

American Legion

PALM SPRINGS Post 519

General Membership Meeting – 07/14/26. JULY minutes

NOMINATIONS

Just to restate, Amado nominated Andrea Klein, who accepted for we're talking first vice commander. Beresh nominated Andrew Stevens, who declined. John Picken nominated Leroy Sidman, who accepted. And then for first vice commander, Aguilar nominated Amado, who accepted. Valerie Rogers nominated Andrew Stevens, who did accept, and then John Picken nominated Daisy, who did accept. Thank you all.

SPEAKERS

Ed Vondra, Gordon Countryman, Mike Beresh, Speaker 1, Judge Advocate, Rusanne Anthony, Kevin Koch, John Picken, Mike Hardy, Allen Lane, Speaker 2, Andrew Stevens, Crawford, Andrea Kline, Amado Salinas, Tony Aguilar, James Snow.

JOHN PICKEN

Opening Ceremony PHONES OFF

One rap of the gavel ...

The meeting is about to open.

The officers will take their stations.

Sergeant-at-Arms, please clear the hall entrance and close the doors

· Three raps of the gavel ...

PLEASE stand and face our Nation's flag Hand Salute! ... 2!

Un-cover ... from the opening prayer through the POW/MIA ceremony

Chaplain, please offer an opening prayer.

CHAPLAIN

Our heavenly Father, once again, we meet as the American Legion veterans of our nation's great wars, our organization goes back over 100 years. During that time, we have stood for God and country. We have worked to promote Americanism and programs for veterans. We have been concerned for our local communities and for the youth of our nation. God is God in our deliberations this evening, keep us alert to our opportunities and responsibilities as citizens. Make us deserve. Make us deserving of our freedom handed down to our generation by those who sacrificed so much in the past. God bless us all. Amen.

JOHN PICKEN

Sergeant-at-Arms only, re-cover. Sergeant-at-Arms, prepare to place the POW/MIA cover on the Empty Chair Resolution 288, adopted at the 67th National Convention, encourages all American Legion organizations to implement the Empty Chair Ceremony at all meetings. As a continual physical symbol of the POW/MIAs and the cause for which we stand, namely their return or full accounting.

POW/MIA Empty Chair is placed at all official meetings of The American Legion, as a physical symbol of the thousands of American POW/MIAs still unaccounted for from all wars and conflicts involving the United States of America. This is a reminder for all of us to spare no effort to secure the release of any American prisoners from captivity, the repatriation of the remains of those who died bravely in defense of liberty, and a full accounting of those missing. Let us rededicate ourselves for this vital endeavor!

Sergeant-at-Arms, place the POW/MIA flag on the Empty Chair.

Sergeant-at-Arms only, un-cover

Please face the flag and join me in the 'Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag'.

EVERYONE

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America and to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

JOHN PICKEN

re-cover please. Remain Standing.
Please join me in reciting the preamble of the Constitution of The American Legion, slowly and in unison.

EVERYONE

For God and Country, we associate ourselves together
for the following purposes to uphold and defend
the Constitution of the United States of America;
to maintain law and order;
to foster and perpetuate
a one hundred percent Americanism;
to preserve the memories and incidents
of our associations in all Wars
to inculcate a sense of individual obligation
to the community, state and nation;
to combat the autocracy
of both the classes and the masses;
to make right the master of might;
to promote peace and good will on earth;
to safeguard and transmit to posterity
the principles of Justice, Freedom and Democracy;
to consecrate and sanctify our comradeship
by our devotion to mutual helpfulness.

John Picken

One rap of the gavel ... Please be seated
I now declare this meeting of American Legion Post 519, Department of California, General Membership Meeting convened > roll call. Adjutant

ALLEN LANE

Commander – John Picken = Present
Adjutant – Allen Lane = Present
2nd Vice Commander – Lee Wilson = Excused
3rd Vice Commander – Kevin KOCH = Here
Finance Officer – Garth Gilpin = Excused
Chaplain – McCarvie Crawford = Present
Service Officer – Allen Lane = Present
Judge Advocate-- Here
Sergeant at Arms – Mike Beresh = HERE
Historian – James Snow = Present
E-Board 3rd Year – Ron Webster = Here
E-Board 3rd Year – Maggie Rable = Excused
E-Board 3rd Year – Rusanne Anthony = Present

Quorum Confirmed. Commander. . .

John Picken

Make sure your phones are turned off or on silent. Please.

John Picken

We'll get back into the business here. Thank you for attending our installation of officers. Okay. Announcement. Last week, the executive board received two letters of resignation from the first vice and the one-year executive board member. The resignations were voted on and accepted at the executive level. We will discuss further under the new business. We do have some district meetings coming up. The August meeting, Lane. Could you remind me when that is?

