

# THE AMERICAN LEGION DEPARTMENT OF WISCONSIN

## DEPARTMENT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Saturday, October 15, 2022

Department Fall Meetings

Portage, Wisconsin

Department Commander Julie Muhle called the meeting to order with a salute to the National Colors, Invocation by Department Vice Commander Jeff Zwiers and the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call was taken with the following in attendance:

Julie Muhle, Department Commander  
Jeff Zwiers, Department Vice Commander  
Karl Stuvengen, Department Vice Commander  
John Polzin, Department Vice Commander  
Harold Rihn, Department Vice Commander  
David Wischer, Past Department Commander  
Robert Shappell, National Executive Committeeman  
Nathan Bond, 1<sup>st</sup> District Commander  
Jim Johnson, 2<sup>nd</sup> District Commander  
Jerry Hook, 3<sup>rd</sup> District Commander

Linda Pfeiffer, 4<sup>th</sup> District Commander  
Craig Ellis, 5<sup>th</sup> District Commander-Virtual  
Gail Minks, 6<sup>th</sup> District Commander  
Phil Green, 7<sup>th</sup> District Commander  
Adam Klapperich, 8<sup>th</sup> District Commander  
Debbie Thomas, 9<sup>th</sup> District Commander  
Larry Larson, 10<sup>th</sup> District Commander  
Gerry Johnson, 11<sup>th</sup> District Commander  
Scott Markle, 12<sup>th</sup> District Commander

Excused:

Greg Eirich, Past Department Commander

**MOTION BY JEFF ZWIERS, SECOND BY KARL STUVENGEN TO APPROVE THE PRE-CONVENTION DEPARTMENT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES HELD ON JULY 14, 2022. MOTION CARRIED.**

**MOTION BY JEFF ZWIERS, SECOND BY JIM JOHNSON TO APPROVE THE POST-CONVENTION DEPARTMENT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES HELD ON JULY 17, 2022. MOTION CARRIED.**

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

### AMERICANISM COMMITTEE- Chair Jerry Lauby

Chair Jerry Lauby called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM with a salute to the Colors, Invocation and the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call was taken with the following in attendance:

Jerry Lauby, Chair  
John Cumicek, Vice Chair  
Jim Schmidt, Member  
Jim Foster, A&G Scholarship Chair  
Bill Cosh, BBS Representative  
Roger Mathison, Baseball Commissioner  
Candace Rothering, County Youth Government Chair

Keith Lovell, SAL Chair  
Norm Bednarek, Education & Scholarship Chair  
Robert Stone, Oratorical Chair  
DuWayne Wieck, Shooting Sports Chair  
Ray Pasbrig, American Legion Riders Representative  
John Wolfe, WALLECA Chair  
Scott Markle, DEC Liaison  
Julie Muhle, Department Commander, Ex-Officio  
Nathan Gear, Department Adjutant, Consultant

Excused:

John Edelblute IV, Scout Chair

**Motion by Roger Mathison, second by Jim Foster to approve the minutes of the previous meeting. Motion Carried.**

Chair Lauby discussed goals for any programs struggling from the effects of the pandemic. There is hope to revitalize. Action plans need to be in place.

**Reports:**

**Americanism and Government Test – Jim Foster** – Jim reviewed his written report. He hopes that the dates of the test do not interfere with school's Spring break this year.

**Motion by Candace Rothering, second by John Wolfe to approve the Americanism and Government Test Report. Motion Carried.**

**Badger Boys State – Bill Cosh:** Bill reviewed his written reports. Thanked Bob Shappell for judging the Samsung scholarship applicants. The scholarship winner from Wisconsin won a \$5000 Samsung scholarship. The total of grants awards to BBS is approximately \$230,000. BBS is the 5<sup>th</sup> largest Boys State program in the country. The 80<sup>th</sup> session will be June 11 – 17, 2023 at UW Eau Claire.

**Motion by Candace Rothering, second by Ray Pasbrig to approve the Badger Boys State Report. Motion Carried.**

**Baseball/Softball Report – Roger Mathison:** Roger presented his written report. He reiterated that there needs to be outreach to promote the programs, sponsors do not need to be legion posts. Wisconsin Legion Baseball is the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest program in the Nation. The goal is to have 250 teams. The Softball portal is now functional. Wisconsin is the 9<sup>th</sup> state to have Legion Softball.

**Motion by Jim Foster, second by DuWayne Wieck to approve the Legion Baseball/Softball Report. Motion Carried.**

**Scouting – John Edelblute:** written report entered into record.

**Motion by Ray Pasbrig, second by Candace Rothering to approve the Scouting report. Motion Carried.**

**County Youth Government – Candace Rothering:** Candace reviewed her written report. She will be reaching out to municipalities and school boards about the program. Bill Cosh suggested that she reach out to the Wisconsin Counties Association.

**Motion by Keith Lovell, second by John Wolfe to approve the County Youth Government Report. Motion Carried.**

**Education & Scholarship Report – Norm Bednarek:** no report due to inactivity at this time.

**Sons of the American Legion – Keith Lovell:** Keith reviewed his written report. SAL has purchased a trailer to store the ALF dogs.

**Motion by Jim Foster, second by Du Wayne Wieck to approve the SAL report. Motion Carried.**

**Oratorical Report – Robert Stone:** Robert reviewed his written report. The drawings were made for the Regional contest to be held February 11, 2023 at Ripon College. Red contest: Districts 6, 8, 10, & 12; White contest: Districts 1,2, 4, & 5; Blue Contest: Districts 3, 7, 9, & 11.

Special action was requested by Chair Stone that resulted in the following motion:

**Motion by Jerry Lauby, second by John Wolfe to allow the Oratorical Chair, going forward, to make modifications in the event contestant numbers in a region are lower than 4, to consolidate the regional contests. Motion Carried.**

**Motion by Jim Foster, second by Keith Lovell to approve the Oratorical Report. Motion Carried.**

**Junior Shooting Sports – DuWayne Wieck:** DuWayne reviewed his written report. He is currently trying to get numbers of shooters from the clubs for 2023.

**Motion by Robert Stone, second by Candace Rothering to approve the Junior Shooting Sports report. Motion Carried.**

**Legion Riders – Ray Pasbrig:** Ray thanked Jen Swenson for her help. 743 Riders are now registered. Ray told everyone that they can invite the Riders to help promote the Legion. The Riders raised \$35,000 funds from the IROC Run for The High Ground. Commander Julie will hold her run in June, the dates have not been set yet, funds will go to Camp American Legion.

**Motion by Jim Foster, second by DuWayne Wieck to approve the Legion Riders Report. Motion Carried.**

**WALLECA – John Wolfe:** John reviewed his written report. He read testimonials from the 2022 academy. The 2023 Academy will be held July 24 – 28, 2023 at the Wisconsin State Patrol Academy.

**Motion by Roger Mathison, second by DuWayne Wieck to approve the WALLECA report. Motion Carried.**

**Motion by Robert Stone, second by Jim Foster to adjourn. Motion Carried.**

Meeting was adjourned per ritual at 12:12 pm

**DEC DISCUSSION ENSUED AND ACTIONS TAKEN ARE AS FOLLOWS;**

**MOTION BY JEFF ZWIERS, SECOND BY DAVID WISCHER TO APPROVE THE AMERICANISM COMMITTEE REPORT. MOTION CARRIED.**

**CAMP AMERICAN LEGION COMMITTEE- Chair Denise Jamrozy**

Chair Denise Jamrozy called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM with a salute to the Colors, Invocation and the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call was taken with the following in attendance:  
Denise Jamrozy, Chair

Roland Crandall, Member  
Dale Slowik, Member  
Bill Crowe, Member  
Victor Ambrose, Member  
Jim Johnson, DEC Liaison  
Jim Klement, Camp Director  
James Fialkowski, Department Service Officer, Consultant  
Steve Krueger, VA&R Vice Chair, Consultant  
Julie Muhle, Department Commander, Ex-Officio  
Nathan Gear, Department Adjutant, Consultant

Excused:

Greg Eirich, Immediate PDC, Consultant

Absent:

Matthew Montag, Vice Chair

Guest:

DVC Jeff Zwiers

Auxiliary Secretary Bonnie Dorniak

Auxiliary President Linda Coppock

DVC Karl Stuvengen

**Motion by Dale Slowik, second by Bill Crowe to approve the minutes of the previous meeting. Motion Carried.**

Jim Klement gave his Camp Director report. He has investigated the proper processes for approvals from the city, county and state and will get it in the Operational Manual. He covered the CIP projects included in his attached report.

