



The American Legion Post143 Combined Regular Monthly Membership Meeting Thursday, January 25, 2017

Commander Merriss called the combined meeting to order at 6:00PM. All stood for a salute to the Colors. The meeting was declared regularly convened.

WELCOME VISITORS & GUESTS: by Commander Merriss:

- **Department/5TH district guests:** Dept JV Eddie Asberry; 5th Dist Cmdr Harold Watkins
- **Guests:** Matt Nelson
- **Prospective New Members:** None
- **Prospective Transferee's:** None

COMMANDERS COMMENTS:

- **Birthdays:** Carlos Fuller's Wife, Ruth, will have a surprise Birthday Party Feb 17th, 2---4 PM at the Pleasant Ridge Baptist Church. All are welcome
- **Anniversaries:** None

GENERAL BUSINESS:

- AUXILIARY PRESIDENT:** By Jeanette Henson Comments/announcements
- The AUX will assist SAL with the Irish Pot-Luck Dinner scheduled for March 8th at 6PM in the post's main meeting hall. All are welcome
- VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR:** By Jeanette Henson
- More people throughout the community are expressing an interest in becoming a volunteer at Trinka Davis. However, Management is having problems scheduling a Training Session for the new volunteers
- Only 10 volunteers are still actively volunteering at the Trinka Davis VA clinic

SICK CALL/SURGERY: By the Commander

- Ronald Ray, Debra Robinson, Edna Scott, Mary Nelson, and Jenifer Merriss

TAPS: By the Commander (Request a moment of Silent prayer for our fallen comrades Toll Bell))

- Frank Scott, USMA, WWII and Camp CH Gilley, USMC, Korea

BLESSING FOR THE SICK; PASSING; AND THE MEAL: by Chaplain Billy Bryant

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE MEAL: By the Commander

- a. A donation of \$5 per meal please
- b. **Guests and** those members requiring extra time & the Trinka Davis Veterans will be first in line.
- c. The **FAR LEFT (facing podium)** room tables will follow. (Request that they remain after meeting to help clean up)
- d. Form a food line in the hall way, please.
- e. **Please remember to uncover while eating.**
- f. Any food remaining will be donated to those in need.

BEGIN REGULAR MEMBERSHIP MEETING

The regular Post meeting started at 7:05PM with three raps of the gavel for all to rise, salute the flag and recite the Pledge of Allegiance. Then all attendees uncovered while Chaplain Billy Bryant offered a prayer. The POW/MIA Empty Chair was honored by the Sergeant at Arms, Joe Morgan. While standing, Sr. Vice Steve Fuller led the assembly in reciting the Preamble to the Legion Constitution. Commander Merriss rapped the gavel one more time and declared Post 143 Department of Georgia, regular meeting officially convened.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

- A roll call was taken and it was determined that enough members in good standing were present to declare a quorum.
- Membership & Guest attendance rosters are attached to the minutes of this meeting.
- There were no additional guests or Dept/Dist Officers to be recognized.

COMMANDERS REPORT: by the Commander Merriss

- If you haven't paid your 2018 annual dues, please do so in person or on-line. The cost is still \$30.00
- Post Vacancies: Adjutant, Service Officer, Service Committee Chair, Historian and Public Affairs Chair.2017
- Irish Potluck Dinner hosted by SAL & AUX is scheduled for March 8th at 6pm in the main post meeting hall.
- The Post will Schedule a Revitalization Day on Saturday, November 4th between 9:00am and 12 Noon at the Post. Contact the commander if you can volunteer. (Will be calling and asking Post 400 folks to consider transferring to post 143)
- Now is the time to visit schools and identify students that will be attending Boys State from 27 May thru 2 June 2018
- Need names of those that will be attending the Department's Spring Conference scheduled for Mar 23-17, Duluth, GA

ADJUTANT REPORT: Vacant (by Cmdr Merriss)

Correspondence: None

Approve Minutes: A motion was made, seconded and approved by voice vote by members in good standing to accept the November 16, 2017 Combined Membership EC minutes and December 12, 2018 EC minutes as written

APPROVE NEW MEMBERS AND TRANSFERS: (by Steve Fuller)

