

Department of Florida March 2023 Newsletter



Top Left : Department members preparing to meet with Congressional Representatives at Midwinter Conference
 Top Right : Vietnam Veterans Memorial
 Bottom left: DAV members appear before House & Senate Veterans Affairs Committees
 Bottom right : Women Veterans Memorial

Department Newsletter Page 2

Department Commander Brenda Reed



It has been a busy month once again! I enjoyed spending time with the members of Chapter 13, Bay Pines last month, took a small vacation to the Caribbean with my disabilities group, then headed off to Washington DC for our annual National Mid-Winter Conference. Our National Commander, Joe Parsetich, did an excellent job representing DAV during his testimony before the joint Veterans Affairs Commission on Tuesday morning.

Unfortunately, we lost one of our dearest members while we were there. Our beloved Dave Tannenbaum was a tremendous advocate for DAV and its injured and ill veterans for many years. He was the Secretary of the DAV State Commanders and Adjutants Association until 2 years ago when he stepped down but remained as Assistant Secretary until his death. Dave was also a member of John C. McCarthy II Chapter 4 in Tampa. He was truly a pillar of DAV and will be missed by so many. We will miss his dry sense of humor and wit, and I will definitely miss my longtime friend. Our prayers and condolences go out to his wife Treva and his children. I have been informed the burial services will be simple with only the family in attendance. A Celebration of Life is tentatively being planned for April 20.

Cards may be sent to:
Treva Tannenbaum
17910 Timber View St
Tampa, FL 33647

We have completed Chapter Officer Training Sessions in Area 1 and will be conducting 2 others in March. Area @ Training will be held on March 15th at Department Headquarters Gainesville and March 22nd at Chapter 84 in Holly Hill. Please, if you are in these Areas, make sure to

attend these training events.

On another note, SCAMMERS abound! I received the following from the VA alerting all of us of SCAMS:

Report and Prevent VA Benefit Scams

Scammers are targeting Veterans and their VA benefits through misleading commercials, emails, texts, cold calls, or online ads. Some may even pose as someone from VA or an organization providing discounts on fees for services. But VA **never** charges you for processing a claim. Keep your benefits safe from fraudsters by knowing what to look out for and reporting fraudulent activity to vaoighotline@va.gov or call **1-800-488-8244**.

I'm looking forward to seeing more of you as the year continues. Until then, please remember to reach out to veterans in your communities either with a simple text, phone call, or email. You never know when someone may be suffering alone. Just one small gesture can make a huge difference in someone's life.

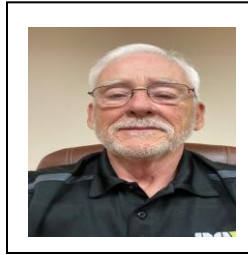
As of January 1, 2023, your Medicare drug plan can't charge you more than \$35 for a one-month supply of each Part-D covered insulin product, and you don't have to pay a deductible for your insulin. You'll pay \$35 (or less) for a one-month supply of each Part-D covered insulin product, even if you get Extra Help to lower your prescription drug costs.

Want to learn more about Medicare's coverage and your costs for insulin? • Visit [Medicare.gov/coverage/insulin](https://www.medicare.gov/coverage/insulin). •

Visit [Medicare.gov/about-us/inflation-reduction-act](https://www.medicare.gov/about-us/inflation-reduction-act). •

Call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227). TTY users can call 1-877-486-2048.





DEPARTMENT SENIOR VICE COMMANDER LAYMOND ROSE

Can Someone PLEASE Explain this to me?

The Department of Florida has 51 chapters but only 20 chapters that report LVAP hours each month to the department.

LVAP (Local Veterans Assistance Program) is a critical and an integral part of everything we do as DAV chapters. I would think that it would be virtually impossible for a chapter to exist without accruing LVAP hours.

The only chapters that ARE REPORTING LVAP hours are: 1, 4, 11, 16, 18, 22, 38, 42, 49, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 94, 108, 109, 123, 133, and 150.

