

# DAV Auxiliary Headquarters News

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



## October Flag Flying Holidays

October 12—Columbus Day

October 27—Navy Day

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## From the Desk of National Commander Diane Franz

Unfortunately, this message has again a very sad beginning. We have lost another devoted member— Past National Commander William “Craig” Johniken. He had the distinction of being the first male Commander of the Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary. He became of friend to all our members, veterans, and their families. On behalf of the DAV Auxiliary members, our sincere condolences to Teresa and her whole family. He will be dearly missed.

The autumn season is fast approaching and with it the coming holidays. No matter what the next few months bring, we must be steadfast in keeping our commitment to our purpose. There are many ways we can still bring joy to our veterans and their families, even without personal contact during the holidays. It is never too early to start planning to share some sunshine into their lives.

Be informed for the upcoming election. Learn what the candidates’ policies are for the veterans and whether they will support legislation to benefit veterans and their families. Our veterans’ well-being will be in their hands. We also need to make our voices heard in Washington, DC.

Share the information you receive in the Headquarter News with other members to stay current and informed. Remember, a lot of information is now provided electronically and online and some may not have access to the internet. Don’t leave them in the dark—share, share, and share. Stay united in our purpose of “Making a difference in the lives of disabled veterans and their families.” Only you can make that difference.

## Craig Johniken —Past National Commander

DAV Auxiliary mourns the loss of Past National Commander William “Craig” Johniken, of Lufkin, Texas, who passed away September 11, 2020. Elected as DAV Auxiliary’s National Commander at the 2017 national convention in New Orleans, Louisiana, he held the distinction of being the first male to hold DAV Auxiliary’s highest office.

One of the first to join the organization following the historic bylaw change welcoming males into the organization, Craig’s association with DAV and DAV Auxiliary came years earlier as he volunteered at DAV and Auxiliary functions with his wife, Teresa, a service-connected disabled Army veteran. He was also eligible for DAV Auxiliary membership through his son, Tim, a service-connected disabled veteran. Family involvement in DAV and DAV Auxiliary has been a staple in the Johniken family for many years and the value of patriotism and volunteerism has been handed down to their three grandchildren.

Often claiming that DAV and the Auxiliary became a second family, he took his role in the organization very seriously which was evident with each office and chairmanship he held on the local, state, and national levels. Following his election as a national officer, Craig’s easy-going and friendly demeanor endeared him to many, and his circle of friends grew as he advanced through the national line. An effective leader, he was proud to be a part of DAV Auxiliary and committed to the future of the organization.





## 2020-2021 Membership Recruiter Incentives

Increasing membership is imperative to our continued efforts of meeting the needs of our veterans and their families. MEMBERSHIP is vital to fulfilling our organization's mission of service.

DAV Auxiliary members are compassionate and the heart and soul of the organization!

Quarterly Drawings held December 31, March 31, and June 30  
for  
Jacket/T-shirt/hat bundle with DAV Auxiliary logo, plus \$50!

### Bonus Recruiter Drawing!

**July 1** – Names of **two** recruiters who have signed up five or more new paid members will be drawn to receive \$250 each

*(Pictured National Membership Chairman, Darlene Spence)*



Recruit one new member with a minimum down payment of \$20 for a chance to win! Don't forget about Junior life members! The more you recruit, the better your chances!

Share the incentive news and encourage others to sign up new members for a chance to win these awesome prizes!

### Life membership rate is \$250.

A \$20 down payment starts a new life membership with an indefinite period of time to pay the balance. Options are available for automatic withdrawal for monthly or quarterly payments.

[Visit our webpage to sign up.](#)

Remember: Membership is complimentary for those 80 years of age and older and for Juniors through age 17.

Families are encouraged to start a life membership for junior members with a \$20 down payment.

## Membership by Darlene Spence, National Membership Chairman

Membership is key to fulfilling our organization's Mission of Service. This was true for 2019-2020 and bears repeating with a greater degree of difficulty for 2020-2021! Increasing membership is imperative to our continuing to meet the service needs of our veterans and their families, and to stop the struggle of some Units to keep enough members to remain active.

