

WARS & SCARS

The Story of Compassion & Service
for our Nation's Disabled Veterans

A HISTORY OF THE DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS



Mission Statement

Made up exclusively of man and women disabled in our nation's defense, the Disabled American Veterans is dedicated to one single purpose: building better lives for all of our nation's disabled veterans and their families.

This mission is carried forward by:

Providing free, professional assistance to veterans and their families in obtaining benefits and services earned through military service and provided by the Department of Veteran Affairs and other agencies of government;

Providing outreach concerning its program services to the American people generally, and to disabled veterans and their families specifically;

Representing the interests of disabled veterans, their families, their widowed spouses and their orphans before Congress, the White House, and the Judicial Branch, as well as state and local government;

Extending the DAV's mission of hope into the communities where these veterans and their families live through a network of state-level Departments and local Chapters; and

Providing a structure through which disabled veterans can express their compassion for their fellow veterans through a variety of volunteer programs.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT & CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Arthur H. Wilson

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS
& CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER**
Richard E. Patterson

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
WASHINGTON
HEADQUARTERS**
David W. Gorman

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS
Thomas L. Wilborn
David E. Autry
Gary Weaver
Thomas K. Keller

CREATIVE DIRECTION
Gary Weaver

DESIGN
ID8 Design

PRINTING
The IPR Group
American Printing

PHOTOGRAPHY
Jim Calloway
Larry Scott
Library of Congress
National Archives

Bob Sehatz/Getty
Shawn Spence
Department of
Defense
Cincinnati Historical
Society Library

Associated Press
U.S. Army
U.S. Navy
U.S. Marine Corps
U.S. Air Force

Table of Contents

PREFACE	PAGE 1
CHAPTER 1	PENCILS ON STREET CORNERS PAGE 3
	THE BEGINNING OF THE DAV PAGE 6
CHAPTER 2	A NATIONAL ORGANIZATION IS BORN PAGE 11
	TRIUMPHANT FIRST CONVENTION PAGE 13
	FROM HIGH PRINCIPLES TO HARD WORK PAGE 15
	DAV AUXILIARY FOUNDED PAGE 17
	FUNDRAISING PROGRESS PAGE 18
CHAPTER 3	BONUS MARCHERS & FALSE ECONOMIES PAGE 21
	CHARTERED BY CONGRESS PAGE 24
	IDENTO TAGS: A FUNDRAISING BREAKTHROUGH PAGE 25
CHAPTER 4	THE MOST COSTLY WAR PAGE 27
	RESPONDING TO A NEW GENERATION PAGE 30
CHAPTER 5	KOREA AND THE COLD WAR PAGE 35
CHAPTER 6	THE LONGEST WAR PAGE 39
	THE DAV & VIETNAM VETERANS PAGE 42
	A NEW NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS PAGE 45
CHAPTER 7	CHANGING OF THE GUARD PAGE 49
CHAPTER 8	NEW WARS AND A NEW ERA PAGE 55
	YEARS OF CHANGE AND GROWTH PAGE 58
CHAPTER 9	THE GULF WAR LEGACY PAGE 65
	DEFINING MOMENT PAGE 68
	NEW BEGINNINGS, NEW SUCCESSSES PAGE 70
CHAPTER 10	DECADE OF EXCELLENCE PAGE 73
	BUILDING THE FUTURE PAGE 75
	THE ACADEMY PAGE 77
	WASHINGTON BATTLES PAGE 78
	BUILDING UP PROGRAMS OF SERVICE PAGE 80
	INCREASING SUPPORT PAGE 84
	THE FIGHT FOR JUSTICE PAGE 86
CHAPTER 11	THE NEW CENTURY AND WAR ON TERROR PAGE 89
	WAR IN IRAQ PAGE 98
	BUILDING THE VOLUNTEER LEGACY PAGE 100
	KEEPING MEMORY ALIVE PAGE 102
	SEAL OF APPROVAL PAGE 106
CHAPTER 12	CENTURY OF HOPE PAGE 111
ANNEX	NATIONAL COMMANDER TERMS PAGE 117
	NATIONAL ADJUTANT TERMS PAGE 121

PREFACE

Wars and scars—those are the hard facts of history that brought about the creation of the Disabled American Veterans. Compassion and service—those are the tools with which the DAV responds to our Nation’s disabled veterans and their families.

This great organization was formed as our country struggled to deal with the painful effects of World War I. At this moment our Nation is struggling once again with the impact of war—as American men and women face combat in Iraq, Afghanistan, and other nations.

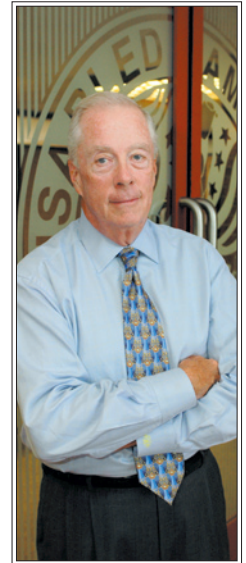
A great deal has changed in the 85 years since the DAV was founded, but this much has remained the same: those who come home from war wounded and sick need the care and attention of a grateful nation. And our Nation’s citizens have an organization they can trust to serve as their vehicle of compassion for their wartime disabled veterans. Through the DAV, they can fully express their appreciation and their concerns for those whose bodies and minds have been forever scarred by war.

But the story on the pages that follow—the history of the Disabled American Veterans—is not a story of able-bodied people taking care of handicapped veterans. While it is certainly true that the American people have been invaluable partners in the DAV’s mission, the work of our organization has been a self-help proposition since the beginning. The DAV—disabled veterans helping disabled veterans—continues working cohesively to build better lives for all disabled veterans and their families!

As you read about the men and women of the DAV in the following chapters, please remember that all those mentioned are themselves disabled veterans, struggling with their own disabilities as they help others.

That’s what it’s all about in the DAV, and I don’t think anyone in America would have it any other way. Surely, it’s the best way for America’s disabled veterans.

Arthur H. Wilson
National Adjutant and
CEO





*We had a common experience which bound
us together, and we ought to continue
through an organization of our own...an
organization of us, by us and for us...*

~ Robert S. Marx ~