

CONSTITUTION
AND
BY LAWS

AMERICAN GI FORUM

ARTICLE I

NAME: The name of this organization shall be:
"AMERICAN GI FORUM"

ARTICLE II

OBJECT: Section 1. The object for which this organization is established is to foster a Democratic and Voluntary Veterans organization. It's main purpose is mutual helpfulness, striving to procure for all persons as well as Veterans, the equal privileges to which they are entitled under the laws of our Country regardless of race, color, or creed. Stated briefly: procurement and safe guarding of the ideals of Democracy for which this Country has fought in all Wars fostering the practice of unquestioned loyalty to our government. The training and education of its citizens in order that the government from its lowest unit to its highest may exist in real and true democracy.

Section 2. The methods to be pursued shall be through its various Forums and branches by orderly discussions and dissemination of information in all matters pertinent to the organization and its purposes and through committees especially appointed and acting under the guidance and authority of the officers of each unit, all under the guidance and supervision of the mother unit organized at Corpus Christi, Nueces County, Texas, March 26, 1948.

Section 3. This organization shall exist as long as its membership may desire to maintain the same locally in Texas; or throughout the entire United States and its possessions.

ARTICLE III

MEMBERSHIP: Section 1. The membership of this organization shall consist of active members and Honorary Members.

Section 2. Active members hereinafter designated as members shall be all persons, male or female, who have honorable served in the United States Armed Forces in any of its wars.

Section 3. Honorary Members shall be those who have distinguished themselves as leaders in our community and whom the organization desires to have as honorary members, but who are not Veterans.

ARTICLE IV

MEMBERSHIP FEES: Section 1. The initiation fee shall be \$.25 for active members to be retained in the local treasury.

ARTICLE V

OFFICERS: Section 1. The officers of this organization shall be: PRESIDENT, VICE PRESIDENT, SECRETARY, TREASURER, and an Executive committee of three members as provided in Section 4.

Section 2. The president, vice president, secretary and treasurer shall be elected by a majority ballot of those present at the first regular meeting in April, or as otherwise provided by the by-laws.

Section 3. An executive secretary may be appointed by the executive committee.

Section 4. The executive committee shall be composed of three members. At second meeting in April, the senior member shall retire, the retiring president shall become the junior member of the committee to serve for three years and the member longest in service shall become chairman thereof.

Section 5. All officers except the members of the Executive committee shall serve for a term of one year or until their successors have been appointed or elected.

ARTICLE VI

AMENDMENTS: Section 1. Amendments to this constitution may be made by a three-fourths vote of members voting at any regular business meeting only after said amendment has been announced at a previous business meeting.

CHAPTER I

BY LAWS: Section 1. The candidate for membership shall submit to the membership committee proof of their having served honorably in the United States Armed Forces.

Section 2. Honorary members shall be chosen by unanimous vote of the executive committee. They shall pay no dues and shall have all the rights and privileges of members (active) except the right to vote or hold office. They shall report to the meeting, either in person or by communication at least once every six months.

CHAPTER II

ELECTION OF OFFICERS: Section 1. At the first regular meeting in April, the organization shall elect by ballot the following officers: President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer.

Section 2. A nominating committee of three members shall be appointed by the President at the last meeting in March. The committee shall present the names of candidates for each office of president, vice president, secretary and treasurer. The committee shall satisfy themselves that all nominees are in good standing and are willing to serve if elected.

Section 3. The report of the nominating committee shall be submitted at the first regular meeting in April. Nominations shall be accepted from the floor also. The nominees receiving the greatest number of votes shall be declared elected to the offices to which there were nominated.

Section 4. Only active members in good standing shall be entitled to vote and hold office.

Section 5. The newly elected officers shall be inducted into office at the last regular meeting in April.

CHAPTER III

DUTIES OF OFFICERS: Section 1. The president shall preside at all meetings of the society and perform all duties consistent with his office. He shall be ex-officio member of all committees. He shall appoint a nominating committee at the last regular meeting in March and also appoint all standing committees unless otherwise provided in the by-laws.

