

SPRING 2009 NATIONAL LINES



Spring is in the air and the year is coming to an end. There's so much to do: Reports, Deadlines, Applying for Awards, Nominations, Election, Installation, Training, State and National Conventions. Wow! And we do it all because we love what we do as an organization. I commend each of you for what you do to support our veterans, military troops, their families, communities and our members. As officers exchange hands, don't forget to pass on information pertaining to the position. It would also be very thoughtful to include a letter of congratulations with a list of helpful hints to ease the incoming officer's year. As my days dwindle down as the National

President, I am enjoying wonderful times visiting departments, seeing what you do and rekindling old friendships and making new ones. Meeting members on a local level is extremely important to me because I get a chance to say "thank you." My year has been very rewarding with a lifetime of memories. Thank you for this great opportunity. The Convention Digest will soon be in the mail, please share the information with the members. There's so much regarding the National Convention, even awards to apply for. Please apply for the awards. PNP/Honors and Awards Chair Carol King and the National Service Officers are looking forward to reviewing the entries. The Past National Presidents along with the National Officers can't wait to present the awards to the winners. You've done the work, why not be rewarded? Thank you to all that attended the Spring NEC and I look forward to seeing you at the National Convention in New Orleans!

UPCOMING SPECIAL EVENTS

- May 31, 2009 – All membership must be postmarked to National Headquarters
- June 30, 2009 Revalidation Paperwork due to National Headquarters
- June 30, 2009 NEC Reports due to National Headquarters for National Convention
- August 8-15, 2009 AMVETS National Ladies Auxiliary National Convention New Orleans, LA



And always remember that,

"You're the Key to our Success."

Charlene D. Kee, National President 2008-2009

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PATTY PIENING
NATIONAL FIRST VICE PRESIDENT

What is the proper way to process membership? This question is forever being asked and I'm glad it is, it shows the willingness to learn the proper procedures in handling your local membership.

With this in mind I received more questions regarding AMVETS Ladies Auxiliary membership in the National AMVETS Riders. It states in the National AMVETS Riders Constitution and By-laws, **ARTICLE VII: MEMBERSHIP, 7.1** *Membership in the National AMVETS Riders shall be limited to members in good standing of AMVETS, AMVETS Ladies Auxiliary, and Sons of AMVETS.* Therefore, if an auxiliary member has not kept her membership up to date, she is no longer eligible for membership in the Riders.

National Membership Awards deadlines and details can be located in the 2009 Convention Digest Book or on line at amvetsaux.org. Reminder, there is an application form required for the Individual Members Awards. If you do not enter, you cannot receive your award you worked so hard for.

Don't hold your membership applications whether they be new or renewals. Get them in before May 31st to ensure printed preprint cards for next year.

Always remember it's not too late to increase your membership.

With more members you have more volunteers to assist our veterans, their families and communities.

If I can be of any assistance to you please feel free to contact me at; papiening@verizon.net or by my cell phone; 513-218-3234.

DEE KREILING
NATIONAL SECOND VICE PRESIDENT

Spring is here and summer is not far ahead. Let's not forget, to watch out and protect our future leaders. Many of our children will be playing outside, attending family functions, school picnics, and birthday parties. These are just a few activities. As we all know when children are playing they do not pay attention to their surroundings. So please watch out for our children in play areas or non-play areas.

Know the rules.....SUMMER SAFETY TIPS for CHILDREN

Always CHECK FIRST with your parents, guardians, or the trusted adult in charge before you go anywhere or

do anything. Be sure to CHECK IN.

Always TAKE A FRIEND with you when playing or going anywhere. It's safer and more fun.

Don't be tricked by people who offer you special treats or gifts. Never accept anything from anyone without your parents' or guardians' permission.

Stay SAFER when you're home alone by keeping the door locked; not opening the door for or talking to anyone who stops by unless the person is a trusted family friend or relative you feel comfortable being alone with, and the visit has been pre-approved by your parents or guardians. Never tell anyone who calls that you're home by yourself. Have a neighbor or trusted adult you are able to call if you feel scared, uncomfortable, or confused or there's an emergency.

Never go into public restroom by yourself.

Never go alone to malls, movies, video arcades, or parks. Take a friend with you, and always CHECK FIRST with your parents' or guardians to make sure it's okay.

Don't panic if you feel lost. Identify the safest place to go or person to ask for help in reuniting you with your parents or guardians. Safe helpers could be a uniformed law-enforcement or security officer, store salesperson with a nametag, person with a nametag who is working at the information booth, or a mother with children. Never search for your parents or guardians on your own and never go with anyone who is trying to reunite you with them.

