



## **American Legion**

### **Department of Wisconsin**

### **8<sup>th</sup> District Spring Conference**

***Spring 2013 Conference Minutes    May 18, 2013 @ 0900 hrs    Post 54, Marshfield, WI***

1. District Commander Dan Rindt called the meeting to order at 0900hrs. The colors were posted and all present rendered a hand salute. Chaplain Knauf gave an opening prayer. The POW/MIA flag was placed on the empty chair and First Vice-Commander Krofta read Resolution 228. Second Vice Commander Solberg led the Pledge of Allegiance. Third Vice Commander Young led the Preamble.
2. Commander Rindt declared the meeting open and thanked everyone for their support during the past year. He expressed special thanks to Department Commander Jensen and his team of officers.
3. He then invited Department Commander Jensen to the podium to say a few words. Commander Jensen gave a speech he was scheduled to present at Mount Moriah High School on Memorial Day. He spoke about the dedication and service of Marine Sergeant William Stacy who was killed by an IED explosion during his fourth deployment to Afghanistan. He read a letter written by Sergeant Stacy prior to his death that set out his reasons for serving his country and the cause of freedom around the world. Commander Jensen also spoke about the service and sacrifice of Father Capon, a Chaplain who also sacrificed his life in the line of duty in selfless service and dedication to his comrades in need. He added that the nearly one million American who have died for freedom since the creation of this great country deserve our respect. We need to be there for them, not just as American Legion members but also as American citizens, to support the families of our fallen heroes. Commander Jensen reviewed the history of Memorial Day in our country and urged everyone to remember the service and sacrifice of the heroes that we honor on this great day.
4. Commander Rindt recognized Past National Executive Chairman David Korth, Past Department Commander Jim Reigel, Department Vice Commander Ken Renes, Past Department Vice Commanders Cathy Gorst, Frank Wozniak, Don Southworth, and Past District Commanders Jensen and Mader. Finally, he recognized Past Wisconsin 40/8 Chef de Gar Don Janke.
5. Commander Rindt introduced Bob Shappell, candidate for Department Vice-Commander, who spoke about his qualifications for office.
6. Commander Rindt then introduced Commander Chuck Roloff, candidate for Department Commander, who spoke about his qualifications for office.
7. Commander Rindt introduced David Wischer, candidate for Department Sergeant at Arms, who spoke about his qualifications for office.

8. Commander Rindt also introduced Ken Renes, candidate for Department Commander, who spoke about his qualifications for office. He also presented a \$100 check to Clintonville Post 63 for winning his membership challenge. Post 63 turned in the most memberships at the 2013 Spring Conference.
9. Commander Rindt then asked Penney Joren, representative of 8<sup>th</sup> District Auxiliary President Lori Barber, to say a few words. Lori welcomed everyone to the Conference, and expressed her thanks to Commander Rindt for his support of Auxiliary activities during the past year.
10. The roll call of Posts was taken by the Adjutant with 52 Legionnaires from 20 Posts in attendance.
11. Roll call and determination of a quorum was completed by Adjutant Arien Herminath with the following results:

Members present: Commander Rindt, 1st Vice-Commander Krofta, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Commander Solberg, 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice Commander Young, Finance Officer Jensen, Adjutant Herminath, Chaplain Knauf, Historian Southworth, Parliamentarian Van Ryzin, Sgt-at-Arms Winter, County Commanders Borchardt, Vandre, Olsen, Jaeger, Czarnecki, and Fregien.

Members excused: Sergeant at Arms Baierl

Members absent:

12. Finance Report:  
Finance Officer David Jensen presented the district financial report. A motion was made and seconded to accept the report as presented. All in favor, motion passed.
13. District Officer Reports:
  - a. Commander Rindt spoke about his activities during the past six months. He informed the attendees that he is a candidate for Department Vice-Commander and asked for their support. Cathy Gorst made a motion to have the 8<sup>th</sup> District support Commander Rindt's candidacy. The motion was seconded, and approved unanimously.
  - b. 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Commander Krofta deferred his comments until later.
  - c. 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Commander Solberg spoke about his activities during the past six months.
  - d. 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice Commander Young spoke about his activities during the past six months.
  - e. Adjutant Herminath spoke about the mylegion8.org website and the support that it affords Post and County officers in the 8<sup>th</sup> District. He also asked the Posts and Counties to submit their 2013-2014 officer election reports as soon as possible. 8<sup>th</sup> District Auxiliary newsletters may also be found on the 8<sup>th</sup> District website. He asked for approval of the minutes for the 1212 8<sup>th</sup> District Fall Conference. A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes, the motion passed.
  - f. Chaplain Knauf reviewed his activities during the past six months.
  - g. Parliamentarian Van Ryzin reported on his activities during the past six months.
  - h. Historian Southworth will give his report this afternoon.
  - i. Sergeants at Arms Winter had nothing to report.

