

# TREA: The Enlisted Association

## How To Organize a TREA Chapter



TREA: The Enlisted Association

National Headquarters  
12200 E. Briarwood Ave,  
#250 Centennial, CO 80112  
303-752-0660  
800-338-9337  
FAX: 303-752-0835  
Toll-Free FAX: 888-882-0835

# TREA'S PREAMBLE

We, as Enlisted Personnel of the Armed Forces of the United States of America, being ever mindful of the glorious tradition of our duty to uphold the Constitution of the United States of America, our responsibility to support a strong defense establishment, our interest in the welfare of our fellow service men and women in the fortune or distress, and with reverence, unite to further the aims and objectives of TREA: The Enlisted Association, Incorporated.

# CONTENTS

<u>SUBJECT</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
HISTORICAL SUMMARY	1
TREA CHAPTERS	1
MEMBERSHIP	1
PRELUDE	2
STEP 1 -START UP	2
STEP 2 -FORM A COMMITTEE	2
STEP 3 -POTENTIAL MEMBER LISTING	2
STEP 4 –PLAN THE FIRST MEETING	3
STEP 5 –PREPARE FOR THE “KICK-OFF”MEETING	4
STEP 6 –THE FIRST MEETING	4
STEP 7 –THE SECOND MEETING	6
STEP 8 –THE PERMANENT ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING	9
STEP 9 –THE INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS AND BANQUET	12
STEP 10-WRAP UP	13
CONCLUSION	15

# ATTACHMENTS

	<u>SUBJECT</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
ATTACHMENT 1	LETTER TO MAL'S	
ATTACHMENT 2	PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT	
ATTACHMENT 3	SAMPLE TELEPHONE SCRIPT	
ATTACHMENT 4	SAMPLE MEETING AGENDA	
ATTACHMENT 5	CHAPTER CHARTER PETITION FORM 100-91	
ATTACHMENT 6	DUTIES OF CHARTER OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN	
	President	1
	Vice President	1
	Secretary	2
	Treasurer	2
	Directors	3
	Sergeant-at-Arms	3
	Chaplain	4
	Banquet Committee Chair	4
	Bylaws Committee Chair	5
	Entertainment Chair	5
	Membership Committee Chair	6
	Newsletter Editor	6
	Nominating Committee Chair	7
ATTACHMENT 7	TREA SAMPLE CHAPTER BYLAWS	

# TREA: THE ENLISTED ASSOCIATION

## A GUIDE FOR ORGANIZING A CHAPTER

### HISTORICAL SUMMARY

TREA was founded in Colorado Springs, Colorado in February 1963, and was granted tax exempt status in 1967. In 1981, a professional membership marketing firm was hired to manage TREA's recruiting efforts and to establish a membership benefits program. In 1987, TREA established a fully staffed Legislative Affairs office in Washington DC and hired a full time lobbyist to represent the interests of all enlisted members. In 1993, Congress voted to give TREA a Federal Charter as a recognized veteran's organization.

### TREA CHAPTERS

TREA currently has many active chapters, located throughout the United States, and Puerto Rico. TREA chapters vary widely in size from fewer than 10 to almost 3,000 members.

Chapters are field extensions of TREA and are recognized within the TREA corporate structure. As such, chapters are automatically exempt from Federal taxes under the tax exempt status granted to TREA by the I.R.S. However, TREA's Colorado Articles of Incorporation does not extend to its chapters, which must be incorporated (if desired) in accordance with the laws of the state in which they are located.

Chapters are not only independent, self-governing affiliates of TREA; they are the eyes, ears, and pulse of the National Association. Chapter members not only adopt their own internal operating policies, they participate in the decision-making process of the national association through frequent communications and attendance at national conventions. Chapters foster patriotism, civic duty, fraternity, camaraderie and a sense of belonging for their members. The National Bylaws and Standing **Rule #19** contain additional information concerning the relationship between National and the Chapters.

### MEMBERSHIP

TREA presently has over 33,000 members; The National Auxiliary has in excess of 13,000 members. The majority of members are Members-At-Large (MALs). TREA membership eligibility is prescribed in **Article III** of the National Bylaws, while membership in chapters may include courtesy members. As noted in Standing **Rule #7**, membership is open to any enlisted person who served or is serving in the US Armed Forces (active or reserve components) while associate membership is open to surviving spouses of deceased TREA members, or persons who were eligible for regular membership at the time of their demise, shall be eligible for associate membership as long as they remain unmarried. Auxiliary membership is open to spouses and widowers of regular TREA members or deceased members who were eligible for regular TREA membership at time of their demise.

## **PRELUDE**

Building a new TREA chapter, or rebuilding an existing chapter, is a unique experience that will provide untold rewards to those willing to successfully undertake the challenge. As with most such undertakings, it is best to organize your efforts in manageable steps which, if followed, will generally produce favorable results.

The basic steps for building a new chapter or rebuilding an existing one are the same. The only difference is that with an existing chapter, there will perhaps be an existing nucleus of members to start with, that will hopefully assist in the rebuilding process.

## **STEP 1 – START UP**

To start, determine if there are a sufficient number of enlisted members in the vicinity to support a chapter. A good rule of thumb is at least 100 or more potential members who reside in the immediate area (members living within a 50 mile radius) from the meeting.

The best and easiest way to determine if there are sufficient members available is to request a listing by zip code, of Members-At-Large (MAL's) from TREA National Headquarters. You may call or write to **TREA National Headquarters, 1111 S. Abilene Court, Aurora, Colorado 80012, telephone number 1-800-338-9337**. Please request only those zip codes you are interested in. (You may wish to have TREA National give you a count of the members available, before you proceed with the list. If there are not a sufficient number of members available, you won't need the list.)

