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3

THE AMERICAN LEGION

4

DEPARTMENT OF OHIO

5

106th ANNUAL DEPARTMENT CONVENTION

6

7

8

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

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11 Dates: Friday, July 11, through

12 Sunday, July 13, 2025.

13

14

15 Location: Holiday Inn Cleveland-South Independence

16 6001 Rockside Road

17 Independence, OH 44131

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1 Friday, July 11, 2025.

2 . . . CALL TO ORDER . . .

3 COMMANDER WHATLEY: Legionnaires, welcome to
4 the 106th Annual Convention of The American Legion
5 Department of Ohio.

6 Please stand and direct your attention to the
7 color guard, the Greater Cleveland Young Marines,
8 who will post the colors of our nation.

9 Once the colors are posted, please stay
10 standing for the playing of "God Bless America" by
11 Brody Alexander and singing of the "National Anthem"
12 by Danielle Rebon.

13 . . . COLORS POSTED . . .

14 . . "GOD BLESS AMERICA" PLAYED BY BRODY ALEXANDER . .

15 (Applause).

16 . . . "NATIONAL ANTHEM" SUNG BY DANIELLE REBON . . .

17 (Applause).

18 COMMANDER WHATLEY: You may be seated.

19 MS. REBON: Thank you so much for the honor and
20 privilege of being able to come and sing for all of
21 you today. I am also going to be singing a medley
22 of the songs of my America and back to God.

23 . . . MEDLEY SUNG BY DANIELLE REBON . . .

24 (Applause).

25 COMMANDER WHATLEY: To the young Marines, Brody

1 Alexander, Danielle Rebon, The American Legion
2 Department of Ohio thanks you for coming in and
3 entertaining us this evening. They thank you and I
4 thank you.

5 (Applause).

6 Please uncover as Chaplain Ron Distel presents
7 the invocation.

8 CHAPLAIN DISTEL: Hard to follow that.

9 Good evening.

10 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: Good evening.

11 CHAPLAIN DISTEL: Before the invocation, I'd
12 like to remind everyone that there will be a
13 religious service on Sunday morning in the Brooklyn
14 Room. Dr. Robert White, our Assistant Chaplain,
15 will be doing the message of the day. We will also
16 be holding a remembrance ceremony.

17 If you've lost a friend or a loved one this
18 past year, I have a little form. If you fill it
19 out, we will definitely bring your memory up in the
20 service. So, if you get with me after, I would
21 appreciate it. It's just a small little form. It's
22 not a lot of writing.

23 Let us pray.

24 Lord, we are aware that the world has many
25 problems, from health issues to regional

1 disagreements, to full active wars. Lord, some of
2 us remember the 1960s, and there were people that we
3 called "hippies." We all thought they were weird,
4 as they echoed peace and love to the world. Lord,
5 we wish for that message to return. And to You we
6 pray for that today.

7 Amen.

8 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: Amen.

9 COMMANDER WHATLEY: You may be seated.

10 Resolution 288, adopted at the 67th American
11 Legion National Convention of The American Legion,
12 calls for designating a POW/MIA empty chair at all
13 official meetings of The American Legion as a
14 physical symbol of the thousands of American
15 POW/MIAs still unaccounted for from all wars and
16 conflicts involving the United States.

17 This symbol is a reminder for all of us to
18 spare no effort to secure the release of any
19 American prisoners from captivity, repatriation of
20 the remains of those who died bravely in the defense
21 of liberty, and full accounting of those missing in
22 action. The empty chair, those we honor are not
23 here in body but are with us in spirit. Let us
24 remember, and never forget, their sacrifice.

25 Sergeant-at-Arms, place the POW/MIA cover on

1 the empty chair in front of the podium.

2 . . . POW/MIA COVER PLACED . . .

3 Please join Department 1st Vice Commander Stan
4 Oren in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

5 . . . PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE BY ASSEMBLY . . .

6 You may cover. You may now cover, as
7 Department 2nd Vice Commander Gary Cox, Jr., leads
8 us in reciting the Preamble of The American Legion.

9 . . . PREAMBLE BY ASSEMBLY . . .

10 Any motions or addresses from this body must be
11 recognized by the Chair, and then proceed to the
12 closest microphone with the assistance from an
13 Assistant Sergeant-at-Arms.

14 I now call Department Adjutant Robinson to read
15 the Convention Call.

16 However, since the Convention Call was mailed
17 to all Posts, the Chair entertains a motion to
18 dispense with the reading of the Convention Call.

19 3RD DISTRICT CMDR EMMONS: Chris Emmons, 3rd
20 District Commander, so moves. Chris Emmons, 3rd
21 District, so moves.

22 6TH DISTRICT CMDR MILLER: Chris Miller, 6th
23 District, seconds.

24 COMMANDER WHATLEY: The motion has been
25 properly made and seconded.

1 Any discussion?

2 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

3 COMMANDER WHATLEY: Any discussion?

4 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

5 COMMANDER WHATLEY: Hearing none, all those for
6 it by saying aye.

7 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: Aye.

8 COMMANDER WHATLEY: All against, nay.

9 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

10 (Motion carried).

11 COMMANDER WHATLEY: I now declare the 106th
12 Convention of The American Legion Department of Ohio
13 convened.

14 To kick off our Department Convention, our
15 first speaker will be Jim Trakas.

16 Currently, Jim is a City Councilman in the City
17 of Independence, and a Major and Battalion Commander
18 of the 1st Civil Support and Sustainment Battalion,
19 Ohio Military Reserve, under the Adjutant General of
20 Ohio, the 4th Civil Support and Sustainment Brigade
21 of the State Defense Forces of Ohio.

22 He has been awarded The Ohio Commendation
23 Medal, Achievement Award, and was tapped as honor
24 graduate of his officer candidate school class.

25 Jim's father was a decorated combat veteran of

1 World War II's 95th Infantry Division, under the
2 U.S. 3rd Army of General George S. Patton, Jr., one
3 of Jim's heroes.

4 Please help me welcome Independence Councilman
5 Jim Trakas.

6 (Applause).

7 MR. TRAKAS: Thank you. Thank you for that
8 warm welcome.

9 And welcome to beautiful Independence, Ohio. I
10 hope you're having a good time.

11 By the way, Sir, may I address?

12 COMMANDER WHATLEY: Yes.

13 MR. TRAKAS: Very good.

14 I really want to thank you for coming here
15 today. And The Legion has had a long tradition here
16 in Independence. And we are so thrilled to have you
17 back.

18 I want you to know a little something about
19 this little community, founded in 1814 by War of
20 1812 veterans. So this community has had a long
21 history, and a storied history, with the military.

22 When you go through town, there is a great
23 soldiers and sailors and airmen monument in the
24 center of town. And there's banners with all sorts
25 of our veterans, saluting them, all over the

1 roadways. So please say hello to a few of them. If
2 you see my dad on East Pleasant Valley Road, tell
3 him a big "hi" for me.

4 My father's division had a reunion right here
5 in this ballroom in 1994. And we were really
6 building this up for my niece, who was four years
7 old at the time. She was born in 1990. And so my
8 father said, "All the soldiers are going to be at
9 this convention and you're going to get a chance to
10 talk to them about what it was like to be over in
11 the European Theater of Operations."

12 And my niece was really excited about this.
13 And she got a picture of General Patton and General
14 Twaddle, who was my dad's division commander, out
15 and was praising them and trying to salute.

16 And so we brought my niece into the room and
17 she looks at everybody and she says, "Well,
18 Grandfather, where are all the soldiers?"

19 And he says, "Well, they're right here."

20 She says, "Well this is a bunch of old men."

21 And he says, "Well, those of us who survived to
22 be old men, God love us."

23 So we're thrilled to have you here today,
24 vibrant all of you, and we appreciate it very much.

25 Independence, of course, was named for the

1 Declaration of Independence, one of a few
2 communities. There's a couple of Independence
3 Townships here in Ohio.

4 But here in northeast Ohio, we're very proud
5 that we have had a Medal of Honor winner from the
6 Civil War who was involved with Morgan's Raiders.

7 The highest ranking officer we have is still
8 with us, who lives on Hillside Road, Lieutenant
9 General Bob Wagner, who was a general in charge of
10 southern European operations in 1980s. He took over
11 for a general who got kidnapped by the Red Brigade.
12 So it was precarious duty over there at that time,
13 with the communists doing all sorts of godless
14 things.

15 And we're very proud of General Wagner. He
16 served on city council with me. And I'm the only
17 one left who's ever served in uniform in the city,
18 in our elected positions.

19 However, you know that one half of one percent
20 of Americans currently have served in uniform. It's
21 the lowest percentage we've had since the foundation
22 of the nation.

23 But we're all proud of you. And we're very
24 proud of the fact that you're here today.

25 And this historic 105th (sic) gathering of The

1 American Legion is particularly historic. We've got
2 the 250th anniversary of the Army, the Navy, and the
3 Marine Corps this year. We've got 110 years of the
4 Coast Guard, 78 years of the Air Force, that we're
5 celebrating here. So what a great achievement that
6 you have to be here.

7 We hope that our community welcomes you very
8 strongly because you're the backbone of America.

9 And, you know, when people say some of these
10 words, and they say, "Well, you know, we love our
11 veterans." Do we? I hope we love our veterans.

12 And that's what The American Legion does.
13 You're instilling patriotism, you're instilling
14 awareness, into people.

15 I still get people who think all sorts of
16 things about the military and the armed forces.
17 They have been lied to so many times over the years.

18 But Buckeye Boys State and Buckeye Girls State
19 and the work that you're doing is helping to reverse
20 that. We're increasing the amount of individuals
21 who are joining the armed forces. That's great to
22 see. And so much of it is a tribute.

23 And you think I know about 80 percent of the
24 Army are prior service family members. So as I
25 joined after my father, my grandfather served the

1 Greek Army in the First World War, that's a great
2 and honorable tradition. So hopefully we can
3 instill that in more of our youth so that this
4 organization and others continue to go on, and we
5 are able to help protect this nation from all
6 enemies foreign and domestic, which is what we're
7 all about.

8 So, on behalf of Mayor Greg Kurtz of the City
9 of Independence, the mayor is out of town this
10 weekend and he asked me to come visit with you,
11 which I'm so thrilled to do, attention to orders, a
12 proclamation, "The American Legion was chartered and
13 incorporated by Congress in the year of our Lord
14 1919, as a patriotic veterans organization devoted
15 to mutual helpfulness. It was founded on the four
16 pillars of belief: Veterans affairs and
17 rehabilitation, national security, Americanism,
18 children and youth."

19 "The American Legion Department of Ohio and the
20 American Legion Auxiliary Department of Ohio are
21 celebrating your convention in this City of
22 Independence, at the Holiday Inn Cleveland South, on
23 11 July through 13 July, 2025."

24 "Whereas, The American Legion Department of
25 Ohio has over 100,000 members, which includes the

1 Sons of The American Legion, and is presently with
2 the outstanding leadership of Commander Arnold
3 Whatley, and Stan Oren, 1st Vice Commander, and Gary
4 Cox, Jr., 2nd Vice Commander, serving under him.

5 "And whereas, The American Legion Department of
6 Ohio Convention will be joined by members from The
7 American Legion, The American Legion Auxiliary, Sons
8 of The American Legion, Legion Riders, and many
9 other distinguished guests."

10 "And whereas, we support, here in the City of
11 Independence, The American Legion Department of
12 Ohio, and recognize your extraordinary contributions
13 to national security and the welfare of military
14 veterans and their families, and for all of our
15 communities."

16 "Therefore, Gregory P. Kurtz, Mayor of the City
17 of Independence, does hereby designate and proclaim
18 that 11 through 13 July, 2025, are to be recognized
19 as 'American Legion Department Days' in the City of
20 Independence, Ohio. We celebrate you. We welcome
21 you."

22 May I present this to you at this time?

23 COMMANDER WHATLEY: Yes.

24 MR. TRAKAS: Thank you.

25 (Applause).

1 COMMANDER WHATLEY: The first greeting is from
2 The American Legion Auxiliary Department of Ohio.

3 This organization was also founded in 1919, and
4 is the greatest patriotic service society in the
5 world, which embodies the spirit of America that has
6 prevailed through wars and peace.

7 The Department President, Louise Smerk, is a
8 member of Unit 610, in Brook Park. During her term
9 over the last year, President Smerk has been a
10 strong advocate for improving the lives of our
11 state's veterans through her project, Sara Harper
12 Village. She believes we need to advocate more for
13 our veterans, and that it is the duty of each and
14 every one of us to ensure they are all cared for.

15 Please help me welcome the Auxiliary Department
16 of Ohio President, Louise Smerk.

17 (Applause).

18 PRESIDENT SMERK: Thank you, Commander Whatley.

19 First and foremost, I'd like to introduce my
20 officers. My 1st Vice President, Renee Kohl.

21 (Applause).

22 And my 2nd Vice President, Mindi Rue, which you
23 all know her.

24 (Applause).

25 Thank you for those kind words.

1 Yes, the Sara J. Harper Village I picked up
2 from one of your Past Department Commanders. And
3 I'm very proud to say that we had National President
4 Trish Ward with us. She had to fly out to Texas
5 this evening, so she's not with us tonight. But she
6 got to visit the village and came back with such
7 great remarks about what we've done there so far,
8 and what we continue to do.

9 So we have a laundry list, you know, from them,
10 what they need, and will continue to support that
11 location for our female veterans.

12 And I do want to thank you and wish you a
13 successful convention. And enjoy your weekend here.

14 Thank you.

15 (Applause).

16 COMMANDER WHATLEY: President Louise and your
17 staff, I thank you for coming to speak with us
18 today. And the work that you do is very important
19 for the entire American Legion and what they stand
20 for. Thank you.

21 PRESIDENT SMERK: Thank you.

22 COMMANDER WHATLEY: Another proud program of
23 our family is the Sons of The American Legion. This
24 group is made up of sons and grandsons of our
25 members.

1 To bring greetings from the SAL is the
2 newly-elected Detachment Commander, Jeff Vrabel, Jr.

3 Jeff is a member of Mahoning Valley Squadron
4 15, in Poland. He earned his eligibility in the
5 Sons through his grandfather's service, who served
6 in the U.S. Army 5th Regimental Combat Team during
7 the Korean War.

8 Commander Vrabel is also a strong advocate for
9 improving the lives of our state's veterans through
10 his project, Save A Warrior.

11 Please help me welcome the Detachment of Ohio
12 Commander, Jeff Vrabel, Jr.

13 (Applause).

14 DETACHMENT CMDR VRABEL: Good evening.

15 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: Good evening.

16 DETACHMENT CMDR VRABEL: As Commander Whatley
17 said, my eligibility was earned through my
18 grandfather's service in the Korean War. He was
19 with the last man to be killed, Sergeant Harold
20 Cross. My grandfather vowed to never forget Harold
21 and never let Harold be forgotten. And 72 years
22 later, we still remember him.

23 And I'd like to introduce my officers behind
24 me.

25 Scott Thornton, he's actually National

1 Assistant Adjutant.

2 (Applause).

3 Past Detachment Commander Dave Dilts.

4 (Applause).

5 Past Detachment Commander and Leading Candidate
6 for National Vice Commander, Steve Honigfort.

7 (Applause).

8 Our Alternate National Executive Committeeman,
9 Past Detachment Commander Jon Coakley.

10 (Applause).

11 National Executive Committeeman, Past
12 Detachment Commander Gary Lang.

13 (Applause).

14 Our National Vice Commander, who I'm going to
15 call up here, Butch Ray, from Illinois.

16 (Applause).

17 SAL NTL VICE CMDR RAY: Well, I've been lucky
18 enough to have the opportunity to address you
19 quickly.

20 So, first of all, to the Legionnaires in the
21 room, thank you your service. Oh, yeah.

22 (Applause).

23 For those of you that are dual members and
24 belong also to the Sons of The American Legion or
25 The American Legion Auxiliary, I thank you for

1 honoring your ancestor who you got your eligibility
2 through.

3 So I bring you greetings from National
4 Commander Joseph Navarrete, from the Detachment of
5 New Mexico, whose theme this year is honoring our
6 heritage, honoring those from whom we, us gentlemen,
7 received our eligibility.

8 In my travels, though, I've been asked
9 sometimes, what's my why? You guys have heard that
10 question before. Why do we do what we do? And what
11 do I do, or why do I do what I do for the Sons of
12 The American Legion.

13 I'll tell you a real short story about three
14 people.

15 The first person is myself, Harl D., "Butch" is
16 my nickname, Ray. Harl, just like "Carl," only with
17 an "H."

18 I do what I do to honor my father, who I carry
19 with me on my cap everywhere.

20 So the second person I'm telling you about is
21 my dad, Harl H. Ray, who was born in 1917, was
22 drafted into World War II at the ripe age of 24, and
23 served in a railroads operation battalion in Iran.
24 He was lucky enough to come home from the war. And
25 I do everything I do because of his memory. We lost

1 him in 2000. He was the same age as all my friends'
2 grandparents. So he's been gone a while, but I
3 still honor his memory with what I do.

4 The third member, however, is my biggest why.
5 This member was also born in 1917, from the State of
6 Arkansas. He enlisted in the U.S. Navy in 1938. In
7 1941, when the war broke out, he was also 24 years
8 old. His name is Harl, Harl Coplin Nelson.

9 My father and I have no connection to that man
10 whatsoever, other than the fact that we share the
11 same first name. But Seaman First Class Harl Coplin
12 Nelson died on the U.S.S. Arizona. He died for my
13 and my father's freedoms. That's my why.

14 So, you never know where your connection is
15 going to be. And I don't mean to be so somber about
16 this issue. It's an honor for me to honor my
17 father's memory and to honor memory of Harl Nelson,
18 as well as all of you who have served this country.

19 I thank you very much. I'll be here all
20 weekend. I'll be more than happy to talk with
21 anybody afterwards. And I thank you, The American
22 Legion Department of Ohio and American Legion
23 family, for everything you do for our veterans and
24 our communities.

25 God bless.

1 (Applause).

2 DETACHMENT CMDR VRABEL: Sorry to take up so
3 much time, but these guys work very hard and I want
4 to recognize them in front of all of you.

5 Our newly-elected Detachment Chaplain, Mike
6 Kennedy.

7 (Applause).

8 Our Detachment 2nd Vice, Adam Budner.

9 (Applause).

10 We have a few officers on the floor, floating
11 around. Our National and Detachment Historian, Past
12 Detachment Commander Bill Towns.

13 (Applause).

14 Our Assistant Historian, Greg Shuluga.

15 (Applause).

