



Several state departments are close to achieving 2015-2016 membership quota. Congratulations to the **State Department of Louisiana** For reaching this goal!

From the Desk of National Commander Linda Stake...

On September 7, I had the most wonderful opportunity to travel to Pittsburgh and participate in the annual “Caring and Sharing” boat ride for hospitalized veterans. What a special event! This is a four-day event and is sponsored by the Pittsburgh VA, several veteran organizations, corporate sponsors, and the City. Each day there are over 250 veterans onboard. As veterans await boarding, a band is playing, Spanky the Clown is doing his routine, and members of different military organizations are greeting veterans. When everyone is on board, the fun continues, along with Elvis and Cher impersonators.

Some of us were called “VIP’s” and asked to come and introduce ourselves. I was so happy to represent you, the DAV Auxiliary. Later, the VIP’s passed out flags to the veterans, joined them in a tasty lunch, and cruised the three rivers. Yes, three rivers! We began on the Monongahela, then up the Allegheny; and finally, came to the point where the two rivers confluence to form the Ohio River. At that point, as DAVA National Commander, I joined the Amvet State Commander and Amvet Auxiliary State Madam President to toss a wreath into the river to honor our deceased veterans. After the boat ride ended, members of different organizations formed a line and shook hands with veterans and thanked them for their service. The veterans were given “caring and sharing” gift bags before getting back on the buses. They had a wonderful day – and, so did I!

When I arrived in Pittsburgh, I was met by NSO Scott Hope and his son, Daxton, a beautiful 19-month-old. We had a great visit on the way to the hotel. Thank you, Scott and Dax, for your warm welcome. After arriving at the hotel, I met my host, Laurie Stopyra. Laurie, Diane Freeman, and I had a wonderful few days while I was in Pittsburgh. On the last night of my stay, Laurie, Diane, and I met the DAVA State Commander, Sr. Vice Commander and State Adjutant, Department of Pennsylvania. We enjoyed a marvelous dinner and comradeship together that evening.

If you have a chance, please visit historical Pittsburgh, "**The City of Bridges.**" In a 2006 study, it was determined that Pittsburgh has a total of 446 bridges! The place is beautiful!

After getting back to Arkansas, on September 12, State Commander Lillie Williams and I attended the DAV and DAV Auxiliary annual picnic of Dr. Gannon #3. This event is held at the Fayetteville Veterans Park each year. Thank you DAV and Auxiliary for making us feel so welcome and feeding us so well. I want to commend you for all of your hard work you do to support our veterans. You are great! Located in Fayetteville is one of our VA hospitals, Wal-Mart, and the infamous Razorbacks. Go Hogs!

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“A leader is someone who demonstrates what’s possible.”

~Mark Yarnell

Mae Holmes by Frances Costa, National Mae Holmes Chairman

I understand there are some questions/concerns regarding the Mae Holmes requirement of making Quota due to the newly implemented change. Of course, the Quota question will still be on the form and attaining quota will still be a factor taken into consideration as part of the judging process. The only change that will occur is that Mae Holmes reports can be judged whether or not the unit made quota. The point system for judging will be enhanced to reflect that making quota earns more points for your unit when reports are judged. Let me emphasize that making quota is still an important objective and by attaining quota your unit will earn more points. The reason behind this is that many units which are quite large have a larger quota requirement than smaller units. It is points of encouragement for these larger units to continue to work towards membership and as well file their end of year reports. These members do a lot of volunteer work but have difficulty recruiting or retaining members.

I would like to reflect a little on what we do and why we do it. Every charitable work carried out by our members should be a reflection of the love that we have of our country and our veterans. It is what the Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary is founded on in principle of caring for those who have borne the scars of war and their families. All of our programs reflect this whether it is Americanism, Community Service, Legislation, Junior Activities, Non-VA Hospital, VAVS and yes, even Membership. The more our units do involving each of these programs is the more we are doing for our veterans. It is not about me, it is about us working together for one purpose-service to disabled veterans and their families.