Section 2. In the absence of the president, the vice president shall assume the duties of the president.

Section 3. In the absence or inability of the president or vice president to act, the chairman of the executive committee shall call the meeting to order and preside.

Section 4. The secretary shall keep a correct and permanent record of the meeting and transactions of the society, conduct correspondence and perform all duties usually and customarily pertaining to the office of Secretary.

Section 5. The treasurer shall keep and receive funds of The Society and pay out same only upon order of the executive committee. He shall make a financial report at a regular meeting, semi-annually and shall be incorporated into the minutes of the meeting. He shall make a financial report to the president and executive committee quarterly.

Section 6. (a) The executive committee shall audit the books and accounts of the treasurer annually or oftener if deemed advisable.

(b) The executive committee shall have control of all money and other valuable property owned or belonging to the organization. No money or other valuable expended or disposed of without approval of the executive committee.

Section 7. Any officers who absents himself or fails to attend three consecutive regular meetings or fails to communicate with the organization within the said period shall deem to have vacated the said office.

Section 8. At the fourth regular meeting under section 7, above, the president shall announce that a vacancy exists for the said office.

Section 9 Any officer who vacates any office under Section 7, shall not be dropped from the roll. He may be carried on the roll as member.

CHAPTER IV

MEETINGS: Section 1. The dates for meetings shall be decided by ballot of majority of member's voting.

Section 2. Meetings shall be bi-monthly.

Section 3. All meetings shall be opened and closed with a prayer and pledge of allegiance.

CHAPTER V

STANDING COMMITTEE: Section 1. A membership committee. To get more members in the organization.

b. Entertainment committee. To arrange Dances, Receptions, Bar-b-Ques, etc.

c. Man Power Committee. To arrange burials to supply transportation to get supplies for meetings (chairs, etc)

d. Bonus committee. To keep informed and assimilate all legislation on benefits and bonuses for veterans. Investigate and report.

e. Educational Committee. To strive for educational advantages and equal opportunities for all citizens. Investigate and report. Arrange for yearly Back To SCHOOL DRIVES.

f. Public Relations Committee. To sell the American GI Forum to the public. To strive for better relations amongst the masses. Public Relations Officer is automatically its chairman.

g. Political Educational Program Committee. To study and recommend activities in all political campaigns in order that our members may vote intelligently. To invite candidates to attend meetings and answer questions submitted by committee and no more. No one shall even attempt to dictate how a member shall vote.

h. Child Welfare Committee. To take charge of all questions pertaining to juvenile delinquency and child welfare problems.

i. Hospitalization Committee. To secure the best possible hospitalization for veterans and to work toward more available hospital beds in the area.

j. Legislative Committee. A legislative committee will keep posted on all pending veterans legislation and keep the membership advised at all times in order that we may advocate and foster desirable legislation and oppose any legislation not to our best interest.

k. Organizational and Functional Committee. This committee shall perform such duties as may be necessary and required in expanding the organization throughout the area, State and Nation. Also to keep the organized Forums active.

l. Law and Order Committee (Civil Rights). This committee shall be interested in enforcement of all laws and the obtaining of all the legal rights, immunities and privileges of our members and the public generally; to the end that there shall be a minimum of abuses and constitutional violations.

m. Finance Committee. The finance committee shall be appointed by the President upon recommendation presented by nominating Committee. The president shall be ex-officio, a member of said committee as well as all other committees herein elsewhere created, said committeemen shall serve until removed, or who shall resign, for the term of the President who appoints such Committee or Committeemen to serve during his administration. The Treasurer shall serve as Chairman of Finance Committee, which said treasurer shall be bonded in such sum as the officers shall require and shall make a report at least once a month of receipts and disbursements and shall by proper receipt and voucher account for all moneys on hand expended or received by him. All movements for raising money shall be approved by the officers of the Unit and the finance committee in joint session, subject to review by the entire membership if and when requested from the floor by any member. The monthly dues shall be fixed by said Finance Committee in joint session with the officers elected from time to time, subject however to approval by the entire post or unit, after ample notice.

