

The Fighting Sixth

Manitowoc
Calumet
Winnebago



Fond du Lac
Green Lake
Marquette

Sixth District Department of Wisconsin The American Legion

Minutes of the Fall Conference Meeting Sunday October 25, 2009

The meeting called to order at 9:00 am by District Commander Helms at CJ's in Ripon.
Hand Salute to the Colors, Opening Prayer, Pledge of Allegiance, POW/MIA remembrance, and Preamble recited.

Welcome Speech 6th District Commander Helms-Commander Helms thanked all the delegates for being present today and acknowledged the host Post Weiske-Farrell Post 351 Montello.

6th District Auxiliary President Sandra Hinkle-Sandra thanked the District for the conference invitation and wished that we have a good conference.

Special Guest Department VC Robert Batty-VC Batty thanked Commander Helms for the kind introduction. VC Batty commended the District for being at 70.95% membership and is currently in 5th position. VC Batty's District's are all in the top 5 ensuring that he is currently in 1st place. VC Batty discussed the process to renew membership online. Department will make reports to the post when online renews are made. Department is currently working on improving this communication procedure. Wisconsin is one of 5 states using online registration. The **ALPOP** computer program that allows posts to manage their membership records directly will be free to all after Jan 1st. VC Batty polled the delegates on how many use the internet, Facebook, and Twitter accounts. He recommended that all delegates read the article in the recent Legion Magazine by Commander Hill concerning recruiting younger members. VC Batty read the first 2 paragraphs of the article. He stated that for WWII, Korean, and Vietnam veterans the traditional Legion Post worked, but today's Veterans feel more comfortable on the internet. VC Batty challenged all Post to have a computer and members that are online representing the Post. VC Batty recommended that now is also the time for Posts to contact all members that have not renewed yet either by phone, letter, or in person. VC Batty said that Administrative Manuals are ready. Posts should hang on to this manual because in future years only the pages that have changes will sent out. The Administrative Manual is also available for download on at the Department website. VC Batty indicated that he is available to speak at County or Post functions. If you invite him you should also contact the County and District Commanders so they are aware he is speaking in the District. VC Batty announced that he is a candidate for Department Commander and will have a hospitality suite at Mid-Winter Conference.

Installation of VC Central- Due to a vacancy, Commander Helms appointed Pete Hennes the new District VC central. The appointment was approved by phone poll of the DEC. Department VC Batty conducted the installation ceremony for Pete Hennes. Commander Helms thanked Pete for stepping up to the challenge.

Host Post Welcome Speech-Ken Kersky welcomed the delegates and encouraged them to participate in the raffles being held by the host Post.

Roll Call-A roll call of all Officers was conducted with the District Adjutant/Finance Officer excused, Calumet County Commander not present, all others present. Open offices include Judge Advocate and Sergeant-at-Arms.

A roll call of all Posts was conducted and a quorum was in place.

Spring Conference Minutes-Minutes of 2009 Spring Conference were emailed and passed out through their County Commanders and asked for everyone to read if they have already not done so. Edgar Ott made a motion to accept the Spring minutes as written and second by Jeff Puddy any further discussion or corrections and having none would then like approval of the minutes as written. Motion Carried.

Fall DEC Minutes-Minutes of 2009 Fall DEC were emailed and passed out through their County Commanders and asked for everyone to read if they have already not done so. Keith Glaser made a motion to accept the Fall DEC minutes as written and second by Ken Kersky any further discussion or corrections and having none would then like approval of the minutes as written. Motion Carried. It was noted that all minutes are available on the District website (www.wilegion6.org) prior to the conference meetings.

Finance Reports- Finance Reports/Budget were handed out for review. It was noted that all dues have been paid and the only expense so far this years is the website expense. All items are within the 2009/2010 budget that was approved at Spring Conference so no motion to approve is required.

District Officer Reports:

Commander-Commander Helms brings two messages from the Department Commander. The first is an October 31st membership deadline for the challenge the Department Commander's bet with the Auxiliary President. The 2nd is to reach 100% membership by Veterans Day. This is an easy date to remember and will put your Post in excellent position for awards. Commander Helms reminds all that membership expires December 31st not next July. It would be an excellent idea to ask your Post snowbirds to renew before they head south. Currently at the state level Wisconsin is 2000 members short of goal. It is best to remember that membership should be a "TEAM" effort. You may want to have part of your team working on renewals while the other part works on recruiting new members. The Adjutant is creating a list of when Award dates are due or you can look in the Administration Manual. The new manuals are available today for each post and county. The manual is also available on the Department website. Commander Helms has received information from the Department NEC person on appointments to National Committees. If you are interested in participating on a National Committee contact Commander Helms so he can pass your information on to Department and the NEC person. National appointments are limited but please contact Commander Helms if you have any interest. There are 2 positions open for District officers, Chaplain and Sergeant-at-Arms. Harland Zietlow has been appointed acting Chaplain but anyone is interested please contact Commander Helms. Since the offices have become open since elections, both positions will be approved by the District DEC. Commander Helms recommends that members subscribe and read the Department Adjutant's Notes on the Department website. Commander Helms discussed some of the information currently in the Adjutant's Notes such as Badger Boys fees remaining at \$235 for next year. He also discussed the Mid-Winter sweepstakes. VC Batty added that most department budgets have been cut by 5% this year and participation in the sweepstakes will help offset those budget reductions. The National website will be changing on November 9th. Expect to see the website news changing several times per day. Site navigation will also be greatly improved.

Vice-Commander East-VC Zietlow reported that Manitowoc County is at 73% membership and Calumet County is at 78%. We are beginning to see some younger Veterans moving into the organization. Harland has encouraged these younger members to attend County and District meetings. Harland discussed a bray fry that was held in Calumet county to redo a memorial. There was discussion on ways to raise money and assist younger members with the expenses associated with attending meetings such as the Mid-Winter at the Wilderness in Wisconsin Dells. Harland encouraged all posts to discuss ways to get younger members more involved.

Vice-Commander Central-VC Hennes thanked Commander Helms and the DEC for the opportunity to serve. He pledged to do the best job he can.

Vice-Commander West- VC Barke reported he has done several post officer installations. He also substituted for Commander Helms at the Post 234 summer picnic to present the Department Public Relations award to Julie Quinn and the Omro Herald. VC Barke discussed the article Julie had done on a disabled Veteran Angie Hahn that was later published in the Badger Legionnaire. VC Barke pointed out how this story highlights how younger disabled veterans are put into nursing homes without contact with people their own age. VC Barke suggested homes like King and other could be restructured to accommodate younger Veterans. Sadly Angie is still in a nursing home and has been told she will probably not improve from her present condition. VC Barke stated that at the State Convention he will discuss the issue of Bob Krause's membership with Past Commander Kurtz and Duckworth. Fred stated that he believed membership to the American Legion should be open to all Veterans. Past Commanders Kurtz and Duckworth explained that the wartime only membership requirement is rooted in the organization's charter of 1919 with Congress. Fred pointed out that he believes that membership for Korean Veterans from 1955 to 1961 should be opened. Several resolutions in the past have tried to correct this matter. Fred asked how many believe membership should be open to these 1955-1961 Korean Veterans? And all Veterans? Commander Helms reviewed the chain of command process that any member can use to write a resolution.

Adjutant/Finance Officer-The adjutant is requesting that Posts and Counties that have not provided current election information please e-mail that information to her. There is a list included in the packets distributed today. Barbara also requests that County Commanders acknowledge receipt of "Legionnaire of the Year" and "Deceased" forms.

Chaplain-Acting Chaplain Zietlow announced he would like to be considered for the open Chaplain position. Harland stated he was a prostate cancer survivor. He discussed a recent article about prostate cancer in the Legion magazine. The article stated that only 22% of the men 20-49 get a PSA test compared to 57% of the men over 49. Harland discussed more of the facts in the article. Harland encouraged all delegates to get a PSA test.

Judge Advocate/Parliamentarian- Open Position no report

Historian-Loretta Miller invited Jack Frank to join her with her report. Loretta thanked Darryl Schmidt for all the pictures he has sent to her and invited other members to send any picture they may have. Loretta reported the Jack brought the history book that Loretta had put together 21 years ago. She invited everyone to look at it during lunch and breaks. Jack pointed out the Loretta received 1st place for this book 21 years ago. Loretta will look in to where this book should be sent for archive. It was pointed out there is also a second book for that year. Commander Helms reported that the Historian has incurred some expenses and would entertain a motion to pay those expenses. Keith Glaser made a motion to pay the Historian expenses and second by Ken Kersky any further discussion or corrections and having none. Motion Carried.

Sergeant-at-Arms-No Report

Service Officer-Keith Glaser reported that all active duty and Veterans eat free at Applebee's on November 11th Veterans Day with proof of service, such as ID card or American Legion membership card.