Is this because 31 of our chapters have no activities (including monthly meetings) that would qualify as LVAP hours? Is it because no one in any of these chapters provides any assistance to fellow veterans within their respective communities? Is it because these chapters do no fund-raising activity? Is it because these chapters do no service officer work? Is it possible that these 31 chapters have no members that take the time to visit sick or homebound veterans or members?

Or could it be that the officers and members of these chapters simply do not know what LVAP is or how important it is to the overall success of our organization?

WHY are reporting LVAP hours so important?

Because we are an organization that is chartered by congress to provide specific services to our fellow veterans. We must report these services, including the volunteer hours donated through LVAP to Congress, watchdog groups, members, and donors to maintain our position, respect, and influence with all these stakeholders. Every hour that we report strengthens our organization and amplifies our ability to serve our fellow veterans. The stronger we are the more we can do to serve.

Recently about 25 of us earned over 40 LVAP Hours each by attending our Mid-Winter Conference in Arlington, VA.

The Local Veterans Assistance Program (LVAP) was established in 2007 to facilitate and recognize initiatives in which volunteers can contribute their skills, talents, professional abilities, and time in ways that benefit veterans residing within their local communities.

The program empowers individuals to find and develop new and unique ways to support veterans and their families by providing resources, assistance or help with everyday needs. LVAP initiatives are carried out through departments, chapters, auxiliary units, associated organizations, corporations, and individuals. Since the inception of the program, 57,513 volunteers have donated nearly 11.5 million hours to veterans residing in their local communities.

LVAP Volunteers can dedicate their time in the following ways:

- Chapter and Department Service Officer work.
- DAV Specific outreach efforts.
- Fundraising efforts. DAV/DAVA Special Events (State Fair, Homeless Assistance including Stand Downs, Etc.)
- Direct assistance to veterans, surviving spouses, or families.
- Seminars, Training, and Activities designed to Operate Chapter / Department smoothly.
- Grassroots Legislation.

I believe that every chapter in the department is performing many, if not all, of the above functions. The problem is that the hours are not being reported to the department monthly as required. This is a serious problem with such a simple solution – just report your hours each month.

Membership Report – End of February 2023: Ten (10) chapters have achieved membership quota. The department is at 98.75%

We have 12 Chapters that have met or exceeded their goal
1; 13; 18; 29; 30; 57; 73; 82; 83; 101; 109; 123.
Congratulations to those listed above.

Four (4) months left in the membership year – ending June 30th.



DEPARTMENT JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER CHIP HANSON



This month I am going to pass along information about our National Cemeteries.

ALL Veterans with an honorable discharge are eligible to be interred in any National Cemetery. No one can reserve a spot in any National Cemetery. The exception is if both Spouses are Veterans, and one dies the remaining Spouse can reserve the spot next to the deceased.

Burial benefits available include a gravesite in any of our National Cemeteries with available space, opening, and closing of the grave, perpetual care, a Government headstone or marker, a burial flag with Military Honors from their Branch of the Military, and a Presidential Memorial Certificate, at no cost to the family. Some Veterans may also be eligible for Burial Allowance.

Burial benefits available for spouses and dependents buried in a national cemetery include burial with the Veteran, perpetual care, and the spouse or dependents' name and date of birth and death will be inscribed on the Veteran's headstone, at no cost to the family. Eligible spouses and dependents may be buried, even if they predecease the Veteran.

Cremated remains represent about 75% of interments in National Cemeteries, they receive the same honors as casketed remains. However, with cremated remains, there are 4 separate ways of interment. They can be buried in the same manner as a casket, with the same headstone as a standard casket grave, the cremated remains can also be placed in the columbarium, (a wall with areas for the urns) or the ashes can be placed in the Ossuary (a common grave in a Memorial Garden) and the name placed on the Memorial Wall. If the Family chooses to spread the ashes in a manner that cannot be visited (such as spreading them around in the Ocean or a meadow or other ways the Veteran wanted to be interred), the name of the Veteran can be placed on the Memorial Wall. The Ossuary and the Memorial Wall are available in National Cemeteries completed after 2007.

There is never a charge for any interment at a National Cemetery or the Memorial Wall.

"It is foolish and wrong to mourn the men who died. Rather we should thank God that such men lived."

