

American Legion

PALM SPRINGS Post 519

MINUTES

General Membership Meeting

08/11/26 **August 2026**

SPEAKERS

Tom Ricchio, Speaker 2, Rusanne Anthony, Speaker 3, Garth Gilpin, Allen Lane, Judge Advocate, Amado Salinas, Andrew Stevens, Speaker 1, Joe OConnell, James Snow, Lee Wilson, Raible, Ron, Kevin Koch, Mike Beresh, John Picken, Crawford

JOHN PICKEN

Meeting is about to open. All officers will take their stations, sergeant at arms. Please clear the hall entrance and close the doors. Stand at attention. Salute. 2. Uncover for the opening prayer through the pow Mia ceremony.

Chaplain Crawford

Our Father, who art in heaven, we hallow and praise your name. We praise You for this gathering in which we will unite with other comrades to further our programs in the American Legion. Guide us and direct us in our decisions that in all things, they may be pleasing, excuse me, pleasing in your sight, in your holy name, we pray. AMEN

JOHN PICKEN

Sergeant at Arms only, recover.

Resolution 288 adopted at the 67th National Convention, encourages all American regional organizations to implement the empty chair Soma ceremony at all meetings as a continual physical symbol of the pow Mia's and the cause from which we stand, namely, their return or full accounting, the pow Mia empty chair is placed at all official meetings of the American Legion as a physical symbol of the 1000s of American pow Mia is 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 dedicate ourselves for this vital endeavor. Sergeant at Arms place the pow Mia flag on the chair you. Would you hand those out for me?

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

Everyone, recover. 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, Constitution of the United States of America to maintain law and order, to foster and perpetuate 100% Americanism, to preserve the memories, to inculcate the sense of individual obligation to the community, state and nation. Faculties are both classes and mass, to make a right and master might promote on earth, to safeguard and transition to posterity the principles of justice, freedom and democracy, to concentrate and sanctify our conference by our devotion to mutual helpfulness.

JOHN PICKEN

Be seated. I now declare this meeting of the American Legion Post 519 Department of California, executive committee open for roll call, adjutant. . .

Allen Lane

Commander - present.

Adjutant - present.

Second vice commander, Lee Wilson - HERE.

Third vice commander, Kevin - here

Chaplain Crawford - here

Service officer - here

Judge Advocate - Here

Sergeant at Arms - Here

Historian James Snow - here

E Board, first year, Mike Beresh - here

E board, third year Ron Webster - here

E board, third year Rusanne - here

Allen Lane

We do have quorum.

John Picken

Thank you everybody for coming today.

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 as requested. To come to the podium, you will be escorted by the sergeant arms. Please salute the flag before passing. All speakers will be limited to three minutes from the floor. Sergeant Arms, do we have any distinguished guests?

Mike Beresh

Yes, we do. Department of California finance officer Rosanne Anthony. Past department California Judge Advocate of Miles Allen, Legislative Council of Miles Salinas, District 21, First Vice Blake.

John Picken

Blake. Okay. The minutes are posted on the website. I take that back. James, he was out of town. Sorry. He'll get to those as soon as he can. So we'll bypass the approval of those at this time. So we'll go into reports. I will hold mine. Agent, do you have anything for us?

Allen Lane

Nothing to report, sir?

John Picken

Kevin KOCH?

Kevin Koch

Sir. We did receive a check from the former mayor of Palm Springs for Boyce Grill State, \$1,500. Garth just notified me today that. Working with the scouts on reorganizing the scouts for the area district and seeing who we can support. Everything else working away, sir.

John Picken

Okay, thank you very much. Well, Kevin's up. We have a gentleman, John Durst, who owns Oasis Real Estate, he came in today and donated a number of tickets for the kids to go to Palm Springs Surf Club. We appreciate that. If anybody knows John, you can say thank you to him. He came in earlier today. We got like 20, maybe 25 tickets there for the kids. So it was very nice of him to do that. Apparently, either used to or still owns the Oasis Water Park. Second vice just walked in, so he's here. Okay. We'll go into finance. Gilpin, Mike, pass around some flyers.

Garth Gilpin

It's posted on the bulletin board. I do not have a finance report this evening. I was on vacation. Just got back last night. The report that we're handing out is the bank statements as of July 31st. We had a total \$194,000 in the bank. 17,000 was for Barr and Lotto. Just today, in the mail, we received our second monthly bill from the electricity company, and both of them are over \$5,200 a month.

So, going to hit us pretty hard. Just keep these. Membership has \$35,000. That again is money to be used in the community to aid veterans, youth, whatever. Measure J funding. We have \$61,000 there. I'll discuss Measure J now. The second quote came in For the kitchen, there's been a delay due to the state of California law, which requires that B contractors, which we are utilizing here, do not need workers' compensation insurance. I've made that a part of our program.

If the if the B contractor were to hire somebody or bring on his own employees who he pays under the table, and they were to be hurt, the responsibility would revert to the Legion. We could, in essence, lose our building if it was a death serious. So anyway, I've held up the kitchen for a little over a month.

The B contractor who had the best lowest bids sent me his insurance. If he's awarded the contract, he will buy the workers' compensation insurance. So that project will start to move forward. Hopefully, the end of this week. The building has \$53,000 in it. Color guard has 4800. Baseball 13-eight, and writers have 7000. So, any questions on the finance? Yes, we're going.

Rusanne Anthony

While you were gone. The point of sale system here quit posting. I don't know how that happened, but it wasn't being batched out every night. Consequently, there was like a good 10 day gap between. So how did that happen, and how do we keep that from happening again?

Garth Gilpin

There's one particular bartender that, as I understand it, just quit posting at night. We got down to about \$13,000. I called John. I said we got got to do something about this. And as we started researching it, then the we discovered that over \$10,000 had not come in from the bank. It comes in weekly, once a week. We get a deposit from American Express, Visa, Mastercard, and third, fourth. I can't remember which one it is, and those come in individually once a week. And so, for 10 days, we didn't get any deposits. So that has been corrected according

John Picken

to John Kleiner. Anybody else have anything for Garth? Thank you. Moving right along, Chaplain Crawford. You have any force, sir? Nothing before. Service officer Lane, do you have anything for us?

Judge Advocate

Nothing this time, sir.

