

Department of Alabama News & Views

July/August 2019



In This Issue:

Commander	2
Senior Vice	3
1st Junior Vice	4
2nd Junior Vice	7
3rd Junior Vice	8
4th Junior Vice	9
Adjutant	9
Benefit Protection	10
Women's Vet	13
Chaplain	16
DAVA	16
NSO	17

Other Information

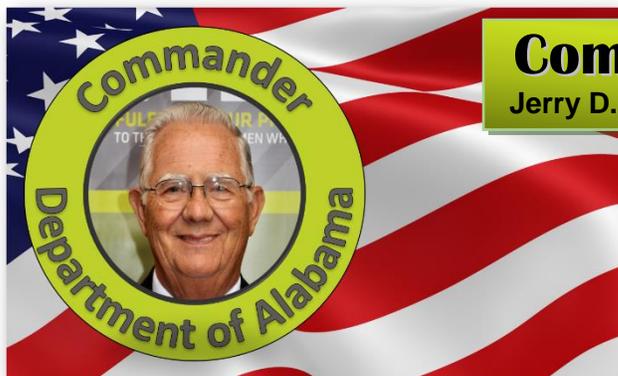
DAV Mission	2
Due Dates	3
Meetings	8
DAV Events	7
eBenefits Info	18
NSO Hours	18
Dept. Contacts	19
DAV Magazine	



“Those who have long enjoyed such privileges as we enjoy forget in time that men have died to win them.”
-- Franklin D. Roosevelt



Editor/Publisher
Anita R. Perez
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Commander
Jerry D. Morgan

have a very strong staff and should make you proud to be a member of the department.

My first goal is providing the training and help to ensure that the DSOs and CSOs are fully trained to assist veterans and their families to apply for their earned benefits.

I want to take a little different approach on trying to get some of my goals to you. We all are veterans, and all know some of the ways we were trained and what was important to our mission and how to execute the plan that was given to us. We know that our mission is helping our fellow veterans and their families to lead high-quality lives with respect and dignity.

Knowing the mission, the first item we need to look at is: Are you a trained DSO or CSO and do you understand ALL the correct forms needed to assist our fellow veterans to apply for the VA benefit that they earned by their service and how to correctly fill out the forms. I know that we have an excellent training director and assistant training director and I will be calling on them to provide the training that you ask for and the training of new items that comes down for DAV Headquarters and from the VA. I hope you saw that I asked for your input on training matters or in other words TWO WAY COMMUNICATION is required. All DSOs and CSOs are now setting aside time to work helping veterans within your chapters' area. I am asking you to set aside about 1 to 2 hours starting at 8 AM on the 4th Saturday of each month to attend the Department Townhall meeting and Training session. I also ask that all Chapter Commanders to set aside the same time to attend the meetings. Again, TWO WAY COMMUNICATION, as we have a question and answer session each time.

Greetings Comrades,

Wow, I am not sure that I am not having a dream, have I really been elected as the Department of Alabama DAV Commander?

This is such an honor that has been bestowed on me and I want to thank every member of the department for having the confidence in me to be the next your current Department Commander.

First, I want to thank Junior PDC Tatum and PDC Richmond for their work this past year that they did and the help, guidance, training and advise that they provided to me as I worked toward learning the requirements of being your commander.

There are so many other people who have helped me that I don't want to try to name all them except for my wife and help mate for the past 53 years. I am looking forward to working with our new Adjutant Hugo Perez and all the rest elected staff. Looking at the list and what I know about each one of them I feel that we

Disabled American Veterans Mission Statement

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.

My second, goal is COMMUNICATION! I want to hear from any member within the department who has a question or complaint. Call me on my cell, 256-343-4340. I may be unable to answer the phone when you call but leave me a message and I will call you back. I do ask that you think about your question and consider whether it might possibly be answered by your chapter commander, the JVC for your district, a NSO, the Adjutant, the Treasure, the Director of Training, Director of Service, or another staff member. It is not a requirement that you go to one of them prior to calling me but I want to and will use all the staff members to help me.

My third, goal is Reports. The Adjutant and I have updated the list of Chapter Reports and Requirements. Each Chapter Commander, the Senior Vice Commander and the four Junior Vice Commanders have been sent a copy. I have asked that the Junior Vice Commander for your district use

this as a guide when they visit your chapter and to provide you with any help or training that you request. Again, COMMUNICATION.

My fourth goal is Recruiting. Each member within the department is a recruiter and knows someone or will meet someone who is a veteran and potential member of the DAV. Talk with them about the DAV and what we as the DAV can do to help them whether they join the DAV or not.

With all this said, thank you again for allowing me to be your commander. I am looking forward to a great year and I hope that you feel the same way. If you think about it, we must work together to make this happen.

Respectfully,

Jerry Morgan
Commander
Department of AL



Senior Vice Commander

Eugene Zeigler

I look forward to working with our new Commander, all elected individuals and members. I would like to say again thank you for electing me. We will make this a productive year and ensure all chapters reach their goal.

Respectfully,

Eugene Zeigler
Senior Vice Commander



Greetings Comrades,

I would like to take this opportunity to thank each and every one for electing me as Senior Vice Commander for the Department of Alabama for 2019-2020. By working together, we will be able to support the Department of Alabama. Commanders please make sure reports are sent in a timely manner and required information is included. These reports have an impact on the funds that your chapter will receive from the National DAV. Let us all remember that all local chapters are dedicated to a single purpose: empowering veterans to lead high-quality lives with respect and dignity.

