

5th District Meeting at Post 316 Date: 13 August, 2023

Meeting was opened in due form by District Commander Miguel Garcia, with the salute to the flag, Chaplain’s opening prayer, POW/MIA Resolution, the pledge of allegiance led by the Sgt-at-Arms and reciting the Preamble of the American Legion.

Adjutant announced that the meeting was being recorded.

**Roll Call of Posts by Adjutant Reaves:** 15 Posts attending, 13 Commanders

**Minutes:** Motion was made to defer the minutes of 7 May, 2023 District Constitutional Conference meeting as posted on the District Website due to an oversight. Motion was seconded and unanimously passed by the members present.

**Correspondence:** None.

**INTRODUCTION OF DISTRICT OFFICERS AND GUESTS:**

Vice Commander Joe Maichle

Vice Commander Randy Whisman

Adjutant Deveron Reaves

Assistant Adjutant Sonny Kirkwood, absent/excused

Finance Officer Nancy Senter

Chaplain Brian Hancher

Historian Patricia Patrick

Sgt-at-Arms Walter Rasco, absent/excused

Sgt-at-Arms Tim Pratt

Service Officer Eduardo Silva

Judge Advocate Troy Horsley

**Guests:**

Past National Commander Clarence Hill

NEC Alternate Jerry Brandt

Northern Area Commander Lena Heredia-Perez

Northern Area Membership Robert Brewster

Northern Area Membership Victoria Ziegler

3rd District Judge Advocate Mike Ziegler

SAL NEC William D. Kelly

Department Membership Chairman Bruce Carl

Sgt-at-Arms escorted Post 316 Commander, Bill Knipper, to the podium for his opening remarks welcoming the 5th District to Post 316. Post 316 Commander was escorted back to his seat.

Sgt-at-Arms escorted Northern Area Commander, Lena Heredia-Perez, to the podium for her remarks and to present End of the Year awards to the following individuals:

* Past Commanders and Adjutants for the 2022-2023 Legion year
* Clarence Hill and Greg Morrow, the Billy Award for outstanding service to the American Legion and their dedication and service to the Boys State program as counselors during their time in Tallahassee
* Vice Commanders Joe Maichle and Miguel Garcia Certificate of Service Award
* Toshiko Moultrie, Post 197, Legionnaire of the Year
* William Bradshaw, Post 54, Commander of the Year
* She mentioned about training in which there is one message throughout the Department – Training is the key! Lookout for the schedule that will be coming out soon. All Legion family members are invited to attend
* The Vice Commanders Hillbilly Hoedown will be held on 20 January, 2024 at Post 115. The proceeds will go to COTA and Disaster Relief
* The Northern Area Ball will be held on 4 November, 2023 at Post 57. Will like to see everyone there, especially members from the Fifth District. This is where I began my journey

Sgt-at-Arms escorted the Northern Area Commander back to her seat and escorted Department Membership Chairman, Bruce Carl, to the podium to speak on the following information:

* Reiterated Department Commander Raymond’s statement of “Integrity, Loyalty, Purpose”. This goes for the whole Legion family
* Please remember his charities this year are COTA and Disaster Relief
* Stop the Slide is the membership plan for the year. Phase 1 is working the renewals and DMS now. It is easier to do it now than later. 400AD membership monies will count for this year. Regular 400 membership will not count until next year
* Goal for this year is 90% retention. Retention and new members should get you 100% for the year
* Race to the top goal is that the District has to be 100% by 31 March, 2024. The District Commander gets an all-expenses trip (minus meals) paid for to National Convention
* 50% of Posts within the Department that reach 100% by 8 May, 2024, their membership teams will receive a pin and a “Be the One” coin for each Post. There are 279 Posts in the Department, so 140 is doable
* Use the proper chain of command. If you have any problems, go to the District Chairman. If there are still problems, they will go to the Area Chairmen, Robert Brewster and Victoria Ziegler. Then to me as a last resort. Joann Collins at Department has a lot of paperwork to keep up for the whole Department, so please don’t distract her
* A Power Point presentation was sent out in July to all Post Commanders and Adjutants. Get with me after the meeting and give me your email addresses if you have not received it
* The group Facebook page is American Legion Department of Florida membership team. Feel free to sign on and join the group
* National has bumped up the numbers needed to reach goal at 3%. The goal is 100,000 and we have no doubt we can reach it again
* Last year, the Department had 9000 new members. There was only 87% retention, so we lost approximately 7000 members
* There are many awards available at Fall Conference. Look at the manual and put in for them
* One question was asked about sponsoring ads across different media platforms such as radio or TV. The answer was that as of right now, there is no money in the budget for that

