

National Sons of AMVETS



Guide Book

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SONS OF AMVETS

AIMS & PURPOSES

1. To serve our country in peace and in times of war; to build and maintain the welfare of the United States of America toward lasting prosperity and peace for all its inhabitants.
2. To encourage, in keeping with policies of our Government, the establishment of a concrete plan to secure permanent international peace and to assist in the maintenance of international peace.
3. To inspire in our membership a sense of responsibility, to develop leadership for the preservation of our American democratic way of life and to help unify divergent groups in the overall interest of American democracy.
4. To aid in the fulfillment of the aims, purposes and interests of AMVETS (American Veterans), or parent organization, and to cooperate with all duly recognized veterans organizations in the furtherance of the aims of the American Veteran.
5. To train our youth to become purposeful citizens in a democracy with full knowledge of the responsibilities as well as the privileges of citizenship.
6. To keep the American public forever reminded that the veteran served to preserve peace, liberty and democracy for our nation.
7. To promote the welfare and fellowship of our members and their families.
8. To recognize that the organization known as AMVETS was chartered by Congressional action on July, 23 1947

PRINCIPLES OF SONS OF AMVETS

We, the Sons of AMVETS (American Veterans), fully realizing our responsibility to our parents, community, State and Nation, associate ourselves for the following purposes: To uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States of America; to safeguard the principles of freedom, liberty and justice for all; to promote the cause of peace and goodwill amongst nations; to maintain the freedom of our country; to preserve the fundamentals of democracy; to perpetuate the friendships and associations of the AMVET organization; and to dedicate ourselves to the cause of mutual assistance.....this by the Grace of God.

INTRODUCTION TO SONS OF AMVETS

HISTORY

- 1944 AMVETS organized (Parent Organization)
- 1947 AMVETS Chartered by Congress
- 1973 First Squadron (Vermillion, OH 22) formed
- 1983 Sons of AMVETS Organized (Subordinate Organization)
- 1984 National Department formed.
- 1997 Legislative Program started
- 1998 Lifetime Membership Program Organized
- 2002 National Commander Larry Combs raises and donates over \$20,000 to Homeless Veterans.
- 2003 Sons establish the office of Junior AMVETS Coordinator, to help in our mission with youth.
- 2004 National Commander Charlie Summerall of Florida establishes Undergarments for Vets, which is later made into an ongoing program.
- 2006 Sons of AMVETS from across the country donate \$20,000 to the AMVETS National Symposium for the Needs of Young Veterans
- 2006 Sons of AMVETS achieve 20,000 members for the year across the country for the first time
- 2007 Achieved our 1,000th Lifetime Member
- 2009 National Commander Ben Haynes, Jr. of Missouri establishes Sweats for Vets, which is later made into an ongoing program
- 2010 Sons of AMVETS gives away the first Aid & Support Award at the Silver Helmet Banquet
- 2010 Veterans Lodging program established.
- 2011 Sons of AMVETS begins online reporting through AMVETS
- 2011 20th State Department formed (Wisconsin)
- 2012 The Legislative drive tops 400 total visits

DIVISIONS OF SONS OF AMVETS

1. Local Squadrons-Established at local AMVETS Posts. The basic unit of Sons of AMVETS.
2. State Districts-Established within State Departments that have approved the existence of Districts, within the boundaries of existing AMVETS Districts. Districts coordinate the Squadrons with their geographic zones.
3. State Departments-Established by the National Sons of AMVETS in a State in which the National AMVETS have established a Department. State Departments oversee all Squadrons (and Districts) within their State.
4. National Department-The highest level of the Sons of AMVETS. Consisting of the National Officers, National Headquarters

NUMBERS

A Post needs 8 members in good standing to form and maintain a Local Squadron.

A State needs three local Squadrons at a minimum to form a Department. If a state has chartered five Local Squadrons and has 150 total members and have not formed a Department, a Department **must** first form before any further Squadrons can form.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Sons of AMVETS are a SERVICE Organization with the following programs:

1. Serve our AMVETS (Parent Organization) -- Legislation and Joint programs.
2. Serve our Youth – Scholarships and Junior AMVETS
3. Serve our Community -- Community Service
4. Serve our Country -- Americanism
5. Serve our Hospitalized Veterans -- V.A.V.S.

OFFICERS

Local Squadrons shall elect and appoint Officers as provided for in the By-laws and may parallel those of the Department in so far as the Squadron wishes regarding duties of program chairmen.

The various elected and appointed Officers a Squadron, District or Department might have are:

Commander	Adjutant	VAVS Coordinator
1 st Vice Commander	Provost Marshal	Legislative Director
2 nd Vice Commander	Chaplain	Public Relations Officer
3 rd Vice Commander	Webmaster	Inspector General
Finance Officer	Historian	National Executive Committeeman
Judge Advocate	Junior AMVETS Coordinator	

NECESSARY PROPERTIES

1. Voucher book
2. Membership applications
3. Dues Remittance forms
4. Checking account
5. Adjutant's Book (minutes)
6. Treasurer's ledger
7. Service Report form
8. Local By-laws
9. Up to date CBL
10. Up to date Roberts Rules of Order

DEFINITIONS

Sons of AMVETS	Male descendants of American Veterans who are eligible for AMVETS.
Principles of Sons of AMVETS	Our Philosophy -- who we are, what we believe and what we strive for
Obligation	Oath and charge of philosophy
Colors	The Flag of our Nation, and our unit flags
Uniform	Navy blue jacket, charcoal gray slacks and light blue shirt
30 seconds of silence	In memory of the departed (following closing prayer)
S.E.C.	State Executive Committee - Department Officers, Past Department Commanders and delegates in compliance with the Constitution, By-laws and Standing Rules
N.E.C.	National Executive Committee - National Officers, Immediate Past National Commander, NEC Representatives from each Chartered Department
P.D.C.	Past Department Commander
P.N.C.	Past National Commander

HINTS & TIPS

1. The Commander may vote only in the case of a tie except during elections.
2. An election may be by secure ballot, hand vote or any other method agreed upon by the membership at the level.
3. The financial records should be audited annually or as provided for in the By-laws.

4. Elections of officers are held once a year. For Squadrons and Districts, this is shortly before State Convention. For States and National, this is at Convention
5. Nominations of Officers are made from the floor. It is not necessary to second.
6. To address the floor or the chair, raise your hand and wait to be recognized by the Commander or Chairman.
7. The Commander should pass the gavel to 1st Vice Commander when he wants to speak on a subject, when action of the body directly concerns him, his personal finances, when his being a part of discussion might pose a conflict of interest or when he leaves the floor.

COMMANDER

You have been elected by the members of your Squadron, District or Department to the highest office at that level. With this action, they placed great faith and trust in you as a leader. With the honor comes the responsibility for the success of your Sons of AMVETS programs. The following instructions will aid you in furthering your aims toward a very successful year.

- a. As Commander, it is your responsibility to preside at all meetings of the Sons of AMVETS and conduct your meetings in a business-like manner.
- b. When presiding at meetings, you should have available for immediate reference the following: Sons of AMVETS Guide Book, Constitution and By-laws and Standing Rules
- c. Have an organized agenda prepared for each meeting. Make your meetings as interesting as possible. Interesting meetings will be well attended.

SAMPLE AGENDA

CALL TO ORDER: (rap gavel and say) "I now call this meeting to order."

INVOCATION BY CHAPLAIN: (SAY) "All rise"

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE BY PROVOST MARSHAL

READING OF "PRINCIPLES OF SONS OF AMVETS" by all present (on back of membership card)

(say, please be seated)

ROLL CALL OF OFFICERS BY ADJUTANT:

Commander, (name)
1st Vice Commander, (name)
2nd Vice Commander, (name)
3rd Vice Commander, (name)
Judge Advocate, (name)
Adjutant, (name)
Finance Officer, (name)
Provost Marshal, (name)
Chaplain, (name)
Historian/PRO, (name)

RECOGNITION OF GUESTS:

INDUCTION OF NEW MEMBERS

READING OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

After Adjutant finishes reading minutes, ask "The minutes have been read, are there any additions or corrections?"

After the minutes have been read, the Commander should call for a motion to approve the minutes (either as they stand or as amended).

If the Adjutant handed out copies of the minutes prior to the meeting then the minutes do not need to be read aloud, provided that the members have had the chance to read them. In this case, the motion would be to approve the minutes as presented. If the minutes were mailed out, then there is also no requirement to read the minutes and the motion would be to approve the minutes as mailed. If there are amendments, then in either case it would be to approve the minutes as amended.

BILLS & COMMUNICATIONS

OFFICERS REPORTS:

1st Vice Commander

2nd Vice Commander

3rd Vice Commander

Finance Officer

Adjutant

Judge Advocate

Provost Marshal

Immediate Past Commander

Chaplain (Good and Welfare)

Historian/PRO

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

NEW BUSINESS:

BENEDICTION BY CHAPLAIN

ADJOURNMENT

SOMETHING TO REFLECT ON.....

Handle the business of the Sons organization at the meetings, speak your peace, make your point, and **LEAVE IT AT THE MEETING**. Use your Post Club room to enjoy the companionship of your fellow Sons.

NOTE: All Sons of AMVETS members and especially Officers should carry a Sons application for membership in his wallet. This will help boost your membership. Surprise them during a meeting by asking to see their Sons application. You could fine the members who do not have an application with them (\$1.00). Fines will go in your treasury.

- d. It is most important that all National and Department minutes/bulletins be read and discussed at the meetings. Our National and Department Officers put much time, thought and effort in preparing these mailings to keep the local Squadrons informed. A mailing is sent to a member designated by each Squadron at no cost.
- e. Use your authority wisely. Do not hesitate to use your gavel to maintain order at all meetings. Do not allow personal conversation to interfere with business, however, each person who wishes to speak on a subject should be allowed to do so. The majority rules when a vote is taken, but remember, it is the right of the minority to be heard.
- f. The form of a motion goes as follows:
 - 1. A member or officer rises and upon being recognized says “ I move that X”,
 - 2. Without discussion, a second member or officer rises and says “I second the motion”,
 - 3. The Commander opens the floor to debate (discussion). After everyone that wants a chance to speak has gotten a chance to speak, the Commander declares debate closed and then says “All in favor of X” where X is the motion EXACTLY as the Adjutant has written it down signify by saying aye. All opposed signify by saying nay. The Commander declares a winning side by declaring either that the motion passes or that the motion is defeated.
- g. The Commander or presiding officer declares the result of the vote. If there is any doubt on a voice vote, a show of hands or standing vote should be taken. ANY member in good standing at the meeting can request a hand vote, and it must be done. This is called “division.” Generally, a voice vote will suffice however.
- h. The Commander shall be tactful, weigh his judgement carefully and not participate in discussion unless he has passed the gavel to the 1st Vice Commander, who temporarily becomes the presiding officer until discussion on that matter is finished.
- i. Your 1st Vice Commander should be seated on your right at all meetings and should be kept informed of all activities of the Squadron in the event he must take over. Your Adjutant should be seated on your left so that you can see the motions exactly as he is writing them in case you need to repeat a motion for

the body.

- j. As Commander, every effort should be made to participate fully on all levels. Remind your members of the various functions and keep them informed of the activities of the Squadron as a whole.
- k. Make sure that all officers know how to make out their paperwork and send them in to Sons Department and/or National Headquarters. If for some reason an officer is not able to comply, it is your duty to complete the paperwork and mail it.
- l. Encourage each officer to compile a record of the activities of his office; therefore, each incoming officer will have these files to refer to and add to each year.
- m. Your leadership and the direction you take can be the difference between an active or inactive organization. You must show interest and participate in projects yourself in order to stimulate interest within your organization.
- n. The unit is only as good as you and your members make it. It is not yours to dominate. It must be led with tact, directness and charm. In this manner, you will win the members respect and cooperation. Recognize and praise the good work done by members.
- o. Conduct yourself in a manner to bring respect to the Sons and be available to represent the Sons at all events where your presence will bring favorable attention to AMVETS and Auxiliary.
- p. After the election of new officers, be sure all records are turned over to the incoming officers promptly.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Sons of AMVETS meetings (whether general, membership or committee) are typically open to all of our members and AMVET Coordinators at that level, who may come and go as they please. This means that under normal circumstances a Sons meeting at Squadron 1 is open to all members of Squadron 1 and their AMVETS Coordinator(s). By the same token, all Department of Massachusetts meetings are open to all members of the Department of Massachusetts and AMVET Coordinators. On occasion, however, the body will need to discuss sensitive topics, or otherwise need to discuss matters behind closed doors. Some reasons for this may include disciplinary hearings, Human Resource discussions (for those parts of the organization that have paid employees), or pretty much for any other reason. *This is called Executive Session.* During Executive Session, only the voting membership of that Committee, etc. is allowed to be in the room except as necessary or allowed by the body. For example, if there is a hearing, only the hearing committee, the accused and his representative, the prosecuting team and witnesses will be in the room, though not all will be in the room throughout the process.

That being said, Executive Session is NOT a license to “do whatever you want” and not keep a record of it. The process of holding a meeting in Executive Session is as follows:

1. Meeting is called to order as usual.
2. At whatever point it is desirable to go into Executive Session, any member may make a motion for this.
3. Assuming the motion passes, all non-voting members leave the room, any recording device is shut off and whatever discussion needs to happen is held at that time.
4. After all discussion and business is held, a motion is made to leave Executive Session.
5. Anyone who had left the room may return and any normal recording devices are turned back on.
6. The Commander/Committee Chairman must announce all motions that were made and passed, but not who made the motions or what the vote totals were. Motions that failed to pass not need to be recorded in this way.

