MEMORIAL RIFLE SQUAD
FORT SNELLING NATIONAL CEMETERY

Mission

Constitution

By-Laws

Manual of Daily Operations

Updated 10 January 2026

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MEMORIAL RIFLE SQUAD
FORT SNELLING NATIONAL CEMETERY

MISSION:

The primary mission of the Memorial Rifle Squad is to provide a military ceremonial burial service at Fort Snelling national Cemetery for the family of an Honorably Discharged Veteran. There is no charge. The family or designated funeral director must request this service. Any unit of a veteran's organization wishing to participate may be assisted by the Memorial Rifle Squad.

Fort Snelling National Cemetery schedules Military Honors from 9:00 am to 2:00 pm, Monday through Friday. Funerals are scheduled up to four times in an hour. The Memorial Rifle Squad shall perform the military honors before any religious service or family remembrance.

The purpose of this document is to explain the Organization and Operations of the Memorial Rifle Squad.

MEMORIAL RIFLE SQUAD
FORT SNELLING NATIONAL CEMETERY
FORWARD
FORWARD

The purpose of this document is to inform, instruct, clarify, and strengthen your belief in, and dedication to, the Memorial Rifle Squad, Ft. Snelling National Cemetery as it pays final tribute to deceased Veterans.

On your Duty Day, you and your fellow Squad members, by your participation, illuminate the magnificent and traditional freedoms of Work, Worship, and Expression.

To those, to whom we bid a fond and final farewell, it is a privilege to recognize their service to Family, God, and Country, in defense of liberty, justice, human respect, and dignity.

Consequently, the annual review, and as necessary, the update, of the constitution and the By-Laws of the Memorial Rifle Squad are intended to build and adapt the organizational structure to insure that its mission is to perpetuated beyond the for seeable years of its present membership.
Respectfully submitted, (MRS Leadership)

Dick Middleton, Commander, 2025-2026
Ernie Denzer, Commander 2023-2024
R J Selden, Past Commander 2021-2022
Mike Pluta, Past Commander 2019- 2020
Dick Kelso, Vice Commander 2024-2027
Mike Rose, Monday Squad Leader
Dan Fisher, Tuesday Squad Leader and Past Commander
Ken Tibesar, Wednesday Squad Leader
Dave Fleming, Thursday Squad Leader
Jack Wallace, Friday Squad Leader and Trustee
Joe Starr, Trustee
Robert (Bob) Nelson, Trustee

Content current as of 10 January 2026

ARTICLES OF CORPORATION OF MEMORIAL RIFLE SQUAD

ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION entered into this 7th day of August A.D., 1982, by and between the undersigned subscribers, all citizens of the United States, who hereby associate themselves together as a body politic under the pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 317, Minnesota Statutes Annotated, known as the Minnesota Nonprofit Corporation Act, and they adopt the following proposed Charter.

ARTICLE I

The name of the corporation shall be the Memorial Rifle Squad.

ARTICLE II

(A) The purpose of this corporation shall be:

1. Fraternal, patriotic, historical and educational; to perpetuate the memory and history of our dead and promote, preserve any project or equipment relevant to the enrichment of providing Military Ritualistic Honors at Funerals held at Fort Snelling National Cemetery; to maintain true allegiance to the Government of the United States of America and fidelity to its Constitution and laws; to foster true patriotism and to maintain and extend the institutions of American Freedom.

2 To construct, hire, purchase, own, lease, operate, manage, maintain, acquire by gift or devise and to sell and dispose of all real and personal property necessary, incident or convenient to the conduct, business and purpose of this corporation.

3. To borrow money for corporate purposes and to make, accept, endorse, execute and issue promissory notes, bills of bonds, debentures or other obligations from time to time for the purchase of property or for any purpose in carrying out the aims and purposes of the corporation, and to secure payment of any such obligations by mortgage, pledge, assignment or deed of trust otherwise.

4. To acquire, hold, mortgage, pledge, buy, sell and dispose shares, bonds, notes, securities and other obligations and evidence of indebtedness of the United States Government and of states and municipalities of the United States and of Corporations organized in the states of the United States.

5. To enter into and perform contracts, arrangements with any persons, firm, company or association or with any government or public authority, national, state, local or otherwise, within the United States, in furtherance of the purposes of the corporation.

6. To acquire, hold, own, sell, exchange, apply for, control, use and dispose licenses, patents, copyrights and franchises.

7. To organize, establish, conduct, and maintain facilities and activities for the use and comfort of the veterans and their families.

(B) The foregoing clauses shall be construed both as objects and powers and the enumeration of specific purposes therein shall not be held to limit or restrict in any manor the powers of this corporation, and are in furtherance of and in addition to, and not in limitation of, the general powers conferred by the laws of the State of Minnesota; and each of the purposes, objects and powers specified in this article shall be regarded as independent purposes, objects and powers and shall in no

way be limited by reference to or inference from the terms of any other clause, paragraph or statement of this article.

ARTICLE Ill

This Corporation shall not afford pecuniary gain, incidentally or otherwise to its members.

ARTICLE IV

The period of duration of Corporation existence of this Corporation shall be perpetual.

ARTICLE V

The location of the registered office of this corporation in this state is in the City of Minneapolis, County of Hennepin.

ARTICLE VI

The active and voting membership of this corporation shall at all times consist of and be confined to the active membership in good standing of the Memorial Rifle Squad. To be eligible to become a member of the Memorial Rifle Squad, the person or persons must be a veteran with an honorable discharge from active military service or currently on active duty (Reserve or National Guard).

ARTICLE VII

In the event of a dissolution of this Corporation all of the assests shall be the property of Department of Veterans Affairs, State of Minnesota. At no time shall the assets of the Corporation be distributed among the individual members thereof.

ARTICLE VIII

The names and addresses of present persons who are to act as incorporators and in the capacity of principal officers until the selection of their successors are as follows:

NAME	ADDRESS	TITLE
Geo. J. Weiss Jr.	18834 Layton No. Marine MN 55047	Commander
Neville "Cap" Wagoner	Deleware #445. W. St Paul MN 55118	Commander Vice
Frank J. Demay	7121 4th Ave So. Minneapolis. MN 55423	Adjutant\&Quartermaster

SIGNATURE TITLE STATE OF MINNESOTA COUNTY OF Ramsey

ARTICLE IX

There shall be no personal liability of members for corporate obligations and there shall be no method of enforcement and collection of corporate obligations against the members.

ARTICLE X

This Corporation shall have no capital stocks.

ARTICLE XI

The right to repeal, alter or amend this Charter at any time is hereby expressly reserved but any alteration, modification or amendment made to said Charter shall be governed by the provisions of the Minnesota Non-profit Corporation Act. We, the undersigned, do hereby subscribe to the above Charter and Articles of Incorporation, not for profit:

SIGNATURE | TITLE

Geo. J. Weiss Jr. — Commander

Vice Commander

Adjutant-Quartermaster

STATE OF **MINNESOTA**

COUNTY OF Ramsey

On this 7th day of **August**, 19 82, before me, the undersigned, a Notary Public in and for the Said County and State, residing therein, duly commissioned and sworn, personally appeared

AJtJ&- Frank J. Weiss

to me known to be the persons described in and who executed the same as their free act and deed, for the uses and purposes therein express

John L. O'Neill, Jr.

