

## From the AUXILIARY NATIONAL COMMANDER WILLIAM CRAIG JOHNIKEN



### Continuing the caregiver fight

**A**s many of my fellow spouses of disabled veterans know all too well, under current law, only caregivers of veterans severely injured after Sept. 11, 2001, are eligible for benefits and support offered by the VA. Caregivers of thousands of veterans injured before 9/11—including veterans of World War II, Korea, Vietnam and the Gulf War—are not eligible for this assistance.

DAV's survey on the subject illustrates that most caregivers do not receive support from our government. Support available to post-9/11 caregivers includes caregiver education, respite care, financial support, home health aide services and medical training.

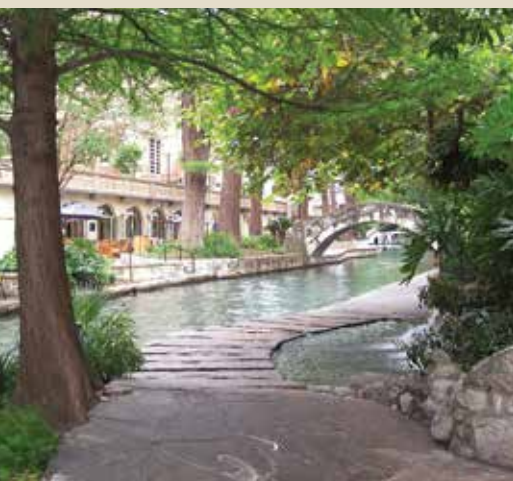
As DAV and Auxiliary members, we should make passing this legislation our New Year's resolution.

If you haven't already, I encourage you to join DAV CAN (Commander's Action Network), which is found at [dav.org/can](http://dav.org/can) or under "Take Action" at [auxiliary.dav.org](http://auxiliary.dav.org). Tell your elected

lawmakers how you feel about equitable caregiver benefits for veterans of all generations.

While DAV and the Auxiliary continue fighting for this important legislation, I am pleased to share some exciting news with you. At the Auxiliary fall conference, the executive committee approved the Caregiver Endeavor Project, which will provide Auxiliary-sponsored caregiver outings during next year's TEE (Training, Exposure, Experience) Tournament in Iowa City, Iowa. While disabled veterans participate in the tournament's therapeutic events, the Auxiliary will ensure caregivers are given an opportunity for some care and respite. We are still developing funding details and ways to expand this new program to include future events, but I am very excited we will be able to offer this service to caregivers at the tournament.

Thank you, and it's an honor to serve as your Auxiliary commander.



### DAV Auxiliary National Commander Testimonial Dinner

■ DAV Auxiliary National Commander Craig Johniken's testimonial dinner is scheduled for April 14 at El Tropicano Riverwalk Hotel in San Antonio.

Rooms can be reserved at a special rate of \$125 per day. Call 210-223-9461 and ask for the "Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary testimonial room block." The deadline for hotel reservations is March 12.

A golf outing at Willow Springs Golf Course is scheduled for Friday, April 13. The cost will be \$48 for 18 holes and a cart.

Cocktail hour for the commander's testimonial dinner begins at 6 p.m. Saturday, April 14. Dinner will begin at 7 p.m. Dress for all events is casual.

Invitations will be mailed out in late January. The cost of dinner is \$50. Mail checks for receipt no later than April 1, to Darlene Spence, 7919 Yellow Bark Blvd., San Antonio, TX 78154.