

**August 10, 2016 1st Business Session**

* Opened at 8:25am with introduction of National Officers by National Convention Chair PNP Charlee Kee (FL)
* A moment of silence was held in memory of the following PNP’s: Sandy Aultman, Dorothy Murroll, Janice Hapner and Bonnie Scott
* 1st National VP Evelyn McElvin (FL) and 2nd National VP Marvell Ruppel (WI) introduced the Past National Presidents attending this convention mentioning highlights of their service year and the National Commander with which they served.
* National President Kathy Berning (IA) then welcomed all attendees and called the convention to order at 8:49am. This was followed with an opening prayer by National Chaplain Joan Sirek and presentation of the colors by National Sargent at Arms Amy Stopyra and her Color Bearers with an additional moment of draping of the charter for our deceased PNPs.
* Reading of Americanism Definition by National Americanism Officer Dee Baggett
* Reading of Auxiliary Preamble by 1st VP McElvin
* Reading of Auxiliary Code of Ethics by 2nd VP Ruppel
* Reading of Auxiliary Aims & Purposes by 3rd VP Barbara Valley
* Roll call of National Officers, NEC Women and Department Presidents by National Ladies Auxiliary Executive Director Carol King
* Roll call was temporarily interrupted to receive National AMVETS Commander Jim Pidgeon, National AMVETS Executive Director Jim Chenelly and the Executive Director for the National Service Foundation, Kent Clark. Their purposes was to highlight the value the Auxiliary brings to the AMVETS organization and to say “thank you.” After their departure, the roll call continued.
* Charlene Kee announced a special first timer who was lovingly called “mama-san” by all who knew and/or met her. She is 95½ years old and is from the Department of Alaska
* The session continued with the reading and adoption of the Convention rules: moved by National Parliamentarian Heidi Dineen-Serpis and 2nd by McElvin. Motion carried.
* President Berning then appointed a time keeper, Cindy Emdia (Iowa). President Berning then asked for a motion to adopt the Convention Agenda. Moved by PNP Patti Peining. 2nd by PNP Leslie Wunderle. Motion carried.
* National Hospital Officer Leslie Nell moved that we dispense with the reading of the 2015 minutes. 2nd by Dee Baggett. Motion carried.
* National Saddest Tina Lumpkins (Texas) and National Snappiest Clarice Poisson (Michigan) were escorted to the podium and both thanked the Ladies Auxiliary for their support. Tina introduced the newly elected National Saddest, Eddie Lumpkins. Clarice announced the 2016-17 Sackette officers.
* Three Convention referrals listed in the Convention book (pgs 98-100) were read by National Parliamentarian Dineen-Serpis. Voting would occur at a later session.
* The National Sons of AMVETS Commander, David Strittmather was the next visitor escorted to the podium. He talked about his joint travels with President Berning, changes at SOA National Headquarters and the “22 a day” pushups program to increase awareness of veterans suicides.
* National Officers then gave their reports (which are all listed in the Convention Book) as well as committee recommendations.
* 1st VP McElvin did talk about a new department level membership promotion incentive that was approved at the National officers meeting. A $250 incentive is being made available to departments within 4 categories of membership: A (30 – 350 members) B (351-700 members) C (701-2500 members) D (2501+ members) Winning departments will be calculated by %age of members. The criteria is based on renewals received in headquarters by January 31, 2017 for memberships renewed by 12/31/2016. Look for more details in the National Lines this Fall. Also Carol King will be providing information to Department Secretaries regarding a second incentive funded by the National Service Foundation for locals.
* During the officer reports several recommendations from their committees were reported. Those requiring action were referred to the Constitution and Bylaws Committee and will be included when that report is discussed later in these notes. Project related changes will be referenced in the Fall National Lines. A few will be highlighted where Officer Reports are mentioned:
  + Marvell Ruppel (WI), Child Welfare – add “milk caps” delete “betty crocker coupons”
    - $24,500.92 donated to John Tracy Clinic
  + Barbara Valley (OH), Community Service – “pill bottles may or may not be accepted within each state”
    - $40,147.82 donated to PAWS
* Reports interrupted by a visit from the Taiwanese Delegation. Also, the National Snappiest, Clarice Poisson took this opportunity to present a check to the National President for her female veterans’ transition project. Also, the Raffle Queen, PNP Sylvia Rowland had a ticket pulled for the daily raffle - $490 to the winner.
* Reports resume with the National Parliamentarian, Heidi Dineen-Serpis (MA). She, like the other officers, referenced her report pages in the Convention book including the three resolutions that she received pre-convention for consideration (see Attachment A). She then did the first reading all of the proposed changes for the Constitution, Bylaws, Standing Rules and Manual (See five page Attachment A) Second reading and voting will occur on Thursday, Aug 11, 2016. She also mentioned that the revised C&BL will be available online after September 1, 2016.
* National Treasurer, Barbara Guth (KY), then gave her report – national membership down 9.6% against the budget, yet donations are up 6% overall and expenses were relatively flat. She mentioned that the proposed budget would be presented on Aug 11 for review and vote on Aug 12.
* Meeting adjourned for lunch and participation in Joint Opening and Joint Memorial Ceremonies.

