

Life Changing Service Dogs for Veterans

April 11, 2024

7:00 PM

Shepherd's Heart Fellowship

1. **Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM
2. **Pledge of Allegiance:**
3. **Opening Prayer and Welcoming of new guests:** Almighty and eternal God, may this who have served their country in the military be eternally blessed. May they know how much their service is appreciated by their fellow citizens. Grant those who have recently returned from active combat, deep healing and a sense of peace as they resume their civilian lives. May our nation offer them the honor and support they need throughout their lives. Amen.
4. **Welcome new guests:** Len Stidel, who is the newest board member. Len is a Pittsburgh native, in the construction management business, and knows Tom and Tony from the Good Guys organization.
5. **Minutes Review and Approval:** A motion to approve the minutes was made by Tony and seconded by Sue. The minutes were then approved by all.

6. Treasurer's Report:

Funds raised by LCSDFV and sent to GAMSD:

	GAMSD operating	GAMSD dogs.	PA Campus
Monthly Total (March):	\$0.00.	\$0.00	\$7,234.52
January 1 to April 3, 2023:	\$0.00.	\$0.00	\$13,375.52
Since inception to April 3, 2024:	\$24,137.00	\$1,260,892.00.	\$633,932.57

There is some work being done on naming opportunities in the healing garden.

7. Passing of a Service Dog: There will be a Memorial Service for Navy on April 12, 2024 at 10:30 at Oak Spring Cemetery Co., 238 Oak Spring Rd., Canonsburg, PA 15317. Go pass the entrance on opposite side of the road and go the small chapel.

Navy's cancer progressed and chemo was not an option, only palliative care. Faith found a veterinarian to come to Debbie Ritchey's house and administer end of life. Debbie's husband Kirk, and sons were present. Bill and Kirk placed Navy in a body bag and draped his body in an American flag with a dog on it. They met Faith in Bridgeville. From there, WAARF picked up the cost of the casket and monument with Navy's picture. Debbie got permission to start weight bearing on her food. She must be weight bearing to be eligible for a new dog. Is there a way we can add to the memorial page to honor Navy?

We have asked Carol Borden for a list of veteran recipients so we can inform recipients of the WAARF program.

8. Website and Analytics: Craig reported that we are getting more donations through the website. He is hoping to get more people to use the "donate" button. He is also adding a new part to the website called "members". For more info or questions go to Craig@HigherImages.com

9. Volunteer for Grant Writing: There is \$15K left on a grant that we need to use by June 30, 2024. We applied for a 2 year renewal, asking for \$30K. A letter of intent was sent to PACE grant. It is for non-profits to create or advance their use of management skills. Sue and Faith have volunteered. The application is due by April 18. Since we did not feel that we could properly represent our group on a short notice, we will apply next year. Bill, Tom Sue, and Faith will screen the process. If we pursue this, we will need more people to help.

We are being offered opportunities to team up with other businesses like small chain restaurants. We are also on a corporate matching fund list who reach out to non-profit organizations.

Tom reported that we have two memorial sites on our website. Tom received a check to memorialize Ida Cole, a WWII Navy Wave. In lieu of flowers, give a donation to padogsforvets.org. Anyone can memorialize a vet or non-vet.

10. Golf Outing: The website for registration for the golf outing is: <http://givebutter.com/LCSDFV-Golf-Tournament>.
The title sponsor is USS Steel and SERVE at \$5,000.
2 platinum sponsors at \$2,000/each
2 Gold sponsored at \$1,500/each
4 Bronze sponsors at \$500/each

6 hole sponsors at \$200/each

As of this date we have 93 paid golfers with a target of 124.

Bill brought sample of swag items.

Registration at 7:00am and play starts at 8:00am. There will be raffle baskets and 50/50. Sports author and historian Jim O'Brien will be there.

11. Speaking Engagements and Volunteer sign ups/ mailing list: June 29, 2024.

From the Vet Tech Institute, 12 people signed up; and from Duquesne University, 34 people signed up. Tom and Craig spoke to 20 Blue Star mothers.

12. Bingo Bark a Que: Flyers are on the website. June 29, 2024 at the Penn Hills VFC #7. Bill and Joanne placed 19 posters in senior living centers, libraries, grocery stores, faculty lounges, on neighborhood apps, and Facebook.

13. Westmoreland County Fair Show: This year the event will take place on August 17th and 18th at the Arnold Palmer Regional Airport. The cost of a booth for a non-profit is \$295. Volunteers will be needed. In 2023 we made \$1,191.00)

14. Thomas Presbyterian Pig Roast and Car Show: August 17, 2024. More info to follow.

15. Shale Insight Conference: This event will be held on September 24-26, 2024 at the Bay Front Convention Center in Erie, PA.

16. Pittsburgh Pet Expo: Is it worth our time? If we do it again, we should ask for a corner booth. Last year's location was not ideal.

17. NEW T-shirts: Bill showed some pictures of possible styles. One was military green with a black logo and a dark blue with a white logo. Think about it.

18. Monthly update from Carol: Jack reported that not much has occurred in the last month, except for some movement in the infrastructure. On the real number of buildings, significant progress has been made. GAMSD has taken on a group called the Ridge Policy Group. Former Gov. Tom Ridge and people who work for him asked if they wanted to be on the board of GAMSD. It could be a great asset for them. Tom Ridge was also the first Secretary of Homeland Security. Two of his staff run the group and could be helpful in pursuing money at the state level. They understand government, and know people of influence and wealth. GAMSD

had an initial meeting with Ridge Policy Group. GA is asking Community Project again for money. They have been successful in the past and hope to do it again.

19. GAMSD: Jack reported that there were some personnel changes in GAMSD. Shylee who was the PR person has moved on. Tracy Kline was head of gifts is no longer there. They brought on Brian DeLong, a commander in the VFW.

The Gala scheduled for May 18, 2024 has been cancelled. It will be held in May 2025 and will celebrate the 15th anniversary of GAMSD.

GA has had significant success with regional rotaries. There has been significant work on the pond. The Pavilion is a multiple use building, open on three sides can be semi-closed in cold weather. It could be a “gathering place” or for training sessions.

20. Points to the Good of the Order:

- Len: asked for promotional materials; he also asked who determines who gets sponsor’s names on the website? Donations get a hyperlink to the business.
- Sue: are there printed materials for the swag bag like a business card or small brochure?
- Deb: thanked all members for their generous donations for the raffle.
- Bill: met with Penn Fencing
- Craig: There is a bronze statue of Foxy at GAMSD as the service dog of the year.
- Tom: donate for Navy on the memorial page.
- Tony: has a list of the original 27 recipients of service dogs; 60 dogs have been funded. On the next month’s agenda...Battle Buddies.

21. Next meeting: Thursday, May 9, 2024 at 7:00 PM at Shepherd’s Heart Fellowship at 13 Pride Street 15219 on the first floor conference room.

Respectfully submitted,
Deb Tulak