John Picken

Judge Advocate?

Judge Advocate

I went with John after the training this past Saturday, and it was very interesting. I read the hand out, and it was at the Perris branch. So lots to learn, lots of good handouts and information.

Allen Lane

Excellent. It was a very good class.

John Picken

I went to the class with Thomas, about two and a half hour class at Perris, which everybody knows. With side note, Perris is going to be closing their building. They've had to sell it, so they're looking for an alternative site to continue the American Legion in in Perris. Eboard two, Anthony. Do you have any for us now?

Rusanne Anthony

The only thing that I have is I'm going to be passing this around. It's called Helmets for Heroes. I'm just collecting change, and I have two more that I'm going to bring and leave here, and I'll be collecting the money and then converting it. And the money goes to department, and what it does is the money goes to disabled veterans. So it's really good cause. I'd like to start it here and pass it around, and we're just asking for a change. So that's that's it.

John Picken

Thank you, Rusanne. Lee Wilson, you ready?

Lee Wilson

I guess I'm ready to go, sir.

John Picken

Okay, Lee Wilson?.

Lee Wilson

Right, sir. Hello, everybody. Commander, I'm kind of making this up as I go along. I'm still getting back in the swing of things, but basically, Friday entertainment. We're booked through December. I'll start booking our January next year entertainment shortly. I think that Ken Bash guy we had last Friday. I get a lot of positive combat comments on Ken Bash we had last week. This Friday, it's Kevin and Lynn, but they're bringing in a guest, a guy named Boots.

He's supposedly really, really, really good, and so we're getting a little extra entertainment at no extra cost this Friday. We got to figure out what we're going to do for New Year's. We decided we're going to do DJ Eddie.

John Picken

We got DJ Eddie doing the evening.

Lee Wilson

We got him for sure? All right, and it's on a Friday, by the way. New Year's is a Friday this year.

The Suns are having a beach party Saturday, August 29th here at the Legion, you got to buy tickets. Trainer Brothers be playing on stage. The auxiliary is doing their bake sale. They always do a really great job in this. It's November 23rd, I believe. I can't access my computer right now. Got issues, but I believe it's Saturday, November 23rd.

We're all set for the Veterans Day parade. Still working on the Pride Parade, I've been in contact with City Councilman Ron Dehart, and he's always waived our fees. You know, if we were a regular schmegular anybody entering this thing, it would cost us maybe a couple 1000 bucks- golf carts, the cars, marching, and all that stuff. They waive our fees.

They really want veterans in the Pride Parade, and so anybody in this room, we need you. We want you be part of the parade. We lead the parade. We're on freaking point. We can't get better in that. So this is really cool for us.

It's great publicity, but working on that still. New state. Kevin Morrison back there. Kev, stand up, please. Kevin Morrison here has kicked ass for us recently in a lot of ways. Turns out I got the wrong kind of lights, and the new lights are in here. They're in that box I gave them, so they're ready to go. But we're going to be able to pip out our stage pretty cool in the long run. Okay, we're starting slow, and when Kevin has time, he's going to add stuff here and there. But we're learning the system. It's kind of complicated at first, but our new stage lights are going to kick ass once we get them up. Still working on getting the outdoor painted here. We're going to have like a processing key with the city is going to be like \$600 or something. Once I turn in the application, the application fees at like 600 bucks or so. So stand by on that one. Still working with Carvey on this, and then I need to make a motion.

One thing we've been doing for the last several years is being a part of the Chamber of Commerce city city chamber of Commerce down the street, the Rock the Park series. They do it every first Wednesday of the month, starting in October. And Terry Johnson back there and I have been really diligent on banning a tent. We get great, great product placement. I mean, right behind the stage to take a photo of the band. You can't help but get in the American Legion in the photos, and they give us stage time too. And by us, I mean me. They give me stage time. I give a shout out to veterans and invite all the veterans to come to this place. It's pretty cool. We get great publicity. We got our tent out there. We're getting the word out, and but to be a part of it, get stage time, the tent, and an advertisement in the magazine. It costs \$1,000, and we've done it for the last several years. I guess I need to make a motion that we would cut a check for \$1,000 to the Palm Springs Chamber of Commerce in order to participate with the Rock the Park series. And it's great if you guys haven't done it yet. Do your three game here. Your pregame here. Walk to the park. After the park, Randy Bartender stays open lane a little bit. You know, it's a good time. Nobody cares if you bring your wine up there. So,

John Picken

so we have a motion on the floor for \$1,000 to the chamber of commerce. Chamber of Commerce. I need a second, Joe. Second. Joe, call. Okay. Any discussion? Any questions, Garth?

Garth

It's the second or third year we've done this. This will be like the fourth, I think. So it's been really good PR. They treat us very well. They're giving us a big discount, actually.

John Picken

Any other questions for the lead? Call for the vote. All in favor? Aye. Any opposed? Any abstentions? Motion passes.

Lee Wilson

Thank you, guys. That's all, sir.

John Picken

I need to talk to you about entertainment later. Back to the meeting, please.

Mike Beresh

All right.

John Picken

Thank you. Excuse me. All righty. Ron webster, you have everything for us, sir.
Thank you. Eboard three Raible.

Raible

I went to two meetings last week: the house and the executive meeting. I don't have it.

John Picken

Okay. How did I got a question for you though concerning the boys and girls? Say, how did the bags work out? They're good. Good. Okay. All right. Something maybe we want to.

Joe OConnell

Yeah.

John Picken

Continue with. Awesome.

Kevin Koch

Absolutely.

Allen Lane

Didn't have an emblem on it or something.

Kevin Koch

We didn't have time this year, but they got the emblems to go with it.

Allen Lane

So for next, oh, they got the envelope. Okay.

John Picken

Sergeant at Arms, anything for us, sir. No, Historian snow.

James Snow

Nothing as far as historian, but I do have something for communication.

John Picken

Go right ahead.

James Snow

All right. So apologize, everyone. I've been out of town for past couple weeks. Had a family member pass way back home, so I haven't really done anything American League and stuff. So I apologize. I'll get caught up on that this week. The only thing I have actually is we got the November's coming up around the corner. We're only a couple months away from there.

John Picken

James, can you? Okay, I was gonna say hang on, but sergeant at arms, is this something we need to handle? something we need to handle?

