



THE OFFICIAL VOICE OF DAV AND AUXILIARY

**MARCH | APRIL 2015**

# MAGAZINE

access to health care  
infrastructure  
caregiver support  
claims-processing system  
women veterans



## FISCAL BLUEPRINT

*The Independent  
Budget outlines  
VA funding needs*

**pg. 7**

waitlists  
underfunding  
backlogs  
high demands  
few resources

**New rules for VA claims, appeals**  
Know which forms you need **pg. 5**



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# 2015 Department Conventions

DEPT.	CITY	CONVENTION HEADQUARTERS	DATES	BANQUET
Ala.	Auburn	The Hotel at Auburn University	June 4–7	June 6
Alaska	Fairbanks	Westmark Fairbanks Hotel & Conf. Center	April 23–26	April 25
Ariz.	Mesa	Marriott Phoenix	June 3–6	June 5
Ark.	Fort Smith	Holiday Inn City Center	June 12–13	June 13
Calif.	Reno, Nev.	Peppermill Resort & Casino	June 10–13	June 13
Colo.	Denver	Doubletree Hotel	May 13–15	May 15
Conn.	Cromwell	Courtyard by Marriott	April 30–May 3	May 2
Del.	Dover	Comfort Suites	May 15–16	May 16
D.C.	Washington	Marriott	June 25–28	June 27
Fla.	Lake Mary	Orlando Marriott – Lake Mary	May 28–June 1	May 30
Ga.	Macon	Marriott Macon City Center	June 11–14	June 13
Hawaii	Honolulu	Ala Moana Hotel	June 19–20	June 20
Idaho	Coeur d’Alene	Coeur d’Alene Inn & Convention Center	April 30–May 2	May 1
Ill.	Springfield	Northfield Inn & Suites	June 18–21	June 20
Ind.	Indianapolis	Marriott Center East	June 18–21	June 20
Iowa	Des Moines	Holiday Inn	June 19–21	June 20
Kan.	Mayetta	Prairie Band Casino & Resort	June 12–14	June 13
Ky.	Lexington	Embassy Suites	June 25–28	June 27
La.	Shreveport	Holiday Inn Shreveport	May 14–17	May 16
Maine	Bangor	Four Points by Sheraton	May 1–3	May 2
Md.	Ocean City	Princess Royale Hotel	May 28–31	May 30
Mass.	Leominster	Doubletree by Hilton	June 17–21	June 19, 20, 21
Mich.	Sault Ste. Marie	Kewadin Casino and Hotel	June 5–7	June 6
Minn.	Mankato	City Center Hotel	April 30–May 2	May 1
Miss.	Meridian	Drury Inn & Suites	May 28–31	May 30
Mo.	Jefferson City	Capitol Plaza Hotel	May 29–31	May 30
Mont.	Anaconda	American Legion Anaconda MT	June 4–6	June 6
Neb.	Kearney	Holiday Inn	June 12–14	June 13
Nev.	Las Vegas	Palace Station Hotel and Casino	May 3–5	May 5
N.H.	Hampton	Ashworth by the Sea	June 5–7	June 6
N.M.	Albuquerque	MCM Eleganté Hotel & Event Center	June 11–13	June 12
N.J.	Atlantic City	Resorts Casino	June 8–10	June 9
N.Y.	Kerhonkson	Hudson Valley Resort	June 14–17	June 16
N.C.	Greensboro	Sheraton Greensboro at Four Seasons	June 18–21	June 20
N.D.	Fargo	Biltmore on Main	April 24–26	April 25
Ohio	Dublin	The Crowne Plaza	June 25–28	June 27
Okla.	Catoosa	Hard Rock Hotel & Casino	June 23–25	June 24
Ore.	Klamath Falls	Running Y Ranch Lodge	May 14–16	May 15
Pa.	Exton	Wyndham Garden Exton Valley Forge	June 16–20	June 18
Puerto Rico	Aguadilla	Faro Suites & Conference Center	April 24–26	April 25
R.I.	Warwick	Crowne Plaza Hotel	April 17–18	April 17, 18
S.C.	Columbia	Double Tree By Hilton	May 14–17	May 16
S.D.	Sioux Falls	Holiday Inn City Centre	May 1–3	May 2
Tenn.	Murfreesboro	Doubletree by Hilton	June 16–20	June 20
Texas	Austin	Doubletree North	June 12–14	June 13
Utah	Ogden	Comfort Suites	June 4–6	June 5
Va.	Roanoke	Holiday Inn-Tanglewood	June 11–14	June 13
Vt.	Rutland	Holiday Inn	May 14–17	May 16
Wash.	Yakima	Howard Johnson Plaza	June 4–6	June 5
W.Va.	Martinsburg	Comfort Inn	June 5–7	June 6
Wis.	Appleton	Radisson Paper Valley Hotel	June 11–13	June 13
Wyo.	Riverton	Holiday Inn	May 8–9	May 9

## From the NATIONAL COMMANDER

### RON F. HOPE



## Standing up for our own

I recently had the exhilarating and humbling honor that befalls all DAV National Commanders during their tenure: the chance to address members of the House and Senate Veterans' Affairs Committees during our organization's Mid-Winter Conference. Seated before Congress, knowing that so many of you were literally standing behind me, and so many more were with me in spirit, I felt more impassioned about our cause than ever before.

This is a feeling I think you all should experience. Nothing rouses the soul in such a profound way as speaking on behalf of your fellow veterans, making your convictions known and demanding rightful treatment of our nation's bravest. Thankfully, you don't have to be the DAV National Commander to understand what I'm talking about.

In each of your communities, large or small, there are opportunities for this kind of leadership. There is a great need for it as well. No one knows the obstacles injured and ill veterans face as well as you do, and that gives you a unique perspective. As we have seen this past year, several pieces of legislation championed by DAV have made their way into law. That was possible because we who share this special camaraderie were bold

enough to stand up and demand the just treatment of veterans and the protection of what they earned through service.

You can take this message to your own local lawmakers. I know this same passion stirs in your Chapters and Departments. Use the strength of your 1.2 million fellow DAV members to bring our message to the forefront of your own communities.

Laws that affect you and your fellow veterans are often the direct result of your contact and communication with local government officials. In Ohio, a veteran-friendly employer registry has been established to help veterans better identify job opportunities. In Illinois, a new law has helped increase tax exemptions for disabled veterans so they can afford specially adapted homes that meet their needs.

These kinds of laws are on the books because veterans stood up and spoke out. They shared their stories and fought for others like them.

You can have this impact, too. Speaking from experience, I can tell you that no other feeling quite compares to having the momentum of more than a million brothers and sisters behind you as you fight for what you have all earned in service to this country.

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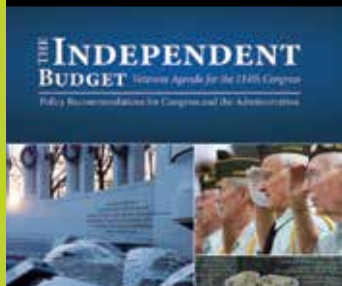


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## From the NATIONAL ADJUTANT J. MARC BURGESS



### Renewing our focus

**A**fter the excitement of the Mid-Winter Conference and pushing on toward this year's National Convention, I now want to draw your focus to our two major initiatives for the year. It's clear from listening to our members that issues concerning caregivers and women veterans are top priorities.

As veteran populations age and as more service members return home from war with injuries and illnesses requiring care, the family members and caregivers who provide support become increasingly important to our community.

Caregivers save the VA and American taxpayers millions of dollars each year, and they allow veterans to live at home rather than in institutions. Their health and well-being are of critical importance, and we must safeguard them.

Congress has numerous legislative options on the table that would ensure the recognition and support of caregivers of all severely ill and injured veterans and service members, including eliminating the inequality of eligibility for VA's Program of Comprehensive Assistance

for Family Caregivers. These are avenues DAV will continue to promote and work to advance through Congress.

Care for women veterans, as has been thoroughly detailed in our recent report "Women Veterans: The Long Journey Home," has lagged behind the times for many years. The demand for gender-specific services and care is severely outpaced by the growing population of women veterans, and this is a problem that must be remedied.

Over the past several years, we have been witness to a VA health care system with high demand on limited resources, and we know that is not the way to operate. However, we also know the VA offers a unique and specialized service to veterans, and

we should look first to ways we can fix the long-term investments we have made in a system designed to serve veterans. Our report on women veterans offers such recommendations.

Change, as we know, is often slow. But we must continue chipping away and working to solve these issues, not just for caregivers or women veterans, but to create a better system for us all.

It's clear from listening to our members that issues concerning **caregivers and women veterans** are top priorities.



## LETTERS

### **Remembering National 3rd Jr. Vice Commander Dennis Krulder**

My sincerest and heartfelt condolences go out to the family of Mr. Dennis Krulder and to the veterans he proudly served and continued to support through his roles with the Northport VA Medical Center and DAV. By definition, Mr. Krulder was a hero and a great role model to many. Without a doubt, the passing of Mr. Krulder is a mighty loss for the veterans and veterans support community around the nation. The great work, career and legacy of Mr. Krulder will certainly not be forgotten. **Max Freeman, Northport, N.Y., 2013 DAV Jesse Brown Memorial Youth Scholarship first place winner**

### **Prouder than ever**

I remember reading about the possibility of [the American Veterans Disabled for Life Memorial] being built several years ago, and I jumped at the opportunity to donate to the memorial foundation to help make it a reality. As a permanently disabled veteran who was injured after driving over an IED in Fallujah, Iraq, in 2006, the memorial is very personal to me. I want to thank all the present and past DAV members who served on the memorial's foundation and helped make the memorial a reality for all disabled veterans. **Chris B. Traxson, Corporal, USMC (retired), Springdale, Ark.**

### **I am a vet**

After reading the letters from the female vets Griffith and Eversby in the November/December issue, I had to write because what they said is so true. I was assaulted three times in basic training but couldn't say anything. Who would believe an E-nothing over drill sergeants? I was afraid they could make my life even more of a hell

than it was, so I said nothing. Ever. I wasn't the only one, either. They will have to answer to their maker for the abuse they inflicted on the females in the company. I've never called myself a vet, because I'd never been in a war. I've been embarrassed to call myself a disabled vet, because I didn't get my disability from a war wound, just a military surgeon's mistake. The article by National Adjutant J. Marc Burgess, in the same issue, made me feel better when he stated, "If you served, you are a veteran."

**Pamela Cantrell, Brady, Texas**

### **Pleased with the VA**

I read and see in the paper all the negative about the bad VA system, but I have to go the other way. I have been in the VA system for over five years, usually going to the VA Medical Center in Leavenworth, Kan. This summer I was told I had kidney cancer and would have to have my kidney removed at the VA medical center in Kansas City, Mo. They set it up in less than a month with a specialist from Kansas University Medical Center. They went out of their way to make sure I was well taken care of, and they always thanked me for my service.

**James R. Doggett, Kansas**

### **Displeased with the VA**

Hats off to all the vets that are speaking out about the VA. I have been to several different VA medical facilities, and the only thing I am sure of is the fact that I

will be treated poorly by the very first person I talk to. I am at the point that I hate to go to them for anything. Even the receptionists at all of these sites are rude.

**Stephen Ramsey, Maryland, Md.**

### **Taking responsibility**

Quit putting all the blame for the overburdened VA Health System on them. As I walk around the two VA hospitals in my state, I've noticed a large amount of veterans who are overweight and not in very good physical condition. I then look out the door at the designated smoking area, and there are so many out there smoking. Being overweight puts your body at risk for all kinds of physical ailments. Smoking has been proven for many years now to cause many physical problems...It is time each of us starts taking care of ourselves. This will surely take a burden off the Veterans Health Administration and care can be given to those who really are in need of it. **Jim Nimesgern, Lake Havasu, Ariz.**

### **Stop the discrimination**

Under current rules, concurrent receipt can apply only to those who have at least 20 years of military service. I meet all but the 20-year mark because my disability occurred before I had accrued 20 years (13 1/2 years). I was "boarded out" and retired. I believe the requirement should be changed to include those retired from the U.S. military. **Bruce Blount, New Egypt, N.J.**

**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](mailto: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](https://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.



## Formalizing the process

New law mandates all claims, appeals begin on standard forms

By Joseph R. Chenelly

**T**he days of being able to informally start disability claims with the Department of Veterans Affairs by writing a simple statement on a sheet of paper are over. That will no longer secure an effective date for the evaluation of an award. New laws going into effect March 24 will require claimants to use specific forms for claims and appeals.

The new laws require that all claims to the VA be filed on standard forms, regardless of the type. The VA states that abolishing the longtime practice of informally initiating veterans' disability claims will be one way of improving the quality and timeliness of processing.

"These new processes will leave no doubt as to the effective dates of claims," said National Service Director Jim Marszalek. "Of course, our 3,815 National, Department and Chapter Service Officers, including County Veteran Service Officers accredited by DAV, are ready to help everyone get through and understand these new requirements."

The new law eliminates the practice of using reports of hospitalizations, examinations and other medical records to serve as the start of informal claims for increase or to reopen while retaining the retroactive effective dates.