16 And Detachment Assistant Sergeant-at-Arms,
17 Bruce Bittner.

18 (Applause).

19 I'm proud to stand here and announce that as of
20 last night, we have hit our National quota by one
21 member.

22 (Applause).

23 PARLIAMENTARIAN MINADEO: Commander.

24 DETACHMENT CMDR VRABEL: I'm sorry. I am so
25 going to pay for this one for a very long time.

1 Our dual Parliamentarian, Mr. Gary Minadeo.

2 (Applause).

3 I'm going to pay for that one for a while.

4 But I'm very excited to announce that we have
5 hit quota, our National quota, by one member, which
6 is also an all-time high and a 90.04 percent
7 retention rate.

8 (Applause).

9 You'll all be proud to announce that one of my
10 major things I'm pushing this year is recruiting
11 Legion membership. Because we all know it, we can't
12 exist if you don't exist. And when my grandfather
13 was on this stage as Department Commander 2003-2004,
14 there were over 150,000 Legionnaires. So I can't
15 get you to that number, but we're going, we're going
16 to surely try and get you as many as we can.

17 I wish you all a great convention. I'm only
18 ever a phone call away if you ever need to reach me.

19 Thank you. Thank you all for your service.

20 (Applause).

21 COMMANDER WHATLEY: We are an organization
22 dedicated to God and country, with a membership that
23 takes deep pride in the U.S. Flag and all that it
24 means. The American Legion and our Americanism
25 programs focus on teaching patriotic values, morals,

1 culture and citizenship. The Americanism pillar
2 embodies its devotion to law and order, the raising
3 of wholesome youth, educated and law-abiding
4 citizenship, and respectful observance of patriotic
5 holidays and remembrances.

6 Unfortunately, a few of our youth that have
7 attended our Americanism programs could not be in
8 attendance during this convention.

9 I direct your attention to the video screens
10 where these fine youth, including the Buckeye Boys
11 State Governor, Department Oratorical Winner, and
12 Americanism and Government participants, have
13 recorded a message addressed to the Legionnaires of
14 this convention.

15 (THEREUPON, THE VIDEO MESSAGES WERE PLAYED).

16 (Applause).

17 Candidates for Department offices report to the
18 podium in front of the stage.

19 The Chair recognizes Adjutant Robinson to
20 introduce the candidates for Department offices and
21 announcements.

22 Each candidate will have the opportunity to
23 make a quick introduction once your name is called.

24 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: Good evening, everybody.

25 So our candidate for Commander of The American

1 Legion Department of Ohio is Stan Oren. Please come
2 to the stage and give your remarks.

3 (Applause).

4 1VC OREN: Thank you for the honor.

5 And I'm very humbled to be here. I thank and
6 appreciate all of you for all the support you have
7 given me over the last few years to get here. And I
8 will need all your support for the next few years to
9 get out of here.

10 Thank you.

11 (Applause).

12 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: Our next up is candidate
13 for 1st Vice Commander of The American Legion
14 Department of Ohio, Gary Cox, Jr.

15 (Applause).

16 2VC COX, JR.: Good evening.

17 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: Good evening.

18 2VC COX, JR.: Wow, what can I say?

19 Thank you.

20 This has been a wild, wild ride this past year.
21 I cannot thank you guys enough for all the Districts
22 that asked me to come speak at your Distinct, being
23 able to participate in all the events, bowling,
24 golf, skeet shooting. It's been crazy. Powhatan
25 for their Memorial Day that they invited me to,

1 Orrville for their installation.

2 But I want to be your next 1st Vice Commander
3 for the Department of Ohio. We've got some work to
4 do.

5 We've been on a great path. I want to follow
6 Stan. When working with him this past year, I can
7 tell you this much, I've learned a lot.

8 And this has always been team, O-H.

9 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: I-O.

10 2VC CANDIDATE COX: Thank you for your time. I
11 look forward to serving as your next 1st Vice
12 Commander for the Department of Ohio.

13 Thank you.

14 (Applause).

15 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: Next up, everybody knows
16 her, candidate for 2nd Vice Commander of The
17 American Legion Department of Ohio, Holly Lewis.

18 (Applause).

19 TREASURER LEWIS: So there was an inside joke
20 there. So the Commander, I think, maybe forgot my
21 last name today. So he just said my name was Holly.
22 So it's all good, all good.

23 As 2nd Vice Commander, my mission will be to
24 transform Post activities into powerful, life-saving
25 tools for connection. In a time when loneliness is

1 silently stealing the lives of our veterans, it's
2 time to see that every event, every meeting, every
3 activity and every gesture as a chance to say you
4 matter. As you hear these words, I want you to
5 imagine what's possible when connection becomes our
6 strategy, not just our sentiment.

7 I thank you for your support. And as you stand
8 with me, you can trust that I will work really hard
9 to make sure that no veteran in Ohio is ever left
10 behind.

11 Be the one. Thank you.

12 (Applause).

13 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: Candidate for Treasurer,
14 The American Legion Department of Ohio, Ken LaVoy.

15 (Applause).

16 CANDIDATE LaVOY: Thank you.

17 Commander Whatley, table officers, fellow
18 Legionnaires and Legion family, it's an honor to
19 stand before you today as a candidate for Department
20 Treasurer.

21 As your Treasurer, it's my goal to continue to
22 be responsible for our treasury, and continued
23 transparency of our finances. I'm committed to
24 maintaining the highest standards of accountability,
25 integrity, and ensuring that every dollar is used

1 wisely and effectively.

2 But beyond managing our numbers, my focus is
3 continuing our culture of financial stewardship. We
4 have developed an effective budget for the coming
5 year. We are actually under budget by over
6 \$100,000.

7 (Applause).

8 And I promise you that's the only number I'm
9 going to say as a Treasurer. So I'm not going to
10 bore you with numbers.

11 But with our membership in continual decline,
12 we continue to struggle with the required revenue to
13 ensure that our budget is balanced. Together, we
14 need to continue the focus of membership, so that
15 our programs, support to our veterans, our community
16 and outreach can continue.

17 My goal is to make sure that our financial
18 health reflects the strength and spirit of our
19 organization as we go forward in the coming year.

20 Thank you for your trust and support. Let's
21 work together to uphold the legacy of The American
22 Legion and continue our proud tradition of service.

23 Thank you.

24 (Applause).

25 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: Commander, may I make a few

1 brief announcements.

2 COMMANDER WHATLEY: Yes, you may.

3 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: For those of you that don't
4 know, we do have a statewide 50-50 raffle going on.
5 You can go to OhioLegion.com, look under the
6 "Gaming" tab at the top. It's the far right one.
7 Scroll down, put your information in, and hey, who
8 knows, you could be a big winner.

9 Next up is we have a new partnership with
10 Primary Pet Care. There's pamphlets and information
11 on it on the website, and also at our vendor table.

12 The same goes with Field Fans blankets. You
13 can have them made to be customized to your Post
14 with The Legion emblem on them. We will have the
15 Commander's out tomorrow, if he'll allow it. That
16 was one of the gifts he received yesterday at our
17 DEC Banquet. They're really nice. All the
18 information is on the website.

19 Now, a little point of privilege here, if you
20 don't mind.

21 LIT. How many of you know what LIT is?

22 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

23 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: Wow. Legionnaire Insurance
24 Trust. Legionnaires are eligible. SAL is eligible.
25 Auxiliary is eligible. It is an insurance program.

1 They deal with everything from vacation insurance,
2 Medicare. Cell phone insurance, that's a big one we
3 just came out with.

4 They have given our Department, out of the
5 premiums that's paid to them, they have donated over
6 a million dollars back to us, just at our
7 Department.

8 (Applause).

9 Please take a look if you're looking for
10 insurance. If you're looking for some offshoot
11 policies, please take a look. If you're going to
12 purchase insurance, why not purchase it through
13 them, which will also come back to help us keep and
14 maintain the Department.

15 At this time I'd like to thank the 13th
16 District and all their volunteers for all the hard
17 work they've done helping us get ready for the
18 convention, unloading and organizing this wonderful
19 convention. Thank you.

20 (Applause).

21 Now this one is a little somber note. I did
22 talk with my counterpart, Bill West. He is the
23 Adjutant from Texas. They have had horrible
24 flooding. They are requesting not to send any
25 physical goods at this time. They are still in

1 recovery mode. If you want to make a donation, the
2 Department of Texas has a place on their website set
3 up, or mail them directly to the Department. They
4 will put them in a holding fund.

5 Do not send it to NEF if you want it to go to
6 Texas. If you send it to NEF, National keeps it.
7 It goes into their account and it gets used whenever
8 somebody applies for it.

9 If you're wanting it to go to Texas, make sure
10 you reach out and send it to Texas.

11 As of right now, there is only one Post in the
12 affected area that Bill knew of. So if you need
13 more information or want to talk about it, please
14 find me over the weekend and I'll gladly help you
15 find out the information you need.

16 Next up is National Convention.

17 The Ohio Party, it will be at the Flor Hotel,
18 which is spelled F-L-O-R. We had a little mix-up on
19 getting into the original venue that we selected so
20 I just got it. Sorry it's taken so long. We will
21 have the information out more.

22 The biggest thing to remember is we do not
23 sponsor transportation. Unfortunately,
24 transportation is extremely expensive and we do not
25 have it in the budget to provide transportation to

1 the hotel for evening's events.

2 All housing forms for National Convention must
3 be turned in by the end of convention.

4 And now I'm on my last one. I know.

5 Past Department Sergeant-at-Arms are meeting at
6 Outback tomorrow evening, Saturday, at 4:30, for
7 dinner. If you would like to go and you're a Past
8 Department Sergeant-at-Arms, please come out and
9 enjoy some fellowship.

10 Commander, those are my announcements this
11 evening.

12 COMMANDER WHATLEY: You have some more, sir.

13 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: Oh, they changed it on me.
14 I apologize. My script was different from theirs.

15 You may have noticed we did a little something
16 different with our convention opening this evening.

17 Hailing from Ohio, Brody Alexander rose to
18 prominence through powerful bagpipe performances at
19 major events such as "Red, White & Boom," in
20 Columbus, where he played live atop the National
21 Veterans Memorial and Museum for thousands of
22 spectators. And that is where we first heard him.
23 He is an award-winning young bagpiper and performer
24 whose passion, talent, and leadership have already
25 made waves across the nation. He was honored as the

1 recipient of the Billy Michal Student Leadership
2 Award from the National World War II Museum,
3 recognizing his commitment to service, music, and
4 inspiring others through action. Brody's presence
5 is unforgettable. Every note he plays carries
6 pride, purpose, and power.

7 Beyond the stage, Brody is deeply committed to
8 storytelling, patriotism, and preserving tradition
9 through modern platforms. Whether piping for
10 Veterans, lighting up firetrucks with sound, or
11 teaming up with creatives like Slugwurf, Brody
12 Alexander is building a legacy that bridges past and
13 future one tune at a time.

14 Please welcome, again, Brody Alexander.

15 (Applause).

16 . . . MUSIC PLAYED BY BRODY ALEXANDER . . .

17 (Applause).

18 MR. ALEXANDER: Thank you, guys. Thank you all
19 for everything you've done.

20 And I'm going to do the best that I can to make
21 sure that everyone hears your story, and everyone
22 remembers everything you guys have done. Because
23 you guys cannot go forgotten. I appreciate you.

24 (Applause).

25 COMMANDER WHATLEY: As we recognize a lot of

1 young men and women, there is one other young man in
2 our midst. His name is Martin Little, Squadron 764.
3 This young man finished the mid-Ohio U.S.A. 250
4 Challenge, which is a feat.

5 Would you please stand up and be recognized,
6 please.

7 (Applause).

8 COMMANDER RUE: Is the Commander for Post 803
9 in our midsts?

10 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

11 COMMANDER WHATLEY: No? All right. Thank you.

12 Is there any further business to come before
13 this session?

14 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

15 COMMANDER WHATLEY: The Chair recognizes
16 Department Assistant Chaplain Robert White for --

17 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: We're not doing a
18 benediction.

19 COMMANDER WHATLEY: Okay.

20 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: We're just recessing. Skip
21 that part.

22 COMMANDER WHATLEY: Okay.

23 The session will recess until 1:00 PM tomorrow,
24 Saturday, July 12th.

25 Our colors will remain in place.

1 Please join us in rendering a salute to our
2 colors. One, two.

3 . . . SALUTE TO COLORS BY ASSEMBLY . . .

4 I now declare this session of 106th Annual
5 Department Convention recessed.

6 Thank you.

7 (THEREUPON, THE PROCEEDINGS STOOD IN RECESS).

8 - - - - -

9 Saturday, July 12, 2025.

10 . . . CALL TO ORDER . . .

11 Render a salute to our nation's colors. One,
12 two.

13 . . . SALUTE TO COLORS BY ASSEMBLY . . .

14 I'll ask Department Chaplain Ron Distel --

15 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: No, skip that. Sorry. We
16 had it in there but didn't need it.

17 COMMANDER WHATLEY: Okay. Thank you.

18 Good afternoon, delegates of the 106th
19 Department Convention.

20 At this time, I'll call Mel Baher, Credentials
21 Chairman, to give us a report of the current
22 strength of this Convention.

23 CHAIRMAN BAHER: Good afternoon, Legionnaires
24 and guests.

25 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: Good afternoon.

1 CHAIRMAN BAHER: What?

2 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: Good afternoon.

3 CHAIRMAN BAHER: This is the Friday Interim
4 Report of the Credentials Committee.

5 The Credentials Committee met in Room 145, at
6 6:00 PM, on Friday, July 11th, for the purpose of
7 determining the voting strength of the 2025 American
8 Legion Department of Ohio Convention. Ten committee
9 members were present.

10 The tally made by the Credentials Committee
11 determined that 263 delegates, 17 alternates, and 43
12 guests are registered. The registered delegates and
13 alternates represent 133 Posts.

14 The voting strength for the 2025 Convention, as
15 of the close of the first day of registration,
16 July 11, 2025, is 272.

17 Commander, as a duly-elected and registered
18 delegate to this Department Convention, I move for
19 the adoption of this interim report.

20 COMMANDER WHATLEY: I need a second.

21 13TH DISTRICT CMDR WRIGHT: Wright, 13th
22 District, seconds.

23 COMMANDER WHATLEY: The motion has been
24 properly made and seconded that we receive the
25 current Credentials report.

1 Any discussion?

2 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

3 COMMANDER WHATLEY: Any discussion?

4 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

5 COMMANDER WHATLEY: Hearing none, all for it
6 say aye.

7 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: Aye.

8 COMMANDER WHATLEY: All against have the same
9 right.

10 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

11 (Motion carried).

12 COMMANDER WHATLEY: At this time, will all Past
13 Department Commanders of The American Legion
14 Department of Ohio please stand to be recognized.

15 (Applause).

16 The Department of Ohio owes each of you a deep
17 gratitude for your dedication and hard work that you
18 have done for The American Legion. Thank you.

19 Our keynote speaker is the newly-appointed
20 Director of the Ohio Department of Veterans
21 Services.

22 Major General John Harris, Jr., was appointed
23 on May 30, 2025, the day he retired from a highly
24 distinguished 44-year military career. In this
25 role, he leads the state's efforts to advocate for

1 Ohio's nearly 700,000 military veterans, overseeing
2 programs and services designed to improve their
3 quality of life, support their transition to
4 civilian life, and ensure access to earned benefits.

5 Before assuming this post, he served as the
6 Ohio Adjutant General from 2019 to 2025, and was
7 responsible for command and oversight of the Ohio
8 Army National Guard.

9 Please help me welcome Ohio Department of
10 Veterans Services Director, Major General John
11 Harris.

12 (Applause).

13 MAJOR GENERAL HARRIS: Hey, sit down. Please,
14 take your seats.

15 Thank you for that.

16 You know, I transitioned into this position.
17 Literally, I left being the Adjutant General on
18 Friday and started this position on Monday. I
19 really wasn't sure what to expect.

20 I had no idea it would be so hard, after 44
21 years of service, to figure out what the hell to
22 wear in the morning, but I actually have to do that
23 every day. And that's the most stressful part of my
24 life right now, and I kind of like it.

25 But the best part, the thing I like, are

1 opportunities like this to come out and talk to
2 Ohio's veterans.

3 And if you know me, you know that I generally
4 don't do prepared remarks, which my staff hates.
5 They spend a lot of time putting together remarks
6 and I spend a lot of time not using them.

7 But today I will talk from prepared remarks.
8 And the reason I will do that is because, as I was
9 preparing for this visit today, I was really struck
10 by your priorities.

11 And one of those priorities resonates with me
12 more than the other four, quite honestly. And this
13 is something that has been a part of The Legion,
14 it's been a part of your DNA, for a very long time.
15 But it really resonated with me, so I sat down and I
16 started making notes. And before I was done, I
17 actually had a speech that I'm going to use. So
18 bear with me as I work from prepared remarks because
19 I'm not very good at it.

20 But I want to begin by expressing my gratitude
21 to The Legion for inviting me today. The
22 organization is more than a gathering of patriots.
23 It's a living testament to the enduring spirit of
24 American service, sacrifice and unity. The members
25 of The Legion, you carry the torch that reminds this

1 nation of what it means to be American, in both word
2 and deed.

3 Right, Jason?

4 I stand before you not only as a retired
5 soldier, but as a citizen shaped by this country, by
6 our freedoms, by our responsibilities, and by the
7 promise of this nation.

8 And today I want to talk to you about one of
9 your priorities, as I said. A word we often hear
10 but sometimes struggle to define, Americanism. It's
11 not just waiving the flag or singing the National
12 Anthem, though those symbols matter deeply.
13 Americanism is a set of values. It's principles and
14 beliefs that unite us across geography, across
15 generations, and even across our politics. It's our
16 reverence for liberty, not just for ourselves but
17 for our neighbors, even when we disagree with them.
18 It's a belief that each person has a right and
19 responsibility to shape their own destiny, from
20 their factory floor to the Oval Office.

21 I think Governor DeWine got it right when he
22 said this, when he tasked every member of his
23 cabinet, at the beginning of his administration, to
24 ensure that we meet our responsibility to ensure
25 that every Ohioan has the opportunity to meet their

1 God-given potential. That doesn't mean every person
2 is going to land in the same place, but we have the
3 responsibility to ensure that everybody has the
4 opportunity to meet their God-given potential.
5 Because we all bring different things to the table,
6 different talents, different ambitions. But we have
7 to make sure that the aperture is open for every
8 single person to be the best them that they can
9 possibly be.

