



THE OFFICIAL VOICE OF DAV AND AUXILIARY

JULY | AUGUST 2017

MAGAZINE



Unsung heroes

New initiative promotes equal treatment for all veteran caregivers

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2017

DAV & AUXILIARY

National Convention

JULY 29 - AUGUST 1

Hilton New Orleans, Riverside



Gary Sinise and the Lt. Dan Band have been invited to perform yet again during Fun Night.

This year, the DAV and Auxiliary national convention returns to the Big Easy. A city known for its vibrant nightlife and culturally diverse history, New Orleans is truly a world-class experience.

New Orleans offers something of interest for everyone—family-friendly attractions, spectacular architecture, the sounds of jazz and zydeco music filling the air and the extravagant, colorful fanfare of Bourbon Street.

After spending time working alongside fellow veterans to help shape DAV's future, you can experience a multitude of one-of-a-kind experiences in the city. New Orleans cuisine, largely influenced by Creole, Cajun and French flavors, is widely held as some of the best in the world. You can experience beautiful historic sites and museums throughout the French Quarter and Garden District, check off a ride on the streetcars from your bucket list or take the kids to see the Louisiana black bear lounging in his own personal bathtub at the Audubon Zoo. With seemingly endless shopping, dining and recreational activities, New Orleans has attractions for all to enjoy. The city also hosts the National World War II Museum, a treasure that reminds us of the sacrifices we honor through our service in DAV.

DAV's national convention is an opportunity to advocate for ill and injured veterans, to enjoy the camaraderie of fellow DAV members and to take ownership of your organization and its yearly agenda. At the same time, it allows for a hearty dose of fun in this premier vacation destination.

This year, as you make plans, please note that the convention will return to the traditional Saturday-through-Tuesday schedule. Additionally, mark your calendars as Gary Sinise and the Lt. Dan Band have been invited to play Sunday night.

Our special room rate is \$130 per single or double. Reservations can be made online at aws.passkey.com/e/15933734 or by calling 800-Hiltons (800-445-8667) or 504-561-0500. If making reservations by phone, be sure to say that you are reserving under the Disabled American Veterans room block. DAV members and guests will also receive a discounted daily self-parking rate of \$15. ■



Travel Assistance

The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) can facilitate the screening of injured or wounded veterans. After making flight reservations, veterans (or their care coordinators) should contact a TSA Cares representative by calling toll-free 855-787-2227 weekdays from 8 a.m. to 11 p.m. and weekends and holidays from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. Eastern time. A representative will either provide screening information relevant to the veteran's disability, or the veteran may be referred to experts at TSA to help them through the screening process.



Learn More Online

Visit dav.org/events/2017-national-convention for more information.

From the NATIONAL COMMANDER DAVID W. RILEY



Unsung heroes

After I was first injured, I couldn't imagine living a normal life. And in fact, I haven't—it's been far greater than what I ever expected. This is why words cannot adequately express the honor, privilege and joy it has meant to me to serve as your national commander.

As a quadruple amputee often wearing a clothing item that identifies me as a DAV member, I am stopped many times by well-meaning citizens who thank me for my service.

However, no one thinks to thank my wife, Yvonne, for what she's sacrificed. Both of our lives were changed forever when my limbs were amputated. Her dreams, her goals and her hopes for the future were altered when she stayed by my side those many years ago and has faithfully remained there ever since.

Yvonne willingly and without hesitation stepped into her role as my primary caregiver, yet she and thousands of others in the nation are being denied the support our government gives post-9/11 caregivers.

These unsung heroes give of themselves willingly every day to support the veterans they love. There are no days off, and in many cases, there's no support and no training.

This is why it remains so important that we keep fighting for lawmakers to pass legislation that would expand the VA's comprehensive caregiver benefits program to severely injured veterans of all eras.

The program provides training, peer support, respite care, health benefits and a financial stipend to family caregivers.

It's not just the right and fair thing to do; in the end, family caregivers save taxpayers money by keeping the veteran at home and out of institutional care and, most importantly, by helping give veterans a higher quality of life.

Please consider visiting DAV CAN (Commander's Action Network) at davcan.org, and tell your elected representatives that you and 1.3 million fellow DAV members expect them to do the right thing for veterans and their caregivers.

Being a caregiver does not get easier with time. If you doubt that, ask the spouses of Vietnam or Korean War era veterans. The sacrifices they have made over their lifetimes are incalculable.

I'm proud of all we have done during my term as your commander. If there is one part of my legacy I hope will live on, it's that our efforts for caregivers will have resulted in recognition for the contributions of people like Yvonne through meaningful change to support them. So many disabled veterans wouldn't be here without these unsung heroes—our caregivers.

Thank you for placing your trust in me to represent our wounded, injured and ill veterans. In my mind, there's no finer group of men and women on Earth, and I'm as proud to stand with all of you today as I was when I joined DAV 20 years ago.

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From the NATIONAL ADJUTANT J. MARC BURGESS



Rethinking ‘independence’ this Fourth of July

As we look to the celebration of another Fourth of July, I can’t help but feel lucky that we live in the land of the free and the home of the brave. Together, we’ll honor the birth of our nation with flags and fireworks, and we’ll show our gratitude for America’s independence.

The feeling of patriotism we embrace on Independence Day makes me tremendously proud to be a citizen of this country, and it also calls to mind the many sacrifices made in the brutal war for this nation’s sovereignty.

But as I stop to think of all the conflicts that have been fought by American men and women throughout our history—particularly all those who have been critically injured in service—I can’t help but also think about the nation’s veteran caregivers.

Caregivers help fill many gaps in a veteran’s life. Sometimes they serve as the arms or legs for an amputee, the eyes for a blinded veteran or the memory for someone who struggles with a brain injury. By filling one of the most vital roles in disabled veterans’ lives, caregivers provide far more than just physical and emotional support; oftentimes, they provide the veteran with a sense of independence.

It can be all too easy to take for granted mobility and functionality when you have not sustained severe impairments, but it’s common for seriously injured veterans to feel robbed of their independence as they learn to cope with their “new normal.”

In my time with DAV, I have been inspired by many veterans who

completely turned their lives around, enduring both intense physical pain and emotional despair as they fought through arduous recovery processes. Many of the most critically injured veterans I’ve met have gone on to raise families, graduate with advanced degrees, lead successful businesses and even fight for the rights of their fellow veterans. I’ve seen double-arm amputees play golf, blinded veterans ski down mountains and those in wheelchairs scale the tops of rock walls.

In so many of these instances, I’ve also noticed a dedicated family caregiver standing by their veterans’ sides cheering them on.

There’s no question that veterans have to harness their inner spirit, grit their teeth, and struggle through the tough times in order to achieve their goals. But it’s often caregivers who help enable veterans to live life to the fullest, who prepare them physically to meet the challenges ahead and who continue to encourage them when the path seems bleak.

Independence means so much to the men and women who live their lives relying on others for assistance. This Fourth of July, as we pay tribute to our country and all those who have helped keep it safe and free, it’s worth remembering that there are men and women out there who have served and sacrificed in a much different but no less important way—family caregivers, who have helped make independence a reality for our nation’s disabled veterans.



Patriot nations

Thank you for the “Patriot Nations” article in the March/April issue! I am an unenrolled Cherokee and Scotch-Irish, 100-percent-disabled American veteran. Thank you for the article and for reaching out to my extended family.

Floyd Giles, Dewey, Ariz.

I was so excited to receive the March/April issue of *DAV Magazine*, with the cover graced by a Native American. The article was exceptional and informative. The National Museum of the American Indian is one of my favorite museums on the National Mall. It is my hope, as a founding sponsor of the soon-to-be-completed National Museum of the United States Army and a member of the Army Historical Foundation, that the American Indian will have a prominent place in both. **Louis R. F. Preysz III, Lexington, Va.**

Women who've paid the cost of war

Thank you for publishing “Women Who've Paid the Cost of War” [March/April issue]. It is long overdue for these brave women who sacrificed so much and fought alongside their brothers-in-arms. As a disabled vet and a life member of DAV, I appreciate everything these women have done.

Russell W. Estlack, via email

Caregivers

It is a gross unfairness that Public Law 111-163 allows only post-9/11 veterans funding for caregivers. My company commander in Vietnam lost both legs and another platoon member is paralyzed from a gunshot wound to the spine. These veterans, as well as wounded veterans from Korea and World War II, also deserve such caregiver support. The physical

needs of these veterans do not get better with age. **Dr. John Hofer, Cross Plains, Wisc.**

Soldier's story

I just finished reading a fascinating book, “A Soldier's Story: Forever Changed,” by a DAV colleague of ours, Richard “Dick” Hogue. It is a vivid description of how Vietnam was fought on the front lines of an unconventional war. Dick lost a leg in combat during the war and describes in detail the dramatic events he experienced during his tour of duty in Vietnam. To me, also a veteran of the Vietnam War, the book was an enlightenment of the hardships our front line troops experienced and how they worked together to complete their mission while looking out for each other. I strongly encourage all Vietnam veterans to read this insightful book. **Reed Phillips, Alexandria, Va.**

Survivor waiting period

Hopefully, DAV will support efforts to reduce from 10 years to one the Dependency and Indemnity Compensation survivor waiting period. Many of our spouses and significant others stayed with those of us who were injured during some hard times and should not be subjected to an arbitrary and capricious rule. **James Ulinski, Phoenixville, Pa.**

Editor's Note: *In accordance with DAV Resolution No. 021, passed by delegates to our last national convention, DAV supports*

legislation to reduce the 10-year rule for DIC qualification to a more reasonable period of time.

DAV on social media Facebook

I would like to thank the DAV for taking care of myself as well as other vets. I understand that DAV needs help fighting the uphill battle on our behalf. I proudly became a lifetime member of the DAV and plan to participate where I can to support our nation's heroes. It's the least I could do to support the cause to fulfill the promise. **Tony Cooper**

Heads up to all DAV members. I recently got a phone call from someone claiming to be from American Disabled Veterans Foundation. I asked, “Wait, did you say you were with Disabled American Veterans?” He went silent, long pause, then he hung up on me. Beware of these scammers. **Gretchen Rieck**

Twitter

Dave Riley and his wife are the heroes of all pre-9/11 vets and their wives/caregivers. @DAVHQ **Paula Minger, @PaulaMinger1**

Correction

In the March/April 2017 issue, a photo caption in the article “Patriot Nations” incorrectly identified Tyson Bahe as a member of the Cherokee Nation. In previous references, Bahe was correctly identified as a member of the Navajo Nation.