"In the Middle Of Difficulty Lies Opportunity." This quote states where we are, directly in the middle of our most difficult recruiting challenge. However, it also gives us a word favorable to our being able to progress in spite of our present situation. The word, "opportunity" says to us that we can explore other methods of recruiting, staying mindful of the need to remain within the boundaries of our Auxiliary Bylaws. For example, relying more on the telephone, (the first real social outlet available to our members); text messaging; sending e-mails to individuals and/or groups. This may be our "new normal" for planning, recruiting, and communicating with our veterans and their families.

We must not only think out of the box but open it as wide as possible and retrieve every usable plate of creativity that may lead to functional innovations for recruiting. It is known that individuals, groups and even families join a membership organization because they believe in the cause it stands for and can depend on the organization to advocate for their beliefs and rights. With this in mind, working within our new normal, please open the box and let's get to work! Remember:

- New member applications may be completed [online](#) or paper form
- Life Membership Rate is \$250.00 or a payment plan with a \$20 down payment starts a new life membership
- Juniors through age 17 and Seniors age 80 and older have complimentary memberships
- Families are encouraged to start a life membership for children, \$250.00 with a \$20 down payment.

2020-2021 Recruiting incentives will include quarterly drawings for Jacket, T-shirt, and Hat Bundles and of course \$cash\$!!

### "MEMBERSHIP HAS ITS PRIVILEGES"

#### MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN THE LIVES OF DISABLED VETERANS AND THEIR FAMILIES

## Americanism by AnnMarie Hurley, National Americanism Chairman

This year our members needed to find new ways to honor veterans who died in service to our country. A veteran of the U.S. Marine Corps and the U.S. Army asked folks to come together digitally for Memorial Day and to honor our fallen heroes with small acts of kindness in the community. People were encouraged during the pandemic to find alternate ways to commemorate the sacrifices of those who died while serving. A veterans group in Massachusetts recently held a Battle of the Bands fundraiser for the benefit of veterans.

I read that many Americans across the country are turning to patriotism to find hope during the pandemic. Ohio Governor Mike DeWine called on constituents to rally around Old Glory, saying "***Fly that flag every single day.***" An Indiana man painted an enormous U.S. flag on a field to honor health-care workers. The Department of Defense's response to the Coronavirus was to graduate nursing students early to support their colleagues in the U.S. Military health system amid the global pandemic.

A U.S. Army veteran from Alabama used his home decor business to honor the nation's first responders and workers during the pandemic—nurses, truckers, farmers, mechanics, police officers, firefighters, mail carriers and more across the nation—gifting 2 million dollars worth of **American-made** products from his business. He met with President Trump at the Made in America Showcase after which the White House contacted him with a request that he make a Stars and Stripes steel wall hanging engraved with "God Bless America." The President wanted to pay for it and the veteran wanted to gift it, but the President insisted on paying so he could keep it in his private collection.

My heart swells with pride seeing the American flag; we are so blessed, even during these most difficult times, to be Americans.

## VAVS by Melissa Pierce, National VAVS Chairman

National Convention may not have happened this year, but our work still needs to get done. Last month, I put together a nine-person VAVS committee. This committee worked to review and judge the four categories of winning state VAVS reports. If you ever get the opportunity to sit on a committee at National Convention to judge reports, take it. You get a unique chance to see what other Units are doing, you get ideas to take back to your own Units and State Department, and most importantly, you are helping to give these Units the recognition they deserve.

The winning reports showed our members getting out and volunteering thousands of hours to their local VA's and CBOC's. They told of the numerous projects and events they participated in, including BINGO parties, baby showers, holiday parties, craft and bake sales, coffee and treats, gift bags, quilts and lap robes, clothing and toiletry donations, gift card and bus pass donations and so much more. They also included thousands of dollars in donations for special events, transportation programs, Rec Therapy programs, Christmas gifts and parties, just to name a few.

Although we could only name one winner per category, all of you who are out there volunteering or helping support the our VA Voluntary Service programs need to be commended. You are helping the VAVS program thrive and impact the Veterans they serve. You are bringing a little cheer to the Veterans. You are easing the burden of new mothers. You are providing clothing to someone who may have been doing without. You are supporting the DAV VTN program to get Veterans to needed appointments. You are supporting Rec programs that keep Veterans active and social. You are doing so much more than I could ever mention. You are making an impact.

