

**VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS OF THE UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF FLORIDA**

**COUNCIL OF ADMINISTRATION MEETING – MID WINTER CONFERENCE
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 2018**

WYNDHAM LAKE BUENA VISTA RESORT, LAKE BUENA VISTA, FLORIDA

The Council of Administration met at the Wyndham Lake Buena Vista Resort, 1850 Hotel Plaza Blvd., Lake Buena Vista, Florida, Friday, February 2, 2018 with State Commander Ken Corr opening the meeting according to the Ritual, including the Prayer led by State Chaplain Harry Seiler followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

ROLL CALL OF OFFICERS by State Adjutant/Quartermaster Gene Perrino, all present or accounted for.

STATE COMMANDER KEN CORR recognized all Past State Commanders from Florida and out of state, Past Commanders-in-Chief, State Commander from West Virginia Todd Kingsbury, Jr. Vice C-I-C selectee Hal Roesch and National Representative Jr. Vice Commander-in-Chief “Doc” Schmitz.

NATIONAL COUNCIL MEMBER DAN DUFFY stated most of his comments will be presented on Saturday in front of the general membership. Dan touched briefly on the Touch 7 Crisis Line. Florida is 86% complete with the Touch 7 phone system. The Touch 7 Crisis Center was featured in the VFW Magazine.

NATIONAL REPRESENTATIVE JR. VICE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF “DOC” SCHMITZ’S REMARKS:

Doc presented everyone in the room with a lapel pin. Doc spoke briefly about the Shriner Clowns and the similarity with the Military Order of the Cootie (MOC) and their mission in the VA Hospitals. The MOC represent the Veterans of Foreign Wars bringing smiles to the faces of the hospitalized veterans. Doc spoke briefly on future qualifications to join the VFW. Questions were asked and some discussions took place. Jr. Vice C-I-C Schmitz brought greetings from Commander-in-Chief Keith Harman.

State Commander Ken Corr spoke about the differences between the Vietnam War, Iraq War and the current war in Afghanistan in regards to the medical technology and capabilities. The survivability is so much greater and that’s why so many more are coming home as amputee’s due to the progress we have made instead of not coming home at all. The training for medics in the military today compared to years ago is mind boggling.

BUDGET & FINANCE REPORT BY CHAIRMAN DAN DUFFY

Dan recognized all the members of the Budget and Finance Committee.

We, the members of the Budget and Finance Committee of the Department of Florida, Veterans of Foreign Wars, do hereby certify that we have this February 2, 2018 examined all books and records of the State Quartermaster and find them to be in order.

Reconciled bank balances as of December 31, 2017 have been verified by bank certification as follows:

ASSETS

Operating Account	\$	270,489.50
Money Market Account		243,391.86
Petty Cash		100.00
Dues Reserve (Savings)		110,247.02
DR, Youth, BWC		
Temp and Board Restricted – Disaster Relief		107,791.28
Temp and Board Restricted – Youth Fund		55,774.76
Temp and Board Restricted – BWC		<u>47,212.95</u>
Total DR, Youth Fund, BWC		210,778.99
Fixed Assets		120,198.25
Retirement Home		2,314,509.89
Other Assets-Prepaid Expenses		2,110.04
Investments		<u>4,977,896.98</u>
TOTAL ASSETS	\$	<u><u>8,249,722.53</u></u>

LIABILITIES AND EQUITY

Current Liabilities		30,927.46
Retirement Home M/P – Regions		379,722.13
Fund Balance		7,146,901.18
Net Income		<u>692,761.76</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	\$	<u><u>8,249,722.53</u></u>

Motion made by Dan Duffy to accept the Budget and Finance report as read, seconded by State Inspector Don Bult, motion passed.

STATE INSPECTOR DON BULT spoke briefly to the District Commanders in regards to their posts with outstanding December quarterly audits. Twenty-five (25) posts audits are considered late as of this meeting. District Commanders need to get in touch with those posts and find out why and assist them. As of January 31, 2018 twenty-two (22) posts have not submitted their 990's which is mandated by the IRS.

State Commander Corr stated every post commander and quartermaster knows the audits and 990s are due and doesn't understand why department has to continually send out reminders, this should not be the case.

Council of Administration Meeting Mins.

