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Saturday, June 27, 2020.

COMMANDER FRIEND: Melissa.
CHAPLAIN FOWLE: Dearest Lord, we thank You for presiding over this past meeting that we just had. And we ask that You continue Your presence here among this next meeting that we're having.

We ask, Lord, that you be with those who are sick and hurting.

The joys and concerns from the last meeting that You raised up, we thank You, Lord, for Your human touch, for Your wonderful presence, Your strength and Your comfort, and Your grace that you give us.

Continue, Lord, to wash over us and The American Legion. We ask that You would bless each and every officer here, every position here, Lord, that You would bless them and keep them, and keep them safe amongst their travels in their Districts and throughout the State of Ohio.

We ask, Lord, that You would help us to find new ways to generate more membership, to generate funds, so that we might support The American Legion and all of its programs. Help us as we continue to do the work for The American Legion Department of Ohio, as well as each of our respective Districts, and for our Posts.

Lead us, Lord, strengthen us and guide us.
It's in Your name we pray. Amen.
FROM THE ASSEMBLY: Amen.
COMMANDER FRIEND: Thank you.
12TH DISTRICT CMDR GARREN: Commander, Rick Garren
12th District Commander. I make a motion to suspend the opening ceremony and go right into DEC business.

COMMANDER FRIEND: I have a motion to suspend the opening ceremonies. Do I have a second?

11TH DISTRICT 1VC ROBINSON: Robinson, 11th District, seconds.

COMMANDER FRIEND: I have a motion and a second to suspend the opening ceremonies.

Is there any discussion?
FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).
COMMANDER FRIEND: Hearing none, all those in favor signify by saying aye.

FROM THE ASSEMBLY: Aye.
COMMANDER FRIEND: Opposed, same sign.
FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).
COMMANDER FRIEND: Motion passed.
We do have to do a roll call.
ADJUTANT HELLER: We're going to do a roll call, and then we'll go right into, once we establish a quorum, we can then go right into the ratification of
officers.
. . . ROLL CALL CONDUCTED . . .
ADJUTANT HELLER: Okay, so, Commander, we do have a quorum for votes.

COMMANDER FRIEND: All right.
ADJUTANT HELLER: And we'll just go right into the ratification of officers.

For the 2020-2021 membership year, the Commander has appointed the following:

Chaplain, Melissa Fowle.
Assistant Chaplain, Mary Austin.
Judge Advocate, Douglas Whitney.
Department Parliamentarian, Jerry White.
Historian, Al Beyer.
Assistant Historian, Greg Elsbernd.
Sergeant-at-Arms, Roy Terry.
Assistant Sergeant-at-Arms, Mel Baher; Assistant Sergeant-at-Arms, Bart Arndt; Assistant Sergeant-at-Arms, John Murphy; Assistant Sergeant-at-Arms, George Mussi; Assistant Sergeant-at-Arms, Andy Atkins; the final Assistant Sergeant-at-Arms is Dave Jones.

For the Finance Committee, Jose Rivera will continue as the Commander's appointment.

For the Publication Board, that is Steve Ebersole.

That is a two-year appointment.
The Commander's Advisory Committee is the following: Bob Schmitt; Stanley Pleasant; Ron Chapman; Jim Campbell; Bob Klostermeier; Dave Hilliard; Steve Masowick; Robert Ray; Jim Morris; Glenn Hickman; Darell Bishop; Dennis Clausing; Jerry Wilson; and Mike Morman.

The Post History Committee is made up of the following, and that is: Al Beyer and Greg Elsbernd.

Convention Corporation for 2021, the appointment is John Murphy from the 13th District.

The Convention Corporation for 2022 is Steve Foster from the 4th District.

The Chairman of the Americanism Commission, Tom Rowe.

Chairman of the Baseball Commission, Marv Shamhart.

Chairman of the Bowling Commission, Peggy Gross, who did a fabulous job last year.

Chairman of the Child Welfare Committee is Andy Atkins.

There are two Co-Chairs for the Citizens Flag Alliance, and that is Dave Lofy and Bill Strong.

Chairman of the DMS is Tom Poulton.
Chairman of the Employment Committee, Scott Horsington.

Chairman of the Environmental Conservation, Bob Schmitt.

Gifts for Yanks Chairman, Darell Bishop.
Chairman of Law and Order, Bart Arndt.
Chairman of the Legislative Commission, Ken Lavoy.
Chairman of the National Security Commission, Al Buxton.

Chairman of the Oratorical Committee, Roy Terry.
Chairman of the POW/MIA, that is now under National Security, so that comes off this year.

Chairman of the Media, Marketing and Communications Commission is Holly Lewis. That's to replace the Public Relations. All those Public Relations posts that were elected by the Districts now fall under the Media, Marketing and Communications Commission.

Chairwoman of the Religious Emphasis Committeeis Melissa Fowle.

Chairman of the Sons of The American Legion is Skip Craun,

Chairman of the Special Olympics is Bill Koehler.
Chairman of the VA\&R is Dave Cook.
I chair the Department Scholarship Committee.
And the following are the members of the
Department Scholarship Committee: Robert Schmitt;

Roger Friend; Jean Wilson; Bob Ray; Tom Rowe; Andy
Atkins; Brad Teis; Stanley Pleasant; Charles Stennis;
Russ Bohland; Bob Weiler; Roy Terry.
Chairman of the Constitution and Bylaws Committee is Jerry White.

