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## Calendar

**January**  
19<sup>th</sup> – MLK Holiday

**February**  
14<sup>th</sup> – Valentine's Day  
16<sup>th</sup> – President's Day

We have received applications for the following awards: Disabled Veterans of the Year, Outstanding VBA Employee, Outstanding VHA Employee, Outstanding NCA as well as Large and Small Employer. If you would like to submit an application I need them sent to Department Headquarters by January 31, 2015 in order to have the Awards Committee make their selection. Applications may be found on our website [davgtx.org](http://davgtx.org) under the news tab.

I would love to see an application for the National Cemetery Employee Award – year after year goes by without a submission for this award from Texas.

We are gearing up for Mid-Winter in Austin January 16-18, 2015. I hope many of you attend. We look forward to your feedback after this event in order to help us decide if the event should continue and/or what other subjects you would like to have added to the agenda.

Teresa

# NEWS BULLETIN

Volume 24 Issue 4 Chartered by act of Congress 1932 Jan-Feb 2015

★ **Tim Lindsey Commander**

[Timlindsey@rocketmail.com](mailto:Timlindsey@rocketmail.com)

Happy New Year Comrades! We have accomplished much in 2014 and yet we still have more to do as long as our men and women fight to protect us from enemies of war. Therefore our work is true by mentoring, transitioning and serving all veterans to help come back "home". I have not talked with one veteran who was deployed to fight that has not come back with mental scars if they came back in one piece or not. The 113<sup>th</sup> Congress has helped secure more of our earned benefits with the President's signature however nothing can help our ill soldiers overcome terrible memories until we all help bring them to the home they remembered and the home they fought and died for.

The new American Veterans Disabled for Life Memorial opened October 2014, to help everyone remember and others heal. Our journey as Disabled Americans Veterans is to reach out to these combat veterans and talk with them openly because no one else is able to understand giving everything you have in service to others like another Veteran. We know it is true because our new combat veterans say it is true, not having another veteran to listen with understanding is the biggest thing missed by our war torn comrades. I urge everyone to seek these veterans in clinics and anyplace we can find them and listen so these veterans can return home mentally and not just physically. Many are in the workforce now as I meet them but the scars remain and the healing has not begun.

A Gift; a present; a sacrifice; anything given voluntarily, at no cost. Let us not stop with "Hi, how are you, a cliché almost superficial. Let us help each other go deeper whether it is hearing despair or celebration while communicating and help find comfort in genuine honesty for each other to go home to. God Bless our American Veterans and the DAV.

Tim Lindsey Commander.

★ **Sharon Thornton Auxiliary Cmdr.**

[sktangel@hotmail.com](mailto:sktangel@hotmail.com)

Hello everyone!!!

Hope all is well with you & yours this holiday season. Especially during this time of joy & celebration - please remember those veterans who are in hospitals, nursing homes, being taken care of at home. Bring a smile to their face & in their heart - and to yours!

Mid-Winter Conference in Austin is just around the corner. Have your reservations been made? I can't wait to see all of you there ☺! It will be a great learning experience & fun.

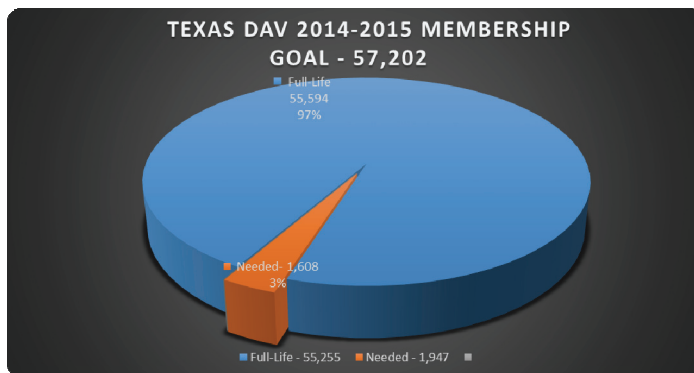
A big "Thank You" for the Christmas party invitations. I enjoyed attending them very much.