The change also affects appeals. Under the new laws, the VA will accept an expression of dissatisfaction or disagreement with its decision as a Notice of Disagreement (NOD) only if it is submitted on a standardized form.

There are three major components to these changes.

First, the traditional informal claims process is being standardized with a new standard form, VA Form 21-0966, *Intent to File a Claim for Compensation and/*

*or Pension, Survivors Pension, or Other Benefits*. The form is designed to capture information necessary to identify and support compensation, pension and other benefit claims.

An individual or their representative can submit this form in order to establish a potential effective date for benefits and then take up to a year to gather the evidence necessary to support the claim.

The form may be submitted electronically, on paper or over the phone. The form is

electronically available through eBenefits. The form can be submitted there or in hard copy by mailing it to a DAV National Service Office. The form can also be completed by a VA call center representative over the phone or by a DAV National Service Officer (NSO).

Submitting an Intent to File claim protects an

**"These new processes will leave no doubt as to the effective dates of claims. Of course, our National Service Officers are ready to help everyone get through and understand these new requirements."**

*Jim Marszalek,  
National Service Director*

## A quick reference guide to the new forms

Effective March 24, a new law will require the use of specific forms for claims and appeals.

### 21-0966

Intent to File a Claim for Compensation and/or Pension, Survivors' Pension, or Other Benefits

*\*This is a new form proposed by the law.*

### 21-526EZ

Application for Disability Compensation and Related Compensation Benefits

Required for paper submissions

### 21-527EZ

Application for Pension

Required for paper submissions

### 21-534EZ

Application for DIC, Death Pension, and/or Accrued Benefits

Required for paper submissions

### 21-0958

Notice of Disagreement

Required for paper submissions

**NOTE: All of these forms may be filled out online.**

effective date of benefits for up to one year, meaning individuals seeking compensation or pension benefits will have a full year to gather and submit evidence necessary to support their claim. The new rule does not require that evidence necessary to support a claim be submitted in order for the claim to be recognized as complete and for the VA to take action.

The new regulations allow the VA to award increased benefits retroactive to the date of medical treatment, as long as the form is filed within one year of the treatment and the required claim form is filed within a year after that.

Second, if veterans wants to file for compensation, they can do so online. If that is not possible or desirable, use of the EZ forms becomes mandatory under the new regulations. VA Form 21-526EZ, *Application for Disability Compensation and Related Compensation Benefits*, is needed for paper submissions. Pension claims must be filed on VA Form 21-527EZ, *Application for Pension*. Survivors' claims for dependency and indemnity compensation (DIC), survivors' pension and accrued benefits must be filed on VA Form 21-534EZ, *Application for DIC, Death Pension, and/or Accrued Benefits*.

The EZ forms were previously available on an optional basis. Under the new regulations, the VA will mandate their use. Veterans and survivors do not have to file fully developed claims (FDCs) when using these mandatory forms, but the VA encourages FDC participation because it can expedite delivery of benefits through the FDC program.

Third, the changes mandate use of a standardized notice of disagreement form when a claimant wishes to initiate an appeal of a VA decision. Claimants will initiate the appeal of a decision with which they disagree by explaining their disagreement on VA Form 21-0958, *Notice of Disagreement*.

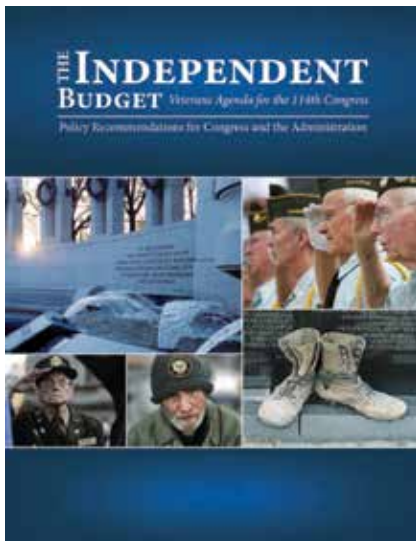
NSOs are being trained in these new laws and forms, and this will be a key topic in this year's Department and Chapter Service Officer Certification Training Program. ■



### Learn More Online

Veterans, family members and survivors should always feel free to contact their local DAV National Service Office with any questions about claims, appeals and compensation. Contact information for those offices can be found online at [DAV.org/veterans/find-your-local-office/](http://DAV.org/veterans/find-your-local-office/).





# New format, new figures for *Independent Budget*

Focus on care access, claims process,  
infrastructure, caregivers and women vets

By Ashleigh Byrnes

**T**he *Independent Budget* (IB), the annual funding and policy recommendations for federal veterans programs co-authored by DAV, AMVETS (American Veterans), VFW (Veterans of Foreign Wars) and PVA (Paralyzed Veterans of America), has taken a new format this year.

In mid-January, the group unveiled *The Independent Budget Veterans Agenda*, calling on the Department of Veterans Affairs and Congress to focus on five critical issues:

- ensuring timely access to high-quality health care;
- fixing the VBA claims-processing and appeals systems;
- maintaining and rebuilding VA critical infrastructure;
- enhancing caregiver support and expanding eligibility of the VA's caregiver program to include veterans of all eras; and
- guaranteeing women veterans have timely access to high-quality care and benefits.

Budget recommendations were released separately, along with the president's proposed funding levels for 2016. Among many key items, this year's budget proposals cite the need for significant new funding to increase the VA's capacity through additional staff and improved facilities. The VA has stated previously it would take \$10 billion to close current safety gaps

in the system's facilities, which has long been noted by the IB co-authors. Additionally, the IB notes it will take between \$56 billion and \$68 billion to close the remaining 4,000 critical infrastructure gaps.

"The co-authors of the IB have a direct pulse on the veteran community," said Washington Headquarters Executive Director Garry Augustine. "So what you get are insightful and reasonable recommendations to help Congress and the Administration home in on the issues that are most important to veterans and their families."

Last year's access crisis reflected the accuracy of the IB's recommendations, which had long stated funding was being steadily outpaced by veterans' needs. In July 2014, then Acting VA Secretary Sloan Gibson requested additional funding to close gaps in access. His requests were commensurate with funding shortfalls repeatedly identified by the IB co-authors for more than a decade.

"The IB figures are carefully developed to request necessary funding," said Legislative Director Joseph Violante. "The IB budget recommendations are designed to ensure existing programs and facilities are meeting the current—and projected—demands on the system."

Improved oversight of the VA's new Veterans Choice Card program to offset potential payment issues or backlogs, changes to the department's Caregiver Support Program that would expand eligibility to pre-9/11 veterans' and further improvements and initiatives to enhance care and support for women



## VA Accounts for FY 2016 and FY 2017 Advance Appropriations (Dollars in Thousands)

	FY 2015 Appropriation	FY 2016* Administration	FY 2016 Independent Budget (IB)	FY 2017 Advance Approp.	FY 2017 IB Advance Approp.
<b>Veterans Health Administration (VHA)</b>					
	Medical Services	45,224,716	47,603,202	51,593,505	51,673,000
	Medical Support and Compliance	5,879,700	6,144,000	5,972,489	6,524,000
	Medical Facilities**	4,739,000	4,915,000	5,703,763	5,074,000
	<b>Subtotal Medical Care, Discretionary</b>	<b>55,843,416</b>	<b>58,662,202</b>	<b>63,269,757</b>	<b>63,271,000</b>
	Medical Care Collections	3,065,000	3,248,000		3,299,954
	<b>Total, Medical Care Budget Authority (including Collections)</b>	<b>58,908,416</b>	<b>61,910,202</b>	<b>63,269,757</b>	<b>66,570,954</b>
	Medical and Prosthetic Research	588,922	621,813	619,000	
	<b>Total, Veterans Health Administration</b>	<b>59,497,338</b>	<b>62,532,015</b>	<b>63,888,757</b>	
<b>General Operating Expenses (GOE)</b>					
	Veterans Benefits Administration	2,534,254	2,697,734	2,796,650	
	General Administration	321,591	346,659	330,436	
	Board of Veterans' Appeals	99,294	107,884	117,853	
	<b>Total, General Operating Expenses (GOE)</b>	<b>2,955,139</b>	<b>3,044,393</b>	<b>3,244,939</b>	
<b>Departmental Admin. and Misc. Programs</b>					
	Information Technology	3,903,344	4,133,363	3,974,781	
	National Cemetery Administration	256,800	266,220	260,970	
	Office of Inspector General	126,411	126,766	128,412	
	<b>Total, Dept. Admin. and Misc. Programs</b>	<b>4,286,555</b>	<b>4,526,349</b>	<b>4,364,163</b>	
<b>Construction Programs</b>					
	Construction, Major	561,800	1,143,800	1,930,000	
	Construction, Minor	495,200	406,200	575,000	
	Grants for State Extended Care Facilities	90,000	80,000	200,000	
	Grants for State Vets Cemeteries	46,000	45,000	48,000	
	<b>Total, Construction Programs</b>	<b>1,193,000</b>	<b>1,675,000</b>	<b>2,753,000</b>	
	Other Discretionary	162,372	166,090	165,132	
	<b>Total, Discretionary Budget Authority (including Medical Collections)</b>	<b>68,094,404</b>	<b>71,943,847</b>	<b>74,415,991</b>	

\* Amounts for health care for FY 2016 reflect the FY 2015 Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act approved in December 2014. However, the Administration has revised its FY 2016 estimated need for the three medical care accounts. The Administration projects need for an additional \$1.1 billion for Medical Services, \$70 million for Medical Support and Compliance and \$105 million for Medical Facilities. The new total includes Medical Services (\$48.7 billion), Medical Support and Compliance (\$6.2 billion) and Medical Facilities (\$5 billion). This results in a new total Medical Care estimate of \$63.2 billion.

\*\* The IB Recommendation for Medical Facilities includes \$900 million over the baseline for Non-Recurring Maintenance for both FY 2016 and FY 2017.

veterans are also recommended. Additionally, the IB focused on the VA's claims and appeals process. The co-authors call for a reassessment of accuracy and efficiency goals set for processing disability claims and creation of a pilot program that would streamline the process for veterans to collect evidence privately to support their appeal arguments.

"What we have constructed in the IB is a sort of road map for addressing major problems that have plagued the VA system," said Violante. "We have seen the result of underfunding: access issues, waitlists and backlogs.

"There is no quick and easy solution, but we believe these are areas that need adequate funding in order to continue providing services veterans have earned."

### A shift in the funding request trend

For many years, the co-authors of the IB have noted dramatic differences between their recommendations and those made by the presidential administrations.



Shortfalls in the multibillion dollar range have been common, often in areas like maintenance and infrastructure, mental health care and information technology (IT).

These gaps, as predicted by the IB organizations, led the VA down a road where demands were too high and resources were too few.

"At a time when more and more veterans are coming home in need of care from the VA, the budgets over the past decade have left us disappointed, and frankly concerned, about the ability of the VA to keep pace with the growth," said Violante.

Violante noted the IB groups were pleased the

Administration's budget, released Feb. 2, was not only delivered on time but also showed positive signs of change for the future of the VA's funding.

The Administration, for example, recommended \$63.2 billion in total medical care for FY 2016 and approximately \$66.6 billion for total medical care for the advance appropriations for FY 2017. This amount actually exceeds the \$66.4 billion advance appropriations recommendation offered in the IB report. In all, the Administration's budget proposal saw a 7.8-percent increase to help provide a boost to the department.

The VA estimates it will treat 7 million patients by 2017, making the increase both needed and welcome.

Steady backlogs of disability claims and appeals, lingering access problems and halted construction projects are just some of the issues the VA has faced as part of the chronic underfunding.

The IB group recommended a \$236 million increase—totaling \$2.8 billion—for the Veterans Benefits Administration to modernize IT capabilities and address many of the claims and appeals problems still tied up in the system. Additionally, the group recommended \$2.8 billion for all VA construction programs and \$619 million for medical and prosthetic research.

"Between the budget recommendations and the veterans'

agenda encompassed in the IB, we believe Congress and the Administration have a comprehensive blueprint to address the issues that have negatively impacted the VA and the veterans it serves," said Augustine. "We have given them tools to work with, and it's good we're seeing changes, but we have to keep pushing toward the goal: a better and more efficient health care and benefits system for our veterans." ■



### Learn More Online

To review *The Independent Budget Veterans Agenda* and *The Independent Budget* report, visit [independentbudget.org](http://independentbudget.org).



# Center for Women Veterans turns 20

By Charity A. Edgar

**T**he Center for Women Veterans (CWV), established with the support and urging from DAV and other veterans service organizations, celebrated two decades of serving women veterans in November.

“Our nation has 359,000 women serving right now—about 16 percent of the active, Guard and Reserve force,” said VA Secretary Robert McDonald during a ceremony recognizing the center’s anniversary. “Women veterans represent 10.5 percent of all veterans in the United States. They have earned the title of veteran, and we’re proud to honor them all.”

