



Pacific Beach American Legion Auxiliary Unit #552

Meeting Minutes September 18, 2019

- President Vicky Seamon called the meeting to order at 6:02pm.
- Co-Chaplain Nancie McLees led us in prayer, which was followed by birthday wishes for the ALA members with a birthday in September (Margaret Smith-9/13; Jody ODonnell-9/28)
- We then recited the Pledge of Allegiance and ALA Preamble.
- Attendance was taken by Secretary Nancy Person.
 - **13 Members Present:** President Vicky Seamon, 2nd Vice Laura McHugh, Secretary/Treasurer Nancy Person, Chaplain Nancie McLees, Chaplain Jody ODonnell, Laura Dorris, Maggie Frazier, Evelyn Garza, Sue Gibbons, Larisa Hall, Desiree Herrera, Sandy Kurosky, and Laurice Tomlinson.
 - **5 Guests:**
 - Chuck Camarato, Post 731 Commander (and Lauree's husband).
 - Lauree Camarato, Unit 731 President, District 22 Secretary and D22 Girls State Chair.
 - Dawn Bertoni, D22 Girls State Co-Chair.
 - Hope Denison, Girls State Delegate from University City High School.
 - Claire Gianola, Girls State Delegate from Mission Bay High School.
- President Vicky: Before the business meeting comes to order, let's give a warm welcome to our guests and give them a few minutes to share about their Girls State experiences.
 - **Lauree Camarato:** I attended Girls State (GS) many years ago, so I happily accepted the position of GS District Chair. GS is basically an immersion program in Leadership and Americanism. To have GS on your resume is huge; when you're applying for college or a military academy, it's a big advantage. It's a unique experience and I love this program. Every single young lady who was selected for GS is at the top of her class; active in the community, active in sports, active in church - she has many accomplishments. To be in the company of these girls is amazing. They are wicked smart; they're the leaders of tomorrow. This last summer was the first time I was a city mom. I had 32 girls in my city. I was their confidant; got snacks for them, made sure they got where they needed to, and gave them hugs when needed. There were four counties and each county was comprised of four cities. The attendees set up a city, county and state government. The GS attendees learn and understand how government works. I've been invited to return as a city mom next year.
 - **Hope Denison:** On the first day at GS, I was really nervous! I knew all of the girls were in the top of their class which made me worry. It was completely different than I expected. Everyone was friendly; they hugged me. Each City Mom provided anything we needed. We only had a few hours to decide if we wanted to run for a position, and just 15 minutes to make our campaign speech. I ran for Board of Supervisors (a county position) in charge of four cities and I won! Throughout the week, there were a lot of other elections in which all 520 girls attended. We had a lot of speakers (politicians) come and I got to meet the Mayor of Claremont since we were in Claremont McKenna College! On our last day, each city did a presentation and each girl picked a

family member who served. I chose my grandfather even though I never met him and I now have his photo on a badge, attached to my GS lanyard. One of my favorite parts of this experience is that my GS roommate and a few other girls have a group chat going almost every day. We also all have a huge group with all the girls that were in our city. We stay in contact about what's happening in our lives which is so great.

- **Claire Gianola:** My experience at GS was untraditional beginning with the interviewing process. I wasn't selected to be interviewed and it hurt that my teachers who knew me didn't think I had a chance. My brother attended Boys State and I knew it was important for me to try. I was able to add my name to the list the day before the interviews. Against all odds, I was announced as the MBHS delegate. I was so nervous on the first day of GS, but immediately got to know the 32 women in my city, plus my city mom, Lauree. There were so many supporting girls my age. It was an inspiring experience where everyone thinks you have potential. You have the opportunity to run for a city, state, and federal position. I decided to run for state office. On the 3rd day, I ran around trying to get the minimum signatures needed to be on the ballot. I was one signature short! When you're so close, and have so many people around you, it's really hard. There were painted rocks left around the campus to inspire us. The next day a friend found a rock that said, "If the door you try doesn't open, it wasn't yours to find." This helped me get over not getting on the ballot. On the last day of GS, girls from every city nominated who they believe embodies GS. I was named Outstanding Citizen of my city! Maybe my door didn't have the glamorous title I had hoped for, but the whole week was an immeasurably positive experience!
- **President Vicky:** The business meeting of Unit 552 will now come to order. The Minutes from the August meeting were sent out electronically. Did everyone have a chance to read them? Any corrections or discussion? Is there a motion to have the Minutes from August accepted as written?
 - **Motion:** made by Sandy Kurosky to accept the August Minutes as written.
 - **Second:** made by Desiree Herrera.
 - **Unanimous vote.**

August Minutes approved as written.

