

PROCEEDINGS

THE SONS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION

POST-NEC MEETING

New Orleans, Louisiana

August 25, 2024

Ernest N. Morial Convention Center
The Great Hall, First Floor

Reported by:

Denise L. Hinxman, CSR, RDR, CRC

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... At 2:00 p.m., August 25, 2024, the members assembled for the 2024 Post-Convention Meeting of the National Executive Committee of the Sons of The American Legion at the 52nd Annual National Convention, and the following proceedings were had:

... *Gavel.*

Call to Order and Salute the Colors

Joseph Navarreté (NM), National Vice Commander

... *Gavel.*

Sergeant-at-Arms, please secure the doors.

Good afternoon, everyone.

FROM THE FLOOR: Good afternoon.

NATIONAL COMMANDER NAVARRETÉ: Please rise.

Salute the Colors

With the Colors of our Nation in place, join me in offering a right-hand salute.

Two.

National Chaplain Jeffrey Hicks will invoke the blessing of God. Please uncover.

Invocation

Jeffrey E. Hicks (NJ), National Chaplain

Let us pray. Gracious God, we thank you for the year we have completed for its successes and for the strength you have given us to overcome its failures.

As we face a new year together, give us patience and understanding for all our comrades, wisdom in our decisions, and your aid in building a better Sons of the American Legion.

Bestow your special blessings upon all who have assumed the duties of leadership, especially our new National Commander Joseph Navarreté.

Walk with each of us in heart and mind, day-by-day, so that we may continue to serve our God and our country. Amen.

...Chorus of amens.

NATIONAL COMMANDER NAVARRETÉ: In memory of our departed comrades and the comrades of all

veterans, let us stand in silence.

... Moment of silence.

POW/MIA Empty Chair Ceremony

To maintain a high awareness that a constant vigil should be maintained so that no POW or MIA will be left unaccounted for, the Sons of The American Legion designate a POW/MIA Empty Chair at all meetings. This is a physical symbol of the thousands of American POW/MIAs still unaccounted for, as a reminder for all of us to spare no effort to secure the release of any American prisoners from captivity, the repatriation of the remains of those who died bravely in defense of liberty, and a full accounting of those missing. Let us rededicate ourselves for this vital endeavor.

The POW/MIA flag is in place at this time.

Pledge of Allegiance

I call upon National Vice Commander Robert Manzo to lead us in reciting the Pledge of

Allegiance.

Pledge of Allegiance

... Pledge of Allegiance recited.

NATIONAL COMMANDER NAVARRETÉ: Please cover.

I now call upon National Vice Commander John Lawrence to lead us in reciting the Preamble to the Constitution of the Sons of The American Legion.

Preamble to the Constitution of the SAL

... Preamble of the Sons of the American Legion Constitution recited.

Blue Star Banner Ceremony

NATIONAL COMMANDER NAVARRETÉ: Serving as a constant reminder that servicemen and women, on a daily basis, are putting themselves at risk to ensure our freedoms, the Sons of The American Legion display a Corporate Blue Star Service Banner at all meetings, to serve as a symbol of our support of all the military personnel serving this great country.

Let us never forget that every day these individuals are protecting our liberty. The Blue Star Service Banner is in place.

National Adjutant Anthony Wright will now read the Call to the Post-Convention meeting of the National Executive Committee.

Reading of the Meeting Call

Anthony W. Wright (PA), National Adjutant

Pursuant to Article VII, Section 1 of the National Constitution of the Sons of The American Legion, the National Commander of the Sons of The American Legion hereby calls for a meeting of the National Executive Committee of the Sons of The American Legion to be held August 25, 2024, in the Ernest N. Morial Convention Center in New Orleans, Louisiana.

NATIONAL COMMANDER NAVARRETÉ: National Adjutant Anthony Wright will now call the roll.