Be careful when you play. Stay away from pools, canals, and other bodies of water unless you are with a trusted adult. Don't play near busy streets or deserted areas, and never take shortcuts unless you have your parents' or guardians' permission

Don't wear clothes or carry items with your name on the outside, and don't be confused just because a person you don't know calls out your name.

Don't get into a vehicle or go near a vehicle with anyone in it unless you are with your parents, guardians, or a trusted adult. Never take a ride from anyone without CHECKING FIRST with your parents or guardians.

Be careful playing or riding your bicycle as it gets dark. Sometimes it is difficult for people driving see you. Wear reflectors and protective clothing if your parents or guardians say you may play outside after dark.

Don't be afraid to say NO and GET AWAY from any situation making you feel scared, uncomfortable, or confused. TRUST YOUR FEELINGS and be sure to TELL a trusted adult if anything happens to make you feel this way.

More information on children safety you can call 1-800-843-5678) or visit this web site www.missingkids.com.

Since 1976, our National Child Welfare Program has been the John Tracy Clinic (JT). For More Than 32 years, AMVETS, AMVETS Ladies Auxiliary and Sons of AMVETS members, and now the AMVETS Riders, have contributed to John Tracy Clinic. We have sent JTC handmade and purchased teddy bears that are given to every child who comes into the Clinic. Proceeds from bake sales, garage sales, fundraisers, candy sales, Chinese auctions, dances, just to name a few has helped t pay for JTC free services to children with hearing loss and their families. We have donated used hearing aids that are loaned to the children or recycle for credits for children's aids. Also, a number of you have sponsored bricks in JTC commemorative courtyard. JTC provides parent – centered services free of charge. I had the privileged to visit John Tracy Clinic this year. Along with members from the Department of California, we had a wonderful visit. We were able to see teachers working one on one with the children; you could just watch the love that was in the class rooms. It will be a visit I will remember for many years. We make all the difference to bring hope, guidance and encouragement to children with hearing lost and their families all around the work. Remember how fortunate we are with our children. To learn more about John Tracy Clinic visit their website www.jtc.org. Thank you for your continued support to John Tracy Clinic and to all children programs.

Remember to apply for the Child Welfare Awards listed in the 2009 Convention Digest book. These awards are presented at the National Convention each year. The awards are given in recognition of the outstanding work done by Departments and Local AMVETS Ladies Auxiliaries.

Penny Boyd "Boyd's Bear", all dressed-up in her Auxiliary uniform will be raffled off at our 2009 National Convention. She was in attendance at the Fall Round Table, Spring NEC Meeting and has been busy traveling to Florida, Illinois, Maryland, New Jersey, Ohio and Pennsylvania. The John Tracy Clinic Family will pick the raffle ticket on the day they visit our convention floor. Raffle tickets are \$1.00 and all proceeds will be given to John Tracy Clinic at National Convention.

Feel free to contact me if I can be of help and it is a pleasure to work with each of you.

LYNDA TAYLOR NATIONAL THIRD VICE PRESIDENT

Time for year end reports and getting ready for the new auxiliary year in your Departments. Don't forget to apply for the National Awards. Each of you do so much volunteer work and good for your Communities. Now is the time to be recognized for those deeds. Please look over the information in the Convention Digest and follow the guidelines to apply. Remember to record your blood donations and information on blood drives you have done. I need that information for presentations at National Convention also.

Thanks to all of you for a wonderful year serving as your National 3rd Vice President. I have truly enjoyed seeing all the community service projects you have completed. Keep up the great work that you do for our AMVET Auxiliaries.

FRANCIS KAY GIBBONS NATIONAL AMERICANISM OFFICER

Time is passing so very quickly that it's hard to believe the Auxiliary year is drawing to a close. Projects have been completed or are nearly so. Year end reports are being sent to your NEC woman and she is compiling them to be sent to all your National Officers. For all of this I send you heartfelt gratitude. YOU are keeping the Patriotic Spirit alive.

As your projects come to a close I truly hope many of you will apply for our Awards. If you have been to a National Convention you know that one of the highlights is the Honors and Awards Program. Carol King our Honors and Awards Chairman has another fun and exciting afternoon planned, but if you don't apply for the awards, what can we celebrate? Don't let her or yourselves down, apply, apply, apply.

While we are thinking about Convention, I want to ask that you get your Americanism Vests made, too. Even though I goofed and missed asking for approval of the vest contest at the Post Convention NEC, it was approved at the Spring NEC, so get your thinking caps on and your fingers and sewing machines going as there is still time to make a vest to bring with you to New Orleans.

I thank each of you for allowing me to have served as Americanism Officer and look forward to seeing many of you soon.