Short Intermission

County Commander Reports

Calumet County-No Report

Fond du Lac County-Gerald Krebsbach reported Fond du Lac County membership has gone up and down in recent years due to the older membership. He would like to thank the District Commander Helms for attending the county meeting at Mount Calvary on September 30th. He stated that District By-Laws state that county elections should be between June 5th and September 30th. They did have a meeting and election of officers on September 30th. They elected a new Adjutant from Fond du Lac and this will make it easier for them to work together. He would like to thank Larry Beuthin for all the years of service as County Adjutant. Last year Veterans Day the firing squad when to Applebee's after firing, it was quite impressive with their uniforms.

Green Lake County-Greg Polly reported that in Green Lake county they also had another wounded warrior, besides Angela Hahn, that has lost the use of his legs. The Posts in Green Lake County are working on Veterans Day programs and will be in most schools. Greg noted that Golden Corral is having a free dinner for Veterans also. It will be November 16th 5-9 PM. Greg recommended that Posts occasionally consider giving older nursing home Veterans a ride to their meetings.

Marquette County-Dan Bailey reported that each year they have a beer stand at the fair and all AL and VFW Posts and share the profits. In December Post 351 will have a free breakfast with Santa for the youth of Marquette County. December 19th there is a free lunch for the seniors at the Montello Post.

Manitowoc County-Roman Backhaus reported they just finished their baseball year and it is getting harder to get sponsors. There is a fish fry for Manitowoc County coming up this Friday at the Legion hall in Manitowoc 5-9 PM. County Youth Day held 6 weeks ago was a success.

Winnebago County-Pete Hennes reported that October 28th would be County Government Day. It will be an all day session at the county courthouse where the kids get to visit all the county departments. There will be a mock trial in the morning session. Lunch will be provided. Pete was happy to hear that Menasha will be sending 26 kids this year and encouraged all schools to send more participants.

Committee Chairperson Reports:

Americanism-Dan Bailey reported on the plans for the 6th District Americanism banquet to be held February 20th at CJ's in Ripon. It was noted that this is the same date as the State Oratorical Contest. Commander Helms noted it is now a District event, there is no host post. There was some discussion of having the dinner earlier in the day to avoid weather problems. This will be discussed further at future committee meeting.

A&G Test Program-Fred Barke reported that in late August and early September department mailed test information to the schools. By now each Post A&G Test chairman should have contacted their respective schools to encourage participation. The test is for 10th, 11th, and 12th grades. Fred noted that the deadline for test ordering is October 26th. The 50-question test will be given the week of November 2nd plus or minus a week. There is also a 300-word essay question tie breaker. Schools grade the test with a supplied key and report school winners to Fred by December 15th. The 6th District A&G Test Committee will select 2 winners for each grade and send the results to Department by January 9, 2010. Department awards \$500 scholarships to the top 12 12th graders, \$250 scholarships to the top ten 11th graders, and \$250 scholarships to the top ten 10th graders. If your schools did not receive the A&G materials it is also available in the Administrative Manual. The A&G materials are on pages 111 to 136. Jack Frank asked if the test was online? Bob Wipf stated it not online yet this year but it is still be worked on to be online next year. It was due to lack of funding to pay the website developer that kept it from being done this year. Because the odds are good, Bob encouraged all schools to get involved. Only about 5000 students actually take the paper test. It was asked what happens if someone wins and is not going to college? They win a voucher that never expires so they may use it years later if they decide to attend classes later in life. It was asked if there is a record kept at HQ of the winners? The answer is yes. When the program goes online students not schools will register. This will help promote other Legion programs.

American Legion Riders-Nancy Helms reported in May four riders go to Washington and lay a wreath on the tomb of the unknown. AL Riders also due brat fries to support the chicken BBQ at King. The AL Riders also support the Legacy Scholarship and BBS/BGS every year.

Athletic Activity-Edgar Ott reported AL Baseball is still going strong and getting stronger. 2000 tickets were sold for the all-star game, which is a record. The Brewers donate some of the ticket price back to the Legion, so keep purchasing them. The Ripon team had a great year. They won the State tournament. They went to national and placed 3rd, but it is being appealed and it is possible they may be awarded 2nd place. Edgar reminded the delegates that Baseball scholarships are available, so be sure to recommend a player from your team.

Blood Donor Program/AL Racing Team-Thomas Schmitz reported that at the convention it was stated that the American Legion is the leading blood donor among service organizations. Mount Calvary is famous for a town of 800 to have over 200 people donate. The next blood drive in Mount Calvary in November 10th. The Post always makes a financial donation and is famous for its lunch. Tom stated that he personally has donated over 6 gallons of blood. Concerning the AL Race Team, Tom has seen the car and driver at National Convention and has materials about the team if anyone would like to see them.

