

DAV Auxiliary Headquarters News

3725 Alexandria Pike, Cold Spring, KY 41076 | April 2020



Quota Achieved!

Congratulations to the following State Departments for making 2019-2020 Quota!

Florida
Idaho
Indiana
Louisiana
Massachusetts
Minnesota
New Mexico
Oregon
Utah
Vermont

Inside this issue:

COVID-19	1
National Commander	1
Can with a Plan	2
Legislation	3
Junior Activities	3
Americanism	4
New Units	4

COVID-19 Update

As we adhere to the recommended CDC guidelines during this COVID-19 crisis, we want to assure you that DAV Auxiliary national headquarters staff remain committed to serving you and making every effort to meet the business needs of our members, units, and state departments.

This is a good time to call or email other members who may live alone and would welcome the sound of a friendly voice. Reach out to caregivers to reassure them they are being thought of with a reminder to take advantage of those quiet moments to breathe and relax as we all should. Think of project ideas to bring to the next unit meeting so the members can discuss and put a plan into motion.

Our resilience and determination will get us through this crisis. In the meantime, remember to take care of yourself and your family.

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From the Desk of National Commander Diane Franz

March really went out like a lion! My hope is that this crisis soon passes and you and your families are staying healthy.

April is National Volunteer month. With everything going on, take the time to call and check on a veteran and their family—stay in touch with them to show that you are thinking of them and care about their well-being. An old-school handwritten letter or card will make that veteran feel that they are not forgotten. Sheltering in place does not mean you can forget about your fellow human beings. These are trying times for all of us, but the veterans in our communities have gone through much worse.

Luckily, I was able to attend the Mid-Winter Conference in Washington, DC, in the latter part of February. DAV National Commander Whitehead addressed the Joint Committee on Veterans Affairs about the goals and benefits the veterans have been promised and earned, along with their caregivers, surviving spouses, and dependents. I also had the honor, along with Assistant National Adjutant Bunny Clos, to place a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknowns. The weather was a bit chilly, but the sunny and blue sky made the day even more beautiful. Arlington National Cemetery is the most awe-inspiring and reverent area.

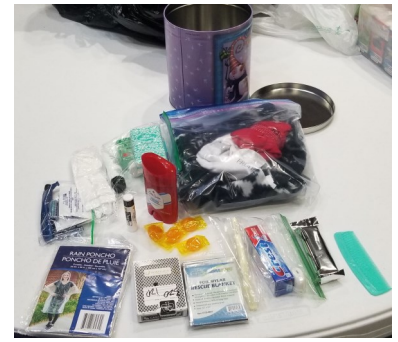
In closing, remember, in unity we can accomplish our present and future goals and commitments for the betterment of our veterans and their families. God bless our veterans, you, and the USA.



Unit Spotlight—Can with a Plan

When Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary units say they are “Making a Difference in the Lives of Disabled Veterans and their Families,” one particular unit made it their mission to do just that. Kudos to Elizabethtown, Kentucky, Unit #3 for making a difference!

The initiative named “Can with a Plan” involved a combination of donated popcorn cans and personal care items. Unit Commander Jane Casher came up with the idea while volunteering with an association that received many donated cans of popcorn, but the empty cans were being thrown away. After giving it some thought, Jane decided, “This can has a plan!” She mentions the cans have several uses for homeless veterans, such as storage, carrying water and for bathing.



Sample of a can and its contents

At a unit meeting on February 13, 2020, approximately 35 volunteers showed up to help pack the cans with items such as small sewing kits, hats, gloves, scarves, socks, combs, lip balm, granola bars, hand sanitizer, hand warmers, pens, mini laundry detergent packs, as well as grooming essentials for both male and female homeless veterans. The donations came from Auxiliary Unit Members, DAV Chapter #3, DAV Chapter #32 of Brownsville, Kentucky, as well as various veteran and charitable groups.

