



THE OFFICIAL VOICE OF DAV AND AUXILIARY

JANUARY | FEBRUARY 2014

MAGAZINE

DAV Leads **ADVANCE FUNDING**

Effort Page 12



No COLA Round-Down

Page 25

**Hollywood Christmas
Parade salutes DAV**

Page 28



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We Can Make a Difference

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

Budget 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 will get the facts, represent your fellow veterans before 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. ■

Travel Assistance

The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) can facilitate the screening of injured or wounded veterans. Those requesting assistance will have their travel information and type of assistance required provided to the departure and arrival U.S. airports to ensure they will have access to assistance, including passenger support specialists, to guide and help them through the screening process. Veterans who require assistance (or their care coordinators) should contact TSA Cares with details of the itinerary once flight arrangements are made with the airline. Call TSA Cares toll-free at 855-787-2227 weekdays from 8 a.m. to 11 p.m. and weekends and holidays from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. (Eastern time) for more information.



From the NATIONAL COMMANDER JOSEPH W. JOHNSTON



Set the Example

First, a happy New Year to all. I hope 2014 brings you closer to the health, goals, successes and resolutions you have in mind. And, I hope DAV is able to help make those things a reality for you.

Connecting ill and injured veterans with the benefits, services and resources they need to re-establish their lives has been the signature mission of DAV since our organization began. I would like for all of us to use 2014 as a year to reflect on that mission and to rekindle our passion for serving our fellow veterans.

Too many of our brothers and sisters in arms will remain homeless, out of work or deep in personal struggles this year if we do not work to reach them and provide them the same lifelines many of us have received.

These are our comrades, our friends. They deserve more from the country they served, and we have to set the example for the rest of the nation to follow. I am pleased to report the DAV Charitable Service Trust has issued a number of grants during the past several months that directly support transition services for veterans, such as job placement, transitional housing and rehabilitation programs.

These are critical steps to supporting our mission, but we still have more to do,

both on the local and the national levels.

At our annual Mid-Winter Conference, slated for Feb. 23-26, we have the opportunity to meet with elected officials and let them know how important it is to care for veterans. While we generally receive great support from lawmakers in Washington, the partial government shutdown this past October showed that even the veteran community is not off-limits when it comes to budget battles.

Disaster was only narrowly averted when Congress passed temporary measures to end the shutdown. Even so, disability compensation, education funding and other benefits are still in question. This is not an acceptable way to treat the men and women who served and sacrificed for this nation, and we need to make sure our lawmakers hear that message directly from us.

I hope you will attend this year's conference, as it marks one of the most critical moments in our advocacy efforts. We cannot let the security of veterans' earned benefits become a mere illusion. These benefits must be protected through advance appropriations. I look forward to joining you on Capitol Hill, working side-by-side this year to drive home the point to Congress that veterans are a national priority and must be treated as such.

CONTENTS

- 1** National Commander Joseph Johnston calls upon DAV members to rekindle their passion for serving your fellow veterans.
- 3** National Adjutant Marc Burgess notes that DAV's commitment to service and compassion for veterans is unmatched.
- 5** The VA will review previously denied claims for PTSD related to military sexual trauma.
- 11** Dog trainer Ben Simmons wins Wilson business grant.
- 15** Transportation Network volunteer driver aims to log 1 million miles.
- 21** DAV teams with Harvard Law School in veterans legal aid program.
- 28** Hollywood Christmas Parade salutes DAV.
- 33** DAV Auxiliary National Commander Susan Miller says our organizations are united in service to veterans and their families and survivors.



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FEATURES

7



DAV's inaugural 5K was a resounding success in honoring those who have served.

12



DAV is leading the effort for advance funding for all VA programs and services.

19



Military Appreciation Monday is more than a fund raiser for Chapters and Departments.

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From the NATIONAL ADJUTANT J. MARC BURGESS



Nobody Does It Better

One of the best parts of being National Adjutant is seeing firsthand the many ways our Departments, Chapters and individual members are serving their fellow veterans. Everywhere I go, it is clear that the DAV spirit is a driving force that fuels the membership, service and volunteer efforts throughout the veteran community.

Here's just one example of what makes me so proud of this organization and our members: When National Commander Joseph W. Johnston and I visited the Northport VA medical center in New York to see the renowned, and perhaps largest, volunteer transportation operation in the country, we saw what we expected to see—and so much more. Of course, the relationship between DAV and VA officials at Northport is one of solidarity and total commitment to the veterans that both organizations exist to serve. Without cooperation and absolute focus on our missions, neither could be as effective as we are in helping veterans lead high-quality lives with respect and dignity.

Our first point of business was a briefing on the many unique and out-of-the-box ways DAV and the VA care for veterans at Northport, many of whom are severely injured. We heard about on-campus weekly concerts and annual comprehensive rehabilitative sports programs. Residents who call the medical center home are treated to trips to New York City for Yankees games and to see the Rockettes at Radio City Music Hall. Currently under construction is an impressive and awe-inspiring Wall of Wars, which will recognize the service and sacrifice of all veterans of all eras. The list of great things goes on and on, with DAV and the VA working together on each and every effort.

As several DAV leaders and volunteers visited with patients, I took note that DAV's motto of "Veterans Helping Veterans" was right before us. World War II Navy veteran Sal Tornatore was providing encouragement to a severely injured veteran of the war in Afghanistan. What an image that was. From World War II to Afghanistan, dedication and commitment the DAV way are stronger than ever. So many years after his service to our country, Sal is still giving. He provides encouragement to his fellow veterans, like he did that day for the young Marine. He volunteers and leads and inspires all of us. Sal is a walking and talking example of heartfelt concern for our fellow veterans and a reminder that we can never forget the sacrifices our men and women in uniform have made for our country and way of life. DAV, through lifelong ambassadors like Sal, will never forget.

As for the multitude of DAV members volunteering at Northport as drivers, call center representatives, Department Service Officers, caregivers to the residents and information desk attendants, they are ensuring that DAV fulfills our promises to the men and women who served. Department Adjutant and Past National Commander Don Sioss, Department Commander Sam Mantilla and Hospital Service Coordinator and National 4th Junior Vice Commander Dennis Krulder should be proud that, under their leadership, DAV is at the pinnacle of service to others. Yes, Commander Johnston and I saw a premier transportation program as we expected, but we experienced so much more. We experienced the dedication and commitment of DAV members and volunteers.



Ambulatory Disabled Ignored

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

What DAV Facebook and Twitter Followers Have to Say

Facebook

www.facebook.com/the.DAV

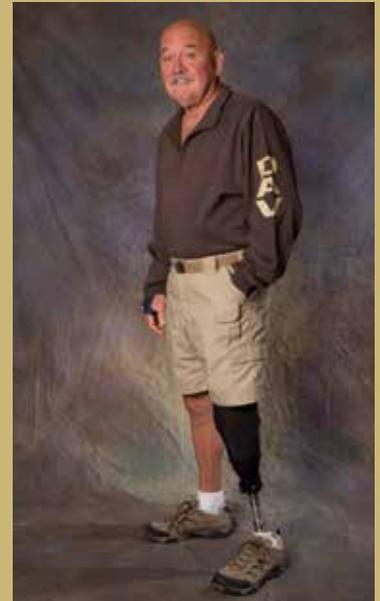
After six long years of filling out paperwork over and over again, copying records and arguing with the VA, my dad is finally getting his Agent Orange compensation. I am truly thankful to DAV for getting this done for him. Sometimes it just takes the right (good) person at the right place, and you get results. Thank you to the Detroit branch of DAV. **Shannon Shaw Tierney**

I want to express my sincere gratitude to DAV for acting as my representing agency. I got the call that my rating had been upgraded from 10 percent to 90 percent. This is a blessing to my family, and we are so very grateful to all who have helped us through this process. May God abundantly bless you and yours. **Phil Burnette**

I cannot wait for the disabled veterans memorial to open in Washington. My children and hopefully their children will see this and better understand how we keep suffering long after we leave the military. We did not make the ultimate sacrifice, and something I feel guilty about that, but we sacrifice

As a Matter of Fact

Many DAV supporters received a recent solicitation featuring Marine Corps veteran Dan O'Connor. Dan, a life member who serves as a mentor and coach to recently injured veterans, asked DAV to clarify the nature of his amputation. While both of his legs were severely injured as a result of an improvised explosive device in Vietnam, requiring more than 20 surgeries, he lost his left leg as a result of a motorcycle accident after returning from combat. Regardless, O'Connor's continued service is a testament to the Marine Corps motto, "Semper Fidelis."



still. This is going to be a very special place to me. **John White**

Twitter

www.twitter.com/DAVHQ

Can't say enough about the effort the @DAVHQ in NorCal is doing on my behalf. Much appreciated. **@SBG_CEO (Travis Bell)**

@DAVHQ kudos for fighting a good fight battling behind the scenes to get veterans what they need. WHOOAH DAVHQ. **@BlackRedHawk**

DAV @DAVHQ is the first veterans service organization to join Friends as a sponsor of the 2014 WWII Memorial's 10th Anniversary Commemoration. **@WWII Memorial (WWII Memorial Friend)**

Correction

A photograph on page 36 (November/December issue) incorrectly said North Carolina Chapter 8 is in Carthage. The Chapter is located in Wilson, N.C. We regret the error.

Correction

An article in the September/October issue incorrectly stated the Defense Prisoner of War Missing Personnel Office is engaged in field operations to recover the remains of U.S. service members lost during war. Those operations are instead conducted by the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command in Hawaii, a part of the United States Pacific Command. DAV regrets the error.

WRITE TO US We welcome letters from our readers. Please mail them to **DAV Magazine, 3725 Alexandria Pike, Cold Spring, KY 41076**, or submit them via email to feedback@dav.org. We regret we are unable to acknowledge every letter, due to the volume received. Letters used are subject to editing for clarity, style, accuracy, space and propriety. Messages involving individual claims are referred to the DAV Service Department.

Military Sexual Trauma Claims To Be Re-evaluated

By Ashleigh Bryant

Veterans who have been denied disability benefits for post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) related to military sexual trauma (MST) are now able to have those cases re-examined by the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA).

Since 2011, VA Undersecretary for Benefits Allison Hickey has been working to correct the disparity in claims approval ratings for PTSD related to combat versus PTSD stemming from MST. From 2008 to 2010, the approval rate for PTSD claims related to MST was only about one third. Today, roughly 55 percent of those claims are granted, while there is a similar 60-percent grant rate for all PTSD claims.

This is due in part to better training for claims specialists, but it also reflects a change in the mandated burden of proof required for approval.

