

Manitowoc  
Calumet  
Winnebago



Fond du Lac  
Green Lake  
Marquette

Sixth District  
Department of Wisconsin  
The American Legion

Minutes of the Spring Conference Meeting Sunday April 26, 2009

The meeting called to order at 9:10 am by District Vice Commander Zietlow at Post 75 Fond du Lac. Hand Salute to the Colors, Opening Prayer, Pledge of Allegiance, POW/MIA remembrance, and Preamble recited.

Welcome Speeches 6<sup>th</sup> District Vice Commander Zietlow – He talked about the incident a few months ago in Washington how they were going to charge back anyone using the VA Health Care and going to the members insurance and could eventually max out his insurance and lose it. The National Commander got involved and got this changed. A few weeks later they feel the Veterans coming back from the Iraq War are a security threat to the country and in a conspiracy and should be watched. This is an ongoing issue but our National Commander is on top of this. We are lucky to have this support in Washington fighting for us.

Elect Department Vice Commander Bob Batty 2<sup>nd</sup> District Commander address group. He brings us greetings and best wishes from the 2<sup>nd</sup> District. Talked about how competition is good and we should have it and is real sorry for what has happened to Bob Krause he is a good man. It is a pleasure to be here today. Told us he was drafted into the United States Army in 1969 and served till 1970. He was a military Police Officer. All four Department Vice Commanders serve on the membership committee and right now membership is a real problem. He admits there are several problems in American Legion. Should make this announcement but cannot go into details but Terry Troutman, the Department Adjutant, has been suspended as of last Friday for personal issues. It is being reviewed and might come before the Spring Dec. Further information on that will be coming out. There is a big deficit in the budget, problems in leadership, and membership. We need solid leadership at the top at this time and he hopes to provide that for us. He comes from a Legion family and is a Manufacture Representative and he works for himself. We need good leadership at top Bob Krause would have been a good man and sorry to see him go. We are a great District so don't lose heart and hang in there. If he is elected he will look at helping the 6<sup>th</sup> District any way he can. As Bob had stated if we want to be represented at the Convention we should really think about nominating someone from the floor don't know what your chance will be but don't lose heart. Hopes we have an enjoyable day and the Conference is successful and he must leave and get back to his District meeting.

A roll call of all Officers was conducted with the District Commander excused, all others present.  
A roll call of all Posts was conducted and a quorum was in place.

Minutes of 2008 Fall Conference and 2009 Spring DEC were emailed and passed out through their County Commanders and asked for everyone to read if they have already not done so. Marcus Oksa made a motion to accept the minutes as written and second by Keith Glaser any further discussion or corrections and having none would then like approval of the minutes as written. Motion Carried.

Finance Reports were handed out for approval one is the 2009-2010 proposed budget and the other is the expenses for 2008-2009. There have been modifications to bring the budget in line with the income. The proposed budget shows the dues increase. If our expenses are what we expect and membership stays the same we should have an extra \$69.00. Art contest was removed since it did not happen at the Department Level. Oratorical contest amounts were lowered and you have the updated Standing Order to reflect the change voted on at the DEC. All expenses for this year have been paid after we pay the officer allowance today and should not have any more expenses this year. There was a discussion on whether or not we intended to pay Past Commander Krause and it was reported we had no intention not to pay him. Both reports have been presented at the DEC and have gained their approval. Motion made by Tom Timmins to accept both finance reports second by Mike Hammer. Point of order was called by Markesan Post 282, Dick Severson, and wanted to

