

MINUTES OF THE MID-WINTER D.E.C. MEETING

January 20-22, 2017

The Radisson Hotel

Colonie, New York

- Seeley B. Parish Sq. #457 Color Guard posted colors.
- The POW/MIA banner was placed by Master Sgt.-at-Arms Greg Falco.
- Commander Ruthven recited the POW/MIA Ceremony.
- Chaplain Parks offered the Opening Prayer.
- V/C DeAngelis led the body in The Pledge of Allegiance.
- V/C Bosford led the membership in the reciting of the Preamble.
- Commander Ruthven called the Meeting to order at 9:30 AM.
- Adjutant Avery took Roll Call, which indicated that a quorum was present.
- Guests Present Included: National V/C East, Joe Korba (NJ), and Past National V/C East Jim Noble (NJ).
- **Motion by V/C Burtch to appoint Tom Kurk as acting Judge Advocate for this meeting, 2nd by NEC Bishop and carried.**

1.00 READING OF THE PREVIOUS MINUTES

- 1.01 Commander Ruthven entertained a motion to accept the minutes of the Fall DEC Meeting as printed with any minor corrections, as noted. The motion was made by V/C Burtch and seconded by ANEC Chang, so carried.**

2.00 COMMITTEE & OFFICER REPORTS

- 2.01 Americanism Commission Chairman Myrtle;** In order to foster and perpetuate a true spirit of Americanism a large segment of the Americanism commission's efforts are channeled into education and citizenship programs for the leaders of tomorrow – America's youth. As a program of the American Legion, The Sons of The American Legion are encouraged to support these efforts. The Detachment of New York's Americanism Program this year is again distributing materials for the Americanism Flag Education Program to each district. It is imperative that each district Commander Take the material back to their districts. It is very important that this material reach as many squadrons as possible. Materials will include the following
- 4" x 6' US Stick flags to distribute at their functions throughout the year.
 - Pledge of Allegiance comic books
 - Pledge of Allegiance book markers
 - Our Country's flag comic book
 - "FOR WHICH IT STANDS" A DVD on flag education
 - A scripted Flag Education Program for giving a presentation on the flag of our Country
 - Essay contest for 1st thru 5th grades "What America means to me" with deadline of April 15th 2017
 - Essay contest for 6th thru 8th grades "What the Constitution of the United States means to Americans" with deadline of April 15th 2017.
 - Scholarship – Cerullo Memorial fund Scholarship open to all members of The American Legion family in good standing within the rules of the Scholarship (one new and three renewable scholarships of \$500.00 awarded each year).
 - Information is available on our website (www.sonsdny.org) for anyone and can be accessed at any time. These materials are for each District Commander to take back and distribute to the squadrons within their counties. There are enough flags, and for several flag education programs. The DVD can be given to the squadrons and be used in flag education. This has been a significant investment on the part of the Detachment so let's make it pay off by getting the materials out to squadrons throughout the State. Additional materials may purchase through Emblem sales. We encourage all students in 9th thru 12th grade and less than 20 years of age to participate in the American Legion Oratorical contest in their local post or county and continue on to different levels in the district, zone, state or even the national level. Competing

for a scholarship and always learning more about the constitution. If you have never been to an Oratorical contest you are missing out on an experience, these young American men and women will do a 10 minute speech on the Constitution. They are on their way to a lifetime of service to their community and our country. Things that make us who we are upholding the constitutional rights of everyone, protecting and preserving the civil rights and property of everyone, exercising our rights to vote, protect our flag from desecration, supporting baseball, boy scouts, boys state and boys nation, honoring and respecting our national holidays, remembering our fallen soldiers and veterans and giving back to our communities with service of helping others. February has been designated as Americanism month to be observed annually by our nation. Let us remember the words spoken by President John F. Kennedy "think not what your country can do for you but what you can do for your Country." Remember to encourage all squadrons to submit a consolidated report this year, reporting their activities and hours of service throughout the year. Support our programs throughout the year and take part in something special this year bring a child along. We must take a stand and each of us must promote patriotic ideas not just to others but within our own families when a child is taught by a family member they will keep that experience forever.

A motion was made by V/C Coates and seconded by V/C Clancy to accept the Americanism report, and was carried.

2.02 Children & Youth Acting Chairman Espey reported that the Children & Youth Commission held their meeting last night with all members present except chairman Hodge. He sends his regrets as he is home recouping from surgery. April is Children & Youth month, now is an excellent time to plan your activities or fundraisers. There are many programs your Squadron can assist. Here are just a few; Camp Good Days and Special Times, Children's Miracle Network, Autism Awareness, Operation Military Kids, Children's Organ Transplant Assoc., along with many others. Please have your squadron do a fundraiser to support our children. Child Welfare Foundation, National Commander Frain has set a goal of reaching the 7 million dollar mark. To help achieve this, a Limited edition CWF Pin has been designed. Only 500 pins were made. They will be given to the first people to send in a \$100 donation. Last year on the national level we raised \$346,099. Let's get the great Detachment of New York to reach \$1 per member or to round up \$30,000 donated. Donations to CWF do make it here to New York. Keys of Sherrill received \$5,362 for music toolkits delivering music, hope and smiles to kids with cancer. Children's Brain Tumor Foundation received \$20,000. Child Find of America Inc. was awarded \$40,500 for their project, "In Safe Hands Information Kits." Sons of The American Legion Youth Handbook are now available for our young members. Available at www.legion.org/sons/file/youth15.pfd In all last year nationally we raised \$1,174,933.00 with 166,825 hours worked. We only had 33% of our Squadrons report, imagine how big these numbers could be if we all reported our time and donations. In closing thank you to all of you, our members for your dedication to our children.