VISITATION REQUEST FORM

From time to time, you may want to request that a Department or National Officer visit your Sons unit. On the next page is a form that should be filled out as much as possible to ensure that you can get the visitation you want.

1. **SQUADRON/DEPARTMENT:** Write in your Squadron or Department, whichever is requesting the visitation.
2. **PERSON MAKING REQUEST:** Enter your Name, title and phone number and email address. This should be the person who is going to be the primary point of contact for the State/National Officer while arranging his travel, not necessarily the person meeting the Officer upon arrival.
3. **REQUESTED OFFICERS:** Write which officers you are requesting here. If you are having issues with membership, request the 1st Vice, issues with the CBL, request the Judge Advocate. Otherwise, you should generally request the Commander.
4. **1ST CHOICE/2ND CHOICE:** Give two choices of times to attend to maximize the chances you will get the officer you want/need **TO ATTEND**.
5. **DIRECTIONS/ADDRESS OF FUNCTION:** Give the address on this line, if there are specific directions or multiple addresses, please attach this information to the form.
6. **HOTEL AND ADDRESS:** Give the address of the hotel that the officer will be staying at.
7. **NEAREST AIRPORT:** Give the name and 3 letter airport code (if you know it). This will help the officer book a flight if needed.
8. **WHO IS BOOKING/PAYING FOR HOTEL:** Some Departments/Squadrons want to pay for the lodging of the officer traveling. This is fine, but is not required if you cannot afford it. There is only a limited pool of money for officers travel and some officers are not covered for travel, so the more expenses are spread out, the more travel the officers will be able to do.
9. **CONTACT WHEN OFFICER ARRIVES:** This is the person that the officer will meet first. If there is airport travel, then this should be the person picking the officer up at the airport. Otherwise, this person should plan to meet the officer at the Hotel/Post when they arrive in the area.
10. **A SIMPLE OUTLINE:** In this area you will put all the information the officer will need for their entire visit. Please specify if they will need a uniform, a suit, a tux, etc. The more information that you give, the more that the officer can be prepared to accommodate all you expect of them. Please feel free to attach extra paper.

FORM: PLEASE VISIT THE FORMS PAGE ON THE NATIONAL SOA WEBSITE

1st VICE COMMANDER - MEMBERSHIP

The 1st Vice Commander is the membership Chairman at each level of the organization. They are primarily responsible for processing the membership and passing it on to the next level. As part of this, they will keep records of the members' information, membership status and other pertinent information. At levels higher than the Squadron, they will also work keep records of which Squadrons are in good standing as far as membership goes, and work with the subordinate 1st Vice Commanders in performing their duties.

MEMBERSHIP ELIGIBILITY

Eligibility for membership in Sons of AMVETS shall be limited to all male descendants, grandsons, adopted sons, and stepsons, fathers, husbands, widowers and brothers of members of AMVETS and deceased members of AMVETS, or service personnel who died and would have been eligible for membership in the parent AMVETS organization, and are at least (18) years of age and are not eligible for membership in the parent organization. This is not to include in-laws of any type.

As the 1st Vice Commander of your local Squadron, your responsibilities are as follows:

- a. Familiarize yourself with all the duties of the Commander as well as your own duties. In the event the Commander should call upon you to conduct a business meeting of your Squadron, you should be well prepared to do so.
- b. Be willing and available to represent the Commander at meetings and other functions as required by the Commander.
- c. Act as the Membership Chairman. It is your responsibility to have a membership report at every meeting. Keep accurate records to be sure each members info is up-to-date.
- d. Always have a good supply of membership applications on hand and available at the Post. Encourage all members to carry them. Membership application envelopes can be obtained from Sons of AMVETS National Headquarters.
- e. Establish a good working relationship with the AMVETS Membership Chairman. Through him, you can receive information regarding AMVETS who might have members of his/her family eligible to join the Squadron. Contact them personally and encourage them to attend the Squadron meeting.
- f. Read all Department and National mailings. As changes are made in the membership program, keep the members informed.
- g. Encourage all members to become involved in getting renewals and signing up new members. REMEMBER! THIS IS NOT A ONE-MAN JOB!!! It takes everyone working together.

- h. Make your members knowledgeable of all deadline dates on the Department and National levels.
- i. Check each D&R form before mailing to be sure they are filled out properly. Make sure all names and addresses are spelled properly, zip codes are listed and birthdays are correct. Membership cards will not be sent until all information is correct. By not filling out the form correctly, you risk the chance that it will be sent back for correction, thus delaying your members cards. If a member loses his membership card, you can obtain a new card by contacting the Department 1st Vice Commander who will issue another card for \$5.00. If you do not have a Department, contact the Membership Coordinator at Sons National Headquarters.
 - 1. Send in dues immediately after each meeting - DO NOT HOLD!
 - 2. Mail or hand out the membership cards promptly. (You can invite new members to your Squadron meetings and present them with their membership card).
 - 3. Invite new members to your Squadron meetings.
- j. Make sure all checks are filled out properly.
 - 1. If you have a Department, one check for both State and National dues should be made out to Sons of AMVETS, Department of _____.
 - 2. If you do not have a Department, checks should be made out to National Sons of AMVETS.
- k. Transfer forms must be filled out properly and signed by both the old and new Squadron Commanders.
- l. Every application for new members **MUST** be checked and signed by the AMVETS Post Adjutant **or** AMVETS Post Vice Commander in charge of Membership. This simple step, when bypassed, can create unforeseen chaos! **THIS IS A MUST DO!**
- m. A list of forms needed for your office: - THIS IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY
 - 1. Dues & Remittance Form (D&R)
 - 2. Transfer Form
 - 3. Membership Applications
 - 4. Change of Address Form
 - 5. Change of Officers Form
 - 6. Life Membership Form

TYPES OF MEMBERSHIP

- n. **NEW OR RENEWAL** - is for anyone who pays dues each year as a new or renewal member. A new member is a member who is making application for membership for the first time or a member who has let his dues expire for a year or more. A renewal member is any member who has held the previous year's membership card is considered a renewal, regardless of when, during the membership year, his dues are paid. A member whose dues have not been paid

for a period of one year or more must re-establish eligibility and shall be considered a new member

1. **Each Squadron in a Department** shall remit annually to the Department the sum of _____ per member for Department dues and \$13.00 for National dues. Each local Squadron shall determine the amount of their local dues and must at least equal AMVETS dues.
 2. **If you do not have a Department**, you shall remit annually to the National Department the sum of \$13.00 per member. Each local Squadron shall determine the amount of their local dues and must at least equal AMVETS dues.
- o. **LIFE MEMBERSHIP** – A Life Membership is offered to all **current** Sons of AMVETS members. By paying a one-time membership fee of \$320.00, a member can be assured of receiving all current and future benefits and communications on the progress of our organization.
- p. **MEMBERS-AT-LARGE:** -A member who is not affiliated with any particular local Squadron. To become or continue to be a member at large, a Son must live 50 or more miles from the closest Sons Squadron. If a member lives closer than 50 miles to the closest Squadron, they must join a Squadron, but do not have to join the closest.
1. Membership Status is determined by the State you live in when you join. If that State does not have a Department, the member pays only the National portion of dues and this is remitted directly to National Sons of AMVETS Headquarters. If that State has a Department, dues are \$11.00 (for National) plus the amount designated by your State Department and is remitted to the address designated by that State.
 2. A Member-at-Large is not eligible to hold office or vote on any level.
 3. A Member-at-Large may become affiliated with a local Squadron at any time by filling out a transfer form and having it signed by the appropriate Commander(s) and remitting that year's dues as established by the accepting Squadron.

CHANGE OF OFFICERS FORM

This form provides the State and National Departments all information concerning any changes occurring at your annual Squadron elections. This information will show what members are holding what offices, their addresses and phone numbers. It also provides all Squadron information that is necessary to revalidate your Squadron each year. To be seated at the Annual State Convention, this form must be submitted 7 days prior to the opening date of the State Convention. Any Squadron that has not submitted their Change of Officers to National at least 2 weeks prior to the opening date of the National Convention shall be placed in suspension in accordance with Article VIII of the National By-Laws until such time as they have submitted said form. Once your elections are completed, install the officers immediately and then this form needs to be sent in immediately. If your Post has a joint installation ceremony scheduled later, your Officers may be sworn in again at that time.

- a. The first portion of all Change of Officers forms asks for all Squadron/District/Department information and must include the E.I.N. number. This includes the Post Home Address and/or Department Headquarters (so we can be in touch with the AMVETS as necessary).
- b. The second portion of all Change of Officers forms asks for an official contact person. All mail and communications will be sent to this person. This person should be responsible in passing this information on to the membership and other officers at that level.
- c. The third portion requires contact information for your officers necessary for records mandated by the AMVETS and our Constitution and By-laws. If for some reason your Squadron cannot fill a position, leave that space blank. Offices that are filled need to be filled out completely. Do not list the Post telephone number, it's already been taken care of in the first portion. If a Department or National Officer needs to contact any one of your Officers, we need his phone number, so please fill this portion out.
- d. The fourth portion requires information regarding your Appointed Officers.
- e. The fifth portion, SQUADRON INFORMATION, must state the time and place of your Squadron meeting. If you meet on the first Sunday of each month, that is your meeting date.

It asks for your Squadron dues, which must be no less than the AMVETS at your Post. If their dues are \$25.00, your Squadron dues must be at least that. Your dues may be higher, but not lower. You are also asked for your website if you have established one.

You are asked for your Squadron's/District's/Department's annual income. If under \$50,000, which is almost always the case, simply check that box and the Finance Officer should fill out a 990-N E Post card on line. If you make more, check the appropriate box, but remember, you have to fill out correct the IRS 990 form. If required to file, a copy of the 990-or 990 EZ must be sent with your Change of Officers to Sons State and National Headquarters for file.

Also mandated by the Constitution and By-laws, your Squadron must have its own checking account. Please fill out the name of the bank and account number. Your Officers should be bonded for financial security reasons. Contact your AMVETS Commander if you are not, and they should be able to assist you.

- f. The sixth portion of this form asks for information regarding your own Standing Rules. It was voted at National Convention in New Orleans, LA in 2009 to have a Single Sons of AMVETS Constitution and By-laws to cover all levels of the Sons of AMVETS organization. You are encouraged to set up Standing Rules if there was something you wanted covered that was not covered in the Constitution and By-Laws. If your Squadron/District/Department has Standing Rules, a copy must be sent to your Department, if you have one, otherwise a copy must be sent to Sons National Headquarters. Mark this box accordingly.
- g. The final portion of this form requires the verification that your elections and installations were done according to our guidelines. The oath that each Officer must take is in this section, and must be given by the installing officer. Eligible Installing Officers are noted in the Constitution & By-Laws. That officer must sign this form immediately after the installation, as well as provide the requested information. You also need your Post Sons Coordinators name, address and phone number in the appropriate space.

FORMS: PLEASE VISIT THE FORMS PAGE ON NATIONAL SOA WEBSITE

MEMBERSHIP DUES & REMITTANCE FORM

The following form is to furnish the State and National Departments of all membership information on each Sons of AMVETS member, for record keeping and for proper issuance of the membership card. (IF THIS FORM IS NOT FILLED OUT COMPLETELY, CORRECTLY, AND READABLE, IT WILL BE SENT BACK TO BE PROPERLY FILLED OUT BY THE ISSUING SQUADRON)

- a. The first portion must include the Squadron's Department (state), EIN Number, date the form is being filled out, Squadron Address, Squadron membership Chairman's name, phone and email (if applicable).
- b. The second portion listed "SQUADRONS" is for the dues that you are submitting on the State level. If your State dues are, for example, \$9.00, you simply place that amount in the space provided. IF YOUR SQUADRON IS IN A STATE THAT DOES NOT HAVE A DEPARTMENT, simply leave it blank and send in the National dues to the address provided.

- c. The back of this form must be filled out completely, and by all means written or typed so it is readable. CARD #-- is not to be filled out by the Squadron for new members. The appropriate Department Officer who issues the cards will do this. N/R - this simply tells the Department whether this is a new member (N), or one renewing (R) his membership. D.O.B. - this of course is date of birth. Since this is printed on all membership cards, **NO CARDS WILL BE ISSUED WITHOUT IT!** The rest of the form asks for name, mailing address and phone number (if applicable). The name in this space will be put on the membership card. Make sure that names are spelled and written as that member wants it to appear! For Members at Large, the Department 1st Vice Commander will fill this form out and send it in to National.

- d. At the bottom, you will need to supply the following information. The Squadron, the mailing address that the cards will be mailed to, total membership submitted on this form, amount of check, and check number. **MEMBERSHIP MUST BE PAID WITH A SQUADRON CHECK UNLESS THE SQUADRON IS NEWLY FORMED. NO PERSONAL CHECKS WILL BE ACCEPTED.** The space saying "Submitted by" requires the name of the Officer in your Squadron who fills out this form, and is responsible for membership. **THE ADDRESS IN THIS SPACE IS WHERE THE CARDS WILL BE MAILED!** Make sure that whoever is responsible for these cards will issue cards as soon as they are received.

Tips:

1. Be sure to submit the form as complete as possible. If the form is not filled out, your State membership Chairman will have to call you to get the information and will be unable to complete ANY members on the form. If you have several new members on one form, this will hold up all of their membership cards.
2. **DO NOT INCLUDE LIFE MEMBERSHIP ON THIS FORM!**
3. Submit membership once per month. Right after your monthly meeting is a great time. Keep in mind the average State Department has over 1,000 members and are all volunteers like your Squadron. If all the membership comes in at once, this will likely cause delays in processing membership.
4. Be sure to keep a copy of every form you send to state or National. This will help you track that you have received all the cards you are supposed to.