The Local Veterans Assistance Program was established to recognize volunteer initiatives that contribute to the lives of our nation's ill and injured heroes. These programs empower individuals to find and develop new and unique ways to use their skill and talent to support the service and sacrifice of our veterans and their families made. Please don't forget to participate in the Local Veterans Assistance Program.

News & Views Article Due Dates:

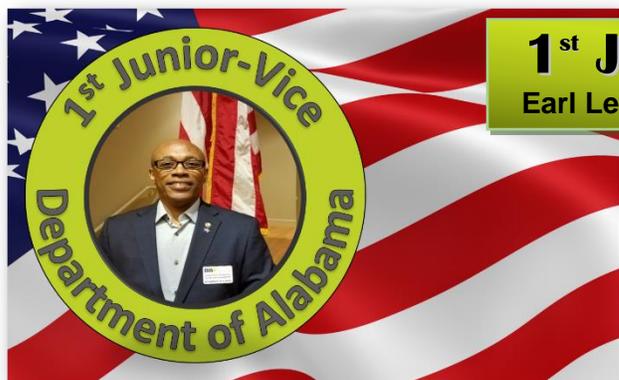
September Issue - Due 20 Aug 2019

November Issue - Due 20 Oct 2019

January Issue – Due 15 Dec 2019

All Articles due the 20th of the month prior to the publishing of the newsletter except for the January Issue! Check dates above.

[Table of Contents](#)



1st Junior Vice Commander

Earl Lee Frazier

(2nd District)

under the care of TVAMC Geriatrics and Extended Care service for Mother's Day.

Chapter 4: ("Magic City" - Birmingham) - Unit 12 will have a Fashion Show /Luncheon on Saturday June 29th, 2019 from 11-2. I plan on attending. Also, Commander Hampton and Chapter 4 will continue with their food pantry every 1st and 3rd Wednesday of the month along with claims every Tuesday.

Chapter 21: (Piedmont) – Chapter 21 will have a fireworks show on June 29th, 2019 at the Piedmont Complex in Piedmont, Alabama. The fireworks show will start at first dark.

Chapter 27: (Pell City) (Submission by Commander Carol Varner)

It is true. Many "Military Veterans" are "Square Dancers". It is great 'mind exercise' - as well as physical exercise. So – our Military Veteran Square Dancers joined forces with several Square Dance Clubs in and around the Birmingham Area to "ENTERTAIN" the Veterans at Robert L Howard Veterans Home in Pell City AL on Thursday, May 23rd. We were so pleased to have three squares dancing at one time. If you are a Square Dancer, Veteran or not, get on Veteran Ted Moss's contact list so he can notify you the next time they dance at the Veterans Home (Pell City). Email Ted and Diane Moss at squareup.t@gmail.com.

Comrades,

First things first. "Thank you for your service!" and thank you for electing me as your Department of Alabama 1st Junior Vice Commander. Congratulations to the new Department of Alabama Commander and the newly elected/ appointed officers. The Department of Alabama Convention turned out to be a well-attended event. I look forward to not only assisting veterans but helping members of District 2 and the Department of Alabama. As a Department continue to push forward and actively pursue membership and fundraising activities. This Department has a lot of talented members that have and continue to contribute tremendously toward moving things forward in many positive ways. Let's continue to work together and keep the traditions going.

Before I continue congrats to my Chapter which is Chapter 12 here in Montgomery for being awarded as one of the oldest DAV chapters in the Department of Alabama. 75 years ago, veterans from the tri-county area of Montgomery, Autauga and Elmore County decided to do the greater good for veterans in this area by establishing a chapter to assist veterans. Continue the tradition Chapter 12 of serving veterans- "Hoorah!"

The following is a consolidated list of events that chapters in District 2 have participated in or are going to participate in till the next issue. If you are from the DAV/MALT (Mississippi, Alabama, Louisiana, Tennessee) and on behalf of Chapter Commanders in District 2 you are invited because this is positively Alabama:

Chapter 1: ("T-town" - Tuscaloosa) - 5/31/2019- Chapter Adjutant Annie Byrd participated in a Women's Veterans Compensation and Pensions Claim Group with Ms. Tawanna Jones (Organizer- DAV-HSC) at the Demopolis VA Clinic.

On 5/11/2019- 2nd JVC & Adjutant Byrd with the support TVAMC hospital support coordinator presented donated flowers to seven female veterans



On Tuesday May 28th, our Chapter Veterans, serving as Court Mentors, assisted approximately 26 Veterans in the Jefferson County Veterans Court System. It is a great program that enjoys around 94% success rate, getting these Veterans back on their feet and back into society as a valuable asset. We are so proud of those employers that also give these Veterans "another chance".

