

Department of Alabama News & Views



January/February
2019



Department of Alabama 2019 Mid-Winter Conference January 3 – 6, 2019

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Editor/Publisher

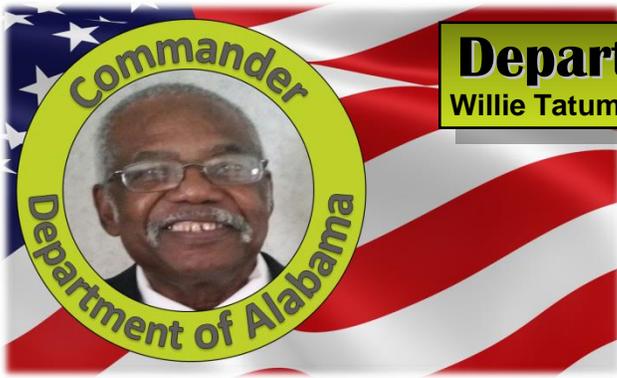
Anita R. Perez

anita.perez13@outlook.com

Volume 23 | Number 4

**Auburn Marriott Opelika Hotel & Conference
Center At Grand National**

3700 Robert Trent Jones Trail Opelika, AL 36801



Department Commander

Willie Tatum

Season's Greetings Comrades,

It is that time of the season when we get to spend time with family and friends, we eat too much, drink too much and all the other things we do in the name of celebrating. Whatever you do I hope that you enjoy yourself and be safe.

Let us not forget our fellow veterans who may not have the same opportunities we enjoy. It is that time of year when we are all celebrating something and it is easy to forget about others. So if you know someone who is shut in and alone reach out to them. By the time this edition hits the press we will be at our Mid-Winter Conference. As always we look forward to a successful conference but we need the support and participation of everyone. Do not feel that your opinion does not matter because it does. I want to take this opportunity to thank everyone who reached out to my wife and me on the passing of my sister-in-law.

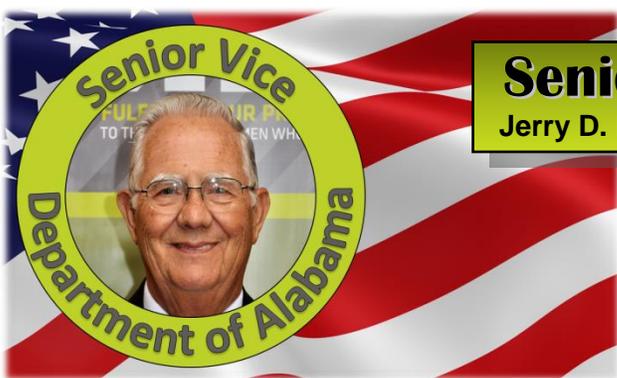
Now I want to again encourage all of our members to become active participants in the commanders' action network. I can't stress the importance of everyone's participation. I am also asking that those chapters who do not submit monthly CSO & monthly LVAP reports to start doing so. Please submit a report even if it is a negative one. That way we will be able to keep up with everyone.

I attended the National Veterans Day Program in Birmingham, AL this year. Even though the weather did not cooperate it was still a wonderful event. We were able spend time with our National Sr. Vice. Commander, Stephen Whitehead, and his wife. Hopefully we gave a good impression of Alabama hospitality. Also attended Louisiana's Mid-Winter Conference in Alexandria, LA and our department was well represented.

We hope to make some revisions to our monthly town hall meeting and our training conference after the first of the year. More information will be forthcoming on that. We still need your participation in those sessions. Remember if there is a subject you want taught in a session let our Director of Training know about it, or better yet teach it yourself. Also, we will be electing two new positions at convention in June. Do if you are interested in becoming a department officer start now. We are doing great in our recruiting efforts this year so keep it up. I want to thank everyone for all that you do.

Semper Fi

Willie Tatum
Commander



Senior Vice Commander

Jerry D. Morgan

Greetings Comrades,

"HAPPY NEW YEAR"

LET'S MAKE 2019 THE BEST YEAR EVER

As the end of this year is upon us and we look back and say, "Wow, I should have done this or that and how I wish I had done something different about..."

whatever." Stop right now and look at the things that you did right and remember that this year is over and we cannot change it. However, we have a new year starting and let's take the positives we did do and build on them along with learning from our less than positives and not repeat them and make this our best year ever.

We have had an excellent recruitment of new members in the first six months of this FY. We started out needing 361 new members to reach recruitment goals for the state. We now need less than 73 members to meet our state goal. We have 16 chapters, one half of the chapters in the state, who have met their goals already. Twelve of those chapters have recruited additional members, over goal, for their chapters. There are four chapters who need only one additional member to meet their goal. There are eighty two members in the department who have gotten credit for recruiting a total of two hundred and sixteen new members. However, there are sixty eight new members who are not listed as being recruited by

Disabled American Veterans Mission

We are dedicated to a single purpose: empowering veterans to lead high-quality lives with respect and dignity. We accomplish this by ensuring that veterans and their families can access the full range of benefits available to them; fighting for the interests of America's injured heroes on Capitol Hill; and educating the public about the great sacrifices and needs of veterans transitioning back to civilian life.