And the Department Liaison for The American Legion Riders is Jack Nix.

Commander, that concludes the ratification of your appointments and it will require a vote.

COMMANDER FRIEND: I'll retain a motion to accept.
1ST DISTRICT CMDE RUE: Jason Rue, 1st District Commander, I make the motion to accept the appointments for the coming year for the Department.

COMMANDER FRIEND: I have a motion to accept. Is there a --

11TH DISTRICT 1VC ROBINSON: Robinson, 11th District, seconds the motion.

COMMANDER FRIEND: I have a motion and a second to accept the appointments. Is there any discussion?

FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).
COMMANDER FRIEND: Hearing none, all those in favor signify by saying aye.

FROM THE ASSEMBLY: Aye.
COMMANDER FRIEND: Opposed, same sign.
FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

COMMANDER FRIEND: Motion passed.
Roy, I don't think we have anymore new guests, do we?

SGT-AT-ARMS TERRY: Sir, I don't think so, looking at the crowd.

COMMANDER FRIEND: Okay, the installation of the officers, Judge Advocate Doug Whitney.

JUDGE ADVOCATE WHITNEY: Clearly, because of our unusual circumstances here, our installation will proceed a little differently than usual. So we will proceed as follows.

My fellow Legionnaires, you have been chosen to fill the various offices of The American Legion Department of Ohio and its respective Districts. I know that you will vindicate the trust that has been placed in you. I know you will faithfully fulfill every obligation required of you.

Familiarize yourself with the duties of your office, and carry out those duties with the same spirit from which arose The American Legion. The welfare and success of this Department depends upon all of you, as does the preservation and the integrity of The American Legion.

Protect the good name of The American Legion with the people of our great nation. Help them know the

Legion's purposes and policies.
Remember that tolerance animates us as members. And remember that there is no rank among us, for we're all equals. We're all aiming for the same goals, the ideals of justice, freedom, democracy and loyalty.

Remember, too, the cardinal principles of The American Legion: The rehabilitation of all disabled veterans; the care of the dependents of those who have answered the final call; the care of those who are now suffering from wounds, disease and want; the education of our children; and service to the community, state and nation.

All elected or continuing in office, Legion officers of the Department and its Districts, and appointed officers, should stand in place now and raise your right hand and repeat after me.

I, state your name, do solemnly pledge myself to perform, faithfully and impartially, the duties of the office of The American Legion I am about to assume.

And I further pledge that I am not a member of, and do not subscribe to, the principles of any group opposed to our form of government.

Congratulations.
(Applause).
You may please be seated.

Commanders and officers, you are entrusted with very important duties. You must teach and protect the cardinal principles of The American Legion throughout the Department and its Districts.

You, as Commanders, are charged with the supervision of the duties of all the officers of the Department and its Districts. Loyalty to The American Legion, to its members, to the National organization, are the obligations you now assume.

Commanders, you are more than the presiding officers. You are guided by the Constitution and Bylaws of the National American Legion, the Department, and your Districts. And, as a body, the responsibility lies upon your shoulders. Familiarize yourself with the traditions of the Department of Ohio and The American Legion. By your sincere acceptance and earnest performance of these duties, may the trust your fellow Legionnaires have reposed in you be justified. Thank you, Commander.

COMMANDER FRIEND: Thank you, Doug.
I want to welcome the new members of the 2021 DEC.
I think we have four, Suzette?
There's four newbies.
The thing of it is, you have a good group here, you four. So use that knowledge that they can give you
because these did one, excuse my French, hell of a job this year.

So I want to thank everybody again. And I want to congratulate all of you on what may not have been the best year we could have had, but I think we did okay with it under the circumstances.

So, moving on, Jeannie, do you want to give the membership report for the new year?

IVC WILSON: Well really nothing on the membership report, Commander, has changed from last Wednesday. And that membership report is in everybody's --

COMMANDER FRIEND: It should be in their packet.
1VC WILSON: -- in your packet.
But what I would like to say is that I hope that, when you get back to your Districts, that you will roll up your sleeves and get your District clear. It takes time. It takes effort. It's just mainly calling, making a phone call.

If you have an issue, if you're having any issue with a Post, give us a call. Give me a call, give Brad a call, give the Commander a call. We'll be glad to call that Post for you. We're here to help you. And we just want to get everybody's Post clear for everyone to get their membership cards. It's hard to work membership without it.

So we want to have a great year this year. So we appreciate everybody's time and effort. And let's really work hard on membership this year.

Thank you.
(Applause).
Did anybody bring any cards?
FROM THE FLOOR: Yes.
We do them on-line.
1VC WILSON: I know you do.
ADJUTANT HELLER: All right.
(Applause).
That's what we want to see.
COMMANDER FRIEND: That's what we need.
Brad, activities.
2VC TEIS: Good afternoon.
FROM THE ASSEMBLY: Good afternoon.
2VC TEIS: Everybody's got a full belly and we want to get out of here quick, so I'm not going to talk here too long.

I want to thank each and every one of you Districts for helping me out this year with all the activities. I know some of them have gotten canceled.

I just got off the phone the other day with Zanesville again. If at all possible, they're still going to try to have the pool tournament, if they can
shoot for sometime late September or October. They've also agreed to Napoleon, next year, taking over again. We've really got to stress this one right now. We're coming up on July 25th and 26th. We are still having the golf tournament.

