

The Little Gold Book



Ceremonial and Business Procedures

of

American Gold Star Mothers, Inc.

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Welcome to American Gold Star Mothers, Inc. We are an organization, established in 1928, of mothers who have lost a son or daughter in the service of our country. Chartered by the United States Congress in 1984, American Gold Star Mothers (AGSM), Inc. continues to honor our sons and daughters through service – service to veterans and patriotic events.

The Little Gold Book, first printed as the Ritual, provides necessary and important procedures, protocol and ceremonial activities essential for conducting Chapter, Department and National events pertaining to AGSM, Inc.

Specifics outlined in this handbook (i.e., conducting meetings, officer responsibilities, and installation of officers) may be used at respective Chapter, Department, or National events.

WEARING WHITE

WEARING WHITE

Wearing White is a time-honored tradition of the American Gold Star Mothers, Inc. While black is a traditional color of mourning, the decision to wear white, rather than black, denotes the celebration of our children's goodness, innocence, and sacrifice.

Associate Members and guests may choose to wear patriotic attire in keeping with the dress code of the occasion at which the Mothers are dressed in white. AGSM periodically offers associate members a polo shirt that coordinates with the Mother's white polo.

Chapter Meetings, Department Conventions and our National Convention call for the wearing of white as suggested attire, not a requirement.

Wearing White should be in keeping with the dress code of the occasion (i.e., casual, business, or formal).

The American Gold Star Mothers, Inc. cap is the official head attire of the organization. The Organizational Cap may be worn indoors or outdoors for official AGSM, Inc. functions. When a member is invited to attend other Veterans Service Organization functions as an AGSM Member, she may wear the AGSM cap.

FLAG ETIQUETTE

PRESENTING AND RETIRING COLORS

The official colors of American Gold Star Mothers, Inc. may be referred to as the Organizational Banner or Banner. The AGSM Honor Guard will consist of the Flag Guard (carries the U.S. Flag) and the Banner Guard (carries the Organizational Banner). The United States Flag and the Organizational Banner are to be displayed at all official functions of the organization.

When carried in a procession, the flagstaffs are to be carried to the right side of the Flag and Banner Guards. The US flag should always have the place of “Marching Right” or the flag’s own right. The AGSM Banner should be on the flag’s left. All other Department banners should follow the procession behind the National Banner.

Members should familiarize themselves with proper U.S. Flag etiquette. When the U.S. Flag is in motion, members will stand solemnly with the right hand over the heart. During the Pledge of Allegiance all hand-held articles should be laid aside and place the right hand over the heart. The Honor Guard is silent during the performance of their duties.

It is recommended the Honor Guard wear white business attire, organization caps, and white gloves.

The AGSM Honor Guard will lead the procession at the opening of the National Convention. Department Flags will follow (if on hand). The U.S. Flag crosses in front of Organizational Banner, and the guards simultaneously place the U.S. Flag and the Banner in the respective stands.

At all official functions of the Organization, the Pledge of Allegiance is given, while singing the National Anthem is optional. The Banner shall be dipped while the Pledge is given and the Anthem sung. The U. S. Flag is never dipped.

RETIRING COLORS

When the President asks to retire the colors, the Flag and

FLAG ETIQUETTE

Banner Guard stand, recover the flags and walk directly to the back of the room, making sure to keep the same pace.

MEETING CONDUCT

CONDUCTING (Chapter/Department/National) MEETINGS

All business meetings must be opened according to Ritual, with Charter displayed.

The Sergeant-At-Arms, Pages, and the Honor Guard will wear organization caps. Organization caps are optional for other members.

It is the duty of the Sergeant-at-Arms to see that the room is properly set up.

It is the Chaplain's responsibility to arrange the altar.

The Honor Guard will ensure that the U.S. Flag and Banner are in their place before, and properly cared for after each meeting.

Only members of the organization ever stand at the altar.

No one shall pass between the altar and the President's station while the meeting is in session and the Bible is open except when draping Charter.

