



## Department of Florida June 2019 Newsletter



Top Left: D-Day Picture—6<sup>th</sup> Airborne

Top right D-Day Picture

Bottom Left D-Day Picture

Bottom Right D-Day Picture

## Department Newsletter Page 2

### Department Commander Mary Ann Keckler



My term as your Department Commander is about to come to an end on June 22. What a great year it has been serving as your Department Commander. It has been a very busy year as I along with your other Department Line Officers have been very busy travelling the State and visiting as many chapters as we could. I am sure the Department Adjutant will ensure officers continue to visit as many chapters as possible solely for the purpose of offering Department assistance to you. I am sure the officers will first visit the chapters they did not get to this year (see listing of chapters visited in Adjutant's column).

I wish to thank the chapters I personally visited for their warm hospitality shown me during my visits. In addition, I visited our VA Medical Centers. I cannot say thank-you enough for our many volunteers at the VA facilities—our Volunteer Service Officers, Volunteer Drivers, and VAVS volunteers. Thank you for all you do to file claims, drive and provide items for our hospitalized veterans. Volunteering to serve our Nation's heroes is very commendable.

I had the privilege of installing newly elected and appointed officers at Chapters 4 and 18 and 158 this month. I attended Installation of Brandon Chapter 83 also.

As your Department VAVS Chairman, I continued to perform those duties in addition to my duties as Department Commander.

I attended the National VAVS Advisory Conference in San Antonio this month and visited our VA Medical Facilities. I appointed two new VAVS Representatives at Bay Pines and West Palm Beach VAMC's.

I attended the Memorial Day Ceremony at Bushnell National Cemetery on May 27.

My year as Commander is not over yet though. I will attend and install officers at Chapter 16 in Orlando and attend the Pre-convention Meeting at the Lake Mary Marriott.

I must take this opportunity to thank my elected line officers who I had a great working relationship with this year. Senior Vice Commander Thomas Ayala, Junior Vice Commander Duane Godfrey, Judge Advocate John Markiewicz and Chaplain Chip Hanson, thank you all for your support and assistance. We all stayed in communication with each other throughout the year.

I would also like to thank the Department Executive and Finance Committees for their support and dedication to our Department. Thanks also to our Department Inspector Wally Tyson for his work this year. Lastly, thank you to our Department Executive Director/Adjutant Andy Marshall for his assistance and a job well done. His wealth of knowledge has been invaluable in helping keep us in check and ensure our Department remains the top Department in the DAV.

I look forward to seeing you in a couple weeks at our Department Convention. I appreciate all those members who take an active interest in our Organization.





## Department Senior Vice Commander Thomas Ayala

This month I visited with Barefoot Bay Chapter 155, who is proposing to change the chapter name. I also visited St. Augustine Chapter 6. I had the opportunity to install the newly elected and appointed officers at Space Coast Chapter 123 in Merritt Island. I participated in the Memorial Day Ceremony at Lake City VAH and attended the Memorial Day Ceremony in Jacksonville.

I had a great visit with Barefoot Bay Chapter 155. The newly elected Chapter Commander and Treasurer have some great ideas on ways to increase their membership. They have an awesome relationship with their community and are hoping to move their Chapter Service Office to a larger space as they now have three Chapter Service Officers and interview between 30-40 clients monthly.

Once again, I had the pleasure of installing new chapter officers. This was my first time to install officers at Merritt Island. Space Coast Chapter 123 has 21 Chapter Service Officers and 5 Volunteer Department Service Officers. They perform their service work at the chapter, Viera and Lake Baldwin Clinics. Thank you Chapter 123 for all you do.

I had the honor of participating in the Lake City VAMC Memorial Day Ceremony. In attendance were representatives from Senator Rubio's and Congressman Lawson's Offices. The Keynote Speaker was Bruce Hill, a Naval retired chaplain. The MC was Chad Adams, Acting Associate Director of the Lake City VAH.

Our Department has done an outstanding job with membership recruiting this year. I am proud of our chapters for their recruitment.

The following chapters are still working hard toward meeting their membership goal.

### Chapter Need

Chapter	Need
5	7
7	18
42	3
97	9
119	3
126	1
159	3

*The top 3 Chapters who have the highest percentage over goal are: Polk County 160 with 114.67 % of goal; Crystal River 158 with 104.49% of goal and, Crestview 57 with 103.56% of goal.*

I will continue to ask you to sign-up and join the Commander's Action Network and Volunteer-for-Veterans through the DAV website. There, you will receive legislative alerts to include already prepared emails to send to your Congressional Representatives and receive email alerts to assist injured and ill veterans in your community who need minor assistance such as yard work, shopping, minor repairs, etc.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank each of you for the confidence and support throughout the year. It is truly an honor to have served as your Department Senior Vice Commander and look for your support in my bid to be your Department Commander for the 2019-2020 year.

