AMERICAN LEGION OFFICER'S GUIDE

♦ Post Officer's Guide
♦ District or County Commander's Guide
♦ Manual of Ceremonies

NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS
THE AMERICAN LEGION
INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA 46206

Consult the World Wide Web

http://www.legion.org - The American Legion Web Site
http://www.legion.org/aboutal/off_guide.htm - Post Officer's Guide

Revised January 2004

(Forty-second Edition)
Handbook for American Legion Officers

FOREWORD

The *American Legion Officer's Guide* combines under one cover a basic handbook to include:

- **Section I** – Post Operations and Procedures;
- **Section II** – District/County Commander's Guide;
- **Section III** – Manual of Ceremonies, in which all of the ceremonies prescribed by the National Trophies, Awards and Ceremonials Committee are given; and
- **Section IV** – Appendix, which is a treasury of information on eligibility, parliamentary procedures, a suggested Post constitution and by-laws; and other subjects.

Publications are available from your Department Headquarters or from the National Headquarters on all of the major American Legion programs. As these program publications are received or obtained, they should be turned over to the responsible Post officers or committee chairmen. However, the *American Legion Officer's Guide* is intended as the principal handbook issued by the National Headquarters to help American Legion officers fulfill their responsibilities.

The community knows The American Legion by its Posts. In your community, The American Legion is your Post. We hope this handbook will help you in your many responsibilities and urge you to become familiar with its contents.

As the year proceeds, you will receive through various Department and National publications additional information concerning specific programs and many suggestions for worthwhile activities. Should you have questions on American Legion policies or procedures, your District Officer can usually be of help. In addition, your Department Headquarters is always available for advice and information. When necessary, your Department Headquarters can also call on the National Headquarters for information, clarification, or assistance on any matter.

Note: Major changes and/or updates will be shown in the table of contents as [NEW] or [UPDATED].

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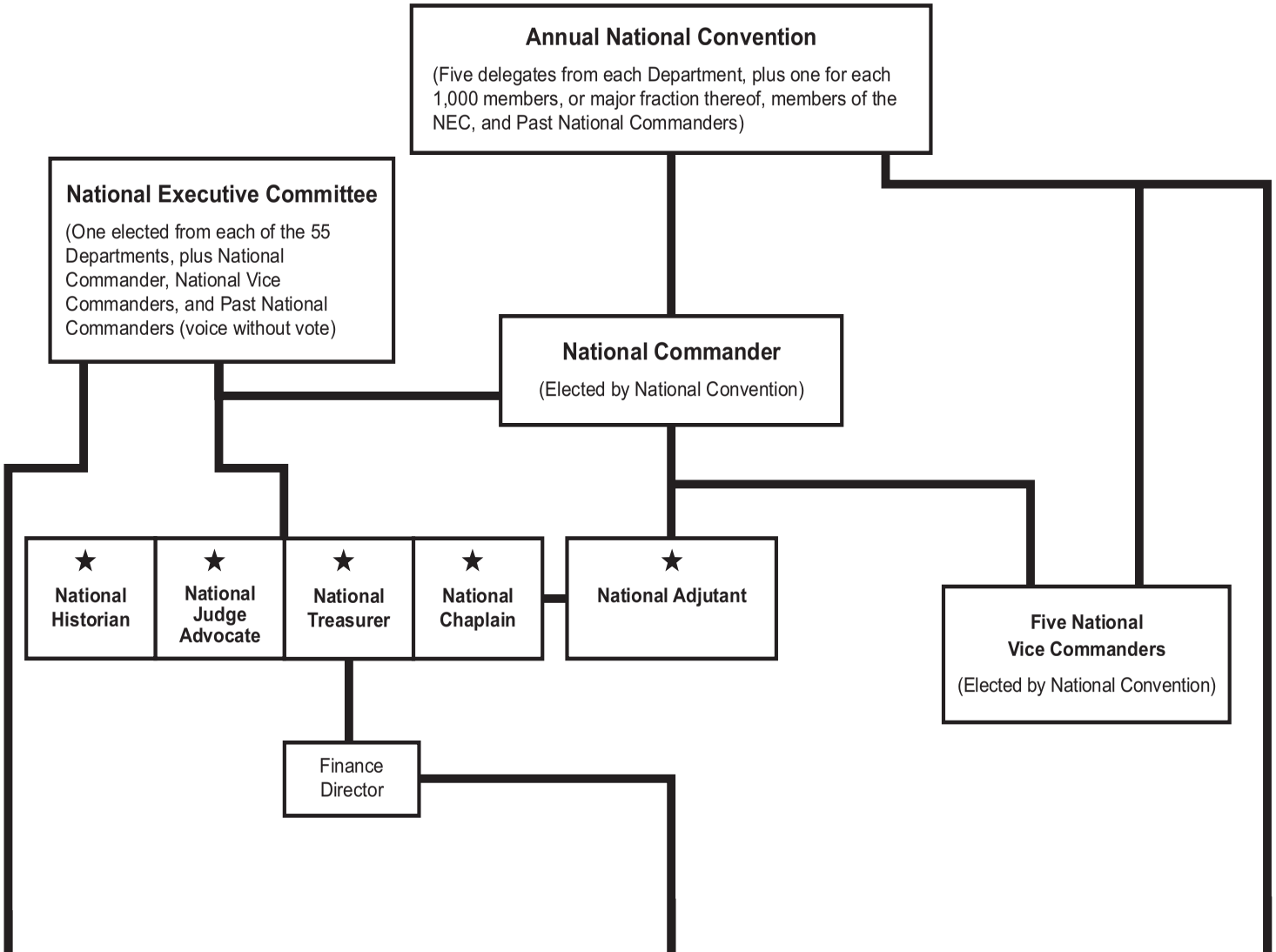
The National Organization of The American Legion



National Commissions and Committees

(Standing)

(Appointed by NEC, and functioning on continuing basis)

Americanism Commission
- Americanism Council
- Committee on Education
- Counter-Subversive Activities Committee

Commission on Children & Youth

Convention Commission
- Contests Supervisory Committee
- Distinguished Guests Committee

Economic Commission
- Employment Committee
- Veterans' Preference Committee

Finance Commission
- Child Welfare Foundation, Inc.
- Endowment Fund Corporation
- Life Insurance Committee
- Emblem Committee
- Overseas Graves Decoration Trust

Foreign Relations Commission
- Foreign Relations Council

Internal Affairs Commission
- Constitution & By-Laws Committee
- Membership & Post Activities Committee
- Resolutions Assignment Committee
- Trophies, Awards & Ceremonials Committee

Legislative Commission

National Security Commission
- Aerospace Committee
- Defense Civil Preparedness Committee
- Law and Order Committee
- Merchant Marine Committee
- Military Affairs Committee
- National Security Council
- Naval Affairs Committee

Public Relations Commission

The American Legion Magazine Commission

Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Commission
- National Cemetery Committee

National Headquarters

(Full-time Staff)

Indianapolis, IN (Bldg 1)
- Administrative Services
  - Finance Division
  - Library and Museum
- Americanism/Children & Youth Division
- The American Legion Magazine
- Internal Affairs Division
  - Membership & Post Activities Section
- Public Relations Division
- National Convention Division

Indianapolis, IN (Bldg 2)
- Emblem Sales Division
- American Legion Life Insurance
- Member Benefits
- Information Technology Operations

Washington, D.C. Office
- Administrative Services
- Economics Division
- Legislative Division
- Media Relations
- National Security/Foreign Relations Division
- Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Division

Various Field Stations

(Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation)

Convention Committees

(Composed of one delegate from each Department, serving during the life of the Convention only)

Americanism (1 delegate)

Children and Youth (1 delegate)

Constitutional Amendments (1 delegate)

Credentials and Internal Affairs
- Credentials and other Internal Matters (1 delegate)
- Membership (1 delegate)

Economic
- Employment and Veterans' Preference (1 delegate)
- Other Economic Matters (1 delegate)

Finance (1 delegate)

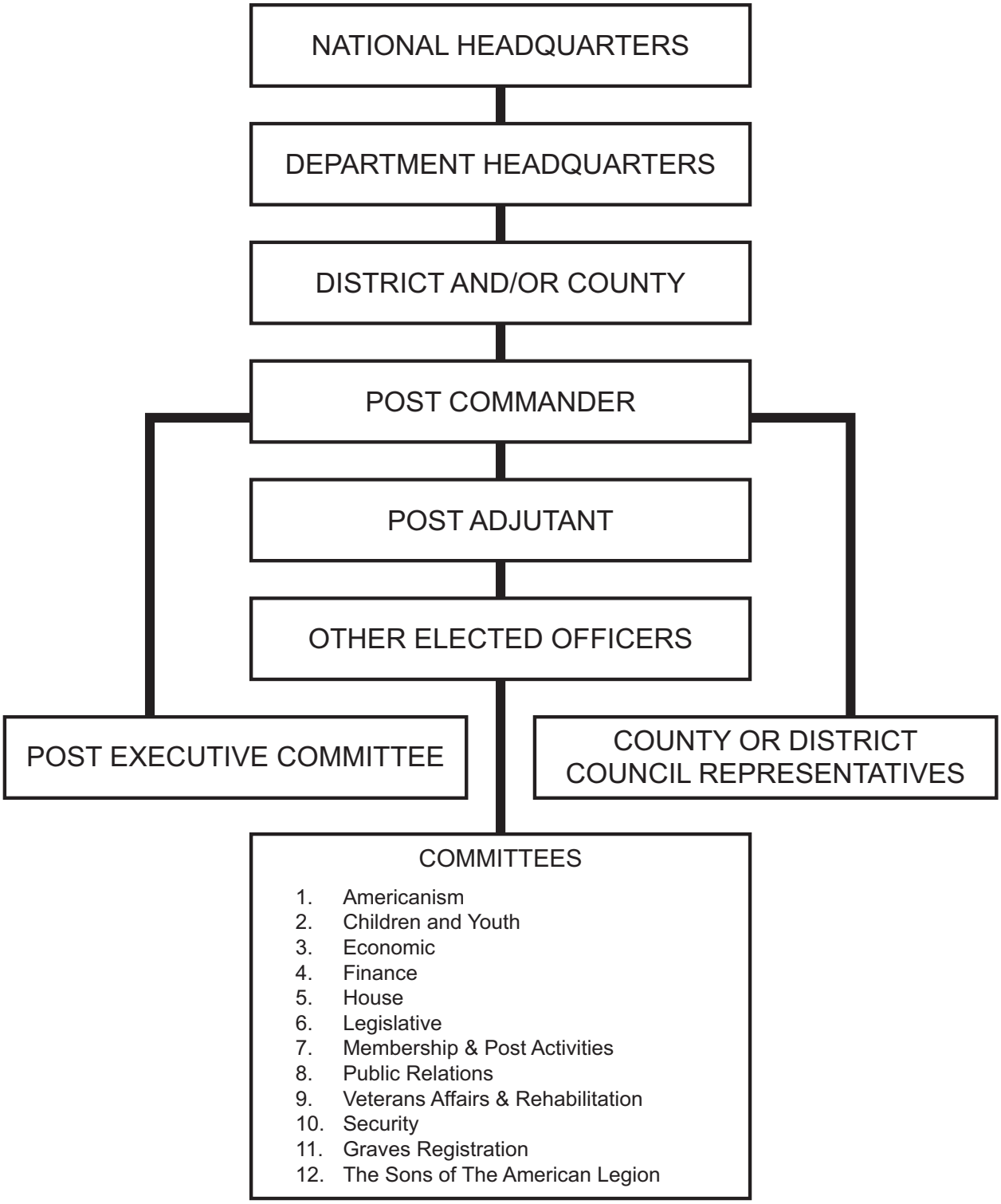
Foreign Relations (1 delegate)

Legislation and Rules (1 delegate)

Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation
- Claims and Rating (1 delegate)
- Hospitals and Medical Services (1 delegate)

Security
- Military (1 delegate)
- Naval (1 delegate)
- Aerospace (1 delegate)
- Merchant Marine (1 delegate)
- Defense Civil Preparedness (1 delegate)
- Law & Order (1 delegate)

Post Organizational Chart



SECTION 1

A "Blueprint" for the 21st Century

Purpose: A plan to provide *"Service"* to our veterans, their families and their communities is as solid today, in a period of high technology and lightning fast changes, as it was in 1919, when the founding fathers of The American Legion met in Paris.

They were true visionaries. Much of The American Legion's success rests on its understanding that the fight for veterans rights - past, present or future - is never-ending. While our purposes may remain unchanged, our capabilities must not. The environment is changing and we must stay in front of change to be this nation's leading advocate for veterans.

For continued success, we must provide first rate service to our veterans throughout the next century, The basis for this blueprint is the Preamble to the Constitution of The American Legion, which was finalized at the St. Louis caucus in 1919 and reaffirmed at Minneapolis in 1994. This declaration reaffirmed the principles on which our great organization was developed *(the Preamble Minneapolis Affirmation follows the 21st century blueprint information).*

And the method for applying this blueprint for success to American Legion activities has not changed either. Personal contact at every level of leadership within The American Legion is the catalyst that has made us successful in the past and will make us even more successful serving veterans in the future.

Since our founding fathers gave us a sound, clear focus, we need to build on this direction as we seek every opportunity to excel in growth and membership in the 21st century.

21st Century Key Challenges: The key challenges facing The American Legion in the 21st Century, as outlined by the National Executive Committee in October, 1997, have a common denominator to success -- personal involvement of Legion Officers.

Vision: Every American Legion member must focus on service to the veteran, to their families and to the communities as their number one priority. Legion officers at every level must lead the way in reinforcing this vision.

Goals: We must have goals to fulfill our vision of service. A mission statement should be in place that includes these goals and spells out a direction of where you and The American Legion at every level should be in one, three, five and seven years.

Image: We must be aware at all times of our image and how others perceive us and our work in the community. We must remain the champions of service to our veterans and their communities. Everyone in a Legion leadership position must set the example for all members to follow.

Partnership: The American Legion, American Legion Auxiliary, and the Sons of The American Legion need to be partners in providing service to our veterans, their families and their communities.

Legion officers again must set the example for inner-organization dialogue and cooperation. Our work of service to our veterans is a ***"family affair."***

Public Relations: We can amplify our commitment of service to the veteran through an aggressive and consistent public relations program. It allows us to maintain visibility in the community. Technology in the media has made it possible for every one to become accessible to print and broadcast media. Likewise, Community Service Committees, the Chamber of Commerce(s), and Business Associations have doubled in number over the past 10 years. These are excellent opportunities to network. Become involved in the community as a good neighbor. Public relations opportunities to tell the Legion story should be pursued.

Programs: Our service to veterans and their communities is manifested in our programs and there are many outstanding programs to choose from. Single theme or service Posts can be drawing cards for starting new Posts. Legion officers at every level should be coaches, motivators and consultants in helping Posts develop and maintain programs.

Training: Every officer and staff member needs training. Through training we gain knowledge to help better serve our veterans. Whether it is a Department Legion College, a conference, an annual convention, the Extension Institute or National Information Conferences, education of our officers and staffs at every level should be an on-going process. One of the most ideal and effective training methods lies in **mentoring.**

Mentoring: Is an "hands-on" approach to training that has proven to be the best investment in nurturing future Legion leaders. Mentoring can be tailored to accommodate any learning needs of your members. It can be in small group or done one-on-one. Through the individualized coaching by a seasoned Legion officer, new officers and members can receive the training and reap the benefits of experience, which may be lost in a classroom setting. Mentoring allows one to learn at their own pace and in their own locality. It allows ample room for positive motivation and stimulates new ideas for improving Legion business.

Membership: Service to our veterans begins with our membership base. Without members we would have no voice on Capitol Hill nor could we achieve the entitlements and support to our veterans, their families, their communities, our state and nation. **Membership is everyone's responsibility -- especially Legion officers.** Post revitalization and new Post development should be on every Legion Officer's mind. Resolution 28, Disenfranchising, reaffirmed that the Department Commander or Department Executive Committee is the final decision maker on establishing Posts within the Department, not another Post or District. The National Executive Committee established, by the same resolution, an objective of one Post for each high school in the community. The focus is presence in the community and the objective is growth. Over the next five years the goal is to increase the number of Posts to over 16,000. Therefore, every Department must focus on Post development/ revitalization

21st Century Outreach Program - This program encourages Legion officers to aggressively seek support from the Active Duty military, Guard and Reserve organizations in your Department to identify eligible veterans. Since January 1998, several active duty bases and guard units have agreed to allow The American Legion to address veterans separating from the service. The potential for membership is unlimited. Two initiatives to identify veterans in the community are listed below:

Jobs – ***American Legion Members and Posts*** can help job seekers from the military community find good jobs with good employers! Help your employer/business in recruiting Veterans, transitioning military, and working spouses! Find out how referring employers will

benefit your Post and the Legion by visiting The American Legion web site at http://www.Legion.org.

Internet - Several of our members have shown leadership initiative by thinking outside the box when it comes to finding new sources of eligible veterans. Tapping into webrings and getting on veteran service organization chat lines has proven to be highly successful in initiating interest in The American Legion. It is also a new frontier to promote the Legion through new public relation opportunities.

Communication: This is a must! Legion officers must set the example in establishing clear and concise lines of communication with members and nonmember alike. Through communication and personal contact, The American Legion can cross all race, gender and age barriers on its way to providing quality service to our veterans and their communities. District and county Commanders should visit every Post within their jurisdiction. This provides you with an awareness of their needs and growth potential. Communicate, educate and support one another through all mediums available to you whether its newsletters, bulletins, television, radio, newspapers, E-Mail and/or direct contact.

Conclusion: The essence of the 21st Century Plan is personal involvement through demonstrated leadership. Our blueprint for success was laid out for each of us by our founding fathers----it is:

SERVICE TO OUR VETERANS, THEIR FAMILIES AND TO THEIR COMMUNITIES, STATES AND NATION

For more information, refer to the full text of the resolutions approved by the National Executive Committee, May 6-7, 1998, Spring Meeting, Indianapolis, Indiana – the "Resolving" clauses of each resolution follows:

Resolution #27, Diversity and A Veteran Is a Veteran (21st Century)

RESOLVED, that The American Legion strongly recommends that any level of The American Legion, Departments, Districts and Posts review its Constitution and By Laws and those of superior bodies within the organization to ensure it is in compliance with the rules that govern this organization; and be it further

RESOLVED, that Departments, Districts and Posts dedicated to the programs of The American Legion and should not take unwarranted actions that may lead to barriers that hamper the growth, support of programs and active community involvement, that may adversely affect the growth of The American Legion; and be it finally

RESOLVED, that we operate with a common focus, derived from cooperation and fraternal relationships developed from working together at all levels of the organization, for the sole intent and purpose of carrying out the duties and responsibilities commonly shared at each level of The American Legion.

Resolution #28, Disenfranchising (21st Century)

RESOLVED, that the formation and revitalization of American Legion Posts be a priority, which only the Department Commander or the Department Executive Committee controls in accordance with Article IX, Section 1 of the National Constitution; and be it further

RESOLVED, as long as all of the required obligations are met for the establishment of a Post, no individual Post or District should have the authority to deny any individual(s) the opportunity to start or revitalize a Post, without just cause, but the final decision will be made by the Department Commander or Department Executive Committee; and be it finally

RESOLVED, that there should be an American Legion Post for every high school where Department, Districts, and Post leadership will work together to ensure the success of the Post in its support of programs and the local community.

Resolution #29, Veteran Outreach Program (21st Century)

RESOLVED, that The American Legion initiate at all levels of the organization a comprehensive plan to educate and provide service to Active, Reserve Component and National Guard eligible military personnel currently in uniform, recently retired and/or separated, about the value and benefits derived form membership in The American Legion; and be it finally

RESOLVED, that The American Legion initiate at all levels of the organization a recruiting campaign targeted at eligible military personnel currently serving on Active Duty, in the Reserve Components and the National Guard.

Resolution #30, Training and Education (21st Century)

RESOLVED, that The American Legion recommend to all levels of the organization, development of a comprehensive plan to educate and train its leadership, preparing them for the present and future challenges to be faced in service to veterans, the community, state, and nation, and be it further

RESOLVED, that The American Legion recommends a standard for its leadership to include a knowledge about programs, activities, goals and objectives of the organization, in order to do their best and be more proactive towards the needs of those that they serve; and be further

RESOLVED, that it is recommended that Departments, Districts and Posts recommend to all candidates for office that they consider taking and successfully completing The American Legion Extension Institute course: and be it further

RESOLVED, that every Department of The American Legion be encouraged to start and staff a comprehensive training seminar/college (also know as Legion College) for the purpose of training its leaders; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the National Organization of The American Legion develop a training environment, seeking a better-trained cadre of leadership that may include the use of computer technology/communications, written materials, teleconferencing, other electronic media, workshops, conferences, and seminars; and be it finally

RESOLVED, all levels of the organization of The American Legion, be strongly and resolutely encouraged to develop and execute a continuing education program, initiated by an inaugural five-year plan with a goal to implement this concept of practical and useful training and education of our Legion leadership in order to maximize effectiveness in communities, states, and our Nation.

Resolution #31, The American Legion Post Operations (21st Century)

RESOLVED, that the attention of all Department, District, County and local American Legion leaders be called to the **need of *mentoring and training*** all Post officials in such areas as:

1. Developing and executing Post mission statements.
2. Developing and executing a five-year plan to include description in each of the following areas: Post activities, programs, budgets to include financial projections, membership and public relations and communications.
3. Development of a constitution and by-laws to include proper charter filing, incorporation, report filing to include Consolidated Post Report, maintaining a proper check and balance system to include audit, risk management (liability, property and event insurance), and proper writing of resolutions.
4. Formation and training of committees based on the size and mission of the Post in the local community.
5. Development of a "Welcome Wagon" Task Force in conjunction with the Auxiliary and the Sons of The American Legion to welcome new veterans into the community.

6. Reaching out to all veterans in the community and listening to their concerns; and be it further

RESOLVED, it is recommended that Departments, Districts, and Counties develop an integrated coordinated assistance visit plan, sometimes referred to as a Post Responsibility Audit, to ensure every Post is visited by one level of leadership at least once a year to review the aforementioned areas with the Post leadership; and be it further

RESOLVED, it is recommended that every Post have a copy of the official history, **The American Legion**, written by Thomas A. Rumer and/or a reference set of The American Legion Extension Institute; and be it further

RESOLVED, The American Legion believes that each Post is a community based wartime veterans organization known for helping all veterans, families and children in the community and where social programs will not supersede the reason The American Legion was founded in 1919 and where the image is associated with "Service First;" and be it finally

RESOLVED, that each American Legion Post should use the word "Post' where appropriate in all official documents, publications and advertising.

Resolution #32, Cooperation with the American Legion Auxiliary and Sons of The American Legion (21st Century)

RESOLVED, that the attention of all Department, Districts, County and local American Legion leaders be called to the need for a cooperative relationship with the Auxiliary, and Sons of The American Legion.

SPECIAL RESOLUTION 419
1919 THE MINNEAPOLIS AFFIRMATION 1994

WHEREAS, To us, the heirs of a proud tradition, the Founders of The American Legion in the City of Minneapolis in November 1919 bequeathed the four pillars upon which our great brotherhood yet stands, as proclaimed in the Preamble to the Constitution of The American Legion; and

WHEREAS, It is upon these pillars that we have built the programs by which we serve our comrades, our youth, and our nation; and

WHEREAS, By the Throne of Almighty God the Founders surely stand and say of us "Well done, beloved heirs and comrades"; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, By The American Legion in National Convention assembled in Minneapolis, Minnesota, September 6-8, 1994, that we express our eternal gratitude for the wisdom and foresight of our Founders in this, our 75th Anniversary Year, by affirming anew our commitment to the perpetuation of our principles; and be it further

RESOLVED, That in affirmation of our troth, we pledge our unrelenting vigilance on behalf of our comrades-in-arms, their children, and their widows and orphans; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we affirm the American Flag to be the sole unifying symbol of these United States, a nation born of diversity and nurtured in the shadow of that banner, beneath which the honored remains of countless heroes have been laid to rest, deserving if need be of our protection unto death; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we affirm to the generations as yet unborn their due inheritance, a legacy no less grand than that to which we today are heirs: a nation strong, united and flourishing in peace and prosperity; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we affirm to our nation's defenders, and the citizens they serve, our dedication to national sovereignty and security so inviolable as to render America forever free from aggression and domination by those who would do us harm; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we affirm the principle of citizen soldiery by our support and dedication to those who stand in ready preparedness to answer the call to arms, the Reserve and National Guard forces, and be it further

RESOLVED, That we affirm to all Americans our commitment to the principle of government of the People, by the People, and for the People, a principle best embodied by a Congress unfettered and free from foreign influence and ever alert to the failures of foreign policy by which the constraints on war are loosed; and be it finally

RESOLVED, That by the witness of Man and in the Presence of Almighty God, we do hereby commend this affirmation to all in whom these sentiments ring true.

Commander

"To you, my comrade, is entrusted a very important duty, that of teaching and protecting the cardinal principles of The American Legion throughout your entire Post. To you is entrusted supervision of the duties of all other officers of the Post. To you may come the needy and the distressed and it is your duty to see that no worthy comrade is turned away without full justice. It is your duty to see that Freedom is ever the watchword of those with whom you may come in contact. Loyalty to your Post, to its membership, to the state and to the National Organization, are obligations which you now assume. You are more than the presiding officer for meetings. You are guided by the Constitution and by the decisions of the Post as a body, yet the responsibility for the success of the year's program is largely on your shoulders. You must initiate and carry through programs to completion. You must thoroughly familiarize yourself with the policies and traditions of your Post and of The American Legion. By your sincere acceptance and earnest performance of these duties, may the great trust which your comrades have reposed in you be justified. To you I extend the congratulations of the Department, and I wish you well as you assume the responsibilities of your office. I present to you a copy of the Post Officer's Guide and Manual of Ceremonies to serve as your guide during the coming year."

--Charge from Installation Ceremony

Yes, Commander, the charge you accepted is broad and difficult. How you respond will determine to a large degree the standing of The American Legion among your associates and within the community.

Your own ability, the help you obtain from District and Department officers, the information contained in this Guide, and the help you will get from the Post officers who form your team, all combine to make the performance of your job possible.

That you have ability is recognized by your election to the office of Post Commander. This ability must have been accompanied by desire or you would not have accepted the office. Everything that follows is provided to assist you to use the ability that you now have and to develop new skills so that your desire to see the Post prosper will become a reality.

As you look to the overall operation of the Post, you realize that you have stepped to another level. You may feel that the step is too high, but as you proceed, following the guidelines suggested, you will

develop the organization and leadership among others that will make your year as Commander the most rewarding of your life.

Planning Post Operations for the Coming Year

It's a rare group of new Post officers who take office without enthusiasm and a desire for a successful year. In the charge you accepted at your installation, you were entrusted with the supervision of the duties of all other officers of the Post. This does not mean that you will discourage them from using initiative and developing new ideas. What it does mean is that you will be judge by the effectiveness of your officers.

There are many ways to determine whether a Post Commander and their officers are enjoying a successful year. Judgments of the worth of a Post are made by the members, the community, and by The American Legion itself. Like it or not, a gain or loss in membership is the measure most often used.

Actually, the membership record is a pretty reliable barometer of what your Post is doing. An active Post, where the members enjoy themselves, often creates a "word of mouth" membership campaign that works almost automatically. The members are proud to belong. It's the most natural thing in the world for them to talk "Legion" to their friends, neighbors, relatives, and business associates. Since they like belonging to the Legion, they want their friends to get in on a good thing, too.

However, whether it shows or not, a great deal of planning has probably gone into every successful membership campaign. But, before sales people can sell a product, they have to have a product. If they are going to do a good job, they have to have a good product--something that people want and will value. The programs, social activities, chances for making new friendships, sometimes the Post home itself--these are what a Legion salesman has to sell. How we build or get this product is the subject we would like to discuss with you.

Executive Committee

Very early in the game, you will find out that running even a small Post is more than a one-man job. If you don't, you may feel as though the weight of the world is on your shoulders. This is the reason the Post constitution provides for a full group of Post officers, as well as an executive committee. They are elected to do specific jobs. It's up to you to get them to work together for the good of the entire Post.

You can get off on the right foot by making it a first order of business to call an early meeting of your officers and executive committee. This can be held even before you are installed. The outgoing Post Commander and adjutant might also be invited to attend.

Before the meeting is held, you and your adjutant need to find out what Post records are on hand, where they are, and how to use them.

Records and Material

Do you have all of your membership records since the Post was chartered or at least for recent years? Members are proud of their record of continuous membership. Try to keep that and all of the membership records up-to-date.

Are the complete minutes of all meetings on file or bound? The keeping and reading of minutes may seem a pretty dull job, but minutes can be extremely important. More than one law case has turned on what some long-forgotten secretary or adjutant wrote in the minutes of a meeting years ago.

Does the checkbook balance? Where are the funds, and is all the money accounted for?

Is the Post incorporated under the not-for-profit laws of the state? Where is a copy of the articles of incorporation? Have the necessary annual reports been filed and any needed fees paid?

Is every officer who will be handling funds bonded? This is required by the Legion's National Constitution.

Do you have a copy of the Post's constitution and by-laws? With the changes in Post officers from year to year, it's easy to see how many of these vital records can be lost or misplaced. So, first make sure

that all of the essential records are on hand, that they are where they should be (and not hiding in the desk of some adjutant of ten years ago), and that you know in a general way, at least, what they are.

Budget and Fund Raising

Anyone who asks people to come to a meeting should do them the courtesy of preparing an agenda--and doing it in advance.

One of the first things on the agenda for this first get-together of new Post officers should be money--your Post's budget. The officers need to know in advance what income can be expected for the year and how it should be spent.

Here are three general principles on Post financing that are worth considering. You'll have a good chance of staying out of money troubles if you follow them:

First, make your dues high enough to meet the fixed, administrative costs: Postage, stencils, stationery, Department dues, in some cases rent--the administrative costs that every Post must meet to stay in business.

Second, if the community is to benefit from an American Legion project, don't hesitate to solicit the community for funds. For example, an American Legion baseball team, a community playground or swimming pool. Actually, the Post will add to its public reputation by such projects. But a full public accounting needs to be made of all funds received and of how they are spent.

Third, don't ask the public to give in the name of charity for any project that will be of benefit primarily to members of The American Legion. A merchant will donate to send a youngster to Boys State, but he probably wouldn't care to give money to buy a new cooler for your bar. Sometimes it is necessary to raise funds from outside the membership for something that is strictly for the benefit of the Post and its members. When this happens, make sure that the public receives full value.

Calendar of Events

Your budget is a means to an end. The amount of money you have is not as important as what you do with it. So, right along with the budget, you need to set up a calendar of events. These are the things your Post is going to be doing during the coming year. (See program reminders in Index.)

Committee Assignments

Elected officers will be responsible for some of the activities and projects. Your appointed chairs will be in charge of others. Decide at the very beginning what is going to happen, when it is going to happen, and who is going to make it happen. Most of the assignments will be to carry on already established programs or activities.

There are handbooks and manuals on all of the important Legion programs—Boys State, baseball, children and youth, veterans affairs and rehabilitation, scholarships, and so on. Probably you and your adjutant will have already received copies of these from Department headquarters. These manuals have information and ideas that your committee chairs need. Take these handbooks to the first planning meeting and turn them over to the proper people right then. (See Publication List in Index.)

Recreational Activities

Then there are recreational activities. The strongest Posts are those where the members not only carry on humanitarian service programs, but also have a good time. When our pioneer forebears assembled to raise a cabin for a neighbor, they ended their labors with a square dance. So don't neglect recreational and social activities. Find out the activities that different groups of members are interested in and provide the means or the opportunity for them to pursue that interest through your Post.

Programs

Just about every Post has some service programs and social activities that were started in the past and have become almost traditional. Organizations fall into ruts—perhaps more easily than individuals. Any program carried on exactly the same way year after year is going to grow stale. So, at this first planning meeting, take a look at your past programs and activities. Decide on those that need some change or a new look.

No Post can stand still. New programs are needed to maintain interest and, especially, to keep up with the times. Every new activity or program offers the opportunity to interest new people in joining the Post. Inactive members can be turned into active members by the same means.

Very little in the world happens without someone to make it happen. So all of the programs and activities need to have a person in charge. Usually, this is a Post officer or committee chair. If the selections of chairpersons and officers are good, the programs will move. You should ask and, in fact, demand that each chairperson and officer build a timetable of events that can be fitted into an overall Post calendar for your year.

First Post Meeting

Now we come to that very important first Post meeting. You know that every member present is going to be judging you in comparison with previous Commanders. At the first meeting, the pattern and the tone are probably going to be set for the entire year. If changes are going to be made, this is the time to start them. The new broom is expected to stir up a little dust. Fortunately, you can lean on the experience of thousands of Commanders of the past. The basic framework for any Post meeting is all spelled out in the *Manual of Ceremonies*. By following the prescribed ritual and order of business, even a person who has never before presided over a meeting can do an adequate job. As a new Commander, you might feel a little self-conscious about running a formal meeting, particularly in a Post that has gotten away from the *Manual of Ceremonies*. But you shouldn't. The American Legion is an impressive organization, and its meetings should be suitably formal and impressive. No time is saved by omitting parts of the ritual. Meetings, of course, can and should vary. There can, and should, be an outside speaker on appropriate occasion. But by following the prescribed ritual and order of business, you should be able to complete your agenda in no more than one hour.

Agenda

"Agenda" is the magic word. While the Manual of Ceremonies provides the framework or the skeleton for a meeting, the Commander's agenda is what puts meat on the bones. Item "c" under "Order of Business" in the Manual of Ceremonies reads simply: "Committee Reports." Your personal agenda for the first and each succeeding meeting should list the exact committee scheduled to report. But before a chairperson's name goes on the agenda, the Commander—at least the foresighted Commander—is going to contact each chair and make sure that person is ready to report. This contact gives you an easy way to check on whether the chair is doing the job. If not, a little encouragement, a few suggestions, or perhaps even some prodding might be in order.

Protocol

Although "protocol" is a term used primarily in setting the rules of etiquette which govern diplomatic functions, there is a certain amount of protocol which applies to American Legion meetings and social functions, especially those to which dignitaries have been invited. Protocol for those events is the responsibility of the Post Commander who should be aware of certain guidelines which begin with the planning of the event.

If the Department Commander is to be invited, this matter should be cleared promptly with Department headquarters. In preliminary planning, it is advisable to have an alternate date in the event the Department Commander is already committed for the original date.

Accompany the invitation with some basic facts about the engagement: Time, place, whether or not it is a dinner occasion, significance of the event, etc. Will it be a joint Legion-Auxiliary function? Will there be non-Legionnaire dignitaries present?

Remember, this is your "home" and those you've invited deserve all the courtesies and considerations to be accorded such distinguished guests.

If the event is a dinner, those who will be seated at the head table should have been notified of this fact before they arrive. They should be escorted to their places to avoid confusion. The main speaker is seated just to the right of the podium. Place cards identifying those at the head table should be used.

Introductions begin after the meal. The presiding officer stands at the center of the head table and makes the introductions, beginning at the extreme left, continuing to the center of the table, and then starting at the extreme right and continuing to the center.

The main speaker, the guest of honor, is the last person introduced.

American Legion officers are introduced in the order by which they were installed into office: Sergeant-at-Arms, Service Officer, Historian, Judge Advocate, Chaplain, Treasurer (Finance Officer), Adjutant, Vice Commanders, and Commander.

As with all rules, there are some exceptions. If it is a function of both The American Legion and the American Legion Auxiliary, the Auxiliary officers, dignitaries, etc., are introduced first. A National Executive Committeeman or Alternate NECman should be introduced immediately before the Department Commander.

Welcome Committee

The first meeting is also a good time to start a welcoming committee—in case there has not been one in the past. Two or three members should be asked to take on the job of welcoming new members, guests, or even older members who are not well acquainted, making them feel at home, and introducing them. The sergeant-at-arms can often help on this assignment. An active welcoming committee is a part of the Post's public relations job.

The American Legion Extension Institute

The EXTENSION INSTITUTE is back! It was developed to provide every member of The American Legion, American Legion Auxiliary and Sons of The American Legion an opportunity to learn and discover the rich history, programs, policies, developments, positions and future goals of our organization.

This concise and comprehensive set of books returns to the original format of the Extension Institute, which was a course of study with chapter review tests and final examination upon the completion of the materials. It consists of a set of four reference/study books, with the fifth book being an introduction to the course, including a list of national officers and the national head-quarters staff.

The primary purpose of this handy reference set, adapted for daily use, is an educated, informed and knowledgeable membership. Men and women who are "in the know" have the understanding that keeps our organization strong and growing. An educated and informed member spells success. If you are interested in knowing more about The American Legion, order your Extension Institute today.

You can order a single set for your own use, or you can order multiple sets at reduced costs to use for study groups, giveaways, fund-raisers, membership incentives, etc. Contact your Post adjutant for special order forms.

Pageantry

Every Post is a part of the community. It will be successful to the degree to which it fits into that community. Pageantry and patriotic observances are something that the community expects of the Legion. A well-trained color guard, drum and bugle corps—either junior or senior—or even a burial detail will help to keep The American Legion before the public.

Community Projects

Another very valuable way of getting your Post knowledgeable—know-how in the right way—is to cooperate with other community organizations in civic projects. A Post Commander who knows his business will encourage active participation in civic affairs on the part of the members. There is personal pride when a local Legionnaire is elected to the school board, heads up the United Way, or even gets a promotion in a job—and will go out of the way to congratulate members on their accomplishments, whether in the Legion or in another field.

Awards

There are many ways to say "Thank you." Awards and citations may be given at Post meetings. A simple "thank-you" note can mean a great deal. Mention during a meeting that Comrade Doe has done an excellent job in arranging the Veterans Day celebration. This is a simple courtesy that should never be forgotten.

So, putting all of these various ideas together they add up to: First, planning; then, assignment of responsibilities; checking back to make sure that the job is being done; and, finally, a THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

Resolutions

If you have an idea which will improve The American Legion at any level, put that idea into words, in the form of a resolution. First have it passed by your local Post; then, have it passed by your District at its annual convention. All resolutions passed at a District convention are delivered to the resolutions committee at the following Department convention. At the Department convention, you should appear before the resolutions committee and plead for their passage of your resolution, and you should also be prepared to speak for its passage when it comes on the floor of the Department convention. All resolutions pertaining to National, passed at the Department are forwarded to National. (See "How to Write a Resolution," in Index.)

Sources of Assistance

You have been shown ways to utilize the potential of your members, but there is more help available when you need it.

Past Commanders

Many Posts have an active Past Commanders' Club. Sometimes its primary purpose is social and the retention of good fellowship among those who have served as Commanders. But here is a wealth of knowledge, know-how and ability just ready to be tapped. Don't let it go to waste. Whether such a club is formally organized in your Post or not, it is helpful to build a Commander's Advisory Committee from your Past Commanders

District Officers

The Post is a separate and distinct unit, which functions independently. But the work of the Post can be more effective if it is joined by a tight link to the Department and national organization. The District and your District officers provide that link.

The District Commander is normally the elected representative of the Posts in the District, but an obligation to provide guidance and supervision is also implied. Posts are charged with carrying out the objectives and programs of the Legion and to comply fully with the obligations assumed under the Post, Department and national constitutions. But, if your Post becomes inactive or begins to falter, you can expect your District Commander to start giving advice.

The District Commander has a position of respect in our organization. A visit to your Post calls for something special. Make it a social event significant enough to draw a crowd. The dignity shown the office can only be reflected back to increase the importance of the office of Post Commander.

Department Officers

Department officers are our "show" people. A visit from one of them usually provides an opportunity for excellent media coverage, and the type of Legion function that will attract your members and community leaders. These officers are your elected leaders and deserving of every respect. Not every Post will receive annual visits from a Department Commander, but if your invitation is accepted, or there is occasion to visit you, make the most of it.

Department Headquarters

The American Legion is organized in Departments for every state, District of Columbia, territorial possessions and several foreign countries. Each Department headquarters exercise a general supervision over the local Posts within its jurisdiction. It is urged that close communication and cooperation be maintained between the Post and its Department headquarters.

The Department headquarters constitutes the link between the community Post of The American Legion and the national organization. The Post will deal directly with the Department adjutant. Routine business should be transacted through Department headquarters. Department headquarters is familiar with the issues and conditions of state affairs. Questions of policy and organization should be referred by the Post to Department headquarters. Through Department headquarters any information may be secured that is desired by the Post, or the ways of securing it may be found.

The Commander should keep in close touch with Department affairs, know what statewide activities are carried on, and see that his/her Post has its full share in them. He/she should study all instructions from Department headquarters and see that they are passed on to the proper officer or committee for action. Also, the membership of the Post needs to be informed of any new activities that may be initiated by the Department.

National Headquarters

Practically all of your contacts with National Headquarters are rightfully carried through your Department headquarters. There is, however, one publication which should be faithfully read and kept, issue by issue. This is *The American Legion DISPATCH* published by National Headquarters. The *DISPATCH* gives you up-to-date information on which to base your programs, the proper timing for programs, and suggested news releases.

Auxiliary Unit

The Auxiliary Unit is an important adjunct to the Post's scheme of organization. The official contact with the unit is through the Unit President. The unit can help only in proportion to its opportunity. A good Commander will find work for the Auxiliary Unit to do. The Commander, or designated representative, will keep in close touch with the unit and give its members plenty of inspiration and encouragement. Follow the same procedure if there is an Eight and Forty Salon in your area.

Conventions

While your Post could continue to operate if there were no Department, District, or national organization, you can be more effective as a part of a team. You may want to take part in a county or statewide promotion. You may have an idea that should be developed and expanded beyond your Post. Certainly you want your Post to have a voice in deciding the future programs of The American Legion.

District, Department, and National Conventions are the places where Legion policy is determined. You will want to make certain that your Post is represented by properly elected delegates—particularly on the District and Department level.

Each year the District and the Department will hold seminars on either general Legion operations or specific Legion programs. You can go a long way toward solving the future leadership problem in your Post by making certain that the Post is represented at whatever training session is provided. You will also find that attendance at District and Department functions will do much toward building the esprit de corps that makes for a good Legion Post.

Program Reminders

Commander, it's up to you! Programs require intelligent planning to be successful. Here are some reminders which should be of assistance.

JANUARY – Initiation ceremonies are good membership stabilizers. Keep working membership campaign, especially by contacting those who became delinquent January 1. A community service survey can reveal areas where additional effort is needed. A good time to present flags and flag codes to schools. Check dates for Oratorical Contests—local, District or county, and state. Plan February program. March is the official Community Service Month; the beginning of the year is the time to plan and implement initiatives and projects so your Post is ready in the Spring.

FEBURARY – Plan school awards with school officials. Sponsor Religious Emphasis activities. Start plans for American Legion Baseball program. The Veterans Employment Representative will make a good speaker for a Post meeting. Remember observances of Abraham Lincoln and George Washington birthdays. Americanism Month. Plan a big birthday program for March.

MARCH – Boys State selection should be given priority attention in March, or earlier. March 15-17 is the recognized anniversary period of the founding of The American Legion. Close out Membership Campaign and mail dues and cards to Department before Birthday Party. Have your "Open House' this month.

All levels of leadership should constantly focus on projecting the proper image of The American Legion in the community, in the programs sponsored and services provided, and also on the appearance of the Post Home and surrounding grounds.

Post Home appearance can be perceived as a reflection of the attitude, the initiative and the civic awareness of the Post membership. The Post reflects the outward image of the whole organization of The American Legion to the citizens in their community. The Post should be a pillar of the community. One that would invite prospective members and guests based on appearance alone. This is not intended to be a capital improvement project but one of attention to detail and routine "fix-ups."

Between January and March, the Post leadership is encouraged to form a committee to host a "Open House" in March, which is officially **Community Service Month.** One major area of interest to prepare for March is a Self-Help Program to fix up needed areas in the Post home from signage to outside appearance to inside appearance that may have gone unattended due to other priorities. In addition, this item should be included on your annual Post Responsibility Audit (PRA), outlined elsewhere in this Officer's Guide.

APRIL – Children & Youth Month. Be sure to coordinate this with the Auxiliary. Secure Children and Youth Guide from Department headquarters. Plan summer scouting activities. Boys State should be given priority. How about an "Old Timers" night? Community service

will elevate your Post's standing in the community. Plans should be made for election of new officers. American Legion Child Welfare Foundation week.

MAY – May 8-10 is the anniversary of the St. Louis Caucus, which completed original organization of Legion back in 1919. Armed Forces Day, Mother's Day and Memorial Day form the basis for good Post programs. Do you have a uniformed group in the Post? Do you decorate veterans' graves? Present school awards at the end of school. Implement American Legion Baseball and summer athletic programs. Contact school officials now—to get Legion activities approved and on the calendar for next year—oratorical contest, Boys State, school awards, American Education Week, etc.

JUNE – June 14th is Flag Day. Does your community fly flags on patriotic holidays? Good time to make a survey. History of "Old Glory" would make an excellent program for a Post meeting. Summer youth programs need your support and attendance. Community service will make your town a better place in which to live. Get ready for the 4th of July.

JULY – Have an "old fashioned" 4th of July celebration? Make it a community project. Be sure new officers are certified to Department headquarters. Installation of officers makes an impressive ceremony at a Post meeting. Continue efforts on behalf of summer youth programs.

AUGUST – Start planning membership drive for next year. Well planned programs produce best results. You should have received next year's membership cards from Department headquarters. Call on past officers for assistance and guidance. September—School starts. Decide how you are going to contact the new veterans. Veterans Day is coming up.

SEPTEMBER – The 2nd is VJ Day; request churches to ring their bells (symbolically) in your community. The 17th is Constitution Day. Good time for Constitution Day—Citizenship Day program. Present school with adequate copies of "Let's Be Right on Flag Etiquette," and "Need a Lift." Follow through on membership drive planning. Co-op ad materials available for Veterans Day.

OCTOBER – Launch all-out membership campaign. Planned programs produce. Columbus Day. Remember, dues for next year are payable by Oct. 20. Participate in Halloween Safety Programs.

NOVEMBER – Continue full speed ahead on membership campaign. Nov. 11 is Veterans Day. American Education Week. Thanksgiving. Remind members they need next year's card number when paying American Legion Life Insurance premiums. Deadline for payment is December 31.

DECEMBER – Remember Pearl Harbor – an epic event that will forever resonate in America's history… **"December 7, 1941 –** ***a day that will live in infamy."*** So spoke President Franklin D. Roosevelt. December is also the Holiday Season. Support activities that bring Christmas cheer to needy families. How about a Christmas party? Work toward an all-time high in Post membership. Keep plugging for renewals and new members. Plan to visit fellow veterans in the hospital.

Adjutant

"My comrade, you have been chosen to assist your Commander in the wise and effective administration of the office and to serve not only your fellow Legionnaires, but a also those whose relationship to our organization has led them to look to us for guidance and relief. You will find the duties many, varied, and at times taxing of your crowded hours and resources. The successful accomplishment of our program depends, to a great extent, upon you and your performance of the duties of your office."

—Charge from Installation Ceremony

The Adjutant holds the same relative position in the Post as the secretary of any other organized body—and a little more—the office serves as the "first sergeant" of the company. Post activities revolve around the adjutant. Most Posts find it wise to retain a good Adjutant in office over a period of years. The Adjutant may well be regarded as the "continuity person" in the Post. While the Commander's duties are largely inspirational and executive, an Adjutant's duties are administrative. The Commander navigates the ship, but the Adjutant is the engineer who runs the ship's machinery.

The Adjutant is the personnel officer, the intimate contact with the individual Post member, maintains the membership records, minutes of meetings, checks up and assists the work of the other officers and committees, and publishes official orders, announcements and instructions.

All Post records should be in the Adjutant's custody; for ready access to all sources of information, and it is to his/her interest to develop a comprehensive filing system.

The Adjutant is primarily concerned with ways and means and, by virtue of a key position, can add effectiveness to all Post activities. The office involves a great deal of work, and it is urgently recommended that some degree of compensation be paid the Adjutant, particularly in large Posts.

Suggestions for New Adjutant

The only indispensable qualifications are honesty and willingness. The Adjutant should get a set of Post account books from the Emblem Sales Division, National Headquarters. They require no special knowledge of bookkeeping.

He/She should go through all the Post records at the first opportunity. The constitution, minutes of meetings, and reports of officers and committees will give an insight into the Post's policies and traditions. Communications from Department headquarters will put the Adjutant up to date on instructions.

A special *Post Adjutant's Manual* is available with full information on the handling and processing of the automated membership card system plus other matters related to the duties of a Post Adjutant. Every Adjutant should have a copy of the *Post Adjutant's Manual*.

First Vice Commander

"To you is given the responsibility of an active cooperation between yourself and the Commander. Particularly should you interest yourself in the membership of the Post. You should be assisted by the most active and devoted members. No single factor has so important an influence on the Post's success as membership. You will be the exponent of means of safeguarding the honor of the Flag of our Country. To you are committed these endeavors with the expectation that you shall fulfill each and every one of them. You are the teacher of 'Democracy'."

—Charge from Installation Ceremony

In the majority of Posts, a First and Second Vice Commander are elected, with membership the primary concern of the First Vice Commander.

Frequently the success or failure of the membership record during his/her year determines the chances of advancing to the Commandership the following year. In a few of our Posts, one or two "tigers" (membership go-getters) will secure the big majority of the dues, but the possibility of death, illness, or a change of residence makes for a weak foundation on which a Vice Commander and the Post are staking the Post's future. While each Post is different, any membership campaign should cover certain fundamentals. Look at the methods used in the past. Were they successful? Do they need updating? Have new procedures been developed that would improve the plans now being used?

In a successful Post, a new Post Commander is going to contact the Post officers and committee chairs right after being elected, either individually or at a special meeting, to lay out a general plan of operation for the entire year. This is the time when the membership plan should also be made.

Planning

Any plan should answer the four W's.

WHERE? Where do you want to go? What's the objective? (Or, for a membership campaign, how many members do you want?)

WHAT? What steps have to be taken to reach the objective?

WHO? Who's going to do all the things that have to be done in each of the steps that have to be taken to reach the goal?

WHEN? When is the work going to be done?

Only you and the members of your Post know where you want to go, or how many members you want. But the steps you have to take to get there are very much the same in every Post. If you can answer the following questions for your Post and for your membership campaign, you have your job analyzed and know what steps have to be taken to reach your goal:

1. Mailed dues notices will bring in about 85 percent of your current members' renewals. Who is going to contact those few who do not respond to mailed dues notices?

2. How are dropouts to be reinstated?

3. How are you going to get usable information on prospective members; how are they to be contacted; by whom; and how are those selected to be taken into your Post?

4. What publicity will be needed?

5. Who can be counted on to work at membership?

6. What awards or special recognition will be given?

7. What special events will be tied in with membership, such as Veterans Day, team competition, contests with other Posts, Legion Birthday observance, etc.?

This can be the agenda for the first Membership Committee meeting. (See Duties of Committee.)

Other Duties

Membership may be the primary assignment of a Vice Commander, but during a normal Legion year, the Vice Commander will have many other duties. He/she should become familiar with the ceremonial protocol for regular meetings. The chances are excellent that he/she will have to conduct one or more meetings during the year. Knowing how to prepare a meaningful and fruitful agenda is very important, as well as good experience. The Vice Commander must be ready to fill in for the Commander upon a moment's notice.

Second Vice Commander

"Into your helpful hands are placed the important responsibilities of assisting the Commander with all duties. Particularly you should be interested in patriotic observances of all kinds, in developing Post activities, and in the entertainment features which mark all meetings. Help to observe strict tolerance among your members on all political, religious and civic matters. The applications of Justice will be your particular concern."

—Charge from Installation Ceremony

Is yours an average Post? If so, many of the members joined The American Legion because of the social and recreational benefits they expected to receive. What is more, many of the members-to-come will also join for the same reason.

Yes, the Second Vice Commander does have a job—an important job. The responsibility is to build the "I-like-my-Post-because . . ." atmosphere that finds a lot of Legionnaires having fun while still doing the work of the Legion.

The Commander will depend on the Second Vice Commander to provide the programs that spice up the meetings and attract attendance. The social calendar must always be filled several months in advance with activities that will bring out the active members, as well as those who are just card-carrying Legionnaires.

One of the first duties should be to contact other veteran and civic groups so that each patriotic holiday and observance receives the attention it deserves. He/She will be concerned with the pageantry so closely associated with the Legion.

The Second Vice Commander may not be in charge of the color guard or firing squad, but must promote it. He/She might not have a part on the initiation team, but should make sure one is functioning. In the pursuit of "Justice," the Second Vice Commander will be concerned with the welfare of all fellow veterans, and will be interested in the work of the veterans affairs and rehabilitation committee. The Second Vice will need to know if the economic committee is functioning. The Second Vice Commander plays a dual role of fun and serious, which so typifies The American Legion.

Finance Officer

"You are the keeper of the moneys and in you is reposed the financial policy of the Post. To you is given charge of the year's budget and to you is given the duty of the payment of all obligations when proper authorization has been given for such payment. Your position is an important one, demanding integrity and honesty. Your election to this office signifies that your comrades have implicit trust in you. Guard well that trust."

—Charge from Installation Ceremony

The Finance Officer must be a person of proven integrity and experience in handling financial affairs. The Post is dependent on finance, just as any other organization, and will do well to accept expert advice in formulating and administering its financial policy.

The Finance Officer usually serves as the chair of the finance committee and is in charge of all receiving and disbursing of Post funds. The Post Adjutant, in all matters relating to finance, should carry on the work in close correlation with the Finance Officer. Both officers must be covered by adequate bond. Department headquarters should be consulted on this for blanket bond arrangement.

Post accounting forms have been designed to meet the requirements of Legion Posts in maintaining a correct and permanent membership and finance record. Because of their simplicity, they require no special knowledge of bookkeeping or accounting. Every Post Adjutant and Finance Officer should insist upon being provided with a set of forms. They will save time, reduce expenses, save money for the Post.

Refer to the current Emblem Catalog for prices and detailed descriptions, or write to the National Emblem Sales Division.

Be prompt in remitting National and Department dues, along with the Department Record Card, to Department Headquarters. Note all payments and other transactions on your Post Membership Register.

Service Officer

> *"You have been singly honored by this Post by your election to perform fundamental, unselfish work, not only for the benefit of the members of this Post, but for those War veterans particularly in need of your service. Yours is the choice responsibility of looking out for the welfare of all concerned. The duties of a Service Officer are highly important and exacting, and while your accomplishments will be deeply appreciated by those immediately concerned, the work itself will not be sufficiently conspicuous to catch the headlines in the newspapers. Depending upon satisfactory performance of duty, there will come to you the heartfelt gratitude of each and every member of this Post. I congratulate you upon the opportunity to serve so constructively and so unselfishly."*
>
> **—Charge from Installation Ceremony**

In naming the Service Officer, each Post creates the most vital link in a nationwide network of American Legion service to America's veterans. Through the Service Officer, the Post can provide your community with a unique service.

The duties of the Post Service Officer call for a competent and dedicated person, preferably one who can serve indefinitely, and should have a deep interest in fellow veterans, the Post, and community. If the Service Officer is readily available to those needing assistance, it will be helpful. Electing someone that works and lives close by will likely improve effectiveness.

A good Service Officer should be retained. The value of a Post Service Officer increases with length of service. As the Service Officer's reputation grows, so will the prestige of the organization in your community.

Beyond the Post, The American Legion maintains a full staff of appeals representatives in Washington, D.C., and at VA Insurance Centers. A small mobile staff of field representatives provides a constant flow of information concerning conditions in VA hospitals, domiciliaries, and regional offices throughout the country.

A team of Legion representatives also provides assistance and oral representation on behalf of former service members of the Armed Forces who petition Department of Defense Boards for review of less than fully honorable discharge or dismissal from the military services. The unit helps veterans in obtaining decorations and medals through the various Armed Forces and Decoration units.

Every Department has trained Service Officers in the various VA regional offices and hospitals in many counties.

The *Post Service Officer Guide* prepared by the National Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Division provides the Service Officer with basic information. Necessary claims forms can be secured from the Department Service Officer. Information will come through Department publications, *National Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Bulletins*, Memorandums, and VA pamphlets. Training schools for Post Service Officers are held periodically in many Departments to increase their knowledge and contacts.

The Post Service Officer is responsible for bringing to the attention of all veterans and their dependents the rights and benefits granted them by law—law for which the American Legion can accept a major share of credit.

The Service Officer must know how to utilize the expert services available through Legion channels, as well as those of other agencies in his community. It takes a dedicated person to get the information to the full-time professionals to make certain that every veteran and dependents are adequately represented.

With a large segment of today's veteran population made up of those who served during the Vietnam and the Persian Gulf Wars, the work of the Service Officer takes on increasing importance. Even more than older veterans, these men and women are apt to be not too well informed on veterans programs. The

older veterans will continue to need advice on how to integrate possible veterans' benefits with their overall retirement plans. Dependents should be visited as soon as feasible after a veteran's death.

These and many other duties are routine to a good Service Officer, but there is more, such as serving as chair of the veterans affairs and rehabilitation or service committee and working closely with the children and youth committee, Post employment officer, and the hospital visitation committee. The Auxiliary Unit frequently needs help. The Service Officer's report should be a standard part of every meeting.

Every Congress considers legislative matters of importance to veterans and to The American Legion. Working in cooperation with the Post legislative committee, the Post Service Officer can aid in coordinating the support of the Post with the national effort.

Chaplain

"To you is given the spiritual leadership of this Post. You will, I know, lend dignity and respect to your office. You should be in close confidence with the Commander and the other officers of this Post, and should attend all meetings of the Post. You should be ready upon occasion to take your part in the initiation of new members, the dedication of halls, monuments of colors, and the funeral services for a comrade. All such ceremonies are made more commemorative by the use of our ritual. Into your keeping we place the spirit of comradeship of this Post. May harmony and unity prevail."

—Charge from Installation Ceremony

The Chaplain need not necessarily be a clergyman, but must be a person capable of moral and intellectual leadership and one who gives dignity and respect to the office. The Chaplain should be in close touch with the Commander and other officers of the Post and should attend all meetings of the Post and Executive Committee. The leadership in many of the Post's activities belongs of right to the Chaplain, and when this office is filled by the right kind of person, the usefulness of the Post to the community will be greatly increased.

The *Manual of Ceremonies* gives an important place to the Chaplain in the conduct of meetings, in the observance of patriotic occasions, funeral services and dedication ceremonies. On these occasions, the Chaplain is the moral leader.

The Chaplain should cooperate with the Post Historian on graves registration work and inspire the Post to its full duty in seeing that graves are decorated on Memorial Day. Besides officiating when requested at funerals of members, the Chaplain can be of service to bereaved families of Post members.

The Chaplain may serve as chair of the Post's Veterans Administration Voluntary Services (VAVS) Committee which coordinates the volunteer endeavors of the membership of nearby VA hospital facilities. The sick should be visited at hospital or home. For more information on VAVS, write the National Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Division, The American Legion, Washington Office.

The American Legion *Service to God and Country* handbook, available through Department headquarters, gives a history of this program and offers working aids for the Post Chaplain and religious emphasis committee.

Sergeant-At-Arms

"You are the sentinel or tiler, the outer guard of this Post. You will guard especially against the loss of one of The American Legion's greater possessions—our deep and abiding spirit of comradeship. You will learn the identity of and introduce to the Commander all visiting comrades and guests of the Post. You are responsible that no one shall remain a stranger in our midst. Be ready at all times to assist your Commander. Into your hands is given charge of the stand of colors which you will properly display at all Post meetings and on ceremonial occasions."

—Charge from Installation Ceremony

The Sergeant-at-Arms should know how to arrange the meeting hall and should assist the Post Commander and Adjutant in the preliminary arrangements for the meeting, including custodian of the colors and should be in charge of the color detail during the presentation and retirement ceremonies of the colors. The Sergeant-at-Arms is the flag etiquette person and should be well informed on proper flag display and procedures used in operating a meeting and should play a leading part in the Post color guard, burial detail, and the other pageantry that is a part of The American Legion.

There is another duty—one that has a tremendous impact on the Post's image, its membership, and its relationship with the members. Every Legionnaire wants to be part of the group. This is particularly important for that new Legionnaire attending his first few meetings. The Sergeant-at-Arms must make certain new members are welcomed, introduced, and made to feel they are important to the Post.

A welcome committee should be standard for every Post. The Sergeant-at-Arms is the logical person to chair such a committee. The members of this committee must welcome new members and guests, make sure they are introduced, and keep the Commander advised as to who should be acknowledged. This committee can also be used to encourage present members to attend meetings.

Historian

"Your Office is an important one. To you is given the responsibility of preserving and compiling the records of this Post. The future can only be judged by the past. Be mindful that the lamp of recorded experience may do much in guiding the footsteps of those who follow. Ever remember that without the recorded history of this Post, its policies and accomplishments will be a blank to the ones who come after we are gone."

—Charge from Installation Ceremony

The office of Historian is of growing importance. It is a suitable position in which a past Post Commander may serve.