Chapter 27 hosted the annual Memorial Day Ceremony in front of the Saint Clair County Courthouse in Pell City on May 27th. Our Chapter Junior Vice Commander Anthony Austin delivered a stirring and heartfelt presentation that connected the past to the present. After three Chapter members recited the names of St Clair County's "Fallen Heroes", a member of the Daughters of the American Revolution read an "original

letter" from one of these Fallen Heroes to his wife. The Alabama Artillery Group (members of Chapter 27) opened and closed the Memorial Day Ceremony with their famous "Firing of the Cannons". They also "Fired" the cannons to Salute our Fallen Heroes at the Reciting of Names. It was a great ceremony, but only made possible by the combined efforts and support of most of St Clair County's Military Organizations: American Legion Post 109 (Pell City – whose Commander is the Treasurer for DAV Chapter 27), VFW Post 4758 (Pell City – whose Commander is also the Senior Vice for DAV chapter 27) and VFW Post 6652 (Ragland, who are members of Chapter 27 and provided the Honor Guard rendering TAPS and Weapons Salute). We look forward to next year's ceremony and have already engaged in planning this event.

Last but certainly not least, Chapter 27 just completed the Camp Corral Campaign at the Golden Corral on Lorna Rd in Hoover. Chapter 27 raised \$12,493.00 to take this Golden Corral to a total of \$15,000.00.

On Saturday, June 15th, the Alabama Artillery Group and an array of their Cannons and displays, joined us at the Hoover Golden Corral to help us collect our largest 'one day' amount. Thank you, Alabama Artillery Group, for your support for this tremendously worthy cause for raising money. If you would like to obtain this group for one of your events, call Mike Church 205-405-1007 or Past Chapter 27 Commander Joe Johnson 205-451-3999. Pictured in this photo with the Alabama Artillery Group are Hoover Golden Corral Managers James and Linda. Our Chapter Golden Corral workers truly appreciate the warm hospitality extended to us by these two managers and all their workers.

Chapter 28: (Blount/Cullman) - Chapter 28 just finished "Just B Kids-Camp Corral and raised money for 30 children whom parents are either ill, wounded or fallen veterans.

Chapter 33: (Clanton) - Chapter 33 congratulations for making mission for DAV Department of Alabama as the smallest chapter and receiving an award at the recent Department of Alabama Convention. On June 29th, 2019 Clanton (Chilton County) will have its annual Peach Festival. Chapter 33 will participate in not only the parade; they will also have a booth set at the Sport complex field. Governor Kay Ivey will possibly attend. I recently visited Chapter 33 at their meeting good fellowship with Commander White and all chapter members. Happy 72nd Anniversary Chilton County on your annual Peach Festival day.

Chapter 78: (Talladega)- Chapter 28 will conduct their annual POW/MIA, Black and White Banquet on



Pictured in this photo with the Alabama Artillery Group are Hoover Golden Corral Managers James and Linda.

September 14th, 2019 at 5 p.m. registration forms can be found on the Department of Alabama website.

Chapter 98: (Anniston/Oxford) – (Submission by Commander Pete Cobb)

It was great seeing everyone at the convention, and congratulations to all our newly elected and appointed Department Officers for the upcoming year. We are looking forward to working with the new staff. Congratulations are also in order to our elected Chapter and Auxiliary officers for the 2019 year.

Our focus now is on membership and fund raising. We lost our major fund raiser due to our local Golden Corral closing. Hopefully we can make up that loss with a few smaller ones. Some new ideas are being discussed, but nothing definite yet.

Our Chapter is getting more and more calls from social workers in reference to assistance available for veterans they are working with that are home bound. We are trying to come up with a solution to assist them in home, but due to filing claims electronically and location of home is difficult at times.

Hoping everyone has a safe and joyous celebration of Independence Day.

Once again "Thank you for your service!" "Feet and knees together, hold what you got, Airborne!"

Earl Lee Frazier
1st Junior Vice Commander



**2019 Willie A. Pruitt, POW/MIA, Black and White Banquet
BANQUET TICKET(S)**

September 14, 2019

5:00 P.M.

**DAV, George Washington Carver Chapter "78"
Talladega, AL 35160**

For pre-registrations postmarked by August 31, 2019

Banquet \$25.00

For pre-registrations postmarked after August 31, 2019

Banquet \$30.00

Please Complete a separate registration form for each individual

NAME _____ DAV _____ DAVA _____

CHAPTER OR UNIT # _____ TITLE _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP _____

FRIENDS OF THE DAV: Special Donation from DAV/Non-Members \$ _____

Hospitality Room (Mid-Winter Conference 2020) (Coffee, water, etc.) \$ _____

Date Paid _____ Total Paid _____

Check# _____ Date Received _____

Please make checks payable to DAV, GWC, Chapter 78
808 Pine St.
Talladega, AL 35160

For reservations at The Holiday Inn, please contact the hotel directly at 256-362-7780

POC James Nelson @ (770) 757-8754 – Billy Springer @ (256) 493-1121



2nd Junior Vice Commander Joseph Donaldson (3rd District)

Tapley followed through with a phone call.

"I let them know I knew of an organization that needed money to get veterans back and forth to appointments," Tapley said. "They are using their personal vehicles now. Steve was more than happy to come on board and see this through."

Peek said Sabal Trail was happy to help the Veterans' organization.

"I was so glad Bobby reached out to me on this," Peek said. "We are happy to help y'all do this."

Chapter 13 commander Scott Shoemaker was happy with the donation which made the van purchase obtainable.

"I'm at a loss for words," Shoemaker said. "We have worked hard for a long time. This is big and will allow veterans to be served more."