Camp American Legion-Jack Frank reported that he spent part of last week at Camp. The Ripon post has a cabin up there. There is a camp committee that makes rules about the cabins that are leased by posts like Ripon. Two years ago the committee made a rule that you can not cut any wood dry or wet. This is a problem for the Ripon post cabin and others because they use wood to heat the cabin. Jack has attempted to get someone on the camp committee to talk some sense into the people making the rules. They also have a fire pit and told they cannot have open fires. Commander Helms noted Jack's comments and pointed out that not only does the camp committee make rules but it is also governed by the DNR. Commander Helms will look into the issue. Commander Helms note that this year they allowed a Veteran family to use the facilities on a trial basis. They are also looking at using the camp during off-season. Commander Helms reminded the delegates to camp is the largest budget item of the Department but it the only free camp in the USA. The normal Veteran stay has been changed from a 10-day stay to a 7-day stay. VC Batty noted that the Veterans family visit was well received and the children were well behaved. Jack stated that the cabin is open to any Veteran with a doctor's recommendation. The camp does have rehabilitation staff. They are two types of cabins, the camp cabins are available free to any Veteran with a doctor recommendation. Any Veteran can rent some cabins on the other side of the lake, such as the Ripon cabin. Because some cabins are in need of work it is possible that Posts may co-sponsor a cabin. VC Batty noted that the Mid-Winter sweepstakes is one method used to fund camp. Rosemarie Pitz noted that applications for camp are available from your CVSO and are taken the 1st of April.

Children & Youth-Commander Helms noted that everyone should have received Barbara Belmont's written report in their packet.

Communications Office-Bob Wipf reported that the website has just been renewed. Bob encouraged Posts to submit information about their major events and provide pictures of the events. Information can be submitted by e-mail or regular mail. The Auxiliary has a menu on the website and is encouraged to submit their information also. The website is also where you will find the district reports and any forms you may need. Commander Helms reminded delegates that the website addresses are easy to remember. The National is www.legion.org, the Department is www.wilegion.org, and the 6th District is www.wilegion6.org. At the last conference it was suggested to publish a list of website addresses. Commander Helms noted that if you go to the 6th District website you will be able to see all those links already.

Legislative-Open Position No Report. Commander Helms suggested that you visit the national legislative alert website.

Membership Program-Open Position. Commander Helms reported as per VC Batty's earlier report the 6th District is slightly behind the 2nd and 3rd Districts. Commander Helms noted that several Posts have done well in the last couple of weeks. Remind your membership that membership expires on December 31st. No District Posts have reached 100% yet. We need to recruit new members because as an organization we are losing many WWII Veterans everyday. You need to have an answer when people ask you why should I join. National has pamphlets available to help answer these questions.

National Security-Fred Barke had no report

Dinner Intermission 11:45 to 12:45 Hand salute before break.

Afternoon Events 12:45 Until Complete

Roll Call- A roll call of all Posts was conducted and a quorum was in place.

Committee Chairperson Reports Continued

Oratorical Program-John Jindra reported the regional and department contest would be February at Ripon College. 6th District contest will be January 24th at a site yet to be determined. John is looking for a venue to hold the district event. John encouraged post chairmen to contact their respective schools to build interest in the program. John reminded the delegates that the district was cut from \$675 to \$275 budget. It is unclear how this may affect the program.

POW/MIA Coordinator-Vern Farley reported that information is available in the Legion magazine. Frank Measa from Waupun is in charge of POW/MIA issues and normally will contact Vern if there are issues. Vern spoke with him before this meeting and there was nothing to report.

Public Relations-Harland Zietlow encouraged Posts to work with their local media. Get picture of an local events and send them to the local media and Loretta Miller. We need to be in every paper every week to let people know what the Legion is doing in their community.

Public Safety-Open Position No report

SAL-No Report

VA&R-Rosemarie Pitz had no report.

Special Committee Reports-No reports

Unfinished Old Business:

Department Convention-Commander Helms reported he was pleased with the turnout of delegates at the convention. He stated that we could always use more delegates to provide better representation of the 6th District at convention. He has some awards that will be passed out later. There are notes on the District website concerning committee activity.

National Convention-Commander Helms has attended national convention before with the AL Riders, but this was the first time as a Department delegate. He attends several meetings and learning a great deal about how the nation organization operates. He encourages anyone in the future to attend if possible. Edgar Ott attended this year's convention for his 9th year. Thomas Schmitz has attended 8 conventions, with his favorite being Salt Lake City. He has been Assistant Sergeant-at-Arm four times. Ed Ott spoke of the opening ceremony with soldiers from Iraq sang the Nation Anthem. Al Kronberg was very impressed with the speakers at the convention.

Open Positions-Commander Helms encouraged people to step up and fill these open officer and committee positions.