There should be close and effective cooperation between the Adjutant and the Historian. The former works with the records on matters of current interest, and the latter on matters of historical interest.

The work of Post Historian is cumulative. It is well to leave it in the hands of one person as long as it's being handled well.

The Post Historian should keep in touch with the Department Historian and should be prompt in answering inquiries. *An annual report should be made to the Department Historian just before the Department convention.*

Copies of whatever is printed concerning the Post should be deposited in the local and state libraries, as well as in the Post files. This is important and will prevent complete loss of valuable records through fire or other calamity, as well as provide material for those who are looking for information about The American Legion. Also, copies should be deposited in Department archives.

The Post Historian should make a point of knowing what Historians of neighboring Posts are doing. The Historian should attend Department conventions and keep in touch with other Post Historians.

The Department Historian can advise Post Historians on Department and national Post history contests, historians' associations, and material available from the Department Historian that will assist in doing a better job.

An outline for a one-year Post narrative history and yearbook is graphically illustrated in the Appendix of this Officer's Manual, listed under "Histories Are Important." The information recommended will be beneficial in assisting Post Historians in compiling these books.

Judge Advocate

"To you, my comrade, is assigned a most important duty for which your legal training and/or past Legion experience so aptly prepare you. You are the interpreter of the Constitution and By-Laws of your Post, and may at any time be called upon by the Commander and other officers and members of the Post to rule on the legality of their actions and decisions insofar as they affect the good of The American Legion. You are also charged with protecting the integrity of our organization and keeping alight the torch of truth and fidelity that symbolizes the high and ennobling ideals under which our great American Legion was founded. Protect wisely that heritage."

—Charge from Installation Ceremony

The primary duty of the Judge Advocate is to supply professional advice in the conduct of the Post business or to procure proper counsel and is the guardian of constitutional form of Post government.

Your Judge Advocate can supply valuable assistance to other Post committees and officers. That officer should be available to the Service Officer for legal advice and to the Americanism committee on matters relating to education and naturalization laws. Any Post committee can benefit from the Judge Advocate's contacts with the office holders of local government.

The Judge Advocate and legal committee are charged by the suggested Post constitution with the duty of auditing Post financial accounts. This should be done annually just before the election of officers or more frequently at their discretion.

Executive Committee

"The administrative affairs of this Post of The American Legion shall, except as may be otherwise provided by the By-Laws, be under the supervision of an Executive Committee which shall consist of . . . . . members in addition to the officers of the Post."

Suggested Form for Post Constitution
Article V—Officers—Section 1

"The government and management of the Post is entrusted to an Executive Committee of . . . . members, to be known as the 'Executive Committee'."

Suggested Form of Post By-Laws
Article II—Management—Section 1

In the model Post constitution and by-laws appearing elsewhere in this book, the government and management of the Post is entrusted to the Executive Committee. Meetings of the Executive Committee are set for regular intervals upon the call of the Commander or as often as the Commander may deem necessary.

The Post Executive committee is further charged with hiring such employees as may be necessary; authorizing and approving all expenditures; requiring adequate bonds from all persons having the custody of Post funds; hearing reports of Post committee chairmen; and generally having charge of and being responsible for the management of the affairs of the Post.

Delegation of these functions to the Executive Committee is in no way intended to usurp the powers of the membership through regular Post meetings. Rather, this allows the dull, routine, operational affairs of the Post to be resolved without distracting from Post meetings. Committee reports of general interest to members should still be given at Post meetings.

The key to interesting Post meetings is using the Executive Committee effectively. The Post meeting that becomes bogged down in arguments on petty details is interesting only to those doing the talking. The meeting is dead and a waste of time to everyone else.

Standing Committees

". . . This Post, by its By-Laws, may provide for such other standing committees as the business of the organization may require."

Suggested Form for Post Constitution
Article V—Officers—Section 1

"The Post Commander, immediately upon taking office each year, shall appoint the following standing committees: Americanism, Ceremonials, Children and Youth, Economic, Finance, Foreign Relations, Graves Registration and Memorial, House and Entertainment, Legislative, Membership, Public Relations, Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation, National Security, Sons of The American Legion and Visiting or VAVS. Such standing committees shall consist of such members, and the chair thereof, as shall be designated by the Post Commander."

Suggested Form of Post By-Laws
Article VI—Appointments—Section 1

People, time, effort, and organization are required to carry out the programs of The American Legion. Whether those programs are continuing services for disabled veterans or a dance, most of your work will be accomplished through committees. There are listed here committees which Posts normally have, together with a brief statement on the usual duties of these committees. Your Post constitution and/or your Department constitution may require additional committees or may have other names for some of the committees, and the following list is not intended to be mandatory or complete for every American Legion Post.

No Post can stand still. New programs are needed from time to time, old programs needed to be changed, revitalized, and in some cases, dropped. Early in your term of office, you and your Post officers should take time to review the programs and activities, which have been carried on in the past, and to decide on desirable changes or additions. The activities that are to be carried on determine the committees that are needed. The next task is to review the membership of the Post and even nonmember eligibles. From this review, a list can be set up of potential committee heads and members. Frequently a nonmember eligible will want to become a member of your Post if the Post has an activity or is planning an activity in which the person is personally interested. Whoever makes a contact with such a nonmember eligible must be able to point out the need for the program and the reason why this particular person is desired to assist in it.

Each committee chair needs to know how the work of the committee fits into the overall program of the Post and he needs to know what is expected, and when.

Here's the list of what might be called standard Post committees and their usual duties:

Americanism

Purpose: To inspire patriotism and good citizenship through patriotic observances, patriotic and civic instruction in schools, Americanization of aliens, information on anti-American propaganda, youth activities such as Boys State, Scouts, Oratorical Contest, School Award Medals, baseball, flag etiquette, and other similar community services, as well as provide a listing of available scholarships through the "Need A Lift?" booklet.

Children and Youth

Purpose: To insure that any child of a veteran in need of care and protection shall receive proper and timely service and aid; to strengthen the family unit; extend support to sound organizations and facilities that provide services for children and youth; and to maintain a well-rounded program that meets the needs of the young people in their respective community.

Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation

Purpose: To assist veterans in obtaining needed hospitalization, in the pursuance of claims and in obtaining other veteran's rights and benefits; to visit comrades who are sick or disabled; to visit and comfort members of their families when sick or bereaved. (The head of the Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Committee may be the Post service officer of the Post veterans affairs and rehabilitation chair. In addition, the Post chaplain may serve as chair of the Visiting Committee.)

National Security

Purpose: To organize the Post membership in support of national or civilian defense projects in the community; to organize the Post and to assist in organizing the community for readiness to meet any emergency.

Membership and Post Activities

Purpose: To obtain, retain and increase the membership of the Post with specific responsibilities for renewals, enrollment of new members, transfers and reinstatements. (The first vice Commander frequently serves as chair of the Membership Committee.)

Public Relations

Purpose: To increase awareness among the veteran's community and the community at large of The American Legion's advocacy of Veterans issues, national security and foreign relations, Americanism, and children & youth. Your goal is to define The American Legion in the public eye by the values for which it stands. Your technique is two-fold: (1) Placing radio and television advertisements and public service announcements produced by the National Public Relations Division where they can be seen and heard, and (2) Developing relationships with editors and journalists serving the Post community so that they cover those programs supported by the organization's founding pillars.

The High School Oratorical Contest is the reporter's "news peg" but The American Legion's support for a "one hundred percent Americanism" is THE story that must be told. Why The American Legion is "Still Serving America?" is the question you, as the Post public relations officer, must ensure is answered in every form of media coverage obtained. Public Relations is a membership multiplier.

Legislative

Purpose: To promote the official legislative mandates of The American Legion; disseminate monthly legislative updates; establish, maintain and promote proactive grassroots lobbying activities; and establish and maintain liaison with elected officials and their staff. All activities must be in compliance with Section 2, Article II of the Constitution of The American Legion: *"The American Legion shall be absolutely non-political and shall not be used for the dissemination of partisan principles nor for the promotion of the candidacy of any person seeking public office or preferment."*

However, voter education is a critical element of the electorial process. This does not prohibit your Post from holding town hall meetings, "Meet the Candidate Nights," or allowing candidates to address Post meetings, District conferences, or state conventions. Candidates may be allowed to participate, as long as an invitation is extended to <u>all</u> candidates affording them an equal opportunity to participate. The American Legion <u>cannot</u> endorse or oppose any candidate, even if the candidate is a Legionnaire and Post member. A Post home should be free of any political materials that would appear to be an endorsement of a particular candidate. If the position of one candidate is Posted, the position of <u>all</u> candidates must be Posted. <u>Every effort must be made to remain nonpartisan.</u>

Note: IF IN DOUBT, CONTACT THE NATIONAL JUDGE ADVOCATE FOR CLARIFICATION, BEFORE PROCEEDING.

Finance

Purpose: To supervise the receiving, disbursement, and accounting of all Post funds; to prepare annual budget recommendations for the Post; to advise the Post on all financial policies. (The Post finance officer is normally the chair of the Finance Committee.)

Economic

Purpose: To serve and assist veterans in meeting and overcoming economic problems such as employment, veterans preference, housing, civil service appeals, employment of handicapped and older workers.

House

Purpose: To supervise the operation of physical facilities of a Post such as a clubroom, American Legion Center, meeting room, etc. Supervision includes administration, responsibility for equipment, hiring and direction of employees, as authorized by Post Executive Committee, and general rules applicable to the conduct of members while on the premises of the Post.

Service

The Service Committee is a key component of every successful Post. Its duties and operations are especially important during the period immediately following the termination of hostilities. The Service Officer may be the chair; however, the responsibilities of the committee go beyond the day-to-day functions of a good Service Officer in filing claims, securing hospitalization, etc. The Service Committee also is concerned with jobs, with veteran contact, with visits to ailing comrades, with on-the-job training, and with pensions. This committee should also be responsible for maintaining contact with any members of the armed forces from the community served by the Post. With the nation's defenses depending upon all-volunteer armed services, it becomes absolutely essential that the man or woman in uniform be assured of the community's respect and support.

Other Committees

In addition to the above, your Post may have need for other committees, depending on the specific programs and activities being sponsored. Some of the other committees that you might need include:

Graves Registration and Memorial Committee

Purpose: To record, mark and decorate graves of deceased veterans; to render service and comfort to bereaved families; to provide American Legion funeral services when requested.

Sons of The American Legion

Purpose: To act as a supervisory committee for the Sons of The American Legion Squadron in connection with its organization, activities, recreational and educational programs.

Uniformed Groups

Purpose: To organize, train, promote and supervise a uniform group, such as a drum and bugle corps, color guard, chorus, firing squad, etc.

Visiting or VAVS

The purpose of the visiting committee is to give comfort and assistance to members and their families when sick or bereaved, and to visit hospitalized veterans. It is recommended the Post Chaplain be chair and all Post members share in this vital function by taking their turn as committee members.

The Post

The American Legion is incorporated by act of Congress and is organized into local Posts, which, for purposes of coordination and administration, are grouped into Departments. The Post is the combat unit of The American Legion. Depending upon its ability to absorb American Legion policies and properly interpret them to the local people, and to successfully carry out unselfish activities for the community, the state and the nation, our organization will stand or fall.

The responsibility given to the individual Post has proved the source of our strength and growth. The Post is to a large degree autonomous, restricted only by broad general guidelines carried in the National or Department Constitution and By-Laws. The Post must never forget, however, the implied responsibility it has to the veterans and the children of its community and to the community itself.

The Post is The American Legion. Its duties are beautifully spelled out in the Preamble to the Constitution of The American Legion.

Membership is by Posts only. Programs are effective to the degree the Post adopts and puts them into operation. Mutual helpfulness becomes a reality through the comradeship, social activities, pride of achievement, and the service programs of the Post.

Perception of The American Legion

The word "perception" is merely a shortcut way of referring to the spontaneous and more-or-less subconscious feelings and reactions of people for an institution, other people, products, or ideas.

The perception of The American Legion is the reaction—mental and emotional—which anyone has of the organization. Each individual may have a different mental perception of the Legion, and each Post creates its own local perception to a great degree. The local perception is colored to some extent by a Department and national perception.

The perception, which the individual Legionnaire—particularly the Post officer—has, of The American Legion will determine in large measure what the Post is. If the person's perception of The American Legion is as a bar, the Post will be a bar and that is all. If the person thinks the Post is doing a good job but it still isn't attracting new members, then the perception of what The American Legion should be, or is, does not agree with what the majority of veterans in the area want in an organization. There is room in The American Legion for many different personal perceptions of The American Legion.

All Posts do not have to be cast in the same mold, although there is a tendency to think they are. We get into membership difficulty in a community when a group with a narrow perception of The American Legion becomes dominant and suppresses any other group with a different perception. The perception which the individual Legionnaire has can prevent the development of new activities which would produce new leaders and new membership, or it can result in the expansion of programs, leadership and, eventually membership.

It can also either help or hinder the establishment of needed new Posts, which might attract and serve an entirely new group of veterans.

Kinds of Posts

Yes, each individual Legionnaire sees The American Legion through personal experiences or desires. The organization is big enough and broad enough to accommodate him (or her), but the Post will reflect the composite personality of its members. There are country club-type Posts and community Posts. There are ethnic groups and all-women Posts. There are business and professional Posts, company Posts, and Posts from a fraternal group. There are many different kinds of Posts and all doing the work of The American Legion.

Goals or Standards

Some Posts have several thousand members—others are successful with less than a hundred. What the Post wants to do and needs to do, it can do. But only if the membership, and the Post officers in particular, carefully spell out its goals or standards in terms of service to the community and then translate these goals into action, will the Post be successful. Service takes many forms. It's getting the manpower or membership to do a job. It's having fun while doing it. And it's doing something that needs to be done, whether for the members or the community. This means that the Post officers must be aware of the likes and dislikes of its members, and equally aware of the needs of the community.

Developing Leaders

All of this implies that there are active devoted Legionnaires. There are, but The American Legion goes through a terrific amount of manpower. Nearly 15,000 new Post Commanders are needed each year. This goes over the 100,000 mark when other Post officers are elected. Some members hold the same office year after year, but there is always a need for replacements.

Where do these replacements come from? First, the veteran becomes a member. Then, experience, education, and exposure through serving on committees, attending leadership schools, conventions and conferences make that person ready for other positions of responsibility.

Over the years The American Legion has played a part in developing a tremendous number of Legionnaires who have gone on to make a mark in other fields, but leadership training, formal or informal, is a never-ending task. Anytime a Post has a search for a new Commander, the danger signals are flying.

The Post and Its Community

What the community thinks of The American Legion is just as basic as what a Legion Post thinks of itself. The American Legion exists only with the approval of our society, or at least a large segment of it. This is true whether it's the national organization or a Post. Each Post is judged by the community. Its success or failure reflects this judgment. A good Post will encourage active participation by its members with other civic-minded committees and organizations within the community. It will seek to participate whether or not the activity is initiated by The American Legion.

The good Post will know the needs of the community. It will know them by the simple process of planned contacts by representative Post members with city officials, educators, welfare workers, community leaders and with other civic and fraternal groups. A Legionnaire who does a good job for the community deserves recognition and thanks from the Post, whether it was a Post-sponsored project or not.

Veterans activities alone will not establish The American Legion as an asset in the eyes of the community. These are, however, of particular importance to an organization composed exclusively of veterans.

Establishing Political Grassroots

As Legionnaires, **we** are soldiers on the front lines of the battle for veterans' benefits. Veterans and their families earned these benefits at a high price: in battles around the world safeguarding the principles of justice, freedom and democracy for **all** Americans! The American Legion must continue to establish, nurture and maintain personal relationships with all elected officials and their staff at the local, state and national levels. Legionnaires can teach elected officials what this battle is all about: Sign them up as members of The American Legion family, if they are eligible for the Legion, Auxiliary and/or the Sons. Extend them an invitation to participate in local and state activities: to judge an oratorical contest; to speak at Boys and Girls State; to throw our the first pitch at a Legion baseball game; to address Post, District or Department meetings; to participate as the keynote speaker in a flag disposal ceremony; to

officiate at a memorial service for fallen comrades on patriotic holidays; or any other significant event. Give members of their staff the same consideration, because they are a part of the elected official's inner circle of political advisors.

During an election year, consider having a "Meet the Candidates Night" meeting. To comply with Section 2, Article II of the Constitution of The American Legion, invite all candidates and let them explain what they plan to do for veterans and their families if elected. Many congressional members started their careers as local elected officials. What better way to introduce these legislators to The American Legion family and establish a positive relationship than from the beginning of their political lives?

Consider having a town hall meeting focused on veterans' issues. Invite elected officials to address and answer questions from their constituents from the veterans community. This is an opportunity for framing the discussion solely on critical veterans' issues. This is not the appropriate setting to discuss specific individual VA disability claims or other benefits problems, but rather general concerns.

When an elected official participates in local Legion activities, be sure to discuss critical Legion legislative issues and widely publicize the event. Tangible and intangible rewards help establish a strong desire by the elected official for a return appearance. The American Legion's lobbying efforts improve tremendously when Legionnaires *back home* address the same issues echoed by Legion members on Capitol Hill. It is critical that Legionnaires establish, develop and cultivate strong relationships with congressional offices in the states. This is permissible without violating Section 2, Article II of the Constitution of The American Legion. Keep in mind that The American Legion deals with issues, not personalities. The American Legion seeks elected officials to support its legislative mandates, not the other way around. The American Legion cannot endorse any incumbent or candidate for elected or appointed offices in the government. Offer to serve on an elected official's advisory council or on a military academy candidate screening committee. If your Member of Congress does not have such an advisory council or screening committee, offer to establish one. Good relations with Members and their District offices will pay big dividends in dealing with Members in Washington, DC.

One of the most effective strategies and another valuable part of the Legion's legislative effort is letter writing. Letter writing is an excellent way to begin building a relationship with elected officials. Written communication puts both the Legion and your elected officials "on record" concerning critical issues. When communicating by mail, personal letters have a tremendous impact in Congress and will usually generate a response. To be effective, letters must be brief, informative and factually correct. Limit each letter to only one topic to get the best response. Multiple topics make the letter more difficult to respond to quickly and puts it in the "answer when I get time" file. **The American Legion Dispatch** is an excellent reference source on critical issues pending in Congress. "Dateline: Capitol Hill" by the National Legislative Commission Chairman appears regularly.

Letters should briefly describe the issue, present significant facts and, most importantly, tell the elected official what action to take. Use a personal example to demonstrate the impact of the legislative issue on local veterans. Equally important, specifically ask the elected official for a written response. Please forward responses form any congressional correspondence to the Legislative Division in Washington, DC. The Legislative staff uses such congressional correspondence to help develop legislative strategy. Informed constituents have the greatest impacts on determining the way a Member of Congress votes.

If your Post does not have a copy of How to Make a Difference Through Effective Grassroots Lobbying, contact the National Legislative Commission for a complementary copy for your Post's Legislative Committee Chairperson. **Additional copies can be obtained from National Emblem Sales.**

Social Activities

Someone once described The American Legion as an organization that came to play but stayed to work. The same description pretty well fits a Legionnaire. In fact, two-thirds of our members joined because of the real or expected comradeship, fun, or social activities. A good Post will recognize this. It will give as much attention to a social event as it does to planning a more serious project. The Legion Post can and should provide many of the outside social contacts for the Legionnaire and family. All events should be scheduled well in advance and publicized. Each Post must determine the type of social activities that will appeal to the greatest number of its members. But more important, each activity should be evaluated as to its acceptance by the community and the eligible veterans.

American Legion Buildings

All of the foregoing presumes that something will take place somewhere. Frequently this is an American Legion activity center or Post home, a familiar but varied sight across America. Some are country clubs, others are community centers. Some are primarily bars; others simply meeting halls. Some are current models representing an up-to-date Post; others haven't been renovated or changed since before World War II. Some appeal to a particular type of veteran; others have a general appeal. Some are landscaped and painted. Most are just a non-descript building.

To assist an American Legion Post in its plans to build a new Post facility or improve its existing building, a publication—*Post Operations Manual*—has been prepared. This booklet contains basic information which is pertinent to a building program—Standards, Planning Criteria, Financing and Related Administration Suggestions, etc.—plus some success stories of actual Post-building programs. Sketches of floor plans are also included in the publication. The *Post Operations Manual* may be obtained by writing to the Membership and Post Activities Section, The American Legion, Indianapolis Office.

Post Clubroom—It's Your Decision

It's up to the individual Post also to decide whether it is to have club room facilities. If your Post decides it wants a clubroom and/or bar, then it calls for the best possible operation. To assist the Post officers charged with the supervision of the Post club room facilities, the *Post Operations Manual* has been prepared. This manual covers such topics as the duties of a club manager, labor costs, beverage control, food service, etc. It also contains a guide on how to use proven principles of financial accounting. The *Post Operations Manual* is available from the Membership and Post Activities Section.

Elections

If the work of the Post has gone well and the present officers have been effective, there should be no lack of competition for the elective Post offices. But there may come a time when someone must be approached and urged to run for Post Commander or the other elective offices. This is particularly true in some smaller Posts where many of the members have already served. This situation should be anticipated and long-range plans made to cope with it.

The present Post officers and the active Legionnaires must always be on the alert toward developing future officer material. A Legionnaire showing ability and interest should be encouraged to seek a higher office.

The Post constitution and by-laws will spell out the dates for nomination and election of officers. If these dates do not agree with the Department constitution and by-laws, the Post dates should be changed. To maintain necessary communications between the Post and the Department, it is desirable all Posts hold elections near the same date, and the results of these elections be promptly reported to the Department.

Installation

The installation of a new group of officers provides the first occasion of the new Legion year for an impressive ceremony and reason for one of the top social events in the Post's calendar. If new officers are casually installed, their attitude toward their obligation will be casual. If the installation is accompanied by a banquet, visits from the Department and District officers, and the type of social entertainment that draws a crowd, the new officers are going to be fully aware of the responsibilities they have assumed.

In many Departments, regulations are in effect as to who the installing officers should be. It is well to check with your District Commander for such details.

Initiations and Other Rituals

Impressive installation ceremonies can provide the framework around which other rituals can develop. Your *Manual of Ceremonies* covers the initiation of new members, dedication of halls, funeral services, and other rituals standard throughout The American Legion. Frequently Department or national headquarters can provide additional tools to make these ceremonies more effective. A contact with Department headquarters will provide this information.

The primary objective in all rituals is to provide for the full impressiveness that has been built into the actual ritual.

Inter-Post Meetings

Post officers can learn from their counterparts in another Post, but more important, inter-Post meetings provide an opportunity for social and fraternal gatherings that do much toward building the solidarity of our Posts and our individual Legionnaires.

Check with the Posts nearby; you usually find them more receptive to such a program. Frequently the home Post Commander opens the meeting and conducts the program; the visiting Post Commander closes the meeting. Color guards can also be interchanged.

Just as important is the fact that the increased attendance caused by joint meetings will allow you to secure more outstanding speakers and better entertainment.

National Headquarters

The top legislative body of The American Legion is the National Convention. The National Executive Committee is vested with administrative authority between National Conventions.

Through its national organization, the unity of the Legion is effected as a national force. Through National Headquarters, the policies of the Legion are clarified and its activities are centered and directed. Thus, the influence of nearly 15,000 Posts is coordinated and directed along the lines of Legion policy. Your national headquarters has offices in Indianapolis and Washington, D.C.

Department

It has previously been mentioned The American Legion is organized into Departments and, these in turn, into Posts. There is one Department in each state, the District of Columbia, and there may be one in each territory and insular possession of the United States (Puerto Rico). Each Department may prescribe

the constitution of its Posts, and the Department has supervision of the Posts within its boundaries and the Posts assigned to it by the National Executive Committee. There are also foreign Departments in the Philippines, France, and Mexico. In all, there are 55 Departments.

District Organization

Departments have the authority to create intermediate bodies between the Post and Department to assist as a liaison between such organizations, and for the purpose of promoting the programs of The American Legion. The Department executive committee or constitution defines the powers of such intermediate groups. In no event shall such powers invade the prerogatives now vested in either the Post, or Department, or the national organization.

The most common division that has been established is the partition of the Department into Districts. However, many of our Departments do provide for county organizations, inter-county councils, and other subdivisions below the District level. In one Department, county organizations substitute for Districts.

Depending upon the powers delegated, the District does have some supervisory powers over the Posts comprising the District; but the primary purpose is to promote, stimulate, and coordinate the programs so the work of the Posts becomes more effective.

SECTION 2

District or County Commander's Guide

What Is A District Commander?

If this is your first time as a District Commander, and you are not quite sure what the job entails, don't feel alone! You're not! Every year nearly 800 Legionnaires across the nation are elected to the position of District Commander and very few have experience. As a District Commander you have a unique opportunity to help The American Legion work and in turn to HELP AMERICA WORK. Your term in the office of District Commander can be one of the most rewarding and satisfying experiences of your life . . . if you meet your—

Responsibility

In many ways the District Commander is the most important person in The American Legion. Department officers learn very quickly that when a District Commander has organized the District, is meeting his/her responsibilities, and keeping a constant watch on District activities, the District is on the move. Each Post in The American Legion is a separate and distinct unit of our organization. Each Post functions independently of each other Post. You, as District Commander, have the responsibility for providing the link between individuals, Posts and Department. The Department, in turn, provides the link between the Districts, and your national office ties the 55 Departments together. The part you play in this communications process is vital. Without your leadership, the Posts in your District will have no way of linking their operations to our much larger national network. With your leadership your District can become an important part of an organized national effort. The American Legion was founded with a spirit of fellowship, enthusiasm and mutual respect among concerned friends. It was built on understanding, appreciation, and vocal pride of America and its people. It was built with the awareness that together we can make a difference—together we are "STILL SERVING AMERICA." The success of The American Legion in today's world begins with you and your desire and ability to link your District to the rest of the organization. Ralph Waldo Emerson once mused that, "Nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm." Enthusiasm indicates excitement about an idea. If we add the necessary ingredients of dedication, personal attention, imagination, and perseverance, we have the requirements for a good District Commander.

Organize 'Team'

As District Commander, your first order of business is your "team"—the people with whom you can work and those who can best perform the tasks necessary for a successful year during your term of office.

You must select the cast, set the stage, and it's up to you to: (1) Move those projects that are most important, following a definite timetable; (2) determine both long-range and immediate objectives; (3) organize fully and communicate exactly your ideas and your enthusiasm; and (4) make sure the lines of communication are tightly drawn so the flow of information will be easily available to the public, Post, District, Department, and national.

Organizing The District

The first couple of months following the election of the District Commander can determine the success or failure of the entire administration. This is the time the selection of the key persons who will assist the Commander is completed, a timetable of future events is established, and it's made certain the Posts are getting organized.

The District Commander is normally the elected representative of the Posts in the District, but an obligation to provide guidance and supervision is also implied. Posts are responsible to carry out the objectives and programs of the Legion and to fully comply with the obligations assumed under the Post, Department and national constitutions. When a Post is inactive, begins to falter or fails, it is then the District Commander must be prepared to give direction and control.

Supervision means organization. Responsibilities must be assigned to District vice Commanders. Other District officers must clearly understand the duties of their office. The most effective way to organize is to use an early meeting to bring together the team that will make the District function.

Prior to that meeting, the District Commander should learn what has caused past successes or failures of programs and objectives of the Posts and the District. District Commanders of previous years should be consulted. The Commander should study all that is possible to find out about the District, and should have clearly defined objectives and assignments to present. This should include assigning District officers the important function of attending regular Post meetings on a rotating basis within the District so one of the officers is present at almost every Post meeting.

A well-prepared agenda will furnish a pattern for all future meetings and go far toward getting the District organization functioning quickly and effectively.

Agenda items should include:

1. Membership potential, goals, target dates, distribution of Posts and the need for more Posts.
2. General discussion of program status throughout the District.
3. Personal objectives of the District Commander.
4. Assignments to officers, chairmen and committees.
5. Initial planning for District meetings.
6. Visitation schedule of Commander and Vice Commanders, and other District officers.

Selection and Use of Committees

No task is more fundamental to a smoothly functioning District than the selection and proper use of committee chairs and committees. Whenever possible, the chair should be someone with personal interests in the program assigned, and should be a person with enough stature to make effective contacts throughout the community with others of like interests. Some consideration must always be given to where the chairs live. It is essential to distribute appointments over the entire District, but it is often more important a particular chair live in a particular spot where the job must be done. Once a District Commander has decided upon the chairs, personal contact should be made with each head to determine a willingness to serve.

A meeting should be arranged where the District Commander can meet with each of the more important chairs and committees to formulate the program for the coming year. The District Commander has an additional obligation to see that each chair and committee is finished with all needed information and materials. All of these preliminary procedures are geared toward each of the District committees being able to build a timetable of events under its supervision that will fit into the overall District program and can be presented as a complete projection for the year at the first District meeting. As the year draws to a close, careful attention should be given to the selection of a nominating committee. This committee will be responsible for selecting qualified persons to carry forward the progress you have made.

Sources of Assistance

Your Department Adjutant will have information or aids available from the Department, National Headquarters, and from outside sources. The other major sources of assistance are within your own District. Don't be too proud to consult with past District officers. In fact, you may wish to establish an advisory committee of Past District Commanders for your District. The experience of this group, when properly sought and utilized will avoid many pitfalls and errors for you.

Value of Reporting

Preparing reports is rarely pleasant, except when results are favorable. But the value of a District Commander is in no small part determined by the ability to report both the favorable and unfavorable situations in the District to Department officers and by the ability to report Department and national actions to the District and Post officers. It is a two-way street, and again emphasizes the importance of the District Commander as a link in a chain. You are the communications key. Membership results should be checked monthly in each of the Posts. Results will frequently indicate a visit.

Timetable

Section 1 of this guide lists suggested Post programs for every month of the year. Not all of these programs will be handled on a District-wide basis, but such a calendar is still necessary. Build your timetable, listing activities far enough in advance so your Post and District chairs are alerted well in advance. Your timetable should also include report dates.

District Meeting

The organization below the Department level varies from state to state. The meeting referred to in this section is the meeting of the organizational level immediately above the Post level, where the officers wear the blue and white cap. The District meeting is the largest Legion meeting the average Legionnaire ever attends. Not all Legionnaires attend state conventions, and an even smaller percentage attend National Conventions. Therefore, the District meeting becomes primarily the one opportunity to impress the average Legionnaire and to instill within each the knowledge and idealism of our accomplishments and aims.

If the first two months have been spent properly, the organization of a District meeting will not be difficult. Committee chairs will be ready to make intelligent and concise reports on their programs and the Posts will have been properly alerted so these officers, too, can outline their plans both as they fit either individual communities and as they are related to the District program.

Certain procedures are pretty standard, but are nevertheless important. District Commanders should get together with the host Post officers and Auxiliary officers to work out details of the meeting, possible entertainment, and a banquet if there is to be one.

All Posts should be sent notices of the meeting as far in advance as possible. The notices should outline 1) the time the meeting will start, 2) where it will be held, 3) whether or not there will be a luncheon, 4) if there will be a social hour, 5) when and where the banquet will start, 6) where different groups are expected to meet, 7) and any other miscellaneous information that would make for a better informed District membership.

The District Commander can use the "Manual of Ceremonies" (Section 3 of this guide) as the guide for conducting a District meeting in the same way a Post Commander follows the Manual in conducting a good Post meeting.

Notice of the meeting should definitely be sent to all District chairs and those who are expected to report should receive an additional follow-up, probably including a telephone call, to be certain they will

be present and ready to report. Elections should be carefully conducted and all candidates given an equal chance to speak.

At every District meeting there will usually be dignitaries of the Legion or the Auxiliary. Be certain you are familiar with the proper method of presenting these people and the proper time for receiving any message they might have. In courtesy to them, to you, and to those attending the meeting, there should never be competing activities to distract from the meeting. Bar activities should be restricted to the social hours. The intent and meaning of the business part of a District meeting is to improve the performance of the Posts and make them more effective for the veterans in the surrounding areas.

Check List for Conferences and Conventions

To a District Commander, careful planning on every detail is most essential.

Time and Place: The timing of your meeting or convention is important so as not to conflict with events in the District that would interfere with attendance.

The site or place of the meeting should be where the greatest number can reach by traveling the shortest distance. Sometimes, a meeting is set at a Post in a far corner of a District hoping it will increase attendance in that area. However, too often this objective fails and results in poor attendance.

Attendance: Just setting a date for a meeting doesn't insure a crowd. The success of a meeting is based on the greatest number of Posts being represented rather than the greatest number of people present, since the District meeting should place its emphasis on getting the job done at the Post level.

The first thing, naturally, should be the official notice to each Post Commander and adjutant. This notice should be in the form of a sincere invitation, rather than just a cold announcement.

This should then be followed by personal contacts by the District Commander and the Vice Commanders. See that every Post Commander is personally invited to attend. Additional reminders are needed and valuable.

The type of leadership provided to a large degree will determine the attendance. Many will come, simply out of loyalty, others because of interest in a certain program, and others because of an obligation.

Every Post should be represented by at least its Commander and adjutant.

Arrangements for Meeting: As soon as the place of the meeting has been determined, the District Commander should then personally contact the Post Commander in that locality to make all the necessary arrangements for the conduct of the District meeting. Don't overlook such details as colors and color guard, podium, microphones, seating and registration procedures.

Details as to any refreshments or social functions should be carefully worked out.

Agenda: Not only is the preparation of an agenda important to the success of the meeting but the execution of the agenda is equally important.

CALL TO ORDER: The District Commander should promptly call the meeting to order at the time set, but before doing so, all officers, guests and color bearers should be in proper position.

ADVANCEMENT OF THE COLORS: Give command for salute with firmness.

PRAYER: At a District meeting, where the Chaplain is possibly not known to all—then it is suggested the District Commander say (for example)—"Charles Smith, our District Chaplain, will offer prayer." Prayer may be one in "Manual of Ceremonies for Regular Meetings." (See Section 3 of this guide.)

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Legionnaires will remove caps.

PREAMBLE: If the Preamble is not on display in the room, give those present an opportunity to get membership cards out so they may join with you.

READING OF MINUTES: Some Districts have the reading of the minutes, others do not. If you do read them, then you will state (for example), "Joan Doe, District Adjutant, will read the minutes of the last District meeting."

INTRODUCTION OF OFFICERS AND GUESTS: This is most important and often leaves people with a bad taste if the presiding officer fails to give the name correctly, fails to introduce in importance of position, or assigns improper titles.

It is suggested you do not rely upon your memory. Write down on a slip of paper those to be introduced, together with names and titles in the order in which they should be introduced. In District meetings, it is always well to introduce past District Commanders and never overlook past Department Commanders or national executive committeemen. When making introductions, do not ask those introduced for remarks at that time. Later, it may be in order to hear from certain distinguished guests.

Department Officers: If Department officers are present, they should be given special recognition and the opportunity to extend greetings. The District Commander, who will invite such officers to take their place for their remarks, should do this. It is suggested that a District Commander never simply state, "We have Joe Smith, Department Vice Commander with us, and I am wondering if he has anything to say." Instead, "We are delighted to have our Department Vice Commander, Joe Smith, with us today, and we will be happy to hear from him at this time."

Department Commander: If the Department Commander is present, he/she should be introduced with respect and dignity and given the floor for such period as may be desired.

ROLL CALL: Sometimes this is appropriate prior to the reading of minutes or the introduction of guests, but often it is found better to do this just before commencement of the business of the meeting. When calling the roll, the person answering for a Post should rise and state their name and position.

REPORTS: Prior to the meeting, the District Commander should inform everyone who is going to be called upon for a report of that fact and should go over what the report should cover. This is important and only fair to those who will be called upon. Reports to early District meetings should cover plans for carrying out the programs in the District and hints or suggestions as to the part Posts are expected to play in the programs.

It is far better if those making reports will write them out, and this should come as a suggestion from the District Commander. Persons making reports should be called upon by their name, Post number and title of the office for which they are reporting and then requested to come to the front and address the meeting. If the District Commander knows an official or committee chair has no report, then it is better to not call upon that person.

If Posts are requested to report to the meeting, then again, it is important the Post Commander be informed in advance of expectations to report and an outline provided on what the report is expected to cover.

District Commanders should by all means have a personal report to make, and time should be spent in its preparation so the program may be properly presented. It would be well to give special recognition to Posts or officers doing an outstanding job, as an encouragement to them and an incentive to others.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: No meeting should ever be concluded without announcement of coming events, such as Department conferences, special programs or forthcoming observances. At all such meetings, a reminder of membership deadlines and active programs should be announced.

SPECIAL RECOGNITION: Never overlook the opportunity to give or report on Posts that have won special wards or special recognition for some outstanding performance.

CLOSING: District Commanders should never close the meeting without an expression of appreciation to those who have attended, for their interest and support of the conference, and to the host Post for its hospitality.

Hints that help:

1. In conducting a meeting or convention, a presiding officer will command more and greater respect, and have better control over such meeting, by standing whenever the group is addressed or presiding over business.

2. Remember, you, as the presiding officer, are the "boss" of the meeting. When being addressed, demand respect and you will be respected. When anyone wishes to address the chair, have that person stand, give their name and Post number and be properly recognized before you grant permission to address the conference.

Evaluating Post Programs

Perhaps the best way to evaluate the changes that have taken place in the Legion programs is to review its history. For example, in the field of childcare, The American Legion has been an innovator. Many nationwide programs first saw the light of day as a Legion resolution. But Children and Youth programs of today bear little resemblance to the programs of the twenties or the thirties. No longer is the emphasis on establishing orphanages. Now the emphasis is on the whole child and the retention of as near a normal family life as possible. The programs have changed over a period of years, but . . .

Don't be surprised if at your first Post visit the entire program consists of a discussion on whether to enlarge the club parking lot. And don't be too shocked if at the second, you are greeted with, "Well we didn't have any program for tonight, so we'll just turn it over to the District Commander." Perhaps at the third, someone will report, "We've had the same program with the school since World War II. Now the school officials want to change it. Well, they won't get away with it. I've got an appointment with the school board."

All of this is business as usual, but today that is not good enough. Your job is to search out and help your Post officers find programs that have meaning today. Opportunities are all around you. The American Legion **National Emergency Fund Program** is a good example.

There are new and old veterans eager for a visit from someone who realizes there are problems in readjusting, in retaining a pension, in finding work, or in getting training to make a decent living. Every community needs a good recognition program for its veterans. Through the press, TV and radio, use it as an example for others. Perhaps the Posts could take on the job of building support.

Leading authorities feel the best way to combat increasing drug abuse is in public education. Urge your Posts to find out what your schools are providing; organize a public meeting with an authoritative speaker; and take the lead in developing a community drug education council.

What happens after your delegates return from Boys State? Perhaps they could help organize a Junior Lawman program copied after one now sponsored by the Department of Nebraska. This involves bringing high school juniors into the state patrol-training center for a week of instruction involving all branches of law enforcement.

There is a need for the promotion of old-fashioned patriotism—an activity that remains timely.

You could be surprised and delighted by the enthusiasm generated by properly planned and conducted District promotions.

Analysis Of Post Operations

(Simplified Analysis Form Provided For District/Post Use Following "Post Responsibility Audit" Form)

Abe Lincoln is credited with the remark that "a man's legs need to be long enough to reach the ground." **The membership of a Post needs to be big enough to carry on the work of the Post—and it will be.** For a Post's activities cannot be greater than its membership can support. So, before we talk about the membership of a Post and how big the Post ought to be, we need to ask—and answer—a few other questions.

What does the Post do that would make a veteran want to belong? Is it looking to the future?

What further activities could it reasonably expect to carry out? How many members can the Post expect to handle? How many does it actually want? Maybe it is satisfied with what it already has.

What kind of Post is it or does it want to be? Or just what is the reason for the existence of this particular Post?

The answers for every Post will be different.

While the answers may be different, they can be revealing and will certainly show which Posts are capable of membership growth and which Posts must have improved and modernized programs before a healthy membership growth can be supported.

In any given Post, there is a rather constant percentage of the members who do the bulk of the work. This manpower pool is the one around which practically all Posts build their programs.

The percentage of active members is rather constant, but it does not need to be. Ideas for increasing the number and quality of active Legionnaires are available in Department and national planning manuals. Use this material as a base for your own presentation to make your Post more effective.

Limits of Authority - - - Methods of Securing Information

Many Posts resent what they infer to be interference in the operation of their Post. At the same time, the Department is counting upon the District Commander to have detailed knowledge and understanding of each Post in the District. This conflict can usually be resolved by use of proper methods of working with the Posts both toward obtaining information and toward improving Post operation. A sample Post Analysis Sheet appears later in this section. This particular sheet is quite similar to the one used by many of our Departments. Experience in the field has shown the actual sheet can be left in the briefcase while the information is being gathered.

Perhaps the most effective method yet devised is for the District Commander to be prepared with several key questions on programs or activities; they may be your own pet interests. Give these to all District officers to use during Post visitations. If a meeting with Post officers can be arranged, these key questions can be the start of a good discussion, allowing the District Commander to obtain all of the information needed and at the same time offer numerous suggestions for improvements. It has been conclusively proven there is no value in handing an analysis sheet to one or more Post officers and asking them to complete it without consultation with the District Commander or whoever is having the form completed.

Use of Information Obtained

As important as it is for the District Commander to know the internal operation of each Post, it is equally important this information is put to proper use. Certainly it has no value if the District Commander simply obtains this information for information's sake. First, the information should be put to work to assist the Post in improving its overall programs and procedures. Second, the information must be passed on to the Department as part of that vast amount of knowledge that makes for a growing Department. Third, District officers can be better informed.

Today, too often The American Legion is guilty of focusing on the needs of the organization rather than on the needs of the veterans or the community. American Legion Posts need to wholeheartedly adopt an approach geared to the ideal of satisfying the needs of potential Legionnaires and communities, thus causing The American Legion to be a vehicle for service, and this would make for easier acceptance. The logical conclusion is that the Posts would become more flexible. There would be a variety of types of Posts—the possibilities are endless if the primary thought behind continuing or forming a new Post is to provide service.

Many like a Post that has a good clubroom. They like the sociability that develops around a good bar, but this doesn't appeal to a lot of veterans. Some of them are leaders in our communities, who are needed in The American Legion. A clubroom can add to a Post, but think of the many Posts where the meetings are held in the bar room or members must go through the bar to get to the meeting room. It doesn't matter how good a salesman you have on your membership team, the market is limited. Sure, the first sale may be made, but you probably aren't gaining a continuing or active member.

There need to be people within our organization whose primary responsibility is analyzing the Post structure, particularly those located in metropolitan and urban areas. Their purpose would not be to make the individual contacts, but rather helping Posts toward the filling of present or developed needs of the veteran or the community.

We must further build a task force of people capable of making contact on the highest level within the community and developing with community leaders a marketable American Legion for the area. "What can this Post and its membership do to better serve the local veterans and the community?" and then did something about it. The Post Responsibility Audit, which follows, is an attempt to answer such questions. This tool will amaze you with its ability to determine the quality of a Post operation and its relationship to membership growth.

Post Responsibility Audit (PRA)

(Simplified Audit Form Provided For District/Post Use Follows)

A "PRA" anticipates an organization will participate, through its members, in meaningful activities within the community where its members reside. But it also means one thing more—and this is important—it means you should also be able to measure the results of its activities.

The American Legion has developed programs primarily in response to pressure. These pressures can take many forms—it may mean a drop in membership, acceptance by communities, being available to all veterans, changing economic factors, or a new generation of veterans. These are all conditions or pressures that directly affect The American Legion. There are many more. Unfortunately, the Post response has been one of reaction rather than one of action. As individuals, and in our personal life, we do plan ahead—some with more success than others—but when a person gets active in a Post, "blinders" with "tunnel-vision" may also occur. Then you see general statements like, "Be Active, promote community service" and Post members usually react rather than act ahead of any emergency.

Perhaps this is because no one has spelled out the one-two-three items to show a Post is doing its share, or another Post is not doing its share. And perhaps the reason for this is that as movement is made up the scale from Post to District, to Department, to National, it becomes increasingly hard to get action and, as Legionnaires, there is trouble getting a proactive/proper response except to a crisis.

There are no precise standards already developed that gives a qualitative as well as a quantitative analysis of a Post, but a start has to be made and perhaps the accompanying charge can be used as a barometer which actually measures the effectiveness of a Post.

This whole presentation has been put together not necessarily to indicate how you could quickly rate your Posts, although this could be a very valuable tool. The primary purpose is to indicate how by evaluating what the Post is doing you can show whether it is fulfilling a useful function, whether it is an organization attracting veterans, and whether it is truly a community asset.

If you honestly evaluate your Posts, you are going to be surprised. More important, the evaluation will indicate where improvement is most needed.

Perhaps the social aspects have been underplayed, although it would be easy to cover all such activities under the 5th item, "Post is a Community Center" or the 8th item, "Is a Friendly Place to Be." It's entirely possible if this type of audit is used, there will have to be increased emphasis on a planned social recreational program. In the meantime, do not lose sight of the very fundamental question, "Is this Post doing the things that justify its continues existence in the community or for your veterans?"

A score of 24 probably should produce a Post that's doing a respectable job of hanging on to old members. It's doubtful many would be coming out to meetings, and it's more doubtful it would be attracting the necessary new blood to make the Post grow.

Most average Posts, with a little effort, can be changed to become outstanding Posts. By improving each item listed on the chart, this improvement should come about. One area where a better performance would be most easily seen would be in attendance at Post meetings. A second would be the enthusiasm displayed by the members. A third would be a brightening of the membership picture.

Evaluate what the Post is doing…use the following form to audit Post activities. First, run a beginning audit, with periodic follow-ups for comparison, such as each quarter, to see whether the Post has made any improvements in specifically identified areas.

Post Responsibility Audit form

Rating Schedule

0 - No Participation
1 - Poor
2 - Below Average
3 - Average
4 - Above Average
5 - Excellent

Rate each category below with a score from 0 to 5

		0	1	2	3	4	5
1.	Follow principles of Preamble.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2.	Have good youth programs.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3.	Members are interested and active.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4.	Is a real asset to the community.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5.	Post is a community center.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6.	Veterans needing help are helped.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7.	Has businesslike operation.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8.	Is a friendly place to be.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
9.	Is well thought of by the community.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
10.	Is well thought of by veterans.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

TOTAL POST SCORE _____

DATE OF AUDIT _____

Overall Rating (Assessment) From Post Total

0 - 4	Dead
5 - 14	Poor
15 – 24	Below Average
25 – 34	Average
35 - 44	Above Average
45 – 50	Excellent

Post Analysis form

THE AMERICAN LEGION
DEPARTMENT OF

_____

POST _____ NO. _____ LOCATION _____
Date of Visit _____ by _____ Title _____
Name
of Commander _____ Adjutant _____

COMMITTEES:

	Committee Appointed		Committee Functioning	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Americanism……	☐	☐	☐	☐
Membership…..……	☐	☐	☐	☐
Children & Youth……	☐	☐	☐	☐
Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation…….....	☐	☐	☐	☐
Jobs for Veterans..……	☐	☐	☐	☐
Boys State…..……	☐	☐	☐	☐
Legion Baseball……	☐	☐	☐	☐
Oratorical…..……	☐	☐	☐	☐
Energy……...……	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other Committees……..	☐	☐	☐	☐

MEMBERSHIP:

Goal _____ Members to date _____ Members Last Year _____ Post Vietnam Veterans Joined? _____
General Conduct of meeting; how conducted in your opinion? _____
_____
_____

Total Attendance_____ How often does Post Meet? _____ Dates _____
How often are executive meetings held? _____
General Comment: In your opinion, what can be done to assist this Post? _____
_____
_____

Signed (Post Officer) _____ Title _____

Signed (Dept. Rep.) _____ Title _____

The Value of Organized Posts

Each District Commander will have under the District jurisdiction Posts ranging from the highly successful to dormant ones. Your success is going to depend to a large extent upon how effectively you can get the greatest number of Legion Posts to cooperate during your year in office.

When a Post has a completely successful operation, it needs a minimum of supervision. But the District Commander will still want to be familiar with the procedures followed by the Post, so ideas and programs used there can be presented to the less successful Posts in the District's jurisdiction. On many occasions, new Post officers are eager to do a job but lack the background.

The District Commander has several options as to how best to help the Post. You may want to call a Post Officers' seminar early in the Legion year, at which time the District chairs and officers can be utilized to present the program for the coming year. Use regular District conventions for the same purpose, but here time limitations prohibit an effective presentation. Maintain a list of phone numbers of all District and county (if any) and Post officers to reach them quickly in an emergency. District officers should make Post visits. Using electronic *e-mail* is another fast way to reach key officers.

On other occasions, it is going to be necessary the District Commander go directly to a Post and sit down with whatever officers available and offer some type of procedure the District Commander knows will work. Here is an outline of a proven plan for organizing the individual Posts. This outline can be used in the District seminars, or it can be used in meeting with individual Posts.

Step Up To A Better Post

As a new Commander, first looking at the overall operation of a Post of The American Legion; you may feel you are facing an insurmountable wall. You probably are, unless, step by step, the wall is climbed through organization and leadership.

Step I—Obtain Post records and get new material from Department headquarters so the Commander and adjutant can become familiar with the policies and traditions of the Post, District, Department and national.

Step II—Call an early meeting of your newly elected officers. Invite the outgoing Commander and adjutant and other influential Legionnaires to meet with you.

A suggested agenda should include:

a. Budget
    1. Old, and possibly new sources of income
    2. Estimated expenditures
    3. Possible methods of financing selected programs with other than Post funds
b. Assignments and outline of duties of elected officers
c. Discussion of individual programs and committees in Post organization chart, Section 1 to determine the following:
    1. Qualifications and suggestions for committee chairs and members (See Section 1)
    2. Established programs
    3. Possible new programs (use available handbooks and Department material as guides)
    4. Schedule programs (see Program Reminders—Section 1)
    5. A program of recognition and service for all veterans.
d. Discussion programs unique to your particular Post
e. Initiate study of Post and community for possible additional programs. Make Post analysis—See the previous page of this section.

Step III—Activate Committees

a. Select chairperson and members
b. Make personal contact with each chair to determine willingness to serve
c. Arrange meeting of committees to formulate program

d. Instruct chairmen as to programs, material available, Post reports, etc.
e. Build timetable for each committee to fit into the overall Post calendar
f. Add a young member

Step IV—Coordinate with the Auxiliary. Many programs depend on Auxiliary support to be successful.

Step V—The Post Meeting

1. The first Post meeting tends to set a pattern for the entire year
2. Work closely with adjutant, officers and committee heads
3. Run a formal meeting—follow the ritual in Manual of Ceremonies
4. Post business should be attended to as briefly as possible—Use executive committee members to resolve Post business
5. Department and National material should be digested in advance and items of interest reported to the membership
6. Committee reports should be brief and to the point
7. Consider qualified speakers at some or all meetings for briefing on some phase of Legion program
8. Don't neglect the social side
9. Announce main business of next meeting
10. Have the "Welcome Committee" working

Step VI—Public Relations Committee Meeting

a. Ways and means
b. Formulate instruction to Post officers and committee chairs on standard procedure for keeping PR chair and editor of your paper or bulletin informed

Step VII—Plan for a better informed membership

a. Talks at Post meetings
b. Give all a job
c. Encourage enrollment/completion of The American Legion Extension Institute
d. Pass on information
e. Have a monthly Post newspaper or bulletin
f. Acquaint active members with veteran benefits

Step VIII—Appoint coordinating committee for patriotic observances. America wants and needs old-fashioned patriotism

a. Work with standing committees. Include younger members
b. Work with community, particularly in recognition of our active military personnel, as well as all veterans.
c. Uniformed groups

Step IX—Give proper credit

a. Awards & Citations
b. Thank you notes
c. Credit at meetings

Step X—The voice of the Legionnaire and the Post is only heard by active participation in meetings, whether District, Department or National.

a. Plan election of delegates as part of the Post timetable
b. Attend District, Department and National Conventions and conferences
c. Present sound resolutions of concern to The American Legion
d. Report back to the Post

Step XI—Follow standard procedures and schedule for the year around. Keep Post meetings planned three months ahead, social activities six months.

Step XII—It is never too early to evaluate possible Post officers for next year.

Reactivating Dead Posts

A community with no Post of The American Legion and a community with a dormant or dead Post show an almost identical void—a void characterized by the complete lack of any activities in the various fields of concern of The American Legion. Actually, the community or neighborhood with a dormant Post frequently is a greater problem to those responsible for American Legion programs. Many times there is an adjutant, Commander, or both on record, and the District or Department officers continue to attempt the revitalization of the Post through these listed officers. Obviously, these are people who lack more than a token interest or do not have leadership ability. If this were not true, the Post would be functioning. District officers are usually wasting their time if these are the only contacts that can be made. The solution lies in reaching out beyond these so-called officers to find a new nucleus for a Post. In doing so, the situation is exactly the same as if a new Post were to be organized.

Remember! One or two key people can change a Post completely.

New Posts

The formation of a new Post or the rebirth of a dormant one is not difficult if certain basic steps are followed. Determine first that The American Legion is **NOT** serving a particular community or neighborhood where there are sufficient veterans to support an active and growing Post. Someone of stature from the District or the Department must visit the area and find out where these community and veterans' needs exist. This may take the form of an actual survey with the necessary contacts being made to find out where The American Legion might serve in connection with the schools and school programs, drug abuse/teenage suicide prevention, scouting, service for disabled or aging veterans, or the need of the community for an additional ladies' volunteer group such as the American Legion Auxiliary. **Such a survey should certainly consider the recreational and social facilities of the community.**

Often while this survey is in progress, giant strides can be made toward solving the second step, which is the recruitment of eligible veterans who have the ability and willingness to provide a good nucleus around which an American Legion Post can be built. The superintendent or principal of the local school might suggest the names of those who would be interested. Federal employees, particularly of the Post Office, offer a fertile source of potential members in a new Post. The local Scout Executive may also have in mind some veterans who would see the formation of a Legion Post as a means of expanding the Scouting program. Methods now exist whereby it is easy to determine names and addresses of Legionnaires belonging to Posts in other communities or other states who live within the boundaries where a new Post is desired. Those active in Little Leagues or other pre-Legion Baseball-age programs are frequently most interested in assuring that there is a continuing baseball program and can be very instrumental in developing the necessary number to start a Post. Other organizations, such as Lions or Kiwanis, may be needing the cooperation of a Legion Service Officer to round out a program. Banks and other businesses are very often interested in being represented in such a venture, particularly if the bank or business is headed by a Legionnaire from another Post, but has many employees living in the desired area.

Sometimes the District officers will still not have a key person to form a new Post. This is the time to make a list. Start with the banks, then the insurance offices and real estate offices. These are fertile fields for finding that key person. Or, visit the school principals and/or city and local government offices.

Visits can be paid to each agency listed, explaining what is being attempted and why it is felt an American Legion Post will be an asset to the neighborhood or community. At the same time, a request should be made at each stop for the names of veterans who might possibly be interested in getting on the organizational ground floor of a new American Legion Post. Almost without exception this method will come up with the one, two, or three key people who can take the lead, locally, in forming the Post. **Additional members can come from the friends and acquaintances in a chain reaction type of operation.**

In making the first contacts with business firms or a prospective new member, it is not necessary to spend considerable time with a detailed explanation of the Legion. This can usually come later; but a

copy of The American Legion Magazine is a simple, dignified item that makes the selling job easier. If the proper people can be found, a very minimum number is required to insure the success of a new Post. These people will do most of the recruiting from among their own friends, business associates, and acquaintances. In fact, the job of finding the initial veterans can frequently be simplified by using friends of Legionnaires in adjacent Posts or from the District officers.

Frequently several arbitrary decisions have to be made in starting a new Post. A temporary name can be selected; initial dues can be set; and, most important, three or four reasons why a new Post is needed can be spelled out.

One of the most important reasons is the Post is being organized to make the community or neighborhood a better place in which to live and to assist veterans and the families of the area, but this reason should be spelled out in terms of programs which have meaning to the local residents.

Once the bare minimum necessary to start a Post is recruited, a first organizational meeting should be held to elect a temporary chairman and secretary. There then exists an organization that can set the date for a second meeting where the procedures outlined in Section 4 can be followed to organize a Post. This group can make sure proper publicity is given to the second meeting, that there is perhaps a Service Officer present, and there are in attendance those Legionnaires who have accepted the responsibility of assisting the new Post during its formative period and the first crucial months of its existence.

The work of dedicated Legionnaires who unselfishly devote time and effort to assuring the success of a new Post should not go unrecognized. The National Membership and Post Activities Committee issues "Pioneer Award" citations which a new Post can award at the time it receives a permanent charter to that individual or Post which has been most instrumental in its success. Details are available through Department headquarters. The Department and the Districts should certainly establish an award system for those most active in a new Post program.

Although the great majority of Posts are of the typical "community-type," drawing their membership from a cross-section of the population and carrying on such standard American Legion activities as they are capable of, there is room in the Legion for a great variety of specialized Posts. There are a number of highly successful luncheon-type Posts, made up primarily of business and professional members. There are Posts which limit their membership to employees of a particular business or industry. There are doctors' Posts, nurses' Posts, Posts made up entirely of church members, federal employees, veterans of a particular military outfit, ex-patients of a specific VA Hospital, and persons who have been stationed in or lived in China. Any area of interest or activity with which a group of veterans can identify themselves can provide the reason for an American Legion Post as well as the means of organizing it.

However, regardless of the type of Post, what has previously been written here still holds true. First, there must be some legitimate, recognizable need which can be served by an American Legion Post. Then, there must be found or brought together a nucleus of those eligible, who can be interested in taking the initiative to form a Post. And, finally, there must be help and stimulation from knowledgeable Legionnaires who are in a position to advise and inform the nucleus.

Step-by-Step Procedures

In the formation of a new American Legion Post, the first and absolutely essential requirement is a positive attitude. There can be no "if we form a Post." Instead, it's "when we form a Post." Remember, you'll be providing a genuine service to the community and its veterans. The following steps can serve as a guide:

1. Determine the city, town, neighborhood or other identifiable area where there are veterans without a readily available Post.
2. Make a firm decision that a new Post will be formed to serve the selected area.
3. At this point, clear with the Department (State) Headquarters of The American Legion, and if necessary the District Commander. (Maybe someone else is already working in the area.)
4. Find out from the Department the minimum number required for a Post Charter.

5. At the same time, get the following from the Department: an Application for Temporary Charter, Post Adjutant's Manual, membership applications, etc.

6. Select two or three projects which the new Post will be able to carry out and which will meet local needs or local aspirations.

7. Contact key people in the community and get their approval for a new Post and their suggestions for possible leaders and members. Excellent sources of information are the mayor, school superintendent/teachers, bank managers, real estate agents, insurance men, barbers, bartenders, cafe operators, police officers, fire Department officials, etc.

8. Pick the key individual who can serve as the presiding person during organization. Look for leadership talent, enthusiasm and community stature.

9. Pick a name for a Post. **(A Post may not be named for any living person.)**

10. Have the Department (State) Headquarters assign a number to the Post.

11. Establish Post dues even before the first organizational meeting. (Average is about $25 today, but keep dues in line with neighboring Posts.)

12. Designate an active secretary-treasurer to serve during the organizational period.

13. Open bank account for Post. (Two signatures should be required on all checks.)

14. Start signing members. (Be familiar with eligibility requirements.)

15. Set time and place of organizational meeting. (See Section 4 under "New Posts")

16. Get signatures of required number on the application for Temporary Charter.

17. Notify all members in writing of time and place of organizational meeting.

18. Publicize formation of Post and organizational meeting through local press, electronic media, notices on shopping center bulletin boards, etc.

19. Check to make sure you have signatures of all members on charter application and the form is fully made out with necessary copies.

20. Do not overwhelm members and prospective officers with literature or too much information. One step at a time does it.

21. Select one or two needed community projects. Emphasize the help The American Legion can give in meeting problems of veterans.

Initiation and Installation

Be sure this is a first-class social event. It should be carefully planned with top Department and District representatives present to properly initiate and install members and officers.

1. Publicize meeting.
2. Temporary officers still preside.
3. Key Legionnaires responsible for the Post should be present.
4. Initiate new members.
5. Install officers.

Direct Renewal Notices

Beginning in July, direct dues renewal notices are mailed from National Headquarters to present members for the next year's dues. The member pays dues directly to the Post. Each year a Post data card will be mailed to the Post from Department Headquarters asking for the amount of the Post dues and the address to which the member is to mail dues. As closely as possible Posts should use a permanent mailing address, either a Post office box or the address of the Post home. Do not use the name of the Adjutant or other individual unless no other address is available. Difficulties arise if the individual suddenly vacates the office, moves, or dies.

Some Posts have members who should not be sent a renewal notice. To take care of this, send a letter to Department Headquarters listing those members' names, addresses, and card numbers, signed by a Post official giving the Post number, and they will never receive a renewal notice again. Thereafter, the code letter "c" will appear in a column after the member's zip code in the Post membership register. Only one amount for Post dues can be printed for each Post. For example, National Headquarters cannot print "$20.00 until January 1, $25.00 after January 1."

