

American Legion

Palm Springs Post 519

MINUTES

Tue, Aug 04, 2026 5:07PM • Executive Committee Meeting

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

POW MIA ceremony, American Legion, executive committee, membership renewals, Rock the Park series, community care, special election, veteran support, kitchen renovation, communication strategy, gaming initiative, Boy Scouts sponsorship, meeting minutes, financial approval, event planning.

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

We have been blessed with many opportunities to help our comrades. Thank you, God, for blessing us, and thank you for blessing those people who you will use to help us and support us in all our efforts.

AMEN

JOHN PICKEN

Sergeant at arms only, recover. 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 Mia's and the cause for which we stand, namely the return of full accounting. A 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 still unaccounted for from all wars and conflicts involving 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 the defense of liberty and a full accounting of those missing. Let us rededicate ourselves to this vital endeavor. Sergeant at arms place the pow Mia flag on chair, Sergeant at arms only uncover. Okay, please join us in the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag. Please say with me the Pledge. . .

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 sentence 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 in order. roll call, adjutant. . .

Allen Lane

commander - present.

Adjutant – present.

second vice commander, Lee Wilson - present

Third vice commander, Kevin - present

finance officer – vacation - excused

chaplain Crawford - here

service officer Allen Lane - here

Judge Advocate Thomas - here

historian James Snow – excused

Maggie Raible - here

E, board third year Ron Webster - here

E, board third year Rusanne - here.

Allen Lane

We do have quorum.

John Pickens

Great. Thank you. Okay,

John Picken

Alrighty, announcements. Upcoming District 21 meetings. District 21 meetings are going to be held here on September 20. Post-Western. November 15, post 79 in Riverside. January 17, Indio Post 739. March 21, 2027, Corona post 742. And May 16, 2027, Norco Post 328. The meeting times are as follows: the suns are 8o'clock. I have down here at the PCC, which is the Pass Commanders Club, at the last District 21 meeting, they voted to disband, so we will no longer have. The American Legion normal time is 10 o'clock.

I have no distinguished guests here today. Okay, there, no guest speakers. I need a motion to approve the executive board minutes from last meeting. They were placed on our website. Hopefully, people got a chance to read them. Anybody want to make a motion? Rusanne. . .

Rusanne Anthony

I'll make a motion to accept the minutes from our last membership meeting, July 14.

Kevin Koch

Second.

John Picken

Kevin seconds. Any discussion? All in favor.

Everyone

Aye.

John Picken

Any nays? Any abstentions? Okay. We'll go to officers' reports. I will hold mine for right now. Adjutant, do you have anything for us, sir?

Allen Lane

Nothing to report, sir.

John Picken

Second vice Wilson.

Lee Wilson

Frankly, sir, pretty much unprepared for today, if you are correctly prepared next week, but the big thing is I'd like to announce the Rock of the Park series. We've done it a couple years now, where we get an advertisement in the magazine for the Chamber of Commerce. We get stage time and we can put our tent out there. It's been I think pretty cool for us. It's starting up again, and it costs \$1,000. That's their bottom price to do it. We've done it three years now. I think we should do it again. I'd like to make a motion so that we cut a check to the Chamber of Commerce for 1000 bucks to be part of the Rock the Park concert series again.

Allen Lane

Question: That's just a one-time event? And that's \$1,000 per month, or . . . ?

Lee Wilson

no? Just one shot.

Allen Lane

Just one shot.

Ron Webster

Yeah. Okay.

John Picken

Previously, anything over \$500 has to go to the general members. Is there a way of splitting that payment up, or do they want all the money at once?

Lee Wilson

I didn't ask them. They probably would do it, but they'd probably prefer to be one. When do they need the money by? I don't know soon this month. Well, I can wait till next week.

John Picken

Can we wait till next week and make that motion and get the general membership to approve?

Lee Wilson

Yeah, very good. Okay, thank you.

John Picken

Allen, yes, President.

Rusanne Anthony

I just think I mean the executive committee could vote on it and then recommend to the membership to pass it.

John Picken

Okay, we have a motion to recommend to the general membership. That work?

Lee Wilson

Yeah, let's do that.

John Picken

Would you state that for the record?

Lee Wilson

I make a motion and a recommend that we pay 1000 bucks to Chamber of Commerce to participate in the Rock the Park concert series starting in, I believe, October 1 Wednesday. It's been really good for us in the past.

John Picken

So anybody second? Kevin seconds. Any other discussion?

Allen Lane

Sounds like a great plan.

John Picken

All in favor.

Everyone

Aye.

John Picken

Any opposed? Any abstentions?

Lee Wilson

Guys, guys should check it out too. Bring your chairs. What time is it? Starts at uh. What time does it start?

John Picken

Seven.

Lee Wilson

5o'clock. 567. Same time. Yeah, starts at seven. You're right. Starts at seven because we always set up at six.

Raible

I'm sorry. The date again?

Lee Wilson

It's the first Wednesday of every month.

John Picken

Starting at starting October. Okay. Thank you.

