



AMVETS
PROGRAMS MANUAL



AMVETS

Programs Manual

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AMVETS Programs Reporting

General

Sharing information is critical to the continued success and future development of AMVETS programs. The information you provide will help us to set priorities and identify areas of need within our various programs. Your reports become the basis of our report card to Congress and the public at large as we work on behalf of veterans and this nation's citizens. It also fulfills an IRS accountability requirement we must meet as a tax-exempt organization.

Submission

You now have a choice of reporting online and submitting your reports electronically or using the interactive PDF form. The online system may be accessed from the AMVETS web site directly from the home page under "what's now." It may be completed prior to printing. This hard copy reporting form should be mailed to your Department, attention Second Vice Commander for Programs. Your Department will receive your online report immediately when you hit the submit button. User instructions are incorporated into both formats; however, if you still have questions or need assistance in utilizing the online reporting program or the interactive reporting "form," please call the National Programs Department toll free at 877-726-8387, extension 4031.

Deadlines: Posts are required to make a report to their respective departments at a minimum of twice each year. For six-month calendar periods ending June and December. However, with online reporting you may make your reports at anytime and they will automatically be shared with your Department and National immediately. They will also be automatically included in the bi-annual National reports without any additional action on your part.

Americanism Programs

General (For schools or any youth group)

As veterans, we are all well aware of the many sacrifices made by service men and women throughout the history of our country. It is our duty to promote the ideals of Americanism, to ensure the veteran is never a forgotten citizen, and that the foundation on which this country was built is never taken for granted. The youth of America will be the torchbearers for the next generation. It is up to us to educate them on the meaning of being an American. One of America's most enduring salutes is our Pledge of Allegiance. This simple pledge sums up what it means to be an American. Informational Pledge of Allegiance comic books that may be distributed to children of all ages are available from the National Programs Department. To obtain these comic books, access the order form from the forms folder, or telephone the national programs department. Payment must be received at the time of order.

Americanism Essay Contest

The National Americanism Essay Contest, cosponsored by AMVETS and the AMVETS Ladies Auxiliary, aims to instill patriotic values and beliefs in America's youth and provides them with the opportunity to express their thoughts in essay form.

■ **Eligibility:** Young people in the 6th, 7th, 8th, 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th grades of American public, private and parochial schools, as well as equally rated home-schooled children, are eligible to participate.

■ **Themes:** The National Americanism Committee, consisting of AMVETS and the AMVETS Ladies Auxiliary, developed five revolving themes. The following are the themes and the corresponding years of their use:

Annual Themes:

2007-2008 My Fovorite American Hero is..
2008-2009 What Does an American Veteran Mean to Me?
2009-20010 Why Do We Celebrate the Fourth of July?
2010-2011 Why Is it Important to Vote?
2011-2012 I'm Proud To Be An American Because...

■ Contest Rules:

All students must address the theme.
All essays must be written in ink, typed or produced on a computer.
6th Grade students should submit essays of 200 words or less.
7th and 8th Grade students should submit essays of 300 words or less.
9th and 10th Grade students should submit essays of 400 words or less.
11th and 12th Grade students should submit essays of 500 words or less.
All national entries must be received by July 1. Local and state deadlines may vary.

■ Post Guidelines: Each summer, brochures for the essay contest and its new theme are produced by the AMVETS National Programs Department. The forms may be downloaded from the AMVETS website or by calling the National Programs Department. The Publications Order Form can be downloaded from our website at www.amvets.org. Upon receipt of contest information, AMVETS posts and auxiliaries should establish joint working committees to encourage participation in their hometowns and surrounding communities. These committees are responsible for promoting the program in their areas, selecting judging panels, establishing local prizes and selecting and forwarding one winning essay from each grade level to the department for judging by the post's established deadline.

It is suggested that a three-member panel of local experts (suggested experts include local teachers and educators) along with AMVETS and AMVETS Ladies Auxiliary members judge the essays on the following criteria:

adherence to the established theme
originality
literary construction
legibility

The decision of the local judging panel will be final. The winning essay must be submitted to the state department and must include an official entry form or application. The entry form or application is part of the Americanism contest brochure and may be reproduced.

If the department does not conduct an essay contest, the post may forward its 1st place essays for each grade to AMVETS National Headquarters for consideration in the national judging. Entries must be received by JULY 1. Each entry must be accompanied by an entry form completed by the post commander/auxiliary president or AMVETS/AMVETS Ladies Auxiliary Americanism officer.

■ Department Guidelines: AMVETS and/or auxiliary departments should also establish joint working committees to oversee the state-level essay contest. The appointed state committee should consist of teachers or educators, as well as one AMVET and one auxiliary member to represent the department. Departments should seek the assistance of the state board of education in establishing a judging panel. The judging panel should rate the submitted essays using the same criteria used by the post; select one department winner from each grade level; and forward it to the National Programs Department. The submitted essays must be received by JULY 1 and include the official entry form or application found in the Americanism contest brochure. A letter should accompany the entries stating the winner of each grade level category, and be endorsed by either the Department Second Vice Commander, Executive Director/Adjutant, or Commander.

■ National Guidelines: The National Americanism Committee oversees the National Americanism Essay Contest and meets once a year at the national convention to review the previous year's program and make recommendations to both national bodies.

The AMVETS National Programs Director, who has functional administrative responsibility for the National Americanism Essay Contest, will coordinate the project with appropriate individuals in AMVETS and the AMVETS Ladies Auxiliary. He or she will also coordinate the appointment of three non-members who have professional expertise in the field of education to function as a national-level judging panel. This panel will meet between July 1 and August 1 to determine the contest winners.

Judges will select one 1st place winner, one 2nd place winner, and one 3rd place winner from the following grades: 6th, 7th, 8th, 10th, 11th, and 12th. All 9th grade Americanism Essay Contest winners at the department level are considered national winners and no further judging will take place. In states with no organized department, all 9th grade post winners will be forwarded to the National Programs Department and will be considered winners.

