**[](http://www.dav.org/)**

**COMMENTS FROM OUR CHAPTER COMMANDER:**

Our State Convention was held the first week of May. Newly elected commander is William Robinson, who is from the upstate. Congratulations to him and the new staff. He stressed the importance of working together. Several members attended the service officer training held there also. Our chapter looks forward to being involved in all of the DAV programs.  
  
Jerry K Stout  
Commander

[](http://www.google.com/url?sa=i&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=images&cd=&cad=rja&docid=D7p-XtGbLROMbM&tbnid=IyQTXUHNVg8muM:&ved=0CAUQjRw&url=http://wugange.com/october-2012-calendar-clip-art-18383-hd-wallpapers.html&ei=fNDbUsDjMOPnsASbp4LoDQ&bvm=bv.59568121,d.eW0&psig=AFQjCNEen1sF1OZp_qARyOeG_KIQjKRGhA&ust=1390223846780109)

**UPCOMING EVENTS:**

**May 20 VAMC Hospital Visitation** 6:00pm. Members and non-members are welcome to participate as we distribute cookies, soda and comradeship to our fellow confined veterans.

**May 26 Memorial Day Ceremony** at Summerville Cemetery (Parks Cemetery) on Boone Hill Road (Highway 17A South) at 10:30 Monday May 26. The inclement weather alternate site is the Mausoleum next to the cemetery.

**May 31 Camp Corral** fund raiser at Golden Corral ends.

**June 16 Veterans Affairs Volunteer Services (VAVS)** meeting 1:00pm, Charleston VAMC main auditorium.

**June 17 May 20 VAMC Hospital Visitation** 6:00pm. Members and non-members are welcome to participate as we distribute cookies, soda and comradeship to our fellow confined veterans.

**June 19 Chapter Meeting 7:30pm** Show your support by attending the meeting and stay informed of Chapter actions and events that affect Veterans.  We often have guest speakers. Invite other Veterans, family members and friends. Door prizes will be awarded and refreshments will be provided.

**May 18, 2014**

****

**Swamp Fox**

Chapter 17

Summerville

[www.davmembersportal.org/chapters/sc/17](http://www.davmembersportal.org/chapters/sc/17)

**Chapter 17 meets 7:30 PM on the 3rd Thursday at VFW Post 3433 located at 10154 Bellwright Rd., Summerville 29483.**

**Auxiliary Unit 17 meets at the same time.**

**Our next meeting will be:**

**June19**



**AUXILIARY COMMENTS:**

The Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary was founded in 1922 to assist the parent organization in their mission of service to honor our country’s defenders for their sacrifices by assuring they were not forgotten by our nation and its legislators.

**[Click to view](http://classroomclipart.com/clipart-view/Clipart/Legal/law-book-with-gavel-2_jpg.htm)**

**LEGISLATIVE REPORT:**

**SVAC Grills VA Secretary**For two solid hours on Thursday, Senators on the Senate Veterans’ Affairs Committee (SVAC) relentlessly questioned Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric Shinseki on the alleged and ever widening reports of numerous VA medical facilities consistently misrepresenting and misreporting the wait times for veterans to receive medical appointments.

Despite many calls in the press, and some from members of Congress, for his resignation and even being asked by several of the Senators why he should not resign, Secretary Shinseki said he intends to serve until his term expires or is told by the President that his time at the VA is over. He said he was asked by the President to serve and improve the VA, and that is what he will do. If malfeasance is found, he would take swift, corrective action.

The veterans organizations that were on a second panel after the Secretary were somewhat split on the issues. As everyone knows the American Legion came out last week and asked for the resignation of Secretary and his deputies, VHA head Dr. Robert Petzel and VBA head Allison Hickey. The Legion representative stuck to this position.

Other panelists from the VFW, DAV, IAVA and VVA called for restraint as the IG investigation looks into the matter. These same groups said that the problem in the VA Health System is not the care received, as it is generally in the very good to excellent range. Rather, the big problem is timely access to quality care.

Note from Legislative Chairman - Dr. Petzel submitted his resignation today.  It should be noted, however, that Dr. Petzel was due to retire shortly so the circumstances don't quite measure up to an accountability action.

**Legislative Chairman Jack Olson**

C:\Users\James\Documents\DAV\Minutes_Newsletters\Logos\Transportation%20Van_jpg.jpg

Van Drivers Needed.

Contact Jerry Stout, the DAV Transportation Network coordinator, at 789-7307 if you wish to be a volunteer van driver.

**DAV Transportation Network Report:**  **April** **Total 2014**

Hours worked 143 720

Miles driven 3180 10743

Veterans transported 96 325

**New Members April**:

Clouse, Mark A

Edwards, Faraji C

Silvas, Jose D

Winter, Sam P

**Deaths**  **April:**

Hicks, Robert H.

Leach, Ercie J

**Transfer in April:**

None

**Charleston VA Medical Center Visitation:** On the 3rd Tuesday each month at 6:00pm we distribute cookies, soda and comradeship to our fellow confined veterans. All members and non-members are welcome to participate.



[](http://www1.free-clipart.net/cgi-bin/clipart/directory.cgi?action=view&link=clipart/Military&image=Armed_Forces_Collage_2.jpg&img=0)

**DAV Service Officers (SOs)** assist veterans and their families in many ways including filing VA claims. All services provided by DAV Service Officers are free of charge. They have an office on the second floor (B254) of the VA Medical Center and can be reached at 789-7456. There is also an office at the Naval Weapons Station, 789-7862, open Mondays only.

Clinical Service Officer Report: April Total 2014

Veterans Assisted **475 1948**

Hours Worked **247 993**

[](http://www.google.com/imgres?imgurl=http://0.tqn.com/d/webclipart/1/0/0/b/fday4.gif&imgrefurl=http://webclipart.about.com/od/animalphoto/l/bleag5.htm&h=186&w=304&sz=9&tbnid=3_sqWq5UQv4YCM:&tbnh=86&tbnw=141&prev=/search?q=flag+clip+art+free&tbm=isch&tbo=u&zoom=1&q=flag+clip+art+free&usg=__lDsritZXQ1UJ_xnD0y5fgiGWpcA=&docid=TUBLrb4wevHDLM&hl=en&sa=X&ei=1zBLUfXpBYPV0gHMuYCQCg&sqi=2&ved=0CC8Q9QEwAA&dur=443)

**[](http://www.dav.org/)**

**COMMENTS FROM OUR CHAPTER COMMANDER:**

           It my pleasure to serve Chapter 17 as its Commander!  In thinking back about my membership in DAV, I recall after leaving the U.S. Navy in 1998, I was approached by a fellow veteran to join the Disabled American Veterans.  I joined, however did not attend any meetings or functions, as I was busy with my transition from the Service to Civilian Life.  I then was contacted by Bob Block who was able to transfer my membership from my home state to Chapter 17.  I had very little knowledge on what DAV provided other than seeing them in parades and in magazines.  After adjusting to a new job, I attended a meeting and eventually became the Junior Vice Commander.  Throughout these many years, I have learned much about our programs and today I am in a position as Hospital Service Coordinator in making a difference in Veterans Lives by providing transportation to and from their medical appointments.

           I am looking forward to a productive year at Chapter 17 activities.  I would also like to thank the following for their service to Chapter 17:  Ken Curtis, James Ray, Joe Tallon, Jack Olson.  These members have served you well and are moving from leadership positions into active members.  Thank you.

Jerry K. Stout, Commander



**AUXILIARY COMMENTS:**

The Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary was founded in 1922 to assist the parent organization in their mission of service to honor our country’s defenders for their sacrifices by assuring they were not forgotten by our nation and its legislators.

**March 24, 2014**

****

**Swamp Fox**

Chapter 17

Summerville

[www.davmembersportal.org/chapters/sc/17](http://www.davmembersportal.org/chapters/sc/17)

**Chapter 17 meets 7:30 PM on the 3rd Thursday at VFW Post 3433 located at 10154 Bellwright Rd., Summerville 29483.**

**Auxiliary Unit 17 meets at the same time.**

**Our next meeting will be:**

**April 17**

**New Members January**:

Atchley, Waymon

Bevis, William F

Coward, Johnny D

Eliason, Terrance P

Smith, Kruger B

Trevino, Gildardo H

Weirick, Wallace G

Wright, William E

**Deaths**  **January:**

none

**Transfer in January:**

Miley, George E.

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**LEGISLATIVE REPORT:**

DAV, Others Urge $72.9 Billion Investment in Health Care, Benefits

By Joseph R. Chenelly

For the 28th consecutive year, DAV has joined with other organizations to create the veteran community’s most comprehensive budget and policy document: The Independent Budget (IB).

While the Department of Veterans Affairs continues to face growing demand on its health care and benefits systems, Congress and the Administration must ensure that the VA has all the tools necessary to effectively meet those demands.

“This commitment must be accomplished in the face of continued pressure to control federal spending,” said Washington Headquarters Executive Director Garry Augustine. “That said, it cannot be emphasized enough that meeting the needs of veterans of every generation is a solemn obligation that cannot be minimized.”

The IB shows a need for $61.1 billion total for health care for fiscal year 2015, which is $2.3 billion more than the Administration recommended ($58.8 billion) in the fiscal year 2015 advance appropriation last year. There is a need for $62.4 billion total advance appropriation for health care for 2016, according to the IB.

The IB states $611 million is needed for medical and prosthetics research in 2015, which is approximately $25 million more than the 2014 appropriated level.

About $44 million more than appropriated for 2014 is needed in 2015 for the Veterans Benefits Administration. That would total at $2.5 billion for VBA.

“The entire VA budget needs to be funded in advance so we don’t have to worry about another government shutdown negatively impacting veterans, their families and survivors again,” said National Legislative Director Joseph A. Violante. “Veterans should not be forced to suffer because of political budget showdowns.”

The IB, which began circulating in its entirety Feb. 7, has been received well in Congress this year.

“The counsel of America’s many veterans service organizations is crucial to ensuring America provides our veterans the benefits they have earned. The Independent Budget is a key part of this process,” said Rep. Jeff Miller (R., Fla.), chairman of the House Veterans’ Affairs Committee.

**Legislative Chairman Jack Olson**

[](http://www1.free-clipart.net/cgi-bin/clipart/directory.cgi?action=view&link=clipart/Military&image=Armed_Forces_Collage_2.jpg&img=0)

**CHAPTER SERVICE OFFICER REPORT**

February continues to show strong numbers with 185 Hours spent helping 356 veterans and their families. We are getting close to the SC State Convention being kicked off on May 1st with our CSO certification session. This year we are sending up to 18 people up for certification.

New this year, a Van will be available for those who wish to ride up and back.  More info will be supplied as we get closer to that time. I have great expectations for the new interest shown in the CSO program. Hopefully we will have all our empty days covered in the Charleston VAMC DAV office. Although we have had great interest, please don't hesitate to continue to pass on info if you know of someone interested in serving our veteran heroes as Chapter Service Officers. We can always use qualified CSOs as fill in coverage for times our regular people need time off.

Buzz Nielsen

VAMC Clinical Service Officer

Chapter 17 Chapter Service Officer

**DAV Service Officers (SOs)** assist veterans and their families in many ways including filing VA claims. All services provided by DAV Service Officers are free of charge. They have an office on the second floor (B254) of the VA Medical Center and can be reached at 789-7456. There is also an office at the Naval Weapons Station, 789-7862, open Mondays only.

**Charleston VA Medical Center Visitation:** On the 3rd Tuesday each month at 6:00pm we distribute cookies, soda and comradeship to our fellow confined veterans. All members and non-members are welcome to participate.

Clinical Service Officer Report: February Total 2014

Veterans Assisted **711 1066**

Hours Worked **359 533**

**DAV Transportation Network Report:**  **February** **Total 2014**

Hours worked 91 271

Miles driven 1837 2487

Veterans transported 40 93

[](http://www.google.com/url?sa=i&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=images&cd=&cad=rja&docid=D7p-XtGbLROMbM&tbnid=IyQTXUHNVg8muM:&ved=0CAUQjRw&url=http://wugange.com/october-2012-calendar-clip-art-18383-hd-wallpapers.html&ei=fNDbUsDjMOPnsASbp4LoDQ&bvm=bv.59568121,d.eW0&psig=AFQjCNEen1sF1OZp_qARyOeG_KIQjKRGhA&ust=1390223846780109)

**UPCOMING EVENTS:**

**March 31 – May 31 Camp Corral** fund raiser at Golden Corral. We cannot represent DAV but can collect as veterans.

**April 15 VAMC Hospital Visitation** 6:00pm. Members and non-members are welcome to participate as we distribute cookies, soda and comradeship to our fellow confined veterans.

**April 17 Chapter Meeting 7:30pm** Show your support by attending the meeting and stay informed of Chapter actions and events that affect Veterans.  We often have guest speakers. Invite other Veterans, family members and friends. Door prizes will be awarded and refreshments will be provided.

**May 1** **Service Officer training** in Columbia 10:00-3:30

**May 2-4 DAV State convention** in Columbia.

C:\Users\James\Documents\DAV\Minutes_Newsletters\Logos\Transportation%20Van_jpg.jpg

Van Drivers Needed.

Contact Jerry Stout, the DAV Transportation Network coordinator, at 789-7307 if you wish to be a volunteer van driver.

[](http://www.google.com/imgres?imgurl=http://0.tqn.com/d/webclipart/1/0/0/b/fday4.gif&imgrefurl=http://webclipart.about.com/od/animalphoto/l/bleag5.htm&h=186&w=304&sz=9&tbnid=3_sqWq5UQv4YCM:&tbnh=86&tbnw=141&prev=/search?q=flag+clip+art+free&tbm=isch&tbo=u&zoom=1&q=flag+clip+art+free&usg=__lDsritZXQ1UJ_xnD0y5fgiGWpcA=&docid=TUBLrb4wevHDLM&hl=en&sa=X&ei=1zBLUfXpBYPV0gHMuYCQCg&sqi=2&ved=0CC8Q9QEwAA&dur=443)

Minutes from the March 20 meeting are attached.



**[](http://www.dav.org/)**

**COMMENTS FROM OUR CHAPTER COMMANDER:**

As the year goes on, half way through February now, we continue to serve our disabled veterans and their families in a very positive manner. Each one of you has given of your time and efforts in support of our chapter and I really appreciate that. But, there is more to do. As the weather gets warmer, our opportunity to serve the disabled veterans in this area increases. Please don’t miss this opportunity.

The DAV is covering approximately 20% to 25% of the total volunteer positions at the Ralph H. Johnson VA Medical Center in Charleston. If interested in volunteering, please contact one of the chapter officers.

I encourage each one of you to support our upcoming Annual State Convention in May. It is the 2nd thru the 4th of May; however, the Service Officer Certification/Recertification will be on May 1st. The exact start time is yet to be determined but, as soon as it is promulgated, we’ll get the information to everyone. **EVERY** Service Officer **MUST** be recertified and **EVERY** new Service Officer **MUST** be certified. This training is only given once a year, during the state convention. There are no exceptions. All those desiring to become a Service Officer, get your names to Buzz Nielsen or one of the Chapter Officers ASAP. Also, those Service Officers already certified, and are planning to get recertified, please get your names to Buzz ASAP. The Chapter must submit a list to the Department NLT April 1, 2014 of those attending the Service Officer Certification/Recertification.

May God watch over our military, at home and overseas. May He give them wisdom, courage, strength and victory so that one day, they all may come home safely. Amen.

Ken Curtis, Commander



**AUXILIARY COMMENTS:**

The Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary was founded in 1922 to assist the parent organization in their mission of service to honor our country’s defenders for their sacrifices by assuring they were not forgotten by our nation and its legislators.

**February 21, 2014**

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**Swamp Fox**

Chapter 17

Summerville

[www.davmembersportal.org/chapters/sc/17](http://www.davmembersportal.org/chapters/sc/17)

**Chapter 17 meets 7:30 PM on the 3rd Thursday at VFW Post 3433 located at 10154 Bellwright Rd., Summerville 29483.**

**Auxiliary Unit 17 meets at the same time.**

**Our next meeting will be:**

**March 20**



FROM THE MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN:

Chapter 17 has met our Life Membership goal for 2014!  Well done!  This is not the time to sit back and rest on our laurels and we should continue to encourage current members to go life and invite new members into our roles.  The way for Congress to listen is through numbers.  Again, well done to all.  
   
Jerry K Stout

Membership Chairman

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**LEGISLATIVE REPORT:**

From the DAV National Commander's Mid Winter Conference Talking Points

Department of Veterans Affairs Fiscal Year 2015 Budget

Congress has yet to receive the Administration’s fiscal year (FY) 2015 budget request. Indications are the Administration’s budget will be submitted at the beginning of March 2014. DAV urges Congress to provide a total discretionary budget for the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) of $72.9 billion.

Failing to pass VA’s budget on time and at adequate funding levels simply leads to one sad

fact: our government is failing to meet its obligations to the heroes of our nation. DAV and the co-authors of *The Independent Budget*, AMVETS, PVA, and VFW, call for the following:

• Medical Care: $61.1 billion for FY 2015—$2.3 billion more than what the Administration recommended ($58.8 billion) in the FY 2015 advance appropriation last year;

• Health care advanced appropriations: $62.4 billion for FY 2016;

• Benefits processing: $2.5 billion—approximately $44 million more than the FY 2014 appropriated level;

• Major and Minor Construction: $3.9 billion for all construction programs—approximately $2.7 billion more than the FY 2014 appropriated level and well below the true funding needs of construction projects that the VA must undertake; and

• Medical and Prosthetic Research: $611 million, which is approximately $25 million more than the FY 2014 appropriated level.

Of great concern to DAV and our VSO counterparts is the serious underfunding of VA construction accounts. From FY 2002 through 2014, *The Independent Budget* recommended $23.5 billion for major and minor construction, yet less than $13.5 billion was appropriated by Congress to keep rapidly aging facilities safe and operational for the proper care and treatment of millions of wounded, ill and injured veterans of all generations and for the staff who serve them.

**Legislative Chairman Jack Olson**

[](http://www1.free-clipart.net/cgi-bin/clipart/directory.cgi?action=view&link=clipart/Military&image=Armed_Forces_Collage_2.jpg&img=0)

**CHAPTER SERVICE OFFICER REPORT**

January 2014 continues with a strong volume of assisted visits to our two locations. There were 355 incidents where we aided our fellow veterans. We are still looking for volunteers who are interested in helping veterans and their families file compensation and pension claims. Anyone interested please contact me or any CSO for information.

I can be reached at:

[carl.nielsen@va.gov](mailto:carl.nielsen@va.gov)

[buzzdav17@gmail.com](mailto:buzzdav17@gmail.com)

843-789-7456

843-870-6192

Buzz Nielsen

VAMC Clinical Service Officer

Chapter 17 Chapter Service Officer

**DAV Service Officers (SOs)** assist veterans and their families in many ways including filing VA claims. All services provided by DAV Service Officers are free of charge. They have an office on the second floor (B254) of the VA Medical Center and can be reached at 789-7456. There is also an office at the Naval Weapons Station, 789-7862, open Mondays only.

Clinical Service Officer Report: January Total 2014

Veterans Assisted **355 355**

Hours Worked **174 174**

**DAV Transportation Network Report:**

**January** **Total 2014**

Hours worked 180 180

Miles driven 650 650

Veterans transported 53 53

C:\Users\James\Documents\DAV\Minutes_Newsletters\Logos\Transportation%20Van_jpg.jpg

Van Drivers Needed.

Contact Jerry Stout, the DAV Transportation Network coordinator, at 789-7307 if you wish to be a volunteer van driver.