As we come upon the New Year of 2015 & "resolutions"- please consider volunteering more, attending more, donating more.

Remember ... "TOGETHER WE CAN"!!!!

★ **Jay Johnson Membership Chairman**

[jayc1034@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jayc1034@sbcglobal.net)



As we approach the end of this calendar year it has been my happy privilege serving as Membership Chairman, and to thank each of you who have been involved in the recruitment efforts for the Department of Texas.

To the National Service Office Supervisors in **Houston and Waco** please know that I receive your **Weekly Membership Reports** and kudos to the National Service Officers doing great work in processing claims and signing up new members into the DAV.

In the next few years thousands of active duty service members will be transitioning out of uniform and into civilian life. This means our state will have

hundreds of current generation veterans needing our services and support. And we must re-examine how we are going to bring these new veterans into our fold. And we will!

I want to wish all a Merry Christmas, a **Healthy, Prosperous and Happy New Year.**

[Jayc1034@sbcglobal.net](mailto:Jayc1034@sbcglobal.net)

★ **Ruth Gates, DAVA Adjutant**

[ruth.gates@sbcglobal.net](mailto:ruth.gates@sbcglobal.net)

Hello Everyone,

By the time you receive this bulletin, we will be well into the holiday spirit. Christmas will have come and gone. The New Year will be fresh and new. I hope that each of you had a very special holiday season with your families, friends and communities. On behalf of Commander Thornton and our State VAVS chairperson, Katie Critz, thank you to each and every Chapter and Unit that participated in our Annual VAVS Christmas program for our hospitalized veterans. Your combined donations allowed us to increase our donation to each Medical Center this year. Without the generosity of each of you, our continued support of the hospitalized veterans would not be possible.

I have new State Standing Rules for 2014-2015 for purchase. They are \$1 each. If you would like to have some, please send me the number of them you need and the payment and I will send them to you. Remember every member can have their own copy.

**Attention Adjutants:** It is time again to start watching for mail outs from State Headquarters for upcoming events and activities. Remember this mail is for your Unit and take it to your meetings to read and share with your group.

Also remember to make sure a copy of you officer reports and audit reports are forwarded to National Auxiliary Headquarters, State Auxiliary Headquarters and DAV State Dept of Texas Headquarters once your elections and installations are completed. These reports are **EXTREMELY** important to each Headquarters.

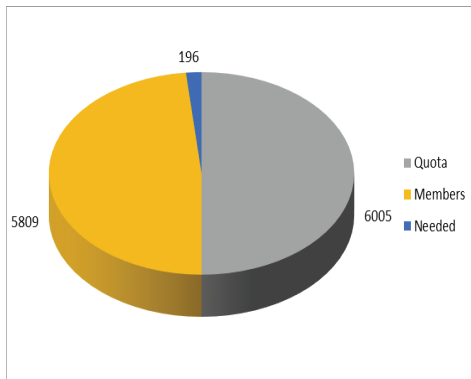
I would like to take this opportunity to wish each member of the Auxiliary and the Chapters a very special Holiday from my family. I know many of you have endured struggles this year but we are nearing a New Year with a fresh start and outlook for us.

Thought for the month:

To me, every hour of the day and night is an unspeakably perfect miracle. -- Walt Whitman.

★ **Darlene Spence, DAVA Membership**

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**97%  
Quota Met  
16%  
Needs to Be  
Met**

**HAPPY NEW  
YEAR!**

A generous "Texas size thank you" to everyone for your heartfelt support provided to our **VETERANS and their families** and for your service to the Auxiliary during the year, 2014.

**Membership-** We are only a hop-skip and a jump from reaching our State goal thanks to the units all working laboriously to reach their individual goals.

Additionally, I thank the chapters, NSO's and DSO's for their help in recruitment.

Each one of us must remain strong, continue to work diligently, recruit new members and maintain uninterrupted support for the DAV and Auxiliary.

Let's all **SCATTER KINDNESS** in the year 2015.