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know why there was no discussion. It was explained we need a motion and a second to go into discussion. He then wanted to know why the Dec can change the by-laws and not have everyone vote. It was noted it was a standing order changed not the by-laws and that only needs to be the approval of the DEC. Why are we lowering the cost of the Oratorical and only the DEC decided on the budget? It was explained it needed to be presented before the Dec and approved by them before we can present it at the general meeting. He feels this is poor because they need to find out things out through email and Markesan does not read email. Why would we want to decrease the amount given to the students when they have little time to compete in the competition? Our students have to decide if they want to play sports, or are they going to be academics and where are they going to get the most bangs for their buck. He is not in favor of cutting something that involves our children & youth. Our youngest people are our future in the United States and our Government. He was very sad to see that Princeton did not support County Government Day. This is a prime example of what is happening. We are not going to get a student to do this if we do not keep the funds up there. He would like to propose if you need to reduce the budget to cut officer money we are all volunteers and none of the officers are here for the money but because they want to serve and if you are going to cut something cut the salaries not the programs. He is real disappointed in these people. Barbara Belmont expressed concerned about cutting the officer budget by saying we are all volunteers and when you do not look at the State budget needing to cut over \$250,000 and never once was the idea of cutting the officer budget discussed instead they talked about cutting the Badger Legionnaire and ask people to start paying for it if they want to keep a hard copy. In fact they increased the amount given to several of the officers. Dick talked about a \$3.00 raise when the Commander was here at CJ's and asked him what he is going to do with it and was told he was going to use it for the programs. If the million and some dollars they raised from the sale of the building was not enough then something ought to be done. We should take up the Badger Legionnaire and put a motion on the floor right now but we are dealing with something that involves the 6<sup>th</sup> District alone so don't bring up another issue to confuse to confuse this one. Does anyone else have a feeling on the Oratorical contest or am I the only one. There was some objection at the DEC, would you like to call on them? Jim Romnek stated that if you look at the proposed budget less than 25% goes to out four programs to take care of our veterans and booster our youth. We are supposed to be a veteran's service organization and with less than 25% going there I question the use of our service organization and stated at the DEC that if he was an IRS agent auditing the 6<sup>th</sup> District red flags would be going off. He voted against the proposed budget and will do so again today. Fond du Lac County Commander talked about over the years being involved with the A & G Testing and looked at the local paper and saw the Elks Club has an Oratorical competition, as well, and get over 100 entrees. They give \$100 for entering that's a \$1000 for their Oratorical contest each year. The American Legion gives them what? The local gives them nothing and the County gives them \$100, the District and on and on so why should these kids join the Oratorical contest of The American Legion if they can go somewhere else to get some money. Harland answered that when he was in high school he played three sports and never got home before 6:30 at night and no one ever gave him a dime. Dick stated that is a sport and you do not get paid in high school. The Americanism Banquet is listed \$200, he thought the Americanism Banquet is self supporting so why do we have a charge? The Commander is allowed to have 6 guests that the District pays for special people, I hope to be able to lower that more but I'm not sure what all the costs are. If there are hidden costs and printing costs. So what is the need to have \$150? If there are 6 people at \$20 each and \$30 for printing there is you \$150. So then this is a budget issue this proposed budget not saying this is actually \$150. The proposed budget might not be spent. Barb was asked by Harland what others Districts have paid out for the Oratorical Contest. It was stated Milwaukee County pays their winner \$150 and then pay \$75 and \$50. We were paying \$300 for the winner and \$75 for all the runner ups. Concern was why do we pay the winner \$300 and the rest \$75 why such a large gap? Why are they not more evened out? Harland believes these people are very well compensated. He has talked too many competing and the money was never brought up. Some are not even aware they are getting anything. Brillion pays either \$60 or \$75 at the local level and if you add up the local, county, district and state they are walking away with about \$1000 which is not bad for a few days work. Comment was made they need to get to State first to get that. He believes these children are very smart today and they know there is money and that is why they are competing. You are joking yourself if you think different. They won't talk about it but they know and talk among themselves. Why should we waste our time on the American Legion when we can get money somewhere else? They will go where they can get the most money. You will see the contestants keep dwindling down because we do not give enough. Rosemarie Pitz stated that their Post gives \$250 and Winnebago County gives \$200 to the winner and \$75 to all others so don't say you only get \$100 at the county level and nothing at the Post. Barbara stated there were contestants at the Regional Level that had no idea they were getting anything so there are people out there that do not know they are getting anything and only expected money if they made it onto state finals. So the statement being made that everyone knows there is money I disagree with. Vern Bartels was involved in prior competitions and the main problem is the Post chairman would go into high school and they do not explain everything to the teachers and the state sends a mailer to the schools and half the time the teachers never see it. So it is up to the Post Chairman to go up to the schools to explain. That is where the main trouble lies. Harland hopes some of the History teachers are teaching the Constitution to get the children interested. With