**New Members January**:

Applegarth, Freddie C

Ferguson, David J

Green, Kenneth

Hawkins, William E

Johnston, Brandon C

Kowalski, Stanley B

Lee, James H

Matheson, David E

Milligan, Harold G

Starrett, Roger C.

West, Brent L

Widlak, Matthew J

**Deaths**  **January:**

Franklin, Benjamin E.

**Transfer in January:**

Burns, Will

**Charleston VA Medical Center Visitation:** On the 3rd Tuesday each month at 6:00pm we distribute cookies, soda and comradeship to our fellow confined veterans. All members and non-members are welcome to participate.

[](http://www.google.com/imgres?imgurl=http://0.tqn.com/d/webclipart/1/0/0/b/fday4.gif&imgrefurl=http://webclipart.about.com/od/animalphoto/l/bleag5.htm&h=186&w=304&sz=9&tbnid=3_sqWq5UQv4YCM:&tbnh=86&tbnw=141&prev=/search?q=flag+clip+art+free&tbm=isch&tbo=u&zoom=1&q=flag+clip+art+free&usg=__lDsritZXQ1UJ_xnD0y5fgiGWpcA=&docid=TUBLrb4wevHDLM&hl=en&sa=X&ei=1zBLUfXpBYPV0gHMuYCQCg&sqi=2&ved=0CC8Q9QEwAA&dur=443)

[](http://www.google.com/url?sa=i&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=images&cd=&cad=rja&docid=D7p-XtGbLROMbM&tbnid=IyQTXUHNVg8muM:&ved=0CAUQjRw&url=http://wugange.com/october-2012-calendar-clip-art-18383-hd-wallpapers.html&ei=fNDbUsDjMOPnsASbp4LoDQ&bvm=bv.59568121,d.eW0&psig=AFQjCNEen1sF1OZp_qARyOeG_KIQjKRGhA&ust=1390223846780109)

**UPCOMING EVENTS:**

**February 25 “Re-Creation’, USO style show. 2:00 at VAMC.**

**March 1** Deadline for submitting annual Department **award nominations**

**March 17 Veterans Affairs Volunteer Services (VAVS)** meeting, 1:00pm at American Legion Post 147, 968 Folly Road, Charleston, SC

**March 18 VAMC Hospital Visitation** 6:00pm. Members and non-members are welcome to participate as we distribute cookies, soda and comradeship to our fellow confined veterans.

**March 20 Chapter Meeting 7:30pm Nominations will close and the Officer election will be held. A Commander’s reception will follow the meeting.**  Invite other Veterans, family members and friends.

**March 22 Department Executive Committee (DEC)** meeting in Columbia 12:00

**April 1** Deadline for submitting names for **Service Officer Class**

Minutes from the February 20 meeting are attached.

**[](http://www.dav.org/)**

**COMMENTS FROM OUR CHAPTER COMMANDER:**

The holidays are over and it’s time to get down to business. I am looking forward to getting busy helping veterans and their families even more. The way we accomplish that now is giving of our time by assisting with the different projects as they arise. For example: passing out cookies and drinks to the inpatients at the VAMC on the third Tuesday of each month. It only takes about an hour of your time and the patients really seem to enjoy. You get a chance to speak encouragement to those who are hospitalized. For some of them, you are their only visitor. It is such an honor and a blessing to speak to the older veterans in the CLC (nursing home portion).

The results of the Golden Corral Veterans Day fund raiser are extremely good. We raised almost $16,000 with our share being over $7,000. Chapter 77 received over $7,000 and Chapter 55 (their first time working with us) is over $500. Well Done! We have been in contact with the Golden Corral and we should receive our check in the not too distant future. I’ll keep you posted.

We still have some assorted sizes of polo shirts for men and tee shirts for ladies. If you desire one, Sarah Harry is our “custodian of the shirts”. Get in touch with her and make arrangements.

Our next meeting will be on February 20, 2014. I would like to see as many as possible at that meeting.

May God watch over our military, at home and overseas. May He give them wisdom, courage, strength and victory so that they may ALL come home safely. Amen.

Ken Curtis, Commander



**AUXILIARY COMMENTS:**

While DAV Auxiliary units actively participate in programs such as Americanism, Community Service, Junior Activities, Legislative, and VAVS two national programs rely on mandates and generous donations for special member assistance – Service Support Program and National Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary Education Scholarship Program.

**January 19, 2014**

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**Swamp Fox**

Chapter 17

Summerville

[www.davmembersportal.org/chapters/sc/17](http://www.davmembersportal.org/chapters/sc/17)

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**Auxiliary Unit 17 meets at the same time.**

**Our next meeting will be:**

**February 20**



FROM THE MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN:

Here we are in 2014 and already, Chapter 17’s membership goal is well within reach. As of January 5th, 2014, we are less than ten (10) members from reaching the National and State goal. The next few months will be the final stretch and because of our successful mail out and email campaign, we have done very well. Also, thank you to the volunteers that made phone calls the last two months. Here are some other ideas that “we” as a Chapter can do to improve our retention and attract new members:

* Welcome new members when they arrive at our meeting. When they join, send a card or make a phone call.
* Invite members to volunteer for something then, take them up on their offer.
* Improve routine communications with members via email. Our Adjutant does this very well now.
* Use email to send members reminders during their dues months and grace periods.
* Make email a part of our chapter’s overall communications mix (email, letters, and phone calls) to improve retention. This does work as noted above.
* Use email to survey members on their likes and dislikes, needs and desires.
* Improve chapter communications (a frequent source of member dissatisfaction) easily. There is always room for improvement in this area.

In closing, by the time you read this, the 9th District NEC Convention will be starting in Myrtle Beach, the 24th through the 26th of January. There will be much put out and looking forward to sharing this news with all of our members.

Respectfully,

Jerry K. Stout

Senior Vice Commander/Membership Chairman

**[Click to view](http://classroomclipart.com/clipart-view/Clipart/Legal/law-book-with-gavel-2_jpg.htm)**

**LEGISLATIVE REPORT:**

**From NAUS Weekly Update**

**Omnibus Spending Bill Passes**

Thursday evening, the Senate overwhelmingly passed the 12-part omnibus spending bill 72-26, which will fund the government through the end of September. The $1.1 trillion package, approved in the House on Wednesday, has been sent President Obama for his signature.

The bill distributes $1.012 trillion in discretionary funding to various departments and agencies, while also providing overseas contingency funding. The bill also prevents another government shutdown, slated for midnight on Saturday.

Earlier in the week Congress agreed on a 3-day continuing resolution to allow sufficient time to complete the omnibus bill.

Like the fiscal 2014 Defense Authorization bill, the spending agreement rejects administration proposals to increase some TRICARE fees and provides $218 million in additional funding to ensure those who have served are not paying higher out-of-pocket costs for the earned health care.

The measure also funding for an across-the-board 1 percent pay increase for military personnel and civilian Pentagon employees, equal to the president’s request but 0.8 percent below the general inflation rate.

The bill also provides a partial fix for the controversial cuts to military pensions that were included in the December budget agreement. It eliminates the 1 percent COLA cuts for both disabled veterans (Chapter 61 disability retirees) and for recipients of survivor's benefits. The cut still applies to all regular military retirees under age 62.

**Legislative Chairman Jack Olson**

[](http://www1.free-clipart.net/cgi-bin/clipart/directory.cgi?action=view&link=clipart/Military&image=Armed_Forces_Collage_2.jpg&img=0)

**CHAPTER SERVICE OFFICER REPORT**

I do hope everyone had a great Holiday Season. We did very well last year with claims for Veterans. 2013 started out slowly, but by July we became quite busy, maintaining over 300 veteran assists per month.

Even though we closed both claims offices on December 20th for the holidays we ended up assisting 331 veterans in only 146 hours for the last month of the year. We assisted 3,546 veterans and their families with 2,432 hours from the claim office in Charleston and at the Naval Weapons Station Clinic in Goose Creek. CSOs, you did a great job. Thank you.

As we enter 2014 our numbers remain encouraging. If things continue this way we will definitely show a larger increase for 2014. As word gets out about our work we are seeing more and more veterans. In order to maintain this pace we need more CSOs. We are short of CSOs going into the new year and need to recruit  more people. Understandably it can be hard to find people able to volunteer on a consistent weekly basis.

Some of my goals this year are to:

* Recruit and train more CSOs
* Continue to keep the offices open according to our posted schedule
* Create a pool of CSOs to draw from to back up our CSO volunteering on a regular basis
* Work on a plan to have a more permanent location at the Naval Weapons Station and increase it's coverage

If anyone is interested or knows of someone who is, please don't hesitate to contact me directly or pass it on through Ken Curtis, James Ray, or any other Chapter Officers or members.

I wish everyone a wonderful New Year and thank everyone for their support last year.

Buzz Nielsen

VAMC Clinical Service Officer

Chapter 17 Chapter Service Officer

**DAV Service Officers (SOs)** assist veterans and their families in many ways including filing VA claims. All services provided by DAV Service Officers are free of charge. They have an office on the second floor (B254) of the VA Medical Center and can be reached at 789-7456. There is also an office at the Naval Weapons Station, 789-7862, open Mondays only.

Clinical Service Officer Report: December Total 2013

Veterans Assisted **331 3546**

Hours Worked **146 2432**

**DAV Transportation Network Report:**

**December** **Total 2013**

Hours worked 69 1,548

Miles driven 1,105 19,411

Veterans transported 24 599

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Van Drivers Needed.

Contact Jerry Stout, the DAV Transportation Network coordinator, at 789-7307 if you wish to be a volunteer van driver.

**New Members January/December**:

Atkinson, Timothy

Bullock, John W

Clay, Richard S

Crosby, Glen

Fink, Ord J

Goforth, Christopher R

Green, James Michael

Griffin, George F

Kalli, George A

Matt, Wesley A

Muldrew, Arthur Leroy

Robertson, Michael T

Singletary, Archie D.

Smith, William L

Spruill, Ronald M

**Deaths**  **January/December**

Henson, Charles M.

Riordan, Timothy F

Wald, William

**Transfer in January/December:**

Cook, Darren W.

Guidi, Louis P.

**Charleston VA Medical Center Visitation:** On the 3rd Tuesday each month at 6:00pm we distribute cookies, soda and comradeship to our fellow confined veterans. All members and non-members are welcome to participate.

[](http://www.google.com/url?sa=i&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=images&cd=&cad=rja&docid=D7p-XtGbLROMbM&tbnid=IyQTXUHNVg8muM:&ved=0CAUQjRw&url=http://wugange.com/october-2012-calendar-clip-art-18383-hd-wallpapers.html&ei=fNDbUsDjMOPnsASbp4LoDQ&bvm=bv.59568121,d.eW0&psig=AFQjCNEen1sF1OZp_qARyOeG_KIQjKRGhA&ust=1390223846780109)

**UPCOMING EVENTS:**

**January 21 VAMC Hospital Visitation** Members and non-members are welcome to participate as we distribute cookies, soda and comradeship to our fellow confined veterans.

**January 23-26 9th NEC (National Executive Committee) convention in Myrtle Beach**

**February 13 Valentines for Veterans Concert at North Charleston Performing Arts Center**

**February 18 VAMC Hospital Visitation** Members and non-members are welcome to participate as we distribute cookies, soda and comradeship to our fellow confined veterans.

**February 20 Chapter Meeting** Show your support by attending the meeting and stay informed of Chapter actions and events that affect Veterans.  We often have guest speakers. Invite other Veterans, family members and friends. Door prizes will be awarded and refreshments will be provided.

**February 25 “Re-Creation’ 2:00 at VAMC a USO style show.**

**March 17 Veterans Affairs Volunteer Services (VAVS)** meeting, 11:00 American Legion Post 184 3003 Rowland Ave, Savannah, GA 31414.

Show your support by attending the meetings and stay informed of Chapter actions and events that affect Veterans.   Invite other Veterans, family members and friends. Door prizes will be awarded and refreshments will be provided.

Minutes from the January 16 meeting are attached.

[](http://www.google.com/imgres?imgurl=http://0.tqn.com/d/webclipart/1/0/0/b/fday4.gif&imgrefurl=http://webclipart.about.com/od/animalphoto/l/bleag5.htm&h=186&w=304&sz=9&tbnid=3_sqWq5UQv4YCM:&tbnh=86&tbnw=141&prev=/search?q=flag+clip+art+free&tbm=isch&tbo=u&zoom=1&q=flag+clip+art+free&usg=__lDsritZXQ1UJ_xnD0y5fgiGWpcA=&docid=TUBLrb4wevHDLM&hl=en&sa=X&ei=1zBLUfXpBYPV0gHMuYCQCg&sqi=2&ved=0CC8Q9QEwAA&dur=443)

**[](http://www.dav.org/)**

**COMMANDER’S COMMENTS:**

Here it is Thanksgiving and Christmas is just around the corner. This year is almost gone. It’s been a very good year for Swamp Fox Chapter 17. It’s also been a sad year with the loss of some of our members.

The November “Eating Meeting” was really great. There was a great variety so everyone could “pig-out” and, several did (myself included). Without a doubt, we have the best cooks in the world. Our Banquet was nothing short of great. Everyone had more than enough to eat.

Golden Corral and DAV have completed their annual fund raiser for Veteran Appreciation Day. It topped out on November 11, 2013 (Veteran’s Day) and Golden Corral fed about 2000 veterans. Last year, on Veteran Appreciation Night, Golden Corral fed a little over 1600 veterans. Several people helped and the total reflects their efforts. Last year, we raised a little under $13,000.00; which we shared with Chapters 77 and 78. This year we fared a lot better. Our grand total this year is over $15,500.00. Yes, we still share with Chapter 77 and, this year for the first time, Chapter 55; but, our portion should be much greater than our portion last year. Well Done to everyone who participated!

I want to wish everyone a happy Thanksgiving and a Merry Christmas and a safe and Happy New Year. Our next Chapter meeting will be January 16, 2014.

May God watch over our military, at home and overseas. May He give them wisdom, courage, strength and victory so that they may ALL come home safely. Amen.

Ken Curtis, Commander



**AUXILIARY COMMENTS:**

Your Membership is very important to continue the successful mission of the DAV Auxiliary. As long as disabled veterans and their families need us, we'll be there.

**November 26, 2013**

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**Swamp Fox**

Chapter 17

Summerville

[www.davmembersportal.org/chapters/sc/17](http://www.davmembersportal.org/chapters/sc/17)

**Chapter 17 meets 7:30 PM on the 3rd Thursday at VFW Post 3433 located at 10154 Bellwright Rd., Summerville 29483.**

**Auxiliary Unit 17 meets at the same time.**

**Our next meeting will be:**

**January 16**



FROM THE MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN:

**Did you know?**   Membership in DAV includes access to a wide range of money-saving and life-enhancing benefits for heroes and their families.  These generous partners stand by our veterans through a variety of programs, products and services.   
\*\* Savings on Ford and Lincoln vehicles, as well as reimbursements for up to $1000 toward the cost of installed adaptive equipment.     
\*\* Prescription Discount Program Creative Benefits Design offers a no cost, no enrollment, discount prescription drug program for DAV and Auxiliary members and their families.  
\*\*Real Estate Services Connect with real estate agents to buy or sell homes, or qualify for cash rewards of up to $1,000 or more.   
\*\* Legal Services. DAV has started our own nationwide network of attorneys who provide DAV members and their families a 10% discount on estate-planning services.    
\*\* Hertz DAV has teamed up with Hertz to offer savings of 5-15% at over 6,300 worldwide locations, plus free local pickup and return service across the U.S.  
   
Respectfully yours,

Jerry K Stout, Senior Vice Commander

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**LEGISLATIVE REPORT:**

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On November 12, 2013, the U.S. House of Representatives voted and passed Senate bill S. 893, the Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 2013, which has now been sent to the President for his signature. This measure will increase veterans' disability compensation, survivor benefits and clothing allowances by the same percentage as Social Security benefit increases scheduled to take effect on December 1, 2013.

A cost estimate released by the Congressional Budget Office concluded the legislation would result in a 1.5 percent cost-of-living increase. As a major step forward, for the first time in almost two decades, the COLA will not be rounded down to the nearest whole dollar unless it is less than fifty cents, but will be rounded up to the nearest whole dollar if greater than fifty cents.

DAV's long-standing resolution has sought legislation like S. 893, which was introduced by Sen. Bernie Sanders (VT), to end the unfair practice of rounding down COLAs. DAV testified before the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee on June 12, 2013, commending Chairman Sanders for his forward thinking by not including the round down provision in his bill, as this practice has siphoned millions of dollars annually from disabled veterans, their families and survivors for far too long in what was to be a temporary measure 20 years ago.

**Legislative Chairman Jack Olson**

**UPCOMING EVENTS:**

**No meeting or hospital visit in December**

**December 16** **Veterans Affairs Volunteer Services (VAVS)** meeting at American Legion Post 147 on James Island, 1:00.

**January 16 Chapter meeting,** our holiday gathering.  The Auxiliary is planning another exceptional meal so invite fellow veterans, family members and friends.

**January 20 VAMC Hospital Visitation** Members and non-members are welcome to participate as we distribute cookies, soda and comradeship to our fellow confined veterans.

**There will not be a Charleston VA Medical Center Ward Visitation:** in December, but join us **January 20** at 6:00pm as we distribute cookies, soda and comradeship to our confined fellow veterans. Members and non-members are welcome to participate. Contact James Ray, 843-534-6262

**No New Members, Transfers In or Deaths reported for October.**

**CHAPTER SERVICE OFFICER REPORT**

October was one of the busiest months I have seen in terms of the number of veterans and their families we have helped. We assisted 397 people. Actually the numbers have been good since July. We have ranged from 356 to 397 assisted during that time.  Last year we had only two months over 300. We have continued to utilize the "Fully Developed Claim". It leaves more of the burden for research on the veteran, but should enable him or her to acquire their entitlements sooner. Veterans are encouraged to bring ALL of the documentation needed to back up their claim at the time the claim is submitted.

Also, I can't emphasize this enough. Everyone should maintain their own Military records, VA medical and mental health records, and medical records from civilian doctors. One of the hardest things can be proving that an injury happened in the military and that you have a record of treatment in the military and in many cases after you left. Unfortunately the burden of proof is with the veteran. I can't count the number of times records have been "lost", miss filed, or went AWOL. I even had a veteran come in with someone else's records along with his from the archives in St. Louis. Civilian doctors actually destroy records after 10 years. I ran into that personally.

I didn't even submit a claim until I was out of the military for 40 years and I see this happen a lot with the veterans I serve. Many of our disabilities don't show their ugly face until much later in life. Having said that, I encourage everyone to gather these records wether you have filed a claim or not.

I want to wish everyone a Happy Thanksgiving to you and your family.

Buzz Nielsen

VAMC Clinical Service Officer

Chapter 17 Chapter Service Officer

Clinical Service Officer Report: October YTD

Veterans Assisted **397 2857**

Hours Worked **237 2099**

**DAV Service Officers (SOs)** assist veterans and their families in many ways including filing VA claims. All services provided by DAV Service Officers are free of charge. They have an office on the second floor (B254) of the VA Medical Center and can be reached at 789-7456. There is also an office at the Naval Weapons Station, 789-7862, open Mondays only.

**DAV Transportation Network Report:**

**October** **YTD**

Hours worked 89 1,274

Miles driven 1,566 15,768

Veterans transported 25 354

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Van Drivers Needed.

Contact Jerry Stout, the DAV Transportation Network coordinator, at 789-7307 if you wish to be a volunteer van driver.

Show your support by attending the meetings and stay informed of Chapter actions and events that affect Veterans.   Invite other Veterans, family members and friends. Door prizes will be awarded and refreshments will be provided.

