



**2024 SPRING NATIONAL EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE (N.E.C.) REPORTS**



2024 Spring National Executive Committee (N.E.C.) Reports

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AGENDA

National Executive Committee Meeting

Saturday, March 9, 2024 | 8:30 a.m.

Call to Meeting Order (8:30 a.m. sharp)	National Commander Bill Clark
Invocation	National Chaplain Mitlon Allen
Honors to the Colors	National Provost Marshall Arthur Majors
Roll Call	National Executive Director Joseph Chenelly
Adoption of Agenda	National Commander Bill Clark
Approval of NEC Minutes	National Commander Bill Clark
Visitors	National Commander Bill Clark
NEC Reports	
District I	Commander Arthur Rodriques
District II	Commander Douglas A. Porter
District III	Commander Laura McFarlain
District IV	Commander Chris Studebaker
District V	Commander Terry Traylor
District VI	Commander Terri Good
Committee Reports	
Finance	National Finance Officer Kelly McFarlain
VAVS	VAVS Chairman PNC J.P. Brown
National Officers Reports	National Commander Bill Clark
1st Vice	First Vice Commander Horace Johnson
2nd Vice	Second Vice Commander Paul Shipley
3rd Vice	Third Vice Commander Sandy Vorhies
Judge Advocate	National Judge Advocate PNC Jim King
National Staff Reports	Executive Director Joseph Chenelly
National Service Foundation	NSF President Harold Chapman
	Executive Director Joseph Chenelly
	NSF Finance Director Agha Husain
Old Business	National Commander Bill Clark
New Business	National Commander Bill Clark
Benediction	National Chaplain Milton Allen
Honors to the Colors	National Provost Marshall Arthur Majors

Bethesda Marriot
Bethesda, Maryland

National Executive Committee Reports



National District I

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Report of Arthur Rodriques, National District I Commander

National District I

Membership

Membership for District I is still coming in slowly.

Programs

District I meetings in New Jersey & Rhode Island in January 24.

Service

Each state in the 1st District makes a report on their services they do in their respective states.

Upcoming Events

I will be attending SEC meetings, also attending testimonial in New York, SOLAR PLUNGE in Natic, MA in February.

Legislative

I will be attending the national meeting in March.

Report of Albert Duff, NEC Department of Connecticut

National District I

Membership

Membership continues to trickle in slowly. I have had a lot of complaints and concerns about the new membership program. I have heard these concerns not only from my posts in Connecticut but also from many other states across the nation.

Programs

There is not much to report in Programs as we have just started a new reporting period. Our Posts were very active in November and December, supporting Veterans Day, Pearl Harbor Day, and Wreaths Across America Ceremonies and Activities. Many of our posts in Connecticut scale back on activities during the winter months. We will continue to submit reports as they come in. One program that continues to go strong is our Operation Gift Cards.

Service

Some of our AMVET Members in CT have continued to support the Military Funeral Honor Program, honoring our fallen Veterans and supporting the families of these fallen heroes.

Upcoming Events

Many of our Posts and members are preparing for Memorial Day activities that will be coming up in May.

Legislative

We continue to get updates both from our State and National Legislative leaders. Our Commander Dana Dillon sits on committees in our State of Connecticut. Commander Dillon, PDC Doug Newell, and I serve on National AMVETS Committees.

Other

AMVETS Department of CT will hold a 1 Day Department Convention on Saturday, June 15, 2024, starting at 9 am. The Convention will be held at the DAV Chapter 6 Hall in Meriden, CT. We will also have members attending the National Convention in Springfield in August. Our last SEC meeting was held on Monday, January 22, 2024. Our next SEC will be on Monday, April 22, 2024, starting at 6 pm. SEC meetings are held at the DAV Hall in Meriden, Connecticut.

Report of James E. Laflin, NEC

Department of Maine

National District I

Membership

The Department of Maine is holding its own in getting renewals and new members. The renewals are coming in slow but steady. All posts are pushing to get all renewals in.

Upcoming Events

The Department of Maine will be having there Department convention on 31 May, 1 & 2 June 2024 at the Merry Manor Inn in South Portland, Maine.

Programs

All Posts are still having a hard time getting into the new program for reporting. We need some new guidance on the program.

Legislative

The Department of Maine is constantly working with the legislature on all bills pertaining to Veterans as well as working with all the other VSO's in the state.

Service

The Department is constantly working with all the other Veterans Group's and also with the State Legislature to make sure that all veterans get what they deserve.

Other

This is my report and I move for its adoption at the proper time.

Report of Caroline J. Kenyon, Alternate NEC Department of Massachusetts

National District I

Membership

We have noticed our membership has been increasing. Members we previously had are coming back. We're also getting new members by way of membership drives though out the state. As I'm sending this, I was told we have almost 7,000 members.

Upcoming Events

On May 31st though June 2nd, will be our State Convention. The location for this year is Post 12, Chicopee, MA. The address is 754 Montgomery St in Chicopee. On Friday, May 31st, will be a get together doing karaoke. Saturday, June 1st, is the start of the convention. That evening we'll have our State Commander's dinner. Tickets are currently on sale. The price is \$35 prior to the March SEC, which is on March 17th. After that the price goes up to \$40. On Sunday, June 2nd, we'll concluded our convention with a State Installation for our newly elected State Officers for year 2024 - 2025. There are hotels in the area that are reasonable in price. We hope you can attend our state convention.

Programs

Our Department and Posts are very active with our programs. EX: Americanism, Eagle Scouts and in the upcoming months for schools that do ROTC. The recipient of the school will receive a certificate and a ribbon from the department. On February 10th, we'll be doing our Annual Polar Bear Passion Plunge for Special Olympics. As I send this report, we didn't have a grand total. This year, our goal was set for \$50,000. I will update the total on the floor.

Legislative

We're continuing to watch for any new bills coming up in the Commonwealth that are pertaining to our veterans.

Service

On Saturday, January 27th, myself, State Commander Eaton and several members of our department attended the wake and funeral for Holyoke resident PHM2 Merlin Hillman who was KIA on the Battleship USS California in the Pearl Harbor Attack on December 7,

1941. His remains were identified in 2023. The funeral home was Barry J Farrell in Holyoke, MA.

Other

Our Honor Guard is still participating in parades and posting colors at sports events. The last time they posted colors was at a Boston Celtic game on November 13th, 2023. The Honor Guard also participated in a church ceremony in Framingham, MA. It was a ceremony to remember the 70th Anniversary of the Korean War.

Report of W. Donald Brown, NEC Department of New Jersey

National District I

Membership

NEW JERSEY AND OTHER STATES ARE STRUGGLING TO RECRUIT AND MAINTAIN MEMBERSHIPS. NATIONAL and Districts NEEDS TO HELP US IN RECRUITMENT, i.e. OFFER MORE DISCOUNTS FROM COMPANIES, LOW INTEREST CREDIT CARDS TO MEMBERS, FREE ACCIDENTAL INSURANCE FOR JOINING AMVETS, AND OTHER INCENTIVE PROGRAMS.

NOTE: I DONATED A NEW LAPTOP COMPUTER TO WARREN COX, THE NATIONAL MEMBERSHIP DIRECTOR, TO BE GIVEN TO THE "NATIONAL RECRUITER OF THE QUARTER." HE WILL BE SENDING OUT AN E-MAIL ON THIS MEMBERSHIP INCENTIVE PROGRAM THIS MONTH.

THE NEW NATIONAL MEMBERSHIP SOFTWARE WILL TAKE TIME AND INPUT FROM STATES AND POSTS TO DESIGN THIS SOFTWARE USER FRIENDLY

Legislature

Gridlock in New Jersey AND Washington, not many veterans bills into law at this time.

Services

SP Veterans Day & Pearl Harbor Services were held and well attended.

Upcoming Services

SP Veterans Advisory Board will meet to set the schedule for 2024 services/events.

Programs

- Peer to Peer Monthly Coffee & Conversation held at Dept. HQ
- An invitation will be going out to local schools to participate in 2024 programs
- A visit scheduled with Dept. nominated student that attended Freedoms Foundation
- Notice of Dept. Annual Scholarship to be advertised

Other

Dept Programs is working on implementing new ideas including Patriotism and project(s) for our local scouts.

Report of Richard DeJesu, NEC Department of New York

National District I

Membership

After speaking with our Dept. of NY First Vice Commander and membership chairman, I have learned that we cannot give a definitive answer concerning up-to-date membership numbers for our Dept. at this time because of the inflated numbers on the national membership roster and the difficulty of navigating the system. We hope that this situation can and will be remedied in a timely fashion. At the last count the Dept. of NY had 5,780 members, with 1136 of that number being Members-at-Large.

Programs

As of this report, the Dept. of NY has 28 posts reporting out of a possible 63, with a total dollar amount of \$1,194,385. Our Second Vice Commander is working on ways to encourage more posts to report on the programs that their posts are involved in.

Service

Many Posts in our Dept. have been conducting events and programs that enhance the lives of our veterans and the communities in which they live and to promote AMVETS and their posts in a positive light in hopes of attracting new members.

Other

We are constantly searching for ways to increase membership and programs planning.

Report of Ronald H. Bennett, NEC Department of Rhode Island

National District I

Membership

Membership is coming slowly but surely.

Programs

We are working with helping autism projects. We also are working on a disabled veterans fishing program.

Service

On Saturday we will be attending funeral service 1/26/24 of a World War II veteran

Upcoming Events

An AMVETS Post in R.I. will be hosting a veteran dinner for Bristol home veterans.

Legislative

We have been going to state and local U.V.C meetings.

Other

Make this website easier to use.

National Executive Committee Reports



National District II

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Delaware and West Virginia reports not received by deadline

Report of Douglas A. Porter, National District II Commander

National District II

Membership

District II total posts: 103
Total membership: 12,912
Total new members: 296

Upcoming Events

NEC Meeting March 6 - March 9 District II meeting
April 12 and 13

Programs

District II cost of hours: \$1,169,497.85
Donations: \$194,594.06
Mileage: \$45,701.46
Activity: \$133,594.40
Total for District II: \$1,543,387.77

Legislative

Meeting with congress on the hill in March.

Service

Departments are planning Memorial Day services.

Other

Went to PNC Ken Welford's funeral attended the
Celebration of Life for District II Adjutant Tony Raines.
Please keep both families in your prayers.

Report of Aaron J. Smith, NEC Department of District of Columbia

National District II

Membership

Our membership has exceeded our expectations so far this year. As reported at the last meeting which was a banner year in recruiting with over 50% new and younger members. Thanks to the efforts of our Commander and 1st Vice Commander. This report period we regret to report that we lost one of our pillars from this Department, and District II Adjutant, William (Tony) Raines.

Upcoming Events

On March 23, 2024, this Department will hold its department meeting, at Fort Myers Officers Club, Ft Myer, Virginia. The first week in April we will be donating and supporting the DCVAMC annual, "Because We Care Day." We will have DC Department Convention on June 22, 2024, at Fort Myer's, Officer Club, Fort Myer's, Virginia.

Programs

I am pleased to report that the Programs Reporting for the Department of the District of Columbus for Period 1 January, 1 March 2024 is 100%.

Service

Veterans Affairs Voluntary Service (VAVS), AMVETS, Department of DC, Inc., donated comfort kits and supplies for a Baby Shower hosted by the Women's Center at the VA Medical Center for veterans and their family members. Johnnie Collins Jr. Post 008 continues donating to the DC Medical Centers, Community Living Center (CLC) monthly bingo. Ms. Angela McKnight, VAVS Representative for Amvets Department of the DC, Inc., volunteers weekly and attends quarterly virtual or in person meetings that are held by the Center for Development and Civic Engagement and the VAVS Executive Committee. The last meeting was on 6 February 2024.

Other

Commander this concludes my report and I move for its adoption at the proper time.

Report of Andre R. Martel, NEC Department of Maryland

National District II

Membership

Membership continues to be a challenge, increasingly so with the new online membership system. While we are making progress in both areas, it will be difficult to reach the 100% mark by the end of the year. But we continue to work at it.

Upcoming Events

The Department of Maryland continues to hold Executive Committee meetings throughout the year, the next scheduled for April at Post 7 in Thurmont and the Department Convention is scheduled for June 7-8, 2024 in Frederick, MD. The PNC Anderson Freestate Award of Excellence is scheduled to be presented on April 13th and the Department-hosted family picnic will be held on May 19th, also in Frederick.

Programs

We were pleased to see that District II achieved 100% reporting and proud that the Department of Maryland was able to participate in that achievement. With VA Hospitals and centers opening and the opportunities increasing, we anticipate that the Department will be able to maintain that record throughout the coming year.

Legislative

Our new Governor, Wes Moore, a veteran himself, has planned an aggressive platform this year for veterans and family benefits. The Department will support those actions in person and through the Joint Veterans Committee of Maryland.

Service

As mentioned above, VA centers and hospitals continue to open to volunteer activities and Maryland is taking advantage. More activities have taken place at VA Hospitals in Baltimore and Martinsburg and at several other centers including the Charlotte Hall Veterans Home and at other nursing homes across the State. Through the efforts of our VAVS Coordinator, PDC Mike Mahoney, Reps and Deps have received their credentials and activities are mounting. Service is looking up across the State.

Other

The Department of Maryland was saddened by the passing of former Secretary of Veterans Affairs, Mr. George W. Owings, III. Mr. Owings dedicated nearly 30 years to veterans causes throughout the State and we owe much of our successes to his personal efforts. He will truly be missed.

Report of David Wilburn, NEC Department of North Carolina

National District II

Membership

We are always looking for new ways to improve our membership. We are holding our own at the time. We have around 2,300 members. We are trying different membership drives. Several post are growing each year. Some of the older post are just maintaining. Hopefully this spring we can get some events up and running for new members. Retaining new members is the hardest part of membership. We are still working on a new post in the near future.

Upcoming Events

Department of North Carolina is having a DEC February 16-18, 2024. In Hickory, North Carolina.

Programs

Our Department is committed to each and every one of our programs. From JROTC, Boy Scouts, Americanism, Poster and Essays Contest. Twice a year Department of North Carolina places flags on graves of veterans. We have AMVET Riders that plan events for the post. The riders put on Poker Runs for fundraising events. The Department of North Carolina is busy working on projects and programs.

Legislative

Our department will have some people available to attend the legislative week in Washington DC 2024. Hopefully we will be able to get a few new members to join us. I have not received any information about legislation

Service

Our Department has post with AMVET Honor Guards. They serve the veterans of our department. They are always looking for new recruits. I have not heard of any or much activity from the VA hospitals. We have reps for each region of North Carolina.

Other

Our State Convention will be sometime around the first of June 2024. July 19,20 2024 in Greensboro, NC. at the Sheraton Four Seasons will be National Commander Bill Clark's Testimonial.

Report of Robert Bankhead, NEC Department of Pennsylvania

National District II

Membership

I think as everyone is aware there are some growing pains that come along with the implementation of any new program and our membership and program reporting program is no exception. Having said that our 1st vices throughout the Department continue to work with the Membership Department to gain knowledge on this program. With the leadership of Director Cox this will become a valuable tool to assist Departments and Posts in the future. We continue to explore ways to increase membership.