A motion was made, seconded and approved by voice vote by members in good standing to accept the following into the Post:

- **New Members:** Cecil Cook, USMC; Anthony Hardy, US Army;
- **Transfer Members:** Thomas McDuffie, USMC

COMMITTEE CHAIR REPORTS

MEMBERSHIP: by Sr. Vice Steve Fuller

74.3% of post members have renewed to date

- All membership renewal cards to date have been mailed out to members
- 21 members had delinquent letters mailed to them; 13 members have been contacted via phone, email or phone message
- 2 home visits were conducted
- Membership committee will continue to concentrate on 2016 members who will drop off the National rolls in June 2018
- The post currently has 182 paid members; 63 members have not paid dues; 30 members have not paid their dues for the past two years. The biggest problem is with POL members, because the Post records appear to lag National's figures. 5th District Commander Harold Watkins said it is taking 45 days to process and print out the results.
- Eight of our fellow comrades that have passed during the past 12 months. Please remember them and their families.
- Jerry Culver will speak at the February Regular Membership meeting. His father was killed at the Battle of the Bulge
- Only 12% of veterans belong to the American Legion out of 18 million. National saw its membership shrink from 2.3m to 1.9m. The Vietnam and Gulf War veterans now make up 66% of all veterans nationally.
- Commander Merriss stated that the post has 555 veterans on the rolls. 16 are WWII veterans, 38 are Gulf War veterans, and the rest are Korea & Vietnam era veterans. He continued to say that the post needs to start recruiting more Gulf War veterans because they are our future.

FINANCE OFFICER/FINANCE COMMITTEE CHAIR: by Chuck Feaselman:

November Finance Report:

General Funds as of 01 Nov, 2017 was: \$30754.67
Total Expenses were: \$ 1001.92
General Funds as of 31 Nov. 2017 was: \$ 31615.78
2nd Qtr Investment: \$169,877.66 (+15376.61)
Honor Guard Fund \$ 3000.00
Service Officer Fund \$ 745.00

December Finance Report:

General Funds as of 1 Dec 2017 was: \$31615.78
Total Expenses were: 863.72
General Funds as of 31 Dec 2017 was: \$30752.06
2nd Qtr Investment: Same as Nov
Honor Guard Fund (\$3000+\$2704 Raffle) = \$5704.00
Service Officer Fund \$ 745.00

*Commander accepts budget statement as presented and is to be filed with the October 19, 2017 Regular Membership Minutes.

JR. VICE / AMERICANISM CHAIR: by Tim Bass

Sub Committees:

9-11/1st Responder Ceremony at CCVMP: by Tim Bass

Don Levans and John Bassett will assist in the planning of the 2018 Sept 9-11/1st Responder event at CCVMP

Junior Shooting Sport: by Frank Joswick

CHS Coach Mike Lewis and his 4 member Precision Air Rifle team will shoot the competition targets Jan 26th
Will Return Targets to National for scoring by January 29th to determine if the team will compete in the qualifying round.

Boys State: by Steve Fuller

Americanism Chair Tim Bass will be briefed concerning the recruitment of high school students for the 2018 Boys State program.

CHILDREN AND YOUTH COMMITTEE: by Jr Vice Bob Hilliard

Toys-for-Tots:

Ronnie Pate gave our Toys for Tots check to Lori. Dena and I helped box up toys (there were plenty). Carrollton High School also had cadets helping.

Boy Scouts:

Troop 179 will hold its last Eagle Scout Ceremony for Eli Nunez at the Carrollton Presbyterian Church Jan 27th @ 3pm. (Cmdr Ted Merriss @ Bob Hilliard will present certificates)

Legion Scholarship Program:

Most Advanced Learning High School students graduate in December. Does anyone have a grandchild of a veteran that is interested in applying for the Legion's Scholarship this June Let me know.

Randy Purser's granddaughter received the Legion Scholarship last year.

Special Olympics:

Need to start thinking about volunteers for the Special Olympics, usually it is held in March but it may be held in April this year

HONOR GUARD: by Dale Robinson

The Honor Guard performed 5 Military Honors for deceased veterans since the last meeting and 2 more is scheduled for Jan 27th
The Color Guard participated in the MLK Day Parade on January 15, 2017 and is scheduled again on Feb 8th for the Valentine's Ball.