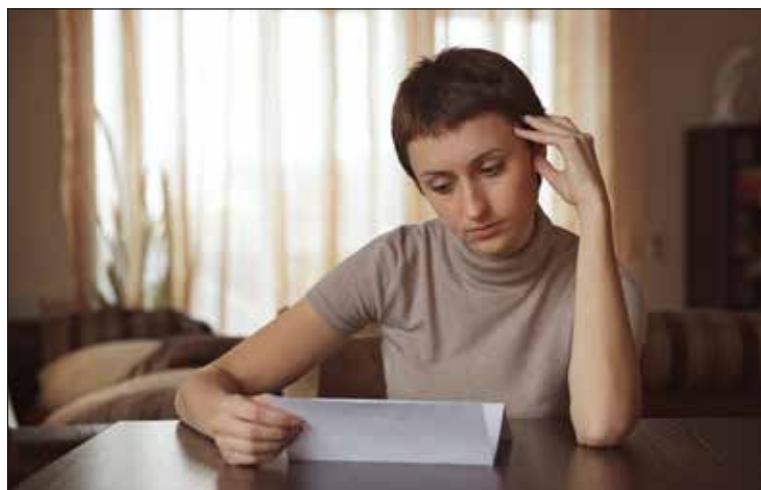
In April, the VBA mailed letters to some 2,500 veterans whose claims for MST-related PTSD were denied. The letter explained to veterans that they can request that their case be reopened to add evidence that may have been previously overlooked.

National Service Director Jim Marszalek said his staff also sent letters in November to veterans whose claims were handled by DAV, to offer specific guidance on the re-evaluation process and the supporting evidence that can be considered. Guidance was also given to National Service Officers on the changes.

"We wanted to be sure the veterans we represent knew exactly what steps to take and what evidence may be used to re-evaluate their claim," said Marszalek. "They need a knowledgeable, direct point of contact. The last thing these veterans need is to discuss their MST claim with a dozen people before finding the one who can help."

The VA has also relaxed the evidentiary requirements necessary to validate a claim. Claims-rating specialists now look for "markers" that indicate a specified traumatic event. These can include:

- Records from law enforcement authorities, rape crisis centers, mental health counseling centers, hospitals or physicians
- Relationship issues, such as divorce
- Pregnancy tests or tests for sexually transmitted diseases



Approximately 2,500 veterans received letters from the VBA telling them they could request their PTSD case be reopened in order to add evidence related to MST that may have been previously overlooked.

- Statements from family members, roommates, fellow service members, clergy members or counselors
- Requests for transfer to another military duty assignment
- Deterioration in work performance
- Substance abuse
- Episodes of depression, panic attacks or anxiety without an identifiable cause
- Unexplained economic or social behavioral changes
- Sexual dysfunction

"Veterans who did not receive the VA letter can still request to have their claim reviewed, if it was previously denied," said Deputy National Legislative Director Joy Ilem. "Any additional supporting evidence, such as statements from family or fellow service members, or markers not previously identified, can be very valuable in the re-evaluation process."

"MST can have devastating consequences on an individual's ability to care for themselves and their families," said Marc Burgess, National Adjutant. "With our utmost sensitivity, we're going to fight to ensure justice and validation for those who are suffering from PTSD as a result of MST." ■



Learn More Online

For more information, or to request that your case be reopened, contact your NSO or locate the nearest DAV office at www.dav.org/veterans/find-your-local-office.

VA Health Care Where You Are

VA Testing Mobile App

By Ashleigh Bryant

The key to the Department of Veterans Affairs new model of patient care fits in the palm of your hand.

For the past few months, the VA has been field testing several pilot programs designed to extend the reach of services to veterans. One program, the Family Caregiver Pilot, has provided Apple iPads to more than 1,000 recently wounded veterans and their caregivers so they can better monitor ongoing health concerns.

Assistant National Legislative Director Adrian Atizado had the opportunity to test the apps and learn about the pilot program at a VA demonstration given at DAV Washington Headquarters.

“This appears to be a very effective tool for both caregivers and veterans to keep track of important health data and to transmit that information directly to their health care team,” said Atizado. “It’s fantastic that the VA also includes elements specific to the caregiver, because we know how much their health can be affected during the recovery process as well.”

Marine Corps veteran Brian Olinger is currently testing the pilot system and said the apps give him greater control over his overall health care.

“It is really a snapshot of my entire VA record,” Olinger said. He was recently diagnosed with a torn ACL and opted to have a non-VA provider perform the surgery. “The VA Mobile App empowers me to provide my private specialist with information from VA, as well as information I can enter myself. Having the information from previous VA visits allows me to review my record to determine if what the doctors are saying is consistent with how I really feel.”



The VA Mobile App pilot testing period will conclude in May 2014, with the VA collecting final feedback from participants about how to best adapt mobile technology to fit the needs of veterans and their caregivers.

The wide variety of apps being fielded right now will be useful to the changing demographic of the veteran population, according to Neil Evans, a VA physician and co-director of Connected Health.

“We have a gaming application that allows veterans to compete against their military colleagues to see who can best improve their health,” said Evans. “We are also getting ready to release several applications specific to women’s health.”

So far, the feedback is largely positive. The 41-year-old Olinger believes that younger veterans will fully expect mobile apps to become a basic part of their health care experience, and he believes older veterans will appreciate the ease of access the apps will provide.

“I recommend VA Mobile Health Apps to any veteran who wants to access information easily, refill

prescriptions, track their personal health or just have a tool to help them get through a tough day,” said Olinger. “Using the apps makes my life easier, and I believe that other veterans have an interest in them, too. They provide the type of information veterans want, when they want it.”

Evans added that the VA plans to collect feedback in early 2014 and release specific apps in May or June. ■

“I recommend VA Mobile Health Apps to any veteran who wants to access information easily, refill prescriptions, track their personal health or just have a tool to help them get through a tough day.”

*—Brian Olinger,
Marine Corps veteran*



Inaugural DAV 5K Resounding Success

Steven Wilson

A brisk, cold morning on Nov. 9 did not deter more than 2,500 participants from taking part in DAV's inaugural 5K Walk, Run or Ride, held in downtown Cincinnati. The event began with longtime DAV supporter Heather French Henry, Miss America 2000, singing the National Anthem prior to the starter's pistol being fired.

After the participating motorcycles, led by Past National Commander Rob Reynolds, roared by, the handcyclists left the starting line, followed shortly by the runners and walkers. Along the route, each branch of service was represented with a band playing their individual service song.

The event concluded with an awards ceremony for the individual race winners, where Past National Commander Richard Marbes, who started the course as a single-leg amputee, reminded everyone that events



Miss America 2000 and longtime supporter of veterans causes, Heather French-Henry, performed the National Anthem prior to the start of the DAV 5K. Past National Commander Bobby Barrera was the honorary starter, and National Commander Joseph Johnston also participated in the pre-race activities.

honoring veterans and their families are much bigger than individual achievements.

"While we're only giving out a few awards this morning, let me stress that every participant and volunteer here today has helped advance the cause of fulfilling our promises to the men and women who served," said Marbes. "You should all be proud of that fact."

National Commander Joseph Johnston thanked the assembled crowd for demonstrating their commitment to veterans' causes and encouraged communities to volunteer and stay involved. He told the crowd that

DAV 5K participants were invited to walk, run or ride in the race in honor or remembrance of those who have sacrificed themselves for our freedoms. Sasha Bradford attached to her baby carrier a special bib, which read "In honor of my daddy, KIA Afghanistan, 16 May 2013," in remembrance of her husband, Michael.



in 1920, Robert Marx, a Cincinnati judge and legal scholar, led a number of prominent veterans from Kentucky, Ohio and Indiana to band together and begin a movement to remind America that fulfilling its promises to men and women who've served was, and still is, the right thing to do.

"The decision to wear the nation's uniform is the greatest commitment to our country and your community that anyone can make," said Johnston. "By participating in this 5K event, you've actively lent your support to our nation's veterans, and I truly thank you for that."

According to National Adjutant Marc Burgess, the pilot event proved successful in many ways. "There is an energy that goes with an event like this. It's a way for the public to experience DAV and show their commitment to our cause," said Burgess. "We will look at ways we can expand the event beyond Cincinnati and hope this new institutional knowledge can be shared with our Departments nationwide." ■

"We are here for Michael Robert Bradford, my husband, who was killed overseas as well as any other veteran who lost their life over there or was injured."

—Sasha Bradford



Download the *DAV Magazine* app or visit www.flickr.com/thedav to view more photos.



Hewlett-Packard Reinvests VA Award Earnings in DAV Services

Hewlett-Packard recently announced it would donate a portion of its \$495,000 award in the Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Appointment Scheduling Contest to DAV.

HP presented a check in the amount of \$150,000 to National Adjutant Marc Burgess at the closing ceremonies of the inaugural DAV 5K in Cincinnati Nov. 9. The remaining portion of the contest earnings were also donated to veterans service organizations.

“We are truly appreciative for this generous donation from HP, a company with a notable history of reaching out and giving back to the veterans’ community,” said Burgess. “We hope this is the beginning of a lasting partnership built around the shared commitment to helping our men and women who served.”

The donation to DAV will help support the organization’s National Service Program, a network of 100 offices throughout the United States and Puerto Rico that provides free benefits counseling and services to veterans and their families.

“HP has a long history of helping U.S. military veterans through community outreach events, sponsorships and employment opportunities,” said Don Picard, Federal Health Care Vice President, U.S. Public Sector, HP



Don Picard of Hewlett Packard Enterprise Services, presented DAV National Adjutant Marc Burgess a check for \$150,000 at the conclusion of the inaugural DAV 5K, November 9. Partnerships with organizations like HP help DAV continue its never-ending mission of service and empowerment to veterans and their families. The need for DAV’s services will grow as the number of veterans returning home from conflicts increases.

Enterprise Services. “This contribution reinforces our commitment to serving and honoring America’s veterans by ensuring they have direct access to programs, services and innovative solutions to meet their needs.”

HP placed third in the VA’s Medical Appointment Scheduling Contest by creating technology systems to aid veterans in making appointments for both outpatient and ambulatory care services provided by the Veterans Health Administration. The contest also challenged the technology industry to incorporate mobile device compatibility, support for best care practices and the ability to integrate calendars across the VA system. ■



HELPing Veterans...
Wesley Holm, owner of HELP Plumbing, Heating, Cooling, and Electric, has been a staunch supporter of DAV since 2009 in honor of his father, father-in-law, veteran employees, and all veterans. Holm presented a check on Veterans Day to acknowledge the company has raised more than \$500,000 to support veterans since 2009 at a special Veterans Day breakfast event Nov. 11. This year, HELP’s annual fundraising campaign raised more than \$60,000 for DAV. PNC Bobby Barrera was the keynote speaker and thanked HELP for their longtime support and said, “DAV cannot fulfill all of the promises we’ve made on our own. We do it with the support of our communities, volunteers and friends like HELP.”



From the NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR JOSEPH A. VIOLANTE

Grassroots Push for Expanded Advance Appropriations

In 2009, our grassroots efforts, and those of many other organizations, were instrumental in getting legislation enacted to provide advance funding for veterans medical care. Thanks to the Veterans Health Care Budget Reform and Transparency Act, VA hospitals and clinics were able to provide uninterrupted care to millions of wounded, injured and ill veterans during last year's partial government shutdown. Meanwhile, other critical services for veterans were delayed, disrupted or suspended.