The Chapter Startup & Assistance Committee for the potential chapter will conduct the first 3 organizational meetings as temporary officers until the permanent officers are elected and installed.

## **STEP 2 – FORM A COMMITTEE**

If it has been established that there is an adequate number of potential chapter members available to form a chapter, the next step is to form a committee. The committee, commonly referred to as a "MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE" committee should be made up of at least five (5) enthusiastic and highly motivated members who have the desire, time and tenacity necessary to organize the chapter. Don't overlook spouses, as potential members, as the more support you will have, and the easier it will be to accomplish your mission.

### STEP 3 – POTENTIAL MEMBER LISTING

You may have already completed this step (in STEP 1). Remember, when ordering your zip code list; ask for only those members that reside within easy commuting distance (not more than 50 miles) from where chapter meetings are likely to be held. The list will be provided at no cost. Additionally, you can request “lift-off” mailing address labels for use in corresponding with potential members.

### STEP 4 – PLAN THE FIRST MEETING

Once you are satisfied that there are enough potential chapter members in your vicinity to form a chapter, and you have secured lists of potential members (either from TREA or from other sources), it is time to plan for the first of three (3) organizational meetings: A date (30 to 45 days hence) and a time and place for the first meeting (called the “Kick-Off” meeting) should be selected. When considering a date, local activities such as major sporting events, etc. should be taken into consideration, to see that they will not conflict with your meeting date. The meeting should be held at a centrally located and easily identifiable place that is convenient as possible to the greatest number of potential members. A service organization building such as a DAV, VFW, or American Legion Hall, or a senior’s Center can generally be obtained without charge. When a facility is confirmed actions shown in “s” through “d” should be taken. Additionally, a supply of “stick-on” name tags should be acquired and used to identify attendees. When making final arrangements for the “Kick-Off” meeting, thought should be given to scheduling a second meeting at the same place, for same day of the week, and same time – about four (4) weeks later. If there is a sufficient interest displayed at the “Kick-Off” meeting for organizing a chapter, you will want to announce the second meeting before adjournment.

The following **additional actions** should be taken in the organizing of the “Kick-Off” meeting:

- a. **Send a Letter.** About three (3) weeks before the “Kick-Off” meeting, the committee should prepare and mail a letter (similar to the sample in **Attachment 1**) to all potential chapter members and MALs in the local area. The letter should be neat and grammatically correct. Once chartered, postage for expenses for the chapter formation will be reimbursed when receipts are submitted to the National Chapter Charter Committee.
- b. **Prepare Announcement.** A public service announcement (similar to that in **Attachment 2**) should be sent to all local newspapers and Public Affairs Offices at local military installations. Please include the “who, what, when, where, why and how” of the meeting. Most newspapers and radio stations, especially in small communities, will announce such events as the formation of a new organization. The best time for these announcements to appear is five (5) to seven (7) days prior to the event.

- c. **Telephone Follow-Up.** Within five (5) to seven (7) days after mailing the letter to potential members, follow it up with a telephone call. This shows personal interest and will add to the success of your turnout. It is the most difficult and important tasks that the committee will need to do. (A suggested telephone script for this call is located at **Attachment 3**). Once a few calls are made, you will quickly find that most people can only respond in one of three ways. They must give you a “yes” or a “no” or a “maybe”. You should always strive for a “yes” response, but don’t push. Treat a “maybe” as a “yes”. Encourage attendees to bring their spouses and/or friend that are now a TREA member or is eligible to be a TREA member. Keep track of the calls, responses and potential attendees.

Phrasing such as “There is limited seating available, and so that we can properly accommodate all the attendees, can I reserve seats for you and your spouse?” Will generally result in a “yes” or a “maybe”.

## **STEP 5 – PREPARE FOR THE “KICK-OFF” MEETING**

Since first impressions are lasting impressions, it is important that the meeting be well organized and that you, or the person conducting the meeting, are knowledgeable and present confidence and authority. If you are properly prepared, you should have no problem conducting the meeting. Start the meeting within ten (10) minutes of the time announced to prevent loss of interest by those who arrived on time. One of the committee members should be assigned as an official “Greeter”, and stationed at the door to welcome attendees and to direct them to another committee member, who should ask everyone to “sign in” on a pre-prepared sign-in roster. As attendees are signing in, have another member of the committee assigned to print their names on a “stick-on” name tag label. It becomes much easier for everyone to get acquainted, if their names are visible. Be sure to get the name, address, and phone number of every attendee. Also, ask if the attendee is a member or eligible to be a member of TREA. This listing is the beginning of your new chapter, and you will want to stay in contact with them. Be sure that the roster of names is legible and contains all the required information. The chapter organizer needs to appoint a member of the committee as a temporary secretary to ensure all rosters and meeting minutes are kept. The “Kick-Off” meeting is both a get-acquainted meeting and a meeting to determine if sufficient interest exists to start a new chapter. Once the meeting is called to order, be prepared to move it along quickly and smoothly. If none or more individuals attempt to “hog” the floor, a firm statement such as “Let’s move on quickly, or time is limited, and we have lots of work to do” should get the meeting back on track. If you or any member of the committee has white TREA jackets (windbreakers), they should be work to assist in identifying you and your committee members.

