



2025 FALL

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

NEC REPORTS



2025 NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (NEC) REPORTS

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AMVETS NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (NEC) MEETING

Saturday, December 6, 2025

Call Meeting To Order.....National Commander Paul Shipley
Invocation.....National Chaplain Jeremiah Botkin
Honors To The Colors.....National Provost Marshal Arthur L. Majors
Roll Call.....National Executive Director Joe Chenelly
Adoption Of Agenda.....National Commander Shipley
Approval Of Minutes.....National Commander Shipley
NEC Reports
District I.....Commander Lester Baker
District II.....Commander Ralph Hensley
District III.....Commander Mark Frederick
District IV.....Commander Sara Pierce
District V.....Commander Brian Bartlett
District VI.....Commander Danelle Wyatt
Committee Reports
Finance.....National Finance Officer Kelly McFarlain
VAVS.....VAVS Chairman PNC J.P. Brown
National Staff Reports.....Executive Director Chenelly
National Service Foundation.....NSF President PNC William Kilgore
NSF Executive Director Joe Chenelly
NSF Finance Director Agha Husain
Old Business.....National Commander Shipley
New Business.....National Commander Shipley
Benediction.....National Chaplain Jeremiah Botkin
Honors To Colors.....National Provost Marshal Arthur L. Majors



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Report of Lester Baker, National District I Commander

National District I

Membership

Membership is being processed by each Department in District One. Membership drives were held in all of the Departments in District One. All of the Departments have printed of membership rosters for their local posts. Life Membership process has improved on the behalf of the local post and Departments. We continue to request communication on life membership as it is processed from National down to the specific Departments.

Upcoming Events

The next National District One Meeting is being held in Three Rivers Massachusetts at AMVETS Post #74, on Saturday February 21, 2026. Meeting will begin at 2:00pm.

Programs

Programs have been implemented throughout our Departments. Americanism Program has been introduced to our middle schools and high schools for student participation. The scouting program is also well underway with local post sponsoring Boy Scout Troops and setting up soap box derby competitions to be held at our local posts. Massachusetts and Maine have events scheduled under programs for scouting. Each Department is working with the local posts for program reporting procedures with Air Table software program. Program reporting continues so each local post can report their activities and programs.

Legislative

Each Department has been busy with the local Legislators working on the Homeless Veterans interest for temporary and permanent housing. We are very pleased with the success of the AMVETS National Legislation, and the success of bills being addressed and passed for all our veterans.

Service

With the government shutdown Departments have been doing their best to provide support to veterans in their communities. Veterans Day Services were held some at different locations due to the shutdown, other areas were utilized to hold services for all veterans.

Funeral Services with Honor Guard representation were held in local cemeteries throughout District One.

Other

Commander Taylor is unable to attend this Fall NEC Zoom Meeting. Tom Davitt, 1st Vice Commander for National District One has submitted this report. I will be representing Commander Baker at this meeting.

Thank you.

Report of Dana Dillon, NEC Department of Connecticut

National District I

Membership

Our membership continues to trickle in.

Upcoming Events

Our next SEC Meeting will be held on Monday, January 26, 2026, at the DAV Chapter 6 Hall. The Hall is located at 80 Hall Ave. Meriden; CT. Service Foundation will meet at 6 pm. The SEC will start at 7 pm.

Programs

We continue to work several programs. A lot of us wear RED on Friday. We have our white clover drives as well as other programs. Operation Gift Card Chairman Al Meadows notified us that the Program has now donated over \$3,000,000.00 since its inception. We have also donated \$1,000 to Commanders project.

Legislative

We continue to keep up with local, state and national legislative issues and act on ones that affect our veterans and service members

Service

We do not have an NSO so we send them to other local NSO's in other organizations.

Other

On Veteran's Day many of our posts and members were involved in Veteran Day activities throughout our state. Activities are currently be planned for Pearl Harbor Day as well as Wreaths Across America. Members of CT Sad Sacks attended the Sad Sack Scrimmage in Haverhill, MA in November. We also attended a Scrimmage in VA for a New Sad Sack Unit in October.

I am sad to report that RI Post 7 will have to close its canteen doors. We have continued to try to get the post membership to step up and work together to save this post, but the ongoing bad feelings and accusations within their post have made this impossible. Additionally, financial problems dating back many years continue to surface, showing that a lack of proper management and accountability over the years has increased their debt to a point where it no longer makes sense to stay in business. They will most likely sell the building and

find a place to meet and build the post up.

AMVETS Post 33, although they have made some progress and have members working together, has had to close their Canteen because they lost their Liquor License and were unable to obtain insurance due to a pending lawsuit in which someone is claiming an injury. In addition, their property is located near a school zone, and the town and local neighbors want to eliminate a bar in this area. The Post is currently considering relocating where it holds meetings. I will continue to keep this body updated.

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

Report of James E. Laflin, NEC

Department of Maine

National District I

Membership

The Dept. of Maine continues to push all Posts to get their annual members renewed. We are at about 75% renewals as of right now.

Upcoming Events

The winter NEC (Zoom) mtg. will be 6 Dec. 25. I am sending in my report but I won't be able to be on that Zoom call due to a family function that day in Vermont. The Dept is holding a Pearl Harbor Day ceremony in Portland on the 7th.

Programs

The Dept. of Maine continues to work with the Posts on getting there reports in. The 2nd Vice is getting a good handle the system.

Legislative

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

Service

The Dept. of Me. 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 all veterans.

Other

The Dept of Maine's Dept. convention is scheduled for 5 thru 7 June 2025 at the Senator Inn & Spa in Augusta, Maine

Report of PDC Caroline J. Kenyon, NEC

Department of Massachusetts

National District I

Membership

We received our Annual Membership Cards at this past National Convention. We distributed them accordingly. I've asked my State 1st Vice Commander for an update on the Membership. As of 9/1/2025, we have for Annual Members a total of 948 which is a percentage of 20%. As for Life Members, we have 3,798 for a percentage of 80%. So for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, we have a total of Annual/Life members is 4,746. We're still having a problem obtaining cards for Life members. We're looking into the problem. Somehow this will get resolved.

Upcoming Events

National District 1 - They held their 1st meeting on October 11th in Billington, NY at the Double Tree. Unfortunately, due to work, I was unable to attend. So the Alternative NEC attended the meeting in my place. As I'm sending this report. He was supposed to update me. He still hasn't updated me. National District 1's next meeting will be held in Massachusetts. The location is set. It will be the AMVETS Post 74 in Three Rivers, MA. The date is set, February 21, 2026. Not sure the time when the meeting will start. If you want to stay in a hotel. There is a hotel in Ludlow, MA. Which is the next town over. Look up Ludlow, MA in Hotel.com for room rates.

Programs

Special Olympic - We've already had 2 meetings. Our next meeting will be either December 4th or December 11th. Right now we're ahead of schedule. Because we've done this for so many years.

The date for this year's Polar Bear Passion Plunge is February 7, 2026. Location is in Post 79, Natick, MA. Last year we were below our goal. So this year's goal is set for now at \$40,000. If you want to sponsor one of our plungers. The website is up and active.

Americanism - We should have already had a meeting to setup this event. But it looks like we'll have a meeting prior to the November SEC meeting or the January SEC meeting.

Scholarship - Applications for 2026, should be ready by the January SEC meeting.

Convention Corporation - on October 16th, we were given dates for our 2026 State Convention. We had a choice of May 29th - 31st, June 5th - 7th and June 12th - 14th. After a lengthy discussion. We voted to have our 2026 State Convention on May 29th - 31st. The location is still pending. Every year we have a Convention Pin contest. The deadline for the contest is our January SEC meeting. The judging will be at our meeting in February 2026.

Golf Tournament - on August 30th, we held our Annual Golf Tournament at The Woods Golf Course in Westminister, MA. We had a total of 16 teams of 4 golfers. During the September SEC a check was presented to the Finance Officer. The Finance Officer announced that they're planning another Golf Tournament but for Skins. During the September SEC meeting it wasn't set in stone. Some of the details are still being worked out. But the date is set, it will be on November 29th at the Gardner Golf Course in Gardner, MA. This town is next town over to Westminister, MA.

Legislative

Right now for this will be one in progress. Anything coming up in our commonwealth government. I will update on the floor during the meeting.

Service

On November 5th, members of the AMVETS family participated in a Bridge Dedication for Gold Star Families in Lynn, MA.

On November 9th, members of the AMVETS family participated in the Annual Veterans Day Ceremony to celebrate Veterans Day. But due to the government shutdown. It couldn't be held at Bourne Cemetery. So it was relocated to MA Maritime Conference Center in Buzzard Bay, MA. This year was also special because the cemetery was planned to place a monument for PTSD veterans. When the government shutdown ends, the monument will be placed in the cemetery so all can see.

Report of PDC Caroline J. Kenyon, NEC Department of Massachusetts (*continued*)

National District I

On November 11th, AMVETS families attended their town's Veterans Day parade and celebration. I attended and participated in 2 towns on that day. The towns were Three Rivers for Palmer and Ware.

On November 12th, we had a contingency of AMVETS members from Western Massachusetts posted colors for the VA Central/Western MA Healthcare System Ceremony- Assumption of Duty to per-mote Jonathan Kerr to the Office of Executive Director. The Ceremony took place in the Garden House at Look Park in Northampton, MA.

Other

Our current State Commander Robert Bruso, has done so much for the time period of July - September. His report for the September SEC was 4 pages long. He has informed me that his report for the November SEC is even longer. For time period of September - November. So our State Commander has been extremely active in the commonwealth representing AMVETS.

Members of our AMVETS family participated in the following parades. On September 1st, for the annual Labor Day parade in Marlboro, MA. On October 5th, for the annual Fall Festival parade in N. Adams, MA. Fishing Derby hosted by AMVETS Post 208 out of Hudson, MA. It was held at the Hudson Riverside Rod and Gun Club on September 6th. This day is set aside for residents of all VA's and Veterans Homes in the commonwealth to just have a day of fun.

The Big "E" - The dates were September 12th - September 28th. This year we finally got to setup a table for a Membership Drive and talk to people about the organization. The first day of the Big "E" is Veteran's Appreciation Day. At the end of the day, we had a full page of personnel interested on obtaining information. We had the privilege on September 22nd to post colors. Which started Navy week. During the ceremony, we watched new recruits being sworn in by a Navy Rear Admiral who is out of the Groton, CT. For us plans for next year's Big "E" are already in the works.

Honor Guard - Including participating in the parades already mentioned earlier. We will be posting colors at a Boston Celtic's home game on Friday, November 21st.

On a Personal Note - We recently lost our IPNC Horace Johnson. He was fighting esophagus cancer. When he announced that he had cancer at the March Spring NEC and what type of cancer. My heart just dropped and I started to cry. When we heard he wasn't attending the National Convention in Greensboro, NC, due to his health and was advised by his doctor not to attend. I knew it was just a matter of time. He fought it to the bitter end. For the family of IPNC Horace Johnson, my personal condolences. I know what they're going through. When anyone gets diagnosed with this type of cancer. It's just a matter of time. I know it does hurt, but through time, it does get better. My husband had the same cancer. He did fight it to the bitter end. If you're come to the 2026 National Convention in Orlando, FL. I want to give a hug for your lost. When this type of cancer is discovered. It's already in Stage 3 or even Stage 4. It's mostly a death sentence. Remember when a life leaves this world. Another one takes his or her place. If a boy is born somewhere there is war in the world. If a girl is born somewhere there is peace in the world. So the day he passed another life took his place. I know this to be true.

Report of Fred Vineyard, NEC Department of New Jersey

National District I

Membership

Membership continues to decline at both National and State level - Post recruitment incentives are needed.

Upcoming Events

NJ Honor Guard participated in City Veterans Day Service and will take part in Pearl Harbor Service

Programs

Monthly Coffee with Vets every 1st Monday National welcomed 3 NJ students to attend Founding Forward (1 was a Dept. Nomination)

Legislative

Fred Vineyard continues to keep updated and vigilant to advocate for all Veterans Bills

Service

VSO Fred Vineyard continues to assist Veterans with claims and appeals

Other

NJ would like to see Nat'l Cmdr. host a monthly zoom meeting for all State Commanders.

Report of PDC Joe Ashman, NEC Department of New York

National District I

Membership

NY continues to address recruitment and the retention of members.

Upcoming Events

Our next SEC is scheduled for March 20-21, 2026 at the Binghamton DoubleTree located in Binghamton, NY.

Programs

NY continues to promote programs throughout the state and the significance associated with reporting to National.

Service

NY's VAVS officers continue to diligently support our hospitalized veterans.

Other

NY has started a Zeffy crowd fundraising campaign in order to raise funds. Please donate here: <https://www.zeffy.com/en-US/donation-form/veterans-helping-veterans-2>



National District II

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Report of David Haines, NEC Department of Delaware

National District II

National Commander, District II Commander, Department Commanders and fellow AMVETS.

Membership

Renewal is about 85 %

Programs

5 posts have reported for the period 3 posts in the Department are involved in legislative efforts in Dover. Delaware toys for tots and ROTC programs across the State. **Food drives are a regular part of our programs.** There are two student ROTC Cadets who have been attending Freedom foundation in Valley Forge, Pa on Am vet Scholarship's. The Department has awarded Two ROTC scholarships of \$ 1000.00

Post #2, participates in Scholarship's and ROTC Scholarships, along with major donations to the men's "Home of the Brave for Veterans" and the new "Women Home of the BRAVE" for women Veterans" in Milford Delaware and Milford's Veterans Home. Set up flu shots for members and family. Made donations of over **\$200, 000.00** for the year to date to charitable causes in addition to Two \$5000.00-dollar Scholarships for ROTC Graduate's during the period. Post 2 also participated in wreaths across America. they also held their annual Veterans Day Ceremony. Post 2 also has built numerous handicap ramps for veterans in need. A veterans Day Ceremony Post 2 also has the **2nd Largest Ladies Aux** post in the country with membership Just over 650 members.

Post #5: post has assisted post # 2 at its various functions and is picking up momentum,

Post #1694: They are doing numerous fund raisers and are planning a "White Clover drive at various business locations in Seaford Delaware.

Post #22 This post 22 has made great strides in cleaning up its membership roster. Duplicate entries are gone, members in arrears are addressed and we continue to keep up to date with new applications.

Community engagement has been enhanced. The post

launched a new membership drive with advertising in local businesses.

Our charitable contributions have been completed for 2025; we are proud to have donated in excess of \$50,000 and this includes a \$5,000 check to Food Bank of Delaware. Participation in "Over the Edge", a fundraiser for Special Olympics Delaware was DOUBLE last year's count.

Auxiliary and Sons stepped up and are supporting the Post in great ways. Canteen sales are at levels not seen in many years; the Sons relaunched their turkey shoot with much success.

Post #8323 Is active in community, and had a number of fund-raising drives including assisting of building ramps for Veterans

Service

Department also participated in legislative proposals which consisted of over \$110,000.00 going to the Delaware Veterans Trust Fund to help assist Veterans and their Spouses These funds comes from our Video lottery machines. The Department also assisted a number of Vets through the Department of Veterans Affairs The Department has also awarded numerous ROTC Award's and Schorships throughout the state.

Legislative Issues

The Department and posts are active in legislation both at the State and National level. We coordinate with the VFW and American Legion, on various pieces of legislation with both state and federal elected officials. Department maintains close relationship with key legislative leaders and their staff. On March 26, 2025 a Veterans Rally was held at the State Capital in Dover Delaware to support two Legislative INITIATIVES one being House **Bill 1** which creates a new Cabinet Position under the Governor which will be the new position of **Secretary Of Veterans Affairs, Tis was signed into law June 30, 2025 The other proposed Bill is HB 31 Which prevents 3rd parties from taking fees from Veterans when applying for Veterans benefits that they are entitled to. This was signed into**

**Report of David Haines, NEC
Department of Delaware (*continued*)**

National District II

law June 30,2025; the governor has appointed a new Secretary for Veterans Affairs to a cabinet Postilion the first time in Delaware history thanks to Amvets and other Veterans organizations.

DEC Meeting Held in December 6, 2025

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

Respectfully submitted,

David Haines
NEC
AMVETS Department of Delaware

Report of Aaron J. Smith, NEC

Department of District of Columbia

National District II

Membership

I am happy to report that membership applications were submitted to Amvets National Membership Department for new members that joined several Amvets Post under the Department of the District of Columbia, Inc. Annual Amvets renewal applications were submitted to Amvets National Membership Department for the period 1 September 2025 through 31 August 2026. Department members were advised to log on to Amvets National Website www.amvets.org to make sure their information is listed correctly. We continue to attend events around the District of Columbia, Maryland and Virginia to recruit for new Amvets members.

Service

Post members volunteered from the Department and the Women's Auxiliary for Winterhaven Homeless Veterans Stand Down. Members assisted veterans with selecting and trying on winter coats. Department members attended membership and program training sessions that were held on Zoom by Amvets National Headquarters staff members. Department members attended the Wreath Laying Ceremony that was held at Sister Springs Cemetery, Interlachen Putnam County Florida. PFC Robert Henry Jenkins, Jr. PFC Jenkins a United States Marine was killed in South Vietnam. PFC Jenkins was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor Posthumously.

Upcoming Events

District II, meeting April 11, 2026, West Virginia

Programs

The Department has 100% Program participants. 1st Vice Commander Angela McKnight serves as the VAVS Representative for the Department. Commander McKnight volunteers at the Washington, DC VA Medical Center on Thursdays. Duties consist of escorting and directing patients and their family members to medical appointments.

The Department donated money and purchased winter coats, hats and gloves for the Winterhaven Homeless Veterans stand down event. The event was held at the Washington, DC VA Medical Center on 1 November 2025.

Meetings Commander Clyde Pike held Amvets Dept Meeting on 11 October 2025 in Clinton, MD.

Department members attended the District II Meeting that was held in Stevens City, VA on 25 October 2025.

Legislative

Members from Johnnie Collins, Jr. Amvets Post 0008 will be attending the Women Veterans Rock legislative leadership session that will be held on 7 November 2025 at the National Guard Memorial Museum in Washington, DC.

Report of Andre R. Martel, NEC

Department of Maryland

National District II

Membership

Nearly made it to 100% for the previous membership year, even after one of our Post did an audit of their membership roster and found nearly 40 were deceased. Nonetheless, we were nearly at 99% with six Posts reaching the 100% mark. Our goal continues, this year, to achieve over 100% membership.

Upcoming Events

Our next DEC's will be in early December and February. Holiday activities are high on our list - for the communities, children, and neighborhoods. The Annual Thrift Store Holiday celebration will be in early December – an affair where they make significant financial donations to local civic and non-profit organizations across the State.

Training events, both in person and via Zoom, are now being scheduled for all of our new officers at Department and Post levels. This training ensures consistency throughout the department in membership, programs, and other efforts across the State.

Nominations for the Department's PNC A. Leo Anderson Memorial Free State Award of Excellence are being prepared. Governors, legislators, volunteers, Veterans assistants, etc. have been past recipients. Announcements will be made at the February DEC.

Programs

All of our active Posts reported last year and continue to report during this period. Several are involved in helping/visiting the hospitalized and all Posts are looking to be active in some way for Veterans Day.

Legislative

Our legislature is currently not in session but returns in January 2026. AMVETS is leading plans for our "Legislative Day" in Annapolis on behalf of the Maryland Joint Veterans Committee. The event is designed to ensure our legislators are aware of the veterans' needs across the State and across VSOs so that we can speak with one voice.

Service

VA centers and hospitals continue to open up to volunteer activities and Maryland is taking advantage. More activities have taken place at VA Hospitals in Baltimore and Martinsburg and at several other centers including the Charlotte Hall Veterans Home and at other nursing homes across the State. Post 7 in Thurmont, MD plans to help the community erect a memorial on behalf of the Gold Star Mothers in the city-center veterans plaza. More to come on this effort.

Report of Mark Beaver, NEC Department of North Carolina

National District II

Membership

Our Department has reported since August 31, 2025. 273 Renewed 126 new members for a total of 399. 4 new life members members. 2 Conv. total 2, 430. North Carolina ranks 19th in Renewals. Art Leaming is Department of North Carolina first Vice Commander for membership. North Carolina is in the red for National renewal standards ranking 33rd at 72.37%. Our Department is striving toward recruiting new members and retaining our current members.

Upcoming Events

Our Department just had our Fall DEC meeting in October 31, November 1 and 2 2025 in Clemmons, North Carolina. Had a good meeting and good fellowship. Discussed turning in nominations for awards. Our Winter DEC will be held January, 23rd thru 25th in, 2026. Clemmons, North Carolina, NEC meeting March 7th. 2026 in Washington, PA.

Programs

Our Department is printing out the Americanism package and getting it out to our local schools within our communities. We have started grouping a list of JROTC medals for the local High Schools within our District.

Legislative

We have been in conservation with our House 76 Representative and State Senator. There is no house bills at the present time concerning Veterans for North Carolina.

Service

VAVS has one hospital reporting. Salisbury, NC VA hospital reported annual fundraiser project. The money raised will go towards youth programs and scholarships. Our District reported of Post holding annual Veterans Day Ceremonies and Parades.

Report of Paul Foresman PDC, Alternate NEC Department of Pennsylvania

National District II

Membership

Our 1st Vice Commander Stan Angel is currently working on a plan to help get new members. Most Posts are holding Open House at their Posts to recruit new members, and a few have opened the Posts to our Service Officers where claims from Veterans can be filed and help with membership from their Post Officers.

Upcoming Events

Our next SEC meeting will be held at PA Headquarters at Fort Indiantown Gap January 10-11, 2026, this will be a virtual meeting. Spring SEC - Sheraton Hershey March 13-15, 2026.

Programs

Reporting from January- June, 2025 showed Pa at 100% reporting. July- December 2025 are still being reported, and is expected to be at 100% also.

Legislative

Legislative issues are currently and ongoing. Our Veterans' Counsel and War Counsel are diligently at work, once we have our winter SEC in January, I'll have more information to provide

Report of Patricia Kishman, NEC Department of West Virginia

National District II

WV Meetings

The department meetings for WV were well attended this year at Post 17.

We want to thank those who emailed reports and information throughout the year; Post 17 Misty, Post 30 Keith, Post 38 Joe and Post 40 Mark, also a big thank you to our Finance Director, Marvin does a great job keeping us in the loop.

Membership

The posts have all done well considering the current obstacles at retaining members and working their recruiting efforts.

Department Growth

We are working to get support for new posts but also want to help those without a meeting place to find a home, maybe co-locate with a restaurant or pub. Fraternal orders are not a good match due to competing interests. One idea presented at the Post 17 meeting was to look into the Army Reserve or National Guard Armories, or other group centers for a space to hold meetings and events.

We are checking out the Grafton and Bridgeport area now, but the process is slow meeting with other organizations that could help, finding volunteers, etc.

Programs

I attended the Programs training at the National Conference but could not log on to actually participate in the training. I am still waiting for access. They suggested an email address be created that can be passed on to the next 2nd Vice or person doing the reporting. I created an email address for Dept of WV but am still waiting on log on approval from National. That email address is WV2ndVice@gmail.com

One of the issues with the current legislative state of affairs is that although the AMVETS is a non-profit organization, donations to us are not directly tax exempt as with the VFW. The donations to the AMVETS if handled correctly can still be deducted as a marketing expense for the organization but that is not fair to the

AMVETS that so much more time, effort and expense must be utilized to support the sponsor.

The AMVETS organization needs to work to get this restriction changed!

Service

The Department's service focus is veterans who are in VA hospitals and nursing/convalescent homes and those who need assistance in making medical visits and rehabilitation visits. Posts donate funds, drive veterans to appointments as required, visit the VA hospital and nursing homes and the Vet centers. This is in conjunction with the Department's recruiting drive. All Posts visit members in the hospital and attend visitations and deliver memorial bibles to the family of deceased members. Post 17 hosts an Annual Easter Egg Hunt, Christmas in July, the Memorial Day Parade & the WV Kids day in the park. Posts 30,38 & 40 are also very active with similar events. Post 30 also participated in the 167th Air Wing Winter Family Day which is fun and a great opportunity for recruiting. Post 30 participated in high school sports activities including sponsoring the Lacross team and advertising with the football program. Post 40 places flags on graves and hosts a Veteran's Assembly Day for Veterans & Memorial Days. Post 40 also partners with the Salvation Army to prepare and deliver Thanksgiving meals among many other activities such as a public breakfast that generally services between 90 and 140 people with a \$4 donation. These posts are doing great work, even the small posts make such a big difference in the communities. Please don't forget that.

Other

All of the WV Posts supported funeral/memorials/farewells to see their full reporting, their contact info is below.

Kristy Riddle has finalized their Ladies Aux. for Post 17; things are finally completed.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Kishman

Report of Patricia Kishman, NEC
Department of West Virginia (*continued*)

National District II

NEC, Department of WV
Todd Kingston
Dept of WV Commander

Dept of WV Contacts:

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Post 40 Mark Mayfield markmayfield2307@gmail.com

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Post 38 Joe Hutton or Jerry White: jfhutton1884@gmail.com / jdwhite102807@gmail.com

Post 20 Connie Sears Goldsmith csears5@gmail.com



National District III

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Report of Mark Frederick, National District III Commander

National District III

Programs: The Department of Tennessee has been heavily involved with the 917 Society and their Constitution program since it began along with several other Departments throughout the nation. 2026 will be the 250th anniversary of the U.S. Constitution and there is a big need from the 917 Society with delivery of the Constitution to all 8th grade students throughout the nation. The 917 Society founder will be at the upcoming District III meeting in February to discuss participation in the upcoming year.

Membership: District III currently leads all Districts in new members with 273 and percentage of growth at 1.1%. The Department of Florida leads the nation with 204 new members and Louisiana is leading the nation in percentage of growth at 3.14%. All Departments in District III have outstanding renewal programs and look forward to that number increasing.

District III Meeting: The upcoming District III meeting will be held this year in Oak Ridge Tn. On the 14th of February. Hotel information can be provided upon request.

District III would like to offer its condolences on the passing of Past National Commander Horace Johnson. He was an inspiration to us all and he will be truly missed.

Report of A.J. John, Department of Florida

National District III

Report to the National Executive Committee for December 6, 2025 from NEC A.J. John for the Department of Florida:

I. MEMBERSHIP

The Department of Florida membership continues to demonstrate steady growth patterns varying across departments. Current national totals show stable retention among life members and incremental gains in annual members due to targeted outreach and community visibility efforts.

Recruitment:

- The department has implemented coordinated recruitment drives with local posts who have reported the strongest increase in membership.
- Events at VA facilities, community fairs, and college-veteran organizations have produced consistent new-member interest.
- Digital outreach, including social media campaigns and updated posts websites, remains an effective tool, particularly for reaching younger veterans.

Retention:

- Retention remains strong at the posts level with meetings and ongoing volunteer opportunities.

II. PROGRAMS

Program reporting within the Department of Florida has remained steady over the past several months, reflecting consistent engagement across posts and a strong commitment to community support. Several major initiatives and service activities reached their peak during this reporting period, driven by increased volunteer participation and improved coordination among program officers.

Highlights:

- **Veterans Support Activities:** Florida posts continued to provide direct assistance to veterans and their families, including transportation services, benefit-navigation support, and emergency relief for those facing financial hardship.
- **Community Service Initiatives:** Many posts reported heightened activity in community outreach, such as food drives, youth mentorship events, and partnerships with local schools and civic organizations.

III. LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS

Florida's legislative session will begin again in February, and several key veteran issues are expected to be addressed during this period. The Department of Florida is preparing to monitor and engage with legislation that impacts veterans, military families, and the broader military community statewide.

Expected Areas of Focus:

- Veteran's Healthcare Access
- Education & Workforce Development
- Benefits & Tax Relief
- Support for Military Families

Department Engagement

The Department of Florida will track pending bills and provide updates to posts as new information becomes available.

IV. DEPARTMENT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

- The Department of Florida's Spring DEC is scheduled for February 19-22 at the Rosen Centre Hotel, 9840 International Dr., in Orlando.

V. MEMORIAM

It is with deep sadness that we report the passing of **Past National Commander Horace Johnson** on

Report of A.J. John, Department of Florida (*continued*)

National District III

November 4, 2025. He was laid to rest on **November 22, 2025**, surrounded by family, friends, and members of the AMVETS community.

Commander Johnson's decades of service to AMVETS and to the veteran community left an enduring legacy. His leadership, integrity, and unwavering advocacy for veterans' rights made a lasting impact on the organization at every level. Beyond his formal accomplishments, he will be remembered for the countless personal connections he made, friendships built over years of dedicated service, mentorship, and genuine care for others.

He will be deeply missed not only by AMVETS, but by the many friends and colleagues whose lives he touched throughout his years of committed service.

Report of Brett N. Colbert, NEC

Department of Georgia

National District III

Membership

As of November 2025, Department 1st Vice Cmdr Wanda Allen reports having 1,834 total members of which 1,643 are life members, and 191 are annual members. During the months of February and March, Posts will be scheduling and hosting membership drives across the state. Each Post is committed to, and actively updating their membership rosters. 1st Vice Cmdr Allen is actively auditing the at Large Roster to remove duplicates and deceased members from the roster. The MAL roster is actively being divided to offer those members an opportunity to be active in a Post.

Upcoming Events

Tentative upcoming dates: Winter SEC Jan 10-11, 2025
Spring SEC April 11-12, 2025
Department Convention May 29-31, 2026
All will be held at the Hilton Garden Inn, in Warner Robins, GA.

Programs

Department 2nd Vice Cmdr Roy Montgomery reports that the Department cannot verify the number of Posts that have submitted reports due to the absence of AirTable training at the National Convention and inadequate staff proficiency with the platform. Immediate action is required to address these training gaps and ensure accurate reporting.

Notable Events and Programs:

- Sept 2 – Veterans Transitional Support Unit Opening, Milledgeville, GA Reps: Posts 12, 110, 1857
- Sept 11 – Patriot Day Flag Raising, Blackshear, GA Reps: Posts 12, 110, 1857
- Sept 13 – Sons of AMVETS 24th Annual Bike Show, Lithia Springs, GA Host: Squadron 118
- Sept 18 – Atlanta VA Suicide Prevention & Recovery Walk & Roll, Decatur, GA Reps: Posts 12, 44, 911
- Sept 20-21 – Fall SEC, Warner Robins, GA
- Oct 4 – Post 910 Appreciation Event, Rose Hill Elementary, Newnan, GA Rep: Post 910
- Oct 4 – Post 911 Stand Down, Atlanta, GA Reps: Posts 12, 44, 110, 911 and 1857
- Oct 24 - Post 607 celebrated their 71st Anniversary
- Nov 6 - Governor's Veterans Day Ceremony,

Atlanta, GA Rep: 2nd Vice Cmdr Roy Montgomery

- Nov 8 - Georgia Veterans Day Parade- AMVETS in the Parade Atlanta, GA Rep: Posts 12, 44, 911, 607, 1857
- Nov 15 - Post 600 Veterans Recognition Dinner Toccoa, GA Community Support Posts have provided support to those that have been affected by the government shutdown and are donating turkeys and non-perishable food for Thanksgiving outreach.

Legislative

The Department of Georgia AMVETS is planning to advocate for Veterans at the State Capitol (Atlanta, GA) during the month of January 2026 and is working with all other VSOs to show solidarity during our legislative season.

Service

Nothing to report.

Other

Department Commander Allen attended the inaugural "Uniting Voices for Veterans Summit," bringing together leaders from the VFW, American Legion, DAV, and other Veteran Service Organizations across the State of Georgia. The summit was hosted by Commissioner Patricia Ross in collaboration with the Georgia Department of Veterans Services.

Past Post 910 Commander Charles Weldon was called home on October 9, 2025. His funeral was held on October 23 in Carrollton, GA.

The Department of Georgia extends its deepest gratitude to Executive Director Ron Dillon for his years of exceptional service and unwavering dedication. Ron has been an integral part of our organization, serving in numerous capacities—including Post Commander, Post Finance Officer, Department Commander, Executive Director, and Service Foundation Trustee. His leadership and commitment have left an indelible mark on our Department and the veterans we serve. Although Ron will be leaving the Peach State and returning to Ohio in November, he will continue to

Report of Brett N. Colbert, NEC Department of Georgia (*continued*)

National District III

assist in training his successor, ensuring a smooth transition. His guidance and wisdom have shaped our path for countless years, and while he will be greatly missed, his influence will endure.

We are pleased to welcome Ricardo Jacobs as our incoming Executive Director. Ricardo will initially serve as Deputy Executive Director as he prepares to assume full responsibilities. We look forward to his leadership and the continued progress of our mission.

Report of Gary L. Stuart, NEC

Department of Louisiana

National District III

Membership

The Department of Louisiana has 6 post with a total membership 853 this includes 212 MALS. Various post have held membership drives to try and recruit new and younger members

Upcoming Events

The next SEC meeting will be in Alexandria in February with Post 7 hosting with food and dance at the Post.

Programs

As of this report the Department is at 33.34 % reporting. 326 volunteers worked 690 hours for a total program value of \$28888.48

Service

The Post are doing community service, Americanism, fundraising, remembering me, supporting veterans to name a few.

Other

We have some people wanting to open a new post in Bastrop and also Shrevport

Report of Lee Ann Adams, NEC Department of Tennessee

National District III

Membership

TN membership stands at 2051, including 490 MAL's. Through recruiting events we have added 25 new members to our roster in the past year. We sadly mourn the death of 9.

Programs

Pocket Constitutions: Over 39,000 Pocket Constitution booklets were distributed by local posts to TN schools for their 8th grade students. Plans are set to increase that number by expanding the booklet distribution to more schools, in more counties, benefiting more students.

National Americanism Contest application forms were sent out to TN schools. Judging of the entries will be held at our Spring SEC Meeting.

Service

Our 'Veterans helping Veterans' service program, aiding veterans in need continues to be active at the local Post level.

The Department of TN annual Golf Tournament, held in September, was a great success. Money raised was targeted for the TN Veteran Relief Fund, providing emergency cash assistance for any veteran residing or passing thru Tennessee.

"Team Tennessee", a new Department Level Service Project Committee, has been developed to supplement the Post level 'Veterans Helping Veterans' Service Program.

TN AMVETS, statewide, are notified, by email, of upcoming larger projects (decks/ yard cleanup, home repairs, etc.) and join together to complete the project.

- The TN Service Foundation has provided seed money for the program. Future funding will come from fundraisers and member/community donations.
- Year to date 3 projects have been completed. Increased moral and team building experiences have been seen within the 6 TN Posts that have participated in the program.

Other

'Turn-Over Guidelines', including SOP's, duties and responsibilities, are being developed for all officer and committee positions (elected/appointed). These documents will provide continuity of service and a smooth transition for a new officer/committeeman entering a department level position.

Legislative

The TN Veterans 'Property Tax Relief Program' funds are dwindling as more veterans are qualifying for the program. Tennessee Veterans (TNVET) is meeting with state representatives on legislation to increase funding for this program.

Upcoming Events

- February 14, 2026: National District 3 Meeting, Oak Ridge, TN.
- March 20-21, 2026: Dept. of TN Spring S.E.C., Cookeville, TN.

Lee Ann Adams

NEC Representative, Department of Tennessee



National District IV

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Report of Sara Pierce, National District IV Commander

National District IV

Membership

Within the IV District, total membership is 53,486 members. We have discussed numerous times on how to encourage the younger veterans to join. Two things we believe could help is having meetings available online and including the whole family. We at AMVETS state we are a family, the posts should be open to including all family members welcome.

District we have our VAVS representatives volunteering diligently with our veterans. Ohio has a suicide hotline, 1 is too Many, that can be reached at 800-OHAMVETS.

Upcoming Events

The next IV District Meeting will be held at Owensboro, Kentucky at Post 75 on February 28, 2026.

Programs

Across the IV District ROTC and JROTC are recognized because of their service.

Operation Red Sleigh in Illinois raises funds to purchase gifts and dinner for needy veteran families.

Iowa celebrated the 100th birthday of a WWII veteran. Many posts held different events for Veterans Day like laying wreaths, putting flags on veterans graves, and participating in community parades and services.

Unfortunately Wisconsin had the Veterans Housing & Recovery Program and Veterans Outreach & Recovery Program closed due to lack of funding.

Legislative

All Departments have veteran legislative issues at the State level.

Illinois will be doing a joint Legislative Day in Spring 2026.

Ohio Veteran Service Offices could lose funding if property tax issues are not resolved.

Missouri currently has 28 different pieces of legislation currently that deal with veterans.

Service

We have multiple Veteran Service Officers across many Departments. Within the VA facilities across the

Report of Richard Shea Jr, NEC Department of Illinois

National District IV

National Commander Shipley, National Officers,

**Members of the National Executive Committee and
fellow Amvets:**

The Department of Illinois held its annual school of instruction in September, over 100 members representing 51 posts were in attendance. We held our workshops to talk about programs, membership, service officers, public relations and many other topics. We held our annual picnic at the VFW in Springfield where Amvets Post 94 meets, since our headquarters does not have the room for it. Our headquarters address is 2206 South Sixth Street Springfield, IL 62703

We are now getting ready for our Operation Red Sleigh program where with donations from individuals, posts, and the Illinois Service foundation. We supply veterans and active-duty members with gifts and a Christmas dinner. It has been a great program for us every year and just keeps growing.

Our winter SEC is scheduled for 14 February 2026 via Zoom.

Membership

AMVETS Department of Illinois' membership has 5,851 total members. We in IL offer a wide variety of membership tools to gain attention and set us apart from other department VSOs. We offer online capabilities to join IL Amvets and our cutting-edge website sets us apart from others. Illinois Amvets is constantly trying to improve our coverage and remain at the fore front of Illinois veterans' organizations.

Programs

AMVETS Department of Illinois reached 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. Illinois Amvets has many programs that we are proud of one of which is the ROTC award, every year we handout medals to various high school and college students around our state and a few overseas, one of our other programs is our Operation RED Sleigh that

provides gifts for children and a Christmas dinner for a needy Veteran family. Both programs are funded by our service foundation, Post and personal donations.

Legislation

We plan on doing a joint legislative day in the 2026 Spring Session to impact our legislation and put forth many veteran specific legislative items we would like updated or introduced. If you have any questions referring to any vet related Illinois legislation, please contact our IL HQ.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Richard Shea Jr
NEC Illinois

Report of Richard D. Caldwell, NEC Department of Indiana

National District IV

Membership

Membership has been down for this quarter. We are not where we want to be but are making strides in signing new members.

Upcoming Events

We have held or SEC, Indiana Veterans Home cookout, our Fall Conference and participation with our National 4th District meeting.

Programs

Our department has held Special Olympics fund raising events along with participating in the Track & Field, Airplane Pull, Special Olympics Basketball finals.

Legislative

We have been speaking with our State Legislators in renewed efforts to obtain passage for greater benefits among our veterans.

Service

We have had to downsize our VSO's contacts due to loss funding for our outreach for veterans to be entered into the VA's program. We also sold several cars to help pay our VSO's.

Other

I want to thank everyone for my prayers after having my right hip replaced end of September then 3 weeks obtained a serious infection the bone in the same area. I am getting better slowly but take 3 strong drug infusions to get rid of infection.

Report of Barry Remington, NEC Department of Iowa

National District IV

Membership

Membership is pretty well static right now. We have been able to recruit some new members, but at this point in time it has slowed down.

Upcoming Events

Our next SEC meeting will be held at Post31 Evansdale January 10.

Programs

Programs have been on the up ward spiral for a change. Our second vice Commander is doing a good job of getting the posts to report back to him what they have done.

Legislative

Our legislature will not go back into session until January of 2026.

Service

Durng the summer months, Post 49 sponsors a Vets in the Park. any and all veterans and their families are welcome to enjoy a meal at the post. It has been such a hit, severral businesses have stepped up and are now sponsoring some of the meals.

Report of Deanna Maynard, NEC

Department of Kentucky

National District IV

Membership

More veterans are coming to AMVETS Post's and joining to support our programs, community, advocacy, and our veterans.

Upcoming Events

Our next SEC is January 9-11, 2026, at Amvets Post 61, Louisville, KY

Our 4th National District meeting is October 31-November 2, 2025, at Dayton Ohio

Amvets 95 has Chili cookoff on the first Saturday in October. Meals for Veteran's Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas and donating our time to put Flag's and Wreath's on Veterans graves and at the VA Cemetery's. We will bring refreshments for the services on November 9, 2025, at 2pm and children from Greysbranch Elementary will be singing the National Anthem. Many toys will be given to children at Christmas. Dinner's will be cooked for Veteran's on Veteran's Day, Thanksgiving Day, and Christmas Day.

Programs

The Veterans Crisis Line provides 24/7 confidential support. VA's "Don't Wait. Reach Out." campaign encourages veterans to seek help with any crisis. Initiatives like the COMPACT Act and Mission Daybreak aim to expand mental healthcare access and innovative suicide prevention solutions. Challenges remain, but there are positive trends and areas of hope.

The Hope Center in Lexington, KY, provides a program for homeless veterans through a partnership with the VA. This program offers free housing and support services to veterans with honorable or general discharges. The Hope Center is also constructing a new facility specifically for veterans, which will offer individual rooms for more privacy and comfort. Additionally, the Lexington VA Medical Center has a Fisher House, offering free lodging to families of veterans receiving care at the facility or in the community.

Legislative

Veterans do not need to be enrolled for health care

at the VA to benefit from the COMPACT Act. Any Veteran determined to be in acute suicidal crisis who meets the military service eligibility criteria is eligible for COMPACT-related care and treatment provided or paid for by VA, regardless of their enrollment and copayment status.

Service

We Participate with Toys for Tots, programs with schools, Halloween for children, Christmas toys to children. We help honor our veterans by sponsoring local events with War Memorials, donating to our local VA Cemeteries, participating with local government at Festivals.

Other

The Department of Veterans Affairs has several VA Outreach Events. The website is <https://discover.va.gov/events/>. Official websites use .gov, it belongs to an official government organization in the United States.

Connecting Veterans, service members, families, and communities. Discover resources, benefits, employment opportunities, and wellness programs designed for Veterans and caregivers. Together, we're empowering Veterans, caregivers, service members, and families to thrive, building brighter futures and stronger communities.

They host Open House for Claims Clinic, Community Partners, Disability Claim Questions, Health Care Enrollment, Mental Health, PACT Act, VA Eligibility, Women's Veteran Health Care, and more.

Check out the VA Homeless Programs at <https://www.va.gov/homeless/> Millions of dollars of grants to combat homelessness of Veterans.

Report of Doug Johnson, NEC

Department of Missouri

National District IV

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

Membership

1. The Department of Missouri currently has 30 active posts.
2. The Commanders and 1st Vice Commanders of Membership at the Posts are encouraged to work on pursuing annual renewals for the year along with those that expired over the previous couple of membership years. For a secondary project, the Commanders and 1st Vice Commanders of Membership plan to reach out to members who have been out for an extended period of time to encourage them to re-join the organization.
3. There are locations within the Department that are being evaluated and considered for new posts.

Programs

1. Programs for the reporting period of January 1 – June 30, 2025, included 14 out of 30 posts (47%) reporting programs online. This included 415 events, 3041 hours, 94,887 miles traveled, and value of \$1,234,382.63. Riders reporting from 9 chapters included 548 events, 5408 hours, 173,750 miles traveled, and value of \$1,664,946.89. Prior to that, Missouri had 100% of all posts report programs online for 15 consecutive years! Thanks to the hard work of Executive Directors Pat Scroggins (2010-2014) and Diana Johnson (2014-2025) for putting in the work to make that possible.
2. Programs for the reporting period of July 1 – December 31, 2025, should be equally as good or better!

Service

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

Payne is also at St. Louis VA Medical Center – Jefferson Barracks (JB) on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. Carolyn Truvillion covers Tuesdays and Thursdays at JB. William Sifford works 9 a.m. – 3 p.m. at O'Fallon City Hall on Mondays and Wednesdays. Two service officers also volunteer at H.E.R.O.E.S. Care in High Ridge, MO. Carolyn Truvillion is there on Wednesdays and William Sifford is there on Thursdays. The Department is currently seeking a replacement for the Service Officer lost in the Kansas City area along with filling positions in Columbia, Poplar Bluff, and the Springfield area. The long-term plan is to have a Service Officer in each of the 5 VA Hospitals in Missouri and in the VA Clinics.

2. We have 2 VAVS Reps and 1 Deputy VAVS Rep in 2 of our VA facilities with credentials good through 2026: Klint Oldham at St. Louis VA Medical Center – Jefferson Barracks with Deputy VAVS Rep J Scott Adams, James McKay at John Cochran VA Medical Center in St. Louis.
3. Ongoing projects throughout the Department continue to include military funerals, homeless Veterans, suicide prevention and awareness, supporting Veterans Hospitals and homes, and supporting JROTC and ROTC programs.

Upcoming Events

1. Our Department SECs and Convention will be held at The Resort at Lake of the Ozarks, 3080 Bagnell Dam Boulevard, Lake Ozark, MO 65049 for 2025 through 2028.
2. SEC meeting dates are as follows:
 - a. 2025 – October 17-19.
 - b. 2026 – February 13-15, April 10-12, and October 2-4.
 - c. 2027 – February 12-14, April 16-18, and October 1-3.
 - d. 2028 – February 11-13, April 14-16, and October 6-8.
3. Our 81st Annual Dept. Convention (2026) will be held June 12-14, 2026.
4. Our 82nd Annual Dept. Convention (2027) will be held June 11-13, 2027.
5. Our 83rd Annual Dept. Convention (2028) will be

Report of Doug Johnson, NEC

Department of Missouri (*continued*)

National District IV

held June 16-18, 2028.

Legislation

The below House and Senate bills and resolutions of interest to veterans in Missouri reflect those that have been filed for the 1st Regular Session (January 8 – May 16, 2025) of the 103rd General Assembly. If these pass, the **proposed effective date is 8/28/2025 unless otherwise noted**. These bills and resolutions can also be followed on these websites: <https://house.mo.gov> or <http://senate.mo.gov>. **The bills that are marked with asterisks (**) are the focus of MAVO's (Missouri Association of Veterans' Organizations) legislative agenda for 2025.**

1. House Bill (HB) 80

Sponsored by Dave Griffith (R – District 060).
Creates provisions relating to veterans.

*Prefile on 12/2/2024. First read completed on 1/8/2025. Second read completed on 1/9/2025.

*Last action: Referred to Emerging Issues on 5/15/2025.

2. House Bill (HB) 81

Sponsored by Dave Griffith (R – District 060).
Requires the department of transportation to install signs to honor recipients of the Congressional Medal of Honor.

*Prefile on 12/2/2024. First read completed on 1/8/2025. Second read completed on 1/9/2025.

*Referred to Transportation on 3/19/2025.

*Voted do pass by Transportation on 4/1/2025 and referred to Rules-Legislative on 4/10/2025.

*Last action: Voted do pass on 4/17/2025 by Rules-Legislative.

3. House Bill (HB) 151

Sponsored by Michael O'Donnell (R – District 095).

Establishes a special license plate for veterans of military operations in both Afghanistan and Iraq.

*Prefile on 12/2/2024. First read completed on

1/8/2025. Second read completed on 1/9/2025.

*Last action: Referred to Emerging Issues on 5/15/2025.

4. House Bill (HB) 399

Sponsored by Dave Griffith (R – District 060).

Creates provisions relating to compensation for assisting with veterans' benefits matters.

*Prefile on 12/5/2024. First read completed on 1/8/2025. Second read completed on 1/9/2025.

*Referred to General Laws on 2/12/2025.

*Last action: Public hearing completed on 3/11/2025.

5. House Bill (HB) 419

Sponsored by Don Mayhew (R – District 124).

Clarifies that military personnel are eligible for in-state tuition for undergraduate and graduate degree programs.

*Prefile on 12/6/2024. First read completed on 1/8/2025. Second read completed on 1/9/2025.

*Referred to Veterans and Armed Forces on 1/22/2025.

*Public hearing completed on 1/27/2025.

*Executive session completed on 2/3/2025 – Voted do pass.

*Referred to Rules – Administrative on 2/6/2025 and voted do pass with perfected title on 3/13/2025.

*Referred to Veterans and Military Affairs Committee on 3/24/2025 and voted do pass on 4/9/2025.

*Referred to Fiscal Oversight on 5/1/2025 and voted do pass on 5/5/2025.

*Signatures: House Speaker (5/29/2025), President Pro Tem (5/30/2025), and Governor (7/9/2025).

*Last action: Delivered to Secretary of State on 7/9/2025.

6. House Bill (HB) 552

Sponsored by Will Jobe (D – District 021).

This bill establishes the "Missouri Disabled Veterans Homestead Exemption" which provides a tiered property tax exemption system for veterans

Report of Doug Johnson, NEC

Department of Missouri (*continued*)

National District IV

with disabilities.

The exemptions are based on a disability percentage, certified by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs. For tax years beginning on or after January 1, 2026, an annual exemption will be given for a property that is used as a qualified residence owned by a veteran with a disability, limited to the amounts as follows:

- (1) For veterans with service-connected disability of 50% or more but less than 70%, the annual exemption is \$2,500;
- (2) For veterans with a service-connected disability of 70% or more but less than 100%, the annual exemption is \$5,000;
- (3) For veterans with service-connected disability of 100%, the annual exemption is equal to 100% of the tax assessed on the qualified residence; and
- (4) For a taxpayer who is the surviving spouse of a veteran whose death was determined to be service-connected and who is certified by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs as a recipient of dependency and indemnity compensation under Federal law, the annual exemption is equal to 100% of the tax assessed on the qualified residence.

If a surviving spouse of a veteran sells the qualified residence, an amount may be transferred to his or her new residence as long as it is used as his or her primary residence and he or she does not remarry. No exemption will be allowed for the tax year in which the surviving spouse remarries.

The bill requires each taxpayer that is granted the exemption to reapply on an annual basis unless the veteran has a service-connected disability rating of 100% and is deemed permanently and totally disabled, as specified in the bill. The provisions of this bill will sunset six years after the effective date.

*Prefile on 12/13/2024. First read completed on 1/8/2025. Second read completed on 1/9/2025.

*Last action: Referred to Emerging Issues on 5/15/2025.

7. House Bill (HB) 700

Sponsored by Aaron Crossley (D – District 029).
Authorizes the “Missouri Disabled Veterans Homestead Exemption”

*Prefile on 12/2/2024. First read completed on 1/8/2025. Second read completed on 1/9/2025.

*Last action: Referred to Emerging Issues on 5/15/2025.

8. House Bill (HB) 786

Sponsored by Aaron Crossley (D – District 029).
Designates the “WWII Robert Earl Sauls Memorial Highway” in Jackson County.

*Introduced and first read completed on 1/8/2025. Second read completed 1/9/2025.

*Last action: Referred to Emerging Issues on 5/15/2025.

9. House Bill (HB) 823

Sponsored by Yolonda Fountain Henderson (D – District 085).

Prohibits a landlord from evicting a tenant who is a veteran unless illegal conduct occurs on the premises.

*Introduced and first read completed on 1/9/2025. Second read completed 1/10/2025.

*Last action: Referred to Emerging Issues on 5/15/2025.

10. House Bill (HB) 909

Sponsored by Jim Schulte (R – District 049).

Establishes a special license plate for veterans of military operations in both Afghanistan and Iraq.

*Introduced and first read completed on 1/15/2025. Second read completed 1/16/2025.

*Last action: Referred to Transportation on 2/19/2025.

11. House Bill (HB) 921

Sponsored by Mike Jones (R – District 012).

Report of Doug Johnson, NEC

Department of Missouri *(continued)*

National District IV

Authorizes the “Disabled Veteran Property Tax Relief Act” relating to a property tax exemption for certain disabled veterans.

*Introduced and first read completed on 1/16/2025.
Second read completed on 1/21/2025.

*Last action: Referred to Emerging Issues on 5/15/2025.

12. House Bill (HB) 948

Sponsored by Michael Johnson (D = District 023).
Establishes a program that provides wellness checks for at-risk veterans.

*Introduced and first read completed on 1/16/2025.
Second read completed on 1/21/2025.

*Referred to Veterans and Armed Forces Committee on 4/2/2025 and voted do pass on 4/24/2025.

*Last action: Referred to Rules-Legislative on 5/13/2025.

13. House Bill (HB) 954

Sponsored by Stephanie Boykin (D – District 070).
Provides federal Servicemember Civil Relief Act (SCRA) protection to National Guard members called to state duty.

*Introduced and first read completed on 1/21/2025.
Second read completed on 1/22/2025.

*Referred to Veterans and Armed Forces Committee on 2/26/2025 and voted do pass on 3/24/2025.

*Last action: Referred to Rules – Administrative on 4/10/2025 and voted do pass on 4/24/2025.

14. House Bill (HB) 1088

Sponsored by Maria Smith (D – District 074).
Designates the “COL Elmer R Parrish Memorial Bridge” in Pulaski County.

*Introduced and first read completed on 1/28/2025.
Second read completed on 1/29/2025.

*Last action: Referred to Emerging Issues on 5/15/2025.

15. House Bill (HB) 1106

Sponsored by Bruce Sassmann (R – District 061).
Designates the “POW/MIA CPT Steven N Bezold Memorial Highway” in Montgomery County.

*Introduced and first read completed on 1/29/2025.
Second read completed on 1/30/2025.

*Referred to Special Committee on Tourism on 4/1/2025 and voted do pass on 4/16/2025.

*Referred to Rules-Legislative on 5/7/2025 with Executive Session continues on 5/15/2025.

*Last Action: Action postponed on 5/15/2025.

16. House Bill (HB) 1355

Sponsored by Ben Baker (R – District 160).
Modifies provisions relating to military license plates to include the Space Force.

*Introduced and first read completed on 2/18/2025.
Second read completed on 2/19/2025.

*Last action: Referred to Emerging Issues on 5/15/2025.

17. **House Joint Resolution (HJR) 7

Sponsored by Dave Griffith (R – District 060).
Proposes a constitutional amendment dividing state revenues from gaming activities between public institutions of elementary, secondary, and higher education and the administration of the Missouri Veterans Commission (MVC).

*Prefile on 12/2/2024. First read completed on 1/8/2025. Second read completed on 1/9/2025.

*Referred to Ways and Means on 1/30/2025.

*Public Hearing completed on 2/10/2025.

*Executive Session continued on 2/17/2025 with action postponed.

*Next House hearing on 2/24/2025.

*Last action: Referred to Rules-Administrative on 3/11/2025.

18. House Joint Resolution (HJR) 41

Sponsored by Bill Lucas (R – District 115).
Proposes an amendment to the Constitution of Missouri relating to a property and income tax exemption for certain disabled veterans.

Report of Doug Johnson, NEC

Department of Missouri (*continued*)

National District IV

*Profile on 1/7/2025. First read completed on 1/8/2025. Second read completed on 1/9/2025.

*Last action: Referred to Emerging Issues on 5/15/2025.

19. House Joint Resolution (HJR) 64

Sponsored by Mike Costlow (R – District 108).

Proposes a constitutional amendment granting homestead and personal property tax exemptions to certain veterans proportional to the veteran's disability rating.

*First read completed on 1/15/2025. Second read completed on 1/16/2025.

*Last action: Referred to Emerging Issues on 5/15/2025.

20. House Joint Resolution (HJR) 66

Sponsored by Mike Jones (R – District -012)

Proposes a constitutional amendment granting property tax exemptions to certain disabled veterans.

*Introduced and first read completed on 1/16/2025. Second read completed on 1/21/2025.

*Last action: Referred to Emerging Issues on 5/15/2025.

21. House Joint Resolution (HJR) 74

Sponsored by Jeremy Dean (D – District -132).

Proposes a constitutional amendment relating to property tax exemptions for certain disabled veterans.