10 It's a practice of civic duty. Americanism is
11 voting. It's serving. It's speaking out. Most
12 importantly, Americanism is showing up when it's
13 time to show up. It's also the simple but radical
14 idea that we are not just a collection of
15 individuals but we're a people. We're a nation.
16 And being a nation is far more important than our
17 rights as individuals.

18 Americanism. It lives in our constitution,
19 yes, but it's also in our conduct. It's how we
20 carry ourselves every day. It thrives not just in
21 the founding documents of our country, but in our
22 classrooms, our town halls, our places of worship.
23 And every time someone stands up for what's right,
24 even if it's not easy, that's Americanism.

25 Now, if anybody understands the cost and the

1 worth of Americanism, it's the men and women of The
2 American Legion. You wore the uniform. You swore
3 the oath. You stood in harm's way for the sake of
4 this country, not just for land or for government,
5 but for the ideals that this country represents.

6 Your service didn't stop when you came home.
7 In fact, I'd argue that's when a new kind of service
8 began, it's when you came home. Because today, as
9 veterans, you're the front lines of a different
10 mission. And that mission is ensuring that
11 Americanism endures.

12 When you mentor a young person, when you
13 organize civic events, when you speak truth with
14 clarity and compassion, you teach what it means to
15 be American. You demonstrate that patriotism.

16 And it isn't performative. It's not
17 performance. It's not words. Americanism it's
18 participatory. You've got to show up.

19 And I want to be clear, you're not relics of
20 the past of America because you believe in
21 Americanism, you are stewards of this nation's
22 future.

23 There's a hunger in this nation, especially
24 among our young people, for meaning, for purpose,
25 for something larger than themselves. You have the

1 story to tell. You must tell it.

2 Americanism is not just about the people in
3 this room. And frankly, I feel that I'm preaching
4 to the choir. Because, as I said earlier, The
5 American Legion, you know this better than most, but
6 we have a responsibility to be catalysts. And that
7 means to the rest of the veterans' community, that
8 means reminding the veterans not in this room that
9 they have a responsibility to Americanism. It's
10 about teaching the veterans' community that coming
11 home following our military service does not end our
12 commitment to be ambassadors for this nation, and
13 especially to the young people of this nation.

14 Let's be honest. Americanism is being tested
15 today. We see increasing polarization. We see
16 increasing cynicism. And we see increasing fear.
17 We see institutions that feel distant, and a media,
18 media, that often divides before they inform. In
19 some cases, the media simply becomes propaganda
20 machines for political ideals, and competing
21 political ideas.

22 And they're unashamed about being propaganda
23 machines. What's concerning to me about the media
24 is that media outlets are unashamed about being
25 propaganda machines for certain divisive ideas.

1 That's very concerning to me. It should be to all
2 of us.

3 But I believe the American spirit is not
4 broken, it's only challenged. And challenge is
5 nothing new to this country, and certainly nothing
6 new to you. We faced it as a country at Valley
7 Forge, at Gettysburg, in the trenches of Europe, the
8 jungles of Vietnam, and on the battlefields of
9 Afghanistan and Iraq, on the beaches of Normandy,
10 and, as I said, on the mountains of Afghanistan.
11 Each generation has been called to renew Americanism
12 in its own way. And now it's our time.

13 The challenge isn't whether we agree or
14 disagree. We're always going to disagree.
15 Americans always have. The challenge is whether we
16 remember that what binds us together is greater than
17 what divides us.

18 And that's where organizations like yours, The
19 American Legion, are vital. Because in your halls,
20 we find unity. In your programs, we find youth
21 uplifted. In your example, we find the better
22 angels in our nation's values.

23 So how do we practice Americanism today?
24 Again, I feel like I'm preaching to the choir, to
25 the people in this room, but we've got to ensure

1 that everybody who wore the uniform understands they
2 have a responsibility to this.

3 How do we pass it forward?

4 First, by educating in civics. You do that
5 better than most. It's essential. We must teach
6 our young people how our system works and why it
7 matters.

8 This is not indoctrination, by the way. This
9 is empowerment.

10 Second, by engaging, showing up at school board
11 meetings, mentor a junior ROTC cadet, help a
12 neighbor, run for office. These aren't just rights,
13 they're responsibilities.

14 Third, by exemplifying integrity and service.
15 Americanism means doing the right thing, even when
16 no one's watching. It means living your values, not
17 just speaking them.

18 And this is why peer support groups, peer
19 counseling for other veterans, veterans supporting
20 veterans, is so important. Because we expect every
21 veteran to live those values. When a veteran falls
22 down, it's important that we lift them back up and
23 put them back on that road of integrity and honesty
24 and civic responsibility.

25 And fourth, by building bridges. Seek common

1 ground, especially with those who think differently
2 than you do. Americanism thrives when we see each
3 other as fellow citizens, not enemies.

4 And finally, probably most importantly, by
5 remembering and ensuring that our communities
6 remember, not just what we've overcome, but why we
7 endure. We remember to honor the sacrifices of
8 those who came before us, to learn from our past,
9 and to renew our commitment to liberty, justice, and
10 for the promise that, out of many, we truly are one.

11 My friends, the torch of Americanism has been
12 passed from generation to generation, not by
13 accident, but by intention, by the intention of
14 organizations like yours. It's carried by teachers.
15 It's carried by soldiers. It's carried by parents.
16 It's carried by public servants. And most
17 importantly, it's carried by you.

18 The world still looks to America. And we have
19 to ensure that it always does, not because we're
20 perfect, but because we strive. Because we believe
21 freedom is not a gift to be hoarded, but a light to
22 be shared.

23 So let us keep that light burning. Let us
24 teach it. Let us protect it. And let us remember
25 that Americanism is not a noun to be defined but a

1 verb to be lived, and, most importantly, to be lived
2 by those of us who wore the cloth of our nation.

3 Thank you for your service. Thank you for your
4 patriotism. And thank you for your commitment to
5 the very soul of this nation.

6 May God bless you, may God Bless America, and
7 may God bless The American Legion.

8 Thank you.

9 (Applause).

10 COMMANDER WHATLEY: Department Adjutant.

11 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: Our next speaker is Oracle.

12 It's an organization that is focused on Department
13 of Veterans Affairs Electronic Health Record
14 Modernization. Oracle is committed to delivering a
15 modernized and seamless healthcare experience for
16 you.

17 As part of this commitment, the VA has been
18 working on implementing a new electronic health
19 record system, ensuring better continuity of care
20 between the VA, the Department of Defense, and other
21 health partners.

22 Essam Attia is a veterans outreach consultant
23 in support of Oracle programs, leading nationwide
24 grassroots outreach focused on the Department of
25 Veterans Affairs electronic health records

1 modernization effort. He served in the U.S. Army as
2 a geospatial analyst, and has served twice in Iraq.
3 More recently, he worked at Capital Hill as a policy
4 advisor on veterans affairs in science and
5 technology issues. He holds a Master's degree in
6 Security Policies Studies from George Washington
7 University.

8 Please welcome Mr. Attia to the stage.

9 (Applause).

10 MR. ATTIA: I get all kinds of pronunciations.
11 It's Essam Attia.

12 Thank you so much, JD. I really appreciate the
13 introduction.

14 And thank you so much for having me here. It's
15 always a pleasure to follow a general officer. As a
16 lowly E4, it makes me feel like sometimes I made
17 some good decisions outside my time in the Army.
18 But I'm not going to really try to follow that, that
19 speech. That was incredible and very inspiring.

20 As was said by JD, I served in the Army for
21 three and a half years, deployed to Iraq a couple of
22 times.

23 I'm super honored to be able to be here on
24 behalf of Oracle's team who is upgrading the VA. I
25 use the VA for all of my healthcare and I'm honored

1 to be a part of this transition to modernize that
2 system.

3 Let me ask a couple of questions.

4 How many people in this room use the VA for any
5 percentage of their healthcare?

6 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (Indicating).

7 MR. ATTIA: Very good. That's almost
8 everybody.

9 How many people have filed a disability claim
10 with the VA?

11 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (Indicating).

12 MR. ATTIA: Very good.

13 And how many people have used more than one VA
14 Medical Center at any point in their time at the VA?

15 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (Indicating).

16 MR. ATTIA: All right. So we're talking well
17 over 75 percent of the population in this room for
18 all of those questions.

19 So this applies to everybody here. You all
20 know that the VA's current system does not integrate
21 between VA Healthcare Centers. The VA's current
22 system does not communicate with DOD. And the VA's
23 current system does not communicate with the
24 Community Care Network.

25 The VA's current EHR is actually the first EHR

1 ever invented in the world. And it has not been
2 updated in a significant manner in over 40 years.

3 So we're here to make sure that we bring this
4 up to the 21st century, so that it will do all of
5 those things, communicate between VAMCs so that you
6 can travel the country without worrying about having
7 to go through eligibility, so newer veterans, you
8 know, this isn't going to apply to most of us in
9 this room, but the new veterans getting out now,
10 their DOD records will communicate with the VA
11 directly. And you'll have a bunch of new patient
12 portal functionality, like appointment making and
13 things like that.

14 We have a short video I'd love to show you.

15 Jon, if you can cue that up, please.

16 (THEREUPON, THE VIDEO PRESENTATION WAS PLAYED)

17 This healthcare record is already deployed
18 across all 138 military treatment facility commands.
19 That's servicing over 3,000 facilities and 9.6
20 million beneficiaries in DOD. It's also deployed
21 across NOAA and the Coast Guard at DHS, and will be
22 eventually, once it's fully implemented, across all
23 the VA. A single, unified, Federal, electronic
24 healthcare record that will follow you through all
25 of your Federal service.

1 In December of 2024, just last year, the VA
2 announced that it is going to be deploying across
3 all of VISN 10, so Michigan, Ohio, Indiana, and one
4 location in north Kentucky. And we already have
5 folks on the ground at all of those locations,
6 conducting the critical infrastructure upgrade work
7 to make it ready for the software updates. So
8 that's all of the servers, computers, wi-fi
9 networks, et cetera. And we're hoping that we'll be
10 going live here in Ohio in early 2026. And we'll be
11 upgrading to the new patient portal as well, and
12 you'll be able to experience all the benefits of
13 that shortly.

14 So, pre-deployment is ongoing. And we'll be in
15 touch. And we're going to be a resource for you as
16 this process unfolds.

17 I have a table in the other room. If you have
18 any questions, feel free to come up and ask.

19 And thank you so much for your time and thank
20 you for your service.

21 (Applause).

22 The Chair recognizes Department 1st Vice
23 Commander Stan Oren to supervise this body.

24 1VC OREN: At this time I ask the Adjutant, JD,
25 to come up.

1 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: Good afternoon.

2 We will now start the awards portion of the
3 event.

4 This award is presented annually to each
5 District with the highest percentage of quota Posts
6 in each category, small, medium, large. They will
7 be receiving a check in the amount of \$200.

8 Whoa, did I miss a page? Thank you. Something
9 wasn't right.

10 Department 1st Vice Commander's Award. This
11 award is presented annually to the Post with quota
12 between 25 and 749, which attains the highest
13 percentage of previous year's memberships, and the
14 winner must be quota by February 7th, 2025.

15 The winner of the Department 1st Vice Commander
16 Award is Post 656, from District 5.

17 Will the Post Commander or a representative of
18 the Willard B. Holmes Post 656 Post please come
19 forward to receive your award.

20 (Applause).

21 And thank the staff for keeping us knowing what
22 we're doing. They are very important.

23 Department 2nd Vice Commander Award. This
24 award is presented annually to each District with
25 the highest percentage of quota Posts in each

1 category, small, medium, large. They will be
2 receiving a check in the amount of \$200.

3 The 2025 winners of the Department 2nd Vice
4 Commander Award is, small District, District 6;
5 medium category, District 1; large category,
6 District 10.

7 Will the District Commander or a representative
8 please come forward to receive your awards.

9 (Applause).

10 So 6, 1, and 10, come on down.

11 The next award is the Grand Award.

12 An additional award in the competition amongst
13 large Posts is the Grand Award, presented annually
14 to the first Post in Ohio to reach membership quota
15 in the quota group of 1,000 or more.

16 The Grand Award winner for 2025 is Commodore
17 Denig Post 83 of Sandusky, located in the Fighting
18 5th District.

19 Will the Post Commander or a representative of
20 the Post please approach the stage to receive the
21 Grand Award.

22 (Applause).

23 The Hugh K. Martin Award is given to the Post
24 showing the highest percentage of goal over quota
25 for the membership year.

1 Will the Post Commander of Camp Cherman Post
2 809, in Chillicothe, or a representative of the
3 Magnificent 7th District, please come forward to
4 receive the 2025 Hugh K. Martin Award.

5 (Applause).

6 Next is our Big 1 Pin Award.

7 The Big 1 Pin Award, consisting of gold-plated
8 lapel pins and \$750, is awarded to the District 1st
9 Vice Commander who leads their category in
10 percentage after the membership year.

11 Small Category: District 12, 1st Vice
12 Commander Suzette Heller.

13 (Applause).

14 Medium Category: District 1, 1st Vice
15 Commander Dean Boyers.

16 (Applause).

17 Large Category: District 10, 1st Vice
18 Commander James Lockyer (sic).

19 (Applause).

20 Would the 1st Vice Commanders of 12, 1, and 10,
21 please make your way to the stage to receive your
22 Big 1ne Pin and check.

23 It should have been Tom Barnett.

24 Thank you, Holly.

25 Tom Barnett, can you please make your way to

1 the stage? Is he here this week?

2 A representative.

3 The incoming 1st Vice is going to receive one
4 on behalf of Thomas Barnett.

5 (Applause).

6 See, it takes a village, guys, and ladies.

7 (Applause).

8 Anytime Post awards, and I will preface this by
9 saying I do have several of these still on the desk
10 that came in very late. So we will get the ones,
11 once they are approved, we will get the checks out
12 to you.

13 The Department has made available monetary
14 awards for any Post that recruits three new members
15 or reinstates three expired members, and who
16 transfers three Post 888 members into their Post, to
17 receive \$100. A Post that doubles the requirements
18 will receive 250. A Post that triples the
19 requirements will receive 500.

20 There are eight Posts eligible to receive this
21 award.

22 Will the following Posts please come to the
23 podium to receive your checks: Post 3, \$500; Post
24 587, \$500; Post 210, 250; Post 450, 500; Post 717,
25 250; Post 23, 500; Post 7, 100; Post 214 is 250;

1 Post 459 is 500; and Post 436 is 100.

2 Our next award, Gold Brigade Award. A
3 Legionnaire who recruits 50 or more new members into
4 The American Legion by May 1st qualifies for
5 enrollment in the elite Gold Brigade. These are
6 very special Legionnaires, who are awarded unique
7 gifts that designate affiliation with the Gold
8 Brigade of The American Legion.

9 For 2025, the Gold Brigade Award goes to Joyce
10 Hannum, a member of Atwood-Mauch Post 459, of
11 Burton.

12 Will Joyce please approach the stage to receive
13 the Gold Brigade.

14 (Applause).

15 This next award is for any Post Commander who
16 accomplishes 100 percent of the assigned membership
17 goal for the Post by the March 31st quota deadline.

18 The Department of Ohio would like to ask the
19 following District Commanders to receive the Quota
20 Awards for all the Posts in your District, and award
21 them to each Post after convention.

22 District 1, 1st Vice Commander Dean Boyers,
23 nine quota Posts.

24 (Applause).

25 District 2, 1st Vice Commander Tim Shaw, one

1 quota Post.

2 (Applause).

3 District 3, 1st Vice Commander Brain Fowle, ten

4 quota Posts.

5 (Applause).

6 District 4, 1st Vice Commander Champ Brown,

7 three quota Posts.

8 (Applause).

9 District 5, 1st Vice Commander Melissa Rodgers,

10 nine quota Posts.

11 (Applause).

12 District 6, 1st Vice Commander William Little,

13 six quota Posts.

14 (Applause).

15 District 7, Commander Johnny Conley, one quota

16 Post.

17 (Applause).

18 District 8, 1st Vice Commander Scott Conn,

19 seven quota Posts.

20 (Applause).

21 District 9, 1st Vice Commander Sam Swoger, four

22 quota Posts.

23 (Applause).

24 District 10, 1st Vice Commander Tom Barnett, 43

25 quota Posts.

1 (Applause) .

2 District 11, 1st Vice Commander David Taylor,
3 four quota Posts.

4 (Applause) .

5 District 12, 1st Vice Commander Suzette Heller,
6 two quota Posts.

7 (Applause) .

8 District 13, 1st Vice Commander James Lockyer,
9 four quota Posts.

10 District 14, 1st Vice Commander John Life.

11 FROM THE FLOOR: How many Posts?

12 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: Three quota Posts.

13 (Applause) .

14 Commander, it has you returning to the stage.

15 COMMANDER WHATLEY: The next group of awards is
16 given on behalf of The American Legion Department of
17 Ohio Gifts for the Yanks Program.

18 The Department currently holds minutes for this
19 program dating back to 1969. Since its origin, this
20 program has given away over \$8 million dollars from
21 its contributions.

22 During the 2025 year, membership year, the
23 Gifts For Yanks program fundraised, from our Posts,
24 SAL, Auxiliary, Charities, Inc., and private
25 donations, in the amount of \$269,230.94, from over

1 270 Posts.

2 The Department of Ohio will use these funds to
3 support Legionnaires who volunteer with VA Voluntary
4 Service at each of the Ohio VA Medical Centers, VA
5 Vet Centers, clinics, and the Ohio Veterans Homes in
6 Sandusky and Georgetown.

7 This program also funds the holiday gift
8 distribution at Christmastime, bringing a gift to
9 every hospitalized veteran in these facilities.

10 If you have not participated in a gift
11 distribution, please consider doing this this year.
12 Our facilities are ever increasing with Gulf War and
13 Vietnam veterans who suffer from diseases caused by
14 Agent Orange and other chemicals. Quite often,
15 these veterans have little to no families, or
16 resources, to look after them. It means a lot to
17 them and this program.

18 This is just one way to get involved. Please
19 contact Department Headquarters for other ways to
20 participate.

21 The Chair recognizes Darell Bishop, a member of
22 the Gifts for the Yanks Committee, to present
23 awards.

24 CHAIRMAN BISHOP: Each year we recognize Posts
25 and Districts who have donated to the Gifts for the

1 Yanks Program, and award them based on donation
2 amount and largest percentage of goal on the various
3 membership categories.

4 For the Department Awards, it's as follows:

5 Largest contribution by Post, 397, Vermillion,
6 \$20,000.

7 (Applause).

8 Largest contribution of a District will be the
9 5th District, \$88,942.

10 (Applause).

