

Jacksonville Chapter #1 INC

Disabled American Veterans, Southside Chapter #1, INC.
1439 Parental Home Road, Jacksonville, FL. 32216
Phone: 904-720-0244

Volume 8 Issue 2

April-June 2008

<u>DAV</u>		<u>OFFICERS</u>		<u>DAVA</u>	
Guy Diffenbaugh	233-4125	Commander	Jean Christian		646-1372
Ray Paine	714-6677	Sr. Vice Cmdr	Erlinda Loubier		221-6404
Al Braun	465-1791	Adjutant	Marjorie Paine		714-6677
Thurman Dubberly	751-4325	Chaplain	Annie Shortridge		641-2748

Chapter Service Officers: Al Braun, John Markiewicz, Guy Diffenbaugh, Dick Aquino

Service office is open Monday-Thursday, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., Fridays by appointment only

Please call before coming to chapter house

Membership meetings are held on the fourth Saturday of each month at 1:00pm, next meeting is 4/26/08.

Executive Committee meets at 12:00 p.m., on the same Saturday.

Editor: Ray Paine ligar@bellsouth.net & Staff

District Meeting is at noon on April 19, 2008 hosted by Chapter 6 in St Augustine at the First United Methodist Church Located at 118 King Street. Take US Hwy 1 through St Augustine and turn on East on King Street. The Church will be on the left as you proceed toward Flagler College.

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS
JACKSONVILLE CHAPTER NO. 1, INC.
P.O. BOX 16444
JACKSONVILLE, FL 32245

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DAV COMMANDER'S REPORT

Greetings! As I reflect on this past year as your Commander, I can tell you that without your help and support it would have been impossible. Together we have accomplished a lot. Be sure and read John Markiewicz's report from Mid-Winter in Washington, D.C. Congress is after your benefits and has the gall to want our support. This is the kind of things that make strong Veterans organizations necessary. I can report that the Chapter is strong and accomplishing its mission of helping disabled veterans and their families. We purchased a van to transport veterans to Lake City VMHC (a critical area of service) and our service office has seen increasingly larger numbers needing our help.

I know that many of you are physically unable to attend our monthly meetings but please encourage those that can to join us. We will be electing officers at the April meeting. Again, thanks for supporting me enabling my command possible

**Guy Diffenbaugh
Commander DAV**

CHAPLAIN'S REPORT

My fellow members, as I write this message just before Easter I am reminded of the Son of GOD giving HIS life on the cross for our sins. Blessed are the brave men and women who have giving their lives in order you and I might be free, please let's not forget them in our prayers. Pray for our official whom we elect this coming year that they will guide us, and help us to make America strong and a leader in the world to come.

The following members have gone to meet the Supreme Commander this quarter: William K. Moore; Mitchel R. Casey; Robert A. Moore; Augusta Newell; Rupert J. Thomas; Samuel J. Williams; Frank T. Huray; Lee H. Greene, Jr.; Henry Higginbotham; Stanley K. Nodland; Ronald E. Turner; Francis E. Reed; Frank E. Rust; Veron B. Pearson; Paul A. Koshler; Willis C. Trawick; Roosevelt Long; and George Christian who passed away on April 7th as we were finalizing this newsletter.

**Thurman Dubberly
Chaplain DAV**

SERVICE OFFICE – REPORT

Volunteers are always needed at the VA hospital, also at the Chapter house. We now are required to submit a monthly report of Chapter volunteers (Not VAVS). Anyone who has worked as a volunteer on Chapter outreach or veterans assistance, please give me information on this.

Anyone knowing a Vietnam vet, who had an amputation as a result of that service, please let me know as there is a new program for traumatic amputation rehabilitation research which is collecting information on these vets.

Veterans using the VA home loan guarantee program can now obtain higher loans. Contact your financial institution.

The VA is collaborating with the FDA to share info on the review and use of FDA-regulated drugs and other medical products.

Effective February 1, 2008, the VA mileage reimbursement rate increased from 11 cents per mile to 28.5 cents per mile for travel to or from a VA facility for exams, treatment or care.

A change in the law that allows certain serious injured veterans and service members with a "permanent and total disability" to receive multiple grants from the VA for constructing or modified homes has resulted in many new grants. Forms for applying are available at the office.

The DAV has its own national network of attorneys who have agreed to give reduced-fee service to our members. These lawyers will prepare simple wills for \$100, health care and financial powers of attorney for \$35 each. Other legal services are provided at 10% off the lawyer's prevailing rate. You may access the list in the DAV Legal Services Network (LSN) at website <http://www.dav.org/membership/legal_services.asp>

**Al Braun
Senior Service Officer**

AUXILIARY COMMANDER'S REPORT

The month of April has always proven to be the busiest month of the entire year. All Unit, District, State and National reports must be finished and mailed before the first day of May. So, we will be burning the midnight oil until all these reports are completed.

