

Department of Alabama News & Views

May/June 2019



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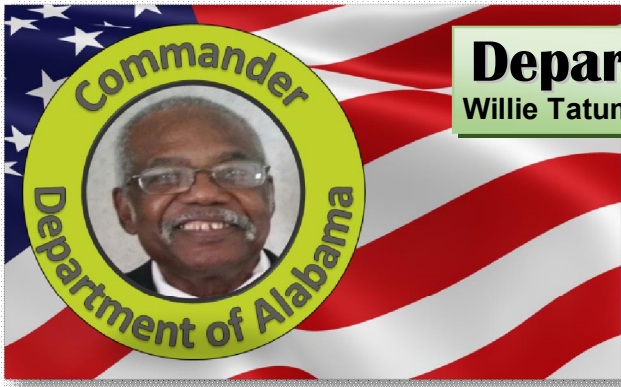
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Volume 23 | Number 6

MAY MILITARY APPRECIATION MONTH





Department Commander

Willie Tatum

As always I want to continue to encourage those who are not members of the Commanders Action Network to become members. I believe you see the impact of your participation as one attempt to gain support for the bills that affect all veterans.

Congratulations to District #2 where all chapters have made their goal. We also have 27 of 32 chapters in The Department have made their goal. The 5 remaining chapters are close to goal and with two months remaining have a good chance to make it also. I am proud of the work all our chapters have done this year. Thank you very much.

I want to take this opportunity to thank The Department staff for a job well done. My job has been easy because of the job you have done. I will not start naming people because someone is always left out and I don't want to do that. There are certain people who have gone above and beyond and I cannot thank you enough and you know who you are. I also want to thank our comrades from the M.A.L.T. who continue to support Alabama. Again, I want to thank everyone for your support this past year. Keep up the good work.

Semper fi

Willie Tatum
Commander

Greetings Comrades,

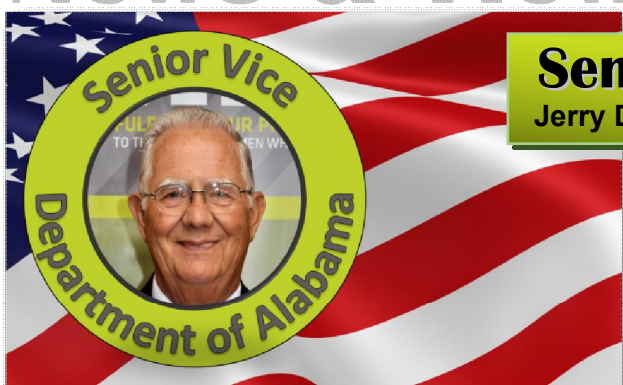
I would like to begin my last article with a sincere thank you to all members of The Department of Alabama. I want you to know that it has been my honor to serve as the Commander of The Department of Alabama. We have had a good year and it is due to the hard work of you, the members, and I want you to know that I really appreciate your efforts. I believe there is always room for improvements and it is my hope that you will keep up the good work.

On February 19, 2019, the new RAMP went into effect and with it came a host of new forms. It is important that those of us who file claims for our veterans become familiar with these forms. This will ensure that our veterans' claims will not be rejected.

Disabled American Veterans Mission Statement

We are dedicated to a single purpose: empowering veterans to lead high-quality lives with respect and dignity. We accomplish this by ensuring that veterans and their families can access the full range of benefits available to them; fighting for the interests of America's injured heroes on Capitol Hill; and educating the public about the great sacrifices and needs of veterans transitioning back to civilian life.

- Providing free, professional assistance to veterans and their families in obtaining benefits and services earned through military service and provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and other agencies of government;
- Providing outreach concerning its program services to the American people generally, and to disabled veterans and their families specifically;
- Representing the interests of disabled veterans, their families, their widowed spouses and their orphans before Congress, the White House and the Judicial Branch, as well as state and local government;
- Extending DAV's mission of hope into the communities where these veterans and their families live through a network of state-level Departments and local Chapters; and
- Providing a structure through which disabled veterans can express their compassion for their fellow veterans through a variety of volunteer programs.



Senior Vice Commander

Jerry D. Morgan

Greetings Comrades,

The DAV National Mid-Winter Conference was very great with an excellent meeting on membership and recruitment initiatives for the rest of the year. As of now we have 27 of the 32 chapters that have met their recruitment goals. For the Department we have made goal and are 260 plus over goal. It would be great if all chapters met their recruiting goals for the year.

Thanks to most of the chapters who responded to my request to update the zip codes for each chapter from National. The chapters who did not respond, I looked at what National had listed for your chapter and the zip codes of the members within your chapter. If you only had one or two members from a zip code that was not on your list from National, I did not add that zip code to your list. This updated list will be used by National to set a %not list+of veterans within those zip codes for your chapter. Also, this list will be important to the chapters in meeting next year's goal set by National Membership.

There is a new form for the chapter to use to request a list of veterans within your area who are not a member of DAV. The form is on the Department of Alabama website. Go to the home page, click on %News+, go to %Dept Officers Check Here+ then click on %Member-List-Request-Form+ which was put on the website on 2/21/2019. This is the form that we passed out by e-mail back in February where a chapter can request a list from National DAV of non-DAV veterans within your area without going through the State Department Membership Coordinator.

The National Commander's presentation to the House and Senate Veterans Affairs Committee was well received by the committee. One thing that gained the attention of the committee is that the DAV is over 1 million strong, and growing, with that many votes in the election of local and national officials. Therefore, we need to keep supporting our DAV National Commander, State Department Commander and local Chapter Commander by recruiting new members to our ranks. The more members that we have the better we can support all veterans by getting the support for bills that effect veterans passed.

I am looking forward to the upcoming Department Convention in Opelika the end of May and first of June. This is when the Department will go from 4 District Executive Committee Members to 4 Junior Vice Commanders with each JVC being assigned to a district to support the chapters within that district. Each chapter needs to have someone at the Convention for voice in the election of these positions. Also, each chapter needs to plan on someone from their chapter attending the First Executive Board Meeting on Sunday morning.