WRITE TO US We welcome letters from our readers. Please mail them to DAV Magazine, 3725 Alexandria Pike, Cold Spring, KY 41076, or submit them via email to feedback@dav.org. We regret we are unable to acknowledge every letter due to the volume received. We also welcome feedback on our Facebook ([facebook.com/DAV](https://www.facebook.com/DAV)) and Twitter (twitter.com/davhq) pages. Letters used are subject to editing for clarity, style, accuracy, space and propriety. Messages involving individual claims are referred to the DAV Service Department.



House votes in favor of appeals modernization

Draft bill will allow veterans' appeals processes be more fair, timely and accurate; now it needs to pass in the Senate

By Mary Dever

Over the past six years, DAV and other veterans' service organizations (VSOs) have worked closely with the Department of Veterans Affairs to dramatically reduce the backlog of veterans' claims for benefits by more than 85 percent. While this progress has allowed veterans to receive initial claims decisions more quickly, the number of appeals of unsatisfactory decisions has grown to over 450,000 and can take up to six years on average for a final decision by the Board of Veterans' Appeals (Board).

The rising appeals backlog is partly due to more claims processing—almost 1.4 million this year—by the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) and partly due to a lack of resources, technology and modern processes at the Board. Last year, DAV and other VSOs joined together with VBA and the Board to develop a new framework for reforming and modernizing the appeals system.

“It was becoming clear that as we began to eliminate the backlog of claims, an equally troubling backlog of appeals was growing,” said DAV National Service Director Jim Marszalek. “With appeals of claims remaining steady at a 10-percent rate, the undermanned

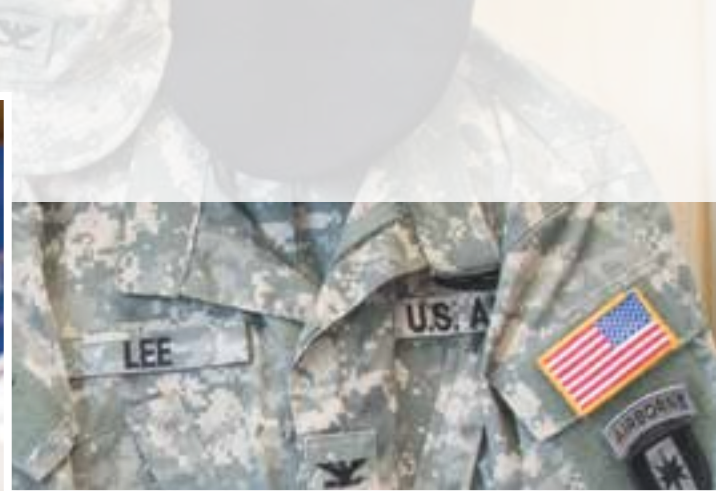
and outdated appeals system was unable to keep pace.”

In fulfillment of DAV's legislative agenda, appeals reform legislation based on the new framework was introduced in the 114th Congress late last year, but was unable to pass both the House and Senate. DAV worked with the VBA, the Board and Congress to reintroduce an enhanced version of the legislation earlier this year.

“The critical core of the new appeals system provides veterans with multiple options to challenge unfavorable decisions, introduce new evidence at both VBA and the Board, and protect their earliest effective dates,” said Marszalek before the House Veterans' Affairs Committee on May 2. “[I'm] confident that [the] legislation, with the additional improvements recommended by DAV and others, could provide veterans with quicker and often more favorable outcomes, while fully protecting their due process rights.”

Within weeks of Marszalek's testimony, the House unanimously approved the Veterans Appeals Improvement and Modernization Act of 2017 (H.R. 2288), which embodies the new appeals framework. The Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee held its own hearing on appeals reform legislation (S. 1024) in May.

“We're finally seeing significant action and momentum on appeals reform from both sides of Capitol Hill,” said DAV National Legislative Director Joy Ilem. “With overwhelming support in the House, it's time for the Senate to complete its work, pass the bill, and get it to the president to sign so veterans can begin receiving more timely and accurate decisions on their claims and appeals.” ■



ADAPTING to a new normal

Veteran of the Year is at the
forefront of adaptive sports
initiatives

Dr. Kenneth Lee combines his experience as a combat-wounded veteran, his knowledge as a rehabilitation doctor and enthusiasm for adaptive sports to bring positive changes to the lives of those around him.

By Bryan Lett

“Daddy, you don’t smile anymore.” Five honest, simple words signaled a turning point for Dr. Kenneth Lee. The Army National Guard veteran, who had struggled for years with the dark aftermath of his wartime injuries, was soon on the long road to personal acceptance and treatment. Today, through adaptive sports, he helps others and has earned his place as the 2017 DAV Outstanding Disabled Veteran of the Year.

The journey began in 2004, when Lee deployed to Iraq as the commander of Company B, 118th Medical Battalion. He oversaw medical treatment clinics in Fallujah and Abu Ghraib—where he revamped the detainee care system earlier in the year after the well-known scandal broke—and he worked tirelessly over several days to save wounded Marines during the Fallujah offensive.

But his life changed that September during a routine convoy. An improvised explosive device had been found in their path, and Lee and his team had dismantled their vehicles to augment the rear security.

“I heard a car screech, so I turned around, and this car was heading straight toward me,” said Lee. “The only thing I know is my soldiers told me they found me under a car.”

Hit by a suicide car-bomber, Lee sustained an open head traumatic brain injury, numerous shrapnel wounds to his legs, severe nerve injuries and the onset of post-traumatic stress disorder. Despite his pleas to return to his unit, those injuries ended his deployment prematurely. Lee was treated at two Army hospitals in Iraq, transferred to Germany and then to Walter Reed National Military Medical Center where he spent four months. He underwent five major surgeries and extensive physical rehabilitation.

“I remember **bashing everything** in the basement because I was so **angry all of the time**. My kids were **always afraid of me** and didn’t want to do anything with me.”

—Dr. Kenneth Lee



Dr. Lee is assisted to safety after a suicide car bomber drove directly into his stopped convoy near Baghdad, Iraq Sept. 12, 2004. Lee sustained an open head traumatic brain injury, numerous shrapnel wounds to his legs and the beginning stages of PTSD.

Lee—who is married with two children—said he and his family experienced a miserable two years after he returned home from Iraq as his brain injury intensified frustrations that strained their home life.

“I remember bashing everything in the basement because I was so angry all of the time,” said Lee. “My kids were always afraid of me and didn’t want to do anything with me.”

As a physician, Lee said, he was embarrassed and could not accept that he had PTSD.

“He would sit down at a window and just look outside for many, many hours,” said his wife, Kate. “He needed to get his life together.”

Then those five words, spoken by Lee’s daughter, Leah, struck a chord.

“My daughter and I were playing a board game and I wasn’t really into it, but she just stopped playing the board game and just said, ‘Daddy, you don’t smile anymore,’” said Lee. “I just started crying, and she ran

away. Something hit me. I needed to do something, or I was going to lose all of my family.”

Lee, who is chief of the Spinal Cord Injury Division at the Milwaukee VA Medical Center, said that accepting his diagnosis of PTSD was the first domino to fall.

“The most important thing is accepting it,” Lee said. “Because I didn’t accept it, and I wouldn’t acknowledge that I needed the treatment. Two years it took to accept it, and then it took another year to figure out that this is treatable, so it was a long haul.”

Lee is a rehabilitation physician as well as a volunteer physician at the National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic, which the VA and DAV co-host, so he was no stranger to using adaptive sports as therapy. After his retirement from the Guard in 2013, he dove into the adaptive sporting world headfirst.

“Adaptive sports is a growing area of activities,” Lee said. “We all know it does positive things for mental and physical health. I think people will see that adaptive sports are the way to go for health care. I see it becoming more popular. I see it becoming a more cost-effective way of treating [patients].”

Within a year of his retirement, he formed the Milwaukee Wheelchair Lacrosse team and hasn’t slowed down since. He is also the president of the Wisconsin Adaptive Sports Association (WASA), which runs numerous adaptive sports programs.

And as a combat-wounded veteran, Lee has a special connection with many of his patients and the athletes participating in his adaptive sports programs.

“Dr. Lee introduced me to adaptive sports,” said Alan Lewis, who lost both of his legs when a land mine blew up his Humvee in Iraq in 2003. “The impact for me was immediate. I remember the first time getting in a chair and playing basketball and just feeling that competitive edge again.

“For me personally, anything I need I can always go to [Lee]. He is like that big uncle that you always need. Whether it is adaptive sports or personal, I know I can go to him. I know I can confide in him, talk to him,



“I most definitely have a **stronger family bond** post-injury.
... This was **something that can easily break a family**,
yet they decided to just jump on the train
and **take on the hardship with me**. It is really great.”

—Dr. Kenneth Lee

and I know he will be there for me.”

This fervor for helping fellow veterans earned Lee a nomination as DAV’s honoree for 2017.

“Dr. Kenneth Lee’s leadership in the adaptive sports arena not only exhibits his passion for his fellow veterans but changes their lives,” said National Adjutant Marc Burgess. “His perseverance and dedication to his family, to his work and to his fellow veterans is something to emulate.”

“He represents the new norm that we have today, and that is citizen soldiers being deployed to combat zones and being put in positions of danger in midlife and midcareer,” added John Polk, commander of the DAV Department of Wisconsin. “Then they have to come back and resume their life again, and he represents that very well.”

Lee, a DAV life member with Chapter 19 in Milwaukee, said the trials and tribulations he and his family went through helped forge who they are now.

“I most definitely have a stronger family bond post-injury,” Lee said. “The mere fact that they support what I do now is a huge testament to what a family bond can

be. This was something that can easily break a family, yet they decided to just jump on the train and take on the hardship with me. It is really great.”

His two children—Leah, 20, and Jonathan, 17—have been avid volunteers at VA hospitals since each was 14, and both have been awarded the Jesse Brown Memorial Youth Scholarship through their volunteer work.

“There is a lot of meaning behind them volunteering at the VA as opposed to someplace else,” said Lee. “For me, that means they have a lot of respect for me. If not, they would just stay away. The fact that they want to be associated with veterans means quite a bit to me.”