I look forward to seeing you at our 92<sup>nd</sup> Department Convention where I will ask for your support to be next Commander of the greatest Department in the DAV.





## **Department Junior Vice Commander Duane Godfrey**

May was a month of challenges for me both personally and with our local chapter so I did not travel as much as I would have liked in May. Unfortunately, several of my fellow chapter members/officers had some personal family issues arise so I spent most of the month attempting to keep our chapter running in their absence. I hope soon they will be back to the chapter and fulfill their duties as newly elected/installed officers.

I hope all chapters completed their IRS Form 990EZ as well as Sunbiz form to maintain their tax exemption status thru IRS and State of Florida. Also, I hope chapters have forwarded their Chapter Officer's Report to all three entities: National and Department Headquarters and the St. Petersburg National Service Office. Also, the end of June is time to submit Annual Financial Reports to Department Headquarters. **In addition, Chapters must submit their report to National Headquarters if income totals \$10, 000 or more excluding per capita dues. If income exceeds \$300,000 excluding per capita dues, the financial report must be reviewed by a CPA.**

I was the Installing Officer for Titusville Chapter 109. They have a new Chapter Commander, Royal Moulton. The chapter does a great job with their Homeless Veteran program. They host one of the best Stand Downs anywhere. It was a pleasure visiting them and look forward to great things coming from the chapter.

I also had the privilege to install officers at Orange Blossom Gardens Chapter 150. The chapter was very helpful to me when I started Chapter 158 in Crystal River. Chapter members have been very active in our Department Servicer Officer Program. Since the clinic at the Villages opened, chapter members volunteered their time serving as Volunteer DSO's at the clinic.

Unfortunately, after many long years as volunteers, 7 Volunteer DSO's recently retired to include PDC Jack Johnson, Robert Kobac, a former VA Service Center Manager and Mary Barrett, the Chapter's Adjutant, Mike Wells, Jose Morales and Steve Grzanichas well as several other members.

In addition to serving as your Department Junior Vice Commander, I was elected again as Chapter Commander of Crystal River Chapter 158.

I attended the Installation of Officers at Manatee Chapter 18. I enjoyed meeting with the chapter membership and enjoyed their dinner. They are a great supporter of the Department of Florida. Would like to thank past Chapter Commander and National Executive Committeeman John Raber for the invitation to attend.

I would like to thank all of the chapters I visited for their hospitality, as our visits are efforts to have the chapters get to know our Line Officers and offer our assistance.

I look forward to seeing many of you at our upcoming Department Convention which begins on Thursday, June 20 at 6:00 pm when our Finance and Executive Committees meet. Remember—dress code for the Saturday night Commander's Ball is Roaring 20's era clothing and dress code for Friday night Memorial Service is white jacket for those who already have one and jacket and tie for those participants in the Memorial Service.

Thank you for your support during last year's convention when you elected me as Junior Vice Commander and I again ask for your support as I seek the office of Department Senior Vice Commander.





## Department Chaplain Chip Hanson

The future of Disabled American Veterans depends on our volunteers. Getting our membership to help is vitally important, not only to us, but the men and women who fought for this Country. Many rely on our volunteers to assist with the VA claims work, drive them to and from medical appointments and provide them with items through our VAVS Program.

What does it mean to volunteer? To volunteer is to give of yourself in service to a cause. It is about freely giving your time to help an organization, your community or an individual. To volunteer means to act on behalf of something or someone else.

One of the more well-known benefits of volunteering is the impact on the community. Volunteering allows you to connect with your community and make it a better place to live for all to enjoy. Even helping out with the smallest tasks can make a real difference to the lives of people, veterans and organizations in need. Volunteering is a two-way street; it can benefit you and your family as much as the cause you chose to volunteer your hours.

Dedicating your time as a volunteer helps you make new friends, expand your network and boost your social skills. One of the best ways to make new friends and strengthen existing relationships is to commit to a shared activity together. Volunteering is a great way to meet new people, especially if you are new to the area.

It strengthens your ties to the community and broadens your support network, exposing you to people with common interests, and neighborhood resources. Also, fun volunteering clearly helps to combat depression. Volunteering keeps you in regular contact with others and helps you develop a solid support system.