Jerry has been in touch with, I've been in touch with, the golf course. They are strictly abiding by the governor's orders. Golf courses are, every time a cart comes in, they clean the cart. They do everything they need to do.

Right now we only have about nine teams turned in. But you know, just like all Legionnaires, we all wait till the last minute to do something.

Please get back to your Posts, your Districts, and get to your Posts and please see if there's any other teams that would like to join.

I have a list from Joe and Betsy from last year. It didn't have phone numbers on it, but what I did was I called it team-by-team from last year, picking the top person. Hopefully they were the captain. I'm getting their phone numbers off of myLegion, which everybody should be using, and I'm giving them a call to see if we can get more.

Post 199 will still be hosting it. We need to get a turnout. The simple reason is they had to put $\$ 500$
down to secure the golf course. So we need at least to make that money back.

And then Joe and Betsy are going to supply all the rest.

Joe just went "Huh?"
I mean it's the end of July. The nice thing is, is Harrison, Harrison (sic) County, whatever it is, they were supposed to have this Greek festival, or whatever it was. So that has been canceled. So three hotels that are on the sheet that you can get off the Ohio Legion website, those hotels are not booked for that festival anymore. So we can get into those three hotels very easily. And the one is like $\$ 85$ or something.

PDC WILSON: 89.99.
2VC TEIS: For 89.99 we can get into that.
So please, please go back. Let's try to make this golf tournament so we can get this American Legion activity going back again.

The bowling tournament will remain in Miamisburg next year.

The euchre tournament, we have two bids in.
The pool tournament, like $I$ said, will stay in Zanesville.

So we still need to get 2021. We will still need
bids and that for everything for 2022. So on the next group of people that come in, officers come in, so we can be set far out like we do for the convention.

That's all I have. Thank you very much and God bless.

COMMANDER FRIEND: Thank you, Brad.
PDC WILSON: Hey Brad.
2VC TEIS: Yes, sir.
PDC WILSON: If I might, Commander. We'd appreciate if some of the Posts would help us with that golf tournament a little bit. We've had two holes sponsored so far from different Posts outside of our District. And we'd appreciate if you'd do that. It's 100 bucks to sponsor a hole.

Saturday night we're having a chicken dinner and smoked salmon dinner at the Post. So we're looking forward to having a good show for the Department of Ohio.

2VC TEIS: And the hole sponsorship forms are also on the Ohio Legion website.

COMMANDER FRIEND: Yes, Bob.
PDC SCHMITT: PDC Schmitt, through the chairs to Mr. Wilson.

Can Charities money at the Post level be used in sponsoring the hole?

PDC WILSON: Good question. I don't know that you need to do that. I would say no.

COMMANDER FRIEND: We'll find out, Bob.
ADJUTANT HELLER: Yeah.
COMMANDER FRIEND: Treasurer's report, Charles.
FROM THE FLOOR: The Department of Ohio could do it.

ADJUTANT HELLER: You could make the donation, you could make the donation to the Department of Ohio. It's a possibility. I'll follow up and let you know. PDC SCHMITT: Okay.

TREASURER STENNIS: I'm back.
The budget is in front of you. You can see that. There's a couple things I wanted to mention.

There is a $5 \%$ increase for each and every expense. We were only supposed to do a two or $3 \%$, but what we did, we forecast, because of COVID-19, that they're going to increase. In some areas you've all probably already seen some price gouging going on. So we accounted for that.

The other thing that you'll see is that we rolled all the VSO officers into regular salaries. That's why that number is 600,000 and looks rather large. But that's because all the VSO officers are now employees of the Department of Ohio and it's not separated into

VA\&R.
The other thing is is that we will no longer be giving a grant to Lucas County vSO. Pat will now become an employee of the Department of Ohio. So, again, that's another reason why VA\&R is shrinking.

Any questions?
FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).
TREASURER STENNIS: Any questions?
FROM THE FLOOR: Yes, we do have questions.
12TH DISTRICT CMDR GARREN: Garren, 12th District Commander. With a lot of our stuff being canceled, like our Department and National and this and that, is there any way that any of that monies can be used to help these Posts that are struggling really bad, before they close up? We're supposed to be, you know, a family. Some of these Posts are in bad shape.

TREASURER STENNIS: I hear your question. That has to come from the Legion.

And I'm not being disrespectful, but this is my belief. I was the Commander of a Post for nine years, for nine years. And we laid out plans in case of emergencies such as this. My Post, 336. And as a matter of fact, we were able to tap into a line of credit so we could float our employees' costs.

I don't think the Department of Ohio wants to get
into the business of saving one Post instead of another. And I think if you do it for one, you've got to do it for everybody.

12TH DISTRICT CMDR GARREN: There could be some kind of a hardship clause put in there, and this and that.

TREASURER STENNIS: Commander.
COMMANDER FRIEND: Is there any other questions?
FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).
COMMANDER FRIEND: I'll retain a motion to accept the Treasurer's report.

12TH DISTRICT CMDR GARREN: Commander, I so move.
COMMANDER FRIEND: I have a motion to accept. Do I have a second?

9TH DISTRICT CMDR ADLEY: Frank Adley, 9th District Commander, I second.

COMMANDER FRIEND: I have a second.
Is there any discussion?
FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).
COMMANDER FRIEND: Hearing none, all those in favor of accepting the Treasurer's report signify by saying aye.

