



THE OFFICIAL VOICE OF DAV AND AUXILIARY

MAY | JUNE 2015

MAGAZINE



**Miracles
return to the
mountain**

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Congress for Mid-Winter**

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2015 Mid-Winter Highlights



DAV members rally together near the Capitol in advance of the National Commander's testimony before the House and Senate Veterans' Affairs Committees as part of Operation: Keep the Promise.



DAV National Senior Vice Commander Moses McIntosh (left), 1st Junior Vice Commander David Riley (center) and 2nd Junior Vice Commander Delphine Metcalf-Foster listen as National Commander Ron Hope presents his testimony before Congress.



DAV Department of Georgia Legislative Chairperson Dottie Pridmore highlights critical legislation to a staff member for Sen. David Perdue, on behalf of her fellow veterans.



DAV Auxiliary National Commander LeeAnn Karg (left) sits on the Mid-Winter panel to testify before lawmakers, with Auxiliary National Adjutant Pat Kemper (right) looking on.



VA Secretary Bob McDonald accepts DAV's 2014 Federal Executive of the Year Award for his efforts taking charge of and bringing change to the department following a year of scandal and access issues brought to light.



Army veteran and former "Dancing with the Stars" competitor J.R. Martinez (second from right) listens to Commander Hope's Mid-Winter testimony, along with Past National Commanders (from left) Raymond Dempsey, Bobby Barrera and Rob Reynolds and Deputy Legislative Director Joy Ilem (right).

From the NATIONAL COMMANDER

RON F. HOPE



DAV advocates for caregivers, women veterans

Excerpts from the National Commander's Mid-Winter testimony before Congress

As wartime service-disabled veterans, we have a vested interest in supporting the VA—a system dedicated to meeting our needs. Many DAV members have experienced horrific injuries, including limb loss, paralysis, burns, blindness, brain injury and PTSD. The VA is important to them and all injured and ill veterans.

Despite a difficult year and the many challenges that lie ahead for the VA, VA health care remains a vital resource. In fact, there is no substitute for it.

While we believe the VA can and must address all its administrative and management lapses that led to the access crisis, in our view the core underlying problem has been insufficient resources.

Speaking of resources, last year's Mid-Winter Conference kicked off Operation: Keep the Promise, a campaign to protect veterans benefits with advance appropriations. This year's campaign focuses on issues concerning family caregivers and women veterans.

We recognize and give our unwavering support to the nation's caregivers. These unsung American heroes often sacrifice their own health, employment and other life goals to care for their loved ones. Family caregivers of veterans have been doing this for decades. Our nation owes them assistance so that they can continue fulfilling their vital role.

We know it costs taxpayers less to provide comprehensive caregiver support in the home than to provide nursing home or other institutional care. Therefore, we call on Congress to extend support and services to family caregivers of wounded,

injured and ill veterans of all service periods. Accordingly, we are pleased to support S. 657, Caregivers Expansion and Improvement Act of 2015, introduced by Sen. [Dick] Durbin.

We are also passionate about ensuring that women veterans receive equal benefits and quality health care from the VA, and that they be properly recognized for the honor of their military service and their contributions to our national defense.

Women are an integral part of the military today and face the same dangers in wartime as men, but federal programs and services do not consistently provide the gender-specific health care and support services they need to aid in their transitions home.

DAV's comprehensive report, "Women Veterans: The Long Journey Home," recommends 27 actions needed to improve services to ensure programs are as equally effective for women veterans as they are for men.

We are pleased to support S. 471, the Women Veterans Access to Quality Care Act, introduced by Sens. [Dean] Heller and [Patty] Murray. We look forward to working with both committees to pass this and other critical legislation.

As an organization of wounded, injured and ill wartime veterans, we recognize the importance and value of standing together. I hope every member of these committees stands with us and holds close the sincere promises that have been made to help sick and injured veterans heal from their physical and mental wounds and to live their lives with dignity and respect.

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From the NATIONAL ADJUTANT J. MARC BURGESS



Our duty as patriots

The great American novelist who gifted the world with the iconic adventures of Huckleberry Finn and Tom Sawyer is also known to have briefly served—and deserted—the Confederate Army during the nation's Civil War.

Despite his talent for prose, which left a lasting mark on the landscape of American literature, Twain was long criticized for his decision to flee from his military obligations. At a time when American men waged war against their own brothers, Twain was troubled by the very nature of the conflict...and the purpose for which his beloved Missouri had recruited him into service.

This brief period of service during the Civil War changed the course of Twain's life, as did future wars and periods of military service for future generations.

Twain once wrote about how true patriotism means supporting our country through and through, at all times. But patriotism, he explained, also demands we pay attention and speak up when we see flaws. I believe we must also speak up when we see commendable progress.

One can easily apply this to the Department of Veterans Affairs. We have a duty to ensure the VA is properly serving veterans. We have seen how chronic underfunding and unrealistic expectations have left the department,

and we have to work to make that right.

No system will ever be perfect, and the VA has come under the microscope for every flaw over the past year. It's right and just to admit and discuss these faults plainly and openly so we may work to correct them, but we should not lose sight of the tremendous work the VA does each and every day for the vast majority of veterans.

Some groups have proposed a radical overhaul of VA, with no concrete plans to rebuild a better performing system or guarantees of accountability or enhanced access. While I understand the desire for change, the best way we can speak up and take corrective action is to reinforce our VA system, making it stronger and more efficient for veterans today and in the future.

Veterans deserve a system that makes them the top priority. They deserve care that is coordinated and envelops all aspects of their well-being. Care for the whole veteran is what we're after, and that simply isn't something we can afford to sacrifice.

At its core, the VA has an honorable mission. But people and politics have created roadblocks within the system. As veterans and as patriots, we must work to root out the problems, strengthen the VA and restore it to an institution worthy of the patients it cares for.



Grateful for care

My story is not one of physical injury, but a psychological one. I have been diagnosed with PTSD from my deployment to Iraq as a Navy Corpsman. I am now retired with 26 years of honorable service and receive my PTSD care from the VA. I have nothing negative to say at all about my care in this wonderful system. To my fellow veterans, it is not all negative—there is light, you just have to think positively. **Janet Cooper, Ind.**

Don't go unheard

I take serious concern with our membership being over 1 million strong and only having little “more than 10,000 phone calls and emails in support of Operation: Keep the Promise.” DAV leadership makes it easy via DAV CAN (Commander's Action Network) to contact our elected representatives. Even for those of us who are not computer literate, there is the telephone or regular mail. If not for ourselves, we should at least participate for our fellow veterans. **Arnold J. Welber, Sunrise, Fla.**

Invisible wounds

I think it is about time veterans with service-connected PTSD should be considered for a Purple Heart. After all, there are wounds no one can see on the inside of those veterans. **M. T. Emming, Ruth, Mich.**

Lift the ceiling

The 100-percent ceiling for service-connected disabilities should be scrapped and left with no limit on how much compensation a veteran should receive. If a person serves this country and, in the process, acquires service-connected injuries or illnesses, it shouldn't matter whether it is 10 percent or 200

percent. We as veterans should be compensated to the fullest for our service, especially when we receive an honorable discharge.

Alim A. Beyah, Honolulu, Hawaii

Speaking from experience

I am a 97-year-old Navy veteran from WWII. I am in a VA medical foster home, a very good program that needs to be expanded to all areas! I am in a private home with two other veterans, 90 and 87. Our great caretaker does everything possible to keep us healthy and happy! **Lorell Roberts, Sandy, Utah**

I have been a disabled veteran for almost 70 years. I've seen many changes, mostly for the good, because of organizations like DAV. My first visit to the VA, in 1946, was by hitchhiking 70 miles from Adrian, Mich., to Detroit. I have found that most of the workers are doing a great job while being swamped by a large number of veterans. Their work should not be ignored just because of some bad apples. **John Butler, Michigan**

Record holder?

I wonder how many members have been in the DAV longer than I have? I was wounded on Guadalcanal and was recuperating in the San Diego Naval Hospital when I started to get the Red Cross to handle my disability claim. Then someone told me it would be better to have DAV take my case, so I took his advice.

That was in 1943. I bought a life membership at that time. Over the past 71 years, DAV has gotten my disability upgraded from 60 to 80 and finally to 100 percent without any whining by me or pestering the VA. Joining DAV might be the best decision I've ever made. I'm 93 now and have been a member since I was 22. I'll bet there aren't many members alive today that can beat that! **E. H. Van Blaricom, U.S. Marine (Ret.), Joseph, Ore.**

Time for a real raise

It is time for the U.S. government to consider a monetary increase in monthly compensation rates for all service-connected disabilities. I have been receiving compensation since 1968, and the only increases have come via the “annual” cost-of-living allowance (COLA). We fought, we gave and we love our country. It is now time for our leaders to show their support for our sacrifices and help us live a respectful life. Semper Fi. **Jeff Blewitt, Gold Canyon, Ariz.**

Veterans choice

The Veterans Choice Program is just more wasteful government spending, costing too much to send out all those Veterans Choice cards when most of the recipients will not be eligible to use them. The program is a step in the right direction but is screwed up, as usual, by our government. **Walter Larson, San Tan Valley, Ariz.**

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



News from the front

Agent Orange benefits updates

■ Bi-partisan legislation introduced in the Senate in March aims to extend VA benefits to “blue water” Vietnam-era veterans exposed to Agent Orange, despite never having set foot on land.

The new bill would allow for those veterans who served up to 12 miles offshore to qualify for VA health care and disability benefits for illnesses linked to Agent Orange exposure.

If passed, the legislation could affect hundreds of thousands of veterans who served aboard aircraft carriers, destroyers, cruisers and other Navy ships in Vietnamese waters during the war. Studies have shown that these veterans may have suffered exposure to the herbicide through contaminated water sources on ships, by direct transport of the chemical or through proximity to Agent Orange drop sites.


NATIONAL ARCHIVES

Proposed changes to VA pension program

■ Recommendations made by the Government Accountability Office (GAO) have spurred proposed changes to how the VA governs pension entitlement.

According to the proposal in the Federal Register, the VA is looking to amend the guidelines to “preserve program integrity because we have received information that, under current regulations, claimants who are not actually in need may qualify for these needs-based benefits.”

In response to the GAO’s recommendations, the VA proposed establishment of a new combined net worth

and income limit of \$119,220, a 36-month look-back period on asset transfers and a penalty period of 10 years concerning gifts.

The proposals also include establishment of a “look-back and penalty period for pre-application transfers of assets,” intended to “preserve the integrity of the pension program by ensuring that VA only pays the benefit to those with genuine need,” according to the proposed rule in the Federal Register.

Currently, VA pays out roughly \$5 billion in aid and attendance benefits.



DAV service program hits **MAJOR MILESTONE**

1 million veterans now represented by DAV

By Joseph R. Chenelly

In January, DAV became the first and only organization authorized by 1 million veterans as their accredited representative for claims before the Department of Veterans Affairs.

DAV has delivered by providing free assistance that has ensured billions of dollars in earned benefits have been granted to America's veterans.

The VA issues a report every other month on how many veterans each organization represents. The final 2014 report had DAV in the mid-900,000s, but the first and most recent report of 2015 showed DAV having 1,001,739 powers of attorney on behalf of veterans.

While not everyone who holds a power of attorney with DAV has an active claim or appeal with the organization, DAV has assisted each with at least one claim for benefits. Though it's impossible to determine

who the 1 millionth individual was, DAV leaders believe the landmark figure speaks volumes about the organization's credibility and commitment to the needs of veterans.