Posts not participating in the Department program may be included in the next billing by filling out a Post data card and sending it to Department Headquarters. Through Department participation, additional notices are available. Scheduled renewal mailings are usually at no cost to Departments or Posts…the Headquarters Post is an exception (in order to avoid a charge, they must meet an established renewal %).

All delinquent members in The American Legion will receive a renewal notice in March; if still delinquent, an additional renewal may be sent for receipt in early May.

Paid-Up-For-Life Membership Plan

Each summer, when American Legion Posts receive their membership cards for the coming year, there will be an increasing number of Legionnaires whose dues are already paid for the following year and for every year thereafter as long as they live. They are Legionnaires who have voluntarily chosen to become Paid-Up-For-Life members under the National plan.

Must Be In Good Standing

A Legionnaire must be in good standing to become a Paid-Up-For-Life member . . . to be in good standing, the member must have a valid membership card for the current Legion year.

Most Buy At Dues-Paying Time

The average Legionnaire is most apt to decide to become a Paid-Up-For-Life member at the time when dues are usually paid for the coming year.

Post Commanders, Adjutants, and membership workers are asked to make sure their members know that with one payment they can take care of dues for all future years.

Not A Discount Membership

The National Constitution & By-Laws of The American Legion is very clear that "there shall be no form or class of membership except an active membership, and dues shall be paid annually or for life."

Post Receives Dues Portion Annually

That part of the total dues now being retained by the Post will be returned every year for all Paid-Up-For-Life members.

For example, if the dues of the Post are $25.00, and of this amount $18.00 is sent to the Department to cover National and Department dues, the $7.00 now being kept by the Post will come back for current dues, and every year thereafter the Post will get its same share. It doesn't make any difference what happens to National or Department dues in the future; the Post will always get its $7.00 share.

Many Posts are purchasing Paid-Up-For-Life membership for their longtime members, and in calculating the cost to remit, they may leave out their share of the dues . . . this will reduce the amount to submit with the application.

To go back to the example above, for a 70-year-old veteran, the cost of a Paid-Up-For-Life membership, based on $25.00 dues, is $251. However, if the Post decides to forego its share of the dues ($7.00), the cost would go down to $181, which is based on $18.00 annual dues ($18 Xs 10.05…see fee schedule on the next page).

The application forms for Paid-Up-For-Life memberships can be ordered from your Department Headquarters, or from National Headquarters.

The member fills out the application and turns it over to the Post Adjutant along with the appropriate payment, just the same as in paying annual dues.

The Post Adjutant endorses the application, certifies the Post's current dues, and that the member is in good standing. The application and payment is then sent to the Department Headquarters, and from there to National for final processing.

Membership Card

Each Paid-Up-For-Life member receives a permanent plastic card, as well as an annual paper membership card, directly from National, to verify continuing membership in The American Legion. The annual card will be mailed in July of each year. ***Note: Sending the annual card is a means to keep track of address changes, and even deaths.***

Upon request, a replacement plastic or paper card can be provided at no additional charge to the Paid-Up-For-Life member.

Cost

The cost of a Paid-Up-For-Life membership, which is based upon the member's age at the time of application and the current annual dues of the Post, can be found on the rate schedule.

Any applicant may pay by check, MasterCard, Visa, Discover or American Express.

Note: Only Kansas and Nebraska do not participate in the National plan. They operate their own plan for their respective members. For more information about these other plans, the members and Post can contact their Department Headquarters.

Time Payment Plan

Members of The American Legion may use the Time Payment Plan to purchase a National Paid-Up-For-Life membership. No interest and no service charge will be added to the fee.

Time Payment Plan instructions/established rules for application:

1) You must be a member in good standing. This means the member must have a paid membership card for the current Legion year.
2) The total Paid-Up-For-Life membership fee has to be paid within twelve (12) months from the date of application.
3) No payment for six (6) consecutive months will cause your account to be closed.
4) On the application, please check you wish to use the Time Payment Plan.
5) When you submit the application to your Post for certification, and initial remittance must accompany the application. The payment should be at least ten percent (10%) of the total fee.

6) National Headquarters will provide coupons and envelopes so you may make the monthly payments. The payment due each month should be at least ten percent (10%) of the total fee.

7) Your permanent Paid-Up-For-Life membership card will only be issued after the total fee is paid in full.

If you need assistance or have any questions, please contact your Post Adjutant or Finance Officer, or write:

The American Legion, National Paid-Up-For-Life Plan, P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206.

YOU MUST BE A MEMBER IN **GOOD STANDING** TO APPLY FOR THIS TYPE OF MEMBERSHIP. GOOD STANDING MEANS THAT THE MEMBER MUST HAVE A VALID MEMBERSHIP CARD FOR THE CURRENT LEGION YEAR.

The American Legion
PAID-UP-FOR-LIFE
Membership Rate Chart - effective January 1, 2004

DUES	AGE GROUP													
	24 & Under	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49	50-54	55-59	60-64	65-69	70-74	75-79	80-84	85 & Over
$20	$697	$663	$626	$585	$540	$492	$441	$388	$334	$282	$232	$186	$145	$118
$23	$801	$762	$719	$673	$621	$566	$507	$446	$384	$324	$267	$213	$166	$135
$25	$871	$829	$782	$731	$676	$616	$552	$485	$418	$352	$290	$232	$181	$147
$29	$1,010	$961	$907	$848	$784	$714	$640	$563	$484	$408	$337	$269	$210	$171
$30	$1,045	$994	$938	$878	$811	$739	$662	$582	$501	$422	$348	$278	$217	$176
$31	$1,080	$1,027	$970	$907	$838	$763	$684	$601	$518	$436	$360	$288	$224	$182
$32	$1,115	$1,060	$1,001	$936	$865	$788	$706	$621	$534	$451	$372	$297	$231	$188
$33	$1,150	$1,094	$1,032	$965	$892	$812	$728	$640	$551	$465	$383	$306	$239	$194
$34	$1,185	$1,127	$1,064	$995	$919	$837	$750	$660	$568	$479	$395	$316	$246	$200
$35	$1,219	$1,160	$1,095	$1,024	$946	$862	$772	$679	$585	$493	$406	$325	$253	$206
$36	$1,254	$1,193	$1,126	$1,053	$973	$886	$794	$698	$601	$507	$418	$334	$260	$212
$37	$1,289	$1,226	$1,157	$1,082	$1,000	$911	$816	$718	$618	$521	$430	$343	$268	$218
$38	$1,324	$1,259	$1,189	$1,112	$1,027	$936	$838	$737	$635	$535	$441	$353	$275	$223
$39	$1,359	$1,292	$1,220	$1,141	$1,054	$960	$860	$757	$651	$549	$453	$362	$282	$229
$40	$1,394	$1,326	$1,251	$1,170	$1,081	$985	$882	$776	$668	$563	$464	$371	$289	$235
Other *	$34.84	$33.14	$31.28	$29.25	$27.02	$24.62	$22.06	$19.40	$16.70	$14.08	$11.61	$9.28	$7.23	$5.88

***** If the Post dues are not shown on the chart, compute the cost by multiplying the actual dues by the amount in the "Other" line, using the one at the bottom of your age column. **For example**, age 62 and annual dues of $27.50 (multiply $27.50 x $16.70 = $459 [rounded to the nearest dollar]). If you use this method to compute the cost, double-check the multiplication to verify the fee...this will avoid unnecessary correspondence and delay.

Consolidated Post Reports (CPR)

Post Adjutants are the key to how well The American Legion as a whole will be able to report to the American people its actual accomplishments for the past year.

Each Post is sent a CPR report form as the reporting year comes to a close. This is a three-part, snap-out form. The third copy is to be retained by the Post for its files and the first two copies go to Department headquarters.

Please be sure all reports from Posts in your District are sent to Department headquarters on or before the June 15 deadline, or sooner if your Department has set an earlier date. The CPR form covers participation in the basic programs—Americanism, Children & Youth, Veteran Affairs and Rehabilitation, Economics, and National Security. But the report goes further than the major program areas, asking for information such as Post involvement in community service, legislative endeavors, public relations efforts, etc. The report also inquires whether the Post sponsors a uniformed group, or distributes a regular publication to the membership, and the number of funeral honors for deceased members.

Information from Consolidated Post Reports is frequently shared with Members of Congress. This information provides Members of Congress with a snapshot of the valuable community service provided by The American Legion family. This report demonstrates community involvement that has been the hallmark of The American Legion's commitment and service to country.

Don't be discouraged if the Post doesn't have something to report in every blank on the report form. Very few Posts carry on every Legion program. Many outstanding American Legion Posts devote their energies and resources to just two or three programs or activities, which more than justify their existence.

Include Details in Narrative

Please urge Posts to confine answers to the allotted spaces. If they wish to go into a subject in further detail, include such information in a descriptive narrative, which may be attached to the report form. The narrative can cover in greater detail a Post's accomplishments in program areas…you can also include photos. This will enable your Department Americanism and Children & Youth Committees to consider the work of a Post in determining its possible qualification for national recognition.

By mid-August, National Headquarters expects to have a completed tabulation of all reports broken down and printed according to Departments. The statistical totals will provide the foundation for The American Legion's annual report to the Congress, required in accordance with the Legion's federal charter.

Once the Post has completed the annual report, you may be surprised at how much the Post has accomplished. In addition to becoming the basis for good local news releases, the Consolidated Report also helps in the preparation of membership promotional material. And there's always the possibility your reports will result in National recognition for one or more of your outstanding programs.

The American Legion asks your cooperation in getting reports from Posts in your District.

"Project Stay Active"

Americans are on the move and Legionnaires are no exception. The Membership Input Services Section processes approximately 30 to 32 thousand address changes per month.

National Headquarters has set up "Project Stay Active" to help local Posts maintain contact with these members who move into your area.

Utilizing the computer, National prints out a summary of the veteran's membership on a 3 x 5 card. Each card will have listed on it: both the new and old address, the Department the member belongs to, the

Post number, the number of continuous years, and the date the card was printed. If the member is a Life Member, it will be noted as well.

The cards are printed in zip code order and mailed to Department Adjutants for distribution to the Post most accessible to the member. This Post is then asked to contact and welcome the member into the area. This would be an opportune time to offer assistance in establishing service and to invite the member to visit your Post.

In many cases, the Legionnaire may wish to transfer membership to a Post in the community. As may be expected, some of these Legionnaires are involved in temporary moves, some may have a Life Membership "back home," and others may have sentimental feelings toward their hometown Post. However, many of them will be receptive to an offer to transfer to your Post when asked.

"Project Stay Active" has been in operation for several years and has proved beneficial to the Post, the Legionnaires, and their families.

Departments actively participating in "Project Stay Active" are generally distributing the cards each month through the District or County Commander. These Departments always have a reserve of prospects to "Get Involved" in The American Legion.

SECTION 3

Manual of Ceremonies

Revised in accordance with the action of the Trophies, Awards and Ceremonials Committee and the National Executive Committee—1985

Adopted by The American Legion in 1921

Foreword

The Manual of Ceremonies was adopted at the Third Annual Convention, Kansas City, Missouri, October 31 to November 2, 1921. It was amended at the Fifth Annual Convention, San Francisco, California, October 15 to 19, 1923; at the Seventh Annual Convention, Omaha, Nebraska, October 5 to 9, 1925; at the Ninth Annual Convention, Paris, France, September 19 to 22, 1927; at the Thirteenth Annual Convention, Detroit, Michigan, September 21 to 24, 1931; at the Fifteenth Annual Convention, Chicago, Illinois, October 2 to 5, 1933; at the Sixteenth Annual Convention, Miami, Florida, October 22 to 25, 1934; at the Nineteenth Annual Convention, New York City, September 20 to 23, 1937; at the Twenty-First Annual Convention, Chicago, Illinois, September 25 to 28, 1939; at the National Executive Committee Meeting of November 19 and 20, 1942, by authority of the 1942 Kansas City National Convention; at the Twenty-Fifth Annual Convention, Omaha, Nebraska, September 21 to 23, 1943; at the Twenty-Sixth Annual Convention, Chicago, Illinois, September 18 to 20, 1944; by the National Executive Committee Meeting, June 5 to 7, 1946; at the Twenty-Ninth Annual Convention, New York, New York, August 28 to 31, 1947; by the National Executive Committee Meeting, May 3 to 5, 1948,; by the National Executive Committee, May 3 to 5, 1950; by the National Executive Committee, May 2 to 4, 1951; by the National Executive Committee, May 2 to 4, 1954; by the National Executive Committee, May 4 to 6, 1955; by the National Executive Committee, May 2 to 4, 1956; by the National Executive Committee, May 1-3, 1957; by the National Executive Committee, April 29 to May 1, 1959; by the National Executive Committee, May 4-5, 1960; by the National Executive Committee, May 3-4, 1961; by the National Executive Committee, May 2-3, 1962; by the National Executive Committee, May 1-2, 1963; by the National Executive Committee, April 30-May 1, 1964; by the National Executive Committee, May 5-6, 1965; by the National Executive Committee, October 12-13, 1966; by the National Executive Committee, May 3-4, 1967; by the National Executive Committee, May 6-7, 1970; by the National Executive Committee, October 20-21, 1971; by the National Executive Committee, May 1-2, 1974; by the National Executive Committee, October 9-10, 1974; by the National Executive Committee, April 30-May 1, 1975; by the National Executive Committee, May 4-5, 1977; by the National Executive Committee, October 5-6, 1977; by the National Executive Committee, May 4-5, 1994; and by the National Executive Committee, May 2-4, 1995.

Message(s) from the National Adjutant

Lapel tacks and the initiation lamp used in the initiation ceremony are available through National Emblem Sales. All such orders should be forwarded direct to National Emblem Sales, National Headquarters, The American Legion, P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206.

The official flower of The American Legion is the Poppy, and where flowers are required, the poppy is appropriate and should be used.

The funeral service may be varied in accordance with the religious belief of the deceased comrade. Great care has been exercised in the compilation of this manual so it would contain no objectionable material to persons of any religious creed.

Much of the information provided in the **Manual of Ceremonies** is the consequence of long-time tradition and usage. The practices adopted by The American Legion may not be the same as used by other groups or organizations. Our methods may be different, but it doesn't mean we are right and others are wrong.

For example, there are subtle distinctions regarding Legion protocol versus military protocol when it comes to steps followed at the gravesite of a deceased veteran.

A Post may choose to use practices adopted over the years by The American Legion, or they may choose to utilize cemetery practices as outlined in the Military Field Manual 22-5. The same commands are completed, but the order of sequence is different. The following illustrates this variation.

Funeral/Cemetery Procedure

Legion Practice:	**Military Field Manual 22-5:**
1) Flag is removed from the casket	1) Secure Flag & hold it waist high off casket
2) Flag is folded and given to the Chaplain	2) Fire Volley by Firing Squad
3) Flag is presented to the Family	3) Taps is sounded
4) Fire Volley by Firing Squad	4) Flag is folded
5) Taps is sounded	5) Flag is presented to the Family

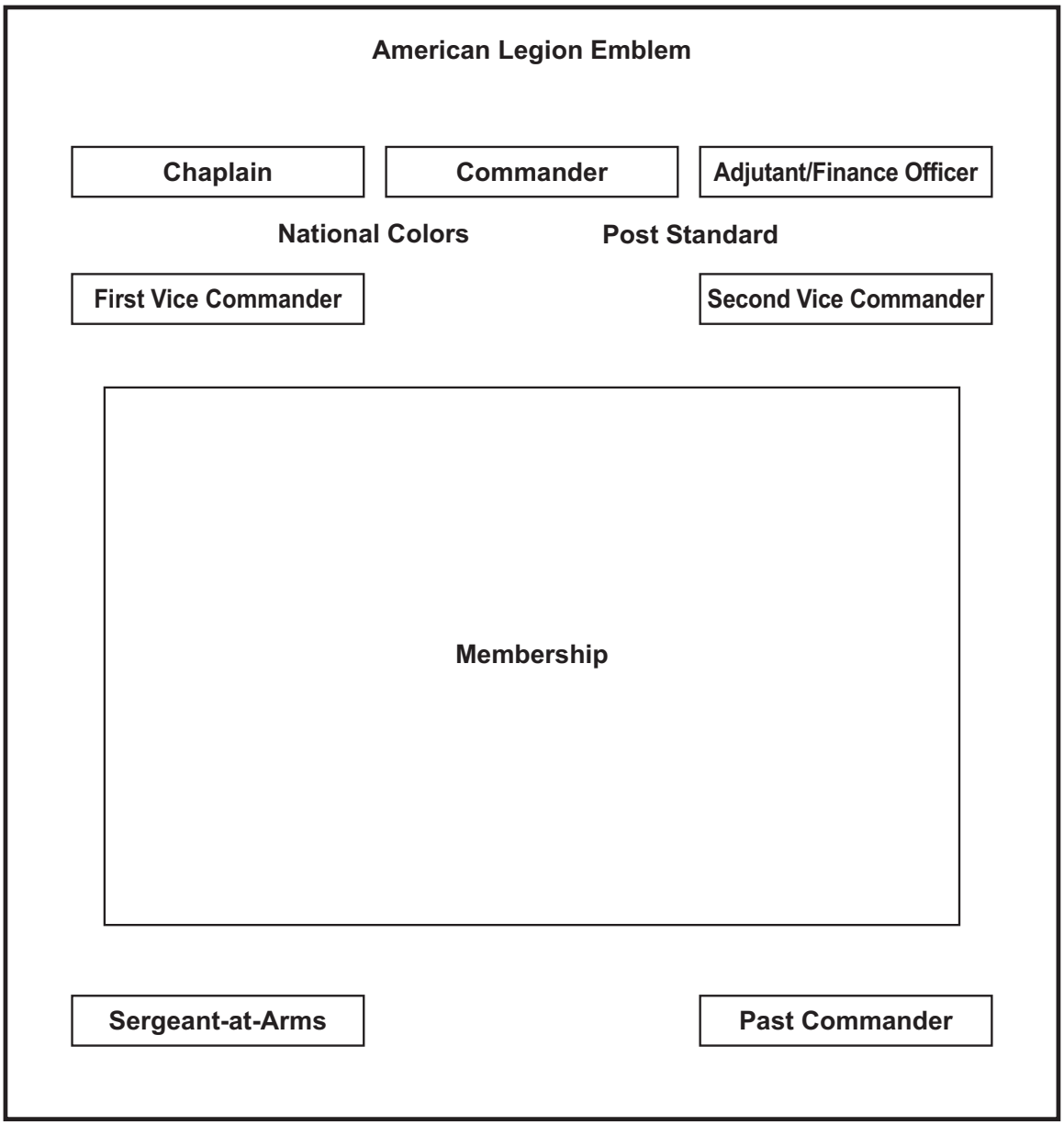
The main concern is that an appropriate ceremony is conducted to honor the deceased veteran.

Another matter open for discussion/interpretation relates to a Woman Legionnaire wearing her American Legion cap during certain occasions. On Page 3-6, item 8, it states: "Female members of The American Legion should wear their caps in the manner prescribed for female personnel of the armed services." This is suitable for most situations, but…taste and common sense should prevail.

By American Legion tradition, a female Legionnaire is afforded the opportunity to leave her cap on during the Pledge of Allegiance, National Anthem, prayer and during meals. No national authority can be found which mandates the removal of the cap by female Legionnaires during such occasions.

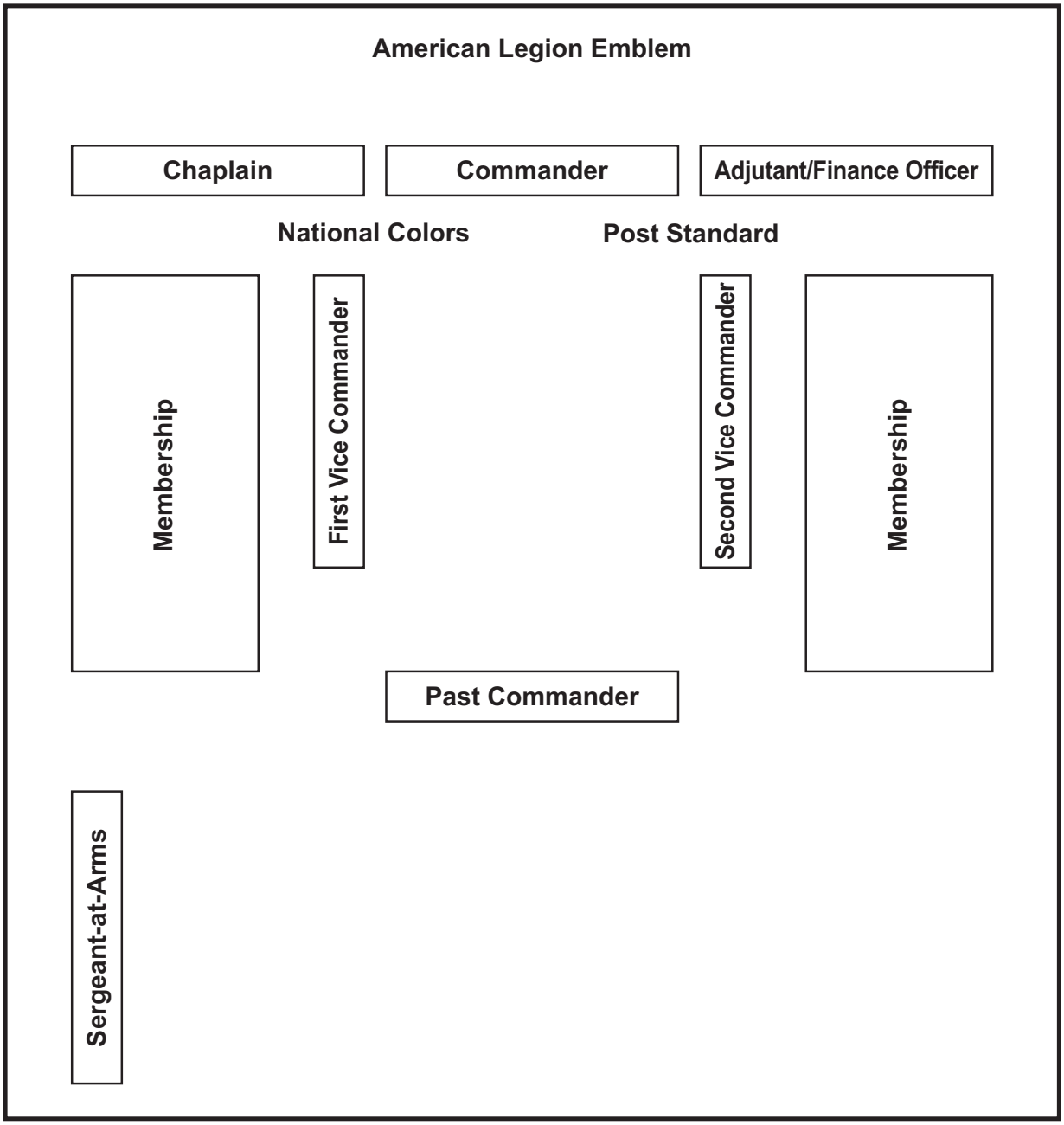
ROBERT W. SPANOGLE, National Adjutant

Plan of Post Meeting Room



This arrangement of a Post meeting room is especially functional for the conduct of regular Post meetings. This plan permits the Post a great amount of flexibility in arrangement to meet the Post's particular needs and/or adapt to any physical limitations.

Plan of Post Meeting Room For Special Ceremonies



For the ceremony of initiation or installation of officers, it is suggested the Post meeting room be arranged as shown in the above sketch.

The Emblem should be in colors and about twenty inches in diameter. If made of glass, it should be illuminated from within; or by a light set above it, if made of wood, cardboard, or metal. Emblems may be purchased through National Headquarters, Emblem Sales, Indianapolis, IN. The Emblems should be illuminated at all times during all meetings.

Anything of a light or humorous nature added by the Post to this initiation should be kept separate and apart, and the candidates should be informed that it is not a part of the initiation proper.

Other officers or members than those designated may be assigned to parts in the initiation ceremony. It is recommended each Post have a degree team, trained and uniformed for degree work.

General Instructions

1. The ceremonial services of The American Legion must be conducted with the solemnity befitting the dignity of this organization.
2. No one shall be admitted during opening, initiation, or closing ceremonies of an American Legion meeting.
3. Comrades shall be careful never to pass between the Flags and the station of the Commander.
4. A member entering the hall after the meeting has begun shall advance to the center of the room, salute the Colors and be seated.
5. Any member desiring to be excused from the hall while the meeting is in progress, except during a prayer, or the obligation, or during the period of silence, shall advance to the center of the room, salute the Colors, and then leave.
6. All officers are instructed to memorize their parts between the dates of their election and installation. It shall be the duty of each officer to memorize that portion of the Ritual assigned to that particular office and the printed Ritual should not be read during any ceremony.
7. The National Colors and Post Flag, when in position, should be in position at either side and just in advance of the Commander's station; the National Colors on the right of the Commander, the Post Colors on the left when facing the audience, even though the Commander is on a platform and the Flags are Posted on the ground level.
8. Each officer shall be equipped with the official overseas cap and with proper official badge of the respective office. Such badges may be purchased in sets by the Post or singly by the individual officer through Emblem Sales, National Headquarters.
9. Legionnaires standing in silent tribute in memory of departed comrades during meetings or ceremonies will face the Flag of our country. Legionnaires are advised of the following action by the National Executive Committee (Resolution No. 33): 'RESOLVED' by the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on May 5-6, 1971, "That The American Legion shall, at functions within Legion buildings and at all levels, cease all activities whatsoever for a period of sixty seconds as a tribute to our comrades who have passed on and in honor of those now serving in the Armed Forces and that this minute of silence shall be preceded by an appropriate announcement and message, if desired."
10. In addressing an officer of The American Legion, preface the title with the word "Comrade."
11. This Manual of Ceremonies is designed with the idea of flexibility and may be adapted to conform to requirements covering all divisions of The American Legion. Therefore, whenever necessary, the words "Post," "County," "District," "Division," "Department," or "National" may be inserted to fit a specific occasion.

Wearing The American Legion Cap, Uniform and Regalia

1. The Legion cap, uniform or regalia should be worn by its members only when in attendance at official Legion meetings or ceremonies or as official guests at patriotic or other civil functions or by individuals when officially representing The American Legion on public occasions. For all Ceremonies, the uniforms adopted by a Department are recommended. However, an official American Legion cap, dark blue or black civilian coat, white or dark trousers, white shirt, black four-in-hand tie, black shoes and socks, make a very attractive uniform.

A Legionnaire is considered to be in uniform if wearing an official American Legion cap. Therefore, it is not proper to wear an American Legion cap while eating a meal at an official Legion or civic luncheon or dinner.

2. The cap should be worn in a place of worship only by the Guard of Honor, Color Guard and Commander of same while in marching order or standing guard. When returned to and seated in pews, the cap should be removed.

3. Legion Posts marching in formation into a place of worship should uncover, at the door, hold the cap with the right hand over the heart (*) until the arrival in the pews and commanded to take seats, remaining uncovered during the entire service. At the close of the service, upon command, the Post shall arise, the members holding the cap with the right hand over the heart (*) will march out of the place of worship and recover after marching through the door.

Note: The hat should be held over the heart as one approaches the casket, and is not at any time worn in a place of worship except by the Guard of Honor, Color Guard or Commander of same while in marching order or standing guard.

4. Legionnaires not in formation will uncover upon entering the place of worship and remain uncovered during the entire service and will re-cover after leaving the place of worship.

5. At the graveside the cap should be held in the right hand over the heart (*) during the entire service. In cold and inclement weather, the cap should not be doffed.

6. In Legion meetings the cap should be worn except during moments of the "Pledge of Allegiance," prayer, and when standing in silent reverence in memory of departed comrades, when the cap should be held with the right hand over the heart (*). **[*See "Saluting" in index]**

7. A Legionnaire wearing the cap should behave in proper accordance as to salutes, etc., the same as if the member was wearing the military uniform. If not wearing the Legion cap, the ordinary rules of etiquette for civilian dress should be observed.

8. Female members of The American Legion should wear their caps in the manner prescribed for female personnel of the armed services. **[See National Adjutant's Message(s) on page 3-2]**

9. Legionnaires wishing to attach decorations and/or other official insignia to their caps are advised of the following excerpts of a National Executive Committee Resolution on this subject:

Official American Legion Caps

The following regulations have been promulgated by National Emblem Sales to standardize the use of lettering, insignia, etc., on the official American Legion cap, as based on Resolution No. 58, adopted by the National Executive Committee, April 30-May 1, 1964.

POST CAPS (members and officers)—All blue, piped in gold and lettered in gold with optional basic lettering (Style 1 or Style 2), additional lettering and restrictions as indicated below:

(a) Style 1—Post numerals at right front between piping and front crease. Department name in full on left side beneath emblem. Lettering on emblem side to be in straight line. Example: "20" (at right front)—"Illinois" (on left side beneath emblem).

(b) Style 2—Post numerals at right front between piping and front crease. Town name in full and Department abbreviated on left side beneath emblem. Lettering on emblem side to be in straight line. Example: "20" (at right front)— "Minneapolis, Minn." (on left side beneath emblem).

(c) Style 2—Shall not be used when the Post town is not physically located within the recognized geographic and/or Postal boundaries of the Department of which the Post is a member. Example: Stuttgart, Germany, a part of the Department of France. Such a Post may place its location and country on the right side of the cap, if desired. Example: "8" (at right front)— "France" (on left side beneath emblem)—if desired, "Munich, Germany" (on right side).

(d) Where any additional lettering is desired, this must be on the right side of cap. This lettering is restricted to name of Post, such as "J.S. Jones," or officer title, such as "Commander" or "Past Adjutant." Where present or past officer cap insignia or badges are used in place of embroidered titles, these must be on right side of cap.

(e) Consecutive membership insignia, membership stars, and/or decorations (authorized American Legion or military services) must be attached to the right side of cap. Fraternal or civil organization insignia cannot be used on American Legion caps.

(f) Names or nicknames of individual members cannot be used on caps.

(g) An individual member placing an order direct with National Emblem Sales must provide the member I.D. number.

Restrictions

(a) The left side (emblem side) of any American Legion cap cannot contain other than the official American Legion emblem, and lettering as set forth previously in this resolution for Post, County, District, Department or National Caps.

(b) No member of any organization, such as drum and bugle corps, bands, and so forth, sponsored by any Post or intermediate organizations between the Department and Post levels, or by any Department, shall wear the overseas caps having the color, or combination of colors, authorized for the sale use of County, District, Department or National officers, when the members of uniformed groups are not appearing in the full uniform of their group;..."

Official Badges

Campaign ribbons, medals, and official American Legion Badges shall be worn three inches below the point of the shoulder and above the left breast pocket, centered; provided, however, that medals and ribbons are not to be worn together.

Badges of other fraternal organizations are not to be worn on uniforms except when attending functions of such organizations. No other badges or insignia are to be worn.

Commander: The American Legion Emblem suspended by The American Legion ribbon from a bar on which there shall be the word "Commander."

Past Commander: The American Legion Emblem suspended by The American Legion ribbon from a bar on which there shall be the words "Past Commander."

First and Second Vice-Commanders: The American Legion Emblem suspended from a bar on which there shall be the words "Vice-Commander."

Chaplain: The American Legion Emblem suspended by The American Legion ribbon from a bar on which there shall be the word "Chaplain."

Adjutant: The American Legion Emblem suspended by The American Legion ribbon from a bar on which there shall be the word "Adjutant."

Finance Officer: The American Legion Emblem suspended by The American Legion ribbon from a bar on which there shall be the words "Finance Officer."

Sergeant-At-Arms: The American Legion Emblem suspended by The American Legion ribbon from a bar on which there shall be the words "Sergeant-At-Arms."

Judge Advocate: The American Legion Emblem suspended by The American Legion ribbon from a bar on which there shall be the words "Judge Advocate."

Service Officer: The American Legion Emblem suspended by The American Legion ribbon from a bar on which there shall be the words "Service Officer."

Treasurer or Finance Officer: The American Legion Emblem suspended by The American Legion ribbon from a bar on which there shall be the word "Treasurer."

Athletic Officer: The American Legion Emblem suspended by The American Legion ribbon from a bar on which there shall be the words "Athletic Officer."

Historian: The American Legion Emblem suspended by The American Legion ribbon from a bar on which there shall be the word "Historian."

Executive Committee: The American Legion Emblem suspended by The American Legion ribbon from a bar on which there shall be the words "Executive Committee."

The metal ornaments for the ribbons should be made with pin back so they can be passed from officer to officer at the time of the new installation.

Each member of each individual Post should be encouraged to possess the Official American Legion Overseas Cap with The American Legion Emblem, the Department, and the number of the Post on same.

How to Organize a Ritual Team

First Step:

The Post Commander appoints a Captain to organize a team. It will be the Captain's duty to recruit, train and assume complete responsibility for organizing and training of the team. Discretion should be used in selecting team members. They should make the Manual of Ceremonies their American Legion bible.

Second Step:

Permanent parts should be assigned and members instructed to memorize these parts. Six members will be required for the initiation team. In calling a try-out or audition meeting, the best qualified should be selected at that time. Each candidate for the team should read part of the Manual to denote clarity of voice, enunciation, expression and meaning given to the text. Additional candidates should be assigned roles as substitutes or stand-ins for the regular members.

Third Step:

Training the team. Many practice sessions are necessary. Teams should practice entire ceremony at each meeting, including marching into the hall, military movements on the floor, presentation and introduction of the team, and the Posting of members to their respective stations. Proper handling of candidates for initiation should also be practiced.

Fourth Step:

Presenting the ceremony. The team's first appearance should be on home grounds. Actual initiation of new members will tend to give the new team confidence to present their work in other Posts throughout the area. Note well:—Much of the team's success depends upon selection of competent Captain and Sergeant-at-Arms. The team will look to these officers for leadership. The team Captain and members should be of commanding appearance, plus personality, and able to impress upon candidates and audience the importance and seriousness of the ceremony.

Every American Legion Post should have a good ritual team present at "Initiation Night" program at least once yearly.

Color Guard Procedure

Advancing Colors:

Color Guard consisting of minimum number of four is formed at rear of meeting room in a rank or file, whichever may suit the situation best, formation facing Commander's station.

In forming a rank, the National Color is to the right of the Post Color and the two Guards are on the respective flanks. In forming a file, the National Color is second in file, preceded by Rifle Guard and followed respectively by Post Color and Rifle Guard.

To properly form the Guard, the following sequence of Commands may be used: "Fall In" — "Dress Right Dress" — "Ready Front" — "Right or Left Shoulder Arms" — (Color bearers should assume the position of carry or any other suitable position at this command) "Forward March." The above mentioned commands put the Guard in a forward motion.

Upon arriving at a position from 2 to 12 feet (depending on available space) in front of the Commander's station, the following commands should be used: "Guard Halt—Post Colors" (The

National Color bearer steps off in the direction of the Flag receptacle to the right of the Commander's station, halting and facing front upon arriving in front of same). The Post Color bearer follows the same procedure to the Flag receptacle to the left of the Commander's station. During this procedure it is suggested the Rifle Guards assume the position of Port Arms, which is a position of readiness. The next command should be "Place Colors." Colors may be placed by stepping forward with one foot and placing Colors in receptacles, making sure the top ornament on each respective color is facing the assemblage. The Color bearers then return to the position of attention. The next command should then be "Present Arms." Rifle Guards should render the prescribed salute with their pieces and Color bearers should render a right-hand salute. (Post Color bearer should either face the National Color or turn head toward the American Flag while executing the salute).

The next command sequence should be "Right Shoulder Arms" (Color bearers recovering from hand salute on same), "Assemble March" (Color bearers may face the center and step off respectively in the direction from which they came and assume their positions in the formation facing the rear of the meeting room. Rifle Guards may execute an about-face on command and be prepared to move out on next command with Guard intact.

The next command should be "Forward March" and upon arriving at starting point, Guard should be halted with command of "Guard Halt" and then the Guard may be given "Fall Out."

Retiring Colors:

Retrieving the Colors may be executed in nearly the same manner except substituting the command of "Retrieve Colors" for "Post Colors," and giving the command "Present Arms" upon the Color bearers' arrival in front of their respective colors (Color bearers will salute at this time).

The next sequence of commands are "Right Shoulder Arms" (Color bearers will assume position of attention) "Take Colors" (Color bearers putting one foot forward to take Colors and assuming position of attention, after securing same). The next commands should be "Assemble, March" (Color bearers executing same marching as in returning from Posting). Rifle Guards will execute about-face after Colors have arrived in respective positions. The Guard may be retired in the same manner as it was in Posting, with the exception of the last command, which should be "Dismissed." The above commands may be used in either Rank or File formation.

A lot of Color and Ceremony may be added to the Posting and Retiring of the Colors if a Bugler is used in the following places: In Posting, "To The Colors," may be sounded immediately after the command of "Present Arms" by the Color Guard Commander. In retrieving, "Retreat," may be sounded immediately after command of "Present Arms."

REGULAR MEETING

Opening

American Legion meetings shall be opened in the following manner:

All officers should be in uniform, each wearing the official American Legion cap and the official badge of office.

The Commander shall announce the meeting is about to open. Officers shall take their stations.

The Commander shall ***seat those present with one rap of the gavel*** *and the doors of the meeting hall shall be closed by the Sergeant-at-Arms.*

The Commander shall then ***give three raps of the gavel and all who are present shall stand*** *at attention.*

Commander: "The Color Bearers will advance the Colors."

(See the index for other sections relating to the Colors/Color Guard)

As the Color Bearers start to advance, the Commander shall give the command:

Commander: "Hand salute."

If a trumpeter is available, sound "To the Colors;" immediately after the Colors have been Posted, and at its conclusion, the ***Commander*** *shall give the command:*

"Two."

If no trumpeter is present, the command "Two" is to be given immediately after the Colors have been Posted.

The Commander shall call upon the Chaplain to give the opening prayer.

Commander: "The Chaplain will offer prayer."

Commander: "All members/guests in attendance shall remain standing with their cap removed and placed over the heart from the Opening Prayer, through the POW/MIA ceremony, and concluding with the Pledge of Allegiance."

In place of the following prayer, the Chaplain may deliver one of the same length and general tenor.

Chaplain: "Almighty God, Father of all mankind and Judge over nations, we pray Thee to guide our work in this meeting and in all our days. Send Thy peace to our nation and to all nations. Hasten the fulfillment of Thy promise of peace that shall have no end.

"We pray for those who serve the people and guard the public welfare that by Thy blessing they may be enabled to discharge their duties honestly and well. We pray for our comrades that by Thy help they may observe the strictest Justice, keep alight the fires of Freedom, strive earnestly for the spirit of Democracy; and preserve untarnished our loyalty to our Country and to Thee. Finally, O God of mercy, we ask Thy blessing and comfort for those comrades who are suffering mental and physical disability. Cheer them and bring them the blessings of health and happiness. Amen."

POW/MIA Empty Chair

This ceremony is a suggested outline that can be followed when an American Legion organization wants to call attention to Americans still unaccounted for from World War II, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, and other conflicts.

Resolution 288, adopted at the 67th National Convention, encourages all American Legion organizations to implement the Empty Chair Program at all meetings. As a continual physical symbol of the POW/MIAs and the cause for which we stand, namely their return or full accounting. *Note: On pages 3-12 and 3-13, there is also listed for information purposes an alternative POW/MIA Remembrance Service that can be used at other functions in conjunction with the Empty Chair ceremony.*

Commander: "Resolution 288, adopted at the 67th National Convention, calls for designating a POW/MIA Empty Chair at all official meetings of The American Legion as a physical symbol of the thousands of American POW/MIAs still unaccounted for from all wars and conflicts involving the United States of America. Accordingly, at this time the Vice Commanders will place the POW/MIA flag on the Empty Chair—a reminder for all of us to spare no effort to secure the release of any American prisoners from captivity, the repatriation of the remains of those who died bravely in defense of liberty, and a full accounting of those missing. Let us rededicate ourselves for this vital endeavor!"

Commander*:* "Place the POW/MIA flag on the Empty Chair."

(The First and Second Vice Commanders, or other designated individuals, approach the Empty Chair carrying a folded POW/MIA flag. Upon reaching the Empty Chair, they reverently unfold the flag and drape it over the Empty Chair with the crest facing the membership.) *(After the meeting is concluded, the POW/MIA flag should be refolded and stored for future use.)*

The Commander (or appropriate official) will lead the Pledge of Allegiance (Legionnaires will remove their caps) and may direct the singing of the Star Spangled Banner.

"I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America and to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."

Regular Meeting Opening Resumes After The Pledge Of Allegiance

Commander: "Everyone will recover."

The Commander and membership shall recite the preamble of the Constitution of The American Legion slowly and in unison, as follows:

"For God and Country,
We associate ourselves together
For the following purposes:
To uphold and defend
The Constitution of the United States of America;
To maintain law and order;
To foster and perpetuate
A one hundred percent Americanism;
To preserve the memories and incidents
Of our associations in the Great Wars;
To inculcate a sense of individual obligation

To the community, state and nation;
To combat the autocracy
Of both the classes and the masses;
To make right the master of might;
To promote peace and good will on earth;
To safeguard and transmit to Posterity
The principles of Justice, Freedom and Democracy;
To consecrate and sanctify our comradeship
By our devotion to mutual helpfulness."

One rap of the gavel by the Commander will seat the members.

The Commander shall then say: "I now declare ..... Post No. ..... Department of ....., regularly convened."

The order of business for Post meetings shall be:

a. Roll Call to determine if quorum is present.
b. Reading of minutes of previous meeting.
c. Introduction of guests and prospective and new members.
d. Committee reports.
e. Balloting on applications.
f. Sick call, relief and employment.
g. Post Service Officer's report.
h. Unfinished business.
i. Initiation of candidates.
j. New business (and correspondence).
k. Memorial to a departed Post member
l. The good of The American Legion.

(The membership shall be permitted to make suggestions of any kind, character or description, save of religion or partisan politics.)

POW/MIA Remembrance Service

*(The following is a **"suggested"** service to be used at American Legion meetings, banquets, luncheons, or memorial gatherings in conjunction with the POW/MIA flag draped over an empty chair...this service can be adopted as is, or modified to whatever is appropriate for your own preferred use.) Members should remove their caps during this service.*

"Those who have served, and those currently serving in the uniformed services of the United States, are ever mindful that the sweetness of enduring peace has always been tainted by the bitterness of personal sacrifice. We are compelled to never forget that while we enjoy our daily pleasures, there are

others who have endured and may still be enduring the agonies of pain, deprivation and imprisonment.

"Before we begin our activities, we pause to recognize our POWs and MIAs.

"We call your attention to this **small table** which occupies a place of dignity and honor. It is **set for one**, symbolizing the fact that members of our armed forces are missing from our ranks. They are referred to as POWs and MIAs.

"We call them comrades. They are unable to be with their loved ones and families, so we join together to pay humble tribute to them, and to bear witness to their continued absence.

"The **table** is small, symbolizing the frailty of one prisoner, alone against his or her suppressors.

"The **tablecloth is white**, symbolic of the purity of their intentions to respond to their Country's call to arms.

"The **single rose** in the vase signifies the blood they may have shed in sacrifice to ensure the freedom of our beloved United States of America. This rose also reminds us of the family and friends of our missing comrades who keep faith, while awaiting their return.

"The **red ribbon** on the vase represents the red ribbons worn on the lapels of the thousands who demand, with unyielding determination, a proper account of our comrades who are not among us.

"A **slice of lemon** on the plate reminds us of their bitter fate.

"The **salt** sprinkled on the plate reminds us of the countless fallen tears of families as they wait.

"The **glass** is inverted, they cannot toast with us at this time.

"The **chair** is empty. They are NOT here.

"The **candle** is reminiscent of the light of hope, which lives in our hearts to illuminate their way home, away from their captors, to open arms of a grateful nation.

"The **American flag** reminds us that many of them may never return—and have paid the supreme sacrifice to insure our freedom.

"Let us pray to the Supreme Commander that all of our comrades will soon be back within our ranks.

"Let us remember—and never forget their sacrifice.

"May God forever watch over them and protect them and their families."

Closing Ceremony

American Legion meetings shall be closed in the following manner:

Commander: "Is there any further business to come before the meeting? If not, the Chaplain will lead us in memorial service."

The Commander shall give three raps of the gavel, and the membership shall arise, uncover, and stand in silence.

Chaplain: "Our Heavenly Father, we deem this a fitting time to pay our respects to our departed comrades. As we stand with bowed heads in reverence to them, let us remember the good deeds they accomplished. Let us revere them, as good soldiers who fought the good fight in a just cause, let us silently pray for peace, the peace that passes all understanding. And let us in mind and soul consecrate our hearts and lives to the real America, the land of the free and the home of the brave, the America worth fighting for. As we stand in silence to our departed comrades, may we sincerely say, 'May their souls rest in peace.' Let us also remember the POWs and the MIAs still unaccounted for from the Wars and Conflicts. Amen."

Commander*:* Cover.

The addition of "Taps" sounded on muffled trumpet will add greatly to the solemnity of the ritual.

The first stanza of "America" ("My Country 'Tis of Thee"), or another patriotic selection may be sung by the audience.

"Till we meet again let us remember our obligation to our Country can be fulfilled only by the faithful performance of all duties of citizenship. Let service to the community, state and nation be ever a main objective of The American Legion and its members. Let us be ever watchful of the honor of our Country, our organization and ourselves, that nothing shall swerve us from the path of Justice, Freedom and Democracy.

The Color Bearers will retire the Flag of our Country."

As the Color Bearers retrieve the Colors, The Commander shall give the command:

Commander*:* "Hand salute" (Colors are retired).

As the Color Bearers reach the rear of the meeting hall, the command "Two" is given by the Commander.

Commander*:* "I now declare this meeting of Post name & No. ..... The American Legion, Department of ..... adjourned."

The Commander gives one rap of the gavel.

INITIATION

Regular Form

The initiation of candidates for membership in The American Legion is an important function of each Post. The new members need to be shown, officially and formally, that they're indeed a part of the organization. They deserve the courtesy of being introduced to the organization which has accepted their membership application and dues payment. This is the purpose of the initiation ceremony.

Whether performed by the officers of the Post or an established ritual team, the initiation ceremony should be conducted at least once a year. Each officer should learn their respective portion of the ceremony in order to be able to deliver it without reference to the printed text. Each initiation officer should wear the regulation American Legion cap and badge of office. (See "Badges" in index)

The Sergeant-at-Arms is responsible for preparation of the hall or meeting room for the initiation, and should see to it the following items, which are presented to the candidates during the ceremony, are on hand in sufficient quantity: American Flags (initiation size), American Legion lapel pins, and Flag Etiquette booklets. All of those items are available through National Emblem Sales (see your current catalog). In addition, the Sergeant-at-Arms, depending on the format your Post wished to use for this ceremony, will set up the following items: Poppies (real or imitation) in a neat arrangement in a vase at either the station of the Second Vice Commander or near the podium identifying the station of the Commander; a gavel bell at the station of the Past Commander or near the podium of the Commander; and a miniature stand of colors consisting of the American Flag and the Legion colors at the station of the First Vice Commander or near the podium.

This ceremony is designed to conform with the floor plan of a Post meeting room as illustrated (*). Candidates are escorted by the Sergeant-at-Arms to the various officers' stations for instruction. However, the ceremony may be altered to conform with the meeting room layout as illustrated (*) with the candidates standing in the area provided between the stations of the First Vice Commander and the Second Vice Commander. The outline of the ritual may be modified to permit all initiation officers to come to the podium to deliver their respective instructions to the candidates.

(*See Meeting Room Arrangement)

The candidates for initiation will assemble at the back of the meeting room or, preferably, in a nearby room immediately prior to the ceremony.

The business of the meeting having been cleared, the *Commander shall* ***call the meeting to order with one rap of the gavel.***

Commander: "We shall now proceed to the initiation of new members. In order that we may impress upon these candidates the serious import and sacred obligations of American Legion membership, all present will conduct themselves in a manner befitting such ceremony.

"The Sergeant-at-Arms will present those ready for initiation."

***Sergeant-at-Arms**, standing at designated station and after saluting the Flag:*

"Commander, there are (number) veterans who have been accepted for membership in The American Legion and are awaiting the obligation."

***Commander**:* "As these candidates have been accepted for membership, we shall proceed with the initiation. Sergeant-at-Arms, escort the candidates into the hall and place them properly before the Flag."

***Sergeant-at-Arms**, after escorting candidates to appropriate location:*

"Commander, I present these candidates for initiation into The American Legion."

***Commander**, after giving three raps of the gavel:* "The Chaplain will offer prayer."

The Chaplain steps to the right of the American Flag and faces the candidates.

***Chaplain**:* "Let us pray. Our Heavenly Father, grant that we may approach this ceremony with clean hearts. Keep us ever mindful of our obligation to those who have made the supreme sacrifice for our country and her noble purpose. We humbly pray that your love may find its way into all hearts and souls that they shall never again seek occasion of conflict, but live in peace and harmony, laboring for the broader benefits of humankind. You have blessed us with the opportunity to serve our country in her hour of need. We pray that you would grant us continued opportunities to serve in time of peace as we served in time of war. Bless The American Legion and those here who await its obligation, that together we may advance the sacred cause of Justice, Freedom and Democracy; that together we may serve you and our country in undivided loyalty. Amen."

The Chaplain returns to designated station. The membership is seated by one rap of the gavel and the Post Commander addresses the candidates.

***Commander**:* "The American Legion cherishes four great principles - Justice, Freedom, Democracy and Loyalty. Its pledge is service to veterans, especially the disabled, the distressed, and their widows and orphans. The cause of service to community, state and nation is jealously guarded and opportunity to serve is offered to all members. Before you are asked to assume the responsibility of membership in The American Legion by accepting its obligations, you will hear an explanation of the principles and symbols of our organization.

"Sergeant-at-Arms, conduct the candidates to the Second Vice Commander for instruction in Justice."

The Sergeant-at-Arms escorts the candidates to the designated position, facing the Second Vice Commander's station. The Second Vice Commander rises.

***Second Vice Commander**: "Justice* makes no distinction of persons. It favors neither high nor low, neither rich nor poor, neither the classes nor the masses. Justice is the guiding star of life. It transcends all boundaries of race and creed. Justice for our sick and disabled veterans has always been, and must forever be, the first concern of The American Legion. The rehabilitation of those men and women who valiantly offered their all in response to their country's call, the relief of those who have suffered by that sacrifice, is our hallowed duty. Legionnaires must be ever vigilant that none shall feel the injustice of work undone. The American Legion is ever mindful of its duty to the nation, and the nation's duty to those who answered its call in time of war.

"This display of poppies, the official flower of The American Legion, serves as a memorial to those who gave their lives so that Justice might prevail. Remember their sacrifice! May your actions forever bring credit upon The American Legion, an organization which is a living memorial to the dead heroes who fought that Justice, the divine right of man, might ever endure.

"Sergeant-at-Arms, conduct the candidates to the Past Commander for instruction in Freedom."

The Sergeant-at-Arms escorts the candidates to the designated position, facing the Past Commander's station. The Past Commander rises.

Past Commander: "Freedom is an ideal of surpassing strength; it is the power of self-determination. For Freedom, Americans throughout the years willingly have fought and died.

"In the War of the Revolution, Freedom was won for the people of the United States. In the Wars of the Twentieth Century, the torch of Freedom led and inspired the American forces through the darkness of conflict.

"The American Legion is dedicated to the concept of Freedom from injustice to the children and youth of our Nation. No nation can long endure if it fails to care for its future citizens. The American Legion has achieved recognition as a National leader in behalf of the nation's children and youth that they may know that Freedom from want, ignorance, and tyranny are God-given rights to be preserved at whatever the cost. The American Legion

staunchly defends the principle of equal opportunity for all in a country where all may enjoy the blessings of Freedom.

"This bell typifies the famous Liberty Bell which in bold and clarion tones rang out the news of Freedom and the birth of a new nation. It is here to remind you that America will remain the land of the free only as long as America is the home of the brave.

"I give you the American Flag, the emblem of Freedom, and a Flag Etiquette booklet."

The Past Commander hands each candidate a small American Flag and Flag Etiquette booklet.

"Sergeant-at-Arms, conduct the candidates to the First Vice Commander for instruction in Democracy and its meaning to America."

The Sergeant-at-Arms escorts the candidates to the designated position, facing the First Vice Commander's station. The First Vice Commander rises.

First Vice Commander: "Democracy is government of the people, by the people, and for the people. Democracy is American in principle and universal in appeal. It offers a voice in government to each citizen. Of its benefits, each citizen may share.

"Democracy finds expression with The American Legion. Within our meeting halls, distinction of rank is unknown. All Legionnaires are equal in a common service. Each Legionnaire is permitted a free voice, but not a voice so free as to transcend the limits of Liberty.

"Democracy can exist only where all do their share, where each citizen knows and accepts the responsibility of service to community, state and nation. Legionnaires must encourage the exercise of franchise among our citizens as a means of preserving and perpetuating our precious heritage. Yes, Democracy to The American Legion is real. It carries a responsibility which each Legionnaire should accept.

(Here the First Vice Commander refers to either a miniature stand of colors consisting of the American Flag and American Legion Colors located at the designated station or the Post's set of colors at the front of the room, depending on the format of Initiation used.)

"These Flags symbolize America, the home of Democracy and The American Legion. The red stripes of our country's Flag represent the valor, the zeal and the passion of those who defended the noble cause of individual dignity; the white stripes signify hope, purity and integrity. The stars of white on a field of blue proclaim that the heights of pure Democracy reach to the very stars of the heavens. This blue and gold emblem against a

background of blue reminds us constantly of our golden opportunities as Legionnaires to promote and protect the principle of Democracy in a government so dearly won and so valiantly maintained.

"Sergeant-at-Arms, conduct the candidates to the Commander for instruction in Loyalty and its application in The American Legion."

The Sergeant-at-Arms escorts the candidates to the designated position, facing the Commander's station. The Commander rises.

Commander: "Loyalty is an attribute of The American Legion as it is the first virtue of the person serving in the uniform of our country. It is as dear as Justice is desirable, as Freedom is glorious, as Democracy is practical. Loyalty will lead us to defend our organization in all that is right, and to do our utmost that we shall be right. Loyalty to our country is the basis of true Americanism. Disloyalty and oppression are foreign to our ideals; nor do we tolerate any form of radicalism or violence seeking to destroy our form of government. The Constitution of the United States of America, the bulwark of our liberties and guarantor of our rights, is sacred to the Legionnaire. Be ever loyal to that which has established your freedoms and defined your responsibilities. Understand The American Legion is in no sense a military organization. Because its membership is drawn from every race, religion, occupational pursuit, and political persuasion, The American Legion is obligated to strict neutrality on all questions concerning religion, politics, and industrial strife. You have received instruction in The American Legion's four basic attributes—Justice, Freedom, Democracy and Loyalty—and its great principles of service. Are you now ready and willing to obligate yourself as expressed in the Preamble to the Constitution of The American Legion? If so, you will each answer, 'I am.'"

Candidates: "I am." *(All candidates must answer, signifying they are willing to take the obligation.)*

Commander*:* "All present will stand at attention during the obligation." *(Three raps of the gavel.)*

The Commander steps to the right and immediately next to the American Flag, raises the right hand, and addresses the candidates.

Commander*:* "You raise your right hand and repeat after me:

'I, *(here give your name)*,

'Do solemnly pledge

'To uphold and defend

'The Constitution of the United States of America;

‘To maintain law and order;
‘To foster and perpetuate
‘A one hundred percent Americanism;
‘To preserve the memories and incidents
‘Of our associations in the Great Wars;
‘To inculcate a sense of individual obligation
‘To the community, state and nation;
‘To combat the autocracy
‘Of both the classes and the masses;
‘To make right the master of might;
‘To promote peace and good will on Earth;
‘To safeguard and transmit to Posterity
‘The principles of Justice, Freedom and Democracy;
‘To consecrate and sanctify our comradeship
‘By our devotion to mutual helpfulness;
‘To all of which I pledge myself
‘For God and Country.
‘I am not a member and do not subscribe
‘To the principles of any group
‘Opposed to our form of government.’
Hands down.”

The Commander resumes station and seats the membership with one rap of the gavel. The Chaplain rises and stands near the Emblem.

Chaplain: “There shines the Emblem of The American Legion. It is your badge of distinction, honor and service. It stands for God and Country, and the highest rights of men and women. Of its several parts, each has a meaning.

“The rays of the sun that form the background stand for the principles of The American Legion—for Loyalty, Justice, Freedom and Democracy will dispel the darkness of violence, strife, and evil.

“The two gold rings around the field of blue, bearing our name, typify two of our four main objectives—rehabilitation of our sick and disabled veterans, and the care for the children and youth of America. Within the rings is placed a wreath for remembrance of those who died that liberty might live. Upon the wreath is set a star reflecting the glory of victory and promising to the world the perpetuation of the cardinal principles of The American Legion.

"Set upon the star are two bronze rings which represent the other two of our main objectives—a deep and abiding spirit of Americanism, and service to the community, state and nation.

"The inscription demands that the wearer shall ever guard the sanctity of home, of country, of free institutions."

The Chaplain returns to station. The Commander rises and addresses the candidates.

Commander: "The Emblem of The American Legion is the emblem of Americanism. Americanism is unity of love, singleness of allegiance, practicality of purpose, care of the distressed, the education of children, all directed to the promotion of a common good. It is that spirit of patriotism which shall ever preserve our land from the stagnation which is the death of peoples. As Legionnaires, we preach and teach the spirit of patriotism throughout the Republic. We must be ever mindful of our obligations as citizens, striving constantly to redeem those obligations. In the Emblem of The American Legion there is great prophecy. It is the promise of the defenders of the Republic, pledging the fullest good for the betterment of all.

"I welcome you to The American Legion, and present you with the Emblem of The American Legion, a symbol of service."

The Commander steps from the station, gives each new Legionnaire an Emblem lapel button, and shakes the hand of each new member.

Short Form Initiation

In order that every new member may receive some form of initiation; where it is not practical to conduct the full initiation ceremonies, the following short form has been authorized so all new members may take the obligation and receive proper introduction to The American Legion.

This ceremony shall be conducted by the Post Commander, or an appointed member, assisted by the Post Chaplain, who shall be seated at the right of the Commander.

Small flags, copies of the Legion pamphlet, Legion emblems, and other appropriate items used in the regular initiation ceremony shall be presented by the officiating officers.

Post Commander: "We will now proceed with the initiation. The Sergeant-at-Arms will escort the following candidates into the meeting hall and place them properly before the Flag."

(Give names of all those who are waiting).

Sergeant-at-Arms salutes the flag and, turning, proceeds to get the candidates whose names shall be read.

***Post Commander**:* "You were privileged to serve your country during Wartime. Because of this service, you are today privileged to join the great service organization, The American Legion.

"Unlike the armed forces in which you served, there is no distinction of rank among us. We are composed of members of every race, religion, occupation and political conviction. We maintain also, strict neutrality on all questions concerning religion, politics and industrial strife.

"The American Legion cherishes four great principles: Justice, Freedom, Democracy and Loyalty. We are pledged to serve the disabled, the distressed, the widowed and the orphaned. We are devoted to the cause of service to the community, state and the nation.

"Are you now ready and willing to obligate yourself as expressed in the Preamble to the Constitution of The American Legion?"

Candidates: "I am."

***Post Commander**:* "The members will stand at attention while the candidates are being obligated." *(Gives three raps of the gavel.)*

The Commander steps to the right immediately next to the American Flag and will raise the right hand and address the candidates.

Commander: "You will raise your right hand and repeat after me:

"I, *(here give your name)*
'Do solemnly pledge
'To uphold and defend
'The Constitution of the United States of America;
'To maintain law and order;
'To foster and perpetuate
'A one hundred percent Americanism;
'To preserve the memories and incidents
'Of our associations in the Great Wars;
'To inculcate a sense of individual obligation
'To the community, state and nation;
'To combat the autocracy
'Of both the classes and the masses;
'To make right the master of might;
'To promote peace and good will on Earth;
'To safeguard and transmit to Posterity
'The principles of Justice, Freedom and Democracy;
'To consecrate and sanctify our comradeship

‘By our devotion to mutual helpfulness;
‘To all of which I pledge myself
‘For God and Country.
‘I am not a member and do not subscribe
‘To the principles of any group
‘Opposed to our form of government.
‘Hands down.”

At the conclusion of the obligation, the Commander will resume the designated station and seat the membership with one rap of the gavel. The Chaplain arises and stands at some convenient location close to the emblem and calls the attention of the candidates to the emblem of The American Legion.

Chaplain: “There shines the emblem of The American Legion. It is your badge of distinction, honor and service. It stands for God and Country, and the highest rights of men and women. Of its several parts, each part has a meaning. The rays of the sun that form the background, are emblematic of the principles of The American Legion—for Loyalty, Justice, Freedom and Democracy will dispel the darkness of violence, strife and evil.

“The two gold rings around the field of blue bearing our name, typify two of our four main objectives; rehabilitation of our sick and disabled comrades, and care for the children and youth of America. Within the rings is placed a wreath for remembrance of those who died that liberty might live. Upon the wreath is set a star reflecting the glory of victory and promising to the world perpetuation of those cardinal principles of our organization. Set upon the star are two bronze rings which typify the other two of our main objectives; a better and more loyal Americanism, and service to the community, state and nation.