Half of the cans were presented by the Auxiliary members to the program manager of a local volunteer group with explicit instruction that the cans were to be given to homeless veterans throughout Hardin County, and Commissioner Jackson and Ms. Ward of Kentucky Department of Veterans Affairs received the other half. Ms. Ward mentioned to Jane Casher that she already had people in line to give the cans to and are hoping to get more cans to give out.

In addition to the “Can with a Plan” program, Unit #3 also developed another initiative called “Visit a Vet.” Every month the auxiliary members visit different nursing homes in Hardin County and pass out gift bags to veterans and spouses of veterans containing items such as hygiene products and cards. Jane stated, “Military spouses go through a lot when soldiers are deployed and we want to pay honor to them also. I have a passion for helping veterans. My husband was in for almost 37 years and I followed him everywhere. I know the sacrifices military families endure.”

As far as the members of her unit, Jane conveys, “I can’t say enough about the group of members I work with’ even the DAV chapter. We work together as a close-knit group that it is like a family. This is an organization dear to my heart.”

What a remarkable group of hardworking individuals who truly made a difference in the lives of disabled veterans their families.



Members from DAV and DAV Auxiliary Elizabethtown, KY, #3

“The more we share, the more we have.” -Leonard Nimoy

Legislation by Julie Weissman-Steinbaugh, National Legislative Chairman

We've all heard the expression, "The squeaky wheel gets the grease." If it can be applied anywhere, it very clearly applies to the DAV's legislative activities. As Auxiliary members, we are DAV's strongest allies. Through participation in DAV's Commander's Action Network, Auxiliary members amplify the voices of veterans on key legislative issues. Since politicians count numbers, we must work together to ensure that promises are kept to the men and women who served.

In addition, Auxiliary members add valuable life experiences that can put a human face to complex, but important issues. During the DAV's recent Mid-Winter Conference, Joel Adema, California's DAV Auxiliary's Sr. Vice Commander and I joined our State's Benefits Protection Team in meetings with Congressional Aides. We discussed DAV's critical policy goals for the year.

One of these goals is to enhance survivor benefits by increasing DIC rates to 55% of 100 percent disability compensation and provide parity with other federal programs. DAV is also asking Congress to reduce the re-marriage age for a surviving spouse to 55 to provide parity with other federal programs.

DAV members were able to talk about their fears about what may happen to their spouses in the future. However, Joel and I were able to talk about the current struggles of our members who rely on DIC to pay for basic essentials to live. As family members of veterans who became ill or disabled, we were able to highlight the urgency of this issue.

Reach out to your Benefits Protection Team and offer your assistance. In doing so, you can encourage lawmakers to do the right thing. You will also remind DAV members that much can be accomplished when we work together.

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Junior Activities by Darlene Hanneman, National Junior Activities Chairman

"Happy April!" April is a "Call to Action" month for you Juniors. Juniors, you need to impact your Veterans and their families by using your WORDS (say), ACTIONS (do), and/or DOLLARS (give). Take your DAV Auxiliary along and show appreciation, gratitude, and recognition to your DAV Chapter in your own unique way by saying, doing, and giving during April!!!! Keep in mind that some of these suggested activities might have to be delayed until it is safe to visit and participate in group gatherings.

"SAY" Ideas: Post an open letter on Facebook, with your parents' permission. Write a letter to someone you know or write to a deceased family member to honor them for Memorial Day. The written word is more powerful today than ever before. Take time and express your gratitude and appreciation for the sacrifices made by those that serve in our military.

"DO" Ideas: We can all identify things in our lives that bring us joy, taste delicious, or simply put a smile on our face. Put together a gratitude package of some of your favorite things and send it to someone you know in the military or their family. Ideas are local goods, yummy snacks, and fun activities.