Minutes from the November 21 meeting are attached.

[](http://www.google.com/imgres?imgurl=http://0.tqn.com/d/webclipart/1/0/0/b/fday4.gif&imgrefurl=http://webclipart.about.com/od/animalphoto/l/bleag5.htm&h=186&w=304&sz=9&tbnid=3_sqWq5UQv4YCM:&tbnh=86&tbnw=141&prev=/search?q=flag+clip+art+free&tbm=isch&tbo=u&zoom=1&q=flag+clip+art+free&usg=__lDsritZXQ1UJ_xnD0y5fgiGWpcA=&docid=TUBLrb4wevHDLM&hl=en&sa=X&ei=1zBLUfXpBYPV0gHMuYCQCg&sqi=2&ved=0CC8Q9QEwAA&dur=443)

**[](http://www.dav.org/)**

**COMMANDER’S COMMENTS:**

Summer is officially over and school is in full swing. I am looking forward to getting busy helping veterans and their families even more. The way we accomplish that now is giving of our time by assisting with the different projects as they require.

The one now in full swing is the Golden Corral. This is our only fundraiser for the year. We need volunteers to take part on this fund raiser. Even if you have trouble walking or standing, you can still help. There are chairs for you to sit in. The shifts are three hours each, but if you can only stay one or two hours, you can still help.

We have the Veteran’s Day Parade coming up on the 3rd of November. It starts at 2:00 p.m. The shuttle starts running at 1:00 p.m. from the VA Hospital parking lot to the parade starting point. If you would like to ride on the float, please be there not later than 1:30 p.m.

Our next meeting will be our Thanksgiving meeting. The Auxiliary is preparing a feast for the meeting.

May God watch over our military, at home and overseas. May He give them wisdom, courage, strength and victory so that they may ALL come home safely. Amen.

Ken Curtis, Commander



**AUXILIARY COMMENTS:**

Our DAVA chapter 17 meeting was held October17 at 7:30pm. We discussed new and old business. We appreciate those who assist in the Golden Coral Military Appreciation fund raiser, but we still need members to sign up to help.

Thank you,

**Unit 17 Commander**

**Melvina Mazyck**

**October 21, 2013**

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**Swamp Fox**

Chapter 17

Summerville

[www.davmembersportal.org/chapters/sc/17](http://www.davmembersportal.org/chapters/sc/17)

**Chapter 17 meets 7:30 PM on the 3rd Thursday at VFW Post 3433 located at 10154 Bellwright Rd., Summerville 29483.**

**Auxiliary Unit 17 meets at the same time.**

**Our next meeting will be:**

**November 21**



FROM THE MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN:

Our membership for life increased by 7 members last month. Today, we need another 36 members to go "life". If you're on the fence, consider taking the jump and pay if you can before the holidays. Thank you as always call me if there are questions 843-871-9533.

Jerry K Stout, Senior Vice Commander

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**LEGISLATIVE REPORT:**

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VSOs Use Shutdown as Case for Advance VA Funding

**(From Military. com news article of 17 October 2013)**

The government shutdown may be over, but veterans organizations are not relaxing their demand that Congress pass legislation to fully fund the Department of Veterans Affairs a full year in advance as a way to prevent future shutdowns from interfering with its mission.

In a statement released Thursday morning, the Veterans of Foreign Wars said it appreciates that Congress passed compromise legislation that reopened the government after two weeks, but the organization noted that the measure is short term with no guarantee there will not be another shutdown.

"The short-term funding package brings little assurance to America's veteran and military communities that what just ended won't happen again in three months," the group said, reiterating its call for Congress to pass existing legislation for advance appropriations across the entire VA.

The VFW, along with The American Legion, the Disabled American Veterans, and numerous other veteran and military-oriented organizations, were pushing for the advance funding even before the recent shutdown.

When the government shutdown began at midnight on Sept. 30, VA healthcare and medical facilities were protected because they already had their 2014 budget approved last year. But that was not the case for discretionary accounts, which include money for disability claims to vets, their dependents or survivors, as well as money for veterans attending school on the GI Bill.

Had the shutdown moved into late October, checks to those individuals would not have gone out.

The VA and veterans were also affected in other areas. Furloughs of administrative personnel resulted in the closure of VA regional offices and a halt to intake of new disability claims. The claims backlog that VA had been steadily bringing down started to climb once more. And longstanding appeals by veterans to earlier claims' decisions ground to a halt.

DAV National Commander Joseph Johnston characterized the threats to VA payments and lost ground on the claims backlog as "fresh evidence of  how damaging budget stalemates and government shutdowns are for veterans, their families and survivors."

"Now is the time to get Congress to pass, and the President to sign, new legislation to extend advance appropriations to all VA programs, services and benefits," he said in a statement sent out shortly after Congress passed Wednesday's legislation that fully reopened the government.

The veterans groups are all backing identical House and Senate bills that, Johnston said, "could easily be amended, passed, and enacted into law if there is the political will to do so."

The "Putting Veterans Funding First Act" would require Congress to pass a full year's appropriations bill for all VA discretionary programs one year in advance.

The measure has support from the GOP-led House but has not picked up traction in the Democratic-held Senate. Senate leadership is likely more sympathetic to the administration's claim that it needs more time to study the proposal and what kind of consequences it could have more broadly on the government.

VA officials appearing before both the House and Senate veterans' affairs committees offered no opinion on the measure.

"Since we know now that VA's mandatory disability compensation and other benefits were also at jeopardy during the shutdown," Johnston said. "Congress should amend the legislation to include all … funding in the advance appropriation, as well."

**Legislative Chairman Jack Olson**

**UPCOMING EVENTS:**

**Present to November 11 Golden Corral Military Appreciation fund raiser.** This is our major fund raiser for the year. It is also a DAV outreach program to assist our fellow veterans and provide exposure to the many good deeds that Chapter 17 offers. Last year was a let-down in member participation so we need everyone to volunteer as often as possible to solicit donations.

**Oct 31 – Nov 1** The **Homeless Stand Down** will be held at the North Charleston Armory

**November 3 Veterans Day Parade**–Sunday starting at 2:00 pm.  **Plan to participate by riding on the DAV float. Afterwards lunch is served at the VAMC and you can make a goodwill visit to the patients.**

**November 11 The Summerville Veterans Day Ceremony will be held at 10:00 am at the Dorchester County administratioon the** corner of Main St. and Highway 78, Summerville**.** After the ceremony there will be a meal and fellowship at VFW Post 3433.

**November 11 Golden Corral Military Appreciation Monday. All veterans get a free meal.** This is the final day of our fund raiser for the year.

**November 14 VISN 7** Stakeholder meeting 2:30p-3:30p at Charleston VAMC. **VISN 7** Director Mr. Charles Sepich will be the host.

**November 19 VAMC Hospital Visitation** Members and non-members are welcome to participate as we distribute cookies, soda and comradeship to our fellow confined veterans.

**November 21 Chapter meeting,** our holiday gathering.  The Auxiliary is planning another exceptional meal so invite fellow veterans, family members and friends.

**December 16** **Veterans Affairs Volunteer Services (VAVS)** meeting at American Legion Post 147 on James Island, 1:00.

**Charleston VA Medical Center Ward Visitation:** On the 3rd Tuesday each month at 6:00pm we distribute cookies, soda and comradeship to our confined fellow veterans. All members and non-members are welcome to participate. Contact James Ray, 843-534-6262

**September New Members:**

Fitzgerald, Thomas D

Hawks, Kevin Eugene

James, David W

Jenkins, Eugene J

Percy, James F.

**September Transfer In**

Jackson, Philip G

**September Deaths**

Grant, Herman N

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Van Drivers Needed.

Contact Harriett Hudson, the DAV Transportation Network coordinator, at 789-7307 if you wish to be a volunteer van driver.

**DAV Transportation Network Report:**

**September** **YTD**

Hours worked 78 1,185

Miles driven 1,262 14,202

Veterans transported 19 329

**DAV Service Officers (SOs)** assist veterans and their families in many ways including filing VA claims. All services provided by DAV Service Officers are free of charge. They have an office on the second floor (B254) of the VA Medical Center and can be reached at 789-7456. There is also an office at the Naval Weapons Station, 789-7862, open Mondays only.

Clinical Service Officer Report: September YTD

Veterans Assisted **382 2460**

Hours Worked **201 1862**

**CHAPTER SERVICE OFFICER REPORT**

A meeting / training session will be held at the VFW on BellWright Road on November 9th at 10:00am. All CSOs and people wanting to be Chapter Service Officers are encouraged to attend. September 2013 figures reflect 382 veterans and families assisted with entitlement claims. CSOs spent 201 hours in this endeavor in September 2013.

Buzz Nielsen

VAMC Clinical Service Officer

Chapter 17 Chapter Service Officer

Show your support by attending the meetings and stay informed of Chapter actions and events that affect Veterans.   Invite other Veterans, family members and friends. Door prizes will be awarded and refreshments will be provided.

Minutes from the October 17 meeting are attached.

[](http://www.google.com/imgres?imgurl=http://0.tqn.com/d/webclipart/1/0/0/b/fday4.gif&imgrefurl=http://webclipart.about.com/od/animalphoto/l/bleag5.htm&h=186&w=304&sz=9&tbnid=3_sqWq5UQv4YCM:&tbnh=86&tbnw=141&prev=/search?q=flag+clip+art+free&tbm=isch&tbo=u&zoom=1&q=flag+clip+art+free&usg=__lDsritZXQ1UJ_xnD0y5fgiGWpcA=&docid=TUBLrb4wevHDLM&hl=en&sa=X&ei=1zBLUfXpBYPV0gHMuYCQCg&sqi=2&ved=0CC8Q9QEwAA&dur=443)

**[](http://www.dav.org/)**

**COMMANDER’S COMMENTS:**

I hope everyone has had a safe and enjoyable Summer. But, now that Summer’s over, it’s now time to turn our attention to our primary reason for existence; helping veterans and their families.

Golden Corral has begun their annual fund raiser in preparation for Veteran Appreciation Day this coming November 11, 2013 (Veteran’s Day). Anyone who can help, please let me or James Ray know. Last year, we did not do very well. ***Only a few people did all the work. It is not hard and, since this is the only fund raiser we (Swamp Fox Chapter 17) have,*** we need as many as possible to help. This year, we are starting out on Friday, Saturday and Sunday for breakfast, lunch and dinner. Also, the shifts will only be three (3) hours long. Please **MAKE SURE YOU SIGN IN AND OUT** in the log book.

The National Convention in Orlando, FL was a great success. We were privileged to have President Obama and the First Lady speak at our opening ceremonies. There were many lectures and seminars that provided all the latest goals, status of different projects in progress by National and other information. Secretary of Veteran Affairs Eric K. Shinseki also spoke of the progress that the VA is making on eliminating the tremendous claim backlog. The VA is working very hard to minimize the backlog and to adjudicate those claims which have been in the system for some time and to reduce the amount of time it takes for new claims. The new National Command and his staff were voted in and installed for the upcoming year. Overall, it was a very good convention. My thanks to our Senior Vice-Commander Jerry Stout and our Junior Vice-Commander Bob Jensen for attending. They have learned a great deal and we can look forward to them sharing what they learned and our Chapter receiving the benefits.

Our next Chapter meeting will be October 17, 2013. Our guest speaker will be Naomi Nimmo, Executive Director of the Summerville Symphony Orchestra.

May God watch over our military, at home and overseas. May He give them wisdom, courage, strength and victory so that they may ALL come home safely. Amen.

Ken Curtis, Commander

**September 20, 2013**

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**Swamp Fox**

Chapter 17

Summerville

[www.davmembersportal.org/chapters/sc/17](http://www.davmembersportal.org/chapters/sc/17)

**Chapter 17 meets 7:30 PM on the 3rd Thursday at VFW Post 3433 located at 10154 Bellwright Rd., Summerville 29483.**

**Auxiliary Unit 17 meets at the same time.**

**Our next meeting will be:**

**October 17**



**AUXILIARY COMMENTS:**

Our DAV Auxiliary units actively participate in community service, Service Support Program and National Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary Education Scholarship Program.

**Unit 17 Commander**

**Melvina Mazyck**

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Van Drivers Needed.

Contact Harriett Hudson, the DAV Transportation Network coordinator, at 789-7307 if you wish to be a volunteer van driver.

**DAV Transportation Network Report:**

**August** **YTD**

Hours worked 105 1,107

Miles driven 1,645 12,940

Veterans transported 29 31

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**LEGISLATIVE REPORT:**

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**Congress: Much Legislation to Complete in this Session**

Congress has yet to pass any of the 12 appropriations bills required to fund the government for the next fiscal year (FY) 2014, which begins on October 1. The House Appropriations Committee has approved 10 of 12 bills, and the full House has passed four appropriations bills.  The Senate Appropriations Committee has approved 11 of 12 funding bills, but no appropriations bills have been passed by the full Senate.

Congress must pass funding legislation for the FY2014 for the government to operate beyond October 1.  Congress will likely pass a “CR” – a “continuing resolution” that would fund the government at FY2013 levels for an as yet to be determined period of time.

The borrowing authority of the federal government will expire in mid-October unless Congress passes a bill allowing additional borrowing.  The debt-ceiling limit compromise legislation of two years ago resulted in the “Sequester".   Unless the debt-ceiling is raised, the government could begin defaulting on its bills.  While some legislators want to tie an increase in the debt-ceiling to more spending cuts or a delay in implementing the Affordable Care Act  – or both, the President has indicated that he will not agree to any conditions in the debt-ceiling bill.

Another bill of major interest is the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA). The House has passed its version of the NDAA, but the full Senate has not.  The Senate Armed Services Committee has passed its version of the NDAA.  If the House version were to become law, $47.9 billion would have to be cut in defense activities in order to comply with the sequestration law.  If the version working its way through the Senate were to become law, $54.1 billion in cuts would need to be made in defense activities in order to comply with the sequestration law.

**Legislative Chairman Jack Olson**

**CHAPTER SERVICE OFFICER REPORT**

Looking back over the summer just ending, I must say it has been rather busy. We have seen an increase in the number of veterans we assisted at our office at the Ralph H Johnson VAMC and at the NWS clinic in Goose Creek. In July we assisted 356 veterans and during August the number was 382 for a total of 738. We worked a combined total of 468 hours helping veterans with claims during that period.

We have made numerous changes in procedures and office lay out, which hopefully will benefit CSOs and Veterans alike.

We have been utilizing the Fully Developed Claims procedures and hope to see greatly reduced turn around times for the claims process. It looks promising. We still have a few hurdles ahead as we become accustomed to the changes. We are printing forms while waiting for the supply channels to catch up with our orders; costly but necessary.

Our 1st CSO meeting was held on Saturday August 31st. Thanks to Tom Musolf we have secured a place for our future meetings. It will be held at 10:00am on the 2nd Saturday of the month at the Summerville VFW on Bells Wright Road. This is the same place as our monthly Chapter meetings. Unless we find we need more, we will have them approximately every other month, with the next one on November 9th.

Buzz Nielsen, VAMC Clinical Service Officer, Chapter 17 Chapter Service Officer

**DAV Service Officers (SOs)** assist veterans and their families in many ways including filing VA claims. All services provided by DAV Service Officers are free of charge. They have an office on the second floor (B254) of the VA Medical Center and can be reached at 789-7456. There is also an office at the Naval Weapons Station, 789-7862, open Mondays only.

Clinical Service Officer Report:

Veterans Assisted Jun/Jul/Aug **486**

Veterans Assisted Year to Date (2013)  **2361**

Hours worked for Jun/Jul/Aug **668**



From the Membership Chairman:

In the state of South Carolina, our goal for 2013-2014 was 822 new members. Today, we need an additional 776 members. For Chapter 17, Swamp Fox, we need 36 new/Life members to make our goal. This will be a great undertaking and will require all of our chapter members to assist in reaching this goal. During the National Convention, I attended three workshops all relating to membership, networking and using social media to attract younger members. By using Social media we can gain information on how to present the DAV to the public and possibly to these members. Once we get them as Life members, then we can get them involved. All this will take a team effort. I cannot do this alone. The Golden Corral is a good place to start, as this month chapter 17 is supporting this effort. I would like to see as much participation as possible. This would be a great opportunity to seek out a new member, the life of DAV is membership, Go to [www.dav.org/membership/join](http://www.dav.org/membership/join), to membership only contents and down load the language. DAV is moving forward and membership is the key.

Thank you as always call me if there are questions 843-871-9533.

Jerry K Stout, Senior Vice Commander

**UPCOMING EVENTS:**

**Present to November 11 Golden Corral Military Appreciation fund raiser.** This is our major fund raiser for the year. It is also a DAV outreach program to assist our fellow veterans and provide exposure to the many good deeds that Chapter 17 offers. Last year was a let-down in member participation so we need everyone to volunteer as often as possible to solicit donations.

**September 29 Open house at the Veterans Victory House** in Walterboro; with the Parris Island Marine Corps Band and an ice cream social.

**October 17** **Chapter Meeting** We will be involved with the Military Appreciation fund raiser and preparing for the Veteran’s Day ceremony and parade. Naomi Nimmo, Assistant Director of the Summerville Community Orchestra, will be our guest speaker.

**October** **12** **St. Padre Pio American Catholic Church 4th Annual Charity Golf Tournament**. Starts at 1:00pm. They have chosen to support DAV with a portion of the proceeds. Members should try to attend in DAV attire.

**Oct 31 – Nov 1** The **Homeless Stand Down** will be held at the North Charleston Armory

**November 3 Veterans Day Parade**–Sunday starting at 2:00 pm.  **Plan to participate by riding on the DAV float. Afterwards lunch is served at the VAMC and you can make a goodwill visit to the patients.**

**November 11 The Summerville Veterans Day Ceremony will be held at 10:00 am at the Dorchester County administratioon the** corner of Main St. and Highway 78, Summerville**.** After the ceremony there will be a meal and fellowship at VFW Post 3433.

**November 11 Golden Corral Military Appreciation Monday. All veterans get a free meal.** This is the final day of our fund raiser for the year.

**December 16** **Veterans Affairs Volunteer Services (VAVS)** meeting at American Legion Post 147 on James Island, 1:00.

**Charleston VA Medical Center Ward Visitation:** On the 3rd Tuesday each month at 6:00pm we distribute cookies, soda and comradeship to our fellow confined veterans. All members and non-members are welcome to participate. Contact James Ray, 843-534-6262

**June-August New Members:**

Backous, Douglas A

Brown, Sylvester W

Coger, Thomas J

Dantzler, Shannon M

Dusenberry, Leroy H

Harmon, William L.

Owens, Clarence L

Stueness, Rodney C

Tyler, Jimmy D

Wood, Richard Raymond

Show your support by attending the meetings and stay informed of Chapter actions and events that affect Veterans.   Invite other Veterans, family members and friends. Door prizes will be awarded and refreshments will be provided.

Minutes from the September 19 meeting are attached.

[](http://www.google.com/imgres?imgurl=http://0.tqn.com/d/webclipart/1/0/0/b/fday4.gif&imgrefurl=http://webclipart.about.com/od/animalphoto/l/bleag5.htm&h=186&w=304&sz=9&tbnid=3_sqWq5UQv4YCM:&tbnh=86&tbnw=141&prev=/search?q=flag+clip+art+free&tbm=isch&tbo=u&zoom=1&q=flag+clip+art+free&usg=__lDsritZXQ1UJ_xnD0y5fgiGWpcA=&docid=TUBLrb4wevHDLM&hl=en&sa=X&ei=1zBLUfXpBYPV0gHMuYCQCg&sqi=2&ved=0CC8Q9QEwAA&dur=443)

**[](http://www.dav.org/)**

**COMMANDER’S COMMENTS:**

Well, here it is Summer already. The unpredictable weather is always something to keep our eyes on. The Info-Expo that we attended at Low Country Harley-Davidson on the 15th went extremely well. A great many veterans had questions and received answers. There was plenty of good food and music, and it was all free. We hope to do it again next year.

