



DAV Department of Texas Headquarters

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EVENTS & REMINDERS

★ Teresa Johniken, DAV Adjutant

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At the Mid-Winter Conference, the Local Veterans Assistance Program (LVAP) was discussed. I would like to encourage each and every one of you to participate in this valuable program. For more information go to DAVTexas.org under the News tab or contact Brad Adams at the Dept. of Texas Headquarters.

When making summer travel plans, please keep in mind the Department of Texas Convention is scheduled to begin on June 10th. Be there or be square. The Call to Convention will be sent out to all chapters soon with more information.

CALENDAR

- Fri, March 5th District II Service Officer Training
- Wed, March 9th Hosts Panel Discussion on Challenges Women Face In Transitioning From Military To College @ Texas A&M College Station
- Sun, March 12th District I Service Officer Training
- Sun, March 13th Daylight Savings Time
- Fri, March 25th Good Friday
- Sun, March 27th Easter Holiday
- Mon, March 28th Mobile Service Office @ Lubbock



Teresa Johniken

DAV ADJUTANT

News Bulletin

VOLUME 25 ISSUE 6

MARCH/APRIL 2016

CHARTERED BY ACT OF CONGRESS 1932

★ Jay Johnson, DAV Commander

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As I write my report this month, I am also packing for the DAV Mid-Winter Conference in Washington, D.C. It is one of the most important events the DAV has each year. I hope to see and visit with those of you planning on attending the Mid-Winter Conference.

National Commander Moses McIntosh and his very able staff created a list of legislative priorities for those attending this conference and to be addressed with elected officials during our Washington visit. These are a few of the most important issues. We will be urging our congressmen to consider these as they move forward in the legislative process for the period they are in session.

1. Women Veterans Access to Quality Care
2. Family Caregiver Support and Services
3. Fully developed Appeals Reform
4. Reform of VA Health Care to better support veterans needs
5. Fiscal Year 2017 Budget Request – Must be sufficient to enable VA to keep pace with current and future demand

We are united in these efforts with other veteran service organizations and we must continue to urge the Administration and the Congress to keep the promises made to veterans on health care funding.

As previous members of the Armed Forces of this great nation called the United States of America, each of us bore the battle of support in some way by our services to protect and keep the citizens from harm's way.

I would encourage each member to exercise their constitutional right by going to the polls and Vote for the official candidate of their choice in the in the upcoming elections for leaders of this nation. Some will say "my one vote will not make a difference." But one vote can make a difference.

History speaks for itself:

- In 1776, one vote gave the United States the English language instead of German.
- In 1875, one vote changed France from a monarchy to a republic
- Without one vote for each, California, Oregon, Texas and Washington would never have become states.
- Our flag would only have 46 stars, except for one vote.
- In 1923, it was one vote that gave Adolf Hitler leadership of the Nazi Party.
- Finally, in 1876, it was one vote that declared Rutherford B. Hayes the 19th president of States.

**One vote can make history.
It is because of history that we need to vote.
It is our civic responsibility.**

Of course, in order to vote you must be registered and have a current Voter Registration Card. If you have moved since the last election or for women, have married since the last election, you need to update your information. If you don't have access to an application for a new card, call or go to your County Clerk office and request the form. MOST IMPORTANT - The name on your Voter Registration Card and some form of your identification, must be exactly the same.

One vote not cast is a terrible thing to waste.

Yours in Comradeship.

Jay Johnson
DAV Commander

★ **Dr. Charles W. Edwards, Membership**

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Our Commitments to Membership Growth

From the very beginning on September 25, 1921, 94 years ago, the Disabled American Veterans (DAV) has had a goal of helping veterans and their families get everything their sacrifices have earned. As a Veteran Service Organization (VSO), that is all we do, and we do it well because disabled veterans deserve the best.

Yes, we serve all of Texas's 342,544 disabled veterans. Presently, the Disabled American Veterans, Department of Texas has a total of 65,758 members. Therefore, today, February 25, 2016, we have a potential of 276,786 disabled veterans in our state to reach, to invite, so they, too, can become members of our VSO, the DAV.