Notary Public, Ramsey Cotmty, Minnesota.

My Commission expires May 20, 1982

Notarial Seal

to me known to be the persons described in and who executed the same as their free act and deed, for the uses and purposes therein express.

MEMORIAL RIFLE SQUAD, FORT SNELLING NATIONAL CEMETERY

CONSTITUTION

ARTICLE I – NAME

Section 1. The name of the organization shall be Memorial Rifle Squad, Fort Snelling National Cemetery.

ARTICLE II – OBJECTIVES

Section 1. Provides ceremonial burial services free of charge for an Honorably Discharged Veteran from the Armed Forces of the United States at Fort Snelling National Cemetery, if requested by the next of kin or funeral home.

Section 2. Hours of Service – 9:00 am to 2:00 pm. Hours may be expended to 2:15pm to meet the needs of Veteran's families.

ARTICLE III – MEMBERSHIP

Section 1.
This is a civilian organization and membership therein does not affect or increase credits or liability for military or police service.

Section 2. It represents all eligible Veterans and all Branches of the United States Armed Forces and performs ceremonial burial services at Fort Snelling National Cemetery.

ARTICLE IV – MEMBERSHIP ELIGIBILITY

Section 1. Becoming a Member

1. Becoming a member of the MRS and performing Cemetery Honors at Veteran Funerals is **BOTH a Right earned and a Privilege**. It is a Privilege that each MRS Member is responsible for maintaining.
2. This is a civilian organization and membership therein does not affect or increase liability or credits for military or police service.
3. It represents all eligible Veterans and all Branches of the Armed Forces and performs ceremonial burial services.
4. Membership in the Memorial Rifle Squad is a right open to any Veteran, Honorably Discharged from the Armed Forces of the United States, and who is also a member of a Veterans Service Organization.
5. Additionally, prospective members must submit to a VA background check. The results for this check will be shared with the MRS Squad Leader for the day the Veteran is volunteering to serve on. The Squad Leader will determine whether to recommend a Veteran for MRS Membership, or not.
    a. Each Squad will hold an election to receive a new member after the prospective member has completed three (3) ride-along duty days with that squad, and
    b. are recommended by their squad leader.

Section 2. Remaining a Member of the MRS is a Privilege

This Privilege is based on an individual's conduct at all times, not just while on duty with the MRS.

1. Conduct that interferes with the daily operations of the MRS, the National Cemetery, or that dishonors a Veteran or their family at an Honors service will lead to a review of a member's membership and possible dismissal from the MRS.
2. Conduct that may tarnish the reputation of the MRS while off-duty will lead to a review of a member's membership and possible dismissal from the MRS.

Conduct that will lead to an MRS member being subject to review includes but is not limited to;

1. Lack of attendance, absence without prior notification.
2. Alcohol/controlled substance abuse
3. Fighting, unruly conduct within the squad
4. Misuse, loss, stealing government property, i.e. rifles
5. Members must be physically and/or mentally capable of fulfilling their duties as an MRS volunteer
6. Conduct while a VA or VA CDCE Employee or Volunteer on Duty at another VA Facility, Hospital, Clinic, Cemetery or Event that results in termination or revocation of the MRS Volunteers VA employment or VA CDCE Volunteer privileges. Dual Volunteers (MRS Cemetery and elsewhere in the VA system) may by their conduct risk their status as volunteers in both areas.
7. General Conduct unbecoming an MRS member: e.g., wearing MRS uniform items to political events, offensive social media posts identifying/associating as an MRS member, criminal arrest, interfering with family members at funeral services, generally bringing discredit upon the MRS through activities outside MRS duties.

Section 3. ACTIONS to be taken by the Volunteer's Squad Leader based on that Squad leader's observations or at the request of another MRS member of any squad,

1. Not meeting attendance criteria. (42 or 45 weeks)
    a. Counsel first time by Squad Leader,
    b. Suspend member and recommend squad vote to remove for a second offense.
2. Alcohol/controlled substance abuse.
    a. Counsel first time by Squad Leader,
    b. Suspend member and recommend squad vote to remove for a second offense.
3. Fighting, unruly conduct.
    a. Counsel first time by Squad Leader,
    b. Suspend member and recommend squad vote to remove for a second offense.
4. Misuse, loss, stealing government property:
    a. Suspend member and refer to VA CDCE, VA police
5. General Conduct Unbecoming:
    a. Suspend member and refer to a council of Squad Leaders as a whole, with Vice Commander deciding vote to retain or dismiss the member.

Section 4. APPEAL PROCESS; After the Squad leader initiates the removal process:

1. The affected MRS member can appeal the removal recommendation to the following officers: Vice Commander who then confers with the Commander.
2. If the MRS member is not satisfied following the Commander's decision, the Commander will refer the matter to the VA Medical Center CDCE for referral to the Medical Center Director who will make the final decision.

3. If the matter is concluded prior to referral to the VA CDCE office, the Commander will ensure that the CDCE office is informed of the removal and the former MRS member as a VA non- compensated employee volunteer.
4. If an MRS member reports the conduct of another MRS member to the Commander: The Commander will appoint an investigating officer.
5. If that officer recommends removal, the Commander will refer the matter, with the exception of theft, misuse or loss of government property, to the squad leaders as a whole, with the Vice Commander being the deciding vote.
6. Matters involving theft, misuse or loss of government property, will be reported by the Commander to the VA CDCE and the VA Police.

See flowcharts on pages 28-29

ARTICLE V – OFFICERS

Section 1. (a) The Elected Officers of the Memorial Rifle Squad shall be; Commander, Vice Commander/Judge Advocate, Finance Officer, Quartermaster, (3) Three Trustees, Ordnance Officer.

(b). The appointed Officers of the Memorial Rifle Squad shall be; Adjutant, Historian, Officer of the Day, Chaplain, WEB Master, Recruiter and Medical Officer.

(c). Terms of Office are defined in the Organization's By-Laws

Section 2. Squad Leaders and Assistant Squad Leaders will be elected by their daily squads annually, in December.

Section 3. Each member of the Memorial Rifle Squad is eligible to hold office, provided he or she has been a member for one year and has completed two hundred (200) or more volunteer hours with the Memorial Rifle Squad.

Section 4. Elected Officers shall be nominated and elected during the annual meeting and immediately assume duties of the office.

4.1 A formal officer installation ceremony will be held annually in April.

4.2 The Commander of the day of election, or as soon thereafter as possible, shall appoint the Adjutant, Historian, Officer of the Day, Medical Officer, and such officers as may be required by vote of the membership.