In November 1994, Public Law 03-446 required the VA to create the CWV as a means to monitor and coordinate VA programs for women. Late VA Secretary and former DAV National Headquarters

In the years following the center’s creation, noticeable progress has been made in caring for our women veterans. The National Center for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder at the Boston VA medical center created its Women’s Health Sciences Division in 1994. In 1999, the VA was authorized to provide prenatal and obstetrical care to eligible veterans, signaling a new focus on gender-specific services for women veterans. The following year, the VA allocated funds to support programs specifically designated for women veterans who are homeless. The sunset provision for sexual trauma counseling in the VA was extended permanently in 2004. By 2008, there were more than 27 research projects funded by the VA specifically addressing issues impacting women veterans.

The list of accomplishments continues to expand under the leadership of Elisa Basnight, the current Director of the Center for Women Veterans. “Looking forward, 2015’s substantive focus follows up on 2014’s, with a focus on employment and entrepreneurship, as it relates to women veterans,” said Basnight, referencing the center’s 2014 emphasis on enhancing women veterans’ competitiveness in order to



“DAV and CWV engage in important, inclusive conversations about policies that impact women veterans, ensuring that discussions are meaningful and can help effectuate change.”

*Elisa Basnight, Director, Center for Women Veterans*

Executive Director Jesse Brown supervised the office’s establishment. This was more than a decade after the VA first created the Advisory Committee on Women Veterans in 1983 in response to the 1980 census, which for the first time asked women to identify themselves as veterans. An astonishing 1.2 million respondents said yes, and in response, the VA and Congress focused their efforts on ensuring women veterans were aware of the benefits available to them.

Two years following the creation of the CWV, the VA hosted the first-ever National Summit on Women Veterans Issues. DAV was the first major veterans service organization to co-host what has become a popular, reoccurring event that brings veterans across the country together to collaborate on issues facing women veterans.

prevent homelessness. “CWV would like to build and enhance partnerships that can enable women veterans to build economic stability and improve their well-being and that of their families,” continued Basnight.

“I come to work each and every day motivated to make a difference for our approximately 2 million extraordinary women veterans, whose service spans multiple generations and eras of war and peace,” said Basnight, who has served at the center’s top post since her appointment in 2013. “As an Army veteran, the daughter of a Navy veteran and a member of a family dedicated to military service, I am personally tied to the VA’s mission of caring for veterans, and the Center for Women Veterans’ goal of ensuring that women veterans receive the respect they deserve.”

*(Continued on pg. 35)*

## Veteran suicide prevention legislation passes House and Senate

The Clay Hunt Suicide Prevention for American Veterans Act, a bill designed to help prevent suicide among the nation's veterans, was signed into law in mid-February by President Barack Obama.

Among its measures, the legislation requires the Department of Veterans Affairs to evaluate all its mental health care and suicide prevention programs and practices for effectiveness. The bill also calls for the creation of a VA website to house information for the department's mental health services, broaden the access methods for veterans to seek mental health services through VA and address critical staffing shortages in the VA's mental health care system by instituting a pilot student loan repayment program.

The bill was originally introduced last year and was reintroduced with the new session of Congress, passing through the House in mid-January. The bill received its namesake from Marine Cpl. Clay Hunt, who dedicated his life post-military to helping other veterans cope with their struggles. Clay himself was dealing with depression and post-traumatic stress. In 2011, he succumbed to the difficult battles he was facing and ended his life.

"Suicide is one of the most devastating issues impacting all generations of veterans," said DAV Washington Headquarters Executive Director Garry



*The parents of Clay Hunt, Richard and Susan Selke (left) and DAV Washington Headquarters Executive Director Garry Augustine (center) were among those in attendance when the president signed the Clay Hunt Suicide Prevention for American Veterans Act, Feb. 12, 2015. (AP Photo/J. Scott Applewhite)*

Augustine. "Getting veterans access to care and meeting their mental health needs is critical, and we are hopeful this legislation will stem an epidemic facing our heroes and their families."



**Learn More Online**

Read the complete bill at [www.1.usa.gov/1vGypBy](http://www.1.usa.gov/1vGypBy).

## DAV testifies on improvements to disability claims, appeals

In late January, Assistant Legislative Director Paul Varela testified before the House Veterans' Affairs Committee's Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs on a number of issues related to improving claims and appeals. In an effort to make the process both more efficient and accurate, Varela testified that in 2014, "approximately 76 percent of the appeals represented by DAV resulted in original decisions being overturned or remanded to [VA Regional Offices] for additional development and readjudication."

Among the improvements recommended by DAV are the needed increases in claims-processing staff and IT upgrades to "modern, paperless, rules-based decision support programs." Varela also testified to the potential benefits of a Fully Developed Appeals pilot program, largely supported by the veterans

service organization community, to allow veterans to privately collect evidence to justify their appeals.

Varela testified on the importance of improving rating board decision notification letters to ensure veterans easily understand the justification for VA's rating decision, as is required by law. DAV recommends the justifications be expressed in a way that the average, nonlegal expert can understand, giving veterans a more clear understanding of their rating and allowing them to make better decisions about their appeals options. Further, in the case of appeals, Varela suggested that Congress pass laws to change the new and material evidence, or simply eliminate the requirement altogether, thus saving the claimant time and eliminating additional resource drains on both the Board of Veterans' Appeals and the Veterans Benefits Administration.





## From the NATIONAL DIRECTOR OF VOLUNTARY SERVICES JOHN KLEINDIENST

### The heartbeat of DAV

From my time in the field as a National Service Officer to my most recent appointment as the National Director of Voluntary Services, my experiences throughout our organization have led me to know this: Volunteerism is the heartbeat of DAV.

Our organization is fortunate enough to have more than 11,000 registered volunteers within its ranks. These selfless citizens are DAV, Auxiliary and Junior Auxiliary members from across the country who generously donate their time volunteering as Hospital Service Coordinators, Transportation Network drivers and in numerous other capacities. These volunteers meet the various needs of injured and ill veterans in communities nationwide. Simply put, they are the engine that keeps this train moving, and without them our organization could not thrive.

However, as noted on page 22, the past few years have shown a downward trend in volunteerism on behalf of veterans service organizations. This phenomenon can be attributed to the fact that many volunteers offer their time and services during retirement, and as World War II-era volunteers are passing away at an increasing rate, volunteers from other eras are waiting longer in life to retire.

But that's not to say volunteering is solely for those who are retired. Take the 2015 National Disabled Winter Sports Clinic in Snowmass, Colo., for example,

where 200 active certified ski instructors have volunteered their professional skills to coach more than 400 veterans in various adaptive winter sports activities for a week in April. Even though the clinic has various sponsors and coordinators to ensure its success, it's the services of the professionals who volunteer their time and wages that make this highly therapeutic and rehabilitative event possible.

Keep in mind, though, that you don't need a professional certification to take advantage of the many volunteer opportunities available in your local community. Whether it's driving a van for DAV's Transportation Network, grocery shopping, running errands or doing yard work and other home repairs for veterans, there's a need you can fulfill. Our Local Veterans Assistance Program (LVAP)—perhaps the most underutilized program in DAV—can help you find these opportunities in your community and help ensure DAV remains a premier volunteer organization. Contact DAV Voluntary Services to learn more about LVAP.

All of America's veterans deserve our gratitude, and so do our volunteers for sacrificing their time and efforts for the benefit of others. Our organization is strengthened immensely by the volunteer efforts put forth by our volunteers, because not only does it show there are fellow Americans who support veterans, it also shows veterans that DAV will continue its mission to empower them to lead high-quality lives with respect and dignity.



# DAV funding benefits homeless veterans in D.C.

## Charitable Service Trust grant helps VA provide assistance

By M. Todd Hunter

**H**omeless veterans—you might not notice them right away. They look like anyone you might pass on the street. They are men and women of every age and race, some with obvious handicaps and others with disabilities you cannot see. The circumstances that have left them homeless are as varied as the individuals themselves.

Reginald Evans is one such veteran. The former Army infantryman served two tours in Vietnam then fell on hard times after being honorably discharged in 1974.

“I came home [from Vietnam] with some problems, and my wife ended up leaving me. I got depressed and turned to drugs and alcohol,” Evans explained. He has been in and out of Washington, D.C., homeless shelters for nearly 40 years. At 65, Evans belongs to a demographic many Americans sometimes forget.

According to the 2014 Annual Homeless Assessment Report, there were 49,933 homeless veterans nationwide on a single cold January night last year, and it’s estimated that two times as many veterans are at risk of becoming homeless. At-risk veterans are those who are underemployed and need to increase their income in order to pay their rent.

“The past few years have been pretty rough around here. I don’t wish being homeless on anyone, especially in a place like D.C.,” said Evans.

More than 700 homeless veterans are estimated to live in the district, with many more in the surrounding counties. In a region where it’s common for winter temperatures to dip below freezing and



*Secretary of Veterans*

*Affairs Bob McDonald hands out clothing to homeless and at-risk veterans during the Washington, D.C., VA Medical Center's annual Winterhaven Stand Down Jan. 24. The Stand Down offered a full day of free services and provisions to homeless and at-risk veterans. DAV's Charitable Service Trust recently bestowed the medical center with a \$60,000 grant to support homeless and at-risk veterans. (Photo courtesy of the VA)*

into the single digits at times, the harsh environment only increases the need for provisions for these sometimes overlooked heroes.

This is what makes the DAV Charitable Service Trust such a vital part of serving veterans, especially at the local level.

Since being established in 1986 to meet the requirements of donors with special needs, the Trust has grown to fund and advance numerous initiatives outside the services normally offered to ill and injured veterans by the DAV National Organization. That mission led the Trust to recently award a \$60,000 grant to the Washington, D.C., VA Medical Center (DCVAMC) to support homeless and at-risk veterans like Evans through initiatives such as the 2015 Winterhaven Stand Down.

The annual event, described by DCVAMC officials as a one-stop shop, is a full day of free services aimed



*Volunteers serve free meals to homeless and at-risk veterans during the Washington, D.C., VA Medical Center's annual Winterhaven Stand Down Jan. 24. The event provided meals and other essential services to more than 700 veterans and was supported through a \$60,000 grant from DAV's Charitable Service Trust. (Photo courtesy of the VA)*

at leading homeless and at-risk veterans to independence and improved health. Provided services include health screenings; housing and employment counseling; substance abuse and psychological services; dental exams; HIV testing; and free warm clothing, boots, shoes and hygiene kits. Attendees are also treated to a hot lunch and a haircut.

"These resources can greatly impact a veteran's quality of life," said Richard Marbes, Chairman of the DAV Charitable Service Trust. "Warm clothing, food and health care—these are basic needs, and we're proud to help provide them for veterans struggling with homelessness."

"Winterhaven allows veterans to come in, relax, get some food and get some other services they otherwise wouldn't get in the streets," said Stephanie Burns, DCVAMC's Chief of Voluntary Services. She added that the event is made possible through donations from more than 70 local vendors, as well as the Trust, and is an integral part of the VA and DCVAMC's comprehensive effort to end veteran homelessness by the end of 2015.

"DAV has always been a true supporter for the initiative of solving homelessness among veterans," said Burns. "We rely on the services and grants DAV provides because we can't provide everything."

Winterhaven Stand Down organizers remain optimistic about the future and efficacy of the event.

"Word got out among the homeless veteran community in and around the capital area about how much of a difference Winterhaven plays in these veterans' lives," said Kevin Morton, DCVAMC's

### Health Care for Homeless Veterans

Coordinator. "I think that says we've got a good thing going here, but there's always more that can be done to help these veterans," he said.

Morton noted the Stand Down has seen a steady growth of about a hundred new veterans each year throughout the past five years. The trend can be attributed to event organizers expanding Winterhaven's service offerings to reflect the needs of different demographics of veterans, such as younger veterans and women, who now make up 10 percent of Stand Down attendees.

"It shows that the Washington, D.C., VA Medical Center is taking a proactive stance and making a positive impact in helping the VA achieve its goals," Burns said.

"Supporting VA medical centers is a natural fit for DAV," said Marbes. "DAV is dedicated to the service of our nation's heroes, and events like Winterhaven at the VA medical center in D.C. serve to show that, even though some veterans may be down on their luck, DAV hasn't forgotten about them or their sacrifices."

"I may not have it all together right now," said Evans, "but it's things like this Stand Down that remind me there are still people out there who are willing to help me figure it out." ■



### Learn More Online

To learn more about homeless veterans or to find out how you can help eradicate veteran homelessness, visit [www.va.gov/homeless](http://www.va.gov/homeless) or call 877-4AID-VET. To learn more about DAV's Charitable Service Trust, visit [www.cst.dav.org](http://www.cst.dav.org).



# New Orleans declares victory in ending veteran homelessness

By Charity A. Edgar

In June 2013, first lady Michelle Obama unveiled her Mayors Challenge to End Veteran Homelessness, an ambitious program that encourages communities across the country to eliminate veteran homelessness by the end of 2015.

New Orleans just became the first major city to make that daunting challenge a reality—a year before the deadline.

Before accepting the challenge, New Orleans was already recognized for its efforts to address veteran homelessness; the city saw a 66-percent decrease from 2012 to 2014. But Mayor Mitch Landrieu wanted to do more, accepted the challenge and vowed “The Big Easy” would meet—and exceed—the first lady’s call to action.

Plagued with an increasing homeless population following one of the worst natural disasters in American history, New Orleans faced and overcame insurmountable odds to accomplish this tremendous goal. The aftermath of Hurricane Katrina meant diminished housing availability, escalating rents and unemployment. High numbers of displaced residents—including veterans—returned to the city to find themselves out in the streets.