A motion was made by 6th District Commander Ainslee and seconded by 5th District Commander George to accept the Americanism report, and was carried.

2.03 VA & R Commission Chairman Cox reported that part of his report will be a repeat of what was discussed at the Fall DEC Meeting and the Commander's Rally last night. For those who have already heard some of this, please bear with me while I bring the general membership up to date. The primary goal of the VA&R Commission is supporting the Veterans who have given so much to ensure our way of life. Yesterday a group of our Sons, including Commander Bruce, Doc Gibbs, Dave Bishop, Bill Clancy, National V/C East Joe Korba and Past National Commander East Jim Noble paid a visit to the Fisher House here in Albany. The purpose of the visit was to present a check in the amount \$2,500.00 to the Fisher House to support their efforts in assisting our Vets and their families. The first order of business is the Walk-a-thon. As reported last year's Walk raised \$20,600.00, with the proceeds divided evenly between the Sons and Auxiliary. I thank Annie for sending me copies of the transmittal letters sent with each of the checks to the VA Hospitals and Homes as well as the Fisher House. She also sent me copies of the thank you notes and letters from virtually all of the recipients. This year's Walk will be held on Saturday April 22nd. Don't get hung up on that particular date. If for some reason that date does not work in your area, you are free to pick another date. Just try to hold you event before the end of April so that you can include the information in your consolidated reports. We have found that in some areas of the State it is very difficult to hold walks because of local ordinances. There are a number of alternate possibilities available. The one that seems to hold the most promise is seeking both individual and/or corporate donations. Do not forget seeking donations from your local Posts, Squads and Auxiliary Units. On the Sons website (sonsdny.org)

there is a section about the Walk. If you go to the site, you will find a sample donation letter. It is in word format so that you can personalize it for a particular individual or business. If we can encourage each district and squadron in the state to contact a few corporations in their area we should be able to raise a significant amount of money without the time and effort of holding a walk. The site also has "They marched for us, we walk for them" boots. You can print them out and sell them at your Legion Post with their permission. We would like to attempt to raise \$30,000.00 this year. I would like to thank Tom and Joe for updating the cover letter and donation letters for the site. We will get the updates to Gabe for inclusion on the website. In addition to Walk the VA&R Commission Awards the William P. O'Connell Scholarship to a disserving high school senior each year. If you have a candidate for this scholarship, please make sure that they are aware of this. I have continued my volunteer work at the Syracuse VA Hospital. I am also on the Executive Committee of the Syracuse VAVS. I encourage everyone to consider volunteering at their local VA Hospital or Home. Even if it is only a few hours here and there your help will be appreciated. For those of you who were not at the fall DEC meeting, or did not see in the Sons newsletter, we have in our presence the winner of the Charles B. Rigby National Volunteer of the year award. In addition to the award the winner was interviewed by Mike Pipher the editor of the National Sons Newsletter. Mike made a special trip to Canandaigua and spent the day with our winner. May we have a hand to the winner Gabe?
V/C DeAngelis made a motion to accept the report which was seconded by V/C Burtch and carried.

2.04 **Legislative Commission Chairman Gibbs** reported; the coming legislative season is upon us. With a new President inaugurated later this month there may be some interesting opportunities. Our Washington, DC On-the-Hill Days are February 26-March 1, 2017. The days feature the wreath lying by our National Commander at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Arlington, a tour of the monuments, some legislative preparation time, as well as a visit with our Congressmen. Commander Ruthven, Bill Clancy, Gary Denmon, Greg Gibbs, Bob Avery, David Lee, Jim Coates and David Perry are planning to be in attendance. Plans are currently underway, securing appointment meetings with all Congressmen. Our Albany On-the-Hill Days are scheduled for March 5-6, 2017 the following week from DC. If you wish to attend you need to contact your American Legion County level Legislative Chairman and let him/her know you are coming. You need to purchase a breakfast ticket as we sit by tables by County and have breakfast with our legislators. It is a one day event, you are prepped the evening before in a general meeting and then we go up to the congressional offices after breakfast the next morning. More Sons should attend; usually there are only 6-8 SAL members present. You do not need an appointment to meet with your Congressman that day, it is Legion Day and they all know you are coming that morning. With a new American Legion Legislative Director, Mathew Schuman, there may be a few changes. Be sure to go to the National Legion website and see some of his early comments and position statements. The focus legislation for the DC and Albany meetings will be out shortly and forwarded to all Legislative Committee members for their use and dissemination as soon as possible. It is easy to set up a Legislative Night at one of your Squadron meetings where all your members can write a letter to their Representative supporting Legion Issues. You can easily go online at the national website and go to Legislative Action Center for sample letters and ideas. This is something that is critically important and easy to do and doesn't cost much at all. Talk to any of the Legislative Committee members or Doc Gibbs or our National Legislative Chairman David Lee and they can get you started. Look for Legislative Updates in our Liberty Newsletter as well.

A motion made by V/C Coates and seconded by V/C Clancy to accept the report, was carried.

