# Department of Alabama News & Views

January/February 2022





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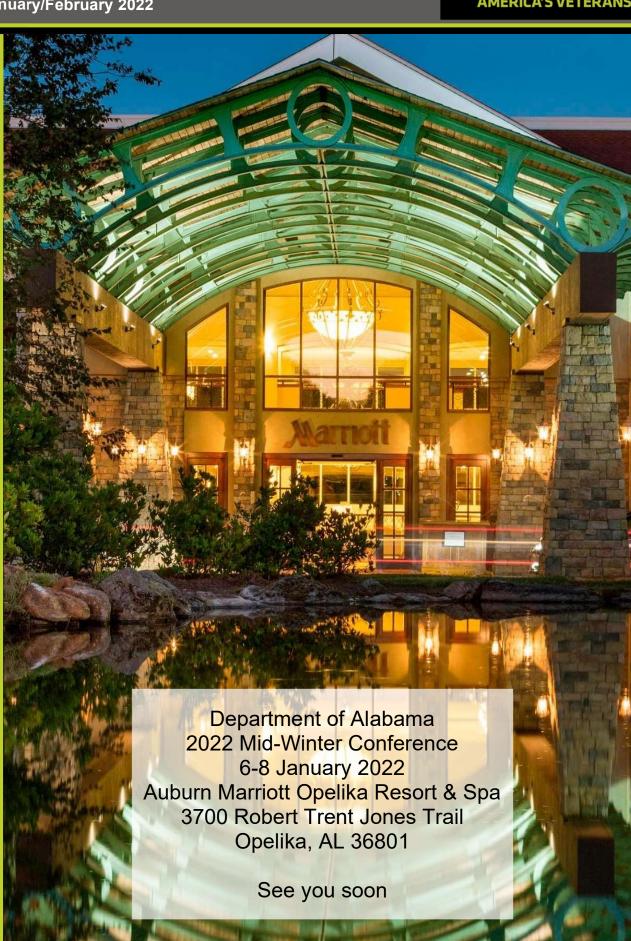
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Volume 26 ! Number 4



Greetings Comrades,

On November 4, 2021, I attended the Mississippi Mid-Winter Conference in Gulfport, Mississippi which enabled me to gain knowledge regarding DAV. This conference further reinforced our mission: we are dedicated to a single purpose, empowering veterans to lead high-quality lives with respect and dignity.

On November 10, 2021, I attended in Birmingham, AL a Veterans Dinner to honor our veterans. I would like to thank our National Veteran Day Coordinator Commander James Nelson and our Department Adjutant Hugo A Perez for coordinating this event.

#### The More You Know:

Veterans Day was originally called "Armistice DAY" Originally on November 11, 1919, it was the first anniversary of the end of World War 1 and was originally established to honor veterans of World War 1, but now it extends to all veterans, Congress made it a national holiday in 1938 and renamed it Veterans Day in 1954.

On 11-18-2021, I attended the Mid-Winter Conference, in Alexandria Louisiana. We went to many events and had the opportunity to gain new information about DAV.

Our Mid-Winter Conference for 2022 is over, and we pray that you will use the information that you gained to continue carry out the mission of DAV.

Respectfully,

Eugene Zeigler
Department Commander



### U.S. & AL State Holidays

January/February

1 January New Year's Day

18 January Martin Luther King Jr. Day

18 January Robert E. Lee Day

February is Black History Month

2 February Groundhog Day

14 February Valentine's Day

21 February Presidents' Day



#### **News & Views Article Due Dates:**

March Issue - Due 20 Feb 2022

May Issue - Due 20 Apr 2022

July Issue - Due 20 Jun 2022

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



Comrades,

Happy Holidays to all members within the MALT. Thank you for what you have done this year as a member of DAV. Whether it's helping veterans, fundraising, or attending the different conventions within the MALT. You are a vital asset to this great organization. Now as we prepare for the Department of Alabama Mid-winter conference in January remember to stay safe and I look forward to seeing all whom will attend and let's have a successful conference.

