



**Pacific Beach American Legion Auxiliary Unit #552**

**Meeting Minutes  
November 20, 2013**

- President Vicky Seamon called the meeting to order at 6:00pm. Co-Chaplain Nancie McLees led us in a prayer. The Pledge of Allegiance and ALA Preamble followed. Attendance was taken by Secretary Nancy Person.
  - **10 Members Present:** Vicky Seamon (President), Heather Tidwell (1<sup>st</sup> Vice), Jody ODonnell (2<sup>nd</sup> Vice), Nancy Person (Treasurer/Secretary), Nancie McLees (Co-Chaplain), Sue Gibbons, Larisa Hall, Sandy Kurosky, Karen Stewart, and our new member, Jodi Walter.
  - **1 Guest Present:** John Alexander, President and Founder of Vets Caring for Vets.
- Vicky confirmed that the October 9<sup>th</sup> Minutes were sent out electronically and asked if everyone had a chance to read them.
  - ❖ **Motion:** made by Sue Gibbons to accept them as is.
  - ❖ **Second:** Heather Tidwell.
  - ❖ **Unanimous vote.**
- Treasurer's / Secretary's Report:
  - Bank balance at last meeting was \$3,093.35; total receipts: \$2,794.00; disbursements: \$789.47; current bank balance is \$5,097.88. Of that, \$597.25 is for our poppy fund, \$965.63 is profit from our 2012 holiday party which we are saving for the 2013 party, and \$3,535.00 is in our general fund.
  - As agreed upon (some in e-mails), we designated the \$700 Bunco profits as follows: \$200 bought school supplies which were sent to the Colorado flood victims; \$200 purchased canteen books for patients at the VA Hospital; \$150 went to Wal-Mart gift cards (10-\$15 cards) to be distributed at the Chula Vista Veterans Home; \$100 will be donated to Project Safehouse (I have not yet written that check); and \$50 will stay in our bank.
  - We have sold 99 cookbooks so far, for \$990. We still need to sell eight more books to break even. We're hoping to end up with around \$1,000 profit when all books are sold. *Thanks to Jodi Walters for buying three after the meeting!!*
  - We donated \$100 to the Mission Beach Women's Club for their "Support Our Servicewomen" project. Our money helped pay for the more than \$1,500 in postage to send 108 boxes of toiletries, paperback books, magazines, snacks, and candy to 75 servicewomen aboard the USS New Orleans, 60 female marines in Afghanistan, and 60 servicewomen in Bahrain.
  - Unit 146 in Oceanside is raising money for WreathsAcrossAmerica. The members of this unit will be placing wreaths at Miramar National Cemetery on December 14<sup>th</sup> and is trying to get enough for every grave there.
    - ❖ **Motion:** made by Nancy Person to buy two wreaths at a cost of \$30.00 to donate to her unit.
    - ❖ **Second:** Jody ODonnell.
    - ❖ **Unanimous vote.** *I made the donation on-line after the meeting.*

- President/Membership Report:
  - As of today, we have two new members, two PUFLs (paid up for life members), one transfer, and 23 renewals. This brings our current membership up to 28.
  - Our unit is scheduled to go down to Chula Vista Veterans Home on Saturday, December 7<sup>th</sup> to help decorate for the holidays. Plan to arrive there by 9:00am since Lois Cornish must escort us in. Vicky, Sue, Jody and Nancie volunteered to assist. If you weren't at the meeting but are interested in helping out, contact Vicky. Vicky is also the contact for carpool info. Lois mentioned that although they have some decorations, extras would be welcome. Our unit will be designated a pod to decorate.
    - ❖ **Motion:** made by Heather Tidwell to buy \$20 worth of decorations at the 99¢ Only store.
    - ❖ **Second:** Nancy Person.
    - ❖ **Unanimous vote.** Sue offered to shop for the decorations.
  - We have been asked by Ketra and Jerry to donate desserts to the Thanksgiving meal next week.
    - ❖ **Motion:** made by Nancy Person to buy two pumpkin pies and two apple pies at Costco; the cost will be around \$30.00. They're delicious and large!
    - ❖ **Second:** Karen Stewart.
    - ❖ **Unanimous vote.** Karen offered to go to Costco and bring them to the post.
  - Dec. 8<sup>th</sup> is the next District 22 meeting in Escondido. Our mid-year reports will be submitted at this meeting. Vicky and Nancy will be getting together over several days next week to create the reports. PLEASE write down a short description of what you have done, hours spent, money spent, mileage driven, etc. from July 1<sup>st</sup> up until now, and get it to one of us ASAP. Also, our unit is one of three designated to bring refreshments to the 12/8 meeting. Nancie will assist Vicky in making an egg casserole to bring. Jody volunteered to drive with Vicky since I will be out of town.
  - Vicky encourages all members to please take home at least five cookbooks as either gifts, or to try and sell. You do not need to pay for them up-front; simply let us know how many you've taken (so we can keep track) and bring back the money or unsold books. Vicky and Nancy each have extra books, and there are some behind the bar at the post.
- 1<sup>st</sup> Vice/VA&R Report:
  - We had nine members (plus two husbands) volunteer at the Nov. 9<sup>th</sup> VA Hospital Bingo. It was a great turn-out and the patients were grateful for everything; terrific food, lots of candy, thank-you cards and Bingo! The only suggestion for next year is to scatter the arrival times of our volunteering members so our efforts are utilized more efficiently. Watch for a few photos in the upcoming December VFW Bulletin.
  - The partnership between the ALA and VVSD is as strong as ever! Heather continues to store furniture and household items donated for veterans transitioning to VASH housing. This Friday another veteran, Ely, will be picking up a recliner, full set of dishes, other kitchen supplies, and misc. household items for his first apartment in six years. He was homeless for four and then lived at VVSD during his two years in their program. He is VERY excited and thankful for our assistance.
  - Heather will contact the case managers at VVSD to let them know about the free Thanksgiving dinner available at the post. VVSD may be able to provide a van so that a good number of veterans who are living there can enjoy the meal.
- Chaplin/Historian Report:
  - Nancie just had to buy more cards because she has been so diligent in sending them that she ran out. She gave us a tip: "Trader Joe's has wonderful cards for 99¢ each!"
- Poppy Report:
  - Our poppy chair, Karen Stewart, is thinking about entering the Poppy Usage Contest and the Poppy Lights Contest. She'll keep us posted.
- Girls State (reported by Nancy in Margaret's absence)
  - Reservations for four candidates have been submitted. Margaret has not contacted the schools yet, but she has worked with several in the past and sees no potential issues.