You can always count on DAV's service when you need help with benefits from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and other city, county, state and national government departments and organizations. This help is free of charge. It's available from our National Service Officers, Transition Service Officers, Department Service Officers and Chapter Service Officers. Our NSOs, TSOs, DSOs and CSOs are the best trained experts regarding veterans' benefits throughout the great state of Texas.

That is important to all of us...when the VA wants to review the benefits you receive...when you have trouble getting treatment at a VA medical center...when you need some direction on job programs or information about Social Security disability benefits.

With threats to our benefits coming year in and year out, we need representation before Congress, the White House, the State House and other government bodies. I am talking about strong, effective, dedicated and determine representation.

The DAV's legislative specialists in Washington, D.C., are the best in Veteran's Affairs. But they must be backed up by strength. The strength that comes from the number of members we have and our member's involvement in the political process of maintaining our earned benefits.

The DAV Mission Statement, Vision and Values

Mission: We are dedicated to a single purpose: To empower veterans to lead high-quality lives with respect and dignity. We accomplish this by ensuring that veterans and their families can access the full range of benefits available to them; fighting for the interests of America's injured heroes on Capitol Hill; and educating the public about the great sacrifices and needs of veterans transitioning back to civilian life.

Vision: Breaking down barriers

Values: Service, Quality, Integrity and Leadership

DAV's Membership Questions and Answers:

1. <https://www.dav.org/membership/join-dav/>
2. <https://www.dav.org/membership-benefits/>
3. <https://www.dav.org/membership/local-chapters/>
4. <https://www.dav.org/membership/membership-system/>
5. <https://www.dav.org/membership/members/>
6. <https://www.dav.org/membership/auxiliary/>

Department Membership Awards

1. **Individual Member Award:** Most New Members Recruited
2. **Chapter Award:** Largest Increase in Membership
3. **Districts Award:** Established New Chapters

I would like to offer once again my congratulations to Commander Johnson for receiving the 2014-2015 General Jonathan M. Wainwright Award which was presented at our DAV National Convention in Denver, Colorado, August, 2015. The Department of Texas had the highest number of new part life and full life paid members over goal for the membership year ending June 30, 2015.

This was the seventh consecutive year that our state, the great state of Texas has won this award. I see no reason why we should not receive our eighth award in Atlanta, Georgia, August, 2016. Our goal for this year ending June 30, 2016 is 58,932, for new full life paid members. Our present percentage as of February 25, 2016 in reaching our goal stands at 97.65%. We need 1,383 new full life paid members before June 30, 2016.

The Department of California has offered a challenge in stating that this will be their year in passing the Department of Texas and receiving this award in Atlanta, Georgia, August, 2016.

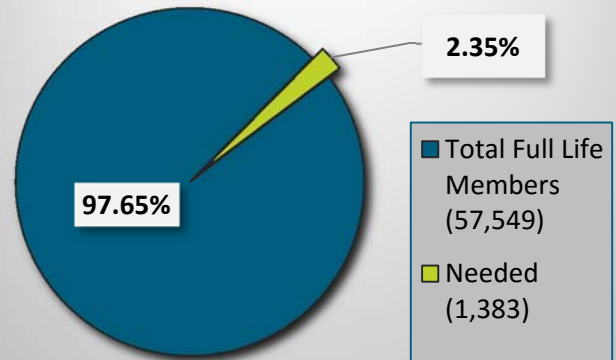
However, our commitment to membership growth within Department of Texas can be summed up under four major headings: conceive it, believe it, and take the steps to achieve it. Then we will be prepared to receive to receive this national membership award once again in Atlanta, Georgia, August, 2016.

In order to reach our membership goal, let all of us continue to inform our fellow veterans that if they as Disabled American Veterans have interest in their benefits, joining the DAV is the best decision that they could possible make.

Joining the DAV is critical for generating the energy, the flow of ideas, and the proactive work needed to maintain benefits earned by those who have served as members of the United States Armed Forces.

