

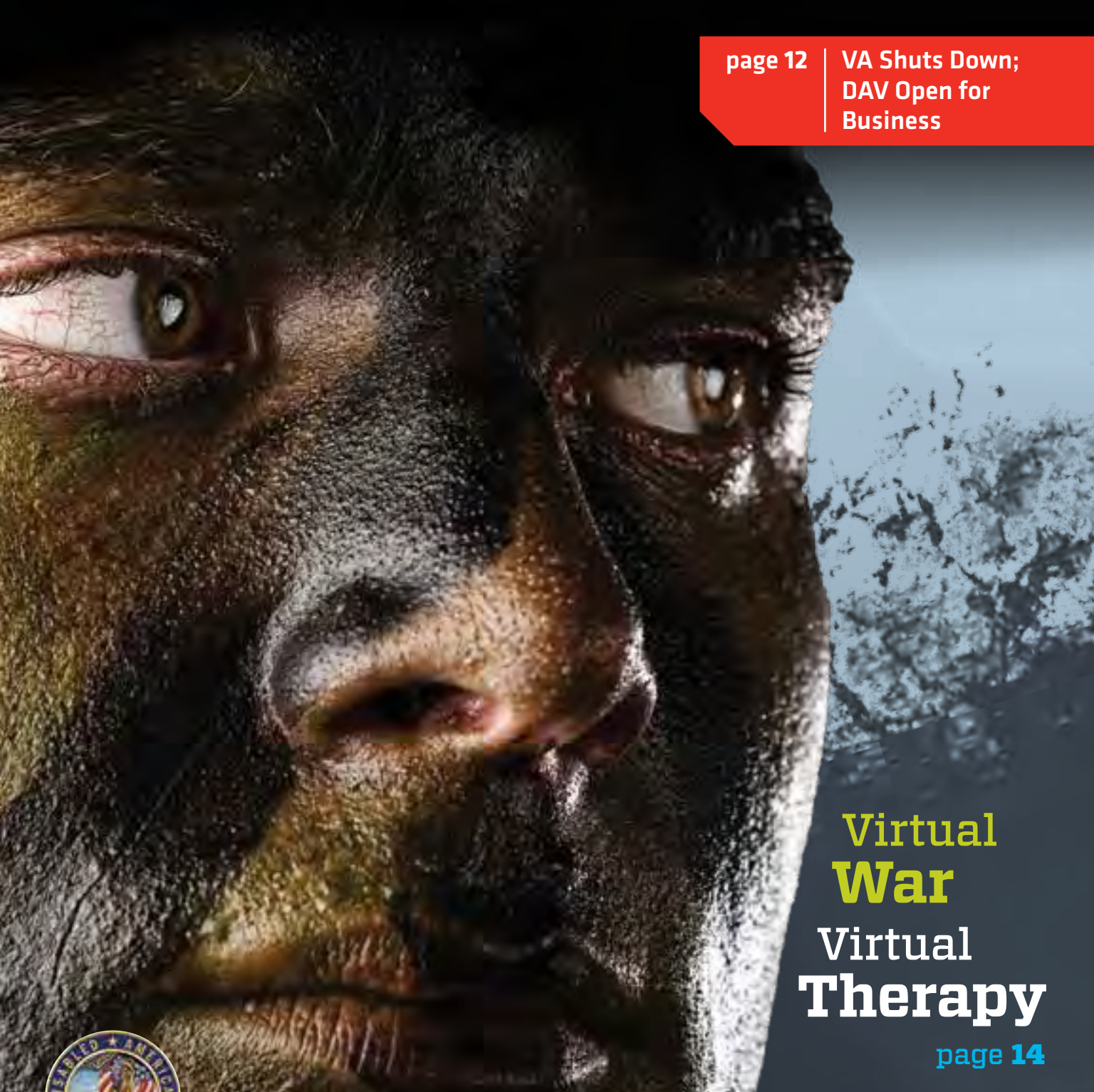


THE OFFICIAL VOICE OF DAV AND AUXILIARY  
**NOVEMBER | DECEMBER 2013**

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**PG. 3** | A MESSAGE FROM ARISTOTLE

**PG. 5** | COLORADO FLOOD RELIEF



# We Can Make a Difference

**DAV Mid-Winter Conference**  
**Feb. 23–26, 2014**

**B**udget battles. Government shutdowns. Partisan gridlock. The VA claims backlog. America's injured and ill veterans have a lot at stake with political uncertainties in Washington.

Trying to keep up with it all, much less figuring out how it affects us and our families, is almost impossible. But there's help on the horizon at DAV's Mid-Winter Conference, Feb. 23–26 at the Crystal Gateway Marriott in Arlington, Va., where you can get the facts, visit your senators and representatives on Capitol Hill and have a personal say in veterans' affairs.

Join National Commander Joseph W. Johnston as he delivers DAV's Legislative Presentation to Congress. The support and direct action by Chapter and Department leaders from across the country are crucial to making our legislative priorities a success.

One of DAV's top priorities is advance funding for all of the VA's programs and services—not just health care. We must ensure our benefits and infrastructure don't fall victim to budget stalemates year after year. We want to make sure the VA has the funding it needs, when it's needed.

The conference agenda includes informative workshops and seminars that will give you an in-depth perspective on the crucial issues facing injured and ill veterans and their families. So make plans to take part in one of the most crucial gatherings of DAV leaders from across the country.

Join us in February to fight for veterans' rights and benefits. We can make a difference. ■



## From the NATIONAL COMMANDER JOSEPH W. JOHNSTON



### Season's Greetings

Once again, we are entering the holidays, a time to give thanks, to celebrate family and to reflect on the past while preparing for the future. My family and I wish you and yours the very best through this special time and into the new year.

As we know too well, many of our brave men and women won't have the opportunity to partake in the joy of these holidays. More than 1 million Americans are serving in some of the most dangerous places around the globe, sacrificing their time with loved ones to protect our freedom and way of life. Being deployed is always a challenge, but it is especially difficult during the holidays. Even with today's technology, there is no substitute for actually being with family.

Of course, others no longer in uniform are still sacrificing because of injuries and illnesses related to their military service. Many will also be away from home, spending the season in medical facilities or bedridden.

Please set aside time to honor those who are forsaking their holidays so others do not have to. Discussing these sacrifices with younger generations who

have not yet been called on to serve, explaining why we are able to remain free, would be a great way to ensure such sacrifices do not go unnoticed.

Enjoy the holidays and our freedom to worship as we choose. But again, give thanks that we are stronger and safer because of those who are on duty.

As we ring in 2014, please keep in mind that there is still much work to be done in Congress, the White House and by the Department of Veterans Affairs. We must stand together to ensure that veterans benefits are protected and continue to evolve with the needs of veterans and their families.

With the new year comes more opportunity to fulfill our promises to those who served.

While we continue to make progress in our service and advocacy, there is still much that needs to be done to ensure every veteran and family member receives the care and benefits they've earned.

I sincerely wish you and your families the most joyous holidays possible. Know that DAV can be counted on to stand up for you in the new year, and I know I can count on you to do the same.

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*Pictured at left is team member Ed Monroe, Marine Corps and Army Reserve combat veteran and DAV National Service Officer.*

**Joseph W. Johnston** National Commander  
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## From the NATIONAL ADJUTANT J. MARC BURGESS



### A Lesson from Aristotle

**A**s we prepare for the coming year and what it has in store for us, I am reminded of a time-honored adage: The whole is greater than the sum of its parts.

For me, it means that when you add together all the parts of something, it becomes greater than it seems possible. Just like teamwork—people working together are able to accomplish more when their individual efforts are added together.

And that's how I view this great organization of ours. Time and again, it has been proven that we can do so much more together—National, Departments, Chapters and the Auxiliary—than individually. Just look at our Transportation Network. Together, we purchase dozens of vans every year and donate them to the VA. Our Hospital Service Coordinators manage the often complex operations and scheduling at VA medical facilities across the country. And our DAV and Auxiliary volunteer drivers take veterans to and from their medical appointments.

If we didn't all work together to provide this valuable service, it would be complete chaos.

Another fine example of DAV teamwork is our far-reaching service program, with our Chapter Service Officers, Department Service Officers, Transition Service Officers and National Service Officers each playing a vital and essential role.

One of our most impressive legislative victories is advance appropriations for veterans health care. It would not have been possible without the teamwork of our grassroots advocacy, including the DAV

Commander's Action Network, which provides our members with very effective tools to influence public policy.

Our fraternal leadership put forward the advance funding national resolution, which was adopted by our membership at three consecutive national conventions. Our professional staff then had a mandate to seek and advocate for legislation to accomplish this goal for VA health care.

Getting the law passed was a top priority for our Departments, Chapters and Units. By urging individual members to contact their congressional delegations and explain why the budget reform was necessary, they collectively generated more than 11,000 email messages to lawmakers.

Meanwhile, your staff in Washington pulled together an unusual coalition of veterans and military organizations that mobilized their own grassroots networks to join our cause.

So, yes, Aristotle knew what he was talking about when he said that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. That is how we get things done in our organization. That's what makes us so effective as advocates for those we serve.

We'll need that kind of synergy in the months ahead, as we fight to take the politics out of funding for all the VA's programs and services. Our goal is to get legislation enacted to fund the remainder of the VA's accounts a year in advance. It is a battle worth waging and one we can win working together—National, Departments, Chapters, Units and individual members at all levels of our organization.

## ■ LETTERS

### Thanks for Service

I am writing to thank my DAV Chapter 63 1st Jr. Vice Commander Vernon Denman for helping me receive the total and permanent service-connected disability that I have been trying to receive for more than six years. Vernon was able to accomplish this in four to six months. Many thanks, Vernon Denman, for your accomplishments!  
**Nolan D. Evetts Sr., Grapeland, Texas**

### Many Disabled Ignored

I completely agree with all the changes that are taking place for the disabled, especially veterans, who need wheelchairs to get around. There are ramps and wider doorways and even places at sports venues where there are dedicated areas for people in wheelchairs. My problem is that although plenty is being done, more still needs to get done. There are thousands of people who are disabled, but not in wheelchairs, who need assistance, can't walk or stand for periods of time, but are being ignored. I think more education and awareness needs to center on the disabled who are still trying to remain ambulatory. I think it's a shame that we're being ignored. **Bam Rubenstein, Round Rock, Texas**

DAV Magazine welcomes letters. However, due to the volume of mail, we are unable to acknowledge every letter. Letters can be sent to DAV Magazine, 3725 Alexandria Pike, Cold Spring, KY 41076. Readers can also comment via email through [feedback@dav.org](mailto:feedback@dav.org). Letters are subject to editing for clarity, style, accuracy, space and propriety. Letters involving individual claims are referred to the DAV Service Department.

