

Rod Olin Installed



Rod Olin was installed as Chapter 31 Adjutant/Treasurer by Department Commander Jim Haukedahl at the Chapter's December meeting.



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that does all this for you!***

Baxley New NSO

John Baxley of Seattle Washington has been appointed by DAV National Service Director Gary Augustine as Office Supervisor of the Fargo, ND DAV Service Office.

As the NSO Office Supervisor, John is responsible for Office Activities in addition to representation of all clients of the Fargo DAV Office.

Mylon Hoefs Appointed as VAVS Representative

Mylon Hoefs, Chapter 1, was appointed by DAV National Director of Voluntary Services Ron Minter to serve as the Fargo VA Medical Center VA Voluntary Services (VAVS) Representative. Mylon previously served as Deputy VAVS Representative for Fargo. He is also quite active in Chapter 1 activities and lives in Fargo.

DAV Urges Support of Acts to Hire Disabled Veteran Heroes

WASHINGTON—The Disabled American Veterans (DAV) is urging lawmakers to approve legislation aimed at creating job opportunities for the men and women who have protected and defended our nation and our precious way of life.

The VOW to Hire Heroes Act would help service members be better prepared for the transition to civilian status, expand career counseling and make it easier for them to convert



their military occupational specialties to related job qualifications. The measure also would expand education and training for unemployed veterans of previous eras and offer tax incentives for employers to hire veterans who have been out of work for six months or longer. It also provides disabled veterans up to 1 year of additional Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Benefits.

“With an unemployment rate of 11.5 percent, veterans are faring worse than others in the jobless population,” said DAV National Commander Donald L. Samuels. “More than 850,000 of our nation’s veterans can’t find a job. That is totally unacceptable, and this legislation would make a real difference in the lives of those veterans and their families.”

The measure combines provisions in the Hiring Heroes Act (S. 951) and the Veterans Opportunity to Work Act (H.R. 2433) into a single, comprehensive package that deserves broad bipartisan support in the House and Senate, Commander Samuels said.

“The DAV is calling upon its members and supporters to contact their congressional delegations and urge them to quickly pass this important legislation,” Commander Samuels said. “America’s veterans have the experience, discipline and leadership skills that employers are looking for. The only thing veterans need is the opportunity to put those skills to work.”

The 1.2 million-member Disabled American Veterans, a non-profit organization founded in 1920 and chartered by the U.S. Congress in 1932, represents this nation’s disabled veterans. It is dedicated to a single purpose: building better lives for our nation’s disabled veterans and their families. More information is available at www.dav.org.

Department Ticket Project Report

The annual department ticket project drawing was held this year on November 17th at the Veterans Memorial Room in Williston. Gross ticket sales are about \$21,737. This is \$494 more than last year. The Quantity of sellers was down, but the Quality of sellers was up. It was still a great job by all who participated in the ticket sales.

The drawing was performed by Department Commander Jim Haukedahl with the assistance of Department Adjutant Warren Tobin.

Project coordinator Robert Evans wishes to personally thank those dedicated DAV members who took the time to sell tickets. Remember that through your work we the DAVE are better able to fund our service programs.

Winners of the 2011 Ticket Project

- 1st Prize \$1,000 Fulkerson Funeral Home, Williston, ND
- 2nd Prize \$500 Doug Wellentin, Cooperstown, ND
- 3rd Prize \$100 Brady Rutherford, Hermantown, MN
- 4th Prize \$100 Leroy Northagen, Fordville, ND
- 5th Prize \$100 Jason Johnson, West Fargo, ND

- 6th Prize \$100 Paul Messner, Bismarck, ND
- 7th Prize \$100 James Peterson, Fargo, ND
- 8th Prize \$100 Wallace Eide, Fargo, ND
- 9th Prize \$100 Moose Lodge 239, Williston, ND
- 10th Prize \$100 Wade Wyatt, Fargo, ND
- 11th Prize \$100 Craig Laducer, Grand Forks, ND
- 12th Prize \$100 Greg Seurer, Moorhead, MN
- 13th Prize \$100 Ron Larson, Garrison, ND
- 14th Prize \$100 Kay Bakken, Fargo, ND
- 15th Prize \$100 Lexie Waa, Harwood, ND
- 16th Prize \$100 Karl Mattson, Moorhead, MN


Sellers of the Most Tickets

- 1st Place Ron Jackson, 550 Books
- 2nd Place Marissa Jackson, 450 Books
- 3rd Place Greg Seurer, 320 Books
- 4th Place Bob Evans, 143 Books
- 5th Place Ginger Snyder, 130 Books



Chapter 9 members preparing for the ticket drawing.

Department Commander Jim Haukedahl draws the first winner of the Ticket Project.



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Joint Base Balad Burn Pit Toxic Gas Exposure

At a recent VA and Institute of Medicine Press Conference, it was reported conducted by that Institute of Medicine studies that the air around the Joint Base Balad burn pit at the height of the Iraq War included dangerous particulate matter that could cause long-term respiratory illnesses.

However, the report, which was released this past Tuesday, suggested that poor air quality in Iraq and Afghanistan may be a bigger threat to servicemembers' long-term health than exposure to toxic smoke from burn pits. It also says that there are many unanswered questions.