MEMBERSHIP DIRECTOR GLEN TILLEY stated the department is at 89% in membership. Florida is a large department so it does take a little longer. Eleven (11) posts are at 100% who received 40 or 50 points toward All State; fourteen (14) posts have met the 5% requirement of new and reinstated members for National All American. Glen spoke with the membership department at national and the All American program will be going away. The post must keep in mind to receive All State and All American the other criteria must be met and this information is in the book. The information packet Glen sends out to the District Commanders is to be forwarded to each post in their districts. Glen reminded everyone of the membership contest. Glen also spoke about the unpaid officer's dues and the importance of the District Commanders reminding those post officers to renew their memberships or they will be removed from office by National. More items will be brought forward at the general session on Saturday. Glen also stated he would go over the Smile Amazon program in which ½% of the sales will be sent to the National Home.

OLD BUSINESS: State Adjutant/Quartermaster gave an update from the Fall Conference in which \$7,500 was returned to national from the \$25,000 disaster relief fund given to Florida and the \$8,000 voted on to assist other places impacted by the hurricanes.

Gene stated 1750 people bought into the PCI Book (Florida VFW History Book) and it will be coming out shortly once finalized. From the sale of the book the department will receive \$17,500 plus an additional \$2,500 for signing up to do the book before the deadline. Ninety (90) days after the book is sent out the Department will receive a check for \$20,050.00 from PCI. Gene thanked everyone for participating in the book.

NEW BUSINESS: Due to the passing of State Judge Advocate Robert Shepherd candidates for the position was announced. Motion made by State Adjutant/Quartermaster Gene Perrino to have a ballot vote, motion seconded by State Sr. Vice Commander Danny Anderson, motion passed. A tally committee was selected to count the ballots.

During the counting of the ballots State Commander Ken Corr announced a Commanders Call meeting will follow the Council of Administration meeting. Ken also thanked everyone for their attendance at Robert Shepherds funeral, he is sure Stella Shepherd & family would say thank you.

Past Dept. Commander/National Council member Dan Duffy was duly elected. Motion made by Immediate Past Dept. Commander Alan Ayoubee to destroy the ballots, motion seconded by State Chaplain Harry Seiler, motion passed. National Jr. Vice Commander-in-Chief Doc Schmitz installed Dan Duffy as the State Judge Advocate.

District 10 Commander Carl Robison made a motion for the Department of Florida endorse Past Dept. Commander Amber Putnam for the office of Jr. Vice Commander-in-Chief for the 2022-2023 term, seconded by District 6 Commander Robert Hernandez. Some discussion took place and a closed ballot vote took place, motion to endorse Amber Putnam passed.

Immediate Past Dept. Commander Alan Ayoubee made a motion to destroy the ballots, seconded by District 18 Commander Kurt Schuh, motion passed.

State Commander Corr informed the membership the roof at the Veterans Village is leaking and the need for a new roof is necessary. A discussion concerning a new roof is in the process along with the contact with the insurance company.

STATE ADJUTANT/QUARTERMASTER GENE PERRINO stated when a new officer is elected a new election report via the national website must be completed. Contents in the council folders, the IRS Form 8822-B, 990's and Post Insurance Issues were reviewed. Gene announced the remainder of events for Saturday to include the Youth Achievement Banquet being held on Saturday night. Comments from the Council were taken at this time.

There being no further business meeting was closed.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 2018
MID-WINTER CONFERENCE – GENERAL SESSION

Opening ceremonies were held to include the Prayer and Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

ROLL CALL OF OFFICERS by State Adjutant/Quartermaster Gene Perrino with all present of accounted for.

STATE COMMANDER KEN CORR recognized all Past State Commanders present and Past Commander-in-Chiefs present. Commander Corr recognized State Commander from West Virginia Todd Kingsbury and Jr. Vice C-I-C selectee Hal Roesch.

NATIONAL COUNCIL MEMBER DAN DUFFY recapped what he presented to the council on Friday, February 2, 2018 but in greater detail. Dan briefed the membership on the Press 7 program. Dan read the email he sent to Bob Wallace at the Washington Office concerning the Press 7 Program Crisis Line. Since 2007 approximately 530,000 calls have been made to the crisis line.

NATIONAL REPRESENTATIVE JR. VICE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF William "Doc" Schmitz briefed the membership on his time in the VFW up to his election of Jr. Vice Commander-in-Chief. He also spoke about the importance of leadership.

MILITARY ORDER OF THE COOTIE GRAND COMMANDER TOM BROWNE spoke about the importance of the MOC. The prime directive of the MOC is to have fun and raise thousands of dollars for local post programs, thousands of dollars for the National Home and millions of hours at VA facilities in the world. The Military Order of the Cootie is the honor degree of the Veterans of Foreign Wars bringing smiles to those in beds of white.

GUEST SPEAKER Alex Russo from Walgreens discussed the importance of the flu shots. Alex informed the membership of all the vaccination shots available at Walgreens. She spoke in depth about the flu and the deaths that are occurring this year with many children passing away from it as well as others.