2.05 **Public Relations/Webmaster Cinquegrana** reported we are pleased to be continuing our so far, very successful practice of partnering with a local Charity as we did at Mid-Winter last year and again at the Convention. As you know our partner this year is the Saratoga County Rural Preservation Corporation, which provides Transitional Housing and Employment services for our Veterans. We hope that you brought gas cards and Walmart gift cards to fill up our collection box in the back. If not, there is still time, and we encourage you to do so. Tomorrow morning we will present our collection to the Director, and hopefully it will be a sizeable donation, Thanks for helping; things like this assist in carrying the name of the Sons of the American Legion, in letting people know what we do. We talked a little at the Fall DEC about good Public Relations, and about the PR Manual which is available to all. As we stated then, we wanted to take some of the items from that manual, and pull them out for easier access. We have done that, and with some tweaks and revisions there are now 4 Press Release Templates on the website, listed as individual documents, there for you to hopefully use. The Templates are Press Releases for an upcoming activity, an invitation to interest students in Boys State, an announcement about an upcoming Service

and/or parade, and the release of Officer Election results. Hopefully it will make communication a bit easier. Again this year we are very busy at the Public Relations Table at the Desmond, and hope you get a chance to get over to see it. Based on Last year's activity at the table, we have tried to recruit some of our more experienced members for the Table this year, and have recruited several PDC's and others to help out. It has become a great resource for Legion and other, and we feel has helped to bridge the gap between the Sons and the Legion. Our SAL Radio headed by Ken Kraetzer continues to do remarkable things and cover major events to keep our organization in the Spotlight, not only locally but nationally. Efforts continue as well on the modernization and expansion of the 4-Chaplains Cemetery in Washington. We continue to tweak and update our Website, and hopefully you check it frequently, and that it a benefit to you, the latest edition of the Liberty is out, and we have some copies at the back table. It can be a useful tool to disseminate information in it. We continue to make pleas for pictures and stories, and will continue to do so. Please make an effort to send in your pictures and activities, so we can all learn from each other. It is important that we not only continually herald what we do, but communicate with each other on information we can share together. And as I always end my presentations, it is vital to remember that anyone who is a member of the Sons of the American Legion is indirectly a member of the Public Relations Commission, as everything you do, is as a representative of the Son of the American Legion, and thereby the face of the Sons of the American Legion to the Public. We need to remind ourselves and our membership of the importance of Public Relations and how to accomplish it effectively.

A motion made by V/C Coates and seconded by V/C DeAngelis to accept the report, was carried.

- 2.06 Annie Wilsey Department Program Coordinator** thanked the Sons for all of our hard work, its paying off with her having to do less work when it comes the membership cards. **Charlie LaHaise** Sons Membership Coordinator thanks us for working hard on membership and for all the support we have given him.
- 2.07 Mid-Winter Coordinator, Mark Kearsing** reported; He welcomed everyone to this year's Mid-Winter and is available if there are questions or problems that may arise. It is an honor to be here and working with all of you. The shuttles are a courtesy of the hotels be patient as they service the airports first.
A motion was made by V/C Burtch and seconded by Chaplain Parks to accept the report, and was carried.
- 2.08 3rd District Commander Baker** reported that Albany County, Squadron 1520, was busy marching in parades, working Halloween and Christmas parties at the post, donating to various charities, they are working on a fund raiser dinner and show on April 1st to raise funds for the Fisher house in Albany. Squadron 977, held breakfast at post, plowed snow helping the Community, sent a young man to boy's state, supplied presents for the community, gave the Legion Riders a check for their veterans fund raiser. Squadron 476 has been helping with the American Legion programs and projects and has donated money and time to their post and community. Rensselaer County, Squadron 471 members hold positions in the band, their Squadron members also assist their Legion Riders program in helping our veterans attend events such as Honor Flights to Washington DC. Squadron 1683 collected and donated to Toys to Tots, had annual Greenbush toy event for families of the community, held a chicken parm dinner, had a pull pork feast for Veteran's, They held a wreath laying ceremony at local cemetery, The Squadron will be having a corn beef and cabbage dinner in February and are holding a show to raise funds for Children and Youth in support of camp Scully. Squadron 1231 has been very active, they held a pancake breakfast with Santa for the community, a fundraiser Breakfast and Chinese Auction to raise funds for a cancer patient in Community, and we donated over \$1,000. In new Kitchen equipment to our post, we collected and distributed 40 dozen winter socks to homeless veterans along with 12 business suites to help our Veterans return to the workforce. We hosted a public relations table at Becker's Farm in East Greenbush, sharing the mission of the American Legion Family, the Sons of Melvin Roads will hosting their Fish fry Friday dinner for 6 weeks for lent and they are celebrating their 40th Anniversary as a squadron. We will once again sponsor a boy to Boy's State. Squadron 111 has been very active supporting the American Legion. They have held various fundraisers and participated in community events. Ulster County, Squadron 111 held coin drops throughout July & August, pancake breakfast, placed flags on graves for Memorial Day, did clean-up at cemetery, donated over 100 baskets of food items to senior citizens throughout their community, and gave a \$500. Scholarship to a senior in high school, they are actively working with the Boys Scouts and Veterans in Community projects. Schoharie County, Squadron 248 is active with helping

their Legion Riders and Legionnaires in their community and Post fundraising events. All Squadrons in the District are looking at ways to increase membership and to assist the American Legion Family in any way that they can. The Third District will be raffling off a Trout rod in April to raise funds to help support American Legion Baseball which is in need of volunteers and funds to keep the program sound, if you know of anyone interested in helping this program please see your Baseball Chairman in the district you live in.

A motion made by 3rd District Commander Baker and seconded by ANEC Chang to accept the report, was carried.