**SYLVIA ROWLAND
NATIONAL VAVS REPRESENTATIVE**

At this time of year VA Medical Centers are preparing for their Volunteer Recognition Banquet. It's a special time to recognize volunteers for their years of service. Volunteers are treated to a luncheon or dinner and presented pins and certificates for hours served. My congratulations to all AMVETS Ladies Auxiliary Volunteers who are receiving awards; thank you for your dedicated service to the hospitalized veteran.

April 19-25 is National Volunteer Week

This would be a good time to share a special event at your VA with friends who might like to join the Volunteer program.

MAY -- NATIONAL VAVS ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

The 63rd VAVS National Advisory Committee Meeting will be held in Houston, Texas May 20-22, 2009. If you plan to go and have not made your reservations, please contact your Chief of Voluntary Service at your VAMC and she/he will be glad to supply the necessary information. I also have the itinerary and hotel information; you may also contact me by email srowland5@nc.rr.com and I will be happy to forward. At the Parke Luncheon I will be presenting the contributions to the Parke Youth Scholarship on your behalf for last year's contributions.

VAVS Award -- James H. Parke Youth Scholarship Fund

An award is given to both the Local and the Department making the largest contribution to the Parke Fund based on National Auxiliary records as of May 31st.

James H. Parke Memorial Youth Memorial Scholarship General Information

James H. Parke was the first Director of Voluntary Service and the founding father of the Department of Veteran Affairs Voluntary Service (VAVS) National Advisory Committee (NAC). The James H. Parke Memorial Fund, comprised of VAVS NAC member organizations, was established in 1976 to serve as the non-profit source of funds for a VAVS Youth Scholarship. Organizations, volunteers, VA staff and others continue to contribute to the Fund. The Board of Directors of the Fund annually establishes (in the early spring) the amount of the primary award and any secondary scholarships. The Fund communicates such and provides a nomination from to the Director, Voluntary Service Office for distribution to Voluntary Service field staff. The scholarships may be used for tuitions and fees, books and supplies and/or room and board or other educational needs purchased through the school of the students' choice. Scholarship winners must use their

awards by their 24th birthday. All winners receive detailed guidance concerning scholarship utilization from the Treasurer of the Fund.

Nominations -- Each Medical Center may nominate one VAVS student volunteer for receipt of the award. Recommendations may be made by any VA staff member who acts as a supervisor of the student volunteer or member of the local VAVS Committee. This recommendation should be discussed with the Chief, Voluntary Service, before submission to the Medical Center Director. To be eligible, candidates must have completed 100 hours of regularly scheduled VAVS volunteer service during the calendar year prior to September 1; be a student in the 10th grade or above; and have not reached their 19th birthday. The Medical Center Director nominates a candidate for the award by submission of the nomination form to the President of the Fund by November 1. Nominations received after that date will not be considered. The nomination from should be completed to reflect the volunteer service and background of the candidate and include: Age, years of volunteering, number of volunteer hours, areas of service, and affiliated/supporting organizations, if any.

Criteria on which candidates are evaluated for consideration of awards include:

- Scholastic Activity
- Dependability
- Fulfillment and acceptance of responsibility
- Personality and pleasantness to patients and staff
- Leadership capability
- Inspiration to patients through service performed
- Appearance

The National Winner received a plaque and a letter commitment. This presentation is made at the Annual Meeting of the VAVS National Advisory Committee.

INFORMATION ON PARKE SCHOLARSHIP FROM DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS WED SITE

AMVETS LADIES AUXILIARY PARKE SCHOLARSHIP DONATIONS 2008 – 2009

NY-11	\$70.00	June 2008
NY-726	\$125.00	June 2008
Wisconsin	\$60.00	July 2008
New York	\$50.00	Sept 2008
IL-13	\$50.00	Sept. 2008
LA-7	\$25.00	Nov. 2008
LA-2004	\$25.00	Nov. 2008
Michigan	\$25.00	Nov. 2008
MI-126	\$100.00	Nov. 2008
Indiana	\$150.00	Jan. 2009
IL-4	\$25.00	Feb. 2009
PA-50	\$50.00	Feb. 2009
TN-7	\$50.00	Feb. 2009

Our donations to date TOTAL \$805.00. All of us know the importance of education, so please set aside a donation for the Parke Scholarship. This is also a good time to plan and encourage your youth volunteers to check the summer volunteer program at your VA Medical Center. Usually sign up and orientation begins shortly after school is out for the summer. A summer youth volunteer program is an excellent way for kids to learn responsibility, respect for others and the importance of volunteering.

**DOTTIE WUSTROW
NATIONAL HOSPITAL CHAIRMAN**

Everything appears to be going well with our service at the VA Hospitals and nursing facilities. I hope you have been keeping up to date, reading the newspapers, and listening to various Congressional hearings that pertain to our Veterans. It appears that the increase in unemployment of our returning combat Veterans has risen to above 11%, well above the National average. This is an issue that we should all be aware of.

