



**MINUTES**  
**OF THE**  
**DETACHMENT**  
**OF**  
**NEW YORK**  
**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING**

**October 15<sup>TH</sup> 2016**  
**Phelps, NY**

*SONS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION*  
*Detachment of New York*  
*112 State Street*  
*Suite 1300*  
*Albany, NY-12207*  
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## MINUTES OF THE FALL D.E.C. MEETING

October 15, 2016

Seeley B. Parish Post 457

Phelps, New York

- Seeley B. Parish Sq#457 Color Guard placed the Colors of our Nation
- The POW/MIA banner was placed by Master Sgt.-at-Arms Falco.
- Commander Ruthven recited the POW/MIA Ceremony.
- Chaplain Parks offered the Opening Prayer.
- V/C Clancy led the body in The Pledge of Allegiance.
- V/C DeAngelis led the membership in the reciting of the Preamble.
- Commander Ruthven called the Meeting to order at 9:05 A.M.
- Adjutant Robert Avery took Roll Call, which indicated a quorum was present.
- **Seeley B. Parish Post Commander Tom Baker, Auxiliary President Bishop, and Squadron Commander Kessel thanked us for being here. They were presented a certificate of appreciation by Commander Ruthven.**

### 1.00 READING OF THE PREVIOUS MINUTES

- 1.01 V/C Bosford made a motion to waive the reading of the minutes of the Pre DEC Meeting, and Post DEC Meeting and accept them as printed with corrections. The motion was seconded and carried.
- Consultant Robert Neville thanked all for attending. He stated that the National Commander of The American Legion has sent a letter to the National Football League stating the displeasure of the Legion Family of players not standing for our National Anthem. He also stated that we need to stand behind and raise money for our Candidate for National Commander of the Sons of The American Legion Greg “Doc” Gibbs.
  - The meeting was recessed by Commander Ruthven at 9:25 A.M. for Commission and Committee meetings.
  - The meeting was reconvened by Commander Ruthven at 10:35 AM

### 2.00 REPORTS

- 2.01 Americanism Chairman Myrtle reported; Commander Bruce Ruthven, Adjutant, Officers, and fellow Sons of The American Legion GOOD MORNING. Our newly elected National Commander Jeff Frain has made American Legion Baseball a priority and his theme this year is “Knowledge is Power” so I would like call on Greg “Doc” Gibbs an instructor at our Department American Legion College to say a few words. “Doc” gave an update on what has been going on with the program. Something of special interest to the Sons is that the college is looking at having a class about the SAL. This would be similar to our Advisors Seminar. David Downey was asked to speak on Boys State and Boys Nation. This is the time of the year that you should be looking for and explaining the program to the prospective applicants. This way they will understand what the program is about. We are always looking for counselors, so if you are interested please let Dave know.
- This year’s agenda:
- 1<sup>st</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup> grade Essay Contest “What America means to me” \$50.00-winner & \$50.00-class
  - 6<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grade Essay Contest “What the Constitution of the United States means to Americans” \$100.00-winner
  - Mid – Winter handout of materials for each District
  - Cerullo Memorial Scholarship
  - Flag pins for Boys State
  - Get out the Vote program
  - Consolidated Reports

### Essay Contests

We will be promoting two Essay Contests through hard copies and our web-site. District Commanders will be asked to get all information out to our Districts, Counties and Squadrons, with participants submitting their essays to the Americanism Chairman. Hopefully the Squadrons, Counties, and Districts will also have judging and award winners in their areas as well. We can exponentially increase the number of winners for this contest throughout the state and create some great incentives for the schools to participate in this program with the help of our American Legion Family. Proposal - For 2016-2017. We challenge each District Commander to provide the Americanism Commission with the names of two Sons Members from their district who will work to get the Essay Contest literature out to more schools. The objective is to get as many children as possible learning about America and the Constitution through their essays. The winners are everyone, because our children will be learning true values of Americans and our laws of land. There are many great ways to reward students who participating in this program. **Mid-Winter Conference: As in previous years flag education materials will be forwarded to District Commanders at Mid-Winter.** Flag Education - Flag Education Script is for grade school children and should be run by two people, one speaker and one demonstrator. The materials will include: Flag Code Pamphlet's, Flag Etiquette Brochures, Flag Education Script, Stick Flags, Flag Education DVDs Flag Comic Books, Pledge of Allegiance Comic Books and Book Marks.

### Scholarships

Cerullo \$500.00 and up to three years renewal of \$500.00 per year.

There are 12 Americanism Programs on the consolidated report form

- 1) Boys and Girls state
- 2) Education: (five star/ ten ideals, 3'x5' - flags presented, scholarships, and hours spend on education programs)
- 3) Flags given away at Parades, schools or placed on graves and hours spend on distributing flags)
- 4) Oratorical contests (no. of contestants, hours of participation) color guard sponsored by squadron and no. of appearances made by color guards
- 5) NEF donations (National Emergency Fund)
- 6) Flag education (no of flag education programs, no. of Flag retirement programs and hours for each)
- 7) Community Service (keep track of hours and donations)
- 8) Scouting (troops sponsored by squadron and no. youths involved)
- 9) Junior shooting sports (no of youths involved and hours spend on programs)
- 10) Baseball (American Legion sponsored teams) National Commander Jeff Frain project
- 11) Blood drives (no. of pints and hours spend)
- 12) Sponsoring other teams

To help with consolidated report forms the Americanism Committee would like to take all forms that were sent in last year wrong and make corrections. Then have District Commanders responsible for getting them to Squadron in their District. For any Squadron that didn't send in a consolidated report send a reminder of the importance of our report. It is important to keep track of money donated or spend on all programs and projects, only by reporting will our deeds be recognized. We would like a Motion to have the finance committee to put \$1,000.00 in the budget a line item to send a member to Indianapolis, IN each year for the Americanism Conference held in the fall.

