NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
REPORTS BOOK

Photo by: 1st Sgt. Michel Sauret
2023 NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (NEC) REPORTS

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AMVETS NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (NEC) MEETING

AUGUST 23, 2023
PITTSBURGH, PA

Call Meeting To Order .............................................. National Commander Donald McLean
Invocation ............................................................... National Chaplain Milton Allen
Honors To The Colors .............................................. National Provost Marshal Arthur Majors
Roll Call ................................................................. National Executive Director Joe Chenelly
Adoption Of Agenda ................................................ National Commander McLean
Approval Of Minutes .............................................. National Commander McLean

NEC Reports
District I .................................................................. Commander Dana Dillon
District II ................................................................. Commander James Barrett
District III ............................................................... Commander Frederick Bates
District IV ............................................................... Commander Jackie Randolph
District V .................................................................. Commander Wayne L. Krueger
District VI ............................................................... Commander Ross Smith

Committee Reports
Finance ................................................................. National Finance Officer Donald Stream
VAVS ................................................................. VAVS Chairman PNC J.P. Brown
National Staff Reports .............................................. Executive Director Chenelly
National Service Foundation ................................ NSP President Harold Chapman
................................................................. NSF Executive Director Joe Chenelly
................................................................. NSF Finance Director Agha Husain

Old Business ....................................................... National Commander McLean
New Business ....................................................... National Commander McLean
Benediction .......................................................... National Commander McLean
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Report of Dana Dillon,
National District I Commander

Membership
Membership is going ok. Our Departments have informed membership of new Life Membership fees. We are still getting renewals and continue to increase our membership.

Upcoming Events
We are looking forward to seeing everyone at National Convention.

Programs
Our District is aware of the new Program reporting system and we are getting used to using it.

Other
I was able to attend each State Convention in my Department. It was very educational and informative to see how each state does its Convention. I have been honored and proud to represent the National First District as Commander this past year. I enjoyed working with all of my officers and everyone in the district and National. It is an experience I will take forward with me as I continue to volunteer within AMVETS.
Membership
Membership continues to trickle in slowly. All posts have been reminded of the life membership dues increase taking effect in September of 2023.

Programs
Many of our posts continue to run various events throughout the state. Events include but are not limited to white clover drives, honor and color guard events, rotc, sick and hospitalized veterans, including local nursing homes. Operation gift card continues to visit patients at our military facilities and hospitals.

Legislative
We continue to work with our legislators in passing of bills that benefit our veterans and military families.

Service
AMVETS Department of CT. had our department convention on June 17, 2023. Our new commander is Dana Dillon. AMVETS Department of CT has attended all National District one meetings.

Other
AMVETS Department of Connecticut will have officers attending the National Convention.
Report of James E. Laflin, NEC
Department of Maine

Membership
The Department of Maine continues to get all posts to push to have all their members renew. We are at about 75% for annual renewals.

Upcoming Events
The national conv will be in Pittsburg, PA, Aug 22 to Aug 27. Myself and the alt NEC and the Dept. Cmdr will be attending.

Programs
The Dept. of Maine continues to get all posts back on. Our new cmdr and 1st vice are working on this. Line to report all programs

Legislative
We constantly are checking on any new veterans bills that come up concerning veterans.

Service
The Dept. of Maine continues to work with the Maine veterans coordinating committee to help fight for all veterans in the state. We also work closely with the state dept of veterans services and our VA hospital to help veterans

This is my report and i move for its adoption at the proper time
Membership
Membership in the department is down. We are doing our best to get our work out and trying to recruit new members. We are finding it very difficult to find new and younger members to come in to our fold. Post are continuing to do their best with drives and activities to draw more people in.

Programs
All programs are continuing to move forward. We will be holding our Special Olympics plunge after this writing. At last check, over $5k has been raised. An oral total will be given on the floor at meeting.

Service
Our honor guard has posted colors at the Boston Celtics and Boston Bruins games. We are continuing to try to get our name and brand out there.

Upcoming Events
Our convention is being scheduled for June 10th and 11th. It has been downgraded to a two-day event and is being moved to our AMVETS Natick Post. We are doing this due to the attendance drops and cost factors.
Membership
Currently the Department of New York has 6,424 members with 1,203 of those being members-at-large. Thanks to the efforts of our Posts First Vice Commanders and Zone Directors we have been successful in getting several MAL members assigned to Posts in their areas.

Upcoming Events
The Department 2023 Fall SEC Meetings will be held October 6-8, 2023, at the Double Tree Hotel in Binghamton, New York.

Programs
With some COVD restrictions still in place at most of our VA hospitals, our VAVS reps and volunteers have been forced to service our hospitalized veterans from a safe distance. The AMVETS Dept. of New York Service Foundation recently purchased a large quantity of blankets and gift cards which they gave to our VAVS reps. for distribution to our hospitalized veterans.

Legislative
The PACT Act has many new improvements, and we recommend that all our veterans research this program. Some of the new service-connected disabilities are Bladder Cancer, Hypothyroidism, and Parkinsonism. These three new conditions raise the number to 17 disabilities presumed to be related to Agent Orange exposure.

Service
The Dept. of New York’s 22 EVERY DAY Program continues to improve, with many Posts setting up 22 Awareness displays and information tents at many of their community events and street fairs.

Other
The Dept. of New York newspaper, The Empire AMVET, continues to improve and expand its features and is mailed out to all members four times a year. The VA has been making recommendations to drastically reduce services at their VA hospitals. We have asked our members to contact Senators and Congressmen to express their opposition to this plan.
Membership
Letter mailed to annual members to encourage life membership.

Upcoming Events
Department is hosting Coffee with Vets on the first Monday of each month. Next is set for August 7th.

Programs
*JROTC awards presented in-person and by mail to those NJ High School Cadets nominated by their instructors. *Scouting Certificates issued upon request from Troop Leader *Americanism Awards given to Kindergarten and First Grade Students at local elementary school for flag coloring contest. First place recipients submitted to National Programs *NJ Department submitted nomination to National for Freedoms Foundation.

Legislative
State Commander Fred Vineyard submitted a letter to Congressmen/Congresswomen urging to vote NO on bill presented that would ban public access to Military Service Records.

Service
Fred Vineyard, NJ State Cmdr/VSO continues to assist Veterans and their families with VA Claims.

Other
Department of NJ hosted PACT ACT Presentation on July 12th with Jacqueline Hinker (VA Outreach Specialist/Veteran Advocate).
Report of Arthur Rodriques, NEC
Department of Rhode Island

Membership
We are currently holding membership drives @ our posts & at Walmarts in our area.

Upcoming Events
We are helping with the Bristol 4th of JULY PARADE, We will be hosting a dinner @ our AMVETS Post 8 for our veterans @ our veterans home in Bristol, RI.

Programs
We have helped veterans who were burnt out of their homes, held an autism fundraiser.

Legislative
We have recently been selected to the governors council for veterans affairs.
National District II

Delaware, Douglas A. Porter, NEC ................................. 14
District of Columbia, Aaron J. Smith, NEC ..................... 15
Maryland, Andre R. Martel, NEC ................................. 16
North Carolina, David Wilburn, NEC ........................... 17
Pennsylvania, Robert Bankhead, NEC ........................... 18
Virginia, Kyle Blake, NEC ........................................ 19

District II Commander and West Virginia reports not received by printing deadline
Report of Douglas A. Porter, NEC
Department of Delaware

Membership
Renewal is at about 80%

Upcoming Events
Veterans Day Services White Clover Drive

Programs
Five posts have reported = 100%

Three posts are involved with Suicide Prevention

Legislative
The Department and Posts are active on both the State and National levels.

Service
The Department presented several recognition awards and several scholarships throughout the Department.
Membership
The Department membership retention is at the highest level it has been in three years. The recruitment is the highest in four years and exceeded last year’s goals.

Upcoming Events
This Department will be collecting new shoes and boots for the District of Columbia, Homeless female and male veterans. These items will be distributed at the DC VA Medical Center on Saturday, November 4th starting at 8:30 am until 3:00 pm at the Patients Parking Lot.

Programs
The Department has 100% Programs participation. We continue providing funds each month to the District of Columbia Veterans Administration Medical Center (DCVAMC) Volunteer Service, to be used for Comfort Kits, Voluntary Services Discretionary Funds and Dental Funds.

Ms. Angela McKnight volunteers at the VA Medical Center Information Desk, on Tuesdays and Thursdays, greeting veterans, patients, and family members. Giving them directions or escorting them to their medical appointments. She attends the Quarterly virtual, Center for Development and Civic Engagement Executive Committee meetings (previously, Veterans Administration Volunteer Service).

The Department donated the following items to Medical Center “Operation Shower of Joy”: Baby bibs, blankets, bath towels, teddy bears and baby comfort, which had shampoo, lotion, soap, and washcloths.

Service
Members of the U.S. armed forces, whether Active Duty or Retired veterans, deserve nothing but the utmost respect paid to them at their death. Following the ceremonies, at Cheltenham Veterans Cemetery, 6 members of the Department served as Pall Bearers at five (5) veterans’ burial. Taps were rendered, the 21 Gun-Salute was performed, and the flag was presented to the family.

Johnnie Collins Jr, AMVETS Post 0008 held their Second Annual Family and Friends Day Cookout on Saturday June 4th from 1200 – 1700 at Joint Base Andrews. The Cookout was a remarkable success.

Other
The Department Convention was held on June 17, 2023, at Patton Hall, Ft Myer Officer Club, Arlington, Virginia. We were honored with a visit from National First Vice Commander William F. Clark and National Membership Director Warren Cox. Commander Clark brought greetings from National Commander Donald McLean.
Membership
Membership continues to gain throughout the State, although at a reduced rate. Currently, the Department is at nearly 97% strength with at least two Posts having reached the 100% mark. We look forward to additional membership drives and renewals.

Upcoming Events
The next Department Executive Committee meeting will be held on July 23rd at AMVETS Post 7 in Thurmont, MD. Our Fall DEC will be on October 1st at AMVETS Post 2 in Frederick, MD.

Programs
Programs continue to increase as hospitals, nursing homes, and VA centers increasingly expand our access. Recently, the PNC A. Leo Anderson Memorial Free State Award of Excellence was presented to Ms. Cindy McGrew, Founder and CEO of Operation Second Chance. A May 2023 Department-wide family picnic (AMVETS, Auxiliary, and Sons) raised a total of $7,225 for Operation Second Chance which will be presented to Ms. McGrew on July 23rd.

Legislative
Newly elected Governor Wes Moore (an Army veteran) signed significant legislation favorable to veterans this year, including: an increase in State tax exemption to $20,000 of military retirement income; reimbursement of the State’s National Guard members up to $60/month for health care and dental plans; burying an eligible spouse or dependent of veterans in a State veterans cemetery without charge; a “checkoff” on State income tax returns for the Maryland Veterans Trust Fund; and funding a study on expediting the State licensing process for service members, veterans, and military spouses.

Service
Department Commander Bruce Rice has approved the nomination of Karla Lathroum as the VAVS Rep to the Baltimore VAMC and we are now waiting on appointment from National HQ. Baltimore VAMC has recently reopened their doors to VSO volunteers and representatives.

Other
We welcome returning Department Commander Bruce Rice for the 2023-24 administrative year. James Childs, Jr. of Maryland AMVETS Post 115 was sworn in on the Prince George’s County Commission for Veterans on July 5th. James also represents AMVETS on the Maryland State Veterans Commission.
Report of David Wilburn, NEC
Department of North Carolina

Membership
The Department of North Carolina has to report that we just closed down one of our posts. We really don't like to have to report that. At the same time we are very happy that we are about to start a new post in our department. We are still working on our membership. This is a very serious issue trying to recruit and retain members. Our Department is holding steady with 2,300 members. We are looking for new members all of the time. We are having activities in hopes of getting new members.

Upcoming Events
Our fall DEC is October 6-8 in Clemmons, North Carolina.

Programs
Our Department is steady working with all of our programs. JROTC is a very strong program with our members. We try to make sure that all of our students get the recognition of their achievements. When possible we the AMVETS hand deliver the medals. We are working very closely with the schools for the essay's and posters and the high school students. Community Service is always a great opportunity for us to help others. Our Department has several hard working volunteers. We have three National Winners of the Boy Scouts here in North Carolina. We have a couple of posts that have AMVETS Honor Guard. Most posts have members who belong to the Honor Guard. We have annual events such as golf tournaments pool tournaments. We held the first annual Touch A Truck this year in Asheboro. We have AMVET Riders who are always looking for new members and they are very productive. The Riders attended the Rolling To Remember this year and last year. Remembrance On The River, in Weldon, North Carolina is getting more attention on Memorial Day weekend. A rest stop for riders who are traveling to Washington, DC. We have a field of flags, vendors and other activities.

Legislative
- HB6 - Uniformed Heroes Voting Act
- HB37 - Expand Disabled Veterans Property Tax
- HB47 - Eliminate Tax On Government Retirees
- HB147 - Maintenance of State Veterans Cemeteries
- HB259 - 2023 Apparitions Act
- HB427 - Honor Women Veterans Plate/Women's Veterans Day
- HB487 - POW/MIA Flags/ State Buildings and Schools
- HB489 - Increase Disabled Veterans property tax
- HB492 - Post North Carolina Veterans Benefits

Service
VA hospitals are not operating at full capacity. I know that we still visit and are able to have small gatherings. We have reps for each VA hospital.

Other
Department of North Carolina 2023–2024 new officers:
- Department Commander - Mark Beaver
- First Vice Commander - Harry Brower
- Second Vice Commander - John Perry

National District II
- HB147 - Maintenance of State Veterans Cemeteries
- HB259 - 2023 Apparitions Act
- HB427 - Honor Women Veterans Plate/Women's Veterans Day
- HB487 - POW/MIA Flags/ State Buildings and Schools
- HB489 - Increase Disabled Veterans property tax
- HB492 - Post North Carolina Veterans Benefits
Report of Robert Bankhead, NEC
Department of Pennsylvania

Membership
We continue to utilize programs (incentive) that help our members in recruiting new members.

Upcoming Events
The Department SEC will be Sept 8-10 2023 at the Hershey/Harrisburg Sheraton

Programs
Our Department continues to maintain 100% in reporting by conducting Military Funerals, presenting JROTC / ROTC Awards, sponsoring Boy Scout Troops, and assisting homeless Veterans.

Legislative
Our Legislative Director continues to actively monitor and act upon any issues that pertain to Veterans.

Service
There are several Posts and individuals within the Department that have been trying to tackle the homeless issue for Veterans. We now have three facilities within the state, one of which is strictly for female Veterans. In addition we have partnered with FSB imitative to try and alleviate the homeless Veteran Population.

Other
The Department awarded 45 JROTC/ROTC Certificates and Medals with a huge percentage of those being presented by AMVET members.
Report of Kyle Blake, NEC
Department of Virginia

Membership
Our Department 1st Vice is continuing to work with the MAL’s list to move membership to local post. The Department has accelerated our goals for the coming year. Some of these goals are to increase membership across Virginia by 10 percent, build 3 new Post's and to create a single door into the Department through a corporate email, web page and social media. We will be awarding the person who has the most new sign ups this year.

Upcoming Events
DEC meeting in September in Collinsville, Virginia

Programs
Programs Total is $561,000. Our VAVS rep’s continue to keep in touch with our hospitalized and ailing Veterans across the State at multiple VA centers around Virginia. We have donated roughly $18,000 to the Veterans Care Center and VA Hospital. Post 511 donated $5,000 to the Virginia Veterans Care Center in Salem. The Commonwealth of Virginia is currently in the process of opening two new Veterans Care Centers. There are roughly 250 beds in each, for long term care. The two Care Centers are located in Virginia Beach and Northern Virginia.

The Department will be funding an individual to go to Valley Forge this year.

Legislative
Our Department continues to support Virginia and Congressional bills to assist Veterans. We are a member of the State JLC Commonwealth of Virginia Veterans Board. Dr. Angela Porter Director of Suicide Prevention and Opioid Addiction Services will be speaking at the National Convention on Suicide Prevention.

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. We are Finally 501c3

Other
In June, The Department of Virginia held its Annual Convention meeting in Harrisonburg, Virginia. During this meeting a New Department Executive committee was elected. The new Commander is Ralph Hensley. He is very excited about this role and is pushing to maximize membership.
National District III

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Alabama, Charles Doubek, NEC ........................................ 22
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South Carolina, James M. Colwell, NEC ......................... 28
Tennessee, Lee Ann Adams, NEC ..................................... 29

Arkansas report not received by printing deadline
Membership
The 3rd District has a total of 25,191 members with the Department of Florida leading the way with 17,905. The Department of Arkansas has increased their membership to 532 and their suspension has been removed. The rest of the departments are increasing their membership with outstanding recruiting programs. The 3rd District is leading the way signing up new Women Veterans, using the Women Veteran Committee program for free membership for Women Veterans.

Upcoming Events
I attended the Department of Georgia State Convention 2-4 June 2023, representing the National Commander. Their convention was highly informative. I installed the newly elected officers for the Department. Attended the Department of Florida State Convention 8-11 June 2023. They had a very productive Convention and newly elected officers were sworn in by the National 2nd Vice Commander Horace Johnson. I also attended Department of Pennsylvania State Convention 22-25 June. They had a very illuminating Convention. The newly elected officers were sworn in by the National 1st Vice Commander William Clark. I will pass on to my District some of their ideas. I attended the National Commander & President Testimonial 14-16 July in Natick MA. I also Attended the National Son Commander Testimonial Dinner 20-22 July 10, 2023.

Programs
The District is working hard to update Programs. The Department of Georgia was the test Department for the District. The Department 2nd Vice was doing an excellent job training all the posts, she is truly knowledgeable about the program system. With all the changes in the Programs system, I feel comfortable that the district will keep the system updated. We are having a problem with Arkansas not inputting data. They were Suspended and we are trying to get their new officer up to speed on the system.

Legislative
I am forwarding the AMVETS Legislative Updates to all Department Commanders and NECs in the District. To keep them updated and inform them on all of AMVETS’ Legislative actions.

Other
The 3rd District is moving in the right direction. I stayed in contact with all Commanders and NECs to keep them updated on all changes at the National. I am setting up a District Facebook page.
Membership
Post 3
Life Members: 17
Active Annual: 6
Live Conversion: 1
Total active members: 24

Post 7
Life Member: 3
Active Annual: 13
Life Conversion: 2
Total active members: 18

Post 21
Life Members: 50
Active Annual: 50
Life Conversion: 14
Total active members: 114

Post 23
Life Members: 17
Life Conversions: 21
Annual Members: 15
Total Members: 53

Post 1955
Life members: 9
Annual members: 8
Life conversions: 0
Total active members: 17

Upcoming Events
Post 7 has a Summer Fest event that is coming up on July 1st in Daleville at the fairgrounds which will consist of multiple vendors, food, kids’ activities, and music. This will be a free event for the community to help bring in Independence Day this year.

We also plan to host the Patriot Day events in Daleville and Elba again this year along with Gold Star Family Day and POW/MIA Recognition Day.

Post 21
- June 2023 Veteran Breakfast Saturday June 10th, 7:00 am to 9:30 am

- Monthly Executive Committee Meeting on Thursday, June 15th at 6:00 pm. (elections)
- BBQ Dinner, Monday June 19th at 5:30pm to 7:30 pm
- Monthly Member Meeting on Thursday, June 15th at 7:00 pm,
- Friday after Five, Friday June 30, 2023 – Soul Night with Utopia
- July 2023 Veteran Breakfast Saturday July 8th, 7:00 am to 9:30 am
- Monthly Executive Committee Meeting on Thursday, July 20th at 6:00 pm.
- Monthly Member Meeting on Thursday, July 20th at 7:00 pm,
- Friday after Five, Friday July 28, 2023 – Soul & Funk Night with Trick Zipper
- August 2023 Veteran Breakfast Saturday August 12th, 7:00 am to 9:30 am
- Monthly Executive Committee Meeting on Thursday, August 17th at 6:00 pm. (elections)
- Monthly Member Meeting on Thursday, August 17th at 7:00 pm September 2023
- Veteran Breakfast Saturday September 9th, 7:00 am to 9:30 am
- German Theme Dinner, Monday September 18 at 5:30pm to 7:30 pm
- Monthly Executive Committee Meeting on Thursday, September 21st at 6:00 pm.
- Monthly Member Meeting on Thursday, September 21st at 7:00 pm
- October 2023 Veteran Breakfast Saturday October 14th, 7:00 am to 9:30 am
- German Theme Dinner, Monday October 16th at 5:30pm to 7:30 pm
- Monthly Executive Committee Meeting on Thursday, October 19th at 6:00 pm.
- Monthly Member Meeting on Thursday, October 19th at 7:00 pm
- November 2023 Veteran Breakfast Saturday November 11th, 7:00 am to 9:30 am
- Annual Thanksgiving Potluck on Thursday, November 16th at 6:00 pm.
- December 2023 Veteran Breakfast Saturday December 9th, 7:00 am to 9:30 am
- Annual Christmas Cocktail Party on Thursday,
December 21st at 6:00 pm.
• Post 23 Monthly business meeting every 2nd Thursday of the month
• Quarterly newsletter to members
• Lunch for Veterans & First Responders – June 10 (all veterans, first responders & families)
• Flag Retirement Ceremony – June 10, following Veterans lunch
• Fall Fund Raiser – Sep - Dec 2023

Post 1955
North Alabama Airfest 2023 10 – 11 June 9AM – 4PM Pryor Field Airport Decatur, AL booth for membership drive and to provide information regarding AMVETS.

Programs
Post 3
AMVETS AL Post 003 is working to re-establish the post under new leadership. Actions being taken:

1. Looking for a meeting location and working with City Leadership.
2. Working to establish contact with the existing membership and fill our leadership roles.
3. Recruiting new members.

Post 7
The Southeast Alabama AMVETS Post 7 remains active within the community and with fellow veterans. We had the honor of presenting JROTC Cadet Awards to deserving youth at Daleville High School, Carroll High School, Rehobeth High School, and Enterprise High School. We hosted a Memorial Day ceremony in Daleville in partnership with the local VFW post and we attended multiple area Memorial Day ceremonies in Opp, Enterprise, and Ozark. We participated in the WTVY-TV Hometown Tour in which they showcased businesses and organizations from the area.

Post 21
We continue to work all our various programs for the last 11 months. Our Veterans Breakfast Program is growing each month. We are averaging close to 100 meals served and $484 in donations each month. So far this service year we have served over 1100 meals. Additionally, our monthly theme dinners is picking up attendance.

Boy Scout Sponsorship Program – The Scouts continue to be part of our group, helping when they can.

Veterans In Need Program – We continue to work on our “Veterans in Need” Program leveraging the grant from Alabama AMVETS Service Foundation along with our own resources. We have begun to develop a network of resources in Limestone County to help these veterans in need. No additional funds have been dispersed since our last report.

Commanders’ Monthly Meetings: We continue to work engage in our local community resources and the other VSOs. We have established a commander’s monthly meeting and are looking forward to how this group comes together.

Post 23
Post 23 programs include setting up a booth at the Rattle Snake Rodeo, assisting veterans applying for VA benefits and placing flags on veteran’s graves.

Post 1955
AMVETS ROTC & JROTC Medals: Medal and certificate was presented to Austin High School JROTC March 2023.