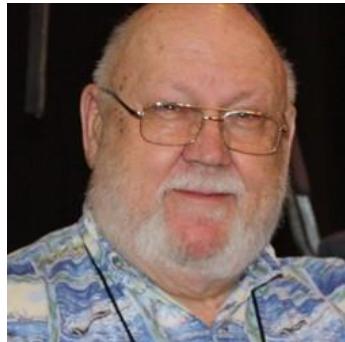
Last year, DAV launched a new site called [Volunteer-for-Veterans.org](#) to give veterans and volunteers a new platform to request and give assistance. This nationwide resource was designed to connect volunteers with opportunities to lend a helping hand to veterans, their families, caregivers and survivors.

It's essentially a database to match volunteers with volunteer opportunities serving veterans. Those opportunities are as limitless and varied as the needs of our Nation's veterans, particularly those changed by wartime service.

Veterans, caregivers and survivors in need of assistance or mentoring can post opportunities based on their specific needs. So please visit [Volunteer-for-Veterans.org](#) and sign up today. While you're at it, please encourage others in your chapter and community to do the same. Pass it on to other organizations who volunteer their time in the community.

*1 Corinthians 13:13 And now abide faith, hope, love, these three but the greatest of these is love.*





## John Markiewicz Department Judge Advocate

This month's article will discuss contracts. Chapters become involved in signing contracts in a number of ways. Some events they may want to participate in require a contract, maintenance contracts on major appliances are common and home maintenance warranties are starting to become more and more common as chapters look for ways to reduce their upkeep expenses on Chapter Homes and appliances.

The first thing to remember is that in order to enter into one of these contracts, the membership must approve the contract before the Commander or Adjutant or any other officer signs that contract. Even if you have a provision in your bylaws that authorizes the Commander, with E-Board approval to make expenditures up to a proscribed limit for emergency repairs or replacement such as plumbing, electrical, heating, air conditioning, it would be difficult, if not impossible, to justify signing a contract for long term services as meeting the emergency criteria for signing in advance of the chapter membership having voted to approve and authorize same. Long term contracts are not emergency repairs or maintenance. Additionally, many of these contracts require payment by credit card only and, as well all know, DAV Chapters are not permitted to use credit or debit cards and must pay by cash or check.

The DAV "Nonprofit Advisor" points out that vendor contracts are commonplace risks in event planning, and there are risks as well as in contracts for maintenance, warranties or services. What if presented with a contract with the following provision: "We can't let our customers terminate for poor performance. If we did that, we could go broke after several months of truly bad performance."

Would you move forward with this agreement? Of course not. While this is an extreme example, many vendor contracts are at times predatory in nature and littered with boilerplate language. To boot, vendors will often present contracts for signature, and the signer will execute the agreement without first reading the terms and conditions of the contract. As you can imagine, this is a recipe for potential disaster.

So how to prevent against this? Ensure someone reviews the contract in its entirety. It is understood that it may not be possible or practicable to pay for review by outside legal counsel. As a rule of thumb, look for mutual risk sharing. "Mutuality" refers to obligations or conditions that should apply to BOTH parties (vendor & purchaser). Of particular note, make sure indemnification, termination and cancellation penalties clauses are mutual. If a vendor refuses to make a provision identical for both sides without providing a compelling explanation, consider finding another vendor. In sum, avoid risking it all in any contract. Instead, keep it PC by protecting the Organization and contracting for mutual risk sharing.





## Andy Marshall Department Adjutant

### Legislative Report

#### **VA MISSION Act of 2018**

As part of implementing the VA MISSION Act of 2018, VA will offer urgent care benefit that provides eligible veterans with greater choice and access to timely, high quality care.

With urgent care, Veterans have a new option for care for the treatment of minor injuries and illnesses, such as colds, sore throats and minor skin infections. The benefit is offered in addition to the opportunity to receive care from a VA provider, as VA offers same-day services.

Eligible Veterans will be able to receive urgent care from an urgent care provider that is part of VA's contracted network of community providers without prior authorization from VA. VA can pay for an urgent care claim **only if**:

- The Veteran is eligible for the benefit
- The urgent care provider is part of VA's contracted network of community provider's and;
- The services are not excluded under the benefit (excluded services include preventive services and dental services).

This benefit is expected to be available when Federal regulations are published and effective, expected June 2019. **Details about urgent care are not final.**

To find an available urgent care provider in VA's contracted network of community providers, veterans will be able to use VA's provider locator on VA.gov (<https://www.va.gov/find-locations/>) or contact their local VA medical facility.

VA can only pay for care under this benefit if the veteran is eligible, the services are not excluded under the benefit, and the provider is part of VA's contracted network of community providers and is identified as an urgent care provider. **If an eligible veteran goes out-of-network urgent care provider, they may be required to pay the full cost of care.** Bylaw, VA cannot pay claims for urgent care rendered to a veteran from providers that are not part of VA's network.