Respectfully,

Jerry Morgan

Senior Vice Commander

Armed Forces Day 18 May 2019

ARMED FORCES DAY WORD SEARCH

H	R	E	I	D	L	O	S	H	Z	D
L	E	P	X	U	G	A	L	F	X	P
A	V	S	E	N	I	R	A	M	Q	I
W	O	N	A	V	Y	A	R	M	Y	K
R	F	A	U	J	J	J	O	C	F	Y
O	J	A	I	R	F	O	R	C	E	C
L	N	G	H	T	D	Z	W	X	E	V
I	C	H	G	A	C	I	R	E	M	A
A	B	C	P	I	H	S	N	I	S	T
S	L	R	J	Z	K	Y	V	O	Y	E
M	C	E	N	A	L	P	R	I	A	E



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News & Views Article Due Dates:

July Issue - Due 20 Jun 2019

September Issue - Due 20 Aug 2019

November Issue - Due 20 Oct 2019

All Articles due the 20th of the month prior to the publishing of the newsletter.

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1st Junior Vice Commander Eugene Zeigler

Comrades,

I am glad that I attended the MALT (Mississippi, Alabama, Louisiana, and Tennessee) Department Convention which enabled me to gain valuable information about the DAV. Also, the Department of Alabama had the largest representation at the Department of Tennessee Convention.

On March 9, 2019 I attended the Bill Nichols Chapter 13 & Auxiliary Unit 13 Disabled America Veterans annual Appreciation Luncheon. This event was held at the First Baptist Church Fellowship Hall Alexander City, AL. Commander Hugo Perez and his staff did a superb job honoring their sponsors. They had 46 sponsors that worked with chapter 13, and helped with their car show.

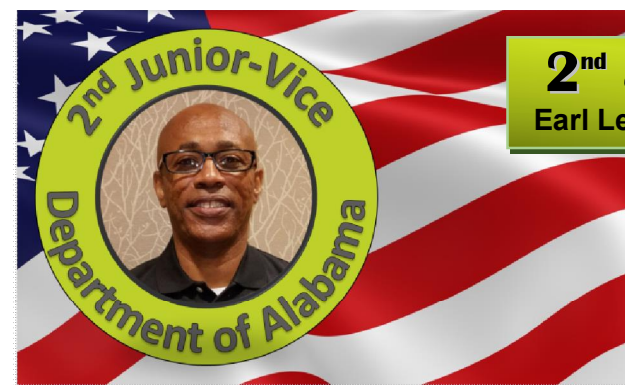
Comrades, suicide is the 10th leading cause of death in the U.S. Every 14.2 minutes, someone in the U.S. dies by suicide. Experts estimate that a suicide attempt is made every 34 seconds. Most suicidal people visit a medical Doctor during the 3 months prior to killing themselves.

Suicide rates among Veteran men are estimated to be 2 times greater than the rate for men in the general population. The Centers for Disease Control indicate that about 20% of all suicides in America occur in the Veteran population.

Suicide prevention is VA's top clinical priority, and the VA has adopted a public health approach to suicide prevention. The goal of the VA's suicide prevention efforts is not to get Veterans enrolled in VA care, but rather to equip communities to help Veterans get the right care, whenever and wherever they need it.

I have been honored to serve as your 1st Junior Vice Commander for this year and I ask that you consider allowing me to serve as your next Senior Vice Commander.

Respectfully,
Eugene Zeigler
1st Junior Vice Commander



2nd Junior Vice Commander Earl Lee Frazier

Comrades,

First and foremost, Thank You for Your Service. This past year has been a unique experience as your Department of Alabama, 2nd JVC. I have had an opportunity to learn and observe the dedication of comrades from different chapters throughout the department and the MALT. We have a lot of valuable experience in this department. From Montgomery to Huntsville to Auburn to Dothan to Mobile and all points in between I have truly enjoyed the fellowship and comradery. During the trip to D.C. for DAV National Mid-Winter, I learned it takes dedicated support from each of us to uphold many of the things

that the DAV does to continue veteran services for future generations. Tomorrow is not guaranteed but doing what we can today will make up the difference for the next generation of veterans.

By the time you read this edition news and views the Department of Alabama will have elected/appointed new officers for the upcoming year. Congratulations to all and push forward for the New Year within the Department of Alabama agenda that is ahead. The newly elected/appointed officers will do a good job with the support of the chapter commanders and their members. Doorah! Thank you for your fundraising efforts and continue to support each other and the DAV mission. Ecclesiastes 4:9-10 states Two are better than one because they have a good reward for their toil. For if they fall, one will lift up his fellow.

Thank you for your service. Airborne and be safe.

Respectfully,
Earl L. Frazier
2nd Junior Vice Commander





Department Adjutant

Charles "Chad" D. Richmond

Comrades,

This will be my last News and Views article as your Department Adjutant. It has been an exciting and eventful ten years serving you, and I am grateful to have had that opportunity. I have realized that it is time for me to step down from that position in order to benefit the Department with some fresh new ideas and concepts. I know some of you will probably hold gala celebrations because I am stepping down, and that's okay. As a department, I think we are in better shape than we have been in a long time and we are looking outside that proverbial box more in order to think of more efficient ways in which to accomplish our mission. When I became Commander in 2006, I said I never wanted to hear the statement "We've always done it that way". A lot of new ideas have come up in the last few years, and that is great. We have benefitted from them. We have many relatively new members throwing their hat into the mix for Department staff, and it is refreshing. Also, some who have been around for a while are starting to voice all of those good ideas that they have been too shy to bring up, and all of us are benefiting from their views and new thinking. One of those was a combined townhall meeting and training session. Our first attempt had a few hiccups, but overall, it was a great success. Juniorette (for just a little longer) PDC Debb Walker put a lot of effort into finding us a useable venue and was happy with how the first event went. And speaking of Debb, she is the one you need to contact concerning training topics, whether it for townhall or convention or mid-winter. But don't do it a few weeks ahead of time, do it months ahead of time, especially if it is for mid-winter.

We also need someone to volunteer to take on the responsibility for the hospitality room after the Department Convention. Art and Fay Miller will also be stepping down after this event, as well.

