

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS | JACKSONVILLE CHAPTER 1, INC

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CHAPTER NEWSLETTER

Volume 19 Issue 8 – August 2019

Chapter 1 Officers

DAV	DAVA
Commander: Leslie Eglinger	Commander: Katherine A. Haines
Adjutant: Paul Markiewicz	Adjutant: Diana Locke
Sr. Vice Commander: Lynn Geiser	Sr. Vice Commander: Billie Jean Christian
1st Jr. Vice Commander: David Kirby	1st Jr. Vice Commander: Generosa McClay-Buchanan
2nd Jr. Vice Commander: Richard Arceneaux	
Chaplain: Oscar McKnight	Chaplain: Marilyn Miller
Treasurer: Larry Eddy	Treasurer: Diana Locke
Judge Advocate: Robert Young	
Benefits Protection: Standley Slowey	

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<u>Meetings and Events</u> August	<u>Meetings and Events</u> September
8/3-6/2019 DAV National Convention, Orlando 8/24/2019 1:00 PM Chapter Meeting	9/28/2019 1:00 PM Chapter Meeting

A comment

At the July 28, 2018 meeting I proposed that if any members of our Chapter and Auxiliary submitted input to me *by the Wednesday before our monthly meeting* – without me having to ask for it – I would put it into a Newsletter and post it to our website at fl.dav.org/1. I also offered to do it monthly, aiming to publish it by our monthly meeting.

If anyone has something of interest, please send it to me.

This Newsletter would be much more informative
if I were not the only one providing input.

/S/ John J. Donnangelo, Editor

Comments: Tom Ayala, Department Commander

I want to thank the members of the BEST Department in DAV for electing me as your Department Commander for 2019-2020. I will continue the hard work that our Past Department Commanders have done. I would also like to congratulate all of our new Department Line Officers. We have a great Department Line and I am looking forward to working with them. Thanks to our National representative National Adjutant Marc Burgess for attending our convention.

Your new Department Officers for 2019-2020 are as follows:

- Thomas Ayala Department Commander
- Duane Godfrey Department Senior Vice Commander
- John Raber Junior Vice Commander
- Chip Hanson Department Chaplain
- John Markiewicz Department Judge Advocate
- Wally Tyson Department Inspector
- Andy Marshall Department Adjutant/Treasurer

The Department Line Officers will continue traveling around the State to visit our Chapters. My goal is to have our line officers visit every chapter this year. The visits are to offer our

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assistance to Chapters and get to know the membership a little better. If you wish a Department Officer visit your chapter for a function or other event, please send your request to our Department Adjutant Andy Marshall at andy@davfla.com.

I will continue to request all Chapters submit their LVAP hours. Although we have 56 Chapters, we only receive LVAP hours from less than half of our Chapters. We only had 23 Chapters submit their LVAP reports this past year. I am asking every Chapter to submit their reports to Thomas @davfla.com. Please register for DAV's newest way to provide assistance to veterans and/or register a veteran who needs assistance at VolunteerforVeterans.org.

If you did not attend our recent Department Convention, you missed out on a lot of fun and comradery. Our theme was Roaring 20's and several members dressed for the theme. Prizes were given for best costumes and winner of the Charleston dance contest. Another goal of mine is to increase the number of Chapters and Delegates to attend our Mid-winter Conference in January and our next Department Convention in June 2020.

All Chapters should have held their elections for the year 2019-2020. Please ensure you have mailed the Chapter Officer Report to National and Department Headquarters and the National Service Office. Please ensure you provide a chapter email address as almost all communications are sent from Department Headquarters via email. Also, it's to submit your Chapter Financial report. The Chapter Financial Report is due not later than September 30. Please ensure you follow directions contained in the report for each line item.

See you in my travels and look forward to visiting your Chapter.

(Actually, Tom is a member of Chapter 1.)

IMPORTANT UPDATE for Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans

From: Dennis Nixon, DAV National Commander, and Ellen Timmerman, DAVA National Commander

A few weeks ago, we alerted you about enactment of the *Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veteran Act* (P.L. 116-23), which makes veterans who served in the waters offshore of Vietnam eligible to receive VA health care and benefits for conditions presumed associated with Agent Orange exposure.

(Continued on next page.)

Unfortunately, a week later, the Department of Veterans Affairs issued a blanket stay on all Blue Water Navy claims until January 1, 2020, which would delay granting these claims for at least six months.

After reviewing the law, the *Procopio* Court decision and the VA stay, and having discussions with VA officials and leaders in Congress, we want you to be aware of actions you should take and actions DAV is taking to ensure that Blue Water Navy veterans get access to VA health care and benefits as soon as possible.

First, although the new law does not take full effect until January 1st next year - and even though VA has issued a stay on all claims - ***it is imperative that Blue Water Navy veterans begin filing claims right now.***

If you think that you or anyone you know may be eligible for these benefits, including survivors of Blue Water Navy veterans, you should contact a DAV Service Officer and file a claim ***as soon as possible*** so that you can receive the maximum benefits to which you are entitled, at the earliest date. *[See the end of this article for the documentation you will need.]*

Second, DAV strongly disagrees with VA's decision to stay all pending Blue Water claims.

We believe that the *Procopio* decision gives VA the authority right now to begin granting claims for those veterans who served up to 12 miles from shore, while those who served beyond 12 miles - up to the limits established by the new law - may have to wait until January 1, 2020.

That is why we are working with our VSO colleagues and supporters in Congress to get VA to lift the blanket stay and begin processing claims right now.

For decades, Blue Water Navy Vietnam veterans have been denied benefits and access to health care by VA. They have waited long enough!

VA and Congress must find a way to move forward and begin granting Blue Water Navy veterans claims before it's too late.

Rest assured that we will not relent in our efforts to get VA to lift the stay and begin processing and granting Agent Orange claims for Blue Water Navy veterans and survivors now.

As the situation evolves, we will keep you apprised of our ongoing efforts and any additional actions you need to take. (Continued on next page.)

**Agent Orange Exposure in Republic of Vietnam Waters
(Blue Water Navy)**

How to file a claim for disability compensation:

- Apply online using www.va.gov, **OR**
- Work with an accredited representative or agent, **OR**
- Go to a VA regional office and have a VA employee assist you. You can find your regional office on our Facility Locator page.
- State on your application that you are filing for one of the presumed Agent Orange conditions.
- Include any evidence you have of service in the offshore waters of the Republic of Vietnam during the required timeframe. Include the name(s) of the ship(s) and the date(s) you crossed within 12 nautical miles of the Republic of Vietnam, if you have that information.
- Provide medical evidence showing a diagnosis of a current Agent Orange presumptive condition or tell us where you are being treated.

For more information on how to apply and for tips on making sure your claim is ready to be processed by VA, visit our Disability Compensation web page. www.va.gov

**YOUR INPUT
COULD BE
HERE!**