**REPORTS FROM DISTRICT CHAIRPERSONS:**

1. **ALR, Zane Koonce,** reported on the following:
   1. There are currently 678 members broken down as follows: 353 Legion, 196 Auxiliary, 129 SAL. During the month, 43,852.5 miles, 5837 hours and $5430.10 were donated.
   2. The 5th District retained the Round Robin Trophy from several April events that raised the most miles, hours, and donations to support Project: Vet Relief. Over $364,000 was raised in April alone. 25% came from the 5th District
   3. The 2024 In-state Unity Ride will be the last week of April that will support Project: Vet Relief. Department Chairman, Jim Wineland, put out that you need to submit your Post if you want to be a stop on the Unity Ride next year. We want to go where we are wanted and not as a surprise. Please get a hold of the District Chairman Koonce or the Department Chairman Wineland if you are interested
2. **Americanism, Robert Brewster,** had no report at this time
3. **Baseball, Mark “Shannon” Wolford,** had no report at this time
4. **Boy Scouts, Joe Maichle,** reported that there will be 4 Eagle Scouts presented awards at a church nearby Post 316 with Joe Maichle and Mike Flanagan in attendance
5. **Boys State, Mike Flanagan,** reported that there were 14 boys elected to the House and 5 elected to the Senate. One delegate was selected to Boys Nation
6. **Blood Donor, Mark “Shannon” Wolford,** had no report at this time
7. **Children and Youth, Lena Heredia-Perez,** reported on the following information
   1. Remember, Duval County schools start tomorrow!
   2. All Post Chairmen, please submit reports to Department by 1 September. This is **VERY** important so they can receive the necessary information on their programs and what is needed. Make sure to talk to the guidance counselors and build a good relationship with them **NOW**! Let them know what programs your Post have that is helpful to the kids, i.e., Halloween, Christmas, Thanksgiving, Oratorical, Boys State and Girls State
8. **Disaster Prep, Shawn Beal,** turned in a written report that has been submitted and attached to the minutes and touched briefly on highlights from report
9. **FHP Cadet Academy, Robert Brewster,** had no report at this time
10. **Law and Order, Barry Litsky,** absent/excused. No report given
11. **Oratorical, Cindy Anderson,** absent/excused. No report given
12. **POW/MIA, Denny Luke,** turned in a written report that has been submitted and attached to the minutes and touched briefly on highlights from report
13. **SAL Advisor, Walter Rasco,** absent/excused, turned in a written report that has been submitted and attached to the minutes given by 5th District Adjutant Reaves
14. **School Medals, Deveron Reaves,** reported that now is the time to reach out to the schools in your local area and introduce yourself and explain what the School Medals program is all about
15. **Shooting Sports, James Nelson,** absent. No report given
16. **Social Media, Virna Luke,** absent/excused, turned in a written report that has been submitted and attached to the minutes and given by 5th District Adjutant Reaves
17. **Website, John Padgette,** absent/excused. No report given

**FINANCE REPORT:**

Finance Officer Nancy Senter reported on the complete finances of the 5th District. A motion was made to accept the finance report as stated, subject to audit. Motion was seconded and passed by the members present. Report has been submitted and attached to the minutes.

**DISTRICT VICE COMMANDER’S REPORT:**

Vice Commander Maichle reported on the following information:

* The 5th District is sitting at 39.43% in membership. Goal is 50% on 7 Sept, 2023

Vice Commander Weisman reported on the following information:

* Update information on the Appreciation Room and District Picnic. Mentioned that two (2) Posts donated 90% of the food for the recent Picnic

**DISTRICT COMMANDER’S REPORT:**

Commander Miguel Garcia reported on the following information:

* Membership is Key! Get members from DMS and 400AD and sell your Post to them. The monies stay in the community. Make sure you check constantly
* Visitations to each Post have been assigned and emailed to the Posts. You should have received them whom your contact is, whether it is myself or one (1) of the two (2) Vice Commanders
* The Florida Legion College will be held 14-17 December, 2023 at Department Headquarters. Applications can be found on the Department website
* Department Commander visitation is scheduled 7-10 December, 2023
* The Legacy Run is scheduled for 20-24 August, 2023 to head to The American Legion National Convention. A group will be leaving Post 129 at 1330 on 16 August, 2023
* Seven Bridges Run will be coming up soon. There will be more information to follow
* Fall Conference will be held at the Carib Royale, Orlando, 17-19 November, 2023. Rooms are currently filled. Overflow is available
* Service Officer, Ed Silva, mentioned that the last day for the PACT act is tomorrow. Get your paperwork in as soon as possible for quite a few cancers that are listed. If you are denied, appeal it

