

DEPARTMENT RECONNECT COMMITTEE
September 20, 2013

The meeting of the Department Reconnect Committee was called to order by Gary Tanner, Chairman at 10:02 a.m., Friday, September 20, 2013 in the Champions West Room of the Boyne Highlands Resort in Harbor Springs, Michigan. The following people were present:

MEMBERS: Gary Tanner, Chairman, Ken Pierce Sr., Wilson Comer, Jim Maki, Earl Lash.

GUESTS: 6 Guests Present

The meeting was opened with the Pledge of Allegiance and an opening prayer by Chairman Tanner.

MINUTES:

It was moved by Ken Pierce and supported by Wilson Coomer that the minutes of the Department Reconnect Committee be approved. Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS:

Chairman Tanner discussed the Michigan Wounded & Returning Warrior Program status. This year's collection by ACO Hardware of Michigan on behalf of The American Legion Department of Michigan resulted in \$50,284.00 in customer donations to the Michigan Wounded & Returning Warrior Program. This brings the 4 year total to \$110,000.00 in donations to the Reconnect Committee and our Michigan Wounded and Returning Warrior Program. Chairman Tanner was invited by ACO's CEO to speak at their annual store manager offsite meeting to accept the donation check and speak about the assistance provided from their donations as well as the problems and issues facing our returning veterans and their families as they reintegrate following deployments.

Chairman Tanner spoke about the Patriot Fund and the reason it was formed. The Reconnect Committee created the Patriot Fund to provide assistance to those veterans who do not qualify for any other existing aid programs. The growing needs and hardships have all but depleted this fund. Chairman Tanner requested that the Reconnect Committee members raise awareness of this need to stimulate fundraising for the Patriot Fund in their zones and districts. Catherine Buckley announced that the 5th District is scheduling several fundraising events to support the Patriot Fund and Reconnect committee.

Chairman Tanner mentioned the ongoing missions and success of the Elmobility Room. The Elmobility Room was recently at the 2nd Annual Michigan Aviation Safety Day on Sunday, Sept. 8th, 2013 in Grand Ledge, Michigan and is currently at the Grand Valley State University Veterans Appreciation event this weekend. PDC Dennis presented a recognition award received by the Reconnect Committee & Elmobility from the 3/238 Aviation Unit.

NEW BUSINESS:

Chairman Tanner spoke about the need to change the name of the Reconnect Committee to make it easier to recognize the mission and purpose of our committee. Chairman Tanner asked committee members to consider new names to discuss at Winter Meeting so that a resolution may be drafted and submitted. Chairman Tanner charged the Reconnect Committee to set new goals and outreach methods to expand our outreach.

Chairman Tanner discussed the recent National Guard Workshops attended as well as the upcoming schedule. These workshops are a vital link to our Michigan Military families. Chairman Tanner discussed the importance and relevance of the support and assistance provided to our military families and our veterans. Chairman Tanner discussed a growing trend by our military to suppress the topic of PTSD and that units are waiting until service members self medicated with alcohol or experience behavioral issues with which they can raise court martial charges thus avoiding medical boards of review, medical discharges and service connected disability benefits.

Reconnect will review current web page and rework with updated relevant material.

Chairman Tanner has been invited by the Commander of the 1072nd Maint. Co. to speak at their upcoming drill weekend Saturday, Nov. 2nd, 2013 to discuss who the Legion is and what we do. We really are more than just a place to drink and tell war stories.

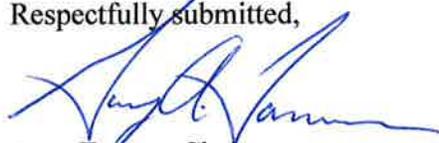
Reconnect has created a military and veteran assistance event form that will be available to assist posts, units, and squadrons to track and communicate their Reconnect efforts and to assist with nominations for the James Schutze Department Reconnect Award.

Chairman Tanner has been asked to attend the Art Van Veterans Tribute Celebration given Sunday, September 22nd in Warren, MI in partnership with the No Restrictions Golf Foundation. The NRG Foundation also conducted another Barrier Breaking golf event in partnership with the Michigan Wounded & Returning Warrior program this past Thursday Sept 19th, 2013 at whispering Willows G.C. in Livonia.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before this committee it was moved by Jim Maki and supported by Earl Lash to adjourn at 11:05 a.m. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,



Gary Tanner, Chairman