

DRAFT
Delaware Veterans Post # 1
General Membership Meeting
January 3, 2024

The meeting was called to order by Commander Bob Onorato at 7:30 PM. All cell phones were silenced, and hats removed.

The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag was rendered by all attendees.

At this time, the Commander called on all newly elected Post Officers, E-Board Members, State Board Officers, and Home Inc. Members to come forward to be sworn in.

Assistant Chaplain Sean McLaren administered the official oath.

The Commander thanked outgoing Board members Harvey Freville & Ed Herman for their hard work and dedication over the last year.

The Commander moved to the Delaware Veteran Member of the Year award and asked 2022 recipient Brian Thomas to come forward. At this time Brian presented our 2023 Member of the Year, Harvey Freville with his award. Harvey thanked the membership but noted that he could not be successful without the members who have supported him in his various roles.

The Commander moved to the presentation of the Commanders Service Award. The commander noted that with the many members who have contributed to the Post this past year there would be more than one award, in fact there would be three, however, one recipient will not be present tonight and their award will presented at a future membership meeting.

The Commander informed the membership about the ongoing project in the game room. The Commander provided a detailed summary of the intense fundraising that the pool league undertook to purchase two new pool tables. It started with one and then moved to two new tables. The Commander noted that currently the league has raised enough funds to cover the cost of the two new tables. The Post is having a new floor installed to upgrade the game room. The Commander now called on Mark Parson to come forward and accept his service award. The Commander commended Mark for his diligence in bringing everyone together to raise the amount of funds that he did without stepping on the many

other fundraisers that take place on a yearly basis. Mark thanked everyone for their support and stated that the game room will officially open on January 13th, at 12:00.

The Commander now began to describe the huge amount of work that our kitchen crew undertakes every day, every week, every month year-round. The Commander noted that Andie Chernekoff has done an outstanding job as always, but since she has brought on an assistant the kitchen is now moving in a new direction. The big test was the volunteer dinner and the Adult Christmas Party that were catered by the Post kitchen staff. Both events were fantastic. At this time the Commander called on John Ratkovic to come forward to receive his service award. The Commander noted that John recently purchased a commercial food saver, and he told John that he needed him to show it to the membership to get John to attend the meeting, it worked! John thanked everyone for their support but again noted that it takes many folks volunteering their time to make the Post a success, especially the work that is done in the kitchen and the many events that it supports year-round. John stated that this award would not be possible without Andie Chernekoff and wanted to share the award with her. The Commander pointed out that Andie was the very first recipient of this award and that this was John's award alone.

The Commander stated that at this time we will move back to our regular agenda.

Previous General Membership Meeting Minutes – The Commander asked the Secretary to read the minutes from the previous General Membership Meeting on December 6, 2023.

A motion was made by Bob Morris to dispense with the reading of the minutes, seconded by Bill Allison, passed by a voice vote.

Previous E-Board Meeting Minutes 12/19/23 – The Commander asked the Secretary to read the minutes from the December 19th Regular E-Board meeting.

The Secretary read the minutes from the meeting.

The Commander opened the floor for questions:

Gerry Stauffer made a motion to accept the minutes as read, seconded by Jim Hague, and passed by a voice vote.

Treasurers Report – Treasurer Michael Janes reported total sales for the month of November were \$52,909.45. The total cost of goods was \$16,789.45 for a gross profit of \$36,120.00. Our total expenses were \$51,775.63 leaving a net income of -\$15,558.13. Year to date we are at a Negative \$21,134.59.

The Commander asked for any questions regarding the Treasurers report. There were no questions, Bob Morris made a motion to accept the report as read, seconded by Gerry Stauffer, and passed by a voice vote.

Committee Reports

- Vice Commander – John Pastor - No report.
- Executive Board – Bob Morris/John Pastor– Outgoing Board President Bob Morris thanked the Board for all their help over the last two years. Bob thanked the kitchen staff for giving up their tips to be donated to various Post items and Mark Parson & Committee for raising the money for the new pool tables.
New Board President John Pastor stated that he had some really good information on how to display the American flag properly whether horizontally or vertically. Please see John if you are interested in getting this information.
- Finance Committee – Bob Morris – All accounts are balanced. Bob stated that in conjunction with what the Board President stated regarding the flag, Bob said that we have flags available downstairs to those members who would like one to display. Bob also stated that we are currently getting all the checking account signers up to date.
- Home Inc. – Jim Brannon – No report.
- By Laws Committee – Mark Schilling – mark stated that he would be scheduling a meeting with the By-Laws committee this month.
- Bar Committee – Erin Facciolo – The Commander reported for Erin that there will be a review of our drink prices to make sure we are keeping up with our cost of goods.
- Chaplain – Randy Scott – Sean McLaren reporting for the Chaplain - Sean reported the following:
 - Gloria Smith, wife of MyRon Smith passed away this past Sunday.
 - Sean McLaren's brother passed away recently.
 - Joe Barnes was in a car accident and has a broken arm.

- **Veteran Affairs** – Rick Rambo – Rick reported that he attended the last meeting with the Commission. The Commission is focusing on service dogs and how they can better assist our Veterans. Rick stated that the Delaware Legislature will be back in session this month. There is currently a bill in front of the legislature that would focus on homeless veterans.
 - A member stated that they had seen on T.V. and the internet that the V/A has been commissioned to deal with the illegal immigrant issue and asked Rick if this was true? Rick stated that he had not seen or heard about it but will follow up to get an answer.