Our VA Hospital visit went very well. We saw the new CLC and it is something to behold. Every veteran that I talked to said that it was much better than the nursing home they had been staying in for the last two years (that’s how long it took to refurbish the CLC in the hospital).

This year’s convention was held in May and Chapter 17 did quite well. Our Chapter received six out of fourteen awards. James Ray received the Greer Award; Jack Olson received Truscello Century Award; Joe Tallon received the Dasher Award and yours truly received the Joe Bridges Award. We, Chapter 17, also shared the Ferrell Award with chapters 19, 41 and 12. The Voegeli Award was shared with chapters 19, 51, 5, 77 and 4. My thanks and congratulations to each of you who received an award. This proves what we already know; Chapter 17 is the best chapter in the state. Now everyone else knows it too.

Our monthly meeting was very fruitful. Our thanks to Jan Helton and Jerry Baxley from Berkeley County Veterans Affairs office for being our guest speakers. They were very informative. Also, our Department of South Carolina Commander, Chris Maddox attended the meeting. He presented the Dasher Award to Joe Tallon as the Outstanding Chaplain. Joe was unable to attend the meeting so Jack Olson received the award for him.

Our next meeting will not be until September 19, 2013. In August, the National Convention will be held in Orlando, Florida. I plan to attend and will return with information that is beneficial to all. I’ll keep you all posted.

May God watch over our military, at home and overseas. May He give them wisdom, courage, strength and victory so that they may ALL come home safely. Amen.

Ken Curtis, Commander

**June 30, 2013**

****

**Swamp Fox**

Chapter 17

Summerville

[www.davmembersportal.org/chapters/sc/17](http://www.davmembersportal.org/chapters/sc/17)

**Chapter 17 meets 7:30 PM on the 3rd Thursday at VFW Post 3433 located at 10154 Bellwright Rd., Summerville 29483.**

**Auxiliary Unit 17 meets at the same time.**

**Our next meeting will be:**

**September 19**



**AUXILIARY COMMENTS:**

While DAV Auxiliary units actively participate in programs such as Americanism, Community Service, Junior Activities, Legislative, and VAVS (refer to the DAV Auxiliary Manual for details), two national programs rely on mandates and generous donations for special member assistance – Service Support Program and National Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary Education Scholarship Program.

C:\Users\James\Documents\DAV\Minutes_Newsletters\Logos\Transportation%20Van_jpg.jpg

Van Drivers Needed.

Contact Harriett Hudson, the DAV Transportation Network coordinator, at 789-7307 if you wish to be a volunteer van driver.

**[Click to view](http://classroomclipart.com/clipart-view/Clipart/Legal/law-book-with-gavel-2_jpg.htm)**

**LEGISLATIVE REPORT:**

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**Without VA Lease Authority, Veterans To Be Denied Care**

Please Contact Your Elected Officials Today!

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) plans to open 38 new community outpatient clinics, in 22 states and territories, between now and 2017. These clinics will be in leased buildings, with VA employees providing the services. This same arrangement has worked well in hundreds of existing VA clinics, nationwide.

Last year, the Congressional Budget Office (CBO), an independent arm of Congress, decided these lease contracts would become long-term debts of the federal government. In considering the first 15 leases, Congress, based on the new CBO interpretation, forced VA to find funds for all 15 leases to cover an entire 20-year leasing period, rather than provide the money for only the first year. The authorizing law only requires the first year to be funded, with future payments to be managed through the annual VA budget. Because VA could not pay the entire cost (between $1.2 and $1.5 billion) in the first year for 15 clinics, this new interpretation effectively stopped all VA proposed leases. This program, both new clinic leases and renewals for existing leases, is now in jeopardy.

Without these clinics, VA will be denying care to veterans in need, while making their health care more expensive overall. The cost to the government is far less than construction of major VA hospitals. Without the ability to lease, from a practical point of view the change in Congressional policy forces VA to buy land and build government-owned clinics, or to do nothing. At a minimum this new requirement will add years to the existing planning process, will delay or deny care for veterans, and is unacceptable to veterans who need VA health care.

VA is managing almost 900 existing community-based outpatient clinics, all established under the prior policy, and operating under leases. Veterans who receive this care are highly satisfied. In our opinion this successful arrangement should not be abandoned at the expense of 340,000 or more veterans who would be denied care.

Please use the prepared letter, or write your own letter, to urge your two Senators and Member of the House of Representatives to solve this problem, to ensure veterans receive the care they earned and deserve. Recently, the Executive Directors of the major veterans service organizations sent a letter to Congressional leaders expressing our concerns.

As always, thank you for your grassroots advocacy on behalf of injured, wounded and ill veterans, and for your support of DAV and our mission of service to veterans.  [www.dav.org](http://www.dav.org)   DAV CAN! but only with every member's help.  Sign up today!

**Legislative Chairman Jack Olson**



**CHAPTER SERVICE OFFICER REPORT**

This past month members of our chapter attended an INFO EXPO at the Low Country Harley Davidson Dealership on Dorchester Road. It was a big success for all participating and attending. Many veterans organizations were there giving information to veterans and their families. We had plenty of food and non alcoholic beverages for everyone along with live entertainment. We have had a number of those attending the info expo stop in at the CSO office.

Our office down town is now open Monday through Friday. I am still working on another group of people to help with coverage other than the six of us who work in both the Goose Creek office and the one down town. If anyone is interested or knows of someone let me know. Training can be done until the next certification.

Buzz Nielsen, Chapter Service Officer

**DAV Service Officers (SOs)** assist veterans and their families in many ways including filing VA claims. All services provided by DAV Service Officers are free of charge. They have an office on the second floor (B254) of the VA Medical Center and can be reached at 789-7456. There is also an office at the Naval Weapons Station, 789-7862, open Mondays only.

Clinical Service Officer Assistance for April/May: **486**

Total Assistance Year to Date (2013):  **1340**

Clinical Service Officer Hours worked for April/May: **364**

**UPCOMING EVENTS:**

**July 16 VAMC Hospital Visitation** Members and non-members are welcome to participate as we distribute cookies, soda and comradeship to our fellow confined veterans.

**August 20 VAMC Hospital Visitation** Members and non-members are welcome to participate as we distribute cookies, soda and comradeship to our fellow confined veterans.

**September 17 VAMC Hospital Visitation** Members and non-members are welcome to participate as we distribute cookies, soda and comradeship to our fellow confined veterans.

**September 19 Chapter Meeting**

Dorothy Hodges from the Veterans Victory in Walterboro will be our guest speaker.

Show your support by attending the meeting and stay informed of Chapter actions and events that affect Veterans.   Invite other Veterans, family members and friends. Door prizes will be awarded and refreshments will be provided.

**Charleston VA Medical Center Ward Visitation:** On the 3rd Tuesday each month at 6:00pm we distribute cookies, soda and comradeship to our fellow confined veterans. Members and non-members are welcome to participate. Contact James Ray, 843-851-1997

**April/May Deceased**

Wilson, Barry A.

Bennett, John C.

Cole, Robert W.

**April/May Transfer In**

Houston, Thomas R.

Norris, Danny R.

**April/May New Members:**

Augustus, Carl C

Behm, Carl Kenneth

Bishop, Eddie R

Blair, Charles R

Campo, T P

Fludd, Willie Lee

Johnston, Robert A

Kasmar, Scott D

Leach, Ercie J

Newman, John W

Parigros, John

Parker, Charles K

Powell, Collie M.

Scarsella, David F.

Schneider, Robert A

Stevens, Robert B

Stone, William Newton

Minutes from the June 20 meeting are attached.

[](http://www.google.com/imgres?imgurl=http://0.tqn.com/d/webclipart/1/0/0/b/fday4.gif&imgrefurl=http://webclipart.about.com/od/animalphoto/l/bleag5.htm&h=186&w=304&sz=9&tbnid=3_sqWq5UQv4YCM:&tbnh=86&tbnw=141&prev=/search?q=flag+clip+art+free&tbm=isch&tbo=u&zoom=1&q=flag+clip+art+free&usg=__lDsritZXQ1UJ_xnD0y5fgiGWpcA=&docid=TUBLrb4wevHDLM&hl=en&sa=X&ei=1zBLUfXpBYPV0gHMuYCQCg&sqi=2&ved=0CC8Q9QEwAA&dur=443)

**[](http://www.dav.org/)**

**COMMANDER’S COMMENTS:**

Elections of Commander, Senior Vice-Commander, Junior Vice-Commander, Treasurer and Chaplain are over. They are as follows: Commander, Ken Curtis, Senior Vice-Commander, Jerry Stout, Junior Vice-Commander, Bob Jensen, Treasurer, Jack Olson and Chaplain, Joe Tallon. James Ray was appointed Adjutant. All our thanks to each of you who participated in the April Meeting. We’re sorry that Kenny Williams, our District 1 Commander could not make it, but we wish him a speedy recovery from his surgery. Our thanks to Charles Wood, Aide to District 1 Commander for stepping up and standing in by installing our newly elected officers. My thanks to the Auxiliary for the fine meal after the meeting.

There will not be a meeting next month (May) because of the annual Department Convention in Columbia. That’s when our existing Service Officers get re-certified and our new ones get their initial certification. Our next meeting will be June 20 th, 2013 at the Golden Corral in North Charleston.

If you ordered a shirt, contact DAV Sarah Harry at sarahlharry@yahoo.com . All shirts that were ordered have arrived and will be distributed as soon as possible. The price is $15.00 each for the Polo shirt, and $9.00 each for the ladies shirt. Even if you did not order a shirt, and would like one, contact Sarah. She may possibly have your size on hand.

May God watch over our military, at home and overseas. May He give them wisdom, courage, strength and victory so that they may ALL come home safely. Amen.

Ken Curtis, Commander



**AUXILIARY COMMENTS:**

While DAV Auxiliary units actively participate in programs such as Americanism, Community Service, Junior Activities, Legislative, and VAVS (refer to the DAV Auxiliary Manual for details), two national programs rely on mandates and generous donations for special member assistance – Service Support Program and National Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary Education Scholarship Program.

**April 21, 2013**

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**Swamp Fox**

Chapter 17

Summerville

[www.davmembersportal.org/chapters/sc/17](http://www.davmembersportal.org/chapters/sc/17)

**Our next meeting will be 7:30 PM  June 20 at Golden Corral** 4968 Centre Pointe Dr  Charleston, SC 29418**Auxiliary Unit 17 meets at the same time.**

C:\Users\James\Documents\DAV\Minutes_Newsletters\Logos\Transportation%20Van_jpg.jpg

Van Drivers Needed.

Contact Harriett Hudson, the DAV Transportation Network coordinator, at 789-7307 if you wish to be a volunteer van driver.

**DAV Transportation Network Report for February:**

Hours worked 115

Miles driven 1280

Veterans transported 27

**[Click to view](http://classroomclipart.com/clipart-view/Clipart/Legal/law-book-with-gavel-2_jpg.htm)**

**LEGISLATIVE REPORT:**

**The Administration’s VA Budget**

The Department of Veterans Affairs is in the enviable position of having the President propose an increase in funding for FY2014. In these times that is a very unusual position to be in. (Just look at the preceding story) The plan has 3 top priorities

* Expand Access to Benefits and Services
* Eliminate the Claims Backlog in 2015
* End Veterans Homelessness; also in 2015

The total budget request is $152.7 billion for FY2014. That is $86.1 billion in mandatory spending and $66.5 billion in discretionary spending (including collections.) The mandatory spending covers primarily disability benefit compensation and education benefits. Discretionary spending is primarily health care spending ($54.6 billion). Proposed discretionary spending is up 4.3% above last year’s discretionary budget.

The proposal also includes a request for Advanced Appropriations adding $1.1 billion to the requested FY2014 $54.6 billion.

At the briefing the greatest focus was, not surprisingly, on ending the backlog. With HVAC Chairman Jeff Miller (R-FL) calling for the removal of VA Under Secretary for Benefits Allison Hickey and some VSOs calling for the resignation of VA Secretary Shinseki this is the subject most on the mind of the VA leadership. The latest call for the Secretary’s resignation was included in a Washington Post op-ed piece written by Rep. Duncan Hunter (R-CA) and Pete Hugest, chief executive of Concerned Veterans of America. It is getting to be a more and more contentious issue here in DC. They say that with improvements and increases in personnel, and the implementation of the Veterans Benefits Management Systems and Veteran Claims Intake Program that the end of the backlog goal will be reached in 2015. There will be much more analysis of this in the future since backlog goals have NEVER been achieved on time..

The expansion of access to benefits and services is focused primarily on increasing funding for technology improvements including programs in home telephone, veterans relationship management (VRM), virtual lifetime electronic record, improvements in eBenefits and VONAPP, increases in women-specific medical care, mental health care, OEF/OIF/OND veterans healthcare and increases in financing non-VA healthcare for rural areas

Secretary Shinseki has called for the end of veteran homelessness by 2015 as his own goal. The budget calls for spending $1.4 billion on homelessness programs in FY2014. That is a 3% increase over last year.

**If it sounds too good to be true, it usually is.  The House and Senate have their own versions in the hopper for consideration.  When the completed piece of legislation is approved by conference and signed by POTUS, then and only then will the truth be revealed.**

**Legislative Chairman Jack Olson**



**CHAPTER SERVICE OFFICER REPORT**

The chapter service officers have been quite busy this year. To date we have put in close to 700 hours

and have help over 600 Veterans and their families. This is less than last year but still impressive figures. This year we have 16 people being certified and re-certified on May 16th. I am hoping to replenish at least some of the some of the open slots we have for service officers from this group. It looks promising. As you all know we now have the office

at the NWS clinic in Goose Creek being primarily covered by Commander Curtis. The flow of Veterans and their family

through that office has picked up and should continue to, as word gets out.

Buzz Nielsen, Chapter Service Officer

**DAV Service Officers (SOs)** assist veterans and their families in filing claims for VA disability compensation and pension, death benefits and more. All services provided by DAV Service Officers are free of charge. They have an office on the second floor (B254) of the VA Medical Center and can be reached at 789-7456.

Clinical Service Officer Claims Filed for March: **219**

Total Claims Filed Year to Date (2013):  **588**

Clinical Service Officer Hours worked for March: **113**

**UPCOMING EVENTS:**

**April 21-26 National Volunteer Week**

**April 23 VA Volunteer Lunch at Red Bank Club 12:00**

**May 16** **Service Officer training** in Columbia 10:00 am

**May 16** **State Executive Committee (SEC)** **Meeting**-Final for 2012-2013

**May 16-19 DAV State convention** in Columbia.

**May 18** **State Executive Committee (SEC)** **Meeting**-First for 2013-2014

**May 21** **VAMC Hospital Visitation** Members and non-members are welcome to participate as we distribute cookies, soda and comradeship to our fellow confined veterans.

**May 27 Memorial Day Ceremony** at Summerville Cemetery 10:30

**June 15 Veterans Resource Day** at Low Country Harley Davidson

**June 18 VAMC Hospital Visitation** Members and non-members are welcome to participate as we distribute cookies, soda and comradeship to our fellow confined veterans.

**June 20**  **Chapter Meeting**

Show your support by attending the meeting and stay informed of Chapter actions and events that affect Veterans.   Invite other Veterans, family members and friends. Door prizes will be awarded and refreshments will be provided.

**Charleston VA Medical Center Ward Visitation:** On the 3rd Tuesday each month at 6:00pm we distribute cookies, soda and comradeship to our fellow confined veterans. All members and non-members are welcome to participate. Contact James Ray, 843-851-1997

[](http://www.google.com/imgres?imgurl=http://0.tqn.com/d/webclipart/1/0/0/b/fday4.gif&imgrefurl=http://webclipart.about.com/od/animalphoto/l/bleag5.htm&h=186&w=304&sz=9&tbnid=3_sqWq5UQv4YCM:&tbnh=86&tbnw=141&prev=/search?q=flag+clip+art+free&tbm=isch&tbo=u&zoom=1&q=flag+clip+art+free&usg=__lDsritZXQ1UJ_xnD0y5fgiGWpcA=&docid=TUBLrb4wevHDLM&hl=en&sa=X&ei=1zBLUfXpBYPV0gHMuYCQCg&sqi=2&ved=0CC8Q9QEwAA&dur=443)

**March New Members:**

Adam, Kenneth W

Agema, Thomas J

Brown, Larry

Collins, Christina A

Coram, Jacquelynia M

Daugherty, Joseph

McKinley, Jeremiah

Meador, Michael D

Newtzie, Barbara J

Packard, David M

Robertson, Roy L

Spletzer, Kirk A

Taste, Allen Charlie

Thomas, Charles E

Thornley, Roy

Ward, John S

**DAV Mission Statement**

Made up exclusively of men and women disabled in our nation’s defense, the Disabled American Veterans is dedicated to one, single purpose — building better lives for all of our nation’s disabled veterans and their families. This mission is carried forward by:

--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.

Minutes from the April 18 meeting are attached.

**[](http://www.dav.org/)**

**COMMANDER’S COMMENTS:**

Can you believe it? Spring is here already. It’s time to start thinking about our State Convention in May. Each of us needs to be supportive of the Convention. And the way to support our Convention is to sell ads for the Convention Book. If each one of us sell just one ad, the chapter and unit will benefit. For each ad we sell, after the first $100, which is already submitted, we receive 40% back from the Department. If you need an ad application, go to the Department web site(www.davmembersportal.org/sc), look under the NEWS tab and you will find it.

Election of Commander, Senior Vice-Commander, Junior Vice-Commander, Treasurer and Chaplain is coming next month. The Adjutant is appointed by the Commander, with the approval of the Chapter. You may nominate any member in good standing for any office. First nominations will be held at this month’s meeting and second and final nominations, elections and installation of Officer will be at the April 18 th meeting. Our Officers will be installed by our District 1 Commander Kenny Williams.

If you ordered a shirt, contact DAV Sarah Harry at sarahlharry@yahoo.com . All shirts that were ordered have arrived and will be distributed as soon as possible. The price is $15.00 each for the Polo shirt, and $9.00 each for the ladies shirt. Even if you did not order a shirt, and would like one, contact Sarah. She may possibly have your size on hand.

May God watch over our military, at home and overseas. May He give them wisdom, courage, strength and victory so that they may ALL come home safely. Amen.

Ken Curtis, Commander

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Clinical Service Officer Claims Filed for February: **184**

Total Claims Filed Year to Date (2013):  **409**

Clinical Service Officer Hours worked for February: **230**

**March 24, 2013**

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**Swamp Fox**

Chapter 17

Summerville

[www.davmembersportal.org/chapters/sc/17](http://www.davmembersportal.org/chapters/sc/17)

**Chapter 17 meets 7:30 PM on the 3rd Thursday at VFW Post 3433 located at 10154 Bellwright Rd., Summerville 29483.**

**Auxiliary Unit 17 meets at the same time.**

**Our next meeting will be:**

**April 18**



**AUXILIARY COMMENTS:**

While DAV Auxiliary units actively participate in programs such as Americanism, Community Service, Junior Activities, Legislative, and VAVS (refer to the DAV Auxiliary Manual for details), two national programs rely on mandates and generous donations for special member assistance – Service Support Program and National Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary Education Scholarship Program.