### What DAV Facebook and Twitter Followers Say about the Shutdown

#### Facebook

[www.facebook.com/the.DAV](http://www.facebook.com/the.DAV)

The effects on my family from not receiving mine and my husband's VA disability checks will be devastating. My husband got laid off last month, and I am unable to work due to illness. If the government doesn't get this figured out, I have no idea how we will survive. Thank you DAV for representing us! **Jen Boys, Fla.**

DAV, your compassion for us vets is amazing...thank you all for coming to the aid of my fellow vets...you are greatly appreciated. **Jacqueline Duncan, San Bernardino, Calif.**

I'm one of those disabled veterans who depends on her VA disability. It is my only source of income. I could lose everything, and I'd never survive on the streets. My health is just not strong enough. I agree with the DAV National Commander: the political posturing has to stop NOW. Moreover, they're all acting like schoolyard bullies and we, the citizens of this great country, are the ones that are suffering. They don't suspend their own pay while they're denying us ours. I pray for all of us in this time of crisis. **Ann Fox**

I am a 100% disabled veteran, unemployed, and worried about my future come Nov. 1. How do members of Congress expect the millions of veterans who sacrificed for their freedom to survive without their earned benefits? It is a disgrace to our great nation that veterans, especially those who gave their lives, to not be taken care of. Please help the ignorant "leaders" (I use that term loosely) understand the plight!! **Jackie Glass Cranford, Cordova, Tenn.**

Yours is an outstanding organization that does a lot of good for our veterans. I witness this first hand when I visit the VA hospital—DAV volunteers all over the place helping the veterans in any way possible. Such a diverse group of people, from high school, and college kids, veterans, disabled veterans, to middle-aged folks just trying to help.

So, the next time you get a mailing from them, please donate what you can, because it really goes to a good cause.  
**Henry Sullivan, Vernon, Conn.**

I have to say thank you to DAV. I have an extremely rare disease—it is so rare less than 1% of the population has it. If not for DAV, I do not know where I would be today. I am a life time member. I am 100% P & T. **Frank Gardner**

#### Tweets

[www.twitter.com/DAVHQ](http://www.twitter.com/DAVHQ)

**@CoffeeLoveWY** 9 Oct: @DAVHQ shameful, hubby served 20 years, OIF OEF Decorated, Disabled Vet. likely no pay for us & they stopped processing his claim filed Feb.

**@jemjax1:** @DAVHQ If our Disabled Veterans fail to receive their compensation November 1st, more than a few Members of Congress will not be reelected.

**@SemperFi\_Mac** 4 Oct: This government #shutdown hurts #wounded and injured #veterans and their families. #StopHurtingVets

**@i45South** 4 Oct: #StopHurtingVets We are going to have to speak louder. We can't be thrown aside on the streets no more.

### Correction

Many noted that a photograph on page 21 in the September/October DAV Magazine is of Omar Bradley, General of the Army, not Maj. Gen. Joseph Maas. Bradley was the first Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army who earned a five-star rank and went on to lead the Veterans Administration. Maas was a mustang Marine officer who served with distinction in World War II and Korea. He is a past DAV National Commander who chaired the Presidential Committee on the Handicapped, earned a Carnegie Medal and was elected to Congress. Maas was blinded in 1945 by enemy bomb fragments and continued serving in spite of his disability. DAV regrets the error and thanks everyone who remembered both generals for their contributions to our nation and cause.



## DAV Aids Colorado Flood Victims

*Residual water pools in an Estes Park, Colo., resident's front yard. The historic rainfall—nearly a year's worth of precipitation within the span of four days—caused flooding that spread across roughly 2,000 square miles.*

By Ashleigh Bryant

“I don’t want to talk to you, I don’t want to talk to anyone,” the veteran grumbled angrily. “I’ve gotten the runaround from every organization out here and I just want to be left alone.”

The man had just lost his home to the massive flooding near Boulder, Colo., and found refuge in an emergency shelter when DAV came on the scene. He was surly, even borderline hostile. But where other volunteers backed away, National Service Officer Doug Miles persisted, promising to offer help right there on the spot.

Within minutes, the veteran’s grimace became a grin and he was on the phone with his friend, a fellow veteran whose home was also ravaged, telling him he knew someone from DAV offering real relief from the tragic events that had unfolded days before.

“No one understands veterans like other veterans,” said Miles, who served in six different conflicts during his 21-year Air Force career. “The hard part isn’t relating to them, it’s finding them.”

As eight days’ worth of rainwater washed down from the Colorado Rockies, the hardest hit areas were also



*As a number of roads and bridges were destroyed by damaging debris and floodwater, National Service Officer Doug Miles (left) had to drive nearly six hours round trip, taking back roads through the mountains, in order to reach the veterans of Estes Park, Colo.*

some of the most remote. Eight people were killed, several hundred homes were damaged or destroyed, and it took more than a week to locate all the missing. And with nearly \$430 million in damage to surrounding roadways and bridges, getting into the affected areas was a challenge.

Still, this couldn’t stop DAV NSOs from trekking the mountain roads in an effort to reach veterans.

With nearly \$430 million in damage to surrounding roadways and bridges, **getting into the affected areas was a challenge.**



*Water poured down the slopes of Colorado's northern Rockies for more than four days, taking with it trees, rocks, and soil. The mountainsides eventually gave way, carving out pathways for massive mudslides and debris flows.*

“Going in after a natural disaster always brings unique challenges,” said National Adjutant Marc Burgess. “But where injured and ill veterans are in need, DAV will make every attempt to reach out to them and get them the help they need.”

In Estes Park, a three-foot deluge of water spilled through the streets and into the home of Roger Humes. He and his wife planned to settle in Colorado, retiring on income from a handmade crafts business. The flood wiped out everything they had.

“Before DAV came out, I had about 30 cents left to my name,” Humes said. “Now I have \$500.30 to my name. It makes all the difference in the world.”

Humes, whose service-connected illness has put him at risk of leg amputation, walked three miles to the shelter to find help.

“Aside from our normal day-to-day claims services, disaster assistance is probably one of the most personally

impactful things DAV does for veterans,” said National Service Director Jim Marszalek. “Unless you’re touched by a natural disaster yourself, you might not even realize DAV does relief work. But for those who have been helped, the assistance is a godsend.”

To date, NSOs have distributed more than 85 vouchers for financial assistance, totaling nearly \$45,000.

Brian Austin, supervisor for the DAV office in Lakewood, Colo., helped organize the disaster relief efforts and contends if anyone knows about tragedy, sacrifice and overcoming obstacles, it is a fellow disabled veteran.

“The ability to be the first veterans service organization on the scene to provide immediate disaster relief gives our NSOs a great sense of accomplishment,” said Austin. “I have a great team of NSOs who have traveled over 1,600 miles and worked long hours to provide much needed assistance for this tragic event. I couldn’t be more proud of my staff.” ■



# Convention Sets Legislative Goals

By Dave Autry

**T**he important business conducted at the 2013 National Convention included setting DAV's legislative and public policy agenda for the coming year. This year's annual meeting saw the membership adopt 133 resolutions to guide our advocacy efforts on behalf of our wounded, injured and ill veterans and their families.

Below are some of the priorities set for the national legislative staff and our grassroots network to fight for access to the full range of benefits and services veterans have earned and deserve.

## **Disability Compensation and Other Benefits**

- Oppose any recommendations by any commission to reduce or eliminate benefits for disabled veterans.
- Support legislation to provide for realistic cost-of-living allowances.
- Support reform in the Veterans Benefits Administration's disability claims process.
- Oppose all attempts to change the basis of the VA Rating Schedule from the "average impairments of earnings capacity" standard.
- Oppose any proposal that would offset payments of Social Security Disability Insurance benefits or any other federal benefits by the amount of VA compensation.
- Oppose any change that would redefine service-connected disability or restrict the conditions or circumstances under which it may be established.
- Support legislation to remove the offset of Survivor Benefit Plan payments and VA dependency and indemnity compensation.
- Support interest payments for VA retroactive awards of one year or more.
- Support legislation to provide service connection to atomic veterans for all recognized radiogenic diseases.
- Support legislation to remove the prohibition against concurrent receipt of military retired pay and VA disability compensation.
- Reduce the 10-year rule for dependency and indemnity compensation.
- Seek legislation to exclude veterans disability compensation from countable income for government programs.
- Oppose any scheme to means test disability and death compensation.
- Support advance appropriations for all VA programs.



### Medical and Health Care Services

- Ensure that priority access and timely, quality health care services are provided to service-connected disabled veterans.
- Support legislation to eliminate or reduce Department of Veterans Affairs and Department of Defense health care co-payments for service-connected disabled veterans.
- Support enhancement of medical services through modernization of Department of Veterans Affairs health care infrastructure.
- Improve the care and benefits for veterans exposed to military toxic and environmental hazards.
- Ensure proper screening and treatment for traumatic brain injury and post-deployment mental health issues.
- Support comprehensive quality medical services and benefits for women veterans.
- Support legislation to provide comprehensive support services for caregivers of all severely wounded, injured and ill veterans.
- Enhance long-term health care services and support to service-connected disabled veterans.
- Support legislation to provide comprehensive services for caregivers of severely wounded, injured and ill veterans from all eras.

### General Issues

- Support legislation that would exempt the benefits paid to wartime service-connected disabled

veterans from the “PAYGO” and “Cut-Go” provisions of the Budget Enforcement Act.

- Support a national dialogue with federal and state governments, employers and unions to establish processes for military training to meet civilian licensure and certification requirements.
- Support legislation to provide families of veterans who are service-disabled business owners, either rated less than 100 percent service-connected or who do not die of service-connected conditions, a reasonable transition period to restructure the business.
- Support legislation to reduce the premiums for Service Disabled Veterans’ Insurance to be consistent with current life expectancy.
- Extend eligibility for Veterans’ Mortgage Life Insurance to service-connected veterans rated permanently and totally disabled.
- Seek the immediate release of any American prisoners of war and seek immediate return of the remains of any Americans who died during any conflict.
- Support veterans’ preference in public employment.
- Extend military commissary and exchange privileges to service-connected disabled veterans.
- Extend, upon availability, air travel aboard military aircraft to 100 percent service-connected disabled veterans.
- Transfer the Veterans’ Employment and Training Service to the Department of Veterans Affairs.
- Support outreach and employment of women veterans. ■



# Membership in the Digital World

By Ashleigh Bryant

**O**ne of the most vital components to successful membership outreach in this day and age is a digital media outreach. “As many of you know, DAV enjoyed record success in this area during the past year, which makes us enormously proud,” said National Membership Director Tony Baskerville.

“While more traditional methods of outreach contributed to all Departments meeting or exceeding our goals, we must thank the efforts carried out online for this year’s numbers,” he said.