*Introduced and first read completed on 1/28/2025. Second read completed on 1/29/2025.

*Last action: Referred to Emerging Issues on 5/15/2025.

22. Senate Bill (SB) 210

Sponsored by Angela Mosley (D – District 13).

Modifies the compensation of certain state employees in positions within Missouri Veterans' Homes.

This act provides that state employees in support care assistance positions for Missouri Veterans' Homes shall receive a wage in the amount of at least \$15 per hour and no more than \$22 per hour. An employee receiving a wage greater than \$22 per hour before January 1, 2026, shall be entitled to that wage on and after January 1, 2026. The wage is effective on January 1, 2026, with an annual adjustment based on inflation every following year.

*Second reading completed on 2/3/2025 and referred to Veterans and Military Affairs Committee.

*Last action: Hearing cancelled on 3/5/2025 by the Veterans and Military Affairs Committee.

23. Senate Bill (SB) 300

Sponsored by Steven Roberts (D – District 5).

Modifies provisions relating to compensation for assisting or advising in veteran benefits matters.

This act provides that no person shall receive compensation for advising or assisting, or referring to another person for such purposes, any individual with regard to any veteran's benefits matter, as described in the act, unless such individual provides a written agreement containing the terms of the fees, provides certain disclosures, and complies with requirements under federal law. Additionally, no person shall advertise for such services without including a disclosure as specified in the act. Furthermore, no person shall receive compensation for any services rendered before the date on which a notice of disagreement is filed with the United States Department of Veterans Affairs and no person shall guarantee the receipt of specific veteran benefits. Any person who violates this act shall be guilty of a class A misdemeanor.

*Second reading completed on 2/13/2025 and referred to Veterans and Military Affairs Committee.

*Last action: Hearing conducted on 3/5/2025 by the Veterans and Military Affairs Committee.

Report of Doug Johnson, NEC

Department of Missouri (*continued*)

National District IV

24. Senate Bill (SB) 566

Sponsored by Sandy Crawford (R – District 028).
Modifies provisions relating to certain veteran-owned small businesses.

Current law requires any veteran who receives a small business loan through the State Treasurer's linked deposit program to complete a boots-to-business program approved by the Department of Economic Development. This act makes participation in such program optional.

*First reading completed on 1/15/2025.

*Second reading completed on 2/27/2025 and referred to the Veterans and Military Affairs Committee.

*Last action: Hearing conducted on 3/26/2025 by the Veterans and Military Affairs Committee.

25. Senate Bill (SB) 664

Sponsored by Rick Brattin (R – District 31).
Establishes the "Veterans Traumatic Brain Injury Treatment and Recovery Act."

This act establishes the "Veterans Traumatic Brain Injury Treatment and Recovery Act". The act creates the "Veterans Traumatic Brain Injury Treatment and Recovery Fund", which will reimburse eligible facilities that provide hyperbaric oxygen therapy to veterans diagnosed with posttraumatic stress disorder or traumatic brain injury and be used to conduct studies on the use of alternative therapies for such conditions. The act specifies the eligibility criteria and requirements for veterans, facilities, and health care practitioners for reimbursement. The veteran shall not be charged by the facility for the cost of the therapy.

The Missouri Veterans' Commission shall compile an annual report with data about the treatment of hyperbaric oxygen therapy and its effectiveness, as set forth in the act. The Department of Health and Senior Services shall award funds to entities to study the use of alternative therapies to treat veterans with posttraumatic stress disorder and

brain injuries and shall annually submit a report to the Governor by January 30 containing findings and recommendations relating to this act.

*First reading completed on 2/3/2025.

*Second reading completed on 3/24/2025 and referred to the Veterans and Military Affairs Committee.

*Hearing conducted on 4/2/2025 by the Veterans and Military Affairs Committee.

*Last action: Voted do pass on 4/9/2025 by the Veterans and Military Affairs Committee.

26. Senate Bill (SB) 716

Sponsored by Travis Fitzwater (R – District 10).
Creates the "Missouri Disabled Veterans' Dependents Tuition Waiver" to provide college tuition waivers for the children, stepchildren, and spouses of certain veterans.

*First reading on 2/17/2025.

*Last action: Second reading on 3/24/2025 and referred to the Veterans and Military Affairs Committee.

27. **Senate Joint Resolution (SJR) 14

Sponsored by Tony Luetkemeyer (R – District 34).
Exempts certain disabled veterans from property taxes.

Current constitutional provisions exempt from property tax all real property used as a homestead by a former prisoner of war who has a total service-connected disability. This constitutional amendment, if approved by the voters, removes the requirement that the former prisoner of war have a total service-connected disability.

This amendment also authorizes a property tax exemption for real property used as a homestead by disabled veterans, as defined in the amendment. The amount of the exemption shall be equal to \$5,000 for veterans with a disability rating of 50-

Report of Doug Johnson, NEC

Department of Missouri (*continued*)

National District IV

69%, and a total exemption for veterans with a disability rating of 70-100%.

*First reading on 1/8/2025.

*Second reading on 2/6/2025 and referred to the Economic and Workforce Development Committee.

*Hearing conducted on 3/5/2025 by the Economic and Workforce Development Committee.

*Last action: Voted do pass on 3/12/2025 by the Economic and Workforce Development Committee.

*Effective Date: Upon voter approval.

Other

None currently.

Respectfully submitted on October 15, 2025,

Doug Johnson,

NEC ~ AMVETS Department of Missouri

28. ****Senate Joint Resolution (SJR) 46**

Sponsored by Jill Carter (R – District 32).

Authorizes a property tax exemption for disabled veterans.

Current law provides a property tax exemption for all real property used as a homestead by former prisoners of war with a total service-connected disability. This constitutional amendment, if approved by the voters, extends such property tax exemption to all veterans of the Armed Forces of the United States who have a total service-connected disability.

*Voted do pass by the Senate Veterans and Military Affairs Committee on 3/13/2025, the Fiscal Oversight Committee on 4/14/2025, the Veterans and Armed Forces Committee on 4/24/2025, and the Rules – Legislative on 5/9/2025.

*Last action: Reported do pass by the Rules – Legislative on 5/15/2025.

*Effective Date: Upon voter approval.

Communications/PRO

Not identified at this time.

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

Report of Pat Rowley, NEC

Department of Ohio

National District IV

Membership

As of 10-3-25 the membership for the Dept. Of Ohio for the year was 25,302 members. That is down 9 percent. We have however post that are still revalidating. So hopefully that will bring up Ohio's membership. Hopefully national won't raise the dues for it's hard enough to make new members. I know that's my opinion.

Upcoming Events

Ohio's S.E.C. is 10-18-25. 4th dist meeting at Dayton post 24, 11-1-25.

Programs

Department of Ohio membership we still have post that have not reported any we are at 34 percent reporting. Those post that have reported have reported 527 programs and more coming in each day. As of 10-3-25, 527 different reports totaling 3.1 million dollars.

Legislative

Our legislative personnel have been working with Ohio legislatures. To make a resolution on the marine corps 250 birthday.

Service

Alot of post are right now involved in stand downs. At all times our riders are active in things from charity rides, building decks, and so much more. Our Sad Sacks are giving out scholarships for nursing, helping gold star mothers and more to help community.

Other

Oh. Always is having state wide sporting competition. All of the Amvets are invited. Golf,horseshoes,corn hole turkey shoots. Billiards. So if your in a state that's close or passing by look on our web page or stop by a post stop in find out what Ohio's dojng.we are one big family.

Report of Ralph Waring Beck, NEC Department of Wisconsin

National District IV

Membership

4th National District membership statistics by Department as reported at the last 4th National District meeting are as follows: Illinois 5851, Iowa 3261, Indiana 3979, Kentucky 1802, Michigan 6333, Minnesota 715, Missouri 3062, Ohio 25,795, & Wisconsin 3141 (Wisconsin's numbers were mistakenly reported as 2688 in the report).

Letters of suspension have been sent to eleven Wisconsin Posts that have not revalidated in the last two or three years. Failure to complete revalidation requirements within the next six months will result in their Charters being pulled. Every effort will be made to transfer their members into nearby active Posts or keep them as Members-at-Large.

Efforts are underway to establish a Wisconsin Post at the Racine Correctional Facility for incarcerated veterans.

Upcoming Events

The next 4th National District meeting is scheduled for 14 February 2026 via Zoom.

The next State Executive Committee meeting will be held on 6 December in Waupaca in conjunction with our annual Winter Dance.

The Department will host an annual Pearl Harbor Day ceremony to be held at the War Memorial in Milwaukee on 7 December.

Plans are being made for our Department NEC, Commander, Auxiliary President and White Clover Princess to attend the Spring NEC, Legislative Advocacy Week, and a wreath laying at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington Cemetery in March 2026.

Programs

The Department of Wisconsin continues to participate in the Veterans Affairs Voluntary Service (VAVS) program and many Posts provide Military Honors for deceased veterans.

The Department of Wisconsin has participated in the White Clover Princess program, having a reigning Princess every year since 1967; 58 consecutive years. It is our hope that by having our White Clover Princess attend Legislative Advocacy Week and attend the congressional session when AMVETS addresses Congress, annually laying a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Arlington, and by attending National Conventions, other Departments will choose to adopt this worthwhile program.

The Department of Wisconsin is also participating in the AMVETS Scholarship program and the AADAA & Americanism contests. Information regarding these programs will be distributed to Posts at our next SEC.

Our White Clover Princess Noel Rataichuk announced that she is organizing a Junior AMVETS Program for the Department of Wisconsin.

Legislative

The Veterans Housing and Recovery Program (VHRP) is closing two of its locations, one in Chippewa Falls and the other in Green Bay, and the Veterans Outreach and Recovery Program (VORP), which serves veterans dealing with mental health and substance use issues and aims to reduce the suicide rate among veterans, is set to lose seven positions. AMVETS Department of Wisconsin supported legislation to fund these programs, and a hearing was held in September. However, it was too late to stop the closures. Senate Bill 411 amended the property tax credit eligibility for disabled veterans and their surviving spouses. The service-connected disability rating was reduced from 100% to 80%.

Service

The Department of Wisconsin continues to support our regional VA Hospitals & Clinics through donations and visits. Representatives of the Department recently toured the VA Hospital in Iron Mountain, Michigan. Our Chaplain responds to notifications of ill, hospitalized, home-bound or deceased members in a timely manner.

Report of Ralph Waring Beck, NEC Department of Wisconsin (*continued*)

National District IV

Other

Larry Redmann was appointed to fill the position of Assistant Executive Director for the Department of Wisconsin. Larry served in the U.S. Marine Corps and is a member of Post-13, Redgranite. His contact information is: N4522 Shady Circle Drive, Redgranite, WI 54970, phone number (920) 299-0058, email address lredmannsr@yahoo.com.

Recent events in the Department of Wisconsin include the SEC in September and our annual State Campout held at Plymouth Rock Campgrounds from 19-21 September.



National District V

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Report of Carol L. Tschampl-Diesing, NEC

Department of Nebraska

National District V

Membership

The government shutdown has affected our ability to set up membership recruitment information tables in various government locations. As a result, our recruitment efforts have been somewhat slowed. However, on the upside, our Department has experienced an increase in member participation at our SEC meetings.

Upcoming Events

The next Department of Nebraska SEC meeting will be held in February in Lincoln, NE.

Programs

This past September, Department officers attended a flag retirement ceremony in Blair, NE. Also in September, several Department officers presented at the funeral of a fellow AMVETS member.

On November 11, AMVETS members will do a Color Guard presentation at Blair High School. In preparation for Veterans' Day, a group of AMVETS members, along with employees from a local credit union, assembled 255 goodie bags on Nov. 3rd. The next day, they distributed those goodie bags to veterans in nursing homes throughout Eastern NE and Western IA.

Legislative

Department Executive Officer Deb Wehrli presented at the 4th Annual Women Veterans Symposium in Kearney, NE last September regarding the ongoing status of current legislation regarding the State of Nebraska's first license plate design honoring female veterans and servicemembers. Coming up on November 17, several AMVETS members will participate in the Nebraska Veterans' Council to work on current legislative bills regarding veterans.

Service

Department of Nebraska is preparing holiday cards and gifts to hand out to every veteran in Nebraska's four veterans' homes and two VA hospitals during the month of December.

Other

Several female veterans who are AMVETS members attended the 4th Annual Women Veterans' Symposium in Kearney, NE this past September. They used the occasion of this event to conduct AMVETS officer training. The last Department of NE SEC meeting was held last October in Lincoln.

Department of NE Commander Rick Harkopf recently suffered a stroke, is out of rehab, and is continuing to recover at home. Get well wishes can be sent to him at 2501 Main St., Bellevue, NE 68005.

Report of Murray Strom, NEC Department of North Dakota

National District V

Membership

Reports from National on dues getting paid back to the department have not been received.

Upcoming Events

SEC is scheduled for February 21, 2026. ACOVA is scheduled for February 6-7, 2026

Programs

Americanism's Founding Forward participant correspondents needs drastic improvement. Our participants were not contacted 60 days prior. Plans were made in a hasty manner. A good contact number has to be developed and posted on web site.

Service

North Dakota is coordinating with other agencies on the homeless. We are shooting to achieve functional zero homeless by using the housing first model.

Other

My NEC pay for National Convention has not been paid yet

Report of Curtis Thomas, NEC Department of Texas

National District V

Membership

We are continuing to renew membership of our current members and attending events in the community providing information about our organization.

Upcoming Events

Our spring SEC meeting location and date will be determined at a later date.

Programs

We continue to feed homeless veterans and the homeless in the community. Help support the local scout troops with donations and use local high school JROTC to post colors for our different veterans ceremonies.

Service

We provide donations to several local service organizations and volunteer when possible



National District VI

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Washington, Glenn Skinner, NEC	55

Report of Terri Good, NEC Department of Alaska

National District VI

Membership

We are still working on getting a new post started in Eagle River and potential Juneau. The biggest obstacle is assisting in finding a place to meet. The Dept. has allocated funds to help start-up posts. All posts continually work on recruitment of new members by identifying and talking with veterans throughout the community, including commercial drivers, numerous open houses. Sponsoring & hosting numerous dart & pool leagues and gaining new members as a result.

Upcoming Events

Next SEC meeting Dependent on date of NEC meeting. Jan. will have fundraiser for VAVS to provide Clothing and personal items for Vets in Need. Dec. participate in Wreaths across America. Free Meals for Veterans at Thanksgiving and Christmas. Feb. will host Salute to the Military Dinner.

Programs

Conducted the third highway cleanup, Red shirt Friday, A lot of work and support with Veterans Commission regarding their sponsored events. Hosted 250th Marine Corps Ball. Assisted with numerous Sick and in need Veterans as well as clothing and food drives. Attended numerous unaccompanied funeral events. Hosted Army and Navy Birthdays as well as working with Navy League Upcoming of commissioning of Ship and events for the Sailors

Legislative

Working with State Legislators to write and pass bill regarding electronical gaming - thus providing additions funds to put towards programs

Other

Several members have passed in last few months. It continues to be a challenge to gain and retain younger Vets and Service members

Report of Bill Vanasdale, NEC Department of Arizona

National District VI

Membership

Unavailable

Upcoming Events

Unavailable

Programs

Unavailable

Legislative

Unavailable

Service

Unavailable

Other

I never received a list of Department officers, phone numbers, or e-mail addresses.

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

National District VI

Derek Hendershot, DEPT. NEC
AMVETS Department of California
AMVETS District VI
November 5, 2025

Department of California NEC Report Input

The 2025 Fall California Department Executive Convention was successfully held at the Marriot convention Center in Visalia California from 30th of October through 1st of November 2025. In times that are increasingly complex, the importance of membership engagement is the cornerstone of the organization has never been clearer. Our theme improves communication, emphasis on membership engagement, Revenue focus, Improve department program transparency.

- **VAVS** – Total cost of programs for the month of October 2025 \$9,379.38. Total cost of programs for the month of September 2025 \$9,379.38. Total cost of programs for the month of August 2025 \$9,379.38. Submitted by Ray Delgado, VAVS Department Coordinator 310-462-3543 delgado7.engr@gmail.com

- **WOMENS VETERANS** – The Women Veterans Committee will be giving gift bags, to all ambulatory women veterans and the female spouses of veterans, starting in February 2026. There will be personal deliveries to all 8 Veterans Homes, in California.

- **AMVETSONE** - Raising Awareness of Veteran Suicide and mental Health within our families and communities. Increase awareness of Resources, Educate and Innovate through Technology. Promote and Motivate Well-Being against Depression and Advocate to Save Lives. Tour dates scheduled for 2025 are from Nov. 9th to Nov 16th focusing on Southern California. AMVETS ONE has multiple ways to donate and support the mission. They are now offering “Travel For A Good Cause” Thank you for supporting AMVETS! We have an opportunity to provide you with a wonderful vacation package that is good for 3 years with no blackout dates to travel and support AMVETS at the same time. To find out more information please

visit AMVETS ONE - AMVETS, Dept. of CA Service Foundation:

<https://amvetscasf.org/what-we-do/amvets-one/>

- **LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE** – 1. During the 2025 transition meeting, 3rd Vice Cmdr Salenga briefed on the differences: Assembly Bills and Senate Bills. A breakdown of legislative protocols was also discussed. The training can be found on amvets.ca.org. Legislative Advocate Seth Reeb will also have his Discord link available on the website.

- 2. We are planning to have AMVETS Day sometime in Apr or May 2026 after Storming the Hill in March 2026. We will have a meet and greet with legislative members coordinated by Seth and Dana, our legislative advocates, and we can discuss legislative issues currently affecting our veterans, their families, and communities they live in.

- 3. A motion to support CA Assemblymember Pilar Schiavo as the AMVETS Legislator of the Year was voted on by the Legislative Committee and it passed.

4. Legislative Wins – Chaptered Bills

Despite the difficult fiscal environment, 2025 produced a surprisingly productive legislative session for veterans. Twelve of our tracked measures were enacted (chaptered) and will become law on January 1, 2026, unless otherwise noted. These bills deliver concrete benefits ranging from expanded educational opportunities to improved tax relief and stronger protections against fraud.

Highlights include:

Educational Opportunities and Academic Mobility

- **AB 88 (Ta) / SB 67 (Seyarto):** These bills extend Cal Grant and Middle-Class Scholarship Program eligibility to the sons and daughters of active-duty service members stationed outside California. The new legislation ensures that students who meet academic and financial criteria may receive state aid, even if they

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

National District VI

graduate high school in another state, as long as their parent maintains California as their legal residence.

- AB 571 (Quirk-Silva): Exempts the construction of the Gypsum Canyon Veterans Cemetery from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) until 2030, clearing the way for Orange County's long-promised cemetery.

- AB 587 (Davies): Requires the Student Aid Commission to include at least one public member with expertise in accessing federal educational benefits for veterans.

- AB 1412 (Gonzalez): Streamlines the transfer process for students with special education plans (IEPs) in military families and clarifies residency rules.

- AB 1508 (Committee on M&VA): Extends the authorization for the Governor's Military Council to January 1, 2031, ensuring Sacramento maintains an organized base retention strategy.

- AB 1509 (Committee on M&VA): Establishes the California State Accrediting Agency for Veterans Education (CSAAVE) within CalVet, which should reduce delays and help protect veterans from predatory schools.

Recognizing Service and Civic Culture

- SB 54 (Umberg): Excludes veterans' disability-compensation payments from household income when determining eligibility for court-fee waivers, preventing disabled veterans from being denied access to the civil courts.

- SB 132 (Budget Committee): This budget trailer legislation excludes certain military retirement and annuity payments from state taxable income from 2025 to 2030. This complements earlier military pension tax relief.

- ACR 16 (Gallagher) / ACR 23 (Quirk-Silva) / SCR 18 / SCR 56: Designate the POW/MIA Bridge, Mental

Health Peer Appreciation Week, National Medal of Honor Day, and National Military Appreciation Month, reinforcing a pro-military culture in California.

5. SB694- While we've secured an agreement to move SB 694 to the Senate Floor for a vote in January, this does not mean we have the votes secured. Despite our hard-fought progress, the fight is far from over. To push SB 694 across the finish line in the Senate and onto the Governor's desk, we need every veteran's voice in California to rise up

Natural Disaster Committee Report: 2025

1. 1000 drawstring bags will be distributed to our Northern, Central, and South Areas to be filled with items that could be needed during emergencies situations.

2. We responded to, 4 disaster since 2024, Park Fire, Palisade's Fire, Eaton Fire and the Hurst Fire, these 4 fires were quite the task.

3. We discussed possibilities of working with other organizations and local government agencies in the future. (i.e.) Cal-OES, Red Cross, and other organizations.

4. We as a committee decided to ask to remind our Membership and Posts to donate some items such as, Socks, Clean Underwear, and other items for female, and males like razors and toothbrushes.

Natural Disaster Committee Co- Chair Carlos Castle

ROTC/JROTC (Medal, ribbon, and certificate). As the school year has started, we expect to be receiving communications from schools concerning awards and event support. We are currently working on supporting a JROTC Air Rifle Match and a Drill Competition. We were recently honored to have Lemoore High School Navy JROTC present Colors and sing our National Anthem at or DEC. Our support is not only vital to their programs but a great way for us as AMVETS to put our name out to them, and the communities they

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

National District VI

live in. Once again, I remind you that the instructors are all retired military, and membership eligible.

John Byrum
Chair, ROTC Committee

COMMANDER NEC REPORT

Dear AMVETS Department of California,

I am profoundly saddened to share the sad news of the passing of our

Past National Commander Horace Johnson, a distinguished leader, dedicated veteran, and cherished friend. His unwavering commitment, profound integrity, and inspiring leadership profoundly impacted the lives of many, leaving an indelible mark on all who had the privilege of knowing them.

PNC Johnson's service to our nation and dedication to AMVETS and community epitomized the highest ideals of honor and courage. Beyond professional accolades, he was a true friend, offering wisdom, support, and kindness during times of need.

During this time of profound loss, please take a moment to remember PDC Johnson but also take time to say a prayer for those that loved and will miss him.

May the memories of PNC Johnson's extraordinary life, courage, service, and friendship provide comfort and peace to all.

Josephine Keller
AMVETS Department of California
Commander
ChiefJoKeller@gmail.com
(951) 544-9270

"Leadership must first and foremost meet the needs of others." ~~

988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline, Veterans press option 1
Online Chat: 98lifeline.org | Text: 741741
LGBTQ Crisis services: 1-866-488-7386
Trans Lifeline: 1-877-565-8860

Report of Glenn Skinner, NEC Department of Washington

National District VI

Membership

Department Membership activities Department Membership: 2083 We're seeking other methods to help our smaller posts to bring new members and young members to their Post to be more proactive because they are aging out.

Upcoming Events

Hosting Compassion Washington Fall Healthcare Event on October 24, 2025 at AMVETS Post 1, Tacoma, WA. Was a success we had over a hundred veterans and homeless at the event for help. We have our Thanksgiving dinner on November 27, 2025 and Christmas's dinner on December 25, 2025 for our veterans.

Programs

Spreadsheets have been obtained for JROTC and ROTC Programs for 2026 and will be updated and submitted to responsible Posts in the department. The department provides Medals, certificates for programs in Washington, Idaho and Western Montana. Where possible AMVETS representatives attend the award ceremonies.

We still continue to support PTSD weekly meeting and Gold Star Wives monthly meeting at AMVETS Post 1, Tacoma, Washington. We provide moral and monetary support for Tacoma, WA rescues mission which we care for 10 beds for our Veterans and we donate money to the Old Soldiers Home on monthly basis for laundry support.

Legislative

Mr. Charles Wharton represents AMVETS on 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. The bill 1106 which will reduce the required disability rating for Property tax Exemption from 80% to 40% effective in tax year 2027. (This bill passes for our Veterans)

Service

Changes have occurred regarding the AMVETS Department of Washington Service Department. The Service Department has closed. We are providing alternative options for our veterans to see care for their VA benefits.



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Report of Paul Shipley, National Commander

My Fellow AMVETS,

First and foremost, I want to say how much I recognize and appreciate the trust that you have put in me to be your commander for this year. I strive to uphold the level of commitment and excellence that all of you dedicate to AMVETS on a daily basis.



We lost a great leader and good friend in the past month. National Commander Horace D. Johnson was courageous until the very end. He fought the disease like everything in his life with wholehearted determination and steadfast will. I hope that we can all live up to the example he set in both Veterans Advocacy and the way he lived his life.

Since taking office, I have represented the membership of AMVETS to the best of my ability.

I took office September 1, 2025, and since then have not rested much.

Immediately, I visited our new National Headquarters to witness the final touches being put in place to move staff into the offices there. I also visited our new Capital Region office in Rockville, MD. Both facilities are beautiful modern spaces that will serve our organization for many years to come. I could not be prouder of the efforts made by the site selection committee, construction committee, and staff that have been involved in these projects. To all the members that

have served on these committees I extend my thanks for our whole organization. To preside over the final parts of these projects is my honor and will be one of the pinnacles of my life.

I then took a tour of Illinois AMVETS. I was able to visit their fall school of instruction. They do a great job teaching the leaders of their department not only the nuts and bolts of Membership and Programs but also the reasons why they are so important to our organization. Thank you Commander Rowe and all the Illinois AMVETS family that showed me so much hospitality while I was there.

September 27, 2025, the first official event was held at the National Headquarters in Washington, PA. The Key Change ceremony was a great showcase for the new facility and attended by so many. AMVETS has truly felt welcomed to the community of Southwestern Pennsylvania. AMVETS Post 103, Hopwood, PA Honor Guard raised the first official flags over the Headquarters. Thank you to all that attended and participated in the events that weekend.

I was able to attend the New York AMVETS Fall SEC meeting and had the honor of presenting a silver helmet award to a truly deserving AMVET. Bob Becker has served Veterans diligently and faithfully. His contributions to the community are truly impressive and he continues to advocate and serve. I was also able to present a replacement award to

Sam Riti. Thank you to Commander McCullough and the NY AMVETS family for a wonderful weekend, especially National Ladies Auxiliary President Mary Lanphere.

The next week in October I was able to attend the Adult Leadership Conference at Founding Forward. This conference which is held every other year is an opportunity that I would encourage every Americanism Chairperson across the country to participate in. Not only do you get to spend the weekend in Valley Forge, Pennsylvania at the Founding Forward Campus. You learn how the program is administered, what the

Report of Paul Shipley, National Commander (*continued*)

students attending the Spirit of America Conference will experience, and tour historical sites. I was so impressed by the information presented at this conference that I now have an even stronger commitment to the success of the Spirit of America program that AMVETS has participated in for decades. I was even encouraged to sing Karaoke at one of the social events in the evening. While I cannot confirm or deny that video evidence exists...I have heard rumors.

The following weekend I visited the Department of Minnesota. As many of you know, this department has been working diligently to overcome challenges. I feel that through the work of the Trustees and the Department officers much progress has been made, and it is my sincere hope that we will be able to turn over operations to the Department independently in the near future.

On October 30, 2025, I had the immense honor to help in presenting the Horace D. Johnson Post 1949 charter in Cleveland, OH. Thank you to N1VC Sandy Vorhies, PN1VC Jonnie Collins, and everyone who had a hand in helping to launch this great post. I have confidence that they will be a force for good in their community and the Department of Ohio.

Later that weekend, I attended the National 4th District meeting in Dayton, Ohio. It is always great to hear how departments can face and overcome obstacles when they arise. Communication is the key to success. These forums allow us to talk about challenges in a space where knowledge and experience can be applied to find practical solutions. These meetings also give us the opportunity to share successes. To motivate people credit must be given when it is due. When we acknowledge the good, we are encouraging more effort. Always remember that even in failure lessons can be learned, champagne was a "mistake"! Thank you to Commander Pierce and all of the departments in National District 4 for welcoming me to your meeting and allowing me to participate. I would like to attend more National District Meetings this year. Please send me the dates to my email pshipley@amvets.org I will make every effort to attend if possible.

I was also able to attend the California DEC meeting via Zoom that weekend. Great things are happening on the West Coast. Thank you to Commander Keller and her officers for allowing me to speak on their floor.

November was definitely a busy month. I have the honor of taking my oldest daughter Kelsey to Founding Forward. After attending this conference as a chaperone, attending the leadership conference in October, and how being able to visit as the National Commander I was so proud of what we do with our Americanism programs nationwide. Keep up the great work!

If your department does not have a strong Americanism program reach out to programs@amvets.org or talk to N2VC Chris Studebaker to get assistance in strengthening your program. We the AMVETS family must provide opportunities for whole families to participate in our organization from the Juniors to Auxiliary to Sons to AMVETS we offer something for everyone. Once they are members of Auxiliary, Sons, or AMVETS they are then eligible for Riders, Sad Sacks, or Sackettes. When we embrace the family mentality we are able to become stronger as an organization!

Sadly, I had to leave the Spirit of America Conference early but for a great purpose. AMVETS was able to participate in the National Veterans Day Parade in Washington, DC. We marched in our nations capitol to honor the sacrifices that every Veteran has made in support of the United States of America. We marched a display of every branch flag that is represented by our membership from 1944 to present. Thank you to Dr. Charles Kissel for letting us use your flags for this presentation. We hope to expand this program in the future to show who AMVETS is and what we do serving Veterans.

Later that week AMVETS had the honor of being the Cohost of the National Veterans Day Services held at Arlington National Cemetery. I had the distinct pleasure of spending the day with the Secretary of VA Doug Collins discussing Veterans policy and the direction of the VA. We talked about how AMVETS can assist in

Report of Paul Shipley, National Commander (*continued*)

making positive changes in the department while not sacrificing services offered to Veterans and benefits earned by Veterans. I had the honor of meeting President Trump at his car when he arrived at Arlington. Got to speak with Vice President JD Vance about his service and how it influences his job as Vice President. I along with my wife were able to stand on the ground level at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier while President Trump presented a wreath. I was then escorted into the amphitheater with the official party where we received a briefing on the events. We then proceeded out onto the stage where I have the honor of leading the Pledge of Allegiance, speaking about AMVETS, and introducing the Secretary of VA for his speech. While it was frigidly cold at Arlington, I was warmed by the knowledge that we AMVETS is leading the way for Veterans Advocacy, Policy, and Service. We Are AMVETS!

Thank you to the AMVETS Family leaders that presented the wreath with me at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier following the ceremonies. Following the wreath presentation, we hosted a reception at the Women in Military Service for America Memorial (WMSA) at Arlington for all the organizations that participated in the ceremonies on Veterans Day. We were also able to hear the National Cemeteries Administrator speak on the National Cemeteries and other Veterans' issues.

The following day ED Chenelly and I had an official meeting with the VA Secretary in his office in DC where we further discussed Veteran Suicide and Mental Health, his vision for eliminating waste while not impacting services in the department, and how AMVETS can have a role in positively impacting the VA.

As we were leaving DC we were called back asking for a representative to be present in the Oval Office as President Trump signed the bill reopening the government from the longest shutdown in this nation's history. We advocated strongly for full funding for Veterans Benefits and full funding for SNAP benefits as well as other programs that directly impact Veterans and their families lives. We were successful in obtaining

these items in the bill and thus supported it. This was a nonpartisan effort in supporting the needs of Veterans and their families. To often today we hear the partisan spin put on government actions but never the work that goes into passing those pieces of legislation. AMVETS has been at the forefront of every major piece of Veterans legislation for the past 80 years. From the GI Bill to the PACT Act we have worked with administrations from every party to achieve what is best for Veterans and their families. We are a Congressionally Chartered Veteran Service Organization and as such cannot be affiliated with any political party. We always keep our impartiality so that we can serve Veterans. It was an honor to be invited as the only Veteran Service Organization to be present when this bill was signed. AMVETS leads the way in Advocacy!

In closing, I want to thank you all for what you do to support Veterans and their families. Without you our organization cannot do what it does. I want to wish all of you and your families the happiness of holiday seasons. Remember that you are the creators of light in darkness. Your actions to help; even the smallest act of kindness can change a life for the better.

If you need help or just need to talk feel free to reach out to me or any member of our organization. We are here to Serve!

Yours in Service,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paul M. Shipley". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Paul M. Shipley, National Commander

Report of Mary A. Lanphere, AMVETS Ladies Auxiliary National President

Greetings to National Commander Shipley, National Officers, Past National Commanders, AMVETS family,

Welcome to the 2025 Fall NEC. I was honored in being elected AMVETS National Ladies Auxiliary President in August 2025. Thank you to my family and mentors for their support, knowledge and encouragement.

My theme this year is “Standing With Our Heroes.” My President’s project, “Tunnel To Towers.” I chose this organization because of their dedication to our Nation’s heroes, our military and first responders. It was started in the wake of 9/11 after a NYC firefighter lost his life while saving others. He left behind his wife and children.

“The Smart Home Program” builds specifically adapted, mortgage free smart homes for catastrophically injured veterans and first responders so they can reclaim their day-to-day independence. The “Gold Star Family Home Program” pays off the mortgages of homes of surviving spouses and young children that have made the ultimate sacrifice. “The Fallen First Responder Program”, pays off mortgages of law enforcement officers or firefighters that have lost their life in the line of duty or have passed away from 9/11 related illnesses. The Homeless Veteran Program” provides stable housing for homeless Veterans and provides services to diagnose and solve the root causes of their homelessness. No veteran should ever experience homelessness or hunger. 93 cents of every dollar goes directly to these programs. I the appreciate support for my project.

Thank you to PNP Dee Kreling Riley for representing me at the Key Ceremony in Washington, Pennsylvania. I was unable to attend as this was the same weekend as my National Officers meeting.

I look forward to visiting everyone around this great Country. Thus far, I have made my visits to the Dept of New York Fall SEC, Dept of Michigan Fall SEC, Founding Forward Auxiliary Conference, PAWS VIP/Open house reception, Kentucky Auxiliary #61 Veterans appreciation dinner. The people I have met have been amazing individuals.

Also, regretfully and with much sadness, I was ill for the DC Veterans Day Ceremonies. Thank you to PNP Carol King for standing in.

Commander Shipley, I wish you a successful NEC. Thank you for the communication and inclusiveness. AMVETS is a special family, with specific goals. May we all work together to reach these goals. God bless and safe travels.

Mary A Lanphere
AMVETS National Auxiliary President

Report of Patrick Holcombe, National Sons of AMVETS Commander

Greetings AMVETS,

It has been quite busy since the National Convention and Sons of AMVETS Squadrons throughout the nation are working diligently on numerous projects to support Veterans. Plans are being finalized for VAVS Christmas parties at multiple VA nursing homes in every state. Fundraisers are being held to provide desperately needed supplies for homeless Veterans. And members everywhere are providing assistance at their Posts to help with daily operations. All to fulfill our mission of "Sons Serving Veterans"

The National Sons of AMVETS executive board has been working on several things to improve our organization going forward. With emphasis on training, timelines and SOPs (standard operating procedures) which should give aid to our Departments and Squadrons. Also I have been asked by several AMVETS why the National Sons Commander and Provost don't have badges on their covers like the AMVETS do, so we are working on making that happen so we have uniformity with our parent organization.

My travels this year have only just begun but are very humbling and inspiring. Our trip to Arlington National Cemetery was such an honor and a privilege to represent the 25,000 plus Sons and the AMVETS Family as we honored our Nations Veterans. I will always cherish the memories of that trip for it was a once in a lifetime opportunity.

As we continue through this year I will strive to do my best to make our great organization even better, and try to leave it better for the next regime of leadership. And I look forward to working together as a family to realize our mission of serving our Nation's Veterans. We wish you all an informative and productive NEC meeting.

Respectfully yours in service,

Patrick Holcombe PDC
National SOA Commander

Report of Sandy Vorhies, National First Vice Commander

Commander Shipley and fellow American Veterans,

I want to first thank the Membership Team Katie Ford, Ben Moser, Ashley Piper, and Director Warren Cox for their dedication to our AMVETS Family and being available for our membership needs.

The membership department is working towards having quarterly zoom meetings with the departments and national district membership vice commanders. Through the quarterly meetings we want to establish a better connection between the national membership department and those responsible for membership. However, we must come together as a team for this to be effective and I do believe we are accomplishing this.

Let us remember that AMVETS posts are a local chapter or building that serves as the foundation for the AMVETS national organization, which supports veterans through social activities, community service, and advocacy. Posts provide members with a place to come together and access resources while also serving as a place for community functions.

Since our national convention in August, we have gained 4 new AMVETS Posts.

1. AZ – 0025
2. GA – 1857
3. OH – 1949
4. PA - 0659

I do want to mention that it was my honor to assist with starting the Horace D. Johnson AMVETS Post 1949. On October 31st I swore in the officers and National Commander Shipley, Ohio Executive Director Don McCaulley and myself presented the Charter to the officers. Commander Shipley also presented the funds raised for PNC Johnson's Project to Mr. Ronnie Davis CEO/Executive Director of Cleveland UMADAOP.

Please consider starting new posts in your department. You can find information on how to build a post in the Membership tab on the national website (amvets.org) you can always reach out to the Membership Team if you have any questions.

I do want to take a moment to thank National 2nd Vice Commander Chris Studebaker for asking me to work beside him, Ben Moser, and Warren Cox on the Spirit of America Founding Forward. As a Team we had a successful program.

With high regard,

Sandy Vorhies



National First Vice Commander
AMVETS (American Veterans)

Report of Joseph Chenelly, National Executive Director

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

Your AMVETS National Headquarters staff and National Service Foundation staff have been busy, working hard to start the new Fiscal Year off in an aggressive, positive way.

The new AMVETS National Headquarters opened for business with a really nice “key turnover” ceremony on Sept. 27. National Commander Paul Shipley ceremoniously accepted a key from the general contractor, Rocky Blier Construction Group.

All our Membership, Programs, & NHQ administration staff are settled in, working in the office five days a week. The official ribbon-cutting ceremony will be held in conjunction with our Spring NEC meeting, midday on March 7. Of course, you are invited!

Phase One (plus part of Phase Two) of the project was completed on budget, which is a truly remarkable accomplishment for the National Headquarters Construction Committee, considering the many surprises and weather challenges that popped up regularly throughout. I am grateful to all who served on that committee over the past year-plus, including Chairman PNC Don McLean, now-National Commander Paul Shipley, 2nd Vice Commander Chris Studebaker, Albert Duff, and Family Services Center Construction Committee Chairman PNC J.P. Brown.

NHQ’s address is 267 North Ave., Washington, PA 15301. The March 2026 NEC meeting will be held there. Details will be discussed in this NEC meeting and will be online at amvets.org/NEC this month.

This past Veterans Day was very special for AMVETS. It began with our National Commander, 1st Vice Commander Sandy Vorhies, 2nd Vice Commander Chris Studebaker, 3rd Vice Commander Sheldon Hartsfield, and several other AMVETS leaders from around the country marching in the National Veterans Day Parade.

AMVETS served as the host organization for the National Veterans Day ceremony at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldiers in Arlington National Cemetery on November 11. National Commander Shipley delivered a stirring address during the nationally televised event, on stage with President Trump, Vice President Vance, and VA Secretary Collins.

NHQ hosted a reception that afternoon at the Military Women Memorial in Arlington with more than 300 in attendance from about 50 other veterans organizations.

Lots of videos and photos from the events are online at facebook.com/AMVETSHQ.

We used our time in D.C. for advocacy, too. Commander Shipley and I met privately with Secretary Collins the next day to discuss AMVETS’ priorities for the new year. It was a positive, productive conversation.

Late that night, I was present in the Oval Office when the President signed the legislation that reopened the federal government, assuring funding for the VA, the U.S. military, and SNAP benefits for FY 2026.

NHQ is OK financially. Stable and improving. We are already seeing the benefits of now being based in a much less expensive area. But cashflow is a major challenge, especially in the first quarter and a half of the fiscal year when the lion’s share of our expenses is incurred at once, several months before most of NHQ’s annual revenue begins coming in.

For the first time in several years, we are cashflow positive through the first quarter. That requires a lot of diligence by everyone associated with the NHQ, all staff and our national officers. Our Finance Department very carefully balances things on a daily basis.

Several key moves this year were implemented this FY to get cashflow positive, including cuts to staff benefits, including employer contributions to health care insurance.

Please keep in mind we have long operated on a 30-day

Report of Joseph Chenelly, National Executive Director (*continued*)

payment schedule for all invoices. Right now, invoices are being paid about 25 days after they hit our system.

We continue putting a lot of effort into getting Membership refunds to the Departments as quickly as possible. The National Finance Committee has recognized delays have created tough problems for the states. Our national officers and staff are proactively working to find ways to solve this problem that has existed for many years.

We have struggled through a lot of confusion over the years regarding NEC expense reports. We will offer online training sessions in early February for all who are to submit expenses for the Spring NEC. This important training will detail how to properly fill out the form, what documentation is required, and how to submit it all. We will also explain how your submittal will be processed and paid.

Finally, I offer my deepest condolences to Mrs. Toni Johnson and all of Immediate Past National Commander Horace Johnson's family and many friends. It was an honor to serve under his command over the past year. I will always appreciate and admire the way he led by example, fighting through terrible pain and suffering to ensure he fulfilled his duties to AMVETS and all who served right up until he passed on November 4. Commander Johnson is already missed.

Key dates for the 2026 Membership Year:

- Spring NEC – March 7, 2026, at 9 AM – NHQ in Washington, PA
- Rolling to Remember – Memorial Day Weekend – Washington, D.C.
- 80th AMVETS National Convention – August 18-20, 2026 – Orlando, FL

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

Report of Warren Cox, National Membership Director

National Commander Shipley, National Officers, NEC Members, Executive Director, AMVETS Family:

Membership would first like to thank Vice Commanders Vorhies and Studebaker who both continue to work towards the betterment of the organization and have already dedicated endless hours to ensure both Membership and Programs succeed. Thank You!!

Thank you all for the privilege of serving as your National Membership Director, it is with great honor and passion that I as well as the new staff serve you. The team is cohesive, dedicated, and motivated to assist you. Please continue to welcome our first employees at HQ Washington PA

Katie Ford. Katie is a proud ARMY spouse who prides herself on serving veterans and her community. She will work in a dual administrative position for both Membership, Programs and the team lead. Please welcome her at kford@amvets.org

Ben Moser Membership/Programs Associate Army Ranger Combat Veteran bmoser@amvets.org

Ashley Piper Membership/Programs Associate Military Family apiper@amvets.org

Membership's Mission is unwavering and that is to provide quality service with excellence and professionalism resulting in expedited sound responses to all needs.

Great news! We have seen recent uptick in Membership with over 2200 New Joins so far this year. Life Membership is currently 80%, our focus and yours is to encourage new members to enroll under Annual Membership, this in return would increase revenue and stability.

Life Dues Reminder

When converting members from Annual to Life, please let the Membership Team know the members' age. Based off the new Life Member dues increase they will

be billed according to their age.

See the Life Dues amount below. They are now available online.

- 55 years of age and under \$500.00
- 56 to 65 years of age \$400.00
- 66 years of age and older \$300.00

Annual Member Cards/Initiative

We are very excited that all Annual Member Cards were preprinted and available at Convention for Dept Leaders to take home and distribute to Posts. This eliminated delays to members

receiving cards and money saving due to multiple mailings. Feedback from Members (you) have been very positive, we will continue this practice moving forward. Any cards needed or reissued can be sent by requesting through membersupport@amvets.org

Initiatives

Recruit 5 Membership Drive: Recruiters will receive a Gold Challenge Coin and Certificate of recognition

Please forward, recruiting initiatives, photos of Post events, etc. for our social media to membersupport@amvets.org and media@amvets.org This will also be sent to Department Leadership to share with their struggling Posts. Your ideas can be adopted for one area or another.

Virtual meetings with National Vice Commanders Sandy Vorhies and Chris Studebaker

Thank you, Department Leaders for attending virtual roundtable. These meetings are to share ideas and to address your concerns and stay on top of any and all situations Please be on the look out for our next meetings in Jan.

National 1st Vice Sandy is committed to increasing communication between Dept and National please see

Report of Warren Cox, National Membership Director (*continued*)

her report for more details

Dues Reminders

We need all leaders to reach out to their people that have yet to renewed. Response have been very positive our members are renewing in huge numbers lets keep this momentum going however we still have many members who expired in 2025

Reminders have been sent via hardcopy to all our members and we are happy to report dues are being paid in record numbers. Another reminder will be sent beginning of the year however we encourage Dept/Post leaders to reach out to your people and not wait.

This year we've sent dues reminders to our new vendor and this has cut our costs in half

New Brochures

Brochures/Applications have been updated! We have pictures highlighting current events, conflicts and our Proud Female Veterans!



Programs Report

Please see National 2nd Vice Studebaker report

Revalidations

Online Revalidations have improved; however, we still receive paper revals mailed. This upcoming year 2025-26 we highly encourage everyone to complete the process online. The online process is a much faster and easier than the antiquated manual process. A confirmation is sent immediately to the submitter and National when the online process has been completed. Let's continue to save the trees and cost of mailing.

Make sure your 990s and Insurances are up to date. This is mandatory

Recruiting

Many Departments and Posts have stepped up their recruiting efforts and have greatly improved their membership.

***RECRUITING IS EVERYONES' (AMVETS WIDE) RESPONSIBILITY!**

1st Vices it is YOUR responsibility to recruit maintain and retain your members not National Post-level recruiting events should take place at least four times a year.

To receive your copy of the new brochures/applications email membersupport@amvets.org.

***Hearts and Minds - RED – don't just Remember them!**

We have addresses to some of our men and woman deployed now. 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.**

Report of Warren Cox, National Membership Director (*continued*)

Member Owned Business

We will highlight your Veteran owned business on our website for free advertisement. Send details to membersupport@amvets.org.

Again, I am honored and fully committed to you all and the mission at hand.

Together we will continue to be the best Veterans Service Organization in our country.

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

God Bless America and AMVETS!

ALWAYS RED

Report of Dana “Bo” Bolton, National Service Director

Membership

We continue to ask for membership, once the veteran claim is completed.

Upcoming Events

Nothing to report.

Programs

Nothing to report.

Legislative

President Trump reinstates GI Bill benefits to Veterans discharged for refusing COVID vaccine. VA reduces backlog of Veterans waiting for VA benefits by 57%. VA houses largest number of homeless Veterans in seven years

Service

These are the numbers FYTD:

- Total Awards MTH: 95,689
- Total MTH Benefits: \$205,187,248
- Total Benefits: \$2,456,542,310

Other

We now have a Department Service Officer servicing veterans at the National Headquarters in Washington, PA.

AMVETS 79th Annual Convention

**Pre Convention
National Executive Committee
(NEC) Roll Call and Meeting Minutes**



*Thursday,
August 21, 2025*

Held at the
Sheraton Greensboro | Four Seasons Greensboro
Greensboro, North Carolina

**Morning Session
(8:31 a.m.)**

**Call to Order
by Acting Commander Paul Shipley**

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Could you please deliver the invocation? Please rise.

**Invocation
by National Chaplain Rigley Jackson**

CHAPLAIN JACKSON: Uncover. As we go through this day with prayer, I request that everybody say a special prayer for Commander Johnson.

(Prayer.)

CHAPLAIN JACKSON: Re-cover.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Provost Marshal, could you please lead us in Honors to the Colors and the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Honors to the Colors
by National Provost Art Majors**

MR. MAJORS: AMVETS, attention. Hand salute.

(Pledge of Allegiance.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Executive Director Chenelly, please do a roll call.

**Roll Call
by National Executive Director Joe Chenelly
National Officers**

MR. CHENELLY: Good morning, AMVETS leaders.

(Chorus of "Good morning.")

MR. CHENELLY: We will start roll call with AMVETS National Commander Horace Johnson excused. Thank you.

National First Vice Commander Paul Shipley?

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Present.

MR. CHENELLY: National Second Vice Commander Sandy Vorhies.

2ND VICE CMDR. VORHIES: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: National Third Vice Commander Chris Studebaker?

3RD VICE CMDR. STUDEBAKER: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: National Judge Advocate Fred Bates, absent. In his place, Deputy National Judge Advocate Ross Smith?

MR. SMITH: Present.

MR. CHENELLY: National Finance Kelly McFarlain?

MR. MCFARLAIN: Present.

MR. CHENELLY: National Provost Marshal Art Majors?

(No response.)

MS. : He is here.

MR. CHENELLY: Art is here? National Chaplain Rigley Jackson?

CHAPLAIN JACKSON: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: National District 1 Commander Tom Davitt.

MR. DAVITT: Present.

MR. CHENELLY: District II Commander Randy Ferguson.

MR. FERGUSON: Present.

MR. CHENELLY: District III Commander Earl Hood.

MR. HOOD: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: District IV Commander Sheldon Hartfield?

MR. HARTFIELD: Present.

MR. CHENELLY: District V Commander Deborah Wehrli?

MS. WEHRLI: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: District VI Commander Jack Isaacson has been asked to be excused. District VI First Vice Commander Danielle Wyatt?

MS. WYATT: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: Thank you.

Past National Commanders

MR. CHENELLY: Our PNCs. PNC Joe Piening?

PNC PIENING: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: PNC Jimmy Smith?

(No response.)

MR. CHENELLY: PNC James Kenney?

(No response.)

MR. CHENELLY: I have been up here two minutes and already broke something. PNC Chuck Taylor?

MR. : ----.

MR. CHENELLY: Thank you, here. PNC Art Stahl?

(No response.)

MR. CHENELLY: PNC Bill Kilgore?

PNC KILGORE: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: PNC Bill Boettcher?

(No response.)

MR. CHENELLY: PNC J.P. Brown III?

PNC J.P. BROWN III: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: PNC Duane Miskulin?

(No response.)

MR. CHENELLY: PNC Jerry Hotop?

(No response.)

MR. CHENELLY: PNC Gary Fry?

(No response.)

MR. CHENELLY: PNC Larry Via?

(No response.)

MR. CHENELLY: PNC Jim Pidgeon?

(No response.)

MR. CHENELLY: PNC Harold Chapman?

PNC CHAPMAN: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: PNC Rege Riley?

PNC RILEY: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: PNC Jan Brown?

PNC J. BROWN: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: PNC Greg Heun?

(No response.)

MR. CHENELLY: PNC Don McLean?

PNC MCLEAN: Present.

MR. CHENELLY: And PNC Bill Clark.

PNC CLARK: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: Membership Director Warren Cox?

MR. COX: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: Service Director Dana Bolton?

MR. BOLTON: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: Programs Manager Colondra Etheredge?

MS. ETHEREDGE: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: And our National Controller Agha Hussain?

MR. HUSSAIN: I am here.

National Executive Committee Members

MR. CHENELLY: Now I am going to do the primary NECs first and then I will do alternates. National District I: NEC Connecticut, Dana Dillon?

MS. DILLON: Present.

MR. CHENELLY: Maine, James Laflin?

MR. LAFLIN: Present.

MR. CHENELLY: Thank you. Massachusetts, Caroline Kenyon?

MS. KENYON: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: Do we have anyone from New Jersey?

(No response.)

MR. CHENELLY: New York, Joe Ashman.

MR. ASHMAN: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: District II: Delaware, Dave Haines.

MR. HAINES: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: District of Columbia, Aaron Smith.

MR. SMITH: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: Maryland, Andy Martel?

MR. MARTEL: Here, sir.

MR. CHENELLY: North Carolina, Mark Beaver?

MR. BEAVER: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: Do we have an NEC for

Pennsylvania?

PNC RILEY: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: Rege Riley? Okay, thank you. Virginia, John Cooper?

MR. COOPER: Present.

MR. CHENELLY: West Virginia, Patricia Kishman?

MS. KISHMAN: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: District III: Alabama, Ernestine Doubek.

MS. DOUBEK: Present.

MR. CHENELLY: Do we have anyone from Arkansas?

(No response.)

MR. CHENELLY: Florida, AJ John.

MR. JOHN: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: Georgia, Brett Colbert.

MR. COLBERT: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: Louisiana, Gary Stuart.

MR. STUART: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: South Carolina, Janice Shelton?

MS. SHELTON: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: Tennessee, Lee Ann Adams.

MS. ADAMS: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: District IV: Illinois, Richard Shea.

MR. SHEA: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: Indiana, Richard Caldwell.

MR. CALDWELL: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: Iowa, Barry Remington.

MR. REMINGTON: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: Kentucky, Deanna Maynard.

MS. MAYNARD: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: Michigan, Jean Hall?

MR. HALL: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: Did my mic go out?

MS. : Your mic went out.

MR. CHENELLY: I didn't touch it. I would normally continue but we need to make sure -- oh, it is back on. Thank you. Let's see where we leave off here. Michigan, Jean Hall?

MR. HALL: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: Anyone here from Minnesota?

(No response.)

MR. CHENELLY: Missouri, anyone from Missouri?

MR. : ----.

MR. CHENELLY: Robert Lee? Thank you. He is present. Ohio, Patrick Rowley?

MR. ROWLEY: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: Wisconsin, Ralph Beck.

MR. BECK: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: National District V: Anyone from Nebraska as NEC?

MS. : Yes, Second Alternate ----.

MR. CHENELLY: Okay, I will read that for the record here. ----. Got it, thank you. North Dakota, Murray Strom?

MR. STROM: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: Texas, Curtis Thomas.

MR. THOMAS: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: District VI: Alaska, Terry Good.

MS. GOOD: Present.

MR. CHENELLY: Arizona, Bill Vansdale?

MR. VANSDALE: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: California, Derek Hendershot?

MR. HENDERSHOT: Semper Fi.

MR. CHENELLY: Washington, Glen --

MR. SKINNER: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: Glenn, what is your last name? I am sorry. I can't quite read it.

MR. SKINNER: Skinner.

MR. CHENELLY: Skinner, of course. Glen Skinner. That completes roll call. We have a quorum.

ACTING CMDR. PAUL SHIPLEY: Apparently I have to use my big mouth. Is it back? Do you want to do the alternates?

MR. CHENELLY: Sorry, I am using a different format here. Do we have a mic? They have asked for a moment. The hotel has been very patient with us. We will be patient with them for a minute. They are going to reset the sound board, which will take another minute.

(Long pause.)

MR. CHENELLY: We are back. Thank you, AV team. Appreciate the quick work.

Alternate NECs

MR. CHENELLY: Okay, we will go through alternates. I am only going to read those who signed in. At the end of each district, if you are here and I didn't call your name, please stand and let us know your name.

National District I: Connecticut, Doug Newell?

MR. NEWELL: Present.

MR. CHENELLY: Maine, Henry Peters.

MR. PETERS: Present.

MR. CHENELLY: Massachusetts, Wayne Anthony.

MR. ANTHONY: Present.

MR. CHENELLY: Do we have an alternate, any other alternates for I?

(No response.)

MR. CHENELLY: District II: Delaware, Michael Savosky?

MR. SAVOSKY: Present.

MR. CHENELLY: District of Columbia, Clyde Pike?

MR. PIKE: Present.

MR. CHENELLY: North Carolina, Kevin Nail?

MR. NAIL: Present.

MR. CHENELLY: Pennsylvania, Paul Forsman.

MR. FORSMAN: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: Any other District II?

(No response.)

MR. CHENELLY: District III: Florida, Eddie Bullock?

MR. BULLOCK: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: Georgia, Milton Allen?

MR. ALLEN: Present.

MR. CHENELLY: Any other alternates for District III?

(No response.)

MR. CHENELLY: District IV: Illinois, Jean Henning?

MS. HENNING: Good morning.

MR. CHENELLY: Good morning. Iowa, Mary Van Horn?

MS. VAN HORN: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: Kentucky, Dean Frazier.

MR. FRAZIER: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: Michigan, Joe Hoecherl.

MR. HOECHERL: John Hoecherl.

MR. CHENELLY: John? They got that all wrong. Missouri, Robert Lee?

MR. LEE: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: And Ohio, Sara Pierce.

MS. PIERCE: ----.