**A motion was made by V/C Bosford and duly seconded to accept the Americanism report, which was carried.**

- 2.02 National Commander of The American Legion Charles Schmidt** stated that the Sons of The American Legion bring value to The American Legion and thanked us for all we do for the Legion, veterans and communities. Our donations to the Child Welfare Foundation are second to none. Membership is going great as usual. He also gave some

insight into the Scouting Program, Operation Comfort Warriors and Junior Shooting Sports program. We all have a niche and we all have something to offer please leave your footprint whether it be big or deep. Please vote and remember we are nonpartisan.

**2.03 Vice Commander Coates** is honored to be representing the Super Seventh and Mighty Eighth Districts in the great Detachment of New York and I has a couple of great district commanders to work with, Charlie Rose for the 7<sup>th</sup> and Tim Van Patten II for the 8<sup>th</sup>. On August 13<sup>th</sup>, he attended The American Legion 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> District Membership Workshop along with Tim Van Patten, Daryl Verstrete, Jerry Ketchum and other members of the Sons, American Legion Riders and the American Legion Auxiliary. This was the first workshop for the American Legion Family and it was very informative. Department Commander Sampson was there and part of his message was that we need to communicate to people a reason to belong to the American Legion Family. Such as, "The American Legion Family is the most powerful voice in Washington" or "in 1944 The American Legion was instrumental in creating the GI Bill and Veterans Administration." "We need to promote the great programs The American Legion sponsors for our Veterans and our communities, our state and our nation. On September 11, Jim attended the Seventh District meeting at the Johnson-Costello Post #355 in Penn Yan. On October 4<sup>th</sup> he attended the Eighth District meeting at Dunkirk Memorial Post #62 in Chautauqua County. The emphasis at both meetings was on membership. A 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> get together this year to be hosted by the Herbert W. Delong Squadron #808 in Belmont, Alleghany County. The date will be April 23<sup>rd</sup> if it does not interfere with the Walk-A-Thon or April 30<sup>th</sup> if it does. Invitations will be sent to Commander Ruthven, NEC David Bishop and Alt NEC John Chang, leading candidate for 2017-2018 Bill Clancy and the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Vice Director for the American Legion Riders. It looks like we are getting off to a slow start with membership this year. As of October 11, the 7<sup>th</sup> District is in 6<sup>th</sup> place in the Detachment with 12.49%, and the 8<sup>th</sup> is in the 8<sup>th</sup> place with 9.43%. While we have all the OCF's in for District 7, we still need 7 to get them all in for District 8. Both districts still have a lot of squadrons with zeros and we have a lot of work to do. However, a 'hats off' to Ontario and Niagara Counties for meeting the October 12<sup>th</sup> goal of 25% with Ontario also meeting the November 16<sup>th</sup> target of 35% with 35.15%. Erie and Monroe Counties are also coming on strong with over 20%. There have been no challenges to come out at this point between the two districts. Yesterday, October 14<sup>th</sup>, V/C Coates joined Commander Ruthven for the National Commander's Visitation for the Eighth District in Hamburg, Erie County. This included a tour of the Niagara Falls Air Reserve Station. Unfortunately, Jim will not be able to attend tonight's dinner with the National Commander due to a family commitment. And of course, the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Districts are overwhelmingly in support of Greg "Doc" Gibbs for National Commander in 2018-2019. **A motion was made by V/C Coates and duly seconded to accept the Vice Commanders report which was carried.**

**2.04 Finance Chairman Lee** reported; we have lots of communication between the members of the Commission. We will have some recommendations for changes to the expense authorizations at Mid-Winter. He also went over how to properly fill out the voucher and match the receipts with the vouchers. **A motion was made by V/C Burtch and duly seconded to accept the Finance report which was carried.**

**2.05 Acting Children & Youth Chairmen Espy reported** -National Commander Jeff Frain has set a \$1 million goal for the Child Welfare Foundation. He would like to see the Sons of The American Legion surpass \$8 million. New York has a goal of \$33,711. Because of late donations we currently have \$7,100.  
-National Children & Youth Chairman John Waite will be holding conference calls with all Detachment chairman and others who want to participate.  
-Our Detachment Commission would like a voting member of the D.E.C. to make a motion under new business to budget \$1000 to send a representative from our

Detachment to the Children & Youth Conference on a yearly basis. This would cover the airfare and hotel room in Indy. Next conference is September 15- 17, 2017.

-Looking for support with a new American Legion program, Our Military Kids. Also support with Children's Organ Transplant Association (COTA).

-This year our Children & Youth Commission has decided that each member will focus on one program. Each member will research the program of their choice and get information to the chairman for distribution to the Detachment membership. We will use our Detachment Vice Commanders, District Commanders and have information available at Mid-Winter to filter information to the membership.

-There will be Child Welfare Foundation piggy banks available at Mid-Winter for members to take and distribute in their areas. Your Squadron can empty these banks, send a check into the Detachment office and reuse them for years to come.

-April is Children & Youth Month please have your Squadron promote the programs during this month.

-National is looking for e-mail addresses for all members. They are setting up for monthly information updates to the membership.

-Reminder for Squadrons to send in pictures and information on your Children & Youth activities to Gabe to put in the Liberty. Let everyone know what you are doing to promote our future leaders.

-The Commission will try and have an article in the Liberty issues about the various programs we are promoting this year.

-Look forward to seeing all members at the Mid-Winter Conference January 20-22, 2017 in Albany.

**A motion was made V/C Bosford and duly seconded to accept the report which was carried.**

▪ **The meeting was recessed by Commander Ruthven at 11:55 AM for lunch.**

▪ **The meeting was reconvened by Commander Ruthven at 12:30 PM.**

**2.06** **Advisor Arthur** spoke about the meaning of inculcate, the definition is to cause (something) to be learned by (someone) by repeating it again and again. He also spoke a program called **Trees for Troops**. Christmas Tree growers have been providing free trees for military families for many years. In 2005, FedEx contacted the Christmas SPIRIT Foundation, the 501(c) (3) charitable branch of the National Christmas Tree Association, and wanted to be involved in the foundation's mission. Together the two organizations expanded the idea of providing Christmas Trees to military families, and Trees for Troops was born. Since 2005, more than 176,000 free, farm-grown Christmas Trees have been provided to troops and military families in the United States and overseas through Trees for Troops. Thousands of trees are donated by American farm families and the public, and FedEx delivers these trees to more than 65 military bases in the U.S. and overseas. FedEx has logged more than 653,400 U.S. miles for the Trees for Troops program.