**"TOGETHER WE CAN"**

★ **James Skipworth, District I DEC**

[Leatherneckvet2@hotmail.com](mailto:Leatherneckvet2@hotmail.com)

I don't know where this year went but Christmas time is upon us. Chapter 237 had an all vets Xmas dinner on Dec. 14th, where we donated a ham and a turkey. It was a good feeling seeing all the different veteran organizations come together and share in the good times and great food. Before that, we had our first fund raiser at the Golden Corral. Being the new kid on the block I thought we did very well with the time we had to organize the people we needed to cover the time periods. Next year the manager wants to start in Sept. and work the week-ends up to Veterans Day. We hope by then to have a strong recruitment of new comrades. Our next Chapter meeting will be on Jan. 24th because of the Christmas Holidays. I hope this letter finds everyone in good health and you all have a HAPPY HOLIDAYS and hope to everyone at the Midwinter Seminar.

James (Skip) Skipworth  
Commander and DEC member Dist. 1

★ **Tom Archer, District II DEC**

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

New Year brings with it reflections of the past year. Overall it has indeed been a productive year. In district 2, the year brought with it accomplishments in assisting those veterans with disability claims, helping to see that our veterans were clothed, had food on the table and a table to put it on.

It also brought with it a stronger organization, through membership drives that produced stronger chapters. An excitement within the chapters exist today that is stronger than ever before.

Locally, we participate at local events that let people know that DAV is here to help. Our presence is often presented at the North East Texas Veteran Memorial located in Paris were many events at holiday ceremonies take place.

Visiting with veterans at Bonham VA hospital, Dallas VA hospital, assisted living homes, also visiting veterans in their homes. Let us not forget the spouses that have issues that arise.

The past is past and now it important to look to the future. There is excitement for the coming year. January will bring a meeting in Austin designed to help build stronger chapters. February will bring a Winter Conference, March will bring Chapter Service Officer Certification conducted in Waco, District I and III on March 24, and District II will be on March 1, 2015.

★ **Robert Squyers, District IV DEC**

[Rws1945@gmail.com](mailto:Rws1945@gmail.com)

WOW; it is already December and the year is almost over. I hope you all had a great Thanksgiving and will have a wonderful Christmas and a fantastic New Year.

I just wonder how many people think of the men and women in our military who will be in areas of strife and danger during these wonderful times. How many would be willing to spend just one day in their shoes. Do you believe there are many that would be willing to swap places for just one day? I would bet that the ones that would be willing are the ones that have served our country before.

I hope you all plan on coming to Austin January 16 thru January 18 for the training being offered. This will give everyone a chance to meet with other veterans and share informative that will help our fellow veterans.

Remember to share what you learn, and, share the handouts and contacts you received.

DAV departments and chapters rely upon volunteers for service work, provision of transportation and a host of other activities to support the organization's stated purpose to fulfill our promises to the men and women who served. Those DAV entities frequently ask questions about liability issues arising from and in connection with volunteer activities. **Does DAV provide insurance for volunteer activities such as the Transportation Network?** DAV's largest volunteer program is the Transportation Network. As is well known, volunteer drivers participating in that program are considered to be federal employees when they are rendering their service. Liabilities that the driver may incur in connection with those activities are absorbed by the federal government under – and subject to the limitations of – the Federal Tort Claims Act. This and more can be found in the Non Profit Advisor, which can be found on the Departments web site.

**Remember our veterans and their families. Offer help, guidance, and camaraderie.**

★ **Marlin Howze, District V DEC**

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

The Holiday Season is behind us and a new year lies ahead. I hope everyone was able to enjoy a great Christmas and New Year's celebration.

A New Year is a good time to look back over the accomplishments and gains made last year and to set a benchmark to move at least a step further than we made last year. Goals like recruiting and retention remain high as always, but also goals for fundraising, veteran service, and keeping our legislative efforts on track. Making sure the public is aware of our existence is a good way to accomplish all these goals. Getting out and participating in the community always helps and with National's recent flurry of TV ads bringing a spotlight on what the DAV does for veterans can only help.