Mike Beresh

No, I don't think so.

John Picken

Okay, sorry, James, go ahead.

James Snow

So I'm thinking as far as for the telethon, maybe the 12th or the 13th. So that's coming up. We need to start getting on the ball as far as how to put that together again this year for the NBC. Maybe making more money than 11,000 last year. I want to try to work on getting another guest host, maybe Gary Sinise this time around, or maybe Rob Wiggle, which is a retired lieutenant colonel from the Marine Corps. He's an actor as well. Gary Sinise, I think, would be great to have here, and I do have a way. I think if I can get in touch with him somehow through somebody else, so if we can get him in here, that'd be great. That's all I got for now. Just let everyone know that the telethon is going to come up in November. We got to start in communications. I want to get communications back together. We haven't really had a meeting yet, so I'll take blame with all that for not initiating the dates. I've just been super busy with my business and NBC and everything else. But I got to get back on the ball with that and get that back under control, so we can get the communications committee actually working and things like that. But that's all I got for now. For now, thank you very much.

John Picken

The post sends their condolences to your family.

James Snow

Appreciate that. Appreciate that. Thank you.

John Picken

Okay, going to committee reports. I'll do the House committee as soon as I find my glasses. You know, I print it big so I can read it without the glasses. But okay, so at the House committee last

week, we approved a number of event requests. One of them was happening tomorrow. We're going to be doing a celebration of life for a past entertainer who used to play here years ago, Billy Erickson. That's right, Billy.

Lee Wilson

Yeah, Billy Erickson.

John Picken

Billy Erickson. So they're doing a celebration of life tomorrow at 20'clock at the post. The back bar will be open to members. Now they've got the front part. We had a number of emergency plumbing issues that we had to handle two weeks ago. The steam table let loose, the drain plugged up, and it just overflowed. And then we also had the men's bathroom urinals started backing up. Bill, our uncalled plumber, repaired both, so we took care of that. We've been doing potluck on Sundays, and it's been fairly well attended. We didn't do it this past Sunday. We will start up again next Sunday. So if you want to bring in a meal for people, feel free. We start around 10 o'clock. Go to one. It's been, like I said, a fairly good success. Reminder: We're going to have a District 21 meeting here next month on the 20th. Again, the main hall will be dedicated to that. The back bar will be open to the members. As Garth mentioned, the kitchen redo is stalled due to insurance stuff, but we're going to be moving along here soon. The ALR is cooking for the karaoke on the 15th, this next Saturday, deal with it doing a nacho bar, and that was it for the house committee. You already had the communications committee by snow finance is already done. Membership. Since we don't have a first vice right now, I've been doing the membership. We have two new members, Gary Cooper and Brian Langdon, both of them verified by DD 214. Are either one of those gentlemen here tonight? Okay, I need to get a motion to approve these two new members. Tom, Tom Riccio, you making a motion? Okay. Second. Mike's making a second. Any discussion? All in favor? Aye. Any opposed? Abstentions. Okay, Gary Cooper, not the star, and Brian Lane. Welcome to the post. As of this past Friday, when the department updates, we have a total of 301 paid members, which includes 78 puffles paid up for lives. We have 10 new members for the year and five transfers. Anybody have any questions about that? Yes.

Raible

I have two people that will be joining. I'm wondering if I mean we're August. If they join now, does their \$65 just get them through the end of the year, or would it get them through the end of next year?

John Picken

Maggie, I'm glad you brought that up. Here's the deal with our membership cards. Membership actually runs from July 1st to July 1st, even though our cards say expire December 31st. We run on a fiscal year, so if. He signs up, he or she signs up next, whenever now they will get their 2027 card, which is going to be good for 17 months.

Raible

All right. Okay.

John Picken

So that's that. And the new cards do say 2027 on them. Okay. I've already processed well over 50 since July 1, so we're moving along. In fact, I got five more in the mail today. So we're processing those. See, I think that's the membership taken care of. Yes, James.

James Snow

I just had a couple people to actually try to do their membership online, so I got to go back and find that email, forward it over to that happened during the time during the process when our first earning was here and he left, and I've been out of pocket, so they're kind of questioning where their memberships at. I can't remember their name, but I'll find it out and I'll forward over to you. Okay. And then I got your email as far as when you you send me one for your condolences. Within that email, I saw also to have you transfer over as far as for the membership stuff.

John Picken

Thank you very much. Okay. mr. Piece of paper. Hang on one, guys. Okay, we're going to go into all business, which means we're going to reopen up our nominations. And you got the.

Allen Lane

I got it.

John Picken

Okay, I'm gonna pass this on to the adjutant. We'll open up the elect or nominations.

Allen Lane

We will open the floor for nominations for first vice commander. Nominees must be president. Meeting to accept or decline nominations. The nominations that we have so far are nominee Andrea Klein. Nominee two is Leroy Sidman.

Are there any more nominations for first vice commander?

Any more nominations for first vice commander?

John Picken

Gordon?

Gordon

I like to nominate Thomas Riccio for first place.

John Picken

Okay, Thomas Riccio, do you accept?

Tom Ricchio

I accept.

John Picken

Okay, we'll add him to the ballot. So, because we have the ballots already pre-printed, there is a space for writing in a nominee. We'll allow that to happen.

Allen Lane

Are there any more nominations for first vice commander?

All right, moving on.

Nominations are closed for that.

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

The nominations we have so far:

nominee one is Amado Salinas,

nominee two is Andrew Stevens,
nominee three is Daisy Boyer.
Are there any more nominations for first-year executive board?

Kevin Koch

Third year.

Allen Lane

I'm sorry, third.

Rusanne Anthony

First year. I'm third year. I put third year on the ballot.

Mike Beresh

Would Like to nominate Garth.

John Picken

Garth Gilpin, sir, do you accept the nomination?

Garth Gilpin

Well, I've been on vacation for two weeks. Turned 83. Happy birthday! Wow. I'm a little disappointed in the fact that the voting is taken tonight. Gives me no time to campaign. But I'd like to see some youth come in and into the organization, and therefore I decline. Thank you, Mike.

Allen Lane

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

Any more nominations for first-year executive board?

John Picken

Bob Lavinia for Tom Prichio. Thank you. Tom, do you accept? Tom Riccio, Commander.