If you didn't turn in your VAVS report this past year, do it next year. Brag on yourselves. Let National know how you're impacting our Veterans. If you didn't reach out to your VAVS office this year, do it next year. No matter how small or how large your Unit, how close or how far away you may be, there is always something that you could be doing to impact our Veterans. If you did turn in your VAVS report, is there something more you could be doing? Could you be making more of an impact?

Alone it may not seem like you are doing much, but when we all work together the impact is amazing. Help us make an even larger impact in VAVS this next year!

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## Donation Reminder

We have an obligation to our generous donors to assure their donations will be used to support DAV and/or DAV Auxiliary programs. There are other very worthy non-profit organizations; however, as a non-profit veterans' service organization, we must be conscientious stewards of the funds raised by and donated to **our** organization. The rationale being – had the donor wanted their donation to go to another non-profit group, they would have appropriated their funds to that cause. Instead, they chose our organization, making it the responsibility of our members, units, and state departments to ensure the funds collected fund raising efforts are expended as the donor intended.

We are very proud of our members who are dedicated to assisting veterans and their families, but today many organizations are not following through on the promises they are making to donors. Use caution with unit funds and do your research. If in doubt about an organization, contact them first for full expenditure disclosure of the funds received. This will protect not only your unit, but will ensure that the monies raised are being used for programs that benefit the DAV and DAV Auxiliary, as we have promised to those who have donated. It bears repeating that if funds are raised by the DAV Auxiliary unit, the donors themselves are of the belief that their funds will directly assist veterans and their families.

Income from approved fundraising activities shall be used to support programs and activities sponsored by DAV, its subordinate units or other entities, as long as such programs and activities provide a direct and substantial benefit to disabled veterans, their dependents and survivors (DAV Regulations, Section 5).



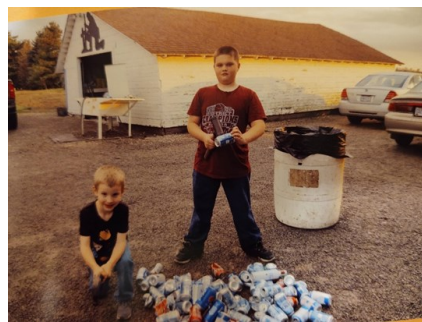
## Junior Activities by Darlene Hanneman, National Junior Activities Chairman

Time to Sign up the Juniors. Get the Senior members of your Unit excited!!! Pass out membership forms as you start up the Fall newsletters, and notifications. Keep a file or notebook to log your Unit members activities and pictures for the new year. Those work-at-home projects are GREAT!!

Units can help their Juniors with projects to assist Veterans and their families who need help recovering from recent natural disasters such as fires, floods, and hurricanes. Keep stuffed animals handy to distribute to small children for comfort. Unit funds could be used to purchase gasoline or snacks. Gift cards could help with meals and necessities. Contribute to a local Veteran food bank. Consider donating clothing, cleaning supplies, and bedding. Juniors can encourage those 17 and older to participate in blood drives. Adopt a pet until the owners can safely pick them up. Be a friend. Listen and provide comfort. And offer PRAYERS!!!!

Stay in touch with your members. Stay in touch with the State Department and National DAVA organization. Let them know how you are doing, how is your unit doing and what they can help you with this fall.

Don't forget, YOU can: Start late, Start over, Be unsure, Act different, Try and fail and you will still succeed. Just keep trying!!!! One smile and one wave will make the day better for each one of us.



Landon and Jackson Warnecke recycling aluminum cans to buy gift cards for disabled veterans.

## DAV Auxiliary Outstanding Member of the Year

The DAV (Disabled American Veterans) Auxiliary has named Clyrissa Brown of Augusta, Georgia, as the DAV Auxiliary Outstanding Member of the Year for 2020.

A life member of L. Mendel Rivers Unit #44 in North Augusta, South Carolina, Brown has served 14 years as unit commander. She has also served in numerous state and national positions, including her current role as National Executive Committeeman for 9th District and chairman of the National Finance Committee. Clyrissa has been awarded the Emma Clark Award twice and is a five-time recipient of the Auxiliary's Commander of the Year Award.