All decisions by the national judging panel will be final. The National Programs Director will be informed of the national judges' decisions and will be responsible for all national award arrangements. Publicity requirements should be handled at the department level. Contest winners will be announced at the National Convention. All entries, in conjunction with the national award prizes, will be mailed to the appropriate department following the National Convention for disbursement to the award winners.

■ Prizes: All national entries will receive a Certificate of Participation signed by the National Commander. Since 9th grade entries are judged at the department level, departments will send a list of all 9th grade participants to National Headquarters for completion of their certificates. All entries (including participation certificates, plaques, and Visa Gift Cards) will be returned to the department for presentation at an appropriate ceremony. Each winner also receives recognition in American Veteran magazine. Specific prizes for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place winners are as follows:

6th Grade: 1st - \$125; 2nd - \$100; 3rd - \$75
7th Grade: 1st - \$150; 2nd - \$125; 3rd - \$100
8th Grade: 1st - \$150; 2nd - \$125; 3rd - \$100
10th Grade: 1st - \$375; 2nd - \$250; 3rd - \$150
11th Grade: 1st - \$500; 2nd - \$375; 3rd - \$250
12th Grade: 1st - \$500; 2nd - \$375; 3rd - \$250

All 9th Grade Department 1st place winners receive an all-expense paid trip to the Freedoms Foundation at Valley Forge, Pennsylvania for a long weekend of youth oriented activities. Dynamic speakers and sightseeing are highlights of a trip that is sure to be long remembered. Ninth Grade Prize: All 9th grade winners receive a certificate, a plaque, and an all-expense paid trip to Freedoms Foundation at Valley Forge, Pennsylvania, to attend the Youth Leadership Seminar. The trip always takes place the first week in November. Names and addresses of all winners and other participants (sponsored by the department) must be sent to the National Programs Director by JULY 1.

Americanism Poster Contest

The National Americanism Poster Contest, cosponsored by AMVETS and the AMVETS Ladies Auxiliary, aims to instill patriotic values and beliefs in America's youth and provides them with the opportunity to express their thoughts in poster form.

■ Eligibility: Young people in the 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th grades of American public, private and parochial schools, as well as equally rated home-schooled children, are eligible to participate.

■ Themes: The contest's themes are the same as those used for the Americanism Essay Contest.

■ **Poster Guidelines:** Posters must be 9 by 12 inches on standard construction paper. Entries must be drawn freehand using paint, crayons, pens or pencils to illustrate the theme. A straight edge or ruler may also be used to aid in drawing a straight line. The student must write or type a description of his/her poster in 50 words or less on the back of the poster, or attach the description on a separate sheet of paper to the back of the poster.

■ **Post Guidelines:** The contest's timetables are the same as those used for the essay contest. Your post can also pick up the brochures at the annual national convention or download them from AMVETS website at www.amvets.org. Upon receipt of contest information, AMVETS posts and auxiliaries should establish joint working committees to encourage participation by students in their hometowns and surrounding communities. These committees are responsible for promoting the program in their areas, selecting judging panels, establishing local prizes and selecting and forwarding one winning poster from each grade level to the department for judging by the post's established deadline.

It is suggested that a three-member panel of local experts (suggested experts include local teachers and educators) along with AMVETS and AMVETS Ladies Auxiliary members judge the essays on the following criteria:

adherence to the established theme
originality
overall presentation

Entries should be submitted to posts for judging. The post should select one winner per grade. The decision of the local judging panel will be final. The winning posters must be submitted to the state department and must include an official entry form or application. The entry form or application is part of the Americanism contest brochure and may be reproduced.

If the department does not conduct a poster contest, the post may forward its 1st place posters for each grade to AMVETS National Headquarters for consideration in the national judging. Entries must be received by **JULY 1**. Each entry must be accompanied by an entry form completed by the post commander/auxiliary president or AMVETS/AMVETS Ladies Auxiliary Americanism officer.

■ **Department Guidelines:** AMVETS and/or auxiliary departments should also establish joint working committees to oversee the state-level poster contest. The appointed state committee should consist of teachers or educators, as well as one AMVET and one auxiliary member to represent the department. Departments should seek the assistance of the state board of education in establishing a judging panel. The judging panel should rate the submitted posters using the same criteria used by the post; select one department winner from each grade level; and forward it to the National Programs Department. The submitted posters must be received by **JULY 1** and include the official entry form or application found in the Americanism contest brochure. A letter should accompany the entries stating the winner of each grade level category, and be endorsed by either the Department Second Vice Commander, Executive Director/Adjutant, or Commander.

■ **National Guidelines:** The National Americanism Committee oversees the National Americanism Poster Contest and meets once a year at the national convention to review the previous year's program and make recommendations to both national bodies.

The AMVETS National Programs Director, who has functional administrative responsibility for the National Americanism Poster Contest, will ensure all departments' winning posters (or post winning posters where no department contest is held) are brought to the national convention for judging. The judges will consist of members of the National Americanism Committee and will be appointed by the committee chairman. Judges will select one 1st place winner, one 2nd place winner, and one 3rd place winner from the following grades: 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th.

All decisions by the national judging panel will be final. The National Programs Director will be informed of the national judges' decisions and will be responsible for all national award arrangements. Publicity requirements should be handled at the department level. Contest winners will be announced at the National Convention. All entries, in conjunction with the national award prizes, will be mailed to

the appropriate department following the National Convention for disbursement to the award winners.