**POST REPORTS (should be written and submitted to the Adjutant to include Membership percentage and upcoming Post events)**

**ANYTHING FOR THE GOOD OF THE LEGION:**

The following was brought up under Anything for the Good:

* Chapter 57 will have a Toys 4 Tots run on 7 October. Bikes will start showing up at 1230
* Bill Kelly mentioned that the SAL National Commander thanked the 5th District for their hospitality during his visit
* Ami West spoke briefly on several special items of interest

Meeting was closed in due form by District Commander Miguel Garcia, Chaplain’s closing prayer, retrieval of the POW/MIA flag and the salute to the flag.

**MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 1539 WITH THE CLOSING PRAYER.**

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

**Next District Meeting – 10 September, 2023**

For God and Country,

Respectfully Submitted,

Ron Reaves, 5th District Adjutant

September 2023

Good day everyone,

Did you know the 3rd Friday of September is the National POW/MIA Recognition Day, which was established in 1979 through a proclamation signed by President Jimmy Carter? Since then, each subsequent president has issued the same annual proclamation.

As such, on the national level a ceremony is held annually on the National POW/MIA Recognition Day which is the third Friday of September. Traditionally a Ceremony is held at the Pentagon which features members from each branch of military service as well as participation from various high-ranking government officials.

In addition to the national-level ceremony, observances of the National POW/MIA Recognition Day are held across the country on military installations, ships at sea, state capitals, schools, veterans' facilities and hopefully at the many American Legion Posts throughout our 55 Departments.

No matter where they are held, these National POW/MIA Recognition Day ceremonies share the common purpose of honoring those who were held captive and returned, as well as those who still remain missing.

Since 1999, the POW/MIA Accounting Agency has created a poster commemorating National POW/MIA Recognition Day. The annual edition of the poster continues to honor this tradition. You can order your 2023 poster at: <https://dpaa-mil.sites.crmforce.mil/dpaaFamWebPosters> they are free to you and your Post.

Now I want to ask you, what are you and what is your Post doing for the National POW/MIA Recognition Day/weekend? A lot of locations will honor the memory and plight of our POW/MIAs on the traditional third Friday 15 September, however several localities will hold their event on the 3rd Saturday 16 September, to allow more participation of their working community. That is the case in Jacksonville where we will be holding a Seven Bridges POW/MIA Remembrance Ride and follow on Ceremony on Saturday, September 16th.

If possibly please join your Department of Florida Officers who will be traveling to Jacksonville for the 3rd Annual Seven Bridges POW/MIA Remembrance Ride & Ceremony. I encourage any whom can attend to please do so. The Ride is awesome, and the Ceremony is quite moving. This year we expect Mrs. Meghan Wagoner, Scott Speicher’s daughter, to be a special guest in attendance. For those of you who does not know, Scott Speicher was the first person to be shot down over Iraq during Operation Desert Storm on 17 January 1991. His remains were not recovered until 2 August 2009. He was assigned to a Squadron which flew out of Cecil Field Naval Air Station, which is where the National POW/MIA Memorial is located. An F/A-18 with his name immortalized on the cockpit is on display at the Memorial.

The Ride and Ceremony information/registration can be found on the Department website: <https://www.floridalegion.org/programs-services/legion-riders/special-events/pow-mia-ride/> and the Nation POW/MIA Memorial website: <https://powmiamemorial.org/>

I encourage all to visit The American Legion Department of Florida website, <https://www.floridalegion.org/programs-services/powmia-remembrance/about/> to learn more about the POW-MIA program. Under the resources tab you will find a link to the Defense POW-MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA), Library of Congress Vietnam Era POW-MIA Database, National League of POW-MIA Families, National Alliance of Families for the Return of America’s Missing Servicemen, and the POW-MIA Chairmans Manual. The link to the National American Legion website is under the Media tab, <https://www.legion.org/honor/powmia>

I also encourage you to visit the National POW-MIA Memorial and Museum website, <https://powmiamemorial.org/> to follow the progress being made to complete this wonderful and only National POW-MIA Memorial being built here in the state of Florida.