ARTICLE VI – FINANCES

Section 1. All money from donations, services provided or the sale of equipment or merchandise, under the name or use of the name Memorial Rifle Squad, shall be transmitted promptly to the Finance Officer. The Finance Officer will deposit all funds, in the name of the Memorial Rifle Squad, in a Financial Institution approved by rifle Squad Officers.

ARTICLE VII – CHARTER & CO-FOUNDERS

Section 1. Charter Members are those who joined the Memorial Rifle Squad before January 23, 1980.

ARTICLE VIII – ADMENDMENTS

Section 1. By-Laws may be amended, or changed, at an annual meeting or special meeting.

a). Special meeting may be called at the request of two or more Squad Leaders.

b). The Commander may call a Special Meeting.

c). Special meeting date must be posted on bulletin board 15 days prior to the meeting.

Section 2. By-Law amendments, or changes, to be read and approved by two-thirds of Officers present at an Officers meeting to be convened prior to annual meeting.

a). Proposed By-Law amendments must be posted on bulletin board at least 15 days before Officers meeting.

[END OF PAGE]

MEMORIAL RIFLE SQUAD, FORT SNELLING NATIONAL CEMETERY

BY-LAWS

ARTICLE I - NAME

Section 1. These are the By-Laws of the Memorial Rifle Squad, Fort Snelling National Cemetery.

ARTICLE II – MANAGEMENT

Section1. The management of the organization shall be entrusted to the Officers, Squad Leaders, and their Assistants.

Section 2. The Squad Leader of each day shall have total command of their day's Squad activities.

ARTICLE III – DUTIES OF OFFICERS

Section 1. Duties of the Commander are to preside over all meetings of the Memorial Rifle Squad; to be the Chief Executive Officer; to approve all orders directing the disbursement of funds and to submit a report to be read at the annual meeting.

Section 2. Duties of the Vice Commander/Judge Advocate are; in the absence or disability of, or when called upon by the Commander, to assume and discharge his or her duties. Duties as Judge Advocate are to provide advice to the Memorial Rifle Squad Officers regarding contracts, protocol during official meetings and be familiar with "Roberts Rules of Order", and the "Articles of Corporation"' "Constitution", "By-Laws", and the Manual of Procedures of the Memorial Rifle Squad, Fort Snelling National Cemetery.

Section 3. Duties of the Adjutant are; to maintain and insure the confidentiality of membership registrations and demographics; and to record and preserve an accurate record of the minutes of all meetings. (This is an appointed position by the Commander).

Section 4. Duties of the Finance Officer are; to be responsible for all Squad finances; to deposit all funds promptly, in an approved financial institution; to sign all checks; to submit a quarterly report to the Trustees and the Commander and to purchase a personal surety bond.

Section 5. Duties of the Chaplain are; to provide the Memorial Rifle Squad with spiritual guidance and direction; and when requested, to tender non-denominational supplications for dedications, funerals, and public functions; to bring to the attention of all Memorial Rifle Squad members, the sickness or death of a member; and to dispatch a memorial to the family of the deceased; and with the approval of the Commander, appoint an Assistant Chaplain.

Section 6. Duties of the Historian are; to be responsible for maintaining the history of all events of the current year, to maintain a copy of all printed and electronic material concerning the Memorial

Rifle Squad and, upon retirement, to transfer all material to the appointed successor. (This will be an appointed position by the Commander).

Section 7. Duties of the Ordnance Officer are; to oversee and inspect all weapons annually; to verify, once each calendar quarter, that weapons are working and clean; to maintain a record of the make, model, and serial number of all weapons; to purchase weapon replacement parts as needed; to submit an invoice to the Finance Officer for prompt reimbursement; and with Commander's approval, appoint an Assistant to facilitate the completion of these duties.

Section 8. Duties of the Three Trustees are; to complete a quarterly audit of Financial accounts; and to report results at the Memorial Rifle Squad annual January meeting, and to count all ballots for the election of Officers at the Annual meeting.

Section 9. Duties of the Quartermaster are; to assure that each member of the Memorial Rifle Squad is supplied with a complete uniform; to maintain a record of all uniforms purchased; to buy reasonably priced quality uniforms; to initiate and enforce a purchase order system for the acquisition of uniforms; to supply adequate quantities of foul weather gear; to appropriately dispose of used brass; and with Commander's approval, appoint an Assistant to facilitate the completion of these duties.

Section 10. Duties of the Officer of the Day are; to perform such duties as may be of incident to the office. (This will be an appointed position by the Commander).

Section 11. Duties of the Chief Medical Officer are; to update the personal medical files of members of the Memorial Rifle Squad's daily Squads, to monitor the performance of the medical devices in the possession of the Memorial Rifle Squad And to update squad medical officers about health related issues that may be encountered while on duty at Fort Snelling National Cemetery. (This will be an appointed position by the Commander).

ARTICLE IV – MEETINGS

Section 1. Officers, Squad Leader, and their Assistants shall meet at least three times each year; one meeting to be held in the month of March, one meeting to be held in the month of June, and one meeting to be held in the month of September. Five members shall constitute a quorum.

Section 2. An annual meeting, called by the Commander, will be held on the first or second Saturday of January.

Section 3. The Commander shall call a special meeting upon written request of one third of the members of the Memorial Rifle Squad. Ten (10) members shall constitute a quorum.

Section 4. All Ballots for the annual election of officers will be cast in person. NO absentee ballots are permitted.

a.) Term of Office;
1. Officers elected by the membership shall serve a term of two (2) years. The term of office shall begin at the end of the annual meetings held in January and will continue until his/her successor has been elected.

An elected Officer (Commander and Vice Commander/Judge Advocate) shall NOT serve more than two (2) consecutive two-year terms.

2. The election of Officers in the odd years (for a 2-year term, starting in January 2019) shall be for;
   Commander
   Vice Commander
   Trustee – 3-year term
3. The election of Officers in the even years(for a 2-year term, starting in January 2020) shall be for;
   Finance Officer
   Ordinance Officer
   Quartermaster
   Trustee – 3-year term

4. Review of Officers; A review of the Officers shall be called by the Commander, Squad Leaders, or a quorum of 1/3 of the Memorial Rifle Squad membership, deemed necessary (or at any time of the year) for any Officer not performing his/her duties.

ARTICLE V – NOTICES

Section 1. Each member shall have his or her name, U.S. Postal address, email address, and telephone number written on a card and submitted to the Adjutant.

Section 2. The Adjutant shall notify the membership at least 15 days prior to the annual election of Officers to be held in January.

ARTICLE VI – RULES OF ORDER

Section 1. All meetings and proceedings shall be governed by the rules and By-Laws of the Memorial Rifle Squad and those incorporated in the most recent edition of "Roberts Rules of Order".

ARTICLE VII – AMENDENTS

Section 1. By-Laws may be amended or changed at an annual meeting, or at a special meeting called by the Commander, if Squad membership is notified by a posting on the MRS Squad Room bulletin board 15 days before the meeting.