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no further discussion it is time to ask for the vote on the motion. Motion made to vote on approving both reports. Vote close will need a hand count. Rosemarie said we really should vote on them separate. The motion was asked to be modified to be separate and seconded by the same original people. The expense budget sheet for 2008-2009 was voted on first. 1 opposed so motion carried. Second motion the proposed budget for 2009-2010. Question on the floor Rich Bodenhausen wants to understand why all the discussion and it is many who feels the students need more money to booster the involvement of the contestant coming forward. And the other side says it should be more of a responsibility at the individual Post to do more to booster them to get them involved. Is that where the debate is? Harland clarified the debate is on the amounts we are to give to the contestants in competing in the Oratorical Contest. Jim Romnek says the debate is on whether or not to reduce the payout of the Oratorical Contest. Part of the new budget is to reduce the amount. Dick restated his concern that at the DEC meeting you had concerns in the budget and that the \$0.45 increase is not enough to cover the budget then if you need to cut the budget why are we lowering a program cost and not the officer's pay? If you have to cut a budget you should cut your own salary. If you got to cut somewhere look at yourself and cut that first. If you need a social security supplements talk to your representative because you did get a raise in Social Security. If the DEC board are all on Social Security and you need a supplement then do that but let's not confuse the issue. I think our programs should maintain their costs. We are all in a crunch today. I would propose to make a motion to this budget we returned the Oratorical contest to the original amount and subtract it out of the officers allowance to make your budget balance. He was informed there is a motion on the floor already. He stated we can override it because this is a budget issue and a motion to approve the budget but you cannot approve the motion if you do not agree with the budget. You can change the budget and he believes he is not out of order. He wants to make a motion to amend it. Was told we need to vote on the motion on the floor and if it is defeated we can make another motion to do what you want. He says his motion is correct and will wait on the Judge Advocate to verify that. Jim Romnek says he can amend the motion and if there is a second to approve the amendment he can do. It was asked if this is allowable. Judge Advocate says there needs to be a second to amend. Vice commander Central Jim Romnek seconds the amendment. Amended motion was restated that we returned the Oratorical contest to the original amount and subtract it out of the officers allowance to make you budget balance. Barbara Belmont made a motion to amend the amended motion to accept the current budget as originally presented. Was then told we are out of order. The Judge Advocate asked for the floor and stated that all an amendment to a motion does is change the wording and does not change what is being voted on in the motion. So, technically Dick is not correct in amending the budget. The budget has been handed to us and the blue caps need to vote whether to accept it or to decline. If it is accepted then we need to see if we can change what has been accepted and if it is declined then we need to fix the budget to where it is acceptable. That is the way it has to work. The current motion to accept the current budget stands and needs to be voted on. Roy Helms would like to discuss the shortfall the difference between the original amount and the proposed amount. Harland stated it really depends on the amount of participants. Worse case scenario we would be paying out \$675. Would it be in order to discuss ways to fund the shortfall outside of changing the stipend to the officers? Not at this time we need to vote on the motion to accept the proposed budget for 2009-2010. And then bring that question back after the vote. Vote by roll call vote. Role count vote done and a 5 minute break was given so the votes could be tallied. Sergeants at Arms were asked to verify the tally count. Results verified by the Sergeant at Arms and the Judge Advocate motion carried 29 in favor of approving the budget and 23 against. Budget has passed.

Dorothy Gruber President of the 6<sup>th</sup> District Auxiliary addressed the group and the Sergeant-at-Arms was asked to hold her posters. She indicated they had their spring meeting yesterday but not as exciting as ours. She thanked us for allowing her to come to our meeting and explained her posters. Hope we have a successful meeting and brought brownies for commander and our theme is Oceans of Love for our veterans so she brought seashells and a pin for the Vice Commanders thanking them for their service.

### District Officer Reports:

Vice Commander East: Harland Zietlow because of the extensive discussions he will waive his report.

Vice Commander Central: Jim Romnek stated they may not want to hear what he has to say but you need to hear it. It deals with the Badger Legionnaire. He asked how many read the Badger Legionnaire? Lately there was a request printed to sign up to get the paper online and not receive a hard copy. How many are aware of that? Many are not aware of being able to read and receive it online. Wonders how well people are reading the Badger Legionnaire. The reason he brings up is because there is a movement is underway to take Badger Legionnaire online or if you cannot or do not want to pay a fee to receive a hard copy in the mail. He was at the Department budget meeting just over a week ago and the budget consisted of one page of revenues and eight pages of expenditures and started with 280 thousand dollars in the red and the task by the end of the day was to have a balance budget. The revenues are down because membership is down. Every 1000 members we are short means \$25,000 short in revenues for the Department. The entire economy if anyone has any

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investments you know what has happened to your portfolio the Department is no different. Interest income is also down. So the revenues are down and there is one of two ways to come up with a balance budget; decrease your expenses or increase your revenues. We are pretty well maxed out on raising money. There is hope for the foundation but that is not any money for our pocket. Primary concerns they were faced with was how you cut the budget without cutting the programs. Question was asked how do we cut expenses or raise money. How do we cut budget without cutting programs for veterans and youth. One solution that came forward was the Badger Legionnaire. The Badger Legionnaire budget was in excess of \$200,000 which is a huge chunk of the budget. Keep in mind we also spend about the same amount for Camp American Legion and the Wisconsin State Service Officer. They did not see a way to cut either of them. So what was recommended to the Badger Legionnaire Committee was that they investigate the feasibility as soon as possible either having you take your Badger Legionnaire on-line if you can or you chose to pay for the paper. This is no way approved at this time. The Finance Committee has tasked the Badger Legionnaire Committee and anything that happens still needs to be approved by the DEC in May or the State Convention. The reason he is doing this is because he would like to give you a heads up on what is happening and why. Everyone was also asked to support the fundraising efforts sent out by the Department we cannot exist on dues alone. The department dues only makes up 1/3 of the budget and the other 2/3 comes from fundraising efforts. If you cannot or chose not to give please keep in mind there is a benefit to our veterans and children and youth for the support of those programs and we need to continue that.