We will now have the reading of the Treasurer's/Secretary's report.

- **Treasurer's/Secretary's Report (Nancy Person):**
 - Bank balance at the August meeting was \$3,901.28; deposits: \$455.00; disbursements: \$582.28; current bank balance is \$3,774.00. Of that, \$1,412.31 is in our Poppy Fund, \$277.16 is in our Children & Youth (piggy) fund, leaving \$2,084.53 in our general fund.
 - I made the \$200 donation to Honor Flight San Diego using their GoFundMe page and our debit card.
 - I have the check ready for Tap Fever Studios. *It was personally delivered to Larisa Hall at the meeting.*
 - I have not yet made the \$100 donation to the District 22 Poppy Production group, or spoken to Lois Cornish. I promise to get this done in the next week.
 - Just a reminder that we have this year's Presidents Pins for sale at \$5/each. This year is the ALA's 100th birthday so the pins are in honor of this milestone. Let me know at the end of the meeting if you would like to purchase one or more.
 - I am still awaiting the final money for the Poppy Bracelets.
- **President's Report (Vicky Seamon):**
 - I am passing around some of the blank ALA business cards. Please feel free to put your name and contact information on them (or mine) and pass them out to potential members.

- We received several letters of thanks from the VA hospital for business clothes that were donated to the Aspire Center, magazines to the VA hospital in La Jolla, children books and \$50 WalMart card donated to the Social Services department.
- Our unit continues to donate coupons towards the Pacific Beach Women's Club's International Outreach program. Thanks to everyone who helps with this project. The coupons are passed along to active-duty families all over the world to be used at their local commissary. Even expired coupons are accepted on the base.
- **Membership (Vicky Seamon):**
 - July 1st marked the beginning of the 2019-2020 membership drive. So far, we have 19 renewals, 3 PUFL and 4 new members, totaling 26. The applications of the four new members, Amy Smith, Sun Young Allen, Ashley Cushing and Rachel Weak, were submitted on Sept. 1st.
 - Our longtime member Lindsey Bittman has accepted a transfer with the VA and is moving to Portland, OR on October 11th. We wish her well and will miss her! We'll need to find another Santa's elf for the Christmas party.
 - Amy Koss has decided to transfer her membership to the Kearny Mesa post.
 - Membership benefits - <http://ala.memberdiscounts.co/perks/register>. Simply go to the web address above and use registration code: ALADiscounts. You will then be asked to set up a password.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

✚ Americanism (Jody ODonnell)

- No report.

✚ Chaplain (Nancie McLees):

- I received a letter from the District Chaplain. The unit's Chaplain is called the minister and offers prayer, counseling and guidance. Please know I'm here for you if you need a shoulder to cry on or just someone to talk to. I'm also happy to accept prayers and devotions to share with our unit.

✚ Children & Youth (Larisa Hall):

- No report.

✚ Community Service (Heather Wilson-absent):

- No report.

✚ Education (Jody Borden-absent):

- No report. We send our condolences to Jody who lost her cat yesterday.

✚ Girls State (Nancy Person):

- No report.

✚ Historian & District 22 Journalist (BJ Coleman-absent):

- No report. Just a reminder that Sept 25th is the deadline to submit articles or photos for the Veterans Day edition of the D22 Legionnaire newspaper.

✚ National Security (Maggie Frazier):

- No report.

✚ Poppy (Evelyn Garza):

- No report.

✚ Public Relations (Nancy Person):

- No report.

✚ VA&R (Vicky Seamon for Miranda Boshart, who is ill):

- Bingo will be at the VA Hospital on Sunday, November 9th. We are co-hosting with Unit 460, and as always, they're going to serve a full Thanksgiving meal. Our unit will be responsible for the

paper products, drinks, utensils, pies with whipped cream, and the 30 bags going to the locked ward. Please remember, we also collect Halloween candy between 10/31 and 11/8. Before Bingo begins we visit the wards, thank the patients for their service, and pass out candy and thank-you notes (made by Birdrock Elementary students). We are asked to be there around 1:00 but we usually arrive 11ish so we have time to visit the wards.