The State Board of Veterans Affairs voted in its April 5th Board Meeting to have the Veterans Homes Committee work in conjunction with the Alabama Dept. of Veterans Affairs Commissioner and staff in the selection process of the 5th State Veterans Home. The criteria for the 5th home will be made available to all interested parties in the Southeast portion of the state in the upcoming month. No selection review has taken place to date. Once the deadline arrives for proposals there will be presentation opportunities before the selection group. This group will narrow down the areas for site visits. The final recommendation will be voted on by the Veterans Homes Committee and presented to the State Board of Veterans Affairs for final approval.

As a reminder, no member of the Board may discuss the details of the selection process. Inquiries should be forwarded to the Alabama Dept. of Veterans Affairs Commissioner.

White-Lee Chapter 53 opened a Service Center in Bay Minette on April 4. Val Obregon and Richard Steadman opened the chapter office at 1701 Hand Avenue, Bay Minette and will be open every Thursday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. to provide assistance in filing veteran claims. For further information contact Val Obregon at 251 401-7377 or Richard Steadman at 251 239-8026.

As I type this, things are going along really slow with registrations and ads for our convention. I have only received seven ads. That is very, very poor. It is extremely difficult, as an event planner, to put anything together if you don't know how many participants you are going to have. It is not unusual for us to have fifty people register at the convention and conference. It is impossible to accommodate everyone that comes in like that, especially when it comes to planning for the banquet and luncheons which have to be ordered by the number of meals. Please help your event planner by getting your registrations in prior to the actual event.

Our National guest for the Convention is Chad Moos, Deputy National Service Director. Chad spends a lot of time in the halls of the Senate and Congress trying to promote the DAV's programs with our legislature. And, he's good at it. This will be his first trip to Alabama, so let's make him feel welcome. Of course, we are still trying to get Gus Malzahn to come to one of our events. We haven't given up.

The year 2020 will mark the 100th Anniversary of the DAV. National Membership Director Doug Wells told me that we can all look forward to many exciting things to begin after the 2019 National Convention in Orlando. He guarantees that the Dallas Convention in 2020 will be one to remember.

Department Meetings

ONLINE/OVER THE PHONE TRAINING

When: Every 4th Saturday 0800

How: Call (319) 527-4759
No access code needed



Tired of feeling in the dark?

Want to know what is going on in the Department?

Would you like a little more help in conducting DAV business?

The State Department of Veterans Affairs has approved an Honor Guard Recognition Award for our volunteers who serve as pall bearers, firing squads, buglers, escorts, etc. in honoring our fallen veterans. The details are on the Department of Veterans Affairs website, va.alabama.gov. The basic requirement is to have participated in at least twenty-five separate ceremonies. A pin and a certificate will be presented to each honoree. Rear Admiral (Retired) W. Kent Davis, Department Commissioner has stated that he would be honored to present those awards if he is available. I have already sent out all the information on the award, plus application. And, speaking of the State Department of Veterans Affairs, they are in the process of modernizing their web site and making it more efficient. That is a slow process, but hopefully it will be done in the next few months.

Veterans Day is six months away but planning for it continues throughout the year. We have cancelled the World Peace Luncheon on Veterans Day, so the only activity will be the parade. Everything else will be done at the Awards Dinner on November 10. Tickets for the dinner will be \$45.00. I should have tickets with me at convention for those who want to attend. This year's National Veteran of the Year is former U.S. Senator and Secretary of Defense Jeff Sessions. I hope many of you will decide to attend. This is DAV's year for providing the speaker for the dinner, so our Senior Vice Commander will be the special guest.

Respectfully,

Chad Richmond
Adjutant
Department of Alabama



Benefits Protection Team Leader

Laird Culver

There have been some items recently sent out from Lisa Bogle at DAV National which BPT leaders and members. One of the most important would be the [Resolution Process and Resolution Writing](#). You can also view a [PDF](#) of the presentation.

Remember it is your DAV, these are your benefits we are discussing, it is your choice to get involved or sit idle while others decide the fate of the VA. I would hope you see the importance of being involved, informed and invigorated to be involved in your benefits protection.

Spring is in the air!

I would like to thank those who were in attendance in Washington, DC for the DAV Mid-Winter in Washington, DC. It would have been better to have a few more people to be able to send teams of three out to meet with the representatives, but I understand how busy folks are after the beginning of the year. The speech before the joint committee by the DAV National Commander was informative and well attended. If you have never been to the DAV Mid-Winter in Washington, DC, you are missing out and should think about attending in the future.

Thanks for your support and I hope to see everyone at the DAV Department of Alabama Convention at the end of May and beginning of June. Get those registrations and ads in to support your Department!

Laird B. Culver

PDC 2014-15
BPTL | DAV Department of Alabama



Benefits Protection Team (BPT) Leaders were able to attend an information brief from the DAV National Legislative Office. The Interim Legislative Committee members were introduced and it was a great event. Your DAV National Legislative Office and Committee are working hard to keep everyone informed of changes, bills, classes, online training and other opportunities. You can receive much of the information pertaining to the goings-on can be sent to you if you are on the [DAV National Commanders Network \(CAN\)](#).



[Contact your House Representative](#)



[Contact your Senate Representative](#)

DAV Upcoming Events

May 2-5, 2019: Department of Mississippi Convention, Drury Inn, Meridian, MS

May 3, 2019: Women Veterans Benefits Claims, Demopolis, AL

May 15-19, 2019: Department of Louisiana Convention, Hotel Bentley, Alexandria, LA

May 18, 2019: Armed Forces Day Celebration, Odenville, AL

May 30-June 2, 2019: Department of Alabama Convention, Auburn Marriott Opelika Hotel and Conference Center at Grand National, Opelika, AL

June 19-22, 2019: Department of Tennessee Convention, Doubletree Hotel, Murfreesboro, TN

June 29-July 2, 2019: State Commanders and Adjutants Orientation, Embassy Suites, Cold Spring, KY

July 12, 2019: SBVA Meeting, Montgomery, AL

July 12, 2019: Women Veterans Expo, UAB, Birmingham, AL

August 1, 2019: DAV/Recruit Military Job Fair, McWane Science Center, Birmingham, AL

