

**AMERICAN LEGION POST 88  
GENERAL MEETING  
MINUTES  
19 February 2024**

Ernie Martin	Tyrone Richard	Myles Houseberg	Lynn Crandal
Carl Ellison	Joe Gill	Don Hunter	Fred Zacher
Harley McPeek	Sal Cenicacelaya	Matt Beatty	Dennis Wishon
Jennifer Lester	Angela Maness	Wayne Brock	George Ermeling
Tammie Richard	Linda Johnston	Donald Underwood	Matt Watson

**Opening Ceremonies**

1. Colors
2. Opening Prayer
3. POW/MIA Table Presentation
4. Pledge of Allegiance
5. Preamble

**Call to Order:** 1900

**Recognition of New Members:** Fred Zacher, Myles Houseberg

**Post Deaths:** Thomas Woolam

1. Commander Martin performed the graveside service at Ft. Sill at 1300 hours on Friday, 2/23/2024.

**Sick Call:** Don Schulenberg

**Good News:** Chaplain Don Hunter has survived heart surgery and has returned to duty at Post 88

**American Legion Auxiliary Fundraiser:**

1. The Auxiliary will hold a Chili Dinner from 1730-1900 hours before our March 18<sup>th</sup> meeting. The price is \$10 per meal. The funds will go towards scholarships to Girls State costing \$300 each: Parents will pay \$200 and the Auxiliary will pay the remaining \$100.

**Service Officer's Report:**

1. Post 88 Veterans Service Officers(VSO) obtained \$6,067,329 in VA Benefits for our Vets in calendar 2023, including 37 Dependents Indemnity Claims for surviving spouses.

2. In 2023, we served 600 visitors, including a veteran who received \$190,000 for his disability claim.

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3. Carl Ellison reported that Tammie Richard and Jennifer Lester recently received VSO Accreditation. Sal Cenicacelaya and Angela Maness have begun VSO training. Anyone interested in serving as a VSO should contact Carl Ellison.
4. Carl urged members to conduct Buddy Checks to encourage participation by our members and to invite missing members to renew their dues.
5. Carl reported that Post 88 members recorded over 6,000 Service Hours in 2023. Service Hours reported provide critical data to VA for requesting funding from Congress.
6. Joe Gil moved for acceptance of the VSO Report, Sal Cenicacelaya seconded and approval was unanimous.

#### **Finance Officer's Report:**

1. Joe Gil presented the Finance Report for last month.
2. Members' dues provide the base of our operating expenses; however with the membership renewal of only 259 of 451 members, we need other sources of income, i.e. donations and fundraising activities.
3. George Emerling moved for approval and Tyrone seconded the motion. The approval was unanimous.

#### **General Discussion**

1. Angie Maness reminded us that the Marine Corps League needs Toys for Tots donations all year, not just October-December. The Marine Corps Reserve's Toys for Tots have provided a donation box for year round giving.
2. Linda Johnston suggested that we could monitor retailers for donations and that we can purchase discount items for donations.

#### **Commander's Construction Report:**

1. Commander Martin detailed the progress of construction and the remaining work ahead. Phase 2 of the construction continues. We need to buy & install a kitchen, get needed electrical repairs, refurbish our flag pole and chairs for our VSO's and staff.

#### **Commander's Discussion:**

1. Membership renewals as of this date are 320 out of 45. We need only to renew 435 members to reach 100%. We have 78 from 2023, 52 still unrenewed from 2022. The Post has had 12 transfers this fiscal year, 26 deceased, and 7 new members. The Post is to be at 90% before 15 March and we are at 73.56%. Some members have died, but we don't know about it; we get no answers from attempted contacts.

2. We now have tickets for the annual Gun Raffle. We keep \$5 from each \$10 ticket we sell. The drawing will be at the Convention in January, 2024. 3. The Lexington Baptist Church thanked us for our donated clothes which they in turn donate, cost free, to the needy.

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4. Boys State needs to work on the agenda for the event in May 2024. 400 boys to attend. We want to send 5-6 juniors to Boys State 2024.
5. Thanks to all who attended the Mid-Winter Conferences in January.
6. Thanks to everyone in Post 88 for all you have done to make Post 88 one of the best in the state.
7. We need to discuss methods of fundraising this year. Perhaps we could have quarterly Bean/Pasta/Spaghetti meals. The Classic Swing Band are willing to donate a dance at the Post on April 13<sup>th</sup> or 27<sup>th</sup>, May 18<sup>th</sup> and June 15<sup>th</sup>.
8. We are working on getting Easter baskets for CFI. Angie Maness suggested trying to get a grant to fund the baskets.
9. Steven Sibley from Senior News and Living OK wants to set up a Veterans Resource Fair at Post in early April.
10. Angie Maness suggested that we participate in The Gun Show at the Oklahoma County Fair Ground on March 9-10. The cost of \$55 per table would allow us to set up a space for VSOs to serve veterans with VA claims. We could also sell American Legion Gun tickets. Dennis Wishon moved, Don Hunter seconded and approval was unanimous.
11. Brett Martin, American Legion Department of Oklahoma Commander announced that our state headquarters has moved to new quarters at Post 12, saving the rent costs and replacing paid employees with volunteers.
12. American Legion dues will increase by \$5 on 1 July....but post 88 will not raise the dues.
13. Linda Johnston noted that AARP Foundation will have a tax aid site at the Well in Norman on Mondays from 5-8 pm.
14. Sal Cenicacelaya introduced us to Flag Poles Honoring Our Veterans is a 501 (c) (3) Founded in 2020 by Kevin and Ginger Blake from Moore Oklahoma. Website: [www.FPHOV.org](http://www.FPHOV.org). FPHOV provides flag pole, solar light and ensign all installed at 100% no cost to the nominated Veteran. Criteria for nominating a veteran is: 1. Honorably Discharged  
2. Must be the property owner.

**Good for the Order**

**Adjourned: 2040 hours**

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/American-Legion-Post-88-161945187156461> Email address: [KochAbbott88@att.net](mailto:KochAbbott88@att.net)

**Next meeting will be Monday, 18 March 2024 at 1900 hours.**