



American Legion Post 543
Saint James, NC 28461

SUBJECT: General Membership Meeting Minutes

DATE: Wednesday November 20, 2019, 7:00pm

LOCATION: St. James Community Center, Saint James, NC, 28461

1) Call to Order and Advance the Colors (Opening Ceremony): (Freeman)

- Per Agenda previously provided, the meeting was called to order at 7pm in the Town of St. James Community Center. (See Attachment #1)
- Colors were posted
- Our Post Chaplain offered the opening prayer
- The POW/MIA Empty Chair was formally recognized
- Pledge of Allegiance
- The Preamble to American Legion Constitution was recited by all

2) Roll Call of Officers: (Freeman)

- Officers Present:
 - Tom Bednarczyk, Chaplain
 - Dan Bennett, Deputy Vice Commander Active Duty Support
 - Chris Romig, Deputy Adjutant
 - George Freeman, Commander
 - Doc Liberty, Judge Advocate
 - Steve Muir, Service Officer
 - Pom Pomeroy, Sergeant-at-Arms
 - Rick Sessa, Membership
 - Chuck Blackburn, Deputy Vice Commander Americanism (Excused)
 - John Muuss, Public Relations Officer
 - Doug Pratt, Finance Officer
- Officers Not Present:
 - Bill Morgan, 1st Vice Commander Resource Development
 - Tom Balbert, Historian

3) Approval of Minutes: (Freeman)

- Minutes of the October 23, 2019 General Membership Meeting were approved without alteration.

4) Election of Adjutant: (Freeman)

- Chris Romig was elected Adjutant by Unanimous Consent of the members.

5) Welcoming Guests & Sick Call: (Freeman)

- Four veterans attending for the first time were invited to stand and introduce themselves and share their Branch of Service.
- Paul Crehan was reported to be back on sick call.
- The following guests and financial awards were recognized:
 - Betty Pratt, Jean Sessa, Barb Blackburn, Judy Freeman, and Lesley Bennet (aka Post 543 Chili Chicks) were recognized for winning the Civitan's annual chili cookoff. In the spirit of supporting others, the winning team opted to not accept the \$1,000 first prize, directing that it be retained by the Civitans to support their philanthropic efforts for exceptional children in Brunswick County.
 - Doug Pratt, Jr., President of the Brunswick County Civitan Organization thanked the Post ladies and reported proceeds would be used to support the over 100 exceptional children in Brunswick County classrooms by providing iPads to assist their learning. Civitans have provided over 140 iPads to exceptional children in the last 10 years.
 - Chuck Blackburn thanked the Post on behalf of Kelley Whitehurst, a nursing student with a 4.0 GPA, who was the recipient of the 2019 Colin Furr State of North Carolina Memorial \$1000 Scholarship.
 - Doug Koontz, Computers for Kids Coordinator, gave a brief presentation on the work his organization does to collect and refurbish used computers that are then donated to local schoolchildren. The Post presented Computers with Kids with a check for \$400 to support their efforts.
 - Charles Jackson, Director of Operations and Outreach for the Brunswick County Family Assistance Office was presented with a \$300 check to support their Angel Tree program. The program provides assistance at Christmas to local active duty service members, veterans, and their families.

6) Membership Report: (Sessa)

- To date 91% of the membership has renewed their membership goal for 2019-2020; 186 renewals of 204.

7) Finance Report: (Pratt)

- The monthly finance report showed the Post has received 72% of the budget projections up to this point. Budgeted expenditures totaled 24% and are on track for the year.
- The Finance Report was approved without alteration.

8) Service Officer Report: (Muir)

- Steve reported the next regional VEAC will take place April 16-18, 2020 at South Brunswick High School. The National Commander will be invited. The NC Veterans Affairs office will provide four vans to transport veterans to the VEAC and the NC DMV has been requested to be on site to issue REAL ID compliant drivers licenses.

9) Guest Speaker: Terry Snyder, Founder & Director, Operation North State

- Operation North State (ONS) is a 501c3 (non-profit), all volunteer, organization which currently offers eighteen "unique" military support services programs for North Carolina's deployed troops and veterans-in-need.

- In 2019, ONS will feature its 10th Annual “NCCARES” Christmas Box Project - utilizing North Carolina’s People, Places, Products and Pride to send 1,500 NCCARES Christmas Boxes to North Carolina deployed troops.
- ONS also conducts 8 “Top Shelf Fishin’ Festivals” throughout the state for Wounded Warriors and Disabled Vets from North Carolina and neighboring South Carolina and Virginia.
- The Post presented ONS with a check for \$1,000 to support their programs.

10) Recent and Coming Events and Commander’s Report

- The Commander reviewed the many activities the Post had sponsored and participated in and thanked all for their tremendous support and teamwork.
- Operation North State Christmas Boxes is ongoing. Post is looking for names of individuals eligible to receive boxes.
- “Charlie Brown” Holiday Tree – your military memorabilia is needed!
- Thanksgiving: 110 active duty members and their families will be hosted by St. James residents for dinner on thanksgiving day.
- Army-Navy Football game watch party on December 14, 2019 at 2:30 pm at Bella Cucina Restaurant in Southport.
- Post level oratorical competition, January 4, 2020 at the Community Center.
- District level oratorical competition, January 18, 2020 at the Community Center.
- Post General Membership Meeting, January 22, 2020, 7:00PM.

11) Closing Remarks, Ceremony & Adjournment (Freeman)

- George thanked everyone for their continued support and efforts.
- Meeting was adjourned at 8:20 pm.

CHRIS ROMIG
Adjutant

GEORGE R. FREEMAN
Commander



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 - Posting of Colors
 - Post Chaplain opening prayer
 - POW/MIA Empty Chair recognition
 - Pledge of Allegiance
 - Preamble to American Legion Constitution reading
2. Welcome to Guests & Sick Call
3. Roll Call of Officers
4. Approval of Minutes of October 23, 2019
5. Election of Adjutant
6. Recognition and Presentations:
 - a. Civitan Organization
 - b. Colin Furr State of NC Scholarship
 - c. Computers For Kids
 - d. Brunswick Family Assistance Angel Tree
7. Membership Report: Rick Sessa, 2nd Vice Commander Membership
8. Finance Report: Doug Pratt, Finance Officer
9. Service Officer Report: Steve Muir, Service Officer
10. Guest Speaker: Terry Snyder, Operation North State
11. Coming Events
12. Commander's and Committee Reports
13. Closing Prayer
14. Closing Ceremony: George Freeman, Post Commander
11. Adjournment and Fellowship

Next General Membership Meeting: January 22, 2020

ATCH #1