Anita Perez with Chapter 13 said the van would be purchased through the Disabled American Veterans Transportation Network and the van would be maintained and insured by the Veterans Administration.

"They even pay for the gas," Perez said.

Tapley said he just made the connection, but it was the work of the organization's officers that made the donation come about.

"All I did was put in a phone call," Tapley said. "Anita, Hugo (Perez) and Steve did all the leg work. Thank y'all first and foremost. If it weren't for y'all we wouldn't have the freedoms we do today."

Comrades,

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of you who voted for and elected me as the District 3 Junior Vice. I am looking forward to visiting and working with the chapters within the 3rd district.

Joe Donaldson

2nd Junior Vice Commander

Chapter 13: (Alexander City) Submission by Commander Scott Shoemaker



Sabal Trail helps DAV get van to transport veterans

[Cliff Williams](#)

Jun 19, 2019 Updated Jun 19, 2019

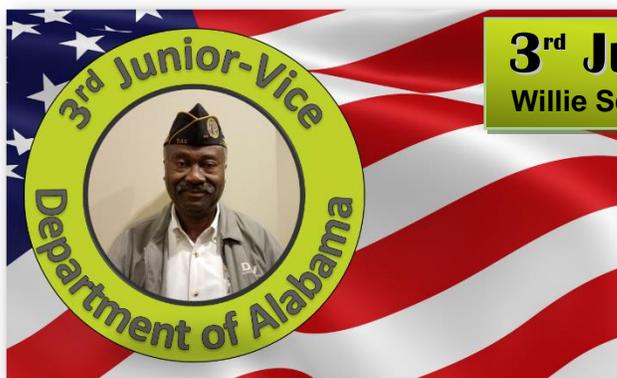
Veterans in Tallapoosa County will soon have a way to get to medical appointments in Birmingham and Montgomery thanks to a \$10,000 donation from Sabal Trail Transmission.

The donation follows Alexander City councilmember Bobby Tapley's observation of the need for a van for the Disabled American Veterans Bill Nichols Chapter 13 to transport veterans.

"At one of your meetings I was at you mentioned you needed money for a van," Tapley said at a meeting of the DAV chapter Monday. "It just so happens I had a connection with Steve (Peek) here with Sabal Trail. One of his coworkers had said if you know of an organization that needs money to let them know."



Members of Bill Nichols Chapter 13 and Unit 13 with Steve Peek (Sabal Trail Transmission) & Bobby Tapley (Alexander City Councilman)



3rd Junior Vice Commander Willie Scott (1st District)

Greetings Comrades,

First, I thank God for allowing me to be a member of the Department of Alabama DAV leadership for the year 2019 - 2020. Secondly, I thank the men and women who voted for me on 1 June 2019 for 3rd Junior Vice Commander. Comrades with God's help I pledge to this Department and to you that I will do the best that I can in carrying out DAV's mission. I want to inform the 1st district that we will be having a call meeting of all chapter's leaders and anyone else who may be interest in being a part of the meeting in late August 2019.

Respectfully,

Willie F. Scott, Jr.

3rd Junior Vice Commander

Chapter 18: (Guntersville) Submission by Commander Edwin Allison

DAV Frank L. Bradford Chapter 18 of Marshall County receives a \$5,000.00 grant from the Marshall County Legislative Office to support the chapter's initiative to help reduce the suicide rate of service members and veterans, specifically, and the general population, in general. Chapter 18 is using the Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST) program developed by Living Works, Inc., a non-profit



Grant to Support Suicide Awareness, Intervention and Prevention Initiative ...

organization, recognized as the world leader in suicide prevention since 1983. ASIST is a grassroots level initiative that teaches the skills of recognizing the warning signs of suicide of those most at risk, how to initiate intervention (suicide first aid) and help them through the crisis toward living a normal and full life. The grant is intended to help Chapter 18 initiate ASIST training to provide trained and certified Suicide Intervention Specialist and program trainers. From Left: Junior Vice Commander Pat Mashburn, Alabama State Representative, Wes Kitchens, District 27, Commander Edwin B. Allison and Senior Vice Commander Curtis Henderson.

Department Meetings

ONLINE/OVER THE PHONE TRAINING

When: Every 4th Saturday 0800

How: Call (319) 527-4759
No access code needed

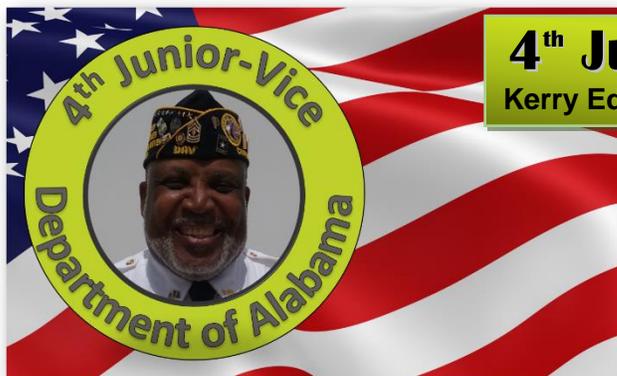


<https://join.startmeeting.com/debbwalk32>

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?