## **STEP 6 – THE FIRST MEETING**

- a. **Conduct the Meeting.** An agenda should be followed similar to the sample in **Attachment 4**. It is preferable to start each meeting in the following fashion:



- (1) Ask one of the MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE members to be prepared to give an opening prayer (an Invocation) after call to order. Ask the assembly to stand for the Invocation.
  - (2) After the invocation ask them to remain standing for the Pledge of Allegiance.
  - (3) Ask them to be seated.
  - (4) Welcome the assembly, and start by introducing yourself and members of the MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE.
  - (5) If the group is small enough (under 20), ask them to stand and introduce themselves, and if applicable, their spouses, as you go around the room. However, if there are more than 20 people present, this could take too long.
- b. Purpose of Meeting.** The person conducting the meeting should present the purpose of the meeting as follows: “The purpose of this meeting is to discuss the building of TREA chapter in this community.” Such issues as “Why should we belong to a chapter” and “What can a chapter do for me” must be answered at this time. Also, the person conducting the meeting should explain what actions have been taken by the MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE, up to this time and then a detailed discussion of what must be accomplished to charter a chapter should follow. When the above has been done, the leader should ask for questions. After all questions have been answered, and if it appears there is enough interest to form a chapter, the leader might ask for a show of hands from those who wish to become charter members. If the response is positive, a committee member (by pre-arrangement) should say “Mr. Chairman, I move that the MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE be authorized to take all actions necessary to form a TREA chapter.” When the motion is seconded, and before the vote is taken, the assembly should be reminded that TREA requires at least 24 members to start a chapter, but that the goal for this chapter should be at least 50 charter members. If the motion is adopted, immediately go to announcements shown below.
- c. Announcements.** The following announcements should be made:
- (1) **Volunteers Needed.** Announce that eight (8) or ten (10) more members are needed to serve on important committees, such as the bylaws, membership and nominating committees. Immediately take the names and phone numbers of all who agree to volunteer, and ask them to meet with you for about five (5) minutes after the meeting. At that time, arrange a meeting with all the volunteers and the MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE within the next week to assign tasks and appoint committees in preparation for the next meeting.

**(2) For the Second Meeting.** Announce the date, time and place of the next meeting and urge everyone to return and bring one or more potential members with them. Continue along the following lines: “Remember that our goal is at least 50 members by the time we are chartered”. At the next two meetings we will accept charter members and their names will be listed on the Chapter Charter to be awarded by TREA National Headquarters. Charter members will also receive a charter member pin and certificate attesting to their being charter members. The MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE will continue to conduct all meeting until the installation of permanent officers. At the next meeting we will appoint a nominating committee who will ask chapter members to stand for election to the various offices that will be open. We will also appoint a membership committee and a bylaws committee to work hand-in-hand in drafting the chapter bylaws. At the next meeting, these committees will discuss, make recommendations, and seek your views on chapter charter fees, chapter membership dues, frequency of membership meetings, and a host of other issues of importance.

**d. Adjournment.** When all business has been discussed, ask the question “Is there any further business?” If not, ask for the Benediction before they leave, remind them of the NEXT meeting date, time and place. Remind them to please bring their spouses to the next meeting, and to bring at least one other potential chapter member. Then state “If there is no further business, the meeting is adjourned.” Encourage members to stay and take this opportunity to become acquainted. Refreshments encourage socialization.

## **STEP 7 – THE SECOND MEETING**

**a. Assign Duties.** In preparation for the second meeting the leader, the chair and all MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE members should meet with members that volunteered at the “Kick-Off” meeting to help organize the chapter. The “chair” should appoint a nominating committee chairman, bylaws committee chairman, a membership committee chairman, and entertainment committee chairman and if enough members are available, a chapter charter banquet committee chairman. If not, this position can be filled by the membership committee chairman. Volunteers should be assigned to the committee of their choice. It is important to involve all volunteers in meaningful tasks as soon as possible, so additional chapter members and the signing up of chapter charter members on the TREA National Form 100-91 (see **Attachment 5**). See **Attachment 6** for the duties of chapter officers and committee chairman.

**b. Make Meeting Arrangements.** Get the word out.

- (1) Again, send announcements (which contain references to the first meeting) to the news media which announces the second meeting, giving the time, place and date.
  - (2) The MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE, and if available, additional volunteers acquired at the “Kick-Off” meeting, must again implement the telephone calling that was used to invite members to attend the first meeting. Telephone calls should be made four (4) to five (5) days prior to the event. Telephoning to invite members to attend the meeting is the MOST effective way to assure a good turnout.
- c. **Follow-Up Check List.** If any of the appointments or actions shown below are still pending, now is the time to take care of them.
- (1) **Greeter(s).** Appoint at least one person to be stationed at the door to greet members as they arrive.
  - (2) **Sergeant-At-Arms.** Appoint a Sergeant-At-Arms to sit at the table by the door, and ask everyone to sign in on the pre-prepared sign-in roster. It is suggested that a second person be assigned to assist the Sergeant-At-Arms. As a person signs in, the assistant can then print the guest’s name on the “stick-on” name tag and ask the guest to wear it during the meeting. The Sergeant-At-Arms should also have a supply of TREA Membership Applications available at the “sign-in” table. If a non TREA guest comes to the table to sign in, they should be handed the membership application, and asked to join, on the spot.
  - (3) **Nominating Committee.** Appoint a nominating committee and advise the chairman of the committee to be prepared to make a presentation to the assembly in accordance with **STEP 8, paragraph e. (1) below.**
  - (4) **Bylaws Committee.** Appoint a bylaws committee to begin drafting a set of bylaws. They chapter bylaws should be adopted as soon as possible, and must be adopted no later than four months after the chapter has been chartered (**see TREA sample Bylaws at Attachment 7**). The committee should be ready to discuss and determine the desires of prospective chapter members with regard to chapter dues, frequency of membership meeting etc.
  - (5) **Membership Committee.** Appoint a membership committee to plan and coordinate all the recruiting efforts. Announce a “goal” in regard to chapter charter members (how many members are they going to try to have signed as chapter charter members by the next and final meeting).

Receiving a TREA charter requires at least 24 confirmed TREA members signed on TREA **Form 100-91**. Encourage the membership committee to strive for at least 50 charter members. The membership committee is responsible for completing and submitting the form to TREA National Headquarters after the final organizational meeting. If the charter application is approved, the chapter charter will be presented to the membership at the installation banquet.