■ **Prizes:** All national entries will receive a Certificate of Participation signed by the National Commander. Each winner also receives recognition in The National AMVET magazine. Specific prizes for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place winners are as follows:

National Awards – VISA Gift Cards

2nd Grade: 1st - \$100; 2nd - \$75; 3rd - \$50

3rd Grade: 1st - \$100; 2nd - \$75; 3rd - \$50

4th Grade: 1st - \$125; 2nd - \$100; 3rd - \$75

5th Grade: 1st - \$150; 2nd - \$125; 3rd - \$100

Americanism Flag Drawing Contest

The National Americanism Flag Drawing Contest, co-sponsored by AMVETS and the AMVETS Ladies Auxiliary, aims to instill patriotic values and beliefs in America's youth and provides them with the opportunity to express their thoughts in their interpretation of the American Flag.

■ **Eligibility:** Young people in kindergarten and 1st grade of American public, private and parochial schools, as well as equally rated home-schooled children, are eligible to participate.

■ **Theme:** An interpretation of the American Flag.

■ **Poster Guidelines:** Posters must be 9 by 12 inches on standard construction paper. Entries must be drawn freehand using paint, crayons, pens or pencils to illustrate the theme. A straight edge or ruler may also be used to aid in drawing a straight line. Entries may include a decorative background or wording to support the flag drawing. The student must write or type a description of his/her poster in 50 words or less on the back of the poster, or attach the description on a separate sheet of paper to the back of the poster.

■ **Post Guidelines:** The contest's timetables are the same as those used for the essay contest. Your post can also pick up the brochures at the annual national convention or download them request them from AMVETS website at www.amvets.org . Upon receipt of contest information, AMVETS posts and auxiliaries should establish joint working committees to encourage participation by 4th grade students in their hometowns and surrounding communities. These committees are responsible for promoting the program in their areas, selecting judging panels, establishing local prizes and selecting and forwarding one winning poster from the 4th grade to the department for judging by the post's established deadline.

It is suggested that a three-member panel of local experts (suggested experts include local teachers and educators) along with AMVETS and AMVETS Ladies Auxiliary members judge the essays on the following criteria:

- adherence to the established theme
- originality
- overall presentation

Entries should be submitted to posts for judging. The post should select one winner. The decision of the local judging panel will be final. The winning poster must be submitted to the state department and must include an official entry form or application. The entry form or application is part of the Americanism contest brochure and may be reproduced.

If the department does not conduct a Flag Drawing contest, the post may forward its 1st place poster to AMVETS National Headquarters for consideration in the national judging. Entries must be received by JULY 1. Each entry must be accompanied by an entry form completed by the post commander/auxiliary president or AMVETS/AMVETS Ladies Auxiliary Americanism officer.

■ Department Guidelines: AMVETS and/or auxiliary departments should also establish joint working committees to oversee the state-level Flag Drawing contest. The appointed state committee should consist of teachers or educators, as well as one AMVET and one auxiliary member to represent the department. Departments should seek the assistance of the state board of education in establishing a judging panel. The judging panel should rate the submitted posters using the same criteria used by the post; select one department winner from each grade level; and forward it to the National Programs Department. The submitted posters must be received by JULY 1 and include the official entry form or application found in the Americanism contest brochure. A letter should accompany the entries stating the winner of each grade level category, and be endorsed by either the Department Second Vice Commander, Executive Director/Adjutant, or Commander.

■ National Guidelines: The National Americanism Committee oversees the National Americanism Flag Drawing Contest and meets once a year at the national convention to review the previous year's program and make recommendations to both national bodies.

The AMVETS National Programs Director, who has functional administrative responsibility for the National Americanism Flag Drawing Contest, will ensure the department winners (or post winners where no department contest is held) are brought to the national convention for judging. The judges will consist of members of the National Americanism Committee and will be appointed by the committee chairman. Judges will select one 1st place winner, one 2nd place winner, and one 3rd place winner from K, and 1st grade.

Decisions by the national judging panel will be final. The National Programs Director will be informed of the national judges' decisions and will be responsible for all national award arrangements. Publicity requirements should be handled at the department level. Contest winners will be announced at the National Convention. In conjunction with the national award prizes, all entries will be mailed to the appropriate department following the National Convention for disbursement to the award winners.

■ Prizes: All national entries will receive a Certificate of Participation signed by the National Commander. Each winner also receives recognition in AMERICAN VETERAN magazine. Specific prizes for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place winners are as follows:

National Awards – Visa Gift Cards

Kindergarten: 1st - \$75; 2nd - \$50; 3rd - \$25

1st Grade: 1st - \$75; 2nd - \$50; 3rd - \$25

Freedoms Foundation Youth Leadership Seminar

General

AMVETS, the AMVETS Ladies Auxiliary and the AMVETS National Service Foundation have participated in the Freedoms Foundation's Youth Leadership Seminar since 1987.

The four-day experience is designed to help young people contemplate and analyze the freedoms granted by our way of life. It helps bring to life magnificent documents like the Declaration of Independence and the Bill of Rights. The seminar is designed to give a better understanding of the phrase "We the People."

Against a backdrop of the famous sculpture of George Washington praying, seminar students strolling through the Medal of Honor Grove can hear an AMVETS memorial carillon playing in tribute to our nation's fallen heroes.

Eligibility

All first place department winners of the 9th grade National Americanism Essay Contest receive an all-expense paid trip to the Valley Forge, Penn., seminar funded by the National Service Foundation. Names and addresses of all winners, selected Junior AMVETS officers, and other deserving participants (sponsored by departments) must be sent to the National Programs Director by

General

With roots in the Morrill Act of 1862, which provided for military education at land grant colleges, ROTC was formally established by the National Defense Act of 1916 and is now recognized as a primary source for recruiting military officers.

AMVETS ROTC and JROTC medals and certificates are available from the AMVETS National Quartermaster (1-800-454-3254). The award, which consists of a medal pendant and ribbon bar, is presented annually to the outstanding cadet at each participating ROTC and JROTC unit for diligence in the discharge of duty. The award should be acquired in the early fall.