FORM: PLEASE VISIT THE FORMS PAGE ON THE NATIONAL SOA WEBSITE

LIFE MEMBERSHIP TRANSMITTAL FORM

Life memberships are initiated at the Squadron level by asking the 1st Vice Commander for a Life Membership Transmittal Form. Please fill the form out legibly.

- a. Any current member of Sons of AMVETS may become a Life Member in Sons of AMVETS.
- b. Current members shall complete the Life Membership Transmittal form, enclose the dues of \$320.00, and forward directly to National Sons of AMVETS Headquarters, 4647 Forbes Blvd, Lanham, MD 20706. You must give a copy of the transmittal form to your Squadron 1st Vice Commander who will forward a copy to your Department (where one exists) 1st Vice Commander.
- c. DO NOT LIST LIFE MEMBERSHIPS ON DUES & REMITTANCE FORMS. Their application is verification for membership.
- d. Sons of AMVETS National Membership Secretary will periodically mail a life membership report to all Squadrons and Departments in which there are life members.
- e. Distribution of Squadron and Department dues will be made according to the National By-laws. Final disbursements for the membership year shall be made prior to the annual National Convention.
- f. Any Sons of AMVETS Life Member that transfers to another Squadron can request a replacement life membership card (showing his new Squadron) by sending his current card into National Sons of AMVETS Headquarters requesting the issuance of a new life card. This is free of charge
- g. The Squadron or Department 1st Vice Commander shall forward to Sons of AMVETS National Headquarters the name of any Life Member that has been suspended, expelled or deceased.
- h. Any questions can be directed to your Department or National 1st Vice Commander, in charge of membership.

FORM: PLEASE VISIT THE FORMS PAGE ON THE NATIONAL SOA WEBSITE

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

The prospective member must fill out all sections up to “Relationship.” The Eligible Relative/AMVET member should sign the “Signature of Sponsor” line. If the prospective member’s sponsoring relative is deceased, write “DECEASED” on the line for his or her signature. The Prospective member then signs where it says “Signature of Applicant”. The Squadron 1st Vice Commander takes everything from there.

The prospective member should include a copy of their eligible sponsor’s DD-214 if the person is deceased and was never a member of AMVETS (but was eligible). Otherwise, a copy of the up to date AMVETS membership card is acceptable.

The Prospective member should be contacted as to which meeting they will be voted upon for membership so that they may attend. Upon the member being approved for membership, they and anyone else voted in at that meeting should be brought in and sworn in as members at which point they should be given the receipt/temporary membership card if they have not already been given it.

Upon the Squadron 1st Vice Commander receiving the actual membership card, it should be handed to the member at the next meeting or mailed if they are unable to attend.

FORM: PLEASE VISIT THE FORMS PAGE ON THE NATIONAL SOA WEBSITE

TRANSFER FORM

The following form is to allow a member to transfer from one Sons of AMVETS Squadron to another, and to supply both the State and National Departments of all information. The State and National Departments are required to maintain all membership records of each Squadron.

1. The top portion of this form requires the transferring member's current membership card number. To properly fill out this section, you will need the address that the member has just moved from, and the address he is now residing if this has changed. If the member is requesting a transfer, but not changing his address, you simply need to fill out the present address.
2. The second portion simply asks for Squadron information. "TRANSFER FROM" would be the Squadron he is leaving, and "TRANSFER TO" would be the Squadron he wishes to join.
3. The third portion is very important. No member may transfer from one Squadron to another without approval of each Squadron involved. The Commander of each Squadron must sign in the spaces available, to validate the transfer. If a form is sent in without both signatures, the transfer will be disallowed.
4. Make sure that the proper amount of copies are made, and sent to the State and National Departments. Also make sure that each is sent to the proper addresses, which are on the form.

FORM: PLEASE VISIT THE FORMS PAGE ON THE NATIONAL SOA WEBSITE

CHANGE OF ADDRESS FORM

The Change of Address Form is used to update State and National of changes (or corrections) in the address for members of the Sons of AMVETS.

Section 1 is the Contact information for the Squadron Membership Chairman.

Section 2 is the signature lines. Each level should sign the form when it they have completed updating their information before forwarding it on to the next higher level.

Following this, are areas for updates. For each member, the Squadron Membership Chairman needs to list the card number and name and whether the member is a life or annual member. In the remaining spaces provided, they should then place the old information and the new information.

FORM: PLEASE VISIT THE FORMS PAGE ON THE NATIONAL SOA WEBSITE

2nd VICE COMMANDER -PROGRAMS

As 2nd Vice Commander, you are in charge of Programs. Successful programs not only help the community but also involve members in structured activities. A well-organized program that demonstrates an answer to a need will generate interest plus stimulate media coverage, while it increases involvement and promotes membership. Your Public Relations Officer should contact the newspaper, radio and TV stations to advise them about what is being planned, who is involved and what will be accomplished before, during and after the program. Remember to acknowledge and thank those who helped; a little recognition goes a long way. As each program progresses, document all pertinent information for future reference. Good records are essential to ensure continuity; therefore, additional copies should be made and given to the designated record-keeper to put on file.

To get volunteers, personally call on some members who were active before or haven't been active at all. Tell them you need their help and get them involved. Look beyond your Post membership to members of the Auxiliary, Junior AMVETSs and even AMVETS who can provide assistance. Identify individuals who have similar interests and concerns. Also look to other community service-oriented organizations and individuals like the Scouts, Jaycees or Chamber of Commerce. Get your entire community to rally behind your cause.

Lastly, if a program works, share it with other Posts, Departments and the National Headquarters. It may be adopted nationwide.

When you finish a project, fill out the Project Form. If your Squadron is part of an organized State Department, send a copy of all the forms with any pictures or flyers to the Department 2nd Vice Commander every month. Your Department will forward all copies to the National Sons Headquarters. If you are not part of an organized Department, send a copy of everything to the National Sons Headquarters. National is very interested in what all Squadrons are doing. Totals are given on the AMVETS floor at Convention and they are really impressed.

PROGRAM IDEAS

Listed below are program ideas and months the programs can be initiated. Keep in mind, however, that it may take weeks or months to plan and develop each program. Make it a success -- plan the program well.

JANUARY

- ◆ Hobby Craft Show. This can be made into an annual affair with invitations going to all hobbyists in the community. They can bring their particular hobby to the show and compete against others who have the same hobby.
- ◆ Literacy in Schools. Furnish local schools with Americanism literature.

FEBRUARY

- ◆ Valentine's Day (February 14) This date offers a good opportunity for the Sons to sponsor a party for teenagers in the community and Junior AMVETS. Hold a Sweethearts Dance.
- ◆ Lincoln and Washington's Birthday Celebration (February 12 and 22). Host an Americanism party.

- ◆ National Salute to Hospitalized Veterans. Visit and spend time with America's hospitalized Veterans.

MARCH

- ◆ Bike Safety Inspection. Host an educational event for the community about bike safety.

APRIL

- ◆ Because We Care Day (first Wednesday in April). Participate at VA.
- ◆ Little League. Sponsor a local team.
- ◆ Girl and Boy Scouts. Assist in any way you can.
- ◆ Organize a Community Clean-Up Weekend. Sponsor and hold a program for the community to clean up local areas.

MAY

- ◆ Memorial Day Activities (May 30). Participate in grave decorations at local cemeteries and memorial services. The Sons of AMVETS Commander may ride in the Memorial Day parade.
- ◆ Bicycle Parade. In conjunction with regular Memorial Day ceremonies, some Sons have arranged for youngsters to participate in the regular parade by decorating their bicycles in patriotic colors and competing for regular prizes in different classes.
- ◆ Armed Forces Day. Participate in ceremonies.

JUNE

- ◆ Flag Day. Special presentations should be made and news releases written. Encourage everyone to display their U.S. flag on this day. Annually each Post, Auxiliary, Sons and Junior AMVETSs should co-sponsor a "home" or "business" sale of U.S. flags weeks prior to Flag Day. Pause for the Pledge of Allegiance at 7:00 P.M. EDT.
- ◆ Sons of AMVETS Softball Team. A softball team requires very little in the way of equipment and is a sport for all. Competition between Squadrons in the Department is good for morale.

JULY

- ◆ Independence Day Celebration (July 4). Help start a community Fourth of July program or sponsor a fund-raising event. The Squadron Commander can also ride in a parade.

AUGUST

- ◆ The National Convention. Plan to attend

SEPTEMBER

- ◆ Membership Campaign. Kick off the efforts to recruit Squadron membership.
- ◆ Labor Day (first Monday in September). Participate with Post in Labor Day parades or other community programs.
- ◆ Bowling. Form or sponsor a bowling team.

OCTOBER

- ◆ Halloween (October 31). If your community does not have a regular program for its youngsters, here is a real opportunity for your Squadron to get into the picture. The program can include structured party games, costume contests, a parade, movies and other

activities that will keep the youngsters (and oldsters) busy and safe on Halloween night. (Excellent program for you to include your Junior AMVETS).

- ◆ VA Hospital Party. Plan and host a party at the VA Center. If one is not close, contact a VA accredited nursing home in your area and ask if you can come and host a party for the Veterans.
- ◆ Senior Citizens' Party. Sponsor a party for senior citizens.

NOVEMBER

- ◆ Food Pantry. Posts normally collect and deliver baskets of food to the needy in the community for Thanksgiving. If this program is not being done at your Post, Sons of AMVETS can start a program to help the needy at this time of year. It can also be carried over to do at Christmas. When you sit down to a nice dinner on these two days, it helps your celebration just knowing that the needy also are having a nice dinner and that you were part of it.
- ◆ Pot Luck Dinner. Host a dinner at your Post.
- ◆ Veterans Day (November 11). Plan your program well in advance. Coordinate your planning with AMVETS at your Post. Show them that the Sons of AMVETS are here to honor those that fought for our Country so we could be free.

DECEMBER

- ◆ Christmas Party. Sponsor a party at a children's home, VA hospital or a veterans nursing home. This is the time of year that those not so fortunate are very depressed and a party might help boost their spirits. If you have a fund raiser, earmarking the funds for this party, you might be able to buy gifts. If not, just go visit and maybe play bingo with them.

PROJECT REPORT GUIDELINES

PURPOSE:

The purpose of the Project Report is to allow the Parent Organization, AMVETS, a documented accounting of the volunteer donations accomplished by the Sons of AMVETS. This gives the parent organization proper documentation in reporting to the various government agencies and helps them to maintain their non-profit status with the IRS (as well as our own). It also shows the various government agencies the need for increased budgets for the welfare of our veterans.

CATEGORIES:

There are (2) categories that are allowed as proper donations by the Sons of AMVETS:

1. Squadrons may report the total number of hours that are worked by their Squadron members at a function that is allowable under these guidelines. Allowable functions may be for any organization, including AMVETS.
2. Squadrons may report any dollar amount that is donated, and is allowable under these guidelines.

Definitions:

Function: An allowable function is a function that is a direct benefit to either the Squadrons general fund, the AMVETS organization, AMVETS Ladies Auxiliary, any veterans organization or one or more of their members, or to the community.

Donation: A donation which can be reported is either the Squadron hours worked, a direct monetary donation or both. The cost to provide a function is not considered to be a donation unless the cost is donated (meaning the Squadron intentionally does not recoup its expenses).

In addition, it is important to know the difference between gross revenue and net revenue. Gross revenue is the total of all income. Net revenue is gross revenue deducting the costs to put on the function. For example, if Squadron 66 has a spaghetti dinner. They sell 50 tickets at \$10.00 each. Gross revenue is \$500. It cost the Squadron \$75 to purchase ingredients, bread, plates, etc. Net revenue is therefore \$425.

Project Examples:

1. Squadron 123 has a steak fry once a month. Their cost to hold the steak fry in September was \$ 250.00. They had 8 members that worked for 4 hours. They took in \$ 523.00 for the steak fry. They are going to put their profits into their Squadron general fund which they may donate to a worthy cause at a later date. Their project report should be as follows:

Hours worked: 8 members X 4 hours = 32 total hours
32 total hours X \$20.00 valuation = \$640.00
Monetary donations - none
Total donations: 32 hours \$640.00

Explanation: The cost of the steak fry cannot be reported because the Squadron had this money already and the cost was donated to no one. It was returned to their general fund. The profit for the steak fry cannot be reported because it too was put into the general fund and was donated to no one.

2. Squadron 79 becomes aware that an AMVETS member needs new oxygen tanks, but his insurance no longer covers it. They decide to have a cheeseburger dinner on Friday night to help pay for the tanks. They also decide to donate the cost of this function. They hold the function and the cost is \$100.00. They had 4 members work 5 hours each and they make \$205.00 profit. Their report should be as follows:

Hours worked: 4 members X 5 hours = 20 hours
20 hours X \$20.00 valuation = \$400.00
Cost donated: \$100.00 100.00
Profits donated: \$205.00 205.00
Total donations: \$705.00

Explanation: The Squadron agreed to donate the cost of the function so it is a true donation, because this money went as a direct donation so they are allowable, the hours are allowable because this function was a direct benefit to a veteran in need.

3. Some Sons members are sitting in the canteen and an AMVETS member comes in and asks them to help him move a huge dresser to his newly purchased home. They agree and help the member. The report should be as follows:

There should be no report.

Explanation: This is not a function. The man simply needed help to move one piece of furniture. As Sons and Americans, we should be doing this kind of help anyway.

4. The 1st Vice Commander of Squadron 18 has just spent 4 hours processing membership.

There should be no report.