“The inscription demands the wearer shall ever guard the sanctity of home and country and free institutions.”

The Commander steps down from the designated station and advances to the newly obligated members.

Post Commander*:* “I welcome you to The American Legion. It is my privilege to present to you the American Flag which is the emblem of freedom; a flag etiquette booklet; and the Emblem of The American Legion, which you may wear as a badge of democracy and a symbol of your devotion to further service.”

The Commander returns to station and introduces each newly obligated member to the membership and requests the Sergeant-at-Arms to seat them with the comrades.

(Attractive Certificates of Initiation suitable for presentation to new members of The American Legion after their initiation are available from the Department Headquarters. The Trophies, Awards and Ceremonials Committee strongly recommends such evidence of initiation be presented.)

INSTALLATION

All officers (a charge consistent with the duties of office may be given to officers, such as additional Vice-Commanders, Judge Advocate, Executive Committee, etc., other than specified in this ceremony) shall, after their election and at the earliest opportunity thereafter, be installed in the following manner:

The Installing Officer (it is recommended either a Department officer or the officer of another Post who shall be a representative of the Department Commander) shall take control of the meeting following the opening ceremony. The Installing Officer is permitted to install alone or with such assistants as may be selected.

The Installing Officer shall then call upon the Sergeant-at-Arms to bring forward the officers to be installed.

***Installing Officer**:* "Sergeant-at-Arms, bring before me the newly elected officers of this Post."

All the outgoing officers are to be in their respective places as shown in the Manual of Ceremonies, and each officer shall be given a card on which should be copied "charge" to the newly elected officer. The positions of the retiring officers can be filled by other officers at the discretion of the Installing Officer.

The Acting Sergeant-at-Arms brings each newly elected officer to the front, facing the station of the Commander. In order of rank, i.e., Commander, First Vice-Commander, Second Vice-Commander, Adjutant, Finance Officer, Chaplain, Judge Advocate, Historian, Service Officer and Sergeant-at-Arms.
After all are standing in place, with the new Commander to the right of the Installing Officer, the Acting Sergeant-at-Arms salutes and addresses the Commander.

***Sergeant-at-Arms**:* "I present to you the newly elected officers of this Post whose eligibility records for membership in The American Legion have been duly checked and authenticated."

***Installing Officer**:* "My comrades, you have been chosen by your comrades to fill the various offices of (Post Name and #). You will, I know, vindicate the trust that has been reposed in you, and fulfill in every way the obligations which that trust entails. You shall at once familiarize yourselves with the duties of your particular offices, and you shall proceed upon those duties in the same spirit of devotion and endeavor which characterized that service out of which arose The American Legion. You must know the welfare and success of this Post depends largely on you; and you must also

know upon your shoulders equally rests the burden of preserving the integrity of The American Legion. You must protect its good name before the people of the United States. You must exalt it in their eyes. You must make them know as we know its purposes and its policy. Ever remember the tolerant spirit that animates its members. There is no rank among us, for each serves as an equal; and all strive toward the same goal, which is the realization in the life of the Republic of the ideals of Justice, Freedom, Democracy and Loyalty. Ever remember the cardinal purposes of The American Legion are the rehabilitation of our disabled comrades; the care of the dependents of those who have answered the final call, and of those who are now suffering the ravages of wounds, disease and want; rightful education of the children of our Country, and devoted service to the community, state and nation.

"You will raise your right hands and repeat after me, giving your names: 'I, ..., do solemnly pledge myself to perform faithfully and impartially the duties of the office in The American Legion I am about to assume, and I further pledge I am not a member of, and do not subscribed to the principles of any groups opposed to our form of government.'"

After the obligation of the new officers, the Installing Officer shall address the Sergeant-at-Arms.

Installing Officer: "Sergeant-at-Arms, conduct the new officers to their respective stations."

The Acting or Retiring Sergeant-at-Arms escorts each officer-elect to the respective station, starting with the elected Sergeant-at-Arms and ending with the Commander. The Sergeant-at-Arms will conduct the Sergeant-at-Arms-elect to the station of the Sergeant-at-Arms and when arrived at that station, will address the elected Sergeant-at-Arms as follows:

Acting Sergeant-at-Arms: "You are the sentinel or tiler, the outer guard of this Post. You will guard especially against the loss of one of The American Legion's greatest possessions—our deep and abiding spirit of comradeship. You will learn the identity of, and introduce to the Commander, all visiting comrades and guests of the Post. You are responsible that no one shall remain a stranger in our midst. Be ready at all times to assist your Commander. Into your hands is given charge of the stand of colors which you will properly display at all Post meetings and on ceremonial occasions."

The acting or retiring Sergeant-at-Arms then escorts the Service Officer to the proper station. The acting Service Officer then charges the new Service Officer.

Acting Service Officer: "You have been singly honored by this Post by your election to perform fundamental, unselfish work, not only for the benefit of the members of this Post, but for those War veterans particularly in need of your service. Yours is the choice responsibility of looking out for the welfare of all concerned. The duties of a Service Officer are highly important and exacting, and while your accomplishment will be deeply appreciated by those immediately concerned, the work itself will not be sufficiently conspicuous to catch the headlines in the newspapers. Depending upon satisfactory performance of duty, there will come to you the heartfelt gratitude of each and every member of this Post. I congratulate you upon the opportunity to serve so constructively and so unselfishly."

The Sergeant-at-Arms next conducts the Historian to the proper station.

The Acting Historian then charges the new Historian.

Acting Historian: "Your office is an important one. To you is given the responsibility of preserving and compiling the records of this Post. The future can only be judged by the past. Be mindful the lamp of recorded experience may do much in guiding the footsteps of those who follow. Ever remember that without the recorded history of this Post, its policies and accomplishments will be a blank to the ones who come after we are gone."

The Sergeant-at-Arms next conducts the Judge Advocate to the position of the Acting or Retiring Judge Advocate who gives the following charge.

Acting Judge Advocate: "To you, my comrade, is assigned a most important duty for which your legal training and/or past Legion experience so aptly prepare you. You are the interpreter of the Constitution and By-Laws of your Post, and may at any time be called upon by the Commander and other officers and members of the Post to rule upon the legality of their actions and decisions insofar as they affect the good of The American Legion. You are also charged with protecting the integrity of our organization and keeping alight the torch of truth and fidelity that symbolizes the high and ennobling ideals under which our great American Legion was founded. Protect wisely that heritage."

The Sergeant-at-Arms then escorts the Chaplain to the right of the Commander.

The Acting Chaplain then charges the new Chaplain.

Acting Chaplain: "To you is given the spiritual leadership of this Post. You will, I know, lend dignity and respect to your office. You should be in close confidence with the Commander and the other officers of this Post, and should attend all meetings of the Post. You should be ready upon occasion to take your part in the initiation of new members, the dedication of halls,

monuments or colors, and the funeral services for a comrade. All such ceremonies are made more commemorative by the use of our Ritual. Into your keeping we place the spirit of comradeship of this Post. May harmony and unity prevail."

Sergeant-at-Arms next conducts the Finance Officer to the Adjutant's desk where the Acting Finance Officer gives the following charge:

***Acting Finance Officer**:* "You are the keeper of the moneys and in you is reposed the financial policy of the Post. To you is given charge of the year's budget and to you is given the duty of the payment of all obligations when proper authorization has been given for such payment. Your position is an important one, demanding integrity and honesty. Your election to this office signifies your comrades have implicit trust in you. Guard well that trust."

Sergeant-at-Arms next conducts the Adjutant to the respective station and the Acting Adjutant gives the following charge:

Acting Adjutant: "My comrade, you have been chosen to assist in the wise and effective administration of the Commander's office and to serve not only your fellow Legionnaires, but also those whose relationship to our organization has led them to look to us for guidance and relief. You will find your duties many, varied and, at times, taxing of your crowded hours and resources. The successful accomplishment of our program depends, to a great extent, upon you and your performance of the duties of your office."

The Sergeant-at-Arms next conducts the Second Vice-Commander to the respective desk where the Acting Second Vice-Commander gives the following charge:

Acting Second Vice-Commander: "Into your helpful hands are placed the important responsibilities of assisting the Commander's office in all duties. Particularly should you be interested in patriotic observances of all kinds, in developing Post activities, and in the entertainment features which mark all meetings. Help to observe strict tolerance among your members on all political, religious and civic matters. The application of Justice will be your particular concern."

Sergeant-at-Arms next conducts the First Vice-Commander to the proper position where the First Vice-Commander will be charged by the Acting First Vice-Commander as follows:

Acting First Vice-Commander: "To you is given the responsibility of an active cooperation between yourself and the Commander. Particularly should you interest yourself in the membership of the Post. You should be assisted by the most active and devoted members. No single factor has so important an influence on the Post's success as membership. You will be the

exponent of means of safeguarding the honor of the Flag of our Country. To you are committed these endeavors with the expectation you shall fulfill each and every one of them. You are the teacher of 'Democracy.'"

Installing Officer *(to retiring Commander):*

"My comrade, You have just completed a year of impressive service to The American Legion and to ..... The record of your Post indicates a quality of that service.

"Through your earnest performance of the duties of leadership, you have truly justified the great trust which your comrades reposed in you.

"Although the mantle of leadership is now being passed to another, a great responsibility remains with you. You possess a great wealth of knowledge gained through your leadership experience. Place this wisdom at the disposal of your successors in order that your comrades may benefit therefrom. Through your station maintain the principle of 'Freedom' within this Post.

"On behalf of the ....., I thank you for the splendid service you have rendered The American Legion.

"Sergeant-at-Arms, conduct Past Commander ..... to the station of the Immediate Past Commander."

Sergeant-at-Arms then conducts the new Commander to the Installing Officer, who in turn brings the entire Post to its feet by three raps of the gavel, then charges the new Commander as follows:

Installing Officer: To you, comrade, is entrusted a very important duty of teaching and protecting the cardinal principles of The American Legion throughout your entire Post. To you is entrusted supervision of the duties of all other officers of this Post. To you may come the needy and the distressed, and it is your duty to see no worthy comrade is turned away without full justice. It is your duty to see Freedom is ever the watchword of those with whom you may come in contact. Loyalty to your Post, to its membership, to the state and to the National Organization, are obligations which you now assume. You are more than the presiding officer for meetings. You are guided by the Constitution and by the decisions of the Post as a body, yet the responsibility for the success of the year's program is largely on your shoulders. You must initiate and carry through programs to completion. You must thoroughly familiarize yourself with the policies and traditions of your Post and of The American Legion. By your sincere acceptance and earnest performance of these duties, may the great trust which your comrades have reposed in you be justified. To you, I extend the

congratulations of the Department, and I wish you well as you assume the responsibilities of your office. I present to you a copy of the Legion Officer's Guide and Manual of Ceremonies to serve as your guide during the coming year."

Commander: "The Chaplain will offer prayer."

Chaplain: "O, God of Might, Wisdom and Justice, through Whom authority is rightly administered, assist with Thy spirit of counsel and fortitude these newly installed officers. May they accept the challenge of their oath. Impress upon each the importance of the duties as well as the honors of their office. May they know the value of working together with Thee. Lead them in the problems that will confront them, keeping them ever mindful of the great heritage preserved by our comrades, living and departed. Vouchsafe into them wisdom and protecting care throughout the year. AMEN."

Installing Officer seats membership with one rap of the gavel. Newly elected officers please rise.

Installing Officer: "My comrades, I present you the officers of your choice. I congratulate you on the selections you have made. You have chosen them to guide the destinies of this Post, now it is your duty to aid them in every way. Help them keep The American Legion a free organization of free men and women, faithful to its principles and ideals."

The gavel is handed to the new Commander and the Installing Officer takes a seat.

New Commander then seats the newly elected officers with one rap of the gavel.

Short Form Installation

For those occasions when it is not practical to conduct the full ceremony for the installation of officers, the following short form has been authorized. This ceremony shall be conducted by an Installing Officer (a duly authorized representative of the Department Commander) who, after being introduced by the retiring Post Commander, proceeds as follows:

Installing Officer: "The Sergeant-at-Arms will bring before me the newly elected officers of this Post."

The Sergeant-at-Arms presents the newly elected officers, standing in one row in front of the Installing Officer, with the new Post Commander to the right of the Installing Officer and the retiring Post Commander to the left of the Installing Officer.

Sergeant-at-Arms*:* "I present to you the newly elected officers of this Post, whose eligibility records for membership in The American Legion have been duly checked and authenticated."

***Installing Officer**:* "My Fellow Legionnaires, you have been chosen to fill the various offices of (Post Name & #). I know you will vindicate the trust that has been placed in you. I know you will fulfill every obligation required of you. Familiarize yourselves with the duties of your offices and carry out those duties with the same spirit from which arose The American Legion. The welfare and success of this Post depend on you, as does the preservation of the integrity of The American Legion. Protect the good name of The American Legion with the people of our great Nation; help them to know the Legion's purposes and policies. Remember the tolerance that animates us as members; remember there is no rank among us for we all serve as equals. We all are aiming for the same goals—the ideals of Justice, Freedom, Democracy and Loyalty.

"Remember, too, the cardinal principles of The American Legion are—

"The rehabilitation of all disabled veterans;

"The care of the dependents of those who've answered the final call;

"The care of those who now are suffering from wounds, disease and want;

"The education of our children . . . "And Service to the Community, State and Nation.

"You will raise your right hand, say 'I' and give your names, and repeat after me—

"I, ..., do solemnly pledge myself / to perform faithfully and impartially / the duties of the office of The American Legion / I am about to assume, / and I further pledge / I am not a member of / and do not subscribe to / the principles of any group opposed to our form of government.

"Hands down."

The Installing Officer will move to the left to address the retiring Post Commander.

Installing Officer: "*(Addressing the retiring Commander by name)*, you have just completed a year of service to The American Legion and to (Post name and #). The records of the Post indicate the quality of your service. It is my hope the things you learned about The American Legion and the experience you gained will always be available to those who follow you. On behalf of the Department Commander, I thank you for the splendid service you have rendered The American Legion."

The Installing Officer will then move to the right to address the newly elected Post Commander.

Installing Officer: "To you, Commander ....., are entrusted very important duties. You must teach and protect the cardinal principles of The

American Legion throughout your Post. You are entrusted with the supervision of the duties of all officers of your Post. The poor and troubled will come to you and you must see no veteran is turned away without full justice.

"Loyalty to your Post—to its membership—to the state and National Organizations are obligations which you now assume.

"You are more than the presiding officer for meetings; you are guided by the Constitution and the decisions of the Post body; yet, the responsibility of the year's programs is on your shoulders. You must initiate programs and carry them through to completion. You must familiarize yourself with the traditions of your Post and The American Legion.

"By your sincere acceptance and earnest performance of these duties, may the trust your fellow Legionnaires have reposed in you be justified.

"I extend to you the congratulations of the Department of ..... and I wish you well as you assume the responsibilities of your office."

(Here the retiring Post Chaplain may offer a prayer for the guidance and success of the newly installed Post officers during their year in office. For a prayer of appropriate length and tenor, see the regular form of Installation.)

The Installing Officer moves to original position and asks all newly installed officers to face the members and guests in attendance.

***Installing Officer**:* "My fellow Legionnaires, I present to you the officers of your choice. I congratulate you on the selections you have made. You have chosen them, now it is your duty to aid them in every way. Help them to keep The American Legion faithful to its principles and ideals."

DEDICATIONS

The members of the Post will assemble at the designated place in uniform, if such are available, all officers wearing ceremonial badges, members wearing their American Legion caps. They will march to the place of dedication. The Commander, Chaplain and the member designated to receive the gift will take their places on the platform with the public official and other guests. The Post will assemble with the general public.

Unless those who are to give the gift provide otherwise, the Commander will preside. A Past Commander or some other member appointed by the Commander will accept the gift on behalf of the Post.

The program as outlined by the Committee will be followed until the Post Commander is called upon, who will then address the members of the Post.

Commander: "Members of (Post name and #), Department of ....., The American Legion, and friends:

"We are gathered today for a grateful and patriotic duty, to dedicate (Colors, hall or memorial as the case may be) (and in case of color dedication) these Colors, the emblems of the United States of America and The American Legion. (Or, to dedicate this building as a home for The American Legion; to dedicate this monument, a perpetual memorial to our comrades who died in their country's service, and to those who offered their lives during time of war (or some other phrase, designating the purpose of the gathering). May we again dedicate our organization and ourselves to the sacred ideals which are here represented, ever remembering that The American Legion's principal service is for God and Country. The Chaplain will ask the blessing of God upon these ceremonies."

Prayer by the Chaplain: *(In place of the following prayer, the Chaplain may deliver one of own preference, of the same length and general tenor.)*

"Almighty God, Judge over people and nations, we stand before Thee today as loyal servants of our Country, grateful for its splendid heritage. We ask Thy blessing upon our great Republic. May America ever remain free and mighty and true to her best ideals. Bless the President of the United States and all public servants, that they may walk in justice before Thee and all their acts may redound to the greater welfare of our people.

"We pray Thy blessing upon our Flag, the emblem of the Republic. May it float forever over a free land. May our ancient watchword, 'In God we trust,' ever live, and may the faith of our father guide, protect and sustain our people.

"We ask Thy blessing upon The American Legion and its members. May we who served our Country in war continue in times of peace, to serve and to shield America throughout all our days. May this edifice serve for the good of the many; in service to the living may it be a memorial to the dead. May we be eager and steadfast in our devotion to Justice, Freedom and Democracy. May we be ever loyal to our Country and to our God. May our service to the sick and disabled, to the community, the state and the nation merit and have Thy guidance and Thy blessing.

"Finally, we remember in love before Thee our departed comrades, who showed their loyalty in their lives and sealed it with their deaths. We pray especially for our comrades in hospitals and homes and wherever they may be, sick in mind and body. May their pain be eased and their burdens lifted, and may their heroic example be an everlasting inspiration. May Thy spirit

rest upon this service. May it uplift us all to constant devotion to Thy teachings and to the welfare of our Country. Amen."

Commander: "In memory of those who have given their all to this country, who have made the supreme sacrifice and have answered the call of the 'Great Commander of all Divisions,' we will stand in silence and with bowed heads." (30 seconds' silence)

Commander: *The Commander will introduce the person who is to present the Colors, Building or Edifice to the Post.*

Presentation Address:

Commander*: The Commander will introduce the Past Commander (or other officer or member designated) who will accept the gift on behalf of the Post.*

Address of Acceptance:

The program as set by the committee shall be followed out, after which the Commander will close the meeting.

Dedication of Colors

Commander*:* "The assemblage will rise. Sergeant-at-Arms, you will call the guard to display the colors." (Colors will be advanced to a position in front of the stage or platform and will halt within ten paces of the Commander.) **The Commander will say**, "The bugler will sound 'To the Colors' and the audience will stand at salute," and the Post Standard will be dipped at a 45 degree angle in salute.

After "To the Colors" has been sounded, the Commander will address the entire assemblage.

Commander: "In the name of (Post name and #), Department of ....., The American Legion, I dedicate these Colors. May they fly perpetually as the emblem of the cause for which we fought and which we now gladly serve. Here is the Flag of our Country; safe within its folds is the freedom and fealty of our nation. Beside it is the Flag of The American Legion, on its expanse the Emblem of our organization—the star of victory, the laurel wreath of remembrance, about it all the sun's rays, significant of the light of an even brighter day.

"I dedicate these Colors to the purposes of our Post, community, state and Nation, and with them I dedicate this Post to the faithful service of our Nation, our people, and our Flag. Comrades, you will join me in saluting the Flag. Hand Salute! Two!"

At the conclusion of this dedication ceremony, the colors will be properly returned.

Dedication of American Legion Building or Hall

Commander: "In the name of (Post name and #), Department of ....., The American Legion, I dedicate this structure (hall), embodiment of the ideals of Justice, Freedom and Democracy for which The American Legion exists. As in time of war, we fight for our country, so in time of peace may we serve the Republic fearlessly and well. May we bear in mind the comrades who have gone before, that their memory may dwell within this home and be a constant blessing among us. It is our hope and desire this edifice may be used ever in the service of our disabled comrades; of the widowed and the orphaned; and to the benefit of our community, state and Nation. I dedicate this structure to the purposes of our Post, and with it I dedicate this Post to the faithful service of our nation, of its people, and to the memory of our heroic dead."

Dedication of Monument, Shaft or Other Memorials

Commander: "In the name of (Post name and #), Department of ....., The American Legion, I dedicate this memorial. I dedicate it to the memory of those who fell in the service of our Country. I dedicate it in the name of those who offered their lives so Justice, Freedom and Democracy might survive to be the victorious ideals of the peoples of the world. The lives of those who have made the supreme sacrifice are glorious before us; their deeds are an inspiration. As they served America in time of war, yielding their last full measure of devotion, may we serve America in time of peace.

"I dedicate this monument to them, and with it I dedicate this Post to the faithful service of our Country and to preservation of the memory of those who died that Liberty might live."

At the end of all dedication ceremonies, a benediction shall be given by the Chaplain.

CEREMONY FOR DRAPING AMERICAN LEGION CHARTER:

Post has option on choice of drape and length of draping period.

***Commander**:* "It is my sad duty to report that Comrade (or Comrades) ..... has (have) been called from our midst. He/She (they/have) gone to the Commander of us all in Post everlasting.

Commander: "Before proceeding with other business of this meeting, we will Drape the Charter in memory of Comrade (Comrades) ..... Sergeant-at-Arms, obtain Drape in preparation for Draping Charter."

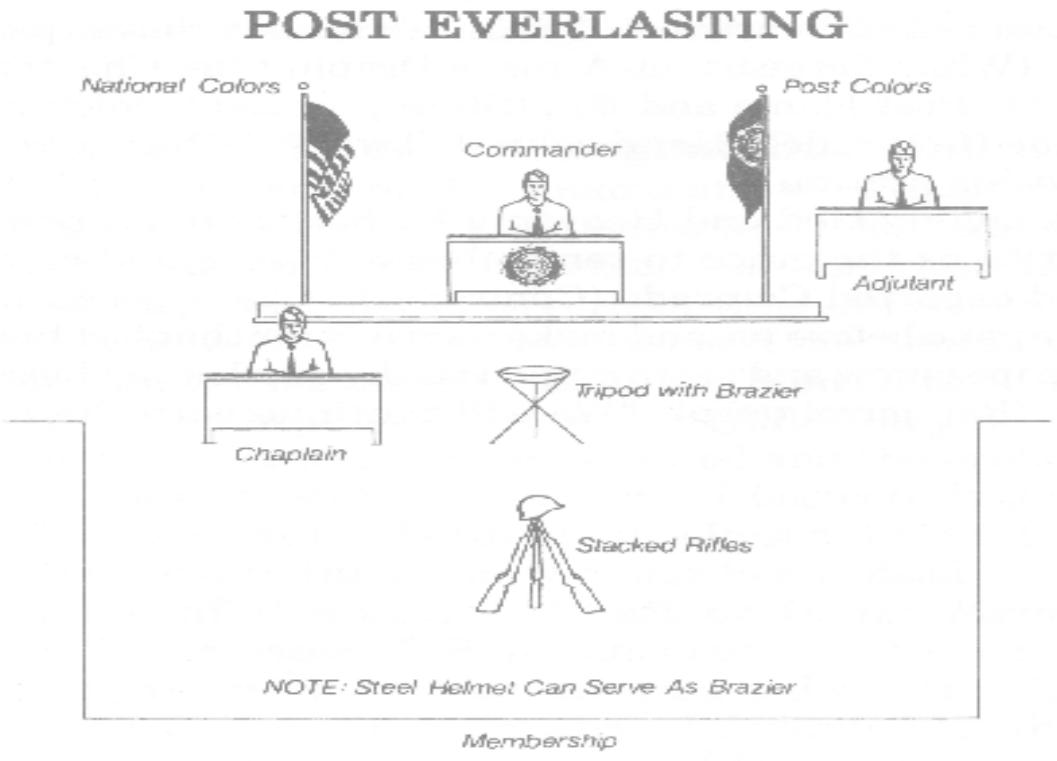
Commander: (Rap gavel three (3) times) "Members rise and face Charter attention."

Commander: "Sergeant-at-Arms, you will now Drape our Charter in memory of our beloved Comrade (Comrades) ..... who has (have) passed on.

Commander: (While Sergeant-at-Arms is Draping the Charter) "By this act we, as members of (Post Name and #), (State), proclaim solemn tribute to our departed Comrade (Comrades) Hand salute! Two!" (After "Two," Sergeant-at-Arms returns to his/her station)

Chaplain: "Almighty God and Heavenly Father, who has dominion over life and death, grant to us the grace to remember with love and reverence our valiant and honored departed Comrade (Comrades). Grant peace and eternal rest to those who have gone before us, and make us ready for that last hour. Strengthen and console those in sorrow and bestow upon us thy everlasting blessing .... Amen."

Commander: (Rap gavel once) "We will continue with the regular meeting ....."



POST EVERLASTING

The diagram (on the previous page) illustrates the proper position of flags and tables or stands which are used by the officers who take part in this ceremony. This equipment (with the exception of the tripod, with brazier and stacked rifles, which are Posted during the ceremony) should be put in place before the meeting opens.

Commander: "It is my sad duty to report that Comrade ..... has been called from our midst, and gone to report to the Commander of all."

(Hesitate momentarily.)

Commander: "Before proceeding with other business of this meeting, we will conduct the Post Everlasting Ceremony for Comrade ....."

Commander: "Sergeant-at-Arms, allow no one to enter or leave this room until the conclusion of this ceremony. All present will remain silent and will refrain from smoking until the conclusion of this ceremony."

Commander: "Sergeant-at-Arms, you will place the brazier and stack the rifles before this rostrum, properly arranged for our Post Everlasting Ceremony." (Sergeant-at-Arms salutes and gives necessary commands to three (3) Rifle bearers and Comrade with brazier. Commander returns salute.)

Sergeant-at-Arms: "The Equipment is properly arranged, Comrade Commander."

Commander: "Sergeant-at-Arms, you will retire the detail."

(Hesitate momentarily)

Commander: "This moment is sacred with the almost visible presence of the one who has gone before.

"We come to honor the memory of one who offered his (her) life in the service of country and who has now enrolled in that great spirit army, whose footfalls cause no sound, but in the memory of mankind, their souls go marching on, sustained by the pride of service in time of war.

"Because of them our lives are free; because of them our nation lives; because of them the world is blessed.

"May this service deepen our reverence for our departed comrades."

(Hesitate momentarily)

Commander: "The Adjutant will place an American Legion cap on the rifles in remembrance of Comrade .....'s service to our Country in the Army (Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps or Coast Guard) of the United States."

(Adjutant places cap on top of stacked rifles.)

(Commander waits until Adjutant returns, then gives three raps of gavel.)

Commander: "Sergeant-at-Arms, lights out."

Commander: "Our Comrade Chaplain will offer prayer."

Chaplain: "Our Heavenly Father in His infinite wisdom has transferred Comrade ..... to the jurisdiction of the Post Everlasting of The American Legion. May your soul rest in Peace. Amen."

Commander: "Comrade Adjutant, enter the name of Comrade ..... in the record of members of (Post Name and #) who has transferred to the Post Everlasting."

(Adjutant enters name in book provided for this purpose; Commander waits until Adjutant stands up.)

Commander: "Comrade Adjutant, hand me the letter containing the Service and Legion records of Comrade ..... which we will transmit to the Post Everlasting of The American Legion."

(Commander then reads letter)

Commander: "Comrade Chaplain, transmit this letter containing the Service and Legion records of Comrade ..... to the Adjutant of the Post Everlasting."

(Commander hands letter to the Chaplain who places it in brazier; record is then burned. NOTE: The record burned by the chaplain can be either a blank piece of paper or a typed document. DO NOT burn the deceased member's Post records.)

Commander: "Bugler, sound Taps in memory of Comrade ..... and in memory of all the comrades of the Post Everlasting of The American Legion."

(Taps)

Commander: "Sergeant-at-Arms, turn on the lights."

(One rap of gavel seats membership)

Commander: "Comrade Adjutant, remove the hat."

Commander: "Sergeant-at-Arms, remove the brazier and rifles."

(A Post Everlasting Citation No. 75228 is available through National Emblem Sales. This thoughtful citation will provide the next of kin with a permanent service record and a tribute to our dearly departed comrade.)

Service and Legion records should contain name in full; date of birth; date of enlistment; branch; rank; etc. theatre of war in which comrade served; battles (if any); date discharged; date joined The American Legion; Legion activities entered into (if any); Legion offices held (if any); date of death.

NOTE: Add or delete as situation requires and as circumstances dictate.

FUNERAL

The American Legion service is nonsectarian. Therefore, it may be varied in

accordance with the religious belief of the deceased Legionnaire. The wish of the family of the deceased, and of the officiating clergyman, should be respected.

The casket is covered with an American Flag when closed or as it leaves the chapel or home. In case the deceased served under an Allied Flag, that Flag shall also be displayed near the casket.

At Funeral, Chapel or Home

Commander: "Another Legionnaire has been called to the High Command, and has gone to report to the Commander of us all."

Chaplain: "Let us pray.

"Eternal God, Supreme Commander of us all, Lord of the far-flung battle line, to whom the ranks of life report, we bow before you with reverent hearts and in sublime faith, knowing you lead us on in death as you have in life. For again you have ordered a Legionnaire to that realm in the West, beyond the twilight and the evening star, where beauty and valor and goodness dwell forever with the unnumbered multitude. Mindful of service nobly done, you have called (name of deceased) to everlasting rest. You have sealed his (her) lips. With the faded blossoms of springtime and the withered leaves of autumn, you have called our comrade to Eternal Peace, to the land of your silent mystery.

"Hear now the sorrows of those who mourn. Touch their tired hearts with healing. Protect them with your holy care. Keep clean and bright in memory the splendid flame that now has flickered out, and shelter us with your compassion.

"Lord of all life, who lives forever, again you have taught us the measure of our days. We are strangers with you and sojourners as our fathers were. Our days are as a shadow and there is none abiding. But you abide. Your years fail not. You never change. A thousand years in your sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night. The grass withers, the flower fades, but your word endures forever. And therein is our help and hope.

"You heal the broken in heart and bind up their wounds. Comfort your people. In their sorrow may there be no bitterness, no doubt of your eternal goodness. Give them to know you do not mock us with this stubborn hope of life eternal; that having created and cared for us you will not desert us to the dust; that you hold us with a love unfailing; that our dead are in your keeping; and that you are able to do far more for them than all we ask or think.

"Until for us also the day breaks and the shadows flee, grant us so to live so our lives may honor the Legionnaires who have gone before us. Together we may come to the City which you have prepared for those who love you and keep your commandments. For your own name's sake we pray. Amen."

Short Eulogy (By one who knew our friend and Legionnaire well.)

Commander: "This moment is sacred with the almost visible presence of the one who has gone before. We come to honor the memory of one who offered life and service for God and Country; one who has now enrolled in that great spirit army whose footfalls cause no sound. But in our memory, their souls go marching on. Proudly we remember their service in time of war. Because of them, our lives are free; because of them, our Nation lives; because of them the world is blessed. May the ceremonies of today deepen our reverence for our honored comrade and friend.

"Let us not enshroud their memory with thoughts of sorrow. Tears or words of sympathy cannot bring back the comfort of those loving hands or the music of voices stilled. The solemn pride of that service is theirs, and for the living to remember.

"Legionnaires and friends, let us here pledge ourselves anew to united service, to consecrate and sanctify our comradeship by a devotion to mutual helpfulness in the protection of those left behind.

"We realize how futile are mere words to express our deep and abiding sympathy in your loss. May you feel our comrade is at rest, and in endless peace. Generation after generation, all the shadowy peoples of the past have lived as we live, perplexed and mystified by death. They have gone into the Great Beyond with hearts filled with wistful longing, as all must go.

"Surely there is an afterlife for all who have been loyal and true, a life to which light and peace shall come, where the burden shall be lifted and the heartache shall cease, where the love, the hope and the fulfillment that escape us here shall be given to us, to be ours forever."

(Here the Chaplain offers a prayer in accordance with the faith of the deceased.)

Chaplain*: (Protestant Prayer)*

"O God, who heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds; look in tender pity and compassion upon thy servants whose joy has been turned into mourning. Leave them not comfortless, but grant that they may be drawn closer to thee and to one another by their common sorrow. Fill their souls with the light and comfort of thy presence. Grant unto them such a vision of that life wherein all mysteries shall be revealed, and all tears be wiped away,

that they may be able to endure. So dwell with them and be their God, until the day break and the shadows flee away; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

Chaplain: *(Jewish Prayer)*

"O Lord, who art full of compassion, who dwellest on high—God of forgiveness, who are merciful, slow to anger and abounding in loving kindness—grant pardon of transgressions, nearness of salvation, and perfect rest beneath the shadow of thy divine presence, in the exalted places among the holy and pure, who shine as the brightness of the firmament, to (name of deceased Legionnaire) who hath gone to his (her) eternal home. We beseech thee, O Lord of compassion, remember unto him (her) for good all the meritorious and pious deeds which he (she) wrought while on earth. Open unto him (her) the gates of righteousness and light, the gates of pity and grace. O shelter him (her) forevermore under the cover of thy wings; and let his (her) soul be bound up in the bond of eternal life. The Lord is his (her) inheritance; may he (she) rest in peace. And let us say, Amen."

Chaplain*: (Catholic Prayer)*

"Father, We entrust our brother (sister) to your mercy. You loved him (her) greatly in this life; now that he (she) is freed from all its cares, give him (her) happiness and peace forever.

"The old order has passed away; welcome him (her) now into paradise where there will be no more sorrow, no more weeping or pain, but only peace and joy with Jesus, your Son, and the Holy Spirit forever and ever.

"Eternal rest grant unto him (her), O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon him (her). May his (her) soul and all of the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen."

When there is a service at the chapel or home and if the casket is open, the Commander or Chaplain may at the conclusion of the service place a poppy in the casket and say, "The Memorial Poppy is a national symbol of the flowers in *Flanders Field* that embodies the sacrifices of men and women who served and died for their country in all wars. We now leave this poppy with you in your honor, and as an eternal reminder of the binding comradeship we feel for you. *He then salutes and says,* Farewell, to our friend, Legionnaire and comrade."

If the casket is sealed and draped with the American Flag, do not use the poppy, as nothing is placed on top of an American Flag, but salute and say,

"Farewell, my Fellow Legionnaire."

All Legionnaires present at the funeral service shall pass the casket and salute the deceased Legionnaire. It is not necessary to place another poppy in the casket. After the salute, the Legionnaires present shall leave the funeral chapel in single file and with dignity.

Funeral Escort

The escort is formed outside the church, chapel, or residence. Upon appearance of the casket, the ***Commander commands****:* "Present . . . Arms."

After the casket is placed in the hearse, the ***Commander commands****:* "Order . . . Arms."

Procedure at Cemetery

The column having arrived opposite the grave, the firing squad and American Legion members are formed in line facing the grave. The Chaplain or clergy stands at the head of the grave.

The casket is then carried along the front of the line to the grave.

The Firing Squad presents arms.

The casket having been placed over the grave, arms are brought to the order.

The ***Commander next commands****: "1. Parade. 2. Rest."*

The Officer in charge of Firing Squad brings his detachment to parade rest. On executing parade rest, they all incline the head.

At Graveside

If no previous service has been held, the service for church, chapel or home should be read at the grave, prior to the following committal.

Chaplain: "Man, who is born of woman, is of few days and full of trouble. He cometh forth as a flower and is cut down. He fleeth also as a shadow and continueth not.

Chaplain *(continuing):* "Forasmuch as God hath taken out of the world the soul of our departed comrade, we therefore commit his (her) body to the ground to sleep and his (her) soul to endless peace to rest. The dust returneth to earth as it was, and the spirit returneth unto God who gave it."

Benediction (if desired).

At the conclusion of the Chaplain's service, two pallbearers remove Flag from casket, fold it in the traditional manner (see "Flag and Flag Etiquette" in index), and place it on the arm of Chaplain, who will give Flag to the nearest kin.

Commander*:* "Salute our departed comrade(s)."

Officer in charge of Firing Squad gives order according to the Infantry Drill Regulations in force at the time.

Squad fires three rounds of blank cartridges, the muzzles of the pieces being elevated.

Bugler: *Taps. (With two bugle echoes from different portions of the cemetery, if possible.)*

The escort is formed into column, marched in quick time to the point where it assembled, and dismissed.

(Wherever the term "Commander" is used in connection with funeral escort, procedure at cemetery and graveside, it refers to the Commander of the Firing Squad. The Post Commander shall be at the head of The American Legion delegation, except where the funeral service is held at the grave. Then the Post Commander shall be on the left of the Chaplain and at the head of the grave.)

American Legion Military Funeral Escorts

An American Legion Military Funeral in its entirety requires twenty-one Legionnaires in uniform, as follows:

1 Chaplain	2 Color Guards	8 Firing Squad
1 Bugler	1 Commander	6 Pallbearers
2 Color Bearers of Firing Squad		

The Commander of the Firing Squad is in charge of all details and movements. The Firing Squad should be composed of members who are familiar with handling the rifle. The Commander should get the squad together before the service and simulate volley firing. The entire escort should be arranged according to height and uniform worn.

In some instances the family calls upon the Post to take charge of the church or home services as well as the services at the grave. As a general rule, however, the church has charge of the church or home services, after which the Post Chaplain conducts the final rites. It is highly desirable the Post conducting the funeral discusses beforehand with the Clergy and the Funeral Director the exact procedure to be followed.

For the guidance of those concerned, the following is suggested:

Post Service in Place of Worship, Chapel or Home

The entire escort should be inside. All uncover except those bearing arms or colors. Pallbearers and Firing Squad should sit as separate groups.

Post Services Following Those at the Place of Worship, Chapel or Home

The Pallbearers are covered, even when carrying the casket. When casket comes into view, the **Commander of Firing Squad** gives the command:

"1. *Escort.* 2. *Attention,*" followed by "1. *Present.* 2. *Arms.*"

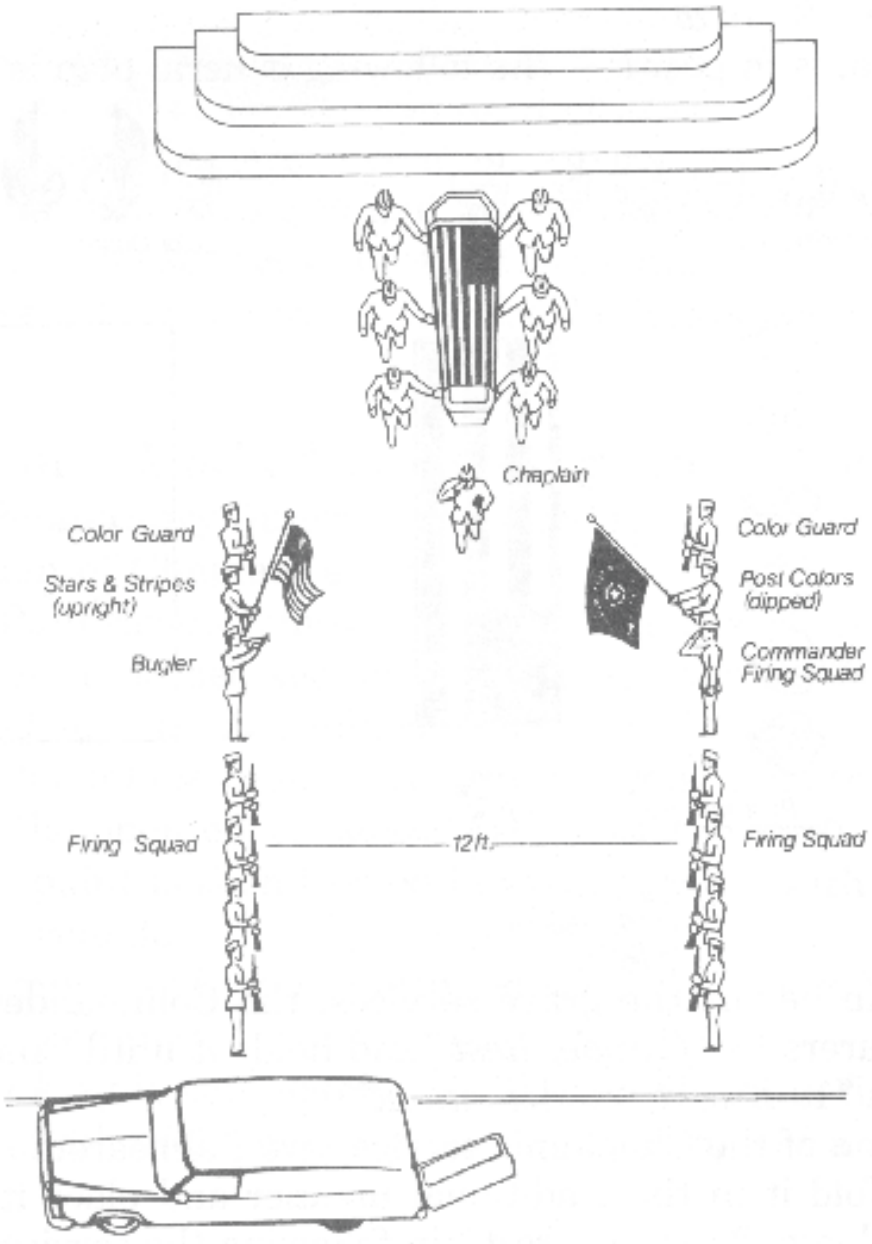
The Commander salutes.

As the Chaplain leads body through escort, the Commander holds the right hand salute (Chaplain salutes Flag only).

Post Banner is dipped as casket passes.

The Firing Squad remains at "Present Arms" until casket is in hearse and doors closed; then the **Commander** gives "1. *Order.* 2. *Arms.*"

The units should be arranged at the building exit before the body comes out of the place of worship or home in the following order:



The escorts enter cars as quickly as possible.

The Firing Squad, Color Bearers, Guards and Commander should go ahead of the procession and get their places.

The Chaplain, Bugler and Pallbearers should go to the cemetery ahead of the funeral procession.

The Firing Squad can be given necessary drill at grave before the hearse arrives.

No definite arrangement at the grave is advisable because the surroundings at each grave differ. The following plan, changed when necessary, is satisfactory.

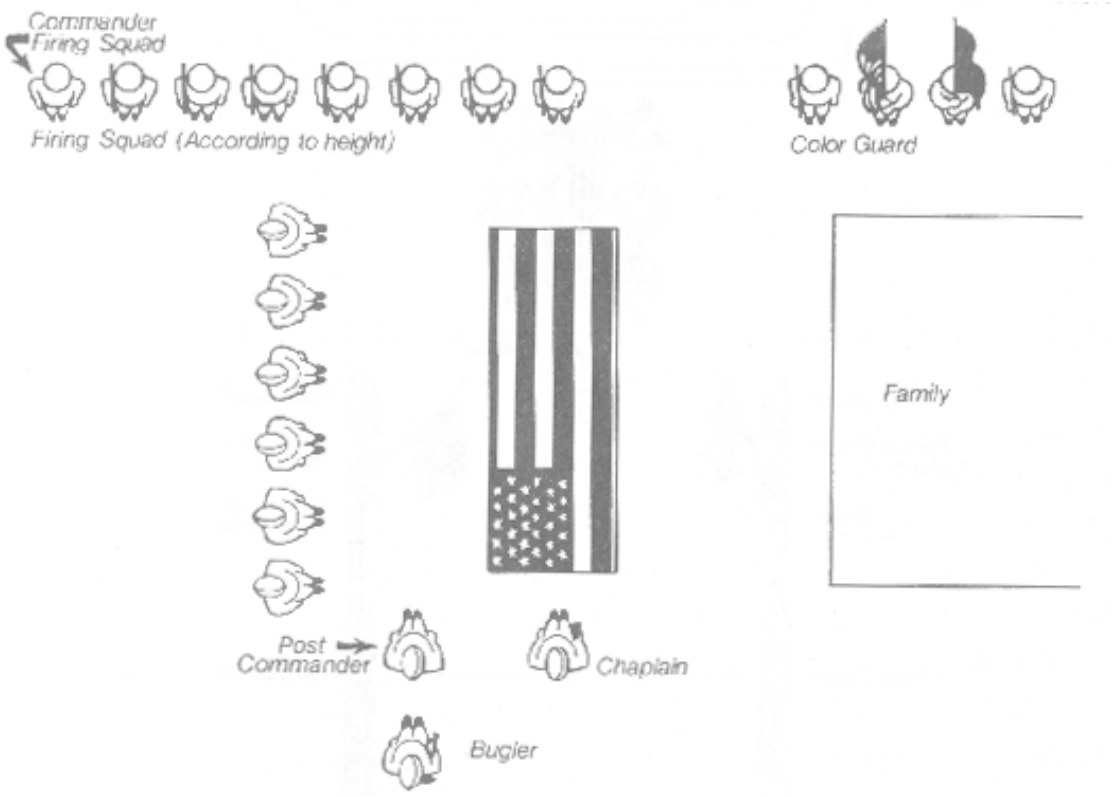
The Pallbearers at cemetery await the opening of the hearse.

The Chaplain leads the casket from hearse to grave.

Upon sight of casket, the **Commander** gives "1. *Present.* 2. *Arms.*" and holds it until body is set over grave.

Then "1. *Order.* 2. *Arms.*"

When the casket is in position, the following general plan is satisfactory:



As the Chaplain begins the grave services, the **Commander** brings Firing Squad and Pallbearers to *"Parade, Rest"* and holds it until Chaplain's services are complete; **then** "1. *Escort.* 2. *Attention.*"

At the conclusion of the Chaplain's service, two Pallbearers remove the Flag from the casket, fold it in the traditional manner and place it on the arm of Chaplain, who will give flag to nearest kin following the services.

Chaplain: "The Government of the United States presents to you, through The American Legion, the flag under which our comrade served."

Other appropriate remarks can be made by Chaplain.

As soon as Flag is presented, the Firing Squad fires three volleys:

At the **Commander's order**, "*Ready*," bring the rifle so that the muzzle of rifle is level with point of chin. The right foot should be placed to the rear about 10 inches. The right hand should be on small of stock and left hand at rear of sight.

At command, "*Load*" (rifles should be loaded, none in chamber before body is taken from hearse) work bolt and put cartridge in chamber.

Remain at position of "*Ready*" until order "*Aim*" is given.

An aiming point should be designated so elevation of rifles is uniform.

The command of execution is "*Fire*."

After firing, the first and second volleys come to position of "*Ready*" and wait for command, "1. *Ready.* 2. *Aim.* 3. *Fire.*"

Upon completion of third volley, come to "*Present Arms*" without command.

If rifle jams, don't attempt to fix it; simulate firing.

The bugler now takes position at head of grave and blows Taps.

Echo Taps, if possible, are very impressive.

The **Commander of Firing Squad** gives "*Order Arms.*"

This concludes the services and the **Commander** gives "1. *Right or Left Face.* 2. *At Trail.* 3. *Forward.* 4. *March,*" followed by the Colors and then by Pallbearers.

Traditional Method of Folding United States Flag

Diagram appears on the following page

1. During the military funeral ceremony, the Flag is folded immediately at the conclusion of Chaplain's service.

2. The two Pallbearers remove the Flag from the casket, hold it taut and then fold the lower striped section of the Flag over the blue field.

3. The folded edge is then folded over to meet the open edge.

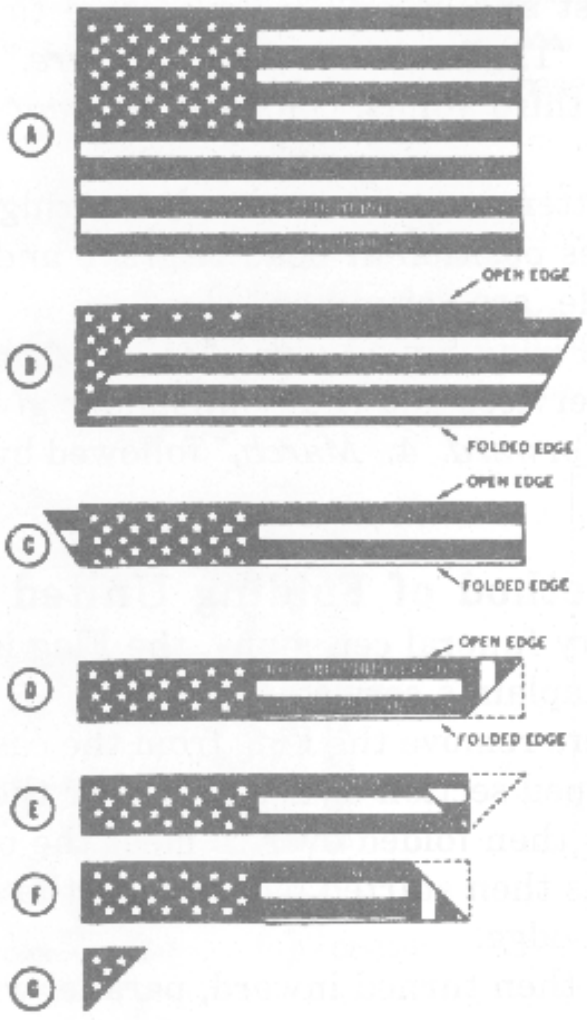
4. A triangular fold is then started by bringing the striped corner of the folded edge to the open edge.

5. The outer point is then turned inward, parallel with the open edge, to form a second triangle.

6. The triangular folding is continued until the entire length of the Flag is folded in this manner.

7. When the Flag is completely folded, only the blue field should be visible, and it should be folded in the triangular shape of a cocked hat.

FOLDING THE FLAG



MILITARY FUNERAL HONORS FOR VETERANS

"Honoring Those Who Serve"

The American Legion ***assisting*** as an "Authorized Provider"

In the *National Defense Authorization Act* for fiscal year 2000, the United States Congress legislated that, upon request of the next of kin, all eligible veterans **MUST** receive Military Funeral Honors when they pass on.

At a minimum, the funeral honors will consist of a two-person uniformed military detail, with at least one member representing the parent service of the deceased.

The legislation also encourages veterans' service organizations, and others, to augment the honors detail as an authorized provider with pallbearers, firing party, bugler and color guard.

The American Legion *has performed thousands of burial ceremonies annually for the families of veterans throughout their history; this will not change. Over the years the organization has adopted certain ways and means that may differ from other groups. This does not mean they are wrong or improper, just different.*

Whenever The American Legion is assisting the United States Government they should conform to the DOD's methods of conduct. In working together, we honor, in the highest traditions of American military service, those who have gone before. In doing so, all the requirements for a reverent, respectful, and dignified ceremony are met.

The individual military services will provide training to an authorized provider assisting with the ceremony to include positioning, timing, safety, and proper funeral honors protocol.

The following represents DOD guidance on the rendering of Military Funeral Honors. By law, the Military Funeral Honors detail will consist of at least two uniformed members of the military, with the detail leader from the parent service of the deceased. When requested by the next of kin, the ceremonial paying of respect and gratitude to those who have faithfully defended our Nation MUST include the following:

- **The sounding of "Taps" and ceremonial folding and presentation of the American flag.**
  (The flag is always presented by the detail leader.)

The detail leader will coordinate all arrangements with the funeral director, other member(s) of the military honors detail, and with Authorized Providers, such as The American Legion. He or she will ensure the funeral director explains military honors to the family, and that they understand the honors to be performed. It is especially important the family know about the firing of three volleys, if a firing party is present.

Additional Military Funeral Honors elements should be in accordance with the family's wishes.
Once the detail leader has completed initial coordination, his or her final pre-interment responsibility is to train and rehearse the detail.

It is important for all involved to remember the detail leader bears the responsibility for all aspects of the Military Funeral Honors Ceremony, whether active duty service members or Authorized Providers perform those elements of the honors.

Positioning/Timing Protocol

1. **The order of the ceremony is the sounding of "Taps," the folding of the flag, and then the presentation of the flag to the family. If there is a firing party, the volleys are fired before the sounding of "Taps."** The detail leader is responsible for ensuring each step in the ceremony is executed properly, from the arrival of the funeral cortege to its departure.

2. The bugler and color guard should be placed at the gravesite so they are in view of the family, approximately 30-40 yards from the grave. The firing party should also be in view of the family, but 45-75 yards from the grave, positioned to fire over the grave.

3. The firing party may include three to eight riflebearers, reflecting the American military custom of firing "three volleys of musketry" over the graves of fallen comrades.

4. The Military Honors detail should be positioned near where the hearse will stop. After the funeral procession has arrived, the funeral director will open the rear of the hearse and the pallbearers should move into position so they can move easily to the back of the hearse when needed.

5. When the family is ready to proceed, the funeral director will signal the pallbearers to withdraw the casket from the hearse and carry it to the grave. The bugler, firing party and color guard are already in their gravesite positions.

6. All detail participants (except for the pallbearers) will come to "Attention" and "Present Arms" as the casket is carried to the grave. All detail participants will "Order arms" after the casket has been placed on the lowering device. Pallbearers may be instructed to hold the flag over the casket, or move off as a group and stand in formation for the service.

7. During the committal or religious service, all the detail participants may go to "Parade Rest."

8. When the committal or religious service is completed, the service representative and assistant will assume the clergy representative's position at the head of the grave and all detail participants will come to the position of "Attention." Then, the funeral director will ask the mourners to stand for the rendering of honors.

9. Once the mourners have risen, the detail leader and all elements will execute "Present Arms," volleys will be fired, and "Taps" sounded. Upon completion of "Taps," all will "Order Arms" and the funeral director will request the mourners to be seated.

10. Next the flag is folded. The two person military detail, the pallbearers, or a combination of the two can do this. Once the flag is folded, it MUST end up in the hands of the detail assistant, who will pass it to the detail leader.

11. The detail leader will present the flag to the next of kin. (The wording accompanying the presentation should be in accordance with each Military Service's tradition of expressing the thanks of a grateful Nation.)

12. Following the flag presentation, the detail leader will offer condolences to the remainder of the immediate family and other mourners seated in the front row. It is appropriate and encouraged for a representative of the Authorized Provider to offer condolences after the detail leader.

13. Once condolences have been offered, the detail leader and assistant will return to the cortege arrival point and await the departure of the cortege. The bugler, firing party and color guard are released when the detail leader departs the gravesite. They may choose to remain in place until the family departs, or can return quietly to their own vehicles.

It is the sacred obligation of all Americans to honor our deceased veterans by performing these time-honored duties in the best tradition of the decedent's Service. America's veterans like The American Legion are helping to fulfill that obligation by supplementing the effort of the Military Services.

Authorized Providers may receive reimbursement for certain expenses incurred in the rendering of Military funeral Honors. The assigned military unit can assist in obtaining the reimbursement. Upon completion of the ceremony, the detail leader MUST ensure the required information on the *Military Funeral Honors Data Collection Form* is completed and submitted to the tasked organization.

As an authorized provider of military funeral honors, The American Legion is the Nation's representative for this most hallowed event. The Legion's dignified

participation reflects the professionalism of our own service to the Nation, and leaves a lasting impression on everyone present – a source of pride and support for the veteran's family, the friends and a grateful nation.

The above are the guidelines to follow if The American Legion is **assisting** as an Authorized Provider.

If The American Legion is conducting the ceremony without the presence of a military detail, established Legion protocol and tradition found in earlier sections of the Manual of Ceremonies may be followed in rendering honors to a veteran who served in the Armed Forces of the United States of America.

PATRIOTIC HOLIDAYS

Memorial Day

Public Hall or Grove

It is well to remember that Memorial Day originated at the close of the Civil War, and therefore, Posts of The American Legion should give due recognition on the program to the veterans of earlier wars.

After the audience is seated, the Post enters, either in uniform or wearing ceremonial badges, and files into reserved space or seats.

The Commander stands before the Post, or upon the platform where the guests, speakers and Chaplain are seated.

Commander: "Comrades, this day is sacred with the almost visible presence of those who have gone before us. We honor the memory of those who gave their lives in the service of our country, and of those others who have dropped their burdens by the wayside of life, and are gone to their eternal rest. May the ceremonies of today deepen your reverence for our departed friends and comrades. Let us renew our pledge of loyalty to our Country and its Flag. Let us resolve by word and deed to emphasize the privilege and duty of patriotism.

"*In place of the following prayer, the Chaplain may deliver one of own of the same length and general tenor.*

Chaplain*:* "Let us pray. Almighty God, Giver of all victories, we thank Thee for the opportunities which abide in our land, for Thy guidance in the hour of peril and Thy tender love in times of need. Help us to remember with reverence the valor and devotion of our departed comrades; not only those whose bodies consecrate our Country's soil, but also those who sleep beyond the seas, and those others whose resting places will not be known

until that last day when the deep will have given up its dead. O God, teach us to honor them by ever cherishing the ideals for which they fought. Keep us steadfast in the cause of human rights and liberties, of law and order, and true Americanism. Give us the power to see, and the will to do the right. Grant that The American Legion may preserve the high ideal for which our comrades died. May Thy merciful blessing rest upon those they left behind. Keep us forever firm in righteousness, humble of heart, and unselfish in purpose. Amen."

Music or readings. The following are suggested: Kipling—Recessional, Alan Seeger—Memorial Day Ode, McCrea—In Flanders Fields.

Speaker, or speakers, of the day, introduced by the Commander.

Tribute to Veterans of all Wars

It is suggested speeches be strictly in the nature of a tribute to, or eulogy of, the dead in all our wars, and speaker should be advised accordingly.

In the absence of a speaker, or if desire for any other reason, the following address may be given:

Commander: "Again our nation has assembled to honor its heroic dead. A thousand battles of land, sea, and air echo the glory of their valiant deeds. Under the quiet sod, or beneath the murmuring waves, their bodies sleep in peace. But in the destinies of veterans, their souls go marching on. Because of them our lives are free. Because of them our nation lives.

"When we recall the things they did, the hero hosts seem mighty in our midst. When peril threatened and their Country called, with what divine self-sacrifice they left their paths of peace to spring to arms, to make their breasts a barricade against the nation's foes. No sorrow for the loved ones left behind could dim the purpose in their souls. No weariness of march and watch could keep them from their hearts' desire. No horror of the field, or sea, or air could beat their courage down.

"They fought for us; for us they fell. Now with one accord, in deepest reverence, we do them honor. Let us not remember them in anguish; they would not wish our pity. For their sakes also let us not forget the loved ones left behind. Our tears or words of sympathy cannot bring back the comfort of those loving hands or the music of those voices stilled. Only the solemn pride of having given more than all the rest is theirs who live to weep. But all the world, because of what they gave, is debtor to them.

"Comrades, on this Memorial Day let us pledge ourselves anew to patriotic service. Let us make ourselves the friend and brother, son and

father, of those who will not see their own again in mortal flesh. Let us grasp with fearless hands the Flag so nobly borne before, and, like those others, plant it always on the battlements of righteousness.

"All who stand with us today, will you not consecrate yourselves with us to emulate their sacred service that those who rest in heroes' graves may not have died in vain?

"Let us stand with bowed heads in solemn memory of our heroic dead."

Thirty seconds' silence.

"The Star-Spangled Banner," sung by the audience.

***Commander**:* "The Chaplain will now pronounce the benediction, after which the audience will please remain until the Post has marched out of the hall."

***Chaplain**:* "Benediction." *The Post files out of the hall.*

Cemetery Ceremony

In case there are no exercises elsewhere, those at the cemetery may be lengthened to include Memorial Day Service for Public Hall of Grove.

Order of March:

1. Colors
2. Music
3. Firing Squad
4. American Legion
5. Others *On arrival at the cemetery, the procession is drawn up in hollow square, or other suitable formation.*

***Commander**:* "1. *Parade.* 2. *Rest.*" *Execute parade rest, inclining the head.*

***Commander**:* "Comrades, attend the Memorial prayer."

***Chaplain**:* "Eternal God, we thank Thee for this hallowed soil. Make us worthy, we pray Thee, to guard our heritage of pride through all the years to come. In memory of these, our dead, may we pledge to our beloved land the same service and the same devotion. And, O Lord, secure to us evermore the peace for which our comrades died. Amen."

The following floral ceremony may be omitted.

***Commander**:* "Sergeant-at-Arms (or other comrade designated), you will deposit upon the monument (or graves) of our comrades a token of our enduring memory."

Sergeant-at-Arms deposits flowers.

***Commander**:* "The flowers may wither, but the spirit of which they are the symbol will endure until the end of time."

In the case of naval Posts, it may be desired to scatter flowers on sea or a stream instead.

Commander *(to the officer in charge of Firing Squad):* "Salute the dead!"

Officer in charge of Firing Squad shall cause the salute to be fired in the manner prescribed by the Infantry Drill Regulations in force at the time.

Bugler: Taps.

Post returns in the same order of march as before.

Independence Day

This ceremony is intended for public halls or groves where public services are held.

The audience is seated. After the preliminary parade, the Post enters, in uniform or wearing ceremonial badges, and files into the reserved space, or seats. The Commander takes designated place upon the platform with the Chaplain, guests and speaker.

Commander: "(Post, Name and #), Department of ....., The American Legion, attention to orders."