"It is humbling to think so many veterans have placed their faith in DAV," said National Service Director Jim Marszalek. "Every Service Officer in DAV takes that honor seriously, and we're all working hard to provide the best representation possible."

Data on how much in compensation has been secured for all 1 million veterans isn't available, but \$3.7 billion in new and retroactive benefits was awarded to DAV's clients just in 2014.

Service to fellow disabled veterans has always been DAV's main mission and backbone ever since the organization was chartered by Congress in 1932. An astounding 10,714,830 claims have been filed since 1932. More than \$87.4 billion has been secured in retroactive and annual disability compensation for veterans, their families and survivors within that timeframe.

"Veterans earn benefits and compensation for the

sacrifices they and their families endure while serving in the military and often long after he or she has hung up the uniform. But too often the veteran does not know what is available, what has been earned or how to go about obtaining it,” said National Service and Legislative Headquarters Executive Director Garry Augustine. “That’s why DAV puts so many resources into providing the best representation anywhere.”

DAV trains, equips and directly supports National Service Officers (NSOs), Transition Service Officers (TSOs), Department Service Officers, Chapter Service Officers and County Veteran Service Officers accredited by DAV in every corner of the United States.

“Providing top-notch, free assistance to veterans has always been DAV’s top priority,” said National Adjutant Marc Burgess. “That’s why we have so many offices around the country, but we also keep in mind those who cannot make it into the more populated areas where our offices are located.”

DAV’s fleet of specially equipped Mobile Service Offices has been traveling the country, bringing expert claims representation directly to veterans and their families. DAV traveled to more than 900 different locations in 2014, mostly in rural areas and at many colleges and university campuses.

“We are proud to get our Mobile Service Office deployed to serve more veterans than ever before,” said Marszalek. “Every veteran should be able to get the help they need, regardless of where they live.”



Mobile Service Offices travel into communities across the country, including college campuses, increasing veterans’ access to DAV benefits-assistance services. In 2014, MSOs visited more than 900 cities and towns.

While a large swath of DAV’s services are provided directly by full-time, professional NSOs, a large number of volunteers at the Chapter and Department levels are trained to assist and provide immediate answers in starting claims and obtaining benefits.

“These volunteers in the Department and Chapter service programs are vitally important to the fulfillment of DAV’s overall mission of service to veterans,”

Marszalek said. “They all go through in-depth initial training and follow-on training to have their certification renewed annually.”

DAV’s Service Program is there for veterans throughout the process. If a claim is initially denied, DAV provides free representation before the Board of Veterans’ Appeals.

Veterans and family members can receive free professional assistance with claims for compensation or pensions at any DAV National Service Office location. ■



Learn More Online

A list of DAV National Service Offices can be found at dav.org/veterans/find-your-local-office, and the MSO schedule can be found at dav.org/veterans/outreach-programs/mobile-service-office.



“Every Service Officer in DAV takes that honor seriously, and we’re all working hard to provide the **best representation possible.”**

National Service Director Jim Marszalek

DAV’s TSOs provide informational presentations, service medical record reviews and initiate claims. They assist veterans at nearly 100 military installations within the continental United States. In 2014, TSOs filed 17,126 claims.

Always working to improve, DAV filed 12,557 claims in the past year electronically, by far the most of any organization.



Advocates make voices heard in Washington

Mid-Winter Conference draws more than 400

By Joseph R. Chenelly

With proposals in hand focused on women veterans and pre-9/11 veterans who need caregivers, more than 400 of DAV's top advocates converged on Capitol Hill in late February, literally carrying the DAV banner demanding Congress keep its promises.

DAV's Mid-Winter Conference kicked off Operation: Keep the Promise 2015 with National Commander Ron Hope testifying before a special hearing of the House and Senate Veteran's Affairs Committees.

"Women are an integral part of the military today and face the same dangers in wartime as men, but federal programs and services do not consistently provide the gender-specific health care and support services they need to aid in their transitions home," Hope told the panel of lawmakers on Feb. 24.

State Commanders and Adjutants Association President Brenda Reed convened the four-day conference on Feb. 22 with an opening session that included remarks from DAV senior leadership and Secretary of Veterans Affairs Bob McDonald.

"DAV members exhibited tremendous dedication in the face of terrible weather around the country making the trip to Washington difficult. But they fought through and made it a memorable Mid-Winter," said Reed. "The C&A was honored to have the Secretary of Veterans Affairs speak at our opening session. I hope the event was informative for all our members, giving them valuable information to bring back to their Departments, Chapters and Units."

Reed also congratulated Warren Tobin, of North Dakota, on being elected to the office of C&A Vice President. Warren was elected to serve the remainder of the term that was vacated due to the recent death of Vice President Dennis Krulder.

McDonald outlined a list of reforms he has been working to implement in his first six months at the head of the VA, focusing on "MyVA."

"We want every veteran to have a seamless, integrated and responsive VA customer-service experience every time. This regional alignment is the first step in empowering veterans to interact with one VA—MyVA," McDonald explained. "Ultimately, this

“[Family caregivers] are **unsung American heroes** who often sacrifice their own health, well-being, employment, educational and other goals to care for their loved ones, our nation’s true heroes.”

—DAV National Commander Ron Hope



reform will improve the veteran experience by enabling veterans to more easily navigate VA and access their earned care and benefits.”

He noted the VA is under fire from some partisan interests advocating for privatization of VA, particularly VA’s health care system. “There are some who want to see VA fail. But that only serves to renew our focus to work that much harder to better serve veterans,” McDonald said.

“This week and throughout the year, we will be addressing some very critical topics,” Hope told conference attendees in his opening remarks. “This includes two that I believe have both the urgency and the momentum to inspire real change and impact: caregivers and women veterans.

“But at the very front of the line is safeguarding and improving the VA so that we can ensure all veterans, today and tomorrow, have a system accountable to them

for the injuries and illnesses sustained in service to this nation. This, we believe, is an integral part of America keeping its promise.”

National Adjutant Marc Burgess also addressed the opening session, noting DAV’s legislative success in 2014 began at last year’s Mid-Winter Conference and is something the organization must build on.

“Last year, we saw our members rally together, both here in Washington and across the country, to fight for a common goal: advance appropriations for veterans benefits payments,” he said. “By the close of 2014, we had achieved our goal. Working in concert, I am confident we can also take our 2015 goals to task. But it will take that same passion on your part to get to the finish line.

“As you fill the halls of Congress, meeting with your representatives and senators throughout the week, your message must be clear: ‘We are veterans. We take care of veterans. And we expect our government to do the same for those who have sacrificed, and for their families and survivors.’

“No matter the era or branch we served in, man or woman, young or old, we have sacrificed for this nation. We have upheld our end of the contract, and now Congress has to ensure they stay true to it as well. Remember, this isn’t about getting more; it’s about securing what was earned and what was promised,” Adjutant Burgess said.

Members spent the first two days of the conference in seminars, learning and discussing the intricacies of the year’s legislative priorities, hearing directly from DAV’s staff and senior government officials.

VA Under Secretary for Benefits Allison Hickey presented at the Service Seminar, speaking about ongoing reform in the claims process, major initiatives addressing



Out in force, a large contingent of DAV members from the Department of Georgia met with Sen. David Perdue as part of their Mid-Winter visit to Capitol Hill.



North Dakota Sen. Heidi Heitkamp meets with Warren Tobin, N.D. Department Adjutant, and Joe Litzinger, Legislative Committee Member for Chapter 2 Grand Forks.



In a meeting with Idaho Sen. James Risch (left), DAV Department of Idaho Senior Vice Commander Harvey Dixon (center) and life member Ernesto "Kimo" Hansen (right) discuss caregiver legislation.



Department of Oklahoma members Misty Summers (left) and Adjutant Danny Oliver (right) speak with Oklahoma Sen. Jim Inhofe.

the appeals backlog and ways her team is working to streamline simple actions, such as adding dependents.

DAV professional staff laid out, in depth, the proposals found in "Women Veterans: The Long Journey Home," the organization's study which identifies significant gaps in federal services for women veterans in health care, transition services, disability compensation, employment, community reintegration, housing and the eradication of military sexual trauma.

"The number of women veterans is growing, and our country is simply not doing enough to meet their health, social and economic needs," said Deputy National Legislative Director Joy J. Ilem.

DAV is also pushing hard to expand VA's Comprehensive Caregiver Support Program to all veterans who were injured or fell ill during any period of service.

"Caregivers are one of the most valuable resources for our nation's ill and injured veterans," said Assistant Legislative Director Adrian Atizado. "These men and women dutifully perform the day-to-day caregiving tasks that save the VA both money and other resources. Yet, many veterans are ineligible for comprehensive caregiver support programs and services because of the dates during which they served."

Veterans from wars prior to 9/11 do not have full access to the VA's Comprehensive Caregiver Support Program. As these veterans become older and their conditions potentially worsen, Atizado said, family caregivers of these severely disabled veterans should be allowed to receive the same comprehensive support to address fully the burdens and strains of caregiving.

"We need Congress to pass legislation to extend the caregiver program to veterans of all eras," Atizado said.

DAV members took that knowledge, along with the vast personal experience each has through their own advocacy work and as veterans themselves, to meet with Senate and House members. These meetings took various formats, some meeting one-on-one while others had meetings with delegations from entire states.

"There is no way to quantify just how valuable it is to have DAV members sit down face-to-face with their elected officials here in Washington, letting lawmakers know just how important these issues are to their constituents. It is especially effective given how knowledgeable the veterans are on the issues," said Washington Headquarters Executive Director

“As the voice for ill and injured veterans, **DAV will continue to fight** for the men and women who served, no matter the cost.”

—DAV National Adjutant Marc Burgess



Garry Augustine. “Much has been achieved in the past through these meetings, and I know this week has moved us forward again.”

“The conference was very informative, and I was glad to see DAV continuing to lead the way on women veterans’ issues. I look forward to seeing the results that the Mid-Winter will have on Congress,” said Jorge Anderson, a DAV member from Long Beach, Calif. “I let my lawmakers know I will be watching and will be sure my fellow veterans back home are, too. We all need to be ready to pick up the phone when needed to help ensure DAV is heard on the issues that affect disabled veterans and veterans overall.”

The Department of Wisconsin was among many who presented information shared at the conference extensively during its legislative presentation to Wisconsin legislators, meeting directly with both of the state’s U.S. senators and several representatives.

“The 2015 DAV Mid-Winter Conference was very well-organized and informative,” said Al Labelle, Wisconsin’s Legislative Director. “We went in well-prepared by the DAV National Legislative Staff and were able to deliver our message effectively.”

Following Mid-Winter, Sen. Dick Durbin of Illinois, along with Sen. Tammy Baldwin of Wisconsin, introduced S. 657, the Caregivers Expansion and Improvement Act of 2015. The bill would extend the VA Family Caregiver Support Program to severely injured veterans of all eras. “This directly shows the value of our Mid-Winter Conference,” Labelle said.

The conference and legislative campaign culminated in Commander Hope, flanked by DAV’s experts on key issues, presenting DAV’s 2015 legislative agenda and policy recommendations before both Congressional committees on veterans’ matters.

“Family caregivers are critical members of a veteran’s

health care team,” Hope said. “These are unsung American heroes who often sacrifice their own health, well-being, employment, educational and other goals to care for their loved ones, our nation’s true heroes.

