

M. R. SARGE WAREHIME
Chapter #33 – Odenton

Meeting Minutes – September 13, 2025

Opening Ceremony – The meeting was called to order at 1900 hrs. by Cdr George Ross. Opening Ceremony conducted. Mission Statement Read.

The meeting was opened with prayer by Chaplain M. Ross and the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag was rendered.

Roll Call of Officers: Read by Adjutant

Commander – George Ross - Present

Sr. Vice Commander – Lottie Miller - Present

Jr. Vice Commander – George Scott - Present

Adjutant – Deborah Rider - Present

Treasurer – Tracy Neal - Present

Chaplain – Mitchell Ross – Present

Sergeant of Arms – Demetrius Jones – Excused Absence

Officer of the Day – Nandkumar Singh – Excused Absence

Webmaster/BPTL – V. Eric Smith – Present

- Quorum of 3/2 met.

Chapter Members Attendance Total: 10

2 Visitors – Dept 4th JVC Tommy Sirico, Jennifer Ross

Note: Member + Visitors = Total Attendance = 12

Reading of Last Meeting Minutes: Adjutant D. Rider

- July Chapter meeting minutes are pending Cdr review and approval to post to the website.” We did not have an August Chapter Meeting (no recorded minutes) due to the National Convention.

Treasurers Report: Treasurer T. Neal – reported monthly Chapter Financial Report. Members were welcome to request a review of the financial reports and bank statements anytime.

- 8/1/2025 – 8/31/2025 –Beginning balance: \$9,283.57 (Income: \$0.00, Disbursements: \$4,495.30) Ending balance: \$4,788.27

Cdr G. Ross – requested Treasurer to breakdown the Services and Administration accounts to show the income, disbursements and balances of both separately.

Bills Against the Chapter: None

Sickness and Distress: Chaplain M. Ross. None. **Noted mention:** All members may contact me if you find yourself sick and/or in distress.

Applications and Introduction of New Members: Chapter welcomed new member - Jeanette Ortegon, who served an honorable 12 years in the Navy and DOD for 13 years. Currently owns a Government Contract Business. Comrade Ortegon shared, “I joined to use my talents to give back to veterans.”

Introduction of Visitors -

- Dept 4th JVC- Tommy Cerico, PDC Chapter 7- Bowie. 22 year Army Veteran, Operations Senior Advisor and currently works on Fort Meade. He thanked the Chapter for allowing the visit. He mentioned observing great things and moving forward in a positive way. He stated helping veterans with their benefits is what they have earned! 4th JVC also shared he is a certified fencing coach at the Historic Savage Mill Fencing Club (Howard County). He stated he asked the club for a direct donation to the DAV/Ch33. In support of the donation, he asked Ch33 to attend a club meeting on Nov 15 & 16 as a community outreach opportunity. Also invited members interested in fencing to contact him.

- ***Cdr Ross completed his Department survey and thanked him for coming.***

Reading of Communications: None.

Committees Reports:

1. Membership Committee: Chair, SVC L. Miller.

- Recruited 3 new members.

2. Service Officer Committee – Chair, Eric Smith.

- NSO Craig Barnes emailed the NSO office conducts training each month on the last Thursday @ 10am. Invites are sent to all certified CSOs to attend . Basic and reinforcement training for CMS was already provided. But the NSO office is available for basic questions. TBD for November CSO training.
- Plans to set up a CSO table at the Fort Meade Retiree Appreciation Day on Fri, October 24. CSOs will gather information from veterans who request assistance with preparing their VA claim and forward the information to the NSO office.

Cdr G. Ross – Contact sheets must be forwarded immediately to CSO or NSO to process. Do not hold or leave their information unsecure. Veterans have sued the VA for back claims for not processing their claim request. Forward the information and keep us out of trouble.

3. BPTL/Webmaster Report - Chair E. Smith

- Discussed Intent to File
- NSO has training on the last Thursday of each month, at 10am. Invites are sent to all CSO. Basic and reinforcement training available for CMS

4. LVAP Committee - Chair D. Jones. Reported by Cdr G. Ross.

- LVAP Year to Date Total – 1842 hours. Keep up the good work and you must submit your hours when working GC fundraiser. Submit your hours.