Tom Riccio

I accept. Thank you.

Allen Lane

Bob, what was your last name?

John Picken

Bob Lavinia.

Allen Lane

Lavinia.

John Picken

Pardon me. No, we're just writing down your last name for L-A-V-E-N-R-A. Thank you.

Allen Lane

One more time: Are there any more nominations for first-year executive board?
Nominations are now closed.

John Picken

Okay, so this time, the chair of the election committee will be handing out ballots to those who are eligible to vote. And while we're doing that, we can take like a 10-minute break and get the voting taken care of right then.

Rusanne Anthony

It'd be really best if you scan fast so we can get these ballots passed out. Sergeant at Arms would you help her? Did you have a question, Mike? I did. Mike, what's your question?

Mike

Thank you, statement. Okay. At our last general meeting, we had our sorry. We had our installments in the other room, and somebody that wants to be on our board

Garth Gilpin

two weeks, one of us.

Amado Salinas

Out of order. Out of order. I don't think it needs to be on our board. Point of order. That's just my opinion. Both discussions like that, negative, are not permitted.

John Picken

Your point is taken. Please keep your personal opinions to yourself during this process.

Rusanne Anthony

Can we, like some of the. . .

John Picken

Absolutely. All the candidates that are on the ballot, please stand up. Okay. We have.

Rusanne Anthony

So this is Daisy Boyer. She's running for first year executive board. This is Amado Salinas. He's running for first board executive board. Leroy. What's your name?

John Picken

Leroy Simpi.

Rusanne Anthony

Just call him Siri. He's running for first Vice Commander, Andrew Stevens is running for first year executive board. Tom Riccio is running for both first vice and first year, and I think that's everybody.

Amado Salinas

No, as I said, each candidate had an opportunity to speak to the membership.

John Picken

Okay, we are missing one person. Would you mention her, please? Andrea.

Rusanne Anthony

Oh, and Andrea Klein. She's not here. She's on vacation right now, but she's running for first vice. Most of you know Andrea. Are we going to let them?

John Picken

Everybody's everybody can. There's a nominee. If it's okay with the general membership, can have like a minute to talk.

Rusanne Anthony

Yeah. All right. We'll start. All right. Anybody need a pen? Really quick, when you vote, fold your ballot.

John Picken

Talk to the courts, please.

Amado Salinas

Again, I'm Amado Salinas. I'm a life member of the American Legion. I have served, and I currently serve as your national legislative council, working with our Congress and our Senate as your advocate. I also work at the national level on the Constitution and Bylaws Committee. I have been the past area five, excuse me, the past department judge advocate, the past area five judge advocate. I have did district 21 first vice, second vice, and at large. I have been here as a first vice and interim commander. Is that one you're saying?

John Picken

Andrew, you want to say something? Oh, I was saying. No, but you can talk. Introduce yourself and give a little political.

Tom Ricchio

I'm Riccio, and I. . .

John Picken

Hang on, Tom. Gave Andrew the floor. Hello.

Andrew Stevens

What? Hello, my name is Andrew Stevens.

I was a veteran in the United States Marine Corps. I'm running for the first year executive board. Just to show some representations for younger veterans.

When I was at the department convention this past June, met with a lot of the all the younger people who you know they have a lot of you know they want something like the Legion, but they oftentimes don't feel like they get represented. So I would like to bring that representation here. Thank you.

John Picken

Thank you, Daisy. You're next.

Daisy

I have nothing to say.
I don't know what to say.

John Picken

Daisy's a strong supporter of the post.

Allen Lane

Introduce yourself.

Daisy Boyer

I'm Daisy Boyer, and I've lived here 24 years, from New York, and if I get on the board, I'll say what I have to say because I get it done.

John Picken

Perfect.

Daisy Boyer

You may not all like what I have to say sometimes.

John Picken

Okay. Tom Riccio, you're up next.

Tom Ricchio

I'm Tom Riccio, and I come here every day, and I put in about 20 hours a week.

James Snow

Thank you, guys.

Andrew Stevens

Is that everyone? Thank you.

John Picken

Leroy Sidman, first vice nominee.

Leroy Sidman

Leroy Sidman, past experience with BFW, Dr. Legion. I was the youngest commander in California a few million years ago. BFW member for 60 years now.

John Picken

All right, thank you. Tom, you're also a nominee for first vice. You want to say anything else? Okay. Then has everybody filled out their ballots? Yep. Please make sure Rosanne's got them. Yeah. Got a couple more back there.

Allen Lane

Raise your hand if you have a ballot still. Thank you. Yeah, right. It's a good idea.

John Picken

Rusanne, you want to take a 10-minute break while we count? Okay.

Okay. We're the election committee. All right. So we'll take a 10-minute break while we count the votes. Good luck.

John Picken

I'll get it back. Just take a picture of it. Yeah, I'm just gonna give you these. I was gonna use them for my kids. They're not coming out. Then at the food store, I noticed the guy who was at the lane camp one night. Sat down with him. Everybody back in here. Okay.

15 minute BREAK WHILE COUNTING VOTES -----

John Picken

That everybody, Mike.

Mike Beresh

Okay.

John Picken

That's Joe. Well, since he's a candidate, I'll wait for him to get in here. All righty. We'll call this meeting back to order. So, looks like it was a pretty close race.

Rusanne Anthony

Andrea Kline...

and for first year, it's first year.

Andrew Stevens.

John Picken

Congratulations to all of everybody who nominated and got in, and thank you for stepping up.

Rusanne Anthony

It was really, really close. It was.

John Picken

I can see that.

Rusanne Anthony

First year, third year,

Like maybe two votes. Wow.

Allen Lane

Thank you.

John Picken

Okay, if there's nothing else to do, we'll go into our other stuff, which that was all the old business I had because Garth already talked about the kitchen remodel. So at this time, I'm

going to ask that district first vice, join me up here. Francis, Blake, Lee. Everybody goes by Blake. So, Blake and I are on the Law and Order Committee. So we're both coordinating on the East Side and the West Side fundraisers to have, excuse me, dinners for local police heroes and fire heroes and first responders.

John Picken

First responders. So, Blake, you already had your one event. You want to tell everybody about it?

