

We are DAV Auxiliary!



National Volunteer Month!

#DAVAImpact250

From the Desk of National Commander Melissa Pierce

DAV Auxiliary – a GREAT group of volunteers and we show that every day! April is National Volunteer Month and a great time to highlight and thank our volunteers!

What have you done? What have your juniors done? What has your unit done? What have you done in your VA's? What have you done for the veterans in your communities? What have you done for their families?

Whether it's helping a veteran with yardwork or housework. Or maybe taking a veteran to the store. Whether it's pushing wheelchairs at the VA. Or passing out popcorn or coffee. Maybe it's giving a veteran a haircut. Or helping a spouse file claims paperwork. No matter how big. No matter how small. **Everything you do has an IMPACT!**

Saturday April 4th was DAV's third annual Community Impact Day. Their inaugural event, in 2024 had over 650 DAV and Auxiliary volunteers going out into their towns and neighborhoods to help veterans and their families and raise awareness of veterans' needs. Last year nearly 1,000 people participated. Hopefully in 2026, we will have an even bigger impact! How much of an impact can we make every day, not just April 4th? How much can we all accomplish working together, to improve the lives of our veterans and their families.

Volunteering. It's a great way to get involved in your community. It's a way to meet new people. It increases camaraderie among members. It can reduce feelings of isolation and loneliness. Volunteers learn new skills. They gain confidence. They build self-esteem. So, what's stopping you? Get out there. Change lives. Change your own life. Make an impact. Volunteer.

And don't forget, if your state hasn't done so yet, there is still time to accept the challenge I made at DAV Mid-Winter – to work together on a joint DAV and Auxiliary service project. Whether it's a food or clothing drive... providing toiletries for a homeless veteran outreach program.... or puzzle books for inpatients or veteran home residents... or whatever your state decides, this simple, yet powerful project will be impacting veterans in your own backyards. And it shows that **together we are better! Together we are stronger! Together we ARE DAV and Auxiliary – not just talking about service but going out there and doing it!**

Continue **servicing with intention!** Continue **making a #DAVAImpact250!**

"In every day there are 1,440 minutes. That means we have 1,440 daily opportunities to make a positive impact." Les Brown

Your Photos are Needed!!

Hey guys, it's that time of the year when our National DAV Auxiliary Commander Melissa Pierce starts traveling to different states. When she visits I would appreciate it if anyone that takes pictures please send them to me at shelia.stephens2@yahoo.com. You can also contact me at 337-718-8622.

Membership Updates

By Terry Grabowski, Chairperson

Congratulations! We have **26 states** that have met their quota. Additionally, there are **three states** where every single unit has met its quota. We also have **15 states** that are only 1–2 members away, and **169 units** that are incredibly close, needing just 1–2 more members to reach their goal.

We can achieve this by utilizing our two current membership incentives. First, there is the **\$2,000 Carnival Cruise gift card**— who wouldn't want to win that? To enter, simply recruit five new members.

Second, we have a new incentive: for every member you recruit before **June 30** with a \$20 down payment, you will be entered into a drawing to win a **\$100 DAV Store gift card**. We will have two lucky winners, and the drawing will be held live on Facebook on **July 1**.

We haven't forgotten our new members, either! Every new member who joins between **April 1 and June 30** with a \$20 down payment will be entered into a separate drawing to win a **\$100 DAV Store gift card**.

One suggestion for finding new members is to wear your **DAV Auxiliary clothing** in public. When people ask, "What does that mean?" it's the perfect opening to tell them all about our wonderful family. I would love to see every unit reach its quota, so remember: recruit, recruit, recruit! If you need to know exactly what your unit needs to reach its goal, please contact our office at dava@dav.org or 833.368.1220.

Lastly, **National has also met its quota!** As of last week, we have **112,860 members**. Let's push to bring that number up to **125,000**. As Rosie the Riveter said, "We can do it!"

Unit leaders – please review your membership list and reconnect with those members you have not seen for awhile. Reach out to let members know the meeting time and place, and encourage them to come back to a meeting. Also, remind those who are inactive/unable to distribute to make a payment!



“What stands out most is that support doesn’t have to be complicated. It can be as simple as listening, checking in, or offering help. Spring reminds us that growth and healing often come in small steps.” ~Ann Wilner

Mae Holmes News

From Kathleen Wenthe, National Chairperson

Have you gathered all the information needed to complete the **Mae Holmes National Outstanding Unit Award Report**? At this stage of the year, every unit should be well underway—or already completed—with its annual reports. Your efforts truly matter, and this report is one of the most important ways to showcase the incredible work being done throughout the year.