August 3-7, 2019: National Convention, Rosen Shingle Creek Hotel, Orlando, FL

November 7-10, 2019: Department of Mississippi Mid-Winter Conference, TBA, Biloxi, MS

November 14-17, 2019: Department of Louisiana Mid-Winter Conference, Hotel Bentley, Alexandria, LA

January 9-12, 2020: Department of Alabama Mid-Winter Conference, Auburn Marriott Opelika Hotel and Conference Center At Grand National, Opelika, AL

June 4-7, 2020: Department of Alabama Convention, TBA

July 31-August 4, 2020: National Convention, Dallas, TX

July 24-27, 2021: National Convention, Reno, NV

August 5-9, 2022: National Convention, Orlando, FL

August 5-8, 2023: National Convention, Atlantic City, NJ



1st District Executive Committeeman Anwarul "Andy" Haq

Comrades,

As I continue to visit the Chapters in District one I am amazed at how the chapters are operating with huge success. However, let's not let our guard down and continue operating with full capacity. The District is going to have an informal meeting on 20 April 2019. We are very grateful for Raytheon Company Veterans helping us to have the meeting at their facility. Chapter 26 is being very generous by providing all the food for lunch. It is going to be a huge and successful function as all the Chapters have agreed to have their briefing by Power Point to speed up the process and have the information put out clearly.

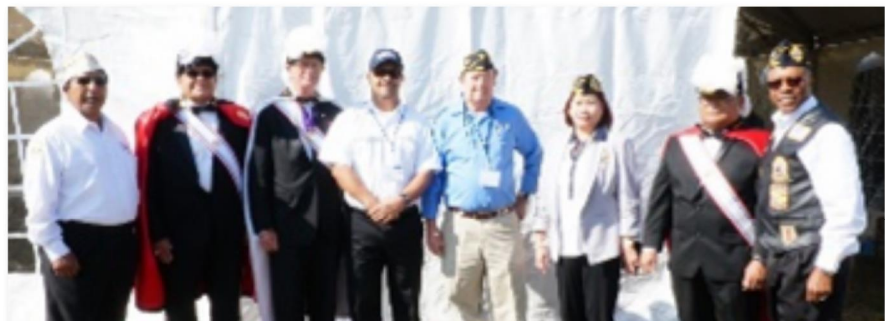
Chapter 11 Commander Wayne Dunkin and the members have worked tirelessly to upgrade their meeting place. They have renovated the bathroom and kitchen facilities for their members. The facility looks very elegant.



Chapter 18 continues to do great things. They have a great Van Transportation Network. They continue to operate their van to transport veterans from the local VA clinic to the Birmingham VAMC for appointments. Commander Allison was interviewed on Boaz local radio station WBSA about the van and its operations on March 21, 2019. From July 2018 . March 2019: 392 Passengers, 137 Trips, 20,239 Miles. Chapter 18 has opened CSO office space across the county in the Boaz, Albertville and Guntersville Public Libraries on the first and third Tuesdays, Wednesday and Thursdays, respectively. Goal is to have CSO representation in the entire county. Chapter 18 members are working together with Chapter 28 members during April, May and June on the Golden Corral Just Be Kids fundraiser at the Cullman Golden Corral to send service member's and veteran's children to Camp Corral.



Chapter 26 is always leading the pack. This chapter works Monday thru Friday and on some Saturdays. The chapter is doing great in their membership goals and has exceeded it. Chapter 26 has a solid training program and has sent its members to CSO, Benefits Protection Team, DAV Alabama Summer and Winter Conference, DAV National Conference. Chapter 26 supports and attends all local Veterans events such as Gold Star Dinner, Hall Of Heroes, and Flag Retirement Ceremony, The Wall That Heals program honoring Vietnam Veterans, Military Appreciation Day/Alabama A&M University and Floyd Tut Fann State Home monthly birthday party for veterans. Auxiliary Unit 26 is just as active and supports the Chapter to help veterans.





Chapter 51 has improved tremendously. They have increased their membership 400 percent and will soon be like other chapters in this area. They are managing their funds and doing great things to increase it. They have come to a point that they can now donate to needy veterans. They supported a blind DAV member to make his VA Appointment, provided funds for the local Little League Team

Uniforms and donated to the Limestone County Veterans Burial Service. They are focusing on getting CSO trained to help with the disability claims program.

Chapter 63 is continuing to do all the great things they do.

Finally, the DAV- Auxiliary Units are really helping the Chapters to be successful.

Respectfully,

Andy Haq
DECM . 1st District



SAVE THE DATE

Veterans Treatment Court Conference

Tuesday, June 11, 2019

9:00 AM - 3:30 PM

(registration starts at 8:00 AM)

University of Alabama

Bryant Conference Center

240 Paul W. Bryant Drive

Tuscaloosa, AL 35487

Sponsored by:

United States Attorney's Office, Northern District of Alabama

University of Alabama School of Social Work

The Department of Veterans Affairs

No cost to attend conference

Pending DOJ Approval

Credits applied for: APOSTE, CEU, and CLE

CONFERENCE AGENDA & ONLINE REGISTRATION INFORMATION TO BE PUBLISHED SOON



2nd District Executive Committeeman

Willie "Hamp" Hampton

Greetings Comrades,

I pray all is well with everyone. I welcome warmer weather. With warmer weather we begin to travel and find ways enjoy it. I hope everyone will take full advantage and be safe. In the meantime if you need me please feel free to call on me. Blessings to all of you from the Hampton Family.

The following are some updates of the things going on around the Second District.

Chapter 1

Tuscaloosa Chapter #1 provided a check in the amount of \$360.00 to the Tuscaloosa VAMC for a catered lunch for approximately 45 female veterans who attended the VA Go Red for women program 2/1/2019.

2/1/2019 -- Commander attended 1st Annual Nonprofit Community Partners breakfast sponsored by the University of Alabama Center for Service and Leadership.

2/15/2019 -- Ms. Annie Byrd, Tuscaloosa Chapter #1 CSO, co-facilitated Women Veterans Compensation & Pension Claims Working Group organized by Ms. Tawanna Jones, DAV HSC, at the Dothan VA Clinic.

3/22/2019 -- The University Of Alabama School Of Law sponsored a free Veterans Legal Assistance Clinic for Tuscaloosa Community. The Commander augmented the event to respond to questions regarding VA benefits.