Roll Call

Anthony W. Wright (PA), National Adjutant

National Commander

Joseph Navarreté, New Mexico

National Vice Commanders

North: Robert Manzo, Maryland
South: John Lawrence, Louisiana
Central: Harl "Butch" Ray, Illinois
Midwest: Mike Monserud, Iowa
West: Dan Ashley, Arizona

National Adjutant

Anthony W. Wright, Pennsylvania

National Assistant Adjutant Emeritus

Harold E. Thompson, Jr., Nebraska

National Assistant Adjutant

James E. "Ed" Sheubrooks, Florida - Excused

Robert J. Avery, New York - Excused

Scott J. Thornton, Ohio - Excused

National Chaplain

Rodney Tolbert, Michigan - Excused

National Parliamentarian

Gary B. Leach, California

National Historian

Bill Towns, Jr. - Excused

National Sergeant-At-Arms

Matthew Griffis, Arizona - Excused

National Assistant Sergeant-At-Arms

Brian K. Waters, Pennsylvania - Excused

Gregory A. "Greg" Falco, New York - Excused

Matthew W. Griffis, Arizona - Excused

Timothy Brower, New York - Excused

National Commander's Aide

Steven Navarreté, New Mexico

Past National Commanders

Immediate Past National Commander Donald L. "J.R."
Hall, Jr., Maryland

Michael K. Seaton, California - Excused
Robert A. McBride, Ohio - Excused
J.R. Stillwell, Illinois - Excused
John J. Smolinsky, Massachusetts- Excused
Robert H. Faust, California - Excused
Gregory D. Reis, Illinois - Excused
Grant M. Jamieson, Michigan - Excused
Charles E. Gannon, Maryland - Excused
David P. Stephens, Indiana
Christopher R. Cerullo, New York - Excused
Frederick L. Hartline, Sr., Ohio - Excused
Douglas P. Bible, Minnesota
David R. Faust, Wisconsin
Robert A. Worrel, Indiana
Eugene L. Sacco, California
Joseph M. Mayne, Minnesota
John T. Dietz, Kentucky
Jack E. Jordan, Texas - Excused
Byron J. Robichaux, Louisiana
Richard L. Cook, Oklahoma - Excused
Kevin N. Winkelmann, Texas
Clifford A. Smith, Massachusetts
Neal C. Warnken - Excused
Michael J. Deacon, Iowa
William L. Sparwasser, Maryland - Excused
Earl R. Ruttkofsky, Minnesota
Raymond P. Giehll, Jr., Indiana
Thomas E. Cisna, Illinois
James K. Roberts, III, Florida - Excused
Joseph W. Gladden, Maryland - Excused
Michael W. Moss, Colorado - Excused
Kevin L. Collier, Alaska
Brian J. O'Hearne, Massachusetts - Excused
Jeffrey C. Frain, Arizona
Danny J. Smith, Nebraska - Excused
Greg K. "Doc" Gibbs, New York - Excused
Clint D. Bolt, Virginia - Excused
Joseph A. Paviglianti, New York - Excused
Michael C. Fox, California.
Christopher A. Carlton, Indiana

Detachments

Alabama - (B)
Alaska - (N)

Arizona - (B)
Arkansas - (B)
California - (N)
Colorado - (A)
Connecticut - (N)
Delaware - (B)
Florida - (B)
France - (N)
Georgia - (B)
Hawaii - (N)
Idaho - (N)
Illinois - (A)
Indiana - (B)
Iowa - (B)
Kansas - (B)
Kentucky - (N)
Latin America - (N)
Louisiana - (B)
Maine - (N)
Maryland - (B)
Massachusetts - (N)
Michigan - (N)
Minnesota - (N)
Mississippi - (B)
Missouri - (N)
Montana
Nebraska - (N)
Nevada - (N)
New Hampshire - (N)
New Jersey - (B)
New Mexico - (B)
New York - (B)
North Carolina - (B)
North Dakota - (N)
Ohio - (B)
Oklahoma - (N)
Oregon - (N)
Pennsylvania - (B)
Puerto Rico - (N)
South Carolina - (N)
South Dakota - (N)
Tennessee - (N)
Texas - (N)
Vermont - (N)

Washington - (A)
West Virginia - (N)
Wisconsin - (B)
Wyoming - (A)

That completes the roll call. You have a quorum.

