***SOA CELEBRATION OF LIFE***

***Items needed Wreath, red flower(s), white flower(s), 3x5 cloth US flag in shadow box. Wreath in front of podium, white flowers on left as you face podium, red flowers on right as you face podium Pre-assign person(s) to present flag 10 to 15 minutes prior to start.***

 *COMMANDER\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_: (Or Provost Marshal)*

***“Good (morning, afternoon, evening,)***

***We will begin our Celebration of Life in a few minutes. We ask that everyone either turn off their cell phone or set them for vibrate. Thank you.”***

***Retrieve names of special guests and add to program.***

***Check with family, Squadron Commander for any Special announcements to be included in program.***

*COMMANDER \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_:*

***“Good (morning, afternoon, evening,) AMVETS Family and friends and welcome to Post \_\_\_\_\_\_\_. We have come here today from places far and near, to gather ourselves in memory and hope; to be in community together. We come to honor, mourn, and celebrate the life of one we cherished, and cherish still. The wheel of life has completed its circle for\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and those of us who are left behind, gather to say good-bye to him and to comfort each other. May our time together today be filled with memories of a loving***

***\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_who only such a short time ago walked the way with us. On behalf of the membership of Sons of AMVETS I extend our most heartfelt condolences to the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ family, the members of Squadron \_\_\_\_\_, and the AMVETS family of Post \_\_\_\_. A well-respected member of Sons of AMVETS, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_was a leader by example. I am honored to be able to participate today.”***

***“Spiritus – Latin for SPIRIT - has added meanings which include vigor, courage, life, and soul. As we join together to pay our respect and remember \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, keep in mind the vigor with which \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ lived, his courage to face recent challenges, a life lived with passion, and a kindred soul that has touched the hearts of many.”***

***“At this time, I would like to recognize a few special guests that are here with us today”.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_***

***National/Department officers, PNC’s, PDC’s, PNP’s, etc - retrieve names prior to start of service. Recognize any special guest includes: National/Department/Squadron + AMVETS + Ladies Auxiliary Members.***

***“Squadron \_\_\_\_\_ would like to acknowledge and thank the Veterans of Post \_\_\_\_, Ladies Auxiliary \_\_\_\_ members, and Squadron \_\_\_\_ members, for their assistance today.***

***To begin our Celebration of Life saluting our comrade \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, I would ask Chaplain \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to lead us in prayer.”… “Chaplain”.***

***CHAPLAIN\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_:***

***“I ask all to remove their hat or cover and please pray with me in your heart and in your own faith:”***

 ***“Creator of all, we are assembled here in faith and confidence to pray for our brother \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. We ask that you provide grace to every member of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ family to ease their grief. We pray Lord, that you will fill the present emptiness in their hearts with the love and prayerful support of the many friends who are gathered here today. For each of us with whom \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ so generously shared his many gifts, may we too, grow in the ability to share our gifts and lighten the burdens of others. For all those who loved and were loved by \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, may we find comfort in our belief in the Lord’s promise to us of eternal life.***

 ***Lastly Lord, for every member of the AMVETS family, bless us richly with the gifts You know we need to fully celebrate life and recognize the new beginning which You offer us each day.***

***AMEN”***

***COMMANDER\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_: “Thank you Chaplain.”***

***“Scripture is the best source of devotional expressions and I would like to share this passage from the second Letter of Paul to Timothy:***

***“Beloved:
I am already being poured out like a libation,
and the time of my departure is at hand.
I have competed well; I have finished the race;
I have kept the faith.
From now on the crown of righteousness awaits me,
which the Lord, the just judge,
will award to me on that day, and not only to me,
but to all who have longed for his appearance.”***

***“In preparation for our Celebration of Life a quote stood out that I felt was especially appropriate for today. Winston Churchill said: “I am prepared to meet my Maker. Whether my Maker is prepared for the great ordeal of meeting me is another matter.”***

***“That sounds just like \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.”***

***TESTIMONIALS: COMMANDER\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_:***

 ***“At this time, I would like to invite those present to come forward or stand in place to share your favorite memory of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. If standing in place, please speak loudly so all can hear.”***

***COMMANDER\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_:***

***“Before we offer our final salute to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, I would like to share this thought:”***

***“What the caterpillar perceives is the end, to the butterfly is just the beginning.”***

 ***“Everything that has a beginning has an ending. Make your peace with that and all will be well.”***

 ***CHAPLAIN\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_:***

***“Let us Pray”***

***"Father of us all! In the depth of our silent reverence, we realize the truth of the inspired words, I am the Resurrection and the Life; he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live. As comrade after comrade departs, we march on with our ranks grown thinner. Help us to be faithful unto Thee and to one another. Look in mercy on the family of our departed comrade \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, we beseech Thee, and with Thine own tenderness console and comfort those who are bereaved. Heavenly Father, bless our country with freedom, peace and righteousness. Through Thy favor may we meet at last before Thy throne in Heaven. We praise Thy Great Name forever and forever. Amen."***

***COMMANDER \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_:***

***“Attention! Officers and members of Sons of AMVETS Squadron \_\_\_\_\_\_, Department of Florida, and National please rise.”***

***“To our brother \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ who has preceded us to the Silent Land Beyond, we will now pay our final respects. In so doing we offer this salute to\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and all Sons of AMVETS wherever their mortal remains may rest, this solemn service we hold in tribute to them all."***

***"On behalf of the entire membership of the Sons of AMVETS the wreath in front of the podium is a symbol of our remembrance of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_."***

***“The white flowers, to your left, is a symbol of purity. May each future generation of the Sons of AMVETS emulate \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ unselfish dedication in service to our nation by serving our Veterans.”***

***“The red flowers, to your right, is an emblem of eternity. Its color bespeaks life everlasting. Thus, do we immortalize the contribution of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_and all Sons of AMVETS committed to our mission.”***

***COMMANDER \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_:***

***“SONS of AMVETS – PROPER HAND SALUTE.”***

***DESIGNATED Son with flag slowly proceeds to selected family member.***

***COMMANDER\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_:***

***“\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_,(family member) on behalf of Sons of AMVETS National Commander \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, Department Commander\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, Squadron \_\_\_\_\_ Commander \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, and all officers and members of Squadron\_\_\_\_, we present this flag as a symbol of\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ patriotic service to our country, community, and Squadron as a member of Sons of AMVETS.”***

***Upon Presentation flag bearer Salutes and holds Salute for a few moments.***

***COMMAMDER\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_:***

***“SONS-- ORDER ARMS.”***

***“We have come together as a community of family and friends – our personal and smaller circles have become as one large circle. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, we carry you in our hearts and minds as we continue the journey of life with gratitude for having had you among us. Members, ladies, and gentlemen this concludes our service. We thank you for your attendance***, ***and wish everyone safe travels in your departure home.”***