Events planned for Hunting, ice fishing and Maple syrup.

This season there were 50-55 per week with minimal no shows. Camp census will be completed soon.

They are need of sponsors for Cabin 9 and Cabin 18. Both need work, Cabin 9 needs a roof.

Great Lakes Roofing gave four new roofs after Camp was anonymously nominated for a program. It was originally for one, but after a tour donated four. Those have been completed.

Commander Julie addressed the committee and stated how amazing the work is that is being done. She asked that marketing of events gets posted across all social media platforms. She asked them to think about how to promote the need for volunteers to the posts, have some type of sign-up platform. She thanked everyone for their hard work and dedication.

Adjutant Gear thanked the committee, volunteers and director for their work. Jess has resigned, and the applications are being received. He asked if we are willing to look at opportunities for outside sponsors such as other organizations and/or corporate sponsors. Jim Johnson stated that any outside sponsors need to be vetted to make sure they are in line with The American Legion.

DVC Jeff Zwiers asked how the collection of history on Camp is going for the anniversary, important to get stories from our Legionnaires. Jim Klement stated the Veterans Museum is going to help with the history. James Fialkowski recommended contacting Barb Pelarski also.

Committee members are being tasked to each take a few cabins and work on the history.

Jeff Zwiers stated that 327 non-legion members attended Camp this year. At the Membership Committee they made a recommendation to budgeted monies to offer free membership to the non-legion campers and will be attached to a sponsor from the post assigned. Denise stated that the problem with it is, if they don't renew the following year, it affects the post in the future.

The committee looked at approving Camp American Legion for all seasons.

**Motion by Dale Slowik, second by Rollie Crandall to extend Camp American Legion for all seasons indefinitely. Motion Carried.**

Bill stated that when a decision is made to redo a cabin, he suggested that there be 3 standard floor plans to choose from and eliminate that process. Jim Klement stated that the lumber yards will help with that and return that cost if you buy supplies from them. Jim stated that he has the prints for those done in the last 10 years and can supply those plans to others with estimated costs moving forward.

Camp Chair read her attached report.

Dale Slowik asked if there is a way we can get permission to have camp fires at the beach area for the rentals again. Jim will look in to the insurance portion. His concern is someone assigned to the fire and responsible. He also stated there are other types like fire rings so more contained. Jim will look at all aspects and revisit it at Midwinter. Dale also stated that Cudworth sold their boats and presented the idea of offering rentals as income. Jim said there is other aspects to consider with this, regarding up keep and time. He would prefer they bring their own.

James Fialkowski asked if there is a way to have times where people can come and visit for a short period of time. Jim stated he never turns people away, and is open to ideas. An idea Jim had was each Post adopt a week and come and volunteer and promote your post.

Bonnie stated that the Auxiliary has been a huge sponsor with over \$200,000 donated. They have not been approached as of late, and asked to be considered for future donations. They prefer it be a specific project, with bills paid directly by them.

**Motion by Dale Slowik, second by Rollie Crandall to adjourn. Motion Carried.**

Meeting was adjourned per ritual at 11:09 AM.

**DEC DISCUSSION ENSUED AND ACTIONS TAKEN ARE AS FOLLOWS;**

**MOTION BY JEFF ZWIERS, SECOND BY HAROLD RIHN TO APPROVE THE CAMP AMERICAN LEGION COMMITTEE REPORT. MOTION CARRIED.**

**CHILDREN & YOUTH COMMITTEE REPORT- Chair Lisa Fauster**

Chair Lisa Fauster called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM with the Salute to Colors, Invocation and the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Roll Call:**

Chair: Lisa Fauster – Present

Vice Chair: Nick Berg – Present

Yiayia Wischki, Member – Present

Robert Borszich, Member – Present

David Hubatch, Member – Absent

Linda Pfeiffer, DEC Liaison – Excused

Julie Muhle, Department Commander, Ex Officio – Excused

Nathan Gear, Department Adjutant, Consultant – Excused

There were no Guests

**Old Business:**

- Be the One Youth Outreach program and availability of bracelets to hand out at Children and Youth events. The cost is \$20.00/100 bracelets. Discussions were had on finding sponsors to help fund the program. Be the One Youth Challenge: students can win moneys for creating a 90 second documentary for sharing the importance of Being the One.

- Pop Top Toss Commanders Initiative: Modification of the handout to reflect Lisa Fauster, Chair's email address as a point of contact for Posts should they need.
- Final review of the new Children and Youth Ambassador Award form created to replace the current Children and Youth Reporting Form. A quorum was present for a vote from the committee.

**Motion made by Nick Berg, second by Yiavia Wischki to submit the new Children and Youth Ambassador form, replacing the current Children and Youth Reporting Form, to Commander Julie Muhle to present at the Fall DEC Meeting for a vote on it's adoption and it's inclusion to the awards presented at the Department Convention. Motion Carried.**

Meeting was adjourned with Benediction and Salute to Colors at 7:27 PM.

**DEC DISCUSSION ENSUED AND ACTIONS TAKEN ARE AS FOLLOWS;**

**MOTION BY JEFF ZWIERS, SECOND BY JERRY HOOK TO APPROVE THE CHILDREN & YOUTH COMMITTEE REPORT. MOTION CARRIED.**

**CONVENTION & ACTIVITIES COMMISSION REPORT-Chair Jim Schmidt**

Chair Jim Schmidt called the meeting to order at 1:00 PM with a salute to the Colors, Invocation and the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call was taken with the following in attendance:

Jim Schmidt, Chair  
 Tom Strey, Vice Chair  
 Jim Kell, Member  
 Mark Lesko, Member  
 Tom Carlson, Member  
 Phil Ingwell, Member  
 Adam Klapperich, DEC Liaison  
 Julie Muhle, Department Commander, Ex-Officio  
 Nathan Gear, Department Adjutant, Consultant

Guests:

PDC Ted DeMicchi  
 PDC Roger Mathison  
 PDC Wayne Jensen  
 NECman Bob Shappell  
 Alternate NECman Frank Kostka  
 DVC Harold Rihn  
 9<sup>th</sup> District Commander Debbie Thomas  
 Auxiliary President Linda Coppock

**Motion by Mark Lesko, second by Tom Strey to approve the minutes of the previous meeting. Motion Carried.**

Chair asked Tom Strey about Golf and bowling. Golf will be relooked at. Mukwonago may do the next bowling tournament.

Bob Shappell gave a Legion College Update. National is using Wisconsin's curriculums. A gentleman from Kansas attended our college and the Kansas Commander said he has others interested. First District has a great

showing of those who have completed the courses. There will be a County Commander Course and others at Midwinter including a new class on generational issues in the posts and how to communicate.

Ted DeMicchi gave an update on the 2022 National Convention wrap up. He gave his report to the National Convention Commission and the NEC at Fall Meetings. The preliminary report is approximately \$50,000 split between National and Department, but there is potentially more. He will have final figures at the Department Spring Meeting 2023.

Roger Mathison stated that there will be changes to the National Convention between now and 2027, with bigger changes coming in 2027. Some of the changes will be a combined opening ceremony on Saturday night, Legion Family Day on Sunday (modeled after Department's Oktoberfest this year) and starting the General Sessions on Monday and concluding on Wednesday afternoon.

Headquarter update given, report attached.

