

Twenty and Four

The Honor Society of Women Legionnaires



THE NATIONAL JEEP

The Official Publication of The National Twenty and Four
Honor Society of Women Legionnaires

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Marilyn Rideaux, Editor

Ethel Matuschka, Editor Emeritus

“WHAT IS HAPPENING TO NATIONAL 20 + 4?”

By Marilyn Rideaux, National Jeep Editor



We all like a good laugh but enough is enough. It's time to get down to business. Is anybody paying attention? What is happening to 20 + 4? Sure, we all know that these are economically tough times for most of us, but if we are not careful, this organization will die.

This has been the worst year for disseminating information to you via The Jeep. Not enough National Officers and Committee Chairs are submitting articles/information for publication. There are fewer Echelon reports, participation our posted greetings is poor (Holiday Greeting in December and Proud to be an American in June), and membership is down this year.

Our National Bivouac is in five (5) months and we have not received any input regarding location, hotel, nor the Bivouac banquet. Emblem Sales, Scholarship Committee, Echelon Development, and Service Director's division seem to be inactive. Do I have your attention, now? It is time for us to do some inventory and get involved in preserving the National 20 + 4.

Thank you to those who have been complying with The Jeep deadline dates. Please keep in mind that it is important to me that you continue to submit entries via email. Also, please state in the subject line, “JEEP ARTICLE,” so that I won't overlook it. Please accept my apology for any articles that I have missed in the past. The **next deadline date is May 24, 2023**, for the June 2023 issue. Don't forget to submit your members name for “Proud to be an American” as well as \$1 for each to our National Disbursing Director, Judi Beischel.

Times are hard but please keep your head up and remember to “Be The One” and reach out to other women veterans, especially the ones who might be alone or shut-in.



MEMBERSHIP

ECHELON	2022 Year End Members	2023 Goal	New Members	2023 Members	Percent
50-AL	15	17	4	18	100.6
29-AK	11	12	0	0	0.0
35-AZ	36	31	7	31	76
01-CA	40	44	8	49	111.4%
05-FL	0		0		0
30-FL	14	15	0	11	73.3
08-IL	24	26	8	28	100.8
02-MA	11	13	0	8	62
09-MT	27	30	8	31	100.3
27-NC	27	30	0	0	0
31-TX	19	21	0	0	0
24-VA	11	12	2	19	158.3
03-WA	12	13	0	9	69
11-WI	8	9	1	6	67
TOTAL	255	282	38	210	70.8



Earnestine Doubek National Aide

Greetings Jeepettes,



I want to thank the Echelon Aides for getting their members' dues in. We are almost there.

How time flies, next thing you know it will be time for annual Bivouac. Start preparing now to attend. I have put it on my calendar and am looking forward to seeing you all in Charlotte, North Carolina. In the meantime, get outdoors and enjoy the fresh spring air. Spring makes me feel invigorated, it gives me energy and enhances my wellbeing. Quite possibly the best time of year. Jeepettes, use this wonderful time of year to recruit new members.



Twenty and Four Challenge Coins

Fundraiser

Limited supply

Be one of the first to own this limited supply Twenty and Four Challenge coin. It was designed to acknowledge the women who are members of the Twenty and Four, and all who sacrificed their time and lives serving honorably as members of the Armed Forces.

The front of the coin displays our organizational logo. It is inscribed with : 20 & 4 Honor Society of Women Legionnaires

The back of the coin recognizes the 15 Echelons since our organization's acknowledgement in 1949. The building depicts the Washington D.C. Women's Memorial Building, dedicated to all women veterans. Here's how to help fundraise and own one of these coins.