- 2.09 7th District Commander Toper** reported on December 11th 2016 it was announced that I would be acting commander for the 7th District. Our Commander Charlie Rose and his wife Merit had much sooner than expected employment opportunity that was too good to pass up. I would like to be on record and express my thanks and gratitude for their service to our Legion Family and also to wish them both good fortune and good luck. Our membership for the 7th District is currently ahead of the 60% January 19, 2017 target date at 66.7%. I am confident and see no reason why we cannot repeat last year's 100% plus. We also can do our part for the Detachment of New York to achieve 100% membership. For our veterans after considerable time and effort a \$6,000 grant for the Canandaigua VA from Operation Comfort Warrior was secured by Gabe Cinquegrana through Canandaigua Legion Post 256. After a \$6,000 shopping spree for items needed at the VA. A presentation of all the items was made at the Canandaigua Center to Voluntary Service Chief Robin Johnson. In Gabe's spare time he received the Charles B. Rigsby Volunteer of the year Award. He was judged to have done the most volunteer work in the country on behalf of American Legion. Our annual Flag Retirement and Education Program are well into the planning stages. It will be held at Francis B. Dalton Post 282, West Bloomfield. If it approaches last year spectacle it should be a fantastic program. Our Flag Retirement and Education committee of James Coats and James Daly do an outstanding job

A motion made by 7th District Commander Toper was seconded by V/C Clancy to accept the report. The motion was carried.

- 2.10 8th District Commander Van Patten** reported Since the Fall DEC meeting I have attended the National American Legion Commander Charles Schmidt's Testimonial Dinner in the 7th District. We have had one District meeting in that time on December 4th in Batavia. We were honored to have Commander Ruthven in attendance with us. We started out that day with our traditional wreath hanging ceremony at the Batavia VA Facility. The next week I traveled to the 7th District to sit in on their District meeting where we discussed a joint 7th and 8th District get together that will be held in spring of this year. I also learned of Commander Rose's relocation from the 7th district, I would be remiss not to mention the excellent work he's done and the fact that he has rose to any challenge the 8th could come up with, and swiftly kicked our butts. I've been working with three groups that have been trying to revive their current squadron or create new ones. We look forward to the start of the New York American Legion family Visitations to the 8th District starting next week.

A motion was made by 8th District Commander Van Patten which was 2nd by NEC Bishop to accept the report was carried.

- 2.11 Leading Candidate for Commander of the American Legion Denise Rohan;** stated one of her proudest moments was when her son told her that he was old enough to pay his membership dues in the sons along with her grandsons. She thanks us for all we do and asked us to keep up the good work. She said she would support us all that she can as we support The American legion.

- 2.12 9th District Acting Commander Guidice reported** The Ninth District report is a mix of mostly good news and a little disappointing news as well. The disappointing news is that our efforts to organize County units in Rockland and Orange have stalled a bit. I believe this is simply doing to a mindset that exists in many squadrons where they don't really have an interest in doing things outside the confines of their own home post and squadron. I would certainly be glad to hear any ideas from counties and districts that have had similar experiences. We will be continuing to try to organize and we will be scheduling another district meeting in the coming month. To the good news, On Membership, the ninth District at the most recent report has FOUR of its FIVE counties among the top ten statewide. We are now actively in the process of reactivating the charter for Squadron #300 in Nyack. Rockland County a very long dormant charter that

was first issued in 1936. We hope to have them up and running this spring. I have been invited to their March post meeting to discuss and assist with forming them up. Some happenings around the District: New Windsor Squadron #1796 in Orange County sponsored their annual Pearl Harbor Day Commemoration. A breakfast was served and at the service all veterans attending were presented with a commemorative coin. Leo Ladders Squadron #130 in Rockland assisted the Post in putting on a holiday meal for veterans from the Montrose VA Hospital. About veterans and staff were bused to the post and were served a filet mignon dinner. White Plains Squadron #135 is working on improvements to Chaplains Hill at Arlington National Cemetery and recently helped to unveil the new Protest Chaplains Monument at the site.

A motion made by 9th District Acting Commander Guidice and 2nd by ANEC Chang to accept the report was carried.

- 2.13 10th District Commander Connelly** reported: I come before you today to tell you that the 10th District is moving on. We got some plans for the spring time. We had a Great Commanders Visitation. We are not where we want to be, but it does not mean that Squadrons are not doing their job on the local level.

A motion was made by 10th District Commander Connolly and 2nd by V/C Clancy to accept the report which was carried.

- 2.14 Acting Judge Advocate Kurk** reported when updating Constitution & Bylaws make sure that you use the proper forms and send them through the chain of command. If there is something you cannot find in them refer to Roberts Rules of Order.

A motion made by V/C Coates and seconded by ANEC Chang to accept the report, was carried.

- 2.15 Historian Van Patten** report; I went everywhere the 8th District Commander went. I've been compiling photos for the Detachment's Yearbook, if you have anything from your Squadron, County or District please send me a copy for inclusion with a brief description and date that it was taken. I will not be running for Historian this coming election, if anyone has questions about this position please feel free to find me and ask.

A motion made by Historian Van Patten and seconded by NEC Bishop to accept the report, was carried.

- 2.16 Advisor Arthur** reported that he is proud of us for supporting the trees for troops program. We received a letter letting us know where all the trees went and we even heard from some of the troops who received them. He thanked us for letting him be our advisor.

- 2.17 Chaplain Parks** reported that he has sent out 4 get well cards, 10 condolences cards, and bouquets of flowers. I have been notified that the following son's members have gone the Squadron Everlasting, Edward Clancy Squadron #1175, Steven Sehm Squadron #881, and Dale McMahon Squadron #20.

A motion was made Chaplain Parks and seconded by V/C Burtch to accept the report, and carried.

- 2.18 American Legion PNVC/Consultant Neville** stopped by our meeting to give us some great news. He started out by saying when we talk it should always be about us or we, not you or I. In the spirit of us the Department of New York is donating \$25,000.00 to the Committee to Elect Greg "DOC" Gibbs National Commander of the Sons of The American Legion.