Legislative
Legislative Notes from the State Board of Veterans Affairs 04/07/2023

1. The Legislature completed a special session on March 16, 2023, to address the second installment of American Rescue Funds. Of interest was legislation to appropriate up to $5 million to the Alabama Department of Veterans Affairs (ADVA) for COVID expenses in the State Veterans Homes. Additionally, it appropriates up to $25 million to support mental health programs which is to be divided between the ADVA and the Alabama Department of Mental Health (ADMH). It is expected that most of these funds would go the ADMH but that $2 million will be for services for services and
programs for veterans.

2. HB125/SB81: The Governor recommended supplemental appropriation from the State General Fund for FY23 includes $10 million from the Veterans Assistance Fund (VAF) to help pay construction costs for the Atkins State Veterans Home in Enterprise. As a side note, construction of the Atkins Home is progressing well, and it is already 40% complete. As for all the State Veterans Homes, the Homes Committee of the SDVA reported that activities are back to normal post COVID.

3. HB129 has been introduced by Rep. Kenneth Paschal, and endorsed by the ADVA, would authorize funeral home directors to work with veteran service organizations to identify those unclaimed remains which are eligible for interment in a State or National veteran cemetery and get those veteran cremains interred. The ADVA would identify and certify the approved veteran service organizations. This bill had come out of committee with a favorable report.

4. Modernization bill to clean up and streamline ADVA’s statutes. ADVA has received the draft from the Legislative Support Agency on this initiative and it is being reviewed. Rep. Paschal has agreed to sponsor it in the House and Sen. Allen has agreed to carry it in the Senate.

5. The ADVA had recommended including the Space Force with other Armed Services vehicle license plates. Sen. Butler has introduced SB17 which would add the Space Force to all lists of armed forces. As part of the Lt. Governor’s military package it is expected to pass.

6. HB211 (Rep. Rehm) has been introduced a bill to add a license plate to honor those awarded the Air Medal. And a license plate to honor those who served during Operation Inherent Resolve will be introduced and will be sponsored by Rep. Starnes. The draft for this is being finalized by the Legislative Services Agency.

7. Finally, while exposure to toxic substances at Ft. McClellan was deleted from the PACT Act, it appears that it is experiencing a resurrection. Unsure, at this point, where this may lead.

Service
Post 7 is regularly visiting with veterans in assisted living quarters in our area.

Post 21
Cleaning gravestones at HOBBS Cemetery, Athens AL.

Post 1955
- 27 May 2023 Post members participated in the Memorial Day Program and dedication of a Huey helicopter at Sportsman Lake Park in Cullman, AL.
- 29 May 2023 Post Members participated in the Memorial Day Program at Roselawn Cemetery in Decatur, AL.
- Membership of the Post in VOAD, Volunteer Organization in Active Disasters.
- Fundraiser/Partnership with VETS Like Us to sell bricks to support their Gold Star Mothers Memorial which will be placed at Founders.
The Department of Florida continues to move forward with fulfilling the Aims and Purposes of AMVETS.

Our Convention was remarkably successful and to top it all off, we had Three Hundred Thirty-Six Family members attend our banquet.

Membership
The Department surpassed last years total membership and now have over Nineteen Thousand Members. In reality, we have a long way to go to reach our potential goal of Fifty Thousand Members.

Programs
I am happy to report we have 90% reporting online. It is great having the National Reporting Program in Place.

Service Foundation
We Thank those Departments who donated to our Disaster Relief Fund. We allocated over Two Hundred Thousand Dollars to those affected by Hurricane Ian. We are now in the process of replenishing our Disaster Relief Fund.

Upcoming Dates

All Meeting are at the Rosen Centre, Orlando Florida

Other
The Department of Florida is honored to have Horace Johnson running for National 1st Vice Commander. Leaderships, Knowledge, Experienced. That is Horace Johnson. Join Us in electing Horace Johnson Our National Vice Commander.
Membership
The Department of Georgia had an increase in membership for the 2023 year of 238 members. The Department newly elected First Vice Arnetha Wiggs has two main goals. Her first goal is to cleanup duplicate membership from all fourteen post roster. Her second goal is to surpass the membership of 2,100. The Department lost one post and gained one post. The Department also added a Rider Chapter from Post 607 in Valdosta. Arnetha Wiggs is encouraging all posts to have a membership drive before September and push lifetime membership before the price increase.

Upcoming Events
The Department of Georgia will be well represented at the National Convention in Pittsburgh. Our fall SEC meeting will be in Warner Robins on September 9th and 10th.

Programs
The Department of Georgia ended the reporting period with 100% reporting. During this reporting period, Second Vice Wanda Allen had several training sessions and emailed information to the posts on the changes from National Headquarters. Educating the posts in Georgia led to a total program value of approximately $804,048.51 this period and the fourth consecutive reporting period of 100%. The Department of GA finished the 2022-2023 year with a total program value over $1.2 million. The Department of Georgia was selected as one of the test Department for the new reporting program. Our newly elected second vice commander, Ronnie Dunn has a lot of computer skills and teaching experience. We are looking forward to the great reporting from the Department of Georgia.

Service
The Department of Georgia newly elected commander is Stephon Banks from Post 600 in Toccoa, Georgia. He stated that he would continue providing service to the veterans and posts implemented from the previous Commander Milton Allen. His goal is to have every post remember our purpose of “Veterans serving Veterans and its Community.”

Other
The Department of Georgia will be having a candidate for national officer. Third District Commander Frederick Bates will be running for Third Vice Commander. Frederick Bates has been active in “Attending the Hill” program for the last six years. He has served as the department state commander and department judge advocate. The Department of Georgia is asking your department to vote to set Frederick Bates on the dais beside National Chaplain Milton Allen also from Georgia.
Membership
The Department of Louisiana has 6 Post with a membership as if 7/16/23 1007 total, 882 life, 125 annual members. This includes 308 MAL. Some of the Post are having membership drives to recruit new members.

Upcoming Events
Our next SEC meeting will be held at Post 66 in Monroe Louisiana in October. The dates haven't been set yet.

Programs
As of 7/16/23 the Department has 4 post reporting for 66.66%. 111 volunteers worked 132 hours for a total program value of $43,839.36

Service
The Post throughout the Department are doing community service events. Including transport to VMAC, handy man projects for senior and Veterans, Americanism, supporting National Guard Troops, Membership activities, Memorial Day and 4th of July activities to name a few.

Other
It is with great sadness that I report the passing of Jim Martin long time Louisiana Department Executive Director and the President of Louisiana Service Foundation. Rest in Peace Jim. New Department Officers were elected at our last SEC in Alexandria they are: Emmitt Bailey Commander, Roy Smith 1st Vice, Tyron Burns 2nd Vice, Charles Gagnon 3rd Vice, Mark Ashley Finance, Bob Griffin Adjutant, Tom Akin Provost, Gary Willimson JA.
Membership
The Department of SC held its Annual Convention on June 13, 2023. There are 443 Annual members and 954 Life members for a total of 1,397 members. The Department gained 28 members from March to June. This is an increase of 11 Annual and 17 Life members. There 178 open invoices. Net membership for Department of SC is 1,219.

Upcoming Events
Post 70 is hosting a pre-trip dinner and send off breakfast in Support of the Savannah, GA of the Honor Flight Network. All Posts are participating in their respective Veteran's Day parades and ceremonies.

Programs
The Department of SC reports the following programs (80% reporting) to date: 436 Volunteers donated 2,759 hours of time at $28.54/hr. = $78,741.86. Travel was 4.869 miles at $.42/miles = $2,044.98. $1,157.00 were expended and $1,500.00 were received in donations. Report totals: $83,443.84. Noted programs reported to the Department of SC by member Posts:

1) Community Service;
2) Americanism;
3) Military Internment Honors;
4) Sick and Hospitalized Veteran Visits;
5) Red Shirt Friday (Support for NG Troops);
6) Fund Raisers;
7) JROTC/ROTC;
8) Membership;
9) Homeless Vets Assistance;
10) Veteran Holiday Observances; Peer to Peer Support.

Legislative
We continue to urge Post members to keep current on all legislation pertinent to Veterans by following current National guidelines. The National Leadership my as a suggestion urge all State Departments to appoint a Legislative Agent to follow and correspond with local, state, and National Legislators so as to encourage their support of pending legislation crucial to Veteran welfare.

Service
All Posts are participating in Veteran Holiday observances and are providing Military honors at Veteran internments. Posts are encouraged to support Red Shirt Friday. Transportation services for Veterans to medical appointments are provided where applicable. Peer to Peer - Assisting veterans with completing disability and benefits claims. 487 veteran contacts were made in the first two quarters of 2023 by six certified service officers. 415 Volunteer hours.

Other
The Department of SC reported 3 Colleges and 30 High Schools requesting medals and certificates be distributed to deserving students. 45 medals and certificates were awarded throughout the state. 2023 continues a downward trend in participation. The lingering effects of the Coronavirus are thought to be blamed. Hopefully 2024 will show an upward trend.
Membership
As of July 10, 2023 the Department of Tennessee has 2444 members including 617 Members At Large (MAL). Tennessee AMVETS membership continues to grow due to initiatives within our 17 posts. Since the last N.E.C. report, January 30, 2023, the Department has added 60 Annual members and 57 Life Members for a total of 117 new TN AMVET members.
- The top 3 TN Posts for new members are:
  o Post 44, Cookeville – 33 new members
  o Post 22, Blount County - 22 new members
  o MAL, 16 new members
- 7 of our posts are proud to document over 100 members; 2 of these posts have over 200 members; and 1 has over 300 members.
- Efforts continue contacting members of the MAL and transferring them to posts in their local areas.
- A spike in Life Memberships and Life Conversions is noted, possibly due to the by-law change for Life Membership, taking effect this year.
- Although membership numbers are on the rise, retention remains a high priority.

Upcoming Events
- October 3-14, 2023: TN AMVETS Fall S.E.C. Meeting, Post 45, Paris Landing, TN.

Programs
Department of Tennessee Posts continue to work diligently understanding the new National Reporting Program and inputting appropriate information. Working with a new system presents challenges, as does the issue of Posts not reporting because “we don’t need recognition for doing community service.” Improvement will continue with time. Tennessee AMVETS are actively:
- Preparing to present U.S. Pocket Constitutions to 8th grade students across the state for Constitution Day, in September.
- Seeking 5 students to attend the Freedom Foundation, Spirit of America Youth Leadership Conference, in November, with full sponsorship.
- Encouraging members and their families to submit for AMVET scholarships.
- Looking forward to a winning entry in the AMVETS Americanism Contest to be judged at the upcoming National Convention.

Legislative
Legislative action proposed in Tennessee currently includes:
- HJR0058, encouraging the federal government to provide free health care for all honorably discharged veterans (Signed by the governor on April 10).
- HB0244, increasing income eligibility limits for property tax relief for elderly low-income homeowners and disabled homeowners.
- HB0698 / SB0965, requiring the state procurement commission to ensure that at least 5 percent of state contracts are awarded to veteran-owned businesses.
- HB0935 / SB1244, expands property tax relief for veterans who have acquired a disability rating of 100 percent for a permanent and total service-connected disability for all of the local property taxes paid on property that the disabled veteran owned and used as the disabled veteran's residence.
- HB1072 / SB1046, establishment of an honor guard grant program to offset expenses incurred by veteran service organizations in providing military funeral honors for qualifying Tennessee veterans.

Service
A new State Veterans’ Home opened on June 23, in Cleveland, TN. Located state-wide for the convenience of our veterans and their families, Tennessee’s 5 state-of-the-art facilities offer 636 in-patient beds to our veterans.
- TN Posts have been active, throughout the year, assisting veterans in their local communities.
- The TN Veterans Administration Volunteer Service (VAVS) as well as individual Posts continue
delivering personal supplies needed by residents in the Veteran Hospitals. Socialization opportunities were provided to local Nursing homes. 4th of July and Veteran Day Celebrations were hosted by many of our Posts.

Other
The Department of Tennessee is proud to announce that for three years in a row, a TN member has received the National Recruiter of the Year Award. For the second year in a row, Dwayne Kindell, Commander of Post TN 044, has been selected as National Recruiter of the Year. Dwayne was awarded with an all-expense paid trip to this National Convention for his efforts, having recruited 99 members (75 Life and 24 Annual) since September 1, 2022.

A 2-day 'Retreat', for Department Officers and trustees of the Tennessee Service Foundation, was held. Proven to be a very productive meeting, a ‘5-year plan’ is now in place, focusing on growth of current posts; development of new posts state-wide; and incentives for the new posts as well as the posts that mentor them.

National Veteran Service Officer (VSO) for the Dept of TN, Mike Oliver, as well as all TN VSO's continue to encourage eligible TN veterans to seek assistance in applying for PACT Act compensation;
National District IV Commander, Jackie Randolph ........32
Illinois, Chris Studebaker, NEC ...........................33
Indiana, Richard Caldwell, NEC ........................34
Iowa, Barry Remington, NEC ............................35
Kentucky, Alan R. Smith, NEC ............................36
Missouri, Robert E. Lee, NEC ..............................37
Ohio, Sandy Vorhies, NEC .................................38
Wisconsin, Wayne Amborn, NEC ..........................40

Michigan and Minnesota reports not received by printing deadline
Membership
The 4th District Membership is shifting from members to Life Members because of Life Members increase coming soon. The Departments of Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois are leading the members increase. We are hitting the malls and sport events to give out information, and churches to recruit new members. Some have set up tables at Walmart to give out information on AMVETS. You would be surprised how many people still look at AMVETS only when cleaning their garages out.

Upcoming Events
Indiana is planning another trip to the Indiana Veterans Home in October to cook meals for the veterans there. Our 4th District Chaplain Rick Caldwell stays busy with the veterans that are incarcerated here in Indiana. They can create nice things using popsicle sticks and some of their projects have been displayed at the National Convention. Some of the other departments have projects at their post helping veterans and going out to other counties to help those in need.

Programs
I can proudly say the 4th District already has 100% on programs. Indiana is doing a great job and Post 99 is leading the way. Post 6 in Gary is helping the community by sponsoring a dinner for cancer patients and handing out gift baskets to them. These are just some examples of what Indiana is doing. The other Departments are also unique in reporting their program strategies.

Legislative
The 4th District is busy getting our local and state politicians involved with veterans projects. Some have used legislation, bills and funds to help out. We are making sure our local politicians and state officials know about the AMVETS. Some of the Officials who are veterans have joined the AMVETS and we are proud.

Service
Indiana AMVETS family in July visited the Indiana Veterans Home in Lafayette to deliver patients White Castle meals. The patients were excited to have some sliders instead of the regular food at the Veterans Home.

Other Departments have placed flags at the Veterans Cemeteries, washed veterans cars, took veterans grocery shopping, a ride to the bank, and giving rides to the VA. We in the 4th District are very proud to help our veterans. That is what AMVETS stand for, Veterans helping Veterans.

Other
The 4th District is dedicated to do all we can to help our veterans. Helping out at soup kitchens, buying homeless vets clothes, helping those who need our help, and leading them in the right direction. We try not to leave a veteran behind.
Report of Chris Studebaker, NEC
Department of Illinois

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

Membership
AMVETS Department of Illinois’ membership was 9,323 members in 2022-2023. Currently, the department has 8,876 members this year as of July 10th, 2023. Illinois AMVETS is constantly trying to improve our coverage and remain at the forefront of Illinois veterans’ organizations.

Programs
AMVETS Department of Illinois received an award for 100% programs reporting for this past year. In addition, Illinois AMVETS volunteers continue to work to provide volunteer events such as bingo, picnics, and the like.

Service
AMVETS Department of Illinois currently has 6 department VSOs located throughout the state. All VSOs are working thoroughly and effectively to assist veterans and their families proven by filing over 3,500 claims bringing in over $52 million worth of benefits to the state of Illinois just this recent calendar year (2021). We couldn’t be prouder of our service officers, they are second to none.

Legislation
The new 102st Illinois General Assembly had a very busy Spring Session passing major legislation, to include some Veteran related bills that Illinois AMVETS facilitated. If you have any questions referring to any vet related Illinois legislation please call or email our Legislative Director Keith Wetherell at 1-800-638-8387 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 at 217-528-4713 or ashley@ilamvets.org.

Other
AMVETS Department of Illinois held its 78th department convention June 2-4 in Springfield, IL. We had the pleasure of having the National Judge Advocate in attendance. During our convention we handed out numerous awards to posts, post members, and businesses that have made a significant impact on their respective communities. The departments newly elected department commander is Steve Holt out of post 103 in Aurora, IL.

Our next upcoming event is our annual school of instruction which is held in conjunction with our September SEC. This year it will be September 8-10 at the Abraham Lincoln in Springfield, IL. At this meeting we invite two members of every post down to learn about membership, programs, our service officers, post organization, post officer responsibilities, communication/pro, and many other things. On Saturday night we have a picnic at the Springfield VFW for comradely and to just get to meet new AMVETS and welcome them in to our great organization.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Chris Studebaker
NEC Illinois
Report of Richard Caldwell, NEC
Department of Indiana

Membership
Indiana’s membership has steadily grown by attending various county fairs and our state fair. We also have attended many military events with our membership brochures in hand. We have had many annual members convert to lifetime with the new increase in September 2023.

Upcoming Events
We have scheduled booth spaces for community stand-downs throughout our state. Many military recognition activities are planned in various cities with fairs and parades for all veterans.

Programs
Our Department of Indiana has many AMVETS Color Guard and Honor Guard Teams in various posts that are eagerly involved with their local community-based funeral homes for honors of our fallen. We also participate in many “Honor & Remember” events to include our “Watchfire @ Post 12” in Muncie.

Legislative
Indiana has made some progress with our state representatives in providing better benefits for our veterans with education, state hunting & fishing licenses, Park entrance fees, etc. We still need to do more for our many veterans to not go out of our state with better benefits in neighboring states.

Service
Our AMVETS Department of Indiana has always been actively involved with many annual events that support our veterans. Just to name a few has been participating in major sporting events with our Colts, Indians, Pacers, soccer and swimming. Our Indiana 4 VSO’s have brought over $7 million in claims benefits to assist veterans just in the last few years. I serve as a Commissioner for AMVETS with our Governor’s Veteran Affairs Commission.

Other
We have still struggled somewhat in getting better participation within our Department at our conferences & convention. We are still working on updating our communication network that is greatly needed. Our outlook to the future is looking upward, and we are much better off than a couple years past as we have continued to build forward.
Membership
Membership is slow right now. However, we are little ahead of this time last year. We expect a number of members converting over to life memberships before the new life dues go into effect in September.

Upcoming Events
Our SEC will be held October 21-22 in Richmond at Post 107. We also have transitioned our department conventions to the posts so that they have an opportunity to increase their revenue and to save a large expense for the department by not having to spend a large amount of money to have it in a hotel or event center.

Programs
Programs are getting better with our 2nd vice doing a good job of contacting the smaller posts to find out what activities they have done this year and get that info reported. Would like to be able to see the reports for the departments especially for the NEC person so that they are aware of how the reporting is going within their department.

Legislative
Our Legislature will not go back into session till after the first of the year. Last year we had some bills passed which will assist vets on property taxes and which will help greatly in the future.

Service
Post 49 has been able to partner with the UNI ROTC cadets the past year. We have been invited to attend their classes and have had the opportunity to meet with them and share our experiences we had in Viet Nam. They also have assisted the post by helping in the kitchen when we have events.
National Commander McLean, National Officers, Members of the National Executive Committee and fellow AMVETS:

The 76th Annual Convention for AMVETS Department of Kentucky was held June 15 -18 - 2023 at the Holiday Inn Cincinnati Airport, Erlanger, KY. At 9am Saturday morning the convention was called to order, with 61 members and 4 guests present on the floor, convention rules, and minuets from the last convention were adopted as printed. PNC Heun addressed the floor and stated we no longer have a National service officer if you need service officer help contact national headquarters, more information to follow later.

All Department Officers, Post Commanders and NEC gave reports and all were adopted. All proposed resolutions for the national constitution and bylaws, were presented to the convention floor by the resolutions and bylaws committee and all were approved or disapproved as the committee recommended. Meeting was adjourned in preparation for the joint opening meeting and memorial service. The joint opening followed by our AMVETS Memorial service was held at 13:00 and was well attended by all.

On Saturday night we honored Department Commander Dale Clark, Auxiliary President Gardina Branscum Rich, and Son's Commander Tim Goldman with a Western theme casual dinner, the dinner was well attended, as was the dance following the dinner. The department of Kentucky AMVETS was very happy to welcome PNC Bill Kilgore, PDC Robert E. Lee, and of course our own PNC Greg Heun who attended as a delegate.

On Sunday morning we held final nominations and election of officers, all elected and appointed officers were sworn in by PDC Robert E. Lee.

I would like to congratulate Dale Clark on his re-election as department commander, I know that he will continue to lead AMVETS department of Kentucky in an ever forward and positive way and continue to help all veterans and their families in KY.
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 3562 current members (937 annual and 2625 life members).
2. The Commanders and 1st Vice Commanders of Membership at the Posts are encouraged to work on pursuing annual renewals for the 421 members that expired on 8/31/2022 and the 282 members whose membership expired on 8/31/2021. These additional Veterans would bring membership up to 4265! For a secondary project, these members will be contacted to encourage re-joining the organization.
3. There are opportunities in areas within the Department to establish posts that are being evaluated and considered.

Programs:
1. Total programs for the 2022 calendar year (submitted via PDF) were as follows: 6,398 volunteers that performed 25,115 hours in services that covered 186,228 miles. These services were valued at $1,029,400.98!!
2. For the six-month reporting period that ended on December 31, 2022, there were 29 out of 29 posts (100%) that reported via PDF on account of the online access being down for upgrades. These reports included 2,878 volunteers who performed 16,466 hours in services that covered 67,335 miles. These services were valued at $439,095.06. This was the last reporting period to be submitted via PDF.
3. Programs for the most recent 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 is $401,231.30.

Service:
1. Department of Missouri has 4 Service Officers in the St. Louis area to assist with Veterans and VA claims. The Department is currently seeking a replacement for the Service Officer lost in the Kansas City area along with filling the positions in Columbia, Poplar Bluff, and the Springfield area. A part-time service officer has been trained for placement into the City Hall in O'Fallon. He makes up the 4th one in the St. Louis 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. The Commander’s Project is to fundraise for AMVETS National Convention which is scheduled to take place in St. Charles, MO, in August 2025.
3. Ongoing projects continue to include military funerals, homeless Veterans, 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: October 7-8, 2023, 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.
Report of Sandy Vorhies, NEC  
Department of Ohio

Membership  
Commander and Fellow AMVETS Family, I bring greetings from AMVETS Department of Ohio and hope that everyone is doing well. The Department this past Spring lost Jeff Brown, our Department 1st Vice Commander and the leader of the “One is Too Many” Program. Jeff would have been elected Ohio Department Commander this year and our thoughts and prayers continue to be with his family.  

Department of Ohio did have a very productive convention on June 15th through June 18th. The convention was held at the Crowne Plaza, Columbus, OH. National 2nd Vice Commander Horace Johnson was in attendance on behalf of National Commander Donald McLean.  

