

NATIONAL SECURITY – CHARLEEN WALTERS

National President Kris Nelson's theme is "*Honor Their Service*". Those three words serve as a reminder that we **are** Auxiliary members because of a veteran in our family. **Everything** we do, in this organization, is to honor the service of our veteran's, America's heroes and **our** heroes. We can best "*honor their service*" by continuing the mission of serving God and Country.

This year, step-by-step instructions, provided by the national organization, follows each objective. Look for the bold, italics type.

Department-level objectives:

1. Develop, implement and monitor programs and activities that contribute to the practical and emotional well-being of military service members and their families.
 - A. Participate in Department of Defense and other outside programs that support our military and their families throughout the entire deployment cycle.
 - a. **Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program**-support the Welcome Home events; offering hospitality, refreshments, or children and youth activities at Yellow Ribbon events; or making presentations on Auxiliary resources and services to family members of returning service members. Log on to www.yellowribbon.mil to learn more about this program.
 - *Invite unit members to meet and make yellow ribbons and display them throughout your communities, not just main streets, to show support for the troops.*
 - *Approach the local Chamber of Commerce or other nonprofits to help promote welcome-home events.*
 - b. **Operation Homefront** provides emergency and morale assistance for our troops, the families they leave behind, and for the wounded warriors when they return home. Units can assemble service member care packages and /or family member support packages.
 - *Look for contacts who know of active-duty military families. Contact your "Family Readiness Group" at nearby military installations.*
 - *Send handwritten notes or emails inviting families to functions.*
 - *Set up webcams in your Legion Home so family members can actually see their soldier.*
 - *Acquire necessary hardware (up-to-date computer, fast Internet connection, Skype or similar software, Webcam.*
 - *Advertise the opportunity to use computer/webcam to community (newspaper or local news station).*
 - *Create events with this opportunity.*
 - A. Participate in the Military and Family Support programs of The American Legion.
 - a. **Family Readiness Group** –to help military families manage the challenges that are often faced following a deployment. Reach out to them by mowing lawns or fixing a leaky faucet or by asking what you can do for them.
 - *Offer help with household chores, lawn mowing, baby-sitting, grocery shopping, or handy-man needs.*
 - *Contact local discount department stores to see if they will donate gift cards.*
 - b. **Family Support Network** – The American Legion has a nationwide toll-free telephone number for service members and their families to call for assistance. Call (800) 504-4098 or log on to familysupport@legion.org.
 - c. **Operation Comfort Warriors** – a program dedicated to meeting the needs of wounded and ill warriors, either hospitalized or in warrior transition units, with comfort items not usually supplied by the government. Auxiliary Units can support their Legion Posts to raise funds for these warriors.
 - d. **Heroes to Hometown** – returning heroes need your help from employment to emergency monetary assistance, to renovating homes for handicap access to family counseling. For assistance call (202) 621-9924 or email heroestohometowns@legion.org.
 - *Host job fairs.*
 - e. **Gold Star Banner and Blue Star Banner Programs** – In 1917, it quickly became the unofficial symbol of a person in the service. Seek out families and present a Blue Star banner to them to show that the American Legion Auxiliary cares.
 - *Present Blue Star Banners to the families in honor of their soldier.*
 - *Present Gold Star Banners to the families in memory of their soldier.*

f. **POW/MIA Initiatives** – September 17th is National POW/MIA Recognition Day. This commemoration is set aside to honor the commitment and sacrifices made by this nation's prisoners of war and those who are still missing in action, as well as their families.

○ *Abide by The American Legion's POW/MIA empty chair Resolution 288, with a display at all official meetings and events.*

○ *Write letters/emails to your state legislators supporting The American Legion Family's commitment to achieving a full accounting of POWs and MIAs from all wars.*

Homeland Security

a. **Citizen Corps** – This is the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) group to help you be prepared, to get training in first aid and emergency skills, and to volunteer to support local emergency responder, disaster relief and community safety.

○ *Have a training exercise in your post home to give training in first aid, CPR, or any other type of emergency skills.*

○ *Collect supplies for emergency preparedness kits and distribute them in your community.*

○ *When a disaster strikes, be there to volunteer as a unit.*

b. **ROTC and JROTC** – provide leadership opportunities for future military personnel. They learn to lead others, motivate groups and conduct missions. Units can support these future leaders by presenting recognition awards and by inviting them to participate in Post and Unit events.