➤ **At this time donations were accepted for Greg "Doc" Gibbs.**

➤ **Donations from the floor totaled \$5350.00, With The American Legion's \$25,000.00 and \$20,000.00 from the Detachment of New York, the total donations given were \$50,350.00.**

- 2.19 Vice Commander 1/9 Clancy** reported Joe DeGuidice and the 9th District is on fire. They have started or reinstated 5 new Squadrons with all of them having meetings. The Bronx is doing well and it shows with the membership coming in. We are still working in Manhattan to get other Squadrons up and running.

A motion made by V/C Clancy and seconded by ANEC Chang to accept the report, was carried.

2.20 Department Commander Sampson thanked us for electing Commander Ruthven who is very knowledgeable and works tirelessly on membership. We are doing alot for our Communities, State and Nation and each other. We need to let everyone know what we are doing. Thank you for all you do.

2.21 Department Adjutant Casey told the membership that we help make his job easier. How the visitations go is how his job goes and he thanked us for running a smooth ship.

2.22 Vice Commander 2/10 DeAngelis reported the 2nd and 10th districts are doing well since our fall conference. On membership both districts have been steady on maintaining the target date goals. As counties Richmond, Kings, Nassau and Suffolk have been also consistent on making all target date goals but there is still work to do as there are still some that have not transmitted anything yet and we will be contacting those squadrons. I attended two more visitations in November to Nassau and Suffolk counties. I attended many events including the New York City Veterans Day parade with a ceremony after at the Vietnam wall in Downtown Manhattan. A week later I was also invited to participate in the Bronx Veterans Day parade. The holidays came and toys for tots was in full gear with myself and county Commander Joe Hall collecting over 1000 toys for the cause. We will also asked by the Combat wounded veterans of America to supply toys for their annual children's Christmas party so between my squadron at the auxiliary and Commander Joe were able to raise \$1,000. To buy toys. I have been in constant contact with the county Commander in Richmond County many great things are being done there they have secured funding to continue their youth fishing program. They recently did a coat drive as well as donating many school supplies to local schools. In October the Kings County Commander Joe Hall attended their first annual pasta fundraiser with a visit from old time TV's Uncle Floyd, who put on a stand-up comedy act. On Veteran's day they took local children and the Girl Scout to local cemetery's to clean up in flag graves. They donated 360 turkeys to needy families at Thanksgiving time, and donated toys and food to the good you children's aid Society Children's Christmas program.

A motion made by V/C DeAngelis and seconded by Chaplain Parks to accept the report, was carried.

2.23 Vice Commander 5/6 Burtch reported; Since the Fall DEC meeting in Phelps Post on October 15th, I have been very busy keeping up with my duties as Vice commander. On October 20th I and the Department of NY traveling party started our Visitations in the 6th District in Madison County. We followed with consecutive stops to Cortland, Chenango, Otsego, Delaware, and Broome Counties ending on Tuesday October 25th. Two short days off, and we were back on the road for our final four Visitations, including Chemung County on the 28th, Tioga County on the 29th, Schuyler County on the 30th, and Tompkins County on Halloween night. Commander Bruce Ruthven did an outstanding job representing our detachment while touring the 6th District. Bruce is natural at the job of Commander and he was very careful to make sure we were being respectful of our Legion, Sons and Auxiliary members we were visiting. Bruce takes the job very seriously, as he should, and keeps a level head when many other people may be losing theirs. It was a pleasure touring our Great State with all our dignitaries and I want to personally thank Commander John Sampson and his wife Vicky for their friendship and generosity and Department President Debra Kryczkowski for her great sense of humor, patience and her awesome enthusiasm. What an absolute pleasure it was for me to represent the Detachment of NY while spending time with these quality people. Membership in the 5th and 6th Districts is coming along very well compared to many past years. 5th district is currently at 60.68% with 4208 paid members and 314 new members so far this year. The 5th district has 4 Squadrons at or over 100% - Klock-Smith Squadron 1788 with 111% in Jefferson County, George Glenn Hughes Post 890 with 100% in Oneida County, Tipperary Hill Squadron 1361 with 144% in Onondaga County, and Hastings-Gorski Squadron 1128 has 105% in Oswego county. The 5th district is on pace to make 100% by convention with a little hard work. We still have 10 Squadrons that have not reported any membership in the 5th District, and that will be addressed ASAP after the midwinter Convention by me and District commander Dennis George. Onto the 6th district where we find 1722 members paid for 2017 or 49.23% of the membership collected. The 6th district has 131 new members for 2017 and has three Squadrons that have made 100% or greater in membership already. These three Squadrons are; Frank A. Johnson Squadron 758 with 100% in Broome county, Johnson-Rogers Squadron 1492 with 100% in Madison County, and Hartwick squadron 1567 with 100% in Otsego County. Combined together the 5th & 6th Districts have already found 445 new members for 2017. That is almost enough to fill Commander Ruthven's new request to break the 30,000 member goal. With a little more work and a 100% renewal rate, we have a great chance to meet our Commander's goal and then some.

Please get out there and make the necessary phone calls to get our members renewed, and contact all the squadrons still missing reports.

A motion made by V/C Burtch and seconded by NEC Bishop to accept the report, was carried.