4th Junior Vice Commander

Kerry Edwards

(4th District)

and Department Constitution and Bylaws. More participation in the Town Hall/Training which is held every 4th Saturday at 0800 and it usually last about an hour. This training is very informative for all members. Do not call me saying that you were not informed on training or issues concerning veterans because the training is available, and information can be found on the Department website.

LVAP is very important for all members. Service work, meetings, fundraisers and community service hours can be recorded on the LVAP form which is then turned into your Chapter LVAP coordinator or to Faye Miller the Department LVAP Coordinator.

I am looking forward to working with all chapters within the next year, Fulfilling Our Promises to The Men and Women Who Served. I can be reached at (334) 648-5894 or kedwards30378@sw.rr.com.

Be Blessed,

Kerry Edwards

4th Junior Vice Commander

Klug Smith #6:
Shehan Pake #7:
Enterprise-Coffee Co. #9: Visited
Leo Dubose #35:
Arnold Byers #45:

White Lee #53:
Andrew G Faulk #72:
Dothan #87: Visited
Ozark #94: Visited
Wiregrass #99: Visited

Greetings Comrades,

I would like to thank everyone who put their trust in me to elect me as the as the 4th Junior Vice Commander. I am very honored to be serving in this capacity to represent DAV National, DAV Department of Alabama, and the ten Chapters within the 4th District.

I will work hard to assist all the chapters with all reports and to make sure that they are turned in on time, making sure that all chapter rosters are up to date and that the chapter's CSO's are proficient on all VA claims and their forms. Wrong forms are being submitted causing delays for compensation for that veteran.

Make sure that Chapter Constitution and Bylaws are updated and meet all requirements of the National



Department Adjutant

Hugo A. Perez

informed on upcoming events and changes that will affect you as well as your chapter. I have included my ten points I live by. Share them with your chapter members and as always contact me with any questions that you might have.

Points to live by:

1. Yelling doesn't make you look smart.

Anger is a negative thing. If you must yell to make your point, then you are pointless.

2. Think about what you're going to say before you say it.

If you have something informative to add to a discussion, then by all means say it. Don't just talk so people can hear you. Sometimes is better for you to listen than to talk and miss the whole point.

3. If you find yourself having to remind everyone all the time that you're in charge, you're not.

Greetings Comrades,

As you all know by now, I am the new Adjutant for the Department of Alabama. Before I begin, I would like to thank Chad Richmond for his mentorship and advice. I would like to congratulate the new Junior Vice Commanders and look forward to working with you as well as all the chapters in our Department.

My plan for the future is simple. Keep the channel of communications always open and I will keep you

4. You must work hard at being more informed.

You will make fewer mistakes if you take the time to be more informed.

5. Leadership takes work. If you are tired of leading, then it's time to give up the position to someone who will.

It's our job as leaders of this organization to keep the Chapters, Units, and Districts together. When things go south, the first place our members look is to us for guidance. We need to put forth the effort that it takes to keep us strong.

6. Don't be afraid of change.

How many times have you heard "that's the way we've always done it"? Be open to new ideas.

7. Don't write anything negative over email.

Email is just one of the tools we use to communicate; unfortunately, it's a permanent one. Once you hit send it's out there for all to see, and you cannot take it back. So, use tact when using email. It's better to

call someone on the phone, if there is a problem, than to write something that will come back to bite you later.

8. It's ok to be nervous.

Being nervous make you try harder and it shows you care.

9. There is always room for improvement.

You may have been in the chapter for a long time and you know how things work but things change, so always keep yourself relevant.

10. We all make mistakes.

When I make a mistake please take me aside and tell me what I did wrong. However, I ask that you not only point out the fault but also tell me how to do it better so we can all learn.

Respectfully,

Hugo A. Perez

Adjutant
Department of Alabama



Benefits Protection Team Leader

Charles "Chad" D. Richmond

On June 6 the MISSION Act went into effect. Corey Hawthorne, Director of the VA's Regional office gave us a very good briefing on the Mission Act at our convention. There's not enough space here to adequately explain it, but if you click on [DOWNLOAD FLYER](#) you can read the pamphlet that explains all of the different options available to veterans healthcare. Hopefully this will enable all veterans to receive timely and effective healthcare, regardless of where they are. At least that is the intention.

Greetings Comrades,

I would like to thank Department Commander Jerry Morgan for allowing me to assume this position. I have big shoes to fill, but PDC Culver has built a very solid foundation to stand on and build upon. Thanks Laird. PDC Culver also stated in his report to the convention how important it is that chapters send their BPTL, or another representative, to the annual Mid-Winter conference in Alexandria, VA. With the tight schedules our legislators have, it is sometimes hard to visit every office whenever we have a small group and have everyone be able to attend the National Commander's testimony.

If you are your chapter's BPTL and would like to really get to know what BPTL is all about, download the [Benefit Protection Toolkit](#) after being announced in February. As stated, it is a good set of tools to get a legislative awareness program set up in your area.

As I mentioned at our convention three weeks ago our HSC Grant that comes from the State is not a self-renewing part of the budget. We have to fight for it each year. It is an amount added to the State Department of Veterans Affairs budget. Our HSC budget is \$161,588.00, but the grant we have gotten is only \$113,400.00. That is a substantial shortcoming, so we need to work on our legislators to not only make sure we continue to receive that grant, but that it be increased, as well. We have a team at the Department level working on this, but your efforts are going to be extremely valuable, too. During the membership year our six HSC's submitted 1,168 claims and coordinated the 128,240 miles driven by volunteer drivers transporting 3209 veterans to their appointments. I do not have the total dollar amount of revenue brought into Alabama by our HSC's but will try to get that to you.