NATIONAL COMMANDER NAVARRETÉ: I now declare this 2024 Post-NEC Convention meeting of the National Executive Committee of the Sons of the American Legion regularly convened.

As a point of housekeeping business, I would remind everybody addressing the chair to please use one of the microphones located in the aisles on the floor instead of just calling out from your seat.

Please ask the chair to be recognized, telling us where you're at on the floor, then identify yourself by name, title, and your detachment before speaking. This will help ensure that we maintain order and give our court reporter a better opportunity to document the proceedings correctly.

Thank you.

Installation of the National Executive Committeemen

NATIONAL COMMANDER NAVARRETÉ: Will all the National Executive Committeemen and Alternates please rise.

You will raise your right hand and repeat after me, giving your names where I give mine.

I, Joseph Navarreté, do solemnly pledge myself, to perform faithfully and impartially the duties of the office in the Sons of The American Legion I am about to assume. And I further pledge, I am not a member of, and do not subscribe to, the principles of any group opposed to our form of government.

You may lower your hands and be seated.

Confirmation of Appointed National Officers.

NATIONAL COMMANDER NAVARRETÉ: The following are my appointments for National Officers for the 2024-2025 Administrative Year.

National Adjutant - Anthony W. Wright.

National Asst. Adjutant Emeritus - Harold E. Thompson, Jr.

National Assistant Adjutants: James E.

"Ed" Sheubrooks; Robert J. Avery; Scott J.
Thornton.

National Chaplain - Rodney Tolbert.

National Historian - Bill Towns, Jr.

National Parliamentarian - Gary Leach.

National Commander's Aide - Steven

Navarreté.

National Sergeant-at-Arms - Matthew

Griffis.

National Assistant Sergeants-at-Arms -

Brian K. Waters; Gregory A. Falco; Timothy Brower.

I will entertain a motion to accept the
National Officer appointments.

SAMUEL JOHNSON (IA): Microphone 2, Sam
Johnson, Iowa. I so move.

CHRISTOPHER L. "CHRIS" COOK (OK): Chris
Cook, NEC, Oklahoma, seconds.

NATIONAL COMMANDER NAVARRETÉ: Sam
Johnson, Detachment of Iowa, makes a motion to
accept the National Officer appointments.

We have a second by Chris Cook,
Detachment of Oklahoma.

Any discussion?

Hearing none, all those in favor of accepting our National Officer appointments, signify by saying aye.

Opposed, nay.

Motion carries.

Confirmation of Convention and Interim Appointments

NATIONAL COMMANDER NAVARRETÉ: I am making the following appointments to serve on the National Commissions and Committees.

Commission - Position Appointee

Americanism - Chairman Jeffrey Hicks.

Internal Affairs - Vice Chairman Michael Kirschner; Member William Murphy, III.

Public & Media Comms. - Vice Ch. Joseph Guidice; Member Scott Williams.

VE & E - Vice Chairman, Mark Fayer, Sr.

Committee - Position, appointee.

Convention - Chairman, Blair Miles.

Vice Chairman, Timothy Van Patten;
Member, Clifford Hall, Consultant; Victor Anderson,
Consultant; Walter Natiw; Consultant, Gary Winters;

Consultant, Ray Hartline, Jr.

Membership:

Northeast Chair, Jeremy Revell.

Southeast Chairman, Brian Hine.

Central Chairman, Steven Honigfort.

Midwest Chairman, Christopher Casey.

West Chairman, Frank Meraz, Jr.; Member
Lewis Elam; Member Matthew Krupco.

I will also be instituting a VCF Ad Hoc
Committee that will be in charge of looking at
raising \$500,000 in support of VCF.

Chairman, Jeffrey Trout; Vice Chairman,
Casey Hanson.

There will be another ad hoc added, Be
the One, that will go towards the completion of
having our members pledge throughout the year.

Chairman, Jamey Holloway; Vice Chairman,
Timothy Van Patten.

Chief of Staff, Seth Rippe.

I will entertain a motion to accept these
National Commission and Committee appointments.

