

WreathsForTheFallen.org

March Officers Meeting

March 11, 2016

The March Officers meeting for WreathsForTheFallen.org was held at the Fort Steakhouse in Fort Ripley at 12:00 pm. on March 11, 2016. Meeting was called to order at 12:05 by John Thomas.

Officers present were John Thomas – President, Ron Robbins – VP, Carrie Johnson – Secretary, Bob Larson – Wreath Procurement Officer and Chaplin Shirley Nelson.

Treasurers Report: Ron Robbins gave his treasurer's reports and submitted the reports to Carrie Johnson. His reports covered the months from October 2015 through December 31, 2015 and also for the months of January and February 2016. The beginning balance on October 1st 2015 was \$17,805.07 and after deposits and with drawls the ending balance in all accounts on 12-31-15 was \$72,566.10 . This includes 5 different bank accounts and does not reflect final wreath payments. A complete breakdown of accounts will be provided in the Annual Report. After Ron gave his reports the officers accepted the reports as reported.

John Thomas presented his detailed spreadsheet for the period ending 12-31-15 to all officers. It included all donations received in 2015. The spreadsheet is very detailed and kept with confidentiality. Total contributions for 2015 were \$69,595.99. John also printed out a list of all Contributing Organizations for 2015.

Agenda Topics:

Printing and the mailing of certificates of appreciation and Thank You letters have been drafted and were proofed by the Officers. 201 letters to

organizations, 75 Thank You letters to the volunteers and section leaders and over 1000 thank you letters will be mailed to individual financial contributors. Lakes Printing of Brainerd MN will do the printing.

Mickmans – John Thomas and Bob Larson had a meeting with Mickman's and they reported that they were very pleased with how we handled the wreath ceremony and that they could be so instrumental in the process. We all look forward to working with each other again next year. They also discussed the new cemeteries in Preston MN and one being planned in the Duluth area. They said they would also be happy to provide wreaths for those 2 locations as well.

Wreath Ceremony Concerns – some of the concerns voiced were regarding the 2nd internments at the cemetery. It's confusing to many wreath layers what the requirements are for placing a wreath on a marker that has more than 1 name on it. Before next year we will come up with an easier method so it will not be confusing to anyone. Some thoughts were to have the Section Leaders place the 2nd wreath, have a special tag or bow to honor the 2nd internment or not place any on the back side of the marker.

We discussed how to get more volunteers – with the growing number of wreaths being placed the need for more volunteers also grows. In 2016 we could possibly have 450-500 more wreaths to place.

Briefing Meeting – we all agreed that the Section Leader/Volunteer Briefing was very important and that every section should have at least one member present. Some of the requirements change or are so important that every section leader needs to be aware of changes. In 2016 we will try to get more members at the meeting.

Refreshment Area – Information Table – we are going to purchase a few 6' or 8' folding tables so that we have them available at events. We will also get 2-3 large coffee pots. As the attendance grows so does the need for supplies. John will check into purchasing these items and store them at the wreath office. All Officers agreed to the purchase of these items.

Parking Issues at the ceremony – we will have to address this issue during the year as this only gets more complicated as the event grows.

We decided we needed to get some office help for John. We will maybe get someone to help him sometime later this summer. We will be looking for someone who would be able to help John in the wreath office in Baxter MN part time doing some clerical work and maybe helping at events also.

Current Pending Events –

We have been invited to several events again this year. They include the 4th Annual Veterans Rendezvous in St Cloud MN on September 17, the Red Bull Military Appreciation Day in North Branch MN on June 26th and the National Remembrance Ceremony at Camp Ripley on December 13th 2015. The Wreath Laying Ceremony will be on the 3rd Saturday this year NOT the 2nd Saturday. This is a change made by Wreaths Across America. The members of WFTF.org will have to help us decide which events we will attend based on the volunteers who will be able to participate in these events.

Other events that we may want to attend: Crow Wing County Fair, Morrison County Fair, Benton County Fair and the MN State Fair. Again all these events require a volunteer presence and a commitment of time. All these fair events will be a 1 day event – usually on Military Appreciation Day.

Newsletter – Laura Becker Palister has been working on the newsletter and we look forward to reading it. It will be emailed to everyone when it is completed.

Preston Cemetery – No news to report from Preston. John has been trying to set up meetings but has not been able to do so yet. We are still unsure if they will have a ceremony in 2016 and if we will be part of that ceremony. John will keep us up to date on any news regarding the Preston Cemetery. Duluth cemetery has not been started yet.

General Meetings – No plans for a general meeting at this time.

Annual Meeting - We discussed having and planning our Annual Meeting. No date or place has been set yet. John will email or post any plans as they are decided upon.

Next officers meeting - was set for Friday April 22, 2016 at the Fort Steakhouse in Fort Ripley at noon.

Closing Prayer – Rev Shirley Nelson

Adjourn- This meeting was adjourned at 2:10 pm.

Minutes submitted by: Carrie Johnson

Secretary – WreathsForTheFallen.org

Minutes approved by: _____

John Thomas, President

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