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TO: National Executive Committee
Past National Commanders
Department Commanders and Adjutants
All Employees

FROM: Barry A. Jesinoski, National Adjutant

DATE: August 19, 2025

SUBJECT: Death of Gary Burns

It is with regret that I advise you of the death of Gary P. Burns, past president of the National Service Foundation (NSF) board of directors, who passed away Friday. He was 81.

A service-connected, disabled Vietnam veteran, Gary enlisted in the U.S. Army in 1967 and served with the 1st of the 327th Infantry, C Company, 101st Airborne Division. He was wounded in action on April 21, 1968, in the Ashau Valley of Vietnam and was medically retired from the Army as a sergeant in 1969.

Gary joined DAV's professional staff in January 1970 as a national service officer in Togus, Maine. He went on to serve as a supervisor in White River Junction, Vermont, and later returned to Togus, where he remained until his retirement in February 2000. A life member of Chapter 1 in Augusta, Maine, Gary held numerous chapter and department roles, including commander of the Department of Maine in 1978.

Gary was first elected to the NSF board of directors in 1996 before being elected president in 2001, a role he held until 2013. As president, he guided efforts to ensure disabled veterans and their families received lasting support through DAV programs and services. He also oversaw the Columbia Trust, which provides grants to a variety of DAV service programs.

The cause of DAV's mission was also deeply personal to Gary. Following the passing of his daughter Chrisanne, he established the "Chrisanne M. Burns Memorial" fund—now known as a tribute—which remains one of the largest in NSF history and a lasting testament to his devotion to veterans and their families.

Gary's commitment to helping others extended beyond DAV. He served on the Augusta City Council from 1986 to 1990, on the board of directors for the Capital Area Recreation Association and was recognized as the Calumet Club of Augusta's "Outstanding Citizen" in 2001. That same year, he was inducted into the Maine Baseball Hall of Fame for his dedication to youth baseball.

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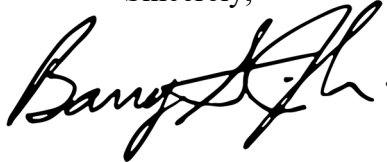
He is survived by his wife Carolyn, two sons, and seven grandchildren.

Visitation for friends and family will be held on Thursday, Aug. 21 from 4–7 p.m., at Plummer Funeral Home, 16 Pleasant St., Augusta, Maine. A Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated on Friday, Aug. 22 at 11 a.m., at St. Mary of the Assumption Catholic Church, 41 Western Ave., Augusta, followed by burial and committal prayers at St. Mary's Cemetery, 605 Western Ave., Manchester, Maine.

The family requests that donations in Gary's memory be made to: Chrisanne Burns Memorial Fund, c/o St. Michael School, 56 Sewall St., Augusta, ME, 04330; Chrisanne Burns Memorial Fund, c/o Cony High School, 60 Pierce Drive, Augusta, ME, 04330; Capitol Area Recreation Association, PO Box 5275, Augusta, ME, 04332; Disabled American Veterans, PO Box 3151, Augusta, ME, 04330; or Maine Military Historical Society, 194 Winthrop St, Augusta, ME, 04330.

Gary will be remembered for his lifelong dedication to veterans, his tireless service to DAV, and his love for his community. His legacy lives on in the countless lives he touched. We extend our deepest condolences to Carolyn and the Burns family during this difficult time.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Barry A. Jesinoski". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a period at the end.

Barry A. Jesinoski
National Adjutant

BAJ:dsb