In 2015, Trees for Troops delivered 18,833 farm-grown Christmas Trees. Trees were donated by roughly 450 Christmas tree growers, retailers and their customers in 25 states. Donations were received through individual farms, the collective efforts of state and regional Christmas tree associations, and Trees for Troops weekend. Hundreds of donors and volunteers participate each year to make Trees for Troops happen.

**Christmas SPIRIT Foundation** P.O. Box 3729, Littleton, CO 80161

**Ph.** 800-965-1653, **Fax:** 303-374-6594, [info@treesfortroops.org](mailto:info@treesfortroops.org), [www.treesfortroops.org](http://www.treesfortroops.org)

#### **Trees for Troops Weekend**

Trees for Troops Weekend is an annual event during which Christmas Tree farms, retail lots and nurseries across the country volunteer to host a trailer (provided by FedEx) to gather donations and donate Christmas Trees. In 2015, 25 collection sites participated,

gathering 5,160 donated trees. Members of the National Christmas Tree Association and many state and regional Christmas tree associations participate in Trees for Troops Weekend, usually held the first weekend in December. Consumers can donate funds or Christmas Trees by visiting one of these 25 locations and are encouraged to write personal messages on the tree tags that accompany donated trees. There are also opportunities to donate remotely for those not located near one of the official locations.

### **One Thousand Tree Campaign**

The One Thousand Tree Campaign provides a convenient new way to support Trees for Troops AND will allow us to send more Christmas trees to military families that request them. Each year, we have some requests that we are not able to meet because we don't have enough trees donated. Each \$40 to the Campaign will help bridge that gap and deliver more trees to military families that are spending holidays separated from love ones.

### **How You Can Get Involved**

Buy a tree for a military family online and support the program through the One Thousand Tree Campaign. Go to [www.TreesForTroops.org/dnn/Donate.aspx](http://www.TreesForTroops.org/dnn/Donate.aspx) for details. Follow Trees for Troops on Facebook, Pinterest and Twitter and share our posts with your social networks. Donate funds online at [www.TreesForTroops.org](http://www.TreesForTroops.org). The Christmas SPIRIT Foundation is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization and donations are tax deductible. Double your donation: some employers will match your charitable donations. Check with your company's human resources department to see if your employer offers a charitable matching program or if you are a federal employee, select #12283 in the Combined Federal Campaign. When you purchase your family's tree, ask your Christmas tree retailer if they are involved in Trees for Troops (look for "We Support Trees for Troops" signs). Many Christmas tree retailers accept donations or provide other opportunities to support the program. During Trees for Troops Weekend, visit one of the participating farms, lots or retail locations to purchase. Christmas Tree or make a monetary donation. To learn more, visit our website at [www.TreesForTroops.org](http://www.TreesForTroops.org) or email [info@TreesForTroops.org](mailto:info@TreesForTroops.org)

- 2.07 Internal Affairs Chairman Acting Chairman Chang** asked for the report from **Conventions and Meetings Acting Committee Chairmen Cox**. Basically, the preparations for the 2017 convention in Syracuse are complete. The Son's headquarters hotel will be at the Doubletree on Carrier Circle, the same as the last 2. The contract is already signed. A block of rooms is reserved strictly for the Son's. These rooms will be held until the registrations deadline. The Meet the Candidates Lunch will be at the Doubletree. The installation lunch will be held at the Cicero Legion. Those plans are already complete. The golf tournament on Wednesday will be at Greenview. The details are being finalized. There are a few small details (busing and parade) to be finalized.
- Member Training and Development Committee Chairmen Jarvis** reported that there will be no changes to the advisors seminar or the leadership class this year. The committee is still looking at doing the Advisors seminar every other year. If this were to happen we would need to find something to fill the time slot as we do not want to lose the room. We would be leaning towards a program that tells the members of the Legion what the sons are doing. This will need to be done with the help of the Public Relations Committee. The two breakout sessions for mid-winter will be Membership and V.A. &R... The committee is asking for \$500.00 to purchase thumb drives to use as hand out instead of doing cd's.
- Membership Committeemen Chairman Verstrete** reported that the National Commanders theme is be a superhero and sign up three American heroes. Upon doing this it is hopefully that they will sign up their family members. We have a goal of 30,000 for the 2016 membership year. As far as the 2017 membership year goes, so far we missed our October 12<sup>th</sup> goal by 3,548 members. We need to work on this. Dues reminders will be sent out from National in September, January, and April. We need to

make sure that we get our OCF's in; in a timely manner that way we get our membership cards and it will be easier to reach the early membership goals. We currently have 53 Squadrons that have not sent in their OCF's. We also need to check the 21 Squadrons that are still showing a zero and find out why. Last year we ended the year at 100.4% with a retention rate at just over 91%.

**A motion was made by ANEC Chang and duly seconded to accept the Internal Affairs report which was carried.**

**2.08 Legislative Chairman G. Gibbs** reported his committee is poised to begin another exciting legislative year. Much of the political action this year will take a back seat to the presidential campaigns and the elections. Your Detachment's committee consists of six members; Greg Gibbs, Charles Duffy, Ken Kraetzer, Jeff Jordan, Jeff Truax and David Perry. This year we have already had several *Legislative Alerts* from the National Organization. Many of the things that have been passed years ago are under fire and we must constantly remain diligent to protect the rights that we already have. Our Washington D.C. On-the-Hill Days are scheduled for February 26 – March 1, 2017. The Unofficial Eater Regional Gathering will take place in New Jersey that following weekend of March 3-4, hosted by NVC Joe Korba. The Albany on the Hill Days will be in early March as well. If you wish to stay on top of the Legislative arena, log into the National Legion website at [legion.org/legislative](http://legion.org/legislative). Go into the site and register yourself for the Legislative Action Center, you will automatically receive bulletins and you will be able to automatically and immediately send your senator a letter with your opinion on an issue with the click of one key on your computer. It is easy to host a Squadron Legislative Meeting as a portion of your regularly schedule Squadron meetings. Just in to the National Legion Legislative website, pick an issue – a bill or a resolution and have your members write a letter on that issue and send it off to your congressmen. Help them out by getting your Senators address ahead of time, get a sample letter (which is easily available on the legion website), provide them with the paper and pen and go to it. Help them see how easy it is to make an impact on your Legislator for the benefit of veterans and active military. Legislation is something that every SAL member can get involved with in their own way and it all makes a huge difference for our veterans, now and in the future. Get involved in the election process, volunteer to work the polls, avoid the apathy by encouraging the first time voters to actually vote, help the elderly to get to the voting places, make sure your post veterans are able to vote and help transport them too.