The Mayors Challenge to End Veteran Homelessness program encourages partnerships among government, nonprofit and private sectors, resulting in a coordinated effort that leverages services and skills that best serve veterans. The program requires a system to identify homeless veterans, a housing-first approach that removes barriers to place homeless veterans into housing as soon as possible and a plan in place to address veterans who are at risk for homelessness.

To make the challenge a reality for New Orleans, Landrieu put together a coalition of non-profit



Mayor Mitch Landrieu announced Jan. 7, from the National World War II Museum's U.S. Freedom Pavilion, that New Orleans has beaten the deadline for first lady Michelle Obama's Mayors Challenge to end homelessness among veterans by the end of 2015. The city partnered with homeless advocacy group Unity of Greater New Orleans, Volunteers of America, the VA and other groups to house 227 homeless veterans in 2014. (Photo by Alex Woodward/Gambit)

organizations; homelessness service providers; service members and veterans; and federal, state and local agencies that worked together and housed 227 veterans, surpassing the original goal by more than 30 people.

“Veteran homelessness is an important and challenging issue, and we are very proud of our accomplishment in New Orleans, but the work of ending veteran homelessness is never really done,” said Landrieu. “That’s why we have also created a new and sustainable rapid-response model that combines all available local, state and federal resources with the work of our local active-duty and former military personnel—utilizing veterans to help veterans. I hope our model here in New Orleans can be replicated

(Continued on pg. 33)



## From the NATIONAL SERVICE DIRECTOR JAMES T. MARSZALEK

### Fixing the Claims Process Must Include Appeals As Well

If you have ever filed a claim for disability compensation, you know how long it can take to get a decision from the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA). And if your claim was denied and you appealed the decision, you know it can take even longer to get a final decision on an appeal.

DAV has always said that the best way to improve the appeals process is to ensure that claims are decided correctly the first time. We have worked closely with VBA and Congress to develop and implement several new claims processing initiatives: Fully Developed Claims (FDCs), Disability Benefit Questionnaires (DBQs), e-Benefits and the Veterans Benefits Management System (VBMS).

These innovations have resulted in significant progress, including a reduction of the number of backlogged claims by 60 percent.

But as the VA produces more claims decisions, the inevitable result will be more appeals. Unfortunately, while the VA focused more attention and resources on reducing the claims backlog, the appeals “backlog” has grown to over 350,000 in the past several years, potentially adding years to the decision process.

One alternative that veterans have now is the Decision Review Officer (DRO) program, which is a *de novo* review of the appeal performed locally at the VBA Regional Office (RO). In the DRO review, a veteran can request a hearing with the DRO and can have a representative, such as one of DAV’s National Service Officers (NSOs), accompany them to present their case. Our NSOs frequently advise veterans to choose DRO review because it can result in a faster and better decision; and if the DRO decision is

not favorable, the appeal can still continue the traditional route to the Board.

But not all appeals can be resolved by DROs, so DAV has been leading a working group composed of VSO stakeholders and leaders of both VBA and the Board to develop new initiatives that could improve the appeals process. After months of discussion and negotiation, we were able to build consensus around a proposal called the Fully Develop Appeals (FDA) pilot program—modeled after the FDC program—and we are now working to get it approved by Congress.

In the FDA program, a veteran would agree to gather all the private evidence required to support their appeal and agree not to request a hearing. Their appeal would then be transferred immediately to the Board, eliminating a number of processing steps at the RO, and saving the veteran time on a decision.

The FDA pilot program would be a completely voluntary program and a veteran could withdraw from it at any time for any reason, retaining all of their appeal rights, including the ability to submit new evidence, have a hearing and continue their appeal through DRO review or traditional appeal to the Board.

The FDA program is not a replacement for either the DRO review or traditional appeal process; instead it could become a third option to give veterans more choices and more flexibility.

If you are considering an appeal, I strongly recommend that you consult with one of our highly-trained NSOs about the free representation services we provide all veterans to help with claims, and if necessary, appeals as well.



# Drowning out the noise

## Treatment for one of the most prevalent veterans' afflictions

By Ashleigh Byrnes

**R**inging. Buzzing. Whistling. Roaring. No matter what it sounds like, tinnitus affects roughly 50 million Americans to some degree, and a large number of veterans therein.

The number of veterans diagnosed with service-connected tinnitus is estimated at roughly 1.5 million.

"Tinnitus affects 10 to 15 percent of adults in the United States. It is a common service-related disability among our military veterans," explained Dr. Sujana S. Chandrasekhar, of the American Academy of Otolaryngology. "Yet despite its prevalence and effect on quality of life, prior to this there weren't any evidence-based guidelines about managing tinnitus."

Chandrasekhar frequently treats veterans for tinnitus through the Department of Veterans Affairs and has worked to help produce the very first clinical practice guidelines on tinnitus. Now a panel composed of clinicians and methodologists have made strong recommendations that physicians distinguish patients with bothersome tinnitus from patients with non-bothersome tinnitus through a comprehensive audiologic exam.

"About 20 percent of adults who experience tinnitus require clinical intervention," explained Chandrasekhar.

Persistent, bothersome tinnitus is described as noise that prevents sleep or the ability to concentrate. These symptoms leave patients more vulnerable to other mental health problems, such as depression or anxiety, as a result.

The guidelines also recommend against prescribing antidepressants, anticonvulsants or various dietary supplements in the treatment of persistent tinnitus. Hearing-aid evaluations are recommended for patients who experience documented, bothersome tinnitus associated with hearing loss. While acupuncture has been suggested as a treatment method in some circles, the panel offered no conclusive recommendation.

There is no cure for tinnitus, but these new guidelines, incorporated with both new and old treatment options, aim to help patients learn to self-manage their condition.

Sound therapy has long been held as one of the most successful ways to treat tinnitus. External sounds are used to reduce the perception of tinnitus noise, which help the patient diminish their own response. Workbooks provided by the VA teach patients to try three different kinds of sounds for this method: "soothing" sounds to relieve stress, "background" sounds to decrease awareness of tinnitus and "interesting" sounds that help shift focus.

This practice has been in use for more than 30 years,



and between 60 percent to 90 percent of patients report relief from their symptoms.

New to the VA is a sound-therapy system called SoundCure Serenade. The device uses soft tones, known as S-tones, to offer relief. The research suggests S-tones help to suppress symptoms.

“The mechanisms underlying tinnitus suppression are different from those in tinnitus masking. Masking attempts to divert a patient’s attention away from the tinnitus,” according to *The Hearing Journal*. “Suppression is a physiologic process where sounds—in this case, patterned sounds—may likely be modulating the activity of the auditory cortex and interrupting tinnitus generation.”

Researchers at the University of California, Irvine, who study the use of S-tones have reported great success. “Within 30 seconds, the subject started to experience some tinnitus suppression, and by 120 seconds reported being unable to hear his tinnitus. This is an example of 100-percent suppression.”

Additionally, cognitive behavior therapy (CBT) is a form of treatment that can address some of the negative reactions brought on by tinnitus. Many patients can develop emotional responses to their

symptoms, including frustration and anxiety. More serious cases can lead to sleep deprivation and depression, and some patients may also experience a form of post-traumatic stress disorder relating the sound to certain distressing events.

CBT offers patients three ways to address these symptoms. By performing relaxation techniques, planning pleasant distraction activities and altering how they think about their symptoms, many patients are able to cope with tinnitus with more positive outcomes.

Veterans who believe they are suffering from tinnitus should contact their health care provider for further evaluation.

“Any issue that affects a veteran’s hearing can impact his or her ability to sleep, perform a job and interact with others,” said National Adjutant Marc Burgess. “It’s encouraging to see the VA working so hard to address this common—though challenging—condition to improve the quality of life of veterans and their families.” ■

“About 20 percent of adults who experience tinnitus require clinical intervention.”

Dr. Sujana S. Chandrasekhar,  
American Academy of Otolaryngology

Learn More Online

Visit the American Tinnitus Association online at [www.ata.org](http://www.ata.org) to find more information, including support networks and tinnitus-management tools.



The DAV Charitable Service Trust has achieved the coveted Charity Navigator four-star rating for “sound fiscal management and commitment to accountability and transparency.” Charity Navigator President Ken Berger commended the Trust for being efficient, ethical and open. The Trust supports programs that typically include providing food, shelter and other necessary items to homeless or at-risk veterans; accessibility or mobility items for veterans with vision or hearing impairments; therapeutic activities; physical and psychological activities for rehabilitation and other forms of direct service for veterans and their families.

Disabled American Veterans National Headquarters			
Unaudited Statement of Financial Position • December 31, 2014			
<b>Unrestricted Assets</b>		<b>Unrestricted Liabilities</b>	
Current Assets	\$ 35,654,393	Current Liabilities	\$ 127,391,523
Investments, at Market	372,795,133	Total Liabilities	127,391,523
Land, Buildings and Equipment,		<b>Unrestricted Net Assets</b>	
Net of Depreciation	7,872,803	General and Net Assets Designated	
Other Assets	313,900	by the Board of Directors	\$ 289,244,706
		Total Unrestricted Net Assets	289,244,706
<b>Total Unrestricted Assets</b>	<b>\$ 416,636,229</b>	<b>Total Liabilities and Unrestricted</b>	
		<b>Net Assets</b>	<b>\$ 416,636,229</b>
<b>Life Membership Assets</b>		<b>Life Membership Liabilities</b>	
Current Assets	\$ 2,719,351	Current Liabilities	\$ 504,259
Investments, at Market	58,794,517	Reserve for Future Distribution	
		of Life Membership Dues	61,009,609
<b>Total Life Membership Assets</b>	<b>\$ 61,513,868</b>	<b>Total Life Membership Liabilities</b>	
		<b>and Reserve for Future Distribution</b>	
		<b>of Life Membership Dues</b>	<b>\$ 61,513,868</b>



DAV is very proud to have been authorized to display the BBB seal since 2004, in recognition of meeting the Alliance’s 20 Standards for Charity Accountability.



*Paul Miller Ford in Lexington, Ky., is one of several dealerships that held a Drive 4 UR Community event in the weeks surrounding Veterans Day 2014. For every completed test drive during the one-day event, Ford donated \$20—up to \$6,000 total—to the respective DAV state Department to help fund local programs for veterans. (Photo courtesy of Ford Motor Co.)*

## Ford Partnership benefits local veterans

DAV and longtime partner Ford Motor Co. worked together to raise funds for DAV in the weeks leading up to Veterans Day. Through Ford's fundraising test-drive event program, Drive 4 UR Community, Ford made a donation to DAV for each person who test drove a Ford vehicle. Since the program's inception, nearly \$3 million has been donated to community organizations nationwide. Additionally, DAV Chapters connected veterans with free services at these events.

Drive 4 UR Community events were held in Apple Valley, Minn.; San Antonio; Tucson, Ariz.; Cincinnati and Lexington, Ky., with all donated funds staying in their respective local communities to benefit veterans.



*Pictured (from left) Dept. of Ohio Executive Committee James Johnston, Dept. of Ohio Executive Committee John Parker, PNC Joseph Johnston, Dept. of Ohio Senior Vice Commander Phillip Alexander and Dept. of Ohio 2nd Junior Vice Commander Kenneth Marcum Jr. attend the Drive 4 UR Community event at Beechmont Ford in Cincinnati. The event benefitted DAV Department of Ohio.*



## From the AUXILIARY NATIONAL COMMANDER LEEANN B. KARG

### Two organizations, one goal

In December, I had the pleasure of seeing my good friend and colleague DAV Auxiliary Adjutant Judy Hezlep retire after more than 40 years of dedicated and selfless service to veterans and their families.

As Judy spoke and reflected on her decades with the organization, it struck me just how fortunate we are to be a part of an organization that's bigger than any one person. I find it staggering. DAV and the DAV Auxiliary are bigger than you, me or any of us. It's the people that comprise the organization that matter most. I find it such a privilege to work beside men and women who are singly dedicated to what I consider among the highest of callings: fulfilling promises to veterans and their families.

That's why I believe some people like Judy dedicate their entire professional career to DAV and the DAV Auxiliary. It's because we work for a cause that's so important.

DAV and the DAV Auxiliary are working closer now than ever before. It's very simple math. Two houses are stronger than one. This sense of our single most important cause, caring for veterans and their families, has united the parent organization and the DAV Auxiliary in such a way that we cannot be ignored.

Our single most important cause... has united the parent organization and the DAV Auxiliary in such a way that we **cannot be ignored.**

We descended on the nation's Capitol alongside DAV and told Congress we expected them to do the right thing and pass advance appropriations for veterans. We forwarded and signed the online petition that campaigned for that same issue. As many of you know, it finally worked.

This past year, I believe we have told our nation's leaders, our community stakeholders and our neighbors that DAV and the DAV Auxiliary are a force to be reckoned with, and we will not back down when it comes to doing what's right in regard to ill and injured veterans and their families.

DAV National Commander Ron Hope and I stay in close contact and agree that both organizations marching in step toward the same goals makes us stronger as a whole. We should keep doing this. We will keep doing this. The results speak for themselves, and the cause is more important than any one of us individually.