Guest Speaker Alex Russo Continued:

The flu is very serious and contagious disease with 226, 000 people being hospitalized and approximately 3,000 to 49,000 dying from complications of the flu. Many children have passed away from the flu this year alone. Symptoms of the flu are high fever, chills, fatigue, sore throat, head ache, dry cough which can last for weeks, but can be treated. Alex stated the flu shot does not give you the flu and flu shots were made available at the conference.

GUEST SPEAKER National website coordinators Rob Tuck and David Strange, designers of the website solution program. National will give a grant to VFW Post wanting to be connected to the Department website. To apply go to National website and apply for the grant. It will be hosted for free for the first year, then the post will pay \$360.00 per year for hosting of the website. They showed how the website can be used to solicit new members, raise funds for the post and many other opportunities.

Every week David Strange has a 2 hour training video available on line for anyone who wishes to participate. Pictorials are also available. They will continue to keep it growing and any suggestions are being looked at and presented to National.

David Strange informed the membership how the website will help recruit membership and raise funds by getting sponsorships from local businesses. All the websites are linked and once something is posted on the National website it will automatically download to the Department website and then to districts and/or posts if they have the website under the department. The hosting of the website cost \$360.00 a year.

State Commander Corr stated there is a wealth of knowledge at National; do not hesitate to contact them with questions or concerns in reference to the social media issues.

ADJUTANT/QUARTERMASTER GENE PERRINO reviewed the budget that was presented to the Council on Friday. The committee found all books and records in order.

Motion made by Gene Perrino to accept the minutes to the Council of Administration meeting held on Friday, October 27, 2017 as published on the Department website, motion seconded by State Sr. Vice Commander Danny Anderson, Motion passed.

Motion made by Gene Perrino to accept the minutes to the General Session held on Saturday, October 28, 2017 as published on the Department website, motion seconded by State Judge Advocate Dan Duffy, motion passed.

STATE CHAPLAIN HARRY SEILER stated his report is based on all District and/or Post Chaplains reports combined for the first six (6) months of the 2017-2018 term.

Nursing Homes and Hospital visit – 238; Greeting cards, condolences cards and other cards – 194; funerals attended or honor guard service – 137 and other such as visiting families etc. - 235.

STATE INSPECTOR DON BULT stated some post are still using the wrong audit form and will not be accepted. The correct form is located on the department website and must be downloaded to your computer to work properly. Don went over the inspection forms and bonds not being up dated with increase coverage. Every penny going in and out must be reported. All inspections are due by the end of February. Don announced the 2018-2019 quartermaster/trustee school of instruction dates and locations.

STATE LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR MARK ALVAREZ stated the Florida legislature has completed the second week of the 2018 session. Bills concerning veteran's employment opportunities and veterans interested in law enforcement opportunities were also discussed. Alternative treatments for wounded veterans with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) are also being discussed. Legislation is moving ahead in waving the cost of college tuition for active military personnel in Florida. Mark stated he had met with several representatives with Jason Smith the Director of the VFW Veterans Service Office and put together a proposal (HB 2479) of \$100,000 for the service officers to be used for transportation purposes. That \$100,000 will get the VFW's foot in the door lay the ground work for what we want to do and in the long run may get more funds for the Service Officers. This could allow us to hire more personnel as well. Mark thanked Jason Smith for putting the proposal together. They also met with Jonathan Till in Representative Burgess's office to discuss the Veterans Improvement package which includes HB 179; HB 303 and HB 333 that covers a variety of veteran's issues. Representative Burgess will receive the VFW Legislator of the Year Award at the Youth Achievement Banquet. Mark briefed the membership on Bills that are in process and a complete listing is on the Department website under Resources. Mark is making the appointments to meet with congressmen and senators at the legislative conference in March. Mark stated bringing the Student Veterans of America to the Legislative conference last year was a great success and hopefully will be again this year.

VETERANS SERVICE OFFICE DIRECTOR JASON SMITH addressed the Appeals Reform Act and how it will affect veterans. Congress passed the Appeals Reform Act, the president signed it and it should take effect in February 2019. The Appeals Reform Act was put together by the VA, Veteran Service Offices including the VFW, other Veterans Organizations, the legislative team in Washington DC, and Congressional Offices. Jason talked about the RAMP program in which everyone that is in the appeals process will receive a letter telling them about the RAMP program. This gives them the opportunity to enter the new, more efficient review process. Jason stated is may not be in your best interest to participate. Before you change to the RAMP program Jason has requested these individuals call the VFW Service Office first. Many are already in the deep process of their appeal and it may not be good idea to switch. Let the Service Office help you with your decision.