○ *Provide recognition and support for ROTC and JROTC groups.*

• *If you have a JROTC unit at your local high school, have them post colors at various functions.*

• *Reward them by having dinners and recognizing their accomplishments; after all, they will be future leaders of our military.*

Additional Activities

American Legion Auxiliary Gateway to Services – search the American Legion Auxiliary's website: www.ALAforVeterans.org, for valuable information on how to connect veteran's military service members and military families to resources and support that enhances their lives.

National Military Appreciation Month (May) – Units can show their appreciation for the military families. We must stand behind them and give them wholehearted support.

UNIT AWARDS:

Department National Security Program Award:

A citation presented to the Department Chairman in each Division that reports the Most Outstanding Overall National Security program. Entry must be typewritten in narrative form, not to exceed 1,000 words. Do not include pictures, clippings, scrapbooks, folders, etc. All entries post-marked by May 3, 2012 and sent to *Charleen Walters, 3515 144th St., Weeping Water, NE 68463*

Military Support Unit Award:

A Citation presented to a Unit in each Division that reports the Most Outstanding Overall Program supporting military families with special emphasis on enhancing quality of life and helping them through times of family member deployment and/or injury (severely wounded.) Entry must be typewritten in narrative form, not to exceed 1,000 words. May include pictures (no more than 5) and news articles. All entries post-marked by May 3, 2012 and sent to *Charleen Walters, 3515 144th St., Weeping Water, NE 68463*

ALA ROTC/JROTC Unit Program Certificate:

Certificates presented to Unit Chairman reporting the Most Outstanding Promotion of the ROTC/JROTC program through the ALA in their Department. All entries post-marked by May 3, 2012 and sent to *Charleen Walters, 3515 144th St., Weeping Water, NE 68463*

Dorothy Pearl Civil Preparedness (CERT) Plaque:

A citation plaque presented to the Department having the greatest percentage of Units participating in Civil Preparedness. Entry must be a typewritten summary (narrative or spreadsheet) of participating units. Include the CERT training dates, and numbers of participants registering for the program and number of participants completing the program. All entries post-marked by May 3, 2012 and sent to *Charleen Walters, 3515 144th St., Weeping Water, NE 68463*

Ione Kubby Department Plaque:

An engraved plaque presented to the Department Chairman reporting the Most Outstanding Overall Program serving military children and events during April – Month of the Military Child. Entries must be typewritten in narrative form, not to exceed 1,000 words. May include pictures (no more than 5) and news articles. All entries post-marked by May 3, 2012 and sent to *Charleen Walters, 3515 144th St., Weeping Water, NE 68463*

Resources:

1. American Legion Auxiliary gateway to Services
www.ALAforVeterans.org

2. Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program
<http://www.yellowribbon.mil/>
www.jointservicessupport.org/YRRP

3. Operation Homefront
<http://www.operationhomefront.net>

4. Family Readiness Groups (FRGs)
www.armyfrg.org/skins/frg/home.aspx -United States Army

FRG homepage

<http://www.hooah4heath.com/4life/hooah4family/frg.htm> - FRG handbook: <http://familyreadinessgroup.org>
www.navyfrg.com –Navy Family Readiness Groups

Many states have National Guard Family Readiness Groups which can be found by doing an Internet search using “National Guard Family Readiness Groups”.

5. USO www.uso.org

6. ROTC/JROTC
www.goarmy.com/rotc
www.afrotc.com
www.nrotc.navy.mil
www.mcjrotc.org

7. The American Legion Programs – www.legion.org
Family Support Network – www.legion.org/familysupport
Operation Comfort Warriors – www.legion.org/troops.operationcomfort
Gold and Blue Star Banner Program – www.legion.org/troops.bluestar
POW/MIA Initiatives – www.legion.org/powmia
Publications for National Security – www.legion.org/publications

8. POW/MIA www.dtic.mil/dpmo/

9. Military Appreciation Month www.nmam.org

10. Citizen Corps / CERT Training
www.citizencorps.gov/cert/trainingmat.shtm
www.citizencorps.gov

CITATION POINTS - 20 points assigned

5 pts..... Support Military and Families

5 pts.....Support Homeland Security

10 pts..... Support 2 additional Military projects