Our membership continues to move forward and growing. We have been participating in membership drives in our communities and had a membership table at the Veterans Day at the Columbus Zoo this past June. We continue to focus on the women veterans and providing benefit information and leadership. Our women veterans committee has put in place an agenda to have community meetings within an AMVETS Post and welcome all women veterans in to learn about benefits and meet community agencies that are available to them.

Upcoming Events  
On July 15th the Ohio Officer Training was held at AMVETS Post 26 in Mansfield, OH. This training is open to all AMVET Members. The Posts, Districts and State Officers attend, and this training is very important to the new officers or an AMVET that is looking at becoming an officer.

August 5 & 6, 2023 is the AMVETS Dept. of Ohio Annual Abby McCory Memorial Golf Tournament being hosted by Salem AMVETS Post #45.

September will be the AMVETS Veterans Homes Picnic where we come together to provide good food and fun for our veterans in the Ohio Veterans Homes.

October 19th – 22nd, 2023 is the Ohio Fall Conference which will be held at the Crowne Plaza, Columbus, OH.

Programs  
Along with the many programs that are provided through the AMVETS, AMVETS Department of Ohio is committed to bring the number of veteran suicides down to zero by addressing the underlying issues that cause it. One Is Too Many will be working with at risk veterans who are dealing with issues like opioid/drug abuse, PTSD, other mental health conditions, financial issues, legal issues, convictions and more. With the ongoing partnership with the county agencies we are making great strides. What One Is Too Many does and will continue to do is help veterans who are in crisis mode, who need a helping hand, and who don't know what resources are available to them. Most importantly, this program will put them directly in contact with other veterans who have “been there, done that” and have dealt with some of the same issues. We will be the ones who will help them get through their low points.

This program will also bring veterans together through AMVETS to do activities to help bring that camaraderie back that some veterans may be missing. The sounds, smells, sights, and feelings of war are something that veterans know all too well and will never forget. Because of that reason, we all came back a little different than before we went over. Many times, veterans cannot come home and talk freely to our families and friends about what we’ve went through while deployed. The burden of war sometimes causes us to withdraw from friends and family. It’s during these instances of withdrawal that loneliness and depression set in. Many veterans try to reach out one last time to anyone who will listen… waiting for someone to validate them, their service, and their life. It’s at this point that this program will be there to help them. Together, we aim to bring down the number of veteran suicides and to bring awareness to PTSD. In doing so, we will help to defeat the stigma around mental health issues. Our veterans didn't fail us while defending our country and we will not fail them when they need us most.
This past year Commander Sara Pierce project was the MASH Pantry which provides to veterans and families food and items in which other pantries do not provide. Through the fundraising Commander Pierce along with the Ohio AMVETS Family raised a little over $10,000.00 for the MASH Pantry. The above 2 programs are just an example of what the Ohio AMVETS Family is accomplishing.

Legislative
OH House Bill 69/135th General Assembly - This House Bill is to revise membership of county veterans service commissions. OH State Bill HR95 - Urge Congress to extend GI Bill Benefits OH State Bill HB69 - Revise membership of county veterans service commissions OH State Bill HB18 - Allow military license plate applicant present county veterans ID

Service
AMVETS Department of Ohio Service Officers are working diligently to serve all veterans that need assistance. At this time the service officers are located in Columbus, Chillicothe, Cleveland, Cincinnati, and Dayton. We are very proud of our Service Officers.

Other
Newley Elected Ohio Commander Pat Rowley has made his project this year the 1 is Too Many Program in honor of our lost friend and leader Jeff Brown. In closing I wish all officers the upcoming year the best. This is my NEC Report and I ask for it's adoption at the proper time Thank you, Commander McLean
National Commander McLean, National Officers, Members of the National Executive Committee, and fellow AMVETS.

UPCOMING EVENTS
Fall SEC September 23, 2023 at the Radisson Hotel and Convention Center, 2040 Airport Rd, Greenbay, WI. 54313 (920) 471-4997

Winter Dance December 1, 2023 7:00PM at the VFW Post 1037 Hall, 244 Industrial Dr., Waupaca, Wi 54891

Winter SEC December 2, 2023 9:00AM at the Ramada Hotel, 110 Grand Seasons Dr., Waupaca, Wi 54981

MEMBERSHIP
The AMVETS Department of Wisconsin presently has 3456 members of which 2569 are Life Members, 714 are Annual with 253 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.

PROGRAMS
The AMVETS Department of Wisconsin reached $850,000 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 with tours of 4 people maximum at the present time. Our VAVS are doing what they can for our Veterans

LEGISLATIVE
Our commander has made several trips to Madison to meet with the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to discuss additional legislation to benefit our Veterans. He also met with legislators regarding the same issues on another occasion. 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
The Department of Wisconsin had its annual Convention from June 21, 2023 to June 25, 2023 at the Radisson Hotel and Convention Center, 2040 Airport Rd, Greenbay, Wi.. A memorial service was held in remembrance of our Brothers and Sisters that Passed On this last year. Brian Svacina was elected our new Commander for the years 2023-2024. The Commander and the Auxiliary President, Deb Suchon, have decided to combine their programs and support the Tiny Homes of Greenbay, Wi. This project helps Veterans with temporary housing while they get back on their feet. During the Convention the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, James Bond, talked to the Combined Assembly concerning Veterans benefits and what the State of Wisconsin plans on doing for the Veterans.
Kansas, Mary J. Wait, NEC .................................................. 42
Nebraska, Carol Tcshampl-Diesing, NEC .......................... 43
Texas, Curtis Thomas, NEC ............................................. 44

District V Commander, North Dakota, and Oklahoma reports not received by printing deadline
Membership
Telephone chats with previous and inactive members has renewed interest. Establishment progress with post at retirement facility and another at state penal institution.

Upcoming Events
Attending orientation prior to visitations to area prison; participating as department supporter to upcoming cross country bike ride Old fort dodge pilgrimage to support veteran residents.

Programs
Adopted established AMVETS program for businesses or individuals who display American flag. Kit contains framed AMVETS recognition certificate and a 3x5.

Valley Forge: We have keen interest in sending students to youth Americanism conference.

Service
We are happy to have recovered the best way we knew from the pandemic and key member loses by reorganizing property allowing us to reestablish charitable giving to our chosen community and VA projects: 2 soldiers homes; 2VA hospitals, I Dole VA, VAVS, special Olympics, Paws for Cause, and Tracy clinic, also local food banks, and soup kitchens.
Membership
Department of Nebraska had a recruitment table at the Annual Veterans Freedom Music Festival in the capital city of Lincoln in June.

Upcoming Events
- Nebraska’s Fall SEC will be held October 2023.
- Our Department members are preparing for National Convention coming up in August 2023.
- Nebraska’s 2nd Annual Women Veterans Symposium will be held October 13-15, 2023, in Kearney.

Programs
- Department of Nebraska handed out 12 ROTC awards to students in schools statewide.
- AMVETS members marched in the 3rd Annual Memorial Day Patriots Parade held in Omaha on May 27th.
- Department Executive Officer Deb Wehrli conducted a flag program at a local school in May.

Legislative
Legislators in Nebraska are currently working on LB126, which would expand the Homestead Act to all disabled veterans on a sliding scale. Currently, the Homestead Act is only available to 100% disabled veterans. The Homestead Act enables qualified homeowners to write off a portion, or all of their property taxes.

Service
- Department Executive Officer Deb Wehrli attended the Nebraska Veterans Home Board meeting in April. The purpose of the Veterans Home Board is to help choose applicants to the veterans home and review rules for operation of the homes throughout the State of Nebraska.
- Several department officers, both past and present, attended the funeral of Past Department of NE Chaplain Dale Wittrock in May.

Other
Final approvals have been granted from the National Cemetery Administration, and the Department of Nebraska is now moving into the construction phase of our carillon project. Construction is expected to be completed by October 2023.
Membership
We continue to attend events around the state to recruit new members. Our posts are also sponsors for events throughout their communities to assist in recruiting new members to our organization, i.e. car shows, bowling tournaments, pool tournaments, children’s events, etc.

Programs
We continue to support Homeless Veterans and the Veterans Suicide Crisis Line with donations; along with the Special Olympics of Texas, Boy/Girls Scouts, and other Charitable organizations.

Service
Our posts continue their community services throughout the year with helping veterans in need, student scholarships, children Christmas parties, Easter egg hunts, Halloween parties, backpack giveaways, and other activities.
National District VI

National District VI Commander, Ross Smith ................. 46
Alaska, Don Oliver, NEC ........................................ 47
California, Ronald Robinson, NEC ............................... 48
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New Mexico, Sarah Ann Langley, NEC .......................... 55
Washington, Steve Bird, NEC .................................... 56

Arizona, and Oregon reports not received by printing deadline
Report of Ross Smith, NEC
National District VI Commander

Membership
It has been an honor and a privilege to serve AMVETS as its National District VI Commander. I look forward to the future and the opportunities that we work for together. We must get better at engaging our younger veterans. They need us. We need them.

Upcoming Events
I will continue to be of service to those in need. AMVETSONE will continue next year and beyond.

Programs
Our District continues to help veterans every day in areas that are needed in there respective communities. I look forward to seeing our reportable program list be looked at and changes made that reflect what is needed “Today” not 10 years ago.

Legislative
We will continue to support legislation that makes sense for our fellow veterans.

Service
Service to others Is why we are here. Any act of kindness has the possibility to make a difference in some ones life. I know this to be true from many personal experiences.

Other
AMVETS as an organization has some very important decisions in the near future. We “MUST” remain proactive and do what is right for the future of this organization which I love deeply. Long standing relationships must be secured. “Together We Can.”
Membership
As always, we try to use the guidelines put forward by National Headquarters.

Upcoming Events
The National convention is center stage

Programs
Our department has done little as a department in programs. I’m sure something was done but the NEC is the only one that has to report anything and I get nothing from Dept. to report on.

Legislative
We disseminate as much information as we can to the members. The Nimitz Group does pretty good keeping us in the loop.

Other
Commander McLean and others that came from headquarters enjoyed themselves and appeared to happily answer any questions put to them. The Commander enjoyed riding in the 4th of July parade in the 1948 M38 Jeep provided by the Alaska NEC. In addition to going to every post in Alaska, Cmdr McLean also got to see a few sights of interest.

Elections were held at our convention the first weekend in June. There were no surprises really as most officers didn't change positions. The biggest surprise was the lack of progress on a post that's got issues. The magic wand apparently didn't work so now other avenues must be explored.
MEMBERSHIP
TOTAL MEMBERS - as of July 5, 2023=7707
ANNUALS= 593
LIFE MEMBERS= TOTAL
LIFE=7114
NEW MEMBERS = 151

This report outlines the upcoming training sessions to improve engagement and operational effectiveness within the Department of California. These sessions foster improved communication and outline best practices for gaining membership.

Upcoming Initial Training Session: We are pleased to announce the scheduling of our first training session. This platform allows the Department of California to engage more effectively with our Posts. The session will focus on 1st Vice matters, establishing a forum for open dialogue and discussion. The agenda includes sharing the best practices for obtaining and retaining membership, which is vital to the sustainable growth of our organization.

Membership Training at the State Convention in Dec: To support the transition of new 1st Vice Commanders into their roles, we are organizing an intensive training module at the State Convention in June. This training will provide an in-depth understanding of the duties associated with the 1st Vice Commander position and introduce strategies to improve recruiting efforts.

This convention aims to create an environment conducive to open dialogue, promoting a beneficial exchange of ideas and strategies between the Post 1st Vice Commanders and the Department 1st Vice Commander. We anticipate this session will significantly enhance operational effectiveness and foster a stronger, more engaged community.

Both training sessions are designed to encourage growth, promote learning, and enhance the overall success of our organization. We look forward to the active participation of all members and are optimistic about the positive impacts these sessions will bring.

Helen Wong, 1st Vice.
AMVETS Department of California

PROGRAMS
The following data represent the work of California AMVETS from July 1st through July 21st.
Volunteers=136
Hours=1609
Volunteer Hours Value= $218,759.10
Miles=2340
Value=$1263.78
Activity Costs=$558.06
Cash Donations= $48
The total cost of Programs= $220,628.94

Shelley Huff, 2nd Vice.
AMVETS Department of California

DEPARTMENT OF CALIFORNIA
The State of California is almost back to normal and open throughout the state regarding dropping COVID Procedures. However, the big issue statewide and across the US is the HEAT WAVE. Triple Digits for the past couple of weeks and forecasted for the next several days!

Because of the many forest fires, which have been devastating up & down the State of California (North, South, and Central), the Department Headquarters and AMVET Post & Members continue to support the local fire victims through various sharing programs and by working directly with the fire victims themselves in providing guidance, referrals, food, clothing and paying for lodging.

The Department of California is still going strong with the Production of the Department PODCASTS.

The Podcast Productions continue monthly. Each Podcast has special guest(s) discussing various subject matters that will be of interest to the viewers, regarding- VA Benefits, local service programs, AMVETS issues, and concerns, to Vocational/Tech Training & College programs. PODCAST invited the newly elected 2023 Department Commander Jeff Lukens as a special guest this month. The Podcasts are supervised by Heidi

Report of Ronald Robinson, NEC
Department of California

National District VI

Helen Wong, 1st Vice.
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Report of Ronald Robinson, NEC
Department of California (continued)

Holguin, Department Social Media Coordinator, and Hosted by Lance Cardoza, Business Street Productions.

AMVETS ONE was another outstanding successful 6-city cross-country tour, advocating and making aware of Veteran Suicide, the mantra again for the time was, “Leaving NO Veteran Behind”! The motor coach and the California delegation made stops along the route. They provided Press Conferences at each visit while planning to arrive in Washington DC the day before to participate with others in “Rolling to Remember,” a large gathering of motorcycle riders (estimated 68,000) and other participants in bringing awareness towards, Not Forget Veterans Suicides, POW, and MIA’s. An advantageous project!

The highlight of this reporting period, during the Department of California’s 2023 State Convention in Visalia, CA, Jeff Lukens was elected as the 2023-2024 Department Commander—Congratulation Commander, Welcome.

Department of California is still very active in various projects & services up & down the state with VA Programs, supporting & partnering with MLB Minor League programs, collaboration groups with many organizations, veterans and non-veteran entities to assist throughout our communities, including participating with JROTC and ROTC programs, as seen through our 100% National report.

During the 2023 Departments State Convention, the Department was very honored to have as our special guest AMVETS National 3rd Vice Commander Paul Shipley (PA); Commander Shipley also kept our newly elected officers by swearing them into office.

Department Committees are to be active as much as possible for the benefit of the Veterans, their families, or for our communities, especially:

- VA CDCE-Volunteer Services and with the various VA Hospitals & Clinics:
- Suicide Awareness Committee.
- Legislative Committee (State & National);
- Women Veterans Committee
- Community Service
- ROTC
- Americanism Committee

The Department, Charities, and Posts are continuing to plan & prepare for Fundraising events that will be occurring in the coming months. Special Announcement: California Department & Charities continue to receive donations up & down the state from AMVETS Branding the Logo, TV appearances of various members, Sports Media Productions, and advertisements regarding AMVETS of California.

Finally, a shout-out to our Leadership within the Department, Charities Boards, and Posts-Good Job, Keep It Going!

Smokey Rickerd, Executive Director
AMVETS Department of California

COMANDER
I was elected Department Commander at our last State Convention on June 11, 2023, at the Visalia Marriott. During my year as Commander, my theme for this year is fellowship. The past couple of years have been hard on us all and we need to get back to being around each other and moving this organization forward. We have a potential of 2 to 3 brand new Posts forming which is exciting to us all. We are working with other Posts that have had a tough time recently. My goal is to create as many Posts as possible this year.

AMVETS ONE had another successful cross-country tour close to over 50 million Americans saw our journey on television, radio as well as social media. I am proud to announce California’s Inaugural Golden State tour will be launching on November 8, 2023, in Long Beach, November 9, 2023, in Ventura, November 10, 2023, Vallejo, November 11, 2023, in Redding as well as Chico and Culminating in Visalia California on November 12, 2023. We are excited about this tour.

Jeff Lukens, State Commander
AMVETS Department of California
Report of Ronald Robinson, NEC
Department of California (continued)

JUDGE ADVOCATE
I took over the position of Judge Advocate on July 1 of this year. To maximize continuity as I come up to speed, the last Judge Advocate, PDC Kyle Miles has agreed to take the role of Deputy Judge Advocate. I’ve already been tasked with answering post-level questions on several matters. It is my opinion that almost all these questions, concerns, and confusion could be handled with a better Department-wide understanding of our governance documents, Roberts Rules of Order, and relevant state and federal laws. In support of this, I will continue to answer Post questions but will focus on the following:

- Inventory and make accessible all governance documents from our Congressional Charter down to the Post bylaws.
- Create a master list of needed Policies and Procedures, inventory what is already in place, update when needed and draft new policies and procedures.
- Empower all AMVETS members to understand our documentation and be aware of the steps to make changes if needed.
- Many see governance documents as restrictive and limiting rather than best practices and guidelines to make AMVETS members and posts more effective in our mission. I will work to change this perception.

All the above will be done in coordination with the Department Executive Committee and their approval.

Kirtley F. Wilson, Judge Advocate
AMVETS Department of California

AMVETS ONE
With immense appreciation, the AMVETSONE committee extends heartfelt gratitude to all those who generously contributed their time and financial support to a cause that has transcended our wildest expectations. The impact of our “Leaving No Veteran Behind” campaign has reached over 60 million people, but this is merely the start of our journey.

National District VI

In May, AMVETSONE will embark on its third cross-country trip, aiming to reach out to every Veteran and communicate that it is absolutely fine to feel not okay.

This advocacy’s success is solely possible through the compassionate collaboration of individuals like you. Together, we can make a difference.

Our upcoming Golden State Tour, showcasing our Posts in California, will commence in early November, featuring the active involvement of various VSOs.

“United We Stand”

Ross D. Smith, PDC,
AMVETS National District VI Commander
AMVETS Department of California

ROTC/YOUTH ACTIVITIES REPORT – ENDING JUNE 2023
What a monster year with ROTC/JROTC. Schools are back on track, and AMVETS California stepped up with outstanding support. We helped sponsor fourteen (14) events, including JROTC Air Rifle Matches, Drill Competitions, Physical Fitness Challenges, and Academics. We were fortunate this year to reach out and support LAUSD, SFUSD, and SDUSD with their programs. This is a first for us and hopefully will continue. This support is vital to their programs and an excellent way for us, as AMVETS, to put our name out to them and the communities they live in.

Also, a banner year for AMVETS ROTC/JROTC Medal with ribbon and certificate. I began sending packets with the Medal, Ribbon, Certificate, and Cover folder in December. Since then, I have sent out one hundred ninety-eight (198) packets to JROTC and eleven (11) to college programs. I did receive several positive comments on our Awards and the presentation folder.

Thank you to the Posts and their members who present the awards on behalf of AMVETS. Once again, I remind you that the instructors are all retired from the military and membership eligible. “One day at a time”
Report of Ronald Robinson, NEC  
Department of California (continued)

John Byrum PDC, Chairman ROTC/Youth Activities  
AMVETS – DEPARTMENT OF CALIFORNIA

SOUTHERN AREA REPORT
This report outlines the activities undertaken by the Volunteers of the Veterans Affairs Voluntary Service (VAVS) within the Southern Area Command. During this reporting period, our committed volunteers have contributed a total of 257 hours towards our noble mission of serving veterans. Furthermore, our volunteers have traveled a significant 235 miles in their quest to fulfill their duties, reflecting their tireless efforts and dedication. The financial expenditure associated with these activities currently stands at $8,937.28, an investment in our veterans’ well-being and support, which has proven to be immeasurably valuable. I would like to highlight the exemplary commitment of Life Member Mr. Robert Reynolds. Mr. Reynolds has been offering an impressive 50 hours per week of his time assisting homeless veterans at our West Los Angeles branch. His dedication is greatly appreciated, and he serves as an inspiration to us all.

Ray Delgado, VAVS, Southern Area Commander, Post 2 AMVETS Department of California

CENTRAL AREA REPORT
The Central Area maintains its ongoing commitment to the communities and veterans they serve. This dedication is manifested in various activities. For instance, Post 3 organized a community-friendly cornhole tournament on July 22, 2023. Post 5 hosted several Veterans Appreciation nights throughout the year and participated in a Juneteenth celebration. Bingo night, an event hosted by Post 22, was a significant community attractor. Post 56 diligently upheld its responsibility for Honor Guard Duties for our departed heroes. During Lent, Post 98 scheduled fish fry events. Each post in the Central Area either organized or participated in many Memorial Day and patriotic events in June and on the 4th of July. They are gearing up for the AMVETS ONE tour scheduled to pass through California in November.

NORTHERN AREA REPORT
The Northern Area has been actively involved in Project Healing Waters fly-fishing for Veterans, securing the Veterans Hall for the construction of fly roads. Between March and June, assistance was rendered for seven Veterans’ Funerals. The Area attended a DEC Meeting in Fresno, California, in April. They presented Colors and Severs flags for the Veterans at their Chico State College Graduation in May. Memorial Day Celebration was attended, during which a wreath was laid at the Cemetery. Participation was also seen at the State Convention in Visalia, where the Northern Area Commander was elected.

Gary L. Imhoff, N.A.C.  
AMVETS Department of California

REPORT FROM THE CHAIR OF AMERICANISM
The Americanism Program saw participation from two Posts in this year’s contest. We celebrated a total of 10 winners ranging from kindergarten to 8th grade. All submissions have been forwarded to National, and those for 2nd place and below were returned to their respective Posts. Some state Posts have expressed interest in launching an Americanism program. In response, I plan to collaborate with the Area and Post Commanders to explore how I can support them.
National District VI

Report of Donald Lazarus, NEC
Department of Hawaii

Membership
Department of Hawaii is happy to report a new Ladies Auxiliary Charter HI-0001. Our AMVETS West Oahu Veterans Center is helping to increase our membership with volunteer opportunities in our communities.

Programs Activities
Our program initiatives at our West Oahu Veterans Center (WOVC) continue to improve the lives of veterans, service members and their families. WOVC is a gathering place for military and civilians in our community to meet for the betterment of our veterans and their families. We have hosted over 132 events this reporting period at our center at no cost to Active Military, Veterans’ organizations, VA, and other nonprofits organizations.

Activities includes: Community Meetings, Conferences, Post Meetings, Scout Troop Meetings, Church Services, Swearing-in Ceremonies, Awards Ceremonies, CPR/AED & First Aid Training, VA Home Loans Benefits Classes, Yoga Classes, Karate Classes, Bootcamp Fitness Workouts, Outdoor Gym Workouts, 5K-Runs, Graduations Parties, Birthday Parties, Baby Showers, Bridal Showers, Food Truck Festivals, Car Shows, Bike Shows, Poker Runs, Bike Blessings, Car Wash Fundraisers; and Games: Softball, Basketball, Tennis, Pickleball, Ping-Pong.

AMVETS - VA Adaptive Fitness Program: offers adaptive sports opportunities to the Oahu community, serving thousands of veterans, including about 720 adaptive veterans annually at the AMVETS Ewa Beach location. This valuable resource reaches eligible participants from multiple congressional districts, while our monthly Zoom nutrition education sessions further expand our impact to 1,200 veterans.