Under the banner of DAV’s new branding and logo, we launched a digital membership campaign specifically aimed at urging veterans to join DAV. The organization charted more than 39 million views across the span of our digital media outlets, and our membership campaign contributed tens of thousands of views to the “Join DAV” webpage.

The use of a digital campaign enables DAV to better track progress and analyze viewership trends, Baskerville said. By understanding the viewing trends of prospective members, DAV could adjust the campaign to best suit their needs and communicate with them more effectively.

For example, DAV learned that visitors spend an

average of two minutes on its membership page. This is actually a fair amount of time when compared to the average of eight seconds viewers spend on any given webpage on the Internet.

DAV finished the membership year with 197,920 trial members, 212,685 partial life members and 823,449 full life members for a grand total of 1,248,150. This gives us 14,096 members beyond our goal. “Our Chapters, Departments and all of our individual members have contributed to these numbers, and I want to thank them for their stellar recruiting efforts,” Baskerville said.

Additionally, DAV National Service Officers and Transition Service Officers are on the front lines of service and membership. We could not have met our goals without their continued efforts.

Under the leadership of then-National Service Director Garry Augustine and his staff, these Service Officers exceeded their goals and recruited 11,584 partial and full life members.

DAV anticipates another great membership year under its new National Service Director, Jim Marszalek. The work of his dedicated staff, paired with the lessons learned from the digital campaign, is solid groundwork for the year ahead.

“I look forward to the challenge, and I know we will be successful,” said Marszalek. ■



## Documentary Film Screening Wraps in Cincinnati

By Ashleigh Bryant

**A**fter several months airing on public television stations across the country, the documentary, “Service: When Women Come Marching Home,” wrapped up its summer tour with one final screening event at the University of Cincinnati on Nov. 7.

The film, which features several women veterans and their transitions back to civilian life in the face of injury and illness, drew DAV’s support when it was released in 2012. “It tells such a powerful story. We felt it needed to be shared with as many people as possible—not just with women veterans, but with the American public and particularly with our lawmakers. The outpouring of support for this film shows how relevant and important

this topic is,” said Deputy National Legislative Director Joy Ilem.

Last May, a DAV National Service Foundation grant sponsored the film’s distribution to public television and at special screening events in dozens of cities.

“Making this film available nationwide is a great example of what the Foundation is for,” said Board President Arthur H. Wilson. “We’re able to expand our reach to the community by telling the story of women veterans, educating the public and showing DAV stands ready to meet the needs of all injured and ill veterans.”

Anthony Louderback, an Army Reserve veteran and program coordinator for the Office of Student Veterans at the University of Cincinnati, said hosting the screening not only addresses the specific challenges

Thanks to DAV,  
the seeds of this  
**grassroots project**  
were scattered  
across the nation.

women veterans face, but also helps bridge the gap between civilian students and those transitioning back from military life.

“We would like to raise awareness about the hardships women service members face, not only among the veteran population, but to everyone on campus,” said Louderback. “This documentary will be a powerful wake-up call to many Americans.”

The University of Cincinnati has historic ties to DAV and the veterans movement. DAV’s founder, Judge Robert S. Marx, graduated from the school’s College of Law before serving in the Army in World War I, where he was injured and awarded the Distinguished Service Cross.

Teaching at the school is part of his living legacy. The Robert S. Marx Law Library on campus and a lecture series he initiated carry his name.

The screenings held during the summer months were hosted with the support of National Service Officers, who have been able to reach out directly to local communities. “Thanks to DAV, the seeds of this grassroots project were scattered across the nation through PBS broadcasts that reached 85 percent of American homes and live screenings in many cities,” said Patricia Lee Stotter, one of the film’s creators. “Therefore, our warriors, through the amazing eight women profiled in our film, have had an opportunity to be better understood by all as they continue serving, in their fashion, courageously speaking out for the thousands and thousands of veterans who share the challenges they face.”

Stotter’s fellow filmmaker, Marcia Rock, noted



*The women of “Service” and the film’s producers shared their stories on Capitol Hill.*

that the collaboration with DAV has helped elevate the film’s message for the American public and the nation’s lawmakers. “Because of DAV’s support, we had a screening at the Senate and were then able to reach the VA and the politicians who are at the forefront of change for our women vets,” said Rock. “DAV members are now taking the film to their congressional representatives.”

“Sometimes I have to pinch myself to believe that what started off as a labor of love became an integral part of a hugely important moment in history for veterans,” said Stotter. “Through all the platforms of this project, we addressed basic human rights issues through the lens of the largest growing demographic in the military: women. Everyone can learn and take hope from the various paths these women found toward healing and reintegration upon returning home.” ■



**Learn More Online**

To learn more about the film and the women veterans involved, visit [servicethefilm.com](http://servicethefilm.com).



## From the NATIONAL SERVICE DIRECTOR JAMES T. MARSZALEK

### Dedication, Flexibility a Must for Service

**W**hen the Department of Veterans Affairs informed DAV that once the government shutdown went into a second week veterans, their families and survivors would not be allowed into federal buildings, we knew that meant our National Service Offices as well. So there was no question what we, as an organization, needed to do.

Being a good service officer requires a passion for those we serve and for what we do. There is no way we would allow the political antics in Washington to keep us from doing what we love. So when congressional discourse meant our nation's wounded and ill veterans were going to be barred from entering the buildings in which we operate, I asked each of our offices across the country to create a contingency plan to enable service to continue, regardless of where we had to provide it. Within hours, fully developed plans from each of our 60 National Service Offices were complete and ready to implement.

As we know, October 1 came and went without a resolution to the shutdown, so the offices' plans were put into motion. Led by our outstanding supervisors, about 50 of our offices moved to temporary locations. We were fortunate to be welcomed by Department Headquarters, Chapters, and VA medical centers. Others set up Mobile Service Offices and even tents in parking lots. There were a lot of moving parts that required our NSOs to apply their unparalleled knowledge of veterans' needs and their ingenuity to accomplish the mission.

Our Chapter and Department Service Officers are also playing a key role in helping veterans get through this difficult time by providing claims and benefits counseling—

as with all of DAV's services, we continue to offer the best possible representation at no cost to our nation's heroes. Perhaps what is now most important to veterans is the fact that we aren't going to allow them to be left behind. Our NSOs are on duty. They understand the needs of their fellow veterans and are there to advocate on their behalf. That means more than ever when VA employees aren't able to answer phones or accept walk-ins.

When the government could no longer meet its obligations to our injured and ill veterans, DAV stepped up and refused to be sidelined. I am proud of all involved and the organization as a whole.

The shutdown is still in place as I write this, meaning the fate of our veterans' compensation and other benefits remains unknown. That's a scary situation to the many who rely on that earned compensation to put food on the table and keep a roof over their heads. But everyone should share my complete confidence that our NSOs will remain on the job, working to do all they can to find and provide needed information and resources for those who have already sacrificed so much.

If you are in need of representation, contact a DAV NSO today. Our office addresses, both temporary and regular, are online at [www.dav.org/veterans/find-your-local-office](http://www.dav.org/veterans/find-your-local-office).

DAV members are urged to get involved through Social Networks such as Facebook ([www.facebook.com/The.DAV](http://www.facebook.com/The.DAV)) and Twitter ([twitter.com/DAVHQ](https://twitter.com/DAVHQ)), where you can share your opinions and encourage others to voice their support for resolution to this issue. You can also join or encourage your fellow veterans to share their stories with lawmakers through DAV CAN (Commander's Action Network) at [capwiz.com/dav](http://capwiz.com/dav).



## DAV Aids Veterans' Travel to World War II Memorial

By Steve Wilson

**F**ifty World War II veterans, with DAV's assistance, traveled in June to Washington, D.C., via the SouthWest Honor Flight program, to tour the National World War II Memorial.

Don Vecoli, retired Navy veteran and founder and president of SouthWest Honor Flight, said Manatee County Chapter 18, Florida has provided volunteer assistance for the program, which has flown more than 600 World War II veterans since its first journey in September 2008.

"DAV Chapter 18 has been very generous in support of my program," the former Navy master chief petty officer said of DAV volunteers.

"For our last three flights, I've had 10 guardians from Chapter 18," said Vecoli. "The guardians totally dedicate themselves to the veteran."

Albert Mackay, Chapter 18 Adjutant, said DAV was happy to assist with coordination efforts and provide some of the volunteer guardians.

"Some of the [World War II] veterans initially don't want to go," Mackay said. "But when they do, they're glad they did."

A big piece of the Honor Flight program is assisting the veterans once they arrive in Washington.

Mackay said travel assistance is usually a veteran's



*Alfred Mignone is among 50 fellow veterans of World War II who visited the National World War II Memorial in June, as part of the SouthWest Honor Flight program.*

biggest concern, but the guardians take care of this. "We're close to this," he said. "We want to pay them the respect they're due."

One of the Honor Flight participants, former Navy yeoman Alfred Mignone, said his ship, the heavy cruiser *USS Houston*, was torpedoed by the Japanese twice. The Honor Flight was therapeutic in that he was able to interact with fellow World War II veterans.

"They got us two times," he said. "Oct. 14, 1944, and Oct. 16, 1944. I can still see the pictures in my head and will never forget the smell, but we

still brought our ship back."

Mignone thought he would be a hindrance on the trip because he could not walk for long distances at a time, but DAV said, "No problem."

"They had volunteers to push those of us in wheelchairs, both in Washington and when we returned home," he said. "I can't say enough about DAV—I'm going to support them every chance I get."

National Adjutant Marc Burgess praised the Chapter. "I commend the efforts of this organization and applaud our Florida Chapter for their volunteer efforts," he said. "We serve all veterans from all eras, and this is a stellar example of our resolve to ensure America's veterans lead enriched and high-quality lives." ■



# **Veterans** and the Digital Battlefield

By Steve Wilson

## Video games and combat simulation programs are a promising therapy tool for veterans of all eras.

**D**awn breaks over the village, which, like so many others you've seen this tour, is a collection of mud-brick buildings, dusty streets and small, white pickup trucks haphazardly parked on the road. You think to yourself, "Everyone in this region must be issued a white pickup truck."

The quiet is broken by the occasional snapping sound of tattered clothes hanging from outdoor lines, fluttering in the low breeze. A dog barks. A goat bleats. You lead your fire team through the village; they each put their life in the hands of their buddy a few meters away. The team moves forward in a staggered wedge formation with each person on the alert for enemy threats in their assigned sector of fire.

SMACK! The entire team instinctively flinches at the sound. Some duck, others look for cover, and one starts to raise his weapon. Then the momentary adrenaline rush is over as quickly as it came. Your grenadier has just smacked an annoying desert fly against the back of his neck. He sheepishly mumbles an apology as the fire team moves out. You shake your head and take a deep breath, trying to force your heart rate down.

The chatter of gunfire erupts from what seems like all directions. The team begins to return fire at the muzzle flashes blinking in and out of the darkened buildings in front of you. You can actually hear the rounds getting closer. Then the screen flashes red.