11 Largest percentage of a Post is 397,
12 Vermillion, at 7,092.20 percent.

13 (Applause).

14 Largest percentage of goal for a District is
15 the 5th District, at 1010.45 percent.

16 (Applause).

17 The next six plaques I will mention. They will
18 be presented at the Exec Board meeting in August.

19 In the small category: Highest percentage of
20 goal of a Post, Post 228, 11th District, at 6296.30
21 percent.

22 (Applause).

23 Highest contribution of a Post is Post 236, of
24 the 9th District, donating \$6,500.

25 (Applause).

1 In the medium Category: Highest percentage of
2 goal by a Post, 397, 5th District, Vermillion, at
3 7092.20.

4 (Applause).

5 And highest contribution by a Post, 397, 5th
6 District, at, \$20,000.

7 (Applause).

8 The large category: Percentage of goal by a
9 Post is Post 587, 1st District, at 2,439.41.
10 Highest contribution of a Post is Post 598, of the
11 3rd District, at \$12,000.

12 (Applause).

13 The Posts that donate \$5,000 or more will
14 receive a crystal eagle for your donation efforts.
15 We will call your number. Please come forward and
16 collect your award. If the Post is not present,
17 will the District Commander collect their trophies.

18 1st District, Post 587, \$7,489.

19 (Applause).

20 2nd District, Post 217, \$5,000.

21 Is there somebody to represent the 1st
22 District, or 2nd District?

23 Also in the 2nd District, Post 323, \$5,000.

24 (Applause).

25 District 3: Post 184, \$5,000.

1 (Applause) .
2 District 3, Post 598, \$12,000.
3 (Applause) .
4 And District 3, Post 707, \$6,500.
5 (Applause) .
6 5th District, Post 8, \$15,000.
7 (Applause) .
8 Post 83, Sandusky, \$10,000.
9 (Applause) .
10 Post 118, \$10,000.
11 (Applause) .
12 Post 181, \$7,000.
13 (Applause) .
14 Post 211, \$10,000.
15 (Applause) .
16 Post 225, \$5,000.
17 (Applause) .
18 Post 397, \$20,000.
19 (Applause) .
20 7th District, Post 62, \$5,000.
21 (Applause) .
22 8th District, Post 677, \$5,000.
23 (Applause) .
24 9th District, Post 236, \$6,500.
25 (Applause) .

1 Someone here from the 9th District?

2 District 11, Post 228, \$5,100.

3 (Applause).

4 13th District, Post 91, \$10,378.91.

5 (Applause).

6 Post 196, 13th District, \$5,000.

7 (Applause).

8 And Post 610, \$5,000.

9 (Applause).

10 On behalf of the Gifts for the Yanks Committee
11 and the Department of Ohio, I thank everyone for
12 their donations. And our veterans are better off
13 with The American Legion.

14 Thank you.

15 (Applause).

16 COMMANDER WHATLEY: The Chair recognizes 2nd
17 Vice Commander Gary Cox, Jr., to present the Post
18 Convention Awards.

19 (Applause).

20 2VC COX, JR.: These awards were conducted
21 prior to the opening of this convention, and the
22 winners of these prestigious awards are chosen based
23 on their contributions logged on the Consolidated
24 Post Reports and other sources, such as social media
25 and notated participation within their communities.

1 Will a representative from the following Posts
2 please come forward when you hear your Post named as
3 a recipient of one of these awards.

4 The Mickeal Golato Award was created to honor
5 Mikeal and Frances Golato, to recognize Legion
6 participation focused within the areas of
7 Americanism and Government and the Eagle Scout of
8 the Year.

9 The 2025 Mickeal J. Golato Award is presented
10 to Post 181, in Bucyrus, Ohio.

11 (Applause).

12 Double time, Marine.

13 The Alice Friedman and Alice Friedman Community
14 Service Awards were based on community service.

15 The 2025 Alice Friedman Post Award is presented
16 to Post 5, in Parma Heights, and the Alice Friedman
17 Community Service Award is presented to Post 200, in
18 Huber Heights (sic).

19 (Applause).

20 I stand corrected. It was District 5, Post
21 118, in Amherst. So I apologize for that.

22 (Applause).

23 The James Cunningham Award is to recognize
24 Posts who are actively engaged in the legislative
25 process.

1 The 2025 award is presented to Post 389, in
2 Beverly.

3 (Applause).

4 The Law and Order Award is presented to Posts
5 who are engaged in law and order programs and
6 service.

7 The 2025 award is presented to Post 199, in
8 Harrison.

9 (Applause).

10 The Edward McBane Award is presented to the
11 Post that has performed the most outstanding service
12 in the field of youth activities.

13 The 2025 award is presented to Post 2, in Parma
14 Heights.

15 (Applause).

16 Thank you to all the Posts who contribute to
17 their community, state, and nation, and continue to
18 uphold The American Legion mission, vision, and
19 values.

20 (Applause).

21 COMMANDER WHATLEY: The American Legion
22 Department of Ohio recognizes individuals who make a
23 difference within our Posts, Districts and
24 communities.

25 Each year, Posts submit nominations to their

1 District leadership for selection of a District
2 Chaplain of the Year Award.

3 The District Chaplain of the Year from each
4 District is submitted to the Religious Emphasis
5 Committee to select a Department Chaplain of the
6 Year.

7 The 2025 Department Chaplain of the Year Award
8 will be presented to John Murphy, of Post 196, in
9 the 13th District, --

10 (Applause).

11 -- who has performed outstanding service by his
12 devoted guidance to The American Legion, and that
13 all activities he is involved in are in kept within
14 the spirit of service to God and country.

15 Please help me welcome to the stage your 2025
16 Department Chaplain of the Year, John Murphy.

17 (Applause).

18 The Chair now recognizes Ken LaVoy for the
19 graduation ceremony of those who have completed
20 Buckeye American Legion College as well as the
21 introduction of the 2025-2026 Dean of BALC.

22 Once graduation is complete, Ken will be
23 discussing information about the National
24 Convention.

25 At this time we will now move to the reading of

1 committee reports.

2 When I call your committee, please move to the
3 podium on the floor toward the front of the stage to
4 give your report.

5 The Chair recognizes Dennis Dickey, Chairman of
6 the Permanent Organization Committee, to present his
7 report.

8 CHAIRMAN DICKY: Thank you, Commander.

9 The 2025 Convention Committee on Permanent
10 Organizations was held in the Maple Heights Room,
11 Holiday Inn Rockside, in Independence, Ohio, at
12 12:00 noon, on Friday, July 11, 2025.

13 The meeting was opened by Chairman Dennis
14 Dickey, of the 3rd District. And Dennis Dickey of
15 the 3rd District gave the invocation. And the
16 Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Don Walters of
17 the 12th District was appointed secretary.

18 There was no new or old business discussed.

19 Kevin Motter of District 1 moved, Michael Baker
20 of District 10 seconded, that the time of the 2026
21 registration will be Friday, July the 10th, 2026,
22 from 10:00 AM to 6:00 PM, and on Saturday, July the
23 11th, 2026, from 10:00 AM to 30 minutes after the
24 close of the general session, and there will be no
25 registration on Sunday.

1 There were ten of the 14 Districts present.

2 And this committee was adjourned at 12:13 PM.

3 Commander, I move that we adopt this
4 resolution, or I move that we accept this report.

5 NEC CHAPMAN: Chapman, NEC, seconds.

6 COMMANDER WHATLEY: The motion has been
7 properly made and seconded that we accept this
8 report.

9 Are there any discussion?

10 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

11 COMMANDER WHATLEY: Are there any discussion?

12 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

13 COMMANDER WHATLEY: Hearing none, all for it by
14 saying aye.

15 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: Aye.

16 COMMANDER WHATLEY: All against have the same
17 right.

18 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

19 COMMANDER WHATLEY: Motion carried.

20 The Chair recognizes Chairman Gary Minadeo to
21 present the report from the Rules and Order of
22 Business Committee.

23 Well, we're going to continue.

24 The Chair recognizes Ken Schutz to present the
25 Children and Youth Committee Report.

1 CHAIRMAN SCHUTZ: The Children and Youth
2 Commission was held at the convention center here at
3 the Holiday Inn, starting at 12:00 o'clock noon on
4 Friday the 11th.

5 The meeting was opened by Chairman Ken Schutz
6 of the 2nd District. Robert White of the 13th
7 District gave the invocation. The Pledge of
8 Allegiance was rendered. Sharon McClain of the 14th
9 District was appointed secretary. Eleven of the 14
10 Districts were represented.

11 We had one guest. Adam Dixon of the 9th
12 District was present.

13 A discussion of the Edward McBane Award was
14 given. We had two submissions for that award for
15 judging. Roger Friend of the 6th District made a
16 motion to select Post 2 as the winner, and that was
17 seconded by John Dugan of the 3rd. Motion passed.

18 General discussion was held on Special
19 Olympics, Child Welfare Worker of the Year, and the
20 Fourth Grade Flag Education program. There was a
21 discussion on the date for the next Children and
22 Youth meeting.

23 And the meeting was adjourned at 12:21 PM.

24 And I submit this report be administered to the
25 record.

1 COMMANDER WHATLEY: I need a second.

2 6TH DISTRICT 1VC LITTLE: Will Little, 6th
3 District, seconds.

4 COMMANDER WHATLEY: The motion has been
5 properly made and seconded that we accept this
6 report.

7 Any discussion?

8 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

9 COMMANDER WHATLEY: Any discussion?

10 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

11 COMMANDER WHATLEY: Hearing none, in favor of
12 it by saying aye.

13 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: Aye.

14 COMMANDER WHATLEY: All against have the same
15 right.

16 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

17 COMMANDER WHATLEY: Motion carries.

18 I now turn the Chair over to Department 1st
19 Vice Commander Stan Oren.

20 1VC OREN: Also being presented today are
21 awards for donations to the Department Children and
22 Youth programs by category.

23 Category I, Post 417, \$2500.

24 (Applause).

25 Anybody from 417? Okay.

1 Category II, Post 196, \$5,000.

2 (Applause).

3 Category III, Post 12, \$5,500.

4 (Applause).

5 Category IV, Post 196, \$5,000.

6 (Applause).

7 COMMANDER WHATLEY: Ty Bowers, would you come
8 up and give the report for the Rules and Order of
9 Business Committee.

10 Ty Bowers, I know you're here.

11 Al Buxton, can you make your way up as well.

12 CMTE MEMBER BOWERS: The Rules and Order of
13 Business Committee met on Friday, July 11th, 2025,
14 at 12:00 PM, in the Independence Room. We had eight
15 Posts represented. Six Posts were absent.

16 We reviewed the documented rules and order of
17 business from the previous year and everything was
18 accepted as the same, with the exception of the date
19 change. It was voted on as a unanimous decision to
20 accept.

21 And we ended the meeting at 1:00 PM.

22 Commander, I move for the acceptance of this
23 report.

24 COMMANDER WHATLEY: I need a second.

25 3RD DISTRICT CMDR EMMONS: Chris Emmons, 3rd

1 District, seconds.

2 COMMANDER WHATLEY: A motion has been properly
3 made and seconded.

4 Are there any discussion?

5 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

6 COMMANDER WHATLEY: Are there any discussion?

7 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

8 COMMANDER WHATLEY: Hearing none, all those for
9 it by saying aye.

10 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: Aye.

11 COMMANDER WHATLEY: All against have the same
12 right.

13 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

14 COMMANDER WHATLEY: Thank you.

15 (Motion carried).

16 3RD DISTRICT CMDR EMMONS: Mr. Commander.

17 COMMANDER WHATLEY: Yes.

18 3RD DISTRICT CMDR EMMONS: Chris Emmons, 3rd
19 District.

20 I'd like to move to suspend the reading of the
21 remaining reports and vote on them as presented to
22 all delegates at their caucus.

23 COMMANDER WHATLEY: I need a second.

24 6TH DISTRICT 1VC LITTLE: Commander, Will
25 Little, 6th District. I second that.

1 COMMANDER WHATLEY: The motion has been
2 properly made and seconded that we dispense with the
3 reading of the remaining committee reports and give
4 them to the Executive Board.

5 Are there any discussion?

6 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

7 COMMANDER WHATLEY: Are there any discussion?

8 LEGIONNAIRE SOISSON-CALHOUN: Yes, Commander.

9 Mindy Soisson-Calhoun, District 5, Unit 41, Post 41.

10 My question is: If we're going to suspend
11 that, at a time when those are all at the same time
12 I can't be, is there minutes that go out to everyone
13 that attends this, so that I can have those reports
14 of all those committees? Because I'm one person. I
15 can't be at every committee.

16 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: Commander, can I answer?

17 COMMANDER WHATLEY: Yes.

18 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: Those were all given out to
19 every District Commander at your caucus.

20 LEGIONNAIRE SOISSON-CALHOUN: Thank you.

21 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: Please retrieve them from
22 the Commander if you need them for your records.

23 LEGIONNAIRE SOISSON-CALHOUN: All right. Thank
24 you, sir.

25 COMMANDER WHATLEY: Go ahead, Jason.

1 PDC RUE: Commander, Jason Rue, PDC.

2 I believe, under constitutional amendments,
3 there is a constitutional amendment that will have
4 to come forward and pulled out and will have to be
5 voted on here today before the body.

6 COMMANDER WHATLEY: Thank you.

7 PDC RUE: Commander, it deals with moving the
8 DEC from two weeks after the convention to before
9 National Convention. That's in the constitution and
10 bylaws and would have to be pulled out and be voted
11 on.

12 And 25-04 is the resolution.

13 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: Yeah. I'm looking for a
14 copy, Jason. They're bringing a copy up so we can
15 vote on it.

16 PDC RUE: Can we just ask for the
17 constitutional amendments be pulled aside out of
18 that --

19 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: Yes.

20 COMMANDER WHATLEY: Yes.

21 PDC RUE: -- and approve the rest of them?

22 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: Yes.

23 3RD DISTRICT CMDR EMMONS: Mr. Commander, my
24 motion was just to accept the committee reports. We
25 still have to vote on the constitution and bylaws in

1 a separate order of business anyway. My motion was
2 to just accept these as presented, the committee
3 reports. The floor would still have to entertain
4 the from the membership body to pass a
5 constitutional and bylaw amendment.

6 COMMANDER WHATLEY: Okay. I still need a vote
7 on this, since the motion on the floor has been
8 properly made and seconded. And I need for those
9 for this by saying aye.

10 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: Aye.

11 COMMANDER WHATLEY: All against have the same
12 right.

13 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: Nay.

14 COMMANDER WHATLEY: Motion passed.

15 The Department will now hear reports from the
16 officers who led the Department --

17 CHAIRMAN KLOSTERMEIER: After all that
18 discussion, this is going to be short and sweet.

19 First of all, the Convention Committee met, the
20 2025 Convention Committee on Constitution and Bylaws
21 Amendments was held in the Bedford Room, Holiday Inn
22 Rockside, Independence, Ohio, at 12:00 PM, on
23 Friday, July 11, 2025.

24 The meeting was opened by Chairman Robert
25 Klostermeier of the 1st District. Chris Emmons of

1 the 3rd District gave the invocation, and Chris
2 Emmons led the Pledge of Allegiance. Chris Emmons
3 of the 3rd District was appointed secretary. We had
4 11 out of 14 Districts represented.

5 Resolution 25-04. Chris Emmons moved to accept
6 the resolution, 25-04, as presented. William Little
7 of the 6th District seconded. Regular discussion.
8 And the motion passed.

9 This committee actually adjourned at 12:30 PM.

10 Now if you want me to, I can read it. It's not
11 real long. And I will leave that up to you.

12 It's basically the standing committees'
13 meetings is what it was about. And they think they
14 need a little more time from the convention, instead
15 of two weeks, they need more time to be able to put
16 together everybody and get them ready.

17 I can read the change part that they want.
18 It's Section 8, "Membership and Post Activities
19 Commission."

20 "The Membership and Post Activities Commission
21 shall consist of the Department 1st Vice and 2nd
22 Vice Commanders, and the District Commanders. The
23 Department 1st Vice Commander shall serve as Chair
24 and Department 2nd Vice Commander as Vice Chair.
25 The Membership and Post Activities Commission shall

1 meet at the beginning of each membership year to
2 strategize and plan membership and Post activities.
3 The authority of this commission shall be given it
4 by the Department Internal Affairs and Finance
5 Commissions, with the Department Executive Committee
6 having the final authority."

7 That's what they wanted to change.

8 So at this time, as it already has passed in
9 the committee, I put a motion on the floor to accept
10 this report.

11 COMMANDER WHATLEY: I need a second.

12 ALTERNATE NEC SCHMITT: Schmitt, Alternate NEC,
13 seconds the motion.

14 LEGIONNAIRE NORRIS: Commander, Jason Norris,
15 District 12, Post 164.

16 We've already had a motion where we dispensed
17 with the reading of the minutes. We can't motion
18 that again. If the next thing we need to do is vote
19 on the resolution, we need to introduce a motion to
20 introduce the resolution.

21 And then the resolution, is that what you just
22 read through, the resolution?

23 CHAIRMAN KLOSTERMEIER: Yes.

24 LEGIONNAIRE NORRIS: Okay.

25 CHAIRMAN KLOSTERMEIER: A constitutional

1 amendment. And it has to be voted on at a
2 Department Convention. It can't be done by the
3 Executive Board.

4 I need to withdraw my motion to accept this
5 report.

6 Okay, I'd to bring a motion that we accept the
7 resolution as it was just read.

8 COMMANDER WHATLEY: Now, I need a second.

9 6TH DISTRICT 1VC LITTLE: Will Little, 6th
10 District, I'll second that motion.

11 COMMANDER WHATLEY: The motion has been
12 properly made and second that we accept the
13 resolution as read.

14 Any discussion?

15 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

16 COMMANDER WHATLEY: Any discussion?

17 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

18 COMMANDER WHATLEY: Hearing none, all for it by
19 saying aye.

20 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: Aye.

21 COMMANDER WHATLEY: All against have the same
22 right.

23 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: Aye.

24 COMMANDER WHATLEY: Motion carries. Thank you.

25 The Department will now hear reports from the

1 officers who led the Department for 2024-2025.

2 As I reflect back to 2024, we talked about
3 change, transparency. And this Executive Board and
4 officers of the Department of Ohio told you we would
5 give you that, and we have. We have made tremendous
6 strides on budgets, spending habits, and also
7 streamlined some of our major committees, such as
8 Americanism, Oratorical, and Buckeye Boys State.
9 With those things being said, we've met the
10 challenge this year.

