

COMMUNITY SERVICE

No man is an island; no home survives within itself alone. Each of us draws, at sometime or another, from our outside surroundings.

As I place the written word on paper and you take time to read and remember, I have suddenly become a part of your life and you have become a part of mine. From this day on, even though we have not physically touched, for this brief moment, our lives have intermingled. Like fine paints on canvas we have become part of each other. Never again can we go separate ways as if this moment had never happened, for without meaning to, we have become involved.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this section is to offer basic guidelines to the units participating in Community Service. It does not restrict the units to participating in the programs mentioned here, for there are many such groups and local projects that are worthy of our time and effort. Let this section be a starting place for your activities to grow in Community Services. Keep an accurate record of time, number of members participating, and cash donations. Remember, it can be work done by one member or a combined effort of the whole unit in the name of the unit.

Community Service is involvement. It is knowing, caring and participating in our surrounding environment. It is being aware of life, and all the responsibilities it holds.

Often we are quick to shake our heads in disbelief at newspaper articles concerning people who witness crimes and vandalism, yet do nothing to assist, because we do not want to get involved. The fear is so deep-rooted that we do not even attempt to pick up a phone. As a result, we lock our doors,

refuse to walk the streets, and treat our local law enforcement agencies as our enemies. Could this be you or me? Are we so blind to think that by not caring about the things that go on about us, we will build a strong wall of safety and everything that we dislike or every cry for our help, will stay outside the wall and not affect our lives.

When working in Community Service, let us never forget that we are members of the Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary and our manner and willingness to participate should always be a credit and not a detriment to the name, which we so proudly bear. Becoming involved for the needs of others has a two-fold purpose. We will find it easier to be accepted and aided, when we in turn ask for aid for our organization.

LOOK AROUND! What is the need in your community? Because we are members of the Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary, our first commitment must be to the Disabled Veteran and family. Aid may be given in direct donations, such as food, clothing, and furniture; or it may be given indirectly. How many veterans and their families are helped through fund drives, Meals on Wheels, or work at your neighborhood school? Think about it. Get involved.

FAMILY SERVICE

Family service will include direct aid to families. This may be given in many ways. There may be veterans' families that due to a change in their financial status need assistance with mortgages, utility bills, food and prescriptions, etc. You can help by paying a utility bill, buying groceries, driving members of a family to the doctor or bank. A weekly telephone call or visit may lighten the burden. How about sitting with a veteran or children while mother runs errands?

PROFESSIONAL AND TRADE SERVICES

These services are also direct services to families. Your unit may have a qualified person who would volunteer to help a veteran and his family. Your unit may wish to pay for a doctor or dental bill. Any assistance you may render could be considered trade services such as barber, beautician, cobbler, tailor, plumber, repairman, etc. Professional skills will include doctor, nurse, optometrist, therapist, teacher, etc. **Those with professional skills cannot be compensated for their time in order to qualify for this program.**

GENERAL SERVICES

General services will include all organized activities in your community. There is no way to estimate how many people are aided in this group of services. Youth groups include Boy Scouts, Campfire Girls, 4-H, etc. Senior citizen groups and Meals-on-Wheels are worthy causes in all communities. Volunteer work on blood drives and donations of blood are included. Civil Defense volunteers work during floods, fires, power failures, drowning or other misfortunes. Contact your Civil Defense organization to get information. More and more schools are asking for community support. This may include office work, P.T.A., library volunteers, assistance in sporting events, etc. You name it, they can use you. **Under church work, please remember your attendance CANNOT BE COUNTED.** Churches need help in fund raising, such as rummage and bake sales. Teaching a Sunday school class and singing in the choir may also be counted. Cultural groups in your community could use your talents. If you have a talent for painting, gardening, music or other crafts, you can be helpful. How about anti-pollution and beautifying our community projects? What about some of the newer programs we are focusing our attention on? Teaching reading to children or adults, child abuse centers, abused wives and suicide centers. There

are half way houses for drug addicts and mental patients, along with the homeless. They all have come to the front in the past few years. Another would be involvement in the neighborhood watch patrols.

RECREATION AND ENTERTAINMENT

This area can bring many hours of cheer to individuals or families. Parties, entertainment, treats, and gifts may be included in this area. You may be able to obtain services of professional entertainers for your parties. How about seasonal parties for the children of the disabled veterans in your own group. For the adults, Grandparents' Day, Mother's Day and Father's Day can be days for a party. Are there forgotten grandparents, fathers and mothers in your own unit? Think about it - charity begins at home. Home could be someone in your chapter or unit.

SPECIAL COMMUNITY PROJECTS

Older Veterans Assistance Program, in 1985, this was created by the parent organization in response to the growing needs of aging veterans and their families. The number of veterans over the age of 65 continues to increase. The program is designed to help with everyday problems such as obtaining food, transportation, shelter, and clothing – things that most of us take for granted. Further information about this program can be obtained through the DAV.

Handicapped Parking is another area where the auxiliary can keep active by making sure that all parking areas are kept free for the handicapped and that there are spaces provided in their areas.

Other areas can include restoring historical markers, recreational clubs and libraries. Tutoring of illiterates can be a very rewarding project. There are special projects in every community. Do not worry about overlapping these projects. If they are

community service, include them where they seem fit.

Stress service to the DISABLED VETERAN AND FAMILY. There is a need to reach out and help. Do not limit your unit to only the projects listed above.

NETWORKING

Think about it! How often do you look forward to a call from a friend or acquaintance just keeping in touch? As a unit, every member could be that lifeline or part of the network of keeping in touch. It's a simple task really and it utilizes what our auxiliaries do best. The members of a unit would each be assigned a member of the unit as a buddy. This would probably be a member that is not active and never comes to meetings. It would be their responsibility to call the member, identify who they are, and state they are calling only to inform the member that even though the member does not attend meetings, they are important. Asking them to attend the meetings would not be part of the conversation. It would be made plain that you were just keeping in touch and would be calling on a regular basis to let them know they are important and to see if they may have needs that the unit could fulfill.

One of the results of this contact is that it will make the member who initiated the call feel better. It will make the member who received the call know that they are of some importance. It will possibly be the best research that this organization can obtain concerning the needs of our members and their families. It does not always have to be monetary needs that these members desire. Many people live alone and just a call on a regular basis can ease that loneliness and make them feel that if they should require assistance they have a telephone buddy they can contact. You may be told not to call again, and that is all right because you have made the effort. You may find out that

your conversations become quite lengthy and that your warm voice is welcome.

Where do you take the credit? Not all things we do should be with the thought of receiving credit: however, just list it on the report form under "Other" and explain.

TABLE OF VALUES

1. All cash donations must be checks issued by your Unit.
2. All other donations will go under Value of Donations.
3. Fund drive money must be checks issued by your Unit.
4. Coupons shall have 1/2 value stated on the coupon.

New clothing	Actual Cost
Used clothing	1/2 Original Cost
Food	Actual Cost
New furniture	Actual Cost
Used furniture	1/2 Original Cost
New linens, dishes, etc.	Actual Cost
Used linens, dishes, etc.	1/2 Original Cost
Personal items – (combs, soaps, cosmetics, etc.)	Actual Cost
Gifts	Actual Cost
Professional & Trade Services ...	Actual Cost
Layman services for above	1/2 Cost (member who is not certified, graduate, etc.)
Parties & entertainment	Actual Cost