FROM THE ASSEMBLY: Aye.
COMMANDER FRIEND: Opposed, same sign.
FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

COMMANDER FRIEND: Motion passes.
Melissa, do you have anything?
CHAPLAIN FOWLE: At this time I don't have anything new. I am probably going to submit some requests for some cards. I've been sending out quite a few lately. So maybe I can get something from the Department of Ohio to send out to those who are bereaved or ill or injured. So I think that's something that I'm going to be doing.

But at this time I don't have anything, except I will say something about Ron Hartman. They did say something about his arm is numb. But other than that, he's doing okay.

Yes, Mary.
ASST. CHAPLAIN AUSTIN: Yes, Melissa. I meant to tell you earlier, a long-time Legionnaire of Post 11, Tom and Tammy Dillon, Tammy's father, John Steinmetz, passed away on Sunday. He'd been a long-time member of Post 11, a black cat, and we're so sorry to hear about his passing. His viewing will be in September.

CHAPLAIN FOWLE: Thank you, Mary.
Is there any other updates?
FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).
CHAPLAIN FOWLE: Hearing none, I will hand the mic back to you.

COMMANDER FRIEND: Thank you.
CHAPLAIN FOWLE: Thank you for the appointment again, sir.

COMMANDER FRIEND: Thank you, Melissa.
Okay, Historian Al.
HISTORIAN BEYER: Commander, if it's all right with the DEC, I believe that the vast majority heard my report the first time, and that will make due for the second time.

However, if anybody has any questions or comments, or wants to get ahold of me later, my contact information was in that handout.

Other than that, $I$ look forward to doing all your history books.

Thank you.
COMMANDER FRIEND: And now from our Alternate NECman, Mr. Masowick.

ALTERNATE NEC MASOWICK: I have nothing, Commander.

COMMANDER FRIEND: Okay, from our Judge Advocate, Doug Whitney.

JUDGE ADVOCATE WHITNEY: I just have one thing to add to what was said before.

Most of our Posts do not have a Judge Advocate, although that's recommended by National. If the Post
has enough people and someone would like to serve at that position, he need not be an attorney, he just needs to be somebody that is willing to become familiar with the constitution and bylaws at every level, as well as the policy documents.

If you've got somebody that wants to serve the position and needs help, feel free to have them call me, both at the Post and District level. I get a number of questions every week, and I'm very happy to answer them. But I would love for the Posts to go to your Post and District Judge Advocates for them, to do their work as well.

So, just a suggestion in that regard.
That's all I have.
COMMANDER FRIEND: Thank you, Doug.
From our newly-appointed Parliamentarian,
Mr. Gerald White.
PARLIAMENTARIAN WHITE: I very much appreciate the invitation by the Commander to serve as the Parliamentarian this year.

When he called me, I certainly questioned his calling me. I felt there were others more active in the organization than $I$ to serve this position. But I guess 38 years of dealing with the Department Executive Committee and Department Conventions and programs count
for something.
I do very much appreciate the invitation by the Commander. I see the role of the Parliamentarian as working with the Department Judge Advocate to steer the DEC members through the forest of procedures. We're simply there to guide you in the procedure. We're not here to mandate. We're not here to dictate. Doug and I are here to guide you as you do the business of The American Legion, just to help you make sure you do it correctly.

So, again, Commander, I very much appreciate this appointment.

COMMANDER FRIEND: Ms. Adjutant.
ADJUTANT HELLER: Yes.
COMMANDER FRIEND: Suzette.
ADJUTANT HELLER: Okay, so, good afternoon.
FROM THE ASSEMBLY: Good afternoon.
ADJUTANT HELLER: So I shared with you where we've been; right? This is where we're at right now. And now I'm going to share with you about where we can go and what our objectives are at Headquarters on where we're going.

So, a quick announcement. Ashley is in the back there, taking photographs. So if you would like a new, updated District Commander photograph, she is more than
happy to do that for you before you leave.
For the new members of the DEC, please have your photograph taken, because we will use that for The Ohio Legion News and also the website.

So if you would like a copy of that, Ashley would be able to provide you with one. Maybe not today, but, through Christie, we would be able to get you a digital copy of your photograph.

So if you would like to have a new photograph taken, get one taken. If you haven't had one, you'll need one. So make sure you get one taken.

All right, Rick, you mentioned a very good question, and that was about helping the Posts.

And during the whole shutdown process and the restrictions, I personally was very concerned about Posts. And so we all are; right? But what I did was I took the Posts' roster and divided it between the Commander, the 1st Vice and the 2nd Vice. And I asked them to please call every Post. So all the Posts were divided into three and I asked them to please call and check on them, see how they're doing, talk to Post Commander. It was the names of all the Post Commanders. See what's going on. We really need to gauge the pulse of what's happening with our Posts.

This business is like a franchise. It's a little
crazy. I didn't realize how similar the business model really is to a franchise.

And so I have huge concern for the Posts. And so for the last two months, we have called every single Post. And I'm sure Brad probably called every single one of them. Jean has probably called every single one of them. And I'm sure the Commander has been working through his list as well.

So, and then I asked for feedback. Well, what's going on? Where can we help them?

So, Rick, I'm sure that if you engage with the Commander, 1st Vice, 2nd Vice, about needs, maybe they can share some of that, what's the common theme happening. We are definitely looking at that.

So the goals for 2020-2021 that I'd like to share with you is we're going to continue all those things that we talked about. That's the norm. That is the stable norm. That's the foundation that we built. And we're going to stand on that and go from there.