Gordon Countryman
Perris Coast this Sunday.

John Picken
This Sunday, July.

Gordon Countryman
10 o'clock is District 21

John Picken
Thank you.

Gordon Countryman
Sunday.

Andrea Kline
And there is an open position for the District 21 So if people are interested, they can feel free.

John Picken
Thank you, Andrea. Okay. Also, we have a District 21 meeting at our post on September 20. Be prepared for that one. Meeting times are as follows: at these meetings, 8 o'clock is the srs, 9 o'clock is the PCC, and the American Legion at 10 o'clock. As a reminder of the ritual, when a member is requesting time on the floor, raise your hand and please stand after being recognized by the chair. State your name and salute the chair. If requested to come to the podium, you will be escorted by the sergeant at arms. Please salute the flag before passing. All speakers from the floor will be limited to three minutes. Sergeant at Arms, would you introduce our distinguished guest, please?

Mike Beresh
Allen Dosla, District 20-One Commander. Francis Blake, District 21 First Vice. Andrea Kline, District 21 East. Mike Hardy, District 21 Second Vice. Albert Martinez, Past Commander. Amado Salinas, National. Jesse Salado, District 21 Task Commander.

John Picken
He's out in the main. Thank you. Okay, I'm going to go right into Office's reports. Adjutant, you have anything, sir?

Allen Lane
Nothing to report, sir.

John Picken
Third vice, Kevin Coke.

Kevin Koch
I'd like to point out that this month the tram is free to all military and veterans. Parking is \$15 to go up. For past business, we had boys n girls stay. We had six candidates go. One of our candidates, unfortunately, a very strong candidate, was one of the individuals sent home. I don't know if parents went up and got him almost the day before coming back, or if they flew him back. Apparently, the boys were running in the dorm and punched a hole in the wall by not being able to stop in the drywall of the dorm, which happens being boys. But rather than report it, they put a poster over the large bowl and covered it all week till the very end. So when the poster came down, the cadre up there put the screws on all 50 guys in the hall and said, "We're sending you all back unless you tell us who damaged it, because nobody would confess. And three boys were sent home. Unfortunately, I think he has

like a 4.6 at Palm Springs High. A tall guy that wants to be in military or police officer, he was sent home. So, a learning experience. Our other four females and one male did quite well for the first time. I believe. District 21, for the first time, actually had a person elected from another post Secretary of State, which is an honor for the whole state of 800, third highest position there. And for the first time, a female was voted governor, and Texas sent a group to observe how we were integrating females into Boy State because they haven't done that change yet and are looking at it. I'm doing an after-action with all those to find out the good, the bad, the ugly, and how we can improve it. One of the things I was stuck doing is we used to have pickups in India or Banning, and then Norco or Corona Norco. Unfortunately, due to the cost of the bus, it's only Norco now. So I had to run several SUV loads of kids early in the morning, late at night, and liability is what I'm concerned about. So in the future, we can look as a group in the Coachella Valley, maybe of a small bus for back and forth rather than that. So we'll investigate those things. But overall, very positive experience. Those who went had a great time, including our adopted one from La Quinta High School in Orange County. He did quite well. So we're looking budget-wise. I'm submitting a budget and would like to look at expanding a little more for ROTC high school awards, college awards, and school awards in the valley. You can-it's endless-but we need to still push it a little farther out. So that's all I have at this time, sir.

John Picken

Thank you, sir. Service officer, Lane.

Allen Lane

Sir, the only thing I had to report is I had a veteran call me today. He's struggling to make his rent, and it's about 492 that he needs, and he's asking for my help. I'm going to make a motion that we offer to assist that amount directly to the manager. He lives in Cornerstone. I believe it's on Sunrise, and I'd like to make that motion to help a veteran pay his rent.

John Picken

Are you asking for money from the post to supplement his rent?

Allen Lane

I am.

John Picken

We have a motion on the floor. Is there a second?

Seconds. Any discussion?

Allen Lane

He is 71. He washes cars for a living, mobile, and nobody wants to do it because it's 105, and it's very difficult to wash a car in this temperature. So this is the first time he's had this issue. This is the first time he's reaching out, but he reached out for help.

Gordon Countryman

Is this going to be an ongoing thing or just a one-time?

Allen Lane

This is a one-time. He may reach out again, but this is going directly to the management office, not to him.

Gordon Countryman

Okay, thank you.

Amado Salinas

sir. Amado Salinas, did you state the amount that you needed?

Allen Lane

492 is what he's requesting. He has the rest of it. His rent is 1395 He has the rest of it. He's requesting 492 is what he needs by Friday.

Tony Aguilar

I'll be not standing.

John Picken

It's fine.

Tony Aguilar

After the meeting, I'm making a personal donation. Okay, I make a personal donation after the meeting.