**A motion was made by V/C Burtch and duly seconded to accept the Legislative report which was carried.**

**2.09 Public Relations Chairman Bruce Cinquegrana** reported I would first like to acknowledge the members of our Commission: Jim Coates, Timothy Van Patten II, William Clancy, Kevin Harrington and Ken Kraetzer. We are all there to help and assist, so please call on use at any time. Our contact information is on the Detachment website and on the back page of The Liberty Newsletter. While we have been running a Collaborative PR Fundraising effort with a local organization at our State Wide events this year, we opted out for this weekend, as we want to make sure we do what can to support Doc. We are in the process of planning an event for Mid-Winter and you will hear more as the time gets closer. We talked at convention about PR Tools that might help our membership. We have looked at the current PR Manual (it can be found under Forms, Documents, and Manuals in MEMBERS on the website). There are several copies available at the table, as well as DVDs of the current PR Tools that are available. It is all pretty comprehensive, maybe too complicated, for the average Squadron. So, we are working on putting together a Mini-Manual of maybe the most important 5 or 6 tools and templates that we feel would be most helpful to members. With our Post Convention issue of The Liberty, we initiated a "Theme" approach, where we identified a specific subject to feature. We not only see doing this as a PR/information tool, but as an educational tool as well. Our theme for that issue was the Consolidated Report Process, and we hope that information and tips people shared was helpful. We would like to

continue that and are always open to suggestions for these or subject matter at any time. Since the last Mid-Winter Conference, we have discussed the significant importance of the PR Table in light of the image and helpfulness we like to portray. The table is increasingly less and less Sons interactive, and more and more Legionnaire interactive. Last Mid-Winter we ended up with almost 10 referrals that we made to our Vice Commanders. These ranged anywhere from how I start a Squadron, to how do I get rid of a Squadron, to how do I attract better leaders in our Sons, etc. etc. So, we have discussed the possibility of manning the table with a mix of Advisors, Vice Commanders, and District Commanders, in addition to PR members. We hope you will support us in that endeavor. We also feel that it is increasingly a distraction from our intent to sell anything at the table. We therefore recommend that while we understand the fundraising needs we may have, that a separate table be used for that specific function when deemed necessary. We have begun to look at the pros and cons, and ramifications, of a Password-Protected” or “Member only” section of the website. This would be to encourage members to renew their memberships, as well as to perhaps have a section for more sensitive data that is only available to certain individuals. Stay tuned on that. We are also looking at better ways of communication. And this is just not exclusive to Public Relations outside of the Organization, but communication within the organization; both top to bottom and bottom to top. This has as much to do with everyone understanding the structure of the Sons and their individual responsibilities in it, as it does how we share information outside of the organization. This may include assigning an email address to every Squadron in the Detachment, so that regardless of who the person is, the message will still get out. This may include development of a Distribution chart by position, that outlines who needs to be included on particular communications, to insure the word gets out. This may include the consolidation of sources sending information out, so that there are minimal sources of information, and those sources are using the correct distribution. And finally, this has in the past, and will continue to include our HQ office, in being aware of and developing the information that is most useful and getting it to the correct people. So, I anticipate that the Public Relations Commission will be quite busy this year, in addition to always tweaking our website and making effective use of Social Media. There are a number of tools and policies that National is now working on in those regards that will also help us all. And I know I repeat this every time I speak but we need to be reminded that anyone who is a member of the Sons of the American Legion is indirectly a member of the Public Relations Commission, as everything they do is as representative of the Sons of the American Legion. It is thereby the face of the Sons of the American Legion to the Public. So we need to remind our membership and in the same context, train our membership, on the importance of Public Relations and to accomplish it effectively.

**A motion was made by V/C Clancy and duly seconded to accept the Public Relations report which was carried.**

- 2.10 VA & R Chairman Cox** reported..... I have very little to report other than the results of this morning's Commission meeting. The most important thing is the results of the 2015 Walk-A-Thon. As reported at the Convention in Binghamton last year's walk raised \$20,600.00, with the proceeds divided evenly between the Sons and Auxiliary. I thank Annie for sending me copies of the transmittal letters sent with each of the checks to the VA Hospitals and Homes as well as the Fisher House. She also sent me copies of the thank you notes and letters from virtually all of the recipients. I have continued my volunteer work at the Syracuse VA Hospital. I am also on the Executive Committee of the Syracuse VAVS. I encourage everyone to consider volunteering at their local VA Hospital or Home. Even if it is only a few hours here and there your help will be appreciated. I contacted those members of the Commission that I could reach and asked them to bring any ideas that they thought should be discussed at the committee/commission break out meetings today. The results of that meeting are as follows: The walk will be on Sat, April 22, 2017. I will contact Department President Debbie about participating. We will need to enlist help of community (boy scouts, girl scouts, and riders). We would like the District Committee to spearhead the walk in their

areas. We are looking at updating title (SOS-Serving our Soldiers). We need to get the info into The Liberty. Use our corporate sponsor letters. We want Bruce to help us with his talks. We need to work on getting information about W. P. O'Connell and Charles B. Rigsby award to the individual squads. We will be getting information about the Woman's Vet Rehabilitation program for Mid-Winter. On the national level, VA&R Donations: \$1,618,370.00 25% increase Also I would like to congratulate "Gabe" as this year's winner of the Charles B. Rigsby Volunteer of the Year award. Additionally, he will be interviewed this week by Mike Piper, National Editor of the Son's newsletter. **A motion was made by V/C Bosford and seconded to accept the V.A. &R report which was carried.**