Outstanding Senior Cadet Program

Recognizing diligence to duty and a willingness to serve the United States of America, AMVETS annually awards a medal to outstanding senior ROTC cadets at colleges and universities throughout the nation. The professor of military science at a college or university selects the cadet who will receive the award and submits his/her name to National Headquarters. If the college or university is in a department-supported state, National Headquarters will forward the cadet information to the appropriate department for preparation of the certificate and medal. The department may call upon a local post for presentation of the award. If the college or university is in a non department-supported state, National Headquarters will prepare the certificate and medal and forward it directly to the ROTC unit.

The medal is presented to selected cadets at the institution's annual honors and awards day ceremony. The cadet must:

Be a full-time undergraduate student enrolled in the ROTC advanced course

Be in good military and scholastic standing at the time of selection and presentation of the AMVETS ROTC Award

Meet other requirements that may be established by the AMVET post/department and the professor of military science

The authorization for the AMVETS ROTC Awards can be found in Army Regulation 145-1 and Air Force Regulation 900-6, Attachment 26. There is no specific regulation for Navy or Marine Corps ROTC units however, they can still participate in this worthwhile AMVETS program. The annual awards ceremonies usually take place during the months of April through June.

Each department has a list of ROTC units located in its state. The appointed state ROTC chairman should form a committee, confirm the post's willingness to present the medals and contact the professor of military science (Army), navy science (Navy), or aerospace studies (Air Force). At each school, he should arrange for the presentation of the AMVETS ROTC medal and familiarize school officials with the awards program. The chairman should also explore other ways the post can support the ROTC unit. Additionally, he should consider ordering an extra medal for each ROTC unit to display on campus.

Outstanding Junior Cadet Program

Recognizing diligence to duty and a willingness to serve the United States of America, AMVETS annually awards a medal to the outstanding senior JROTC cadets at high schools throughout the nation. The senior instructor at the high school selects the cadet who will receive the award and submits his/her name to National Headquarters. If the high school is in a department-supported state, National Headquarters will forward the cadet information to the appropriate department for preparation of the certificate and medal. The department may call upon a local post for presentation of the award. If the high school is in a non department-supported state, National Headquarters will prepare the certificate and medal and forward it directly to the JROTC unit.

The medal is presented to selected cadets at the institution's annual honors and awards day ceremony. The cadet must:

Be a full-time JROTC participant

Be in good military and scholastic standing at the time of selection and presentation of the AMVETS

ROTC Award

Meet other requirements that may be established by the AMVET post/department and the senior instructor.

Each department has a list of JROTC units located in its state. The appointed state JROTC chairman (usually the ROTC chairman) should form a committee, confirm the post's willingness to present the medals and contact the senior JROTC instructor. At each school, he should arrange for the presentation of the AMVETS JROTC medal and familiarize school officials with the awards program. The chairman should also explore other ways the post can support the JROTC unit. Additionally, he should consider ordering an extra medal for each JROTC unit to display on campus.

The Ted Leszkiewicz AMVETS Against Drugs and Alcohol Abuse (AADAA) Program

General

Drug abuse, alcoholism and compulsive gambling, to name a few, are diseases. As diseases, they are very closely related because they involve abuse of habit-forming patterns of behavior. Today, we face an ever-rising social epidemic due to the abuse of drugs and alcohol. No community in the United States is free of these diseases. Drug abuse is one of the biggest problems in America today. The war on drugs is on, and AMVETS posts can help by promoting community-based drug and alcohol educational programs. These programs, combined with other community civic and social organizations, can reach the entire local population.

Education Programs

It is important to remember that the AADAA Program will act simply as a resource center for information on chemical dependency. We are not licensed counselors or consultants. Our purpose is to direct people in need to the correct resource. It is suggested that AMVETS posts establish their own officers and committees to address the objectives of this program. Committees can act as organizational agents in setting up local presentations addressing the problems of substance abuse. For more detailed information on setting up your own program, consult the AADAA Booklet, which can be ordered from National Headquarters.

Contests

The Ted Leszkiewicz AADAA Program Essay and Poster Contest, cosponsored by AMVETS and the AMVETS Ladies Auxiliary, allows the youth of America to express their views on the dangers of substance abuse and compulsive diseases. They are given the freedom to put into words or drawings the dangers of these serious issues that face them on a daily basis.

■ Eligibility: Young people in kindergarten through 12th grade of American public, private and parochial schools, as well as equally rated home-schooled children, are eligible to participate. Grade categories are as follows:

K – 2: Poster contest

3 – 5: Poster contest

6 – 8: Story/poem contest

9 – 12: Story/poem contest

■ **Themes:** The Ted Leszkiewicz AADAA Program Committee, consisting of AMVETS and the AMVETS Ladies Auxiliary, has developed six revolving contest themes. The following are the themes and the corresponding years of their use:

2007-2008 Users are Losers
2009-2009 Be a Winner, Be Drug Free
2009-2010 There is No use for Drug Abuse
2010-2011 Drugs Come in All Shapes & Sizes
2011-2012 Be Smart, Don't Start
2012-2013 Stop Abuse...Don't Use
2009-20010 There Is No Use for Drug Abuse

■ **Story/Poem Guidelines:** Story/poem must be 250 words or less for 6th through 8th grade students, 350 words or less for 9th through 12th grade students. All entries must address the theme selected for that year. Entries may be written in the student's own handwriting in blue or black ink, typed, or printed from a computer.

■ **Poster Guidelines:** Posters must be 9" x 12" inches on standard construction paper. Entries must be drawn freehand using paint, crayon, pens or pencils to illustrate the theme. A straight edge or ruler may also be used to aid in drawing a straight line. The student must write or type a description of his/her poster in 50 words or less on the back of the poster, or attach the description on a separate sheet of paper to the back of the poster.