5. Corporate Sponsorship/Solicitations Committee: Reported by Cdr G. Ross.

- Chapter needs 3 volunteers
- Committee Members (volunteered) - Chair – SVC Lottie Miller; Comrade Jeannette Ortegon** (Proxy/Cdr George. Ross)
- Purpose: Committee will review corporations in the area to send the letter to
- Sample Letter “In Kind Donation Request” emailed to members to review
- National website - explains how to start corporate sponsorships and shows the DAV sponsors
- There is a difference between sponsorship and donations. This could make up the donations we aren’t receiving at our GC event
- CDR G. Ross - Currently soliciting my own contacting office – Parsons

6. Budget / Financial Committee – Reported by Cdr G. Ross

- Chapter needs 3 volunteers
- This is very important to vote and establish a budget for our Financial reporting
- LYFT requires a line item budget for the year
- Travel reimbursements/expenses require a budget
- Service and Administrative accounts should have a budget for the year

Committee Members (volunteered) - Chair – SVC Lottie Miller; Comrade Burt Pearman (Proxy/Cdr George. Ross)

7. Forget Me Not Fundraiser – Postponed due to National Policy/GC Fundraiser. TBD for calendar availability with Fort Meade Commissary manager (*after Nov 11th*)

8. Audit Committee: Audit completed and submitted by Sept 30, 2025, deadline. Thank you and Great job by Treasurer, Tracy Neal, Chair Burt Pearman, Comrades George Franklin and Demetrius Jones.

Unfinished Business – Cdr G. Ross

1. **GC Fundraiser/POA** – Plan of Action approved by State and endorsed by GC Management.
 - Core Hours – Fri, Sat and Sun, 2 shifts, must have 2 people per shift, however 3 members max may sign up/per shift.
 - Weekdays are optional and must follow the core hours and guidelines.
 - Area must be kept professional and clean
 - Check sign-up genius before you report to ensure another member will be present
 - B. Pearman – suggested to exchange numbers with Ch13 to help with coverage and contact.
 - Members must wear attire that identifies you as DAV. (davstore.org)
 - August funds collected: Donations of \$3,602.00; Raffles Sales \$457.00; Grand total: \$4,059.00.
2. **LVAP Hours** - Hours worked per chapter, , divided by each, multiplied by \$14 p/h the 15% to State. Plan of Action, AAR and LVAP are required by State to release funds to Chapters.
 - Chap13 recorded more hours than Chap33 in August.
 - Ch13 is partnering with Ch33. This is our fundraiser members are highly encouraged to increase our participation, let's step up and show up.
 - E. Smith -Sign up Genius – Online. Link available and sent out to members to sign up monthly
3. **JBK Resolution (edited)** – JBK Scholarship Program. Money cannot stay with GC, cannot be Nonprofit and turn money into a Profitable company – violates the rules and may cause the loss of our tax exempt status.
 - JBK Scholarship. Created by DAV National. Money must be turned into National
 - April through June. National Program. Not Golden Corral
 - Ch33 started a resolution to change the rules to not leave the money with GC due to safety concerns, and severe damage the relationship with GC.
 - Approval process is Chapter – State to DEC – NEC – National Resolution – then read one by one to pass or accept it.
 - Per National, Tammy Schafer, you process receipts to account for funds received.

Cdr G. Ross – The resolution should be cancelled because 1) IRS/Maryland rules And regulations, 2) Ch33 is covered under Department Liability insurance and 3) National will not accept receipts. Requested discussion, a motion to present at the Oct 24th DEC. National sends the JBK policy and rules out every year for the last 10 yrs. Chapter 33 has its

own EIN Non-Profit tax exempt letter. It's now open for discussion and motion.

- Chaplain M. Ross – Discussed forwarding and presenting it at the State DEC, Oct 24th. This will clear up the word of mouth.
- Adj D. Rider – The resolution was created for awareness across the State. Chapters did not know and were not following the policy.
- B. Pearman – Its policy, for guidance and IRS makes it law.

Cdr G. Ross – Is there a motion for the JBK Resolution?

- **Chaplain M. Ross – I motioned to forward the JBK Resolution to the State DEC**
- **R. Henry – Seconded motion**

Cdr G. Ross – It has been moved to forward the JBK Resolution to the State DEC. All in favor say “Aye.” Those opposing say “Nay,” hearing none. Ayes have it. Result recorded and carried.

4. **DAV State BBQ** – Cdr G. Ross - Date changed to October 25th, Fort Meade Park, Burba Lake Cottage. Chapter names must be turned into the Adjutant by 10/15. Comrade R. Henry, Chief of Fort Meade Security, is working with our Department Cdr to ensure smooth passage thru the Ft Meade gate for DAV members and guests.
5. **VA Hospital Collection** – Cdr G. Ross/SVC L. Miller - Donations for 3 VA hospital were sent out. Suggested items were provided. SVC L. Miller will collect your items and turn them in next week. This is how we help veterans. \$200 was voted to offset the items not collected *if necessary*.
6. **Rumor Control**: Cdr G. Ross – This is a serious matter. Our DAV principles and motto states - IF I CANNOT SPEAK GOOD OF MY COMRADE, I WILL NOT SPEAK ILL OF HIM. There was mention of an incident that the police were called on our Adjutant Deborah Rider during a GC fundraiser. I was told by another chapter while at Golden Corral, that our Adjutant was not allowed to return to volunteer at Golden Corral fundraisers. Adjutant denied the rumor and was felt it was defamation of her character. I advised Adjutant I would investigate. I interviewed past commander, Ben Green, who confirmed it was a rumor that GC didn't want her there using her laptop during the fundraiser. I met with GC managers - Labi Hyseni, and Pat Brooks, who stated the incident never happened and didn't even know who she was. Members we cannot put out false rumors or personally attack another member. You can be sued for defamation of character. GC was also glad it was cleared. If you have a concern against another member – go to them or use the Grievance committee/CEC. Please present your evidence and remove personal emotions. This incident did not happen and our

Adjutants name has been cleared. Chapter 33 – again – always be mindful to our principles – comradeship, friendship and loyalty to principle and our comrades.