When arriving at an in-network care provider, eligible veterans must:

- Ask and verify that the urgent care provider is part of VA's contracted network of community providers.
- Inform the provider that they would like to use their VA urgent care benefit to receive care.
- The urgent care provider will confirm the veteran's eligibility.

If the provider is not part of VA's network, eligible veterans have several options:

- Agree to pay potentially the full cost of care and receive care immediately
- Go to a different urgent care provider that is part of VA's contracted network of community providers
- Go to nearest VA medical facility
- Go to nearest emergency department if veteran reasonable believes that delay in seeking immediate medical attention would be hazardous to their life or health.

The urgent care benefit covers treatment of non-emergent symptoms such as flu-like symptoms, wheezing, sprains, sore throats, painful urination, bumps and bruises, ear pain, and mild skin irritations, which are typically addressed by urgent care facilities and walk-in retail health clinics. Excluded from the benefit are preventive and dental services.

Eligible veterans may be charged a co-payment for urgent care that is different from other VA medical copayments. VA co-payments for urgent care depend on the eligible veteran's assigned priority group and the number of times they visit an in-patient urgent care provider in a calendar year.

### Chapters visited by Department Line Officers & Adjutant Since Department Convention

4, 6, 7, 11, 12, 16, 18, 23, 30, 32, 38, 42, 57, 63, 70, 78, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 90, 94, 97, 98, 101, 109, 112, 113, 122, 123, 125, 129, 133, 144, 148, 150, 155, 158, 160.

## Adjutant's Column Continued

**Priority Groups 1-5.** There is no co-payment for the first three visits during a calendar year. For the fourth visit and all subsequent visits in a calendar year, the co-payment is \$30.00.

**Priority Group 6.** There is no co-payment for the first three visits during a calendar year if the visit is related to special authority or exposure. For the fourth visit and all subsequent visits in a calendar year the co-payment is \$30. If the visit is not related to special authority or exposure, the co-payment is \$30 per visit regardless of which visit it is.

**Priority Groups 7-8.** The copayment is \$30 per visit.

**Priority Groups 1-8** No co-payment for a flu shot visit. Visits consisting only of a flu shot do not count as a visit for the number of visits in a calendar year for eligible veterans in Priority Groups 1-6.

Veterans will be eligible for the urgent care benefit if they are enrolled in VA health care and have received care through VA (from a VA or Community Provider) within 24 months prior to receiving this care.

Special authorities include those related to combat service and exposure (e.g. agent orange, active duty at Camp Lejeune, ionizing radiation, Project Shipboard Hazard and Defense (SHAD/Project 112), Military Sexual Trauma, and presumptions applicable to certain veterans with psychosis and other mental illnesses.

VA will pay for prescriptions for urgent care. For routine prescription medication longer than 14-day supply, the prescription must be submitted to VA to be filed.

For urgent prescription medication of a 14-day or fewer supply, veterans can either fill the prescription at a contracted pharmacy in the VA network or the prescription can be filled at a non-contracted pharmacy. If a non-contracted pharmacy is used, veterans must pay for the prescription and then file a claim for reimbursement with their local VA medical facility.

Remember, to find a list of available urgent care providers in VA's contracted network of community providers. [www.va.gov/find-locations](http://www.va.gov/find-locations).

Congratulations to two Florida members on their awards from the National Organization.

**Outstanding Disabled Veteran of the Year:**  
Honorable T. Patterson Maney, BG United States Army Retired

**George H. Seal Award**  
John Markiewicz, PDC, United States Navy Retired

Both will receive their awards at

In preparation for the 2020 Legislative Session, please be advised of the schedule for fall interim committee meetings:

- Monday, September 16-Friday September 20, 2019
- Monday, October 14-Friday, October 18, 2019
- Monday, October 21-Friday, October 25, 2019
- Monday, November 4-Friday, November 8, 2019
- Monday, November 12-Friday, November 15, 2019
- Monday, December 9-Friday, December 13, 2019

Then 2020 Legislative Session will convene on Tuesday, January 4, 2020.

Congratulations to Bay Area Auxiliary Unit 112 located in Valparaiso. Unit Commander is Deanna Minkler.  
Congratulations to Unit 112.