Please keep in mind that the deadline to submit reports to the State Adjutants is **May 1**. Completing and submitting your materials early not only reduces stress but ensures your unit’s hard work receives the recognition it deserves.

As you gather your information, take the opportunity to reconnect with *all* members, especially those who may not regularly attend meetings. Attendance does not define commitment. Many members are quietly making a difference every day in meaningful ways that often go unrecognized. A quick phone call or email can uncover powerful stories of service. Members may have participated in Veterans Day programs, Flag Retirement ceremonies, or other community events. Others may be preparing meals for veterans, delivering them personally, or spending time on the phone offering encouragement to a veteran or a veteran’s spouse.

These acts of service—though sometimes small or unseen—are the heart of our mission. They are often unreported simply because no one thinks to ask. By taking the time to gather this information, you help ensure that every contribution counts and every member feels valued.

Before completing the Mae Holmes National Outstanding Unit Award Report, please be sure that *all* annual report forms are finished. Have a current **Population Summary** available so you can accurately report totals for both senior and junior members. Using a membership roster may lead to inaccuracies, so please rely on the Population Summary to ensure correct numbers.

Carefully transfer all information to ensure the report is accurate and complete. If your totals exceed **\$1,000** in either or both the Community Service and/or VAVS reports, remember that those reports must be attached to the Mae Holmes National Outstanding Unit Award Report form.

Finally, do not forget to **sign** the report. It is especially disappointing for strong submissions to be disqualified at the national level due to missing signatures or incomplete details, particularly when the report could otherwise have been a winning entry.

I look forward to receiving your reports. The work *is* being done—now, let’s make sure it is fully documented so we can proudly demonstrate that we are the premier volunteer organization.

Community Service News

From Ann Wilner, National Chairperson

Spring has a way of making everything feel a little lighter. The days get longer, the weather warms up, and life starts to move outdoors again. For many veterans and their families, this season can bring a quiet sense of renewal.

After winter, spring often feels like a reset. Veterans who carry physical or emotional reminders of their service may find relief in simple things—fresh air, sunshine, and the ability to get outside more often. A walk around the neighborhood, time in the yard, or sitting on a porch can make a real difference. These small moments help break routines that can feel heavy during colder months.

Families experience this change too. Spouses, children, parents, and caregivers support veterans every day, often in ways others don’t see. Spring creates opportunities to reconnect as a family—sharing meals outdoors, attending school activities, or just spending time together without rushing. These moments help restore balance and strengthen relationships that may have been tested by deployments, relocations, or ongoing challenges.

Spring also brings people back into the community. Local events, outdoor gatherings, and volunteer activities naturally encourage connection. For veterans and their families, feeling welcomed and included matters. A friendly conversation, a shared activity, or a simple expression of gratitude can go a long way toward easing feelings of isolation.

There is also a reflective side to the season. As communities prepare for memorial events and moments of remembrance, spring reminds us of those who gave their lives and the families who continue to honor their memories. It’s a time that holds both gratitude and hope—acknowledging sacrifice while looking ahead.

What stands out most is that support doesn’t have to be complicated. It can be as simple as listening, checking in, or offering help. Spring reminds us that growth and healing often come in small steps.

As the season unfolds, it offers veterans and their families a chance to breathe, reconnect, and move forward. And for the rest of us, it’s a reminder to show appreciation not just with words, but with kindness and understanding.

Engaging Juniors in the Spring

From Kim Knowlton, National Chairperson

As we step into April, we find ourselves at a truly historic crossroads for our organization and our country. This year marks the beginning of the 250th anniversary of our nation’s independence, and it is a monumental time for our Junior members to take the lead. This milestone is not just a look back at history; it is a call to action for the next generation of leaders. Through our #DAVAimpact250 initiative, our youth can prove that the spirit of service is just as vibrant today as it was in 1776.

April is celebrated as **Global Volunteer Month**, which provides the perfect backdrop for our Juniors to showcase their dedication to veterans and their families. This month offers a unique opportunity to bridge the gap between the revolutionary spirit of our founders and the service-driven hearts of our modern youth. It is also the **Month of the Military Child**, a time specifically set aside to honor the resilience and sacrifices of our youngest heroes. We encourage all our Juniors to participate in "Purple Up" events like wearing purple shirts, hats, or ribbons, and find creative ways to recognize the military children in their local schools and communities, like with "Walls of Honor" featuring students with their military parents.