Dr. Charles Edwards
DAV Senior Vice Commander
Membership Chairman

Membership



★ Ruth Gates, DAVA Adjutant

ruth.gates@aig.com

Hello Auxiliary Members.

The State School of Instruction was very informative and all presenters were well prepared. If your unit was not able to send an attendee and would like a copy of the packet that was handed out, please give me a call at (972) 285-1269. I will be happy to put one in the mail for your Unit.

It is time for us to all start making plans to attend **State Convention June 10-12, 2016, in Austin at the Doubletree Hotel**. We have some exciting plans and changes in place so I hope every Unit will send at least one member as a delegate to attend. With that being said, Adjutants, please watch your mail boxes as I will be sending out several packets of information for you. This will be your annual reports, State Convention registration and luncheon information, and other items as appropriate. Please take the mail to your meetings and be aware of the deadlines on some of the documents.

Reservation info for State Convention:

Doubletree Hotel Austin, 6505 I-35 North. Reservations must be made **by May 17** to get the contracted price of **\$106 for a double room and \$136 for a queen room** plus tax. For reservations call **800-347-0330**. You must use the group name of **Disabled American Veterans Department of Texas** or **group code of DVC** when you are calling.

Also, State History Chairperson, Elaine Morehead, needs any and all pictures from the units for State Commander

Darlene's book. This includes pictures of the Unit Commanders, junior members, any and all activities for our programs, etc.

Please make sure you include the names of all persons, the date of the event, and what the activity was.

Please mail your pictures for the State Commander's History Book to:

Elaine Morehead
110 Seri Cove
Universal City, TX 78148

*Happiness is the absence of the striving
for happiness. Zen saying of Zhuangzi.*

Ruth Gates
Adjutant, DAVA

★ **Robert Simmons Jr. , District I DEC**

majrsimmonsjr@hotmail.com

I hope everyone intends to vote in the coming November elections.

Mobile Service Office Travels to Lubbock

DAV's Mobile Service Office (MSO) program brings benefits counseling and services to veterans and their families where they live. Aided by Department and Chapter Service Officers, NSOs travel to communities across the country to help veterans develop and file claims for benefits administered under federal, state and local laws. MSOs travel the country helping veterans.

National Service Officers will travel to Lubbock on March 28th 2016. The Mobile Service Office will be at Lubbock's Chapter house from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm. They will be here to file claims and or discuss current claims pending (those filed through the DAV).

**Questions about Mobile Service Office?
Please call Harry Carroll @ (806) 472-3462**

National Order of Trench Rats

**Imperial Rendezvous July 30 – August 2, 2016
Hyatt Regency, 265 Peachtree St. NE, Atlanta, GA 30303
Telephone: 1-888-421-1442 or 1-404-577-1234
Group Name: Disabled American Veterans Rate: \$125 Single/Double**

There will be a meeting of the National Order of Trench Rats (NOTR) Dugout 632 at the Department of Texas Convention in Austin, TX. Specific information including date, time and room to be announced at the convention. We will induct new members and provide new information on joining.

If you have information that you would like published in this area, please text me at (713) 302-3062, e-mail me at majrsimmonsjr@hotmail.com or call me at (713) 302-3062... just get in touch with me.

Robert Simmons
District I DEC

★ **Tom Archer, District II DEC**

etexarcher@yahoo.com

As we move out of the cold weather, actively working with veterans with claims that enhance their lives also brings great rewards for our local chapters, bringing forth many plans for the year, bringing also a tremendous desire to join an organization that goes all out to assist veterans from all age groups.

Remember to get certified as Chapter Service Officers. There are a lot of veterans needing our help. North Texas chapters will be meeting Saturday March 5th in Arlington for recertification.

June brings with it the Department Convention - make plans now. Great plans are being made to bring an exciting convention. One I know you and I will enjoy. From comradeship to entertainment, you don't want to miss it.