Lee Wilson

If you don't check it out, it's always really professional. Is that it? Oh, the lights. for the stage. Kevin Morris is going to be here. It's our framework and stuff is really sketchy. He's got to do some reinforcements before he can hang the new lights from the structure, the scaffolding, whatever you call it, the frame. Okay. He should be here to want to work on that. Thank you very much. Oh, and I, I am working on getting this place painted again. I got to talk to McCarvie because I got the three different colors that we need to choose. Okay, I'll put that in the city. We'll work on the paperwork to get this place painted. So heads up on that.

John Picken

Thank you.

Speaker 1

That'd be great.

John Picken

Third vice, Kevin Koch.

Kevin Koch

Sir, getting information on oratorical, the debate clubs and things. I will get it out, but I don't know if we'll be sponsoring anybody. You must really go find somebody willing to do it. But it's one of the established programs out of our district. There are only about two posts that have been doing it on a regular basis. I'm getting together to expand what we do but not go overboard on doing some of the ROTC programs and some of the lead. Awards to schools, which is a totally different program, but they do have certificates, medals, and coins, and things like that. So, I'll get in a budget request and a game plan of what schools to target to start it off, see if it works, and to expand it potentially. I was approached by a nonprofit that its costs are like 50,000 a year for soccer, male and female. It's in the area. They're out of Cathedral City High School. They just won a championship in the area, and the person did a nice two-page letter to you guys, which I left in my car. But I think it's worthy to do no community money and spread it around, even if it's a one-time shot. I think 500 or 1,000 to assist them might be a good thing. They cover a lot of people, and a lot of them are military connected. So, I'll make a recommendation next week when I have more information on that. Boy Scouts, which is now Scouting America, girls included. Our guy is in Denmark right now, and his posts have gotten very small, and he's ready to close out. I got in trouble because I'm officially a member. Because in order to sponsor, I must be a member. Do I go to any of the meetings? No, I try to, but they're kind of hidden in just a handful of guys. But they changed the requirement for doing all the child molestation reporter and all that to an annual, and I got it in right at the wire.

They were so they did it, did all the videos, passed it, but in that talking with the people, a new person has taken over the district because I was always trying to go to district meetings and they were changed and canceled for the valley, and they're trying to revamp. And a new person in charge for the whole valley. She set up a meeting with me. She just wants input on what's needed. And I said, "Hey, we're kind of shopping if you've got a group or what, because what's happened? The churches were sponsoring a lot of them, and Latter-Day Saints were involved, the Mormons, but then the lawsuits were affecting them, and so nobody wanted to do it. Well, the wave of lawsuits is kind of over, and they've got way so many safeguards in, but everybody's too, and the Legion always we don't have an issue in sponsoring, and so they were glad. So I have a meeting, and I'll come back with some more feedback, and hopefully we can make an impact on the area. That's all I have currently.

John Picken

Thank you very much. Okay, finance officer is not here. He'll give a report next week, Chaplain. Do you have anything for us, sir? No. Thank you. Board two, Anthony. Do you have anything for us,

Rusanne Anthony

ma'am? Yes, sir. I have next Tuesday's special election will be in ballot, so don't ask me who's running. But it's first by seat is open, and then there's e-board seat open. So we already have candidates. If somebody wants to add somebody, they can write it in on the ballot. But we're just not going to do anything other than that. And it'll be you know pass out ballots. They can fold it in. We'll count it afterwards.

John Picken

How do know that somebody wants to get nominated next week to be put on that ballot, so he's going to have somebody nominate him to be first year.

Rusanne Anthony

So what do I do?

John Picken

That's why I said we bring the copier in here. We can add his name. We can make however many copies we need.

Rusanne Anthony

Okay, I'll bring my computer, so we just print it off. That's fine.

John Picken

Whatever you want to do, and then yeah.

Raible

So I know I throw a little bit of a wrench into it, but to be fair, that person wasn't at the last membership meeting.

Rusanne Anthony

I'll be doing the food for District 21 in September.

John Picken

Okay, perfect. I was going to ask you about that this morning because you weren't there, so that's great. Thank you. No, sorry.

Kevin Koch

Need any help?

Rusanne Anthony

You know, what do you guys think we should do? Just like donuts and coffee?

John Picken

I think donuts, bagels would be just perfect for that.

Kevin Koch

I have some raffle items for us.

Rusanne Anthony

Oh yeah, that's District 21 meetings. They always have a raffle in the back, so that's usually handled by them.

John Picken

I have gift cards. Second, I have a second vice district usually handles the raffles, but you can get them and give them to him. That'll be fine.

Rusanne Anthony

And as far as the Take Care of America Veterans Act, that department just voted to reject it to National. National was promoting it. It's just a bad deal. It's because of Section 108, that removes care for those with tinnitus and sleep apnea. It's not so much veterans, existing veterans that suffer from this. It's for future veterans that removes protection for them to be able to claim it as a disability. So it's Section 108 department is recommending to national to throw it out.