Monthly DEC conference calls. I would like to see, by a show of hands, did you enjoy the monthly conference calls? I'm not going to say "enjoy." Would you like to have monthly conference calls to take care of our business in between the DECs, in between the times we meet face to face? So it would be two
conference calls in between each DEC meeting.
I liked it because I thought we got a lot of business done and I felt like you all were in the know.

It would be like the same, Tuesday evening, the first Tuesday of the month at 6:00 PM, for, you know, one hour. I know the membership already has one with the Vice Commanders. But can I see a show of hands of who would be interested? Would you be interested in continuing the monthly conference call?

FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (Indicating).
ADJUTANT HELLER: That is not a lot of hands.
I would like to continue it. I know the Commander has talked about it. I know the table officers talked. You know, we all talked about it. And I just felt like the more we engaged each other, you know, the more you were able to help us and we were able to help you, the more we work together.

So, okay, we'll get that together and let you know what day that is.

Yes, sir.
ALTERNATE NEC MASOWICK: It's a good idea.
Steve Masowick, Alternate NEC.
It's a good idea to do this once a month but we need some protocol on what to do. Because we can cut the time down if people would just shut their
microphones off.
ADJUTANT HELLER: Conference call etiquette.
11TH DISTRICT 1VC ROBINSON: Robinson, 11th District.

Why don't we do a training on Zoom or GoToMeeting etiquette, to where you can actually teach people how to work the machines before we get them involved?

ADJUTANT HELLER: I have documentation on conference call etiquette. I'd be more than happy to distribute that again. And maybe for the actual conference call, maybe if we all learned where the mute button is.

FROM THE FLOOR: Yeah.
ADJUTANT HELLER: Yeah. Because if you're on your phone, it looks a lot different.

And maybe we could find a way to create a video on that at Headquarters. That might be an opportunity, to do that. And I'm sure there's some YouTube videos already out there. I'm pretty sure we're not the first ones to think of that. So we'll do our homework and get some information on that.

Yes, ma'am.
CHAPLAIN FOWLE: One thing that I really noticed when talking about businesses or The Legion or, you know, any group, the worst thing that people complain
about is communication. So $I$ think this is a great idea, so that we can be able to be on top of all the issues. And if no one has a question now, maybe someone else had that same problem. And so we're going to be able to work through it a lot easier and quicker, and maybe get things resolved in a timely manner and be able to continue the business of The American Legion.

ADJUTANT HELLER: Okay, great. Thank you.
Okay, we are instituting the Media, Marketing, Communications Coordinator position. So what we would like to do with that is use all that fancy equipment that we have. Right? But we would like to utilize that to help the Districts and the Posts with membership and fundraising efforts.

So I know we talked about Jermaine. We talked about, you know, how you can get on myLegion and there's all those member data forms, right, for transfers and whatnot. So we were able to provide you with the labels and member data forms.

So we're going to come up with a price list of what that would -- it's always going to be cheaper. We're going to give you the cost price of what would that cost, even if you need a donation.

If a Post just doesn't have it, right, we would, maybe we would at least just ask them to pay for the
shipping.
But we're going to come up with a cost. What would that cost us to be able to provide that service for Posts, for Posts and Districts? Okay?

The other part is to market programs, events and training to best engage members and potential members. So we want to be able to use our equipment to put things in the hands of folks to engage our members.

Another area that we talked about, obviously, is the membership focus.

From the Headquarters' standpoint, it's really getting the micro engagement of the Posts and members, engagement through mentoring and training. Post officer development and training we're doing through the membership events we're hosting in September, and then also through Buckeye American College.

And then we're streamlining our membership processing at Department. So the more we can engage at the Post level and get people to a baseline of membership processing, the better that's going to be. There won't be such a disparity on the membership processing. And people may want to get more engaged because they may not necessarily have to spend as much time trying to figure it out. Right?

So really what we focused on is really more of a

Post engagement, as well as the Districts. Get more micro in helping our Posts from the Department level, with the District Commanders.

Information gathering. So I realized the way that we ask for information is very antiquated. We send you a form and we say fill this form out and send it back to us. And for some people that's great. For a lot of people that's very time consuming. Or for us it's very time consuming because it's a lot of data entry.

So it's kind of like when you go to the grocery store and you're in the checkout line, and you can either have the lady in the checkout, right, or a man, a lady or a man, they'll run that through the line, or you can go to the self-checkout. Right? So it's kind of like that when you're checking out for your groceries, you're either going to go in the self-checkout aisle or you're having somebody ring up your groceries.

Well, with the Office 365 Suite platform that we have, we can send you a link or we can put a link on our website. You can click on that and all of those questions that we asked you on the forms, like we've been doing with our surveys and things like that, you just put your information in there. You just put it right in there. And it comes to us electronically.

And now all we have to do is download the spreadsheet and now we have your data. So you're just doing that individually.

So please, you know, be mindful that you'll be seeing more electronic forms come to you, more links, and more opportunities to use the website. So efficiency is really what we're driving this year as well.

Developing dialogue within our organization that focuses on the inclusion of age, race and gender within our membership. I know this is a very touchy subject.

I will tell you the amount of things that are coming to my phone from officers in this organization, whether it be at the Post level, the District level, or the Department level, the negative things that are being placed on social media --

We're not here to monitor your social media account. But we're all officers of the organization. And I may be the only American Legion somebody sees.

