



American Legion

Department of Wisconsin

8th District Spring Conference

Spring 2014 Conference Minutes May 17, 2014 @ 0900 hrs Post 442, Wisconsin Rapids, WI

1. District Commander Jerry Krofta called the meeting to order at 0900hrs. The colors were posted and all present rendered a hand salute. Chaplain Wozniak gave an opening prayer. The POW/MIA flag was placed on the empty chair and First Vice-Commander Solberg read Resolution 228. Second Vice Commander Young led the Pledge of Allegiance. Third Vice Commander Fregien led the Preamble.
2. Commander Krofta declared the meeting open and thanked everyone for their support during the past year.
3. Commander Krofta recognized Department Vice Commander Dan Rindt, Past Department Vice Commanders Cathy Gorst, Frank Wozniak, Don Southworth, and Past District Commander Dave Jensen. Finally, he recognized Shelly Wilkinson, standing in for 8th District Auxiliary President Joan Wilkinson.
4. Commander Krofta introduced Bob Shappell, candidate for Department Commander, who spoke about his qualifications for office.
5. Commander Krofta introduced Dave Brisk, candidate for Department Vice-Commander, who spoke about his qualifications for office.
6. Commander Krofta introduced Rich Ruland, candidate for Department Vice-Commander, who spoke about his qualifications for office.
7. Commander Krofta introduced John Thurk, candidate for Department Vice-Commander, who spoke about his qualifications for office.
8. Commander Krofta introduced Dale Oatman, candidate for Department Vice-Commander, who spoke about his qualifications for office.
9. Commander Krofta introduced Julia Atkinson, candidate for Department Chaplain, who spoke about her qualifications for office.
10. The roll call of Posts was taken by the Acting Adjutant with 48 Legionnaires from 20 Posts in attendance.
11. Roll call and determination of a quorum was completed by Adjutant Arien Herminath with the following results:

Members present: Commander Krofta, 1st Vice-Commander Solberg, 2nd Vice-Commander Young, 3rd Vice-Commander Fregien, Finance Officer Jensen, Acting Adjutant Herminath, Chaplain Wozniak, Historian Southworth, Judge Advocate Gorst, Sgt-at-Arms Jaeger, County Commanders, Vandre, Cassetta, Jaeger, and Miller.

Members excused: County Commanders Borchardt and Czarnecki.

Members absent: Sgt-at-Arms Zapka

12. Acting Adjutant Herminath read the minutes of the 2014 Spring Executive Council meeting held on 13 May. A motion was made and seconded to accept the minutes as read. The motion passed.

13. Finance Report:

Finance Officer David Jensen presented the district financial report. A motion was made and seconded to accept the report as presented. All in favor, motion passed. The Shell was passed and \$67.42 was collected.

14. District Officer Reports:

- a. Commander Krofta spoke about his activities during the past six months.
- b. 1st Vice Commander Solberg spoke about his activities during the past six months.
- c. 2nd Vice Commander Young spoke about his activities during the past six months.
- d. 3rd Vice Commander Fregien spoke about his activities during the past six months.
- e. Acting Adjutant Herminath asked the Posts and Counties to submit their 2013-2014 officer election reports as soon as possible. The officer and contact information changes, along with 8th District newsletters, may be found on the 8th District website wilegion8.org.
- f. Chaplain Wozniak reviewed his activities during the past six months. He asked that he be informed of deaths and illnesses of 8th District legionnaires so he can send cards in a timely manner.
- g. Judge Advocate Gorst reported on her activities during the past six months.
- h. Historian Southworth spoke about his activities during the past six months.
- i. Sergeants at Arms Jaeger had nothing to report.

A motion was made and seconded to accept the above reports. All in favor, the motion passed.

15. County Commander Reports:

- a. Don Southworth read Marathon County Commander Pat Borchardt's report of Marathon County Post activities during the past six months.
- b. Portage County Commander Dave Vandre gave a report of Portage County Post activities during the past six months.
- c. Shawano-Menomonie County Commander Cassetta gave a report of Shawano-Menomonie County Post activities during the past six months.
- d. Waupaca County Commander Jim Jaeger gave a report of Waupaca County Post activities during the past six months. He presented Arien Herminath with a Certificate of Appreciation for his activity related to the Waupaca County Youth Government Day program.
- e. A report was read for Waushara County Commander Marty Czarnecki on Waushara County Post activities during the past six months.
- f. Wood County Commander Ron Miller gave a report of Wood County Post activities during the past six months.