We should be ready to jump on these efforts to get our message of taking care of veterans out into the open. Recently I had opportunities to speak with Congressional Representatives and there is still a lot of work getting some of them to look at veteran issues with a sincere eye. While they may speak of support for us, and I'm sure they do, they're voting patterns and other priorities can sometimes make them take a stance that will ultimately hurt our cause. For instance, one representative had

education on his mind as a major priority. In order to fund his idea of increased education improvements, he supported reducing DOD budgets. We all know that veteran benefits spring directly from the DOD budget. While I support his desire to improve education in the US, I'm not as enthusiastic about the idea of cutting benefits to our active duty military and the veterans who served faithfully.

I point this out as an example of why we must remain diligent in our efforts. Recruiting and retention give us the numbers to add strength to our voice on a national level, service to our veterans supports our recruiting and retention efforts, and finally the results of our recruiting and retention is the power behind our legislative efforts. Everything we do is connected and reinforced by the totality of our efforts on every front.

The DAV is an organization worthy of our efforts, and every little bit of help each of us provides makes the organization stronger. Hopefully, one of your resolutions was to become a little more involved (just a little more) in supporting the DAV and our Nations Veterans.

I hope to see many of you at the upcoming Mid-Winter 16-18 January in Austin where we can learn more by sharing our many ideas on how to accomplish all of our goals.

Marlin Howze  
District V Commander

★ **Christy Sloane Women Vet Coord.**

[Christylanesloane@yahoo.com](mailto:Christylanesloane@yahoo.com)

There is an amazing event for Women Veterans coming to Houston soon!! The Women Veterans' Empowerment Expo will be held at the United Way of Greater Houston, 50 Waugh Dr. Houston Texas, on Saturday March 7, 2015 from 9AM to 3PM. This is a free event with both breakfast and lunch provided for all those that attend. There will be so many great activities to aid and inform us women not only of what we can take part in, but how we can move to take charge of our own lives. This expo will have a lot of great resources for us to learn from to include informative and inspirational speakers, Veteran resources, useful information, and live personal appearances. I hope to see everyone there!

Wishing everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!!!



★ **Robert Squyres, Legislative/BPT Chrmn**

[Rws1945@gmail.com](mailto:Rws1945@gmail.com)

There have been several things happening over the last few months. The most talked about was the passage of a spending bill:

President Barack Obama on Tuesday December 16, 2014 signed a \$1.1 trillion spending bill passed by Congress last week that lifted the threat of a government shutdown. The legislation funds most government agencies through September 2015. The Department of Homeland Security will be treated differently, getting a funding extension only through Feb. 27, by which time Republicans will control both chambers of Congress. Passage of the 1,603-page bill was a long struggle in the Senate and the House of Representatives marked by bitter disputes over changes to banking regulations and Obama's recent executive order on immigration.

The DAV heralded the inclusion of legislation in the Omnibus Appropriations Bill that will provide advance appropriations for mandatory veteran's benefits, such as disability compensation and GI Bill educational payments. The advance appropriations provision, which was part of the Putting Veterans Funding First Act (S. 932, H.R. 813), was added to the spending bill late last week by key Senate and House leaders following a series of meetings with DAV and other leading veterans and military service organizations.

Our country has a sacred obligation to care for those who served and sacrificed for our collective freedom. The men and women returning home from service face obstacles others simply can't fathom in their daily lives. They must find jobs in a difficult economy; re-learn how to relate to their families after having been away for long periods of time; find housing; and learn to overcome unique obstacles. Far too many veterans struggle to regain a sense of normalcy; they must start the long and often difficult process of healing and rehabilitation so they can begin to rebuild the lives they once knew. And DAV provides programs that address their overall health and well-being. All DAV services are free.

I hope you all plan on coming to Austin January 16 thru January 18 for the training being offered. This will give everyone a chance to meet with other veterans and share informative that will help our fellow veterans.

Remember to share what you learn, and, share the handouts and contacts you received. Be ready to contact your State and Federal Legislators for issues in your local, state, and federal legislation.

If you have plans, or want help in planning a trip to your state Legislators, please contact me.