11 I thank the Executive Board for the support
12 that you have given. I thank the Executive members
13 for the support given. And I thank the Finance
14 Committee for their knowledge in this effort. I
15 appreciate it.

16 Thank you.

17 Now I call on 1st Vice Commander Stan Oren.

18 1VC OREN: As 1st Vice, this has went awful
19 fast.

20 Membership, we did improve over the last year.
21 We need to support Gary and everybody else to get
22 membership up.

23 The A&G trip that I got to go on was fabulous.
24 These kids, we have kids that are, young men and
25 women that are going to be great leaders. And we

1 need to support these programs that we do to
2 continue that.

3 I thank you for your time.

4 (Applause).

5 COMMANDER WHATLEY: 2nd Vice Commander Gary
6 Cox, Jr.

7 2VC COX, JR.: Good afternoon.

8 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: Good afternoon.

9 2VC COX, JR.: The activities that we had, I
10 want to thank all the Posts that went out there and
11 held all the golf, bowling, euchre, skeet shooting,
12 pool tournaments.

13 But I to want to talk about one thing that we
14 didn't host but we started. We just had the
15 Mid-Ohio Race here in Mansfield, Ohio, and the
16 U.S.A. 250 Challenge, where myself, Brad Beatty,
17 Will Little and his family, walked the 2.2 miles.
18 Ohio was the start of that. We need to embrace
19 that. We need to get out there, take your Post
20 members, ten people, 2.5 miles, is 25 miles. You do
21 that over the course of the year, you guys could get
22 that 250, 250 hours of community service. Ohio was
23 the start of that. Ohio needs to continue to
24 embrace that for this upcoming year, for this entire
25 year, up until America's 250th birthday.

1 I thank you for everything. And I look forward
2 to hopefully being able to step forward.

3 Thank you for your time.

4 (Applause).

5 COMMANDER WHATLEY: We will now hear from
6 Department Treasurer Holly Lewis.

7 (Applause).

8 TREASURER LEWIS: Hello, hello. I'll keep this
9 short.

10 This year I was really proud of the work that
11 we did on the Finance Commission, especially in the
12 process of budget versus actual. There was a lot of
13 work that had to be done in order for that to be
14 stood up and the transparency that needed to happen.

15 And I especially want to thank Becky for all of
16 the hard work that she did, working with Quickbooks
17 to make sure everything matched on our budgets
18 versus actual.

19 I was really proud of the fact that we were
20 able to give the DEC insight into what was
21 happening, that we were able to categorize things in
22 an efficient manner so we could really see what was
23 happening with the finances.

24 So thank you very much to the Finance
25 Commission. You guys were all awesome. We met

1 every single month for the entire year. Sometimes
2 our members were in Africa, but we still did it. So
3 we had a good time.

4 The financial investments remain stable over
5 the year, even though, in spite of the market
6 turbulence that we've been experiencing over the
7 last six months. So that was a good thing.

8 I'm just going to be honest. Revenue remains a
9 concern. And membership is going to be really
10 crucial to that.

11 One of the things that we were able to do is we
12 launched an advertising campaign with iHeart Radio.
13 The first commercial ads actually launched on Monday
14 the 7th. So you should be hearing, on iHeart Radio
15 stations in Ohio, an ad for people to join The
16 American Legion.

17 And we're also going to be launching some
18 Facebook ads and Instagram ads, Meta ads, to do the
19 same thing. It's going to point people to
20 [OhioLegion.com/join](https://ohiolegion.com/join), to put them into our
21 Department. And then we're going to put them out
22 into your Posts with your permission.

23 Please, do your part to bring in new members
24 and keep the ones you have. Engage with them. Make
25 sure that they know what your Post has to offer.

1 Please.

2 The other thing we're looking at, too, is other
3 revenue streams. So I want to ask a favor.

4 You heard Adjutant Robinson talk about
5 Legionnaire Insurance Trust yesterday. If you have
6 not looked into that, please do, if you need some
7 insurance. They support our Department
8 significantly, hundreds of thousands of dollars. So
9 the more that we can participate in that program,
10 the better off the Department is.

11 Also, we launched some affiliates for My
12 Healthy Pet Care and for Field Fan Blankets. You
13 probably saw them next door.

14 We're looking for more affiliates. So if you
15 know someone who has, you know, has a veteran-owned
16 business in Ohio who would potentially be an
17 affiliate with us, we would love to hear about that.
18 Or if you know any other businesses that are aligned
19 with our values, we would love to hear about that
20 too. You can just have them e-mail us at
21 legion@OhioLegion.com, and we'll get on a meeting
22 with them and talk to them about having a
23 partnership. So we need your help with that. If
24 you own a business or you know somebody who does who
25 would be interested in that, please talk to us.

1 Thank you for your support this year. I really
2 appreciate it. And I'm honored to have served this
3 year.

4 Thank you very much.

5 (Applause).

6 COMMANDER WHATLEY: Department Judge Advocate
7 Josh Brown.

8 FROM THE FLOOR: He walked out.

9 COMMANDER WHATLEY: Department Chaplain Ron
10 Distel.

11 CHAPLAIN DISTEL: Good afternoon, everyone.

12 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: Good afternoon.

13 CHAPLAIN DISTEL: You all kept me busy this
14 year. I visited several, well, more than several,
15 about half a dozen hospitals. I've sent out 14
16 get-well cards and I sent out four sympathy cards.

17 And my address is in the newsletter that gets
18 sent out. And if you need anything, get ahold of me
19 on my e-mail or my phone number, it makes no
20 difference, and I will get it handled.

21 Tomorrow morning we have religious service. It
22 will be in the Brooklyn Room at 8:00 AM. Dr. Robert
23 White, the Assistant Chaplain, will be delivering
24 the message.

25 We'll also be holding a remembrance for anyone

1 who has lost a friend or a family member this year.
2 I have a form for you to fill out so we do it
3 correctly. It's real simple. It's not very long.
4 It's just a couple of questions. So please see me
5 for that.

6 I want to thank you for putting up with me this
7 year. And I got bad news for you, you're going to
8 do it again next year.

9 Thank you.

10 (Applause).

11 COMMANDER WHATLEY: Department Historian Al
12 Beyer.

13 HISTORIAN BEYER: Commander AJ, Legionnaires
14 and distinguished guests, whether you believe it or
15 not, and I know a lot of people are not, but,
16 fortunately, more people do, documenting your Post
17 history is the success to telling the story of what
18 was done, what was accomplished, and who was
19 involved and why it matters.

20 Many of us can't remember what we did
21 yesterday, let alone what was accomplished over the
22 past year. So keeping a record of the photos and
23 names, dates, and what happened, preserving it for
24 reference, is just as important as the event itself.
25 And then having it archived into a digital format.

1 The National Historian and The American Legion
2 Library staff priority is to keep the records in its
3 digital format. They encourage us to do the same.
4 The National History Book Contest is now a digital
5 entry format because there is no storage for
6 physical history books. In the next Legion News,
7 there will be suggestions and tips on where and how
8 to keep and store your history and photos digitally.

9 Following Commander AJ's comments about many of
10 the Post activities and events have given me a front
11 row seat to all the great things that go on in our
12 state. Getting to know many of you, to see many, to
13 see you serving our fellow veterans and communities,
14 I actually stand in awe of you. Some of the things
15 documented and shared have been picked up by
16 National, as well as other Departments. You should
17 be proud of yourself and what you've accomplished.

18 And mainly, I could not have done it without
19 the help of my Polynesian Baby, my wife Dayna.

20 (Applause).

21 And my wife Dayna is the Department of Ohio
22 Auxiliary Historian.

23 And like many of you, it's our spouses who
24 support what we do in The American Legion. She
25 takes the photos and gets the names and provides the

1 content and gets it on social media long before the
2 event is even over. She's really amazing sometimes.

3 Can I retract the word "sometimes"? I don't
4 know.

5 Anyway, it's the support of our Headquarters
6 staff, though, who are doing the behind-the-scenes
7 work to help us get through each year and be
8 successful. This, again, is all part of our
9 history.

10 It brings me back to serving in the Marine
11 Corps. Oorah.

12 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: Oorah.

13 HISTORIAN BEYER: We rely on each other to get
14 the job done. And as Legionnaires, we rely on each
15 other to get the job done. We can't do this job
16 alone. Yes, I can come up with an idea. But to
17 make it successful, I need and received the help of
18 each and every one of you throughout the last, what,
19 six years.

20 As I have heard Commander AJ several times, he
21 could not have done his job without all of you. I
22 could not have done the Historian job without you
23 and your Post family doing The American Legion thing
24 you do.

25 And that is our history. It's what we do. We

1 tag it, bag it, and we share it with everyone.

2 It's been a crazy and amazing journey recording
3 the history of our Department these last 6 or so
4 years. I can't recall anymore. See, I'm getting
5 old.

6 For Dayna and I, the ride is ending. And as we
7 pass the pen, the camera, to continue the work we
8 started, we thank you, AJ, and all of you, for the
9 opportunity, for the blessings this calling has
10 given me, and all of us.

11 And I'd like to thank someone else besides my
12 Polynesian baby, Kevin Motter, who has assisted me
13 this last year. And upon my retirement next month,
14 he will be assuming my duties.

15 FROM THE FLOOR: I'm not your Polynesian baby.

16 (Applause).

17 HISTORIAN BEYER: All right.

18 And remember, no matter what else, be the one.

19 (Applause).

20 Thank you, Commander.

21 COMMANDER WHATLEY: You're welcome, sir.

22 Department Judge Advocate Josh Brown, would you
23 like to address the body?

24 JUDGE ADVOCATE BROWN: No.

25 COMMANDER WHATLEY: Thank you.

1 Department Adjutant John Robinson.

2 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: Thank you, Commander. Just
3 a few quick words.

4 First off, the Commander wanted me to announce
5 that the Annual Roger M. Hight State Bowling
6 Tournament will be in February, at Poelking Lanes,
7 February 14th through the 15th, 21st and 22nd, and
8 the 26th and 27th. That will be going out in the
9 mailing for the fall mailing. So please keep your
10 eyes out and get your team registered early.

11 Next up I want to thank the officers for a
12 great year. I've talked to each of you almost
13 daily. Maybe not Chappy. Probably at least once a
14 week on all of them, if not two or three times. So
15 thank you guys for always being there, guiding and
16 helping shape the direction the Department is going.

17 Next up is probably a little bit more important
18 to me, maybe not everybody else, but the wonderful
19 staff we have. I see a few of them over there.
20 Please stand up.

21 FROM THE FLOOR: (Indicating).

22 (Applause).

23 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: Is there any other staff
24 hiding in here?

25 Jon, come out from behind the Chair and let

1 them see you. That way you know who to attack, not
2 just me.

3 (Applause).

4 They do an amazing job, a lot of selfless
5 hours. I could probably go into hours of
6 conversation on what we get into, how we get into
7 it. But overall, I think we have an amazing staff.
8 We do our best to accommodate everybody and try to
9 keep everything rolling according to how The Legion
10 standards set.

11 So with that said, carry on.

12 Commander, thank you.

13 (Applause).

14 COMMANDER WHATLEY: NECman Ron Chapman.

15 NEC CHAPMAN: Good afternoon.

16 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: Good afternoon.

17 NEC CHAPMAN: I must say it's been a very
18 interesting year. We've had some special times here
19 in Ohio.

20 Last September, we were able to entertain our
21 leading candidate for National Commander Dan Wiley.
22 He was here for the regatta. And he enjoyed that
23 trip very much and we got to tour a lot of the Posts
24 in the 13th District. And we thank you for the
25 hospitality that was shown there.

1 And we did the Washington Conferences. We had
2 a good crew to go up to Washington and lobby some of
3 our priorities for The American Legion. I would
4 encourage each and every one of you, each year, to
5 go to the National website and download those
6 National priorities so you can familiarize yourself
7 with what we're trying to do when we go to
8 Washington and lobby these Congressmen and Senators
9 to get some of these bills passed that you're
10 responsible for.

11 We were fortunate to have our National
12 Commander be with us just a couple weeks ago here in
13 Ohio. And we toured central Ohio a little bit. He
14 got to go out and visit the Save A Warrior complex.

15 If any of you are not familiar with that
16 program, it's one that we've sponsored, and many
17 Posts have sponsored. The hospitality was great
18 there.

19 And then we went on to the 3rd District. The
20 VA facilities were toured there, and also
21 Wright-Patterson Air Force Base. And once again,
22 the Posts that we visited in the 3rd District, thank
23 you very much. The hospitality was fantastic. And
24 the National Commander sends his regards. He really
25 enjoyed this trip to Ohio.

1 He was apprehensive at first, because it's one
2 of his last stops before he gives up his duties.
3 And, you know, he's kind of tired because he's on
4 the road a lot. But he was really thankful that he
5 made this stop. And he sends his congratulations
6 out to you, the Thundering 3rd.

7 We will be honored, in September of this year,
8 to start off the year with our leading candidate
9 again, scheduled to visit in Ohio in September.
10 That's Jay Bowen, from the State of Colorado. And
11 once again, the Adjutant is still putting together
12 the agenda for that program. And that will be
13 passed on as we go. And I know that Jay will
14 probably also receive the same hospitality as
15 always.

16 That, along with the meetings, the fall
17 meetings, the spring meetings, that we attend, some
18 of the business that's taken care of, I would
19 encourage each and every one of you to go to the
20 National website once again, and go to the archive
21 section, and you can read every resolution or every
22 proposal that's brought up before your National
23 Executive Committee. It's all right there in black
24 and white. So be encouraged to do that.

25 And I'm going to echo what our Historian just

1 said. Be the one. Let's keep it going.

2 Thank you.

3 (Applause).

4 COMMANDER WHATLEY: Alternate NECman Bob
5 Schmitt.

6 ALTERNATE NEC SCHMITT: Well, I'm really not
7 supposed to have much to say. I was supposed to
8 have a lot to say because Chappy was going to refer
9 it to me but he didn't.

10 But I do want to reiterate what he talked
11 about. When Leading Candidate Dan Wiley was here
12 last fall, he really enjoyed himself well. He
13 turned around and went on.

14 And you've got to see how these people operate.
15 National Commander Jim LaCoursiere, when he came in,
16 he came in here, he spends 330 days on the road. He
17 said he'll be home 35 days through the whole course
18 of his year. That's how many days he'll be home for
19 the course of the year, 35. That's not a lot, not
20 very much time to spend with your family.

21 But anyways, we had a good time. We did the
22 Washington Conference. We did the spring meetings.

23 And so that's what we've got to report. And
24 I'm still keeping my mouth shut and listening.

25 (Applause).

1 COMMANDER WHATLEY: Ratification. The Chair
2 recognizes Adjutant Robinson for the reading of
3 names and Post affiliations of the newly-elected
4 District Commanders, 1st Vice Commanders, and 2nd
5 Vice Commanders.

6 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: I was asked to remind all
7 National appointees to report to the Independence
8 Room at 4:30, at the conclusion of today.

9 All right, District officer ratifications,
10 Department Adjutant.

11 The Great 1st District: Commander, Dean
12 Boyers, Post 468; 1st Vice Commander, Bernie Rau,
13 Post 541; 2nd Vice Commander, Jeff Hess, Post 384.

14 The 2nd-to-None District: Commander, Tim Shaw,
15 Post 652; 1st Vice Commander, Kurt Emans, Post 382;
16 2nd Vice Commander, Thomas Tierney, Post 210.

17 The Thundering 3rd District: Commander, Brain
18 Fowle, Post 586; 1st Vice Commander, Mike White,
19 Post 707; 2nd Vice Commander, Robyn Ladson, Post
20 776.

21 The Fabulous 4th District: Commander, Champ
22 Brown, that's an easy one, Post 615; 1st Vice
23 Commander, Steven Baumann, Post 72; 2nd Vice
24 Commander, Sylvia Thweatt, Post 72.

25 The Fighting 5th District: Commander, Melissa

1 Rodgers, Post 12; 1st Vice Commander, Kenneth
2 Parsons, Post 118; 2nd Vice Commander, Ty Bowers,
3 Post 181.

4 The Sizzling 6th District: Commander, Will
5 Little, Post 764; 1st Vice Commander, Keith Smigle,
6 Post 518; 2nd Vice Commander, Robert Decker, Post
7 92.

8 The Magnificent 7th District: Commander, John
9 Conley, Post 23; 1st Vice Commander, Douglas Boys,
10 Jr. (sic), Post 23; 2nd Vice Commander, Robert
11 Wagoner, Post 325.

12 The Great 8th District: Commander, Scott Conn,
13 Post 78 (sic); 1st Vice Commander, Ronnie Rutter,
14 Post 677; 2nd Vice Commander, John Stabler, Post
15 371.

16 The Dynamic 9th District: Commander, Sam
17 Swoger, Post 301; 1st Vice Commander, William
18 Dittebrand, Post 214; 2nd Vice Commander, Joseph
19 Ball, Post 236.

20 The Great 10th District: Commander, Thomas
21 Barnett, Post 428; 1st Vice Commander, Howard
22 Stouffer, Post 290; 2nd Vice Commander, Dirk
23 Harkins, Post 525.

24 The Elite 11th District: Commander, David
25 Taylor, Post 768; 1st Vice Commander, Rick Smathers,

1 Post 228; 2nd Vice Commander, David Wiles, Post 768.

2 The Leading 12th District: Commander, Suzette
3 Heller, Post 1.

4 The Tenacious 13th District: Commander, James
5 Lockyer, Post 91; 1st Vice Commander, Kevin Conlan,
6 Post 738; 2nd Vice Commander, Christy Hlavaty, Post
7 2. I know I messed it up.

8 The Phenomenal 14th District: Commander, John
9 Life, Post 449; 1st Vice Commander, Jacob Marx, Post
10 449; 2nd Vice Commander, Ronald Grams, Post 496.

11 COMMANDER WHATLEY: I will now entertain a
12 motion to ratify the newly-elected District
13 officers.

14 13TH DISTRICT CMDR WRIGHT: Commander, Wright,
15 13th District, so moves.

16 6TH DISTRICT CMDR MILLER: Chris Miller, 6th
17 District Commander, seconds.

18 COMMANDER WHATLEY: A motion is properly made
19 and seconded that we accept the newly-elected
20 officers from each District.

21 Any discussion?

22 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

23 COMMANDER WHATLEY: Any discussion?

24 8TH DISTRICT 1VC CONN: Yes. Commander, Scott
25 Conn, incoming Commander for District 8. My current

1 Post is Post 11, not Post 78.

2 COMMANDER WHATLEY: We will correct that, sir.

3 Thank you.

4 Any other discussion?

5 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

6 COMMANDER WHATLEY: Hearing none, all for it by
7 saying aye.

8 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: Aye.