Allen Lane

Oh, great!

John Picken

Thank you. Awesome. So, first of all, we have a motion on the floor. We have a second. However, you're going to take care of that full amount, Tony?

Tony Aguilar

No, I make an \$100 donation to his cause after the meeting. Okay. Thank you.

John Picken

Thank you. I just wanted to clarify everything. All right. So we have a motion. We have a second, discussion. Any other discussion? Go ahead, sir.

Allen Lane

This is not someone I've been focusing on the Veterans Village, which is going well. I have a meeting on the 30th to introduce myself as the Post Service Officer to the Veteran Villagers, and then on the August 27th, they have another. . .

Amado Salinas

point of order. We have a motion

Allen Lane

. . .meeting.

John Picken

We're in discussion. He's discussing it.

Allen Lane

I'm just wrapping it up. Thank you for listening. Got another one on the 27th of August, and this request is from someone who is not at the Veterans Village. So I am working the entire community. It's just the Veterans Village just happens to have a cluster of veterans, so this is something that I think we can do, and I'd like to make that motion. Thank you.

John Picken

We have that motion. We have the second, discussion. Anybody else? Gordon.

Gordon Countryman

Did you say this gentleman lives on Sunrise?

Allen Lane

Cornerstone Apartments.

Gordon Countryman

Oh, Cornerstone. Mm-hmm. Okay. Because we lived at one of the apartments at the south end. Mm-hmm. I'm the executive of housing.

Allen Lane

Oh, great.

Gordon Countryman

And we would subsidize this, right? But it's not one of our apartments. That's why I ask.

Allen Lane

Okay. Let's have a conversation after the meeting. I would love that. Thank you.

John Picken

Any further discussion? All in favor of supplementing 492 to this veteran? Aye. Any opposed? Any abstentions? Passes. Get with me later. Anything else?

Allen Lane

That's it, sir. Thank you.

John Picken

Thank you. . . Judge Advocate. Do you have anything for us, sir? Welcome to the board. Welcome aboard. Nothing, okay. Chaplain Crawford?

Crawford

Yes, sir. Thank you. First of all, I'd like to thank everybody that came by on the fourth and bought some barbecue, baseball cleared about 480 bucks. Okay, I want to thank everybody and appreciate your support.

John Picken

Thank you. E board Rusanne.

Rusanne Anthony

The only thing I have is to bring up, and I just had it on my phone, and now I can't see it. Is to talk about the Take Care of America's Veterans Act, and I just had it here so I could read it, but what it's doing is it's redistributing veterans' disability payments from one fund into another fund. It's a shuffle of money, and it dilutes disability payments to veterans in the long run. So what I would like to do is send our communications officer the information so he can be blasted out to all veterans because we need to get hold of our congressman and let us know our displeasure with what the American Legion is getting behind, so the American Legion is behind this act, but the veterans themselves are not. So that's all I have for announcement.

John Picken

Thank you, Rusanne. I do. I was reading some stuff about this. The California American Legion is very opposed to what's going on at the national level. Is when you send that out, are there links for the people to click on to get their Congress people?

Rusanne Anthony

There, there, there is a phone number. Yes, for here in the state of California.

Andrea Kline

Yeah, there is. There actually is a publication that has all the links that you can click on and it'll send it to all of your constituents in California. I did it recently and I've had them responding to me after doing that. So I'm glad to share that. It's been shared on Facebook.

Rusanne Anthony

this has to go nationwide.

John Picken

Go ahead.

Andrew Stevens

Andrew, I would like to comment, VFW has a tool that will eblast everybody or every congressman that is in your district. The addition that I want to bring up is that the two disabilities that they're focusing on are tinnitus and sleep apnea. Tinnitus is something that has been affecting a lot of global war on terror veterans because of the defective hearing aids or the hearing protection we were getting, so that's where they're trying to take it .

John Picken

Thank you.

Tony Aguilar

There's almost a daily posting on Facebook by one of the former department officers about these details exactly what we need to do, and those of you who are on the Park Legion page, as you read that, it's especially meaningful for people 100% disabled or disabled. I'm 100% disabled. Fortunately, I'm blessed. I don't need help, others do, but believe me, it is something that needs to be addressed. Absolutely.

Rusanne Anthony

What we want is a veteran to respond to the American Legion because the American Legion is in support of this law, and we want the American Legion national to kind of change their tune on it. And listen to the veterans. So I'll be giving this information to James. James can go out and get it out to our post members.

Andrea Kline

And the American Legion National is hosting a Q and A on the 16th, and I think it would be good to get that in case people want to join that call and just hear talking points.

