

KWVA Bylaws Committee Project For 2009

■ Revision of KWVA Standard Procedure Manual and KWVA Bylaws

Review

In *The Graybeards* (November-December 2008, Page 13), we announced the kickoff of a project the KWVA Board of Directors approved at the Norfolk meeting in October 2008, which was to revise both the Bylaws and the Standard Procedure Manual (SPM), the process intended to correct errors and omissions, and furnish the membership with rules and procedures that are more inclusive. The result will be a pair of documents that are in harmony, and that meet in full the current needs of the Korean War Veterans Association, Incorporated.

It should be repeated that to be considered are our obligations to meet the compliance requirements to the new Federal Charter, Public Law 110-254 (S.1692), granted on June 30, 2008 to the Korean War Veterans Association, Incorporated.

Central to the Project was our request the for the entire KWVA membership to have the opportunity to participate in the process, by providing their input if they wish to do so. All Regular KWVA members in "good standing," i.e., current in their dues, are eligible to participate.

The period for input was and is from December 1, 2008 through February 28th, 2009. Following that, the writing and review process by the Bylaws Committee will begin, with the subsequent review and approval process by the Board of Directors. Following that, it will be put before the Membership.

Please note that the KWVA Bylaws, the KWVA Standard Procedure Manual (SPM), and our Federal Charter are all available for review and/or download from the National website <http://www.kwva.org> at any time.

Status

On December 1st, the Project plan was posted on the KWVA, Inc. website. Shortly after December 1st, inputs began to arrive in both my email box george@lawhon.org and the email box bylaws@kwva.org, the latter of which was set up specifically for the Project by our KWVA Webmaster, Jim Doppelhammer. Some were from KWVA National officers, but since that time submittals from Chapter and Department members have begun. That is encouraging. Hopefully, the rate of contributions will increase.

All the National officers and functional folks (database management, membership, etc) have been urged to do a thorough review of their procedures and the enabling bylaws, and to speak up as to what their feelings are regarding revision and change. Whether you are a Chapter member or a Member-at-large, your Voice Is Important.

Issues

Among the issues raised in the emails so far, there are two very important ones, both involving membership. You are encouraged to add your voice on them, if you choose.

Membership Eligibility

In the KWVA, Inc. original state charter, filed on June 25, 1985 in the

State of New York, the wording regarding eligibility was:

"...1. The purposes for which the corporation is formed are as follows:

To organize, promote and maintain for benevolent and charitable purposes an association of persons who have seen honorable service during the Korean War at any time between June 25, 1950 and January 31, 1955, both dates inclusive, and of certain other persons, the particular qualifications for membership to be set forth in the Bylaws of the Korean War Veterans Association. ..."

The last two clauses give the organization the flexibility to first define, and later alter, the qualifications expressed in the Bylaws, including the dates of eligibility. Bylaws amendments have been approved since 1992, but as of October 2005, dates of eligibility had not been changed, although some wording was changed on inclusiveness.

The present wording in KWVA Bylaws Article I, Section 1.A is:

1. Service in the United States Armed Forces. Any person who has seen honorable service in any of the Armed Forces of the United States, defined as Army, Navy, Marines, Air Force and Coast Guard, said service being within Korea including territorial waters and air-space OR who served outside of Korea (June 25, 1950 – January 31, 1955) is eligible for membership.

The present wording in KWVA Standard Procedure Addendum M-3 is:

1. Service in the United States Armed Forces. Any person who has seen honorable service in any of the Armed Forces of the United States, defined as Army, Navy, Marines, Air Force and Coast Guard is eligible for membership if:
a. Said service was within Korea including territorial waters and air-space at any time September 3, 1945 to Present, or
b. Said service was outside of Korea June 25, 1950 to January 31, 1955.

While the meaning of the text in both the Bylaw and SPM is identical, the SPM is more specific, in that it includes '...September 3, 1945 to Present' to be precisely specific, the result being useful clarity. Anyone who objects to the term 'Present,' which is used in this case as an adjective, can recommend a better word, otherwise it should stand.

We are still in a state of war with North Korea. More than 1,200 service personnel have lost their lives since the Armistice, and we have service men and women in harm's way as you read this. Moreover, in the recruiting process, it should be stressed that the recent veteran is no less eligible and welcome than any who served at any time during the period June 25, 1950 – January 31, 1955. It applies even more so, considering it will be they who survive to carry on what Bill Norris and a few good men began.

