

AMVETS PUBLIC RELATIONS MANUAL

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AMVETS Post 89

Citrus Springs, FL

The importance of Public Relations

-Your post may have 500 members, maybe 15 of those members were at the Post event or meeting, the other 485 members that were not at the meeting or event don't know what your post did. If they don't know that the post is doing things, it gives the impression nothing is going on.

How would veterans know you are working for them and find your post, if no information about your post is available?

The public knows of the VFW and American Legion. Inform them about AMVETS.

Every member represents AMVETS and your post to the public.

Community Update

After the post's election of officers each year or post moves to a new location or changes its meeting time, send the new information to the Chamber of Commerce, Sheriff's Office Welcome Wagon and your local government office. The old contact information or no information that you exist as a post results in either they never heard of you or they don't know how to contact your post.

AMVETS POSTERS

Posters about AMVETS are available at the state office which are great for your events and meeting sites. Order them early and don't let them sit in the car.

AMVETS NAME

The AMVETS name should be all capital letters.

The Media and your Amvets

Whether it is the daily paper, radio, TV, cable, or weekly papers, their reporting staff is very limited. We therefore have to inform them of post meetings times and places.

The post activities need to be reported in a timely manner and can be copied directly to the newspapers computer or read as a radio or TV script.

Check your spelling especially names and grammar, badly written items will need editing, which the media may not have time for and discard the article.

Every submission must include the name of the post contact person(s), their phone number and or email address, the media may need to clarify something written or verify you are the right person to write about your post. A contact person needs to be available during the day. Most work places frown on personal calls.

Every article must include Post name, number, location, event description, when event/ meeting happens and why.

Most types of media require articles submitted 10 to 14 days prior to the date of a planned event or meeting date.

FOCUS ON ITEMS OF INTEREST

Keep your articles focused on post issues that the public would be interested in reading. Someone may have read a great American poem or the post enjoyed a great dessert someone brought in. Due to available print space or radio/ TV time available those portions may be cut out.

NEVER include negative items, a poor turn out for an event or a heated discussion casts a bad light on the post.

No one is interested in your dirty laundry, it hurts the image of the post and serves no public good.

BROCHURES, POSTERS, MEMBERSHIP APPLICATIONS ETC

All AMVETS publications serve to inform the public or recruit members. These publications need to include the name and location of the post, meeting times and dates should also be added and the name of the post contact person their phone number and email address, and Post mailing address.

Please attach a post contact label to everything you are prepared to give out now, don't wait until five minutes before the event as you won't find them.

We recommend every AMVETS carry in their car a couple AMVETS brochures and Application forms. You can't inform and recruit if you don't have the tools with you. Brochures and posters are available through the state department office.

Seize the Opportunity to promote AMVETS

Community Involvement

Communities have days to promote their town tell them you post would like to participate. Pull together The post 's American flag, post AMVETS flag, AMVETS Brochures, member application blanks and Auxiliary, Youth or AMVETS Riders applications for your booth. Florida AMVETS state and/ or district officers may come to support your effort if they are asked as soon after you know times and location. Plan to arrive early to setup, other vendors often stroll around to check out other booths. Do not try to market other stuff as it distracts from your purpose. If the head of the event learns you are not trying to sell things, you might get a free space.

Flea markets also may provide free space on national holidays.

Parades

Plan to enter either an honor guard and/or a float to enter in local parades. Be sure the post name is visible from both sides of the float. Have a banner in front and leave at least two car lengths between your post and the unit in front of you to ensure your post parade entry is clearly seen. Look sharp when stepping off.

Cruise Ships

Six cruise ships I was on listed a military gathering and two other cruise ships had not included a time for military gathering in their agenda. Only one ship's gathering had a ship person present, and no one was ready to lead the meeting.

None of the members of the military at any gatherings had heard of AMVETS!!

Only once the American flag was available.

Guest relations desk will help you get the meeting on the agenda, Contact the desk on the first day, they will usually list the meeting and list you as a contact.

Pack a desk American flag to start the meeting off and Amvet brochures to have available. Bring your uniform or AMVETS polo shirt, its visible PR.

A great way to start the meeting is with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ask for a moment of silence for POW/MIAS who are not able to be there.

Open the meeting by asking everyone present to take a minute to tell about them and their military life going around the room ending with you. Tell them the room is only available for a short time and everyone should have an equal chance to speak.

Be sure to include everyone, the woman sitting there she may be a veteran, the wife or mother of a veteran.

Thank everyone for their service to our country.

Thank veterans families for supporting their veteran's service .

Give a brief story of your service and AMVETS. Let them know how to find Amvets.org on line and show them where brochures are located in the room.

Thank them for coming to the meeting. Allow time after the meeting to answer questions.

PUBLICITY CONTACT LIST

Call or visit your daily paper to determine who should receive your information. Our paper has one person for calendar of events posting of your meeting notices, another person for major events and a third person for the Sunday veterans page.

DAILY PAPER _____

Contact person _____ Phone number (____) - ____ - _____

Email address _____ Submission deadline _____

WEEKLY PUBLICATIONS _____

Contact person _____ Phone number (____) - ____ - _____

Email address _____ Submission deadline _____

TV STATIONS _____

Contact person _____ Phone number (____) - ____ - _____

Email address _____ Submission deadline _____

RADIO STATIONS _____

Contact person _____ Phone number (____) - ____ - _____

VFW POST _____ Commander _____

Email Address _____ Phone number (____) - ____ - ____

AMERICAN LEGION _____ Commander _____

Email Address _____ Phone number (____) - ____ - ____

LOCAL VA OFFICE _____ Contact person _____

Email Address _____ Phone Number (____) - ____ - ____

National Guard or Military BASE _____ Contact person _____

Email Address _____ Phone number (____) - ____ - ____

Sample post meeting notice

Harry M Bailey AMVETS Post 89 meets 6:30 PM the third Monday of every month at the VFW Post hall located on Citrus Springs Blvd in Citrus Springs, Fl. All veterans with an honorable discharge from the military are welcome to become members. The next meeting is month/day. For more information, contact Floyd Blodgett 352-220-3339 Thank you for your service.

Last but not least

Cut newspaper articles for display in a post album which will show visitors and potential member you are an active post.

Send letters of thanks from the Commander or PR person to the media thanking them for their help in getting the AMVETS message out.

Invite leaders of other military organizations ROTC units and Young Marines to your post events, we are all serving veterans.

Invite your Auxiliary, Riders , Sad sack unit and Youth group to events and keep the informed. They are a key to your success as a post.

After your elections the post should hold a installation dinner, invite families to attend also local personalities.

Phone calls

Many of us avoid calls from unknown phone numbers (robo calls or salesman), An unknown phone could be a veteran calling looking for information or help. All of our phone systems have a set up to give a personal message to answer an incoming call. I do not give out my name, they should already know that, I do let them know they have also reached AMVETS post 89, please leave their name and message, if they want me to get back to them.