A motion was made and seconded to accept the above reports. All in favor, the motion passed.
14. Commander Rindt invited the featured speaker, Past Department Commander Jim Reigel, to the podium. Commander Reigel opened by speaking about an infirmity, MDS, he is suffering from. He spoke about his future treatment regime, which includes chemo and a marrow transplant. Commander Reigel then spoke about the impact of the American Legion in our communities. He also spoke about the programs supported by the Wisconsin American Legion that benefit veterans in our State, the scholarship programs that we provide to our children, the funeral honors that we perform for our fellow veterans now passed away, the activities we provide our veterans through Camp American Legion, the blood and volunteer hours donated by our members, and the Boy Scout units that we sponsor. Every legionnaire who participates in the above activities plays an important role in his or her community and has an impact.

15. A representative of the Marshfield Historical Society spoke about an upcoming speaking engagement at the newly-formed Marshfield Military Museum featuring a survivor of the Bataan death march. She invited the legionnaires to attend this special event to honor the memory of those who suffered and died during the Bataan death march and to meet an American hero who survived this terrible event.
16. At 11:30, Commander Rindt adjourned the meeting for lunch with a salute to the colors. He called the meeting back to order at 1300 with a salute to the colors.
17. County Commander Reports:
  - a. Marathon County Commander Pat Borchardt gave a report of Marathon County Post activities during the past six months.
  - b. Portage County Commander Dave Vandre gave a report of Portage County Post activities during the past six months.
  - c. Shawano-Menomonie County Commander Olsen gave a report of Shawano-Menomonie County Post activities during the past six months.
  - d. Waupaca County Commander Jim Jaeger gave a report of Waupaca County Post activities during the past six months.
  - e. Waushara County Commander Marty Czarnecki gave a report of Waushara County Post activities during the past six months.
  - f. Wood County Commander Ronald Fregien gave a report of Wood County Post activities during the past six months.

A motion was made and seconded to accept the above reports. All in favor, the motion passed.

18. District Committee Chairman Reports:

- a. Americanism Jerome Krofta  
The A&G Test Program has been redesigned as the A&G Scholarship Program. It is now offered on line and over 4,000 students participated this year. The 8<sup>th</sup> District is in need of an Oratorical Chairman.
- b. Badger Boys State Jim Jaeger
- c. Communications Vern Pitt
- d. Camp American Legion Jim Jaeger  
The camp has a new family cabin. There are nine special activity weeks scheduled this year, one week is dedicated to blind people while another is for care keepers who serve veterans.
- e. Children and Youth Ron Fregien  
There is an initiative to combine the Department Americanism and Children and Youth Committees.
- f. Convention and Activities Gary Mader  
The 2015 Department Convention will be in Appleton, the 2016 Convention will be in Madison, and the 2017 Convention will be in Eau Claire.
- g. Finance Don Southworth  
He spoke about a recommendation to combine the Department Finance and Fund Raising Committees at the Department Convention.
- h. Historians Report (Deferred from this morning) Don Southworth  
Commander Southworth reported that he received third place for his 2012 Post yearbook. He added that he would not serve as Department Historian during the upcoming year and encouraged legionnaires to run for the position.
- i. Legionnaire Trust Fund (Special report) Don Southworth  
Commander Southworth encouraged everyone to call LIT, check to see if they are current and sign up for the free insurance it offers. USAA would like to introduce a program to replace the LIT program currently endorsed by the Department of Wisconsin. He gave a comparison of the benefits of both

programs to the Department of Wisconsin, a comparison that appeared to favor continued endorsement of the LIT program over the USAA replacement program.