The Adjutant shall read orders.

After the rewarding of orders, the Post will be seated.

Commander: "Comrades and friends: We meet to celebrate the anniversary of our Country's independence. The Vice-Commander will read portions from the Declaration made by our forefathers on July 4, 1776."

The Vice-Commander shall then read:

"When, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature and of nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. That to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed and that whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, and to institute a new government, laying its foundation on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness. Prudence, indeed, will

dictate that governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shown that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursing invariably the same object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such government, and to provide new guards for their future security. Such has been the patient sufferance of these colonies; and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former systems of government. The history of the present King of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over the states. To prove this, let facts be submitted to a candid world.

"We, therefore, the representatives of the United States of America, in General Congress, assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the name, and by the authority of the good people of these colonies, solemnly publish and declare, that these united colonies are, and of right ought to be free and independent states; that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connection between them and the state of Great Britain, is and ought to be totally dissolved; and that as free and independent states, they have full power to levy war, conclude peace, contract alliances, establish commerce, and to do all other acts and things which independent states may of right do. And for the support of this declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes and our sacred honor."

***Commander**:* "This declaration was followed by years of struggles. Therefrom our nation was born, and on September 17, 1787; it adopted the Constitution, the charter of our rights and liberties, whose preamble I now request our Second Vice-Commander to read."

Second Vice-Commander: "We, the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this constitution for the United States of America."

Commander: "This government guaranteed by these great documents has been preserved to the present day. We now pay tribute to those who fought

for its establishment and preservation. The same spirit which animated them promoted the heroes of the World War of 1917 and 1918 to fight to preserve the freedom of civilization of the world. Out of that struggle grew The American Legion, whose preamble I now request the Chaplain to read."

***Chaplain**:* "For God and Country, we associate ourselves together for the following purposes:

"To uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States of America: to maintain law and order; to foster and perpetuate a one hundred percent Americanism; to preserve the memories and incidents of our association in the Great Wars; to inculcate a sense of individual obligation to the community, state and nation; to combat the autocracy of both the classes and the masses; to make right the master of might; to promote peace and good will on earth; to safeguard and transmit to Posterity the principles of Justice, Freedom and Democracy; to consecrate and sanctify our comradeship by our devotion to mutual helpfulness."

Music.

The Commander will introduce the speaker of the day.

It is optional for the Post to have children in patriotic dress to sing "America," "Columbia, the Gem of the Ocean," or other patriotic music at this point.

Chaplain: "Let us stand in silence in memory and in honor of the soldiers of the Revolutionary War and those after them who have fought that Liberty might endure."

"The Star-Spangled Banner."

The Post files out and is dismissed.

Veterans Day

Public Hall or Grove

The Post files in and is seated in reserved space or seats. The Commander, Chaplain and other officers or members with speaking parts take their places on the platform. The active parts are given by four officers or other members designated by the Commander.

***Commander**:* "The Chaplain will offer prayer."

The following prayer is optional. In its place the Chaplain may deliver one of own of the same length and tenor. If any member shall object to prayer on conscientious grounds, then thirty seconds' silence in memory of the dead shall be observed, provided the same is so ordered by a majority of the members present.

***Chaplain**:* "O God of Hosts, we bow our heads in thankfulness for the victories Thou hast granted us—to us and to those peoples who have united with us to stamp out the evils of aggression, intolerance and greed.

"We beseech Thee to bring the blessings of understanding to the families and friends, in this and other lands, of those who have given their lives that men may be free. Grant, O God, that those closest to the fallen may mingle the pain of their losses with the ennobling light of sacrifice for civilization—sacrifice for a better world for this and other generations yet unborn.

"Grant us too, O God, the courage to so live with the family of nations around the world that the end of strife will be the beginning of enduring peace. Grant us patience in planning with our fellow men and women a world in which nations may resolve their differences by peaceful means.

"Touch Thou the souls of people in every land with the enduring light of wisdom so they may form a brotherhood which will strive to further the arts of peace under laws and ethics blessed by Thy love.

"Grant us now Thy continued blessing upon unity and strength, that makes victories possible in war, that we may win greater victories of peace.

"Amen."

Music or singing:

***Commander**:* "On this day, Veterans Day, we are commemorating the services of veterans of all wars.

"We remember how men and women set aside their civilian pursuits to serve their nation's cause, defending the freedom of mankind and preserving our precious American heritage.

"We believe our strength on the field of battle, on the supply lines which nourished our armed might, lay in the justice of our cause against the forces of evil. We believe our determination made us better warriors because we fought with our minds and our hearts as well as our bodies.

"We recognize service to our country and her cause does not end with the termination of military service. We continue our endeavors in behalf of an honorable world peace with a feeling of profound gratitude to God, and to the men and women who gave their lives as their part of the cost of this noblest of causes.

"Out of blood and sweat we learned of purpose, sacrifice, tolerance, bravery and discipline. These are solid foundation stones upon which a great nation is built. In our continuing quest for an honorable world peace we must cultivate these virtues."

***President or representative of the American Legion Auxiliary**:* "The waging of war involves more than just the combatants who fight to the death on the field of battle. The fighting forces begin at the fireside and in the

hometowns. The repercussions of war's terrible brutality have chilled the heart and dimmed the hopes and dreams of many a loved one left behind on the homefront.

"While the horrors of the battlefield may not have been our experience, we have lived with the terrifying loneliness created to answer an aggressor's challenge.

"In waging war, we have moved forward with a unity of purpose which made us strong, forgetting pettiness, egotism and pride. Our hearts beat in tune with those in other nations fighting for freedom and the dignity and opportunity of mankind. In our constant quest for an honorable world peace, there is need for unity of purpose if we truly are to move toward a brighter tomorrow."

First Officer: "If there be glory in war, it is the almost incredible spirit which it engenders. Those who offered their lives, sacrifice their all, with magnificent abandon. Heroism becomes contagious. Yet, too, in warfare, greed and brutality are epidemic. Too often it is these later which persist in the peace that follows. Let us strive to see the same spirit of self-sacrifice is cultivated in peace as has been exhibited in war.

"It behooves us to rear new standards of success, to inspire youth in peace as youth was inspired in war. Public honor must be given, where public honor is due; not to the manipulator of a market, the seeker after profit, power or position; but rather, let us honor the heroes of science who alleviate human suffering and carry to greater heights the standards of civilization.

"Let us honor those who in public service seek not how much they may secure from the nation but how much they can give. Let us honor those who devote their lives to that education which will lead our children on to live and laugh and learn and love, as we have only dreamed of doing. Let us honor those veterans who carry into ordinary affairs of life a noble idealism and sincere capacity for self-devotion. Let us translate the devotion of war into a devotion of peace. Let us will to live as well as die for our Country."

Woman Veteran: "The hurts of war fall alike upon those who wear the same uniform, no matter how they may differ in race, creed or culture. Those who fight together suffer together to achieve a common aim.

"In the similarity of battle dress, there is a common denominator. The common purpose, the sharing of danger and suffering which brings in time of war a tolerance which adds strength to the cause.

"As we put aside the brown and blue and green fabrics that made us one people on the battlefields, we can hold in our minds that tolerance we have achieved. In tolerance there is progress—progress toward a better and a happier world."

***Second Officer**:* "Courage is one of the virtues born of war—the courage of individuals in the face of danger and the courage of nations to protect the weak and punish the aggressor.

"There is bravery to be shown in peace as well. May we recapture the courage which turned the wilderness into cities, that bound men together under government.

"We can turn slums into comfortable homes; turn uncertainty into certainty. We can reach new heights of civilization and opportunity for the men and women of this nation if we have the courage to expect and work for a better way of life.

"There can be romance in this challenge also. The bravery that fights for political, social, economic and spiritual gains may be more difficult to practice—may be unsung when achieved—but it is all the more worth striving for."

***Third Officer**:* "War has taught us the lesson of obedience to command.

'The game is more than the player . . .

And the ship is more than the crew.'

"There is a greater discipline we must now pursue if we are to preserve this virtue of obedience in our quest for an honorable world peace. That is obedience to the laws we, ourselves, make—the voluntary discipline of citizenship.

"Under our system of government we may change the laws by majority rule. We may persuade our neighbors to new theories or new courses. We may advocate in free elections the choice of veterans or plans. As good citizens we follow the choice of the majority, whether that choice be the individual's or not.

"This is the virtue of discipline which must be ours in peace. This is the lesson we must learn at home, in school, on the playing fields, in organizations, in the community, and the nation. It is the lesson of voluntary obedience to the decisions of the majority.

"We must not be unmindful either of the conclusions of other peoples with whom we have joined in the quest for an honorable world peace, this is the higher order of disciplines."

Commander: "In time of peace we can use the ennobling virtues of war and put behind us its ugliness and suffering. In peace we shall go forward together to scale new heights of achievement in unity of purpose, in sacrifice for the common good, in tolerance for those of different faiths and creeds, in bravery to fight for social and economic gains, and in the discipline of good citizenship. We shall move forward in the sight of God as a strong nation in a peaceful world."

Other speakers may be introduced by the Commander:

"The Star-Spangled Banner"

Post files out.

FLAG CEREMONIES

Retirement of Old Colors

This ceremony is a suggested outline to be followed when an American Legion organization may wish to retire, not destroy, colors which have become unserviceable.

Commander: "It has been recommended our worn set of old colors be fittingly retired. As they have served our Post for many years and on a great variety of occasions we shall retire them with the respect they deserve.

"Sergeant-at-Arms, you will have the Color Guard advance and present the colors for final inspection."

The colors are brought to the Commander's rostrum in proper form.

Sergeant-at-Arms: "We have the honor to present for inspection and retirement the colors which have served our Post for (name number) years." (Sergeant-at-Arms steps to one side.)

Commander: The members of the inspection team will examine the colors." (The two inspectors can be Post officers.)

First Inspector: "The colors have become faded and worn as a result of use in Post functions. I recommend they be retired."

Second Inspector: "These colors have become unserviceable in a worthy cause and they should be honorably retired from further service.

Commander: "Sergeant-at-Arms, prepare the colors for retirement."

Sergeant-at-Arms instructs the Color Guard to prepare to retire the colors.

The Commander gives three raps of the gavel.

Commander: "The Chaplain will offer prayer."

Chaplain: "Almighty God, Captain of all hosts and Commander over all, bless and consecrate this gathering.

"We thank you for our country and its Flag, and for the liberty for which it stands.

"We thank you for The American Legion and its banner, and the privilege you have given us to serve our country in its hours of need and to continue to serve our country in time of peace. Amen."

***Commander**:* "Sergeant-at-Arms, retire the colors."

It is presumed most Posts will desire to retain their old colors in a trophy case or some other place where they can be properly displayed or stored.

Dignified Disposal of Unserviceable Flags

(Diagram of arrangements appears on a following page)

This is a very desirable ceremony to present as part of a Flag Day observance.

The Post assembles in meeting, out-of-doors, at night. Members are aligned in two parallel rows about twenty feet apart, facing each other. Officers at their stations as shown. A small fire is burning opposite the Commander and beyond the rows of members.

***Sergeant-at-Arms**:* "Comrade Commander, we wish to present a number of unserviceable Flags of our Country for inspection and disposal."

***Commander**:* "Comrade Sergeant-at-Arms, advance with your detail and present the Flags for disposal and inspection."

"*Sergeant-at-Arms calls detail to attention. They form at the Post of the Sergeant-at-Arms, take the Flags which are to be inspected, march abreast down center until opposite the Second Vice-Commander, turn right and halt two paces in front of the Second Vice-Commander. The Sergeant-at-Arms steps one pace forward and salutes.*

***Sergeant-at-Arms**:* "Comrade Vice-Commander, we present these unserviceable Flags for your inspection."

Second Vice-Commander: "Is the present condition of these Flags the result of their usual service as the Emblem of our Country?"

Sergeant-at-Arms: "These flags have become faded and worn over the graves of our departed comrades and the dead soldiers, sailors, and airmen of all our Nation's wars."

***Second Vice-Commander**:* "Present these Flags to the First Vice-Commander for his inspection."

The Sergeant-at-Arms salutes, about faces, commands the detail, "About Face," crosses behind the detail and takes Post at its left, commands "Forward March." The detail marches to within two paces of the First Vice-Commander, halts and proceeds as before.

Sergeant-at-Arms: "Comrade Vice-Commander, we present these Flags which have been inspected by the Second Vice-Commander, for your further inspection."

First Vice-Commander*:* "Have any of these Flags served any other purpose?"

Sergeant-at-Arms*:* "Some of these Flags have been displayed in various public places."

First Vice-Commander*:* "Present them to the Commander for final inspection and dignified disposal."

Sergeant-at-Arms*: The Sergeant-at-Arms salutes, about faces, commands the detail "About Face," crosses behind the detail and takes position on its left commands "Forward March." The detail marches to center, turns left, halts within two paces of the Commander, Sergeant-at-Arms steps one pace forward and salutes.*

Sergeant-at-Arms*:* "Comrade Commander, we have the honor to present for final inspection and proper disposal these Flags of our Country."

Commander*:* "Have these Flags been inspected by the First and Second Vice-Commanders?"

Sergeant-at-Arms*:* "They have."

Commander*:* "Comrade Second Vice-Commander, what does your inspection show and what do you recommend?"

Second Vice-Commander: "Comrade Commander, since these Flags have become unserviceable in a worthy cause, I recommend they be honorably retired from further service."

Commander: "Comrade First Vice-Commander, what does your inspection show and what do you recommend?"

First Vice-Commander*:* "Comrade Commander, since these Flags have become faded and worn in a tribute of service and love, I also recommend they be fittingly destroyed."

Commander: "Comrades, we have presented here these Flags of our Country which have been inspected and condemned as unserviceable. They have reached their present state in a proper service of tribute, memory and love.

"A Flag may be a flimsy bit of printed gauze, or a beautiful banner of finest silk. Its intrinsic value may be trifling or great; but is real value is beyond price, for it is a precious symbol of all that we and our comrades have worked for and lived for, and died for—a free nation of free men and

women, true to the faith of the past, devoted to the ideals and practice of Justice, Freedom and Democracy.

"Let these faded Flags of our Country be retired and destroyed with respectful and honorable rites and their places be taken by bright new Flags of the same size and kind, and let no grave of our soldier, sailor, or airman dead be unhonored and unmarked. Sergeant-at-Arms, assemble the Color Guard, escort the detail bearing the Flags and destroy these Flags by burning. The members shall stand at attention."

Color Guard forms. The detail about faces. Preceded by the Color Guard, the detail marches down center to the fire. National Colors cross over and take position on the right of the fire, facing the Commander. Post Standard takes position on left of fire. The detail lines up behind the fire, which is burning low.

***Commander**:* "The Chaplain will offer prayer."

***Chaplain**:* "Almighty God, Captain of all hosts and Commander over all, bless and consecrate this present hour.

"We thank you for our Country and its Flag, and for the liberty for which it stands.

"To a clean and purging flame we commit these Flags, worn out in worthy service. As they yield their substance to the fire, may your Holy Light spread over us and bring our hearts renewed devotion to God and Country. Amen."

Commander: "Hand salute."

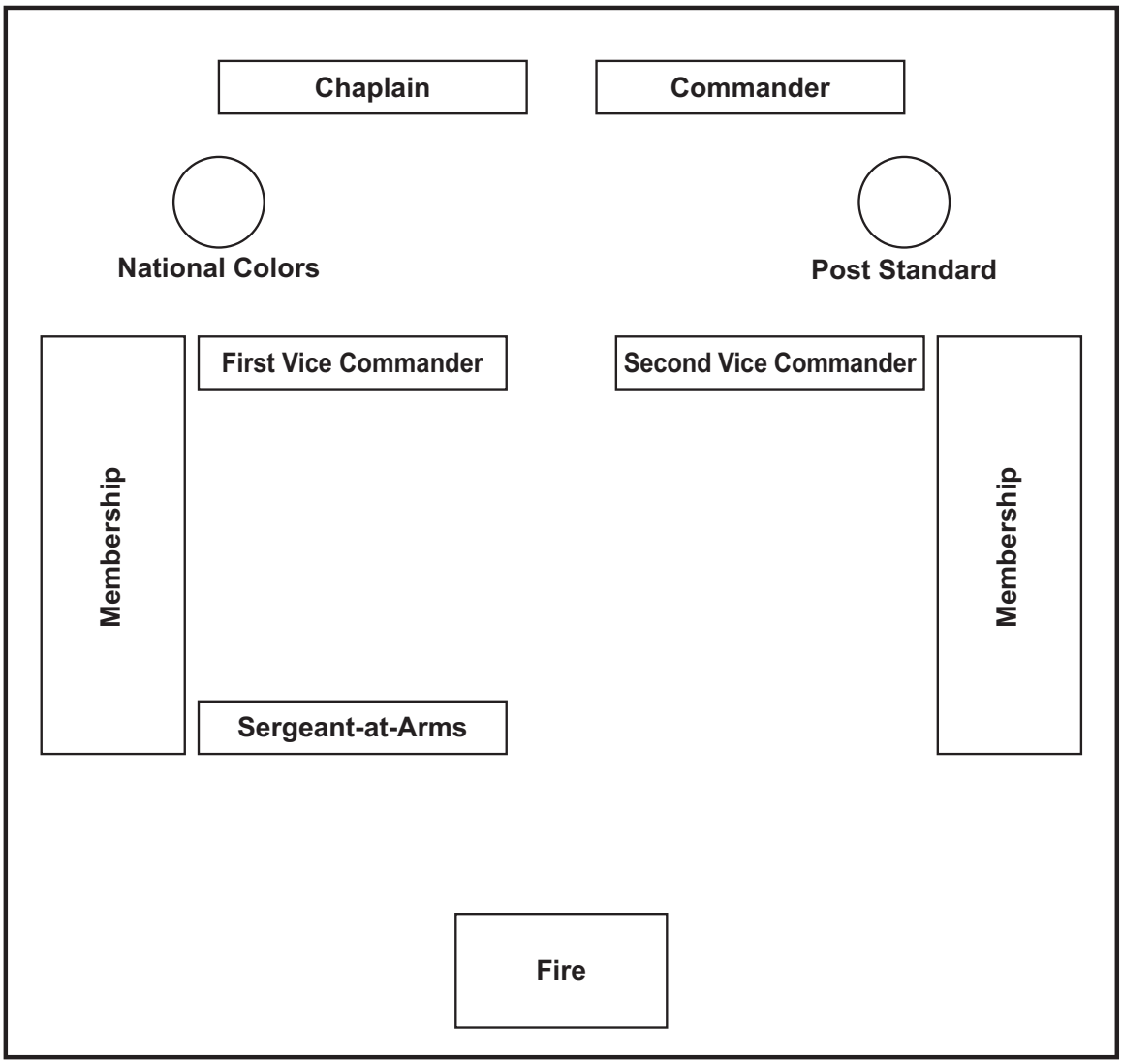
Color Guards present arms. Post Standard is dipped. All officers and members, except those on the Flag detail, salute. Members of the Flag detail dip the condemned Flags in kerosene and place them on a rack over the fire. ***Bugler*** *sounds "To the Colors."*

***Commander**, at conclusion of "To the Colors:" "Two."*

The Color Guard shall resume its station and detail is dismissed.

Color Guard advances down center and places Colors. Members of the detail resume their places among the members.

Diagram – Dignified Disposal of Unserviceable Flags



Flag Presentation

1. Open ceremony with Chairman or Master of Ceremonies calling gathering to order and briefly outlining purpose of meeting.

EXAMPLE—The audience will please come to order. We gathered here for an

important patriotic and solemn purpose. To witness the presentation of the Flag of our country, "Old Glory" to ....., by ..... .

2. Let us stand while .... pronounces the invocation. (Post Chaplain or local minister)

3. Reading—"Your Flag and My Flag," by Wilbur D. Nesbit (Chairman introduces person who will give the reading). Note: Check your School or Public Library for other appropriate verse on the Flag.

4. Purpose of Presentation—A brief explanation of purpose of presentation, the organization or person presenting the Flag and the organization or individual to whom the Flag is to be presented. (By chair or other designated person.)

5. Presentation of Flag—Person making presentation should have Flag ready. Be sure Flag has been properly folded in form of colonial hat with only the blue field and stars thereon showing. (See "Flag and Flag Etiquette" in index.) Person who is to receive the Flag is called from the front of audience, and after a few well-chosen words by the presenting person, receives the Flag.

EXAMPLE—It is a great privilege and pleasure to have the honor of presenting this beautiful symbol of our country, the Flag of the United States of America, "The Stars and Stripes," to ....., on behalf of ..... . May it always fly over our land, representing a government instituted by our founding fathers, that will always champion Freedom and Justice.

6. Acceptance of the Flag—Person receiving Flag makes acceptance speech.

EXAMPLE—With sincere thanks and appreciation, I accept this beautiful and precious Flag on behalf of ..... . Thank you.

7. The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag should be recited by everyone present. (Legionnaires will remove their caps.)

8. Mass singing— "The Star-Spangled Banner," "America," or other appropriate patriotic song.

9. Benediction.

Note—This suggested program is for a brief ceremony. Should a more elaborate program be desired, such as raising the Flag on a flagpole, etc., hold presentation ceremonies as indicated above and extend program following item #6 and before mass singing and the benediction.

If a flag raising is included in the ceremony, it's recommended an Honor Guard consisting of at least seven (7) riflemen, two (2) Color Bearers carrying the American Flag and American Legion Colors, and two (2) Legionnaires to raise the Flag be marched to the flagpole. (A 150 feet distance is recommended, although this will vary as circumstances permit.)

After the Flag is raised, and/or National Anthem is played, the Honor Guard should fire one volley as a salute to the Flag.

If a band is not available to play the National Anthem, a bugler could be substituted to play "To the Colors."

The Flag Code

Title 4, United States Code, Chapter 1

As amended by P. L. 80, 106th Congress, 1st Session, October 25, 1999.

As Adopted by the National Flag Conference, Washington, D.C., June 14-15, 1923, and Revised and Endorsed by the Second National Flag Conference, Washington, D.C., May 15, 1924. Revised and adopted at P.L. 623, 77th Congress, Second Session, June 22, 1942; as Amended by P.L. 829, 77th Congress, Second Session, December 22, 1942; P.L. 107 83rd Congress, 1st Session, July 9, 1953; P.L. 396, 83rd Congress, Second Session, June 14, 1954; P.L. 363, 90th Congress, Second Session, June 28, 1968; P.L. 344, 94th Congress, Second Session, July 7, 1976; P.L. 322, 103rd Congress, Second Session, September 13, 1994; P.L. 225, 105th Congress, Second Session, August 12, 1998; and P.L. 80, 106th Congress, First Session, October 25, 1999.

§ 4. Pledge of Allegiance to the flag; manner of delivery

The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag, "I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all," should be rendered by standing at attention facing the flag with the right hand over the heart. When not in uniform men should remove their headdress with their right hand and hold it at the left shoulder, the hand being over the heart. Persons in uniform should remain silent, face the flag, and render the military salute.

§ 5. Display and use of flag by civilians; codification of rules and customs; definition

The following codification of existing rules and customs pertaining to the display and use of the flag of the United States of America is established for the use of such civilians or civilian groups or organizations as may not be required to conform with regulations promulgated by one or more executive departments of the Government of the United States. The flag of the United States for the purpose of this chapter shall be defined according to sections 1 and 2 of this title and Executive Order 10834 issued pursuant thereto.

§ 6. Time and occasions for display

(a) It is the universal custom to display the flag only from sunrise to sunset on buildings and on stationary flagstaffs in the open. However, when a patriotic effect is desired, the flag may be displayed 24 hours a day if properly illuminated during the hours of darkness.

(b) The flag should be hoisted briskly and lowered ceremoniously.

(c) The flag should not be displayed on days when the weather is inclement, except when an all weather flag is displayed.

(d) The flag should be displayed on all days, especially on New Year's Day, January 1; Inauguration Day, January 20; Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday, the third Monday in January; Lincoln's Birthday, February 12; Washington's Birthday, third Monday in February; Easter Sunday (variable); Mother's Day, second Sunday in May; Armed Forces Day, third Saturday in May; Memorial Day (half-staff until noon), the last Monday in May; Flag Day, June 14; Independence Day, July 4; Labor Day, first Monday in September; Constitution Day, September 17; Columbus Day, second Monday in October; Navy Day, October 27; Veterans Day, November 11; Thanksgiving Day, fourth Thursday in November; Christmas Day, December 25; and such other days as may be proclaimed by the President of the United States; the birthdays of States (date of admission); and on State holidays.

(e) The flag should be displayed daily on or near the main administration building of every public institution.

(f) The flag should be displayed in or near every polling place on election days.

(g) The flag should be displayed during school days in or near every schoolhouse.

§ 7. Position and manner of display

The flag, when carried in a procession with another flag or flags, should be either on the marching right; that is, the flag's own right, or, if there is a line of other flags, in front of the center of that line.

(a) The flag should not be displayed on a float in a parade except from a staff, or as provided in subsection (i) of this section.

(b) The flag should not be draped over the hood, top, sides, or back of a vehicle or of a railroad train or a boat. When the flag is displayed on a motorcar, the staff shall be fixed firmly to the chassis or clamped to the right fender.

(c) No other flag or pennant should be placed above or, if on the same level, to the right of the flag of the United States of America, except during church services conducted by naval chaplains at sea, when the church pennant may be flown above the flag during church services for the personnel of the Navy. No person shall display the flag of the United Nations or any other national or international flag equal, above, or in a position of superior prominence or honor to, or in place of, the flag of the United States at any place within the United States or any Territory or possession thereof: Provided, That nothing in this section shall make unlawful the continuance of the practice heretofore followed of displaying the flag of the United Nations in a position of superior prominence or honor, and other national flags in positions of equal prominence or honor, with that of the flag of the United States at the headquarters of the United Nations.

(d) The flag of the United States of America, when it is displayed with another flag against a wall from crossed staffs, should be on the right, the flag's own right, and its staff should be in front of the staff of the other flag.

(e) The flag of the United States of America should be at the center and at the highest point of the group when a number of flags of States or localities or pennants of societies are grouped and displayed from staffs.

(f) When flags of States, cities, or localities, or pennants of societies are flown on the same halyard with the flag of the United States, the latter should always be at the peak. When the flags are flown from adjacent staffs, the flag of the United States should be hoisted first and lowered last. No such flag or pennant may be placed above the flag of the United States or to the United States flag's right.

(g) When flags of two or more nations are displayed, they are to be flown from separate staffs of the same height. The flags should be of approximately equal size. International usage forbids the display of the flag of one nation above that of another nation in time of peace.

(h) When the flag of the United States is displayed from a staff projecting horizontally or at an angle from the windowsill, balcony, or front of a building, the union of the flag should be placed at the peak of the staff unless the flag is at half-staff. When the flag is suspended over a sidewalk from a rope extending from a house to a pole at the edge of the sidewalk, the flag should be hoisted out, union first, from the building.

(i) When displayed either horizontally or vertically against a wall, the union should be uppermost and to the flag's own right, that is, to the observer's left. When displayed in a window, the flag should be displayed in the same way, with the union or blue field to the left of the observer in the street.

(j) When the flag is displayed over the middle of the street, it should be suspended vertically with the union to the north in an east and west street or to the east in a north and south street.

(k) When used on a speaker's platform, the flag, if displayed flat, should be displayed above and behind the speaker. When displayed from a staff in a church or public auditorium, the flag of the United States of America should hold the position of superior prominence, in advance of the audience, and in the position of honor at the clergyman's or speaker's right as he faces the audience. Any other flag so displayed should be placed on the left of the clergyman or speaker or to the right of the audience.

(l) The flag should form a distinctive feature of the ceremony of unveiling a statue or monument, but it should never be used as the covering for the statue or monument.

(m) The flag, when flown at half-staff, should be first hoisted to the peak for an instant and then lowered to the half-staff position. The flag should be again raised to the peak before it is lowered for the day. On Memorial Day the flag should be displayed at half-staff until noon only, then raised to the top of the staff. By order of the President, the flag shall be flown at half-staff upon the death of principal figures of the United States Government and the Governor of a State, territory, or possession, as a mark of respect to their memory. In the event of the death of other officials or foreign dignitaries, the flag is to be displayed at half-staff according to Presidential instructions or orders, or in accordance with recognized customs or practices not inconsistent with law. In the event of the death of a present or former official of the government of any State, territory, or possession of the United States, the Governor of that State, territory, or possession may proclaim that the National flag shall be flown at half-staff. The flag shall be flown at half-staff 30 days from the death of the President or a former President; 10 days from the day of death of the Vice President, the Chief Justice or a retired Chief Justice of the United States, or the Speaker of the House of Representatives; from the day of death until interment of an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court, a Secretary of an executive or military department, a former Vice President, or the Governor of a State, territory, or possession; and on the day of death and the following day for a Member of Congress. The flag shall be flown at half-staff on Peace Officers Memorial Day, unless that day is also Armed Forces Day. As used in this subsection -
(1) the term "half-staff" means the position of the flag when it is one-half the distance between the top and bottom of the staff;
(2) the term "executive or military department" means any agency listed under sections 101 and 102 of title 5, United States Code; and
(3) the term "Member of Congress" means a Senator, a Representative, a Delegate, or the Resident Commissioner from Puerto Rico.
(n) When the flag is used to cover a casket, it should be so placed that the union is at the head and over the left shoulder. The flag should not be lowered into the grave or allowed to touch the ground.
(o) When the flag is suspended across a corridor or lobby in a building with only one main entrance, it should be suspended vertically with the union of the flag to the observer's left upon entering. If the building has more than one main entrance, the flag should be suspended vertically near the center of the corridor or lobby with the union to the north, when entrances are to the east and west or to the east when entrances are to the north and south. If there are entrances in more than two directions, the union should be to the east.

§ 8. Respect for flag

No disrespect should be shown to the flag of the United States of America; the flag should not be dipped to any person or thing. Regimental colors, State flags, and organization or institutional flags are to be dipped as a mark of honor.
(a) The flag should never be displayed with the union down, except as a signal of dire distress in instances of extreme danger to life or property.
(b) The flag should never touch anything beneath it, such as the ground, the floor, water, or merchandise.
(c) The flag should never be carried flat or horizontally, but always aloft and free.
(d) The flag should never be used as wearing apparel, bedding, or drapery. It should never be festooned, drawn back, nor up, in folds, but always allowed to fall free. Bunting of blue, white, and red, always arranged with the blue above, the white in the middle, and the red below, should be used for covering a speaker's desk, draping the front of the platform, and for decoration in general.
(e) The flag should never be fastened, displayed, used, or stored in such a manner as to permit it to be easily torn, soiled, or damaged in any way.
(f) The flag should never be used as a covering for a ceiling.
(g) The flag should never have placed upon it, nor on any part of it, nor attached to it any mark, insignia, letter, word, figure, design, picture, or drawing of any nature.

(h) The flag should never be used as a receptacle for receiving, holding, carrying, or delivering anything.
(i) The flag should never be used for advertising purposes in any manner whatsoever. It should not be embroidered on such articles as cushions or handkerchiefs and the like, printed or otherwise impressed on paper napkins or boxes or anything that is designed for temporary use and discard. Advertising signs should not be fastened to a staff or halyard from which the flag is flown.
(j) No part of the flag should ever be used as a costume or athletic uniform. However, a flag patch may be affixed to the uniform of military personnel, firemen, policemen, and members of patriotic organizations. The flag represents a living country and is itself considered a living thing. Therefore, the lapel flag pin being a replica, should be worn on the left lapel near the heart.
(k) The flag, when it is in such condition that it is no longer a fitting emblem for display, should be destroyed in a dignified way, preferably by burning.

§ 9. Conduct during hoisting, lowering or passing of flag

During the ceremony of hoisting or lowering the flag or when the flag is passing in a parade or in review, all present except those in uniform should face the flag and stand at attention with the right hand over the heart. Those present in uniform should render the military salute. When not in uniform, men should remove their headdress with their right hand and hold it at the left shoulder, the hand being over the heart. Aliens should stand at attention. The salute to the flag in a moving column should be rendered at the moment the flag passes.

§ 10. Modification of rules and customs by President

Any rule or custom pertaining to the display of the flag of the United States of America, set forth herein, may be altered, modified, or repealed, or additional rules with respect thereto may be prescribed, by the Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces of the United States, whenever he deems it to be appropriate or desirable; and any such alteration or additional rule shall be set forth in a proclamation.

Note: For uniformity when reciting the "Pledge of Allegiance," in an attitude of prayer, or in paying respect to the deceased, each Legionnaire should hold the Legion cap by inserting the fingers of the right hand into the cap, leaving the front of the cap at the top and placed over the heart with the Legion Emblem facing outward.

Prayers For Special Occasions

With greater emphasis given by The American Legion to the "God and Country" program, many Post Chaplains have been asked to give prayers at meetings other than Post meetings. Therefore, the following prayers have been printed as a guide for their use:

For Joint Meetings

Most gracious Father of us all, from Whom comes all help and blessings, look upon us gathered here, and with Thy favor, direct us in all our actions. Grant to us vigilant hearts; give us minds to know Thee, diligence to seek Thee, and wisdom to find Thee. Sanctify us with Thy presence, bless us with Thy might, and assist us with Thy counsel; that all our endeavors may begin with Thee and through Thee may be happily ended. AMEN.

Benediction

May the strength of God sustain us; may the power of God preserve us; may the hand of God protect us; may the way of God direct us; may the love of God go with us. AMEN.

Memorial Service

Almighty God, our Heavenly Father, who hast dominion over life and death, grant to us the grace to remember with love and reverence our valiant and honored departed comrade. Grant peace and eternal rest to those who have gone before us, and make us ready for that last hour. Strengthen and console those in sorrow and bestow upon us Thy everlasting blessing. AMEN.

APPENDIX SECTION 4

Official

The National Constitution of THE AMERICAN LEGION as set out herein, is in full force and effect and represents action taken by National Conventions, being the Constitution adopted at the First Annual Convention, Minneapolis, Minn., Nov. 10-12, 1919, and as amended at the Second Annual Convention, Cleveland, Oh., Sept. 27-29, 1920; Fourth Annual Convention, New Orleans, La., Oct. 16-20, 1922; Fifth Annual Convention, San Francisco, Calif., Oct. 15-19, 1923; Sixth Annual Convention, St. Paul, Minn., Sept. 15-19, 1924; Seventh Annual Convention, Omaha, Nebr., Oct. 5-9, 1925; Ninth Annual Convention, Paris, France, Sept. 19-22, and Ratification Convention, New York N.Y., Oct. 19-22, 1927; Twelfth Annual Convention, Boston, Mass., Oct. 6-9, 1930; Fifteenth Annual Convention, Chicago, Ill., Oct. 2-5, 1933; Nineteenth Annual Convention, New York, N.Y., Sept. 20-23, 1937; Twentieth Annual Convention, Los Angeles, Calif., Sept. 19-22, 1938; Twenty-first Annual Convention, Chicago, Ill., Sept. 25-28, 1939; Twenty-second Annual Convention, Boston, Mass., Sept. 23-26, 1940; Twenty-third Annual Convention, Milwaukee, Wis., Sept.18, 1941; Twenty-fourth Annual Convention, Kansas City, Mo., Sept. 19-21, 1942; Twenty-fifth Annual Convention, Omaha, Neb., Sept. 21-23, 1943; Twenty-seventh Annual Convention, Chicago, Ill., Nov. 18-21, 1945; Twenty-eighth Annual Convention, San Francisco, Calif., Sept. 30-Oct. 1-4, 1946; Twenty-ninth Annual Convention, New York, N.Y., Aug. 28-31, 1947; Thirtieth Annual Convention, Miami, Fla., Oct. 18-21, 1948; Thirty-first Annual Convention, Philadelphia, Pa., Aug. 29-Sept. 1, 1949; Thirty-second Annual Convention, Los Angeles, Calif., Oct. 9-12, 1950; Thirty-third Annual Convention, Miami, Fla., Oct. 15-18, 1951; Thirty-fourth Annual Convention, New York, N.Y., Aug. 25-28, 1952; Thirty-sixth Annual Convention, Washington, D.C., Aug.30-Sept. 2, 1954; Thirty-seventh Annual Convention, Miami, Fla. Oct. 10-13, 1955; Thirty-eighth Annual Convention, Los Angeles, Calif., Sept. 3-6, 1956; Fortieth Annual Convention, Chicago, Ill., Sept. 1-4, 1958; Forty-second Annual Convention, Miami Beach, Fla., Oct. 17-20, 1960; Forty-eighth Annual Convention, Washington, D.C., Aug. 30-Sept. 1, 1966; Fifty-second Annual Convention, Portland, Ore., Sept. 1-3, 1970; Fifty-fourth Annual Convention, Chicago, Ill., Aug. 22-24, 1972; Fifty-fifth Annual Convention, Honolulu, Hi., Aug. 21-23, 1973; Fifty-sixth Annual Convention, Miami Beach, Fla., Aug. 20-22, 1974; Fifty-eighth Annual Convention, Seattle, Wash., Aug. 24-26, 1976; Fifty-ninth Annual Convention, Denver, Colo., Aug. 23-25, 1977; Sixty-first Annual Convention, Houston, Tex., Aug. 21-23, 1979; Sixty-ninth Annual Convention, San Antonio, Tex., Aug. 25-27, 1987; Seventy-second Annual Convention, Indianapolis, Ind., Aug. 28-30, 1990; Seventy-third Annual Convention, Phoenix, Arizona, Sept. 3-5, 1991; the Seventy-seventh Annual Convention, Indianapolis, Ind., Sept. 4-6, 1995; Seventy-ninth Annual Convention, Orlando, Fla., Sept. 2-4, 1997*; Eighty-second Annual Convention, Milwaukee, Wis., Sept. 5-7, 2000; and reiterated at the Eighty-third Annual Convention, Charlotte, NC, Aug. 27-29, 2002; (as found in italic print).*

The By-Laws as adopted at the Fourth Annual Convention, New Orleans, La., Oct. 16-20, 1922, and as amended at the Fifth Annual Convention, San Francisco, Calif., Oct. 15-19, 1923; Sixth Annual Convention, St. Paul, Minn., Sept. 15-19, 1924; Eleventh Annual Convention, Louisville, Ky., Sept. 30-Oct. 1, 2, 3, 1929; Fifteenth Annual Convention, Chicago, Ill., Oct. 2-5, 1933; Nineteenth Annual Convention, New York, N.Y., Sept. 20-23, 1937; Twentieth Annual Convention, Los Angeles, Calif., Sept. 19-22, 1938; Twenty-first Annual Convention, Chicago, Ill., Sept. 25-28, 1939; Twenty-second Annual Convention, Boston, Mass., Sept. 23-26, 1940; Twenty-third Annual Convention, Milwaukee, Wis., Sept. 15-18, 1941; Twenty-seventh Annual convention, Chicago, Ill., Nov. 18-21, 1945; Twenty-ninth Annual Convention, New York, N.Y., Aug. 28-31, 1947; Thirtieth Annual Convention, Miami, Fla., Oct. 18-21, 1948; Thirty-first Annual convention, Philadelphia, Pa., Aug. 29-Sept. 1, 1949; Thirty-third Annual Convention, Miami, Fla., Oct. 15-18, 1951; Thirty-fourth Annual Convention, New York, N.Y., Aug. 25-28, 1952; Thirty-ninth Annual Convention, Atlantic City, N.J., Sept. 16-19, 1957; Fifty-second Annual Convention, Portland, Ore., Sept. 1-3, 1970; Fifty-eighth Annual Convention, Seattle, Wash., August 24-26, 1976; and Fifty-ninth Annual Convention, Denver, Colo., Aug. 23-25, 1977.

Robert W. Spanogle, National Adjutant

CONSTITUTION
of THE AMERICAN LEGION

PREAMBLE

For God and Country, we associate ourselves together for the following purposes: To uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States of America; to maintain law and order; to foster and perpetuate a one hundred percent Americanism; to preserve the memories and incidents of our associations in the Great Wars; to inculcate a sense of individual obligation to the community, state and nation; to combat the autocracy of both the classes and the masses; to make right the master of might; to promote peace and good will on earth; to safeguard and transmit to Posterity the principles of justice, freedom and democracy; to consecrate and sanctify our comradeship by our devotion to mutual helpfulness.

ARTICLE I
NAME

Section 1. The name of this organization shall be THE AMERICAN LEGION.

Section 2. The National Headquarters of THE AMERICAN LEGION shall be located at the site of the Indiana World War Memorial in the city of Indianapolis, Indiana.

ARTICLE II
NATURE

Section 1. THE AMERICAN LEGION is a civilian organization; membership therein does not affect nor increase liability for military or police service. Rank does not exist in the Legion; no member shall be addressed by his military or naval title in any convention or meeting of the Legion.

Section 2. THE AMERICAN LEGION shall be absolutely nonpolitical and shall not be used for the dissemination of partisan principles nor for the promotion of the candidacy of any person seeking public office or preferment.

ARTICLE III
ORGANIZATION

Section 1. THE AMERICAN LEGION shall be organized in Departments and these in turn in Posts. There shall be one Department in each state, in the District of Columbia, and there may be one Department in each territory and insular possessions of the United States. The National Executive Committee may establish Posts in the territorial and insular possessions of the United States and foreign countries, and shall designate the Department under whose jurisdiction they shall function, but this shall in no way affect the status of Departments already established.

ARTICLE IV
ELIGIBILITY

Section 1. Any person shall be eligible for membership in THE AMERICAN LEGION who was a member of the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard or Air Force of the United States and assigned to active duty at some time during any of the following periods: April 6, 1917, to November 11, 1918; December 7, 1941, to December 31, 1946; June 25, 1950, to January 31, 1955; February 28, 1961, to May 7, 1975; August 24, 1982, to July 31, 1984; December 20, 1989, to January 31, 1990; August 2, 1990, to the date of cessation of hostilities as determined by the Government of the United States; all dates inclusive, or who, being a citizen of the United States at the time of his entry therein, served on active duty in the armed forces of any of the Governments associated with the United States during any of said periods; provided, however, that such service shall have been terminated by honorable discharge or honorable separation, or continued honorably after any of said periods; provided, further, that no person shall be entitled to membership who, being in such service during any of said periods, refused on conscientious, political or other grounds to subject himself to military discipline or unqualified service. *

Section 2. There shall be no form or class of membership except an active membership, and dues shall be paid annually or for life.

Section 3. No person may be a member at any one time of more than one Post.

Section 4. No person, who has been expelled by a Post, shall be admitted to membership in another Post without the consent of the expelling Post, except that where such consent has been asked for and denied by such Post, he may then appeal to the Executive Committee of the Department of the expelling Post for permission to be admitted to membership in another Post, and shall be ineligible for membership until such permission is granted.

* Appendix following National By-Laws, carries amended sections of the National Charter of The American Legion.

ARTICLE V
NATIONAL CONVENTION

Section 1. The legislative body of THE AMERICAN LEGION shall be the National Convention, except as otherwise provided in the Constitution and By-Laws.

Section 2. The time and place of the National Conventions shall be determined by the National Executive Committee, which shall have authority to change such time and place for sufficient reasons to it appearing.

Section 3. In the National Convention each Department shall be entitled to five delegates and one additional delegate for each one thousand members, or major fraction thereof, whose current dues have been received by the National Treasurer 30 days prior to the meeting of said convention, and whose registration fees, as fixed by the National Executive Committee, for its total authorized delegate strength, have been paid; and to one alternate for each delegate. The delegates shall be chosen not less than two weeks before the National Convention at Department Conventions or in any other manner specified by any Department Constitution.

Section 4. Each duly registered delegate shall be entitled to one vote. The vote of any registered delegate absent and not represented by an alternate shall be cast by the majority of the registered delegates present from his Department. Alternates for registered delegates shall have all the privileges of registered delegates, except that of voting. A registered delegate is one who has received his credentials after his registration fee has been paid.

Section 5. A quorum shall exist at a National Convention when sixty percent of the Departments are represented as provided above.

Section 6. The National Executive Committee shall provide a Uniform Code of Procedure for the orderly organization and operation of National Conventions with continuing power of revision, and said Code shall be applicable at all National Conventions unless it is amended, suspended, or repealed by a majority vote of the total authorized representation at a National Convention.

ARTICLE VI
NATIONAL OFFICERS

Section 1. The National Convention shall elect a National Commander, and five National Vice Commanders, who shall serve without seniority. No two Vice Commanders shall be chosen from the same Department. No persons shall be eligible for re-election to the office of National Commander or National Vice Commander.

Section 2. Such officers shall serve until the adjournment of the succeeding National Convention following their election and thereafter until their successors are chosen. Vacancies in these offices occurring between National Conventions shall be filled by election by the National Executive Committee, and any member of THE AMERICAN LEGION, in good standing, shall be eligible for election to such vacancy. Provided, however, that no Past National Commander, or Past National Vice Commander shall be elected to fill any vacancy in these respective offices.

Section 3. The National Executive Committee at its first meeting following the National Convention shall appoint the National Adjutant, National Treasurer, National Judge Advocate, National Chaplain, and National Historian, such officers to hold office at the pleasure of the appointing power. All persons having the custody of funds shall give adequate bonds, which shall be approved by the National Executive Committee.

Section 4. All Past National Commanders, while in good standing in their respective Posts, shall be members for life of the National Executive Committee, without vote, and shall also be life delegates to all National Conventions of THE AMERICAN LEGION, with vote, to be exercised by them with their respective Departments.

ARTICLE VII
NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Section 1. Between National Conventions, the administrative power shall be vested in the National Executive Committee, which shall be composed of the National Commander, the National Vice Commanders, and one National Executive Committeeman and one alternate from each Department to be elected as such Department shall determine, the alternate to act only in the absence of the National Executive Committeeman.

Section 2. The term of office of such National Executive Committeemen and alternates shall be two years. The term of office of each National Executive Committeeman and alternate shall commence immediately upon the adjournment of the National Convention next ensuing after their election and shall end at the adjournment of the second next succeeding annual National Convention.

Section 3. Members of the National Executive Committee shall be delegates to the National Convention with vote, which vote shall be exercised with their respective Departments, except that the vote of the National Commander shall be exercised only in his capacity as chairman of the National Convention.

ARTICLE VIII
DEPARTMENT ORGANIZATION

Section 1. Departments shall be chartered by the National Executive Committee and shall be composed of the Posts within their respective areas, and such other Posts as the National Executive Committee may approve. Each Department charter shall be signed by the National Commander and National Adjutant.

Section 2. Each Department shall have a Department Commander, one or more Department Vice Commanders, a Department Adjutant and a Department Executive Committee, and may have a Chaplain and such other officers as the Department shall determine.

Section 3. Departments shall have authority to create intermediate bodies between the Posts and Department to act as a liaison between such organizations and for the purpose of promoting the programs of THE AMERICAN LEGION.

Section 4. The Department Executive Committee shall define the powers of such intermediate groups, but in no event shall such powers invade the prerogatives now vested either in the Post or Department or National Organization.

Section 5. Such intermediate bodies now existing within the Departments and heretofore authorized or recognized by such Department are hereby officially recognized to the extent of the powers herein granted.

ARTICLE IX
POST ORGANIZATION

Section 1. Those who desire to form a Post shall make application for a temporary charter to the Commander of the Department in which they reside. The temporary charter shall be issued by the National Commander and National Adjutant upon receipt of the application properly executed by the charter members of the projected Post, but only when such application is approved by the Commander of the Department or by the Department Executive Committee.

Section 2. The minimum membership of a Post shall be determined by the Executive Committee of the Department in whose area it lies.

Section 3. No Post shall be named after any living person.

Section 4. A temporary charter shall be granted and shall state that it is granted on the recommendation of the Department and on the following terms and conditions:

1. All acts heretofore duly and properly taken for the formation of the above named Post are recognized and confirmed by the National Executive Committee.

2. The above named Post shall uphold the declared principles of THE AMERICAN LEGION and shall conform to and abide by the regulations and decisions of the Department and of the National Executive Committee, or other duly constituted national governing body of THE AMERICAN LEGION.

3. This charter is subject to revocation by the National Executive Committee on the recommendation of the Department, or by such authority that may hereafter be established by the National Convention.

Section 5. After a temporary charter has been in effect for a probationary period of at least ninety days, application for a permanent charter may be made. Such probationary period shall not exceed one year upon the termination of which the Department shall determine whether or not a permanent charter shall be issued or denied and the action of the Department shall be final.

Section 6. All charters shall be countersigned by the Commander and the Adjutant of the Department.

Section 7. Each Department may prescribe the Constitution of its Posts. Permanent charters may be suspended, cancelled or revoked by the Department Executive Committee as provided in the By-Laws.

ARTICLE X
FINANCE

Section 1. The revenue of THE AMERICAN LEGION shall be derived from annual membership dues and from such other sources as may be approved by the National Executive Committee.

Section 2. The amount of such annual dues shall be determined by each National Convention for the ensuing year.

Section 3. The annual dues shall be collected by each Post and transmitted promptly through the Department to the National Treasurer. Departments are designated agents for collection for THE AMERICAN LEGION with respect to such annual dues and upon the receipt thereof shall remit them promptly to THE AMERICAN LEGION. In no event shall the period transpiring between the receipt of such annual dues by a Department and the remittance thereof to THE AMERICAN LEGION exceed thirty (30) days.

Section 4. Annual dues shall be payable October 20 of each year, for the succeeding calendar year.

ARTICLE XI
DISCIPLINE

Section 1. The National Executive Committee, after notice and a hearing before a subcommittee as hereinafter provided, may cancel, suspend or revoke the charter of a Department for any good and sufficient cause to it appearing.

Section 2. The National Executive Committee may designate, appoint and authorize a subcommittee to hear and try and make written findings of fact and recommendations with reference to the matter of the cancellation, suspension or revocation of the charter of any Department of THE AMERICAN LEGION after said Department shall have received due and proper notice of said hearing and trial. Said subcommittee shall make its written findings and recommendations to the National Executive Committee for its approval or rejection, and the action of said National Executive Committee upon such findings and recommendations shall be final and conclusive.

Section 3. The hearing and trial of any cause involving the cancellation, suspension, or revocation of the charter of any Department in THE AMERICAN LEGION shall be had and held under rules of procedure to be adopted by the National Executive Committee.

Section 4. Upon suspension of the charter of any Department of THE AMERICAN LEGION, the National Executive Committee is authorized, empowered and directed, by and through its duly authorized agents, to take possession, custody and control of all of the records, property and assets of and belonging to such Department, and to provide for the government and administration of such Department during said suspension.

Section 5. Upon cancellation or revocation of the charter of any Department of THE AMERICAN LEGION, the National Executive Committee is authorized, empowered and directed, by and through its duly authorized agents, to take possession, custody and control of all of the records, property and assets of such Department, and to take all necessary and proper steps and proceedings to conclude and close the affairs of such Department, and said National Executive Committee may provide for such continued recognition and activities of Posts in said Departments as it may deem proper.

ARTICLE XII
CHANGE OF RESIDENCE

Section 1. Any member in good standing in a Post removing from his Department shall be entitled to a certificate from his Post stating his membership and the duration thereof.

ARTICLE XIII
AUXILIARIES

Section 1. THE AMERICAN LEGION recognizes an auxiliary organization, known as the American Legion Auxiliary.

Section 2. Membership in the American Legion Auxiliary shall be limited to the mothers, wives, daughters, sisters, granddaughters, great-granddaughters and grandmothers of members of THE AMERICAN LEGION, and to the mothers, wives, daughters, sisters, granddaughters, great-granddaughters and grandmothers of all men and women who were in the Armed Forces of the United States during any of the following periods: April 6, 1917, to November 11, 1918; December 7, 1941, to December 31, 1946; June 25, 1950, to January 31, 1955; February 28, 1961, to May 7, 1975; August 24, 1982, to July 31, 1984; December 20, 1989, to January 31, 1990; August 2, 1990, to the date of cessation of hostilities as determined by the Government of the United States; all dates inclusive, or who, being citizens of the United States at the time of their entry therein, served on active duty in the Armed Forces of any of the governments associated with the United States during any of said periods, and died in the line of duty or after honorable discharge; and to those women who of their own right are eligible for membership in THE AMERICAN LEGION.

Section 3. The Auxiliary shall be governed in each Department of THE AMERICAN LEGION by such rules and regulations as may be prescribed by the National Executive Committee and thereafter approved by such Department of THE AMERICAN LEGION.

ARTICLE XIV
RATIFICATION

Section 1. All acts performed and charters heretofore granted by the temporary organization to THE AMERICAN LEGION are hereby ratified and confirmed.

ARTICLE XV
AMENDMENTS

Section 1. The Constitution may be amended at any National Convention by a vote of two-thirds of the total authorized representation thereat, provided that the proposed amendment shall have been submitted through the National Adjutant to the several Departments and members of the National Executive Committee by mailing same to them at least twenty (20) days prior to the convening of the next National Convention; any such proposed amendment may be amended without further notice by a two-thirds vote of the total authorized representation thereat, provided it does not increase the modification proposed by the amendment and it has received the approval of the Convention Committee on Constitutional Amendments; and, provided further, it may be amended by unanimous vote at any National Convention without notice.

Section 2. That no proposed amendment shall be submitted through the National Adjutant to the several Departments and members of the National Executive Committee, as provided in Section 1 of this article, unless said proposed amendment shall have been first submitted by a Department Convention, Department Executive Committee, or the National Executive Committee.

ARTICLE XVI
NATIONAL INCORPORATION

This Constitution is adopted conformably to the Act of Congress of the United States of America of September 16, 1919, and all amendatory acts thereto.

ARTICLE XVII

In the event the Congress of the United States shall amend the eligibility clause in the Act creating THE AMERICAN LEGION, this Constitution shall be deemed amended in conformance therewith, but subject to all consistent limitations and restrictions in this Constitution contained.

BY-LAWS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION

ARTICLE I
NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Section 1. In case of death, resignation or removal by his respective Department of any National Executive Committeeman or alternate to the National Executive Committee, the successor shall be selected as such Department shall determine and shall serve for the remainder of such unexpired term.

Section 2. The National Executive Committee shall meet within twenty-four hours before and after each National Convention and within forty-five days following its adjournment, provided however, that the National Commander shall have authority to extend said forty-five-day period for sufficient reasons to him appearing, upon approval by the National Executive Committee, and in May of each year. Special meetings may be held upon reasonable notice at the call of the National Commander. The National Commander shall call a meeting of the National Executive Committee upon the written request of National Executive Committeemen from fifteen or more Departments.

Section 3. Twenty-five members shall constitute a quorum of the National Executive Committee.

Section 4. The National Commander shall name such committees as he shall deem advisable, subject to ratification by the National Executive Committee at its next meeting succeeding the appointment.

Section 5. The National Executive Committee shall appoint, upon nomination by the National Commander, a National Finance Commission to be composed of seven (7) members. Of the seven members appointed following the National Convention (1945) at which this amendment is adopted, two shall be appointed to serve for a term of one year, two shall be appointed to serve for a term of two years, and three shall be appointed to serve for a term of three years; thereafter each succeeding appointee shall serve for a term of three years or until removed by the majority vote of the National Executive Committee. The National Commander and the National Treasurer shall be ex officio members of said commission and the National Adjutant shall be ex officio secretary of the said commission. The National Finance Commission shall be charged with the preparation of the yearly budget and the handling of funds under that budget, and such other duties as shall be prescribed by the National Executive Committee, subject to the approval of the National Executive Committee.

Section 6. There shall be the following standing commissions: National Americanism Commission, National Commission on Children and Youth, National Convention Commission, National Economic Commission, National Finance Commission, National Foreign Relations Commission, National Internal Affairs Commission, National Legislative Commission, The American Legion Magazine Commission, National Public Relations Commission, National Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Commission, National Security Commission.

The commissions shall consist of such number of members of THE AMERICAN LEGION as the National Executive Committee may from time to time determine. Appointments to such commissions shall be made by the National Executive Committee upon nomination by the National Commander. The National Executive Committee is empowered to assign duties and responsibilities to all standing commissions and committees and to group standing committees with commissions for the purpose of efficient supervision and coordination of activities.

Section 7. The National Executive Committee shall provide for the appointment and employment of such subordinate officers and employees as may be needed for the administration of the affairs of THE AMERICAN LEGION, and prescribe their duties and emoluments.

Section 8. All questions affecting the election, eligibility and conduct of national officers shall be referred to and determined by the National Executive Committee. All questions affecting the election, eligibility and conduct of the National Executive Committeeman from any Department, or of Department officers, or members of Department Executive Committees, shall be referred to and determined by the Executive Committee of the Department involved, which shall be the final authority thereon.

ARTICLE II
DUTIES OF OFFICERS

Section 1. NATIONAL COMMANDER: The National Commander shall be the executive head of THE AMERICAN LEGION with full power to enforce the provisions of the National Constitution, National By-Laws, and the will of the National Convention. He shall be the chairman of the National Convention and the National Executive Committee. He shall perform such other duties as are usually incident to the office.

Section 2. NATIONAL VICE COMMANDERS: The National Vice Commanders shall act as representatives of the National Commander on all matters referred to them by him, and shall, on his request, preside over the meetings of the National Convention or National Executive Committee, and perform such other duties as are usually incident to the office.

Section 3. NATIONAL ADJUTANT: The National Adjutant shall be charged with the administration of the policies and mandates of the National Convention, the National Executive Committee, and of the National Commander. He shall perform such other duties as are usually incident to the office. He shall also be authorized, in event of the death or resignation of the National Commander, to summon the National Executive Committee for the election of a successor, and in event the National Adjutant shall fail, refuse or neglect, within fifteen days after said death or resignation, to issue a call for said meeting of the National Executive Committee to be held within thirty days after said death or resignation, then said meeting for the purpose of electing a successor may be held upon the written demand therefore signed by representatives from fifteen or more Departments, giving fifteen days' notice thereof.

Section 4. NATIONAL TREASURER: The National Treasurer shall be the custodian of the funds of the National Organization. He shall sign all checks disbursing the funds of the National Organization, and shall make reports upon the condition of the national treasury when called for by the National Commander. The National Treasurer shall furnish a surety bond as hereinafter prescribed. He shall perform such other duties as are usually incident to the office.

Section 5. NATIONAL JUDGE ADVOCATE: The National Judge Advocate shall advise the national officers and the National Executive Committee on all legal matters, including the construction and interpretation of the National Constitution and By-Laws, and shall perform such other duties as are usually incident to the office.

Section 6. NATIONAL CHAPLAIN: The National Chaplain shall perform such divine and nonsectarian services as may be necessary, adhering to such ceremonial rituals as may be recommended by National Headquarters from time to time.

Section 7. NATIONAL HISTORIAN: The National Historian shall collect from year to year all records and data of value and interest for the National Headquarters of THE AMERICAN LEGION, and shall compile during his term of office a complete history of the year's activities. He shall also assist Department and Post historians so as to coordinate and unify the work of these officials, and shall have such other duties as the National Executive Committee shall prescribe.

ARTICLE III
CHARTERS

Section 1. The Department Executive Committee may suspend, cancel or revoke a Post Charter. The action taken by the Department Executive Committee shall be final and conclusive unless an appeal is taken to the National Executive Committee within thirty days from the date of said suspension, cancellation or revocation. The action taken by the National Executive Committee upon appeal shall be final.

Section 2. Any Post failing to meet the obligations imposed upon it by the Constitution and By-Laws, or ceasing to function for six months as an American Legion Post, or voluntarily ceasing to function as a Post, or merging with one or more other Posts, or refusing to pay the Department and National per capita dues, or under such other conditions as might make such action necessary shall, upon order of the Department Executive Committee, surrender its charter for cancellation. Upon failure to surrender such charter, immediate steps may be taken for its revocation, suspension or cancellation.

Section 3. Upon revocation, cancellation or suspension of the charter of a Post in any Department of THE AMERICAN LEGION, said Post shall immediately cease operations and upon revocation or cancellation shall turn over its charter to its Department Commander or Department Executive Committee, and the Department Executive Committee is authorized, empowered and directed by and through its duly authorized agent to take possession, custody and control of all the records, property and assets of said Post; provided, however, that nothing herein shall be construed as requiring any Department to take over or assume any financial responsibility as to such property. Said Department Executive Committee may provide for the transfer of the members in said Post to other Posts of their choice, subject to the approval of such other Post.

Section 4. The National Executive Committee shall provide a uniform code defining the procedure to be followed in the revocation, cancellation or suspension of Post charters and providing for a method of appeal and further providing a code of procedure for the revocation, cancellation or suspension of Department charters with

continuing power to revise said code, provided, however, that the procedure now in effect shall continue until such code is so adopted.

ARTICLE IV
DISCIPLINE OF POST AND POST MEMBERS

Section 1. Each Post of THE AMERICAN LEGION shall be the judge of its own membership, subject to the restrictions of the Constitution and By-Laws, except that no person who is a member of an organization which has for its aim the overthrow of the United States Government by force or violence, or who subscribes to the principles of any group opposed to our form of government, shall be eligible to become or remain a member of THE AMERICAN LEGION.