Commander Julie thanked the commission for their work and if anything is needed to please reach out.

Meeting was adjourned per ritual at 1:55 PM.

**DEC DISCUSSION ENSUED AND ACTIONS TAKEN ARE AS FOLLOWS;**

**MOTION BY JEFF ZWIERS, SECOND BY KARL STUVENGEN TO APPROVE THE CONVENTION & ACTIVITIES COMMISSION REPORT. MOTION CARRIED.**

**FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT- Vice Chair Tom Lay**

Vice Chair Tom Lay called the meeting to order at 3:00 PM with a salute to the Colors, Invocation and the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call was taken with the following in attendance:

Tom Lay, Vice Chair  
Jennifer Rumbold, Member  
Paul Reilly, Member  
Deborah Thomas, DEC Liaison  
Aimee Korger, Fundraising Chair  
Julie Muhle, Department Commander, Ex-Officio  
Nathan Gear, Department Adjutant, Consultant

Excused:

Ken Rynes, Member  
Robert Gammon, Chair

Absent:

Donald Stone, Member

**Motion by Jennifer Rumbold, second by Paul Reilly to approve the August 23, 2022 and September 22, 2022 meeting. Motion Carried.**

Fundraising is still working with V360 but it is not a consistent report and contact. There will be four campaigns per year, eliminating the At Risk and Veterans Day campaign for next year.

Adjutant Gear introduced Lisa as the interim finance employee. VSO is hiring 2 VSR positions, Camp is hiring for office manager position. The structure of the finance positions will need to be restructured in the near future. Commander Julie spoke to the committee encouraging the creation of SOPs and transparency in the finance office.

Camp CIP- Cabins 1, 2, 3 working with the zoning committees and DNR to confirm who has control of the land. Cabin 18 will be renamed as Cabin 12 and new foundation walls have been completed. Septic issues have been pushed off to next year now that the camp season is complete. Sponsors are still needed for Cabins 9 and 18.

**Motion by Paul Reilly, second by Jennifer Rumbold to have the loan from Dept of Wisconsin to National Convention Corporation rescinded and given as a donation. Motion Carried.**

Request by Linda Pfeiffer for continued support of the SALUTE program and approval to submit grant requests.

**Motion by Jennifer Rumbold, second Paul Reilly to approve the SALUTE program and delay funding request to the next finance meeting. Motion Carried.**

Meeting was adjourned per ritual at 3:28pm

**DEC DISCUSSION ENSUED AND ACTIONS TAKEN ARE AS FOLLOWS;**

**MOTION BY JEFF ZWIERS, SECOND BY LARRY LARSON TO APPROVE THE FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT. MOTION CARRIED.**

**FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE REPORT- Chair Aimee Korger**

Chair Aimee Korger called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM with a salute to the Colors, Invocation and the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call was taken with the following in attendance:

Aimee Korger, Chair  
Chuck Roessler, Vice Chair  
Chris Chinander, Member  
Jerrold Schultz, Member  
David Fuller, Member  
Gene Hembrook, Member  
Phil Green, DEC Liaison  
Julie Muhle, Department Commander, Ex-Officio  
Nathan Gear, Department Adjutant, Consultant

**Motion by Chris Chinander, second by Gene Hembrook to approve the minutes of the previous meeting. Motion Carried.**

**Motion by Chuck Roessler, second by Gene Hembrook to authorize Aimee Korger to contact gun shops/manufacture to procure a gun for the raffle at a not to exceed retail amount of \$600.00. Motion Carried.**

**Motion by Jerrold Schultz, second by Chuck Roessler to run a multi-platform Fundraising campaign for WALLECA to start at Midwinter with a 50/50 raffle, online campaign and contact to Law Enforcement agencies. Campaign to end July 23, 2023. Motion Carried.**

**Motion by Jerrold Schultz, second by Chuck Roessler to recess the Fundraising Committee at the call of the Commander. Motion Carried.**

Meeting was adjourned per ritual.

**DEC DISCUSSION ENSUED AND ACTIONS TAKEN ARE AS FOLLOWS;**

**MOTIN BY JEFF ZWIERS, SECOND BY JERRY HOOK TO APPROVE THE FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE REPORT. MOTION CARRIED.**

**LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE REPORT- Chair Paul Fisk**

Chair Paul Fisk called the meeting to order at 3:00 PM with a salute to the Colors, Invocation and the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call was taken with the following in attendance:

Paul Fisk, Chair  
Chuck Friedlein, Vice Chair  
Jerry Krofta, Member  
Cathy Gorst, Member  
Nicholas Lange, Department Judge Advocate, Consultant  
Nathan Bond, DEC Liaison  
Julie Muhle, Department Commander, Ex-Officio  
Nathan Gear, Department Adjutant, Consultant

Excused:

Ed Cooper, Member

Absent:

Mark Degner, Member

**Motion by Jerry Krofta, second by Cathy Gorst to approve the minutes of the previous meeting. Motion Carried.**

**Old Business:**

Chair Fisk presented the DAV Legislative Agenda catalog – he will hand it over to the Department Adjutant.

The group reviewed the Legion Wisconsin Legislative Agenda for the 2023-2024 Legislative Session. They made some verbiage changes. Chair Fisk will present the new agenda with the changes to the DEC.

**Motion by Cathy Gorst, second by Chuck Friedlein to recommend adoption of the 2023 – 2024 Legion Wisconsin Legislative Agenda. Motion Carried.**

**Motion by Jerry Krofta, second by Chuck Friedlein to adjourn the meeting. Motion Carried.**

Meeting was adjourned per ritual at 3:30pm

**DEC DISCUSSION ENSUED AND ACTIONS TAKEN ARE AS FOLLOWS;**

**MOTION BY JEFF ZWIERS, SECOND BY HAROLD RIHN TO APPROVE THE LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE REPORT. MOTION CARRIED.**

**MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT- Chair Becky Stankevitz**

Chair Becky Stankevitz called the meeting to order at 1:00 PM with a salute to the Colors, Invocation and the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call was taken with the following in attendance:

Becky Stankevitz, Chair  
Paul Ciarelli, Vice Chair  
Chet Faith, Member  
Allen Nohl, Member  
Nancy Rivera, Member  
Larry Larson, DEC Liaison  
Bonnie Dorniak, American Legion Auxiliary Liaison  
Julie Muhle, Department Commander, Ex-Officio  
Nathan Gear, Department Adjutant, Consultant

Excused:

Joan Sallee, Member

Guests:

PNC Denise Rohan  
PNVC Russ Hansetter  
District Commander Jim Johnson  
District Commander Scott Markle  
District Commander Gail Minks

**Motion by Allen Nohl, 2nd by Nancy Rivera to approve the July 14, 2022 meeting minutes. Motion Carried.**

**Motion by Chet Faith, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Paul Ciarelli to approve the September 10, 2022 electronic meeting minutes as submitted. Motion Carried.**

Paul Ciarelli gave a presentation of his mock-up website and pointed out the key points he would like on the marketing and communications page of the department website.

Commander Julie spoke to the group about what she would like to see for the year and encouraged the committee to be “doers” this year.

Requests for addition to the marketing and communications page:

- IT Help
- Social Media Planning Calendar/Legion focused event ideas
- Contact Form
- TikTok (& how to)
- National social media plan
- Media List- Media submission packet

Wisconsin Community Media- association that works with different stations that work with public access. Chair Stankevitz and Commander Julie met with them to discuss help with content creation as a low to no cost option. We would need to give them topic/content, people, script and location. They talked with camp director to begin with that project. Russ Hanseter will reach out for drone coverage of camp.

Midwinter Training- How to Use the PR Toolkit

Branding discussion regarding uniformity between brand themes of National vs Department.