Blake

Right. So the goal is to raise 4000 annually. One dinner out here in Palm Springs, or maybe next year another post, and then 179 or 28, whatever. So two dinners a year, \$2,000 recognized. Law enforcement first responder will do the interviewing based on the recommendations from the sheriff's individual units and whoever they want to nominate, and Al, Al, our district commander, is retired law enforcement. So we're pretty well connected in it, and we want this to be a continuing thing. We also recognize that individual posts are already doing this, so we applaud that. This is on top of that. So the first fundraiser we did, I made the family recipe, spaghetti, meatballs from scratch.

Individual donations exceeded 700 prior to the event, and then that paid for DJ, the food, everything else, and we raised 1,600. So, for the West End, I'm 400 short. I got two more events to do, so October 19th in 289, and then Hemet will do another one. So, however much money we get, we'll go forward in the continuing years. John will coordinate that out here, and the hope is the smaller posts, because we can't do district meetings there; they're just too small. That we hold these events there, and boost them, show our faces, get their input, add up their numbers, help them out, and become the bigger family that we are. And just a side note: the last three years, with the help of current and past officers, including Amato, District 21 has really put a stamp on California. For the first time in a bunch of years, every post was 100% compliant. Better than half, including you guys, had 100% membership. We want to continue that.

You guys, Palm Springs, when people look at you guys from the outside, the way the Riders, the Suns, Auxiliary, and Legion work together along with the community at large. The other posts are looking to you as the example. You guys set a hell of an example, so applaud yourself. Back to the Law and Order thing. Once we get interviews, we'll have everyone come, and it's a big deal for Lane, or it's part of our pillars of the Legion, and we'll do a hell of a job. I know John'll do just thank you, sir. Thank you.

John Picken

So, moving on to that, hopefully we'll have one or two events, one here, and hopefully one at maybe the surrounding post in the area that's kind of on our list, which is banning him at Idlewild, Indio, yeah. There's one more. My mind just pulled in the blank on that one. Anyways, hopefully we'll have some fundraisers. We'll get to dinner. It will probably be held here. Last or two years ago, we did it. It was very well received. We had at least I want to say 10 to 12 police officers and sheriffs here, along with their families and representatives. And it's it's a great community thing. It's great for public relations, and hopefully it'll work out just as well as it did last time. Okay, thank you, Blake. Appreciate you coming for that. We got a couple of upcoming events: karaoke on Saturday, as Lee mentioned, the Suns Beach party on the 29th. We're also going to be doing our 9/11 ceremony, which will be presented and performed by the ALR, they're providing dinner here. They're going to be doing ribs and everything that goes with the ribs, baked beans or you know whatever. That's pretty much that. Is there any new business that I'm forgetting? Anybody?

Lee Wilson

I have.

John Picken

Yes.

Allen Lane

As the service officer, I have a lot of veterans who come to me and need help. This is a very hard time these days, and everyone needs help. April from the auxiliary came to me with a gal at the Veterans Village. She's got a list of things that are due, and her car broke down. They couldn't find they couldn't find time to work on it until next week. I made some calls, got it over to a shop. It is the timing components that need work on. I spoke with April, and I'd like to make a motion to propose that we help her with her car payment or to get it fixed, and with the hope that April can help with that through the auxiliary, we took it to a place in Cathedral City, FNR fleet, an auto repair service. It is the water leak. Found the bad water pump, replacing all of that. If you're familiar with cars, there's a whole slew of parts that go into it, and a lot of labor in that. The total is 4,500.

Tom Ricchio

Yeah, yeah. Buy another car.

Allen Lane

And unfortunately, she's overdrawn and got several things other that she needs, but having a car would solve a lot of the issues. I talked to FNR, and they're willing to drop the price; if the American Legion would help; to 4000.

John Picken

Yes, Tommy?

Tom Ricchio

Let's buy a car. I can get you \$4,500. I get you a beautiful car. Matter of fact, I'm going to rip off the guy that I'm going to buy it. So I'll do the sitting and I'll go get it.

Allen Lane

That's, that is fabulous. Yeah. What do we do with the car, the broken car? It is a 2011 Ford Edge, and she is in dire straits. I'll put it out to you. Any suggestions, Andrew?

Andrew Stevens

For if the if you were able to get if another car was able to be acquired, then there California does have a cash for clunkers. So depend if the car can technically run but fit but throws a check engine light, a smog you know a smog will get allow them to get up to 1000 or more if they're below poverty line, so that is a possibility that there's something that other than doing a repair.

Allen Lane

Okay. . .

John Picken

so from the April, Auxiliary is approaching them to ask them for 1000. Again, I think we need to have either a motion or another suggestion besides the car, James.

James Snow

This is car. I mean, is anybody we have an allegiant that are auto mechanics that can possibly do it and willing to do it for free? I mean, that's a lot. I mean, I see helping this lady out. It's a great thing to do, but \$4,500 kind of a lot. It's yeah, that's a lot. And then again, I mean, what if we put that money into that card and then something happens to it again? Right. You know, so that's like waste of \$4,500. Not saying it's a waste to help her out because we're supposed to be helping people out. I'm all about people. Well, but if there's another alternative that we have, maybe there's something we can research. Maybe there's a donation, card donations for someone like that, we're not spending money. I mean, the main goal is to get her some some transportation.

Allen Lane

Absolutely

James Snow

right. So I mean, we have public transportation. There's Uber. Maybe we get her some gift cards or something. It's just an idea where she get. But I mean, that's a lot of money to be thrown out. I mean, who was the lady again? I didn't. I didn't catch that. She's a Cynthia Healthy.

Allen Lane

She's a veteran, I want to say Air Force. Why is she?

James Snow

My question is: Is why is she negative in her bank account? Like, what's does she have? There's a story behind. I mean, what's the backstory behind this lady?

Allen Lane

She was ill earlier, and she missed her turn to apply for stamps and all this fun stuff. So she's hasn't had income for several months.

James Snow

Is she a member of this post?

Allen Lane

No, she lives at the Veterans Village.