- Providing free, professional assistance to veterans and their families in obtaining benefits and services earned through military service and provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and other agencies of government;
- Providing outreach concerning its program services to the American people generally, and to disabled veterans and their families specifically;
- Representing the interests of disabled veterans, their families, their widowed spouses and their orphans before Congress, the White House and the Judicial Branch, as well as state and local government;
- Extending DAV's mission of hope into the communities where these veterans and their families live through a network of state-level Departments and local Chapters; and
- Providing a structure through which disabled veterans can express their compassion for their fellow veterans through a variety of volunteer programs.



anyone. We are very glad to have them but would like to give credit to the person who recruited them. There are only three chapters in the department who have not gotten credit for recruiting any new members. The other thirteen chapters are at least half way or better toward their goal for the year. So don't stop recruiting new members but keep up the excellent work.

I have attended the mid-winter conference in Louisiana and Mississippi and have learned something new at each one. One item of training that Mississippi had was a webinar on what to expect at National Mid-Winter on benefit protection and the visits to our members of Congress and Senate.

I am looking forward to the upcoming Mid-Winter conference and training in Opelika. I feel that every chapter will benefit from the training at Mid-Winter. Hope to see you there.

I close with a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to everyone.

Respectfully,

Jerry Morgan

Senior Vice Commander

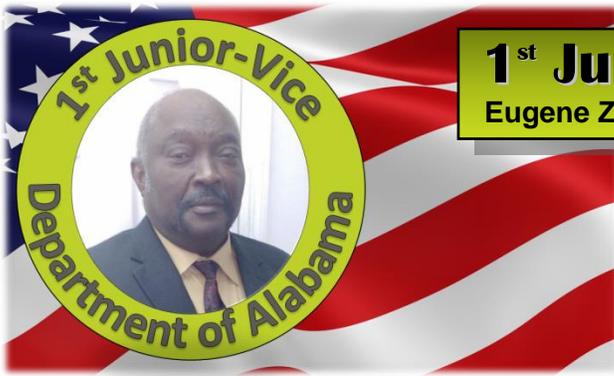
News & Views Article Due Dates:

January Issue – Due 15 Dec 2018

March Issue – Due 20 Feb 2019

May Issue -- Due 20 Apr 2019

All Articles due the 20th of the month prior to the publishing of the newsletter. (January due December 15th, due to the Holiday season)



1st Junior Vice Commander

Eugene Zeigler

Greetings Comrades;

I attended the Mid-Winter Conference, in Alexandria Louisiana. We went to many events, and had the opportunity to gain new information about the DAV. For example, membership is the lifeblood of DAV. DAV has 1.3 million members, 52 Departments, 1300 active chapters. Louisiana Disabled Veterans can Park at Louisiana Airports, veterans who have been granted a service-connected rating of at least 50% may be eligible for free parking at Louisiana airports

for up to 10 days. Louisiana Veterans can now be recognized through a special "Veteran" designation on their official Louisiana driver's licenses and IDs. Proof of Veteran status is required.

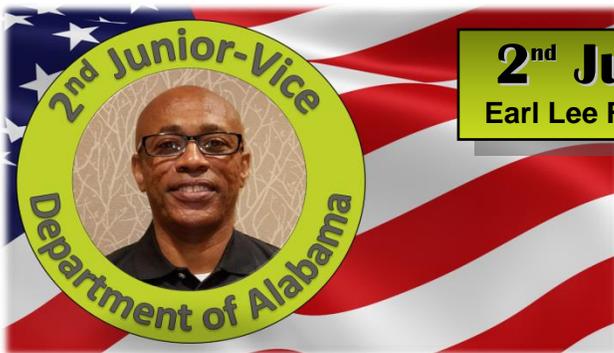
On November 29, 2018 I attended the Mississippi Mid-Winter Conference in Meridian, Mississippi which enabled me to gain knowledge regarding DAV. This conference underlined, we are dedicated to a single purpose, empowering veterans to lead high-quality lives with respect and dignity.

Our Mid-Winter Conference is upon us for 2019. It is time to get trained so we can continue the DAV mission of assisting veterans and their families. I hope to see you at the Mid-Winter Conference in Opelika AL.

Respectfully

Eugene Zeigler

1st Junior Vice Commander



2nd Junior Vice Commander

Earl Lee Frazier

Comrades,

As we near the end of 2018 calendar year and on behalf of the Department of Alabama we appreciate all the great fundraising activities from all chapters. Hopefully 2019 begins and ends the same. Speaking of 2019 it's only a few shorts weeks away as we move forward with CSO training and the Department

of Alabama's Mid-Winter Conference. It's still not too late to register for rooms in Auburn. I also still want to thank the chapters I have already visited and look forward to the ones I have not. Take this time to reflect on the true meaning of Christmas.

Once again thanks to all chapters ahead of time for your future support in the Department of Alabama activities. Thank you for your service. Happy Holidays, New Year, "Airborne" and be safe.

Respectfully,

Earl L. Frazier

2nd Junior Vice Commander

Department Meetings

Tired of feeling in the dark?

Want to know what is going on in the Department?

Would you like a little more help in conducting DAV business?

For an invite, email
culverla1@yahoo.com

TOWNHALL
TELECONFERENCE

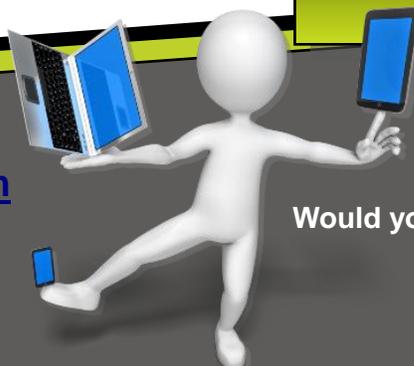
When: Every 2nd Saturday

How: Call (641) 715-3273
Access Code: 991969#

ONLINE/OVER THE PHONE
TRAINING

When: Every 4th Saturday

How: Call (323) 920-0091
Access Code: 3727660#





Department Adjutant

Charles "Chad" D. Richmond

Comrades,

First of all, congratulations to Mary Stovall-Moore on her promotion to NSO Supervisor. It is well deserved.