Membership wise, as a whole, everyone is doing a great job. Continue to spread the positive word about becoming a member of DAV along with the discounts and advantages that accompany as being a member. As we transition into the new membership app that DAV

National Headquarters is starting to implement, I think the real time features that will be displayed will help everyone to see how well we all are doing. DAVs National Mid-Winter Conference will be held from February 27<sup>th</sup> to March 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2022, in Arlington, VA. Hope to see you there. This concludes my comments for this edition of news and views. To all DAV/DAVA

March 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2022, in Arlington, VA. Hope to see you there. This concludes my comments for this edition of news and views. To all DAV/DAVA members, active-duty service members, retired veterans, civilians, and their families. "Thank You for Your Service". "Happy Holidays "and remember to stay safe.

Respectively,





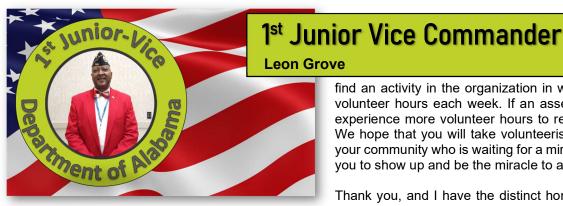
#### **Disabled American Veterans Mission Statement**

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.

(4th District)

### **News & Views**



From the 1st JVC

Hello Comrades, I hope that this Newsletter finds you well, safe, and COVID free. I am excited about the great things that are happening throughout the State; especially in District 4, the lower half of Alabama. I am especially thankful to serve some great Commanders as they move the charge of the organization forward. Therefore, I like to thank each of the Commander's in District 4 that have welcomed me in their Chapter meeting; thanks to each of you. For that, I want each of you to know that my involvement with you do not end there but increasingly evolves as we share a common interest and that is seeking ways to help our veterans.

One of the common themes with the 4th District is the constant effort of finding ways to help our veterans. I sincerely appreciate this commonality and part of my Leon Grove initiative have been to support your efforts by seeking ways to develop collective partnership with the city, and other community leaders. Recently, I've asked two Commanders to introduce me to their mayors to discuss how the Mayor and the City can develop a constant collaboration with the local DAV to work on projects that will collectively help the community and the veterans who we are trying to serve. These meetings with the City's Mayor are showing promise and they are just a start of a series of dialogues that will take place. For instance, in Dothan, Alabama, Mark Saliba (Mayor) discussed with us Dan Blackman, (Commander, Chapter 87), Henry Williams, (Adjutant, Chapter 87), and me about how the city could get behind and support the Traveling Memorial Vietnam Wall, this information was introduced by the Commander of Chapter 87. The discussion also included reestablishing the Veterans Council, and the Veterans One Stop Initiative that will allow veterans to get support from the city and the Veteran's service organization; this initiative will roll out soon. These discussions and activities will help support other DAV functions within our organization; namely, membership and fundraising.

Moreover, I like to encourage each Commander and each member of District 4 to make an assertive effort to

find an activity in the organization in which to work and to dedicate some volunteer hours each week. If an assertive effort was put forth, we could experience more volunteer hours to report to our LVAP reporting system. We hope that you will take volunteerism to heart, for there is someone in your community who is waiting for a miracle to happen for them: I am asking you to show up and be the miracle to a fellow Comrade in need.

Thank you, and I have the distinct honor and pleasure of serving each of you.

Chapter 6 (Foley, Alabama) commanded by Harry Zegarski will have a booth on Saturday October 30, 2021, at the Elberta Sausage Festival. They are continuing with their monthly meetings and on Veterans Day, they will ride their van in the parade in Foley.

Chapter 45 is continuing to have their monthly meetings on the first Tuesday morning of the month at 9am. The City of Loxley continues to provide a pre meeting breakfast at 8am. Our members have also attended the Veterans Day ceremonies the at Town of Silverhill and the City of Fairhope.

We have members who volunteer their time at the Nix Center in Fairhope assisting Veterans with claims.

