





## President's Message

By Barbara Wong

Since its inception in 1919, the American Legion Auxiliary has achieved its own unique identity while working side-by-side with the American Legion veterans. Our preamble clearly indicates that we are to "participate and contribute to the accomplishments of the aims and purposes of the American Legion". Starting in June 2003 when our unit charter was granted we have definitely fulfilled our goal through activities that support the active military members, veterans and our community.

As a newly chartered unit without experience working with the veterans, we have a long and steep learning curve. Our approach was to initiate the auxiliary programs one at a time. Rehabilitation of disabled veterans and serving our community became our first priority; currently we have three teams visiting the in-patient veterans at both the New York City VA Hospital and the Northport VA Hospital on a monthly basis. Our community service hours have doubled during the past two years. As we gain more experience, we can get involved in other programs to facilitate the well being of our active military members, their families as well as the children and youth. This year we are sponsoring two very talented high school female juniors to attend the New York Department American Legion Auxiliary's Empire Girls' State summer camp. They will learn about responsible citizenship as well as how the state and local government operates. All these activities would not be in existence without our members' dedication and support for which I am truly grateful.

The birth of our Unit brought about the frequent female presence at the Kimlau Post and caused quite a culture shock to some of the legionnaires. They felt threatened and demonstrated hostility towards our members in a few occasions. Fortunately, our appropriate and timely responses put those hostile legionnaires' fears to rest, and our participation and contribution "to the accomplishment of the aims and purposes of the American Legion" have proven to the legionnaires that we have earned our rightful existence. Therefore like they say, "everything is cool" now!

My answer to potential members who ask me about the benefits of joining our auxiliary unit is always "the sense of fulfillment"; our help to rehabilitate "the disabled veterans, the care of the dependents of those who've answered the final call, the care of those who now are suffering from wounds, disease and want," to educate our children and to serve our community, state and nation is definitely a rewarding experience.

Commander Tam, his staff and Kimlau Post's magnanimous support in the past two years has provided us with a positive environment to achieve success. We certainly owe them our deepest gratitude. We wish them well and "Happy 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Kimlau Post!"



## About The American Legion Auxiliary

By Elizabeth Pon

The American Legion Auxiliary is the world's largest women's patriotic service organization. The nearly 10,500 Units have nearly 1 million members. The Units are located in every state and some foreign countries.

The Auxiliary was organized in 1919 to assist The American Legion. The mission of the American Legion Auxiliary is to support the American Legion's programs for veterans, young people, and community.

The Auxiliary was organized by concerned women who took on the day-to-day responsibilities of life when their male family members went overseas during World War I. Aware of the many fatherless families and the needs of return veterans, Auxiliary women continued their supportive roles when the veterans of World War I founded The American Legion in 1919. Auxiliary members today are wives, mothers, sisters, daughters, granddaughters and great-granddaughters of dedicated veterans. Some members are veterans themselves.

In one year, the Auxiliary raises more than \$18 million and sponsors many programs that contribute over 10 million service hours for the veterans, their families and the communities.

Below are a few major ongoing Auxiliary programs:

The Poppy Program is a well-known Auxiliary program. It is the oldest and most widely recognized Auxiliary program. Each Memorial Day, Auxiliary members distribute millions of bright red crepe paper poppies in exchange for contributions to assist disabled and hospitalized veterans. This program provides multiple benefits to the veterans and to the community. The hospitalized veterans who make the poppies are able to earn a small wage that helps to supplement their income and make them feel more self-sufficient. The physical and mental activity provides many therapeutic benefits as well. Donations are used exclusively to assist and support veterans and their families. The poppy also reminds the community of the past sacrifices and continuing needs of our veterans. The poppy has become a nationally recognized symbol of sacrifice and is worn and used by Auxiliary members to honor the men and women who have served or died for their country in all wars.

Another Auxiliary program is Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation. This program provides service and financial assistance to veterans and their families. Members provide emotional support and cheerful companionship while attending to the hospitalized, handicapped and homebound veterans' physical comforts. During visits to VA hospitals, Auxiliary members conduct bingo games, sing songs and socialize with the hospitalized veterans. Since some of the veterans are on restricted diets; Auxiliary members also bring appropriate refreshments during their visits. The Auxiliary gift shops and holiday parties have become an essential part of the VA program.

The Auxiliary Community Service program is based on the premise that no organization has a right to exist within the community without giving something to that community in return. Community service helps to make our communities better places in which to live. Auxiliary members study community needs, recommend projects, raise funds and donate their time to accomplish their specific goals.