“I think my husband has really instilled service in our family,” said Kate. “Our kids also know it has become their life as well. Many of our weekends are spent following him around.”

Despite his injuries and the constant pain in his lower extremities, Lee speaks with gratitude about his time in the Army.

“I got a lot more from the Guard than I put into it,” he said. “I joined the military with my eyes wide open. I volunteered to join. I have no regrets.” ■



DAV National Service Officer Rafe Delli-Bovi (right) helped fellow Army veteran Leonard “Joe” Penner access VA benefits that enabled him to finally treat the invisible wounds of service he first developed seven decades earlier. During his time in the military, Penner was subjected to continuous harassment and abuse due to anti-Semitism which was not uncommon during the 1940s.

RIGHTING THE PAST

After decades, target of anti-Semitism finds long overdue support

By Charity Edgar

Not long ago, if you would have told Leonard “Joe” Penner that one day a fellow Jewish veteran would have a VA medical center named in his honor, he would not have believed you.

But when he attended the renaming ceremony for the Tibor Rubin VA Medical Center, in Long Beach, Calif., in May, Penner had already begun the process of healing after a decades-long battle with undiagnosed post-traumatic stress, brought on by anti-Semitic harassment during his time in service.

When Penner was drafted in 1943, he was prepared to serve his country and fight against the Nazi regime alongside his fellow soldiers.

“I was proud to be a soldier, I was proud to serve in the Army, and I’m still proud of the service I gave today,” said Penner.

The now 92-year-old faced many battles, but not the

kind he expected. The teenager found himself the victim of verbal, emotional and even physical abuse at the hands of his fellow recruits—all because of his Jewish faith.

“In boot camp, there was a notice on the bulletin board for all Jewish personnel to get a day off for Yom Kippur, the holiest Jewish day. I signed up, but it was really a trick to identify Jews,” explained Penner. “After that, I was harassed quite often. They would mess up my bed, and they would hide my gear. I was shoved around, and they constantly made fun of my religion and threatened me.”

The harassment and abuse continued relentlessly through boot camp and to his first duty station. Despite fear of retaliation, Penner approached his chain of command several times with his concerns, but they dismissed the mistreatment the young man received at the hands of his fellow soldiers.

“In every era, men and women who served have sustained both physical and invisible wounds. Too often, **veterans suffer in silence for years**—and, in Joe Penner’s case, decades—before getting the assistance they need.”

—Jim Marszalek, National Service Director



Army Pvt. Leonard “Joe” Penner poses with his father following his completion of military training. Penner was drafted in 1943 and was prepared to serve his country and fight against the Nazi regime. The now 92-year-old faced many battles, but not the kind he expected. Penner found himself the victim of verbal, emotional and even physical abuse at the hands of his fellow soldiers—all because of his Jewish faith.

“From the top down, no one would address the abuse,” recalled Penner. “I worried all the time. I would lie in bed making sure everyone else was asleep before I closed my eyes. I never knew what they would do next.”

The harassment, abuse and heightened state of vigilance took its toll.

“I was never sick a day until I joined the Army,” said Penner. “Suddenly, I was throwing up constantly. It worsened, and they ended up hospitalizing me.

“After a series of tests, I found out I had an ulcer. Then I got a letter that I was no longer of use to the Army.”

Just shy of two years in the military, Penner received an honorable discharge for medical reasons.

Despite the barriers Penner faced in the Army, he went on to have a successful post-military career, managing dining at the famed Friars Club, where he rubbed elbows with Jerry Lewis, George Burns, Jack Benny, Judy Garland and Don Rickles.

The ulcer continued to plague Penner, but he never knew to pursue a service connection. After the urging of his wife, Annette, Penner submitted a VA claim years later and was granted a small percentage rating. Because of the impact the illness had on Penner’s day-to-day life, Annette insisted he have the claim re-evaluated.

The Penners came into the Los Angeles DAV National Service Office, and that is where they met Rafe Delli-Bovi.

“I get much more than I give in this job,” said Delli-Bovi, a fellow Army veteran who joined DAV in 2010. “When you go home at night, you know you helped someone who truly needed it. That’s better than a paycheck.”

After speaking with Penner, Delli-Bovi immediately went to work to submit for a percentage increase on the disability. Within six months, there was a favorable decision from the VA. Delli-Bovi didn’t stop there—he believed Penner was eligible for services and benefits that could address invisible wounds that Penner had tried to ignore for decades.

“I’m Italian. But I’m also Jewish. I identify with my Jewish faith, so meeting Leonard and hearing his story resonated with me,” said Delli-Bovi. “I realized almost immediately that Joe wasn’t only suffering, he had been suffering since 1943.

“The harassment and abuse he was subjected to resulted in a debilitating ulcer, as well as post-traumatic stress. He needed help, but that generation of veterans did not feel that they could address mental health concerns.”



“The Tibor Rubin medical center means that we should all be proud of the fact that the facility is named after a Jewish war veteran. **It makes me proud to be an American.**”

—Leonard “Joe” Penner

Delli-Bovi had submitted three claims before a Jewish psychologist at the VA met with Penner, read through his paperwork and confirmed that the ongoing abuse and harassment caused by anti-Semitism could be causation for post-traumatic stress. The fourth and final submission for Penner finally granted him the overdue rating for post-traumatic stress.

Perhaps most importantly, Penner finally sought out medical attention for his invisible wounds, and he attends group therapy with fellow veterans weekly.

“In every era, men and women who served have sustained both physical and invisible wounds,” said National Service Director Jim Marszalek. “Too often veterans suffer in silence for years—and, in Joe Penner’s case,

decades—before getting the assistance they need. I commend Rafe for his determination and tenacity in connecting a veteran with the benefits and services he earned that could help him on the ongoing road to recovery.”

The renaming ceremony, which he attended with Delli-Bovi, brought an additional perspective about Penner’s own experience as a Jewish veteran.

“The Tibor Rubin medical center means that we should all be proud of the fact that the facility is named after a Jewish war veteran,” he said. “It makes me proud to be an American.” ■

Tibor Rubin



Born to a Jewish family in Hungary, Tibor Rubin was sent to a concentration camp in Austria during the Holocaust. He was liberated 14 months later by American soldiers and swore he would one day give back to the country that saved him. After immigrating to the United States, he joined the Army and served in the Korean War.

Rubin’s actions in close contact with the enemy and commitment to his fellow service members after becoming a prisoner of war for 30 months in North Korea led to eventually receiving

the Medal of Honor. Due to anti-Semitism that was still prevalent in the 1950s, Rubin, who was a DAV member, did not receive the military’s highest honor until 2005. Rubin had been submitted several times, but it was denied by the same sergeant who reportedly assigned Rubin to the most dangerous missions.

VA Long Beach, which serves more than 50,000 veterans each year and where Rubin passed away in 2005, renamed its medical center in his honor during a ceremony May 10.



Unsung Heroes

DAV launches national campaign to recognize sacrifices, challenges of veteran caregivers

Past National Commander Dennis Joyner (left) speaks to the need for expansion of caregiver benefits for veterans of all eras at the launch of DAV's Unsung Heroes Initiative in Washington, DC in June. Joining him on the panel are (left to right) Donna Joyner, Jason Courneen, Alexis Courneen, Yvonne Riley, National Commander Dave Riley, Sen. Tammy Duckworth, and moderator Garry Augustine, Washington Headquarters Executive Director.

By Ashleigh Byrnes

As a quadruple amputee, people see me, and they thank me for my service,” said National Commander Dave Riley. “No one ever stops to thank my wife for the sacrifices she’s made as my caregiver.”

Family caregivers to our nation’s most severely disabled veterans sacrifice so much of themselves in order to give their loved ones the highest quality of life possible, yet the American public remains largely unaware of the role they play in a veteran’s life and the unique obstacles they face.

To raise awareness of the challenges veteran caregivers face, including inequities in how the federal government treats different groups of caregivers, Riley and wife Yvonne—alongside Sen. Tammy Duckworth, a disabled Army veteran; Past National Commander Dennis Joyner and his wife, Donna; and Coast Guard veteran Alexis Courneen and her husband,

Jason—helped DAV launch the Unsung Heroes Initiative in mid-June in Washington, D.C.

The panel of veterans and caregivers discussed the hardships of caregiving as well as the resources that would help ease burdens, including respite care, medical training, peer support, health care and financial assistance.

“They handle a lot of basic things in life that are just normal for others,” said Dennis Joyner. “Normal is not a standard way of life for us, and without our caregivers it would be very difficult.”

“Yes, it’s 24/7, and it takes its toll on the caregiver,” added Donna. “But I don’t ever want to have to send him to a nursing home because everything is much better at home when someone you care about is helping you.”

Currently, only veterans injured on or after Sept. 11, 2001, are eligible for the Department of

Veterans Affairs’ full package of caregiver support—thereby excluding tens of thousands of veterans from World War II, Korea, Vietnam and the Gulf War era, which includes the Rileys, Joyners and Courneens.

“It is our hope that Congress will act to pass legislation that ensures all severely disabled veterans,

“They handle a lot of basic things in life that are just normal for others. **Normal is not a standard way of life for us**, and without our caregivers it would be very difficult.”

—Dennis Joyner, Past National Commander

no matter when they served, have equal access to all of these life-changing benefits,” said Washington Headquarters Executive Director Garry Augustine.

