**Del Webb Naples Veteran’s Club Meeting**

**Friday, January 8, 2021**

**delwebbnaplesveterans.com**

**President: Joseph Tillman**

**First Vice President: Bob Greiss**

**Second Vice President: Ed DeMaio**

**Treasurer: Rick Bachofner**

**Secretary: Helen Scorsone**

**Advisors: Bill Kaufmann Joe Rivera Jim Brodie Tracy Sunderlage**

**John Alfonso Bobby White**

The Meeting was called to order by Joseph Tillman, President at 4 PM.

The Pledge of Allegiance was said by all.

There were no new Members or Guests in attendance.

Joe Tillman requested a motion to approve the Minutes from the December 5, 2020 Meeting. Motion made and approved.

Rick Bachofner provided a current Treasurer Report: 11/30/2020 Check Book Balance was $14,305.36. December total deposits amounted to $1,600.00. Total checks written in December amounted to $4,521.50. Monies allocated were $2,315.00 that included the Memorial Fund, 2021 Steak Dinner, Veterans Cup Challenge, 2021, and Honor Flights. Available balance for general expenses is $9,068.86. Check book balance, 12/31/2020 was $11,383.86.

Rick reminded the Membership that dues for 2021 are now due.

Ed DeMaio gave an update on the “Diaper Drive” for the families in Immokalee. This December over 10,000 diapers were collected, and several thousand baby wipes and other baby related items were also among the donations. Total combined collection from June, 2020 and December, 2020 for the families in Immokalee amounted to over 20,000 diapers. Ed thanked the Members of the Veteran’s Club and residents of Del Webb for their generosity. Ed is hoping to have another “Diaper Drive” in December, 2021. He will propose this “Diaper Drive” to the Veteran’s Club again at a future Meeting. He is hoping to make this an annual event because it was well received by the community and our Club. Ed thanked Joe Tillman for sending out a thank you note to all Del Webb Residents for their generosity.

Bill Kaufmann informed the Members that the “Golf Tournament Fund Raiser” will be April 10, 2021. This is the Saturday after Easter. Bill reminded the Membership that this Tournament is our largest source of funds to support the vision mission of our Club. Bill informed the Members that his Committee will start next week to actively go out and solicit the sponsors from previous years and new hole sponsors and players. Bill asked the Membership to let him know or anyone on his Committee know if there is a business, etc. that they might use who would be interested in a sponsorship. Damian will be working with the Committee to obtain sponsorship from venders of Panther Run and for Pulte. Bill is hoping for more Gold, Silver, and Bronze sponsorship. Not only will these sponsorships get a pendant flag on the first tee, the Gold sponsor will get two teams included and this is a donation of $1,00 or more, the Silver sponsors get one team included and is a donation of $750 or more and Bronze sponsors with a donation of $500 minimum will also get one team included. Bill is hoping that COVID will be “winding down” and more players will participate in the tournament. Bill told the Membership that Damian is willing to go to Hampden and solicitate contacts from Hampden Clubs in the area to submit players for teams. This year the Committee is hoping to go to different Golf Clubs and talk to their Golf Association to get players for our tournament. Bill wants our Committee to go to both men and women’s associations to obtain players. Bill emphasized that any input from the Membership would be greatly appreciated. Bill emphasized that no Member will be asked to solicit themselves if they do not feel comfortable. The Tournament Committee will be happy to follow-up on any contacts given by Members. Bill reminded the Membership that over $40,000 has been raised and distributed to needy and homeless Veterans from having the Golf Tournaments. Bill will continue, at each Meeting, to give the Membership an update on the “Golf Tournament Fund Raising”.

Joe Tillman asked Bill Kaufmann if the Golf Tournament Committee is planning a luncheon after the Tournament. Bill said this is still to be determined due to the COVID restrictions.

Joe Tillman asked for as many Members as possible to help in any way possible with the fund raising for the Golf Tournament.

Ed DeMaio showed a banner that was designed by Bobby Pitts for Joe LaMothe that is in honor of WWII Veterans. Bobby Pitts did an outstanding job with the design.