MR. CHENELLY: Thank you. Do we have a new alternate for Nebraska? No?

MS. : She is standing in for the NEC.

MR. CHENELLY: Understood, thank you. North Dakota, Brian Bartlett?

MR. BARTLETT: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: Texas, Clay Roundtree?

MR. ROUNDTREE: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: National District IV, Alaska, Steve -- I am sorry, District VI. Steve -- I can't read it. I am sorry, Steve. Alaska, alternate for Alaska?

MR. : Here.

MR. CHENELLY: All right, Commander.

That does complete roll call.

Adoption of Agenda

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: The agenda is in the front of the NEC book. Do I have a motion to adopt the agenda?

MR. ROWLEY: So moved, Rowley.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Pat Rowley from Ohio? Second, McFarlain, national finance officer. Any questions on the agenda?

(No response.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Any questions? Any questions? Hearing none, all in favor, state aye.

(Chorus of "aye.")

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Opposed, state nay.

(No response.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Agenda is adopted.

Approval of Minutes

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: The minutes from our March meeting are still being transcribed. They will be available for review at the December NEC meeting. They will be in the digital book.

Could I please have a motion to dispense with them to be present in December? Motion by Randy Ferguson. Do I have a second?

MR. SHEA: Second.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Second, Shea, Illinois. Any questions on the motion?

(No response.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Questions? Questions? Hearing none, all in favor, state aye.

(Chorus of "aye.")

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Opposed, state nay.

(No response.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Thank you. All right, now for all the fun. We will begin with the reports of our NEC members. We will receive these reports by national district in numerical order. First district is up. First District Commander Davitt, please come forward and introduce your NECmen.

MR. CHENELLY: While we are waiting for Commander Davitt, I want to offer an apology. Obviously with the number of reports that are not in the book, it is clear there is something wrong in our system. I have talked to several of you who have submitted your reports but they are not in the book.

And I know -- the common denominator I found is that none of you had received a conformation e-mail. You did see the "I submit," or thank you for submitting page. I don't know why the system did not bring those through. We will solve that, but I do apologize for that.

So don't hold it against your NEC members if their reports are not in there, please.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: National District I, could you please line up in alphabetical order to come through so we will be as ready as we can be for when Commander Davitt returns. First one would be Connecticut, correct?

MS. DILLON: Yes.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Connecticut, could you please give your report?

NEC Reports National District I

MS. DILLON: My report did not make the book. Our membership is just like everyone else. We are still trying to get people to pay their renewals, get new members. We are working our programs. We have some great programs going on. I am hoping that once you guys get back to National, you will be able to send out all the reports that did not make the book. And I make a motion that we accept it at the proper time.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Next would be Massachusetts.

MS. KENYON: Massachusetts, Kenyon. I am in the same business as you, as Connecticut. My report was submitted, and it is not in the book. So if you would wait until otherwise, there will be one in progress for me.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Thank you. Maine?

MR. LAFLIN: Jim Laflin, Maine, NEC. My report was sent in. I had the confirmation but it didn't make the book, so. I don't have another copy with me so.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Thank you, sir. That will lead us to New York.

MR. ASHMAN: Joe Ashman, NEC for New York. Happy to say my report is in the book.

And I move for its adoption at the appropriate time.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: I would say the few and the proud today. New Jersey's report is in the book on page -- it says 8 in here but 7 works for me. Any further departments from District I?

(No response.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Hearing none, District II Commander Ferguson, could you please come forward? District II NECs, please line up at the microphone there so we can get things on.

Commander Davitt, I apologize, we kind of rolled on without you. If you have a report, you are welcome to come up and give it yourself. Go ahead and lead in front of Commander Riley there, and we will get you going.

MR. DAVITT: Thank you. Thank you, Commander, delegates. This is the AMVETS National District I report. This year has been a very busy year for the New England states. My report is on page 6 of the booklet, so please feel free to peruse it. Any questions during the time here at the convention, feel free to reach out to myself or anyone from District I. So at this time I would like to call up our --

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: We went through your states already.

MR. DAVITT: Oh, you already did. Okay, very good. Thank you very much, Commander. In closing, have a wonderful afternoon.

District II

MR. FERGUSON: Randy Ferguson, District II commander. My report is on page 10 if you want to see it. Mine did make it. Pennsylvania, Commander Rege Riley. Your report.

PNC RILEY: Well, I am not going to lie. I didn't send my report in. But I have a few things I would like to pass along.

Our convention was in August. It was very successful. We had a good turnout. Our new commander is Bill Zeller. I don't know if Bill is here or not. We added two new service officers this year. We now have seven working for us in the state of Pennsylvania. And between the seven, they have brought in over \$5 million in the past year. I think that shows a lot, that our service officers are doing a damn good job.

Our programs reporting as usual is 100 percent this past year. And our SEC meeting will be held in September in Hershey, PA. And our new executive director, the one who just resigned, Gerry Hawk, he resigned for his third

time. But we got a new ED. His name is Bernie McDonald, past department commander. And he is going to do a good job.

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

MR. FERGUSON: Thank you, commander. District of Columbia.

MR. SMITH: Good afternoon, good morning. My report did not make the book either but DC continues to work with the VA hospital, upper Washington, DC, making monthly contributions and also working with the senior facility up there.

We also had 100 percent programs, and that is my report right now. It was submitted.

MR. FERGUSON: Thank you. Delaware?

MR. HAINES: Good morning. Dave Haines from Delaware. My report did make the book. It is on page 11. One of the few. Move that it be adopted under the proper order of business, please.

MR. FERGUSON: Maryland.

MR. MARTEL: Good morning. Andy Martel, NEC from Maryland. My report is not in the book. My fault. I didn't get it done. But I would like to tell you that two-thirds of our post made it to 100 percent membership, so I thought that was pretty cool. We did pretty well in programs reporting.

And we were honored to honor Jonathan Eckman, the director of the Maryland VA health-care system with our PNC A. Leo Anderson Achievement Award for the year. So he did a great job. So thank you very much.

MR. FERGUSON: Thank you, sir. North Carolina.

MR. BEAVER: Good morning. My report did not make it to the book but the Department of North Carolina, we had our state convention. Second Vice National Commander Sandy Vorhies, she swore in our newly elected officers. Our new department commander is John Perry.

Our department is like about every other department. We are struggling with membership. But we still have around 2,400 members. We are working diligently with Americanism. Jr. ROTC awards and medals were sent out. Commander, this concludes my report, and I move for its adoption.

MR. FERGUSON: Thank you, sir. Virginia?

MR. COOPER: Good morning.

MR. FERGUSON: Good morning.

MR. COOPER: My report is located on page 12. Our next DEC will be held in Roanoke, Virginia, September 12. And believe it or not, we are already looking at our department convention in June of next year in Harrisonburg, Virginia. This concludes my report. I ask for its adoption at the appropriate time.

MR. FERGUSON: Thank you, sir. West, my God, Virginia.

MS. KISHMAN: Pat Kishman, NEC. My report is on page 13, and I move for its adoption when it is appropriate.

MR. FERGUSON: Thank you, ma'am. Commander, those are our reports, and I move for their adoption.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: District III, Commander Hood. District III departments, please line up at the microphone.

District III

MR. HOOD: Earl Hood from District III. Commander, my report is on page 15 in the book. I move for its acceptance at the proper time.

MS. DOUBEK: Ernestine Doubek, Alabama. I submitted my report but it is not in the book.

MR. JOHN: Good morning. AJ John, Department of Florida. Also I submitted my report. It is not in the book but I would like to say that our new department commander is Dean Richards. He is not able to be with us this convention due to knee replacement surgery.

Our next SEC is going to be held October 29-November 1 at Rosen Centre Hotel. And I move my report.

MR. COLBERT: Brett Colbert, NEC, Department of Georgia. Like many others, my full report is MIA from the booklet but we will resubmit it next week. These are merely highlights from our originally submitted report:

Membership as of July 2025, Department First Vice Commander Warren Allen reports having 2,005 total members, of which 1640 are life members, and 365 are annual members.

Programs: Department Second Vice Commander Ward Montgomery reports that 100 percent of Georgia's posts reported at least one program during the January-June 2025 reporting period.

A total value of reporting for the January-June 2025 period was \$1.66 million, with 53,744.1 hours reported.

Service: Nothing to report.

Upcoming events: Our fall SEC will be held September 20-21, 2025, at the Hilton Garden Inn in Warner Robins, Georgia.

Legislative: The Department of Georgia AM-VETS will be attending state legislative meetings in the upcoming months. Let's see, on June 20-22, the Department of Georgia held its 79th department convention and the 74th ladies auxiliary convention in Warner Robins. We have a new department commander, who is Milton Allen.

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

MR. STUART: Gary Stuart, NEC, Louisiana. My report, like most of the people's, didn't make the book.

MS. SHELTON: Good morning. Dana Shelton, Department of South Carolina. Just like everybody else, my report did not make the book.

Our membership for the department is 1,116. We are looking for ways to increase membership and possibly gaining a new post in the near future.

All of our posts have submitted programs reports to department. We participated in Memorial Day activities and parades and flag retirement ceremonies. Upcoming events are conducting a raffle for a quilt donated by the spouse of one of our department officers.

Our District III meeting was held in Port Royal, South Carolina, in February. We had our department convention in Port Royal, South Carolina, in June. And our next SEC is in Abbeville, South Carolina, September 20-21.

That is my report, and I ask for its acceptance at the appropriate time.

MS. ADAMS: Lee Ann Adams, NEC, Tennessee. My report did make the book. It can be found on page 16. And I ask that it be accepted at the appropriate time. I would like to make note that in July at the National Finance Charities and Service Foundation meeting, a video was made and presented to Commander Johnson with a Quilt of Valor honoring his service to us and to the nation.

MR. HOOD: Commander, that completes the District III reports.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Thank you, sir. District IV, Commander Hartfield. The only benefit to this is it probably did save us money. The printing was probably a lot lower in cost.

District IV

MR. HARTFIELD: Good morning, Commander. My report is also one of those that did not make the book. But I will say that while the National Fourth District got off to a rocky start at the beginning of the year with the passing of Jim King and Al Smith and us having to move some officers around, we got off to a bad start. But after coming back from that, we were able to move forward.

Our district is at 100 percent reporting. All of our departments within the district are moving along well. I want to personally thank all the officers that stepped up during difficult times that we have had to keep things together. But District IV remains solid, as you will hear from the departments.

MR. SHEA: Richard Shea, Illinois NEC. I won the lottery. My report is on page 18.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: You should really play the Powerball, Rich.

MR. CALDWELL: Richard Caldwell, Indiana. Same thing like everybody else. My report was submitted but don't see it. No big deal. I will take the blame on that because I sent it in two days before it was due so --

The only difference from last year is we have new officers. We have a new finance officer and we have a new judge advocate. But business is good as far as the veterans' service officers. They have actually gained over \$3 million for Indiana in six months with benefits and compensation. So they are doing great. That is my report.

MR. REMINGTON: Barry Remington, NEC Iowa. My report was submitted but it never got in the book. So have fun.

MS. FRAZIER: Kentucky here. I submitted my report June 30th but it didn't make the book. Right after the convention, which we had Fred Bates attending our state convention, and we had guests from National, which was Sandy Vorhies, second national commander, National Commander First Vice Paul Shipley. 83 attended from 11 AMVET posts.

Our next SEC will be September 12, 13, and 14 hosted by AMVETS Post 75 in Owensboro, Kentucky.

And in legislative, it is still Don't Wait, Reach Out. That is the slogan for a campaign to encourage veterans to seek help.

And the Joseph Eddie Ballard Veterans Program House has 83 guests: 80 of them male, 3 female. On Father's Day, the GE employees had a cookout for the residents.

In central at the Lexington VA, it has a Fisher House offering free lodging for families of

veterans receiving care there at the facility. All branches of the military considered. You have a strong case for discharge upgrade if your discharge was for PTSD; TBI, traumatic brain injury; sexual assault; or harassment or MST. And don't ask, don't tell policy.

Compact that for suicide for veterans who meet the military service eligibility programs. A great reach-out for the suicidal. Sorry, that reaches close to home.

We have the KDVA and assistance with benefits counseling, long-term care, state cemeteries, health-care education, employment, and other special programs provided for by the KDVA.

In Michigan, Alan Smith also worked for the VFW. And they are going to lay a brick for Alan Smith at the VFW National Home in Eaton Rapids, Michigan. He was a great advocate for veterans' benefits. This is the first national convention he has missed.

Everywhere we went, he knew everyone, whether it was a VFW, AMVETS, or Legion. His love was always with AMVETS though. He had many, many hats, and will be missed by all who knew him, which was everyone. Thank you, Commander. That concludes my report. I ask that it be accepted at the proper time.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Thank you.

MR. HALL: My name is Jean Hall, NEC from Department of Michigan. My report didn't make the book. But I have some highlights from there.

Our membership remains flat, and we have roughly 6,867 members and holding. The only positive: We had a new post, 422 in Delton, Michigan, just started.

Programs: We had -- supporting the veterans at the Michigan home. The clinics, community. We had our new incoming commander hosted the Great Lakes National Cemetery there.

I attended the Fort Custer National Cemetery, which I am on the board. Our past outgoing commander presented a wreath there. We had a fly-by by World War II trainers going by, an orchestra and precision color guards there at Fort Custer.

And in July, AMVETS took over hosting a picnic that started at AMVETS Post 126. It was a picnic/barbecue food. We give out roughly about 3, 400 dinners because most of the people are, don't come out. And my wife said make sure -- she writes my report, my commander in chief -- she says to thank Gloria Hall for being, completing her term as

AMVETS Auxiliary president.

And that concludes my report, my oral report, that it be accepted at the proper time. Thank you.

MR. LEE: Robert Lee, Department of Missouri. NEC Johnson's report is on page 19 to 25. I don't think in the essence of time I need to read the book. But I move for its adoption at the proper time.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Thank you, sir.

MR. REILLY: Pat Rowley, Ohio. Andy McElrath's report is in the book. And we move for its adoption at the proper time.

MR. BECK: Ralph Beck, Department of Wisconsin. Our report was submitted but didn't make the book. I did not bring a printed copy so I can't give you the statistics. I can tell you that our membership, like most other departments, is down a little bit from the previous year.

We did have our convention in June, and we were honored to have Art Majors, national provost marshal, attend. And much to our displeasure, we also had Dana Dillon, the National Saddest, at our convention.

(Chorus of "boos.")

MR. BECK: Amen to that. Ron Griffin is our new commander for the Department of Wisconsin. Our next SEC is the third week in September in Eau Claire, Wisconsin. I trust that my report will be printed at a later time and will be accepted. Thank you, sir.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Thank you, sir. District V, Commander Wehrli. States from District V, please line up behind the district commander.

District V

MS. WEHRLI: Deborah Wehrli, District V commander. My report did not make it to the book. So I do want to highlight that our governor in the state of Nebraska is passing out certificates and medals for all the WWII veterans that we have in our state, which is about 225. I will call on Nebraska now.

MS. : Good morning. ---- from Nebraska. I am standing in for NEC Carol Tcshaml-Diesing. Her report did not make it into the book. She did submit it. Nebraska is doing good. We have a lot of bill in front of the senators for veterans. Next NEC meeting will be sometime in October. Date to be determined. I move for its adoption at the proper time.

MS. WEHRLI: North Dakota, Murray Strom.

MR. STROM: I will read my report and submit it so I can get it in the electronic book. Posts are trying to get membership by supporting youth activities, Americanism, National Anthem singing sponsorship, and talking to local guard units about color guard and honor guard.

State American program had over 1,500 entries. 200 were judged at the local level with 13 grades. \$2,530 was awarded at the state level, and over \$2,000 at most post levels.

North Dakota forwarded 9th graders for the winner to the Founding Forward, with all the rest of the 9th and 10th going into the consolation round.

North Dakota posts are funding 9th graders and chaperones to Founding Forward. North Dakota also supported a triple-crown high school wrestling program for both boys and girls.

We are conducting more honor guards due to other honor guards folding up. SEC is going to be held October 25 at the Bismarck AMVETS.

Under legislative, the state legislature has passed a bill allowing the posts to use up to 20 percent of funds to fund food and alcohol at the canteen level. I submit this report for approval at the proper time.

MS. WEHRLI: Texas.

MR. THOMAS: Curtis Thomas, Department of Texas. Unfortunately, my report did not make the book. But our fall SEC will be October the 10th-12th at the Holiday Inn in Tyler, Texas. That concludes my report. Thank you.

MS. WEHRLI: Also with the help of Bobby Lumpkins, we have gotten Kansas back into our district. So we are still working on Colorado. Commander, those are the District V reports. I move for their adoption at the proper time.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Thank you, commander. District VI. District VI departments, please line up behind the district, behind the microphone.

District VI

MS. WYATT: Good morning, everyone. I am Dani Wyatt from Washington, vice commander for District VI. Jack Isaacson is out on health issues. So if a report was submitted, I hope you adopt it at the appropriate time. Alaska, Terry Good.

MS. GOOD: Terry Good, Alaska. My report was not in the book but I do have a couple of things. We have been working hard and with

the Honor Flight and going as guardians and participants. We have been honoring and serving for the ROTC as well as the Special Olympics. It has been a special project.

We co-sponsored the Navy Week. And the ship that is about to be commissioned. Our attendance is monthly for the unaccompanied soldier at the National Cemetery. Our main focus this year is going to be getting new membership, working with MALs as well as we may be having opportunities to open two new posts. That concludes my report, and I move for its adoption at the appropriate time.

MS. WYATT: Arizona?

MR. VANASDALE: Good morning. Bill Vanasdale from Arizona, NEC. I e-mailed my report in. It did make the book, page 29. I ask for its adoption.

MS. WYATT: California?

MR. HENDERSHOT: California, Derek Hendershot, NEC. My report was submitted but did not make the book. Also I would like to state that my alternate NEC, Sandra Durbin, is present. But I would like to touch that our Welcome Home project was able to serve 6,445 veterans and provide furniture for their new homes and get them off the street.

Our suicide awareness program is going very strong with the help of AMVET 1 as it continues its mission around the country and around California to bring awareness to suicide prevention and reach that one.

And then also our DEC for fall will be October 30 to the 1st of November. Thank you.

MS. WYATT: Hawaii submitted theirs. We hope you approved their report. It is on page 30 in the book. Washington?

MR. SKINNER: Yes, Washington did submit their report but it did not make the book. I would just like to highlight a few things that we are currently doing.

We just finished up on August the 16, ---- did an open house. The ROTCs and JROTCs along with the schools, and did the schools, and our Riders participated there and took the colors. They had different things out there: planes, Army vehicles and everything for the kids to do.

Upcoming events: We will be down at the state fair. We are down there every year for three days. We are always invited to come down there and talk to fellow veterans, people who are interested in joining the AMVETS.

Also on October the 25th, we have got Compassion of Washington coming to our

local building, Post 1, and they will be doing a health care, dental health care event, for veterans, low-income and homeless. And anybody who would like to come off the streets, that they will help. They do these things 4 times a year.

That is the end of my oral report. I ask that it be moved at the proper time.

MS. WYATT: Sir, that is the end of our reports.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: I was just sitting up here thinking, as you all know, I have lost a little bit of weight this year. But District VI first vice could absolutely fit in here with me and probably another one. I don't have the cool shoes though.

All right. At this time, since all motions, the reports act as motions themselves, I would accept a second for the vote for the NEC reports to be accepted.

MS. DILLON: Second, Dillon, Connecticut.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Second, Dillon, Connecticut. Any questions on the reports? Questions?

(No response.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: All those in favor, state aye.

(Chorus of "aye.")

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Opposed, nay.

(No response.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Ayes have it. Now we will move on to committee reports.

Committee Reports Grievance Committee by AJ John

MR. JOHN: Good morning again. The Grievance Committee met yesterday at 1415. There were 3 Grievance Committee members present. The accused did not show up. After hearing the charges against the individual, the committee voted to expel the individual, revoke his membership, and also bar him from any AMVETS facility. And he cannot participate in anything that deals with AMVETS. That concludes my report.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: You do need to give the name of the AMVETS.

MR. JOHN: It is Arthur Rodriques unfortunately. That concludes my report, and I move for its adoption.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: I have a motion. Do I have a second for the Grievance Report?

MR. LUMPKINS: Second.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Who was the second? Lumpkins, Texas. Any questions on the Grievance report?

(No response.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Questions, questions? Hearing none, all in favor of accepting the Grievance Committee's report, state aye.

(Chorus of "aye.")

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Opposed, say nay.

(No response.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Committee report is accepted. All right. I am going to give my report now, and then we will go back into the regular order. Commander Vorhies, I am going to give my report now.

Acting Commander's Report by Acting Commander Paul Shipley

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: All right, everybody. National First Vice Commander Paul Shipley. My report is on page 34 and 35. I did want to highlight that the AMVETS Traditions and Membership Program is highlighted in there. You all have been given an individual copy in your hands today as well as the copy that is printed in the book.

This program is designed to create cash flow for the National headquarters so that we can help to support the membership programs across the country. Are there any questions on that program?

There is also -- be a capacity of this during the finance report later. I move for the adoption of my report.

2ND VICE CMDR. VORHIES: Is there a motion?

MR. : ----.

2ND VICE CMDR. VORHIES: Any discussion?

(No response.)

2ND VICE CMDR. VORHIES: If none, all in favor?

(Chorus of "aye.")

2ND VICE CMDR. VORHIES: Opposed,

same sign.

(No response.)

2ND VICE CMDR. VORHIES: Carries.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Thank you, Commander Vorhies. All right. National Finance Officer McFarlain.

National Finance Officer's Report by Kelly McFarlain

MR. MCFARLAIN: I just tell you what: I love my job, and I appreciate you all for electing me into this position. And so everybody should have received a finance report, this paper right here if you didn't get it. Maybe the provost will make sure everybody -- you did? Everybody should have it. And that is what we will tomorrow.

So it is a one-page document. And that is -- basically as far as our financials, currently for this fiscal year, we are on, we are within budget, we are on course, following our spending plan as planned.

We did meet yesterday, I think it was. We met this week. The Finance Committee met. We finalized our budget that we will present. It is actually on that same document. You will see on the second to right column from the right, you will see the budget for next fiscal year.

I think Agha has been here four years now, three years. And I have been in this position two years. We are right there with each other, and we are finally getting to the point where normally it takes your three years to understand something, and I think we are finally there, and seeing where actual spending is and all that kind of stuff. So we are in a good place.

And as first vice commander said, you know, that we had the Traditions Program, and that program is designed -- I know people always want to know where is that money going to go. That money is going to go right back into membership programs, which in turn goes into our operating budget. Cash is king. It takes cash to operate.

Membership programs include things like NEC travel, your travel. You are welcome, all right? It goes to the things like convention and all that kind of stuff. So where is that money going? All this costs money, right? That is where that money is going, all right?

So I am pleased to announce that this year we had a clean audit. We had minor deficiencies that the audit team found. We did correct those deficiencies moving forward.

I did ask, well, my committee did ask for you

to allow us to explore multi-year options for convention bids. We did that, and we have a plan. And we are going to present it to you. It is going to take a little work, and we hope we get your support in accomplishing that.

But we are looking at possible cost savings of hundreds of thousands of dollars with this plan. And it is real dollars, not some fictitious number. It is real dollars if we can move forward with it.

So we do have that plan ready to present to you, later to the body tomorrow I think is when it will be. It will be tomorrow morning. So I ask you, you find me in a corner, you see me around, especially this crew. You know how to find me. Hit me up or hit Paul up. Any of us. We know it. We will break it down for you. Get with your members if they are on the Finance Committee. They know it.

We have a good plan, but there is more to follow with that. Commander, that is my report.

PNC J.P. BROWN III: Second, Brown.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Any questions on the finance report? Kelly, you might as well get back up here.

MS. : Can you hear me?

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Yes, but the minutes don't, so could you please go to the microphone. We will definitely get the orientation fixed on that. It should have been printed as portrait and not landscape.

MS. : That is all I was going to say.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Understood. And that takes you to the full report. All right, any further questions on the finance report?

(No response.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Any further? Hearing none, all in favor of accepting the finance report, state aye.

(Chorus of "aye.")

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Opposed, state nay.

(No response.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Good job, Kelly. VAVS, Bobby Lumpkins.

VAVS Report by Bobby Lumpkins

MR. LUMPKINS: We had a meeting yesterday afternoon, and everybody was present. We did 13 CBLs and accepted all of them. So that

is my report. Move for acceptance.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: I have a motion. Do I have a second to accept the VAVS report?

PNC KILGORE: Second.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Second, Kilgore from Tennessee. Any questions?

(No response.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Questions, questions? Hearing none, all in favor, state aye.

(Chorus of "aye.")

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Opposed, state nay.

(No response.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Report is accepted. Mr. Executive Director, could you facilitate your staff reports?

MR. CHENELLY: Staff with reports, could you please come to a microphone? Only if you have a report in the book.

National Staff Reports Executive Director's Report by Joe Chenelly

MR. CHENELLY: My report is on page 40 and 41. I do hope you are able to take the time to read it and read our staff reports. We have got a lot of exciting things, facing a lot of challenges -- continuing to and excelling at them, I think.

You will certainly hear a lot more about the National Headquarters building in Washington, Pennsylvania, our new national capital regional headquarters, which just opened. We had the ribbon-cutting this past Friday. You will hear more about that in the general session. We want everybody to hear it.

Also you will note in the -- and I addressed this in my report. That is why I am addressing it now. Our national commander did not have a report in the book. He is not able to do that right now.

We did talk through it. Would have been happy to help him formulate that but with the challenges he has right now, it is hard for him to talk more than 15 to 20 seconds at a time.

But he did have some specific things that he wanted to -- people he wanted to thank and recognize from this body, and that is in my report. Colondra, programs, please?

National Programs Report by Colondra Etheredge

MS. ETHEREDGE: Colondra Etheredge, programs manager. And I would like to thank all the departments and the posts for all their reporting and participation within the programs department. And my report is on page 45, and I ask that it be accepted at the proper time.

**Chief Veteran Employment Officer's Report
by Ciara Singletary**

MS. SINGLETARY: Ciara Singletary. I am the Career Center manager, and my report is on page 47. And I wish that it would be adopted at its proper time.

**National Membership Director's Report
by Warren Cox**

MR. COX: Warren Cox. My report is on page 42 of the book. I move that it be adopted at its proper time. I would like to thank all the leaders for having their numbers the way they are.

**National Controller's Report
by Agha Hussain**

MR. HUSSAIN: Hello, my name is Agha. And I will be presenting a summary of the financials.

The budget proposal submitted for '25-'26: So we presented a budget proposal for a total inflow of \$2.7 million. Compared to expenditures of \$2.7 million, which makes it a balanced budget.

This budget is 4 percent less compared to the last fiscal year. And this year, like just been mentioned, we have tried to keep it as close to, you know, as close to what the projected activities of the coming year would be to ensure that we hit our first, at least, you know, working with our own -- keeping within our expenses.

We are trying to make this budget more real, and there are certain things that we have done, which -- just to ensure that the presentation and exchange of services between NSF and Headquarters are properly quantified, which will help National Headquarters to balance its budget.

And we are really hopeful next fiscal year we will see our first balanced actuals also, and that is the idea behind this budget. If you have any questions, I am here to answer. Otherwise, please accept my report. Thank you.

MR. CHENELLY: Thank you. Mr. Chairman, that concludes the staff reports.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Each report acts as its own motion to accept. Do I have a second for all the staff reports?

MS. PIERCE: Second, Pierce, Ohio.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Second, Pierce, Ohio. Any questions on the staff reports?

(No response.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Not even one? You guys just do too damn good of a job, that is all there is to it. Hearing no further questions, all in favor of accepting the staff reports, state aye.

(Chorus of "aye.")

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Opposed, state nay.

(No response.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Ayes have it. National Service Foundation President PNC Chapman. Would you like to come up here, Harold, or you want to do it down there.

**National Service Foundation's Report
by PNC Harold Chapman, NSF President**

PNC CHAPMAN: Good morning, everyone. My report did not make the book. But I wanted to say we have had some great years, as Kelly mentioned, since Agha has been on. It is I think Agha's third or fourth year.

We have gotten ourselves back together, and I thank you all for the patience while we got through this. I mean, it was a long time coming but it is here.

And I am proud that we were able to locate a new location, get into our new location in Maryland. The office, you will see it on Facebook. Are we going to show that tomorrow or -- the new offices? You will be able to see that. It is very up-to-date, modern and safe. And the whole thing. Joe will probably go into more detail Friday.

But all in all, I think we are doing fantastic compared, and once again I want to thank you for your patience.

**Service Foundation Financial Report
by Agha Hussain**

MR. HUSSAIN: So like the president just mentioned, this is our -- this is my third year for working for AMVETS, and this is the third year we are presenting, we have just presented our third consecutive operational surplus budget.

This is our second consecutive year that we have achieved our surplus budget target. This is our second consecutive year that we have posted a surplus. So I think this is now by any means not a one-off thing. It is more of a trend.

And that is why we are confident that we are stabilizing as an organization. This shows that we are stabilizing. In showing that we have lived within our means. We have not borrowed for 23 straight months. We have positive cash flow months for consecutive eight months now.

This is really an achievement from the whole team, and it appears that we have all worked together. And it was real teamwork.

Some really drastic decisions taken by our leadership. Joe is here. Mr. President is here. They have done so fantastic work. You know, and the vision that we had that we presented three years back, which titled revitalization of the financial system of AMVETS, I think it is taking shape.

We just got our first grant, \$3 million, from the Department of Labor, and you will get to know more about it. So that was a first try, and we got it the first time. Very rare, very rare, I tell you.

Doesn't happen. It normally takes 10 to get 1. We need to put in 10 proposals and we get 1. So this shows that AMVETS has and that can offer to the government, you know, kind of --- their grants, and that is compatible with our programs.

Apart from that, we are now in our new office. All of this I just mentioned about the positive impact we have achieved. That is after we have paid approximately \$2 million US dollars of outstanding liabilities when 3 years back was standing on my books.

After paying \$2 million, opening 3 new stores, opening 1 brand new office, even then our cash flows are positive now. And this shows a lot, the potential that AMVETS has. So thank you very much everybody. Thank you.

MR. CHAPMAN: Thank you, Agha. Once again, I want to thank the staff and the Service Foundation. This can't be done without real dedicated people, so I want to thank then, I like I said, we are moving on, and we will be more -- talk about our new location in Maryland. Have any questions for me or Agha?

(No response.)

MR. CHAPMAN: That is my report.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: I have a motion. Do we have a second to accept the Service Foundation report?

PNC CLARK: Second, Clark.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Second, Clark. Any questions on the Service Foundation report?

(No response.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Kelly wants to know if we are going to get our money next year. Hearing no further questions, all in favor of accepting the Service Foundation report, state aye.

(Chorus of "aye.")

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Opposed, state nay.

(No response.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Ayes have it. National Third Vice Commander Studebaker.

Third Vice Commander's Report by Chris Studebaker

3RD VICE CMDR. STUDEBAKER: Good morning, everyone. My report is on page 37. And I move for its adoption at the proper time. I would like to add one thing for everybody to know. Tonight at 1830, the Legislative Committee is going to meet in Gullford B, which is right here. We have another -- just like last year, we have a legislative panel discussion again. We have three federal aides coming. The Nimitz Group is also here.

So spread the word. Everybody is welcome to attend this. It is going to probably be about an hour of questions and answers again. And then the committee will go through the resolutions that we have to discuss and approve or deny.

I ask everybody to come, and we have had a great year legislation-wise. It has been a tough year. But with all of your help, we got some things passed. We still have some things going, and I want to thank you all for everything that you guys all do for us to make sure we look good up on the Hill.

Commander, that is my report, and I move for its adoption.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: I have a motion. Do I have a second to accept the -- Ferguson from North Carolina. All right. Any questions on the third vice commander's report?

(No response.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Seeing none, all in favor of accepting the third vice commander's report, state aye.

(Chorus of "aye.")

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Opposed, nay.

(No response.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Ayes have it. I do want to reiterate that if you have the opportunity, if any of you were there last year, it was an absolutely wonderful panel.

With us shortening by a day for convention this year, the schedule forced it to the evening, so please let everybody know to come in and see that because those are the people who really make the sausage in DC. So if you want to see how it works, that is the place to get the opportunity to do it.

All right. Second Vice Commander Vorhies. Your report.

Second Vice Commander's Report by Sandy Vorhies

2ND VICE CMDR VORHIES: Good morning. My report is on page 36. And before I go into anything else, I do want to remind you that today Colondra will be doing some training in the Colony Room at 11. So please join us there. So if you have questions or you need a little tweaking in your training, we will get it handled today.

With that, I just want to point out I really have seen an improvement in the reports from your departments on your programs. And I just want to mention a couple to give maybe an idea to you if you are not doing this, that maybe another department is doing.

Department of New Jersey, there was a Flag Day. There was like a coloring book they donated to the kindergarten and first grades. And that is a way to get into our schools for your Americanism.

Virginia presented over 70 ROTC and Jr. ROTC awards to high schools and to a Coast Guard unit in North Carolina.

Department of Tennessee had a great response this year on their Americanism. And then they kindly did what we asked and they forwarded everything to National right away.

Department of Hawaii, they became or did a charter sponsor for a scout troop. And Alaska just mentioned their honor flights. That is very important to our veterans that may not have that opportunity to go see the memorials.

And then of course California, who continues their work with the homeless and their suicide prevention. And those are just a few of them that I picked out and wanted to share with you.

I do want to continue thanking you for the work that you do for our veterans through your programs. And with that, that is my report.

3RD VICE CMDR. STUDEBAKER: Second, Studebaker.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Chris beat you to it, Rege. All right, we have a motion and a second to accept the second vice commander's report. Any questions on the second vice commander's report?

(No response.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Hearing none, all in favor of accepting the second vice commander's report, state aye.

(Chorus of "aye.")

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Opposed, state nay.

(No response.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: We will now move into old business.

Old Business

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: PNC McLean, are you in the room? There he is. PNC McLean, would you please give us a Construction Committee report.

PNC MCLEAN: Good morning Acting Commander and delegates. The Construction Committee has been working diligently, meeting every week by Zoom with the contractor. And going over the progress to date, and any slippage they have had.

We have been going good. We are almost near the end of phase one. And we are putting paint on the walls. We are finishing up the ceilings. And getting ready for final floor tiles. All of this is interior work. We haven't done much with the exterior. And right now we don't have a firm ribbon-cutting date but we are looking for a point in September.

But like I said, everything is going well. We are under budget actually, even with moving the construction of the elevator into the first phase. And we are going good.

And I would like to thank my committee members Mr. Paul Shipley and Mr. Chris Studebaker. We have been there every week on the Zoom meetings. And Paul, because of his close proximity to the site, has made multiple visits to the site. And myself, I have gone down there twice since June. And overall we are happy that the progress is finally getting to the point where we want it to be.

So that is my report, Commander, and I move for acceptance.

MR. MCFARLAIN: Second, McFarlain.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Second, McFarlain. Are there any questions on the Construction Subcommittee report?

I do want to state: Thank you for your leadership on that committee. PNC McLean has held Rocky Bleier Construction Group's feet to the fire.

He has been nice when he needs to be but he has also been a you-know-what when he needs to be but he has really kept the project going. He has kept us able to report, and we are truly seeing progress in the facility. So thank you for your work, Commander McLean.

PNC MCLEAN: Thank you, sir.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Any further questions on the Construction Committee? NEC Dillon? Oh wait, no, she is dressed as the Saddest right now. Boo.

(Chorus of "boo.")

MS. DILLON: I just have a comment. I think it is important that the NEC body and anyone who wants to, should be able to attend the ribbon-cutting to show our force, and I think it would be better to delay that to the March NEC.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Any further questions on the Construction Committee report?

(No response.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: All right. Hearing none, all in favor, state aye.

(Chorus of "aye.")

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Opposed, nay.

(No response.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Ayes have it.

PNC MCLEAN: Thank you very much.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Lead Trustee Roundtree, could you please give us a report on the Department of Minnesota.

MR. ROUNDTREE: Yes, sir. We had the meeting here. Richard and Bobby had to attend. I couldn't attend at that time. But we have a meeting planned for October that we are going to demand some of the posts that show up -- some of them haven't been showing up -- but we are working on it diligently. We got their bylaws and everything straightened out. And we should have a final report on that in October after the October FEC.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: How many posts

are there in Minnesota currently?

MR. ROUNDTREE: 12 total. We had full revalidation. I do believe we had that all correct. Department and post. Is that what we had on that, Richard? Bobby took care of that end of it.

So we are probably going to do one last meeting in October, and Richard has got the rest of that. I just have to sign off on the bylaws for Minnesota. So we are set for that right now. Will probably hold the last meeting in October. We would like for the programs director to attend. And hopefully we will have them settled out by then. That is my report for Minnesota at this time.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: All right, we have a motion to accept the Minnesota trustee report.

MR. ROUNDTREE: Unless Richard has something else.

MR. ROWLEY: Second, Rowley.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Second, Rowley from Ohio. Any questions on the Minnesota report?

(No response.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Hearing none, all in favor of accepting the report from Lead Trustee Roundtree, state aye.

(Chorus of "aye.")

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Opposed, say nay.

(No response.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: All right. Is there any further old business to be brought before the NEC? Is this NEC or is this Sad? NEC Dillon.

MS. DILLON: I just wanted to give an update on Rhode Island. We have been meeting with two of the posts regularly trying to get them pointed in the right direction. They seem to be doing well. It is our recommendation that we close two posts, Post 13 and Post 8. They are not doing anything. And that is our recommendation.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Thank you. You do not need to give a report on that as the department itself is closed and it is not a trusteeship. So we appreciate the update on what is going on in that department. Any further old business for the body today?

(No response.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Hearing on, we will move on to new business. Is there any new business to be brought before the NEC today?

(No response.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Going once, going twice. Looks like none. Good of the order?

(No response.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Good, bad? You have a hospitality room you want us to come to? All right, hearing none, I would absolutely entertain a motion to adjourn.

MR. MCFARLAIN: Move to adjourn.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: McFarlain makes a motion. Second, damn near everybody. We will just put Rege Riley's name on it. Chaplain Jackson, could you please give us a benediction.

**Benediction
by National Chaplain Rigley Jackson**

CHAPLAIN JACKSON: Uncover.

(Prayer.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Provost Marshal?

**Honors to the Colors
by National Provost Marshal Art Majors**

MR. MAJORS: AMVETS, attention. Hand salute.

(Whereupon, the meeting adjourned at 10:02 a.m.)

AMVETS 79th Annual Convention

First Business Session
Meeting Minutes



Friday,
August 22, 2025

Held at the
Sheraton Greensboro | Four Seasons Greensboro
Greensboro, North Carolina

**Morning Session
(8:30 a.m.)**

**Call to Order
by Commander Paul Shipley**

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: I call this first business session of the 2025 AMVETS National Convention to order. All rise. Chaplain Jackson.

**Invocation
by Chaplain Rigley K. Jackson**

CHAPLAIN JACKSON: Good morning.

(Chorus of "Good morning.")

CHAPLAIN JACKSON: Uncover.

(Prayer)

(Chorus of "Amen")

CHAPLAIN JACKSON: Re-cover.

ACTING CMDR 1ST VICE SHIPLEY: Provost Marshal.

**Honor to the Colors
by Provost Marshal Art Majors**

PROVOST MARSHAL MAJORS: AMVETS attention, hand salute.

(Pledge of Allegiance)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Please be seated. Everybody have a good night of fellowship getting around to the hospitalities last night? I have heard the brown water and the creek water was flowing pretty good last night, so stay hydrated as much as possible. All right. Our first order of business will be to adopt the convention rules. They are in the convention journal. Can I have a motion to adopt the convention rules?

MOTION

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Motion by Danny White to adopt. Do we have second?

MR. LUMPKINS: Second.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Bobby Lumpkins, Texas. He waved. Any questions on the convention rules as written? As printed in the journal? Hearing none, all in favor of adopting convention rules, state aye.

(Chorus of "ayes.")

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Opposed nay?

(No response.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Rules are adopted. Also in the convention journal is the agenda. Can I please have a motion to accept the agenda for today?

MOTION

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Motion by Terry Coresom, Florida. Second by Kelly McFarlain, National Finance Officer. Any questions on the agenda?

(No response.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Hearing none, all in favor of adopting the agenda, state aye.

(Chorus of "ayes.")

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Opposed naye.

(No response.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Agenda is adopted.

Committee reports. If your committee has met and you are prepared to give a report, please line up at the microphones and we can get your reports on to the record. National 4th Commander Hartsfield, please go first.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS
Diversity Committee
by Sheldon Hartsfield**

MR. HARTSFIELD: Thank you, Commander. Sheldon Hartsfield, National 4th District Commander. I chaired the Diversity Committee and the Honor Guard Committee yesterday. The first meeting was the Diversity Committee. We met and assessed the status of the Department and its ways of diversity and we are very satisfied with the posture that the organization has taken.

I am also stepping down as chairman of that committee and we have turned over that to over to Mr. Eddie Bullock from Florida. Later that afternoon, the Honor Guard met, was only one other member of the committee there but we had several other members from different departments who are in the process of starting new Honor Guards. And we have provided instructions and ways to move forward to increase the mentor folds(sic). And that concludes my report and move for its adoption. Thank you.

MOTION

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: All right. Your motion will cover both your Diversity Committee report and your Honor Guard report?

MR. HARTSFIELD: Yes.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Do I have a second -- we will start with the Diversity Committee report, do I have a second to approve that report?

MR. FERGUSON: Second.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Second, Randy Ferguson, National 2nd District Commander. Any questions on Diversity Committee Report?

(No response.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Hearing none. All approve state aye.

(Chorus of "ayes.")

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Opposed naye.

(No response.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Honor Guard report, we have a motion for the Honor Guard report, do I have a second for the Honor Guard Report?

MR. CORESOM: Second, Coresom, Florida.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Second Terry Coresom from Department of Florida. Any questions on the Honor Guard report?

(No response.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Hearing none, all approved state aye.

(Chorus of "ayes.")

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Opposed nay.

(No response.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Honor Guard report is accepted. Kevin Matteson, National Suicide Prevention and Awareness chairman, please give your report.

**National Suicide and Awareness Report
by Kevin Matteson**

MR. MATTESON: Good morning, Commander, executive body, AMVETS. We held our committee meeting on Wednesday -- I am sorry Tuesday -- whichever day it was, at 3 p.m. We had in excess of 40 attendees which was outstanding. The updates is all I will cover. We, because of the legislation that was passed end of '24, 501(c)(19) have privileges, same privileges as 501(c)(3) which means I have opened up a business account. The EIN number group ID, the whole nine yards. This opens up us for raising capital so that we can put again -- I will re-emphasize 100 percent of all proceeds that come to this committee

to 22 every day. Veterans suicide prevention awareness will go back into the program.

We continue in our efforts of finding non-pharmaceutical resources to treat our veterans with a variety of different issues that can lead to suicide, drug and alcohol, mental health, PTSD, TBI and ---- homeless and hunger. These all contribute to our veterans taking their lives.

In attendance I have -- I am just going to name you off, you don't have to come up. My committee consists of myself, Dana Dillon as vice-chair, Joanie Byrum, Deborah Wehrle, Milton Allen, Carol Ebert, Joe Ashman and Roseann Bellar. Of course, our ex-officios are the National Commander, National Judge Advocate Frederick Bates and Membership Director, Warren Cox.

I am asking that each of you departments get ahold of me so I can come travel -- I have asked our hopefully new commander, that I travel with him because he does travel quite a bit to a lot of these destinations. And if I can do that and speak on your floors, I would like to get 22 every day veteran suicide prevention awareness gone. Built up in your department so your posts squadrants, axillaries, riders, juniors, can all participate and build awareness and help our efforts in stopping suicide.

Commander, that is my report. I am going to ask for its adoption.

MOTION

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: I have a motion for the suicide prevention and awareness committee report, do I have a second?

MR. WYATH: Second, Danny Wyath.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: I have a second, Danny Wyath from Washington. Questions on the report?

MS. DILLON: Just to add to what he said, we also have a webpage on the -- an e-mail address 22everyday@amvets.org. So if you have any questions or anything like that, you can find us there.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: That was committee vice-chair, Dana Dillon. Any further questions on committee report? Hearing none, all in favor, state aye.

(Chorus of "ayes.")

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Opposed, nay?

(No response.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Committee report is accepted. Thank you so much for

everything that your committee is doing, Kevin. This is by far and away the most important thing that we as veterans can do is to keep other veterans alive and here with us. Let everybody know that we got your back and we are here for you. Thank you. Past Department Commander California, Jeff Lukens.

MR. LUKENS: Yes, sir. Americanism, sir.

Americanism Committee Report by Jeff Lukens

MR. LUKENS: Americanism, we had our poster contest last night in our grading. First place is Allie -- that is for the Americanism for Kindergarten from North Dakota. Brooklyn Branelvik from first grade also from North Dakota. Kennedy Szep I need to learn how to read your writing, ---- second grade Ohio. Decker Bulow, third grade Department of North Dakota. Oh, Tatum Lorenzo, California Post 56, whoop whoop. Good job California. We are doing good.

Conely Bulow, fifth grade North Dakota. Ahlaam Binte Yasir, also North Dakota, Sabrina Sibya, Maine Post 3. Cohen Hensley from Department of Maryland. Our ADAA K-12, first place is Coen Hensley, a second grader from Wisconsin and first place was Brooklyn Gossart from Maryland.

Second place for the Americanism program from Kindergarten, Avery Bell, New Jersey. Alexandra Irish from Maine. Second was Ambree Deis from North Dakota. Catherine Thick from Michigan, Elizabeth Taylor from Tennessee, Clark Brott from California, Paisley Evans Ohio, Cooper Yiyus Craven from North Dakota and our last 8th grade winner is from Ohio, is Adisyn Shafer.

We are going to finish doing the essays and we will send out those winner when we get those. We had a lot of participation with the grading. We need more submissions from the states. So please, get your Americanism programs up and running. If you need help, look for me or look for Americanism chair or your second vice and we will figure it out. Because the more participation we have for these kids, the more eventually will fill our ranks.

So that is my report, Chair and I move for adoption.

MOTION

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: I have a motion for the Americanism report to be accepted, do I have a second?

Brandy Ferguson, National District 2 Commander. Any questions on the Americanism report?

(No response.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Hearing none, all approve state aye.

(Chorus of "ayes.")

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Opposed, nay?

(No response.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Report is accepted.

National 3rd Vice Commander Studebaker?

Legislative Committee Report by 3rd Vice Commander Christopher Studebaker

3rd VICE CMDR. STUDEBAKER: Yes, Mr. Chair and Commander. The Legislative committee met last night at 1830. Right here in this room. We had 17 people in attendance. And we started the meeting off with a federal house panel discussion that was moderated by the Nimitz group. Danielle was our moderator for that. We had three Congressional aides here to discuss veterans issues. And we had that for about an hour.

It was a very great discussion. A lot of things were discussed and then after that, we went through the resolutions that are in the book and made recommendations on those. And we adjourned at 2030. I would like to say to everybody, if you -- when you go back to your post and your departments, if you have not signed up for the Veterans Advocacy, which is the weekly newsletter that is sent out by the 3rd Vice and the Nimitz group, you need to sign up for that. You need to tell your post members to sign up for that.

There is a lot of information that comes out on a weekly basis when the House and the Senate are in session. I mean, things are changing so fast and so rapidly, it is hard to keep track some days. So you can either send an e-mail to me. You can send an e-mail to the Nimitz group. You can send an e-mail to any one of us and we can get you on the list. You can also go to the AMVETS.org website and under the services tab, you scroll down and there is a spot for advocacy and you can sign up through that.

So I encourage everybody to sign up for this because legislation is super important. All it takes is one time in the middle of the night and things disappear. So Commander, that is my report.

MOTION

3RD VICE CMDR. STUDEBAKER: And I move for its adoption at the property time.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: I have a motion to accept the legislative report, do I have a second? Second, Marty Bugotton, New York. Any questions on the legislative report?

(No response.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Hearing none, all in favor of accepting the report, state aye.

(Chorus of "ayes.")

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Opposed nay.

(No response.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Report is accepted. Thank you. I see -- AMVETS Department of California Commander Joe Keller.

POW/MIA Committee Report

UNKNOWN SPEAKER: Good morning, Commander. We are here with POW MIA Committee. It is Joe Keller and my wingman Cole. We are here to report on the POW/MIA meeting that we had. We did not have minutes from the previous year however, we are going to go forward. As you all know the third Friday in September is National POW/MIA Day. Right now we discussed how we are going to revive this program, how we are going to move it forward because we can't just do the celebration in September and call it a day.

Remember we are -- these -- most of the people that are missing in action, where are they? They haven't come home yet. So we are remembering everybody until they all come home. And we have a promise to never leave anybody behind. So this is what we are doing. We are going to work on a mission, vision and goals for POW/MIA day. And we are going to move this program forward so that we fulfill our promise of never leaving anyone behind.

Cole?

COLE: So I am a bit taller than her. We have one way that we would like everybody to be involved. Everybody have an opportunity to be informed. We started this last year. There is a Facebook group that we would like everybody to come and join. Not only just join but to share it with all of your contacts on Facebook. We want everybody to know when a veteran is coming home.

We update it regularly. We have been updating it all year long. There is stuff on there that tells you every time a veteran is repatriated. So if you would write this down. Please join this group. It is called National AMVETS POW/MIA Committee. If you join that, you will know every single time that a veteran is repatriated to the United States.

MR. : Repeat it again please.

COLE: It is National AMVETS POW/MIA Committee.

UNKNOWN FEMALE: Just wanted to say remember that a lot of these people have been missing for a long time. So they sometimes do not have family members to show up for them. So we are their family. So when you see your state coming up and you are near one of them, make sure you or someone in your group is able to attend so that we can stand up for them at their celebration of life. Thank you.

MOTION

UNKNOWN FEMALE: A motion to accept please.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: All right. I have a motion to accept the POW/MIA.

MR. BULLOCK: Second.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Second, Eddie Bullock, Past Department Commander Florida. Any questions on the POW/MIA report? I do want to say this is very important. The 85,000 or so POW/MIAs that have not come home. We need to keep the pressure on the Government to make sure that we get everyone home and as many identified as possible because they deserve that. They sacrificed for this county, we deserve everything we can to get them back.

With that being said, all in favor of accepting the POW/MIA committee report state aye.

(Chorus of "ayes.")

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Opposed nay.

(No response.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Committee report is accepted. Thank you.

Innetta Bullock, Department of Florida.

Women Veterans Committee Report by Innetta Bullock

MS. BULLOCK: Good morning. I am here to report for the Womens Veterans Committee meeting. We met Wednesday evening and we had 36 present. We were honored by the presence of four of our brothers who attended the meeting. We discussed the CBL Amendments and also the resolutions. And in those -- the ones that -- the one CBL we want to address right now real quickly, 26-02, the one about changing the words subordinate. And we want to just ensure that everyone is aware that by changing the word subordinate, that removes the status of our Sons in Auxiliary

and our Juniors and our Riders from being able to fall under our 501(c)(19). They would have to file on their own.

The other items that we had that we went over during the legislative meeting last night and those were 26-01, Resolutions 26-01, 26-02 and 26-07, 26-08 and for those -- those are the ones that I mentioned that we did not recommend but we gave the information to the legislative task force and they were in agreement, so that will be addressed later on this evening with the new amendment -- ask to be recommended with the adoption.

MOTION

MS. BULLOCK: I move my report and I ask for its approval at the proper time.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: I have a motion to accept the Womens Veterans Committee report, do I have a second?

MS. : Second, Department of Alaska.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Second. Department of Alaska. I have a motion and a second. Do we have any questions on the Womens Veterans Committee report?

(No response.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Hearing none. All in favor of accepting Womens Veterans Committee report state aye.

(Chorus of "ayes.")

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Opposed nay.

(No response.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Report is accepted.

Barry Remington from the cornhole state -- I mean Iowa.

(Laughter)

CBL Committee Report by Barry Remington

MR. REMINGTON: We appreciate that. CBL Committee met yesterday at 4:30 at Gate City. Not having a quorum of the committee members, we could not make any recommendation to -- for the body on our amendments to the Constitution.

MOTION

MR. REMINGTON: I move for the adoption of my report at the proper time.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: All right, CBL

Committee, you were not able to have a quorum last evening. We would truly appreciate it that if you can find five minutes to get together or a few more minutes as needed to review those. If you are on the CBL Committee or you have been in previous years, please touch base with Commander Remington so that we can try and get this -- get recommendations. Because your recommendations are integral to us when we are looking at CBL Amendments.

So I will not accept the report at this time as you did not have a quorum to have a report but I thank you for coming up and letting us know that you guys got together and were unable to. Please identify yourself at the mic, I apologize. The cans are starting to get to my eyes.

Community Services Committee Report by Loretta DiBrino

MS. DIBRINO: Commander, I am Loretta DiBrino. Chair of the Community Service Committee and my co-chairman, Dave Ferry, we are from the Department of New York. Our meeting this week had a healthy 13 in attendance. I began the meeting by sharing examples of community service activities in New York which sparked an engaging discussion among the participants about their own activities.

The Department of New York's Community Service efforts focus on supporting veterans, families in the wider community through various fundraising and outreach activities. These initiatives provide vital assistance ranging from care packages to troops overseas, to support for families facing severe health challenges. The Troop Jar began by simply placing a jar on the bar identifying its goal to support needing veterans and the community. The Troop Jar has been very successful and funded multiple community and efforts including small fruit baskets for hospitalized veterans, flowers for veterans funerals, gift cards for medication and heating assistance, care packages for troops overseas, holiday turkeys and gift cards for veterans -- for families with children suffering from incurable cancer.

It also provided funds to hold a fundraising event that raised over \$30,000 for a family with a child battling cancer. In some remote areas such as Alaska, they rely on state grants that fund Alaska's LINKS resource center. This center offers advocacy and resources to improve veterans lives including assistance with social security, medicare, medicaid, independent living, long term care and obtaining nursing home level care at home.

The Community Service meetings encourage veterans to share ideas and collaborate on projects fostering creativity and expanding support efforts across departments. I encour-

age everyone to attend the Community Service Committee meeting next year in Orlando.

MOTION

MS. DIBRINO: Commander, this is my report and I move for its adoption.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: I have a motion to accept Community Service Committee report. Is there a second?

MR. FERRY: Second, Ferry, New York.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Second, Ferry, New York. Any questions on the report?

(No response.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Hearing none. All in favor of accepting the report, state aye.

(Chorus of "ayes.")

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Opposed say nay.

(No response.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Ayes have it. Are there any further committee reports?

MR. : One more, Commander.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Could every member of the Constitution and Bylaws Committee please step outside with JA. With Deputy JA Smith.

MR. : One more, Commander.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: And I will get to your report in one second. If you were on that CBL Committee, Commander Remington, whoever else is on that CBL Committee please step out with Deputy JA Smith, so that you can review those so that we can have recommendations. Dr. Tooms, I appreciate you. Anybody else? Okay. Andy Martel, Past National District II Commander, Past Department Commander of Maryland, I got a whole list of shit for you. Excuse me, I was told last night that I may need a swear jar when I am up here, so.

MR. MARTEL: I never thought I would find myself one of the old guys in this crowd but here I am.

National Armed Services & Military Liaison Committee Report by Andy Martel

MR. MARTEL: So Commander, I am reporting on behalf of the National Armed Services and Military Liaison Committee which met on Wednesday, August 20th in the Tanglewood

Room. Committee members present were myself and Richard Vanetta of Illinois. Others present were Derrick Henderson of California, David Lang of California and I hope I get this right, Dr. Jan Dexter Toombs of Florida, is that close? And Benjamin Moser for National Headquarters.

