

Religious Emphasis Committee
May 4, 2024
American Legion - Department of Illinois
Bloomington, Illinois

1. Meeting called to order by Department Chaplain Kevin Keen at 10:50am
2. Salute to Colors
3. Opening prayer offered by Assistant Department Chaplain Virgil Oikion
4. Pledge of Allegiance led by Tina Abdenour, Department Auxiliary Chaplain

Attendees: (present)

Department Chaplain Kevin Keen

2nd Division Chaplain/Asst. Dept. Chaplain Virgil Oikion

3rd Division Chaplain Floyd Henderson

5th Division Chaplain Ralph Rounds

Department Auxiliary Chaplain Tina Abdenour

(absent - excused)

1st Division Chaplain Danny Eison

4th Division Chaplain Annette Tinch

5. As of the date of this meeting, applications for the Chaplains Award have been received from the 5th, 13th, 16th, 21st & 22nd District Commanders. One month remains for additional applications to be received for presentation at the Annual Convention in Springfield in July.

6. Roundtable discussion of past events in each Division shared during the year;

5th Division - Wreaths Across America program was very successful at the Altamont Cemetery, with 24 wreaths laid honoring fallen comrades from all four branches of service on December 16, 2023. Gifts for the Yanks continued again as annual observance to local veterans at the Christmas season.

2nd Division - Unaccompanied Veterans Military Honors Ceremony was conducted on October 16, 2023 at the Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery in Elwood, IL. Twenty (20) veterans were honored during the ceremonies.

SAL - Wreaths across America ceremonies conducted in association with the historical society.

Auxiliary - patriotic memorial services conducted to honor and remember fallen auxiliary member.

7. Department Legion, Sons and Auxiliary Chaplains collectively reviewed the program script for the Memorial Service to be conducted on Saturday morning of the up-coming convention to ensure continuity and a seamless presentation. Three Past Commanders at the Department level will be honored this year. SAL lost Past National Vice Commander and Past Department Detachment Commander Fred Hickem and Past Department Detachment Commander Carl Stratton. The Department Auxiliary lost Past Department President Anna Umdenstock.

8. Chaplain Seminar will be conducted on Thursday, July 11th in Room B6E from 10:00am - 10:45am at the BOS Center in Springfield at the Annual Conference in Springfield.

9. There being no other business to come before the Religious Emphasis Committee at this time, Department Chaplain Kevin Keen closed the meeting at 10:55am, with 5th Division Chaplain Ralph Rounds providing the closing prayer and salute to the colors.

Respectfully submitted,
Kevin Keen, Post 1922
Department Chaplain.