**Motion by Chet Faith, second by Allen Nohl to move forward with media company to create WALLECA, Camp and Oratorical promotional videos. Motion Carried.**

**Motion by Chet Faith, second by Nancy Rivera to create a media base for Midwinter. Motion Carried.**

Meeting was adjourned per ritual at 2:50pm

**DEC DISCUSSION ENSUED AND ACTIONS TAKEN ARE AS FOLLOWS;**

**MOTION BY JEFF ZWIERS, SECOND BY KARL STUVENGEN TO APPROVE THE MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT. MOTION CARRIED.**

**MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE REPORT- Chair Joe Roberts**

Committee Chairman Joe Roberts called the meeting to order at 8:00AM with a salute to the colors, the Invocation, and the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll call was taken with the following in attendance:

Joe Roberts, Chair  
Jay Anderson, Vice Chair  
James Waltich, Member  
Rita Rindahl, Member  
Tom Visintainer, Member  
Steve Kohnke, Member  
Jeff Zwiers, Department Vice Commander  
Karl Stuvengen, Department Vice Commander  
John Polzin, Department Vice Commander  
Harold Rihn, Department Vice Commander  
Nathan Bond, 1<sup>st</sup> District Commander  
Jerry Hook, 3<sup>rd</sup> District Commander  
Craig Ellis, 5<sup>th</sup> District Commander  
Phil Green, 7<sup>th</sup> District Commander  
Debbie Thomas, 9<sup>th</sup> District Commander  
Gerry Johnson, 11<sup>th</sup> District Commander  
Julie Muhle, Department Commander, Ex-Officio  
Nathan Gear, Department Adjutant, Consultant

There were 8-10 guests in attendance.

**Motion by Nathan Bond and seconded by Steve Kohnke to waive the reading of the minutes from the last meeting. Motion Carried.**

James Waltich gave a summation of the “Budweiser Salute to the Troops.” The overall attendance was down a bit but participation was strong. Focus now should be on following up on the membership leads.

Department Adjutant Gear brought up inquiring into the qualifications of Camp American Legion veteran camp attendees and determining whether we can make them members or at least offer them the opportunity. Vice Commander Zwiers stated that there needs to be follow-up and solicited responses from the posts if one does join or if contact has been made. He suggested that perhaps the individual posts could sponsor the new members

for one year, but in the meantime a budget would need to be put together for the Midwinter Conference. There was discussion as to whether members signed up through Camp American Legion should have a choice on which posts to join rather than assigned automatically to the Camp itself. If new members are assigned to the post, then it will be the post that is accountable for future retention.

**Commander Bond made a motion that \$10,000 for first year membership dues for the American Legion of Wisconsin be included in the proposed budget for approval by the Finance Committee at the upcoming Midwinter Conference. The motion was seconded by Steve Kohnke. Motion Carried.**

Commander Julie introduced the 2023 membership incentives which were included in the committee packets. She gave an overview of them and affirmed that each participant is allowed one entry regardless of how many members he/she signed up. She also stressed that each post create a yearly membership plan that includes monthly activities or a quarterly membership plan in which current members reach out to other members and to engage them in general conversation to show that they are being thought of. She also mentioned her recent meeting at National wherein the Big 12 Membership Pledge was introduced, forecasting what membership should be by March 15<sup>th</sup>, the goal being 91.2% including 2023 #2930 members as well as those who transfer from #2930 to a local post.

Commander Julie concluded her remarks by emphasizing that the Legion Posts as well as their SAL Squadrons and the Women's Auxiliaries work together to turn Post posts around in an effort to keep the Posts from disbanding.

Department Adjutant Gear brought up that National Recognition and Awards for Membership should be emphasized as well as local and state recognition and that 100% Family Ribbons as well as 103% goal pins are recognitions to strive for.

Each District Commander was asked to give a summation of his/her membership activities and plans. The overall point continuously made by several commanders was that the county commanders need to be brought in more and made a more visible part of the membership growth efforts. Commander Stuvengen stated working with counties is a major key in growth and revitalization. Commander Zwiers agreed, stating county commanders need to be more involved. Commander Polzin stated he is working on revitalization and Commander Bond stated that six of his posts need attention, some of which are experiencing leadership problems.

Commander Ellis from the 5<sup>th</sup> District stated that out of eight posts, only three were actively working posts and that none of his eight posts has its own building. District Commander Bond stated his district would donate \$2,000 to the 5<sup>th</sup> District to help in their efforts to revitalize. Commander Green stated that his district is having great success in transferring #2930 members into his 7<sup>th</sup> District and they are preparing to fill out proposed forms for transfer and then giving them to the appropriate posts to follow-up with contact. He also stated that his county commanders are engaged and overall things are going well.

District Commander Thomas stated that revitalization efforts are moving forward, specifically for the Peshtigo Post.

Committee Chair Roberts offered several tips on achieving membership success.

Membership Committee Vice Chair Jay Anderson gave his report stating that the push for an SAL Squadron for each post should be part of its goals. Also, American Legion College should also be promoted.

Tenth District Commander Larry Larson brought up the Tractor Pull Promotion and sponsorship, believing that we should step down from being a \$5,000 primary sponsor to a 2K sponsorship, not seeing that there is a significant difference in marketing attention. Other members said that the sub-sponsor cost is \$2500, not 2K and

that further research should be looked into what the 5K benefits are before a decision is made. Larson said he would do more research.

It was stressed that it should be made known to members who are reluctant to renew before the end of 2022 that the renewal year actually begins on July 1<sup>st</sup> for the upcoming year and the membership year actually ends on June 30<sup>th</sup> of each designated year.

Chair Roberts stated that he is putting together recruiting classes for the upcoming Midwinter Conference with the emphasis on how to sell Legion membership.

It was proposed and agreed upon by the committee that monthly Zoom meetings be held for roundtable discussions, absent motions and formality. Roberts will set up the initial Zoom meeting, the date to be determined.

The meeting adjourned per ritual at 9:55 AM.

**DEC DISCUSSION ENSUED AND ACTIONS TAKEN ARE AS FOLLOWS;**

**MOTION BY JEFF ZWIERS, SECOND BY GAIL MINKS TO APPROVE THE MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE REPORT. MOTION CARRIED.**

**NATIONAL & HOMELAND SECURITY COMMITTEE REPORT- Chair Bob Bohr**

Chair Bob Bohr called the meeting to order at 10:12 AM with a salute to the Colors, Invocation and the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call was taken with the following in attendance:

Bob Bohr, Chair  
Charlie Young, Vice Chair, POW/MIA Chair  
Michelle Adams, Member  
Gail Minks, DEC Liaison  
Julie Muhle, Department Commander, Ex-Officio  
Nathan Gear, Department Adjutant, Consultant

Excused:

Leo Endres, Member  
Steve Isensee, Member, Blood Donor Chair

Absent:

Thomas Lachance, Member

No quorum present, following discussion took place:

POW Report

Army recovered  
    20 WWII  
    13 Korea  
    2 Vietnam  
Navy  
    2 WWII  
Marines  
    3 WWII  
Army Air Force  
    25 WWII

Sendiks now carries Vet Java and are working on publicity for Troop & Family Support around Veterans Day. May be reaching out to Berres Brothers for attending.

Be The One discussion on suicide prevention. ETSSP, coasters for tavern league with suicide hotline information and how NH Security can make a difference.