Explanation: The man is simply doing what he was elected to do in his position.

1. The Sons Commander attends a funeral for a fallen post member.

There should be no report.

Explanation: The Commander went out of respect, and should attend if possible. There is no benefit to this member, the person is deceased.

If you hold a program that gets mentioned in a local paper, please send in copies and any pictures available to be included with your Project Form.

RULE OF THUMB:

You are encouraged to turn in all reports for your functions. The examples listed are situations that we all face at our Squadron level. This is a basic guideline to follow in hopes it will clarify some of these situations. If you have questions, please contact your State Department or the National 2nd Vice Commander for clarification.

ONLINE PROGRAM REPORTING:

In 2014, Sons of AMVETS developed their online program reporting system. To report your programs online, go to www.sonsofamvets.org and register at the site. From your Profile page click on Add New Report. This will direct you to the data entry page.

If you have never reported online before, you will need to set yourself up to use the program. Where it says “new user” and asks for your membership number, but sure to use the word “sons” before the member number. So if your membership number is “137654”, you would use “sons137654” in this spot. From here you will be prompted to create an account and choose a password. You will need to fill out ALL the boxes.

If you are going to be a State level administrator (i.e. State 2nd Vice Commander), contact the Sons National 2nd Vice Commander to work through setting up your State level access. **YOU MUST HAVE THIS ACCOUNT SET UP FIRST!**

Once you have set yourself up, you enter your membership number and the password you created and this will bring you in to the program reporting page.

Once you are logged in, you have 6 buttons.

1. **REVIEW REPORTS:** Review reports you have entered in the past and make changes if needed.
2. **ADD NEW PROGRAM DATA:** Self-explanatory, this will be reviewed below.
3. **ANALYZE REPORTS:** Click here to bring up past reports to see trends.
4. **CONTACT THE NATIONAL DIRECTOR:** Click here to contact Beryl Love, the AMVETS National Programs Director. This is used when you are having problems entering or tracking information. You **DO NOT** contact him to ask him if a program is valid or not. In this case, contact the Sons National 2nd Vice Commander.
5. **MODIFY PROFILE:** Click here to make changes to your profile information.
6. **EXIT:** Logs you out.

ADD NEW PROGRAM DATA

When you click this link, you will end up in the entry screen. There is a help link which you should use if it is the first time you have logged in or if you need help. There are a number of program categories, but the only one we use is the one that says “*SONS OF AMVETS ONLY*”. This is an AMVETS Program, so it is set up for their use, and we piggyback off of that. In the Comments section, you enter in the information about what your program was. You should begin your comments with one of the following codes:

“A=”: Americanism, Program related to inspiring a sense of patriotism in our youth and our citizenry.

“E=”: Education, programs designed to educate our youth, or which happen in a school environment

“H=”: Health/Welfare, programs designed to provide for the health or welfare of members of the community. These are programs which do not fall under the AVAVS label.

“V=”: VAVS, “Veterans Affairs Voluntary Service”, programs which are completed at a VA Facility, or which the primary benefit goes to VA Patients.

“P=”: Post Support, programs which are designed to help out your AMVETS Post as a primary beneficiary.

“C=”: Community Service, programs which are designed to aid our community, or a segment thereof, or another non-veterans group such as the Boy Scouts.

“O=”: Other, all things not covered by another category.

Be sure to enter the number of volunteers, total hours, mileage, activity cost and and/or cash donations. The total hours is the total hours worked by all Sons. If 3 people worked at the function, and one worked 2 hours, one worked 3 hours and one worked 4 hours, the total hours would be 9. Mileage is the total number of miles driven for the program and includes Sons mileage from when they leave their home until they get home (not including non-function related side trips). In addition, mileage represents actual wear and tear on a vehicle that is being donated to the cause. If one Son picks up another, one son claims all mileage. If a Son is driving a vehicle as a volunteer effort, he only claims the mileage if the vehicle’s mileage is being donated (i.e. if a Son volunteers driving a VA shuttle, he does not claim the mileage for driving the shuttle unless he pays for the vehicle).

Activity Cost is only filled out if the cost is being donated and NOT being recouped. As an example, this would be used if the Sons are buying something for the VA, such as underwear or a scooter. Cash donations are only filled out for donations to another organization for their programs, such as to Paws with a Cause.

Once you have entered in all the data you want, click “Preview Data”. Once you have reviewed the information, click “Submit Data”.

PROJECT REPORT FORM

The Project Report Form is used to explain the details of any projects that your Squadron organizes and/or participates in. Remember, the Sons of AMVETS is a volunteer-based organization so documentation of our projects is important.

The first section explains which Squadron is reporting and who was in charge of the project.

The second section specifies what type of program is being reported. Is this the first time for this project? What general category does it best fit in? Which part of the AMVETS Organization headed up the project?

The third section covers all the details. Begin with a brief but accurate description of the project. Then fill in the number of people that were involved in the project, how many total man-hours were involved and the related value of those hours. Remember, if the project is a Sons project, you can report **ALL** volunteers involved including AMVET members, Ladies Auxiliary members and others. The next line asks for Miles Driven. This includes mileage to and from home to participate in the project. If several people ride together, only count the mileage once. Mileage is the actual wear and tear on the vehicle. Next, the form asks for the amount of allowable funds used from the Sons budget, including cash donations. Then the form asks for the value of donations received for the project. Remember to review the examples to help understand what is allowable.

Be sure to have the 2nd Vice Commander or the Squadron Commander sign and date the form.

ALL SQUADRONS AND DEPARTMENTS ARE ENCOURAGED TO SUBMIT PROJECT REPORTS ONLINE THROUGH THE SONS WEBSITE. YOUR DEPARTMENT 2ND VICE IS AVAILABLE TO ASSIST. YOU MAY ALSO CONTACT THE NATIONAL 2ND VICE COMMANDER DIRECTLY. HOWEVER, IF YOUR PREFERENCE IS PAPER, PLEASE VISIT THE FORMS PAGE ON THE NATIONAL WEBSITE.

3RD VICE COMMANDER - PROMOTIONS

The 3rd Vice Commander is in charge of promotions. He shall coordinate all fund raising activities by the local Squadron.

He shall:

- Evaluate all fund raising possibilities and make his recommendations to the Executive Committee.
- Perform such other duties in connection with Sons of AMVETS as the Commander directs.

In the National Sons of AMVETS By-Laws, Article VII, Section 1: Any fund raising project on the National, Department, District or Squadron level must receive prior approval from the parent AMVETS corresponding level. It shall then be the responsibility of the AMVETS to submit such projects for approval, if necessary, in accordance with ARTICLE VII, SECTION 3, item (a), of the AMVETS National By-Laws.

What this means is that before you start a fund raiser at your level, you **MUST FIRST** receive approval from the AMVETS on your level.

As 3rd Vice Commander, after approval, you will form a committee to help organize your functions and help make each fund raiser run smoothly. You need to work closely with the AMVETS Commander and 2nd Vice Commander to coordinate with them, so there is no conflict.

Make sure you bring the idea across your floor for approval before doing it. Just remember, your programs do not have to be something that will make a big profit. If it's something that will sell fast, you can run several over a month's time and be amazed at how much money you made in one month.

IF YOUR 3RD VICE DOES NOT DO THE FUND RAISING AT YOUR SQUADRON, (MAYBE YOU ALL WORK TOGETHER) THIS WOULD BE A GOOD SPOT FOR A VAVS REPRESENTATIVE. GET YOUR SQUADRON INVOLVED AT YOUR VA HOSPITAL. IF YOU DO NOT HAVE ONE NEAR YOU, YOU CAN FIND A VA ACCREDITED HOSPITAL OR NURSING HOME IN YOUR AREA. CHECK THE VAVS SECTION IN THIS BOOK.

FINANCE OFFICER

The position of Finance Officer requires an individual of the highest caliber. This individual must be capable of sound financial judgment and is the official overseer of all finances of the organization.

The Finance Officer is responsible for all receipts and disbursements of the organizations money. Where there may be a Secretary, Administrative Assistant or other Officers required in the handling of funds, it remains the responsibility of the Finance Officer to see that proper reports are issued to him and that funds are turned over to him in a timely manner when others complete their assigned financial responsibilities.

The Finance Officer is to ensure accurate financial records are maintained and kept on file and complete financial reports are distributed at all meetings or upon request when necessary. Verify officers that handle funds are properly bonded. Ensure the IRS Form 990 is filed annually at the close of the fiscal year with copies forwarded to the Department and National Sons Headquarters where applicable.

A good practice for Squadrons and Departments is to establish an annual budget. This will help guide the allocation of expenditures and identify where funds are needed in order to operate the organization.

Checks to National Headquarters should be made payable to "National Sons of AMVETS". Checks to Department should be made payable to "Sons of AMVETS, Department of _____".

DUTIES OF A FINANCE OFFICER

The duties of this office may include, but are not limited to the following:

- a. Keeping the financial records of the organization. These financial records are permanent records of the Local Squadron, District or Department.
- b. Filing and/or completing all necessary forms with the Internal Revenue Service, State and Local governments as required by the agencies.
- c. Maintaining a detailed record of all income and expenses.
- d. Responsible for all monies received for the organization, recording receipts and depositing the funds in a bank. Deposits should be made on a regular basis. Checks should be deposited as soon as possible. Checks held for long periods of time run the risk of not having funds available at the time the check is cashed.
- e. The Finance Officer should pay all duly authorized expenditures. Payment should be made by check or authorized organization credit card where applicable.
- f. Prepare monthly financial reports and distribute them to the Commander and authorized officers as prescribed in the By-Laws or when requested by the Commander or the Executive Board.
- g. When applicable, work closely with Officers and Committee Chairman to monitor the financing of various programs and activities of the Squadron, District or Department.

- h. Work closely with the Adjutant in carrying out the financial procedures as set forth in the Constitution and By-Laws.
- i. Obtain from the bank the necessary forms to either open an account or change the signatures on an account when new officers are elected. Complete these forms when necessary and return them to the bank as soon as possible.
- j. There must be a minimum of two (2) signatures on a check and three (3) signatures on the accounts. These signatures must include the Commander and Finance Officer, and the 3rd signature should be the Adjutant or 1st Vice Commander.
- k. Reconcile the monthly bank statement.
- l. Learn how to manage the organization's money wisely. Consider placing money that is not being used for a specific period of time in a Certificate of Deposit or Savings Account to obtain a better rate of interest. **DO NOT** place Sons of AMVETS money in any account that is **NOT INSURED**.
- m. From a good Surety Bonding Company, you can bond up to five (5) Officers for \$100.00 to \$150.00 per year. If one of these Officers were to disappear with the organization's funds, then the bonding agency will work with the local police in catching and prosecuting these people.
- n. Prepare all records for the annual audit.
- o. Submit all records to the audit Committee as requested or as stated in the By-Laws.

AUDITING PROCEDURES

An Audit is a verification of accounts and proper business procedures in account handling. It is also an examination of all financial records and evidence in support of the financial books correctness. The Audit has nothing to do with trust or lack of trust. It is a process by which the organization can be assured that its funds are being used in accordance with its wishes and as a protection for those that handle the funds to ensure that there are no errors.

Financial books and records of the organization should be audited as provided for in the By-Laws. All financial books and records should be audited prior to relinquishing them to a successor.

THE AUDIT COMMITTEE is usually three members appointed by the Commander. The Finance Officer should not be on the Committee, but should be available to answer any questions the Audit Committee has.

RECORDS THAT SHOULD BE AVAILABLE FOR AUDIT ARE:

- a. Adjutants Cash Receipts Journal
- b. Finance Officer Books/Check Register
- c. Checkbooks and Check Stubs
- d. Bank Statements
- e. Cancelled Checks, Vouchers, Paid Invoices
- f. IRS Form 990 (if necessary)
- g. Committee Reports that involve Squadron Funds
- h. Minutes of all meetings in which funds were spent since the last audit.

AUDIT PROCEDURE

- a. Check all the mathematical calculations
- b. Compare the Adjutant's Cash Receipts Journal with the Finance Officer's
- c. Compare the cash receipts with the bank deposits
- d. Review the Bank Statements
- e. Compare the cancelled checks with the disbursements
- f. Compare the cancelled checks with expense vouchers/receipts
- g. Review committee reports that involve Local Squadron's funds
- h. Review the monthly financial statement.

BANK STATEMENT

Bank statements should be received on a monthly basis. Canceled checks or scanned copies of canceled checks may be included with the bank statement. Typically the balance on the statement will not match the balance in your checking account register. There are several reasons for this such as:

- a. Checks outstanding that have not cleared the bank statement are recorded in your register, but are not deducted from your bank statement.
- b. Outstanding deposits made after the date of the bank statement are recorded in your register, but are not added to the balance of your bank statement.
- c. Interest earned on your bank statement may not have been entered in your register
- d. Bank charges listed on your bank statement may not have been entered in your register

RECORD KEEPING

1. Organizations with a computer should utilize tools like Quicken or QuickBooks or other software to maintain your checking account. These software programs usually have the capability of generating financial reports to help make the Finance Officer's reporting responsibilities more efficient. This software is very helpful, but is not required.
2. For those without a computer may utilize the following process to establish a general ledger tracking their income and expenses.
3. Create two pages for each month

Page one (Left) use for receipts
Page two (Right) use for disbursements (expenses)
4. Identify the organization on the top of the Page one (Left) with the following:
The name of the Squadron
The date - month and year
Cash Receipts Journal

5. Identify the organization on the top of the Page two (Right) page with the following:
 - The name of the Squadron
 - The date - month and year
 - Cash Disbursement Journal

6. Enter all monies as they are received in the Cash Receipts Journal (left page)

7. Enter all disbursements (expenses) as they are paid in the Cash Disbursements Journal (right page)

8. On the last day of the month total all the cash receipts and total all cash disbursements.

9. Use the space at the bottom of the page (or an additional page, if necessary) to create the Financial Report as follows:

The balance from the previous month	\$----.---
Add the total cash receipts of the month	\$----.---
	\$xxx.xx
Subtract the total cash disbursements for the month	\$----.---
	\$xxx.xx*

*This is the balance for the last day of the current month.