In fact, if the budget stalemate had continued for another couple of weeks, even mandatory obligations of the federal government, such as disability compensation and pension payments to veterans and their survivors, would have been halted. More than 4 million wounded, injured, ill and poor veterans rely on those payments, which for some are their primary or only source of income.

It is simply unacceptable that there was even the threat of a default on those payments because Congress was in partisan gridlock over unrelated matters. That's why National Commander Joseph W. Johnston urged Departments and Chapters to hold town hall meetings and rallies calling on lawmakers to end the shutdown. (See page 13.) And once the shutdown ended, he again issued a call to action in support of extending advance appropriations to all VA discretionary and mandatory programs. A number of Departments and Chapters have held or scheduled rallies to tell their elected officials it is time to change how Washington pays for veterans programs, by putting veterans funding first.

Meanwhile, DAV has been joined by dozens of other veterans' and military organizations in delivering that message directly to

Congress and the White House. (See page 11.) We are urging Congress to pass, and the President to sign, legislation that would extend advance appropriations to all remaining VA programs and services. That legislation is the Putting Veterans Funding First Act (S. 932, H.R. 813). It has bipartisan support in both chambers of Congress, including the leadership of the Senate and House Veterans' Affairs Committees.

The success of this latest effort—as it was with the advance funding for VA medical care—will require an all-out grassroots campaign. While town hall meetings and rallies are integral parts of our strategy, the tried-and-true tactics are personal contacts, phone calls and emails to your Senators and Representatives. We need to urge them to extend the same one-year advance appropriations cycle, currently used for VA's three medical care accounts, to include all discretionary and mandatory programs and services.

The message we want to send to Congress and the President is that extending advance appropriations would shield all veterans programs from unrelated political and partisan budget disputes. That way, the VA can continue to deliver all the benefits and services that our wounded, injured and ill veterans have earned. So, I urge you to get involved in this crucial effort and encourage others you may know to join DAV CAN (Commander's Action Network).



Learn More Online

You'll find important information about this vital legislation and how to deliver DAV's message at www.davcan.org.

Top Dog Wins Top Venture



Ben Simmons, a former Air Force Security Forces K9 handler, plans to use the DAV Arthur H. and Mary E. Wilson Award for Top Venture Impacting Veterans to advance his small business, which is aimed at training dogs to help veterans with service-connected disabilities.

Canine trainer Ben Simmons receives Arthur H. and Mary E. Wilson Award for Top Venture Impacting Veterans.

By Vicki Prichard

Ben Simmons was a self-professed class clown, more interested in the social aspect of going to school than educational opportunities. Lacking the desire as well as the finances to attend college, he took the advice of his cousin, retired Air Force Chief Master Sgt. Jack Perry, and joined the Air Force, where he learned the skills that would shape his future and inspire him to own a business.

As a working-dog handler in the Air Force, Simmons completed more than 500 hours of technical instruction in canine training. Simmons and his K9 partner specialized in explosive detection and protection patrol work in Kuwait, Greece and the United States. Ultimately, Simmons gained valuable experience and skills that, coupled with his lifelong passion for dogs and their behavior, prompted him to launch a new career upon his return to civilian life.

Armed with ambition and drive, Simmons was accepted to the Entrepreneurship Bootcamp for Veterans with Disabilities (EBV). The program is designed to open business ownership opportunities for post-9/11 veterans with disabilities resulting from service by offering cutting edge experiential training in entrepreneurship and small business management.

Through the Florida State University College of Business, Simmons delved into the intensive program that he says was “life-changing.” The result was OnCommand K9, Simmons’ Georgia-based business where he works to enhance communication between dogs and their owners. He hopes to develop a military program to pair rescue dogs with veterans who suffer from post-traumatic

stress disorder and traumatic brain injury. Through this program, Simmons says he will train both the dog and veteran to have the dog certified as a service animal.

“The dogs will assist the veteran daily in achieving small goals that were previously impossible,” said Simmons. “In time, I will establish a non-profit organization and

“DAV affords veterans the opportunity to pursue dreams beyond our military service. To know there are organizations looking out for veterans and their families in the sea of red tape is very comforting, and DAV leads the way. Thanks to DAV, I can pursue my dreams while helping to support my family.”

—Ben Simmons, Air Force veteran, owner of OnCommand K9



work solely with these veterans and rescue dogs. I hope to pair 36 teams a year, which will greatly improve the quality of life for 72 living and deserving souls each year.”

Just as Simmons invests his time and expertise to ensure On Command K9’s success, each year DAV invests in a veteran whose business plan wins top honors in EBV’s business plan competition. As this year’s recipient of DAV’s Arthur H. and Mary E. Wilson Award for Top Venture Impacting Veterans, Simmons has earned the organization’s investment in his future.

(Continued on pg. 17)

Grassroots Efforts Across the Country Push for Advance Funding Legislation

By Steve Wilson and Charity Edgar

When the budget battle rumbled through Washington, the resulting government shutdown threatened earned compensation and benefits for nearly 5 million men and women who faithfully served their nation. The close call was avoided, for now, with a temporary funding measure, called a continuing resolution, but veterans' benefits could be threatened again.

DAV members are refusing to sit back and allow political posturing to jeopardize their benefits any longer. While National Service Offices and Department and Chapter Officers found innovative ways to continue serving veterans and their families during the government shutdown, Departments and Chapters launched grassroots initiatives to support advance funding, which would prevent political gridlock from adversely affecting any of VA's benefits and services ever again.

DAV Commander's Action Network (DAV CAN) is a tool members may use to fight for the protection of benefits veterans and their families have earned through service. This innovative feature, accessed through DAV's website, allows users to instantly check on issues currently affecting veterans, DAV's stance on the issue, which legislators have supported it and which ones haven't.

DAV CAN users are able to email their lawmakers to demand they take action on issues affecting veterans and their families. The site provides sample emails for certain key issues, so users can be sure to include the appropriate legislative language as they customize their messages to their Senators and Representatives.

"The DAV Commander's Action Network is such an innovative and powerful tool veterans and supporters can access," said National Legislative Director Joseph A. Violante. "We've provided a resource that allows for



Department of Florida Commander Guy Diffenbaugh (second from right), National Executive Committee member and Past Department Commander John Markiewicz (right) and fellow VSO representatives rally for the Putting Veterans Funding First Act at the Jacksonville, Fla., Town Hall. This bipartisan legislation would insulate veterans from the harmful effects of future showdowns. Rallies are being held in cities across the nation, including Oakland, below. Through www.davcan.org, individuals can also directly reach out to their representatives.



instant access to elected representatives and for holding them accountable for supporting issues that affect veterans and their families. I encourage everyone to access DAV CAN and use it to tell Congress that using veterans as a political football is unacceptable, and legislation like the Putting Veterans Funding First Act must be passed."

To bring additional attention to the impact a prolonged shutdown would have on members, DAV National Headquarters created a tool kit for holding

“Advance appropriations are a **proven budget reform** that can prevent real harm to millions of veterans...”

—Garry Augustine, Washington Headquarters Executive Director

rallies and town hall meetings and provided guidance to Departments and Chapters hosting events.

“To the general public, the infighting and political posturing in Washington can seem distant, with little or no local effects,” said Violante. “That’s why, when local veterans share how damaging a shutdown is for them personally, it sends an important message that resonates throughout the country.”

Rallies and town hall meetings in cities including Anchorage, Boston and Oakland focused attention on the nationwide need to secure full funding for the VA. The Department of Florida took the lead on this initiative by hosting the first event just days after the shutdown ended.

Despite heavy rain, DAV members and fellow veterans’ advocates joined forces at the Jacksonville Veterans Memorial Wall in a showing of solidarity to encourage supporters to contact their lawmakers and let them know that it is time for Congress to pass, and for the President to sign, legislation that extends advance appropriations to all VA discretionary and mandatory programs. Newspaper and TV coverage of the event circulated DAV’s message to millions in Florida.

“More than 1.6 million veterans live in Florida,” said Department Commander Guy Diffenbaugh. “That’s a lot of people whose benefits were nearly on the chopping block. We’re concerned about the fate of veterans. We want Washington to wake up and take care of its heroes.”

John Markiewicz, DAV National Executive Committee member and Past Department Commander, echoed Diffenbaugh’s sentiment.

“All of the issues we had during the shutdown affecting veterans—such as uncertainty of pensions and disability compensation—highlighted the importance of advance funding for all of the VA,” Markiewicz said. “Veterans in Florida are very concerned and are looking to DAV for guidance to make sure they’re not threatened again.” ■



Learn More Online

More information on DAV’s grassroots efforts is available at www.dav.org. The Commander’s Action Network is found under the “advocate” tab and material from rallies and town hall meetings are accessible from the home page.



Washington Headquarters Executive Director Garry Augustine, along with representatives from nearly two dozen other military and veterans service organizations, hold a Capitol Hill news conference to seek bipartisan support for the Putting Veterans Funding First Act. “America’s veterans’ leaders are launching an all-out campaign to pass new legislation to extend advance appropriations so that all VA programs, services and benefits are protected,” said Augustine. Augustine is flanked by House Veterans’ Affairs Committee Chairman Jeff Miller, left, and Ranking Member Michael Michaud. Both the House and Senate Veterans’ Affairs Committees have approved versions of the measure.

Transportation Network Volunteer

Aims for 1 Million Miles

By Charity Edgar



Volunteer driver Gene Lister has set his sights on logging 1 million miles through his dedicated service to the Transportation Network. Lister supports fellow veterans by ensuring they have rides to their medical appointments.

During World War II, Petty Officer 2nd Class Gene Lister served in the U.S. Navy aboard the USS *Wisconsin*, an Iowa-class battleship. Almost 70 years later, Lister continues to dedicate his life to service. Today, he supports injured veterans through the DAV Transportation Network, ensuring that his fellow veterans in and around Huntington, W.Va., have access to the care they earned by shuttling them to and from medical appointments.

“DAV’s voluntary services are successful because of volunteers like Gene Lister,” said National Director of Voluntary Services Ron Minter. “He is a veteran helping veterans, enabling our nation’s heroes to receive essential health care.”

Prior to the war, Lister was a tugboat operator, so serving in the Navy as a boatswain’s mate was the perfect fit. After an honorable discharge, Lister volunteered with the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary whose commanding officer recommended him to Hospital Service Coordinator Rush Williams. Williams welcomed him aboard in 1999, and the two have been working together ever since.

“Rush gives me the assignments and provides the equipment, and I go from there,” said Lister. “None of this would be possible without his leadership and guidance.”