■ **Post Guidelines:** Each summer, brochures for the story/poem and poster contest and its new theme are produced by the AMVETS National Programs Department. Your post can also pick up the brochures at the annual national convention or download them from AMVETS website at www.amvets.org. Upon receipt of contest information, AMVETS posts and auxiliaries should establish joint working committees to encourage participation by students in their hometowns and surrounding communities. These committees are responsible for promoting the program in their areas, selecting judging panels, establishing local prizes and selecting and forwarding one winning essay and poster from each grade category to the department for judging by the post's established deadline.

It is suggested that a three-member panel of local experts (suggested experts include local teachers and educators) along with AMVETS and AMVETS Ladies Auxiliary members judge the story/poems and posters on the following criteria:

adherence to the established theme
originality
literary construction
legibility

The decision of the local judging panel will be final. The winning story/poems and posters must be submitted to the state department and must include an official entry form or application. The entry form or application is part of the AADAA contest brochure and may be reproduced.

If the department does not conduct a story/poem or poster contest, the post may forward its 1st place essays and posters for each grade category to AMVETS National Headquarters for consideration in the national judging. Entries must be postmarked by JULY 1. Each entry must be accompanied by an entry form completed by the post commander/auxiliary president or AMVETS/AMVETS Ladies Auxiliary Americanism officer.

■ **Department Guidelines:** AMVETS and/or auxiliary departments should also establish joint working committees to oversee the state-level story/poem and poster contest. The appointed state committee should consist of teachers or educators, as well as one AMVET and one auxiliary member to represent the department. Departments should seek the assistance of the state board of education in establishing a judging panel. The judging panel should rate the submitted stories/poems and posters using the same criteria used by the post; select one department winner from each grade category; and

forward it to the National Programs Department. The submitted essays and posters must be postmarked by JULY 1 and include the official entry form or application found in the AADAA contest brochure.

■ National Guidelines: The Ted Leszkiewicz AADAA Program Committee oversees the story/poem and poster contests and meets once a year at the national convention to review the previous year's program and make recommendations to both national bodies.

■ Story/Poem Judging: The AMVETS National Programs Director, who has functional administrative responsibility for the Ted Leszkiewicz AADAA Program Story/Poem and Poster Contests, will coordinate the project with appropriate individuals in AMVETS and the AMVETS Ladies Auxiliary. He or she will also coordinate the appointment of three non-members who have professional expertise in the field of education to function as a national-level judging panel for the story/poem contest. This panel will meet between July 1 and August 1 to determine the story/poem contest winners. Judges will select one 1st place winner, one 2nd place winner, and one 3rd place winner from the 6th through 8th grades and a 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place winner from the 9th through 12th grades.

■ Poster Judging: The AMVETS National Programs Director will ensure all department winning posters (or post winning posters where no department contest is held) are brought to the national convention for judging. The judges will consist of members of the Ted Leszkiewicz AADAA Committee and will be appointed by the committee chairman. Judges will select one 1st place winner, one 2nd place winner, and one 3rd place winner from the kindergarten through 2nd grade category, and a 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place winner from the 3rd grade through 5th grade category.

All decisions by the national judging panel will be final. The National Programs Director will be informed of the national judges' decisions and will be responsible for all national award arrangements. Publicity requirements should be handled at the department level.

■ Prizes: All national entries will receive a Certificate of Participation signed by the National Commander and the AADAA lapel pin. All entries (including participation certificates, plaques, and VISA gift cards) will be returned to the department for presentation at an appropriate ceremony. Each winner also receives recognition in The National AMVET magazine. Specific prizes for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place winners are as follows:

Kindergarten through 2nd Grade Prizes:

First Place: \$75, certificate, and plaque

Second Place: \$50 and certificate

Third Place: \$25 and certificate

Third through Fifth Grade Prizes:

First Place: \$100, certificate, and plaque

Second Place: \$75 and certificate

Third Place: \$50 and certificate

Sixth through Eight Grade Prizes:

First Place: \$125, certificate, and plaque

Second Place: \$75 and certificate

Third Place: \$50 and certificate

Ninth through Twelfth Grade Prizes:

First Place: \$200, certificate, and plaque

Second Place: \$75 and certificate

Third Place: \$50 and certificate

Funding of monetary awards in this program is provided through the National Service Foundation.

Community Service Programs

“To serve our country in peace as in war; to build and maintain the United States of America towards lasting prosperity and peace for all its inhabitants.”

— AMVETS Officers Manual

This stated aim of AMVETS is a commitment to service. Commitment to service extends not only to the nation as a whole, but also to every community. Our commitment to communities is realized through AMVETS' ongoing community service programs. These are the projects that AMVETS posts may use to deal with community issues and help satisfy community needs.

“Caring and sharing” describes our community service programs. We promote and support many people-oriented projects. AMVETS community service programs are extremely flexible allowing AMVETS posts a great deal of independence in operating their own programs. This section will provide broad, general descriptions of AMVETS community service programs, with suggestions for implementing these programs at the post level. For further information, contact the National Programs Department.

National Homeless Veterans Program

A National Homeless Veterans Program was initiated during the 50th National Convention for the purpose of establishing and coordinating national and local programs to help our homeless veterans.

On a national level, AMVETS has joined forces with the National Coalition for Homeless Veterans, which works to draw up a legislative agenda and a program model. We also interact with the Department of Veterans Affairs Homeless Task Force and with the Department of Housing and Urban Development. Information is provided to posts and departments on grants available to homeless providers, on legislation dealing with homeless veterans and on other important items.

White Clover Program

Every community has its share of people unable to help themselves. Although government agencies provide assistance, they often lack the personal touch. AMVETS can provide the additional assistance with the personal touch. Nearly every community has sick or injured servicemen, hospitalized veterans, disaster victims, widows and orphans. They appreciate and benefit from your support of this program. The White Clover Program is one of the best means AMVETS has to help these people. One day every year, AMVETS members go into their communities with white clovers to solicit donations to fund programs to assist the needy.