Respectfully,

1st Junior Vice Commander



Dept 1st Jr Vice Commander Leon Grove DAVA Unit 45 member Jacqueline Grove



Dept Auxilliary Jr. Vice Commander/ Unit45 Commander Linda Steadman

Ch 45 Sgt At Arms Harry Ingel

Ch 45 Jr Vice Commander BobbyTurner

DAV Ch45 Commander Rick Steadman
DAVA unit45 Member Kecia Chambers
Dept Aux Jr Vice Commander/Unit45 Commander Linda Steadman



DAV Ch45 Jr Vice Commander Bobby Turner DAVA Unit 45 Adjutant/Treasurer Rita Turner

Chapter 45 Judge Advocate Mel Apley

Chapter 45 Commander Rick Steadman

and 94 Meetings.

Grove attended our December Meeting and spoke & 45 and Unit 45 were all present & accounted for. about upcoming Department activities.

We are currently assisting the City of Loxley with their annual Veteran Appreciation Dinner which will be held on November 5th, 2021. Also, The City of Loxley will be putting up Banners of Veterans, the six branches of the Military and the DAV banner on the streetlight poles along State Highway 59 in Loxley, AL.



We will finally be able to resume our yearly Walmart fundraising with the next event scheduled on November 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> 2021.

Our Chapter members also visited Chapters 9, 87 Members throughout the State of Alabama attended the Mississippi and Louisiana Mid-Winter Conferences in November. They also attended the Veteran of the Year dinner and parade in Birmingham on The Department 1st Jr. Vice Commander Leon November 10th and 11th 2021, members of 4th District's, Chapter 35

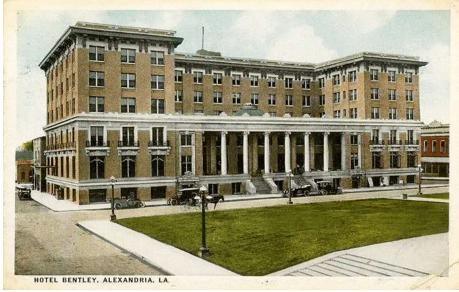














FULFILLING OUR PROMISES

CHAPTER 87
DOTHAN, ALABAMA

We proudly recognize and congratulate Rick Moritz as the 2021 State of Alabama Governors Veteran of the Year. Rick is a proud member Chapter 7 (Mobile, AL), 4<sup>th</sup> District. Congratulations Rick....

November 18, 2021

Commander Daniel Blackman of the Disabled American Veterans (DAV) Chapter 87 awarded the Anderson Manufacturing AR-15 to the winner, Sr. Vice Commander John Johnston. The raffle drawing was held at Golden Corral-Dothan to benefit local disabled veterans and their families in order to provide many services such as rent for the homeless, foodbank assistance, gas for transportation, energy bills, and assistance in filing disability claims to the Veterans Administration (VA). Commander Blackman was quoted as saying, "Thank you to all who purchased tickets this year to help our Alabama veterans and to remember that all donations are fully tax deductible. For all you inquiring minds, the winning ticket number was 0083!" For more information regarding the services provided by the local Chapter-87 DAV call (334) 446-0866.



The 2021 State of Alabama Governors Annual Alabama Veteran of the Year Award was presented to Rick Moritz of the Department of Alabama Disabled American Veterans.





#### 2<sup>nd</sup> Junior Vice Commander

Willie "Hamp" Hampton

(2nd District)

No input for this issue.

Respectfully,

Willie D. Hampton JJJ
2nd Junior Vice Commander



### 3<sup>rd</sup> Junior Vice Commander

D. Jerome Anderson

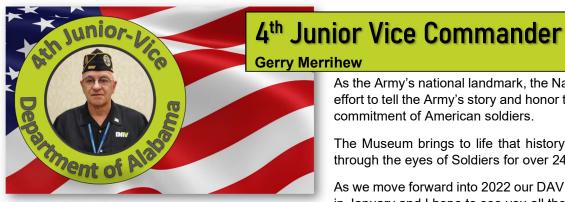
(1st District)





Respectfully,

**D.** Jerome Anderson 3<sup>rd</sup> Junior Vice Commander



Greetings Comrades,

I hope you and your families are well and are remaining vigilant and safe from the rapid COVID which is once again on the rise across our country.