“DAV believes it is only proper that family caregivers be recognized for their decades of sacrifices and dedication, that they receive the support and assistance needed to fulfill their vital role,” he said.

Hope made a direct appeal to Congress to address this inequity by extending equal benefits, support and services to family caregivers of veterans of all eras.

“The particular calendar date on which an injury or illness occurred should not be a reason for legislation to discriminate against one group of veterans to favor another,” he testified. “They are all equal in our eyes and equally deserving of your support and the support of the nation.”

Adjutant Burgess expressed his gratitude to those who attended the conference. “Whether it is helping house a homeless veteran, spreading the word about DAV’s free claims services or advocating for important legislative issues through the Commander’s Action Network, you’re all serving your fellow veterans. Your presence here alone speaks volumes of your commitment to our brothers and sisters,” he told the Mid-Winter attendees.

“While there is still much to do, I have no doubt that everyone here is up to the challenge. It won’t be easy, but that’s never deterred DAV or the DAV Auxiliary before. As the voice for ill and injured veterans, DAV will continue to fight for the men and women who served, no matter the cost. And we will do it together.” ■



Watch Video Online

Commander Hope’s oral testimony can be viewed online at bit.ly/DAV2015MidWinter.

Candidates for National Office

The following information is intended to inform membership on the announced candidates for National Office. Such use does not constitute an official endorsement or approval by DAV National Headquarters of any candidate to the exclusion of others who may stand for election. DAV members may announce their candidacy at any time, up to and including the time of election, at our National Convention in Denver, Aug. 8–11, 2015.



★ Moses A. McIntosh



Moses A. McIntosh is DAV's National Senior Vice Commander. He is a life member of Chapter 55, Covington, Ga., where he has served as treasurer in addition to a variety of other Chapter positions. He was elected Department Commander in 2007. He

has served on the DAV National Executive and National Interim Membership Committees.

A native of Meridian, Ga., he enlisted in the Air Force

after graduating from high school. Following an inter-service transfer to the U.S. Army in 1989, McIntosh attended warrant officer training as well as Army aviation flight training, which qualified him to pilot UH-1 and UH-60 assault helicopters. He was medically retired at the rank of chief warrant officer in 1997. He is a service-connected disabled combat veteran of Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm.

McIntosh received a Master of Science in human resource management from Troy State University and completed his undergraduate studies at the University of Maryland and Louisiana Tech University.

McIntosh is seeking election to a higher office.

★ David W. Riley



Army and Coast Guard veteran David Riley is a life member of Chapter 7, Mobile, Ala., and serves as National 1st Junior Vice Commander. He has held a succession of Chapter and

Department offices, including Department Commander. In 2010, DAV named Riley as the Outstanding Disabled Veteran of the Year for his dedication, commitment and inspiration to his fellow injured and ill veterans.

While serving as a Coast Guard helicopter rescue swimmer, Riley contracted septic shock pneumococcus sepsis. As a result of the infection, he was hospitalized for three months, lost all four limbs, several organs and suffered

damage to additional internal organs. Riley now mentors fellow injured veterans and recently wounded service members in their recovery and rehabilitation at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center and VA facilities across the country. He also serves as a Chapter and Department Service Officer.

Following his medical retirement from the Coast Guard in 1997, Riley earned a bachelor's degree in computer science and a master's degree in computer and information science. Following graduation, Riley started Gulf Coast Technical Service in Mobile. After several years of successful business, he redirected his efforts toward giving back to his fellow veterans full time.

Riley is seeking election to a higher office.



★ Delphine Metcalf-Foster

National 2nd Junior Vice Commander Delphine Metcalf-Foster is a retired Army first sergeant and combat veteran of Operations Desert Storm and Desert Shield.

Her military awards include the Army Commendation Medal, Army Achievement Medal, Army Component Achievement Medal and the Southwest Asia Service Medal. Metcalf-Foster retired from the U.S. Army Reserve in 1996. She continued her service for the Department of Defense as a civilian for 20 years as a quality assurance work leader for Naval Air Station Alameda, Calif. After retirement, she earned a bachelor's degree in liberal studies from Sonoma State University.

Metcalf-Foster has long been active in DAV at the Chapter, Department and National levels. In 2004, she was the

first woman in the Department of California to be elected Commander. Metcalf-Foster is a life member of Chapter 21 in Vallejo, where she also serves as Adjutant.

At the National level, Metcalf-Foster's service on the Board of Directors from 2010 to 2012 included one term as Treasurer. She is an active member of the VA Advisory Committee on Women Veterans. In 2014, Metcalf-Foster joined other DAV representatives in Washington for meetings with Congressional leaders and advocated for advance appropriations for all of the VA. In response, a legislative provision was passed a few months later, ensuring veterans' benefits were protected. For her efforts last year, Metcalf-Foster was honored with the California Department of Veterans Affairs (CalVet) Woman Veteran Trailblazer Award.

She is seeking election to a higher office.



★ Brigitte Marker

Coast Guard veteran Brigitte Marker was elected National 4th Junior Vice Commander at the 2014 National Convention. Marker served on active duty from 1995 to 1998 until a service-connected training injury

resulted in a medical discharge.

Marker became a member of DAV in 2000 and holds a life membership in Chapter 12, Klamath Falls, Ore. In 2005, Marker joined the leadership ranks at the Chapter level. Five years later, she was elected to the position of Commander of the Department of Oregon, where she served until 2012. Marker currently serves on the executive board of the Commanders and Adjutants Association. She is also a certified DAV Chapter Service Officer.

Marker earned a bachelor's degree in business administration from Oregon State University. She attributes her educational background as instrumental in overcoming difficult financial issues impacting both her Chapter and Department while serving as Commander.

She is seeking election to a higher office.



★ Harmon L. Evans

National Executive Committee member Harmon L. Evans served in the Air Force and Army for more than 30 years, deploying to Korea, Germany and Vietnam. Evans earned many military awards during his long career,

including the Vietnam Service Medal, Army Commendation Medal with three Oak Leaf Clusters and the Cross of Gallantry with Palm.

Evans is a DAV life member of Chapter 4, West Columbia, in his home state of South Carolina. He has served in the Chapter, Department and District at all levels including Commander. Evans is an active member of the National Order of Trench Rats and is a past Golden Rodent. He currently serves as the Department Chief of Staff.

In addition to his DAV career, he is the senior site director at the TyJasKey Academic Enrichment and Mentoring Program, a nonprofit youth organization.

Evans is seeking election to National Office.



★ Dennis Nixon

After medical retirement from the Marine Corps in 1970, Dennis Nixon became a DAV National Service Officer and dedicated 36 years to helping his fellow veterans obtain the benefits they earned.

Since retirement, Nixon has continued to serve as a volunteer, assisting in the certification training of Department and Chapter Service Officers, as well as mentoring the NSO Trainees in the Waco, Texas, National Service Office.

Nixon has served in various leadership capacities at both the Chapter and Department levels, including Adjutant. He has served on the National Executive Committee and is currently a member of the DAV Charitable Service Trust Board of Directors. He also serves as the Judge Advocate for the Department of Texas.

He is a life member of Blue Bonnet Chapter 20 in Fort Worth, Texas, and has been an active DAV member for 43 years.

Nixon is seeking election to National Office.



★ Dennis Thompson

Marine Corps veteran Dennis Thompson served in Vietnam from 1966 to 1967, where he was wounded in combat. His awards for service include a Purple Heart and Combat Action Ribbon.

In 1998, Thompson attended his first DAV meeting at Chapter 103, New Lenox, Ill, during which Thompson became a life member and was also elected 1st Junior Vice Commander. Since then, Thompson has served in various capacities at both the Chapter and Department levels.

From 2006 to 2008, Thompson served as the Department of Illinois Commander. He was elected Northern District Commander. He also served as the National Executive Committee 12th District Representative. He was named Department of Veterans Affairs Voluntary Service Representative at the Jesse Brown Memorial VA medical center in Chicago, and he serves as a member of the Interim Hospital and Voluntary Service Committee. He also serves as a Chapter Service Officer.

Thompson has received many honors for his advocacy. He was named Illinois Veteran of the month in April 2011, and the Combined Veterans Association of Illinois named him Person of the Year in 2010.

He is seeking election to National Office.



★ Michael "Maddog" Sater

Army veteran Michael "Maddog" Sater's service, from 1967 to 1970, included a tour in Vietnam. The year he left the military, he joined DAV and has been involved ever since. Sater is an active Chapter Service Officer

and is currently serving as the Assistant Adjutant for the Department of Maryland. In addition to holding various offices at the Chapter level, Sater has also served as Past Department Commander, 6th District Treasurer, Executive Committee member of the Commanders & Adjutants Association and was a member of the National Interim Employment Committee from 2012 to 2014.

Outside DAV, Sater continues to advocate for his brothers- and sisters-in-arms. In 2014, he was recognized for his efforts and was named Maryland's Outstanding Veteran of the Year.

Sater is a life member of Old Glory Chapter 22, Westminster, Md.

He is seeking election to National Office.



FOR NATIONAL JUDGE ADVOCATE ★ Michael Dobmeier

Michael E. Dobmeier has served as National Judge Advocate, advising the National Executive Committee (NEC) and Board of Directors, since 2002. He served as DAV National Commander in

1999 and as the 14th District NEC Representative in 1994.

Dobmeier enlisted in the Navy in 1969 after graduating from high school. He trained as an engineman, attended the Naval Submarine School at New London, Conn., and completed Navy Dive School in San Diego.

In April 1972, Dobmeier suffered severe burns on more than 30 percent of his body while aboard the submarine USS *Trigger* after an oil heater exploded. He was evacuated to the Naval Hospital in Bremerton, Wash., and later sent to Brooke Army Medical Center in San Antonio. He was discharged later that year and became a life member of Chapter 2, Grand Forks, N.D. He has since been appointed or elected to nearly every Chapter and Department office and position and was named the 1985 DAV Outstanding Member of the Department of North Dakota.

Dobmeier is seeking election to another term as National Judge Advocate.



FOR NATIONAL CHAPLAIN ★ Michael Patrick Dover

National Chaplain Michael Patrick Dover is a service-connected disabled veteran and life member who has served in a variety of capacities for Muscogee Chapter 7, Columbus, Ga., including Adjutant, Service Officer and Chaplain. At the Department level, Dover has served as Commander and Chaplain.

A decorated soldier, he retired from the Army as a master sergeant after 20 years of service. Since then, he has worked as a civilian military trainer and analyst while simultaneously serving as a counselor and chaplain at

the Crossroads Men's Addiction Recovery Program at the Harris County Jail in Hamilton, Ga., where he conducts chapel services and guides men in dealing with life-controlling problems and how to prevent them from occurring again. He also volunteers as president of the Homeless Veterans and Veterans Stand Down in Columbus, where he has assisted more than 3,000 homeless veterans since its inception.

An ordained minister, Dover received his Bachelor of Theology from Christian Life School and a Bachelor of Science in business management from Liberty University.

Dover is seeking re-election as National Chaplain.



2nd Junior Vice Commander speaks to transitioning women veterans

2nd Junior Vice Commander Delphine Metcalf-Foster speaks at the Ford Reboot Workshop designed for military women leaving service, held in San Diego March 23 – April 10. The three-week workshop is designed to assist veterans making the social and career transition from uniformed service to civilian life. Metcalf-Foster discussed the DAV mission and the comprehensive study and correlated findings of the report commissioned by DAV for the unique needs of women veterans.