In 2012, Ms. Brown and members of her unit initiated an annual baby shower for expecting veterans and continued to hold the event for six more years. This program helps address the unique needs of women veterans while acknowledging their service to the nation.

Clyrissa has dedicated more than 750 hours, leading numerous programs to aid local veterans, including monthly social events and caregiver support lectures at the Charlie Norwood VA Medical Center in Augusta, Georgia. She has also donated and helped facilitate the donation of many magazines, books, household items and clothes to local hospitals for homeless veterans.

"Ms. Brown has been a dedicated member of this organization," said DAV Auxiliary National Commander Diane Franz. "She continues to be an inspiration to new members by living a life of continued service. I cannot think of a better person who exemplifies the century-long mission of both the DAV and its Auxiliary."

Ms. Brown was honored as a part of the DAV and Auxiliary Virtual Salute which was held in late August.

## Banking Information Reminder

Has your unit or state department banking information changed? If so, have you notified DAV Auxiliary national headquarters? If not, keep in mind that any funds owed to the unit or state department will be deposited into the account information on record, not the current account. Failure to notify the national headquarters office will result in delayed and unnecessary transactions.

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



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### Save the Date

2021 National Convention  
July 24—27, 2021  
Grand Sierra Resort  
2500 East Second St.  
Reno, NV 89595  
800-501-2651

\$105 GSR Basic Room  
\$125 Summit Room

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### Save the Date

2021 National Fall Conference  
September 30—October 2  
DoubleTree by Hilton  
51 Walnut St.  
Lawrenceburg, IN 47025  
812-539-8888

\$129 s/d; \$139 triple;  
\$149 quad

## DAV AUXILIARY

**Diane Franz,**  
National Commander

3725 Alexandra Pike  
Cold Spring, KY 41076

**Patricia Kemper,**  
National Adjutant

Phone: 877.426.2838  
Fax: 859.442.2095  
E-mail: [dava@dav.org](mailto:dava@dav.org)  
[www.davauxiliary.org](http://www.davauxiliary.org)



**“Unity”**

## Caregiver Initiative Program by Melissa Pierce, National Chairman

Caregivers play an important role in the lives of Veterans. But not all caregivers are aware of their support options through the VA. It is up to us, as Auxiliary members, to educate ourselves so that we can help educate others.

There are currently two different types of Caregiver Programs available. The first program is available to all caregivers, regardless of the era in which their Veteran served. The Veteran also does not need to have a service-connected connection that requires a caregiver. There is no application process for this program. While this program is not as comprehensive, it does offer a number of benefits. This program includes options for text messages encouraging self-care as well as a caregiver support line. A six-week online course is offered on not only how to be a better caregiver, but also how to improve and manage caregiver physical health, stress and emotional health. Or if you prefer, they have in-person courses available. They also have a peer mentoring program, so that caregivers can talk to others and share experiences. For more information on this program, visit [https://www.caregiver.va.gov/Care\\_Caregivers.asp](https://www.caregiver.va.gov/Care_Caregivers.asp).

The second offers support for caregivers of eligible Veterans who have a serious injury caused or made worse by their active duty service on or after September 11, 2001. This program is called Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers (PCAFC.) In order to qualify for this program you will have to fill out an application and meet specific requirements. Once approved a Veteran can appoint a Primary caregiver and up to 2 secondary caregivers. Caregivers receive education and training and mental health services and counseling. They are also eligible for travel assistance when traveling with their Veteran. They will also receive a monthly stipend, access to health care benefits and up to 30 days of respite care for their Veteran per year. To find out more on this program and the eligibility requirements, visit <https://www.va.gov/family-member-benefits/comprehensive-assistance-for-family-caregivers/>. Caregivers can also reach out to their local VA Caregiver Support Coordinator or call 1-855-260-3274 to find out more information.

I tried to summarize the important points of each program, but it's still a lot of information to take in. Do some additional research and share this information with your members. Caregivers are important to our Veterans and we all need to work together to make sure they get the support they need and deserve.