And if you're a veteran, you have a right to be in this organization. Because you served.

So I would just ask that we be mindful of that before we hit that send button, what it is that we're actually putting out there when we have our caps on in pictures.

And I can show you all the stuff. I considered putting a presentation together and crossing out the names. And some of you are sitting in this room right now, and some of you are not.

So I would just ask that we just be really mindful of that. Because we don't want somebody to think that they don't belong here when they do. Right?

We're an American Legion family. We're veterans. You know?

So that's a dialogue that's been brought to our attention, not just by ourselves but also by folks that we work with as stakeholders in the community. We want to be sure that, you know, everybody has a seat at the table. Okay?

So, please, I hope you don't take that offensively. I didn't mean it that way. I'm just asking us to be mindful.

Continue to identify the Posts that need help and assist with stabilizing the Posts that need help to prevent Post closings and minimize legal problems. That is something that, I mean if you were to see the cart in my office -- every time we get a phone call, Marie logs it. I get the message and I pass it on. I know all of you have heard from me, hey, we got this complaint, da, da, da, da.

Usually, when the Judge Advocate gets it as well, he'll look at it and he'll start doing the background check at the Post.

And I have to say eight out of the ten times there's a compliance issue with the Post. There's something going on and the Post could not do that or it would put them in a legal situation. So we're really trying to be more proactive in doing that as well.

So I'm going to wrap up by saying that at National, Henry Howard, in the media division, is seeking to do a piece on the farmers with Legion connections. So if you know of any farmers who may be veterans or Legion, veterans who maybe they could become a Legionnaire if they're not, if they have a connection with The American Legion, if they're a veteran and they farm, National would like to do some highlighting on this and has asked us to put them in connection with somebody in our community.

That's all I really have.
Are there any questions for me about 2020-2021?
FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).
ADJUTANT HELLER: No? Okay.
Thank you, each and every one of you. And I look forward to where we're going this year.
(Applause).

CMTE CHRMN BISHOP: Okay, standing committee reports. Gifts for Yanks.

FROM THE ASSEMBLY: He did it.
He did it already.
CMTE CHRMN BISHOP: Good afternoon.
FROM THE ASSEMBLY: Good afternoon.
CMTE CHRMN BISHOP: All right, everybody should have a copy of the budget for the Gifts for the Yanks, or the proposed 2020-2021. This is just a tentative budget. Since the whole committee has not met yet, it has not been approved. So it's just a tentative report.

At our subcommittee meeting we talked about sending out pledge cards for the Gifts for the Yanks. We thought that might be a good idea to get some of these Posts that do not donate, that they might donate with the pledge card. So we talked about that.

The coins will be raffled off at the Mid-Winter Conference. But since we haven't met, we haven't collected all the tickets yet. So somebody might have a ticket out there that hasn't been turned in. So it's going to be at Mid-Winter this time.

We're going to do the same thing with marketing that we did last year. We're going to send the Gifts for Yanks information by mail, like we did last year.

So every Post will have the brochures and they'll have the marketing material for the Gifts for the Yanks program.

With the budget we had this year, like I said earlier, we collected over $\$ 147,000$. In our budget, we budgeted for $\$ 180,000$ and we were short.

Now, we figured, we projected that we're going to have at least $\$ 30,000$ that hasn't been used this year because of the pandemic. So that's going to help in our budget.

Also, back in 2019, we gave $\$ 100,000$ to Cleveland for their Fisher House. And at that time, the Gifts for the Yanks Committee decided not to take that out of our investment funds at that time. But we didn't need to because we had money in the checking account.

But at the present time, in our checking account, we have $\$ 174,608.05$. And in our reserve fund, our investment account, we have $\$ 437,842.53$. So the Gifts for the Yanks are in real good shape.

We project that we should take in $\$ 200,000$ a year. It has been falling short the last couple years. We hate to go into our investment account and take money out. So we're trying to budget as close as we can to what we take in. So our Gifts for the Yanks Committee is working very hard with that.

There is a Gifts for the Yanks meeting on July 18th, at 12:00 o'clock, at Department Headquarters. Please make sure your representative is there.

We have the Gifts for the Yanks plaques to pass out to Posts in your Districts for last year. We'd like them picked up by your Gifts for the Yanks Chairmen.

It's a very important meeting. This way the Districts will know what's going on if they have their committee chairman at their District meeting and they report back to you.

We made out these sheets so you could read them, so you could tell your District what your facility is receiving. A lot of times we give them to the Gifts for the Yanks and the VAVS representative, the VA\&R representative, but it never gets back to the District and the District Commanders. This way, your District will know exactly what your facility is getting; if they have a special project, what the special project is. It's all in black and white and the budget is set up that way.

We sent a notice out, or, excuse me, Jermaine sent an e-mail out to each facility on the projected gifts for next year. Every one of them, except for

Cincinnati (sic) and Chillicothe; correct?
COORDINATOR FERGUSON: Dayton and Chillicothe. CMTE CHRMN BISHOP: Chillicothe and Dayton did not reply back. The rest of them, they were very good.

Now a lot of you will ask, "What do you do about the people that are in the lockdown units?" Well we don't send them a gift. We give them, each unit gets $\$ 200$, so they can put it on a card for those people. Because they cannot take gifts because they might poke somebody with it, might hit somebody with it, might be a danger to somebody else. So we felt at the Gifts for the Yanks that what we would rather do is give them money so they could have a party, pizza, ice cream, whatever they need on that ward. So that's what we've been doing for the Gifts for the Yanks and it's working out very good.