ARTICLE VIII – MEMBERSHIP ELIGIBILITY

Section 1. Becoming a Member

a. Becoming a member of the MRS and performing Cemetery Honors at Veteran Funerals is **BOTH a Right earned and a Privilege**. It is a Privilege that each MRS Member is responsible for maintaining.
b. This is a civilian organization and membership therein does not affect or increase liability or credits for military or police service.
c. It represents all eligible Veterans and all Branches of the Armed Forces and performs ceremonial burial services.
d. Membership in the Memorial Rifle Squad is a right open to any Veteran, Honorably Discharged from the Armed Forces of the United States, and who is also a member of a Veterans Service Organization.

e. Additionally, prospective members must submit to a VA background check. The results for this check will be shared with the MRS Squad Leader for the day the Veteran is volunteering to serve on. The Squad Leader will determine whether to recommend a Veteran for MRS Membership, or not.
f. Each Squad will hold an election to receive a new member after the prospective member has completed three (3) ride-along duty days with that squad, and are recommended by their squad leader.

Section 2. Remaining a Member of the MRS is a Privilege

This Privilege is based on an individual's conduct at all times, not just while on duty with the MRS.

1. Conduct that interferes with the daily operations of the MRS, the National Cemetery, or that dishonors a Veteran or their family at an Honors service will lead to a review of a member's membership and possible dismissal from the MRS.

2. Conduct that may tarnish the reputation of the MRS while off-duty will lead to a review of a member's membership and possible dismissal from the MRS.

3. Conduct that will lead to an MRS member being subject to review includes but is not limited to;

1. Lack of attendance, absence without prior notification.
2. Alcohol/controlled substance abuse
3. Fighting, unruly conduct within the squad
4. Misuse, loss, stealing government property, i.e. rifles Members must be physically and/or mentally capable of fulfilling their duties as an MRS volunteer
5. Members must be physically and/or mentally capable of fulfilling their duties as an MRS volunteer
6. Conduct while a VA or VA CDCE Employee or Volunteer on Duty at another VA Facility, Hospital, Clinic, Cemetery or Event that results in termination or revocation of the MRS Volunteers VA employment or VA CDCE Volunteer privileges. Dual Volunteers (MRS Cemetery and elsewhere in the VA system) may by their conduct risk their status as volunteers in both areas.
7. General Conduct unbecoming an MRS member: e.g., wearing MRS uniform items to political events, offensive social media posts identifying/associating as an MRS member, criminal arrest, interfering with family members at funeral services, generally bringing discredit upon the MRS through activities outside MRS duties.

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   a. Counsel first time by Squad Leader,
   b. Suspend member and recommend squad vote to remove for a second offense.
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   a. Counsel first time by Squad Leader,
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4. Misuse, loss, stealing government property:

a. Suspend member and refer to VA CDCE, VA police

5. General Conduct Unbecoming:
   a. Suspend member and refer to a council of squad leaders as a whole, with Vice Commander deciding vote to retain or dismiss the member.

Section 4. APPEAL PROCESS; After the Squad leader initiates the removal process:

1. The affected MRS member can appeal the removal recommendation to the following officers: Vice Commander who then confers with the Commander.
2. If the MRS member is not satisfied following the Commander's decision, the Commander will refer the matter to the VA Medical Center CDCE for referral to the Medical Center Director who will make the final decision.
3. If the matter is concluded prior to referral to the VA CDCE office, the Commander will ensure that the CDCE office is informed of the removal and the former MRS member as a VA non- compensated employee volunteer.
4. If an MRS member reports the conduct of another MRS member to the Commander: The Commander will appoint an investigating officer.
5. If that officer recommends removal, the Commander will refer the matter, with the exception of theft, misuse or loss of government property, to the squad leaders as a whole, with the Vice Command being the deciding vote.
   a. Matters involving theft, misuse or loss of government property will be reported by the Commander to the VA CDCE and the VA Police.

See flowcharts on pages 28-29

ARTICLE IX – TRAINING

Section 1. All training is to conform to the Operations and Procedures Manual of the Memorial Rifle Squad.

ARTICLE X – CO-FOUNDERS & CHARTER MEMBERS CO-FOUNDERS

1. George Weiss
2. Lawrence Pluta
3. Frank DeMay
4. Bob Anderson
5. Jim Stewart
6. Joe Nicosia
7. Ray Frisvold
8. Glenn O'Malley

CHATER MEMBERS

9. Bill Weber
10. Dennis Christy
11. Dick Clancy
12. Tony Cuff
13. Carl Falkowski
14. Dean Hamre

15. Wally Herron
16. Lloyd Isaacson
17. Lloyd Jackson
18. Joe Jasper
19. Jim Lang
20. Al Schaeppi
21. Bob Swanson
22. Mel Schofield
23. Russel Green

These men joined the Memorial Rifle Squad on or before January 23, 1980 and are eligible as Charter Members as stated in the Memorial Rifle Squad Constitution, Article VII – Charter & Co-Founders.

ARTICLE X – Ordnance

Section 1. The Ordnance Officer shall oversee the use and care of MRS rifles. It is incumbent upon the MRS members using a rifle, as part of their regular duty day, to maintain the rifle and to report issues to their Squad Leader.

Section 2. MRS rifles are to be used only on FSNC grounds to fulfill the daily duties of the MRS according to its Constitution and Bylaws, and for special events hosted by the FSNC administration requesting participation of the MRS. An exception will be allowed for Memorial Day services held at the Fort Snelling Chapel and Vets Home. All other special events held off grounds will require the prior approval of the MRS leadership team.

Added 10 January 2026

MANUAL OF PROCEDURE

RECOMMENDED PROCEDURES

1.1. An ideal Squad for any given day should consist of the following *20* members

- A Color Guard with two chrome rifles and the following flags;
- U.S. Flag
- POW/MIA Flag (Nov. 8, 2019 – Federal Law)
- Flag of Branch of service of deceased
- Flags of other Branchs of the service
- Bugler(s),
- Two Flag Folders
- Rifle Squad with up to Seven Riflemen
- One Squad Leader
- Two parking directors (Squad Leader can be one of these)

1.2. This requires a minimum of nineteen (19/20) volunteers. If a Squad is short of volunteers, positions would be eliminated at the discretion of the Squad Leader.

If possible, there should never be less than eleven (11) members on the Squad on any given day. This count provides for at least five (5) riflemen.

1. The Squad leaves the squad room fifteen (15) minutes prior to the scheduled time of the funeral. The bus will be parked at the assigned location for each committal shelter.

2. Flag Folders take their positions at the entrance of the burial shelter.

3. Cars should be parked three abreast short of the committal shelter in as even columns as possible, to prevent cars not in the procession to attempt to drive through the ceremony. Avoid obstructing the rear door of the Squad bus, which would hinder loading and proceeding to the next funeral.