John Picken

I believe on our department website is actually a button someplace on there that you can click on to send a letter to. That's great. I believe. I think I saw something in my email. I've already sent a letter, so I kind of ignored it. But I thought I saw somebody send something out, and it might have been Chris Yates on his

Rusanne Anthony

probably Chris

John Picken

But it should be do a little research if you want to send a letter.

Rusanne Anthony

Push a button and just let your congressperson know that they don't agree with what's going on. I mean, I can bring the thing where you call where you need to call the voice share. I can bring that from membership.

John Picken

That would be great. That would be great too.

Rusanne Anthony

That's it.

John Picken

He board to Webster. Do you have anything for us, sir?

Ron Webster

Thank you.

Ron Webster

I go to the casino probably two, three times a week, and I walk around and everyone with that there because I don't want to spend too much money there. But I I walk around, I notice people with any kind of military attire on it, and I always had like a card from the Legion in my pocket, and a couple of guys have come over here. You've already taken them in as members. Matter of fact, my doctor's assistant- he's one of the members here now. Just recently, what's his name, Paul Herrera or something?

John Picken

Oh, just retired from CFOS.

Ron Webster

Yeah.

John Picken

Yep. Yep. I've signed him up. He got to prove the last general membership meeting.

Ron Webster

Yes. Yeah. So this is what I do. I walk around the field time. Yep. I watch people with the anti-built area tire on, and I'll give them a drive and I'll explain how the membership works and what we're here for.

John Picken

Perfect.

Raible

Yes, sir. The casinos in the area all have a veteran card.

John Picken

You go and apply for your player's card. You tell them you're a veteran. They'll give you the special evidence card, which on certain days gives you \$10 free play.

Speaker 2

Nice.

Rusanne Anthony

Tuesdays at Morongo is free food at the buffet or. Nice.

Allen Lane

Nice to know.

Chaplain

Sounds like is that your board party, right?

Rusanne Anthony

Pardon?

Chaplain

Sounds like that is your board party.

John Picken

Yeah, that sounds good, right? Absolutely, absolutely.

Allen Lane

Our next meeting will be there.

John Picken

Thank you, Ron. Okay, e-board 3, Maggie. Anything for us?

Raible

I certainly do not have anything to report yet.

John Picken

Kevin, you had something?

Kevin Koch

Yeah, sir. I believe, if I'm correct, there's an American Legion recruiting ribbon. We ought to look into that and take care of some of our people that have done a lot of the recruitment.

John Picken

Actually, they just came out with a reminder about that on the State Department last month. They also were doing a recruitment bayonet or knife, the K-bar, little K-bar that says recruitment on it. There you go. That was posted on the website by the past commander of the department. Being a Marine, he wants that K-bar. Okay, Judge Advocate, do you have anything for us, sir. Thank you, service officer Lane. Anything for us?

Allen Lane

I do. Please. I've seen a lot of veterans. Some of them from the Veterans Village, and I will get you a list of those names and email that to you. I have a new request. Someone is asking for a ride to Loma Linda on, and I don't have my notes in front of me. I think it's the 20th. I'd like to make a motion to help that veteran get there?

Lee Wilson

Amvet 66 or Amvet's post.

Allen Lane

Someone else does give them a ride,

John Picken

right?

Allen Lane

Because there is services that offer that, and I'll look into that and see if we can find it. Amvet was doing it for a while, but they're kind of on a down low right now.

John Picken

PSP was doing it from Twenty nine Palms to here. There might be the USO. There might be somebody willing to do it over the U.S.O. at the airport,

John Picken

What was I saying? He's in community service, community care.

John Picken

There's requesting here instead of going to Loma Linda. If you guys don't know, if you if you get all these appointments at Loma Linda, and it's too far to drive, you can ask for community care. They have to give you a local doctor or you know nurse practitioner or PA. It might take a little bit longer. They found me community care in Palm Desert, went there. Nice, simple, easy desert eye and laser. Great place. Great place.

Kevin

A couple more things.

John Picken

Go ahead, Kevin.

Kevin Koch

Just real quick, sir. I'm using the system to help document for a potential VA claim, but I have good health care on the side, being a teacher, I set up an appointment. It was canceled, moved, and then it was a telephone interview only because I couldn't get anybody at Kaplan. And then my follow-up that's been canceled and postponed into reissue, and I'm good. I mean, I've got my own coverage, but if I was that was my sole coverage. Yeah, I'd be going up the wall. It's kind of like all of us veterans had appointments canceled, and their answer, at least to me, was the doctor you had just left.

Raible

Yeah,

John Picken

they went to another facility, or they left the VA completely. But if you get into the community care system-it's going to help you guys a lot and saves your wear and tear on your car driving to Loma Linda. You can still get mileage going to where they send you for community care. Won't be as much, but you got to weigh the good with the bad. Oh gosh, yeah.

Raible

I'm working on community care myself. Yeah.

John Picken

Yeah. Yes.

Allen Lane

I'd like to make that motion as a plan B to offer a ride to him. It'd be the same thing: right

John Picken

I know we voted last time to do that.