There were no resolutions or CBL Amendments presented by National Headquarters for us to consider. Although we did consider many of the resolutions and CBL Amendments in the book. And I will comment on those as they come up. Commander this committee adjourned at 2:45 and Commander this concludes my report and move for its adoption.

MOTION

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: I have a motion to accept the Armed Services Liaison Committee Report, do I have a second?

MR. MCFARLAIN: Second, McFarlain.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Second Kelly McFarlain, National Finance Officer. Any questions on that report?

(No response.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Hearing none, all in favor of accepting the report, state aye.

(Chorus of "ayes.")

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Opposed nay.

(No response.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Thank you, sir.

Further committee reports?

MR. : Uniforms Committee.

Uniforms Committee Report

MR. : Uniforms Committee. We did not hold a meeting. I was the only one there. So I have nothing to report at this time.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: All right. Hopefully you all can get together and meet at some point.

Any further committee reports? Any further committee reports today?

(No response.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Okay. We are going to move on to Credential Reports. PNC Brown, Jr. The other, whichever we would like to call you. You are not John Brown, III. So we have to call you something else. Ah, PNC

Jan Brown the first.

(Laughter)

Credential Report by PNC Jan Brown

PNC BROWN: All right, seems weird given my first credential report on Friday, when this is usually my next to the last, but it's still my next to the last. We had 321 pre-registered. As of close a business yesterday, we had 320 people check in. There is a line out the door, we won't do another report at the next committee meeting or the next business meeting today.

We will have another one tomorrow morning and then we will give a first thing in the morning and then we will give a final shortly after 10. I am going to give a full report this morning though so if you have issues just keep in mind people are checking in but just to keep in mind and if you need to check, come in will be there until 1 o'clock today.

So starting with Alabama we have 3 checked in, Alaska 6, Arizona 3, Arkansas 0, California 16, Connecticut 3, District of Columbia 12, Delaware 4, Florida 31, Georgia 14, Hawaii 0, Idaho 0, Illinois 10, Indiana 17, Iowa 4, Kansas 0, Kentucky 11, Louisiana 8, Maine 3, Maryland 6, Massachusetts 10, Michigan 6, Minnesota 0, Missouri 5, Nebraska 2, New Jersey 0, New Mexico 0, New York 22, North Carolina 19, North Dakota 2, Ohio 19.

Oklahoma 1, Oregon 0, Pennsylvania 16, Rhode Island 0, South Carolina 2, Tennessee 27, Texas 8, Vermont 1, Virginia 15, Washington state 3, West Virginia 2, Wisconsin 9 for a total of 320. The -- I am going to say in advance that I got an amazing crew this year and I -- I didn't have to do any pre-work this year because they did it all. I like that. I was like, after 20 something years, we got it -- somebody that can work a computer a lot better than me.

So, Vice Commander, we are going to draw for the -- what state we are going to start the election at. Nebraska, is who we will start with tomorrow.

MOTION

PNC BROWN: So Mr. Vice Commander, that concludes my report and I move for its adoption.

MR. McELRATH: Second, McElrath.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: All right, we have a motion to accept the first credentials report. We have a second from -- are you NEC currently or past department commander,

Andy McElrath from Ohio? Sorry, I am trying to record all of them so that we get really good notes for this year. So that is why I'm trying to get the titles appropriately on here. So please, if you get up to this microphone, make sure that you identify yourself so we can have the best minutes possible.

So we have a motion and second on credential reports. Is there any questions?

(No response.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Hearing none, all in favor of accepting the first credential reports, state aye.

(Chorus of "ayes.")

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Opposed state nay.

(No response.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Thank you, Commander Brown.

Mr. Executive Director, Resolutions and Amendments.

Resolutions and Amendments by Joe Chenelly

MR. CHENELLY: Good morning, everyone. We will start with the resolutions as our amendments are being reviewed right now. So, referring to the book, we will start obviously with 26-01. Sure. Yes. If you are a convention chair who plans to weigh in on any of these please be near a mic so we can be expedient. Likewise if you have a state who has endorsed a resolution and would like to weigh in on that please be near a microphone.

So Draft Resolution 26-01, I am going to read the resolved paragraphs after I start off with the number and the subject. So subject here is supporting full concurrent receipt of military retired pay in VA disability compensation. Be it resolved, the AMVET strongly supports legislation to fully authorize concurrent receipt of military retirement pay and VA disability compensation without offset regardless of VA rating or years of service and be it further resolved that the AMVETS urges Congress to pass the Major Richard Star Act to ensure that combat injured veterans received the full benefits that they earned through both their service and sacrifice. And be it further resolved the AMVETS will continue to advocate for the full repeal of concurrent receipt restrictions and call upon lawmakers to write this enduring inequity to all disabled military retirees.

MOTION

3RD VICE CMDR. STUDEBAKER: The Legislative Committee moved to accept.

MR. CHENELLY: Any other comments?

(No response.)

MR. CHENELLY: So each resolution is a motion in itself. Do we have a second?

MR. CORSON: Terry Corson, second.

MR. CHENELLY: Terry Corson, Department of Florida seconds. All in favor say aye.

(Chorus of "ayes.")

MR. CHENELLY: All opposed same sign.

(No response.)

MR. CHENELLY: 26-01 is passed. Draft Resolution 26-02. Increase veterans' burial benefits. Be it resolved that AMVETS believes that AMVETS believes there is a -- there is still a serious deficit between the original value of the plot allowance benefit and its current value.

Congress should increase the plot allowance for all eligible veterans and expand the eligibility for the plot allowance for all veterans who might be eligible for burial in the National Cemetery, not just those who have served during wartime.

And be it further resolved, the AMVETS urges Congress and the administration to provide the resources required to meet the critical and sensitive nature of the National Cemetery Administration's mission, thereby fulfilling the nation's commitment to all veterans who have served their country so honorably and faithfully.

Committee?

3RD VICE CMDR. STUDEBAKER: The Legislative Committee recommends approval.

MR. CHENELLY: Thank you.

MR. : Suicide Prevention Committee recommends moving.

MR. CHENELLY: Thank you. Any other comments? Do we have a second? Can't tell who that was. Ted Gando, Ohio. Thank you, Ted. All in favor? Say aye.

(Chorus of "ayes.")

MR. CHENELLY: All opposed. Same sign.

(No response.)

MR. CHENELLY: 26-02 has passed. Draft

Resolution 26-03, tinnitus and hearing loss presumptive service connection. Be it resolved that AMVETS urge Congress and VA to grant service connection on a presumptive basis for any veteran diagnosed after discharge with hearing loss and or tinnitus when there is evidence that the veteran participating combat operations worked in a position or occupational specialty likely to have damaged the veterans hearing or was exposed to any form of auditory trauma.

Committees?

3RD VICE CMDR. STUDEBAKER: The Legislative Committee recommends approval.

MR. MATTESON: The Suicide Prevention Committee agrees as well.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Thank you. Do I have a second? Thank you. All in favor? Say aye.

(Chorus of "ayes.")

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: All opposed?

(No response.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: 26-03 has passed. 26-04 VA claims and appeals. Be it resolved, the AMVETS urge Congress to ensure adequate funding and train staff levels for the Department of Veterans Affairs to improve upon the timeliness and accuracy of all claims and appeals being filed.

And be it further resolved, the AMVETS push for the Veterans Benefit Administration to process timely and accurate claims the first time they are reviewed, as well as the immediate implementation of a uniform data claims processing system as well, improve training for both VA claims and appeals processors to ensure timely, and accurate claims and appeals process for every veteran.

3RD VICE CMDR. STUDEBAKER: Legislative Committee recommends approval.

MR. MATTESON: Suicide Prevention approval.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Any others? Do I have a second?

MS. PIERCE: Second, Pierce, Ohio.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Sarah Pierce, Department of Ohio seconds. All in favor?

(Chorus of "ayes.")

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: All opposed, same sign?

(No response.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: 26-04 has passed. 26-05 civilian credentials for military training and experience.

Be it resolved that AMVETS should encourage Congress to engage in a national dialogue to include the administration, Department of Defense, Department of Veterans Affairs, Department of Labor, Governors, State --- and Generals, Employers, Trading Professional Associations, and Licensing and Credentialing Entities, to establish a process, some military training meets civilian certification and licensing agreement requirements for states in which veterans choose to live once they leave the military.

3RD VICE CMDR. STUDEBAKER: Legislative Committee recommends approval.

PNC J.P. BROWN: Second, Brown III, Ohio.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Second, J.P. Brown, III, Ohio. All in favor? Say aye.

(Chorus of "ayes.")

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: All opposed, same sign.

(No response.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: 26-05 passed. 26-06 continuing fighting to end veteran homelessness. Be it resolved that AMVETS ensure that the issue of veteran homelessness remains a priority for both the administration and Congress.

And be it further resolved, the AMVETS encourages Congress to increase the availability of affordable housing, expand education and training programs, and provide employment opportunities until all veterans are properly housed and gainfully employed.

3RD VICE CMDR. STUDEBAKER: Legislative Committee recommends approval.

MR. MATTESON: Suicide Prevention approval.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Do we have a second.

MS. ADAMS: Second, Adams, Tennessee.

MR. CHENELLY: Leanna Adams, Department of Tennessee, seconds. All in favor say aye.

(Chorus of "ayes.")

MR. CHENELLY: Same sign if you oppose.

(No response.)

MR. CHENELLY: 26-06 passes. 26-07, continuing implementation of the electronic health care record. Be it resolved the AMVETS reaffirms its strong support for the VA's implementation of a unified, efficient EHR system across all VA facilities in full alignment with the Department of Defense and be it further resolved that AMVETS recognizes the importance of the VA's new site deployment model, standard national baseline and commitment to interoperability as critical steps so as improving care and outcome for all veterans.

And be a further resolved that AMVETS urge continued congressional oversight to ensure transparency, clinical involvement and timely execution of this multi-year rollout.

And be it further result the AMVETS will continue to oppose any efforts to revert to the outdated VISTA system, which has long hindered the delivery of high quality integrated care for veterans. Committees?

3RD VICE CMDR. STUDEBAKER: The Legislative Committee recommends approval with the following amendment. In the last paragraph there on the left column, the last sentence where it says, "Any effort to revert to the outdated VISTA system", we would like to change the word "the" to "all."

MR. CHENELLY: All?

3RD VICE CMDR. STUDEBAKER: Yes.

MR. CHENELLY: Is there a second for the amendment?

MS. DAWES: Dawes, Illinois.

MR. CHENELLY: Laura Dawes, Department of Illinois. All in favor?

(Chorus of "ayes.")

MR. CHENELLY: All opposed?

(No response.)

MR. CHENELLY: The amendment passes. Any other discussion on the Resolution as amended?

(No response.)

MR. CHENELLY: So you are going to vote on the amended version. All in favor?

(Chorus of "ayes.")

MR. CHENELLY: All opposed?

(No response.)

MR. CHENELLY: 26-07 passes as amended. 26-08 support for the Protect Act to ensure care for veterans exposed to radiation and toxins at the National Training Center. Be it resolved, the AMVET strongly supports the passage of HR 1400, the Protect Act, to provide long term, long overdue access to health care and benefits for veterans exposed at NTTR, to be it further resolved that AMVET urges Congress to pass this legislation without delay to bring justice and peace of mind to those who served and sacrificed.

And be it further resolved, the AMVETS will continue to advocate for all veterans affected by toxic exposures and to support legislative solutions that recognize and respond to the unique health needs.

3RD VICE CMDR. STUDEBAKER: Legislative Committee recommends approval with the following amendment. In the very first resolved, in the last sentence where it says, Veteran exposed at NTTR, we would like to add and places where these chemicals and toxins existed.

MR. CHENELLY: Thank you. Any discussion on the amendment?

(No response.)

MR. CHENELLY: All in favor of the amendment? Say aye.

(Chorus of "ayes.")

MR. CHENELLY: All opposed, same side.

(No response.)

MR. CHENELLY: The amendment is adopted. Now voting on the resolution as amended. This is Resolution 26-08. All in favor say aye.

(Chorus of "ayes.")

MR. CHENELLY: All opposed, same sign.

(No response.)

MR. CHENELLY: 26-08 passes. 26-09, military sexual trauma. The AMVETS calls on DOD to continue to enhance its MST awareness program and calls on VA to continually improve its MST treatment program and to disseminate evidence based clinical practice guidelines to clinicians who care for veterans who have suffered from MST.

Be it further result that AMVETS call upon Congress to continue its oversight and hearings related to military sexual trauma, care and benefits with the goal of improving VA and DOD collaboration, improving policies and practices for military sexual trauma care and disability compensation.

MR. MATTESON: Suicide Prevention approval.

MR. CHENELLY: Recommend approval suicide prevention, thank you.

3RD VICE CMDR. STUDEBAKER: Legislative Committee recommends approval.

MR. CHENELLY: All in favor say aye.

(Chorus of "ayes.")

MR. CHENELLY: All opposed same sign.

(No response.)

MR. CHENELLY: 26-09 is adopted. 26-10 expand veterans veteran treatment courts. Be it resolved, that AMVETS advocates for the continued use and expansion of veteran treatment courts across the country.

MR. MATTESON: Suicide prevention recommends approval.

3RD VICE CMDR. STUDEBAKER: Legislative committee also recommends approval.

MR. BULLOCK: Second, Eddie Bullock, Florida.

MR. CHENELLY: Second, Eddie Bullock, Florida. All in favor say aye.

(Chorus of "ayes.")

MR. CHENELLY: All opposed, same sign.

(No response.)

MR. CHENELLY: 26-10 is adopted. 26-11. Support for the rescheduling in research of cannabis as an opioid alternate. Be it resolve that we call upon the White House and Congress to fulfill their responsibility to the nation's veterans by recognizing the inappropriateness of cannabis current scheduling and removing it from the Controlled Substance Act by removing the roadblocks to expanding improved cultivation and research and committing all necessary resources to understanding the therapeutic potential of cannabis and bringing those derive medications to veterans as quickly as possible. Committees?

MR. HUTCHINS: Keith Hutchins, J.A. North Carolina. I stand in opposition to this, at least the way it's written right now. There's another incident of conflating use of cannabis with CBDs the way I read it. Cannabis by itself has a record and more studies are coming out saying that it worsens mental health conditions overall. Even if a few people say it's relieving their symptoms. Overall, long-term, it tends to worsen whatever mental health issues they are trying to treat.

CBD, on the other hand, has increasing evidence of helping multiple different conditions, including mental health and pain control. I say in opposition to this.

3RD VICE CMDR. STUDEBAKER: Legislative Committee recommends approval.

MR. CHENELLY: Second, North Carolina. Thank you. All in favor of adopting 26-11, say aye.

(Chorus of "ayes.")

MR. CHENELLY: All opposed, same sign.

(Chorus of "ayes.")

MR. CHENELLY: Resolution 26-11 is adopted.

26-12 supporting women veterans. Be it resolved that we urge Congress to support and increase the availability of high quality, gender specific services at the VA, and be it further resolved that we urge VA to ensure that every VA facility has a zero tolerance policy towards sexual harassment for employees and patients.

MR. MATTESON: Suicide prevention recommends approval.

3RD VICE CMDR. STUDEBAKER: Legislative committee also recommends approval.

MR. CHENELLY: I can't hear who it is from Ohio. Got it. Okay. Lisa, our court reporter here has the, has it. Thank you. All in favor say aye.

(Chorus of "ayes.")

MR. CHENELLY: All opposed same sign.

(No response.)

MR. CHENELLY: 26-12 is adopted. 26-13 advancing is evidence driven mental health continuum of care for veterans. Be it resolved that AMVETS strongly encourages the VA to embrace an evidence-driven approach to mental health. One focus on measurable long-term quality of life outcomes such as purpose, connection, employment and growth. Not just short-term symptom reduction.

Be it further resolved the AMVETS urges Congress and the VA to establish and adopt a new continuum of wellness framework that prioritizes upstream non-pathologic, pathologizing, do not harm interventions, including peer-led training, resilience building, and reintegration support. While reserving clinical and pharmaceutical interventions for when they are necessary and evidence supported.

And be it resolved that AMVETS endorses a shift in national messaging surrounding veteran mental health to focus on post-traumatic growth, strength, and continued service, and continues to encourage public support for National Post-Traumatic Growth Day on June 13th, as a unifying reminder of veteran's capacity to thrive, not just survive after service.

3RD VICE CMDR. STUDEBAKER: Legislative Committee recommends approval.

MS. HENNING: Jean Henning, Illinois.

MR. CHENELLY: Henning of Illinois?

MS. HENNING: Jean Henning, Illinois.

MR. CHENELLY: Jean Henning, Illinois, seconds? All in support of resolution 26-13 say aye.

(Chorus of "ayes.")

MR. CHENELLY: All opposed.

(No response.)

MR. CHENELLY: 26-13 is adopted. 26-14, re-authorizing the Staff Sergeant Parker Gordon Fox Suicide Prevention Grant Program. Be it resolved that AMVETS urges swift congressional reauthorization of the Staff Sergeant Parker Gordon Fox Suicide Prevention Grant Program to ensure continuing continuity of service and long-term partnerships development.

That AMVETS reaffirms its commitment to a proactive community-driven approach to veteran suicide prevention when ruled in connection trust in the belief that growth is possible after trauma.

3RD VICE CMDR. STUDEBAKER: Legislative committee recommends approval.

MR. MATTESON: Suicide prevention recommends approval

MR. FERGUSON: Second ---

MR. CHENELLY: A second from Randy Ferguson, North Carolina here. Those in favor of 26-14 say aye.

(Chorus of "ayes.")

MR. CHENELLY: Those opposed same sign.

(No response.)

MR. CHENELLY: 26-14 is adopted. 26-15, prioritization of veteran-owned small businesses in federal contracting. Be it resolved the AMVETS supports the Federal Government's promise to award at least 3 percent of

all contracts to SDVOSBS, small business, veteran-owned businesses, and calls for the goal to be enforced across every agency.

And further be it resolved, the AMVETS urges the Department of Veterans Affairs and other federal agencies to give veterans owned small businesses a bigger role in their purchasing decisions and to be open and honest about how many contracts go to veteran owned businesses. And be it further resolved that AMVETS supports creating a new option called direct SDVOSB engagement authority. That would be -- that would let federal agencies award contracts under \$25 million directly to SDVOSBS, especially when those businesses offer unique skills without going through the usual bidding process.

3RD VICE CMDR. STUDEBAKER: The Legislative committee recommends approval with the following amendment. In the second to last resolve, the very last sentence to where veterans own businesses. We want to put and training and then it would say and it be further resolved. We want to add training into that.

MR. CHENELLY: Add training. Is there a second for the amendment?

(Voice not near microphone.)

MR. CHENELLY: Mr. Foley, Department of Alaska, seconds the -- voting now just on the amendment. Those in favor say aye.

(Chorus of "ayes.")

MR. CHENELLY: Those opposed?

(No response.)

MR. CHENELLY: Right. The resolution is amended. Now voting on the resolution. Those in favor as amended. Say aye.

(Chorus of "ayes.")

MR. CHENELLY: Those opposed same sign.

(No response.)

MR. CHENELLY: 26-15 is adopted as amended. 26-16. Preservation and expansion of the VA Technology Acquisition Center as the central hub for IT procurement. Be it resolved that AMVETS strongly supports keeping the VA Technology Acquisition Center as the main place responsible for all VA technology purchases.

And be it further resolved, the AMVETS urges the Secretary of Veterans Affairs and Congress to give the TAC full authority over all VA IT contracts, no matter which office or funding sources involved, to ensure proper oversight,

prevent waste, and follow federal laws.

Be it further resolved, that AMVETS supports expanding the TAC's work to include all digital services, cyber security, cloud systems, and IT infrastructure improvements. Building on its strong track record, and be it further resolved, the AMVETS opposes any move to weaken or split up the TAC's responsibilities, which could hurt the quality, speed, and reliability of the technology veterans depend on.

3RD VICE CMDR. STUDEBAKER: The Legislative committee recommends approval.

MR. CHENELLY: Those in favor of resolution 26-16, say aye.

(Chorus of "ayes.")

MR. CHENELLY: All opposed?

(No response.)

MR. CHENELLY: 26-16 is adopted. 26-17 continued use and expansion of the transformation 21 total technology next generation contract vehicle. Be it resolve the AMVETS strongly supports the continued use and growth of the T4 and G contract to help meet the rising demands for veteran focused technology and services and be it further resolved that AMVETS urges the VA to use T4 and G as much as possible for its IT needs to keep high quality cost-reliable cost reasonable and results consistent across the department.

Be it further resolved that AMVETS encourages the VA to keep expanding opportunities for veterans-owned and service disabled veteran owned-small businesses to the T4 and G contract. Be it further resolved that AMVETS supports strong oversight of all T4 and G projects to make sure contracts are used properly. Vendors perform well in everything stays focused on the VA's mission.

3RD VICE CMDR. STUDEBAKER: Legislative committee recommends approval.

MR. CHENELLY: Thank you. Innetta Bullock, seconds. Those in favor of resolution 26-17 say aye.

(Chorus of "ayes.")

MR. CHENELLY: Same sign to oppose.

(No response.)

MR. CHENELLY: 26-17 adopted. 26-18 strengthening military readiness and national security through improved health and resilience. Be it resolved the AMVETS affirms the foundational role of force readiness and physical resilience in maintaining a strong national defense.

Be it further resolved the AMVETS supports Department of Defense efforts to promote whole health and mission fitness, including evidence driven strategies to ensure that service members remain deployable, resilient and prepared. And be it further resolved that AMVETS encourages a full review of existing health guidelines, interventions and policies that affect force health in order to identify path ways that support early proactive treatment options.

And be it further resolved, that AMVETS calls for those for close collaboration between the Department of Defense and the Department of Veterans Affairs to ensure continuity of care and sustained health outcomes that service members transition to veteran status.

3RD VICE CMDR. STUDEBAKER: Legislative committee recommends approval.

MR. MARTEL: Armed Services and Military Liaison committee recommended approval.

MR. CHENELLY: Thank you. Second Randy Ferguson, North Carolina. All in favor of 26-18, say aye.

(Chorus of "ayes.")

MR. CHENELLY: Same sign if you oppose.

(No response.)

MR. CHENELLY: 26-18 is adopted. 26-19, establishing Pacific Branch National Veteran Park. Be it resolved that -- make sure I am starting in the right the place. Be it resolved, the AMVETS supports establishment of Pacific Branch National Veteran Park on the North campus the West Los Angeles VA Medical Center.

Be it further resolved, that AMVETS calls for federal legislation to transfer jurisdictions of the North Campus to the National Park Service. And be it further resolved, AMVETS affirms that this designation will preserve the site's historical integrity while honoring its intended purpose as a home and community for veterans and their families.

3RD VICE CMDR. STUDEBAKER: The legislative committee last night took no action on this resolution.

MR. CHENELLY: Any other comments?

(No response.)

MR. CHENELLY: Okay. Those in favor of 2619 say aye.

(Chorus of "ayes.")

MR. CHENELLY: Those opposed?

MR. : Point of order, there was no second. There was no second.

MS. DURBIN: Is there no discussion?

MR. CHENELLY: I am sorry, are you second?

MS. DURBIN: No -- is there no discussion?

MR. CHENELLY: Is there a second?

MS. BULLOCK: There was no motion for this one. We killed it on the floor in the Legislative meeting. There is nothing to vote upon.

MR. CHENELLY: In 26-19 fails. 26-20, U.S. flag protection, our last resolution. Be it resolved that AMVETS petitions Congress to allow United States citizens to consider approval for a flag protection amendment to the Constitution of the United States.

3RD VICE CMDR. STUDEBAKER: Legislative committee recommends approval.

MR. JOHN: A second from John.

MR. CHENELLY: Add a second from AJ John, Department of Florida.

MR. MARTEL: Armed Services and Military Liaison committee also recommends approval.

MR. CHENELLY: Thank you.

MR. : Americanism chair after a spirited debate, we also recommend for its approval.

MR. CHENELLY: Thank you. All in favor of 26-20, U.S. flag protection say aye.

(Chorus of "ayes.")

MR. CHENELLY: All opposed?

(No response.)

MR. CHENELLY: 26-20 is adopted.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Before we get into CBL, I need to make two quick announcements. First, if you haven't registered, there is no line at registration.

(Laughing)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Second one I think is a little more prevalent to a lot of people here. They are getting ready to paint lines in the parking lot in Section E. So if you know where the auxiliary registration is, it's that section of parking lot right there. If you don't want white paint on your car or whatever else they put on those things, you need to go move your car right now. So you don't want paint on your car. That stuff don't come off. So.

MR. CHENELLY: We will now move into the three proposed amendments. Our first is the annual membership dues, Amendment 26-01. I have the resolved up on the screen as well. Be it resolved the AMVETS National CBL Article 7, Section 5, to be replaced with the following. The minimum annual membership dues effective at the beginning of membership 25-26, shall be \$27 payable to the post of which some \$25 shall be forwarded to the national headquarters and \$2 to the department headquarters.

We have a second to begin discussion. We have PNC Bill Clark from the Department of North Carolina, seconded. Mr. Finance Officer.

MR. McFARLAIN: National Finance Committee moves to the following amendment from fiscal year '26 to '27.

MR. CHENELLY: So I have a motion on the floor there. Do we have a second to the amendment?

MS. : ---

MR. CHENELLY: Innetta Bullock, Department of Florida seconds the amendment. Any discussion on the amendment? The amendment is to move the effective date one year back. So for membership years '27-'27. '26-'27. One year back. All in favor of the amendment? Say aye.

(Chorus of "ayes.")

MR. CHENELLY: All opposed?

(Chorus of "nay.")

MR. CHENELLY: The amendment is adopted.

Mr. Remington?

MR. REMINGTON: Yes, sir.

MR. CHENELLY: I will go over it again. We can hear you. Okay, the next one we had was 26-02, which has been withdrawn by the writer. And 26-03 will be brought up -- pardon me?

MR. : 01 --

MR. CHENELLY: Pardon me? We are just looking how did the CBL Committee view Amendment 1. The membership dues.

MR. REMINGTON: Oh, we approved it.

MR. CHENELLY: Approved. Thank you. That was Barry Remington, Department of Iowa. Any further discussion? For Amendment 26-01 as amended, support say aye.

(Chorus of "ayes.")

MR. CHENELLY: Opposed say same sign.

(Chorus of "ayes.")

MR. CHENELLY: We will do a hand vote, Provost.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: All right, Provost Marshall, are you prepared? All right, all of those in favor of CBL Amendment 26-01. Please raise your hands. Stand up also. Let's stand up. That will give it easier for them to read. If you can't stand, raise your hand.

MS. : Commander, we just had a lot of people leave to go move their vehicles. Is it really right that we are doing this when we suggested they move their vehicles and they all got up and went?

(Applause)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: All right, on the recommendation of the lady from Ohio, we will pause this section for a few minutes. We will let the National Service Foundation make their report. That should give us enough time for people to get back into the room.

MS. : Thank you, Commander.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Mr. President Chapman.

**National Service Foundation
by PNC Harold Chapman and Agha Hussain**

PNC CHAPMAN: Good morning, everyone. Everyone. Yo. Good morning, everyone.

(Chorus of "Good morning.")

PNC CHAPMAN: Seems to me this is my third time that I made this report. So many of you have probably heard it. I do want to say first of all thanks for the patience for the last few years that we have had to really tighten our belts. But the good news is that the foundation has organized enough to save a lot of money.

And unfortunately, there were some situations that was tough for people to take. But it is better. We have got it done. And we are moving forward, very positive. And with that, I will let -- Agha. You want to grab the mic.

MR. HUSSAIN: Thank you, Mr. President. Like just been mentioned about the recovery that AMVETS NSF has went through. And we presented this V-shaped victory, the initial first phase of it, where we fixed cash flow problems, procedural problems, work flow problems. Some very strategic decisions were made and this is -- and the fruits that you know whatever

we have worked on for the last three -- three and a half years we can clearly see that the numbers are telling us that we took the right path and I am very pleased to say that this is my 30 years of presenting -- consecutively surplus budget for AMVETS.

This is our second consecutive year where we have posted operational surplus. And this is our second consecutive year where we have met our surplus budget targets. All these numbers points towards one thing that, this is not a one-off thing. This is now a trend. I can safely claim to an extent, though it's hard, but still we think -- and we have no reasons not to, that we are out of the dish that we were in three -- three and a half years back.

Our cash flows have improved a little. I am not saying that we are there but we are adding more cash to our reserves instead of getting into it. So we are adding more cash to it. This is very important cash is getting as we all know. Everything revolves around cash availability and NSF has learned over the years to live in it's means.

That is a big turn around in the shortest possible time. It would not have been possible without a leadership and of course the guidance of the board. They trusted us with this strategic plan that we presented three -- three and a half years back. And a few things really happened, which I really want to mention here.

We got -- we added a couple of new revenues, contribution streams for us to raise more funding for AMVETS. One of the very important ones that I will ask Joe also to talk more about it is our first Federal Government grant that we got a long-term grant that we got \$3 million. That has been a big change. AMVETS has never asked for, never put in a proposal. This is the first time they did for a government grant and we got it for the first time.

This shows the depth that AMVETS has and the government is, you know, can be an eye candy for the government because they are always looking for new partners. The normal proportion, you put in 10 proposals, you get one. We put in one, we got one. This is amazing. And I think this is really a new journey for raising more funding for the programs that AMVETS is funding.

And with that, Joe, would you like to add more to the HVRP grant that we got? Thank you.

MR. CHENELLY: Thank you, Agha. So in the 80 years of -- of AMVETS history, we have always steered clear of federal grants. And as have most of the other major veterans service organizations. And part of that is that we need to be, you know, we have a unique role in our

advocacy. We are advocates for the VA to ensure the VA gets the funding that it needs to be able to keep its promises to our veterans, but we are also a watchdog. We have to be able to, without any conflict of interest, be able to go before Congress or before the American public and the media or to the White House and say, "Hey, the VA is not spending its money correctly," or it's not keeping its promises. So there was a lot of thought put into, if we become a federal grant recipient, will that change us? Will that create some type of conflict with interest?

We have looked through a lot of case law, we have looked through actual common sense practices and things, we have found a way to really be able to insulate ourselves from any type of conflict of interest. But what these federal funds and state funds in some places, it is going to -- is now already in place helping us build, help more veterans that we have ever before, in places also that we have not helped veterans before. So, as Agha mentioned, we are recipients of two of the homeless veteran reintegration grants, Department of Labor is actually where the funding comes from.

Each is \$500,000 a year for over three years. And if we do a good job, we can be renewed on that. And so the two locations that we were initially approved in here will be, we are now have programs for the next three years in Phoenix, Arizona and Salt Lake City, Utah.

I know we have got some good representation from Arizona here today, which I am thankful for, you know, we don't have a department in Utah. These are two areas that we have not provided a lot of direct services. So this is a new opportunity for AMVETS, but more importantly, it's a new opportunity for these veterans in these areas.

These are areas that have been terribly underserved by the veteran service organizations in general, but also by the VA Department of Labor, the Federal Government. There are a lot of veterans in those two cities who need help, who really have not had access to it. We are very excited about it. It is bringing more staff on, more direct services. Not only in those areas, but those new staff members are able to provide services elsewhere as well.

You know, getting your foot into the federal grant system is difficult. And often, from others who have been in there now, they have told us it's taken them five, 10 years, sometimes to really be able to get a sizable grant. We were able to do it. We fired off five applications. We were able to get two of those approved in this first year. We are really ahead of the game and we know this is a sign of really bright things to come for the amount of services and the areas and service that we are going to be able to provide. Mr. President?

PNC CHAPMAN: Okay, so the -- I am very proud of what's happened with this organization the last few years.

We also moved into a new office in Maryland. We had said when we moved out of there with the headquarters that we would keep a presence in DC area and we did accomplish that. We had to get rid of the warehouse that the foundation owned and for the sale price we were able to acquire a beautiful office still in Maryland, not too far from the DC area.

They were able to maintain some staff there and also our Auxiliary and the Sons there. We have this office for the Sons. So part of the AMVETS family still remains there in DC. We did it within the budget that we had set for the sale of the old warehouse. That was getting very dangerous for the girls and well for the staff to come in and out of there. And there was a lot of bad activity going on in the parking lots.

So the board met and made that decision and that is complete and it is beautiful. You will see tomorrow there will be the slides on the new location. I believe that is all we have for now. Do you have any questions? I would be honored to answer them.

MR. ASHMAN: Joe Ashman, Department of New York Service Foundation President for New York, as you know Commander. Just curious as to when New York might see some reciprocation back from the stores we have in our state? Our term just ended the contract that we signed with you. That we were almost forced into signing. Was either that or nothing.

MR. : I can't ----

MR. ASHMAN: You recall years ago those stores came into New York.

PNC CHAPMAN: This --

MR. ASHMAN: Wait, excuse me. But the stores came --

PNC CHAPMAN: It is hard to hear you. I am --

MR. ASHMAN: You can't hear me?

PNC CHAPMAN: That is better.

MR. ASHMAN: Okay. We helped get those stores off the ground historically. And always it was a, you know, shared deal with national and New York abruptly ended. And I am just curious to when we can get back. We followed you down the road where you said 18 months. We are at that point. We are getting a little back. When are we going to be able to get back to where we share the amounts we had before

in the past? That is what a lot of people are asking. That is what a lot of people are curious about.

PNC CHAPMAN: This year we were looking at just under 4 percent increase in the revenue going back to the departments. We would like to get it all the way back, but we have to make sure our feet is solid on the ground.

MR. ASHMAN: You just mentioned, I could just mention these operating for the third year on a surplus budget.

PNC CHAPMAN: We are doing much better. This year we have to help headquarters, and if we don't get -- keep headquarters solid, then we don't exist.

MR. ASHMAN: What about keeping New York solid? Because we are on the cusp looking at four to five years. And our budget with what we have left.

PNC CHAPMAN: Agha, can you answer that? Joe can answer.

MR. CHENELLY: So Joe, there is more money going into the pool, right? One, I should say, it's not something we have talked about too much because really it's becoming around more recently, but one of the stores have become less profitable rapidly this year. We are taking measures, we have taken measures that are in place now to be able to get the stores to the level of profitability that they were in the past.

A lot of what is going in there is fixed costs continue to go up. The minimum wage is certainly making impact. But there is the pool of grant funding that's leaving the National Service Foundation destined for the states in which we have stores is going up this year. But there was one department that had a contract that was still in place. And that department came to service foundation with litigation and it had to be settled. That settlement needs to be paid. So a large chunk of that pool has to go to that one department. That will be resolved.

And you will have an increase again this year, but as you have already seen and you have been paid out for this past year. But it is not what we were hoping for or planning for, but we will be back and it will go up again next year. I would say not sure that we can forecast when we get back to the levels that we were at before, but that's certainly the goal.

But it's going to keep going up each and next three years for certain.

MR. ASHMAN: Well, I just offer that, like, no, of course we won't get back to those levels because it seems like money is being spent,

right? In time, like, we heard a year ago that the warehouse was what we are going to do. It was going to be a temporary spot and everybody was happy with that. And then all of a sudden this year, the warehouse, no, we got to move. We got to get a new office. So it seems like all the time we can't do this because of that. And then we are sitting back and we are still holding the bag with nothing in it.

MR. CHENELLY: So the warehouse was sold and proceeds from that sale is what completely what we were able to use to acquire a much more cost efficient, safer and just a much better office.

MR. ASHMAN: It's beautiful. I will give you that. But again, Joe.

MR. CHENELLY: Selling the warehouse -- so it's not that we created a new asset here, right? We traded one asset for another. And the new asset will be worth more down the line. And it's a better asset.

MR. ASHMAN: Yeah, I just, I want to give you, for instance, because you know, we know where it's coming from. You sold the warehouse and get it. But like, the appearance of it all to us is, it's off the back of New Yorkers.

MR. CHENELLY: Sure.

MR. ASHMAN: You know, and that's what we got. We want to just get back to where we were.

MR. CHENELLY: Understood.

MR. ASHMAN: I mean, we are the ones that got to tell the people in the neighborhood that, sorry, this stuff isn't staying in town. You know what I mean? The money is going elsewhere.

MR. : Right.

MR. CHENELLY: You mentioned the surplus budget it is. But if you remember -- remember everyone probably remembers this two years ago, we were standing at this microphone and we were within a couple of weeks of going out of business. And that's because the reserve that the organization that the National Service Foundation had had fallen down to almost zero at that point in the aftermath of the economy that became very, you know, turbulent.

So two years later, we are in a stable spot. As we promised then, we asked ever then for patients with us as we are going to have to go through some very difficult times. And it was and it still is and still stings for a lot of people. But now we are at a stable point, but we need to get back to a healthy point before we are able to really return to being as supportive as we were able to be before. And as supportive

as we want to be.

But so what I'm talking about is the healthy is we have to have a healthy reserve. Right. Now we are at a stable reserve. We are going to continue climbing -- once we get to that healthy reserve where we don't, we should never again give to a point where we are almost out of business.

We were literally almost out of business. That's what took such -- we had to take such stress steps.

Look, we are getting there, and we are ahead of schedule. You know, we asked for a five-year plan at that point. I would say we are probably three and a half-year plan. Now, we are there.

We are everything that we have talked about and everything that the board has worked through has been working these few years and I am asking for patients for another year, year and a half as we come through here. But you will see better numbers next year.

MR. ASHMAN: I appreciate it. Maybe some increased communication. I wouldn't have to bring it to the floor. So maybe we can sit down at some point and just kind of hammer some of these things out because what, you know, honestly, the last time you sent out the thing to the treasure of the Service Foundation, got all goofed up. I didn't know about it for three months.

Okay. So if we can increase communication, I don't think we have to have these type of discussions or be called out on the carpet about this stuff. But I would like to just really move forward and see where we can be at for New York. So that's what I'm asking.

MR. CHENELLY: So I'm a big fan of communication. If at any point of time your board wants to have a Zoom call with our national board, I would be happy to facilitate.

MR. ASHMAN: Not to make it all about New York too.

MR. CHENELLY: ---- he would be willing to do it.

MR. ASHMAN: So if I could ask, what is the number of the 4 percent will be on top of? Are you saying that possible increase of 4 percent. What's the baseline?

MR. CHENELLY: So that's the overall pool, right?

MR. ASHMAN: Okay, so the overall pool is going to receive a 4 percent increase?

MR. CHENELLY: Yes. The overall pool, but I am saying because of that litigation that we

had to settle with a department within the organization.

MR. ASHMAN: Gotcha.

MR. CHENELLY: That's going to take up quite a bit of the pool.

MR. ASHMAN: All right.

MR. CHENELLY: But we did structure it so that it wouldn't require cuts and that you would still be able to receive something of an increase. I mean, an increase for sure but not as much as we want it to be.

MR. ASHMAN: All right. Thank you.

PNC CHAPMAN: Okay. Any other questions? Like, I say I wonder, you know, we had a lot of expenses with especially healthcare. You know, those that you were, you know, at the meetings this week, Agha broke down and you know, with the -- it has cost. Pim(sic) had given her report of, you know, what it's been costing us for healthcare for the employees in the thrift stores and also at the headquarters and NSF.

So you know it's just bad news all around. We increased I believe the headquarters we -- we increased them to 200,000 additional funding so we are still getting -- we are still going to get there. It's just taking time. It is probably never going to get back to to be honest. I don't think it will ever be back to what it was because everything keeps rising anyway. So. Go ahead.

MR. BANKHEAD: Commander Bob Bankhead, Pennsylvania, has there been a second store established in in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania? What we are hearing that -- that -- that has happened, could you fill us in on that please?

PNC CHAPMAN: The second store is -- yes, it is very close. Joe will go into more detail about it.

MR. BANKHEAD: Thank you.

MR. CHENELLY: So the first store in Pennsylvania is the Erie, Pennsylvania. We hope within the next year, within this coming year that will be paid off. The investment. A new store that is set to open next month is a much smaller store, but we have high hopes for it still in New Castle, Pennsylvania about two hours away in suburban Pittsburgh.

PNC CHAPMAN: Go ahead.

MR. CULTER: Rob Culter, Maryland. I just have a question of why we still have the thrift stores? They don't get to our core mission of taking care of veterans. They continuously underperform the market compared to what

we can invest in the market. And we continue to double down on, we loaned them money two years ago. The service foundation so we still haven't gotten paid that back. Why are we continuing to double down on something that's not working?

(Applause)

MR. CHENELLY: Who did you loan money to? Who did you loan money to? Not the National Service Foundation.

MR. CULTER: Two years ago we bailed out the National Service Foundation.

MR. CHENELLY: How so?

MR. CULTER: We doubled down on the thrift stores. We purchased more thrift stores that were underperforming. So again, they don't get to the core mission of this organization. Why are we still doing this? That is my question.

MR. CHENELLY: We have increased the number of thrift stores because they were performing well at that time. We have only added two thrift stores, one that hasn't opened yet. But the Erie thrift store happens to be one of our highest performing thrift stores. But the thrift stores do actually directly relate to our core mission. Average thrift store contribution to those communities through goods to people who are -- to veterans and their families who are struggling is about \$300,000 of direct donations in the community -- too of these goods. It also provides places for people who don't have as much money to be able to buy more affordable items. It's also, it is good brand awareness for the organization in general.

In Maryland, we don't own those stores. Those stores are not necessarily store-nation stores. We own the donation part of that. So when those donations are given, they are given to AMVETS, and then funding the funds, the value of those donations comes back to fund National Service Foundation. But the stores in Maryland, which are for sale by the way right now, we are not purchasing those stores. But those stores are owned by a private company that was here actually earlier this week to make another donation to AMVETS organization. But look, I know maybe it's not the image we want or some want, but there is value in it to the community and to the organization.

And we do look, right, and so we have had some very serious conversations here recently as the profitability dipped, could we make more if that money was in the market, right? But the profitability often is up around 20 percent. Right? That's better than we're going to get out of the market. Right now it's dipped

down into 8, 9, 10 percent. We have taken steps and being transparent with the real numbers, we are taking to get that back up to 20 percent.

MR. CHENELLY: If it can't get back up to 20 percent, the store will close. We are going to make sure that that store is making more, you know, a better margin than if we were to invest in somewhere else. Does that make sense?

MR. CULTER: Yep, thank you.

MR. CHENELLY: Thank you.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Okay, we would like to move on. Anybody -- I think everybody is back possibly. Well, the first guys will take care of that. Anything else? And did you have any more? Did you want to do more?

MR. : Did you make a motion to accept your Service Foundation report?

MOTION

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Service Foundation President Chapman makes a motion to approve the Foundation budget. I mean to approve the Foundation report, second.

MR. : ---

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Corrson from Florida. Any questions? I think we have beat that dead horse as far as we can so far today. But are there any further questions for the Foundation Report?

(No response.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Hearing none, all in favor of accepting the National Service Foundation Report, State aye.

(Chorus of "ayes.")

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Oppose, say nay.

(No response.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Thank you, Mr. President. All right, in an abundance of caution with the people that are out of here, I don't know if everybody is coming back and as to Ms. Pierce's point, we will postpone the CBL votes to first thing in the business session tomorrow morning because I truly, we were kind of just in the mix of it and just going in automatic.

So we do not want to take the chance for anybody to miss their opportunity to vote for the CBLs because they are too important for this organization. So with that being stated we are running a little bit behind schedule, but do you all need a five-minute bathroom rest?

(Chorus of "Yes.")

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Okay, we need to be sure as precise as possible for that so that we can then get to our presentations.

MS. DAWES: National first vice?

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Yes, ma'am

MS. DAWES: Laura Dawes past Department Commander State of Illinois. I do rise point of inquiry. My state, we have been discussing -- we submitted what we believe two resolutions to be considered timely that did not appear in the book. So first of all my point of inquiry is making sure that if out of your state if you have resolutions that are raised at your state convention and they are approved by the body, is it correct to email that to member support at amvets.org as well as to the executive director?

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Let me refer that question to the executive director for -- that would be a yes.

MS. DAWES: Okay. So what the state of Illinois respectfully requests is that when we resubmit next year that they are resolutions, please be put in the book.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: You still have the opportunity to present those as for on the floor.

MS. DAWES: We have discussed that as a state and we believe that it would be better to ensure that they are in the book so that they can be reviewed by the Legislative committee as well as the entire body in a written form. However, the post that raised these resolutions that were passed on our floor, I need to be able to go back and discuss this with them.

So, which is why I need this acknowledged in the minutes.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: I appreciate your point of inquiry. And we apologize for the -- for lack of a term, snafu. But we will -- we will address them at the appropriate time next year when they are submitted. And please follow up with me and I will make sure that they are placed properly. We have -- as everybody here that has spoken to in any NEC knows, we have had a little bit of tech issue this year with a couple of things. The apologies are there and we appreciate the consideration.

MS. DAWES: Thank you very much.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Okay, bathroom break, five minutes, come back in, then we are going to hear from Cherokee, North Carolina, Atlantic City, New Jersey, and Louisville, Kentucky. Five minutes. 10:06.

(Whereupon, a break was taken.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: The order was randomly selected from the three competing cities. The first one will be the Harrah's in Cherokee, North Carolina. The second presenting will be the Tropicana in Atlantic City, New Jersey. And the third will be the Louisville Galt House.

So at this time, I am going to turn the podium here over to Joanna Hurt from the Cherokee Casino. Harrah's Casino, I know some of you all love that stuff. But, Joanna, please.

Presentation Harrah's Cherokee by Joanna Hurt

MS. HURT: Thank you, Paul. First, I want to say how privileged I am to be standing here in front of you.

In fact, I am kind of short, so I am gonna stand up here if that's okay. But I'm very privileged -- don't fall, I know. Right. I think some of you all will help me if I did, right?

But what an honor. What a privilege to be here presenting in front of all of you today. I am humbled at the service that you have provided this great nation. So thank you from the bottom of my heart. Got a little teary there. So he mentioned that I am Harrah's Cherokee in North Carolina. And we are a casino resort, but we are also part of the Caesar's entertainment family.

So we have some great products, but today I am going to tell you about the fabulous Harrah's Casino Resort. And when I do this, this is a participative event presentation. So there is going to be questions and hopefully some answers from you guys. And I might have a little prize or two. So without further adieu, let's talk about Harrah's, Cherokee Casino Resort.

We want you to meet with us. Harrah's is in the Smoky Mountains of North Carolina, with a breathtaking landscape. We have our resort nestled in nature. And you get to experience because we are part of the Eastern band of the Cherokee tribe. So you do have the Native American culture, where we're located. So where is Cherokee? I know I have got my North Carolina people down here.

So this is my first question. Where is Cherokee? Smoky Mountains. So if you can see the map, that little red dot, we are right there at the line of Tennessee and North Carolina. Of course, Western North Carolina, we just mentioned. And we are in the heart of Smoky Mountains. So with that, I am actually going to throw a shirt. So who wants to come up here and grab it? There we go.

I was a softball player. I should be able to throw better, right? I know. Oh, well, you have got to pull for me. So I am going to show you some additional things about Cherokee here. Our resort itself is pretty expansive. So what we call, we have two sides of it. The Cherokee side and we also have the resort side.

So here, I am just showing some visuals of the new Cherokee side. Where we added in 2021 a new convention center it also has 700 rooms rough roughly in that section you see in the bottom middle is our lobby bar. I am sure some people will be visiting that. But also it is just a beautiful -- this is just part of the resort.

So the other side I talked about is the resort side. These are just some fabulous features with the scenic views, outdoor spaces and our spa relaxation room as well as the lobby area which gives those kind of warm undertones. So now it's question time again. Get ready. How many rooms would you think are in our resort? 700 is on one side of the resort. Let's say that. And I am going to throw out a cap, but it is not as cool and it doesn't mean to replace your post hats that you have. Okay. 1,300, 1,200. Any other takers?

(Group talking)

Okay. 1800. Who said 1800? All right. So, we have 1,833 rooms and suites, so you get a cap. If you want me to throw it, I will, but I am just going to and I am going to try to do this kind of quick, but I do have a lot to give away. Alright, so between the 1,833 rooms, we have, get to see some visuals. Thank you very much.

We get to see some visuals. Now some of the rooms will be looking different, but they are all going to be fabulous because we are in different towers. And that's prompting you for my next question. So 111 ADA accessible rooms and we also have pet friendly rooms because we know that those furry critters will be with us. Oh, let's go back. I just gave the answer, but how many towers in our resort?

(Chorus of "four")

MS. HURT: Okay. Well, I have got multiple shirts, so I am just going to start throwing them. You got to sit closer, I guess, but that's what North Carolina gets. So Florida. All right. Hold on, hold on. Sorry. I know, I know, I know. You all better remember me when you all are voting for where you want to go next. I am just saying. There you go. Okay, so we have four towers.

So we have the Cherokee side, which I mentioned before and then we have the resort side. That's the Cherokee. That's the aerial view of just the Cherokee side. And you see that little blue spot in there, that's one of our pools. That's another question. And then this is the

other side, our resort side. You only see two of the towers, but there is a third tower as well?

MR. : How many elevators?

MS. HURT: What prize do I get from you by answering that? Every single one of them and escalators. So we have, gosh, I wouldn't even presume, every tower has at least eight elevators. So yeah, yeah. And escalators. It's a very efficient property -- it's a large property, but it's a very efficient property to get through.

Oh, I am jumping ahead. All right, so somebody gets a ----. So we have 132,000 square feet. I can't work this clicker, I am sorry. All right, I am going to come over here -- 132. Okay, so part of that, this is the new convention center. This is a visual of the new convention center pre-function space, as well as our most recently renovated Council Fire Ballroom. And we also have a 1600 person event center. How many restaurants in our resort? And I am not clicking.

(Group shouting out answers)

MS. HURT: Not giving you that answer. Seven. All right, who said 12? Okay, so we have 12 restaurants. Actually, that is not accurate. This was something that they gave me, but I know it's actually a few more. All right, so 12. Yeah. There you go. So we have anywhere from, I am going to give you some answers here, Emeril's, or not, I am sorry, Guy Fieri's, we also have Ruth's Chris Steakhouse and some visuals that's our Brio Italian Grill. So we have a lot to offer. The four towers, the 132,000 square feet of meeting space, 1800 guest rooms and suites, 12 restaurants and venues, and with all this, you get a luxury stay at a very affordable price.

What I think is an affordable price for what we can do. So that leads me to Convention Room Race for 2028. And this is for August that we are presenting for the open dates that we have for all of our space because you would get every single bit of our 132,000 square feet of meeting space.

\$179 and then there is a \$20 resort fee. But before I go with this, the \$20 resort fee includes self and valet parking, Wi-Fi in the guest rooms and in the meeting space and access to three pools in the fitness center. More questions ready for some prizes? How many pubs? Everything is open. Everything is open. That property does very well. Everything is open.

MR. : ---- casino ----

MS. HURT: Oh, good question. You have valet, too, by the way. But from a handicap, I will have to get back to you on that one. That

is a great question. I feel like I was prepared. I mean, I had some questions the other day that I have already answered that I had the other day. Thank you. I will make sure I get back to you. So I heard somebody say, Guy Fieri, yes because I said that. So who said that? I heard a lady over here.

MR. : Emeril Lagassi.

MS. HURT: Thank you so much. So, Guy Fieri's we have the kitchen and bar. That is on our Cherokee side, so that is the new side. We also have the Gordon Ramsay -- question?

MR. : Do you have a veterans discount? Do you have a veterans discount?

MS. HURT: The veterans discount? That is the veterans discount. I promise you, it will be worth your stay.

MR. : Do you have coffee?

MS. HURT: Do we have coffee? Yes.

MR. : Free?

MS. HURT: Well, coffee will be in the offices for free. Yes.

MR. CHENELLY: If you have questions come to the mic.

MS. HURT: We are going to get to that. I am going to tell you your transportation options. But great questions.

MR. : I have a question.

MS. HURT: Yes, sir.

MR. : Are you related to any veterans like your father, your mother, your sisters, your brothers?

MS. HURT: Yes. Well, not me, my husband's father, my father or my grandfather-in-law was killed in World War II. He was a pilot.

MR. : So that makes you part of our family, right?

MS. HURT: That makes me?

MR. : That makes you part of our family. Because we represent every single person in the world that's a veteran. The United States veteran. So thank you for being part of our family.

MS. HURT: Oh, thank you so much. I appreciate that. I will share a tender moment about my grandfather-in-law. I never got to meet nor did he get to meet his baby girl, which is my mother-in-law. He was on his 50th mission in World War II and he was shot down in

Italy and she was two months old. (Crying)
Never got to see her.

Okay, but thank you for that very, very kind
compliment, sir.

MR. TOMBS: All right, Dabet Tombs, De-
partment of Florida. What would be the food
and beverage minimum?

MS. HURT: A food and beverage minimum.
So we are offering \$75,000 food and beverage
minimum for all of the meeting space. But
what includes in that and what I will share
with you is that we can set up concession
stands and we can set them out throughout
the property where when you are on break and
you want to purchase something aside from
the 12 restaurants that we have, if you wanted
to purchase something from the concession
stand, that's from our banquet scene that
will count towards the food and beverage
minimum.

So we are willing to work with you. So thank
you so much for the questions. Yes ma'am?

MS. DILLION: Dana Dillon, National
Saddest. They are supposed to boo, we do
everything backwards, so it was okay. So don't
freak out. Two questions. One is ice included
in this for the hospitality rooms.

MS. HURT: Yes.

MS. DILLION: Unlimited ice.

MS. HURT: Yes.

MS. DILLION: And parking.

MS. HURT: Yes. Parking is free. It is includ-
ed, valet too. Use valet. I even use it. And
I probably shouldn't. All right, so Gordon
Ramsay Food Market, that we have multiple
options in the food market. And we will talk
about that, but mainly it's we have fish and
chips, we have burgers, we have pizza, we have
so many different counter service items that
you can go and pick up on your breaks.

And then we also have the Gordon Ramsay
Truffles Pub. So those are the celebrity chef
restaurants we have. What other restaurants
out of the 12 -- what other restaurants do
you think we would have on property if you
haven't been there?

MS. : Starbucks.

MS. HURT: Starbucks. Yes. We have a
winner.
I am really sorry. Thank you so much. And I
am glad you came back. You said you would. I
told her when she was leaving she has to come
back because she has some great presentations
ahead.

All right, we also, you won't know this, but we
also have the Shelly Garden Café. Fabulous
breakfast, lunch option for you. It is located on
our resort side and it has creek view seating.
Sorry?

MR. : Wicked Weed.

MS. HURT: Wicked Weed, yes. Wicked Weed
Brewery. Somebody is looking up on their
phone. All right, he wants to, you want a shirt
or hat? Shirt, all right. All right, you come
find me if you don't want to come up here
now. You can come find me.

MS. : I will give it to him.

MS. HURT: Oh, look at that. A woman always
doing the man's job. Okay, okay. I really do
want your business. All right, so we said and
I am not gonna click forward because Wicked
Weeds further in my list. Anything else you
can think of if you are not looking at your
phone?

We got a Caesar's Reward card. Oh, you are a
seven star. You got the big one. Yes, ma'am.

MS. : Okay, what about vegan and vege-
tarian restaurants?

MS. HURT: For vegetarians. So I am sorry.

MS. : And vegans.

MS. HURT: And vegans. Okay, so our
banquet team is fantastically seasoned on
handling that for any of the meals that we
prepare from our banquet team. But all of our
restaurants, there are options that are notated
on the menu that they can, that you can enjoy.

MS. : Not just salad, right?

MS. HURT: Not just a salad, you are correct.
Yes, sir?

MR. McCALLY: Yes, ma'am, Don McCally,
Ohio.
How far from an airport are you?

MS. HURT: Okay, we will get there. I want to
tell you right now that we will get to it and I
will tell you the options. You would fly in the
Ashville, which is very similar to flying here
into Greensboro. But Ashville does have 27
direct flights from all over the country. And
then we also have transportation services that
we can offer from an affordable standpoint to
get from the airport to the properties for an
hour drive through the mountains. So it is an
hour drive.