n. Committee of the Whole. In order to transform itself into a "Committee of the Whole" when a more informal discussion is desired than can be obtained under strict laws of debate the assembly will adhere to the following procedure:

The Whole assembly resolves itself into a committee, and for the time being the regular order of business of the meeting is in abeyance and in action until the particular problem under consideration is worked out. The presiding officer asks some member of the assembly to take chair and takes his place with the other members of the assembly. Rules as to the length of speeches and the number of speeches which can be made by any individual are temporarily suspended and the debate is carried on with the freedom which prevails at committee meetings. In order to transform itself into a Committee of the Whole, the assembly must hear a motion and second to that effect and must vote on it.

Section 2. An extension chairman shall be appointed by the president. It shall be his duty to establish and maintain all relationship between this organization and all other similar organizations. He shall prepare and submit all material pertinent to such affiliation and shall in cooperation with the executive committee render such aid and advice as is expedient.

Section 3. Any committee shall be appointed at any time for any purpose; such appointment to be made by the President with the recommendation of Nominating Committee.

CHAPTER VI

VACANCIES: Section 1. A vacancy in the Executive committee or any other committee shall be filled by appointment by the president.

Section 2. A vacancy in any office shall be filled by appointment by the executive committee, except in the office of president which shall be filled by the Vice-president.

CHAPTER VII

QUORUM: Section 1. A quorum for a regular or special meeting shall consist of not less than twelve members, including the officers, unless total membership is less than 15 then 8 members and one officer is a quorum.

CHAPTER VIII

PROCEDURE: Section 1. All parliamentary proceedings at the meeting of this organization shall be governed by "Robert Rules of Order, Revised", except where otherwise provided.

Section 2. The following shall be the order of business unless otherwise ordered by the presiding officer:

1. Call to order
2. Prayer
3. Pledge of Allegiance
4. Disposal of minutes
5. Report of officers
6. Report of committees
7. Unfinished business
8. New business
9. Election of officers (1st meeting of April) or installation of officers (last meeting in April)
10. Adjournment

CHAPTER IX

AMENDMENTS: Section 1. Amendments to these by-laws may be made at any regular or special meeting by majority vote of the members present. Notice of such amendments having been given to the members not less than one meeting prior to the time of voting.

CHAPTER X

OATH: Section 1. Members Oath. Each member shall subscribe to the following oath:
"I do solemnly promise and swear that I will uphold the constitution of the United States, my State and my flag. That I will abide by the Constitution and By-Laws of the AMERICAN GI FORUM and that I will neither wrong nor harm, in any way shape or form the same nor a member thereof, SO HELP ME GOD".

Section 2. Oath of Office:

I _____ do hereby solemnly promise and swear to uphold the constitution and By-laws of the AMERICAN GI FORUM of which I am _____ further that my conduct and thoughts shall always be for the betterment and advancement of said organization, that I shall carry on with greater dignity and increased prestige all Forum activities and that I shall not take any part in any activity or discussion not approved by the Forum unless authorized to do so. That I will serve to the best of my ability and strive for cooperation with all committees and officers of the Forum; to this I shall always adhere and uphold to the utmost, SO HELP ME GOD.

These by-laws and this Constitution may be amended at any time by two-thirds vote of the unit membership after ten days notice.

APPROVED BY THE MEMBERSHIP THIS THE _____ DAY OF _____

1948 AT CORPUS CHRISTI, NUECES COUNTY, TEXAS.

OFFICIAL

PRESIDENT

SECRETARY

TREASURER

PRAYER OF ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI

LORD, make me an instrument of The Peace.
Where there is hatred, let me sow love.
Where there is injury, pardon.
Where there is doubt, faith.
Where there is despair, hope.
Where there is darkness, light.
Where there is sadness, joy.

O, Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to
be consoled as to console; to be understood, as to under-
stand; to be loved, as to love, for it is in giving that
we receive, it is in pardoning that we are pardoned, and
it is in dying that we are born to Eternal Life.