So please, unit members; keep track of what your unit does throughout the year and fill out your entire end of year reports and give the DAVA a chance to recognize you for your efforts. Our national chairmen and N.E.C.'s need to consolidate the information for their reports for national convention and we cannot give an accurate report without all the information possible from the units around the country. We are all DAV and DAV Auxiliary - Partners Pulling Together.

The American Creed by William Tyler Page

I believe in... The United States of America. A government of the people, by the people and for the people. Whose just powers are derived from the consent of the governed. A democracy in a republic. A sovereign Nation of many sovereign States. A perfect Union. One and inseparable. Established upon those principles of freedom, equality, justice and humanity, for which American patriots scarified their lives and fortunes. I therefore believe it is my duty to my country to love it. To support its Constitution. To obey its laws. To respect its flag. And to defend it against all enemies.

Reminders~

- When sending in membership applications, please make sure the application is filled out completely, and is legible. Also, a date of birth is required for processing.
- New membership applications and brochures are available at no charge. Please contact national headquarters at 877.426.2838, option 5, to place an order. The applications are available in single forms or in triplicate books of 25.
- 990-N e-Postcard due dates are quickly approaching. If your unit is struggling to complete this annual requirement, please contact national headquarters, and a member of our staff will be glad to assist you. The 990-N e-Postcard is due by the fifteenth day of the fifth month following the close of your fiscal year. For those units with gross receipts over \$50,000, please remember that the paper form 990 is required.
- When placing an order for DAV Auxiliary merchandise, such as clothing or pins, please contact the DAV Store at 877.426.2838, ext. 3252, or sales@dav.org.
- If your unit has recently changed its meeting day, time, or location, please send those changes to our office as soon as possible. This can also be done by email to dava@dav.org.
- National Headquarters will be closed on Monday, October 12, 2015, in observance of Columbus Day.

Americanism by Diane Franz, National Americanism Chairman

A few October milestones in our history:

- The U.S. Supreme Court convenes during the first week
- 04 Rutherford B. Hayes born (1822-1893) 19TH President
- 05 Chester A. Arthur born (1830-1886) 21st President
- 07 The Stamp Act Congress convened in NYC (1765)
- 11 Eleanor Roosevelt born (1884-1962)
- 12 Christopher Columbus landed in the Bahamas
- 13 The US Navy was born after the 2nd Continental Congress (1775)
- 13 The cornerstone of the White House was laid by George Washington (1792)
- 14 Dwight D. Eisenhower born (1890-1969) 34th President
- 15 Selective Service Registration Day (1940)
- 18 Alaska ceded to U.S. (1867)
- 19 Cornwallis surrendered at Yorktown (1781)
- 20 Spain ceded Florida to U.S. (1820)
- 22 Cuban Missile Crisis announced to nation (1962)
- 28 Cuban Missile Crisis ended (1962)
- 28 Dedication of Statue of Liberty (1886)



Veterans Day will soon be here. Units can plan a special program during that week or day at your local Community Living Center, Nursing Home, or Senior Citizen Center. If a cemetery in your area does not place the American Flag on veterans' gravesites, ask if your unit may do so to honor those veterans. But most of all, remember to thank a Vet for the freedom that they fought for the right for all to possess. And remember to honor our Flag as you proudly display it.

VAVS by Nancy Mooney, National VAVS Chairman

In a recent message, Secretary of Veterans Affairs Robert A McDonald stated, "In the past 5 years the VA team has reduced Veterans homelessness by 33%. In the past 2 years, the VA shrunk the claims backlog by more than 80 percent. In the past year, we've completed 2.4 million more patient appointments within the VA system than in the previous 12 months and reduced the Electronic Wait List by 27%." He has insight in the progress made but still believes there is a lot to do. To this end he announced a new program recently called "MyVA." MyVA will promote an environment in which all VA employees see themselves as members of one team, thus making treatment in a VAMC whether it be in Maine, Florida, Ohio, Oregon or California, the same experience for our veterans.