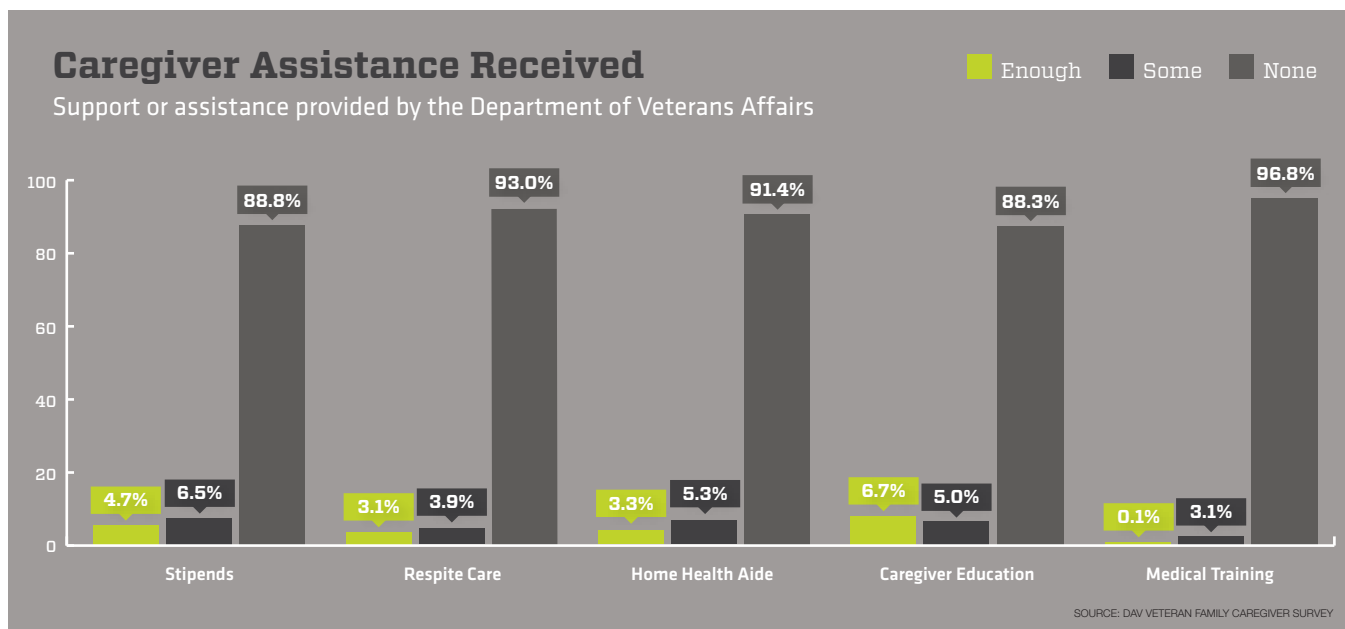
“We need to pass laws that allow the VA to compensate caregivers,” said Duckworth. “We need

to make sure we make that iron-clad guarantee to our military men and women that we will be there for them, and sadly we simply have not when it comes to caregivers.”

Of the more than 5.5 million caregivers taking care of current or former service members, roughly 80 percent provide assistance to veterans from pre-9/11 eras. To better understand their needs, DAV conducted an online survey of self-identified veterans and caregivers, releasing the findings in the new report, *America’s Unsung Heroes: Challenges and Inequities Facing Veteran Caregivers*, during the launch event.

“Hearing directly from veterans and their caregivers, the survey shows we need to do more, particularly to support severely disabled pre-9/11 veterans and their caregivers,” said Deputy National Legislative Director Adrian Atizado. “Caregivers for these veterans have been shouldering the physical and emotional burdens for years without adequate help, and we need to make that right.”

Of those surveyed, the vast majority said they were not receiving caregiver support or assistance from the VA. Specifically, 88 percent reported that they did not receive caregiver education, 93 percent were not given



“We need to make sure we make that **iron-clad guarantee to our military men and women** that we will be there for them, and sadly we simply have not when it comes to caregivers.”

—Sen. Tammy Duckworth, disabled Army veteran



respite care, nearly 89 percent did not receive direct financial support, 91 percent did not receive home health aid, and close to 97 percent were not provided medical training.

The report also found that without family caregiver assistance, nearly half of respondents said the veteran would require institutional care in the future, and slightly more than 25 percent believed the veteran would require immediate institutional care—the cost of which far outweighs the cost of supporting a family caregiver.

“It’s hard to even think of what it would be like if she wasn’t there,” Riley said of his wife. “If I was to have to go into a facility, I don’t think I could last very long.”

Alexis Courneen, whose traumatic brain injury makes the tasks of independent living difficult if not impossible, agreed.

“I need a clone of [Jason] because if anything happens to him—legit there’s no other way to put this—I’m really screwed.”

More than half of survey respondents (62 percent) said receipt of a stipend would help support the family caregiver in caring for the veteran, and 48 percent said the same of health insurance for caregivers.

“This is the first note of a steady drumbeat,” said Augustine. “We’ll continue to work with Congress and the VA to strengthen and expand VA’s caregiver program so that veterans and caregivers of all eras have the support they need and deserve.” ■

 **Learn More Online**

To view the full survey results, or to find more information on the Unsung Heroes Initiative, visit www.unsungheroesinitiative.org.



Honoring the accomplishments of our national leaders...

Left: National Adjutant Marc Burgess introduces National Commander Dave Riley at the National Commander’s Testimonial Dinner in Mobile, Ala. (Photo by Al Labelle, BPT) **Right:** National Commander Dave Riley and Auxiliary National Commander Fran Costa enjoy an evening of fellowship honoring Costa at her testimonial dinner in Randolph, Mass.

CURING the INCURABLE

New combination of anti-viral drugs show promising results in veterans infected with hepatitis C

By Mary Dever

Coast Guard veteran Ian Phillips lived with an active case of hepatitis C (HCV) for 20 years. He was mostly asymptomatic, although like in many other veterans, the virus caused cirrhosis, a deterioration of the liver.

“It was like living with a ticking time bomb,” he said.

But research is showing a new anti-viral drug regimen for HCV has yielded “remarkably high” cure rates among 17,000 patients receiving care through the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Researchers extracted anonymous data on all patients in VA care who received HCV anti-viral treatments between January 2014 and June 2015. According to the report, “The drugs, introduced in 2013 and 2014, have been credited with revolutionizing HCV treatment, which means a cure is now in reach for the vast majority of patients infected with the virus.”

Most patients undergoing earlier drug regimens could expect only a 50-percent chance of being cured.

The new treatment is providing Phillips with hope for a healthier future.

“It was difficult for many years while the virus was still active,” said Phillips. “HCV is not something you want to go around and tell everybody about. It’s a tough thing.”

HCV has been undetectable in Phillips’ blood for the past year, and his cirrhosis has stabilized, allowing him to regain some liver function. His doctors tell him his hepatitis is totally cured and will not come back unless he gets infected again.

“Thankfully, a boost in VA funding over the past several years has enabled VA to screen and treat more veterans,” said National Legislative Director Joy Ilem. “Hepatitis C infections have nearly tripled in the last five years, and veterans who served in Vietnam were disproportionately exposed to the disease—often as



a result of blood transfusions after combat injuries. Access to this new medication and the care veterans receive from VA is good news for veterans.”

The new combination of drugs over the course of treatment doesn’t have troublesome side effects such as fever, fatigue and low blood counts like previous treatments, which encourages patients to stay with the regimen for much longer. Researchers are also seeing “remarkably high SVR (sustained virologic response) rates in real-world clinical practice,” according to the research.

“I don’t have the virus hanging over my head,” Phillips said. “I have the chance that I could have complications like liver cancer, because you have a high percentage of people getting that with cirrhosis. But knowing that the HCV is no longer attacking my liver ... I feel healthy, I hike, I’m active. I’m no longer carrying around that stigma, the ticking time bomb of the virus. It’s a wonderful thing.”

The VA is currently the largest provider of treatment for HCV in the nation, as an estimated 234,000 veterans are affected by the virus. To date, more than 68,000 veterans have been treated with the new drug regimen.

Doctors and researchers with the Veterans Health Administration predict an additional 50,000 veterans may unknowingly carry the virus, and they advise everyone get screened. To learn more, visit hepatitis.va.gov. ■



Mike Hert (right) served as Adam Alexander's deputy commanding officer in Afghanistan. The two lost contact after Alexander was struck in the head by a sniper round on the deployment, but they later reunited through DAV.

Afghanistan veterans, DAV members reunite through service

By Bryan Lett

On Nov. 10, 2011, a typical civil affairs mission turned tragic for Army Sgt. Adam Alexander, who was operating as part of the 432nd Civil Affairs Battalion in Paktia province, Afghanistan.

"Adam said he had to go because they were under attack," said Lt. Col. Mike Hert, deputy commanding officer of the Paktia Province Reconstruction Team, who was keeping tabs on the team by conference call.

"I remember Mike saying keep your head down," Alexander recalled. It would be one of the last things he remembered before the events that changed his life forever.

Twenty minutes later, Hert received the news—Alexander had been struck in the head by an armor-piercing round and was unresponsive. Insurgents had attacked his team using small arms, rocket-propelled grenades and suicide vests during a government meeting.

Alexander survived, but not without several major surgeries.

"I was initially told I had a 5 percent chance of survival," Alexander said. "Luckily, I'm not very good at math."

While Alexander was navigating an extensive and grueling rehabilitation, Hert was finishing up his deployment, and the two temporarily lost contact.

After service, Hert returned to his home state of Wisconsin and settled in Oshkosh. He was an active member of DAV Chapter 17 when he heard about an opportunity to volunteer as a mentor in the new Outagamie County Veterans Treatment Court. Veterans Treatment Court is a program that provides veterans an alternative to incarceration, tailored to the unique experiences and needs of those struggling with mental health or substance abuse issues from their service. Volunteer veteran mentors lend their time and abilities to assist veterans going through treatment.

"I was just sitting at my desk when I got a mass email about Veterans Treatment Court," Hert said. "I was just looking through the names of recipients on the email when I saw the name Adam Alexander. I had to see if it was him, so I emailed the address, asking, 'Adam, is that you?'"

As fate would have it, it was. After years without contact, they would soon discover they only lived a mile and a half apart.

“We got together and caught up,” Alexander said. “Mike was involved with DAV, so I took a look and drank the Kool-Aid. I was experiencing a bitter taste from being retired and missed being [a noncommissioned officer] and being with my guys. DAV built that camaraderie and was an excuse for us to spend more time together.”

Hert and Alexander now co-mentor veterans going through the Outagamie Veterans Treatment Court and get together about once a week.

“We don’t discuss Afghanistan as much—it’s more about what we are doing now,” Hert said. “Adam is immersing himself in the chapter. He has a deep passion and commitment for his fellow veterans, and he makes an immediate connection with everybody that he meets.”

“Adam and Mike go above and beyond in not only promoting DAV and its mission, but also in bringing the community together to support our veterans, particularly those who are struggling and in need of assistance,” said fellow DAV Chapter 17 member Bill



Mike Hert (left) and Adam Alexander in Afghanistan.

Trombley. “Mike and Adam are an inspiration to us all. I do not see that older gentleman with a cane or a young man with the scars. I see two soldiers who devoted their lives to our country and continue to serve through DAV.” ■

Did you know that DAV members have access to great discounts on products and services?