**2.11 Commanders Advisory Chairmen Santa Croce** reported that he and Bruce started talking while they were at the Washington Conference while trying to stay away from the other member who were there and were sick. I had the pleasure of hearing Commander Bruce speak while they were in New York City for their first visitations. He did very well. After hearing all our leaders give their speeches it was clear to me that this was going to be a very good year as they all have great messages. **A motion was made by ANEC Change and seconded to accept the Commanders Advisory report and was carried.**

**2.12 3<sup>rd</sup> District Acting Commander Myrtle** reported I am sorry I cannot make the Fall DEC meeting as my wife and I are on vacation. I have asked that my report here be read and placed in the minutes in my absence. Since the Department Convention in July I have been stressing membership and that while high numbers are great we also need active membership. Our Program is only as good as the members within and that requires hard work and dedication to keep us moving forward. We have all seen where the same handful of people are running around doing the work and we all have to realize that after a while this will take a toll. I emphasize that instead of having a few members do major amounts of the work we should have everyone do a little and complete the job with less stress on the individual members. I look forward to working with the many squadrons in my district to achieve 100% membership this coming year and to make sure that consolidated reports are prepared and turned in on time. I look forward to continuing my work with 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> District Detachment, Vice Commander Ike Bosford. I was not sure about moving up in the ranks in the Sons, but Ike, Kevin Harrington, Bob Myrtle and Dave Bishop all spoke to me and showed me that there was nothing to worry about and that they would be there to assist me in my endeavors. I must say that with this type of encouragement it is no wonder why the Sons are such a powerful entity within the American Legion Family. I will use their wisdom and guidance to promote and encourage others to move up through the ranks and to continue to show what the Sons are about and are capable of. My personal project that I work on in and out of the Sons is the increasing problem of veteran homelessness and trying to get veterans back into the workforce and provide them the tools they need to help themselves. One thing we do is receive donations of clothing, in particular suits and dress clothes that can be used for job interviews and for job attire. When I first started this project in 2013 there were at any given time over 68,000 homeless veterans, current statistics have the number around 40,000 which in itself is an impressive decline, but that is not enough. We need to completely eliminate this number and make sure that our defenders and their families are provided with opportunities to enter the workforce, receive adequate healthcare and that they are treated with the dignity they deserve. I am the proud husband and father of veterans and I cannot express enough my gratitude for everything the Sons do for the American Legion. I am so glad I was given the chance to work with such fine people **A motion was made by 3<sup>rd</sup> District Acting Commander Myrtle and seconded to accept the 3<sup>rd</sup> District report which was carried.**

**2.13 4<sup>th</sup> District Commander Williams** reported as a newly elected 4<sup>th</sup> District Commander it's been busy. Started out with my first convention as the 4<sup>th</sup> District Commander, I was

honored to be at the Turning Point Parade which was the turning point of the Revolutionary War. Then onto my first visitation tour in the 4<sup>th</sup> District. It was great to tour with the Detachment Commander Bruce, Department Commander John and Department President Deb. Before visitation tour got started I got challenged to do the Suicide Awareness for our Veterans that are committing 22 suicides a day. The challenge was 22 pushups a day for 22 days. With help from the visitation team, I did my 22 pushups along the way as many different Legion posts. I completed my challenge. **A motion was made by 4<sup>th</sup> District Commander Williams and seconded to accept the 4<sup>th</sup> District report which was carried.**

- 2.14 8<sup>th</sup> District Commander and Historian Van Patten** reported First, I'd like to thank the new membership of the 8<sup>th</sup> District and the Detachment of New York for electing me to their respective positions. In August I attended the Department Membership Workshop for the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Districts in Leroy. Daryl did a fantastic job with his presentation. I also went to Cincinnati for the National Convention and sat in on the Americanism and Membership workshops, both were very educational. Throughout the remainder of August and September, I tried to make contact with the Squadrons that were still missing their OCF's. I attended the annual Commander gathering held at the Buffalo VA where they discussed the upcoming improvements to the VA Healthcare System as well as identify areas that could use Legion support. I was able to attend a county meeting for Chautauqua and was pleased to see some of their members show for our first district meeting of the year in October that was held in Dunkirk. I was also given the opportunity to handle the A/V aspects of Congressman Higgins Military Academy Evening where he, along with representatives of all branches of military, instructed students on how to apply for appointments to the academies. This informational meeting was well attended by WNY Students and their families. I had the opportunity to photograph the second annual 5k race held to support the Homeless Female Veterans Home that is to be built in Erie County. Just yesterday the 8<sup>th</sup> District played host to National American Legion Commander Charles Schmidt. We started the day with a tour of the Niagara Falls Air Reserve Station, a trip to Niagara Falls, and concluded with a dinner at the Hamburg post that concluded with the presentation of \$6,700 to the Commanders Project. Seventh District has their work cut out for them tonight. Our history book fell short to the detachment of Vermont this year, but I would like to present our entry to our Jr. Past Detachment Commander Joseph Santa Croce. **A motion was made by Historian Van Patten and seconded to accept the 8<sup>th</sup> District and Historians report which was carried.**
- 2.15 9<sup>th</sup> District Commander Duffy** reported District 9 has had a productive season in its first year of being organized. Our Vice Chairman, Joe Guidice, deserves the credit for organizing district meetings in both Rockland and Orange Counties. New faces are appearing at each of these meetings, noting that there is increased interest in supporting our newly formed District 9. Vice Chairman Joe Guidice has recruited two additional members to our executive committee. **A motion was made by 9<sup>th</sup> District Commander Duffy and seconded to accept the 9<sup>th</sup> District report which was carried.**
- 2.16 10<sup>th</sup> District acting Commander Cerullo** reported that we are having a hard time getting Counties and District motivated to attend the meetings. They are active in there post and just wish to stay there. It is hard to move forward when you lose a key player. The Suffolk County Sons mailed a letter to the 20 Squadrons in the County to let them know about the upcoming State visitation and we are getting a great response. **A motion was made by acting 10<sup>th</sup> District Commander Cerullo and seconded to accept the 10<sup>th</sup> District report which was carried.**
- 2.17 Vice Commander Clancy** reported we have been making great progress. The 9<sup>th</sup> District is doing very well. They are communicating and working very well together. They are

working with a couple of Post to reactivate their Squadrons. Bronx County is has a full slate of Officers and is planning fund raiser the year. The will be advertising this event to let the communities know that they are and what they are doing. The next six months I will be working with Commander of the Intrepid Post on a fund raising event to get awareness of the Sons in Manhattan.