We are rapidly approaching the end of 2018 and getting ready to start 2019 running. We have a lot ahead of us for the coming year. It was a real joy for me to see the participation of our Department staff officers in the various activities in the 8th District and in other activities across our state during the last couple of months. Of course, January and February are very busy months with our Mid-Winter Conference, as well as Tennessee's. Then comes the National Mid-Winter Conference in late February. I hope we have good participation there. It is a very educational experience and an opportunity to see our legislators and their staffs face to face. More on that later. It also looks like we may make our membership goal before the end of 2018. That would be fantastic. Thanks to everyone who is a part of that recruiting effort.

The Veterans Day fundraising at Golden Corral was great this year. There was some pretty fierce competition at the top. Here's the top five:

Chapter 87: \$12,753.28
Chapter 28: \$12,631.00
Chapter 98: \$7,162.82
Chapter 12: \$5,921.44
Chapter 27: \$5000.00

The total collected by all of the stores was \$59,228.19. Great job! Not all of the store managers utilize the same fundraising schedule, so your particular store may be one of those that did not enjoy an extended fundraising period, so your total may not be nearly as much as it could be. If that's the case, work with your manager to see if you can increase the fundraising period. Yes, I know it takes volunteers, but, that is what we are all supposed to be doing. Now, the chapters need to use that money to accomplish our mission of supporting veterans. Thanks for your efforts.

On December 8, Birmingham VA Medical Center Director Thomas C. Smith passed away after an extended illness. His passing is a great loss to the VA community and to all veterans who used the Birmingham and Huntsville VA healthcare facilities. Mary Mitchell will be the Acting Medical Center Director in the interim.

As of this writing, we have 160 registered for the conference, 120 for the banquet and 172 for CSO certification. Those are some really great numbers. PDC Debra Walker has a very busy slate of classes lined up for the conference, with a lot of subjects not covered before. One of those is Scott Landreth and Rambo telling us about the service dog process. We will also begin a journey on a very important subject to all veterans – suicide prevention. Our National guest will be National 4th Junior Vice Commander Nancy Espinosa.

Director of Services Joe Donaldson reports that only 42 of our CSO's are submitting their reports to him. That means that 146 of our certified CSO's are not submitting reports or are not doing claims. We need to do a better job of our reporting. Those numbers are very important to our Washington service staff and benefits protection staff. Please start getting those reports turned in. As a CSO you are not doing your job correctly if you are not submitting your reports. If you have any questions, please contact Joe. We all need to do a better job of our LVAP reporting, as well. That is one area that we seem to have poor performance in. Reporting those hours to Fay Miller so she can report them to National is a very important task for us all.

BPTL PDC Laird Culver needs to know how many people plan to attend the National Mid-Winter Conference, so please get your name in to him and your arrival and departure schedule so he can put together our legislative teams for the visit to our legislators. The conference begins on Saturday, February 23 and ends on Tuesday, February 26, unless you plan to stay for the Board of Directors meeting and the NEC meeting. The testimony by National Commander Dennis Nixon and his reception will be on Tuesday.

As I stated in our last issue, on October 31 the State of Alabama said goodbye to RADM (Ret) W. Clyde Marsh as he retired from his position as the Commissioner of Veterans Affairs. He is now the Executive Director for the Northeast Region of the Veterans Cemetery Agency. He is based out of the Regional Office in Philadelphia. RADM Marsh will be sorely missed as a leader and administrator for Alabama's veterans' programs. The State Board of Veterans Affairs will select a new Commissioner at the next State Board meeting on January 4.

Please remember, as you are planning your fundraising for 2019, to send me a list of those fundraisers so I can put them on my calendar.

Lastly, On November 21 I forwarded everyone the necessary information for nomination for the DAV's National Employment Awards. The deadline to National HQ is February 28, 2019, so if you get them to me before February 22, I can hand-carry them to the National Mid-Winter Conference.

I hope everyone had a very good Thanksgiving and Christmas and were able to spend some quality time with family and friends.

Respectfully,

Chad Richmond,
Adjutant



Benefits Protection Team Leader

Laird Culver

Greetings Comrades! Happy New Year, too!

As of this writing, we are preparing for the department midwinter and the training which goes along with it. I am certain we are all looking forward to the CSO Annual training to be conducted the day before our midwinter commences. Mike, Mary and the team will run everyone through the new and improved processes affecting the Chapter Service Officers. We have some of the most professional volunteers when it comes to doing claims for veterans and I thank you.

In February there is the DAV National midwinter which will involve learning information pertaining to veteran issues and what our national organization has been doing to help. This is an event I would encourage all members who are able to attend. This is also the event where we as the Alabama constituents meet with and discuss issues with our representatives. The office visits with our representatives will occur on the Tuesday of the midwinter. If you plan on attending, please let me know and I can try to set you up to visit the office of your specific representative. The schedule is in process and with all the changes occurring in the coming weeks with transfer of authority of the House, the closer we get to the visit, the better I will know the schedule of visits.