**August 11, 2016 2nd Business Session**

* Session called to order by National President Berning at 8:00am followed by Prayer and Pledge. She was then escorted off the floor for visits to other groups. Executive Director Carol King did the roll call. First VP Evelyn McElvin is chairing the meeting in Kathy’s absence.
* Officer Reports continued:
  + Dee Baggett (FL), Americanism – needs to get full names for all Youth Volunteers. The names are frequently missing from reports. She reported that the AMVETS Joint Americanism Committee is considering several topics as themes for future contests. 2016-17 will remain “Why It’s Important to Vote.” Dee went on to mention that the application is being updated to include school and parent email addresses.
    - Dee moved a recommendation from her committee that Freedom’s Foundation month be moved from May to October. Gloria George, NEC Washington 2nd. Motion Carried.
    - Auxiliary Freedom Foundation Weekend reminder: October 2017. Cost is $365 before 12/31/16. $385 after. A brochure is available.
    - Cindy Rice, Ohio #22 presented Dee with a $200 check from the #22 Auxiliary
    - $17,161.20 donated to Freedom’s Foundation
  + Sheila Jackson (AZ), Scholarship – received 50 applications (2 Career, 26 National, 22 College).
    - 31 were disqualified due to wrong application forms, wrong scholarship identified, missing signatures, and blank spaces. All 19 remaining applications received awards, $8000 disbursed in total.
    - Committee members talked about fundraising projects. Most interesting one was dog washing.
  + Amy Stopyra (PA), Sgt At Arms – discussed the uniform policy that will be voted on later. Always needed Pages for Convention.
  + Joan Sirek (WI), Chaplain – lost 4 PNPs this year:
    - Bonnie Scott (2005-6), Dorothy Murrell (1991-2), Sandye Aultman (2002-3), AND Janice Hapner (1998-9).
    - Several questions came up concerning differences between National and Department or Local data. Seems like there are database challenges at National that would require a $30,000 investment to resolve.
  + Marie Rorrio (MA), VAVS – Attended the AMVETS VAVS meeting where 11 Resolutions were adopted. National Auxiliary presented a Parke Scholarship donation of $4583.48. The Parke Board award $35, 000 to students in scholarships.
  + Leslie Nell, Hospital – committee met and discussed questions regarding what qualifies as hospital and what might actually be community service. Highlighted projects:
    - from NY Dept women veterans expecting babies – locals filled diaper bags with baby items and delivered them to the Department Fall Conference as shower gifts to be distributed to the VAVS reps for delivery to the VA hospitals across the state.
    - From Wisconsin #15 held a silent auction with proceeds totaling $6378 direct to St Judes
    - $35,655.24 donated to St Jude’s Children’s Hospital
  + Donnajean Hackler (FL), Chair Council of NEC Women – announced new Chair, Gloria George NEC Washington. 18 NEC women present. Summarized discussions around reporting of Youth volunteers, appointments sheets, CBLs coming up for vote on the floor, tax exempt status and member retention within local auxiliaries.
  + Betty Lawson (TN), Training – Convention training program was well attended.
    - The Focus 2016 program will kick off a year-long celebration of 70 years as a National Auxiliary. Our 2017 Convention will include a yearend celebration.
    - Today’s (8/11) evening event “Paint the Town Red” is designed as a stress reliever.
    - The leadership training at Pigeon Forge is January 27-29, 2017. The theme is “The Future is Now.” Will raffle off 2 scholarships during this convention to Pigeon Forge.
  + Carol King, National Executive Director – New AMVETS ED has a vision for the AMVETS family. A note about Auxiliary membership card changes:
    - Templates will be available via website (new and renew)
    - 2017 preprinted will be sent to address on department reval.
    - Rosters sent after National convention from hdqrts
  + NEC reports continue – all referenced where their reports were located in the Convention Book. Some introduced new Department Presidents or NEC women. If a Department had someone running for National office, it was mentioned.
  + Leslie Wunderle (WA), National Honors and Awards – reminded all of the honors and awards program for later in the day. She also had chaired the Board of Trustees meeting.
  + Nancy Carrier (IA), History & Scrapbook – announced that one book was sent to the hotel. Reminded delegates that the instructions specifically say to not send entries to the hotel.
  + Second reading adoption of Constitution, Bylaws, Standing Rules and Manual changes. (See attached Schedule A, pgs 1 and 2 for results). Updated documents will be available online and by flash drive after Sept 1
* AMVETS Ex Director Joe Chenelly and National Service Foundation Ex Director Kent Clark came on the floor to explain the AMVETS non-profit and tax exempt status. AMVETS is a 501c19 tax exempt Veterans organization. Because it only has 60% of its membership as wartime veterans, it is not a tax deductible organizations. Any donors who want to make tax deductible donations will need to do so to AMVETS organizations that are 501c3 designated. The AMVETS Service Foundations are 501c3. (See IRS Publication 557 for more information)
* Treasurer Guth presented the budget for the first time. It will be voted on Friday.
* Raffle winner name pulled – awarded $667.50
* Meeting concluded for the day at 12:30pm
* Honors and awards program held from 2:30-5:30pm