Past DAV Auxiliary Adjutant Hezlep reminded me of that. She's left behind a great legacy, and it's my goal to prove us worthy of it. But I will need your help.

I look forward to continuing to work with you all in our goals of caring for the men and women who served and their families in 2015.



# Long-lasting gratitude

## DAV Past National Commander honored by the VA

By Ashleigh Byrnes

**D**AV Past National Commander Lyle C. Pearson's legacy of service to veterans will be forever remembered by those whose lives he touched, and it will now also be part of VA history.

A bill has been passed to name a Mankato, Minn., VA clinic after the former North Mankato resident and World War II veteran. The clinic, which will now be called the Lyle C. Pearson Community Based Outpatient Clinic, opened in April 2011.

The Mankato DAV Chapter, dedicated more than 60 years ago, officially changed its name to Mankato Chapter Lyle C. Pearson Sr. in 2013, just in time for its 75th anniversary the following year.

Pearson, who passed away in January 2013, served as National Commander from 1975 to 1976. He served in the 15th Air Force in Europe, flying the equivalent of 50 combat missions before he was shot down over Italy in December 1944. Pearson was held as a prisoner of war until being freed the following year. For his service and actions, he was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Air Medal with clusters and the Purple Heart.

Service runs in the family. Pearson's wife Katherine was DAV Auxiliary National Commander from 1987 to 1988, after holding more than 20 offices at the Unit and Department levels. All four of the Pearsons' daughters are life members of the Auxiliary, and a son is a Vietnam veteran.

"The Pearson family is a shining example of service over self. The state of Minnesota was fortunate to have two leaders dedicated to giving back to the men and women who wear our nation's uniform," said DAV Department of Minnesota Adjutant Stephen

Whitehead. "They led by example, and their legacy continues to live on through a state-of-the-art health care system that honors their contributions to not only veterans, but the entire Mankato community as well."

In June 2014, when U.S. Rep. Doug Lamborn of Colorado introduced legislation that would name the clinic after Pearson, he said, "Lyle Pearson was the true definition of an American hero. Through his lifelong dedication of service, both in and out of uniform, Lyle left a profound and everlasting impact on southern Minnesota and this country as a whole."

"This honor directly reflects Mr. Pearson's incredible spirit of devotion to his fellow veterans," said National

Adjutant Marc Burgess. "There was no end to his generosity, and it's fitting that there should be no end to our gratitude to him."

DAV National Commander Ron Hope echoed Burgess' sentiment. "Commander Pearson

exemplified the spirit of DAV at the Chapter, Department and National levels. The devotion to his fellow veterans inspires me, as it has past Commanders, and I salute him for his many years of service," said Hope. "This honor could not be bestowed upon a more deserving individual."

Pearson's son Lyle Pearson Jr. said his father would be honored to be part of this VA clinic's heritage.

"It was a vital part of his health care, so I think he'd be very, very proud," said Pearson. "He always felt it was really important that everybody stand up and support that because, quite frankly, they deserve it. They earned it." ■



"There was no end to his generosity, and it's fitting that there should be no end to our gratitude to him."

*Marc Burgess, National Adjutant*

# Bridging the generation gap

## As WWII volunteers pass, retiring boomers needed

By M. Todd Hunter

**A**s our population of World War II-era volunteers continues to decline, the veterans' community is experiencing a downward trend in volunteerism. DAV has not been immune to this change in demographics and is looking to shore up its volunteer base as needs grow.

Last October, the Department of Veterans Affairs Voluntary Service (VAVS) Central Office report showed a slump in volunteerism across nearly all veterans service organizations (VSOs) throughout the past five years. DAV and the Auxiliary—the most prolific volunteer force noted, with 11 percent of the total VAVS volunteers throughout the reported period—are nonetheless facing a dilemma common to organizations that rely on an unpaid workforce.

Nearly 15,000 VAVS volunteers and 1.5 million volunteer hours were lost between 2009 and 2014. Last year alone, 40 of the 54 VSOs listed in the report saw a decrease in both the number of volunteers and the hours they worked. The groups that saw positive increases would not significantly impact the 11.1 million hours of annually donated services volunteers provide and veterans have come to rely upon.

“There are different factors that are contributing to this decline, but the greatest trend we see is the shift in volunteer demographics,” said John Kleindienst, DAV National Director of Voluntary Services. “Those who were considered part of the ‘Greatest Generation’ were historically our most prolific volunteers. Many of those folks are passing away. Meanwhile, members of the Vietnam era are working longer.”

According to Kleindienst, the most significant volunteer contributors have historically been those who are retired. A lull between generations inevitably causes some anxiety and makes the recruitment and retention of qualified volunteers even more critical.

“We know what’s on the line here,” said Kleindienst. “A decline in DAV drivers could ultimately lead to vets losing their rides. For many, that may mean that they

*(Continued on pg. 28)*

### The Decline of Volunteerism



Between 2009 and 2014, the VAVS lost nearly **15,000** volunteers and **1.5 million** volunteer hours.

#### VAVS Registered Volunteers

2009		107,194
2010		111,639
2011		109,912
2012		106,225
2013		100,928
2014		96,695

#### VAVS Total Volunteer Hours

2009		11,874,478
2010		12,535,936
2011		12,340,601
2012		12,195,943
2013		11,394,103
2014		11,121,737

### DAV Volunteer Trends, 2009–2014

Registered Volunteers		Volunteer Hours
2009	12,217	2,028,820
2010	12,420	2,009,270
2011	12,300	1,950,824
2012	11,897	1,850,476
2013	11,540	1,667,196
2014	11,045	1,625,742

Call 877-426-2838 or email [VAVS@dav.org](mailto:VAVS@dav.org) to find out how you can become a volunteer.





## All-America city to host DAV Commander's testimonial

**N**orth Carolina's rolling hills and forests will provide a picturesque landscape for the testimonial honoring the leadership of National Commander Ron Hope. This event takes place Saturday, May 2, at the Embassy Suites Concord Golf & Spa Resort in Concord, N.C. Cocktail hour begins at 6 p.m., immediately followed by dinner.

The cost of the dinner is \$50, with checks made payable to the Ron Hope Campaign Fund and mailed to Rodney Tucker, P.O. Box 100, Lexington, NC 27293. A meal choice should be included with payment. The

options are chicken saltimbocca, pan-crusted salmon or beef tenderloin.

A block of rooms has been reserved at the resort. The room rate is \$169 per night and includes the hotel's evening welcome reception and breakfast. To receive the special DAV rate, call the hotel at 704-455-8200 and mention that you are with DAV.

Guests are invited to unwind and relax at the spa or enjoy a round of golf at the premier Rocky River course that offers options for players of all skill levels. ■



## Auxiliary National Commander to be honored at Twin Cities testimonial

**A** testimonial dinner to honor Auxiliary National Commander LeeAnn Karg is scheduled for April 11 at the Hilton Minneapolis/St. Paul Mall of America in Bloomington, Minn.

The hotel is in close proximity to both the Minneapolis/St. Paul International Airport and the Mall of America. A complimentary shuttle provides guests transportation to both locations. To reserve your room in the Auxiliary block, contact the hotel at 952-854-2100. Rooms are \$89 per night for a single or double with the special DAV Auxiliary rate.

On Friday, April 10, there will be a reception with drinks and light snacks from 4 to 6 p.m. Saturday's testimonial dinner begins at 6 p.m., immediately following the 5 p.m. cocktail hour. Dinner options are a New York strip steak, panko herb-crusted walleye, merlot-glazed grilled chicken breast or the vegetarian/gluten-free entrée. A Caesar salad, white chocolate-raspberry mousse dessert and the choice of a glass of red or white wine are also included with dinner. The cost is \$50, and checks can be made payable and mailed to Van Karg, 21644 746th Ave., Dassel, MN 55325, along with the meal choice and a list of any food allergies.

A breakfast buffet on Sunday closes out the fun-filled weekend in the Land of 10,000 Lakes. ■

# DAV mourns National 3rd Junior Vice Commander Dennis Krulder's passing

■ DAV's National 3rd Junior Vice Commander Dennis L. Krulder passed away Jan. 8 at St. Francis Hospital in Roslyn, N.Y. He was 68.

Krulder was a life member of Chapter 125 in Malverne, N.Y. He was unanimously elected National 3rd Junior Vice Commander at the 93rd DAV National Convention in Las Vegas on Aug. 12, 2014, after being elected National 4th Junior Vice Commander in 2013 at the National Convention in Orlando, Fla.

"DAV has lost a strong, compassionate, dedicated leader, and I have personally lost a friend," said DAV National Commander Ron Hope. "Dennis dedicated his life to serving America's bravest and was a catalyst for positive change in the veterans' community both at home and on a national level."

Krulder received the George H. Seal Memorial Trophy in 2013, recognizing him as DAV's top volunteer. He had served in all positions at the Chapter and Department levels, was DAV Department of New York Treasurer, an Executive Committee member of the Commanders and Adjutants Association and served as the Executive Director for the VA Voluntary Services Program for all volunteers in the state of New York.

Krulder was also the DAV Hospital Service Coordinator at the Northport VA medical center in New York for the last 14 years. There, he managed more than 130 volunteer drivers, who provided free transportation to disabled veterans.

"Dennis Krulder was the consummate DAV member. He never met a veteran that he didn't try to help in his 20 years as a DAV volunteer," said DAV Department of New



*Krulder*

**"I saw him touch so many lives. He pulled so many suffering veterans out of difficult times and would personally get them the help they needed, no matter what the need was."**

*Joseph Krulder,  
DAV life member and  
Krulder's nephew*

York Adjutant Donald Sioss. "Whether he was working at the Department of New York Headquarters or the Northport VA Hospital, he was ready, willing and able to help any vet who asked him. His caring nature and wise counsel will be sorely missed by all of us and everyone who knew him."

Krulder was the longtime president of the committee supporting Calverton National Cemetery in Riverhead, N.Y. He was interred there on Jan. 14 with honors.

DAV life member and Krulder's nephew, Joseph Krulder, said his uncle's zeal for the men and women who served was unwavering.

"I saw him touch so many lives," Joseph Krulder said. "He pulled so many suffering veterans out of difficult times and would personally get them the help they needed, no matter what the need was."

"I know. Because I was also one of those people."

National 3rd Junior Vice Commander Krulder was a Vietnam veteran who served with the 5th Cavalry Regiment as a helicopter door gunner. Included among his military decorations is the Air Medal for Valor. He retired due to

service-connected injuries in 1969.

"Dennis was very well known, and to say he was adored by his fellow veterans would be an understatement," said National Adjutant Marc Burgess. "His talent and dedication saw him rise through DAV's highest offices, and I've no doubt he would've been elected our National Commander soon. We will miss him and his leadership but honor the legacy he leaves behind."

He is survived by his wife, Geraldine, and three sons, Daniel, Brian and James.

## From the NATIONAL CHAPLAIN MICHAEL P. DOVER



### True service

Greetings, everyone! Through the years, numerous theologians have pondered, discussed and taught the subject of the office of ministry. Right now, there are a number of erroneous concepts when the term office is applied to ministry. The “office” of ministry isn’t just about performing a certain prescribed ceremony, doing paperwork or waiting for people to seek help. And it isn’t just holding a certain title, like Chaplain, that enables someone to meet the spiritual needs of others. These are elements of the job but certainly not the heart of it.

Many spiritual leaders over the years have managed to enter positional ministries without receiving a divine call. Some have entered ministry in presumption. Some entered with innocent and noble motives and others in the same way they would enter any other profession in the world. To really be working in the office of ministry, one must be working in a flexible way outside of denominational differences. One must meet people’s spiritual needs wherever they are and not just in an office. Also, working in ministry is more than titles, positions, certificates or official rooms for a particular kind of

**You provide ministry to veterans and their families simply by introducing them to the free services DAV offers.**

service. Chapter members must be careful of positionally minded people who pursue ministry positions without aspiring to true service. If they do not enhance our organization, more than likely they are doing their faith preference an injustice as well.

We rarely think of work done by National, Department and Chapter Service Officers, or DAV and DAV Auxiliary members in general, as ministry, and yet they provide a high-quality ministry, or service, that is second to none. We typically believe that those who get their paychecks from a church or other religious organization are the ones who “do” ministry, while the rest of us are those to whom

ministry is “done.”

But do the DAV and DAV Auxiliary do work that benefits others? Yes, we do! Essentially, you provide ministry to veterans and their families simply by introducing them to the free services DAV offers.

So, regardless of position, everyone has been given a divine gift. It’s important you understand the gift given to you and use it according to your abilities, which aspire to true service.

In His Service for You.