For those who have been answering the call to action concerning the CAN, thank you! If you have not signed up for the CAN, please consider being one of our members in the grassroots efforts to let your voice as a veteran be heard! There have



been a couple of online conferences with the legislative team in Washington in the last two months. The most recent one concerned Blue Water Navy veteran issues resulting from service in Vietnam. Those who have submitted information to me as their chapter Benefits Protection Team Leaders have been on email lists concerning attendance. If you have not received the emails, please, get your information to me and I will put you on the email chain for department BPT correspondence. With changes during chapter elections, it is essential that commanders or the BPT leader let the department BPT leader know who their point of contact is.



Folks, as always, it is a pleasant day in sunny Alabama. I hope you and yours are doing well and that you are doing what you can for the veterans in this state and across the country. One easy way is to do that is how?

By JOINING THE Commander's Action Network AND BEING INVOLVED in your Chapter and Department!!!

With respect and honor,

Laird Culver
BPTL

[Contact your House Representative](#)

[Contact your Senate Representative](#)

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DAV Upcoming Events

January 3-6, 2019: Department of Alabama Mid-Winter Conference, Auburn Marriott Opelika Hotel and Conference Center At Grand National, Opelika, AL

January 4, 2019: State Board of Veterans Affairs meeting, Montgomery, AL

January 17-19, 2019: Department of Tennessee Mid-Winter Conference, Doubletree Hotel, Murfreesboro, TN

February 24-27, 2019: National Mid-Winter Conference, Crystal Gateway Marriott, Alexandria, VA

May 2-5, 2019: Department of Mississippi Convention, Drury Inn, Meridian, MS

May 15-19, 2019: Department of Louisiana Convention, Hotel Bentley, Alexandria, LA

May 30-June 2, 2019: Department of Alabama Convention, Auburn Marriott Opelika Hotel and Conference Center at Grand National

June 19-22, 2019: Department of Tennessee Convention, Doubletree Hotel, Murfreesboro, TN

June 29-July 2, 2019: State Commanders and Adjutants Orientation, Embassy Suites, Cold Spring, KY

August 3-7, 2019: National Convention, Orlando, FL

January 9-12, 2020: Department of Alabama Mid-Winter Conference, Auburn Marriott Opelika Hotel and Conference Center At Grand National

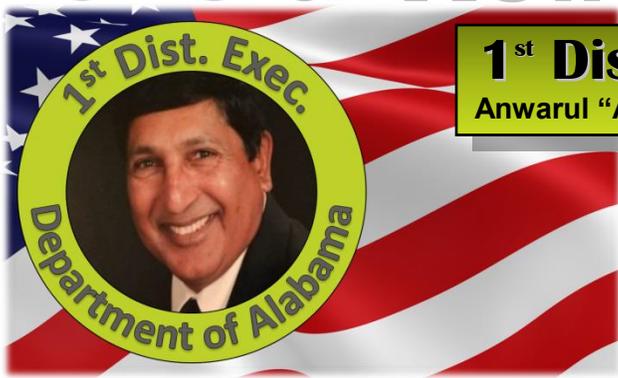
June 4-7, 2020: Department of Alabama Convention, TBA

July 31-August 4, 2020: National Convention, Dallas, TX

July 24-27, 2021: National Convention, Reno, NV

August 5-9, 2022: National Convention, Orlando, FL

August 5-8, 2023: National Convention, Atlantic City, NJ



1st District Executive Committeeman Anwarul "Andy" Haq

Suicide Prevention after attending Assisted Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST) Train for Trainers (T4T) course at Fort Bliss, TX the week of November 25th. They had their annual Membership Drive and Forget-Me-Not drive October 5th and 6th at the Boaz Annual Harvest Festival. They also participated in the Arab Veterans Day Ceremony laying a wreath at their memorial and donated \$150 to Blue Star Salute for Fallen Individuals (BSSF) for Wreaths Across America to be placed at the Fort Mitchell Alabama National Cemetery for Christmas.

Comrades,

I would like to thank all the chapters who are providing me input for their activities.

The District activities are picking up steam and chapters were busy with their activities. Hopefully we will remember to give our fundraising schedule to the Department Adjutant. The chapters are in full swing with Disability Claims, helping Veterans in financial need, assisting veterans and their families getting with wheelchairs and giving them rides to the hospital as needed. All this is in the day's work of the District 1 Chapters.

On 13 November 2018 1st DECM Andy Haq performed the swearing in ceremony for the officers of the James L. Daniels DAV Chapter 51 in Athens, AL. This chapter needed help and the District helped them in their hour of need.

Chapter 26 had a successful fundraiser at the Golden Corral. They teamed up with Raytheon to have another successful fundraiser at a local Brewery. The chapter is teaming up with Saint Vincent DePaul society to help local needy Veterans with food boxes.



They also teamed up with American Motorcycle Riders to have another great fundraiser. They have helped about 20 Veterans with financial support (Electric Bills, Rent etc.) with approximately \$4000. The chapter is doing very well in helping Veterans with their disability claims. The Chapter and its Auxiliary unit continues their monthly visits and give socks and Christmas cards to Veterans on their birthdays at the Tut Fann State Veterans Home and other nursing homes in the area. The Chapter also participated in the "The Wall that Heals" Vietnam traveling wall that arrived on 30 Oct 2018 and remain in Huntsville till 4 November 2018. The DAV Chapter 26 was the honor guard and had the privilege to raise the flag. The Chapter also participated in the homecoming game at the University of Alabama and had the privilege to participate in the coin toss for the football game. Finally, the Chapter and its Auxiliary Unit are planning on attending their annual Mid- Winter Conference.