- (6) **Installation Banquet Committee.** Appoint an installation banquet committee (or if there are not enough volunteers available at this point, assign the task to the membership committee). The committee is responsible for planning and making arrangements for the chapter charter and installation of officer's banquet. The committee chairman should ask for input from those present about menu choices, cost, required dress, etc. It is suggested that as soon as the location and cost have been established, that the committee begin collecting payment so that those attending have paid in advance. "Walk-ins" create another problem since most facilities have a specified deadline for adding and deleting from the order. In picking a facility it is important to be sure that the place chosen can provide sufficient privacy to conduct an "oath of office" ceremony, and if there is a guest speaker, that the guests will be able to hear him. No other business, other than the swearing in of the new Board of Directors should be conducted at the banquet. Special awards may be given to guest speakers and to select individuals, but even these functions should be kept to a very bare minimum. There should be no "call to order", but it is appropriate to have a color guard present the colors, and to have an opening and closing prayer. The chapter charter and installation banquet may be the most important function the chapter will hold for a very long time. It is the key to the future growth of the chapter, so plan with care. **TREA Standing Rule#32** provides good guidance and recommends appropriate dress.

- (7) **Make an Agenda.** The agenda for the second meeting should be patterned after the first meeting agenda, particularly the opening and closing ceremonies. The following items, plus other pertinent data should be listed on the agenda.

- (a) Call to order
- (b) Opening prayer, by \_\_\_\_\_, our Chaplin
- (c) Pledge of allegiance
- (d) Welcome and self-introduction
- (e) Purpose of meeting (to discuss future plans for the chapter)
- (f) Assign committees – ask for volunteers to serve on committees
- (g) Suggest dates and locations for committees to meet
- (h) Make any additional announcement

- (i) Announce time, date, location and purpose of next meeting (**to elect permanent chapter officers**)

**(8) Conduct the Meeting.** As previously written, the MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE will continue to conduct all meeting until the installation of permanent officers.

**(9) Adjournment.** When all temporary officers and committee chairmen positions have been filled, and if there is no further business, the meeting may be adjourned in the same manner as the first meeting. Remember, you are BUILDING a chapter. Encourage people to stay and get acquainted. Refreshments may be served.

## **STEP 8 – THE PERMANENT ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING**

The hard work of the MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE is finally beginning to pay off. You have arrived at this point and are beginning to plan for this, your final organizational meeting. At this meeting, all of your plans must come together if a chapter is to be formed. Officers will be elected. If completed, the bylaws should be reviewed and approved. Chapter charter and installation banquet plans should be presented to the members for approval and members who have not yet signed on as charter members may do so. If the membership has authorized chapter dues, it should be collected before signing the petition to charter. Any eligible member may join TREA and the chapter at the same time.

- a. **Communicate.** For the third time, you'll need to notify potential members that the final organizational meeting will be held on (date, place and time). The communications should remind prospective members of pending actions that must be taken prior to becoming a chapter. At the first and second meeting, it was suggested that a letter or a post card be mailed to members as well as telephoning them. You may wish to forgo the post card or letter, but **YOU and the MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE MUST CALL** prospective chapter members. Failure to re-institute the telephone calling program used for the first and second meetings will probably result in a very low turnout.
- b. **Submit Public Service Announcements.** Submit announcements to the local news media, the same for the first two meetings.

c. **Assign Duties.** Approximately a week before the scheduled meeting, a meeting should be held with all committee chairmen and committee members. Plans for the installation banquet can be reviewed, progress on membership can be discussed, and specific tasks that need to be done at the meeting can be assigned. The following positions are recommended:

(1) Greeter(s)

(2) Sergeant-At-Arms, and the assistance to be at a table for the sign-in book, and prepare “stick-on” name tags for attendees

(3) Secretary. This position has already been filled, but be sure that a recording device is available at the meeting, and that the secretary is prepared to oversee the recording of the meeting.

(4) A flag should be available for the meeting.

(5) Ensure there are enough “stick-on” name tags available for the meeting.

(6) Inform committee chairmen that they will be expected to give a brief report on their committee activities.

d. **Prepare an Agenda.** The agenda should be similar to what was used for both the first and second meetings. Be sure to have the secretary read the minutes of the last meeting, and have them approved by the membership. A properly prepared agenda will remind you of important items that must be brought before the assembly, and the order in which they should be presented.

e. **Conduct the Third Meeting.** Again, the meeting should be conducted similar to the way it was done for the first and second meetings. Some specific duties of committee chairmen are:

**(1) Election of Chapter Officers**

a. The nominating committee chairman should have prepared for the meeting by having either a blackboard or flip chart available.

b. When it is time to elect officers, an assistant should write the office for which nominations are being taken on the chart or blackboard.

Nominations may be taken. Candidates could have submitted their resumes. Either way, the person at the blackboard or chart should write the name of each candidate in large enough letters for everyone to be able to see. Officers to be elected are:

- (1) **President**
- (2) **Vice President(s)** – If there are enough people available, select a 1<sup>st</sup> and a 2<sup>nd</sup> vice president
- (3) **Secretary** – Hopefully, someone has volunteered for this position, and was assigned at the beginning so that minutes are kept on the meeting. It is VERY IMPORTANT to keep/record the minutes of the meeting.
- (4) **Treasurer** – See Attachment 6, Page 2.
- (5) **Sergeant-At-Arms** – Like the secretary, this position may have already been filled. If there is no one assigned, then select a person to perform the duties as prescribed.
- (6) **Three (3) Directors** – The directors and vice president(s) should be made committee chairmen for the committee listed in Step 7(a) above.

(c) Once nominations are closed (this is left up to the President to decide), members of the nominating committee will hand out small pieces of paper to the assembly, who will then vote.

(d) The nominating committee will then collect the ballots, and the President will announce the election.

