

**FALL S.E.C. MEETING  
DOUBLETREE BY HILTON  
GRAND RAPIDS MI**

**OCTOBER 13, 2023**

The Fall SEC meeting was called to order by President Pat Michalski at 6:38pm. Our special guest at the meeting was National President Amy Stopyra.

The invocation was given by Chaplain Patsy Watkins.

President Pat requested the approval of PDP Carol Pickett to be acting Sgt-at-Arms for this meeting.

\*\*Motion Faye Richardson-Green/2<sup>nd</sup> Kathy Keizer to approve the Presidents appointment. CARRIED

Roll Call of Officers showed all in attendance with the exception of 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice Pam Lein who will be arriving late (she was working) and Sgt-at-Arms Linda Langland who was excused. District I President Linda Marshall was excused and District VII President Barb Robare was not connected to the zoom program yet. John Dingell VA Rep Cel Rose Solak was excused. Jacobetti Rep Judy Smith was also working on connecting to the zoom program.

Correspondence: None

Convention minutes, (the pre-convention minutes, Convention 2023 minutes and the Post Convention)

\*\*Motion Kathy Keizer/2<sup>nd</sup> Patsy Watkins to approve the minutes as printed. CARRIED

**OFFICER'S REPORTS:**

President Pat Michalski reported she has attended many committee meetings with the AMVET Officers. She attended National Convention in Pittsburg PA where she served on the By-Laws Committee and the Americanism Committee. She also attended the Penrickton Tour.

1<sup>st</sup> Vice President Kathy Keizer stated memberships were coming in very slow. She and the Secretary have compared figures through August. September hasn't been done yet because of issues of errors on D&R's.

Honorary members must now pay \$15 annually. This is a national fee – the Dept. does not charge any fee for Honorary members. Also, all annual members who wish to

purchase a life membership must do so between Sept. 1 and November 30 so it can be postmarked to the Department no later than 12/5. All Honorary renewals and life member assessments must be postmarked by 12/5. All annual memberships must be paid by 12/31 and postmarked to the Department by January 5.

*Membership contests:*

#1 100% renewed by October 31. So far #910 is a winner of \$25.

#2 The first 4 Auxiliaries who submit their life member assessments of \$3 to the Dept. will receive \$25. The 1<sup>st</sup> three submitting were #23, #93 and #4064. Three Auxiliaries were received on the same day for fourth place. Total payout for this contest will be \$150.

\*\*Motion Kathy Keizer/2<sup>nd</sup> Nancy Middleton to increase contest (#2) by \$50 to give each winner \$25. CARRIED

#3 Each annual member was given a number and on the last day of the month of September, October, November and December, there will be a drawing. If the number belongs to a member who has paid their dues and it is received by the Dept. Secretary by the deadline, they win \$25. If there is no winner, the \$25 will be added to the next month's prize. The number drawn for September was Laura Lesniak from Aux. #57. Her dues were not received by the deadline so the \$25 prize will be added to the October drawing.

2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President Bonnie Rojaski reported on the Penrickton Tour. There were 20 members at the tour. Bob Green won the drawing for a Penrickton shirt. Bonnie reminded everyone to make their donations for Penrickton through the Department.

Bonnie asked to be excused from the Spring SEC. She will be in Florida at that time.

3<sup>rd</sup> Vice President Pam Lein has not arrived yet.

Treasurer Deb Davis turned in a Net Worth report as of September 20, 2023. We have \$77, 942 in bank accounts; \$41,148 in CDs for a total new worth of \$119,090. There was no other report.

Chaplain Patsy Watkins had nothing additional to report.

Americanism/SOS Officer Karen Harmon said the Americanism entry forms on the website have been updated for 2023/24. She also reported on the AMVET raffle after taking with Jessic Simmons. The paperwork for the raffle has been resubmitted.

Karen would like to continue the Camp Grayling USO project for SOS for this year. She is looking at purchasing furniture for the USO with funds donated by the Department Auxiliaries. She was also given a list from Roberta Robinson for recreation equipment which is needed including fishing poles.