**LEGISLATIVE REPORT:**

[Click to view](http://classroomclipart.com/clipart-view/Clipart/Legal/law-book-with-gavel-2_jpg.htm)

**VA Asked for More Info on Claims Backlog**

**At a Senate Veterans’ Affairs Committee hearing held on March 14, committee members requested VA share internal performance data with Congress.**

**In response, the VA asserted** it “will continue to be responsive to requests from the committee for information in addition to the public reports posted online and quarterly briefings provided to members of Congress.”

The request was in response to Center for Investigative Reporting (CIR) release of certain VA internal tracking documents, showing its ability to provide timely disability benefits to veterans had declined.

The documents obtained by CIR show that since 2009 the number of veterans waiting more than a year for service-connected benefits had increased from 11,000 to 245,000.

The VA says it has a plan to eliminate the disability claims backlog by 2015, but Committee members find the goal questionable. Internal documents show the agency believes the number of veterans waiting for benefits, currently at about 900,000, will hit a million this month and continue to rise throughout the year.

**(Note: 900,000 is the number for only disability claims. If all claims, including education, pension and others, are counted, the total VA backlog is over 2 million.)**

Lawmakers from both parties expressed skepticism during the hearing that the 2015 deadline could be met, noting that delays and the number of veterans waiting have continued to increase in the three years since the agency pledged to eliminate the backlog.

During testimony, Allison Hickey, the VA Undersecretary for Benefits, said the VA is working feverishly to put into place systems that could substantially shrink the backlog, asserting that a new computer system will help the agency achieve its goal.

But after spending four years and more than half a billion dollars on the new system, the internal documents show 97 percent of claims remain on paper.

**(Note: The recent decision by the VA and DoD to abandon efforts to create a joint Integrated Electronic Health Record does not bode well for as rapid a solution as projected by Undersecretary Hickey.)**

**JOIN DAV CAN today so you won't have to complain later!**

**Legislative Chairman Jack Olson**



MEMBERSHIP REPORT:

Well, I received only one recommendation for how our chapter can improve attendance at our meetings on the Third Thursday of the month.  Offer a meal outside of the VFW at a Restaurant and/or a public facility (beach, pool, pavilion).  The Auxiliary offers a nice snack now after our meetings and I am one of the first in line, but this recommendation is still valid.  At the next Officers Meeting, we will discuss this along with where we, Chapter 17 stands in overall Lifetime membership in obtaining our goal.  I do appreciate those that continue to attend our meetings.  There is lots of information that is put out from all members.  Please continue to wear your DAV Shirts/hats and devises whenever you are out.  I was in the Joint Base Charleston Exchange last week, and a retired E-8 stopped me and wanted to know more about "DAVE".  I had to think why is he referring to DAV as Dave?  I picked up right away and offered information on what he was asking and gave him a card.  He will be joining us soon as he relocated from Alabama.  In closing, have a nice Easter Week and take care.  
   
Jerry K. Stout  
Vice Commander/Membership

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Van Drivers Needed.

Contact Harriett Hudson, the DAV Transportation Network coordinator, at 789-7307 if you wish to be a volunteer van driver.

**DAV Transportation Network Report for February:**

Hours worked 116

Miles driven 1134

Veterans transported 28

**UPCOMING EVENTS:**

**March 23 State Executive Committee (SEC)** **Meeting** at SC Headquarters in Columbia

**April 16 VAMC Hospital Visitation** Members and non-members are welcome to participate as we distribute cookies, soda and comradeship to our fellow confined veterans.

**April 18**  **Chapter Meeting**

Final Officer nominations made and then the election will be held.  Show your support by attending the meeting and stay informed of Chapter actions and events that affect Veterans.   Invite other Veterans, family members and friends. Door prizes will be awarded and refreshments will be provided.

**April 21-26 National Volunteer Week**

**April 23 VA Volunteer Lunch at Red Bank Club 12:00**

**May 16** **Service Officer training** in Columbia 10:00 am

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**June 15 Veterans Resource Day** at Low Country Harley Davidson

**Charleston VA Medical Center Visitation:** On the 3rd Tuesday each month at 6:00pm we distribute cookies, soda and comradeship to our fellow confined veterans. All members and non-members are welcome to participate. Contact James Ray, 843-851-1997

[](http://www.google.com/imgres?imgurl=http://0.tqn.com/d/webclipart/1/0/0/b/fday4.gif&imgrefurl=http://webclipart.about.com/od/animalphoto/l/bleag5.htm&h=186&w=304&sz=9&tbnid=3_sqWq5UQv4YCM:&tbnh=86&tbnw=141&prev=/search?q=flag+clip+art+free&tbm=isch&tbo=u&zoom=1&q=flag+clip+art+free&usg=__lDsritZXQ1UJ_xnD0y5fgiGWpcA=&docid=TUBLrb4wevHDLM&hl=en&sa=X&ei=1zBLUfXpBYPV0gHMuYCQCg&sqi=2&ved=0CC8Q9QEwAA&dur=443)

February New Members:

Brady, Cynthia

Byars, Joni L

Dallas, Thomas A

Haynes, Samuel

Payton, Chris

Rojas, Ramon M

Seagle, Steven

Thomas, Beverly J

February Transfer In:

Woodson, Warren A

February Deceased:

Gray, James A.

**DAV Mission Statement**

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--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.

Minutes from the March 21 meeting are attached.

Building Better Lives for America's Disabled Veterans



**COMMANDER’S COMMENTS:**

Commander’s Comments:

February is just about gone and March is just around the corner. It seems like the older we get, the faster time goes by. Each one of us should try to make the best of each day because none of us know if today will be our last.

We lost a good Comrade when we lost John Bowen. He always had a good word to say to whomever he met. He will be missed. Keep the families of Hank Hyduk and John Bowen in your prayers and let them know that they, the family members, are still important parts of our Chapter.

Our February meeting was a very successful meeting. Those of you who missed it, really missed out on some very good information. It was presented by our guest speaker, Alleine Simmons, Founder/President and CEO of Nulife Housing 4 Homeless Heroes, Inc. in Summerville. This organization is worthy of all the support we can give it. There should NOT BE ANY Homeless Veterans. But, as we all know, there are too many.

If you ordered a shirt, contact DAV Sarah Harry at sarahlharry@yahoo.com . All shirts that were ordered have arrived and will be distributed as soon as possible. The price is $15.00 each for the Polo shirt, and $9.00 each for the ladies shirt. Even if you did not order a shirt, and would like one, contact Sarah. She may possibly have your size on hand.

May God watch over our military, at home and overseas. May He give them wisdom, courage, strength and victory so that they may ALL come home safely. Amen.

Ken Curtis, Commander

**February 24, 2013**

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**Swamp Fox**

Chapter 17

Summerville

[www.davmembersportal.org/chapters/sc/17](http://www.davmembersportal.org/chapters/sc/17)

**Chapter 17 meets 7:30 PM on the 3rd Thursday at VFW Post 3433 located at 10154 Bellwright Rd., Summerville 29483.**

**Auxiliary Unit 17 meets at the same time.**

**Our next meeting will be:**

**March 21**



**AUXILIARY COMMENTS:**

While DAV Auxiliary units actively participate in programs such as Americanism, Community Service, Junior Activities, Legislative, and VAVS (refer to the DAV Auxiliary Manual for details), two national programs rely on mandates and generous donations for special member assistance – Service Support Program and National Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary Education Scholarship Program.

**Charleston VA Medical Center Visitation:** On the 3rd Tuesday each month at 6:00pm we distribute cookies, soda and comradeship to our fellow confined veterans. All members and non-members are welcome to participate.

**LEGISLATIVE REPORT:**

[Click to view](http://classroomclipart.com/clipart-view/Clipart/Legal/law-book-with-gavel-2_jpg.htm)

**Electronic Health Records Being Scaled Back**

**On Tuesday February 5th, Secretary of Defense Panetta and Secretary of Veterans Affairs Shinseki held a joint conference to announce that the dream of a new joint medical record was not going to happen.**

**Since then, and after the Chairmen and Ranking Members of both the House and Senate Veterans’ Affairs Committees expressed their extreme dismay at the announcement, both departments have backtracked a bit and have clarified they are scaling back on plans to create a single shared electronic health records system in favor of a less expensive one built on existing technology.**

**Since 2008, when Congress ordered the departments to create a seamless system of lifetime health records that would follow troops from recruitment to grave, the DoD/VA Interagency Program Office has worked to develop and deploy an integrated electronic health record system by 2017 at an estimated cost of $4 billion.**

**The Defense Department currently uses the DoD Composite Health Care System for its electronic records, while VA uses the Veterans Health Information System and Technology Architecture, or VISTA. (VISTA has been in use for over 20 years and works extremely well.)**

**The new effort will allow physicians at seven VA poly-trauma facilities and two DoD facilities — Walter Reed National Military Medical Center and San Antonio Military Medical Center — to view clinical information across a common interface by July.**

**It also will allow VA and DoD to exchange real-time data by the end of the year and permit all patients to download their medical records from any computer by May.**

**Note: It has long been advocated by virtually all veteran service organizations that DoD and VA use “off the shelf” existing software to more rapidly expedite the development of the system. Much time and money have again been wasted in this effort. We must continue to urge more stringent oversight by Congress in following the long overdue development of an urgently needed workable joint health record.**

**JOIN DAV CAN today so you won't have to complain later!**

**Legislative Chairman Jack Olson**



MEMBERSHIP REPORT:

Dear Fellow Chapter 17 Veterans,  
   
Chapter 17 has over 1200 members.  Over 30 members are not yet life members as they have not fully vested into DAV.  If you are a member of DAV and are still paying on your life dues, consider, if able, to pay your life membership in full!  OUR GOAL is for 14 members to go life!  
   
If you are reading this newsletter and did not attend our last meeting, I would like to ask you "What the Chapter" could do to bring you to our meeting and thus become more involved?  Call and/or write me with the addresses below.  
   
Thank you for continuing to support the DAV and I look forward to hearing from you.  
   
Sincerely,  
   
Jerry K Stout  
Sr. Vice Commander  
[jwustout@hotmail.com](mailto:jwustout@hotmail.com)  
843-871-9533  
843-568-5923  
 

**DAV Service Officers (SOs)** assist veterans and their families in filing claims for VA disability compensation and pension, death benefits and more. All services provided by DAV Service Officers are free of charge. They have an office on the second floor (B254) of the VA Medical Center and can be reached at 789-7456.

Clinical Service Officer Claims Filed for January: **225**

Total Claims Filed Year to Date (2013):  **225**

Clinical Service Officer Hours worked for January: **168**

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Van Drivers Needed.

Contact Harriett Hudson, the DAV Transportation Network coordinator, at 789-7307 if you wish to be a volunteer van driver.

Once we get our local system in place we will need 15 drivers a week just to cover Dorchester and Berkley counties.

**DAV Transportation Network Report for January:**

Miles driven 1907

Hours worked 174

Veterans transported 55

**DAV Mission Statement**

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--Providing a structure through which disabled veterans can express their compassion for their fellow veterans through a variety of volunteer programs.

January New Member:

Martin, David A

**UPCOMING EVENTS:**

**March 18 VA Volunteer Services (VAVS)** meeting, 11:00 American Legion Post 184 3003 Rowland Ave, Savannah, GA 31414

**March 19 VAMC Hospital Visitation** Members and non-members are welcome to participate as we distribute cookies, soda and comradeship to our fellow confined veterans.

**March 21** **Chapter Meeting**

Show your support by attending the meeting and stay informed of Chapter actions and events that affect Veterans.  We often have guest speakers. Invite other Veterans, family members and friends. Door prizes will be awarded and refreshments will be provided.

**March 23 State Executive Committee (SEC)** **Meeting** at SC Headquarters in Columbia

**May 16** Service Officer training in Columbia 12:30-3:30

**May 16-19** DAV State convention in Columbia.



Minutes from the February 21 meeting are attached.

Building Better Lives for America's Disabled Veterans



**COMMANDER’S COMMENTS:**

Last year, 2012, was a very unusual and prosperous year for Chapter 17. Thanks to a VERY GENEROUS donation to our chapter, we presented the Department of South Carolina DAV with a donation of over $20,000.00, the Ralph H. Johnson VA Medical Center a donation of $15,000.00, the Veteran’s Victory House in Walterboro with $5,000.00 and DAV Chapter 77 in James Island with $5,000.00. We have a Scholarship Fund with up to $15,000.00 ready to be awarded to deserving students in Dorchester and Berkeley counties.

We raised a lot of money for Camp Corral, over $1200. We also raised a lot of money from the Golden Corral; over $12,750. However, it’s not all for us. We share it with Chapter 77 and 78 because they were part of the effort. But, a good job was done by those who participated.

We assisted over 3100 veterans file claims through our Service Officers. Also, we now have a DAV Claims office at the NWS Clinic that is open one day a week. So, 2012 was a very good year.

In June, 2013, we are planning an “Info Expo” in conjunction with several other local and national service organizations along with Low Country Harley-Davidson in North Charleston. As we finalize the event, we will make sure everyone has the information. We will need a lot of help for that event. That’s just one event in the plans. As others become a reality, we will get the word out to all our members.

This year, 2013, could be a fantastic year for us. I hope to see other events during the year that will get everyone actively involved. I hope to see greater participation by every member of the chapter. I encourage everyone to seek out a member who is not active and encourage them to become an active member; attend the meetings, take part in the activities.

May God watch over our military, at home and overseas. May He give them wisdom, courage, strength and victory so that they all may come home safely. Amen

Ken Curtis, Commander

**January 23, 2013**

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**Swamp Fox**

Chapter 17

Summerville

[www.davmembersportal.org/chapters/sc/17](http://www.davmembersportal.org/chapters/sc/17)

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**Auxiliary Unit 17 meets at the same time.**

**Our next meeting will be:**

**February 21**



**AUXILIARY COMMENTS:**

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**LEGISLATIVE REPORT:**

[Click to view](http://classroomclipart.com/clipart-view/Clipart/Legal/law-book-with-gavel-2_jpg.htm)

**Budget Delay Likely**

The two-month delay in the budget cuts from sequestration that were approved in the “fiscal cliff” deal will expire in March.  Unless Congress acts, the Defense Department’s budget for the fiscal year will be slashed by roughly $45 billion.

The Pentagon is considering delaying delivery of its budget plan for fiscal year 2014, which is due in February, to see if Congress can reach a final deal to avert sequestration.

During a Pentagon briefing last week,  Defense Secretary Leon Panetta said, “The most immediate threat to our ability to achieve our mission is fiscal uncertainty, not knowing what our budget will be, not knowing if our budget will be drastically cut, and not knowing whether the strategy that we've put in place can survive."

But sequestration isn’t the only budgetary headache facing military planners.  The fights on Capitol Hill over the debt ceiling and a continuing spending resolution to fund the government beyond March 27 are also causing problems.

**Legislation Introduced to Help Surviving Spouses**

At the start of the 113th Congress, Rep. Joe Wilson (R-SC) introduced H.R. 32, called the Military Surviving Equity Act, to ensure survivors do not lose benefits from the DoD Survivor Benefit Program if they receive the Dependency Indemnity Compensation from the VA. Eliminating that benefit loss, called the “widow's tax,” would help more than 50,000 armed forces’ widows and widowers. Wilson is Chairman of the House Armed Services subcommittee on military personnel.

**Social Security Administration develops new Online Service**

The Social Security Administration has a new “my Social Security” online service. With a “my Social Security” account, you can have direct access to your Social Security Statement to view your earning record and future benefits. If you currently receive benefits, you now can get a benefit verification letter; change your address and phone number; and start or change your direct deposit.

**DAV CAN awaits your participation - sign up at** [www.dav.org](http://www.dav.org)**!**

**Legislative Chairman Jack Olson**



MEMBERSHIP REPORT:

Dear Fellow Chapter 17 Veterans,  
   
I hope everyone had a wonderful Holiday Season.  The Calendar year has come to a close and we looking forward to a great 2013.  Our previous year was great in our chapter and I know we are on our way to a great New Year. We are doing well with membership so far.  However, we still need 16 Life Members to meet our membership goal set by National.  The State needs over 500 total.  We need everyone to get out there and recruit new members and encourage partial members to become Life Members by paying the remainder of their membership fees.  Finally, do not forget that Awards are due to the state by March 1st, 2013.  This means that Ken, Bob and I need input from the chapter.  We cannot do this ourselves.  Yes, I can write an award, had plenty of experience in the Navy, however, we need input.  I hope everyone has a Happy New Year!  
   
Jerry K Stout,

Sr. Vice Commander,

Swamp Fox Chapter

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Clinical Service Officer Claims Filed for December: **154**

Total Year to Date (2012):  **3254**

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Van Drivers Needed.

Contact Harriett Hudson, the DAV Transportation Network coordinator, at 789-7307 if you wish to be a volunteer van driver.

Once we get our local system in place we will need 15 drivers a week just to cover Dorchester and Berkley counties.

**DAV Transportation Network Report for December:**

Miles driven 182

Hours worked 24

Veterans transported 7

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Nov/Dec New Members:

Anderson, Howard J.

Banks, Joseph J

Barkand, Richard J

Deal, Walter A

Kent, Randolph

Sarkozy, Paul L

Williams, Gary W

Nov/Dec Transfer In:

N/A

Nov/Dec Deaths:

Craig, Marvin P.

Hyduk, Henry J.

Marks, Paul B.

**UPCOMING EVENTS:**

**January 25-27 9th NEC (National Executive Committee) convention in Myrtle Beach**

**February 19 VAMC Hospital Visitation** Members and non-members are welcome to participate as we distribute cookies, soda and comradeship to our fellow confined veterans.

**February 21 Chapter Meeting Guest speaker will be** Alleine Simmons, CEO, President of Housing 4 Homeless Heroes. She

**will speak on this project.** As always, family members and friends are invited. Door prizes and refreshments will be provided.

**March 18 Veterans Affairs Volunteer Services (VAVS)** meeting, 11:00 American Legion Post 184 3003 Rowland Ave, Savannah, GA 31414



Minutes from the January 17 meeting are attached.

Building Better Lives for America's Disabled Veterans



**COMMANDER’S COMMENTS:**

This year is almost gone; October is past. During the month, we had the MSO van at the Golden Corral parking lot and in Goose Creek at the Publix Shopping Center parking lot. We also started our annual Golden Corral Fund Raiser for Veterans Appreciation Day in November. We celebrated Columbus Day and the Birthday of the U. S. Navy. We assisted the VA Hospital with Stand-Down and made the formal presentation of our $15,000 donation to the hospital. Later in the month, we had our quarterly SEC meeting in Columbia. At this meeting, we presented the Department of South Carolina DAV with a donation of $20,000 plus a donation of $3,000 for the NSO/HSC/VAVS.

Our participation with the Golden Corral Fund Raiser is less than what I had hoped for. It seems that hardly anyone has time to help out. Consequently, our share of the proceeds will be much less than in the past. Everyone is highly encouraged to participate in all of the fund raisers hosted by our Chapter. We conduct very few fund raisers during the year. It is for the benefit of the Chapter and everyone should show their pride by helping out.

Again, if you ordered a shirt, contact DAV Sarah Harry at sarahlharry@yahoo.com . All shirts that were ordered have arrived and need to be distributed as soon as possible. The price is $15.00. If you want a shirt, and we have your size in stock, it’s yours; first come, first serve. Those that were ordered and not picked up, are up for grabs by anyone who wants them.

May God watch over our military, at home and overseas. May He give them wisdom, courage, strength and victory so that they all may come home safely. Amen

Ken Curtis, Commander

**November 18, 2012**

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**Swamp Fox**

Chapter 17

Summerville

[www.davmembersportal.org/chapters/sc/17](http://www.davmembersportal.org/chapters/sc/17)

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**Auxiliary Unit 17 meets at the same time.**

**Our next meeting will be:**

**January 17**



**AUXILIARY COMMENTS:**

It’s now getting to be the holidays and your auxiliary is doing some great things. We have adopted homeless Women from the veterans shelter. On Dec 8 we will be having a Christmas party for them at Golden Corral. We are making gift bags for them with all kinds of stuff in side for them.