“Mr. Lister honorably served his country and continues to serve by supporting his fellow veterans. **His commitment to empowering veterans is an inspiration.**”

—Ron Minter, National Director of Voluntary Services



Lister volunteers with the Transportation Network five days a week, donating 10 to 15 hours of his time every day. “Mr. Lister honorably served his country and continues to serve by supporting his fellow veterans,” said Minter. “His commitment to empowering veterans is an inspiration.”

“The need for services like the Transportation Network is so great, and Mr. Lister is helping to fulfill that need as are hundreds of other volunteer drivers all across the country,” said National Headquarters Executive Director Barry Jesinoski.

Lister transports veterans in his native West Virginia, as well as neighboring Kentucky and Ohio, to hospitals and clinics throughout the region. Lister notes the difficulty of finding the homes of veterans in some of the rural, mountainous terrain—areas that his GPS does not even recognize.

“I am given directions from the veterans like, ‘Take a left at the sycamore tree and then a right at the saw mill.’ We deal with that on a daily basis. It makes things interesting,” said Lister.

On one particular day, Lister picked up a veteran

near Huntington and drove him to an appointment in Lexington, Ky. “I brought him in. I’ll sit and wait and then take him home when I’m finished. That’s my day—over 300 miles,” stated Lister, matter-of-factly.

“I put 231,000 miles on the last van and 235,000 on the one before that,” said Lister. “My new van has 21,000 miles on it after a month and a half.”

As of September, Lister had transported 11,304 veterans and accrued 756,855 miles but said he won’t slow down until he reaches his goal of 1 million miles. Despite these impressive numbers, the spry 86-year-old does not view himself as a hero or as doing anything too special.

“It is my meager effort to give back a portion of what I have received. This is a reason to get out of bed in the morning,” said Lister. “These veterans are people in need, and I am able to help them. I can supply them with something they can benefit from, and that’s the reward—being able to help.”

“Volunteer drivers like Mr. Lister are fine examples of DAV’s commitment to serving veterans in our communities,” said National Adjutant Marc Burgess. “I’m confident he will meet his goal of 1 million miles.” ■



A Job Well Done...

North Carolina Chapter 8 member and volunteer driver Eddie Price marks his 18th year behind the wheel. Price helped start up the DAV Transportation Network in his community in 1999 after four years of driving patients in his own car. (Gray Whitley/The Wilson Times)

Top Dog: Ben Simmons

(Continued from pg. 11)

The award is made possible by an ongoing contribution from Rick Fenstermacher, chief operating officer of the Disabled Veteran's LIFE Memorial Foundation. Fenstermacher established the award in honor of retired National Adjutant Art Wilson and his wife Mary and to inspire individuals and corporations to contribute to the fund to expand its reach to other worthy individuals.

Simmons counts DAV among the "awesome organizations" that helped him turn his passion for training dogs and helping others into a business.

"This grant will allow me to make improvements to my training facility a year earlier than I had originally planned," Simmons said. "This will allow me to take on more clients and begin my military program much sooner. The award will also allow me to visit other organizations doing similar activities so that I can possibly benchmark, or at least reduce the learning curve."

The scholarship isn't the first time DAV has had an impact on Simmons.

"DAV assisted me in my initial claim (for benefits)," says Simmons. "The process can be overwhelming, but my counselor from DAV simplified the process and educated me on the other programs I was eligible for."

Simmons says the transition from military to civilian life can be difficult and encourages others to keep in mind that veterans are honest, hard-working and dedicated professionals who can be great assets in the community and workplaces.

"We sacrifice a lot during service and most just want a chance to continue to give once we return home," Simmons says.



Ben Simmons, center, accepts a grant to advance small business, OnCommand K9. Presenting the award are Dr. Mike Haynie, Executive Director and Founder of the Institute for Veterans and Military Families; Sara Lafe, Director of Charitable Investments for the Bob Woodruff Foundation; and Brian Cowart, Chief Development Officer for DAV.

He stresses the important role that DAV has played in his life as well as so many other veterans.

"DAV affords veterans the opportunity to pursue dreams beyond our military service," says Simmons. "To know there are organizations looking out for veterans and their families in the sea of red tape is very comforting, and DAV leads the way. Thanks to DAV, I can pursue my dreams while helping to support my family."

"It is an honor to be associated with an award that recognizes and encourages contributions by veterans to the veteran community," said Wilson, the award's namesake. "Through his business, Ben Simmons is taking his military experience and the training he received through EBV to improve the lives of his fellow veterans, their families and caregivers. It's a win-win concept." ■

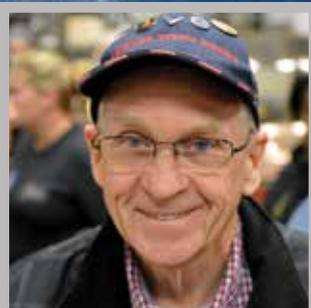


Honoring Veterans...

National Commander Joseph Johnston, standing, joins President Obama, Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki and representatives from veterans and military organizations on the dias at Arlington National Cemetery on Veterans Day.



Serving Those Who Have Served



Golden Corral Events Help Support Service Programs

By Dave Autry

Chapter 14 in Hagerstown, Md., may be small, but it's helping local veterans in a big way, thanks in part to Golden Corral's Military Appreciation Monday. But the Chapter has a year-round presence that has cemented a close bond with the restaurant.

"We've been involved with Golden Corral since it opened three or four years ago," said Chapter Adjutant Ernest Unger. "And we're there on weekends selling raffle tickets to raise funds."

According to Manager Richard Macfarland, the restaurant staff complements the Chapter's efforts and helps raise funds during the week. "The staff holds raffles and sells candy at the register throughout the year, and it all goes directly to the Chapter."

Although the restaurant is pretty busy on any given night, Macfarland said Military Appreciation Monday is like a holiday. "It gets really crazy in here, but the entire staff has a great time."

The 2013 Military Appreciation Monday events set a new record, collecting \$1,409,400 for Departments and Chapters while serving 433,500 free meals to veterans and service members.

In the 13 years since Military Appreciation Monday began, Golden Corral has served more than 4 million free thank-you meals and has helped Departments and Chapters raise almost \$9 million to support their service programs.

So, how do the Chapter and the restaurant prepare for a successful event?

"As [the time] gets closer, we have a sit-down meeting and throw around some ideas," Macfarland said. "Then we come up with a plan we can all agree upon."

"Working with [the restaurant] is great," Unger said. "The manager is a good guy, and we have a great relationship."



From left: Golden Corral Manager May Connor, Maryland Chapter 14 Treasurer Howard Williams, Chapter 14 Sergeant-at-Arms Danny Brown, Chapter 14 Sr. Vice Commander Doug Flannigan (standing) and Golden Corral Manager Richard Macfarland. The money collected will be used locally to assist and support injured and ill veterans.

Macfarland said that Chapter members "make it so much easier for us. They talk to the customers and explain all about the [fundraising] program."

In 2012, Chapter 14 raised about \$3,000 to support its service and volunteer programs. Among the many ways the Chapter uses those funds is to purchase equipment for the VA's outpatient clinics in Hagerstown and Cumberland, Md. The Chapter also has donated funds to help complete a women veterans domiciliary at the VA medical center in Martinsburg, W.Va., and to support activities for all hospitalized veterans.

Of course, Golden Corral's Military Appreciation Monday events often have unexpected moments.

Mike Welborn, Commander of Chapter 33 in Clanton, Ala., recounted one heartwarming moment. "I was working the table at the restaurant and a little girl came up. She stood there twisting and turning like all little shy girls do, without saying a word. All of a sudden, she came

2013 National Totals

433,500 meals served **\$1,409,400** raised

2013 Top Fundraisers

Restaurant #741 Orem, Utah **\$30,138** Restaurant #550 Midwest City, Okla. **\$25,016**



A DAV member in Greenville, N.C., thanks an active-duty soldier for his service and tells him about Camp Corral opportunities for the children of active military and disabled veterans.

up to me and Phil Burnette and gave us the biggest hug. We gave the little girl a flag, and she ran back to her table.

“This was the single moment of the entire two weeks that will stand out in my mind. It has touched me in a way that I will remember for the rest of my life, and it is a memory that I will cherish for eternity,” Welborn said.

The Department of North Carolina touted a system of mutual support, which helps their efforts with Golden Corral’s fundraising for DAV every year.

“I think it’s our consistent relationship with the managers at the stores,” said Cleveland Bryant Jr., Department of North Carolina Commander. “We have a relationship with them year round with not only the managers but the employees, waiters and cooks. It’s not a one-time thing in building a relationship with them.”

Commander Bryant said DAV members are committed to making military appreciation something that goes beyond any one event.

National Adjutant Marc Burgess, center, stopped by the Midwest City, Oklahoma Golden Corral (#550) to thank the management team and volunteers staffing Military Appreciation Monday there.

“We’ll go (to the restaurants) on other random days and we do things like pick veterans up from nursing homes, pay the full price of their meals and then bring them back,” he said. “I know of a few Chapters that do that every month, and we have 61 Chapters in North Carolina.”

The Department of North Carolina also reciprocates by raising funds for Golden Corral’s Camp Corral program, which sends the children of injured and fallen military heroes to a one-week outdoor summer camp. “So they are more than willing to help us when Military Appreciation Day comes around,” said Commander Bryant.

The mutual support has been extraordinary.

“We had one Golden Corral here raise \$18,000,” Commander Bryant said. “I think that’s just great.”

“In addition to raising funds, Military Appreciation Monday is a good opportunity for the Chapter to connect veterans with our free services and opportunities to serve,” said National Adjutant Marc Burgess. “Our partnership with Golden Corral is a real success story of acknowledging the men and women who served with thank-you meals and providing funds to support Department and Chapter service programs.” ■



DAV Goes to Harvard

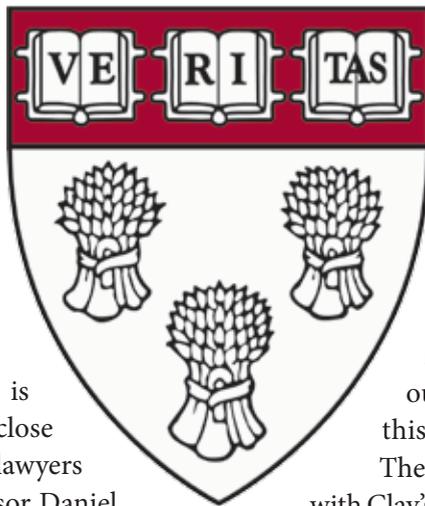
Harvard Law School, the legendary institution in Cambridge, Mass., has initiated a veterans law clinic to provide assistance to needy veterans in the school's geographic region. Through its close association with the law firm of Chisholm, Chisholm & Kilpatrick, LTD of Providence, R.I., DAV has had a number of opportunities to make its presence felt at Harvard.