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These are some of our valued Member Benefit partners:



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CREATING NEW PURPOSES

National Commander Dave Riley, a former Coast Guard rescue swimmer and quadruple amputee, knows a thing or two about reinvention, after he lost his limbs to a rare bacterial infection during service. He invited cameras into his woodworking shop in Alabama for a look at how he transforms old, discarded wood into handcrafted works of art—a process he likens to the profound changes disabled veterans undergo as they begin rebuilding their lives.



Above: Riley shows off his woodworking trademark—a brand reading “Hook made by Dave Riley.” A quadruple amputee since 1997, Riley has taken to woodworking in his home workshop in Semmes, Ala., as a hobby in the aftermath of his amputations. “Rather than focus on recovering what [disabled veterans] lost, we can often create something new,” he said.

Right: National Commander Dave Riley amassed a large collection of unwanted, discarded wood that he now uses to create handmade gifts in his home workshop—specially outfitted to accommodate his prosthetic devices.





Some might say the wood I used for these boxes **outlived its worth.** That's how many veterans may feel after they become ill or injured. But the splintered pieces of their lives can be **reshaped and repurposed into something extraordinary.** That's exactly what DAV did for me during my recovery.



Top: Riley uses a wire brush to clean a piece of wood in his home workshop in Alabama. "When I found this wood, it was used, broken and discarded," Riley explained. "But with a little work, I was able to transform it into something beautiful with a purpose." **Left:** As a quadruple amputee, Riley has had to adapt some of the tools in his workshop and come up with unique methods for his hobby. "Woodworking as an amputee isn't as simplistic as it would be if I had all my limbs, but there's always a workaround," Riley explained. "One of the pluses is I don't have to worry about losing a finger." Riley uses a soldering iron to brand the bottom of a box. **Below:** Riley's handcrafted boxes, a symbol of the resilience and transformative potential of injured and ill veterans, have become a treasured keepsake for many throughout his tenure as Commander.





Riley sits in his home workshop with one of dozens of boxes he has made out of discarded wood. "No matter how hard you try to piece together the fragments of a previous life, there is no glue in this world that can restore it exactly as it was before," he explained. "That's why the work we do in the veteran community is so vitally important."



GOING VIRTUAL

Taking the job hunt online

By Steven Wilson, Ed.D.

While the traditional job fair experience is still a very successful recruiting tool for companies seeking new talent, taking the experience to the web has steadily gained popularity for employers and job seekers alike for its effectiveness and convenience.

As we move closer to a paperless world, companies are catching on—many have ditched hard-copy resumés and applications altogether in favor of digital recruiting, video interviews and virtual networking.

Louis Johnson, a 26-year Navy veteran who recently transitioned from a life of military service to the civilian workforce, found a position he called the “last piece of a puzzle” through a DAV/Veteran Recruiting Virtual Career Fair.

Johnson, who landed a new career with Johnson Controls Inc. after a virtual career fair, said the convenience of the virtual environment was very appealing to him.

“The ease of seeing the employers and when they would be online to conduct the career fairs made this easy for me,” said Johnson. “I understood not every company was a good fit for me, so I was able to see the schedule and pick the career fair by the company that I thought I would be a good fit with.”

The accessibility of the web has truly created a job seeker’s market, and many companies—including Johnson Controls Inc., which pledged to hire between 1,000 and 3,000 veterans in the next five years—have further expanded opportunities for prior military members by introducing veteran hiring initiatives.

“When we think of a diverse workforce, increasingly

it will be inclusive of veterans who can bring so many assets to our company,” said Grady Crosby, Johnson Controls vice president and public affairs and chief diversity officer.

The commitment the company made to hire veterans played to Johnson’s advantage. Johnson said about a month after his online interaction, he was interviewed and hired.

“Louis’ story illustrates how valuable and convenient virtual career fairs are for transitioning veterans or veterans who can’t attend a traditional career fair,” said DAV National Employment Director Jeff Hall. “He was able to interact with employers in real time, post his qualifications and land meaningful employment. This is how the system was designed, and I encourage any veteran seeking employment to consider our virtual job-searching environment.”

Johnson advised fellow veterans to not limit themselves to employment opportunities that line up directly with their military career field, as his new career has nothing to do with his former military job.

“If a veteran strictly tries to stay within their [military occupational specialty], they may be cutting themselves short,” said Johnson. “Many veterans gain skills, such as leadership and management and a plethora more, that is separate from an MOS and may be applied elsewhere.” ■



Learn More Online

Dates and information regarding virtual career fairs can be found at jobs.dav.org.

From the NATIONAL EMPLOYMENT DIRECTOR JEFFREY C. HALL



Making that first impression

As we begin the third quarter of 2017, DAV has hosted more than 65 traditional and five virtual career fairs.

Our career fairs are ideal places for veterans and spouses to take advantage of a unique opportunity to make that critical first impression on a potential employer. Studies show that introducing oneself to a stranger is often stressful and intimidating. I've spent a great deal of time observing veterans introducing themselves to employers and wanted to explore the importance and impact of an introduction.

"At job fairs you're doing yourself a disservice if you hug the walls and have your head down into your iPhone," says branding expert Lida Citroën, author of "Your Next Mission: A Personal Branding Guide for the Military-to-Civilian Transition." "Project the confidence that comes with military service, and seize the initiative to put others at ease by introducing yourself."

Citroën advises to shake hands with warmth, friendliness and confidence when meeting new people, make eye contact and be prepared to ask your own questions in addition to being asked about your background.

In his book, "How to Get Anyone to Do Anything," Dr. David Lieberman says, "The No. 1 tactic for generating a favorable first impression is the easiest to do: Smile!"

Lieberman says smiling conveys confidence, happiness and enthusiasm, and it shows acceptance to your environment and other people. This may be counter-intuitive to the lessons of the military, where a different type of confidence and

bearing are projected to convey strength. However, showing that you are affable and cooperative in a civilian environment puts a potential employer at ease right away.

"Regarding first impressions, there is something called the primacy effect—the process whereby our first impression of another person causes us to interpret his or her subsequent behavior in a manner consistent with the first impression," Lieberman says. "In English, this means that our first impression of someone is so crucial because everything we see and hear afterward gets filtered through our initial opinion."

Citroën says knowing how the primacy effect works can be an advantage for disabled veterans.

"People internally tend to see future images of others through their initial first impression," she says. "So if a disabled veteran leaves a first impression coming from a position of strength, confidence and conveying a genuine smile, their chances of a potential employer remembering them at the end of the day is greatly increased."

We have 62 traditional and five virtual career fairs left from July to the end of the year. I encourage veterans, especially disabled veterans who are unemployed or underemployed to get out there and make those strong first impressions to connect with employers seeking the unique talents offered by veterans.

The complete career fair schedule, including our virtual career fairs and other employment resources, are always available at jobs.dav.org.

Safeguarding service programs

Columbia Trust support helps preserve, enhance trademark initiatives

By Bryan Lett

Veterans across the nation have come to rely on many of the services DAV provides, but sometimes the demand outpaces the ability of chapters and departments to administer those much-needed programs. The Columbia Trust helps bridge the gap when local chapters and departments need assistance, serving as an important resource to uphold DAV's service programs and ensure they remain available to veterans and their families.

As a "restricted fund" within DAV's National Service Foundation, the Trust has one sole purpose—to support DAV service programs at department and local levels where funding otherwise would not be available. No other use of the Trust's funds is permitted.

"The Trust provides us with an avenue to share who we are and what we do," said Foundation President Arthur H. Wilson. "It acts as a catalyst by bridging resources from well-to-do departments and chapters to those in need. It provides the means to accomplish our mission of empowering veterans to live high-quality and fulfilled lives with respect and dignity."

Funds contributed to the Trust are then used for service initiatives around the country at other departments and chapters in order to serve veterans in their communities at no cost. So far in 2017, the Trust has awarded eight grants totaling nearly \$359,000 to departments for local service programs.

"The Columbia Trust is a powerful and needed resource for states like mine, which have a small population spread over a very large area," said DAV Department of Nebraska Adjutant Jamie M. Jakub, whose department received a \$20,000 grant in 2017. "The Trust is vital to our ability to operate and maintain our three hospital service coordinators who oversee 18 DAV vehicles. Without it, we would not be able to provide this necessary service."

On the flip side, chapters and departments that have excess funds can redistribute them by contributing to the Trust, thereby providing other chapters and departments with the means to accomplish their mission.



Larry Miller and Robert J. McTighe pick up vehicles for the DAV Transportation Network in Buffalo, N.Y.

"The Trust gives DAV the flexibility needed to address veterans and communities with the greatest needs," said National Adjutant Marc Burgess. "It's a tool we can use to enhance local initiatives and help veterans in underserved communities."

A department or chapter that has liquid assets surpassing three times the expenses of their previous fiscal year is required to spend the surplus on service programs, in accordance with Article 18 of the National Bylaws. One way to use the surplus for service is by contributing it to the Trust.

Commanders and adjutants are encouraged to identify unmet needs and develop projects to serve veterans in their communities. To ensure funds go where they are needed most, grants are not awarded to chapters and departments that have demonstrated the ability to meet their proposed service obligations. A committee made up of one member from each district of DAV's national organization advises the Foundation's board of directors in the grant decision-making process. ■



Learn More Online

More information about the Trust, including a grant application and steps on how to contribute, is available at nsf.dav.org/trust.



VA women's health program implements new breast cancer screening guidelines

■ The Department of Veterans Affairs will now give women veterans the choice to receive breast cancer screenings at age 40, in line with the guidelines published by the American Cancer Society. According to the VA, the guidelines apply to women at average risk for breast cancer and will strengthen the extensive care programs already in place.

“It is important for our women veterans to know that they are in control of their care and the care they receive from VA is consistent with—or exceeds—care in the private sector,” said VA Secretary Dr. David Shulkin. “Adopting American Cancer Society standards gives veterans further assurances that their care aligns with other health care systems.”

According to American Cancer Society guidelines, “all women should begin having yearly mammograms

by age 45 and can change to having mammograms every other year beginning at age 55. Women should have the choice to start screening with yearly mammograms as early as age 40 if they want to.”

At this time, 76 percent of women veterans ages 40 to 49 enrolled in VA health care receive mammograms through the VA.

This adaptation to keep up with current recommendations comes alongside other initiatives by the VA that include the establishment of a breast cancer registry. The registry integrates data from several VA sources to provide comprehensive, patient-specific information about breast cancer screening, test results, treatment and population surveillance of breast care, both in the community and within the VA.

