

Department of Washington President's Message

Convention and Installation are over and our work for the year has begun. Congratulations to our junior past president, Laurie Lukas, for all her hard work and guidance this last year. I wish to let all of my officers and chairmen along with the members know that I am here for you during this coming year. None of us can accomplish the necessary tasks alone. "Making Veterans' Dreams Come True" can only happen when we all work together toward that goal. Every member is important and has something to offer as we push forward to make this year successful.

Thank you to all of the membership who have supported and encouraged me during the past years as I moved up the chairs in our department. It was a privilege to have Past Department Commander, Frosty Hulsey, install me. Thanks to his skillful craftsmanship for the lovely hope chest on display at department which will be given away next June at our convention. Al and I also appreciate the beautiful quilts he gave us which will help keep us warm when travelling in our RV. There also are two more quilts inside the hope chest waiting for June to find new homes.

Our year will begin with the school of instruction in August, which will be in Ritzville. We have members already working to help add auxiliaries to our numbers. You never know who you will come in contact with that might be eligible to belong to our organization and help us grow. Always keep your eyes open and watch for opportunities to share information about what the auxiliary does and ask others to join us. So often the reason given for not being a member is "Nobody ever asked me to join."

My special project for this year is Captain Joseph House in Port Angeles. This is a former bed and breakfast being transformed into a spot for Gold Star Families to come together and begin the transition after losing a loved one in service to our country. I was honored to have Betsy Schultz, the founder of Captain Joseph House come to spend her birthday with us at installation. She began this effort to honor her son who was killed in Afghanistan. Please think of this when you purchase my president's pin which is a dreamcatcher whose center opening is circled by the yellow bow for our troops and has a blue and a gold star between the feathers at the bottom.

This will be the second year for Family Freedom Festivals. Last year several auxiliaries and districts had very successful events to celebrate what our organization does and get out the word to the public. I hope that this year will see even more of these events happening to show all the fun we have along with the work for our veterans and their families. Take time to go online to the national website and look at all the information available to help you be successful in working for our veterans. You don't even have to log into MALTA to get to the resources, online academy, and many other items prepared to aid you in making your programs better. Making use of these tools will only help to make your auxiliary's programs and efforts even more successful. I am headed to Kansas City on the 20th for the National Convention.

Ruth Lamoureux, Department President