Another significant opportunity for impact arrives during **Global Youth Service Day**, April 24-26. This is the largest service event in the world, and it is the ideal time for DAVA Juniors to be seen and heard. Whether they are organizing a community "Clean and Sweep" at a local veterans' memorial or hosting a card-making marathon for hospitalized veterans, every action helps build a legacy of care. We want to ensure that the work being done on the ground is recognized at every level of our organization.

To make sure these incredible efforts are documented, we ask that you share your stories and photos widely. Please remember to tag all your social media posts with **#DAVAimpact250** to join the national conversation and highlight the reach of our mission. Furthermore, it is essential to send your project pictures to both your State and National chairmen. These photographs are vital to ensure that their hard work is achieved for future generations to admire. Our Juniors are the living legacy of the freedom fought for 250 years ago, and together, we can make this April a month of service that truly honors that heritage.

The Folds of the American Flag

From Kim Stake, National Chairperson

The folding of the American flag is a ceremonial tradition practiced during military funeral, memorial services, and patriotic events. The flag is folded into a triangular shape, and each of the thirteen folds is often given a symbolic meaning that reflects American values, faiths, honor, and remembrance.

- 1.The first fold symbolizes life and precious gift it represents.
 - 2.The second fold symbolizes belief in eternal life.
 - 3.The third fold honors veterans who gave their lives defending the country.
 - 4.The fourth fold represents human weakness and the need for strength and guidance.
 - 5.The fifth fold is a tribute to the United States and the freedoms it provides.
 - 6.The sixth fold symbolizes the heart and loyalty of citizens to their nation.
 - 7.The seventh fold honors the armed forces who protect the country.
 8. The eighth fold honors those who have passed into the valley of the shadow of death, especially fallen service members.
 - 9.The ninth fold honors womanhood and the sacrifices of mothers, daughters, and wives.
 - 10.The tenth fold honors fathers who guide their families with love and devotion.
 - 11.The eleventh fold represents faith and the spiritual heritage associated with the nation.
 - 12.The twelfth fold symbolizes eternity and faith in God.
 - 13.The thirteenth fold completes the triangular shape representing the hats worn by soldiers during the American Revolution.
- These meanings are traditional interpretations often shared in ceremonies, but they serve as reminders of honor, sacrifice, and patriotism.
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A Salute to Service – National Commander Forget-Me-Not Testimonial Luncheon

You are cordially invited! Please join us on Monday, August 3, 2026, at the Salute to Service – the National Commander Forget-Me-Not Testimonial Luncheon held in conjunction with the National Convention in Orlando, Florida. The event will be held from 12:30pm – 3:00pm at the Rosen Shingle Creek Resort. Reservations are now being accepted!! Tickets are **\$65.00** per person and the menu includes a Classic Caesar Salad, All-Natural Chicken Francese with Mashed Yukon Potatoes, Sauteed Spinach, and White Wine Lemon Butter, and Carrot Cake with Cream Cheese Icing. Water, Coffee, and tea is also included. Tickets **MUST** be pre-purchased – **NO TICKETS WILL BE SOLD ON SITE!** The deadline to purchase your ticket is **Friday, July 10, 2026.**

Tickets can be purchased by calling our office at 833.368.1220 and making payment with a credit or debit card. Checks will also be accepted – please earmark how many tickets you will need. Tickets will be picked-up on site beginning Thursday, July 30, 2026, in the Auxiliary Headquarters Office.

We hope you'll join us as we come together to honor the work and dedication of National Commander Melissa Pierce! See you there!

Help us Fill the Membership Map!

We need YOUR help!! We want each state to meet membership quota for 2025-2026. Can you help us by making our map green by June 30, 2026?

Here is the key – if your state makes quota, your color will change to green. And if every unit in your state makes quota, your state will change to blue with a gold star!

It gets even better – we are working on a fun, new incentive to congratulate our state departments and units that have achieved quota. So far, three have made that happen. **Congratulations** to Rhode Island, Vermont, and Wyoming!!

There is still a lot of time left to fill our map, so what are you waiting for? Let's make it happen!