I would like to say a special thanks to all that helped with Golden Corral days.  Without your hard work and dedication we would not be able to give back to our Veterans.

Please come and see what your auxiliary is doing. Hope that everyone has a great holiday season.

Auxiliary Commander Virginia Holley

**LEGISLATIVE REPORT:**

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**Think Tank Puts Out Report Calling For Complete Overhaul of Military Benefits**

A new report by the Center for American Progress, a liberal think-tank that is influential in the White House, released a report last week that called for a complete overhaul of military benefits. The proposed changes call for capping active-duty pay raises, eliminating military health benefits for retirees who are covered by an employer-provided plan and raising fees for those that stay on TRICARE, instituting a 401K style retirement system and making active-duty retirees wait until age 60 to receive it.

The report, called “Rebalancing Our National Security” was released October 31 and is in line with many of the proposals in the Bowles-Simpson deficit reduction plan that was not enacted. The report also tracks closely with proposals that have been put forth by the Department of Defense.

The report also calls for cutting the number of active-duty troops stationed in Europe and Asia (33,000 in Europe and 17,000 in Asia).

The Pentagon has put forth plans to have a .5% raise for the active duty in 2015, a 1% raise in 2016, and a 1.5% pay raise in 2017 to bring military pay levels back in line with what they call “parity” with the private sector.

It also has put forth plans, mainly endorsed by the report, that would stick military retirees and their families with TRICARE fee hikes and would reduce “overutilization” of TRICARE resources and force service members with access to employer-sponsored healthcare onto those plans. Another idea in the report would require TRICARE for Life members to pay for the first $500 of costs per year and then would only pay for 50% of the next $5,000. All of these ideas are non-starters and an insult to those who have honorably served.

As has been pointed out before, changing the rules of the game for those who have already served a career in service to their nation is a violation of a moral contract, and it would force those currently serving, as well as those who are considering a life of service, to think long and hard before they spend 20-plus years away from their families in health and life-threatening conditions. Frankly, it could not be in worse taste to do so after more than 10 years of constant warfare. Those who have answered the call deserve better than this.

It requires grassroots involvement in DAV Commander's Action Network (CAN) to forestall erosion of pay and earned benefits.  Go to DAV.org, sign up and get involved.  Only 18% of the newly elected members of Congress are veterans.  The remaining 82% need to be educated.  To be quite honest I feel as if I have been carrying the vast majority of the chapter's legislative efforts since 1996.  Declining health precludes me from continuing to work 3-4 hours a day on these efforts.  If you can use e-mail and formatted e-mails, you can be of immediate help.

**Legislative Chairman Jack Olson**



MEMBERSHIP REPORT:

If you would like to access DAV’s Membership System, simply log onto <https://www.davmembers.org> with your membership credentials and you are ready to go!

Members can update their personal information, request transfers and make payments toward full life membership.

October New Members:

Barkand, Richard J

Williams, Gary W

October Transfer In:

N/A

October Deaths:

**N/A**

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Van Drivers Needed.

Contact Harriett Hudson, the DAV Transportation Network coordinator, at 789-7307 if you wish to be a volunteer van driver.

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**DAV Transportation Network Report for October:**

Miles driven 1135

Hours worked 94

Veterans transported 30

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Clinical Service Officer Claims Filed for October: **289**

Total Year to Date:  **2856**

**Charleston VA Medical Center Visitation:** On the 3rd Tuesday each month at 6:00pm we distribute cookies, soda and comradeship to our fellow confined veterans. All members and non-members are welcome to participate.

**UPCOMING EVENTS:**

**November 20 VAMC Hospital Visitation** Members and non-members are welcome to participate as we distribute cookies, soda and comradeship to our fellow confined veterans.

**December 17** **Veterans Affairs Volunteer Services (VAVS)** meeting at American Legion Post 147 on James Island, 1:00.

**There will not be a meeting or hospital visit in December**

**January 15 VAMC Hospital Visitation** Members and non-members are welcome to participate as we distribute cookies, soda and comradeship to our fellow confined veterans.

**January 17 Chapter Meeting Guest speaker will be Pat Moretti, a South Carolina Disabled Veteran Outreach Program Specialist who will outline the services provided by his organization. I**nvite any veteran that may be interested. As always, family members and friends are invited.Door prizes and refreshments will be provided.

**January 25–27 9th NEC** (National Executive Committee) meeting in Myrtle Beach.



Minutes from the November 15 meeting are attached.

Building Better Lives for America's Disabled Veterans



**COMMANDER’S COMMENTS:**

Everyone is encouraged to participate in our annual fund raiser at Golden Corral in North Charleston. This is our major fund raiser for the year and it is very important that we get as many helpers as possible. It isn’t hard; you just ask the customers of Golden Corral if they would like to donate to the Disabled American Veterans. All of the funds raised are given to the DAV. The Golden Corral does NOT keep any of it. We need your help. All of the funds collected will be divided among participating DAV Chapters.

If you ordered a shirt, contact DAV Sarah Harry at [sarahlharry@yahoo.com](mailto:sarahlharry@yahoo.com) . All shirts that were ordered have arrived and need to be distributed as soon as possible. The price is $15.00 each for the Polo shirt, and $9.00 each for the ladies shirt. If you would like a shirt and we don’t have your size, we will be placing an order in the near future. Give your size to DAV Sarah Harry and she will put your name on the list. You’ll be notified when the order is received and you can make arrangements with Sarah to get your shirt.

Don’t forget the Veterans Day Parade on Saturday, November 10th. Starting time is 1530. The parade will follow the same route as last year. If you would like to ride the float, be **at the back of the VA hospital** by 1400.

The Veterans Day Ceremonies, at the Dorchester County Office Building, will be held on Sunday, November 11th. Start time is 10:00. If you can, please attend. If you plan to attend, please contact Senior Vice-Commander Jerry Stout and let him know.

Also, the Veterans Appreciation Day Ceremonies will be held at the Golden Corral on November 12th at 1800. Major General James E. Livingston, USMC Ret, Medal of Honor recipient, will be the guest speaker. Please come out and support our efforts at the Golden Corral. If you attend, please wear your cap and/or DAV shirt.

May God watch over our military, at home and overseas. May He give them wisdom, courage, strength and victory so that they all may come home safely. Amen

Ken Curtis, Commander

**October 21, 2012**

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**Swamp Fox**

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Summerville

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**Our next meeting will be:**

**November 15**



**AUXILIARY COMMENTS:**

The family and extended family members of any person who has served in the armed forces of the United States of America and has not been dishonorably discharged or separated from such service are eligible for membership in the Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary.

**Charleston VA Medical Center Visitation:** On the 3rd Tuesday each month at 6:00pm we distribute cookies, soda and comradeship to our fellow confined veterans. All members and non-members are welcome to participate.

**LEGISLATIVE REPORT:**

[Click to view](http://classroomclipart.com/clipart-view/Clipart/Legal/law-book-with-gavel-2_jpg.htm)

**COLA Increase**

The federal government announced Tuesday that Social Security recipients will see a 1.7 percent rise in the cost of living adjustment, or COLA, next year. That is less than the 3.6 percent increase beneficiaries got this year and is among lowest hikes since the U.S. government started making annual adjustments in 1975.

The increases also apply to military retired pay, VA disability pay, DIC and all other VA pays. It will start December 1 and you will receive the first increase pay with your January check.

**Sequester**

Please contact your Representatives and Senators while they are working for reelection and make sure they know the importance of ensuring that the Sequester does not happen. In recent testimony, DoD Comptroller Robert Hale indicated that the $500 billion automatic cuts in defense spending would desperately hurt our national security and likely bring reductions in TRICARE spending and raise rates on beneficiaries.

Also, there are many other urgent and important items that need to be fixed before this Congress adjourns. They include the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA); “Doc Fix” to do something about the January 1 scheduled 27 percent cut in payments to doctors for Medicare and TRICARE for Life reimbursements.

Encourage your Senators to complete passage of a new Stolen Valor Act, which the House overwhelming approved (HR 1776) September 17. The Senate needs to act to approve a freestanding bill or attach an amendment to the National Defense Authorization Act (S. 3254) when the agenda allows. It appears that Senators Jim Webb (D-VA) and Scott Brown (R-MA) are working together to present a bi-partisan free standing bill that is similar to the House passed bill sponsored by Joe Heck (R-NV).

**Legislative Chairman Jack Olson**

**DAV Service Officers (SOs)** assist veterans and their families in filing claims for VA disability compensation and pension, death benefits and more. All services provided by DAV Service Officers are free of charge. They have an office on the second floor (B254) of the VA Medical Center and can be reached at 789-7456.

Clinical Service Officer Claims Filed for September: **215**

Total Year to Date:  **2,567**

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Van Drivers Needed.

Contact Harriett Hudson, the DAV Transportation Network coordinator, at 789-7307 if you wish to be a volunteer van driver.

We need drivers! Once we get our local system in place we will need 15 drivers a week just to cover Dorchester and Berkley counties.

**DAV Transportation Network Report for September:**

Miles driven 855

Hours worked 92

Veterans transported 75

**DAV Mission Statement**

Made up exclusively of men and women disabled in our nation’s defense, the Disabled American Veterans is dedicated to one, single purpose — building better lives for all of our nation’s disabled veterans and their families. This mission is carried forward by:

--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.

**UPCOMING EVENTS:**

**October 27 State Executive Committee Meeting (SEC)** at SC Headquarters in Columbia

**November 10 Veterans Day Parade**–Saturday starting at 3:30 pm.  **Plan to participate by riding on the DAV float. Be at the back of the VA hospital by 2:00 to ride a van to the float location. A meal will be served afterwards at the VA Hospital and you can make a goodwill visit to the patients.**

**November 11 The Summerville Veterans Day Ceremony will be held at 10:00 am at the administration building on the** corner of Main St. and Highway 78, Summerville**.** After the ceremony there will be a meal and fellowship at VFW Post 3433.

**November 12 Military Appreciation Monday at Golden Corral.** This is our major fund raiser for the year. It is also a DAV outreach program to assist our fellow veterans and provide exposure to the many good deeds that Chapter 17 offers. Attend the September and October meetings for more details.

**November 15 Chapter meeting** will be at the **Golden Corral at 7:00pm. The chapter will pay for each member’s meal plus one guest.**

**November 20 VAMC Hospital Visitation** Members and non-members are welcome to participate as we distribute cookies, soda and comradeship to our fellow confined veterans.

**December 17** **Veterans Affairs Volunteer Services (VAVS)** meeting at American Legion Post 147 on James Island, 1:00.

**There will not be a meeting or hospital visit in December**



MEMBERSHIP REPORT:

If you would like to access DAV’s Membership System, simply log onto <https://www.davmembers.org> with your membership credentials and you are ready to go!

Members can update their personal information, request transfers and make payments toward full life membership.

September Deaths:

**Mitro, Albert F.**



Minutes from the October 18 meeting are attached.

****

**COMMANDER’S COMMENTS:**

We have received our updated, and approved, Constitution and Bylaws from National. A copy will be affixed to the back of our new Charter. Both the Charter and the Constitution and Bylaws reflect our new name; Swamp Fox Chapter 17. Also, everyone should look on the back of your DAV Membership card and call the number listed to obtain a new card with our new name. I spoke to the Membership Department at National Headquarters and they encourage everyone to call as soon as possible to get your new membership card. We are no longer the David E. McWhorter chapter and if you have anything with that name on it, you should get it corrected.

In July, we received word at the VA Hospital that the Disabled American Veterans were to receive a donation, via the will of Ms. June M. Story. It was a very substantial donation. At first, I thought it to be a scam. But, after checking with the attorney, I found it to be real. WOW!!! We received the check on August 14, 2012 and our Treasurer “Jack” Olson deposited it into the Chapter’s account on the 16th. I called an Emergency Executive Committee meeting and we discussed how to properly handle this sum of money. On September 5, 2012, we (Adjutant James Ray, Senior Vice-Commander Jerry Stout and myself) made a donation to the Ralph H. Johnson VA Medical Center in the amount of $15,000.00. The check was presented to Ms. Carolyn Adams, Director of the Hospital during the morning “Senior Staff” meeting. Other donations will be made during this fiscal year. A complete plan will be presented to the Chapter at our monthly meeting on September 20, 2012. I urge everyone to attend.

The DAV Mobile Service Officer Van (MSO) is bringing FREE services to our area to help you with your benefits. The van provides free, professional assistance with claims from highly trained experts. The van will be in the parking lot at the Publix Grocery Plaza, 213 St. James Ave. (Hwy 176), Goose Creek, Thurs, Oct 4, 2012, 1000 until 1600 hrs.

If you ordered a shirt, contact DAV Sarah Harry at [sarahlharry@yahoo.com](mailto:sarahlharry@yahoo.com) . All shirts that were ordered have arrived and need to be distributed as soon as possible. The price is $15.00

**September 24, 2012**

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Chapter 17 Summerville

[www.davmembersportal.org/chapters/sc/17](http://www.davmembersportal.org/chapters/sc/17)

**Chapter 17 meets 7:30 PM on the 3rd Thursday at VFW Post 3433 located at 10154 Bellwright Rd., Summerville 29483.**

**Auxiliary Unit 17 meets at the same time.**

**Our next meeting will be:**

**October 18**

each for the Polo shirt, and $9.00 each for the ladies shirt. Please try to have exact change at the next meeting.

May God watch over our military, at home and overseas. May He give them wisdom, courage, strength and victory so that they all may come home safely. Amen

Ken Curtis, Commander



**AUXILIARY COMMENTS:**

The family and extended family members of any person who has served in the armed forces of the United States of America and has not been dishonorably discharged or separated from such service are eligible for membership in the Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary.

**DAV Mission Statement**

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Clinical Service Officer Claims Filed for July/August: **248/269**

Total Year to Date:  **2,352**

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Van Drivers Needed.

Contact Harriett Hudson, the DAV Transportation Network coordinator, at 789-7307 if you wish to be a volunteer van driver.

We need drivers! Once we get our local system in place we will need 15 drivers a week just to cover Dorchester and Berkley counties.

**DAV Transportation Network Report for August:**

Miles driven 2539

Hours worked 140

Veterans transported 69



MEMBERSHIP REPORT:

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Members can update their personal information, request transfers and make payments toward full life membership.

**Charleston VA Medical Center Visitation:** On the 3rd Tuesday each month at 6:00pm we distribute cookies, soda and comradeship to our fellow confined veterans. All members and non-members are welcome to participate.

**July & August New Members**:

Harry, Sarah Louise

Helton, John Richard

Hibbs, Timothy Wegner

Meador, Russell

Molter, Richard Kenneth

Patterson, Kevin

Sean, Sean Robert

Smith, Wayne S

July & August Deaths:

Moore, James M.

Walters, Emery A.

**July & August Transfer in:**

Weizer, Leonard R.

**UPCOMING EVENTS: October 1** The **DAV Mobile Service Office** will be at Golden Corral in North Charleston from 10:00 – 4:00. The National Service Officers will assist any veteran with claims and other benefits.

**October 4** The **DAV Mobile Service Office** will be at Publix in Goose Creek from 10:00 – 4:00. The National Service Officers will assist any veteran with claims and other benefits.

**November 10 Veterans Day Parade** –Saturday starting at 3:30 pm.  **Plan to participate by riding on the DAV float. Afterwards you can make a goodwill visit to the patients at the VA Hospital.**

**November 11 The Summerville Veterans Day Ceremony will be held at 10:00 am at the administration building on the** corner of Main St. and Highway 78, Summerville**.** After the ceremony there will be a meal and fellowship at VFW Post 3433.

**November 12 Military Appreciation Monday at Golden Corral.** This is our major fund raiser for the year. It is also a DAV outreach program to assist our fellow veterans and provide exposure to the many good deeds that Chapter 17 offers. Attend the September and October meetings for more details.

**December 17** **Veterans Affairs Volunteer Services (VAVS)** meeting at American Legion Post 147 on James Island, 1:00.

**LEGISLATIVE REPORT:**

[Click to view](http://classroomclipart.com/clipart-view/Clipart/Legal/law-book-with-gavel-2_jpg.htm)

**President Signs Executive Order to Improve Veterans Mental Health Care**

Late last week President Obama signed an executive order to make improvements to mental healthcare and suicide prevention services for veterans.

The executive order instructs the VA to hire 800 peer-to-peer support counselors for mental healthcare and to increase the VA veteran crisis line's capacity by 50 percent before the end of the year.

The order also directs the strengthening suicide prevention efforts across the force and in the veteran community:

* Directs the VA to increase the VA veteran crisis line capacity by 50 percent by the end of the year.
* Directs the VA to ensure that any veteran identifying him or herself as being in crisis connects with a mental health professional or trained mental health worker within 24 hours or less.
* Directs the VA to work with the Department of Defense to develop and implement a national 12 month suicide prevention campaign focused on connecting veterans to mental health services.

**Legislative Chairman Jack Olson**



Minutes from the September 20 meeting are attached.

Building Better Lives for America's Disabled Veterans



**COMMANDER’S COMMENTS:**

The Ralph H. Johnson VA Medical Center in Charleston hosted the 66th Annual VAVS National Advisory Committee Meeting. It was a great success thanks to all the volunteers. There were approximately 350 attendees from all over the country. We, Chapter 17, received a well deserved “well done” from the VAMC.

Please don’t forget to help support our upcoming Annual State Convention in May. You can do this by selling ads for the Convention Magazine. The ad subscription forms were distributed at the February meeting and if you need more or if you have questions, contact any one of your chapter officers. You can go to Chapter 17’s web site at: <http://www.davmembersportal.org/chapters/sc/17/default.aspx> or the Department web site at: <http://www.davmembersportal.org/sc/default.aspx> for additional information.

We are taking orders for our Chapter Polo shirts. To place your order, contact either myself or Sarah Harry at [sarahlharry@yahoo.com](mailto:sarahlharry@yahoo.com). Just give us your name, size and quantity you wish to order.

May God watch over our military, at home and overseas. May He give them wisdom, courage, strength and victory so that they all may come home safely. Amen

Ken Curtis, Commander



**AUXILIARY COMMENTS:**

The family and extended family members of any person who has served in the armed forces of the United States of America and has not been dishonorably discharged or separated from such service are eligible for membership in the Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary.

**March 18, 2012**

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Chapter 17 Summerville

[www.davmembersportal.org/chapters/sc/17](http://www.davmembersportal.org/chapters/sc/17)

**Chapter 17 meets 7:30 PM on the 3rd Thursday at VFW Post 3433 located at 10154 Bellwright Rd., Summerville 29483.**

**The Auxiliary Unit 17 meets at the same time.**

**Our next meeting will be:**

**April 19**

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Clinical Service Officer Report Claims Filed for January: **268**

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Van Drivers Needed.

Contact Harriett Hudson, the DAV Transportation Network coordinator, at 789-7307 if you wish to be a volunteer van driver.

**DAV Transportation Network Report for February:**

Miles driven 1001

Hours worked 96

Veterans transported 19



MEMBERSHIP REPORT:

Well over half of all veterans eligible for DAV membership have already joined our ranks. Asked why they joined in a recent survey, they overwhelmingly cited DAV service.  
Veterans need help with disability compensation, VA pension, death benefits, and so much more. They get that help – expert help – from other disabled vets who are trained as DAV Service Officers (SOs). Veterans like the fact that the DAV gets no government funding and that all DAV services are free of charge. Vets **know** that DAV is on their side.  
At the highest level of appeal within the Department of Veterans Affairs, the DAV represents more clients than all other veterans’ groups **combined.**

If you know a veteran that qualifies, ask them to become a member of the best team in supporting veterans, the Disabled American Veterans.