"Much of the work at the clinic is performed by law students under the close supervision of faculty, as well as the lawyers from CCK," explained Harvard professor Daniel Nagin, who runs the program. "We believe that this gives the law students a valuable hands-on educational experience, while at the same time making them aware of the tremendous need that veterans, especially disabled veterans, have for various kinds of assistance. We are well aware of DAV's nationwide programs to assist disabled veterans and their families, and Harvard is proud to join the army of advocates—lawyers and non-lawyers alike—devoting themselves to this important cause."

In September, DAV General Counsel Christopher Clay addressed the veteran law students on the first night of the new semester, reminding them that DAV National Service Officers have been the backbone of the VA representation system for decades and will continue to be so far into the future. "We at DAV claim to represent veterans better than anyone else, and our results prove it," Clay told the students.

Clay reported that security at the Harvard clinical buildings was quite tight, in order to protect the client records that are kept there. He feared he wouldn't be able to make it to the classroom in time for his lecture. Clay quipped, "I guess this is what they mean when they say that it's hard to get into Harvard Law School."

National Adjutant Marc Burgess praised the Harvard program for providing a number of services to veterans that are outside the DAV's area of focus. "I commend



Harvard for realizing that veterans need help with matters such as estate planning, that traditionally fall outside the scope of DAV's programs. I am also impressed that an institution of this caliber is open and welcoming to our organization, which has been the leader in non-lawyer advocacy for veterans for so many years. I am especially grateful to our friends at CCK for helping us forge this alliance."

The relationship with Harvard did not end with Clay's lecture. In October, DAV was again represented as the Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims (CAVC) held oral arguments at Harvard in a case that came from our Board of Veterans' Appeals office. Student advocates argued on behalf of the appellant, and the court ruled in favor of the veteran. DAV Washington Executive Director Garry Augustine noted, "The students were mentored by CCK lawyer Zachary Stolz, who received his training from DAV. Of course they were good."

Finally, in November, the DAV Charitable Service Trust provided funding for Harvard Law Clinic to

DAV National Service Officers have been the **backbone** of the VA representation system for decades and will continue to be so far into the future.

Chris Clay, DAV General Counsel



engage a "DAV Fellow," a full-time public interest lawyer who will expand the services of the clinic even further. CST Chairman Richard Marbes stated that the Trust "helps veterans where it finds them and is particularly proud to be associated with this fine program. The union of DAV and Harvard Law School is truly a marriage of the best with the best, and we thank CCK for being the matchmaker." ■

DAV's Message Goes Skyward

"Wings Over Houston"



Members of DAV's flight crew regularly communicate DAV's message of service to veterans and their families through the media at their events. A legacy B-25 bomber helps draw the media and the public to DAV's aircraft and displays.



Local Chapters often volunteer to assist the DAV flight crew when our legacy bomber arrives at the event. DAV Chapter 9 Houston assisted DAV's aircrew during this year's final event.

By Steve Wilson

The DAV Air Show Team wrapped up the 2013 season Oct. 26 and 27 with "Wings Over Houston." This year, the DAV-sponsored vintage B-25 Mitchell Bombers *Panchito* and *Special Delivery* performed for more than 1.3 million people at venues nationwide, bringing DAV's message of service to veterans and their families.

Through the program, DAV was featured in a flyover at the 138th Preakness Stakes horse race in Baltimore and took center stage at the Experimental Aircraft Association's Air Venture, held in Oshkosh, Wisc. As the largest air show in the country, it boasted a record 500,000 attendees this year. DAV sponsored a concert featuring Gary Sinise and the Lt. Dan Band, and past National Commander Larry Polzin led the veterans' parade.

Budget cuts caused many events to be cancelled on military installations, so DAV's outreach initiative was more in demand than ever before.

"Through this program, DAV becomes an experience at patriotic events," said Barry Jesinoski, National Headquarters Executive Director. "Airshow patrons are able to connect with DAV and become aware of our free professional services and volunteer opportunities." ■



Learn More Online

For updated information, visit www.dav.org or follow us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/the.dav.

DAV National Convention Returns to

Las Vegas



Bally's Hotel and Casino is in the middle of everything the City of Lights has to offer.

The 93rd National Convention takes members back to the ever-popular Las Vegas strip for our yearly assembly for veterans advocacy and service camaraderie. The annual meeting of DAV's national body is slated for Aug. 9–12 at Bally's Las Vegas Hotel and Casino.

As always, this event gives DAV and Auxiliary members the chance to address the needs of injured and ill veterans and their families and survivors. It serves as one of the premiere opportunities to be an active part of DAV and to help steer the legislative direction of this great organization.

“Convention attendees will hear directly from subject-matter experts on the most pressing issues our community faces today,” said National Adjutant Marc Burgess. “If you want to be part of the conversation and the solution, this is the place to do it.”

During the convention, national officers will be elected, and national leadership will brief members on the organization's progress throughout the past year.

Family and guests are welcome to attend with members and enjoy nearby attractions. And while there is a great deal of DAV business to attend to during the day, after hours, you can enjoy all Las Vegas has to offer.

There are a limited number of reduced-rate rooms

available before and after convention, so it is advised that you make travel plans early to secure your reservation.

To make hotel reservations, call 800-634-3434. Be sure to tell the booking agent that you are attending the DAV National Convention to receive the special rate of \$112 single/double per night. More information can be found online at www.dav.org/events. ■

Travel Assistance

The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) can facilitate the screening of injured or wounded veterans. Those requesting assistance will have their travel information and type of assistance required provided to the departure and arrival U.S. airports to ensure they will have access to assistance, including passenger support specialists, to guide and help them through the screening process. Veterans who require assistance (or their care coordinators) should contact TSA Cares with details of the itinerary once flight arrangements are made with the airline. Call TSA Cares toll-free at 855-787-2227 weekdays from 8 a.m. to 11 p.m. and weekends and holidays from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. (Eastern time) for more information.



Historic Hall to Host DAV Commander's Testimonial

One of the most beautiful and most historic locations in the city where DAV was born will be the site of a testimonial honoring the leadership of National Commander Joseph Johnston.

The event will be held in the Hall of Mirrors at the Hilton Cincinnati Netherland Plaza, Saturday, April 12, beginning with cocktails at 6 p.m. and followed by dinner at 7 p.m.

This stunning hall is modeled after the world-famous Palace of Versailles in France. Like the rest of the Netherland Plaza, it is filled with artistic masterworks.

The cost is \$50, with checks made out and mailed to the DAV Department of Ohio, P.O. Box 15099,

Columbus, OH 43215-0099, no later than March 10. Please indicate a meal choice of New York strip steak or roasted salmon. For additional information, please call Sherry Williamson at 614-221-3582.

Room reservations, \$149 plus tax for a single or double, should be made directly with the Netherland Plaza. Call 800-445-8667 and provide Code DCT to get the special rate.

The hotel is located in the heart of downtown Cincinnati at 35 W. Fifth St. Arrangements are being made for tours of DAV National Headquarters, located a little less than eight miles south of Cincinnati, in Cold Spring, Ky., on Friday, April 11. ■

Auxiliary National Commander to be Honored at Testimonial

■ A testimonial dinner to honor Auxiliary National Commander Susan K. Miller will be held at the Double Tree by Hilton Hotel in Denver April 5. The hotel address is 3203 Quebec St.

The event begins at 6 p.m. with a cash bar reception, followed by dinner at 7 p.m. Menu choices include slow-roasted prime rib au jus, herb-crusted Atlantic salmon or vegetable ratatouille. Cost of the dinner is \$50. Checks should be made out to Susan Miller and mailed to Olive Tomlin, 31164 State Highway 183, Las Animas, CO

81054. Cutoff date for dinner reservations is March 31.

For attendees who choose to stay over, a special hotel room rate, \$89 plus tax for a single or double, is available but must be booked by March 6. To make reservations online, go to http://doubletree.hilton.com/en/dt/groups/personalized/R/RLDV-DT-DAA-20140405/index.jhtml?WT.mc_id=POG or by phone at 303-321-3333. The group code is DAA.



Service-Connected Disability Compensation

data shown as monthly rates

Basic Compensation Rates		
Disability Rating	2013	2014
10%	\$ 129	\$ 130.94
20%	255	258.83
30%	395	400.93
40%	569	577.54
50%	810	822.15
60%	1,026	1,041.39
70%	1,293	1,312.40
80%	1,503	1,525.55
90%	1,689	1,714.34
100%	2,816	2,858.24

Special Monthly Compensation Rates		
	2013	2014
K	\$ 100	\$ 101.50
L	3,504	3,556.56
M	3,867	3,925.01
N	4,399	4,464.99
O or P	4,917	4,990.76
R1	7,026	7,131.40
R2	8,059	8,179.89
S	3,152	3,199.28
Clothing Allowance	753	763.13

Dependency and Indemnity Compensation		
Veteran's Pay Grade	2013	2014*
E-1 thru E-6	\$1,215	\$1,233.23
E-7	1,257	1,275.86
E-8	1,327	1,346.91
E-9	1,384	1,404.76
W-1	1,283	1,302.25
W-2	1,334	1,354.01
W-3	1,373	1,393.60
W-4	1,453	1,474.80
O-1	1,283	1,302.25
O-2	1,327	1,346.91
O-3	1,418	1,439.27
O-4	1,503	1,525.55
O-5	1,654	1,678.81
O-6	1,865	1,892.98
O-7	2,013	2,043.20
O-8	2,211	2,244.17
O-9	2,365	2,400.48
O-10	2,594	2,632.91

COLA Has No Round-down

■ President Obama has signed off on a 1.5 percent cost-of-living increase for VA compensation and pension benefits that, for the first time in years, ends the practice of rounding down payments.

The Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act ties annual increases for veterans benefits to the same Bureau of Labor Statistics consumer price index used to adjust Social Security benefits. For the coming year, the measure would increase benefits in 2014 for almost 4 million veterans and survivors.

*Surviving spouses of veterans who died on or after Jan. 1, 1993, receive \$1,233.23 a month. For a spouse entitled to DIC based on the veteran's death prior to Jan. 1, 1993, the amount paid is based on the veteran's military pay grade.

Add \$261.87 a month to the basic rate if the deceased veteran had been entitled to receive 100% service-connected compensation for at least eight years immediately preceding death and the surviving spouse was married to the veteran for those same eight years.

Additionally, the monthly allowance rate for each dependent child under age 18 is \$305.52.



VA Extends Adaptive Auto Grants

■ The VA has adopted a final rule that extends financial assistance and grants for severely burned veterans to purchase adaptive automobiles. The rule, which became effective Oct. 21, applies to claims received by the VA on or after Oct. 1, 2011, and includes any claims pending before that date. Previously, VA regulations only provided automobile allowances and adaptive equipment grants to veterans with complete loss or loss of use of extremities or permanent vision impairment of both eyes.

By extending benefits that empower them to lead high-quality and fulfilled lives, this amendment recognizes the difficulty that these veterans experience on the road to recovery.

“We strive to ensure veterans are receiving the care and benefits they have earned,” said National Service Director Jim Marszalek. “We are pleased any time benefits for injured and ill veterans are enhanced.”