\*\*Motion Karen Harmon/2<sup>nd</sup> Pam Lein (Pam had arrived at the meeting during the Americanism report) to have the Camp Grayling USO as the Department SOS project and use donations to purchase furniture and recreational equipment. CARRIED

Hospital Officer Kay Kemp requested approval of a Chairman's Hospital Award: A gift card to the Auxiliary with the largest total donation to the hospital fund.

\*\*Motion Kay Kemp/2<sup>nd</sup> Karen Harmon to approve the Hospital Officer's Chairman Award. CARRIED

Scholarship Officer Roberta Robinson sent letters to Posts to broaden awareness of Scholarship programs. She also attended District VI meeting. (Sec. note: I am assuming this is the AMVET District VI meeting because there is no Auxiliary District VI – please correct me if this is wrong). We have 23 Auxiliaries and 12 have Scholarship Officers. We need to try to enhance our Scholarship program.

Roberta requested permission for Chairmen's awards:

#1 A gift card drawing for an Auxiliary who has participated in the Scholarship reports but has not participated for the past 2 years. CARRIED

#2 February is Scholarship month and there will be a prize for the Auxiliary who holds a special fundraiser in February with the largest Scholarship donation

\*\*Motion Roberta Robinson/2<sup>nd</sup> Faye Richardson-Green moved to accept both Chairmen's awards. CARRIED

NEC Woman, Nancy Middleton reported picking up the National President at the Grand Rapids Airport. Since her flight was delayed and she just arrived, there was no time to get anything to eat so we will feed her after this meeting!

Parliamentarian Faye Richardson-Green reported on two poll votes: #1 to approve a contest for membership and #2 to increase the budget.

\*\*Motion Faye Richardson-Green/2<sup>nd</sup> Kathy Keizer to ratify the Poll Votes. CARRIED

Roberta Robinson questioned the Parliamentarian about a couple things she found in the Standing Rules page 1 under Finance:

#6 Solicitation of funds by any Dept. Officer must have approval of the SEC and the Ways & Means Chairman.....

#7 Fundraisers for the Dept. which are not held in conjunction with Convention, Fall Conference and SEC meetings will need the approval of the Ways & Means Chairman.

\*\*Motion Faye Richardson-Green/2<sup>nd</sup> Kathy Keizer change the word 'approval' to coordinate with the Ways & Means Chairman. CARRIED

Also under discussion under "Finance" #12:

- a. In the event of the death of an elected or appointed Officer, Past Department President or their immediate family (spouse, child or parent) etc.....
- b. In the event of the death of a Past Department Commander or their immediate family (\*spouse child or parent), etc.....

The discussion concerned who this needs to be reported to. Who should know if an immediate family member was deceased. When should this information be provided.

At this time, the Parliamentarian received an emergency call and had to leave the meeting.

\*\*Motion Kathy Keizer/2<sup>nd</sup> Bert Lema to table the discussion of Standing Rule #12 A & B until Parliamentarian Faye Richardson-Green was available to continue this discussion. CARRIED

Ways & Means Chairman Nancy Woodwyk On 9/28/23 Nancy turned in the money raised at the July Training Session for the lunch and a raffle (\$255). She is planning a fundraiser tonight of grab bags and a 50/50. The grab bags have hints on what they contain – if you can figure it out – or have fun trying! Tomorrow there will be a card game called Show Me the Money starting at 7pm.

President Pat appointed Kathy Keizer to take over as acting Parliamentarian.

\*\*Motion Bert Lema/2<sup>nd</sup> Allison Aldrich to appoint Kathy Keizer as acting Parliamentarian. CARRIED

3<sup>rd</sup> Vice President Pam Lein (arrived) turned in her activity report.

The National 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice President Laura Budaj will be visiting PAWS on October 23. Anyone wanting to attend, please let Pam know. So far, Pam just has Faye Richardson-Green, President Pat Michalski and herself going.

Honors & Awards Chairman Kathy Keizer – there are many changes recommended for the Honors & Awards rules and/or programs.

