



As we attended Convention last year, who would have guessed that a virus would change the world in 2020? Thank you to everyone for your understanding as we navigate this “new normal.” I look forward to continuing our year. Hopefully, we will be back to a normal schedule soon. Last year, in my July/August message, I encouraged you to celebrate the Auxiliary’s 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. The good news is that we now have more time to celebrate. The 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Chairman, Betsey Lee Hodges, has suggested that we hold Zoom Celebrations until we can meet in person. I would also encourage you to celebrate what we have accomplished during this time of crisis. We have held meetings and stayed in touch through Zoom. We have also held Memorial Services, Poppy Day Celebrations, and 4<sup>th</sup> of July Celebrations through Zoom and Facebook. I did not expect Zoom to uplift my spirit, but I am thankful that Zoom has given us the opportunity to see each other’s smiles. I miss you all! We have had “Social Distancing Parades” and Drive Through Dinners. The Auxiliary has proven us to be resilient. As we move into the new year, I would like you to remember the words of Ralph Waldo Emerson, “Nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm.” Think about that as you work our mission and recruit new members. Recruiting may appear more difficult, but we are Auxiliary strong and “we can do it!”

Thank you to Jill, the Membership Team, and everyone for working hard on membership. Congratulations Department of NC for making this a successful year. Membership is everyone’s responsibility. Retaining our members is also everyone’s responsibility. Thank you to all the chairmen who have continued to work their programs and keep us encouraged and active in our mission. Thank you to my Division and District Presidents for all you do. I am excited to see the successes that this year will bring our ALA family. I want us to focus even more on our mission, “Service over Self,” by serving our veterans, active military, and their families, as well as our children and youth, and our communities. During this time of crisis, the ALA will be there to help.

The District meetings are set to start August 8 in person. If we are not able to meet in person, we will have the meeting by Zoom at the same scheduled time.

Thank you to everyone who supported the President’s Project this year. The money will be divided between the 4 VAMCs for the PTSD Units. I hope to be able to deliver the money soon. This year the President’s Project will continue to raise money for the PTSD Units at the 4 VAMCs. I decided to continue with this project for a couple of reasons.

1. The need for this project is great. Anywhere from up to 30% of veterans suffer from PTSD and on average 20 veterans die from suicide per day.
2. I realize that due to current circumstances, units have not been able to fundraise. Keeping the same project takes some of the pressure off if your unit is not able to contribute this year. I fully understand and I do not want any person or unit to feel pressured.

For God and Country,  
ALA Proud and Strong,  
Julie