Lastly let's not forget to get our financial records in order to file with the IRS.

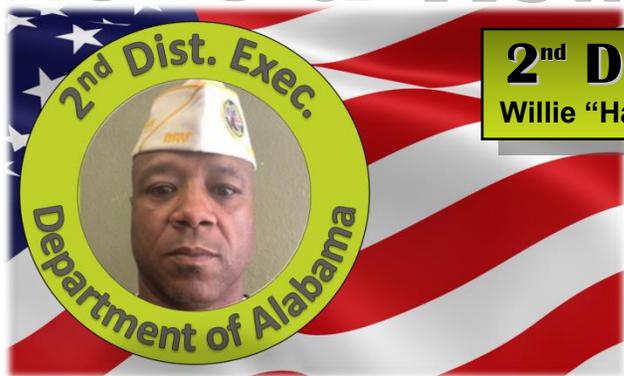
Respectfully,

Andy Haq

DECM,
District 1, DAV Alabama



Chapter 18 continues to operate its van transporting veterans from the local VA clinic to the Birmingham VAMC for appointments. As of November 30th they had transported 461 veterans in 165 trips logging 24,570 miles. Commander Allison presented Guntersville Police Chief Jim Peterson with a Certificate of Appreciation for his continued support of the Chapter and its Van Program at the City Council meeting on October 15th. Commander Edwin Allison established a Joint DAV/DAVA Committee for



2nd District Executive Committeeman

Willie "Hamp" Hampton

Greetings Comrades,

I hope all is well with you and yours. It's already almost Christmas. This year has flown by. I attended the Veterans Day banquet at the Sheraton Hotel in Birmingham. It was finely put on. I hope to see all of you at the Mid-Winter Conference. I am looking forward as always. I pray for a safe and prosperous holiday season. Blessings to all of you from the Hampton Family.

The following are some updates of the things going on around our District. If you ever need me please don't hesitate to call on me.

Chapter 1 - I would like to make a correction this Chapter sent \$1,000.00 not \$100.00 to the National Relief Fund for the aid of hurricane Florence victims. I believe it was stated incorrectly in the last issue. This Chapter has donated another \$1000.00 to the National Relief Fund this time for California wildfires.

Chapter 4 - The Commander on behalf of the Chapter would like to wish Sr. Vice Mattie Harper a speedy recovery from surgery. She is sorely missed. This Chapter also reports it has given in excess of 300 food boxes in December, and will more than likely be very close to giving 500 or more this month all together. 75% of those boxes go to veterans and their families.

Chapter 21

Chapter 27

Chapter 28 - First I would like to congratulate Commander Cannon on receiving the award of Veteran of the year. He represents his Chapter, our District and the State of Alabama well.

The Chapter reports they raised more funds through Golden Corral than any other Chapter. Kudos to them. They also report that they enjoyed a joint Christmas Dinner with Chapter 18 from District 1. Commander Cannon was so appreciative to the Commander and the members of Chapter 18 for their

friendship and assistance towards Chapter 28.

(I personally believe we need more of this type of outreach between Chapters. Chapters getting together if for nothing more than to share a meal. That really builds camaraderie and sets a good example for what we can be, which is Stronger together than apart!)

Commander Cannon says he looks forward to seeing everyone at the Mid-Winter Conference in January.

Chapter 33 - Chapter has nothing to report at this time, but wishes everyone a great Holiday season.

Chapter 78 - Reports the efforts at the Golden Corral were successful. They have an ongoing initiative to help local veterans and some of their events are as follows.

- Helped a veteran relocate for Selma to Talledega.
- Helped a veteran go from homelessness he now starting a new chapter in life.
- Assisted veterans get jobs locally using the Alabama Jobs Department. The point of contact is Ms. Karen. Her email address is karens@albamajobsdeparment.com. If you have any further questions please contact Commander Nelson. She may be able help veterans in your area.
- Lastly they have assisted local high school students by providing various services and skills and then linking them with local businesses for employment.

Great Job Chapter 78

Chapter 98 - We were deeply saddened by the news of Birmingham VMAC Director Mr. Thomas Smith's passing. He will be missed by all.

Chapter 98 is working during the cold weather months on recruiting and membership. We are not stopping with 100% of our membership goal. Also during these months we are planning out our fundraisers for the months ahead.

With permission from Birmingham VA the new Transportation Van was entered into the local Veterans Day Parade with Veterans riding in it and drew a lot of attention from local businesses, Chamber of Commerce, City and County Officials. Some have expressed interest in donating now toward replacing the present one once needed. Surprising to us was the number of Veteran owned businesses, or Veteran managed businesses in our community.

Enough cannot be said about our Auxiliary Unit. They purchased, prepared and delivered Christmas baskets to veterans in nursing homes in Clay County. Clay County was selected due to not having an active Veterans Service Organization and the County Unit 98 is in has numerous organizations providing baskets to nursing homes. Without the Unit assisting us with Golden Corral Fundraiser it would not have been as successful as it was.

News & Views

We hope everyone has a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Please remember this: "Do not do anything stupid over the Holidays or you may end up in the slammer for a while because Judges observe Holidays also".