10. Repeat steps 2 through 9 for each month of the year.

ADJUTANT

The Adjutant provides the administrative support for the Sons unit and is charged with taking minutes and maintaining all non-financial records. He is also responsible for correspondence and handles the routine business of the Sons of AMVETS. The Adjutant is usually the official contact person for the Squadron and serves as the Liaison Officer between the AMVETS, his Community and the other levels of the organization.

Among his responsibilities, the Adjutant should -

- a. Maintain all documents and records of the Sons of AMVETS from all levels of the organization. Keep them ready for inspection as required or requested.
- b. Prepare and have available information of all official actions, assignments and records of various meetings.
- c. Records and maintains accurate minutes of meetings.
- d. Prints and distributes the minutes of the meetings. If this is not done, then he reads the minutes of the previous meeting at the next meeting.
- e. Keeps a schedule of all Squadron, Department and National meetings and all committee meetings.
- f. Keeps an up to date list of names, addresses and phone numbers of all members.
- g. Maintain a complete file of all Squadron, Department and National correspondence.
- h. Keep a copy of the Sons of AMVETS Constitution and By-Laws for reference.
- i. Keep copies on file of the previous two (2) years. Your retention guide for keeping correspondence records is three (3) years, financial records is five (5) years. Use clear judgment when throwing away files. Some files may want to be kept.
- j. The Adjutant does not turn over permanent records to anyone except the incoming Adjutant. These records should be inspected in the Adjutant's presence and then re-filed. If someone needs a copy of a specific record, the Adjutant locates the record that is requested, makes a copy and returns the original record to the file.
- k. Perform other duties as prescribed in the By-Laws or as requested by the Commander.

The Adjutant must be able to write or type minutes accurately and impersonally. He is not allowed to enter his opinions in the minutes.

The Adjutant should use proper names and/or titles when referring to the members. Pet names and nicknames may lead to confusion at a later date.

The Adjutant needs to be prepared for the meeting:

- a. Discuss the upcoming meeting with the Commander and make notes of what needs to be covered at the meeting.
- b. Make a calendar for the coming year. On the calendar, mark all special events that take place in the Squadron/Department/National so they can be placed on the agenda at the proper time. This will prevent these events from being overlooked or forgotten.

Minutes of a meeting become the permanent record and history of the Squadron, Department or National proposals, activities and discussions.

The minutes are the official record that will be used when it is necessary to refer to or check on what was done in the past.

Minutes can also be used by auditors to verify important expenditures.

The general principle to keep in mind is that minutes should contain a record of what was done, not what was said and should never reflect the Adjutant's opinion.

FOLLOW THESE EIGHT STEPS

STEP ONE - THE OPENING OF THE MEETING:

The opening paragraph must contain four pieces of important information. The four W's - What, Who, When, Where. I.e. "The regular meeting of Squadron _____ was opened by Commander Smith on July 1, 2012 at 7:00 P.M. at Post _____. Next, make note of the opening ceremonies (invocation, Pledge of Allegiance, Sons Preamble, etc.). Roll call of officers is next.

STEP TWO - MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING:

If the minutes were not mailed out, the minutes of a regular meeting are normally read and approved at the beginning of the next regular meeting, after the opening. If they have been mailed, the Commander can say "You have read the minutes of the previous meeting, are there any additions or corrections?" If none, he will then ask for a motion to accept the minutes. After they have been motioned, seconded and approved, he then states that the minutes will stand as mailed. If the minutes have to be read, the Commander asks if there are any additions or corrections. If there are none, a motion is made to accept the minutes as read. This is recorded in the minutes. It can be helpful to hand out copies of the minutes PRIOR to the meeting starting so the members can start reading them early. In this case, you do not need to read the minutes either.

STEP THREE – BILLS AND COMMUNICATIONS:

The bills this refers to are expenses incurred since the last meeting that have not been voted on AND are not specifically a part of the budget approved by the body at the annual meeting. Bills that have been incurred on behalf of the Squadron/Department are presented. A copy of the bill or voucher, with receipts attached, is given to the Adjutant who reads the bill or voucher to the members and records it in the minutes. The members vote to approve or not approve the payment of the bill. Once the bill has been read and approved, it is given to the Finance Officer for payment. The bills can be read and approved one at a time or all the bills can be read and then one motion can be made to approve payment of all the bills presented.

Correspondence refers to the official correspondence received by or on behalf of the Squadron, District or Department. The correspondence is read by the Adjutant. All

correspondence is briefly noted in the minutes. I.e. "A letter from the Bedford VA thanking us for our donation of underwear was received and read by Adjutant Smith."

STEP FOUR - OFFICERS AND CHAIRMEN REPORTS:

Officers and Chairmen reports are the next items to be listed in the minutes. If the reports are given verbally - record the highlights of the report (the important facts given by the Chairman or Officer). If the Officer or Chairman has a written report, he will read it at the meeting. Written reports, if they are short, can be included in the minutes. If the written report is a long one, just highlight the important facts.

STEP FIVE - UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Unfinished business deals with matters previously introduced and have not been completed or the final report has not been given. Use a separate paragraph for each item that is considered at this meeting. The name of the member making the motion and the name of the member who seconded the motion should be recorded. Record motions verbatim. (Exactly as the maker of the motion states it). The Commander should read each motion so all can agree what exactly they are voting on. Record whether or not the motion was carried (passed) or rejected. It is not necessary to record the discussion. Only the action taken by the Squadron should be recorded. Occasionally, for a specific reason (which does not have to be stated) a member may ask to have his individual vote recorded and this must be done.

STEP SIX - NEW BUSINESS:

New business deals with issues that are being introduced for the first time. New business is recorded in the same manner as unfinished business.

STEP SEVEN - NEW BUSINESS:

Nominations and election of Officers are included in this segment of the minutes. Nominations of Officers take place once a year as prescribed in the By-Laws, usually the meeting before elections are to be held. The nominations are recorded in the minutes. Nominating and seconding speeches are not recorded in the minutes.

Elections of Officers are recorded in the minutes. Elections take place as prescribed in the By-Laws. Acceptance speeches, by those who were elected to office, are not recorded in the minutes. Elections take place in one of two ways: By voting, if there is more than one candidate or by the Adjutant casting one ballot, if there is only one candidate. At the National level this is accomplished by the Judge Advocate due to National not having an Adjutant.

STEP EIGHT - CLOSING THE MEETING:

At the end of the meeting the Commander will ask if there are any announcements. These announcements are recorded in the minutes. The announcements are items of interest to the members such as:

- Names of members who are sick or in the hospital.
- Announcement of the date of committee meetings.
- Dates/times of upcoming events
- Date of next meeting.
- Etc.

The closing prayer (Benediction) should be noted. If a guest speaker follows the meeting or a special program or installation, this should be noted in the minutes. Do not record the speech. The closing paragraph should include the time the meeting adjourned. Adjournment requires a motion and second and should be recorded. All that is required at the end of the minutes is the signature of the person recording the minutes and their office.

**IF YOU HAVE TAKEN THESE EIGHT STEPS, YOU CAN BE AN EFFICIENT
ADJUTANT, THE ONE THAT PRODUCES ACCURATE AND CONCISE MINUTES.**

JUDGE ADVOCATE

The Judge Advocate is responsible for maintaining the current copies of the Sons of AMVETS Constitution and By-Laws. If the Sons unit has adopted Standing Rules, then he should also maintain a copy of these. There should also be a copy of Roberts Rules of Order, Newly Revised at all meetings. At the Squadron and District level, this can be the short version, but it is highly recommended for State and National to use the full version.

Other responsibilities of the Judge Advocate are:

1. Advise the Commander, Officers, Committee Chairmen and members on all matters of legal significance.
2. He shall interpret the Constitution and By-Laws, and the Standing Rules as they pertain to what the Sons are doing.
3. Serve as an Ex-Officio member of the Appeals Board.
4. Shall serve on all Committees, with the Commander, as the legal advisor for the Sons.
5. Shall be the Chairman for the Standing Rules Committee.

PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITIES (In Order):

1. Sons of AMVETS Constitution.
2. Sons of AMVETS By-Laws.
3. Appendix A&B of the Sons of AMVETS By-Laws.
4. The Sons of AMVETS Standing Rules at that level (if established).
5. Roberts Rules of Order, Newly Revised.

Roberts Rules of Order, Newly Revised, shall be the parliamentary guideline for all matters not specifically covered in the Constitution and By-Laws of this organization. Any conflict among these authorities shall be governed in the following precedence: the Constitution first, the By-Laws second, and the provisions of Roberts Rules of Order, Newly Revised, being last as a guideline for determining a course of action.

Always keep in mind that the AMVETS is our parent organization, and the Sons NEVER DICTATES to the Post. The Post may, however, request the Sons assistance in their programs, etc...

When the Post does request help from the Sons, it is usually best to give them whatever assistance they need if we are capable of complying.

COMMONLY USED TERMS

The Chair	The presiding officer
On the Floor	A motion has been made, seconded and is the only subject under discussion
Has the Floor	A particular person has the Chair's permission to speak and is generally allowed to continue until he is finished (unless he is out of order).
Point of Order	When a member believes the speaker is out of order, he may rise, and without waiting to be recognized, state, "Point of Order". The Chair must then stop the speaker and ask what the reason is. This is stated and if the Chair agrees, will correct the speaker. If he does not agree, the Chair will permit the speaker to go on.
Table a Motion	Action on the motion on the floor is voted to be acted on at a later time at the same meeting
Postpone a Motion	Action on the motion on the floor is voted to be acted on at a meeting at a later date, generally to allow more information to be gathered.
The Body	The members present at any meeting
Annual Meeting	The yearly meeting for the Squadron and District levels of the organization at which time new officers are elected, Standing Rules are amended and yearly reports of all officers are given. Usually this will be in May, and is usually the last meeting before State Convention.
The Rostrum	The desk or platform where the presiding officers conducts the meeting. There are usually 2 or 3 other officers at the rostrum. This is usually the Commander, Adjutant and 1 st Vice Commander.
Constitution &By-Laws	Also called the CBL; these are the Rules which organize the Sons of AMVETS
Standing Rules	Rules established by the Squadron, District, State and National organization which dictates how monies can be spent, Uniform codes, and other reasons allowed by the Constitution & By-Laws. Such Rules cannot be in conflict with the CBL.

PROVOST MARSHAL

The Provost Marshal is the custodian of the Colors. He is responsible for them at all meetings and ceremonies where they are used. He shall post the Colors at every meeting, (either the small or large sets) and lead the Squadron in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

1. He shall see that the meeting room is in order, with tables and chairs for all members and guests.
2. He is the keeper of the door during the meetings and shall answer all phone calls and deliver messages.
3. He is responsible for escorting guests to the rostrum and introducing new members to the membership.
4. He shall distribute all bulletins to the various Officers. During an election he shall distribute and collect the ballots and report the results to the Commander.
5. He shall help the Commander maintain order during meetings, and perform any other duties the Commander shall assign.
6. He shall study Flag Etiquette and promote the proper respect for the Flag at all times.
7. On request of the Commander, he shall be responsible for transporting and presenting the Colors at State Meeting.

COMMANDS

There are several commands a Provost Marshal may be called upon to give.

ATTENTION

The Sons come to attention. Flags are lifted off the ground and holstered if applicable. If there are Sons with rifles, those are lifted to the right shoulder

COLUMN

The body of Sons in a Parade that are in the same unit, subject to the same commands (if multiple Sons units).

FORWARD MARCH

The column begins to move or march forward

HALT

The column stops

LEFT (RIGHT) SHOULDER ARMS

An order for the flag and rifle bearers to switch arms during the parade

PRESENT ARMS

Flags are dipped except for the American Flag (which is never dipped). Rifles are brought in front of the bearers for inspection. All other Sons salute

the flag or Commander as appropriate (those with hands occupied with flags and rifles DO NOT salute the flag).

ORDER ARMS

Flag poles and rifles are lowered to the ground. The Sons otherwise remain at attention.

PARADE REST

The column can relax and is not at attention while waiting for the parade to resume.

COLUMN RIGHT (LEFT)

The parade column is going to be turning, each line should remain shoulder to shoulder, people on the inside of the turn will walk with smaller steps and people on the outside with larger steps

HALF-STEP

The group begins using a half step, slower pace to either allow space to form in front of the unit or to allow the back of the unit to catch up.

PROCEDURE FOR POSTING COLORS

1. On command of the Commander to "Post the Colors", the Provost Marshal will come forward to the rostrum, then turn and face the color bearers and command-- "color Bearer Attention. Forward march". Color bearers will then advance the Colors, being sure the American Flag is on the marching right.
2. When they arrive at the front, the Provost Marshal says – "Prepare to Post" which will indicate that the flag bearers should line up their flag poles into the bases. On the order of "Post Colors", the flags are lowered into the bases. The American Flag will then pass in front of the banner, to the right side of the Commander. The banner will pass to the left and they are both placed in the standards. Bearers then step back one pace and salute the Flag.
3. Following the prayer by the Chaplain, the Provost Marshal will then lead the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.
4. The Provost Marshal will then command-- "Color Bearers, about face, forward march". The Provost Marshal will make an about face and lead the bearers to the rear of the room.