All right, so let's talk about the restaurants
some more. Anybody else want to get -- yes,
ma'am.

MS. TRACEY: Jessica Tracey, Tennessee is
construction finished?

MS. HURT: Construction is finished. Yes,
we finished in '21. Yes, also notable is we had
Hurricane Helene come through as every-
one knows last year. And our property was
untouched, fortunately for us, but what that
afforded us an opportunity to do, because we
lost a lot of meetings business, people couldn't
get there.

I mean, 40 is still, you know, was still rough
to get to us. So we were the hub for FEMA.
We were the hub for Home Depot. And they
came and stayed with us so they could dis-
patch throughout the Western parts of North
Carolina. So that was just kind of a food for
thought for what we did.

So next we also, who doesn't like carbs -- I
know I do, we have a noodle bar. Ruth Chris,
I mentioned it before. I didn't hear anybody
else. Yes, ma'am?

MS. DILLION: I just had a question, Dana
Dillon again, National Saddest. Would we be
blocking the rooms off on the side of the con-
vention center or would we be on the resort
side and how far is it from the resort side
to the convention center?

MS. HURT: Excellent questions. Excellent
questions. So you actually would be in all
four towers because we wouldn't -- it wouldn't
all be on the convention side because we also
have meetings based on the resort side as well.
And the event center is in the middle between
the two. So the walk between the resort side
to the convention side, five minutes, seven
minutes.
It's a very--

MS. DILLION: We are talking an average age,
probably 70s.

MS. HURT: Yes.

MS. DILLION: And a lot of people disabled.

MS. HURT: Yes.

MS. DILLION: So five minute walk for you,
like is it quarter mile, half mile?

MS. HURT: Yes.

MS. DILLION: Or is it all indoors?

MS. HURT: It is all indoors. Yes, ma'am.

MS. DILLION: Thank you.

MS. HURT: Yes ma'am, and we have scooter
rentals as well at the property. Was that going
to be a question? I am trying. Yes, sir? So his
question is --if I can paraphrase or would you

like to use a mic? And I just want to say thank you so much for asking all the questions. And I hope I have every answer for you but if I don't I promise Paul will know this before I get home. Okay.

MR. : We have a lot of handicapped old-timers. Can your facility take care of all of them? Have enough to take care of all of our handicapped?

MS. HURT: In terms of --

MR. : Restaurants, this, that and everything. The whole --

MS. HURT: Absolutely. We are equipped to handle groups. And I wish I would have come with a list of groups that we have had to stay with us that have disabilities. But yes, we have worked with groups in the past and we have all the capabilities to handle that.

MR. : Thank you.

MS. HURT: Thank you. Yes sir?

MR. : I just have one quick question and maybe it's not as proper as it should be but do you have does the property --

MS. HURT: He has a mic it's just not as loud as me because I am talking right on the mic. There we go.

MR. : Yeah, that's on, yeah. I would just like to know does the property have information on how we can get some Tennessee moonshine?

MS. HURT: Oh, okay. Funny you say that. We actually can do like a moonshine bar and we can do different flavors of moonshine for you. So we can set that up. We have actually had clients come in and we have done a fam tour with them and we have set up a taste testing of moonshine. So yes, we can. We are that in the backwoods.

I need to speed this up. So we are part of Caesar's entertainment. I am so sorry. All right Yes, ma'am.

(Question indiscernible)

MS. HURT: We do have a tower that has smoking floors. So there is multiple rooms. I don't have the exact number of smoking rooms that we have. In our gaming floor, we do have a separate section for smoking as well inside. It's separated there. Okay. For those that are non-smoking, but we do allow it because we are on native properties, so we can make any decision we want.

MR. : What about celebrities, concerts, during our time frame?

MS. HURT: Yes. So if you're using the event center, we wouldn't have entertainment at night. But they would be generally August is a very busy month for our property. So generally they are bringing in entertainment acts to come in to work there. Now, again, if we use the space for you, then it wouldn't be open. But we do have a comedy club. Comedy club?

All right, so I have more questions and a few more gifts to give out. All right, entertainment options. I have already said a couple that we have on site. Comedy club is one. Yes. I will get you. Karaoke. We have bars for it. Absolutely. Yeah. All right, ma'am.

MS. : Why is there going to be an increase of \$100 in two years? Right now currently we could rent a space or you know a room for \$100 a night.

MS. HURT: Right. Right. Right.

MS. : And in two years it's going to be 200.

MS. HURT: I understand. I understand it. In order to get the accessibility to some of the things that we have to offer, that is the best rates we can offer, but I do understand. There are great options inside the city of Cherokee as well for a more affordable rate. We also have Airbnbs that are around, but I mean, just different things, but I definitely recommend staying on property.

So we talked about, mentioned earlier, we have the three pools that casino, World Class Spa, Bolling, Event Center, shopping, Comedy Zone was mentioned in an arcade for those families.

So these are just some of the pictures of our property. Yep. She asked if we have a lot of tables, yes. In the comedy zone. All right, what do we have available close by? And I will just speed this through. So I will go through and then I will throw out the rest of the gifts I have here in a minute.

We have golf nearby at Sequoia National Golf Course, which we have an affiliation with. We have hiking, fly fishing in the creek on our property. Great Smoky Mountain Park, so if you want to go take a scenic drive through the park, and the great Smoky Mountain Railroad experiences. I mentioned this on Wednesday's presentation that the railroad experience, and I will show you a picture as we go through here. That's our creek. That is our creek that divides the property. That is a view from the Smoky Mountains, and then the great Smoky Mountain Railroad.

Most people may know this, they do the Polar Express in the winter, that goes to Bryson City, but they also do barbecue and brew

train rides. They do wine train rides, and it happens all throughout the year, so that is an option close by. So getting to Cherokee, we were talking about this. So we are major cities or within a five-hour drive to us from North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Georgia, Alabama, Kentucky, Ohio from certain parts and we have 27 direct flights that go into Asheville Regional Airport daily.

Major airlines are Delta, United, American Airlines. We have a Allegiant, Jet Blue and Sun Country. And we can offer for AMVETS affordable third party shuttle transfer to and from the airport. Other perks. We are going to give you a spa discount if you want to go and get -- and we have a salon in the spa as well.

Cesar's rewards you need to sign up for Cesar's rewards so you get those perks and then we are going to give you \$30 in free slot play just for coming to us. Okay.

So that concludes my presentation what I want to do is one last -- last token is that if you will look under your seats, I have something taped under your -- somebody's seat. It's a complimentary two-night stay with us to come and check Cherokee Harrah's out. We also are giving you \$150 credit for food and beverage. Any takers? Feel for some tape? You might have to turn the chairs upside down. I know.

All right. So, you just need to -- my business card's in there just reach out to me and I will give you a way to redeem. Okay, again, I am sorry I took so long, but I really appreciate the time that you have given me today. And all the questions that you have presented to me. My name is Joanna Hurt and I represent Caesar's Entertainment, the Harrah's Cherokee, and I so hope that we can spoil you in Cherokee. Thank you again.

(Applause)

MR. CHENELLY: Mr. Provost Marshall, can you get the representative from Atlantic City? Thank you for your presentation, Ms. Hurt.

All right, this is presentation for the Tropicana, Atlantic City. Jeanna, I will let you introduce yourself. This is a removable, if you want to walk around. We do ask that you be as concise and as effective as possible.

MS. HARRIGAN: All right.

Presentation Tropicana Atlantic City by Jeanna Harrigan

MS. HARRIGAN: What's the, what's the role on left slipping from curse words out? All right, do you take Venmo? All right, perfect. Well, good. Right? Money's money. I heard cash is king. That's what my dad always used to tell me. So good morning everybody, my

name is Jeanna Harrigan. I am the Director of Sales for our three Atlantic City Properties.

Thrilled to have the opportunity to present in front of each of you and hopefully you will choose Atlantic City for your destination. Before I get started, of course, I couldn't start without thanking each of you for your service. My husband's grandfather served as an Army medic in World War II, and I know the impact that that can have on the person, the family, and the legacy that it leaves for generations. So thank you very much.

As I start my presentation, I wanted to talk to you a little bit about how Caesars Entertainment values our veterans. First, by our veteran employees. So we have three separate programs supporting your transition back into civilian life. We work together with different military partnerships and we also have something called Salute, which is a affinity group that allows veterans and their allies to come together and create a community of people that understand what they go through on a day-to-day basis and working together at Caesar's Entertainment.

(Slide)

We don't stop there with our employees, but we also want to take care of our guests that come in that are active and veteran military. And we have what's called our Caesar's Award Salute card. So this is special for our military folks and gives you discounts to shows and shops and things of that sort.

(Slide)

Next, I am going to play a video. I think Cameron might be able to help me with that, right?

(Pause)

MS. HARRIGAN: I had a really fun video and had lots of energy, but I will let you guys give me some of that energy back when the questions come.

(Slide)

So talking about Atlantic City and our hope to host you guys in 2028 or 2029, we have got dates in July, which anybody from our New Jersey, Pennsylvania and New York contingent can attest that some of the best time of the year to be by the ocean. And for those, how many people have never been to Atlantic City? Okay, fair amount. For those that don't know where it is, it is in New Jersey. It sits right on the ocean. And it is Little Las Vegas as we like to call it. Really great personality. Lots of New Jersey, so when I heard a few swear words come out today, I felt like I was at home.

Cesar's Entertainment specifically has three

properties here. We have reinvested \$425 million into those properties over the past couple of years. And what we are most proud of right now is a destination is we just won Top 25 Convention City in 2024. For those that raised your hand that you have never been to Atlantic City, your first question maybe well how am I going to get to Atlantic City? So we pride ourselves on the fact that we are within one third distance of the entire United States with an driving distance.

So you can get in your own comfortable vehicle and make it there within six hours or less.

From an airport standpoint, Philadelphia is our main hub, along with Atlantic City does have a small airport, very similar to the Greensboro Airport here. And then if you North Jersey, you know, you have got Newark and JFK, et cetera.

(Slide)

We also are really excited over the past couple of years. American Airlines has partnered with Atlantic City Airport and what they have created is a system that would allow you to book a flight, let's say, if you're coming from Dallas to Atlantic City. You would book Dallas to Atlantic City on the American Airlines website. So it looks seamless. The plane actually lands in Philadelphia, but we guide you on to a luxury motor coach. They put your luggage on there, and then you commute from Philadelphia to the Atlantic City airport.

So making that flight from or making that travel time from Philadelphia Airport that much easier, built right in, and it's a luxury motor coach, so it's pretty nice.

(Slide)

Speaking about your program specifically at Tropicana, I wanted to give you guys a quick look at the rates that we have been able to offer for you, as well as a discounted resort fee.

(Slide)

And now to talk about the property that will host your future program. So Tropicana is one of my favorites because of all the restaurant outlets that it has. I had the opportunity to come into the hotel last night. So I got to see how you all interact with each other. I saw a lot of people outside, and it was really cool to see because I could see how we would be such a great fit for your program.

So as you can tell from the image, the property sits right on the boardwalk. So you walk right out of the hotel and you are within feet of the ocean and the beach, as well as all the restaurants, the rides, all the different things that the boardwalk has to offer. Here is what's called

our Quarter.

This is where some of our restaurants are just to give you an idea of some of the things we have to offer. You have anything from burgers to a steakhouse to Italian. And the Boogie Night's is one of my favorite places. This is great opportunity -- a great location for receptions. If you are a big fan of Saturday Night Fever, you will fit right in at home here. I am like, come on, guys, my video wasn't excited. I didn't get my--

(Slide)

So the building has 2,400 guest rooms in total over five towers. We have centrally located you guys towards the meeting space area, so that accessibility is nice and seamless for you. With 2400 guest rooms, we have a variety of your roll-in showers, your handicap accessible, anything that you might need. I have a great spreadsheet in that backpack that outlines all that. If you have questions about it.

Scooters are really friendly within the building because we are a casino hotel, and we like to make sure that we are accommodating to everybody that wants to, as a for-profit company, give us their money.

(Slide)

Here is the Grand Exhibition Center. This is one of the meeting spaces that we would host your event in. Our grand ballroom, these are all within a couple of -- not too far from each other. And then our theater, which is pretty exciting. This is another opportunity for a location for some of your events.

So that was a quick fly-through of Tropicana, but as I heard you, I didn't hear but I noticed there was a lot of questions. So I wanted to open the mic to everybody and see what I could answer for you about Atlantic City and Tropicana.

MS. : ----

MS. HARRIGAN: Of course. The most important thing. For those of you who can't read it, to be perfectly honest I almost can't read it from here now. But if -- so the most important number you are going to want to know is the \$187.70 and that is your inclusive rate. So that is your room rate, taxes, resort fee, all bundled into one number.

In addition, you heard the word resort fee which is normally a pain point for people. That includes your internet access, your fitness center access, local calls, which I kind of cringe when I have to say. But those are the things that include that, which is why we have also discounted for your group already. It is normally \$32 inclusive.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Over here.

MR. HENSLEY: Ralph Hensley with the Department of Virginia and National District 2. A quick question on that resort fee, if it was a tie breaker, could you cancel the, or delete the resort fee and go gratias on that?

MS. HARRIGAN: We have already negotiated the resort fee, but we are always open to having the dialogue with the finance team if necessary.

MR. HENSLEY: All right. Because \$159 looks like a good room rate. Oh, is it?

MS. HARRIGAN: So your total number that you want to focus on is that 187.70. That is truly at the end of the day with the cost would be.

MR. HENSLEY: Yeah, we don't see that anywhere.

MS. HARRIGAN: Oh, I think they zoomed it in, so let's zoom it out. 187.70, that bottom bold line.

MR. HENSLEY: All right, I would be happy with the gratias on the resort fee. But that is just me.

MS. HARRIGAN: I apologize, I couldn't hear what you said.

MR. HENSLEY: I said I would be happier with the waiving of the resort fee, but that's just me.

MS. HARRIGAN: Understood.

MS. : Massachusetts, handicapped parking. As you see, there is a whole lot of us have -- some of us have scooters and all that. Handicapped parking.

MS. HARRIGAN: Yes. So, I unfortunately don't have the exact number of handicapped spots that we have. I can definitely provide that to Paul once I reach out to the property. But I can tell you that we have 5,000 parking spots -- I am sorry -- what are you pointing at?

MS. : No, next.

MS. HARRIGAN: Sorry. We have 5,000 parking spots throughout the building. So there is a plethora of it. I don't have the exact number of handicap, but I can provide that for you. Thank you. Thank you for directing.

MR. MERKENSON: George Merkenson, Indiana. Do you have transportation from various airports you were talking about to and from the hotel?

MS. HARRIGAN: We don't have that built in.

That is something that we have various vendors that we could work with in the planning process. But we do recommend especially with American being such a large hub that kind of solves for that transportation component if you are flying into Philadelphia.

MR. MERKENSON: One more question. Do you have like, since you are in approximately in New York City, do you have like complimentary trips to New York?

MS. HARRIGAN: We don't, I think the gaming side of things, they do do some bus trips up.

MS. DILLION: Dana Dillon, Connecticut, a couple of questions. How much is parking?

MS. HARRIGAN: The parking, I believe is complimentary in your concession package. \$15, one time fee.

MS. DILLION: 15 or 50?

MS. HARRIGAN: Yeah.

MS. DILLION: Which one? 15 or 50?

MS. HARRIGAN: 15 one time fee.

MS. DILLION: 1-5.

MS. HARRIGAN: If that is what it takes to win the business, I can make sure that you guys have complimentary parking.

MS. DILLION: That would be good. Also, is ice included for our hospitality rooms?

MS. HARRIGAN: I am so sorry, I couldn't hear you.

MS. DILLION: Is ice included in the hospital-ity rooms and is there a corkage fee?

MS. HARRIGAN: There is a corkage fee, that is something that we get more detail into with the finance and hall in order to answer that question. So I would need little bit more details on this. Oh, if you are in the guest rooms, we don't charge anything if you are bringing.

MS. DILLION: Okay, and what about ice?

MS. HARRIGAN: What you do in your guest room, I don't know about and that's okay.

MS. DILLION: What about ice? Is ice included?

MS. HARRIGAN: There is ice and ice machines on the floors.

MS. DILLION: I meant like the big buckets for the hospitality rooms.

MS. HARRIGAN: I have to look into it only because I want to be careful of the corkage fees. So if you guys are doing it in your guest room, then I know we don't -- if banquet is not involved, then --

MR. : ----

MS. DILLION: All right, thank you.

MS. HARRIGAN: Okay. Thank you.

MS. LUMPKINS: Tina Lumpkins for the state of Texas. You were talking about flying from American from DFW to Philadelphia and then getting on a bus. How long is the trip on the bus?

MS. HARRIGAN: How long does it take to get on to the bus or how long is the drive from the airport to --

MS. LUMPKINS: The drive?

MS. HARRIGAN: It is about 55 minutes. I joke the road is called the American or the Atlantic City Expressway and Expressway was a strong word in that sentence. That is included in when you book that way. Correct.

MS. DURBIN: Sandra Durbin, PDC, California. We just looked up the flights. If you get them a year in advance, it's going to be between \$1,100 and \$1,300 to fly from California to Atlantic City. That is to me beyond the pale.

MR. : If you want to drive in, get off Interstate 75. How much are all the tolls and they are not free I can take from experience?

MS. HARRIGAN: I apologize. I couldn't hear you.

MR. : How much are the toll roads off of Interstate 75 to get to your hotel?

MS. HARRIGAN: The toll road is --

MR. : Or 95, excuse me, Interstate 95?

MS. HARRIGAN: 95 is not a toll road.

MR. : To get to your place there is tons of tolls.

MS. HARRIGAN: From where? There's tolls in the Atlantic City Expressway, it's about \$10 I think. But 95 is not a toll road. Okay. Okay, thank you.

MR. : Any further comments from the representative from the Ceasar's Atlantic City?

MS. HARRIGAN: Great.

MS. DAWES: Laura Dawes, past department commander, state of Illinois. Is there a food

and beverage minimum?

MS. HARRIGAN: There is a food and beverage minimum.

MS. DAWES: Excuse me. So my next question obviously would be, What is the food and beverage minimum?

MS. HARRIGAN: \$50,000.

MS. DAWES: 5-0?

MS. HARRIGAN: Yes.

MS. DAWES: Thank you.

MS. HARRIGAN: Yeah.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Thank you so much.

MS. HARRIGAN: Thank you. Have a nice day. I will follow up with you on the corkage and ice.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Okay. Corkage and the ice delivery to the rooms.

MS. HARRIGAN: All right. Thank you.

(Applause)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Our next presentation will be by the Galt House in Louisville. They will be attending virtually here. I do want to explain that usually we really prefer people to be here in person. A month ago we had zero bids for the 2028 convention. So this was very last minute presentations that both the Cherokee and the Harrah's were able to get somebody here is excellent and it's wonderful.

Please give the consideration to our third city, the same as you would give to them because it is not their fault. They didn't know they were going to be doing anything this summer, though they worked really hard to give us a presentation. So executive director Chenelly, could you please bring us into the Zoom meeting for Samantha from the Galt House.

Could one of the provost marshals please get the flash drive for the Cherokee presenter to take back out there.

**Virtual Presentation The Galt House
by Samantha Lallogia**

(Whereupon, Video Presentation indiscernible, setting up presentation.)

Go ahead, Samantha.

(Whereupon, video presentation is indiscernible to transcription.)

MS. LALLOGIA: All right. Everyone, thank you so much for allowing me to ----. Today, we are going to give a quick overview of ---- location for your convention. I will ---- take too much of your time. But before I begin, if you would ---- and it started after that.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Okay, Samantha, can you hear me?

MS. LALLOGIA: Yes.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: All right, we will have some questions.

MS. LALLOGIA: Sure.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Samantha, can you please give your room rate again?

MS. LALLOGIA: ----

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: What is your tax rates or like an ----

MS. LALLOGIA: 17.66 for taxes.

(Whereupon, audio is indiscernible due to echoing and distortion.)

MS. DILLION: Dana Dillion, Connecticut. What is the parking fee?

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: What is the parking fee?

MS. LALLOGIA: Currently \$30(sic) ----.

MS. DILLION: And is ice included?

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Ice and ----

MS. LALLOGIA: We will ---- one complimentary ice ---- beginning of the day and if you need more, we will ----.

MR. : One of the things that I wanted to do ---- because we have services ---- (audience member speaking off mic)

MS. DAWES: Laura Dawes, past Department Commander, state of Illinois, is there a food and beverage minimum? And if so, how much is it?

MS. LALLOGIA: \$50,000 for 2028 and \$55,000 for 2031(sic).

MR. : So that is \$50,000 for 2028 and \$5,000 more for 2031.

MS. LALLOGIA: ----.

MS. BECK: Shelly Beck, Tennessee. I know they are downtown. Do they have parking for trailers?

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Parking for trailers.

MS. LALLOGIA: You have on site parking and there is like ----.

MS. BECK: What is the cost for the trailers?

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Is there an additional cost for the trailers?

MS. LALLOGIA: ----.

MS. DILLION: Elevators. That seems to be an issue every time we have been there.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Okay, the last time we were there, the elevators were a little slow or not working. ----.

MR. : Great question. And ---- of the elevators. They made them 40 percent faster. There are six elevators. ---- and we have several ----. In addition to them being 40 percent faster and ----.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: I would like to thank you both for coming on today and ----.

MR. : ---- very important to us and just to ---- similar groups. And ---- also, we really appreciate you all's service ----. Hospitality suites is one of our favorites. ---- open dialogue of what it is going to take to earn your business and ---- to serve you at ----.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Thank you both so much for coming to talk to with us today. And ----.

MS. LALLOGIA: Thank you. Thank you for your service.

(Whereupon, video presentation concluded.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Is the Zoom clear? Okay. So we have had three presentations. We will entertain motions on those tomorrow morning during the business session to give you all chance to decipher what you have learned. All right. Back to the fun business of AMVETS. NHQ financial report finance officer McFarlain. Are we doing okay? So we are going to move that into tomorrow Executive Director Chenelly, we have a 1300 meeting. We have about 45 minutes before chow. Can we do the awards?

MR. CHENELLY: Yes.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: All right. So we will first do our membership awards. Or do you want to do program awards first. I see Collandra with the hand up. Did Director ---- have to go to the potty? Everybody else go to the potty, five minutes. Five minutes.

(Whereupon, a brief recess was taken.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: The National Commander, Don McLean, has a special thing happening today.

(Whereupon, Happy birthday was sung.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Alright, now everybody please find your seats so we can get back into business here. Please take your seats. We will come to order very briefly here. AMVETS please take your seats. All right. National Finance Officer McFarlain, please give the financials report for the national headquarters.

NHQ Financial Report by Kelly McFarlain

MR. McFARLAIN: All right, so one of the things we did this year instead of printing the whole financial book like we did in the past because that's what I was saying. We categorized that as waste because half the people don't read it. So what we do now is they have this one page document.

So those of you that do like want to dig into the numbers and all that kind of stuff what we did is on this document you will see on the front -- you will see it's two-sided. Make sure you look at, there is one, we put the service foundation on one side and the head -- NHQ on the other side. So you can scan the QR code and it will take you to the full budget. And there is also a short link if you don't want to scan the QR code you can type it in.

So it actually will take you, so everybody, the marshals are passing out the cover sheet, give you a brief overview of where we are and where we are going. So far, our actuals here to date, just membership revenues, is 459,990. The total revenues, grants, everything else, restricted funds, affinity code, all that stuff is 1,340.

MR. : Wait. We don't have it yet. Hang on.

(Pause)

MR. McFARLAIN: Well, they don't have it yet. When PDC Woody gives me a thumbs up, we will continue. There we go. All right. And again, there is two sides. There's NHQ and foundation. I am in NHQ. I love New York. Inside joke. All right. So now looking at the far left column on the financials for NHQ, you will see the actuals year to date as of June of this year. There we go. Oh, sorry about that. Sorry, Florida.

MS. DILLION: Is it possible to put it on the big screen?

MR. McFARLAIN: Say it again?

MS. DILLION: Is it possible to put it on the overhead screens because even the sheets you pulled out are very fuzzy and hard to read?

MR. McFARLAIN: Scan a QR code you pull up right on your phones.

MS. DILLION: I understand that but not --

MR. McFARLAIN: They don't have it back there.

MS. DILLION: I understand that. I was just wondering if we could pull it in there.

MR. McFARLAIN: They don't have it back there.

MS. DILLION: Okay.

MR. McFARLAIN: All right. Everybody have? All right, far left corner. Actuals date of June 2025. All right. Revenues, 459,990, all membership. Others -- other revenues, 880,131, total revenues, 1,340. Expenditures, two million seven thousand five hundred and forty-one dollars. All right. So that puts us at a deficit of 667,420. All right.

So we had some -- when you go into line items deeper down into the thing you will see we had some things like, we had some cyber attacks and we had some things like that that definitely increase our expenditures we didn't project. There is -- and then there is also -- we didn't pull -- we haven't received -- this will be a funny story. So we haven't received all of our NSF grant to NHQ that is supposed to help cover that.

So there is things we do project, we will cover that deficit. And it does have us in a balanced budget which was approved last year. So if you have any questions, comments -- so like I said, if you look on the follow-up column, not '23-'24, '24-'25, you will see the budget and you will see we are right in line of where we projected and where we are. Where we -- after convention, which is our probably our largest expense.

MOTION

MR. McFARLAIN: Commander, that is my report.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Do you want it accepted or you just want them to throw tomatoes at you?

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: National 3rd Vice Studebaker moves to accept the financial report. Second Bobby Lumpkins from Texas. Questions on the Financial Report. All right, I see somebody coming up. I see two peoples

up.

MS. DILLION: I am not a financial analyst or anything else, but I do have a question. It's saying the actual year to date, if I am reading this correctly, the others was 880,131, but it's projected for next year to be 2,311,200. Am I reading that right?

MR. McFARLAIN: So the budget for '25-'26 will be presented when we give the Finance Committee a report. That's when we will come and bring you the budget, projected budget for next year. This is at -- so one -- one -- look at year to date and that is where we are going to look at '24-'25 and that's the budget. Two million, the two numbers and the -- the bow legs that deficit, the one right above it. Add that up and that is two million, eight hundred and eighty dollars -- which is exactly what we are budgeted for for this year.

MS. DILLION: Thank you.

MR. McFARLAIN: Does it make sense?

MS. DILLION: Yep.

MR. McFARLAIN: Okay. But don't look at that other column, because we are going to talk about that one on the finance committee when I asked for your -- or read ahead and get your questions and bring them to me tomorrow. Go ahead, brother.

MR. MILLER: Sir, Sean Miller from Second Vice, Illinois. And I was calling out or looking at the AMVETS NSF, page two, the performance bonuses. And I was wondering if you can provide any additional information on that.

MR. McFARLAIN: Wrong, dude.

MR. MILLER: Is that were we not on the --

MR. McFARLAIN: No, there is NHQ and there is service foundation, two totally separate entities.

MR. MILLER: Okay, I just want to make sure I --
I didn't know which one we were on.

MR. McFARLAIN: Yeah, there is a finance officer for that place. Yeah, that is all -- I won't even acknowledge or discuss it, that is all them. So it's okay -- sorry about that.

MR. MILLER: No problem.

MR. SMITH: Jimmy Smith from Tennessee.

MR. McFARLAIN: Yes, sir.

MR. SMITH: Chairman is in our Constitution bylaws, I believe you do the regular

membership on what last year's membership was is how you do your budget. This year you budgeted a -- old man can't read, '24-'25 to \$100,000. For the coming year you have put in the budget \$452,000 budget. Now I know that you got a resolution in to change the membership, so is that where you are getting that number? For \$452,000 is because you are going to have the increased in membership views?

MR. McFARLAIN: So when we had the three year variance -- so we had -- I will let you -- go ahead.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Okay, with the first answer is it is not budgeting an increase, we are budgeting based off of the current rate. But the reason that last year was at the 240,000 is honestly because of the way Springley had messed up our income so much. We were basing last year's budgeted number on what we brought in on Springley as we are required to. Next year's reflects actuals from this year's membership, which is closer to that \$400,000. So that is why you will see that increase. It does not reflect an increase in dues rate now. Obviously, if there was an increase in dues rate, that number would be higher than our projected. But we are projecting based on the \$15 national dues rate right now on real numbers from this past due membership year.

MR. LUMPKINS: So you are making the assumption you are going to have the same membership people or even increase it, but you are also assuming the \$15 increase is going to pass.

MR. McFARLAIN: We are not projecting the increase and -- we are not projecting the increase in annual membership that is not included in the next year's budget. It is not.

MR. : Springley messed up the numbers that bad.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: We are not basing the numbers on the increase. We are only basing the numbers on what it is right now, \$15. If it was increased, it would be \$25. We are only basing this projection on where we are right on based on last year's numbers. That is it. There is no increase budgeted into this budget problem.

MR. LUMPKINS: So it looks to me like to me like you are expecting an increase in membership of around 60,000.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: 160,000 based off of two years ago numbers and then Springley gave us the most screwed up a system we have ever dealt with. Yeah. Because that is based off of real right now? We are what, \$440,000 this year in annual membership income? We have not --

MR. LUMPKINS: But I am not sure that that's what the Constitution bylaws says. I question that.

MR. MARTEL: Commander, so I see under others, right, there is a drop of 90 percent in contributions and grants. It drops from 500,000 to 50,000.

MR. McFARLAIN: Where are you at?

MR. MARTEL: I am on the AMVETS budget proposal for '25-'26.

MR. McFARLAIN: Okay, the budget for '25-'26 will be discussed tomorrow when we give the finance committee report and requests approval for the budget for '25 and '26.

MR. MARTEL: Okay. So we are not doing that now?

(Chorus of "No")

MR. MARTEL: Okay.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Any further questions on the 2024-2025 financials? Tim, Massachusetts?

TIM: Thank you. Since Springley screwed up so greatly, do we have any process of suing that ----? Because I have been sued over \$500. How much they screwed up for us? How much money did they put us and aggravation, do they put us?

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Honestly, that's not truly quantifiable because it was so screwed up. We are done with Springley and I say we move the hell on -- swear jar.

TIM: I thought we could use the money.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Honestly, we would spend more litigation than we would be able to get. So, all those in favor of accepting the financials report, state aye.

(Chorus of "ayes.")

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Opposed, nay.

(No response.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Thank you. Now we will move on to awards, membership director Cox.

Awards

MR. COX: Good morning everyone. I say good morning everyone.

(Chorus of "Good morning.")

MR. COX: Sound like Coast Guards for a minute. Are there any coasties in the house? Where is Don at? Any Navy in the house?

(Cheers)

Air Force?

(Cheers)

Any Marines?

(Cheers)

Now where are my people at, where is the Army?

(Cheers)

That's what I am talking about--

MS. DILLION: You know what Army stands for, right? Air Force rejected me yesterday.

MR. COX: I am glad you guys excited me just a little bit. When my leadership in, we hear about Springley, I was about to throw up. It was a tough time, but to my commander's point, we are on to better days. I am more excited for '25-'26 than I have been in years. Give yourselves applause for bearing through that. Where are today, our numbers to the great.

(Applause)

I am before you today to acknowledge some rock stars amongst rock stars, I swear to goodness if I give an achievement award to everyone I would. But not to belabor the time, the first achievement award for the dedication to the state of California, increasing their numbers. This gentleman does any and everything in all times a day and night. So let's give it up for Department of California Ross Smith.

(Applause)

We're going to do a little photo op, get a certificate. I will get through this. We have several as fast as we can so we can get along with our business. Mr. Chenelly, did you want to be in that? Okay, hang on, Cory. We have the commander and executive director.

Our next achievement award goes out to a young lady. She is deeply improved her department with numbers. Not only that, she volunteers her services at the VA where she talks about AMVETS and take care of some of our crazy veterans like myself. Department of D.C., Angela McNight, she in the house.

(Applause)

Is there someone from D.C., Clyde, Department Commander Clyde? That's too much

tequila walk right there.

The next achievement award I like to give this gentleman and his staff. They call us really every day. I have five e-mails from assistant this morning actually. I don't know how he does it day and night. It is the biggest department that we have in the AMVETS family. So let's get up for Don McCauley, Tracy Settle, the Department of Ohio.

(Applause)

Thanks, Don. The next achievement award I would like to give out is this young lady. She came in to AMVETS a few years ago, she created a post. We want to make this place a department this year. That is my challenge to her. She is in tune with her local government, the mayor, politician and she doesn't humbly, although she has a loud voice in these meetings, I swear. Let's give it up for Gayla LaFemberg(sic) out of Oklahoma.

(Applause)

Is Gayla here? There is Gayla.

And she is good at getting grants, so give her a call. She is a fine example. Thank you, Gayla. The next award we would like to give out, the Department of North Carolina. She is a friend to us all. She works day and night, literally. You don't have to call me at 11 o'clock every night and let's give it up for Laura Britton, North Carolina. Is she in the house?

(Applause)

That is my sister, I got your six. Thanks, Laura. Post Award. This post is special to me because what they did, I was working Thunder Alley at Rolling To Remember, they came up to me on their bikes and said Warren what you need? They walked the streets, they put almost 30 members into the AMVETS family that day.

And when I looked at the numbers of their post, they doubled their numbers this year. So let's give it up for West Virginia 30. Are they in the house?

(Applause)

Come on up, come on up. Thank you, brother. Department Award. And I don't like these guys and gals too much, but I have to credit them for almost 2,000 new members in the fiscal year '24-'25. I do love these -- this state. They are giving Ohio a run for their money, the Department of Florida.

(Applause)

We have a rep, come up, there he is. Where is McKern, is he in the house? Commander Paul in the ED Joe, if you don't mind. McKern, can

you come up as well and get into this photo. Hang on a second, D.

(Pause)

Outstanding job. The next award I would like to give out is the top recruiter of the year. This gentleman calls me every single day I call him Mr. How Am I Doing. Warren, how am I doing? Three years in a row, almost 100 members, 100, 100, 100. Let's give it up for Mr. Dwayne Kindle.

(Applause)

And the recruiter award, we have a special gift for you up here as well, sir. War man. We will talk about that later.

(Laughter)

Outstanding job, Dwayne, keep up the good work. Just briefly about Dwayne as he walks a bit away, as we all know we need younger veterans in the organization, Dwayne attacked a younger veteran group by giving them what they wanted, Forged in Steel. He has a program where he brings the veterans in to make knives, axes, things of that. And he does that, I guess, on a weekly basis. Good for you. Thank you, sir.

(Applause)

Is Donna McAllen in the house?

MS. McALLEN: Yes, she is.

MR. COX: Can you step up? Is Jeff in the house? Jeff, Ohio. If you can just go to the microphone real quick. While they are making their way, this award that we are going to present is to a very special person. They gave it to me last year. I am not special and totally didn't deserve it, but I am very appreciative.

It touched my heart to the point where I want to give this award out every year. It's called the Blank Check Award. Jeff has some information about that. Jeff briefly grabbed the mic so our family knows the breakdown of the Blank Check. It's deep.

MR. BANG: I don't know if you all have seen the check. It is just a blank check. There it is right there. He is holding it up. It is white on the front. And at the top of it, it says, "Pay to the order." "Pay to the order of the people of the United States." It's signed simply veteran.

The routing number on the check is 06141775. That is the year, month, and the day that the military was established in this country. The second number, which is your account number, I can't see it --

MS. McALLEN: 6, 4 -- I can't see it either. 5,

5 --

MR. BANG: There it is.

MS. McALLEN: 6, 4, 6, 5, 9, 6.

MR. BANG: There you go. That is the number of people who was actually killed in battle to the date of the printing of this, which was Memorial Day last year. The final number is 3517. That number is the number of metal of honorary recipients to the date this check was actually printed. Then on the back of the check is all five of the military forces, the Army Navy, Marines, Space Forces is even on there, Air Force, and Coast Guard, Don.

(Applause)

DON: Thank you.

MR. BANG: You are welcome.

MS. McALLEN: All right, so there is no date on the check. This means that there is no stale date. The check cannot expire. There is no written or numeric amount because the amount cannot be determined. The memo line is blank. This check can be used for many reasons.

On the back, like Jeff said, we have the six forces that is three on each side of the AMVETS symbol. This indicates that all is balanced. All right. Back to work.

MR. BANG: Back to work. Thank you all.

MR. COX: Since you guys were not the founders, but starters, Jeff, come on up and take this photo up. We would like to present this award, I have seen this young lady for years. I call her sister like I do everybody and I am her brother. I have seen her literally have a surgery and the next day, traveled to get to work, bandaged up.

If you need her, she is always there. She is boisterous, but with very intelligent questions for clarity for everyone. To my sister, give it up for Dana Dillion.

(Applause)

We have a plaque for you Dana and a special gift. Yep, in the box. Commander, you want to get in there? Joe? Thank you so much, Dana. Let's give it up for all the award winners.

(Applause)

Joe and Paul, if you guys want to come on up. This as a membership director, what I am about to do in my staff, has to be one of the most important things we do. It really warms my heart under the leadership of all my vice commanders, in particular 1st Vice Com-

mander Shipley who has worked very hard this year to make sure the proper communication -- boots on ground type of leader, thank you sir and to my executive director Joe Chenelly, who is my boss and I just don't think the man ever sleeps. So thank you so much for what you do.

So when I said it is important, we have three brand new posts. These are the most recent posts. I am going to call the departments up, Commander and Executive Chenelly is going to sign for you. If you can come up to the podium, we have, let's give it up for Georgia, Post 1857. Do we have a Georgia rep here?

(Applause)

Come on, Georgia. Looking forward to the buffet for lunch, so let's go.

(Laughter)

Good job, Georgia. Outstanding, Georgia. Our next charter that we would like to present, again, thanks to Mr. Chenelly and Paul ---- these group all hours of the night to make this work, let's give it up for the Department of Pennsylvania Post 659.

(Applause)

So if Pennsylvania can come up.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: I am a Pittsburgh area resident and this is a post that is relatively close to Pittsburgh and Warren has a raiders pen up here. I just can't sign something with a grave pen. Is that close to Pittsburgh? So Commander Zellner, can you please sign right there? This is two years in a row that the Department of Pennsylvania has been able to open new posts in the area around our new National Headquarters facility. So congratulations to them, keep up the good work.

(Applause)

MR. COX: Okay, this last charter, it really touched my heart. We have been working on this for several months now. Thank all the leadership, Sandy, Chris, Paul, Joe for everything. This post, it put on their hearts to have the number, the year of the gentleman's birth year when he was born, his hometown, they named the post, Post 1949, the Horace Johnson Post.

(Applause)

So if we can have Ohio come to the podium and you know let's do this right. Let's have some Florida come up here as well. That is his hometown. Let's get this going. Can you make it up, Commander?

And just so just for information Horace John-

son signed this. All right.

(Applause)

This picture will be set to Commander Johnson as well.

(Applause)

Okay, that is all the awards and the charters. Again, thank you for your hard work this year. And let's kick '25-'26 in the tail. God bless everyone.

(Applause)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: If you notice, I stepped off to the side during that one. Sandy Vorhies was integral with working with these dedicated veterans in the Cleveland area to get this post founded and I really want her to get the credit for all the work that she did to get that post established and running. Thank you so much for your dedication to AMVETS, Sandy.

Before we do the programs awards while they get set up down there I had the opportunity to talk to Commander Johnson on the phone this morning. He sounded as upbeat as you could ever expect him to. He actually had some really strong words for a little while. I was very very excited to hear him. He wanted me to convey to all of you that he wishes he could be here with us today, but he knows that we will make the best decisions for AMVETS.

And as he said, Horace knows.

(Laughter)

So --

MS. DILLION: Can I say one thing, Commander? I would just like to say thank you to Warren Cox for all that he does, because you can call him in the daytime, you can call him at night. He is always there to answer all of questions. He goes above and beyond what you would expect from a membership director. So if we can give them a round of applause.

(Applause)

MS. ETHEREDGE: Mid-day, every day, everyone. I am here to present -- I am here to present the programs awards for this year. And before I get started, I would like to thank Warren, Joe, as well as Sandy for all the support they put along with the membership team.

For Americanism Award this year, the Department of Ohio. They -- their hours were the highest hours that we had, I mean, cost of hours that we had posted in the reporting

system, the Department of Ohio.

(Applause)

Ohio must be doing a lot of great things in Americanism because Ohio Post 89 also ranked the highest in Americanism.

(Applause)

For our Community Service Awards, the Department of Florida.

(Applause)

Our second community service award was for the Post -- was California Post 66.

(Applause)

Our highest ranking JROTC Department was Georgia.

(Applause)

The highest ranking JROTC Post was 66 out of California.

(Applause)

And our AADAA, AMVETS Against Drug and Alcohol Abuse, the Department of New York.

(Applause)

Department of New York can stay where they are because they also have the highest record post. New York Post 2000. This year we wanted to recognize our unorganized departments that were doing their programs reporting and the most improved department well, unorganized department is Oklahoma.

(Applause)

And overall, National Second Vice Department of the Year will be for Angela McKnight out of D.C.

(Applause)

Thank you all and look forward to this upcoming year.

(Applause)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: As we have said many times, we as an organization need to do a better job of acknowledging the good. We are the helpers and we don't want to feel uncomfortable and we don't want to feel that we are trying to boast about ourselves. But it is very important that we acknowledge the works that are done and the people that are doing them across this organization.

So let's give one more big round of applause to all of our award winners today.

(Applause)

All right. Two things of business and then we can go into recess. We should only be like another two hours.

(Laughter)

No, the first thing that I need to announce per our Constitution bylaws is the first round of nominations will commence at 1300 in this room today. 1300 in this room today.

And the next thing that I need to announce is I would entertain a motion to recess.

MOTION

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: I heard Bouga and I see Ferguson. We are in recess.

(Meeting adjourned at 12:08 p.m. to reconvene at 2nd Business Session at 1:00 p.m.)

AMVETS 79th Annual Convention

Second Business Session
Meeting Minutes



Friday,
August 22, 2025

Held at the
Sheraton Greensboro | Four Seasons Greensboro
Greensboro, North Carolina

**Morning Session
(10:30 a.m.)**

**Call to Order
by Acting Commander Paul Shipley**

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: I call this second business session into order. Provost Marshal, please honor the colors for us. On your feet.

Honor to the Colors

by Provost Marshal Art Majors

PROVOST MARSHAL MAJORS: AMVETS attention, hand salute.

(Pledge of Allegiance)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Please be seated. As always, may the light of God look down upon us on everything that we do and the decisions that we make within this room. Are there any further committee reports that would like to give a report at this time? You also have the opportunity to give committee report tomorrow morning during the third business session. Seeing none at this time.

Mr. Executive Director, would you please take the nominations of officers for the organization?

First Nomination Officers

MR. CHENELLY: So nominations are now open. Nominations are now open for the National Service Foundation Trustee position there are two seats. They are both three year terms. To organize the election, we will do a Trustee A and a Trustee B. But now I will take first nominations. The nominations will remain open until tomorrow morning at 10 a.m. The first nominations open for Trustee A for the NSF Seat A. Are there any nominations?

PNC McLEAN: Yes, Mr. Chenelly, Don McLean from Massachusetts, Past National Commander. I am here to put in nomination for Seat A for Trustees for the National Service Foundation, Rick Vanetta. An Air Force veteran from Vietnam era. First elected to the service foundation from the NEC floor and then was elected to a three year term and he served on the foundation and in charities.

He is also the president of the Charities Board for the foundation at this time. So I nominate Rick Vanetta.

MR. CHENELLY: Mr. Vanetta, do you accept this nomination?

MR. : Second.

MR. CHENELLY: Second. Is there second for the nomination? Thank you.

MR. SHAE: Rich Shae, NEC, I rise to nominate Rich Vanetta for the A-slot Service Foundation. He is an Air Force Vietnam Air Veteran, past Illinois Department Commander, past Forth District National Commander. Rich is very knowledgeable in AMVETS and has been a mentor to many. I have been following Rich up through the chairs and he has never steered me wrong.

Rich has proven leadership and will be a great addition to the foundation working on our behalf. I proudly second the nomination for Rich Vanetta for the service foundation A slot. I look forward to your support.

MR. CHENELLY: Mr. Vanetta, do you accept this nomination?

MR. VANETTA: I accept.

MR. CHENELLY: The name of Rich Vanetta from the Department of Illinois has been placed in the nomination for Trustee A of National Service Foundation. Do we have any other nominations at this time for Trustee A?

Mr. Ferry?

MR. FERRY: Dave Ferry, past Department Commander State of New York. Commander, Executive Director, elected Officers and fellow delegates. I would like to start my nomination with one of my favorite quotes. "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has", Margaret Mead.

Please indulge me with a little story. Last summer, my post commander was diagnosed with Stage 4 cancer that had metastasized from his colon into his brain and lungs. Seeing the need to help another veteran, Marty Bugaj, worked with his fellow postmembers, brought in our Lady's Auxiliary family to facilitate a spaghetti dinner themed ---- auction. The fundraiser expanded into what looked like more of a living wake with Commander Dave's family and friends sitting around talking and enjoying a great atmosphere.

At the end of the day, other than being exhausted for serving over 200 spaghetti dinners, I find myself filled with a great joy that can only be felt from giving of yourself to others needs. Happy and content. At peace with the world. Thank you, Marty Bugaj. Marty Bugaj started in AMVETS as a junior AMVETS in 1972. He joined the Marines in 1982 and was Honorably discharged in 1986, he joined AMVETS in 1984.

He held every position in the post of 14's level, serving as commander for 10 terms. He held every position in the Department of New York, the Department of New York commander from 1999 to or excuse me, 1988 to 1999.

Currently sits as the JA in the Department of New York and the Service Foundation.

Marty has served on the New York Service Foundation for 16 of the last 20 years. He held the position of District One Commander from 2001 to 2002. Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed veterans can change the world. Please consider Marty Bugaj for the position of Service Foundation A.

MR. CHENELLY: Thank you. Is there a second for the nomination? Is there a second for the nomination?
Thank you. I see someone is coming.

MR. ANTHONY: Second nomination, Wayne Anthony of Massachusetts.

MR. CHENELLY: Thank you. Mr. Bugaj, do you accept this nomination? The record shows Mr. Bugaj accepted and the name of Marty Bugaj has been entered into the nomination for Trustee A National Service Foundation. Do we have any other nominations for Trustee A at this time?

(No response.)

Nominations will remain open till 10 a.m. tomorrow. Do we have any nominations for Trustee B for the National Service Foundation? It's a three year term.

MS. DURBIN: Over here, please.

MR. CHENELLY: Go for it.

MS. DURBIN: Over here, I am sorry. Sandra Durbin, PDC California. I would like to nominate Joseph P. Piening for the three year term for Trustee B. He brings a tremendous amount of knowledge to the service foundation having served six years as trustee, five years as president and 11 years as director. When he left the foundation, they had \$22.5 million and I would like to recommend him for B, please.

MR. CHENELLY: Thank you. Is there a second for the nomination?

MR. FERGUSON: Yes. Doug Ferguson, PDC Department of Florida, seconds the nomination of Joe Piening.

MR. CHENELLY: Thank you. PNC Piening, do you accept this nomination?

PNC PIENING: Yes, I do.

MR. CHENELLY: We will check back with PNC Piening when we reserve when he is here --

PNC PIENING: I said yes, I do.

MR. CHENELLY: Thank you, Mr. Piening.

The name of Joseph Piening has been nominated for Trustee B, National Service Foundation. Are there are any other nominees for Trustee B?

MR. McELRATH: Andy McElrath, PDC from the Department of Ohio, I would like to place a name of Past National Commander J.P. Brown III for the position of National Service Foundation seat B. J.P. has served on the foundation for many years. He sat out last year due to a term limits.

He's been a valuable contributor to the foundation throughout the years that he served. J.P. is also serving as the chairman for the construction committee for the new AMVETS Family Service Center in Washington, Pennsylvania. He has been the lead on this project since the beginning and he has saved this project many thousands of dollars.

Your support and your vote is needed for J.P. to continue doing the work on the AMVETS National Service Foundation. Your support would be appreciated.

MR. CHENELLY: Is there a second for this nomination?

MR. UROTTO: Second, Urotto from Massachusetts.

MR. CHENELLY: Thank you. The name of John P. Brown III has been entered in nomination.

PNC Brown, do you accept this nomination? Not here. Are there any other nominations for Trustee B at this time?

MR. FERRY: Dave Ferry, past department commander, Department of New York. I would like to put in the name of Marty Bugaj, Trustee B.

MR. CHENELLY: Is there a second for this nomination? Is there a second for this nomination?

MR. ASHMAN: Second, Ashman.

MR. CHENELLY: It was Joe Ashman, Department of New York Seconded.

Mr. Bugaj, do you accept this nomination as well?

They have Marty Bugaj has also been entered into nomination for Trustee B. Are there any other nominations for Trustee B at this time?

(No response.)

Hearing none, we will move on, but nominations for Trustee B will also remain open till 10 a.m. tomorrow. Now open nominations

for National Judge Advocate. Do we have any nominees for National Judge Advocate?

MS. FOLEY: Thank you, Chris Foley, Department of Alaska. We would like to nominate Jan Brown for JA. Thank you. Jan has done a lot for this organization and since I came into it and she is a really great role model for a lot of us so thank you, Jan.

MR. CHENELLY: Is there a second for that nomination?

MS. PIERCE: I would like to second that nomination. She has been married to J.P. for almost 30 years, if she can put up with him. She can put up with anything.

(Laughter)

MR. CHENELLY: I believe that PNC Brown is also not in here because of the honors awards committee and PNC council meeting. But are there any other nominees for National Judge Advocate this time?

(No response.)

Hearing none, nominations will remain open till 10 a.m. tomorrow. Nominations are not open for National Provost Marshal. Are there any nominations?

MR. HARTSFIELD: Sheldon Hartsfield, National Fourth District Commander. I would like to enter the name of Mr. Art Majors one more time. Art has served as the National Provost Marshal for 15 years after serving 5 years as a deputy Provost Marshal.

I can tell you from personal experience from working for him. He is a well-organized man. He knows how to treat his people. He has put together an exceptional team of Provost Marshal's and I would like to see him continue the good job that he is doing. Thank you.

MR. CHENELLY: Is there a second for this nomination?

MR. DAVIS: Mike Davis PDC Indiana, I second for nomination for Art as Provost Marshal.

MR. CHENELLY: Mr. Major, do you accept this nomination? The record show he said yes.

Are there any other nominations for National Provost Marshal at this time?

(No response.)

Hearing none, nominations will remain open until 10 a.m. tomorrow. National Finance Officer. Nominations are now open for National Finance Officer. Do we have any nominations?

MS. MCFARLAIN: Good afternoon. Laura McFarlain, Department of Louisiana would like to proudly nominate for finance officer Kelly McFarlain. He is the current finance officer. He has done it for the last few years and I believe he has done a pretty good job. And we would like to keep him in that position. So, I nominate Kelly McFarlain.

MR. CHENELLY: Is there second to this nomination?

MS. LUMPKINS: Tina Lumpkins, State of Texas, I second that nomination.

MR. CHENELLY: Thank you. Mr. McFarlain, do you accept this nomination?

MR. MCFARLAIN: I do accept it. I just heard a cell phone, Art. You heard it too.

MR. CHENELLY: Are there any other nominations for National Finance Officer? Any other nominations for National Finance Officer at this time?

(No response.)

Nominations will remain open until 10 a.m. tomorrow. National Third Vice Commander. Are there any nominations for National Third Vice Commander?

MR. LEE: Robert Lee, Department of Missouri. I would like to place the name of Shelton Hartsfield in line for nomination for the Third Vice Commander. Shelton has spent a better part of his life serving our veterans. 26 years as an AMVET, veteran of the United States Marine Corps and the Missouri National Guard. Currently he is their National Fourth District Commander. Came up through the ranks, passed Missouri District Commander, Post Commander 106, 20 years in ROTC Committee. 21 years as Missouri Convention Chairman, National Deputy Provost Marshal. Sheldon has the experience and the expertise in management to take us forward.

I would like to place the name of Sheldon Hartsfield in place for our National Third Vice Commander.

MR. CHENELLY: Thank you. Is there a second to this nomination?

MR. ALLEN: Milton Allen Department Commander Georgia, I second that nomination.

MR. CHENELLY: Is Milton Allen, Department --

MR. : --- incoming Department Commander, Department of Missouri, I second nomination for Sheldon Hartsfield.

MR. CHENELLY: Mr. Hartsfield, do you accept this nomination?

MR. HARTSFIELD: I do accept.

MR. CHENELLY: Thank you. Are there any other nominations for National Third Vice Commander? Any other nominations at this time?

(No response.)

Nominations will remain open until 10 a.m. tomorrow. National Second Vice Commander, nominations are now open for Second Vice.

MS. DAWES: My name is Laura Dawes. I am Past Department Commander of the great state of Illinois. And I am deeply honored to have been asked to nominate my friend and brother, Chris Studebaker, for National Second Vice Commander. Even though I was not his first choice to do so. Being honest here, we both would have preferred that PNC, PDC, Jim King be the person making this nomination, but as he is not available to do so at this time, Chris asked me to do my best.

Chris has been a member of AMVETS since 1992. He became a member while in active duty in the United States Navy, serving as a machinist mate, Second Class Petty Officer, thank God he put E5 so I actually knew how that translated to what I was. Go Army.

Okay, during his time in the Navy he was assigned to the USS Sacramento AOE1 out of Bremerton, Washington and had two six month deployments to the Persian Gulf region in support of Operation Southern Watch. Chris has been an active member with an AMVETS at the post, department and national levels. He is a life member of AMVETS Post 115 in Pontiac, Illinois.

He is currently serving as finance officer in adjunct of his post. He has held both of those positions since 2009. At the department level, he is currently serving as the Inspector General. He is really good at it. Nobody else wants to do it. And while he can be a decent person, nobody wants to see him in his capacity as IG anyways, as well as on the personnel and Finance Committees. He was the Department Commander 2014 to 15, Service Foundation President 2015 to 16 and continues to be active on the Service Foundation as a Director.

He served as Alternate NEC from 2016 to 2018 and then as NEC from 2018 to 23. His leadership roles have continued at the national level including Fourth National District Commander from '23 to '24. National Finance Committee member from 2019 to present, and also serving as a member of the National Constitution and Bylaws and Civil Service and Veterans Employment Committees.

He is currently the National Third Vice Commander. As active as he is within AMVETS, Chris also currently works full-time outside of AMVETS. He has worked for the Illinois Department of Transportation for 23 years and is currently a highway maintenance lead worker in the Bloomington, Illinois area. He is in that team section. He supervises 25 employees, taking care of 475 lane miles of roadways, and approximately \$3 million of equipment.

It is hard for me to imagine AMVETS in Illinois, as well as the national level without Chris in it. But on a personal note, it is hard to see where I would be as a leader in AMVETS without Chris's influence. He constantly seeks out challenges and works to better himself for his post, his department, and his national organization. He doesn't like to be in the position to have to admit being wrong.

And those of us who know Chris, very much know this. However, when he is, he owns up. He listens, he takes suggestions, and acknowledges those who help. And that is pretty rare. Most importantly for the National Second Vice position, he is passionate about programs. I cannot think of a better person to hold this position. I am proud to nominate as National Second Vice Chris Studebaker. And I hope he has your support. Thank you all very much.

MR. CHENELLY: Is there a second for this nomination?

PNC PIENING: Yes, there is, Joe Piening, PNC, Department of Florida. I stand proudly to second the nomination of Chris Studebaker, who has done an excellent job as our Third National Commander.

I know that Chris, no matter what position, he has the ability and the expertise to lead us at any and all of our national positions. I proudly second the nomination of Chris Studebaker.

