



**2024 Michigan NEC Report from National Convention
August 5 – 10, Springfield, IL Includes:
Pre-Convention Meetings, Council of NEC Women and
Post-Convention NEC**

Submitted by Faye Richardson-Green, August 27, 2024

*We waited together...
Now let's work together...*

The 78th National AMVETS Ladies Auxiliary Convention began with a series of pre-Convention Meetings on Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday. I attended the National Finance Committee meeting on Monday, August 5th as well as the following meetings and events on Tuesday, August 6th: Hospital/VAVS, Americanism, Council of NEC, Constitution and Bylaws (CBL) and the Training "Carousel of Knowledge." The business meetings began on Wednesday, August 7 and ended on Saturday, August 10 with elections, officer installations and the post-Convention NEC.

Although the Finance and the Service Office committee meetings weren't required of me as NEC, each helped me better understand what direction national provides and how other departments are helping/supporting their communities and veterans through these programs. I was an appointee to the CBL committee. The CBL committee reviewed and accepted or rejected other committee referrals as well as Constitution, Bylaw and Standing Rules changes prior to presenting them to the convention body for possible approval. Major changes presented to be presented included life membership cost and eligibility; and search committee name change to personnel committee with needed updates to the committee membership.

The referral from the Department of MI regarding the Constitution wording change affecting female veterans, was rejected in committee due to the AMVETS Judge Advocate explaining to the National Ladies Auxiliary Parliamentarian "that female veterans is added to the eligibility to allow that veteran eligibility under herself to join the Auxiliary." The referral from Michigan regarding training assistance from National was not handled in the CBL committee. The National Parliamentarian has referred it to the National Training/PNP Committee.

The Council of NEC meeting held on Tuesday afternoon, was chaired by NEC Debbie Beck of Florida (FL). There were 19 NEC Women and 7 Alternates & guests. Several women spoke about concerns with loss of members. A couple of NEC women spoke of hopeful signs through creative activities at one or two Locals. Although past Convention Council meetings held elections for the new Chairwoman, an election did not occur this time. It was explained that a change had been made at the March NEC meeting to hold the elections in March to make it easier for the new chair to learn her responsibilities and do her job for the year.

The post-Convention NEC was brought to order by current National President Amy Stopyra at 12:15pm. After the Invocation, Presentation of Colors, Pledge of Allegiance, Roll Call

and Presentation of the Budget, PNP Kathy Berning's appointment to the Finance Committee was moved by PNP Marvell Ruppel, 2nd by Tyann Schlenker and approved by the officers and NEC present. The following actions prior to the introduction of the newly elected National President occurred:

- Humanitarian Award Recipient named – Cindy McGrew, "Operation 2nd Chance"
- Newly elected officers' themes and programs presented:
 - 1st VP Mary Lanphere, Membership, "Strength thru Communication"
 - 2nd VP Laura Bugaj, Child Welfare, "Communication thru Play, " John Tracy Center
 - 3rd VP Deb Gass, Community Service, "Ask Not What Your Community Can Do For You, But What You Can Do For Your Community," Paws with a Cause
 - Faye Richardson-Green, Americanism Officer, theme TBA, Founding Forward
 - Allison Aldrich, Scholarship Officer, "We Are Here to Empower You," College, Career Start and Trade Scholarships
 - Donna Tolland, Hospital Officer, "We Share Because We Care," St Jude Children's Research Hospital
 - Barbara Montagne, Chaplain, "Be the Blessing"
 - Kathy Hays, Sergeant-At-Arms, "Honoring and Respecting the American Flag"
- PNP Carol King moved and Barb Montagne 2nd Linda Bonin's appointment as 2025 Convention Chair (motion carried)
- PNP Patty Peining moved and NEC Stormy 2nd the acceptance of all themes and programs. Motion carried.

Incoming National President Cynthia "Cindy" Rice presented her 2024-25 theme "Together We Care" and project – AMVETS Diabetes Research Institute. She next presented her appointments for approval. NEC Lisa Stoddard 2nd her motion. All were approved:

- PNP Charlene Kee – 2026 Convention Chair
- PNP Heidi Dineen-Serpis – Parliamentarian
- Denise Spiegle - Jr. AMVETS Coordinator
- PNP Karin Simmons - Honors and Awards Chair
- Paulette Joy – Scrapbook Chair
- Lee Ann Singer – President's Scrapbook
- PNP Charlene Kee – Training Chair
- Fran Ganda – VAVS Representative

Retirement of Colors and Benediction happened next. The post-Convention NEC meeting was adjourned at 12:55pm by President Amy Stopyra.