WILLIAM D. "BILL" KELLY, JR. (FL):

Mr. Commander, Bill Kelly, NEC Florida, I'd like to make a motion that we accept the nominations as read.

NATIONAL COMMANDER NAVARRETÉ: Give me one second. One correction. Mark Fayer is supposed to be VA&R, not VE&E. Sorry about that.

Mr. Kelly from Florida, would you like to amend, just to capture that correction.

WILLIAM D. "BILL" KELLY, JR. (FL): So amended.

NATIONAL COMMANDER NAVARRETÉ: Okay. Bill Kelly from the Detachment of Florida makes a motion to accept the National Commission appointments as amended.

Is there a second?

CHRISTOPHER SHERMAN (WI): Chris Sherman, NEC from Wisconsin, seconds.

NATIONAL COMMANDER NAVARRETÉ: Motion seconded by Chris Sherman, Detachment of Wisconsin.

Any discussion?

Hearing none, all those in favor of

accepting the National Commission and Committee appointments, signify by saying aye.

Any opposed, saying nay.

The motion carries.

At this time, we will hear from our National Membership Committee Chairman Daryl Verstreate.

Remarks by Commission/Committee Chairmen

Daryl V. VerStreate, Jr. (NY), Nat'l Membership Committee Chairman

I was asked to say a few words, but I'm not quite sure what to say. It's not often -- those that know me, know after nearly 20 years of doing membership know that I can nonstop talk about it.

But after the year that we've had, 44 out of 55 detachments over 100 percent. As of Monday I have no doubt we'll be hitting 394,000 members. Every region over 100 percent, two over 105 percent, what do I say to that?

It's just phenomenal. Everybody in this room, when I think about that, I think about the

Band of Brothers. It really takes every single one of you and the entire family working together to make those things happen. It doesn't happen because of me; it happens because each and every member in the national organization, with communication and a common goal.

So how do we beat that? You know what would be phenomenal? I tell myself 6,000 members is all we need by December 31st to end this year with 400,000 members.

It's not a question I can answer, but it's a question that everyone in this room together working can answer. Exactly, I think we can do it. I really do.

If everybody goes home, focuses on retention -- I know you've heard this saying before, but if you can just ask one, if you got one person, one veteran, one disabled person, one person in your squadron struggling, get that card, send it in and sponsor them for this year, I have no doubt by walking into fall NEC, that if we don't break it, we'll come close to it. I'd love to do

it by December 31st. I mean, it would be very nice, whether it's J.R.'s claims to fame or Commander Navarreté's claim to fame, but what it comes down to is it's all us.

This year I have a friendly competition. And I love winning. But with something like this, I don't mind losing, as long as we're improving.

With the National Membership Chairman of The American Legion walking into the National Membership Workshop next year, whoever has the lowest retention rate will buy the winner a steak dinner. Just something short, friendly competition.

But we walked in just shy of 90 percent this year. They walked in, I want to say, just over 92 percent. We weren't that much further behind them. I would love to beat The American Legion, especially in retention.

But that being said, I'm going to keep it under five minutes. Thank you for all your hard work this past year. If we're going to beat next year what we did this year, we've got to continue

working together. Thank you, brothers, and I appreciate everything you've done.

... *Applause.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER NAVARRETÉ: Thank you, Daryl.

I also had the honor of addressing the Legion's Membership Workshop that weekend. And let me tell you, it's what ignited us to continue to push harder. We know how to recruit. We can retain. We just need to give it that little extra effort, and I know we can get it done.

I joked with my brother J.R. as we were at NEC, because we were getting close, and I told him I wouldn't be too upset if it didn't happen during his year, but at the same time, we're all winners, each and every one of us, because it's all of us together that collectively work these programs.

If there are any other chairmen that have any remarks at this time, please come forward.

NEDLEY C. "NED" FOX (CA): Ned Fox, chairman of the Subcommittee on Resolutions. Just

asking all the chairmen of all the various committee and commissions, that when you guys are involved presenting new resolutions out of your committees, if you could shoot me a copy so that at least we've got a heads-up and we can keep the communication flowing back and forth to help the process move, it would be greatly appreciated.

Thank you.