Tom Archer
District II DEC

★ **Marlin Howze, District V DEC**

fehorse@gmail.com

I hope the New Year has shown itself to be a prospective one for your chapters. With the mild winter we have had so far, there has been great opportunity to go out and meet some of the challenges presented to us for the rest of the year. From helping our comrades live better lives, to making our chapters healthy and strong, we have some of the most remarkable tools at our disposal for

making great in-roads to furthering our goals as DAV members.

First and foremost are our Chapter Service Officers. At the grassroots level, these officers have the greatest opportunity for outreach in your communities. Hopefully, they are being used to their greatest potential. They should be at the heart and soul of your chapter for the amount of good they can do for fellow veterans in your area. Their ability to help get properly researched and filled out applications to our National Service Officers and educate our brothers and sisters on the VA system and their benefits are the best assets to your Chapter. Well trained CSOs can bring in new members just because the veterans they help want to be a part of something that works.

Involvement in your community is another vital tool to letting those in your area get to know you. Do you have or have you thought about starting an Honor Guard to offer final respects to fallen comrades around you? Not just other members, but any veterans deserving of a proper final farewell from a fellow brother/sister at arms.

The key point is that so many try to focus on getting their Chapter financially stable so they can do programs. I believe that if we give to our communities first, the rest will follow. That's what makes a charitable heart beat. I wish you success in your endeavors.

Marlin Howze
District V DEC

★ **Howard T. Ray, Legislative/BPT Chairman**

htray1931@gmail.com

Reforming the Veterans Health Care System
One of Five Critical Policy Goals for the DAV in 2016

In 2014, Congress passed the Veterans Access Choice and Accountability Act (VACAA) in response to waiting list and an access crisis. The law created a temporary “choice” program for some veterans to access non-VA community care if they live more than 40 miles from a VA facility or there was more than a 30 day wait for an appointment. The “choice” program temporarily increases access for some veterans, but numerous problems arose with its design, implementation and operation. DAV believes the current choice program is not a long-term solution.

An independent assessment of VA healthcare mandated by Congress found that VA is not being given sufficient funding to meet the demand for care, a problem DAV has pointed out for years, and that to increase access more resources would be needed. However, the independent assessment did find that the quality of care provided was high, concluding that the VA health care system, “...performed the same or significantly better on average than the non-VA provider organizations...” Therefore the challenge is how best to preserve VA expertise and capabilities while supplementing the system with other public and private health care.

Over the past couple of years, a number of years, a number of simplistic VA reform ideas have been floated that could actually weaken, downsize or dismantle the VA health care system entirely. For example, converting VA from a robust full-service health system into a smaller number of “centers of excellence” would close hundreds of medical centers and outpatient clinics and force disabled veterans to travel farther for care. Similarly, treating only the combat or service-related injuries of veterans and forcing them into the private sector for other medical needs would fracture their care, leading to less coordinated, holistic and preventative care, and worse health care outcomes.

Turning the VA health care system into an insurance function that no longer provides direct health care services to veterans would disregard all of the experience and expertise that VA doctors and researchers have amassed and require new government regulations setting premiums, copayments, deductibles, lifetime limits and the actual medical services to be provided.

Finally, Privatizing VA by creating a new government chartered corporation, similar to Amtrak or the Post Office, would shift management of VA to an unaccountable, independent entity driven by corporate considerations, with little oversight by Congress or veterans themselves.

The better solution is to create local community health care networks that optimize the strengths of both VA and private sector. VA would be the coordinator and principal provider of care, especially for primary and specialty care related to military exposure. To expand access, VA must also increase its capacity to deliver urgent care at existing VA medical facilities and develop additional capacity by establishing urgent care clinics. Rather than be limited by arbitrary federal access standards, such as VA’s current 40-mile and 30-day standards, decisions about when and where veterans can

receive medical treatment are critical decisions that should be made between veterans and their doctors, not by legislators, regulators or bureaucrats.

Congress must reject dangerous, simplistic reforms and work together with key stakeholders to reform and strengthen the VA health care system.