James Snow

Department. I think for one, if we're going to help her, I mean, I know I'm just throwing it out there, but you know, why not? Why not have her be a member? You know, we're going to help her out. Absolutely. Have her be a member. We'll continue to help her if she needs help. Absolutely. But I think I think that's a great idea, but I think we should look at other options first before we just throw \$4,500 out there. My opinion, and I would look it up myself and see if there's any programs out there as far as maintaining cars. And I'm doing a documentary on veterans that are struggling, so I'll do the research myself and see if there's anything out there where she can get a free car. All right. I know there's stuff out there. I just got to find it.

Allen Lane

Okay. That's all

James Snow

you.

Rusanne Anthony

You know, this is the second consecutive membership meeting where you come asking for money, and it's we cannot nickel and dime this, and that's what it's going to turn into. We need to have a committee that addresses that is veterans services, and then come up with a game plan how to help people like her. But we just cannot. I'm sure. I don't know, Garth, if you agree with me or not. But it's just it was 500 bucks last membership meeting, 500 bucks. This membership meeting. At some point, we have to get our talents together. We got a whole people, not as membership people. Some of you should, you know, we could volunteer to make a committee to address these veteran issues. Yep. I think that'd be more constructive.

James Snow

Absolutely agree. Yep. Sorry.

John Picken

Tom?

Tom Ricchio

remember too. I have an idea. You know that magazine that you do every month. Maybe we should put a little ad inside there of everybody. I think we have 900 members. Ask everybody, do you have a extra car? And then we're gonna check it out. And if people are giving up something junky or something, then we'll pass. And then like we might be able to get somebody that's a millionaire. We got millionaires coming here, and they're well off. They got they got an extra car. They didn't give it to us. Thank you, Commander.

John Picken

Thank you, Tom. Second vice. Take over the podium for me.

We are here to help our veterans, and we have a community fund that's funded by our membership here. So we have 700 members who pay their membership dues. That money is allocated to community service. I understand where Russell Anthony's coming from, and I'm not going to deny or anything. I'm just going to bring up the point that We have a number of dollars in our community fund. We should be able to help people out, even if we only do, you know, 1000 here, 1000 there, to help our veterans out. That's just my personal opinion, and that's all I want to say. Thank you.

Garth Gilpin

It's new to us to have money to help veterans. COVID, we're lucky we're here. I think we are trying to help an individual at that level of expense is something we just can't afford. We'll open up floodgates as soon as the word's out that we'll fix your car or pay your monthly rent. We'll have a line out the door. I appreciate that, but to me, I think we need to look at programs like the Palm Springs to PSP, where we get 60, 100, 200 Marines coming down who can't afford the transportation at Christmas time, back and forth programs like that, where we help a tremendous amount of people who just those guys up there can't. They don't have the money.

They're not paid. So it's tough, and I feel very sorry for the individual, but we just don't have the time or resources to help individuals that are in this dire situation. Possibly, we could find veteran organizations that do help like this and donate on the three \$5,000 amount each year. And when this when this happens, we refer them to that organization, but I just I say we struggle to get to where we are, where we can help, and I just I think it needs to be more devoted to groups of people, Veterans Village, 29 to PSP, that type of organization.

John Picken

Thank you, Garth. James.?

James Snow

All right. So I looked up. I did find a couple things on the website. Cards for Heroes is a nonprofit that helps veterans out. Free cars. Free charity cars is another organization that gives free cars to veterans. Recycle rides is another one. I can talk to the ad about this afterwards, but I'm not reading in depth. Ease of progress is another one that gives vehicles, military families, and veterans. Another one on here where they get cars and they fix them up. Insurance companies buy cars and picks them up and they give them to veterans. So you and I can we I can go afterwards. That'd be great. I think we should go that route first before we come up. If this doesn't work, then I think we can donate money to her. I think a free route is probably the best way to go first before we go that way. That's all I got.

John Picken

Thank you, Jim.

Oh, you didn't make a motion or anything like that, so

Just have to be the same. It's all they. Yeah. Okay.

Any body have anything, new business-wise?

I do have some correspondence that I want to read real quickly. This is from a member. Good afternoon, John. We just got back home from Palm Springs and wanted to write this while it's fresh on my mind. Our son Chris, who lives in Houston, is visiting on a short layover, and we wanted to spend as much time with him as possible. He suggested we go to the Legion since he is a member of the Suns and doesn't get to participate too often with his work schedule as a captain for United Airlines. It was a pleasure to walk in with him, and within minutes, you came over and made us feel welcome, and that would greatly impress our son. Then your wife Lori came over shortly thereafter and warmly greeted us. This was the exact opposite of most of our Legion experiences over the past 10 years, since we've been members of Post 519 through three commanders. In the past, we were not greeted, recognized, or even given a hello from anyone. It was somewhat awkward and unfriendly, especially finding out that some of the people there were the commanded or the officers. It appears that there are several negative factors within the post with serial troublemakers that like to stir the pot. My friend, neighbor, and member Allen Herbel came with me to vote and asked a few questions of the three people that were missing. And I'm not going to read the rest of this because it does kind of become a little bit negative. But I just wanted to let everybody know that our practice of welcoming people has been recognized by people who come here, and I want everybody here to keep that in mind. If you see somebody new that you haven't met, go up to them, say hello. Okay. Thank you very much for that member sending that email. If there's no other, yes, sir.

Speaker 6

In addition, I'm also a B contractor. I've done work here under several previous commanders that have never been asked to do any work. It's just we come here and we're invisible, except for John.

John Picken

Thank you. Appreciate that. Thank you for standing up, Garth.

Garth Gilpin

We went to Syracuse, New York on our vacation. Took a license plate in, walked in the door. Immediately the commander came over, just welcomed us, sat two free drinks on the bar. We sat there and talked with three or four people. Got a complete tour of the facility, and then they gave us a license plate to bring back here for our post, and I highly recommend taking buying a few, stick them in your suitcase. When you get someplace, you can go on to the website Touch Tunes, which our jukebox has here, and it'll tell you every legion within 10-15 miles of where you are in the city. It's easy to do. It's free, and it was a real nice experience. So that's one.

John Picken

Thank you, Rich Hill.

Tom Ricchio

Commander, Rich Hill, I put a request last year to change the name on the Lego room to Sinatra's Way. Year later, I wanted to. you help me with that? We have to a vote, or you have a time round.

John Picken

Well, we're going to find out more information through the city on how you would do that. You never come back to me.

Tom Ricchio

Okay. Thank you.