# 2015 ALL VETERANS CAREER FAIRS

Date	City	Location
March 5	Philadelphia, Pa.	Lincoln Financial Field
March 5	Kansas City, Mo.	Arrowhead Stadium
March 12	Miami, Fla.	Kovens Conference Center at Florida International University
March 12	Nashville, Tenn.	LP Field
March 12	San Diego, Calif.	Anchors Catering & Conference Center
March 26	Houston, Texas	Minute Maid Park
March 26	Washington, D.C.	FedEx Field
April 2	Austin, Texas	Circuit of the Americas
April 9	Jacksonville, Fla.	EverBank Field
April 9	Boston, Mass.	Gillette Stadium
April 16	Denver, Colo.	Sports Authority Field at Mile High
April 23	Charlotte, N.C.	Charlotte Motor Speedway
April 30	Minneapolis, Minn.	TBD*
April 30	Oxnard, Calif.	Oxnard Performing Arts & Convention Center
May 7	Orlando, Fla.	TBD*
May 7	San Antonio, Texas	Norris Conference Center

\*Please visit our website at [jobs.dav.org](http://jobs.dav.org) for updates on venue locations.

## DAV 5K RUN TO HONOR VETERANS 2015 NATIONAL SERIES



### Save the date!

**CINCINNATI**  
SAT., NOV. 7



**SAN DIEGO**  
SAT., NOV. 7



**ATLANTA**  
SAT., NOV. 14

Visit [DAV5K.org](http://DAV5K.org) for more information.



## 2015 Winter Classic



PHOTOS COURTESY OF USA WARRIORS

*Top: The USA Warriors were invited to participate in the NHL Winter Classic 2015 at Nationals Park. Members of the standing and sled hockey teams enjoyed ice time with the Washington Capitals and Chicago Blackhawks.*  
*Left: Army veteran Rob Easley skates toward the action during the Winter Classic 2015 in Washington, D.C.*



## Veterans can apply to upgrade discharge for PTSD


■ The Department of Defense—after acknowledging in September that thousands of Vietnam-era veterans may have been given punitive discharges as a result of behavior problems associated with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)—is trying to help veterans right the wrongs of the past with a new Web page.

The page, hosted by the Army Review Boards Agency, is aimed at assisting veterans who may have suffered from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) before it was officially recognized in 1980—thanks largely to DAV-funded research—as a debilitating medical condition. The online resource provides veterans with various applications and information to help navigate the bureaucracy involved with seeking discharge upgrades.

Such upgrades are important because the discharge statuses of individual veterans are directly linked to the benefits available to them through the Department of Veterans Affairs, such as PTSD treatment.

Veterans who previously were denied an upgrade can now reapply under the new guidance, and the Army Board for Correction of Military Records will consider the application a new case.

Additionally, the new guidance only applies to veterans who received “other than honorable” discharges. It does not apply to veterans who received less than honorable or dishonorable discharges because of serious infractions.

 The Web page can be found at [arba.army.pentagon.mil/adrb-ptsd.cfm](http://arba.army.pentagon.mil/adrb-ptsd.cfm).

## VA expands access to therapy for sexual assault

■ The Department of Veterans Affairs is expanding eligibility for veterans to access mental health treatment at VA hospitals or clinics if they were victims of rape, sexual assault or harassment while serving in the military.

The new rule is aimed mainly at National Guard and Reserve members who previously could not get care if their assault occurred during a time other than active service or training.

Under sweeping legislation passed last August to overhaul the VA health system, Congress required the department to provide counseling and care to military personnel, National Guard and Reserve members for

military sexual trauma (MST), regardless of whether the crime was committed while the patient had active or inactive status.

“VA simply must be an organization that provides comprehensive care for all veterans dealing with the effects of military sexual trauma,” VA Secretary Robert McDonald said in a prepared statement. “Our range of services for MST-related experiences are constantly being re-examined to best meet the needs of our veterans.”

VA provides physical care and behavioral health treatment for veterans who were sexually assaulted while they were in military service, regardless of whether the crime was reported to the Defense Department or elsewhere. The department does not require affected patients to be enrolled in the VA health system to receive treatment, nor do they require veterans to provide documentation or records supporting the assertion that they had been raped, assaulted or harassed.


## Report: VA provides veterans inconsistent depression treatment

■ The Department of Veterans Affairs provides inconsistent treatment to veterans with depression and may also be underestimating the number of vets who suffer from the condition, according to a new report by the Government Accountability Office (GAO).

The GAO—an independent, nonpartisan watchdog agency—analyzed VA data from 2009 through 2013 and found inconsistencies in how veterans were treated and how medical records were kept.

The report found that roughly 10 percent of the veterans who sought health care services through the VA were diagnosed with major depressive disorder, but the true number of depressed veterans could be even higher due to clerical errors in veterans’ health care paperwork.

Coding errors were found in 11 of 30 individual cases that kept veterans from being flagged as having a major depressive disorder. And while a vast majority—94 percent—of those who were actually diagnosed with major depressive disorder were prescribed at least one antidepressant, almost none were treated in accordance with the VA’s clinical guidelines or given instruction on how to properly administer their drugs.

 The full report can be found at the GAO website, [www.gao.gov/assets/670/666842.pdf](http://www.gao.gov/assets/670/666842.pdf).

## Study finds mental health providers not well-prepared to care for veterans

■ Most community-based mental health providers are not well-prepared to take care of the special needs of military veterans and their families, according to a new study by RAND Corp.

The exploratory report, based on a survey of mental health providers nationally, found few community-based providers met criteria for military cultural competency or used evidence-based approaches to treat problems commonly seen among veterans.

Although the Departments of Defense and Veterans Health Administration have increased employment of mental health professionals in recent years, many veterans may seek services from practitioners in the civilian sector, often because they are located closer to their homes.

Recent military veterans are more likely than the general population to suffer from major depressive disorder and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), two conditions prevalent among those who have deployed to combat zones.

RAND researchers surveyed more than 500 psychiatrists, psychologists, licensed clinical social workers and licensed counselors to determine whether

they used evidence-based methods to treat major depressive disorder and PTSD and whether they had the training needed to be sensitive to the needs of veterans.

Just 13 percent of the mental health providers surveyed met the study's readiness criteria for both cultural competency and delivering evidence-based care. Providers who worked in community settings were less prepared than providers who are affiliated with the VA or military health system.

While 70 percent of those providers working in a military or VA setting had high military cultural competency, only 24 percent of those participating in the TRICARE network, and 8 percent of those without VA or TRICARE affiliation, met the threshold for cultural competency.

The study recommends that organizations that maintain registries or provider networks include information about mental health practitioners' ability to properly treat the special needs of military and veteran populations. Researchers also encourage policymakers to expand access to effective training in evidence-based treatment approaches and to create incentives to encourage providers to use these strategies in their routine practice.



The study can be found at [www.rand.org/pubs/research\\_reports/RR806.html](http://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR806.html).

## Bridging the generation gap

*(Continued from pg. 22)*

won't be getting the care they need and earned. We simply can't let that happen."

Kleindienst said that although he is confident that the number of DAV volunteers will trend upward over the next two to four years, he believes that the early generation of baby boomers represent the greatest hope for volunteer continuity.

"We need to encourage folks to volunteer as soon as they retire. Having that influx of volunteers will ensure DAV is able to provide the continuity of services needed for veterans across all age groups," he said. "Whether it's in a hospital, on the road with the Transportation Network or through the Local Veterans Assistance Program, we need to encourage and promote volunteerism as much as possible."

Kleindienst said he is encouraged to see Chapters, Hospital Service Coordinators and volunteers reaching

out to the media for help in making the public aware of needs and opportunities. In the coming year, he hopes more will contact his office to connect with resources that can help spread the word.

"We're blessed to have volunteers out there who understand the promises we made to veterans and are committed to improving their quality of life," said Barry Jesinoski, National Headquarters Executive Director. "The most common thing we hear from volunteers is that they feel they get as much out of donating their time as the veterans get from their generosity. It's a rewarding way to stay active and make a difference." ■



## Get Involved

Anyone interested in volunteering for VAVS on behalf of DAV can contact DAV Voluntary Services at [VAVS@dav.org](mailto:VAVS@dav.org) or by calling 859-441-7300, or toll-free at 877-426-2838.

# DAV Flight Team 2015 Schedule



Date	Show Name	Location	Aircraft
March 13–15	TICO Warbird Air Show	Titusville, Fla.	B-25 Panchito
March 21–22	Thunder in the Valley	Columbus, Ga.	B-25 Panchito
March 28–29	Tuscaloosa Air Show	Tuscaloosa, Ala.	B-25 Panchito
April 11–12	MCAS Beaufort Air Show	MCAS Beaufort, S.C.	B-25 Panchito
May 2–3	Defenders of Liberty Open House & Air Show	Barksdale AFB, La.	B-25 Special Delivery
May 9–10	Aviation Celebration	Millville, N.J.	B-25 Panchito
June 20–21	Vectren Dayton Air Show	Dayton, Ohio	B-25 Panchito
July 20–26	EAA AirVenture	Oshkosh, Wis.	AD-1 Skyraider
Sept. 5–6	Great State of Maine Air Show	Brunswick, Maine	B-25 Panchito
Sept. 19	Andrews AFB Air Show	Andrews AFB, Md.	B-25 Panchito
Oct. 3–4	Wings Over North Georgia Air Show	Rome, Ga.	B-25 Show Me
Oct. 17-18	Wings Over Houston Air Show	Houston, Texas	B-25 Special Delivery

Visit [www.davflightteam.com](http://www.davflightteam.com) for the most up-to-date schedule.



**A simple change  
of beneficiary form**

## **A legacy gift to DAV**

Meeting with your attorney is a great way to begin the process of naming DAV in your estate plans. You will need to use our legal name and address as follows: DAV (Disabled American Veterans), P.O. Box 14301, Cincinnati, OH 45250; EIN/tax identification number: 31-0263158. Then please let us know, so we can thank you through the Guardian Society!

We invite you to *create your own legacy* of compassion for your fellow veterans by making a special gift to DAV through your will, trust, life insurance policy or retirement plan.

### **TO LEARN MORE:**

- Call Stephanie Vorhees at 1-800-216-9802, ext. 1,
- Email [giftplanning@dav.org](mailto:giftplanning@dav.org),  
or
- Return the attached postcard.

# **A gift to those who have sacrificed**

## **92-year-old farmer plans to leave a lasting legacy to DAV**

**D**AV's Gift Planning Department was recently contacted by a new bequest donor. Marvin Larsen, a spry 92-year-old farmer, notified us that he had decided to name DAV in his trust for a percentage of his estate.

When you speak to Larsen, you can't help but marvel at his hard-working, generous nature. He's just a "good ol' boy" farmer who speaks of the sacrifice of veterans with a true passion. As we inquired to learn what drove him to want to leave such a generous gift to DAV, he sincerely expressed his deep appreciation for the challenges that so many disabled veterans are faced with today. "None of them (injured veterans) want to be in this condition; it happened because of their service to the United States."

Having not been able to serve in the military himself, Larsen has always felt the need to give back to the many who have sacrificed so much for his freedom. "As I keep working, I think of it as working for charity. I feel good about it. I know I want to help."

Larsen's contribution to DAV will be a lasting legacy for many years to come and will allow DAV to continue to help the countless veterans we serve every day.

Upon notification of Larsen's future gift, we immediately honored him as a new Guardian Society member, our small gesture of appreciation to those who inform us they have remembered DAV in their estate plans. ■

*Larsen stands proudly in front of his John Deere combine, which he still operates at the age of 92.*



*Marvin Larsen*





# Mile High City

## to host DAV National Convention



**August 8-11, 2015 | Sheraton Denver Downtown Hotel**  
*located at 1550 Court Place*

**T**he Mile High City offers visitors the perfect blend of outdoor adventure and urban sophistication. Denver's snowcapped peaks make for the perfect backdrop of this year's convention.

Beyond meeting your fellow veterans and influencing DAV's future, the city itself offers a multitude of unique adventures for convention attendees. Denver is known as the Arts Capital of the West, and it is teeming with unique museums and galleries.

A beautiful, family-oriented city, Denver has dozens of different escapes for outdoor enthusiasts, sports fans, culture vultures and curious travelers.

From boutiques, spas and shops to amusement parks and recreation, pioneering attendees will have every chance to advocate for injured and ill veterans and enjoy everything the Mile High City has to offer.

Our special room rate is \$128 per single or double and is valid until July 4, while availability lasts. Additional hotel reservation information is available at [www.starwoodmeeting.com/Book/DAV2015](http://www.starwoodmeeting.com/Book/DAV2015), or by calling 888-627-8405. Be sure to tell them you are reserving under the "Disabled American Veterans" room block if making reservations by phone. ■



**Learn More Online**

Visit [dav.org/events](http://dav.org/events) for more information about the convention. To plan additional activities and find discount tickets to venues, visit [www.visitdenver.com/DAV](http://www.visitdenver.com/DAV).



### 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.



#### **Flags over America...**

DAV Chapter 10, Billings, Mont., conducted their Flags Over America program at Huntley-Project high school, Worden, Mont., on Veterans Day, 2014. The program focuses on the different flags flown over the United States for more than 200 years. Accompanied by patriotic music, DAV presents 25 full-sized historic replica flags on ornate staffs with a professionally researched in-person narrative of each flag's history and significance to U.S. history. Schools and other organizations often request this program a year in advance to ensure the Chapter can schedule it. Pictured (from left) are DAV Billings Chapter 10 Commander John Tiry, Chapter 10 Adjutant Ed Saunders, George Forstner, Hank Wright, Jimmy Kerr and Bob Scott. (Photo courtesy of Jeff Roher)



#### **Bingo!**

Residents of the Ohio Veterans Home in Georgetown, Ohio, were treated to an afternoon of Bingo, cards and companionship thanks to members of DAV Auxiliary Unit 120, Camp Dennison, Ohio. Gift bags, cake and cash prizes for Bingo winners were on hand as DAV Auxiliary members shared their day with Georgetown, Ohio veterans.