(e) This process will be repeated for each office, except for the directors. The assembly may vote for three (3) directors. If there are no more than three (3) candidates, then the person receiving the largest number of votes is the three (3) year director, the person getting the second highest number of votes is the two (2) year director, and the person getting the next largest number of votes is the one (1) year director.

(f) After the election is completed, all ballots should be destroyed.

(g) If the new President is different than the person that was selected as the temporary President, then that person will continue to chair the meeting, but will relinquish the position at the installation banquet to the new President.

(2) **Presentation of Bylaws.**

- (a) If the bylaws committee chairman has the bylaws ready for approval, the bylaws chairman requests approval/disapproval each section individually.
- (b) If changes to the draft are proposed and adopted by majority vote, the entire set is then adopted by a single motion from the floor (e.g. “On behalf of the bylaws committee, I move that the proposed bylaws be adopted as written (or as amended, as the case may be).” Only a simple majority vote (more than 50%) is required to adopt the bylaws.

(3) **Membership Committee Report.** The chairman should report on the number of members that have presently signed on as charter members, with a report as to how close to their goal they are. He should remind members present that this is the last opportunity they will have to be chapter charter members. He should point out that the Sergeant-At-Arms has the applications for charter.

(4) **Banquet Committee Report.** The chairman should provide as much detail as possible in regards to the upcoming event. Many in attendance may not have attended previous meetings, so state the reason for the banquet, and what it means to the chapter. All chapter members should be encouraged to attend. If banquet arrangements are firm, this is an excellent time to begin collecting for the banquet. A deadline should be announced for the collection of money from those that wish to go to the banquet but have not signed up. It is extremely important that the committee chairman have “cash in hand” before giving the facility the final count of how many members are going to be present. Money collected for the banquet should include a gratuity charge, and the cost of the band (if one is planned).

f. **Announcements and Adjournment.** Announcements during the formation of a chapter should always include membership. Without a constant flow of new members, the chapter cannot survive. With the elections and bylaws out of the way, renewed emphasis should be placed on membership and the banquet. The banquet is the first social event of the new chapter, and it will promote camaraderie among the members and their spouses, as well as to help the chapter grow. The meeting should be adjourned on a positive, optimistic note for the future chapter.



## STEP 9 – THE INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS AND BANQUET

This is a very special occasion for the new chapter. It marks the end of building the chapter and the beginning of the chapter becoming a reality. Since it's of such great importance, it should be carefully planned and coordinated with all chapter members. The following procedures are recommended:

- a. **Protocol.** The banquet committee should familiarize themselves with TREA Protocol National Standing **Rule #10**
- b. **Invitations.** The new chapter president should, as soon as possible, mail an invitation to the National President and to the members of the Board of Directors. (The National President needs as much advance notification as possible so that the banquet can be fit into a very heavy travel schedule.) Anyone that attends from the National Board or National Staff will do so at no cost to the new chapter. The new chapter organizer will usually be asked to make appropriate hotel reservations, and perhaps meet and transport these attendees to from the airport, etc.
- c. **Master of Ceremonies (M.C.).** The Banquet Committee should have selected an M.C who is a good public speaker. The M.C, in cooperation with the president and members of the banquet committee, should prepare a program for the occasion. The program should be similar to a meeting agenda. Reference Standing **Rule #10 (page6)** for specifics in regards to an agenda for the evening.
- d. **Dignitaries.** The M.C should have a list of dignitaries and should have made arrangements to be sure he know and can properly pronounce the names of each one to be introduced. (It is suggested that the SCU&A Committee station a person at the door, to check those that are signing in for the banquet, to be sure that no unexpected dignitaries arrive without being noticed or introduced).
- e. **Check In.** Guests should be checked in at the door by the Sergeant-At-Arms, the same as for a meeting. A sign-in book should be used.
- f. **Key Note Speaker.** The banquet committee, in coordination with the Board of Directors, should select a Key Note Speaker early on, and send out an invitation. The candidates chosen for the "honor" of being the Key Note Speaker should be done with care and due consideration as to the wishes of the chapter membership. Always inform the speaker how long you expect to speak. The chapter is responsible for all expenses incurred by the speaker and the speaker's spouse, if in attendance, unless other arrangements have been made in advance.

- g. **Escorts.** The banquet committee should assign an escort for the Key Note Speaker, and for the National President, and any other guests of similar status. The escort should meet them at the door, introduce himself, and then escort them to the Chapter President and other for inductions.
- h. **Retiring of the Colors.** You may wish to retire the colors prior to adjournment.

## STEP 10 – WRAP UP

Our heartiest congratulations to all that shouldered the enormous responsibilities in organizing the new chapter. We wish the chapter well and ask that you call the **Membership Services Coordinator at 1-800-338-9337**, when you have questions or a problem that we might be able to help you solve.

That's the END of the "organizing" process. NOW you must start functioning as a CHAPTER. Some suggestions area listed below that will help you be successful as a new chapter:

- a. **Membership Meetings.** As soon as possible, secure a permanent location to hold both Board and General Membership meetings.
  - (1) Have monthly Board AND General Membership meetings.
  - (2) Do not conduct the chapter business at the Board meetings.
- (a) **Board of Directors Meetings.** The Board of Directors should meet about a week before each membership meeting and should take final action on all business matters that do not require a vote of the general membership. The Board should also discuss, take a position on all known business items that require a vote of the membership, and be prepared to offer motions for a specific course of action at membership meetings. Other items that are known to be "on the grapevine" should also be considered so as to rapidly defuse any controversy that might arise.
  - (3) Make the General Membership meeting a SOCIAL EVENT. Invite the spouses. Explain what the Board doing or not doing at the General Membership is meeting.
- (a) **General Membership Meetings.** The meeting agenda should contain only essential items of business that will be of interest and/or requires approval of the general membership (e.g., the expenditure of funds, etc.). All discussion should be pertinent, lively, and quickly moved along without dragging or stalling because members will not support a chapter that has long and dull meetings where everyone talks but

nothing is accomplished. If handled properly, meetings can even be fun and looked at as social events, especially if guest speakers are invited. If a chapter auxiliary has not been formed, spouses should be invited to chapter meetings; but should not be permitted to vote since this privilege is restricted to “regular” and “active military” members as (will be) provided for in **Article III, Sections 1 and 2** of the chapter bylaws.