NOTE: The bugler may play the service song of the deceased while mourners are walking to the committal shelter, as a sign of respect for the deceased and to encourage the attendees to gather as quickly as possible.

NOTE: Since this is a military ceremony, religious hymns of any denomination should not be played during the ceremony, with the possible exception of the Navy Hymn if the deceased is a Navy veteran while the flag is being folded during a casket service.

4. Color Guard position is opposite the catafalque, the U.S. Flag is in direct line to the catafalque.
   **Rifles positions themselves in an area where it is visible to the mourners in the shelter, yet at a distance that the concussion from the rifle volleys will not be too disturbing to the mourners.

**Flag Folders advise the mourners of the sudden "Report" of the rifles and the need to safely protect the ears of youngsters.

Sample Announcement:

Welcome to Fort Snelling National Cemetery
Our Service today starts with three volleys from our rifles
They are quite loud. Please be sure that your ears are protected during the rifle volleys.
Make sure that any young people in the gathering have their ears protected.

The Fort Snelling Memorial Rifle Squad is made up of all Veterans and all Volunteers.
For any Veterans or active duty service people that are here today we invite you to salute whenever we salute.
All others, please place your right hand over your heart when we salute in honor of your family member, friend and our fellow veteran

5. **Color Guard Chrome Rifle men are to be alert to assure that no one passes between the Colors or between the Colors and the Rifles.

MILITARY HONORS PROCEDURE **When all the mourners are assembled at the shelter one of the flag Folders notifies the funeral director that the Military Honors may begin.

CREMATION: Flag Folders receive the flag and the remains container from the funeral director and position themselves between the colors and the Catafalque with the flag to the right of the remains. The Squad Leader then calls squad to “Attention”.

CASKET: As the casket is removed from hearse the squad Leader calls squad to “Attention.”

**At this command, the Flag Bearers place the base of the flagpoles in the pocket of their carriers.

**Squad Leader then commands "Present Arms". (At this point, all Rifles come to "Present Arms" and all but the U.S. Flag dipped or lowered).

**For cremation funeral on the command “Present Arms” the Flag Folders escort the flag and the remains to the catafalque. The remains are placed upon the catafalque and the Flag positioned against the remains container. Flag Folders step back and salutes.

**After the casket or the remains are placed on the catafalque the Squad Leader gives the command “Order Arms”.

** Flag folders take their position on each end of the catafalque and the Presenting Flag Folder informs the mourners of the rifle volleys, then salutes the Squad Leader.

** Squad Leader commands rifles to “Port Arms”, then commands “Unlock”, “Ready”, (Rifle man place right foot one step back); “Aim”, “Fire”.

At the command of “Ready”, MRS members not firing, including the flag detail with the exception of the United States flag bearer, come to “Present Arms” without a verbal command. This position is held until the conclusion of Taps. MRS members not firing, including flag detail, then perform “Order Arms” without a verbal command.

Squad Leader must be aware that all Rifleman are able to clear spent shells and insert another round then take ready position. (If a rifleman is having difficulty with his rifle, they should take the ready position and simulate firing on the next commands).

** Next command is "Aim; "Fire". Riflemen again eject the spent shells and insert another round and take the ready position.

**Again, Squad Leader notes that all Riflemen are Ready and the next commands are; "Aim" "Fire".

**After the third round, Riflemen do not eject spent shells but take the Ready position.

Squad Leader then commands "Ready Front"; (Rifleman brings right foot back and take the position of “Port Arms”.

**Squad Leader command the squad to “Present Arms”.

**Bugler(s) now sounds Taps.

** At the conclusion of Taps, Squad Leader commands ‘Order Arms”.

**Flag Folders proceed to fold the flag.

** Upon completion of the Flag folding (or for cremation when the Presenting Flag folder takes possession of the Flag) Squad Leader commands “Present Arms”.

** Present Arms are held throughout the Flag Presentation.

FLAG PRESENTATION Flag Presenter will use the following prescribed and accepted Presentation speech.

“On behalf of the President, the Armed Forces of the United States and a grateful nation, I present you this Flag, a symbol of our Great Republic, for which our departed comrade has honorably served”.

The Envelope and the Flag are presented to the Flag Recipient as Designated by the funeral director or by the family. When the Flag Recipient appears to be holding the Flag firmly, Presenter steps back one pace and, with the assistant Flag Folder, renders a hand salute. Both then move out of the shelter.

When Flag Folders have excited the shelter, the Squad Leader commands, “Color Guard Port Arms, Right (or Left) Face, Forward March.

Lead Chrome rifleman leads Color Guard back to the bus and dismisses them. Rifle Squad remains at Present Arms until Colors pass by.

Squad Leader then commands, “Port Arms, Right (or left) Forward March”. Dismissal procedure at the bus is “Squad, Halt, Right (or Left) Face, Order Arms, Fall out”.

Return to bus is reverentially quiet and respectful.

Flag Folders pick up spent rifle shells following the Military Honors. At the discretion of the Squad Leader, the bugler(s) may participate in this, or return to the bus after sounding Taps to prepare rounds for the riflemen for the next service, assist the orderly entry of the flag detail, and permit entry of the riflemen once the flags are stowed.

[END OF PAGE]

UNIFORMS, ISSUANCE AND USE OF:

A complete new uniform is issued to each new member after their successful election as a member.

Uniforms are worn as issued caps with emblems (winter) jackets (no additions); shirts (no additions) ties, with tie bar, belts, trousers. Individual veteran's overseas organizational caps may be worn at the member's prerogative.

Uniforms may be worn only at the National Cemetery and veterans organization meetings, or such meetings that are benficial to the Rifle Squad. They shall never be worn at any political function; or activity, whatsoever, that infers endorsement of the Memorial Rifle Squad.

**GUIDELINES: Violations, of these procedures, are brought to the attention of the Commander and Squad Leaders before actions are taken.

** No posting on the bulletin board without permission of the Commander and Squad Leaders.

[END OF PAGE]

TRADITIONS OF FINAL HONORS

We are members of the Memorial Rifle Squad, Ft. Snelling National Cemetery: we are here to perform the Final Honors for the deceased Veteran.

When you serve our country in uniform, be it at war or peace, you help Contribute to the freedoms that each of us is lucky enough to be here today.

The United States government says that as a reward for your service to country, one day when you pass, it will provide final Honors.

However, it has been unable to keep this promise due to manpower shortage, so it has been us veterans, serving as volunteers that have been providing the final Honors to our fellow Veterans.

We do not know most of the Veterans for whom we provide Final Honors. We do know, however, that they served our Country Honorably, as did we, so we have a Brotherhood of "Service to Country".

There has been a lot of misinformation about a "21 gun salute". In military, a gun is always a cannon or howitzer, and if you make a mistake of calling your rifle a gun, bad things will happen to you.

The only person entitled to a 21-gun salute is the President. The Vice President is entitled to a 19-gun salute and some top Generals and Admirals, a 17 gun-salute.