#1 Recommend designating all Membership Awards (Class A, B, C) to be Department awards. This will free up PDP's to be donors for the service awards.

\*\*Motion Kathy Keizer/2<sup>nd</sup> Bert Lema to approve the recommendation. CARRIED

#2 Our Membership Awards currently are set up as Class A (41 and over) 14 locals / Class B (26 to 40) 6 locals / Class C (10 to 25) 3 locals.

\*\*Motion Kathy Keizer/2<sup>nd</sup> Bert Lema recommend changing membership totals for the Class A, B, C as follows: Class A (81 and over) 7 locals / Class B (41 to 80) 8 locals / Class C (10 to 40) 8 locals. CARRIED

#3 Recommend monetary awards of \$25 for each winner of the Class A, B, C membership awards. Funds to be taken from the Texas Hold'em account with a check written to the winning local.

\*\*Motion Kathy Keizer/2<sup>nd</sup> Gloria Hall to approve the recommendation. CARRIED

#4 Current the membership numbers for the Service Reports are 10 to 40 (8 LOCALS) / 41 and over (15 locals). Kathy recommends change the service report categories (Aux. size) to 10 to 65 (12 locals) and 66 and over (11 locals)

\*\*Motion Kathy Keizer/2<sup>nd</sup> Bert Lema to approve the recommendation. CARRIED

#5 The following awards have minor changes from the donors. They are:

Nancy Middleton Child Welfare - change to cash donations will now read proof needed for \$1,000 (instead of \$500)

\*\*Motion Kathy Keizer/2<sup>nd</sup> Nancy Middleton to approve the word change to Child Welfare award. CARRIED

Allison Aldrich Americanism – add the following sentences: Donor prefers the service report be sent by U.S.P.S. instead of email; however an emailed report will be accepted.

\*\*Motion Kathy Keizer/2<sup>nd</sup> Gloria Hall to approve word change to Americanism award. CARRIED

Pat Michalski Americanism – change the year of expiration (it is wrong) Automatic Change

Faye Richardson-Green Paws With A Cause Award add the word Officer to the end of #4.

\*\*Motion Kathy Keizer/2<sup>nd</sup> Wendy Lynema to approve this recommendation. CARRIED

The PDP Bertha Zeno Lema Outstanding Member of the Year Award has several changes. Here is the updated Award for approval:

\*\*Motion Kathy Keizer/2<sup>nd</sup> Pam Lein to approve Donor's proposed changes. CARRIED

### **PDP Bertha Zeno Lema Outstanding Member of the Year award**

This award is presented to a Local Auxiliary member for the work, dedication and inspiration she has offered to her Auxiliary. Criteria for this award are as follows:

- The nominee must be a member in good standing for at least the past five (5) consecutive years.
- The entry must be in an essay form of not more than 250 words stating why the nominee should receive this award.
- Activities done on behalf of the local Auxiliary in support of veterans, their families, children, or the community are the only ones which will be considered.
- Supporting documentation is limited to no more than five (5) pictures and three (3) pieces of other material.
- A completed entry form (provided on next page) is required. The accompanying essay and supporting material are to be attached to the entry form with the nominee's name noted on each.
- Mailed entries MUST be received by the Honors and Awards Chairperson at least fourteen (14) days prior to the scheduled begin date of the Convention. Hand-delivered entries will not be accepted.
- Members of the Honors and Awards Committee will act as judges. They will meet in closed session at as designated time before Spring SEC to make their selection. The judge's decision is final.
- In the event only one qualifying nominee has been submitted, along with the required entry form and essay (photos and other materials, if provided) by the stated deadline, the Honors & Awards Chair may provide scanned copies of the nominating documents to the committee members and request a confidential vote in advance of Convention. The winner's name will then be shared with the Donor for the purpose of having a plaque correctly engraved in advance of Convention. The confidentiality requirement by all who know the winner's name in advance of convention is expected.
- If the recipient's name is unknown in advanced of Convention judging, the winner will receive an engraved plaque without her name to be added afterwards. At her request, it can be presented again at a time and place convenient to both the recipient and donor.
- This award will be presented to the winner by the Donor or designee during the Honors and Awards Program at the annual Department convention.
- If clarification regarding the award nomination criteria is needed, the Honors & Awards Chairman should contact the Donor at 586/214-1019 or [lema81@wowway.com](mailto:lema81@wowway.com)
- The winner will retain her award.
- The Donor reserves the right to revise these rules with the approval of the SEC.