Upcoming Events

Spring SEC is March 10th 2024 at the Sheraton Harrisburg Hershey Hotel The Department Convention will be held in June (13-16) 2024 in Morgantown PA.

Programs

SEE ABOVE. We have everyone with the supervision of the Department 2nd Vice working to ensure we are administering the programs such as ROTC/JROTC, Scholarships (to name a few) and reporting these programs.

Legislative

The legislative director for the department continues to actively monitor and address any introduced bills that could affect Veterans or their families within the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania .

Service

We have added two Service Officers to our staff to assist Veterans with their claims.

Report of Kyle Blake, NEC Department of Virginia

National District II

Membership

Our Department 1st Vice is continuing to work with the MAL's list to move membership to local post.

Springly Database. AMVETS National Membership has launched its new database. There are many options available with this database. The database is not intuitive and those authorized access will need to complete online training and refer to the training manual.

Our Dept. 1st vice is still working on opening a new post in Moneta, Virginia.

Programs

Jones Cabacoy Veterans Care Center Ribbon Cutting in Virginia Beach. The Care Center was opened by Governor Youngkin. Dept. Commander presented a Department coin to the Governor. Posts 14 and 69 were represented at this event.

Our VAVS rep's continue to keep in touch with our hospitalized and ailing Veterans across the State at multiple VA centers around Virginia.

The Commonwealth of Virginia is currently in the process of opening another new Veterans Care Centers. There are roughly 250 beds, for long term care. Date not set yet for the opening of the new Veterans Care Center in Northern Virginia.

Service

The Department of Virginia Service Foundation Is still instrumental in supporting the Department of Virginia and other charities with funds to make our future events successful.

Legislative

9 October: Dept. Commander participated in a Veterans Roundtable hosted by Elks Lodge 867, Winchester, VA. Delegate Bill Wiley was in attendance. Local VSOs were represented. Hosted by Jay Marts, Veterans Committee, Elks Lodge 867.

Our Department continue's to support Virginia and Congress bills to assist Veterans. We are a member

of the State JLC Commonwealth of Virginia Veterans Board.

Upcoming Events

NEC meeting in Maryland on March 9th

District 2 meeting April 12th

DEC meeting in June

Other

Our VA Posts statewide continue to grow in membership and are active monthly in their communities. Veterans Serving Veterans. Statewide we have growth in our Red Fridays. Memberships are also growing in our Ladies, Sons and Riders. Continue to work on MALS and looking forward to opening a new post in the state of Virginia, at the request of local Veterans.

National Executive Committee Reports



National District III

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Report of Laura McFarlain, National District III Commander

National District III

Membership

The 3rd District has a total of 28,031 members with the Department of Florida leading the way with 13,957. This is an increase in membership for our District of 1,035 members since my last report in November 2023. The Departments are continuously working on increasing membership by utilizing excellent recruiting programs. Our District invited AMVETS Membership Director, Mr. Warren Cox, to our District Executive meeting for a membership roundtable and one-on-one training to assist our Departments get a better understanding of the new program. Working with the broadcasting company, “Keeping it Country Live”, to work on getting the organization name public, in hopes to increase membership.

Upcoming Events

The National 3rd District Executive meeting was held Saturday, February 3, 2024 @ 1000 hrs. Our next District Executive meeting will be held at the 2024 AMVETS National convention.

Programs

The District is working hard to update Programs in the new program system.

Legislative

I am looking forward to representing our District during Legislative Advocacy Week this year, to present our legislative priorities and advocate for veterans, and to witness the National Commanders testimony with Congressional staff.

Service

Each Department has been conducting various services to assist/support veterans and their communities, and has represented our District very well.

Report of Charles Doubek, NEC Department of Alabama

National District III

Membership

The Department has 790 active members, the majority of which are on the MAL list. Two posts have 100% retention. Life membership has increased for all Posts throughout the state. We encourage all members to always carry an AMVETS application with them.

Upcoming Events

February 17, 2023, SEC meeting to be held virtually via Google Meets, March 26, Post 1955 Anniversary Celebration, Decatur, AL, Post 21 Annual Horse, Pony and Mule Fun Day, Answered Prayers Farm, Taft, TN, June 15, 2024, Annual State Convention, Clanton, AL

Programs

From July 1 to December 31, 2023, the Posts in the Department generated a dollar value of \$99,156.36. This number would have been higher if all the members reported their volunteer hours.

Legislative

The Department Third Vice Commander updates the membership on legislative actions during our SEC meeting and State Conventions. The Alabama Department of Veterans Affairs is asking the Alabama legislature to set aside 25% of the opioid settlement for veterans. Also, the ADVA has set aside up to three million dollars to research, renovate and possibly relocate the Alabama War Memorial.

Service

Posts throughout Alabama have been assisting in their communities. Post 21 was instrumental in setting up a Veterans Treatment Court in Limestone County which held its first session in November. Post 7 regularly conducts buddy checks and Post 1955 conducts "Visit a Vet" programs at community and State veterans nursing homes. These are just a few examples of the many activities that posts do to honor and serve veterans.

Report of Joseph T. Piening, NEC Department of Florida

National District III

The Department of Florida under the Leadership and guidance Commander Doug Fergeson are working diligently to fill the Aims and Purposes of AMVETS. We are honored to have our National Commander Bill Clark visiting us at our February S.E.C. We are proud to show him the work being done here in Florida.

Membership

To date our Membership stands at 15,350. I do not know if we can achieve our total membership of last year of 19,00. I find it hard to get new members and renewals for a VSO when there is little, or no service being made available.

Programs

I am happy to report we have 90% of our Posts reporting. To date we have total hours of cash equivalent of \$4,428,109.04.

Service Foundation

Our Service Foundation is in the process of replenishing our Disaster Relief Fund. If you or your department and or Foundation can help us, I thank you in advance. Please, send any checks to; PDC Terry Corson at; 401 Pelican Lane, North Port, Florida 34826.

In closing, I invite all to join with the Department of Florida in electing Horace Johnson as the next National Commander in Springfield, Illinois.

Our Department Convention will be held June 6th through the 9th, 2024 at the Rosen Centre, 9840 International Dr., Orlando, Florida 32819. Telephone number; (407) 996 – 9840

Report of Wanda Allen, NEC Department of Georgia

National District III

Membership

The Department of GA currently has 12 active Posts and 1 Post under Trusteeship. We have 1,784 members of which 1,634 are life members and 150 are annual members. Many Posts are experiencing difficulties renewing members and recruiting new members presently. Department 1st Vice Cmdr Wiggs conducted 1st Vice Cmdr training during the Winter SEC.

Programs

Department 2nd Vice Cmdr Dunn reports that Posts continue to submit their Programs through the online reporting system, and believes that 10 out of 12 active Posts have reported their volunteer efforts.

Service

Nothing to report

Upcoming Events

Department Spring SEC April 13-14, 2024
State Convention May 31-June 2, 2024

Both events will be held at the Hilton Garden Inn, Warner Robins, GA

Legislative

Nothing to report

Other

The National Guardsmen killed in action in the recent drone attack in Jordan were all from Georgia. SSGT William Rivers (Carrollton) returned home to his family February 11, 2024. National Chaplain Milton Allen NEC Wanda Allen joined the VFW and Patriot Guard to pay respect and honor SSGT Williams. Post 99 (Carrollton) will join the city of Carrollton, Tuesday February 13 to memorialize SSGT Williams. The family has asked the public to respect their request for a private interment at the Georgia National Cemetery. SGT Kennedy Sanders will return home Wednesday February 14. Post 621 (Waycross) was personally touched by the loss as SGT Sanders' father is a member of Post 621. SGT Sanders will be memorialized and laid to rest on February 17, 2024. Post 621 Cmdr Guylee Washington reported that Post members will serve as honorary pallbearers for the

funeral. SGT Breonna Moffet's (Savannah) family has asked for privacy as they mourn their loss. No memorial or funeral arrangements have been announced as of the submission of this report.

Post 10 Commander Jeremiah Botkin successfully formed a Juniors Chapter within their Post.

PDC Fred Bates has announced his intentions to run for National 3rd Vice Commander.

Report of Gary L. Stuart, NEC

Department of Louisiana

National District III

Membership

As of Nov. 30 2024 the Department of Louisiana has 6 Post with a membership of 888 life members and 134 annual members for a total of 1022 total members. This is up by 1.77%

Upcoming Events

Our next SEC will be June 7 - 8 at Post 68 in Springfield La. Hotel will be determined at a latter date.

Programs

The Department is at 50% reporting. The three reporting post reported 1037 volunteers donated 249 hours for a total value of \$180,857.19. This includes a wide range of community and veteran support in their areas. To list a few Scouting, Red Shirt Friday, Pearl Harbor Day Activity, and monetary donations to various Veteran and Community nonprofit organizations.

Service

The different Post are assisting veterans in their communities with their needs. Cooking and bingo at the veterans homes just to name a few.

Report of Janice Shelton, Alternate NEC Department of South Carolina

National District III

Membership

There is one MAL (Members At Large) (Post 0) and five Posts (2,33,70,111,and 177) in the State of SC. The Dept of SC reports 434 Annual and 995 Life Members, for a total of 1,429 Members. The Dept had an increase of nine Annual and an increase of 41 Life Members since the summer Dept meeting. The Dept has 377 Open Invoices, making the active total membership 1,052.

Upcoming Events

Fundraisers to go towards Veterans Victory House, OPFOB, and homeless Veterans Tent City

Programs

Noted categories reported are Community Service, Support for NG Troops (Red Shirt Friday), Military Funeral/Interment Honors, Flag Day Celebration, SAVE/Suicide Awareness, Sick & Hospitalized Veteran Visitation, JROTC/ROTC Awards, Peer to Peer Support, Membership/Recruiting, Memorial Day Celebration, Veterans Day, Americanism, Scouting, Honor Flight Network, Saluting Branches at Beaufort National Cemetery, OPFOB 22 days of fire for Veteran Suicide Awareness, and Fund Raising for other Veteran Causes.

Legislative

S-533 SC Justice Act

Service

JROTC/ROTC medals and certificates for the 2023-2024 school year. Three schools requested medals and certificates, one college and two high schools. Six medals and certificates were awarded.

Other

The Dept of SC reports 1,949 volunteers across the state who gave 14,513 hours of volunteer service

Report of Lee Ann Adams, NEC Department of Tennessee

National District III

Membership

As of 1 Jan 2024, the new Springly Database notes the Department of TN membership to be 2106; including 1926 Life Members and 180 Annual Members. 163 have renewed and we have 17 new members. Nationally, Tennessee ranks 17th in membership and 2nd in District III. As a department, our 17 Posts are struggling with the new Membership management system. It seems “Springly” is not fully functional and is not user friendly. Many posts have found that when the prescribed filters are used, there are inconsistencies in the results. When downloading the “current membership filter and lifetime memberships” into the Excel spreadsheets, many lifetime members have the ‘date they converted’ as their ‘expiration date’, instead of the 1/1/38 date it should be. About 10 % of the membership with ‘expired dates’ of 8/31/23 actually have up to date annual membership that expire 8/31/24 when a comparison data search, back to “Springly” are done. The Executive Director and 1st Vice Commander have started screening each post for accurate records.

Programs

TN participation in National Programs continue to be active.

- Americanism Contest entrants have noted the topic “Why is it important to Vote” as very fitting, with the presidential election coming up in November.
- Our TN attendee to the National Youth Conference in Valley Forge, provided a very favorable report on her experience.
- TN is preparing for the JROTC Award Banquets coming up in the Spring.
- The Scouting Tool Kit and BSA Adult Leadership Awards, on the National Website, has been noted to be ‘offline’. TN hopes for a rapid fix on this issue to present these awards to our future leaders. The new National Program “Airtable” has provided a valuable snapshot of activity for most of our posts. Several posts continue with problems in using the system including gaining access from a phone when a computer is not available and lack of internet access. Forwarding ‘paper reports,’

to the Department 2nd Vice, for input into the National System, has been our solution. TN has 94% Post Reporting. The TN Reported Program Hours Value is \$1,290,143.49, including hours, cash donations and mileage.

Service

TN posts continue to be a source of assistance to our veterans in need. Additional, recent activities include participation in:

- Food basket distribution at both Thanksgiving and Christmas.
- Christmas gifts and personal care items taken to the residents of The TN State Veteran Homes. With intermittent/limited access to our Veteran Homes, Tn VAVS have been very active in communication and assistance to these facilities.
- Wreaths Across America, to honor those who have gone before us, at the National, local community in the Great Smoky Mountain, trail-only accessed cemeteries.
- Quilts of Valor Programs, honoring the service of our veterans who have been ‘Touched by War’.

Upcoming Events

- March 15, 2024 Post 90, Decatur, TN 50th Anniversary Celebration.
- March 16, 2024, S.E.C. Meeting, Post 90, Decatur TN.
- June 6-9, 2024, Department of TN Convention, Gatlinburg, TN.
- September 7, 2024, Annual Golf Tournament, Ridgewood Golf Club, Athens, TN.

Legislative

TN legislation continues to be active in support of our veterans and veteran services. Current topics in include and are related to:

- SB1046 - Honor Guard Program funding grant.
- SB1576 - Financial assistance for dependents of 100% disabled TN veterans.
- SB1647- Discount in tuition for children of the TN Army and TN ANG.
- HB1665/SB1716 - hunting permits and waterfowl seasons.

Report of Lee Ann Adams, NEC Department of Tennessee

National District III

- HB1609 - Restricted release of the TN-NG members into federal active-duty service.
- SB1725 - Expanding property tax relief for permanent and total disabled veterans.
- HB1604 - Fees and tuition for dependent children of 100% disabled veterans.
- HB1651 - Nonprofit organizations operating charitable gaming events.
- HJR0733 - Designation of a “Gold Star Children’s Day.”
- HB1715 - 100% disabled veterans property taxes.

National Executive Committee Reports



National District IV

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Report of Chris Studebaker, National District IV Commander

National District IV

National Commander Clark, National Officers Members of National Executive Committee, and fellow AMVETS:

Membership

The departments in the district are working hard to get their annual members renewed now that we all have received our membership cards All of the departments are getting use to using the new membership database now that it has been up and running for a few months. It's just like anything that is new it will have some bugs that will need to be worked out.

Programs

The Fourth National District worked very hard getting programs submitted for the 6 month reporting period that ended December 31. All of the states in the district reported programs except Minnesota.. I want to thank all of the states for your hard work in getting these programs reported. Lets keep up the good work.

I had a meeting with Carol Hebert and Olivier Godet about the programs questions and concerns from our last meeting. Here are the answers and changes that have happened because of that meeting. They put zero's in a lot of the categories that have to be filled out as the default so that way if they are not needed you can just leave it that way. We discussed the programs list and Olivier suggested to only use the sub category drop down box and not the main category box if you want. The main category box is not needed to do program reporting just the sub. As far as getting program totals for your post without doing the math you will still need to talk to your department second vice commanders. They will be able to get the information to you or the programs department at National. Same with seeing who has reported programs it will still be the second vice commanders. that can see that.