- 2.24 Vice Commander Coates** reported; On November 6th I attended my squadron meeting and worked at our Post breakfast on November 13th. Then on November 20th I attended annual Veteran's Gift Shop at the Canandaigua VA sponsored by the Seventh District American Legion Auxiliary. This year I had the privilege of escorting Veterans from their floor down to the Gift Shop so they could buy gifts for their family. On December 10th I had the privilege to be Santa at our Squadron's Santa Party for the kids. The only problem is that my youngest grandson, who is also a Sons member, now thinks I really am Santa Claus. On Christmas day I also participated in the wheelchair escort to church services, also at the Canandaigua VA. On December 21st I had the pleasure to help shop for an Operation Comfort Warriors grant that was awarded to the Canandaigua VA. The application for the grant was submitted by our own Gabe Cinquegrana and Canandaigua Post Commander Don Gruendike on behalf of Canandaigua Post #256. This is being considered as the first grant awarded for an application submitted by the Sons of The American Legion. The grant was for \$6,000 and benefited the Hospice Program, Homeless Program and Recreational Therapy at the Canandaigua VA. On December 4th I attended the Eighth District meeting at the Botts-Fiorito Post #576 in Leroy, Genesee County and on December 11th the Seventh District meeting at the Warner-VanRiper Post #435 in Waterloo, Seneca County. Our 7th and 8th Districts Get Together is being scheduled for April 30th, 2017 at the Herbert W. DeLong Post #808, 29 Schuyler Street, Belmont, NY 14813. The get together will begin at 1:00 PM with lunch following. The meeting will follow consisting of addresses from the district commanders and invited guests followed by a sharing of activities and discussion under "For the Good". Next week we will begin our visitations in the Eighth District followed by the Seventh District in mid-February. I look forward to traveling with Commander Ruthven, President Kryczkowski and Commander Sampson along with district commanders Tim VanPatten II in the 8th and now acting commander Jerry Toepper in the 7th. As of January 19th, 2017 the Seventh District is in 3d place in the detachment with 66.72% and the Eighth District is in 10th Place with 53.52%. This is a huge improvement since our fall DEC but we still have a long way to go. I think the Eighth District must be about ready to put on their annual surge and we certainly will be working on this as we go through the district visitations.

A motion made by V/C Coates and seconded by V/C Burtch to accept the report, was carried.

- 2.25 Finance Chairman Lee** gave the finance report. He thanked the members of the finance commission for their work. He thanked the membership for paying their dues and for all the fund raising work they do. He also thanked us for trusting that we do the right thing with your dues money. We have a budget in place and we need to work on when need to be disbursed dates are for those funds. We are recommending the following changes to the expense authorizations. To go from two days per diem to three days per diem for those eligible that attends the mid-winter meetings. That those eligible to travel outside the detachment for the National Commanders Homecoming get an extra day travel when traveling west of the Mississippi. The committee reviewed the current budget vs what has been actually spent. We currently have \$258,666.32 in our mutual fund. We revue our membership numbers because this how we base our budget, we currently get \$8.00 per member and our current budget is \$240,000 for 30,000 members.

A motion made by 6th District Commander Ainslee and seconded by 5th District Commander George to accept the report, was carried.

- 2.26 NEC Bishop introduced National V/C East Joe Korba (NJ).** Joe thanked us for the invitation to come to New York. I bring greetings from National Commander Frain. His membership theme is be a hero and sign up three heroes. Your membership is going well you made the 60% goal. Keep up the good work and you will make your goal of 30,000 members. There is a new pin out there to raise funds for the CWF. It is a limited pin edition pit with only 500 being made. They cost \$100 each and you can get them from Commander Frain. If we raise \$1,000,000 Jeff has stated that he will shave his head. Please donate to the NEF fund it is always needed. Please report what you are doing by submitting your consolidated report form.

Commander Ruthven called the Executive Meeting of the Sons of The American Legion Detachment of New York in recess until 8:30AM tomorrow.

**MINUTES OF THE MID-WINTER D.E.C. MEETING
January 20-22, 2017
The Radisson Hotel
Colonie, New York**

- Chaplain Parks offered the Opening Prayer
- V/C Coates led the body in The Pledge of Allegiance
- Commander Ruthven called the Meeting to order at 8:30 AM
- Adjutant Avery took Roll Call, which indicated that a quorum was present
- Guests Present included National V/C East Joe Korba (NJ), and Past National V/C East Jim Noble (NJ).

2.00 COMMITTEE AND OFFICER REPORTS (continued)

2.27 Internal Affairs Chairman Williamson called forth committee chairmen:

Member Training and Development Chairman Jarvis reported; that we had seventeen sons attend the leadership class, and eleven people attend the advisors seminar. Both programs were well received. I would like to thank the presenters for stepping up and putting these programs on. I would also like to thank the commission and committee chairmen for putting on programs and spreading the word about our programs. I would like to ask someone to make a motion so that we can buy more thumb drives. At this time we will hand out certificates to those that attended the leadership program. If you have someone who like to attend next year's class please let me know.

Membership Chairman Verstreate reported; the American Legion has membership seminars that are held across the state and for the first time have been invited to attend. We need to push getting the officer certification forms in starting in March. We made the last to membership goals. Congratulations!! We need 4073 members turned in to make our next goal of 75% in about three weeks. We have 49 Squadrons with no membership turned in. We need to check on these and help them out. Certificates for 100% membership by January 15th were handed out.

Convention and Meetings Chairman Williamson reported; The Sons Headquarters hotel will be the Doubletree. The rooms are \$126 per night. There will be a golf tournament Wednesday morning. Installation Luncheon will be held at Cicero Post #787. We will do Shirts they will be pre order only and you can pick them up at convention.

We did have a resolution that went to national and was sent back for review. It is currently in the hands of the Department Judge Advocate and the legion is reviewing it.

A motion made by V/C Burtch and seconded by V/C Clancy to accept the report, was carried.

2.28 Department President Kryczkowski; hello to all my brothers, this is an American Legion Family and I am proud to call you my brothers. Thank you for electing Bruce he is always a gentleman and is always willing to help and is lots of fun. I come from a military rich family. I have 5 brothers all have served, My Father and Stepfather were in WWII, my Grandfather was in WWI, my son is retired from the air force and my daughter is a master sergeant. My project is TAPS, it is a program that helps the family of a veterans that have passed away no matter what the circumstances are. This is a peer to peer support group that is there 24/7 for the families.