Our Unit has already started collecting comfort items and personal toilet articles to fill ditty bags for the homeless and needy Veterans. The "Veterans Stand-down" is usually held at the Fairgrounds in downtown Jax on the first Saturday in August. Unit member Susan Fischer has volunteered to crank up her sewing machine to make the ditty bags. If you can help provide items to fill the ditty bags you may drop them off at the Chapter House, bring them with you when you come to the meeting on the 4th Saturday of each month, or call one of the Unit officers and we will arrange to pick them up.

The "No-bake sale" is still going on. Please be generous when you mail in your donation as this is how we determine how much money we can spend on our disabled Veterans throughout the year and at Christmas time. We are seeing an increased number of younger Veterans in the VA hospitals and nursing homes as well as the elderly Veterans. But there seems to be fewer Chapter and Unit members who are able to continue assisting and serving them as our organization has done for so many years. I encourage all of you younger men and women who are eligible, to join and be active in the DAV and Auxiliary. Most everyone has family members serving in the military and they deserve our support. The DAV and DAVA provide a strong support base for the Veterans as well as for their family members.

The annual election to elect Unit officers for 2008-2009 will be held at our next meeting April 26, 2008. Please try to be present at this meeting so you will have an input in the election process.

So many of our Chapter and Unit members have been seriously ill the past couple of months. Hopefully, everyone is recovering and feeling much better. My husband has been in Critical Care at Memorial hospital since February 21st. The prognosis for his recovery does not look good at this time, but I believe in miracles and ask you to please continue to keep him in your prayers.

To each and everyone of you who called, visited or sent those beautiful cards to me while I was in the hospital last month with pneumonia, I thank you from the bottom of my heart. I am feeling much better and will soon be back to normal.

I have been so very fortunate to have such a good supportive group of Unit officers who have worked together so well and accomplished so much. My deepest gratitude, respect and love go out to Past Unit Commanders Lola Dealy and Phyllis Underwood. I could not have carried out the responsibilities of serving as your Unit Commander for the past three years had it not been for the helpful support given me by these two ladies. Just saying thank you is not enough, but I will always be grateful to you both.

I look forward to seeing everyone at the District 3 meeting on Saturday April 19, 2008. Chapter and Unit 6 of St. Augustine will be hosting the meeting and lunch will be served at 12:00 noon. Bring a covered dish, come have a good time and see old friends. I will be looking for you.

**Jean Christian
Commander DAVA**

Membership

The following is from 01/01/2008-03/01/2008:

<u>PAID –UP MEMBERSHIP</u>	<u>NEW MEMBERS</u>	<u>TRANSFERRED IN</u>
Robert E. Strauss	Robert E. Strauss	Michael N. Bading
James R. Snellen	James R. Snellen	William Feliciano
James R. Collins	James R Mounce	Stephan H. Kolb
Andrew Griffith	Andrew Griffith	William A. Pitt
John W. Hughes	John W. Huges	
Jimmy F. Williams	Robert L. Alford	
Fred L. Hyre	Larry Blue	
Gerald G. Druley	Wayne E. Dansey	
Raymond J. McMahon	Robert L. Freeman	
Christopher A. Platt	Joanne LaTanya Gilford	
Merrill E. Jones	Lester Louise Driggers	
Robert A. Sey	Donald F. Kiger	
Andrew J. Carter	Andrew J. Carter	
Patrick B. Jarvis	James Smith	
Jeffrey P. Humphreys	William F. McInarnay	
Richard B. Warner	Clarence Wallace	
Harry L. Herman	Milton L. Thomas	
William F. Cobb	Scott A. Bieber	
Jacque L. Saul	Raymond J. Bergeron	
Gregory P. Loubier	Sammy M. Bryan	
Randi Wooddell	Stephan E. Dingsel	
Dennis R. Shropshire	Leonard Green	
James E. Stellacie	Donald L. Jones	
Albert T. Hawk	James D. Russell	
Jack W. Mounce	Sheila A. Sanders	
Paul Tucker	Roger W. Cason	
	Brandon A. Smith	

Congratulations to the new and transferee members for joining DAV Chapter 1. Double congrats to all paid-up-for-life members. If I left anyone out please forgive me. Notify me and I will make the changes.

You can make a difference in the lives of veterans and their families by coming out to our meeting, by partaking and bring ideas for the betterment of the Chapter and Unit. There are still many veterans out there who don't know who we are. So I ask all of you to make this your goal of "Veterans helping other Veterans". DO YOUR PART. Bring in new members, reach out to make them feel like a part of this vast family and by doing this others will join. Our Veterans are coming home little by little from IRAQ, AFGHANISTAN, and the PERSIAN GULF. Some are having trouble readjusting back into civilian life. There are still many veterans out there who don't know who we are, so I ask all of you to make an effort to let them know we're here to help.