The new National Museum of the United States Army has opened at Ft. Belvoir, Va. This Museum captures all periods of the U.S. Army. Click HERE to learn more.

(3rd District) As the Army's national landmark, the National Army Museum is an enduring effort to tell the Army's story and honor the accomplishments, sacrifices and

The Museum brings to life that history in times of war and peace as told through the eyes of Soldiers for over 245 years.

As we move forward into 2022 our DAV mid-winter conference is coming up in January and I hope to see you all there.

I'm looking forward to visiting more 3rd district chapters during the upcoming new year.

Respectfully,

Gerry Merrihew 4th Junior Vice Commander

commitment of American soldiers.





Ho, Ho, Ho, Comrades,

Well, we are here at the end of the year, and it is Mid-Winter conference time. Let us take a moment to reflect on our 2021 year. After the COVID quarantine it looks like things are getting to what I like to call "COVID normal". Our chapters are starting to open more and more a little at a time. Although we still have people who are hesitant to meet in big crowds, for the most part, we are getting there. Our member numbers are growing, and we have a lot more fundraisers happening. I want to congratulate Chapter 9 for making goal and let them know that they are closely followed by Chapter 1. There is still plenty of time left for the rest of us to make goal, we can do it.

The Mid-Winter Conference will be on January 6, 7 & 8, 2022. CSO training will be on 6 & 7 January followed by some special classes for our department. This Mid-Winter's classes will be about chapter officers and their job descriptions. We decided to do this because we have a lot of new people coming to our chapters and asking what a Junior Vice Commander does. What does a Senior Vice Commander do? And so on. so we decide to have a class that will hopefully give you a better understanding of what makes a chapter work correctly.

Our CSO training, as I mentioned, will be on January 6 & 7. We have a news NSO Supervisor. Her name is Sheretta Latham, and she and John Karuza will be our instructors. If you are attending the CSO training, you must download the book or print it; we

On a fun note, we will be having a Hawaiian Luau for our fun night at Mid-Winter; please come out and support the department Commander and the Auxiliary in their fundraiser.

And finally, let's make our next year a great one everyone, please stay safe, have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year, and as always, take care 

#### Hugo A. Perez

Adjutant

will NOT provide training books.





**Department Meetings** 

### ONLINE/OVER THE PHONE TRAINING

When: Every 4th Saturday 0800

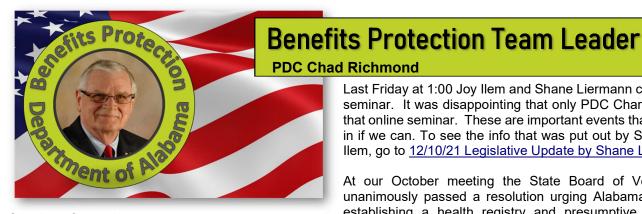
How: Call (319) 527-4759 No access code needed

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?



Greetings Comrades,

Not much to talk about for this newsletter except to remind everyone that the National Mid-Winter Conference is coming up February 27 through March 2, 2022. The agenda is still in a state of flux because of COVID. No one has made the decision on whether the Commander's Report to the Joint Committee will be in the normal format or if something else will be done due to COVID. I have not contacted any of our Senators or Representatives yet concerning our visit, so I'm not sure if we will get face-to-face appointments. I know they are doing them, but I'm not sure if we have enough clout for them to see us in person.

For information on the conference and the link to make room reservations, go to 2022 Mid-Winter Conference - DAV. There is also a tentative agenda. If you plan to attend the National Mid-Winter, please send me a text or an e-mail along with your cell phone number. This will help me in putting the teams together and scheduling them for specific visits.

Though they haven't been finalized, the following are currently the Critical Policy Goals:

- Benefits based on toxic exposures
- Protecting veterans in the claims and appeals process
- Enhance survivor benefits
- Building a Veterans Health Care system for the future
- Minority and underserved veterans' access
- Improving mental health and suicide prevention

These may change between now and the conference, so please check back to this site frequently.