- Other Old Business:

- First and foremost, our annual holiday party will be on Saturday, December 14<sup>th</sup>. As of today, there are 79 reservations (33 adults and 46 children). White, folding chairs have been ordered from San Diego Party Rentals. They will be delivered that day between 10am and 2pm, and then picked up on Monday or Tuesday. The post is having two functions on Sunday, the 15<sup>th</sup> (Ketra's breakfast and an afternoon hall rental) so the chairs need to be gone on Saturday night. Heather has offered her garage to store them so volunteers will be needed after the party (during clean-up) to bring the chairs down the alley to the garage. Nancie McLees offered herself or her husband to be the pick-up contact person. They will be available to meet the SD Party Rentals truck on Monday or Tuesday at Heather's garage for chair retrieval. Larisa's boyfriend, John, will be our holiday Santa. Thank you so much, John!! Larisa already took home the Santa costume for John to try on. I believe both Brenda and Lindsey will be elves. I forgot to bring the gift lists but will e-mail them to our buyers (Karen, Nancie, Jody and Vicky) shortly upon finishing these Minutes. Our gift budget this year is an average of \$30 per child. Gift buyers will also wrap the gifts they purchase, and put each child's name somewhere on the outside once it's wrapped (please write it small; I will place a large label over your note). Buyers, please remember to get a gift receipt for EVERY GIFT and write the family last name on the receipt. I will collect all receipts and put them in a family envelope. Harvey Stewart (Karen's husband) has arranged for us to get a 15% discount on all toys purchased at Toys 'R Us, so that is where most of the gifts will be bought. Vicky will once again make goody bags for the kids. I'll handle seating arrangements, family envelopes, and am the contact person for family communications. Depending upon how much money we have left, we also may give each family a Target gift card. Thanks to Larisa, Tap Fever's "Feverettes" will perform a routine at the party, and also act as greeters and seaters. I will contact Sarah Mattinson, owner of The Olive, to order desserts for the party. I will also contact Karen and Mike Dodge to see if they are again able to donate bicycles for the raffle. *I already e-mailed them and Karen said they would be honored to help us out again!* Anything we forgot can be taken care of via e-mails and/or phone calls.
- Website update: At last month's district meeting, several officers informed me that the ALA units are supposed to have their own websites, not just be a link on the American Legion site. They suggested we contact a local high school to see if a student could create a website for us as their senior project. I have been in touch with the head of the IT Dept. at Mission Bay High School and he is very willing to help one of his students take on this project. I have to move forward and get signed up with Grassroots.org. Once a member, I can apply for BlueHost service (a partner of Grassroots). Grassroots.org will send me a lifetime free coupon which will be applied to BlueHosts's website and we will have free hosting by them. After we have set up the URL (website name) and I complete the hosting issue, I can get back to the IT guy at MBHS. We agreed on the name: ala552pacificbeach.org. I imagine it will be available.

- New Business:

- On December 2<sup>nd</sup> from 4:00 until 7:00, there will be a fundraiser dinner at Il Fornaio in Del Mar. Please see the attached flyer for all details. This meal will benefit San Diego Center for Children. Heather is spearheading this event to help the 70 children her division specifically works with. These kids are mostly in foster homes (they have been abused, were homeless, etc.) and are really in need. The cost of the dinner is either one new unwrapped toy, or a gift card to Target, Wal-Mart or Sports Authority. Please come spread some holiday cheer to these very needy children. Heather has a letter from each child asking for specific things, so if you'd like to shop for a specific child, contact Heather.
  - ❖ **Motion:** made by Karen Stewart to donate \$200, so Heather can buy four \$50 gift cards.
  - ❖ **Second:** Nancie McLees.
  - ❖ **Unanimous vote.**

A check was written to Heather on-the-spot, and she will purchase the gift cards.
- Guest John Alexander, President and Founder of Vets Caring For Vets gave us a 20-minute presentation. He is a board member of the Veterans Employment Task Force, and also San Diego Veterans Commission.

He used to work for a private in-home care service and found that on the few occasions when the caretaker was a veteran, assisting a patient who also was a veteran, the patient seemed to improve and appreciate the care more. He made it his mission to match up veterans to veterans and started this company. Now he hires only veterans but will take on veterans and civilians as clients. For each new client he gets, he has to hire two veterans to care for them. It's a win-win for veterans! Contact John at 858-229-3406 or [john@vc4v.com](mailto:john@vc4v.com). Check out [www.vetscaringforvets.com](http://www.vetscaringforvets.com) for more information.

- Should there be a December meeting?
  - ❖ **Motion:** made by Nancy Person to forego the December 18<sup>th</sup> meeting due to the busy holidays.
  - ❖ **Second:** Jody O'Donnell.
  - ❖ **Unanimous vote.**
- Next meeting will be Wednesday, January 15<sup>th</sup> at 6:00pm.
- Meeting was adjourned at 7:35pm.
- Minutes are respectfully submitted by Secretary Nancy Person.