**Charleston VA Medical Center Visitation:** On the 3rd Tuesday each month at 6:00pm we distribute cookies, soda and comradeship to our fellow confined veterans. All members and non-members are welcome to participate.

**UPCOMING EVENTS:**

**March 19 Charleston VA Voluntary Service (VAVS)** quarterly meeting will be held 1:00pm at American Legion Post, James Island.

**March 20 VAMC Hospital Visitation** Members and non-members are welcome to participate as we distribute cookies, soda and comradeship to our fellow confined veterans.

**March 24** State Executive Committee meeting in Columbia

**March 19** VA Medical Center Stakeholders meeting 11:00 in main auditorium

**April 16-21 National Volunteer Week**

**April 17 VA Volunteer Lunch at Red Bank Club 12:00**

**April 19 Chapter Meeting** invite fellow veterans, family members and friends.

**April 21** WWII Veteran Honor Flight

**May 17** Service Officer training in Columbia 12:30-3:30

**May 17-20** DAV State Convention in Columbia.

**LEGISLATIVE REPORT:**

[Click to view](http://classroomclipart.com/clipart-view/Clipart/Legal/law-book-with-gavel-2_jpg.htm)

On Wednesday, March 14th, Chairman of the House Armed Services Committee Rep. “Buck” McKeon (R-CA) gave a speech at the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library in California. His speech concentrated on the implications of proposed massive cuts to the DoD budget and what he believed are the priorities needed to sustain a strong national defense

Chairman McKeon highlighted the fact that our military is worn out and needs to replace much of the equipment that has been used up in over a decade of war. He also questioned why the Navy was cutting more ships, the Air Force was reducing the number of squadrons and that there would be over 100,000 fewer Army and Marine Corps troops.

He also said, “But explain to me why defense is less than twenty percent of federal budget, but has accounted for half of our spending cuts to date.” VSO's agree with Rep. McKeon in that defense is a core responsibility of our federal government, and there are many lower priority areas or areas of recognized serious fraudulent activity (Medicare loses more than $70 billion annually to fraud) ripe for reductions that deserve scrutiny.

One area Chairman McKeon mentioned was the promises made to the troops in regards to health care. The Chairman said, “…recent proposals to pump up military health care fees by up to three hundred percent is absolutely unacceptable.

“When our troops made a decision to volunteer for service, they entered a sacred agreement with this government—a moral contract. Part of that agreement was that their medical needs will be met. We made a solemn covenant with them — we cannot, and we must not break it.”

**Legislative Chairman Jack Olson**

**January New Members**:

Mouzon, Louis

Odom, Theodore R

**January Deaths**:

Campbell, Earnest K.

Davis, Sherman

**January Transfer in:**

Hicks, Robert H.



Minutes from the March 15 meeting are attached.

Building Better Lives for America's Disabled Veterans



**COMMANDER’S COMMENTS:**

As the year goes on, half way through February now, we continue to serve our disabled veterans and their families in a very positive manner. Each one of you has given of your time and efforts in support of our chapter and I really appreciate that. But, there is more to do. So far, the DAV is covering approximately 20% of the total volunteer positions for the upcoming event: next month the Ralph H. Johnson VA Medical Center in Charleston is hosting the 66th Annual VAVS National Advisory Committee Meeting and volunteers are still needed. If interested in volunteering, please contact one of the chapter officers.

I encourage each one of you to support our upcoming Annual State Convention in May. You can do this by selling ads for the Convention Magazine. If you are interested in doing this, and you have questions, contact any one of your chapter officers. You can go to Chapter 17’s web site at: <http://www.davmembersportal.org/chapters/sc/17/default.aspx> or the Department web site at: <http://www.davmembersportal.org/sc/default.aspx> for additional information.

On Wednesday, February 22, 2012, at 2:30 p.m. we will be presenting a plaque to the Golden Corral in North Charleston in appreciation for their support for the Disabled American Veterans on Veterans Appreciation Day last year. If you can attend, please do so. If you do attend, please wear your DAV shirts and/or caps.

May God watch over our military, at home and overseas. May He give them wisdom, courage, strength and victory so that they all may come home safely. Amen

Ken Curtis, Commander

**February 17, 2012**

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Chapter 17 Summerville

[www.davmembersportal.org/chapters/sc/17](http://www.davmembersportal.org/chapters/sc/17)

**Chapter 17 meets 7:30 PM on the 3rd Thursday at VFW Post 3433 located at 10154 Bellwright Rd., Summerville 29483.**

**The Auxiliary Unit 17 meets at the same time.**

**Our next meeting will be:**

**March 15**

**DAV Mission Statement**

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Clinical Service Officer Report Claims Filed for January: **411**

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Van Drivers Needed.

Contact Harriett Hudson, the DAV Transportation Network coordinator, at 789-7307 if you wish to be a volunteer van driver.

**DAV Transportation Network Report for January:**

Miles driven 1030

Hours worked 90

Veterans transported 28



MEMBERSHIP REPORT:

Our Chapter's Membership goal is to bring in an additional 8 members. At our last meeting, a member made the commitment and became a life member.  In the DAV, there are no associate or annual member. We all remember when we first joined once we completed active duty service and how in each magazine, we were encouraged to continue to pay down the amount owed for Life Membership.  Currently, there are 12 members that only owe less than 100.00 to life. Continue to pay down your membership.

Senior Vice Commander Jerry Stout

**UPCOMING EVENTS:**

**February 21 VAMC Hospital Visitation** Members and non-members are welcome to participate as we distribute cookies, soda and comradeship to our fellow confined veterans.

**February 22** A plaque will be presented to the Golden Corral on at 2:30 in recognition of a successful Military Appreciation fund raiser.

**February 22** Veterans Job Fair, 11:00-3:00 at North Charleston Convention Center

**March 14 – 16** **VA Voluntary Service (VAVS) National Advisory Committee** meeting will be held The Charleston Marriott located at 170 Lockwood Boulevard.  Volunteers are still needed to help with registration and can contact Eileen Hadbavny at [HadbavnyE@usa.redcross.org](mailto:HadbavnyE@usa.redcross.org) or 764 2323 ext 372 (office).  Cell phone:  843 991 6311.

**March 15 Chapter Meeting** invite fellow veterans, family members and friends.

**March 20 VAMC Hospital Visitation** Members and non-members are welcome to participate as we distribute cookies, soda and comradeship to our fellow confined veterans.

**March 19 Charleston VA Voluntary Service (VAVS)** quarterly meeting will be held 1:00pm at American Legion Post, James Island.

**April 21** WWII Veteran Honor Flight

**LEGISLATIVE REPORT:**

[Click to view](http://classroomclipart.com/clipart-view/Clipart/Legal/law-book-with-gavel-2_jpg.htm)

America’s uniformed services are the finest in the world.  The men and women who defend this nation continue a proud tradition that goes back to the Minutemen.  Since 1973 the United States military has been an all-volunteer force.  With diminished operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, our brave men and women are returning to civilian life with a degree of uncertainty.  Unemployment rates have created an extra challenge for them.

With these women and men in mind, I am pleased to join with area partners in organizing a Veterans Jobs Fair to be held on Wednesday, February 22nd from 11:00 AM to 3:00 PM at the North Charleston Convention Center, Room B.  This event, open to all Veterans and service members, is being held in cooperation with **The Ralph H. Johnson VA Medical Center**, The City of North Charleston, the South Carolina Department of Employment  and Workforce, SC Works Trident and Trident Technical College.

It is an honor to be joined by so many Lowcountry groups in working to help give our veterans a great opportunity to connect with local employers.  I am humbled by the many partner organizations who have stepped forward to participate.

**If you or someone you know is transitioning from the military and in search of employment, please encourage them to come by the North Charleston Convention Center on February 22nd.**

With two brothers in the military, I fully understand the sacrifices made by our veterans and their families.  Working together we can assist our nation’s defenders in returning to the workplace. 

**Legislative Chairman Jack Olson**



**AUXILIARY COMMENTS:**

The family and extended family members of any person who has served in the armed forces of the United States of America and has not been dishonorably discharged or separated from such service are eligible for membership in the Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary.

**January New Members**:

Dennis, Benjamin

Saradpon, Valeroso M

Sellers, Bruce D

**January Deaths**:

None

**January Transfer in:**

Wright, Alfred C.

Elledge, Lawrence L



Minutes from the February 16 meeting are attached.

**Building Better** Lives for America's Disabled Veterans



**COMMANDER’S COMMENTS:**

I would like to wish everyone a very Happy and Prosperous New Year. 2011 was a good year for Chapter 17. We raised a lot of money for Camp Corral; over $1200. We also raised a lot of money from the Golden Corral; over $12,000. However, it’s not all for us. We share it with Chapter 77 and 78 because they were part of the effort. Overall, an OUTSTANDING job was done by those who participated. We assisted over 3100 veterans file claims through our Service Officers. We donated 10 oversize wheelchairs to the VA. We presented the DAV to the Berkeley County Council and indoctrinated them on the organization. So, 2011 was a very good year.

But, 2012 could be even better. I hope to see other events during the year that will get everyone actively involved. I hope to see greater participation by every member of the chapter. I encourage everyone to seek out a member who is not active and encourage them to become an active member; attend the meetings, take part in the activities.

May God watch over our military, at home and overseas. May He give them wisdom, courage, strength and victory so that they all may come home safely. Amen

Ken Curtis, Commander



MEMBERSHIP REPORT:

Who is Eligible to join the Disabled American Veterans?

Any man or woman, who:

* served in the armed forces during a period of war or under conditions simulating war, and
* were wounded, disabled to any degree, or left with long-term illness as a result of military service, and
* were discharged or retired from military service under honorable conditions

**January 23, 2012**

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Chapter 17 Summerville

[www.davmembersportal.org/chapters/sc/17](http://www.davmembersportal.org/chapters/sc/17)

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**The Auxiliary meets at the same time**

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**February 16**

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**AUXILIARY COMMENTS:**

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**LEGISLATIVE REPORT:**

**IT'S THE LAW!** [Click to view](http://classroomclipart.com/clipart-view/Clipart/Legal/law-book-with-gavel-2_jpg.htm)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**VA Announces Changes to Emergency Care Payment Policy**

WASHINGTON – The Department of Veterans Affairs announced today a change in regulations regarding payments for emergency care provided to eligible Veterans in non-VA facilities.

“This provision helps ensure eligible Veterans continue to get the emergency care they need when VA facilities are not available,” said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki.

The new regulation extends VA’s authority to pay for emergency care provided to eligible Veterans at non-VA facilities until the Veterans can be safely transferred to a VA medical facility.

More than 100,000 Veterans are estimated to be affected by the new rules, at a cost of about $44 million annually.

VA operates 121 emergency departments across the country, which provide resuscitative therapy and stabilization in life-threatening situations. They operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week. VA also has 46 urgent care units, which provide care for patients without scheduled appointments who need immediate medical or psychiatric attention.

For more information about emergency care in non-VA facilities, visit [www.nonvacare.va.gov](http://capwiz.com/trea/utr/1/AXJQREFOZR/FDKYREHAPP/7800911036).

**Legislative Chairman Jack Olson**

**DAV Service Officers (SOs)** assist veterans and their families in filing claims for VA disability compensation and pension, death benefits and more. All services provided by DAV Service Officers are free of charge. They have an office on the second floor (B254) of the VA Medical Center and can be reached at 789-7456.

**Clinical Service Officer Report Claims Filed**

November 294

December 226

**New Members**:

(November & December)

Cox, Dennis E

Dunson, Donald

Elledge, Lawrence L

Faulkenberry, Jerry P

Herrington, Jennifer Claudine

Holliday, Raymond C

Martin, Harold L

Schneider, Timothy A

Simmons, Michael K

Stevenson, Jeffrey Cooper

Young, Dedrick D.

**Deaths**: (November & December) None

**Charleston VA Medical Center Visitation:** On the 3rd Tuesday each month at 6:00pm we distribute cookies, soda and comradeship to our fellow confined veterans. All members and non-members are welcome to participate. On the January 17 visitation we had 5 volunteers.

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Van Drivers Needed.

Contact Harriett Hudson, the DAV Transportation Network coordinator, at 789-7307 if you wish to be a volunteer van driver.

**DAV Transportation Network Report:**

**November December**

Miles driven 991 1932

Hours worked 94 174

Veterans transported 23 42

**UPCOMING EVENTS:**

**On the 3rd Tuesday of each month at 6:00pm we visit the Charleston VA Medical Center to distribute refreshments and fellowship to our confined fellow veterans.**

**Our next visit will be: February 14.**

**February 16 Chapter Meeting** invite fellow veterans, family members and friends.

**February 21 VAMC Hospital Visitation** Members and non-members are welcome to participate as we distribute cookies, soda and comradeship to our fellow confined veterans.

**March 14 – 16** **VA Voluntary Service (VAVS) National Advisory Committee** meeting will be held in Charleston with registration starting on March 13. The location is the Charleston Marriott located at 170 Lockwood Boulevard.

Volunteers are needed to help with registration and can contact Eileen Hadbavny at [HadbavnyE@usa.redcross.org](mailto:HadbavnyE@usa.redcross.org) or 764 2323 ext 372 (office).  Cell phone:  843 991 6311.

Building Better Lives for America's Disabled Veterans



**COMMANDER’S COMMENTS:**

The Golden Corral was a great success. Thanks to all who participated in the collections of donations. We collected almost $13,000.00. GREAT JOB!!!!!

The Veterans Day Parade was also a great success. It was a beautiful day and there were a lot of people along the parade route. The DAV was well represented. Thanks to all who took part.

The Veterans Day Ceremony in Summerville was OUTSTANDING. Thanks to all who participated.

Bottom line is that over the last month at the Golden Corral and over the Veterans Day holiday, the DAV was well represented by a lot of dedicated and hard working people and each one of you have my appreciation and thanks.

Our banquet was great, a special thanks to the Auxiliary for an outstanding job

Commander Ken Curtis

MEMBERSHIP REPORT:

Well done to those current members that have brought in three (3) additional members. Two (2) of them came to their first meeting on Thursday. We are very glad you have joined the DAV!  As we go into 2012, again, I emphasize wearing part of your DAV uniform whenever you go out. You would be amazed how conversations can start. During the fundraiser at Golden Corral, we raised much for our veterans' programs. In addition, members brought awareness to the community during those two weeks. Thank you to all the volunteers who asked for donations during this time.

Senior Vice Commander Jerry Stout

**November 20, 2011**

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Chapter 17 Summerville

[www.davmembersportal.org/chapters/sc/17](http://www.davmembersportal.org/chapters/sc/17)

**Chapter 17 meets 7:30 PM on the 3rd Thursday at VFW Post 3433 located at 10154 Bellwright Rd., Summerville 29483**

**No meeting in December**

**Our next meeting will be:**

**January 19**

**DAV Mission Statement**

Made up exclusively of men and women disabled in our nation’s defense, the Disabled American Veterans is dedicated to one, single purpose — building better lives for all of our nation’s disabled veterans and their families. This mission is carried forward by:

--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.



**AUXILIARY COMMENTS:**

I would like to take a second and thank all the woman of unit 17 auxiliary for all there hard work with camp corral and military night. Both were great events to help our unit with. I would also like to thank you for your help with the dinner we had on Thursday November 17th. If you would like to know more about the DAVA and what our unit does please feel to email me at [southernbellgirlsc@yahoo.com](mailto:southernbellgirlsc@yahoo.com). If your are interested in joining we are more then welcome to have you join us.   
  
I hope that everyone has a great Thanksgiving, a merry christmas, and a happy new year! Are you at our next meeting on January 19 2012.   
  
Auxiliary Commander Virginia Holley

**DAV Service Officers (SOs)** assist veterans and their families in filing claims for VA disability compensation and pension, death benefits and more. All services provided by DAV Service Officers are free of charge. They have an office on the second floor (B254) of the VA Medical Center and can be reached at 789-7456.

**Clinical Service Officer Report** **October 2011:**

368 Claims Filed

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Van Drivers Needed.

Contact Harriett Hudson, the DAV Transportation Network coordinator, at 789-7307 if you wish to be a volunteer van driver.

**DAV Transportation Network Report for October:**

Miles driven 1452

Hours worked 144

Veterans transported 164

**New Members**: (October)

Lackey, John G

Starbird, Richard C

**Deaths**: (October)

Berry, Clyde E.

Hartman, Carl W.

Hunt, Robert D.

**Charleston VA Medical Center Visitation:** On the 3rd Tuesday each month at 6:00pm we distribute cookies, soda and comradeship to our fellow confined veterans. All members and non-members are welcome to participate. On the November 15 visitation we had 4 volunteers.

**UPCOMING EVENTS:**

**3rd Tuesday of each month at 6:00pm we visit the Charleston VA Medical Center to distribute refreshments and fellowship to our confined fellow veterans. Our next visit will be January 17.**

**December 19 VA Volunteer Services (VAVS) quarterly meeting 1:00 pm at American Legion Post 147**

**January 17 VAMC Hospital Visitation** Members and non-members are welcome to participate as we distribute cookies, soda and comradeship to our fellow confined veterans.

**January 19 Chapter Meeting** invite fellow veterans, family members and friends.

**LEGISLATIVE REPORT:**

**Senate Introduces “VOW to Hire Heroes Act”-**On Friday, November 4 the Senate introduced the “Vow to Hire Heroes Act of 2011.” The actis bipartisan, bicameral, comprehensive legislation that would lower the rate of unemployment among our nation’s veterans.  
TREA, represented by Deputy Legislative Director Mike Saunders, participated in a conference call on Wednesday of this week with Senate Veterans’ Affairs Committee Chairwoman Patty Murray where she expressed her hope that the Senate would pass this legislation by Thursday the 10th in time for Veterans Day this Friday. It is expected to quickly pass the House of Representatives next week.

This bill combines provisions of Chairman Murray’s Hiring Heroes Act ([S. 951; Report #112-36](http://capwiz.com/trea/utr/1/JMKOQTQPBZ/GOJGQTTVJZ/7575773576)), with House Veterans’ Affairs Committee Chairman Jeff Miller’s Veterans Opportunity to Work Act ([H.R. 2433; Report #112-242](http://capwiz.com/trea/utr/1/JMKOQTQPBZ/EEBOQTTVKA/7575773576)), and veterans’ tax credits into a comprehensive package that will aggressively attack the unacceptably high rate of veteran’s unemployment by:   

Improving the Transition Assistance Program (TAP): The VOW to Hire Heroes Act will make TAP **mandatory** for most servicemembers transitioning to civilian status, upgrade career counseling options, and resume writing skills, as well as ensuring the program is tailored for the 21st Century job market.

Facilitating Seamless Transition: This bill would allow service members to begin the federal employment process **prior to** separation in order to facilitate a truly seamless transition from the military to jobs at VA, Homeland Security, or the many other federal agencies in need of our veterans.

Expanding Education & Training: The VOW to Hire Heroes Act provides nearly 100,000 unemployed veterans of past eras and wars with up to 1-year of additional Montgomery GI Bill benefits to qualify for jobs in high-demand sectors, from trucking to technology. It also provides disabled veterans up to 1-year of additional Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Benefits.

Translating Military Skills and Training: This bill will also require the Department of Labor to take a hard look at what military skills and training should be translatable into the civilian sector, and will work to make it easier to get the licenses and certification our veterans need.