AMVETS Hawaii BioModulator Program: provides physicians with BioModulators to treat Military/Veterans for the alleviation of chronic pain as an alternative to the pharmacological approach to pain management. Mission statement: To reduce the chronic pain of our veterans and active-duty service personnel so they can fully reclaim their lives and the dignity they deserve. The Lt. General Henry “Hank” Stackpole (USMC, Ret.) Legacy Project: Tripler Army Medical Center Interdisciplinary Pain Management Department personnel include Pain Medicine Specialist Justin T. Matsuura, MD and Physician Assistant Erica Masi. P.A. Masi has over five years of Biomodulator and clinical expertise leading the Biomodulator program. Dr. Brian McLean is past head of the TAMC’s Integrative Pain Management Department with many years of clinical understanding in this micro-current technology. He is serving as an advisor and consultant to this study. IRB completed by Dr. William Humphrey on 25 January 2021.

Recognition & Awards: The Institute of Violent, Abuse and Trauma (IVAT), present Commander Donovan A. Lazarus and Committee Members the 2023 Felix-Stackpole on 28 April 2023.

AMVETS VET-HEAL and Suicide Prevention Program: year-round program aims to help reduce the number of suicides and to support veterans with medical needs to access the best quality healthcare, including mental health and specialized services (traumatic brain injury, polytrauma, post-traumatic stress) and live longer, healthier lives. The department and all posts support this program to include the HEAL program online training.

The University of Hawaii, West Oahu and AMVETS Hawaii STEM Program: year-round program that aims to help Veterans empowered through STEM - Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math programs to be successful in their degree program. The STEM Lab aims to teach various educational workshops to help our military, veterans, and their families achieve their educational goals. The department provides the STEM center furniture and flags (Military Services, State, and the U.S.).

The Hawaii Veterans Beekeeping Program: year-round on the job training (OJT) program aimed to help support veteran beekeepers with training on honeybee biology, colony management, queen rearing, apiary economics, and other valuable skills. The department
hopes this program will become a model to spread veteran beekeeping programs nationwide to assist veterans and families of veterans through bees.

- AMVETS Hawaii sees Beekeeping as a pathway to economic stability, closeness with nature for posttraumatic stress support, reintegration into civilian life with fellow service members, continued education, career training, social networking, and a fascinating hobby that supports agriculture and natural ecosystems.

AMVETS Hawaii Community Garden Program: therapeutic gardening and urban farm using Tower Gardens is a vertical method of growing plants without soil. We use Tower Gardens to grow veggies at our AMVETS West Oahu Veterans Center.

AMVETS J/ROTC Program: AMVETS Hawaii presents 2 AMVETS ROTC Medals with Certificates to each of the 3 ROTC Detachments (Army, Air Force, Navy), at the University of Hawaii at Manoa, and 2 AMVETS ROTC Medals with Certificates to each of the 24 JROTC Detachments in Hawaii.

Hawaii National Guard Youth Challenge Program is a year-round program aimed to help provide life skills and educational courses to at-risk youths. Hawaii Post 4 continues to provide certified mentors as part of the Hawaii National Guard Youth Challenge Program. The department presents leadership awards to youths who display exceptional leadership skills.

Prisoner of War/Missing In Action (POW/MIA) Program: AMVETS members participated in the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA), Repatriation and Memorial ceremonies.

Annual Memorial Commemorations: AMVETS Hawaii hosts The Battle of Midway & NAS Barbers Point NAS Memorial’s Annual Commemoration Ceremony on the first Sunday in June, at the World War II Historic Air Traffic Control Tower, 91-1259 Midway Road, Kalaeloa Airport, Kapolei 96707. The NAS Barbers Point Memorial honors the service of all veterans, civil service employees, and government contractors who served at NAS Barbers Point from 1942 during World War II, Korean conflicts, Vietnam War, NASA missions, Cold War, and Persian Gulf War, until its closure in 1999. The Naval Air Station Barbers Point (NASBP) Memorial was funded and rebuilt by AMVETS Hawaii and re-dedicated on 6 June 2021.

AMVETS Hawaii hosts the Ewa Battlefield, Pearl Harbor Annual Commemoration Ceremony on the on the first Sunday in December, at the World War II Historic 1941 Concrete Airfield Ramp, Roosevelt Ave and Corregidor Rd, Kapolei, 96707. The Battle of Ewa Plain began just before 0800 and was part of the larger surprise attack by the Imperial Japanese Navy (IJN) on the United States of America (US) military base at Pearl Harbor and other installations on the island of Oahu, Territory of Hawaii, on December 7, 1941. This place is sacred ground to the United States Marines that died there, to the Japanese aviators that perished and the civilian residents of Ewa plantation. Remembering our solemn commitment to their memory is the promise that is fulfilled at battlegrounds that are preserved and enshrined by our nation. Ewa Battlefield (Ewa Mooring Mast Field) was officially listed in the National Register of Historic Places on May 23, 2016.

Services
- Provide VA claims information and assistance
- Provide military funeral honors and VA benefits assistance
- Provide legal services and other assistance to veterans and family members
- Provide rides for elderly veterans to doctor’s appointments and grocery stores
- Provide homeless veterans and those in need of groceries, toiletries, clothing, kitchen and household items

Upcoming Events:
- Ewa Battlefield Commemoration Ceremony: 3 December 2023 (0900-1030), Ewa Battlefield 1941 Airfield Concrete Ramp, Kapolei, Hawaii 96707.
- AMVETS Christmas Concert, 8 December 2023 (1200-2000), AMVETS West Oahu Veterans
Report of Donald Lazarus, NEC
Department of Hawaii (continued)

Center, Address: 5001 Iroquois Ave., Building 612, West Loch Annex (JBPHH) Ewa Beach, HI 96706.

Legislative:
Legislative Director, 3rd Vice Commander Marcus DeValentino and Post Commanders continue to meet with Hawaii State elected officials, VA Leadership, Military Leaders, Neighborhood Boards, and Local Media through face-to-face, via emails, letters, and online platforms to help build public awareness to support legislation impacting Veterans: Support for AMVETS National Legislative Priorities: Healthcare Access & Coordination; Women Veterans; Mental Health & Suicide Prevention; Military Sexual Trauma (VA & DoD); Traumatic Brain Injury; Toxic Wounds & Environmental Exposures; VA Oversight, Accountability & Improvement; Economic Opportunity and, Homelessness. Advocating for a solution to this healthcare crisis –

Submitted testimony to support the passing Hawaii State Senate Bill 1035, a step in the right direction to help retain our physicians and attract new physicians to the state.

Hawaii’s islands have some of the worst physician shortages in America. Recently Governor Ige proclaimed that the shortage of nurses in our state was an immediate peril to public health. Making it easier for healthcare professionals in other states to practice in Hawai‘i is a worthy goal. Unfortunately, however, Hawai‘i has just been ranked as the worst state in the U.S. to practice medicine in. The State Legislature and Finance Committee must take immediate steps this session to make Hawai‘i more competitive and fiscally viable for providers to attract health professionals from out of state.

Communications/PRO:
PRO, Valerie Hill and Post Commanders continue, to conduct interviews sharing our AMVETS community service programs initiatives; collaborates with community leaders, companies, schools, churches and veterans other service organizations; to write letters to elected representatives and to voice support on the issues that matter to our military families. Continuing to improve our communication for Department and Posts online presence on websites and social media platforms. This allows our clients to request appointments directly from the website and boost your rating and visibility from website. Automatically request and post reviews from current and recent customers to boost your rating and visibility online.
Report of Sarah Ann Langley, NEC
Department of New Mexico

Membership
Post 1944 has 6 new members. Post 12 has 10 lifetime members, they are on working on recruiting new members to the post.

Upcoming Events
Post 7 will be getting gift cards, for the holiday, to help other organization for the homeless.

Post 12 in the month of July we are on an event for the 4th of July. In August there are developing plans to complete renovations & a grand opening for a new post building & in Sept, we are working on celebrating the accomplishments of Veterans who have returned to school or are planning on obtaining a college degree.

Post 1944 helped with the 4th of July parade. We will be having a table at the county fair in Aug. and will provide food baskets to Veteran families during the holidays.

Post 7 will continue to present the colors at the Duke city Galadiators game, at the Santa Fe cemetery, and at the VA chapel memorial service. The 31st of July will have an education program about flags history at the Veterans Memorial Park.

Programs
Post 12 has worked on becoming a more active part of the community by working with the local community organizations as well as those on the Navajo nation, the state of NM & in other communities in the United States. We are planning more membership drives, voter registration drives, & requesting collaboration from other entities to obtain funding for the construction of our Veterans Memorial Park & othe community projects.

Post 1944 membership activity: Peer-to-Peer support, have a table at the county fair, SAVE /Suicide awareness, JROTC awards, Women Veterans & service members, communications/PRO activity, and Veterans service claims.

Post 7 will continue the ROTC programs & Peer-to-Peer support. Also the Honor Guard & Color Guard were at events around the state (Honor Guard at funerals)

Legislative
Post 12 are working with the Navajo Nations in developing direct services to the Veterans on the reservation with the VA Benefits & expanding resources to the Navajo Nations

Service
Post 12 is currently working on getting back to providing direct services as the Navajo Nations has just recently lifted gatherings as well as the mask mandate.

Post 1944 has helped four families file for their husband death benefits, & one Veteran help file for disability under the Blue Water Navy, Pact act.

Post 2017 attended funerals for two Veterans. Post 2017 will continue to put the flags up at the local businesses, help keep the cemetery clean, & reset the Veterans head stones.
Report of Steve Bird, NEC  
Department of Washington

Membership
Job Fair Pierce County VA will be August 22, 2023 at Post 1. Post 1 and Department Open House is September 16, 2023. VSO complete their training for JBLM to host internship at POST 1. Membership 2,523

Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) will start conducting their monthly meeting here at Post 1 September 2023

Upcoming Events
Next Department Executive Meeting October 2023

Programs
There is a new method the public schools have adopted for communication purposes to the parents regarding their child or children enrolled in public school. It is called the “PeachJar App.” Please see https://ms.peachjar.com/parents and click onto the “Community Organizations” tab. This is the only way community organizations can also communicate directly to the parent(s) through the educational district to let parents know about the National AMVETS PROGRAMS that we annually offer these students (AMERICANISM & AADAA). The use of the Peachjar app requires a subscription. Currently the cost for 40 schools at $12.50 each/ $500.00. This is currently too expensive for AMVETS Dept of WA to cover the 2754 schools in the state of Washington. This year’s AMERICANISM contest for the department received only two entries. One was a first grader and the other a 7th Grader. The 2nd Vice Cmdr for programs recommends AMVETS National Programs Coordinator to contact the CEO of “peachjar app” and inform them of what AMVETS is and does and negotiate for a reduction in pricing.

The department coordination of the AMVETS J/ROTC awards programs was effective in providing the Medal, certificates, and presenters for many of the programs. The department was unable to support some programs who failed to respond to phone calls.

Legislative
The department Legislative Director, Charles (Chuck) Wharton, continues to be active as a member of the Washington Governor’s Veteran Advisory Committee. Mr. Wharton is also a member of the Washington State Veterans Legislative Coalition (VLC). The VLC discusses the individual Bills during meetings, votes on them and speaks “collectively” to the Legislators through emails to Committee Members, phone calls to Aides, and personal testimony on the record during Legislative Committee Hearings. We assign targets to specific team members for priority Bills. We always remind them of the number of Veterans our statewide Coalition speaks for and thank them for their support. During the last 6 years the Veterans Legislative Coalition (VLC) Team has made major improvements of Jobs for Veterans and spouses.

There have been 11 Bills passed to help the Veteran families. A major jump this year was the Nurses Compact. Now the following medical related compacts are law: Nurses Licensure Compact, Interstate medical Licensure Compact, Physical Therapy Compact, Psychology Interjurisdictional Compact, Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology Compact and the Dentist and Dental and Dental Hygienist Compact. There have been 4 plus bills for Education Assistance. There were 4 bills passed to provide property tax relief. There are now 3 bills that establish the Suicide Prevention 988 program. Two bills that will help our Handicap veterans, one of those bills means they will not have to pay sales tax on their VA provided Handicap Vehicles. And lastly provide a Service Officers for our states Rural Counties. I must state the VLC is a team effort comprised of volunteers who are passionate about Veterans.

SHB 1069 Mental health counselor comp PEW(Leavitt) C 58 L 23 SHB: Enacts the Counseling Compact. E2SHB 1134 988 system APP(Orwall) Del to Gov Establishes an endorsement for mobile rapid response crisis teams and community-based crisis teams that meet staffing, vehicle, and training standards, as well as a performance payment program to support them.
- Directs the University of Washington to develop recommendations for the creation of crisis workforce and resilience training collaboratives to offer voluntary regional trainings for personnel in
the behavioral health crisis system.
- Directs the Department of Health to develop informational materials and a social media campaign to promote the 988 crisis hotline and related crisis lines. Establishes liability protection for several entities and personnel for activities related to the dispatching decisions of 988 crisis hotline staff and the transfer of calls between the 911 line and the 988 crisis hotline.
- Extends several dates related to reporting, designated 988 crisis contact center hubs, and funding the new crisis call center system platform.

SHB 1346 Purple star award ED(Shavers) Del to Gov
SHB: Establishes the Purple Star Award (Award) to recognize school districts and schools that demonstrate educational and social-emotional supports to students of military service members.
- Establishes related administrative duties for the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI), including authorizing the OSPI to collaborate with a qualifying entity in administering the Award.

HB 1355 Property tax exemptions FIN(Wylie) C 147 L 23 SHB: Expands qualification for the senior citizen, disabled individuals, and qualifying veterans property tax relief program by increasing the calculation of income thresholds.
- Makes adjustments to income thresholds for property tax relief programs every three years.
- Allows individuals to continue to qualify for the senior citizen, disabled individuals, and qualifying veterans’ property tax exemption if their income increases as the result of certain cost of living adjustments for tax year 2024

ESHB 1576 Dentist compact PEW(Caldier) Del to Gov
Enacts the Dentist and Dental Hygienist Compact.

HR 4646 (Wilcox) H Adopted Recognizing the aeronautics and military community.

ESSB 5320 Journey level electricians LC (Saldaña) C 95 L 23 Modifies the eligibility requirements for obtaining journey level electrician certification.
- Establishes a temporary pathway for current trainees to obtain journey level electrician certification without completing an apprenticeship program through July 1, 2026. (A pathway for veterans includes having 8000 hours of experience in the electrical construction trade installing and maintaining electrical wiring and equipment while serving in a construction battalion in the armed forces.)

SB 5323 Dept. of veterans affairs (MacEwen) Del to Gov WDIV FN: SB: Moves the director of nursing services position at each state veterans’ home from WMS to EMS, which is exempt from civil service provisions.
- Provides certain limited instances in which the Washington Department of Veterans’ Affairs may
disclose a veteran’s discharge papers.
- Repeals statutory references to the Soldiers’ Home Colony, fundraising for the eastern Washington veterans’ home, and a requirement to provide domiciliary and medical care.

SSB 5358 Veterans’ services SGE(Gildon) Del to Gov SSB: Requires the Washington Department of Veterans Affairs to submit reports to the Legislature to determine the effectiveness of the veterans service officer program, and the veteran peer-to-peer training and support program in meeting veterans’ needs.
- States legislative intent to double appropriations for the programs, prioritizing smaller counties and counties with below-average rates of veterans receiving federal benefits.

EFFECT OF CHANGES MADE BY STATE GOVERNMENT & ELECTIONS COMMITTEE (First Substitute): States the intent of the Legislature is to increase, rather than double, state appropriations for veterans service officer and peer mentoring programs.

SSB 5499 Multistate nurse licensure HLTC(Mullet) C 123 L 23 SSB: Enters Washington into the Nurse Licensure Compact.

SGA 9330 DAVID PUENTE JR. () S Confirmed Confirming David Puente as the director of the Washington Department of Veterans Affairs

Service
The AMVETS Department of Washington Service Department currently employs two service officers. Services are provided under contract with the Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs. Under this contract there are two performance requirements that must be met, the claims approval rating “batting average” and the cost per claims. This contract arrangement serves 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. Since the last DEC May 2023, our numbers stand as:

- 433 Claims submitted
- 2,051 Conditions

We have taught 11 classes at JBLM with each class averaging at least 70 service members. Most classes have over 100 in attendance.

We attended the 3rd Quarter Congressional VHA leaders conference in Seattle and were the only Veteran Service Organization in attendance (Thursday, June 22nd at 1pm).

We hosted the first ever Women Veteran’s Brunch at Post 1 with over 50 veteran and active service women in attendance (Sat, June 24th). We have hosted 3 PNW Leaders Coalition meetings so far and will continue throughout the year, every 3rd Wednesday of the month, each with a total of 30+ key veteran services leaders from Pierce County.

Upcoming events
We have 2 resource events a month scheduled at JBLM as well as 2-3 benefits classes per month.

We are restarting and hosting the Women Veterans resiliency meetings starting September 6th at Post 1 and will be hosting them twice a month moving forward. We are hosting, in conjunction with the WDVA, the first ever VSO Social here at Post 1 Aug 9th, inviting leaders and service officers from the south sound region to join us that evening.

Aug 6th we will be hosting a PACT Act clinic in conjunction with the WDVA at Post 1 to allow any last min veterans to file before the August 9th deadline.

We will be attending the Serving Those Who Served leaders conference in Wenatchee, WA Aug 24-25th. I will also be attending AMVETS National’s conference Aug 21-23rd.

We will be attending the WDVA/VA Puget Sound Suicide Prevention Think Tank along with other key leaders in our region on September 7th at 1pm.
We will be sitting down with King County in September to pursue a funding contract with them through their Veterans, Seniors & Human Services Levy in order to continue operations and possibly expand depending on funding.
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*Finance Officer and Inspector General reports not received by printing deadline*
Greetings, I would like to welcome everyone to our AMVETS 78th National Convention. It has been an honor for me to have served as your National Commander for this past year. During this time we have updated our Programs Reporting System and Membership Database. These are proving to be more user friendly and with more information available. I want to commend all the headquarters staff for working so diligently on this.

During the past year I have had many opportunities to represent this great organization at all types of functions all across the country, from Washington, D.C. to Washington State, New York, Massachusetts, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Florida and Hawaii, just to name a few. I met with the Secretaries of Defense, and VA. I met with the Directors of three VA Hospital systems discussing how they are treating women veterans issues and how it can be improved. We talked about the ramp-up of service to those filing toxic wound claims, the PACT Act.

I also visited many posts in these states and met a lot of you, the members. You have left a lasting impression on my wife and I as we see all the things you are doing to help veterans and your community. Please keep up this important work and keep getting our name out there.

I also had the pleasure of visiting Taiwan as a guest of the Taiwan Veteran Affairs Council. The most memorable aspects of the visit were meeting the President of Taiwan and touring their latest Coast Guard Cutter. Other sites were their Veterans Hospital and Veterans Home. In all of these visits, it was my pleasure to represent you.

Our R2R, Rolling 2 Remember, continues to grow and bring awareness to our POW/MIA and veteran suicide mission. It was great to be back at the Pentagon for this. I can’t thank the Special Activities staff there enough for the support we received. We continue to meet with Congress and present our Legislative agenda hoping that these items can be brought out of committee and to a vote, maybe making it to the President’s desk for signature. It is never ending.

As we close out our year, I want to thank all the staff in the Headquarters Building, garden level, first floor and second floor, all the National officers, and all Department and post officers for all your hard work. It is through your dedication that we continue to grow and I can’t thank you enough.

That concludes my report and I move for its adoption at the proper time.
Report of Bill Clark,
National First Vice Commander

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

I wish to thank all that supported me and offered me the opportunity to serve as your 1st vice commander. I have been able to travel to several state conventions, visit dept executive meetings and testimonials, and want to take this opportunity to thank all for the hospitality I experienced during my travels. We are truly an AMVETS family!

This past year has been one of challenges, with the National Director retiring, computer issues we have had our hands full, however, through the leadership of Warren Cox the membership is running smoothly and, as evidenced by the positive emails, service to the departments if outstanding.

Our first line of communication is with the department 1st vice commanders, so please keep the membership department informed of any changes that take place after revalidations are submitted.

The most important issue is current email addresses. Please let the membership department know of any additional addresses that your department would like included for our email traffic. Also, watch for upcoming roundtables to be held via Zoom, addressing any needs of our posts/departments and also working through our new computer program.

Also, please join me in welcoming our new member, support specialist Duane Perry, who is an Army veteran and an AMVETS life member.

A mention again that life Dues will increase effective 1 Sep 23 to:
$500.00 - 55 years of age and under
$400.00 - 56 to 65 years of age
$300.00 - 66 years of age and older

Our recruiting initiative this year for the high recruiter is travel to/from convention, four nights hotel stay and tickets to both events plus $200.00 to District I.

The winner this year is Fred Vineyard from NJ.

Congrats to Fred and if he is not available to attend the convention, 2nd place winner is Mike Eason from DC. Thank you to all who participated in our membership initiative.

This concludes my report and I move for its adoption at the proper time.
Report of Horace Johnson,  
National Second Vice Commander

Membership  
For the past twelve Months, the National Member Support Team has been a great help, helping Programs move through a new phase of Programs Reporting. Membership will provide a vital role in Programs reporting as the Springly Team ties Membership into the same Systems that Programs Reporting enjoys now.  
copy of Upcoming Events: If you are reading this report, that means you are at AMVETS National Convention 2023, where we will be selecting our newly elected Officers for 2023/2024. I will be a Candidate for the National 1st Vice Commander. I plan on continuing with my quest to insure AMVETS is on the right path to keep up our Membership competitive, and in line with our Aims, and Purposes; remember, numbers are strengths.

Programs  
When you elected me as your National 2nd Vice Commander, I promised you that I knew what the problem was with Programs. I knew that our Programs Reporting System was broke, and that if I was elected National 2nd Vice, I would do all I could to get the Programs Reporting System back to an easier Reporting System. During most of this past 2022, and 2023, that is a lot of what the Programs Team worked on, until we got a new System on board. We have the new System up and running; but there is more to do, because now Programs has the task of educating Membership to use the System properly; this will be an ongoing process, but everything worth having need some upgrading, and maintaining. I thank you for your support, and pray that you will support me as I move to my next endeavor, which will be AMVETS National 1st Vice Commander.

Service  
When the Membership Team is incorporated into Spingley System, it will be much easier to assign tier levels to the annually elected officers of the Organization by automatically assigning access to the newer elected officers, according to their newer elected positions.  
Other: I would be remissed if I didn't Thank My Wife Toni, and Family for their unselfish support as I travel the different Departments of this great Organization.  

Thank You Colondra Etheredge; Thank You Carol Hebert.
Report of Paul Shipley, National First Third Commander

Fellow AMVETS,

As we come to the close of our year and look to the future, I want to take the opportunity to thank all of you for the opportunity to serve this great organization. I hope that you have a great and productive convention and please take the time to enjoy Pittsburgh.

This year we have made great strides in improving our footprint in Washington, DC. Last year, after the successful passing of the most significant piece of legislation since the G.I. Bill, the PACT Act, we have not been complacent in fighting for the recognition and benefits you deserve as American Veterans!

I want to point to a few major items from this past year:

1. Being able to have the Legislative Advocacy Week (LAW) program at its full impact on Capitol Hill. Including over 150 total participants from the AMVETS family walking the halls of congress and having meetings with their representatives in congress.