MR. CHENELLY: Mr. Studebaker, do you accept this nomination? The record show, he said yes. Are there any other nominations at this time for National Second Vice Commander? Any other nominations at this time?

(No response.)

Nominations will remain open 10 a.m. tomorrow. Nominations are now open for National First Vice Commander, First Vice, any nominations.

PNC McLEAN: Yes, good afternoon. Don McLean, Past National Commander, Massachusetts. I had to stop and think, I thought I was doing Sad Sacks and I would have said, I don't want to nominate her, hell. But I am here to gladly nominate Sandy Vorhies of Ohio for the position of National First Vice Command-

er. You work in this organization over the years and you realize really quickly that while membership is very important, the biggest department or the biggest title you have and the most work you have is as Second Vice. And I think Sandy has done a fabulous job of that for this past year, but she's also continuing doing it outside of the AMVETS floor where she works in a state of Ohio for the Sons and a couple of the other departments. So for this place I want to place her name in for National First Vice Commander.

MR. CHENELLY: Is there a second to this nomination?

MR. : ---- Massachusetts, I second that nomination for Sandy Vorhies for First Vice.

MR. CHENELLY: Ms. Vorhies, do you accept this nomination? The record shows she answered yes. Are there any other nominations for National First Place Commander at this time?

(No response.)

Nominations will remain open until 10 a.m. tomorrow. Our National Commander, do we have any nominations for National Commander? Nominations are now open. Please come to microphone.

MR. : ---- Department of Missouri, it gives me great pleasure to place the name of Paul Shipley nomination for our next commander. His resume speaks for itself. He has served at every level of AMVETS including Department Commander of Pennsylvania, National Third, Second and First Vice. He has done an admiral job as we all know, representing Commander Johnson this past year. He stepped up when needed to fill some very big shoes. Paul is also a family man. His wife and three daughters are with him here this weekend -- this week. You saw them participating in the events this week. His daughter Kelsey, beautifully sang the National Anthem yesterday in our opening ceremony.

His daughter, Hannah, played TAPS for our memorial service. All three are active juniors and our participating in their convention this week. Paul will do an excellent job leading AMVETS next year and I could not be prouder to nominate Paul Shipley for the Office of National Commander.

MR. CHENELLY: Is there a second for this nomination?

MR. FERGUSON: Randy Ferguson, the state of North Carolina, Past Department Commander, current District Four Commander. I have no idea why I am doing this. But I understand the dilemma that you are in. I was moved into a position that I didn't know I was

going to get put in as quickly as I was.

Paul is going to be a good commander and I second the nomination for Paul Shipley. You got a cool ---- too.

MR. CHENELLY: Is there another second to this nomination?

MR. ZELLNER: Second, Zellner, Pennsylvania.

MR. CHENELLY: Please come to the mic. This is pretty official stuff.

MR. ZELLNER: Second, Bill Zellner, state of Pennsylvania.

MR. CHENELLY: Thank you.

Mr. Shipley, do you accept this nomination.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: I guess.

MR. CHENELLY: The record show he answered in the affirmative. Are there any other nominations for National Commander at this time? Any other nominations?

(No response.)

Nominations will remain open until 10 a.m. tomorrow. Remember, be in here tomorrow by 10 a.m. if you plan to vote. No one will be able to come into the room after 10 a.m.

Mr. Chairman?

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: All right, now we got that out of the way. We have the opportunity today to have a fireside chat with the company that is revolutionizing the electronic health record in the VA system. And most specifically, we have the opportunity to be talked to today by a gentleman from Oracle, Dr. James Elsey, Vice President of the Federal Health Executive and Market Lead with Oracle Cerner*. Dr. Elsey provides strategic clinical direction for Oracle's federal business, including the Department of Veterans Administration, Department of Defense, U.S. Coast Guard, and Center for Disease Control.

He leads the development of the vision and strategy for the largest healthcare transformation in history. Prior to joining Oracle Cerner, Dr. Elsey completed 26 years of federal service, with 22 years in the active military service, and the last 4 as a civilian.

His civilian position was the MHS Genesis clinical functional champion where he was instrumental in the rollout of the CERNER and the DOD. He advised and assisted defense health agency leadership on all matters pertaining to the

MHS Genesis as it applied to clinical policy and procedures.

These duties included collaborating with the Veterans Health Administration. Dr. Elsey retired from the United States Navy. We won't hold that against you, though -- oh, we will hold it against you. In December of 2018, some highlights of his active duty time included Chief Medical Information -- Informatics Officer, sorry, I am not all that well in the medical terminology.

Good with therapy, but not so much in there. For the Navy Medicine Family Department Chief at Fort Belvoir Community Hospital, reintroduced the first Navy residents into their DeWitt Army Community Hospital.

There you go, you brought me around to the good side. And the Director of Clinical Quality in the Office of Chief Medical Officer at TriCare Management Activity, the predecessor to the DHA. He completed four deployments aboard Navy amphibious ships. Dr. Elsey received his medical doctorate from the East Tennessee State University James H. Quillin College of Medicine.

He received his Master's in Medical Informatics and Bachelor Arts and Computer Studies from Northwestern University. Dr. Elsey is a fellow in the American Academy of Family Physicians and served on the Board of Directors for three years. He earned a certification in medical quality from the American Board of Medical Quality.

Please, AMVETS, help me to welcome Dr. Elsey to our stage.

(Applause)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Dr. Elsey is accompanied on stage today by our esteemed lobbyist Justin Brown of the Nimitz Group. If you have legislative questions, hijack him after the meeting today, but today he's going to be able to lead the conversation and help you to understand what we have going on with Oracle today. Thank you so much.

Fireside Chat with Oracle by Dr. James Elsey and Justin Brown

MR. BROWN: Thank you. Appreciate it. And how about another round of applause for Paul Shipley?

(Applause)

Well, I am super excited to be here with you all this week and I am always honored to have been a part of the AMVETS family for a number of years now as we work on all the legislative issues that are so important to our community.

And so it is great to be here and it is great to be here with the fellow Navy man. He was a little confused on the, you know, decor of the day and he brought his Army green jacket as a proud Navy veteran. And how many Army veterans do we have with us today?

(Cheers)

MR. BROWN: All right, all right. But I should have given him, you know, really we have got Marine Corps Red going on, don't we? I mean, that seems to be the dress code of the day. Well, I am a proud Navy veteran as well and where are our Navy veterans?

And then I think we have at least one coastie, right? Where was he at? Where was he at? Oh, okay. Well, I guess we are out of coasties. I have known Dr. Elsey for a little bit of time now.

We have gotten to see some good work that they are doing in the veteran community. And they have also been a huge supporter of a non-profit I founded in Washington, D.C., called the Hilbets Foundation to help more veterans get involved in policy, politics working on Capitol Hill, both parties.

And so I have gotten to know him a little bit through that role. And we knew we were both Navy veterans, but as we were chatting last night, we discovered not only were we both Navy veterans, not only did we serve on the same ship, but we served on the same ship at the same time and didn't know each other.

And it was for the invasion of Iraq in 2003, which is the second naval invasion in the history of our country. And he did some incredible things. He was a surgeon. I was a third class petty officer. So we were living very different lives. I was cleaning scuppers and he delivered a baby on that ship in the Persian Gulf. Can you believe that?

So anyways, just kind of a fun aside, fun story. As you all know, it is always really neat to find a fellow veteran where you guys shared some history together and maybe didn't know it. But I am really excited about what I am seeing with the electronic healthcare record. I remember walking off that same ship, the USS Boxer. We had just completed our third deployment in four years.

And we had taken a lot of Marines to Iraq. And I remember being told as I was getting out, to go -- on my way to go use my GI bill, I was 21 years old. I remember being told, you know, make like a ridiculous amount of copies of your healthcare record. So here I am on 32nd Street. I got this giant crappy Xerox and making a gazillion copies of my healthcare record.

And, you know, I did it because I was told that is what I needed to do. And then I went to my service office, officer in Utah where I am from and kind of, you know, the rest is history. But we are in a very different place right now. I mean, I think the entire Department of Defense has an electronic healthcare record. And now I think about 10-ish VA's.

So there are states right now where service member is walking off a ship and they are walking straight into a VA and their electronic healthcare record is there. Is that right?

DR. ELSEY: Absolutely, absolutely. Yes, so we are deploying now a joint record. And it's intriguing because the DOD calls it, MMH Genesis. The VA calls it the federal electronic health record. So it sounds like two different things. It is two names for the exact single one thing. So it is a large pool of data. There are DOD facilities. Right now there are six VA facilities, about to be 13 more. There are Coast Guard facilities and NOAA facilities all in that data pool. And you as a patient show up once in there. So whether the DOD added to your record or whether the VA is adding to your record, it is still the same single record now, moving forward.

MR. BROWN: So other than being, you know, this idea of a seamless record and, you know, not having to Xerox my healthcare record, which, you know, again, I made it -- took me all day. I didn't have a very big healthcare record either. I was a pretty healthy guy, but it was quite a thing.

And then being nervous about having to be the person that retains that record, right? Like, what if I lose this? What other improvements will we see from the Oracle electronic healthcare record?

DR. ELSEY: I think when you look at historically with the VA is the facilities that have not migrated to the new record yet. If you go to one facility, they know about what has happened at that facility. And if you happen to go on vacation or you spend three months of the year down in Florida, you have a second record at the VA.

Now as you go to the VA deploying the single record everywhere, everyone has your information all at once. It is not a no matter I have to tell this person or tell that person. Likewise, the joint health information exchange opportunity is humongous. So if you are somebody who has a civilian doctor who does maybe 75 percent of your care and 25 percent of your care is in the VA, right now you are constantly having to tell one person what happened at the other place because they just can't see it or you are having to bring physical paperwork into them so they can see it.

About 90 percent of health systems in the U.S. are part of the health information exchange where they can electronically share, it is a limited data set, but they can share some data about you. Whether it be lab results, it could be even radiology results, what medications you are on, your allergies, which your problems are, they can share that back and forth. Well, this federal EHR is participating in that health information exchange.

And so now when you go to your civilian provider, they can see what actually happened in the VA and vice versa.

MR. BROWN: You and I talked a little bit about this yesterday, but I think a lot of people don't realize really who Oracle is as a company is and also how big of a company it really is. I mean, it's one of the largest tech companies in the world.

And, you know, I have looked into some of the other stuff that Oracle does. And frankly, I am like pretty excited that a company of this scale is taking on this project. What excites you about this project from that perspective and the capabilities and capacity that a company like Oracle can bring to this community?

DR. ELSEY: So I was part of the DOD source selection for selecting which company we would go with for the electronic health record. And we picked Cerner at the time. And Cerner was one of the largest, probably the top three or four electronic health records in the U.S. And they were acquired by Oracle, who is this huge tech company, but who is Oracle?

We were kind of joking last night while we had dinner, our waiter's key card had this big kind of racetrack picture on it. If you have gone to the bar, the bar under -- the Bar Down Under, I think it's what they call it?

MR. BROWN: I think so.

DR. ELSEY: There are little corners have like a little red icon in the corner and then a brown racetrack. That is actually an Oracle symbol, because Oracle is the software behind what they are using for the cash register and to do all the bar, the hospitality.

Often when you go to the front desk of a hotel, when you are doing your check-in process, that's Oracle. By the way, they are also in construction. They are also in power. They are also working with the police and safety. So they are in all of these other industries already, including finance and baking.

It's a very large tech company like you said, who has decided we are going to take on health care. Now, it's not just electronic health record that was kind of their nudge in the door, but they are also working with the payer

side of the house. How do they make it easier for the providers, those who are actually providing health care, work with those who are trying to pay for healthcare, especially with prior authorization to treat --- what that looks like, make more of that automated.

So they really are trying to revolutionize healthcare and bring it into this century. Because it's about two centuries behind compared to a lot of other things.

MR. BROWN: Yeah, and recently I did get to see you guys had a presentation of, you know, almost an AI tool that the provider can use. Can you maybe talk about some of the cool, you know, technology things that the providers are going to see that the doctors are going to be able to utilize?

DR. ELSEY: So I don't know how many times you have gone into whether it's your civilian providers, your VA providers, and you go in, and this is what you see. You are looking at the back of their head, because they are so busy looking at a computer screen. Some of what we are revolutionizing is one thing is called ambient listening.

It is the idea that the provider can say, I am going to spend a little time with you today. If you are comfortable, I am going to actually just have a recorder out on the table, or I can use my computer screen to record our conversation. We have a conversation like we normally do. But a by-product of that conversation is an actual note like we normally would have written.

That probably captures is 20 to 50 percent more of what you actually said as a patient, compared to what the provider actually thought to put in your note. But it's all captured and they can actually look at you and talk to you and have that conversation. But the thing that excites me even more, because I still see patients about once a month down at Fort Belvoir, is the idea that to give me a summary of everything inside the patient's chart. If you have diabetes and you have been in the healthcare system for 20 years, I as a physician, even in an hour-long appointment, probably do not have time to go through your entire medical record and look up everything about your diabetic care for the last 20 years.

But AI can go through and pull a summary with still those links back to where it got the data from. Oh, you don't agree with something? Boom. Here is where I got it from the medical record. I can go right to that spot in the record and say, "Yeah, that's exactly what that note is saying." Or, "You got it a little wrong." Let me help educate you so you don't do this again for me.

But that ability to help summarize the record

from an AI standpoint is amazing to me. And I am so excited.

MR. BROWN: Yeah, that sounds really cool. And again, I saw that presentation and it was very neat. It didn't -- it more summarized the conversation, it didn't kind of, you know, and then it excluded things that maybe were irrelevant to the record itself. Like if you were just having a personal conversation, it was very cool.

What can you tell us about, I mean, we are at six facilities now. What can you tell us about the additional rollout and, you know, when veterans, if they are not, one of those six facilities can expect to see this at their home VA medical center.

DR. ELSEY: So at the beginning of this calendar year, the plan was to do four more facilities next year for the VA. When Secretary Collins came in to the VA, he said that's not fast enough. That is going to take us like 40 years to get this done. And we need to do it faster. So our leadership in Oracle got together with the VA leadership and came up with a plan to do 13 facilities in four chunks next year.

The first chunk will be around the April time frame, and that is going to be up in Michigan. So those were the four sites that were slated to go live right before there was the last pause with the VA. Along with that is Ohio, Indiana, and then kind of an interesting mix with Columbus -- not Columbus, Cincinnati, and Alaska.

Some people are concerned saying, well, if you have been taking just one at a time, what makes you think you can go do four facilities at a time. I will tell you leadership in the Michigan market is actually excited about going together because they work very closely together and they were very concerned of having some facilities on the new system while some facilities were on the old system.

The DOD, just to kind of give a frame of reference as they finished their deployments, they went live across all of Europe, so that's Italy, Germany, UK, so forth and so on, at the same time on a single night. And then one month later, they went live across all of Asia.

So Oracle, along with the Leidos partnership, knows how to do several places across geographical barriers of significant size, because let's face it, Lungstahl is not a small facility. They also, the VA themselves, they had been struggling because they have now moving to a centralized record, which means they need to govern a centralized record. They were really stuck with the first facilities and trying to make sure this facility was happy.

Okay, that facility is happy, okay and now we

ready to deploy the next one, let's make sure they are happy. And they can do things the way they are used to doing them. And they have come to the realization, they have to standardize care to some degree across the VA in order to have a centralized record. And what does that governance of that centralized record look like?

I am really comfortable, but they really have figured that out over the last two years. And so now as they go forward with trying to do 13 facilities next year, the fact that they have that governance down is really going to help them be able to be successful with that.

MR. BROWN: So two last questions for you. So from if I am one of those veterans in Michigan and going to the Detroit VA Medical Center, this occurs, what can I expect to see on the veteran side? I mean, what kind of direct impact will this have on me at that time?

DR. ELSEY: I think one of the -- when you are talking about direct impact, change is hard for us as humans, right? And so, have a little grace with your VA, your VAMPSE*, when they go live. It's going to have a little bit of a take them longer to do some things for a couple of weeks. So I like to tell people, if you know you have some chronic medications, and you need to go get a new prescription done right around the time they are scheduled to go live, see if you can't get in before go live and get it done to help relieve some of the pressure on the system after the go live.

Now that being said, I got caught with my spouse decided they didn't tell me about needing a prescription until the week of go live for my facility in D.C. area. And so I went into the pharmacy the week of go live and that pharmacy actually took about 10 minutes extra than they took them before. So it's possible for it not to take hours longer. Some other facilities have struggled even in the DOD to take a longer period of time with the change management.

I think the big thing I am saying is, know what that date looks like if you are one of those areas. Make sure that your fellow veterans in the area know what that date is. And if there is any care you can get done the couple of weeks beforehand, try to get it done beforehand.

MR. BROWN: So this may be a bad analogy, but is this kind of like going from an old flip phone to like an Apple iPhone? And then there's just a little bit of a struggle figuring out kind of what the new functionality is and how things work. And therefore it's a little tougher on the front end.

DR. ELSEY: That is actually a very good analogy.

MR. BROWN: Lastly, I mean, the folks with us here today really represent the leadership of AMVETS as an organization and lead their local and state level efforts. How can AMVETS be helpful to ensure the success of these future deployments?

DR. ELSEY: Well, I think, first of all, I would like to say, thank you for everything you have done to date. I know that I believe you have had some resolutions move forward saying that this is the way to go. So we do appreciate that. I think when it comes to what you can do to kind of help things continue to get forward is make sure you partner with your VAMPSE. See what their schedule looks like. Ask them what you can do for them. Making sure you are having a dialogue between the VAMPSE and the AMVETS local chapter.

MR. BROWN: Dr. Elsey, we are grateful for you and Oracle taking the time to come out here and give us an update on this huge effort. We know it's one of the secretary's priorities. We know it was President Trump who originally kind of initiated this process to change this electronic health care record. And so we are grateful for your time and Oracle's commitment to the veteran community. Thank you.

DR. ELSEY: Thank you. I am happy to take some questions from the floor.

MR. BROWN: Sure. Do we have time for some questions?

MR. KENDLE: This is quick and short. Dwayne Kendle, Post 44, Cookville, Tennessee. Are you AMVETS members? Are you an AMVET member?

DR. ELSEY: I am not.

MR. KENDLE: If you can come see me and Mr. Shipley after this session, please. I am the national recruiter. Both of you, please.

(Applause)

MR. KENDLE: That is how you do it.

MR. MOO: Sean Moo, Roanoke, Virginia. I could be wrong on this. Sean Moo, from Roanoke, Virginia. I could be wrong on this, but wouldn't that violate the HIPAA laws sharing the information with the hospitals? Usually, I mean, when I have gone to the hospital, have paperwork transferred, I had to sign some kind of waiver where it is you can share medical records with each hospital.

DR. ELSEY: So when you look at the HIPAA laws, HIPAA talked to us about if it's treatment, treatment operations and payment, are the reasons that you can share information. The way the health information exchange

works is, I am seeing the patient. I then query that because I have seen the patient at the time, from a treatment standpoint, so it falls on the treatment category, I can query does anybody else have information about that patient?

And if so, that it brings over that information about the patient that is in front of me. So it is not going and getting all the data about all patients out there, it's about the patient in front of me and that is covered under HIPAA.

MR. MOO: If I going from Johnson City Hospital to Roanoke, Virginia and they got my medical records in Johnson City, I had to sign a waiver to get it transferred to Roanoke. Is that what I would have to do again or are you guys already going to have that on file.

DR. ELSEY: So, it's --

MR. MOO: ---- violate the HIPPA law right there.

DR. ELSEY: Historically because each of the CPRS's were separate or the VISTA's, each was a separate instance. Therefore, they had to do a different level of agreement on how to share that data, how to move that data. There is no moving. Now, it is a centralized database that people are reaching into because they have a need to have access to that same database. There is no movement of data.

MS. WOJCIECHOWSKI: Hi, Kathy Wojciechowski Post 30, Yorktown, Virginia. My question is you are talking about merging this with the VA hospital. The problem I have had in the past and they still have not been able to say it's been corrected is that they actually have three different systems. So if you have got information in one system, it isn't necessarily being transferred completely through into the new system. So merging the systems, if that information is not complete with all three of those systems, to me seems a waste of time and money.

DR. ELSEY: So when you talk about standing and moving to a new electric health record, there is a couple of ways to do it. Now I will tell you the DOD and the VA had very different approaches. So the DOD kind of used a minimalist approach and said we are only moving over problems, allergies, medications, procedures and immunizations. And they said, that is all removing from the old system to the new system. Otherwise, now you need to basically create a new record about the patient.

And the reason they did that was they said their data wasn't as clean as they would like. And so they want to have a clean system as they started. The VA opted to move additional data into the new system because so many veterans have a very long history and they

didn't want to have to have the clinicians have to start that whole history totally over.

So is it going to be a complete record of you, the first day when it goes live? I would be lying if I said it is going to be. I will say for those younger generation that is coming through now and getting out of the service, they actually entered -- met some of them on their new record that followed them through their four years of active activity. And as they got off active activity, and moved to the VA, it will be the same record.

There will not be a, I had this old data that needed to be in there. All of their data will be and there going forward. But for those of us who are older, I started on paper just like many of you did. My paper stuff did not get into the new system. It is still just on paper with the copies that I made, just like he did. But the electronic information, any of those problems, allergies, medications that did port over from the system, the legacy system into the new EHR.

MS. WOJCIECHOWSKI: Okay, so then how is service going to be applicable? Because you may have something that is a long-term issue and it's not going to be in there.

DR. ELSEY: It is not going to be the start with. You are right. It is not going to be. I am sorry if I portrayed that all your information is going to be there from Day 1. It is not going to be in there. It is going to have to be moved into there by the health care providers.

MS. WOJCIECHOWSKI: So basically the same thing we are doing currently, which is I show up with my CD from the one place I got service and then I go to another place that I get service and I have to give them that CD so they can input it. Is what you are telling me?

DR. ELSEY: Yes and no. So here is the difference. Right now, if you go to VAMPSE A and then you go to VAMPSE B, you have to bring that information from A to B. And now when you go back to A, you have to bring it back from B back to A, right? That is kind of what you have to do now. Once both of those are live, if you go to A, B can see that information. And as B adds it to the same record, A will see the information.

So I think you are asking, is it going to fix all the historical problems? It is not going to fix all of the historical problems. It is not going to. But, especially moving forward with your care, it is all going to be in the same system.

MS. WOJCIECHOWSKI: Thank you.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Dr. Elsey, I truly want to say thank you for taking the time to spend with us today here in AMVETS. I would

like to give you one of our commanders points from Commander Johnson.

DR. ELSEY: Thank you. Thank you.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: And here is that membership application.

DR. ELSEY: Thank you.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: You know, life member is a great thing to have and we would love to have you.

DR. ELSEY: Thank you so much.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: And thank you Justin for making this opportunity for us to happen.

(Applause)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: All right. We do have a few minutes for some announcements. If there are any announcements that you would like to make, please feel free to come to the microphones. We do still have one there and one there and one there. Oh, look. Go ahead, sir. Please identify yourself for the record.

MR. NEWMAN: I am the NEC from the Department of Virginia, and with my great pleasure to announce our new Department Commander Bart Edwards.

(Applause)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Mr. Shae?

MR. SHAE: Illinois NEC Rich Shae, it is my pleasure to introduce our new Commander Marine Corps veteran, Ken Rowe.

(Applause)

MR. HARTLESS: I am Jeff Hartless, the Executive Director for Tennessee, I would like to introduce our new commander, Navy veteran, Frank Kusiowski, Jr.

(Applause)

MR. ANTHONY: I'm Wayne Anthony, from Massachusetts, past Department Commander, I would like to welcome our new state commander, Robert Brusio from Massachusetts.

(Applause)

MS. WONG: Helen Wong, junior past Department Commander from California. I would like to introduce our wonderful new Department Commander Miss Josephine Keller.

(Applause)

MS. DILLION: Dana Dillion, NEC, I would like to introduce our State Commander. He hasn't gotten it right yet. This is 11th year. So, Alda*.

(Applause)

MR. : NEC, North Carolina, like to introduce our new Department Commander John Perry.

(Applause)

MR. BECK: Ralph Beck, Department of Wisconsin, NEC, I would like to introduce our Department Commander, Ron Griffin.

(Applause)

MR. McELRATH:: Andy McElrath, past Department Commander for Department of Ohio. I would like to introduce our new Department Commander, Tom Banyas, Jr.

(Applause)

MR. COLE: John Cole, first place from the great state of Illinois. I am going to interrupt you all your new state commanders, by telling you, as of right now, since I made that announcement his morning there are 59 new members to the AMVETS POW/MIA committee page. It's a good start, but we need to get out every one of you guys in there.

(Applause)

MR. WHITE: Hello, sir. Danny White from the Department of Washington, past Department Commander, and I would like to introduce our new Post Commander Glen Skinner.

(Applause)

MR. COLBERT: Brett Colbert from the Department of Georgia. I would like to introduce our former commander, former national chaplain, U.S.M. C retired, Milton Allen.

MR. HAWK: Jerry Hawk, Department of Pennsylvania. I would like to introduce our new commander, Bill Zellner.

(Applause)

MR. HARTSFIELD: Sheldon HartSfield, Department of Missouri, past Department Commander. I would like to introduce our new Department Commander, Mr. Tim Ohnesorge.

(Applause)

MR. REMINGTON: Barry Remington, Department of Iowa, I would like to introduce

our new Commander Kevin Reece.

(Applause)

MS.KELLER: Joe Keller, Department Commander for California. I would like to introduce our new ED for California, Mr. Ross Smith.

(Applause)

MR. JACKSON: Rigley Jackson, Executive Director for District Columbia. I would like to recognize the national -- correction, our Department Commander, Clyde Pike, Jr.

(Applause)

MR. ROWE: Ken Rowe, Department Commander Illinois. I would like to introduce our new Executive Director, Joe Bartley.

(Applause)

MS. FOLEY: Hello Chris Foley, past Department Commander Alaska. I would like to introduce our new ED Brenda Coons.

(Applause)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: All right, thank you all and congratulations to all the new department commanders, post commanders and executive directors that were just introduced. A couple of pieces of information that I would like to put before you. Just a little bit of clarifications from some of the proposals from our convention sites today.

The handicap rooms from the Cherokee, they are still not sure of how many there are, but they said there are plenty was the word that she used. Lord knows what that means. The Atlantic City did say free parking will be free for everybody through there. And the Galt House reduced their room rates to 159, which Finance Officer McFarlain, do we have the final price that comes out after the 159 room rate on that one? Or he run away? Okay. I was going to say, I thought that his wife might have tied him up after she nominated him.

MS. : 177 --

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: It is 17.65 percent is their tax rate, so 159 times 1.1765. \$187.06 total price on that one, then they said it would go up \$5 for 2031. So, just so you can keep that in your considerations for when we have that conversation tomorrow.

Mr. Executive Director, do you have anything else that you need today?

(No response.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: All right, so the banquet tonight is at 1800, 6 o'clock, for those of you that don't like that kind of math, you must have your ticket present this year. We have really taken a conscious effort to make sure that we are getting the best product for you so you must have your ticket or you will not be able to enter the banquet. So if you have not picked them up you must see Miss Tiffany and make sure you have them.

And tomorrow I have been told by the Provost Marshal that if you do not have your credential, you will not be allowed on the floor. So you must have your credential and you must be properly registered to be on the floor tomorrow for voting purposes.

And we have some people over yonder.

MR. STONE: Hey, my name is Joshua Stone from Virginia. And I just wanted to know earlier, when you sent half the room out to the parking lot to get their cars, we were going to vote on some rate increases. When is that going to take place now since that is going to --

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: That will be right off the top on our meeting tomorrow with so many people that were in and out, we wanted to have an err of caution of making sure that everybody has the opportunity to be here to vote on those CBL Amendments tomorrow.

MR. STONE: All right. Thank you.

MS. PIERCE: I would like to do one thing real quick. Mission to enhance and safeguard the entitlements for all American veterans who have served honorably and to improve the quality of life for them, their families, and the communities where they live through. Leadership, advocacy, and services. Please remember this is why we are here.

(Applause)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Sometimes it is important to be reminded. All right, so, Reception 1800, dinner 1900 tonight. Anybody want to say something?

3RD VICE CMDR. STUDEBAKER: I like to say --

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: I got somebody right there.

3RD VICE CMDR. STUDEBAKER: I like to know how much are the tickets for the banquet and is there a central location where you can pick one up? It is sold out?

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Right out there by where the registration was, it was right across the hallway. That is the centralized pickup point. And if you need to purchase

some, they have a list of people that have them available. If you need to sell some, they can put you on the list. But you are getting a little bit to the 11th hour. Anybody want to recess? Oh, there we go. We stand in recess until tomorrow at 0830.

(Meeting adjourned at 2:02 p.m. to reconvene on August 23rd, 2025 at 8:30 a.m.)

AMVETS 79th Annual Convention

Third Business Session
Meeting Minutes



Saturday,
August 23, 2025

Held at the
Sheraton Greensboro | Four Seasons Greensboro
Greensboro, North Carolina

**Morning Session
(8:35 a.m.)**

**Call to Order
by Acting Commander Paul Shipley**

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Find your seats, please. Find your seats. All right. Just a couple of housekeeping announcements everybody. We are going to have a couple of floor visits here at 8:30. So I know that all the public postings said 9:00 a.m. We are probably not going to get into any real business until 9:00 a.m. Okay?

We are going to have Madam President and the Suns Commander come in. They are going to chat to us for a second. Okay?

And make sure that if you have somebody that wants to have their opportunity to vote, that they are in this room by 10:00 a.m. 10:00 a.m. to vote.

And I believe it goes without saying, if you have a medical condition that would prohibit you from staying here; I know we have a lot of people that are on water pills, we have a lot of people like that, please let the Provost know. They can assist you safely with that and make sure that you are not influencing anything inappropriately so we can let them out. I know we have at least one person that came to me today. You can go out and come right back in for that purpose and that purpose only.

If you have a cell phone on, it is going to be 25 bucks, and that will be payable immediately and it is going to Horace Johnson's project. All right?

All right. I have got Rigley. Is Chris ready to come in?

(Pause)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: All right. Has everybody got enough sugar to be able to stay awake for this? If you ain't got enough sugar, I have got a bag full of it up here. I am not campaigning. I just don't want to take it home with me. There's nuts and other stuff out there. She doesn't want to take it home with her either. We are not campaigning. But if you wouldn't mind voting for everybody, we would appreciate it today.

**Invocation
by National Chaplain Rigley K. Jackson**

CHAPLAIN JACKSON: Good morning.

(Chorus of "good morning").

(Prayer)

(Chorus of "Amen").

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY:

CHAPLAIN JACKSON:

**Honors to the Colors
by National Provost Art Majors**

PROVOST MARSHALL MAJORS: AMVETS: Attention. Hand salute.

(Pledge of Allegiance.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Please be seated. On a personal note I want to say thank you to everybody that came up to my daughters and talked to them about singing the National Anthem and playing Taps. They truly appreciate all of the support that you guys have shown them, and Kelsey was brought to tears by it last night. So thank you all for everything that you are doing for them.

(Applause)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: We are an AMVETS family and we want to see AMVETS family do well, and that's all across this organization; up and down in every one of our orgs.

So at this time, could you please bring the Suns Commander in. National Suns Commander Owen Jackson.

(Applause)

MR. JACKSON: I'm just going to keep this very, very short. I have a check that I want to present to First Vice Commander Paul Shipley for Commander Johnson's project. And then, thank you veterans and good luck in your elections, and I'll let you guys get to your business.

(Applause)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Owen is a man of few words, but they're always poignant. Good job, Sons of AMVETS. \$500 towards Commander Johnson's project.

(Applause)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Is there a Saddest? We've got a Saddest. The Saddest was in the hall right there. But she was dressed like an AMVET. So I don't know.

For those of you just coming in, we have tons of sugar for you stay awake in the meeting. Please get yourselves handfuls of it.

(Pause)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: So my oldest daughter is really fond of this joke that she likes to tell all the time, and it's what do you call a pile of cats? A meow-tain. I told her it

wouldn't work, but she just keeps saying it over and over again. So I think she might want to be a dentist, because that's like Novocain. It just keeps going and going and going.

Second Vice, could you call the Saddest and see if she is around somewhere? She went out the door. Oh, they are waiting on the next Saddest. Well, tell the Saddest to get her sad ass in here, and then she can bring the other Saddest in a minute. But I have got something for her.

(Chorus of "Boos").

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Hey, Saddest. I need you to be an AMVET for about 37 seconds.

Last evening Commander Johnson wanted to recognize your service and your aid to him for this year of stepping out and getting out and doing anything that he could ask. As the Saddest you stepped up, but you also stepped up as an AMVET. So with his appreciation, Commander Johnson would like to present you with this award as the National Officer of the Year.

(Applause)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: All right. Now you can go back to being a jackass.

(Chorus of "boos").

MS. DILLON: You wouldn't expect me to be on time now, would you? I was waiting for the incoming Saddest, but he's not on time either. Anyway, I'd like to thank -- I'm going to straight talk.

I'd like to thank all of you guys and gals for all the help and support that you've given us over the year for nursing scholarships. As you know, that is our prime focus. Of course, the main one is promoting AMVETS. But with nursing scholarships it's something that helps every person in the world. We would not be who we were without our nurses.

So I'm going to ask once again. I'm going to ask the provost marshals to pass around bags. Anything you guys can help to put in that bag to help us with our nursing scholarships would be greatly appreciated. I mean, even change helps. It all adds up.

Our newest Saddest is Kim Ardrey. He is the first Sons to become the National Saddest. So if he ever does decide to show up, I'll point him out and you guys can boo at him. In the corner. I was going to get him right now.

Anyway, thank you all.

(Chorus of "boos").

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: So as goofy as we can be with sad sacks, sad sacks do have a very, very important purpose in this org. If you've needed a nurse, you know how important their cause is. So, please, open up your hearts --

(Chorus of "boos".)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Can the members of the National CBL Committee please follow Deputy J.A. Smith out into the hallway.

Oh, we're going to let this guy up on the stage? Boo-oo-oo.

(Chorus of "boos".)

MS. DILLON: So, this is the guy I was talking about. He's pretty sad. He's a chicken shit, he's a sad ass and he's going to do a horrible job this year. I don't think he'll even compete with what I did, but we'll see. Kim Ardrey.

(Chorus of "boos".)

MR. ARDREY: Well, first off, I don't want to compete because she's a vet. And being a Son and having to disrespect you all, that's really tough for me. So I prepared myself to talk to you guys, and I wrote it down this morning. Oh, wait a minute. Oh, no. Oh, crap. I used the wrong piece. I'm sorry. Doggonit.

I don't know what I want to say, but I will do my best to disrespect all of you and hate you all. And whatever I can do to make your lives miserable, I will try.

So I am honored to be the first Son to be in as a National Saddest, and I will do my worst to hold that chair. And thank you all.

(Chorus of "boos".)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Any further committee reports, please line up at the microphones. We are waiting on Madam President. But if you have a committee report, let's knock it out.

PNC Clark, you have the mic. Somebody get that man a stepstool.

**Final Committee Reports
Council of Past National Commanders and
Honors and Awards Committee
by PNC Clark**

PNC CLARK: This is the report from the Council of Past National Commanders and the Honors and Awards Committee. First, a pin winner. The pin winner for the departments is Connecticut, and for the -- I'm sorry. For the state. The department winner is the Sons of AMVETS Massachusetts.

(Applause)

PNC CLARK: The Sons of AMVETS National AIDS Support Award goes to Dave MacAfee.

(Applause)

PNC CLARK: The Ladies Auxiliary Humanitarian Award goes to Mike Rowe, who you might know from Dirty Jobs and the Maytag Sales Loneliest Repairman in Town. The Riders Guardian Award goes to Wayne Kauffman. The Juniors Award this year goes to our friend from Florida, Joe Piening.

(Applause)

PNC CLARK: AMVET of the Year, also from Florida, Larry Arnette.

(Applause)

PNC CLARK: And lastly, the coveted Silver Helmet Awards. Two recipients this year. First, from Ohio, under Americanism is Gary Sallaude.

(Applause)

PNC CLARK: And from the Department of D.C., Billie Ainsworth.

(Applause)

PNC CLARK: Thank you all.

MOTION

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Can I get a motion to accept the Past National Commanders Awards Report?

VOICES: So moved.

PNC RILEY: Second.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: All right. Seconded Rege Riley.

Any questions on the report?

(No response.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Hearing none, in all favor of accepting the report state aye.

(Chorus of "ayes".)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Opposed, nay.

(No response.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: The ayes have it.

Mr. Provost Marshal, please escort Madam President in.

(Applause)

**National Ladies Auxiliary Report
by President Cynthia Rice**

MS. RICE: Good morning, gentlemen, AMVETS, ladies and gentlemen. Thank you for your service by the way. So I wanted to come on your floor. You know, I really missed having my Commander Horace with me this year. He's been in my heart and my prayers all year long. You know, it's something to look forward to as a national president, being with your counterpart.

So, A.J., if you could please tell him that I really, really missed him this year.

So on our national floor we decided to pass a hat for his project. I don't even know how to say that because there are so many abbreviations to it. But the alcohol and drug rehabilitation thing that he's done.

But anyway, we collected -- we previously gave him \$100. Well, we thought, no, that ain't enough. So I asked the ladies to pass a hat. They came up with \$1300. So collectively, we are donating \$1500 to his project.

(Applause)

MS. RICE: That's from the MS National Ladies Auxiliary family. That's from everyone that was present on the floor and just representing national. So here's the check for his project.

Thank you for allowing me to be on your floor and thank you for your support all these years as I made my way up here. And I'll be a was-he. I'm an is-he and I'll be a was-he in about an hour and a half. Thank you again.

(Applause)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: So today we've really seen the Sons step up and make a donation to Commander Johnson's project. We've really seen the National Ladies Auxiliary step up and make donations to Commander Johnson's project.

I challenge each and every one of you in here. Let's help Commander Johnson's project be a great success. He did not have the opportunity to go around the country this year to let you all know about what he was trying to raise funds for. So if anybody has any donations that they would like to present for Commander Johnson's project, please bring them up today.

If you personally feel it in your heart to help donate to this project, please don't hesitate. I challenge each and every one of you to find

what you can. If it is a dollar, if it is 100, whatever you can afford, whatever you can help with, please donate it to Commander Johnson's project.

You can see the Finance officer right here. He will take your money. He likes to take people's money as much as he can. So, please, help Commander Johnson with this one.

All right. What am I pointing to? Oh, I see some people over here. Is that Clyde?

MR. PIKE: The District of Columbia would like to donate \$500 to the Commander's project.

(Applause)

MR.
: Department of Florida, \$2200.

(Applause)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Thank you, D.C. Thank you, Florida.

MS.
: The Department of Louisiana has \$1,000 for the Commander's project.

(Applause)

MS.
: The Department of Alaska.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Department of Alaska.

MS.
: Department of Alaska. We brought, between all of our entities, \$975 for the Commander's charity. Thank you.

(Applause)

MR.
: District 5. We'd like to give a check for 50 bucks for the Commander's project.

(Applause)

MS. BRITTON: Laura Britton, the Department of North Carolina, \$500 for the Commander's project from the department.

(Applause)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Thank you for all of those that stepped up and donated money to support the Commander's project.

At this time, Mr. Provost Marshal, could you escort the White Clover Princess in.

**White Clover Princess
by Josephine Johnson**

MS. JOHNSON: Good morning everybody.

(Chorus of "good morning".)

MS. JOHNSON: If you don't know me already, I am Josie. I'm the Past White Clover Princess for Wisconsin for the year 2024 to 2025. So a little bit of why I did White Clover Princess. This wasn't something I did. It became a huge part of what I am today.

Ever since my grandpa was Commander and I met the first White Clover Princess I told my whole family I was going to be her one day. Well, look at me now.

(Laughter)

MS. JOHNSON: I finally got to live that dream that I had once as a little girl. But not just because of the title, but because I got a chance to represent something I truly cared about.

Over the past year I've made so many unforgettable memories. Ones that I will carry with me forever. I honestly don't have the words to describe how thankful I am to have gotten a part to experience all this. I've gone to so many different events. From simple things like picnics and parades, where I got to walk in one for the first time, to something totally out of my comfort zone, like riding a motorcycle in a dress.

(Laughter)

MS. JOHNSON: Then there was the Freedoms Foundation where I got to learn so much history and I made so many new friendships who I still talk to this day. After that I was attending the 9/11 ceremony, each moment meaningful in its own way.

One of the most powerful memories was going to the Pearl Harbor ceremony and having the chance to meet one of the last living survivors. That moment will stick with me forever.

Toward the end of the my term I got to go to Washington, D.C. twice. The first time we visited the Capitol to speak to politicians about bills we believed in and expressing our voices. Then I would back and I had one of the most emotional experiences of my life. Laying a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. At that moment I felt so proud and grateful to be representing the AMVETS and for our country.

But not only am I grateful for the experiences I've gotten to go on, but also the way this program has truly shaped me as a human being. I've gotten to learn more about public speaking, communication and honestly just talking to people normally. Yes, school does that, but this actually makes you do it more.

And one of the best parts of this journey has been the connections I've made with all of you. You aren't just people that I see at events or at a dinner, but you guys are truly my AMVETS family. Even though I've only seen some of you guys for such a short time, I feel like I've made such a strong connection.

This wasn't about wearing a crown or a sash. It's about being surrounded by the people who truly care about you and actually make this experience very special. So I am so thankful for every friendship, every smile and all the love felt throughout this entire experience.

Every state has the option to have this program, but Wisconsin is the only one that's had it for 50 years. It's amazing and life-changing. So if you're interested in this program for your state, if you have any questions, feel free to ask me.

So it has been an honor and privilege to serve as your 2024/2025 White Clover Princess for Wisconsin.

(Applause)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Thank you so much.

Mr. Provost Marshal, could you please have Jeremiah Botkin come to the podium. Yeah, you. I see those fingers.

(Applause)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: So as much as I would like to have the honor of introducing the Gold Star Mothers' National President, Jeremiah has spent so much time with these ladies, and you can see it in their eyes that he holds a very special part in their heart. So, Jeremiah, would you please introduce the National Gold Star Mothers' President and some of her officers.

Gold Star Mothers By Annette Kirk

MR. BOTKIN: I'm going to try and get through this with a dry eye. Those of you who know me know what my passion is, and it's Gold Star Families, Gold Star Mothers, Gold Star Spouses. Everybody. These ladies have been an incredible part of what we do. What AMVETS does. Our relationship with them has grown over the last few years, and I'm very proud to call these ladies my friends and feel like I'm a small part of their family right now.

So with that being said, I'd like to introduce all three Gold Star Mothers that are with us today. Annette Kirk, American Gold Star Mothers' President.

(Applause)

MR. BOTKIN: And Patty Elliott, Past President; and Nicole Chilton, the IT Director.

(Applause)

MS. KIRK: All right. Good morning everyone.

(Chorus of "good morning".)

MS. KIRK: You've all heard me speak already in all the different groups, but I hope you all had a great weekend at your convention. We do really appreciate being invited; being included. You know, we all serve. We're continuing our service. I am a veteran. I'm considering joining.

(Applause)

MS. KIRK: I'm not sure who I have to see. But I'm pretty sure by saying that someone will approach me. Oh-oh, I see them digging in the back.

Okay. So I just think everybody that I've met -- everyone that I've met this weekend has just been so friendly. And the people that I already know, you're wonderful people. I love you.

You know, you've been so supportive for myself, my board, even Patty's board and Pam Stempele* when she was president, and my local chapter and my department. So, way to go, Florida.

I love serving. It all started when I was 19 and went in. I raised my right hand and went in the Army and --

(Whoo-ha)

MS. KIRK: There it is. There it is. And my son followed. I pretty much knew by the time he was three, as he was reading some of my books that I had. That kid. So I'm glad that I'm here and continuing the service as you all are. It's so important.

And our moms in the membership they are continuing their sons' and daughters' service and they want to volunteer. That is their purpose. So if you need them, if you need them to volunteer for something and you don't know who they are, please reach out. Come to our website. President, you can reach out. There's just a button. Ms. IT, she set that up; very easy. Or info at. And we also have on the website by each state. So you can go there and click on the state for direction communication.

Also, I know that you've provided for our Gold Star Mothers, and we really appreciate that. We do offer -- we're going to say scholarships. We have our Giving Grace Grant where we help our mothers. We do not have benefits.

Most of you, you may know that. You may or may not know that. But we do not have benefits as Gold Star Mothers. So we try and help our mothers within.

So we do accept donations. I'm just saying. We do have expenses, just like every other organization, as a 501(c)(3).

I don't know. Anything else? Memorial Day. Rolling to Remember. I wanted to get the name just right.

The Riders, you guys, you're amazing. Men and women. You're amazing. And anybody else, if you want to join us, we would love to have you. It's a very special day in Washington, D.C., to be there, and we just love the support. So please, if you want to be there, get with Jeremiah. There he is. He's hiding in the back. Okay.

So, thank you for this, and I will look it over when I have my glasses on to make sure that I don't fill out the wrong information. So, thank you.

(Inaudible/indiscernible comments made away from a microphone.)

MS. KIRK: Thank you, ma'am.

Did you want to say something, Patty.

MS. ELLIOTT: You know, last year -- so I just went out of office 60 days ago. I'm the has-been now. But just the tremendous love and support we have felt from the AMVETS family, all of you all, and the way you all work together for the common purpose.

Our mission statements are the same. We want to take care of our veterans and our military. We are stronger together. It's not, you know, you do your things in this pocket and we do our things in here. When we combine our efforts there's no telling what we could accomplish, and we just thank you all for being part of our family.

(Applause)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Madam President and your fellow officers, I would like to present you with one of our National Commander Horace Johnson's coins for all that you do to support us as veterans and for those -- and for the sacrifice you have made.

MS. KIRK: Let me say one thing about that. So this past year at Memorial Day we did not -- there was not a White House breakfast, but last year at Veterans Day there was. And I just happened to get in the Secret Service security line right behind Horace, and I was by myself and he was by himself. And we got to walk through that together and walk up, and he was

so excited about getting to go to the White House. And he was talking about, you know, who would have ever thought that I -- when I was growing up, that someday I would be walking into the White House.

And I will always -- one of my best memories is that I was able to take his picture standing outside of the White House for him to have as a memory. So our prayers are with him and I hope that he and his family, you know, weather this storm.

(Applause)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: So we've been building the relationship with Gold Star Mothers for the past number of years that we've been doing Rolling to Remember in D.C. If you have not had the opportunity to come to D.C. for Rolling to Remember, please make your way there over Memorial Day weekend. It will touch your heart in ways you can never expect.

It is the single largest one day veterans motorcycle demonstration in the world. And when you hear them start rolling that thunder before they start up and before they start rolling down there to let the politicians in D.C. know that we will not stand by and let our unaccounted for persons overseas be forgotten, and what's very important for us to add to that, veteran suicide. So we are standing behind anybody that is supporting bringing all of our people home and keeping all of our people that have served here with us and alive.

To that note, we also have a representative in the room of the Gold Star Spouses. While she is here as an AMVET registered, I'm not trying to call you out or single you out, but I do want to recognize your organization because you do great things for families of veterans also.

So please join me in giving a round of applause to the Gold Star Spouses' representative, Ms. Kim from Ohio. Would you like to say a few words?

(Applause)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Sorry. I didn't mean to put you on the spot.

**Gold Star Spouses
by Kimberly Hazelgrove.**

MS. HAZELGROVE: Good morning everybody.

(Chorus of "good morning".)

MS. HAZELGROVE: Thank you. I just want to say, yeah, Ohio. I'm from Post 32 in Elyria, Ohio. I have only recently become an AMVETS member; a year ago when we put in a Wood Williams Foundation memorial and

AMVETS Post 32 was our Honor Guard, and I wanted to give back to all of the support that they gave to me.

So my name is Kimberly Hazelgrove. My husband, Chief Warrant Officer Brian David Hazelgrove, died in Iraq about 22 years ago in 2004, leaving me with four children. I was active duty, and our youngest was six months old. So I turned that grief and anger into a passion for advocacy, because what I learned in 2004 was that an active duty surviving spouse could not stay in the military and be non-deployable.

But if I was an acting duty sibling, I would have been non-deployable and been able to keep my career and probably would have been retired at this time. So there was a lot of inequity in benefits. There was a lot of inequity in how surviving spouses were treated by the United States Government, and so I turned that into a passion for advocacy.

And I will say that Gold Star Spouses of America are the men and women who have lost not only their spouse on active duty, but also a service connected disability because they are also entitled to benefits from Veterans Affairs. And if you don't know, those benefits are inequitable and they're not adequate. The main benefit hasn't been updated in over 30 years.

So I'm asking all my brothers and sisters out there to please learn what our policy issues are and to fight not only for the surviving spouses across this country, but also to fight for your spouse. Because if you happen to die from a service connected disability, they will too be in the same position that I am.

So thank you for your time and thank you for the opportunity to be recognized and to be honored. I really appreciate it. Thank you.

(Applause)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: All right. Mr. Provost Marshal, could you bring in the National Juniors. I think we are getting towards the end of the visits.

(Applause)

National Juniors by Corbyn Dolf

MR. DOLF: Please be seated. Good morning National Officers and AMVETS family. Thank you for letting me on your floor and I would just like to thank everyone who has helped me out throughout the years and everyone who has donated to my project. I would also like to thank my coordinators and all my officers.

My officers this year were Senior Vice Ash Stopyra, Junior Vice Kelsey Shipley, Chaplain

Hannah Shipley, Secretary Viola W., Treasurer Peyton Jackson, Sergeant at Arms Corey Riley, which those two could not be here due to school starting, and PRO Charlotte Shipley, and ---- Aidyn Dolf.

(Applause)

MR. DOLF: Thank you and congratulations to all officers on a good year.

And now, the 50/50 tickets. The green ticket first. The green ticket number is 181299.

(No response.)

MR. DOLF: The green ticket, 181299.

Now the red ticket, 500311.

(Applause)

MR. DOLF: Thank you.

(Applause)

MR. DOLF: And now, help me welcome our new 2025/2026 National Juniors President Ash Stopyra.

(Applause)

MS. STOPYRA: Good morning.

(Chorus of "good morning".)

MS. STOPYRA: My name is Ashira Stopyra. Most of you know me as Ash or Ashley. I'm your newly elected National Junior AMVETS president. My project is Founding Forward and my theme is Teachings that Inspire our Tomorrow. My newly elected officers are Kelsey Shipley as Senior Vice, Corey Riley as Junior Vice, Charlotte Shipley as Secretary, Quinn Sheldon as Treasurer, Hannah Shipley as Chaplain, Corbyn Dolf as Sergeant at Arms, Layla W. as Public Relations Officer and last but not least, Parliamentarian Aidyn Dolf.

(Applause)

MS. STOPYRA: I chose Founding Forward because I have trouble knowing who I am and what I stand for, but it's simple. We're all Americans. I think we, the people, have this very much so opportunity to teach kids about their American heritage; to let people know we just don't stand for the flag, but we are the flag. And honestly, every second is worth it.

(Applause)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Congratulations to the newly elected Juniors officers and President Ash. Remember this is the future of our organization. For them to be able to see the patriotism displayed here, it will really have an

impact on their lives.

Bye, Kelsey. When you have a 14-year-old daughter, you do everything you can to get her face to turn bright red.

(Laughter)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Nobody else? You want to make a report, don't you? Yeah, yeah, yeah. Come on, PNC Brown. Come give a Credentials Reports.

Credentials Report by PNC BROWN

PNC BROWN: Good morning.

(Chorus of "good morning".)

PNC BROWN: Mainly the reason for this report is to -- if there is an issue with your count, you could come see me before 10 o'clock and we can fix it. So this is as of close of business yesterday. So I am just going to go down the list.

Alabama 4, Alaska 6, Arizona 4, Arkansas 0, California 17, Connecticut 3, District of Columbia 15, Delaware 4, Florida 39, Georgia 18, Hawaii 0, Illinois 13, Indiana 23, Iowa 4, Kansas 0, Kentucky 12, Louisiana 8, Maine 3, Maryland 6, Massachusetts 11, Michigan 7, Minnesota 0, Missouri 6, Nebraska 2, New York 29, North Carolina 26, North Dakota 2, Ohio 23, Oklahoma 1, Pennsylvania 18, South Carolina 2, Tennessee 33, Texas 8, Vermont 1, Virginia 16, Washington State 3, West Virginia 4, Wisconsin 10, for a total of 381.

So yesterday we had -- yesterday we had 26 sign in. If you need any corrections, please see me at the desk and we will see if we can fix it.

Any questions?

(Inaudible response.)

PNC BROWN: 381. That was as of close of business yesterday. We're still checking people in for another 35 minutes. So if you've got people here that you don't see where they're supposed to be, text them and get them here, because we close at exactly 10 o'clock. If they're in line at 10 o'clock, we will still register them.

MOTION

If there are no questions, I will move for the adoption of my report.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: I have a motion to accept the report and a second by Terry Corson, PDC Florida. Any questions on the Credentials Report?

(No response.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Hearing none, all in favor of approving the Credentials Report state aye.

(Chorus of "ayes".)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Opposed, nay.

(No response.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: So we will see at what, 10:03 with the rest of the report?

PNC BROWN: Pretty much.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: All right everybody. Time to -- what? Yeah. We've got a little bit of business to do yet you all.

MS. DILLON: Commander, if I may?

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Yup.

MS. DILLON: One, the mic is not working. Two, the ---- asked the Connecticut NEC to count the funds that were donated, and we received \$985.06 for nursing scholarships. Thank you everybody.

(Applause)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Okay. Going back into CBL Amendments, Executive Director Chenelly.

Amendments by Joe Chenelly

MR. CHENELLY: All right. Good morning everybody.

So when we suspended yesterday because a large portion of our members had to leave to move their vehicles, we had worked our way a little bit through CBL 26-01. It had been amended. This is the annual membership dues, increasing the membership dues by \$10. The amendment that was adopted was to move that to 2026/2027. So it would not start for a year from next week.

Is there any further discussion on 26-01?

(No response.)

MOTION

MR. CHENELLY: Hearing none, all in favor say aye.

(Chorus of "ayes".)

MR. CHENELLY: All opposed, same sign.

(Chorus of "ayes".)

MR. CHENELLY: We'll do the standing vote, please. Provost. All in favor, please stand. The ayes. These are supporting the amendment.

(Standing vote.)

MR. CHENELLY: Who's counting this row here?

(Pause; standing vote count.)

MR. CHENELLY: 138.

All opposed, please stand.

(Standing vote.)

MR. CHENELLY: The motion fails. Those were the nays. So failed. It failed. Correct, it failed. No, I said it failed four times. The audio is not great. The speakers don't go in this direction.

MR. CHENELLY: CBL Amendment 26-02, change of the word subordinate. Source, Department of Missouri. "Be it resolved that the National CBL Article 14, subordinate organizations A, B and C and Article 15 through 22 describing other entities, remove the word subordinate and replace with the word affiliate in the AMVETS National CBL."

MOTION

Committees? Any committee reports?

(No response.)

MR. CHENELLY: Is there a second for this motion?

MS. McGLOTTEN: Second.

MR. CHENELLY: Second, Department of Alaska.

Okay. All in favor say aye.

(Chorus of "ayes".)

MR. CHENELLY: Discussion. Thank you.

MS. DILLON: Dana Dillon, Connecticut NEC. It was my understanding that we could not change the word subordinate because of the IRS laws and that the subordinate organizations, if this passed, would lose its C-19 status because of the word subordinate. It has to be subordinate.

MS. BULLOCK: Inetta Bullock, Department of Florida, also the CBL Committee. The CBL Committee did not approve this motion. We're also in agreement that information was brought forward, and we decided not to vote on this one; to pull it back.