2.29 ANEC Chang reported; on October 10th I attended a Chinese Independence Day parade hosted by the Kim Lau Post in China town. Oct. 14th found me at the DEC Meeting in Phelps. Nov. 4th I attended the New York/ Bronx County Veterans Ball. Nov 6th I marched in the Kim Lau Veterans Parade. Nov 7th I was invited to a program at a local school called bring a veteran to school day. Nov 8th I exercised my right to vote. Nov 10th I attended the Westchester County Veterans Breakfast; there were over 500 Veterans there. On Nov 11th I attended the local Veterans Day ceremonies. From the 12th through the 16th I attended the 9th

District County Visitations. On Nov 19th I was inducted into the National Solders Association a division of the Masons. On Jan 15th I attended the Kim Lau Chinese New Year Banquet.

A motion was made by ANEC Chang and seconded by 3rd District Commander Baker to accept the report was carried.

2.30 **NEC Bishop** reported; since my last N.E.C. report was given at the D.E.C. meeting in Phelps N.Y. in October there have been no National meetings or events that I have been required to attend. With that said I can assure you that I have been in contact on a daily basis with the National organization through daily emails that I receive from National Liaison John Kerestan and also from our National Vice Commander Eastern Region Joe Korba. Also our National Vice Commander Korba holds a conference call for the Eastern Region every 3rd Sunday of the Month. Many of the emails received reflect the news of the many issues or stories facing our veterans each and every day. On our conference calls Vice Commander Korba goes over our membership as a region and where we stand nationally as well as coming up with suggestions or ideas to get those renewals in. We may also have National Commission and committee chairman on the call that we give a report on things going on within their respective commissions and committee's as well. At the end of the call there is a go around of the Detachments on the call in which at that time a brief report is giving on things going on within our Detachments. This is a great way to hear and share ideas on what we can do as an organization to support our veterans, Children and the Four Pillars of our parent organization the American Legion. On Friday I had the privilege of escorting our current and Past National Vice Commanders for the Eastern Region Joe Korba and Jim Noble along with our second leading Candidate for National Commander, Doc Gibbs, Detachment Commander Bruce Ruthven and leading to the fisher house at the Stratton V.A. Medical Center for a tour of the house at which time Detachment Commander Bruce made the annual donation of \$2,500 to the Fisher house on behalf of the Detachment of New York. As the second half of the 2016-2017 administrative year begins things will begin to get busy once again for our Squadron, Counties, Districts, Detachments and National organization as we push to complete our projects and push for membership in hopes of achieving our 100% goal. Some of the Events going forward are the National Commander of the Sons of the American Legion Jeff Frain's homecoming in Arizona in February. We have the Washington Conference in February and Eastern Regional Gathering in March and then The National Commander of the American Legion Visitations to the Department of NY in April. Spring N.E.C. meetings in Indianapolis in May.

A motion made by NEC Bishop and seconded by V/C Coates to accept the report, and was carried.

2.31 **Master Sergeant-at-Arms Falco** reported that the Sgt's at Arms had collected \$51.00 in fines so far. He also donated \$50.00 to Doc's campaign. He requests that you make sure your cards are signed.

A motion made by V/C Burtch and seconded by V/C Coates to accept the report, was carried.

2.32 **Adjutant Avery** reported; Welcome to this 98th Mid-Winter Conference of The American Legion Department of New York. Mid-Winter is one of the high-lights of every Legion year when all members of the NY Legion Family meet. I hope you find this year's just as good as always. Take the opportunity to meet fellow members and learn more about our organization! We are pleased to welcome National Vice Commander Joe Korba from the Detachment of New Jersey this year. Traveling with Vice Commander Korba also from New Jersey is Past National Vice Commander Jim No-ble. Kenneth Warner from Pennsylvania is the Leading Candi-date for National Vice Commander and he sends regrets and best wishes. Ken is attending another Eastern Region Mid-Winter Meeting this weekend but will be with us next year. According to the December 31, 2016 National Membership Re-port, there are 367,948 members in our organization, an in-crease of 5,629 over last year. Nationally we ended at 101.55% of goal, up just under half of a percentage point from 2015. We had 37,465 members who did NOT renew in 2016. The National renewal rate was 89.66% last year which is an increase over the prior year. In New York we ended with a 92.69% renewal rate which is 2% over last year and is **7th highest in the Nation**. Only France, Hawaii, Nevada, North Dakota, Puerto Rico and Wisconsin did better. We finished in first place amongst the 5 largest Detachments. Congratulations to all who made this happen!! We can always do better as we still had 2,143 members who did not re-new, but that is 600 more renewals than last year. As for our membership total, we finished in 28th place in the Nation with 101.27% of our goal with a final total was 29,671 members. The remaining Membership Tar-get Dates are as follows: February 8, 2017 75% March 8, 2017 80% April 12, 2017 90% May 10, 2017* 100% *Total Percentage July 19, 2017 105% As you have heard, our very own Past Detachment Commander and Past National Vice Commander Greg "Doc" Gibbs,