- **Old Business (Vicky Seamon):**

- Sandy did a wonderful job along with the kitchen crew in bringing back the Sunday breakfast on 9/8. The next is scheduled for this Sunday, 9/22. Please come out and show your support.
- The Pacific Beach Town Council will be holding their Police and Emergency Services Appreciation Night (PAESAN) on 9/25 from 4 to 6pm. They hold a community picnic to show support and appreciation for these agencies. Our unit purchased 300 bottles of water, which I will be delivering on 9/24.
- Oktoberfest - September 28 - Steve will be doing all the cooking, but needs our help setting up, cleaning up, and providing desserts. The food is amazing so don't miss it. All profits go toward our holiday party, so the more meals that are purchased, the more money we have to spend for the party.
- Bunco is on the calendar for 10/12. So far, I have received donations of passes for Sea World, Halloween theme basket and stem wear. Nancy has gotten a \$20 donation from somebody who has previously attended but can't make it this time. We still need more items for prizes and raffle baskets. We also need everyone to get the word out and invite friends and family to attend. This fundraiser also really makes the difference on what we can spend on the holiday party. A flyer is attached to these Minutes for easy distribution.
- Did anybody bring donations for SUFKs? Thanks to our members, I brought toiletry items, tote bags, and jeans over the last month. They can also use gently used towels. Stand Up For Kids is a non-profit that assists homeless teenagers and young adults.
- Keep bringing in your Box Tops - we collect them for Birdrock Elementary, where Jody Borden teaches.
- I am also still collecting manufacturer coupons for military families who are serving abroad. They can use them in the commissary, even if they're expired. Thanks to all who continue to bring them to me. I send a special thanks to Nancie McLees & Margaret Smith who cut them out and separate them, saving me the job. I must turn them in already cut and sorted.

- **New Business (Vicky Seamon):**

- At our last meeting we agreed to help the SONS with the Tuesday meals on 10/22 and 10/29, but no one has come forward to lead a meal. Please consider helping out.
- Chula Vista Veterans Walk is on 11/2. It's about a 4-mile walk from the Chula Vista Veterans Home to the local VFW. Lunch is served at the VFW. In the past, we've had several members participate. One year there were eight of us and it was really fun! Is anyone interested in participating this year? If we have a team, we save money on the entry but I must let them know in advance.
- Make Them Smile Holiday Party is scheduled for 12/7. Please mark your calendars and start thinking about what you can do to help.
- REMINDER: ALA National has put out a challenge to all units. Units that have the most members completing a 5-part on line course will receive a monetary award. I would encourage all members to go to the website <https://www.alaforveterans.org/About/History/> and complete the courses. If you do it, be sure to print out your certificate of completion as I will need to verify your status before adding your name to the list. I took the 1st one and it only took about 15 min.

- **New Business (Larisa Hall):**
 - Pacific BeachFest is on Saturday, Oct. 5th. Tap Fever Studios dancers will be meeting at Trader Joe's (at the big sign on the corner of Garnet & Ingraham) at 4:00. At 4:30, we'll be walking down to the beach in preparation for our Thriller Dance Flash Mob performance. We'll all be dressed up as different kinds of zombies. It would be really cool if we had some patriotic zombies among us as we walked. You could bring the ALA business cards to distribute to passers-by. Let me know if you're interested in joining in the fun.
 - Is there an easy way to submit our volunteer hours? I would be happy to make a Google document to share with all members. They could send it in once a month instead of waiting for the two times a year the data is needed for ALA reports.
 - Since we still struggle each time we talk about making a meal, can we have a side meeting just to brainstorm meals? If we come up with a dozen or so meals that are easy and affordable, we can just rotate making them. *Everyone liked this idea so Vicky will send out an email with some possible dates/times for this meeting and members will choose one that works best for most of us.*
- **New Business (Desiree Herrera):**
 - This Saturday is the VFW Dominoes tournament. It costs \$5.00 to enter. If you win, you get your name engraved on the plaque. It starts at 1:00. Even if you don't want to participate, come on down to the canteen to have a drink and cheer everyone on.
- Dates to remember:
 - Dominoes tournament at the VFW - Saturday, Sept. 21st
 - Second post breakfast - Sunday, Sept. 22nd
 - PAESAN picnic - Thursday, Sept. 26th
 - Oktoberfest - Saturday, Sept. 28th
 - Next District 22 meeting - Sunday, Oct. 6th
 - Our Bunco fundraiser - Saturday, Oct. 12th
 - Next Unit 552 general meeting - Wednesday, Oct. 16th
 - Honor Flight returns to Charles Lindbergh Airport - Sunday, Oct. 20th
 - VA Bingo - Saturday, Nov. 9th
 - ALA Holiday Party - Saturday, Dec. 7th
- Our "Pass the Pig" collection for Children & Youth tonight was \$30.00. *Thanks for your generosity!*
- Meeting adjourned at 7:24.
- Minutes respectfully submitted by Secretary Nancy Person.