Section 2. Members may be suspended or expelled from the Legion only upon a proper showing of cause. Charges shall be based upon disloyalty, neglect of duty, dishonesty and conduct unbecoming a member of THE AMERICAN LEGION. All charges must be made under oath in writing by the accusers, and no member in good standing shall lose his membership until given a fair trial by the Post or Department in such manner and form as the Department By-Laws and Department Executive Committee shall prescribe.

Section 3. Any member who has been suspended or expelled has the right of appeal to his Department Executive Committee, or to the Department Convention, according to the provisions in the By-Laws of such Department. The decision of the Department shall be final.

Section 4. A member whose dues for the current year have not been paid by January first shall be classed as delinquent. If his dues are paid on or before February first, he shall be automatically reinstated. If he is still delinquent after February first, he shall be suspended from all privileges. If he is still under such suspension on June thirtieth of such year, his membership in THE AMERICAN LEGION shall be forfeited. A member so suspended or whose membership has been so forfeited may be reinstated to active membership in good standing by vote of the Post and payment of current dues for the year in which the reinstatement occurs. Provided, however, that the Posts, Departments and the National Organization may waive the provisions hereof, upon payment of dues for the year in which reinstatement occurs, with reference to former members who have been prevented from the payment of dues by reason of active military service.

ARTICLE V
MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Membership in THE AMERICAN LEGION is membership in the National Organization of THE AMERICAN LEGION by affiliation with Posts.

ARTICLE VI
MONIES AND COLLECTIONS

Section 1. All National, Department and Post officials handling THE AMERICAN LEGION monies shall be properly bonded with a good and solvent bonding and surety company, as surety, to cover double the average amount of money handled in a single year. In case of delinquencies in the payments of amounts due Department or National Headquarters, action shall be taken at once by the proper officials to bring about a speedy and complete settlement. The bonds provided by national officials shall be approved by the National Judge Advocate and the National Executive Committee, and those provided by the Department officials shall be approved by the Department Judge Advocate and the Department Executive Committee, and those provided by the Post officials shall be approved by the Post Legal Officer and the Post Executive Committee, or such other official or officials as the Department may designate.

Section 2. National Headquarters shall, should it be deemed advisable, detail special auditors to investigate the membership roll and financial statement of any Department, and should that Department so desire, assist in a similar audit of Posts within that Department.

ARTICLE VII
TRANSFER OF POSTS

Section 1. Posts of THE AMERICAN LEGION formed within units of the Army, Navy, Marine Corps or other organizations liable to transfer from one place to another, and which are organized under the Department in which they are then located, may transfer to another Department in a manner similar to the transfer of individuals from one Post to another.

Section 2. Any existing Post in the territorial or insular possession of the United States or in foreign countries, which is not under the jurisdiction of a present existing Department, shall within one year following the adoption hereof, unless extended by the National Executive Committee, request the National Executive Committee to place it under the jurisdiction of a Department to be selected by such Post. Said request shall have attached thereto the formal consent of such Department. Should a Post fail or refuse to make such request or be unable to obtain the consent of a Department, then the National Executive Committee shall designate the Department.

ARTICLE VIII
AMENDMENTS

Section 1. These By-Laws may be amended at any National Convention by a vote of two-thirds of the total authorized representation thereat, provided that the proposed amendment shall have been submitted through the National Adjutant to the several Departments and members of the National Executive Committee by mailing same to them at least twenty (20) days prior to the convening of the next National Convention; any such proposed amendment may be amended without further notice by a two-thirds vote of the total authorized representation thereat, provided it does not increase the modification proposed by the amendment and it has received the approval of the Convention Committee on Constitutional Amendments; and, provided further, it may be amended by unanimous vote at any National Convention without notice.

Section 2. That no proposed amendment shall be submitted through the National Adjutant to the several Departments and members of the National Executive Committee, as provided in Section 1 of this article, unless said proposed amendment shall have been first submitted by a Department Convention, Department Executive Committee, or the National Executive Committee.

APPENDIX TO THE CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS

Amendments to the Charter of THE AMERICAN LEGION enacted by Congress, October 29, 1942, Public Act 767; July 9, 1946, Public Act 495; December 28, 1950, Public Act 895; June 26, 1953, Public Act 80; July 26, 1955, Public Act 178; September 1, 1966, Public Act 89-550; December 27, 1974, Public Act 93-557; August 17, 1978, Public Act 95-346; December 21, 1979, Public Act 96-155; October 30, 1990, Public Act 101-478; December 3, 1991, Public Act 102-179; November 20, 1997, Public Act 105-110; August 12, 1998, Public Act 105-225; November 3, 1998, Public Act 105-354; December 2, 2002, Public Act 107-309.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That section 3 of the Act entitled "An Act to Incorporate THE AMERICAN LEGION," approved September 16, 1919 (41 Stat. 285, Title 36, U.S.C., Sec. 43, amended to Title 36, U.S.C., Sec. 21702), is hereby further amended to read as follows:

ORIGINAL SECTION

Sec. 3. That the purpose of the corporation shall be: To promote peace and good will among the peoples of the United States and all the nations of the earth; to preserve the memories and incidents of the Great War of 1917-1918; to cement the ties of love and comradeship born of service; and to consecrate the efforts of its members to mutual helpfulness and service to their country.

AMENDED SECTION

"Sec. 21702. *That the purpose of this corporation shall be: To uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States of America; to promote peace and good will among the peoples of the United States and all the nations of the earth; to preserve the memories and incidents of the two World Wars and the other great hostilities fought to uphold democracy; to cement the ties and comradeship born of service; and to consecrate the efforts of its members to mutual helpfulness and service to their country."*

That section 5 of such Act of September 16, 1919 (41 Stat. 285, Title 36, U.S.C., Sec. 45, amended to Title 36, U.S.C., Sec. 21703) is hereby further amended to read as follows:

ORIGINAL SECTION

Sec. 5. *That no person shall be a member* of this corporation unless he served in the naval or military service of the United States at some time during the period between April 6, 1917, and November 11, 1918, both dates inclusive, or who, being citizens of the United States at the time of enlistment, served in the military or naval services of any of the governments associated with the United States during the Great War.

AMENDED SECTION

"Sec.21703. *That no person shall be a member of this corporation unless such person has served in the naval or military services of the United States at some time during any of the following periods: April 6, 1917, to November 11, 1918; December 7, 1941, to December 31, 1946; June 25, 1950, to January 31, 1955; February 28, 1961, to May 7, 1975; August 24, 1982, to July 31, 1984; December 20, 1989, to January 31, 1990; August 2, 1990, to the date of cessation of hostilities as determined by the Government of the United States; all dates inclusive, or who, being a citizen of the United States at the time of entry therein, served in the military or naval service of any of the governments associated with the United States during said wars or hostilities: Provided, however, that such person shall have an honorable discharge or separation from such service or continues to serve honorably during or after any of the aforesaid terminal dates."*

NEW POSTS

How to Form a Post

Some Legionnaire or eligible veteran must take the lead if a new Post is to be successfully launched. There must be a definite need for a Post and there must be an interest developed among the ex-servicemen and women that The American Legion can best meet this need.

When the Department-prescribed minimum number of eligible veterans have decided upon forming a new Post, and have the go-ahead from the county or District and Department organizations, the time and place of an organizational meeting should be determined. It is important editors of local papers be informed of the meeting some time in advance and proper publicity obtained. Handbills may be printed and Posted to advertise the meeting.

Post Charter

Application forms for chartering a new Post of The American Legion may be obtained from Department headquarters. (Directions for organizing a new Post will be found below.) A temporary charter is issued at first. When the founders have demonstrated their ability to maintain a Post over a period of not less than 90 days and have developed an efficient organization for furthering the work and

ideals of The American Legion, they are eligible to receive a permanent Post charter. Application forms for permanent charter may be obtained from Department headquarters.

A Post name must be adopted before a charter can be issued to a new Post. It is customary to adopt the name of some departed comrade and no more fitting memorial could be devised.

If the members do not wish to decide on a permanent name at the time the Post is organized, it is suggested that a temporary name be adopted (for instance, the name of the town or county); this can be changed by resolution of the Post body at the time application is made for permanent charter. (Copy of the resolution, attested by the commander and the adjutant, should be attached to each copy of the application for permanent charter).

When a Post adopts a new name after it has received its permanent charter, a new permanent charter bearing the new name may be obtained upon written request through Department headquarters. Such request should be accompanied by duly attested copies of the resolution adopting the new name and by surrender of the old charter.

If a Post loses its permanent charter through fire or other cause, a new one may be obtained by a written request to the Department headquarters. The request should include an explanation of the facts surrounding the loss and should be signed by the Post commander and attested by the Post adjutant.

Charters for Incorporated Posts

Departments or Posts, which have incorporated since issuance of their original charters, need to receive supplemental charters in their corporate capacity upon application to National Headquarters through regular American Legion channels. This brings in to conformity the legal incorporated status of the Post with its charter status so that the Post which has incorporated may avoid the issue of what is the proper name when dealing with the Internal Revenue Service.

Eligibility for Membership

See Article IV of the National Constitution (see "Constitution, National" in the index). Also see Simplified Eligibility Guide. Questions on eligibility matters may be referred to Department headquarters.

Organizational Meeting

A tentative draft should be made of a Post constitution before the organization meeting. (See "Post Constitution" in index) The person best fitted for the purpose among the organizers should call the meeting to order and outline its purposes, and should bring out the following facts:

(a) This meeting is called to organize a local Post of The American Legion.

(b) The American Legion has Posts in most county seats in America and many countries in the world.

(c) It is formed of the veterans of World Wars, the Korean War, Vietnam, Lebanon, Grenada, Panama, and the Persian Gulf.

(e) Any solder, sailor, marine, airman, nurse, WAC, WAVE or SPAR of the United States who served honorably between April 6, 1917, and November 11, 1918; December 7, 1941, and December 31, 1946; June 25, 1950, and January 31, 1955; February 28, 1961, and May 7, 1975; August 24, 1982, and July 31, 1984; December 20, 1989, and January 31, 1990; August 2, 1990, to the date of cessation of hostilities as determined by the Government of the United States; and men and women whose service began during one of those periods and remain in service, are admitted.

(f) Fifteen members are <u>usually</u> required for the formal application for a charter; however, the actual minimum is set by each Department.

(g) Dues should be set sufficiently high to cover anticipated administrative expenses and collected either before or at the organizational meeting. Dues are collected annually and include national, Department and, on occasion, District assessments.

The organizer should then call for nominations for a temporary chairman and secretary. These officers, being elected, will take charge of proceedings.

The suggested constitution should be discussed and the approved form adopted. Then the temporary chair should name a committee to consider a name for the Post. (No Post may be named in honor of a living person.) It is customary, but not necessary, to adopt the name of some local person who died in the World Wars, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, Lebanon, Grenada, Panama, or in the Persian Gulf; or use the names of a deceased veteran of each war.

A list should be taken of those present, including their full name, name of last organization with which they served (not a casual company), date of separation from the service and present local address; these facts to be kept for the permanent adjutant when elected.

The committee on a name for the Post should then report and a name be adopted. The temporary chair should then ask for nominations for the following officers:

Post Commander	Post Finance Officer
Post Vice-Commander	Post Historian
Post Adjutant	Post Chaplain
Post Service Officer	Post Sergeant-at-Arms

The newly-elected officers should then assume their duties and the new commander should name at once the standing committees. The Membership Committee should be instructed to canvas for new members and should secure application blanks. All the original members, as well as new ones, should fill out these blanks as soon as they are available. Standard membership application blanks can be secured from the Departments or National Headquarters, if desired.

The original (white sheet) only of the application form for charter should then be signed by the minimum required by Department constitution. These forms may be secured from any Legion Post and from Department headquarters. It is preferable to have the officers sign first, in the order above named. When done, the form should be turned over to the newly-elected adjutant for recording the same names and addresses by typewriter on the remaining two copies. All three copies should then be signed by the Post commander, attested by the adjutant, and, together with an amount covering the dues of the Department and the national organization for all names appearing on the application, be forwarded to the Department headquarters of the state.

Adjournment.

Post Officers

The keynote of The American Legion is progress. Upon the Post depends the progress of the Legion, and upon the Post officers depends the progress of the Post. It is urged all Post officers fully realize this, and seriously familiarize themselves with the duties, responsibilities and opportunities of their position. Suggestions for their guidance are incorporated in this handbook.

An American Legion Activity Center

In most cases it is desirable that a Post have its own activity and service center in its own building. The first step is to establish a building fund, which once started should be added to constantly by systematic planning. In some towns there are not enough buildings to accommodate present and anticipated needs for business, shops, apartments, etc. You may wish to consider the needs of your town and fashion a building plan to include sound provisions for rentals, club privileges, etc., which may pay off a loan in a reasonable length of time.

As a rule, building operations may be started when the fund accumulated is sufficient to pay for the site, clear of encumbrance, plus 10 percent of construction costs. This varies with credit conditions in the building trades; however, it is not advisable to start construction with less than that amount. Do not take on more than can be handled and remember that the larger the loan, the more interest required. The Post will do well to consult with financiers of integrity and be guided by their advice on both funding and building plans.

Where feasible under existing laws and regulations, Posts have found it an advantage to incorporate and market stock on a conservative plan. This method should never be used without complete investigation.

Properly planned, an American Legion service center, Post home or club will include features that make it a creditable community asset. The Auxiliary unit should be taken into consideration when building plans are approved.

The possession of a home is one of the best guarantees of permanence and progress an organization can have. It establishes the prestige of the organization in the community. It holds old members and attracts new ones. Soundly financed, it constitutes a source of revenue as well as a site of service and social activities. Once established in its own home, a Legion Post is in a position to benefit the community in many ways.

(See "American Legion Buildings, Centers" in index)

Suggested Form for Post Constitution

(Section 7, Article IX, National Constitution of The American Legion provides each Department may prescribe the Constitution of its Posts. Consequently, Posts should ascertain whether or not the Department has adopted a uniform Constitution for all Posts in that Department. If such Constitution has been approved by the Department, it should be followed.)

Constitution of (Post Name and Number).

Department of . . . . .

Preamble

For God and Country, we associate ourselves together for the following purposes: To uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States of America; to maintain law and order; to foster and perpetuate a one hundred percent Americanism; to preserve the memories and incidents of our associations in the Great Wars; to inculcate a sense of individual obligation to the community, state and nation; to combat the autocracy of both the classes and the masses; to make right the master of might; to promote peace and good will on earth; to safeguard and transmit to Posterity the principles of justice, freedom and democracy; to consecrate and sanctify our comradeship by our devotion to mutual helpfulness.

Article I—Name

Section 1. The name of this organization shall be (Post Name and Number), The American Legion, Department of . . . . .

Article II—Objects

Section 1. The objects and purposes of this Post shall be to promote the principles and policies as set forth in the foregoing preamble, and the national and Departmental Constitutions of The American Legion.

Article III—Nature

Section 1. This Post is a civilian organization and membership therein does not affect or increase liability for military or police service. Sec. 2. This organization shall be absolutely nonpolitical and shall not be used for the dissemination of partisan principles nor for the promotion of the candidacy of any person seeking public office or preferment.

Sec. 3. Rank does not exist in The American Legion; no member shall be addressed by his military or naval title in any meeting of this Post.

Article IV—Membership

Section 1. Eligibility to membership in this Post shall be as prescribed by the National Constitution of The American Legion.

Sec. 2. Application for membership shall be made in writing under such regulations as may from time to time be prescribed by the Post Executive Committee.

Sec. 3. All applications for membership shall be acted upon at the next Post meeting following the making of such application, and shall at such meeting, be accepted, rejected or referred for further investigation and consideration. If a majority of the members cast their vote against the acceptance of said application, then such application shall be recorded as rejected.

Sec. 4. Any member of this Post may be expelled for cause by a two-thirds vote of the Executive Committee after charges are preferred under oath in writing, and a fair trial had upon the same.*

Sec. 5. A member who has been expelled or suspended from this Post for any cause may be reinstated to membership by a two-thirds vote of the membership present in Post meeting, and the payment of current dues for the year in which the reinstatement occurs.

Sec. 6. No person who has been expelled by a Post shall be admitted to membership in this Post, without the consent of the expelling Post, except that where such consent has been asked for and denied by such Post, may then appeal to the state Executive Committee of the Department of the expelling Post for permission to apply for membership in this Post, and shall be ineligible for membership until such permission is granted.

*Before proceeding under this section, Posts should make inquiry as to whether or not the Department Constitution and By-Laws has provided a different procedure which should be followed.

Article V—Officers

Section 1. The administrative affairs of this Post of The American Legion shall, except as may be otherwise provided by the By-Laws, be under the supervision of an Executive Committee which shall consist of ..... members in addition to the officers of the Post. The term of office of members of the Executive Committee shall be for one year. This Post, by its By-Laws, may provide for such other standing committees as the business of the organization may require.

Sec. 2. The officers of this Post shall be a commander, a vice-commander, an adjutant, a finance officer, a Post historian, a Post chaplain, Post service officer and a sergeant-at-arms, and such other officers as may be deemed necessary by this organization, who shall be nominated from the floor at the meeting preceding the annual election.

Sec. 3. All officers and executive committeemen shall be elected annually, and they shall hold office until their successors are duly installed or as otherwise provided. Any officer or executive committeeman may be removed for inefficiency by the Executive Committee, a two-thirds vote of said committee being necessary to effect such removal.

Sec. 4. Every member of this Post in good standing shall be eligible to hold office in this Post.

Sec. 5. The duties of officers and the executive committee shall be those usually appertaining to such officers or committee and as further provided in the By-Laws.

Article VI—Finance

Section 1. The revenue of this Post shall be derived from membership or initiation fees, from annual membership dues and from such other sources as may be approved by the Post Executive Committee.

Sec. 2. The amount of such membership or initiation fees and the amount of such annual Post dues shall be fixed and determined by this Post.

Sec. 3. The Post shall pay to Departmental headquarters the National and Departmental annual membership dues for every member of the Post.

Article VII—Charter Members

Section 1. Members who joined this Post prior to November 11, 1919 (or members who joined this Post prior to the issuance of charter) shall be known as charter members.

Note—The matter of charter members for the permanent charter is left to the decision of the Post members.

Article VIII—American Legion Auxiliary

Section 1. This Post recognizes an auxiliary organization to be known as the Auxiliary Unit of (Post Name and Number), The American Legion.

Sec. 2. Membership in the Auxiliary shall be as prescribed by the National Constitution of the American Legion Auxiliary.

Article IX—Amendments

Section 1. This Constitution is adopted subject to the provisions of the national Constitution of The American Legion and of the Department Constitution of the Department of ....., The American Legion. Any amendment to said National Constitution or Department Constitution which is in conflict with any provisions hereof shall be regarded as automatically repealing or modifying the provisions of this Constitution to the extent of such conflict.

Sec. 2. This Constitution may be amended at any regular Post meeting by vote of two-thirds of the members of said Post attending such regular meeting, providing the proposed amendment shall have been submitted in writing and read at the next preceding regular meeting of said Post, and providing, further, written notice shall have been given to all members at least ..... days in advance of the date when such amendment is to be voted upon, notifying said members that at such meeting a proposal to amend the Constitution is to be voted upon.

Suggested Form Of Post By-Laws

Article I

Section 1. The Post existing under these By-Laws is to be known as (Post Name and Number), The American Legion, Department of ..... .

Sec. 2. The objects of this Post are as set forth in the Constitution.

Article II—Management

Section 1. The government and management of the Post is entrusted to an Executive Committee of ..... members, to be known as the "Executive Committee."

Sec. 2. The Executive Committee shall consist of ..... members in addition to the officers of the Post and together with the other officers of this Post shall be elected annually on ..... and take office at the meeting next following that of the election. All elections of officers and executive committeemen shall be by ballot and the candidate or candidates receiving the highest number of votes shall be elected to the respective office or offices for which they are candidates.

Sec. 3. All vacancies existing in the Executive Committee, or in any office of the Post from any cause other than the expiration of the term, shall be filled by a majority vote of the remaining members of the committee, and a person so appointed shall hold office for the unexpired term of the member of the committee or officer who succeeded. A vacancy shall exist when a member or officer is absent from the Post for a continuous period considered detrimental to the interest of the Post by the Executive Committee.

Article III—Post Executive Committee

Section 1. The Post Executive Committee shall meet for organization and such other business as may come before it at the call of the Post commander within 10 days after the installation of the new officers. Thereafter the Post Executive Committee shall meet at the call of the commander at least every ..... and as often as said commander may deem necessary. The commander shall call a meeting of the Post Executive Committee upon the joint written request of three or more members of said Post Executive Committee, ... members of the committee shall constitute a quorum thereof.

Sec. 2. The Post Executive Committee shall hire such employees as may be necessary; shall authorize and approve all expenditures; shall require adequate bonds from all persons having the custody of Post funds; shall hear the reports of Post committee chairs; and generally, shall have charge of and be responsible for the management of the affairs of this Post.

Article IV—Duties of Officers

Section 1. *Duties of Post commander.* It shall be the duty of the Post commander to preside at all meetings of the Post and to have general supervision over the business and affairs of the Post, and such officer shall be the chief executive officer of the Post. The Commander shall approve all orders directing the disbursement of funds and shall make an annual report covering the business of the Post for the year, and recommendations for the ensuing year, which shall be read at the annual meeting and a copy thereof immediately forwarded to the Department adjutant. The Commander shall perform such other duties as directed by the Post.

Sec. 2. *Duties of vice-commander.* The vice-commander shall assume and discharge the duties of the office of commander in the absence or disability of, or when called upon by the Post commander.

Sec. 3. *Duties of Post adjutant.* The adjutant shall have charge of and keep a full and correct record of all proceedings of all meetings, keep such records as the Department and National Organizations may require, render reports of membership annually or when called upon at a meeting, and under direction of the commander handle all correspondence of the Post.

Sec. 4. *Duties of the finance officer.* The finance officer of the Post shall have charge of all finances and see that they are safely deposited in some local bank or banks and shall report once a month to the Executive Committee the condition of the finances of the Post, with such recommendations as may deem expedient or necessary for raising funds with which to carry on the activities of the Post. The Finance Officer shall sign all checks disbursing the monies of the Post, and shall furnish such surety bonds in such sum as shall be fixed by the Post Executive Committee.

Sec. 5. *Duties of Post historian.* The Post historian shall be charged with the individual records and incidents of the Post and Post members, and shall perform such other duties as may properly pertain to the office as may be determined by the Post or the Executive Committee.

Sec. 6. *Duties of Post chaplain.* The Post chaplain shall be charged with the spiritual welfare of the Post comrades and will offer divine but nonsectarian service in the event of dedications, funerals, public functions, etc., adhere to such ceremonial rituals as are recommended by the national or Department headquarters from time to time.

Sec. 7. *Duties of sergeant-at-arms.* The sergeant-at-arms shall preserve order at meetings and shall perform such other duties as may be from time to time assigned by the Post Executive Committee.

Article V—Delegates

Section 1. Delegates and alternates to a Department convention shall be elected by ballot by the Post at a regular meeting of the Post to be held at least 20 days prior to the date of such convention.

Article VI—Appointments

Section 1. The Post commander, immediately upon taking office each year, shall appoint the following standing committees: Americanism, Ceremonials, Children and Youth, Economic, Finance,

Foreign Relations, Graves Registration and Memorial, House and Entertainment, Legislative, Membership, Public Relations, Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation, National Security, Sons of The American Legion and Visiting or VAVS. Such standing committees shall consist of such members, and the chair thereof, as shall be designated by the Post commander.

Sec. 2. *Americanism Committee.* The Americanism Committee shall be charged with the inspiration of patriotism and good citizenship by arrangements for proper observance of patriotic occasions; encouragement of patriotic and civic phases of instruction in schools; Americanization of aliens; combating anti-American propaganda by education of the general public in American ideals through public forums, etc., and activities for community and civic betterment.

Sec. 3. *Ceremonials Committee.* The principal duty of the Ceremonials Committee is to insure all new members are properly initiated. The committee also concerns itself with proper presentation of other rituals outlined in the Manual of Ceremonies—burial detail and the wearing of Legion regalia.

Sec. 4. *Children and Youth Committee.* Shall be charged with aid and service to children of veterans, cooperating with other established agencies in the community; laboring for the betterment of child conditions and in coordinating services and agencies in the community for the above purposes. To act as intermediary for the needy child of a veteran in obtaining the fulfillment of the Legion's pledge that "no child of a war veteran shall be in need of the necessities of life" and "a square deal for every child."

Sec. 5. *Economic Committee.* The Post Economic Committee is primarily concerned with local employment programs, Veterans preference, government employment and re-employment rights.

Sec. 6. *Finance Committee.* The Finance Committee shall be charged with the administration of the financial policy, preparation of budget recommendations and supervision of receiving, disbursing and accounting of all Post funds.

Sec. 7. *Foreign Relations.* This committee has become active as America has recognized its responsibility as a world leader. Maintaining and securing world peace and friendship abroad through community endeavors have become as essential as any aspect of treaty law.

Sec. 8. *Graves Registration and Memorial Committee.* The duties of this committee involve recording of grave sites and complete information on veterans burial in cemeteries assigned to the Post. Special assistance can be given the service officer in providing flags, headstones or proper interment in national cemeteries.

Sec. 9. *House and Entertainment Committee.* The House and Entertainment quarters promotion of club advantages and arrangement for social activities.

Sec. 10. *Legislative Committee.* The Legislative Committee needs to have a knowledge of what is going on in Congress—what we favor or oppose, and should be ready to initiate action in support of our position when requested by the national or Department organization.

Sec. 11. *Membership Committee.* The Membership Committee shall have charge of all matters pertaining to the membership of the Post, including the procuring of new members, reinstatements and eligibility of members.

Sec. 12. *Public Relations Committee.* The Public Relations Committee shall be charged with the promotion of public support of the Legion's program by the establishment of proper contact with The American Legion Magazine, Department and national Legion news service and by local publicity of Post programs and activities.

Sec. 13. *Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Committee.* The Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation committee shall supervise all matters pertaining to service to comrades in the prosecution of all just claims against the United States or state government, employment, relief, etc.

Sec. 14. *Security Committee.* The Security Committee shall work with and coordinate Legion efforts with the Local Civil Defense Council on matters pertaining to national, civilian and home defenses. It shall assist the armed forces of the United States in recruiting efforts and in every way be active in community activities for the defense of the nation and the security of the American home.

Sec. 15. *Sons of The American Legion Committee.* This committee shall have supervision over the operations of the Post's squadron of the Sons of The American Legion.

Sec. 16. *Visiting or VAVS Committee.* This committee is charged with visiting and comforting members and their families when sick or bereaved, and with visiting ex-service personnel in hospitals.

Article VII—Resolutions

Section 1. All resolutions of state or national scope presented to this Post by a member or reported to this Post by a committee shall merely embody the opinion of this Post on the subject and copy of same shall be forwarded to the Department headquarters for its approval before any publicity is given or action other than mere passage by the Post is taken.

Article VIII—Meetings

Section 1. The regular meeting of the Post shall be held at the club rooms on ....., at which may be transacted such business as may properly be brought up for action; such meetings may be converted into entertainment meetings, as may be deemed advisable by the officers of the Post.

Sec. 2. The Post commander or a majority of the Executive Committee shall have power to call a special meeting of the Post at any time.

Sec. 3. Upon the written request of ..... members, the committee shall call a special meeting of the Post.

Sec. 4. ..... members shall constitute a quorum.

Article IX—Notices

Section 1. Every member shall furnish the Post adjutant with an address for mailing.

Sec. 2. The Post adjutant shall cause notice of the annual election to be given at least two weeks prior thereto.

Article X—Rules of Order

Section 1. All proceedings of this Post shall be conducted under and pursuant to Roberts' Rules of Order, except as herein otherwise provided.

Article XI—Limitations of Liabilities

Section 1. The Post shall incur, or cause to be incurred, no liability nor obligation whatever which shall subject to liability any other Post, subdivision, members of The American Legion, or other individuals, corporations or organizations.

Article XII—Amendments

Section 1. These By-Laws may be amended at any regular Post meeting by a vote of two-thirds of the members of said Post attending such regular meeting: Provided That the proposed amendment shall have been submitted in writing and read at the next preceding regular meeting of said Post: and, Provided, Further, That written notice shall have been given to all members at least ..... days in advance of the date when such amendment is to be voted upon, notifying said members that at such meeting a proposal to amend the By-Laws is to be voted upon.

Delinquency, Resignation and Transfer

A concise statement of the national policy with reference to delinquency, resignation, transfer, etc., based upon the Constitution, By-Laws, national policy and decision of national judge advocates.

Delinquency

1. Legion membership is annual, the Legion year being from January 1 to December 31. Dues are payable October 20 in advance.

2. If dues are not paid by January 1 of each calendar year, the member becomes delinquent. If dues have not been paid by February 1, the member is suspended, but nevertheless a member with no privilege except that of reinstatement by vote of the Post and payment of dues; and dues not being paid, such membership continues for a period of five months, to June 30, at which time the member is dropped from the roll by constitutional mandate and the membership forfeited.

Resignation

1. A member may resign from the Post at any time while dues are paid and can thereafter join another Post as a new member, in which event the continuity of Legion membership is broken, and upon resignation the Post is not required to rebate any part or portion of the member's dues.

Transfer

1. The only method of transferring from one Post to another so the continuity of the membership in the Legion is not broken is by formal transfer, which is available only to members in good standing.
2. A member of a Post may not move the membership to another Post and retain continuous membership without the formality of a transfer. Being a member of more than one Post at one time is a violation of the Constitution.
3. The right to transfer does not carry the right to be accepted by any Post.
4. On transfer there shall be no transfer of funds derived from dues, etc. The accepting Post shall recognize the fact of dues having been paid to the Post from which the transfer is effected and shall make no charge therefore, excepting only if the dues of the Post accepting the member are in excess of those from which the transfer is sought; then the accepting Post may collect from the transferring member the excess dues prorated from the date of the acceptance to the end of the current year.
5. In all instances where a member of The American Legion during a current year transfers from one Post to another after payment of the current year's dues, the transferring Post shall retain said dues and shall have credit for such membership during the remainder of such year for which said dues were collected, but said transferred member shall be entitled to all of the benefits and assume all of the responsibilities of membership in the Post to which transfer is made, after such transfer is effected. (See "Transfer of Membership" in index)

Simplified Eligibility Guide

National policy requires that eligibility inquiries be submitted through the Department.

There is only one class of membership—honorary memberships are not authorized. In all doubtful cases, consult your judge advocate.

Constitutional Eligibility Requirements

ALL WHO SERVED IN THE ARMY, NAVY, MARINE CORPS, COAST GUARD OR AIR FORCE OF THE UNITED STATES ARE ELIGIBLE ONLY IF THEY HAVE THE FOLLOWING CONSTITUTIONAL QUALIFICATIONS:

"Any person shall be eligible for membership in The American Legion who was a member of the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard or Air Force of the United States and assigned to active duty at some time during any of the following periods: April 6, 1917, to November 11, 1918; December 7, 1941, to December 31, 1946; June 25, 1950, to January 31, 1955; February 28, 1961, to May 7, 1975; August 24, 1982, to July 31, 1984; December 20, 1989, to January 31, 1990; August 2, 1990, to the date of cessation of hostilities as determined by the Government of the United States; all dates inclusive . . . provided, however, that such service shall have been terminated by honorable discharge or honorable separation, or continued honorably after any of said periods; provided, further, that no person shall be

entitled to membership who, being in such service during any of said periods, refused on conscientious, political or other grounds to subject himself to military discipline or unqualified service."

(The language "or continued honorably after any of said periods" has reference to those remaining in service after the date terminal at which time eligibility may be established by all veterans having honorable active service during such periods, regardless of whether they have been discharged or stay on in the service).

Constitution Requirements with Reference to Allied Armies

"Any person shall be eligible for membership in The American Legion . . . who, being a citizen of the United States at the time of entry therein, served on active duty in the armed forces of any of the governments associated with the United States during any said periods; . . . provided, however, such service shall have been terminated by honorable discharge or honorable separation, or continued honorably after any of said periods; provided, further, that no person shall be entitled to membership who, being in such service during any of said periods, refused on conscientious, political or other grounds to subject himself to military discipline or unqualified service."

(The word "citizen" requires full citizenship and one who had only made application for citizenship and had what is commonly known as "first papers" was not admitted to full citizenship at the time of entry into the service and therefore is not eligible. Only full citizenship prior to service with an allied army entitles one to membership. The attainment of U.S. citizenship subsequent to such service does not fulfill the requirement).

(Service in the allied forces is not restricted to the initial dates as given for service in U.S. Forces, but may have been at any time after the declaration of war by the particular government.)

(NOTE: Section 1, Article IV, of the National By-Laws provides:

Each Post of The American Legion shall be the judge of its own membership, subject to the restriction of the Constitution and By-Laws, except that no person who is a member of an organization which has for its aim the overthrow of the United States Government, by force or violence, or who subscribes to the principles of any group opposed to our form of government shall be eligible to become or remain a member of The American Legion.)

Dishonorable Discharge

When a veteran has proper wartime service, with honorable discharge, but received a discharge other than honorable by reason of a subsequent enlistment, if the later enlistment was outside to the ending dates of eligibility set forth in Article IV of the National Constitution of The American Legion, the person in question would be eligible, based on the first period of service which met the constitutional requirement. (The question of his acceptability being a matter of the Post under Section 1, Article IV, National By-Laws.)

If the subsequent enlistment was during a period of eligibility set forth in Article IV of the National Constitution of The American Legion and ended on other than a honorable discharge, would permeate the entire service for that period and would not be eligible for membership based on service for that period.

World War II

The Kansas City National Convention of The American Legion, held September 1942, and the Chicago National Convention, November 1945, authorized the amendment of the National Charter to include the eligibility dates covering World War II service (December 7, 1941, to September 2, 1945). Public Laws 767 and 495, approved October 29, 1942, and July 9, 1946, respectively, effected the change. The Miami Beach National Convention, August 1974, authorized the amendment of the National Charter to change the terminal eligibility date for World War II service to December 31, 1946, and Public Law 93-557, approved December 27, 1974, effected.

WORLD WAR II

Digest of Eligibility Opinions

SERVICE	OPINION
Acceptability (See Membership)	Discretionary
Active Duty (honorable discharge, constitutional period)	Eligible
Aliens (Honorable active duty, U.S. Armed Forces)	Eligible
Allies, Service with (If citizen of U.S. at time of entry therein)	Eligible
If U.S. citizenship acquired subsequent to service)	Ineligible
American Field Service (Civilian status)	Ineligible
American Volunteer Group, Chinese Air Forces (Civilian status)	Ineligible
Annapolis (See Naval Academy)—Midshipmen	Eligible
Armed Guard (Navy)—(Naval personnel manning defense ordinance, merchant vessels	Eligible
Army Corps, Women's (See WAC's) (If active duty, honorable discharge)	Eligible
Army Auxiliary Corps, Women's (WAAC's)	Ineligible
Army Reserve (Unless active duty)	Ineligible
Army Specialist Corps (Uniformed civilians; abolished)	Ineligible
Army Transport Service: (unless granted veteran status)	Ineligible
Masters and crews, civilian employees	Ineligible
Administrative group comprised of military personnel on active duty for purpose of administering troops being carried thereon	Eligible
Army, United States (Honorable active duty)	Eligible
Associate Membership (See Membership)	Prohibited
Aviation Cadet (If active duty)	Eligible
Bad Conduct Discharge	Ineligible
Blue Discharge	Ineligible
Canadian Forces, Service with (If active duty, honorable termination, constitutional period and U.S. citizenship time of entry)	Eligible
Certificate of Service, Army of the United States (Form No. 280)	Eligible
Chinese Air Forces, American Volunteer Group (civilian status	Ineligible
Civil Air patrol (Civilian status)	Ineligible
Civilian Technical Corps, The (Civilian status)	Ineligible
Coast Guard (Active duty, honorable termination, constitutional period)	Eligible
Coast Guard Academy (Cadets)	Eligible
Coast Guard Beach Patrol (CGR)-(If active Duty)	Eligible
Coast Guard, Industrial Guards (Reserve temporary)	Ineligible
Coast Guard Reserve (Unless active duty)	Ineligible
Coast Guard Reserve (Temporary-Unless full-time active duty with pay)	Ineligible
Coast Guard Reserve, Volunteer Port Security Force	Ineligible
Coast Guard, Women's Reserve (SPAR's) – (If active duty)	Eligible
Conscientious Objectors	Ineligible
Constitutional Period, Service Without	Ineligible
Continuous Service, Subsequent Cessation Hostilities	Eligible
Disability, Discharged (If active duty, honorable termination)	Eligible
Discharges:	
Bad Conduct	Ineligible
Blue	Ineligible
Certificate of Service, Army of the Disability (If honorable)	Eligible
Dishonorable	Ineligible
Good	Eligible
Honorable (Active duty)	Eligible
Inaptitude:	
Naval—Honorable conditions	Eligible
Army—Honorable	Eligible
Army—Blue	Ineligible
Indifferent	Eligible
Ordinary (Under honorable conditions	Eligible
Over-Age	Eligible
Special Order (Under honorable conditions)	Eligible
Transfer to Enlisted Reserve Corps	Eligible
Undesirable	Ineligible
Unfavorable	Ineligible
Unsuitability (Under honorable conditions)	Eligible
Employment, discharged to accept	Eligible
Enemy Nations	Ineligible

WORLD WAR II

Digest of Eligibility Opinions
(continued)

SERVICE	OPINION
Enlisted Reserve Corps (Unless active duty	Ineligible
Field Service, American (Civilian status).	Ineligible
Good Discharge	Eligible
Guards, Industrial	Ineligible
Honorable Discharge (Active duty, constitutional period)	Eligible
Honorary Membership	Prohibited
Inaptitude Discharge (if honorable conditions)	Eligible
Indifferent Discharge	Eligible
Industrial Guards	Ineligible
Length of Service (Not a prerequisite)	Eligible
Marine Corps, United States	Eligible
Marine Corps Reserve (Unless active duty)	Ineligible
Marine Corps, Women's Reserve (If active duty)	Eligible
Marine Officers' Training School	Eligible
Maritime Service (Non-military)	Ineligible
Membership:	
Acceptability	Discretionary
Associate	Prohibited
Honorary	Prohibited
Posthumous	Prohibited
Merchant Marine(unless granted Veteran status)	Ineligible
If service between December 7, 1941-August 15, 1945, and have a discharge from the Coast Guard, Navy or Army showing honorable service within the delimiting dates	Eligible
Merchant Marine Reserve (USNR)—(Unless active duty naval service)	Ineligible
West Point, Annapolis, Coast Guard Cadets	Eligible
National Guard (Unless active duty)	Ineligible
Naval Academy (Annapolis) – Midshipmen	Eligible
Naval Reserve, United States (Unless active duty)	Ineligible
Naval Transportation Service (Unless granted Veteran status)	Ineligible
Navy (Active duty)	Eligible
Navy, "Armed Guard" (Naval personnel manning defensive ordinance, merchant vessels)	Eligible
Nurses, Army and Navy	Eligible
Officers' Candidate Schools (If member Armed Forces)	Eligible
Officers' Reserve Corps (Unless active duty	Ineligible
Ordinary Discharge (Under honorable conditions—Active duty)	Eligible
Over-Age (Discharged for)	Eligible
Philippine Scouts	Eligible
Police, Auxiliary Military (Civilian status)	Ineligible
Posthumous Membership (See Membership)	Prohibited
Post Membership Honor Rolls—See NEC resolution, #11 May 1967	Authorized
Public Health Service, U.S. (Civilian status)	Ineligible
(If assigned active duty Armed Forces)	Eligible
Reserve Corps Enlisted (Unless active duty)	Ineligible
Reserve Officers (unless active duty)	Ineligible
Seabees (If active duty)	Eligible
Separation, Honorable (If active duty)	Eligible
Shipyard Workers (Civilian status)	Ineligible
SPARS (Coast Guard, Women's Reserve) —(If active duty)	Eligible
Special Order Discharge (Under honorable conditions—if active duty)	Eligible
Transfer (Discharge for, to Enlisted Reserve Corps)	Eligible
Transport Service, Army: Masters and crews, civilian employees	Ineligible
Administrative group, comprised of military personnel on active duty for purpose of administering troops being carried thereon	Eligible
Undesirable Discharge	Ineligible
Unfavorable Discharge	Ineligible
Unsuitability Discharge (Held issued under honorable conditions—If active duty	Eligible
WAAC's (Women's Army Auxiliary Corps)— (Civilian status—Abolished)	Ineligible
WAAC's (Women's Army Auxiliary Corps) If served on or after May 1942	Eligible
WAC's (Women Army Corps)—(If active duty)	Eligible
WASP (Women's Air Force Service Pilots) If Service between Sept. 10, 1942-Dec. 20, 1944	Eligible
WAVES (Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service)—(Naval Reserve-If active duty)	Eligible
West Point (Military Academy—Cadets)	Eligible

ELIGIBILITY OF MERCHANT MARINE DECEMBER 7, 1941 - AUGUST 15, 1945

A January 19, 1988, decision of the Secretary of the Air Force granted veteran status, not just veterans benefits, to its members of the Merchant Marine and certain employees of the Army and Navy during the period December 7, 1941, to August 15, 1945. The Federal Government now considers such service to be "active duty" service. Affected individuals must apply for a Discharge or Certificate of Release. A DD Form 214 record of service will be issued which will show service in the Army, Navy or Coast Guard, depending on the service of the individual. In this case the individuals would be eligible and no action is needed by The American Legion. Often such DD Form 214's will also show Merchant Marines as a component of one of the Armed Forces (e.g. Army, Navy, Coast Guard, Army Air Corps now Air Force, or Marines). Since The American Legion has never looked beyond active duty in one of the Armed Forces, the particular component does not affect membership eligibility.

Merchant Marine Flag [Resolution No. 3]

Resolved, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, October 8-9, 2003, that the commemorative Merchant Marine Flag be included as one of the official United States Auxiliary Service Flags; and be it further

Resolved, That The American Legion shall take steps to have the Merchant Marine flag included in all National Displays as an official United States Auxiliary Service Flag and to fly beside other Service flags of the Armed Forces as appropriate and in accordance with accepted protocol.

Korean War

The Los Angeles National Convention, The American Legion, October 1950, and the Washington, D.C., National Convention, August 30-September 2, 1954, authorized the amendment of the National Charter to include the eligibility dates covering the Korean War (June 25, 1950, to July 27, 1953). Public Laws 895 and 178, approved December 28, 1950, and July 26, 1955, respectively, effected the change. The Miami Beach National Convention, August 1974, authorized the amendment of the National Charter to change the terminal eligibility date for Korean War Service to January 31, 1955, and Public Law 93-557, approved December 27, 1974, effected to change.

Area where service performed is not a determining factor.

The two weeks' annual training periods to not fulfill eligibility requirements, as such training periods represent nothing more than similar active duty excursions demanded from component branches of the Army during peacetime as well as during the period of hostilities.

One who was ordered to active duty for purposes of undergoing physical examination, subsequently returned to his home, reverting to inactive status, is not eligible.

Discharge Data

(November 1951)

FORMS FOR ARMY, NAVY, MARINE CORPS AND AIR FORCE

DD 256 (A) or (N) or (MC) or (AF) (White) Honorable ..... Eligible*
DD 257 (A) or (N) or (MC) or (AF) (White) General ..... Eligible*
DD 258 (A) or (N) or (MC) or (AF) (White) Undesirable ..... Not Eligible
DD 259 (A) or (N) or (MC) or (AF) (Yellow) Bad Conduct ..... Not Eligible
DD 260 (A) or (N) or (MC) or (AF) (Yellow) Dishonorable ..... Not Eligible
DD 214 Report of Separation from the Armed Forces of the United States ..... Eligible*
(If released to a civilian status, although still in the Reserves) ..... Eligible*
DD 217 Certificate of Service (Reserve) ..... Eligible*
DD 156A Honorable Discharge Armed Forces USA (Reserve) (Unless active duty) ..... Ineligible
*Honorable service during periods of eligibility.

Vietnam War

The 48th National Convention of The American Legion, August 30-September 1, 1966, Washington D.C., and the 56th National Convention of The American Legion, August 20-22, 1974, and the 59th National Convention of The American Legion, August 23-25, 1977, authorized the amendment of the National Charter to include the eligibility dates covering the Vietnam War (August 5, 1964, to May 7, 1975), and Public Law 89-550, approved September 1, 1966, and Public Law 93-557, approved December 27, 1974, and Public Law 95-346, approved August 18, 1978, effected the change.

During the 61st National Convention in Houston, Texas (August 21-23, 1979), the convention passed a resolution to amend the Vietnam War dates to begin on December 22, 1961, pursuant to Congressional approval.

On December 21, 1979, President Carter signed into law S-1874. This became Public Law 96-155, which changes American Legion eligibility for the Vietnam War to be December 22, 1961-May 7, 1975.

The National Charter of The American Legion was amended by the delegates at the 79th National Convention, September 2-4, 1997, Orlando, Florida. This amendment requested a change to the beginning eligibility date for American Legion membership for the Vietnam War period to February 28, 1961. In late-November, 1997, United States Congressional approval through Public Law 105-110 effected this change.

Status of Those in Service Defined

With the establishment of a terminal date for Vietnam War service, eligibility for American Legion membership is extended to the individual who served on active duty during the Vietnam War (February 28, 1961, to May 7, 1975), and remained on active duty after the terminal date. (See Article IV, Section 1, National Constitution: "...or continued honorably after any of said periods...")

Active Duty for Training Defined (ACDUTRA)

The situation regarding personnel who enter "active duty for training" – the so-called "six month enlistees" – is outlined in a letter addressed to National judge Advocate B. G. Davis by A. S. Sadove, Colonel, USA, Commanding, U.S. Army Reserve Components Personnel Center, Fort Benjamin Harrison, Indiana, dated November 14, 1966:

> *"At the present time individuals with no prior service may be enlisted to fill unit vacancies in the United States Reserve. These enlistments are accomplished under the Reserve Enlistment Program announced in 1963 (Public Law 88-110). The enlistment must be for a period of six years. Reservists enlisted under this program are required to perform an initial period of active duty for training with the active Army during which time they receive basic combat training and occupational specialty training... commonly referred to as ACDUTRA. As a minimum, each Reservist must perform at least four months on active duty for training. The maximum period of active duty for training depends upon the time required to fully qualify the Reservist to perform the occupational specialty and may exceed six months. The period during which a Reservist performs active duty for training is creditable as active Federal service in the same manner as for other soldiers..."*

The matter of the eligibility for American Legion membership of the individual who has completed a period of "active duty for training" and been issued a Form DD214 to show honorable separation from service revolves around the question of whether the "active duty," as used in Section 1 of Article IV of the National Constitution of The American Legion, included "active duty for training." Title 10, United States Code Annotated Section 101, Subparagraph (22) states:

> *"'Active duty' means full-time duty in the active military service of the United States. It includes...full-time training duty...(In clause (22), the definition of 'active duty' is based on the definition of "active duty for Federal service' in the source statute, since it is believed to be closer to general usage than in the definition in 50 U.S.CA. 901(b)."*

The then National Adjutant of The American Legion in a general information memorandum dated September 9, 1966, explaining the eligibility changes resulting from the action of the 48th National Convention, stated:

> *"Upon the conclusion of the period of training, the six-month enlistees are normally transferred to the Active Reserve and at that time will normally receive a Form DD214 (Report of Separation from the Army of the United States). This form if showing the termination of any period of honorable service on or after August 5, 1964* **(now February 28, 1961)**, *may be accepted as evidence of eligibility for membership."*

The weight of evidence indicates that, for purposes of eligibility for membership in The American Legion, the term "active duty" as used in the National Constitution of The American Legion, includes "active duty for training" as performed under Public Law 88-110, and in each case referred to National Judge Advocate B. G. Davis, the September 9, 1966, announcement by the National Adjutant has been found valid.

Two-week National Guard Training

Training periods in the National Guard – usually of two weeks duration – or other periods of service with the National Guard do not meet eligibility requirements unless the Guard unit was federalized and the individual's separation papers record a period of active duty in the military forces of the United States.

Lebanon and Grenada

The 72nd National Convention of The American Legion, August 28-30, 1990, Indianapolis, Indiana, authorized amendment of the National Charter to include the eligibility dates covering the United States operations in Lebanon (August 24, 1982, to July 31, 1984) and Public Law 101-478, approved October 30, 1990, effected the change. This time period included operations in Grenada.

Panama

The 72nd National Convention of The American Legion, August 28-30, 1990, Indianapolis, Indiana, authorized amendment of the National Charter to include the eligibility dates covering the United States operations in Panama (December 20, 1989, through January 31, 1990) and Public Law 101-478, approved October 30, 1990, effected the change.

Gulf War

The 73rd National Convention of The American Legion, September 3-5, 1991, Phoenix, Arizona, authorized amendment of the National Charter to include the eligibility dates covering Persian Gulf Operations and Public Law 102-179, approved December 3, 1991, effected the change. The time period for Persian Gulf operations, as stated in the National Constitution, is "August 2, 1990, to the date of cessation of hostilities as determined by the Government of the United States." When the date of cessation of hostilities is determined by the United States Government, The American Legion expects to be informed and will transmit the information.

Place of Service Not a Consideration

As in the past, place of service is not a consideration in the determination of eligibility. Although reference is frequently made to the Vietnam veteran, service in Vietnam is not a requirement of membership.

Active Duty Is Required

Since the language used in changing the Legion's Charter and National Constitution was exactly the same as used in the past, the basic requirement as a condition of eligibility has not changed in any respect

since WWI—active duty in the military forces during a defined period of hostilities. This requirement was stated succinctly by then National Judge Advocate R. A. Adams in a letter dated March 20, 1925;

"...service is the test, subject to the fact that the ex-serviceman was not dishonorably discharged."

This statement was made in connection with a ruling made by the Judge Advocate at that time that those enrolled in the United States Military Academies during World War I were eligible for American Legion membership without regard to whether any other service was performed, or even whether the individual completed training at the Academy. In the specific case in which this ruling was made, the individual had terminated training at the Military Academy by a letter of resignation. The Judge Advocate's decision at that time was supported by a statement made by the Judge Advocate General of the Army three years earlier that "service at the military academy is service in the Army." The Judge Advocate General of the Army had cited as his authority the case of U.S. vs. Morton, 112 U.S. 1. Thus, from the very beginning of The American Legion, the test of eligibility has been whether the individual was actually in military service on active duty during defined periods and whether that service was either terminated honorably or continued after the period of hostilities had ended.

Length of Service Not a Requirement

There is no requirement as to length of service. National Judge Advocate B. G. Davis, in a letter dated October 26, 1966, wrote:

"...there is no limitation placed on the length of the individual's service. If the individual served one day on active duty as a member of the Armed Forces on or after August 5, 1964 (now February 28, 1961), and has received an Honorable Discharge or separation; or served on active duty as a member of the Armed Forces during any of the delimiting periods set forth in Article IV, Section 1 of the National Constitution, and is still on active duty, he is eligible for membership in The American Legion."

A minimum of 90 days' service is necessary to qualify for some veterans' benefits, and 181 days for others. However, eligibility for veterans' benefits is *not* a criterion of eligibility for American Legion membership.

National Guard & Reserve Eligibility

The National Guard and Reserves are required to meet the same eligibility requirements as the full time federal active veterans. To be eligible, the National Guardsman/Reservist **must have served at least one day on federal active duty during any of the delimiting periods** set forth in Article IV, Section 1 of the National Constitution, and either have an honorable discharge or currently be serving either in the Guard/Reserve or on federal active duty.

The key to determining if a Guardsman/Reservist has been on or currently serving on federal active duty is the **"Authority Line"** on the activation orders of the Guardsman/Reservist. In both cases "Title 10, Subsection 672 or 12301" are orders from the Secretary of Defense and are federal orders.

The authority the Governor uses to activate the National Guard as an individual or unit is "Title 32" orders, i.e. Weekend Drills and Annual Training. These are **not** federal orders. The Reserves have similar reserve orders which are "Title 10, Subsection 270." This authority code gives the reserve component the authority to activate the reserves for Weekend Drills and Annual Training.

Use the chart below when determining eligibility for National Guard and Reserves.

	ELIGIBLE	NON-ELIGIBLE
National Guard	Title 10 Subsection 672 or 12301*	Title 32
Reserves	Title 10 Subsection 672 or 12301*	Title 10 Subsection 270

This information was taken from Military Law Chapter 39.

*This Subsection was created following Desert Storm to replace 672.

Note: A DD-214 will be issued for the time on federal active duty or a DA-1059 for a completion of a school will be issued with a character type of discharge. All Reserve components send their service members to "Basic Training" using Title 10, Subsection 672/12301 orders.

Clemency Discharges

In response to a recommendation submitted by the 1974 National Conference of Department Commanders and Adjutants, National Judge Advocate B. G. Davis issued the following opinion:

"After having reviewed the Proclamation of the President of the United States released on September 16, 1974, it is my opinion that a clemency discharge will not satisfy the eligibility criteria for membership in The American Legion. Article IV, Section 1, of the National Constitution requires that the individual seeking membership in The American Legion must, inter alia, have an honorable discharge or honorable separation from military service or his service must have continued honorably after any of the delimiting periods set forth in the above cited article and section. A clemency discharge does not meet this criteria."

Temporary Duty

During the Vietnam War, it was the practice of the Air Force to call members of the Air National Guard to duty for temporary periods, frequently for no more than 10 days. The call is made with the consent of the individual and of the Governor of the state concerned. The duty usually involves flying Air Force cargo from the United States to Southeast Asia. Correspondence with the Chief of the National Guard Bureau, Washington, D.C., has established that duty of the type outlined herein is included in the term of "active duty," in the sense that it is full-time duty in the active military service of the United States. Upon the completion of such duty, as evidence by the issuance of a Form DD-214 or other evidence of honorable separation, the individual is eligible for membership in The American Legion, provided, of course, that any part of the duty occurred between February 28, 1961, and May 7, 1975.

Discharge Data

(Vietnam War) and (Later Periods)

	FORMS NOS.	ARMY	AIR FORCE	COAST GUARD	MARINE CORPS	NAVY		
Honorable	DD256	(A) or	(AF) or	(CG) or	(MC) or	(N)	(White)	Eligible *
				Reg. & Res.				
(UHC) (under Honorable conditions)	DD257	(A) or	(AF) or	(CG) or	(MC) or	(N)	(White)	Eligible*
(UTH) (under other than Honorable conditions)	DD258	(A) or	(AF) or	(CG) or	(MC) or	(N)	(White)	Not Elig.*
Bad Conduct	DD259	(A) or	(AF) or	(CG) or	(MC) or	(N)	(Yellow)	Not Elig.*
Dishonorable	DD260	(A) or	(AF) or	(CG) or	(MC) or	(N)	(Yellow)	Not Elig.*
Certificate of Service	DD217		(AF)					Eligible
(REPORT OF TRANSFER (OR DISCHARGE (ARMED FORCES OF THE (UNITED STATES	DD214	(A) or	(AF)		(MC) or	(N)		Eligible

(if released to a civilian status, although still in the reserves)

*Honorable service during periods of eligibility.

U.S. Military, Naval, Air Force or Coast Guard Academies

B. G. Davis, National Judge Advocate, ruled on March 6, 1978, that "Cadets who served at the U.S. Military, Naval, Air Force or Coast Guard Academies during any of the delimiting periods set forth under Article IV, Section 1 of the National Constitution and whose service has been honorably terminated those individuals are eligible for membership in The American Legion." Chapter 1, Section 101 (21) Title 38, United States Code provides as follows: The term "active duty" means service as a cadet at the U.S. Military, Air Force or Coast Guard Academies or as a Midshipman at the U.S. Naval Academy.

Eligibility Matters Not Covered

Questions of eligibility not covered in the foregoing should be referred by Post Commanders to the Department Adjutant or the Department Judge Advocate. Should the Department Adjutant or the Department Judge Advocate be in doubt, an opinion and ruling may be requested from the National Judge Advocate.

Discharges Are Not Infallible

Discharges are not infallible as a test for membership, for many discharges were erroneously issued, and if clearly so, may be corrected on application to the appropriate Department in Washington.

If the discharge has been lost, an abstract of service may be procured from the appropriate Department.

Reconnect

Reconnecting America with her military was the driving force behind the Department of Defense establishing a Reconnect program several years ago. There was a perception America had lost touch with her fighting force of men and women. The American Legion was tasked with leading the way in rekindling that relationship.

Reconnect events can take many forms. Visiting Active Duty installations are the largest events, but simply visiting a local recruiting office, National Guard/Reserve unit, local military entrance processing station, or even a welcome home event, serves to reconnect local communities with their military.

The "Reconnect" program has been a great success in many Departments. Relationships are being formulated with many Active Duty, National Guard, and Reserve units. Visits and activities are continuing to flourish on active duty installations and with every conceivable portion of the total force. Local recruiting stations are still a viable source to get involved.

It is important to note that the Department of Defense has reconstituted the old "Reconnect" program and are now calling it "Operation Tribute to Freedom". Information about the program can be found at their web site: http://www.defendamerica.mil/support_troops.html.

The American Legion has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the United States **Military Entrance Processing Command (USMEPCOM)**. This will help to establish contact with the 62 Military Entrance Processing Stations around the country. A list of MEP stations, and a copy of this memorandum can be requested through the Department from the National Internal Affairs & Membership Division.

A Memorandum of Understanding with the United States **Army Recruiting Command (USAREC)** has now been in effect for several years. This memorandum informs all levels of USAREC and The American Legion about our partnership and details ways we can assist. A list of Army Recruiting Commands and stations, and a copy of this memorandum can be requested through the Department from the National Internal Affairs & Membership Division.

Lists of Active Duty installations, National Guard Headquarters and some Reserve Commands, and Marine for Life Hometown Links are also available.

If Posts wish to get involved with the "Reconnect" Program, and/or need assistance, contact the Department.

Reconnecting can have positive results - Service first, Membership second.

Internet Information Links

The American Legion - http://www.legion.org	**United States Department of Labor - http://www.dol.gov**
Corporate Gray - http://www.corporategray.com	**National Military Family Association, Inc. http://www.nmfa.org**
DoD Job Search - http://www.dod.jobsearch.org	**Transition Assistance Online (TAOnline) http://www.taonline.com/al**
DoD Transportal - http://www.dodtransportal.org	**Military Assistance Program - http://dticaw.dtic.mil/mapsite**
Marine for Life - http://marineforlife.com	**United States Department of Veterans Affairs http://www.va.gov**
Military Children and Youth - http://mfrc.calib.com/mcy	
Military Family Resource Center - http://mfrc.calib.com	
Military Teens on the Move - http://dticaw.dtic.mil/mtom	
Special Needs Network - http://mfrc.calib.com/snn	

PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

I	Order of Business
II	Motions
III	Amendments
IV	Nominations and Elections
V	Courtesies in the Assembly
VI	Parliamentarian
VII	Authorized Business

Procedure

PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE is the application of parliamentary law to the conduct of an organization. It is wise for all leaders to familiarize themselves with the accustomed technique of conducting a meeting. While it is important that the members understand the fundamental rules of parliamentary procedure, this knowledge should be used only to insure order, to expedite business, and to develop an organization that will cleave to the objects for which it was organized. For a member constantly to raise points of order and to insist upon the strict observance of every rule in a peaceable assembly where there are members ignorant of these rules and customs is but to defeat the opportunity of gradually accustoming the membership of the proper observance of parliamentary procedure.

THE CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS of an organization contain specific rules for the conduct of its business. General rules and customs for orderly procedure in addition to these specific rules are commonly known as parliamentary law. These rules are needed to guide the deliberations of an organization in order to do the right thing in the right way at the right time, and to secure the best results with the least expenditure of time and effort. The underlying principles of parliamentary law are justice and courtesy to all, one thing at a time, the rule of the majority, and the right of the minority.

PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY—It is important for every organization to adopt some authority on parliamentary law, and for the members to be familiar with both the specific and the general rules of the organization. A copy of the by-laws should always be on the commander's desk. Excellent books and small leaflets on parliamentary procedure have been written in simplified form and are available, but Roberts' Rules of Order Revised is the accepted authority for The American Legion.

I. ORDER OF BUSINESS (IF NOT OTHERWISE PROVIDED IN BY-LAWS)

1. CALL TO ORDER—The commander taps once with the gavel and says, "The meeting will come to order (follow ritual; roll call). The adjutant will please read the minutes of the preceding meeting."

2. MINUTES—After the minutes have been read by the adjutant, the commander asks, "Are there any corrections?" If none is made, "The minutes stand approved as corrected."

3. TREASURER OR FINANCE OFFICER'S REPORT—The commander then calls for the treasurer's report. After it has been read, the commander says, "If there are no questions or corrections, the report will be filed for auditing." The Auditing Committee reports at such times as the by-laws provide.

4. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORT—In some organizations much of the routine business is taken care of by the Executive Committee. This committee submits a report of its meeting at each regular meeting of the organization for adoption by the membership. The Executive Committee may transact only such business as the membership authorizes, except where the by-laws give the committee power to act. This report might include the outstanding points in communications and committee reports submitted at the Executive Committee meeting, and presented to the organization for the information or the action of the group.