However, us common "GI's" were promised three rifle volleys. It might be 7 or 8 riflemen or 1 or 2 riflemen. The number of riflemen is not important. What is important is that the Veterans receives "three rifle volleys". This is a centuries old tradition meant to recognize the deceased Veteran's service to Country and as a final heartfelt Salute from Veterans to a fellow Veteran.

The Taps you are going to hear was first played in 1862 during our tragic Civil War over the graves of our slain Union soldiers. Taps is meant as a final farewell tune. The Veteran has been, and has done, many things in this life but now has reported to the "Commander-in-Chief" to whom, one day, we will all report.

The American Flag is always folded into a triangle in memory of our first Veterans—Our Revolutionary War Soldiers. By service to our Country, Again in its time of need, this now deceased Veteran helped preserve the most treasured and cherished American Freedoms, the freedoms of work, worship, and expression.

Our sincere condolences to the family and friends of the deceased.

SYMBOLS FOR THE FOLDS OF THE FLAG

1. The first fold of our flag is a symbol of Life.
2. The Second fold is a symbol of our Belief in the Enternal Life.
3. The Third fold is made in honor and remembrance of the Veteran departing our ranks and who gave a portion of life for the defense of our Country to attain peace throughout the world.
4. The Fourth fold represents our weaker mature; for as American citizens trusting in God, it is to Him we turn in times of peace as well as in times of war for His divine guidance.
5. The Fifth fold is a tribute to our Country, for in the words of Stephan DeCatur. “Our Country, in dealing with other countries, may she always be right, but it is still our country, Right or Wrong.
6. The Sixth fold is for where our hearts lie. It is with our heart that we pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and to the republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.
7. The Seventh fold is a tribute to our Armed Forces, for it is through the Armed Forces that we protect our country and our flag against all enemies, whether they be found within or without the boundaries of our republic.
8. The Eighth fold is a tribute to the ones who entered into the valley of the shadow of death, that we might see the light of day, and to honor our mother, for whom it flies on Mother’s Day.
9. The Ninth fold is a tribute to womanhood, for it has been through their faith, love, loyalty, and devotion that the character of the men and women who have made this country great, have been molded
10. The Tenth fold is a tribute to father, for he, too, has given his sons and daughters for the defense of our country since he or she was first born.
11. The Eleventh fold, in the eyes of Hebrew citizens, represents the lower portion of the seal of King David and King Solomon and glorifies, in their eyes, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.
12 .The Twelfth fold, in the eyes of a Christian citizen, represents an emblem of eternity and glorifies, in their eyes, God the Father, the Son and Holy Ghost.

When the flag is completely folded, the stars are uppermost, reminding us of our national motto, “In God We Trust”.

After the flag is completely folded and tucked in, it takes on the appearance of a cocked hat, ever reminding us of the soldiers who served under General George Washington and the sailors and marines who served under Captain John Paul Jones, who were followed by their comrades ans shipmates in the Armed Forces of the United States, preserving for us the rights, privileges, and freedoms we enjoy today.

OFFICER'S OBLIGATION

I do hereby solemnly promise – that I will faithfully discharge to the best of my ability, the duties of the office to which I have been elected or appointed – according to the Constitution and the By-Laws of the Memorial Rifle Squad. I solemnly promise – that at the close of the term to which I have been elected or appointed – or sooner if so ordered by proper authority – I will surrender immediately – to only the duty authorized person or persons – all records, money, or other properties of this organization – in my possession or under my control.
All this I freely promise – upon my honor as a loyal citizen of our great republic.

Installing Officer; As you were! Parade rest.

MEMORIAL RIFLE SQUAD
FORT SNELLING NATIONAL CEMETERY

REQUIREMENTS TO BECOME A VOLUNTEER MEMBER

1. Posses an Honorable Discharge from the United States Armed Forces and be a member of a Veterans Organization.
2. Visit with a Squad Leader to determine interest and dedication.
3. Volunteer to serve on a given day from 0830 to 1430 hours for most of the year – Approximately 42 weeks (except for reasonable absences).
4. **Abide by the Constitution, By-Laws and Procedures of the Memorial Rifle Squad.**
5. Maintain uniform in a clean and presentable manner.
6. Member provides own thermal wear, socks, black shoes or boots.
7. Transfer to squads based on the need and acceptance of the current members of each Squad.

Answers to questions and requests, for additional information may be obtained from any Memorial Rifle Squad Officer.

MEMORIAL RIFLE SQUAD CLOTHING LIST 2024

Sized Items from the Memorial Rifle Squad Quartermaster:
2 white short sleeve shirts w/logo
2 white long sleeve shirts w/logo
1 black sweater w/logo
1 pair of black slacks
1 trooper hat
1 black tie
2 jackets w/logo (1 ea summer& winter)
1 trench/rain coat w/logo

Unsized Items from Memorial Rifle Squad Member's Squad Leader:
1 tie clasp
2 collar pins for white shirt
1 trooper hat badge
1 white duty belt
1 duty belt brass buckle
1 pair light weight white gloves (M, L XL sizes available)

Individual Member Provides:
1 pair black shoes or boots
1 pair black cold weather winter boots
1 pair of black ear muffs
1 white scarf (optional) (no printing or artwork).
1 Veterans Service Organization (Fore & Aft) service hat

WHO IS A VETERAN?

"They are men and women who, for any reason, donned the uniform of our country to stand between freedom and tyranny; to take up the sword of justice in defense of the liberties we hold, to preserve peace and to calm the winds of war.

Your mothers and fathers, your grandparents, your aunts and uncles, your neighbors, the shop owners in your community, your teachers, your favorite athlete, a Hollywood star, and your political leaders…each one could be a veteran.

But as much as they differ by gender, race, age, national origin, or profession, they share a common love for our great nation; a love great enough to put their very lives on the line, if needed, to guarantee the way of life we enjoy today, and to secure that way of life for tomorrow's generations.

The title VETERAN must be earned. It is a title endowed by a grateful nation on citizens whose shoulders were broad enough to carry the weight of our common defense.

It is a title that speaks of courage and sacrifice in the face of mortal danger.

It is a title that speaks of compassion and heartbreak in the wake of the terrible cost of war.

And it is a title that speaks of love of country, and of a belief in America's goodness, and our hearts.

In each of America's struggles, hero's in uniform emerged to inspire and spur us on to victory. Our veteran's steadfast resolve to stand and fight for the American way of life is a constant reminder that the righteousness of our destiny overaches the anguish of our losses.

America's servicemen and women, who became our nations veterans when they set their uniforms aside and resumed their civilian lives, distinguished themselves through their willingness to risk life and limb in defense of freedoms we all cherish.
I am honored and privileged to lead the Cabinet Department that was charged by Abraham Lincoln to redeem our Nation's debt to liberty's defenders.

Those who have served our nation in uniform are the best people our society has to offer. We owe them our full support, and our sincere thanks.