John Picken

Amado Salinas.

Amado Salinas

Sir, Madam Salinas Area Five District 21 Plus 519. We recently came back from Northern California and had the opportunity to visit a VA home. It was good to know that a veteran with 30% or greater can go ahead and ask to retire or go to a VA home. They'll take care of your nursing. If you have a spouse, the spouse can go ahead on some of them. The spouse can live with them. If the veteran dies before the spouse, the spouse is still there and taken care of. So for veterans that are looking into a assisted living, the VSO maybe there's eight of them in in California. Maybe if we look at so some of our seniors that may be looking into assisted living that can't take care of themselves have an opportunity to make the application. The list is long, so don't wait. If you know you're getting there, quitting your application for a VA assisted living home, 30 percent or greater. Sir,

John Picken

question,

Speaker 3

sir.

John Picken

Who runs that program? Is it through the VA?

Amado Salinas

Through the VA and also Calvet.

Speaker 6

Calvet.

Amado Salinas

So we have Chula Vista, Barstow, West LA, VA, and Napa Valley. They have over 600 acres and a golf course. But anyway, just wanted to pass that on to our DSO so we can let our membership know.

John Picken

Golf course, I'm in. Tommy, last thing.

Tom Ricchio

Can we have a committee like she was talking about of like three people that know how to find everything, and can we vote for that tonight? Committee for what?

John Picken

For what?

Tom Ricchio

She she mentioned a great idea. We should have a think tank specialty of our problems and not spend \$4,500. Can we vote for that tonight, sir? I can.

John Picken

make a motion.

Tom Ricchio

I make a motion.

John Picken

Yeah.

Tom Ricchio

Would I just?

John Picken

make the motion?

Tom Ricchio

I make a motion to form a committee, form a committee to know how to put together anything tape that we need. When we have a meeting, we go to that committee and we vote that night. You guys work on that, please. Can we vote for that tonight, sir?

John Picken

Rusanne, she's got a comment on it?

Rusanne Anthony

Yeah, you're looking at the executive board to make this happen, and it's the executive board that does 90% of the work around here. So I'd really like to see members step forward. Maybe Allen, as VSO, would chair the committee, but it would be really nice if veterans from the within the membership stepped up and chaired.

John Picken

Anybody else want to be on a committee like that?

Amado Salinas

Point of order. There's a motion on the floor.

John Picken

Yeah, we haven't had a second yet. You're right. Thank you very much, Amato. You made a motion. Is there a second? Andrew makes a second. Any other discussion? Okay, wait a motto.

Amado Salinas

Sir, and I think it's right that the membership, if they're going to put this burden or this opportunity, however you want to look at it, that we have a membership that understands the due diligence that's going to be involved and the recommendation that will be submitted to the House committee, then to the membership of the executive board, and then to the membership. So we really do need individuals that have the time that are willing to go ahead and put in the work. As Rusanne mentioned, we do have a lot of burden on our executive board. They do a great job to steer us, but it's important for we, the membership, to support that. So before we vote on it, are we really ready to take that action? Thank you, sir.

Tom Ricchio

We need one more.

John Picken

Okay, hang on. We're in discussion right now. Is there any other discussion on this committee, Joe?

Joe OConnell

Since since Allen is in charge of it, he is the RPSO. I think he should be. We should hear his recommendation.

John Picken

Well, somebody volunteered him to be a chair, but I don't know if that's actually what he wants to do. Yes, he's our veterans service officer, but he's got a full plate too, and he works.

Joe OConnell

And as you know, and I think everybody knows, one one person, this woman that we're talking about will take dozens of hours to to process, do all the due diligence. All it's a big, big job, as you know.

Speaker 2

So I nominate Joe.

John Picken

He nominates you, Joe. You did a great job with Nona. You and there was going on. Yeah.

Joe OConnell

What?

John Picken

Okay. No, but let's get this over with, and we'll discuss that. Okay. All right. Okay. So we have a motion on the floor. The second by Andrew. No other discussion. All in favor of forming a committee that does the work,

Allen Lane

miracle work,

Judge Advocate

miracle work,

John Picken

a think tank. Okay. Any all in favor?

Speaker 2

Aye.

John Picken

All opposed?

Amado Salinas

Nay.

John Picken

Any abstentions? I abstain. Okay. So what do the Nays get? Sorry, Tom. Um, James?

James Snow

I have something. I forgot about this earlier. Sorry, wait. Oh, on the website, it kind of goes along with what our BSO, our page has been talking about.

I'm considering putting another page on the website. It's for AI. Don't get scared, everybody.

All right. I know everyone's scared of AI. I'm very, very proficient with AI. If you guys have any questions as far as AI, I'm very, very talented with it. Mike, my idea as far as the website is add another page for people to go on. It's just be a one-liner. If you have a question pertaining your anything to do with veterans or medical VA, anything, I'm going to put something on a website. It's like a search engine optimization kind of deal. You can go in if you have a question pertaining anything about your career or anything health, whatever. Type it in the AI, and it'll give you a response, and it'll be on the website. Oh, you just just talking to somebody, and you know if you need help with submitting a VA package or help with anything, you should be able to get an answer strictly from our website. That's one thing I'm working. I've got to mention.

Allen Lane

Great idea.

John Picken

I think that most everybody, most everybody is pretty computer literate, but I still have troubles finding the on-off button, and you know I've still got you got mail. So again, technology is helping us a lot, especially in American Legion. But we got to stay up on the technology ourselves, otherwise we're going to get left behind. I was going to say something about that, but I forgot where I was going. So sorry. Senility, senility kicking in. If there's no other new business,

Raible

I'm sorry.

John Picken

Go ahead, Maggie. I know you got something.

Raible

Yes, I think you sharing that letter tonight was an interesting idea, so I would like. I mean, it's a learning thing, right? So the feedback from membership, maybe we should go ahead and read all the letters that I can't imagine there's very many at each meeting, so we can get the positive.

John Picken

I normally do read whatever correspondence comes in, thank you cards or welcome stuff, and if you look back in our minutes, it should be in our minutes that we've done that. We've got a number of different correspondence that comes in, and that's why I have new business and correspondence under the agenda. Thank you very much.

Raible

Awesome.