**DEC DISCUSSION ENSUED AND ACTIONS TAKEN ARE AS FOLLOWS;**

**MOTION BY JEFF ZWIERS, SECOND BY JERRY HOOK TO APPROVE THE NATIONAL & HOMELAND SECURITY COMMITTEE REPORT. MOTION CARRIED.**

**POLICY COMMITTEE REPORT- Chair Bob Batty**

Bob Batty called the meeting to order at 3:00 PM with a salute to the Colors, Invocation and the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call was taken with the following in attendance:

Ted DeMicchi, Member  
Al Richards, Member  
Bob Batty, Member  
Roy Helms, Member  
Wayne Jensen, Member  
Denise Rohan, Past National Commander, Ex-Officio  
Nicholas Lange, Department Judge Advocate, Consultant  
Robert Shappell, DEC Liaison  
Julie Muhle, Department Commander, Ex-Officio  
Nathan Gear, Department Adjutant, Consultant

Absent:

Dallas Loesel, Member

Guests:

DVC John Polzin  
DVC Karl Stuvengen  
Americanism Chair Jerry Lauby  
PDC Roger Mathison

**Motion by Al Richards, second by Denise Rohan to nominate Bob Batty as Chair. Motion Carried.**

**Motion by Wayne Jensen, second by Al Richards to close nominations. Motion Carried.**

**Motion by Wayne Jensen, second by Al Richards to nominate Ted DeMicchi as Vice-Chair. Motion Carried.**

**Motion by Roy Helms, second by Al Richards to close nominations. Motion Carried.**

**Motion by Roy Helms, second by Ted DeMicchi to approve Policy Committee minutes of July 14, 2022. Motion Carried.**

The committee review the Constitution and Bylaws changes made per passed resolution.

**Motion by Al Richards, second by Roy Helms to approve the Constitution and Bylaws changes. Motion Carried.**

The Committee reviewed the Department Constitution and Bylaws, regarding changes needed to the Department Chaplain and Religious Emphasis Committee. The Judge Advocate will complete the resolution to correct these items.

Article XVI, Section 1, remove the word 'as' at the beginning of the sentence. This is a grammatical change that does not need a resolution.

Denise stated that on January 4, 2019, the Judge Advocate gave recommendations for the Foundation Bylaws, and to date they have not been updated. Chair Batty stated that the committee was given an updated version dated July 2021. Denise stated they have talked about the Bylaws, but she does not recall them actually finalizing a version. It was recommended that Denise have the Foundation look at the 2021 version, compare it to the Judge Advocate recommendations and approve a finalized version.

Commander Julie addressed the committee, and asked the committee to look in to developing Policies and SOPs for the Department business operations. She thanked them for their work.

The committee discussed the combining of the Protocol and Planning Guide with the Leadership & Communications Guide. Chair stated that most information is in the National Officer's Guide. Denise recommended combining the Commanders onboarding manual, Protocol and Planning Guide and the Leadership & Communications Guide.

**Motion by Denise Rohan, second by Al Richards to form an Adhoc committee to combine the Commanders Onboarding Manual, Protocol and Planning Guide and the Leadership & Communications Guide. Motion Carried.**

An Adhoc committee, consisting of Al Richards as the chair, Denise Rohan, Bob Batty and Wayne Jensen, will work on the new combined manual.

The committee reviewed the Wisconsin American Legion Baseball Association By-Laws changes: Article II, 2.4, Article IV, 4.2 and 4.7.

**Motion by Al Richards, second by Roy Helms to approve the Wisconsin American Legion Baseball Association By-Laws changes. Motion Carried.**

Meeting recessed to the call of the Commander at 4:07 PM.

**DEC DISCUSSION ENSUED AND ACTIONS TAKEN ARE AS FOLLOWS;**

**MOTION BY JEFF ZWIERS, SECOND BY JOHN POLZIN TO APPROVE THE POLICY COMMITTEE REPORT. MOTION CARRIED.**

**VETERANS AFFAIRS & REHABILITATION COMMITTEE REPORT- Vice Chair Steve Krueger**

Vice Chair Steve Krueger called the meeting to order at 1:00 PM with a salute to the Colors, Invocation and the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call was taken with the following in attendance:

Steve Krueger, Vice Chair  
Bill Crowley, Member  
Rich Ruland, Member

Steve Conto, Member  
Gary Meyer, Employment Chair  
Tim Baranzky, Homeless Veterans Task Force Chair  
Dan Jakubczyk, Hospital Chair  
James Fialkowski, Department Service Officer, Consultant  
Denise Jamrozy, Camp American Legion Chair, Consultant  
Jerry Hook, DEC Liaison  
Julie Muhle, Department Commander, Ex-Officio  
Nathan Gear, Department Adjutant, Consultant

Excused:

Clifford Stanisch, Chair  
Ron Kuta, Member  
Gary Meyer, Employment Chair

Absent:

Bill Crowley, Member

**Motion by Rich Ruland, second by Tim Baranzky to approve the minutes of the previous meeting.  
Motion Carried.**

### **Reports:**

**Homeless Task Force – Tim Baranzky:** Tim reviewed his written report. He distributed information about the SALUTE program. Nathan Bond asked for an amount for the budget for the programs for a proposal at the DEC.

Phil Green spoke about the “Together with Veterans” program for rural veterans. There is a meeting on November 18, 2022 at 2pm at the Sparrows Nest in Sparta to appreciate Veterans.

**Hospital Report – Dan Jakubczyk:** Dan reviewed his written report.

**Veterans Service Office – James Fialkowski:** James reported that he has 3 vacancies in the office, he is working on filling 2 of them. The applications are posted on Indeed. He reported that the PACT Act expanded eligibility for claims.

**Steve Conto -Member:** Steve reported about the Cremated Remains. Steve asked if his title can be changed from member to Cremated Remains Task Force Chair. The title came through a decision from the DEC and it was deemed “ad hoc”. Steve spoke at the Wisconsin Funeral Homes Association Conference about the program.

**Camp American Legion – Denise Jamrozy:** Denise reported that there were 536 campers this year, about 50 - 55 weekly. Camp is now open all year round now for different programs. The camp application is now available on the website. \$500 to sponsor a Veteran for Camp.

**Employment (Steve Krueger for Gary Meyer):** Steve spoke about the Vets Ready Program which supports employers who are encouraged to hire and support veterans and their families. They are looking for a representative from The American Legion to be on a committee to choose annual employment awards and to attend other meetings.

**Motion by Steve Conto, second by Rich Ruland to recommend Steve Krueger to represent the Wisconsin American Legion on this Committee. Motion Carried.**

## **Old Business:**

**Motion by Dan Jakubczyk, second by Tim Barancyk to take forward the resolution for the Wisconsin Recognition of Veteran Family Employer of the Year. Motion Carried.**

## **New Business:**

Steve Conto will work on a resolution to change his title from member to Cremated Remains Task Force Chair.

Linda Pfeiffer expanded on information about the SALUTE Program.

Meeting was adjourned per ritual at 2:20pm.

## **DEC DISCUSSION ENSUED AND ACTIONS TAKEN ARE AS FOLLOWS;**

### **MOTION BY JEFF ZWIERS, SECOND BY LINDA PFEIFFER TO APPROVE THE VETERANS AFFAIRS & REHABILITATION COMMITTEE REPORT.**

It was recommended that a Task Force be put together to distribute KC Salute items. Task Force will consist of:

- 10<sup>th</sup> District Commander Larry Larson, Chair
- VC Jeff Zwiers
- VC Karl Stuvengen
- 6<sup>th</sup> District Commander Gail Minks
- 7<sup>th</sup> District Commander Phil Green
- 12<sup>th</sup> District Commander Scott Markle
- VA&R Vice Chair Steve Krueger

Linda Pfeiffer stated that the KC Salute program has saved Camp \$34,000, the total value of donations is \$330,520, 10,000 veterans served and has cost \$9,113 in storage fees.

Phil Green touched some more on the Together with Veterans program. It is VA funded program to reach rural veterans in regards to suicide prevention. There is a meeting on November 18, 2022 at 2pm at the Sparrows Nest in Sparta to appreciate Veterans. They are looking for sites to run the program. Sites are paid \$3300 per month to administer the program.

## **MOTION CARRIED.**

## **OFFICER REPORTS**

### **DEPARTMENT CHAPLAIN'S REPORT**

#### **Department Chaplain- John Gessner**

1. Attended the American Legion State Convention 13-16 July. Attended the Religious Emphasis Committee Meeting Thursday, Conducted church services on Saturday, and conducted the final bugle ceremony on Sunday.
2. Due to the Assistant Chaplain unable to serve as Chaplain for 2022-2023, continued to assume Department of Chaplain duties for 2022-2023.
3. Emphasis for 2022-2023 is to increase the communication between Chaplains in the state stating with a Chaplain's contact list.
4. Planning for 2023 Chaplain's retreat again at Camp American legion 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> weekend in May 2023. More information at the Mid-winter conference. With the success of re-energizing the retreat, plan to open it up to as many chaplains as the camp can support.