Verified with Donor 07/2023. Award expires at the end of Convention 2032.

*Secretary's note: I am pretty sure there are several errors in the timeframe of this award, but this is what was voted on and I cannot change it. It can be amended at the Spring SEC*

PDP Seletha Robertson would like to be the new donor of the former Department of Michigan Hospital Award for 10 to 65 members. She will keep the donor rules the same as previously approved by the SEC.

\*\*Motion Kathy Keizer/2<sup>nd</sup> Pam Lein to approve PDP Seletha Robertson as the donor and this award and rules will remain the same. CARRIED

#### #6 Wording for Membership Awards Class A, B, C

This award is presented to the Auxiliary who has the largest gain in membership over the previous year's total (including new, renewed and Life members). This is a certificate award.

1. The Auxiliary must have a total membership of ...by June 1
2. The Auxiliary must be in good standing with the Dept. by June 1.

Judging: The current Department 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President will calculate the winners, 1<sup>st</sup> place and Runner-up, for the award AFTER comparing and matching figures with the Executive Secretary. She will give the list of winners to the Executive Secretary no later than ten (10) days before the start of Convention so certificates can be prepared before Convention.

The 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President will present the award during the Honors & Awards ceremony. In her absence, it will be presented by the Department President. The Department 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President will have the right to revise these rules with the approval of the SEC.

\*\*Motion Kathy Keizer/2<sup>nd</sup> Bonnie Rojas to approve this recommendation. CARRIED

#7 Recommend we delete the award formally known as the PDP Jeane Wedyke Hospital Award which was taken over by District I which is now disbanded. Question, all other service offices only have two (2) awards. Why does Hospital get to have three (3)?

\*\*Motion Kathy Keizer/2<sup>nd</sup> Patsy Watkins to approve this recommendation. CARRIED

#8 The following awards are available:

SOS – 10 to 65 members

SOS – 66 and over members

Scholarship – 66 and over (formerly PDP Clarice Poisson Award)

Scrapbook Award

The Outstanding Local Auxiliary will be available after the 2024 Convention.

#### **The following are changes from National:**

#9 Hours and mileage rates will be increased for the 2024/2025 service year. Hours will be evaluated at \$30 per hour / mileage will be evaluated at .65 cents per mile / new

platelets and plasma will be valued at \$300 when not paid for donating. Whole blood will remain the same at \$100 per pint. For those attending the Freedoms Foundation Adult conference 10 hours may be claimed.

#10 There will no longer be a Department History Book for National judging. Everything will be scrapbooks. There will be a new Point system for Department awards and the Department of the Year Award. There will be a new scholarship for those entering a skilled trade school. Watch for updated information from National in the Spring.

Fall Conference Chairman Bert Lema stated there has been very little communication with the AMVETS for this Fall Conference.

Personnel Committee Chairman Wendy Lynema stated she has received no complaints.

Higgins Lake Lodge Rep Roberta Robinson stated the AMVETS had a meeting in September. They have received a grant from Home Depot and the Riders have been painting and doing technical work. There will be a raffle for the lodge (Secretary Note: did not get the date for the drawing).

There is a new rule for the Lodge and cabins – No Dogs! (except for Service Dogs)

PRO Caroline Wisniewski – nothing to report at this time.

District II President Linda Marshall – excused

District V President Gloria Hall said the District meets every other month throughout the year. They have a full slate of Officers. The local Auxiliaries in District V are #23, #126, #1941 and #1978. They hold Texas Hold'em fundraisers 3 or 4 times a year and help out at the Department events. The Department President will make her official visit to District V in May 2024.