is now officially the Second Leading Candidate for National Commander of the Sons of The American Legion. Doc hopes to be National Commander in the 2018-2019 Administrative Year. At this time we are working only within the Detachment of New York to help raise funds in this effort. Any Squadrons or individual members in the Detachment of New York wishing to make a donation can make their checks payable to the "Committee to Elect Greg K. Gibbs" and mail to PDC Gary Denmon, 503 N. Page Avenue, Endicott, NY 13760. There will be time set aside at Mid-Winter on Saturday the 21st for those wishing to present a donation directly. Thank you for your support! Squadrons should be receiving the 2017 Consolidated Squadron Report (CSR). As a reminder, this form is the most important document that you need to complete. The compilation of all volunteer hours and donations from Posts and Squadrons are reported to Congress each year by the National Commander of The American Legion. National only ships us enough for one CSR per Squadron in our Detachment. Squadrons who have not received a CSR by mid-March should contact Anne Wilsey at Albany HQ 1-800-ALEGION. You are reminded to complete and submit your CSR to Detachment HQ by April 30, 2017 for Detachment judging. Reports will then be forwarded by the Detachment Adjutant to National HQ. Also, all Squadrons are reminded to complete and forward an Officer Certification Form (OCF) to HQ immediately following their annual elections in May. This can be completed on line. Squadrons are not recognized without a current OCF on file at HQ, and will not receive membership cards without an OCF. The OCF and much more information is always available on our Detachment website www.sonsdny.org. There is also a wealth of info at the National site www.sal.legion.org. Wishing you a successful 2017 in all your endeavors!

A motion made V/C Clancy and seconded by V/C Coates to accept the report, was carried.

- 2.33 Detachment Commander Ruthven** reported; this is a great time to learn about our programs, while you are here at mid-winter. Take advantage of all the seminars that the legion and the Sons put on. After a two month holiday we have started our county visitations again. I look forward to seeing you out there. My theme this year is education through communication. What an opportunity we have, we can now send our members to the newly named American Legion Family Collage. The Collage will run June 2nd, 3rd, and 4th. The cost is \$225.00 and there are 100 slots. I would like to thank last year's membership committee for an outstanding job. The consolidated report form will be mailed to the adjutants shortly. Please make sure that it gets filled out. Help those squadrons that have not filled in the last few years. I would like everyone to get on board with our Flag retirement ceremonies, essay contest, and walk-a-thon fundraiser. The Family Homecoming will be in June 2017 at Vernon Downs, come out and support us.

A motion made by Commander Ruthven and seconded by V/C DeAngelis to accept the report, was carried.

- **A motion made by V/C Burtch to accept the pre-submitted reports and seconded by V/C Clancy was carried.**

3.00 SICK CALL & RELIEF

- 3.01 PDC Englert is sick.
- 3.02 Richard Chandler Sq. #574 is sick.
- 3.03 Thomas Pececio Sq. Commander #1060 is sick.
- 3.04 Tom Crawford Sq. Commander #1278 is sick.
- 3.05 Rich Hodge had an operation.
- 3.06 David Payne Sq. 702 passed away.
- 3.07 Joseph Bateman Sq. #787 is sick

4.00 UNFINISHED BUSINESS

NONE

5.00 NEW BUSINESS

- 5.01 V/C Burtch made a motion to change the expense reimbursement for Mid-Winter from two days per diem to three days Per Diem for those who attend the meetings and are authorized. The motion was seconded by V/C DeAngelis and carried.**

- 5.02 V/C Coates made a motion that those authorized to travel out of state for authorized meetings and official functions will receive an additional per diem if said location is west of the Mississippi River. The motion was seconded by V/C Burtch and carried.
- 5.03 The PR Project for this meeting was to raise funds for the Rural Preservation (Two Veterans Homes) in Ballston Spa. Cheryl Haig Perez accepted our donation of \$1110.00 in gift cards.
- 5.04 8th District Commander Van Patten made a motion to purchase thumb drives not to exceed \$500.00. The motion was seconded by ANEC Change and carried.

6.00 FOR THE GOOD OF THE SONS

- 6.01 James Coates announces that he is running for Detachment Commander 2018-2019.
- 6.02 Bill Clancy announces that he is running for Detachment Commander 2017-2018.
- 6.03 Drawing for the quilt to benefit the Committee to Elect Gregg 'DOC' Gibbs. The quilt was won by Robert Hunt and raised \$1220.00.
- 6.04 Oneida County Sons donated \$100 the Walk -A-Thon.
- 6.05 Tim Van Patten announced that he is running of Detachment Vice Commander 7th & 8th District 2017-2018.
- 6.06 Joe Guidice announced that he is running Detachment Vice Commander 1st & 9th District.
- 6.07 Joe Hall Kings County Sons Commander made a donation a behalf of the Kings County Sons of \$500.00 to CWF.
- 6.08 Wayne Ainsley announced that he is running for Detachment Vice Commander 5th & 6th District 2017-2018.
- 6.09 The 4th District donated \$500.00 to NEF.
- 6.10 Pete DeAngelis announced that he is running for Detachment Vice Commander 2nd & 10th District.
- 6.11 Diamon Smith thanks us for our support of resolution DC- 16. We have made an awesome commitment.
- 6.12 The Committee to elect Joe Santa Croce made a donation of \$500.00 to CWF.
- 6.13 Make sure you get the consolidated reports in by April 30th. Please find a place on the form for everything.
- 6.14 James Parks announces that he is running for Chaplain 2017-2018.
- 6.15 Hannibal Legion Riders will be holding Vet Fest on June 16th & 17th.
- 6.16 Allegany County Golf Tournament will be held on Sept. 8th at the Wellsville Country Club.
- 6.17 Gabe Cinquegrana asked that if you are looking for grants from operation comfort warriors please contact him for help.

With no further business to be brought before the Detachment Executive Committee,

- Commander Ruthven requested that Chaplain Parks offer the closing prayer
- Master Sergeant at Arms retrieved the POW/MIA flag
- Sheley B. Parish Squadron #457 color guard retrieved the colors.

Detachment Commander Ruthven declared the Executive Meeting of the Sons of The American Legion Detachment of New York adjourned.