7. **By Laws Revision:** Cdr G. Ross – Our Constitution and By Laws rules state revision have to be discussed during 2 Chapter meetings then vote on changes and add ins at the next meeting. Cdr Ross stated the Chapters Bylaws needed to be updated and changed. He encouraged members to move into a position of leadership, to serve and get involved in DAV business and fulfilling the mission at the local/Chapter level and moving up to State and National. Cdr Ross reminded members that the DAV has only had two women serve as National Commander. CDR Ross highlighted the following Bylaw changes: 2 year Tour of duty for Chapter Officers, LYFT program, No member can sign their own reimbursement checks, Online meetings are permitted per IG but cannot elect officers at online meetings. He encouraged members to review the Chapter Officer Guide and to learn DAV policy and rules. Cdr Ross advised members to review the revisions and prepare to vote at the next meeting.

New Business:

1. **Corporate Solicitation Committee** - No December Chapter Meeting. Motioned on 10/11/2022 to have the Chapter Christmas Party at Yard House on 12/13/2022. Chair: Sr Vice Catrina Redfield
2. **Travel and Reimbursement Policy** – Mirrors the States policy, emailed to members and will be added to Chapter By-Laws. Noted – Travel in the local area / within 50 miles will only be reimbursed for mileage, tolls and parking. Members must be authorized by the Chapter, voted and recorded in the minutes.
3. **Zeffy Electronic Payments**– Free in person payment option. Tap and Pay app. Donations are directly deposited into our bank account through a secure system. Zeffy does not charge nonprofit organizations. EIN Letter will be uploaded to Zeffy to link the accounts. Then the chapter must vote on the actual device to set up at GC for those who do not have cash. Cdr Ross thanked SVC spouse for researching this and soliciting at the mall for donations.
4. **Civility / Decorum** – Cdr G. Ross - We are not always going to agree during Chapter discussions. Robert Rules of Order says you have to be recognized by the chair. We must be civil to one another and conduct yourself professionally. We are a non-profit professional organization. We must conduct ourselves and think like a business. Cdr Ross stated, If I've been guilty of any unprofessional conduct, I openly apologize to you and the Chapter and ask others do the same. We don't have to be confrontational.

Note: Agenda business for Budget Committee, RAD Ft. Meade was already discussed and recorded.

Good of the Order: Adjutant D. Rider

- Chapter **AFR completed** 7/12/2025 ahead of the deadline
- 2025 National Convention, **9 – 12 August** is completed. Cdr G. Ross and SVC L. Miller and PDC Mattie Whitfield attended. Cdr and SVC Trip Reports emailed to members. Note: August Chapter meeting was cancelled due to convention.
- 1st State DEC, **Sat October 18th**, 11:00am, American Legion Post 278. 800 Romancoke Rd, Stevensville, MD 21666
- Employment Fair, **Wed, October 22**, American Legion Post #22, Towson
- RAD, Ft. Meade, **Fri, October 24th**, 08:30am – 2:30 pm, McGill Training Center.
- Annual DAV Maryland - Family and Friends Fun Day, **Sat, October 25th**, 1:00am – 4:00pm, Burba Park Cottage, Ft Meade
- Veterans Claims Clinic – **Sat, October 25th**, First Baptist Church of Gilford, Columbia
- GC Military Appreciation Night, Tues, November 11th, 4pm – Closing.
- Chaplain Training, Online via Zoom, **Sun, October 26th**, 4pm. Host: DAV Dept Chaplain
- Menopause - Brunchfest Celebration – Women’s Veterans Committee, **Sat, November 15**, 11:00am – 2:00pm, Omaha Beach Chapter 7, Bowie
- 2026 National Convention, **August 1st – 4th**, Orlando, Florida (more to follow)
- **R. Henry** – when you sign in – complete your information completely, clearly and correctly. Regarding **emails** – **please don’t reply to all** . Everyone does not need to know if you disagree with communication because your comments could discourage another member. Please **use professional etiquette**.
- **Adj D. Rider** – Please check if you **are a member or visitor** when you sign in and know your **membership number** (check your membership card)

Memorial Ceremony/Motion to Adjourn – Conducted Cdr G. Ross.

Adjournment with Closing Ceremonies

Moved by B. Pearman. Seconded by M. Ross

Closing Prayer – Chaplain M. Ross.

Closing Ceremony – Cdr G. Ross. Meeting was adjourned at 11:42am.

Next meeting scheduled for 10am – Sat, Oct 11, 2025