Veterans Tax Credits: The VOW to Hire Heroes Act provides tax incentives of up to $5,600 for hiring veterans, and up to $9,600 for hiring disabled veterans, if the veteran has been looking for work for six months or longer.

**Legislative Chairman Jack Olson**



Building Better Lives for America's Disabled Veterans



**COMMANDER’S COMMENTS:**

The Golden Corral Veteran Appreciation Day Fund Raiser is going along nicely. We do however, need more volunteers to help us. It’s only for a three or four hours at a time (or whatever you can do). We are still trying to beat last year’s record. So, please contact either myself or James Ray and let us schedule you for a few hours.

The Veterans Day Parade in Charleston, will be on November 6th at 1400. We still would like to have riders for our float. You don’t have to do anything but wave at the crowd. Please let either myself or James Ray know as soon as possible if you will be able to take part in the parade. It doesn’t cost anything and it’s a great tribute to our veterans.

The Golden Corral Veteran Appreciation Day will be November 14th. ALL veterans will be able to eat free between the hours of 1700 and 2100. Come on out and enjoy yourself.

Commander Ken Curtis

MEMBERSHIP REPORT:

I am very active in another Veteran Organization, called USSVI, in which membership is limited to those in the Navy that have qualified in Submarine Duty. DAV accepts veterans from all branches of the military. Just last month after my fellow Submarine Veteran waited over eight (8) months for the review board to meet, he was awarded a disability rating.  Because of our organization, and the availability of the Van, he filled out the proper paperwork and got it submitted.  I have been after him for years.  Today he is a member of DAV.  You may have other stories like this. All members of the Services can join. Wear your ship, station or unit hat with pride and encourage others to join.

Senior Vice Commander Jerry Stout

**October 31, 2011**

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Chapter 17 Summerville

[www.davmembersportal.org/chapters/sc/17](http://www.davmembersportal.org/chapters/sc/17)

**Chapter 17 meets 7:30 PM on the 3rd Thursday at VFW Post 3433 located at 10154 Bellwright Rd., Summerville 29483**

**Our next meeting will be:**

**November 17**

**DAV Mission Statement**

Made up exclusively of men and women disabled in our nation’s defense, the Disabled American Veterans is dedicated to one, single purpose — building better lives for all of our nation’s disabled veterans and their families. This mission is carried forward by:

--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;

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--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.



**AUXILIARY COMMENTS:**

The Auxiliary is preparing the Holiday Feast for the November 17 meeting and we are hoping to have a great turnout.

The Auxiliary Unit provides volunteers for our related causes just as the DAV Chapter does. Volunteer opportunities are available whether at the Golden Corral fundraiser or through the VA Medical Center.

We need more members and we need active members to achieve our goals of helping Veterans.

**DAV Service Officers (SOs)** assist veterans and their families in filing claims for VA disability compensation and pension, death benefits and more. All services provided by DAV Service Officers are free of charge. They have an office on the second floor (B254) of the VA Medical Center and can be reached at 789-7456.

**Clinical Service Officer Report** **September 2011:**

327 Claims Filed

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Van Drivers Needed.

Contact Harriett Hudson, the DAV Transportation Network coordinator, at 789-7307 if you wish to be a volunteer van driver.

**DAV Transportation Network Report for September:**

Miles driven 1419

Hours worked 102

Veterans transported 32

**New Members**: (September)

Felix, John C

Garbie, Cindy G

Sanders, Israel

Williams, Francis Kermit

Ziegler, Gerard

**Transfer in**: (September)

Eggers, Keith P.

**Deaths**: (September)

Bell, James E.

Duggins, Wallace

Inman, Hollis T.

**Sickness:**

Jerry Hall, Past Chapter Commander, is at home recuperating from a fall.

**Charleston VA Medical Center Visitation:** On the 3rd Tuesday each month at 6:00pm we distribute cookies, soda and comradeship to our fellow confined veterans. All members and non-members are welcome to participate. On the October 21 visitation we had 4 volunteers.

**UPCOMING EVENTS:**

**3rd Tuesday of each month at 6:00pm we visit the Charleston VA Medical Center to distribute refreshments and fellowship to our confined fellow veterans. Our next visit will be November 15.**

**From now until November 14 Military Appreciation Fund Raiser at Golden Corral We still need volunteers.**

**November 6 Charleston Veterans Day Parade at 2:00. The DAV will sponsor a float and encourages members and family to ride.**

**Afterwards you can visit the patients at the VA Hospital.**

**November 11 The Summerville Veterans Day Ceremony will be held at 10:30 am at the administration building on the** corner of Main St. and Highway 78, Summerville**.** After the ceremony there will be a fellowship meal at VFW Post 3433.

**November 14 Military Appreciation Day at Golden Corral.** This is our major fund raiser for the year. It is also a DAV outreach program to assist our fellow veterans and to highlight the many positive actions that Chapter 17 renders.

**November 15 VAMC Hospital Visitation** Members and non-members are welcome to participate as we distribute cookies, soda and comradeship to our fellow confined veterans.

**November 17 Chapter Meeting** our holiday gathering.  The Auxiliary is planning another exceptional meal so invite fellow veterans, family members and friends.



Building Better Lives for America's Disabled Veterans



**COMMANDER’S COMMENTS:**

I hope everyone has had a great summer. Now, it’s time to get back into the routine of school, work and just doing what has to be done.

Last night’s meeting was very productive. We took orders for our new Polo shirts, talked about Camp Corral and had a very interesting presentation on Long Term Care Insurance. I would like to thank Dan Riggs and his associates from Banker’s Life & Casualty Insurance Co. for their presentation. It was very informative.

Our Camp Corral “Mini Fund Raiser” is coming up the 30th of September, the 1st and 2nd of October. I hope to see as many of you as possible there. Even if you can only spare an hour or two, it will be well worth the time. It’s for a really good cause. And 100% of the money raised goes to Camp Corral. If anyone has any questions about our fund raiser or about Camp Corral, don’t hesitate to contact myself or one of the Officers of the Chapter. I’m really looking forward to both the Camp Corral Fund Raiser and the big one later; Military Appreciation Day. That’s the one on Veteran’s Day when Golden Corral gives a free meal to all veterans. Like I said last night; we were number one in the state and 10th in the nation last year. This year, let’s be number one in both.

May God watch over our military, at home and overseas. May He give them wisdom, courage, strength and victory so that they all may come home safely. Amen

Commander Ken Curtis

**LEGISLATIVE REPORT BY JACK OLSON:**

**As New Fiscal Year Approaches Congress Tries to Find a Way to Keep the Government Running-**Congress is scrambling to find a way to keep the government running when fiscal year 2011 comes to an end in just 14 days. The House of Representatives has passed only 6 of the 12 annual spending bills it needs to pass and none of them has passed the Congress as a whole. In order to avoid a government shut-down it appears the House leadership will attempt to bundle all

**September 20, 2011**

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Chapter 17 Summerville

[www.davmembersportal.org/chapters/sc/17](http://www.davmembersportal.org/chapters/sc/17)

**Chapter 17 meets 7:30 PM every 3rd Thursday at VFW Post 3433 located at 10154 Bellwright Rd., Summerville 29483**

**Our next meeting will be:**

**October 20**

**DAV Mission Statement**

Made up exclusively of men and women disabled in our nation’s defense, the Disabled American Veterans is dedicated to one, single purpose — building better lives for all of our nation’s disabled veterans and their families. This mission is carried forward by:

--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.

**Clinical Service Officer Report** **August 2011:**

343 Claims Filed

12 appropriations bills together and pass a single omnibus package. According to reports that package would meet the spending targets

that were agreed to in the budget agreement that was passed in August.

Passing that bill will prove to be controversial, however, both within the House Republican majority and with the Democratic majority in the Senate. In order to buy time to craft it and then get it through both chambers the House leadership plans to put a continuing resolution (CR) up for a vote next week that would fund the government at the FY2011 level through November 18.  However, since nothing ever seems to be easy in Congress anymore, even that plan could prove difficult to pass. The House version of a CR conflicts with the Senate’s leadership over some spending issues so those differences will have to be worked out before the end of the month if they are to avoid shutting the government down on October 1. The action of the House Appropriations Committee on the stop-gap bill currently has no adverse affect on Military Retirement, Social Security, Veterans Disability or other mandatory spending

**Senator Graham Suggests Cuts in TRICARE and Retirement**

The Senate Armed Services Committee held a hearing this week to consider the nomination of Ashton B. Carter as Deputy Defense Secretary, the number 2 civilian at the Pentagon.

During the hearing, Sen. Lindsey Graham (R-S.C.), an Air Force reservist, piped in to encourage the nominee to urge the Pentagon to reform military retirement and to increase TRICARE fees and copays.

"When you want to reform retirement, count me in," the South Carolina Republican said. "When you want to change TRICARE premiums for people like myself, who are going to be retired colonels one day, count me in.”

Graham added, “We're not going to ask more from the retired force than they can give, but change has to come."

As an editorial comment by your Legislative Committee Chairman, the following questions might bear consideration.  What is the probability that Senator Graham will actually use TRICARE benefits given the fact that he has the Congressional Health Benefits Plan available? Why is Senator Graham silent on measures to reduce guaranteed congressional retirement benefits for himself?  Could Senator Graham's political clout be better utilized as an **advocate** for the active duty forces, retired military personnel, and disabled veterans?

**VAMC Hospital Visitation:** On the 3rd Tuesday each month we distribute cookies, soda and comradeship to our fellow confined veterans. All members and non-members are welcome to participate. On the July 21 visitation we had 8 volunteers and on August 16 we had 4 volunteers.

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Van Drivers Needed.

Contact Harriett Hudson, the DAV Transportation Network coordinator, at 789-7307 if you wish to be a volunteer van driver.

**New Members**:

Coakley, Charles M

Foulois, K Innis,

Roberto Revin G

Irvine, John David

Transfer in:

Garcia, Valentino O.

**Deaths**: (Jun 1 –Aug 31)

Blaylock, Ernest

Byers, Thomas F.

Carter, Carl V.

Jones, Eugene W

Martin, Grover F.

Mathews, Jessie C.

Quarterman, Samuel J.

Raefski, Joseph A

Remas, Josephine J.

Woodcock, Claude R.

Sickness:

Carolyn Bowen, Unit 17 Adjutant, is in Trident Medical



**AUXILIARY COMMENTS:**

The Auxiliary needs members. One of the greatest services you can provide during this critical time is inspiring others to fill our ranks and carry out our mission. With our eligibility open, the Auxiliary is a more progressive, more inclusive organization than it has ever been.

**DAV Transportation Network Report:**

**July August**

Miles driven 1341 1949

Hours worked 167 192

Veterans transported 23 40

**UPCOMING EVENTS:**

**3rd Tuesday of each month at 6:00pm we visit the Charleston VA Medical Center to distribute refreshments and fellowship to our confined fellow veterans. Our next visit will be October 18.**

**September 30 - October 2 Camp Corral fund raiser at Golden Corral. Funds received will go to pay for 2012 summer camp for kids of wounded or disabled military.**

**October 28 Stand Down Against Homelessness in Charleston**

**November 11 The Summerville Veterans Day Ceremony will be held at 10:30 am at the administration building on the** corner of Main St. and Highway 78, Summerville**.** After the ceremony there will be a fellowship meal at VFW Post 3433.

**November 14 Military Appreciation Day at Golden Corral.** This is our major fund raiser for the year. It is also a DAV outreach program to assist our fellow veterans and to highlight the many positive actions that Chapter 17 renders. Attend the October meeting for more details and schedule a time to volunteer.

***At the VA Volunteer Services meeting September 19 it was announced that the Veterans Day Parade in Charleston is in limbo due to some issues with the city. More details will be provided when received.***

Building Better Lives for America's Disabled Veterans



**COMMANDER’S COMMENTS:**

**Ralph H. Johnson VA Memorial Hospital and it supporting clinics-**

Things are happening at the VA Hospital that are intended to make life easier for our veterans. Improvements are being made and changes are implemented on a daily basis. Beautification projects and renovation projects are well underway on various floors. And these are only some of the improvements.  On July 5, 2011, the new Clinic in Hinesville, GA opens. It’s not a large clinic but it will facilitate helping more veterans each day. The new, larger, 5400 square feet clinic in Savannah is scheduled to open sometime in 2013-2014. Transportation for veterans, to and from the hospital, Trident Clinic and Naval Weapons Station Clinic, is being improved at every opportunity. Families of veterans who are admitted to the hospital, are a major consideration. Their care and comfort if of a major concern and there are provisions in place to assist families who live in excess of 25 miles from the hospital.

**Service Officers –**

Our Service Officers who received training in Columbia on the 19th of May are continuing to be processed by the VA Hospital so they can begin assisting veterans. The VA hospital does a background check, take fingerprints, and administer a Security course and exam for each Service Officer. The Service Officers are also beginning their OJT by spending time with each experienced Service Officer and learning from them. The Service Officers at Ralph H. Johnson VA Medical Center, during the months of January thru May of this year have already assisted 930 veterans in filing claims; this does not include the veterans who stopped by the office at the hospital “just to ask a question”. This also does not include the veterans helped by the Service Officers at locations other than at the hospital office.

**Chapter 17 Overall –**

Our chapter is strong and doing very well; thanks to each and every member. We could not enjoy the above average reputation, in the entire state, that we have, if it were not for each member.  I offer my sincere thanks and I urge each one of you to keep striving to improve. I know it’s hard to improve on perfection, but we can. South Carolina is number one in our division for membership; we are at 100.72% of goal. We are 90 members OVER quota.

**June 22, 2011**

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Chapter 17 Summerville

[www.davmembersportal.org/chapters/sc/17](http://www.davmembersportal.org/chapters/sc/17)

**Meeting location:**

10154 Bell Wright Rd

Summerville SC 29483

**UPCOMING MEETINGS:**

**July** No chapter meeting.

**August** No chapter meeting

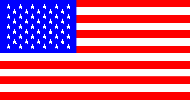
**September 15** We return to our normal meeting schedule. We plan to invite a speaker for a presentation. We will have refreshments and door prizes

**OTHER UPCOMING EVENTS:**

**June 25** 10:00 am

Training for Commander/ Adjutant/ Treasurer at South Carolina DAV Headquarters **in Columbia**

**July 4 Many holiday activities**

 **Check them out.**

**July 19 6:00pm VA hospital visitation to distribute refreshments and fellowship.**

**July 23 12:00 State Executive Committee meeting at State Headquarters in Columbia**

**August 16 6:00pm VA hospital visitation to distribute refreshments and fellowship.**

Here are some statistics:

**Division III - 10,000 To 17,999 Members**

**Life Member        Life                         % of Variation                                        Population            Goal                       Goal**

1 SOUTH CAROLINA         12,613                   12,523                   100.72%                90

2 WISCONSIN                      14,537                   14,493                   100.30%                44

3 LOUISIANA                       8,771                      8,771 1                  00.00%                  0

4 MARYLAND                       13,085                   13,137                   99.60%                  -52

5 ARKANSAS                       10,784                   10,834                   99.54%                  -50

6 NEW MEXICO                   9,268                      9,326                      99.38%                  -58

7 INDIANA                            13,884                   13,989 99.25%                  -105

My heartfelt thanks to each one of you and I’m hoping that you will continue to support your chapter. We have some exciting projects coming in the future and I hope each of you will participate and kelp keep our chapter showing the way for every other chapter in the state, division and nation.

May God watch over our military, at home and overseas. May He give them wisdom, courage, strength and victory so that they all may come home safely. Amen

Commander Ken Curtis



**AUXILIARY COMMENTS FROM HARRIETT HUDSON:**

Any DAV member 80 or over can sign up for the Auxiliary, that can be a brother, sister, mom, dad even aunt or uncle; if they are 80 or over they are free.

**FROM THE MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN, JERRY STOUT:**

Membership Recruiting is not just the responsibility of the Chairman, it falls on every member of our DAV organization.  DAV is a much different organization from the VFW, American Legion, Fleet Reserve Association and Sub Vets, as our membership is open to anyone who is serving and has served in the Military, whether disabled or fully able. Each and every day, we as members will run into other members of the armed services in our daily travels and when interacting with our fellow members is the opportune time to offer membership to the DAV. Always stress that DAV exists to

support all veterans, improve our quality of life from our disabilities and provide needed services from our VA Hospital to all eligible veterans. Wear your uniform items that depict your military service with pride and set the example of a proud former military member.

**Clinical Service Officer Report** **May 2011:**

215 Claims Filed

On the June 21 **VAMC Hospital Visitation** we had 8 volunteers distributing cookies, soda and comradeship to 58 of our fellow veterans.

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**DAV Transportation Network Report** **May 2011:**

2712 Miles driven

263 Hours worked

53 Veterans transported

Van Drivers Needed.

Contact Harriett Hudson, the DAV Transportation Network coordinator, at 789-7307 if you wish to be a volunteer van driver.

**New Members**:

Andrews, William H

Carlton, Cecil G

Davis, Frederick

Haselden, Kenneth E

Lucas, Donovan I

**Deaths**:

Guindon, Clarence J

Salina, Thomas J.

Trego, Eugene I.

**LEGISLATIVE REPORT BY JACK OLSON:**

SASC NDAA Markup

The Senate Armed Services Committee (SASC) began its markup of the Senate version of the fiscal 2012 defense authorization bill with Subcommittees finishing work on Tuesday and full Committee completing the job on Wednesday. With the exception of the SASC Readiness Subcommittee markup, all the markups are closed.

In a press release summarizing the bill, among other provisions, the Committee authorizes a 1.6 across-the-board pay raise for all members of the uniformed services; allows the Pentagon plan to go forward for increases in pharmacy co-payments; and, does not prohibit TRICARE Prime enrollment fee increases but limits future increases to the percentage increase in retired pay.

 On these matters, the Senate bill is consistent with the House version of the defense policy measure. The bill now goes to the full Senate and then, following passage, to a House-Senate conference where any differences will be ironed out.

The bill also provides authority for $12.8 billion to enhance Afghan security forces and $1.75 billion in Coalition Support Funds to reimburse key partners supporting U.S. military operations in Operation Enduring Freedom. It would also support $524 million for DoD operations to oversee and implement foreign military sales to Iraqi security forces.

As a side note, traditionally SASC markups have been closed to the public. However, for the first time in 15 years the Readiness Subcommittee held an open discussion. It was the first time that any part of the Senate defense authorization bill had been marked up in public witness. Panel Chairwoman Claire McCaskill of Missouri, who has campaigned in the past against what she considers excessive secrecy in the process, calls it "a victory" for transparency.

  NAUS agrees with the Missouri Democrat. It, too, would like to hear the arguments for or against certain proposals. While we understand the importance of holding certain discussions on America’s defense in secret, we believe that a more open process would be beneficial and especially informative in a representative democracy.

 House Approves MilCon/VA Appropriations Bill

The House approved (HR 2055) by an overwhelming bipartisan vote of 411 to 5 on 6/14/11.

The bill would provide total MILCON funding of $14,014,047,000, a 15.7 percent decrease below the FY 2011 level.

 The total FY 2012 VA funding would be  $127,796,852,000, an increase of 5.8 percent over the FY 2011 level. The recommendation provides funding increases for several mandatory veteran benefits programs, as authorized by current law.

  The House recommended bill includes $52,541,000,000 in **advance appropriations** for FY 2013 for the three health care accounts of the Department.

  The House bill now goes to the Senate for its consideration. The Senate schedule for review has not been established

**DAV Mission Statement**

Made up exclusively of men and women disabled in our nation’s defense, the Disabled American Veterans is dedicated to one, single purpose — building better lives for all of our nation’s disabled veterans and their families. This mission is carried forward by:

--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.



Minutes from the June 16 meeting are attached.