Last Friday at 1:00 Joy Ilem and Shane Liermann conducted a BPTL online seminar. It was disappointing that only PDC Charles Waugh, and I joined that online seminar. These are important events that we should all take part in if we can. To see the info that was put out by Shane Liermann and Joy Ilem, go to 12/10/21 Legislative Update by Shane Liermann - YouTube.

At our October meeting the State Board of Veterans Affairs (SBVA) unanimously passed a resolution urging Alabama Legislators to support establishing a health registry and presumptive service connection for Veterans who served on Fort McClellan. This, of course, is a very touchy subject to some of our legislators, both federal and state, but it is an issue that has existed for way too many years with little action being taken. SBVA Vice Chairman Scott Gedling is really pushing our legislators to take positive action on this a State Proclamation was approved concerning the need for support. You can learn more about the resolution and see a full copy by clicking here.

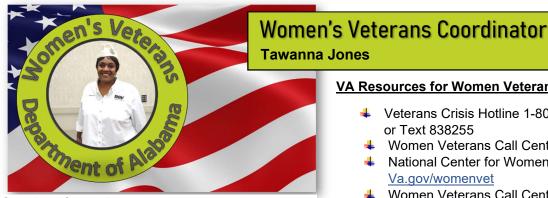
This newsletter will not be published until sometime after Christmas, so I hope it was a joyous occasion for everyone and that families were able to gather together once again. Hope to see everyone at our Mid-Winter Conference January 6-8. Until then, stay healthy; stay safe.

Respectfully,

#### Chad Richmond

Benefits Protection Team Leader





Greetings Comrades,

It's that time of the Year! It is the season to be Joyful! However, it's also the time of the year the Suicide Rate among Veterans increase. Please STOP and take the time to reach out to Veterans. Go ahead pick-up your phone now and call a veteran from your phone log, call a Veteran in your chapter, call a Veteran in your community, call that Veteran that been on your mind, and give him or her the gift of they are not Invisible or alone. Do it! Do it TODAY!!!

#### **New Veterans Crisis Line Number: 988**

Signed into law in 2020, the National Suicide Hotline Designation Act authorized 988 as the new three-digit number for the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline. Veterans can use this new option by dialing 988 and pressing 1 to contact the Veterans Crisis Line. Veterans may still reach the Veterans Crisis Line with the current phone number — 1-800-273-8255 and Press 1 — by text (838255), and through chat (VeteransCrisisLine.net/Chat).

#### **VA Resources for Women Veterans**

- Veterans Crisis Hotline 1-800-273-8255, Press 1 or Text 838255
- ♣ Women Veterans Call Center 1-855-VA-WOMEN
- National Center for Women Veterans Va.gov/womenvet
- ♣ Women Veterans Call Center and Chat www.womenshealth.va.gov/programoverview/wvcc.asp
- Women Veterans Health Care Program www.womenshealth.va.gov
- ♣ Women Veterans Programs and Benefits benefits.va.gov/persona/veteran-women.asp

Until next time, remember if no one told you today, I LOVE YOU!!!

#### Tawanna

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"





### **Upcoming Events**

Jan 6-8, 2022: Dept of AL Mid-Winter Conference, Auburn Marriott Opelika Resort & Spa, Opelika, AL

Jan 23-26, 2022: Dept of TN Mid-Winter Conference, Embassy Suites, Murfreesboro

Feb 27 – Mar 2, 2022: National Mid-Winter Conference, Arlington, VA

Aug 6-9, 2022: National Convention, Orlando, FL

Feb 12-15, 2023; National Mid-Winter Conference, Arlington, VA

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

Feb 25-28, 2024: National Mid-Winter Conference, Arlington, VA

Aug 3-6, 2024: National Convention Phoenix, AZ

Aug 9-12, 2025: National Convention Las Vegas, NV



From the Chaplain Corner

"The former things are come to pass, and new things do I declare." As new things of our life began anew entering the New Year 2022, let us begin with a new hope.