John Picken

The 16th of this month. Yes. Thursday. James, if you can work on that, that'd be great. Maybe we can put the links on our Facebook page also to see if we can get some people to respond to that. I've been following Chris Yates and everybody else talking about this stuff, and it's kind of disheartening to me for our veterans. Nothing else was sent.

Rusanne Anthony

Yes.

John Picken

Thank you. E-board Webster. Nothing. Thank you. Sergeant at Arms Beresh?

Mike Beresh

Nothing at this time.

John Picken

Thank you. Historian Snow.

James Snow

Nothing at this time.

John Picken

Okay, moving right into committee reports.

Crawford

In regard to Chuck and Nona, you had mentioned them before. We were able to get some money for Nona because she didn't have enough money for a hotel room. I don't know if you saw their granddaughter was on the news, and anyway, I don't know. I'm assuming she's being taken care of, and this was Joe O'Connell's idea.

John Picken

Okay, that was where I was going for my report. But thank you very much. I appreciate you bringing it up. Okay, commander's report. I think most of you know Chuck Potter and his wife Nona. Super great people.

Unfortunately, Chuck passed away last month. Nona's in a little bit of distress in the fact that AC went out on our house, and they're potentially blaming the AC for Chuck passing away, amongst the other stuff they had going on. Nona's been was living in her car for a couple days.

Apparently, we got a hold of granddaughters thanks to Andrea and her wife Maureen and Joe O'Connell, who's not here tonight. They have coordinated trying to get Nona some help. We voted at the executive board to give her some money. The auxiliary is doing the same thing. I believe the ALR is going to try and do something also. They were supposed to be here tonight for the meeting, but not going to make it. I talked to Nona twice a day, she called me. I'm doing okay, John. I can't make it to the post today. I'm going to try, but she's staying right now down in Indian Wells, and it's a 40-minute drive for her. But anyway, just keep her in your thoughts and prayers, and hopefully we can get her some more help. The iron horse. Horse Riders Group is going to give some money to them too, and I believe there's other options out there for her.

Anyways, that's that was with that. Thank you very much. Okay, going into the committee reports. Since we don't have a House Chair right now for the House committee, I'm going to go ahead and fill my glasses. Okay, there they are. Okay, so at the house minute we talked about July 4th. Thanks to the chaplain, we had a great turnout. Lots of people were enjoying themselves. We made a number of event request approvals. As I said earlier, District 21 wants to hold their meeting here on September 20. The kitchen redo is underway. Last three Friday dinners, food was provided by Riccio's restaurant. The food costs were breaking even, and the canteen money is staying within norms. This Friday, the Suns are volunteering to cook on the 17th for dinner, which is Nick. I can't pronounce his last name to say Nick D. So they're selling tickets for that at the bar. I believe it's \$20 On the 18th Saturday, the ALR is cooking for the karaoke, and on the 25th, the Suns are doing their installation with music provided by them. That is the House Committee, Communications Committee. Snow. Nothing. Nope.

Tony Aguilar

Who's collecting the money from Nona? You are.

John Picken

No.

Tony Aguilar

I'd like to make a donation to like that. I'm sure.

John Picken

I did give her the money that we took for out of that executive board approved. If you want to write a check or give it to somebody else, you can give it to Andrew behind you there. She can make sure that gets taken care of. Yes. Again, Joe O'Connell is here. I'd ask him to take that too. Okay. Again, Nona, I love her. She's in serious distress right now. So we got to keep her in our thoughts.

Okay. Moving down to the membership committee. Again, we don't have a first vice. We do have five new members: Larry Wade verified with his military ID. Paul Herrera Ramirez verified with his DD-214. Gail Davis verified with her military ID. Louis Miranda is verified with his military ID, and George Thomas verified with his DD 214. Going back to Gail Davis, So she decided that she was going to join with her boyfriend. Bill is a member. So I'd like to entertain a motion to approve these five people. Mike Hardy makes a motion to approve. Second. Amado, second. He had his hand up first. Any discussion? Are any of those people in here right now? Okay. All in favor of accepting these five new members? Aye. Any opposed? Any abstentions? Passes. Copy from you. Okay, all business. As I mentioned, the kitchen remodel is underway. As usual, when you're doing construction, things slow down. The pod you saw out there was delivered for storage. We had Flag Day. It was well attended with the PD and Fire also attending, thanks to all who participated. We had probably 20 people there. Again, we discussed July 4 was a great success for the post and the baseball fundraiser. Is there any old business I need to discuss.

Moving on to new business. Due to the resignations of the executive board members, we will have another election next month, with nominations tonight, and then again on the 14th of August with an election following. At the end of the new business, we'll open up the nominations. This, as I said before, this Friday dinner is being provided by the cells. I was talking with our VSO here, possible co-op with a nonprofit called Folds of Honor. They help veterans and families with donations and scholarships. More to follow.