4/15/2019 -- Convened April Chapter Meeting - Held nomination, election, and installation of new Chapter Leadership Team for 2019-2020. Only change was Ms. Annie Byrd replaced Ryan Sabbagh, who stepped down due to family obligation.

Chapter 4

The Chapter has serviced a large number of veterans with claims to the VA for their earned benefits. They also continue to serve the community and anyone in need by providing free food. This is accomplished by the personal funds of its executive committee mainly. Chapter 4 would like to thank Mrs. Nary and the NSO staff for providing great service to the veterans in the area through the MSO van.

Chapter 27

We are sure you don't remember, but in the last issue of News and Views, Chapter 27 was looking for a good used car at a reasonable price. Chapter 27 did in fact find a very good car and assisted a Disabled Veteran in purchasing it. It is so heartwarming to be able to help our Veterans in a way that enables them to live better lives!!

The Chapter also continues to assist numerous Veterans by serving as Mentors in the Veterans Court System. We enjoy seeing more and more Veterans GRADUATE from this program. It is a great program that believes in Veterans and feels they are worth another chance. If you have a program like this in your area, we hope you will volunteer to assist. Did you know a lot of Veterans are **Square Dancers**? It is TRUE. On Thursday, May 23rd, several of these Square Dancers will use their time and talents to ENTERTAIN the Veterans at Robert L Howard Veterans Home in Pell City AL. This exhibition will start at 2:00pm. If you are a Square Dancer, join us for this fun time. You can let us know you are interested in participating by emailing Ted and Diane Moss at squareup.t@gmail.com. We are hoping for enough dancers to form 3 squares.

Mark your calendars: Monday, May 27th, Chapter 27 will conduct the **Memorial Day Ceremony** in front of the Saint Clair County Courthouse in Pell City. The ceremony begins at 10:00 am. Our famous Alabama Artillery Group will be there to fire the Cannons in Memory of our Fallen Comrades and their families from St Clair County. Hope you will join us.

Chapter 28

Chapter 28 held its annual election of officers on March 2, with Frank Cannon being reelected as Commander. Department Commander Willie Tatum installed our officers.

On April 1 we began a 2 ½ month long fundraising period with the Cullman Golden Corral in their Just Be Kids program. So far it has been extremely successful. The City of Cullman is looking for a place for our chapter to open a service office in the city so we will be able to better assist the veterans of Cullman County. We hope to have a total of four offices open



JUNE 14TH:

THE BIRTHDAY OF THE U.S. ARMY

by Convention. We are looking for laptops and printers to support those offices. Commander Cannon is very active in both Blount and Cullman Counties trying to recruit ads for the Department Convention book.

Chapter 78

1. Helped Navy Veteran settle in the COL. Robert L. HOWARD Veteran Home.
2. Chapter Commander participated in Ferreira's scholarship program.
3. Chapter participated in community awareness program sponsored by the 100 Men Community Support Group.
4. 19th Annual POW-MIA Banquet will be held on September 14, 2019 @1700 hours. Pre-registration flyers will be published in the next News and Views.
5. Chapter sponsoring career coaching at the local career center.

Chapter 98

Chapter 98 CSOs are continuing to work with veterans in filing claims, we appreciate the hard work and help provided by the NSOs in obtaining positive outcomes for our veterans. The benevolent

committee has been active in helping local veterans in need not only with available funds but as a resource in connecting them to community resources.

Recently, one of our own suffered a disaster and it was heartwarming to see not only members of our chapter, but other veteran organizations come together to provide for Pete and Dee Dee Cobb. We are looking forward to a great convention at the end of May.

In service.
Respectfully,

Willie "Hamp" Hampton

2nd DECM
Commander Chapter 4
Birmingham, AL



3rd District Executive Committeeman

Reuben Redd

Commander Odemes and members, and any other chapters or individuals that made contributions to the recovery efforts.

April is the month for Chapter Elections. Please consider comrades who have a desire to lead and serve your Chapter, the Veterans, the Department of Alabama, and DAV National.

The 3rd. District Luncheon will be held on Saturday May 25, 2019, from 12:00 am - 2:00 PM, at 17 Main Street, Alexander City, AL 35010. Please contact Hugo Perez hugoperez13@outlook.com if you plan to attend so we can get a head count for the meal. Thank you!

Department Convention May 29, 2019 - June 01, 2019, Robert Trent Jones, Marriott Auburn Opelika Conference Center, Opelika, AL. 344-741-9292

Sincerely,

Reuben E. Redd
3rd. DECM



10 May 2019

**Military Spouse
Appreciation Day**

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Greetings from the DAV 3rd. District of Alabama,

All is well as most of the Chapters are working to assist Veterans, Widows, and Orphan's.

Most of you have heard about the devastating tornadoes that hit Lee County Alabama on Sunday March 3, 2019. There was a lot of property damage, twenty-three lives were lost, and a lot of people were injured. I would like to thank the following DAV members for their assistance after the Tornado: NSO Supervisor Mary Moore, NSO Assistant Supervisor Michael Smith, and their Staff; Chapter #95



4th District Executive Committeeman

Melvin Apley

FROM THE TRUNK OF THE ROLLING OFFICE

Among the many events that have occurred within the 4th District was the **Ribbon Cutting** and **Grand Opening** of the new **Mobile Veterans Outpatient Clinic** on the 15th of March. First patients were seen on the 25th. The facility is increased by 25% more square footage, has spacious waiting areas, and an improved reception system. As the new location is a distance away from its former building, the Mobile Transit System has added new bus routes in order to assist veterans in needed transportation.



Harry Zegarski, **Commander** of Chapter #6, reports that their fund raiser held at the **Elberta Sausage Festival** on March 30th was quite successful. They have plans in motion for **Memorial Day Activities**. On a personal note, the Zegarski's recently learned that they will finally graduate to the %World of Grandparents+ this fall. Ms. Lucia is already headed to the %Baby Stuff Stores+.