With considerable expectations of new visions, making more resolutions, we need a new hope of faith not deferred, putting old things behind us. May the year of 2022 bring you abundance of opportunities, joyful experiences, and treasurable memories.

It may become difficult to put past hurts, disappointments, and emotional struggles behind, but if we allow our faith to be restored and a desire to hope again, we can celebrate our new beginning. We have a promise, no matter what it is or what it was, this too will pass, nothing in life come to remain.

Allow your positive action, and cheerful outlook to inspire others to be brave enough to take on life challenges and learn to overcome every obstacle in their path.

There are greater things to be achieved in every New Year, and each one must prepare themselves to be great, not by words of the mouth, but by a lot of sacrifices. You are never too old to set another goal or to dream a new dream.

May you forever be filled love, hope and strength that your hearts desires will become a reality in the coming year

This is a new year. A new beginning. And things will change for the better.

Sincerely,

Debra Varner

Department Chaplain

MY FATHER ...

Loves me - John 3:16

Cares for Me - Psalm 103

Renews Me - Isaiah 40:31

Protects Me - Psalm 23:4

Guides & Teaches Me - Psalm 25:9

Redeems Me - Job 19:25 Is Preparing a Place for Me - Psalm 139 **Understands & Accepts Me - Psalm 139** 





Greetings from the Commander:

After attending the 74th National Veterans Day Parade and Banquet in Birmingham. Which I was very pleased to have been a part of. We were pleased to have our National Commander Lynn Helms-Prosser to grace us with her present. This was my first parade and banquet. I can say that it was a sight to see all the floats and organizations that precipitated in the parade, even with the rain. The banquet was a great success, there was a very large turnout.

We have the Mid-Winter Conference coming up soon and I hope to see all of you there if possible. Please be careful and safe. Protect yourself and your family along with others. We are planning a great conference which will be only 2 days now. Let us support the events and the Auxiliary fund raiser.

I would like to thank all that attended the events and supported the Auxiliary in great numbers. As I always say we can do great things together instead of by our self. May God smile upon each of you and give you peace is my prayer.

Sincerely,

#### Fredrick Green

State Commander DAVA State Department Alabama



#### 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:

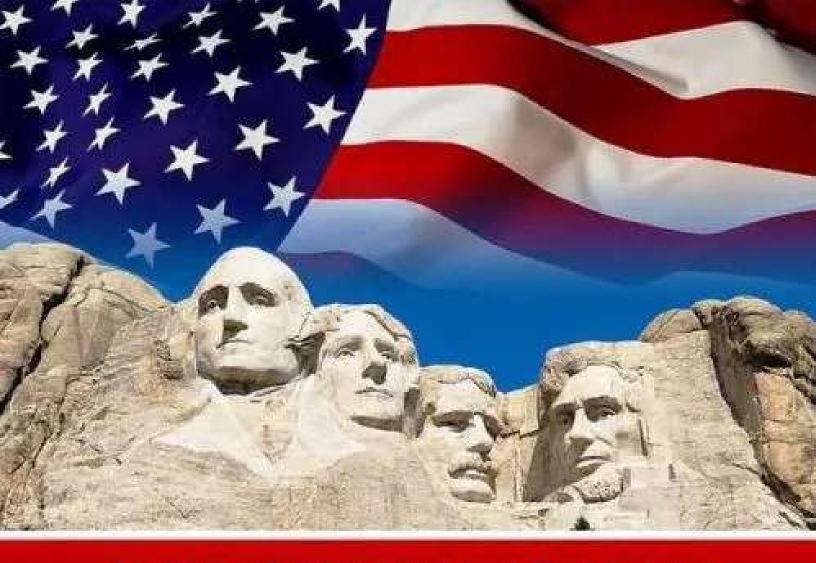
**NSO Hours** 

By Appointment: Office closed.

Office hours for telephone calls:

Office is currently closed due to COVID 19.





# \* PRESIDENT'S DAY \*

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