MR. DOWNS: Mr. Chair, if I may? I'm Jack Downs. I am the maker of this amendment. I myself personally have reasons to try to get this ball rolling. It is in no shape, form or fashion to hurt the organization any at all. It's an IRS code. I knew it was going to be a hill and a battle, but I'm not ringing the bell just yet.

The word to me in itself is subordinate. We're all subordinates of some sort of some type. Heck, I mean we're subordinates of the IRS.

The reason why I bring this up is because I hear at the ground levels, at the post level and the district level and sometimes the department level. I've heard several stories this weekend since I've been here. That if it wasn't for our Sons and our Auxiliary and our Riders, how many can say in your department that there would be a lot of chapters that wouldn't be in existence right now? How many can say that?

I can say it on a personal level if it wasn't for them. The word to me is degrading, but it's a word that the IRS uses. So I do have a couple of individuals that have told me that they would look into it to see what the IRS would accept. If there's a chance for that, then fine. If this dies for a lack of a second, that's fine. At least I got the ball rolling.

Our Sons and our Auxiliary and Riders and other entities of our organization I believe deserves a better word than being a subordinate, beneath us, and that is why I made that.

Thank you very much for your time. I greatly appreciate it. Like I said, I knew it was going to be a battle and an uphill, but I'm not ringing that bell just yet. Thank you, gentlemen, ladies.

MR. CHENELLY: Thank you.

Any further discussion?

(No response.)

MR. CHENELLY: Hearing none, we will take the vote. No, we have somebody. We are real short on time.

MR. COLTER: I understand. Rob Colter from Maryland. Has our Judge Advocate been asked whether this should be ruled out of order as it is not legal per our charter or the tax code?

MR. CHENELLY: I'm sorry. We have an echo up here. We can't --

MR. COLTER: Has our Judge Advocate been asked if this should be ruled out of order as it is not legal per our charter or the tax code?

MR. CORSON: Terry Corson, Department of Florida. This is an illegal motion. If it's against the IRS rules, it's against the law and it should be an illegal motion and should not even be considered.

MR. COLTER: It should be ruled out of order.

MR. SMITH: Point of order. (Away from microphone.)

MR. CHENELLY: So we move on to --there was one -- there is one additional amendment here, 26-03. This was not in the book. I know the CBL Committee did review it. This is the housekeeping amendment. In part we are already out of compliance and have been for years where a section of the constitution says that our national convention must be held in the first two weeks of August.

That was something that the convention body decided to override years ago now, as the costs of doing conventions in the first half of August are substantially higher than doing it the second half of August. And then the second part of this amendment here, and I will read through this in just a moment; we'll go through it and have it all up on the screen here, would remove the limit of how far out you, the convention body, can choose convention sites.

And this is in response to the convention body's motion that we unanimously passed last year asking the Finance Committee to seek out multi-year contracts, not consecutive year contracts. But convention sites where we can get a much better deal over the course of several years where you could go back to the same site with numerous years in between.

So this was something that the Finance Committee had to put together to get to clean up here to make sure that we stay compliant, but also be able to honor your wishes. So I'm going to read this entire one since it wasn't in the book.

This is Draft Amendment 26-03. Subject, National Convention Planning. National Finance Committee is the source.

"Whereas, the AMVETS National Department's largest expenditure each year is the cost of holding its annual national convention; whereas, significant savings can be realized by committing to multiple year contracts with hotels and convention centers to host AMVETS most important event each year; whereas, the 2024 National Convention Body passed a motion directing the AMVETS National Finance Committee to find and negotiate multi-year contracts with multiple convention sites to obtain optimal terms and rates; whereas, the AMVETS National Constitution, Article V, Section 1, stipulates convention sites may only

be planned up to five years in advance.

Therefore be it resolved, the AMVETS National CBL Article VII, Section 5 to be replaced with the following: A national convention shall be held annually in the United States of America during August at a time and place selected by the delegates present and voting at a national convention."

So there on the screen is how the one paragraph would be edited. There is an error and I made this error when typing it in here. As you may have heard or read on the screen there, Article V, Section 1 and Article VII, Section 5 they are not correct. Only one of those is correct. So we will need an amendment for that to begin with?

But discussion? Or is there a second?

MR. STUDEBAKER: Second. Studebaker from Illinois.

MR. CHENELLY: Thank you. Chris Studebaker, Department of Illinois.

Seconds? Discussion?

MS. DILLON: The subject line needs to be amended.

MR. CHENELLY: Okay. So it will go as printed; as printed presented to the CBL Committee. We'll have that -- the subject line won't go into the amendment.

MR. STUDEBAKER: Mr. Chairman? Chris Studebaker, National 3rd Vice Commander, and I am in favor of this change to the constitution and bylaws, because as a member of the Finance Committee last year this body gave us the authority to start seeking multi-year bids. And that is exactly what we did this year, and we have spent numerous days and hours and time coming up with a plan that gets us out to about 2033.

But for that plan to happen, we have to get this changed. So with us being able to change this, this will save this organization hundreds of thousands of dollars for convention, because the rates that they are giving us are multi-year rates with very miniscule increases, if any increases at all.

So I encourage everybody to approve this motion. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. HENSLEY: Mr. Chairman? Ralph Hensley, National District 2 Commander, Department of Virginia. I recommend that we strike out the August month because one of the proposals we received yesterday started in July. So I think we should figure out a different way to set the date.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Just a point of clarification on the bids that we got. Those go from the Thursday before our convention dates, which would be what is covered by the CBL. They actually don't start until the middle of the next week. So it would be in August. And every one that we have received on that is like that. But they show the whole block of that period, which doesn't actually contain sections of the convention.

MR. HENSLEY: But it still doesn't give you any wiggle room in case you have to go into September or anything like that. So yeah.

MR. CHENELLY: The conventions have to be held in August because that's the end of the membership year.

MR. HENSLEY: Correct.

MR. CHENELLY: But I get it. We've arrived at our convention sites before on like July 30th, but then the actual opening ceremony and first business session is not until August 1st.

MR. HENSLEY: All right. As long as the proposals and the bids that we get won't be in any conflict.

MR.
: Mr. Chairman?

MR. CHENELLY: Yes?

MR.
: Point of clarification. If you go to the top of the amendment that you have on the screen, the subject says changing the word subordinate. That is not the correct --

MR. CHENELLY: Oh.

MR.
: Just so we know we're voting on the right thing here.

MR. CHENELLY: Right. The subject should be National Convention Planning. What was submitted to the CBL Committee has the correct subject line. I apologize. In my copy and paste here I didn't copy and paste the entire thing.

Microphone two.

MR.
: Mr. Chairman, I think there should be one more administrative change on the amendment, and that's where -- if you get back on the screen, where it shows the resolved. It should say resolved that AMVETS National Constitution Article VII, not the CBL.

MR. CHENELLY: We can make that change or you can -- if you want to make a formal amendment, you can do that too. But we will

-- the format will be corrected when entered in.

MS. BULLOCK: Mr. Chairman, I would just like to note that the Juniors start school in August. So moving it later in the month is something that we need to -- if we want the Juniors here, we need to consider. Thank you.

MR. CHENELLY: Every effort is made and the request for proposals all does stipulate that we want them in the first two weeks of August. A lot of those bids come back here. And as you saw yesterday, some of them will have dates in the later half of August, and you see significant differences in cost. It does change from year to year, but...

Okay. No more discussion? All in favor? Oh, I'm sorry. Sorry. Deanna.

MS. BULLOCK: The CBL Committee actually amended the information. I am going to read the resolved, but we were also in agreement with the change. The subject of it.

The resolved: "AMVETS National Constitution, Article V, Section 1, to be replaced with the following:" So I'm requesting an amendment to this. "A National Convention shall be held annually in the United States of America during August at a time and place selected by the delegates present and voting at a National Convention."

MOTION

MR. CHENELLY: Thank you. That is the amendment?

MS. BULLOCK: Yes.

MR. CHENELLY: Is there a second for the amendment?

MS. MAYNARD: Second. Maynard, NEC Kentucky.

MR. CHENELLY: Thank you.

Any discussion on the amendment?

(No response.)

MR. CHENELLY: All in favor say aye.

(Chorus of "ayes".)

MR. CHENELLY: Opposed same sign.

(No response.)

MR. CHENELLY: The amendment passes. So we have amended the amendment.

MOTION

MR. CHENELLY: We will now vote on the amendment. It must be unanimous for it to pass because it is being brought to the floor here rather than coming to the department ahead of time.

All in favor say aye.

(Chorus of "ayes".)

MR. CHENELLY: All opposed?

(No response.)

MR. CHENELLY: The amendment is adopted. Thank you.

(Applause)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Okay. We are going to have the final budget presentation and finance report and the finance officer report from Finance Officer McFarlain. And following that, we will go into convention site.

Finance Officer McFarlain.

Budget Presentation by Finance Officer McFarlain

MR. McFARLAIN: Like Joe just said, you know, normally the final speech for the line officers this is our goodbye speech. Mine is never goodbye.

All right. So those of you have NEC for the finance officer report to the NEC kind of got the gist of how things are going. Membership has a traditions program that's going to be coming online that Vice Commander Shipley created. That is going to help start creating some cash flow. You'll start seeing the signage and the things like that.

But listen. To understand how the cash flow works at NHQ, we're not the service foundation, as you've heard me say over and over again. We have -- you know, we don't -- any time we go into competition trying to raise money and things like that, we're competing with the service foundation. We're competing with you guys.

So really, that membership money is our driving force and, you know, life membership we can't touch. That's restricted funds and all that kind of stuff.

So when we created the budget this year, we did anticipate -- we did not plan on the budget -- on that CBL change to pass. So no. That is not incorporated in the budget, as was said numerous times yesterday. But I am saying it clearly right now. It is not.

So when you go the budget, the page ---- saw yesterday and you click on that code, it takes

you to the nice spreadsheets and things like that. So we did have a -- we did a four-percent decrease in the budget for this coming FY. The reason being is we're going to start doing cost share between the service foundation. Chargebacks, if you will.

So employees that are doing dual rules, then we can charge their time back to the foundation, if that makes sense to you. If not, I'll break it down ---- style.

So if he does one work an hour -- if Joe does eight hours of work on Monday for the foundation, then the foundation payment is paid for Monday. If he does eight hours on Tuesday, headquarters pays him for Tuesday. If he does four hours each day, then it's four hours each day. They actually keep a log sheet of things like that.

And that goes, really, with Joe Agha*. And there are some of the bean counters that are doing the same thing. So it does help with the salary on the NHQ side.

So with all that, like I said, the budget is there. It is balanced. This is Agha's third year kind of in this whole thing together. We didn't know what we didn't know. I think now we feel very confident, Agha and I do, whenever we say we're broke. We're never going to say we're rich, but we feel very confident on where -- we feel very confident with the budget. That's why you saw the big increases last year and this year. We didn't know what we didn't know. So now we do know.

We have a three-year average. Typically in the budget world you want three years of data. We didn't have three years coming in. We've got three years now. So now we know where we are. We feel very confident where we are.

So in all that, the budget is there. I encourage you to review it. We dug through it in depth. The only change you'll see, and it's already been made, was on the contingencies and administrative. We did add a \$10,000 line item in there. It was an error on our end. Whenever we had it, the Finance Committee caught it and we did make that correction.

So that's the -- like I say, so the budget is there. It was reviewed by the Finance Committee and approved and NEC as well.

All right. The other thing this past year -- you know, you gave us the authority. Last year we asked you on this floor to do multi-year deals. We did that. I commend the line officers up here and the Finance Committee. I can't thank the Finance Committee enough for all they do. The Construction Committee and all those guys.

So we went out and we did that. We have a

plan going out to 30 -- what is it? Thirty to 34. We are going to go through that where you see the convention bids. And I'll tell you be very cognizant on -- remember. Okay? Let me go back a little bit.

The travel for all this is extremely expensive. Your departments pay a good part of it. Your posts pay a good part. I know you come out with personal funds and things like that. But there's a lot that comes out of NHQ for all the NECs. All you NECs, you know, it's \$1500 an NEC on average and then some. All right? All of that comes out of this budget.

So we take everything into consideration. When we talk about the multi-year deals, nothing is going to be back to back. That's what I kept getting steamrolled about. We hate going to the same places. Look back 20 years. We went to the same places no matter what. We did. There's been one voted on that way.

So we went in and we did the multi-year deals. Hey, look, if we come this year and this year? You know, they gave us really good, really, really good rates.

We also broke it down and separated it where we're not staying in the northeast, we're not staying in the south, we're not staying -- we're moving every year. We're going from north, south, east to west every year. It's a rotation. But it is -- we will be going back to some of the same places. That's not a bad thing because we don't have all the questions about the corkage fees, the ice, the water. We know what we got.

If we come back to Greensboro, we know exactly what we get in Greensboro. We know the facilities. Every knows where they're going. It's too easy, right? So we took all that into consideration.

So in saying all that, be real cognizant on how you vote for that because there's a lot of benefits to the organization financially. Especially financially. We really need that cost savings. I'm just being honest with you.

Membership is our prime revenue. Just think about it like this. As long as membership keeps going down, we're going -- that's -- it's a decline for NHQ. So that's the best way to look at it.

So with all that, Commander, that is my report and I move for its adoption.

MOTION

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: A Second, Gerhard, Florida, was the first one that I heard.

All right. Any questions on the Finance Officer's Report?

(No response.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Hearing none, all in favor say aye.

(Chorus of "ayes".)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Opposed nay.

(No response.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Good job, Kelly.

All right. The time is 9:50. We have to secure the doors at 10:00. We can continue business once the doors are secured. So we are going to do a 10-minute break so you can do your potty breaks or you can get something.

Remember, if you're not back here and you don't have a very valid medical reason, you ain't getting back in. So...

(Whereupon, at 9:50 a.m., a recess was taken, and the meeting resumed at 10:05 a.m.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Take your seats, please. Take your seats.

(Pause)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Please take your seats. Please takes your seats.

(Pause)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: I think 10:05 means the new 10 o'clock. So it's kind of like orange it he new black.

Provost Marshals, please secure the doors. The only people getting in have got a medical reason, which means if your bladder wants to explode, I consider it a medical reason. Okay? But you'd better be quick about it and no shaking more than twice.

(Laughter)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Oh, that's my swear jar again. Darn it.

Okay. So here is how this works. When we start elections, you need to have a count for your state. If you're short, that person does not get a vote. I'm not talking about Tina Lumpkins kind of short. I'm saying if you're supposed to have nine and you got seven, you only get seven. I love you, Tina.

Convention Site Vote by Acting Commander Shipley

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: All right. So back to Convention Bids. We all saw the presentations yesterday. I did want to put out the information that the Galt House came back with reduced prices yesterday. Just for

consideration purposes.

Okay. So the Tropicana. First, they told me that it will be complimentary parking. The Atlantic City, New Jersey, Tropicana said there will be complimentary parking. And they said for hospitality rooms with ice, because of the way the local stuff is, they can provide four hospitality rooms with complimentary ice.

Any above that would be a \$100 delivery fee for those other rooms. They said that they would be able to pay for those. And she said if it is a deal breaker, she can probably get them to go further. But right now they're offering four free hospitality rooms, and their room rate is the 159-plus-plus.

Sorry. People keep texting me. So I have 700 million texts to get what I have.

Okay. The Galt House. They offered 159 for 2028, with a \$5 increase for the 2031 proposition. And that, when you take the all in for the Tropicana, it was 187.70 for all their fees and things. And for the Galt House it would 187.06. The Galt House also said that they will be able to reduce the East Tower parking. They said they don't have a rate on that, but they said it will be significantly reduced. They just do not have the rate for it right now.

All right. I am going to pass this over to Joe Chenelly so he can go through the specifics. I just wanted to give you the little bits that were extra brought in.

Ms. Doss.

MS. DOSS: Laura Doss, State of Illinois, Department of Illinois. I do have a question that I regret I was not quick enough on the draw to ask each proposal, and that is shuttles. I would not have thought of that prior to coming to this convention. So what would be extremely helpful is knowing when the shuttles -- you know, how late they run.

For those of you who don't know, my experience -- when I flew out here initially, I should have been here in plenty of time. But as I was driving to the airport, my flight was delayed. Not a problem. But then it was delayed, delayed to where I couldn't catch my connecting flight. I got rerouted and then rerouted on a reroute.

When I got here, I was here. I was happy. My bags -- I hit the lottery. My bags were one of the first 10 bags on the thing. That's never happened in my life. I get out. I call the hotel 13 minutes after the shuttles stopped running. So my option to get here essentially was to Uber.

So my question is when do the shuttles stop running on a nightly basis? And depending

on when that is, can we get a general Uber amount because that is extremely important. Thank you.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Okay. Uber would be impossible for us to know because ---- surge pricing.

MS. DOSS: Right. Well --

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: What we can say is the Cherokee North Carolina site, they stated they will be able to set up shuttle service on a continuous running cycle at \$40 each way, and it's an hour ride.

For the Tropicana site they said that if you fly in on American Airlines, American Airlines has a shuttle that's included in your flight cost. Once again, it's an hour ride from Philadelphia to there. That runs based off of the flights that you would come in on American.

That Galt House does have a shuttle that runs 24 hours a day to the airport there, and it's complimentary to the hotel.

MS. DOSS: Outstanding. Thank you.

PNC SMITH: PNC Timothy Gene Smith from Tennessee.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: From Tennessee.

PNC SMITH: I would like to make a motion that you have a stand on each individual site and let us stand. I think that would go faster than anything, and I make that as a motion.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: That we do a stand vote on each individual site?

PNC SMITH: That's my motion, sir.

MS. BARBER: Katy Barber, ----.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: So I have a motion to do a stand vote based on each of the three sites, with a second from Katy Barber from Florida.

MS. BARBER: B-a-r-b-e-r.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: B-a-r-b-e-r. Can I get a shave after the meeting?

(Laughter)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: All right. So, please. Any questions you have on the sites we should be able to address them. So if you have questions on the Atlantic City Tropicana site, go ahead and go for your questions.

(No response.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Going once,

going twice.

(No response.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: If you have any questions on the Cherokee North Carolina, the Cherokee Harrah's, please stand up. Any questions?

(No response.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Any questions? Any questions?

(No response.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: All right. If you have any questions on the Galt House in Louisville, Kentucky, home of bourbon? I'm sorry. That's just a personal thing. Any questions?

(No response.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Any questions?

(No response.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Okay. Mr. Finance Officer, could you please give the Finance Committee's recommendation and reasoning, please.

MR. McFARLAIN: Commander, the Finance Committee met and the recommendation for the 2028 convention is the Galt House in Louisville, Kentucky.

(Applause)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: All right. He ain't got a mic. You don't need a second on the Finance Committee's approval on that one. But I appreciate it, Chris.

Could you please give the justification.

MR. McFARLAIN: Without going too far into it on how we did the long-range planning, but that was a factor in the long-range planning. Plus the multi-year deal. That was a factor also with the notes. So the same deal that they offered us. Where is all this? Oh, right here.

The same deal that they offered for '28 they also offered for '31. So we're talking in 2031 getting the same rate. We're still under \$200 a night; \$50,000 in food and beverage. We took all that. We weighed value on everything.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: I can give you three major key factors we look at when the Finance Committee is debating these. And this is Paul 1st Vice. I'm not saying this as chairing currently.

We really look at food and beverage. We really look at the transportation costs for you guys

and for us because, as the Finance Officer stated earlier, that transportation cost we do incur for the NEC members that come to the convention. So that is a huge savings for us when we're looking at a Galt House, which our committee did decide to endorse because of that cost. It's cheaper for you to get there, it's cheaper for us to pay for you to get there and then that food and beverage is huge. You know, we are trying to reduce the liability of the organization for funds going out.

So, with that being said -- yes, Ms. Bullock? Can you go to the mic so we can get it on record.

MS. BULLOCK: One of the questions that we did is with being at 501(c)(19) why are we still charged the taxes? Is there no way that they can abscond those?

MR. McFARLAIN: Okay. That's between you, the individual, and the property. So an individually billed account, like your personal credit card or whatever, is not taxed. It carries no weight, no nothing. But your post, if your post has (c)(19) status and is registered with that state for non-profit status and that state has acknowledged your non-profit status, then they won't charge you taxes.

So it's something that you have to actually use your post or your department or AMVETS' method of payment. But that's something you can definitely negotiate. I've done it before. We went to the Royal Carribean a few years back. You know, I called them ahead of time and told them who I was and, you know, gave them our tax ID number and everything. And when we got there, I gave them a check. It was too easy. No taxes. It was clean.

So if your department or your post communicates that with the property, it's absolutely doable.

MS. BULLOCK: Is there a reason why that can't be inclusive with the contract? Because it's coming from National, who secures the rooms, and then we all can just pay through our posts or departments.

MR. CHENELLY: So tax exemption can vary by municipality. Right? So counties, cities, states. It's different in every place we go, right? So while there are different taxes, there are definitely city and county taxes as well and not all counties and not all states provide the tax exemption. Occupancy tax in hotels, I don't know anywhere that they exempt us from that type of thing, right?

Our great audio/visual people in the back here? Their company is able to give us a tax exemption because the state allows them to. A lot of the catering, it's not allowed to be tax exempt. We take advantage of all of the tax

exemptions that we legally can, but there are some that are just not offered.

MS. BULLOCK: So we've confirmed for these three that they do not, I'm assuming?

MR. CHENELLY: Yes.

MS. BULLOCK: Okay. That answers my question. Thank you and thank you.

MR. CHENELLY: Also, when we're looking at this multi-year, which I know Kelly is going to lay out the whole thing here in a few minutes, but as we talk about the Galt House and the Finance Committee's endorsement, I personally -- you know, running the staff that does the convention, I worry about going to a new place if we're going to look at multi-year. Right?

I'm comfortable with the multi-year contracts that the Finance Committee is going to propose to you shortly because these are places we've been to. I know how they are going to treat us. You know how they are going to treat us. We can all vote on that with a sense of confidence, right?

We're not going to vote on a place that we've gone to and they didn't take care of us well. And if we're voting on a place that we haven't been to before and we're looking at a multi-year contract with them, it's a lot riskier than going to a place that already has a proven track record for us.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: All right. We'll start with Dana, then we'll move over to PNC Kilgore and then we will come back over to Tim. Dana.

MS. DILLON: Dana Dillon, Connecticut NEC. I just want to remind everybody that the Galt House only has those three elevators on each side, and it took a long time for those elevators to work.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: They actually addressed that yesterday in presentations. They're brand new.

MS. DILLON: They did. But there are still only three and there's a lot of us.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: PNC Kilgore.

PNC KILGORE: Yes, sir. Thank you. Bill Kigore, Tennessee. When someone spoke earlier about taxes and wanting to put it in the contract, that's a state thing. It has nothing to do with a hotel nor the contract. But the last time there was a national convention in the State of Tennessee our foundation paid every bill for three sections of our organization, the foundation, headquarters and the auxiliary, on tax exemption and

then they paid us back.

If the state foundations would do that, you'd save every nickel of all the state taxes. The thing you can't get around is like a resort fee and that type of stuff. But it's really not a tax, but the fee is a tax and the tax is a fee. You know? That's simple.

But if any other foundations would be willing to do that, it would save a lot of money for the national. We did it and I proved that it had worked. So I just want everybody to know that if they -- you talk about the taxes added on. You don't pay no sales tax if you've got a sales tax exemption in your state, which I'd say every foundation does. Or department. You pay it that way and save money.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Thank you, PNC Kilgore. Tim.

TIM: As Dana said, the three elevators on each tower. But if you're going to do that, we have to extend our meetings and time in between the meetings because you won't get everyone up to those meetings. I think we ought to go back to an extra day in the convention just for the elevators, because to get this many people -- and this is just us. Just the AMVETS. We've got two other groups coming with us. Three elevators in one tower is just not enough. Thank you.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: All right. Discussion is now closed for this matter.

MOTION

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Based off of the motion made by PNC Smith -- what was the order that they presented in yesterday?

We are on '28. Okay. We are going to go by the order that was presented yesterday. All of those in favor of going to the Harrah's in Cherokee, North Carolina, please rise.

(Stand vote.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Provost, please get a count. Keep it down so they can quickly count through. We have a few Marines counting. We don't need shoes coming off, guys.

(Laughter)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Art, did you double check Sheldon's numbers? Twenty-three.

For the Atlantic City Tropicana property, all those in favor, please rise.

(Standing vote.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Eleven? Thir-

teen. I'm pretty sure that we are going to be going to Louisville. But for all of those that want to go to Louisville, Kentucky and the Galt House, please rise.

(Standing vote.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: I'm going to say that that exceeds 35. So we're going to the Galt House in 2028.

(Applause)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: All right. We're starting to run up against time because we've had a little bit going on. We're now going to have the Finance Officer come up and present the Finance Committee's learnings on a multi-Year plan for you where we talk about the real-life savings. So, Mr. Finance Officer.

MR. McFARLAIN: All right. Like I said before, with us doing this we're talking hundreds of thousands of dollars. You heard us all talk about the FNB and all that stuff, and these properties are keeping the FNBs at an extreme minimum. I think it's between 50,000 to 55,000. Zero to 55. You're right. Zero to 55,000. No properties over 55. Correct. All right. Say again?

MS.
: ---.

MR. McFARLAIN: All right. So no property is over 50,000 FNB. That's huge. All right. That's really -- so the -- like I said, this is something we sat around and just said, hey, it will be cool. We actually did a lot of work and did a lot -- put a lot behind this.

So what we're proposing is in '29 going to the Rosen, '30 -- that's 169 a night with taxes. All right. In '30 coming back to Greensboro at 172 a night with taxes; '31 going to the Galt House, back to the Galt, at 194 a night including taxes; '32 back to the Rosen at 180, including taxes; '33 Reno at 101, including taxes. We're talking 2033. Okay? Zero FNB, \$100 a night including taxes. All right?

In 2034 Greensboro, North Carolina at 178 a night, including taxes; 55,000 FNB. All right? So that's how far we went out, and with these properties we can go out as far as '38. They're willing to negotiate.

And like I said earlier, this has us on the east coast, west coast, south and as a center as we can get with Kentucky. In Louisville. You know, Louisville is right there. Ohio. It's right there.

I know it's a lot. Trust me, I get it. But on the flip side, the cost savings on this -- and not only us with the cost savings as far as the FNB and all that stuff, but as far as you, as

in members, when we're talking about your room rates. These room rates are going to go up if we don't sign these deals. So it's a win. Everybody wins.

MOTION

MR. McFARLAIN: So that is the plan that the committee has worked up, and I move for its adoption.

MS. DILLON: Second. Dana Dillon, Connecticut.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: All right. So there is a motion that we, starting in 2029, go back to the Rosen, 2030 here in Greensboro, '31 The Galt House, '32 Rosen, '33 Nugget, '34 Greensboro. The motion by Finance Officer McFarlain and seconded by Dana Dillon, from Connecticut.

Please, discussion.

(No response.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Seeing none, all in favor of this plan state aye.

(Chorus of "ayes".)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Opposed nay.

(No response.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Thank you all. You've just saved this organization hundreds of thousands of dollars.

(Applause)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: All right. Now we have got to do the budget report. The budget presentation? Okay. You did that.

Could I have the lady from Waypoint Vets up.

(Applause)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: So a few years back I was down in Tennessee at their convention, and I walk up to this highly, highly motivated individual and she's telling me about some damn passion that she has. And let me tell you what, the Department of Tennessee is behind her 150 percent, and you can't help getting infected by the amount of positive energy that she brings in.

I told her she has exactly five minutes to talk, and they told me she's going to be five and a half minutes. So I said she couldn't talk. So she said she'd figure it out. So, Sarah, welcome.

**Guests: Waypoint Vets
by Sarah Lee**

MS. LEE: Camera, take it way back there. I have a little video to play while I share. Is it starting?

Good morning, AMVETS family.

(Chorus of "good morning".)

MS. LEE: My name is Sarah Lee, life member of AMVETS Post 1776 in Nashville, Tennessee. I'm an Army combat vet of the Iraq War and founder of Waypoint Vets. Go Army.

I'm incredibly grateful to be given a few minutes to share today. Waypoint Vets is an all-volunteer 501(c)(3) with the mission of uniting and powering veterans through comradery and adventure. We're actively combatting posttraumatic stress, military sexual trauma and suicidal ideation on a national scale. Our five-day small group experiences combine physical intensity with America's most inspirational landscapes to deliver clarity, community, lasting healing and renewed self-worth.

In under five years Waypoint Vets has executed 40 national adventures and has deeply impacted hundreds of veterans in all 50 states. In 2023, we designed and executed a nine-day transformative experience spanning the full length of Vietnam for 10 Vietnam Veterans, two of which are AMVETS members.

The only requirement to sign up with us is an honorable discharge. We're an all-volunteer charity. There are zero salaries taken, and we cover all the costs for our participants through donations and in-kind support. We provide all transportation, meals, lodging and fully outfit our veterans for their adventure.

All of our experiences include the leadership of mental health professionals who are also veterans, experienced guides and trained peer support staff. We offer a complimentary alumni aftercare program that ensures the healing and sense of belonging is ongoing. I know after that military they kind of give you your medals and say best of luck, and I wanted the opposite for Waypoint.

We provide mental health seminars, virtual workouts, resources, reunion Zooms and more. Tennessee Past State Commander Tim Woody, a nationally accredited veterans service officer, even volunteers his time assisting our alumni with their disability claims and benefits after every single trip.

The AMVETS Department of Tennessee has sponsored our Tennessee adventure for four years now. AMVETS has been instrumental in helping Waypoint succeed and has been encouraging toward me personally from post level to national.

I've been doing this for six years now, and it's been a beautiful process. We truly have a powerful family here that refuses to stand-by while veterans struggle alone. As of last night the waiting list to attend our adventures has reached 382 veterans. The need for our unique programming is significant. The war inside is so different from the wars we were trained to win. Our alumni testimonials consistently confirm that our mission is truly enriching lives and preventing veteran deaths.

Over the past 18 months we have trained and tripled our passionate volunteer team in preparation to expand upon our offerings, from 10 annually to 20. We are in sincere need of support. If our mission is resonating and you are able to help us at a post or state level, please reach me personally through our contact form on the website at waypointvets.org. It would be an honor working with you to make a real difference for our deserving brothers and sisters. We will always provide a detailed expense report, visuals and testimonials.

On each trip we create customized and memorial dog tags for each participant with the names of those they've loved and lost. Our motto is simply honor the fallen by living. We have an obligation to our fallen to pursue the life they'd want for us and to live fully on their behalf. Waypoint Vets is committed to helping veterans navigate the path toward peace and joy.

Thank you, brother and sisters, for the amazing conversations all week and for helping me feel less alone as I navigate life post-service. Thank you.

(Applause)

MS. LEE: I will leave some literature up here if you're interested. It has everything in it.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Thank you again. It's great to see AMVETS that are making positive effects in their community, and I know that she is a future leader in this organization. I feel also.

All right. District Commander Election Results. Would you, District Commanders, please present your new District Commanders. Here they come.

District Commander Election Results by Outgoing District Commanders

MR.

: Good morning everybody. I'm from the State of New York, and it's my pleasure to introduce our new District -- our new Department Commander John McCullough.

(Applause)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Tom Davitt, District 1.

MR. DAVITT: Yes, Commander. Yesterday we had our meeting, and at the end of the meeting we had the Department of New York Les Baker. He was elected as the new National District 1 Commander.

(Applause)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: District 5.

MS.

: In our meeting we elected, from New York, Brian Barlett, from North Dakota.

(Applause)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: District 6.

MR. WHARTON: Thank you, Chair. Chuck Wharton, Past Commander, National District 6. We'd like to present the next National District Commander for District 6, Commander Danelle Wyatt.

(Applause)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: District 2.

MR. FERGUSON: Randy Ferguson, National District 2 Commander. We'd like to present Ralph Hensley, from the great state of -- I'm sorry. The Commonwealth of Virginia.

(Applause)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: District 4.

MR. HARTSFIELD: Sheldon Hartsfield, National District 4 Commander. I would like to present to you the newly District 4 Commander from the State of Ohio, Sarah Pierce.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: And last, but certainly not least, District 3.

MR.

: We'd like to announce that we elected Mark Frederick from the Great State of Tennessee. Is Mark here?

(Applause)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Congratulations to all our newly elected National District Commanders. If elected here, I look forward to working with you all here in the near future.

National Officer Reports. Who have we got left? JA, have you got a report?

National Officer Reports

MR. SMITH: Good morning everyone.

(Chorus of "good morning".)

MR. SMITH: Good morning everyone.

(Chorus of "good morning".)

MR. SMITH: The JA's report. As I stand in as the National Deputy Judge Advocate, the JA'S report is on page 38, and I move for its adoption.

MOTION

MS. WYATT: So seconded, Danny Wyatt.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: All right. I have a motion and a second from Wyatt from Washington. Who did it? Yeah, okay.

The motion is seconded to accept JA's. All in favor state aye.

(Chorus of "ayes".)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Opposed same.

(No response.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: All right. You've done yours. 3rd Vice Commander.

3rd VICE CMDR. STUDEBAKER: Sorry. I didn't get much sleep this week for some reason. My report. I would just like to thank everybody for all their hard work this year with legislation. We did get a couple of bills passed, and I appreciate everybody's hard work. We are still going to be pushing hard on the Hill to keep our politicians at bay.

It's hard to say how this next Congress is going to play out in 2026 when we have midterm elections. The best I can tell for everybody is when you go back home and you're talking to your elected officials, you need to start asking them which way they're looking forward on veterans issues. You're either for us or you're against us, and we need to make sure that we have politicians in office that are for us.

But like I said the other day, if you have not signed up for the veterans advocacy page, you need to go to AMVETS.org, go to the services tab and scroll down to where it says advocacy. That is where all of our initiatives are and agendas, and you can also sign up to receive the newsletter that comes out usually ever week when the House and the Senate are in session. So I encourage everybody to do that.

And if you have the ability to come in March to legislative week, please come. The more that we can bring on the Hill, the better we look and the more they have to pay attention to us.

MOTION

3RD VICE CMDR. STUDEBAKER: Commander, that concludes my report, and I move for its adoption.

MR. CORSON: Second, ----.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Second from Terry Corson, PDC Ohio. Any questions on the 3rd Vice Report?

(No response.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Hearing none, all in favor of accepting the 3rd Vice Report state aye.

(Chorus of "ayes".)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Opposed same sign.

(No response.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: The ayes have it.

What did I say? Terry, I'm sorry. I put you in the wrong state. Terry Corson, Past Department Commander, Florida.

All right. 2nd Vice Commander.

2ND VICE COMMANDER VORHIES: Good morning.

(Chorus of "good morning".)

2ND VICE COMMANDER VORHIES: So this is going to be short and sweet. So on Wednesday, August the 20th of 2025, at 17:00, the Programs Team held a roundtable. I want to tell you that was a very good roundtable. The room was packed. Thank you very much.

I also want to give out a thank you to Colondra and Ben for all their assistance in getting our programs out to you and assisting you. Every day they are there for you.

With that, we also met on Thursday, August the 21st, 2025, at 11:00, and we did a half an hour of programs training, which I'm going to tell you all of your 2nd Vice Department Commanders, please, please attend the upcoming Zoom training for 2nd Vices. They are outstanding. I want this to continue. And whoever may become our 2nd Vice, I am sure they will continue that process.

MOTION

2ND VICE CMDR. VORHIES: And with that, I move for my report to be adopted at the proper time.

MR.

: Second, ---- Massachusetts.

MS. PIERCE: ---- Ohio.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Seconded Pierce, Florida. I mean, Pierce, Ohio.

Any questions on the 2nd Vice Report?

(No response.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Hearing none, all in favor state aye.

(Chorus of "ayes".)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Opposed same sign.

(No response.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: The ayes have it.

Hey, Sandy, you have got to come back here.

2ND VICE CMDR. VORHIES: Oh, darn. That's right.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: I can't gavel my own report.

2ND VICE CMDR. VORHIES: At this time the 1st Vice will give his report.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Can I just say all the above, because they both did a great report? Wow. It's a tough crowd. I got seconded already and I didn't even make a motion yet. Well, damn. Swear jar.

(Laughter)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: I really appreciate the support that we've had all across the country this year. It's been a challenge for all of us Vice Commanders stepping up to make sure that we represent Commander Johnson in the best way that we possibly could.

We are seeing a lot of positive movement in this organization, and that is attributed to you and your faith that you put in us; being able to get out there, being able to meet you. You know, I traveled as much as I physically could this year. I love the departments that I visited over the past five years. You know, really getting out there and really seeing how things are happening. I've been to a lot of your departments in the past few years and I truly appreciate both the hospitality and the support.

So, as 1st Vice Commander, we held a membership meeting the other day. It was so attended people were walking away, because they were like I'm not standing in that mess of people. We talked about the AMVETS Traditions Membership Program. If you haven't had an opportunity to look at it, talk to your

NECs. They have a printout of it. It will be on the national website in a few days so that you can get on there.

And, please, join to help contribute to us to be able to have some cash flow at the National Headquarters so that we can better serve you.

We also have had a bunch of trainings this year. I want to thank my staff. That would be Director Cox, our two retired staff, Ms. Carol and Ms. Linda, and I want to encourage our new staff, Katie, Ashley and Ben, to understand while we're hard on them, we know they can be absolutely successful. And let me tell you what, so far they've been knocking it out of the park and doing great, great work.

Yeah, I'm trying to think of anything else. No, I don't have anything else.

MOTION

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: That is my report, and I move for its adoption.

2ND VICE CMDR. VORHIES: Okay. There is a motion. Seconded by Mr. Bullock of Florida. Any discussion?

(No response.)

2ND VICE CMDR. VORHIES: If not, all in favor?

(Chorus of "ayes".)

2nd VICE CMDR. VORHIES: Same opposed? The same sign.

(No response.)

2ND VICE CMDR. VORHIES: It carries.

(Pause)

For Good Order and Welfare

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Good of the order. That's what I like. Are you Sad or are you an NEC?

MS. DILLON: No, I'm me.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Okay.
MS. DILLON: I would like to propose next year making sure that membership and programs has at least an hour for the training session. A half hour, by the time you get everybody in there, it's gone and you get not as much work done. So if there's any way we can squeeze that or at least do it at the end of the evening so that way they can go on.

MR. CHENELLY: Immediately after, probably on Wednesday or so of this coming week, there will be a survey that will go out. It will

be emailed. It will be on the website for the next couple of months on the convention page.

We know going into this it was an experiment, right, with the condensed schedule. We're going to look at what the financial savings were. We're going to weigh that versus what we've lost. We know we've lost some value here.

I think we're also going to look at the possibility of moving the joint opening to Thursday morning rather than Thursday afternoon. We're going to look to see ways that we might be able to maximize the time so that we have more time for those really important training sessions and roundtables. We know we didn't have some training offered here.

We know we lost a lot, and we're going to determine -- the Finance Committee will determine whether it's worthwhile and it will come to the NEC in December, what our plan will be for next year.

MS. DILLON: Thank you.

MR. CHENELLY: But noted definitely, Dana. Thank you.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: PNC Riley.

PNC RILEY: Yes. Thank you, Commander.

There's two people I'd like to announce. It's their first time at the convention. They weren't here yesterday when everybody who was here got acknowledged for being at the first national convention.

Emily Collingham, stand up.

(Applause)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: She's also been our nurse all this week over in the first aid room. Ask Al Duff. She's pretty good at taping stuff up.

PNC RILEY: And last but not least, this is a good example of the Junior AMVETS. We have a new member, regular member, Army, Joe Stopyra.

(Applause)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Joseph Stopyra is a Past National Juniors President, and he's also serving in the Pennsylvania Army National Guard currently. I got that one right, right? You are nasty-nasty, right?

(Inaudible response.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Oh, you're going to Texas for a little bit, huh? He's getting ready to do a border mission in Texas with the Pennsylvania National Guard. So keep him in

your prayers.

Andy.

ANDY: Commander, on behalf of Ohio Department Commander Steve Alberry's* project, I'd like to present a check to the National AMVETS Family Service Center in the amount of \$14,793. This was raised in his project, bringing the total of his project donated the family service center to \$24,700.

(Applause)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: PNC J.P. Brown, III, are you here? Get that check off of him and get it in the bank. PNC Brown has been leading up that committee.

Mic two, ma'am.

MS.

: I am Post Commander at Ray Meddie* 897, and we have a check for AMVETS National Charities for \$2,500.

(Applause)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Mr. Vanetta, you are the Charities President also. You should be up here too. I apologize. I just know you had appointed JP for that committee. Come on up. You deserve the recognition for all the hard work you've done in your leadership with the Charities Board this year.

But thank you again for your dedication to the AMVETS Family Services Center, Past Commander Vanetta. Come on up with JP and they can give you a quick spew of what's been going on with that project. Because if you know, I've been trying to tout the living hell out of it.

We also will have the Flag Report here in a few minutes with, Dr. Kissel, as soon as they're finished.

PNC J.P. BROWN: Good morning everyone.

(Chorus of "good morning")

PNC J.P. BROWN: You know, this project started about a year and a half ago with Mr. Chenelly, myself and a few other ones. We were on a committee looking for our headquarters. The building that we're using for a -- converting into a family service center was one of the sites we looked at. And both Joe and I and -- where's Don? Don is around here somewhere.

Both had the idea of, wow, this would be a great place to do a resource center. So the Charities decided they would help us out and get it started. Then I went and begged, borrowed and stole money from everyone I could

to do more. And as you can see today, people are seeing what's going to happen, believing in what's going to happen and -- I don't know.

I just -- in my heart I took this project on and I was asked to chair the committee. I've been traveling back and forth between Ohio and Pennsylvania; in Ohio, where I live, and down to the site. It's coming along. We're a little behind because we made a command decision to take all of the workers from that building and put them on the headquarters so you all could have your headquarters done.

Now, as things are getting done at headquarters, they're moving over into our building. We tried to get a video put together so you could see what's going on. but for some reason it's not working on this system. But believe me all of you will be very proud to see the first Family Service Center that AMVETS has put together, and I hope we can do more throughout the country.

But this is open to any veteran who needs help and their family. This is the key. Putting the families with that veteran that needs support and help, we feel that they will heal a lot better.

But thank very much for all the generous donations and all the help you've given us. From the bottom of my heart, thank you very much.

(Applause)

MR. VANETTA: When I was elected Charities President, I appointed PNC Brown and PNC McClean to the construction committee and they've held their feet to the fire. And as PNC Brown said, we stepped aside to get the headquarters moving. Now they're coming back.

But PNC Brown is so close he can get there. He does keep me updated. And I've also created a fundraising committee. So we're still fundraising, and we'd take more. Thank you.

(Applause)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: NEC Durbin.

MS. DURBIN: We have a standdown for homeless veterans October the 17th through the 19th, the North County Standdown. They get three hots and a cot. There's courts there, there's DMV, haircuts, teeth; everything is taken care of.

If you want to volunteer, you want to come and help, some people have come from out of town. It's an excellent experience and it's a chance to give back and help them get back on their feet. Thank you.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Sergeant Major.

MS.

: Department of California, Post 48, Long Beach, California, would like to donate \$1,000 to the Charities for the Family Center.

(Applause)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Dr. Kissel.

DR. KISSEL: In addition to the Flag Report, I'm asking my fiduciary to send over another contribution in my continuing effort for the transitional project. The next shipment will be for 5K.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: \$5,000 from Dr. Kissel for the Family Services Center.

DR. KISSEL: Yes, sir.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Thank you.

(Applause)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Dr. Kissel, can you make your way up to the podium up here, please.

MS. DILLON: While he's making his way up, Commander, would you please talk on the Commander's project? I know he isn't here to speak on it.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: National Commander Horace Johnson's project this year it's called Yumadop*. I'm sorry. I'm not great with the anagram on it. But what it is is it is a substance abuse recovery program for -- and it works with veterans in the Cleveland area. And what it does is to positively impact those veterans so that they can get off of the addictions.

Commander Johnson has authorized me to share that he struggled with alcoholism before and it was a program like this that saved his life. He strongly credits them and that is why he chose this as his project this year. So, please help any way that you can with his project this year, because he doesn't have the chance to get out and ask himself. So I'm here to ask you and my Vice Commanders have all asked you. Anybody else that I know of that has had anything to do with this has asked you. So, thank you.

MS. DILLON: So I am going to start with \$20. We're going to pass bags around. If you guys could match me or beat me, whatever you can do, it would be great to give Commander Johnson's project the money it deserves. Thank you.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: I'll put \$100 in the hat too.

MS. DILLON: Thank you.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Dr. Kissel.

Flag Report
by Dr. Charles Kissel

DR. KISSEL: Thank you, Commander. The first part of this is more or less final remarks involving the flags for the Olympics. The NEC has heard the information earlier, but the floor hasn't.

I found the backdoor into procurement in Colorado Springs. I was able to complete the entire shipment with one final delivery to complete the Summer Games Flag Project. I was starting to think about what I would do for the winter and procurement called me, and that was a big deal. I didn't have to go after it. We're on their list.

We were able to take care of the winter games in one shipment. So that's in February next year. These will be AMVETS' flags, as you know, and we're pretty much in a maintenance mode now where they know where they can get the flags. It's going to be AMVETS.

Now this wasn't my 100 percent contribution. About half of the money came from my good friends at the Chicago, Illinois Post 18, and I thank them very much for helping me with this program. Thank you guys.

(Applause)

DR. KISSEL: Now I ask you all to try to help me with the next step. Actually, there are two. As you know, I have this giant flag marching capability at eight at rest and five platoons. It's 200 feet long and not one flag is the same as any other. And if you've seen my flag book, you know what I'm talking about.

I seek venues around the nation to provide AMVETS marching capability for this unit. We've tried to get into D.C. three times. It didn't get us anywhere. When the President wanted to do the 6,600 Army guys in D.C. for Flag Day, that hit me right in the bread basket. Instead, I hit the cement. I didn't get anywhere.

So I'm looking for large parades that will take this thing that AMVETS basically is the only one on the plant that it has. And if you have a parade in your state department, it might be a possibility. Please contact me.

The other thing is have any of you ever heard of America 250?

(No response.)

DR. KISSEL: Neither did I. But it's the biggest growing thing. It is a huge machine, it is well funded and the culmination of it, of all these Americanism projects that are going

on nationwide, are aimed at 4th of July next year, the 250th birthday of the Declaration of Independence.

They have a little thing in one of the cubby-holes that says flags. Well, okay. Everybody is going to have a lot of flags. They're all going to need 50 stars. We still have that marching capability, and I'm going to try to find a backdoor into the America 250 Program.

If you have any interest or know where a backdoor is to get into procurement for this thing, please let me know, because we can do that project also. Thank you. That ends my Flag Report to you for today.

(Applause)

DR. KISSEL: On a separate issue, while I was doing my investigation work in Lanham and I went through the safe room, if any of you saw it in the later years, it was just a pile of boxes; just folders all over the place. But you know I usually find things in there.

But I accidentally found something that was absolutely misfiled, and it is important to each of us and the people who came before us and the people who will take over after we cannot do the job anymore. And I'd like to -- and I had it framed and I want to present it to the Commander.

And the intent, as far as I know, is to put it presumably in our new office in Washington, Pennsylvania. What is it?

Ladies and gentlemen, I show you one of the earliest copies of our charter misfiled. It probably would have been thrown away with all the rest of the papers, but it is proudly framed. The plaque says, "AMVETS National Headquarters, Serving Veterans Since 1947."

Commander, would you please accept this for your new home shortly this year.

(Applause)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: On behalf of every AMVET across the United States, I humbly accept this to place in our new National Headquarters. Our new home.

DR. KISSEL: Great.

(Applause)

MR.

: Commander, I have a question for the doctor.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: What's that?

MR.

: I have a question for the doctor. Can the

flags be ordered by the different posts? We order \$1,000 worth of flags every six months at our post.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: I believe that would be the National Service Foundation that does the flags. Dr. Kissel is the secretary of the Service Foundation, but you would need to talk with the actual Service Foundation to be able to get those flags ordered for your post. Yes.

MR.

: Okay. Thank you. I'd just assume give it to the AMVETS as anybody.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: We appreciate your contributions.

Thank you, Dr. Kissel.

All right. PNC Brown, the full Credential Report, please. The Final Credential Report. We're only an hour and a minute behind schedule. Come on you all.

Final Credential Report
by PNC Brown

PNC BROWN: Hello again. Before I forget, I want to introduce my committee because these people work hard all week. We don't get to go to meetings. We don't get to go to committee meetings. Sometimes we don't get to go to lunch. So I would like them to stand wherever they might be.

Jodi Woods, Florida. She's on the bias dais there.

(Applause)

PNC BROWN: Our token male, Lloyd Butch Adams from Tennessee.

(Applause)

PNC BROWN: He may not come back. I don't know.

Florida, Katy Barber.

(Applause)

PNC BROWN: And Kentucky, Veneda Dalton.

(Applause)

PNC BROWN: We are a little shorthanded this year. Diana Johnson and Cathy Argyle could not make it this year, but they'll be back next year if the new Commander sees fit.

So I can read this whole list again or I can just tell you the changes.

(Chorus of "the changes".)

PNC BROWN: All right. I thought that might be it.

We moved one guy from Maryland into the post -- into the department he was supposed to be in, in Missouri. So they have six now in Missouri. Maryland has five. The last person to sign in was from Pennsylvania, and don't you know it was Paul's brother.

(Laughter)

PAUL'S BROTHER: Hi you all.

PNC BROWN: I would have never guessed it. I said a cousin? He goes, no, I'm his brother.

So anyway, our grand total is 382. And keep in mind it's not the number of people that you had registered or that I read out. It is butts in seats; the people that you have on the floor. And you don't have to say we have 15 registered and we got 10 on the floor. We have 10 votes, period. It confuses us. It's late in the week and we're kind of fried.

But again, I'd like to thank the committee and the support from Headquarters. Butch and Jodi put together -- they took the Tennessee program and expanded it to the nation. We've still got a couple of bugs, but I think we're going to make it, and it worked pretty well.

Did you have a question, sir?

MR.
: Yes, ma'am. The Department of New York, we had 31 on our floor and you only gave us 29.

PNC BROWN: I gave you what?

MR.
: Twenty-nine.

PNC BROWN: Did you guys come see me?

MR.
: Uh...

PNC BROWN: See me down here after the report is done.

MR.
: Okay. All right.

PNC BROWN: That's why I give an early report. Do you want me to check with him first? I've got the list. I've got them right here.

(Pause)

MR. CHENELLY: In the back, are we able to do video one while they're handling that? Thank you.

So the new National Capitol Region Headquarters held its ribbon cutting at the National Service Foundation's property that has the full AMVETS family working in it in Rockville, Maryland, maintaining our national capitol D.C. area presence, which we need for our advocacy and for a lot of the business we do as well. But there is a video here as the Credentials Committee squares away final numbers.

By the way, we were not able to get to, because of time, the briefing on the new National Headquarters. We've got some photos and things like that. It will be on the website. Some of it is already on the website. I don't want to steal Commander McLean's -- I wish he was able to -- we had time for this.

But the Construction Committee has just done an amazing job. I am telling you they are working multiple hours every day. For volunteers it's something amazing to watch, and I'm very grateful to them. But yes. Here is the video from the ribbon cutting last Friday.

(Ribbon Cutting Video.)

MR. CHENELLY: Other videos are up on social media and more photos of that building, as well as our new National Headquarters, which we're hoping to get the keys to here in the next week or so. And there will still be some work to do, but much more will be coming from the Construction Committee on that very soon.

(Pause)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: I bet you're all glad Sandy brought that trail mix now.

PNC BROWN: All right. We did find the mistake and, New York, it is 31. Somebody didn't sign their name. So they didn't get counted. But they are here and they have a badge. So negligence on both our parts.

So the total now is 383. Why would it be 384? It's only one. I didn't add two. We moved one. I can't see that. I'm sorry.

(Pause)

PNC BROWN: We're good. 384. I forgot about Rob. All right. Anything else? Last chance.

(No response.)

PNC BROWN: 193 is the number that you have to have to have ----. When you give your votes, please do it in the order that they were nominated. It just makes it easier for whoever is putting in the numbers, because that's how we have them listed. You know, if it's zero for somebody and 24 for that. But it needs to be in -- please, just help us out a little bit with the

-- it's hard enough to do this job without figuring it out. I mean, without having to figure out what column you're in.

MOTION

PNC BROWN: Commander, that concludes my report and I move for its adoption.

MR. DAVITT: Second, ---- from Massachusetts.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Second Smith from where?

MR. DAVITT: Massachusetts.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Second from Davitt, Massachusetts.

All right. Any more questions on Credentials?

(No response.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Hearing none, all in favor of accepting the final Credentials Report state aye.

(Chorus of "ayes".)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Opposed same sign.

(No response.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Thank you, Commander Brown.

All right. Executive Director Chenelly, could you please open our final nominations.

Final Nominations by Joe Chenelly

MR. CHENELLY: Okay. This will be final nominations. We're going to go through the nominations first. I will state who has been nominated already. We have two pending nominations. They will need to decide if they accept those nominations. After each nomination I'll close nominations. At the end, when all nominations are closed, any races that has more than one candidate, we will conduct the elections.

First up will be the National Service Foundation Trustee. We have two seats. Both are three-year terms. For organization election purposes we have Trustee A and Trustee B.

For Trustee A, the already entered nomination is Richard Vanetta of Illinois and Marty Bugaj of New York. Are there any additional nominations for Trustee A of the National Service Foundation?

(No response.)

MR. CHENELLY: Any additional nominations?

(No response.)

MR. CHENELLY: Hearing none, the nominations are now closed for Trustee A.

For National Service Foundation B we have Past National Commander Joseph Piening, Past National Commander Joseph P. Brown, III and Marty Bugaj entered into nomination. Actually, PNC Brown, PNC J.P. Brown, do you accept this nomination?

PNC J.P. BROWN: Yes.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Let the record show he answered in the affirmative.

We have three names in nomination for Trustee B. do we have any additional nominations for Trustee B?

(No response.)

MR. CHENELLY: Any additional nominations?

(No response.)

MR. CHENELLY: The nominations for Trustee B are now closed.

For the AMVETS Office of National Judge Advocate we have a pending nomination for PNC Jan Brown.

PNC Jan Brown, do you accept this nomination?

PNC BROWN: Yes.

MR. CHENELLY: Let the record show she answered in the affirmative. So Jan Brown has been entered in nomination.

Are there any additional nominations for National Judge Advocate?

(No response.)

MR. CHENELLY: Any additional nominations?

(No response.)

MR. CHENELLY: Hearing none, the nominations are now closed for National Judge Advocate.

For National Provost Marshal, Arthur Majors of Ohio has been entered into nomination. Are there any additional nominations?

(No response.)

MR. CHENELLY: Any additional nominations for National Provost?

(No response.)

MR. CHENELLY: Hearing, nominations are now closed for National Provost Marshal.

National Finance Officer. Kelly McFarlain of Louisiana has been entered into nomination.

Are there any additional nominations?

(No response.)

MR. CHENELLY: Any additional nominations?

(No response.)

MR. CHENELLY: Hearing none, the nominations for National Finance Officer are now closed.

National 3rd Vice Commander. Sheldon Hartsfield of Missouri is entered into nomination.

Are there any additional nominations for National 3rd Vice Commander?

MR. HARTLESS: Mr. Chairman, Jeff Hartless, Department of Tennessee. I am pleased to nominate Mr. Tim Woody, United States Air Force Veteran, for 3rd Vice Commander. He's a Past Department Commander, 1st and 2nd Vice Commander, Department of Tennessee, his currently the Finance Officer and the Chair for the Department Legislative Committee.