The Auxiliary's membership program conducts ongoing recruiting to ensure the future growth and prosperity of the Unit. Unit members work diligently to publicize and promote the benefits, objectives and activities of the Auxiliary and seek those eligible women who might be interested in membership and active involvement in Unit activities. Units, Departments and Divisions vie in friendly competitions against one another as they work toward reaching their individual and organizational membership goals.

## Birth of an Auxiliary Unit

By Lisa Chung

On October 20, 2002 at 191-193 Canal Street, the site of the American Legion Kimlau Post 1291, close to thirty women attended a preliminary organizational meeting to discuss the possibility of starting an auxiliary unit for the American Legion Kimlau Post 1291. The attendees included wives, daughters and granddaughters of Kimlau Post members. I attended this preliminary meeting since I am eligible to join through my father, who served during the Vietnam War and a member of Kimlau Post,

The preliminary organizational meeting began with an introduction by Fang Wong, the Post Adjutant who provided us with insight on what makes an auxiliary unit successful. Every participant introduced herself and conveyed what she could contribute and how she could participate in the creation of the new unit. At the end, the consensus was to proceed to apply for the charter from the American Legion Auxiliary of the Department of New York.

First and foremost was to determine the process necessary to create the new unit. I accepted the task to research and acquire an auxiliary unit's constitution and by-laws' template. Fortunately, everything was easily accessible through the Internet and other means. I was able to provide the information at the subsequent organizational meeting that was held three weeks later in which Peggy Sheng, Barbara Wong, Jean Wu and myself were in attendance.

With all the pertinent information at hand, we formed a Planning Committee and assigned duties to start the charter application process. A November 24, 2002 meeting date was also set for all the interested parties to attend.

On November 24, 2002 with close to twenty people in attendance Barbara Wong brought the meeting to order and introduced Rita Venedam, New York County President of the American Legion Auxiliary of the Department of New York. President Venedam provided insight on how to operate an auxiliary unit and brought a wealth of experience and advice to the group. We learned about election of unit officers, Robert's Rules of Order that governs the meetings, setting membership fees, how to form committees for the veteran and community activities, etc. The outcome of the meeting was to submit all the required documents along with Kimlau Post Adjutant's recommendation letter to the Department President's Office for a unit charter.

On Sunday, May 18, 2003 with twenty-five members gathering at Kimlau Post, Barbara Wong announced the American Legion Auxiliary of the Department of New York had granted us the unit charter on April 23, 2003. Kimlau Post Auxiliary Unit 1291 was born. Subsequent to that announcement, membership dues were collected and the following unit officers were elected:

|                              |  |
|------------------------------|--|
| <i>President</i>             | <i>Barbara Wong</i>  |
| <i>First Vice President</i>  | <i>Ruth Mui</i>  |
| <i>Second Vice President</i> | <i>Gabrielle Shin</i>  |
| <i>Secretary</i>             | <i>Stella Yee</i>  |
| <i>Treasurer</i>             | <i>Lily Tam</i>  |
| <i>Historian</i>             | <i>Ann Chan</i>  |
| <i>Sergeant-at-Arms</i>      | <i>Juanita Tam</i>   |
| <i>Executive Committee</i>   | <i>Helen Lau, Lisa Louie, Rubi Louie,<br/>Shin Ling Moy, Elizabeth Pon</i>   |
| <i>By-laws Committee</i>     | <i>Ruth Mui, Elizabeth Pon, Gabrielle Shin,<br/>Barbara Wong, Stella Yee</i> |

The American Legion Kimlau Post Auxiliary Unit 1291 was now official, and all the elected officers were sworn in on June 7, 2003 by both Past Department President Regina Davison and New York County President Rita Venedam. Since its creation, Auxiliary Unit 1291 has grown in size and recognition by the community it supports.



The American Legion  
 Lt. B. R. Kimlau Chinese Memorial Auxiliary Unit 1291  
 2003 – 2005 Officers  
 紐約華裔美國退伍軍人婦女會第一屆職員玉照