Your character in this first-person shooter video game respawns as your friends, some miles away, are cackling at you in your headset. You swear revenge and attack the digital village again.

This make-believe scenario plays out in various forms every day. Millions of people around the world, including veterans and military personnel, relax by fighting a digital battle with high-definition graphics and realistic sound. But when players are "killed," they reset and live to fight another day.

Video game technology has advanced exponentially over time. The simple joystick, one-button controllers of the 1980s have been replaced by multi-button consoles. Three-dimensional graphics and enhanced simulations provide players with heightened game experiences.

But this same technology that some service members and veterans call a "hobby," others call "therapy."

### **Military Members and Video Games**

Hank Keirse, a retired Army lieutenant colonel, master parachutist, Army Ranger and former West Point history and ethics professor, has lent his expertise to the "Call of Duty" (CoD) video game franchise as a military advisor and consultant. He was surprised at the number of active-duty personnel playing CoD while they were deployed in actual combat theaters.

"I'd go wandering off as an advisor to a general, and the soldiers didn't care," said Keirse. "But when they found out I was involved with 'Call of Duty,' they'd stop me and tell me they had ideas for the next one. Those guys were playing these games while at a [forward operating base]."

But why would someone deployed in a combat zone take pleasure in a simulation of something that could happen for real? Keirse has a few ideas. "I think the average Joe on patrol is ready for action but doesn't normally see a lot of action," Keirse said. "There are countless days slogging through the streets, slogging through the sewage, sweating through your uniform while your brain is armed for a big fight but rarely do you get one."

Keirse believes the appeal of battlefield simulation stems from the fact that a service member can sit down in a lounge, under an air conditioner and, in a controlled environment, get hit, see a red flash across the screen and then get right back in the game. They can play out a variety of scenarios and not suffer actual bodily harm.

Retired Marine captain and California DAV Chapter 73 member Dale Dye agrees. "First-person shooter video

games seem to be all the rage with the active-duty people I talk to about the subject,” he said. “There’s an element of challenge and personal accomplishment inherent in the form, and I think that appeals to military people for the same reasons that drove them to enlist. They want to test themselves, and I think that’s always healthy.”

Dye has been a military advisor for the “Medal of Honor” video game franchise, as well as an actor and advisor for more than 40 movies and TV shows, including “Platoon,” “Saving Private Ryan,” “The Great Raid” and “Band of Brothers.”

“Military-theme video games naturally emphasize constant combat, run-and-gun, shoot-and-scoot scenarios,” said Dye. “But anyone who has served realizes that kind of thing is only a small part of what you encounter in military service, if you encounter it at all.”

So do first-person shooter video games trivialize or make light of a veteran’s service? Keirsey said comments

like that are, in his experience, usually from people who have never played the game or don’t like video games in the first place. He views games like CoD as an opportunity to tell the story of veterans through a different medium.

“I was reluctant to join [Activision] because I didn’t see the connection in video games making the next generation of centurions,” he said. “But, the modeling of the weapons, the uniforms...I saw this as an opportunity to teach history from the indirect approach. I’ve had 13- and 14-year-olds tell me they had no interest in World War II until playing this game.”

Keirsey has often been told how the previous CoD games in World War II settings have prompted young people to ask their relatives about their war experiences. “It’s opened the eyes of people who didn’t know what Normandy was, where Pointe du Hoc is or what the Big Red 1 was,” he said.

Dye has made similar observations. “In the original concept for the ‘Medal of Honor’ series, we intended to reward good play with lessons about World War II history. I’m a big fan of that kind of thing. We need to teach young people about America’s military history, and our schools are failing miserably in that regard.”

## Video Game Technology and Treating Veterans

Moving a joystick and pressing a trigger on a digital battlefield can be more than just entertainment for some veterans. It can actually be a form of treatment. Dr. Kathleen M. Chard, a clinical psychologist with the PTSD and Anxiety Disorders Division at the Cincinnati VA medical center, has treated mental health disorders for more than 20 years. “It’s our hope that the current generation of veterans are comfortable and familiar with this type of technology,” Chard said. “We want to remove the stigma associated with seeking help. The goal of Virtual Reality Exposure (VRE) therapy is to help veterans process the traumatic memory so it no longer controls their life.”



*Virtual Reality Exposure (VRE) therapy places veterans with post-traumatic stress disorder and other mental health issues in a controlled environment where they can learn to process emotions associated with traumatic events. Therapists can customize scenarios based on a veteran's unique experiences, which will help the patient work through the trauma and begin the healing process. VRE therapy stimulates four of the body's five senses: sight, hearing, touch and smell.*

‘Call of Duty’ has  
“**opened the eyes** of  
people who didn’t know  
what Normandy was,  
where Pointe du Hoc is or  
what the Big Red 1 was.”

The treatment procedure would be familiar to a veteran who has played a video game such as those in the CoD franchise. The patient is given a control stick similar to a joystick on a video game console. It’s connected to a weapon, a pair of virtual-reality glasses and headphones. There’s even a machine in the room that replicates smells familiar to this generation of veterans: the marketplace, burning fuel, explosives and gunfire. The goal is to recreate the scene of the traumatic event in painstakingly accurate detail to change the veteran’s perception of what happened.

“The VRE treatment allows us to trigger memories about the event to obtain the full story,” said Chard. “Once these memories are triggered, we can challenge those misperceptions in the veteran’s mind, including areas where they may be blaming themselves for things they could not have controlled or predicted.”

One symptom of PTSD is avoidance of the emotional state of the traumatic experience and emotional shutdown, out of fear of reliving the event. But Chard said experiencing emotions and moving forward are natural parts of life. “The virtual-reality technology allows us to put details in front of them and challenges the misperception the veteran may have about the event,” said Chard. “It allows them to process the emotion.”

## The Veteran Connection

Keirsey believes first-person shooter games such as CoD can resonate with veterans. He said veterans and

military personnel will be able to identify with many aspects of this year’s much-anticipated title, “Call of Duty: Ghosts,” in which the United States is no longer a superpower but a mere shadow of its former self. A group of special operations forces from each branch of service form an elite unit to defend the homeland. “It’s a dystopian world,” Keirsey said of the new title. “We’re now the underdog, and bad

things have happened.”

“Ghosts” involves brand-new types of scenarios and tactics to advance through the story. An interesting twist, which Keirsey believes will appeal to anyone who has served in uniform, is the emphasis on subunit integrity. “This is what you identify with,” he said. “You’ve got this guy on your left and right and your squad leader. You really learn about your squad and feel like you’re a member of a team.”

## Different Perceptions

Dye said there seem to be two schools of thought among military people and veterans who play first-person shooter games. One group tends to be service members whose jobs involve direct combat action and who find the game an entertaining distraction, as no one actually gets hurt, or worse, if they make a mistake. The other group has typically not engaged in direct combat, but they enjoy first-person shooter games because those are as close as they’ll get to combat. “I understand the motivations in both camps, and I don’t think there’s any harm in it,” he said.

Both Keirsey and Dye say that while the games should be considered authentic, they should never be called “real.” “We’re making a game,” said Keirsey. “This is entertainment; this is a gaming product.” He said games such as these can allow people who have never served to gain a small perception of what veterans have experienced.

“Less than one half of 1 percent of this generation have been in uniform,” he said. “You’ll find whole towns without a military family. I think one side effect of these games is that they can foster respect for people who’ve served. The product honored the folks who were out there. It made a gamer get a better idea of what a bad day in Fallujah would look like.”

However, Keirse added that there is no way games such as those in the CoD franchise could depict what a veteran goes through in reality. “It’s not realistic,” he said. “There’s no sweat, no dirt, no waiting three to four weeks to cross the border. And no bad food.”

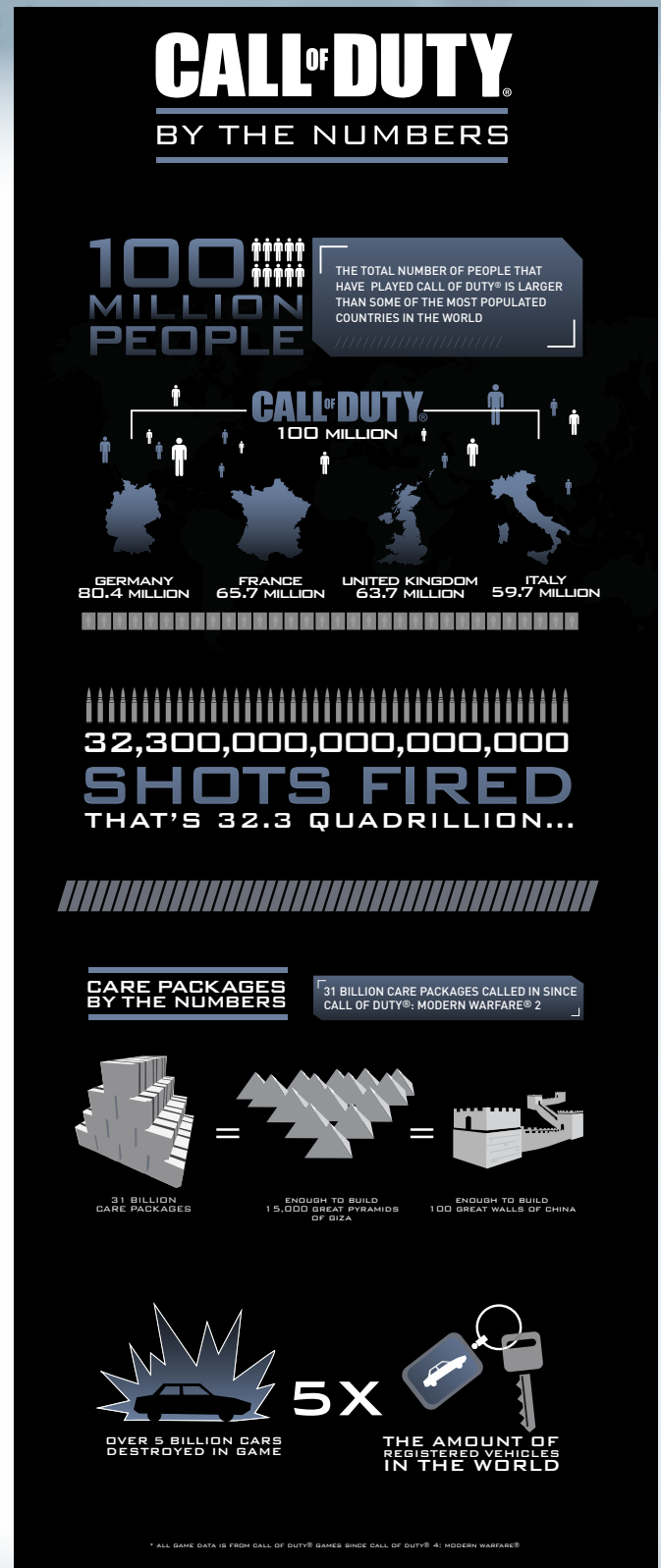
Dye agrees. He said gamers in uniform know the difference between a video game and the “real deal,” and the “morality” question of video games depicting military combat is certainly not a question to be asked of a video game producer.