Service

With very few national service officers the departments in the 4th district are reporting that their service officers claims have increased drastically since one the Pact Act being signed into law and also veterans that were using

a national service officer are going to them for help now. All of our service officers in the district are doing a great job helping our veterans get the services they deserve.

Other

I have been trying to get a hold of the department leadership in Minnesota with no success. I have called and emailed the department leadership with no return communication. I have also called the number listed on their department website and got the answering machine. I left a message and also no response. I will continue to try to make contact with them if any one has any info on them please pass it along so we can get them back active in the district.

Respectfully submitted,

Chris Studebaker
National District IV Commander

Report of Richard Shea Jr., NEC Department of Illinois

National District IV

National Commander Clark, National Officers, Members of the National Executive Committee and fellow AMVETS:

Membership

AMVETS Department of Illinois membership was 9278 members in 2022-2023, Currently the department has 8812 members. Some of our posts have been having issues with the new program for membership and we are working with them to resolve any continuing issues. We offer a wide variety of membership tools to gain attention and set us apart from other department VSO's. We offer online capabilities to join and we are constantly trying to improve our coverage and remain at the fore front of Illinois Veterans' Organizations.

Programs

We at Illinois AMVETS are proud to report that we again achieved 100% in program reporting for this last year. This has been an ongoing tradition for us for numerous years, but like the membership program are members are having a bit of a learning curve with the new program. We are diligently helping as much as we can to showcase what our members do for their veterans and communities.

Two of our top programs that we take great pride in is our "Operation Red Sleigh" where with donations from individuals, posts and the IL Service Foundation. We were able to help numerous veterans and active duty members and their families with gifts and a Christmas dinner. It has been a great program for us every year and it just keeps growing. Second is our ROTC & JROTC program that has been a very active program for many decades, we give out annually around 400 medals to high school and college students throughout our state and overseas, this program is funded by the IL Service Foundation and personal donations.

We sent one student to Freedoms foundation this year and we working on ways to try and send additional students in the future, the responses we receive from students that have attended are always amazing to hear.

Service

AMVETS Department of Illinois currently has 6 Department VSO's located throughout the State. All VSO's are working thoroughly and effectively to assist Veteran and their families by filing over 500 claims bringing in millions of dollars worth of benefits to the Veterans in the State of Illinois just in this recent calendar year (2023). Our service officer program is in the top of the Nation in claims submitted and we continue to be a leader in the industry. We couldn't be more proud of what our service officer's do.

Legislation

The new 103rd Illinois General Assembly is getting ready to start it's spring session, IL AMVETS is currently working with other VSO's on a combined Veteran Lobby Day at our State Capital in Springfield IL. If you have any questions referring to any veteran related Illinois legislation please call or email our legislative Director

Keith Wetherell at (800) 638-8387 or keith@ilamvets.org

Communications

We have a full time communications Director at Illinois AMVETS State Headquarters, Ashley Murphy oversees all IL AMVETS PR, social media and communications. If you want something shared, disseminated or to be noticed in Illinois call or email

Ashley Murphy at (217) 528-4713 or ashley@ilamvets.org

Upcoming Events

The Department of Illinois held its SEC in February via zoom, we seem to get a better turnout for this than an in-person meeting with our weather being so unpredictable at that time of year, plus it saves our department some money that we can use elsewhere. Our Department convention will be held in Springfield IL at the Abraham Lincoln Hotel on 21-23 June 2024.

We are pleased to announce that Illinois is hosting the AMVETS National Convention this year in Springfield Illinois the first full week in August, also our State fair

**Report of Richard Shea Jr., NEC
Department of Illinois (*continued*)**

National District IV

in Springfield IL starts on the 8th of Aug and runs till the 18th of Aug., if you have some time check out the festivities.

We look forward to seeing all of our AMVETS family in Illinois.

Any questions please contact our State Headquarters at (217)528-4713.

Respectfully submitted,

Richard Shea Jr
NEC Illinois

Report of Richard D. Caldwell, NEC Department of Indiana

National District IV

Membership

We are active in our communities with stand downs, military events, parades, and veteran recognition awards. Our department is still in the top 10% of recruiting and renewals across the nation. Our posts continue to share our mission with handouts and Q & A sessions.

study for Christy Sutton, a Ph.D. student at Walden University.

Upcoming Events

Our department has designated Feb. 10, 2024 as our much-needed training on the new Springley membership data base along with the ins & outs on rosters along with renewals. Our SEC will be March 22 - 24, 2024 in Indianapolis.

Programs

Our department has conducted numerous training sessions on the value of reporting our many programs in each community. We achieved 100% reporting this past year with the help of our department 2nd Vice input training at our posts.

Legislative

On Jan. 16, 2024 was our Veterans Legislative Day at our Statehouse where we met our local representatives to obtain more benefits for our veterans. We had great participation from larger posts. The legislatures on working a new bill called "Green Alert" to help communicate missing veterans across the state similar to Amber or Silver alerts.

Service

Our department has hired a new VSO in Crown point up north in Indiana. We now have six VSOs across our state to include one at IU University area in Bloomington, IN. Our IN Service Foundation has been successful in our obtaining grant money to assist with maintaining offices for all our VSOs.

Other

We are participating in an interview study of National Guard spouses or intimate partners with a mental health diagnosis. This study could help care providers like doctors and counselors better understand and help their patients. The interview is part of the doctoral

Report of Barry Remington, NEC Department of Iowa

National District IV

Membership

Membership is steady. Several of our posts have received the new cards but did not receive enough of them for their membership. Also, some posts have received new cards and there were mistakes on them and had to be replaced.

Upcoming Events

WE just had our SEC on the 27-28 of January. Our next SEC will be 12-13 April. We are preparing for our Memorial Day activities!

Programs

Programs continue to have problems getting the smaller posts to report their activities and programs. This has been an ongoing problem and phone calls have been made and either no activities or no replies. Also, some of the posts have reported that they cannot get connected to the programs reporting system, and the majority of those are the 2nd vice commanders of those posts. Also, the department 2nd Vice has had problems getting connected to the program reporting system.

Legislative

The legislature has reconvened in the past two weeks. There are a few bills dealing with veterans issues that have not been brought out of committee yet.

Service

Post49 continues to partner with the University of Northern Iowa ROTC cadet program. They are in the process of receiving new cadre for the program.

Other

Our Department Convention will be held In Des Moines in June.

Report of Alan R. Smith, NEC Department of Kentucky

National District IV

National Commander Clark, National Officers, Members of the National Executive Committee and fellow AMVETS:

The AMVETS Department of Kentucky SEC meeting was held on January 13, 2024 at AMVETS Post # 125 Somerset, KY. With 41 members present,. All reports were given and adopted. Minuets of the last SEC, and Agenda were adopted as printed in the News Paper. No bills or correspondence.

1st vice gave report, and discussed ongoing problems with the National Computer system. Report adopted
2nd vice gave report, and discussed ongoing problems with national computer, and if you can't get your reports submitted to national at the local level to send them to him and he will enter them. Report adopted.

ED gave report, problems with the membership computer; we have sold the state HQ building and are awaiting permits to get the new state HQ building built behind AMVETS Post 61. Report adopted.

Finance officer gave report, report adopted.

IG gave report; all has been quiet with no problems to report, report adopted.

JA, PNC Greg Heun gave report and spoke about proper filing of disciplinary problems and making sure you go by appendix B of the National Constitution and By-Laws, and that the National HQ building will be sold and will move to a new location as soon as one is located. Report adopted.

NEC report was given and adopted. Suicide prevention chairman gave report suicide rates are up from last year, Report adopted.

The hat was passed and \$227.00 was collected for the ladies auxiliary scholarship program.

The Department Commander appointed PNC Greg Heun as Department JA, and Albert Roberts as Son's coordinator, both appointments were ratified by the SEC floor.

Service foundation gave report, report adopted.

Convention corp, gave report, \$19,691.81 in convention corp account. The 2024 State convention will be June 13-15, 2024, at the Holiday Erlanger, KY (859) 371-2233. AMVETS rate \$112.00 + 12.36% tax. May 23,2004 is the last day for registration package at \$75.00. If registration package received after May 23, 2024 price is \$100.00. Deadline for convention book articles, ads and honor rolls is May 13, 2024.

Post commanders gave post reports. All reports adopted.

Old Business: None

New Business: the next KY SEC will be at AMVETS post 67 Clay City, KY on April 13, 2024 at 12 noon.

Good and Welfare, various announcements for department offices at the 2024 State Convention.

Commander Clark this concludes my report and I move for its adoption.

Alan R. Smith
NEC KY

Report of Bob Green, NEC Department of Michigan

National District IV

Our program and membership numbers continue to be about the same as last reported. Programs are working better for some locals, but others continue to struggle. Our SEC will be held on February 24th at our Higgins Lake Lodge headquarters.

Although I am unable to also attend the 4th National District meeting on March 1 & 2, our Department Alternate NEC said he would also attend that meeting on behalf of the Department.

I have nothing additional to report on the Department or District since those meetings have not happened yet.

Report of Robert E. Lee, NEC

Department of Missouri

National District IV

National Commander, National Officers, Members of the National Executive Committee, and Fellow AMVETS:

Membership

1. Department of Missouri currently has 29 active posts with a total of 3086 current members (417 annual and 2669 life members).
2. The Commanders and 1st Vice Commanders of Membership at the Posts are encouraged to work on pursuing annual renewals for the 600 members that expired on 8/31/2023, the 394 members that expired on 8/31/2022, and the 278 members whose membership expired on 8/31/2021. This additional 1272 Veterans would bring membership up to 4358! For a secondary project, these members will be contacted to encourage re-joining the organization.
3. There are locations within the Department that are being evaluated and considered for new posts.

Programs

4. Programs for the reporting period of January 1 - June 30, 2023, included 29 out of 29 posts (100%) reporting programs online in the new database. These reports included 1,096 volunteers who performed 12,658 hours (\$361,259.32) in services that covered 62,954 miles (\$26,440.68). Outgoing donations totaled \$9,523.00 and activity costs totaled \$4008.30. The overall value of reported programs is \$401,231.30.
5. Programs for the reporting period of July 1 - December 31, 2023, included 29 out of 29 posts (100%) reporting programs online in the new database. These reports included 950 volunteers who performed 269,582 hours in services that covered 404,396 miles. The overall value of reported programs is \$8,030,767.88.
6. For the current reporting period (January 1 - June 30, 2024), 5 out of 29 posts (17%) have reported events online to date. These reports included 252 volunteers who performed 4,774 hours in services that covered 10,304 miles. The overall value of reported programs is \$144,762.64.

Service

1. Department of Missouri has 4 Service Officers in the St. Louis area (St. Louis VA Medical Center - Jefferson Barracks, John Cochran VA Medical Center, and O'Fallon City Hall) to assist with Veterans and VA claims. James McKay is at John Cochran VA Medical Center on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. Martin Payne covers Tuesdays and Thursdays at that location. Martin Payne is also at St. Louis VA Medical Center - Jefferson Barracks (JB) on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. Carolyn Truvillion covers Tuesdays and Thursdays at JB. William Sifford works 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. at O'Fallon City Hall on Mondays and Wednesdays.

Two service officers also volunteer at H.E.R.O.E.S. Care in High Ridge, MO. Carolyn Truvillion is there on Wednesdays and William Sifford is there on Thursdays. All 4 service officers recently completed training in Springfield, MO, during the first week of October.

The Department is currently seeking a replacement for the Service Officer lost in the Kansas City area along with filling positions in Columbia, Poplar Bluff, and the Springfield area. The long-term plan is to have a Service Officer in each of the 5 VA Hospitals in Missouri and in the VA Clinics.

2. We have 3 VAVS Reps and 1 Deputy VAVS Rep in 3 of our VA facilities with credentials good through 2024: Klint Oldham at St. Louis VA Medical Center - Jefferson Barracks with Deputy VAVS Rep J Scott Adams, James McKay at John Cochran VA Medical Center in St. Louis, and Carol Thompson at Harry S. Truman Memorial Veterans Hospital in Columbia.
3. The Commander's Project is to fundraise for AMVETS National Convention which is scheduled to take place in St. Charles, MO, in August 2025.
4. Ongoing projects continue to include military funerals, homeless Veterans, suicide prevention and awareness, supporting Veterans Hospitals and homes, and supporting JROTC and ROTC programs.

Upcoming Events

1. Our upcoming SEC meetings will be held at the Inn at Grand Glaize in Osage Beach on the following dates: February 3-4, 2024, April 20-21, 2024, & October 5-6, 2024.
2. Our 79th Annual Dept. Convention will be held on June 1-2, 2024, at the Inn at Grand Glaize.

Legislation

The below House and Senate bills and resolutions of interest to veterans in Missouri reflect those that have been filed for the 2nd Regular Session (January 3 – May 17, 2024) of the 102nd General Assembly. If these are passed, the proposed effective date is 8/28/2024 unless otherwise noted. These bills and resolutions can also be followed on these websites: <https://house.mo.gov> or <http://senate.mo.gov>. **The bills that are marked with asterisks (**)** are the focus of MAVO's (Missouri Association of Veterans' Organizations) legislative agenda for 2024.

1. House Bill (HB) 1419 – Sponsored by Robert Sauls (D – District 021).
Authorizes the “Missouri Disabled Veterans Homestead Exemption.”
Referred to Special Committee on Property Tax Reform on 1/11/2024.
2. House Bill (HB) 1459 – Sponsored by Greg Sharp (R – District 004).
Modifies provisions relating to disabled American veterans special license plates.
Second reading completed 1/4/2024.
3. ******House Bill (HB) 1490 – Sponsored by Dave Griffith (R – District 060).
Creates provisions relating to compensation for assisting with veterans’ benefits.
Second reading completed 1/4/2024.
4. House Bill (HB) 1494 – Sponsored by Dave Griffith (R – District 060).
Establishes the “Uniform Deployed Parents Custody and Visitation Act.”
Second reading completed 1/4/2024.
5. House Bill (HB) 1495 – Sponsored by Dave Griffith (R – District 060).

Tasks the Missouri Veterans Commission (MVC) with expanding its efforts to prevent veteran suicide. Reported do pass 1/24/2024.

6. House Bill (HB) 1496 – Sponsored by Dave Griffith (R – District 060).
Establishes the “Operation Enduring Freedom, Operation Freedom’s Sentinel and Operation Allies Refuge Program” which authorizes the issuance of a medallion, medal, and certificate to certain veterans who served in specific conflicts.
Second reading completed 1/4/2024.
7. House Bill (HB) 1712 – Sponsored by Adam Schnelting (R – District 069).
Allows Missouri National Guard member educational assistance grants to be available for tuition at out-of-state educational institutions.
Second reading completed 1/4/2024.
8. House Bill (HB) 1713 – Sponsored by Adam Schnelting (R – District 069).
Modifies provisions relating to income tax deductions for enlistment bonuses paid to members of the armed forces.
Second reading completed 1/4/2024.
9. House Bill (HB) 1832 – Sponsored by Aaron McMullen (R – District 020).
Clarifies that military personnel are eligible for in-state tuition for undergraduate and graduate degree programs.
Second reading completed 1/4/2024.
10. House Bill (HB) 1908 – Sponsored by Bruce Sassman (R – District 061).
Designates the “POW/MIA SSG Paul Hasenbeck Memorial Highway” in Osage County.
Public hearing completed 1/24/2024.
11. House Bill (HB) 1988 – Sponsored by Phil Amato (R – District 113).
Modifies provisions relating to the military honor detail program.
Second reading completed 1/4/2024.
12. House Bill (HB) 2091 – Sponsored by Michael O’Donnell (R – District 095).
Establishes a special license plate for veterans of military operations in both Afghanistan and Iraq.
Second reading completed 1/4/2024.