9 COMMANDER WHATLEY: All against by saying no.

10 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

11 (Motion carried).

12 COMMANDER WHATLEY: I now call on Adjutant
13 Robinson for announcements.

14 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: Okay. National Convention
15 2028, Columbus, Ohio, we will be looking for
16 volunteers. Please see or get ahold of myself or
17 Ken LaVoy, as we are preparing to put our team
18 together. It does take quite a few volunteers to
19 pull this off. So we will look for your support.

20 Membership Workshop. If you have not attended
21 before, it is the 1st Vice Commanders of the
22 Districts. They are not required to go, but
23 encouraged to go. And if you need help registering,
24 go on legion.org/membershipworkshop2025, scroll
25 down, register. It's pretty easy. If you need

1 help, call me. It will be August 8th and 9th, 2025,
2 in Indianapolis.

3 I'll repeat this again, National housing forms
4 need to be turned in by the end of convention.

5 National Convention is August 22nd through the
6 28th, Tampa, Florida.

7 Standing commission meetings are August 2nd.
8 Most of them are virtual. Please look for your
9 call-ins. We are e-mailing those out. So please
10 make sure, if you are a member of that group, or a
11 group appointed by your Commander, that we have your
12 correct e-mail address.

13 Our next DEC meeting is August 16th, at
14 Department Headquarters, 60 Big Run Road. If you
15 need directions, let me know. We can mail them to
16 you.

17 I believe that is all of them. Yep, that's all
18 of them, Commander.

19 COMMANDER WHATLEY: Is there any further
20 business to come before --

21 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: My name is Joyce Hannum,
22 Past 9th District Commander, Past 14th District
23 Commander, and 1st Vice Commander at Post 59. I'd
24 like to address an issue that has not been corrected
25 at this time.

1 In 2021, the Department Executive Committee
2 voted to close Post 504, in Youngstown, Ohio, as
3 they had no living members left. They were closed
4 in the fall by the DEC. The NEC closed them in the
5 spring of 2022.

6 At this time, this Post is currently operating
7 as a private bar. It still has The American Legion
8 name on the building and in front of the building.
9 They are participating in activities that does not
10 reflect well on The American Legion.

11 The title of the property is still listed as
12 Post 504, and the other three lots attached to this
13 property are still assigned to Post 732, which was
14 closed in 2009.

15 I hope the incoming DEC will help us get this
16 Post closed, get the property transferred to
17 Department, as per our constitution and bylaws,
18 because it is an embarrassment to The American
19 Legion and the entire state.

20 Thank you.

21 (Applause).

22 COMMANDER WHATLEY: I will go ahead and inform
23 the body that is a legal issue, and our Judge
24 Advocate is aware of that and he is looking into it.

25 FROM THE FLOOR: What's he doing?

1 COMMANDER WHATLEY: He will have a comment on
2 that a little later on. He wasn't aware that that
3 was going to come up today. So that is something
4 that I promise you you will get that information.

5 Is there any other business to come before this
6 body?

7 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

8 COMMANDER WHATLEY: The session will recess
9 until 9:00 AM tomorrow morning, Sunday, July 13th.
10 Colors of our nation in place, hand salute,
11 two.

12 . . . SALUTE TO COLORS BY ASSEMBLY . . .

13 (THEREUPON, THE PROCEEDINGS STOOD IN RECESS).

14 - - - - -

15 Sunday, July 13, 2025.

16 . . . CALL TO ORDER . . .

17 Colors of our nation in place, hand salute.
18 Two.

19 . . . SALUTE TO COLORS BY ASSEMBLY . . .

20 Legionnaires, I announce the 106th Annual
21 Convention of The American Legion Department of Ohio
22 reconvened.

23 The Chair now recognizes Ken LaVoy for the
24 graduation ceremony of those who have completed
25 Buckeye American Legion College, as well as the

1 introduction of the 2025-2026 Dean of Buckeye
2 College.

3 Once graduation is completed, Ken will discuss
4 information about the National Convention.

5 1st Vice Commander Stan Oren, would you please.

6 BALC DEAN LaVOY: Good morning everyone.

7 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: Good morning.

8 BALC DEAN LaVOY: It seems like the air is on.
9 So we should be having a very good morning here at
10 the convention.

11 Before I begin with the graduates, I'd like to
12 just give a few statistics.

13 We had 12 this weekend attending the graduate
14 course for BALC. We had 56 students attending the
15 basic course. To date, we have over 300 enrolled.
16 Today we're going to recognize 15 graduates.

17 And we also, I had mentioned in BALC, for those
18 graduates that are out there, if you would like to
19 attend the National American Legion College, please
20 get your application in. We're going to be
21 reviewing them this week.

22 At this time, I'd like all past graduates to
23 stand up and be recognized.

24 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (Indicating).

25 (Applause).

1 BALC DEAN LaVOY: Thank you.

2 Some of you may not be aware, but in 2019, with
3 the work being done in late 2018, Buckeye American
4 Legion College was created. Since that time, we've
5 had, I am the third dean. So I would like to
6 recognize Holly Lewis as our first dean of the
7 college.

8 (Applause).

9 Mike Blackwell, the second dean.

10 (Applause).

11 And soon, I will be the third dean, as I pass
12 the torch to Ty Bowers, who is down here up front,
13 assisting AJ Whatley, our Department Commander.

14 (Applause).

15 We made a promise when we took over the college
16 that we would continue to change out deans every
17 couple to few years, because we always want new
18 blood and new ideas.

19 So Ty, thank you so much.

20 At this time, graduates for the Convention of
21 2025:

22 Ted Cwiok, please come forward and be
23 recognized.

24 Robin Gray.

25 Robyn Ladson.

1 Brandy Little.

2 Jerry Martinez.

3 Rickie May.

4 Jose Natal, Jr.

5 Jack Peterson.

6 Burnell Rau.

7 Tom Romito.

8 Mindi Rue.

9 John Stabler.

10 I'd also like to recognize Elaine Stallsworth.

11 She had a family issue that she might miss today.

12 So I'm not sure if she was able to stay. I haven't
13 seen her this morning.

14 Sylvia Thweatt. My apologies. Here she comes.

15 I see her coming up the side.

16 The last one I can definitely pronounce, John
17 Watson.

18 Let's give them a round of applause.

19 (Applause).

20 Last but not least, before I step down as the
21 last time as the Dean for Buckeye American Legion
22 College, we cannot do this course without the
23 support of the Department staff.

24 So, staff, please rise.

25 (Applause).

1 Thank you so much.

2 COMMANDER WHATLEY: Candidates for office who
3 have not provided a name of their nominator and
4 second to the Department Adjutant need to do so
5 immediately.

6 Following the election, we will conduct and
7 install all our new officers. They deserve your
8 attention on this special occasion. We would
9 appreciate you remaining until the conclusion of the
10 program.

11 I will give my final remarks, but first I want
12 to thank the entire staff of the Department of Ohio.

13 Would you please stand up again and be
14 recognized?

15 (Applause).

16 I think I haven't seen this done before. So I
17 have a recognition certificate for each of you. So,
18 if you would, come to the stage to receive it.

19 (Applause).

20 This staff, in my opinion, is the No. 1 in the
21 nation.

22 (Applause).

23 Thank you.

24 Also, I have one certificate left for the
25 leader of the Department of Ohio, John Robinson.

1 I appreciate you. You've kept me on the right
2 path when I tried to get off. I really appreciate
3 it.

4 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: It was a pleasure,
5 Commander. Thank you, sir.

6 COMMANDER WHATLEY: 776, where you at? I know
7 you're in the house. I know you are.

8 (Applause).

9 Thundering 3rd.

10 (Applause).

11 Post 598, I thank you for all the support that
12 you've given during my trip to this stage.

13 It's been a pleasant one and an experienced
14 one. But I've met a lot of friends, and thank you.

15 I'm going to leave you with this: To be
16 successful at anything, you don't have to be
17 special. The truth is, you just have to be what
18 most people are not, consistent, determined, and
19 willing to work for it, without any shortcuts.

20 If you look at all my comrades and teammates
21 here today, it would be impossible to find a better
22 example of fine men and women who embody the work
23 ethic, integrity, purpose, determination, and
24 discipline, that it takes to be a champion, a
25 champion in life.

1 I thank you.

2 (Applause).

3 I now call Chair Mel Baher to present the
4 Credentials Committee report.

5 CHAIRMAN BAHER: Good morning, Legion family
6 and guests.

7 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: Good morning.

8 CHAIRMAN BAHER: Saturday final report of the
9 Credentials Committee.

10 The Credentials Committee met in Room 145,
11 July 12th, for the purposes of determining the
12 voting strength of the 2025 American Legion
13 Department of Ohio Convention. Ten committee
14 members were present.

15 The final tally made by the Credentials
16 Committee determined that 298 delegates, 21
17 alternates, and 63 guests are registered. The
18 registered delegates and alternates represent 134
19 Posts.

20 The final voting strength for the 2025
21 Convention, as of the close of the second day of
22 registration, July 12th, 2025, is 308.

23 Per the voting strength just reported, along
24 with the rules of order of business, and for the
25 purpose of elections, a candidate to be elected must

1 receive 155 votes, which is the majority of the
2 established voting strength.

3 I thank the members of the Credentials
4 Committee for their cooperation in completing the
5 reports needed for this convention.

6 Commander, as an duly-elected and registered
7 delegate to this convention, I move for the adoption
8 of the Credentials final report.

9 COMMANDER WHATLEY: I need a second.

10 13TH DISTRICT CMDR WRIGHT: Commander, Wright,
11 13th District, seconds.

12 COMMANDER WHATLEY: The motion has been
13 properly made and seconded.

14 Any discussion?

15 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

16 COMMANDER WHATLEY: Any discussion?

17 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

18 COMMANDER WHATLEY: Hearing none, all those for
19 it by saying aye.

20 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: Aye.

21 COMMANDER WHATLEY: All against have the same
22 right.

23 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

24 (Motion carried).

25 COMMANDER WHATLEY: I call on Adjutant Robinson

1 to read the rules of election of officers.

2 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: Good morning, everybody.

3 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: Good morning.

4 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: All right, let's try this
5 again.

6 The nominating rules for this election are set
7 forth by the Rules and Order of Business Committee
8 in 2024, and listed in your program.

9 The following are the rules for the election:

10 No. 1. Robert's Revised Rules of Order, Newly
11 Revised, shall be the authority of parliamentary
12 procedure, with the following modifications:

13 2. A delegate desiring to make a motion or
14 address the convention, shall rise, address the
15 Chair as "Commander," and state their name and the
16 name and number of their Post before proceeding.

17 Debate shall be limited to three minutes for
18 each speaker.

19 No. 4. Debate on any one subject presented to
20 the convention shall be limited to 30 minutes,
21 except under such special rules as the convention
22 shall adopt prior to debate.

23 5. Only two delegates from any one Post delegation
24 shall be permitted the floor on any one subject.

25 Where disagreement exists within a delegation, one

1 delegate shall be permitted to speak on each side of
2 the subject, except on a division of the question,
3 when this rule shall be applied separately for each
4 division.

5 6. The floor shall be permitted but once to
6 any individual delegate on any one subject, except
7 by a two-thirds vote of the convention.

8 Chairpersons of the convention committees may speak
9 as frequently as may be necessary in connection with
10 the report of the committees. The presiding officer
11 shall not entertain any motions which will curtail
12 further debate without affording the committee
13 chairperson an opportunity for rebuttal. On request
14 of a delegate, any resolution contained in a
15 committee report shall be considered separately, and
16 at the conclusion of the vote on the remaining
17 report, and after discussion, voted upon at that
18 time.

19 Any resolutions originating on the floor of the
20 convention shall be in writing, then automatically,
21 without reading, be referred to the Adjutant or a
22 secretary of the convention, who will refer them to
23 the appropriate committee for their action and
24 report thereon prior to the end of convention.

25 Decisions on rules and debate or parliamentary

1 order by the presiding officers may be subject to
2 appeal by any two delegates from two different
3 Districts under a point of order. Such an appeal
4 shall take precedence over any pending questions and
5 shall be decided forthwith. An appeal from the
6 decision of the Chair shall be put to the convention
7 on the question: "Shall the decision be sustained?"

8 9. When the poll of any Post delegation is
9 demanded by a delegate of any other Post, the
10 convention secretary shall poll the vote without
11 discussion of the question being voted on. When a
12 poll of the Post is demanded, it must be made
13 immediately upon announcement of the vote of the
14 delegation.

15 10. On roll calls, the Post delegation
16 chairperson shall poll their delegation on the floor
17 and announce its vote upon presenting their
18 credentials to the person in charge of the
19 microphone.

20 11. Past Department Commanders shall be
21 entitled to vote, provided they are registered as
22 such.

23 12. Only delegates or their accredited
24 alternates may be heard or given recognition on any
25 issue or in the nomination of candidates unless he

1 or she has two-thirds consent of the delegation.

2 13. Delegations may arrive at a vote in such a
3 manner as they choose but shall announce it in terms
4 of a full vote and not in terms of a fractional part
5 of a vote. The vote of any delegate absent and not
6 represented by the alternate shall be cast by the
7 majority of the delegates present from his or her
8 Post.

9 There shall be no unit rules of voting in this
10 Convention.

11 15. Voting shall be by acclamation, except
12 when a roll call or a standing count is directed by
13 the Commander or demanded by a Delegate of at least
14 three Posts of three separate Districts. Elections
15 of Department officers shall be by roll call, except
16 when a candidate is unopposed, at which time the
17 vote may be by acclamation.

18 All roll call voting will be as follows: the
19 delegate chairperson or designee will approach the
20 closest microphone and cast votes from the
21 microphone. The delegate chairperson or designee
22 should be prepared, prior to the calling of their
23 Post number, to move toward the closest microphone
24 so their vote can be cast in a timely manner. All
25 standing count votes will be by District, with the

1 District Commander, assisted by the 1st and 2nd Vice
2 Commanders, polling the vote from each Post
3 delegation chairperson. The District Commander will
4 announce the poll to the assembly by Post from the
5 microphone when called upon by the Commander.

6 The registration desk will be closed at least
7 30 minutes prior to any expected standing count to
8 allow the Credentials Committee to update the
9 delegate strength for the determination of a
10 majority and two-thirds of the delegate strength for
11 the standing count.

12 16. In the event a Post has not provided the
13 method by which alternates shall be designated to
14 serve in the place of absent delegates, the
15 chairperson or acting chairperson of the delegation
16 shall make such designation certified by the Post
17 Commander or District Commander.

18 17. Prior to the election of Department
19 officers, the Department Commander shall appoint,
20 subject to approval of the convention, a chief
21 teller of elections, and such number of tellers as
22 the Department Commander deems necessary, provided
23 that the total number of tellers so appointed shall
24 be an odd number. In a contested election, each
25 candidate going to the ballot shall be entitled to

1 one teller of the candidate's choice if the
2 candidate so elects.

3 18. Nominations for Department officers shall
4 be from the floor. Each Post may present as many
5 candidates as it chooses.

6 19. Nominating speeches for Department
7 officers shall be limited to five minutes each. Not
8 more than one seconding speech shall be made for any
9 candidate, and said speech limited to two minutes.

10 20. When more than two candidates are
11 nominated for any office, voting shall continue
12 until one candidate receives the necessary majority
13 of the votes cast. If on any vote taken no
14 candidate receives the necessary majority to elect,
15 a new vote shall be taken for the place to be
16 filled. The candidate receiving the lowest number
17 of votes on the preceding vote shall be
18 disqualified. All roll call votes for officers or
19 otherwise will begin with the next sequential Post
20 where the last roll call vote ended. The 2024
21 Convention's last roll call vote ended with Post
22 614. The first roll call vote of the 2025
23 Convention will begin with Post 615.

24 The order of election of officers shall be:
25 Department Commander, 1st Vice Commander, 2nd Vice

1 Commander, Treasurer. In even years, we will then
2 elect National Executive Committeeperson and
3 Alternate National Executive Committeeperson.

4 Those recognized by the Department Commander
5 shall be entitled to a respectful hearing, and the
6 Chair shall have the authority to clear the gallery
7 or the floor or have the Sergeant-at-Arms escort
8 from the convention anyone creating a disturbance or
9 interfering with order of procedure.

10 23. None of the above rules shall be construed
11 as preventing any member of The American Legion
12 Department of Ohio from serving on a convention
13 committee.

14 24. The consent of two-thirds of the voting
15 strength of the convention is necessary for
16 suspension of standing rules of the convention.

17 25. The Department Commander will have the
18 authority to appoint a Parliamentarian to assist the
19 Judge Advocate for this convention.

20 26. Any amendment originating on the floor to
21 any resolution shall be presented in writing and
22 transmitted to the presiding officer at the time of
23 the introduction of such amendment. However, in the
24 case where a word is stricken and another inserted,
25 this change can be done by the one making the report

1 or introducing the resolution.

2 COMMANDER WHATLEY: I call upon Department
3 Adjutant Robinson for the reporting of the names of
4 tellers appointed to serve as tabulators for the
5 election and the name of the chief judge.

6 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: Chief Teller, Mel Baher;
7 1st Recorder, Jack Pederson; 2nd Recorder, Russell
8 Bohland; 1st Checker, Robert Steggemann; 2nd
9 Checker, Larry Stottsberry; 1st Adding Machine,
10 Jerry Perry; 2nd Adding Machine, Suzette Heller;
11 Notebook is Jim Dombrose; Draft Tally Sheet, Jim
12 Dombrose.

13 Mr. Commander, this report will require
14 ratification by this body.

15 COMMANDER WHATLEY: The Chair will entertain a
16 motion to accept this report.

17 13TH DISTRICT CMDR WRIGHT: Commander, Richard
18 Wright, Commander, 13th District, motions to accept
19 the report as read.

20 1ST DISTRICT 1VC BOYERS: Commander, Dean
21 Boyers, Post 468, seconds that motion.

22 COMMANDER WHATLEY: The motion has been
23 properly made and seconded to accept this report.

24 Any discussion?

25 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

1 COMMANDER WHATLEY: Any discussion?

2 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

3 COMMANDER WHATLEY: Hearing none, all those for
4 it by saying aye.

5 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: Aye.

6 COMMANDER WHATLEY: All against have the same
7 right.

8 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

9 COMMANDER WHATLEY: Motion carries.

10 I call upon the Legionnaires nominating and
11 seconding candidates for office, and tellers, to the
12 stage.

13 We have come to the point where we, as The
14 American Legion Department of Ohio, elect our
15 officers for the coming year. Today we will elect
16 officers for Department Commander, 1st Vice
17 Commander, 2nd Vice Commander, and Treasurer.