And while I'm talking about Alabama, let me address a few of our issues at home. HJR151 (2019-144) by Rep. Rafferty created the task force to investigate the causes of and prevention of suicides among returning Alabama veterans. The task force is composed of the Chairman, who is appointed by the Commissioner of the Alabama Department of Veterans Affairs, two appointed by the State Senate, two by the State House and one each by the Governor, ADPH, ADMH and DHR. This Task Force will

hold Town Hall meetings in our major population centers to gather information concerning veteran suicides.

A few bills have already been passed, but none of them are really earth shattering. Several are to correct state laws to coincide with previous bills that have been passed.

One item that I have mentioned to you and Admiral Davis also mentioned at our convention is his aim to reestablish a County VSO in every County. That is something that has not existed for nearly ten years. I know many of our CSO's will take issue with that, but not everyone qualifies for DAV membership. They need to have someone, too. That is the mission of the State Department of Veterans Affairs. Admiral Davis is currently working on vastly improving the ADVA website and merging it with ALVETNET so that everything pertaining to Alabama veterans can be found on one website.

But, let's talk about some of the Federal Bills that we can support through the [Commander's Action Network](#) :

Federal - HR 553 - Military Surviving Spouses Equity Act: This is what we have been referring to as the DIC Offset Bill which would stop a surviving spouse from having to sacrifice DIC from the SBP. Remember, we the service men and women paid for that ourselves. It's not something that we are asking to be granted to us. It's interesting to note that Gary Palmer and Robert Aderholt are not Co-Sponsors. Makes you wonder, doesn't it?

Federal - HR 203 - Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act of 2019: As I first began this article, the bill had not been passed. But, after submitting it to Anita, I found out that it had passed. As Commander Dennis Nixon stated, "tens of thousands of Vietnam veterans who served in the waters offshore will soon be able to receive benefits for illnesses they suffered due to Agent Orange exposure. It will next go to the President to be signed!" That is one change to this article that I was glad to edit.

Federal - S 514 - Deborah Samson Act: This is but one of the bills pertaining to women veterans. This is the Senate Bill to amend Title 38 to improve the

benefits and services provided by the VA to all of our women veterans. Neither of our Senators are co-Sponsors of this bill. In a nutshell, the DAV's Legislative office is for the enactment of all the legislation that has been introduced addressing all the issues raised in the DAV's report "Women Veterans: The Journey Ahead" and provide sufficient funding to achieve equal access to benefits and quality healthcare for women veterans.

Director Joy Elam and her staff are particularly interested in the way that the VA handles the implementation of the MISSION Act and make sure that we get feedback from our members and other veterans on any hurdles they have had to overcome since June 6 that directly are a result of the MISSION Act.

I looked at all the bills concerning women veterans, both in the Senate and the House, and none of Alabama's legislators are signed on as co-sponsors. Looks like we have some work to do.

If you want to check out all of DAV's advocacy programs, click on to [DAV's current advocacy campaigns](#).

If you aren't signed up for CAN, what are you waiting for?

Lastly, if you have any suggestions for me on what needs to be in this article, don't hesitate to contact me. My e-mail address did not change.

Respectfully,

Charles "Chad" D. Richmond
Benefits Protection Team Leader



DAV
BENEFITS
PROTECTION
TEAM LEADER



[Contact your House Representative](#)



[Contact your Senate Representative](#)



DAV Upcoming Events

July 12, 2019: SBVA Meeting, Montgomery, AL

July 12, 2019: Women Veterans Expo, UAB, Birmingham, AL

August 1, 2019: DAV/Recruit Military Job Fair, McWane Science Center, Birmingham, AL

August 3-7, 2019: National Convention, Rosen Shingle Creek Hotel, Orlando, FL

September 14, 2019: 2019 Willie A. Pruitt, POW/MIA, Black and White Banquet

October 25-26, 2019: Department of Mississippi Mid-Winter Conference, Treasure Bay Casino and Hotel, Biloxi, MS

November 10, 2019: National Veterans Award Reception/Dinner, Sheraton Birmingham, Birmingham, AL

November 11, 2019: Veterans Memorial Service, 8:30 a.m. Cathedral Church of the Advent, Birmingham, AL

November 11, 2019: National Veterans Day Parade, 1:30 p.m. Birmingham Parade Route

November 14-17, 2019: Department of Louisiana Mid-Winter Conference, Hotel Bentley, Alexandria, LA

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

January 16-19, 2020: Department of Tennessee Mid-Winter Conference, Doubletree, Murfreesboro, TN

May 14-17, 2020: Department of Louisiana Mid-Winter Conference, Hotel Bentley, Alexandria, LA

June 4-7, 2020: Department of Alabama Convention, Auburn Marriott Opelika Hotel and Conference Center at Grand National, Opelika, AL

June 17-21, 2020: Department of Tennessee Convention, Doubletree, Murfreesboro, TN

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



Women Veteran Coordinator

Tawanna Jones

Greetings to my DAV Family and Friends,

First, I give Honor and Glory to my Heavenly Father, Thank You LORD!