Center for Compassionate Innovation launches within VA

■ The Department of Veterans Affairs has launched the Center for Compassionate Innovation, aimed at exploring emerging therapies that may improve or enhance veterans' mental and physical well-being.

According to the VA, the center will investigate innovations in the health care industry as well as new practices currently being piloted on a small scale within the VA.

The center is intended to create an entry point for sharing new treatments or therapies with the VA and focuses on cutting-edge treatments and therapies emerging in the health care industry.

At this time, it is focused primarily on personalized, proactive and patient-driven treatments that can address veteran suicide prevention, traumatic brain injury, post-traumatic stress disorder and chronic pain.



From the AUXILIARY NATIONAL COMMANDER FRANCES J. COSTA

Farewell and best wishes

As I reflect back on the past year, I marvel at the caliber of people I've met as I attended conventions, conferences, testimonials, the annual mid-winter conference and other events while serving as your DAV Auxiliary Commander.

We don't know for certain when the demands on our nation's servicemen and women will lessen, but we do know that as long as there is a need to send our bravest overseas, there will also be a need to support them when they return home, forever changed by military service.

This is why DAV and the DAV Auxiliary must remain strong—and why our Auxiliary in particular must continue to champion the cause of caregivers.

I announced at the beginning of my tenure that caregivers were near and dear to my heart, as many of our Auxiliary members have personal experience with this issue.

Not very long ago, DAV National Commander Dave Riley shared the impact his wife and primary caregiver, and my good friend, Yvonne Riley, has on his life daily.

While Yvonne would be the first person to tell us that post-9/11 caregivers are very deserving of the support the government provides, she would also probably say that being a caregiver does not get easier with age.

An arbitrary date on the calendar prevents Yvonne, and thousands of others who have cared for veterans decades before 9/11, from accessing

life-changing benefits like medical training, respite care, health and education benefits, and financial support.

Some lawmakers say they hesitate to expand caregiver benefits to caregivers of all generations because of the associated price tag. But according to the VA, comprehensive government support for veteran caregivers, which would allow the veteran to remain at home with their loved ones, costs under \$40,000 per veteran yearly.

In comparison, nursing home care costs well over \$300,000 per veteran every year. It costs taxpayers nearly \$90,000 a year per veteran in a community nursing home and over \$45,000 yearly per veteran in a state run veterans home.

Allowing family caregivers to receive the services and supports they need and deserve, so that severely ill and injured veterans can remain at home, is more than just the right thing to do—it's the smart thing to do.

The founders of this country made a solemn covenant with our veterans when they promised to take care of them. Part of that equation includes the amazing men and women who care for the veterans in their lives every day. I've had the opportunity this year to meet many of these incredible people, and I will forever cherish the stories, challenges and dreams you shared with me.

It has been an honor to serve as your DAV Auxiliary national commander. May God continue to bless America, DAV and the DAV Auxiliary.



DAV opens New York Stock Exchange...

DAV National Commander Dave Riley kicked off Memorial Day weekend at the New York Stock Exchange by ringing the opening bell. Considered a high honor, Riley's ringing of the bell on behalf of DAV served as a reminder of what the holiday represents. Riley joined a long list of humanitarians, veterans, politicians and celebrities throughout the years who have been recognized by ringing the famed bell and signing the ledger. The historic event was streamed live and can be viewed at livestream.com/NYSE/DisabledAmericanVeterans2017. (Photos courtesy of NYSE Group Inc.)



Dates announced for 2017 DAV Auxiliary Fall Conference

The 2017 DAV Auxiliary Fall Conference is scheduled for Sept. 28–30 in Lexington, Ky.

The conference will open with a health and wellness fair. The Auxiliary National Executive Committee meeting will begin at 4 p.m., with the opening business session beginning that evening at 7:30. Normal business sessions are scheduled for Sept. 28, 29 and 30, with the banquet slated for the night of Sept. 29.

Registration for the conference is \$50, which includes a Friday evening hospitality event and the reception on Saturday.



The conference will be held at the Lexington Embassy Suites. Single and double rooms can be reserved for \$124 per night, while triple and quadruple occupancy rooms go for \$134. Rates include free parking, complimentary daily breakfast and evening cocktails.

Reservations can be made by calling the hotel directly at 859-455-5000 or by calling 1-800-EMBASSY (1-800-362-2779). Reservations must be made by Sept. 6.

The Lexington Embassy Suites is located nine miles from Blue Grass Airport (LEX), and taxi, Uber and Lyft services are available. ■



New VA tool provides transparency on facility wait times, quality of care

By Charity Edgar

The new Access and Quality Tool from the Department of Veterans Affairs enables veterans to access patient wait times and current quality-of-care data.

In April, the VA unveiled www.accesstocare.va.gov, a website that allows users to quickly search for clinics or hospitals in their area and view average wait times from the past month based on the type of appointment. Veterans can also see which facilities offer same-day services.

“Veterans must have access to information that is clear and understandable to make informed decisions about their health care,” said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Dr. David J. Shulkin. “No other health care system in the country releases this type of information on wait times. This allows veterans to see how VA is performing.”

The website compares quality of care with other VA facilities, as well as private hospitals and clinics that publish their patient satisfaction data—all with just a few clicks of a mouse.

“This tool is another example of VA leading the way,” said acting Undersecretary for Health Dr. Poonam Alaigh. “No one in the private sector publishes data this

way. This tool will instill a spirit of competition and encourage our medical facilities to proactively address access and quality issues while empowering veterans to make choices according to what works best for them and their families.

“Having the veteran in the driver’s seat is tremendous for me,” continued Alaigh. “This tool identifies what’s working—and what isn’t—for veterans.”

The VA will continue to make improvements to the website based upon feedback received

“Veterans must have access to information that is clear and understandable to make informed decisions about their health care.”

—Dr. David J. Shulkin,
Secretary of Veterans Affairs

from veterans directly, as well as veterans service organizations like DAV.

“Accountability and transparency within the VA is one of our largest concerns, and this website is a big step forward in earning back the trust of veterans,” said DAV Washington Headquarters Executive Director Garry Augustine. “We are optimistic about this increased transparency and will continue to collaborate with VA on improving veterans’ access to quality health care.” ■



Monument dedicated to veterans in New York...

DAV National 3rd Junior Vice Commander Donald Day (front right) alongside DAV Chapter 28 members from Brooklyn, N.Y., dedicated a monument on the grounds of the Brooklyn VA Medical Center. The monument is a reminder to all who pass by how DAV members are fighting to fulfill the nation's promises to all the men and women who served. The Brooklyn VAMC is one of three VA facilities in the N.Y. Harbor Healthcare System, which supports the largest Healthcare for Homeless Veterans Program in the nation.



A gesture of thanks...

Veterans residing at Gundersen Tweeten Care Center in Spring Grove, Minn., were given handmade pillowcases on behalf of DAV Chapter 28. Each pillowcase represents a specific branch of the military and is embroidered with the words, "Proud Veteran." Mike Hlohinec (left) of Chapter 28 hands resident Doug Hughes his new U.S. Army pillowcase. More than 467 pillowcases, which are made in partnership with the Ability Building Center, have been made for veterans in nursing homes and assisted living facilities.

Pledging against suicide...

DAV Department of Florida held its annual state convention in June. Coast Guard veteran and retired New York City Fire Department Chief Danny Prince (center) brought the Spartan Sword to the convention in order to raise awareness and help prevent veteran suicide.

The Spartan Sword was created from steel salvaged from the World Trade Center bombing on 9/11. For veterans and first responders, the sword is a symbol of the enduring strength of the country. Additionally, veterans are encouraged to say the Spartan Pledge, a pledge against suicide that encourages them to turn to each other—their "battle buddies"—before taking their own lives. Also present were (from left) Past National Commander (PNC) Al Linden, PNC Dennis Joyner, PNC Joseph Johnston, National 4th Junior Vice Commander Andy Marshall, and PNC Wally Tyson.





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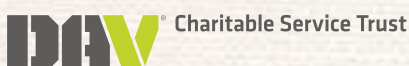
- \$10,000 minimum contribution to the Trust to establish a CGA.
- Minimum age of 60.
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- No maximum age required.
- Rates based on age.
- Higher rate, the older you are.

Single-Life Rates

Age	Rate	Age	Rate
60	4.4%	80	6.8%
65	4.7%	85	7.8%
70	5.1%	90+	9.0%
75	5.8%		

TO LEARN MORE

- Call Stephanie Vorhees at **1-800-216-9802**, ext. 1.
- Email giftplanning@dav.org.
- Return the attached **postcard**.



Supporting veterans is a WIN-WIN

‘You can see the absolute good you are doing’



Mark Hanneke (right), a Vietnam War era veteran, alongside his 94-year-old father, a World War II veteran

When asked, Mark Hanneke has no trouble explaining why he has funded not one, but *five* charitable gift annuities with the DAV Charitable Service Trust over time.

“I believe it is a win-win situation. The Trust receives funds to support programs that benefit disabled veterans. The donor receives a tax deduction for that calendar year and lifetime income that is largely tax-free for a number of years,” said Hanneke. “You feel that during your lifetime you can see the absolute good you are doing. That is an asset one cannot put into dollar terms.”

As a Vietnam War era veteran, Hanneke admires the sacrifices wartime veterans have made in service. By funding gift annuities with the Trust, he remembers loved ones who served.

We salute Hanneke, a retired math teacher, for wanting to make such a difference in the lives of his fellow veterans in such a lasting and meaningful way. It truly is because of the compassion and generosity

of people like him that we are able to continue to do the significant, life-changing work that we do every day.

If, like Hanneke, you would like to see the absolute good you are doing while also looking after yourself and a loved one over the age of 60, contact us today about taking out your own Charitable Gift Annuity through the Trust. ■

I honor my deceased brother-in-law, who died in 2002 from Agent Orange exposure in Vietnam and my 94-year-old father, a World War II Marine, who was awarded full disability four years ago due to the lingering residual effects from his combat experience in the Pacific.

All of our lifetime experiences make us the people we are today. I would like to think I have developed a deeper empathy for other people, including disabled veterans, by way of my health experiences over the last third of a century. I have had five life-threatening medical situations I was able to survive. I have a blessed life with a renewed positive mental attitude, a strong support group and spirituality. Likewise, I know DAV and the DAV Charitable Service Trust work hard to ensure ill and injured veterans can build happy and fulfilled lives, too.