5. Attended some training sessions and the graduation of the American Legion Police Academy course at Fort McCoy, July 24-29. Article appeared in the Monroe County Herald August 18<sup>th</sup>.
6. Attended the 7<sup>th</sup> District meeting in Wilton Sept 17<sup>th</sup>. Article appeared in the Monroe County Herald, Sept 26<sup>th</sup>.
7. Contact with Military units and service members this quarter:
  - a. Presented 16 Patriot Awards for employers across the state.
  - b. Briefed 3 units on military-employer relations.
  - c. Briefed 280 soldiers on military-employer relations in August and Sept.

**DEC DISCUSSION ENSUED AND ACTIONS TAKEN ARE AS FOLLOWS;**

**MOTION BY KARL STUVENGEN, SECOND BY JOHN POLZIN TO ACCEPT THE DEPARTMENT CHAPLAIN’S REPORT. MOTION CARRIED.**

**DEPARTMENT JUDGE ADVOCATE’S REPORT**

**Department Judge Advocate- Nicholas Lange**

Review of overflow contract for the Midwinter Conference, review of the contract with Prolytic and review of the Ripon College Contract.

**DEC DISCUSSION ENSUED AND ACTIONS TAKEN ARE AS FOLLOWS;**

**MOTION BY JEFF ZWIERS, SECOND BY JOHN POLZIN TO ACCEPT THE DEPARTMENT JUDGE ADVOCATE’S REPORT. MOTION CARRIED.**

**DEPARTMENT SERVICE OFFICER’S REPORT**

**Department Service Officer- James Fialkowski**

Your Service Office is honored to represent The American Legion, Department of Wisconsin. Your office is proud, knowing that veterans, war widows(ers) and orphans will receive their due benefits and possibly one day a college education because we were able to help.

According to the VA, the over 46 thousand Wisconsin veteran family members receive over \$62 Million a month in benefits. This equates to over \$744 Million in the last year. I want to thank the Service office staff for their invaluable work efforts.

Monthly, we continue to represent veterans in video BVA Judge Hearings and video/in-person hearings for the local VA Regional Office. The Service office continues training for all employees. We Attended VA Regional Office Service Officer and VA Hospital Meetings. I am working with Reclaiming Your Path as a veteran partner and mentor. I attended both Department and National Conventions.

We are in the process of hiring two staff members to replace the VSRs we are down in the office. With our required training, access level to VBA programs, and compensation levels, finding applicants that fit our requirements has been difficult.

Matt, Mauricio, and I completed Department Service Officer school veteran service representative training provided by Bergmann & Moore Law Group in September.

As I informed you in my last report, we have employed a platform that improves our service by being able to securely deliver and receive documents via email. Due to our transition, we are changing the way we track work.

Office Statistics	10/2021 - 09/2022
Walk in Clients	488
Appointments	399

Incoming Calls	2644
Outgoing Calls	4008
Emails	9854
Incoming Mail	17656
Forms Created	1313
Direct Uploads	1001
Hearings	92
Events Attended	7
Total Office Transactions	37462

## Recap of VBA INFORMATION:

**August 2022 - H.R.3967 - Honoring our PACT Act of 2022** was signed into law –

The PACT Act expands VA health care and benefits for Veterans exposed to burn pits and other toxic substances.

Please see my Badger Legionnaire article for added information.

## DEC DISCUSSION ENSUED AND ACTIONS TAKEN ARE AS FOLLOWS;

**MOTION BY JEFF ZWIERS, SECOND BY JERRY HOOK TO ACCEPT THE DEPARTMENT SERVICE OFFICER’S REPORT. MOTION CARRIED.**

## NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEEMAN’S REPORT

### National Executive Committeeman- Robert L. Shappell

1. August 17 and 22 – Attended the Department Commander’s virtual Post Commanders Conference.
2. August 26-September 1 – Attended the National Convention in Milwaukee
  - a. Pre-Convention NEC Meeting – August 29 (Highlights)
    - 1) Legion efforts to support the PACT ACT resulted in 34,756 messages sent to Congress in 48 hours. Wisconsin ranked 7<sup>th</sup> among all departments in number of messages sent to Congress between SEP 2021 and 2022.
    - 2) In the 2022 membership year, 111,316 new members were acquired through DMS.
    - 3) The Mission Blue Post Assistance program ended on July 1, 2022. Final totals were 1039 grants assisting posts from 46 departments totaling \$1,287,550.
    - 4) To date in 2022, Operation Comfort Warriors has distributed \$175,466 to 18 individuals and 13 facilities
  - b. Post-Convention NEC Meeting – September 1 (Highlights)
    - 1) 204 resolutions were approved as part of the legislative agenda for the 118<sup>th</sup> Congress
    - 2) Mark Antal (ND) appointed as National Chaplain
    - 3) Deb Davis (CO) appointed National Historian
    - 4) Michael Byrnes (NY) appointed National Sergeant-at-Arms
    - 5) Daniel J. Seehafer was officially recognized as the leading candidate for National Commander
    - 6) Our National Vice Commander for this year is Ken Hylton from Indiana.
3. September 6 – Reappointed NEC Liaison to the National Convention Commission
4. September 10 – Attended the Celebration of Freedom at Department HQ
5. September 11 - Attended the 9/11 ceremonies at Caledonia Post 494
6. October 8- Attended the National Commander’s Homecoming at Post 64 in Indianapolis
7. Attended the National Fall meetings in Indianapolis from October 8-13
  - Oct 9-11 – Reception line member for National Commander Candidate Dan Seehafer
  - Oct 10 – Attended the National Convention Commission meeting
  - Oct 10 – Attended the Subcommittee on Committees meeting to confirm the appointments and reappointments of Wisconsin Legionnaires to National commissions, committees, and councils

- Oct 11 – Attended the Americanism Committee meeting
- Oct 11 - Attended the Central States Caucus

8. Items of interest from the October 12-13 NEC meeting

- a. Badger Boys Stater Dylan Detloff of Sheboygan was awarded a \$5000 Samsung Scholarship.
- b. All flag education and Americanism comic books for purchase through Emblem sales have been updated and will be available soon.
- c. The membership auto renewal option is working well. 65,000 members have signed up for auto renewal.
- d. 2021-2022 Emblem Sales royalties for Wisconsin were \$6507.
- e. Last year the SAL donations to Legion programs and charities totaled \$7,771,295. They also reported over 3 million volunteer hours
- f. Results of the initial 2-year sponsorship of Ganassi racing were \$55 million worth of advertising and \$3.7 million in donations. In seven months, the mobile marketing trailer signed up members for 31 departments. 17 of them were for Wisconsin.

9. Notable resolutions – The NEC reviewed 25 resolutions. Following are a few of the approved resolutions:

1) Chip Ganassi Racing INDYCAR Partnership – Authorized the marketing division to negotiate and extend the sponsorship agreement for three years, with costs up to 4.5 million a year. To make the extension affordable, the marketing division review current marketing projects and efforts, and cut those that were deemed to be low-return. The extension can be done within the current marketing budget. Additionally, the extension includes continued status of the Legion as an official charity of INDYCAR; more donation campaigns through Ganassi and NASCAR; expansion of corporate partnerships (especially in the Be The One) campaign; and expansion of the Legion livery and Be The One logos on cars of Champion Alex Palou, Indy 500 winner Marcus Ericsson, and Kyffin Simpson – driver on the Indy Lights tour for younger drivers. Additionally, if Jimmie Johnson returns for driving, TAL has the rights to his car. Also included is extra Legion branding on equipment, signs, transporters.