5. COMMUNICATIONS—These may include letters received, notice of the next meeting, and any matters of general interest to the organization, read by the adjutant.

6. STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS—Standing committees are usually provided for in the by-laws and function throughout the year. The commander should have a list of the standing committees and call on each chair by name for reports according to plans previously made. If a report is made which contains merely a statement of opinion or facts, the commander says,

"If there are no objections, the report is accepted." If it contains resolutions or recommendations for future action, a motion should be made by the reporting member "to adopt the resolutions or recommendations which may be amended in exactly the same manner as any main motion."

7. SPECIAL COMMITTEE REPORTS—Special committees are appointed for special purposes and are automatically discharged when the special duties for which they were created are completed and their final report made to the organization. If there are any special committees to report, the commander says, "We will now hear the report of the special committee appointed to ***." A motion to adopt the resolution or recommendations of the committee opens the report to discussion and amendment.

8. UNFINISHED BUSINESS—The commander next brings before the meeting any business Postponed from the previous meeting, or nay matters introduced at that meeting on which the action of the organization was not completed. A list of these unfinished matters should have been prepared from the minutes of the last meeting by the adjutant. Only when the unfinished business has been disposed of may new business be brought forward.

9. NEW BUSINESS—The commander then says, "Is there any new business to come before the meeting?" Communications and motions calling for action by the organization may then be presented and necessary action taken. This closes the business part of the meeting.

10. THE PROGRAM is then presented.

11. ADJOURNMENT—Members should remain seated and in order until the meeting is declared adjourned. The commander may, if desired, use the "common consent" motion to adjourn, etc., "If there are no objections, the meeting stands adjourned." Formal adjournment is usually followed by a social hour. (Follow ritual.)

II. MOTIONS

Business is introduced by a motion, or by a resolution. The steps in making a motion and voting on it are as follows:

1. OBTAIN THE FLOOR—The member rises and addresses the presiding officer, as Mr. or Madame Commander, as the case may be and gives own name unless known by the commander. If the

member is entitled to the floor, the chair repeats the name of the member. This recognition gives the member the right to speak.

It is out of order for another member to stand before the member speaking has finished, or to remain standing after another has been given the floor.

2. MAKE THE MOTION—The member then states the motion or offers a resolution; for example, "I move that we take action to secure a playground for this community." In order to state a motion properly, members of the organization should become accustomed to using the words "I move that" when introducing a motion.

3. SECOND THE MOTION—If anyone wishes the matter discussed and voted upon, a member says, "I second the motion," without rising or addressing the Chair. If no member seconds it, immediately the Chair, except in small assemblies, repeats the motion and asks, "Is the motion seconded?" In small assemblies, where every member has evidently heard the motion, instead of repeating the motion, the Chair may say, "You have heard the motion; is it seconded?" If the motion is not then seconded, the Chair may say, "There being no second, the motion is not before the assembly."

(Note: Consult your parliamentary authority for the motions that do not require a second.)

4. STATE THE MOTION—After the motion is seconded, the Chair then states the motion; for example, "It has been moved and seconded that we take action to secure a playground for this community." As this motion is debatable and amendable, the Chair should then immediately ask, "Are you ready for the question?" or "Is there any discussion?" If the motion is not debatable or amendable (consult your parliamentary authority on this point if in doubt), the Chair should then immediately put the question to vote.

5. DISCUSSION—After a motion has been stated by the Chair, it is before the assembly for consideration and discussion. Speakers to the motion must (1) be entitled to the floor, (2) address their remarks to the presiding officer, (3) be courteous in their language and Department, and avoid all personalities. The maker of the motion has the right to open and close the debate.

Speakers must observe the rules of the organization as to the number of minutes and number of times they may speak on a question. The maker of a motion may vote against, but not speak against, the motion. Discussion must relate to the immediately pending question.

(Note: Consult your parliamentary authority for the few exceptions by which a speaker may be interrupted after having been assigned the floor, also for the rules to guide the Chair when more than one person arises at the same time.)

6. PUT THE QUESTION—After sufficient opportunity has been given the debate, the Chair repeats the motion and says, "Are you ready for the question?" After waiting a moment, if no one claims the floor, the Chair then says, "All those in favor of the motion as stated, say aye. All opposed, say no."

7. ANNOUNCE THE VOTE—The chair says, "The ayes have it, and the motion is adopted," or "The noes have it, and the motion is lost," as the case may be. In the event of a tie, the motion is lost unless the Chair votes in the affirmative in order to carry the motion. A tie loses because every question must be carried by at least a majority. If in doubt as to the result, the Chair calls for a rising vote, first for, and then against, the motion, asks the adjutant to count the votes, and then announces the results.

III. AMENDMENTS

After the question has been stated to the assembly by the presiding officer, it may be desirable to change it in some way. A member may rise, address the Chair, and after being recognized by the Chair, say, "I move to amend the motion by adding the words (with proper supervision) after the word (playground)." After the motion to amend has been seconded, and the motion repeated as it will read if amended so all may understand the effect the amendment will have on the main motion, the Chair then calls for remarks on the amendment.

The discussion is now upon the proposed amendment. After discussion is over, the Chair puts the question and calls for a vote on the amendment. **For example, "The question is on adding the words (with proper supervision) to the motion we take action to secure a playground for this community.**

All those in favor of this amendment please say (aye), those opposed say (no)." After announcing the result of the vote on the amendment, the Chair will then restate the motion before the house, in its original form if the amendment has been lost, or as amended if the amendment has been carried and the vote is then taken upon the question in its final form (if no further amendments are offered).

An amendment may be offered in any of the following forms: "I move to amend by inserting," or "adding" if at the end of the motion; "I move to amend by striking out and inserting," or "by substituting" in case of any entire resolution, by-laws or paragraph.

Only one amendment of the first degree is permitted at a time when a motion or resolution is under consideration, but one amendment of that amendment—that is, an amendment of the second degree—is also in order. While there may be only one amendment of each degree pending at the same time, any number of them may be offered in succession after disposing of the prior amendment. An amendment must relate to the subject to be amended.

The amendment of the second degree, if there is one before the assembly receives first consideration. After disposal, unless another secondary amendment is offered, the amendment of the first degree is then pending. After all amendments have been disposed of, the main motion as amended (or in its original form if all the amendments have been lost), is placed before the assembly for action.

WHAT SHALL I DO?

1. To introduce business? Make the main motion.
2. To modify the motion? Amend, commit or refer.
3. To defer action? Postpone to a certain time; make a special order (require a two-thirds vote); lay on table.
4. To suppress or limit debate? Move the previous question (two-thirds vote); limit debate (two-thirds vote).
5. To suppress the question? Object to the consideration (two-thirds vote); Postpone indefinitely; lay on the table.
6. To consider a question a second time? Take from the table; reconsider; rescind.
7. To prevent action from becoming final? Reconsider and have entered on the minutes.
8. To reverse the decision of the Chair? Appeal.
9. To make a request for: Parliamentary inquiry; information; permission to withdraw a motion; reading papers; excused from duty; any other privilege. (See Roberts' Rules of Order, 44 to 51.)
10. To correct a mistake? Rise to a point of order.

A motion that's been carried, lost, or Postponed indefinitely can't be considered again during the same session except by a motion to reconsider the vote disposing of the question, or to rescind the action taken. The motion to reconsider can be made only by one who voted on the prevailing side. The motion to reconsider must be made on the same day or the calendar day (not counting Sundays or holidays) after the vote which is to be reconsidered was taken. Any member may second this motion. The motion to reconsider, if carried, annuls the vote already taken and brings the motion before the assembly again for action.

A motion to rescind an action may be made if the motion to reconsider is not already pending. The motion to rescind may be made by any member. Its purpose is to undo some action already taken and is identical with the motion to amend by striking out something previously adopted, such as a by-law, resolution, section, or paragraph. If made on the same day, it only requires a majority vote, but on a subsequent day, if without notice of intention to rescind it, requires a two-thirds vote.

In case of doubts as to parliamentary procedure, or if difficult questions arise, such as to lay on the table, to Postpone, to limit debate, to reconsider, point of order, etc. consult the parliamentary authority.

MOTIONS CLASSIFIED IN THE ORDER OF PRIORITY

Privileged Motions

Fix time to Adjourn

To Adjourn
**To recess
Questions of personal privilege
Call for order of business

Subsidiary Motions

Lay on table
Previous question 2/3
*Postpone to definite time
*Refer to Committee
*Postpone
*Amend Amendment
*Amend
Objection to Consideration 2/3

A Main Motion is used to bring before the meeting any particular subject for consideration of the assembly.

NOTE

*Are debatable—others are not.
**Debatable only when no other motion pending.
Those not marked with 2/3 require only majority vote.

IV. NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS

The choosing of officers for a Legion group is one of the most important functions. It means the choosing of leaders upon whose faithful service the success of the organization largely depends. Among the qualifications necessary for efficient official leadership is an understanding of the purpose of The American Legion; knowledge of the work and enthusiasm for it; a high sense of justice, fairness and courtesy; open-mindedness, moral courage and the ability to get along with other people.

Officers should be chosen for their ability to perform the work of the office to which they are elected, and not because of their social prestige or because they want the office. Willingness to serve is not enough; fitness to serve must stand above every other consideration.

A Nominating Committee reports to the assembly only nominees approved by a majority vote of the committee. No action is taken on the report of Nominating Committee. Nominations from the floor are always in order after Nominating Committee has reported.

A nomination is only a statement of a preference and does not control the election in any way. When voting by ballot, one may be elected without having been nominated, subject to getting the required number of votes at the election.

The elective ballot alone elects. Mistakes made in nominating do not invalidate elections, as you may vote for whom you please, regardless of nominations.

Members of a Nominating Committee may be nominated for office without resigning from the committee. When printed ballots are used, names presented from the floor as well as the names presented by the nominating committee must be printed on the official elective ballot so there will be no discrimination among the candidates.

NOMINATION BY BALLOT

No nominations are made from the floor when nominations are by ballot, as all have had opportunity to nominate by ballot.

The method of election best fitted to a particular group should be provided in the by-laws. These election rules must be strictly adhered to. If the election rules prove unsatisfactory, amend them. But abide by them as they are, until properly amended.

Before proceeding to an election, it is customary for nominations to be made from the floor or by a Nominating Committee, or by ballot. The by-laws may prescribe the method, but if they do not, then the assembly by motion may choose the method of nominating. This motion is not debatable.

Only members of the organization can make nominations or vote at an election.

The by-laws should provide that no name shall be placed in nomination without the consent of the nominee. This prevents promiscuous nomination and withdrawals.

Nominations from the floor may be made by any voting member. Nominations require no second, but a second is complimentary to the candidate.

NOMINATIONS BY COMMITTEE

If names of candidates are to be presented by a Nominating Committee, this committee should be named at least one month before election day and the by-laws should provide the method of appointing (or electing) the committee. The usual methods are election by the assembly, or election by the Executive Committee or part by the assembly and part by the Executive Committee.

The commander should not appoint the Nominating Committee nor be a member of it.

The Nominating Committee should give thoughtful consideration to the qualifications of each candidate for office and should secure the consent of the candidate before placing the name on the ticket.

CLOSING NOMINATIONS

Nominations from the floor may be closed by a two-thirds vote, or the commander may close nominations by unanimous (common) consent of the assembly (no one objecting). If for any reason it is desired to reopen nominations, it may be done by a majority vote (unless the by-laws limit the time for nominations).

A member may be nominated for more than one office, unless the by-laws forbid. If elected to more than one office, the member must choose immediately on which office to serve. The other office (or offices) shall be filled according to the provisions of the by-laws, if simultaneous service in more than one office is forbidden.

ELECTIONS

Majority vote is necessary to elect if there is no by-law to the contrary. Plurality vote never elects except by special by-laws. **A person ineligible to hold office at the time of election cannot be elected even by unanimous vote.**

The usual methods of election are by voice, or by ballot (a secret vote). The by-laws may provide that election shall be by ballot except when there is but one candidate for office, the election may be by voice. The ballot vote is the fairest vote when there is more than one choice for an office. When the by-laws require the vote to be taken by ballot, it is out of order to move that the adjutant or any other person shall cast the ballot of the assembly, as ballot vote is a secret vote and each voter must cast their own ballot.

ELECTION BY VOICE

The election to office may be by voice, and vote taken on each candidate separately, or the assembly may, by a majority vote, order the vote taken on the ticket as a whole when there is but one candidate for each office.

ELECTION BY BALLOT

Ballots should be given to identified voting members only. The names of candidates for each office may be printed or written on the ballot, or the voter may write the name of choice on the ballot. The identity of the voter must not be indicated in any way as a ballot is a secret vote. If printed ballots are used, the names from the floor and those proposed by the Nominating Committee must be printed on the official ballot. Printed ballots cannot be used if nominations and elections take place at the same meeting. Instructions may be given to the assembly concerning the method of marking the ballot. An unmarked

(blank) ballot is just a scrap of paper and is not counted in elections. The Election Committee has no authority to make any changes in the election ballot or mark it in any way.

The vote cast for each office must be preserved in such manner that if the election is questioned, the voter may be verified by a recount. If printed ballots are used, the Election Committee places the voted ballots in a sealed packet together with its report (signed by at least a majority of the Election Committee), and delivers the packet, sealed, to the adjutant. This sealed packet shall not be opened except by order of the assembly or the board for the purpose of verifying the vote, or destroying the packet.

If slips of paper are used for voting for each separate office, the votes cast for each office must be sealed in a separate packet and delivered to the adjutant in like manner.

The form of the report of the Elections Committee for each office to be filled is as follows (Example): "For commander—Number of votes cast—30; necessary for election—16; Brown received—19; Jones received—10; Green received—1."

After the vote for all the offices has been read (the largest vote for each office stated first), the names of the committee members signing the report are read, the report is handed to the commander, and the reporting member sits. The commander announces who is elected.

In counting the ballots, every name for which a vote has been cast must be reported.

Newly-elected officers take their seats at the time prescribed in the by-laws. If there is no such rule, they are seated following election, or at the time established by usage as a precedent.

When there is more than one vice-commander, they always should be numbered to establish their precedence when acting as commander pro tem.

V. COURTESIES IN THE ASSEMBLY

Members contribute to the success of a meeting when they—

1. Come to order at once when the commander opens the meeting.
2. Give thoughtful attention throughout the business meeting and the program.
3. Rise to address the Chair, and wait to speak until recognized by the Chair.
4. Sit down at once when someone else has been given the floor.
5. Rise to make a motion, but remain seated in small assemblies when seconding the motion.
6. Write a long or involved motion and give to the adjutant, when asked to do so.
7. Rise when a rising vote is requested and remain standing until the vote is taken.
8. Vote on every question.
9. Limit their remarks to their rightful share of the time of the meeting and do not infringe upon the right of others. The floor should be given to one who has not spoken on the question, in preference to one who has spoken, if there is any question as to precedence.
10. Rise to make reports, remain seated during the discussion of the report.
11. Refrain from conversation during the meeting.
12. The courtesy of the floor may be granted to one who is not a member when it is desired to have such one speak during a business session.

VI. PARLIAMENTARIAN

A parliamentarian may be appointed if there is a member of the organization who is well informed on parliamentary law. It must be remembered the function of a parliamentarian is to express an opinion on the point in question when requested to do so. The ruling or decision based upon this advice must be stated by the presiding officer.

VII. AUTHORIZED BUSINESS

Authorized and lawful business which the organization becomes responsible for can only be transacted at meetings regularly or specially called for that purpose at which meetings there is a quorum present.

The notice for a special meeting must state the special business to be transacted, and no other business can be entertained.

If no quorum is present, the motion to adjourn and to provide for an adjourned meeting are the only motions in order.

If additional knowledge of Parliamentary Procedure is deemed necessary, Posts should refer to Roberts' Rules of Order. These rules can be purchased from National Emblem Sales, American Legion National Headquarters, P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206.

VIII. MOTIONS CLASSIFIED IN ORDER OF PRIORITY

1. Privileged Motions: Fix time to Adjourn; To Adjourn; To Recess **; Question of Personal Privilege; Call for Order of Business.

2. Subsidiary Motions: Lay on Table; Previous Question (2/3); Postpone to Indefinite Time *, Refer to Committee *; Postpone *; Amend Amendment *; Amend *; Objection to Consideration (2/3).

3. Main Motion *: A main motion is used to bring before the meeting any particular subject for consideration of the assembly.

NOTE: *Are debatable—others are not.
**Debatable only when no other motion pending.
Those not marked with (2/3) require only majority vote.

Uniform Code of Procedure for the Revocation, Cancellation or Suspension of Post Charters

(Adopted by the National Executive Committee of THE AMERICAN LEGION May 1-2, 1941, Indianapolis, Ind. Amended by that body November 6-7, 1941)

I. Charges

Section 1. A charge that any Post should, for any good and sufficient cause, have its charter cancelled, suspended or revoked may be initiated by any intermediate body between the Post and the Department, or by any three Posts of the Department in which the Post accused is located. A charge may be withdrawn only with the consent of the Department Commander.

Sec. 2. Such charge shall be filed with the Department Commander at Department Headquarters.

Sec. 3. Such charge shall be in writing, and signed by the respective Commanders and Adjutants of the intermediate bodies or Posts, as the case may be, and sworn to before any officer authorized to administer oaths.

Sec. 4. Three additional copies of such charge shall be filed with the original. The Department Commander shall forthwith cause one copy of such charge to be served on the defendant Post by delivering a true copy thereof to the Adjutant of said Post, as hereinafter provided.

Sec. 5. Such charge shall include the following:

a. A certified or attested copy of the resolution authorizing the filing of such charge.
b. The full name and address of the Post against which the charge is made, as well as the full name and address of the Commander and Adjutant of such Post.
c. A clear, concise and detailed statement of the facts upon which the charge is based.
d. The section or sections of the National and Department Constitutions and By-Laws alleged to have been violated.
e. Affidavits or documents substantiating the charge may be attached.

Sec. 6. After a charge has been filed, the Department Commander shall forthwith cause a full investigation of the facts to be made. After such investigation, the Department Commander shall file a report and recommendation with the Department Executive Committee for its action thereon at its next meeting.

Sec. 7. Proceedings relating to the cancellation, suspension or revocation of a Post charter may also originate with either the Department Commander or the Department Executive Committee.

Sec. 8. The action of the Department Executive Committee in rejecting any charge or charges against a Post shall be final.

II. Resolution of Department Executive Committee

Section 1. Should the Department Executive Committee determine by a majority vote that the Post should surrender its charter, said Department Executive Committee shall direct the defendant Post to surrender its charter for cancellation, and shall pass a resolution that unless the charter is so surrendered, prior to the date therein specified, a hearing and trial be held to determine whether the Post charter should be cancelled, suspended or revoked, and said resolution shall include the following:

a. A statement that the Department Executive Committee has determined that a hearing and trial is warranted.
b. Authorization and direction to the Department Commander and Department Adjutant to sign a formal complaint.
c. The names and addresses of the members of the subcommittee before which the hearing and the trial is to be held.
d. The name and address of the Department Judge Advocate or special acting Department Judge Advocate who is to assist the committee.
e. Authorization to the subcommittee to hire such stenographic or other help as may be necessary and to incur such expense as may be necessary. Said expense, including the cost of stenographic report of the trial when ordered to be transcribed by the subcommittee or the Department Executive Committee, shall be taxed as costs against the Department, complainants or defendant Post in such manner and amount as the Department Executive Committee shall prescribe.
f. That the subcommittee shall report its written findings of fact and recommendation to the Department Executive Committee at its next meeting, provided, however, that if the hearing or trial is not completed, a partial report shall be made.

III. Complaint

Section 1. In all cases, a formal complaint, in triplicate, shall be drawn by the Department Judge Advocate and signed by The American Legion, through its Department Commander and Department Adjutant, setting forth the following:

a. A clear and concise statement of the facts upon which the charges are predicted.
b. The origin of the charges.
c. A copy of the resolution of the Department Executive Committee appointing the subcommittee and its assistants.
d. A copy of the Uniform Code of Procedure for the Revocation, Cancellation or Suspension of Post Charters.
e. The time within which an appearance or answer shall be filed by the Post, which shall be not less than 20 or more than 60 days from the date of the service of a copy of the complaint.
f. The time and place for the hearing and trial, which shall not be more than 30 days after the date of the expiration of the time for the filing of the answer.

Sec. 2. Any such complaint may be amended by the subcommittee of the Department Executive Committee in its discretion at any time upon such terms as may be deemed just in the opinion of the said subcommittee.

IV. Service

Section 1. The subcommittee shall cause a true copy of the complaint to be served on the defendant Post.

Sec. 2. All complaints, orders and other process and papers of the subcommittee or the Department organization of THE AMERICAN LEGION may be served personally, or by registered mail, or by leaving a copy thereof at the principle office or Headquarters of the intermediate body or Post, or place of residence of the person or officer to be served. The verified return by the individual serving the same showing service thereof in the manner herein provided, or the registry return receipt shall be proof of service.

Sec. 3. All notices, orders, papers or other process which are to be served on the Department Headquarters of THE AMERICAN LEGION, or the subcommittee appointed to conduct the trial, shall be deemed served if they are served on the Department Adjutant at Department Headquarters, said service to be made as herein above provided.

Sec. 4. Witnesses may be summoned by a notice signed by either the special acting Department Judge Advocate, the Department Judge Advocate, or by a member of the subcommittee.

V. Answer

Section 1. The defendant Post shall file an answer to said complaint with the Department Judge Advocate at Department Headquarters within the time specified in the complaint. The answer shall contain a clear and concise statement of the facts which constitute its defense. Any charge or specification in the complaint which is not expressly denied or explained in the answer shall be deemed to be admitted.

Sec. 2. In the event that the complaint is amended during the course of the hearing or trial, the defendant shall be furnished with a copy of such amendment, and may file an amended answer to the said amended complaint within five days thereafter.

VI. Subcommittee

Section 1. The subcommittee to hear and try and make written findings of fact and recommendations with reference to the matter of the cancellation, suspension or revocation of the Post charter shall be appointed by the Department Executive Committee and shall consist of not less than three (3) members of the Department Executive Committee. No member of the Post under investigation shall be a member of such subcommittee.

Sec. 2. Should no member of the subcommittee be a lawyer, opinions on questions of law may be obtained from the Department Judge Advocate.

Sec. 3. A majority of the members of the subcommittee shall constitute a quorum. If for any reason there is less than a quorum, the hearing shall be adjourned until a quorum is present.

Sec. 4. The duties of the Department Judge Advocate or special acting Department Judge Advocate shall be to see that the trial is prompt, complete and thorough, make all arrangements for the hearings, the summoning of all witnesses and the production of all papers. He shall see that all the orders of the subcommittee shall be carried out. He shall examine and cross-examine all witnesses.

VII. Hearing and Trial

Section 1. The rules of evidence prevailing in courts of law and equity shall not be controlling. The subcommittee shall decide all questions arising as to relevancy of the evidence and the regularity of the proceedings.

Sec. 2. The subcommittee may hold its hearings in closed sessions or may open them to the public. The subcommittee shall hear witnesses on oath or affirmation.

Sec. 3. Any party to the proceeding shall have the right to appear at such hearing in person, by counsel or otherwise, subject to such reasonable restrictions as may be placed on this right by the subcommittee, and to examine and cross-examine witnesses and to introduce documentary or other evidence.

Sec. 4. Stipulations of fact may be introduced in evidence with respect to any issues.

Sec. 5. Objection to the conduct of the hearing shall be stated orally together with a short statement of the grounds of such objection and included in the stenographic report of the hearing.

Sec. 6. Any party to the proceedings shall be entitled to a reasonable period at the close of the hearing for oral argument, which shall not be included in the stenographic report of the hearing. Briefs may be filed by the parties within the time fixed by the subcommittee.

Sec. 7. In the discretion of the subcommittee, the hearings may be continued from day to day, or adjourned to a later date, or to a different place by announcement thereof at the hearing by the chairman or vice-chairman of the subcommittee or by other appropriate notices.

Sec. 8. A stenographic report of the trial shall be made.

VIII. Report of Subcommittee

Section 1. The subcommittee, after it has completed its hearings, shall file the complete report of the proceedings had upon the trial, together with its written findings of fact and recommendations with reference thereto with the Department Adjutant not less than five (5) days before the next meeting of the Department Executive Committee, all of which shall be open to the inspection of all members of the Department Executive Committee, as well as representative or representatives of the defendant Post.

Sec. 2. The Department Executive Committee shall consider said report and act thereon.

Sec. 3. At the Department Executive Committee meeting at which the report of the said subcommittee is to be considered, one representative of the defendant Post may, within the discretion of the Department Executive Committee, be given the privilege of the floor for not more than one hour.

Sec. 4. Should the subcommittee's report be a partial report, the Department Executive Committee may continue the committee and authorize it to hold further hearings and present its final report at the next meeting of the Department Executive Committee.

IX. Appeal

Section 1. Should the Department Executive Committee refuse to cancel, suspend or revoke the charter of the Post, such decision shall be final and no appeal can be taken there from.

Sec. 2. Should the Department Executive Committee, upon a report of its subcommittee, cancel, suspend or revoke the charter of the defendant Post, the defendant Post and the National Adjutant shall be notified by the Department Adjutant of the decision of the Department Executive Committee, which notice shall be mailed within five (5) days after such decision has been rendered. Should the defendant Post desire to appeal from the decision of the Department Executive Committee, it shall serve its notice of appeal, signed by the Post Commander and Post Adjutant, on the Department Adjutant at Department Headquarters within thirty (30) days from the date of said suspension, cancellation or revocation.

Sec. 3. Upon receipt of said notice of appeal, the Department Commander shall immediately notify the National Commander of such appeal and shall cause the Department Judge Advocate, or acting Department Judge Advocate, and the subcommittee to submit all the papers and the complete record of the hearings to the National Commander. Upon receipt of the notice of appeal, the National Commander shall appoint a subcommittee of not more than five (5) nor less than three (3) members of the National Executive Committee for the purpose of hearing the appeal from the action of the Department Executive Committee.

Sec. 4. The National Executive Committeeman, or alternate, from the Department of which the defendant Post is a part, shall not be eligible to serve on this committee.

Sec. 5. This subcommittee of the National Executive Committee shall meet at least one day prior to the meeting of the National Executive Committee and to this committee the National Commander shall refer the complete record, in writing, of said proceedings with such exceptions thereto as are made by the defendant Post.

Sec. 6. This subcommittee may make its recommendations merely from the records, or it may permit representatives of the Department or the defendant Post to appear and argue the matter before the committee, and it may, as such hearing of such appeal, take further evidence relating thereto under such rules and conditions as it may from time to time adopt.

Sec. 7. This subcommittee shall review the cause and recommend to the National Executive Committee the action to be taken thereon.

Sec. 8. The decision of the National Executive Committee, based upon the report of this subcommittee, shall be final and there shall be no appeal there from.

Sec. 9. The cost of the proceeding may be retaxed as the National Executive Committee shall deem just and equitable.

Practice and Procedure in the Expulsion or Suspension of a Member of The American Legion

(May be revised and changed by subsequent action of the National Executive Committee.)

National Judge Advocate's Note

Many Departments and Posts of The American Legion have failed to adopt a method of practice and procedure on the suspension or expulsion of a member. The following is not mandatory upon any Post or Department, but is submitted only as a guide or form to follow. It is approved by the National Executive Committee.

A.

Section 2 of Article IV of the By-Laws of The American Legion is as follows:

"Members may be suspended or expelled from the Legion only upon a proper showing of cause. Charges shall be based upon disloyalty, neglect of duty, dishonesty and conduct unbecoming a member of The American Legion. All charges must be made under oath in writing by the accusers, and no member in good standing shall lose his membership until given a fair trial in such manner and form as the Department by-laws and Department Executive Committee shall prescribe."

I. Process

The first process in all actions of expulsion or suspension against a member of The American Legion in good standing shall be by filing with the adjutant of the Post written charges in triplicate, properly verified by affidavit of the accuser or accusers.

II. Writ—When Returnable When Written Charges Are Filed

The adjutant shall issue a writ dated upon the day it shall be issued and sign it, directed to the sergeant-at-arms (or some other member of the Post in good standing), commanding that person to summon the accused to appear at the Post meeting place at the next regular meeting (providing 15 days have intervened), to show cause why he should not be suspended or expelled (as the case may be).

III. Service—Return

It shall be the duty of the sergeant-at-arms, or the member appointed, to serve the writ so issued, by reading it to the accused and at the same time delivering to the member a verified copy of the charges filed. The person serving the writ shall endorse upon said writ the time and manner of serving it and immediately thereafter file the same with the Post adjutant.

IV. Alias Writ

Whenever it shall appear by the return that the accused is not found fifteen (15) days, or more, previous to the regular Post meeting, the adjutant, at the request of the accuser, shall issue another writ and so on until service is had.

V. Failure to Make Return

If the sergeant-at-arms, or the member to who a summons is delivered, shall neglect or refuse to make return of same within the time required in Paragraph 4, another summons shall be issued, directed to some other member in good standing for service as herein above set forth.

VI. Service by Publication

Whenever the accuser shall file with the adjutant of the Post in which the charges are pending, an affidavit showing the accused has gone out of the state or on due inquiry cannot be found or is concealed within the state so that process cannot be served upon the intended, and stating the place of residence of such accused, if known, or that upon diligent inquiry the place of residence cannot be ascertained, the adjutant of the Post shall cause publication to be made in the county where the Post is located and if there be no newspapers published in said county, then in the nearest newspaper published in the state containing notice of the pendency of such charges before said Post, the names of the accused and the accuser, and the time and place of the hearing of said charges. Within two days of the first publication of such notice, the adjutant of said Post shall send a copy thereof by mail addressed to the accused if the place of residence is stated in said affidavit; said notice shall be published at least once each week for three successive weeks.

VII. Charges

The accuser or accusers must be members of the same Post as the accused and shall set forth the charges of disloyalty, neglect of duty, dishonesty and conduct unbecoming a member of The American Legion in terms of simplicity and understanding in order the accused may properly prepare a defense.

VIII. Accused to Enter His/Her Appearance in Writing

Before the accused defends in his/her own proper person, or through counsel, he/she shall enter an appearance by filing an answer to said charges on or before the date of the regular meeting to which the accused has been summoned to appear.

IX. Failure to Answer

If the accused fails to answer the charges, in manner and form as herein last set forth, the charges and matters and things therein stated shall be taken as confessed and the prayer for expulsion or suspension granted.

X. Date of Trial

Whenever the accused enters an appearance by filing an answer to the charges preferred, the entire proceedings shall automatically be continued until the next regular Post meeting, at which time the trial shall be had.

XI. Continuance

Either party may apply for a continuance before the day set for trial, however, it shall be accompanied by a written motion, supported by affidavit of the party so applying. Good and substantial cause must exist before said motion is granted. The presiding judge advocate shall pass on said motion.

XII. Trial—Post Judge Advocate to Preside

The Post judge advocate shall preside at the trial, and shall have the power and authority to pass upon the materiality and relevancy of all the evidence presented, and shall have general power to prescribe the necessary and reasonable rules and regulations for the orderly procedure of said trial.

XIII. Post Judge Advocate Vacancy

In case of death, removal, vacancy, resignation or disability of the Post judge advocate, it shall be the duty of the Department commander, when duly notified by the Post adjutant, to appoint a special judge

advocate in the Department to fill the vacancy. Such special judge advocate so appointed shall have the authority, right and powers of a duly elected Post judge advocate. The Post shall bear the expenses of any special judge advocate.

XIV. Post Officers and Executive Committee to Act as Jurors

The Post officers and the Post executive committee are hereby selected as jurors to ascertain under the guidance of the judge advocate the truth of the charges preferred. Their province is strictly limited to questions of fact, and within that province they are still further restricted to the exclusive consideration of the matters that have been proven by evidence of the interested parties in the course of the trial. Their decision shall be reduced to writing and filed with the Post adjutant, who, in turn, shall enter the same in the Post records.

XV. Causes of Challenge

If any Post officer or any member of the executive committee, or any other member selected as a juror, shall state he/she cannot fairly and impartially render a verdict therein in accordance with the evidence, and the presiding judge advocate shall be satisfied of the truth of such statement, said member or members shall be challenged for cause.

XVI. Peremptory Challenge

Each party shall be entitled to challenge of two jurors without showing cause for such challenge.

XVII. When a Post Has No Executive Committee

When a Post has no executive committee, the presiding judge advocate shall direct the sergeant-at-arms to summon five members of the Post to sit as jurors in their place.

XVIII. Duty of Sergeant-at-Arms

If any member is challenged peremptorily or for cause, or if any Post officer or member of the Executive Committee shall be absent from said trial, the presiding judge advocate shall direct the sergeant-at-arms to summon a sufficient number of members of the Post to sit as jurors in their place.

XIX. If Sergeant-at-Arms Not Present, etc.

If the sergeant-at-arms is not present at said trial or upon objection of either party to the cause to the sergeant-at-arms summoning a sufficient number to fill the vacancies, the presiding judge advocate shall appoint a special sergeant-at-arms to summon the necessary persons to act as jurors.

XX. Members Insufficient to Fill Panel

When the membership of the Post, through cause or otherwise, is insufficient in number to make a full panel for jury service, the trial shall be continued until the next regular Post meeting. The Post adjutant, within five (5) days thereafter, shall transmit such information to the Department commander, who shall, before the next regular meeting of the Post, cause the sergeant-at-arms of said Post to summon a sufficient number of members of The American Legion from the body of the county in which the Post is located to fill the vacancies.

XXI. Amendments

At any time before a final decision is made by the jury upon the trial of a member upon expulsion or suspension, amendments may be allowed by the presiding judge advocate upon such terms as are just and reasonable.

XXII. Number Necessary to Expel or Suspend

To expel or suspend a member of The American Legion in good standing, two-thirds of the members selected to sit as jurors shall vote in the affirmative.

B.

Section 3 of Article IV of the By-Laws of The American Legion is as follows:

"Any member who has been suspended or expelled has the right of appeal to his Department Executive Committee, or to the Department convention, according to the provisions in the by-laws of such Department. The decision of the Department shall be final."

I. Time for Appeal

Within forty (40) days after judgment of expulsion or suspension is made and recorded, the accused ONLY may take an appeal in manner and form as set forth in Section 3 of Article IV of the By-Laws last mentioned.

II. Stenographic Report

Either party demanding a stenographic report of the trial shall pay for the same, and when said report is completed, it shall be the duty of the presiding judge advocate, on appeal, to examine the same and if correct, officially certify to the correctness of such report, and the same shall be immediately filed with the Department adjutant, who, in turn, shall present the same to the Department Executive Committee or the Department convention officials, according to the by-laws of such Department. All matters and things contained in such stenographic report shall become a part of the record and shall be considered in the final decision by the Department. In addition to the stenographic report, all interested parties shall have the further right of appearing in person, or by counsel, and present further evidence and arguments upon such final hearing.

III. Notice by Department Adjutant Upon Request

When an appeal is taken by accused, in compliance with Section 3 of Article IV of the By-Laws of The American Legion, it shall be the duty of the accused to obtain from the Department adjutant the date of the Executive Committee meeting or Department convention and the exact time and place of such hearing on appeal. This notice should be given if possible at least ten (10) days before the meeting or convention.

IV. Appeal—Department Judge Advocate to Preside

Upon appeal the Department judge advocate shall preside at the trial, and shall have the power and authority to grant a continuance to either party if deemed for the best interest of the Legion; to pass upon the materiality and relevancy of all the evidence presented and shall have general power to prescribe the necessary and reasonable rules and regulations for the orderly procedure of said trial.

V. No Further Appeal

The decision reached by the Department Executive Committee or Department convention shall be final.

VI. Effect of Decision

Where an appeal is taken by the accused and the Department Executive Committee or Department convention sustains the appeal, the expelled member automatically becomes a member in good standing of said Post, and it is mandatory the adjutant reinstate said member upon the Post membership roll. Any Post failing to comply with this provision is subject to having its charter suspended or revoked.

C.

Section 4 of Article IV of the National Constitution of The American Legion is as follows:

"No person who has been expelled by a Post shall be admitted to membership in another Post without the consent of the expelling Post, except that where such consent has been asked for and denied by such Post, he may then appeal to the Executive Committee of the Department of the expelling Post for

permission to be admitted to membership in another Post, and shall be ineligible for membership until such permission is granted."

How to Write a Resolution

Because the resolutions adopted by your membership represent a formal expression of the official opinion or will of the Post, extreme care should be devoted to both their preparation and thought content. The following guidelines and suggestions relate primarily to the *form* your Post's resolutions should take, rather than their content. However, when considering resolutions, keep in mind that any proposal transmitted beyond your Post and within the organization of the Legion must be "germane"—that is, closely related to the purpose for which The American Legion exists.

Resolutions requiring county, District or Department consideration must be prepared and forwarded in accordance with their respective regulations and by-laws. A well-written resolution stands a better chance of getting favorable consideration at your county, District, or Department convention than a resolution which is vaguely worded and carelessly formulated.

From the standpoint of the policies and practices of The American Legion as a whole, resolutions are all-important. The National Organization cannot act on a given problem in the absence of a controlling resolution; and, conversely, it must act on a matter when mandated to do so by a resolution which has been properly adopted by the National Convention or National Executive Committee. If your Post seeks to be a leader in the policies and practices of The American Legion, it can do so only through the resolution method.

Post Procedures May Vary

In some Posts, the member who moves the adoption of a resolution must present it in writing at the time the motion is offered. Other Posts follow the practice of assigning one member, or special committee, the task of drafting or editing those resolutions to be sent forward for convention consideration. However, it remains the responsibility of the Post Commander to make sure each resolution truly reflects the sense of the action taken by the Post—and is presented in the best possible form.

Except for certain details (noted in the discussion of *resolving* clauses below) the National Organization has not established an official style guide for the preparation of American Legion resolutions. However, the National Executive Committee has expressed (Res. No. 20 and 21, May 1960) certain general considerations are applicable to all resolutions being forwarded for action by the National Organization as follows:

1. A resolution should contain "supporting documents," and its intent should be clearly defined.
2. A resolution should be free of errors of fact and law.
3. A resolution should have material relevance to the purposes and programs of The American Legion. (On the latter point, the NEC specifically cautions Legion Posts to beware of becoming a channel through which non-Legion organizations seek to achieve their goals.)

A resolution should deal with only one subject. Those which attempt to treat more than one subject are unwieldy to process at conventions, especially if they involve matters which do not fall within the jurisdiction of a single committee of the convention. They are generally rejected or amended to delete reference to more than one subject.

Resolutions have two major parts, a *preamble* and a *resolving section*. Each consists of one or more clauses (sometimes called paragraphs) and the whole is read in its entirety, beginning with the preamble, as one continuous, complex sentence. The preamble sets forth the reasons for the resolution; the resolving section sets forth the intent of the resolution.

Prepare Preamble Last

Although it precedes the resolving section in appearance, the preamble of a resolution should be prepared after the resolving section has been put into final form. Once the intent of the resolution has

been clearly stated, it is much easier to decide what statements need to be in the preamble to make clear the reasons for the resolution. Also, during committee or floor debate, a preamble is always amended last because changes in the resolution may require changes in the preamble. The resolving section of a resolution begins with the word "*RESOLVED*," usually printed in capital letters and followed by a comma. Between this opening word and the statement of the resolution's intent there should be inserted the following information: (1) identification of resolving authority: (2) the circumstance and place of the action; (3) the date of the action. The first word after this information would be "*That*" with a capital "*T*."

Example:

"RESOLVED, by Post No. ....., The American Legion, Department of ....., in regular (or special) meeting assembled in ..... (Place and Date) ....., That . . ."

This clause, referred to as the "resolving clause" (similar to the "enacting clause" of a law), should be uniform for every resolution. For National Convention and National Executive Committee resolutions, the resolving clauses have been standardized as follows:

"RESOLVED, by The American Legion in National Convention assembled in ..... (City and State) ....., ... (Date) ....., That . . ."

The word "*That*" immediately following the resolving clause introduces the clause which is the object of the verb "*RESOLVED*." It aids the reader to find the point at which the meat of the resolution begins; it aids the drafter of the resolution to launch a strong and unmistakable statement of intent.

Examples:

"*RESOLVED, . . . That The American Legion shall sponsor and support legislation to . . .*"
"RESOLVED, . . . That The American Legion is opposed to repeal or weakening of . . ."

Although each resolution should deal with only one subject, it is often necessary or desirable to attach additional clauses (or paragraphs) to a resolution's resolving section in order to cover matters that are closely related to the main intent. This device is especially useful for spelling out the details of how and by whom the intent of the resolution is to be carried out or accomplished. Example:

"RESOLVED, by (etc.) . . ., That (etc.) . . ., and be it
"FURTHER RESOLVED, That (etc.) . . ., and be it
(add FURTHER RESOLVED paragraphs as required) . . ., and be it
"FINALLY RESOLVED, That (etc.) . . ."

As shown here, the identifying information is stated *only once*, in the first paragraph of the resolving section of a resolution, and is not repeated in subsequent paragraphs. A period is used only once—at the close of the last paragraph of the resolving section.

Construction of Resolution Preamble

The preamble of a resolution is made up of one or more clauses (or paragraphs), each of which begins with "*WHEREAS*." Two or more of these clauses are joined together by a semicolon followed by "*and*."

Example:

"WHEREAS, The American Legion is an organization of war veterans who have dedicated themselves to the service of the community, state and nation; and

"WHEREAS, This service is performed through The American Legion's basic programs; and (etc.)"

Each clause in the preamble should contain a statement of fact which is logically related to the intent of the resolution and explains and justifies the need for the resolution. Note that each clause would stand alone as a complete sentence if the "*WHEREAS*" were removed and a period were used in place of the semicolon at the end.

The final clause of the preamble is joined to the resolving section of the resolution by a semicolon (or colon), followed usually by the phrase "*now, therefore, be it....*" (acceptable variations in common usage are "*therefore be it*"; or simply "*be it*").

Example:

"WHEREAS, ... (etc.) .....; and
"WHEREAS, ... (etc.) .....; and
"WHEREAS, ... (etc.) .....; now, therefore, be it
"RESOLVED, by ..... (etc.) ....., That ..... (etc.) ....."

(Note: The "Whereas" may be set out in capital letters, italics, underscored, etc., depending preference. When capitalized, it is usually followed by a comma, and then the first letter of the following word is capitalized.)

There is no formula for deciding how many "WHEREAS" clauses a resolution should have. In general, the fewer the better, provided the reason or reasons for the resolution are adequately stated. Most of the good reasons for a resolution will have been stated during the debate for its adoption. Use them. It is not necessary, however, to refer in the preamble to every fact or circumstance that has a bearing on the intent of a resolution.

Study the resolving section and get the exact purpose of the resolution firmly in mind. Then start writing down statements of fact which relate to this purpose. Organize them into a logical sequence (throwing out the weak or unnecessary ones), and then put a "WHEREAS," in front of each, a semicolon at the end of each, plus the appropriate connecting word ("and") or words ("now, therefore, be it") for joining them to each other and the resolving section. *Do not use a period in the preamble.*

Resolutions are important business to The American Legion. Write them with thought and care.

The American Legion Life Insurance Program

When considering the plans offered through The American Legion Life Insurance Program, it is important to remember these plans are for supplemental coverage only and are not meant to be the only coverage a member has. In addition, these plans are not meant to replace existing coverage. These plans are not designed to compete with individual/private insurance plans or employer benefit plans.

As with any insurance coverage, members should carefully consider these plans and read and understand all materials received including rates, benefits, features, scheduled premium increase or benefit reductions.

<u>Important Information:</u> Effective January 1, 2004 - All Term Life plans were transferred to Reliastar Life Insurance Company. Insured members were informed of this change in October.

As a result of this change, all Term Life Insurance plans are under review. As soon as determinations are finalized about existing plans or new plans, appropriate announcements will be made. We expect to have additional plans available in 2004.

If you have questions from current policyholders call 1-800-542-5547:

MARSH AFFINITY GROUP SERVICES
Formerly (SEABURY & SMITH, INC.)
1776 West Lakes Parkway
West Des Moines, IA 50398

The American Legion Whole Life Insurance Program

Another plan available to members and spouses is Birthday Life, underwritten by Union Fidelity Life Insurance Company, located in Fort Washington, Pennsylvania. This plan is a guaranteed-issue, whole life plan combined with accidental death insurance. The benefits do not decrease and premiums paid at entry age do not increase, as the insured grows older. No medical exam is required.

Guaranteed renewable for life, Legionnaires and spouses age 45 through age 80 are eligible to enroll in this plan, which builds cash values and offers a loan provision. **The age limit in Washington and New Jersey is lower than age 80. Contact Union Fidelity for details.**

The plan provides a limited death benefit, for the first two years, for death from natural causes and provides full benefits during that period for accidental deaths. Full benefits in any event are payable after two years.

For more information, contact Union Fidelity at the following address and phone number:

UNION FIDELITY LIFE INSURANCE CO.
(Now Owned By GE Capital)
Administrative Offices
500 Virginia Dr.
Fort Washington, PA 19034
1-800-523-5758

Health Care Plans:

The American Legion has the following health care plans available to American Legion and Sons of The American Legion members and their dependents.
Please Note: ***The plans are not available in all states.*** **Call for details**.

1.) A variety of major medical plans, called "Market Basket", which allows members (Legion and SAL) to call and request quotes on major medical insurance.

2.) Small Business Group Insurance- provides quotes on major medical coverage for small employer groups of 2-50 employees. Additional options offered for employees are term life, accidental death, long and short-term disability and dental. Remember, these plans are for employees of the small business group- not the general membership. Posts and Departments with 2 to 50 employees could also use this plan.

3.) Dental Insurance- this is an indemnified insurance plan with a full schedule of benefits, for members and their dependents, including SAL.
For more information, call 1-877-886-0110.

The American Legion TRICARE Supplement Program

The American Legion has approved a National TRICARE Supplement Program for active duty and retired military members and dependents.

The program is designed to meet the needs of active duty and retired military members who may be referred to civilian facilities for care. It includes an active duty and retired version. A combined brochure

is available from the Administrator. Information on the plan has previously been distributed to Departments.

This program can also provide an important tool for Posts and Departments that desire to recruit members on or near military bases or retired military personnel.

For additional information, questions, or quantities of brochures, call 1-800-542-5547. The American Legion TRICARE Supplement Program is underwritten by Hartford Life Insurance Company and Administered by Marsh Affinity Group Services, of West Des Moines, Iowa. **Please Note: (*These plans are not available in all states*).**

The American Legion Discount Prescription Program

An important benefit for American Legion, Sons of The American Legion (SAL) and The American Legion Auxiliary members and dependents is The American Legion Discount Prescription Program designed by Seabury & Smith and administered by RxAmerica. The program was approved nationwide by the National Executive Committee at its October 1995 meeting. We are pleased to announce that the Department of Maryland entered the National program in 2003, after their own program was terminated.

The program has two components: a network of retail pharmacies and a mail order service. It's easy to use. Members simply present their current American Legion, SAL, or Auxiliary membership card at the pharmacy when purchasing a prescription to receive the discount. For mail service, obtain a mail order request form from the local Post or by calling the toll-free number, 1-800-905-9818, complete the mail order form and send it to: RxAmerica, P.O. box 960125, Fort Worth, TX 76161-9863. The mail service is guaranteed to be more cost-effective than AARP mail service.

Most of the time members can save as much as 20% or more on prescription purchases. In cases when members appear not to save, it is usually when the drug is already on sale as a loss leader. Loss leaders are drugs priced well below retail, sometimes below cost, to lure customers into the pharmacy. However, the Legion Discount Prescription Program assures that members pay the lowest price in the network pharmacy for that drug on that particular day--the lesser of the two.

Members have actually experienced an average savings of about 17.5% nationally. This amounts to nearly $45 million in savings for Legion, SAL and Auxiliary members thus far. Continued utilization will increase savings even more.

Notice: In the September issue of The American Legion Magazine, an ad was published and two (2) RxAmerica prescription cards were inserted. The cards were provided to increase awareness of the program and assist members when they encounter pharmacists who are not familiar with the program. However, membership cards are accepted and can still be used.

If you would like additional prescription cards, contact the Member Benefits Division at 5745 Lee Rd, Indianapolis, IN 46216; (317) 860-3013.

The Discount Prescription Program is providing assistance to members in a highly visible need area and can potentially be one of the most valuable member benefits available.

Additional General Information

Uniformed Groups

The American Legion invented the drum corps, and perfected the beauty, excitement, and preciseness of the modern parade. We've been America's unquestionable leader and staunchest supporter of amateur musical drill units since 1921. It behooves us to maintain this leadership, and we can with proper organization and support at the Post level.

Uniformed groups are American Legion "display cases" so to speak. At Post, Department or national level, they advertise and dramatize The American Legion's size, scope and substance to everyone within sight and sound. They afford everybody involved a sense of accomplishment, and a great deal of satisfaction and enjoyment and, to both, are one of the finest opportunities for Post public relations.

Every Post can participate in uniformed group activities if it so chooses. Take your choice with categories available; one must surely meet with the approval of your Post's membership. If a drum corps or band can't be managed, try a color guard or firing squad. If these don't appeal, go to work on the organization of a chorus, or just a quartet. If the natural bent of your Post is toward youth activities, sponsor a junior unit of some type.

There is a National Convention competition in the following categories: 1) Senior Color Guard—Military Closed (American Legion Members Only), 2) Senior Color Guard—Military Open (Auxiliary, SAL, Mixed Members), 3) Senior Color Guard—Open Class (Legion, Auxiliary, SAL, Mixed Members), 4) Senior Concert Band Contest.

For further details and rules concerning Convention competition, contact the National Convention Office at (317) 630-1243.

National Emblem Sales

National Emblem Sales has available a wide variety of merchandise including American Legion and Auxiliary decals, uniforms, gifts for outgoing officers, bookkeeping materials, gifts, fashion apparel, etc. National Emblem Sales distributes merchandise catalogs to every Post Commander, Post Adjutant, and Unit President. Additional copies can be obtained by calling toll-free at 1-888-453-4466.

Additionally, National Emblem Sales has been delegated, by the National Adjutant, the task of administering use of the emblem on manufactured goods. The name and emblem of The American Legion are registered service marks in the U.S. Trademark Office and are protected by criminal and civil enforcement provisions of federal law (18 U.S.C. S 705 and 36 U.S.C. SS 44 and 48). However, by authority of May 1947 Resolution Number 71, the National Organization may grant permission to use the name and emblem in accordance with Resolution Number 71, other Resolutions and U.S. Trademark Law. In order for permission to be granted, a request must be submitted in writing, through Department Adjutant who will forward the request to National Emblem Sales. The following information must be included with the request: 1) name and address of requesting Post, 2) name and address of manufacturer, 3) description of item to be manufactured, 4) quantity to be manufactured, 5) cost each, 6) assurances that the item is made in the United States, 7) purpose of which item is to be used (must be for Post use, not purchased for re-sell). Authority may then be granted on a one-time basis only; additional orders require new authority, and the manufacturer must not produce more items than that being ordered.

National Emblem Sales is pleased to serve you regardless of your requirements. During your continuing activity in The American Legion, you will find this service division of valuable assistance in carrying out the programs of your Post. See page 4-51 for official form to use.

Use of The American Legion Emblem

The use of the emblem by an **individual Legionnaire** is limited to the wearing of the official insignia and to the possession of authorized jewelry or merchandise bearing the insignia.

Posts are confined to using the emblem or reproduction of the emblem on stationery, Post publications, notices, Posters or placards, or matters of similar character used in the ordinary routine and conduct of legitimate Post business.

Departments are similarly limited. Any other use of the name "The American Legion" or the emblem shall be subject to the approval of the National Adjutant as described earlier in accordance with Resolution Number 71.

Request for Use of American Legion Name or Emblem on Merchandise

The name and emblem of The American Legion are registered service marks in the U.S. Trademark Office and are protected by criminal and civil enforcement provisions of federal law (18 U.S.C.S. 705 and 36 U.S.C.SS 44 and 48). By authority of May 1947 Resolution 71, the National Adjutant or his designated representative (Director, National Emblem Sales), may grant limited permission to use the name and emblem in accordance with Resolution Number 71, other Resolutions and U.S. Trademark Law. In order to gain permission for limited use of the name or emblem, complete the form provided on the next page and forward it to your Department Headquarters, attn: Department Adjutant. Your Department Headquarters will forward the completed form to National Emblem Sales. Please note that the member or Post purchasing the merchandise must request permission and permission is granted directly to U.S. Manufacturers only.

Any permission given will be granted on a one-time basis for a given quantity. Additional orders will require new authority and the manufacturer must not produce more items than being ordered. Permission will be given with the caveat that all material used will specifically identify the Post. If the merchandise requested is available through National Emblem Sales, you will receive a quote for the merchandise or a one-time limited permission. If the merchandise is not available through National Emblem Sales, you will receive a one-time limited permission or denial of permission. If you are ordering an outdoor sign for the Post, the only licensed manufacturer of American Legion Post outdoor signs is the J. M. Stewart Company, 2201 Cantu Court, Suites 217-218, Sarasota, FL 34232, and they can be reached at (800) 237-3928.

The official American Legion form requesting permission to use the name and/or emblem in accordance with Resolution Number 71 follows on the next page.

Please completely fill out the form on the next page and fax or mail it to the Department Headquarters.

FILL OUT FORM COMPLETELY AND FAX OR MAIL TO DEPARTMENT HEADQUARTERS

Purchaser Information	Manufacturer Information
Post Number _____	**Name Of Business** _____
Address _____	**Address** _____
City _____ **State** _____ **Zip** _____	**City** _____ **State** _____ **Zip** _____
Contact Person _____	**Contact Person** _____
Member I.D. # _____	**Telephone #** _____
Telephone # _____ **Evening** _____	**Product in all parts made in U.S.A.?** **Yes** _____ **NO** _____
Product Description _____	**If No, Please attach an explanation.**
Quantity _____	**Imprint Instructions Provide rough sketch below or attach artwork.**
Price _____	
Purpose/Use of Product _____	

DEPARTMENT USE	FOR OFFICE USE ONLY	NATIONAL USE
❑ **Recommend Approval** ❑ **Recommend Denial**	❑ **Approved** ❑ **Referred** ❑ **Denied**	
_____ **Department Adjutant**		_____ **National Adjutant** **or Designated Representative (National. Emblem Sales)**

THIS FORM MAY BE REPRODUCED LOCALLY

SURPLUS MILITARY EQUIPMENT

Regulations, procedures, and prices for obtaining blank ammunition surplus rifles, and other military equipment available for donation are subject to change without notice. **Major changes have been made by the Department of the Army**. Be advised all requests for surplus military equipment must first go through the Washington Office to verify the legitimacy of the Post making the request. The Washington Office is only authorized to handle requests from chartered American Legion Posts in good standing. Once verification has been made, requests are sent by the Washington Office to the appropriate agencies for processing. When requests are made to Congressional offices or other military Departments, without the proper verification and endorsement, the acquisition process is greatly slowed down. Separate letters must be sent for each type of equipment being requested. If both rifles and ammunition are needed, separate letters must be sent for each type of equipment being requested. If both rifles and ammunition are needed, separate requests should be forwarded to the Washington Office as two different agencies, Rock Island, IL and Warren, MI will be handling the items. This is a change from past handling procedures.

Requests are to be made on Post letterhead and contain the following:

Post name and number Address (not a P.O Box number)
Telephone number Number of members in the Post (another new change)

Request must be signed by Post Commander or Adjutant.

These are requirements set forth in new policies and procedures established by the Army. Any correspondence lacking any of these items will be returned to the Post causing a delay in processing.

Posts are reminded equipment donated by the Department of the Army to American Legion Posts remain the property of the United States Army. Transfer of any equipment obtained through the Surplus Program is unauthorized without the written permission of the United States Army Tank-automotive and Armaments Command (TACOM).

Posts receiving surplus equipment, rifles, static display items, etc. can expect periodic inspections to assure accuracy of information provided by the Donor and compliance with the terms of this Conditional Deed of Gift, proper storage and handling, etc.

This program is to be at no cost to the government and even though Posts have paid for handling, shipping, packaging, crating, etc., the items are really just "on loan" from the Department of the Army.

BLANK AMMUNITION

American Legion Posts needing blank ammunition for ceremonial purposes can be assured of the best possible service on requests, if they comply with the following instructions:

1. Direct a letter of request on Post letterhead with an address (not a P.O. Box number) and a telephone number to Executive Director, Washington Office, American Legion National Headquarters, 1608 K Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20006. Indicate the type of blank ammunition desired—1305-A222/A224 (for cal. .30 rifles), 1305-A242 (for cal. .30 Krag rifles only). The quantity issued may be one or two boxes containing 960/1200/1240 rounds for .30 rifles, and 1,700 rounds for .30 Krag rifles. The existing stock of 1305-A242 are 1937 vintage and have not been included in the Surveillance Centralized Reliability Program (SCRP) for function testing since 1975. As a result of the discontinued testing, functional serviceability can no longer be assured.
2. **Ammunition is now provided free of charge**. Please do not send any checks or money orders.
3. At the present time, the only storage facility handling blank ammunition is in Missouri; orders will be shipped from there. You may receive a call from the shipping depot before delivery is made to indicate when shipment is being sent and to verify someone will be available to sign for delivery.
4. Upon receipt of the above information from a Post, the Legion's Washington Office will place an endorsement on the request stating it is a chartered Post in good standing and eligible to participate in the Veterans' Program. The request, with endorsement, will be forwarded to Rock Island, IL for processing. No further correspondence should be necessary. Presently, it cannot be

estimated how long it will take for ammunition requests to be filled. Requests will be handled in turn as to when received and when ammunition is available.

Do not put multiple requests (ammunition, rifles, static display equipment) in the same letter as each request must be sent to a different agency.

You can request clips through Rock Island, IL with your ammo request. State this in your request. **Clips are provided free of charge**.

FACT SHEET
Issue of Cartridge Caliber .30 Blank

- **NOTE: This office will only respond to requests for Caliber .30 blank ammunition or clips from the following authorized officers:**

American Legion = Commander, Vice Commander, 2nd Vice Commander or Adjutant
Marine Corp League = Commandant, Sr. Vice Commandant, or Jr. Vice Commandant
VFW = Commander, Quartermaster, or Adjutant

- Your request for forms for ammunition or clips can be by letter, fax, phone call, or email.
- Request for forms must provide home address, phone number of officer, Post number and city and state Post where Post is located.
- Address your request for issue of SOSMA Form 725-2 to:

Commander
Operations Support Command
ATTN: AMSOS-PRS
1 Rock Island Arsenal
Rock Island, IL 61299-6000
POC: Ms. Jackie Scalf
Email: scalfj@osc.army.mil
(309) 782-4608
Fax 309-782-1582

- Prefer to ship ammunition to the residence of an officer.
- Ammunition is sent 1,240 rounds (2 metal cans in a wooden box).
- Quantity is limited to 2 boxes (2,480 rounds) of ammunition.
- PLEASE DO NOT SEND ANY MONEY/CHECKS. **AMMUNITION IS PROVIDED FREE OF CHARGE (NO SHIPPING AND HANDLING).** ALL CHECKS/MONEY WILL BE RETURNED.
- Allow 6-8 weeks delivery after Rock Island receives and processes your order.
- All ammunition will be shipped via Federal Express (FEDEX) from Lake City Army Ammunition Plant, Independence, MO. Normal FEDEX delivery will be Monday through Friday between 9:00 am and 5:00 p.m. An officer signature is required.

RIFLES

Under the provisions of Public Law 1028, Title 10 United States Code (USC) 4683, the Secretary of the Army, under regulations prescribed, may conditionally lend or donate excess M-1 rifles (not more than 15), slings, and cartridge belts to any eligible organization for use by that organization for funeral ceremonies of a member of former member of the armed forces, and for other ceremonial purposes. The American Legion is only authorized to handle requests from chartered American Legion Posts in good standing. The Army facility at Warren, MI is responsible for the issue and management of rifles for

ceremonial use. Title 10, USC 4683 allows conditions to be imposed on the use of the rifles as may be necessary to ensure security, safety, and accountability. The Secretary may impose such other conditions as considered appropriate.

An American Legion Post wishing to obtain rifles for ceremonial use should forward its request through the Washington Office of The American Legion. The request should be on Post letterhead with an address, not a P.O. Box number, a telephone number, a contact person, the # of active organization members, and should be signed by the Post Commander or Adjutant. State the number of rifles desired up to a maximum of 15. Failure to include any of these requirements will cause the letter of request to be returned to the Post. The request is endorsed stating that the Post is chartered and in good standing and eligible to participate in the ceremonial rifle program. It is forwarded to Headquarters, U.S. Army Tank-automotive and Armaments Command, Attn: AMSTA-LC-CID, Warren, MI 48397-5000. An e-mail address is: donations@tacom.army.mil. The command may be reached by calling 1-800-325-2920, ext. 46943 or 48469. E-mail or fax requests cannot be processed, as the signed original must be forwarded.

