



# American Legion Auxiliary

*A Community of Volunteers Serving Veterans,  
Military, and their Families*

**TO: National Executive Committee Members, National Officers, National Chairmen, Past National Presidents**

**CC: Dept Presidents; Dept Secretaries, NHQ Staff; National Committee Members**

From: Kelly Circle, Executive Director

Re: **Weekly Briefing 12-18-2020**

It's hard to believe we've almost made it through 2020 and this will be the last weekly briefing for the year. From all the staff at ALA National Headquarters, thank you for the opportunity for us to serve our veterans, military, and their families, through serving you, our volunteer members!

Please note National Headquarters will be closed on Thursday, December 24<sup>th</sup> and Friday, December 25<sup>th</sup> for Christmas and Thursday, December 31<sup>st</sup> and Friday, January 1<sup>st</sup> for the New Year's holiday. Many of the staff are taking much needed time off the next two weeks as well. NHQ will still be open so please don't hesitate to call or email as needed.

Our mid-year NEC meeting, traditionally held at National Headquarters in February, will be a virtual meeting this year. Please mark your calendars for February 27<sup>th</sup> and look for more details from us soon.

I just received word from The American Legion that Washington DC Conference will be virtual this year. The National Commander will still give his testimony, but it will also be virtual. As I receive details on the ALA's participation, I'll be sure to send them out.

The ALA Foundation was featured on a radio show this week! PNP Diane Duscheck gave a wonderfully informative and inspirational interview. If you have a few minutes, I encourage you to go online and have a listen. Thank you, PNP Diane for representing the ALA Foundation so well!

The recording can be found here: <http://wintradio.com/archived-programs-now/>. Click on "They Sacrificed for Us" under weekday programming, then scroll all the way to the bottom of the list and click on the 12/16/2020 recording.

Our National Headquarters Holiday Party was held via Zoom yesterday afternoon. We were honored President Nicole was able to join in the fun from her home in Iowa. We played party games, answered trivia questions, and guessed which Christmas tree belonged to which staff member. There were lots of laughs and silliness—an excellent way to celebrate our team accomplishments this year! I've attached a few pictures for your enjoyment.



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As people take time off to be with loved ones and celebrate the holiday season with their families, it allows all of us time to pause and reflect on our thoughts and actions over the past year. Please, take this opportunity to think about those actions of which you are most proud, and those where you see improvement is needed. But most especially, take time to Fill Your Funnel.

What does “Fill Your Funnel” mean? As Girls State Director, Brister Thomas, Dept. of Hawaii, explained when we Buddy Checked each other this week, it’s all about taking in “nourishment” as you are giving to others. This nourishment can be physical (getting enough sleep, taking vitamins), emotional (acknowledging your feelings, talking through feelings that are troubling you), or mental (putting a puzzle together, doing a crossword). Some refer to it as work/life balance, others call it self-care, but it’s a message that I’ve heard numerous times over the last several months. I’ve attended a few caregiver webinars and ALA HNQ has even recently offered a virtual training on the subject but for whatever reason, the lightbulb didn’t come on in my head until I heard it phrased as “fill your funnel.”

If a person gives and gives without taking in enough nourishment to replenish, they become tired, impatient, and frustrated. The tendency to see only the worst in a situation and in people becomes more and more common. Does this sound familiar? If so, take some time to evaluate how much nourishment you are taking in; maybe it’s time for an adjustment. This is “filling your funnel.”

One can draw nourishment from fellow members. We come together (in person or virtually) to plan and execute activities to help our veterans, military, and their families. We do this even as we are dealing with stress from our jobs, family, health issues, and a myriad of other problems that crop up for us. Let’s make sure we have enough nourishment to get us through what we have planned. It might be helpful to take time before the meeting or as part of a unit meeting to get to know each other as people, not just as ALA members.

Do you know where that new member sitting across from you (or on the Zoom call) grew up? What challenges did they face growing up? What makes them happy? Many of us have known each other for years but aren’t able to answer these questions. It may not seem important to our mission on its face, but knowing this information helps build trust and when there’s trust, it’s much easier to work through the inevitable miscommunication so we can keep our energy focused on our mission.

Thank you, Brister, for educating me and thank you to everyone reading for allowing me to share my heartfelt thoughts with you. Happy Holidays and God bless!