Other than that, does anybody have any questions? I'll be glad to answer them.

12TH DISTRICT CMDR GARREN: Commander, Rick Garren, 12th District Commander.

I was sitting next to my wife last night and a woman from, I think it was Newark, was out at Chillicothe. And what it amounted to was Chillicothe is locked down now. And if anybody wants to take anything down there, take it to Building 9, and they
will get it through the wards. Okay?
And she specified that, let's see, men's body wash and stuff like that for the men was needed badly. Just to let you know.

So if you take anything down there, it's Building 9.

Thank you.
CMTE CHRMN BISHOP: Thank you very much.
Most facilities, if you have something to drop off, drop it off at the main door. They will have somebody at the main door and they will collect it for you and make sure it's taken to the proper place.

ADJUTANT HELLER: Thank you, Darell.
COMMANDER FRIEND: Thank you, Darell.
I'll retain a motion to accept the --
CMTE CHRMN BISHOP: It doesn't need it because it hasn't been approved by the full committee yet.

COMMANDER FRIEND: Oh, okay.
Cancellations --
We're going to have to fine the Judge Advocate.
PDC SCHMITT: A motion to fine the Judge Advocate \$5 for making noise with his phone.

COMMANDER FRIEND: He just got fined $\$ 5$.
Who do you want it to go to?
PDC SCHMITT: We'll put it in the Gifts for the

Yanks.
COMMANDER FRIEND: Okay.
Moving on --
PDC SCHMITT: PDC Schmitt, for the record. I didn't specify, but let me say I'm trying to remember what was going on at that particular point in time.

But anyways, we'll give it to the Gifts for Yanks, what the heck.

COMMANDER FRIEND: All right.
PDC SCHMITT: They can use a few more bucks.
COMMANDER FRIEND: Okay, moving on, cancellation, revocation and suspension of charters.

Actually, as you all know, the only thing left is we're still with the 7th down in Chillicothe, that suspension. And actually, I will be there tomorrow afternoon. We have a meeting with the Post to go forward on what we're going to have them do.

I have some suggestions. We were going to talk about reopening the Post and having officers elected. And I think it's best that, we had a guy that was in line, and we're actually going to have this individual actually be in charge of the Post until we can get them straightened out. Because there's still a lot of things up in the air as far as the monies and stuff. I hate to leave it closed. But if we can get started
with this individual in there in charge, that's what we're going to try to do tomorrow. But just to give you a heads-up on Chillicothe.

Okay, resolutions, constitutional amendments. We're going to table that.

Is there any unfinished business?
FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).
COMMANDER FRIEND: Is there any unfinished business?

FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).
COMMANDER FRIEND: Is there any new business?
12TH DISTRICT 1VC POULTON: Commander.
COMMANDER FRIEND: Yes.
12TH DISTRICT 1VC POULTON: Poulton, 1st Vice, 12th District.

Can I have the microphone, please? I may lose my voice on this one.

It's taken me about a year to try to figure out membership. I guess I'm going to get a lot of practice doing it for another year.

But something has concerned me a lot over the last eight or nine months. And I'm thinking about words to call it. And $I$ think we have a pandemic with membership.

I'm going to be brutal. We've got 3500 new
members for Department this year. We did a great job. We're bringing in 2500, plus or minus, new members, another 1,000 or so, 1300 , whatever it was, transfers from 888.

But when you add that to what our quota was and subtract the numbers, we had a 14 percent net loss this year. Do the math, folks. Fourteen percent losses every year and we're going to be out of business in less than ten years.

I do a seminar in our District on membership. I did one last year and I'm going to do it again this year. And the National averages puts us at about a $10 \%$ loss every year, across the nation. You do the math. In ten years, the National American Legion will cease to exist.

So I guess my point to you is, you membership chairs, you Commanders, $I$ feel strongly about this, and you can run me out the door if you want to, but $I$ think we need to get with our expired members. And some of them are dead. I mean, I understand that. We can't bring them back. That's about 3\% out of that, two to 3\%, based on the national average.

We're still losing nine to 11\% who just fail to show up. Some move out of state. I understand that. But a lot just don't renew. We're leaving a lot of
members on the table.
You know, us in the Army, had something. We used to say "Don't leave anybody behind." Well we're leaving a bunch of folks behind every year.

And I tried to call some of them to find out why they're not renewing and they don't return my phone calls. So I'm going to start knocking on doors when I get a chance to.

We're trying to find out why people just aren't coming back. And if it's something we're not doing in our Posts the right way, then we need to work with how we operate our Posts and operate them better.

I mean, these are Legionnaires. Some of them were Legionnaires for 20 years or more, and they're not coming back. That's a problem.

And we focus, our 1st Vice at Department tells us every month how hard we need to work to do membership. Well, we're losing them as fast as we're gaining them. And I think it's something we need to take a look at.

We have a membership face-to-face in August, I think. I think we need to do a little research within our Districts, within our Posts, to see if we can find some answers, to see how we can address this to do something about it to reverse this trend.

Thank you, sir.

COMMANDER FRIEND: You're welcome.
Is there any more?
FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).
COMMANDER FRIEND: Is there anything for the good of the Legion?