The key to a successful post White Clover Program is effective organization. A White Clover committee should be established at least eight weeks prior to the campaign day. This committee is responsible for establishing campaign goals and procedures and for making sure the post contributes the proceeds to worthwhile charities. The receiving organization should be designated prior to the campaign. This will add legitimacy to the campaign.

The post should recruit volunteers. Each post has a ready-made pool of volunteers in its members, their families, AMVETS Auxiliary, Sons of AMVETS and Junior AMVETS. Community scouting organizations and local high schools (Junior ROTC) are other prime sources of volunteers. Supervision also supports the operation. If a volunteer runs out of White Clovers or suddenly becomes ill, someone must be on hand to remedy the situation. The post should also select locations for the program. Heavy pedestrian traffic locations, such as local businesses, street corners and shopping mall entrances, are the best areas to use. Be sure to obtain permission and acquire permits where required by law. As a rule, communities will generally give full support for charitable activities such as a White Clover drive. Endorsements from local public officials and community leaders will help to generate maximum media support. Once the post has secured volunteers, selected locations and publicized its efforts, it should begin the actual program. White clovers, as well as other promotional materials, are available through the AMVETS Quartermaster at 1-800-454-3254.

Blood Donor Program

Every year nearly eight million pints of blood are needed to treat the sick and injured. The best way to help fulfill this need is through blood drives. AMVETS posts can ensure an adequate supply of blood for post members, their families and community residents by establishing their own blood banks.

Preparation for a local blood collection necessitates coordination with local Red Cross chapters and blood banks, as their personnel are the only non-medical people authorized to draw blood. The post's blood donor committee should coordinate with the Red Cross to establish dates for the blood drive and should secure volunteer support to assist Red Cross personnel. Post public relations officers should contact local media for press support.

In appreciation, and in recognition, of AMVETS members who regularly and unselfishly give blood beyond eight pints, posts or departments can award an AMVETS Blood Donor Pin.

Organ Donor Awareness and Bone Marrow Donor Programs

Advances in medical technology have made it possible to replace a variety of malfunctioning human organs. Current techniques make it possible for transplants of kidneys and corneas. Progress is also being made in overcoming transplantation problems connected with the liver, heart, pancreas, bones, and other tissues.

The greatest hindrance to all transplant programs is the lack of suitable donor organs for those individuals desperately awaiting surgery. This is where AMVETS can contribute by either becoming donors or simply helping to inform the public of the critical need for organ donation.

Posts can speed this process along by conducting meetings on organ donor awareness, with representatives of donor organizations as featured participants.

In addition, some states have donor provisions on drivers' licenses. Posts might be able to provide information or support legislation at all levels of government to have such provisions adopted.

Each year, several blood-related diseases take the lives of thousands of people. There are some alternative medical procedures which may, or may not, help these patients. But for most, bone marrow transplantation is the only hope for them. More than sixty percent of patients requiring bone marrow transplants do not have a matched family member who can donate the needed marrow. Your post can help change those odds by donating bone marrow through a local collection agency.

The odds of finding a matched unrelated donor vary from 1 in 10,000 to 1 in 100,000. The need for donors is great. Your post or department can help by joining the National Marrow Donor Program.

Special Olympics

Special Olympics is sharing a joy that can only happen when individuals make it happen. Throughout the ages, the Olympic ideal of achieving physical and spiritual excellence through sports has inspired generations of youth to test their athletic skills against some of the world's finest athletes. Yet, nowhere has the influence of this ideal been more profound than in the international sports movement of Special Olympics.

Special Olympics has been a catalyst to help bring mentally challenged individuals out of the closets of their communities and into the mainstream of life. It has encouraged families and communities to recognize the abilities of their mentally challenged loved ones and community members, and to appreciate the skill, courage, and joy expressed in the lives of those competing in the Special Olympics. Daily, Special Olympics transforms the dream of participating in sports into reality and, for these special Olympians, promotes a more positive self-image.

AMVETS is a co-sponsor with Special Olympics in the training and competition for the mentally challenged. AMVETS posts and departments are encouraged to volunteer and support the Special Olympics chapter director's efforts to help organize and operate a Special Olympics program.

Child Abuse Awareness

Each year hundreds of thousands of children disappear, while thousands more become victims of criminal and sexual abuse. The problem is very serious and will continue unless we do something to stop it now. We hear about child abuse, we read about it, but who would ever think it could happen to us? In reality, it could and, as a parent, you may not even know it. So if you care about children, this program is important to you.

Children are vulnerable, inquisitive and eager to learn and explore new things. The type of human beings they will grow up to be depends on what they learn from the teachings and actions of their role models: parents, teachers and other responsible adults. They also learn from their own initiative and from their peers and may behave differently in various environments. They are taught socially acceptable values and many of their actions depend on rewards and punishments, personal gratification or fear. The question often asked is "What can I do?"

The Missing and Exploited Child Program is one that demands nationwide awareness and action. The home is the best place to begin addressing the situation and preventing it before it becomes a problem. Educating children and their families is important, but temporary protection, treatment and rehabilitation of the victim are also critical. There are seven steps to prevent child abduction and exploitation:

Know where your children are at all times. Be familiar with their friends and daily activities.

Be sensitive to change in your children's behavior; it is a warning that you should sit down and talk with your children about what caused the changes.

Be alert to a teenager or adult who is paying an unusual amount of attention to your children or giving them inappropriate or expensive gifts.

Teach your children to trust their own feelings and assure them that they have the right to talk about what they sense is wrong.

Listen carefully to your children's fears; be supportive in all your discussions with them.

Teach your children that no one should touch them in a way that makes them feel uncomfortable. If someone does, make them understand that they should tell you immediately.

Be careful about babysitters and any other individuals who have custody of your children. Contact Child Help U.S.A. (1-800-422-4453) for information and a referral service to a local child abuse awareness agency or call the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (1-800-843-5678).