Harland would like to have a postscript to that and tell the rest of the story. A few years ago he was appointed by Chuck Cooney to the Badger Legionnaire Public Relations Committee and a year later Dave Kurtz appointed him as chairman. Working on a program to offset the cost of the program because he personally believes there are veterans out there whose only connection with the Legion is that paper. So this issue was looked at and said we do not want to take that paper away from the Veterans who truly need it. He tried to set up a sponsorship program using the chain of command for the paper but got nowhere with Portage. He was removed because they did not want to hear what he had to say. Question was if you can choose not to get the Badger Legionnaire at all? Why not bring it into the post and share. Did not realize the dire straight the Department is in. It really is an attitude problem with not wanting to access the computer. There are problems with not having access to computers is no longer true. Now a day's the Library have computers with free access. So we have a negative attitude as well. 50% of Veterans are still WWII and do not know Computers nor do they want to learn how to use them.

Vice Commander West: Fred Barke reported that Green Lake and Marquette County hosted the 46 Annual Americanism Banquet. 130 attended and Rosemarie Pitts received the Legionnaire of Year award. He would like to give a big thank you Roy Helms for all his help. Also Marquette and Green Lake County just had a joint Badger Boys and Girls orientation with Ted Duckworth.

Elect Department Commander Leo Endres addressed the group stressing working your way up through the post. Many problems have been coming up this year. Everyone should come to the spring meetings. We will need to cut the budget and there are three largest expense items; Camp American Legion, Service Officer, and Badger Legionnaire. Thank you for your Support and have good conference.

Adjutant & Finance Officer: Barbara Belmont reported that the following nominations are due today; Outstanding Legislator of the Year, Edward J Ormsbay Law and Order Award, Outstanding Firefighter Award, and Emergency Medical Technician Award, please turn in today before you leave.

Chaplain: Stanley Jezeski reported that many Posts did not turn in their Deceased Report they are Hilbert, Darboy, Ripon, North Fond du Lac, Waupun, Campbellsport, Brandon-Fairwater, Mt Calvary, Princeton, Kingston, Westfield, Briggsville, and Neshkoro. We have forms here for you to pick up for next year if you need it.

Parliamentarian: Chris Cerney reported not much is happening but when the Post has problems he helps. Announced he will be stepping down.

Historian: Loretta Miller reported she is finishing up the history book for the Commander and will still present him his book. If a family does not want to keep the history book they should send to state.

Post Member of 423 is getting 2 copies of Badger Legionnaire and would like to know why duplicate copies being sent? They were supposed to have eliminated all duplicated a while back. Tell state you are still getting 2 copies. What happened when Headquarters was moved from Milwaukee to Portage they were supposed to save lots of money? What happened to the savings? Jim Romnek did not have any answers as to where the money went.

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Sergeant-at-Arms: Jerry Opperman had nothing to report.

Sergeant-at-Arms: Jim Nourse had nothing to report.

Service Officer Keith Glaser had nothing to report.

### County Commander Reports

Calumet County: Ron Schneider reported on their County Birthday Party where everyone had a blast. The Children & Youth had a bowling program. They deleted the golf outing but hope to have it again next year. The Birthday Party was the most exciting in the last 25 years. Membership is almost 100%

Fond du Lac County: Jerry Krebsbach reported they have little problems. He was the Past County Commander 10 yrs ago and now trying to get meetings back on track. Was at the Department Convention but did not know about the fall meetings. Student Government Day was last week. Portage has meetings on how to run meetings but no one must attend. People don't wear traditional hats anymore they wear the ball caps which cost only \$5.00 instead of buying the higher price hats through emblem sales. These sales help support the Oratorical Contest and other Youth Programs. Can we have Classes at the District Level?

Green Lake County: Gregory Polly reported they just had their 43<sup>rd</sup> Youth Government Day and Badger Boys and Girls orientation have been completed. They also have one Baseball team in Berlin. Working with the VFW to do Memorial Service and please remember we need to all work together.

Marquette County: Dan Bailey reported on April 15 they had County Government Day and a big thanks to Keith Glaser and Post 351. Boys liked the squad car that costs over \$40,000 and they all wanted to take it for a spin.

Manitowoc County: Roman Barkaus reported that the County Commander was ill and Bill Stiefvater was filling in. County Government Day was Last Tuesday and Badger Boys orientation was combined with Calumet County. St Nazianz is at 100% membership.

Winnebago County: Rosemarie Pitz reported they have 1 more meeting this year and they go Alphabetical. 20 June they are having elections. All nine schools attended County Government day. We do ours in the fall. Post Nominated new officers. Our contestant took 1<sup>st</sup> in the District Oratorical Contest. May 13 we are having Badger Boys orientation. 2 posts are over 100% membership.

