

McCORMICK AREA



VETERANS ASSOCIATION

MAVA MONTHLY MEETING MINUTES FEBRUARY 20, 2024 at Lutheran Church by the Lake, 1000 Twelve Oaks Drive

Call to Order: Chairman Craig Pierre, 6:04 pm
Followed by Pledge of Allegiance and opening prayer, led by Craig Pierre.
Craig announced that Chaplain Howard Milhoan was unable to attend due to a fall and was confined to home.

Officers Present: Chairman Craig Pierre; Treasurer David Flom, Judge Advocate Tom Westgate; Webmaster Wayne Ehrensberger, Secretary Sharon Branigan. Executive Subcommittee: Al Cauther. Immediate Past President: Harry Klug

Craig invited new attendees to rise and introduce themselves. Six visitors representing Air Force (3), Army (1), Navy (1), Marines (1).

Guest Speaker: Becky Moon of McCormick Area Transit.
Becky asked for prayers for one of the MAT drivers whose wife had passed this morning. Becky gave a history of the MAT services. Followed by current services and fees. MAT transportation is open to anyone in the community. 90% of their 42 vans have lifts to accommodate wheelchairs. Transport fares depend on where you live and where you are going, and range from \$3, \$5, \$7, up to \$14 round trip. Destinations vary depending on van availability but may be able to include Abbeville, Greenwood, Edgefield, Aiken, Augusta. Hospitals, VA facilities, jobs, schools, doctor offices, shopping. Normal hours are 6 am to approximately 6:30 pm. Reservations are required and you are encouraged to book as far in advance as possible because they fill up. Half of the vans go into maintenance while the others work and vice versa so space is limited. Drivers are needed \$15 per hour, CDL is not required, but a medical card is. MAT has a VA rep in their facility 2 times/month for vets needing counseling services. They also have a dining program and a meals on

wheels program. Contact Becky if you can help or need help, 864-465-2626.

New Business:

Craig Pierre: Tonight is Board election night, requested any interested candidates to rise. No volunteers. Craig offered to remain as Chairman, advised that Len Fouch (absent) offered to remain as Vice-Chairman. Tom Westgate, David Flom, and Sharon Branigan all offered to remain in their positions. Roger Anderson has resigned from the Executive Committee therefore one position is open, see Craig if interested.

Tom Westgate: Hats are in, six available, \$20 each. Request a volunteer to take over the uniform program.

Joy Sawicki reported on the Anderson Veterans Home. She thanked Paul Doyle for coordinating the Christmas gifts to the veterans; they were so grateful for the generosity of MAVA members and SLV residents. Vickie Leonard of DAR took Valentines cards, Birthday cards and Balloons to the residents on behalf of DAR. Future garage sale at the LCTTL on 4/20/24 is scheduled and donations are being accepted. MAVA has use of a storage space at Lincolnton Marine until April 27 to collect donations. Proceeds are to go to the Veterans home residents. An anonymous donor is giving \$10 to each veteran to spend as they wish. DAR gave bracelets to residents as well. Joy is trying to get a Quilt of Valor for a 99 year old WWII vet and is waiting to hear back from the Anderson Home administration. Harry Klug reported that 3 spots are reserved for the LCBTL yard sale on 4/20, from 0800-1400. Please clean out your garages and closets and donate goods to MAVA for the yard sale. He also reported on a book titled Veterans Benefits for You available from Amazon, full of valuable info for veterans. Also the VA has a transportation program for reimbursement of travel costs on round trips to the VA. You must register with them to receive it. See Harry for help.

Ongoing business:

Craig Pierre advised that MAVA golf tournament on 11/11/23 raised \$2000 funds for residents of the Veterans home and \$2000 for Wounded Warriors. the WW donation is on hold as they have not responded to us with instructions yet. We have been asking for instructions but no

response. The Board agreed that if there was no response within 30 days the money will be re-appropriated to Veterans organization. Judi Bouchard has a contact there and will try to help facilitate the contact.

MAVA is planning another Veterans Day golf tournament on 11/11/24, location TBD. Need volunteers to organize and help run the program. The Anderson Veterans home will be a recipient of funds raised and another organization will be identified.

Vickie Leonard has DAR bracelets available for sale after the meeting; all profits go to the Anderson Veterans home.

Paula Palaima reported on Wreaths Across America 2024. The Mobile Exhibit is returning to McCormick in April. On 4/28 it will be in the Food Lion parking lot and open to the public. On 4/29 it will be at the McCormick School complex and will be open only to students and staff at the school. Vietnam veteran volunteers are requested to participate in the school exhibit to be part of the Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans program. Please see Paula to volunteer. The WAA 2/for/1 BOGO sale was very fruitful and 322 wreaths will be received through that effort. Approx. 384 wreaths are needed to cover all the veterans graves in our program so DAR will be selling wreaths through the year.

David Flom: Treasurer report. Also request new members to see him after the meeting. Re: group baseball tickets to Green Jackets in Augusta - they usually go on a Thursday night to take advantage of Thirsty Thursday. Tickets were \$11 each last year and we must guarantee 30 tickets in order to order group seating. If we have enough people we will proceed. 8-10 people indicated interest tonight.

New Business:

Craig Pierre requested a vote to approve expense of \$60 for a flag case to be presented to a MAVA member's widow. Vote in favor was unanimous.

Harry Klug reported that a doctor will be a LCBTL to talk about a procedure to negate the need for blood thinners. He will follow up with a date and time for that event.

John Yeadon announced that he has been approved for an Honor Flight for May 9. See John if you have an interest in finding out how to apply for this. South Carolina has a “hub” that handles these requests.

50/50 winner Paula Palaima donated the funding back to MAVA.

Dan Rego will report in a few days, the weight of the food donations collected tonight at the meeting. That figure will be reported to the membership at the next general meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sharon Branigan
Secretary