Allen Lane

it was going to be \$200 for Uber.

John Picken

Right, but they wouldn't stay, obviously.

Allen Lane

And then you'd have to arrange another ride.

And he bought the veteran lunch.

Allen Lane

I would like to make the motion as a plan B to offer that service to this.

Raible

Do we bring it up at the?

John Picken

Well, we can we can spend up to \$500 at this level.

Raible

I'm just thinking that maybe the membership committee might have a volunteer that would do it.

John Picken

We can ask that.

Allen Lane

I can bring that up absolutely.

John Picken

Okay, but let's get the motion taken care of as Plan B. The motion is for a Plan B to pay for transportation for this veteran to Loma Linda and back. That sound right? The 20th. You think? Thursday. Thursday.

Allen Lane

Yeah. I'd have to look at my notes.

Kevin Koch

Yes, a Thursday. Is this the same individual or a different one?

Allen Lane

Same place, different individual.

Ron Webster

Don't think about that van that meets at Cathedral City that picks up a bunch of veterans and takes them, and they make a stop at North Palm Springs.

Allen Lane

Do you know who that is?

John Picken

The U.S.O. probably know more about that.

Speaker 1

Okay.

Ron Webster

That'd be great.

Raible

I've had an appointment, they talk about that in the appointment. Okay. So that might. But anyway, I support the motion. Okay,

John Picken

we have a motion here. We need a second.

Raible

Second.

John Picken

Maggie seconds. Any other discussion? All in favor.

Everyone

Aye. Aye.

John Picken

Any opposed? Abstentions.

Allen Lane

And then one final thing. I've got a couple of people who are asking for help with money and rent, and my answer to that was to sit with them, get labor ready. It's a temporary service, job service, and I text that to them, call, or have them call, explain that you called, set up your file, if you will, and when they have something available, you can go out and get a job for a day. And a lot of people get-I've gotten a job through temporary services, permanent. So, it does work. A lot of them are happy, especially at the Veterans Village. You must qualify to get in. You must stay qualified. So, they kind of encourage you not to work and not to have, you know.

So, it's a whole thing. A lot of resistance. A lot of people have no talent, you know, no skills. So it's difficult to find them jobs. But they were eager to take the name, labor ready. I know it's in Palm Desert, but I spoke to them, and they are excited about it and willing to take on the clients when they have work, if they qualify for the work and all of that.

I also gave them quite a few opportunities to get a hold of me, you know, in crisis or, you know, when they have other needs, but to answer that, I'm trying to be the source and not the answer, and it's worked out very well.

A lot of the people at the Veterans Village, I had a meeting last Thursday, and about 10 of them attended. A lot of them I'd spoken to previously. Very nice people, just in need of small things. You know, they have clothing, they have shelter, they just need small things. So it's been very great.

I have another one who lives in Cornerstone who's been asking for help, and I'm directing them to other ways. Money is the big request, though.

Kevin Koch

Point of clarification: What's the average rent they're asking for in general? What's their need?

Allen Lane

Usually, it's a couple 100 because they don't have enough of the rent. But I'm working with Brandee. She's the coordinator over at Vets Village. It's not the only source, but it's the concentration of veterans.

Kevin Koch

If you have some one individual or family or person that needs like paper towels from Costco and certain things, 100 or 200 a month, I'd be happy to sponsor someone.

Allen Lane

I thought that would be a great idea to, as we go along periodically, buy supplies and just go over and offer it directly to the veterans. You know, supplies, paper towels, simple things that you know sometimes you don't get.

John Picken

Along with that line, a month ago we voted to do \$100 a month, along with the auxiliary and the sons, to buy toiletries, paper towels, and everything else. So that should be taken care of by, I believe, it's April O'Neil doing that stuff over at the with the auxiliary, and we committed to \$300, \$100 a month. No, might be six months. It's \$100 a month. So I can't remember. It's three months or six months now to buy those things. So if they're not getting those things from us, we need to know about that and find out where that money is going.

Allen Lane

And I'm coordinating with April, we had a request for help with rent, and I spoke to Garth, and he sent me to April, and April got it covered with the money that we're offering. We offered \$496 from the auxiliary. The auxiliary stepped up with that money and helped that veteran pay his rent.

John Picken

Okay. Again, that's what our, to a certain extent, our community funds should be for. We don't want to become the bank of the American Legion.

Allen Lane

I'm trying. I'm trying to deflect that to give them other answers rather than just a piggy bank.

John Picken

Yes.

Rusanne Anthony

Yeah. Are we handing them cash? Are we actually?

John Picken

No, no, no. Garth is coordinating that with the auxiliary by to actually buy the supplies

Rusanne Anthony

Because I wouldn't.

John Picken

No, no. We put that into Garth's hands. They're buying the supplies, and we take them over there, or the auxiliaries taking them over there. Something else I was going to say along those lines. Done.

Raible

It'll return.