Sincerely, Mark Hanneke

From the NATIONAL CHAPLAIN MICHAEL P. DOVER



Understanding leadership

Good leadership is critical to an organization like ours—without it, the mission suffers. Let me explain: If a leader cannot submit to other leaders, they will not be prepared properly to submit to a higher authority later. Many leaders want full authority immediately; this is not wise. The reception of authority comes from proper recognition and obedience. Leaders must learn to take their responsibility gradually, as those over them give it to them. They must learn to not demand too much too soon, which may well lead to their own pride and destruction.

Many leaders are too proud to openly receive encouragement and comfort from others. All good leaders realize that because they are human, they need times of inspiration and edification. To encourage means to fasten upon, to seize, to be strong, to repair and to fortify. To strengthen is to be alert both physically and mentally and to be steadfast. Every leader often needs these influences in their lives.

Good leaders learn from their mistakes and the missteps of others, especially of those over them. Why should a burgeoning leader have to repeat a misfortune of a more seasoned one? Remember, experience is expensive; wisdom is far, far cheaper. For those who are young, let no one look down on your youthfulness.

Rather, in speech, conduct, love, faith and purity, show yourself as an example for those around you.

Leaders must combine both organizational and spiritual principles in their lives. Some leaders can organize and administrate but do not know how to hear and obey. Others know how to hear and obey, but fail at administration. Good leaders know how to balance both. If you want to know why you're not being promoted, you probably have an imbalance. Have you ever experienced people who thought they were all that and a bag of chips? How did that make you feel? Did you want to stay in their presence? I think you get my point.

Overconfidence is a temptation for every leader who has experienced success. There are two keys in maintaining one's humility: dismiss the importance of past achievements and give credit where credit is due.

Living in the past does not help move the organization forward to the future. A good leader will not resist change that enhances an organization.

Leaders must care. It does not matter who they know or how much schooling, on-the-job training, degrees or experience they have. Leaders must care about the people they serve. They must care about the organization and its mission. Finally, they must leave their position in a better place than they found it.

In His Service for You.



Celebrating Armed Forces Day in Georgia...

Jonesboro, Ga., was host to an Armed Forces Day event to pay tribute to the men and women who serve in uniform. DAV Chapters 1 and 55 in Georgia helped sponsor the event which featured live music, educational activities and a car show. DAV members also provided meals for homeless veterans who came to the event, while VA and DAV personnel were available to assist with veteran issues.



We've got your family's back...

DAV Department of Mississippi Commander John Grower (left) and 2nd Junior Vice Commander Vernon Miller present diapers, wipes and children's gifts to Saucier resident Jamie Lee, whose husband, a service-connected disabled veteran, passed away unexpectedly this spring. DAV Chapter 17 in Ocean Springs and Chapter 5 in Gulfport provided a combined \$800 worth of support to Lee and her three children during a difficult time of need.




West Virginia member honored for recruiting efforts...

DAV Chapter 45 Adjutant George Davis (right) of West Virginia awarded Chapter Service Officer Roger D. Roy (left) with the prestigious Francis J. Beaton Award on behalf of the National Membership Department. Roy earned this award for his tireless recruiting efforts and his devotion to fulfilling DAV's promises to veterans and their families through service, membership, and community action.



Racing to get the word out about DAV...

Department of Wisconsin Treasurer and Past National Commander Dick Marbes (center left) stands with DAV life member and Vietnam veteran Dean Goss (far left) and his sons Lou (center right) and John Goss of Goss Competition in Green Bay. The Goss Competition team recently adorned their Late Model division race car with DAV's logo in order to raise awareness of DAV's programs and services. The car will be competing in 16 racing events at the Wisconsin International Raceway this summer, as well as four other events at Rockford Speedway and Lacrosse Fairgrounds Speedway in Wisconsin.



Funds support Delaware veterans...
 DAV Department of Delaware held their annual state convention where The Harvest Ridge Winery made a donation to the organization for the third consecutive year. The check—totaling \$16,000—will help the department purchase vans for the transportation program, as well as help cover storage and other expenses. Harvest Ridge has given a total of \$52,000 and pledged to continue to support DAV in the future. At the check presentation were (from left): DAV member Jim Kopley, National Executive Committee District 4 representative; National Service Officer Supervisor Janson Hassinger; Past National Commander Moses A. McIntosh Jr.; Department of Delaware Treasurer Paul Lardizzone; Harvest Ridge and Winery owner Chuck Numan; Past National DAV Auxiliary Commander Linda Trulio; and Hayden Numan.

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 877-999-8322



Mentors support vet courts...

DAV members from Chapter 17 of Winnebago County serve as mentors for the Outagamie County Veterans Treatment Court in Wisconsin. Pictured left to right: Judge George Gill Jr., Bill Trombley, Mike Hert, Todd Raley, Adam Alexander and Judge John Des Jardins. The treatment court was started in 2012 with hopes to restore the lives of veterans who have struggled with mental illness or substance abuse that may be mitigating circumstances related to their military service. Once caught up in the criminal justice system, these veterans are assigned a veteran mentor and a judicially supervised program of substance abuse treatment, mental health treatment, rehabilitation services and strict community supervision.



Making connections through service...

DAV National Senior Vice Commander Delphine Metcalf-Foster (center) reunited with her former Command Sergeant Major from her time in the Army National Guard. Joseph Sweeney (left) introduced Metcalf-Foster to key leaders of the California Army National Guard, where they met to discuss women veteran issues and how to retain more women in the National Guard. Chief of Staff for the California Army National Guard, COL Jeff Smiley (right), has enlisted Metcalf-Foster's help to spread the word on issues affecting women veterans.



Chapter supports local veterans home...

DAV Chapter 9 Commander Brian McDonald (left) from Hastings, Neb., and DAV Department of Nebraska Chaplain Bob McGovern (right), presented a check to Linda Lewis (center) for more than \$3,000. Lewis is a representative of the Nebraska Veterans Home in Grand Island. The money was donated by Chapter 9 to support recreational activities for the veterans of the home.

Retired NSO Kenneth Warr dies

Retired National Service Officer Kenneth Warr, of Murtaugh, Idaho, passed away on April 30 at the age of 68. Warr joined the U.S. Navy in 1967, serving for 13 years, including four tours in Vietnam. He received a direct commission in 1977.

Upon leaving service, Warr relocated to Boise and volunteered with DAV before becoming a national service officer in 1981. He went on to serve veterans in the Albuquerque, N.M.; San Francisco; and Los Angeles



Warr

National Service Offices, rising to the rank of national area supervisor before retiring decades later in October 2001. Warr was a life member of Chapter 2 in Boise.

“Ken dedicated his career to securing benefits and services for thousands of fellow veterans, as well as their dependents and survivors,” said National Adjutant Marc Burgess. “He was a tremendous mentor and friend to our members and professional staff.

We are deeply saddened by his passing but comforted knowing countless veterans and their families are leading more fulfilled lives today as a result of his dedicated advocacy and representation on their behalf.”



Bridging the gap...

National Service Director Jim Marszalek introduced the film *Operation: Route 66* at the 2017 G.I. Film Festival in May at the United States Navy Memorial Theater in Washington, D.C. The film follows a father and son team along Route 66 as they learn more about today’s veterans after realizing they themselves do not personally know any veterans of the current war. Prior to the start of the film, Marszalek cited DAV’s 2015 Military Pulse Survey finding that nearly 6 out of 10 post-9/11 veterans feel those who never served cannot understand what they experienced. “There’s an ever-increasing military/civilian divide in this country,” said Marszalek. “But that’s what makes this film so exceptional—it centers around two gentlemen from two different generations who, through their own initiative, seek to bridge that gap.” ***Inset:*** Pictured (from left): producer Nick Gerber, Jim Marszalek, collaborating director Louis Holland and director Kurt Gerber.

REUNIONS

ARMY

106TH INFANTRY DIVISION Sept. 13–17, Kissimmee, FL, Contact: Wayne Dunn, Ph: 410-409-1141, Email: WayneDunn@comcast.net, Web: 106thinfdivassn.org.

249TH ENGINEER BATTALION ASSOCIATION Oct. 26–29, Nashville, TN, Contact: Robin Wandell, Ph: 660-815-1166, Email: firewoodfriends@hotmail.com.

24TH INFANTRY DIVISION ASSOCIATION Sept. 11–15, Savannah, GA, Contact: George Vlasic, Ph: 910-287-5618, Email: geonanvlasic@atmc.net.

27TH INFANTRY REGIMENT (THE WOLFHOOUNDS) HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC. Aug. 20–27, Seattle, WA, Contact: Mac and Charlene Fletcher, Ph: 425-281-1929, Email: makotofletcher@comcast.net, Web: wolffhoundpack.org.

57TH ASSAULT HELICOPTER COMPANY, KONTUM, PLEIKU, ANKE (1967-72) Oct. 16–20, Las Vegas, NV, Contact: J. Carriere, Ph: 701-239-9213.

630TH ENGINEER (L.E.) COMPANY VIETNAM Sept. 14–16, Branson, MO, Contact: Cecil Brown, Ph: 731-415-6460, Email: ceclibrown@charter.net.

83RD INFANTRY DIVISION ASSOCIATION Aug. 2–6, Cleveland, OH, Contact: Paul DiGiammerino, Ph: 781-608-5222, Email: littleyetalian@comcast.net.

87TH INFANTRY DIVISION LEGACY ASSOCIATION Oct. 19–22, Columbia, SC, Contact: Dennis Lennon, Ph: 336-816-2551, Email: dlennon@triad.rr.com, Web: 87thinfrantrydivision.com.

B COMPANY 504TH MILITARY POLICE BATTALION Sept. 27–Oct. 1, Norfolk, VA, Contact: Harry Yates, Ph: 505-865-7359.

D COMPANY, 1ST BATTALION 6TH INFANTRY, 198TH LIB, AMERICAL DIVISION – VIETNAM Aug. 17–21, Washington, DC, Contact: Lynn D. Baker, Ph: 870-253-1591, Email: LDBHistory@yahoo.com.

NATIONAL PATHFINDER ASSOCIATION Aug. 29–31, Newburgh/West Point, NY, Contact: Dean “Spanky” Nelson, Ph: 970-353-0146, Email: nelent@aol.com, Web: nationalpathfinderassociation.org.