Membership Dues

Who pays? That is the issue. We are told that there are many departments that have officers and chapters that have officers and members who do not pay National dues. Indeed, we have had Departments which have instructed their chapters that their members are not required to pay National dues, either. Various reasons have

been given, most of them assumptions that departments and chapters were separate from the National if they chose to be. This was promoted and supported by some recruiting folk, and past administrations chose not to enforce the rule that everyone pays, fearing that to do so would result in the break-up of chapters long established, and with 'members' who had never paid, although it was clearly not fair to those who have no choice but to pay, such as At-Large members.

It came to a head on October 5th, 2005, when a compromise was implemented by the Board of Directors, which put in a requirement, Article V, Section II:

'... Initially a Chapter shall consist of not less than twelve (12) National Regular Members in good standing who wish to form a Chapter in their area. Effective October 5, 2005 each person who becomes a new Regular member of a Chapter must first become a National Korean War Veterans Association, Inc. Regular member, and must maintain National Regular membership to remain a member of a Chapter. When a KWVA Department within a State has been formed, Chapters are considered to be a unit under the Department and will cooperate as a unit of the Department.'

That has been interpreted and used by some to mean that if your chapter was formed before October 5, 2005, chapter members need not pay dues to National. As for the requirement for payment of dues:

The present wording in KWVA Bylaws Article I, Section 3 is:

A. Amount of Dues. Payment of dues is a condition of initial and/or continuing National Membership. Dues required are published on the approved Application Form for each category of membership. Medal of Honor, POW, Gold Star Parents and Gold Star Spouses are granted Life Membership with no payment, however they may pay dues if they so desire. The Board of Directors may, with the prior approval of the membership, adjust the dues.

B. Payment of Dues. National dues shall be sent to the Membership Office listed on the Official Application Form, and collected by the National Treasurer. All dues shall be due and payable on the day before their Anniversary date recorded by the Membership Administrative Assistant, at the time of their initial application payment. Life Membership may be paid in a lump sum or in six (6) equal payments over a twelve (12) month period. All dues collected by any Regular Member, Chapter or Department shall also be sent to the Membership Office.

The present wording in KWVA Standard Procedure Addendum M-3 is:

1. Service in the United States Armed Forces. Any person who has seen honorable service in any of the Armed Forces of the United States, defined as Army, Navy, Marines, Air Force and Coast Guard is eligible for membership if:
 a. Said service was within Korea including territorial waters and airspace at any time September 3, 1945 to Present, or
 b. Said service was outside of Korea June 25, 1950 to January 31, 1955.

Please note that, as reported in the November/December issue of *The Graybeards*, Jake Feaster, Supervisor of the KWVA Data Management System, reports that we have 9,848 Active Regular Chapter Members and 4,326 Inactive Regular Chapter Members for a total of 14,174 KWVA members that have been reported as being in chapters [This does not account for the many "so-called" KWVA

members that are in chapters who have NEVER joined KWVA!]. As for those that do not pay National dues, chapters report 'inactive members.' They do not necessarily report those who attend, but are recognized by the chapter as members.

If the above is true, then Members At Large are at a disadvantage. There is no way they are competing on an even playing field in the payment of dues when, for one reason or another, individuals, chapters and departments do not comply with the Bylaws and Standard Procedure Manual requirement to pay National dues. On the other hand, there are members who believe that forcing chapters to comply with an 'all must pay' rule would destroy chapters who have members that for many years have performed good works for the organization, albeit while not paying National dues, a primary requisite for being a chapter or department member.

Consider this: One of the ongoing goals of the KWVA is to increase our membership. If you are recruiting service members who served, say in the last five years, how do you answer the question of fairness, where if they join, they will not enjoy the privilege that some chapter and department members have assumed, to not pay dues? It is reasonable to say that if you belong to any element of the KWVA; At Large, Chapter or Department, you pay.

Aside from the question of fairness, what value accrues to our organization when some pay and some do not?

So, which shall it be? Do we let those who have been in chapters for many years and have not paid dues to National continue to do so, in fear that they will 'quit' the KWVA? Or, do we set a date certain for all, such as January 1st, 2010, to enforce Article I, Section 3. A, "... Payment of dues is a condition of initial and/or continuing National Membership."

If it is the latter, do we enforce it by withdrawal of a chapter's charter for non-compliance, or if not, how? If all else fails, there is shame, but considering the fraternal intent of the KWVA, it would be a shame to have to do so.

This brings us to a serious issue that underlies all of the above, and that is the relationship between KWVA National, and its subordinates, individuals, chapters, departments and chapters. The Bylaws are clear about National's authority:

The present wording in KWVA Bylaws, Article V, Section II, 1. Chapters is:

II. Chapters

Section 1. Organization. Initially a Chapter shall consist of not less than twelve (12) National Regular members in good standing who wish to form a Chapter in their area. Effective October 5, 2005 each person who becomes a new Regular member of a Chapter must first become a National Korean War Veterans Association, Inc. Regular member, and must maintain National Regular membership to remain a member of a Chapter. When a KWVA Department within a State has been formed, Chapters are considered to be a unit under the Department and will cooperate as a unit of the Department.