The members stand and render proper etiquette when the U.S. Flag is in motion or during the Pledge of Allegiance. The Honor Guard is to remain stationary and silent during the Pledge of Allegiance or the singing of the National Anthem.

The Chaplain approaches the altar, reverently opens the Bible, offers prayer, steps back a few steps still facing altar, then turns and returns to her station.

All communications from the National and the Department Boards must be read at business meetings of the Chapter.

The Corresponding Secretary keeps a copy of all written correspondence. At the end of the year the President may appoint a committee to review and discard all unimportant correspondence.

The Recording Secretary's notes may be bound in a volume or prepared by digital means. After minutes are approved, they shall be dated and signed by the Recording Secretary and President.

After the Treasurer's report is given, the President will ask to have the report filed subject to audit.

Warrants, or requests, for all expenditures from Chapter/Department/National Headquarters funds shall be received by the Corresponding Secretary, and if approved, co-signed by her and

MEETING CONDUCT

the President. All checks will be made out by the Treasurer for appropriation of money and will be co-signed by two (President, Treasurer, or Corresponding Secretary).

The Chapter/Department/National History book is the property of the Chapter/Department/National Organization, or it may be presented to the outgoing President.

A member in “good standing” is one whose Chapter dues have been paid for the current year and whose per capita (National Dues) has been received by the Department and National Treasurer.

If a Mother is financially unable to pay her dues, and the Chapter so desires, her per capita (National dues) may be paid from Chapter funds, with no mention of the Mother’s name.

The Chaplain may act as Welfare or Floral Chairman. The First Vice President may be Chairman of the Membership Committee and the Second Vice President may be Chairman of the Ways and Means Committee.

CHAPTER MINUTES – OUTLINE

The minutes of a regular meeting of the Chapter/Department/National Headquarters, as recorded by the respective Recording Secretary, should include the following:

- Number of officers present and the names of those absent.
- Name of Mother for whom the Charter is draped.
- Summary of Treasurer’s report, giving total receipts and total expenditures since the previous meeting, and the balance carried forward.
- Corresponding Secretary’s report which should include received communications from -----(giving name of organization or Individuals.)
- Bills received, and the Chapter vote to pay for each bill.
- Reports (only pertinent details.)
- Record of all motions made with the name of the Mother

MEETING CONDUCT

offering motion and the name of the Mother seconding. Do not give details of discussion. Simply state, "Discussion followed" and give results of vote.

MEETING RITUAL

PRESIDENT: Will the Officers please take their respective stations and the Sergeant-at-Arms please close the door.

PRESIDENT: Color Guard, present the colors.

(All Stand)

(Music may be played as the Color Guard proceeds to the altar.)

PRESIDENT: Madam Chaplain, please approach the altar and open the Bible.

(Chaplain leaves her station, slowly approaches the altar and reverently opens the Bible.)

PRESIDENT: We will have a moment of silent prayer in the name of peace and freedom.

(Members offer silent prayer.)

PRESIDENT: Our Chaplain will now ask the Divine Blessing.

MEETING CONDUCT

CHAPLAIN: Our Father, we pray that your presence may be felt in all our hearts at this time. Bless our Nation, for which our Sons and Daughters gave their lives.

Bless the members of this beloved Organization, oh Lord. Open our hearts so that we may live in loving kindness, causing peace and harmony to prevail.

Offer mercy, we pray, and lift up those who are in sorrow or sickness. Will you in your infinite tenderness help them find comfort and healing at this time.

Guide us, that we may become a great power in this land for Charity, Service, and Loyalty. In Your Name we give you all honor and glory both now and forever, Amen.

(The Chaplain, still facing the altar, takes a few steps back, and returns to her station.)

PRESIDENT: Mothers, The Americanism Chairman will now lead us in the Pledge of Allegiance.

(All repeat together.)

AMERICANISM CHAIRMAN: "I 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."

(The National Anthem may be sung.)