NATIONAL COMMANDER NAVARRETÉ: Thank you, Chairman Fox.

JEFFREY J. VAN HORN (IL): Mr. Commander, Chairman Van Horn, Finance Commission. We would distribute checks after the Post-NEC, Brian Compton, and I, at the back of the room.

NATIONAL COMMANDER NAVARRETÉ: Thank you.

PNC ROBERT A. WORREL (IN):
Mr. Commander, PNC Worrel, Indiana. Permission to approach?

NATIONAL COMMANDER NAVARRETÉ: Yes.

PNC ROBERT A. WORREL (IN): Thank you, Commander. Just want to give you a brief update on the 100th Anniversary. We were able to meet

Thursday evening.

I won't give you a full-blown report, but I want to give you an update for where we stand and ask for everyone to be involved. We need your input. This is, as Past Commander Hall has said, remember your why. The best way to honor your why is, as Commander Navarreté said, tell your story.

We have over 393,000 stories. This is our history. This is what we're about. We discussed a lot of things. I'll give you a few highlights.

We want to reach out -- the Detachment Commander School, I spoke to them, asked them to start considering forming 100th Anniversary committees, and we want to work with them, the National committee. We want to honor all three levels. Squadron, detachment, national. We want a complete, comprehensive history of our organization.

We want to honor every phase going back. We want to break this down into 20-year segments where we can really honor each and every member of

the past, present and future of our organization.

We're working to create some type of clearinghouse where there's a place where you can submit your ideas, things that you found. You can ask questions. It will be monitored by the 100th Anniversary Committee so we can communicate.

I gave the detachment commanders my email information. Anybody that wants it, see me after the meeting. I'll give you a way to get in touch with me until we get something established so we can work together. We're trying to think of some ways to honor the longest chartered squadrons, just a lot of ideas are on the table.

We're creating a Challenge Coin series to start in 2027 and have a coin each year up to the 100th Anniversary. We want your ideas. Share with us what you think these coins should be and what they should represent.

This is all of us working together. We're working on a brochure that's going to kind of be the nuts and bolts, the how-to, what you should look for when you're creating your history, the

important things, where to look, who to talk to.

We've got a lot of people with a lot of knowledge in this organization. Just reach out to them and just offering our assistance to help all of you. Thank you very much.

... *Applause.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER NAVARRETÉ: Thank you.

BLAIR MILES (AL): Mr. Commander, Blair Miles, Convention Committee chair. First, I'd like to thank the NEC for approving this new committee and to let you know what it's all about, we want to establish some continuity, some good things for this National Convention now and in the future.

I think we can all agree that the Detachment of Louisiana did a fantastic job, and we're going to all leave here with some great memories of what happened.

So what I'm going to ask of the NEC -- this might be the craziest thing I've ever done -- I want you to leave here and go home and think about the things you've seen this weekend, the things that you liked, you didn't like, the changes

that you would like to see. Some of the things that you've seen that could have been a little different.

I thought the timing was great this year. It's much better. But there's always still some things to work on. So give me an email, give me a text, phone call, say while this is on my mind -- we want to get ready for Tampa Bay and just have a great convention with less hiccups and a smooth run, and with your help, the NEC, we'll make that happen. So thank you, sir.

NATIONAL COMMANDER NAVARRETÉ: Thank you, Chairman Miles. Gentlemen, we've tried to start the groundwork to make our convention that much better. It started this year with Commander Hall.

Our planning sessions have been going on. You see we now have a commitment by having a committee to really drive the importance of not just making sure we have a good flow, we have something entertaining, and we're also taking care of business.

I was sad to see that we started off

without our Commander, but I want to tell you just something real quick: You saw me and our now leading candidate, Mr. Clancy, walking around, throwing out beads with jester hats.

That was because our brother, Mr. Hall, even though he was lying in bed, hurting, reached out and said, "I want you guys to do this."

What do brothers do? We step up and we take on the challenge. That's what we do.

WILLIAM D. "BILL" KELLY, JR. (FL):
Mr. Commander, Bill Kelly, NEC from Florida.
Point of clarification.