Front



Back

Order Form (Please Print)

Name _____
Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Email Address _____

Number of coins _____ \$10.00 each Total Cost _____

Make payment to: **National 20 + 4**

Mail order form along with check or money order to:

Mildred S. Wright-Pearson, Jr Vice Director VIP
PO Box 233
Tranquillity, CA 93668

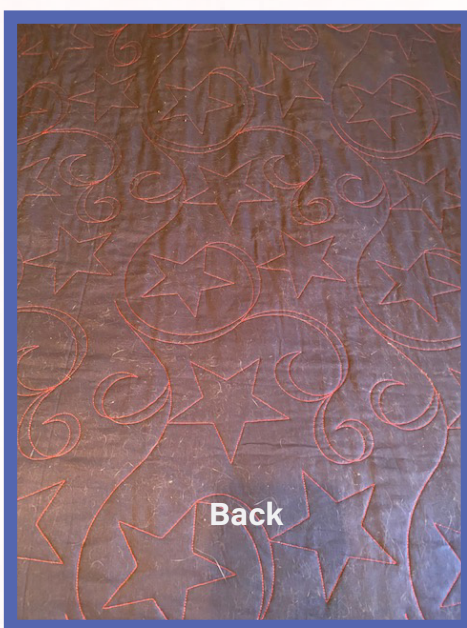
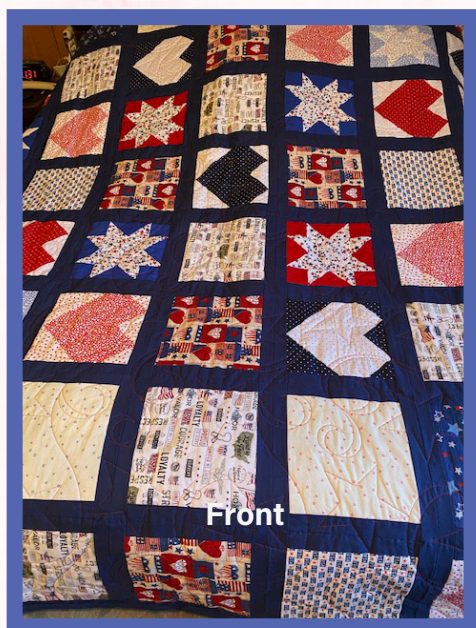
Text or Message me at: (559) 250-8247

Cash will only be accepted in person.

Coin will not be mailed until receipt of payment

Twenty and Four Fundraiser Handmade Queen Size Quilt

This beautifully handmade queen-size quilt is a one of a kind. The quilter has used squares that salutes the Armed Forces, the United States, and the values of this country. It encompasses the colors symbolic of our nation as well as flags, stars, fireworks, and confetti on stars that are associated with this great nation. This is a raffle item.



Raffle tickets are
\$10.00 each
Only 250 will be sold
Drawing will be held at
the National Bivouac
August 24-25, 2023
Charlotte, NC
Winner need not be
present

Raffle Ticket Form (Please Print)

Name _____
Address _____ City _____ State _____
Zip _____
Email Address _____

Number of tickets _____ \$10.00 each Total Cost _____

Make payment to: **National 20 + 4**

Mail raffle ticket request form along with check or money order to:

Mildred S. Wright-Pearson, Jr Vice Director VIP
PO Box 233
Tranquillity, CA 93668

Text or Message me at: (559) 250-8247

Cash will only be accepted in person.

Raffle Ticket(s) will not be mailed until receipt of payment

Echelon 1 - CA

Serving California's Veterans and their Families

<https://calvetconnect.blog/2023/02/27/bhmkelly/>

PATRICIA JACKSON KELLEY: MAKING HISTORY EVERY DAY FOR DECADES

February 27, 2023 · by [Jeff Jardine](#) · in [History](#), [Minority Veterans](#), [Women Veterans](#) · [Leave a comment](#)



Kelley, with House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries.

At a recent veterans' event in Los Angeles, a woman approached Patricia Jackson Kelley and offered words of appreciation.

"I don't know if you are aware of the difference you made in my life," the woman told her, referring to a moment that occurred roughly two decades ago, when Kelley worked as a program coordinator at the VA Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System's West Los Angeles VA Medical Center. "You told me, 'You are worthy. You are somebody. I care about you,'" the woman said. "It made such a difference in my life. I will always remember that."

As will Kelley remember the woman's gratitude.

February is Black History Month, March is Women's History Month, and count Kelley among the history makers who bridge the two.

In a career spanning more than six decades, she has touched a great many women's lives in a variety of ways—as a nurse, a veteran, the first women veterans program manager at the West Los Angeles VA Medical Center, a mentor, a trailblazer, and continuing to this day—an advocate through her work with the American Legion.