PRESIDENT: Post the Colors.

(The Flag Guard and Banner Guard simultaneously post the colors in respective flag stands, using proper flag etiquette.)

(Members may be seated)

PRESIDENT: Madam First Vice President, what is our preamble?

MEETING CONDUCT

(First Vice President rises.)

FIRST VICE PRESIDENT: In fond memory of our Sons and Daughters who died in military service to our Country; in the sincere belief that the sacrifices they have made will cause to burn more brightly the fires of patriotism and glory; in the lasting hope that our young men and women have helped to create a structure that time cannot tear down; and with a compelling desire to carry on the torch they let fall with death:

We, inspired by the love, we bore them, have associated ourselves together for the purpose of perpetuating the noble principles for which they fought and died.

PREISIDENT: Thank you Madam First Vice President. Madam Second Vice President, what is our mission?

(Second Vice President rises.)

SECOND VICE PRESIDENT: Our mission is to assist all those who bear the sacred name of “Gold Star Mother” and help each other bear the cross of sorrow which has come to us through the sacrifices our Sons and Daughters made for Freedom and Democracy; to work for the mutual benefit of all Gold Star Mothers; to minister and serve the disabled comrades, as best we can, of our Sons and Daughters; to cooperate with all Veterans Service Organizations, Civic and patriotic organizations in commemorating the deeds of our fallen heroes particularly on Memorial Day and all through the days of the year; and to encourage peace and harmony between all peoples.

PRESIDENT: Thank you Madam Second Vice President.

I now declare this Chapter/Department/ National Convention of the American Gold Star Mothers, Inc., convened for the transaction of such business as officially comes before it.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

MEETING CONDUCT

1. Roll Call of officers.
2. Draping of Charter (Page 18).
3. Obligation Members (page 16).
4. Reading of minutes of previous meeting.
(After approval, to be signed by Secretary and President, with date.)
5. Report of Treasurer
(Motion here to have Treasurer's report filed for audit.)
6. Report of Standing Committees.
 - a. Finance and Budget
 - b. Headquarters
 - c. Standing Rules
 - d. Constitution & By-Laws
 - e. Legislative
7. Report of Special Committees (as appointed by the President) and may include:
 - a. Veterans Affairs
 - b. Ways and Means
 - c. Membership
(Reports of any other committees that the President or Chapter deems necessary.)
8. Reading of bills and communications by Corresponding Secretary.
(Any action on communications taken at this time.)
9. Short recess may be declared by the President at any time throughout the order of business.
(Chaplain closes Bible for recess and opens Bible before regular order of business is continued.)
10. Unfinished Business.
11. New Business.
12. Good of the Order.

MEETING CONDUCT

(Suggestions by members.)

PRESIDENT: If there is no further business to come before the Chapter/Department/National, we will proceed to close.

(All Stand)

PRESIDENT: Let us bow our heads in silent prayer in memory of those who have made the ultimate sacrifice.

(Offer moment of silent prayer).

PRESIDENT: Madam Chaplain will you please lead us in the closing prayer.

(Chaplain approaches the altar.)

CHAPLAIN: Dear Heavenly Father, we thank you for this privilege of meeting together, and as we go forth to intermingle with the busy world, we ask you to protect and guide us according to your most holy will. Help us to do your work through our words and our deeds.

Dear Father, as we go about our busy days, help us to remember our obligation to you, and to each other. May we go from here to better work and better usefulness to our country and to those we have promised to help. Oh Lord, enlighten our understanding and bless our efforts to continue honoring our Sons and Daughters through our service.

All this we ask in your name, Amen.

(Chaplain closes Bible and returns to her station).

PRESIDENT: Color Guard, Retire the Colors

(Color Guard retires the colors)

MEETING CONDUCT

PRESIDENT: I now declare this Chapter Meeting/Department Convention/National Convention of American Gold Star Mothers, Inc., ended. (May offer next meeting date at this time.)