Another issue is having more VA Medical facilities set up to help put those Veterans requiring ongoing services within a reasonable distance. In Texas, there was a demonstration regarding travel time to the VAMC's. Our servicemen and women deserve to have the opportunities afforded them through Veterans Affairs Programs.

I do hope that our Local Auxiliaries are planning a "Yard Sale for Hope", the fundraiser that our National Program for Hospital asked us to sponsor. No matter how big or small this project is, every little bit of help is important to these patients.

Don't forget National President Charlene's pet project, "Fischer House." These homes, located on or near VA Medical Centers, afford our Veterans and their families a home like setting while the Veteran is awaiting treatment.

Thank you all for everything that you have done and are doing for our Veterans, their families, and our very special friends at St. Jude's.

**EVELYN MCELVIN
NATIONAL JR. AMVETS COORDINATOR**

It's almost time for another National Convention, remember to send in your Service reports and apply for those awards. New Orleans here we come !

By the time you read this National Lines article, you would have already sent in your dues for the year 2009.

You would have already sent in your Mid-year Reports, with copies going to your National Junior AMVETS President Trevor Speigle, National Junior AMVETS Junior Vice President Justin Sheldon and a copy is to be sent to the National Auxiliary Junior AMVETS Coordinator.

Mid-Year report includes the months of June 1 through December 30 and Postmarked by December 31st.

Final Report includes the months of June 1 through May 31st and Postmarked by June 15th.

Please look for **the National Junior AMVETS Foot Connection News letter**. This newsletter will have all the information you will need for your National Convention and National Junior AMVETS awards.

Please look for this Convention newsletter in early May.

Please share this information with all your Junior AMVETS Posts. If I can be of any assistance, please don't hesitate to contact me. I look forward to seeing you at the National Convention in August. Below are the contacts you will be sending some of your Junior AMVETS paperwork to.

Trevor Speigle
Junior President
543 Perry St.
Salem, OH 44460

***Copies of Service Reports/Copies of Change of Officers Form**

Tacordon Riggins
Junior Sr. Vice President
3851 Kitty Hawk Ave.
Orlando, FL 32808

***Copies of D&R Forms**

Justin Sheldon
Junior Vice President
7755 Sunydale Ct.
Ft. Worth, TX 76137

***Copies of Service Reports**

Evelyn McElvin
National Auxiliary Coordinator
4332 Princehall Blvd.
Orlando, Florida 32811

**All Membership paperwork & checks
Also copies of Service Reports**

Cleve Geer
National AMVETS Coordinator
6190 Shadow Wood Ct
Orlando, Florida 32808

LINDA MCGRUFF
NATIONAL CHAPLAIN

Blessings to all....Are you ready for Spring? It's already "sprung" here in Texas. It's coming close to the end of the year for our Auxiliaries. We are all busy with year-end reports, upcoming Conventions and general wrap up to your year of service. It's been an honor working with the Department Chaplains this year. You have all worked hard and I appreciate your reporting to me. I sincerely hope you have enjoyed your year and if you should consider running again as Chaplain you will twice blessed! I know I have been blessed this year as your

National Chaplain and am looking forward to continuing next year if you will allow me.

I pray all that you do and will be doing is successful and fulfilling. Continue to keep the leaders of this great Nation and all our service member's current and past in your daily prayers.

"Let us not get tired of doing what is right, for after a while we will reap a harvest of blessings if we don't get discouraged and give up"
Galatians 6:9

||| I WOULD LIKE TO THANK MY AMVET FAMILY FOR ALL YOUR KIND THOUGHTS AND
||| CONCERNS. THE BEAUFUL FLOWERS AND ALL THE CARDS FROM ACROSS THE
||| COUNTRY BRIGHTEN EACH DAY. THANKS AGAIN AND GOD BLESS
||| LOVE
||| PNP JAN HAPNER

YOU

HAVE

NOW

CROSSED OVER INTO.....

THE MARDI GRAS ZONE

YOU ARE TRAVELING THROUGH ANOTHER DIMENSION, A DIMENSION NOT ONLY OF SIGHT AND SOUND BUT OF MIND. A JOURNEY INTO A WONDROUS LAND OF IMAGINATION. NEXT STOP, THE MARDI GRAS ZONE!

WEAR YOUR SEQUINS AND FEATHERS AND JOIN US AS WE FETE OUR VERY OWN KREWE QUEEN CHARLENE! THE FESTIVITIES BEGIN ON FRIDAY, AUGUST 14, 2009 AT 1:30 P.M.



**"LAISSEZ LES BON TEMPS ROULET"
LET THE GOOD TIMES ROLL!**