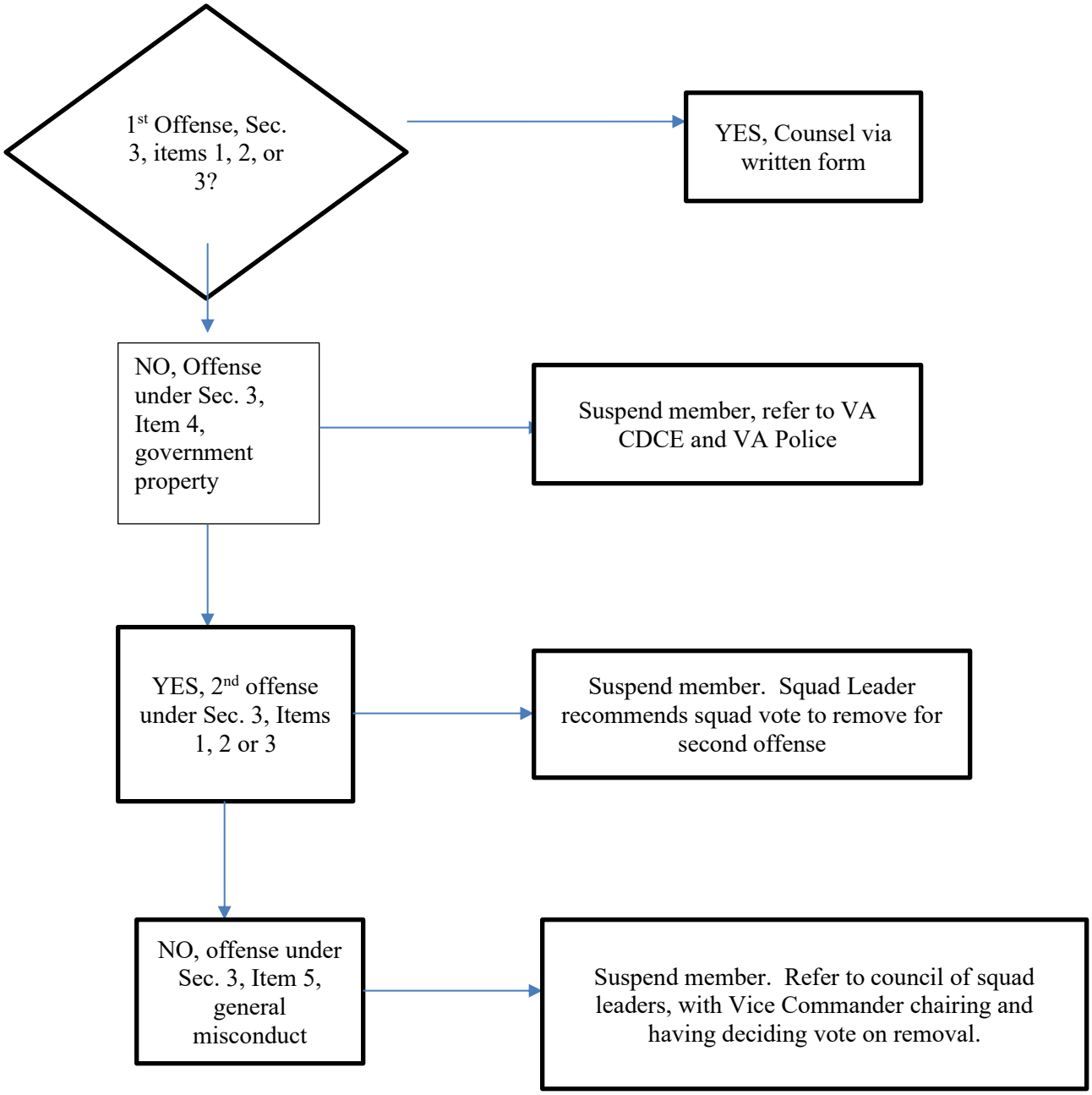
America's veterans did not shrink from battle; they did not yield to fear; they did not abandon their cause. All too often, they paid the ultimate price.

By their example of courage under fire, they raised up a new nation, inspired by the dignity of the common person—a nation blessed with hero's and hero's dreams.

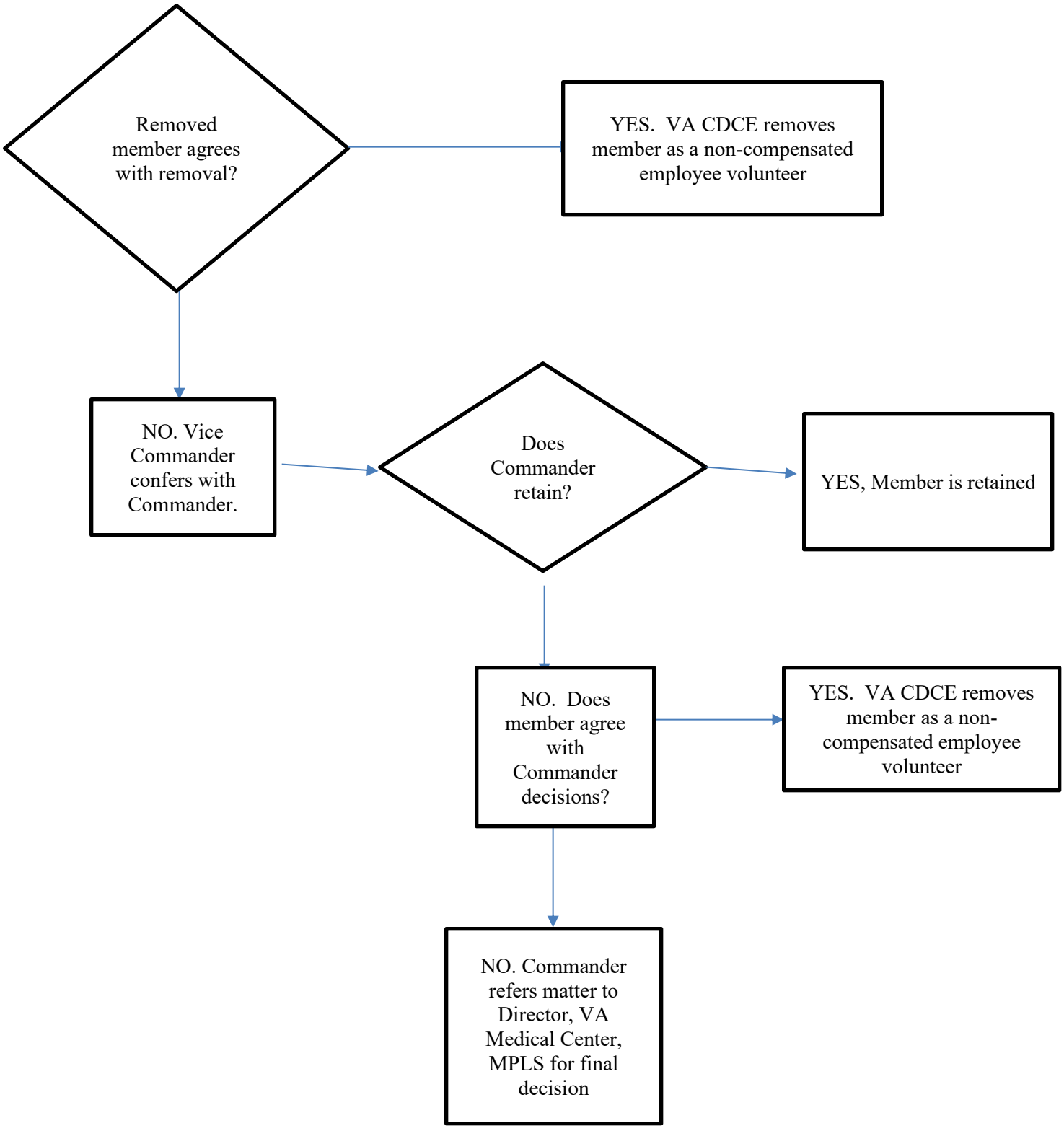
That is leadership of the highest quality. That is America's leadership legacy.