7) American Legion Family Day – Established the last Saturday in April as Legion Family Day. Posts are asked to open their doors to their members and members of the community to help celebrate our great work, thank our Family members and community, and educate all who attend. Feature and explain “Be The One.”

11) Uniform Code or Procedure for the Organization of National Conventions of The American Legion – Current process requires 24 Department delegates for convention committees and sub-committees. This eliminates 15 Convention Sub-committees and consolidates resolution review into 9 Convention Committees.

15) Oversight of Camp Lejeune Justice Act – Urges Congress to ensure veterans receive fair consideration and are protected against predatory law firms.

21) Amend the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act – Include veterans who participated in above ground testing after November 6, 1962, on any soil, domestic or foreign.

10. National Vice Commander Ken Hylton from Indiana will be visiting Wisconsin from Nov 2-6. A visit agenda will be finalized within the week. He will walk in the Milwaukee Veterans Day parade with Commander Julie on Nov 5.

11. Future National Conventions

- |                  |                      |
|------------------|----------------------|
| - Charlotte NC   | Aug 25-31, 2023      |
| - New Orleans LA | Aug 23-29, 2024      |
| - Tampa Bay FL   | Aug 22-28, 2025      |
| - Louisville KY  | Aug 28 – Sep 3, 2026 |
| - Kansas City MO | Aug 27 - Sep 2, 2027 |

He further added that Daniel Seehafer gave presentations at National regarding legislation. For the PACT Act there were 34,000 members who contacted their legislators however, the number should be more like 340,000. Staying on top of Legislators is important and starts with the Legislative Council. Legionnaires are appointed each year to a Legislator. You can apply to be on the council, and set up to receive legislative alerts at

<https://www.votervoices.net/AmericanLegion/home>. Dan is also going to continue to push the Be The One campaign. Denise Rohan stated that Dan asked her to express his gratitude to all for their support.

**DEC DISCUSSION ENSUED AND ACTIONS TAKEN ARE AS FOLLOWS;**

**MOTION BY JERRY HOOK, SECOND BY KARL STUVENGEN TO ACCEPT THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEEMAN’S REPORT. MOTION CARRIED.**

## **DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT'S REPORT**

### **Department Adjutant- Nathan Gear**

Welcome DEC, Distinguished Guest and the Legion Family,

The new fiscal year kicked off in Green Bay "Packerland" for Department Convention. The HQ's Team welcomes Department Commander Julie, the newly elected and appointed officers to Department. Immediately following Convention DEC, new officers conducted in processing and leadership training. The Official Directory was updated for all Department Officers and Committee members. The latest version for Official Directory is located on [wilegion.org](http://wilegion.org) website.

This year, Department of WI was host state for the National Convention. As host Adjutant, I worked cooperatively with National Convention Commission and several outside agencies to help support the success of the 103<sup>rd</sup> National Convention. Department hosted a successful full day Career Workshop and Job Fair working with the Veterans Employment & Education Commission, shaped the Legion Family Day for the Department fundraising event at Milwaukee War Memorial Center with an Oktoberfest theme, helped support the 91yr old National Legion Emblem rededication ceremony at the Reservoir Park, coordinated color guard NCO representation from local ROTC and facilitating the Community Outreach Project at the War Memorial Center. Department could not of completed such a successful job without the volunteers and HQ's Team support.

Department of WI had twelve representatives attending this year's National Membership Workshop. Each representative received a stipend and was assigned to a membership training category to maximize ROI.

The Wisconsin American Legion Law Enforcement Career Academy completed another success class of cadets at the State Patrol HQ's, Ft McCoy. The sponsors and supporters truly make a lasting impact on these young leaders while they learn about becoming a first responder.

The Wisconsin American Legion Baseball completed an impressive season while celebrating their 50<sup>th</sup> All-Star Game at American Family Field. If you missed the banquet, the event was a memorable evening with the players and families, coaches, hall of fame inductees, to include distinguished guest retired GM MN Twins, Terry Ryan. There was an increase in Department leadership and attendees participating at the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary for the All-Star Game. Legion representation at our own programs is a great reflection on why we continue to serve every year.

The American Legion, Department of WI, was part of this call to action calling upon our Legionnaires to contact our WI Senators to support the PACT Act. The bipartisan legislation, SFC Heath Robinson Honoring Our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics Act of 2022, simply known as the PACT Act, passed the House and Senate after several days of uncertainty was signed into law Aug 10<sup>th</sup>, 2022. This expands qualifications through the Cold War, Vietnam, Gulf War, and many other areas veterans served. WI had 1,365 National Legislation registered participants using the Grassroots Action Center software. Please refer any veterans that may qualify for the PACT Act to contact our professionals at the Veteran Service Office.

I was honored to be part of the The Blue-Ribbon Commission on Veteran Opportunity created under Executive Order #157 from the Governor which concluded on August 31, 2022. The commission was charged with developing comprehensive, long-term efforts to support Wisconsin's more than 300,000 veterans and address challenges they may face, including increased risk for economic and housing insecurity, mental and behavioral health needs, and substance use disorders, among other challenges supporting veterans' success and opportunity. The commission presented a final report of recommendations to the governor's office, the report was included to the DEC for review. Since the commission's report, the Governor announced an additional \$10 million into the biennial FY23-25 budget proposal to further support veterans.

The Camp American Legion Director Jim and Team finished out another successful summer season as they begin the winterization process. Over the summer season, the Camp Team hosted multiple open houses, had several outreach events, hosted various veteran like organizations to learn more about the mission of Camp American Legion. We welcomed new Assist Cook, Courtney, to the Team and wish former Camp Officer Manager Jessica the best as she returns back to college.

The Veterans Service Officer James and Team, completed the Department Service Office School enhancing their knowledge and keeping up with the latest updates withing the VA. The VSO is pre-screening and interviewing applicants to backfill two VSR positions.

The HQ's Team continues to strive for excellence in all areas of daily operations. The Team continually improves automating their area of operations to help our Legionnaires and volunteers. The wilegion.org site is the resource center for the Post, Counties and Districts. If any ideas or improvements, let our team know to see if feasible.

Our employee workforce continues to welcome new members to the Team to support the mission of Legion WI. We have new HQ's Team members in Finance, please welcome interim Bookkeeper, Lisa Sherman and a new Membership Coordinator, John Michel.

## **DEC DISCUSSION ENSUED AND ACTIONS TAKEN ARE AS FOLLOWS;**

**MOTION BY JEFF ZWIERS, SECOND BY DAVID WISCHER TO ACCEPT THE DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT'S REPORT. MOTION CARRIED.**