The gentleman called me as I was on my way to the district installation in Riverside and talked for a few minutes on the phone. He was supposed to call me back today. They're based out of Palm Desert. They want to get involved with helping our veterans and their families. They've been doing mostly scholarships, but they want to expand into helping those that are in need. So we're going to talk to that. Allen's got the number. We're going to try and talk to them later on. Okay, that's the end of new business. I now pass it on to the adjutant.

Allen Lane

We're going to open the floor for nominations for first vice commander nominees.

Amado Salinas

I accept. Second.

Andrea Kline

in

John Picken

No seconds in this. Yeah. No seconds in this. Yeah, we don't need a second.

Allen Lane

Any other nominations for first vice? Okay.

Any other nominations for first vice?

Any other nominations for first vice, Commander? Yes.

Andrew Stevens

Decline the first vice.

Allen Lane

Andrew, what's your last name?

Andrew Stevens

Stevens.

Allen Lane

Stevens, thank you.

John Picken

I got a nomination.

Allen Lane

Declined. Almost there. Writing this down.

John Picken

I'm going to nominate Leroy Sidman.

Leroy Sidman

Accept. Accept.

Allen Lane

Leroy Accepted.

John Picken

Sigmund S I D M A N

Allen Lane

Accepted.

John Picken

Sid for short, accepted.

Allen Lane

Thank you. I didn't know his first name.

Any other nominations for first vice commander?

Any other nominations for first vice commander?

And one more time, are there any other nominations for first vice commander?

John Picken

Thank you.

Allen Lane

All right, nominations are closed.

We will go ahead and open the floor for nominations for first year executive board member.

Tony Aguilar

I nominate Amado Salinas.

Amado Salinas

accept.

Andrea Kline

I'd like to nominate Andrew Stevens.

Allen Lane

State your name.

Speaker 2

Vallery Rogers.

John Picken

Andrew. Thank you.

Allen Lane

Andrew Stevens, are you going to accept that one, okay?

Any other nominations for first-year executive board member?

John Picken

I'd like to make a nomination.

Allen Lane

Go ahead.

John Picken

Daisy. No. What?

Allen Lane

Daisy, what's your last name?

John Picken

Daisy, what's your last name?

Allen Lane

What's your last name?

Rusanne Anthony

Boyer.

Allen Lane

B O Y E R.

Boyer

No, I accept.

Allen Lane

You accept? All right, awesome, awesome. Oh, you are nominated.

Andrea Kline

Oh, good. Yes.

Allen Lane

So. I do this three times.

Are there any more nominations for first-year executive board?

Are there any more nominations for first-year executive board?

Any other nominations for first-year executive board?

Okay, nominations are closed.

Just to restate, Amado nominated Andrea Klein, who accepted for we're talking first vice commander.

Beresh nominated Andrew Stevens, who declined. John Picken nominated Leroy Sidman, who accepted.

And then for first vice commander, Aguilar nominated Amado, who accepted. Valerie Rogers nominated Andrew Stevens, who did accept, and then John Picken nominated Daisy, who did accept. Thank you all.

John Picken

Thank you.

Kevin Koch

Okay,

John Picken

moving right along. That's the end of new business. Does anyone have anything for the good of the legion? Ed.

Ed Vondra

This may come under new and old business, both. But I'm in touch with the veterans city, and we talked about they wanted us to donate a swing set, and I suppose maybe in this week and next week to measure to see how big of one they want. So I mean, I've been looking online. There's hundreds of different kinds. So sometime maybe tomorrow or next Monday, whatever I'll meet with them. And I also we have some donations we're going to give them. I have a little total gym, wind houses, some men and women's blouses and Levi's and stuff like that. So when they get all this together, I want to bring it back up to see if anybody else has anything to donate that we can take over, and I'll find out just exactly what they would like and what they can need, and I'll bring it back to you.

John Picken

Thank you. The gentleman right here. State your name, please.

Mike Hardy

Mike Mike Hardy. I'm not sure. Is it possible to get this swing set donated? Don't we have some relationships with some of the people like Moe's or I don't know if they sell swing sets or not?

Ed Vondra

success or not. Home Depot, you get online and there's like five or six, and they have 3040, minutes one online. I couldn't go through all of them, but I need to what I need to do over there is measure, find out where it's going to be, and also want to know what the age group they're going to have, because if they want a little tots or whatever, I'll find all that stuff out.