The Boy Scouts of America have an excellent videotape. "A Time To Tell" explains the problem of sexual molestation through the dramatization of experiences of adolescent boys. Through these experiences, the three R's of youth protection are taught: Recognize, Resist and Report.

Scouting Programs

The Boy Scouts of America and the Girl Scouts of America are the free world's largest youth organizations. One out of every four boys and girls of scouting age today are members of one of these organizations. Scouting's purpose is to help families and institutions instill in each new generation the confidence and courage to master the changing demands of America's future. Scouting programs are for all boys and girls, ages 8 to 21, regardless of mental or physical handicaps. These programs are highly acceptable within communities and are fun for most youngsters.

Scouting is an ideal program for AMVETS, as it contributes to America's needs by motivating young people to serve the community and by providing them with the knowledge and skills to help themselves and others. Scouting is an opportunity for young people to learn about the history of our nation. Scouting programs also provide opportunities for post members – as they participate in leadership activities – to promote a better understanding of the value of the American way of life to scouts, their families and their friends.

To start a post scouting chapter, an organizing plan must first be formulated and adopted. Include in the plan ideas about post sponsorship, post leadership and membership recruitment. In the sponsorship section of the plan, specify which type of scouting unit (Brownie, Cub Scout, Girl Scout, Boy Scout or Explorer) the post wishes to sponsor. Arrange for the selection of leaders such as an institutional representative and appoint a post unit committee. This committee should select unit leaders and oversee their training. To recruit membership, conduct a post orientation meeting for children and their parents. After the meeting, the post should register any of the interested youngsters

and plan the first month's scouting activities.

The plan is the first step in implementing post-level scouting activities. Once this plan is completed, the post should present its scouting chapter application to the Boy Scout or Girl Scout local chapter (Camp Fire Girls and Little League Baseball programs could also be adopted in a similar manner.).

The National AMVETS Eagle Scout certificate is available to all young men who achieve this high honor. The troop leader must send a request into the National Programs Department or to a post or department. A congratulatory letter and certificate are sent to the department or post so that an AMVETS member can make the individual presentation at the ceremony. If an AMVETS member is not able to make a presentation, the certificate is sent to the troop leader for his presentation.

Habitat for Humanity

Habitat for Humanity International is a nonprofit, ecumenical Christian housing ministry that seeks to solve the problem of inadequate shelter by forming partnerships between people in need and those with the willingness and resources to help. The Habitat goal is to eliminate substandard housing from the world and to make decent shelter a matter of conscience and action. Habitat's philosophy is to engage and empower people in partnership in grassroots community development to address housing needs.

AMVETS encourages participation in any of the areas Habitat offers in which volunteers may become active. To locate an affiliate near you, contact the Habitat helpline at 912-924-6935, ext. 552, or visit their website at www.habitat.org.

National Awards Program

What has your post and department accomplished this past year that deserves recognition? Why not spread the news and, at the same time, compete for national prizes and distinction? The National Second Vice Commander for Programs and the National Programs Director encourage all posts and departments to submit their entries for the annual National Awards Program. All entries submitted to National Headquarters must be received by JULY 1. Awards have been broken down into five categories. They are:

- Americanism
- Community Service
- ROTC
- Special Olympics
- The Ted Les Leszkiewicz AADAA Award

Independent national judges identify and rank those posts and departments who actively participate in community service and other AMVETS programs. Each award, which is announced and presented at the AMVETS national convention, serves as a tangible reminder of the hard work and dedication that is found in all of our posts and departments. However, the only way to have an opportunity to be recognized for your efforts is to enter the competition.

Each national award is listed on the official entry form. To enter, submit a presentation with a completed entry form. If a department or post chooses to enter more than one category, a separate presentation must be entered for each. Presentations may be submitted in the following categories:

- **Background:** Americanism Awards are presented annually at the national convention to the AMVETS department and post that have made the most outstanding contributions to Americanism during the preceding year.

■ Qualifying Criteria: Activities considered patriotic or military related such as (but not limited to) POW/MIA ceremonies, memorial/veteran/flag day ceremonies, parades, etc.).

■ Selection Criteria: Department and post Americanism programs and events must be documented. Documentation may take the form of photographs, proclamations, letters of endorsement and appreciation, and newspaper clippings. The presentation must be mailed to the National Programs Department received by JULY 1. A panel of judges, independent of the AMVETS organization, makes selections from department and post presentations prior to the national convention.

The Robert Gomulinski Community Service Post Award

Awarded to: Best Post

Award: \$1,000 Cash Award

National Awards Program Trophy

All participants will receive a Certificate of Participation for entry

National Awards Program Plaque

■ Background: Community service is the most important single activity of an AMVETS post. This award, named in honor of PNC Robert B. Gomulinski of Michigan, recognizes the post with the most outstanding community service program in the nation.

■ Qualifying Criteria: Activities that are related to community service such as (but not limited to) fund raisers to assist needy families, scholarship programs, blood drives, organ donor awareness programs, working with the elderly and youth, white clover, scouting, etc.

■ Selection Criteria: Post community service programs and events must be documented. Documentation may take the form of photographs, proclamations, letters of endorsement and appreciation, and newspaper clippings. The presentation must be mailed to the National Programs Department received by JULY 1. A panel of judges, independent of the AMVETS organization, makes selections from the post presentations prior to the national convention.

The Paul Welsh Community Service Department Award

Awarded to: Best Department

\$1,500 Cash Award

Award: National Awards Program Plaque

All participants will receive a Certificate of Participation for entry

■ Background: This award was named in honor of PNC Paul C. Welsh of Ohio. Commitment to community service is realized through programs and projects that confront community issues and help satisfy community needs.

■ Qualifying Criteria: Activities which are related to community service such as (but not limited to) fund raisers to assist needy families, scholarship programs, blood drives, organ donor awareness programs, working with the elderly and youth, White Clover, scouting, etc.