-- George S. Patton

Barrancas

Naval Air Station 1 Cemetery Rd Pensacola, FL 32508-1054
(850) 453-4108

Florida

6502 SW 102nd Ave Bushnell, FL 33513-8914
(352) 793-7740

Cape Canaveral

5525 U.S. Highway 1 Mims, FL 32754-4826
(321) 383-2638

Bay Pines

10000 Bay Pines Blvd St. Petersburg, FL 33708
(727) 319-6479

Sarasota

9810 State Rd 72 Sarasota, FL 34241-9574
(941) 922-7200

St. Augustine

104 Marine St St. Augustine, FL 32084-5004
(904) 766-5222

Tallahassee

5015 Apalachee Pkwy Tallahassee, FL 32311
(850) 402-8941

Jacksonville

4083 Lannie Rd Jacksonville, FL 32218-1247
(904) 766-5222

South Florida

6501 S State Rd 7 Lake Worth, FL 33449-5309
(561) 649-6489



DEPARTMENT CHAPLAIN REVEREND JIM TAYLOR



I just returned from our National Mid-Winter Conference in Washington DC. I enjoyed and am grateful for the experience. Our National Commander, Joe Parsetich and his team, did an outstanding job when he presented to the Joint Session of the Veteran Affairs Committee. The most unusual issue I observed was around scheduling. We saw that a number of the Veteran Affairs Committee members were coming and going. One congressperson addressed the issue saying, "please know we are interested in all you have to say but the schedule got messed up and many of us are on both this committee and the Armed Service Committee and they are meeting at the same time." Even for my own Florida district legislator the staff person in charge of veteran concerns was double booked and the legislator scheduled for me to come back and see her the next day but that was cancelled due to her schedule changing overnight. All I know is when the submarine CO said we were leaving at a certain day and time we left at that day and time or someone had hell to pay.

Mary and I stayed two extra days to see the sights around Washington DC. We saw our different monuments for WWI, WWII, Korea, Vietnam, Washington, Lincoln, ML King, etc. Of course, I had to go by the Navy Memorial. Inside the Navy Museum there is a special section for the Chief Petty Officer's Locker. I was happy to find that we have a DAV Memorial. Most of you likely knew that but I appreciated finding out that existed.



World War II Memorial above and Korean War Memorial below





John Markiewicz Department Judge Advocate

Some information and guidelines for our Chapters.

APPROVAL

When a Constitution and Bylaws, or amendments thereto, have been adopted, they must be forwarded immediately, in triplicate, to the State Department for approval by the Department Judge Advocate and signed by both the Chapter Commander and the Chapter Adjutant. Following that, the document will be forwarded to National Headquarters for approval by the National Judge Advocate. Until the National Judge Advocate has affixed his/her approval, the document is neither effective nor binding. In drafting a Constitution and Bylaws, you should refer to the Department's Constitution and Bylaws and the National Constitution and Bylaws to avoid any conflict in content. You are strongly encouraged to utilize the Model Chapter Constitution and Bylaws provided on the National Website at:

https://www.dav.org/wp-content/uploads/Model_Chapter_Const_Bylaws.pdf

You can copy and paste this link onto your computer browser. The closer you adhere to this Model the greater the likelihood of quick approval. Specific times dates and locations of meetings should be documented in your Chapter Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) that can be changed without further approval and effective immediately locally by vote of membership and should then be referred to in your Constitution and Bylaws indicating "as specified in the Chapter SOP". This will allow you to make changes to meeting dates and times without having to revise your Constitution and Bylaws every time you do so and without having to delay until you get Department and National approval of the revised date/time.

INCORPORATION

Chapters may wish to incorporate under their respective state laws as a non-profit corporation. Articles of Incorporation must follow the guidelines and contain the provisions as set forth in Article 17 of the National Bylaws.

Furthermore, the Articles of Incorporation must be approved by the respective DAV Department Judge Advocate and the National Judge Advocate prior to filing the document with the proper state corporation authorities.