BECAUSE WE CARE CHAIRMAN DAVE HARRIS stated it has been a successful year for the program. At Christmas time the Because We Care program helped veteran's families with gifts for their children and helped put food on their tables. Dave stated it is important to make sure when sending in an application that it is legitimate before signing your name to it and forwarding it to Department. Dave thanked everyone for their support and donations. Donations were taken at this time.

HOSPITAL/CLINICS CHAIRMAN CHESTER PYATT briefed the membership on all the VA medical centers in Florida. Chester listed the post that made donations to four (4) of the VA Hospitals. Donations are down and in need of financial assistance. Chester informed the membership of Larry Phelan's resignation due to a fall and Gene Leshore took over as the VAVS Representative for Bay Pines Hospital. Larry will be 98 in April and has been a VAVS Representative for at least 23 years. Chester asked District and Posts to have fund raisers for the Hospitals and stated reporting was low but the work is being done. When sending in donation checks designate which VA facility it is for. Chester thanked the VA representatives in attendance. Donations were taken at this time.

MEMBERSHIP DIRECTOR GLEN TILLEY introduced Tom Randall membership chairman for post 15010 (Members at Large). Tom stated he has renewed and reinstated members at large or replace their membership cards and connected those in need of assistance to file a claim with the VFW Service Office. Work the three R's – Reinstatement, Retention and Recruiting. A Retiree Veterans Appreciation Day is being held February 24, 2018 at 9:00 a.m. at Fort Stewart. The VFW will have a booth at this event. Later in the year a Retiree Veterans Appreciation Day will be held in Doral, Florida and one in Pensacola.

Glen stated the department is at 89% which is a little behind. Eleven (11) Posts are at 100%, fourteen (14) posts have met the 5% requirement of new and reinstated members. Glen thanked District 8 for putting together a new post in Merritt Island. Glen spoke briefly about the attitudes of VFW members with the complaining and how it affects membership. Glen called it the Grumpy Old Man Syndrome and read a paper on it.

2017-2018 Membership awards presented by State Commander Ken Corr and National Representative Jr. Vice Commander-in-Chief "Doc" Schmitz. All recruiting awards are verified by National Memstats as of January 17, 2018 are as follows:

The Squad Award: Any member recruiting (15) new and/or reinstated members by May 31, 2018 received a designed Commanders Challenge Coin.

District 3 Post 8195 Hollywood ~ Quartermaster Vernon Nelson with 15 members.
District 19 Post 8093 DeBary ~ Quartermaster David M. Mears with 20 members.

The Company Award: For every new Life Member recruited by May 31, 2018 (minimum of 5) the recruiter received a specially designed Commander's Challenge Coin and a \$100.00 in gift cards.

District 1 Post 11367 Mary Esther ~ Barry Bergschneider with 5 New and/or Reinstated members.
District 11 Post 10132 Stuart ~ Raymond Becker with 6 new and/or Reinstated members.

District 7 Post 4864 Citrus Springs ~ Bob Shepherd, State Judge Advocate and Quartermaster of Post 4864 who passed away earlier this month, Post 4864 will accept the award on his behalf.

COMMANDERS SPECIAL PROJECT CHAIRMAN RON MILLS (Service Dogs for Vets) Ron asked Post to have fund raisers for the Paws for Patriot's Program. The auxiliary raised \$40,000 for the program. Ron presented a check for \$1,000 to State Commander Corr. Ron suggested each post donates \$1.00 for every member. Donations were taken at this time. The Department has raised \$10,000 toward the program.

VETERANS VILLAGE HOME BOARD PRESIDENT CHESTER PYATT stated March 23rd is the Annual Golf Tournament and March 24th is the Annual Picnic and the. Chester announced the turkey shoot being held on February 17th. Chester informed the membership the Veterans Village needs a new roof. Tarps are on the roof where the leaks are and the roof is 28 years old. Three (3) residents were moved due to the leaks. The Department is trying to work on assisting in the Veterans Village with replacing the roof. One bid is \$185,000 and a metal roof is being looked into but will be more money due to the changing the flat roofs to peaked roofs.

VETERANS VILLAGE DIRECTOR AL LUGO presented National Jr. Vice C-I-C with a Veterans Village medallion. Al stated the first part of his life (25 years) was in the Army taking care of soldiers and for the past ten (10) years taking care of veterans at the Veterans Village. The Department of Florida is the only department that has a fully funded Veterans facility that is not federally funded. Al touched base on the need for a new roof.

State Commander Corr stated the Veterans Village will get a new roof, it is being worked on and the Council will be advised as to the options.

