

**American Legion Post 341**  
**Membership Meeting February 12, 2018**

**Opening Ceremonies:**

At 1830 hours, First Vice Commander Fay Ryan called the Post meeting to order. There were only eighteen members in attendance, so an official meeting could not be conducted as a Post General Membership meeting.

Opening ceremonies were led by First Vice Commander Ryan, with the Pledge of Allegiance, an opening prayer was led by Chaplain Norvil Lantz, and the group's recitation of the Preamble to the Legion's Constitution and Bylaws which was guided by the First Vice Commander. The roll call of officers was performed, and the minutes of the December meeting were reviewed briefly by the Adjutant.

**Adjutant's Report:**

Adjutant Naught reviewed the current state of membership renewals. At the present, the Post has 746 members on the rolls to renew minus 56 Paid Up For Life members. We have 420 members (68.3%) who have already renewed their memberships leaving approximately 270 more-member renewals needed yet to complete the process for 2018.

**Finance Officer's Report:**

Finance Officer Chelstrom was ill so the Adjutant reprised the significant numbers for the current month. The Post's February operating balance is \$2,865.83. The report indicates the electric bill, water bill and Direct TV bills weren't paid yet but the bill's balances had already been deducted to arrive at the current operating balance. Chelstrom's report indicates the mortgage balance is down to \$257,082.00 from \$258,140.00.

Vice Commander Ryan announced the cancelled Valentines Dance was being rescheduled for March 10<sup>th</sup>. All party arrangements will remain the same for the March party. He also related the fact the new \$6,000.00 loan had been consummated with Arvest Bank so the new, electronic sign has been installed. He shared the fact a team led by Pat O'Brien and himself are perfecting their operation techniques for the new sign. Kudos to all involved in the purchase and now the ongoing operation of the sign.

Ryan introduced three meeting guests who would be sharing information with the group. The individuals were:

1. Dean Michaels who was representing an eight-day, bus tour from Bella Vista's Riordan Hall to Virginia Beach, Virginia, and Washington DC. The cost of the tour is \$1,600.00 per person for a couple. Individuals can purchase tickets for \$2,089.00. Michaels left five trip catalogs for members interested in the trip.
2. The second presentation was made by Timothy Birch Farling who is a district representative of the VA Rehabilitation and Counseling Service. Farling's group is one of four within the Veterans Administration. He stated his group is strictly responsible for providing veterans rehabilitative and counseling services. His group does not provide hospital or healthcare services, benefits administration, or cemetery care or administrative services. His group is strictly charged to provide rehabilitative and counseling services to deserving veterans.
3. The final guest was the Arkansas Department Commander, Michael Westergren, who shared information about upcoming meetings through the month of March including:
  - a. February 25 – 28 meeting with elected representatives of the Federal government.
  - b. March 7, 2018, a meeting with elected state representatives.
  - c. March 17 and 18 a Lead Training Meeting focusing on child and youth services.

Westergren indicated the need for seven flag poles for seven different Posts. The Department has currently raised \$3,000.00 but still needs \$4,000.00 more to provide poles to all seven Posts.

Westergren then opened the floor for questions. Two of the questions of special interest were rumors about the reduction of opiate based medicine for veterans. Westergren dismissed this as rumor and indicated veterans meeting this challenge can get assistance from the VA.

Another question of interest was the challenges presented veterans when they are attempting to avail themselves of the health and hospital services. Once again, Westergren indicated these problems can be overcome. He indicated persons who were unsuccessful in the past should try again.

The members in attendance showed their appreciation for Westergren's visit and invited him to return at his earliest convenience.

**Closing Ceremonies:**

When the Department Commander's presentation concluded, closing ceremonies were conducted by First Vice Commander Ryan and Chaplain Lantz at approximately 1920 hours.

Respectfully submitted by Bella Vista Adjutant

*Don Naught*

American Legion Post 0341

Bella Vista, AR