On the Convention Committee, are we appointing a member from the Detachment of Florida or not? Because if not, it would be the first time that a convention committee did not have someone from the host state.

WILLIAM HILL III (MD): I'm not sure if this mic is on.

Yes, nothing changed. Under the resolution that was presented at the Preconvention NEC, it was stated the previous, current, and future

will remain on that committee.

Nothing changed that was voted in pre-NEC. The answer is yes.

WILLIAM D. "BILL" KELLY, JR. (FL): Thank you for the clarification.

CLIFFORD SMITH (MA): Mr. Commander, Clifford Smith, Massachusetts. For all you on the Liaison Committee, I want to thank you all for getting your questionnaires that have come in. If some of you have not sent that in, please send it to us.

We've been able to pretty much to accommodate everybody with their first choice that they wanted. We could not officially hand that out until Brian Compton has the official roster done.

So I want you to go back to your seats and make sure that your detachment has sent in their officers for National so we could get that roster updated.

And once I have that done, I will release all the assignments that were made, what committee/commission you're on so you know when you

go to the fall meetings, you'll know which you'll be going to.

Thank you, Mr. Commander.

New Business

NATIONAL COMMANDER NAVARRETÉ: Thank you.

At this time, is there any new business to be brought before the National Executive Committee?

Any new business? Any new business?

For the Good of the Sons of The American Legion

NATIONAL COMMANDER NAVARRETÉ: Is there anything for the Good of the Sons of The American Legion?

For the good of the Sons?

Announcements

NATIONAL COMMANDER NAVARRETÉ: Are there any announcements at this time? Do we have any announcements?

No announcements?

Closing Comments

The transition meeting for the National officers and chairmen will be at 8:00 am on Monday,

August 26th in Room 202 on the 2nd Floor here in the Ernest N. Morial Convention Center.

The Fall National Executive Committee meeting call will soon be sent out.

We were hoping that call would get out, but as you know our liaison is in the hospital still. So we are not positive if that call did go out and if the link is live. However, it is important that everyone use the online registration site to submit their housing requests to National Headquarters no later than August 31st.

We do understand, if that link is not live, that we will go past beyond that date. But please be patient with us. It is live now. So you have until the 31st.

If there is no further business to come before this National Executive Committee meeting, Past National Chaplain Jeffrey Hicks will lead us in the closing prayer. Please rise and uncover.

Benediction

Jeffrey E. Hicks (NJ), Past National Chaplain

Let us pray. May the road rise up to meet you. May the wind be always at your back. May the sunshine warm upon your face and the rains fall soft upon your fields.

And until we meet again, may God hold you all in the palm of his hand.

Amen.

... Chorus of amens.

NATIONAL COMMANDER NAVARRETÉ: Please cover.

Adjournment and Salute the Colors

Until we meet again, let us remember that our obligation to our Country can only be fulfilled by the faithful performance of all duties of citizenship.

Let service to the community, state and nation be ever a main objective of the Sons of The American Legion. Let us ever be watchful of the honor of our Country, The American Legion, our organization, and ourselves, that nothing shall

swerve us from the path of Justice, Freedom,
Loyalty, and Democracy.

With the Colors of our Nation in place,
join me in offering a right-hand salute.

Two.

I now declare this 2024 Post-Convention
Meeting of the National Executive Committee of the
Sons of The American Legion adjourned.

2:36 p.m.

-o0o-

CERTIFICATION OF COMPLETION

I, DENISE HINXMAN, Certified Court Reporter, do hereby certify;

That on August 25, 2024, I was present and took verbatim stenotype notes of the 2024 Post-Convention Meeting of the National Executive Committee of the Sons of The American Legion entitled herein, and thereafter transcribed the same into typewriting as herein appears;

That said meeting was taken in stenotype notes by me, a Certified Court Reporter, and thereafter reduced to typewriting under my direction as herein appears;

That the foregoing transcript is a full, true, and correct transcription of my stenotype notes of said meeting.

Dated at Reno, Nevada, this 27th day of September 2024.

DENISE HINXMAN, CSR, RDR, CRC