Yes, Melissa.
CHAPLAIN FOWLE: I have a question. I was going over the calendar and in March, on the 7 th and the 15th, we have the Oratorical Contest both days.

COMMANDER FRIEND: Suzette, did you hear that?
ADJUTANT HELLER: Say that again.
CHAPLAIN FOWLE: In March, on the 7 th and the 15th, it shows that we have the Oratorical Contest at Department Headquarters on both days.

ADJUTANT HELLER: Christie?
COORDINATOR WHITE: The Oratorical Contest has not been set yet. The 15th is National's cutoff for Oratorical. The 7th must have slipped in there.

CHAPLAIN FOWLE: Okay, so just put both of them "to be determined"?

COORDINATOR WHITE: Correct.
CHAPLAIN FOWLE: Okay, thank you.
COMMANDER FRIEND: Is there anything else for the good of the Legion?

ADJUTANT HELLER: Yes.

COMMANDER FRIEND: The April DEC is actually set for the Saturday before Easter. So the proposal is to change that date to March 27 th. I'll retain a motion to change that date to the 27th of March.

4TH DISTRICT CMDR FOSTER: Commander, 4th District, Steve Foster, I make a motion we change the date to the 27 th .

COMMANDER FRIEND: I have a motion to change the date to the 27th. Do I have a second?

4TH DISTRICT 1VC ERVIN: Commander, Steve Ervin seconds that.

COMMANDER FRIEND: I have a motion and a second to change the date of the April DEC to March 27th. Is there any discussion?

FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).
COMMANDER FRIEND: Hearing none, all those in favor signify by saying aye.

FROM THE ASSEMBLY: Aye.
COMMANDER FRIEND: Opposed, same sign.
FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).
COMMANDER FRIEND: Motion passed.
The August DEC is set for August 1st, to be determined where. And I'll take suggestions from the floor, or a motion, to either have it at Department or actually have it back here.

ADJUTANT HELLER: Do you prefer face to face? FROM THE FLOOR: Is there a Post big enough to do it?

COMMANDER FRIEND: I'm sorry.
FROM THE FLOOR: Is there a local Post that is big enough to do it?

ADJUTANT HELLER: Not big enough.
COMMANDER FRIEND: Not big enough for this. Not this big.

ALTERNATE NEC MASOWICK: What about Newark? It seems like it's pretty big.

I've not been inside that.
FROM THE FLOOR: I've been to the Post. And that room is big. But to do the social distancing --

ALTERNATE NEC MASOWICK: Oh, I see.
COMMANDER FRIEND: -- for this size of a group -1VC WILSON: Commander, I make a motion that we have our August DEC back here at the Crowne Plaza. COMMANDER KLOSTERMEIER: I have a motion to have it back here. Do have I a second?

ADJUTANT HELLER: I cannot dictate where it's going to be because they may have an event here. So we'll try to have it back here.

COMMANDER FRIEND: I have a motion to have it back here if at all possible. Do I have a second?

12TH DISTRICT 1VC POULTON: Commander, Poulton, 1st Vice, 12th District, I second that motion.

COMMANDER FRIEND: We have a motion and a second to have the meeting, the August DEC, back here if we can. Is there any discussion?

FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).
COMMANDER FRIEND: Hearing none, all those in favor signify by saying aye.

FROM THE ASSEMBLY: Aye.
COMMANDER FRIEND: Opposed, same sign.
FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).
COMMANDER FRIEND: Motion passed.
Okay, you all know that the National Membership Workshop is August 3rd through the 6th, and that will be on-line, as well as the Department Membership Workshop on September 12th. That is in person, but the location will be determined. So we may have to do the membership workshop at the Department. I think we can do that.

ADJUTANT HELLER: I don't know yet.
PDC WILSON: Mr. Commander.
COMMANDER FRIEND: Yes. Go ahead, Jerry.
PDC WILSON: Just a recommendation. When you have it back here, I'd really appreciate it if everybody would speak closer to the mic; and the people that are
speaking at the mic that have masks on, that they take them down. Because today the only one I understood was Jerry White. But everybody else who spoke with a mask on or who spoke away from the mic, you couldn't hardly hear them with this social distancing.

COMMANDER FRIEND: All right.
PDC WILSON: And I know you could say move up front, but you can't do that either.

COMMANDER FRIEND: Okay. Will do, Jerry.
Okay. In closing, guys, you know, it's been an unusual year. I've enjoyed it. I think we're going to have a year to look forward to this coming year because we're seasoned. We know what needs to be done and we know how to do it. We've succeeded in what we've done so far with everything that's happened to us. So it should be really easy next year.

I want to thank all of you again. It's been an honor to be your Commander. And it will be an honor to be your Commander again next year.

Thank you all, again, very, very much. (Applause).

Mary, will you give us the benediction. Uncover.

ASST. CHAPLAIN AUSTIN: Heavenly Father, as we depart from this place, may we always be mindful of our
obligations to this great organization. Keep each and every one of us in Your prayers. Keep each and every one of our family in Your prayers. God bless every man and woman that is serving overseas at this time. Bless our great leaders in making decisions and keeping everyone in mind when they make their decisions.

In Your heavenly name we pray. Amen.
FROM THE ASSEMBLY: Amen.
COMMANDER FRIEND: Our nation's colors in place, hand salute. Two.
. . . SALUTE TO COLORS BY ASSEMBLY . . .
I thank everybody again. Meeting Adjourned.

(PROCEEDINGS CONCLUDED)

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