"GIVE" Ideas: Small fundraisers are fun, raise awareness and provide support to DAV and DAVA's mission. It's easy. Choose a DAV chapter, DAV Auxiliary unit, or veteran family you would like to support. Provide the food and drink and request a donation from your guests. (Keep it small or invite the neighbors.) Ideas: Pizza party, spaghetti dinner, taco night, pancake breakfast, barbeque, Hot dogs and hamburgers after a game. You can come up with all kinds of ideas.

Remember: SOMETIMES when things go wrong in your life, You must yell "PLOT TWIST!!!!" and MOVE on. Joke for April Fools Day: What is the most musical part of a chicken? Answer: The drumstick!!!!

Stay in touch: E-mail: dava@dav.org or Website: www.davauxiliary.org, or call 877.426.2838. You can also send information: DAV Auxiliary, 3725 Alexandria Pike, Cold Spring, KY 41076.



Follow us on Social Media
for news and information
on the DAV Auxiliary.



New Auxiliary Units!



Joe C. Montoya #24
Socorro, NM
Chartered Feb. 5, 2020

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Oregon City #4
Gladstone, OR
Chartered March 23, 2020

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Greater Cleveland Area
Community #147
Cuyahoga County, OH
Chartered March 26, 2020

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Share Your

News! Send photos of
your DAV Auxiliary unit
or juniors in action to
dava@dav.org. Include
a description of the ac-
tivity and the names of
the individuals in the
pictures.

Americanism by AnnMarie Hurley, National Americanism Chairman

While at the DAV Mid-Winter Conference, with DAV and DAV Auxiliary National, Department, State, Chapter and Unit officers and members, I was privileged to be at Arlington National Cemetery where National Commander Diane Franz was honored to participate in a wreath laying ceremony at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier by posting the DAV Auxiliary Wreath. The ceremony was beautiful and emotional.

Walking around the cemetery, before and after the ceremony, with a few of the Massachusetts delegation, reading many of the headstones was an empowering experience, reminding me once again of those who gave their lives in service of our country. This is why we do what we do.

This year was the first time I was in the audience with the DAV Auxiliary for a DAV National Commander's presentation of the DAV legislative agenda. DAV National Commander Stephen "Butch" Whitehead's presentation to the Veterans Affairs Committee members was powerful. The members were informed and asked many questions. It was a great presentation.

I was part of the Massachusetts delegation when we presented the DAV's proposed legislation to our district congressional representatives. We had 38 members attend the conference, so we were split into groups of 4 or 5. The group I was in visited with Congressman Stephen Lynch's aide, who, I was pleased to see, was well informed on veterans legislation and she also asked pertinent questions. My part in this was to speak about survivor benefits, which I did.

Even the travel to and from the conference (*10 hours each way*) was a learning curve for me. I travelled by vehicle with two disabled veterans. He had been in the Air Force recovering aircraft that were broken and two that had crashed. She served in the Army, deployed to Iraq and Kuwait, and gave me a glimpse of what it is like for a female soldier who is also a mother and wife of a veteran. Listening to the two of them talk of their experiences was eye-opening, a small view of what our veterans live with while in the service we so admire. I've been with many family members who served, but they rarely speak of actual experiences. Remembering this ride and all of our disabled veterans only gives me more resolve to do the best I can while volunteering for this organization I love.

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Save the Date:

2020 Natl. Fall Conf.
October 1—3, 2020
DoubleTree by Hilton, Lawrenceburg
51 Walnut St.
Lawrenceburg, IN 47025
Telephone: 812.539.8888

\$129 Single/Double
\$139 Triple; \$149 Quad

All rates will include complimentary
breakfast the mornings of Thursday,
Friday, and Saturday only. Free garage
parking.

Additional accommodations:

Hollywood Casino
777 Hollywood Dr.,
Lawrenceburg, IN 47025
Telephone: 888.274.6797
\$129.99 per night

Rates includes complimentary breakfast
on the mornings of Thursday, Friday,
and Saturday at DoubleTree, free park-
ing, round-trip transportation to/from
conference location.

**Make your reservations early to avoid
sell out!**