The researchers said that the unhealthy "particulate matter" in the air around Joint Base Balad likely came from general environmental sources – "windblown dust combined with elemental carbon and metals that arise from transportation and industrial activities" – and not the burn pit's toxic smoke. With that factored in, the study found no additional threat from the plastic, metal and other waste being burned in the waste fires.

However, study authors were quick to point out that those conclusions aren't meant to prove that working and living around burn pits was safe. Researchers noted that air-quality monitoring data supplied by DoD was limited.

The Reserve Enlisted Association (TREA) urges further research into the topic, and in the meantime urges the creation of burn pit registry to identify servicemen and women who were possibly exposed to toxic smoke while they were carrying out orders overseas. That way, when

more conclusive medical studies are done the federal government will be able to easily contact them and let them know what possible health effects they can expect from that exposure.

Earlier this month, a study in the Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine suggested that defense and VA researchers begin using the term "Iraq/Afghanistan War Lung Injury" for the high rates of respiratory illnesses among returning troops. However, that research also didn't isolate whether the problem was from the frequent use of burn pits or other environmental problems in the war zone.



TREA is supporting legislation to create a burn pit registry. Congressman Todd Akin (R-MO) and Senator Mark Udall (D-NM) have cosponsored **HR3337**. This is a very important bi-partisan bill. Urge your Members of Congress and Senators to support it as well.



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MEMBER F.D.I.C.

Veterans Upward Bound Program

Introducing our program to those of you who are not familiar with us. We are Veterans Upward Bound, a grant-based program from the Department of Education. We have been continually funded for the last 39 years. Our region includes all of North Dakota, the upper



third of South Dakota, and northwest Minnesota. We have two classrooms we are currently working from located on both the campus of North Dakota State University and the campus of the University of North Dakota.

The purpose of this grant is to assist veterans who qualify for our program to update their scholastic skills levels so that

they can pursue a college degree of some sort. To qualify, they must have a DD-214 which states a discharge of any type but dishonorable; first generation, meaning neither parent has a four-year degree; and/or be low income, which is 150% of the current national poverty level (example: a single person, no dependents, has income of \$16,335 or less annual adjusted gross income. Disability benefits do not apply).

Because our region is so large, it is unreasonable to think that all who qualify and desire to return to school could do so with only two sites; therefore, we have developed on-line courses that allow veterans to bring their skills levels up in basic computer, math, English, Study Skills, writing and literature. Academic and career guidance is also available. If qualified, veterans only need access to a computer and they can do their online work at their own pace. Computers are usually available through local schools, community centers or libraries. Once they complete our program, veterans will then determine which school they wish to attend and begin the admission process.

More information on the online courses are located at our website at www.ndsu.edu/trio/veterans_upward_bound. In addition at that site, there is a video that can be played that speaks of what some of our students have accomplished by participating in our program. This video is also located on our Facebook page and YouTube. We have disks available with the video information if you prefer. Please let me know if you need dvd format or a computer download version.

If you have questions regarding our program, please do not hesitate to contact either myself or the Veterans Upward Bound Director, Bruce Steele, at 1-800-570-5719. I want to thank each of you for your dedication to our veterans.

DAV Service Training Program Wins Praise

By Thom Wilborn

The DAV's Structured and Continuing Service Training Program has once again been approved by the American Council on Education (ACE) as the best training program for National Service Officers (NSOs). Currently an NSO can receive as many as ten college credit hours for successfully completing the course.

Many veterans service programs are considered good, but only one can be the best. And the most knowledgeable NSOs are found at the DAV, where the program ensures they are the very best.

"The DAV is the only veterans service organization in the nation that has that distinction," said National Adjutant Arthur H. Wilson. "In fact, we are the only organization in America that receives college credit certification for our training program."

The college credits provided by ACE include anatomy and pathology, physiology, medical terminology, legal research and writing and administrative law.

"DAV has been very serious from our founding 91 years ago that our training program is far and away the best and most inclusive program providing knowledge in the benefits claims arena," said National Service Director Garry J. Augustine. "We are elated that our service officer can obtain college credit for the Structured and Continuing Training Program."

The program is a spin-off from the DAV's first formal training program launched in 1944 in cooperation with American University in Washington, D.C. The program offered specialized classroom training for prospective NSOs over 24 weeks. The 400 service officers who trained at American University provided a nucleus of expertise that

served the organization for many years.

In 1967, coupled with increased DAV membership and heightened demand for claims representation, another formal training program began at Catholic University in Washington. The Structured and Continuing Training Program was created in 1987 to offer on-site training of NSOs. The lessons are frequently updated to provide the latest and most pertinent information.

"The Structured and Continuing Training Program Helps our NSOs adjust to new laws and changes in regulations affecting veterans," said Adjutant Wilson. "We keep abreast of modern technology and rule-making to provide the best service a disabled veteran can receive anywhere."

The review of the DAV training program by the ACE is conducted every three years. This year, not only was the program approved, it was applauded. One council reviewer took photos of the display saying that it was the perfect way to present a program. "Our training program strives for perfection in every skill set," said Augustine. "In the final analysis, those who benefit the most from our expertise are the veterans seeking our help."

