

**2009 National Convention
Louisville, KY
August 21 – 27, 2009**

**Written by
Sandra S. Duntz
District 10 President**

Nebraska Caucus

The Nebraska Caucus was held August 21, Friday evening at 7:00 PM.

The meeting was opened in form.

All delegates were given their packets and a notepad.

Everyone gave their room numbers in case someone needed to be located during the convention,

The meeting schedule was reviewed and changes were noted. Everyone was reminded they needed to submit a report on all sessions attended.

The Northwest Division caucus will be held on Saturday afternoon. All members of the Nebraska caucus were instructed there would be a meeting after the Northwest Division caucus to report on the pre-convention meetings.

Burdette talked about the parade and stag party that would be held on the 2nd floor after the parade. The River boat cruise was discussed as it appears anyone going on the cruise will not be able to walk in the parade.

Tickets for all functions were distributed.

Amendments were reviewed. Carol VanKirk spoke on several of the amendment and brought us up to date on some of the activities at National Headquarters.

Donna Gana spoke about the need to work on the Cavalcade of Memories and also was trying to find out who has some of the Department bound histories as some are missing. 2000 is last book that is at Department. Several books were in accounted for.

Education Pre-convention Meeting

The Education pre-convention meeting was held Saturday and started at approximately 10:15 AM as the DEC meeting ran long.

The meeting was opened in form.

There were no resolutions or recommendations.

The list of awards is attached.

Only 35 Departments submitted Education Reports to National. The Chair asked for input as to the reason more Departments are not submitting the reports. It was reported that a great many school supplies had been donated to schools across the US. 100 Education Patches were awarded this year. Outstanding awards were read and a list was distributed. The list is attached. A list of the National Scholarships was distributed and it is attached.

Legislative Pre-convention meeting

The Legislative pre-convention meeting was held Saturday and started at approximately 11:00 AM.

There were no resolutions or recommendations.

There was a focus on increasing awareness of Health care for Women Vets. The need to encourage soldiers to request Absentee ballots for military personnel out of the country was discussed. This is the first year the Advanced Health Care HR 1016 funding was set for the next year.

The Post 911 GI bill was discussed. It is 4 years tuition plus up to \$1000 per month living expenses for active duty military since 911. These benefits can be used by the veteran or passed to a spouse or child.

Suggestions to improve the Legislative Program were discussed:

- Telephone (direct contact works best)
- Email petitions are not effective
- Snail mail takes 6 months for a response

Everyone was encouraged to “Go directly to the source”. Take advantage of local elected officials, local radio stations. It was suggested the best way was to become friends with the people in charge of the media and use your contacts to get your message out.

The awards will be mailed to the Departments.

A list of Legislative Awards was distributed and it is attached.

Northwestern Division Caucus

The Northwest Division Caucus was held Saturday afternoon at 1:30 PM.

The meeting was opened in form.

The Secretary and Parliamentarian were appointed for the session. Role call of Departments was as follows: Colorado 10, Minnesota 55, Montana 10, Nebraska 25, North Dakota 14, South Dakota 21, and Wyoming 6.

Special guests were presented. They were some of our Juniors from the Northwest Division. The incoming Northwest Division Vice President is Amanda Washburn from Nebraska.

Introductions were done as listed in the program. A copy is attached.

Minutes of the 2008 caucus were not read as they were mailed to all Departments.

The Nomination for 2009-2010 Northwest Division Vice President is Joyce Babcock.

Carol VanKirk gave a few brief remarks and told everyone to “Keep up the good work”.

National Officers were presented and gave brief remarks.

The meeting was closed with everyone singing the song on the back of the program.

Update Meeting for Nebraska

The Nebraska update meeting was held after the Northwest Division Caucus and everyone reported on the award presented to Nebraska and any resolutions or recommendations that were discussed in their meetings.

Page Meeting

Page Meeting – August 23rd, Sunday 9:00 AM

The meeting was informal and basically gave us our instructions for the convention. We were told where to pickup our mail and flowers that had been ordered (L12). Seating charts for the convention were distributed (copy attached). We were instructed to be at the convention hall by 8:00 AM and to direct our delegation to the correct part of the hall.

We were told the Local Pages would man the doors and if we had any issues that needed resolved to go to one of the Local Pages. Medical emergencies were discussed (keep low key and do not disrupt the convention if possible). According to the convention rules the only people that required an escort were the Department President and Past National Presidents if they desired an escort. We were told to extend our right arm for the escort in order to leave the correct hand free for the escortee to salute the flag or shake hands. We were told not to cross in front of the stage.