**A motion was made by V/C Clancy and duly seconded to accept the Vice Commander report. This was carried.**

- 2.18 Vice Commander DeAngelis** reported it's good to be here in Phelps, NY, another beautiful area in our great state of New York. Yesterday was fun playing golf with our fellow sons. It was my first time playing golf and I learned that I am not very good yet but will start practicing more. It was a good summer in the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 10 districts. I attended many functions in my area. Richmond County family Clambake attended by Ike and Gaither and some ladies returning from the national convention making a pit stop in Richmond County to visit us I attended many Squadron barbecues in Kings Richmond in Nassau County. I also did a successful legacy run well attended by Westchester, Bronx, Nassau, and Suffolk County's Legion Family. Department visitations came around early September so far attending Queens, Kings and Richmond County Visitations looking forward to attending Nassau and Suffolk in the upcoming month. Have a new squadron in broad Channel Queens which has received its 2017 cards and are planning their first meeting. Membership in my area is doing very well, so far putting the 2<sup>nd</sup> district in first place thanks to Richmond County who is at 60%. I believe the 10<sup>th</sup> District is also doing well in 4<sup>th</sup> place. Thanks to everyone who is sending the transmittals up early. In closing I just want to say thanks for having me and hope everyone has an enjoyable remainder of the weekend.

**A motion was made by V/C DeAngelis and duly seconded to accept Vice Commander's report which was carried.**

- 2.19 Vice Commander Bosford** reported at this times there isn't a lot to report since most Squadrons are just starting to get going after a long summer. In July I was asked to play golf by Squadron 337 Broadalbin for Make a Wish this tournament raised over \$11,000. This was done as a Legion Family. In early September, Gaither and I went around 4<sup>th</sup> District and handed out membership cards to some squadrons that had not turned in the OCF's. On September 16<sup>th</sup>, the 4<sup>th</sup> District Visitations began with Commander Bruce, Commander Sampson, and President Debbie. We traveled through our 11 counties and over 1100 miles. During one of our visitations we were given a tour of the Veterans homes in Ballston Spa. There are 2 homes, one is for mend and the other is for female veterans. They are allowed to stay up to 2 years in these homes. The men's home was established in 1988. It has 12 beds and has been running at full capacity. They provide veterans and other both shelter and support within an environment that offers dignity, integrity and most of all hope. They help with employment as well as helping with veteran's get permanent housing. The Guardian house was established in 2011 and is for female veterans. They are non-profit and can use all the help they can get. If you would like to help you can go to their website [www.vethelpny.org](http://www.vethelpny.org).

**A motion was made by V/C Bosford and seconded to accept the Vice Commander report which was carried.**

- 2.20 Vice Commander Burtch** reported Since Detachment Convention in Binghamton; I have been very busy keeping up with the many duties and responsibilities associated with the office of Vice Commander for the Sons of the American Legion. I started with the 6<sup>th</sup> District Homecoming in Homer on August 20<sup>th</sup>. It was great to get together with my traveling party from last year and just relax and have fun. Next on the agenda was a double header in Syracuse on August 14<sup>th</sup>. We had a District membership meeting at East Syracuse Legion in the morning and a Detachment Convention meeting in the afternoon at Mattydale post. September was just as busy, beginning with the 5<sup>th</sup> District Auxiliary Fall Conference held in Little Falls on September 9<sup>th</sup>. Then I attended a funeral service

for my squadron member Carl Lieber on Sept. 14<sup>th</sup>. Then on September 18<sup>th</sup>, the Oneida County Sons had their first meeting of the year, and it was very well attended – 8 squadrons and 23 sons were present. The next weekend, September 25<sup>th</sup> was the Oneida county golf tournament to support the Citrin military rehab program. The County had 10 teams and raised about \$500 for the veterans program. Visitations for the 5<sup>th</sup> District started in Herkimer County on the 30<sup>th</sup> of September. Commander Bruce Ruthven gave a great speech and set the tone for the remaining visitations by stressing improvement in communications and reporting. We then traveled to Oneida County on the 1<sup>st</sup> of October, Onondaga on the 2<sup>nd</sup>, Oswego County on the 3<sup>rd</sup>, Jefferson County on the 4<sup>th</sup> and finished our tour in Lewis County on October 5<sup>th</sup>. We saw many noteworthy places and things, including; NEADS in Rome, the Gregory J. Harris military courtesy room in the Syracuse airport, Bolt Castle and the 1000 islands river region on the Jefferson County boat cruise, the AMF bowling pin factory, and some of the very best fall foliage you could ask for. The only negative thing that happened was on the last day of our Visitations, we were informed of the passing of Department President Debbie Kryczkowski's mother, so she left us to make arrangements and take care of her family. We were all saddened to hear the news and dinner was a little more somber without Madam President. I would like to take a moment and thank all the Sons and all the Legion Family members that worked so hard to put on our Visitations. It is truly an honor and privilege to travel with Legion Commander John, Auxiliary President Debbie and Sons Commander Bruce as they meet and greet all our hardworking members across the state. Our leaders are all doing a stand up job and should be commended on their dedication and selfless service to our organization. Next I would like to touch on membership and congratulate George Glen Hughes Squadron 890 in Oneida County in 5<sup>th</sup> District for reaching 100% membership in 2017. Along the same lines I would also like to acknowledge Schuyler County in the 6<sup>th</sup> district for all ready obtaining 60.43% paid membership for 2017. I know it is early in the year, but we still have a lot of work to do to make 100% in both districts. I know that we will get **around to it**, with a little planning, hard work and perseverance. Let us make Commander Ruthven proud by having 100% membership and 100% reporting this year before State Convention in Syracuse. I know we can do it. In closing, I have made a challenge to my County and the 5<sup>th</sup> District and now to the Detachment of New York. At the Oneida County Visitation, my Squadron 1448 in Oriskany made a donation to Commander Bruce Ruthven of \$146 for the Child Welfare Foundation. That \$146 represents one dollar per member of our squadron for the CWF. I think it is time that the Detachment of New York takes its' rightful place on top of the CWF donation leaderboard. If you have upcoming Visitations, please consider presenting a similar check to Commander Bruce at your visitation or at Midwinter Convention or mail your donation directly to detachment. I know we can easily reach Commander Ruthven's goal of 30,000 members this year, and I believe, with a little motivation, we can also raise \$30,000 for CWF.