2. Having a well-attended reception on Capitol Hill mere steps from the Capitol Building. Many AMVETS were able to converse directly with Representatives and Congressional Staffers at the beautiful Phoenix Park Hotel.

3. Being called to testify before congress and present vital information that directly impacts the way the PACT Act is being implemented across the VA system.

4. Leading the way for all VSO’s to pass the VETT Act to end the unfair tax policy that penalizes organizations like AMVETS from their memberships being inclusive to all veterans who served this great nation.

I want to thank the Sons of AMVETS for all of their dedicated work on LAW. Without them this great program would not be possible. Thank you to Justin and Danielle from the Nimitz Group for being our voices everyday working on Capitol Hill to get our message to the decision makers in DC. Finally, thank you AMVETS Family for all the support you have given the legislative department. Without your dedication we could not be making the impact that we continue to make.

Yours in Service,
Paul Shipley
National 3rd Vice Commander
Commander McLean and members of the National Executive Committee,

As of this writing, several departments and have not revised their bylaws to reflect the increased live membership dues. These need to be submitted for approval of the National Judge Advocate and kept on file at National Headquarters.

Aside from this, it has been a normal year for the National Judge Advocate. The usual questions and requests for information have been received and responses made.

As a matter of interest, I’m including in this report copy of our national charter. This is something we’ve all heard about but I believe many of you have never had an opportunity to read this before.

Report of James B. King,
National Judge Advocate

(3) to dedicate ourselves to the service and best interests of the community, State, and Nation to the end that our country shall be and remain forever a whole, strong, and free Nation;

(4) to aid and encourage the abolition of prejudice, ignorance, and disease;

(5) to encourage universal exercise of the voting franchise to the end that there shall be elected and maintained in public office men and women who hold public office as a public trust administered in the best interests of all the people;

(6) to advocate the development and means by which all Americans may become enlightened and informed citizens and thus participate fully in the functions of our democracy;

(7) to encourage and support an international organization of all peace-loving nations to the end that not again shall any nation be permitted to breach their national peace;

(8) to continue to serve the best interests of our Nation in peace as in war;

(9) to develop to the utmost the human, mental, spiritual, and economical resources of our Nation;

(10) to perpetuate and preserve the friendships and comradeship born on the battle front and nurtured in the common experience of service to our Nation during time of war; and

(11) to honor the memory of those men and women who gave their lives that a free America and a free world might live by the creation of living memorials in the form of additional educational, cultural, and recreational facilities.

Title 36 U.S. Code,
Subtitle 1.2.2, Chapter 227

§ 22701. Organization
(a) FEDERAL CHARTER.— AMVETS (American Veterans) (in this chapter, the corporation”) is a federally chartered corporation. (b) PERPETUAL EXISTENCE.— Except as otherwise provided, the corporation has perpetual existence.

§ 22702. Purposes
The purposes of the corporation are—

(1) to preserve for ourselves and our posterity the great and basic truths and enduring principles upon which this Nation was founded;

(2) to maintain a continuing interest in the welfare and rehabilitation of the disabled veterans of World War II, the Korean conflict, and the Vietnam era and to establish facilities for the assistance of all veterans and to represent them in their claims before the Department of Veterans Affairs and other organizations without charge;
Report of James B. King,
National Judge Advocate (continued)

constitution and bylaws of the corporation.

(b) VOTING.— Each member has one vote in the conduct of official business at the post level.

(c) NONDISCRIMINATION.— The terms of membership may not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin.

§ 22704. Governing body
(a) DELEGATES TO NATIONAL CONVENTIONS.— Each post may elect delegates to national conventions of the corporation. The delegates each have one vote in the conduct of business of the convention to which they are elected. (b) EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.— The executive committee of the corporation consists of—

(1) one member elected to represent each department; and (2) the officers of the corporation as ex officio members.

(c) OFFICERS.— (1) The officers of the corporation are a national commander, two national vice commanders, a finance officer, a judge advocate, a chaplain, six national district commanders, and a provost marshal.

(2) The officers shall be elected by the delegates at the annual national convention.

(d) NONDISCRIMINATION.— The requirements for holding office in the corporation may not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin.

§ 22705. Powers
(a) GENERAL.— The corporation may—

(1) adopt bylaws and regulations for the management of its property and the regulation of its affairs;

(2) adopt seals, emblems, and badges;

(3) choose officers, representatives, and agents as necessary to carry out the purposes of the corporation;

(4) make contracts;

(5) establish State and regional organizations and local posts;

(6) acquire, own, lease, encumber, and transfer property as necessary to carry out the purposes of the corporation;

(7) borrow money, issue instruments of indebtedness, and secure its obligations by granting security interests in its property;

(8) publish a magazine, newspaper, and other publications consistent with the purposes of the corporation;

(9) sue and be sued; and (10) do any other act necessary and proper to carry out the purposes of the corporation.

(b) POWERS GRANTED TO OTHER ORGANIZATIONS.—

The provisions, privileges, and prerogatives granted before July 24, 1947, to other national veterans’ organizations because of their incorporation by Congress are granted to the corporation.

§ 22706. Exclusive right to name, seals, emblems, and badges
The corporation and its State, regional, and local subdivisions have the exclusive right to use the name “AMVETS (American Veterans)” and seals, emblems, and badges the corporation adopts.

§ 22707. Restrictions
(a) PROFIT.— The corporation shall operate as a not-for-profit corporation, exclusively for charitable, educational, patriotic, and civic improvement purposes. (b) STOCK AND DIVIDENDS.— The corporation may not issue stock or declare or pay a dividend. (c) POLITICAL ACTIVITIES.— The corporation or an officer of the corporation or member of its executive
committee as such may not contribute to, support, or assist a political party or candidate for elective public office. The corporation may not carry on propaganda.

(d) DISTRIBUTION OF INCOME OR ASSETS.— The income or assets of the corporation may not inure to the benefit of, or be distributed to, a director, officer, or member of the corporation, except on dissolution or final liquidation of the corporation. (e) LOANS.— The corporation may not make a loan or advance to a director or officer. Directors who vote for or assent to making a loan or advance to a director or officer, and officers who participate in making the loan or advance, are jointly and severally liable to the corporation for the amount of the loan or advance until it is repaid.

§ 22708. Headquarters and principal place of business
The headquarters and principal place of business of the corporation shall be in Maryland. However, the activities of the corporation are not confined to Maryland but may be conducted throughout the States, territories, and possessions of the United States.

§ 22709. Records and inspection
(a) Records.—The corporation shall keep—

(1) correct and complete records of account;

(2) minutes of the proceedings of its members, executive committee, and committees having any of the authority of its executive committee; and

(3) at its registered or principal office, a record of the names and addresses of its members entitled to vote.

(b) Inspection.— A member, or an agent or attorney of the member, may inspect the records of the corporation for any proper purpose, at any reasonable time.

§ 22710. Service of process
(a) District of Columbia.— The corporation shall have a designated agent in the District of Columbia to receive service of process for the corporation. Notice to or service on the agent, or mailed to the business address of the agent, is notice to or service on the corporation.

(b) States.— As a condition to the exercise of any power or privilege granted by this chapter, the corporation shall file, with the secretary of state or other designated official of each State, the name and address of an agent in that State on whom legal process or demands against the corporation may be served.

§ 22711. Liability for acts of officials, representatives, and agents
The corporation is liable for the acts of its officials, representatives, and agents acting within the scope of their authority.

§ 22712. Distribution of assets on dissolution or final liquidation
On dissolution or final liquidation of the corporation, any assets remaining after the discharge or satisfactory provision for discharge of all liabilities shall be transferred to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to be applied to the care and comfort of disabled veterans of World War II, the Korean conflict, and the Vietnam era.

As always, my office is open as I often say, 24/7. If you need to contact me my e-mail address is jim1941@live.com and my cell phone number is 410 913 2780.

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

Jim King
National Judge Advocate
AMVETS (American Veterans)
Dear Commander, and members of the national executive committee

It is an honor once again to come before you today to represent the National Service Foundation.

As you know in the past, we were honored to support the entire AMVETS family with many grants, spending Millions of dollars. It has been a pleasure to fund these programs in the past. Unfortunately, we are unable to continue being as generous due to the changing times in our economy and the financial world.

In July, our Foundation trustees met face to face to propose a budget for the upcoming year. Unfortunately, it was a grim meeting and incredibly stressful realizing we had to take drastic measures to continue to survive as a 501 C-3 organization. We had to unfortunately let mostly all our National service officers go and depend on the few remaining to organize the closure of offices throughout the country, which was stressful, and to complete claims that had to be processed. We are so grateful for all the work these staff members have done. This task was a major accomplishment and will take months to complete. We are restructuring so we can eventually go back to getting our VSO's back throughout the country.

We are re-negotiating with our departments that have thrift stores. They also have had to take some deep cuts in their grants and are working with us to regroup. We are hoping that we will be ready to go back to supporting all our NSO's and our departments with thrift stores. This we hope to have back in 12 to 18 months.

As you review our proposed budget, I hope you will understand the deep cuts we had to propose. We of course were not happy with this budget but if we want to go back funding our NSO's and the other programs, we must act now to save our foundation.

As you all know, the economy has created large overheads for us and you as well. 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.

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. We have a few new openings coming soon which gradually will help us get back to the funding we once enjoyed.

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 Karin Simmons,
AMVETS Ladies Auxiliary National President

National Commander McLean, National Officers, NEC’s, Past National Commanders, Delegates, Members, and Guests – I extend greetings to you on behalf of AMVETS Ladies Auxiliary. Welcome to Pittsburgh!

It’s hard to believe that my year as National President is almost over. I have had an amazing year traveling to many of the Departments, meeting so many members and seeing what you all are doing to further our cause for our Veterans, active-duty military, their families and our communities and children.

The hospitality shown to me was overwhelming! I was deeply honored to participate in Veteran's Day activities at Arlington and ride in Rolling to Remember. The memories I've made, and the friendships formed will be forever etched in my heart.

I would like to thank everyone across the country that supported my project – Fisher House. As they continue to grow to assist our Veterans and Active-duty personnel, I know your donations will help immeasurably.

To National Commander Don McLean and his wife Peggy, National Son's Commander Mick Ciesla and his wife Linda, National Riders President John Reando and his wife Kelly, National Junior's President Joy Stopyra, National Saddest and Snappiest Mike and Evelyn Davis – THANK YOU so much for letting me share my year with you.

It has been my privilege and honor to serve as your National President. I hope I have made you as proud of me as I am proud of my AMVETS family!

Karin Simmons
National President
AMVETS Ladies Auxiliary
2022 - 2023
Report of Michael “Mick” Ciesla, National Sons of AMVETS Commander

Commander Don, Officers, and AMVETS members,

Sons of AMVETS will be closing our 40th Anniversary year with distinction. Across the country we have continued our exemplary performance supporting AMVETS and all Veterans. Our pro-active Direct-to-Vet approach provides an impact that impacts the daily lives of your comrades.

This year we will again exceed over $10 million in projecting reporting. Programs have included chair ramps, labor and funds for individual Post improvements, cemetery maintenance, Vet transportation to VA facilities, undergarments and sweats for Vets, mobility scooter presentations, a leadership role during LAW week, plus a myriad of other endeavors. The ‘tale of the tape’ reveals a true commitment to service. In less than 3 years, Sons of AMVETS have traveled over 2 million miles to provide over 600,000 volunteer hours.

Membership is on the rise. More Sons than ever are making a long-term promise to the AMVETS Family by making the decision to become Life Members. Additionally, we have added 5 new Squadrons during the year with more to follow.

It has been a truly remarkable experience to lead such a dedicated group of men. “Sons Serving Veterans” for us is not just a motto but a mission. It is our way to fulfill a civic duty, to give back to our communities and country and pay tribute to those in our individual family who, by their service, made us eligible to be part of the AMVETS family.

In closing and on behalf of our entire Sons membership I would like to extend a THANK YOU to each AMVETS member for your service. The Sons of AMVETS look forward to building on our legacy of support to achieve a better future for the AMVETS Family.

May God bless you and may God Bless America,

Respectfully,
First, thank you Commander McLean for having the confidence in me to lead this committee.

**What is the difference between the Department of Veteran Affairs National Advisory Committee (NAC) and the VA Federal Advisory Committee (FAC)?**

**Answer:** The NAC has a unique charter that supports the VA's mission to care for the Veterans, Family Members, and Caregivers. The FAC is a Federal statute that governs the establishment, termination, and management of the FAC.”

April 25th -29th the AMVETS, Ladies and Sons National Officers participated in the National Advisory Committee Meeting. Many of the VA facilities are getting back to business but lacking participation, due to the death of volunteers during the pandemic or volunteers are afraid to reintegrate in the facilities. So, the CDCE staff is asking what can be done in the communities or remotely?

The CDCE team also discussed the work being put into the new Volunteer Portal for the volunteer to log into the portal from anywhere to register their hours. Once logged in, a volunteer can only choose one assignment per facility. They were working on integrating all the systems to support one profile process. This has started at the VA Center for Development & Civic Engagement (CDCE) level and assignments would be coordinated with the coordinator. They were planning out Training and Educational sessions and they would keep at the CDCE facilities. Implementation of on ID for all facilities (CBOCS, multiple VAMC, and HCSS) should be happening. Most of the questions about the Volunteer Portal was about Reports. They are looking this accessible to all who will need to download reports such as the Volunteers and the National Representatives? Tracking Awards is a new feature. The issue with the Portal is only 8% of the Volunteers are logging in successfully. This is why they will be implementing training to educate the volunteers.

On another note, The James H. Parke Memorial Youth Scholarship was rewarded to Kyla Griffin. Watching Kyla interact with her little sister before and after to hearing her speech at the luncheon was an inspiration of motivation. Kyla has been volunteering for four years and accumulated 785 volunteer hours at the W.G. Bill Hefner Salisbury VA facility.

At the Parke Luncheon, Kyla's spoke on the importance of giving back to her community and with that she created a Veteran's Book Club last summer. She and the VA staff felt that the book club added value to the Veterans who participated. Bringing a since of connection has encouraged Kyla to continue her book club sessions this upcoming year. Kyla was rewarded $20,000 to assist in her continued studies this fall at the college of her choice and a plaque for all her hard work. Congratulations Kyla!!!!

AMVETS Reps and Deps- We are still behind working on certifying the Department Reps and Deps. The goal is to have all the of the Reps and Deps who sent in the proper paperwork letters and card available at the convention. Please check with Carol Hebert and Colondra Etheredge as they are both VA National Certifying Officers about your memos and letters. Many memos went out to the facilities; however, we haven't gotten around to all the letters and cards. See the National Programs Director and National Programs Manager to see who they have listed for your department. We have found that we sent out memos and letters for paperwork received, and the individual was deceased or no longer volunteering.

The next NAC (National Advisory Committee) is scheduled to meet April 24th – 27th in South Carolina. This is an opportunity for the exchange of ideas and new practices amongst the nation's VAVS Reps and Deps.

In my last report we talked about the negative impact which the 2019 pandemic and the new VA Volunteer Portal has place on the Veteran community, hospitals, and clinics. From the look of the AJRs received within the last past year, AMVETS presences has declined. We know it is because of the pandemic and facility closures.
but reach out to your last known chief. Many of the facilities are opening with the option to also participate in the Zoom (virtual) meetings. During these meetings they are putting information out about community project and other ways to volunteer which would count as VA hours.

Come on states N-Z this is your year to get recertification and show up for AMVETS at the VA facilities. Do not assume that we have you correct information. Help National Programs by providing them with your current Rep and/or Dep's information, their facility, and the chief/volunteer coordinator’s contact information.

Thanks to all the volunteers, Reps and Deps for all you do.

A big thanks to Colondra Eldridge for her support and help.

A final note. Chris Slawinski, Executive Director of the Fleet Reserve Association (FRA) a life member of AMETS Post 44 and treasurer of Parke Scholarship fund lost his battle with cancer recently. He will be greatly missed. Fair winds and following seas my friend.

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

Yours in Service,

John P. “JP” Brown III, PNC
VAVS Chairman
Report of John Reando,  
National AMVETS Riders President

It’s been another great year for the AMVETS Riders in 2023! Record breaking performance from our membership and programs reporting.

Membership as of July 31 was 10 Departments comprising of:

125 Chapters  
In 29 states

2691 Riders  
536 Supporters  
3227 total members

1399 AMVETS  
885 AUX  
943 SON’s

New members to the organization:  
88 AMVETS  
100 AUX  
96 SON’s  
284 Total

And program reporting, Jan. 1st, 2023 thru June 30, 2023 = $8,437,244.75!

July 2022 thru December 2022 = 6,586,900.24

For a grand total of $15,024,144.99… way to be LENGENDARY!

I’m looking very forward to seeing everyone again this year!

LRB/LRS,  
John Reando, RNP
Report of Milton Allen, National Chaplain

Programs
First Chaplain’s Zoom Roundtable was conducted on Mar 30, 2023. Based on responses received, this event is anticipated to be conducted quarterly. Chaplain’s Roundtable held at Spring NEC, great attendance by members. Chaplain Allen will hold a Roundtable at the National Convention, for interested members. The National Chaplain attended Rolling to Remember, Gold Star Mothers Banquet and participated in various activities during his visit to D.C. “Canes of Heroes” donated 54 canes to worthy veterans. Total donations this year to Canes for Heroes are $900.00. Total program hours for 1st Reporting Period were $4,613.64

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, III & VI Spring Meetings, attended and participated in Departments of Florida and Louisiana State Conventions. Attended National Commander’s and President’s Testimonial Dinner.
Greetings Commander McLean, Executive Director Joe Chenelly, Officers, NEC Representatives, Members, and Guests. I would like to welcome everyone to Pittsburgh, PA for the AMVETS Family 2023 National Convention. I wish everyone a productive week and safe travels.

Another year has come and gone. Congratulations Commander McLean on a great year. You have represented the AMVETS Family very well this past year. The AMVETS Family Traditions & Protocols Committee has been working on a few things this past year, one of those things is getting the correct Protocols down on seating our Honored Guest during Banquets and special events. These protocols will be added to the AMVETS Family Traditions & Protocols Guidebook. The Guidebook will be posted on the AMVETS website if you would like to have a copy.

Thank you, Commander McLean, for allowing me to Chair this great committee this past year. Big thanks to all the committee members for all your great work and dedication this past year.

Harold P. Collins PNC
AMVETS Family Traditions & Protocols Committee Chairman
Report of Joseph Chenelly,
National Executive Director

National Commander McLean, 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.

Financially, this past year has been our toughest in a long time. AMVETS weathered difficult challenges many times, and we will do so again now. Together.

Despite the challenges, a great deal has been accomplished. From improving the user experience and functionality of Programs Reporting, to bringing on a new, modern Membership Database, to groundbreaking advocacy in Washington, YOUR National Headquarters has spent the past 12 months setting a very positive future for AMVETS and all veterans and their families.

Working hand in hand with the Department of Veterans Affairs throughout the implementation of the PACT Act, which we feverishly fought get through Congress in 2022, this vital process has gone even better than expected.

As of July 17, 2023, 4 million Veterans had received VA’s Toxic Exposure Screening. More than 1.7 million Veterans have identified at least one potential exposure. This is enabling VA health care teams to provide ongoing care with a focus on early diagnosis and treatment of any health concerns that might be connected to exposures.

An amazing 79% of PACT Act claims for VA disability and compensation were approved over the first year of this, the largest health care and benefits expansion in VA history.

Rolling to Remember, which in 2022 set the path for passage of the legislation that became the PACT Act, was in 2023 our most successful event yet. More than 40,000 patriots joined together in the Pentagon parking lot on May 28, over Memorial Day weekend, and once again captured the attention of the nation, advocating for our missing in action, prisoners of war, and our fellow veterans who made it home but are still battling their own wars.

Our triumphant return to the Pentagon was a four-year effort that many said was impossible. Those who rode in the demonstration over the past three-plus decades, when it was called Rolling Thunder, expressed their elation and gratitude this year for now fully restoring the impactful tradition.

AMVETS’ signature event, the largest veterans event in the nation, was a smashing success. More than 50,000 patriots took part in Rolling to Remember 2022, in person, in Washington, D.C. We made a massive impact in veterans advocacy, reaching millions and millions of Americans with our message, raising awareness of veterans needs and of the AMVETS organization.

Everyone at NHQ is striving to make the work of the green hats easier and quicker. I urge you to read the reports of our vice commanders, as well as those by our Membership and Programs directors, to see how they’ve worked diligently all year to improve the ways their respective departments serve you and meet their missions.

I am particularly proud of their work in modernizing their databases, improving how leaders and members interact with membership information and programs reporting. A huge plus is that they finally tie together on the same platform, eliminating redundant date entry at the post, state, and national levels, saving your valuable time.

I first brought up the idea at last year’s national convention of relocating our national headquarters out of the D.C. area. I spoke of the expensive repairs and renovations needed to continue operating in our building. Those need still exist and are only becoming more pressing and more expensive. In addition to the building itself, the labor market in the National Capital Region continues to tighten, ramping up salaries and making it incredibly difficult to find veterans to hire.
A proposed amendment will be considered this week by the convention body. Should it be adopted, removing the requirement that NHQ be located in Maryland, we will propose to the NEC on Saturday a list of criteria to consider in seeking a place to relocate. We will also propose a plan to list the building in Lanham, Maryland, for sale. Should those proposals be approved, we would hope to bring offers for the NEC to consider in December. The proposal will come with a special proposed budget for the relocation, completely paid for by the sale of the current building.

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.
National Commander McLean, 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. As a team we are proud to have recently been acknowledged as the most cohesive, dedicated, and motivated team in a decade. Our vacant seat has been filled with Member Support Specialist Army Veteran and AMVETS Life Member Duane Perry, who has hit the ground running. We remain dedicated to supporting you.

Our Mission this year is clear, and that is to provide service with excellence and professionalism resulting in expedited sound responses to all needs. Though our current membership numbers are slightly down as we continue to move in a positive direction coming out of COVID we expect those numbers to increase on a continual basis.

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 currently at 80 percent, our focus for the upcoming year is to encourage new members to enroll under Annual Membership which would increase revenue.

Life Dues

Life Dues will be increased effective 1 September 23 by a much-needed amount:

$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

Be on the lookout for invitations in early October for 1st Vice Roundtables to address the needs of the Posts. These Roundtables will take place quarterly (Zoom).

A new membership monthly Newsletter has been developed and 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.

National 1st Vice Bill Clark recruiting initiative (see his report).

New Data Base

On 15 July 23 the Board approved the onboarding of Springly to be our data base provider. Over the past few months, we have diligently been working with them 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 simplifies our processes and 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 National. Save the trees and cost of mailing.

Recruiting

*Should be EVERYONES 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.

*New QR Code directs potential new members to our join feature and can be printed, emailed etc.

*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.

*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.

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 our Officers on how to enter and renew members. Work more with the Departments/Post on how important it is to apply monies to the members records ASAP. Our data base has many members with RED X’S, which means no money has been applied to the record. National receives daily calls from members who have paid their dues to the post and departments and the money has not yet been applied. This causes a huge delay in the Member receiving their card and member status within the organization.

Annual cards for 2024 will be sent to the Departments this coming August/September. We are stressing to the Departments on how important it is to make sure every Post in their state receives their cards, and to the Post that all cards are sent to their members promptly.