John Picken

Okay, there's something else I'm forgetting, and I wanted to bring it up, and now I can't remember what it was. Oh, I do. We recently lost a member. McCarvie will mention it in a closing prayer. Marty Foley, Martin Foley, he was a 52-year member of this post. Marty,

Garth Gilpin

that's why I haven't seen him down.

John Picken

Yeah, I saw him. I saw him two weeks ago. I saw him two weeks ago, here he was having a good time. I do not know what the circumstances were. It's not our business unless somebody from his family helps, and it's a shame. I gave him his 50-year certificate last year, and I wanted to have him presented it here in a meeting.

But unfortunately, the days his wife was having issues too. She passed, and six months after she passed, he came in and said thank you so much and everything else. But that was 50-year. That's what it was. I have another member who passed. Sorry, another 50-plus year member who was living in Arizona, but was still a member here. Ed, what was his name? Walt Paul. Walt Paul. Past commander here. Yes. District commander. I got a phone call from his son.

They want to have a service celebration life here, November 7. Still got to do the application and everything else, but keep that in mind. He was, like I said, 50-year member. November 7th is a Saturday. That's our goal right now. And I gave him the available dates. Our Saturdays are pretty full from now until the end of the year. But that one happened to be cleared up. That was what it was. Thank you so much for. When I put in my commander's report, I send an email to the district chaplain, and actually have a new form that I got. I got to reread, but we do we do send it out last month. We at last month's district meeting we we mentioned Chuck Potter, so that's what we're going to do. Yeah, Walter Paul, thank you. Amado?

Amado Salinas

sir. Do we need to have a motion to approve the celebration of life on November seven for that family?

John Picken

No, not yet. They have to fill out the application. It goes to House Committee. The House Committee will approve or disapprove. Okay, moving right along. Yes, Tom.

Tom Ricchio

All right, Commander, Tommy June. Can we order batteries for the shrine?

John Picken

Already got them.

Tom Ricchio

Thank you.

John Picken

They're out there on the bar. Got them today. Amazon. Okay. Does anyone have anything for the good of the Legion? Anything for the good of the Legion? If not, we'll go in. Ron?

Ron

I don't know how many of you guys are 30% or more disabled. If you are, you're eligible for mileage. I'm not sure if you're aware of that. I'm just letting you know. I found a glaring problem with the system, and I'm having an address with Congressman Reese right now. If you have an outside doctor or a community care doctor, normally that doctor is assigned to you by Tricare or Triwest. They make the payments. Bottom means they will assign the doctor. Doctor will call you. You go to your appointment, and it's not put in the computer base. I found I had six appointments recently for dental and dermatology, I went in and looked real carefully. Where were my appointments? They never were entered, so I went and put them in myself. One of them picked up as an address. It was going to pay me to give it a loan to Linda when the appointment was here at Palm Springs. So I stopped and I called them up. I said, "What's the problem here? They said, "Well, you were supposed to put no. I'm the veteran. You made the appointment. Why didn't you put it in? They in turn said this should have been done by the travel department. Travel department is saying no. Community care should have been. Well, since Tri West is the one who makes the appointments, they schedule appointments. They should be. Contacting community care. Community care should go with travel, but you have the individual addresses have to be in the computer. You have to let excuse me. You have to make sure that that appointment where you work is in the computer before it's not going to pay. Now they've made this new thing in the computer. Oh, you can do it on our our cell phone,

community care appointments are not in the cell phone. You got to go in the old PTSS system, and you got to file your claim that way. So what's happened is all these appointments are put into a manual review. They're held off on the side. You're not being paid. I've asked many veterans, and I'm getting the same response back. I've got all these payments. When am I going to get paid? You're not. Until you send a message in the messaging system directly to travel. Why aren't you paying me? Then they'll go back in and start paying. I got a better now that hasn't been paid since January. He's got 20 appointments all along the window, all the main hospital. Here's what you got to do. So I'm going to help them. I'm probably the one that do this thing. You got to contact your travel department. You got a contract. Try Wes to put your put your appointments in. You must do that. Just let you know. Amen.

John Picken

Thank you, thank you, Ron. Appreciate it. Just briefly before I go to the closing ceremony, along those lines, I got a call from the community care person at the VA asking whether I had gone to my appointment, and when I said yes, it was two weeks ago. They said, "Well, we haven't received confirmation from that doctor. So, if you do community care, tell your doctor, please let the VA know that I was here. Go ahead.

Ron

One other thing: If you do a doctor like today, I was at my dentist. I had two crowns, but I said, "Give me a statement. Show me some kind of statement, and they'll ask for to come on the file. You download your file, then you send it to them, and now they're clear. That's one. That's one of the issues. I just one other thing. I think the thing in commerce was spending that a lot of people are concerned about was the getting turned down for tinnitus, turned down for sleep apnea.

Ron

That wasn't going to concern anybody that's already got it. That's only someone that is going to file in the future. But that did not pass Congress. So if someone was to come up now and file, you'll probably still get your tinnitus. You're asleep down there, but you have to have proof of it. Now, if it does, if they overturn it again, it comes back. What they were doing is trying to take all the people sitting golf right now fighting, or over there. If they would have filed when they came back, they would have been denied. It was a flat denial. Now, if you've never filed, but you've got 3040, 50% and it's something that if they would have had that cut off, you would have been denied as well. Just to let you know, so if you're going to file on this something like that, do it before the change.

John Picken

Thank you, Ron. Okay, moving along. If there's no other further business to come before the meeting, please stand at attention. Uncover, Chaplain. Closing prayer, please.

Crawford

First of all, I'd like to recognize the two veterans that have passed, Marty Foley and Walter Paul. I'd like to recognize two other veterans that are in the hospital, Carlos Butler and Tony Aguilar. Thank you, God, for our recent success. Thank you for those who have stepped up to be leaders, and for those who have chosen to be good followers. We thank God for all our thank God for our ability to work together. We are all blessed. Thank you for protecting us and blessing our comrades in the Middle

John Picken

Sergeant at Arms, please recover the POWMIA flag. Till we meet again, let us remember 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. Please recover. Please face our nation's flag and salute. Two. I now declare this meeting of the American Legion Post 519 Department of California General Membership Meeting adjourned.

Minutes by Allen Lane
Adjutant
Post 519