

MESSAGE FROM THE SC STATE COUNCIL PRESIDENT

Vietnam Vets of South Carolina

Am writing this as I am waiting to find out status of two VA Claims at an American Legion and SC Sec of Veterans Affairs' hosted Veterans Experience Action Center (VEAC). Am looking to see status of an appeal of a hearing denial for alleged lack of military connection and to determine what is happening to a recent disability claim in process. VEAC started in North Carolina few years ago and our SC American Legion followed suit with programs throughout the state. It is designed for vets to talk in person to VA officials who are handling or overseeing claims. In some cases vets can file and have the entire matter resolved during the day. I got here early 7:30 on Saturday, March 22d. It is last day of the Columbia area event. Vets from all over SC and the geographic area attend. I saw a guy from Atlanta who drove over just for this. We mentioned this at our last state council meeting and had flyers for the program.

UPDATE. Am writing this after attending VEAC . Wait was reasonable with VA visit by zoom in cubicle with earphones and microphone for my use. Reese, the VA rep answered all questions and said my rating would be forthcoming within the week. It was! Got it on Tuesday just after. A well worthwhile visit. Thanks to SC American Legion and SC Secretary of Vet Affairs, Todd McCaffrey, who was there, for doing this. I understand maybe 1,000 vets participated during the three-day event.

We already are working on our National convention in August. Each chapter must be up to date with its reporting requirements to send delegates to the New Orleans event. Candidates for national office are required to declare by the end of March or go through a complicated process at the convention. Also, proposals for resolutions or constitutional amendments must be in by the end of March. We have three proposals for constitutional amendments submitted. One is to clarify the application of Robert's Rules. The other two relate to annual filing requirements—the election and financial reports. Proposal is to remove those requirements and the constitutional draconian effects of failure as unnecessary.

Each chapter can have delegates dependent on the chapter size. Pretty much one for each 50 members. We also may have some extras if a chapter does not use its allocation. Check with me if such is the case. I already understand at least one extra will be needed. The state council will look at financial assistance for convention attendance in our June state council meeting. We have limited funds and chapters have first responsibility to assist.

Chapter Presidents, Secretaries, and Treasurers please get your financial and election reports out soonest. If on a two-year election cycle and no election required this year, send in a copy of last year's report with note election not needed this year. Do not delay. Be sure to email all reports. DO NOT mail. National is on a mission to weed out chapters that are weak and unresponsive. No continuances as in past years. In SC we are strong and have been 90% on time in the recent past. We need to be 100% and early. Please at least by June 1st.

The convention is in New Orleans from 5-9 August at the Marriott Hotel, 555 Canal Street. It is an important convention as the delegates will determine the future of the VVA. There is a strong push to have specific dates for dissolution or whatever the closure is being called with the whittling down of our National programs and affiliations. Already National has shredded some veteran service

programs and is looking to cut down board size and other programs. For the near term it is going to continue profit sharing with chapters and state councils. Some funds may be forthcoming in April. Each chapter and our council need to start looking at its plans for the future to include fund raising for support if it has not done so already. Jay Reynolds our Treasurer is already working this. Our Secretary, Zeke Cervantez, has done a great job for Chapter 303 in this area. Our state council meeting on June 8 will look at our future. In the meantime state council Regional 3 presidents will meet and National will have a Special Board meeting at its April meeting to look at all this.

Very respectfully
Sam Brick,
SC VVA State Council Presidents.