DAV assumes responsibility for American Veterans Disabled for Life Memorial

By M. Todd Hunter

The opening of the American Veterans Disabled for Life Memorial in Washington, D.C., last October marked the completion of a 17-year journey to ensure the sacrifices made by our nation's disabled veterans are never forgotten.

After completing the necessary fundraising campaign for the creation and construction of the memorial—which is located within eyesight of the U.S. Capitol Building—the Disabled Veterans' Life Memorial Foundation recently entrusted DAV with the long-term safeguarding of the site. Given DAV's longstanding affiliation with the memorial, it was the most logical choice. The memorial has officially been turned over to the U.S. government, and DAV will work with the National Park Service to ensure it is preserved for future generations of veterans.

DAV has been financially involved in the memorial from its inception through its dedication, and many former organizational leaders have served on the Disabled Veterans' Life Memorial Foundation board.

In fact, the 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization was co-founded by Lois Pope, a prominent philanthropist who served as chairman of the Foundation's board of directors, and Arthur H. Wilson, Past National Adjutant

of DAV who served as board president.

"Having seen the memorial go from an idea to a reality through more than a decade of hard work and dedication by the Foundation has really been an inspiration," said Wilson. "It's only fitting that DAV take the reigns from here."

Dennis Joyner, the newly-elected president of the Disabled Veterans' Life Memorial Foundation board, echoed Wilson's sentiment.

"Having previously served as secretary of the board for several years, I've witnessed firsthand the years of painstaking work our Foundation and DAV has put into getting the memorial constructed," Joyner remarked. "Selecting DAV as the memorial's guardian was a no-brainer."

"This is a source of great pride for DAV and all of its current and future members," said Marc Burgess, National Adjutant of DAV. "DAV hopes to continue promoting the memorial's legacy in a way that truly recognizes the sacrifices made by our nation's veterans."

DAV is the leading voice for America's disabled veterans, and its mission of fulfilling promises to the men and women who served is consistent with that of the memorial. Administering the daily business operations will ensure that this national memorial is preserved far into the future. ■

From the NATIONAL MEMBERSHIP DIRECTOR ANTHONY L. BASKERVILLE



Nurture your legacy

It is with a heavy heart that I write this last column as your National Director of Membership. I will certainly miss working with all of you and joining efforts as we constantly bring new veterans into our DAV family.

It's been a privilege to serve in this capacity. However, I did not do it alone. While other veterans service organizations have experienced a gradual decline over the years, DAV's membership has grown. I credit this to the work DAV does for veterans and their families and the passion and commitment of our members.

Fortunately for DAV, the first contact a veteran has with our organization involves our Service Officers and volunteers.

Because of that, and the additional service of recruiting that our front-line advocates provide, it's very easy for eligible veterans to understand the importance of membership.

I applaud your efforts. For the past two years, all DAV state-level Departments have exceeded membership goals.

After four decades with DAV, I have

seen a lot of changes. We may have changed the way we conduct certain aspects of our charitable work, but our values and desire to take care of our own have remained the guiding light.

I can honestly say that DAV is better today than it's been at any time in my career. While I plan on staying active as a member, I end this part of my career

with a sense of great optimism and high hopes that I contributed to a legacy that will endure.

And if I were to provide any parting thoughts to my fellow veterans who know they will be transitioning to another stage in life, I would encourage you to focus on finishing strong. As a leader, that means ensuring you've provided the mentorship and guidance necessary

After four decades with DAV, I have seen a lot of changes... but **our values and desire to take care of our own** have remained the guiding light.

so that your work continues long after your role in the organization has changed.

I wish my successors the best of luck on the exciting journey ahead. I am grateful to have had the opportunity to contribute to DAV's legacy and thank all of you who have supported me these many years. Semper Fidelis.



INSPIRED BY YOUR SERVICE.

For more than 90 years, USAA has supported the military community, and we're proud to honor the members of DAV. USAA is committed to stand alongside you wherever life, or the military takes you.



USAA is
Honored to Serve
Disabled American Veterans



Winter Sports Clinic XXIX

Pushing past obstacles for nearly 30 years

By Charity A. Edgar

Army nurse Christine “Chris” Treiber had just arrived at the hospital to start her last shift as a major. She was looking forward to pinning on lieutenant colonel the following day and continuing her successful military career of nearly 20 years.

But that all changed in the blink of an eye when she suffered a brain aneurysm and was not expected to live, let alone continue her career. The miraculous survival was just the beginning. Life as she knew it drastically changed in an instant as the aneurysm caused visual, physical and cognitive impairments.

Treiber’s fellow veterans and participants at the National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic understand this abrupt realization all too well. Whether it’s a bullet wound sustained in battle, a car accident while home on leave or an unexpected diagnosis from the doctor, the men and women who descend upon the mountains in Snowmass have seen their lives unexpectedly change. And they have refused to let an illness or injury stop them.

Treiber, a DAV life member, is no different. Despite the devastating effects of the aneurysm, she was determined to stay active as she adjusted to her “new

normal.” The National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic seemed like the perfect outlet to challenge herself. In 1995, she took the plunge and signed up. She has attended almost every clinic since then and continues to push herself year after year.

“When you have an impairment, it can seem like everything is slower—your movement, thoughts and day-to-day living,” explained Treiber. “But when you get out on the mountain, the limitations are gone. Everybody is equal. Even if you are a beginner, you can fly down that bunny slope, and you’re a winner.”

Co-hosted by DAV and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, the clinic has served as a world-leader in adaptive sports for 29 years.

While the event has proven instrumental in helping veterans begin their road to recovery, it also has served as a training ground for elite athletes. More than 20 Paralympians participated in the 2015 National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic. One of those athletes is Joel Hunt.

When Hunt joined the Army in 1998, he planned on serving his country for 20 years, but that all changed during a deployment to Iraq. A roadside blast left him

"It's my hope that by setting the example, others will realize that tough times don't last, tough people do."

*Joel Hunt
Army veteran, Paralympian*



with a severe traumatic brain injury.

After returning home, Hunt struggled to adapt. He needed to rely on his parents as caregivers because of constant blackouts, double vision and bouts of dizziness. The lack of control and feeling in his legs confined him to a wheelchair.

He was angry and depressed, but his parents encouraged him to get out of the house and get active again. One sport they suggested he try was skiing. Hunt was apprehensive at first, self-conscious about his

abilities. Because of his post-traumatic stress disorder, he was also anxious about being around a large group of people he had never met. However, he quickly fell in love with the sport, and when he decided to take his training to the next level, the clinic played a major role in his development as a world-class athlete.

By the end of the 2009-10 season, Hunt was nationally ranked in the top 10 of adaptive skiers. Today, he is ranked third nationally and 34th in the world. He competed in the Sochi 2014 Paralympic Games and earned a silver medal in slalom at the Canadian Nationals. He also qualified for the World Cup.

"I hope to inspire others with disabilities by showing them that if a regular guy like me can make it, anybody can," said Hunt. "It's my hope that by setting the example, others will realize that tough times don't last, tough people do."

Taking on more than 11,000 feet of elevation on skis and snowboards wasn't the only daunting activity participants overcame. Veterans tried their hand at scuba diving, snowmobiling, curling, sled hockey and rock climbing. Secretary of Veterans Affairs Bob McDonald joined participants on a quest to the top of the rock-climbing wall.

"Through sports and other forms of recreation therapy, we can greatly improve the quality of life for

*VA Secretary
Bob McDonald
took time to
challenge the
rock wall during
his visit to the
clinic to support
and cheer on
fellow veterans.*





many of our nation's heroes," said McDonald.

DAV National Commander Ron Hope understands the importance of recreation therapy and adaptive sports. Hope, who lost an arm in Vietnam, is no stranger to the clinic. He participated twice before coming to Snowmass in his role as DAV's top line officer.

"This event teaches some of our most profoundly wounded veterans to challenge themselves and to overcome the obstacles they face as a result of their service to our nation," said Hope. "Participants are able to rediscover abilities and opportunities that they may have

thought were taken from them when they were hurt."

Captain Ed "Flip" Klein had been an avid skier and snowboarder before his 2012 deployment to Afghanistan where he lost both legs, his right arm and several fingers on his left hand. The Army Ranger didn't hesitate at the opportunity to get back on the slopes.

"My interest in skiing and winter sports is that really, of all the things I can't do anymore and all the things

you have to find a new normal for, skiing is one of the few things that kind of feels the same," said Klein, a first-time clinic participant. "I don't feel disabled on the mountain, so I pursue events like this to feel some of the same freedoms that I was familiar with before."

Navy veterans Jon and Eileen Vasquez were also attending the clinic for the first time. Jon Vasquez sustained a traumatic brain injury, and Eileen Vasquez has service-connected visual impairments. The couple banded together with fellow participants to overcome the mountain.

"It's great to get out there with other veterans. We're all here to help each other," said Jon Vasquez. More than 360 men and women attended this year's clinic, including participants who served in World War II, Operation Enduring Freedom and every era in between. More than 150 first-time participants joined the long list of participants who make the clinic an annual event.

For longtime participant Treiber, the clinic is the highlight of her year. "When I return from the clinic, I'm ready for anything that comes my way. When you leave Snowmass, no matter what you've done, as long as you tried, you have excelled," said Treiber. "Being at the clinic makes me feel like I can tackle anything."

Treiber's determination and resilience can be seen in each and every veteran at Snowmass, where men and women rediscover abilities, regain strength and courage and test the limits of what they believe to be possible. ■

Turn the page to read about
the recipient of this year's
DAV Freedom Award...

**"I don't feel disabled
on the mountain, so I pursue
events like this to feel some of
the same freedoms that I was
familiar with before."**

Captain Ed "Flip" Klein, Army veteran



2015 DAV Freedom Award Recipient

Alan Babin

Army veteran

By Ashleigh Byrnes

If ever a veteran personified the spirit of the DAV Freedom Award at the National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic, friends and family will tell you it's 34-year-old Alan Babin.

On March 31, 2003, while serving as a medic in Iraq, Babin's platoon came under attack, and a fellow soldier was struck by enemy fire. Babin rushed to the soldier to render aid and was shot through the stomach. The bullet tore through several vital organs and left a gaping wound in his torso. He clung to life for three hours before the firefight ceased long enough to medically evacuate him.

Several weeks later, while recovering at the former Walter Reed Army Medical Hospital in Bethesda, Maryland, Babin contracted meningitis and suffered a debilitating stroke. He was left paralyzed, unable to communicate, and completely dependent on others for his care.

Following more than 70 operations, including five brain surgeries, Babin slowly began showing signs of progress. In 2005, he attended his first winter sports clinic.

"The Winter Sports Clinic has been the main venue for his growth over the years, and he is now on the verge of becoming an independent skier," said Babin's recreational therapist and coach, Jose Laguna. "I have known him since 2005, and the only way to describe his progress is nothing short of a miracle."

"I don't know what inspires me," said Babin. "I just know I have a starting point and an ending point, and the ending point is where I want to be, so that's what I do. I get to the ending point."

During the event's 29-year history, thousands of veterans have proved to themselves that their injuries do not define them. Ensuring that veterans receive world-class health care and rehabilitation is a primary



Remarkably humble and always with a smile, each year Army veteran Alan Babin demonstrates outstanding courage and achievement along the road to recovery.

goal of VA and DAV. When veterans conquer the mountain, it proves to all that a disability need not be an obstacle to an active, rewarding life.

