



# AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY

## DEPARTMENT OF IOWA

SERVING VETERANS, THEIR FAMILIES AND THEIR COMMUNITIES

*Auxiliary Communique - Fall 2017*

Page 7

### Auxiliary President Vicki Klinkhammer - Installation Address



Good Morning, Department President Sharon, members, and guests. I can't tell you how honored I am to be

standing here before you today as your 2017-2018 Department of Iowa President. I'd like to thank my Installing Officer, Past Department President 2010-2011, Marilyn Block. Marilyn gave me my first Department appointment that started me on this journey. I'd like to thank my Installing Chaplain, Past Department President, Fran Kirk, who was my Department of Iowa President in 2009-2010 when I was serving as Second District President. I would also like to thank Executive Director Marlene Valentine for all of her expertise and answering every question I threw her way. Marlene, you have been my rock! I have one more member to give special thanks to, Kay McVey. I want to thank you for all of the support you have given me over the years. Kay, you were there for me when I was Second District President., you took me under your wing and encouraged me, and if it weren't for you raising me up, I might not be standing here today. In honor of that support, I'd like to ask my daughter, Alice, to sing one of my favorite songs, that always moves me to tears.

**Alice solo: "On Eagle's Wings"**  
For my year, I'd like to emphasize that we as an organization stand for God and Country, that we are to put God first, above all else. In order to do that, I have chosen two Bible Passages and two religious songs that speak to me to represent my year. The first is from the Old Testament, **Ecclesiastes 3:1-8**, which has always been a favorite of mine, "There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under heaven: a time to be born and a time to die, a time to plant and a time to uproot, a time to kill and a time to heal, a time to tear down and a time to build, a time to weep and a time to laugh, a time to mourn and a time to dance, a time to scatter stones and a time to gather them, a time to embrace and a time to refrain, a time to search and a time to give up, a time to keep and a time to throw away, a time to tear and a time to mend, a time to be silent and a time to speak, a time to love and a time to hate, a time for war and a time for peace." I feel this very fitting for my year as there is a

time for everything, including a time to serve as your Department President. I have chosen the hymn, "There is a Time for Everything" to go along with this verse.

**Alice solo: "There is a Time for Everything"**

My next verse is from the New Testament, **John 14:6**, which was my confirmation verse, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life. No one comes to the Father except through me." This verse has always been important to me and has shaped how I have lived my life. I've chosen the song "Gloryland" by Carbon Leaf to go along with this verse.

**"Gloryland" by Carbon Leaf: Music played on Laptop.**

My symbol is a White Mustang, running free, and my theme is "America Runs Free because of Those Who Served Our Country." I want to tell you a little story of why I chose this symbol. You may think that I am a horse lover, but it is quite the contrary. Horses actually scare me! So you must be wondering why I chose a Mustang as my symbol. Well, the story I am going to tell you is of a young girl of about 10 or 11 who loved going to Junior Camp. On the ride home from camp one year, this girl asked her mom who chooses the theme and symbol each year, so her mom told her that it was the Department President who decides. The girl was quiet the rest of the way home, but when they got back into town the girl said "here" and handed her mom a paper. On it, the girl had drawn a horse and written around it the words, "Running Free with the American Legion Auxiliary." The mom told the girl "That would make an excellent theme, you should save that for when you are president," and the girl told her "No, I don't think I ever want to be president. You should be president, mom, you'd make a great president, and then you could use it." So the mom told her, "Well then, if I'm ever president I will," thinking to herself that there was no way she'd ever be the Department President either. But then, 15 years later, this mom was asked to be the next Department of Iowa President and she agreed. When she told her daughter, who was not so little anymore, the girl jokingly asked her, "So are you still going to use my theme and symbol?" As you may have gathered, that mother and daughter was myself and my daughter Alice. And of course, as I promised that 10 year old girl, I chose a horse as

my symbol with just some minor adjustments. I reworded the theme to incorporate not just the Auxiliary, but the whole Legion Family. I chose a White Mustang because by nature mustangs are free roaming horses, and white is the rarest of colors, just as freedom is a rare gift we are given as Americans by those who serve. To me, the white symbolizes freedom, sacrifice, and patriotism. I have chosen the song "Wild Horses" by Natasha Bedingfield as one of my songs to represent the free spirit of the mustang.