### Committee Chairperson Reports

Americanism: Roy Helms reported the Americanism Banquet was a success despite the uncooperative weather. The Americanism Banquet next year will be Feb 20, 2010. There has been several inquires to do an earlier time in the afternoon but then we may run into conflict with the Regional and State Oratorical Contest. It is hard to get Posts wanting to sponsor the event and would like to turn the event into a District Event. Profit depends on the number of people attending could help offset the budget. Every post should be there to support the ones being honored. Motion made by Roy Helms to move the responsibility of the Americanism banquet to the District making it a District event. Motion was second by Rosemarie Pitz. Comment if same group always does it then no one will want to get involved and everyone else gets lazy. What happens when you die? Have others Chair the banquet and have Roy mentoring. Roy has an outline of everything he does. Officers in the District if changed will help. The Standing Order will then need to be changed. If you want an efficient program then you need to form a committee. Roy has a disc spelling everything out. Who would be the Chairman of Americanism? The District Commander will still appoint someone to the position. Vern Bartels wanted to know where the profit would go if the District would make the money. Post are getting to lazy they don't want to volunteer for anything. 1 opposed Motion carried.

Americanism & Government Test Program: Fred Barke reported District 6 did very well but not as well as in previous years. This year 5 of the 32 winners were from the 6<sup>th</sup> District. Schools have 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, and 12<sup>th</sup> grader take an one hour tests of 50 questions and write a 300 word essay. Portage sends letters to the Schools but do not presented them to the schools. He handed out certificates for the winners for the Post to give to the schools for those that participated. The following got letters Brillion got 2, Oshkosh West got 1, Neenah got 1, Manitowoc got 1, Berlin got 1, Valders got 1, Two Rivers Post 165 \$500 winner, Omro got 3 winners, Ripon got 1, and Green Lake got 1. All winners should get certificates. Fred just got them in on Friday.

Elect Department Vice Commander Mr. Steve DuBois said 5 were running for the spots. Had a pop quiz and said you don't have to be active to belong to the Legion you just need to donate money. He handed out flyer and pin. His favorite area is Camp Americanism Legion, \$250,000 of the budget goes there and the camp is only open 3 months of the year.

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Will need to try to push more Iraq Veterans to come and visit. Many Veterans are not being asked to join only 20% are members of Legion. He is the only Pilot running. He would like to stay around for a bit to answer any questions. He was asked questions about Badger Legionnaire cutes and what he thought about salary cuts? He does not plan to collect his salary.

American Legion Riders: Roy Helms started with his wish to thank the Sixth District for their continued support of the American Legion Riders. Their goal is to serve the District, and the Department, in a manner deserving of that support. The Riders recently held their District elections and I am proud to announce that Nancy Helms, who currently serves as Auxiliary President of Oshkosh Unit 70, was elected to be the new President of the American Legion Riders, District 6. She is the first woman in the State of Wisconsin to be elected to the office of District President and I know she looks forward to continuing the tradition of supporting the Legion and its programs. District 6 Legion Riders participated in the usual parades and activities since Fall Conference in addition to working within their respective Posts and Counties. We are honored to donate our time and resources in representing the Sixth District all across Wisconsin, and around the Nation. Your Legion Riders are involved in a number of fundraisers in order to continue the Troop support programs that are so vital to our common mission. We have adopted the Legacy Scholars-hip Fund as our primary means of supporting the families of our Service men and women. We also continue to support the Legion's programs locally as annual sponsors of a Badger Boy and a Badger Girl. In addition, your Legion Riders also contribute their support of Legion programs at their individual Posts. The District 6 Legion Riders are committed to supporting the District and its Posts in furthering the programs of the American Legion. Your District 6 American Legion Riders are proud to represent the 6th District at every opportunity. Thank you for allowing us the privilege of serving you. Respectfully submitted,

Athletic Activity: Edgar Ott had no report.

Blood Donor Program: no report.

Camp American Legion: no report

Children & Youth: Barbara Belmont nothing new to report they have not had a meeting since the Midwinter they will be called in at the May spring meetings and will have a report in the fall.

Communications Office: Bob Wipf not present and having problems with hip please keep him in your prayers.

Dinner Intermission: 11:45 am – 1:00 pm had a Hand Salute to the colors before Break.

Afternoon Events: 1:00 pm Until Complete

Roll Call

Fond Du Lac Post 33 turned over 33 memberships to the commander to increase their membership to 100%.

## Committee Chairperson Reports Continued

Legislative: Delbert Schmidt reported the January issue of the Badger Legionnaire it was stated that the Vietnam Veterans should enroll in the VA Health Care System now because the VA will soon be having a cutoff date. As a result of that he drafted a letter that the signup sheets to not have a closing date on them. Since then there were many layoffs in many companies of high officials that had good health insurance and now are finding themselves without insurance. He felt it necessary to draft a letter so these veterans will be able to enroll in the VA Health Care System. Many veterans lost all benefits because their jobs were terminated. This letter was drafted and circulated in Calumet County. It then went to Representative Thomas Petri, Senator Russ Feingold, and Senator Herb Kohl. He had feedback from Senator Feingold updating some of the key provisions of the Economic Stimulus Recovery Package to help Wisconsin Veterans. He is in favor of the VA Medical Facility maintenance of one billion dollars for maintenance and improvements of the facility. Received a letter from Representative Petri Office saying he needs more time to look into this matter. That was two months ago and still haven't heard anything back. He was at the Milwaukee VA Hospital this past week because of health problems and will be going back this next week. Could not find any parking spots in Milwaukee the parking lot was full and drove around a bit when a Police Officer helped him park. Went down there again and there was no place to park and they were parking them where they should not be parking. President Barack Obama says a Veteran is a Veteran and should all be treated alike. This is what was said on National TV.