PAST COMMANDERS CLUB PRESIDENT KATIE SMAILIS stated the G.I. Joe Awards are due to her by May 14, 2018 and the form is on the website under post forms. Past Commanders Club meeting will take place after the general session. Katie informed the membership of the different programs they donate to such as the Commander Special Project the Veterans Village and others. Past Commanders must complete their 1st full year as a Post Commander or District Commander to qualify for the Past Commanders Club.

BUDDY POPPY CHAIRMAN RAY JARVIS stated if every post donated funds out of their relief fund the roof for the Veterans Village would get done. Out of 173 posts 130 have not made a donation, reports are coming slowly but most Posts are not putting in reports. Ray explained what goes into the blocks on the report and a brief message is all that is needed in the description box. District Commanders need to give their post a boost. Ray informed the membership as to the amounts of money raised through the Buddy Poppy Program by Post that raised the most funds. Make sure you get proof from your vendors to be at their facility.

CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION CHAIRMAN ROBERT HERNANDEZ stated eleven (11) Districts and Forty-Seven (47) posts participated spending \$6,500. Robert stated next year please submits full packets.

NEW BUSINESS: State Adjutant/Quartermaster announced Past Department Commander Dan Duffy was elected State Judge Advocate to finish the term due to the passing of Robert Shepherd.

New Business – State Adjutant/Quartermaster Continued:

In November at the Southern Conference Dan Duffy was also elected as the Southern Conference Vice Chairman and Benny Bachand is the Secretary Treasurer. Gene informed the membership in regards to the four (4) qualifications in the National By-Laws Manual of Procedure, Section 719 in the yellow section, to be a past commander. 1) Complete your term as a commander at every level; 2) If you pass away during your term as a commander at any level; 3) If you are the commander and your post merges with another post; 4) If you are in the job as commander at any level and receive orders back to active duty you qualify as a past commander.

GOOD OF THE ORDER: Past C-I-C John Hamilton spoke briefly about the VFW Foundation Golf Tournament and funds taken in. State Commander Corr thanked District 9 and other individuals that assisted in the tournament. John also spoke about the Veterans Service Office and its importance with the need for donations. The service office assists more veterans than any other program in the VFW and it's the best donation you can make.

A moment of silence was recognized to the passing of State Judge Advocate Robert Shepherd.

Glen Tilley informed the membership of the program by Amazon called Smile Amazon. If you log into Amazon be sure and use Smile Amazon.com and the VFW National Home will receive .5% of the every sale.

State Commander Ken Corr introduced West Virginia State Commander Todd Kingsbury for a few words. Todd stated he is seeking the nomination for National Jr. Vice C-I-C. Todd thanked everyone for their hospitality.

State Commander Ken Corr stated at the Council meeting on Friday they voted to endorse Past Department Commander Amber Putnam for Jr. Vice Commander-in-Chief. Amber said a few words and thanked everyone for their support.

State Adjutant/Quartermaster Gene Perrino introduced Hal Roesch as the designee for the next Jr. Vice Commander-in-Chief for a few brief comments. Hal Roesch addressed the membership and thanked them for their support.

Candidates for State Office are as follows:

State Commander ~ Danny Anderson
State Sr. Vice Commander ~ Tony Purdy
State Jr. Vice Commander ~ Glen Tilley
State Quartermaster ~ Gene Perrino
State Judge Advocate ~ Dan Duffy, Steve Surface and Terry Guthrie
State Chaplain ~ Harry Seiler
State Surgeon ~ Jack Kelleher, Ron Mills and Dani Hernandez
National Council Member ~ Benny Bachand and Ken Corr

Candidates for the Veteran Village Home Board are as follows:

3 Yr. Term ~ Joe Rosa

State Adjutant/Quartermaster made the following announcements and reminders for remaining events:

March 3-8th National Voice of Democracy and Legislative Conference, Washington, DC
March 23rd VFW Veterans Village 7th Annual Golf Tournament
March 24th VFW Veterans Village 18th Annual Picnic
June 1-3rd Northern Area Quartermaster/Trustee School of Instruction, Hilton, Ocala
June 8-10th Southern Area Quartermaster/Trustee School of Instruction, Fort Myers
June 21-24th State Convention, Renaissance, Orlando
July 21-25th National Convention, Kansas City, MO

State Commander Corr thanked the Council for their dedication and support.

Comments from the Council were taken at this time and there being no further business meeting was closed in due form.

The Youth Achievement Banquet was held with the Legislative Award presented to Congressman Danny Burgess, the top five (5) Voice of Democracy winners and the top three (3) Patriot Pen Winners Awards were presented.