OATH OF OBLIGATION

OBLIGATION

The Oath of Obligation is to be used at the Installation Ceremony of all new Chapters and Departments, and the National Convention of American Gold Star Mothers, Inc. The Oath of Obligation should be recited at Chapter meetings and Department Conventions when a new member is present. The Oath will not be taken lightly and will remind Gold Star Mothers of the camaraderie we share, just as our fallen Sons and Daughters did while defending our Nation.

(All Stand)

PRESIDENT: Mother(s), as a member of our organization, I earnestly trust that you fully understand the objects for which we are banded together.

OATH OF OBLIGATION

Please raise your right hand, and repeat after me, using your name where I do mine.

(/ denotes a pause.)

I (name) / in the presence of Almighty God / and these American Gold Star Mothers / do of my own free will and accord / most faithfully promise / that I will comply / with all the Constitution and Bylaws / of this organization.

That I will never wrong / or permit a wrong to be done / to any member of this organization if it is in my power to prevent it.

Should my affiliation with this organization / cease in any way / I shall consider this pledge / a lifelong obligation. I will bear true faith and allegiance / to the United States of America / and to the advancement / of my Country's honor.

All this I promise / on my honor / as a true American.

PRESIDENT: You may lower your hands.

DRAPING OF CHARTER

DRAPING OF CHARTER

When the Organization is deprived of one of its members by death, the Chapter or National Charter will be draped in black during the meeting immediately following her death.

The Sergeant-at-Arms may assist the Chaplain with Draping of the Charter.

The following ceremony is to be used, with or without the accompaniment of soft music.

PRESIDENT: With deep regret, let us remember our beloved Gold Star Mother (name), who died since our last gathering. In sympathy, we will drape our Charter in loving memory of (name).

(All Stand)

(The Sergeant-at-Arms may escort the Chaplain to the Charter. Facing the Charter the Chaplain says:)

CHAPLAIN: It is my solemn duty to drape the Charter of ---- Chapter/National, in memory of our departed Gold Star Mother --- (name).

(Chaplain drapes Charter and offers the following prayer.)

CHAPLAIN: Dear Heavenly Father, hear our prayer as we gather here to honor our departed Mother. Though she has died and left this earth, as we know it, may she live again in the mansion that has been prepared for her in Your house. Grant us wisdom to understand Your greatness, discernment to see Your goodness and insight to accept your love with humility and thanksgiving. Amen.

(The Lord's Prayer may be repeated in unison.)

(The Sergeant-at-Arms and Chaplain return to their stations.)

INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS

INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS

The President-elect shall plan the installation of her officers and shall choose the Installing Officer, who must be a member in good standing. The Installing Officer shall be a Current or Past Chapter President, Current Department or Past Department Officer, Current National or Past National Officer of the American Gold Star Mothers, Inc.

The Ritual of the American Gold Star Mothers, Inc. shall be used for the Installation Ceremony and will normally be conducted as last on the agenda of the Chapter/Department/National meeting.

The President-elect should have at least the following officers for the Installation Ceremony, the Installing Officer, Chaplain, Sergeant-at-Arms, and if possible, an officer or member to fill each of the remaining stations.

When installations are open to the public, the ceremony takes place after the meeting has been declared open according to Ritual. No additional business other than the installation ceremony will be conducted.

The retiring President presides until she introduces and turns the meeting over to the Installing Officer.

After Installation, the newly installed President presides and closes meeting.

A list of names of officers and the office they are about to assume, in proper order according to Ritual, shall be prepared and given to the Installing Officer.

In an emergency where an officer is unable to be present at time of Installation, the Chapter/Department/National President, shall administer the oath of office at the next meeting.

Officers will assume their duties immediately following installation.

Installing Officer: Will the Installing Sergeant-at-Arms retire with officers and prepare for Installation.

INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS

(Officers, led by Installation Sergeant-at-Arms, will walk from the room in an orderly fashion.)