**A motion was made by V/C Burtch and seconded to accept Vice Commander's report which was carried.**

- 2.21 ANEC Chang** reported that he is looking forward to the visitations. He thanked the members for electing him. He looks forward to serving as your ANEC and representing us at the National Level.

**A motion was made by A.N.E.C Chang and seconded to accept the ANEC report which was carried.**

- 2.22 NEC Bishop** reported my duties as the NEC began with attending our National Convention in Cincinnati, Ohio in August. National Commander Kevin Collier closed business to his administrative year as the National Commander of the Sons of the American Legion elected Jeff Fran from the great state of Arizona to serve as the National Commander of the Sons of the Legion for the 2016-2017 administrative year. Commander Jeff is a 33 year Member of the Sons of the American Legion and gets his eligibility to the Sons from his father's service in the United States Army during the

Korean War. Commander Jeff Frain's theme this year is "Knowledge is power" which encourages all members attending National meetings to bring back information that they pick up at meetings, classes and from commission and committee reports back to their detachment. Also Commander Frain has put out a booklet on knowledge is power which is available to any squadron in the Country. I do have one of the earlier booklets that was handed out at convention that has the order form in it, I would encourage all our district Commanders to get the order form and order the booklets to hand out to County Commanders who in turn get that info and order forms down to our Squadrons. Commander Frain also has a membership theme as well which is "Be a superhero and sign up three American heroes" our national commander is asking all our sons members to try and sign up three members in the American Legion. The numbers of members in the American Legion have been declining over the last few years and this can another way the sons can help our parent organization. Not only will this help our parent organization grow but it will also give the potential of signing up members to the Sons of the American Legion and the American Legion Auxiliary as well. Also elected at the National Convention was National Vice Commander for the Eastern Region Joseph Korba from New Jersey. I will be working with Vice Commander Korba throughout the year via conference calls and emails to go over membership and other agendas for the eastern region. Last year the Child Welfare Foundation had their theme "wouldn't it be heaven if we hit seven" Well I am happy to report that CFW did hit that goal and at the end of Convention the Sons of the American Legion has donated over 7 million dollars to the Child Welfare Foundation. This brings us to our new theme "Make no debate we will hit 8." The following National Awards were awarded to the Detachment of N.Y. Under Americanism – The Gerald Atwood-Edward Beyea-Raymond York award went to John Handle SQ. 89 Vestal NY. Also under Americanism the largest donation to the American Legacy Fund Eastern Region went to the Detachment of NY. Under VA&R the Kirby-Keplar award went to John Handle SQ. 89 Vestal NY. Also under VA&R the Charles B. Rigby Award which is one of the most prestigious awards of the Sons of the American Legion and goes to the nation's volunteer of the Year went our own Gabe Cinquegrana of the Detachment of New York. Our congratulation goes out to Gabe on a well-deserved award. My final comment on the National Convention is probably the biggest and most exciting for the Detachment of N.Y. It was under "For the Good of the Sons" when Past National Commander Douglas Bible from Minnesota announced that the 2017-2018 leading candidate for National Commander is Danny Smith (NE) and the second leading candidate for National Commander 2018-2019 is our own Greg 'Doc' Gibbs from the Detachment of N.Y. The next event I attended was the Fall National Executive Committee which was held in Indy, Oct 7-9<sup>th</sup>; We had nine representatives at this year's meetings from the Detachment of New York. On Saturday morning the N.E.C. had a short session. Commander Frain addressed the N.E.C. as did the National Liaison to the Sons Jon Kerestan. Mr. Kerestan announces that the son's had a renewal rate last year of 89.16% which was an all-time high. Mr. Kerestan also mentioned that the 2018 membership cards have been redesigned and will have an additional box for dual members. After Mr. Kerestan's remarks Commander Frain asked if there were any donations to be made at this time and our Detachment Commander Bruce Ruthven approached the podium and made a donation of \$2,500 to the Child Welfare Foundation on behalf of the Detachment of N.Y. After the N.E.C. session all the Commissions and Committee's held their meetings to go over this year's goals and agendas. I have handed those minutes of those meetings to our Detachment chairman of the respective committee's this morning before their meetings so they have an idea of what is on the National agenda. Also after the N.E.C. session on Saturday morning the Member Training and Development Committee held their Commanders Class in which Past Detachment Commander Gary Denmon serves on? This year's class had 27 commanders and 16 guests for a total of 43 participants including our Detachment Commander Bruce Ruthven and leading candidate for Detachment Commander William Clancy. Commander Bruce received her certificate at the Commanders Class Breakfast the following morning. On Sunday the N.E.C.

reconvened and the entire commission and committee chairman gave their reports. During the VA&R report the Chairman asked the National Sergeant-at-Arms to escort the winner of the Charles B. Rigby Award Gabe Cinquegrana to the podium where Gabe received his cover. It truly was a proud moment for Gabe and the Detachment of N.Y. **Motion was made by N.E.C. Denmon and seconded to accept the report which was carried.**

**2.23 Judge Advocate Downey** reported last month my 2<sup>nd</sup> daughter had a new auxiliary member; my daughter that lives in Kansas just informed me that she will be having a baby boy in November and he will be a son's member of the Detachment of New York.

When the commander in is your area don't be afraid to take money out of your pocket to make a donation to the CWF. When doing changes to your Constitution and Bylaws or if you are having a problem at your post or squadron use the chain of command. Do not call headquarters first. We have not had any submissions for new or changes to any constitution or bylaws.