We were also instructed to ask an alternate delegate to fill any seat that was vacant.

Page ribbons were distributed and proper dress and allowed jewelry were discussed.

National Convention

Day one of the Convention, Monday, August 24th

The convention opened at 8:15 and followed the printed schedule. Credentials reported a total of 901 registered delegates (601 = 2/3 majority) (452 = 1/2).

All reports scheduled for the day were read.

Veteran's Affairs and Rehabilitation Report included a speech from Mr. Hans Song from China's VA Commission bringing greetings from the Republic of China. The aftermath of a typhoon prevented his leader from attending the convention.

A special VISTA call to service kick off was held before dismissing for the day. The National office will have 8 VISTA volunteers and 12 Department Offices will have a volunteer. The volunteers took their VISTA pledge in front of the delegation.

Day 2, Tuesday, August 25th

The meeting was reconvened at 8:15 AM.
Nominations for National Officers were presented.

Reports were presented as printed in the program.

A special presentation was given by Mike Alerding concerning the changes needed for the ALA to move into the 21st Century. Form 990 which is required to be filed by the IRS. Mr. Alerding stated the IRS wants to see the following in a nonprofit corporation: Consistency, Mission based principles, accountability for the entire organization, and transparency to members, donors, and other stakeholders.

His recommendation is to form various levels of committees to oversee the process. Details of his presentation may be found on the ALA National website. He stated that immediate change is needed.

The finance committee had 3 resolutions.
Resolution #1 which deals with the inclusion of Mini-plans of work being included in the magazine beginning with the 2010-2011 was adopted.

Resolution #2 which deals with the release of known donor lists to the Departments was defeated by a roll call vote and required a 2/3rds vote to pass.

Resolution #3 which dealt with the number of issues of the National magazine was to increase to 6 per year. The Resolution was defeated.

The Constitution and Bylaws report was given and the meeting was adjourned for the day.

The delegation was informed the Resolutions for the Constitution and Bylaws would be presented on Wednesday morning and the Wednesday session would most likely run long.

The session was recessed for the day.

3rd day, Wednesday, August 26th

The convention was reconvened at 8:15 AM with the Call to Order.

The session was opened in form.

Election of the 2009-2010 Officers was held.

Rita Navarrete (NM) – National President, Carlen Ashworth (TX) – National Vice President, Beverly Wolff (ND) – National Chaplain, and Joyce Arent (AZ) – National Historian.

The Division Vice Presidents were also announced: Central – Norma Swenson (KS), Eastern – Barbara Golde (RI), Northwestern – Joyce Babcock (MT), Southern – Linda Horton-Turk (TX), and Western – Peggy Brown (NM).

Resolution #2 from the Finance Committee which dealt with the release of known donor lists to the Departments was revisited.

The business resumed with lively discussion on 9 amendments from our constitution and bylaws committee.

- Amendment #1 dealt with including spouses eligibility was defeated.
- Amendment #2 dealt with including wives of Sons of the American Legion was defeated.
- Amendment #3 dealt with the rights of the Past National Presidents in good standing being life members of the NEC with all rights except to vote was passed. It reworded the amendment but didn't change the intent.
- Amendment #4 dealt with the time frame for the National Historian to complete here history book was amended and passed.
- Amendment #5 creating an Administrative Committee: "Audit" was passed.
- Amendment #6 creating a permanent HR committee failed.
- Amendment #7 was withdrawn.
- Amendment #8 asking for a dues increase failed.
- Amendment #9 dealt with planning the membership theme and program *if possible* in correlation with the American Legion for the following year.

Reports from the following were given:

Historian, Chaplain (included a Memorial Service for Ione Kubby), Cavalcade of Memories, Auxiliary Emergency fund, National Security, Legislative, Membership, Public Relations, and National Secretary.

The Membership Committee had one amendment concerning being able to obtain a VIM membership on a time payment plan. This was defeated.

The Local Convention Committees were introduced.

President's Awards of Excellence were presented to 5 units.

The first volume of the National President's Scrapbook (HOPE book) was presented.

Miriam Junge – Past National Secretary was made an Honorary Past National President with a very impressive presentation.

The Resolutions Report was given.

The National Secretary of Homeland Security dropped in and gave a few remarks.

A video Report of the National President was played.

The convention was closed for the day.

Thursday, August 27th.

The meeting was opened and the Presentation of Pin and Ribbon to retiring National President was done. Colors were presented to the retiring National President.

Installation of 2009-2010 National Officers was done.

Announcement of the National Presidents Program was done "Service not Self". Colors were retired.

The National Convention was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted:

Sandra S. Duntz

District 10 President