If those weren't enough, Kelley also soars in the rarified air of being a Black woman who served in three separate branches of the military over her 26-year career: in the U.S. Navy Reserve, as an active-duty Air Force officer before joining the Air Force Reserve, and finally a member of the Army Reserve. She retired as a lieutenant colonel in 2003.

In the early 1960s, Kelley began working alongside her mother and aunt at Bellevue Hospital in New York. She became a licensed vocational nurse in 1964, then a registered nurse four years later. A college program associated with the hospital enabled her to earn her Bachelor of Science degree in nursing. Living on Staten Island, she passed by a Navy recruiting office on her way to work each day.



“I stopped in one day, and we talked about the possibility of joining the Navy,” Kelley said. “I went into the Navy Reserve in 1977 as a Hospital Corpsman Second Class with the goal of becoming an officer.”

When she sought active duty in the Navy, she was told there were no positions for women in the unit. When her reserve enlistment ended, Kelley applied for the Army Reserve only to be told, after waiting for months to hear back from them, that they had no record of her enlistment paperwork, “so, I went to the Air Force Reserve and the recruiter said, ‘Why Reserve? Go active duty,’” Kelley said.

She signed on at age 36 in 1979, her college degree enabling her to enter as a captain. Her military career included a 15-month duty at a small hospital in the Azores, but also gave her what she really coveted.

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“I always wanted to come to California,” Kelley said. She did, and to Southern California. When her active duty ended, she transferred to the Air Force Reserve while awaiting a job at the West Los Angeles VA Medical Center. That wait, caused by the slowness of the military to provide references to the VA—left her out of work for more than five months. She avoided homelessness for herself and young son by the grace of friends who took them in as house guests.

The paperwork finally arrived, and Kelley became a staff member in the VA’s psychiatric family unit, spending two years there before leaving to head a home care agency in Los Angeles. She later returned to the VA as the head nurse of the 40-bed substance abuse unit. She also left the Air Force Reserve and signed on with the Army Reserve to continue her military career.

Kelley went on to become the West Los Angeles VA Medical Center’s first women veterans program manager and then served as the women veteran’s coordinator from 1993 until her retirement in 2003. During her time at the VA, she was instrumental in opening a proper women’s health clinic.

“Women coming in for their mammograms were literally changing in the hallway behind a cover over the doorway,” Kelley said. “Before I left, we had a state-of-the-art mammogram unit.” She advocated so hard for women veterans, she said, that she was told she was spoiling them. Management moved her into the patient advocate office, where she helped women and other veterans get the care they needed.

Kelley continues to build her resume and legacy in so-called “retirement.” She’s the immediate past national president of the National Association of Black Military Women. She’s an advisory commissioner for the Los Angeles County Military & Veterans Affairs second district. She has served as a member of the VA’s Sexual Assault and Harassment Prevention work group and is commander of the American Legion Jackie Robinson Post 252 in Los Angeles.

In March 2022, she gave the keynote address during the “Fighting for the Right to Fight” speaker series in Orange County, where she lectured on the U.S. Army’s 6888th Central Postal Directory Battalion, which became the only all-African American, all-female unit sent overseas during World War II. Yet, for all that she’s accomplished in life—overcoming obstacles, the promotions and the “firsts”—little moments like the compliment she received from the woman veteran last month mean the most. “It just touched me when she said that” Kelley said.

Indeed, history—including Black History and Women’s Military History—so often is made through those moments of humanity that impact others.

Echelon 50 - AL

Echelon 50 member Nancee Jones helped coordinate her Post Oratorical Contest. Their contestant Sarah E. Wilson won first place all the way to state where she came in second place.

Earnestine Doubek was on Capitol Hill with the State Commander and NEC visiting Alabama Congressmen during The Legion's Legislative week February 26 -March 1, 2023. While there Earnestine saw American Legion Vice Commander Patricia Harris, Judi Beischel, Gerry Hince, Eunice Butts and met a Jeppette from Florida Echelon 30. It was a very fulfilling three days.