“I don’t know if video games are the right place to teach young people about things like selfless service, sacrifice, dedication, patriotism and teamwork,” he said. “[It] seems to me those valuable things should be taught by parents in the family setting and then possibly reinforced by service in uniform.”

What is real, however, and arguably quite moral is that the technology found in video games is available to treat mental health disorders affecting so many veterans.

Chard said that 70 percent of her patients using VRE therapy—most of them Vietnam veterans—no longer have PTSD symptoms after seven to 15 sessions. The remaining 30 percent show improvement.

“Whether you like video games or not, they have changed the way we communicate and can change how people perceive military service,” said National Adjutant Marc Burgess. “Dr. Chard and her team at the VA are seeing positive results stemming from a platform very familiar to many veterans. I encourage any veteran experiencing mental health issues to talk to their health care provider and explore all treatment options, including VRE.” ■



# Miracles on a Mountainside

March 30 – April 4, 2014  
Snowmass Village, Colo.

**T**he National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic will be back on the mountainside in Snowmass Village, Colo., this April. For almost 30 years, alongside a cohort of dedicated sponsors who help make the event possible, DAV and the Department of Veterans Affairs have co-hosted this life-changing sports rehabilitation clinic for our nation's ill and injured veterans.

Nearly 400 veterans and active-duty service members participated in the 2013 clinic. With skiing, snowboarding, hockey, kayaking and a number of other sports and activities, the clinic is a solid week of mettle testing and courage finding. Some participants faced physical challenges after losing a limb during their time in service, others battled the debilitating effects of illness, and many fought to overcome post-traumatic stress disorder or the lingering symptoms of traumatic brain injury.

Each year, these men and women prove to themselves that these injuries and illnesses do not define who they are. During its 28-year history, the clinic has helped thousands of our nation's finest by offering the challenges and support veterans need to overcome mental and physical obstacles.

It is a powerful and often emotional journey for participants and volunteers alike. For many, the clinic is the first time these men and women have dared to take on adaptive sports since becoming injured or falling ill, and it changes their perception of what is possible and attainable in their lives.

Disabled veterans receiving care at a VA medical facility, as well as injured or ill active-duty personnel, can request initial information and registration packets by calling 970-263-5040. ■



# 26.2 Miles for the Men and Women Who Served

By Ashleigh Bryant

**F**or months now, they have had the honor of waking up before sunrise on weekends, logging dozens of miles over the scorching summer pavement, bandaging countless blisters and tackling the mental demons that say it's much easier to hit the snooze button and catch a few more hours of sleep than to get up and train for the 38th Marine Corps Marathon in Washington, D.C.

But for the 36 individuals pounding the pavement in training under the banner of Team DAV, it was honor that kept them moving. They are veterans, some with service-connected disabilities and some not, active-duty service members and civilian supporters who share the belief that taking care of our veterans is a sacred duty.

Each member paid their own way to run for Team DAV and to honor the men and women who served. Most had never covered this distance before, and some had never raced so much as a local 5k before committing to a full marathon in support of DAV's mission.

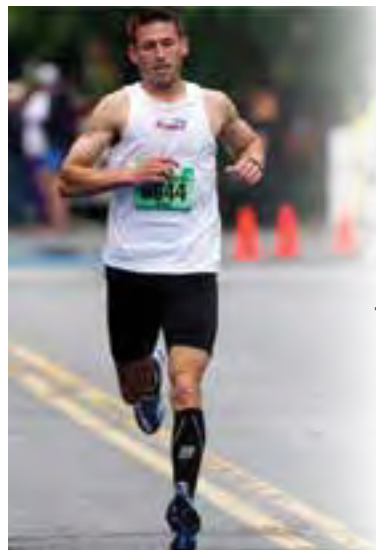
National Service Director Jim Marszalek is one of the veterans who took up the challenge. "This has been a great opportunity to help bring awareness to what DAV does for veterans," he said. "We work every day to empower the men and women who served, and this is just another way we can show our support and rally the community around the veteran population."

Despite the variety of physical abilities within the team, every time they laced up their shoes and every step they

took throughout training, team members were reminded of the reasons a nation must support its injured and ill veterans.

Marine Staff Sgt. Brian Buckwalter, a combat correspondent who has twice deployed to Afghanistan, explained, "I have seen firsthand both the physical and mental effects war can have on a person. DAV is doing important work on behalf of disabled veterans, and I was proud to represent the organization."

David Brundage, a 14-year Army veteran and DAV member, ran the marathon in 2006, 2008, 2010 and 2012. "My father, Michael Brundage, is a retired 100-percent disabled veteran who has been my 'support crew' for all of my previous Marine Corps Marathons," said Brundage. "I



**"Those who served deserve the best from our government leaders, and that's what DAV fights for on a daily basis."**

*—Brad Byrnes,  
team coach*

**“DAV is doing important work on behalf of disabled veterans, and I was proud to represent the organization.”**

—Marine Staff Sgt. Brian Buckwalter



there is no higher honor than to defend the flag of the United States. Those who served deserve the best from our government leaders, and that's what DAV fights for on a daily basis.”

One of the first to accept the marathon challenge was Joyce Wise. Her husband is a DAV member and a 100-percent disabled Marine veteran of the Vietnam War. “I will never completely understand all that Frank experienced and endured in his two tours of duty on the

(Vietnamese) Demilitarized Zone in the Vietnam War, but I can try to emulate, just a little, the dedication and mental strength he required there by training for and running the marathon,” said Wise.

Team DAV's core mission to raise awareness and educate veterans and their families is perhaps best summarized by team member Ed Monroe, a combat veteran of both the Marine Corps and Army Reserve, a DAV member and a DAV National Service Officer. “If running 26.2 miles through our nation's capital encourages just one veteran to stop trying to go it alone and to seek out assistance from DAV, then all the sweat and effort was well worth it.” ■

wanted to run representing DAV for my dad and all of the soldiers I served with and who continue to serve.”

For the team members who have not served in the military, ties to the veterans they know have brought a special kind of motivation to train to tackle the marathon. “I was honored to run for Team DAV in the Marine Corps Marathon, as so many veterans have been an influential part of my life,” said team coach Brad Byrnes, whose 90-year-old grandfather is a DAV member who served as a combat diver in the Pacific during World War II. “His stories of sacrifice and courage taught me early on that

Army veteran David Brundage, left, with his father, Michael, who is a disabled veteran and one of Brundage's reasons for running the Marine Corps Marathons.

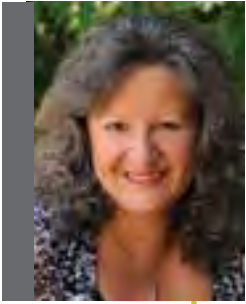


**Editor's Note:** At time of publication, the status of the Marine Corps Marathon was in question, with the government shutdown threatening to limit the resources necessary to hold the event as originally scheduled on Oct. 27. The operating status of the race was to be determined by Congress' ability to end the shutdown on or before Oct. 19.



### **Quilts of Valor...**

DAV National 3rd Jr. Vice Commander Delphine Metcalf-Foster, second from left, is among four women veterans to be honored by the Quilts of Valor Foundation. The foundation makes quilts in honor of Northern California combat veterans. Also honored are, from left, Jo Lawrence, Gracieia Tiscareno-Sato and Roberta L. Santiago. It is the first time quilt recipients have been women.



## From the AUXILIARY NATIONAL COMMANDER SUSAN K. MILLER

### Strength in Numbers

All of the Auxiliary's programs are important. However, at this time I believe that membership is the most important. We all know there is strength in numbers, and the DAV Auxiliary must continue to be a strong supporter and advocate for our nation's injured and ill veterans and their families and survivors.

At the National Convention in 2004, the delegates approved a change in the Constitution to allow men in the organization. Ratification occurred in February 2005. That made every male DAV member and spouses of female DAV members eligible to join, as well as their fathers, brothers, grandfathers, etc. In 2010, the Constitution was again changed to include extended family members. Those changes have opened a huge pool of potential new members.

I am listing the eligibility requirements for all to read, as I have heard from various members that many people did not know males were eligible, etc. If you keep it in mind, everyone should be able to sign up at least one extended family member, know a DAV member who has not joined the Auxiliary, or know a family member of a DAV or Auxiliary member who has not yet joined. We need to find a way to get them to join. We need to market our organization.

Membership in the DAV Auxiliary is available to:

- the family and extended family members of any person, living or deceased, eligible for membership in DAV;
- the family and extended family members of any injured person still in active service in the armed forces of the United States and eligible for membership in DAV;

- the family and extended family members of any person who served in the armed forces of any nation associated with the United States of America as an ally, was honorably discharged and became an American citizen;
- the family and extended family members of any person who has served in the armed forces of the United States of America and has not been dishonorably discharged or separated from such service; and
- the family and extended family of Auxiliary members who are not otherwise eligible for membership.

Making sure America remembers its injured and ill veterans is a challenging mission, but we are a strong and influential advocate for veterans' rights. We fight for those rights on Capitol Hill, promoting policies which ensure veterans and their families can live with respect and dignity.

There are many great reasons to join the DAV Auxiliary: exceptional volunteer programs, an opportunity to serve veterans and their families directly, a chance to help others in your community and much, much more. But the most important reason for joining the DAV Auxiliary the pressing need to protect the benefits veterans have earned for the people they care most about—their families.

I challenge every DAV Auxiliary member to sign up one extended family member. Numbers count, especially when we are meeting with Congress. We support DAV in its efforts. Just think how great it would be and what an impression it would make on Capitol Hill if we were more than 2 million strong. If we are united in our efforts, we can make this happen. I look forward to seeing our numbers grow.

# Preserving the Stories of America's Wartime Heroes

By Tracy Rae Dunlap, RMR, CRR

In August, American veterans from World War II, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, the Persian Gulf War and the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan sat down with volunteer court reporters to tell their stories as part of the Library of Congress' Veterans History Project (VHP), a program mandated by Congress and signed into law by President Clinton in 2000. Participating veterans represented the U.S. Army, Navy and Marine Corps. They were interviewed at a special VHP Day, sponsored by the National Court Reporters Foundation (NCRF) as part of its Oral Histories Program during the National Court Reporters Association (NCRA) 2013 Convention & Expo in Nashville. These oral histories will be added to the collection of more than 3,000 war stories that NCRF has already recorded for the Library of Congress.