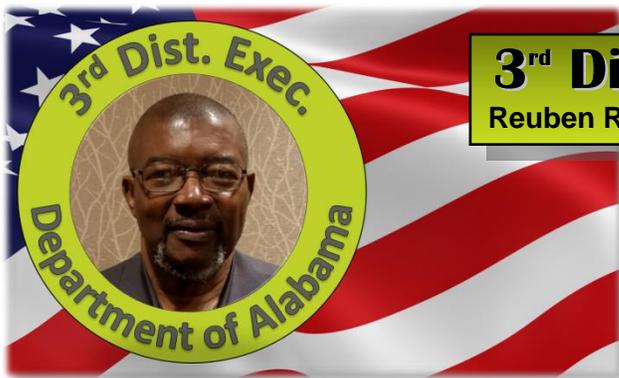
In service.
Respectfully,

Willie "Hamp" Hampton
2nd DECM



3rd District Executive Committeeman

Reuben Redd



in Demopolis, AL. We were able to provide valuable assistance to the Chapter.

The Chapters in the District are performing well; however, there is always room for improvement. I realize this is a volunteer organization. Commanders you accepted the responsibility to lead your Chapters. Let's LEAD.

Greetings from the 3rd. District Department of Alabama.

I wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Also, please be safe out on the roads.

We have been busy encouraging the Chapters that recruitment of new members is the life blood of the Chapters as well as the Department of Alabama.

Looking forward to seeing you at Mid-Winter Meeting in January 2019.

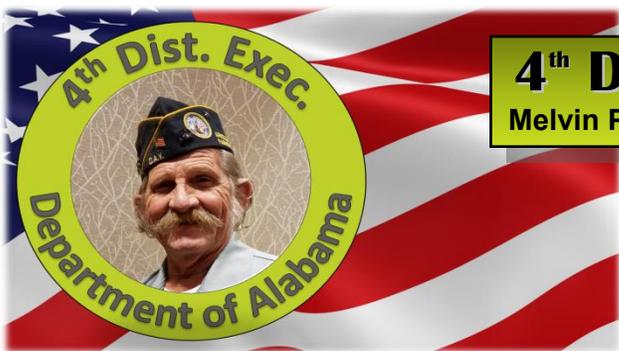
Submitted -By:

In November 2018, I attended Chapter #31 Meeting

Reuben E. Redd
3rd. DEC

4th District Executive Committeeman

Melvin P. "Mel" Apley



Additionally, 4th District Chapters submitted the only Department Grant Applications for new Service Vans; 2 for replacement and 1 for a new Chapter Program. Also of note: nearly all have achieved Goal and more than 60 members have been enrolled into the CSO training at Mid-Winter.

FROM THE TRUNK OF THE ROLLING OFFICE

Chapter #6 Commander Harry Zegarski reports that attendance is improving, Service work is up and 4 members plan to be in Opelika. All else is going well.

What a busy time of the year! It seems that just about every chapter has participated in Veterans Day Parades and Memorial Services of some nature. By the time that this is published, most will have had Holiday meals, award ceremonies, and held successful fundraising campaigns. 4th District Chapters that were at Golden Corrals collected in the neighborhood of \$20,000 combined.

SVCO Jerry Morgan of Chapter #7 has news that 10 members will be at CSO training. They have achieved Goal, and are on track for their new van with the addition of what was collected at the Theodore Golden Corral.

The Holiday dinner for Chapter #9 was held on the 15th of December; -no word on awards. 19 comrades from Enterprise plan for CSO certification. This according to Commander Tom Ferguson.

There is a breakfast meeting at the Airport Golden Corral in west Mobile planned for Jan. 19th by Chapter #35. The time is set for 09:00 and Installation Ceremonies will follow. With more than \$2500 collected at the Corral, plans for their new Van are moving along. 3 members are going to CSO training.

Chapter #45 events in Central Baldwin County included the Veterans Day Parade in Fairhope, Forget-Me-Not campaigns at area Wal-Marts, and a day with the NSO Service Van at Loxley which was attended by 19 veterans. On Nov. 10th, a new Veterans Memorial was dedicated in the Towne of Loxley. Mayor Billy Middleton led the program and Congressman Bradley Byrne was The Guest Speaker. Designed and overseen by Comrade Ernie Baker, this is the 4th such memorial designed by him and is the culmination of three years of planning and work. 7 members will attend CSO.



Memorial at town of Loxley



Patriot Riders on Line



Ernie Baker, designer & Butch Turner



Congressman Byrne delivering keynote speech



Congressman Bradley Byrne & 4th DECM Mel Apley

Val Obergon reports that Chapter #53 has acquired the needed equipment for their service office to get back in operation. All that is left to do is rewire their building and send 2 members to CSO training. Adjutant Bernard White is still suffering with medical issues so please keep him in your thoughts and Prayers.

Word comes from Commander Dan Blackman, Chapter #87, that their Golden Corral fund raising led by lead dog Comrade Billy Williams brought in more than \$12,000. He was presented with an Award for Outstanding Work at their Holiday Dinner. Senior CSO James Crow has started Dialysis. Keep Jim in your thoughts and Prayers. They have enrolled 8 members into CSO training.



Comrade Billy Williams volunteered more than 300 hours during this campaign

So far, as of the 15th of Dec, 96 Food Baskets have been prepared and delivered –with more to come–to nursing homes in three surrounding counties by members of Chapter #94. The chapter is also participating in a food drive for the Ozark Area Food Bank. Work is continuing on the Homeless Shelter. The Chapter has completed the long and tedious job of refurbishing their service office. Along with Commander Fay Miller will be 3 other members at Mid-Winter. PDC Art Miller is recovering nicely after a procedure on his leg.