John Picken

No sergeant at arms right now. No historian. You said something that kind of sparked my thought, and I don't remember where it was. Okay, I'll get back into that. Okay, so that should be all of the reports. We'll go into committee reports. So, at our House Committee meeting this morning, we went over a number of event requests which we approved, including one. If some of you might know a Billy Erickson, is that right, wrong, Billy Erickson?

Ron Webster

Pardon? Erison, Erikson, Erikson. Oh, Erickson.

John Picken

Okay, we're having a celebration of life for him on next Wednesday. It's going to be during the Wednesday from two till four. Very short. Probably have to get another bartender to help out. That was one that kind of got the ball got dropped by the people who were going to do it. We had two emergency plumbing issues that we handled this month. Two weeks ago, the steam table drain plugged up, and last Saturday due to your urinals backing up. So Bill, our on-call plumber, repaired both. As a side note, he lost his brother this past Saturday, so I'm giving him a few days before I call him for any other plumbing issues.

We also have two things I forgot to mention during our House committee. We had to do an AC repair a week ago, Friday. It was I came in here. They said the AC wasn't working. I got told late. Got told as soon as was on my way here. Should have been notified earlier, but that's me and the bartender is going to talk about that. The we called Esser in on Friday to see what was going on. Apparently, we blew a fuse on the roof for that particular ACs, so they took care of that.

They also recommended that we have a cleaning done up there, and Garth is going to handle that. One of the things that happened last a week ago, Friday, which I didn't bring up in the House committee, and I should have, there was an incident of a member who passed out from dehydration and was shipped off to the hospital? I'm happy to say he's still standing in front of you right now. Oh, all right.

Raible

Wow! I was going to ask, is that you?

John Picken

That was me.

Raible

dehydration.

John Picken

Dehydration, and they were throwing some-I call them PVCs-because of the dehydration. So I've got to keep an eye on that. And I feel fine. I feel fine drinking my water.

John Picken

I used to tell my mom every day, drink your water, mom. My wife and I just got back from Temecula that day. Little wine tasting, a little hot down there too. Of course, you know you drink alcohol, you get dehydrated. So, I ended up at hospital. At the same time, they were trying to fix their AC and all that fun stuff.

Allen Lane

Timing is terrible

John Picken

And while I'm on that thing, I want to say thank you to the volunteers who have been helped serving the food on Fridays. I am going to probably need more volunteers this Friday to serve food dinner. We pick it up at Riccios. We bring it over here. It's been doing well. We're making a little bit money or breaking even on the costs. Danny Riccio has given us a great deal on the food, so we actually make a little bit of money now and then on the week. We've been doing it now for five weeks. Well, 444 out of five weeks. One week the Suns took care of that.

Ron Webster

Sir,

Allen Lane

what are the times on Friday that you need volunteers?

John Picken

We start serving at 5:30 until I pick the food up around 5 o'clock.

Allen Lane

Okay.

John Picken

I may have somebody else pick the food up because of another commitment I might have, so I'll have to figure that out and let people know.

Allen Lane

And that runs until . . .?

John Picken

until the food runs out or they stop buying the meals. Very good. Usually they get done 6:30 at the latest. Oh, okay,

Raible

So that's the pasta and salad thing.

John Picken

Yes, Danny's been changing the pasta every week. Last week we had meatballs and pasta. Week before that we had sausage and peppers. The week before that, I think we had chicken cacciatore.

Allen Lane

He makes good food.

John Picken

It's great.

Thomas

And I can attest, I'm here every Friday. You know my group.

John Picken

Okay. Again, I already talked about district meeting next month. The back bar will be open for members while we have a district meeting going on.

Raible

cool.

John Picken

As you may remember, last month we brought up that there was a investigation being conducted by the police department for an alleged assault in a canteen. The police department has concluded their investigation, and there was no report filed with the DA.

Not enough evidence to substantiate the claim.

So, as far as the post is concerned, we are done with that subject.

Raible

Cool.

Allen Lane

Excellent.

John Picken

kitchen redo. The House Committee already heard this, but those who weren't there has stalled due to the contractor not having the proper insurance coverage. Garth has arranged for a new contractor to start soon. We will continue to offer the Friday dinners and so on.

Now the Suns were going to be serving on September 4 for Nicky D. They have pulled out, so we'll go back to Plan Eight with the Richie. On the 15th, we have karaoke. The writers are going to be cooking for that. They're doing a nacho bar, nacho bar.

John Picken

Yes, Kevin.

Raible

I agree.

John Picken

Thank you very much. The judge advocate and the adjutant will need to get together and discuss the format of that letter. That is the end of the House Committee, and now we'll go into the Membership Committee. Since we do not have a first vice, I've been handling the membership. We've been getting, on average, about a week ago we had 53 renewals. This past week, yesterday we had 25 renewals, and we've had one new member, which I'll mention along with that next week. Total members to the date, 253. This includes 10 new members for the year, which is starting January. It's weird, and then 78 puzzles paid up for lives. So that's where we stand on membership. I am continuing to work my best at

doing the membership as long as I'm as well as doing everything else that I've been going on. Next thing would be communications, website committee. James is excused. Russell, do you have anything along that line?