To the Editor:

Dearest Marilyn,

I pray this finds you well!

Another bout of COVID later, I am FINALLY getting back in action! Until I saw the Feb issue, didn't realize we hadn't sent our membership in - the sleep deprivation from caring for my husband was horrible last fall. It was all sitting in a folder on my desktop, and I spaced sending it! Sheesh! Not a peep out of National...so much for buddy checks!!!

We have a women veteran's event our Echelon will be at this weekend and will hopefully have some good photos and news from it! Also a district meeting on Sunday with Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans event next Wednesday. Hope to get it all together by the end of next week to get to you!

With love and appreciation for ALL you do to keep the Jeep coming! Chaya

Chaya "Hiya" Semple

Aide

Echelon 9 - MT

Twenty and Four Honor Society of Women Legionnaires

Spring shows what God can do with a drab and dirty world {Virgil A Kraft}

It is Spring again. A time of renewal, growth, and hope. Flowers and trees are budding and blooming, or will be soon, depending on your part of the country. Birds are chirping, animals are coming out of hibernation and life is reasserting itself.



I hope this message finds all of you well. I hope all of you will take a moment to pray for Carol Barker and her husband's health, for Elexanria Carr for the loss of her mother, for healing for Cathy Henning. Our sisters could use some Spring in their lives right now. Also sent up a generic prayer for any of our sisters who we may not know the tribulations they are traversing right now.

Spring is also a time to renew your efforts and commitment to the 20 & 4. What have you and your echelon done for women veterans lately? Have you reached out to other Lady Legionnaires to spread the word about our mission? Here in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, I have found that most Lady Legionnaires have not heard of the 20 & 4. Needless to say, I am recruiting wherever I go! As Sky Pilot, I find it a great way to minister to our sisters. But this ministry is not isolated to me. We all have it within us to provide strength and succor. You can be a source of light and joy to others. Take a moment, look around, and you will see someone who needs your support.

If you know of anyone who is ill or suffering in our organization, please reach out to me. My email is JLepinski@aol.com and my phone number is 312.305.9789. You can also text me, as my phone does not always ring up here in the Northwoods.

Until we meet again, May God's Blessings be upon you.

Jan Lepinski
National Sky Pilot

The 89th Annual National American Legion and Family Pilgrimage to the Tomb of Abraham Lincoln is the longest running observance held on President Lincoln birthday. This year there were approximately two hundred in attendance at each event (breakfast, wreath laying and luncheon). The American Legion National Vice Commander Patricia Harris; National Auxiliary President Vickie Koutz; National Sons of The American Legion Commander Christopher Colton; The American Legion Department of Illinois leadership; The American Legion Departments of Arkansas, Indiana, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Wisconsin; numerous local and state politicians as well as numerous organizations including the National Twenty and Four.

As a national organization we were amongst those seated on the dais, represented by Sr Vice Director Gigi Callaway. There were state organizations seated at the two-tiered dais, and it was pleasing to see Echelon Eight's Director Ann Tincher seated too. At the luncheon there was a procession to the dais into the banquet hall. This was led off by the 20&4 SVD and ended with Director of Echelon 8, the beauty of that was that the attendees seen and heard our organization name first and last. It wouldn't be a surprise if Past National Director Cheri Stanton and Past Echelon Director Edna Taylor played a role in that positioning! The entire team of Jeepettes were there in force the entire weekend. Networking and promoting the 20&4. "Bravo Zulu" to all of you! (Note: BZ or Bravo Zulu a Navy term meaning "Well Done")

It is hopeful that those echelons that had not reported their membership in the last Jeep edition received a call or email. When communication is effective, it leaves all involved with a sense of accomplishment. Speaking and understanding a mutual goal delivers messages clearly which decreases the potential for confusion. If you would like to connect with me, it is best to text or email. Additionally, let me know your availability and best way to communicate with you in your communication.

Together we can achieve!

Semper Fortes
Gigi Callaway, SVD
callgeorgi@yahoo.com



It is supposed to be good luck to rub Lincoln's nose. Our own Patricia Harris visited Illinois for Pilgrimage.



Gigi and Annette laying a wreath for 20 & 4.



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