This is the 10th year in which NCRA members have supported the VHP through the foundation's efforts. Court reporters, as well as court reporting students and other NCRA members, are encouraged to volunteer their time and skills to transcribe the recordings of these interviews verbatim. The transcripts, as well as the audio and videotapes, are cataloged by the Library of Congress and are made available to the public.

"The National Court Reporters Foundation is the charitable arm of the professional association for stenographic court reporters, and VHP is one of its highest-profiled programs. Steno court reporters have the unique talent to record and transcribe the spoken word almost instantaneously, and NCRF serves as the conduit between them and the 85,000 recorded stories at the Library of Congress. Since 2011, the NCRF has made a special effort to collect the recollections of DAV members through a grant from the DAV Charitable Service Trust," said B.J. Shorak, deputy executive director of NCRF.

"The experience is one that deeply touches both the



*The Veterans History Project, signed into law in 2000, allows veterans' experiences to be recorded, transcribed and stored in the Library of Congress, the largest library in the world based on shelf space and number of books.*

veterans who are interviewed and the court reporters who listen to and transcribe their stories. Both parties know these accounts will be forever preserved for future generations," Shorak added.

At NCRF's VHP Day in August, former U.S. Marine and disabled veteran Stephen Cochran shared his story of serving as one of the first special troops deployed at the start of the conflict in Iraq. After serving a tour there, Cochran, a Nashville-based country musician, was deployed for a second tour, this time to Afghanistan, where he was critically injured by an improvised explosive device while on patrol. Flown home to recover at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in Bethesda, Md., Cochran was told the broken back he sustained would prevent him from ever walking again. Despite that



diagnosis, he did learn to walk again after a successful surgery. When not recording music, he now spends much of his time supporting programs that serve injured veterans and their families.

“I think the Veterans History Project is vital, not just for preserving the stories of our military men and women, but also for providing a resource for other service members and those who have returned injured—whether physically or mentally. They will know they are not alone in what they are facing,” he said.

For Cochran, who also has post-traumatic stress disorder, the healing process is long, and his message hits home hard. “Every day, 22 of our soldiers commit suicide. It’s heartbreaking. But it’s heartening to know, too, that just one soldier reading these stories could be consoled by knowing that they are not alone in going



*Interviewer Eileen Beltz, center, from Brecksville, Ohio, talks with disabled U.S. Marine Corps veteran Stephen Cochran, right, while court reporter Vicky Marcon from Cincinnati transcribes during NCRF's VHP Day in Nashville.*

The **experience is one that deeply touches** both the veterans who are interviewed and the court reporters who listen to and transcribe their stories.

—B.J. Shorak,  
Deputy Executive Director, NCRF

through the physical and mental injuries caused by wartime service.”

In 2007, the VHP was expanded through the 1,000 Voices Initiative, which encouraged members of the public to interview any wartime veteran they might know. To assist them, the Library of Congress offers a

free, downloadable VHP Field Kit that includes sample interview questions and a questionnaire to gather basic information such as a veteran’s branch of service, the wars in which they served and any medals and commendations they may have received for their service. The field kit is available online at [www.loc.gov/vets/kit.html](http://www.loc.gov/vets/kit.html).

Court reporting schools and state associations of court reporters are also encouraged to host VHP days in their communities to help maintain a flow of interviews to the Library of Congress’ archives. Many veterans have never made any formal record of their wartime experiences but are willing to talk with someone who will listen. VHP continues to play an important role in preserving their stories. ■



#### Learn More Online

For more information about the Veterans History Project, visit [www.loc.gov/vets](http://www.loc.gov/vets) or contact the National Court Reporters Foundation at [oralhistories@ncra.org](mailto:oralhistories@ncra.org) or call 1-800-272-6272, ext. 174.



## Chapter Reaches New Heights with Outreach

By Steve Wilson

**D**AV Chapter 10 in Billings, Mont., had a very common problem: how to keep in contact with three generations of veterans across a vast frontier state.

“We face a challenge of how to keep in contact with three generations of American veterans, covering a 75-year age span from World War II all the way to Iraq and Afghanistan,” said Chapter Adjutant Ed Saunders.

The Chapter’s solution was to reach each generation of veterans in a manner they’re comfortable with, including an active Facebook page, an email newsletter and some printed newsletters mailed mostly to veterans who prefer getting their news that way.

After the Chapter found effective ways to communicate with its members, the next obvious step was to take its message to the rest of the community. The vehicle of choice was the local media.

“We began by approaching print media and asking if they’d be interested in how veterans can work with schools on American history through Chapter 10’s Flags Over America program,” Saunders said. “We’ve since been very successful in getting our message out through print, radio and local TV.”

One specific issue the Billings veterans community

needed was additional public transportation to the local VA hospital. Could the media actually help deliver this message to community leaders and stakeholders? Saunders thinks so.

Craig Vance, Sr. Vice Commander of the Department of Oklahoma, has been successful taking advantage of the most mobile of all communication media: radio. “We’ve found that our local radio stations are always looking for someone to talk for a few minutes during morning drive time about upcoming local civic events,” he said. “I’ll call the radio station several days before our

“I applaud the local outreach efforts by these Chapters. This is a great demonstration of what innovation and creative thinking can accomplish.”

*Marc Burgess, National Adjutant*



event to schedule a specific day, and then on that day I’ll arrive at the station about 15 minutes before airtime to familiarize the announcer with the event.”

Vance said the outreach power of radio is a golden opportunity for him to let his community know about DAV’s message and free services his Chapter and Department provide. “We’ll be interviewed for

several minutes about the specific event details, but we also get the opportunity to mention other things, like our location, the Chapter's day-to-day services for veterans and their families and where they can get more information," said Vance. "The radio station has also done an on-site remote broadcast as well as interviews in the hours leading up to our local Golden Corral Military Appreciation Monday."

Saunders' advice to anyone starting an outreach effort is to do their research first, as it pays off in the end. "Before talking to the press, we do our research and find the facts," Saunders said. "What surprised me was how our local media now approaches us to find out DAV's position on a subject. We've become a credible source for the media.

Our material is well-prepared and reliably presented."

"I applaud the local outreach efforts by these Chapters," said National Adjutant Marc Burgess. "This is a great demonstration of what innovation and creative thinking can accomplish. I encourage everyone to explore their own avenues of getting DAV's message of service to veterans in front of their local communities. Our communications team at National Headquarters is only an email or phone call away for help and advice." ■

For media relations and outreach guidance, contact Associate National Director of Communications Steve Wilson. Call 859-442-2046 or email [swilson@dav.org](mailto:swilson@dav.org).

## Volunteer Effort Earns Big Thanks for Veteran

by Tom Keller

**"W**hat the heck could these two big wheels want with me?" wondered Vietnam veteran Bobby Gross when he spotted DAV's top two national leaders coming directly his way at one of the organization's recent events.

Gross is a humble guy and couldn't think of what on earth DAV National Commander Joseph W. Johnston and National Senior Vice Commander Ron F. Hope could have to say to him. Typical to his style, it did not occur to Gross that he was about to be thanked for his truly incredible record of volunteer service to fellow veterans.

How great was his service record? Let's count the ways, in hours and miles.

Gross, a Vietnam Era veteran, has given 14,420 hours of his time to veterans recovering at the Louis Stokes Cleveland VA Medical Center Wade Park Campus, not too far from his home in Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio.



*Vietnam Veteran Bobby Gross, center, receives thanks from DAV National Commander Joseph Johnston, right, and National Senior Vice Commander Ron Hope.*

As a volunteer driver in the DAV Transportation Network, he has logged an astounding 394,765 miles, helping 11,591 veterans get to the medical appointments they needed but otherwise could not get to on their own. Those miles have filled an additional 24,210 hours of Gross's

volunteer time.

"Bobby has set a gold standard of service to his fellow veterans," Commander Johnston said. "This is just an amazing record, indicative of the kind of dedication and heart DAV and Auxiliary volunteers demonstrate time and again." ■

## From the NATIONAL CHAPLAIN REV. DR. RONALD R. RINGO Jr.



### Veterans Day and Holidays Can Be Times of Stress

In November, we have the opportunity to remember and celebrate our veterans who so freely served their fellow citizens, especially those who didn't make it home: our KIAs, MIAs and POWs. We never leave anyone behind. We carry them in our hearts and our minds this Veterans Day. Thank you all for your service.

As we move into the holiday season, it is a time of year meant to create a feeling of joy and peace on earth. However, those of us who have been around a few years know that it often can be a very stressful time, especially in this difficult economic environment.

This can be quite a stressful time with so much to prepare: the parties to attend, the gift exchanges, the relationships to mend and family to visit. It can actually feel much like we are fighting a battle, especially when we are in many of the stores or shopping malls, as we have seen in some recent headlines.

The widely secular commercialization of the holidays may at times obscure the real meaning of the season. For an example of how to overcome this season of stress under fire, consider the following story.

During a World War I battle on

Christmas Eve, as the evening wore on, fighting between the Germans and the British finally gave way to a confusing silence. After a short while, a lone soldier began singing "Silent Night." Slowly, others joined in until soldiers from both sides were singing together. Remarkably, it is told, the soldiers ended up spending the evening together. Instead of fighting, they played a game of soccer. The story exemplifies the true spirit of the season.

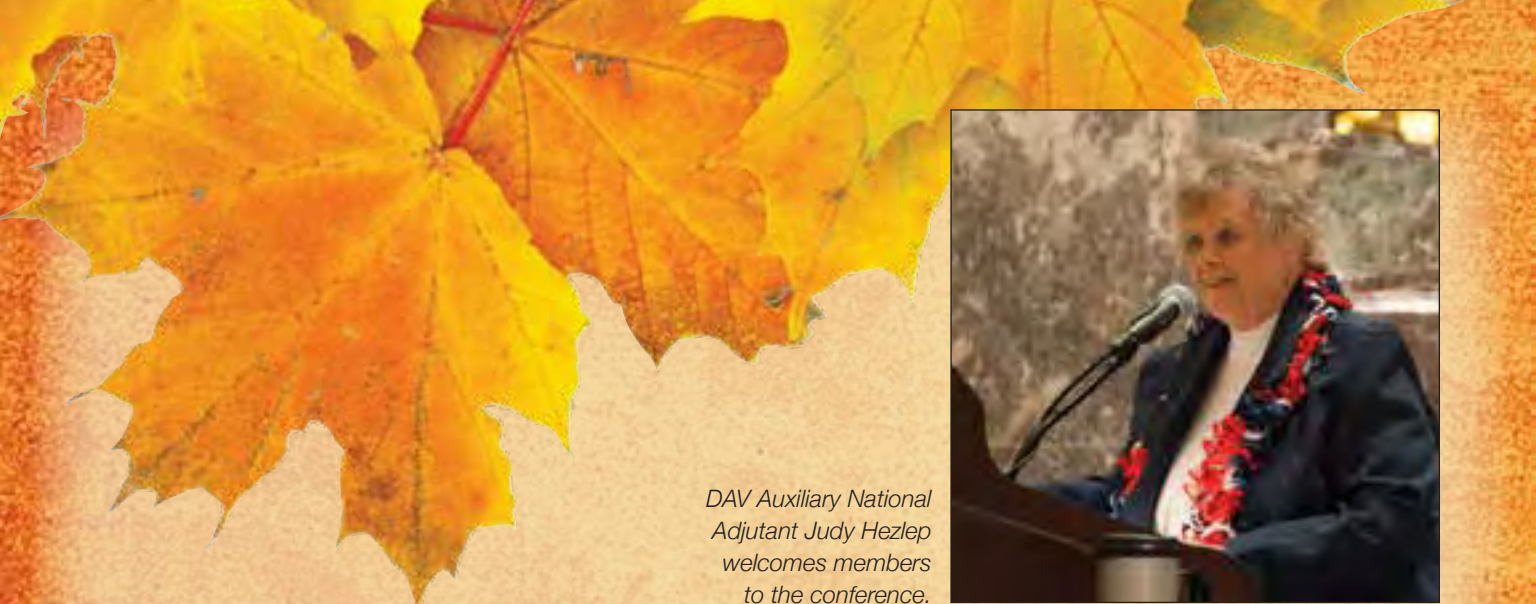
I pray all will have a great holiday season and remember all the joys and feelings that come with this time of year. Remember also our friends and family who are deployed throughout the world at this time. May God bless and watch over them. Be safe and look forward to magnificent opportunities in the coming year.