(from speech by VA Sec. Principi – July 2, 2003)

SECTION 3 REMOVAL PROCESS



APPEAL PROCESS IF MEMBER DISAGREES WITH REMOVAL RECOMMENDATION



ADDENDUM 1

MEMORIAL DAY PROCEDURES

The Memorial Rifle Squad traditionally participates in three events over the Memorial Day holiday weekend: Presenting honors at the conclusion of the Sunday service at the Fort Snelling Historical Chapel; the main FSNC observance the morning of Memorial Day; and honors at the Minneapolis Veterans Home in the afternoon.

Since the Fort Snelling Chapel and Minneapolis Veterans Home locations are outside the Fort Snelling National Cemetery grounds, we cannot take the MRS bus to those events. Car-pooling in personal vehicles is highly recommended.

The bus will be used for the Memorial Day morning ceremony at FSNC. The ceremony is held on Krause Avenue, at the north end of the assembly areas.

Uniform for all ceremonies is short-sleeve shirts, pistol belt, black pants and shoes, and black necktie. The necktie is add to our summer uniform as a sign of the solemn and dignified nature of this holiday. Black raincoats and helmet liners will be used if it is raining.

Rifles for the ceremonies must be cleaned and oiled before each event. One personal vehicle should be used to transport the rifles to the Fort Snelling Chapel. The required flags should be carried in whatever vehicles can handle their length.

Rifles should also be carried in one vehicle to the Minneapolis Veteran Home event. The Veterans Home provides the U.S. Flag and American Legion flag for the ceremony. The Veterans Home also provides lunch.

Rifles will be carried on the bus by the individual riflemen for the FSNC ceremony.

A full crew is required for the Fort Snelling Chapel and FSNC Memorial Day events. Only two flag-bearers are needed for the Minneapolis Veterans Home event, as the main ceremony is inside and only the American flag and American Legion flag are presented. The rifle crew and bugler are outside in a courtyard for their portion of the ceremony.

Following are the sign-up sheets for the various events. The sheets include date/time groups and grid coordinates for the event, and the roster for participants. These should be posted no later than the last week of April in the Squad Room on the Commander's locker. Email the squad leaders when they are posted, and encourage participation from all squads.

Flagbearers, if not all positions on the sign-up sheets are filled, should be at a minimum: U.S. Flag, service flags for Army, Marines, Navy, Air Force, Space Force, Coast Guard (in that order upon deployment). The U. S. Merchant Marine, Veterans Admin., POW/MIA, and Minnesota State Flag are optional, depending on participants.

Fort Snelling National Cemetery
Memorial Rifle Squad
Memorial Day Weekend Sign-Up Sheet

Memorial Day Ceremony
Monday May ___, 20___

Uniform is short-sleeved White Shirt with Black Tie, pistol belt, and black pants and footwear for all Members. Even Riflemen

Squad Room Opens by 8 AM
Bus for the Ceremony leaves the Squad Room at 9:15 AM
Ceremony starts at 9:45AM with wreath-laying. Rain or Shine
The MRS Bus will return to the Squad Room after the Cemetery Ceremony

Squad Leader/Caller _____
Bugler _____
Bus Driver _____

Color Guard
U. S. Flag _____
U. S. Army _____
U. S. Marine Corps_____
U. S. Navy _____
U. S. Air Force _____
U.S. Space Force _____
U. S. Coast Guard _____
U. S. Merchant Marine _____
Veterans Admin. _____
POW MIA _____
Minnesota State Flag _____

Rifle Team
1 _____
2 _____
3 _____
4 _____
5 _____
6 _____
7 _____

Fort Snelling National Cemetery
Memorial Rifle Squad
Memorial Day Weekend Sign-Up Sheet

Minneapolis Veterans Home Ceremony
Monday May ___, 20_____

Uniform is short-sleeved White Shirt with Black Tie, pistol belt, and black pants and footwear for all Members. Even Riflemen

Transportation is via PRIVATE VEHICLE. Please leave from the Squad Room after the Cemetery Ceremony in time for lunch at noon, with rifles and ammo. Veterans Home Ceremony starts at 2 PM. Return rifles and remaining ammo to squad room.

Squad Leader/Caller _____
Bugler _____

Color Guard (Flags to be provided by the Veterans Home)
U. S. Flag (Provided by Vet Home) _____
American Legion (Provided by Vet Home) _____

Rifle Team
1 _____
2 _____
3 _____
4 _____
5 _____
6 _____
7 _____

Fort Snelling National Cemetery
Memorial Rifle Squad
Memorial Day Weekend Sign-Up Sheet

Fort Snelling Memorial Chapel Ceremony
Sunday, May ____, 20_____

Uniform is short-sleeved White Shirt with Black Tie, pistol belt, and black pants and footwear for all Members. Even Riflemen

Squad Room Opens by 9 AM
Transportation via PRIVATE VEHICLE. Leave the Squad Room NLT 10:30 AM
Squad Members may attend 11:00 AM Religious Service in the Chapel or remain outside.
Ceremony starts at approximately 12 AM. Rain or Shine
Return rifles and flags to the Squad Room immediately after the ceremony.

Squad Leader/Caller _____
Bugler _____

Color Guard
U. S. Flag _____
U. S. Army _____
U. S. Marine Corps_____
U. S. Navy _____
U. S. Air Force _____
U.S. Space Force _____
U. S. Coast Guard _____
U. S. Merchant Marine _____
Veterans Admin. _____
POW MIA _____
Minnesota State Flag _____

Rifle Team
1 _____
2 _____
3 _____
4 _____
5 _____
6 _____
7 _____

MEMORIAL RIFLE SQUAD
FORT SNELLING NATIONAL CEMETERY