18 The floor is open for nominations for
19 Department Commander.

20 The Chair recognizes Past Commander Jason Rue,
21 from the Great 1st District.

22 PDC RUE: Thank you, Commander.

23 It is an honor and a privilege to stand before
24 you this morning to put the name of Stan Oren for
25 the high office of Department Commander. Stan is a

1 very good friend of mine.

2 I told you last year how I got started in The
3 American Legion. I got taken to my first District
4 Conference. Stan took me under his wing and gave me
5 a lot of tutelage coming up through the District
6 chairs. He was our immediate Commander before me
7 for the outliers in our District.

8 I've learned a lot from Stan. I've had many
9 mentors through my time in The American Legion,
10 coming up through the great 1st District, but Stan
11 was one of the first ones to take me under his wing
12 and give me guidance to get me to where I am today.

13 Stan does so much for our veterans. You know,
14 he's on the County Veterans Service Commission. He
15 has been for almost five years now. He is involved
16 in many different nonprofits also, and boards.

17 We could do no better job than elect Stan Oren
18 for the high office of Department Commander. I
19 nominate Stan Oren for Department Commander.

20 Thank you.

21 (Applause).

22 COMMANDER WHATLEY: The Chair recognizes Thom
23 Stan, from elite 11th District, for a second.

24 11TH DISTRICT CMDR STAN: I met Stan in
25 Phoenix, at the National Convention in 2021. And

1 that was my first National Convention. And I was a
2 little lost, if you would. And we had a few beers,
3 did a little chitchatting, and before I knew it he
4 was guiding me through the entire convention. And
5 as I became a District officer, he guided me through
6 that.

7 He's been an invaluable resource. He's very
8 willing to mentor anybody. He knows a lot about
9 veterans' benefits. He knows a lot about charitable
10 organizations. He knows a lot about philanthropy.

11 I couldn't come up with a better candidate for
12 Commander of this great Ohio Department. And I
13 firmly believe that he will serve us all very well.
14 So I do second the nomination for Stan Oren, 1st
15 District, as the candidate for Commander, Department
16 of Ohio, American Legion.

17 Thank you.

18 (Applause).

19 COMMANDER WHATLEY: Are there any other
20 nominations for Department Commander?

21 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

22 COMMANDER WHATLEY: Are there any other
23 nominations for Department Commander?

24 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

25 COMMANDER WHATLEY: Are there any other

1 nominations for Department Commander?

2 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

3 COMMANDER WHATLEY: Hearing no further
4 nominations, nominations for the office of
5 Department Commander are closed.

6 DELEGATE KENNEDY: Commander, Kennedy, Post
7 297, duly-elected delegate to this convention, makes
8 a motion that you close the nominations and instruct
9 the Adjutant to cast one unanimous vote for Stanley
10 Oren, Department Commander.

11 PARLIAMENTARIAN MINADEO: Commander.

12 COMMANDER WHATLEY: Yes.

13 PARLIAMENTARIAN MINADEO: No need. Out of
14 order. We can do it by acclamation, all in favor.

15 COMMANDER WHATLEY: Okay.

16 I need an acclamation coming from the Adjutant.

17 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: No, it's --

18 PARLIAMENTARIAN MINADEO: All you do is ask all
19 in favor of Stan being --

20 COMMANDER WHATLEY: By acclamation, all in
21 favor of Stan Oren for the Department of Ohio
22 Commander say aye.

23 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: Aye.

24 COMMANDER WHATLEY: All against have the same
25 right.

1 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

2 COMMANDER WHATLEY: Let the demonstration
3 begin.

4 (Applause).

5 Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the
6 newly-elected Department Commander to the stage.

7 . . . DEMONSTRATION CONDUCTED . . .

8 (Applause).

9 Fellow Legionnaires, I present to you
10 Department Commander Stan Oren.

11 (Applause).

12 COMMANDER-ELECT OREN: Thank you, thank you.

13 Ladies and gentlemen, fellow Legionnaires,
14 dignified guests, friends, and my very supportive
15 wife, thank you.

16 Yeah, I remembered her, finally.

17 I stand before you today as an honored and
18 humbled Legionnaire, grateful to accept the role as
19 Commander of The American Legion Department of Ohio.

20 When I took the oath to serve my country, I did
21 with pride and purpose. Today, that same sense of
22 duty fuels me to take this new mission, to serve and
23 honor the caretakers of our community, our veterans
24 and their families.

25 The organization has always been the meeting of

1 not meetings and minutes. We are a lifeline of
2 support systems that promise that no veteran will
3 ever be forgotten, no family is ever left behind,
4 and no service will be taken for granted.

5 To those entrusting me with the leadership,
6 thank you for your confidence. I promise to lead
7 with integrity, compassion, and with the same
8 relentless commitment that defines each and every
9 one of you.

10 Our outgoing leadership, thank you for building
11 a foundation that I can proudly build on our
12 service.

13 Ohio is a proud Legion Department, with rich
14 legacies and service and civil leadership. But
15 we're not here to rest on tradition. We are here to
16 shape the future. We will stand strong for our
17 veterans, advocating loud and clear, and working
18 shoulder to shoulder with our communities, to uphold
19 the values that brought us together. Let's move
20 forward in unity, with vision and with fighting
21 spirit. And that always defines The American
22 Legion.

23 For God and country, thank you. Let's get to
24 work.

25 (Applause).

1 As my first act as Commander, I would like to
2 have Past Commander Whatley please step up.

3 We've got a few things coming for you my
4 friend. And thank you for all the help and guidance
5 you have given me.

6 And this is from your fellow veterans
7 (indicating).

8 COMMANDER WHATLEY: What is it?

9 COMMANDER-ELECT OREN: You got to open it.

10 COMMANDER WHATLEY: You didn't wrap this.

11 COMMANDER-ELECT OREN: My wife did.

12 A shadow box for your awards, for your
13 challenge coins.

14 (Applause).

15 COMMANDER WHATLEY: It says, "Congratulations."
16 It's got a lot of words in here. And it's got some
17 dollar signs.

18 (Applause).

19 I know what this is.

20 COMMANDER-ELECT OREN: Do you? What is it?

21 COMMANDER WHATLEY: Patron.

22 (Indicating).

23 (Applause).

24 COMMANDER-ELECT OREN: Thank you, Commander.

25 COMMANDER WHATLEY: Thank you.

1 (Applause) .

2 We will now hear nominations for Department 1st
3 Vice Commander.

4 The Chair recognizes Past Department Commander
5 Roger Friend, from the sizzling 6th District.

6 PDC FRIEND: Good morning. Legion family,
7 ladies and gentlemen.

8 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: Good morning.

9 PDC FRIEND: I stand here this morning as a
10 duly-elected delegate to this convention and honored
11 to nominate Gary Cox, Jr., for 1st Vice Commander
12 for the Department of Ohio.

13 I've had the distinct honor and privilege to
14 watch this young man grow and prosper into the
15 Legionnaire you all see today.

16 Gary is a Paid-Up-For-Life member of The
17 American Legion. And he has actually been a member
18 of both parties, not only The American Legion but
19 the SAL, for over 30-some years.

20 Many of you sitting here have seen Gary, how
21 active he really is. Gary has been the 2nd Vice
22 Commander of the Department to the bowling
23 tournament, and also, here just recently, he was at
24 Mid-Ohio, where the race was going on.

25 His positions that he's taken over these years

1 includes Post Vice Commander 2022 to 2024; the 6th
2 District District Commander '21; and '23, a Squadron
3 Commander, '99 and 2000; SAL 6th District Commander
4 2000-2001; Detachment Assistant Sergeant-at-Arms in
5 1997 to 1998. Gary has also had numerous
6 accomplishments that has molded him into the
7 individual you see today.

8 The one thing Gary is most active with is
9 Buckeye Boys State, either as a city commissioner or
10 working with boys in the state government. As a
11 Buckeye Boys State alumni, he strives to give back
12 to the boys all the mentorship that he was taught
13 over the years.

14 Legionnaires, as a duly-elected delegate to
15 this convention, I proudly nominate Gary Cox, Jr.,
16 to the high office of 1st Vice Commander for the
17 Department of Ohio.

18 Thank you.

19 (Applause).

20 COMMANDER WHATLEY: For the purpose of a
21 seconding speech, I present to you John Life, from
22 the phenomenal 14th District.

23 14TH DISTRICT 1VC LIFE: Good morning.

24 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: Good morning.

25 14TH DISTRICT 1VC LIFE: I first met Gary when

1 I attended American Legion Buckeye Boys State
2 several years ago for the first time. It was a nice
3 change to see a younger face at an American Legion
4 event. After spending years of coming to and
5 participating in American Legion functions, the
6 closest to my age was at least a 20-years
7 difference. That's what first drew me to Gary.

8 But talking with him and learning our
9 similarities and passions, we became close friends
10 very quickly. Over the years, we've talked
11 regularly and we've traveled together. We drove to
12 Milwaukee for National Convention, and again to
13 Charlotte.

14 On a long drive like that, you get to learn
15 more about a person you travel with. You get to
16 talk one on one. And one of the things that stuck
17 out, the thing with Gary, is something I remember
18 that was instilled in me in Marine Corps boot camp,
19 you don't always have to be the best person in the
20 room, you don't always have to be No. 1.

21 Sorry, I kind of lost my spot here. My
22 apologies. I'm getting ahead of myself.

23 There we go.

24 But as long as you have heart, that is what
25 will get you through even the toughest of times.

1 My conversations with Gary as we drove to
2 National Convention, the way that he spoke about The
3 American Legion, were how we can improve and then
4 bring in our younger generations of veterans.

5 We worked together in creating the Video Gaming
6 Committee, and the resolution to bring it to
7 Department.

8 You could hear the heart and passion in his
9 voice as we talked.

10 And it didn't stop there. His first run at
11 Department 2nd Vice Commander didn't go as planned.
12 He improved, he adapted, and he overcame. And he
13 ran again and won the election of 2nd Vice.

14 I can only see him taking this heart and
15 passion and putting it towards the membership. This
16 is why I gladly second the nomination of Gary Cox,
17 Jr., for Department 1st Vice Commander.

18 (Applause).

19 COMMANDER WHATLEY: Are there any other
20 nominations for Department 1st Vice Commander?

21 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

22 COMMANDER WHATLEY: Are there any other
23 nominations for Department 1st Vice Commander?

24 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

25 COMMANDER WHATLEY: No further nominations for

1 the office of Department 1st Vice Commander, it's
2 closed.

3 Vote by acclamation. All those in favor, say
4 aye.

5 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: Aye.

6 COMMANDER WHATLEY: All against.

7 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

8 Let the demonstration begin.

9 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: No demonstration,
10 Commander.

11 (Applause).

12 COMMANDER WHATLEY: Sergeant-at-Arms, please
13 escort the newly-elected Department 1st Vice
14 Commander to the stage.

15 (Applause).

16 Fellow Legionnaires, I present to you YOUR
17 Department 1st Vice Commander, Gary Cox, Jr.

18 (Applause).

19 1VC-ELECT COX, JR.: Please be seated.

20 Are we having fun yet?

21 I cannot thank you guys enough.

22 Sizzling 6th District, where you at?

23 My fellow Marines, where you at?

24 1st Vices, both District and Post, please
25 stand.

1 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (Indicating).

2 1VC-ELECT COX, JR.: Look around you. All 1st
3 Vices, whether you're Post or District, I want you
4 to stand. Because we have some work to do. And
5 today is the day that it starts.

6 You all can be seated.

7 We are going to have a lot of fun this year.
8 And today is when it's going to begin.

9 I cannot thank you enough for where we are
10 headed. I cannot thank you enough for all that has
11 been done. And I look forward to seeing what
12 happens this following year, because we are
13 definitely team O-H.

14 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: I-O.

15 1VC-ELECT COX, JR.: Thank you for your time.
16 (Applause).

17 COMMANDER WHATLEY: We will now hear
18 nominations for Department 2nd Vice Commander.

19 The Chair recognizes Jean Wilson, from the
20 fabulous 4th District.

21 PDC JEAN WILSON: Commander Whatley, table
22 officers, delegates and guests, today is the day
23 that many of us has been waiting for. Today, I,
24 Jean L. Wilson, a duly-elected delegate to this
25 convention, has the honor and privilege to place

1 into nomination for Department 2nd Vice Commander a
2 great leader.

3 You may ask yourself, "What is a great leader?"

4 In my opinion, a great leader is characterized
5 by a combination of qualities that inspire, guide,
6 and influence others. These qualities include
7 integrity, communication skills, empathy,
8 resilience, decisive, adaptability, and have a sharp
9 vision for the future.

10 To me, Holly Lewis, my friend, my sister, my
11 fellow Legionnaire, has all of these qualities and
12 many more. She is one who leads by example. She's
13 not afraid to roll up her sleeves and put the
14 demanding work it will take to make our Department
15 of Ohio better for everyone.

16 She has proven her leadership skills on every
17 single level. At her Post, she helped Post 557
18 navigate the devastation of a fire. She helped take
19 it from ruins to a brand new, beautiful, thriving
20 Post.

21 On the District level, she served all offices,
22 including 10th District Commander in 2018. Not only
23 was their District quota, but she was also the
24 National Race-to-the-Top Commander for Category V
25 that year.

1 On the Department level, she has served as
2 Department Assistant Sergeant-at-Arms, on Gifts for
3 the Yanks Committee, the Media and Marketing Chair,
4 Dean of Buckeye American Legion College, and
5 graduated National American Legion College.

6 And in 2021, when I was Department Commander, I
7 had the honor to appoint Holly to the Department of
8 Ohio Finance Committee. She became the Department
9 of Ohio Treasurer in 2024-'25, doing an outstanding
10 job. And she was the first female to hold that
11 position for the Department of Ohio.

12 During her years as Department Treasurer, she
13 worked alongside the Department Finance Committee
14 and the Department officers to help implement some
15 of the following: To work to produce a line item
16 budget that is easily reported upon from Quickbooks;
17 the transparency that was created by sharing the
18 budget versus actual with the Department Executive
19 Committee; documenting the policies and procedures
20 that were formerly word of mouth, such as expense
21 policy, credit card policy, and the Commander's car,
22 now are standard operating procedures; the marketing
23 partnerships that were created for recurring revenue
24 with My Primary Pet Care and Field Fans; creating a
25 way to work with iHeart Radio for advertising for

1 new members and membership retention; she introduced
2 virtual meeting technology at the Department of Ohio
3 to reduce travel costs.

4 Holly has had an amazing, successful career,
5 over 30 years in the software service department,
6 launching three extraordinarily successful
7 commercial software packages. She also created a
8 consulting businesses that manages nearly 90 million
9 in revenue. She is a successful leadership coach
10 with her own private practice.

11 Holly has been married to her husband, Matt,
12 for 32 years, and has two adult children and one
13 grandchild.

14 It is my honor, my extreme privilege, to place
15 in nomination Holly Lewis for the Department of Ohio
16 American Legion 2nd Vice Commander for 2025-'26.

17 (Applause).

18 COMMANDER WHATLEY: For the purpose of a
19 seconding speech, I present to you Ed Long, from the
20 great 10th District.

21 LEGIONNAIRE LONG: Commander, table officers,
22 fellow Legionnaires, guests, I'm here to second the
23 nomination for Holly Lewis.

24 I've traveled extensively with her over the
25 past many years.

1 As Jean said, she won the Race to the Top in
2 2018, and was very instrumental in the District also
3 winning it in 2017, and coming very close in 2019.
4 So she's very good with membership. She's very
5 sincere about it, just as she is sincere about the
6 activities of the Legion.

7 She has done many of the activities the
8 Department has had over the past few years, and
9 she'll be very well suited to keep them going this
10 year and the coming year.

11 With that said, I nominate, or second the
12 nomination for Holly Lewis for 2nd Vice Commander of
13 the Department of Ohio.

14 Thank you.

15 (Applause).

16 COMMANDER WHATLEY: Are there any other
17 nominations for Department 2nd Vice Commander?

18 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

19 COMMANDER WHATLEY: Are there any other
20 nominations for Department 2nd Vice Commander?

21 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

22 COMMANDER WHATLEY: Are there any other
23 nominations for Department 2nd Vice Commander?

24 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

25 COMMANDER WHATLEY: Hearing no further

1 nominations, nominations for the office of 2nd Vice
2 Commander are closed.

3 By acclamation from the floor, everybody by
4 saying aye.

5 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: Aye.

6 COMMANDER WHATLEY: Let the demonstration
7 begin.

8 Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the
9 newly-elected Department 2nd Vice Commander to the
10 stage.

11 (Applause).

12 Fellow Legionnaires, I present to you
13 Department 2nd Vice Commander Holly Lewis.

14 (Applause).

15 2VC-ELECT LEWIS: Thank you so much, everybody,
16 for your trust and support. I'm honored to serve as
17 your 2nd Vice Commander.

18 I really want to thank my husband Matt. I
19 usually forget this part. So I want to really thank
20 my husband Matt. Because he has been there, my
21 partner in crime, for over 32 years. And no matter
22 what shenanigans I want to get into, he's always
23 there to support me. And he's asked me several
24 times over the last several year or so, "Are you
25 sure you want to do this?"

1 And I was like, "Yes, I'm sure I want to do
2 this."

3 Jean and Ed, thank you so much for doing my
4 nominating speeches. They were beautiful.

5 I want to also thank my entire campaign team,
6 as well as the great 10th District.

7 (Applause).

8 Yep. Thank you so much for all of your
9 support.

10 You know, this role is about connection,
11 because connection saves lives. And we have a
12 loneliness epidemic. We can do something about
13 that. We really can.

14 So, together, we're going to just turn every
15 Post activity into a purposeful opportunity to
16 engage, include, and support one another.

17 And I promise to work hard and stay mission
18 focused and make you proud.

19 So thank you very much.

20 (Applause).

21 COMMANDER WHATLEY: We will now hear
22 nominations for Department Treasurer.

23 The Chair recognizes Lance McCartney from the
24 capital 12th District.

25 DELEGATE McCARTNEY: Commander Whatley,

1 delegates, and guests, today is special for me
2 because I get to place in nomination for The
3 American Legion Department of Ohio Treasurer my
4 close friend and fellow Legionnaire, Ken LaVoy.

5 I've known Ken for nearly 25 years, having
6 served and supported him in various special
7 operations units in both peacetime and in combat,
8 until our retirements. He is a true leader who is
9 not only hard working but respected for his
10 treatment of others and focused team approach.

