

DAV Auxiliary Headquarters News



3725 Alexandria Pike, Cold Spring, KY 41076 | January 2016

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

We invite you to check out the new inventory in the DAV store!

davstore.org

Thank you for making 2015 one to be remembered.

Inside this issue:

From the desk of the National Commander 1

Making a Difference 1

Membership 2

Community Service 2

Chaplain's Corner 3

Together, We Can Make a Difference 3

Legislation 4

From the Desk of National Commander Linda Stake...

Happy 2016 Everyone!

What a great year for new beginnings! First of all, let's begin with membership. It is so important to our organization. When you begin the January meetings in 2016, please stress membership as a priority. This is the month to plan the unit goals for the year. What will your unit do for veterans in January, February, March...? Pre-planning is the key for getting things done. Please let us know your ideas so we can pass them along to other units. I look forward to hearing what your unit does.

In December 2015, I basically attended functions in Arkansas. My very favorite party was the Christmas party held at the VAMC in North Little Rock for hospitalized veterans. Each year units throughout Arkansas bake cookies, bring hors d'oeuvres, and serve with coffee or punch to veterans who attend the

party. Entertainment is also provided. This year the 100+ veterans each received a \$15.00 coupon booklet to spend on things they want or need while hospitalized.

Our nursing home veterans were remembered by Unit 57. A treat bag, Christmas card, candy canes and a bottle of root beer decorated as a reindeer were given to 40 veterans in our two nursing homes. For our nine veterans living in Pine Mountain Veterans Home, a \$10.00 Wal-Mart gift card was given to each.

I ended 2015 and brought in the New Year of 2016 by attending the "Classic" Melody Boys Quartet" concert in Jacksonville, AR.

My wish for my DAVA family is to have the happiest, healthiest, and most blessed New Year ever! God bless you, God bless our veterans and God bless our nation!

Making a Difference

We would like to thank the DAV Auxiliary Commander of New York Unit 88, Patty Montone, as well as the entire unit for their efforts towards Friends of Our Troops. Friends of Our Troops collects holiday cards to be sent to servicewomen, servicemen, and veterans around the world. DAV Chapter 88 Commander, Constance Lennon provided a letter and newspaper article to support the story.

The article stated the following:

"LOCAL VOLUNTEERS HELP VETS DURING HOLIDAYS - As we prepare for the upcoming Christmas mail campaign, Friends of Our Troops would like to extend thanks to Disabled American Veterans Chapter 88 and

Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary Unit 88 of Schenectady, which participated in the most recent campaign.

Led by Patty Montone, they were the leading DAV participant in New York."

It is a pleasure to see and showcase valiant efforts towards our cause. Please send us your stories, pictures, articles, etc. Your efforts can be an inspiration for action. While we may not always be able to share any or all stories of success, we are so proud to receive them.

We thank you in advance for your contribution.

*Please send any stories, articles, pictures, etc., to 3725 Alexandria Pike, Cold Spring, KY 41076

Membership By Craig Johniken, National 1st Junior Vice Commander

Membership is the key to our future and our existence. That may seem like a strong statement, but it is the truth. If we do not continue to sign up new members, eventually we will dissipate and be gone.

I have had many discussions with other members and we discuss ways to sign up members. We are a unique group of people; we have a common goal that is not like any other; we are a group of people who work to preserve benefits for Disabled Veterans and their families. That is where we begin our search for new members.

If you are planning a membership drive (and I hope you are) here are some tips that may help:

1. Ask people to join right now, and give them a reason to join right now.
2. Most people join an organization because they believe in what the organization is doing. Let them know what the mission is and how important they are to helping with it
3. Give potential members a chance to dream. Explain what we do and ask them to become a part of our dream.
4. Tell them about how DAVA makes a difference in the lives of others.
5. Make all your members part of the team on your drive.
6. When planning your drive consider having "give -a-ways" to entice people to stop and talk to you. It doesn't have to be expensive.

I hope at least one of these tips will help you with a successful membership drive.

