



MILITARY ORDER OF THE PURPLE HEART

FORT LOWELL CHAPTER 442

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MINUTES: May 20, 2024

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 5:00 PM at Bridge Church.

Opening Ceremony: Honors rendered to the Flag. Pledge recited & Invocation was given.

Roll Call: Present was Cdr Dyer; Jr Vice-Cdr Phipps, Adjutant Moore; Finance Officer Zimmerman; Chaplain Lemon; Trustee Lohman; Trustee Bertagnoli & Sgt-at-Arms Gilbert. Absent was Sr Vice-Cdr. Perkins. There was a quorum present.

Attendance: Ten members of the chapter were present.

New Members: none

Guests: Casey Alexander, Kimberly McAllister, Congressman Juan Ciscomani, & Mike Proctor.

Congressman Ciscomani:

- **Commander Dyer** invited the Congressman to our meeting to discuss veterans' issues with the VA. Issues Commander Dyer highlighted were disability ratings need to be taken care of much faster; VA funding should not be diverted by the administration to fund other agencies; The VA is cutting back on community care; TBI is recognized by the Army and Marines for Purple Hearts, but the processing is extremely slow; Denying or delaying benefits earned is a big contributor to the high Veteran suicide rate.
- **Congressman Ciscomani** discussed veteran issue policy in congress and how the Veterans' Affairs Committee works. He listened to concerns from our members with issues at the VA. The congressman had his staff get the particulars on the various issues and will investigate them for us. The major concerns from the members were funding cuts in Community Care, PAC Act implementation, & Purple Heart award processing time for those with TBI injuries. The congressman said to reach out to his staff anytime issues arise.

Reports:

Minutes: Minutes for the May meeting were available and previously emailed out. Patriot Grand moved the minutes to be placed into the record. Patriot Lemon made the 2nd to the motion & no discussion. The minutes were approved unanimously. See May minutes.

Finance Report: The Finance Officer was out of state. Patriot Moore provided the finance reports and bank statements for April. The beginning balance was \$54,061.24 & the ending balance was \$53, 838.39. The report highlighted deposits and expenses. Patriot Gilbert moved the Finance reports to be placed into the record. Patriot Bertagnoli made the 2nd. There was no discussion. The motion passed unanimously. See the finance reports.

Americanism: - Patriot Moore indicated that the JROTC/ROTC presentations were complete. Everyone did a great job, Thanks!

Tucson Veterans Serving Veterans Report: No report

Tucson VAC: VAC minutes emailed out.

Commander's Report: Department Convention minutes will be mailed out once published. The Department would like Chapter 442 to host the convention next year. It has been rotating among the

chapters. The commander asked Patriot Moore and Patriot Bertagnoli to look into possible dates and locations. The end of April or early May are the preferred times. The Department has formed a Suicide Prevention Committee. Each chapter is to have a representative on the committee. Commander Dyer appointed Patriot Grand as the chapter representative. The monthly Department Commander's calls are now Department Executive Committee meetings. This will allow the department to get more done. The DEC can vote on items where as the commander's call is a non-voting forum.

Old Business:

Bingo: Bingo is 25 May at the VA Hospital. If you can help out meet Patriot Bertagnoli at 1:30 in bldg. 60.

Jim Click Raffle: No Update

MIA Burial at Marana Veterans Cemetery: The funeral of the recovered remains of a WWII MIA, TSGT Seifreid, were buried on April 19th. It was a very nice ceremony and the funeral detail from Ft. Huachuca did a nice job. The family was represented by a nephew who lives in Oro Valley.

BiPolar General: The book has been received and is available for members to borrow and read. Patriot Dyer has the book.

Name Badges: If you ordered them give your receipt to the Finance Officer for reimbursement.

Business Cards: They have been ordered. Patriot Moore will let those who order them know when they are in.

Budget: The annual budget proposed at the April meeting was emailed out. The budget level was suggested at \$16,880 dollars for FY 2024/2025. Patriot Bertagnoli made a motion that the budget be set at \$20,000. Patriot Grand seconded the motion. There was a discussion about the need to continue funding EEE for \$250 a month since they received a \$70,000 grant from Empower Coalition. Commander Dyer asked Patriot Moore to see if Patriot Zimmerman will check with EEE about their needs. The Budget was approved unanimously. See Budget Worksheet.

Memorial Day: Help place flags at Veterans' Cemetery Marana -. May 24 0800.

Memorial Day: South Lawn, East Lawn & Marana Veterans Cemetery - May 27. Patriots Moore and Patriot Grand will place a wreath at South Lawn at 9:00 AM. We do not have anyone to cover East Lawn.

Arizona Diamondbacks - Free admission PH Day and discount tickets all year. Need numbers by June 3rd if you wish to be recognized on the field with other PH recipients. Was emailed out to membership.

Chapter Election: The Department Jr. Vice-Cdr, John Moore, administered the oath of office to Patriot Richard Perkins who was elected chapter Sr. Vice-Cdr.

New Business:

Expenditures: No expenditures were approved by the officers by email since the last meeting.

National Vietnam Veterans Day Memorial at Kino Park: \$500 to help fund the memorial was approved in the annual budget.

Good of Order: The chapter will be dark for June, July, August.

Closing Ceremony: Moment of silence for departed Patriots. The Benediction was given, and the chapter rendered Honors to the Flag.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 6:15 PM. The next meeting will be on September 18th.