Membership Program: Roy Helms reported the 6<sup>th</sup> District is currently in 7th place with 92.62%. I would like to thank every Post for all the work done so far in the 2009 membership year. I would also like to congratulate the Posts who have reached the 100% goal.

Calumet County: New Holstein Post 124 and Darboy Post 265

Fond du Lac County: North Fond du Lac Post 156, Ripon Post 43, and Fond du Lac Post 75

Manitowoc County: Saint Nazianz Post 477

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Winnebago County: Neenah Post 33 and Omro Post 234

Remember, it is not too late to reach your target goal. The deadline is 30 days before Convention so keep working on those who still have not renewed and go ahead and replace the ones who are dropping. Those members who have decided not to renew should be contacted as a follow up to determine what prompted their decision. I would like to suggest that additional community involvement may be an approach to gaining membership. Perhaps at a Post meeting you could ask for upcoming community events that your members are aware of and then discuss creative ways your Post could become involved. It may be too early yet for some of the Veterans of our latest conflicts in Kuwait, Iraq, and Afghanistan but there is huge potential out there in the Vietnam Era age group. We still have reached only a very small percentage of those eligible Veterans. Remember ... the most often cited reason eligible Veterans give when asked why they haven't joined the American Legion is ... "Nobody ever asked me to". Respectfully Submitted,

National Security: Fred Barke nothing to report

Oratorical Program: Jon Jindra Oratorical Program was held on January 25 here at the Fond du Lac Post 75. We had 4 contestants and one asked to be disqualified because she was unprepared since she was substituting for someone else. Winner was an 11<sup>th</sup> grader from Oshkosh she went to regional but did not go any further. Oratorical date for 2010 is not set yet but will let you know as soon as he finds out. Thanks to all who helped make the contest a success we had good teamwork. We looked good for The American Legion and at the end of the day we gave out \$450 in prize money leaving us under budget by \$225. Budget passed this morning to reduced the prize money for the contest. We will now have to move forward.

POW/MIA Coordinator: Vern Farley not present no report

Public Relations: Harland Zietlow not much to say but keep up the good work and please let everybody know what the Legion is doing in your Community. Make your group the one to join. You can sign up for any group but you must raise your right hand and swear to give you life for your country if necessary to get into a military organization like the Legion and be proud of it when you go in there.

Public Safety: no one assigned and no report

SAL: Vern Bartels just recently appointed 6<sup>th</sup> District Chairman for SAL. Oshkosh needs two members to go over the top. Fond du Lac 128% Princeton 68% and State is believed to be third highest in National. Gladys Hritsko when she was District Commander started the empty chair program and several including himself set down and wrote the original empty chair program. He would like to thank Gladys for bringing the program to the State of Wisconsin and National.

VA&R: Robert Stone 3 Bs in Public Speaking Be short, Be brilliant, and Be gone. We are a product of our surroundings. With that he recognized Bill Stiefvater a good friend of his and very active in the 6<sup>th</sup> District. Also wanted to recognize Darrel Schmidt who had a great impact on his life by loaning him a book called Flags of Our Father. This book should be a must read book especially for our younger generation. I would like to bring greetings from the County Service Office. Computer area, we are in by default and need to get on board even if it is kicking and screaming. I would like to discuss a very important topic ALS more commonly known as [Lou Gehrig's disease](#), if you served on active duty for more than 90 days and have come in contact with [Lou Gehrig's disease](#) you are now eligible for help. A surviving spouse of someone who died from [Lou Gehrig's disease](#) is eligible for dependant compensation. Post 911 GI Bill is a huge step back to the way the original GI Bill was intended. The VA will now pay Books, tuition, and a housing stipend. The program starts in August. Display booth in the back recognizing the officers of the 6<sup>th</sup> District so please look. One brochure is on the property relief tax. Three significant changes made. Can be 100% IU and still be eligible for help. You no longer have to be over the age of 65. You did not have to go into the service from Wisconsin but only need to have lived in Wisconsin for five years. If you are age 64 you can apply for help. This refers to the 2009 taxes. Wisconsin GI Bill offers those with a Bachelor degree to go after a Doctor degree and the State of Wisconsin will cover the fees. VA Medical under Wisconsin coming back from combat you fall in the exempt status for medical care for five years and dental care for 180 days after active Duty.