John Picken

I know you are. You don't have to send out. Please see. Regarding your issue about donations, assuming about food as well. Ron over here does every week runs to

Tony Aguilar

take staples to the State of Brothers, Albertsons get food every week. So get in touch with him if somebody needs food assistance. Okay. Second, if I may, Kevin mentioned the assumption of a leadership role by women. I am a strong proponent of women being in leadership positions. I have two daughters who are attorneys who are outstanding, and I think this post. I should say first of all, we have a woman for the first time that I. Of leading our department, who's a woman? It's time we have one here eventually, and hope he remembers that. We have some strong, well-qualified women in this post, and we need to acknowledge that. Thank you.

John Picken

Thank you.

Ed Vondra

sir.

Gordon Countryman

As far as Home Depot doing donations, they do. But someone who's authorized to accept them has on the post has to go there and talk to the promotion manager. They will do. They will donate pretty much anything they can donate in that regard. The only thing that we require is a photo op. There's no fee or anything else; just a photo op.

Crawford

Thank you, Gordon. Nice job, Chaplain. Commander, if I'm not mistaken, this may fall under my youth activities as far as baseball goes, and so I would like to talk to Ed and whoever else is going to be involved. When Garth gets back, I'll confirm that I can spend that money that way. I can go to Home Depot and hopefully get a deal on a swing or wherever, and then we can donate.

John Picken

Thank you. Roll stand.

Rusanne Anthony

I just want to circle back to the nominations for an election, so we're all clear. So what happens now with that? All these nominees. Will there be a special election at our next membership meeting?

John Picken

Yes.

Rusanne Anthony

Okay. Everybody knows.

John Picken

There will be a full-on election in here. As far as I know, that's the way it's supposed to be done. No, to

Andrew Stevens

the public.

Rusanne Anthony

but is it going to be that ballot? I mean, do the election committee, like do Tony and I, need to reconvene our election committee?

John Picken

I believe in my mind, I believe the election committee should be reinstated, at least partially, to manage what we're going to do. We still have nominations that come up on the next meeting, which will have to be put onto a handwritten ballot.

Rusanne Anthony

Well, what we'll do, I mean, we have nominees there. I'll get the list from Allen, and I'll prepare a ballot, and then Tony and I, election committee members, we'll have them ready. So, how does that sound?

John Picken

So, what we could do? Hang on, Tony, please. What we can do is pre-write the ballots with a blank line on it. Bring that printer in here. Okay, we have other nominees that are not listed tonight. We can handwrite those in, make copies of that ballot right then and there, and then we can do the vote. Okay, Tony, go ahead.

Rusanne Anthony

All right, I just want to be prepared.

John Picken

Andrew had his hand first. I'm sorry. Go ahead, Andrew.

Andrew Stevens

Just something I wanted to bring up that came up that was that convention. The American the American Legion does or California department has a gaming convention, which is a video games, so not gambling or anything like that. I did attend a few of some of their training, and they actually do have interesting ideas that can bring certain other games to the post that are not gambling. Obviously, I'm going to work with them to see about getting stuff.

John Picken

Sounds good. That's great.

Andrew Stevens

All right,

John Picken

thank you.

Andrew Stevens

Something to bring younger people.

John Picken

right, thanks. Tony Aguilar,

Tony Aguilar

our committee has expired. I recommend that you reappoint us to what be legal. The election committee,

John Picken

executive committee past chair. What do you think?

Rusanne Anthony

I think I easily can. I mean, there's Mike and there's Tony and me here already. We got Joe. I don't know if he's going to be part of it, but anyway, we have enough. We have at least five that we can make a forum and make it happen.

John Picken

Just keep me informed of your meetings, please. Copies of the minutes, Ed. as far as us getting a straight hand up,

Ed Vondra

April O'Neil is the sports person there, and she handles all. They give him my name, my name, and they're going to come to me and stuff. And the art builder wants to get involved in this too. So they may even talk about that today. When we get everything together, when I know what's going on, I'll bring it back up again. But I'd say maybe even the sons want to get involved.

John Picken

Okay.

Ed Vondra

There's a lot of people want to get involved.

John Picken

Thanks, Hud. Great.

Gordon Countryman

Okay.

John Picken

Yes, sir.

Allen Lane

Are you referring to the donations? Oh, the swing set. The other donations you were talking about. Some people were telling me in other meetings that they had offered it to Brandy at the Veterans Village, and she was turning it down because food was about to expire or the clothes weren't good enough. If you want, you can offer it to me. I'm going directly to the veterans and offering a box of goodies, you know, and so if it's turned down, let me know, and I can give it directly to the veterans in a random stuff box. A welcome to the neighborhood.

Ed Vondra

Do we have some games and board games and puzzles and stuff you want to take over to? But we've been donated with them with so many stuff. We got one.

Allen Lane

You've got it handled, perfect. Absolutely.

John Picken

Okay, great. Thanks, Ed. Anybody else have anything for the Good Events?