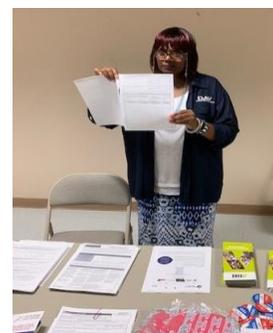
As the Disabled American Veterans (DAV) year came to an end, I was able to get in one more Women Veterans Benefit Workshop and two more Women events. I would like to thank Chapter 31 out of Demopolis for their support with the women workshop that was held at Bryan W. Whitfield Memorial Hospital. I also want to thank Chapter 1 out of Tuscaloosa Alabama for their support with the Mother's Day event and the Baby shower event both held at the Tuscaloosa VAMC. It has been an awesome year, and because of all the support from the DAV Chapters. Thank you all for help with informing Women Veterans of their Veteran Affairs Federal and State Benefits.

I asked the question early this year, "Are You Ready?" I can say: YES, you are, judging by all the support I received from the DAV Chapters of Alabama. There is still a lot of work that we need to do to reach and inform our Women Veterans of their benefits, however I want you all to know that we are on an awesome start in the right direction. I already have two chapters with a pre-tentative date for Women Veterans Benefit workshop for this coming year, one in September and November. Looking for two more for the second part of year.

According to VA News, Women Veterans are among the fastest growing Veteran demographics, accounting for more than 30% of the increase in Veterans who served between 2014 and 2018. Let's do our part and lead the way in making sure all Women Veterans in the state of Alabama are informed and aware of their Veterans Affairs, Federal and State benefits. Women Veterans can live a high-quality life with respect and dignity. Thank You for Standing Behind Women Veterans.



Tuscaloosa DAV Chapter #1 donated and delivered flowers to Women Veterans during the Mother's Day event.



Demopolis DAV Chapter 31 supported the Women Veteran Benefit Workshop

Secondly, I would like to give a Big Shout Out to Annie Byrd, a member of Tuscaloosa DAV Chapter #1. Annie received the award for second place for recruiting new members to join Disabled American Veteran. Annie's hard work, dedication and help with Tuscaloosa DAV Chapter #1 earned an award for the highest number of new memberships for a medium Chapter. Annie Byrd, a lifetime member of DAV is an awesome, professional, dedicated and an advocate for Women Veterans. She believes that all Veterans should be treated with respect and dignity as they seek their benefits. Annie is the reason I do what I do, she took the time explained the real meaning of the DAV mission statement and how DAV made a difference in her life as a retired Coast Guard Sergeant. By being a DAV member, she can make a difference in another Veteran's life through service. Thank You Annie Byrd for all the support you have shown me as the Women Veterans' Coordinator.





As the Women Veterans' Coordinator, I would like to welcome Ellie Vance as the new Tuskegee VA Hospital Service Coordinator.



Ellie is a Retired Army Major Combat Veteran. She is originally from Georgia and is currently residing in Alabama and has traveled all over the world as a military Soldier. She has a passion for helping fellow Veterans and it stems from her interaction with the DAV. She is a lifetime DAV



Ellie, husband (Jerry) and family.

member and has been active in her local chapter. She served as the Adjutant for a year and assisted with local fund raisers and educated the public on their compensation concerns. She is active in her church and serves as an Usher and Sunday School Teacher. She is married to Jerry Vance, also a combat Veteran, and they have two daughters, Najla and Zahra. Ellie is from a family of Veterans. She is a people person and loves spending time with her family and friends. She is excited to meet fellow Veterans and assist them with their claims to get compensated for all the sacrifices they made. She has earned an MBA in Business Administration as well as BS In Criminal Justice. She is also a Certified Paralegal.

To All the DAV Women Veteran members, thank you for all that you do to continue to serve Veterans.

Respectfully,

Jawanna

Women's Veteran Coordinator

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



2nd Annual Women Veteran Health Expo

July 12, 2019

7:30am-4:30pm

UAB Hill Center

1400 University Boulevard Birmingham AL 35233



©Bahman Farzad / lotusflowerimages.com

**Are you a military woman or woman Veteran?
Do you serve/care for military women or women Veterans?
Then this Expo is for you!!**

**Come hear from women Veterans and experts in the field
Women Veterans' health needs, creating responsive
organizations, re-integration challenges, suicide prevention,
violence against women Veterans, maternity care, cancer
screenings, heart health, and healthy lifestyle changes**

See you there!

Pre-Register <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/women-veterans-health-expo-2019-tickets-63666563405>



Department Chaplain

Debra Varner

We cannot do it of ourselves; it takes the power of God working in us to accomplish this unity of love and forgiveness, honesty and truth. In the kingdom we are connected and knitted together bone to bone, shoulder to shoulder and heart to heart.

We were connected as one in war and in peace; one in defeat and one if victory; one on shore and at sea; one on land and one in the air. Wherever we were, we stood together as one voice, one sound, and more importantly "One Nation under God".