SOCIETY OF THE 1ST INFANTRY DIVISION (THE BIG RED ONE) July 26–30, Kansas City, MO, Contact: Ron Watts, Ph: 215-654-1969, Email: SFIDPA@gmail.com, Web: 1stID.org.

THE GATHERING 2017 54TH TRANSPORTATION BATTALION (1966-67) Sept. 10–15, Morro Bay, CA, Contact: Kathy Blackstone, Ph: 936-239-3006.

USS GENERAL WILLIAM WEIGEL Sept. 10–15, Morro Bay, CA, Contact: John McMurray, Ph: 805-772-5651, Email: jmj669tc66vn67@hotmail.com.

MARINES

1/5 USMC (1986-92) Sept. 8–10, Macomb, IL, Contact: Scott Hainline, Ph: 309-351-2050, Email: ptimfi@yahoo.com.

26TH MARINES ASSOCIATION Aug. 11–13, Las Vegas, NV, Contact: Sonny Hollub, Ph: 512-825-4730, Email: sonnyusmc@gmail.com, Web: 26thMarines.com.

2ND BATTALION, 9TH MARINES SILVER ANNIVERSARY REUNION Nov. 8–12, Arlington, VA, Contact: Danny Schuster, Ph: 978-667-4762, Email: ditson35@verizon.net, Web: www.2ndbattalion9thmarines.org.

3/9 AND FOX 2/12 AND SUPPORT UNITS (ALL ERAS) Sept. 5–8, San Antonio, TX, Contact: Robert W. Stewart, Ph: 727-581-5454, Email: ThreeNineMarines@aol.com.

3RD 155MM AND THE 3RD 175MM GUN BATTERY (SP) Oct. 5–7, Branson, MO, Contact: Ed Kirby, Ph: 978-987-1920, Email: edkirby@comcast.net.

FIRST MARINE DIVISION ASSOCIATION July 31–Aug. 6, Norfolk, VA, Contact: June Cormier, Ph: 760-763-3267, Email: june.ldbreed@fmnda.us, Web: 1stmarinedivisionassociation.org.

REUNION STORIES DAV is interested in stories about veterans who connected via the “Reunions” section of *DAV Magazine*. If you have a story you would like to share, please email feedback@dav.org.

HOTEL CO 2/5 (VIETNAM 1966-71) Oct. 26–29, Santa Fe, NM, Contact: Dave Harbin, Ph: 505-720-4728, Email: Harbin_d@q.com.

GROUND SURVEILLANCE UNIT/SCAMP, 3RD AND 1ST MARINE DIVISIONS, VIETNAM Oct. 25–29, Houston, TX, Contact: Benny Rains, Ph: 713-875-4102, Email: brains08@comcast.net.

MARINE AIR GROUPS REUNION, WWII TO PRESENT Oct. 11–14, Branson, MO, Contact: Jerry Gipe, Ph: 660-909-4144, Email: jgipe@hotmail.com.

MARINE DETACHMENT USNDC Sept. 12–17, Portsmouth, NH, Contact: Steve Jennison, Ph: 603-988-9867, Email: sajbuilds@aol.com.

NAVY

MOBILE RIVERINE FORCE ASSOCIATION (MRFA) Aug. 31–Sept. 3, Indianapolis, IN, Contact: Charlie Arding, Ph: 563-735-5924, Email: mrfamembership@mabellnet.coop.

USS ALTAIR (AK-257/AKS-32) Oct. 11–15, Myrtle Beach, SC, Contact: Dan Douglas, Ph: 203-219-7509, Email: ddouglas@aol.com, Web: ussaltair-aks32.org.

USS BON HOMME RICHARD SHIPMATES ASSOCIATION Sept. 26–Oct. 1, Tucson, AZ, Contact: Ray King, Ph: 715-456-5933, Email: Patryking94@yahoo.com.

USS COGSWELL (DD-651) Oct. 10–12, Colorado Springs, CO, Contact: George Overman, Ph: 760-889-2216, Email: Secretary@usscogswell.com, Web: usscogswell.com.

USS DIXIE (AD-14) Oct. 3–7, San Diego, CA, Contact: Ken Robinson, Ph: 520-825-5613, Email: robinson4ken@gmail.com.

USS ELDORADO Sept. 26–30, Houston, TX, Contact: Sherri Kennedy, Ph: 713-202-1965.

USS HOLLISTER (DD-788) Sept. 20–24, Rapid City, SD, Contact: Brad Moomey, Ph: 308-762-3107, Email: bradmoomey@hotmail.com, Web: usshollister.org.

USS INDEPENDENCE (CVA/CV-62) Aug. 23–27, Buffalo, NY, Contact: Dennis Bagley, Ph: 828-648-7379, Email: ussindcva-62@hotmail.com.

USS LEAHY (DLG-16) Sept. 18–20, Bath, ME, Contact: B. L. Jeffries, Ph: 260-723-4620, Email: bljeffries@embarqmail.com.

USS MANLEY (DD-940) Sept. 13–17, Harrisburg, PA, Contact: Harold Kane, Ph: 609-409-7737, Email: manleypres940@gmail.com.

USS MIDWAY VETERANS ASSOCIATION Sept. 11–13, San Diego, CA, Contact: Ronald E. Pope, Ph: 469-353-8676, Email: ronpope2@yahoo.com, Web: ussmidway.net/home.html.

USS NAVARRO (APA-215) Oct. 23–26, Pensacola, FL, Contact: John Majors, Ph: 225-638-5002, Email: majors@qualitytransport.net.

USS PIEDMONT (AD-17) Oct. 3–7, San Diego, CA, Contact: Kent Thomas, Ph: 913-381-8334, Email: kthomas82@kc.rr.com.

USS ROBERT H. MCCARD (DD-822) Oct. 1–5, San Antonio, TX, Contact: Steve Shepherd, Ph: 870-662-0485, Email: sship72@gmail.com.

USS SENNET (SS-408) Oct. 1–4, Myrtle Beach, SC, Contact: Ralph Luther, P.O. Box 864, Summerville, SC 29484-0864, Email: rluther107@gmail.com.

AIR FORCE

4TH FIGHTER INTERCEPTOR WING, 334TH, 335TH, 336TH FIGHTER INTERCEPTOR SQUADRONS AND SUPPORT PERSONNEL Sept. 13–17, Goldsboro, NC, Contact: Carlo Romano, Ph: 301-593-2266.

86TH FIGHTER-BOMBER GROUP WWII ASSOCIATION Oct. 11–15, Fort Walton Beach, FL, Contact: Dallas Lowe, Ph: 850-319-3047, Email: fighterbomberpilot@yahoo.com, Web: 86fighterbombergroup.com.

553RD RECONNAISSANCE WING BATCATS REUNION Sept. 28–Oct. 1, OklaHoma City, OK, Contact: Cliff Jensen, Ph: 702-302-9409, Email: mungatuc2000@yahoo.com.

AIR FORCE POSTAL AND COURIER ASSOCIATION. Sept. 5–8, Harrisburg, PA, Contact: Jim Faulkner, Ph: 361-746-8460, Email: jim1c21@aol.com.

MAXWELL-GUNTER AFB FAMILY REUNION (1975-85) Nov. 16–19, Montgomery, AL, Contact: Elnora Seabrooks-Fluellen, Email: elnorafuellen@gmail.com.

COAST GUARD

USCGC WESTWIND (WAGB-281) Sept. 8–11, Mobile, AL, Contact: Alex Mavica, Ph: 845-352-7040, Email: amavica@optline.net.

INQUIRIES

- Searching for any members of the USS LCS-60. Contact Quentin E. Smith, 2221 Oak St., Forest Grove, OR 97116.
- Searching for anyone who knows me from MALS-29, May 29, 1989–93, USMC; or AIMD USS Inchon, 1990–91; or USS Wasp, 1991, HMM-162. Contact Matthew Forgey, 175408 PCF, 727 Moon Road, Plainfield, IN 46168.
- Searching for anyone who served with me at Camp Hauge, Okinawa, in 1967. I was Cpl. Gonzales and was up for emeritus sergeant. Contact Jose J. Gonzales, Ph: 323-712-1762.
- Searching for anyone who served with me in the 38th ADA Brigade (US Army) at Osan Air Base, Korea, from 1978–79. Contact Lillian Jones (Burney-Mason), Email: burneymason1@gmail.com.
- Searching for anyone who served with me in the 501st Supply & Transport Battalion (US Army); stationed at Montieith Barracks, Nuremberg, Germany, 1976–78. Contact Lillian Jones (Burney-Mason), Email: burneymason1@gmail.com.
- Searching for anyone who served with my father (Ron Schneider) at Parris Island, 1st Battalion, Platoon 127, June 1973. Contact Stacy Schneider, Email: schneiders6546@gmail.com, or Facebook.
- Searching for John Renden, who served with 101st Airborne, HHC 2/503 in the Scout Platoon. He was a corporal at the time. Contact Ron Felder, 2875 N. Amber Light Lane, Chino Valley, AZ 86323-4703, Ph: 623-329-6377.
- Searching for veterans and descendants of veterans who served with the 83rd Infantry Division from WWII to the present. Contact Paul DiGiammerino, Ph: 781-608-5222, Email: littleyetalian@comcast.net.
- Searching for veterans in the Edgewater, FL, area who would be interested in speaking with students at New Smyrna High School located in New Smyrna, FL. Contact Ruth Myers, Ph: 407-340-6337, Email: ruth61@gmail.com.
- Searching for anyone who served with me aboard the USS Newport News (CA-148). Contact Nolan A. Blood, P.O. Box 2712, West Monroe, LA 71294-2712, Ph: 318-396-5261.
- Searching for anyone who served with me in A Troop, 1/4 Cavalry, 1st Infantry Division, at Fort Riley, 1974–75. Contact Mark Pritt, #156-453, P.O. Box 209, Orient, OH 43146.
- Searching for Jack Pope, B Team, Delta Force, Fort Bragg, NC, in the early 1980s from the Murphy, NC, area. Contact SMSgt (Ret) Thomas (Tom) Segars, Ph: 214-316-6240, Email: fredricasegars@sbcglobal.net.

REUNION NEWS

We welcome submissions from our readers for reunions and inquiries. Please mail them to DAV Magazine, 3725 Alexandria Pike, Cold Spring, KY 41076, or submit them via email to feedback@dav.org.



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