Commander Merriss recognized Past Post Chaplain, Larry Boswell for his efforts in working with local funeral homes and keeping the Honor Guard Team Leaders assigned and informed in a timely manner. He also arranged for the Martin & Hightower Funeral Home to donate a \$550 Ceremonial Bugle to the Post.

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE/RAFFLE TICKET SALES: by Jr Vice Joe Harrod

Final Report: As of 1/25/2018

Tickets sold:	<u>AR-15</u>	<u>M-1</u>
	326	500
Unsold tickets:	174	0

Collected \$3,260 from ticket sales for the AR-15 (minus \$556) for the cost of the rifle leaves a net gain of: \$ 2,704

Sold all tickets for the M-1 for a total of: \$ 5,000

Total Net Gain \$ 7,704

- The Honor Guard will receive \$2,704 from the sale of the AR-15
- Winner of the AR-15: Doug Robbins of Post 145, Douglasville
- Winner of the M-1: Michael Hemrock of Post 70, Villa Rica

SERVICE OFFICER: by Angie Hale-Smith

Angie Hale-Smith submitted her resignation letter effective immediately, although she will continue to be a member of the post. So now I am looking for someone to fill this position.

PUBLIC RELATIONS COMMITTEE CHAIR: **Vacant**

Sub Committees:

Website: by Frank Joswick

All Post meeting minutes, Newsletter and Event Calendar are now on the post website: www.gapost143.org

Newsletter: by Frank Joswick

The next post newsletter is scheduled to will be mailed out during the month of April

JUDGE ADVOCATE: by Richard Guynn

Members of the Special Governance Committee provided the EC members with handouts outlining the recommended changes to the Constitution, its Bylaws and the Standard Operating Procedures. One final meeting with the EXEC Committee will take place at the next EC meeting on Feb13, 2018 before bringing the recommended changes before the general membership at a subsequent meeting.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: by Joe Morgan

Joe Morgan welcomed the new members and asked them to see him after the meeting to order their new name tags. Commander Merriss Asked Joe to set up a welcome package and have a volunteer by the entry door to welcome visitors and guests to the Post.

SONS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION: by Commander George Wheelless

A copy of the previous meeting minutes and budget report was submitted to the Post 143 Commander for filing. SAL will host an Irish Pot-Luck Dinner with live entertainment on March 8th at 6:00pm in the post's main meeting hall.

WERE THERE ANY COMMITTEE REPORTS MISSED

- None

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

- None

NEW BUSINESS:

- None

DATES TO REMEMBER:

- Jan 26____CHS Riflery Team to shoot 1st round of National Air Rifle Championship competition targets
- Jan 27____Troop 179 Eagle Scout Ceremony for Eli Nunez at the Carrollton Presbyterian Church @ 3pm
- Feb 1-3____5th Dist Revitalization workshop at Post 294, Powder Springs (Hours 10am-4pm except Sat, 10am – 2pm)
- Feb 8____Valentine Ball at 10am, Carrollton City Rec. Center (Color Guard will participate)
- Mar 8____Irsh Pot-Luck Dinner with live Entertainment starting at 6:00PM
- Feb 13____Next EC meeting @ 5pm
- Feb 15____Next GM meeting @ 6pm
- Feb 17____5th District meeting, Post 216, Austell, GA. 8am registration and the meeting starts at 9am (Out by lunch)
- Mar 23-27__Department Spring Conference and Georgia American Legion College, Duluth, GA

“IS THERE ANY FURTHER BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THIS MEETING REQUIRING A VOTE?”

- No further business brought forward.

BUSINESS FOR GOOD OF THE LEGION: (MEMBERSHIP SHALL BE PERMITTED TO MAKE ANY SUGGESTIONS OF ANY KIND, CHARACTER OF DESCRIPTION, SAVE OF POLICAL OR RELIGION NOR WILL ANY MOTIONS BE MADE)

Legionnaires:

- None

5th District:

Cmdr Harold Watkins began by stating that the Group Revitalization meeting is scheduled for February 1 through 3, 2018. A representative from each post is requested for each day. National will be coming and will provide lists of names for each post to contact. He said that Posts within Carroll County have a lot of veterans at are not members of the any post, and that we need to actively start recruiting them.