Report of Robert E. Lee, NEC

Department of Missouri (*continued*)

National District IV

13. House Bill (HB) 2100 – Sponsored by Dave Griffith (R – District 060).
Requires the Department of Transportation to install signs to honor recipients of the Congressional Medal of Honor.
Public hearing completed 1/11/2024.
14. House Bill (HB) 2162 – Sponsored by Kent Haden (R – District 043).
Designates the “US Army SPC4 James W Cahall Memorial Bridge” in Audrain County.
Public hearing completed 1/24/2024.
15. House Bill (HB) 2166 – Sponsored by Bill Hardwick (R – District 121).
Modifies provisions relating to veterans’ affairs.
Public hearing completed 1/10/2024.
16. House Bill (HB) 2215 – Sponsored by Chris Brown (R – District 016).
Creates provisions relating to alternative therapies for veterans with PTSD and traumatic brain injuries.
Second reading completed 1/4/2024.
17. House Bill (HB) 2235 – Sponsored by Robert Sauls (D – District 021).
Provides federal Servicemember Civil Relief Act (SCRA) protections to National Guard members called to state duty.
Second reading completed 1/4/2024.
18. House Committee Resolution (HCR) 36 – Sponsored by Jerome Barnes (D – District 028).
Designates the week of November 4-11, 2024, as “Veterans Week of Service.”
Second reading completed 1/16/2024.
19. **House Joint Resolution (HJR) 74 – Sponsored by Dave Griffith (R – District 060).
Proposes a constitutional amendment dividing state revenues from gaming activities between public institutions of elementary, secondary, and higher education and the administration of the Missouri Veterans Commission (MVC).
Second reading completed 1/4/2024.
20. **House Joint Resolution (HJR) 75 – Sponsored by Dave Griffith (R – District 060).
Proposes an amendment to the Constitution of Missouri relating to property tax exemptions.
Referred to Special Committee on Property Tax Reform on 1/11/2024.
21. House Joint Resolution (HJR) 95 – Sponsored by Alan Gray (D – District 075).
Proposes a constitutional amendment granting property tax exemptions to certain disabled veterans.
Referred to Special Committee on Property Tax Reform on 1/11/2024.
22. Senate Bill (SB) 734 – Sponsored by Bill Eigel (R – District 023).
This act modifies provisions relating to military affairs, including vaccination of members of the Missouri National Guard against COVID-19. Missouri Veterans’ Commission’s efforts on veteran suicide, information on veteran services provided by state agencies, medallion programs for certain veterans, fees for hunting and fishing permits for certain members in the military, and foreign ownership of agricultural land near certain military areas.
Voted Do Pass on 1/17/2024 by the Veterans, Military Affairs, and Pensions Committee.
23. Senate Bill (SB) 1308 – Sponsored by Ben Brown (R – District 026).
Designates “POW/MIA SSG Paul Hasenbeck Memorial Highway” in Osage County. Costs for the designation shall be paid by the Department of Transportation.
First reading completed 1/9/2024. No amendments found.
24. Senate Bill (SB) 1322 – Sponsored by Ben Brown (R – District 026).
Modifies provisions relating to education assistance for members of the Missouri National Guard.
Currently any Missouri National Guard member may be awarded an education assistance grant to an approved public or private higher education institution. This act provides that any Missouri National Guard member may be awarded, upon application before each semester, either a tuition and fee waiver for undergraduate courses at a postsecondary institution of higher education located in a state that directly received funds appropriated by the General Assembly or a grant to certain eligible institutions as defined in this act.

**Report of Robert E. Lee, NEC
Department of Missouri (continued)**

National District IV

This act additionally allows members of the Missouri National Guard to make a one-time transfer of the educational assistance to a dependent spouse. Spouses seeking to received educational assistance shall provide a certificate of satisfactory service of the member's National Guard duties along with proof of a cumulative GPA of at least 2.5 on a 4.0 scale while attending the approved institution.

First reading completed 1/11/2024. No amendments found.

25. Senate Joint Resolution (SJR) 58 – Sponsored by Tony Luetkemeyer (R – District 34).

This resolution exempts certain disabled veterans from property taxes.

This constitutional amendment, if approved by the voters, expands the current exemption from real property taxes for former prisoners of war with a total service-connected disability to all disabled veterans, as defined in the amendment.

First reading completed 1/11/2024. No amendments found.

Effective date upon voter approval.

Communications/PRO

There are many projects, programs, and events being conducted at posts across the state. Please follow AMVETS Department of Missouri on Facebook along with individual AMVETS posts across the Department.

Other

None currently.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert E. Lee,
NEC Department of Missouri

Report of Andrew McElrath, NEC Department of Ohio

National District IV

Commander, Delegates, and Guests:

The Department of Ohio has had a very busy year. We are holding strong at 103 posts within the Department, with a total current membership of 25,775. Unfortunately, that is a 9.6% decline from last year, so as I said we have been very busy with recruitment drives, meet and greets and social media marketing throughout the state of Ohio. One area of growth has been our Member-At-Large, which has seen a 5.38% growth year over year, while we would love them to all be post members, we are glad that we can add veterans into our ranks in any capacity.

I attended the virtual NEC meeting in December, it was a good meeting that was difficult to follow at times but a very good way to get the NEC together without the added expense to the National budget.

I attended an emergency meeting of the NEC that was called by Commander Clark to discuss selling the National Headquarters, the NEC voted to accept a bid if it came in higher than a certain asking price, more details to come. There is a committee that has been appointed by National Commander Clark to explore locations for relocating the National Headquarters.

Ohio's Midwinter conference will be held in Columbus Feb 23rd thru Feb 25th with Commander Rowley's testimonial being held Saturday night Feb 24th.

I will attend the IV National District in Dayton on March 2 and the Spring NEC on March 9.

I am excited for the direction of the AMVETS organization, while it may not always be easy and we often disagree, I do believe that AMVETS is the nation's leading Veterans Service Organization because we are an organization of action. I look forward to working with this years National Officers and AMVET members from across the country to advance our great organization.

Commander, this concludes my report and I move for its adoption.

Andrew McElrath, PDC
AMVETS Department of Ohio, NEC

National Executive Committee Reports



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Report of Terry Traylor, NEC National District V Commander

National District V

Membership

Our District continues to hold membership drives, and using our Riders chapters to help reach out for new members.

Upcoming Events

Dept. of Texas Sons of AMVETS is holding their annual Homeless Veterans Benefit at Texas Post 36 in May 2024. Each of our states are continuing to support our communities, and take care of Veterans. We are all working diligently to support and assist our VA Hospitals,

Programs

We have had bowling events, car shows, and are anxiously preparing for the ROTC/JROTC awards ceremonies to begin. The depts. in our district working together to present the most awards again this year. Continue to do blood drives, and community assistance.

Legislative

We continue to keep communication lines open with our legislative representatives, to echo the voice of our 3rd vice commander in DC.

Service

We have held flag retirement ceremonies, and are well into the preparation stage for hosting Memorial Day ceremonies, supporting the Rolling to Remember event, and other community events.

Other

We appreciate the communications and assistance we continue to receive from National Headquarters dealing with the Springly transition as well as the National Commanders continual heart felt messages to keep us all motivated.

Report of Mary Wait, NEC Department of Kansas

National District V

Membership

Reestablishment of past members to currency

Upcoming Events

Participate in 2024 June special Olympics at regional event: visits to soldier homes veterans

Programs

Patriotism certificates and flags distribution to entities who exude patriotism by flying American flag

Legislative

None

Service

Charitable donation distributions for growth and development of posts, homeless shelter soup kitchens, VAVS, veteran homes, Salvation Army, VA hospitals

Report of Carol L. Tschampl-Diesing, NEC Department of Nebraska

National District V

Membership

Our department is focusing on retaining the members we have while also recruiting new members.

Upcoming Events

The next Nebraska SEC meeting will be held February 24 in Lincoln, NE. Our State Convention will be held sometime in May. The date will be set during our February SEC.

Programs

Over the holiday season, Department of NE provided a Christmas card with a gift of cash to every veteran in every Veterans' Home in Nebraska as well as in both of the Veterans' Hospitals in the state.

Legislative

Nebraska Veterans Legislative Day was held in the State's Capitol on February 2, 2024. Members of different VSO's across the state met with various senators to voice their concerns and to learn of several bills on the current agenda affecting veterans. Some of these bills include: making adjustments to the Homestead Act, free registration for disabled veterans' vehicles, eliminating discrimination against veterans in applying for jobs, and petitioning for a license plate for Women Veterans in Nebraska.

Report of Murray Strom, NEC Department of North Dakota

National District V

Membership

The new membership program has had some roadblocks when trying to input renewals. We need to have state executive directors, Adjutants, 1st Vices and NEC permission to access.

Upcoming Events

North Dakota Department Convention will be in Fargo ND on May 17-19.

Programs

Program reporting has been difficult with new program. Our state adjutant is trying to work out the kinks. Americanism and JROTC is in full swing.

Service

Color Guards and Honor Guards are still taking place. Veterans' homelessness has been at virtually zero for a year. If we find a homeless, we have programs and places to put them right away.

Other

Fischer house is moving forward with the purchase of land in Fargo ND near the VA hospital. We have been working on a commemorative coin for all Vietnam Veterans.

Report of Gayla Laufenberg, Adjutant Department of Oklahoma

National District V

Membership

Updating national/local rosters with good contact info, reporting deceased, recruitment drives.

Upcoming Events

Coordinating with Girl & Boy Scouts on Flag Retirement Ceremony and White Clover Drives

Programs

Three community parades 4th of July, Veterans Day, Christmas, Food Drives, Memorial Day Events, Wreaths across America

Legislative

Ok Sales Tax Exemption for 100% disabled Vets, Ok Veteran Home for new homes & budgets, Ok Veterans Commission

Service

PACT Act Events in our area attendance, VSO providing claims assistance,

Other

Plaque for Vietnam Veterans Memorial installed on Community Building in city of Duncan, OK

Report of Bobby Lumpkins, NEC Department of Texas

National District V

Membership

Our department continues to provide support for our post, STILL working with the post and members on the computer to get them up to speed.

Programs

We still support all the programs: Special Olympics, ROTC, A.A.D.A.A., Americanism, Scholarship, Boy Scouts, Blood Drives, Scholarship Bowling. And we are working hard at V.A. hospitals.

Service

WE HELP veterans filing claims, and them get to ther appointments

Upcoming Events

We are having our SEC March 8-10, 2024, and having our Convention June 14-16, 2024.

Legislative

We go down to Austin to help respective to pass bills for Veterans.

Other

That's my report I move for it's adoption at the proper time.

National Executive Committee Reports



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Report of Terri Good, NEC National District VI Commander

National District VI

Membership

Total Membership changes are not available at this time until all departments finish reviewing current data. Some departments are hosting Membership drives. There have been numerous challenges with the new membership system that has resulted in delays of processing. District with National support is assisting Departments with ease of accessing training guides and tools. Expect things will be better in next couple of months.

Upcoming Events

District VI Meeting, Memorial Day / 4th of July events,

Programs

Numerous posts throughout the district are participating in community events and festivals, job fairs, donating and supporting JROTC/ROTC and community sponsorships.

Legislative

I have no updates at this time.

Service

Suicide prevention and intervention services remain a priority focus for all the departments, many volunteers are assisting veterans get to their appointments, deliver groceries, conduct safety checks, providing free CPR certifications.

Other

There are so many members, posts and departments that are doing so much for Veterans that go unnoticed or unreported. As a team we need to continue to work together to bring attention to the importance of publicizing our accomplishments.

Report of Don Oliver, NEC Department of Alaska

National District VI

Membership

I received nothing from any posts or the department before due date of report.

Upcoming Events

Super Bowl

Programs

See membership report

Legislative

See membership report

Service

See membership report

Other

Go Chiefs. a special meeting regarding a troubled post was held. Voted to do nothing until post tries to reconcile itself. The women veterans post might happen. Someday. Leadership apparently misplaced their magic wand and their crystal ball.

Report of Ronald E. Robinson Jr., NEC Department of California

National District VI

Department of California NEC Report Input

The AMVETS California Winter Department Executive Conference (DEC) was successfully held at the Visalia Wyndham Hotel from 11th January through 14th January 2024. In times that are increasingly complex, the importance of membership engagement is the cornerstone of the organization has never been clearer. Our theme improve communication, emphasis on membership engagement, Revenue focus, Improve department program transparency.

- CALIFORNIA SERVICE FOUNDATION SERVICE - The AMVETS Welcome Home Program has made over 6,445 successful deliveries throughout California: San Diego County, Orange County, Long Beach, Greater Los Angeles, Fresno, Tulare, and Merced County. The first delivery was made to a Veteran in San Diego County the week of Thanksgiving 2012 with a “Welcome Home” celebration. A residence is made a home by moving in beds, sheets, pillows, blankets, dressers, nightstands, couches, coffee tables, end tables, dining room tables and chairs, refrigerators, pots and pans, and special request items, such as towels or lamps. This “Welcome Home” delivery set the standard of thanking formerly homeless Veterans for their service and getting them not only off the streets, but also into a furnished residence, providing them with purpose, hope and dignity. AMVETS is “Committed to Serve... Those Who Served” The program has delivered 78,652 goods at a value of \$3,680,466.
- CBL/RESOLUTION TRAINING - In the process of updating the organization policies and procedure and digitalize the file for easier membership access.
- WOMENS VETERANS - Attract, train and retain a diverse and inclusive team. Post 1947 has started an all women color guard to present honors at military funerals.
- SUICIDE AWARENESS - AMVETS ONE Raising Awareness of Veteran Suicide and mental Health within our families and communities. Increase

awareness of Resources, Educate and Innovate through Technology. Promote and Motivate Well-Being against Depression and Advocate to Save Lives. Tour scheduled 2024.

- MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE - New membership process has been implemented from National training is underway for all officers and those involved in membership. Will be more engage in POST events and venues, plans to increase AMVETS digital footprint on social media.

- LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE - ACR 126 - would dedicating a portion of State Route 80 in the County of Placer as the “Sergeant Nicole Gee, United States Marine Corps Memorial Highway.” This serves as a tribute to her bravery and selfless sacrifice for her country. SB-916 Purpose: SB-916 seeks to extend the California Veteran Fee Waiver (CalVet Fee Waiver) to cover extended education courses. Impact: This expansion will open more educational opportunities for veterans’ families, supporting unique and specialized programs vital for today’s diverse job market. AB-46 a state Assembly bill working its way through the California Legislature aims to exempt retirees and their surviving spouses from paying state income taxes on military pensions for the next decade.