REFERENCE GUIDELINES

It is suggested that every Chapter should make and maintain current copies of the National Constitution and Bylaws, the Department Constitution and Bylaws and have available for ready reference a current copy of Robert's Rules of Order, Revised. These documents, if followed judiciously, should eliminate misunderstanding and internal disputes within the Chapter. These three copies of Constitution & Bylaws were placed on a flash drive and provided to those chapters in attendance at our January Mid-Winter Conference and will be provided to all other chapters who attend the scheduled Department Officer Training in their Area.

PUBLICITY

Excellent, timely Chapter publicity material is available free of charge on our national website at www.dav.org/wp-content/uploads/PublicityGuide.pdf, or send your request to the DAV Communications Department, National Headquarters, P.O. Box 14301, Cincinnati, OH 45250-0301.

Our National Director of Outreach and Communications Dan Clare will be providing training on AV's Website and how to utilize the website to better assist your chapter in promoting your chapter and contacting media. Don't miss this presentation during our upcoming Department Convention in June.





Andy Marshall Department Adjutant

Senate Bill S 10 VA Careers Act of 2023

Sen. Jon Tester (Mont.), Chairman of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee and Sen. John Boozman (Ark.) introduced S. 10—the VA CAREERS Act of 2023, legislation to bolster efforts to recruit and retain strong clinical and managerial leadership in the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) health care system and make other important improvements to attract clinicians in scarce medical specialties.

In the wake of COVID-19, physicians, nurses and other clinical and administrative executives are in short supply throughout the health care industry. In addition, the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) has been hampered with salary caps which prohibit them from effectively recruiting and retaining critical health care professionals in their local markets. In addition to modification of pay limitations for specialty medical positions and increasing pay caps for certain leadership positions in VHA, the bill would allow VA to pay for licensure costs for recipients of VA scholarship programs; require additional staff training on care models for managing older veterans' health care needs; expand leave options for clinicians during national emergencies; provide reimbursement for continuing medical education costs for certain employees; and modernize VA's human resources program.

DAV supports the VA CAREERS Act of 2023, in accordance with DAV Resolution No. 056, which urges our support of efforts to recruit and retain a robust VA clinical workforce. We commend Senators Tester and Boozman for their bipartisan leadership in ensuring the VA health system can remain competitive with the private sector in attracting and retaining health care professionals who are able to provide the highest quality care to our nation's veterans.

S. 42 – the BUILD for Veterans Act of 2023

Sen. Jon Tester, Chairman of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee, recently introduced S. 42, the Build, Utilize, Invest, Learn and Deliver (BUILD) for Veterans Act of 2023, which would improve staffing to manage construction of VA assets and ensure that there are concrete plans to improve planning, management, and budgeting for construction and capital asset programs at the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).

The legislation would also ensure VA completed climate resilience surveys for all of its facilities and projected needs for capital assets into the future. Importantly, the bill would assure that VA's infrastructure planning considers the needs of women veterans and veterans' needs for dental and long-term care services.

With the growing number of veterans expected to enter the VA health care system in the coming decades, it has become increasingly imperative that Congress take the lead in strengthening VA's health care infrastructure, and S. 42—the BUILD for Veterans Act is a critical first step toward achieving that goal.

VA increases maximum life insurance coverage for Veterans and service members by \$100,000

WASHINGTON — Beginning March 1, VA is increasing the maximum amount of life insurance coverage available to Veterans and service members from \$400,000 to \$500,000 for [Veterans' Group Life Insurance \(VGLI\)](#) and [Servicemembers Group Life Insurance \(SGLI\)](#). This increase in coverage reflects the current cost of living and helps ensure that the families of Veterans and service members will have the financial support they deserve after their loved ones pass away.

Veterans who are under age 60 and currently enrolled in VGLI will be able to purchase additional coverage in \$25,000 increments up to \$500,000. All active duty, guard, and reserve service members eligible for SGLI will automatically receive the increased coverage on March 1.

Adjutant's Column Continued

West Virginia State

Senate passes bill allowing veterans and retired law enforcement officers to protect schools

A bill that would allow honorably discharged veterans, retired state troopers, deputy sheriffs, and federal law enforcement officers to protect West Virginia schools has passed in the Senate.