#### **Auxiliary leader shines brightly...**

Past DAV Auxiliary National Commander Lucille McCarthy (left), who also served as the organization's National Judge Advocate and as Chairman of the National Constitution and Bylaws Interim Committee, receives the Daily Point of Light Award for volunteerism. McCarthy, an active member at the state and local level at age 93, received the award at a Veterans Day celebration in Inglis, Fla.

#### **Kemper takes Auxiliary reins**

*(Continued from pg. 32)*

capacity, and with the surge of energy we're seeing from our partners in the Auxiliary, I'm looking forward to all we'll accomplish together moving forward."

National Commander Ron Hope said Kemper will make the national organization, as a whole, stronger.

"Pat brings years of experience and continuity that will benefit the parent organization and the Auxiliary," Hope said. "I know through her guidance, veterans' families and loved ones will be well represented on a national scale through the voices of our members."

Kemper is eligible for membership through her husband, Ernie, a Vietnam veteran, and her late father, James Connelly, a service-connected disabled World War II Navy veteran. Her brother also served, her late father in-law was a service-connected disabled World War II veteran and seven of her uncles wore the uniform, including William Egan, who made the ultimate sacrifice in service to his country.

Kemper has served in several leadership roles in the Auxiliary and joined the national DAV Auxiliary staff in 1982. In May 2008, after 26 years of service to the organization, she was appointed National Assistant Adjutant. ■



# Kemper takes Auxiliary reins



Pat Kemper addresses Auxiliary members and guests at the 2013 Auxiliary Fall Conference.

By Steven Wilson

**A**s DAV Auxiliary Adjutant Judy Hezlep retired in early January, Auxiliary Assistant Adjutant Pat Kemper was appointed by Auxiliary National Commander LeeAnn Karg to step up to the helm of the organization.

"DAV has lost a treasure in Judy Hezlep," Karg said, "but we've gained another great leader in Pat. I'm confident of her vision as we continue to make the Auxiliary stronger and move toward our objectives of being the voice unique to the needs of veterans' families, caregivers and survivors."

Hezlep said retiring was one of the hardest decisions she ever made but knows the Auxiliary is in good hands.

"Once I decided to retire, and I knew Pat would lead the Auxiliary, it made the decision easier," Hezlep said. "Pat has been a dedicated employee for more than 30 years, and she has an unwavering commitment to leading the Auxiliary to new heights and furthering our mission."

The newly appointed Auxiliary Adjutant said she has big shoes to fill.

"We wish Judy the best in a well-earned retirement," said Kemper. "But we're also aware of how important our fight is today as caregivers' legislation needs to be expanded. We will be reaching out to a new generation of family members who deserve the very best in terms of advocacy and support."

Kemper said she appreciatively and humbly steps into

the role of Auxiliary National Adjutant and already has goals for the organization in mind.

"The need for our organization is as great now as it was in 1922, if not greater," she said. "We must evolve with the changing times and serve the needs of those who need our help."

"Most of us are aware of the effects of service to country, the life-altering sacrifices and the family units that are forever changed. We need to be the voice for families—those who provide round-the-

clock care to their injured heroes, the families dealing with personality changes due to PTSD, the children who instinctively know their lives are different from their friends," Kemper said.

She added that in order to meet the goals of making a positive difference in families' and caregivers' lives, the

organization must build membership.

"There are people out there who don't feel they can make a difference, but we need to remind them they can," Kemper said. "Ordinary people can and do achieve extraordinary results. DAV and DAV Auxiliary can and should be a family effort."

According to DAV National Adjutant Marc Burgess, his Auxiliary counterpart is poised to build upon the Auxiliary's recent progress and long-standing foundation.

"There are many exciting things happening in the Auxiliary, and Pat has been involved in many of the encouraging changes we've seen that have expanded membership eligibility," said Burgess. "In her new

*(Continued on pg. 34)*

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**"Ordinary people can and do achieve extraordinary results. DAV and DAV Auxiliary can and should be a family effort."**

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*Pat Kemper, DAV Auxiliary National Adjutant*

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## New Orleans declares victory

(Continued from pg. 15)

nationwide so that we can end veteran homelessness in America once and for all."

Active-duty service members canvassed the streets of New Orleans, identifying their brothers- and sisters-in-arms in need of assistance. Landlords across the city were recruited to provide apartments for homeless veterans utilizing government programs such as HUD-VASH and Rapid Rehousing. Supportive services were identified to ensure recently housed veterans have the resources they need to stay off the streets.

"No one who served our country should be huddled under a bridge, in shelters or camped out in the streets," said DAV National Commander Ron Hope. "Mayor Landrieu recognized this injustice and set out to do his part to end this national tragedy. By coordinating government services

and programs with the public and private sector, New Orleans was able to implement a successful program that serves our nation's heroes in greatest need."

"The program's success speaks volumes to the importance of government and public- and private-sector partnerships and how these relationships can positively

**"No one who served our country should be huddled under a bridge, in shelters or camped out in the streets."**

*Ron Hope, DAV National Commander*



impact veterans," said National Adjutant Marc Burgess. "New Orleans' dedication to the men and women who served has set a shining example for communities across the country, and I salute the city for being the first in the United States to end veteran homelessness." ■

## CHAPTER 6 DEPARTMENT

### Honoring veterans in Alabama...

Top: Deputy Veterans Affairs Secretary Sloan Gibson (left) met with National Sr. Vice Commander Moses McIntosh (right) and daughter Paige McIntosh (center) at the National Veterans Day Event in Birmingham, Ala. Gibson served as the National Veterans Day Parade Grand Marshal. Bottom: National Sr. Vice Commander Moses McIntosh laid a wreath at the Alabama Veterans Memorial Park to honor the men and women who served.



In Birmingham, Ala., members of the National Veterans Day Executive Committee (from left: Dept. Adjutant Carolyn Harris, Auxiliary National Commander LeeAnn Karg, Dept. Commander Laird Culver, Dept. Auxiliary Commander Becky Culver, National Senior Vice Commander Moses McIntosh and Dept. Adjutant Chad Richmond) met to discuss plans for this year's event.



## Salvatore “Sal” Tornatore

■ DAV lost a relentless champion for veterans in a tragic car crash Jan. 23, at Huntington Station, N.Y. Salvatore Tornatore, 94, served as a Director of the DAV National Service Foundation.

“Sal was not only a dedicated DAV member, but he also volunteered at the Northport VA, including delivering presents to patients on Christmas morning,” said DAV Department of New York Adjutant Don Sioos.

“He was concerned for returning Vietnam veterans, and more recently Iraq and Afghanistan veterans, and mentored them.”

Through his work with the NSF, he helped ensure DAV’s free services would be available to veterans for years to come.

“Our hearts and prayers are with the Tornatore family after this tragic loss,” said DAV National Adjutant and CEO Marc Burgess.

“Sal dedicated his life to serving fellow veterans for decades, and his life’s legacy is this organization’s continued support to veterans and their families.”



Tornatore



### Honoring our bravest...

Garrett Hanas (right), Commander of DAV Chapter 24 Knoxville, Tenn., spent time with several Medal of Honor recipients, including Gary Wetzel, at the annual Medal of Honor convention in 2014. (Photo courtesy of Commander Garrett Hanas)



### Share Your News!

Send your DAV or Auxiliary news to [feedback@dav.org](mailto:feedback@dav.org).

Please provide a JPEG image (minimum 300 dpi), a description of the photo and the names of those pictured, if possible.

## Center for Women Veterans Turns 20

(Continued from pg. 10)

Washington Headquarters Executive Director Garry Augustine applauded the center’s two decades of service to women veterans. “Since the Center for Women Veterans opened its doors two decades ago, the VA has demonstrated it is committed to ensuring that the women who served have access to the benefits they’ve earned,” said Augustine. “While great strides have been made, there is work yet to be done. DAV outlined these areas of need in the landmark study, ‘Women Veterans: The Long Journey Home.’

“DAV commissioned this report to shed light on the unique challenges facing women as they transition out of military service,” continued Augustine. “While the study shows there are still many gaps to fill, I have complete confidence that the VA can step up to the challenge.

“The Center for Women Veterans illustrates the VA’s commitment to meeting the needs of all eras of women veterans,” he said. “DAV is proud to have worked



DAV Deputy National Legislative Director Joy Ilem (fourth from right) joined fellow women veterans and advocates at a ceremony commemorating the 20th anniversary of the Center for Women Veterans.

alongside them for the past 20 years, and we look forward to continuing to work together to best serve women veterans for years to come.”

Basnight echoed Augustine’s sentiment. “Women veterans have benefitted from DAV’s partnership with CWV—and the VA in general—in many ways. The partnership is an effective vehicle for delivering women veterans’ concerns directly to the entity that can address them,” said Basnight. “DAV and CWV engage in important, inclusive conversations about policies that impact women veterans, ensuring that discussions are meaningful and can help effectuate change.” ■

## REUNIONS

### ARMY

**1ST MILITARY INTELLIGENCE BATTALION (ARS)** June 11–14, Dulles, VA, Contact: Don Skinner, Ph: 503-648-6059, Email: dons@frontier.com

**3RD BATTALION 8TH INFANTRY “THE IVY DRAGOONS”** July 30–Aug. 2, San Antonio, TX, Contact: Steve Edmunds, Ph: 949-294-6981, Email: Edmundsdb@aol.com

**19TH & 34TH INFANTRY REGIMENTS, 24TH INFANTRY DIVISION (KOREA & JAPAN 1950-53)** April 27–29, Pigeon Forge, TN, Contact: Llanie Ellison, Ph: 205-349-2237, Email: bobnjoan@citcom.net

**25TH INFANTRY DIVISION ASSOCIATION** Sept. 28–Oct. 3, Springfield, IL, Contact: Sarah Krause, Email: TropicLn@aol.com

**73RD TANK BATTALION** April 21–25, Independence, MO, Contact: Bob Jones, Ph: 816-836-0969, Email: bobjones73rdtkbn@yahoo.com

**121ST AVIATION ASSOCIATION REUNION** June 4–7, Nashville, TN, Contact: John Schmied, Ph: 352-633-0541, Email: johnschmied@yahoo.com

**500TH BOMB GROUP MEMORIAL ASSN. (SAIPAN)** May 21–25, Herndon, VA, Contact: Ed Lawson, Ph: 716-673-1921, Email: edlawson@netsync.net

**ARMY COUNTER INTELLIGENCE CORPS VETERANS (ACICV)** April 27–May 1, Stony Brook, NY, Contact: Stan Solin, Ph: 714-998-1562, Email: AgentReport@gmail.com

**COMPANY L, 21ST INFANTRY REGIMENT, 24TH INFANTRY DIVISION** April 22–26, Kissimmee, FL, Contact: George Vlasic, Ph: 910-287-5618, Email: geonanvlasic@atmc.net

**DELTA TROOP BLACK HAWKS 7/1 AIR CAV** May 14–16, Fort Knox, KY, Contact: Joe Vernengo, Ph: 586-337-3334, Email: jvern@wowway.com

**FIREBASE AIRBORNE 101ST ABN D/501 INF, 2/31 AND 2/11 ARTILLERY** May 12–17, Mesa, AZ, Contact: Larry Laughlin, Ph: 480-644-1322, Email: Llock@q.com

**HAMBURGER HILL 101ST ABN DIV** May 11–15, Clarksville, TN/Fort Campbell, Contact: Tom Martin, Ph: 856-453-8407, Email: tomsmail96@yahoo.com

### MARINES

**HMM-265 SQUADRON 1962 TO PRESENT (MARINE CORPERS BIRTHDAY BALL CRUISE)** Nov. 8–15, Fort Lauderdale, FL, Contact: Tim Bastyr, Ph: 603-364-5761, Email: tmb2sdb@numail.org

**F-2-1 1967 VIETNAM** April 20–22, Tampa, FL, Contact: Dieter Maass, Ph: 920-846-2988, Email: dietermaass@centurytel.net

**MARINE OFFICERS REUNION ASSN.** Oct. 15–18, San Francisco, CA, Contact: John Featherstone, Ph: 310-833-2190, Email: johnf9375@aol.com

### NAVY

**DESTROYER LEADER ASSN. DL-1/DL-2/DDG-35/DL-3/DDG-36/DL-4/DL-5** Aug. 30–Sept. 4, San Diego, CA, Contact: Mike Bugara, Ph: 401-635-8860, Email: mjbugara@hotmail.com

**HELICOPTER-ANTISUBMARINE SQUADRON SEVEN (HS-7)** Oct. 9–11, Jacksonville, FL, Contact: Steven Hargett, Ph: 502-693-8911, Email: Steven.t.hargett@faa.gov