California is one of three states in the nation that fully taxes veteran’s pensions. An exemption law on military pensions would bring the state in alignment with the rest of the nation.

- CALIFORNIA CHARITIES BOARD - Focus on revenue and will look into federal and state grants Interim Executive Director will provide training in grant writing.
- DEPARTMENT FINANCE COMMITTEE – Review budgets initially prepared by staff, to help develop appropriate procedures for budget preparations, and on a consistency between the budget and the organization’s plans.

Department goals are to increase our community engagement and partnerships with other veterans’

Report of Ronald E. Robinson Jr., NEC Department of California (*continued*)

National District VI

organizations and non-government organizations to create a better collaboration in providing services to our veterans and their families.

Julian Manalo
Executive Director AMVETS
Department of California

AMVETS ONE launched a successful Golden State Tour 8-12 November 2023. The tour included Long Beach, Santa Barbara, Travis AFB, Redding, Chico, and Visalia. AMVETS ONE continues to engage members from all Veteran service organizations--not just AMVETS--and the community at large in reducing stigma and highlighting local resources to prevent Veteran suicides using earned media. Our mission has solidified our position at the "tip of the spear" to better serve those who served. We can do more than build awareness; we can proactively save lives.

Thanks to overwhelming community support for this awareness and advocacy effort, we recognize that we can build on the momentum of AMVETS ONE, we will be embarking on our third multi-state tour 5-10 May 2024.

*Leaving No Veteran Behind provides
Healing, Hope and Honor.*

Lisa Roybal
AMVETS ONE Co-Chair

ROTC/JROTC are currently requesting support for the competitions between programs. We have already helped sponsored a couple of JROTC Air Rifle Matches, and a physical endurance challenge. We will be supporting several events within the next few months, including Drill Competitions, Physical Fitness Challenges, and Academics. Our support is not only vital to their programs, but a great way for us as AMVETS to put our name out to them and the communities they live in.

To date, I have received several request for AMVETS ROTC/JROTC Medal with ribbon and certificate. I have begun preparing and mailing (21 mailed) them to

the schools. I expect several more requests in the next couple of months, as a large number of school JROTC award ceremonies are conducted in March, April, and May time frame. College programs usually occur more in April/May.

Thank you to the Post and their members that go out and present the awards on behalf of AMVETS. Once again, I remind you that the instructors are all retired military, and membership eligible. "One day at a time."

John Byrum
Chair, ROTC Committee

1ST VICE COMMANDER NEC REPORT

In the latest strategic plan for membership growth and engagement, AMVETS is embarking on an innovative journey to strengthen our community and honor the service of our members. Recognizing the evolving landscape of veterans' needs, the plan emphasizes a multifaceted approach to outreach, support, and inclusion. Key initiatives include leveraging digital platforms for more comprehensive connectivity, enhancing mentorship programs to foster intergenerational bonds, and expanding our advocacy efforts to address pressing issues facing veterans today. This strategy is designed to increase our membership and deepen the sense of belonging and camaraderie among our veterans, ensuring that AMVETS remains a pillar of support in their lives. Through these efforts, we aim to uphold our commitment to service, advocacy, and fellowship, welcoming all veterans into our fold with open arms and a shared purpose.

TOTAL MEMBERS DEPT OF CA TO DATE: 7753
TOTAL NEW: 19 TOTAL RENEWED: 109
TOTAL ANNUALS: 595
TOTAL LIFE: 7158

Thank you for all that you do to make our organization the best it can be!

Helen Wong
1st Vice Commander

Report of Ronald E. Robinson Jr., NEC Department of California (*continued*)

National District VI

2ND VICE COMMANDER NEC REPORT

Despite the initial challenges in reporting for the Programs, the California Post's engagement on social media highlights ongoing activities. Training sessions remain open for 2nd Vice Commanders, Commanders, and any members interested in mastering the Nationals Online Program Reporting Portal. These training sessions are accessible via Zoom or Google Meet. The primary aim of improving post-reporting is to familiarize posts with the digital platform and shift away from traditional paper-based reporting. Post Commanders and 2nd Vice Commanders cannot see the collective reporting data for their post if members report individually without forwarding their information to the Post 2nd Vice Commanders. Efforts are underway, led by the Department's 2nd Vice Commander, to compile and distribute reports to Post 2nd Vice Commanders for their records.

Data indicates that Americanism and Community Service are the most active areas for California, encompassing scholarships, veteran outreach, transportation for veterans to VA facilities, feeding veterans and their families, flag ceremonies, participation in patriotic events, support for youth leagues and scouting, community event involvement, and Veterans Day commemorations. Other areas of focus include legislative advocacy, memory preservation, suicide prevention, and support for veterans and their families.

These initiatives support California's veterans, their families, and the wider community, offering a chance to engage with the posts. Veterans looking for volunteer roles and philanthropic opportunities view AMVETS Posts as a rewarding platform for engagement and service.

Shelley Huff
2nd Vice Commander Department of California

COMMANDER NEC REPORT

This comprehensive report encapsulates the pivotal

activities and milestones achieved by our esteemed organization from October 31, 2023, to February 2, 2024, marking a period of remarkable engagement, strategic development, and inspirational leadership within the AMVETS community.

In an illustrious gathering at the Wyndham Hotel in Visalia, our Winter DEC convened with an impressive turnout of approximately 40 dedicated members. This assembly was a testament to our collective commitment and a platform where I had the distinct honor of ratifying the appointment of a highly qualified individual to a vacant Officer position. Notably, this event welcomed four AMVETS members embarking on their inaugural participation in DEC's or conventions, enriching our assembly with fresh perspectives and renewed vigor.

Among the distinguished attendees was Lino Camacho, a resilient young man and suicide survivor who has courageously authored two pivotal books on the subject. His compelling narrative and insights profoundly resonated with our members, fostering a deeper understanding and empathy within our ranks.

The launch of AMVETS ONE's Inaugural Golden State Tour marked a historic milestone in our journey toward veteran advocacy and support. Commencing on November 8, 2023, in Long Beach and weaving through Santa Barbara, Travis Air Force Base, Redding, Chico, and culminating in Visalia on November 12, 2023, this initiative significantly amplified our mission's visibility and impact, one veteran at a time. Furthermore, the anticipation builds for the national tour set to commence on May 6, 2024, in Phoenix, Arizona, concluding in San Diego, California, on May 10, 2024, promising an even broader platform for our vital mission.

February 2024 marked the inauguration of our Commander's Newsletter; a strategic communication channel designed to enhance member engagement and foster a more interconnected community. This initiative underscores our commitment to transparency and active involvement in our organization and the broader community.

**Report of Ronald E. Robinson Jr., NEC
Department of California (*continued*)**

National District VI

In our continuous pursuit of organizational excellence, we are developing a comprehensive Organizational Chart to elucidate the chain of command, streamlining communication and operational efficiency. Our Department Executive Director has instituted weekly briefings with Department Officers and myself, ensuring we remain at the forefront of our mission to support our veterans. Additionally, I have implemented monthly DEC meetings, strategically aligned with the Foundation meetings, to provide comprehensive updates and foster a cohesive and informed community.

This period has been a testament to our unwavering dedication, innovative initiatives, and the impactful leadership that propels us forward in our noble mission to serve and support our veterans.

Jeff Lukens
Commander Department of California

Report of Sarah Langley, NEC Department of New Mexico

National District VI

Membership

No new members in the state. I think that Post 12 is trying to get a Post going.

Upcoming Events

Post 7 Help with putting flags up at the VA on Holidays
Post 2017 Planning to service dinner for the Adapt Sports Volunteers & participants in August at Ute Lake
Planning to meet Posrtales Chamber Commerce to create a Memorial for all Military Branches.

Programs

Post 7 Pere to Peer. Volunteer at Veterans Memorial.
Post 1944 Womens Veterans. Post 12 sent there reportin to National all ready POST 7 took a Veterans to a meeting

Service

Post 7 Had a Female Veteran in home for a week while Veteran was try ing find housing here in N M Post 1944 Helped two women Veterans , ! for claims, I for Medical Prodocedure Post 20177 Posting America flags in town for National Holidays, resetting & reiforcing Veterans headstones in Community cemetery.

Report of Steve Bird, NEC Department of Washington

National District VI

Membership

Participated in Veterans day parade and Tacoma's Santa Parade. Sponsored the Post 1 Holiday event. Department Membership: 3178

Upcoming Events

Job Fair planned for April 18, 2024

Programs

Participated in Veterans day parade and Tacoma's Santa Parade. Sponsored the Post 1 Holiday event. The department coordination of the AMVETS J/ROTC awards programs is starting 2024 work to support the annual effort to provide Medals, certificates for programs In Washington and Idaho.

Legislative

Bill Title Bill Summary HB 1005 Military/employer tax incen. HB: Extends the public utility tax (PUT) and business and occupation (B&O) tax credits for hiring veterans to July 1, 2034.

- Increases the maximum PUT and B&O tax credit an employer may claim for hiring a qualified employee to \$3,000 per employee.
- Increases the maximum total credit to \$5 million per year for each of the PUT and B&O tax credits.
- Expands eligibility for the PUT and B&O tax credits by removing the unemployment requirement for veterans and including the spouse of a veteran or an active-duty military member as a qualified employee. SHB 1862 Disabled veteran assist./tax SHB: Provides a business and occupation tax exemption for amounts received from sales on a military reservation by a nonprofit that operates an adaptive recreational facility that serves disabled veterans and members of the armed forces.
- Provides a retail sales and use tax exemption for sales on a military reservation by a nonprofit that operates an adaptive recreational facility that serves disabled veterans and members of the armed forces. HB 1869 National guard recruitment HB: Provides a referral bonus for a National Guard member whose successful recruitment results in an enlistment contract. Provides a reenlistment bonus to a National Guard member who extends his or her service for at least two years. SHB 1905 Equal

pay/protected classes SHB: Amends the Equal Pay and Opportunities Act to prohibit an employer from discriminating in compensation and career advancement opportunities against similarly employed employees based on the employee's age, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, race, creed, color, national origin, citizenship or immigration status, honorably discharged veteran or military status, or the presence of any sensory, mental, or physical disability or the use of a trained dog guide or service animal by a person with a disability. HB 1917 Physician assistant compact HB: Adopting the physician assistant compact. Exempts certain information and data relating to physician assistant multistate licenses and applications from the Public Records Act. SHB 1925 Veterans service officers SHB: Requires the Washington Department of Veterans Affairs (WDVA) to provide information to recently discharged veterans about veterans benefits and services, and information about resources available to veterans in each county.

- Expands county eligibility for the WDVA's Veterans Service Officer Program, and prioritizes funding for those counties where the number of veterans receiving benefits is below the national average and for counties that do not have a veterans service officer.
- Requires the WDVA to provide reports every two years that include, by county, the number of resident veterans and the services available to veterans. SHB 1939 Social work compact SHB: Adopting the social work licensure compact. HB 1943 National guard ed. grants HB: Expands eligibility for the Washington National Guard Postsecondary Education Grant to the spouse or dependent of a Washington National Guard member. Extends eligibility for the Washington National Guard Postsecondary Education Grant from five years or 125 percent of the published length of the student's program to six years or 150 percent of the published length of the student's program. HB 2004 Military student early reg. HB: Requires institutions of higher education that provide early course registration to allow students who are eligible veterans, national guard members, active duty military members, and their spouses,

domestic partners, and dependents early course registration. SHB 2014 Definition of veteran SHB: Standardizes requirements relating to qualifying discharges for the purpose of establishing eligibility for various benefit programs for veterans.

- Provides a definition of “qualifying discharge.” SHB 2203 Incarcerated veterans pilot SHB: Creates a pilot project to assist incarcerated veterans with reentry into civilian life.

- Appoints a reentry navigator to assist incarcerated veterans with a reentry plan that will address housing, employment, education, and access to services.

- Provides a housing and reentry subsidy to assist veterans during the first year of civilian life. HB 2340 Military service/DOL fees Reducing department of licensing fees for Washington residents who have served in the military. SB 5803 National guard recruitment SB: Establishes the Washington National Guard member referral incentive program, which provides a referral bonus of no more than \$500 to Washington National Guard members who make a successful referral.

- Creates the National Guard reenlistment bonus program, which provides a reenlistment bonus to eligible members who extend their term of service in the Washington National Guard. SB 5845 Military housing taxation SB: Repeals the military housing property tax and leasehold excise tax exemptions beginning in calendar year 2025. SSB 5871 Definition of veteran SSB: Expands veterans’ eligibility for purposes of state benefits and services for veterans. SB 6000 Military service credit SB: Expands no-cost interruptive military service credit eligibility in the state’s pension systems to members who were awarded a service medal. SB 6238 Property tax/veteran widows Updating thresholds for the property tax exemption for widows and widowers of honorably discharged veterans. SB 6280 Veteran parking privileges Providing for veteran parking privileges.

pending new hires. The previous Director and staff resigned taking on new positions. Since that time the Department has worked with the IRS to establish a new EIN number and is currently in the process of reestablishing a new contract with Washington State DVA New hires are pending. Under a new contract there will be two performance requirements that must be met, the claims approval rating “batting average” and the cost per claims. The contract arrangement will serve Veterans through increased assistance in evaluating and processing valid claims and it serves the citizens of the State through increased revenues generated when Veterans receive monetary benefits through successful claims.

Service

As reported at last NEC, the AMVETS Department of Washington Service Department has closed

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Report of William (Bill) Clark, National Commander

Welcome all to the AMVETS 2024 Spring National Executive Committee meeting. Coming up on the first half of my year, it has been extremely busy, trips to Louisiana for the District III mtg, PA, NC, RI, and several local trips in MD. On the 6th of March, I am scheduled to deliver our testimony to the House and Senate committees on Veterans Affairs.

There have been two meetings, so far, for the Rolling to Remember event. It is building into being a great success for 2024! As you know, the ride will take place Memorial Day weekend with other events, i.e. blessing of the bikes at the Washington National Cathedral and the night vigil at the Vietnam Wall.

Both new computer programs, for programs and membership are up and running, usual glitches that accompany any new system are being corrected. Membership videos are now available to help Departments and Posts to navigate the new system. We are sending in “groups” of questions that are being addressed (in video) by Springly for distribution. I am asking all Posts and Departments to work together to create constructive criticism to help better the program.

The National Headquarters building has been sold to another non-profit organization that owns a building in the same complex. The contract was fully ratified on the 8th of February 2024 and OurCare Inc. will take possession of the building on 30Apr24. The headquarters relocation committee has been working toward finding a suitable location for our new headquarters, researching many regions and recently visiting two potential sites.

The Freedom Foundation has been purchased by the Union League Legacy Foundation of Philadelphia, PA. The new name will be “Founding Forward.” The new concept will be civic education for both students at the high school level and teachers who can attend a summer course at Liberty Hill, a location owned by the ULLF. A strategic plan is being developed and is projected to be ready by December 2024. As of right now, it is projected to have students on site in summer/fall 2024, subject to change.