**COMMANDER CALLED FOR A CLOSED SESSION.**

**MOTION BY JEFF ZWIERS, SECOND BY NATHAN BOND TO GO BACK IN TO OPEN SESSION. MOTION CARRIED.**

## **DEPARTMENT COMMANDER'S REPORT**

### **Department Commander- Julie Muhle**

July 20<sup>th</sup> – West Bend Post 36 for birthday party for member who turned 100 – West Bend  
July 20<sup>th</sup> – Fox Lake Post 521 for SAL start up meeting – Fox Lake  
July 23<sup>rd</sup> – Golf outing fundraiser for the leading candidate for National Commander, Dan Seehafer - Horicon  
July 26<sup>th</sup> – WALLECA – Fort McCoy  
July 28<sup>th</sup> – 30<sup>th</sup> – National Membership Workshop – Indianapolis  
August 2<sup>nd</sup> – Strategy session with Marketing and Communications Chair, Becky Stankevitz - Appleton  
August 6<sup>th</sup> – American Legion Baseball Banquet - Brookfield  
August 7<sup>th</sup> – American Legion All-Star Game – American Family Field  
August 10 – 2<sup>nd</sup> District Organizational meeting – Cedarburg  
August 11<sup>th</sup> – LaCrosse Post 52 Monthly Membership Meeting/Swear in new officers – LaCrosse  
August 13<sup>th</sup> – 1<sup>st</sup> District Installation of new members – Lake Geneva  
August 16<sup>th</sup> – Department Vice Commander meeting – Zoom  
August 16<sup>th</sup> – Foundation meeting – Zoom  
August 17<sup>th</sup> – Post Commander's Huddle – Zoom  
August 18<sup>th</sup> – Finance Committee Chair meeting – Zoom  
August 20<sup>th</sup> – Post Commander's Huddle – Zoom  
August 21<sup>st</sup> – Allenton Parade – Zoom  
August 23<sup>rd</sup> – Finance Committee meeting – Zoom  
August 25<sup>th</sup> – National Legacy Rider's return – Oak Creek Post 434  
August 26<sup>th</sup> – Dedication of the Legion Emblem – Milwaukee  
August 26<sup>th</sup> – September 1<sup>st</sup> – National Convention – Milwaukee  
September 3<sup>rd</sup> – Badger Football Game with VFW Commander Rathke and WDVA Secretary Kohlar – Madison  
September 5<sup>th</sup> – Dedication of the Meeme Liberty Pole – St. Nazianz Post 477  
September 7<sup>th</sup> – Camp American Legion meeting - Zoom  
September 7<sup>th</sup> – Dodge County Council meeting – Beaver Dam  
September 8<sup>th</sup> – Juneau Post 15 Monthly Membership meeting – Juneau  
September 9<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> – Celebration of Freedom – Portage  
September 14<sup>th</sup> – Shawano/Menominee County Commander's Dinner – Birnamwood  
September 15<sup>th</sup> – Finance Committee Chair meeting – Zoom  
September 16<sup>th</sup> – Headquarters - Portage  
September 17<sup>th</sup> – 1<sup>st</sup> District POW/MIA Silent March – Elkhorn

September 18<sup>th</sup> – Barron County Veterans Picnic – Cameron  
September 20<sup>th</sup> – Peshtigo Post 312 Membership meeting – Peshtigo  
September 22<sup>nd</sup> – Finance Committee meeting – Zoom  
September 24<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> District Fall Conference – Grantsburg  
September 26<sup>th</sup> – Headquarters – Portage

Well, except for the pitch that got away from me at the Brewer's game before the All-Star game, it has been a good start to my time as Department Commander. It is truly heartwarming to visit posts that I haven't yet been to. It is also heart-wrenching at the same time. I went to Peshtigo Post 312 with the Membership Chair, Joe Roberts, 9<sup>th</sup> District Commander, Deb Thomas, past DVC Clarence Davister and Terry Quatsoe. Six post members attended this meeting to close a post of 83 members. They are tired. They have tried all of their resources to get members engaged. Many want to transfer to other posts. By the end of the meeting, we convinced them to give us a year to help them. Let me tell you, if you want to get excited about the Legion, listen to Joe Roberts. As he has come up through the ranks and has taken Legion college courses and attended various meetings, he has become a wealth of knowledge. If we could bottle him up and ship him around the state, we would be golden. He and others are working on saving the Osceola Post and are having great results.

Several of us were able to attend the National Membership Workshop, which was once again held in person. Those who hadn't been before found it to be a great learning opportunity. On the way back, we developed the Yearly Post Membership Plan. This is an easy month-by-month plan to help posts succeed. It is based on best practices of posts who continually achieve 100% or more. I have a challenge out to the posts to try it this year.

National Convention? Bravo to the planning committee. I have never stayed, nor gotten, as far into Milwaukee as we were but it was amazing. I will definitely be planning a trip there next summer. I stayed at the Drury Hotel. Awesome hotel. Staff were friendly and the extras they had during the stay were appreciated. As always, we wish we had more people but those who attended enjoyed the experience.

One of the things I am learning quickly is that we need to operate as a system and not individual parts. As we operate in individual parts, we lose sight of the whole. If we don't start to get SOP's (standard operating procedures) in place we are only going to continue to repeat history. We have to stop running our business based on four individual meetings and run it monthly. Coming from manufacturing and healthcare backgrounds, policies and procedures help guide how we do business. They can also help guide us as we change every year. As with documents, they need to be living to be modified as business conditions change. We need to set our people, whether they are paid or volunteer, up for success and we cannot do that if each person is individually trying to figure out what they are supposed to be doing.

This year for Midwinter we are bringing back the band from Department Convention. Midwinter Saturday night is going to be luau-themed so wear your Hawaiian shirt. We are also going to be having a talent show. You can participate as an individual, team, post, county or district. \$50 to the winner! Our National Commander and National President will be in attendance so maybe we can talk them into being on the panel of judges. Who knows? Share this information with your Posts, Counties and Districts and let's have some fun!

## **DEC DISCUSSION ENSUED AND ACTIONS TAKEN ARE AS FOLLOWS;**

**MOTION BY KARL STUVENGEN, SECOND BY JERRY HOOK TO ACCEPT THE COMMANDER'S REPORT. MOTION CARRIED.**

### **CLOSED SESSION MOTIONS**

**MOTION BY LINDA PFEIFFER, SECOND BY GAIL MINKS TO RATIFY THE TERMINATION OF PROLYTICS CONTRACT. MOTION CARRIED.**

**MOTION BY KARL STUVENGEN, SECOND BY NATHAN BOND TO CONFIRM RETENTION OF LISA SHERMAN AS INTERIM BOOKKEEPER AT DEPARTMENT. MOTION CARRIED.**

## OLD BUSINESS

The DEC discussed the Marshall Post 279 matter. After much discussion, the Department Judge Advocate will be sending the individuals in questions a letter regarding letters they are sending to the post membership and ads being taken out by them. He will also supply a letter to the current Post Adjutant and Commander to disseminate to their membership.

Jim Johnson, 2<sup>nd</sup> District Commander talked about the Be The One march at the Midwinter Conference. He is looking for 22 Legion Family members to carry a 1-pound rock each and march to the Radisson. He is working with a local elementary to hopefully start there and educate the kids on the Be The One for youth.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Midwinter Conference:
  - January 12-15, 2023- NOTE: the location of Midwinter is different than convention
  - Official Family Housing form due October 28, 2022. The October 28<sup>th</sup> deadline is for those listed on the Call-In ONLY. If you miss the October 28<sup>th</sup> cut off, you can still make reservations by calling the hotel directly (after this date it will be 1<sup>st</sup> come, 1<sup>st</sup> serve)
  - Please promote and support
  - Saturday night, join Commander Julie at the **LUAU INTO THE KEYS - TO SUCCESS Wear your best Hawaiian Shirt and enjoy a Family Style Dinner with Entertainment by Daddy D Productions (band from convention) and a Talent Show, the best Individual, Team or District talent will win \$50! ALL ARE WELCOME!**
  - All information and updates can be found at <https://wilegion.org/2023-midwinter-conference/>.
- Social Media:
  - Like Wisconsin American Legion
  - Follow posts
  - **SHARE ALL POSTS** this is how the word gets out. You share it, your friends share it, their friends share it and so on.
    - Example: we had a post for COF with 52 shares that reached over 8800 people. Most of our posts average 4-5 shares and only reach only 500 people
- Important Dates
  - Midwinter Conference: January 12-15, 2023 Radisson Hotel and Conference Center, Green Bay
  - WALLECA Application dates: January 3, 2023- March 31, 2023
  - Department Oratorical: February 11, 2023 at Ripon College
  - Awards Due to Department: May 1<sup>st</sup>- Americanism June 1<sup>st</sup>
  - Department Spring Meetings: May 12-13, 2023
  - Commander Julie & President Coppock Joint Testimonial: May 20, 2023, Romy's Nitingale, Black Creek, WI
  - Annual Reports: June 1<sup>st</sup>
  - Badger Boys State: June 11-17, 2023 at UW Eau Claire
  - Department Convention: July 19-23, 2023 in Rothschild/Wausau

Meeting adjourned with a benediction by Department Vice Commander Karl Stuvengen and a salute to the colors at 11:53 AM.

Respectfully Submitted;

Nathan Gear  
Department Adjutant