



S.A.L. General Membership Meeting Minutes – September 2016

On September 21, 2016 the monthly meeting of the Sons of the American Legion Veterans Memorial Squadron 347 was held at 7:00 PM in the Post 347 Hall.

Membership cards were checked at the door. There were 21 members, including 1 new member, in attendance. 11 Officers were in attendance; Bill Preston, Gary Bishop, George Worton, Ben Kiselica, Bill Gray, Doug White, Danny Adams, Cory Meloni, Richard Duncan, and Butch Stroud. DeanoMosingo, Bill Spriet, and Jack Dirga were not present with excused absences.

Commander Bill Preston opened the meeting at 7:00 PM. Acting Sgt at Arms 'Radar' performed the POW/MIA Chair Ceremony. The Pledge of Allegiance was followed by a moment of silence for our fallen comrades and Veterans, and the reciting of the Preamble to the national Constitution by the members. The Commander noted that Legion 1st Vice Commander Al Varrone was in attendance.

Adjutant Doug White made a motion to accept the minutes from the August General Membership meeting as emailed to membership, and posted on the meeting room door; motion seconded by Gary Bishop. Discussion followed: Richard Duncan felt the minutes should be read aloud. The motion was Approved.

New Business:

2nd Vice Commander George Worton discussed the upcoming fundraising event, the Crab Race. Requested that members actively sell tickets to the event, since less than 100 have been sold so far. It is hoped that a total of 250 tickets will be sold.

George also discussed the carnival event held at the ARC Sunrise in Leesburg. Several Sons' members volunteered and we made a \$250 donation to help support the event.

George mentioned that there is an on-going need for volunteers for the Thursday night dinner service; also for Sunday NFL kitchen duty.

George also discussed that the Sons would like to purchase a banner for use at Special Olympics events, as well as begin selling stuffed owls as a Special Olympics fundraiser. Judge Advocate Danny Adams motioned that we purchase the banner for \$75; seconded by Gary Bishop. Discussion followed: Gary Bishop noted that Special Olympics is a Detachment Commander priority project for this year; the Commander stated the banner is made of a durable material and is expected to last for a long time. The motion was approved. Richard Duncan motioned to purchase the initial supply of 25 stuffed owls at a cost of \$10 each; seconded by Gary Bishop. Discussion followed: It was noted that we would sell the owls for \$20, making a \$10 profit on



each one. Motion was approved with one abstention by Danny Adams due to potential conflict of interest.

1st Vice Commander Gary Bishop discussed the desire of the Squadron Executive Committee to hold an initiation ceremony for new members and 5-year anniversary members and issue membership pins. This was a tradition in the past but was stopped about two years ago. There have been about 100 new members since the practice of issuing membership pins was stopped. Cory Meloni motioned to purchase (75) 1st-year pins and (25) 5-year pins at a cost of \$8.95 each; seconded by 'Radar'. Motion passed.

1st Vice Commander Gary Bishop reported on membership progress. Since the last meeting there were 4 new members applications received and 1 transfer member. Gary Bishop made a motion to accept the new member applicants into the Sons Squadron; seconded by Corey Meloni. The motion was Approved. New member Gary Welch was introduced and recognized. He made a brief statement that he joined the Squadron to honor his father's service during WWII.

Gary Blanchard was recognized to discuss the upcoming Crab Race fundraising event. He emphasized the need for more ticket sales and that flyers need to be posted at local businesses. He will provide some flyers tonight to be posted in the area. He mentioned that there are enough volunteers to run the event.

Past Commander Richard Duncan was recognized to discuss the upcoming Halloween Dance event. The dance will be held on October 29th at the Legion Hall beginning at 5 PM. Flyers are ready to be distributed and that will occur immediately after the Crab Race event is over so as not to overlap the ticket sales activities. The cost is \$12 per person and costumes are not required to be worn; however prizes will be given for best costume and other superlatives. Tickets can be purchased individually or for a table of 10. The entertainment is a popular local singing duo, Danny and Johnny; see a sample of their work here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uq7VWHEf9AE>. Richard requested the members to loan out some Halloween decorations for the event; no straw please. All borrowed decorations will be returned.

Our Thursday night chef, Angelo Speziale, was recognized. He noted that the Thursday night table shuffleboard in the lounge will be starting up again soon. He wanted to know if the players were allowed to bring in their own food in competition with the Thursday night dinner service. Charly McGlone was recognized and said that the shuffleboard group is not allowed to bring in their own food, except for their 1-time event, their end-of-season party.

Bill Gray was recognized to discuss the upcoming Legion golf tournament. He says Gary Bouchamp, a past Legion Commander, relayed to him that there are 35 foursomes signed up.



Bill also stated that Mr. Bouchamp has suffered a health setback. Gary Blanchard was recognized to state that Len Biederman has had some major surgery and is recovering. The Commander requested that the Chaplain send a get-well card to both men.

Youth Activities Chairman Matthew Duncan was recognized to discuss the recent visit by his High School JROTC Lead Instructor Sergeant Major Michael Kelson to the Squadron's Executive Committee meeting. The Weir HS JROTC program is in need of outside support to enhance its activities for the 270 students. The Adjutant Doug White read a letter from the Sergeant Major detailing a list of items he would like to have donated. At the top of the list was a 5'x8' enclosed trailer with graphics to transport honor guard and competition items for various class activities. The Commander stated that we was personally going to donate one of the items, a flag set, and he will be sending a check to the Sergeant Major. Gary Blanchard says he will help publicize the group by having the Legion's military radio channel run a public service announcement and maybe a story. Commander stated that if we decide to donate items from the list we should have them labeled as coming from the Sons' organization. Legion 1st Vice Commander Al Varrone was recognized and stated that he is familiar with the Lake Weir HS JROTC program and that the Legion has recently approved a donation of \$1,000 to assist their program. Bill Gray was recognized and asked if there is money in our budget to help support the JROTC program; the Commander said due to recent changes in the list of supported organizations he believed there were sufficient funds available to be allocated if the Executive Committee and the membership approve. Richard Duncan motioned to fund the program but it was pointed out by the Commander that it first needed to be considered by the Executive Committee.

Correspondence received was read by Adjutant Doug White:

- 1) Letter of thanks from ARC Sunrise of Central FL for the \$250 donation and other support received from the Squadron.
- 2) Letter from The American Legion Child Welfare Foundation thanking the Squadron for its donation of \$2,000.
- 3) Letter of thanks from Bonnie Miller with the Junior Volunteer program at the VA.
- 4) Letter from the Villages Honor Flight, Inc thanking the Squadron for its donation of \$2,500.

Al Varrone was recognized to discuss several upcoming issues:

- The Legion is once again holding a monthly breakfast on the 2nd Saturday beginning October 10th and running through April 8th.
- October 16th is the Legion's initiation ceremony for new members. Mr. Varrone is inviting officers of The Sons organization to attend if they wish to see how their ceremony is run and to maybe make a small pitch to encourage Legion members to apply for dual membership.



- December 18th is the Post's early bird dinner for those Legion and Sons' members who renewed prior to 11/11/16. The Sons' Adjutant will be notifying paid-up early bird members via email in mid-November.

The meeting was properly close at 8:04PM with a closing prayer by the Chaplain and the retirement of the POW/MIA flag by Acting Sgt at Arms.

Yours in God and Country,
Doug White, Adjutant