- j. Department Service Officer Report (Special report) Don Southworth  
Finally, Commander Southworth gave a Department Service Officer report on good things that our Department Service Officers do for our veterans and encouraged all legionnaires to refer veterans to them for help with their VA-related issues and problems.
- k. Fund Raising Rick Klotzbuecher  
He reminded Legionnaires to participate in the convention sweepstakes program.
- l. Homeless Vets David Jensen  
He asked the Sergeant at Arms to pass the shell which resulted in the collection of \$102.50. He also reminded the legionnaires of the need for financial, clothing and food stuff donations (coffee/snacks) for the homeless vets at King.
- m. Hospital Gary Mader  
King has a new Commandant. Several buildings are also undergoing sprinkler system, ventilator system and elevator upgrades. The chapel is also undergoing a significant renovation.
- n. King Day Pilgrimage Dan Rindt  
King Day will be held on June 16, Father's Day. The National 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Commander will be the keynote speaker. Donations to provide chicken dinners for residents can be sent to the Post 161 Auxiliary.
- o. King Day Parade Jerry Krofta
- p. King Publicity Dan Rindt
- q. Legislative Kathy Horst  
The Department Legislative Committee is working to be more proactive on legislation. She outlined the contents of several bills related to veteran-related issues and Department support or opposition to the legislation. She also outlined the Legislative Committee's position on a number of current finance-related initiatives that affect veterans.
- r. Membership and Post Activities Committee Jerry Krofta  
Of the 46 Posts in the 8<sup>th</sup> District, 9 have reached 100% membership. They include: Arpin Post 475, Bowler Post 514, Caroline Post 456, Rosholt Post 509, Rothschild Post 492, Rudolph 485, Mattoon Post 287, Manawa Post 226, and Marion Post 198. The 2014 8<sup>th</sup> District membership cards will be handed out on King Day, 16 June.
- s. National Security Jim Young
- t. Policy and Resolutions Gene Van Ryzin  
He spoke about the need for good leadership, active members, and well organized programs at all levels of the American Legion. Focus on any one area to the detriment of any other area weakens the whole.
- u. POW/MIA Sam Solberg  
He spoke about the return of the body of a Wisconsin MIA and his burial on one of the Apostle Islands.
- v. Public Safety Jim Young
- w. Religious Emphasis LeRoy Knauf
- x. VA and Rehabilitation Kathy Horst  
She spoke about the activities at the last meeting of this committee. They support legislative initiatives to have the state set quotas for the hiring of disabled veterans. She also spoke about the importance of helping veterans in need contact support offices, stressing that the suicide rate for veterans is high. She also stressed the need to help unemployed veterans as the lack of employment leads to a feeling of hopelessness and despair. She encouraged the Legionnaires to refer veterans

who are not getting the service they need locally to the Department Service Officer for assistance. She then spoke about a proposal to combine the Department VA&R and Legislative Committees. This was because the Legislative Committee often did not have a quorum. This, she stressed, is not currently the case as the Legislative Committee has been meeting with a 100% attendance. She spoke of a bill opposed by the Wisconsin American Legion that would have made it more difficult for veterans to claim disability for mesothelioma-related injuries.

19. District Program Director Reports:

- a. Americanism and Government Testing                      Arien Herminath  
Around 300 8<sup>th</sup> District students participated in this year's on-line program. Participating high schools included Wisconsin Rapids, Wild Rose, Tomah, Stevens Point, Wittenberg, New London, Manawa, Pittsville, Mosinee, Omro, Cecil, and Bernamwood. The 8<sup>th</sup> District had two state winners in this year's program. They included a Junior and Senior from Wild Rose High School.
- b. Baseball                                                              Jim Young  
He spoke about the security checks that all advisors have to obtain this year. He reviewed the content of several baseball-related resolutions that will be presented at the Department Convention.
- c. Boy Scouts                                                              Lyle Freiberg
- d. Blood Donor                                                              Nick Blaske
- e. County Youth Government                                      Arien Herminath  
Frank Wozniak reported on the Shawano County program. Arien Herminath reported on the Waupaca County program.
- f. Oratorical                                                              Wayne Winter  
He reported that a representative of the Shawano Community School District won this year's 8<sup>th</sup> District Oratorical Contest. A representative from Wild Rose High School took second place. He suggested that the current practice of awarding the winner \$400, the second place finisher \$250, and the third place finisher \$100 be modified. He would like to consider awarding the winner \$300, second place finisher \$200, third place finisher \$100, and \$50 for the fourth, fifth, and sixth place finishers should we have that many contestants. Currently, any candidate that finishes lower than third in the contest does not receive any money for participating.
- g. SAL Liaison                                                              Robert Hoffman
- h. Shooting Sports                                                              Jim Young  
He spoke about his efforts to start a program at Clintonville Post 63. He is looking into obtaining funding for 4-5 pellet rifles and has the interest of Boy Scout leaders for a shooting sports program. Having obtained participant interest, he is moving on to gain the support of parents, line up volunteer support to help run the program, and gain support of the public for the program.  
A motion was made and seconded to accept the Committee and Program Director reports. All in favor, the motion passed.