Our overseas trip is scheduled to start the week after the close of the NEC and will include Korea, Taiwan, and Hawaii.

This concludes my report and I move for its adoption at the proper time.

Report of Horace Johnson, National First Vice Commander

National Commander Clark, members of the NEC,

I again thank you all for the opportunity to serve as the National 1st Vice Commander.

I really know now that the responsibilities are astronomical. When officers at this level are successful, it's because he/she has been through a lot of sleepless nights, difficult meetings, debates, and discussions.

While working with Member Support, we've had to endure challenges all while making the system better than it was before. Back in November, the membership system seemed broken and hard to understand. We acknowledged your feedback and concerns with the new system. We continued to meet with Springly and requested more tools, more training, and more videos. Springly understood and gave Member Support the tools to give you (AMVETS) a better experience working with the new system. I know Member Support has been doing their very best to answer all your questions as they come in. We know change can be uncomfortable, but change can be good with an open mind, patience, and a little time.

For those of you who have been working in the membership system, you know there are good additions like being able to communicate with your members through the new system. You have more control when it comes to administrative tasks like profile corrections, post transfers, and authorizing our members to maintain their roster at the Post, District, and Department levels. That's a big one! We used to have to call and/or email to get Member Support to do all of those things for us. Now we can do it in real time.

I know some of you are reluctant about this new system, but we have signed the contract. We must at least try to see it through. I too was reluctant at first, but I've been talking to fellow members, getting positive feedback from them, and that even makes me hopeful.

Again, we did not switch to a new platform to make it complicated. We changed the system to make it compatible with Programs and Membership.

Communication between Programs and Membership through the reporting portion makes Revalidation an easier operation because it can automatically give the newly elected Officers access to whatever office they are elected to. That

is the method to our ideology, but it takes time. We have to take steps along the way to get it right, and keep you informed at each level. So please give time, time.

Yours in Service

PDC Horace Johnson
AMVETS National 1st Vice Commander

Report of Paul Shipley, National Second Vice Commander

Commander and fellow AMVETS,

The concerns of AMVETS across the country have not been unheard and the Programs department has been driving on. The new software is working and if you are having trouble making reports for yourself, your post, or your department or having trouble in accessing Airtable to see reports reach out to our office immediately.

It is **VITAL** that you understand there are two web based programs used in reporting. One is the reporting side **ANY AMVET** can access at www.amvets.org/submit-reports and the other is Airtable which only **IDENTIFIED PERSONS** in your department have access to for generating reports on the data that has been submitted via the reporting side. If you feel you should have access to Airtable please talk to your Department Commander and get a letter of recommendation sent to the programs department and we can get you access.

We will be having in person training on the software and programs reporting this year at Convention. We ask that you bring a laptop, preferably the one you will be using to do reporting. We will have some Chromebooks available but if possible, bring yours so we can troubleshoot any problems that may arise there.

AMVETS is doing great work with programs reporting so far this year for the period January 1, 2024 to February 11, 2024. nationally we have reported \$3,183,186.07 worth of programs. Great work so far! Amazing numbers for only having 45 days of reporting at the time I write this report.

Together we can overcome any obstacle in our path! Keep reporting everything you do in the service of veterans.

Some key dates to keep in mind:

1. January 1, 2024 – June 30, 2024 Program Reporting Period 1
2. July 1, 2024 – December 31, 2024 Program Reporting Period 2
3. August 7-11, 2024 National Convention

You have a one week grace period after the close of the reporting period to get in your data. If you don't get it in

by then please contact our office to make sure it can be added to the report. Please report your programs as you complete them and do not miss the reporting period.

Do your part to show the great things we do!

If you didn't see the January Newsletter here is some info, I would like to share with you all:

What is an AMVETS Program?

Simply, it is the way that we provide service to veterans and our communities. When your post raises funds to help a homeless veteran get a sleeping bag and a tent that is a program. When your post sponsors a little league team that is a program. When your chaplain visits sick post members in the hospital that is a program. When your post honor guard gives funeral rights to a veteran that has passed away that is a program. Whatever you do to better to world around you in the name of AMVETS is a reportable program.

Why is it so important to report all of these things?

When we do good in our communities it shows the world that we are not just a club and we are not just a bar. It shows them that we have a purpose and a mission to better the lives of veterans and our communities. Our posts are often pillars of community. People are married there, celebrate birthdays there, and honor our deceased there. These places that we call our home posts are truly places where we spend our lifespans and celebrate the milestones all along the way. When we report programs, it shows in a very real way that we give back. When we apply for grants, it shows that we have a proven track record of service to the community. When we go to politicians to convince them to support veterans and veteran legislation, we have the data to show that we are committed to our cause of bettering the lives of veterans and our communities.

Thank you all for giving the opportunity to serve as your Second Vice Commander.

Yours in Service,
Paul Shipley

Report of Sandy Vorhies, National Third Vice Commander

Our legislative team in Washington, DC has been driving our efforts harder than ever as the end of this Congress is on the horizon. There is no shortage of turmoil in the nation's capital, but AMVETS remains confident in our mission and hopes lawmakers will set their differences aside and pass key legislation to help our veterans.

House Speaker Mike Johnson has managed to keep ahold of the gavel so far this year. Despite some snowy weather in DC, and a right flank that seems to be growing by the second, Johnson successfully passed another continuing resolution to fund the government at current levels until the beginning of March.

Election year tensions are upon us as members try to push bills through or prevent controversial ones from moving. All 435 seats in the House are up for re-election in November, and one-third of the Senate is, as well. Several members are retiring this year, leading to more open seats that could swing the chambers either way. Depending on how the race for the White House goes, we may have a difficult 119th political landscape to contend with. We will be monitoring these developments closely.

We have exciting news to share regarding our progress in the House. In December, our top legislative priority was marked up by the House Ways and Means Committee. The VETT Act is moving along well, and staff members are optimistic about its passage out of the chamber. We eagerly encourage you all to reach out to your members of Congress and ask them to support making this bill a law. Our special thanks go out to Congressmen Brad Wenstrup and Jimmy Panetta for tirelessly advocating on our behalf and pushing this bill forward. We will miss Congressman Wenstrup when he retires after this term.

Our team in DC is also working with several members of Congress on a new mental health bill. We hope to have more information for you during Legislative Advocacy Week (LAW). More information about our March fly-in should be coming your way soon. Keep an eye on your calendar for March 6, when AMVETS

is scheduled to testify before the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee.

Looking forward to seeing you soon, and we continue wishing you well.

With high regard,

Sandy Vorhies,
AMVETS National Third Vice Commander

Report of James B. King, National Judge Advocate

Commander Clark and NEC Members,

It has been a normal year for the office of National Judge Advocate thus far. I have answered many questions from the field and approved two department's bylaws.

I am going to ask each NEC to please inform your Department JAs That if they approve new or revised post CBLs they do not need to submit them to me for my approval. Send them directly to the National Membership Department for filing. If they have questions about bylaws, I am available to offer advice.

As before, if you need to contact me, my email address is jim1941@live.com and my cell phone number is 410 913 2780. If I do not answer, leave a message and I will return your call. Please pass this information on to your departments and posts.

Commander, this concludes my report and I move for its adoption at the proper time.

Jim King PNC
National Judge Advocate
AMVETS (American Veterans)

Report of PNC John P. Brown III, National VAVS Representative

Thanks to Commander Bill Clark for having the confidence in me to lead this committee.

We are making progress with getting the VAVS Reps and Deps certifications up to date. We want to thank all for their efforts in getting us up to steam with our reports.

Departments A-M appointments will expire July 2024.

The Total of final Volunteer hours (recorded) for Fiscal 2023:

VAVS VAMC// Volunteers	RS	OS	R/D	Total Volunteers
AMVETS	220	331	50	601
Ladies	82	49	41	172
Sons of AMVETS	9		4	13
TOTAL	311	380	95	786

Sons Data not reported on VA end of Year Report: 506 Volunteers

VAVS VAMC// Volunteer Hours/Costs	RS Total Hours	OS Total Hours	R/D	Total Hours	Value FY 2023 (\$28.54)
AMVETS	25,442	1,380	424	27,246	\$777,500
Ladies	3,478	177	405	4,061	115,888
Sons of AMVETS	1503		132	1634	46,634
TOTAL	30,423	1,557	961	32,940	940,115

Donations	Cash	Checks	Monetary	Item Value	Activity In-Kind	Donation	Grand Total
AMVETS			18,906.78				118,960.78

NON VAVS-From Programs Reporting	Total Cost of Program Value	Total Cost of Hours	Activity Cost	Cost of Mileage	Cash Donations
AMVETS	8,971,229.87	8,040,725.46	403,457.63	198,242.10	\$328,804.68

Included activities are Career Centers, Sick/Hospitalized Vats, Chaplin Visits, National Guard Support, Support Family Readiness, Homeless Veterans, Women Veterans, Peer to Peer.

Any individuals, posts/or departments wishing to donate to the James A. Parke Scholarship Fund(recognizing youth who volunteer at VA Facilities) donations can be sent to Anne Glende at 520 Spring Street, Elsmere, KY 41018.

Please take note that all VAVS Representatives and Deputies are appointed by the Department Commander. The appointment documentation is then sent to AMVETS Programs Department by July 31st in the expiration year. Programs will process the paperwork, send a letter to the Representative and a memo to the VA Programs Coordinator or Chief. The VA will connect with the representative for them to complete the process on their end.

Report of PNC John P. Brown III, National VAVS Representative (*continued*)

The representative should also try to reach out to the VA to ensure they are tracking their recertification.

We have noticed that many of the Reps and/or Deps have not been attending the VA meetings at their facilities when the AJRs are mailed into National HQ. After so many absences, the VA will remove them from the roster.

Please ensure your Reps and Deps are upholding their responsibilities and attending the quarterly meetings at their facility.

AN AMVETS VAVS term expires after two years. Departments A-M expire in the even years (2024) and Departments N-Z expires in the odd year (2025).

If programs does not have up-to-date documentation, they cannot and will not certify anyone once their ends.

Note: An appointment can be requested at any time, however, that appointment will expire at the same time as the rest of the Department appointments.

The Programs department is working on the “cracks” in the Programs’ foundation to rebuild. This at this magnitude takes time. So, we thank you for your patience as we continue to do our best.

Finally, a special thanks to Colondra Etheredge, Programs Manager, for supporting the VAVS programs and for her effort above and beyond to AMVETS.

Commander this concludes my report and I move for its adoption.

John P. Brown III, PNC
Chairman

Report of PNC Harold Chapman, National Service Foundation President

Dear Commander, and members of the national executive committee

I Want to thank all of you for your understanding as we continue to work to pull out of our financial struggles. I know everyone feels this crunch in their own everyday life. We are still struggling to receive donations that we used to enjoy from our donors.

The future of your service foundation is looking up as we move forward this year. We did show a positive balance for October and November, however December was rough as we had year-end invoices that had to be paid that set us back.

We are looking forward to hiring another service officer to help process our claims. Danna, our service director has been working hard to improve the program with virtual processing. This process has been proven to reach many more veterans throughout the country and is favored by the V.A. Eventually we will be able to put many more service officers in place to work in all 50 states and even overseas veterans.

We are slowly opening new stores to help finance these programs. This is a slow process to hire personnel to work in the stores, including managers. The first investment is tough, but the overall revenue is worth the effort to support our program. A lot of credit is owed to the director and his team as they get these stores up and running. There are obstacles to overcome with city and state permits and customs. The overall stores throughout the states do take a financial hit during the winter months but typically do rebound well in the spring. We are looking forward to another good year in that vein. On the brighter side, our stores continue to do well with the economy as bad as it is. Everyone is struggling so they tend to use the stores more often. The stores are also struggling with higher utility and labor cost so price adjustments are being made to make up for it. Again, we are asking the employees to work with us as we get through these rough times.

Our investments are in the tank, and we have lost millions over the past couple of years with not much

of a good outlook for the near future. We ask for your patience with us as we get through the next couple of years as we restructure.

In closing, I ask your support as we go through these trying times. We also thank all the staff that have worked with us and have taken much more of the workload as we streamline the operations. We have a bare minimum in staff to complete the growing task at hand.

Commander, this concludes my report and I move for its adoption at the proper time.

Report of Amy Stopyra, National Ladies Auxiliary President

Welcome to the 2024 Spring NEC. Thank you for allowing me to present this report at your Spring NEC meeting.

Since my last report I have attended the Department of Pennsylvania SEC weekend, where I had the pleasure to tour the Winery at Hershey and sample many of the wines that are made there as well as a crafted beer with the ladies from the ladies. That Saturday night they hosted the horse races. I was lucky enough to have my horse win a race and even place 2nd in the final race. I have also attended the Department of North Carolina Winter DEC and Reverse Drawing, and the Department of Ohio, Mid-Winter Conference and Testimonial Dinner.

My theme is “Foster Connections”. The words I chose as my theme all have a special place in foster care as we, as foster parents, create connections with the children placed with us and make sure we create a connection with their families while we help get them home. Those connections are a huge part of their being able to transition into the home. “Foster Connections” has a double meaning. It can help us as AMVETS Family support each other and grow by learning and making deeper connections as we work hard for our Veterans, communities, hospitals and for our children or wherever you spend time volunteering. Remember, you are building a connection.

My project is the National Foster Parent Association – The NFPA Mission is to be a respected national voice for Foster, Kinship, and Adoptive Parents through networking, education, and advocacy. I chose this organization because of the passion my family and I have for loving children when to them their lives have fallen apart. The NFPA believes in helping to educate their foster parents through their online resources tab, where you can locate numerous learning opportunities.

Commander Clark, I wish you a productive and successful NEC.

Amy M Stopyra
National President
AMVETS Ladies Auxiliary
2023 - 2024

Report of Bobby Bryant, National Sons of AMVETS Commander

Commander Clark, National Officers, and Members of the AMVETS NEC,

Greetings from the Sons of AMVETS! I hope that everyone is doing well and having a successful first half of the year of Serving Our Veterans! It is certainly an exciting time for our Organization! I would like to thank everyone who joined us on the Hill this week, visiting with our National Representation, we all have seen that it helps with getting legislation passed to help our Veterans. I hope and pray that this tradition will be carried on in the future, for as long as possible. I understand that with the relocation of HQ obstacles will arise, but I'm confident that leadership across the organization will find solutions to help continue such an important part of our mission. The issues with our website are being worked out as we speak. We have a great team heading up the project and are holding training sessions at SEC's when possible and a session this week for all those in attendance for NEC. Hopefully, you'll all get the chance to join us for the Horse Races and Silent Auction on Friday night and to enjoy the hospitality room. If you need anything, please let either Harold Collins or myself know, and we will work to make it happen. It is amazing how quickly the year is passing. My testimonial will be held on May 4 in Vandalia, Ohio, very close to the airport. There will be a flyer with details distributed as soon as possible.

My Commander's Project this year is The Taylor Foundation, founded by Corey Taylor (musician) to help Veterans and their families as well as First Responders and their families in every way that they can. Financially, emotionally, spiritually and so on, Corey reaches out to other non-profit organizations and helps raise funds, and serve our Veterans in the communities.