Once TACOM receives the endorsed request, forwarded by the Washington Office, processing will begin and an eligibility package will be sent to the Post. This package will include the checklist and forms required for completion by the Post Commander or Adjutant. Return the original forms to TACOM. The sooner the forms are completed and returned, the quicker the request will be filled and rifles sent to the Post. Presently it takes approximately ninety days for rifles to be shipped after receipt of the eligibility requirements from the Post. The American Legion National Headquarters has no forms to send to Posts. The only thing done by the Legion is to verify on the request the Post is eligible.

Currently, surplus MI Garand rifles are available for ceremonial use on a conditional basis. These rifles are shipped from Anniston Army Depot located in Anniston, Alabama. Ceremonial rifles remain the property of the United States Government. The rifles cannot be loaned, sold, transferred, or given to anyone else without the written approval of the Donations Program Group Office. If for any reason the Post no longer requires the use of the conditionally loaned rifles, submit a written request to the U.S. Army Tank-automotive and Armaments Command, 6501 East 11 Mile Rd., Attn: AMSTA-LC-CID, M/S:419, Warren, MI 48397-5000. The Post is provided with shipping instructions for defective or unserviceable rifles.

Transportation for the return of the rifles is at the expense of the Post. After the rifles are returned, provide a copy of the receipt to TACOM for validation of the return. In turn, they will send a letter to absolve the Post of the responsibility for the returned rifles.

If rifles are no longer in the possession of the Post, it is a requirement to state what happened to them. If the rifles were lost or stolen prior to 1980, a notarized statement signed by the Commander describing the circumstances surrounding their loss and the action(s) taken to recover the rifles is acceptable. For rifles lost, stolen, damaged, etc., after 1980, a police and/or fire Department report is required. Send this information to TACOM for review. After review, a determination is made as to the liability for the missing/lost/stolen rifles. The Post will be notified if reimbursement costs are required.

Slings are not provided through the Donations Program Group Office. The Post may order from Amherst Arms or Fulton Armory: **Amherst Arms**, PO Box 1457, Englewood, FL 34295. Their telephone number is: 1-941-475-2020. The address for **Fulton Armory** is: 8725 Bollman Place # 1, Savage, MD 20763. Their telephone number is: 1-800-878-9485.

STORAGE AND SECURITY OF CEREMONIAL RIFLES

The following checklist is provided to assist Posts receiving M1 rifles for ceremonial use. The guidance is based on AR 190-11. Physical Security of Arms, Ammunition, and Explosives (AA&E). AR 190-11 should be referred to for specific requirements. The weapons donated are classified as Category IV weapons.

a) Walls. Walls will be constructed of a minimum, 2-inch by 4-inch standard studs on 16-in centers, gypsum board or plaster surface. At least one surface will be covered with 1-inch

(nominal) double nailed tongue-and-groove wood sheathing or material: for example, 3/4-inch plywood, which provides a similar degree of security.

b) Ceilings, roof, and floors. At a minimum, they will be 1-inch (nominal) double nailed tongue-and-groove wood sheathing or other material: for example, 3/4 -inch plywood, which provides a similar degree of security.

c) Doors, windows, and other openings. At a minimum, doors will be constructed of 1 3/4 inch thick, solid, or laminated wood, or be of standard 1 3/4-inch thick hollow metal, industrial type construction with minimum 16-gauge thickness. At a minimum, windows and other openings will be constructed to provide equivalent penetration resistance as that provided by the walls. Windows and other openings will be sealed with material comparable to that forming the adjacent walls and otherwise limited to the minimum essential. Windows, ducts, vents, or similar openings of 96 square inches or more with the least dimension greater than 6 inches will be equipped with any of the following:
    1) Three-eighth inch or larger hardened steel bars, provided the vertical bars are not more than 4 inches apart with horizontal bars welded to the vertical bars so that the openings do not exceed 32 square inches.
    2) Number 8 gauge high carbon manganese steel mesh with 2-in diamond grid.
    3) Number 6 gauge steel mesh with 2-inch diamond grid with number 8 in (2) above, is not available.
    4) Bars or steel mesh will be securely embedded in the structure of the building or welded to a steel frame that will be securely attached to the wall with fastenings inaccessible for the exterior of arms storage facility.

d) Arms stored in unmanned facilities not equipped with an intrusion detection system will be checked by a security/guard patrol at irregular intervals not to exceed 24 hours. Liaison will be established with local civil police agencies to ensure periodic surveillance is conducted.

e) Within the arms storage facility, weapons will be stored in metal containers or arms racks. Approved metal wall lockers or metal cabinets may be used. Containers, cabinets, lockers, or arms racks will be locked to prevent weapon removal without leaving visible signs of tampering. Screws, bolts, hinges, and other fastening hardware will be made to prevent disassembly, e.g. bolts and hinge pins spot welded or brazed to prevent easy removal. Arms racks, containers, cabinets, or lockers weighing less than 500 pounds will be securely fastened to the structure. Chains used to secure racks, containers, etc., will be heavy duty hardened steel, welded straight links steel, galvanized of at least 5/16-inch thickness or of equivalent resistance.

f) Doors used for access to arms storage rooms will be locked with an approved high security locking device or high security padlock and hasp providing comparable protection to the locks.

g) Tools such as hammers, bolt cutter, chisels, crowbars, hacksaws, and similar items which could be used to gain unauthorized access should be removed from the vicinity of the arms storage room. High value items subject to pilferage should not be stored with the arms.

h) Key and lock control procedures will be established. AR 190-11, paragraph 3-8 provides regulatory requirements. Highlights of key and lock control requirements include: development of a key control register and inventory, appointment of a key and lock custodian, authorization roster for signing out keys, key container specifications, lock specifications, and protection of combinations.

i) Stored weapons will be rendered inoperable. For M1918 rifles, the firing pin series will be removed. For M1 rifles, the bolt assembly will be removed. The removed items will be tagged with the weapon's serial number to ensure return to the same weapon and stored in a locked container away from the arms storage facility, e.g. in another building. Etching of the weapon's serial number on the removed part is prohibited.

j) Personnel having access to the arms storage facility should be kept to a minimum. A current roster of those authorized access to the facility should be maintained. A security screening process should be developed to determine trustworthiness and reliability of those individuals assigned duties involving control and accountability of the weapons. Recommend local law enforcement authorities be contacted for assistance.

k) Lost, stolen or missing weapons. An investigation will be made of lost, stolen, or missing arms to determine the circumstances surrounding the loss or theft and to fix responsibility as necessary. As soon as a loss or theft is discovered, notification to the local law enforcement authorities and the TACOM Police Desk at (810) 574-5564 will be made. The notice will be as complete as possible but will not be delayed because of incomplete data.

This Physical Security Checklist for Ceremonial Rifles has been furnished by the agency at TACOM responsible for the Rifle Program. There may be changes from past instructions.

Alternative acceptable methods of storage are:

- In a locked gun cabinet/safe located in a non-public access area
- In a gun cabinet with a chain running through the trigger guards to prevent removal.

Unacceptable methods are:

- In a private residence
- In a gun cabinet located in an area accessed by the public
- In a glass faced cabinet without additional security
- Openly displayed in a public area

Local law enforcement is required to inspect the Posts arms room. The police have three options: (1) the room meets specifications; (2) the room does not meet specifications but is considered adequate, or (3) the room does not meet specifications and the police do not recommend storage of the weapons in the room. The Donations Program Group office usually upholds the police recommendation.

POLICY AND PROCEDURE FOR ACQUISITION OF COMBAT EQUIPMENT FOR DISPLAY AND MONUMENTAL PURPOSES

The following organizations are presently authorized to acquire through donation obsolete condemned surplus combat equipment for decorative and/or monumental purposes:

Municipal Corporations Soldiers' Monument Associations State Museums

An incorporated museum, operated and maintained for educational purpose only, when charter denies it the right to operate for profit.

A Post of The American Legion

A local unit of any other recognized war veteran's association

Equipment is for static display only and is not in working condition. For instance, this program would not have jeeps in condition for driving or other movable vehicles. Equipment in working order should be obtained at military R&R activities or at bases with surplus sales.

All requests for tanks, field artillery pieces, mortars, etc., should be directed to the Washington Office of The American Legion, 1608 K Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20006. This Headquarters is only authorized to process requests from American Legion Posts. Requests are to be made on Post letterhead and contain the following: Post name and number; address (not a P.O. Box number); Telephone number and name of contact person; number of members in the Post; and all requests must be signed by the Commander or Adjutant.

Donations of combat equipment for display are made at no expense to the government. The costs for handling, demilitarization, where applicable, and transportation , must be paid by the requesting organization. The method of transportation may be chosen by the receiving organizations if such choice is economically advantageous and the item to be transported does not exceed weight or measurement limitations established by State Highway Departments if truck transportation is indicated.

Once the Washington Headquarters receives the request for a piece of equipment, it will be endorsed stating the Post is chartered and in good standing and eligible to participate in the program. The request is forwarded to the proper agency at TACOM in Warren, MI. The Washington Headquarters does not have any forms or information as to what is available. Once TACOM receives the request, they prepare an official packet and sends it to the Post. The Post then reviews all rules, regulations, requirements, and can then make a final decision if the equipment is still desired.

AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY MEMBERSHIP ELIGIBILITY

Membership in the American Legion Auxiliary is limited to the mothers, wives, daughters, sisters, granddaughters, great-granddaughters and grandmothers of members of The American Legion, and to the mothers, wives, daughters, sisters, granddaughters, great-granddaughters and grandmothers of all men and women who were in the Armed Forces of the United States during any of the following periods: April 6, 1917, to November 11, 1918; December 7, 1941, to December 31, 1946; June 25, 1950, to January 31, 1955; February 28, 1961, to May 7, 1975; August 24, 1982, to July 31, 1984; December 20, 1989, to January 31, 1990; August 2, 1990, to the date of cessation of hostilities as determined by the Government of the United States, all dates inclusive, or who, being a citizen of the United States at the time of their entry therein, served on active duty in the armed forces of any of the governments associated with the United States during any of the said periods, and died in the line of duty or after honorable discharge; and to those women who of their own right are eligible for membership in The American Legion.

Membership Application for American Legion Auxiliary

1. If applicant is joining on her own service record, the Auxiliary Unit to which she is applying for membership will be responsible for verification of her eligibility for membership. It's not necessary she be a member of The American Legion.
2. If applicant is joining on the basis of her relationship to a member of The American Legion, a Post officer of the Post to which that relative belongs must certify the Legionnaire's membership in that Post.
3. If any applicant wishes to join a unit or a Post other than the one to which her Legionnaire relative belongs, the unit to which she is applying for membership should check the eligibility with the Post of her Legionnaire relative.
4. Under no circumstances, when the eligibility for American Legion Auxiliary membership is to be based on relationship to a deceased veteran, should an Adjutant certify an application for membership without checking the discharge papers of the deceased veteran to determine the dates of service fall within those time periods which determine eligibility for American Legion membership. The deceased veteran need not have been a Legionnaire for the applicant to qualify for membership in the Auxiliary.

SONS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION

Sons are urged to participate in American Legion and public observances. Holidays generally observed by the squadrons include Memorial Day, the Fourth of July, Veterans Day, etc. SAL uniformed groups are quite popular. Many squadrons have active drill teams and color guards that participate in patriotic observances in their local communities.

Since the age eligibility begins from date of birth, activities and programs of any squadron should be determined by: (1) age groupings of those eligible; (2) apparent needs of youthful eligibles; (3) needs of the community for the programs and activities which could be provided by SAL; and (4) capabilities of those serving as leaders and advisers.

Just as each Legion Post determines the extent of its service to the community, state and nation, each squadron is permitted flexibility in planning programs and activities for the needs of its own age groups.

The initiation of candidates for membership is important in the life of the squadron. New members taken into the Sons of The American Legion should be initiated with full ceremony. The first impression is often the most lasting.

Make sure you have copies of the SAL Squadron Handbook available when initiating your new candidates. The Squadron handbook contains a wealth of information on the "Initiation Ceremony," "Installation of Squadron Officers," the "Ceremonial for Regular Meetings," the "Official Uniform of the SAL," "The Ten Ideals" program and the "Five-Point Program of Service."

Two copies of the handbook per squadron are available from your Department for the Squadron Commander and the Squadron Adjutant. Additional copies may be purchased from National Emblem Sales, P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206-1055.

The Internet, the World Wide Web and The American Legion's Home Page

The Internet is the worldwide connection of many computers and networks. The American Legion has established its own presence there and the Post members can find much information about the Legion.

Via the computer, one can locate the address of National Headquarters and see a map of the locations in Indianapolis and Washington, D.C. There is background material of programs, news releases, articles from *The American Legion Magazine*, Emblem Sales items and other valuable information, some of it similar to what you see in this guide. Unlike this printed book, however, the Legion's web pages are updated as soon as the information changes. There are visual images, such as clip art that can be downloaded or sent to a computer printer. News releases and statements of late-breaking importance, such as our close work with Gulf War veterans and our support of the flag protection amendment are on site within hours of release.

Our Legion family is also represented with information about the Auxiliary and Sons of The American Legion. There are also references and links to government information, such as jobs and benefits, via web sites for the Department of Employment and the Department of Veterans Affairs.

The Home Page is not only to be read. Messages may be sent via the Guest Registry or e-mail function. National Headquarters can be reached with your questions, comments or concerns and a response, when required, can often be returned quickly. Not only will you save the cost of a stamp, but you will probably have an answer days sooner than in the more traditional U.S. Mail fashion. In addition to e-mailing National Headquarters, there are lists of other offices with similar computer capabilities, such as Department Adjutants and Service Officers. At present, there are only a few Departments with their own web sites, but whenever a Department site is found, it is included, along with their e-mail address.

Below the Department level, many Posts, Counties and Districts are developing their own web sites. Though we neither encourage nor discourage other American Legion web sites, we hope any Post establishing a site provides only local information related to Legionnaires and other veterans. These local sites should link to the Department or National Headquarters sites for details at those levels. Departments will make the determination whether these local sites will be linked to or listed within the Department web pages.

The American Legion will not abandon the printed page as a source of information. Because of its speed and efficiency, the Internet is here to stay, and those Legionnaires with access to computers should take advantage of the wealth of information available on the Internet from National Headquarters. The American Legion's World Wide Web address is: http://www.Legion.org

The American Legion's e-mail address is: tal@Legion.org.

Publication List

Following is a list of basic handbooks and publications issued by the National Headquarters. These publications are generally available free through your Department Headquarters. In many cases, one copy of a publication can be provided per Post without cost, but a modest change may be required for additional copies. (See Emblem Catalog for current prices of sale items.) General publications include:

The American Legion Magazine is received by all members; additional subscriptions $6.00 per year to Posts. *The Talking American Legion Magazine* is made available, at no charge, to visually impaired and physically handicapped members of The American Legion, American Legion Auxiliary and SAL.

DISPATCH. It is published monthly. A subscription is $15.00 a year for this tabloid-style newspaper. Complimentary issues are mailed to all National Commissions/Committees; members/alternates of the National Executive Committee; National Officers of The American Legion Auxiliary and SAL; Department Commanders, Adjutants and Senior Officers; Chairmen only of Department Commissions/Committees; Vietnam Veterans Family Assistance Program Coordinators; District and County Commanders; Post Commanders (mailed to Post Adjutants).

American Legion Officers' Guide and Manual of Ceremonies (one copy free to each Post). (See Emblem Catalog for price of additional copies.)

National Constitution and By-Laws of The American Legion

PUBLICATION LIST

Americanism *- Free Items:*

Action Programs of Americanism
Adult Literacy
American Education Week
American Legion Policy on Education
American Legion School Award Medal Program
Americanism Manual
Baseball Handbook
Boys State Program
Department Americanism Chairman's Guide
Education Chairman's Guide
Eight and Forty Nurse Scholarship Fund
Junior Shooting Sports Program
National High School Oratorical Rules
PACT in Education Handbook
The American Legion and Scouting
Chairman's Guide to the Oratorical Contest
Saga of Four Chaplains
Veteran of the Month Program

Americanism *- Cost Items: (See National Emblem Sales Catalog)*

Chaplains Prayer Manual
Declaration of Independence and Constitution of the United States of America
Firing Line (11 issues - subscription, $7.00 per year)
Flag of The United States (code)
Guide for Parents and Students
I Pledge Allegiance (comic book)
Know Your America
Let's Be Right on Flag Etiquette
Light of Liberty (Citizenship comic book)
Need a Lift? (Financial Aid and scholarship information)
Our Country's Flag (comic book)
Service to God and Country
World Geography Coloring and Activity Book

Children & Youth *- Free Items:*

American Legion Child Welfare Foundation Brochure
American Legion Child Welfare Foundation Brochure - Awards
American Legion Child Welfare Foundation Brochure - Grant Guidelines
American Legion Child Welfare Foundation Contribution Envelopes

Annual Children & Youth Program Brochure
April is Children & Youth Month
Children's Miracle Network (CMN) Brochure
Children's Miracle Network (CMN) Fund Raising Guidebook
Children's Miracle Network (CMN) Walk-a-Thon Guidebook
Family Support Network
Gateway Drugs (Drug Prevention)
Make Halloween A Safe and Fun Night
National Family Week
Play It Safe Booklet (Child Safety)
Temporary Financial Assistance (TFA)
Unit Children & Youth Report Form
Warning Signs (Youth Suicide Prevention)
We Want A Children & Youth Report From Your Unit or Salon

Children & Youth *- Cost Items: (See National Emblem Sales Catalog)*

Nathan's Visit (Safety Comic Book)

Economics:

Employment Service Awards—booklet containing rules and official nomination forms
Employer Awards Program—booklet containing rules and official nomination forms
A Resource Guide For The Homeless Veteran—pamphlet
Job Fairs for Veterans—explains how Posts and Departments can plan and initiate job fairs
Manual for Employment Chairmen—handbook for Post/District/Department Employment Chairmen
Pocket Guide to The American Legion's Economic Award Program
Questions and Answers About Your First Resume—pamphlet
Questions and Answers About Veterans Preference—pamphlet

Foreign Relations*:*

Foreign Relations Statement of Positions and Resolutions
POW/MIA Fact Book

Legislative*:*

Legislative Handbook ($6.00 per 100 copies)
"How a Thought Becomes a Bill—How a Bill Becomes a Law" ($9.00 per 100)
"Effective Grassroots Lobbying" (*See Emblem Sales Catalog*; stock # 75204, $1.95 per copy)

Membership/Internal Affairs*:*

Post Adjutant's Manual (available on our web site)
Post Officers Guide & Manual of Ceremonies (available on our web site)
Post Operations Manual - Guidelines To Post Building Program
Why You Should Belong—new member promotional material
Paid Up For Life Brochure and P.U.F.L. Applications
Membership Team Training Guide

National Security*:*

The American Legion Blood Program
The American Legion ROTC Achievement Program
Your Friend - The Policeman
The American Legion Fire Protection/Prevention Program
The American Legion National Crime Prevention Program
National Security Statement of Positions and Resolutions
The American Legion Certificate of Commendation, Post Officers
The American Legion Certificate of Commendation, Fire Fighters
The American Legion Certificate of Appreciation, Civil Air Patrol

***Public Relations**:*

Public Relations Handbook (also available on our web site)
Speakers Guide (now included in PR Handbook)
Message Points (available on our web site)
American Legion Fact Sheets
Suggested Speeches (major speeches available on our web site)

(Speeches are available for The American Legion Birthday, Memorial Day, Flag Day, Veterans Day, Our Preamble, Americanism, Flag Retirement Ceremony, Civic Groups, GI Bill of Health, We Call Ourselves Legionnaires, Post Home Dedication, and Women Veterans.

Promotion Products…The following are free:

Video tapes: Reconnect, Membership Tools, Blue Star Service Banner Public Service Announcements, "A Day To Remember" Sept 11th Remembrance Public Service Announcements, How to Conduct the National High School Oratorical Program, and other timely/topical productions.

Audio (CD): Membership radio spots; Radio public service spots on programs and issues, the Blue Star Service Banner, Patriotic Holidays; "A Day To Remember" Sept 11th Remembrance spots; and American Legion Legacy Scholarship Fund.

Print: Blue Star Service Banner ad slicks, "Day to Remember" promotional materials, Membership ad slicks; Family Support Network ad slicks, American Legion Legacy Scholarship Fund ad slicks, and general clip art for external and internal publications.

***Sons of The American Legion**:*

SAL Squadron Handbook
SAL Why I Belong Brochure
SAL Brochure
SAL VA & R Brochure

***Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation**:*

The GI Bill of Health: A Vision For Excellence In Veterans Health Care For All Generations
The American Legion Guide to: Post Traumatic Stress Disorder
The American Legion Guide: Women Veterans
Is There Value In VA?
Gulf War Era Benefits and Programs: A Guide for Veterans and Families
Vietnam Veterans: Guide to Agent Orange Benefits
Sourcebook for Military Personnel and Veterans
Post Service Officer's Guidebook
Volunteer Hospital Workers Handbook
Code of Procedures
The American Legion - What To Do Before A Veteran Dies
The American Legion - Guide To Filing Military Discharge Review Board and Board for Correction of Military Records Applications
The American Legion - Debt Management Guide

Histories Are Important

It has been a well-established policy of The American Legion to encourage the preparation of Post histories. Such information on the Post's activities will be of considerable value in the years to come.

The National Headquarters is also aware in many Posts a professional historian does not fill the position of Historian. This need not deny a proper recording of the respective Post's activities. The scope of the information included is the main consideration, keeping in mind, however, the comprehensiveness, readability, and arrangement, so as to make it not only an interesting account of your Post but a reference source as well.

You, as Post Historian, should start now to make a permanent record of your organization for the year ahead, from the installation of officers, up to and including the Department Convention. Make plans to compile a complete history of your Post since its founding, but concentrate, for the present, on a one-year history. Then go back into the files and gradually write up the back history.

The National Historian will normally conduct annual one-year narrative history or scrapbook/yearbook (pictorial) history on the Post level. It is felt that these ongoing National Contests will add stability and continuity to the recording of Post events for future generations of Legionnaires. Your Department Historian will inform you of any National Contest changes that may occur during your tenure as Post Historian.

You will find herein, comprehensive outlines to compile a One-Year Narrative History or Scrapbook/Yearbook with their respective Judging Standards for competition in the National Contests.

To be eligible for the National Contests, your entry in either category must be a "first place winner" in your Department Contests and must be "certified" as such by your Department Historian before being forwarded to the National Historian.

The work of collecting, preserving and recording the activities of The American Legion is an important endeavor and demands much detail work; hopefully you will find it inspiring and rewarding.

It is suggested you contact your Department Historian for additional ideas and information regarding your Department contest qualifications.

You can appreciate the fact Departments of The American Legion have their own particular set-up and policies. You will find it advantageous to adapt these suggestions of your Department to your own needs, keeping in mind your compliance with the National outlines for the contests that are usually conducted for the Posts.

OUTLINE FOR A ONE-YEAR POST NARRATIVE HISTORY

This outline has been developed to be helpful to the historian. It would be advantageous to check any compilation against this outline so as to include as much of the material suggested here as is possible.

PART I - FORMAT

(1) COVER: A standard three-ring binder, or similar type, to accommodate 8 ½ x 11 inch bond paper must be used with The American Legion emblem centered (left to right) on the cover with the name and number of the Post. However, the binders available through National Emblem Sales have The American Legion embossed on them.

Since the standard three-ring binder is one inch wide, you may wish to use a wider binder. Each book is not to exceed three inches between the front and back cover. If you submit two or more binders, you must indicate on the COVER and TITLE PAGE the wording "VOLUME I", "VOLUME II", etc.

(2) NAME/ADDRESS OF COMPILER: The full name and complete mailing address of the history author should appear on the inside front cover in the lower left hand corner. It will be neatly typed or computer generated and centered on a 3 x 5-inch index card.

(3) TITLE PAGE: This will be the first page facing the reader as the history book is opened. It should be centered on the page and in a logical arrangement with double spacing or more and contain as a minimum the following:

HISTORY OF
(Name of Post) **POST NO.** (Number of Post)
THE AMERICAN LEGION
(City Location and State)
FOR 20_____ to 20____
BY: (Person Compiling History)

(4) INTRODUCTION: Every history should carry a forward or introduction, setting forth the reasons for the organization and may include:

The selection of the Post name: If for a departed comrade or comrades, include a short biographical sketch of their lives and include photographs if available.

If possible, include a brief resume of your community's history, and especially the part played by that locality in furnishing the men and women during the wars and conflicts.

Mention should also be made of the formation of our National Organization with a tie-in of the Department and Post.

If your Post has a Post home, you may want to include a photograph of it and street address location.

You can have a biographical background of the current Post Commander and/or the author of the history with a photograph included.

You may also use this space to acknowledge any assistance or contribution used in compiling the history.

(5) TABLE OF CONTENTS: This is a must for any good history, which will list the page reference of the CHAPTERS and APPENDICES and should be carried in the front of the history immediately following the INTRODUCTION.

(6) PREAMBLE TO THE CONSTITUTION OF THE AMERICAN LEGION: This basic document which sets forth the principle aims of The American Legion is a fitting introduction and should follow the TABLE OF CONTENTS. It should be centered on the page and spaced in a neat and logical arrangement. Multicolored prints 8½ x 11 inch, of the PREAMBLE may be obtained through National Emblem Sales.

(7) ORDER OF PAGE NUMBERING: The above pages should appear in order as listed above with pages listed in Arabic numerals or Roman numerals as follows:

Title Page	1 or i
Introduction	2 or ii
Table of Contents	3 or iii
Preamble	4 or iv
Acknowledgments	5 (if any) or v
Author's Notes	6 (if any) or vi

The following units will list each page in consecutive order using Arabic numerals. If you used Arabic numerals, then the next number will follow your last number (e.g. if Author's Notes is 6, then the first page of the history is 7). If you used Roman numerals, then the first page of the history is 1 (e.g. if Author's Notes is vi, then the first page of the history is 1).

CHAPTERS

Following the PREAMBLE, the CHAPTERS may be sequenced in this suggested manner:

CHAPTER 1 - Roster of Post Officers: Photographs of present Post Officers should be included in the history. If not possible to secure photographs of every officer, special efforts should be made to include the photographs of the Commander and the Adjutant.

CHAPTER 2 - Roster of Post Chair: This should be your next Chapter and photographs, if available, will add immeasurably.

CHAPTER 3 - One-Year Post Chronicle: The history is to cover one year, beginning with the installation of officers, up to and including the annual Department Convention. This timeframe may vary in some Departments.

This most important Chapter in your history must be as complete as possible with a graphic account of the Post and its activities. The historian should relate in narrative form, and in chronological order, all important events and programs held during the year by the Post or events jointly with the Auxiliary, County, District, Department or National level.

Historians use the minutes of meetings as a basis for information of the activities of the Post. Then they contact the members who were chairs of the committees involved for further details. Include anything that you may deem is a special attribute of your Post that sets it apart from all others.

Do not use any photographs or newspaper articles in this Chapter of your narrative history. However, photographs may be placed in dedicated Committee Chapters and newspaper articles in the Appendices.

CHAPTER 4 (...AND 5 AND 6, ETC.) - While many programs of The American Legion and Post projects are of a continuing nature and may run through several administrations, such activities might be better in a separate Chapter following those devoted to the individual administration.

The activities of all standing Post committees should be given considerable coverage, particularly if one committee performs an outstanding service. You may want to include each of these committees in separate Chapters.

These dedicated Chapters can be on Americanism, Membership, Boys State, School Award Medals, Oratorical Contest, Baseball, Children and Youth, Sons of The American Legion, Patriotic Observances, Post Parties, Boy Scout troops and other sponsored units to name just a few. Collect and record for posterity all activities of the Post.

The inclusion of illustrations (photographs) in the Committee Chapters will add to the attractiveness of the entry. Attention should be given to arrangement of illustrations in relation to the text and captions under each illustration.

APPENDICES

Appendices are pages of statistical data that should be carried at the end of the history, following the CHAPTERS and before the INDEX, and might include:

- The organization of the Post with a list of names of the Charter Members and the dates of the temporary and the permanent charter
- Roster of all past Post Commanders and Adjutants since Charter date with the years they served.
- If the Post is not too large, a roster of members listed in alphabetical order can be added. This may include, after each member's name, the organization with which he/she served or the date joined the Post
- Record of Citations and Awards received by the Post, as well as awards presented by the Post
- List of members who served as Delegates to the National/Department conventions, or National/Department officers and Commission/Committee appointees to include the County and District organization level
- Complete records of annual elections showing all nominations and votes received by various nominees
- In addition, you may also include the membership standing by year since the Charter date; list of new members for the current year; a list of Life members and Paid-Up-For-Life (PUFL) members; In Memoriam (Taps/Post Everlasting for the current year); the Constitution and By-Laws of the Post; the annual Post budget; and any other statistics of importance.

(7) INDEX: The alphabetical index is the last must for any good history. This comprehensive index of names, places, and events mentioned in your history, with page references, shall be carried at the end of the history following the APPENDICES.

(8) PAGE NUMBERING: This appears to be a common oversight when compiling history books. Do not forget to number the pages. However, be consistent in where the page numbers are placed, either at top or bottom of pages. Page numbering will start with the Title page.

PART II - GRAPHIC ACCOUNT/READABILITY

Emphasis is placed upon the narrative rather than the statistical style of presentation. Use your imagination and be original in thought and presentation.

A high degree of literary style is not essential to success, but the method of presentation should be pleasing to the general reader. The reader must be able to follow the story of the Post without difficulty or confusion.

The most common error is in not writing in the third person. This means you should write as an observer, not as a participant.

It is to be written as a chronological and detailed account of events without any analysis or interpretation.

Statistics are of great value but should be included in the Appendix, rather than being placed indiscriminately throughout the book.

PART III - ILLUSTRATION

All photographs must be identified by occasion, individuals, date and place of event with the exception of individual photographs of the Post Officers and Chairs (name and title/committee only). Provide "left-to-right" subject identification, and if necessary, by row also.

Be sure all photographs are clear, as blurry prints will not aid materially and will detract rather than enhance your history. Proper arrangement with the text is a must to achieve an eye-catching history book. Avoid using pictures with alcohol in them.

PART IV - JUDGES OPTION

Under this category, Judges will consider a number of qualities or items of content in the history, which are not readily cataloged under the preceding headings. Some histories, for example, have rather complete roster of members. In other words, Judges will determine features that make a history especially attractive or especially useful. By the same token, if inaccuracies should come to the attention of the Judges, they would have a disqualifying effect on that entry.

PAGE FORMAT SUGGESTIONS

Use plain and unruled 8½ x 11 inch white and/or colored bond paper for your history binder filler.

The history should be typewritten or computer generated on one side of the paper using black ribbon or print. Single sheets of paper may be placed back-to-back using the transparent plastic protective covers.

Margins are a must for neatness, readability and standardization. Use a one-inch margin on all sides (except one inch from the perforation side of paper, if necessary).

Where feasible, provide double-spaced copy on pages with a 3 to 6 space indention for new paragraphs and single line for photograph identifications.

If you have any doubt of the spelling of a word, use a dictionary. Also some people have a tendency to get upset when their name is misspelled. Check before compiling.

Some entries would have a better chance in the contests as a scrapbook/yearbook even though they were submitted as a history. Make sure of your entry. Is it a history or a scrapbook/yearbook? There is a big difference. Read the outlines for each category.

NATIONAL JUDGING STANDARDS FOR A ONE-YEAR POST NARRATIVE HISTORY CONTEST

You will note that PART I, PART II, PART III, and PART IV, as identified in OUTLINE FOR A ONE-YEAR POST NARRATIVE HISTORY, coincides with those listed in the NATIONAL JUDGING STANDARDS. The "etc.", listed after several of the scoring elements on the JUDGING STANDARDS, shows that there are additional requirements necessary for the score points.

It is suggested that you re-examine the OUTLINE using the STANDARDS as a checklist before submitting your entry for the contest. The comparison will assist by avoiding being penalized in score points needlessly.

PART I -- FORMAT--40 POINTS		
(1) COVER - standard three-ring binder for 8½ x 11 inch, bond paper, emblem, etc.	(5)	
(2) NAME/ADDRESS OF COMPILER - inside front cover/lower left hand corner		
(3) TITLE PAGE - centered in logical arrangement/double line spacing plus, etc	(5)	
(4) INTRODUCTION - background of Post; tie-in Department/National; community, etc.	(5)	
(5) TABLE OF CONTENTS - with page reference of Chapters, Appendices, etc.	(5)	
(6) PREAMBLE - to the Constitution of The American Legion, etc.	(2)	
(7) INDEX - comprehensive alphabetical listing carried at end of history book	(13)	
(8) PAGE NUMBERING - for Table of Contents, Chapters, Appendices, and Index	(5)	
Subtotal	(40)	
PART II -- GRAPHIC ACCOUNT/READABILITY -- 40 POINTS		
(1) NARRATIVE - rather than a statistical style of presentation	(10)	
(2) PRESENTATION - chronological order and in the third person; not to detract from the general readability	(10)	
(3) CLEAR/GRAMMATICALLY CORRECT - pleasing to the general reader	(10)	
(4) ORIGINALITY - different in thought and presentation	(10)	
Sub total	(40)	
PART III -- ILLUSTRATIONS -- 10 POINTS		
(1) ARRANGEMENT - check in relation to text and captions under each, etc.	(5)	
(2) CLEAR-CUT PHOTOGRAPHS - blurry/foggy prints will not aid materially	(5)	
Subtotal	(10)	
PART IV -- JUDGES OPTION -- 10 POINTS		
(1) JUDGES WILL CONSIDER - a number of qualities or items of content in the history which are not readily cataloged under the preceding headings **(2) JUDGES WILL DETERMINE** - features which make a history especially attractive or useful as a source of reference and of historic value	(10)	
TOTAL POINTS OF ENTRY	(100)	

POST SCRIPTS

Consider making a copy of your entry in the event it should become a National Contest winner. With your permission, it will be retained in the National Library archives of The American Legion in Indianapolis, Indiana for visitors to view.

In the event that your Post records are missing and there is no history, the Post Historian may search the local newspaper files and interview past commanders, adjutants and older members. Many important Post events can be found using these methods.

Information about the Post Charter can be obtained by writing the Charter Clerk, National Headquarters, The American Legion, Post Office Box 1055, Indianapolis, Indiana 46206.

Perhaps your Department is fortunate in having a Department Historian's Association. Many of our Departments have organized such groups, patterned along the lines of our National Association of Department Historians of The American Legion (NADHAL). They are proving very effective in rendering assistance so necessary to carrying out successful historian's program. Be sure to inquire if such an organization exists in your Department and join in its activities. If there is no such Department organization, try to establish the closest contact possible with your Department Historian who should be only too happy to assist you.

The serious Post Historian will find informative and interesting any one of the following published histories about The American Legion:

Bennett, Michael J. *When Dreams Come True.* Washington: Brassey's Inc., 1996

Rumer, Thomas A. *The American Legion: An Official History.* New York: M. Evans, 1990

Moley, Raymond. *The American Legion Story.* New York: Duell, Sloan & Pearce, 1966

Jones, Richard. *A History of The American Legion*. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1946

James, Marquis. *A History of The American Legion.* New York: William Green, 1923

Where possible, oral histories should be recorded by use of a cassette or other recorder to tape interviews of American Legion founders and leaders to capture "first hand" information about the historical events of the Posts.

CAPSULE HISTORY OF THE AMERICAN LEGION

A group of twenty officers who served in the American Expeditionary Forces (A.E.F.) in France in World War I is credited with planning the Legion. A.E.F. Headquarters asked these officers to suggest ideas on how to improve troop morale. One officer, Lieutenant Colonel Theodore Roosevelt, Jr., proposed an organization of veterans. In February 1919, this group formed a temporary committee and selected several hundred officers who had the confidence and respect of the whole army.

When the first organization meeting took place in Paris in March 1919, about 1,000 officers and enlisted men attended. The meeting, known as the Paris Caucus, adopted a temporary constitution and the name The American Legion. It also elected an executive committee to complete the organization's work. It considered each soldier of the A.E.F. a member of the Legion. The executive committee named a subcommittee to organize veterans at home in the U.S.

The Legion held a second organizing caucus in St. Louis, Missouri, in May 1919. It completed the constitution and made plans for a permanent organization. It set up temporary headquarters in New York City, and began its relief, employment, and Americanism programs.

Congress granted the Legion a national charter in September 1919. The first National Convention, held in Minneapolis, adopted a permanent constitution and elected officers to head the organization.

OUTLINE FOR A ONE-YEAR POST SCRAPBOOK/YEARBOOK

The scrapbook/yearbook is easier than the narrative to prepare by any historian. This is a pictorial history of the Post. One must remember, however, that this is a permanent record that will be seen by others for a long time, so the suggested outline should be followed as closely as possible.

PART I – FORMAT

(1) COVER: The size of the scrapbook/yearbook cover must not be smaller than a standard three-ring binder or larger than 12 x 15 inches with The American Legion emblem centered (left to right) on the

cover with the name and number of the Post. Each book is not to exceed three inches between the front and back cover.

If you use two or more scrapbooks/yearbooks, you must indicate on the COVER and TITLE PAGE the wording, such as, "VOLUME I, VOLUME II, etcetera."

Acceptable scrapbook/yearbook binders and standard three-ring binders are available from National Emblem Sales with The American Legion emblem embossed on the cover.

(2) NAME/ADDRESS OF COMPILER: The full name and complete mailing address of the scrapbook/yearbook author should appear on the inside front cover on the lower left-hand corner. It will be neatly typed or computer generated and centered on a 3 x 5 inch index card.

(3) TITLE PAGE: This should be the first page facing the reader as the scrapbook/yearbook is opened. It should be centered on the page and be in a logical arrangement with double spacing or more and contain as a minimum the following:

SCRAPBOOK OF
(Name of Post) **POST NO.** (Number of Post)
THE AMERICAN LEGION
(City Location and State)
FOR 20____ - 20____
BY: (Person Compiling Scrapbook/Yearbook)

(4) INTRODUCTION: Every scrapbook/yearbook should carry a forward or introduction, setting forth the reasons for the organization and may include:

- The selection of the Post name: If for a departed comrade or comrades, include a short biographical sketch of their lives and include photographs if they are available.
- If possible, include a brief resume of your community's history, and especially the part played by that locality in furnishing the men and women during the wars and conflicts.
- Mention should also be made of the formation of our National Organization with a tie-in of the Department and Post.
- If your Post has a Post home, you may want to include a photograph of it and street address location.
- You can have a biographical background of the current Post Commander or the author of the scrapbook/yearbook with a photograph included.
- You may also use this space to acknowledge any assistance used in compiling the scrapbook/yearbook.

(5) TABLE OF CONTENTS: Consists of separate units covering programs with page reference.

(6) PREAMBLE TO THE CONSTITUTION OF THE AMERICAN LEGION: This basic document which sets forth the principle aims of The American Legion is a fitting introduction and should follow the INTRODUCTION. It should be centered on the page and spaced in a neat and logical arrangement. Multicolored prints 8½ x 11 inch, of the PREAMBLE may be obtained through National Emblem Sales.

(7) INDEX: The alphabetical index is the last **must** for every scrapbook/yearbook. This comprehensive index of names, places, and events mentioned in your scrapbook/yearbook with page references, shall be carried at the end of the scrapbook/yearbook.

(8) PAGE NUMBERING: This appears to be a common oversight when compiling scrapbooks/yearbooks. Do not forget to number the pages. However, be consistent in where the page numbers are placed, either at top or bottom of pages. Page numbering will start with the title page.

(9) ORDER OF PAGE NUMBERING: The above pages should appear in order as listed above with pages listed in Arabic Numerals or roman numerals as follows:

Title Page	1 or i
Introduction	2 or ii
Table of Contents	3 or iii
Preamble	4 or iv
Acknowledgments	5 (if any) or v
Author's Notes	6 (if any) or vi

The following units will list each page in consecutive order using Arabic numerals. If you used Arabic numerals, then the next number will follow your last number (e.g. if Author's Notes is 6, then the first page of the history is 7). If you used Roman numerals, then the first page of the history is 1 (e.g. if Author's Notes is vi, then the first page of the history is 1).

PART II -- PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES/READABILITY

ONE-YEAR POST MEMORABILIA: The scrapbook/yearbook material for your Post programs and activities will follow the PREAMBLE and precede the INDEX.

The scrapbook/yearbook is to cover one year, from the installation of officers up to and including the annual Department Convention. This timeframe may vary in some Departments.

A record as vitally important as the history itself is a complete and accurate scrapbook/yearbook containing all newspaper clippings, photographs, copies of programs, tickets, badges, and other items pertaining to the Post and its activities.

All material recorded in the scrapbook/yearbook must be in chronological order.

A systematic and logical arrangement should be sought and planned. The reader must be able to follow the meaning of the illustrations (news clippings, photographs, etc.) with very little difficulty and confusion.

All newspaper clippings must include the name and date of the publication from which it was taken.

Photographs must be identified by full proper names (nicknames in brackets), from "left-to-right," occasion, source, dates, function, etc. You may know who is in the photograph and why, but the reader may not.

Be sure all photographs are clear and sharp, as blurry or fuzzy prints will detract rather than enhance your scrapbook/yearbook. Proper arrangement with the caption is a must to achieve an eye-catching scrapbook/yearbook.

Neatness and originality are even more important for scrapbook/yearbook than for the narrative histories since all the material in the scrapbook/yearbook must be identified properly to make it worthwhile.

If the compiler cannot type, nor print well, he or she should have a competent person do the printing or make typewritten or computer generated inserts for him.

The judges will consider the foregoing factors as well as comprehensiveness of the scrapbook/yearbook and the features, which made the scrapbook/yearbook especially attractive or especially useful, and of historic value.

PART III -- JUDGES OPTION

Under this category, Judges will consider a number of qualities or items of content in the scrapbook/yearbook, which are not readily cataloged under the preceding headings. Some scrapbooks/yearbooks contain items and features that make them attractive and especially useful.

By the same token, if inaccuracies should come to the attention of the Judges, they would have a disqualifying effect on your entry.

NATIONAL JUDGING STANDARDS FOR A ONE-YEAR POST SCRAPBOOK/YEARBOOK CONTEST

You will note that PART I, PART II, PART III as identified in OUTLINE FOR A ONE-YEAR POST SCRAPBOOK/YEARBOOK coincides with those listed in the NATIONAL JUDGING STANDARDS. The "etc." listed after several of the scoring elements on the JUDGING STANDARDS shows that there are additional requirements necessary for the score points.

It is suggested that you re-examine the OUTLINE, using the STANDARDS as a checklist before submitting your entry for contest. The comparison will assist by avoiding loss of points.

PART I -- FORMAT--40 POINTS		
(1) COVER - size of 12 x 15 inches, emblem, etc.	(5)	
(2) NAME/ADDRESS OF COMPILER - inside front cover/lower left hand corner		
(3) TITLE PAGE - centered in logical arrangement/double line spacing plus, etc.	(5)	
(4) INTRODUCTION - background of Post; tie-in Department/National; community, etc.	(5)	
(5) TABLE OF CONTENTS - page references covering programs/events	(5)	
(6) PREAMBLE - to the Constitution of The American Legion, etc	(2)	
(7) INDEX - comprehensive alphabetical listing carried at end of Scrapbook/Yearbook	(13)	
(8) PAGE NUMBERING – carried on Post Memorabilia pages and index	(5)	
Subtotal	(40)	
PART II -- GRAPHIC ACCOUNT/READABILITY -- 40 POINTS		
(1) ARRANGEMENT - systematic and logical arrangement should be sought and planned. Material to be recorded in chronological order. The reader must be able to follow the meaning of the illustrations (pictures, clippings, copies of programs, tickets, badges, etc.) with very little difficulty or confusion	(20)	
(2) IDENTIFICATION - All clippings and/or photographs must have occasion, source, dates, functions, names, etc. listed to properly identify the subject matter. Provide proper left-to-right identifications	(10)	
(3) CLEAR CUT PHOTOGRAPHS - blurry/fuzzy prints will detract	(10)	
(4) ORIGINALITY - different in thought and presentation	(10)	
Subtotal	(50)	
PART III -- JUDGES OPTION -- 10 POINTS		
JUDGES WILL CONSIDER - a number of qualities or items of content in the scrapbook/yearbook that are not readily cataloged under the preceding headings. They may determine that some scrapbooks/yearbooks contain items and features which make them attractive and especially useful	(10)	
TOTAL POINTS OF ENTRY	(100)	

HELPFUL HINTS FOR DISTRICT (ALSO COUNTY) HISTORIANS

It is to be noted that some Departments of The American Legion utilize the County structure as well as the District structure and that historians at both levels must assert complete team effort to accomplish their respective responsibilities to the Posts in their jurisdiction.

If you have been elected or appointed District Historian this year, but as long as you are willing to continue in office, do not let them down. Primarily your duty is to coordinate the records of activities of the Posts within your District to ensure the preservation and accessibility of such records at all times.

The attached ANNUAL REPORT OF POST HISTORIANS form (similar to Consolidated Post Report form) is a sample of the type of form that can be distributed to the Post Historians to aid them in compiling the information so necessary for YOUR records. If you should want to make use of a form of this type, be sure to mail it out to the Post Historians in time (and with an appropriate deadline) to allow for the compilation of your own report to the Department Historian (if required).

Some Departments hold comprehensive Spring and Fall District meetings. If this is the case in your Department, make every effort to be allotted time on the program. Travel to Posts within your District with the District Commander and his Staff whenever possible, and speak at Post meetings. Use the Spring meetings as your vantage point for administering the final "morale booster" to the work-shy in your District. Impress upon the minds of all Legionnaires the importance for adequate records and of giving all possible help and encouragement to their Post Historians.

You may find that you have a tremendous job before you this year since many District Historians have had no experience in this type of work and then too, many of the Posts have never tried to keep a history of any kind. You will just have to begin by researching and compiling as much information as possible from past records, then begin this year to keep your own records current, using this report form as a guide.

Be sure that every Post in your District has a Post Historian and that they are kept informed of the latest developments and material available. It is your duty to give all possible aid to Post Historians within your District. If your Department conducts an annual Post Narrative History or Scrapbook/Yearbook Contest, encourage the historians to enter.

OUTLINE FOR A ONE-YEAR DISTRICT/COUNTY HISTORY OR SCRAPBOOK/YEARBOOK

Your Department may be one of the few that conduct an annual District and County narrative history or scrapbook/yearbook contest in addition to the ones that are sponsored on the Post level.

National does not hold District and County contests, so specific outlines for these books are not available at the National level.

The key for the compiling of your District or County books is in the enclosed "Outline For A One-Year Post Narrative History" and "Outline For A One-Year Scrapbook/Yearbook.

When using the Post outlines as a guide, change the cover title, the title page, and text references to read "District" or "County." Naturally, some of the material suggested on the Post level would not be appropriate for your District or County books.

Remember where it says POST in the outlines, insert DISTRICT or COUNTY and determine if the suggested item fits the context for your narrative history or scrapbook/yearbook.

Department Historians are encouraged to use the same format as described above for their One-year Department Narrative History and/or Scrapbook/Yearbook.

****

GRANTS & GRANT APPLICATIONS

The cost of operating community-based nonprofit organizations is growing, competition for funding is considerable, and government funding is likely going to continue to shrink.
There is not a successful professional who can do all that is desired or required by relying solely on the budget of today's nonprofit organization. Ideas and ideals exceed resources. One way to add to an organization's resources is to request grants from foundations, corporations, or government agencies or even from individuals.

Although foundation funding is a small portion of the total financial resources in the nonprofit sector, it is one source of new funding for program innovations. Therefore, the competition for foundation funding is very high. The sad truth is that organizations do not automatically obtain grants from foundations simply because they represent a good organization doing good things.

In order to secure funding, a lot of homework needs to be done. The key information includes what funders are interested in, how to approach them, and how to present ideas to them. If your proposal is to be among the 10% funded, you will want to learn how to compete positively.

If you would like to learn the basics of researching grants, appropriate to your post and project, and the "how-to" for preparing grant proposals that place you among the 10% funded, you are encouraged to visit the **American Legion Child Welfare Foundation's website at www.cwf-inc.org and click on "Latest News."** In addition, you may find the section on "Links" useful.

"Fund raising is not a simple exercise, nor should it ever be. Fund raising is the complex process of seeking to involve people in a cause that is responsive to human needs and that is worthy of gift support. Through people involvement, the organization creates an advocacy force that constitutes the core of its strength and assures its advancement into the future." – *Henry A. Rosso, Founder & Director Emeritus of The Fund Raising School, a program of the Center on Philanthropy at Indiana University.*

THE AMERICAN LEGION CHILD WELFARE FOUNDATION

PURPOSE

Our Foundation was created in 1954 to (1) contribute to the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual welfare of children and youth through the dissemination of knowledge about new and innovative organizations and/or their programs designed to benefit youth; and (2) contribute to the physical, mental, emotional and spiritual welfare of children and youth through the dissemination of knowledge already possessed by well-established organizations, to the end that such information can be more adequately used by society.

FUNDING

The primary source of revenue for The American Legion Child Welfare Foundation is from individual members of the Legion, Auxiliary, Eight & Forty, and Sons of The American Legion. We also receive support from all levels of our organizations from national to community.

To provide an incentive for giving on an annual basis, the Foundation has developed a program called the **"Cornerstone" Gift Club.** Awards go to **individuals** for their cumulative donations made during the current contribution year (June 1 – May 31):

Century Club	-	$100.00 - Gold Pin (Amethyst stone)
Foundation Partner	-	$250.00 - Gold Pin (Blue Sapphire)
President's Circle	-	$500.00 - Gold Pin (1 Diamond)

Foundation Ambassadors - $1,000.00 - Gold Pin (5 Diamonds)

The **"Children First" Gift Club** is for **Post-level** awards, given to organizations for their cumulative donations:

Caretaker	-	$500.00 - Bronze plaque
Advocate	-	$750.00 - Silver plaque
Guardian	-	$1,000.00 - Gold plaque

When donations accumulate to any of the above plateaus during the fiscal year, the appropriate item will be awarded to that individual or organizational level.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCESS

Each contribution received is handled in the following manner: (1) Every check or money order ($5.00 or more) received is acknowledged by official receipt which should be held for tax purposes. (2) Accurate records are kept in our offices by state, organization, and individual sending in support. This correspondence is only kept on file for one year, but the computer records are kept continuously. (3) All cash contributions are acknowledged regardless of the amount. We caution, however, that sending cash through the mail is not recommended.

DID YOU KNOW?

(1) All contributions are tax deductible. (2) Your state organization gets credit for your support on our national report to the United States Congress. (3) Contributions can be made directly to us, they do not have to go through your Department Headquarters. (4) All of the money you contribute goes directly into the C.W.F. to help youngsters through grants. All overhead expenses are handled from separate funding. (5) **We always need your support!**

SOME SUGGESTIONS

(1) The next time someone in your Post or Unit passes on, suggest that contributions be sent to The American Legion Child Welfare Foundation in their memory. The next of kin will be notified by us of your thoughtfulness, and the memory of the departed will live on in meaningful grants that will help children. (2) Make the Foundation a regular part of your annual Post activities by holding a fund raiser for it. (3) Mention the Foundation at your Post and Unit meetings to keep other people aware of what it is and how it helps children. (4) Start a collection of plaques to display in your Post home.

Send inquiries for information materials and contributions to:

The American Legion Child Welfare Foundation
P.O. Box 1055
Indianapolis, IN 46206-1055

TEMPORARY FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE (TFA)

Temporary Financial Assistance is the landmark program of The American Legion's National Commission on Children & Youth. Begun in 1925 as a form of direct aid to children, the TFA program is still unique in the social work field today.

Through TFA, a Post can call upon the National Organization to lend a hand in providing cash assistance to help meet the basic needs of veterans' children **when it is established there are no other resources available to provide the required assistance**. These payments, as the name of the program implies, are **"temporary"** and this cash assistance is in the form of a grant.

It is the responsibility of an American Legion Post and Department to make every effort to secure assistance for needy veterans' children from its own resources, or those of other organizations or agencies within the community whose purpose it is to meet the need.

Payments from the program may be made to, or on behalf of, the family for a variety of expenses necessary to **maintain the health and welfare of the children involved**.

A Maintenance Grant may be used for:

1. Food
2. Shelter - Rent or Mortgage payment
3. Utilities
4. Educational Expense
5. Household Supplies
6. Other needs as specified

A Maintenance Grant may never be used for debts incurred prior to the date of application for TFA. Credit card payments, bank notes (other than home mortgage loans), auto loans and other installment-type payments are considered to be "prior debts." The only **exceptions** to this policy are utilities and shelter payments.

A Medical Grant requires a written statement from the doctor outlining the program, the treatment and the estimated costs. It may be used for:

1. Medical Care
2. Surgery
3. Dental Care
4. Pharmaceuticals
5. Dietary Needs
6. Hospitalization
7. Nursing and Convalescent Care
8. Other Needs as specified

A Medical Grant cannot cover previous medical expenses or care. For a family to be eligible for consideration, there are two basic requirements:

1. The veteran must have served a portion of their active duty during one of these dates:
   December 7, 1941 - December 31, 1946
   June 25, 1950 - January 31, 1955
   February 28, 1961 - May 7, 1975
   August 24, 1982 - July 31, 1984
   December 20, 1989 - January 31, 1990
   August 2, 1990 - Cessation of hostilities as determined by the U.S. Government

2. There must be children in the home under the age of 18. These children may be legitimate, step, legally adopted, or illegitimate with necessary proof of relationship provided.

***NOTE: The veteran need not be a member of The American Legion to receive assistance.**

In order for a family to be considered for TFA, a request for assistance must be submitted on the prescribed application form. Applications may be obtained from your Department Headquarters or your Children & Youth Chairman. Each application comes complete with instructions to guide the local investigator through the procedure of filing.

Further details on the program and its regulations are contained in a TFA brochure which may be obtained from either your Department Adjutant or the National Americanism and Children & Youth Division, The American Legion, P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206-1055.

FAMILY SUPPORT NETWORK

The American Legion Post, in its infancy, was very much a "community" post. Made-up of friends and neighbors, members knew everyone else in the post, their families and friends. The post was the focal point when a veteran or family member was in trouble and help was always ready and available to everyone associated with the organization. It was a network of friends and comrades who cared for each other and responded when a need was known.
The Family Support Network is very much the same concept developed in those early days. The difference lies in the expanding population and the loss of the close neighborhood relationships of today's posts.

The name of The Family Support Network and development of the concept came during the early days of Desert Shield and later Desert Storm and the Persian Gulf War. For the first time in American history, the "total force concept" was activated without much advanced notice or preparation. While the Reserves and National Guard units activated were ready for the military mission before them, the military was not effectively prepared to deal with or support the thousands of families left behind during the mobilization. Paychecks were often lost, not forwarded to the family, or not even generated. This was especially true in the Reserves and National Guard.

As a result, the families of these men and women found themselves unable to meet normal monthly expenses and assistance was needed for a variety of everyday chores. These tasks included grocery-shopping, childcare, mowing the grass, fixing the family car and a multitude of routine household jobs.

To help address these issues, The American Legion implemented a nationwide toll-free telephone number, **1-800-504-4098**, for service personnel and their family members to call for assistance. Families can also request assistance electronically through the Legion website www.legion.org/support or via email at familysupport@legion.org. Requests are referred to The American Legion Department in which the call originated. The Departments relay the collected information to a local Post, who in turn contacts the individual to see if assistance can be provided locally. Since the inception of the Family Support Network, thousands of Posts have responded to meet the needs of these families.

On September 11, 2001, America watched in horror as terrorists attacked America. In response to this heinous act, active-duty military have been placed on a high state of alert. National Guard and Reserve Units are being activated in record numbers, and for extended periods of time to support Operation Enduring Freedom and mobilization to Southwest Asia. Once again, The American Legion stands ready to support our men and women in uniform and their families with the Family Support Network.

Posts are reminded that families in financial need, with minor children, may call on the Temporary Financial Assistance program at the National Headquarters to assist. Otherwise, it will be up to the Post to provide or develop the resources necessary to meet the need.

The Family Support Network only works if Legionnaires at the Post level respond to the increasing needs of comrades and their families. As the nation's largest veteran's organization, our commitment to our men and women in uniform and their families never wavers. Together, we must act to ensure that no family endures hardships caused by military service alone. By doing so, we ensure that The American Legion is "*Still Serving America*."

Current Family Support Network Procedures:

1. Requests are received via the toll-free number: 800-504-4098, email address familysupport@legion.org, or through www.legion.org/support.

2. The name, address, telephone number of the caller, and reason for the call is collected.

3. The call is referred to the Department.

4. The Department refers the call to a local post.
5. The local Post contacts the family and provides the assistance if resources are available or refers the family to other local agencies.

6. In case of financial need, the Post provides the necessary funds or assists the family in applying for Temporary Financial Assistance if there are minor children in the home.

THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY FUND

ORIGIN: The National Executive Committee passed Resolution No. 30 establishing The American Legion National Emergency Fund at its meeting in the fall of 1989 to be used to meet the needs of Posts or an individual member of the Legion family [Legion, Auxiliary or SAL] in areas stricken by natural disasters. Since disasters are not restricted to boundaries and can strike anytime or anywhere, the National Emergency Fund is ongoing so the Legion will be prepared to address future emergencies as they arise.

GUIDELINES: A special committee was appointed by the National Commander with the responsibility to establish guidelines for applying for assistance and the subsequent disbursement of funds to those in need. These are:

1. All requests, whether by a Post or an individual member of The American Legion family, will be submitted through your Department Headquarters on The American Legion National Emergency Fund Grant Application. Copies are available upon request from your Department Headquarters.
2. It is suggested that the Department establish a field assessment committee(s) of responsible Legionnaires to investigate, evaluate and make recommendations concerning requests for National Emergency Fund assistance.
3. Each application must be signed by the Department Commander and Adjutant.
4. The Department Headquarters will assure each grant application is accompanied by documents to support the claim (i.e. photographs, repair estimates, insurance coverage, estimated net loss, etc.).etc.).
5. Grant applications for The American Legion National Emergency Fund, after validation, will be forwarded to National Headquarters *for final approval*.
6. Upon final approval, a check will be forwarded to the Department Headquarters for disbursement. In extreme emergency situations, if requested, disbursement could be made directly to The American Legion family member or the Post with notification to your Department Headquarters.
7. The distribution of the Grant Application Form copies are as follows:
   a) Pink Copy - Applicant's Copy
   b) Yellow Copy - Department's Copy
   c) White Copy - National's Copy

Considerations:

A) The amount of disbursement will be decided on a case-by-case basis *and* monies available in The American Legion National Emergency Fund.

B) All money will be used for direct replacement relief, but not for expansion and/or upgrading of previous situations or for the creation of a new facility when a prior facility did not exist.
C) Monies would not be made available unless all other sources (insurance, local emergency relief funds, etc.) have been exhausted.
D) All disbursements will be outright grants.

The fund disbursement guidelines and the grant application have been created to keep the procedure as simple as possible, flexible enough to adapt to a variety of situations, and be responsive to address immediate needs in a timely manner.

Further details concerning this program can be obtained by contacting your Department Adjutant or Membership Services, The American Legion, P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206-1055.

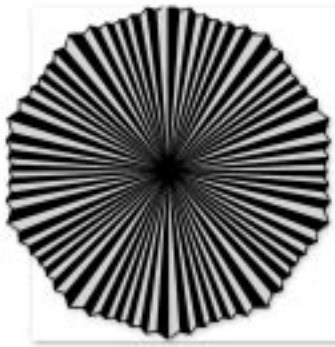
Elements of The American Legion Emblem

Every part of The American Legion emblem has a meaning, a rich symbolism that a glance does not reveal. The emblem is laid upon the rays of the sun, giver of life, warmth and courage; foe of the cold, of the darkness, of fear, of apprehension. In turn, each of the emblem's parts signifies a meaning, which no American Legionnaire who wears the emblem should take lightly, and which he/she should know from the first moment it is put on. Why does the star signify constancy of purpose? Because the stars are fixed in the heavens. As the stars do not wander, so should The American Legion not wander from its fixed purposes. **See the next page for a further explanation of The American Legion emblem.**

Further, the words "The American Legion" demand "that the wearer shall ever guard the sanctity of home and country and free institutions…" There shines the emblem of The American Legion. It is your badge of pride and distinction, honor and service.

Here are the meanings of all the symbols of The American Legion emblem.

Elements of the Emblem



The Rays of the Sun

The rays of the sun form the background of the emblem and suggest the Legion's principles will dispel the darkness of violence and evil.

The Wreath

The wreath forms the center, in loving memory of those brave comrades who gave their lives in the service of the United States that liberty might endure.

The Words

The words "American Legion" tie the ring together for truth, remembrance, constancy, honor, service, veterans affairs and rehabilitation, children and youth, loyalty, national security and Americanism.

The Star

The star, victory symbol of World War I, also symbolizes honor, glory and constancy. The letters "U.S." leave no doubt as to the brightest star in the Legion's emblem.

Outer Rings

The larger of two outer rings stands for the rehabilitation of our sick and disabled comrades. The smaller inside ring denotes the welfare of America's children.

Inner Rings

The smaller of two inner rings set upon the star represents service to our communities, states and the nation. The larger outer ring pledges loyalty to Americanism.

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