**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
National Commander McLean, members of the NEC, and distinguished guests,

Congratulations to all Departments, we met our goal for 100% Department reporting. We also have had Unorganized Departments report as well, my goal is to get all unorganized departments to start reporting. This couldn't have been possible without the help of our National District Commanders and the National 2nd Vice, as my last resort to get the reporting. By means it was no easy job and with teamwork we accomplished our mission.

Our Program system is up and running we have had states test it out before it went out to all and received feedback on things that they needed, and we tried to make sure those items were taken care of. Anyone now can report but they need to make sure their email is up to date with the membership data base to register. Training videos will be going out soon as well as classes here at convention. The only personnel right now that will be able to pull up program reports for their states are, the State Commander, the State 2nd Vice and the State Executive Director. If any states have full time staff members that handles programs, please let me know if they will need access to the reports.

Americanism entries have been submitted and are being judged and hopefully results will be given out for the essay part of the contest. The coloring contests posters will be on display and if you would like to help vote on which poster is deserving of winning, please feel free to check them out.

We are still currently being sent Eagle Scout and Boy Scout requests, the Programs Team at National are forwarding those requests to the states so they can touch base with them and hopefully coordinate for an AMVET to be present at their ceremony. If you have a boy scout or JROTC chair for these please let us know who they are so we can get them directed to the proper person.

VAVs REP/Dep appointments for the states of A-M. which ended 31 July 2022, N-Z ends 31 July 2023 some states have still not been updated. All states need to look at their REPs/DEPS to see if they need to be updated. Even if it is the same individuals, we need the new forms with the current state Commanders Signature and this year's date.

Scholarships is now closed for Veterans, Spouses of and Grandchildren of Veterans.

The Career Center is doing a wonderful job:

In 2022, AMVETS Career Center successfully exceeded the 630 veteran placement goal. Here is to another collaborative year with the Call of Duty Endowment. Together, we will continue the work of addressing the labor statistic issue of unemployment and underemployment amongst our nation's heroes.

Progress on our agreed upon plan for 2023:

As of June, Quarter 2-2023, AMVETS Career Center has placed 154 veterans at a cost per placement of $626.00. Full-time placements are at 90%, Post 9/11 veterans are at 81% and 23% of placements are women. The top three industries placed are Government and Public Administration, Business Support - Admin/Staffing, and Information - Information Technology. The average salary for quarter two is $73,135.

Additionally, there has been a demand for data on the ethnicities of veterans placed through Endowment funding. After much consideration and exploring how some charitable contributors already record this information, the extra data helps CODE continue to fundraise on behalf of AMVETS and provide additional support. That said, the percentage of vets placed last quarter in the ethnic groups are as follows:

**U.S. Only:**
- Black or African American-38%
- Hispanic or Latino- 6%
- Asian, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander-1%
- Two or More Races-6%
Report of Carol Hebert, National Programs Director (continued)

· White-43%
· Did not disclose-13%
· We do not currently have this information-47%

To date, the career center has successfully placed 368 veterans in high quality careers. With an annual goal of 630, we are certain that the team will meet CODE's expectation for FY23.

Lastly, I would like to thank the State of Texas for inviting me out to explain about programs, their hospitality was top notch, along with the State of Ohio and Wisconsin.

Commander this concludes my report and I request a motion to approve its acceptance.

Carol Hebert
AMVETS National Programs Director
Report of Michael Black, National Service Director

Please see below our productivity for the last 12 months.

September 2022 - August 2023

Total Amount of Benefits paid out: $2,331,652,416.00
Total amount of claims open: 108,395
Average payment per claim: $1,826.00
Appeals forwarded on to the CAVC (Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims): 18
International Claims: 48 different countries around the world

NEW MEMBERS
Life: 66
Annual: 100
Total: 166

PERSONNEL
The latter part of 2023 has been very challenging. Loss of personnel to other organizations and retirement has taken its toll on the NSO corp. Budgetary concerns have made moving forward almost impossible, but with all that the NSOs have continued to exceed expectations in all facets of Veteran assistance reaching the highest monetary compensation ever achieved in AMVETS history.

Currently we have hired 3 new personnel since December 2022. Unfortunately, we have now lost 9 NSOs and I'm expecting more. At present time the National Service Department has 40 individuals down from 48 a year ago.

Resignations as of September 1, 2022:
Anthony Aragon, Phoenix VARO Arizona
Nicholas Holt, St. Petersburg VARO Florida
Gene McCreight, Witchita Kansas
Heath Haug, Roanoke VARO Virginia
Jim Hill, Philadelphia VARO Pennsylvania
Tim Graham, St Petersburg VARO Florida
Russell Woodal, St Petersburg VARO Florida
John Wingfield, Louisville VARO Kentucky
Dale Tiburg, Phoenix VARO Arizona

Positions Filled as of December 1, 2022:
Nicheia Nugent, Baltimore VARO Maryland
Jantri Knob, Philadelphia VARO Pennsylvania
Tim Graham, St Petersburg VARO Florida

TRAINING
We are continuing with Bergmann and Moore's Computer Based Training program. This type training has been a key factor in reaching our goals of more Veteran claims being resolved in a quicker time frame. Training will be conducted July 17 thru July 29, 2023. We are expecting 81 National and Department Service Officers to participate. During training we also award our National Service Officers of the Year awards. This year’s recipients were:

National Service Officer of the Year 2022/2023
Kevin Jones
VA Regional Office BVA, Washington, DC

Region 1 National Service Officer of the Year
Stephen Boland
VA Regional Office Providence, Rhode Island

Region 2 National Service Officer of the Year
Justin Larkins
VA Regional Office St Petersburg, Florida

Region 3 National Service Officer of the Year
Chase Freeman
Pt. Cavaros, Texas

Region 4 National Service Officer of the Year
Louis Rossi
VA Regional office Albuquerque, New Mexico

OUTREACH
Mike Black, National Service Director, was honored to be chosen to testify in front of the House Committee on Veteran Affairs (May 16, 2023) on behalf of the AMVETS Service Department to review the VA’s implementation of the recent Pact Act/Camp Lejeune legislation. Mr. Black was able to express AMVETS views concerning how well the Pact has been received by veterans and how well the VA is responding to
Report of Michael Black,
National Service Director (continued)

veterans’ claims and needs.

AMVETS NSOs are continuing to follow tradition reaching out to our immediate community and Veterans worldwide. Service officers who are stationed in VA facilities and satellite offices continue to facilitate programs and care to those Veterans and family members who are in need.

**APPEALS**

Kevin Jones our Chief of Claims continues to do a phenomenal job. We are now at an AMVETS unprecedented as never before number of appeals, (Legacy 9 claims and AMA 17).

This could possibly be the lowest in all Veteran Service Organizations.

In summation, I and the National Service Officers would like to thank you for all the support from the National Service Foundation and the many state departments. Without this we could not possible assist the many thousands of veterans, widows, and orphans in the United States and Overseas that our officers now serve.

Respectfully submitted,
Michael T. Black
Report of Bumi Ayodele,  
National Communications Manager

Membership
The Facebook page for Rolling to Remember has been successful in reaching a vast audience. In the last 90 days, we have actively engaged 120,000 users. The page has garnered close to 170,000 impressions/views, indicating a substantial level of interest from our audience. We’ve also had steady growth in followers, which is up by almost 46%.

Twitter engagement has been decent, with a consistent engagement rate of 10-12%. Consistently, we average about 2,000 impressions. The specific hashtag for Rolling to Remember generated about 32,000 impressions on this platform which further indicates that we do still have an active audience on twitter.

Our Instagram account gained 183 new followers. The Engagement rate on Instagram has experienced a remarkable surge, growing by 136%. This substantial increase indicates that our content is resonating exceptionally well with our Instagram community, leading to higher interactions and connections. With 7,000 Impressions on Instagram this means our posts have been viewed 7,000 times, contributing to increased brand visibility and awareness.

The newsletter was relaunched on May 1st, aiming to improve communication and engagement with subscribers. We encourage anyone who might have missed out on past newsletters to visit our website and subscribe to stay updated on the latest news and events.

For R2R we successfully reached 157 million people across all social media and news outlets. We had close to 15,000 website visits on R2R day alone, showcasing a significant interest in Rolling to Remembers cause and activities. While the current outreach efforts are commendable, there is always room for improvement. I look forward to growing all our social media platforms and continuing the engagement and growth of our organizations reach nationally.

Upcoming Events
Veteran’s Day on November 11th

Legislative
Media Department accompanied AMVETS National Commander, Don McLean and AMVETS National Service Director, Michael Black who testified on Capitol Hill providing feedback to congress on the efficiency of the VA and progress that has been made with the PACT Act.
Spring National Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

Saturday, March 11, 2023

Held at the
Washington Dulles Airport Marriot
Dulles, Virginia
Morning Session  
(9:00 a.m.)

Call to Order  
by Commander Rege Riley

COMMANDER McLean: COMMANDER McLEAN: $25 to the Commander’s project if your phone goes off. And as I have done in my home state, I shut off my caller ID and I call people who I know don’t shut their phone off. Okay? It has been very profitable.

Good morning, ladies and gentlemen, delegates. Welcome to the spring NEC. Could we all please rise? Could I have the chaplain, please?

Invocation  
by National Chaplain Milton Allen

MR. ALLEN: Good morning, everyone. I was going to read you this poem but it might take a minute. So I am going to run through it right quick. Take my time? You said that.

Life is like a journey on a train. You might have heard this poem before. With it has many stations, which change routes, and it has accidents. At birth we bore the train, and we meet our parents. We believe that they will travel with us all the way through. However, at some stations our parents step down off the train, leaving us on the journey alone.

As time goes by, we meet people on the train. They come and sit beside us. Our siblings, our friends. The loves of our lives. Many step down and leave a permanent vacuum. Others will go on unnoticed. And then we realize there are seats that have been vacated.

The train ride is full of joy and sorrow, fantasies, expectations, hellos and goodbyes and farewells. The mystery to everyone is we do not know which station we will step down. So we must live the best life that we can. Love, forgive and offer the best to those whom we love.

It is important to do this because when the time comes for us to step down and leave the seat empty, we should always leave behind beautiful memories for those who are still traveling on this train of life.

I wish you all a safe journey on this train. And last, I want to thank you all for being passengers on my train.

(Prayer)

Honors to the Colors  
by National Provost Marshal Art Majors

MR. MAJORS: AMVETS, Attention: Hand salute.
MR. CHENELLY: So NECs. National District I.

Connecticut, Doug Newell?

MR. NEWELL: Present.

MR. CHENELLY: Maine, James Laflin.

(No response)

MR. CHENELLY: Massachusetts, Walter Peacey?

MR. PEACEY: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: New Jersey, Fred Vineyard.

(No response)


MR. GRAY: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: Rhode Island, Arthur Rodrigues?

(No response)

MR. CHENELLY: District II: Delaware, Doug Porter.

MR. PORTER: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: District of Columbia, Aaron Smith.

MR. SMITH: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: Maryland, Andy Martel?

MR. MARTEL: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: North Carolina, David Wilburn.

MR. WILBURN: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: Pennsylvania, PNC Stahl.

PNC STAHL: Present, sir.

MR. CHENELLY: Virginia, John Cooper?

MR. COOPER: Present.

MR. CHENELLY: West Virginia, do we have anyone from West Virginia here.


MS. DOUBEK: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: Do we have anyone from Arkansas?

(No response)

MR. CHENELLY: Florida, PNC Piening.

PNC PIENING: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: Georgia, Wendell Rivens.

MR. RIVENS: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: Louisiana, Gary Stuart.

MR. STUART: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: South Carolina. KC Colby?

MR. COLBY: Here.


MS. ADAMS: Here.


MR. STUDEBAKER: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: Indiana, Richard Caldwell.

MR. CALDWELL: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: Iowa, Barry Remington.

MR. REMINGTON: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: Kentucky, Alan Smith.

MR. SMITH: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: Michigan, Bob Green?

MR. GREEN: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: Do we have anyone from Minnesota?

(No response)

MR. CHENELLY: Missouri, Doug Johnson.

MR. JOHNSON: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: Ohio, Sandy Vorhies.

MS. VORHIES: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: Wisconsin, Jim Ruppel.

MR. RUPPEL: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: Kansas, Mary Wait.

(No response)

MR. CHENELLY: Nebraska, Deborah Wehrli.

MS. WEHLRLI: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: North Dakota, Murray Strom.

MR. STROM: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: Texas, Curtis Thomas.

MR. THOMAS: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: District VI: Alaska, Don Oliver.

MR. OLIVER: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: Do we have anyone from Arizona.

(No response)

MR. CHENELLY: California, Ronald Robinson.

MR. ROBINSON: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: Hawaii, Dimitria Williams.

(No response)

MR. CHENELLY: Anyone from Hawaii? New Mexico, Sarah Langley?

MS. LANGLEY: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: Do we have anyone from Oregon?

(No response)

MR. CHENELLY: Washington, Steve Bird.

MR. BIRD: Here.

Alternate NECs

MR. CHENELLY: For the sake of time, I am just going to call the alternates who have checked in. If I miss you, please identify yourself after. I have no one from District I. District II, Delaware: Michael Servoski?

MR. SERVOSKI: Present.

MR. CHENELLY: District of Columbia, Clyde Pike?

MR. PIKE: Present.

MR. CHENELLY: Maryland, Michael Mahoney?

MR. MAHONEY: Here.
MR. CHENELLY: North Carolina, Randy Ferguson?

MR. FERGUSON: Here.


MR. BANKHEAD: Present.


MR. JOHN: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: Georgia, Wanda Allen.

MS. ALLEN: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: South Carolina, Cathy Colby.

MR. : She had to leave.


MR. SHEA: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: Kentucky, Dale Clark.

MR. CLARK: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: Ohio, Thomas Banyos.

MR. BANYOS: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: District V, Texas: Clay Roundtree.

MR. ROUNDTREE: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: And District VI, California: Sandra Durbin.

MS. DURBIN: Go Navy.

MR. CHENELLY: Did I miss any alternates?

MR. : ----.

MR. CHENELLY: Thank you. So seating as NEC?

MR. : Alternate.

MR. CHENELLY: Alternate NEC. All right. That completes roll call, Commander.

COMMANDER McLEAN: Thank you, sir. The next order of business: adoption of the agenda. Please come to a microphone, state your names for both the motion and the second, please.

Adoption of the Agenda

PNC KING: Motion to accept, Jim King.

MS. DURBIN: Second, Durbin.

COMMANDER McLEAN: Thank you very much. We have a motion and a second to adopt the agenda. All in favor?

(Chorus of “ayes.”)

COMMANDER McLEAN: Opposed?

(No response)

Approval of Minutes

COMMANDER McLEAN: Approval of the minutes.

MR. COOPER: Cooper, Virginia.

COMMANDER McLEAN: We have a motion from Mr. Cooper from Virginia to accept --

PNC STAHL: Second, Stahl, Pennsylvania.

COMMANDER McLEAN: Neither one of you took a microphone, okay? All right. We have a motion and a second to approve the minutes. Any discussion?

(No response)

COMMANDER McLEAN: Seeing none, all in favor?

(Chorus of “ayes.”)

COMMANDER McLEAN: Opposed?

(No response)

AMVETS Riders

by President John Reando

MR. REANDO: Okay, I would just like to thank the AMVETS for having us. This last year has been really, really good for the AMVETS Riders. And I got a few things that I would like to boast about that the Riders are doing if you don’t mind.

On page 83, if you would look at my report, since then, it has got a lot better. Currently we have 10 departments, 133 chapters in 28 different states. Last year, we chartered 13 new charters. At the end of the year, we had over 2,900 members. 184 of them were new members to the AMVETS organization.

Since 2002 convention, we have chartered an additional 8 chapters to our first chapter in Colorado, to be sworn in May 6. Our members’ year started in the first of 2023, and as of 3/4/2003, with 96 chapters reporting so far this year, we got memberships back up to 2,300. And everybody knows how membership runs. Everybody is late and you get them in late. Is that everywhere? Is that the whole AMVETS? Yeah, I know it. I have been doing it too.

So members: We got 1,017, 60 new members. Auxiliary: 662 with 58 new members. And Sons, we have 703 with 64 new members.

I would like to thank Past Commander Heun for giving me this dandy little badge up here. It shows that -- I am hoping that Riders are working hard enough to fit in with the AMVETS and show them our worth, okay?

Our second vice: We have all had a problem with programs, right? So our second vice made up an app. And she has been taking in our reporting hours through this app while we have been down. And if you look at the program reporting in my report, even through all this hard time we have been having with our programs, she still did $6,586,000. With the grand total of $8,300,000 so far. So I am really proud of my officers. My officers really bust their hump. Dan, back there -- and I just couldn’t ask for anything better.

And Commander, I would like you to take my report.

COMMANDER McLEAN: Very good, sir. Thank you.

MR. REANDO: Thank you.

(Applause)

COMMANDER McLEAN: We are going to start the NEC reports. And we are going to go a district at a time for the district commander to come up to the podium. We are going to vote for all the reports in that district at once, please. Thank you. Doug Newall from Connecticut is standing in for Dana Dillon. Dana’s mother is ill. That is why she couldn’t make it this weekend.

NEC Reports

District I

MR. NEWALL: Thank you, Commander. Dana’s report is on page 4 in the book. And I have an addendum for Dana. We are having a District I meeting in April 28-30 in Binghamton, New York. And I move that Dana’s report be accepted at the proper time. Jim Peacey, Massachusetts.

MR. PEACEY: My report is on page 7. Please accept
it at the proper time. The only amendment I would like to make to that is that under the Special Olympics for our Passion Plunge, it is listed as $5,000. Collections are still ongoing. They close in 2 more days, but as of right now we are just over $41,000 for Special Olympics this year.

(Applause)


MR. GRAY: Jack Gray, New York NEC. My report is on page 9. I move for its adoption at the proper time. I would just like to mention one thing. This new PACT Act that came in thanks to Rolling Thunder last summer, it is really beneficial and they have a lot of new things so if you have any doubts about putting in for a disability claim, do it. They are very generous and very helpful. So it is a big change from the VA. Thank you.

MR. NEWELL: Thank you, Jack. No one is from Maine, but Maine’s NEC report is on page 6 in the book. And the New Jersey report is on page 8 in the book. Al Duff’s report is on page 5 in the book. And Rhode Island’s report is on page 10 in the book. And I move that all reports be accepted.

PNC KING: Second, King.

COMMANDER McLEAN: We have a motion and a second to accept all the reports for District I. Any discussion?

(No response)

COMMANDER McLEAN: Seeing none, all in favor, say aye.

(Chorus of “ayes”)

COMMANDER McLEAN: Those opposed?

(No response)

COMMANDER McLEAN: The ayes have it. Thank you. District II, please.

District II

MR. PORTER: District II Commander Mike Barrett is in intensive care at Lenova Hospital in West Virginia. He is battling throat cancer but has a lot of other issues that have just popped up so keep him in your prayers. His report can be found on page 12. I move for its adoption at the proper time.

My report is on page 14. I move for that to be done at the proper time. DC?

MR. SMITH: Good morning. My report is on page 13.

I request it be approved at the proper time.

MR. PORTER: Maryland.

MR. MARTEL: Good morning. Andy Martel from Maryland. My report is on page 15. I move it be approved at the right time.

And please remember Ron Hall, our past department commander who passed away in December.

MR. PORTER: North Carolina.

MR. WILBURN: Good morning. NEC David Wilburn from North Carolina. My report is on page 16. I ask for its adoption at the proper time. Thank you.

MR. PORTER: Pennsylvania.

PNC STAHL: Commander, my report is on page 17. And it’s an abbreviated report. I would just like to make an addition to it if possible. Commander McLean, thank you for visiting the Department of SEC meeting. We hope you had a good visit during your stay. We would like to thank you and Executive Director Chenell for filling the open slot of membership director with AMVET Warren Cox. Warren is a great asset to the national department as he works through the daily problems he faces from the field.

We look forward to you opening this year’s national convention in Pittsburg, Pennsylvania. National Third Vice Commander Paul Shipley and PNC Rege Riley have been working with a great crew to make sure the AMVETS has a memorable convention in August.

Good luck to all candidates. We hope you finish your term with lots of good memories. Pennsylvania supports Paul Shipley as he begins his challenge of election to the office of national second vice commander. Paul did an excellent job, giving structure to his office he is leaving, and he is ready to face a new challenge as national second vice commander. We ask you all to join us as we vote for Paul.

Our state convention will be held at the Hilton Garden Inn, Union Town, Pennsylvania, June 21st to June 25th, 2023. That concludes my additions. Thank you. I move for its adoption at the proper time.

MR. NEWELL: Virginia.

MR. COOPER: Good morning, I have just a few additions. Our department convention will be held in Harrisonburg, Virginia, on 23-25 June. It will be held at Post 7.3

The Joint Leadership Council submitted paperwork to our Virginia Legislature for the hiring of a person to oversee suicide prevent-
MR. BATES: All right, Gary. South Carolina?

MR. STUART: Gary Stuart, NEC, Louisiana.

MR. BATES: Louisiana?

MR. RIVENS: Georgia's report is on page 27. My report is on page 29. Adopt it at the proper time.

MR. BATES: Georgia.

MR. DOUBEK: Ernestine Doubek, alternate NEC for Alabama. My report is on pages 21. I have one amendment to it. We had our Third District meeting 3 through the 4th of February. And I would like to thank the Commander for showing up at our district in Valdosta, Georgia. We have him a little Georgia hospitality. And I would like to also thank all the Third District for supporting me during that time.

And I would like to have my report approved at the proper time. It is on page 20. Alabama.

MR. DOUBEK: (No response)

MR. BATES: Good morning, everybody.

(Chorus of “Good morning.”)

MR. BATES: Give us a few minutes while we line up. All right. My report is on page 20. I have one amendment to it. We had our Third District meeting 3 through the 4th of February. And I would like to thank the Commander for showing up at our district in Valdosta, Georgia. We have him a little Georgia hospitality. And I would like to also thank all the Third District for supporting me during that time.

And I would like to have my report approved at the proper time. It is on page 20. Alabama.

MR. DOUBEK: Ernestine Doubek, alternate NEC for Alabama. My report is on pages 21. I move that it be adopted at the proper time. Our state convention will be June 18, 2023. We have no location at this time.

MR. BATES: Florida?

PNC PIENING: Commander, my report is on page 26. I also would like to add to it if I may. We were honored to have our national Commander visit us at our SEC last month. I trust that he and his wife had a wonderful time. And I am sure he can attest that the Department of Florida is very viable in fulfilling the aims and purposes of this great organization.

I would also like to mention that we will have Horace Johnson running for national first vice commander. We support him 100 percent. I ask for my report to be accepted at the proper time.

MR. BATES: Georgia.

MR. RIVENS: Georgia's report is on page 27 and 28 in the book. I move for its adoption at the proper time.

MR. BATES: Louisiana?

MR. STUART: Gary Stuart, NEC, Louisiana. My report is on page 29. Adopt it at the proper time.

MR. BATES: All right, Gary. South Carolina?

MR. COLBY: I am KC Colby, Department of South Carolina NEC. My report can be found on page 30, and I move for its adoption at the proper time.