From the Chaplain's Corner:

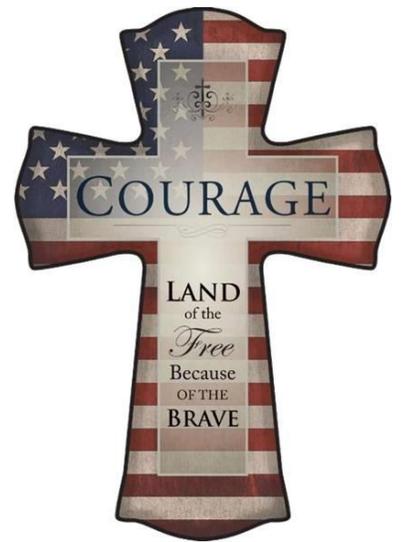
Let us continue in the faith of being one. Ephesians 4:3 - Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Endeavoring, making an honest attempt and a real effort to keep unity and peace among one another. It takes having a made up mind and a strong determination over self and pride declaring, I will allow nothing to separate me from love, peace of mind and the love of God.

A take away thought.... being one is unique and whole – this bond by which peace is maintained..... is Love.

Humbly Submitted,

Debra H. Varner

DAV Chaplain,



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](#)



DAVA Commander

Linda Doss

can accomplish much by way of legislation for our veterans. The undertaking is ongoing and much is to be done. We need to stand fast for the rights and benefits of our disabled veterans. Together we can make a difference in fulfilling the promise.

Respectfully,

Linda P. Doss, State Commander

DAV Department of Alabama Auxiliary

Greetings to all Auxiliary members,

I would like to thank all of you for your confidence in electing me as the 2019-2020 State Commander for the Department of Alabama Auxiliary. It is an awesome task set before me. Working together we





NSO Supervisor

Mary Stovall-Moore

Greetings Comrades,

We have been receiving numerous questions with regards to disagreeing with and or appealing decisions in the new Appeals Modernization Act (AMA), so this article is dedicated to answering the top 3 questions.

How Does the new Appeals Modernization Act (AMA) Work?

To Answer this question, we must first look at the

pre-February 19, 2019, appeals process. In the past VA used a single docket appeals system (the Legacy system). In the legacy system, claimants only had one option if they disagreed with a VA Rating Decision... file a Notice of Disagreement (NOD) and wait several years for the VA to review their prior decision. If the review resulted in a continuation of the denial, the claimant was issued a Statement of the Case and provided 60 days to file a substantive appeal (VA9) to the Board of Veterans Appeals (BVA). The VA9 provided the claimant with the options of a review with a hearing or a review without a hearing. Claimants who did not request a hearing were stuck in the same docket line with those claimants who requested a hearing. This system created a backlog for everyone, whether a claimant requested a hearing or not.

AMA allows claimants to choose from three different review options, or "lanes", when they disagree with a VA Decision:

- **Higher-Level Review Lane.** This review is conducted by a more experienced rating specialist at one of the two Decision Review Operations Centers (DROC). One DROC is located in Bay Pines FL, and the other DROC is located in Seattle, WA. In this lane, claimants are not allowed to submit additional evidence in support

[Table of Contents](#)

of their claims. Instead, the DROC will issue a new decision based on the same evidence of record that was available at the time of the prior decision. The reviewer will evaluate the claim *de novo* (i.e. a fresh new look). The reviewer can overturn the previous decision based on several factors, including a clear and unmistakable error.

- **Supplemental Claim Lane.** This lane allows for the submission of new and relevant evidence. Claimants can also submit a supplemental claim with new and relevant evidence after receiving an unfavorable decision from the higher-level review process, or after receiving a denial from the BVA. If claimants do so within one year of the decision, their effective date will be preserved.
- **Notice of Disagreement Lane (Appeal Directly to the BVA).** Claimants can appeal their cases directly to the BVA following an initial decision from the RO, or any unfavorable decisions from the higher-level review lane or supplemental claim lane. There are three dockets at the BVA for claimants to choose: the direct docket, the hearing docket, and the evidence docket.

Direct Docket – In this docket the claimants are not allowed to submit additional evidence in support of their appeal. The BVA will only look at the evidence that was in the claimant's file when the appealed decision was made. The direct docket option will most likely result in the fastest decision among the three docket options.

Evidence Docket – In this docket, claimants can submit additional evidence to the Board with their NOD or up to 90 days following their NOD submittal. The evidence docket option will most likely result in the 2nd fastest decision among the three docket options.

Hearing Docket – In this docket, claimants will have the opportunity to submit new evidence either at the hearing or within 90 days following the hearing. Since the hearing docket option will most likely result in the longest wait for a decision among the three docket options, careful consideration should be given to determine if this is the right option for you.

Can I opt-out of the Legacy system and opt-into the new AMA?

If you're stuck in the out dated Legacy system it is possible to opt-into the AMA System, however, you can only do so after receiving a Statement of the Case (SOC) or a Supplemental Statement of the Case (SSOC).

What VA Forms are used in the AMA?

- 20-0995 Decision Review Request: **SUPPLEMENTAL CLAIM**
- 20-0996 Decision Review Request: **HIGHER-LEVEL REVIEW**
- 10182 Decision Review Request: **BOARD APPEAL (Notice of Disagreement)**

Respectfully,

Mary Stovall-Moore
NSO Supervisor



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.](#)



NSO Hours

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

Enjoy a safe and happy Independence Day.



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