**Remember our veterans and their families.  
Offer help, guidance, and camaraderie.  
Merry Christmas, and a wonderful New Year!!!!**

Robert Squyres  
202 Lakeview St.  
Somerville, TX 77879-4342

★ **Ralph Marchesano, Chaplain**

[rjmarche@windstream.net](mailto:rjmarche@windstream.net)

The New Year Ahead

Have you heard of good riddance day? Probably not, unless you happen to live in New York City. Yes December 28<sup>th</sup> 2014 was Good Riddance Day in Times Square.

I recently came to learn about this by reading an article. Good Riddance Day is inspired by a Latin American tradition in which New Year's revelers stuffed dolls with objects representing bad memories before setting them on fire. There was no bonfire in Times Square, but many were invited to shed and shred forgettable memories from 2014 for a fresh start in 2015.

Organizers encouraged people to write their grievances down and then throw the lists into shredders symbolizing the act of letting go of painful memories, bad experiences, foolish mistakes, bad relationships, dumb choices, and long-held grudges that had been clogging up their insides. Participants could have used a sledgehammer in case the shredder didn't provide enough emotional release.

One blogger clearly loved the idea: "I think this is becoming one of my favorite holidays!!! Today's the chance to say Good Riddance to something... and I'm making quite a list!!!" There is something almost irresistible about the idea of "out with the old, in with the new." Sometimes we need to say "good riddance" to the pain and hurt of the past. To do that we're going to have to find the courage to let go of our anger, say farewell to our bitterness, and cast off our malice toward those who have hurt us deeply.

We must learn to forgive. *Until we do that we can never go forward.* As long as we live in the past, we will be chained to the past, and the people who have hurt us deeply win a double victory-once when they hurt us the first time and twice when we refuse to let go and move on.

Why is that? I was once asked. My answer was; I guess it's because people have a lot of anger and bitterness.

We all struggle with broken relationships, people who hurt us, painful words, prejudices, deceitful actions, friends who turn against us, racism and unkind words said about us or our loved ones.

*The following two things seem to be true about the human condition:*

1. *We always need forgiveness and*
2. *We always have someone we need to forgive.*

Sometimes we mistakenly think that if we forgive, we are going soft on the people who have hurt us. But if God treated us the way we sometimes treat others, we would never be forgiven at all. Have you ever known anyone who loved to argue? We all know people who love to keep a quarrel going because they are so angry. God is not like that. He is willing to end the quarrel and welcome us back home. Sometimes the real problem is that we want to keep fighting.

Comrades I want you to take this time today to reflect on this, who do you need to forgive today? Or what issue do you need to forget? I always tell folks, who or what is buying space in your head? Why are you allowing them or it to possess your thoughts? It's time to let go, it's time to forgive and forget!

I pray that all of you will find the strength and wisdom only God can give to accomplish this goal.

Father, we thank you that you reveal your love to us every day. We invite you to send us out to our fellow veterans and help us minister to them on a daily basis. Abba father, help fan the flame of the gifts you have given us. Come reveal your grace and truth to us each day. For yours is the Kingdom, the power and the glory, forever and ever. Amen!

Rev Ralph Marchesano  
Chaplain

## Submissions and Pictures





**Your web page address is:**

[http://doubletree.hilton.com/en/dt/groups/personalized/A/A/USLNDT-DVT-20150610/index.jhtml?WT.mc\\_id=POG](http://doubletree.hilton.com/en/dt/groups/personalized/A/A/USLNDT-DVT-20150610/index.jhtml?WT.mc_id=POG)

Group Name: DAV Disabled American Veterans 2015  
Conference

Group Code: DVT

Check-in: 10-JUN-2015

Check-out: 13-JUN-2015

Hotel Name: [Double Tree by Hilton Hotel Austin](#)

Hotel  
Address: 6505 IH-35 North

Austin, Texas  
78752-4346

Phone  
Number: 5123744870

If you have questions concerning your web page, please [email us](#). For all other questions concerning your group, contact the hotel where your group event is booked.