"We are so proud to see veterans like Alan make such incredible strides out here on the mountain," said DAV National Commander Ron Hope, who twice participated in this event after losing his arm in Vietnam. "Every year he comes back here with a great attitude and a tremendous work ethic, and it shows in the progress he's made."

"It's really comforting to know you're not the only one who went through something," said Babin.

Both Babin's mother and father, Rosie and Alain, are Army veterans and have stood beside their son as parents, caregivers and advocates. They said they believe the clinic was a turning point in their son's rehabilitation.

"We have witnessed a lot of miracles and continue to be amazed daily by his determination," said Rosie Babin. "He does not consider himself a hero, but he's become my hero for the battle he has fought day after day after day to get his life back." ■



Learn More Online

To learn more about the event and Alan Babin, visit www.wintersportsclinic.org.

From the AUXILIARY NATIONAL COMMANDER

LEEANN B. KARG



Make good things happen

Spring is in the air, and it's time to think about State Department conventions and year-end reports. Each year, we work on taking care of our veterans and their families through direct aid or by encouraging our legislators to fulfill the promises they've made.

We visit the hospitals, nursing facilities, veterans homes and VA medical centers as angels of warmth and caring. We bring smiles to the faces of those who've done so much for us. It is our mission to "make a difference in the lives of disabled veterans and their families," and we do that every day.

We take time to contact or meet with our legislators to ensure that our wishes are being heard. We sew, bake, visit and assist our veterans with anything that they may need. We are their family, too! Your year-end reports will tell us all what you have been doing and what a difference you are making.

I hope that you've all been working on membership. Membership is one way that we make ourselves heard. Starting July 1, there will be a change concerning

membership in the DAV Auxiliary, and it is wonderful news! We will convert to a life membership program for all adult members. The changeover will be automatic, and current annual members will receive updated cards. Members may pay their dues in the manner they have been accustomed to, but the funds will be applied toward a life membership, based on the member's age.

I find it hard to believe that this year is slowly coming to an end. So much to do and so little time! Together we will succeed. When we stand together we are invincible. Stand with me, shake things up and make good things happen for our wounded and disabled veterans. It is because of them that we have the way of life we cherish so much. Teach your children about patriotism, respect and selflessness. Remind them how this nation became so strong and who sacrificed to make it so. We have been truly blessed.

God bless our military, our veterans, DAV and the Auxiliary, and God bless the USA.

DAV Auxiliary Membership Application

Membership year is July 1 to June 30.

DATE _____

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION IN UNIT NO. _____ STATE _____

☐ MS. ☐ MRS. ☐ MR.

NAME (please print) _____

STREET ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP CODE _____

DATE OF BIRTH (required) _____ PHONE NO. _____

EMAIL _____

APPLICANT'S SIGNATURE _____

Type of Membership

☐ New Junior (complimentary through age 17)

☐ New Junior Life – \$20 down payment

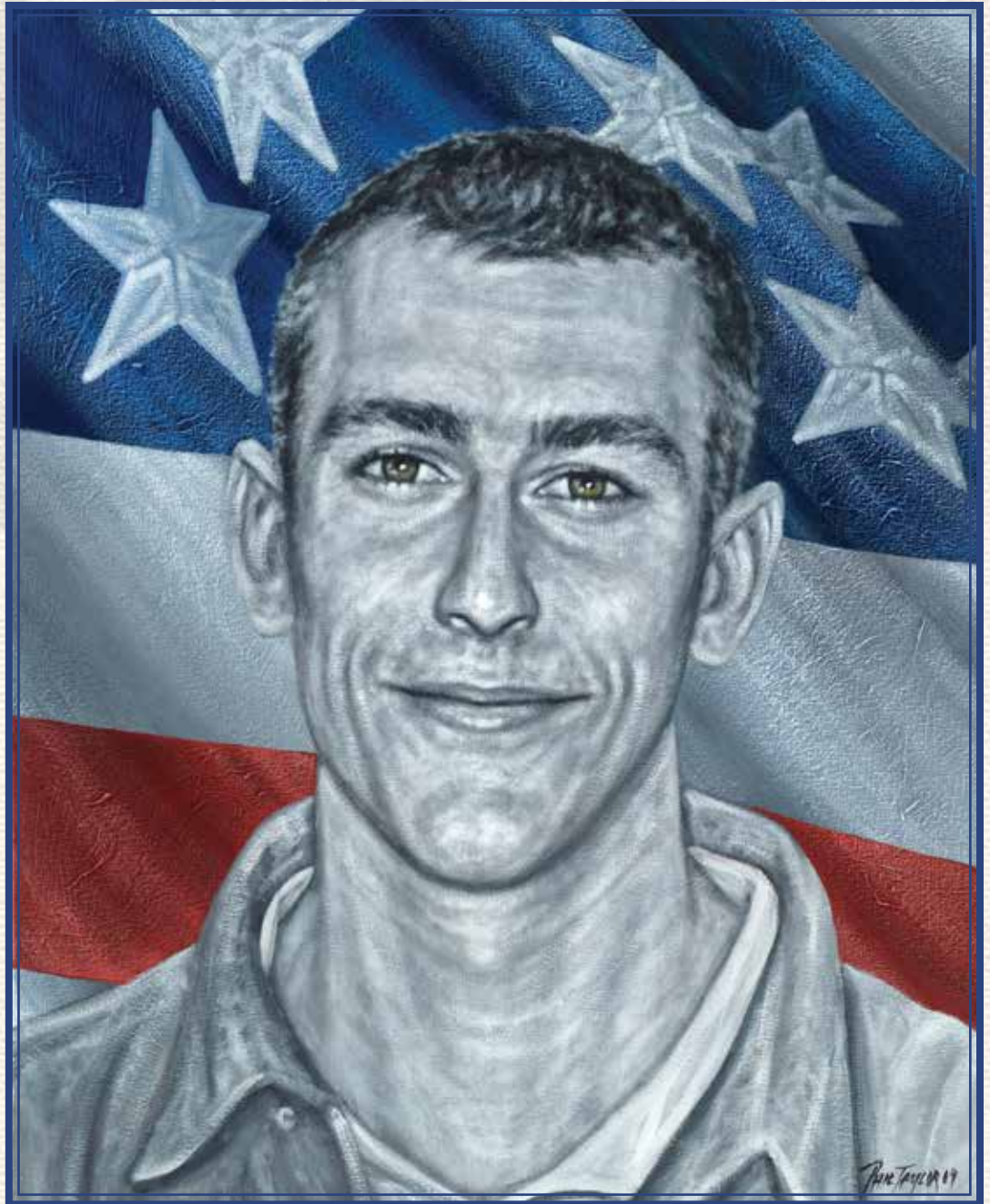
☐ New Life – \$20 down payment

Age	Life Amount
Birth-30	\$250
31-45	\$230
46-60	\$200
61-70	\$180
71-79	\$140
80 +	Free

AMOUNT PAID

\$ _____

Mail application and payment to DAV Auxiliary, 3275 Alexandria Pike, Cold Spring, KY 41076.



Capt. Derek Argel

Brush OF HONOR

★ ★ ★

New television series pays tribute to America's fallen heroes

By M. Todd Hunter

"Never look down on anyone unless you're reaching to help them up."

Capt. Derek Argel lived by those words, but they're just a glimpse of what you learn about the fallen hero's life in "Brush of Honor," an original series from DAV partner Inspire

Network (INSP), debuting Thursday, May 21, at 9:00 p.m. Eastern time.

“Brush of Honor” follows artist Phil Taylor and his wife, Lisa, as they provide comfort and healing to military families whose loved ones have been killed in action. Phil meets with families to learn as much as he can about their loved ones, and then paints a portrait of the fallen soldier that is presented to the family in an emotional ceremony which has been thoughtfully planned and carried out by Lisa.

“It’s always important for us to honor any fallen hero properly,” Lisa said, which is why Phil treats each portrait with dignity and respect.

As the artist paints, he bonds in a unique way with the fallen service member and his or her family. His mission is to celebrate the courage and sacrifice of each service member, and to honor their families by “bringing them home” in a one-of-a-kind portrait.

“I think painting has the capacity to restore a father to his son,” Phil said. This is a statement that at least one member of Capt. Argel’s family agrees with.

After the unveiling ceremony, the slain soldier’s son, Logan, told Lisa, “You brought my dad home.

“I lost him before I could get to remember him,” said Logan. “Now I can see him again.”

Now 10, Logan was only 10 months old when his father perished on Memorial Day in 2005. The Air Force combat controller was killed when an Iraqi Air Force aircraft he was travelling in crashed during a training mission in eastern Diyala Province, Iraq. He was 28.

“When I saw this portrait, I was overwhelmed,” said Deb Argel-Bastian, Argel’s mother. “[Phil] really captured his eyes. It was like Derek was looking back at us.”



**“I think painting
has the capacity
to restore a father
to his son.”**

—Phil Taylor, artist

“I don’t know what I expected,” said Wendy Argel, Derek’s wife. “But [Phil] got a lot of details in Derek’s face, so it was pretty emotional.”

But Argel’s story is just one episode in a series meant to shed light on the sacrifices made by those who never made it home.

“We are very excited to share ‘Brush of Honor’ with everyone this May,” said INSP CEO and Chairman David Cerullo. “We could not think of a more fitting way to express our gratitude to those who lost their lives in service to our country, and the loved ones they’ve left behind.”

INSP’s values-based content reaches more than 80 million households across the U.S. The network has produced and aired public-service announcements honoring veterans and DAV.

“Most people struggle with ways they can honor the fallen on Memorial Day. We’re grateful to our partners at INSP for making this type of programming available to remind the public about the sacrifices our fallen heroes have made on our behalf,” said Barry Jesinoski, National Headquarters Executive Director. “They will be sharing DAV’s public service announcement during the programing, and we hope it will bring more of our survivors and veterans to DAV for free assistance.” ■

About Inspire Network

INSP is available nationwide via Dish Network (Channel 259), DirecTV (Channel 364), Verizon FiOS (Channel 286), AT&T U-verse (Channel 564) and more than 2,800 cable systems. To find out where to view INSP in your area, please visit www.insp.com/insp-channel-finder.

THE Gender METRIC



University study finds differences in women veterans' heart health

By Ashleigh Byrnes

As the population of women veterans grows larger, so, too, does the body of specialized knowledge concerning their health and risk factors.

A new study published by the University of Michigan, “Characteristics and Outcomes of Women Veterans Undergoing Cardiac Catheterization in the Veterans Affairs Healthcare System,” has zeroed in on specific gender discrepancies within the veteran population concerning cardiac health.

Using data from the VA’s Clinical Assessment Reporting and Tracking Program, researchers concluded women veterans undergoing cardiac catheterization are more likely than their male counterparts to suffer from obesity, depression and post-traumatic stress disorder. The data also show that the women studied were younger at the time of their initial catheterization (57, as opposed to 63 for men) and had fewer traditional risk factors for heart disease.

Perhaps most interestingly, though presenting with the physical symptoms of a cardiac event, 46 percent of women and just 17 percent of men were found to have normal functioning coronaries or no arterial obstructions. In short, more women were experiencing symptoms like chest pains without actually suffering a cardiac condition, leading researchers to believe



“Findings like these echo the importance of **veteran-specific research**, especially broken down by gender and minority status.”

