



# NEWS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **USC professor, Pulitzer finalist honored for account of veterans' anti-Nazi spy ring**

**COLD SPRING, Ky.** – The DAV (Disabled American Veterans) Bugle Award to recognize outstanding contributions of media that spotlight issues related to disabled veterans has been awarded to Dr. Steven J. Ross of Los Angeles today at the DAV and DAV Auxiliary 97th National Convention in Reno, Nevada.

While conducting historical research on another subject, the University of Southern California history professor uncovered evidence of a largely unknown California spy ring started in 1933 by DAV life member Leon Lewis, aimed at stomping out Nazi terror plots in the U.S. His book, *Hitler in Los Angeles: How Jews Foiled Nazi Plots Against Hollywood and America*, was a Pulitzer finalist and has been optioned by Bruce Cohen (American Beauty, Silver Linings Playbook) for a feature film.

“Our nation was a different place in the 1930s amid the Great Depression,” said DAV National Commander Delphine Metcalf-Foster. “Nazi-ism had firmly taken root in Germany and world powers were at a loss on how to stop Hitler’s conquest of Europe. In America, wounded, ill and injured veterans had every reason to feel disenfranchised and forgotten by their government. The benefits they were promised, which they courageously earned in the trenches of World War I, were being cut.”

Lewis uncovered Nazi plans to target and recruit American combat veterans, just as Hitler had successfully done in Germany. Plans existed for hanging Hollywood actors and prominent figures including Al Jolson, Eddie Cantor, Charlie Chaplin, Louis B. Mayer and Jack Warner. There were also plans to gun down Jewish residents in Los Angeles with machine guns, fumigate Jewish homes with cyanide, blow up military installations and seize munitions from National Guard armories.

“This book illustrates how Lewis and other DAV members countered the Nazi threat in our homeland,” said DAV National Adjutant Marc Burgess. “It proves the unwavering patriotism of our founding members and their continuing story of courage and love for our country, despite the challenges presented to them by our own government during a very tumultuous time.”

Photos and media from the event may be made available upon request.

### **About DAV:**

*DAV empowers veterans to lead high-quality lives with respect and dignity. It is dedicated to a single purpose: fulfilling our promises to the men and women who served. DAV does this by ensuring that veterans and their families can access the full range of benefits available to them; fighting for the interests of America’s injured heroes on Capitol Hill; providing employment resources to veterans and their spouses; and educating the public about the great sacrifices and needs of veterans transitioning back to civilian life. DAV, a nonprofit organization with more than 1 million members, was founded in 1920 and chartered by the U. S. Congress in 1932. Learn more at [www.dav.org](http://www.dav.org)*