**President  
Barbara Wong**



主席林希儀

**1<sup>st</sup> Vice President  
Ruth Mui**



副主席梅如意

**2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President  
Gabrielle Shin**



副主席單陳瓊芳

**Picture  
Not Available**

**Secretary  
Stella Yee**

西文書記朱雯君

**Chinese Secretary  
Fanny Chan**

中文書記鄧爾玲

**Treasurer  
Lily Tam**



財政黃淑芳

**Historian  
Ann Chan**



會歷陳潔霞

**Sergeant-at-Arms  
Juanita Tam**



糾察譚惠燕

**Executive Committee  
Helen Lau**



執行委員李金堂

**Executive Committee  
Lisa Louie**



集執行委員雷笑雲

**Executive Committee  
Rubi Louie**



執行委員雷阮秋蟬

**Executive Committee  
Shin Ling Moy**



形執行委員梅倩菱

**Executive Committee  
Elizabeth Pon**



執行委員陳美儀

## Son of American Legion Report

By Gary Quan

To paraphrase President Ronald Reagan, "There is no telling how far an organization can go if no one cares who gets the credit." My SAL experience has truly been a humbling and divine enabling from the Almighty, which the American Legion acknowledges in its motto, "God and Country." The leadership of Lt. B. R. Kimlau Chinese Memorial Post 1291, Former Commanders Fang Wong and Frank Gee, among others, has articulated the idea that the American Legion community and its mission would be enhanced if the families became more visibly involved. Although our local Legion organization has always involved the immediate and extended families of the veterans of the United States military through its fifty plus years of history with various activities such as summer picnics, holiday meals, Legion ceremonies and so forth, our leaders decided to take the formal step to promote such a more goal. Their idea led to the creation of the local Ladies Auxiliary (LA) and the Sons of the American Legion Squadron (SAL) in 2003. The leadership entrusted me to lead the SAL in its inaugural year in 2003.

The administrative glitch which resulted in a disconnect with the local SAL branch, with Albany and Washington D.C. was entirely my error, to which, as the Army through its various schoolings, including OCS at the Empire State Military Academy, has taught me, there is "no excuse". Therefore, the official records, notwithstanding the SAL Charter of 2003, shall reflect that our local SAL branch commenced in Legion Year 2004. Nevertheless, the fledging organization is still in existence, and is inspired by the fine example exhibited by the local Ladies Auxiliary with its spirit, multitudinous community activities, and direct help to the Sons of the American Legion. The highlight of the two years is an event ordained by the Almighty through two "angels" in the persons of Ladies Auxiliary Ann Chan and Barbara Wong, its president, which led to the visit by the SAL and American Legionnaires to the U. S. Merchant Marine Academy on April 7, 2004. The trip was attended by representatives of the three Legion organizations and some of their children, Eric Wong, Justin Tam, Jason Quan, and Gary Quan, Jr.

The formal history of SAL, Squadron 1291, starts on May 26, 2003, where Advisor Frank Gee, Department Commander Fang Wong, Peter Mark, Chuck Jung, and I, attended our first meeting to discuss the first slate of officers, recruitment, the drafting of the constitution, and dues. Meetings followed in June 28, 2003, December 21, 2003, April 24, 2004, and November 6, 2004. Due to the unfortunate passing of SAL Adjutant's Peter Mark's father in 2003, Peter relinquished his post temporarily. Although it was difficult to replace Peter, who was very capable, Eric Tam brilliantly filled the gap with his computer literacy in maintaining the records of the meetings. From the beginning of the budding Squadron's history, the SAL participated in every Memorial Day and Veteran's Day parade.

During the summer of 2004, a SAL member sponsored a basketball team, which in the past was funded by a Chinatown church, called the Morning Stars-Rockits. The teenagers competed against players in their twenties and thirties and lost in the semi-finals. Since they had defeated the other semi-final loser during the regular season, the team technically placed third.

The November 6, 2004 meeting was encouraging because Advisor Frank Gee was able to recruit Paul Gong, a local community leader, while John Yee was able to bring aboard Pastor Bayer Lee of the First Chinese Baptist Church. Since then, Paul Gong has been asking for recruiting applications and SAL brochures because his senior basketball teammates are interested in this enterprise as another venue to benefit the community. During that meeting, the officers were assigned to peruse the draft of the Squadron Constitution. On Veteran's Day, 2004, the SAL marching contingent numbered about a dozen, its best turnout thus far.

The 2005 members of the SAL are Lamtin Chu, Frank Gee, Michael Gee, Tim Gee, Paul Gong, Kenneth Ho, Bayer Lee, Peter Mark, Harold Moy, Gary Quan, Jr., Jason Quan, Francis Shin, Eric Tam, John Tom, Jason Tom, Michael Tom, John Chang, Jr., Henry Hom, Chuck Jung, Stephen L. Koo, Stephen Koo, Justin Moy, Joseph L. Tsue, Eric Wong, Thomas J. Louie, Justin C. Tam, and myself. Hopefully, these men, young and old alike, can build on the foundation exemplifying love of God and country and fiscal responsibility to complete the many SAL-related tasks.