Word comes from Chapter #7 that **Service Coordinator Joe Donaldson** was elected to **Junior-Vice Commander** on April 9th. **John Brown** will serve as **Officer of the Day**. The Chapter will be holding the **2nd Annual Boot's Ride** on May 4th. This is a 60 mile ride starting at **Fish Rivers** and ending in **Stockton, Al**. Fee is \$20 per Bike and there is no limit to number of Scoots. On the same day, **Chaplin Edward Dembo** will be overseeing the **Belk Spring Charity Ticket Sale** at Bel-Air Mall in Mobile. Proceeds go to the Patriot Guard.

The **Enterprise Wal-Mart** is the location of a fund raiser held by Chapter #9 on the 27th. As of this writing on the 20th, it hasn't happened yet. Nominations for their election next month are **Gerry Merrihew** for **Commander**, and **Tom Ferguson** as **Senior-Vice Commander**. Other Officers remain the same. Additionally, **Honor Guard Members** are submitting the required paperwork for awards from the **Alabama State Department of Veterans Affairs**. On April 6th, **Tom Ferguson** fell and shattered his left ankle. After a plate, a handful of screws and a couple of pins, his recovery is going to be tedious. Please keep him in your thoughts and prayers.

Congratulations to **Leon Grove** as he has been elected to **Commander** of Chapter #35, **Commander Grove** was also named as the **4th District Veteran of the Year**. The Chapter is working diligently on developing their new **Service Van Program**. Another project has members investigating options concerning the improvement of some property in order to create a new Service Office and Meeting Location.





Members of Chapter #45 attended the **M.O.P.C. Ribbon Cutting** and a **Veterans Job Fair** in March. April started with members getting into their wallets and collecting \$300 in support of a veteran who recently became homebound. The Chapter will assist this person as time goes on. A donation was also given to Chapter #35 in support of their **Service Van**. On the 4th, **Commander Steadman** assisted Chapter #53 in their service office. On April 5th, Chapter members and the DAVA came together to host the **4th District Luncheon** held at the **Loxley Community Center**. More about this later. The **Loxley Strawberry Festival** was on the 13th & 14th, and the Chapter was at their usual location, holding a **For-Me-Not Drive**. During this event, All of our CSO's met with and explained the Claims Process with veterans in need. Eight (8) claims were initiated.

Chapter #53 held a **Grand Opening** of their remodeled **Service Center in Bay Minette** on April 4th. At their meeting on the same day, members voted to assist Chapter #35 with **Service Van Funding**. Concerning a members' health, **Treasurer/Adjutant Bernard White** is having serious medical problems. as is his entire family. **Commander Val Obergon** requests that all keep this family in your thoughts and prayers.

On 12 April, 2019, DAV Chapter 87- Dothan joined in support of the **Dothan Chamber of Commerce's** program named **Huston County Gives+**. This is a joint effort of all non-profit organizations within the county. Like many others, we erected our tent for display, handed out Chapter material, recruited for Chapter membership and conducted a radio PSA. Members supporting this event were **Henry William** (Adjutant), **Wayne Maddox** (CSO), and **Daniel Blackman** (Commander).



Commander Fay Miller of Chapter #94 says that they **sold-out+ early** during their **Good Friday Boston Butt Sale**. Proceeds are for Chapter support of local Veterans. During the last week of April, the Chapter came together to celebrate the 93rd Birthday of **WW II veteran Jack Perkins**. We wish him many more. On **Memorial Day**, Chapter members hold services at the local cemetery. Veterans from each war are recognized separately. On a sad note, **Treasurer Barry Martin** lost his home to fire in mid April. Although some of their property was salvaged, it sounds as if the house may have to be leveled. If anyone is able to help the Martin's, **Contact Fay Miller**. Please keep this family in your thoughts and Prayers.

Adjutant Charlie Lobdell of Chapter #99 reminds all of the **Spring Rally** known as "**Thundering Woods**" which is held at **Jack, AL** in late May. The Chapter serves Breakfast to Veterans during this 4-day event. From their recent Forgive-Me-Not, \$500 was sent to the **Florida Pan-Handle American Legion** to assist **Mexico Beach Veterans** affected by Hurricane Michael. Plans are in the works with the **Towne of New Brockton** concerning **Memorial Day Activities**.

THE 4TH District luncheon was attended by 45 members and guests. All but 1 of the active **4th District Chapters** was represented. Chapter #7's **Chaplin Edward Dembo** conducted the services as both **Dept. Chaplin Debora Varnar** and Chapter #45 **Chaplin Roy Hermencz** were indisposed.

The Department was represented by 2nd Junior-Vice Commander Earl Lee Frazer; The DAVA by Commander Marilyn Edwards. Adjutant – Designee Hugo Perez assisted in that capacity.



Special Guest was **Andrew M “Andy” Leon**, He was presented with a **Plaque in Appreciation** for his Service by the **DAV Members of Baldwin and Mobile Counties**. Although not a DAV Member, this gentleman has been a **Service Van Driver** since 1996, and has also been serving as a **Van Coordinator** beginning in 2004. His program is consistently rated as the best within the **Biloxi VA’s Healthcare System**.

A very special **THANK YOU** goes out to the **Chapter #45 Members and Auxiliary**, who assisted in making this Event Successful.



Chapter #35 **Commander Leon Grove** was presented with the **Eagle Award** as the **Veteran of the Year for the 4th District**. This is in recognition of his endeavors to turn the **Saraland Chapter** toward a more effective future.



During the Forum, The DAVA was invited to stay and Join in on the conversation. All were free to offer ideas or suggestions and to present questions. Subjects discussed covered attendance, homeless Veterans, ways to work together, Women Veterans, types of forums, Service Van Programs, Public awareness, Job Fairs, fund-raisers and end of life planning.

And for you, the worthy readers that peruse these pages of enlightenment, The **GRAND FINALE**

In the way of Constitutions, By-Laws and such, after our **State Convention** in June, the title of **District Executive Committeeman** will be no more. In all likelihood, the 4th DEC will be the last to be replaced. As is the norm criteria of publication, the spaces that we, your DEC’s, have occupied in the **News and Views** will be filled with the prose of yet unnamed **New Junior-Vice Commanders**. They will without a doubt have their own style of writing. We wish them the very best. Now for the last line to ever be presented in print in the **News and Views** by a **Department of Alabama District Executive Committeeman**.