PROCEDURE FOR RETIRING THE COLORS

1. Commander commands-- "Retire Colors"
2. Provost Marshal come forward, faces the bearers by making an about face, and commands-- "Color Bearers, attention, forward march"

3. When they arrive at the front of the room, he commands-- "Retire Colors"
4. Color bearers remove Flag from standards, steps back one pace. Provost Marshal then commands-- "Right and left face, forward march".
5. Provost Marshal makes an about face and leads them to the rear of the room.

PROCEDURE FOR ESCORTING GUESTS

1. Provost Marshal stands on the right of the person he is escorting or assisting.
2. If a woman guest, Provost Marshal offers his left arm. If a man, he walks to the right and assists them to the rostrum if needed.

MEETING REGULATIONS CONCERNING DRESS CODE/CONDUCT

At an official meeting of the National and State Departments or District, no Sons of AMVETS member shall:

1. Wear shorts of any kind.
2. Wear tank top shirts.
3. Wear ball caps.
4. Be barefooted or wear sandals.
5. Use profanity.
6. Drink alcoholic beverages.
7. Smoke (The option of smoking will be voted on prior to each meeting by the body if the venue allows smoking).

The following covers shall be worn in an official meeting:

1. Gold Braid - National Officer, past or present (if not current, then the years of service and title must be stitched into the cover).
2. Black Braid - State Officer, past or present (if not current, then the years of service and title must be stitched into the cover).
3. Red Braid - Squadron delegates.

The official uniform shall be worn in all State and National meetings and at formal and semi-formal occasions and shall consist of:

1. Navy blue jacket
2. Light blue shirt
3. Gray slacks
4. Tie
5. Officers badge and cover
6. Black Shoes

To be seated at a meeting, you are required to:

- a. Present membership card (or receipt).
- b. Be in good standing regarding finances and paper work at the level you are representing as a delegate.
- c. Pay required registration fee (if appropriate)
- d. The Commander may authorize other people to sit in a meeting.

To speak at a meeting, you must:

1. Stand and be recognized by the Commander, or presiding Officer.
2. If not at your Squadron meeting, state your name and Squadron or Department for the minutes.

When approaching the head table, you must:

- a. Be recognized, and approved to come forward.
- b. Salute Colors (if not wearing cover, hand to heart and out)
- c. Go behind table on your right. You must never cut Colors unless physically impossible.

**YOU SHALL ALWAYS SALUTE COLORS WHEN ENTERING OR LEAVING ROOM
WHEN MEETING IS IN SESSION AND SALUTE COMMANDER BEFORE SPEAKING!**

DEPUTY PROVOST MARSHAL(S)

At larger meetings, especially when the Provost Marshal expects to need to leave the floor, he may request the appointment of one or more Deputy Provost Marshal's. This should be done at the beginning of the meeting and recorded in the minutes. Such appointment can last for just one meeting or for the entire year depending on the wishes of the Provost Marshal and the Body. The Provost Marshal requests the appointment by gaining the floor and asking for the appointment, and naming the Son(s) her wished appointed. If the Commander agrees, he makes the appointment subject to his appointment power. These Deputies act as the Provost Marshal whenever there Provost Marshal is off the floor or whenever he or the Commander/Chairman issues them instructions.

UNIFORM ORDER FORMS:

The Name Badge Order Form is used to order name/officer badges for your Squadron, District or Department. This form is mailed to an outside vendor that we have contracted with to provide these badges at a set price for you. This form is mailed directly to the vendor listed on the form.

FORM: PLEASE VISIT THE FORMS PAGE ON THE NATIONAL SOA WEBSITE

The Cover Order Form is used to order your cover and includes a size chart and a breakdown of how to order the embroidery if you so choose. This form is mailed directly to the AMVETS National Quartermaster.

FORM: PLEASE VISIT THE FORMS PAGE ON THE NATIONAL SOA WEBSITE

IMMEDIATE PAST COMMANDER

The role of the Immediate Past Commander on the E-Board and the Executive Committee is primarily to provide continuity in the leadership and to be a source of information for the other officers as to what decisions have been made in the past and why they were made. This is not to say that the Immediate Past Commander should be a negative personality, but rather a stabilizing one, ensuring that policy decisions of the past are not thrown out lightly from one administration to the next.

In addition, Commanders often have a “Commander’s Project” in which they will designate a cause and try to raise money for these programs during their year(s) as Commander. At the State and National levels, sometimes these will become a permanent program, such as the Undergarment Program and the Sweats for Vets Program.

Monies raised while he person is Commander are generally distributed after their term of office has ended, with the Commander acting as a permanent chair of that Program until all funds are expended.

At the National level, the Sons have also formed the Council of Past National Commanders. This Council consists of all Past National Commanders who are in good standing. The Council meets at the Spring National Executive Committee Meeting and National Convention and discusses the state of the Organization, and makes recommendations to the body for how to improve. The Council also is the body that chooses the recipient and presenters for the Sons of AMVETS National Aid & Support Award.

VAVS REPRESENTATIVE / DEPUTY

The Department of Veterans Affairs Voluntary Service (VAVS) program offers members of the Sons of AMVETS an opportunity to provide direct service to our Nation's Veterans by volunteering their time and talents to the comfort of patients in VA Medical Centers, Domiciliaries, Nursing Homes and State Veterans Homes. VA coordinates with staff members to match the needs of each patient with the talents of hometown volunteers. As of 2013, VAVS Volunteers may also volunteer their time and energy at National Cemeteries and for the transportation Network (transporting patients to and from appointments).

Often deprived of the encouragement and love of family and friends due to extreme distances, hospitalized veterans lose hope and lose touch with the outside world. This is where VAVS volunteers step in to help sick and disabled veterans. Volunteers, who provide the necessary link back to the community and supplement the VA staff's work, are trained, assigned and supervised by VA facility staff. VAVS workers are volunteers in the true sense of the word. They receive no salary or compensation for their contribution; their reward is knowing the vital role they play in the care and treatment of hospitalized veterans.

There is a constant need for volunteers and Sons of AMVETS can help. Contact the chief of volunteer service at the nearest VA medical facility. Find out whether Sons of AMVETS is represented and, if so, find out what the needs are and offer your assistance. If no Sons of AMVETS Program exists, organize one. The chief of volunteer service will supply the information that you need. You can enlist other help such as Auxiliary members, youths, senior citizens and others who want to help.

If your Squadron would like to participate in this worthwhile program, contact your State or National VAVS Coordinator. They can help in getting you started on a very worthwhile and enjoyable program.

REMEMBER!!! The Sons of AMVETS main purpose is to "SERVE OUR VETERANS", and what better way than through voluntary service at a VA Hospital in your area. If you do not have a VA hospital near you, you can serve through any VA accredited nursing home. To find out if the nursing home in your area fits in this category, contact them and ask if they are a VA accredited nursing home.

If for some reason, your Squadron can't volunteer regularly at the hospital, but would like to help in another capacity, contact the VA Hospital or nursing home and ask what they need. It might be canteen books, telephones, televisions, newspapers, etc... Hold a function at your Post Home and donate the proceeds, earmarking it for whatever you have picked out to work towards. Be sure to fill out a project form, send one copy to your Department 2nd Vice Commander and two copies to National Headquarters.

SUGGESTION -- Place a box in your Post Home and ask for the members' old magazines, puzzles or new crossword books, etc... Take these to the VA Hospital / nursing home. Be sure to fill out a project form. Send one copy to your Department 2nd Vice Commander and two copies to National Headquarters.

Under the VAVS Program, each VA Facility can have one VAVS Representative up to three deputies. This means Sons of AMVETS as a whole can have one Rep, even if there

are many Squadrons that service the same hospital. The role of the VAVS Representative is to coordinate donations (both physical and time) to the VA Hospital from any and all Squadrons that service them, not just their own. In addition, there are quarterly meetings that must be attended. The Deputies assist the VAVS Representative in their duties and attending meetings.

The Role of the State and National Coordinators are to ensure coverage at as many facilities as possible, to ensure that Annual Joint Reviews are being conducted promptly and to ensure that the Reps and deputies know what is expected of them and to coordinate State/National VAVS Programs.

In a nut shell, The National Coordinator and his deputies ensure States Departments have Coordinators and that they know how to do what is expected of them, and also to work with non-department Representatives. The State Coordinators and their deputies ensure each VA Facility has a Representative and as many deputies as possible (up to 3 deputies per facility). The VA Representative manage the Sons presence at the specific VA facility, both in ensuring Squadron members are registered as volunteers and spending time there, as well as coordinating larger programs with the Squadrons.

The VAVS Representative Recommendation Form is fairly self-explanatory. The State Coordinator fills out section 1 with the VA Facilities name, and then fills out a section for each rep or dep being assigned to that facility. The final section is filled out by the State Coordinator with his information. This form, once complete, is sent to National Headquarters for the National VAVS Coordinator to certify with the VAVS Program.

FORM: PLEASE VISIT THE FORMS PAGE ON THE NATIONAL SOA WEBSITE

CHAPLAIN

The Chaplain is a member of the Commander's Staff and acts as advisor and consultant to the Commander in all matters relating to religion, morals, and morale as affected by religion. The Chaplain assists the Commander and his staff with integrating the principles of good moral conduct and citizenship in the Post. He represents religion which teaches fortitude, reverence and justice, as well as kindness, sympathy and humility. His mission is to provide - or to see that provisions are made - for the spiritual and moral needs of Sons of AMVETS members, their dependents, and constituents. He should stimulate and guide the growth of a spiritual and moral sense of obligation, to enable a member of AMVETS to be a more faithful citizen.

As spiritual leader of your Squadron familiarize yourself with the prayers and rituals contained in the Guidebook, as you play an important part of all rituals. Be sure to notify Department and National Chaplains of all deceased members and cases of serious illness so that proper responses can be made from these levels.

DUTIES OF A CHAPLAIN

1. Give the opening and closing prayers at the meetings.
2. The Chaplain may be asked to give the invocation and benediction at dinners or other ceremonial or social events.
3. The Chaplain should at all times have with him a prayer that is suitable for any occasion in case he is asked, without notice, to give an opening or closing prayer. Always be prepared.
4. The Chaplain may be asked by the AMVETS to participate in a Joint Memorial Service. In such cases he should ask the AMVETS exactly what duties he is expected to perform.
5. Cards of sympathy, get well, congratulations, etc. are sent to members upon notification.
6. Give a written or oral report at meetings as requested by the Commander, about his activities as Chaplain.
7. The Chaplain may be required to wear the Sons of AMVETS uniform on certain formal or ceremonial occasions.
8. In all ceremonies the Chaplain should work closely with the Provost Marshal to ensure order and timing.
9. Upon the death of a Sons member, it is the responsibility of the Squadron Chaplain to fill out the Deceased Notification Form in its entirety. After the form is complete, send three copies to your Department 1st Vice Commander, who will distribute copies to the

appropriate Department Officers and will also forward a copy to National Headquarters. If you do not have a Department, send 1 copy to National Headquarters.

STANDARD OPENING PRAYER (INVOCATION)

Our Father Who Art in Heaven,
Thy name be ever hallowed by the people of America,
Whom Thou hast blessed as no other.

May America ever adore and thank Thee,
For those blessings guaranteed to us by law.

As we gather in devout and patriotic assembly,
We realize we have not always been appreciative of those blessings,
For that we are sorry.

Bless all nations,
That they may dwell together in peace and justice.

Bless our nation that she may ever be
Strong and generous, right and victorious,
Among the family of nations on this earth.

Bless us banded together for good in this organization,
That we may serve our nation and fellow man well,
In peace as in war.

Bless our fallen comrades and those whose price of patriotism,
Cause them to suffer today.

In Thy Holy Name,
Most humbly do we pray.

AMEN

STANDARD ENDING PRAYER (BENEDICTION)

Let us pause this moment that each of us in his own faith and heart
may hallow the memory of our fallen comrades
who made the supreme sacrifice
and gave their lives at the alter of patriotism to a grateful America.

(Pause for 30 Seconds)

God of all consolation and mercy,
may our comrades ever sleep in thy bosom of love.

And may thou bless our loved ones, our comrades,
and our fellow man everywhere, now and forever.

AMEN

STANDARD MEAL PRAYER

Oh Lord, we thank thee for the bountiful meal which we are about to consume. As we prepare to consume this meal before us, humble in the knowledge that our servicemen and women on active duty will be consuming meals not so plentiful. We thank thee for all that thou hast given us and our countrymen and pray that thou will continue to look down upon us with favor.

AMEN

FUNERAL RITUALS

PREPARATION

Where the remains are to be interred in a local cemetery, the burial ritual should be conducted at the graveside. In such cases, the church or home services will best be left in the hands of the family spiritual advisor. Where the Squadron Chaplain conducts the church or home service, the sermon should be left to the discretion of the Chaplain.

GRAVESIDE RITUAL

a. COLOR GUARD AND COLOR BEARERS:

1. Will remain covered at all times so long as the Colors and/or rifles are actually in the hands of the Color Bearers (church included).
2. Will execute parade rest and attention with members.
3. The National Color should never be dipped, nor should it be lowered to the ground while in the cemetery.
4. Squadron/District/State/National Colors should be dipped whenever the casket is being carried, and Honor Guard executes present arms. If the Colors are at order, the senior Color Bearer will command "Carry Colors" and both Colors will come to the carry position, just before the salute is to be rendered by the Squadron Colors.
5. Whenever the Squadron Color is dipped, the Color Guard comes to present arms.

b. SQUADRON MEMBERS:

1. Will uncover as they enter the home or church.
2. Will stand uncovered with their cover over the left breast whenever the casket is being carried in good weather.
3. If inclement weather necessitates covering the head, the right-hand salute will be given instead of uncovering.

c. ORDER OF MARCH FOR FUNERALS:

Colors and Color Guard

Chaplain

Hearse

Honor Squad and pallbearers (Honor Squad on each side of hearse)

Squadron/Other Sons members

Mourners (designated member shall take charge of the pallbearers, guard of honor)

BURIAL RITUAL

Arriving at the grave, the Squadron halts.