Installing Sergeant-at-Arms will place the Officers in pairs as follows:

President..... National Service Officer (National only)

2nd Vice President.....1st Vice President

Recording Secretary.....Corresponding Secretary

Treasurer.....Chaplain

Community Service Chairman.....VAVS Chairman

Historian.....Sergeant-at-Arms

Americanism Chairman.....Parliamentarian

Legislative Chairman.....Flag and Banner Guards

(After Installing Sergeant-at-Arms has Officers placed in their proper order, she enters the meeting room and announces to the Installation Officer.)

Installing Sergeant-at-Arms: Madam Installing Officer, the Officers are assembled and prepared.

Installing Officer: Madam Installing Sergeant-at-Arms, please present the Officers at the altar.

(Installing Sergeant-at-Arms steps in line and walks in with the President-Elect. Officers form a semi-circle with the President-elect in the center. Installing Sergeant-at-Arms then steps to the side of the semi-circle, and waits for further instructions.)

(All stand)

Installing Officer: Let us all bow our heads while we are led in prayer.

Installing Chaplain or Member of the Clergy: Our Father, we pray You are with us at this time and draw especially near to the Mothers

INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS

assembled before you. They are about to assume a most sacred obligation. Father, please grant them strength to carry out the sacred promises made before God and all of us assembled here. Guide them in all things, that they may perform the duties of their offices with honor and dignity and by doing so, will gain the love and approval of their fellow Gold Star Mothers. Through their work, may they hear in their hearts, your voice, whispering, "Well done, my good and faithful servant." All this we ask in Your name, Amen.

(Members may be seated)

Installing Officer: Officers, you have been elected or appointed to responsible positions. Perform the duties of your office faithfully and conscientiously, meeting all challenges with compassion and strength bravely as true Americans.

Do you accept the office to which you have been elected or appointed?

(All answer, "I do".)

Installing Officer: That being your intention, I will ask you to raise your right hand and repeat the following pledge using your name where I do mine.

(/ Denotes pause.)

I (name) / in the presence of Almighty God / pledge allegiance / to the Flag of the United States of America / and accept the office / to which I have been elected or appointed / and promise to fill such office / to the best of my ability.

I pledge to conduct myself / in such a manner / that will only reflect good of the order / keeping sacred its ritual / and will comply / with all the Constitution and Bylaws/ of American Gold Star Mothers / and when my successor / has been duly elected and installed / I will turn over to her / all books and other property of the organization / in my possession.

INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS

Installing Officer: Madam President, step forward please.

(President steps forward.)

Installing Officer: Madam President, you, by your election and promise are this day assuming a grave responsibility. It shall be your duty to preside at meetings of the (Chapter/Department/National Organization), and to preserve order therein. You will decide all questions of debate, subject however, to an appeal to the Chapter. It will be your duty to appoint all committees, not otherwise provided for, obligate new members, and sign (all warrants and, if used) checks drawn on the Treasury, for appropriation of money.

(Chapter only: At all elections you will act as judge, and should the Chapter disband during your term of office, you shall forward immediately to the Department, the Charter and all money belonging to the Chapter. By virtue of your office, you are a member of the Department Board and should represent your Chapter at meetings of the Department.)

Remember you are the guiding hand and you must be charitable in your dealings and upright in your example, for yours is a trustworthy position, and let not the confidence that has been placed in you be unappreciated.

The members in electing you have promised to support you in your efforts and you can look to them for assistance.

(After charge, President steps back into position. Other officers step forward as they are called.)

Installing Officer: Madam National Service Officer, you have been duly appointed to manage the day-to-day actions pertaining to the National Headquarters. Your duties will include receiving mail delivered to National Headquarters, managing operational activity pertaining to our National Headquarters, receiving and processing all membership applications, and assist the National Executive Board with necessary actions for them to complete their duties. You will

INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS

perform such other duties as the President may direct.