Ed DeMaio showed the new flag that represents our new branch of service, “Space Force” that will be displayed with the other branches of service at the Golf Tournament and other events for our Veteran’s Club. The men and women that serve in this new branch of the military are call “Guardians”.

Joe asked for a motion to donate 25 backpacks for the “Point In Time Count” organized by the “Hunger and Homeless Coalition” of Collier County. Last month Joe asked for a vote to donate backpacks to the “Wounded Warriors of Collier County”. The vote was narrowly voted in favor of this donation, but Joe was not comfortable going ahead with the donation of the 25 backpacks. (see detailed information about this matter in the December 5, 2020 Veteran’s Club Minutes) Joe told the Membership that he found out that the “Hunger and Homeless Coalition” of Collier County runs the “Point In Time Count”. Wounded Warriors helped the Coalition on the Veterans side. The “Hunger and Homeless Coalition” is a 501-C3 and sponsored by the state of Florida and the “Department of Children and Families”. They have an excellent website for those who would like to read more about their work in the community. With Bob Wheeler and Ed DeMaio’s help, our donation of the 25 backpacks will be made directly to the “Hunger and Homeless Coalition” of Naples. We will bring the backpacks directly to them. Joe stated that he stills supports this project strongly. Ed DeMaio, with the help of Bob Wheeler, corrected the misinformation that we were previously donating directly to the Wounded Warriors. We donated directly to the “Hunger and Homeless Coalition”, a non-profit organization. There are two objectives on January 29, 2021: 1. To go out and look for all homeless people. 2. THE Wounded Warriors of Collier County and any of our representatives from our Club has the responsibility to identify homeless Veterans at the time of the “Point In Time Count”. The Wounded Warriors will then distribute the backpacks and a flag to those Veterans in need. John Shaffer proposed a suggestion that if all 25 backpacks were not given out to homeless Veterans, why not donate the remaining backpacks to the “Hunger and Homeless Coalition” to give out to anyone in need. Bob Wheeler said that last year there were a few backpacks that were not given out to Veterans. He explained that typically what is done, the backpacks are saved until the Wounded Warriors come across a Veteran in need, then a backpack is given to that person at that time. The Wounded Warriors are extremely specific that the backpacks donated for Veterans will only go to a Veteran. The “Hunger and Homeless Coalition” does honor this donation.

After the questions, answers, and discussions, took place about the “Hunger and Homeless Coalition” and “The Wounded Warriors of Collier County”, Joe asked for a vote to donate 25 fully stocked backpacks, tents, and flags to the “Hunger and Homeless Coalition”. The motion made and unanimously passed. Joe asked Bob to let the Coalition know of our decision.

Ed DeMaio reserved the Grand Hall on Monday, January 18, 2021 at 1:30 to assemble the backpacks with towels, socks, first aid kits, flashlights, etc. Ed asked Members of the Club to help fill the backpacks. Bob Wheeler, Rick and Linda Bachofner, Ann and Paul Hashagen, Bob Greiss, Tad Duffy, and John Shaffer offered to help Ed DeMaio with the backpacks.

Joe Tillman asked for volunteers, in addition to Bob Wheeler (who will be cooking), Bill Kaufmann and himself, to help with the Point In Time Count that will take place on January 29, 2021. Full details can be found in the December 5, 2020 Minutes of the Veteran’s Club. Contact Joe Tillman or Bob Wheeler for additional information and to sign up to volunteer. It is important to know that anyone who volunteers for the “Hunger and Homeless Coalition Count” will have to fill out a Confidentiality Form and return it to the Coalition prior to January 22, 2021’s training date. This is important because you are required not to disclose any location of the homeless you encounter. Even though the people are homeless, Collier County considers where these people are living, private.