The pallbearers are formed in two files facing the road and ready to receive the casket. All personnel stand at ease.

When the hearse comes into view, the Commander calls the detail to attention.

When the hearse is parked, the pallbearers step forward and take the casket from the hearse.

The body is brought to the bier.

Squadron colors are dipped.

The Squadron forms around the grave and the Commander pays tribute to the deceased.

The Chaplain invokes Devine Blessing.

When he has finished, he steps to one side.

Squadron colors are dipped over the grave.

The body bearers and Squadron move off at quick time at the Commanders' order.

FUNERAL HOME SERVICES

Officers in uniform with covers, line up and march in. AMVETS and Auxiliary fall in behind the Sons. Line up in front of the casket. On command, salute their fallen comrade. After the salute is completed, the Chaplain reads the following prayer.

CHAPLAIN: "Shall we Pray"

At this time we pause in quietness and reverence, to pay tribute to the memory of our departed member _____. His earthly sorrows and tears are over, and a place is left vacant in our Sons of AMVETS. He contributed his best efforts and loyal devotion to making a worthy Sons unit, which he loved so well. Life passes swiftly; like a cloud, we are consumed and vanish away. As he was in life, so he shall be in death, in the hands of his Heavenly Father, where we all hope to join him in fraternity unbroken.

AMEN

DECEASED MEMBER FORM

The Deceased Member Notification Form will allow the State and National Departments to not only keep track of all deceased members, but more importantly see that these members be honored in the respective memorial services at State and National Convention.

This form is very self-explanatory. The top portion is to be all Squadron and State information, to allow membership records to be amended and kept up to date.

The second portion is the information regarding the deceased member. Addresses need to be included to allow contact with the family, to send flowers, cards, etc.

The third portion is to give the Departments a contact person from the Squadron to verify all records, and to help setting up any kind of memorial plans.

FORM: PLEASE VISIT THE FORMS PAGE ON THE NATIONAL SOA WEBSITE

PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICER (PRO)

The Public Relations Officer has different jobs depending on the level at which the PRO operates. Primarily, he is responsible for communicating with media sources to boost knowledge of Sons of AMVETS Activities, whether in advance to boost attendance or after a major donation to let outsiders know the organization exists and to hopefully boost membership.

The community won't know of the special and outstanding activities sponsored by the Sons of AMVETS without being told; therefore, it is the job of the Public Relations Officer (PRO) to spread the word. We want people to know about us. We want them to know what we're doing on the Local, Department and National levels, what we stand for, and how we feel about our communities, children and country. Visit your local newspaper; see the managing or city editor. Tell them who you are, what your organization is, what your Squadron's local activities consist of and frankly ask for help in publicizing them. Explain that you often have news items and would like to forward them to the paper. Ask if there is one person in charge of club notes or Veteran's Organizations who should get your news items. By all means find out the deadlines of the newspaper. It is possible that while you are at the newspaper, one particular phase of your Squadron's local program would be of interest to them. In this case, follow it through and see if they will run a story on it right away. Find out what part of your programs they like, what type of stories they want from your Squadron, etc. News articles could possibly increase your membership. The more people hear about what you are doing, the more they will want to join. We want to build a stronger organization. Strength means more members, and it means more people aware of the fact that we are an active organization. There are many avenues of publicity available. The PRO should take advantage of these opportunities to enhance the prestige of the Sons of AMVETS.

At higher levels, the PRO may also take on a role spreading Sons to areas where Sons do not exist yet.

HISTORIAN

The Historian's primary job is to create a history of the Sons of AMVETS through pictures and other materials. They should have a camera with them at all events of the Sons, Auxiliary and Post that Sons attend, both at their Post home and local Posts, Conventions, etc. They should encourage others to take pictures as well and give them copies as well as collect other things for the scrapbook they will create at the end of each year.

AWARDS:

The following awards are presented each year at the National Convention. Books must be turned in to the National Historian at the National Convention on Friday morning by 9:00 a.m. Awards will be announced on Saturday morning during the meeting, with physical awards mailed out after convention.

1. Best Local Scrapbook
2. Best Department History book
3. Best Cover

SUGGESTIONS FOR HISTORIANS

1. Scrapbooks should be made with a Scrapbook. History Books should be made with a ring binder. You may also make covers from wood, plastic, or use your imagination.
2. The cover should be designed to match the theme you are following through the book.
3. Your theme can come from several different ways. Commanders Theme, a Slogan, a cartoon, a project name, State motto, or a nickname, etc...
4. There are many different items that can be used in a book, such as stickers, ribbons, greeting cards cut out to hold a picture or a face, lace, etc... Don't use bulky items -- it causes the book to become too thick.
5. When using pictures, you can cut them out in various shapes to make the page more interesting. It also saves space when you can eliminate needless background in a picture.
6. Always try to identify all people who are in the picture.
7. If you can't get the original of something, make a photocopy of it.
8. Start collecting material at the beginning of the year. Save everything! Establish a file box using large envelopes and separate your materials according to Programs and dates.
9. Encourage members to bring you anything that they think would be appropriate for the book. It is better to have duplicates, then to have to hunt for something at the end of the year.

10. If you cannot attend the event, ask someone to collect items that you can use, and take the pictures for you. Provide an envelope for them to put these items in and send them to you.
11. Arrange photos in an interesting manner. This is not a photo album; try to stay away from straight rows. Frame them, arrange them in circles, overlap or collage them. Use an item, such as an invitation, clippings, or a menu as the focal point, and surround it with pictures of members enjoying the event.
12. Most of all, **HAVE FUN DOING IT!!!!**

LOCAL SCRAPBOOK

A scrapbook should encourage you to take pictures and to seek publicity, letting the AMVETS and the AMVET Family know what the Sons are doing. It will protect Memorabilia, and be a fun and creative thing to design, execute and present to your Squadron Commander for his year in office.

Local Scrapbooks are prepared yearly. Use cut off dates so that material does not overlap the previous year's work. Department Convention to Department Convention or Installation Banquet to Installation Banquet are good guidelines. You should choose a theme, and follow it throughout the book. Be original when preparing your Scrapbook, and encourage all members to participate in the planning and collecting of photos, articles, and souvenirs to be used. Make sure that the book is presented to your Squadron Commander at a local meeting, or at the Installation Banquet at the end of the year to be seen and enjoyed by all.

Contents should run from either Convention to Convention, Banquet to Banquet, Month to Month, Project to Project, etc... Contents should also contain the Pledge of Allegiance, Sons Preamble, a copy of the Squadron Charter, and it's Charter Members, a copy of the Squadron Standing Rules (if adopted), a list of the present Officers, a list of **ALL** donations made, copies of all Awards, Certificates, Letters of Recognition, Thank you letters, Invitations, Pictures of projects and activities, News articles from both your Post Newsletter and the local newspapers, and Menu or Program Souvenirs, etc...

Judging -- (Subject to Change)

a.	Presentation -- (Originality)	25 Points
b.	Neatness	25 Points
c.	News Articles, Press Releases	10 Points
d.	Content -- Awards, Menus, Pictures, Letters, Thank You Notes, Pledges, Preamble, Lists, Donations, Etc...	25 Points
e.	<u>Conformance -- (Is Table of Contents followed)</u>	<u>15 Points</u>
TOTAL		100 Points

DEPARTMENT HISTORY BOOK

All history books are prepared yearly. They should run from State Convention to State Convention. It should be noted that a History Book should differ from a Scrapbook in as much

as it should not contain any data that is not of a Historical Nature, such as pressed flowers, matchbooks, souvenir type information, etc... Letters of Recognition for Community Services, Certificates of Appreciation from Civic and like Organizations, Awards and other such items are considered to be of a Historical Nature.

Contents should contain; the Pledge of Allegiance, the Sons Preamble, copy of the Department Constitution & By-Laws and (if adopted) Standing Rules, List of the Department Officers, List of all donations, copy of the year end NEC Report, pictures of events and visits that the Commander made, Awards, Letters, Certificates, Thank you notes and letters, news articles, etc...

Judging -- (Subject to change)

a.	Content -- Quality and scope of material	25 Points
b.	Merit -- Historical Value	35 Points
c.	Conformance -- Was Table of Contents followed	20 Points
d.	Neatness	20 Points
TOTAL		100 Points

This criteria was formed using the National Auxiliary PRO/Historian Manual, and revised to conform to the Sons of AMVETS.

LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR

A position that exists primarily at the State and National level is the Legislative Director. The Legislative Director is our primary officer to work with our elected officials. The National Legislative Director coordinates our annual Legislative Drive and Lobbying effort in conjunction with the Spring NEC. He needs to be knowledgeable of the laws and legislation at his level affecting veterans and service member benefits and be able to work closely with the AMVETS Legislative Director. He will need to communicate the legislative alerts and legislative bills that AMVETS supports to the membership through the NEC men. He will need to be knowledgeable and have professional communication skills that may be required during meetings with government lawmakers. At the National Level, we also have an Assistant Legislative Director, who works closely with the Legislative Director on our goals and will fill in and assume the responsibilities if the Legislative Director is unable to.

State Legislative Directors fulfill a similar role at the state level.

If your town has ordinances that set up benefits for veterans, you may also want to have a Legislative Director to be able to lobby Selectmen, Aldermen, Councilmen, etc. to maintain or push for expansion of benefits.

INSPECTOR GENERAL

A position that also exists ONLY at the State and National level is the Inspector General. The Inspector General is the investigating officer of the Sons of AMVETS. He is sent by the State or National Commander whenever a serious report of malfeasance is occurring. At the instruction of the State Commander or State Executive Committee, the State Inspector General is authorized to see all records (financial and otherwise), minutes, recordings and other properties of any Sons Squadron or District within that State, even if said records have been "sealed." Depending on their mandate, they may be authorized to conduct an audit, or implement other review procedures, etc. If a State Inspector General is sent to investigate, a written report must be given to the next SEC or Convention reporting what was found. The Inspector General may or may not be called upon to give his opinion of the situation, but his report will usually be factual only.

The National Inspector General works in much the same way, but may be called upon to investigate a State Department as well.

JUNIOR AMVETS COORDINATOR

The Junior AMVETS Coordinator really only exists at Squadrons or Departments that have Junior AMVETS at that level or are trying to form a Junior AMVETS at that level. They are required to aid and assist the AMVETS and Auxiliary Coordinators and to work with the kids on programs and functions and to act as chaperones for Junior AMVETS outings.

A Junior AMVETS Coordinator should:

- a. Work well with children of all ages
- b. Be someone who can be trusted with our youth, both individually and in groups
- c. Be interested in similar activities to the kids
- d. At the State and National level, be willing (and able) to miss Sons meetings to attend Junior Functions
- e. Plan or assist in the planning of outings for the Junior AMVETS. This is especially important at the National level where the Juniors' parents are expected to attend AMVETS, Auxiliary and Sons meetings.
- f. This would be a good spot for a Sons member who has kids aged between 12 and 17 who they can bring in to the Junior AMVETS and help develop into strong members of the AMVETS Family.

A Junior AMVETS Coordinator is an important position. They are dealing with children and as such must be able to act appropriately. It is also important that we know who we are putting into these positions and ensure that we are not putting in someone who could potentially harm one of the children.

WEBMASTER

In the Constitution & By-Laws, the position of Webmaster is established for the State and National levels however ANY level may choose to have one. The Webmaster is primarily responsible for the cyber-presence of the Sons of AMVETS at his level. This might mean setting up a web page, utilizing social media such as Facebook or Twitter, or any number of other activities. At the National level, the Webmaster is also responsible for forms maintenance, and some states use this aspect for State forms as well.

When establishing a website, it is important to update your website with updated information frequently. The more accurate the website is, the more often it will be visited. The more it is visited, the easier it will be to disseminate information.

When using social media, you will maintain a higher level of interest if you post something every day. If your Webmaster does not have the time, perhaps he can open up the account to others to help him post things. The more often you post, the more likely people will find you.

It is also very important that anything posted on your website, facebook page, etc. keep in line with the aims and purposes of AMVETS and Sons of AMVETS and do not reflect poorly on the AMVETS Family.

Important to note, the Webmaster is NOT the Commander, not the 1st Vice, etc. Questions that are emailed to the Webmaster through the website are best served being answered by the appropriate officer. Even if the Webmaster knows the information (perhaps they are a past Commander), it is important that the current officers get the chance to field questions, as when they don't know an answer, this is how they learn.

STATE DISTRICTS/DISTRICT COMMANDERS

As of 2012, the only State Department to host Districts is the Department of Ohio, though other states have had them in the past. The role of the State District is to help the larger State Department manage their membership and Squadrons more easily. They are formed only if a State Department votes to form Districts and adds this to their Standing Rules. Once voted upon, State Districts must be formed in any AMVETS District that meets the criteria for formation. They are led by a similar slate of officers to the Squadron level and like the Squadrons they elect once a year at an annual meeting.