Installing Officer: Madam First Vice President and Madam Second Vice President, you have been duly elected and are to uphold and maintain the Constitution and By-Laws of the American Gold Star Mothers, Inc., and assist the President in any way that may be within your power.

Madam First Vice President, it shall be your duty to preside at meetings of the Chapter/Department/National Organization in the absence of the President.

Madam Second Vice President, it shall be your duty to preside at meetings of the Chapter/Department/National Organization in the absence of the President and First Vice President.

You are both to familiarize yourselves with your duties so that when obliged to assume these responsibilities, you may be qualified to do so.

***Installing Officer:** Madam Recording Secretary, in electing you for this important office, the membership shows its confidence in your ability to perform all duties required of you. Your minutes will be the only evidence in the future of what has been done in the (Chapter/Department/National Organization). It is important that all matters pertaining to the business of the Organization be properly recorded. Guard well these records and be faithful to the maximum.

Installing Officer: Madam Corresponding Secretary, it shall be your duty to manage the correspondence of the (Chapter/Department/National Organization) and keep a copy of same; sign all warrants, or checks, with the President, you will assist the President in managing incoming and outgoing correspondence.

(*At the National Level, Recording & Corresponding duties are the responsibility of the National Secretary.)

Installing Officer: Madam Treasurer, one holding such an office shall possess the qualifications of fidelity and accuracy.

INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS

You are responsible for the funds of the Chapter/Department/National Organization. It shall be your duty to keep an accurate account of each member; pay all orders drawn by the Corresponding Secretary and signed by the President; collect all money due the Chapter/Department/National Organization, giving a receipt therefore; notify all members regarding the payment of dues; and at each meeting provide a statement of the financial condition of the Organization.

Installing Officer: Madam Chaplain, it shall be your duty to conduct devotional moments at the opening and closing of each meeting; conduct all Memorial Services; send names and addresses of deceased members and Dads to the Chaplain of the Department/National Headquarters; and perform such other duties as pertains to your office.

Installing Officer: Madam Custodian of Records, it shall be your duty to keep a copy of all applications for membership in the Chapter/Department after they have been approved and the member has been obligated; and perform such other duties as the President may direct.

Installing Officer: Madam Historian, it shall be your duty to preserve a record of the activities of the Chapter, past and current.

You will keep all pictures, newspaper articles, and other items of historic value to the Chapter/Department/National Organization. Items of Department and National importance should be sent to the respective historians.

Installing Officer: Madam Sergeant-at-Arms, it shall be your duty to guard the door of the Chapter/Department/National Organization meeting room and see that order is maintained during meetings. You shall assist during obligation ceremonies and perform such other duties as the President may direct.

INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS

Installing Officer: Madam Americanism Chairman, it shall be your duty to lead the Pledge of Allegiance at the opening of meetings and to further all patriotic work as outlined in the objectives of the American Gold Star Mothers, Inc. You shall assist in programs set up by the Department and National Americanism Chairman.

Installing Officer: Madam Veterans Administration Volunteer Services (VAVS) Chairman, it shall be your duty to render such service as your Chapter/Department/National Board directs, to veterans through the VAVS Representatives, and all other hospital work through the proper authorities. You shall submit a report annually to the Department/National VAVS Chairman.

Remember, you are the one who represents this Chapter/Department/National Organization in the work of giving comfort and service to the men and women who defended our Nation and were wounded or incapacitated in service.

Installing Officer: Madam Community Service Chairman, it shall be your duty to compile the Community Service Report, from the reports given to you by your Chapter/Department members of their community service activities, and forward same to the Department/National Organization Community Service Chairman.

Installing Officer: Madam Parliamentarian, you shall study the Constitution and By-Laws of the American Gold Star Mothers, Inc. and interpret it upon the request of the President. You shall become familiar with Roberts Rules of Order and advise the President during meeting

Installing Officer: Madam Legislative Chairman, you shall keep informed of all pertinent legislation of interest and benefit to American Gold Star Mothers, Inc. and inform the members.