A motion was made and seconded to accept the above reports. All in favor, the motion passed.

16. 8th District Commander Krofta invited Department Commander Reynes to the podium. Commander Reynes spoke about the positive effect that we have on the legionnaires we mentor as well as the potential legionnaires who witness our activities on behalf of our fellow veterans. He also promoted the Legacy Scholarship program and encouraged all legionnaires to get active in their communities. Commander Reynes encouraged legionnaires to raise money for the Legacy Scholarship program, to encourage the solicitation of corporate sponsorship money which can be routed through a foundation. Finally, he encouraged all legionnaires to remain positive and passionate about membership and all our activities, don't adopt a negative attitude and things will turn out well. Finally, he expressed his concern for Vietnam vets, particularly their high rate of suicide. Commander Reynes encouraged all legionnaires to listen to these vets and support them as they continue to struggle with emotional and physical challenges related to their military service.

17. Commander Krofta then introduced Dallas Loesel, Chairman of the Department Membership and Post Activities Committee, as the main speaker. Mr. Loesel gave an overview of the current membership situation at Department and the 8th District and encouraged all legionnaires to continue to work hard to reach 100% . He challenged all legionnaires to take the initiative, knock on doors and continue to work on membership. He also challenged all posts to get their mandatory 2014 reports in on time. In response to a question from the floor, Mr. Loesel briefly spoke about a possible PUFL rate increase and stressed that we want more PUFL members. Mr. Loesel then acknowledged the 100% posts in the 8th District one by one and called for a round of applause to recognize their outstanding effort. He then listed a number of incentives offered by Department for additional memberships submitted during this membership year.

18. District Committee Chairman Reports:

- a. Americanism Jerome Krofta
There were no candidates for this year's Oratorical Program from the 8th District. This is the first time in several years that the 8th District did not have any Oratorical Program candidates.
- b. Badger Legionnaire/Public Relations Ron Rindt gave the report for Vern Pitt
- c. Camp American Legion Jim Jaeger
The Executive Board Meeting was held on 09 May. They are renegotiating the lease of camp land from the DNR. They are also working hard to expand the number of veterans that use the facility and hope to have 1,000 veterans attend this year. Commander Krofta added that checks to support camp activities should be made out to The Wisconsin American Legion with a notation for Camp American Legion.
- d. Children and Youth Ron Fregien
Department Children and Youth Committee activities included consideration of a resolution to combine the Americanism Committee and Children and Youth Committees. He said the Children and Youth Committee reports from the posts should focus on activities that help children financially or physically, not Legion Baseball or Boy Scout-related activities. These are Americanism activities.
- e. Convention and Activities Don Southworth
The 2014 Department Convention will be held in Appleton from July 16-20 at the Raddison Paper Valley Hotel. He also gave the locations of the upcoming Department golf and bowling tournaments.
- f. Finance Don Southworth
The Department finance report was accepted pending audit approval. Commander Krofta then commented on the LIT and the USAA insurance programs. Legionnaires can participate in one or both of these programs.
- g. Fund Raising Rick Klotzbuecher
He encouraged all Legionnaires to participate in the convention sweepstakes as that is a very important fundraiser. He mentioned that the Department was participating fully with National to raise funds to support Denise Rohan's candidacy for the office of National Commander.
- h. Homeless Vets David Jensen
He outlined the reasons for having a homeless vet program at the Veterans Hospitals in Wisconsin and the rules that the patients must follow in order to remain in the program. He also gave a list of items popular with the patients.
- i. Hospital David Jensen reported for Gary Mader
He outlined the individual activities of the Veterans Hospitals at Union Grove, King and Chippawa Falls, to include ongoing facility upgrade activities at these facilities. He mentioned that King is getting a new eight million dollar building.
- j. King Day Pilgrimage Jerry Krofta

King Day will be held on 15 June, Father's Day. He said that 2015 membership cards will be handed out at day.