HAPPY TRAILS TO YOU! And the Rolling Office heads down the Road with the Trunk Closed.

Stay Safe

Melvin P. Apley
4th DECM



Women's Veterans of Alabama

Tawanna Jones

Greetings to my DAV Family and Friends,

First, I give Honor and Glory to my Heavenly Father, God for all that I am.

Women Veterans are becoming the new face for homeless Veterans. The number of women serving in the military has increased; female veterans have become the fastest growing demographic in America's homeless community. Just as with male veterans, women veterans struggle to transition to civilian life, and some deal with unemployment which is one part of the increase for women veterans become homelessness. These Women Veterans are living in a shelter, staying with a friend or just couch surfing. Our Women Veterans need our help! One of the main and tough things about women veterans are that a lot of them don't identify themselves as a Veteran. Yes, this is still a problem; they are

confused of the definition of what is considered a Veteran, even within the military community. We (Disabled American Veterans) must make sure we are doing our best in carry out our mission statement to serve Women Veterans. Women are also seeing combat and are coming home with the physical and mental scars of battle historically associated with male veterans and we need to be READY to provide professional assistance. Start seeing the Women Veteran as a VETERAN that served! Thank you to all the DAV Chapters who are READY to SERVE WOMEN VETERANS!!! Let do our part in helping to end HOMELESSNESS in our Veteran population by providing Professional Assistance to All Veterans with Respect and Dignity as stated in our mission statement.

"Every day we live is a priceless gift of God, Loaded with Possibilities to learn Something new, to gain Fresh insights"

Respectfully,

Tawanna
Women's Veteran Coordinator





Department Chaplain

Debra Varner

sense to others or meet their immediate approval, but God's ways will prove best every time. When you stop being encouraged towards the seemingly impossible you may need to question whether you're still walking by faith.

So, let God take the lead. You can do some things well. God can do the impossible. You will be amazed when we seek to move toward the things in life that will help us to grow spiritually, mentally, and physically. This transformation can only come about when it's according to His will and not yours. This will take discipline, humility, and practice.

From the Chaplain's Corner:

We are in the spring season and many things began anew. We are moving forward in coming out of our winter season of hibernation. We must allow ourselves to spring forward into the newness of life. Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it (Proverbs 4:23). Avoid any hint of temptation to remain in a stagnated place. Look for the working signs your heart drifting into places of despair and giving up. Allow others to speak words of encouragement into the dark places of your life, but, more than anything keep your heart saturated with God's Word and in prayer.

Let God lead. If you can dream it, God can dream it bigger. Don't dismiss the seemingly ridiculous things God has asked you to do. They won't always make

Just a word of encouragement to begin new, it is a new beginning!

Humbly Submitted,

Debra H. Varner

DAV Chaplain,
Department of Alabama



2 May 2019

MY FATHER ...

Loves me [John 3:16](#)

Cares for Me [Psalm 103](#)

Renews Me [Isaiah 40:31](#)

Protects Me [Psalm 23:4](#)

Redeems Me [Job 19:25](#)

Is Preparing a Place for Me [Psalm 139](#)

Understands & Accepts Me [Psalm 139](#)

Guides & Teaches Me [Psalm 25:9](#)



DAVA Commander

Marilyn Todd Edwards

BUILD...BUILD....BUILD!!!

Hello ALL!

Happy Spring and Happy Easter!

Again, congratulations Alabama Units for being one of the first states to



make quota this year! Keep up the great work! Though we have made quota, let us not sit down. I know each unit needs help. Let's put these new members to work. It is difficult when we have the same members doing the same work all of the time. Burn out sets in and we do not need to get burnt out. Let us reach out to our new members, our junior members and even our members that we have not heard from in quite some time for some new help and support. Keep encouraging one another. We still have a lot to do for our veterans and their families.

Well May/June for 2019 DAV/DAVA 2019 Convention will be here before you know it, so let's start working towards it. Let's get those registration forms in so that the Department can have an accurate account of attendees. This is most helpful. Hopefully the Mid-winter training prepared you for completing your reports accurately so that they can be judged clearly. Please make sure to complete your Mae Holmes Report as National has asked us to complete this one especially. Now is a good time to start thinking about

who will be appointed as the delegates and/or alternates for convention.

Upcoming Events:

DAV/DAVA Department of Alabama 2019 93rd Convention:
May 30 - June 2, 2019, Auburn Marriott Opelika Hotel & Conference Center At Grand National 3700 Robert Trent Jones Trail Opelika AL 36801

Remember Auxiliary members, it is time to BUILD! Build our units, build our membership so that we can build our efforts in assisting veterans and their families. So let's continue to BUILDō BUILDō .BUILD!!!

DON'T FORGET YOUR JUNIORS!

If I can be of any further assistance, please feel free to contact me at (334) 596-9610 or mari36305@hotmail.com.

Marilyn D. Edwards
Commander



NSO Supervisor
Mary Stovall-Moore

Greetings Comrades,

Changes to the Claims Process

On Tuesday, February 19, 2019 the Veterans Administration made the following changes to the claims process:

The definition of a "claim" was changed into the following two type of claims:

- 1) **Initial Claim:** 38 CFR 3.1(P) defines an 'initial claim' as a claim for benefits other than a supplemental claim, including the first filing by a claimant (original claim) and a subsequent claim filed by a claimant for an increase in a disability evaluation, a new benefit, or a new disability.
- 2) **Supplemental Claim:** 38 CFR 3.1 (P) further defines a 'supplemental claim' as a claim where an initial claim for the same or

similar benefit on the same or similar basis was previously decided. 38 CFR 3.2501 notes that new and relevant evidence must accompany a supplemental claim or be submitted or secured while a supplemental claim is pending for VA to take action on the evidence and re-adjudicate the claim.

As a result of the above definition changes, the below forms are to be used as follows:

21-526 EZ - Used in the following two instances:

1. Claiming an initial service connection for a specific condition for the first time.
2. Requesting an increased rating for an already established service-connected condition.

21P-527EZ - Used for the initial application for veterans pension benefits.

21P-534EZ - Used for the initial application for DIC, death pension and/or accrued benefits.