Community Service

**By Lynn Prosser,
National 4th Junior Vice Commander**

Everyone get ready to embrace our New Year, 2016 with motivation, teamwork, and goals. You, as a volunteer, can change lives and inspire others to make a difference in their communities. As we reflect on the accomplishments of past years, we realize your dedication to help others has molded and inspired new ideas for our future. As members of the DAV Auxiliary, I want to challenge you to surround yourselves with successful, positive, and motivated people who are willing to make dreams become a reality.

There is no better time than NOW to tap into your membership list and contact them with a small newsletter informing them about upcoming unit community projects. Encourage them to volunteer their talents and invite them to your meetings. Realizing some members can't attend meetings, invite them to complete home projects like sewing lap blankets or small pillows and volunteering to make cookies/cakes for a bake sale. Open the window of opportunity so they can volunteer their talents.

There are many projects that can be very inexpensive: Saving coupons for our military families overseas, collecting comfort items (shampoos, conditioners, soap, etc.) that

can be delivered to homeless shelters, donating gently used clothing to local clothes closets, collect canned foods from members and deliver them to soup kitchens and food pantries. The list is endless! Members can and are volunteering to help with community drives: Heart Fund, Cancer Society, Red Cross Blood Drives, Animal Shelters, Friends of the Library, Literacy Council, Domestic Violence and Homeless Shelters and Children's Homes. Again the list never ends.

I also want to encourage unit adjutants and committee chairmen to download the service reports available on the DAVA website and provide copies for members at your next meeting. A short class of instructions will encourage members to document their personal volunteer information including hours, miles and monies so they can aide the committees in compiling the unit's annual reports.

YOU have the power within yourself to achieve anything. It just requires faith, belief, and determination. That being said, just remember that, "A Hero Lies in YOU!!!"

As your Community Service Chairman, I want to thank you for your relentless desire to volunteer and fulfil our mission of "Serving those that Served." From my home to yours, may God bless you and your family, our veterans, our troops and may we always stay "America Strong."

"HAPPY NEW YEAR!!!"

Chaplain's Corner

By Aura-Lee Nicodemus, National Chaplain

Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own. 21 Corinthians 6:19 NIV

How many of you have heard those around us say "If I knew I was going to get this old I would have taken better care of myself." As we enter this pivotal time, the start to a New Year, it is time that we reflect on how we care for our bodies, our minds, and our spirit. It is a time of commitment to change-whether a renewed effort to eat healthier, exercise more, quit smoking, or make other commitments to improved health; this is the perfect opportunity-TODAY. We can begin to make a commitment to improve today, to be healthier tomorrow.

Change isn't just about making a difference in our physical body, it is also about a commitment to be healthier spiritually, mentally, and emotionally. We are now done with the holidays and can look forward to the winter months. It is a perfect time to commit to improved health spiritually and emotionally. It is a time where we should take time to stop. Just take a few slow breaths-think about the importance of taking time for you, think about taking time to de-stress. Whether you alleviate stress by exercise, reading a good

book, watching the birds, snow, a warm fire, the ocean waves, or just taking a warm bath, it is essential that we take time to care for our inner self each day. You deserve it, you need it, and you will be stronger, healthier, and more productive if you recharge your body.

It is also vitally important that we nourish our spirit by connecting with those around us. Many of our elderly can't get out in the winter months. They are lonely, they may need help to shovel a path, shop or just check in; especially if there are power outages. Even a simple phone call can be priceless to let them know you care. This is a great time for community service! Do you have leftovers that aren't enough for a meal for your family? Many seniors find it hard to cook a well-balanced, healthy meal and your leftovers are a perfect meal they can heat in the microwave. Please also take time to think of the homeless. Do you have a spare coat, sleeping bag, mittens, and especially important warm socks? They need lots of warm, dry socks. If you are the person that is alone and lonely, reach out to your DAVA and let them know you miss them and would love to have a visit. Sometimes we just need an invitation so that we realize you would welcome the company.

Improve your health, reduce your stress, find inner peace, and then reach out to others as that will also help to heal your inner spirit.