(4) Ask for a vote when necessary, for the expenditure of funds, approval of minutes, etc., then get on with making the meeting an EVENT that will draw people back the next time. Nothing kills a chapter faster than long, dull general membership meetings, where nothing ever gets resolved.

(5) Invite good guest speakers. Contact the local Retired Officers Association (TROA) for assistance along these lines.

b. **Fund Raisers.** You will need a fund raiser soon after becoming a chapter. There are several things that you can do:

(1) **Raffles.** Sometimes local merchants will assist by donating items that can be raffled off. If not, then perhaps a member will donate an item to be raffled.

(2) **Sale of Merchandise.** One of the best and most successful fund raisers is to arrange to sell poinsettias at Christmas time. The program works as follows:

(a) In early October, contact local florists, and ask if they would help you in your poinsettia sale. They would need to agree to order a predetermined number of poinsettias that the chapter would sell. You might wish to order different sizes and colors as well.

(b) The florist should order a good quality (better than the local super market) poinsettia, and charge the chapter a price slightly over wholesale. The chapter can then mark up the price. As an example, the florist gives the chapter the poinsettias for \$4.00 each. The chapter sells them for \$8.00 each. The chapter, of course, keeps the profit.

(c) As soon as arrangements are made with the florist, a delivery date should be set. That’s the day the plants arrive.

- (d) Chapter members should start taking orders for the poinsettias as soon as possible. The agreement with the customer should be that the chapter member that sold the plant should pick it up from the florist and deliver it.

The good thing about this fund raiser is that all chapter members can participate. They can either help sell them or buy them, or both. In addition, this is a fund raiser that can grow bigger each year.

No matter what the chapter chooses to do for a fund raiser, it is critical to the future success of the chapter to have them, and not be dependent on just dues, or the small stipend they will receive from National. Chapters must become financially independent as quickly as possible, and stay that way, if they are going to be a viable chapter.

- c. **Social Functions.** A good entertainment committee chairman is worth his weight in gold. Part of the reason people join the chapter is to meet and socialize with their peer group. A good entertainment chairman will be able to plan functions and events that will get the membership involved. Functions such as pot luck dinners, card tournaments (especially pinochle – it seems as though every successful chapter has a regular weekly pinochle tournament), dances, and dance classes are just a few activities that can help to make the chapter a success.
- d. **Political Agenda.** Again, one of the reasons for organizing the chapter was to allow members to have a more untied and effective voice in local, state and national politics. As a result, the chapter should support issues that have a positive effect on them, and speak out on those issues that adversely affect them. Both sides of the political spectrum should be allowed to address the membership, but the chapter should not actively support any candidate. Each individual member should make the decision as to who he wishes to vote on his own.

## **IN CONCLUSION**

The secret to a chapter's success is involved in the membership. The chapter must always strive to recruit new members, and once those new members are recruited, they must be encouraged to become involved with the chapter. Members-at-Large (MAL) lists are available on a regular basis from TREA National Headquarters and are an excellent recruiting tool for chapters. It is equally important to recruit new members as well. If each member will simply attempt to replace themselves with one new member a year, it would make the chapter one of the fastest growing chapters in the system. Membership drives are essential. A good membership chairman should keep the concept of recruiting new members in front of the membership at all times.

Dear Fellow TREA Member,

A group of local TREA members, just like you, have joined together to form a committee to organize a local chapter, and we need your assistance and support.

TREA National Headquarters has provided us with information and "A Guide to Organizing a TREA Chapter". With this information in hand, the committee has arranged to hold a meeting at (location) and (date), at (time).

The purpose of this meeting will be to determine if there is sufficient interest in the local community to allow us to build a chapter, and to discuss what a chapter can do for us.

If this project is to be successful, WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT! Please mark your calendar and plan to attend this important meeting. Both you and your spouse are invited and encouraged to attend. This will be a "get acquainted" meeting and an excellent opportunity to renew old friendships, and perhaps form some new ones.

As a current member of TREA you are no doubt aware that our earned benefits are under constant attack by the budget cutters in Washington. They no longer wish to honor the promises that were made to us for our sacrifices and contribution to this great country. TREA's full time Legislative Affairs Office in Washington has fought this battle at the national level for many years. We believe it is now time to organize a chapter, not only to support TREA's efforts, but to look out for our own interests at the state and local level. We vote our politicians in office. We are the constituents. Now let them hear our concerns. Your support in forming a local chapter will be the beginning.

This letter is being sent to all TREA Members-at-large (MALs) who reside in our local area. So that we might have some idea of the number of people to prepare for at the scheduled meeting, please help us out by calling (telephone number) and letting us know that you plan to attend, and if you plan to bring your spouse.

Sincerely yours,

Membership Committee Chairperson

(NOTE: Letter should be TREA National Letterhead stationery, if it is to be effective)

ATTACHMENT 1- Letter to MALs

Membership Committee

(To be affiliated with TREA: The Enlisted Association)

Address

City, State

DATE

SUBMITTED BY (Name & Phone)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION TO ESTABLISH LOCAL CHAPTER

TREA: The Enlisted Association (TREA), a Congressionally chartered Veterans Service Organization, is organizing a chapter in (name of city). All enlisted military members and their spouses living in (city) and the surrounding area, are invited to attend a meeting on (date) at (time) at (location). The purpose of the meeting is to discuss the benefits of having a local TREA chapter. For additional information, call (name and phone number of the person in charge of local MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE).