John Picken

Like Lee Wilson?

Rusanne Anthony

He always does these, you know, lines up all these events, and we should e-blast out the beginning of the month all the events, like the fifth of the month of August, because it does reach about 400 people. It just good communications with our membership, saying, "Hey, we got these things going on here at the post. Send out an email last once a month. The happenings here, what Lee is lined up, and I, you know, it's not that hard to do.

Lee Wilson

The Suns like their beach party thing.

Rusanne Anthony

You know, we can always ask the Suns and auxiliary, "What would you like added? But I think communications, you know, would be huge, would be a boost for us, and it might, you know, entice people to come in and be more active.

John Picken

I agree with you. That is all. Yep,

Raible

I like it.

John Picken

So, do you know how to do that? You guys can coordinate reality for me.

Lee Wilson

Everything's on our Facebook. Right. That's what we've done in the past is we've just extracted what Leah's posted on Facebook.

John Picken

Since we're talking about the email blasts, I had a member coming in today who thought we had a meeting, general membership meeting for an election. Apparently, he didn't get the second corrected email that was sent out.

Rusanne Anthony

I didn't know there was an email that went out about the election.

John Picken

James sent out a splash concerning the election.

Rusanne Anthony

That's right. Yeah.

John Picken

And I gave him the wrong date, and he sent out a correction that same day, which actually Andrea brought up to me on Facebook, and I and I told her I'd already corrected that with Lee when that came out with James. So, I I don't know if there's some of the emails are getting dropped because of the. Amount of emails we're sending out, or just he didn't open the proper email. I don't know. Just something to think about. I don't know.

Rusanne Anthony

But when we eat less, they have the option. There is the option to opt out, so they don't have to receive future emails. But we. It also has analytics where we can see the open rate, and it's generally if we send out to 400, we get about 200 that do open the emails, which I think is a good. Where in comparison to Facebook, you might get 11 or 12 people that will. Right.

John Picken

So, question on that: when they open the email, do you get notified who has opened it, or is it just okay? Okay, we okay to move on to old business. We already talked about the kitchen renovation problems with the contractor. Garth is handling the insurance requirements. What happened was, as I said in the House committee, the original contractor did not have workers' comp for his people. Therefore, we looked at another. We fired him basically and got another contractor who had the same issue. But he has agreed to get workers' comp and was supposed to start this week. I will email Garth tomorrow to find out if he's heard anything from Rick? And I don't know his last name. He's a new contractor. I already talked about the investigation, so that's a dead deal. Any other old business that I need to talk about? I forgot.

Kevin Koch

Question for . . .

John Picken

Kevin.

Kevin Koch

We were approached, mentioned about Ford doing something with us is that passed? Is it still in the pot? Are we doing anything with Ford?

John Picken

James is one who's got that, and he's unfortunately had a death in the family, so he's back.

Kevin Koch

You haven't heard anything more? No, no,

John Picken

I have not.

Kevin Koch

Just curious.

John Picken

Yeah, that's a good point, and we will have to remember to ask about that. Okay, new business election next Tuesday for first vice and for first year e-board.

Hopefully, we have a smooth Transition, and this is where I also have to read correspondence. I was supposed to do this at the last general membership meeting. It's a long letter. Yes gentleman?

Allen Lane

of course. Sorry, before you start, do you have the election committee set up and ready to go for next week?

Rusanne Anthony

Yes, because it's going to be in here during the membership meeting. All we're going to do is pass out ballots and pins, and they're going to vote. We'll collect them.

John Picken

Take a quick 10-minute break, and . . .

Rusanne Anthony

me and anybody else that's not on the election can go and count the ballots.

Allen Lane

Okay, I'll come a little while earlier.

John Picken

5o'clock.

Speaker 2

Pardon?

Lee Wilson

The election is it over at five?

John Picken

No. No,

Rusanne Anthony

it starts at five.

Lee Wilson

Starts at five.

Rusanne Anthony

Yeah.

John Picken

During our general membership meeting.

Allen Lane

It's a little different from last?

John Picken

Not doing the like a regular election. This is a special election that we hold.

Lee Wilson

Yes.

John Picken

During the general membership. If some people had their way, it would have been done at the last general membership meeting, but I didn't feel it was fair to our members to only have a week before to you know the campaign.

Allen Lane

Let everybody participate.

Speaker 1

All right, great.

John Picken

Okay, so this letter is from Ken Hatfield. He's one of our members.

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, that 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 greatly impressed our son. Then your wife Lori came over shortly thereafter and warmly greeted us. This was the exact opposite of what most of our Legion experiences over the past 10 plus years, since we have been members of Post four 19, through three commanders. In the past, we were not greeted, recognized, or given a hello from anyone.