VA 20-0995 (DECISION REVIEW REQUEST/SUPPLEMENTAL CLAIM) - Used to initiate a supplemental claim. The claimant MUST submit new and relevant evidence to support a change in the decision. Refer to the definition of supplemental claim above.

The options available to a claimant who disagrees with a decision was changed as follows:

Decisions issued prior to February 19, 2019:

21-4138 (Statement in Support of Claim) Request reconsideration of the decision by submitting New and Material evidence. This request must be made within one-year of the decision.

21-0958 (Notice of Disagreement) Must be submitted within one-year from the date of the decision. The claim remains under the legacy appeal process.

NOTE: Claimants in the legacy system who received decisions and filed a NOD prior to February 19, 2019, will remain in the legacy system. Those claimants, who wish to opt into the faster modernized system, must wait until a Statement of the Case (SOC) or Supplemental Statement of the Case (SSOC) is issued. Once a SOC or SSOC is received by the veteran, they should utilize either the Supplemental Claim form 20-0995, or the Higher Level Review (HLR) form 20-0996, or the VA 10182 Notice of Disagreement (NOD) to the Board of Veterans Appeals (BVA) and check the appropriate review option.

We provided financial assistance through DAV's Disaster Relief Program to those veterans who were victims of the tornado in Beauregard and Smith Station. We continue to keep those families in our prayers as they rebuild their lives. It was a humbling experience and we were blessed to be able to assist those veterans in need during this difficult time. We would like to thank CSO Eugene Benford, Commander Freddie Odomes and Ariel Ferrell of Chapter 95 in Opelika for their assistance as well. They took us to find veterans in those areas that needed assistance.

Sincerely,

Mary Stoval-Moore

NSO Supervisor



eBenefits Info

Once a decision is rendered in either a claim or an appeal, we will have the opportunity to review the decision prior to your notification. If the decision is in accordance with the law, we will release the decision to the VA and provide you with an unofficial notification by mail. You can track the status of your claim through e-Benefits by signing up at:

[Click here for eBenefits.](#)



NSO Hours

VA Regional Office
[345 Perry Hill Road](#)
[Montgomery, AL 36109](#)

Office: 334-213-3365
Fax: 334-213-5661

NSO Office hours for NSO contact/Interview:

By Appointment: Call office phone

Office hours for telephone calls:
Monday - Friday: 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM



Greetings, Comrades

I Kerry M Edwards DAV Chapter 9 Enterprise-Coffee Co. am seeking your support for the Department of Alabama 1st/ 2nd Junior Vice Commander. I have a proven record to lead, along with the skills in management and the ability to work with others at local and Department level. If my likeable demeanor and qualities are those that you would want in a Department Line Officer, then I am your man.

I received my Army Basic Training at Ft Jackson, SC in 1975. AIT Training at Ft. Benning Ga. Infantry/Airborne (11B/P) 1975, Ft Lee Va. Petroleum Storage Specialist (78W/77F) 1978, Ft Lenard Wood Mo. Motor Transport Operator (64C/88M) 1981 After serving 11yrs Stateside and in Korea (1 yr.) and Germany (9 yrs.), I was deployed to Desert Shield/Storm 1990-1991, Somalia 1993, Rwanda 1994. I retired as a 1sg E-8 after 21 plus years 1996.

I have held many Chapter and Department positions and excelled at all of them. Department 4th DEC 2017-2018, Chapter Commander (5yrs), SVC (8yrs), JVC (1) Adjutant (1yr) , Treasurer (2yrs), Chaplain (3yrs), Executive Committee (9yrs), Van Coordinator/Driver (13yrs), DSO/CSO (19yrs), Clinic Coordinator (18yrs), DAVA Unit 87 Life Member (13yrs), (SEACH) Southeast Alabama Coalitions for the Homeless member (10yrs). As you can see, I have the knowledge and experience to be the next 1st or 2nd JVC and future Department Commander. Once elected, you, will find out how devoted I am to my fellow Disabled American Veterans, BUILDING BETTER LIVES FOR ALL VETERANS AND THEIR FAMILIES.

Thank you for your support,

Kerry M Edwards
DAV Chapter 9 Enterprise-Coffee County
1sg E-8 Army Retired
DAV/DAVA Life Member



Hello, my fellow Veterans.

My name is Scott L. Shoemaker, currently the Commander for Bill Nichols Chapter 13, Alexander City. I am a 20-year Army Infantry veteran, born and raised in Roseville, California. My residence is Dadeville, Alabama, where I share my home with my wife, Harshila, and our plethora of house animals and non-house animals.

My military career started at Ft. Benning, GA in 1984 One Station Unit Training (OSUT) as an 11HE9. Then I was assigned to E Co 1/5 CAV, 1st CD until January 1986, then on to B Co 1/6 Inf, 1st AD, Illesheim, Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) until 1989. I then served in E/B Co 3/6 Inf Ft. Polk, LA as a new E5, then on to recruiting in 1991 as an E6 in Salt Lake City, UT. I went back to the FRG in 1992 but this time to B/A Co 1/6 Inf AD until 1998. I was sent back to B Co 1/5 Cav, 1st CD until 2002 and I got to go to Korea with HHC 1/503rd 1st ID. I went back to Ft. Hood in 2003 I got assigned to B Co 2/8 Inf, 4ID until my retirement in 2004. My deployments include Spain, Italy, Macedonia X2, Bosnia and Iraq.

My civilian work was with government contract work in and out of country until 2010 after that I took up employment at Lyman Ward Military Academy Camp Hill, AL which resulted in me and my family moving to the great state of Alabama.

Within the DAV, I have held the positions of Benefits Protection Team Leader, CSO, Senior Vice Commander, and now, Commander. I strongly believe in Veterans helping Veterans, for it was a Veteran who helped me in my darkest time (thank you, Hugo). I am running for State Junior Vice. I have knowledge to share, and I am not above learning and receiving new knowledge. I believe actions speak louder than words. I look forward to serving my fellow veterans.

May the best person be chosen.

Scott L. Shoemaker
Commander, Bill Nichols Chapter 13
Alexander City, AL



Remember Our Fallen Heroes

Memorial Day
27 May 2019

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