DAV assisted with 300,000 claims in 2012, and National Service Officers are standing by to assist veterans with new claims related to this rule.

“Our NSOs are well-versed in the process and stay current on new rules and legislation to ensure the veteran’s claim encompasses all earned benefits,” said Washington Headquarters Executive Director Garry Augustine.

 If you believe you are eligible for financial assistance under this rule, visit www.dav.org/veterans/find-your-local-office to locate your National Service Office.

VA Dental Insurance Pilot Implemented

■ The Department of Veterans Affairs has implemented a comprehensive national dental insurance program for enrolled veterans and Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs beneficiaries. This three-year pilot project is the first national dental insurance program authorized by the U.S. government for eligible VA beneficiaries.

Those eligible for the VA Dental Insurance Program (VADIP) can purchase a policy through Delta Dental and MetLife at a reduced cost. Purchasing a dental plan does not affect veterans’ eligibility for VA dental services and treatment.

Covered services include diagnostic, preventive, surgical, emergency and endodontic/restorative treatment. Delta Dental and MetLife are offering multiple plans. Each participant pays a fixed monthly premium for coverage and any co-payments required.

Dependents of veterans, except those eligible under CHAMPVA, are not authorized to participate in the program. Those individuals may be eligible for separate dental insurance coverage offered by the carriers.

For more information about VADIP and to verify your eligibility, visit www.va.gov/healthbenefits or call 877-222-VETS (8387).

Veterans Provide Mental Health Counseling



■ Veterans who have successfully dealt with their own mental health recovery are drawing upon their experiences to help other veterans being treated by the VA.

Since August 2012, 815 of those veterans have been hired as part of the VA’s goal of improving access to mental health care by hiring thousands of additional mental health professionals. Peer specialists and peer support apprentices are a unique cadre of people joining the VA’s mental health care teams. Peer specialists are trained and certified, while peer support apprentices are undergoing training and certification to become peer specialists.

 To learn more about current VA Peer-to-Peer job opportunities, visit www.vacareers.va.gov/peer-to-peer. Veterans and their families interested in learning more about the VA’s mental health services can go to www.mentalhealth.va.gov.

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



Try Something New

With the ushering in of the New Year, most of us get very excited with the opportunity of experiencing something new; a start-over or new look with different eyes. If you, like me, are tired of dealing with the same old thing over and over, maybe it is time for us to try something new.

We all have little frustrations and difficulties that tend to just ruin our day when they really shouldn't have that kind of power.

I came across a story years ago that has helped me in this area, and I want to share it with you to address this issue.

Year after year, an old farmer planted and plowed around a large rock in his field. His experience with rocks over time had taught him it would be a most difficult obstacle to remove. Even after breaking several plowshares and a cultivator against the stone, he continued to work around it. He grew rather accustomed to this enemy in the field.

One day, after losing yet another plowshare to the rock, he remembered all the problems it had caused him through the years. That's when he finally decided to take action. Putting a crowbar under the stone, he discovered to his surprise that the "foreboding rock" was only a few inches thick and could easily be broken with a sledgehammer.

Hauling the crushed pieces away, he smiled sadly as he reflected on all the

trouble the rock had given him and how he could have gotten rid of it years ago. His life's labor was much easier once the rock was removed.

Like the farmer in the story, when we have stones of frustration rearing their ugly heads in our day-to-day lives, and we start to give in to anger, pride, hurt and revenge, may we use the crowbar of our courage to wedge underneath our debilitating weaknesses to remember to face our own faults and to look past grudges.

We know that the solutions are not normally very easy to determine, and it can be more difficult to remove those rocks when we have let them become embedded. However, it is equally frustrating and difficult to only work around them. Our lives can be much easier and have much more joy and happiness, when we purge our souls of all these destructive stones to which we tend to cling.

So, to all our DAV members and family: May we start this year with a new sense of strength to overcome the obstacles that may get in our path and create the life of peace and joy we desire.

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 (*Isaiah 40:31*).

Until next time, happy New Year, may God bless you and may God continue to bless our great nation. SEMPER FI.

DAV Saluted at Hollywood Christmas Parade



National Commander Joseph Johnston and his wife, Vicki Linn, a DAV Auxiliary life member, greet the crowd at the 82nd Annual Hollywood Christmas Parade, which saluted DAV.

EARL GIBSON/HCP

By Charity Edgar

Tinsel Town lit up Dec. 1 during the 82nd Hollywood Christmas Parade saluting DAV. Larger-than-life balloons, celebrities and plenty of holiday cheer filled Los Angeles' famous streets at this time-honored tradition.

The second man to set foot on the moon, retired Air Force aviator Buzz Aldrin, served as the grand marshal for this year's parade and praised fellow veterans for their unwavering commitment to service. "CHiPs" actor Erik "Ponch" Estrada and television travel expert Laura McKenzie hosted the event, which aired frequently in December on the Hallmark Channel, Hallmark Movie Channel, American Forces Network and other syndicated networks across the country, reaching millions of viewers.

One of the balloons was an impressive American flag, secured by DAV volunteers and accompanied by Department of California Commander Richard



Smiling on the red carpet, Board of Directors Chairman Larry Polzin, Commander Johnston, 2nd Jr. Vice Commander David Riley, National Adjutant Marc Burgess, Department of California Adjutant Dan Contreras and Commander Richard Valdez, are recognized by Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti, actor Erik Estrada and television travel expert Laura McKenzie. (Kari Hendler/HCP)

Valdez and Adjutant Daniel Contreras and National Adjutant Marc Burgess. They had to quickly make their way over to the start of the two-mile parade route after mingling on the red carpet with celebrities such as American Idol contestants Ace Young and Diana DeGarmo, actresses Judi Evans and Melissa Joan Hart and beloved "Leave it to Beaver" star Jerry Mathers. In between big smiles for dozens of photographers, DAV representatives including National Commander Joe Johnston, National Adjutant Marc Burgess, Second Junior Vice Commander David Riley and Board of



Above, a Man of Steel balloon honors real life hero Jarod “Superman” Behee at the Hollywood Christmas Parade. Right, Behee poses with actor Dean Cain who portrayed the superhero on television. Cain insists Behee is a real “Superman.” (James Thompson/HCP)

Directors Chairman Larry Polzin, accepted an award of appreciation from Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti.

The parade also boasted special guest hosts, including talk show personality, Marine Corps and Navy veteran Montel Williams. Williams conducted candid interviews with several DAV leaders, including Johnston, who took the opportunity to share DAV’s message of hope and service.

“Our nation’s heroes stood up for us, so it is only appropriate to honor them this holiday season,” said Johnston. “The Hollywood Christmas Parade showcases the many ways DAV gives back to veterans and how people can get involved and make a difference.”

Formerly known as Clark Kent on television, guest co-host Dean Cain insisted veterans were the true superheroes. “DAV supports disabled American veterans in their efforts to lead high quality lives,” said Cain. “Now it’s safe to say that our country would not be the same without their sacrifice.”

The highlight for several local DAV members in attendance was talking to some of the Marines who were representing Toys for Tots, also honored at this year’s event, and thanking them for their service.

Despite all the glitz, glamour and celebrity of Hollywood, it was a real “Superman” who stole the show. Following close behind vans from DAV’s Transportation

Network, a smiling, young man walked with the superhero balloon. But it wasn’t Dean Cain or Clark Kent. It was Army veteran Jarod Behee, a life member and past National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic DAV Freedom Award recipient.

“DAV supports disabled American veterans in their efforts to lead high quality lives. Now it’s safe to say that our country would not be the same without their sacrifice.”
—Dean Cain

In 2005, Behee, then a 27-year-old staff sergeant, was serving his second deployment in Iraq—a tour he had volunteered for—when he was shot in the head by a sniper. Behee was not expected to live, let alone relearn to walk and

talk, but “Superman,” as friends called him before the day that changed his life, lives up to his namesake daily, defying expectations set by doctors day after day.

“Heroes like Jarod sacrifice in our defense,” said Burgess. “We must ensure that the brave men and women who served their country are not facing the road to recovery alone.”

It is appropriate that Behee, adorned with the red cape walked—a task once thought to be impossible—with the Superman balloon. Cheers along the parade route erupted as the crowd heard Behee’s story. Band Daughtry appropriately played “Waiting for Superman” and dedicated the song to DAV.

The audience clamored to see the stars at the Hollywood Christmas Parade, and Behee and all the other veterans in attendance gave them just that. ■



More Than a Meal...

Golden Corral of Fort Wright, Ky., hosted their Military Appreciation Monday with assistance from Northern Kentucky Chapter 19. Past National Commander Bobby Barerra spent the evening speaking with veterans at the event.

Generating a Buzz...

During Military Appreciation Monday at the Greenville, N.C., Golden Corral, the Bee Keepers of Eastern North Carolina presented members of Chapter 37, Pitt County, with a check for \$655.



Still Serving...

Retired National Headquarters Executive Director Richard Patterson pitches in for the Forget-Me-Not drive in Fairhope, Ala.

Share Your DAV News!

Send your Chapter or Department news to feedback@dav.org.

The preferred format for photos is JPEG, 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.





New Wheels...
Charitable Service Trust Chairman Richard Marbes, second from left, is joined by veterans who received free Segway scooters from Segs4Vets. A Charitable Service Trust grant supports the program.

DAV Heads Sponsored Hunt for Veterans...

The Department of Minnesota partnered with Midwest Outdoors Unlimited for the fifth consecutive year to sponsor a pheasant hunt for disabled veterans. The event featured 42 disabled hunters, more than 30 volunteers and a dinner after the event. Each participating hunter took home seven pheasants cleaned, frozen and wrapped.



Veterans Day...
National Commander Joseph W. Johnston, center, lays a wreath on behalf of DAV at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C., on Nov. 11. The 2013 Veterans Day Observance at the Wall ceremony commemorated the 20th anniversary of the Vietnam Women's Memorial and honored nurses from the Vietnam War.

All Revved Up...

Members of Hollywood Motorcycle Riders, Bikers of Broward, Vice City Riders of Miami, Palm Beach Knight Motorcycle Riders, Creek Motorcycle Riders, Southern Cruisers, Tropical Beach Bikers, Miami HOG Chapter 694 and independent Military Veteran riders all pitched in to raise \$2,000 to help support DAV service programs.



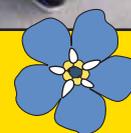
Healing Wall...

National Commander Joseph Johnston visited the Vietnam Travelling Wall exhibit Oct. 12 when it made its stop in Clermont County, Ohio. Commander Johnston delivered remarks at the event and said, "My homecoming from Vietnam was vastly different than my homecoming from the first Gulf War. I believe we have learned it is absolutely the right thing to do to welcome home the service man or, indeed these days, woman and help them transition into civilian life."



Forget-Me-Not Drive...