It was somewhat awkward and unfriendly, especially finding out that some of the people there were commanders or officers. Administering election, his initial comment was that if it weren't for our wives being members of the auxiliary, we would not have known that there was a recall vote scheduled. It was explained there were some improprieties that occurred during the last vote, and that all the campaign campaigning was deceased by midnight before election day. We then mentioned that we didn't attend the meetings and events on a regular basis, as we didn't appreciate the negativity in the division of members. It was also said that membership was down, and that our comment was that it was probably for the same reason we had just discussed. I don't know where that membership number came from. That pretty much ended the conversation, and we were told that she had written down our comments and would follow through. Again, thank you for your congenial greeting this morning. It was the first time in a long time that we enjoyed feeling welcome at our post. Best Ken Hatfield member number blah blah blah. This first part of this letter really made me feel very, very good, and I've had numerous people come up to us and say the same thing.

As a side note, I do try to go up to people I haven't seen before and old members and say hi, how you doing, especially on Fridays and Sundays when we're doing our events and stuff like that. Anyways, that's a copy for the adjutant. We're all good there. anything for the good of the post. Anybody got anything?

Raible

I'd like to say real quickly is once we have the first vice, I have heard so many negative things about, you know, just sign here and then, you know, nothing after that to be a member. So I'm thinking that if the first vice could come up with a membership committee and do a lot more outreach offering to give

rise to come down to the post or whatever. So I just want to throw that out there. It bothered me. I made about 70 phone calls, and there were just so many folks that felt like they were encouraged to sign, and then never got any response to any communication.

John Picken

So that's a good point. I will say that we asked for people to volunteer for the membership committee a number of times, and the only person involved was past first vice. And again, he was here once a week, every week, doing the membership stuff. He was overloaded, as I can tell you right now. I'm a little overloaded doing this stuff. There are welcome letters that can be printed out and sent. There are little pins that we can get from National that says "Welcome to the American Legion. I believe at one time we had a bunch of those, but they disappeared. I do not know where they went. That reminded me of something. The next membership chair, which would be the first vice, will have to either address that stuff or, like you said, the other membership.

Raible

Yeah, many hands make light work, and I don't. I never knew About any you know recruitment for a committee, but I just think it would be nice. And some of the older members, like somebody that's been a member for 30 years, invite them for a Friday night dinner, and we comp them for their meal. And maybe give them a little pen or printed certificate. My mentor used to say it costs us nothing except the sleeves off our vest. So, anyway, just some ideas to really-I mean, joining this has been very important to me because, as a veteran, I was not in a good place, and being part of this means everything. And I would just hope that we can, you know, just welcome our brothers and sisters with open arms.

John Picken

Absolutely, absolutely. I appreciate that, Maggie. Mental health is a huge thing for us, the veterans.

John Picken

When we get the new first vice, whomever that may be, that can be something that can be addressed in the near future, and I appreciate it, Kevin. Yes, sir.

Kevin Koch

Point of clarification: membership is 65.

John Picken

65 to the member, we get 20. No, wait a minute. Yeah, we get about 28 dollars. 43 goes to national. \$10 goes to department, and then we, yeah, and now Nashville gets their money right away. We paid department at the end of the fiscal year for the new members. Yes, sir.

Allen Lane

We did start a couple of campaigns. I don't remember if it was you, Lee, or Snow that was doing Facebook. He was helping the first vice, the membership committee, get the word out. You know, so there is there is effort to do that. It is a monumental task, a position that you know we need.

Raible

Well once we get the new first vice, then we can you know get the membership riled up. hoping that this will be the end of the squabbling, and we'll just move on to helping the community.

John Picken

Kevin, one more thing. Yeah,

Kevin Koch

I have over 10 younger individuals connected with the school system that I'm willing to pay for their first year and get them in here. I did a previous. with one person, and he came with his wife on a Friday, and he said, "I'm never going back. It's just old people that are drunk arguing.

John Picken

So I really waiting to get them to re to get this list, and we ended up paying for 10 individuals to get our 100% so I'm waiting to do it. But after hopefully things settle down a little, and we've got some good things going on. But that's a problem that we face. We need to get younger in, or we're going to die on the vine like most posts. Absolutely. And there's so many out there, and but we got to do relevant things and treat them right and be a little more family oriented to make it worthwhile.

Lee Wilson

Agree.

Rusanne Anthony

We do it. Excuse me. One of our members, Andrew Stevens, is a younger, way younger. He wants to do like a gamey thing here. I don't know how. I don't understand any of that.

Allen Lane

I think it's possible. I think it's a good idea. Absolutely. Absolutely.

Chaplain

Video games. Yeah. Yeah.

Allen Lane

Video games.

Kevin Koch

Just some different. You know,

Rusanne Anthony

we're going to do that. Just some different things. Yes. Yes.

John Picken

If I may interject, gaming thing. I know that they brought that up at district or excuse me department a year ago. They had classes and they were talking about it there. I didn't go to that, but I I thought it was a good idea. But it would take some specialized equipment for the gaming that we would have to do, we'd have to get more modern monitors and stuff like that. So, there would be some sort of initial cost, but it's a great idea. Maybe department has resources that might help that.