20. Old Business:

- a. Consolidated Post, Children and Youth and VA & R reports: Every post is to turn in the above three reports by 01 June. Adjutants and Commanders are to get these reports in.
- b. Commander Rindt suggested that Legionnaires use the Department and 8<sup>th</sup> District website to locate forms and guidelines for completing the above reports.
- c. He also requested that the posts and counties submit updated officer and committee member information as soon as their elections are completed. This information is needed to update current 8<sup>th</sup> District contact information for its mailing list and for website reference purposes.
- d. Finally, Commander Rindt encouraged all Legionnaires to continue to work on membership.

21. New Business:

- a. Commander Rindt said that New London Post 263 submitted an application to host the 2013 8<sup>th</sup> District Fall Conference. As no other Post submitted an application, he asked for a motion to award the Fall Conference to Post 263. A motion was made and seconded to that effect, the motion passed.
  - b. No vote was called for at this time, but Commander Rindt reported that two posts, Wisconsin Rapids Post 442 and Rothschild Post 492 had expressed interest in hosting the 2014 8<sup>th</sup> District Spring Conference.
  - c. Commander Rindt asked for volunteers to serve as Committee Representatives and Ballot Clerks at the upcoming Department Convention in Appleton. The following Legionnaires volunteered to serve as Committee Representatives: Krofta (Americanism); Fregien (Children and Youth); Jaeger (Constitutional Amendments); Southworth (Finance); Gorst (Legislative); Krofta (Membership); Young (National Security); Herminath (Resolutions); and Olsen (Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation). Legionnaires Jensen, Zapka and Fregien, volunteered to serve as ballot clerks.
  - d. Commander Rindt reminded Legionnaires of the 8<sup>th</sup> District Caucus meetings at 7:30 a.m. on the 19th and 20th of July at the Department Convention. He asked for maximum representation to pick up the Administrative Manual updates for the Posts.
  - e. Commander Rindt said that Legionnaires who would like to serve on District and/or Department Committees should submit the appropriate forms for signature prior to the District Convention.
  - f. Commander Rindt then asked for the names of Legionnaires who planned to serve as delegates at the National Convention in Houston, TX or serve as an Alternate Sergeant-at-Arms. Legionnaires Gorst and Rindt expressed interest in serving as National Delegates representing the Department. We did not have a volunteer to serve as Alternate Sergeant-at-Arms.
  - g. Commander Rindt reviewed the names of 8<sup>th</sup> District Legionnaires serving on Department Committees and confirmed that they wanted to continue to serve as committee members.
22. Commander Rindt introduced Past Department Vice-Commander Southworth for the election of 2013-2014 8<sup>th</sup> District officers. He listed the candidates as Jerry Krofta for Commander, Sam Solberg for 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Commander, Jim Young for 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Commander, Ron Fregien for 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice Commander, David Jensen for Finance Officer, Frank Wozniak for Chaplain, no candidate for Historian, Kathy Gorst for Parliamentarian, Jim Jaeger for Sergeant at Arms, Mike Zapka for Sergeant at Arms, and Dan Rindt will serve as Past Commander. The above officers were elected unanimously.
23. The 8<sup>th</sup> District Chaplain led the Conference in a Memorial Service for our departed comrades. The Legionnaires then stood at attention and observed a moment of silence.
24. There being no further business to come before the meeting, Commander Rindt declared the meeting adjourned at 1500 hours.

Respectfully submitted by: Arien Herminath, 8<sup>th</sup> District Adjutant