Amado Salinas

Sure. Amado Salinas. Last March we had a luau for Mass Three down at Camp Pendleton, where we went ahead and had a big barbecue for the members and the families, and during that blew out, the lieutenant colonel announced that they would be 24-hour day, I believe, and they went to CENTCOM and they went down to Iran. Tomorrow, no, Thursday the 14th, we're having a welcome home beach bash down Del Mar, which will be welcoming them back, them and their families. So I'm asking for a donation of 500 to cover food, drinks, and ice for the Marines that just got back from Iran.

John Picken

We have a motion on the floor, Andrea.

Andrea Kline

Oh, I didn't realize we had a motion. Sorry, I was just going to make a comment.

Amado Salinas

Yeah, we just need a second or a motion.

Andrea Kline

I guess I'll second it.

John Picken

Okay, Andrea. Any discussion? So I'm not trying to stir a pot, but Camp Pendleton, Del Mar-they're not in our district. I mean, we're helping the veterans. I understand that, but I've heard from other people are saying when we do these things out of district, we're stepping on that district's toes. So I think we need to be careful how we approach those types of events. We have a motion on the floor. That's my discussion. Anybody else have any discussion? Mike Beresh.

Mike Beresh

Should we be discussing this and spending the money without our finance officer's knowledge?

John Picken

We can still make a motion and approve it up to \$500 So that's I believe that's the amount that Amado suggested. Go ahead.

Allen Lane

to make a point of what you were talking about. Is it possible to give it to a post down there?

John Picken

Well, that's not worth looking at. I don't believe.

Allen Lane

Oh, I'm just trying to control the dots.

Amado Salinas

Yeah, we will go down there and make the donation at that time to go ahead and cover. You can make the donation to the Navy League if you like, or you can go ahead and write a check directly to. You'll never forget. It's another foundation. So we work with District 22 District 29 District 25 We all work together. Everyone's bringing a portion because we have over 1100 Marines and then their families. So everyone takes a little bit of the chunk.

Allen Lane

He was talking about stepping on toes. Any thoughts on that?

Amado Salinas

To get around, we're all collaborating.

Allen Lane

You're all collaborating.

John Picken

Rosa,

Rusanne Anthony

I make a motion that.

John Picken

No, we already have a motion. Hang on. We had a second. Any other discussion, Andrew?

Andrew Stevens

Just I guess for clarification. So it was mentioned that this was going to be collaboration. Are the other posts in San Diego going to be collaborating and joining in with us.

Amado Salinas

Yes, sure. District 29 and District 25 have already made their donations. They'll be going down there. Actually, we're also providing six people as servers and cooks. Each one of them is also bringing their servers and cooks.

Allen Lane

So, from District 21 is that where they come from? The people?

Amado Salinas

No. Well, they're coming from all over.

Allen Lane

Oh, okay.

Amado Salinas

We're going to go ahead and personally bring in those kinds of people.

John Picken

So again, who do we going to write the check out to?

Amado Salinas

So you can make it out to U.S. Navy League Palm Springs Council, or you can make it out to you are worth it foundation.

John Picken

I'd rather do the league.

Tony Aguilar

No. Let me make a suggestion Amado because you're president of the Navy League. Make it out to the other agency so that we avoid a conflict.

Allen Lane

What was the name.

Amado Salinas

You were worth the foundation.

John Picken

I'm afraid of foundations. I know that there are a lot of good ones out there, but there are the ones that they're the ones that are doing consistently

Amado Salinas

They've been working with us on that. So we did over 1,100 turkeys for Thanksgiving. We did 1,000 Marines for lunch at that time, so it's been a consistent annual. We also did the third track Halloween on it, so it's been a consistent program to help the raise down.

Allen Lane

As the district 21

Rusanne Anthony

I recommend that if we're going to donate money to this, it goes to Bitmartin District 22 It stays within the Navy. Stays within American Legion. I mean, I'm involved with Navy League too. District 22.

John Picken

22. Okay. Somebody texts me the person to write that check to, and I'll make sure it gets done. You said it's on the 16th. It's Thursday.

Amado Salinas

Yes.

John Picken

You did mention the 14th, and that's today. So it's like. Yeah.

Rusanne Anthony

That way it stays.

John Picken

Pardon?

Rusanne Anthony

That way it stays.

John Picken

Yeah. Okay. So I'm. If it's okay with you guys, I'm going to let Garth write that check when he gets back.

John Picken

Pardon? ED?

Ed Vondra

One more thing about the swing set.

John Picken

Okay, hold on. We're way beyond that. We got a motion on the floor. Sorry. All in favor of donating to District 22 \$500 in the name of the Navy League for the event. All in favor. Any opposed? Any abstentions? Passes. Okay. Andrea.