- **Entertainment** – Vince Vandenbrak reported the following schedule:
 - 1/5 – Country Line dancing – In the hall
 - 1/6 – New act – The Twangabillies – In the lounge
 - 1/9 – Soup and Sandwiches 4:30 – 7:00
 - 1/12 – Rick & Connie – In the lounge
 - 1/13 – Pollyanna Gift Exchange – In the lounge
 - 1/15 – Jimmy’s cheese steaks
 - 1/27 – Jerry Lee Watkins
 - 2/2 – Benny and Bill
 - 2/11 – Super Bowl Party
 - 2/13 – Fat Tuesday
 - 2/17 – Valentines Party – In the hall featuring the Old News Band
 - 2/24 – WAC’s Chili Cook-Off

- **Eagles Football**
 - 1/7 – @ Giants, 4:25 kickoff
 - 1/13 – 1/15 – Wild Card Weekend
 - 1/20 – 1/21 – Divisional Play-Offs
 - 1/28 – Conference Championship

- **Rentals** – John Descioli – John reported that the month of January is light. There are four rentals, eighteen total events.

- **WACS** – Lauren Cullumber – Diane Onorato reported for Lauren. Diane reported that the WAC’s now have two new members for a total of 58 members.
 - Upcoming events – The WAC’s are having a chili cookoff in the lounge on Saturday February 24th in the late afternoon to early evening.

- Sojourners Place – The WAC’s are looking into putting together toiletries, socks, and blankets for the homeless.
- Whacky Bingo – Tuesday March 5th, 7:00 p.m. Jimmy Hague will be cooking his cheese steaks from 4 – 7p.m.
- **Kitchen** – Andie Chernekoff – Andie reported that we are looking to expand the use of the kitchen in 2024.
- **Pool** – Shawn Coho – No report.
- **Sports** – No report.
- **Grounds** - Jack McKelvey – Not Present - No report.
- **In House Committee** – Chip Roop – No report
- **Membership** – Jim Biddle reported:

1st reads.

PRESENT –

Associates

Veterans

Gilbert L. Bunner – USN

Henry Schultz – USA/NG

Michael O’Neill - USMC

NOT PRESENT –

Veterans

Nicholas Niehoff – USA/NG

Gregory S. Zentz – USMC

Raymond L. Kern – USA/Active Duty

Associates

2nd reads.

PRESENT

Associate
Mark Ross

Veterans
Brandi H. Niehoff – USA/NG

NOT PRESENT

- Jim reported that all dues' notices have been sent out
- Progressive Raffle – Art Chernekoff – No report.
- Honor Guard – Vince Knoll – No report.
- Scholarship – Mike Phillips – Mike reported that applications are available and the cut off for submission is February 1st.
- Baseball – No Report.
- Swim Team – Stephanie Coho – No report.
- Public Relations – Florie Henry – No report.
- Welcoming Committee – Ed Brinkman – Not Present, No report.
- Facilities Management – Harvey Freville – Harvey reported that work on the new game room floor will start on January 4th. Harvey thanked all those folks who helped move all of the furniture out of the game room.
- Old Business – The Vice Commander reported that all financial issues with Aquasafe have been resolved. We owed them \$75,000.00 and after the negotiations we paid \$50,000.00, however, we agreed to keep \$3,000.00 in escrow to address the racing lines and targets.
- New Business – Florie Henry inquired about a funeral flag that needs to be refolded. Her Brother-in-law recently passed away and his services were held in Ohio. When the flag was folded it was raining heavily and it was folded wet. Florie wanted to

know if there was somewhere to go to have it dried and refolded. The Vice Commander stated that she could go to any American Legion or VFW to have this done.

- **Good of the Order** –

- The Commander informed the membership of an upcoming referendum for the Brandywine School District, be on the lookout for the date of the vote.
- Jim Hague wanted to let the Commander know that both the volunteer's dinner and the Christmas Party dinner were excellent.
- The Commander pointed to a brand-new bell sitting in the front of the room. The bell was donated to the Post by the Upper Chichester Fire Department. The Commander thanked Butch Minner for his assistance in obtaining this beautiful bell for the Post.
- The Commander stated that he received a letter in the mail that was a screenshot of the Post E-Blast regarding the dues increase. The letter listed several other Veterans Posts and their current membership rates with the word WHY, written in ink, and an arrow pointing to the new dues amount. The Commander was not happy about this given the fact that there was extensive discussion on the floor at the membership meeting and the topic that was discussed most was a \$10.00 increase enough? The Commander stated that it was at this point that a motion was made and seconded to increase the dues by \$15.00. When the vote was taken on the motion there was not one objection and it passed unanimously.
- Brian Thomas informed everyone present that this Saturday we will be taking down all the Christmas decorations in the hall and lounge. All are welcome to help.
- Karen Freville inquired if the shuffleboard table will be releveled once the game room is back in operation and the answer was yes.
- Karen also asked if the Post could purchase new quates and the answer was yes.
- Andie Chernekoff wanted to let the membership know that during the year the kitchen staff receives tips for their efforts. Andie stated that all tips that are given to the kitchen are donated back to the Post to certain areas.

- **50/50** – Peter Mitchell won \$178; Post received \$177.00 from ticket purchases. Peter generously donated his winnings back to the Post.

- **At this time the Vice Commander announced that the bar would be open for one hour to celebrate the New Year and new Post leadership.**

Sean McLaren recited the Del Vets Prayer.

Taps were sounded.

Motion was made by Harvey Freville to adjourn the meeting, Bill Allison seconded the motion, passed by voice vote.

The meeting was adjourned at 20:40 hours.

Respectfully submitted by the Secretary Mark Schilling