**Video: "Wild Horses" (Played on Projector through the Laptop.)**

**Natasha Bedingfield - Wild Horses - YouTube**

I have chosen Blue, Red, and Purple as my colors for the year. The blue stands for our Legionnaires, who we will call Stallions this year, the SAL, who will be known as Colts, and the Legion Riders who we will call Ferals, the name given to free roaming wild horses. The red represents our Auxiliary Senior Members, who we will call Fillies, and our Junior Members, who will be known as Foals. Together, blue and red make purple which represents our Legion Family. I have chosen flowers as a part of my colors as well. Blue forget-me-nots to represent our POW/MIA's who we will never forget, the red poppy to represent all of our veterans, and the sweet smelling and resilient purple lilac which blooms again and again every year to represent the strength we can achieve and the atmosphere we can obtain by working together as a family. Speaking of colors, I have chosen the song, "The War Was in Color" by Carbon Leaf as one of my patriotic songs this year for all of those who have served and those who have lost loved ones serving.

**Video: "The War Was in Color" (Played on Projector through the Laptop.)**  
**Carbon Leaf - War Was in Color - YouTube**

Wasn't that song beautiful? It's such a moving piece. Now, I'm sure you are all dying to know what my projects this year will be, am I right? Well, as you all know, there are so many amazing projects to choose from, and they all do such wonderful things. It's so hard to choose! I have decided to pick projects that are close to my heart, and you all know how much I love art and music, so I would like to support the Veterans Creative Arts. I feel that art is such an important

part of life, especially for veterans suffering from PTSD and other disabilities, as a creative outlet for them has been proven to reduce anxiety and depression, and can lead to a brighter and more successful outlook for their future. For my other project, I'd like to support Retrieving Freedom. Retrieving Freedom is an organization that raises and trains service dogs for people who could not afford one otherwise, as insurance will not help with a service dog for those with invisible disabilities such as veterans who suffer from PTSD and mobility issues. These dogs cost upwards of \$25,000 to care for and train, but Retrieving Freedom only asks those who apply to raise \$5,600, which they help them to raise. I'd like to raise \$5,600 for Retrieving Freedom so that we can help at least one veteran to obtain a service dog. This is important to me, because my daughter suffers from an invisible disability and I know how hard it can be. And I believe that those who served deserve the right to a service dog who can help to make their lives better.

**My Family was brought up to the stage by the guest chairman of pages and her assistant**

While my family is making their way to the stage, I'd like to take a moment to thank my Legion Family who have gotten me to this point today. Would the members of Farley Unit #656 please stand and be recognized? Stay Standing! Would the members of Dubuque County please stand and be recognized? Stay Standing! And would the members of Second District please stand and be recognized? I want to thank you all for standing behind me and helping me to succeed.

I wouldn't be able to succeed this year without the help of my team members and our other Auxiliary leaders. The Past Departments Presidents were already introduced. I will be relying on them this year with any questions I might have, they will be my mentors. Would all of my District Presidents please stand again and be recognized? Would my Department Officers please stand and be recognized? And would all of my Department Chairman please stand and be recognized? Thank you all for agreeing to work with me this year. I know that by working together as not only a team, but a family, we will have a great year! Now I'd like to introduce my family. My mom, Arlene Reisen, who is a

77 year member of the American Legion Auxiliary, currently with Unit #656 Farley. My sister, Kristine Staver, a member of the LeClaire Unit #347 for 8 years. She currently resides in Victoria, Texas but has kept her membership with IA. My son, Matthew Klinkhammer, is a charter SAL member of Squadron #6 Dubuque, chartered May 5, 2005, 12 years ago while he was still in high school. His wife, Kate could not be here today due to work obligations. They are currently living in Sellersville, PA which is the Philadelphia area. My daughter, Alice Greenwood, is a 22 year member currently with Unit #656 Farley, and her husband Kyle Greenwood. We are working on getting Kyle signed up as a SAL member with Squadron #6 Dubuque. Thank you all for taking time out of your busy lives and traveling, some further than others, to be here with me today. I can't tell you what it means to me to share this with you, and how much your support means to me.

Does anyone in my family wish to say a few words?

**Alice solo: "Wind Beneath My Wings" sung on stage to mom as her speech from her and her brother.**

I want to thank the members of the American Legion Auxiliary for giving me the opportunity to serve you this year. Working together as a family, and building membership, will be my two main goals, and with your help, we can achieve it.

**Would the Chairman of Pages and her Assistant please escort my family from the stage.**

Now, before my membership team comes forward, I'd like for us to sing "God Bless the USA" together. My daughter, Alice, will sing the verses, if you would all join in on the chorus. I will take my leave of the stage so I can be with my membership team, but I'll be back! **Alice solo verses: "God Bless the USA" Members on chorus (Leave stage to change) Membership Roundup! (I am changed to my membership wardrobe) Rocking horse on floor. Thank you everyone, we are going to have a great year! President Sharon, (Hand over Gavel).**