Installing Officer: Madam Flag Guard, Madam Banner Guard, it shall be your duty to carry the Colors in presenting and retiring same at

INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS

Chapter meetings; assist at obligation of new members and at such times as the President may direct.

You will see that the Flag and Banner are in their place before, and properly cared for after each meeting. You will display them at official times and do so with dignity and reverence.

The Chaplain or member of the Clergy may offer the prayer below or personal words of prayer.

Chaplain: Our Heavenly Father, we come before you with grateful hearts for Your many blessings, be with us today in this our meeting, give us strength to do your will. If any of our members are ill or in sorrow, comfort and keep them. Guide and direct us in the daily walks of life and hear us as we pray. Amen

(The Lord's Prayer may be sung by soloist or repeated in unison by the assemblage.)

Installing Officer: Installing Sergeant-at-Arms, conduct the newly installed officers (minus the newly elected President) to their stations, as I call their name and office. Please remain standing until all have been taken to their stations.

(Have list of officers' names and office.)

Installing Officer: Installing Sergeant-at-Arms, please conduct the newly installed President to her station.

Installing Officer: Madam President, allow me to congratulate you upon the honor bestowed upon you by the members of this Chapter/Department/National Headquarters. May you perform every duty of your office faithfully, and may this Chapter/Department/National Organization grow in love and significance during your administration. I now present you with this emblem of authority, the gavel, may you wield it wisely and gently.

INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS

(Installing Officer raises her right hand.)

And now, by the power vested in me, I declare these Officers of –(Chapter/Department/National Organization) of American Gold Star Mothers, Inc., duly installed and qualified to enter upon the duties of their respective offices for the ensuing year.

RITUAL SERVICE FOR DECEASED

RITUAL SERVICE FOR DECEASED MEMBERS

The Chapter members should attend funerals of deceased members and conduct the Ritual Service when requested to do so by the family. (Consult the family as to the time and the place for the Ritual Service.)

If Colors are requested, they should be posted previously. The American Flag should be at the head of the casket, the Gold Star Banner at the foot.

The President and the Chaplain conduct the Ritual Service. The President (or her representative) takes her position at the head of the casket, the Chaplain at the foot.

If possible, each member attending the Ritual Service should have a flower (preferably gold or yellow). These are to be placed in a vase by each member at the end of the service.

The President places her flower in the vase first, then the Chaplain; they then return to their places where they remain standing until the last member leaves the casket.

Members approach casket two by two and after placing their flowers, stand solemnly with their hand over their heart, for a few seconds, then turn and leave the casket as the next two fall in line, and so on until all have placed flowers and the service is ended.

RITUAL SERVICE FOR DECEASED MEMBERS at CHAPEL

PRESIDENT: Mothers, we gather this day to pay tribute of love and respect and remember our departed Gold Star Mother.

She gave to the defense of this land of ours, that which is the utmost precious of jewels – her (Son/Daughter) who has given (his/her) life for Freedom and Democracy.

RITUAL SERVICE FOR DECEASED

(President places a flower in the vase saying:)

I place this flower in the name of the American Gold Star Mother, (name of Chapter) with the love and respect of the organization and with a prayer that we shall meet in the world beyond.

CHAPLAIN: Dear Heavenly Father, hear our prayers, as we gather here to honor and remember our dear Gold Star Mother. We ask that she may live again in the mansion that has been prepared for her in Your House. Amen

(The Lord's Prayer or Psalm 23, or both, may be repeated by all.)

(Chaplain places a flower in the vase after prayer.)

The following prayer may be repeated at a service for Fathers:

PRAYER FOR DECEASED GOLD STAR FATHERS

Dear Heavenly Father, we are gathered here today to pay our respects to Gold Star Father -----.

Hear our prayers for his family and friends. Comfort and guide them in their daily walks of life.

Bless our dear Gold Star Father. May eternal light shine upon him and bring him to everlasting rest and peace in the world beyond.

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