The District Commander is an unusual office, in that it functions at 2 levels of the organization. First and foremost, he is the Commander of the District and as such is a District Officer. He is, however, also a voting member of the State Executive Committee and represents the District at all SEC meetings in this capacity.

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEEMAN

The National Executive Committeeman is an even more unusual officer than the District Commander. Similarly, he serves at 2 levels (in this case State and National).

His role at the State level is to bring back information from the National Department for the membership of the State and disseminate it where it needs to go. He should report on what National is doing, when the National meetings are, try to encourage more participation from his state, etc.

At the National level, his role is to represent the interests of his home state, bring matters to the National Floor impacting his home state to seek advice or resolutions. In addition, he will report on what his state is doing and what the Squadrons therein are doing.

The NEC for any state should be knowledgeable of the State Organization and its Squadrons, plan to attend all State and National Executive Committee meetings and State E-Boards if allowed. Often, a State will use a Past State Commander or a current State Officer, as this is usually something that they do already.

There are many options for selecting an NECman. The default or “standard” way is by appointment by the Commander. This makes the person an Appointed State Officer, and therefore it can be held by any State Officer, including the Commander if he so chooses. A second option is to make it something held by virtue of holding another office, such as Immediate Past Commander is automatically the NECman. Finally, you can elect your NEC man, but bear in mind that this will make him an elected State Officer, and make him a voting member of any meeting that Elected State Officers can vote. Whatever you choose to do (except regular appointment) MUST be added to your State Standing Rules, which should also specify what to do if the normal NEC man cannot attend an NEC meeting.

Funding for the NEC is shared between State and National. National provides up to 4 nights lodging and 4 days per diems at Spring NEC and Convention and up to 2 nights lodging and 2 days per diem at Fall NEC. The expectation is that the State pays for the travel and any other expenses of the NEC man.

AMVETS COORDINATOR

The Coordinator must be a member of AMVETS and have knowledge of the rules and regulations of AMVETS, the procedures of conducting meetings and when and how to fill out paperwork when due. They are appointed by the AMVETS Commander at that level to work with the Sons and guide them. He or she should be familiar with the Sons of AMVETS procedures and their forms and when they are due.

The Coordinator at any level should plan to attend the Sons meetings, to keep himself aware of what they are doing, to keep the Sons aware of what the Post is doing and advise the Sons on various matters. They should also attend AMVETS meetings to tell the AMVETS what the Sons are doing.

The first thing the Coordinator should do is go through the Principles of Sons of AMVETS and their Aims & Purposes with the Sons of AMVETS members.

When a new Squadron is formed, recommend that they meet once a week for four weeks. In those four weeks, the Coordinator will have the Sons members:

- a. Study and review the Sons of AMVETS Guidebook, which is available from Sons of AMVETS National Headquarters.
- b. Learn about their Constitution and By-Laws.
- c. Learn how to conduct meetings. Whether there are four or ten or 100 members present, follow the proper procedures until you learn how to conduct the meetings properly.
- d. Learn the duties of all Officers. Every office is important to the organization.
- e. Learn all about the forms and their purposes.
 - How to fill out.
 - When to fill out.
 - When to send in.
 - Where to send in.
 - It's the responsibility of all Officers to see that this gets done promptly.
 - Membership eligibility. How to fill out applications for membership and who can be a sponsor. The AMVETS Post Adjutant must approve applications first.

After the four weeks, temporary officers should be appointed or elected, and serve until the annual meeting when you should have regular elections.

If you have any questions, learn who your District or State Officers are and where they can be contacted.

Learn to coordinate activities between the Post and Squadron through your Post Coordinator. He plays a very important part in your organization. You will learn more as you meet and participate in Post activities. Then you can start your functions.

Good Luck! If you need help or further information, please contact your Department Sons of AMVETS Coordinator or National Sons of AMVETS Headquarters.

NATIONAL PROGRAMS

The National Department has established several programs over the years, all of which are funded through membership dues, funds raised and other means. Below are the programs adopted by the National Sons of AMVETS:

Blood Donor Program

Every year nearly eight million pints of blood are needed to treat the sick and injured. The best way to help supply the need is through blood drives. You can ensure an adequate supply of blood for members of your Post by setting up a blood drive through the Red Cross or Blood Bank. Preparation for a local blood collection necessitates coordination with local Red Cross chapters and/or blood banks, as their personnel are the only non-medical people authorized to draw blood. You need to set up a blood donor committee to coordinate with the Red Cross or local blood bank personnel. The only way blood available is for healthy persons to provide it. Persons 17 and older, in good health, can donate blood.

If anyone from your Post donates blood on a regular basis, ask them to please donate it in the name of Sons of AMVETS, Squadron _____. You will need to serve cookies and juice or a light lunch for those who volunteer to give blood. This is one way to cover members of your Post that are not covered anywhere else.

The Blood Donor form is used to highlight and thanks members of the Sons who have gone above and beyond with their donations of blood.

FORM: PLEASE VISIT THE FORMS PAGE ON THE NATIONAL SOA WEBSITE

Paws with a Cause

Sons of AMVETS endorses this unique and innovative program for the hearing impaired and physically challenged. Hearing dogs are provided for the hearing impaired and service dogs for victims with cerebral palsy, multiple sclerosis, muscular dystrophy, a closed head injury or other physically limiting diseases or injuries.

Training for a service dog takes 12 months while training for a hearing dog takes 4 months. Once a dog is selected, the first half of its training begins at the training center located in Byron Center, Michigan. The hearing dog is trained to respond to at least four sounds (the telephone, doorbell, alarm clock and smoke alarm). Later, in the recipient's home, the dog is trained for additional sounds, depending on the needs.

A service dog is trained to respond to 87 verbal commands and tasks. Tailoring of the training package begins in earnest when the dog is in the recipient's home. Because needs vary, each individual selects the responses that will help him or her most to live independently. These responses are then made an integral part of the training for the dog.

For more information, contact Paws With A Cause, 1235 100th Street, SE, Byron Center, MI 49315 (616) 698-0688.

Department Development Fund

The Department Development Fund was established to assist young Departments in the first years of their existence. Departments needing assistance are encouraged to write a letter to the National Finance Officer who will forward that request on to the National Executive Committee. All requests can be sent to National Headquarters who will forward on all requests.

Matching Grant Fund

The Matching Grant Fund was established to aid Squadrons, Districts and Departments in their more expensive endeavors. Specific Guidelines are on the form which should be submitted to the National Finance Officer via National Headquarters.

FORM: PLEASE VISIT THE FORMS PAGE ON THE NATIONAL SOA WEBSITE

Veterans Lodging

The Veterans Lodging Program was established at the 2010 National Convention. The brainchild of PNC Larry Combs, this program is designed to help get veterans, especially older ones, to Washington, D.C. to be able to see their memorials and meet their elected representatives. This program is funded to run twice a year, once at Veterans Day and again in conjunction with the Spring NEC.

FORM: PLEASE VISIT THE FORMS PAGE ON THE NATIONAL SOA WEBSITE

Past National Commanders Projects

This consists of a variety of programs. Primarily it is for Commander Charlie Summerall's Undergarments program and Commander Ben Haynes Sweats for Vets Program. The form also allows you to request funds from the Immediate Past Commander's project if his project plans to be utilized that way. After filling out the contact info, and selecting the appropriate box, tell us briefly what each item will be used for. The Undergarments and Sweats for Vets program are designed for VA Donations.

FORM: PLEASE VISIT THE FORMS PAGE ON THE NATIONAL SOA WEBSITE

Sons of AMVETS Aid & Support Award

A few years ago, the Sons of AMVETS Established the National Aid & Support Award, which was designed to thank those people and entities that have helped our organization prosper from the outside. It is specifically forbidden to be received by any member of the Sons. A recipient is selected every year by the Sons Council of Past National Commanders at the National Convention and the award is bestowed at the Silver Helmet Awards Banquet at the Spring NEC.

FORM: PLEASE VISIT THE FORMS PAGE ON THE NATIONAL SOA WEBSITE

Past Winners include:

AMVETS PNC Joseph Piening, presented by Sons PNC Larry Combs (2010)
AMVETS PNC John Lorec, presented by Sons PNC Jay Williams (2010)
AMVETS member Gary Klodt, presented by Sons PNC Mike Mrzlak (2011)
AMVETS member Tim Tuttle, presented by Sons PNC Robert Hammett (2012)
AMVETS PNC William Boetcher, presented by Sons PNC Robert Grose (2013)
AMVETS PNC S. John Sisler, presented by Sons PNC Charlie Summerall (2013)

Scholarship Program

National Sons of AMVETS developed a \$500.00 Scholarship program several years ago. There multiple scholarships awarded. Eligible individuals may apply before April 1 of each year. A letter is written to each applicant informing them if they did or did not receive a scholarship and a letter is also sent to the college listed on their application for confirmation that the student is registered. After confirmation from the college, the check is then sent to the college.

As of 2012, the National Department annually gives away seven scholarships. Of these, we have named 4 of the awards. These are named in honor of AMVETS Member Gil Garza of Ohio, AMVETS PNC Cecil Aultman of Texas, Sons Member Barry Lima of Ohio (a long time National VAVS Coordinator), and Sons PNC Richard Mooney of Pennsylvania.

You can start a scholarship program of your own by earmarking funds from certain functions you do during the year. You can use the format from our Scholarship application for a guide line.

The National Scholarship Form is used by anyone who needs a little extra help for their school expenses. It should be filled out entirely. This scholarship is highly competitive, so the more information that is accurately filled out, the easier it will be for the selection committee to pick the best candidates.

FORM: PLEASE VISIT THE FORMS PAGE ON THE NATIONAL SOA WEBSITE

SUGGESTED "INSTALLATION CEREMONY"

Installation can be made before an invited public. There are no secret ceremonies or rituals, and neither the public, especially prospective members, nor families of members should ever be kept in the dark as to the truly sincere aims, purposes and principles of Sons of AMVETS. The Installing Officer should be an Officer of the State or National Department, if available, or a duly authorized Officer of another Squadron.

It is recommended that you take the Installation ceremony on that follows and modify it to suit the needs of your Squadron, District or Department.

SONS OF AMVETS INSTALLATION CEREMONY

Presenting the Installing Officer

- Commander or M.C.* "Provost Marshal, please escort the Installing Officers to the rostrum."
- Installing Officer* "Provost Marshal, please retire the outgoing Officers of Sons of AMVETS Squadron No. _____, Department of _____."
- Provost Marshal* "Commander, the Officers of Sons of AMVETS Squadron _____, Department of _____ have been removed."
- Installing Officer* "Provost Marshal, are the elected Officers of Sons of AMVETS Squadron _____ prepared to take their oath of office?"
- Provost Marshal* "They are Commander."
- Installing Officer* "Then you will lead them before the rostrum to be installed."
- Provost Marshal* "Mr. Commander, I present to you the Officers-elect, with the exception of the Squadron Commander of Sons of AMVETS Squadron No. _____, Department of _____ for the purpose of installation."
- Installing Officer* "Sons of AMVETS Officers-elect, you have been chosen by the members of your Squadron to represent them in your respective capacities. Are you prepared to take your Oath of Office? If so you will answer "I am"."
- Assembled Officers* "I am."
- Installing Officer* "Raise your right hand, and repeat after me, using your name where I use mine, the Sons of AMVETS Oath of Office."

(Rap gavel three times, and say "All rise")

OATH

"I _____, solemnly swear, that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States, That I will defend and support the United States from all enemies, both from within and without and that I will support and obey the Constitution of Sons of AMVETS and that I will carry out the duties of my office to the best of my ability, so help me God."

(Rap gavel once and say "Please be seated")

Installing Officer

"You may lower your hands. May I offer my congratulations to all of you. Provost Marshal, you will introduce and seat the elected Officers."

(Provost Marshal gives Officers an about face, introduces 1st Vice by name, then 1st Vice goes back to his seat, then 2nd Vice and so on until they are all seated.)

Provost Marshal

"Mr. Commander, the Officers with the exception of the Commander have been seated."

Installing Officer

"Provost Marshal, you will lead to this rostrum the Sons of AMVETS Commander-elect, so that he may be installed."

Provost Marshal

"Mr. Commander, I present to you to be installed, the Commander-elect of Sons of AMVETS, Squadron No. _____, Department of _____."

(Provost Marshal salutes, takes two steps back, covering the Commander.)

Installing Officer

"You have been chosen by your fellow Sons of AMVETS to lead them for the following year. The responsibilities will be great. Knowing this, are you willing to assume your duties and take your Oath of Office? If so, you will answer "I am"."

Incoming Commander

"I am."

Installing Officer

"Raise your right hand and repeat after me, using your name where I use mine."

(Rap gavel three times, and say "All rise")

OATH

"I _____, solemnly swear, that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States, That I will defend and support the United States from all enemies, both from within and without and that I will support and obey the Constitution of Sons of AMVETS and that I will carry out the duties of my office to the best of my ability, so help me God."

(Rap gavel once and say "All be seated")

Installing Officer "Provost Marshal, you will escort the Commander to the dias. (Provost Marshal complies.) You have been elected to the highest office that this Squadron can bestow upon any member. This office exemplifies Authority and Justice. I present you with the gavel, the symbol of authority. Use it wisely and with discretion. Congratulations. (Installing Officer hands gavel to new Commander, then faces Provost Marshal.)

Installing Officer "Provost Marshal, please issue the Proclamation."

Provost Marshal "Having complied with our rules and regulations, with the power invested in my authority, I hereby declare Sons of AMVETS Squadron No. _____, Department of _____, duly and legally installed for the year 20____ - 20____."

(Provost Marshal salutes, does about face, salutes Installing Officer, does an about face, and retires to the rear of the hall)