**NAVAL MINERWARFARE ASSOCIATION** May 17–22, San Antonio, TX, Contact: Walter W. Crews, Ph: 405-485-2660, Email: waltcrews@pldi.net

**NAVAL NUCLEAR POWER UNIT** May 4–9, Goshen, NY, Contact: Bob Berkowitz, Ph: 845-782-5539, Email: fixitbob3@optonline.net

**NCB-40/NMCB-40 SEABEES (ALL ERAS)** April 16–19, Washington, DC, Contact: Ed Holston, Email: nmcbfighting40@aol.com

**USS ABNAKI (ATF-96)** Sept. 16–20, Jeffersonville, IN, Contact: Debbie Pennington Setser, Ph: 937-243-5368, Email: tsetser@columbus.rr.com

**USS BENJAMIN FRANKLIN (SSBN-640)** Oct. 14–18, Charleston, SC, Contact: Jim Albert, Ph: 518-527-7279, Email: captainjim@maritimecaptain.com

**USS CARPENTER (DD-825)** May 14–17, Portland, OR,

Contact: Coy Ritchie, Ph: 303-690-5118, Email: coyritchie@aol.com

**USS DECATUR** Sept. 10–14, Branson, MO, Contact: Jerry Hihn, Ph: 573-893-7346, Email: bananaboy@embarqmail.com

**USS FOX (DLG/CG-33)** Sept. 17–20, Mobile, AL, Contact: Michael Hare, Ph: 419-310-2958, Email: wyandotveter@sbcglobal.net

**USS HOLDER (DD/DDE-819/DE-401)** Sept. 30–Oct. 4, Northern Kentucky/Cincinnati, OH, Contact: James deBarrios, Ph: 831-458-9062, Email: ussholder\_dde819@hotmail.com, Web: www.ussholder.com

**USS JOHN S. MCCAIN (DL-3/DDG-36)** Aug. 30–Sept. 4, San Diego, CA, Contact: Peter Peterson, Ph: 321-952-2066, Email: peteusna@aol.com

**USS MITSCHER (DL-2/DDG-35)** Aug. 30–Sept. 4, San Diego, CA, Contact: Raymond A. Caldwell, Ph: 513-542-9488, Email: raymondac78@zoomtown.com

**USS NORFOLK (DL-1)** Aug. 30–Sept. 4, San Diego, CA, Contact: Bob Godas, Ph: 516-293-4115, Email: bobg190@verizon.net

**USS SHANGRI-LA (CVA/CV/CVS-38)** May 26–June 1, Charleston, SC, Contact: Al Miller, Ph: 610-588-0422, Email: shangai@yahoo.com

**USS TARAWA (CV-40 & LHA-1)** April 16–19, Norwich, CT, Contact: Walter Thotero, Ph: 765-362-6937, Email: walsue@accelplus.net

**USS WILKINSON (DL-5)** Aug. 30–Sept. 4, San Diego, CA, Contact: John Lair, Ph: 619-479-7387, Email: hobocamp@aol.com

**USS WILLIS A. LEE (DL-4)** Aug. 30–Sept. 4, San Diego, CA, Contact: Frank Graham, Ph: 718-934-6410, Email: frankDL4@optonline.net

### AIR FORCE

**613TH TACTICAL FIGHTER SQUADRON, TORREJON AB SPAIN: “THE PHANTOM YEARS”** June 11–14, Clearwater, FL, Contact: Jim McCormick, Ph: 303-506-0700, Email: Jimccor@tampabay.rr.com

**SAFESIDE ASSOCIATION** April 9–11, Valdosta, GA, Contact: Pete Vilarreal, Ph: 907-388-6942, Email: villa@sanetanet.org, Web: www.safesideassociation.org

### ALL SERVICES

**MILITARY ORDER OF THE PURPLE HEART-CAPITOL CITY MEMORIAL CHAPTER AND UNIT 652** March 28, Gallman, MS, Contact: Luis Vargas, Ph: 601-825-4121

**THREE WAR VETERANS** May 18–20, Las Vegas, NV, Contact: Lee Yagle, Ph: 888-452-3434, Email: All3Wars@aol.com, Web: all3wars.org

### INQUIRIES

- Searching for anyone who served with me from October 1954 to October 1957 in the 67th Medical Detachment, 2nd Armored Division, Mainz Germany. Contact Arthur B. Barnes, 2403 Fayetteville Street, Durham, NC 27707, Ph: 919-246-4335.
- Searching for Michael Berry (New York), and Roosevelt Gatewood, who served with me in Saigon 1968–69, USA H.A.C. Please contact Harry Williams, 1466 Edgehill Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15216, Ph: 412-260-5827.
- Searching for anyone who served with the 48th Group 62nd Trans. “Orient Express” during 1968–69 for a possible reunion. Contact Joe Haren at 740-248-2663 or Frank Wiczorek at 410-761-4755 or Email: Jgrfdex11@yahoo.com.
- Searching for a shipmate of mine who took care of me after a muzzle blast while we were on Battle Station North of the 38th Parallel, North Korea, 1951–52 aboard the USS Purdy (DD-734). Contact Victor W. Flansburg, 7687 12th St. S.W., Motley, MN 56466-2580, Ph: 218-352-6751.
- Searching for Jeff Downey who served with me in 1st FSR, 1st FLC Hvy Sect, during Vietnam 1969–70. Also knew his sister Colleen. Please contact Kirby Jordan, 110 Cherokee Drive, Mount Rest, SC 29664, Ph: 864-638-7824.
- Searching for anyone who served with me as combat engineer for the 1st Marine Air Wing at Hiroshima, Iwakani Naval Base and Marine Air Wing and knew of my back injury. Please contact Robert Lea, 2130 Meagher Road, Helena, MT 59602.
- Searching for anyone who served with the 173rd ABN Brigade 11-B-1P with A Company, 4th Battalion, 503rd Infantry, from April 1969–70. Contact Ron Herndon, 14524 Lock 9 Road, Fosters, AL 35463, Ph: 205-343-0751.
- Searching for my sergeant who was shot in the leg when we were around the Saigon area, Company A, 554th Engineer Battalion, Cú Chi, February 1968 to April 2, 1969. Please contact Johnny Mondragon, 4508 Palo Ouro Ave., N.E., Albuquerque, NM 87110, Ph: 505-717-2051.
- Searching for anyone who served with Rich Bondreski, Company E, 3rd Battalion, 60th Infantry, 9th Division, on March 15, 1968. Wounded near My Tho, Vietnam. Lt. Christi was leading us. Please email Emy511947@yahoo.com.
- Searching for anyone who served with me aboard USS Pogy (SSN-647), 1979–83, and who was at Mare Island Naval Shipyard and part of wrecking crew overhaul, 1980–81. Contact Roger Rossbach, 2820 Cedar Ave., Mattoon, IL 61938, Ph: 727-510-3418.
- Searching for anyone who served with Clarence Holdman in Korea 1950–53, as well as Capt. Stravler from Okinawa, Japan. I was his driver in 1982. Please contact Lance Cpl. Hayes, USMC, P.O. Box 1763, Hyden, KY 41749, Ph: 606-279-4960.
- Searching for anyone who served with me in the 321st A/B Glider Field Artillery Battalion in WWII, 1944–45. Contact Lawrence Bourdreaux, 310 E. Willard St., Welsh, LA 70591, Ph: 337-734-4110.
- Searching for anyone who served with me in Fort Riley, KS, in November 1966, Company C, 1st Training BM, B.C.T., that was involved in an accident on Nov. 26, 1966, going to fight a fire. Please contact Joseph A. Verbanac at verbanac@westrive.com or Ph: 605-823-4358.
- Searching for personnel assigned to the Nike Missile Site at Middletown, N.J., during the explosions of May 22, 1958. Please contact Michael Donovan, 5606 Glanmore Court, Fairfax, VA 22032, Email: micseadon@gmail.com.
- Searching for anyone who served in the Persian Gulf (Operation Desert Shield, Desert Storm, etc.) and is experiencing unexplained and erratic colon bleeding. Please contact Roman Velasquez, USMC Retired, 1447 Jim Larabel Drive, El Paso, TX 79936, Ph: 915-867-9727.
- Searching for Danny Jantz who served with me in Vietnam at Pleiku in 52nd Battalion, Camp Holloway, during 1965–66. Contact Bob Flick, P.O. Box 491, Salyersville, KY 41465-0491, Ph: 814-233-7736.
- Searching for anyone who served with me in the 163rd TC at Long Bien, South Vietnam 1965–1966. Please contact Robert Crowe, 5102 N. 10th St., Ozark, MO 65721, Ph: 417-693-1228.
- Searching for anyone who graduated from Camp Pendleton approximately 1964 or 1965 and served with my brother, James H. Kurdeliski, H Co. 2nd BN, 9th Marines, 3rd Marines Division, III MAF. Looking for photo. Please contact Carol O'Donogue, 3133 Dove Drive, Sierra Vista, AZ 85635, Email: codonogue@yahoo.com.
- Searching for anyone who served in the 134th Infantry Division, Company E, Lt. Johnson Platoon. Contact Albert Bruno, 14326 Bristow Court, Orlando, FL 32837, Ph: 407-288-6409.
- Searching for Ronald Spriggs from Camp Page, Korea, 1968–69, 161st Combat Engineers. Please contact Wayne Kern, Ph: 908-313-8559, Email: whisper1@optonline.net.
- Searching for Richard Stribling from Fort Belvoir, VA, 1969–70, 91st Engineers. We were demo instructors at West Point during summer of 1970. Contact Wayne Kern, Ph: 908-313-8559, Email: whisper1@optonline.net.
- Searching for anyone who knew Jack Bloom, Recon sergeant, Charlie Battery, 2/40, attached to Alpha Company, 4/12 199th LIB, wounded on Dec. 6, 1967, out of FSB Nashua. Contact M. E. Defoe, Ph: 715-779-5330, Email: kendefoe@yahoo.com.
- Searching for anyone who served with me in 1969–70 with Battery C, 33 FAB, 101st ABN, Div Arty, in Vietnam. Contact James W. Goodman Sr., 14743 S. Glenn St., Glenpool, OK 74033-3113, Ph: 918-321-2364.
- Searching for anyone who served in Vietnam during 1968–69 in the 1st Calvary Division. Please contact Poncho, 3732 Dulane Drive, New Orleans, LA 70065, Ph: 504-401-6980.
- Searching for anyone who knew 2nd Lt. Douglas (Doug) Wade, Kingston or Kingsport, TN. KIA in Vietnam in 1968. Please contact Larry Johnson, Ph: 931-596-3809, Email: llarryjohnsn@aol.com.



# Helping kids



DAV is once again joining with Camp Corral to provide a unique and fun camp experience to help our kids. This summer, more than 3,000 children of fallen and injured veterans will be attending a free week of Camp Corral throughout the nation. Last year, more than 200 of the camp participants were sponsored through **DAV's "Just B Kids" scholarship program**. Children between the ages of 8 and 15 are invited to come experience Camp Corral and enjoy a week of nonstop fun and excitement.

**2015**

**CAMP  
CORRAL**

**Schedule**

DATES	LOCATION	CITY	STATE
May 31–June 5	<b>YMCA Camp Classen</b>	Davis	Okla.
June 7–12	<b>YMCA Camp Cormorant</b>	Lake Park	Minn.
	<b>YMCA Camp Shady Brook</b>	Sedalia	Colo.
June 7–13	<b>YMCA Camp Flaming Arrow</b>	Hunt	Texas
	<b>YMCA Camp Greenville</b>	Cleveland	S.C.
	<b>YMCA Camp Wood</b>	Elmdale	Kan.
June 14–20	<b>YMCA Camp Manitou-Lin</b>	Middleville	Mich.
June 28–July 3	<b>Camp Joy</b>	Clarksville	Ohio
	<b>Triangle Y Ranch Camp</b>	Oracle	Ariz.
	<b>YMCA Camp Carson</b>	Princeton	Ind.
	<b>YMCA Camp Gorham</b>	Eagle Bay	N.Y.
July 5–10	<b>YMCA Camp Hanes</b>	King	N.C.
	<b>YMCA Camp Loma Mar</b>	Loma Mar	Calif.
July 12–17	<b>4-H Camp Timpoochee</b>	Niceville	Fla.
	<b>Texas 4-H Conf. Center</b>	Brownwood	Texas
July 19–24	<b>4-H Memorial Camp</b>	Monticello	Ill.
July 26–31	<b>4-H Camp Ocala</b>	Altoona	Fla.
	<b>Eastern NC 4-H Center</b>	Columbia	N.C.
Aug. 2–7	<b>YMCA Camp Seymour</b>	Gig Harbor	Wash.
Aug. 2–8	<b>YMCA Camp Ernst</b>	Burlington	Ky.
Aug. 9–14	<b>Northern Virginia 4-H Center</b>	Front Royal	Va.
	<b>YMCA Camp Weaver</b>	Greensboro	N.C.
Aug. 9–15	<b>YMCA Camp Fitch</b>	North Springfield	Pa.

[www.justbkids.org](http://www.justbkids.org)



If you have a kid in your life who would like to attend Camp Corral for free, visit [www.justbkids.org](http://www.justbkids.org) to link to information on eligibility and to apply.

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