Rusanne Anthony

So, I was just at department executive committee, and they had vendors there that presented this gaming machine. It's not a gambling machine. It's a gaming machine, and it's free to the post. And it just looks like a arcade game, but it has games on it. Now, here's the deal: you got somebody go up there and monopolize the machine, or what? But I can call these guys and ask them if they.

John Picken

Why not?

Rusanne Anthony

Yeah, I mean it's free.

John Picken

If we can bring in people and it's free, that'd be great. That'd be great. Cool. I know that we years ago before I was here, we had a couple pool tables. We had a shuffle board, and they were actively being used a lot. However, pardon? I remember those. However, there was there was some gambling going on, and the one of the past commanders decided that we were going to get rid of them. I wish they hadn't, but that's where it was. Yeah,

Rusanne Anthony

but gambling, we could lose our ABC license.

Kevin Koch

Exactly. I don't know a movie night, popcorn, and members buy beer.

John Picken

Yeah, We could do that too. Ron?

Ron Webster

I know last year Saint Reese's. I do a lot of work over there, and they started bingo, and it was very successful. Of course, they don't do it in summertime, but in season. Then they have the opening kitchen up in the auditorium behind the church, and people go over there have dinner, and then they have the bingo game, and they have a machine that does it all. And last year was his first year; it was very successful. Instead of that, gambling.

John Picken

If there's money being given out, that's gambling, and here's the other thing. Pardon? You have to get a license from the state. You must get a bingo license, just like a 50/50 license, and just like a raffle license. I see. The state wants their part. Now, what I've heard, and I've never confirmed it, but because we're so close to the casino, they frown upon us doing stuff like that.

John Picken

Now we're a private club. We should be able to do within the legal limits stuff like that, which means getting the licenses and everything else. I one of these days I'll try and get over to Agua chiefs and talk to them more about this. I want to also approach them about donating some money and equipment here. I just a little overwhelmed. I'm overwhelmed. I will tell everybody here two things before we go on. I love the gaming thing, Rusanne. If you can follow up on that, it'd be great. The Boy Scouts. I think we need to get some money to them to see if we can keep them running. Maybe we need they need a new scoutmaster. I don't know.

Kevin Koch

That post looks like it's it's dying. Yeah, they need to they the district to come into the valley and get some new.

John Picken

Have they got any prospective Eagle Scouts? Because we have awards for Eagle Scouts.

Kevin Koch

No, not right now. Yeah, and that's why. And right now he's unable to be even approached. He's in Denmark, not answering.

John Picken

Yeah.

Kevin Koch

Yeah.

John Picken

Okay. Last thing, I forgot to mention this earlier for the Good Post. Our little pod out here. I put some equipment. Our computer that we had in the back bar, our back room. We had given some toys that were given to the post. They were collectibles, and a race car that a gentleman gave us, a model that said American Legion on it. It got broken into. Somebody came out about 2 o'clock, 230 in the morning, a week ago, week and a half ago now, and cut the lock, and then absconded with stuff. I had a video, of the culprits, and I got a call from the detective in charge. They made an arrest. None of our stuff was there, but the car was very distinctive. Didn't belong to the person driving it, but they have made an arrest. They wanted more videos, better, clearer videos, which helped make the arrest. Interesting. They drove a suburban type of vehicle in. They had this blue tank top covering a window. Distinctive blue pulled in, backed up. You see this blue T-shirt on side of the car. Went over the lock, opened it up, then they drove out. Then they came, walked back in, and started taking things out. So an arrest was made. Whether they actually prosecute, hopefully they do. It's good evidence. We're missing, as far as I know, at least \$1,000 worth of items. Didn't take any of the kitchen stuff I had in there. They did take the computer. Probably my bad on my part putt putting it out there, but I was we were trying to get the office cleared out so they can do the remodel. Oh well, that computer was actually donated by two members way back three years ago.

Kevin Koch

Did they clean everything out or leave something?

John Picken

They left all the kitchen equipment we had in there and all the paperwork I had from stuff. So I put a new lock on there, even though the cop says we shouldn't probably put a lock on there. You know, it's going to encourage them to come back. But I have no other place to store this stuff until we can get a shredder or get a shredding company out here to shred a lot of the paperwork.

Anyways, that was that. If there's nothing else to bring before the post, we'll go into our closing ceremony. Please stand up and at attention. Uncover, chaplain, please lead us in a closing prayer.

Chaplain

thank you, God, for our progress and our ability to work together. Thank you, God, for blessing our troops in the Middle East. Bless those who are working for peace. Amen. Amen.

John Picken

Sergeant at Arms, recover, And please recover the POWMIA flag. To even begin, let us remember our obligation to our country can be fulfilled only by the faithful performance of all duties of citizenship. Thus, service to the community, state, and nation be ever a main objective of the American Legion and its members.

Let us ever be watchful of our 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 the flag and salute. Two.

I now declare this meeting the American Legion Post 519 Department of California Executive Committee meeting adjourned.

Minutes by Allen Lane