**August 12, 2016 3rd Business Session**

* Opened by Pres Berning at 8:33am followed by prayer and pledge. President Berning passed gavel to 1st VP McElvin and left floor to continue visits to other AMVETS organizations. Ex Director King called the roll call.
* National Sackettes Snappiest Clarice Poisson moved that Sackettes be allowed to be under the Sad Sacks along with the Sons and become one organization. ML Maslow 2nd. Lots of discussion took place. Denise Rodzen (ME) moved that the question be tabled to the Spring NEC. Carol King (IL) 2nd. Motion carried.
* Reading of Election Rules #5 and #6 by Parliamentarian Heidi Dineen-Serpis
* Nominations were opened for the national offices. Briefly interrupted for the Jr AMVETS visit. Danielle Pay, 2015-16 president announced the winner of the Juniors 50/50 raffle: Cindy Rice (OH) $219 and the 2016-17 President, Ivy Cook (OH). President Ivy introduced her officers as well as her project (PAWS) and theme (More than a Four Legged Friend).
* Nominations for National Offices resume:
  + 1st VP – Marvell Ruppel (WI) o 2nd VP – Barbara Valley (OH)
  + 3rd VP – Dee Baggett (FL) o Treasurer – n/a
  + Americanism – Joan Sirek A (WI) and Faye Richardson-Green (MI)
  + Scholarship – Karin Simons (Alaska)
  + Hospital – Leslie Nell (IL) and Shelia Jackson (AZ)
  + Chaplain – Peggy Liss (MI)
  + Sergeant at Arms – Amy Stopyra (PA)
  + President – Evelyn McElvin (FL)
* Americanism Officer Dee Baggett introduces Freedom Foundation President and CEO Mike DiVeso who thanked the Aux for its support and explained what the Foundation does. Dee presented him with a check for $17,161.20
* 3rd VP Barbara Valley introduced PAWS Founder and CEO Mike Sapp and Community Rep Deb Davis. Deb explained the organization mission and Mike mentioned some of its programming like the new Prison Training program where several Michigan prisons are allowing prisoners to train PAWS dogs. It has become a very successful rehabilitation program for prisoners and successful development program for the dogs. Barbara presented a check for $40,304.74.
* Dee Baggett announced the Freedom Foundation Aux weekend trip winner: Joanne Harshberger (WI)
* Betty Lawson mentioned that silent auction items were available in the back of the room.
* Hospital Officer Leslie Nell (IL) introduced the St Jude’s rep Shelby Anderson who talked about the 18 year relationship between AMVETS Ladies Aux and St Jude’s. She also recognized IN, TN, PA, Alaska and FL as top donors to the organization. Leslie presented a check for $35,605.24
* Riders President Rob Quick came in and presented a check for $500 to support our various charities.
* Wisconsin’s 48th White Clover Princess Emily Brown came on our floor to explain her role and encourage other departments to consider having a princess program.
  + White Clover Princesses must be a daughter or granddaughter of an AMVET
  + Are selected based on results of an essay contest
  + Visit veterans in various settings and raise money through white clover sales
* 2nd VP Marvell Ruppel talked about John Tracy Clinic CEO Gaston Kent who is both a veteran and hearing impaired. She played a moving video that Kent had given her showing families who use its service. A check had been presented earlier because of scheduling issues.
* Treasurer Guth did the final presentation of the budget. Each section of income and expenses were moved, 2nd and carried separately. Full budget approved.
* Board of Trustees Chair Leslie Wunderle announced that Gary Sinese has been approved as the Humanitarian of the Year and would be recognized at the Silver helmet Awards in March 2017. And as H&A chairman, Leslie announced that the H&A list of Winners would be available on Saturday.
* 50/50 Raffle winner $785 announced Beth Remington (IA)
* Meeting recessed at 11:50 until Saturday, August 13. General Caucus and Meet the Candidate events planned for the afternoon where all nominated candidates for office will say a little about themselves, answer questions and distribute campaign materials.