As of the end of July there are over 81,000 DoD personnel still unaccounted for. For FY 2023 the DPAA has identified 75 personnel from WW II, 31 from the Korea war and 4 from the Vietnam war for a yearly total of 110 Service Members recovered and identified.

**Denny Luke***POW/MIA Chair*

**5th District Financial Report for May thru Aug**

**Previous Account Balance - Checking $ 9,152.37**

**Deposits:**

Entry Fee / 50/50 for April Meeting $ 31.00

Check 1015 – Alton Green Memorial Post 194 Inc – Donation for Picnic $ 100.00

Check 1016 – Alton Green Memorial Post 194 Inc – Donation for Hospitality Suite $ 100.00

Interest Credit $ 1.49

Check 1293 – Alton Green Memorial Post 194 – Boys State Transportation Fee $ 104.00

Check 6665 – Lakeshore American Legion – Boys State Transportation Fee $ 520.00

Check 1516 - Middleburg American Legion Post Inc – Boys State Transportation Fee $ 520.00

Check 1134 – American Legion Riders Chapter 202 – Boys State Transportation Fee $ 208.00

Check 1499 – Dewitt B Tilden Memorial Post 316 – Boys State Transportation Fee $ 936.00

Check 0231 – Saint Augustine Legion Post 37 Inc – Boys State Transportation Fee $ 312.00

Check 7085 – American Legion Jacksonville Post 197 – Boys State Transportation Fee $ 312.00

Check 1345 – Theodore Hernandez American Legion Post 54 – Boys State Transportation Fee $ 462.00

Check 2430 – American Legion Post 129 – Boys State Transportation Fee $ 728.00

Check 1138 – Jacksonville Memorial Post 88 – Hospitality Suite Donation $ 250.00

Check 0230 – Saint Augustine American Legion Post 37 Inc – Hospitality Suite Donation $ 100.00

Donation for Hospitality Suite $ 100.00

Transfer from Saving to Checking – Cover Boys State Transportation Check 342 $ 3,180.00 Transfer from Saving to Checking – Cover Boys State Transportation Check 342 $ 600.00

Check 1020 from Zawyer Sports Foundation, Inc – Jacksonville Iceman Fundraiser $ 205.00

Check 3219 – Arlington American Legion Post 283 Inc – Hospitality Suite Funds $ 3,052.45 Check 6678 – Lake Shore American Legion – Hospitality Suite Donation $ 300.00

Check 1147 – American Legion Mandarin Fallen Heroes’ Post 372 – Hospitality Suite Donation $ 100.00

Check 1539 – Dewitt B Tilde Memorial Post 316 – Hospitality Suite Donation $ 300.00

Fine $ 5.00

**Total Deposits $ 12,526.94**

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| **Withdrawals:**  Check 343 – Emblem Sales – Flag Poles | $ 255.59 |
| Sam’s Club – Hospitality Suite – Paper Goods/Snacks/Drinks | $ 605.81 |
| Sam’s Club – Hospitality Suite – Chicken Salad | $ 70.50 |
| Check 342 – Academy Bus – Boys State Transportation | $ 3,780.00 |
| Check 346 – Mayport Exchange – Spirits/Beer/Liquor/Mixers | $ 429.83 |
| Check 348 – Reimbursement for Hospitality Ste Expense at Coast Guard Exchange | $ 476.62 |
| Check 349 – Reimbursement to SAL Squadron 283 for Hospitality Suite Room | $ 1,120.00 |
| Transfer from Checking to Saving – Boys State Transportation Deposit | $ 4,102.00 |
| **Total Withdrawals** | **$ 10,840.35** |
| **Checking Account Balance as of 7-25-23** | **$ 10,838.96** |
| **Previous Savings Account Balance** | **$ 2,284.41** |
| **Deposits:**  Interest Credit | $ 0.48 |
| Transfer from Checking to Saving - Boys State Transportation Fees | $ 4,102.00 |
| Total Deposits | $ 4,102.48 |
| Withdrawals:  Transfer from Saving to Checking to Cover Check 342 Boys State Transportation | $ 3,180.00 |
| Transfer from Saving to Checking to Cover Check 342 Boys State Transportation | $ 600.00 |
| Total Withdrawals | $ 3,780.00 |
| **Savings Account Balance as of 7-25-23** | **$ 2,606.89** |
| **Previous CD Balance** | **$ 564.85** |
| **Deposits:**  Interest Credit | $ 1.27 |
| **Balance as of 5-7-23** | **$ 566.12** |