It is my hope that this message will help you to "mount up as on eagle's wings" and renew a little of your strength to keep moving forward and find joy.

"But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not be faint." (*Isaiah 40:31*)

Until next time, happy holidays. May God bless you, and may God continue to bless our great nation. Semper Fi.





*DAV Auxiliary National Adjutant Judy Hezlep welcomes members to the conference.*



# DAV Auxiliary Fall Conference

By Steve Wilson

**T**he DAV Auxiliary Fall Conference was held in Cincinnati, Oct. 3–5 where the National Officers and National Chairmen presented their programs for the year.

The event also featured skits with characters from the “Wizard of Oz,” including the timeless Wicked Witch of the West. The Auxiliary’s Americanism Program included a video of Red Skelton explaining the meaning of the words to the Pledge of Allegiance.

During the second day, National Membership Director Tony Baskerville, Director of Direct Marketing Tracey Burgoon and National Communications Director Dan Clare shared their ideas for how to increase membership for the DAV Auxiliary, fundraising and information about the DAV Logo.

“Their expertise in these areas was very much appreciated,” said Auxiliary National Commander Susan Miller.

During the Oct. 4 banquet, DAV National Commander Joseph Johnston was the featured speaker, and Oct. 5 speakers included National Adjutant Marc Burgess, National Headquarters Executive Director Barry Jesinoski and, for the first time, Washington Headquarters Executive Director Garry Augustine.

“We had attendees from almost every state,” Auxiliary National Adjutant Judy Hezlep said. “National Commander Miller conducted a very successful, informative and fun-filled conference.” ■



*Above, DAV National Commander Joseph Johnston greets Auxiliary National Commander Susan Miller during the final session. Below, Auxiliary members share successful and unique community service ideas as part of Ellen Timmerman’s presentation.*





*Frances Costa's Legislative Program presentation provided vital information on issues affecting injured and ill veterans and their families and survivors.*



*From left, Auxiliary Assistant National Adjutant Pat Kemper, Past National Commander Donna Adams and National Commander Susan Miller enjoy the banquet.*



*National Headquarters Executive Director Barry Jesinoski speaks with Auxiliary Past National Commander Donna Tanner, right.*



*Mr. and Mrs. James Hawkins of Columbia, S.C., celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary at the conference banquet.*



*This top membership award is given to those who successfully recruit 15 or more paid senior members this year.*



*National Adjutant Marc Burgess and Auxiliary 3rd Jr. Vice Commander Craig Johniken display a handmade afghan for the raffle.*

## New consortia to research PTSD, TBI

■ The departments of Defense and Veterans Affairs have established two joint groups to research the diagnosis and treatment of post-traumatic stress disorder and mild traumatic brain injury. Their combined investment will total \$107 million.

During the next five years, the Consortium to Alleviate PTSD (CAP) will work to develop the most effective diagnostic, prognostic and novel treatment and rehabilitative strategies to treat acute PTSD and prevent chronic PTSD. The CAP is the collaborative effort of the Boston VA Medical Center, the San Antonio Military Medical Center and the University of Texas Health Science Center San Antonio.

Virginia Commonwealth University, the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences and the Richmond VA medical center have joined together to form the Chronic Effects of Neurotrauma Consortium. With the goal of improving diagnosis and treatment options, this collaborative research will examine the factors that influence the chronic effects of mild TBI and common co-morbidities. A key goal will be to further the understanding of the relationship between mild TBI and neurodegenerative disease.

## Veterans' Guide to Health Care Law Now Available

■ The VA has launched an awareness campaign for veterans who want to know how the new Affordable Care Act affects them. By logging on to [www.va.gov/aca](http://www.va.gov/aca), veterans can find answers to their questions based on their level of coverage through VA or learn how to enroll

for VA coverage. The Affordable Care Act will not change any of the benefits or out-of-pocket costs for veterans who receive health care through the VA.

## New Grants Announced to Support Homeless Veterans

■ The Department of Housing and Urban Development along with the Department of Veterans Affairs announced a second round of HUD-Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) funding to help reduce homelessness among veterans. Totalling \$7.8 million, the HUD-VASH funds will provide housing and clinical services for 1,120 veterans who are currently homeless in the U.S. and Puerto Rico. This follows a release of \$60 million in HUD-VASH vouchers in May. Since 2008, more than 58,000 vouchers have been awarded, with 43,371 formerly homeless veterans now living in homes of their own. These funds are part of \$75 million appropriated this year to support housing for homeless veterans, with more grants expected later in the year.

## Enhanced Rural Service for Veterans

■ Since August, veterans living in rural areas have gained better access to health care under a VA initiative supporting new transportation services. The VA began accepting grant applications to help state veterans service agencies and veterans' service organizations both operate and contract services that transport veterans to and from their appointments at VA medical centers. VSOs and state veterans' service agencies may apply for grants of up to \$50,000 to fund these services, which are provided to veterans at no cost.

### POW/MIA Display...

*In observance of National POW/MIA Recognition Day on Sept. 20, the Department of Pennsylvania POW/MIA Committee provided this informational exhibit to increase public awareness. Pictured is Vince Darcangelo, a member of the POW/MIA Interim Committee.*





## Taking Service on the Road...

*DAV assisted with the needs of more than 70 veterans during a day-long event at the Home Depot in Cold Spring, Ky., Sept. 28. The day featured do-it-yourself workshops, a variety of health and safety seminars and a chance for veterans and their families to meet leaders from local area law enforcement.*



*National Service Office Assistant Supervisor Donald Inns assists Robert Sinclair of Alexandria, Ky., during the Mobile Service Office stop at the Home Depot in Cold Spring, Ky.*



*Associate National Service Officer Afua Whiteside assists Carter Chromartie of Independence, Ky., with filing for VA benefits he earned through his service as a combat veteran of Iraq at the event.*



### DAV Day...

*National 2nd Jr. Vice Commander and Department of Alabama Commander Dave Riley, seated, talks with members of Boy Scout Troop 11 in Auburn, Ala., on Flag Day. The Honorable Bill Ham, Mayor of Auburn, proclaimed the day Disabled American Veterans Day in Auburn and acknowledged DAV's efforts to promote the significance of the American Flag and honored disabled veterans.*



**A New Generation Learns to Honor Our Fallen Heroes...**

*DAV members and their children place flags on veterans' graves at the Calvary National Cemetery in New York on Memorial Day. (Photo courtesy of Bob Chambers, Sr. Vice Commander, DAV Chapter 190 Selden, N.Y.)*

**Share Your DAV News!**

Send in photos of the things your Chapter or Department is doing. Images should be submitted in JPEG format, 300 dpi or larger. Photos should be accompanied by a description, and all persons should be identified when possible. Submissions are subject to editing for clarity, style, accuracy, space and propriety. Send your Chapter/Department news to [feedback@dav.org](mailto:feedback@dav.org).



**Black History Month...**

*In recognition of Black History Month, Sgt. 1st Class Robert H. Yancey Sr., U.S. Army, retired (center), was the guest speaker at the Coast Guard Training Center, Cape May, N.J., luncheon on Feb. 20. Yancey spoke about his experiences during World War II, Korea and Vietnam. He was also one of the last Buffalo Soldiers before desegregation of the U.S. Army by President Truman.*



**POW/MIA Dedication...**

*Despite torrential rains and thunderstorms, approximately 3,600 people attended Military Appreciation Night at Roger Dean Stadium in Jupiter, Fla., when the POW/MIA flag was dedicated.*

# Firm Recognized for Support of National Service Foundation

**A**t the recently-completed National Convention in Orlando, the DAV National Service Foundation bestowed its first “Exceptional Donor” award on the Washington, D.C., law firm of Finnegan, Henderson, Farabow, Garrett & Dunner, LLP. As of the completion of the Convention, the Finnegan firm had donated more than \$1,000,000 to the Foundation. In addition, Finnegan was the first law firm to partner with DAV in offering *pro bono* representation at the United States Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims and remains a major participant in that program.

National Adjutant Marc Burgess commented that “the Finnegan firm has exhibited an extraordinary commitment to DAV and the veterans we serve by giving generously of its time, talent and treasure to a cause that we all cherish.” Echoing that sentiment was the newly-elected President of the Foundation, past DAV National Adjutant Arthur Wilson. Mr. Wilson noted that “Finnegan holds a singular place in the distinguished history of the National



*DAV National Service Foundation President Arthur Wilson, left, with Finnegan attorneys Paul Browning, center, and Ron Smith. Finnegan received the prestigious “Exceptional Donor” Award at the 2013 DAV National Convention.*

Service Foundation. Never has a single donor made such a remarkable commitment to our cause.”

National Headquarters Executive Director Barry Jesinoski summed up the magnitude of Finnegan’s generosity by noting that it would be difficult to find words that capture the meaning of the firm’s “remarkable philanthropy and impeccable legal work on behalf of disabled veterans.” ■

## REMEMBRANCE

### Retired NSO Supervisor Kenneth Grunewald Passes

■ Retired National Service Officer Kenneth Grunewald passed away on Aug. 31. The Vietnam-era Air Force veteran was 66. Grunewald joined DAV’s professional ranks as a National Service Officer trainee in 1976 at DAV’s National Service Office in Los Angeles. In addition to his service in California, he served veterans in his home state of Pennsylvania as well as in Iowa and New Jersey. He retired in 1997, after 21 years of service work.