SAMPLE TELEPHONE SCRIPT

Be enthusiastic and always keep the conversation on a positive note. If the answers are always “NO” — there has to be a reason. Attempt to find out the REAL reason, but don’t push. Say something like,

***“We’d certainly like to have you attend the meeting if you can possibly make it. If you can’t maybe you can make the second meeting—about a month later. Is it OK if I call and let you know the next meeting date—when we get it firmed up?”***

If his/her response is positive, be sure to thank him/her and tell him/her that you’re looking forward to seeing him/her at the meeting. Repeat the date, time and place, and ask him/her to please mark his/her calendar.

***Hello, my name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I’m a member of TREA: The Enlisted Association. The reason I’m calling is to ask if you received our letter inviting you to attend a meeting of members, and help us organize a local TREA Chapter.***

***Did you get our letter? \_\_\_\_\_ If yes, say “Great, we’ll reserve a seat for you. Will your husband/wife be attending as well?” (Let your voice indicate that you expect a positive response.) Then say, “In our letter we stated that the meeting will be at \_\_\_\_\_, on the \_\_\_\_\_, at \_\_\_\_\_ O’clock. Are you Familiar with the location?”*** If not, explain.

If they say NO, say ***“Oh, I’m sorry—and explain the purpose of the letter. Without waiting for an answer, ask “Can we count on you to attend the meeting?”***



ATTACHMENT 3-Sample Telephone Script

SAMPLE MEETING AGENDA

("Kick-Off" Meeting)

Call to Order

Invocation

Pledge of Allegiance

Welcome Attendees

\*Self-Introductions

Explain the purpose of the meeting and introduce the Membership Committee members.

Announcements

1. Volunteers Needed – 8 to 10 to help build the new chapter
2. Next Meeting – date, time and place
3. Want 50 charter members (Must have 24 to charter)
4. Will appoint committees – nominating, membership, bylaws, etc.

Adjournment – when no further business

1. Benediction
2. Meeting adjourned

\*If applicable

NOTE: The agenda for the second and third meetings will contain essentially the same subjects as shown above, plus committee reports and election of temporary/permanent officers. Refer to Steps 7 & 8 for additions.

ATTACHMENT 4- Sample Meeting Agenda

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF  
CHAPTER OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN

**PRESIDENT**

1. Chief Executive Officer
2. Official Spokesman for the Chapter
3. Responsible for establishing Goals and Objectives for the Chapter
4. Leads the Chapter Membership in accomplishing goals and objectives
5. Is a non-Voting Member of all committees, except the nominating committee
6. Sees that the “Will of the Membership” is reflected in the operational management of the Chapter
7. Appoints Committee Chairs (except the Nominating Committee Chair, who should be elected by the membership)
8. Shall be a non-voting member of the Board of Directors (except to break ties)
9. Fulfill such other duties and responsibilities as may be assigned by the Chapter Bylaws and Standing Rules
10. MUST BE PRESENT HIMSELF/HERSELF AS A LEADER. As such must take charge and see that the goals and objectives established at the beginning of his term are being aggressively pursued.

**VICE PRESIDENT**

1. Assist the Chapter President
2. Fulfill such other duties as the President may assign
3. Shall be Chair of at least one (1) MAJOR Committee (such as Entertainment or Membership)
4. In the absence of the President, shall serve in his/her stead. The Vice President and the President should have good communications between them. The Vice President might have to assume the presidency with little or no notice. It is therefore his/her responsibility to be prepared to assume the office if and when called upon.
5. Shall have one vote

## **SECRETARY**

1. Record the minutes of ALL Board of Directors and/or General Membership meetings.
2. Shall transcribe (or have transcribed) the minutes of the meetings.
3. Shall make sufficient copies of the minutes available to those who require a copy. Shall see that the minutes are distributed accordingly.
4. Shall have the minutes of the previous meeting available at each Board and General Membership meeting and will either read the minutes and ask for a vote or approval, or if agreed to by the members, may waive the reading of the minutes, but must ask for a vote of acceptance of minutes "as read" or "with noted changes."
5. Will be responsible for maintaining a file of all minutes. Copies of minutes shall be maintained in the file for the life of the chapter. Tape recording may be destroyed after a specified time, if agreed to by the Board of Directors.

## **Treasurer**

1. Will be responsible for the CUSTODY of all funds belonging to the Chapter.
2. Shall be responsible for providing a "Treasurer's Report" at each Board of Directors meeting, to inform the Board members of the financial status of the Chapter.
3. Shall insure that all fees, taxes, insurance premiums, and other levies are promptly paid.
4. Shall NOT have check signing authority.
5. Shall be responsible for directing the establishment of a Budget, for the Chapter.
6. If elected, shall have one vote.

## **DUTIES OF THE DIRECTORS**

Most Chapters have three (3) Directors, with terms of 3-Years, 2-Years and 1-Year. The Director receiving the highest number of votes for this position shall be the 3-Year Director, the one receiving the second highest number of votes shall be the 2-Year Director, and the one receiving the third highest number of votes shall be the 1-Year Director.

1. Shall be the Chair of at least one (1) MAJOR Committee, such as Membership, Entertainment, Bylaws, etc.
2. Performs such other duties as may be assigned by the President
3. Due to staggered terms, the Directors provide continuity between administrations.
4. Each Director has one vote.