Aleda E Lutz VAVS Linda Marshall – excused.

Ann Arbor VAVS – looking for a replacement for Pat Krzesowik who is in ill health.

Grand Rapids Home Rep Leora Williams reported a root beer float event was held at the Home and they had dancing girls as entertainment (all between the ages of 70 and 90) They were great! Aux. #23 purchased 2 motorized scooters for the Home.

John Dingell VAVS Rose Solak – excused



Battle Creek VAVS Faye Richardson-Green – excused.

Jacobetti Home Rep Judy Smith – now hooked up on zoom. She reported the Vets from Jacobetti are now back to visiting Post #122 for dinners and music. They are also enjoying small outings.

Executive Secretary Nancy Middleton – no report

### **Unfinished Business**

Discussion regarding Ann Arbor VA Rep. Allotments have not been sent because of the health of the VAVS. Treasurer Deb Davis contacted someone at the VA concerning where donations could be made. The Secretary, who is one of the signers on the account, received statements from Frank Krzesowik and is trying to get more information from the bank. No one seems to know where the checks and paperwork for the Ann Arbor VA has gone.

\*\*Motion Nancy Middleton/;2<sup>nd</sup> Judy Smith to have the allotments which have been held back be added together and a check be sent to the Ann Arbor VAMC to be used for their activities. CARRIED

Return of some of the Expense money from National Convention:

Nancy Middleton, NEC Woman returned \$228.20

Kathy Keizer, Head Delegate returned \$210.25

### **New Business:**

#1 Bert Lema discussed a place online where you can buy old postage stamps at a huge discount. She bought Forever stamps which are no longer sold at the Post Office at about ¼ the cost. The online website is called “stampstore”. Check it out!

#2 There was a discussion regarding the low attendance for Fall Conference. Many thought it was because the local Presidents are no longer receiving the Department newsletter. This was stopped as a vote of the Convention Body in June. The newsletter is on the website, but many do not visit the web.

\*\*Motion Bert Lema/2<sup>nd</sup> Allison Aldrich to begin sending the newsletter to each local President again. CARRIED

#3 Roberta Robinson questioned where we are getting the Scholarship Memorial Cards. This has been brought up at convention and the last of the cards were sent out by Gloria Hall when she was Scholarship Officer last year.

Secretary Nancy Middleton reported there is not a big demand for them so no more were printed. Most of those who used the cards did not donate to the Dept. Scholarship

fund. The money from the sale of the cards is in Savings #1 (restricted). Roberta stated she can do them and will look into the cost. Since the time we started doing this, blank cards we inexpensive. Not anymore!!

#4 President Pat brought up a request from the AMVETS. They asked for a donation to help pay some of the room costs for this Fall Conference.

\*\*Motion Nancy Middleton/2<sup>nd</sup> Gloria Hall to give the Department AMVETS \$500 toward room cost from the Texas Hold'em account. CARRIED

#5 National President Amy Stopyra was asked to speak. She thanked Michigan for their hospitality and was looking forward to this weekend. It is her first official visit.

She talked about her President's Project – National Foster Parent Association. Her theme is Foster Connections. President Amy and her husband have fostered many children and got quite emotional when describing how much this program means to her personally. Donations to her project will support the NFPA Caregiver Scholarship Fund and the Youth Scholarships for Post Secondary Education Fund. This is a Community Service program.

**Mark Your Calendars:**

Monday, October 23, 2023 – Department tour of PAWS

Sunday, November 12, 2023 – Veterans Day Recognition Dinner – AMVETS Post #22

February 17 – Spring SEC meeting

March 2024 – NEC Meeting

June 20-24, 2024 Department Convention – DoubleTree Hotel, Grand Rapids

August 2024 – National Convention – Springfield IL

Benediction – Chaplain Patsy Watkins

Retirement of Colors – acting Sgt-at-Arms Carol Pickett

Meeting adjourned (after 10pm)

Nancy Middleton, Exec. Secretary

January 16, 2024

Approved with corrections by President Pat Michalski and Parliamentarian Faye Richardson-Green.