



**MILITARY ORDER OF THE COOTIE  
SUPREME VAVS PROGRAM**

**Tom Sutterfield – Supreme VAVS Rep**

**VAVS National Advisory Committee Conference**



**May 26, 27, 28, 2021**

Walt Smith and I spent Wednesday, Thursday & Friday attending the VA's National Advisory Committee conference. We were proud to represent the MOC as voting members of the council. The VFW and MOC were acknowledged as part of the 1<sup>st</sup> groups to be part of the VAVS 75 years ago. We have always helped in any way we can.

The conference topics revolved around VAVS and the support provided by the many organizations that provide voluntary support to the VA system and its patients. Our visits to the hospitals are an integral part of this.

When asked when we can resume visiting the hospitals, the Director stated that they currently expect we will be able to do this mid-summer. I hope that means July or August. We have waited a long time and are looking forward to resuming our visits!

**Some of the suggestions that were made to the VA were:**

- Establish a standard listing of items needed by the Hospitals/Clinics. Each item on the list should have a suggested value range (similar to how the Salvation handles donations). Today the donated item value credited to us varies greatly at each VA location.
- Volunteer drivers will be subjected to a much more rigorous qualification. In addition to licensing and background checks, volunteer drivers will be entered into the VA's Drug Free Program and require periodic testing.
- Establish a new VAVS role to allow VAVS volunteers to help less tech-savvy veterans learn how to enroll and use the VA web based systems such as learning how to order meds, how to send messages to their doctor, .etc.
- The VA needs to add the volunteer's name to the database when reporting. Current reports show the facility and the Volunteer organization's total hours, but not the person.
- The local VA facilities should promote social gatherings of the Volunteer organizations that help at their facility. This might be a conference, banquet or any number of gatherings.