National 3rd Jr. Vice Commander Delphine Metcalf-Foster gives a Forget-Me-Not to 4-year-old Antonio Cortez as World War II veteran Joe Silva looks on.



Flag Bearer...

DAV Auxiliary member Juanita Lancaster, left, carried the DAV flag at Veterans Day ceremonies at Arlington National Cemetery and met with Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki and his wife during a reception.

From the AUXILIARY NATIONAL COMMANDER SUSAN K. MILLER



United in Service

No one knows more about service than DAV and the DAV Auxiliary. In support of DAV's mission of "Fulfilling Our Promises to the Men and Women Who Served," the DAV Auxiliary's mission is "Making a Difference" in the lives of disabled veterans and their families.

I don't see those as two separate missions, but as one being an extension of the other. Together, we offer services for veterans and their families that address their overall health and well-being, from their physical and emotional health to their financial needs. Working in concert with one another has a far greater impact than acting alone.

That has proven true time and again, especially in fighting for veterans' rights and in supporting programs that benefit injured and ill veterans, as well as their families and survivors. The tremendous impact that our two organizations have through the Transportation Network and the VA Voluntary Service program are just a couple of examples of our joint successes.

The DAV Auxiliary's services through our Americanism, community service, hospital and junior activities bring our organization closer to our local communities.

DAV National Commander Joe Johnston and I believe strongly in being "United in Service." We agree that we must act in harmony with each other if we are to continue to fulfill our missions.

Throughout my travels for the past five years, I have learned quite a lot about local and state DAV and DAV Auxiliaries working together.

I know that in the legislative arena, the Auxiliary has always been very good at writing, calling, emailing and talking to our elected officials. DAV made it very easy for us to unite with them through the Commander's Action Network. This computerized service is a wonderful way to contact your elected officials with just a click of the mouse.

On the national level, DAV is also helping the Auxiliary with its membership efforts. A huge membership mailing drive went out in November. And every new member that joins is one more than we had before.

It is my hope that this year DAV and the DAV Auxiliary, on all levels, can reach new heights in meeting the needs of those we serve. And that together, we will be ready and willing to be of service, no matter what, because we are "United in Service."

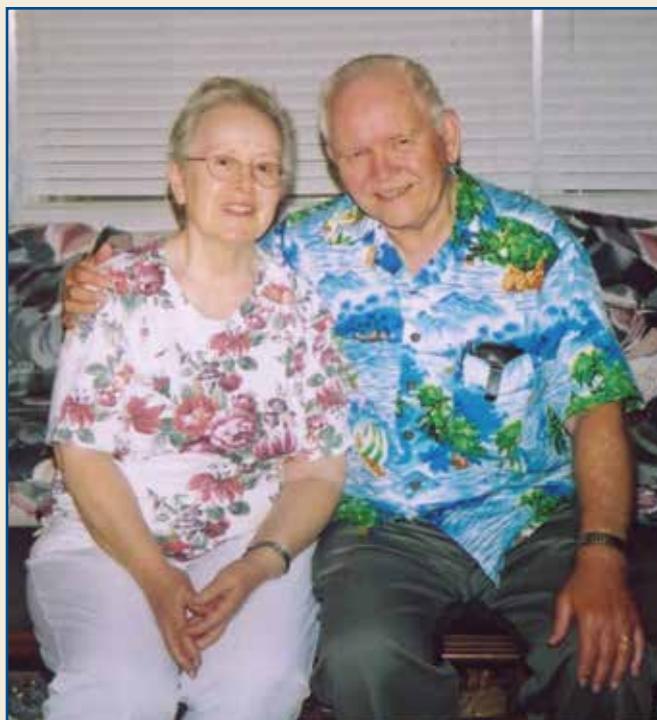
Income You Can Depend On

Navy veteran supports his retirement income through a gift to DAV

Long before Roger W. Rae reached out to offer support to DAV, he spent decades serving his country. The 21-year Navy veteran served on board a Gearing-class destroyer, the USS *Perry* (DD-844), in 1952 and went on to serve on five additional “tin cans” before transitioning to land duties that included an assignment at the Pentagon.

Rae retired in 1972, but the decades he served on those destroyers resulted in hearing loss. Ever the man of service, he enlisted as a teacher for American Sign Language classes, taught Sunday school classes at his church, spent time at the renowned Bill Rice Ranch deaf Christian ministry camp and leads classes at a local recreation center.

Rae currently serves DAV as Chaplain for Chapter 24 in Harrisonburg, Va., a natural fit combining his specialty in deaf ministry with his experience at sea. Volunteering with his local Chapter is not the only way he has made a difference for DAV. Upon the death of his brother-in-law, an Army veteran from World War II, Rae decided to establish a Charitable Gift Annuity in his memory. DAV provided him with a rate based on his age, and he now receives a fixed, monthly payment—a



Roger Rae married Jeanne Burleigh in 1953, and the couple recently celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary. Together they have four children, seven grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. Mr. and Mrs. Rae are currently enjoying their retirement in Virginia.

majority of which is tax-free income—for the remainder of his life, all the while providing for fellow ill and injured veterans. ■

Support DAV with a Gift Annuity

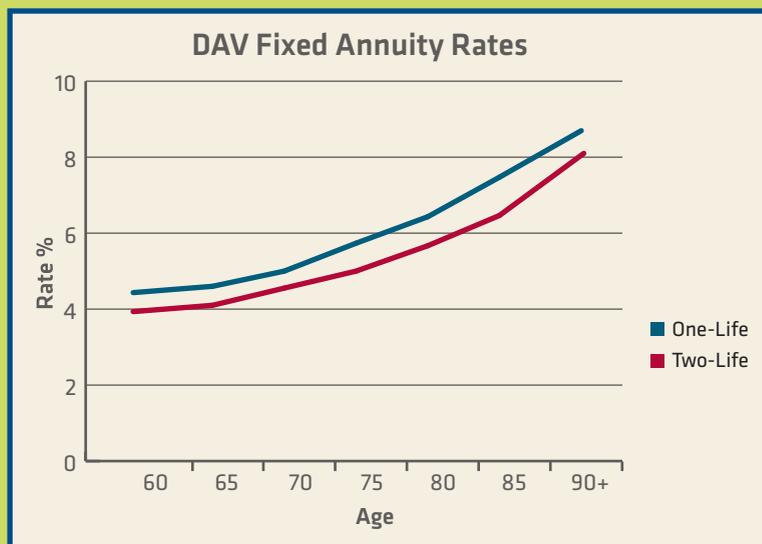
- Minimum age: 60
- Minimum gift: \$10,000
- Great rates
- Fixed, regular payments
- Tax deductions

DAV



PROTECTING THOSE WHO SERVED

Disabled American Veterans
P.O. Box 14301
Cincinnati, OH 45250
Phone: 800-216-9802, ext.1
Email: giftplanning@dav.org
Web: www.dav.giftplans.org
Tax I.D. Number: 31-0263158





Veteran of the Year...

Ruth Livingston, an Army and Navy veteran and Oklahoma Auxiliary Treasurer, was honored at Oklahoma City's 2nd Annual Veterans Appreciation Day program as Veteran of the Year. Livingston volunteers at the veteran's center twice a week and teaches therapeutic activities such as ceramics and leatherworking. Once a week, she volunteers with Narcotics Anonymous, where she shares her personal story of overcoming addictions.

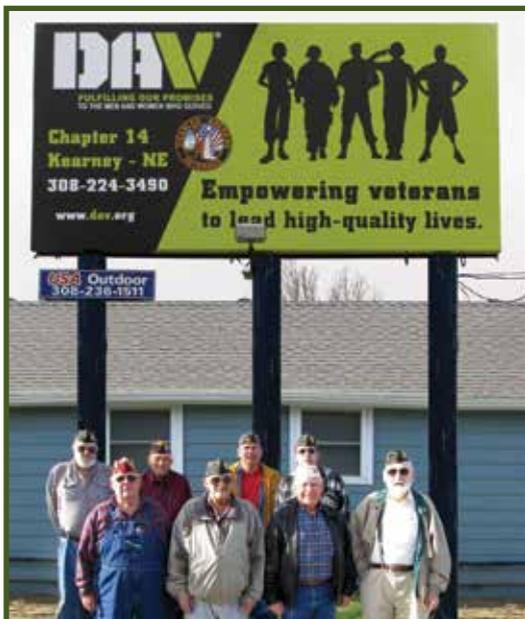


Great American Hero...

The Department of District of Columbia was proud to have had National 1st Jr. Vice Commander Moses A. McIntosh Jr. present to award World War II Army veteran Julius Hawkins Sr. with a DAV coin. Hawkins was surprised to be recognized for doing his duty for his country during a time of war. He has been a member of DAV since the 1970s and has served as Department Commander and is still an active member in good health of Chapter 3.

Support and Camaraderie...

Past National Commander Bobby Barrera, left, visits with a veteran at the VA hospital in Cincinnati.



A Powerful Message...

Members of Chapter 14 in Kearney, Neb., are proud of their new billboard, which was donated in part by USA Outdoors. The 12' x 24' canvas was purchased by Chapter 14 Commander and Nebraska Jr. Vice Commander Chuck Ogle and his daughter Holly Ogle, an Auxiliary member. USA Outdoors, where Holly Ogle is employed, donated the space and says that as long as there is a blank billboard available, DAV is welcome to place this canvas on it. "The goal is to get DAV out into the public," said Commander Ogle.

Past National Commander Stevenson Passes

■ Past National Commander Cecil W. Stevenson died Nov. 2 at the Craighead County Nursing Center in Jonesboro, Ark. He was 88.

Stevenson joined DAV in 1948, shortly after his honorable discharge from the U.S. Navy. Before taking the reins as National Commander in 1970, Stevenson served in various capacities locally, including Chapter Commander and Adjutant. He was twice elected as Commander for the Department of Arkansas and was a National Executive Committeeman. Stevenson was also a member of the National Finance Committee for two years, where he served as Chairman.

“After nobly serving his country, Cecil dedicated his life to empowering our nation’s ill and injured heroes,” said National Commander Joseph W. Johnston. “His devotion to service inspires me, as it has past Commanders, and strengthens the resolve to fulfill our promises to the men and women who served.”

Stevenson enlisted during World War II, and served with distinction as a gunner’s mate 3rd class. While he was underway in the Pacific, he incurred severe powder burns

to his face and eyes, resulting in visual impairment.

Following his service in the Navy, Stevenson returned to his native Jonesboro and worked for the U.S. Postal Service as a rural letter carrier. Additionally, he was an accomplished beekeeper and cattleman. He enjoyed the outdoors and was often seen gardening, fishing and riding his tractor.

Stevenson is survived by his wife of 67 years, Lillian; one son; two daughters; a sister; four grandchildren and six great-grandchildren. He was buried at Old Enterprise Cemetery in Craighead County.

“Cecil served generations of his fellow veterans at the Chapter, Department and National levels, and we salute him for his decades of selfless commitment,” said National Adjutant Marc Burgess. “His exemplary service lives on through his legacy of leadership.”