From the smallest Chapter by way of Adjutant Charlie Lobdell comes word of a fund raiser that netted \$3,300 dedicated to Florida's Hurricane Relief for Veterans. They also participated in parade on Veterans Day and on the 15th of Dec., after which their holiday Seniors Meal was at the Officers Club. CSO Amos Donaldson was recognized for his exceptional work. The NSO Service Van visited Chapter # 99 on Election Day, Nov 7th, and after a "minor" parking problem, served 15 Veterans before leaving 2 hours early due to weather. Maybe better luck next time. Because New Brunswick also serves the Troy area, they have increased their CSO count to 10.

So it goes for District 4. Hope to see all at Mid-Winter; by then 2019 will be here and so will the Christmas bills, which mean that you will know how good Christmas was.

HAPPY NEW YEAR AND STAY SAFE

Melvin P. "Mel" Apley
4th DEC



Commander Dan Blackman, Chapter 87, presents Larry Castleman with a Past Commander pin.



Commander Dan Blackman, Chapter 87, presents Billy Williams with an award for his outstanding work during the Golden Corral fundraising campaign.



Women's Veterans of Alabama

Tawanna Jones



Greetings to my DAV Family and Friends,

First, I give Honor and Glory to my LORD and SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST, for all that I am.

For the month of December, Women's Health Services recognizes the many challenges women Veterans face during reintegration. Stressors such as feeling alone, adjusting to civilian life, reclaiming family roles, loss of military title, and redeployment anxieties are all normal struggles of reintegration. Not every transition is the same and no matter the level of difficulty, VA is committed to providing the resources and services to help women Veterans reestablish their lives with support and dignity. My questions to All the Disabled American Veterans (DAV) Chapters is "Are You Ready?" What do I mean? Are you ready to serve Women Veterans with the same amount of respect and dignity as you serve male veterans? Returning home is challenging for Women Veterans. They are dealing with life issues of reconnect issues, mood changes, and change in their routines just to name a few. The challenges Women Veterans deal with is REAL! Are You Ready!!!



DAV Women Coordinator passed out treats for Halloween.



Coming Home is just the Beginning.

DAV is here:

By providing free professional assistance in obtaining benefits from the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Highlight of some events



Annie Byrd received Certificate of Appreciation at Tuscaloosa VAMC



Figure 1 Annie Byrd with members of DAV Chapter 1

May the Good LORD fill you all with His promises and bestow on you His many blessings.

Season Greeting!

“Every day we live is a priceless gift of God, Loaded with Possibilities to learn Something new, to gain Fresh insights”

Respectfully,

Jawanna

Women’s Veteran Coordinator



Department Chaplain

Debra Varner

address book. These words are powerful and will remind us of the true “season”.

Today we have such a great ability to communicate so much information, both useful and useless, with so many people instantly. I want to encourage you to share the Good News that the angel of the Lord proclaimed to the shepherds in Bethlehem: “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. (Luke 2:10-12). Christ did not come to give us a day of celebration, but to fill our hearts with happiness and joy.

From the desk of the Chaplain:

Greetings to all,

The story of Jesus would have passed from person to person by word of mouth, through personal witness, and through the writings of the Gospels. I would like to encourage you to bear witness today by reading the following passage: Luke 2:1-20. Read these words together with your family, share them with your friends, proclaim them on the streets where you live, email them to everyone in your

Many of our fellow comrades will be separated from families and loved ones this Christmas, which is difficult for those deployed and those at home. Wherever our Soldiers are, on behalf of the DAV Chaplain of Alabama, I express warmest wishes and the blessings of Christmas. Our thoughts and prayers turn to those who have lost a loved one during the year. We ask that God comfort those who mourn. They will forever be in our prayers. We are humbled by your selfless dedication to duty and the sacrifices you make.

May the blessings of the Lord bless you and your family as you celebrate and share with others the good news.

In His Service,
Chaplain D.H. Varner

MY FATHER ...

Loves me [John 3:16](#)

Cares for Me [Psalm 103](#)

Renews Me [Isaiah 40:31](#)

Protects Me [Psalm 23:4](#)

Redeems Me [Job 19:25](#)

Is Preparing a Place for Me [Psalm 139](#)

Understands & Accepts Me [Psalm 139](#)

Guides & Teaches Me [Psalm 25:9](#)

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DAVA Commander Marilyn Todd Edwards

During the Commanders Reception, would like everyone to “Show your Colors” by wearing your favorite school team colors. It’s going to be a fun great time, so be there to cheer for your favorite team!

Upcoming Events:

2019 Mid-Winter Conference: January 3 – 6, 2019, Auburn Marriott Opelika Hotel & Conference Center At Grand National 3700 Robert Trent Jones Trail Opelika AL 36801

BUILD...BUILD....BUILD!!!

Hello ALL!

Firstly, I want you to know that I really appreciate all of the prayers and get well wishes you sent my way. I feel so grateful for your friendship and thoughtfulness. Thanks also for calling me to check up on me and see if I needed anything. Every day I feel stronger and more energetic. Thanks a million for your caring ways and for thinking of me during my recovery!

Veterans’ Day in Birmingham was wonderful and eventful. We were able to visit Colonel Robert L. Howard State Veterans Home in Pell City. The facility is awesome! There were so many interesting people who participated in the Veterans’ Day weekend celebration. The parade was great –cold and wet—but great. The number of spectators that stood out to watch was truly awe inspiring. All in all, Veterans’ Day observation celebration was great!