Senate Bill 282, introduced by Senator Eric Tarr (R-Putnam), would establish the West Virginia Guardian Program. The program would allow county boards of education to contract with honorably discharged veterans, retired state troopers, retired deputy sheriffs, or retired federal law enforcement officers to provide West Virginia Guardian Services.

The purpose of the contract is to provide public safety, and or security on public school grounds and buildings.

According to the bill, public safety or security means the protection of students, faculty, and staff of a public school from violence, bullying, theft, substance abuse, sale or use of illegal substances, exposure to weapons, and threats on school grounds. The "Guardian" may carry a concealed weapon upon meeting all requirements. Guardians will not act as law enforcement and will not have the authority to perform an arrest. Senator Tarr says that this bill will not mandate county boards of education to hire "West Virginia Guardians."

"It is permissive by counties, no county has to participate in this," Tarr said. "If they want to run a levy to do this, they can run a levy and do this in their schools, if they wanted safer schools in their county," Tarr explained. Potential Guardians must provide proof of current U.S. and West Virginia residency, possess a high school diploma or GED, hold a concealed carry permit, and pass the law enforcement professional standards program at the West Virginia State Police Academy.

Ensuring the [Department of Veterans Affairs](#) does not get overwhelmed by the influx of new patients and claims coming from the sweeping toxic exposure law passed last year will be a priority of the new House Veterans Affairs Committee chairman, the lawmaker told Military.com in an interview.

Rep. Mike Bost, R-Ill., said he sees no signs yet that the VA is being overwhelmed, noting that the law, known as the [PACT Act](#), also gave the department the funding and flexibility to hire more claims processors and medical staff. But he added that it will be important for Congress to stay on top of the issue as the implementation progresses.

"That's 3.5 million-plus new people receiving services. That's a lot of people on a system that's already a big system," Bost said "We got to make sure that we're ready to roll and no one loses out on what they're already receiving. "The department began accepting benefits claims shortly after the law was enacted and processing them at the start of January.

As of Tuesday, the VA had received 278,000 PACT Act claims and processed 39,250, approving nearly 85% of them, VA Secretary Denis McDonough told reporters at his monthly news conference. The claims backlog, defined as claims older than 125 days, has grown by roughly 50,000 since September to 200,140, but the department has hired about 2,000 new claims processors and is using an automated system to process some



Calendar of Events

March 12 Daylight Savings Time Begins



March 17 St. Patrick's Day



March 20 1st Day of Spring



March 27-31 Winter Sports Clinic



US Congress Senate Bill 280

A bill to ensure that only licensed health care professionals furnish disability examinations under a certain Department of Veterans Affairs pilot program for use of contract physicians for disability examinations, and for other purposes.

Action: 2023-02-07 - Read twice and referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

SB 112

A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to strengthen benefits for children of Vietnam veterans born with spina bifida, and for other purposes

Action: 2023-01-26 - Read twice and referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

HB841

To amend title 38, United States Code, to allow a surviving spouse of a Medal of Honor recipient to receive a special pension concurrently with dependency and indemnity compensation, and for other purposes.

Action: 2023-02-06 - Referred to the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

HB608

To terminate the Electronic Health Record Modernization Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Action: 2023-01-27 - Referred to the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

HB562

To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to permit Members of Congress to use facilities of the Department of Veterans Affairs for the purposes of meeting with constituents, and for other purposes.

Action: 2023-01-26 - Referred to the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

HB394

To prohibit the Secretary of Veterans Affairs from denying a veteran benefits administered by the Secretary by reason of the veteran participating in a State-approved marijuana program, and for other purposes.

Action: 2023-01-17 - Referred to the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

HB 366

To amend title 38, United States Code, to treat certain individuals who served in Vietnam as a member of the armed forces of the Republic of Korea as a veteran of the Armed Forces of the United States for purposes of the provision of health care by the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Action: 2023-01-13 - Referred to the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs

HB 196

To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to modify the information technology systems of the Department of Veterans Affairs to provide for the automatic processing of claims for certain temporary disability ratings, and for other purposes.