Stevenson

Retired Assistant National Adjutant for Financial Management Passes

■ Combat-injured Marine Corps veteran Thomas G. Dehne, a native of Newport, Ky., first joined DAV’s national staff when he was hired as comptroller in 1963. He retired in 1989. In 1971, he was appointed Assistant National Adjutant by Then-National Adjutant Dale Adams. In addition to Dehne’s service within the organization, President Ronald Reagan appointed him as DAV’s representative to the Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board in 1987.



Dehne

“Tom was a vital cog in advancing the programs, which even today provide the financial and social underpinnings for disabled veterans and their families,” said Fred Bristol, who preceded Dehne as Assistant National Adjutant. “Tom lent his accounting expertise to every area of administrative affairs at National Headquarters.”

Dehne was awarded two Purple Hearts for serious wounds in the Korean War where he lost the use of a leg. Following military service, he earned his bachelor’s degree from Xavier University in 1956.

“Tom brought a tremendous amount of experience to

DAV and was a very thoughtful and prudent steward of DAV’s resources,” said Arthur Wilson, retired National Adjutant. “He was committed to DAV’s mission and a careful defender of our reputation. Though he retired nearly 25 years ago, he will long be remembered for his contributions and service.”

Dehne and his wife Ruth spent the last years of their marriage together in Naples, Fla. A devoted family man, Dehne is survived by six children, 15 grandchildren, a sister, sister-in-law and numerous nieces and nephews.

“Tom was a recognized and respected leader who managed the financial health of DAV with prudence and thoughtfulness. He represented his fellow veterans with dignity and class,” said National Adjutant Marc Burgess. “Tom is remembered and revered still today at DAV, these many years after his retirement. His contributions to our organization are carried forward in our careful stewardship and the invaluable services we provide to the men and women who have made our American way of life possible.”

REUNIONS

ARMY

121ST AVIATION COMPANY (AML), 121ST ASSAULT HELICOPTER CO., 93RD TRANSPORTATION CO., 80TH TRANS. DET. (AVN. MAINT.) June 12–15, 2014, Branson, MO, Contact: John Schmied, Phone: 352-633-0541, Email: johndschmied@yahoo.com.

1ST BATTALION 83RD ARTILLERY (VIETNAM 1966–1971) October 12–15, 2014, Branson, MO, Contact: Bill Taggart, Phone: 856-228-5614, Email: artillery_83rd@yahoo.com, Website: home.comcast.net/~83rd_artillery/.

62D - A/502D - 175TH ASSAULT HELICOPTER COMPANIES September 18–22, 2014, Washington, DC, Contact: Tom Anderson, Email: teander@cox.net, Website: www.vinhlongoutlaws.com.

73RD TANK BATTALION April 22–26, 2014, Las Vegas, NV, Contact: Bob Jones, Phone: 816-836-0969, Email: bobjones73rdbn@yahoo.com.

765TH SECURITY PLATOON May 12–14, 2014, Galena, IL, Contact: Alan K. Abraham, Phone: 608-274-3516, Email: abraham.alank@gmail.com.

CHEMICAL CORPS SOLDIERS (VIETNAM) June 24–27, 2014, Fort Leonard Wood, MO, Contact: John Thiel, Phone: 563-564-5809, Email: drjthiel@gmail.com.

FLATIRON AIR AMBULANCE/CRASH RESCUE April 25–27, 2014, Fort Rucker, AL, Contact: Warren R. Blake, Phone: 978-994-7935, Email: flatironcrs@juno.com.

L COMPANY, 21ST INFANTRY REGIMENT, 24TH INFANTRY DIVISION April 30–May 4, 2014, Savannah, GA, Contact: George Vlasic, Phone: 910-287-5618, Email: geonanvlasic@atmc.net.

NAVY

USS CONY (DD/DDE-508) May 28–June 1, 2014, Jacksonville, FL, Contact: Ken Cox, Phone: 863-307-3187, Email: kcox@tampabay.rr.com.

USS GEORGE K. MACKENZIE (DD-836) September 4–7, 2014, San Diego, CA, Contact: Stan Baggett, Phone: 619-426-5138, Email: s1bag66691@cox.net.

USS HOUSTON (CL-81) October 20–25, 2014, Norfolk, VA, Contact: Donna Rogers, Phone: 717-792-9113, Email: dlr7110@yahoo.com.

USS KEMPER COUNTY (LST-854) May 1–4, 2014, San Antonio, TX, Contact: Jim Simonson, Phone: 320-253-2167, Email: jasimonson@stcloudstate.edu.

USS SPROSTON (DD/DDE-577) September 10–14, 2014, Baltimore, MD, Contact: Michael Bereskin, Phone: 415-239-0104, Email: Sproston@sbcglobal.net, Website: www.sproston.com.

USS TARAWA (CV-40 & LHA-1) April 24–27, 2014, Branson, MO, Contact: Ken Underdown or Walter Tothoro, Phone: 215-547-0245/765-362-6937, Email: walsue@accelplus.net.

USS TAYLOR (DD/DDE-468) September 21–25, 2014, Charleston, SC, Contact: James G. O'Neill, Phone: 804-212-8911, Email: oneillfalm@aol.com.

USS WALDRON (DD-699) October 22–26, 2014, Tampa, FL, Contact: Michael Montalbano, Phone: 813-977-9652, Email: mike.montalbano@yahoo.com, Website: www.usswaldron.org.

AIR FORCE

500TH BOMB GROUP (SAIPAN) May 28–June 1, 2014, Wichita, KS, Contact: Ed Lawson, Phone: 716-673-1921, Email: edlawson@netsync.net.

INQUIRIES

- Searching for anyone who served with the 15th Medical Battalion/1st Cavalry Division during August–December 1967, and anyone with the HHC 15th Admin Co. Please contact Thomas Claycomb at Email: tclaycomb@bellsouth.net.
- Searching for Albert Owl or anyone serving at Camp Mercer in the 1960s. Please contact Marie Gibson, P.O. Box 557, Riddle, OR 97469, Phone: 541-670-7779, Email: meordale@tymewyse.com.



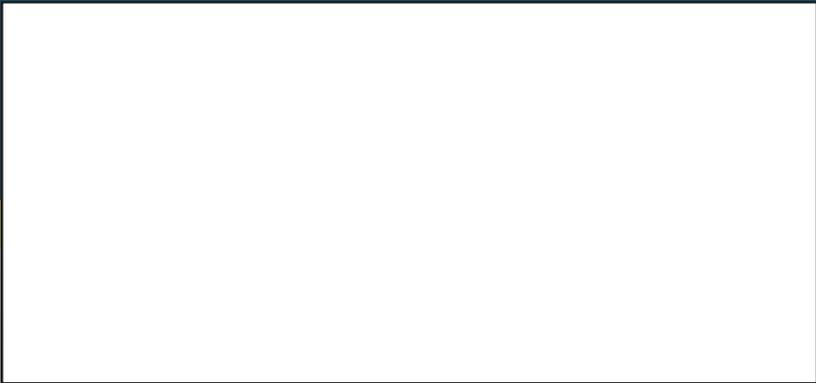
Honoring a Fallen Hero...

Department of the District of Columbia Commander Joann Fisher makes a special presentation to the family of 2nd Lt. Emily Jazmin Tatum Perez, a West Point graduate and first African American killed in Iraq. The Military Order of the Purple Heart organization also presented the family with honors.

Disabled American Veterans National Headquarters Unaudited Statement of Financial Position • September 30, 2013

Unrestricted Assets		Unrestricted Liabilities	
Current Assets	\$42,663,657	Current Liabilities	\$136,067,693
Investments, At Market	342,256,682	Total Liabilities	136,067,693
Land, Buildings and Equipment, Net of Depreciation	7,182,378	Unrestricted Net Assets	
Other Assets	608,400	General and Net Assets Designated by the Board of Directors	256,643,424
		Total Unrestricted Net Assets	256,643,424
Total Unrestricted Assets	\$392,711,117	Total Liabilities and Unrestricted Net Assets	\$392,711,117
Life Membership Assets		Life Membership Liabilities	
Current Assets	\$1,084,392	Current Liabilities	\$280,885
Investments, at Market	56,399,825	Reserve for Future Distribution of Life Membership Dues	57,203,332
		Total Life Membership Liabilities and Reserve for Future Distribution of Life Membership Dues	\$57,484,217
Total Life Membership Assets	\$57,484,217		

- Searching for anyone assigned to Avionics Maintenance Squadron at RAF Mildenhall from 1984-1986. Please email mskittyx5@cox.net.
- Searching for anyone in WWII concentration camp. Please contact Donald Herne, 117 Thunderbird, #32A, Scranton, PA 18505, Phone: 570-343-4644.
- Searching for anyone who I served with in the 45th Medical Battalion, assigned to the 12th Evacuation Field Hospital in Cu Chi and supported the 25th Infantry. Please contact Samuel Smith Jr., 4430 W. 17th St., Yuma, AZ 85364, Phone: 928-783-1508 or 928-271-1937.
- Searching for anyone who served aboard the USS Haven (AH-12) for a reunion in April 2014 in Branson, MO. Please contact Chuck Lee at 936-433-0763.
- 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 Email: call7185@yahoo.com.
- Searching for anyone who served with me in C Det 27th Maintenance Battalion, 1st Cavalry Division at LZ Buttons from 1969 to 1970. Please contact A. W. Dolaway, 1355 Legend Oak Drive, Fountain, CO 80817, Email: Arthur.Dolaway@mygait.com; Phone: 719-392-4932 or 719-439-0317.
- Searching for members of the Navy crew of USS Miller located in the Pacific during WWII (all years). Please contact Charles J. Palmer, 15 Patricia Circle, Senath, MO 63876, Phone: 573-738-2903.
- Searching for original members of Charlie Battery 1/13; those Marines who formed up and trained at Camp Horno, CA, in the fall of 1966. Please contact Ron Hoffman, 2548 Manitowoc Road, Green Bay, WI 54311-6570.
- Searching for Paul E. Garner, Guy A. Walker, Martin R. Woods and John Luoma, who served with me during "Northern Hills J.T.F.," Alaska, June 1965. Please contact Felix Carrion, 10784 S. Avenida Esperanza, Yuma, AZ 85367, Phone: 928-342-7070.



NEW for 2014!



Life Member Cap

- Black/Grey
 - Hook & loop closure
 - Low profile
- \$15**



Travel Mug

- Ceramic mug
 - 11 oz.
- \$12**



TEAM DAV long-sleeve tee

- Nike Dri-Fit
 - Light grey
 - Moisture-wicking polyester
 - Sizes: S-4XL
- \$25**



Hooded Sweatshirt

- Black pullover with sublimated lined hood
 - DAV logo on chest and right sleeve
 - Sizes: S-4XL
- \$35**



sleeve detail

SHOP DAVSTORE.ORG