—Joy Ilem, Deputy National Legislative Director

the symptoms were linked instead to mental health conditions like PTSD, depression or anxiety.

Based on the findings, the study shows a clear need for further study into these gender differences. It also points to a need for enhanced cooperation between mental health and other specialty providers who treat veterans.

Gender Gaps in Research

The study included research on 86,000 veterans, including 3,181 women. Noting a lack of information

on the cardiac health of women veterans, physicians at the University of Michigan looked to the wealth of knowledge within the VA's database.

Dr. Claire Duvernoy is chief of cardiology for the VA Ann Arbor Healthcare System and director of the University of Michigan Cardiovascular Center's Women's Heart Program, as well as the lead researcher for this study.

Researchers looked at the number of veterans being referred for cardiac catheterizations following red-flag symptoms like chest pain. They tracked the percentages that came back with normal results versus those who, in fact, suffered coronary artery disease (CAD).



"To me, this is a call to improve VA care, to make it more seamless and keep it in the VA system so that veterans can get the best care."

*Dr. Claire Duvernoy,
Chief of Cardiology, VA Ann Arbor
Healthcare System and
Director, University of Michigan
Cardiovascular Center's
Women's Heart Program*

The report indicates the women veterans studied also had higher rates of depression and PTSD than male veterans, thereby "highlighting mental health as a potential risk factor for CAD and adverse outcomes."

"I think we were all surprised," Duvernoy said. "We knew the veteran women were going to be younger... [W]hat we didn't know was that we would find these higher rates of depression and post-traumatic stress disorder in the women veterans, and that would really be quite significant."

PTSD, anxiety and other mental health conditions are known to cause chest pains in patients. But further research is needed to better understand why higher numbers of women experience these physical symptoms without actually suffering heart disease.

This conclusion backs the VA's integrated approach to treating the "whole veteran" and gives insight into the learning curve physicians face when treating

women veterans in a system that has been largely male-dominated.

"Findings like these echo the importance of veteran-specific research, especially broken down by gender and minority status," said Joy Ilem, Deputy National Legislative Director.

DAV's 2014 report, "Women Veterans: The Long Journey Home," also points to the need for this kind of gender- and minority-specific data. And the American Heart Association (AHA), which published this study in their March issue of *Circulation: Cardiovascular Quality and Outcomes*, highlights how women are typically underrepresented in heart disease research.

"In the future, if we really want to answer all the questions we have about gender differences, then we need studies that are large enough, focused enough and with the intent from the start to illuminate the issues around sex differences," said AHA's Harlan Krumholz.

Further Conclusions

The findings of the study also make a clear point that integrated health care is of critical importance, particularly among veterans.

"Veterans, due to the nature of their military background and exposures, have unique health needs that may go unaddressed by private-care physicians," said Ilem. "We want to ensure our veterans are getting the best care, but that they are also not being overtreated, undertreated or improperly diagnosed because a doctor outside the VA may not have the full scope of medical information at their disposal."

Duvernoy said she believes the study results highlight the need for integrated care for veterans, as well as better communications between mental health care and specialty providers.

"What I see when care is fragmented is that veterans go to outside facilities, and they may get catheterized and stress-tested over and over and over again. And nobody is really delving deeper into what is really going on," said Duvernoy. "To me, this is a call to improve VA care, to make it more seamless and keep it in the VA system so that veterans can get the best care." ■



Learn More Online

To read more, visit record.umich.edu/articles/women-veterans-chest-pain-heavier-more-depressed-men.

VA to expand Choice Card eligibility

■ The Department of Veterans Affairs announced in late March it would work to expand eligibility under the Veterans Choice Program, which has initially shown minimal participation for users. Instead of measuring the 40-mile distance “as the crow flies” or in a straight line, as originally directed by Congress, the VA will now measure the mileage as driving distance. The change is expected to double the number of eligible veterans and will be implemented in the weeks ahead.



Select VA facilities employ new evaluation process for physicians

■ Two Chicago-area VA facilities have engaged veterans in a new process to improve the feedback process for their doctors. In an effort to improve the quality-of-care outcomes, researchers are looking for nonmedical, socioeconomic “red flags” doctors may be missing in regular conversations with patients.

The concept is that doctors may be missing indicators, such as job loss or lack of transportation, which could be impacting a patient’s health outcomes.

As part of the study, researchers provided 774 veterans with devices to record their conversations with medical staff. Both the veterans and the patients consent to the audio recordings, though the physicians are not made aware of which patients will be recording a session. The recordings are all protected from legal discovery or from use in medical-liability cases.

Some of the key “red flags” are: missing appointments or tests, failing to acquire prescription refills, having uncontrolled hypertension or diabetes and/or declining to get recommended health screenings or vaccines.

The concept is being considered for use at other VA facilities as part of care-quality improvement.

New life skills tool available to veterans

■ Recognizing the unique challenges of veterans and military members, the Departments of Defense and Veterans Affairs have developed Moving Forward: Overcoming Life’s Challenges to help veterans and service members strengthen their problem-solving skills and successfully overcome obstacles.

Moving Forward is a free, confidential, online educational and life coaching program designed for veterans and service members, but it can be useful to anyone with stressful problems. Moving Forward uses videos, games and interactive exercises to create an engaging and enjoyable learning experience. Moving Forward teaches skills to increase one’s ability to identify goals and formulate plans to solve problems more effectively. Because stress and pessimism make it harder to solve problems, Moving Forward provides tools to reduce stress and increase optimism. This self-paced program includes eight modules that can be viewed and reviewed at the user’s convenience.



Learn More Online

Veterans and service members can start the course at www.veterantraining.va.gov/movingforward.

From the NATIONAL CHAPLAIN MICHAEL P. DOVER



We are ambassadors

Greetings, everyone! For those of you who don't know, I drive a school bus part time. I surely don't do it for the money, so why do I do it? Because it is an opportunity to impart positive life experiences onto our young people, considering the cultural condition of some of our younger generation. There is no greater calling than the positive example and impression we leave with others. If we do not want America to forget those who have paid a price in maintaining our freedom, then we must find unique ways to ensure America does not forget.

My faith teaches me to be an ambassador. I try my best, but in spite of my best efforts, I sometimes fail miserably because I'm not perfect. This thing we call human nature keeps interrupting my good moral intentions. But I don't quit. Every day I wake up and strive to do what is right, because my faith requires me to live by a higher standard, regardless of how imperfect I am.

But what is an ambassador? How do I know if I am representing correctly? Let's go back in time to find the answer. Roman provinces were divided into two types. One was under the control of the

There is **no greater calling** than the positive example and impression we leave with others.

senate, the other under the direct control of the emperor. The distinction of who controlled what was based on whether it was a peaceful province, in which case the Senate controlled it. If it had issues, then it came under the direct control of

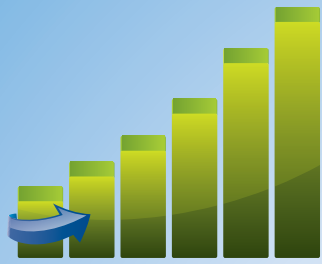
Roman troops and became known as an imperial province.

An American ambassador in a foreign land spends life among people who usually speak a different language and have different traditions.

The American ambassador speaks on behalf of the president of the United States. The honor of a country is in the ambassador's hands.

I am an ambassador for my faith. I find this a proud privilege but also a terrifying responsibility because, by my every word or action, I can make people think more or less of whom I represent. DAV and the DAV Auxiliary are only as good or great as the men and women who represent it. Because of your words or actions, prospective members and their spouses will think more or less of our organization. So, what positive or negative examples and impressions are you leaving with others? It has a lasting impact in both realms.

In His Service for You.



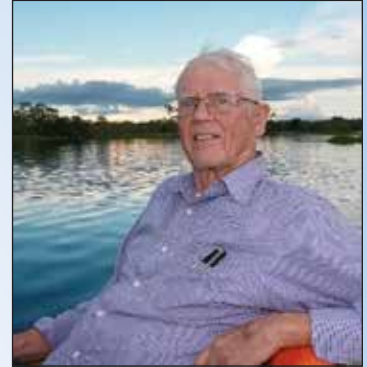
It's a win-win

Stock gift benefits the donor and DAV

Jack Higgins is a DAV life member who courageously served in the U.S. Navy on submarine duty during World War II. In addition to being a member, Higgins and his wife are both longtime supporters of DAV. Jack delightedly explained that he was keeping a promise he'd made to himself years ago: to give back to DAV to ensure they could continue to assist his fellow disabled veterans. "Several years ago, I decided to take some extra money I had set aside and play the stock market. My wife and I promised ourselves we would donate the money we earned on the stock market to DAV, and this seems like the perfect time."

When Higgins needed to offset his taxes due to some additional income, he immediately knew what he would do. Jack is a savvy investor and knows that by giving stock directly to a charity, he avoids capital gains taxes and can claim a charitable deduction for the stock's full market value. In conversations with our Planned Giving office, Higgins pointed out that many stock gift donors make the mistake of cashing their stock and sending a donation of the proceeds to the charity of their choice, thus losing out on the true value of giving stock gifts.

If you are interested in contributing stock to DAV, simply contact our Planned Giving office, and we will provide the information you need to facilitate the transfer of your stock to us. Then, you should contact your financial advisor or the stockholder to initiate the transfer process. Your final step is to provide us with the name and the approximate value of the stock gift after the transfer so we can track and acknowledge your gift accordingly. ■



Jack Higgins celebrates his 87th birthday by checking off a bucket list item: relaxing on a skiff following a swim in the rainforest of the upper Amazon in Peru.

To Learn More about Stock Gifts

- Call 1-800-216-9802, Ext. 1,
- Email giftplanning@dav.org,
- or
- Return the attached postcard.



FULFILLING OUR PROMISES
TO THE MEN AND WOMEN WHO SERVED

President Obama, Secretary McDonald visit Phoenix VAMC

By Steven Wilson

DAV Department of Arizona Commander Ronald Cox met with Secretary of Veterans Affairs Bob McDonald and President Barack Obama at the Phoenix VA Medical Center on March 13.

The president noted every veteran he spoke to indicated they were pleased with the quality of care in the VA system, but the issue of gaining access to that care still needs to be addressed.

"I discussed the Veterans Choice Card and the 40-mile 'as the crow flies' rule, which was hampering veterans getting access to their care," Cox said. "Secretary McDonald inherited a huge problem, but I'm thankful he's working diligently to address it."

The president signed legislation last August giving the VA an additional \$16.3 billion to hire doctors, open more clinics and expand a program that allows veterans facing long delays to get care from a private-sector doctor.

In an analysis conducted by The Associated Press (AP) from 940 VA hospitals and clinics nationwide, the AP found the longest delays in getting appointments were at VA centers in states in the South and Southwest.

In those regions were 47 of the 75 worst-performing clinics or hospitals, responsible for delays of more than 60 days, affecting one in five patients.

However, progress is being made in Phoenix. According to a March 2015 fact sheet released by the VA, 4,000 veterans in Phoenix were identified as being on unofficial waiting lists and were contacted personally by the Phoenix VA medical center. Between May 2014 and January 2015, 30,000 authorizations were granted to veterans to receive non-VA medical care.