Howard T. Ray

Legislative/BPT Chairman

★ **Christy Sloan, Women Vet Coordinator**

christy.sloane@va.gov

A panel of women veterans, who are current students enrolled at Texas A&M, are scheduled to share their experiences in the military and transitioning back to civilian life as a student. The goal of this event is to help other Students understand what it is like to be a woman in the military. They will be discussing the experiences women have while serving in the military and the challenges involved in transitioning to college.

Date/Time: Wed., March 9, 2016
11:00 am – 1:00 pm

Location: Sterling Evans Library, Room 204E
0468 Spence St
College Station, TX 77844

Christy Sloane

Women Vet Coordinator

★ **Rev. Ralph Marchesano, DAV Chaplain**

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There is much wisdom available to us in God's Word and if we are open to it much of it will teach us about life. Proverbs is a great place to learn about this. The Hebrew word for proverb is "mashal" and it can mean several things; "similitude, a maxim, poetry, parable, byword," and as the word says, "proverb" or "to be like." Proverbs gives us The Wisdom of God on how to deal with life's situations and in dealing with believers and non-believers. If we break down this word, the first part is "pro" for coming before and the second part "verb" is that of verbal or words but the Proverbs are so much more than having a word coming before us. They show us godly wisdom that the world does not know; we cannot learn godly wisdom from the world. Since Proverbs is the inspired Word of God, we are reading

what God thinks about various situations and so as we read through part of Proverbs (Chapter 12), let's attempt to glean the most important truths from one of the most profound chapters in one of the greatest books, with the understanding that I cannot possibly cover the entire chapter in this article. I will be choosing some special pearls among the massive treasure of knowledge.

Whoever loves discipline loves knowledge, but he who hates reproof is stupid. (Proverbs 12:1)

The inability to admit error and confess mistakes means we hate knowledge because we don't accept discipline. I think an attribute of meekness is to be teachable and to stand corrected where and when needed. If we love discipline we love knowledge but if we hate it, we essentially hate wisdom.

No one is established by wickedness, but the root of the righteous will never be moved. (Proverbs 12:3)

What the author is saying is that anything that is established will be established in the long term if it is done in the right way (or righteously) because eventually, those things done in wickedness cannot last beyond this life. The root of the righteous of God will never be moved or put to an end for they have eternal life and their reward will not be taken away and unlike the unrighteous who will lose everything they have when they are judged.

The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, but a wise man listens to advice. (Proverbs 12:15)

There is strength in admitting your mistakes and listening to others. Learning the hard way works, yes, but it is the hardest way of all to learn. Wouldn't it be better to listen and learn? When someone is wrong but believes that they are not (right in their own eyes) their way is the way of the fool (foolishness) and since pride comes just before the fall, they don't want to humble themselves and listen to others. If only they understood that God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble and if they do not humble themselves, God may have to do it for them.

Anxiety in a man's heart weighs him down, but a good word makes him glad. (Proverbs 12:25)

I remember hearing that doctors believe that 80% of illness is caused by anxiety and 80% of the things that we worry about never come to pass. What a terrible waste of energy and health. In contrast to that, it takes 15 (or so) positive comments to make up for one negative comment and so I believe we need to be encouraging

one another, exhorting one another, and edifying each other by giving people “a good word.” We’ve already got enough negativity in the world as it is without adding to it.

One who is righteous is a guide to his neighbor, but the way of the wicked leads them astray. (Proverbs 12:26)

If one follows the lead of The Good Shepherd and in the paths of righteousness (the advice of Proverbs) then you will be a good example to your neighbors (friends and family) and it will be difficult for the wicked to lead them astray by trying to convince them of false teachings and beliefs. You need to be an example by following God’s wisdom, His principle, so that false teachers will not deceive your neighbors and lead them away from the right which is our eternal God. However, you have the right knowledge, the wisdom of God that is found in Proverbs.

In the path of righteousness is life, and in its pathway there is no death. (Proverbs 12:28)

Like the Good Shepherd in Psalm 23:3, He leads us to eternal life and in eternal life there is no death. If you learn nothing else in Proverbs 12, learn this; God is life, no God is death.