Together, We Can Make a Difference

By Anthony Chamblin, Public Relations Specialist

I am the recently hired Public Relations Specialist for the DAV Auxiliary. I have a background in communications and hold a proficient familiarity with social media marketing. I can truly state that it is a sincere pleasure to now be involved with such an organization as the DAV Auxiliary. Throughout my life I have examined my passions and why it is that I have given them specific focus. It is clear, rather it should be, that I am a person who doesn't quit, especially on matters that I am passionate about. Before accepting this position, I traced down those whom have served our country within my own family. My examination brought to mind several brave and intelligent men and women. It highlighted loved ones that I had been greatly impacted by throughout my life both directly and indirectly.

I have been fortunate to have an understanding at a young age, an understanding of accountability. My father made it clear to me how important being accountable was by simply stating, "We cannot control the actions of others but we

can and should control the actions and reactions that we chose to expel." That feeling of accountability brings forth a responsibility, one that correlates with this organization.

While brave men and women have represented my family by serving the United States of America, it is awe-inspiring to behold the number of those that have permanently given up much of their mobility, mind, and/or lives to this country. A sacrifice that truly cannot be measured, or repaid. The fact that such a sacrifice can never be repaid does not excuse a lack of initiative on our part. Our actions should reflect those that we hope to serve and their families; especially their families.

I am here to attribute any skills and talents that I might have towards the betterment of our cause. We exist to support and I can guarantee that focus will not fade while I am present. The unified strength between the DAV and the DAV Auxiliary has driven this organization to the peak it sits on today. Let us not remain comfortable or become hesitant in our efforts. I hope to meet many of you soon and again, it is a pleasure to be here.

Linda Stake

National Commander

Patricia Kemper

National Adjutant

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The DAV Auxiliary hopes that you enjoyed your holiday season and we wish you a Happy New Year.

Legislation

by Ellen Timmerman, National 2nd Junior Vice Commander

H.R. 2894, the "Caregivers Access and Responsible Expansion for All Veterans Act," or the "CARE for All Veterans Act."

If enacted, this bill would responsibly and finally address these families' needs on the same basis as those of veterans injured after September 11, 2001. Ultimately, when fully implemented, the bill would improve the lives of tens of thousands of veteran families, and will save the federal government massive sums that otherwise would need to be spent to provide institutional solutions to these veterans' health challenges and health maintenance. Therefore, this bill is both beneficial to these families and a taxpayer-friendly measure.

In recent years, it has become apparent that even the several prior COLA increases failed to meet rising costs faced by disabled veterans, their dependents and survivors. These individuals are not "normal" consumers of goods and services on the U.S. economy; they are significantly older and suffer disabilities at higher rates than average citizens across the age range of residents of this country. Please contact your elected officials to urge them to introduce legislation that would guarantee a reasonable COLA for wounded, injured, and ill veterans and their dependents and survivors. A letter for this purpose is provided for your use. You may also write a personal message if you prefer.

S. 2251, the Seniors and Veterans Emergency Benefit Act. The bill would provide veterans and others in receipt of VA financial support a one-time payment of about \$580 (calculated based on 3.9 percent of the average annual Social Security payment). This one-time payment would soften the financial blow associated with the lack of an increase through a COLA, and the payment would be tax free. Payments would be disbursed to beneficiaries beginning 120 days after enactment. Even if eligible for multiple federal benefits payments, individuals could receive only one payment under this bill.

H.R. 313, a bill that would protect service-disabled veterans employed by the federal government from discrimination when they are absent from work due to their disabilities and the need for health care. This bill would prohibit federal departments and agencies from taking any adverse action against veterans who need to be away from work to address their health care challenges consequent to military service.

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) presented a new plan to Congress that would restructure and integrate VA and non-VA health care programs to expand access to quality health care. We believe this would be an important step in the right direction to ensuring veterans can receive high-quality, comprehensive, accessible and veteran-centric health care now and in the future. Restructure the veterans health care delivery system; Redesign the systems and procedures that facilitate veterans' access to health care; Realign the provision and allocation of VA's resources to reflect its mission; and Reform VA's culture with workforce innovations and real accountability.

We encourage you to read the [IB testimony](#)

Congratulations to these newly chartered Units!

R. George Issacs Jr. Unit 66 of Phenix City, AL

J. Douglas Memorial Unit 9 of Johnson City, TN