Remember Auxiliary members, it is time to BUILD! Build our units, build our membership so that we can build our efforts in assisting veterans and their families. So let’s continue to BUILD...BUILD....BUILD!!!

Again, I want to thank you all for the get well wishes. If I can be of any further assistance, please feel free to contact me at (334) 596-9610 or mari36305@hotmail.com.

Marilyn D. Edwards
Commander, DAVA



Colonel Robert L. Howard State Veterans Home in Pell City

Mid-Winter Conference is coming up in January!!! Really excited about seeing you all there where we will be engaged in learning a great deal through the different schools of instructions.





NSO Supervisor Mary Stovall-Moore

Greetings Comrades,

Hearings

Hearings are a very important part of trying get benefits granted that were previously denied. Here are some pointers:

- If you are represented by a Veterans Service Organization (VSO) and you do not know what evidence is needed to try to get the claim or appeal granted, please call your VSO for advice on what evidence is needed to support your claim.
- Get Disability Benefits Questionnaires (DBQs) filled out by your doctor. For a disability or disabilities that you are trying to get service-connected, make sure the DBQ contains a medical opinion and rationale linking the disability to your military service.
- If you are unable to make the hearing, please send in a Statement in Support of Claim (VA Form 21-4138), to inform the VA Regional Office (VARO) of the reason you are unable to attend the hearing. You can send this form to your VSO to forward to the VARO on your behalf.

VA Modernization

VA modernization focuses on building a system that works best for Veterans. This includes modernizing VA healthcare, claims and appeals. VA's pledge to build lifelong, trusted relationships with its Veterans is the basis for delivering relevant and excellent benefits, care, and services to Veterans that enhance their lives. VA understands that earning Veterans' trust is the gold standard needed to achieve and is critical to their long-term success. How VA delivers on its promises is just as important as what it delivers. VA will earn trust and be the natural choice for Veterans by holding itself accountable, being transparent about how they are performing, and showing how they adhere to core values with every single interaction. Specifically, VA will focus on accountability, transparency, and value.

VETS.GOV

The VA launched a new program that enables veterans to track their appeals in real time. Vets.gov is a secure site that allows veterans to access detailed status of their appeal and it also provides the current status of appeals, including upcoming hearings. It also outlines what happens next in the appeals process and allows veterans to see where they are at on the Board's docket. According to the tool's creators, the vision was to create a place for veterans to check their claim or appeal status. Vets.gov also allows veterans to sign up for health care through the VA Medical Center as well. Go check out this site today and I am sure you will be pleased with all it has to offer.

MERRY CHRISTMAS

Mary Stovall-Moore
NSO Supervisor

NSO Hours

eBenefits Info

Once a decision is rendered in either a claim or an appeal, we will have the opportunity to review the decision prior to your notification. If the decision is in accordance with the law, we will release the decision to the VA and provide you with an unofficial notification by mail. You can track the status of your claim through e-Benefits by signing up at:

[Click here for eBenefits.](#)



VA Regional Office
[345 Perry Hill Road](#)
[Montgomery, AL 36109](#)

Office: 334-213-3365
Fax: 334-213-5661

NSO Office hours for NSO contact/Interview:

By Appointment: Call office phone

Office hours for telephone calls:
Monday – Friday: 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM



Reflecting on 2018, looking ahead to 2019

This time of year is sacred to many because it's when we take time to reflect on our blessings. We remember the generous and bountiful nature of our great country, and we surround ourselves with loved ones, family and friends.

It is also when we reflect on the meaning and sacrifices behind Veterans Day and what it means to us as disabled veterans.

I often remind myself that when the guns of World War I finally fell silent a century ago, at 11 a.m. on Nov. 11, 1918, the suffering of our country's bravest did not end. American service members returned home to a nation that could not, or would not, care for them and live up to the promises it had made.

From the ashes of the greatest human conflict the world had ever seen, our organization was born. We've been fighting for veterans and their families ever since.

For example, I'm proud to say we recently released *The Veteran Advantage: DAV Guide to Hiring and Retaining Veterans with Disabilities*. This is a resource designed to educate employers about the many advantages of hiring disabled veterans who, as we all know, are among the most resilient people in our country. It contains strategies, lessons learned and best practices for hiring and retaining disabled veterans.

In September, we released *Women Veterans: The Journey Ahead*, a follow-up report to our comprehensive 2014 women veterans study. In this new report, we illustrate how we're still fighting to ensure appropriate cultural changes in the VA health care system are enacted to adequately care for women veterans. The unique needs of our sisters-in-arms must remain in the foremost thoughts of VA leadership when making these much-needed changes.

And this year, through your assistance and after years of fighting, we are proud to have helped gain passage of the VA MISSION Act, which extends support to thousands of pre-9/11 caregivers. However, we're still in the fight, and I hope you will join me. All our nation's severely ill veterans are not covered by this bill, leaving behind thousands of caregivers. Please visit [DAV CAN](#) (Commander's Action Network) and tell your elected representatives this is wrong.

The 2019 Mid-Winter Conference in Arlington, Va., is just around the corner. If at all possible, I urge you to join me in February as I deliver testimony to Congress about issues that are most important to the disabled veteran community.

Thank you for your service and commitment to fellow disabled veterans. I will close 2018 by wishing you and those you hold dear a happy and safe holiday season.

Dennis R. Nixon, National Commander

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