In conclusion, Proverbs is full of God’s wisdom and contains what is called “wisdom literature” and there is no greater wisdom for a man, woman or child than to understand God’s wisdom, repent of their earthly ways, confess their wrongs to God, and trust in the Good Shepherd, for He will lead you in the paths of righteousness and in Him there is life. If you know this, then you are as wise as you can possibly be. Immerse yourself in the book of Proverbs and reap the benefits of God’s wisdom! May our Lord and Almighty God bless you and keep you, may He bless the DAV and the United States of America.

Rev. Ralph Marchesano
DAV Chaplain

★ **Fannie Lowe, DAV Chaplain**

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Greetings All,

I am thankful for the opportunity to share my prayer for today with you. May you be increasingly inspired each day as you serve, helping to fulfill our purpose of the DAVA.

Father,

May I be given the opportunity to serve others, giving of myself with a joyful heart. Serving without any expectations of receiving gifts in return.

Help me to understand the needs of others. May I serve without judgment and with the right attitude. Please give me the talent, time, energy and other support necessary to do my absolute best in service to our DAV and their families, our DAVA family and to others.

I wish to serve others as You serve, with compassion, mercy and tenderness; always forgiving; and, moving on leaving love, joy and peace behind.

Amen.

With the words of my prayer in mind, if I can be of service and support please allow me to do so. You may request any services that I, as your State of Texas DAV Auxiliary Chaplain, can provide by contacting me by phone at (512) 461-2924; by mail at 20605 Raptor Roost Rd., Pflugerville, TX 78660; or by e-mail at fannielowe@aol.com.

Fannie Lowe
DAVA Chaplain

2013 Mid-Winter Conference, Washington D.C.



Buddy Ward, Howard Ray, Jay Johnson, Darlene Spence, and Robert Woodfork



DAV and Auxiliary Members visit The office of Senator Ted Cruz



DAV Commander Jay Johnson and DAVA Commander Darlene Spence at The Office of Congressman Lamar Smith



Meeting with Congressman Will Hurd



DAV Commander Jay Johnson, DAVA Commander Darlene Spence and National DAVA Commander Linda Stake



DAV Commander Jay Johnson and Department Finance Committee Person Percy Spence

★ **Darlene Spence, DAVA Commander**

psdspence@aol.com

Hello Texas DAVA Family

The State School of Instruction was held on January 23 and 24 in Austin, TX. The presenters provided valuable information related to their areas of work to help make this an exciting time of education, sharing ideas and fun. Additionally, we gave a Texas size howdy and welcome to our newest Unit's, Paris 89 and Stephenville #234.

If you were unable to attend the State School of Instruction this year, please try to take advantage of this educational opportunity next year.

I challenge each unit in the state of Texas to send at least 1 delegate to our State Convention, June 10, 11 and 12, in Austin at the Doubletree Hotel Austin. In order to make this a record turnout, we should start making plans now to attend. Let's give our guest, Assistant

National Adjutant Bunny Clos, a Big Texas Welcome.

Elaine Moreland, History Chairman is in desperate need of pictures of Unit Commanders, Junior Commanders, SEC's, State Chairman's, junior members, etc. for the State history book. Elaine will be taking pictures at the State Convention please assist her in this noteworthy project.

Randolph Area Unit 17 will be hosting the Auxiliary State Commander's Tea, April 9, 2016, at 12:00 pm, at Christ the King Lutheran Church 1129 Pat Booker Road, Universal City, Texas. All Units will be receiving invitations soon. I look forward to seeing you, as I am honored and proud to represent you as your State Commander.

Darlene Spence
DAVA Commander



**DAVA Sr. Vice Commander Anita Lee, DAVA Commander Darlene Spence
and 1st Jr. Vice Commander Charlene Parker**

The University of Texas Medical Branch Doctor of Physical Therapy Class of 2017 Presents a \$2,000 Donation to Their Philanthropy of Choice, DAV Chapter 194 – Pasadena



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