District CD-Bob Wipf reported that the previous District Commander had wanted to develop a CD that could be used through out the District to promote the Legion on TV cable outlets. There has been no activity on this project and the project is on hold.

Collection of printer ink cartridges-Barbara Belmont is still collecting these cartridges to offset some of the cost of the Adjutant expenses.

Officer Pictures-Officer picture will be taken for the website after the meeting.

Awards Presentations-Commander Helms and the Vice-Commanders presented the following awards:

1. Anyone who has recruited one member is entitled to an "I Got One" pin. Please come forward later and pick it up.
2. Posts 156, 265, and 477 received 100% membership banners and pins. County and VC commanders should pick these up and distribute them.
3. Post 124 received a "Certificate Of Meritorious Service" for equaling or surpassing its all time high membership.
4. Post 43 received "Children & Youth Award"
5. Post 33 received "Children & Youth Award"
6. Post 70 received "Children & Youth Award"
7. Post 234 received "All Time High" membership award.
8. Post 234 received National "All Time High" membership award for 6 consecutive years.
9. Post 124 received "All Time High" membership award.
10. Post 33 received "Children & Youth Certificate Of Participation"
11. Post 124 received "Highest Percentage of Membership Increase Over Previous Year"
12. Post 70 received "Children & Youth Certificate Of Participation"
13. Post 234 received "Highest Percentage of Membership Increase Over Previous Year"
14. Post 43 received "Children & Youth Certificate Of Participation"
15. Post 234 received Department "All Time High" membership award for 5 or more years.

New Business:

6th Spring Conference Bids-Commander Helms requested bid for the spring conference to be held April 25, 2010. The bid should come from the central area. Fond du Lac Post 75 and Oshkosh Post 70 both placed bids. A vote was taken by show of hands. Fond du Lac received 19 votes and Oshkosh received 21 votes. Oshkosh wins the bid.

6th District Americanism Banquet-The banquet will be coordinated by the district, there will no longer be a host Post. The banquet will be February 20, 2010 at CJ's in Ripon. Social will be at 5:00 PM with ceremonies beginning at 5:45 PM and dinner at 6:30 PM. Department Commander will be the featured guest. Jack Frank suggested we attempt to get one of the winning speakers from the oratorical contest to speak at the banquet. Commander Helms will pursue getting the oratorical speaker.

Oratorical Contest-The regional contest will be at 10:00 AM and the Department Finals will be at 1:00 PM on February 20, 2010 at Ripon College. John Jindra has set the District contest for January 24, 2010.

Mid-Winter Conference-Conference will be January 29th -31st at the Wilderness Resort in Wisconsin Dells. Commander Helms encourages members to attend the conference. He believes the room rate is \$70.000 per night, which is a great value. The good rate is due to a multi year contract with the Wilderness. Commander Helms has a brochure for those that would like to see the facilities.

A&G Testing-Fred Barke reported that tomorrow is the last day to order tests.

Post Ownership-Department is asking that County Commanders report which Posts own their buildings. This is program designed to help Homeland Security locate possible emergency facilities in case of a natural or man-made disaster. Please send the post information to District Adjutant Barbara Belmont at bjbelmont@sbcglobal.net

For The Good Of The Legion-Pete Hennes would like to thank Rosemarie Pitz for the many years of service as Winnebago County Commander. Rosemarie reminded people to get their flu shots; most VA facilities have the vaccine. Laurie Koepke has a walker he would like to donate to King. Keith Glaser said he goes to King every Wednesday and would be willing to take it. Keith also encouraged members to donate clothing; he will be willing to take them. The Old Glory Honor Flight will be leaving this week for Washington. Any person wanting to go should contact Commander Helms about application information. The coordinator for the Honor Flight will be at Post 75 November 12, 2009 at 7:00 PM for anyone seeking more information. A representative will also be at the Post 70 Veterans Day dinner on November 11th. It was asked what the cost of the escort was? Commander Helms indicated it is about \$500 to \$600. There is no cost to the Veteran. Veterans with any serious health concern are given priority. Darryl Schmidt reported that ground has been broken for the Veterans Museum in Oshkosh. It will be located south of the EEA grounds by Highway 41 where all the flagpoles are currently positioned. The Vietnam Moving Wall will be in Medford November 11-15th. Ton Schmitz reported the "Wall" would be coming to Brillion next year in September.

Adjournment-A motion was made by Keith Glaser and seconded by Kensky to adjourn. Motion Carried.

Retirement of POW/MIA Flag

Closing Prayer-District Chaplain

Hand Salute-Retirement of Colors

Respectively submitted by Bob Wipf acting 6th District Adjutant