Bob Wheeler spoke about the requirements of the Volunteers for the “Point In Time Count”. Bags will be packed for the non-veterans. There are two sessions on the day of the count, 9 AM to Noon and 1:00 PM to 4 PM. One group will consist of probably two to three Veterans, EMT, and a Police Officer. These volunteers will go into the homeless camps. A second group of volunteers will be stationary at such places like McDonalds, Home Depot, 7-Eleven, and the Unemployment Office. These volunteers will look for people / Veterans who seem to be homeless. These volunteers will have a computer that will allow the volunteer to input data given to them by the homeless Veteran and to get the Veteran services they might need, such as medical, dental hygiene, etc. The objective is to get back to these homeless people with those services.

Ann Hashagen will be going to the company who did our t-shirts to get samples, colors, and pricing. Even if the pricing is a little higher than the previous company, much can be saved on shipping since the company Ann is dealing with now is in Naples and there will be no shipping. Shipping the shirts has been very costly.

Bill Kaufmann showed a white shirt with our logo printed on it that Bobby Pitts had made up for Ann to consider. Bob used Vista-Print and sent them our logo to print on the shirt. One shirt cost Bobby $12. Bobby did not inquire how much Vista-Print would charge the Club if we bought in volume. Ann will talk to Bobby for additional information.

Joe Tillman spoke to Joe Rivera about the “Veterans Memorial Initiative”. Joe was not able to attend today’s Meeting due to work. However, Joe will talk to Ken Rice along with Bob Greiss to see if they can get Pulte involved and when the Club can get started on this project. Joe Tillman would like to get started this year and possibly even completed this year. Joe Tillman asked for volunteers to work on this Committee. Joe will have additional information at our next Meeting. Ed DeMaio informed the Membership that since Paul Perzichilli was a construction manager, Joe had asked Paul to participate on the team. Ed asked that either Joe Tillman or Joe Rivers to follow-up with Paul for his impute. Joe told the Membership that there is a gentleman from Canada that he will be talking to and try to incorporate his sculpture into our design for the Memorial.

Bobby White told the Membership that he would like to establish a relationship to partner with the Ave Maria University and Donahue Academy to share military stories and experiences with the younger generation. Bobby feels that the younger generation is interested in talking with Veterans and learning about their experiences in the military. He has done this at other Universities and would like to establish this program with our Club. Bobby will follow-up with both the University and Donahue Academy to see if there is any interest.

Bobby White is also looking into reaching out to several of his contacts to have guest speaker come to our meetings to share health and wellness information and is willing to initiate this project as well.

Joe Tillman is trying to get speakers for our future Meetings. Joe is talking with the VA and trying to get a representative for our February Meeting to update our Membership on any changes with the VA and their benefits. Unfortunately, with COVID he has not been able to get a confirmation from the VA.

Tracy Sunderlage gave the Membership present information he learned about cleaning dryer vents. This was a public service information talk for the Membership and had nothing to do with Veterans Club, but Tracy thought the information he found out would be beneficial to the Membership. Tracy explained that many of us have had our dryer vents cleaned out and he informed the Membership that Collier County’s code states that on our roofs, a grate is installed for construction purposes. When the construction is over, the grate is to be removed. What has been discovered in our community, most of these grates have never been removed. So, you may get your dryer cleaned out but if that grate is still on the roof, this grate can cause problems such as lint blowing back into the house, clogging the vent and sometimes even cause a fire. Tracy showed the Membership what the grate looks like and strongly suggested when we get our dryer vents cleaned, ask the service man to make sure this grate is not still on the roof of our home.

Tracy wanted to let Bobby White know that he has done speaking engagements like Bobby is suggesting and would be happy to work with him to get a program started with the University and Donahue Academy.

Both Tracy and Mark Clayton shared short personal stories that related to what Bobby White would like to start with Ave Maria University and Donahue Academy and they were in favor of his initiatives.

The next Meeting of the Veteran’s Club will be on Saturday, February 6, 2021 at 10:00 AM. Donuts, coffee, and juice will be served at 9:30 AM.

Joe invited the Members present to enjoy the beer, wine, soda, and chips after the Meeting today.

The Meeting was adjourned at 4:38 PM.