MR. BATES: Last but not least, Tennessee.

MS. ADAMS: Lee Ann Adams, alternate NEC, state of Tennessee. My report can be found on page 32. I request that it be adopted at the proper time. I would also like to thank Commander McLean for attending our SEC in Tennessee as well as celebrating the 75th anniversary of our Post 2.

MR. BATES: Commander, those are our reports. I move for its adoption.

COMMANDER McLEAN: Thank you, Mr. Bates. We have a motion to accept all the reports of District III. Is there a second?

SECOND VICE CMDR JOHNSON: Second, Horace Johnson.

COMMANDER McLEAN: Seconded by Mr. Johnson. Any discussion?

(No response)

COMMANDER McLEAN: All in favor, signify by saying aye.

(Chorus of “ayes.”)

COMMANDER McLEAN: Opposed, say no?

(No response)

COMMANDER McLEAN: The ayes have it. Thank you very much. Thank you, sir. District IV, please.

District IV

MR. RANDOLPH: Thank you, Commander. And everyone here, good morning. Jackie Randolph, District Four commander. My report is on page 36.

And I just want to add during my travels, I did get a chance to visit the Midwinter Conference of the Department of Ohio. The hospitality was great, and they are doing a great job on trying to recruit veterans, and the different programs they have for veterans there. And so I just want to give the Department of Ohio a big hand.

(Applause)

MR. RANDOLPH: We had our Fourth District meeting last month in St. Peter's, Missouri. It was a great turnout, and I had the honor of swearing in a new AMVET member who had just joined the Air Force, which I am very proud because I am an Air Force veteran.

Aim high.

Okay, with that I hope my report will be adopted at the proper time. And we will start off with the Department of Illinois.

MR. STUDEBAKER: Chris Studebaker, NEC from Illinois. My report is on page 37 and 38 in the book, and I move for its adoption at the proper time.

MR. RANDOLPH: Department of Indiana.

MR. CALDWELL: Richard Caldwell, NEC, Indiana. My report is on page 39, and I move for its adoption at the proper time.

MR. RANDOLPH: Iowa.

MR. REMINGTON: Barry Remington, NEC, Iowa. My report is on page 40, and I move for its adoption at the proper time.

MR. RANDOLPH: Kentucky.

MR. SMITH: Alan Smith, NEC, Kentucky. My report is on page 41, and I move for its adoption at the proper time.

MR. RANDOLPH: Thank you, Michigan, its report didn't make it in the book but Bob Green, if you just want to highlight your report.

MR. GREEN: Yes. I did send it in. They just misplaced it. But anyway, I have got some highlights of it. The membership, we got 6,876. And MAL, we got 1,429. And our programming has been a problem for the state, but our second vice, he had medical leave and he was off for a while, so he wasn't able to do it.

And although the reporting -- we did find out some things that were happening in Michigan. And there were some ceremonies at the nursing homes and stuff where we recognized the veterans. And we went and had the National POW/MIA Day, and Pearl Harbor Day, wreath across America. The four chaplains were celebrated by the post and auxiliary across the state.

Our upcoming event is the state convention June 22nd to 25th, 23, in Grand Rapids, Michigan, at the Doubletree Hotel.

In our legislative report, it was our long-term legislative director, he got sick and got cancer, and he had to resign. And so we went and made Steve Bidstrup our legislative report, and he went and got some stuff on the federal issues and he went and passed out stuff for our department on what we are looking to do as legislation.

But another thing I put in my report, our headquarters is at Higgins Lake, Michigan. It
is a lodge and cabins. Now out of the past, if you look it up on the Website, on the national, it is not right in there because it is like a ten-year-old price list, and I do have a price list here on that because we would like for people to come and see it because we have upgraded it. We put new stuff it. We redid the walls and put flat-screen TVs, and everything in the cabins.

So we got 16 bedrooms in the lodge and cabins that can be rented. And I have got the price list here with me. If anybody is interested, I will get them a copy. And they can have it because we would like for you to come and visit. It is nice place. And that concludes my report, and I move for it to be adopted.

MR. RANDOLPH: Okay. Thanks, Bob. Minnesota: Due to communications, we haven't had any communication at all with Minnesota. I don't know if it is because of the heavy snow that we are getting in there and can't get out or whatever, but hopefully with the spring thaw, well, we will send somebody up there to check on them. Missouri?

MR. JOHNSON: Doug Johnson, alternate NEC for Missouri. I just want to make a comment other than the report that Robert E. Lee has got in the book. Also for the Riders, that one-day event, one the last comments of his report was on the Polar Plunge that raised over $10,500 for that 1-day event. And that is what funds our service officers to do their work in the VA facilities.

The other thing is Robert E. Lee has had some health issues going on. Most of you know he had some circulatory problems with his legs. And that was supposed to have been taken care of Thursday. And they will find out if they have to do something to his heart. He has got some heart problems going on also. So keep him in your prayers.

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

MR. RANDOLPH: Thank you. Ohio?

(Ringtone)

MR. : $25 for the provost.

(Laughter)

MS. VORHIES: Good morning. Sandy Vorhies, NEC, for the Department of Ohio. First of all, I want to thank our national Commander and our fourth national commander and our third vice for joining us at the Midwinter Conference.

And as you know, I didn't put it in here because I had to do my report before that, but in Ohio at our Midwinter Conference, we do a legislation breakfast where we are very blessed and lucky to have Merle Pratt, who goes on the Hill for us along with our executive director, Don McCauley.

And so through those who help our veterans and our communities throughout Ohio, we invite them and award them, sort of like the Ohio Silver Helmet, but it is a different type of award. But it is a way of showing our appreciation for their work and not only that it is a way of getting them on board if they are on the fence of which way they want to go because once you give them that nice award for their office, and they see AMVETS, they are going to maybe go our way a little more.

But we appreciate having you there. So additional, I would like to also say that our Department of Ohio convention will be June 16th through the 18th, and it is at the Crown Plaza there in Columbus, the north end of Columbus so we would invite anyone who would like to be there to come in.

Also we just recently lost our department first vice, Jeff Brown. That was a big loss for us. Jeff chaired and started our program for One Too Many suicide prevention. And I just have to brag on this because just to show how our AMVET families work together, we had a gentleman who left Ohio, that we had helped. He moved to California and he called us in Ohio. Ohio contacts California, and we get this gentleman help. So that is how we work as a family.

We also had another gentleman who is in Texas just recently. And so we were able to talk with Texas while we were here. Again, that is how we work as a family. And I just want to say I am very honored to be part of this family.

But with that, I would just like to say thank you, and have my report adopted at the proper time.

MR. RANDOLPH: Thank you, Sandy. Wisconsin?

MR. RUPPEL: Good morning. I am Jim Ruppel, alternate NEC from Wisconsin. Our report is on page 47, and I move for adoption at the proper time.

MR. RANDOLPH: Okay, thank you. Commander, those are all of the Fourth National District reports, and I ask for them to be adopted at the proper time.

COMMANDER McLEAN: We have a motion to accept the reports of District IV.

THIRD VICE CMDR SHIPLEY: Second, Shipley.

COMMANDER McLEAN: We have a second from Mr. Shipley. Any discussion?

(No response)

COMMANDER McLEAN: Seeing none, all in favor, say aye.

(Chorus of “ayes.”)

COMMANDER McLEAN: Those opposed, say no?

(No response)

COMMANDER McLEAN: The ayes have it. Thank you, Jackie. At this time, we are going to take a break and ask for the Sons to come in.

Sons of AMVETS
by Michael “Mick” Ciesla

MR. CIESLA: Good morning, veterans.24

(Chorus of “Good morning.”)

MR. CIESLA: I appreciate the opportunity to address you this morning. First, I would like to say the Sons are doing a good job. Our membership is coming in at a faster pace than in many years before.

Project reporting is on the rise. And that is good to see, and that tells us from our side of the fence that our Sons are very active carrying out their mission of Sons serving veterans.

So you should be very proud to know there are Sons across the country who are actually doing a great job representing you, being your ambassadors, and it is our privilege to be part of this organization to make that happen.

I also want to touch base on my project. Now my report is in your book. My project is the Gary Sinise Foundation. You all are familiar with Gary Sinise, I hope. If you are not, if you think of Forrest Gump and think of Lt. Dan. He does a lot for our veterans.

And just a brief example is their Snowball Express. Snowball Express caters to the children and spouses of fallen heroes. When COVID come in, it kind of prevented a lot of the travel, but back in December, over 800 families, 2,000 people, were brought to Disneyworld down in Florida.

They treated the kids like superstars, let them bond with other children that have had the same experience and brought those families closer together.

They do other programs during the course of the year but he is constantly reaching out. He even flew, Gary Sinise actually flew his Lt. Dan Band, on his own dime, to South Korea to entertain the troops.
So he is out there, and we are going to support him all the way. So I thank you for all your support. We are here for you. You need us, let us know. Sons are the icing on the cake for everything you do, and we are glad to be that icing. I can tell you that.

I also brought along my legislative director, Doug Brown. He is going to fill you in on our legislative advocacy days on the Hill. So Doug, you want to come up?

Comments by Sons of AMVETS Legislative Director Doug Brown

MR. BROWN: Good morning, ladies and gentlemen.

(Chorus of “Good morning.”)

MR. BROWN: First, thank you for your service. Thank you for everything you did this week in helping us out on the Hill. I would like to say, we are back.

Tuesday night we had 96 people at the meeting. Last year, our first year back from the pandemic, we only had about 45. And with that, and all your hard work, the auxiliary’s hard work and the Sons, we had 224 face-to-face meetings with the total of that, and out of that we had 28 face-to-face meetings with our congressmen and senators. So we are on our way back up.

(Appause)

MR. BROWN: We did do some changes this year. And anyone that was at the meeting or on the Hill, we put priorities on a business card with a QR code. So the response from the Hill was they were excited we had that. They were using their tablets and their phones and scanning those.

And they said that they would like us to continue doing that so we will do that. If anyone has any suggestions that we can do to make this better, make it easier. I can’t make it any easier walking on the Hill for you but I hope everybody had a good time.

As I said, I love this AMVET family, and we are really making a big difference up there. So thanks very much.

(Appause)

MR. CIESLA: I have to admit going on the Hill is very impressive, and I don’t know about your experience. The experience I got on the Hill was boy, were they glad to see us. The attitude and environment there was very, very friendly, so that is a good program. But before I leave, again, thank you, veterans, for what you do. I also want to thank the National Service Foundation for their continued support for our programs and the grants that they provide us.

Again it is our privilege to be part of this organization, and it is just very good to be involved and doing something for our country through this organization and the support of you. Again thank you guys very much, and ladies. You veterans are super. We love you. Thank you.

(Appause)

MR. BROWN: And I am back now. And a special thank-you to Paul and Justin and Joe. We really appreciate everything you did for us.

(Appause)

COMMANDER McLEAN: One of the things that was really good about the Tuesday night meeting prior to going on the Hill Wednesday and Thursday was of the 96 people, close to half of them were first-timers.

Ladies and gentlemen, please rise for Madam President, Karin Simmons.

AMVETS Auxiliary by Karin Simmons

MS. SIMMONS: Greeted the Commander and flipped my lid. Thank you all for coming this week, weekend, part of a week, I guess. I have had a great time. I got to go up and present wreaths at the memorial. It was a little damp but it wasn’t bad.

I’m looking forward to seeing Commander in our travels. We have met a couple places at the same time, and I am having a great time this year. Thank you all.

(Appause)

COMMANDER McLEAN: All right. Delegates, let’s welcome the Juniors, please.

(Appause)

Junior AMVETS by Joy Stopyra

MS. STOPYRA: Good morning, Commander, officers, NEC persons, members and guests. My name is Joy Stopyra, and I am the National Junior AMVETS president for 2022-23. My officers are senior vice Aiden Dolf.

(Applease)

MS. STOPYRA: Junior Vice Corbin Dolf. Secretary Peyton Jackson. Chaplain Ashira Stopyra, Sergeant-at-Arms Corey Riley, Past National President/Parliamentarian Joseph Stopyra.

(Appause)

My project is national suicide awareness, and my theme is I would rather talk to you all night than about you at your funeral. So we have exciting news, but I need this guy up here and the national executive director.

We have started a new chapter in West Towa-koni, Texas, and I am asking for the Commander’s signature and the executive director’s signature.

(Pause)

MS. STOPYRA: And now they are official.

(Appause)

MS. STOPYRA: We are also working with a guy from New York to get another chapter started. More great news, and hopefully they will be official at national.

We still have -- I don’t know if it is claimed yet. No? It is still unclaimed. 50-50. It is yellow and white. The last 3 digits are 8-1-3. So we raised a total of $1,000. It is half the jackpot. So you get $500. You have 30 days to claim that.

I hope you all have a wonderful rest of your NEC and safe travels home.

(Appause)

MS. PIERCE: Can I make an announcement really quick because I will be with them? I am running for Fourth District’s national second vice. I am not running against Paul Shipley. I just want to make that correction so everybody knows.

MR.: Who are you?

MS. PIERCE: Sarah Pierce from the Department of Ohio. I am the commander.

COMMANDER McLEAN: Thank you, thank you. We have another visitors who -- no one we want to see. We wish he wasn’t here at all.

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MR.: Who are you?

MS. PIERCE: Sarah Pierce from the Department of Ohio. I am the commander.

COMMANDER McLEAN: Thank you, thank you. We have another visitors who -- no one we want to see. We wish he wasn’t here at all. The National Saddest.

(Chorus of “Boo.”)

National Sad Sacks

MR.: Hey, Join Sad Sacks. We need the money for nursing scholarships. Some of you have heard this before. Some of you haven’t. I had COVID in the fall of 2020. One of my nurses was a Sad Sack scholarship -- thank you. I am getting old. But she was one of our nurses from Indiana. And so I am tickled to death.

And I said it before: All of us are getting to the
age where we are going to need a nurse one of these days so let's do what we can to make them be a Sad Sack scholarship recipient. Thanks a lot.

Art is making coin boxes. And it might be too late today for you to pitch in there and get them but $2 for 1 ticket and $5 for 2 tickets. And when he raffles them off, Art is not making anything out of it. The money is going to our nursing scholarship fund.

If you need a challenge coin box, see Art. Thank you.

(Chorus of Boos)

COMMANDER McLEAN: Get off my stage. Boo. Hey, he is leaving, yay. What a shame. All right, that is it? That is it for now. All right, let's go to National District V, please. Commander, come up. And the states line up at a microphone.

NEC Reports
District V

MR. KRUEGER: Good morning, AMVETS. Wayne Krueger, North Dakota District V commander. My report is in the book on page 49. I do have a couple of additions or addendums to it I would like to go over.

First of all, first off I would like to remind everyone just to keep the Lumpkin family in your prayers with the passing of Eddie.

So first I wanted to say that Rick Young, our executive director from Colorado, has chartered another Riders chapter. And they are close to having a department in Colorado.

And also Past Commander Deb Wehrli has accepted paperwork from the VA to put up a 40-foot bell tower carillon music box at the Omaha National Cemetery.

And I move for adoption at the appropriate time. Okay, Kansas. Mary Wait? Mary Wait's report is in the book on page 50. She was not able to attend today with the weather and airport issues. So I move for the adoption of her report at the appropriate time. Nebraska.

MS. WEHLRI: Deborah Wehrli stepping in for Carol Tschamp-Diesing. Her report is on page 51. And also I would like to say that our department chaplain, which is her uncle, is in hospice, and we would like to have Carol in your prayers, if you would, please. I move for her report to be approved at its appropriate time.

MR. KRUEGER: North Dakota.

MR. STROM: My report is on page 52. I would just to point out a couple things.

Our state legislature is taking up a bill that says we can use gaming trust funds help finance department expenses. And right now we are about 55 percent through. It went through the house really well. It is going through the senate. It looks like it is going to pass. That is one way to keep our departments afloat for money.

We also got a bill out there to scan all our paper records in to databases at the ..... And we also are building a new house, got a goal to build a new Fisher House in Fargo. I would like to move that my report be accepted at the proper time. I apologize for not wearing my cap. It is back in a snowstorm in North Dakota.

MR. KRUEGER: By the way, North Dakota is closed.

MR. THOMAS: Curtis Thomas, alternate NEC, Texas. Standing in the place of Bobby Lumpkins due to death in his family, Ed Lumpkins, past Saddest. So would you please keep him in your prayers. And we also lost our executive director, Mark Clark, Thursday. So please keep those families in your prayers.

Bobby Lumpkins' report is on page 53. And I just have one addendum to it. The Texas department convention will be held at the Holiday Inn in Tyler, Texas, 5701 South Broadway Avenue. And that will be on June 9th through the 11th. Thank you, and I hope you move for the acceptance of my report.

MR. KRUEGER: Thank you, Commander, the reports are in the book. We move for their adoption at the proper time.

COMMANDER McLEAN: Thank you, sir. We have a motion for the District V reports. Is there a second, please?

MR. COOPER: Cooper from Virginia.

COMMANDER McLEAN: Second by Mr. Cooper from Virginia. Any discussion?

(No response)

COMMANDER McLEAN: Seeing none, all in favor, say aye.

(Chorus of "ayes.")

MR. SMITH: my name is Ross Smith. I am the District VI commander. My report is on page 55. I move for its adoption at the proper time. Would the great state of Alaska come forward?

MR. OLIVER: Don Oliver, NEC for Alaska. My report is in there somewhere.

MR. SMITH: Like usual.

MR. OLIVER: Like usual. And I forgot to put down our convention, which is always the first weekend in June. Maybe this year we will actually get a national representative to visit us. Other than that, we are looking forward to all of it coming up in July as always. That concludes my report, gentlemen and ladies.

MR. SMITH: Thank you, sir.

MR. OLIVER: Thank you.

MR. SMITH: Arizona is not present but their report is on page 57. I look for that report's adoption at the proper time. Great state of California.

MR. ROBINSON: Good morning, everyone. Ron Robinson, NEC for California. My report is on page 58 through 63. I would like to highlight on page 63 is our AMVETS 1. We would appreciate if everyone takes a look at that.

Our convention is on the first weekend of June, June 8 through the 11 in Visalia, California, at the Visalia Marriott. I move for my report and its adoption at the proper time.

MR. SMITH: Thank you, sir. Great State of New Mexico.

MS. LANGLEY: Sarah Langley from New Mexico. My report is on page 64, and I would like to add that we are having our state convention on June 24 at the Holiday Inn Express Midtown in Albuquerque. And I have a phone number here in case anybody is interested in sending somebody from national for a change to come visit. And I move for its adoption as written in the book.

MR. SMITH: The great state of Washington, please.

MR. BIRD: Steve Bird, NEC. Our report is on page 65. I have an amendment to announce the state convention which will be held at Clover Island Inn in Kennewick, Washington, on May 19th through the 21st. I move for the report's adoption at the proper time.

MR. SMITH: Thank you, sir. Hawaii is out surfing. And Commander, with that said, those are the District VI reports. I move for...
the adoption of these reports at the proper time, sir.

THIRD VICE CMDR SHIPLEY: Second, Shipley.

COMMANDER McLEAN: We have a motion and a second to accept the reports for District VI. Any discussion?

(No response)

COMMANDER McLEAN: Seeing none, all in favor, say aye.

(Chorus of “ayes.”)

COMMANDER McLEAN: Those opposed, say no?

(No response)

COMMANDER McLEAN: The ayes have it. Thank you very much. And for the record, on my behalf, I just want to tell you I tried going out to Washington. No, I made the Washington. I tried getting out to Alaska and New Mexico, and it didn't seem quite right that it was 16 hours from point A to point B. I am sorry, I love you. I would love to be there but nobody should have to spend 16 hours on a plane and still be in the United States.

(Laughter)

COMMANDER McLEAN: Next order of business is the report of the Finance Committee. And we are going to leave that to Mr. Chenelly to report, please.

Finance Committee
by Executive Director Joe Chenelly

MR. CHENELLY: Thank you, Commander. National Finance Officer Don Stream has continued to deal with some medical challenges and remains hospitalized as of at least a couple days ago.

So in his stead, the Finance Committee voted to have PNC Piening chair the meeting yesterday, here yesterday morning. The financial reports up through January were reviewed. Spending is down but our revenue unfortunately is down a little bit more so we definitely have some ground to make up.

With that in mind, the national Finance Committee voted to dissolve the HEAL Program effective April 1 of this year. The move, should it be approved here, in acceptance of this report, would save more than $100,000 of the remainder of this membership year. And it would save about $275,000 into the next year.

Commander, that completes the Finance Committee's report, and I move for its adoption at the proper time.


COMMANDER McLEAN: Motion is made and seconded by Horace Johnson to accept the finance report. Any discussion?

(No response)

COMMANDER McLEAN: Seeing none, all in favor, say aye.

(Chorus of “ayes.”)

COMMANDER McLEAN: Those opposed, no?

(No response)

COMMANDER McLEAN: The ayes have it. Thank you. VAVS report, please.

VAVS Report
by PNC J.P. Brown III

PNC BROWN: My report is on page 66 and 67. The only thing I would like to add to it is that Commander Piening, myself, Commander -- the other, as someone else pointed it out -- the other Commander Brown, the better one, we attended the National Special Olympics bowling tournament that the national charity sponsors out in Reno, Nevada.

It is a very heartwarming program. I brought some bowling pins back for headquarters and for the foundation.

My appeal would be at this time, the end of February next year it will be in Las Vegas, Nevada. We would love to see more AMVETS out there to help present awards. It is the more heartwarming thing that you can do.

These young people -- and I say young because a lot of them are older than Joe Piening and Jim King but they enjoy the bowling. If you can find it within your departments to bring it back to them and ask them to help support this, it would be a wonderful thing.

With that, Commander, I move for adoption of my report at the proper time.

COMMANDER McLEAN: Thank you. Is there second.

(Chorus of "Seconds.")

COMMANDER McLEAN: We have a motion and a second to accept the VAVS and charities report. Any discussion?

(No response)

COMMANDER McLEAN: Seeing no discussion, all in favor, say aye.

(Chorus of "ayes.")

COMMANDER McLEAN: Opposed, say no?

(No response)

COMMANDER McLEAN: Thank you. The ayes have it. Next order of business is the report from the Grievance Committee of meetings they had yesterday, or hearings, I should say.

Grievance Committee
by Ross Smith

MR. SMITH: Once again, thank you, Commander. AMVETS, the national Grievance Committee met yesterday at 1500 hours. The results are as follows:

Number 1: Florida member Tom Peyton has been expelled from AMVETS. Reason: Conduct unbecoming a national district commander.

Number 2: North Carolina member Buddy Waller had filed an appeal. Member Waller did not show up, gave no reason for an excused absence. Mr. Waller's appeal is dismissed. This concludes the results of the Grievance Committee, and I look for its approval at the proper time, Commander. I move for its approval now, per the JA.

MR. PEACEY: Second.

COMMANDER McLEAN: We have a motion to accept the Grievance Committee report and a second by Mr. Peacey. We have multiple seconds, I guess. All in favor of accepting – I am sorry. First, any discussion?

(No response)

COMMANDER McLEAN: Seeing none, all in favor of accepting the Grievance Committee report, say aye.

(Chorus of "ayes.")

COMMANDER McLEAN: Those opposed, say no?