In May 2014, the Veterans Health Administration hired 33 emergency medical professionals to supplement



AP PHOTO/JACQUELYN MARTIN



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE WHITE HOUSE

President Barack Obama and VA Secretary Bob McDonald met at the Phoenix VAMC, which was at the heart of the scandal that broke in the media last year. DAV Department of Arizona Commander Ron Cox met with the president and secretary and discussed issues related to veteran health care in the Phoenix area.

the Phoenix VAMC staff. Since June 2014, the Phoenix VA Health Care System (PVAHCS) has hired 305 new full-time employees to meet the needs of veterans in the Phoenix area. The PVAHCS was authorized to hire 80 full-time employees after the Veterans Choice and Accountability Act was signed into law and, as of January 2015, 50 of those positions have been filled.

In 2015, the PVAHCS is scheduled to also open new community-based outpatient clinics in northeast and southwest Phoenix. Construction aimed at expanding the Emergency Department at the Phoenix VAMC began in January 2015, and the PVAHCS is currently expanding the Homeless Community Referral and Resource Center by 5,000 more square feet to serve the needs of more homeless veterans in the area.

"I'm grateful for the work that's being done in Phoenix and other VA medical centers across the nation," said DAV National Adjutant Marc Burgess. "I'm hopeful we'll see all VAMCs across the nation make progress like Phoenix has. The bottom line is our country absolutely must keep its promises to our veterans." ■

Mile High City

to host DAV National Convention



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

The Mile High City offers visitors the perfect blend of outdoor adventure and urban sophistication. Denver's snowcapped peaks make for the perfect backdrop of this year's convention.

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

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

From boutiques, spas and shops to amusement parks and recreation, attendees will have every chance to advocate for injured and ill veterans and enjoy everything the Mile High City has to offer, including a return performance by Gary Sinise and the Lt. Dan Band during Fun Night at the convention.

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



Learn More Online

Visit dav.org/events for more information about the convention and special guidance regarding altitude concerns. To plan additional activities and find discount tickets to venues, visit www.visitdenver.com/DAV.



Gary Sinise and the Lt. Dan Band will perform during Fun Night.



Travel Assistance

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



Remembering those we've lost...

DAV Chapter 10, Billings, Mont., placed commemorative wreaths at Yellowstone National Cemetery in December.

Participants included Department of Montana Senior Vice Commander Jimmy Kerr (left) and Chapter 10 Commander John Tiry (right).



Big win for 'Small Wonder' vets...

DAV Department of Delaware purchased a new van through the DAV Columbia Trust and with matching funds donated by the three largest banks in the state. The van will be used to transport disabled Delaware veterans from their homes to VA facilities for treatment and services.

"Delaware's banks are proud to help in this important effort to assist the veterans who have given so much to us all," said David G. Bakerian, president of the Delaware Bankers Association.

From left: David G. Bakerian, President, Delaware Bankers Association; Mark Wischmann, Commander, DAV Department of Delaware; State Representative Earl G. Jaques Jr.; James J. Roszkowski, President, Discover Bank; Paul V. Lardizzzone, Adjutant and Past Commander, DAV Department of Delaware; Vernita L. Dorsey, Vice President and Director of Community Strategy, WSFS Bank; Mark E. Huntley, President and CEO, Artisans' Bank; and Rodger Levenson, Executive Vice President, WSFS Bank.



Welcome home from Vietnam...

This year marks the 50th anniversary of when conventional forces in large numbers began to deploy to Vietnam. To remember South Dakota's Vietnam veterans, Chapter 1, Sioux Falls, orchestrated a "Welcome Home" event. When interviewed by a local NBC affiliate, Chapter Commander Ritchie Wilson said he went to Vietnam as an infantryman in the Spring of 1970 and he, like other veterans of the same era, still suffers from various illness and injuries incurred as a result of his service.



Plaque of appreciation presented to mayor...

DAV Department of Alabama Adjutant Chad Richmond presented a plaque of appreciation at the Birmingham City Council meeting on Jan. 27, 2015, to Birmingham Mayor William Bell. The plaque was designed by National Senior Vice Commander Moses McIntosh and was presented to the mayor in appreciation for having DAV represented as the keynote speaker at a city event. From left: Donald Sellers, Department of Alabama Chaplain and Senior Vice Commander of Birmingham Chapter 4; Department Adjutant Chad Richmond; Mayor William Bell Sr.; Chapter 4 Commander Ronald Sellers; and DAV life member and Birmingham City Councillor Sheila Tyson.



Paying it forward...

DAV Chapter 31, Lakeland, Minn., created a "Pay It Forward" grant to assist Becker County veterans in need who are motivated toward positive change. The grant will be carried out in partnership with the Becker County Veterans Service Office. From left: Committee members Duane "Doc" Lindsay, Chapter Treasurer; Laurie Brooke, Becker County Veterans Service Officer; Danny Morrison, Chapter Trustee; and Neil Olson, Chapter Commander.



DAV and Home Depot partner to remodel veteran's home...

Army veteran James Ham received new flooring for his home, Feb. 13, 2015, after the carpet began to impair his ability to use his walker, and the dust in the carpet labored his breathing. "It's all about partnerships, and Home Depot has done a great job for veterans in the High Desert," said DAV Chapter 92, Victorville, Calif., Senior Vice Commander Ernest Bockhorn. "I'm glad James and his family could be helped."

Influencing future leaders...

DAV Chapter 86, Flagler Beach, Fla., Junior Vice Commander Raymond Parker addressed nearly 100 Air Force Junior ROTC cadets over five class sessions at Flagler Palm Coast High School. Parker discussed the advantages military training has had in higher learning and employment. Parker said values such as flexibility, an ability to meet deadlines, multitasking capability, quality and results orientation and a sense of duty—all qualities being taught in Air Force JROTC—can certainly transfer into successful future endeavors.



2015 ALL VETERANS CAREER FAIRS

Date	City	Location
May 7	San Antonio, TX	Norris Conference Centers
May 7	Orlando, FL	Heaven Event Center
May 14	Norfolk, VA	Sandler Center for the Performing Arts
May 14	Dallas, TX	Irving Convention Center
May 21	New York, NY	Hotel Pennsylvania
May 21	Milwaukee, WI	Milwaukee County War Memorial Center
May 28	Cincinnati, OH	Paul Brown Stadium
June 4	Seattle, WA	Greater Tacoma Convention & Trade Center
June 4	Baltimore, MD	M&T Bank Stadium
June 18	Washington, DC	FedEx Field
June 18	Detroit, MI	Ford Field
June 24	Houston, TX	Minute Maid Park
June 25	Atlanta, GA	Georgia World Congress Center
July 9	Indianapolis, IN	Murat Shrine Temple
July 16	St. Louis, MO	Chaifetz Arena at Saint Louis University
July 23	Sacramento, CA	TBD*

*Please visit our website at jobs.dav.org for updates on venue locations.



Recognizing employment resource...

DAV Chapter 7, Jacksonville, Fla., thanks CareerSource of Northeast Florida for outstanding service to local veterans. From left: Chapter 7 Commander Sheila Sanders, Senior Vice Commander Joseph Spruiell, Northeast Florida CareerSource Director Faron Miles and Chapter Adjutant Crystal Whiteside-Lemon.



Share Your News! Send photos of your DAV or Auxiliary news to feedback@dav.org. Please provide a JPEG image, a description of the photo and the names of those pictured.



RUN TO HONOR VETERANS

2015 NATIONAL SERIES



Save The Date!

CINCINNATI
SAT., NOV. 7



SAN DIEGO
SAT., NOV. 7



ATLANTA
SAT., NOV. 14

Registration opens July 4th weekend at DAV5K.org.

REUNIONS

ARMY

19TH COMBAT ENGINEER BATTALION ASSN. VIETNAM

AND ATTACHED UNITS Sept. 10-12, St. Roberts, MO, Contact: Tom Ebrite, Ph: 765-286-4906, Email: s2snoopy@comcast.net, Web: www.19engrvm.org.

249TH ENGINEER BATTALION ASSN. Sept. 17-19, Louisville, KY, Contact: Robin Wandell, Ph: 660-815-1166, Email: firewoodfriends@hotmail.com.

2ND BATTALION/34TH ARMOR REGIMENT VIETNAM Oct. 1-4, Branson, MO, Contact: Pat Forster, Ph: 949-493-4080, Email: Lpat234@hotmail.com.

3RD SQUADRON 5TH CAVALRY BLACK KNIGHTS

Sept. 23-27, Fredericksburg, VA, Contact: Mike Cook, Ph: 352-419-4202, Email: mcook159@tampabay.rr.com.

AZ ASA ASSN.

Aug. 14-16, Tucson, AZ, Contact: Doug Cook, Email: dougirenecook@q.com, Web: www.azasaa.org.

F COMPANY, 51ST INFANTRY, LONG RANGE PATROL

(AIRBORNE) VIETNAM Sept. 8-12, Las Vegas, NV, Contact: Richard "Spanky" Moyer, Ph: 702-610-9097, Email: dickmoyer702@yahoo.com.

MARS TASK FORCE & DESCENDANTS

Sept. 3-6, Westlake, TX, Contact: Joni Newman, Ph: 937-423-1294, Email: mmpdvices@gmail.com.

OV-1 MOHAWK ASSOCIATION

Oct. 1-3, San Diego, CA, Contact: John Bosch, Ph: 949-290-2748, Email: jbcrcete2@cox.net.

VIETNAM GUNTRUCKERS AND ALL TRANSPORTATION

UNITS (THE GATHERING) Aug. 18-23, Chattanooga, TN, Contact: John Dodd, Ph: 434-724-1469, Email: johndodd@centurylink.net, Web: www.vietnam-guntrucks.com.

MARINES

1ST BATTALION, 3RD MARINES, (BLT 1/3) REUNION

Aug. 11-16, Orlando, FL, Contact: Richard Cleary, Ph: 520-487-0327, Email: clearyr@msn.com.

2ND BATTALION 4TH MARINES (THE MAGNIFICENT

BASTARDS) July 23-26, Quantico, VA, Contact: Jim Rogers, Ph: 703-887-6238, Email: jwr@verizon.net.

F COMPANY, 2ND BATTALION, 7TH MARINES/UTTER'S

BATTALION 1965-66 May 18-22, Fredericksburg, VA, Contact: Bob Gallagher, Ph: 615-360-7927, Email: Gal2001@comcast.net.

MARINE CORPS WEATHER SERVICE (METOC)

May 31-June 4, Savannah, GA, Contact: Dave Englert, Ph: 812-630-2099, Email: englertd@psci.net, Web: www.psci.net/englertd.

PLATOON 342 (JUNE-SEPTEMBER 1965)

Sept. 4-6, Parris Island, SC, Contact: Charles Harmon, Ph: 702-458-3132, Email: chickster48@live.com.

NAVY

AMERICAN AMPHIBIOUS FORCE ASSN.

Sept. 16-19, New Orleans, LA, Contact: Pat McCormick, Ph: 978-649-3094, Email: patrick1561@verizon.net.

AVIATION BOATSWAIN'S MATES ASSN. (ABMA) 2015

PROFESSIONAL WORKING GROUP

Aug. 10-14, Portsmouth, VA, Contact: Doug Thornton, Ph: 619-578-1523, Email: thunderjtt@gmail.com, Web: www.abma-usn.org.

NAVAL AIR STATION SANFORD, ALL UNITS AND

SQUADRONS 1942-1968

June 25-28, Sanford, FL, Contact: Ralph Feeback, Ph: 407-302-2252, Email: Dlfrr@aol.com.