**A motion was made by V/C Clancy and seconded to accept the Judge Advocates report which was carried.**

**2.24 Master Sergeant-at-Arms Falco** reported that he has collected fines for the commander's project in the amount of \$102.00.

**A motion was made by ANEC Change and seconded to accept the Sergeant-at-Arms report which was carried.**

**2.25 Adjutant Robert Avery** reported that we did reach 100% membership by National Convention. He thanked Gaither and his team for a great job and is looking forward to working with Daryl and his team another great year. Please don't hold your membership it cost us a lot of money to mail renewal cards three times a year. The 2018 cards will have spot on them for email address as well as birthdates. The Detachment manual and Executive Committee Manual will be out shortly. I will have Gabe do a blast on social media to get them out. Most forms are now available on line in a fillable format. Thanks Gabe for all you do with the website and social media. Some upcoming dates are; Mid-winter January 20-22, Washington Conference February 26-March 1, Hill Day March 6&7, National Children and Youth Conference September 15-17, National Americanism Conference September 22-24.

**A motion was made by V/C Bosford and seconded to accept the Adjutant's report which was carried.**

**2.26 Detachment Commander Ruthven** reported The Department of New York has put together a fantastic traveling party. With Legion Commander John Sampson, Auxiliary President Debbie Kryczkowski, and my-self, we are promoting the American Legion Family, stressing the need to improve communication and increase the use of social media. We have a great message, but it needs to be heard by more SAL members. We need to do a better job of getting more Sons at the county visitations. The American Legion has welcomed us into the family, making us part of the visitations; we need to do our part by getting our members in attendance. Thank you, to the District Commanders and Detachment Vice Commander for your assistance and guidance throughout the county visitations. We have met some fantastic legion family members, toured some great veteran and historical sites, and we have been treated royally. Some highlights include Teddy Roosevelt's home, and the New York City Veterans Day parade. Our National Commander, Jeff Frain, has a request for you to become a "Super Hero" and sign up three new "American Heroes" into the American Legion. By helping legion membership grow, we also help the Auxiliary and Sons grow. Jeff's project is CWF. Let's help reach his \$1 million goal and make a \$1.25 donation per member. Thank you to all who participated in the golf scramble fundraiser for "Doc", and for your attendance at our Fall DEC meeting on October 14th and 15th. This meeting is so critical in getting our commission programs for the year off and running. That was the easy part now let's

get the information out to your Squadron and promote what we set out to do for a successful year. Don't you wish we had a larger email list that would make corresponding with our Squadron so much easier. We need your help in getting the word out to update our list of emails. Go to the Detachment website and become a Subscriber, and encourage everyone to do the same. Make your plans now for the Mid-Winter Conference in Albany from January 20th to 22nd. The agenda and housing forms are now online. District Commanders are reminded to submit the names of two members to attend the Leadership Workshop class. The Joint Homecoming is scheduled for June 9th & 10th in Oneida County at Vernon Downs Hotel and Casino. We are planning for a fun filled Legion Family event. More information will be forthcoming.

**A motion was made by V/C Burtch and seconded to accept the Detachment Commander's report which was carried.**

- **A motion was made by V/C Burtch and seconded to accept the pre submitted reports which was carried.**

**3.00 SICK CALL & RELIEF**

- 3.01** PDC Smallcomb will be having knee replacement surgery in December.
- 3.02** Master at Arms Falco's Uncle passed away recently.
- 3.03** Auxiliary President Kryczkowski's mother passed away.

**4.00 UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

- 4.01** The Detachment awards from the prior administrative year were handed out.

**5.00 NEW BUSINESS**

- 5.01** **A motion was made by 8<sup>th</sup> Commander VanPatten and seconded to purchase thumb drives for the M.T. &D. Committee not to exceed \$500.00 which was carried.**
- 5.02** **A motion was made by V/C Bosford and seconded to put in two line items in the budget for \$1,000.00 each to send a representative of the Detachment of New York to the Fall National Children & Youth and Americanism Conferences in Indianapolis each year which was carried.**

**6.00 FOR THE GOOD OF THE SONS**

- 6.01** Commander Ruthven thanked the Post and Squadron for lunch and the golf tournament.
- 6.02** A plaque was presented to the Color Guard of Squadron #457 from the Waterloo Memorial Day Museum for their support.
- 6.03** **A motion was made by V/C Burtch and seconded to donate \$100.00 to the Trees for Troops program which was carried.**
- 6.04** **A motion was made by V/C Bosford to reimburse Chairmen Cinquegrana his expenses for mileage and meals while entertaining Mike Pipher from the National Update for a story about our Volunteer of the Year. This motion was carried.**
- 6.05** **A motion was made by Acting 10<sup>th</sup> District Commander Cerullo and seconded to donate \$20,000 to the Committee to Elect Gregg "Doc" Gibbs National Commander. This motion was carried.**
- 6.06** Gregg "Doc" Gibbs thanked everyone for their support. He also spoke a little about his theme, "What's up Doc". There is a quilt being raffled for the Committee to Elect and the winner will be drawn at Mid-Winter.
- 6.07** If you are giving or sending a check for "Doc" make it out to the Committee to Elect Doc Gibbs and send to Gary Demon.
- 6.08** 7<sup>th</sup> District Commander Rose presented Doc Gibbs a check for \$500.00 from the 7<sup>th</sup> District Sons.
- 6.09** A check was present to Doc Gibbs for \$1,000.00 from the golf tournament, and \$424 in cash from passing the hat around for his Campaign Committee.

- There being no further business to come before the Meeting, the Master Sgt.-at-Arms retrieved the POW/MIA banner, Chaplain Parks offered the Closing Prayer, following which, the membership saluted our Nation's Flag as the Color Guard retrieved them.
- The Meeting was adjourned at 4:10 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Handwritten signature of Raymond J. Jarvis in cursive script.

Assistant Adjutant Raymond Jarvis

Handwritten signature of Robert J. Avery in cursive script.

Adjutant Robert J. Avery