

## McCORMICK AREA



## VETERANS ASSOCIATION

MAVA Member Meeting Minutes August 19, 2025  
at Lutheran Church By the Lake, 1000 Twelve Oaks Drive

Call to Order: JAG Craig Pierre, 6:03 pm

Pledge of Allegiance, Opening Prayer, Moment of Silence: Chaplain Howard Milhoan.

Present: Chairman Len Fouch, Vice Chairman Bryan Richardson, Chaplain Howard Milhoan, JAG Craig Pierre, Secretary Sharon Branigan, Wayne Ehrensberger, Judi Bouchard, Jerry Wishall, Harry Klug, Al Cauther.

Visitors: A Navy veteran (name unknown), Penny Anderson, Cathy Quinn.

Special Guests: Ellen Jankowski of Fuller Homes, and Endia White, Director of Communications for Mc Cormick County.

Bryan Richardson introduced Ellen Jankowski who shared the history of Fuller Center for Housing and the Fuller General Store in Mc Cormick County. (Formerly Habitat for Humanity.)

Len Fouch introduced Endia White, Director of Communications for Mc Cormick County. She shared information about the 911 system and the need to have our 911 dispatchers reclassified from secretary to first responder. This reclassification would give them access to much needed health benefits include emotional support directly related to the nature of their job. Len Fouch, Chairman of the Mc Cormick County Valor Awards shared they were able to award valor citations to two dispatchers who handled the shooting event involving Sgt. Robby Coker. This is only one of the types of high stress and emotional stress events that dispatchers deal with. Discussion followed on helping organize a letter, email and phone campaign to our elected representatives, to help drive the issue to the state legislature.

Craig Pierre: Reported on the Veterans Day Golf Tournament. The first registration was received today. We need all members to talk up the tournament to friends and family, to make this years fundraiser a success. The Campbell Veterans home in Anderson, and the Gary Sinise Foundation are the charities we are supporting. Craig also reminded us of

the August 29 monthly visit to the veterans home. On that same day at the Dolly Cooper Cemetery, 140 Inway Dr., Major Gerald O'Brien, AF, will be laid to rest. His widow has chosen the MAVA DME program to donate Major O'Brien's medical equipment. Please consider attending the funeral ceremony. It is very close to the Veterans home. Volunteers are needed to pick up the equipment from Mrs. O'Brians home in SLV on Saturday, August 23.

By Laws update- By-Laws changes will be presented at the next board meeting. Terms for officers will be staggered, to ensure continuity of the organization. If the board passes the changes they will be reviewed at the next member meeting.

Bryan Richardson: Spoke regarding our DME lending program/partnership with Fuller Housing. Across from the Dorn Mill, is a building that Fuller will refurbish to allow us to use for storing and lending/giving the DME that is donated to us. The address is 157 N. Mine Street. Bryan and Theresa are organizing and collecting donations. He would like a dedication ceremony to thank Mrs. Sharon Ferguson, widow of Art Ferguson, whose DME donation created the idea of a lending/giving program.

New Business:

Rob Needham: Gave a power point presentation for future MAVA outings/field trips. Rob suggests that we organize a strategic partnership with the SLV Outdoor Adventure Club (OAC) on their outings and field trips. OAC has the membership (300) and the experience in organizing outings including those which need group transportation and overnight accommodations. MAVA offers experienced military members who can bring historical and personal insights to military related outings. Suggested name for this group would be MASH: Military Affiliated Sites and History. Suggested parks/trips, see handout presentation distributed by Rob to all members present. An informal vote of members present indicated a strong interest in pursuing this plan. Len advised that we need volunteers to form an activity committee to organize this program. Interested parties are requested to see Rob after the meeting.

Joy Sawicki: A local church donated a number of quilts to give to veterans at the Campbell home. The next visit on August 29. Meet at 8 am at the Rec Center to carpool. Anyone attending, please try to attend the funeral

ceremony that morning as well. Also, there is a veteran who is going to receive a Quilt of Valor who would like to hold the ceremony at a MAVA member meeting.

Judi Bouchard: Vets for Vets - has been sending cards to members that haven't been coming to meeting to see if we can help. Also, Friday 9/19/25, is National POW/MIA Recognition Day. MAVA will hold a ceremony at 0830 at the Rec Center. Bryan Richardson will lead. We need volunteers to help at the ceremony. We will be raising the POW/MIA flag and share the meaning of the ceremony.

Bob Leonard: Reported for Vickie Leonard on a DAR event: Bells Across America is an annual recognition program of the anniversary of the final signing of the US Constitution. 2025 is the 238th year of this event. The program will be held on 9/17/25 at 3:30 pm, at 509 W. Kirksey Drive in Greenwood. Gather at 3:30 pm, the Bells will ring at 4 pm.

Harry Klug: Wreaths Across America (WAA) ceremony this year will be held at the Lutheran Church by the Lake. Pastor Greg reminds us that LCBTL would like to be involved however they can with MAVA and veterans. The ceremony is on Saturday, December 13 at 12 noon. After the ceremony, attendees are invited to visit either City Cemetery or Overbrook Cemetery in Mc Cormick to help lay wreaths on the graves of veterans.

Gary Zoldowski, Quartermaster: Has new t shirts for ladies. Also a fleece mens cover up. Long sleeve polos are also available. We need 5 new orders to place the order with the vendor. See Gary after the meeting to order.

Len Fouch: Paula Palaima who handles the MAVA food donation program, is absent due to shoulder surgery. Please consider calling her or sending a get well card.

Next month, Probate Judge John Gray will be our guest speaker.

Howard Milhoan: Reported on the young Citadel graduate who was paralyzed in a fall. He and his family would like to attend a meeting. Howard recommended that we offer the electric wheelchair that was donated to our DME program, to this young man. All are in favor. Also, Durham Bley, the man who makes the wooden crosses that Howard gives to veterans, would like to come to a future meeting.

50/50 winner was Gary Z.  
Food donation total: 101.8 pounds

Len called for motion to close. Motion by Craig Pierre, second by Al  
Cauther, all in favor.  
Meeting closed at 7:30 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sharon Branigan/Secretary