■ Selection Criteria: Department community service programs and events must be documented. Documentation may take the form of photographs, proclamations, letters of endorsement and appreciation, and newspaper clippings. The presentation must be mailed to the National Programs Department received by JULY 1. A panel of judges, independent of the AMVETS organization, makes selections from the department presentations prior to the national convention.

AMVETS Department ROTC Award

Awarded to: Best Department

\$1,500 Cash Award

Award: National Awards Program Plaque

All participants will receive a Certificate of Participation for entry

- Background: ROTC—the Reserve Officers Training Corps—is the training ground for tomorrow’s military leaders. To show our support for the ROTC program at colleges, universities and high schools, AMVETS presents special AMVETS ROTC medals to selected cadets, those chosen for their scholastic and leadership ability and performance.
- Qualifying Criteria: Activities which are related to ROTC such as (but not limited to) ROTC medal presentations, support for various ROTC functions, etc.
- Selection Criteria: Department ROTC programs and events must be documented. Documentation may take the form of photographs, proclamations, letters of endorsement and appreciation, and newspaper clippings. The presentation must be mailed to the National Programs Department received by JULY 1. A panel of judges, independent of the AMVETS organization, makes selections from the department presentations prior to the national convention.

Special Olympics Award

Awarded to: Best Post and Department
(\$1,000 Post) (\$1,500 Dept.) Cash Award
Award: National Awards Program Plaque

All participants will receive a Certificate of Participation for entry

- Background: Special Olympics is the world’s largest program of sports training and athletic competition for mentally challenged citizens. This award recognizes and commends those posts and departments for their unselfish and outstanding contributions toward helping mentally challenged citizens.
- Qualifying Criteria: Activities which are related to Special Olympics such as (but not limited to) sponsoring events, participating in events, promoting events, etc.
- Selection Criteria: Department and post Special Olympics programs and events must be documented. Documentation may take the form of photographs, proclamations, letters of endorsement and appreciation, and newspaper clippings. The presentation must be mailed to the National Programs Department received by JULY 1. A panel of judges, independent of the AMVETS organization, makes selections from the department presentations prior to the national convention.

The Ted Leszkiewicz AADAA Award

Awarded to: Best Post (Three awarded)
\$500 Cash Award
Award: National Awards Program Plaque

- Background: This award, named in honor of PNC Thaddeus “Ted” Leszkiewicz of Michigan, recognizes the department with the most outstanding AMVETS Against Drug and Alcohol Abuse (AADAA) program in the nation.
- Qualifying Criteria: Activities related to the promotion of anti-drug and alcohol use throughout the community and public schools.
- Selection Criteria: Post and department AADAA programs and events must be documented. Documentation may take the form of photographs, proclamations, letters of endorsement and appreciation, and newspaper clippings. The presentation must be mailed to the National Programs Department received by JULY 1. A panel of judges, independent of the AMVETS organization, makes selections from the department presentations prior to the national convention.

Ceremonial Rifles/Static Displays

www.tacom.army.mil/ceremonial_rifles

General

Public Law Title (10 USC 4683) authorizes the loan of weapons for ceremonial purposes. For AMVETS posts, it is an opportunity to honor our proud military heritage through the use of ceremonial rifles/static displays. The weapons add dignity and class to our honor guard details as they serve in events such funerals or parades. It is important that each post accepts responsibility for the safe use, storage, and serviceability of ceremonial rifles.

Application and Procedure

A written formal request signed by a person authorized to obligate his or her post or Department Commander, or Adjutant, must be submitted to the AMVETS National Headquarters Programs Department. After the post is validated as being in good standing, the request is forwarded to the U.S. Army Tank and Automotive Command (TACOM). No requests will be accepted at TACOM without the written approval of AMVETS National Headquarters.

Upon receipt of an approved request, TACOM will provide the post with loan certificates. They must be completed and returned within one year time prior to actual release of the rifles/static displays. Although there is no charge for the rifles, the loan action must be accomplished at no cost to the government.

Disposition of Donated Rifles

If, for any reason, it becomes necessary for the post or department to dispose of loaned rifles, disposition instructions must be requested from the TACOM Commander.

Storage and Security

Ceremonial rifles must be stored in:

- The arms storage room of a National Guard armory
- The arms storage room of a U.S. Army Reserve Center
- The arms storage room of a police department
- A military installation

A room with barred windows and padlocked doors to provide reasonable break-in protection

Rifle bolts will be removed and stored separately in a locked container in another room with barred windows and padlocked doors. The post commander or adjutant is required to sign a notarized certificate, endorsed by the local police department, assuring proper security.

Ammunition and Clips

Request for blank ammunition and ammunition clips should be submitted to ATTN: SF5JM_CDS 1 Rock Island Arsenal, Rock Island, IL 61299-6000. The quantity of ammunition is limited to two boxes that can be stored safely and securely. Cartridge, caliber .30 is shipped free of charge. POC at Rock Island Arsenal. 309-782-4608

Static Displays

In order to obtain a static display you must go through the same requirements as the ceremonial rifles. Once your post has been validated in good standing, the request is then forwarded to TACOM for processing.

List of Forms

All forms listed here may be downloaded from the Programs Forms Folder on this CD:

AMVETS Programs Planning Sheets
Complete Set of Americanism Contest Forms with Cover Sheet
Americanism Essay Contest Entry Form
Americanism Poster Contest Entry Form
Americanism Flag Drawing Contest Entry Form
The Ted Leszkiewicz AADAA Program Essay and Poster Contest Entry Form
Blood Donor Form
National Award Programs Entry Form & Requirements
"Pledge of Allegiance" Comic Book Order Form
Girl Scout Gold Award Certificate Form
Eagle Scout Certificate Form
Program Planning Work Schedule
Scholarship Application – Freshman - \$4000
Scholarship Application – Jr. ROTC - \$1000
Scholarship Application – Veteran - **\$4000**
Scholarship Application - Veteran - \$3000