(No response)

COMMANDER McLEAN: The ayes have it, unanimous. Thank you. Next report for national officers. Call on Chaplain Milton Allen, please.

National Officers Reports
Chaplain's Report
by Milton Allen
CHAPLAIN ALLEN: Good morning, all. You will find my report on page 69. I have three things to add to it, please. There will be a chaplain's Zoom call meet and greet on March 30th, this year, at 1900. I will send out some links for you to attend. It doesn't just have to be chaplains. If you would just like to attend, you can attend.

My e-mail address is AMVETSnatchaplain@gmail.com.

Deceased members' roster: I have been a chaplain of AMVETS since 2014. And I did not know until last year that the deceased member roster was due to national until -- by June 1st. So I don't know how many of you don't know that. But I am letting you know today that I need that list by June 1st, please, so that I can make sure that all our deceased members are recognized.

I have heard a lot this morning from several states of members who have passed away, called home or sick and shut-in. I ask if you would please include me in those. I cannot pray if I don't know that those things have happened. I cannot recognize those deceased members if I don't know they have been called home.

So please add me in your deceased members' notifications to national so that I can also recognize them. Commander, that is my report, and I move for its adoption at the appropriate time.

COMMANDER McLEAN: Thank you. We have a motion. Can I have a second to accept the report?

SECOND VICE CMDR JOHNSON: Horace Johnson, second.

COMMANDER McLEAN: We have a second. Multiple from the -- off podium here. Any discussion?

(Chorus of "ayes.")

COMMANDER McLEAN: All in favor, say aye.

(Chorus of "ayes.")

COMMANDER McLEAN: All opposed, say no?

(No response)

COMMANDER McLEAN: The ayes have it. Next order of business: the report of national Third Vice Commander Paul Shipley

National Third Vice Commander's Report by Paul Shipley

THIRD VICE CMDR SHIPLEY: My report is in the book on pages 70 to 79. A few things I would like to add to it. A fantastic turnout from AMVETS at the Legislative Advocacy Week this week.

It is a Sons program that I wholeheartedly support but as I have said before and I will continue to say, we add so much more credibility to the words that we are saying when we have a veteran in the room with a congressman or the staffers. It is night and day, it truly is. So please continue to come out. Let's try to get as many AMVETS on that Hill next year as possible.

Get as many face-to-face meetings as we possibly can. 228, that is just about half. Let's try and kick that up. But thank you for everybody who came out. And that is my report, and I move for its adoption, Commander.

MR.: Second.

COMMANDER McLEAN: Thank you, thank you. We have a motion and a second to accept the report of Third Vice Paul Shipley. Any discussion?

(No response)

COMMANDER McLEAN: All in favor, say aye.

(Chorus of "ayes.")

COMMANDER McLEAN: Opposed, say no?

(No response)

COMMANDER McLEAN: The ayes have it. Next order of business: report of Second Vice Commander Horace Johnson.

Second Vice Commander's Report by Horace Johnson

SECOND VICE CMDR JOHNSON: My report is in the book on page 80. I would just like to amend the report for those of you who were not in the programs roundtable yesterday. Our new program reporting system, in my report I was saying we are still working on it, we were still tweaking it and fine-tuning it.

As of last week, we have had that done, and we forwarded the reporting system out to six states for testing, so those states can report back to us and let us know if there is anything else we need to do. And that is a 30-day period, and after that we are going to send that program reporting system out to the states.

We estimate it is going to be out there by the last of April. And with that, Commander, I move my report be accepted as reported.

SECOND VICE CMDR SHIPLEY: Second, Shipley.

COMMANDER McLEAN: Thank you. We have a motion and a second to accept the report of Horace Johnson. Any discussion?

(No response)

COMMANDER McLEAN: Seeing none, all in favor, say aye.

(Chorus of "ayes.")

COMMANDER McLEAN: Opposed, say no?

(No response)

COMMANDER McLEAN: The ayes have it. Next order of business: report of National First Vice Commander Bill Clark.

First Vice Commander's Report

PNC KING: My report is on page 68. I just want to remind all of you that due to the change in the life membership dues accepted at the convention last year, everybody is going to have to be redoing their bylaws.

These need to be done prior to June 1st for revalidation -- excuse me. Prior to July 1st for revalidation. I move for the adoption of my report.

THIRD VICE CMDR SHIPLEY: Second Shipley.

COMMANDER McLEAN: Motion is made and seconded to accept the judge advocate's report. Any discussion?

(No response)

COMMANDER McLEAN: Seeing none, all in favor, say aye.

(Chorus of "ayes.")

COMMANDER McLEAN: All opposed, say no?

(No response)

COMMANDER McLEAN: The ayes have it. Next order of business: the report of national First Vice Commander Paul Shipley.

First Vice Commander's Report by Paul Shipley

PNC KING: Good morning.
by Bill Clark

FIRST VICE CMDR CLARK: Good morning. My report is published on page 81. I would just like to add that we have a new membership director as you all know, Warren Cox, replacing retired Harry Neal.

He slipped in, he is doing a wonderful job, and he is working currently on a program for membership to be revamped. That concludes my report, and I move for its adoption at the proper time.

SECOND VICE CMDR JOHNSON: Second, Horace Johnson.

COMMANDER McLEAN: Thank you, thank you. We have a motion and a second to accept the report of the national first vice commander. Any discussion?

(No response)

COMMANDER McLEAN: Seeing none, all in favor, say aye.

(Chorus of “ayes.”)

COMMANDER McLEAN: Opposed, say no?

(No response)

COMMANDER McLEAN: The ayes have it. Thank you. The next report is my report.

Commander’s Report
by Don McLean

COMMANDER McLEAN: Delegates, my report is on page 88 in the book. I move for its adoption at the proper time. Thank you.

MR. PEACEY: Second, Peacey, Massachusetts.

FIRST VICE CMDR CLARK: We have got a motion and a second to accept the Commander’s report. All those in favor, signify by saying aye.

(Chorus of “ayes.”)

FIRST VICE CMDR CLARK: Those opposed?

MR. : Aye.

FIRST VICE CMDR CLARK: Those opposed?

Passed, thank you.

COMMANDER McLEAN: Next order -- I want to go back to the Riders. They had mentioned that they had one thing that they wanted to add. I ask the Riders to give their report, please?

Comments
by Riders President John Reando

MR. REANDO: Thank you, Commander. I don’t know how many of you are on Facebook, but -- there are a few, a handful. I started a program about five years ago. It is called Wood for Vets. It is just a local plan right here in my hometown but we do is we go and give -- we cut, split firewood for veterans. If they have a hard time getting their meds or their food, they are on a budget. They are on a fixed budget, a budget that should be updated.

So we found a few cold ones down there at 48. These guys asked me, hey, you think you could cut me a little wood? I’m pretty cold out there. And it just broke my heart. You know, I thought, yeah, I can cut you some wood. So that is when it all took off.

I went and I take my own pickup, my own chainsaws, go out and cut some of my own wood.

Well, years passed. And then we started getting -- hey, are you giving that to the vets? I said, yeah. And it was mostly local members. So I said, yeah, I am giving it to the vets. They are cold.

So one thing led to another and I bought two tractors. I bought a dump trailer. I used my old pickup. Now I have been doing this, and I haven’t said too much about it until I became an officer. This year, just on whim, you know how women are with the Amazon boxes, guys. We all burn them. We just kind of tuck tail and burn the Amazon boxes, right? Well, one was actually for me. And I thought, hot damn.

So I went and I opened this box in the shop, and here it was Indiana 91 sent me a brand new chainsaw. And a good one.

(Applause)

MR. REANDO: And it just made my heart tingle. But I use it every day or every Sunday. We cut every Sunday. This was the first Sunday that I hadn't cut in quite a while. But the look on people's faces when they are cold, and you back in there and you dump that big old load of wood out of there, they got tears in their eyes and it is really great.

So I am trying to take it a step bigger. I want to buy a wood processor. And this wood processor will be able to let me help three families a week instead of just one.

And on Monday morning when I get ready to go to work, I won't look like a praying mantis. Go ahead and split that much wood and see what you look like.

So this wood processor is quite pricey, but I figure I done bought the tractor, I done bought the truck. It is just the look on their face gives me this drive to do this. So my project is the wood for vets. And anything you got, you got an old used chainsaw, send it my way. I will use it or somebody will.

I want to make sure I don’t forget anything. All the wood is locally donated. People have their place logged. I live in a rural area, and they have their places logged, and they just call me. Hey, man, there are lots of logs that are laying there. There are tops everywhere.

So I haven't put a dime into getting the wood. So with this wood processor, I’m going to try to take it to where I can call the next state, like Indiana or wherever, and say, hey, you guys get a bunch of wood cut, and I will bring the processor over, and we will cut it all up in a weekend, and there you go. Your locals and your post will be taken care of.

You fellas down in Florida, you are not going to need it probably but these northern states, Midwest/northern states, and California in the mountains. But I just wanted to get you all familiar with it. You might see it on Facebook, pictures of what we do. But that is my project. And I appreciate you guys listening to me. Am I forgetting anything?

MR. : I don’t think so.

MR. REANDO: I make a motion accept my report.

MR. : Second, North Carolina.

COMMANDER McLEAN: We have a motion and a second to accept the report of the national Riders. Any discussion?

(No response)

COMMANDER McLEAN: Seeing none, all in favor, say aye.

(Chorus of “ayes.”)

COMMANDER McLEAN: Those opposed, say no?

(No response)

COMMANDER McLEAN: The ayes have it. Thank you.

Mr. CHENELLY: My report is on page 90.

National Staff Reports
Executive Director’s Report
by Joe Chenelly
National headquarters is running well. As I said in the finance report, expenses are up. Inflation is our biggest enemy right now. It is extensively in my report, and it is in a few other reports as well of how it is impacting us. Because of the hard work of our staff, we are making it through and we will continue to do so.

Michael, service department, please?

National Service Director’s Report
by Michael Black

MR. BLACK: The service department report is on page 92 and 93 of the book, and I move my report at this time for adoption.

MR. CHENELLY: Warren?

National Membership Director’s Report
by Warren Cox

MR. COX: AMVETS family, my report is on page 96 of the book, and I motion for its acceptance at the proper time.

MR. CHENELLY: Carol?

National Program Director’s Report
by Carol Hebert

MS. HEBERT: My programs report is in the book on page 94 and 95. The values for the reporting period from July to December was with the report but they couldn’t get it in the book but they did send that out to the national district commanders for the national district meetings.

If anybody would like to know what the values were for the states, they can also contact me and I will shoot them the list, and I request a motion for it to be approved at its proper time.

MR. CHENELLY: Thank you, Carol. We do not have a communications department report. Miles Migliara has been with us, had been with us for about six years. Recently left for a new job over at the Pentagon but as of this week, Bumi Ayodele is our new communications specialist. You want to stand up and --

(Applause)

MR. CHENELLY: Commander, that completes the national staff report, and I move for its adoption.

PNC BROWN: Second, Brown.

COMANDER McLEAN: We have a motion and a second to accept the report of all the national staff. Any discussion?

(No response)

COMANDER McLEAN: Seeing none, all in favor, say aye.

(Chorus of “ayes.”)

COMANDER McLEAN: All those opposed, say no?

(No response)

COMANDER McLEAN: The ayes have it. Thank you. National Service Foundation, please.

National Service Foundation Report
by NSF President PNC Harold Chapman

PNC CHAPMAN: Good morning, everyone. Thank you all for your patience yesterday in the fact that we had to go into executive session so many times. It was discouraging but it had to be done, so I thank you again for your patience for that.

My report is on 98 and 99. As we know, we all have our issues with the cost of living, and that doesn’t leave the service foundation out. We have a tremendous amount of salaries. That includes the thrift stores that we own, the service officers. And plus the staff at headquarters. So those of you that got to see that report, that big green box, that is payroll. And we can’t exist without it.

And the stores, hopefully we are going to be getting a few more stores pretty quick. And then down range there are more stores, which brings in our revenue. So without too much talk, I will turn it over to our man who knows the numbers.

And I hope most of you got to see his projection on yesterday on the screen, and I hope you all understood it, but we feel like we are okay. We are going to be fine. It is just going to take a little time. All right, thank you.

Comments
by Alga Hussain

MR. HUSSEIN: Thank you, Mr. President. So I am going to present the financials for the first 5 months of this fiscal year.

In the first 5 months of this fiscal year, we have grossed $2.2 million against contributions coming from thrift stores, mailings, special gifts, scholarships.

On a year-to-date basis, we are under 20 percent down based on what we budgeted year-to-date. Coming to other contributions, which includes our interest income, dividends. We have grossed $305,000, which is basically bringing down our gross contributions that we have collected over the first 5 months of this fiscal year to $2.5 million, which are basically under 20 percent of what we projected in the first 5 months. So we are down 20 percent.

As far as the expenditures are concerned, we have spent $3 million in the first 5 months of this fiscal year. And based on the year-to-date budget, we have actually spent less, which is 5 percent.

So in the overall net basis, we are basically 15 percent down our year-to-date net that we were projecting. So on actual basis, we have operating deficit of $484,000. But unexpectedly our investment portfolio did pretty well during the first 5 months, which actually knocked out our last, so we actually had an unrealized gain of $453,000, posting basically a meager $31,000 of net loss.

So this is pretty much it for the financials for the first 5 months. Thank you.

PNC CHAPMAN: Anyone have any questions out there? No? Like I said, we got to work together. We have to be patient and let’s get this economy down to where we can all afford our own -- putting meals on our tables and paying for out utilities. It is a tough nut, and we got to ride this through.

So thank you. Any questions? Nobody has any questions? Thank you. Commander, that concludes my report.

PNC HEUN: I make a motion to accept the National Service Foundation financial report. Heun, PNC.

SECOND VICE CMDR JOHNSON: Second, Horace Johnson.

COMANDER McLEAN: We have a motion and a second to accept the service foundation report. Any questions?

(No response)

COMANDER McLEAN: Seeing none, all in favor, say aye.

(Chorus of “ayes.”)

COMANDER McLEAN: Those opposed, say no?

(No response)

COMANDER McLEAN: The ayes have it. Thank you. Next order of business: old business. Any old business?

(No response)

New Business

MR. WILBURN: Yes, Commander. David Wilburn, NEC, from North Carolina. Our state convention will be first weekend in June. We do not have a location yet but first weekend in June. We will send some information out as soon as we find the location but anyone wanting to come to North Carolina, come on down and we will have a good time. Thank you.

COMMANDER McLEAN: Thank you, sir. Any other new business? Any other new business? Yes, Jackie?

MR. RANDOLPH: Commander, the Department of Indiana will have their state convention the first weekend in June also. And it will be in Indianapolis.

COMMANDER McLEAN: Thank you. Any other new business?

(No response)

COMMANDER McLEAN: Good and Welfare?

Good and Welfare

COMMANDER McLEAN: Wow, they are all jumping up. Past National Commander Heun, go for it.

PNC HEUN: Thank you, Commander. It is with extreme pleasure that I announce the candidacy for third vice commander of an extremely, extremely well-derived person. Sandy Vorhies I do believe in my heart will be an excellent candidate. Thank you, sir.

COMMANDER McLEAN: Thank you, Chris?

MR. STUDEBAKER: Commander, Chris Studebaker, NEC, from Illinois. And I would like to announce that PNC Jim King will be running for national judge advocate at national convention. Thank you.

COMMANDER McLEAN: Thank you. Mr. Jeff?

MR. JEFF: Commander, as you look in your book, page 63, you see AMVETS I. There is a little link on there for a four-minute video. Those of you who are not aware, we are going to be leaving Sacramento on May 22. We will hit Salt Lake City on May 23. Denver May 24. Kansas City May 25 and Cincinnati, the state of OH, here we go.

I have these little handouts. If you want to donate $1,500 to our journey across the country, we will advertise your department and your post logo on our bus across the entire United States. I have these if you need me.

COMMANDER McLEAN: Thank you.

MR. CLARK: Commander, Dale Clark, NEC alternate, commander from the state of Kentucky. Last night at the Silver Helmet Awards, I saw something that was one of the blatant cases that I have ever seen of disrespect. I hope it never happens again in this.

When you are a PNC, especially the immediate past PNC, if you don't have a seat at the Silver Helmet because your seat was taken by other people. That shows a large amount of disrespect, sir.

I hope that you all can figure it out where that never happens to any other people that have served your title again. I just wanted to let you know that Kentucky, we are very displeased with how that was handled. Thank you.

COMMANDER McLEAN: Yes, sir. Yes, Art Majors.

MR. MAJORS: Commander, I am going to be a delegate for the provost marshal again. I figure I am going to try it until I get it right.

COMMANDER McLEAN: Thank you, Jack?

MR. GRAY: Jack Gray, NEC, New York. I would like to submit the name of the Honorable Howard Jack Chapman for service foundation.

COMMANDER McLEAN: Very good. Thank you.

MS. DURBIN: Sandra Durbin, commander for California. I will be a keynote speaker on the 24th of March in Cleveland, Ohio, at the International Women's Air and Space Museum. If it is possible for you to come and support me, I will be wearing my regalia from AMVETS. I will be talking about AMVETS and I will be talking about AMVETS I. And I would like to have the support.

If you go online and you are a member of AMVETS, you do get a discounted price for the ticket. And all of the money goes to support Women in Flight. Thank you.

COMMANDER McLEAN: Thank you for that. And I would like to add my comment. I think everyone that is in the area should try to do everything they can to get there for that. Thank you, Mr. Stahl?

PNC STAHL: Commander, PNC Art Stahl, Pennsylvania. At this time I would like to thank all of the AMVETS for supporting Pennsylvania's candidate for the past two years. Paul Shipley has stayed in that office because he felt there were problems there that he had to correct.

He has corrected them all, and he is going to be a candidate for national second vice commander, and we urge all AMVETS to continue to support Paul. Thank you, sir.

COMMANDER McLEAN: Thank you, sir. Mr. Bates?

MR. BATES: Yes, Fred Bates, Third District commander, commander from Georgia. I would like to announce I am running for third vice, national third vice.

COMMANDER McLEAN: Thank you, sir. Inetta.

MS. BULLOCK: Good morning, AMVETS. My name is Inetta Bullock. I am the national Women's Veterans Committee chairperson. I would like to say that today, Anchorage, Alaska, is holding an open house. Kristie Foley is the point of contact. And she reached out to the committee for applications, so I sent her my box that I had with female veterans on the cover of AMVETS applications, and then reached out to national, who also sent additional applications to her. And I sent a few T-shirts.

So I am looking forward to find out the numbers. They are expecting over 500 people to be in attendance this weekend, so I am looking forward to hearing the call-back from that.

Secondly, I have gotten a lot of phone calls from women veterans. The VA has increased its step-up as far as taking care of women veterans. It has been very dim over the years. But that being said, when people have been calling me asking for information, I have been reaching out to the women's veterans centers at the VA across the states because I don't know about different states because I am only in Florida.

So I reach out directly to them, and put them in contact with them, and let them be the liaison of where and when. So I am going to, at my next meeting with the Women's Veterans Committee, ask that we each do that and we maybe develop a partnership with the VA so that our name is also out there as well. But as these questions come in, and as the VA has questions, they have a point of contact not only in the veterans' sisterhood side of the house but also within the VA itself. We are networking and connecting us all together.

COMMANDER McLEAN: That is all I currently have for my report. And I move for its acceptance.


MS. McFARLAN: My name is Kelly McFarlain. I am the first vice for District III. Also past department commander, Post 7, and
current commander of Post 7 in Alexandria, Marion Polk's post. But I want to announce that I am running for finance officer this year. And just to kind of clear some air, whatever, if I am elected as finance officer, I will step down, and my wife will take over the District.

But it is something I am very passionate about. If you haven't talked to me about me and the finances, I love it. But I am running for finance officer, just to let everybody know. Appreciate it.

COMMANDER McLEAN: Thank you. Mr. Kilgore.

PNC KILGORE: Good morning, Commander, members of the NEC. I am here to announce I am running for a three-year seat on the national service foundation in Pittsburgh. I would appreciate your support. Thank you.

COMMANDER McLEAN: Thank you. Yes, Mr. King.

PNC KING: I am proud to announce that the NEC from the Department of Illinois, Chris Studebaker, will be a candidate for the Finance Committee, to be elected at the post-convention NEC.

COMMANDER McLEAN: Mr. Shipley?

THIRD VICE CMDR SHIPLEY: I would be remiss if I did not get up here and recognize and give recognition where it is due. Any of you that were first time on the Hill this week, could you please stand up? First time ever on the Hill with our programs.

(Members standing)

THIRD VICE CMDR SHIPLEY: Let's give these AMVETS a round of applause.

(Applause)

THIRD VICE CMDR SHIPLEY: Thank you. Tell your friends. Bring more next year. Hopefully we get a hundred new ones next year. Thank you.

COMMANDER McLEAN: Thank you. Mr. Majors.

MR. MAJORS: I forgot one thing. We talked about the coin boxes, and I am not promoting them. I have a ticket that has not been claimed, and the number is 218.

So if you know of anybody who has got 218, I have it so we can get things straightened out.

SECOND VICE CMDR JOHNSON: My name is Horace Johnson, and I will be running for the position of first vice in August. I ask for your support and vote.

COMMANDER McLEAN: Yes, Mr. Heun.

PNC HEUN: Commander, with your permission, I am going to give this $20 to Art Majors for Mr. Rider president's project because it is an extremely important project. He is keeping fuel in our veterans' houses.

COMMANDER McLEAN: Absolutely. Thank you, sir.

Thank you for that.

(Applause)

COMMANDER McLEAN: Any other good and welfare? Yes, Mr. Pieining?

PNC PIENING: Commander, I would just like to announce that I will be a candidate for trustee to the National Finance Committee at the post-NEC.

PNC BROWN: Mr. Commander.

COMMANDER McLEAN: Mr. Brown III.

PNC BROWN: I will one-up him. Here is $40.

(Laughter)

PNC KING: In reality he took that money from Jan.

(Laughter)

COMMANDER McLEAN: Anything else under Good and Welfare?

(No response)

COMMANDER McLEAN: All right. Seeing none, the next order of business is the benediction. Mr. Chaplain.

Benediction
by National Chaplain Milton Allen

CHAPLAIN ALLEN: I made some copies. They are out front. They are on the table. Please take those home. They came from the chaplain's library. Maybe they can be of some use to you at your posts and your departments.

Like I say in Georgia, I am asking you all to recruit one for the AMVETS family. Recruit one before I see you again. Sons, Ladies Aux, Juniors, Sad Sacks, AMVETS, Riders: Just recruit one, all right?

(Prayer)

COMMANDER McLEAN: I have one more announcement. I have some fliers out on the table outside, which is my project, Operation Second Chance. And they are based mostly in Maryland but they operate in about seven other states right now. And then they partner with other private families to offer their services.

So I would appreciate it if you would take a flyer, look at what they do, and hopefully decide to contribute to my project. Thank you. Mr. Provost Marshal: Salute to the colors, please.

Honors to the Colors
Provost Marshal Art Majors

MR. MAJORS: AMVETS, attention. Hand salute.

PNC KING: Move to adjourn.

MR. : Second.

COMMANDER McLEAN: Motion is made and seconded to adjourn. All in favor?

(Chorus of “ayes.”)


(Whereupon the meeting concluded at 10:48 a.m.)
AMVETS
(American Veterans)

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