11 Ken joined the military in 1986, and served
12 nearly 31 years in the Army and Army Reserve before
13 his retirement as a Colonel. Ken earned his
14 eligibility for membership in our American Legion
15 with his service during Desert Storm as an Infantry
16 Anti-tank Company Commander at Ft. Benning, Georgia.

17 Ken has been a member of The American Legion
18 and Post 598, in Kettering, Ohio, for over 30 years,
19 where he has served as the Post 1st Vice Commander.
20 And Ken has also served as the 3rd District Finance
21 Officer, 2nd Vice Commander, and 1st Vice Commander,
22 and the District Commander.

23 As the District Commander in '23-'24, not only
24 was he in the large District category, but the only
25 District within the Department to reach quota.

1 On the Department level, he has served as the
2 Department Assistant Sergeant-at-Arms, Legislative
3 Commission Chair, and the Dean of the Buckeye
4 American Legion College. He was appointed to the
5 Finance Commission by the late Department Commander
6 Brad Teis, and is currently serving as its Chairman.

7 Ken has a focused outlook for the Department
8 finances, a balanced budget, accountability, and
9 identification and reduction of unnecessary
10 spending.

11 On the National level, he has served on the
12 Employment and Education Commission, and now serves
13 on the Convention Commission. He has also been
14 chosen as the Convention Chairman with when the
15 National Convention comes in Columbus, Ohio in 2028.

16 Ken is also a graduate of the National American
17 Legion College in 2018, and a co-founder of the
18 Buckeye American Legion College.

19 Ken has also been selected this year to serve
20 as an Academic Director for the National American
21 Legion College in Indianapolis, Indiana.

22 Not only does Ken maintain two LLCs in his
23 retirement, he also currently serves as the director
24 and senior instructor and adjunct faculty for the
25 Joint Special Operations University. In this

1 position, he travels internationally, instructing
2 foreign operation militaries and assisting U.S.
3 Embassies abroad.

4 Ken has been married to his lovely wife
5 Michelle for 23 years, and resides in Kettering,
6 Ohio.

7 Ken will do a fantastic job as our Department
8 Treasurer. It is my true honor and privilege, as a
9 delegate to this convention, to place in nomination
10 Kenneth J. LaVoy for Department Treasurer for the
11 years 2025-2026.

12 Thank you.

13 (Applause).

14 COMMANDER WHATLEY: The Chair recognizes Jeff
15 Laack, from the Thundering 3rd District.

16 DELEGATE LAACK: Thank you, Commander Whatley.

17 Table officers, fellow Legionnaires,
18 distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, my name
19 is Jeff Laack. And as a duly-appointed delegate to
20 this convention, representing the largest and best
21 Post in Ohio, Kettering Post 598, the proud home of
22 Ken LaVoy, I am here to happily second the motion
23 for nomination of Ken to the high office of
24 Treasurer for the Department of Ohio.

25 He is a man of high moral character, integrity,

1 chrisma, and business acumen.

2 For those that don't know Ken personally,
3 here's an example of the type of man that he is.

4 A few years ago, I had a large tree fall down
5 in my front yard. And I called him up to ask if I
6 could borrow his chainsaw. But instead of just
7 letting me borrow his chainsaw, Ken came over and
8 helped me all day, and we were cutting and breaking
9 down that tree, this massive maple tree.

10 He's always willing to help others, and to do
11 what is right. This is the type of man that Ken is.
12 And in my mind, he is a class act.

13 Ken embodies the virtues of being a
14 Legionnaire. He loves his country. He loves his
15 community, his many friends, his American Legion,
16 and, most importantly, his incredibly supportive
17 wife Michelle.

18 We should look to the future. And I firmly
19 believe he will help move The American Legion
20 forward. Therefore, I am honored and humbled that I
21 was asked to second the motion of nominating my
22 friend, Ken LaVoy, to the high office of Treasurer
23 of the Department of Ohio.

24 Thank you and go Army.

25 (Applause).

1 COMMANDER WHATLEY: Are there any other
2 nominations for Department Treasurer?

3 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

4 COMMANDER WHATLEY: Are there any other
5 nominations for Department Treasurer?

6 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

7 COMMANDER WHATLEY: Are there any other
8 nominations for Department Treasurer?

9 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: (No response).

10 COMMANDER WHATLEY: Hearing no further
11 nominations, nominations for the office of
12 Department Treasurer is closed.

13 Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the --

14 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: No.

15 COMMANDER WHATLEY: Oh, thank you.

16 By acclamation by saying aye.

17 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: Aye.

18 COMMANDER WHATLEY: Sounds good to me.

19 Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the
20 newly-elected Department Treasurer to the stage.

21 (Applause).

22 Legionnaires, I present to you Department
23 Treasurer Ken LaVoy.

24 (Applause).

25 TREASURER-ELECT LaVOY: Thank you so much.

1 I just heard JD say, in the back, 20-minute
2 speech. I promise I will make this short.

3 Fellow Legionnaires, guests, Legion family,
4 thank you for your trust, confidence and support.

5 I also want to thank the leadership of our
6 Department, the 3rd District, and of course Post
7 598. Thank you.

8 Like Holly, we get up here so often and forget
9 to always mention our loved ones. And I could not
10 do this without the support of my wife.

11 Michelle, thank you so much for all of the
12 support over these past years.

13 (Applause).

14 As we go forth in this coming year, I'm going
15 to continue to ensure our budget remains balanced.

16 One of the very first things I plan on
17 implementing is an on-line meeting for our Post and
18 District Finance officers, to ask questions and
19 share ideas. I'm going to start off every other
20 month. And this meeting is going to mirror the type
21 of meeting that's already in place by our Department
22 Adjutant, JD.

23 I want to leave with one final comment. As
24 mentioned, we need each and every one of you to
25 focus this coming year, and years to come, on

1 membership. And as Holly mentioned yesterday, we
2 need help with future revenue streams. So think
3 about that as you leave, membership and future
4 revenue streams.

5 Thank you so much. And we look forward to a
6 great year.

7 Thank you.

8 (Applause).

9 COMMANDER WHATLEY: Will Deborah Smith come to
10 the stage, please, if she's in the body.

11 (Applause).

12 We will now transition 1st Vice Commander Stan
13 Oren's cap to Department Commander.

14 I call Past Department Commander Robert
15 Schmitt, from the great 1st District, to perform the
16 installation of Department officers.

17 ALTERNATE NEC SCHMITT: Good morning.

18 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: Good morning.

19 ALTERNATE NEC SCHMITT: We're about ready to
20 get this thing over with, right?

21 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: Yeah.

22 ALTERNATE NEC SCHMITT: Oh, it says right here
23 in the book.

24 There have been a lot of salutations already
25 expressed, so I'll just say good morning everyone.

1 Okay. Sergeant-at-Arms, bring before me all of
2 the newly-elected Department and District officers
3 for the installation.

4 District officers, please line up across the
5 front here (indicating).

6 This isn't the first time you guys have done
7 this, so you should know how to do it.

8 My fellow Legionnaires, you have been chosen to
9 fill the various offices of The American Legion
10 Department of Ohio and your respective Districts. I
11 know you will vindicate the trust that has been
12 reposed in you. I know you will faithfully fulfill
13 every obligation required of you.

14 Familiarize yourself with the duties of your
15 offices and carry out those duties with the same
16 spirit from which arose The American legion. The
17 welfare and the success of this Department depends
18 upon all of you, as does the preservation and
19 integrity of The American Legion.

20 Protect the good name of The American Legion
21 with the people of our great nation. Help them know
22 The Legion's purposes and policies. Remember that
23 tolerance animates us as members.

24 And remember that there is no rank among us,
25 for we are all equals. We are all aiming for the

1 same goal, the ideals of justice, freedom,
2 democracy, and loyalty.

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

10 Legionnaires, raise your right hand and repeat
11 after me.

12 I, Robert E. "Bob" Schmitt, do solemnly swear,
13 pledge myself, pledge myself, I'm sorry, to perform
14 faithfully and impartially, the duties of the
15 offices of The American Legion I am about to assume.
16 And I further pledge I am not a member of, and do
17 not subscribe to, any principles of any group
18 opposed to our form of government.

19 You may lower your hands.

20 Commander Stan Oren. Where are you, sir?

21 COMMANDER-ELECT OREN: Right here, sir.

22 ALTERNATE NEC SCHMITT: Okay.

23 You are entrusted with very important duties.
24 You must teach and protect the cardinal principles
25 of The American Legion throughout the Department of

1 Ohio. You are entrusted with the supervision of the
2 duties of all officers of the Department. Loyalty
3 to The American Legion, to its members, and the
4 National organization, are obligations which you now
5 assume.

6 You are more than just a presiding officer.
7 You are guided by the constitution and the decisions
8 of the Department as a body, yet the
9 responsibilities of the Department is largely upon
10 your shoulders. You must familiarize yourself with
11 the traditions in the Department of Ohio and The
12 American Legion. By your sincere acceptance and
13 earnest performance of these duties, may the trust
14 your fellow Legionnaires have reposed in you be
15 justified.

16 I extend congratulations to the Legionnaires of
17 the Department of Ohio and wish you all well as you
18 assume the duties of your offices.

19 Congratulations, Commander. Now you face the
20 members of your Department.

21 My fellow Legionnaires, I present to you the
22 officers of The American Legion Department of Ohio.
23 I congratulate you on the selections you have made.

24 (Applause).

25 As I started to say before I was interrupted,

1 my fellow Legionnaires, I present to you the
2 officers of The American Legion Department of Ohio
3 and congratulate you on the selections you have
4 made.

5 You have chosen, and now it is your duty to aid
6 them in every way. Help them to keep The American
7 Legion faithful to its principles and ideals.

8 Thank you.

9 Commander Whatley, this concludes the
10 installation of officers.

11 (Applause).

12 COMMANDER WHATLEY: Now is the time for the
13 membership recruiter card drawing.

14 COMMANDER-ELECT OREN: Come to order.

15 COMMANDER WHATLEY: Now is the time for the
16 membership recruiter card drawing.

17 Every member that signed up a new member or
18 reinstated an expired member would be eligible for
19 this drawing, provided a verified recruiter card was
20 sent in by the Post Adjutant and verified by the
21 Department.

22 So at this time we will conduct a recruiter
23 drawing consisting of 15 winners.

24 Will Stan Oren please conduct the drawing.

25 . . . RECRUITER CARD DRAWING CONDUCTED . . .

1 (Applause) .

2 The American Legion Charities, Inc., mailed out
3 raffle tickets for cash prizes up to \$5,000.

4 I call on Immediate Past Department Commander
5 Jason Rue of The American Legion Department of Ohio
6 Charities, Inc., to conduct the prize drawing.

7 . . . CHARITIES, INC., PRIZE DRAWING CONDUCTED . . .

8 (Applause) .

9 PDC RUE: I'd like to thank everybody for their
10 participation. Have a safe trip home.

11 COMMANDER WHATLEY: The new Department
12 Executive Committee will meet in the Broadview
13 Heights Room immediately following the closing of
14 the convention and completion of official
15 photographs.

16 You must stop in the Bedford Room down the hall
17 for your official headshot before entering the DEC
18 room.

19 (Applause) .

20 Assistant Chaplain Robert White.

21 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: Good afternoon.

22 So, last night, I was approached by a District
23 Commander that he had a Post in his District that
24 put a pledge out, or a challenge out, to everybody
25 here at convention. They are putting up \$300 to

1 help a Post in Texas, and they would like to
2 challenge each of you to donate to help that Post.
3 It's one of the Posts in Texas that was hurt in the
4 recent floodings.

5 So I don't know if we want to pass the hat or
6 you just want to come and bring it to me. We can do
7 it real quick after convention.

8 But that is what the challenge is. They have
9 \$300 right now. Can we raise more?

10 FROM THE FLOOR: Pass the hat.

11 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: We'll have a
12 Sergeant-at-Arms use the bags at the door. Please
13 donate.

14 COMMANDER WHATLEY: Every District Chairman,
15 will you collect from your District and then bring
16 it up to JD.

17 Thank you.

18 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: One more announcement that
19 I was asked to make is that there are still a few
20 Districts that have not retrieved their cards. They
21 are out there if you would like to retrieve them.
22 Otherwise, we will mail them.

23 COMMANDER WHATLEY: Can we come back to order,
24 please.

25 DELEGATE KENNEDY: Commander, one moment,

1 please.

2 If there's any District Commanders here that
3 have SAL Units, check with Sherry. We have still
4 quite a few cards down there for the SAL to pick up
5 too. We'd appreciate it.

6 Thank you.

7 COMMANDER WHATLEY: We will give you an amount
8 of money that has just been raised. They are now
9 counting it.

10 But we will proceed with the business of the
11 day.

12 Chaplain White.

13 ASST CHAPLAIN WHITE: Gracious and eternal God,
14 as we draw this convention to a close, we pause with
15 gratitude for the leaders who have served this
16 Department with honor, transparency, and unwavering
17 commitment. Their actions have reflected the
18 enduring values of The American Legion: Service,
19 justice, loyalty, and respect.

20 We thank You for the strength You have given
21 them to lead with integrity for the clarity You have
22 granted the moments of challenge and the unity that
23 they have nurtured among us.

24 Now, as the torch is passed and a new path
25 begins, we ask for Your love to surround each person

1 present. May Your divine guidance illuminate every
2 step of their journey. Bless them abundantly with
3 knowledge, wisdom, and understanding. And in all
4 that getting, may they obtain understanding.

5 Let Your grace be our constant companion. May
6 we not only receive it, but also extend it in every
7 hall we enter, in every life we touch.

8 In Your holy and powerful name we commit this
9 community, its leaders, and its mission. Amen.

10 FROM THE ASSEMBLY: Amen.

11 COMMANDER WHATLEY: With the colors of our
12 nation in place, hand salute. Two.

13 . . . SALUTE TO COLORS BY ASSEMBLY . . .

14 I now declare this 106th Annual Convention of
15 The American Legion Department of Ohio officially
16 closed.

17 (Applause).

18 (PROCEEDINGS CONCLUDED)

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11TH DISTRICT CMDR STAN: [1] 117/24 13TH DISTRICT CMDR WRIGHT: [4] 36/21 96/14 107/10 115/17 14TH DISTRICT 1VC LIFE: [2] 124/23 124/25 1ST DISTRICT 1VC BOYERS: [1] 115/20 1VC OREN: [4] 25/4 51/24 70/20 79/18 1VC-ELECT COX, JR.: [3] 127/19 128/2 128/15 2VC CANDIDATE COX: [1] 26/10 2VC COX, JR.: [5] 25/16 25/18 63/20 80/7 80/9 2VC-ELECT LEWIS: [1] 133/15 3RD DISTRICT CMDR EMMONS: [5]	8/19 71/25 72/16 72/18 74/23 6TH DISTRICT 1VC LITTLE: [3] 70/2 72/24 78/9 6TH DISTRICT CMDR MILLER: [2] 8/22 96/16 8TH DISTRICT 1VC CONN: [1] 96/24 ADJUTANT ROBINSON: [34] 24/24 25/12 26/15 27/13 28/25 29/3 29/23 32/13 34/17 34/20 35/15 47/11 52/1 58/12 73/16 73/18 73/21 74/13 74/19 74/22 89/2 89/23 94/6 97/14 98/21 105/4 108/2 108/4 115/6 119/17 127/9 146/21 147/11 147/18 ALTERNATE NEC SCHMITT: [6] 77/12 93/6 141/17 141/19 141/22 143/22 ASST CHAPLAIN WHITE: [1]	148/13 BALC DEAN LaVOY: [3] 101/6 101/8 102/1 CANDIDATE LaVOY: [1] 27/16 CHAIRMAN BAHER: [5] 35/23 36/1 36/3 106/5 106/8 CHAIRMAN BISHOP: [1] 59/24 CHAIRMAN DICKEY: [1] 67/8 CHAIRMAN KLOSTERMEIER : [3] 75/17 77/23 77/25 CHAIRMAN SCHUTZ: [1] 69/1 CHAPLAIN DISTEL: [4] 6/8 6/11 84/11 84/13 CMTE MEMBER BOWERS: [1] 71/12 COMMANDER RUE: [1] 34/8 COMMANDER WHATLEY: [149] 5/3 5/18 5/25 7/9
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<p>FROM THE ASSEMBLY:... [36] 101/24 106/7 107/15 107/17 107/20 107/23 108/3 115/25 116/2 116/5 116/8 118/21 118/24 119/2 119/23 120/1 123/8 124/24 126/21 126/24 127/5 127/7 128/1 128/14 132/18 132/21 132/24 133/5 139/3 139/6 139/9 139/14 139/17 141/18 141/21 149/10 FROM THE FLOOR: [6] 58/11 84/8 88/15 89/21 99/25 147/10 HISTORIAN BEYER: [3] 85/13 87/13 88/17 JUDGE ADVOCATE BROWN: [1] 88/24 LEGIONNAIRE LONG: [1] 131/21 LEGIONNAIRE NORRIS: [2]</p>	<p>77/14 77/24 LEGIONNAIRE SOISSON-CALHOUN: [3] 73/8 73/20 73/23 MAJOR GENERAL HARRIS: [1] 38/13 MR. ALEXANDER: [1] 33/18 MR. ATTIA: [4] 48/10 49/7 49/12 49/16 MR. TRAKAS: [3] 10/7 10/13 15/24 MS. REBON: [1] 5/19 NEC CHAPMAN: [3] 68/5 90/15 90/17 PARLIAMENTARIAN MINADEO: [4] 22/23 119/11 119/13 119/18 PDC FRIEND: [2] 123/6 123/9 PDC JEAN WILSON: [1] 128/21 PDC RUE: [6]</p>	<p>74/1 74/7 74/16 74/21 116/22 146/9 PRESIDENT SMERK: [2] 16/18 17/21 SAL NTL VICE CMDR RAY: [1] 19/17 TREASURER LEWIS: [2] 26/19 81/8 TREASURER-ELECT LaVOY: [1] 139/25</p> <hr/> <p>\$</p> <hr/> <p>\$10,000 [3] 62/8 62/10 62/14 \$10,378.91 [1] 63/4 \$100 [1] 55/17 \$100,000 [1] 28/6 \$12,000 [2] 61/11 62/2 \$15,000 [1] 62/6 \$20,000 [3] 60/6 61/6 62/18 \$200 [2] 52/7 53/2 \$2500 [1] 70/23 \$269,230.94 [1] 58/25 \$300 [2] 146/25 147/9 \$5,000 [12] 61/13</p>
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