“The contributions NSO Grunewald made to DAV and to the veterans’ community are a tribute to his life of service,” said National Adjutant Marc Burgess. “The lives of countless veterans and their families have been



*Grunewald*

touched by his dedicated work.”

From 1966 to 1969, Grunewald served as a firearms instructor and security specialist in the U.S. Air Force. He earned his associate’s degree in drafting from Fox Valley Technical School in Wisconsin. He also spent several years of his retirement providing transportation to special-needs children of the Bucks County Intermediate Unit in Doylestown, Pa.

“Our NSOs are always at the front lines of our mission, and it’s the dedication of individuals like Mr. Grunewald that reflect

such great credit on the notion of veterans helping veterans,” said Burgess. “He will be dearly missed by his family and friends, the veterans he helped and the entire DAV family.”

Mr. Grunewald is survived by his wife, Patricia, their children and grandchildren.

# DAV Member Earns Top Honors for Generosity

**I**t's not often that DAV receives a \$50,000 or \$100,000 check from a donor. Robert Weinstein, a longtime DAV member, surprised our Gift Planning office last fall with two such checks, followed by another, then another and so many more that he has become our largest-ever living donor, outside of our gift annuity program. He is also one of our most modest supporters and, arguably, one of our most entertaining. Every "thank-you" call to him is rewarded with a hearty belly laugh.

A frugal, everyday man, Mr. Weinstein says he and his wife, Dana, decided 20 years ago that "Whatever we could spare, DAV would get some day." His good feelings for DAV go back to the years just after World War II when he served as an aerial gunner with the Air Corps, which included an assignment in the China Burma India Theater. When he became sick after his discharge, he sought help from the VA, only to have a bad experience. He turned to DAV for help.

"I consulted with DAV, and they've been taking care of me ever since," Mr. Weinstein says. "They're the only people who can really help with an honest claim. They helped a friend of mine, too."

A few years ago Mr. Weinstein informed DAV that he and Dana had planned a generous bequest in their wills. After Dana passed away, he decided to change course a bit, saying, "I don't need any more for myself or for my kids. What am I going to do with this? DAV might as well have some of it now. The need is so great."



**Robert Weinstein, Guardian Society member, pictured above in his Air Corps uniform, and today at his home in Florida. Twenty years ago, he and his wife decided, "Whatever we could spare, DAV would get some day."**

Mr. Weinstein expressed disbelief that he was DAV's largest donor of all time.

"Are you sure I'm the most generous?" he quizzed. "I'm really surprised. Well, if that's the case, maybe my story will inspire others to do more than they had planned to do."

DAV salutes Mr. Weinstein for his extraordinary generosity to DAV now, as well as through his estate plans. His gifts will make a lasting difference in the lives of countless deserving Americans who need our services today and will continue to need DAV for decades to come.

■ To learn about special program sponsorship opportunities or for information about including DAV in your estate plans, please call **1-800-216-9802, ext. 1**. You may also email **giftplanning@dav.org**, visit **www.dav.giftplans.org** or return the attached **postcard**.

■ Legal address for estate gifts: **Disabled American Veterans, P.O. Box 14301, Cincinnati, OH 45250; tax identification number: 31-0263158.**

■ If you have already created an estate gift for DAV (Cincinnati, OH), please let us know so we can thank you, during your lifetime, through the DAV Guardian Society.

**DAV**



**PROTECTING THOSE WHO SERVED**



### **Ribbon Cutting...**

Department of Missouri Commander Rick Polk and Department Auxiliary Commander Velma Steinman wields the scissors during a ribbon cutting ceremony at the Branson, Mo., VA clinic. The event was hosted by Veterans City Chapter 68. Also officiating at the ribbon cutting were, Chapter Commander Don Helms and Chaplain Paul Vicalvi. Special guests included Branson Mayor Raeanne Presley and Carol Kick, volunteer services director for the Veterans Health Care Systems of the Ozarks.

### **Citations of Merit Awarded for Outstanding Service to Veterans...**



A.G. Tricentennial Chapter 84 of Illinois awarded Kathy Harms, RTA, with a Citation of Merit for her many years of dedicated service to the veterans at the Hines VA hospital. She was also given a 5 in 1 Nintendo Wii Fitness Kit for use in her programs, a basket of supplies and two \$25 gift cards to purchase supplies for her department and programs. Presenting the award, from left to right, are Commander Alexander Pechar, Adjutant/Treasurer Charlie Luhan and Sr. Vice Commander James Wright III.

Chapter 84 also awarded a Citation of Merit to the Hines VA Chaplain Service for its countless programs and services to the veterans at the Hines VA hospital. Monsignor James Burnett, Chief of Chaplains, accepted the certificate framed with a limited edition sheet of stamps portraying the Immortal Four Chaplains of the Dorchester. Presenting the award, from left to right, are Commander Alexander Pechar, Adjutant/Treasurer Charlie Luhan and Sr. Vice Commander James Wright III.



## REUNIONS

### ARMY

**1ST BATTALION 12TH INFANTRY, RED WARRIORS, (VIETNAM) 4TH INFANTRY DIVISION** May 23-25, 2014, Washington, D.C., Contact: Whitney Echols, Jr., Phone: (251) 948-2242, Email: whitney.echols.rtr@gmail.com.

**101ST AIRBORNE DIVISION ASSOCIATION'S SNOWBIRD REUNION** February 5-9, 2014, Tampa, FL, Contact: Eddie Pissott, Phone: (813) 454-3205, Email: epissott@tampabay.rr.com, Website: www.101abnfgcc.org.

**BATTLE OF THE BULGE CHAPTER 62 MEETING** December 15, 2013, West Palm Beach, FL, Contact: George Fisher, Phone: 561-585-7086, Email: GeorgeFVBOB@aol.com, Website: www.VBOB62.com.

### MARINES

**KILO COMPANY, 3RD BATTALION, 7TH MARINE REGIMENT (VIETNAM)** September 9-15, 2014, San Diego, CA, Contact: William Rolke, Phone: (262) 780-0993, Email: k37usmc@att.net.

### NAVY

**MIDWAY ISLAND VETERANS, DEPENDENTS, CIVILIANS AND BATTLE OF MIDWAY SURVIVORS**

June 5-8, 2014, Glasgow, KY, Contact: Mike Wilson, Phone: 270-579-2525, Email: bartmike105@gmail.com.

**USS GEORGE K. MACKENZIE (DD-836)** September 4-7, 2014, San Diego, CA, Contact: Stan Baggett, Phone: 619-426-5138, Email: slbag66692@cox.net.

**USS STEINAKER (DD/DDR-863)** April 24-27, 2014, Pensacola, FL, Contact: Russ Noble, Phone: 231-944-2148, Email: olnoble@att.net.

### AIR FORCE

**12TH TFW (VIETNAM), 12TH FEW/SFW (KOREA), 12TH FTF (RANDOLPH), 479TH FTG PENSACOLA & 306TH FTG USAFA) & SUPPORTING UNITS** April 23-26, 2014, Pensacola, FL, Contact: E. J. Sherwood, Phone: 480-396-4681, Email: ej12tfw@cox.net.

**45TH MISSILE SECURITY SQUADRON** June 16, 2014, Rapid City, SD, Contact: Steve Sehi, Phone: 402-310-4326, Email: hsolo44@hotmail.com.

### INQUIRIES

- Searching for anyone who served with me in the Second Division, 38th Infantry during the Korean War and was in Kunu-ri at the time I was shot on November 29, 1950. Please contact Anthony Michael Sacco, 4451 Dolph Road, Gainesville, NY 14066-9704, Phone: (585) 322-7334.
- Searching for anyone who served with Leslie Gibson Squibb in the U.S. Army from November 12, 1942 to September 10, 1943. Please contact Kevin Squibb at kevinssquibb@yahoo.co.uk.
- Searching for anyone who was a member of the crew or military on LST-850 for the Invasion of Okinawa. Please contact Bob Cadogan, 1810 Lantern Lane, Middleboro, MA 02346, Phone: (508) 923-1388.
- Searching for anyone who served with me in the United States Air Force from September 5, 1952 to 1968. Please contact Mr. Reinhold Gassmann, 164 Wagon Ford Road, Easley, SC 29640-7672, Phone: (864) 836-8438.
- Searching for anyone who served in WWII with G Co 121st Inf. 8th Inf. Division with Pvt. Ricardo Alaniz who was killed on April 11, 1945. Please contact Roberto Alaniz, 933 Holly Street, Copperas Cove, TX 76522, Phone: (254) 547-1484.
- Searching for anyone who served with me aboard the USS George Clymer (APA-27) in July, 1965. Please contact Albert G. Aikins, Jr., 12093 Spinnaker Drive, Tega Cay, SC 29708, Phone: (803) 548-0728.
- Searching for anyone who worked with me in Songbe, Vietnam from November 1968 to April 1969. Please contact Juan S. Silva, 1241 Shadwell, San Antonio, TX 78226, Phone: (210) 289-3609.

- Searching for anyone who served with Willie Zarate in Vietnam, November 1967 to November 1968. He served with HHC 2nd BN 8th Cav, 1st Cav Div., (AM). Please contact Susanna Garcia, 10604 Salem Avenue, Lubbock, Texas 79424, (432) 978-7358, huelapoo@yahoo.com.
- Searching for anyone who served in Southeast Asia during 1967-68 at the Aerial Mail Terminal. Please contact Nathaniel Biddle, Jr., 62 E. Macedonia Road, South Texarkana, TX 75501-1713.

- Searching for anyone who witnessed or heard of the building of a temporary bridge over a stream in Kumwha Valley, Korea, by the 2nd Infantry Division, 82nd AAA AW Battalion circa 1952. Please contact James Callahan at call7185@yahoo.com.
- Searching for anyone who knows or knew my Marine Corps friend Jerry Presti, stationed in Okinawa in 1966. Please contact Woody Raymer, #09346-074, U.S. P. ADX, P.O. Box 8500, Florence, CO 81226-8500.



#### Rotary Club Support...

DAV Chapter 9, Coffee County, Ala., received a donation of \$5,000 from the Enterprise Sunrise Rotary Club. Chapter Commander Laird Culver and Chapter Treasurer Sam MacMaster accepted the donation from Rotary Club President Rich Johnson. The entire donation will be used to support local veterans and veteran services. Pictured left to right: Culver, Chapter MacMaster, Johnson, Paul St. Onge and Russ Nichols. (Photo courtesy of Paul St. Onge)



#### Sergeant Major Speaks at Memorial Day Program...

Retired Army Sgt. Maj. Lynn Widener, center, a member of Chapter 8 in Carthage, N.C., speaks to those who attended the Wilson, N.C., Memorial Day program. He was the program's guest speaker.

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