Update your file, make sure your address, phone numbers, spouses name, paid up dues, email address and etc. are on the national rolls, if not call me @ 714-6677 or email me, ligar@bellsouth.net, the information and I will put it into your record. You must have a correct address in order to receive the newsletter.

Have a wonderful day and a better day tomorrow. Take care.

**R. D. Paine, Jr.
Sr. Vice Commander/Membership Chairmen**

Information by District Commander John Markiewicz

DAV 2008 MID-WINTER CONFERENCE OF THE COMMANDERS AND ADJUTANTS ASSOCIATION

I am submitting this report of my trip to the subject conference for your information and to make you aware of some of the things going on, in our organization, in the Department of Veterans Affairs and in Congress.

The opening session included remarks from The Honorable James B. Peake, Secretary of Veterans Affairs as well as the National DAV and Auxiliary Commanders and Adjutants.

I attended all of the workshops while there, including Benefits Protection Team, Legislative, National Service, VA Volunteer Service, Membership, Adjutants and a Communications Seminar. The highlight of the trip every year is the presentation of the DAV's Legislative Program by the National Commander to a joint session of the Senate and House Veterans Services Committee which I attended and the visit to all of the representatives of our individual states where we present the DAV program to them individually. I was assigned to and met with Corrine Brown, who was very receptive to our programs.

Our talking points this year included thanking the Congress for providing an adequate VA health care budget for 2008 and for providing combat-related special compensation for veterans wounded in combat with less than 20 years of service; encouraged the amendment of federal veterans' benefits provision to grant entitlement under the Montgomery GI Bill to educational assistance to individuals who serve on active duty after 9/11/2001; reminded of the continuing need for sufficient, timely and predictable funding of the VA to guarantee the long term viability of the VA health care system and that it is and must remain a national priority; encouraged the repeal of offsets that penalize the 40% and below VA disability rated veterans who also receive military retirement pay as well as the offset between SBP and DIC benefits; encouraged the increase of VA disability compensation to include compensation for the loss of quality of life resulting from service-connected disabilities (current compensation is based only on average impairment of earning capacity); and, finally, we discussed the new "Stand up for Veterans" initiative (www.standup4vets.org) which urges new laws to mandate that all veterans are properly screened and treated for psychological wounds, including PTSD, utilizing the most evidence-based therapies; ensure that all combat veterans are properly screened using validated assessment tools and, when indicated, be provided timely and convenient access to proven, effective treatments; provide comprehensive support to family caregivers of severely wounded and disabled veterans, including access to VA mental health care services, financial support and other programs to promote full recovery of these veterans and their families; and reform the federal budget and appropriations process for veterans medical care programs to guarantee that funding is sufficient, timely and predictable to sustain VA health care as the "best care anywhere".

I need to mention the Wounded Warrior and the Noble Warrior bills that have been authored by Senator Burr and Representative Buyer, who spoke briefly on their bills and their concern that the veterans organizations are not buying into it as they ought. They professed concern that they are attempting to help the veterans of our current conflict and we should be behind that 100%. As you may know, the bills set up a new separate compensation system for recently disabled veterans, forces older veterans into the new system if they ever apply for or reopen a claim and eliminates the current provisions that a rating can not be reduced after 10 years and can not be removed after 20 years.

It adds quality of life compensation for the new vets but does not allow it for the old vets, it bases compensation on receiving treatment and reduces or eliminates compensation when maximum improvement is reached or if no improvement or treatment is possible. If someone loses a limb and through therapy and an artificial limb the veteran is determined as able to return to full employment it removes compensation.

It allows the VA to re-evaluate a veteran as often as they desire and to adjust the compensation levels at will as well as allowing compensation ratings themselves to be readjusted without evaluation, all with the goal of reducing compensation.

The real result would be increased backlogs by the VA trying to deal with two distinct rating systems when they have proven unable to deal with just one (backlogs have gone from 600,000 to nearly 800,000 claims) but worst case is that it removes rating decisions from the VA and gives them to Congress who wish to endear themselves to the veterans of the current conflict at the cost of the veterans of earlier conflicts.

We have made great progress, but still have some way to go in our quest for our disabled veterans. One of the interesting things that I picked up on, that is highly relevant to our local operations, is that while the number of volunteer hours being performed in our VA hospitals and our transportation system is up, the actual number of volunteers performing those services is down. This means that fewer volunteers are being required to do even more to meet the needs of our veterans and that we need to work on getting our volunteer numbers up.

THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS

We want to thank all of our donors who have contributed this fiscal year. Their generosity helps us to continue our services to our members and to all of our Veterans, donors listed below:

George & Jean Christian	Al & Lola Dealy	Guy L. Diffenbaugh
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