Action: 2023-01-09 - Referred to the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

HB 41

To amend title 38, United States Code, to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to ensure the timely scheduling of appointments for health care at medical facilities of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

Action: 2023-01-09 - Referred to the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs

DAV's 2023 Critical Policy Goals

1. Correct inequities and provide parity in compensation benefits for veterans and survivors.
2. Implement the PACT Act and address gaps in toxic exposure benefits.
3. Ensure equity in VA care, services and benefits for women, LGBTQ+ and minority veterans.
4. Provide a full spectrum of long-term care options for service-disabled and aging veterans.
5. Bolster mental health resources to ensure continued progress in reducing veteran suicide.
6. Expand the VA's capacity to deliver timely, high quality care to veterans.

Adjutant's Column Continued

H.R. 232,

The Real Justice for Our Veterans Act, would authorize the Department of Justice (DOJ) to provide grants to local governments for improving retention rates in veterans' treatment courts and specialized programs that integrate substance use treatment services with criminal justice proceedings. The bill also would allow veterans to participate in a regular drug court program if no veterans' treatment court is available. This bill would also require DOJ to report to Congress three years after its enactment on the effectiveness of veterans' treatment court programs, including an assessment of access to such programs for women and other demographic groups.

Years of experience from the veterans' treatment courts have resulted in a reduction of recidivism rates for veterans compared with persons in other treatment courts and individuals not involved in any sort of alternative or diversionary court program. DAV supports H.R. 232, in accordance with DAV Resolution No. 030, which supports the continued growth of veterans' treatment courts in addition to appropriate goals and metrics to determine the program's effectiveness.

Pending Florida Veterans Legislation**HB 0339**

Education of Dependents of Deceased or Disabled Servicemembers, Prisoners of War, and Persons Missing in Action by Yarkosky

Education of Dependents of Deceased or Disabled Servicemembers, Prisoners of War, and Persons Missing in Action: Revises eligibility requirements for educational benefits provided by state to spouse or dependent child of deceased or disabled servicemember; revises eligibility requirements for educational benefits provided by state to dependent child of prisoner of war, person missing in action, or deceased or disabled servicemember who participated in certain military operations.

Effective Date: July 1, 2023

Current Committee of Reference: House Higher Education Appropriations Subcommittee Actions

02/28/2023 HOUSE Now in Higher Education Appropriations Subcommittee

SB 0366

Dental Services for Veterans by Burgess Dental Services for Veterans; Establishing the Veterans Dental Care Grant Program in the Department of Veterans' Affairs; requiring the department to contract with a direct-service organization to administer the program, etc.

Effective Date: 7/1/2023

Current Committee of Reference: Senate Military and Veterans Affairs, Space, and Domestic Security

Actions 02/09/2023 SENATE Referred to Military and Veterans Affairs, Space, and Domestic Security;
Appropriations Committee on Health and Human Services;
Appropriations.

HB 0417

State Lottery Funding for Veterans' Assistance Education Programs by Temple State Lottery Funding for Veterans' Assistance Education Programs: Requires Department of Lottery to create instant-ticket lottery game that benefits veterans' assistance education programs; provides that veterans' assistance education programs may be funded by Educational Enhancement Trust Fund; requires department to provide certain information to public.

Effective Date: July 1, 2023

Current Committee of Reference: House Constitutional Rights, Rule of Law & Government Operations Subcommittee Actions
02/01/2023 HOUSE

Now in Constitutional Rights, Rule of Law & Government Operations Subcommittee.

HB 0453

Veterans' Assistance Grants by Dunkley Veterans' Assistance Grants: Requires DVA, subject to appropriation, to award grants to certain entities for purpose of increasing public awareness of benefits & services available to veterans; provides requirements for initial grant recipients; requires report to DVA as condition for consideration for subsequent grants; requires DVA to adopt rules.

Effective Date: July 1, 2023

Current Committee of Reference: House Local Administration, Federal Affairs & Special Districts Subcommittee Actions

02/01/2023 HOUSE Now in Local Administration, Federal Affairs & Special Districts Subcommittee.

Chapters visited by Department Officers since June 2022: 11, 13 (x2), 17, 18 (X2), 23, 30, 32, 38, 49, 67, 78, 84, 85, 86, 87 (X3), 90, 97, 101, 109, 123, 129, 158