



**The American Legion
Department of Maryland
Damascus Post 171
PO Box 171
Damascus, Maryland 20872**

**Steve Monteiro
Commander**

2023 – 2024

**Anita Trotter
Adjutant**

**POST MEMBER MEETING MINUTES
November 13, 2023**

ATTENDANCE:

Executive Committee	
1 st Vice Commander: Charles Bradsher	Finance Officer: Ray Lewandowski
2 nd Vice Kevin O’Neill	At-large Member: Keith Martin
Adjutant: Anita Trotter	
At-large Member: Mandy Buckley	
Members	
Jim Serritella (Chaplain)	Keith Midberry (Service Officer)
Bill Raab (PPC)	Dave Clemmer (PPC)
Sam Baughman (PPC)	Sam LeHane (Historian)
Ernie Screen	Dean Elliott
Mike Wright	Brownie Chichester
Casey O’Neill	Scott Dallas
Bob Carlisle	Phil Purcell
Cary Henry	

1st Vice Commander: Charles Bradsher began the meeting at 1930 hours.

- The meeting took place at Post 171.
- Chaplain began the meeting with a prayer.
- The Vice Commander presented the previous Member meeting minutes; Approved.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- The **Member Meeting in December** will include a Pot Luck, starting at 6pm. This is in conjunction with the Unit meeting, so bring food and come hungry. Then stay for the meeting.
- Does anyone want to gather to watch the Army Navy Game together in the club room? This is an option on the table, but we’re gathering interest input for the event. This is **Saturday, December 9th**.
- There will be another Blood Drive on **Friday, January 5th**.
- Plans are in progress for the annual Post and Unit Member Awards Event on **Saturday January 27th**. In the recent past this has been a seated dinner with award speeches. In the farther past, it included a band or DJ and dancing. This year we’ll have hors d’oeuvres, desserts, and a big band for entertainment and dancing. Please put this on your calendars and plan to attend. More information is forthcoming. We will invite the general public to join us with the band, after our award presentation is complete.
- Send us your grandchildren! Or neighbors or friends.... The process for getting high schoolers into the annual Constitutional Speech contest is in full swing. Our Post competition is in February, so there’s plenty of time to get involved, if they start now. Post 171 joins with the Department of Maryland and National programs to give thousands of dollars in scholarships and prize money to youth every year. Let

your loved ones know. See Sam LeHane to get details about the oratorical contest or go to <https://www.mdlegion-oratorical.org/> .

- Along the same line, the application processes for Boys State and Girls State 2024 are now open at <http://mdlegion.org/boysstate/> . Both are in June 2024, but time to sign up starts now.

A BIG THANK YOU!

- Thank you to all the 15 or so Post and Unit members who attended Veteran's Day events at the local elementary schools. We made a good showing and our attendance was appreciated by the schools.
- Thank you to the speakers at each of the four schools. They were Will Trotter, Keith Martin, Jim Serritella, and Fred Mitchell.
- And still more thanks to everyone that made the Veteran's Day event at the Post a success. The Damascus HS choir performed for us, including a rousing set of service songs. We had a great speaker and good food from Safeway. Attendance by Veteran's could be better, but we're building that.
- A big thank you to Sam LeHane, who presented to the Lorien residents this month.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

- Member Larry Matthews reminded everyone that we visit the Lorien senior and veteran living center on the second Wednesday of every month, from 9-10 am. On December 13th we will have a Christmas Carol and Music event.
- The Post joined with Home Depot to assist a local veteran on Thursday November 16th. We had 4 members join in. Drop your name to the Adjutant now if you'd like to do this sort of thing in the future.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

FINANCE OFFICER'S REPORT

- The Finance Officer presented the monthly report. We cleared about \$10k this month.
- FO also reported that the federal tax forms have been submitted, we are still awaiting the Maryland sales tax exemption, and all the scholarships are paid for the year.
- Auditor Scott Dallas reported that the annual financial audit is complete and all is in order.

MEMBERSHIP

- Membership Chair, Sam Baughman, presented the membership stats. As of 11/13, we have 245 members, which is up 12, for 83.05% of our goal. Post 171 is in first place in the District.
- Membership Chair presented three new members, and they were voted in:
 - Forrest Neal
 - Obed and Christine Pelligrino

ADJUTANT'S REPORT

- The Adjutant reported that preparations have begun for the upcoming Post inspection by the District 8 commander, Cliff Bergstresser.
- Adjutant read a note from Commander Steve. He's recuperating at home from some medical procedures.

HOUSE AND GROUNDS

- Mike Wright reported that installation of the exterior security cameras is progressing well. He has run cables and will install the NVR this week.

BINGO

- This week during play, just a little before intermission, the bingo and TV screens all went blank. House and Grounds lead Mike Wright was able to diagnose the issue as the UPS (uninterrupted power supply) component died. He bypassed the UPS for that night and then replaced it later in the week.

BASEBALL

- Post 171 won the 18u AA Montgomery County Baseball Association championship. Yay!
- The baseball committee and team had a presentation on 11/7 regarding baseball college scholarships. 30 parents and players attended.
- The Baseball banquet is on Sunday, November 19th.
- The Post 171 Baseball program has been voted into the Western Maryland Region 4 for the summer of 2024.

OTHER

- Keith Martin reported on another successful Red Cross Blood Drive. We had 6 first-time donors collected 27 units, which was good though short of goal. We'll change up our advertising for the January 5 event, to try to entice more donors next time.
- The Post Service Officer Keith Midberry encouraged members to sign up for coverage and claims with the Maryland VA. You can sign up at any of three local offices, including the DMV office in Gaithersburg. Contact Keith if you want more information.
- Keith Midberry also reported that the Life Member Award committee met and completed their selection process. They requested and obtained membership approval for one award recipient, without naming the person at this time.
- The Rental Agent Anita Trotter reported that rental rates have been increased by approximately 12% starting on January 1, 2024. The percentage amount was selected because it made the hourly rates a round number. The main hall will now rent for \$180/hour and the party room at \$90/hour. Don't forget that members get a discounted rate and we did not raise that rate.

Meeting Adjourned:

Chaplain closed the meeting with a prayer.

The meeting was adjourned at 2015 hours.

Approved by the Executive Committee via email, November 20, 2023.

Submitted by:

Anita Trotter
Post 171 Adjutant