## **SERGEANT-AT-ARMS**

1. Usually appointed by the President, but may be elected, if desired.
2. Shall check membership credentials at each meeting.
3. Shall establish a “sign-in” procedure for each General Membership meeting, so that a record of members that attend such meetings can be established and maintained.
4. Shall be responsible for maintaining order during all meetings.
5. Shall assist the nominating committee in the distribution, collection, and counting of the ballots.
6. Act as coordinator for the Color Guard.
7. Shall be the Chair of the Parades and Ceremonies Committee.
8. Shall have one vote if elected, none if appointed.

## **CHAPLAIN**

1. Shall conduct opening and closing prayers at all Board of Directors and Membership meetings and at such times as is appropriate.
2. Offer condolences and assistance to:
  - a. Sick and/or hospitalized members.
  - b. Surviving family members, in the event of the death of a chapter member or his/her spouse.

3. Shall chair the Bereavement Committee.
4. Shall have one vote if elected. None if appointed.

### **BANQUET COMMITTEE CHAIR**

1. Reference TREA National Standing Rule #32, Page 5, f. PROGRAM. The Banquet Committee Chair should familiarize themselves and the committee with this standing rule. The Chair will:
  - a. Select a suitable place to hold the Installation/Chapter Charter Banquet.
  - b. Have the selection of the location approved by the Board of Directors and, if time permits, by the General Membership.
  - c. Plan and approve the meal, if applicable. Be sure the cost is in line with the wishes of the membership.
  - d. Be responsible for sending invitations to VIPs.
  - e. Be responsible for acquiring an appropriate Guest Speaker with the approval of the President.
  - f. Be responsible for meeting, seating, and introduction of VIPs.
  - g. With the approval of the President, select and appoint a Master of Ceremonies for the banquet.
  - h. With the assistance of the Entertainment Committee and the Board of Directors, will collect fees from the membership, if required.
  - i. If special entertainment is to be provided for the evening, coordinate such entertainment with the Entertainment Committee Chair.

### **BYLAWS COMMITTEE CHAIR**

1. The Bylaws and Standing Rules Committee Chair shall:
  - a. Receive and evaluate proposed changes to the Bylaws and/or Standing Rules.
  - b. Prepare a draft of the proposed Bylaw and/or Standing Rule and submit it to the Board of Directors for approval.
  - c. Present the proposed Bylaw and/or Standing Rule or change to the membership, if approved by the Board of Directors, for ratification.
  - d. Establish and maintain a current file of approved Bylaws and Standing Rules.
  - e. Be responsible for interpreting Chapter Bylaws and Standing Rules.

2. The Committee will review all Chapter Bylaws and Standing Rules at least annually and make recommendations for changes as appropriate.
3. Ratification of Bylaws and Standing Rules requires a two-thirds vote of the General Membership.
4. The basic governing document of the Chapter is its Constitution and Bylaws. The purpose of the Bylaws is to set forth laws to govern the internal operations of the Chapter. The Bylaws take precedence over all other documents with regards to settling disputes or in the interpretation of other written rules.
5. Standing Rules set forth administrative practices, and are secondary to the Bylaws. Standing Rules should be short and address the “How to” of a specific function.

### **ENTERTAINMENT CHAIR**

1. Responsible for development of a calendar of activities and events for the forthcoming year. The plan will be prepared at the start of the Entertainment Chair’s term of office.
2. Submit the calendar to the Board of Directors for approval.
3. Will be sure the plan reflects the desires of the membership. Will devise methods of determining the membership interest.
4. Will be responsible for informing the membership of pending events, in a timely manner.
5. Shall be responsible for informing the membership of expected dress, cost per couple/person, time and date of each event.

### **MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE CHAIR**

1. RECRUITING – Prepare and submit to the Board of Directors a program aimed at recruiting new chapter members.
2. RETENTION – Prepare and submit to the Board of Directors a program aimed at retaining current chapter members.
3. RECRUITER AWARD PROGRAM – Prepare and submit to the Board of Directors suitable rewards to be awarded to the top chapter recruiter of the year.
4. Is responsible for carrying out the plans for above programs, when such programs have been approved by the Board.
5. Will provide the Board and the General Membership regular update reports on chapter membership.

6. Is responsible for ordering and selling official TREA wearing apparel.
7. Will routinely submit the names of proposed new chapter members to the Membership Committee for approval.
8. Will perform such other duties as may be requested by the President.

## **NEWSLETTER EDITOR**

1. Publish and distribute a Chapter Newsletter at intervals approved by the Board of Directors.
2. The Newsletter will contain, as a minimum:
  - a. Calendar of events scheduled by the Chapter for the period covered by the Newsletter.
  - b. A report on those events that were listed in the calendar of events of the last Newsletter.
  - c. The date, time, location, and any other pertinent information, as to the next Board of Directors and/or General Membership Meetings.
  - d. If specific attire is suggested for a social event, the requirements should be spelled out in the Newsletter.
  - e. Any other information the Editor might find to be worthy of including.

**NOTE:** The Newsletter is the PRIMARY means of communicating with the members of the chapter. It also informs those that are not currently members, but are eligible, of chapter activities. It is often the first and only impression prospective chapter members have of the chapter. The Newsletter should be published in a timely fashion and should carry pertinent information, in an appealing format.

## **NOMINATING COMMITTEE CHAIR**

The Nominating Committee Chair shall:

1. Be ELECTED to his position, as will members that will serve with him. This does not preclude them from running for a chapter office.
2. Attempt to recruit at least two (2) candidates to stand for election to each office to be filled.
3. Have ballots passed out prior to the election process, and shall see that all ballots are collected for counting. The number of ballots to be distributed should be equal to the number of members the Sergeant-at-Arms verifies is present to vote.
4. Count the ballots and verify the count of each ballot with members of the committee.

5. Provide the results of the election to the President.

NOTE: The Nominating Committee has a BIG responsibility in selecting a suitable slate of officers, and for seeing that qualified individuals stand for election. Members of this committee must be persuasive and determined in achieving their objectives.