NAVAL MOBILE CONSTRUCTION BATTALION

7-NMCB7

Sept. 17-20, Los Angeles, CA, Contact: Denny Blaisdell, Ph: 419-867-9371, Email: mcb7ra@yahoo.com.

USS CANBERRA (CA-70/CAG-2)

Oct. 14-18, Mobile, AL, Contact: Ken Minick, Ph: 740-423-8976, Email: usscanberra@gmail.com, Web: www.usscanberra.com.

USS GRAND CANYON (AD/AR-28)

Sept. 14-17, Harrisburg, PA, Contact: Tom Chamberlin, Ph: 843-504-8771, Email: wtchamberlin@aol.com.

USS HORNET (CV-8, CV, CVA, CVS-12)

Sept. 9-13, Lexington, KY, Contact: Carl & Sandy Burket, Ph: 814-224-5063, Email: hornetcva@aol.com.

USS HOUSTON (CL-81) ASSN. Aug. 18-23, Green Bay, WI, Contact: Barbara Hillebrand, Ph: 608-424-6095, Email: Bjhillebrand@charter.net.

USS IWO JIMA (LPH2/LHD7) SHIPMATES

Sept. 13-16, Baton Rouge, LA, Contact: Robert G. McAnally, Ph: 757-723-0317, Email: yujack46709@gmail.com, Web: www.ussiwojimashipmates.cfnss.net.

USS JOHN R. CRAIG (DD-885)

Sept. 16-20, Atlanta, GA, Contact: Jerry Chwalek, Ph: 734-525-1469, Email: jermail@ameritech.net.

USS KING (DLG10/DDG-41)

June 18-21, Las Vegas, NV, Contact: John Fitzsimons, Ph: 609-971-5498, Email: jfritzwithking@verizon.net, Web: www.usssking.com.

USS KNOX (FF-1052)

Sept. 17-20, San Diego, CA, Contact: Bob Simonson, Email: bsimosd@aol.com, Web: www.usssknox.org.

USS MANSFIELD (DD-728)

Aug. 26-30, Tampa, FL, Contact: Gary Thompson, Ph: 641-567-3737 or Dawn Serdiuk, Email: Dlsieriuk@aol.com.

USS NAVARRO (APA-215)

Oct. 7-10, Nashville, TN, Contact: Donald Bush, Ph: 256-413-7295, Email: drbushrbc@comcast.net.

USS NECHES (AO-47)

Sept. 8-12, Rochester, NY, Contact: Johnny Hanlon, Ph: 918-760-7371, Email: johnnyhanlon@cox.net.

USS RANGER (CVA/CV-61) ASSN.

Sept. 3-6, San Mateo, CA, Contact: George Meoli, Ph: 203-453-4279, Email: uss.ranger@yahoo.com.

USS RASHER REUNION (SS/SSR/AGSS-269)

Sept. 9-14, Philadelphia, PA, Contact: Richard Moore, Ph: 804-815-0730, Email: drifterpilot@cox.net.

USS SOMERS (DD-381/DD-947/DDG-34)

June 14-18, New Orleans, LA, Contact: Bob Plante, Ph: 315-668-0332, Email: somersdd947@gmail.com.

USS SPROSTON (DD/DDE-577)

Oct. 7-11, Galveston, TX, Contact: Ralph Hanson, Ph: 832-661-1604, Email: sigs63@comcast.net, Web: www.sproston.com.

USS WARRINGTON (DD-843)

Sept. 27-Oct. 1, Jacksonville, FL, Contact: Stan Prager, Ph: 916-791-6700, Email: Stashuman843@msn.com.

USS WILHOITE (DE/DER-397)

Oct. 5-8, Mobile, AL, Contact: Elisabeth Kimball, Ph: 479-968-1236, Email: canerday@centurytel.net, Web: www.usswilhoite.org.

AIR FORCE

AC-119 GUNSHIP ASSOCIATION REUNION XV

Sept. 16-20, St. Louis, MO, Contact: Ev Sprou, Ph: 314-221-7385, Email: ac119gunner@hotmail.com, Web: www.ac-119gunships.com.

AF OFFICER CANDIDATE SCHOOL REUNION (ALL

CLASSES 1943-63 INVITED) Oct. 8-12, Montgomery, AL, Contact: Dave Mason, Ph: 757-820-3740, Email: blokemason@verizon.net.

THE AIR FORCE ORIENTATION GROUP (AFOG)

Sept. 26, Dayton, OH, Contact: Adam F. Kohler, Ph: 321-225-4979, Email: adam12kohler@yahoo.com.

COAST GUARD

ALL COAST GUARD REUNION

June 20, Minneapolis, MN, Contact: Chris Kalgerson, Ph: 952-935-9065, Email: chriskalgerson@gmail.com.

INQUIRIES

- Searching for anyone who served with me in I Co., 3rd Division, 5th Regiment, 1st Marine Division, Ashau Valley, Vietnam, December 1968 to January 1969. Seeking Naval Corpsman "Chicken Man" or anyone who remembers company CO or his radioman tripping booby trap. Please contact Joseph P. Webb, 301 Stratford Road, Glenolden, PA 19036, Phone: 610-532-4296.
- Searching for anyone who was on Heartbreak Ridge, Korea, Sept. 19, 1951. There was a rifleman, and I was a light .30 machine gunner. The rifleman was along side me when I was shot. Please contact Ed Reeg, 2188 Key Way

Drive, Dubuque, IA 52002, Phone: 563-557-2609.

- Searching for anyone who was stationed in Vietnam from 1961 to 1973 who has documentation on the number of attacks on USAF bases in Vietnam. Please contact Kenneth L. Cox at kennethc@suddenlink.net.
- Searching for anyone who worked at Wilford Hall Military Hospital in San Antonio in January 1971. I had a cystoscopy in January 1971 for a discharge physical and was not given any anesthesia. Please contact Johnny Caudill, 175 S. Cardinal Drive, Prestonsburg, KY 41653, Phone: 606-226-1834, Email: jmack1947@hotmail.com.
- Searching for survivors of the 2nd Infantry Division, Changbong-ni and Saemal, Korea, who were ordered to withdraw on Feb. 11, 1951, and suffered a terrible defeat which became known as the "Hoengsong Massacre" and also as "Massacre Valley." Anyone interested in sharing their personal account, please contact Jack M. Witter, 3629 U.S. 23, Oscoda, MI 48750-9567, Phone: 989-739-5494, Email: jmd154@charter.net.
- Searching for three men in the 101st Airborne 502nd, who were involved in Operation Eagle Wing on April 24, 1958: Spc 4 Wilson, who received a shoulder injury; Spc 4 Raye & Pvt Spikes from Panama City, FL. Please contact Bill Short, 770-607-0823, email: bshort37@gmail.com.
- Searching for anyone who served with me at Camp Barkley, Texas, with the 90th Division, 358th Regiment Med. Det. WWII. Contact Francis O'Rear, 4401 Mayberry Road, Pine Bluff, AR 71603.
- Searching for Felix (Sword Blade) Wilkerson who served with me in Long Binh, Vietnam, in 1967. Contact Arnie Battersby, 18 Bellevue Blvd., Rumford, RI 02916, Ph: 401-431-0396, Email: centman2@cox.net.
- Searching for Brooks-A-Truck Driver or anyone who served with me in Korea 1952-53, with the 13th Combat Engineers C Company in Komwa, Korea Hill #1063. Contact Wally Gonzalez, Box 1126, Freer, TX 78357, Ph: 361-394-7121 or 361-813-6327.
- Searching for George R. White, who served with me as radar operator in Nike Hercules, Battery C, 2nd Missile Battalion, 67th Artillery, in South Dakota in 1959-60. Drafted from Fulton, KS. Contact J. Paul Dennis, 10826 Stockwell Road, Gladwin, MI 48624-9518, Ph: 989-246-1982.
- Searching for anyone who served with me in BearCat, Vietnam, 1969-70, Company A, 228th Avn, 1st Cavalry, Chinooks, who remembers when we crashed Oct. 31, 1969, killing pilot CW3 Paul Getz. Please contact Tom McBriarty, Ph: 860-877-2710, Email: Mvctet007@aol.com.
- Searching for anyone who was a patient on Ward 4-B, Hand Orthopedic Ward, Philadelphia Naval Hospital, September 1967-68. Contact Frank Williams, P.O. Box 331, Marion, NC 28752-0331, Ph: 828-803-2229.
- Searching for anyone from the 720th MP Battalion stationed at Fort Chaffee during Operation New Arrivals around March to June 1975. Contact Millie Orey at Email: oreyjm@bresnan.net.
- Searching for anyone who served with me in Ansback, Germany, 1954-57, 793rd and later the 750th FA Battalion. It was an 8th SP Cannon Bn Btry 'A'. Please contact James W. Goodman, 14743 S. Glenn St., Glenpool, OK 74033, Ph: 918-321-2364.
- Searching for anyone involved with firefight at the DMZ Outpost Beryl South Korea on March 15, 1969. I believe they belonged to Unit A Company, 23rd Infantry, 2nd Infantry Division, Korea. Contact Joseph at Ph: 209-204-8040, Email: xxadela@aol.com.
- Searching for anyone who served aboard the LST-120 during WWII. Contact Dean Rider, 2026 Highway H, Mayview, MO 64071, Ph: 816-633-7296, Email: oldblueodg.cdr@gmail.com.
- Searching for anyone who served with 3292 Signal Base Maintenance Company in Wandre, Belgium, and after VE day sent from Marseille, France, to Santa Mesa, Manila, in the Philippines on a small freighter via the Panama Canal. My superior in Wandre was Sgt. Gonzales. Contact Jerry Barshov, Ph: 718-926-5102.

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

Honored for service to veterans

DAV Life Member posthumously recognized by local award; home Chapter changes name

On Jan. 22, DAV Life Member Doug Herrle was posthumously awarded the *Seguin Gazette's*—the local publication from his hometown in Seguin, Texas—"Vision Award" in recognition of his dedication to serving his fellow veterans as a longtime Chapter Service Officer.

Herrle served five tours in Vietnam and was injured on each tour. After single-handedly battling for 12 years for his own compensation for service-connected injuries and Agent Orange exposure, he became involved with DAV and dedicated the rest of his life in ensuring fellow veterans did not have to fight the same battle.

Herrle mentored and trained several other CSOs for his local Chapter and his reputation was so widespread in the local area veterans would sometimes wait hours outside his office to see him.

He passed away on May 17, 2014—Armed Forces Day. Soon after his passing, the name of his home Chapter was changed to the Doug Herrle Chapter 61, Disabled American Veterans and Auxiliary Unit. ■



Department of Oklahoma provides relief to tornado victims

DAV National Service Officer (NSO) Chris Rende drove a Mobile Service Office to Sand Springs, Okla., to help Department of Oklahoma representatives provide disaster relief assistance to veterans affected by the tornado that ripped through the area on March 25.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF DAVID COMBES, DAV LIFE MEMBER AND DEPARTMENT OF OKLAHOMA PHOTOGRAPHER



Above: Inside a Red Cross emergency shelter in Sapulpa, Oklahoma, 95-year-old World War II veteran Elmer Wilkes (center) receives DAV disaster relief and assistance from National Service Officer Chris Rende (right) and Department of Oklahoma Adjutant Danny Oliver. **Left:** Gulf War Veteran George Jones (center) receives DAV disaster relief assistance from NSO Chris Rende (left) of the Muskogee DAV National Service Office and Department of Oklahoma 2nd Junior Vice Commander Bob Allen.

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