He built Tennessee Post 911 from the ground up, which was chartered in 2016. He is the Vice Chair of an organization called Tennessee Veterans. It's a coalition of veteran service organizations throughout Tennessee who get together to help sponsor legislation for Tennessee. He has done multiple trips to the Tennessee Assembly and also to Law Week for AMVETS on the Hill.

His full-time is a Veteran Service Officer where he serves veterans of our county and anyone who reaches out to him and spouses of deceased veterans to get them the benefits they well deserve. He is a recipient of Southeast Tennessee's Veteran of the Year and the prestigious Bill Norwood for Veteran Service Award.

His legislative experience in Tennessee make him a prime candidate and an asset to AMVETS. I guarantee you he will give sound advice to AMVETS' command team. He's a hands-on performer and he's self-motivated.

Once again, I am proud and honored to be able to nominate Mr. Tim Woody.

MR. CHENELLY: Thank you. Is there a second to this nomination?

DR. KISSEL: Kissel, California. I honorably second this motion. I'm sorry. This nomination for Woody, Tim for National 3rd Vice Commander.

MR. CHENELLY: Thank you.

Mr. Woody, do you accept this nomination?

MR. WOODY: I accept, Chairman.

MR. CHENELLY: Thank you.

Are there any additional nominations for the office of National 3rd Vice Commander? Any additional nominations?

(No response.)

MR. CHENELLY: Hearing none, the nominations are now closed for National 3rd Vice Commander.

For National 2nd Vice Commander, Chris Studebaker of Illinois has been entered into nomination. Are there any additional nominations?

(No response.)

MR. CHENELLY: Any additional nominations for National 2nd Vice?

(No response.)

MR. CHENELLY: Hearing none, the nominations are now closed for National 2nd Vice Commander.

National 1st Vice Commander. Sandy Vorhies, of Ohio, has been entered into nominations. Are there any other nominations?

(No response.)

MR. CHENELLY: Any additional nominations for National 1st Vice Commander?

(No response.)

MR. CHENELLY: Hearing none, the nominations are now closed for National 1st Vice Commander.

For the Office of AMVETS National Commander, Mr. Paul Shipley, of Pennsylvania, is entered into nomination. Are there any additional nominations for the Office of National Commander?

(No response.)

MR. CHENELLY: Any additional nominations for the Office of National Commander?

(No response.)

MR. CHENELLY: Hearing none, the nominations are now closed for the Office of AM-VETS National Commander.

We will begin our elections as soon as I get a thumbs up from the back, but I think they are ready. I have got a thumbs up.

National Elections by Joe Chenelly

So we are going to start. As you can see on the screen here with Nebraska, the drawing, it was a random drawing that was made at the beginning of the 1st Business Session yesterday morning.

MR. McELRATH: Mr. Chenelly?

MR. CHENELLY: Yes?

MR. McELRATH: If I may? There is a race that we just recently contested that we did not have an opportunity to speak with our delegations about. Can we take a five-minute recess to speak with our delegations about the 3rd Vice race?

MR. CHENELLY: We will take a five-minute recess. We cannot leave the room. If you do need leave the room, you are not going to be able to come back in unless it's a medical reason.

Provost, please make sure of that. Five minutes, which means at 11:25 we will reconvene.

(Whereupon, a brief recess was taken.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Already everybody. Find your seats. Find your seats.

While you are doing that, let's all give a great big round of applause for our Deputy Provost Marshals and Provosts for all that they've done this week.

(Applause)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: I was also informed by Past National District 1 Commander of Connecticut, NEC Dana Dillon, that she has something she would like to say.

MS. DILLON: With all your generosity, we raised \$2,230 for the Commander's project. Thank you everybody.

(Applause)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Great job to all of you and thank you for your support for Commander Johnson's project.

A little point of information. If you are a

National District Commander and has been elected at your meetings, you need to be installed with the AMVETS officers today. Okay? Or you, you know, you're not official. We'd like you to be official. That means you, Mark Frederick.

All right. Are you all ready to have some elections? Apparently they are not motivated for elections, but we are going to start them anyway.

All right, Joe.

MR. CHENELLY: All right. The first vote will be held for National Service Foundation Trustee A. As you can see on the screen here, the nominees are Richard Vanetta and Marty Bugaj.

To echo what the Credentials Chair PNC Brown asked, when you call your vote, please vote and say your number for Richard Vanetta first, your vote Marty Bugaj second, along with your state and number of delegates voting.

We want to make this as expedient as possible. So Nebraska, we know Nebraska is up first. We know no one is here from New Jersey or New Mexico. So New York should be right behind Nebraska, North Carolina and so on. Spread it out among the three microphones. You don't need to wait to be recognized, but wait for the numbers to appear on the screen.

Once those numbers before you appear on the screen, please be ready to go. We really want to reduce the delay. So, Nebraska.

NEBRASKA: Nebraska, two on the floor, two for Richard Vanetta.

MR. CHENELLY: New York.

NEW YORK: New York. Zero for Vanetta; 31 for Bugaj.

MR. CHENELLY: I did not call New Jersey or New Mexico. Just for everyone's situational awareness, if I don't call them it is because they don't have anyone here.

North Carolina.

NORTH CAROLINA: Vanetta 22; Bugaj 2.

MR. CHENELLY: North Dakota.

NORTH DAKOTA: North Dakota, two on the floor. Zero Vanetta; 2 Marty.

MR. CHENELLY: Ohio.

OHIO: Ohio has 20 delegates on the floor. Twenty for Vanetta.

MR. CHENELLY: Oklahoma. Has Oklahoma left?

(No response.)

MR. CHENELLY: Okay. I won't be calling Oklahoma again.

Pennsylvania.

PENNSYLVANIA: Pennsylvania has 18 on the floor. Two Vanetta; 16 Bugaj.

MR. CHENELLY: South Carolina.

SOUTH CAROLINA: South Carolina has two on the floor. Zero for Vanetta; 2 for Bugaj.

MR. CHENELLY: Tennessee.

TENNESSEE: Tennessee, 31 on the floor. Thirty-one for Vanetta.

MR. CHENELLY: Texas.

TEXAS: Texas has 7 on the floor. Seven for Vanetta; zero for Bugaj.

MR. CHENELLY: Vermont.

(No response.)

MR. CHENELLY: Okay. Virginia.

VIRGINIA: Virginia, 17 on the floor. Sixteen for Bugaj; 1 abstained.

MR. CHENELLY: Washington State.

WASHINGTON: Washington, 3 on the floor. Three for Vanetta.

MR. CHENELLY: West Virginia.

WEST VIRGINIA: Four on the floor. Four for Marty.

MR. CHENELLY: Wisconsin.

WISCONSIN: Wisconsin has 9 on the floor. Two for Vanetta; 7 for Bugaj.

MR. CHENELLY: Alabama.

ALABAMA: Four on the floor. Four for Vanetta.

MR. CHENELLY: Alaska.

ALASKA: Alaska has 6 on the floor. Five for Vanetta; 1 for Bugaj.

MR. CHENELLY: Arizona.

ARIZONA: Arizona has 4 on the floor. Four for Marty.

MR. CHENELLY: California.

CALIFORNIA: California has 15 on the floor.

Fifteen for Vanetta.

MR. CHENELLY: Connecticut.

CONNECTICUT: Connecticut has 3 on the floor. One for Vanetta; 2 for Bugaj.

MR. CHENELLY: District of Columbia.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA: District of Columbia, 15 on the floor. Fifteen for Richard Vanetta.

MR. CHENELLY: Delaware.

(No response.)

MR. CHENELLY: Does Delaware have any delegates here?

(No response.)

MR. CHENELLY: Florida.

FLORIDA: Thirty one on the floor. Thirty-one Vanetta.

MR. CHENELLY: Georgia.

GEORGIA: Georgia, 18 on the floor. Fourteen for Richard; 4 Marty.

MR. CHENELLY: Illinois.

ILLINOIS: Illinois, 13 on the floor. Thirteen for Vanetta.

MR. CHENELLY: Indiana.

INDIANA: Indiana, 16 on the floor. Sixteen for Vanetta.

MR. BUGAJ: Mr. Chairman, at this time I'd ask that the ballots be destroyed and one unanimous vote be placed in Rich Vanetta's name. Congratulations, Rich.

(Applause)

MR. CHENELLY: As we prepare the screen for Trustee B, I have been asked by the --

MR. VANETTA: Mr. Chairman, a few words?

MR. CHENELLY: Sorry. Please.

MR. VANETTA: Thank you, Mr. Bugaj, for your confidence in me. Thank you, fellow AMVETS, for your confidence in me as I work every day to help our veterans. Thank you.

(Applause)

MR. CHENELLY: I have been asked by the Provosts to remind everyone that whoever your delegates are as you're counting to please stand so that the Provost can verify that they

are on the floor.

So we're now moving to National Service Foundation Trustee B, a three-year term. In nomination, PNC Joe Piening, PNC J.P. Brown, and third, and Marty Bugaj.

We will start with Nebraska. Nebraska, when you are ready, please kick us off.

NEBRASKA: Nebraska, 2 on the floor. Two for Piening.

MR. CHENELLY: New York.

NEW YORK: Thirty-one on the floor. Zero for Piening, zero for Brown, 31 for Bugaj.

MR. CHENELLY: North Carolina.

NORTH CAROLINA: Twenty-four on the floor. Twenty-two for Piening and 2 for Brown.

MR. CHENELLY: North Dakota.

NORTH DAKOTA: Two on the floor. Two for JP.

MR. CHENELLY: Ohio.

OHIO: Ohio has 20 on the floor. One for Piening, 19 for Brown, zero for Bugaj.

MR. CHENELLY: Oklahoma and Oregon not here. Pennsylvania.

PENNSYLVANIA: Pennsylvania has 18 on the floor. Eighteen for PNC Piening.

MR. CHENELLY: South Carolina.

SOUTH CAROLINA: South Carolina has 2 on the floor. Two for Piening.

MR. CHENELLY: Tennessee.

TENNESSEE: Tennessee, 31 on the floor, and we've got 31 for Piening.

MR. CHENELLY: Texas.

TEXAS: Texas has 7 on the floor. Seven for Piening, zero for Brown, zero for Bugaj.

MR. CHENELLY: Can we see Texas, please. Can we get Texas on the screen? We want to verify. Is that correct, Texas?

TEXAS: Yes.

MR. CHENELLY: Okay. Thank you.

Vermont.

(No response.)

MR. CHENELLY: Okay. Virginia.

VIRGINIA: Seventeen on the floor. Fifteen for Bugaj, 1 for J.P. Brown, 1 abstained.

MR. CHENELLY: Is that correct, Virginia? 1-5?

VIRGINIA: Yeah. Fifteen for Bugaj, 1 for J.P. Brown and 1 abstained.

MR. CHENELLY: Thank you.

Washington State.

WASHINGTON: Three on the floor, sir. Three for P.J. Brown.

MR. CHENELLY: West Virginia.

WEST VIRGINIA: Four on the floor. Four for Marty.

MR. CHENELLY: Wisconsin.

WISCONSIN: Wisconsin has 9 on the floor. Zero for Piening, 1 for Brown and 8 for Bugaj.

MR. CHENELLY: Wyoming. No. I'm sorry. Alabama.

ALABAMA: Alabama has 4 on the floor. Four for Joe Piening.

MR. CHENELLY: Alaska.

ALASKA: Alaska has 6 on the floor. One Piening, 5 Brown, zero Bugaj.

MR. CHENELLY: Arizona.

ARIZONA: Arizona has 4 on the floor and 4 for Marty.

MR. CHENELLY: California.

CALIFORNIA: California has 15 on the floor. Piening 12; Brown 3.

MR. CHENELLY: Connecticut.

CONNECTICUT: Connecticut has 3 on the floor. One for Piening, 1 for Brown, 1 for Bugaj.

(Laughter and applause.)

MR. CHENELLY: Thank you for coming, Connecticut.

District of Columbia.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA: The District of Columbia has 15 on the floor. Two for Joe Piening and 13 for J.P. Brown and zero for Marty.

MR. CHENELLY: Florida.

FLORIDA: Florida has 31 on the floor. Thirty-one for Joe Piening.

MR. CHENELLY: While they are counting to confirm, Delaware is not here, correct? Thank you. Georgia.

GEORGIA: Georgia, 18 on the floor. Twelve Joe, 5 J.P., 1 Marty.

MR. CHENELLY: Illinois.

ILLINOIS: Illinois, 13 on the floor. Eight for Piening, 4 for J.P. Brown, 1 for Bugaj.

MR. CHENELLY: Indiana.

INDIANA: Indiana, 16 on the floor. Sixteen for Brown.

MR. CHENELLY: Iowa.

IOWA: Iowa, 4 on the floor. Four for Joe Piening.

MR. CHENELLY: Kentucky.

KENTUCKY: Kentucky has 12 on the floor. Twelve for J.P. Brown.

MR. CHENELLY: Louisiana.

LOUISIANA: Louisiana has 8 on the floor. Six for Piening, 2 for Brown.

MR. CHENELLY: Maine.

MAINE: Maine has 3 on the floor. Three for Bugaj.

MR. CHENELLY: Maryland.

MARYLAND: Maryland has 4 on the floor. Four for J.P. Brown.

MR. CHENELLY: Massachusetts.

MASSACHUSETTS: Massachusetts has 11 on the floor. Eleven for J.P. Zero on the others.

MR. CHENELLY: Michigan.

MICHIGAN: Michigan has 7 on the floor. One for Piening and 6 for J.P.

MR. CHENELLY: Missouri.

MISSOURI: Missouri has 6 on the floor. One for Brown, 5 for Marty.

MR. CHENELLY: Is that it? That is it.

Congratulations to PNC Piening.

MR. BUGAJ: Mr. Chairman, at this time I'd

like to remove my name from balloting for the second ballot.

MR. CHENELLY: Thank you. If the Credentials could re-rack.

(Pause)

MR. CHENELLY: The delegates will not need to stand anymore. Unless somebody is -- if someone leaves, it will be noted by the Provost. I have been asked to give one more minute here.

(Pause)

MR. CHENELLY: Are we ready to begin? Okay. Nebraska, you are up again, please.

So again, please list your vote in order of PNC Piening and then PNC Brown.

NEBRASKA: Two for Piening.

MR. CHENELLY: New York.

NEW YORK: Twenty-nine Piening, 2 J.P.

MR. CHENELLY: North Carolina.

NORTH CAROLINA: Twenty-two for Piening.

MR. CHENELLY: North Dakota.

NORTH DAKOTA: Two J.P.

MR. CHENELLY: Ohio.

OHIO: Ohio has 1 for Piening, 19 for Brown.

MR. CHENELLY: A correction for North Carolina, please.

NORTH CAROLINA: Twenty-two for Piening and 2 for Brown.

MR. CHENELLY: Thank you.

I think we are on to Pennsylvania.

PENNSYLVANIA: Pennsylvania has 18 on the floor. Sixteen for Piening, 2 for J.P.

MR. CHENELLY: South Carolina.

SOUTH CAROLINA: South Carolian, 2 on the floor. Two for Piening.

MR. CHENELLY: Tennessee.

TENNESSEE: Tennessee, 31 for Piening.

MR. CHENELLY: Texas.

TEXAS: Texas has 7 on the floor. Seven for Piening, zero Brown.

MR. CHENELLY: Texas, could you restate that, please.

TEXAS: Texas has 7 on the floor. Seven for Piening.

MR. CHENELLY: Thank you.

Virginia.

VIRGINIA: Sixteen for J.P. Brown.

MR. CHENELLY: Was there someone here from Vermont?

(No response.)

MR. CHENELLY: No. okay.

Washington State.

WASHINGTON: Three for Brown. Three on the floor.

MR. CHENELLY: West Virginia.

WEST VIRGINIA: West Virginia, 4 on the floor. Four Piening.

MR. CHENELLY: Wisconsin:

WISCONSIN: Wisconsin, 9 on the floor. Eight for Piening, 1 for Brown.

MR. CHENELLY: Alabama.

ALABAMA: Alabama, 4 on the floor. Four for Piening.

MR. CHENELLY: Alaska.

ALASKA: Alaska has 6 on the floor. One for Piening, 5 for Brown.

MR. CHENELLY: Arizona.

ARIZONA: Arizona has 4 on the floor. Four for Brown.

MR. CHENELLY: California.

CALIFORNIA: California has 15 on the floor. Piening 12, Brown 3.

MR. CHENELLY: Connecticut.

CONNECTICUT: Connecticut has 3 on the floor. Two for Piening, 1 for Brown.

MR. CHENELLY: District of Columbia.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA: District of Columbia has 15 on the floor. Two for Piening, 13 for J.P. Brown.

MR. CHENELLY: Florida.

FLORIDA: Florida has 31. Thirty-one votes

Joe Piening.

MR. CHENELLY: Georgia.

GEORGIA: Georgia has 18. Fourteen Joe, 4 J.P.

MR. CHENELLY: Illinois.

ILLINOIS: Illinois has 13 on the floor. Nine for Piening, 4 for Brown.

(Applause)

MR. CHENELLY: That's it.

PNC PIENING: I want to thank you all for all the support that you've given me here today. It means a lot to me. I can guarantee you one thing. For those who voted for me or against me, I will work my very best to forward the foundation to meet the needs of the service department, as well as the National Headquarters. God bless you all. thank you.

(Applause)

PNC J.P. BROWN: Mr. Chairman, J.P. Brown, III. I'd like to make a motion that a unanimous ballot be cast for my friend of over 50 years for the National Service foundation and thank all of you for the confidence you had in me with the vote I got.

And, Joe, if you need help, I'm here to help you. Thank you very much.

(Applause)

MR. CHENELLY: We have one more contested race here for AMVETS National 3rd Vice Commander. When stating your votes, please vote first for Sheldon Hartsfield, second for Tim Woody.

Nebraska, when you are ready.

NEBRASKA: Nebraska, still 2 on the floor. Two for Shledon.

MR. CHENELLY: New York.

NEW YORK: Thirty-one on the floor. Thirty for Sheldon, 1 for Tim.

MR. CHENELLY: North Carolina.

NORTH CAROLINA: Twenty-four on the floor. Twenty-two for Sheldon, 2 for Woody.

MR. CHENELLY: North Dakota.

NORTH DAKOTA: Two on the floor. Two for Sheldon.

MR. CHENELLY: Ohio.

OHIO: Ohio has 20 on the floor. Sixteen for Sheldon, 4 for Woody.

MR. CHENELLY: Pennsylvania.

PENNSYLVANIA: Pennsylvania has 18 on the floor. Eighteen for Sheldon.

MR. CHENELLY: South Carolina.

SOUTH CAROLINA: South Carolina, 2 on the floor. Two for Woody.

MR. CHENELLY: Tennessee.

TENNESSEE: Thirty-one on the floor. Zero for Hartsfield, 31 for Tim Woody.

MR. CHENELLY: Texas.

TEXAS: Texas has 7 on the floor. One for Sheldon, 6 for Tim.

MR. CHENELLY: Virginia.

VIRGINIA: Virginia has 15 for Woody.

MR. CHENELLY: Washington State.

WASHINGTON: Three on the floor. Three for Sheldon.

MR. CHENELLY: West Virginia.

WEST VIRGINIA: Four on the floor. Four for Woody.

MR. CHENELLY: Wisconsin.

WISCONSIN: Wisconsin, 9 for Sheldon.

MR. CHENELLY: Alabama.

ALABAMA: Alabama, 3 on the floor for Woody.

MR. CHENELLY: Alaska.

ALASKA: Alaska has 6 on the floor. Six for Sheldon.

MR. CHENELLY: Arizona.

ARIZONA: Arizona has 4 on the floor. Four for Woody.

MR. CHENELLY: California.

CALIFORNIA: California has 14 on the floor. Hartsfield 10, Woody 4.

MR. CHENELLY: Connecticut.

CONNECTICUT: Connecticut has 3 on the floor. Three for Sheldon.

MR. CHENELLY: District of Columbia.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA: District of Columbia, 15 on the floor. Fifteen for Sheldon.

MR. CHENELLY: Florida.

FLORIDA: Florida has 31 on the floor. Twenty-five Shelon, 6 Woody.

MR. CHENELLY: Georgia.

GEORGIA: Georgia, 18 on the floor. Seventeen Sheldon, 1 Woody.

MR. CHENELLY: Illinois.

ILLINOIS: Illinois has 13 on the floor. Twelve for Hartsfield, 1 for Woody.

MR. CHENELLY: Indiana.

INDIANA: Indiana, 15 on the floor. Fourteen for Sheldon, 1 for Woody.

(Applause)

MR. HARTSFIELD: I would just like to thank everybody for their confidence and tell you that I've been listening to what you've been telling me, and I will be doing the best I can to put those changes that you're asking me to make into play. Thank you again for your confidence.

(Applause)

MR. WOODY: Congratulations, Sheldon. And I want to thank the AMVETS who did support, and we'll try it again in the future. So, thank you.

(Applause)

MR. CHENELLY: Commander Shipley, that completes our elections. Congratulations to all our newly elected.
(Pause)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: So we have a motion?

MOTION

WASHINGTON: Sir, the State of Washington. I make a motion that we accept the individual nominees by acclamation.

ALASKA: Second.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: A motion for election by acclamation. Second for Alaska.

Questions on the motion? Mr. Studebaker, you said you wanted to make a statement? All right.

PNC J.P. BROWN: Mr. Chairman, I agree with that motion, except I think it should not have you in the motion. It is tradition that the National Incoming Commander be nominated and elected by his department to show the support that he or she may have within that department, and I would like to amend your motion.

WASHINGTON: That's fine, sir. I didn't mean ----.

PNC J.P. BROWN: Oh, maybe I shouldn't. Maybe you won't get elected if it's from your department.

(Laughter)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Well, how about it, Jerry?

PNC J.P. BROWN: We've got to do a vote on the first motion first for that to --

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: So the first motion for all the previous offices, all in favor state aye.

(Chorus of "ayes".)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Opposed same sign.

(No response.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Congratulations, you guys. would you like to say something? All right. And, PNC Brown, you have the opportunity also.

1st Vice Elect.

Newly Elected Officers' Comments

2ND VICE CMDR. VORHIES: I just want to say thank you very much for your continued support, your votes and your guidance, because we do do this as a team and I will continue to work as a team and a family. Thank you.

(Applause)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: 2nd Vice Elect.

3RD VICE CMDR. STUDEBAKER: Just like Sandy said, thank you all again for your support, and I'm looking forward to working with everybody to keep this moving forward. So thank you all for supporting me for another year and thank you very much.

(Applause)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Art.

PROVOST MARSHAL MAJORS: I'd like to

thank everybody who voted for me and also my crew. If it wasn't for the crew, we couldn't do what we do. So thank you very much for taking a little bit more pride in me, and I'm going to try my best. Thank you.

(Applause)

MR. McFARLAIN: Thank you. We will continue to stay accountable. You know where I'm at if you need me. Let me know.

(Applause)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: PNC Brown.

PNC BROWN: I'd like to thank everybody for their support. I think this is going to be a tough year with JA, but I look for all your support. And if I call upon you to help, please do. Thank you.

(Applause)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: So I'm running for an election, and usually I need somebody else to take motions for that one. So, could you come up here. His name is Gerry Hawk.

MR. HAWK: Because you called me out on this, I guess I have to do this. My name is Gerry Hawk, from the Department of Pennsylvania.

MOTION

MR. HAWK: At this time the Department of Pennsylvania would like to make a motion that we cast one unanimous ballot for Paul Shipley for National Commander.

(Applause)

2ND VICE CMDR. VORHIES: We have a motion. Do we have a second?

OHIO: Second.

2ND VICE CMDR. VORHIES: I think it came from Ohio, but I'm not sure.

MR.

: Washington, Ohio. We've got coast to coast.

2ND VICE CMDR. VORHIES: All in favor -- or, wait a minute. Is there any discussion?

(No response.)

MR. SHIPLEY: I have a discussion. Hi. My name is Rob Shipley. I'm Paul's brother.

2ND VICE CMDR. VORHIES: Oh-oh.

MR. SHIPLEY: I've got something to say. For years this man has bled for this organization. What I want to talk to you about is devotion to country, to family, to ethos, to pathos. This

man up here is one of the best men that I have ever met in my life, my brother.

(Applause)

MR. SHIPLEY: He's a combat veteran for this country. And I'm telling you one thing right now. He will serve this organization and these veterans. Being that I am a two-time combat veteran, I wholeheartedly endorse this man. And thank you for your time.

(Applause)

2ND VICE CMDR. VORHIES: Okay. No further discussion. All in favor?

(Chorus of "ayes".)

2ND VICE CMDR. VORHIES: Opposed the same sign.

(One "aye"; laughter.)

2ND VICE CMDR. VORHIES: I believe that motion carries.

(Applause)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: All I can say is thank you for the support. Thank you for the work that you put in to support veterans. Thank you for the confidence in me to lead this organization for another year.

I truly believe that the words AMVET family; we are a family. You better believe that we fight each other sometimes. But as a father of three teenage daughters, I understand that fighting is pretty much all that happens between brothers and sisters. So...

My vision for this organization is for us to keep moving up, to keep moving forward, to keep supporting the needs of veterans all across this country and their families. Keep the passion going. It's very important that we know where we came from. We have a wealth of knowledge in this room.

We have gentlemen like PNC Jimmy T. Smith. He's been here since damn near the beginning. And PNC Joe Piening. I mean, he probably got wrote up for having a dirty bow and arrow.

But then we also have people out there that this is their very first convention. We have people out here that have never had the opportunity to see what our family looks like when we get together in a common cause and common purpose.

So thank you again. And anybody in this room that's a first-timer, please come see me. I appreciate you. I appreciate what you do. And for those of you that have been around and you need to kick my ass a little bit, that's

perfectly fine too. Because Bill Kilgore tells me he's always going to kick my ass any time he needs to.

And I have to give a special thanks to my mentors from the Department of Pennsylvania. Pennsylvania, we have some great people. PNC Riley especially for all of the support and direct help that you've given me all these years. Gerry Hawk for your support while you were working with us.

When I was a Department Commander of Pennsylvania I had to let go our executive director and Gerry stepped up to take that role for us and then he wouldn't leave for a little while. But he's since retired and I wish him a happy anniversary on his retirement for next year. You know, when we have to bring him back in a couple more years, he'll just be rested up for it.

But thank you to all of my Department of Pennsylvania AMVETS and thank you for coming out and supporting me every year. I appreciate it.

And to my second home, those sons of bitches in Ohio, it's closer for me to get to Juniors to bring my kids to Ohio. So we signed them up at Ohio 45 in Salem, and they've become very active. But it's like a second family for me when I got to Ohio. So thank you for all the support the Department of Ohio has given me over the years also. Thank you.

(Chorus of "Ohio")

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: I-O. That's the only damn time you're going to hear me say that.

(Laughter)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: All right. I'm done yapping on that stuff. They took my thing out of here. So where's my schedule of events? Here we are.

All right. Are there any further announcements from the floor? Any further announcements? Apparently he has to talk now.

MR. CHENELLY: For anyone who is planning to check out or is scheduled to check out of this hotel today and hasn't already put in an extension, we were able to get an automatic extension for you until 1:00 p.m. But if you haven't done your key, you're going to have to redo your key to get into your room. Those keys expired at 11:00 this morning. But if anyone has any issues with that, stop by the office.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Thank you, Joe. And thank you to Spencer, who I'm sure was the one that had to go out and work on that. If you haven't had a chance to meet Spencer, go

shake his hand. He has been a rockstar for us.

First over there, Connecticut.

MR. NEWELL: Doug Newell, Connecticut. If anyone would like a copy of the award winning pin, come see myself or Dana Dillon or Commander Duff. You don't have to have one to give us. thank you.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Colonel Adams.

COLONEL ADAMS: Yes. LeeAnn Adams, Tennessee NEC. Who won the pin contest?

MS. DILLON: Connecticut.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Connecticut.

COLONEL ADAMS: Congratulations. Also, I would like permission to come to the podium or in front of the podium.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Really?

COLONEL ADAMS: Yes.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Get up here.

COLONEL ADAMS: And I would like you to come down also.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Yes, ma'am.

MS. DILLON: While that's happening, the total was \$2,234 for the Commander's project.

(Applause)

(Presentation of "Cost of Services" Wall Plaque.)

(Applause)

MS.

: Sir, stay where you are, please. If Washington can have a moment also with you.

(Pause)

WASHINGTON: All right. I will repeat this. Paul Shipley came to AMVETS Post 1 in Takoma, Washington. As you know, I gave out pins for this convention. You either one duck, two ducks, you got a mega duck, but we have the most largest duck of them all. sir, if you would.

(Acting Cmdr. Shipley holding up duck.)

WASHINGTON: He has his own around the neck water bottle all the time.

(Applause)

POST 18: Good morning everybody. This is Post 18. We're here again to make a couple of donations to our favorite charity, the

AMVETS. The first one is for \$20,000 to the Commander's fund, and also another \$20,000 for the building that they're renovating in Pennsylvania. It's coming. We don't have us with us, but it will be here.

We had a little problem, but as long as you know \$40,000 for both altogether. Thank you.

(Applause)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Any further business?

(No response.)

VOICE: Motion to adjourn.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: I heard a motion to adjourn. Do I have a second?

(Chorus of "yes".)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Chaplain Jackson, could you please give us a benediction.

**Benediction
by National Chaplain Rigley Jackson**

CHAPLAIN JACKSON: Congratulations to all the new members. Our closing prayer. Uncover.

(Prayer.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Provost Marshal?

**Honors to the Colors
by National Provost Marshal Art Majors**

MR. MAJORS: AMVETS, attention. Hand salute.

(Whereupon, at 12:07 p.m., the meeting adjourned.)

AMVETS 79th Annual Convention

**Post Convention
National Executive Committee
(NEC) Meeting Minutes**



*Saturday,
August 23, 2025*

Held at the
Sheraton Greensboro | Four Seasons Greensboro
Greensboro, North Carolina

PROCEEDINGS
(1:04 p.m.)

Call to Order
by Acting Commander Paul Shipley

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Call the 2025 post-convention NEC meeting to order at 1304 Saturday, August 23rd, 2025. Chaplain Jackson, please give the invocation.

Invocation
by National Chaplain Rigley Jackson

CHAPLAIN JACKSON: Uncover.

(Prayer.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Provost Marshal.

Honors to the Colors
by National Provost Art Majors

MR. MAJORS: AMVETS, attention. Hand salute.

(Pledge of Allegiance.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Mr. ED, roll call.

Roll Call
by National Executive Director Joe Chenelly
National Officers

MR. CHENELLY: National Commander Horace Johnson excused. National First Vice Commander Paul Shipley?

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Present.

MR. CHENELLY: National Second Vice Commander Sandy Vorhies.

2ND VICE CMDR. VORHIES: Present.

MR. CHENELLY: National Third Vice Commander Chris Studebaker?

3RD VICE CMDR. STUDEBAKER: Present.

MR. CHENELLY: National Judge Advocate Fred Bates, absent. National Deputy Judge Advocate Ross Smith?

MR. SMITH: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: National Finance Officer Kelly McFarlain?

MR. MCFARLAIN: Present.

MR. CHENELLY: National Provost Marshal Art Majors?

MR. MAJORS: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: National Chaplain Rigley

Jackson?

CHAPLAIN JACKSON: Here.

Past National Commanders

MR. CHENELLY: Our past national commanders. Past National Commander Joe Piening?

PNC PIENING: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: PNC Jimmy T. Smith?

(No response.)

MR. CHENELLY: PNC Chuck Taylor?

(No response.)

MR. CHENELLY: PNC Bill Kilgore?

PNC KILGORE: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: PNC J.P. Brown III?

PNC J.P. BROWN III: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: PNC Duane Miskulin?

(No response.)

MR. CHENELLY: PNC Harold Chapman?

PNC CHAPMAN: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: PNC Rege Riley?

PNC RILEY: Present.

MR. CHENELLY: PNC Jan Brown?

PNC J. BROWN: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: PNC Don McLean?

PNC MCLEAN: Present.

MR. CHENELLY: And PNC Bill Clark.

PNC CLARK: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: District 1 Commander Tom Davitt.

(No response.)

MR. CHENELLY: District II Commander Randy Ferguson.

MR. FERGUSON: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: District III Commander Earl Hood.

MR. HOOD: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: District IV Commander Sheldon Hartfield?

(No response.)

MR. CHENELLY: Sheldon is here. He is working as deputy provost. District V, Deborah Wehrli?

MS. WEHRLI: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: District VI: Standing in for Jack Isaacson, Danielle Wyatt?

MS. WYATT: Here.

National Executive Committee Members

MR. CHENELLY: We will do primary -- NECs first and then we will do alternates separately. National District I: Connecticut, Dana Dillon.

MS. DILLON: Present.

MR. CHENELLY: Maine, James Laflin?

MR. LAFLIN: Present.

MR. CHENELLY: Massachusetts, Caroline Kenyon?

MS. KENYON: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: New York, Joe Ashman.

MR. ASHMAN: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: National District II: Delaware, David Haines.

(No response.)

MR. CHENELLY: District of Columbia, Aaron Smith.

MR. SMITH: Present.

MR. CHENELLY: Maryland, Andy Martel?

MR. MARTEL: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: North Carolina, Mark Beaver?

MR. BEAVER: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: Pennsylvania, PNC Riley?

PNC RILEY: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: Virginia, John Cooper?

MR. COOPER: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: West Virginia, Patricia Kishman?

MS. KISHMAN: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: District Three: Alabama, Ernestine Doubek.

MS. DOUBEK: Present.

MR. CHENELLY: Ernestine here? Oh, thank you. Florida, AJ John.

MR. JOHN: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: Georgia, Brett Colbert.

MR. COLBERT: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: Louisiana, Gary Stuart.

MR. STUART: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: South Carolina, Janice Shelton?

MS. SHELTON: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: Tennessee, Lee Ann Adams.

MS. ADAMS: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: District Four: Illinois, Richard Shea.

MR. SHEA: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: Indiana, Richard Caldwell.

MR. CALDWELL: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: Iowa, Barry Remington.

MR. REMINGTON: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: Kentucky, Deanna Maynard.

MS. MAYNARD: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: Michigan, Jean Hall?

MR. HALL: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: Missouri, Robert Lee? Thank you. Is here. Ohio, Patrick Rowley?

MR. ROWLEY: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: Wisconsin, Ralph Beck.

MR. BECK: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: National District V: Nebraska ----.

MS. : Here.

MR. CHENELLY: North Dakota, Murray Strom?

MR. STROM: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: Texas, Curtis Thomas.

MR. THOMAS: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: National District VI: Alaska, Terry Good.

(No audible response.)

MR. CHENELLY: Arizona, Bill Vansdale?

MR. VANSDALE: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: Thank you. California, Derek Hendershot?

MR. HENDERSHOT: Semper Fi.

MR. CHENELLY: Washington, Glen Skinner.

MR. SKINNER: Here.

Alternate NECs

MR. CHENELLY: I will go into alternates. I am just going to read the names. Stop me at the end of each district if I haven't read your name and you are here. I am just going to read those who have checked in. Connecticut, Doug Newell?

(No response.)

MR. CHENELLY: Is Maine, Henry Peters, here?

MR. PETERS: Present.

MR. CHENELLY: Thank you. Massachusetts, Wayne Anthony.

MR. ANTHONY: Present.

MR. CHENELLY: Is there an alternate here for New York? Marty Biagi. National District II: Delaware, is Michael Savosky here?

(No response.)

MR. CHENELLY: District of Columbia, Clyde Pike?

MR. PIKE: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: North Carolina, Kevin Nail?

MR. NAIL: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: Pennsylvania, Paul Forsman.

MR. FORSMAN: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: Any other alternates for District II?

(No response.)

MR. CHENELLY: District III: Florida, Eddie Bullock?

MR. BULLOCK: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: Georgia, Milton Allen?

(No response.)

MR. CHENELLY: Is Milton here? Tennessee, Jessica Tracey?

MS. TRACEY: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: Anyone else for District III alternate?

(No response.)

MR. CHENELLY: Let the record show District I Commander Tom Davitt is present. Thank you. National District IV alternates: Illinois, Jean Henning?

MS. HENNING: Hello.

MR. CHENELLY: Iowa, Mary Van Horn?

MS. VAN HORN: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: Kentucky, Dean Frazier.

(No response.)

MR. CHENELLY: Michigan, Joe Hoecherl.

MR. HOECHERL: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: Missouri, Robert Lee?

MR. LEE: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: Ohio, Sara Pierce.

MS. PIERCE: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: Anyone I am missing from District IV alternates?

(No response.)

MR. CHENELLY: District V: North Dakota, Brian Bartlett?

MR. BARTLETT: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: Texas, Clay Roundtree?

MR. ROUNDTREE: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: Missing anyone from District V?

(No response.)

MR. CHENELLY: Alternates for District IV: Alaska, Steve Martilla?

MR. MARTILLA: Here.

MR. CHENELLY: Thank you. Anyone else from District VI? Did I miss anyone at all? You have a quorum, Mr. Chairman.

Adoption of Agenda

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: All right. I would ask for a motion to adopt the agenda?

MR. MCFARLAIN: McFarlain.

MR. JOHN. AJ John.

MS. KENYON: Second, Kenyon, Mass.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Motion, by McFarlain, second John. Any questions on the agenda?

(No response.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: All in favor of the agenda passing, state aye.

(Chorus of "aye.")

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Opposed, same sign.

(No response.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: All right. Move into nominations for the NSF Trustee one-year term. Mr. ED, do you handle this or do I handle it? Okay. Still learning. Only done it for a week.

Nominations National Service Foundation Trustee

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: All right. Nominations. NEC Adams?

MS. ADAMS: Lee Ann Adams from Tennessee. I stand here today enthusiastically nominating Laura McFarlain for the position of Trustee of the AMVETS National Service Foundation.

Laura McFarlain is service. She embodies the values we hold dear: dedication, leadership and commitment to those who have served.

For nearly 25 years she has dedicated her life to our nation in the United States Army. And that commitment extends far beyond her uniform. She is a devoted wife to Kelly, a lov-

ing mother to seven children, and a steadfast leader within AMVETS at every level.

Laura isn't just a member. She is a builder. She has risen through the ranks of our organization, serving with distinction as past national Third District commander, past Department of Louisiana commander, and currently serving as Post 7 in Louisiana commander, and Department of Louisiana finance officer.

She understands the needs of our members, and consistently steps up to lead. Laura brings more than leadership. Her current role as auditor for the Army National Guard demonstrates the crucial skill set of financial responsibility and a keen attention to detail.

She understands how to manage resources effectively and ensure accountability. These qualities are essential for a trustee of our foundation.

I have no doubt that Laura will be a valuable asset to the foundation, bringing her strategic thinking, dedication and leadership to the challenges and opportunities ahead. I urge you to join me in supporting this nomination. Let's bring her experience and dedication to the AMVETS National Service Foundation and continue to strengthen our ability to serve those who have served.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: NEC McFarlain, do you accept the nomination?

MS. MCFARLAIN: I accept.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Mr. Studebaker?

3RD VICE CMDR. STUDEBAKER: I am not quite sure how to go after that. Chris Studebaker, national third vice commander. I second the nomination for Laura McFarlain. I want to reiterate why I believe Laura is exceptionally qualified for this role.

You know, often we talk about wanting individuals who are passionate to the mission. Laura is passionate to the mission. I mean, she has been around AMVETS for over 25 years. She has held every position in the Department of Louisiana and her post. Also on the foundation at the Department of Louisiana. So she will make an exceptional member of the National Service Foundation.

And her leadership through accounting and auditing and everything else that she has done in the United States Army, and if she can put up with Kelly, then you know she can put up with anything.

So I strongly support and ask for everybody's vote for Laura McFarlain for the National Service Foundation trustee.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: All right. Well, we will start over here. PNC Brown?

PNC J.P. BROWN III: I rise before you to place the name of Dana Dillon. Dana has been around for a long time. And all of you have been on the floor today and yesterday, she is constantly at the mic so I am sure she will have a lot to say if she gets elected to the service foundation.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Mr. Remington?

MR. REMINGTON: I would like to put the nomination for Bill Clark in for the service foundation. I have known Bill for many, many years.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Dana, do you accept your nomination?

MS. PIERCE: I would like to second Dana's nomination.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Fair enough, second. Do you want to talk more? Okay, you are good. Do you need to talk? Okay. Barry, you put in the name of Bill Clark?

MR. REMINGTON: Yes.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Is there a second for Bill Clark's?

MR. FERGUSON: Ferguson.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Randy Ferguson. PNC Clark, do you accept?

PNC CLARK: I do.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Any further names for the one-year service foundation?

(No response.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Any further names for the one-year service foundation? Hearing none, the nominations for the one-year service foundation are closed. All right, we will do a standing vote. Provosts, you prepared to count?

We have the option legally to do a stand vote or to do a roll call vote. I would prefer -- only the present NEC members may vote. We trust you on this. So we will review that you are the standing NEC. If there is any question, please bring it up immediately if somebody stands who is not the NEC. You have to be signed in as the NEC. If you are the alternate that is seated, that is also acceptable, but you are standing as the NEC. PNC Kilgore?

PNC KILGORE: ----.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Motion for a

roll call vote. Who seconded it? Stewart from Louisiana. We have a motion and a second. Any questions on that motion for a roll call vote? PNC Brown, are you coming up for a question? No?

PNC J. BROWN: I am gathering PNCs.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Oh, the PNCs. All right. Any further questions on the motion?

(No response.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Seeing none, all in favor of a roll call vote, state aye.

(Chorus of "aye.")

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Opposed, same sign.

(No response.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: All right. We have the roll call? Electee candidates: If you would like a vote counter, please appoint them now and have them come to wherever would be appropriate. If you need paper, we have paper up here. But you have been given enough pens today. You should have one.

MR. CHENELLY: So each state gets one vote. If your state happens to have the district commander, your state technically gets two votes, right? If you have another national officer.

So we will start with District I: Commander Thomas Davitt? Your vote? Dana Dillon. Connecticut? Maine? Bill Clark? Massachusetts?

MS. KENYON: Connecticut. I am voting for Dillon, Dana.

MR. CHENELLY: Got it. New York?

MR. ASHMAN: McFarlain.

MR. CHENELLY: National District II: Randy Ferguson, commander?

MR. FERGUSON: Clark.

MR. CHENELLY: Delaware is not here, correct? District of Columbia? Clark? Maryland?

MR. MARTEL: Dillon.

MR. CHENELLY: North Carolina?

MR. BEAVER: Clark.

MR. CHENELLY: Pennsylvania?

(No audible response.)

MR. CHENELLY: Virginia?

MR. COOPER: Clark.

MR. CHENELLY: Clark. West Virginia?

MS. KISHMAN: Dillon.

MR. CHENELLY: Dillon. District Three Commander Earl Hood?

MR. HOOD: McFarlain.

MR. CHENELLY: McFarlain. Alabama.

MS. DOUBEK: McFarlain.

MR. CHENELLY: Florida.

MR. JOHN: McFarlain.

MR. CHENELLY: Georgia.

MR. COLBERT: McFarlain.

MR. CHENELLY: Louisiana.

MR. STUART: McFarlain.

MR. CHENELLY: South Carolina?

MS. SHELTON: McFarlain.

MR. CHENELLY: Tennessee.

MS. ADAMS: McFarlain.

MR. CHENELLY: District Four, commander?

MR. HOOD: McFarlain.

MR. CHENELLY: No, had to have been seated during roll call. District IV, Illinois.

MR. SHEA: Clark.

MR. CHENELLY: Indiana?

MR. CALDWELL: Dillon.

MR. CHENELLY: Iowa.

MR. REMINGTON: Clark.

MR. CHENELLY: Kentucky.

MS. MAYNARD: Dillon.

MR. CHENELLY: Michigan.

MR. HALL: Clark.

MR. CHENELLY: Missouri.

MR. ROWLEY: McFarlain.

MR. CHENELLY: McFarlain. Ohio?

MR. : McFarlain.

MR. CHENELLY: Wisconsin?

MR. BECK: Dillon.

MR. CHENELLY: National District V, commander?

MS. WEHRLI: Clark.

MR. CHENELLY: Nebraska?

MS. : Clark.

MR. CHENELLY: North Dakota?

MR. STROM: Dillon.

MR. CHENELLY: Texas.

MR. THOMAS: McFarlain.

MR. CHENELLY: National District VI, commander?

MS. : Dillon.

MR. CHENELLY: Dana Dillon, Dillon. Alaska?

(No audible response.)

MR. CHENELLY: Arizona?

MR. VANSDALE: McFarlain.

MR. CHENELLY: California?

MR. HENDERSHOT: McFarlain.

MR. CHENELLY: And Washington.

MR. SKINNER: McFarlain.

MR. CHENELLY: PNCs have one collective vote.

MS. : McFarlain.

MR. CHENELLY: McFarlain. Should I move on to our -- we still have our finance officer.

MR. MCFARLAIN: McFarlain.

MR. CHENELLY: Deputy JA?

MR. SMITH: Dillon.

MR. CHENELLY: Third vice?

(Away from microphone.)

MR. CHENELLY: Second vice?

2 VICE CMDR. VORHIES: Dillon.

MR. CHENELLY: And first vice.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: (Away from microphone.)

(Pause.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: According to our tabulation, McFarlain is the winner of the race.

(Applause.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Dillon?

MS. DILLON: I would like to thank everyone who voted for me. I think Laura McFarlain is going to do an excellent job. Had I known she was running, I probably wouldn't have. But thank you very much. Congratulations.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: PNC Clark?

PNC CLARK: I would like to thank those that voted for me, and good luck to Laura. And if you need any help, I am here.

MS. MCFARLAIN: Thank you. I want to truly thank everybody for your support. I expect this year to be a good year. I have got a lot of learning to do. It was kind of last minute for me to finally make the decision to do this. I wanted to make sure that I did my homework before jumping into something. But I am really looking forward to it. Thank you.

(Applause.)

National Finance Committee Member

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: All right, at this time I will open up the nominations for the National Finance Committee member. There are two seats open, both one-year seats. Nominators, please go to the microphones.

2ND VICE CMDR. VORHIES: Commander, I would like to nominate Lee Ann Adams of Tennessee. This is Lee Ann's fifth year serving on the NEC. And when she was elected to the Finance Committee last year from this floor. And she has done an outstanding job for us this past year. And she would like to continue to serve this coming year.

Lee Ann is active at the local and state level since 2017 with the AMVETS. She is a retired Army colonel after 24 years of service. She is the daughter of a World War II Navy finance officer. She is a granddaughter of a World War I Army pilot. Wife an Army Vietnam veteran. Mother of two Army veterans, one retired with 22 years of service.

She is the grandmother of a senior at Ohio University, who will be a second lieutenant in May 2026. Lee Ann has a lifetime history of serving, and I ask that you continue her ser-

vice on the Finance Committee. Thank you.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Is there a second for Lee Ann Adams?

MR. : I rise to second the nomination for Lee Ann Adams for finance position. She joined when I was post commander, and she has been busy ever since. She is at the department level and she does Quilts of Valor. She is constantly on the go doing anything and everything that she can for veterans.

She sat on the Finance Committee last year. And I am sure she is well-prepared to continue that position. Thank you.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Lee Ann Adams, do you accept the nomination?

MS. ADAMS: I do.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Next nomination.

MR. STUART: Gary Stuart, NEC, Louisiana. I nominate AJ John from Florida.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Is there a second for John?

MR. BECK: Ralph Beck, NEC, state of Wisconsin. I would like to second the nomination for AJ John, a good friend of mine for more than 15 years. A dedicated AMVET.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Mr. John, do you accept the nomination?

MR. JOHN: I do.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Are there any further nominations for the Finance Committee?

MS. PIERCE: Sarah Pierce, Ohio. I would like to nominate Richard Shea Jr. for the National Finance Committee. He is a Marine Corps veteran. A full-time Chicago fire lieutenant with 27 years in the service. Married to Laurie Shea, a very active Ladies Auxiliary member, with three grandchildren and some pet fish.

He is a 31-year life member of AMVETS Post 43 in Burnham, Illinois. He was Post 43 commander from 2010 to 2016. Illinois District I commander from 2012 to 2013. And Department of Illinois Commander in 2016-2017. Thank you.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: We have a second for Richard Shea?

MR. ASHMAN: Yes, sir. Joe Ashman, NEC from New York. I rise to also support the nomination of Richard Shea. As you heard from Sarah, you have heard a few things that

Richard has done in the past. Currently he is also the Post 43 JA. He is the Illinois District I finance officer. He is Department of Illinois NEC. Department of Illinois Service Foundation director. He is currently the Fourth National District newly elected first vice. And he is currently one of AMVETS' national trustees for the Department of Minnesota.

He is a person that you want to trust with your finances, quality person. I second the nomination of Richard Shea.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Mr. Shea, do you accept the nomination?

MR. SHEA: Yes.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: All right. So since you all wanted roll call last time, we will do roll call this time.

You have two votes. So you will say the name of two candidates per vote. Mr. Executive Director.

MR. CHENELLY: And once again we will start with District I. So District I commander?

MR. DAVITT: Adams and John.

MR. CHENELLY: Connecticut?

MS. DILLON: Adams and John.

MR. CHENELLY: Maine?

(No audible response.)

MR. CHENELLY: Single vote? John and Adams. Massachusetts?

MS. KENYON: Lee Ann Adams and Richard Shea.

MR. CHENELLY: New York?

MR. ASHMAN: Richard Shea and AJ John.

MR. CHENELLY: New York.

MR. ASHMAN: Richard Shea and AJ John.

MR. CHENELLY: District II, commander?

MR. FERGUSON: Lee Ann Adams, AJ John.

MR. CHENELLY: Is Delaware here? No. District of Columbia?

MR. SMITH: AJ John, Richard Shea.

MR. CHENELLY: Maryland?

MR. MARTEL: Lee Ann Adams, AJ John.

MR. CHENELLY: North Carolina?

MR. BEAVER: Lee Ann Adams and AJ John.

MR. CHENELLY: Pennsylvania? Pennsylvania?

MR. RILEY: Adams and John.

MR. CHENELLY: Virginia?

MR. COOPER: Adams and AJ.

MR. CHENELLY: West Virginia?

MS. KISHMAN: Lee Ann Adams and Richard Shea.

MR. CHENELLY: Adams and Shea. National District Three, commander?

MR. HOOD: Adams and John.

MR. CHENELLY: Alabama.

MS. DOUBEK: Adams and John.

MR. CHENELLY: Florida.

MR. JOHN: Adams and John.

MR. CHENELLY: Georgia.

MR. COLBERT: Adams and John.

MR. CHENELLY: Louisiana.

MR. STUART: Adams and John.

MR. CHENELLY: South Carolina?

MS. SHELTON: Adams and John.

MR. CHENELLY: Tennessee.

MS. ADAMS: Adams and John.

MR. CHENELLY: District Four commander here? Yes, thank you.

MR. HOOD: John.

MR. CHENELLY: Illinois.

MR. SHEA: Adams and Shea.

MR. CHENELLY: Indiana?

MR. CALDWELL: John and Shea.

MR. CHENELLY: Iowa.

MR. REMINGTON: John, Shea.

MR. CHENELLY: Kentucky.

MS. MAYNARD: John and Shea.

MR. CHENELLY: Michigan.

MR. HALL: Lee Ann and Shea.

MR. CHENELLY: Missouri.

MR. ROWLEY: Lee Ann and Shea.

MR. CHENELLY: Ohio?

MR. ROWLEY: John, Shea.

MR. CHENELLY: Wisconsin?

MR. BECK: Adams and John.

MR. CHENELLY: District V, commander?

MS. WEHRLI: Adams and John.

MR. CHENELLY: Nebraska?

MS. : Adams and John

MR. CHENELLY: North Dakota?

MR. STROM: John and Shea.

MR. CHENELLY: Texas.

MR. THOMAS: Adams and John.

MR. CHENELLY: District VI, commander?

MS. WYATT: Adams and John.

MR. CHENELLY: Alaska?

MS. GOOD: Adams and John.

MR. CHENELLY: Arizona?

MR. VANSDALE: Adams and Shea.

MR. CHENELLY: California.

MR. HENDERSHOT: Adams and Shea.

MR. CHENELLY: And Washington.

MR. SKINNER: Adams and John.

MR. CHENELLY: Provost Marshal, you have a vote. I didn't ask you last time.

MR. MAJORS: John and Shea.

MR. CHENELLY: Apologize for that. Finance officer?

MR. MCFARLAIN: John and Shea.

MR. CHENELLY: JA?

MR. SMITH: Adams and John.

MR. CHENELLY: Third vice commander?

3RD VICE CMDR. STUDEBAKER: Adams

and John.

MR. CHENELLY: Second vice commander?

2ND VICE CMDR. VORHIES: Adams and Shea.

MR. CHENELLY: And first vice commander.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Abstain. PNCs.

MR. CHENELLY: PNCs, collective vote.

PNC J.P. BROWN III: PNCs, Lee Ann and John.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: All right, per tabulation, your winners are Lee Ann Adams from Tennessee and AJ John from Florida. Congratulations.

(Applause.)

MR. SHEA: Commander, Illinois NEC Rich Shea. I want to thank all those did support me, and to the two candidates that did win, best of luck. I know that they are going to do a great job. All of us are here to do a great job. So thank you.

(Applause.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: AJ?

MR. JOHN: Mr. Commander and the NEC, I would like to thank you all, those of you that supported me, and even those of you that didn't. You know, it is all a race. And I would like to thank you all, and I will do the best job I possibly can this upcoming year. Thank you.

(Applause.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Lee Ann?

MS. ADAMS: Commander and NEC, I would like to thank you all who voted for me. Last year was my first year. Took a few months to get my feet wet but hopefully this year I know a little more. Can participate a little more. And I have several plans and am approaching this with enthusiasm. Thank you.

(Applause.)

New Appointments

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: All right, new appointments. I guess that is me. The two appointments that I am going to announce presently are my chaplain, which will be Jeremiah Botkin from Georgia, and my IG, which will be PNC Rege Riley.

My Grievance Committee will also be appointed. It will be AJ John as the chairman, Barry Remington and Rich Shea. Any other persons

that will be appointed as committee chairmen or as members of the committees will be notified by end of week by e-mail or by phone call if I can't get you by e-mail, by close of business on the 29th of August.

I will submit the entire committee list to the NEC by e-mail so that you will all be fully informed of who has been appointed. And if there are any objections, they can be dealt with at the December NEC meeting. Yes, sir?

MR. : What was the second appointment after chaplain?

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: I appointed Jeremiah Botkin from Georgia as chaplain. I appointed PNC Rege Riley as the IG.

All right, moving on from that. Old business? Is there any business before this NEC?

(No response.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Although I need a motion to accept my appointments? Okay. Apologies.

PNC J.P. BROWN III: Move to accept his appointments.

MR. : Second.

2ND VICE COMMANDER VORHIES: Properly motioned and seconded to accept the Commander's appointments. All in favor?

(Chorus of "aye.")

2ND VICE COMMANDER VORHIES: Any opposed?

(No response.)

2ND VICE COMMANDER VORHIES: And we should have had a discussion but it carries.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Okay, now old business. Any old business?

(No response.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Going once, going twice, sold. Any new business?

(No response.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Once, twice, sold. Chaplain Jackson, can you give us the benediction?

**Benediction
by National Chaplain Rigley Jackson**

CHAPLAIN JACKSON: Uncover.

(Prayer.)

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Wait one -- who said it? Dana Dillon said motion to adjourn. Do I have a second?

MS. KENYON: Second, Kenyon, Mass.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Now, Provost Marshal.

**Honors to the Colors
by Provost Marshal Art Majors**

MR. MAJORS: AMVETS, attention. Hand salute.

ACTING CMDR. SHIPLEY: Next NEC meeting will be December -- it is on the Website.

(Whereupon, the meeting adjourned at 1:41 p.m.)

AMVETS
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