There have been, and are at present, individuals who ignore or oppose the above. Up to now the Board of Directors, as far as I can determine, has never taken steps to enforce the hierarchical policy it itself put in place, but perhaps it should.

In the rewrite of the Bylaws and SPM, we will try to give it more specificity and clarity. We are a full-fledged VSO now, with our fed-

eral charter, and we should behave accordingly, not just with words, but with our actions. We can begin with our collective and individual acknowledgement of the written policy and rules. This Project's intent is to support that, with your help. Your voice on this is important, key, and crucial. Please express your views on these issues by providing your input to bylaws@kwva.org or by USPS mail, to:

George Lawhon
KWVA Bylaws Committee Chairman
600 E. Weddell Drive #91
Sunnyvale, CA 94089-1731

Of particular interest are inputs from Department and Chapter officers—and most importantly, National officers.

This is the format to be followed for all submittals to the KWVA Bylaws Committee:

INSTRUCTIONS FOR KWVA BYLAWS & STANDARD PROCEDURE MANUAL CHANGES

CHANGE: This should be a description of the change you feel should be implemented.

If it is to an existing procedure or Bylaw, please be specific as to its number.

Be specific about text to be added or deleted.

If it is new, say so.

REASON: Why you think the change is necessary. Be as specific or as brief as required.

With fraternal respect to all,

George Lawhon, Director
Chairman, KWVA Bylaws Committee

Remember this?

We start a new feature with this issue. We will present a piece of history from the Korea War. You add anything you might remember about it. If you have any memories of this event, let us know. If not...at least we have a piece of history.

23 April 1953

Between 1430 and 1600 the island of Tee-do was under intense enemy fire from gun positions on Kalma Pando. Five United Nations enlisted personnel (one USMC and four KMC) were injured, one critically. When informed of the firing and the necessity to evacuate the injured personnel, COMDESDIV 282 designated USS Henderson (DD 785) to lay down heavy suppression fire while USS Owen (DD536), with a medical officer aboard, approached the island and took aboard the casualties. While engaged in this evolution Henderson and Owen were taken under fire by the enemy batteries, with most firing concentrated on Henderson. Several enemy salvos were fired at Owen and the small boat transporting the casualties. Owen withdrew from the harbor so that immediate surgery could be initiated. Twelve TF 77 aircraft arrived in response to a call for air support and strafed Kalma Pando. All firing ceased at 1730. The four HMC personnel, with minor wounds, were transferred to the island of Yo-do and the seriously injured U.S. Marine was transferred to Manchester upon completion of surgery. The destroyers escaped injury.

Membership Report

By Jeff Brodeur, Membership Chairman



KWVA Membership Report for 2008

Age and lack of recruiting post-war Korea veterans in past administrations are now catching up with the KWVA. In 2008, our membership actually went down. This is the first year KWVA membership has gone down since I became Membership Chairman in 2005.

At the end of 2008, we had 16,899 members overall. This figure is down from the 17,175 members we had in 2007. Overall membership was down 276 members. This figure is not bad, considering that we had 705 KWVA members pass on in 2008. This is up from the 644 deaths we incurred in 2007. Remember, these are the members we know about who passed away. I am sure there are others who nobody has reported.

We had 847 new members for the year 2008. This figure was also down from the 929 new members we had in 2007. This is an 82-member decrease for new members. We have taken aggressive steps to try to welcome not only new members, but post-war Korea veterans.

At last year's KWVA National Convention, the Membership Committee, through authorization of KWVA President Mac Swain, purchased 10,000 KWVA Flyers and 300 KWVA posters. Five thousand KWVA applications and 300 posters were given out to the KWVA members in attendance to distribute throughout the country. These flyers and posters have been hung in VA hospitals and VFW, Legion and Amvets Posts. Five thousand more of those flyers will be given out at the 2009 KWVA National Convention in Dallas.

The new members' dues brought in by these flyers have offset the cost of the flyers and posters already. Posters and flyers are also downloadable on our great website, www.kwva.org. We need to saturate the country with KWVA material. We need you, the membership, to recruit one member a year each. Just one new member each and we could double our membership.

There are millions of post-war Korea veterans out there. Some of these Korea veterans are your sons or daughters: please recruit them. We have a federal charter now; let's carry on the legacy of the Korean War through our membership.

*Jeff Brodeur
KWVA Membership Chairman*



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