He stated that if you plan to become an Officer of the post or are a new Officer, you need to attend one the Departments training sessions during the upcoming March 22-24 the Spring Conference in Duluth, GA. The Officers manual is ok for starters but the training sessions provide updated material that the Training Manuals do not contain.

He also mentioned that the 5th District meeting is scheduled for February 17th at Post 216, Austell, GA. Again Post officers should attend. (Will be out before lunch).

Membership is also a concern. 5th District is 11th out of twelve in membership renewal. All need to work on getting members to pay their dues.

Commander Watkins stated that another concern he had was the resignation of the Service officer. It came to the attention of the Department Commander that there was a problem at post 143 that centered on the Service Officer. The Post is already short an Adjutant and now the Service Officer just resigned. We must do a better job in training our new officers and members and not just relying on the Officer's Manual. Women in particular, it appears, are not being recruited to serve as Offers or given the necessary training to accomplish their assigned duties. All of us must do a better job in this area.

He went on to remind us that if you go to any political rally, don't wear your cover; it is against the Legion's Constitution & Bylaws. It's ok to wear other caps, but not the official legion cover.

He ended by Thanking the Commander and its members.

Department:

Dept. Junior Vice, Eddie Asberry, began by stating that it had been a long time since he last visited the post because of his other assignments within the Department. He went on to say he missed all at the Post and enjoyed the meal as always.

He then spoke about membership. This word can bring anger or happiness and pride he said, depending on what your membership percentage rate is. The Legion is at its lowest membership rate ever, and so is 5ht District. Post 143 was always in the top 3, but has fallen as well. So get all your members to renew now. Come February 1, if dues are not paid, members are to be suspended with loss of all post privileges. Last year the Department had a 42,000 membership rate and came in 35th place. He said we can and must do better.

National Commander Cohan's motto is "Family First"; our family is Legionnaires, the SAL & AUX. And post 143 has a great post family that actively supports the Legion's four pillars and its programs.

He went on to say that as Dept. Junior Vice, he will be running for Senior Vice Commander next year and wants our support. He has been a commander at the Post and District levels; Has Chaired the National Emergency Fund at the Department level and is part of the National Legislative committee. He went on to say it's not about him though, but us, working together. He also said that we need to start recruiting the Gulf War veterans so that they may become our future Officers and Post, District, and Department Commanders some day. He once again asked that we go out and get our members to renew their dues, and help find members to fill our vacant positions.

He closed by thanking the commander and the Post family, and wishing all a good night.

1. CLOSING CEREMONY

- There was no further business brought forth at this meeting.
- **THREE RAPS OF THE GAVEL**, ALL RISE-UNCOVER
- (membership stood in silence and uncovered while placing their right hand over their heart)
- *Chaplain Billy Bryant lead us in the closing prayer*

COMMANDERS CHARGE

“TILL WE MEET AGAIN LET US REMEMBER THAT OUR OBLIGATION TO OUR COUNTRY CAN BE FULFILLED ONLY BY THE FAITHFUL PERFORMANCE OF ALL DUTIES OF CITIZENSHIP. LET SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY, STATE AND NATION BE EVER A MAIN OBJECTIVE OF THE AMERICAN LEGION AND ITS MEMBERS. LET US BE EVER WATCHFUL OF THE HONOR OF OUR COUNTRY, OUR ORGANIZATION AND OURSELVES, THAT NOTHING SHALL SWERVE US FROM THE PATH OF JUSTICE, FREEDOM AND DEMOCRACY.”

The Commander rapped the gavel three times for all to raise and uncover for the closing prayer by Chaplain Billy Bryant. All recovered and performed a Hand Salute to the flag. The January 25, 2018 Regular Membership Meeting of Post 143, Dept. of GA adjourned at 8:40PM with one gavel rap.

Approval Date: _____

Commander Ted Merriss

Recorder Frank Joswick (Adjutant Position Un-Filled)