**August 13, 2016 Final Business Session**

* Session Opened by President Berning at 9:02am followed by prayer and pledge. Chaplain Sirek asked for all to pray for the residents of Louisiana due to the 21” of rain that have received.
* Carol King, Exec Dir, read the roll call and the 95 year old first time attendee from Alaska was again recognized
* 1st VP McElvin presented a gift to President Berning from the National Officers. Jan from Iowa presented Madam President with her history/scrapbook.
* President Berning thanked her officers and trustees
* H&A Chair Leslie Wunderle came forward to present winners who had not picked up award checks from Thursday’s program.
* Betty Lawson, Training Chair explained that no Focus program was held this year due to lack of time. She further explained that this year each Past National President (PNP) was asked to answer three questions. Some answers were incorporated into the convention:
  + Highlights of their year?
  + What are they most impressed with since joining?
  + What do they see in the future?
* Kay Hopkins (TN) won a trip to the Leadership training in Pigeon Forge in January 2017.
* At 10:00am the floor was closed to begin the election process:
  + Election rules read and moved for adoption by Heidi Dineen-Serpis. 2nd by Patty Peining (OH). Motion carried.
  + Voting strength confirmed by Credentials chair Charlene Kee and Sergeant at Arms Amy Stopyra.
  + Tellers selected from the non-voting guests
  + Officers moved to their state delegation for voting
* Election results in voting order:
  + 1st VP Marvell Ruppel by acclimation
  + 2nd VP Barbara Valley by acclimation
  + 3rd VP Dee Baggett by acclimation
  + Treasurer (no vote Barbara Guth begins 2nd year of 2yr term)
  + Americanism Joan Sirek by majority vote
  + Scholarship Karin Simons by acclimation
  + Hospital Sheila Jackson by majority vote
  + Chaplain Peggy Liss by acclimation
  + Sgt at Arms Amy Stopyra by acclimation
  + Evelyn McElvin President by acclimation
* Florida delegation celebrated the election of Evelyn McElvin to President with a victory song and because of Evelyn’s long association with the Juniors, they came in to congratulate her victory.
* Letter from AMVETS ED was read regarding the official Quartermaster. Sylvia Rowland pulled the final 50/50 raffle winner who would receive $742.50.
* President Berning announced NEC meeting would be held after the Installation ceremonies and then thanked her Local Auxiliary, the Department of Iowa and everyone for their support this past year
* Convention closed at 11:05am followed by prayer and retirement of colors

Report submitted by

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