The VAVS program in the DAVA is an important part of our service to veterans. This program deals with volunteer hours and service to include: VAMC, VA Outpatient Clinics, VA Hospice, VA Home-Health, VA Nursing Homes, VA Foster Care, VA Vet Centers, National Cemeteries, VA Regional Offices. Volunteer hours may be submitted for State Veterans' Homes and Cemeteries if a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is in place. These hours must be certified through the VAMC.

It is the responsibility of each VA Representative to register monthly reports for their respective facility with DAVA National before the end of September. This allows National to record the work being done at the VA Hospital. If you have not already done this, please do so immediately.

The fiscal year for the VA system is October 1 to September 30; therefore it is now time for VA Representatives at each VAMC to file the annual joint review (AJR) form with the director of Voluntary Service at your local VAMC. Please call your respective directors and ask for an appointment date. At the AJR meeting, the VA Medical Center will have a record of volunteers, their hours, and donations received for each event throughout the past year of service of each unit in your district. You will be able to cross check this information against the activity sheets on file during this fiscal year. There is a space on the form to address goals and performance ratings for the past year. You may, if needed, comment on short falls as you recognize them at the VAMC, and the director may also comment on areas of concern that may be addressed in the upcoming year. With mutual understanding the next year may be more productive in your service to veterans at the VAMC.

If we all follow this format, we will be establishing the spirit of working as one team. Thank you for your continued service to our veterans.

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New Auxiliary Unit

Paris #89

Paris, Texas

Chartered 9-16-2015

Congratulations and welcome!

DAV AUXILIARY

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DAV and DAV Auxiliary—Partners Pulling Together

Chaplains Corner by Aura-Lee Nicodemus, National Chaplain



This year when National Commander Stake announced her theme: "DAV and DAV Auxiliary - Pulling Together," immediately a great picture came to mind. An age-old New England Tradition at our fairs are the oxen pulls. Oxen are very large animals and most often compete in pairs. The goal is to pull the largest load the farthest to win not only a cash purse, but the honor that your team was the best.

Ecclesiastes 4:9 English Standard Version (ESV)⁹ Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil.

What does this have to do with the DAVA? As you sit and watch the farmers enter the competition area it is clear that each has a different leadership style - some work and some do not.

Oxen pulls are noted for their power and their teamwork - their success is by pulling together in a uniform steady pull. One farmer will come in with a whip or other object and strike the oxen to try to make them work harder - these are very tough animals with very thick hide and the oxen tend to just look at the person, often not moving at all or the one that is being struck takes off but the other one stays still holding back and the advance is slowed. The next farmer enters the area and yells, hollers, and maybe even swears at the oxen - they do not really seem to care and they don't often move much further than the first pair. Many variations of these appear with varying levels of success, but by far the most impressive farmer is the one who comes into the competition area - speaks gently in the ear of the oxen or kindly coaxes the oxen - they move forward striving to pull their hardest to please the soft spoken farmer. As you watch you can feel him moving alongside providing constant encouragement. They often are not pulling as fast at first - they move forward slowly, methodically and most importantly together - these are usually the winners as they not only accomplish the most, by pulling the largest weight the longest distance, but there seems to be a sense of comradery between the group. They make it look beautiful, powerful and fun.

How does this impact our organization? At our helm we have two amazing leaders - National Commander Stake and our National Adjutant Pat Kemper - they are the quiet leaders that instill pride in each of us and a desire to pull together to create a great year of success, but that success will be minimized if we do not have our leadership at all levels follow their suit - pulling together in an organized manner - leading with respect, providing an atmosphere of respect and a desire to work together and all pull together. As we each lead, whether in the role of officer, director of a project, or in your own service how will you create an environment that helps us all to pull together?

"Teamwork divides the task and multiples the success." ~Unknown