Andrea Kline

For the good of the Legion, during the department convention, I'm on the I'm on the mental health committee. We hosted a mental health luncheon, and we sold out. So we had Dr. Sundar, who has an office here in Palm Springs. He's a board-certified psychiatrist, and he treats anxiety, insomnia, depression, PTSD. He has helped a lot of people in this post. He took his entire staff to Visalia, and he hosted the lunch luncheon for us, and it was sold out. He is currently working on anyone from that convention that wanted to come and have the brain mapped or have treatment. He is working on trying to find housing for those individuals, and he he has a separate foundation where he is supporting those individuals. So we do have individuals coming from Northern California to come for three weeks for treatment. So I just wanted to share that it was a very successful event.

John Pickens

Thank you, Andrea. Appreciate that. While she's talking about district or excuse me department stuff, does anybody else who was there have any comments? I mean, you talked about the gaming. Rusanne, did you have any other insights on? Oh, you know what? Stand up.

Andrea Kline

What? What? Rusanne is now on the department.

Rusanne Anthony

I, I, yeah. So I went to convention. It was great. It was quite an experience, and I really recommend anybody. I mean, I went there just as somebody from the post but walked out of there. They found out I was an accountant, so now **I'm going to be the finance officer for the state of California for the American Legion.**

John Picken

Obviously, Rusanne was in the Navy because in the Marine Corps you don't volunteer. Oh man! Thank you, Rusanne. Congratulations!

Rusanne Anthony

It's an honor, and you know I look for big things in the American Legion in the year to come. So I'm excited about this.

Allen Lane

Yeah, good for you. All right, thank you.

John Picken

I have one last thing for the good of the American for the good of the post.

Actually, I went to the District 21 installation on Sunday. I got called up to the podium by Jesse Salcedo, and we have been awarded. Let's see. I'll just read it off.

The American Legion Department of California recognizes Post 519 Owen Kaufman in recognition of your exceptional performance of achieving 100% or higher membership for 2026. Signed, Commander David Brambilla, Adjutant Sam Flores.

This is the second out of three years that we did this. We could have done it last year, but. We didn't know one of the ins and outs of pushing it, but we figured it out. Starting arms will be your responsibility to put this on this at the end of the meeting. You can wait till the end of the meeting.

All this is the 100% membership, and again, membership is everybody's responsibility. If one of you can bring in one person, we can go from 746 all the way up to 1,400 people. If everybody can just bring one new person in, and I'm sure everybody knows a veteran out there who's not a member of this post. Okay. Anyways. if there's no other business to come before this meeting, Aguilar, just standing. You can sit. I know you're hurting.

Tony Aguilar

I just want to make one last comment here, Mr. Chairman. I've been a member here for 40 years, and our last election was so close. It shows how divided this post is. And my hope and my prayers are that this year we're able to get together, come together as we should be. We're all veterans. We're doing it.

Allen Lane

I think it's going to be great. It's going to be great.

Gordon Countryman

District 21 Commander, you have something?

Speaker 2

Yeah, if I can just make my comments from here. Sure, Commander.

I just want to tell you that this is the bedrock of District 21 and I'm proud of this. Proud to be Commander of District 21, I'm proud to be your commander. Your commander attended our installation, and I was proud that he was there because you are the biggest post in the 21st district, and I've got a lot of respect for all of you folks. And I was an honor to come here and do the installation today.

I just wanted you to know that, and they say that I'm just another blue camera. No, she wasn't. She was a delegate, very important position, absolutely very important. In fact, Andrea was there also, and their presence was important.

We had a lot of important decisions, and you were there. Thank goodness. Yes, and you were there also. So you had a lot of representation in this post, and so our new commander, district commander, or department commander is Summers, and she's first class.

Yes, this is the first time in a long time we've had a woman's department commander. I got to tell you, she's my five-year driver impressive, and I think we're going to be making some great strides in District 21. I'm following suit. I agree that we need to recognize women, so I'm forming a women's committee on the first district, and Ray is going to serve on that. So I just want to just want to share that with you.

John Picken

Okay, if there's no other further business to come before the meeting, please stay in attention. Closing prayer.

Crawford

First of all, thank everyone once again for a nice, calm meeting. Thank you, God, for blessing our new officers. Thank you for our future successes, and thank you for the people, places, and things you will use to help us with our continuing growth. Thank you for blessing us all. We are all blessed. Amen.

John Picken

Sergeant Arms, everybody, recover, please. No, I've been corrected. Sergeant Arms, recover the POW MIA flag. To omit again, let us remember our obligation to our country can be fulfilled only by the faithful performance of all duties of citizenship. The service to 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. Recover. Please face our nation's flag. And salute. I now declare this meeting of the American Legion Post 519 Department of California General Membership Meeting adjourned. Thank you, everybody.

Minutes by Allen Lane