I hope that your meetings go well and that everyone has safe travels home. We are all looking forward to working together to make the second half of this year as rewarding and beneficial to our Veterans as possible.

Yours in Service,

Bobby Bryant
National Commander
Sons of AMVETS

Report of Karla I. Maddock, National Saddest

Membership

Some Units have sent their membership in. For those Units that haven't, please do so & join our very important, fun group. We need your support.

Programs

All Sad Sack Units are accepting applications for Nursing Scholarships. Paul Powers is my Scholarship Chairman.

Upcoming Events

My Testimonial Banquet is in Bucyrus, OH at the AMVETS Club on Saturday, April 13th. The National Executive Scrimmage will also be held on this date. Rooms are available at the Holiday Inn or Quality Inn. Our ND Scrimmage is Friday, May 8th in Fargo, ND which I am also Saddest.

Other

I am very proud to be the first female, non-Veteran to be the National Saddest with a lot of loving support from many Friends, but especially my Husband, Gary Maddock. ***We have been trying to get a website set up for a very long time. If anyone is interested in helping, please email me. Thank you very much in advance. God Bless our Veterans, America, & much needed Nurses.

Report of Milton Allen

National Chaplain

Upcoming Events

The 2nd Chaplain's Zoom Roundtable of 2024 will be conducted on April 16, 2024. The National Chaplain will be attending Rolling to Remember, Gold Star Mothers Banquet and participated in various activities during his visit to D.C. I am asking for every Chaplain that has the ability to, to come and participate in this life changing event.

Programs

This year I have been encouraging more Chaplains to include the Four Chaplains Sunday and Ceremony into their Programs. Also I am asking all Chaplains to begin using the 2 new forms in the Chaplain's Library (AMVETS.ORG) to record hours and to memorialize their deceased. Total donations this year to Canes for Heroes are \$1,000.00. Total program hours at the end of 2nd Reporting Period of 2023 were \$8,073.88

Service

Weekly messages are sent to the National, District, and Department leadership with the hopes that they are passed onto the Posts. The National Chaplain has a Facebook page to share inspirational messages and inform members of upcoming events and public awareness.

Other

National, District and Department participation: The National Chaplain attended District I Zoom meeting and District III meeting. The National Chaplain has partnered with the 1687 Foundation. And they will be providing free religious materials to AMVETS.

Report of Harold P. Collins, Committee Chairman AMVETS Family Traditions & Protocols

AMVETS Family Traditions and Protocols 2024 Spring
NEC Report

Greetings, Commander Clark, Executive Director Chenelly, Officers, NEC Representatives and Guest. The Traditions and Protocols guidebook is available for everyone, a copy of the guidebook will be posted on the AMVETS website. The Traditions and Protocols Committee will be meeting on Thursday March 7, at 7:00pm during the Spring NEC week, meeting will be held in the Boardroom at the Hotel.

Safe travels everyone, look forward to seeing everyone soon.

Harold P. Collins PNC
AMVETS Family Traditions and Protocols
Committee Chair

Report of Joseph Chenelly

National Executive Director

National Commander Clark, National Officers, members of the National Executive Committee, and fellow AMVETS:

Your AMVETS National Headquarters continues working tirelessly to best serve you, all our members and the entire AMVETS Family.

This second quarter of the fiscal year has been an especially busy, productive, hectic time at NHQ.

Everyone at NHQ is striving to provide top-tier service to green hats and Department leaders. I hope you will read the reports of our commander, vice commanders, and our Membership and Programs directors, to see how they continue working to improve the ways their respective departments serve you and meet their missions.

With the stroke of a virtual pen on your behalf, Commander Clark accepted a full-price offer (\$3,000,000) for the current NHQ building on February 8. Pending a couple inspections, the anticipated settlement is April 30. Our Care, Inc., a nonprofit organization, is the eager buyer.

With the sale moving much quicker than predicted, a lot of work has been done and is underway to relocate the NHQ, along with the AMVETS Ladies Auxiliary, the Sons of AMVETS, and the National Service Foundation staffs, temporarily and permanently.

The National Service Foundation is opening a building it owns in Hyattsville, Maryland, just three miles from the current HQ building, to become the AMVETS National Capital Region Office. The AMVETS family will move into that building April 15.

NSF has owned two warehouse units in Hyattsville for more than a decade. A church was renting it from NSF that entire time. In late January, NSF notified the church that the lease would not be renewed. NSF regains full control of the space, which was long ago converted into office space, on April 1.

As of the publishing deadline for this report, all staff working at the current building are preparing for the move.

The ad hoc committee appointed by Commander Clark and approved by you, the NEC, has worked nearly every day since early January. They meet formally weekly. They began by defining what a new area needs to offer. Using the criteria, coupled with comprehensive research of every state within 250 miles of Washington, D.C., they identified nine target regions.

Then they created a comprehensive list of what a new-to-us building must have along with a list of what would be nice to have. Those guidelines were then sent to commercial real estate brokers in each targeted region. The Realtors searched their areas for possible fits and provided them to the committee, which then reviewed each listing.

In early February, the committee began traveling to see properties in person that seemed on paper to match the organization's needs and wants.

Being that this report needed to be submitted for printing a month before this NEC meeting, the Relocation Committee will report its progress and any findings to the NEC in person on March 9.

The important takeaway is that the committee has shown its commitment to doing its due diligence to ensure no stone is left unturned in the quest to find the best possible building in the best possible location that can be a great home to our national headquarters for generations to come.

We at National Headquarters remain grateful for your guidance and leadership. Thank you!

This concludes my report, and I move for its acceptance at the appropriate time

Report of Bumi Ayodele

National Communications Manager

All social platforms are performing well.

Facebook

- The HQ Facebook page has shown consistent engagement throughout the quarter, reaching nearly 8,000 people.
- There have been over 800 content interactions and over 100 link clicks, indicating a strong level of engagement from the audience.
- The page currently boasts 73,000 followers, indicating a solid and sizable audience base.

Twitter (X)

- Twitter engagement has been notably strong, with over 14,000 reach over the past few months.
- The follower count has remained steady at 13,400, suggesting consistent interest and growth in the platform's audience.

Instagram

- Instagram reach has been more modest compared to other platforms, with approximately 800 people reached.
- However, there's been notable engagement, with 180 people interacting with content on the Instagram page.
- The follower count on Instagram is close to 6,000,
- The current outreach efforts across all platforms are commendable, with each platform showing varying levels of engagement and audience size.
- There is clear potential for growth and improvement across all platforms, particularly in enhancing reach and engagement on Instagram.
- Moving forward, a focus on strategies to further increase engagement and expand the audience nationally will be beneficial for the organization's social media presence.

The Communication Department is pleased to report on its ongoing efforts in managing various requests and initiatives.

The department has diligently ensured the smooth operation of the websites, with regular maintenance checks and updates. Several pages have been recently refreshed with new media content, enhancing the overall user experience and relevance of the website.

Our HQ newsletter continues to be distributed monthly, serving as a vital communication tool for our organization. Efforts are underway to expand the mailing list, in response to the increasing number of requests for newsletter subscriptions. We recognize the importance of reaching a wider audience and are actively working towards achieving this goal.

Report of Warren Cox

National Membership Director

National Commander Clark, National Officers, NEC Members, Executive Director, AMVETS Family, and Distinguished Guests:

Thank you all for the privilege of serving as your National Membership Director, it is with great honor that I as well as the Membership Staff serve you. The team is cohesive, dedicated, and motivated to assist you.

Our Mission is clear, and unwavering, that is to provide quality service with excellence and professionalism resulting in expedited sound responses to all needs.

Though we have obvious challenges ahead, we are all proud military men and women and I for one am up for the challenge. Are you? Our Life Membership is 80 percent, our focus (yours too) is to encourage new members to enroll under Annual Membership which would increase revenue and stability.

Life Dues Reminder

Life Dues have been increased by a much-needed amount and now available online.

\$500.00 55 years of age and under

\$400.00 56 to 65 years of age

\$300.00 66 years of age and older

Initiatives

A new membership monthly Newsletter is being developed through our new data base, we appreciate your patience as we build it and please forgive the delay. This will be sent to Department Leadership to share with their Post via email. Please forward, recruiting initiatives, photos of Post events etc. to be included in this newsletter and social media to membersupport@amvets.org. The newsletter will hopefully be used as a tool by any Posts that may be struggling in one area or another to adopt some of the ideas shared.

Our Brother Fred Vineyard (NJ) has secured Laptops for the Recruiter of The Quarter. Department Leaders

please let us know your top Recruiters within your Department. Thanks Fred

National 1st Vice Horace Johnson initiative (see his report).

New Data Base

On 15 July 23 the Board approved the onboarding of Springly to be our data base provider and went Live in December. We do understand the concerns and challenges we all face when a change of this magnitude takes effect and know that this will take time to adjust to. Springly is a top-notch modern provider unlike the very expensive former provider we had. Our aim is to allow Departments a to have more control over their areas. We are all learning this system together and are not experts yet, however we have confidence that when we get past the learning curve it will be very successful. In order for this to be successful we need you to open your emails and take the time to learn processes. Below is factual evidence of what we see at HQ of the vast majority not opening very important instructions and user guide. Family we can't be successful if we don't take the time to open emails and learn.

Yesterday,

'Locating Your Active Lifetime + Regular Members on Springly'

3,120 emails sent.

1,537 emails opened.

But only **49 people** clicked on the resources provided within the email!

In November, we hosted trainings for Post and Department 1st and 2nd Vice. After the trainings, we sent a replay by email to this group.

676 emails sent.

Around 47% emails opened.

Report of Warren Cox

National Membership Director (*continued*)

But **0 people** clicked on the replay video link!

For the video training, we hosted 4 days in total.

676 invitations sent.

Day 1: 118 registered, **58 attended**

Day 2: 62 registered, **33 attended**

Day 3: 46 registered, **36 attended**

Day 4: 39 registered, **21 attended**

148 total is only 21% of that leadership group!

We receive many calls and question pertaining to exactly what was answered and emailed to you.

Over the past few months, we have diligently been working with Springly logistically to ensure everything is captured and transferred to our new data base so that we can provide you with quality service. The new provider allows us to merge with different departments within HQ/NSF who already have Springly as their provider.

Revalidations

Revalidations have improved however we encourage all to complete the process online. The online process is a much faster and easier process than the antiquated manual process. Further when the online process has been completed the confirmation is sent immediately to the Submitter as well as to National. Save the trees and cost of mailing.

Recruiting

*Should be EVEERYONES responsibility, post-level recruiting events should take place at least four times a year. Email membersupport@amvets.org, and we will send you brochures and applications to assist.

*Hearts and Minds - **RED** – don't just Remember them! Send care packages and literature so AMVETS is the first VSO they remember when they return home. We have addresses to some of our men and woman deployed now.

*MALs – Reach out to all of those in your zip code and invite them to join. Most states have more MAL than active post members.

Member Owned Business

Let us know your Veteran owned business and we will highlight on our website for free advertisement.

Again, I am honored and fully committed to you all and the mission at hand. Together we will continue to be the best Veterans Service Organization in our country.

We continue to stand on “**Help One Save One.**”

God Bless America and AMVETS!

Report of Carolyn Taylor-Harrison Assistant to the National Membership Director

With over twenty years of service to AMVETS National HQ I consider it a privilege to serve in this capacity. Our new National Director Warren Cox has positively motivated us with a sense of importance, belonging and value. We as a team fully support Warren as he supports us in our individual growth and development. This has resulted in a cohesive and positive development for the team allowing us to better serve AMVETS.

Our mission this year is to strive even harder to educate and train you as we fully transition into the new Data Base, and to work more with the Departments/Post on how important it is to apply monies to the members records ASAP.

Revalidations: We are working hard to get the officers to utilize the online revalidation. It is faster and when they are completed online, we do not need any paperwork sent to National.

When it is not completed online, we will have to enter all the information manually from the forms received.

Thank you.
Carolyn

Report of Dana Bolton, National Service Director

Upcoming Events

In the process of retrieving all AMVETS property across the country.

Service

Creating a secure online portal so we can service the veteran community virtually. Continuing to work claims that AMVETS holds POA.

Other

As of February 2024. Total number of open claims: 13,487 Appeals: 7 Legacy 25 AMA Personnel Kevin Jones, (Chief of Claims) Justin Larkins, NSO

AMVETS LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES FOR THE 118TH CONGRESS

Mental Health and Suicide Prevention in the VA and Armed Forces

Since 2019, AMVETS has led the way in highlighting that mental health, more than any other issue, results in the unnecessary loss of lives for the veteran and military community. As a result of AMVETS legislative efforts insisting that the VA try new and innovative approaches to address the issue, Congress passed the Commander John Scott Hannon Veterans Mental Health Care Improvement Act. The law requires the VA to provide significant grants to community and non-profit organizations as well as requiring the VA to carry out innovative pilot programs to execute novel approaches to tackle the avoidable outcome of death by suicide.

Within this law, the Staff Sergeant Parker Gordon Fox Suicide Prevention Grant Program (SSG Fox SPGP) was established. AMVETS has been closely monitoring this effort to ensure the program is successful in treating veterans in crisis who search for alternatives to VA mental health care. In December of 2023, the House Veterans Affairs Committee held a hearing on the success of the program, highlighting organizations like the Boulder Crest Foundation and their partnerships with the VA. These organizations are proving that alternative approaches to mental health care, post-traumatic growth, and improving veterans' overall quality of life are efforts deserving of increased funding and attention.

In November of 2023, the VA released its National Veteran Suicide Prevention Annual Report. It showed overarching trends in veteran suicide, once again displaying an increase in veteran suicide since 2021. The lives of our service members and veterans continue to be our number one priority. AMVETS constantly explores legislative opportunities to address this problem, seek innovative solutions for bringing these numbers down, and do everything we can to keep them down.

Ideal legislative outcomes:

- Congressional leadership will establish a

Select Committee on Suicide for Veterans and Servicemembers

- Introduce and support legislation that requires the DoD to establish a proactive footprint to help train servicemembers on what is necessary to live lives worth living and the components that create positive outcomes in our lives.
- Support increased Congressional oversight at the VA to understand the proportion of veterans who previously utilized VA services at any juncture and ultimately died by suicide and ensure the massive VA budget is being used in the best manner to seek alternative solutions for veteran suicide.

Create Equitable Non-Profit Policies for Veteran Non-Profits

AMVETS is committed to the passage of a bill that will allow 501(c)(19) congressionally chartered nonprofits to receive tax-deductible donations.

For numerous Congresses, AMVETS has led the charge on legislation that will allow a tax deduction for charitable contributions to specific federally chartered organizations of past or present Armed Forces members. (Under current law, donations to such an organization are only deductible if at least 90% of the organization's membership consists of war veterans. The bill expands the deduction to include organizations that do not meet the wartime service requirement and are federally chartered.)

The non-profit designation for veterans' organizations is 501(c)(19), and this status includes tax exemption and the ability to accept tax-deductible donations. However, an outdated regulation requires these organizations to maintain a membership of at least 90% of wartime veterans to receive tax-deductible contributions. This regulation was likely created in the 1970s when nearly every military veteran was a "war veteran," defined as having served during wartime.