Unfinished Old Business

Delegates for National Convention Ed Ott, and Barbara Belmont

Hand out 100% awards from Mid-Winter Awards Darboy, New Holstein, and St Nazianz

Certificate of Appreciation for Post 306 Arne Wagner and Post 454 Wilbert Sparks

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New award Post Lifetime Achievement Award we started this program last Americanism Banquet and we want to continue this program. Acknowledge those who got the posts where they are today. If you need any help please get a hold of me.

Mid-Winter Conference there was a procedural matter at the DEC trying to spend money on Discover Wisconsin without first consulting the Finance Committee. The Finance Committee went into a special meeting to verify they had the money to spend and then their finding was presented at a special DEC meeting.

Post elections reports will be needed after your elections so please be sure to send me a copy of the newly elected officers. If you send me an email I will forward them to state. The Department website now has a date field so we will know who has the latest information.

Communication Officers and Email addresses needed from each Post please send us your Post email addresses. We need to start sending you notes via email to reduce our costs. If no one in your post has one we will mail you a hard copy. Our goal is to get every Post with an email address.

Status of CD to promote American Legion on TV Cable outlets is on hold. Bob Wipf is still working on it but his computer went down and is working on a laptop. He will have surgery latter this week.

Donations for Website sponsor sheet Donation Bob Krause donated \$100 of his pay. CVSO will be getting a letter and it is in the works. Calumet and Winnebago will be offering \$50 for the website. We will need to follow up with the other CVSO officers. Five of the six counties are covered.

## New Business

Site of Fall Conference is will be hosted by a Post from the West. Post 351 will be the host at CJ's.

District rules for Oratorical Contest we need to prevent the kids from mixing with the judges. We want to avoid all contact with the judges. Try to get judges that are professionals. Put article in school newspaper promoting the kids to compete. Please ask your schools.

Formalizing conduct for Post Officers formalize conduct Robert Rules class for elected officers. Midwinter had a class teaching Roberts rules and covered the basics. Every Post should have a parliamentarian post and if they would learn to listen to them and follow directions. Every library has the books all you need to do is go and read the book. If you are computers smart I'm sure you could find it there.

Print cartages recycle extra money for admin supplies please turn in and we can make extra money. We can get a line of credit for \$3.00 for each cartridge.

Standardize guidelines for running a conference I need copies of you files so we can share with the ones running the conferences. Trying to get a disc to pass around and share the information.

Membership report allocation of power need to be brought up at the next DEC. Chris Cerney commented that the problem would be putting a Vice Commander in charge of 2 ½ or 1 ½ counties and counties of different sizes are you planning to rewrite the counties as well. The answer was no. Doesn't understand why we are concerned are you afraid one of the Vice Commanders are going to take over? It could happen was the reply. The problem is the distribution geographically is not the same as population so we can have more votes in one area than others. You could have one county take over. He doesn't understand the fear of one area having 20% more votes than another area. County Commander Jerry Krebsbach commented that it is not the numbers you have that matters but the number of people you get there. At the DEC meeting there was a concern by the Adjutant that the two largest counties are in the Central area and they send a large number of delegates to the meetings and the West area is the smallest with the least number of delegates attending. What was decided at the DEC was to have this looked at and put together a resolution to explain more of what needs to be done. Then bring to the DEC for approved and then it will be brought back to the general public. You may not feel anyone here can sway the votes but there are people at the Department level who have swayed the public to get what they want. So if it happens at the Department level then who says it cannot happen in the District? The people at the Department level come out of the Districts. We have a good group of people but if someone can go after our Commander and get him removed. This should have never happened but someone wanted him removed and found a way to make it happen. We may not abuse the power but the younger generation might. We need to move on.

Department Convention, Milwaukee, July 23-26, 2009 please let's get our delegates there to vote.

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**Memorial Service** The District Chaplin gathered everyone to start the Memorial Service. To start the Memorial service the first candles to light are for the American Legion Family. Then the County Commanders lit a candle for all deceased members from their County. Color Guard then presented their salute and played taps. A prayer was then offered to conclude the ceremony.

**District Elections** Need to elect: Commander, 3 Vice Commanders, Chaplin, and 2 Sergeant-At-Arms  
Harland Zietlow will need to remove his name for District Commander due to his health and his wife's health but plans to stay on as a candidate for Vice Commander East.