- k. King Day Parade Sam Solberg
Arrangements will be similar to past years.
- l. King Publicity Dave Jensen
The need for donations to cover the chicken dinners was publicized in the Badger Legionnaire, but the need for donations to cover travel (buses) and administrative costs related to the program was not well publicized. They are in need of donations to cover these other expenses and ask that checks be sent to Department, earmarked for King Day.
- m. Legislative Kathy Gorst
County and post Legislative Officers are encouraged to forward any pertinent information to her at gorstlawoffice@aol.com. She asked for input from the posts for Legislator of the Year award. The Legion fought hard against recent state legislation negatively impacting asbestos claims by veterans. Any information on the negative impact of this legislation on local veterans should be reported to Department. The Wisconsin SAL is working to set up Districts and this may call for our Districts to update their constitutions.
- n. Membership Sam Solberg
- o. POW/MIA Sam Solberg
The Defense Department POW and MIA offices will be combined into one office to improve the search for and repatriation of remains of our missing servicemen and women.
- p. National Security Jim Young
He gave a review of the awards for the fireman, policeman, EMT, and enlisted member of the year. He said that the many award submissions had to be discarded because they did not include all the required information.
- q. Religious Emphasis Frank Wozniak
A new chaplain handbook is being prepared and should be available soon.

19. District Program Director Reports:

- a. Americanism and Government Testing Arien Herminath
This is the first time that the program was offered on line. Test dates were from the end of March to the first part of April. Students signed into the Department website, took the test and received a certificate of completion. The number of awards for the program was increased from 32 to 45, a total of \$14,500 in scholarship money. Participation reached 4,200 students this year and Department is confident that this number can be increased significantly in 2015. The 8th District had three winners this year, all of them from high schools in Portage County.
- b. Badger Boys State Don Southworth
This year's program is scheduled from June 14-21 at Ripon College. Boys are encouraged to attend an orientation prior to attending the program.
- c. Baseball Jim Young
All coaches still have to go through a security check.
- d. Blood Donor Jerry Krofta reported for Nick Blaske
There will be a blood drive at the Department Convention on Friday from 9:00 to 3:30.
- e. County Youth Government Arien Herminath
Shawano County and Waupaca County participated in this program. Both programs were held in April. Shawano County had 68 students in attendance, Waupaca County had 76 students in

attendance. Legionnaire participation at both programs was outstanding, 25 at Shawano and 14 at Waupaca.

f. Shooting Sports

Jim Young

He spoke about his efforts to start a program at Clintonville Post 63. He is looking into obtaining funding for 4-5 pellet rifles and has the interest of Boy Scout leaders for a shooting sports program. Having obtained participant interest, he is moving on to gain the support of parents, line up volunteer support to help run the program, and gain support of the public for the program.

A motion was made and seconded to accept the Committee and Program Director reports. All in favor, the motion passed.

20. Old Business:

- a. Consolidated Post, Children and Youth and VA & R reports: Every post is to turn in the above three reports by 01 June. Adjutants and Commanders are to get these reports in.
- b. He also requested that the posts and counties submit updated officer and committee member information as soon as their elections are completed. This information is needed to update current 8th District contact information for its mailing list and for website reference purposes.
- c. He asked that legionnaires sign up to receive the Badger Legionnaire by email in order to save postage.

21. New Business:

- a. Commander Krofta asked for volunteers to serve as Committee Representatives and Ballot Clerks at the upcoming Department Convention in Appleton.
- b. Commander Krofta reminded Legionnaires of the 8th District Caucus meetings at 7:30 a.m. on the 18th and 19th of July at the Department Convention. He asked that all County Commander attend or have someone present to pick up the Administrative Manual updates for the Posts.
- c. He also encouraged that all post delegates be present by 09:00 on Saturday to vote for the candidates of their choice.
- d. Commander Krofta said two posts had submitted bids to host the 2014 Fall Conference. One bid was from Rothschild Post 492 and the other was from Clintonville Post 63. Representatives of both posts were asked to give a presentation on their bids. A vote was taken and the Rothschild bid won 26-12.
- e. Commander Krofta asked for a volunteer to replace Mike Zapka as 8th District Sgt at Arms.

22. The 8th District Chaplain led the Conference in a Memorial Service for our departed comrades. The Legionnaires then stood at attention and observed a moment of silence.

23. There being no further business to come before the meeting, Commander Krofta declared the meeting adjourned at 1430 hours.

Respectfully submitted by: Arien Herminath, Acting 8th District Adjutant