However, there are 2.4 million veterans who do not meet this definition. These men and women are mainly those who honorably served following the end of the

Vietnam War in 1975 and prior to the Persian Gulf War in 1991. These members of the Nation's first "All-Volunteer Force" served knowing full well that they may be called into war.

This antiquated regulation negatively impacts many of America's distinguished and historic veterans' non-profits which are (or are at threat of) losing their ability to receive tax-deductible charitable donations. For example, AMVETS lost its ability to receive tax-deductible donations in 2015. AMVETS is the only one of the "Big 6" Congressionally-chartered veterans service organizations open to all non-wartime veterans. About 38% of AMVETS' 250,000 members are not wartime veterans, leaving the 75-year-old organization unable to accept tax-deductible donations.

This legislation addresses this unintended consequence in the tax code by allowing any congressionally chartered 501 (c)(19) to be eligible to receive tax-deductible charitable donations.

AMVETS is proud to have attended the House Ways & Means Committee markup of the VSO Equal Tax Treatment Act in November of 2023. We now look eagerly forward to seeing this bill get passed the House and Senate this Congress.

Support Immediate Passage of the Major Richard Star Act

AMVETS fully supports the immediate passage of the Major Richard Star Act. For nearly two decades, AMVETS has supported the Bilirakis family in their efforts to end the unfair and antiquated statute preventing veterans from receiving their earned Department of Defense retirement pay and disability compensation from the VA. It is unconscionable that we are reducing retirement pay by every dollar of disability pay received for those who have given so much in defense of our Nation.

Increase Women Veterans' Voices in Policy and Government to Address Issues Disproportionately Affecting them

Addressing mental health issues specific to women is a top priority for AMVETS. In the VA's 2021 National Veteran Suicide Prevention Annual Report, the rate at which women choose to end their own lives is over

166 percent higher than members of the same gender who never served. Male veterans, meanwhile, are 43 percent more likely to commit suicide than their peers who have only known civilian life. The rate of increase in suicides by female veterans during the COVID-19 pandemic was four times higher than for male veterans, and a significant correlation was found between suicide by female veterans and their experience with military sexual trauma (MST).

AMVETS played a pivotal role in key legislation led by Senator Gillibrand and others to reduce military sexual trauma and expand health care and benefits. We will continue to champion this issue on Capitol Hill. We will also continue to engage with Congressional staff and other VSOs on women in the military, female veterans, and issues specific to those populations.

AMVETS has also noted the astonishingly low number of veterans working as policy staffers on Capitol Hill and, more specifically, the low number of women and minority veterans working in these positions. As such, we are proud to be teaming up with the HillVets Foundation to work with them to address this shortage of women and minority voices working in these positions.

Bolster Recruitment and Retention at VA

The VA has pledged to serve our veterans' health care needs, but the means to accessing this care is different for every veteran. Millions of rural and highly rural veterans face a unique combination of factors that create disparities in health care not found in urban areas. These include inadequate access to care, limited availability of skilled care providers, and additional stigma in seeking mental health care. There is also the continued challenge of the politicization of VA health care.

AMVETS realizes that the best healthcare option for veterans will first provide a strong, well-run, and fully staffed VA. As a support mechanism, AMVETS supports the VA's utilization of private care to provide ease of care to veterans, as is often the case for veterans in rural areas. This community care program has been the subject of many Congressional inquiries during this session.

AMVETS has been a long-time leader in working to ensure that our nation's veterans receive world-class

healthcare, and we will continue to support legislation that affords the best option for veterans. AMVETS will also pursue ongoing opportunities for public-private partnerships with the VA to guarantee access to veterans regardless of where they live.

Create a National Veterans Strategy to align care and benefits to focus on outcomes and success

AMVETS is fully aware of the challenges of reorienting a VA system that so many veterans have come to rely on. Sadly, veterans currently existing low-lows would have benefited from a more proactive approach had it existed previously. We have to start somewhere because our current policy is misaligned, provides negative incentives, and leads to poor outcomes.

As such, we continue to recommend that Congress create a new office with significant funding; we recommend \$1 billion to be achieved by not providing the casual annual increase to the mental health budget. The office should be given the mission of creating a National Veterans' Strategy that orients the future goals and vision of a VA that focuses on veterans maintaining their warrior wellness and providing proactive outreach, training, benefits, and services with the intent that they go on to live lives of purpose and meaning while maintaining a state of physical wellness and understanding the components of living a mentally healthy lifestyle.

POW/MIA

AMVETS is proud of former President Trump's signing of Senator Elizabeth Warren's legislation, the National POW/MIA Flag Act, into law in November 2019. This bi-partisan legislation requires the display of the POW/MIA flag outside of high-profile Federal buildings and National war memorials throughout the year. Previous law only required the POW/MIA flag to be displayed on Armed Forces Day, Memorial Day, Flag Day, Independence Day, National POW/MIA Recognition Day, and Veterans Day.

AMVETS continues to encourage members of Congress to display the flag outside their offices, as is protocol. This legislation requires the Architect of the Capitol (AOC) to display the National League of Families POW/MIA flag outside of the entrance of the office of

each Member of Congress, unless the Member directs the AOC to not display the flag. This requirement applies only to a Member's office in a House or Senate office building within the U.S. Capitol Grounds.

Support the Increase of DIC for our Survivors

For decades, survivors have been working to garner a small increase in Death and Indemnity (DIC) payments for the men and women left behind after our servicemembers die in duty to our nation. Current payments are not even at par with federal workers. We all must ensure that these men and women who paid the ultimate price with their loved ones are well taken care of. Supporting this critical change is a small way to repay that debt and highlight that our nation is grateful for their sacrifice.

The House Veterans Affairs Committee held a hearing on this issue on January 30 of this year. They discussed increasing DIC, as well as other topics relevant to surviving spouses and children. We continue to support these efforts to improve the lives of those families.

Support the Completion of a Successful and Seamless Electronic Healthcare Record

AMVETS fully supports the VA's efforts to create a seamless and effective electronic healthcare record (EHR). For decades, the VA has faced the challenge of having to deal with a broken system of transitioning veterans from DoD to the VA. Even today, millions of veterans are suffering from lost information, lost data, paper records, and more. AMVETS also is keenly aware that VISTA is no longer a tangible option, meaning something has to take place to serve our veterans and servicemembers now adequately and in the future.

AMVETS is adamantly against using this issue for political gain and will vocally and locally fight any members who imply that ending this effort is in our nation's veterans' best interests. Nothing could be further from the truth.

However, AMVETS does support a high level of oversight and holding, particularly, the VA accountable for getting their act together on this project. When the DoD had similar issues, highly competent technical leaders were assigned to lead the implementation and were given strong authority to make decisions and

make them happen. We hear numerous insinuations that this project needs to be more adequately led by VA leadership. Numerous project managers have been assigned and reassigned, and the VA at multiple levels of leadership is failing to make timely decisions which is resulting in inadequate delays.

Even so, AMVETS is still working on our veterans' moonshot to fix this long-overdue issue. The VA needs to step up to the plate because they are failing our Nation's veterans on this front. Congress must hold them accountable and possibly lead the charge on calls for resignation. However, we will not tolerate outright calls for an end to this project for short-term political gains, as this is not in the best interest of our current and future veterans and servicemembers.

AMVETS eagerly awaits outcomes from the next launch of the EHR system at the Lovell Federal Health Care Center in Chicago, IL this March.

Readiness/Recruitment for the Next Generation of Veterans

AMVETS believes that military readiness is the cornerstone of a nation's defense strategy, ensuring that armed forces are always prepared to respond to various threats. Effective recruitment is crucial in maintaining a robust and skilled military, ready to face any challenges that may arise and safeguard national security.

AMVETS has signed onto relevant letters from the Military Coalition (TMC), endorsed bills aimed at recruitment efforts, and pursued partnerships with organizations seeking to address the health and readiness of our armed forces. We believe that addressing these challenges requires targeted recruitment strategies that emphasize physical fitness and healthy lifestyles, alongside programs within the military to improve the overall health and fitness of service members.

LEGISLATION THAT AMVETS HAS PUBLICLY SUPPORTED IN THE 118TH CONGRESS:

Bill Number	Title of Bill	Senate Sponsor	House Sponsor	Status (updated 1/24/24)
S. 677/ H.R. 1432	VSO Equal Tax Treatment Act	Senator Bill Cassidy	Representative Brad Wenstrup	Placed on Union calendar in House (1/18/24)
S. 344/ H.R. 1282	Major Richard Star Act	Senator Jon Tester	Representative Gus Bilirakis	Placed on Union calendar in House (7/18/23)
S. 740/ H.R. 1139	GUARD VA Benefits Act	Senator John Boozman	Representative Chris Pappas	Hearings held (Senate 4/26/23; House 3/29/23)
S. 622	Helping Heroes Act	Senator Patty Murray	-	Introduced
S. 596/ H.R. 1277	Military Spouse Hiring Act	Senator Tim Kaine	Representative Donald Beyer	Introduced
S. 414/ H.R. 1083	Caring for Survivors Act	Senator Jon Tester	Representative Jahana Hayes	Hearings held (Senate 4/26/23; House 1/30/24)
S. 2158/ H.R. 4278	Restore Department of Veterans Affairs Accountability Act	Senator Jerry Moran	Representative Mike Bost	Reported to the full House after markup (7/26/23)

S. 1986/ H.R.4136	U.S. Congressman Sam Johnson Memorial VA Clinic Act	Senator John Cornyn	Representative Keith Self	Introduced
S. 1954/ H.R. 4150	Improving Whole Health for Veterans with Chronic Conditions Act	Senator Bernie Sanders	Representative Julia Brownley	Hearing held in Senate (7/12/23)
S. 1951	Department of Veterans Affairs Income Eligibility Standardization Act	Senator Bernie Sanders	-	Hearing held (7/12/23)
H.R. 3649	Veterans National Traumatic Brain Injury Treatment Act	-	Representative Gregory Murphy-	Introduced
H.R. 3565	Spectrum Auction Reauthorization Act	-	Representative Cathy McMorris Rodgers	Reported to the full House after markup (5/24/23)
H.R. 2431	The Veterans Equal Access Act	-	Representative Brian Mast	Introduced
H.R. 4400	Veteran Overmedication and Suicide Prevention Act	-	Representative Vern Buchanan	Introduced
S._____	National Guard Health Care Access and Expansion Act	Senator Bernie Sanders	-	Introduced
H.R. 4334	Healthcare Equality and Rights for Our Heroes (HERO) Act	-	Representative Darrell Issa	Introduced
H.Res. 642	VSO Recognition Resolution	-	Representative Darrell Issa	Introduced
H.R. 5619	Military Dependents School Meal Eligibility Act	-	Representative Mike Levin	Introduced
H.R. 5470	Veteran Medical Exams for Distant Areas (VET MEDS) Act	-	Representative Juan Ciscomani	Introduced
S._____	Workforce Training/ Incentives for Surviving Spouses Bill	Senator Maggie Hassan	-	Not introduced
H.R.5702	Expanding Access for Online Veteran Students Act	-	Representative Juan Ciscomani	Hearing held (11/2/23)

H.R. 5785	Edith Nourse Rogers STEM Scholarship Opportunity Act	-	Representative Nikki Budzinski	Reported in nature of substitute after markup (12/5/23)
H.R. 3790/ S. 1590	Justice for ALS Veterans Act of 2023	Senator Christopher Coons	Representative Elissa Slotkin	Reported in nature of substitute after markup (12/5/23) in House
H.R.5938	Veteran Exam Expansion Act of 2023	-	Representative Juan Ciscomani	Reported to the full House after markup (12/5/23)
H.R. 4016	Veteran Fraud Reimbursement Act	-	Representative Gerald Connolly	Reported to the full House after markup (12/5/23)
H.R. 4190/ S. 263	Restoring Benefits to Defrauded Veterans Act	Senator Joe Manchin	Representative David Trone	Reported to the full House after markup (12/5/23)
H.R. 4306	Michael Lecik Military Firefighters Protection Act	-	Representative Abigail Spanberger	Reported to the full HVAC after Subcommittee markup
H.R. 5559	Protecting Veterans Claim Options Act	-	Representative Mike Bost	Reported to the full HVAC after Subcommittee markup (11/29/23)
H.R. 5891	Veteran Appeals Decision Clarity Act	-	Representative Morgan Luttrell	Reported to the full HVAC after Subcommittee markup (11/29/23)
H.R. 5890	Review Every Veterans Claim Act	-	Representative Morgan Luttrell	Reported in nature of substitute after markup (12/5/23)
H.R. 5870	Veteran Appeals Transparency Act	-	Representative Keith Self	Reported to the full HVAC after Subcommittee markup (11/29/23)
H.R. 1753/ S. 2014	Jax Act	Senator Jackie Rosen	Representative Darrell Issa	Reported in nature of substitute after markup (12/5/23) in House
H.R. 6337	Saving Vet Halls Act of 2023	-	Representative Andrew Garbarino	Introduced
S.____	Eliminating Racial Disparities in Claims Processing Act of 2023	Senator Sherrod Brown	-	Not yet introduced

Report of Wayne Amborn, NEC

Department of Wisconsin

National District IV

National Commander Clark, National Officers, National Executive Committee and Fellow AMVETS.

Upcoming Events

Spring SEC and Commander's Testimonial March 23, 2024 at the Radisson Hotel and Convention Center, 2040 Airport Rd, Greenbay, WI 54313 (920) 471-4997

Wisconsin State Convention June 19th to 23rd, 2024 at the Radisson Hotel and Convention Center, 2040 Airport Rd, Greenbay, WI 54313 (920) 471 - 4997

Membership

The AMVETS Department of Wisconsin presently has 3540 members of which 2599 are Life Members, 708 are Annual with 233 at Large members. We have noticed a slight up tick in Annual to Life Membership transfers due to the new pricing for Life memberships approved by National AMVETS. An increase in membership has been realized which has been greater than our losses of older members. We have 54 Posts and 8 Districts in our State.

Programs

The AMVETS Department of Wisconsin reached \$8,605,007 total value in programs reporting. Some Posts are still feeling the result of covid and have just started in doing projects in the community.

Service

The AMVETS Department of Wisconsin currently has 8 VAVS serving our Veterans in the following locations; Iron Mountain, Chippewa Falls, Minneapolis, Madison, King, Tomah, Union Grove and Zablocki. Our locations are opening up a little at a time. Our VAVS are doing what they can for our Veterans.

Legislative

The State of Wisconsin is considering the allowance of Veterans with a 70% or greater rating to receive their rating percentage back on their property taxes. Presently only those with a 100% rating receive their property taxes back.

Other

On December 1st we had our Winter Dance and December 2nd we had our winter SEC meeting at the Ramada Hotel in Waupaca, Wisconsin. Monies were requested by the VAVS and approved at the Hospital and Service Meeting. The SEC meeting was successful in the regard that several Posts donated money to the Commander's project which is to support the Tiny Homes in Greenbay. These homes give Veterans a temporary place to live while seeking employment until they are able to obtain housing on their own.



AMVETS
(American Veterans)

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