Nomination for Commander: are Jerry Opperman declined, Fred Barke declined, Ken Kersky declined

Nomination for Vice Commanders: Vice East Harland Zietlow, Vice Central Ken Flack, Vice West Fred Barke  
With no other nominations for the Vice Commanders we will call for the unanimous ballot accepting all three candidates. The motion being made by Keith Glaser and second by Chris Cerney we will call for the vote. Motion carried

Nomination for Chaplin: are Stan Jezeski With no other nominations for the Chaplin we will call for the unanimous ballot accepting the candidates. The motion being made by Keith Glaser and second by Pete Hennies we will call for the vote. Motion carried

Nomination for Sergeant-at-Arms: are Pete Hennies and At Kronberg With no other nominations for the Sergeant-at-Arms we will call for the unanimous ballot accepting the two candidates. The motion being made by Chris Cerney and second by Mike Hammer we will call for the vote. Motion carried

Back to the nominations for Commander: are Keith Glazer Decline, Barb Belmont Decline. Roy Helms Accepted. With no other nominations for the Commanders we will call for the unanimous ballot accepting all three candidates. The motion being made by Chris Cerney and second by Vern Bartels we will call for the vote. Motion carried

**Business For the Good of the Legion** Jim Romnek gave a reminder that all officers do not take officers till the completion of State Convention. Technically at this point we do not have a District Commander and he would like to offer a motion to declare our Commander Elect to be our District Commander effective immediately. This motion was second by Rosemarie Pitz. Motion Carried.

Question on floor announcement for those who did not hear the bugler their regular bugler had an operation and had to use the electronic one and the battery was dead so they needed to use the standby bugler so they apologize for that.

Closing Prayer – District Chaplain

Asked for nominations for National Convention and District Committees please give names to the adjutant.

Retirement of POW – MIA Flag

**Commander's Closing Remarks** Would like to say it is a great honor to be elected to this position and I hope to be able to serve in the capacity that you expect and I will do my best to bring honor to this office and I thank you again.

Retirement of the Colors

2:59 meeting adjourned

Respectively submitted by Barbara Belmont 6th District Adjutant/Finance Officer

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**National Delegates for National Convention  
August 22-23, 2009  
District 6  
\$15.00 Registration Fee Due for Each by June 1, 2009**

	<u>Name</u>	<u>Phone Number</u>	Complete Address	<u>Post #</u>
1.	Ed Ott	(920)748-2692	565 Newbury St. Ripon, WI 54971	43
2.	Thomas L. Schmitz	(920)266-3072	N8114 Glen St. Malone, WI 53049	454
3.	Barbara Belmont	(920)720-2229	726 London St. Menasha, WI 54952	33
4.	Al Kronberg	(920)836-2923	3022 Shady Ln. Neenah, WI 54956	33
5.	Roy Helms	(920)231-5310	2540 Clover St. Oshkosh, WI 54901	70

	<u>Alternates Name</u>	<u>Phone Number</u>	Complete Address	<u>Post #</u>
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				

List of who will report ONE assistant Sergeant at Arms for the National Convention as follows:

	<u>Name</u>	<u>Phone Number</u>	Complete Address	<u>Post #</u>
1.	Thomas L. Schmitz	(920)266-3072	N8114 Glen St. Malone, WI 53049	454
2.	Al Kronberg	(920)836-2923	3022 Shady Ln. Neenah, WI 54956	33

	<u>Alternates Name</u>	<u>Phone Number</u>	Complete Address	<u>Post #</u>
1.				
2.				

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### Milwaukee Department Convention

List of who will attend and report on the following Convention Committee meetings on **FRIDAY, JULY 24 from 1 - 3:00 P.M.** as follows:

<u>COMMITTEE</u>	<u>WHO WILL ATTEND</u>	<u>POST NO</u>
Americanism		
Children and Youth	Barbara Belmont	33
Constitutional Amendments	Rosemarie Pitz	70
Finance		
Legislative		
Membership		
National/Homeland Security	Fred Barke	
Resolutions		
Veterans Affairs & Rehab.	Harland Zietlow	

List of who will report ONE assistant Sergeant at Arms meetings on **FRIDAY, JULY 24 at 8:00 A.M.** as follows:

<u>NAME</u>	<u>WHO WILL ATTEND</u>	<u>POST NO</u>
George Wakup		351

ALTERNATE

List of who will attend and report for Ballot Clerks meetings on **FRIDAY, JULY 24 from 12:30 P.M.** as follows:

<u>NAME</u>	<u>WHO WILL ATTEND</u>	<u>ROOM</u>
1.Keith Glaser		
2.Duane Moseley		
3.Pete Hennes		

ALTERNATE

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

DRAFT Pending approval at Fall Conference

## Department Committee Appointments

List of who would like to serve on a Department Committee for 2009 – 2010

<u>COMMITTEE</u>	<u>NAME</u>	<u>POST NO</u>
Americanism		
BL Public Relations		
Camp American Legion		
Children and Youth		
Conventions & Activities		
Fundraising		
Hospital		
Legislative		
Membership		
National/Homeland Security		
Policy		
POW/MIA		
Religious Emphasis		
Veterans Affairs & Rehab.		
Public Safety		

<u>PROGRAM DIRECTORS</u>	<u>NAME</u>	<u>POST NO</u>
A & G Testing		
Boy Scouts		
Blood Donor		
County Youth Gov.		
Education/Scholarship		
Employment		
Homeless Veterans		
Oratorical		
SAL		
Shooting Sports		