### DAV Convention Memorial Service Reminder

**Dress code for the Memorial Service on Friday night is optional. If you already have a white dinner jacket---you may wear it at the Memorial Service. Otherwise, jacket and tie preferred for participants.**

## Calendar of Events

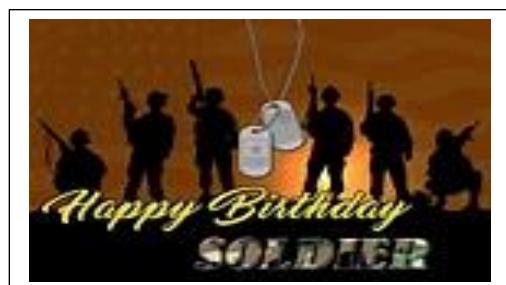
June 6 D-Day



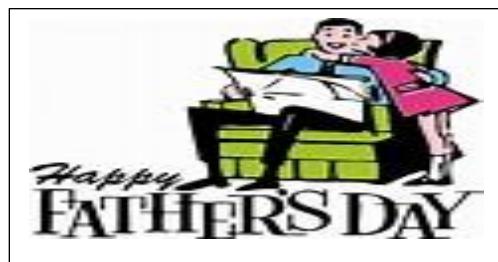
June 14 Flag Day



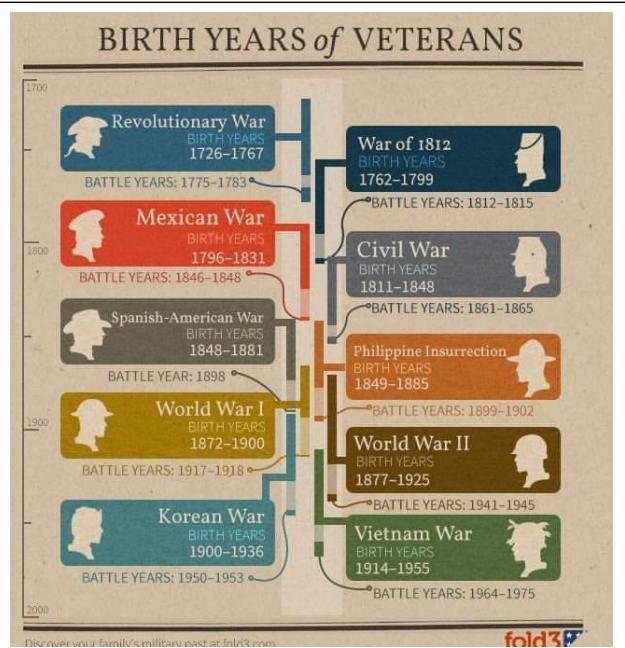
June 14 Army Birthday



June 16 Father's Day



## Adjutant's Column Continued



**ATTENTION**  
**The new email address**  
**for DAV National Service**  
**Office is**  
[dav.vbaspt@va.gov](mailto:dav.vbaspt@va.gov)

## For Your Information

VA Facilities as of 9/30/2017	Florida	National
Number of inpatient care sites	9	154
Number of outpatient care sites	69	1,029
Number of Vet Centers	24	300
Number of VBA Regional Offices	1	56
Number of National & State Cemeteries	9	246

## VA Expenditures FY 2017 (in thousands)

Compensation & Pension	\$6,371,816	\$84,138,460
Construction	\$57,522	\$1,467,395
Education/VR&E	\$988,717	\$13,182,263
General Operating Expenses	\$145,493	\$9,222,998
Insurance & Indemnities	\$132,806	\$1,700,374
Medical Care	\$5,709,770	\$69,709,570

## Veteran Population

Number of Veterans	1,525,400	19,998,799
% of Adult Population that are Veterans*	9.70%	6.60%
Number of Women Veterans	144,229	1,882,848
% of Women Veterans*	9.46%	9.41%
Number of Military Retirees	200,509	2,156,647
% of Veterans Who Are Military Retirees*	13.14%	10.78%
Number of Veterans Age 65 or Older	807,597	9,410,179
% of Veterans Age 65 or Older*	52.94%	47.05%

## VA Healthcare and Benefits

Number of Veterans Receiving Comp.	348,567	4,552,819
Number of Veterans receiving Pension	23,266	276,570
Number of DIC Recipients	34,160	411,390
Number of Education Beneficiaries	70,539	987,577
Number of Enrollees in VA Healthcare	733,037	9,116,200
Number of Unique Patients Treated	513,010	6,035,183

\*Florida leads the Nation in this category

If you have pictures for publication in newsletter  
 please email to [andy@davfla.com](mailto:andy@davfla.com) with caption.

## NSO Supervisor's Column Michael Michelotti

### **VA Caregiver Program**

Family Caregivers provide crucial support in caring for our Nation's veterans by allowing them to stay in the homes and communities they defended, surrounded by their loved ones. Currently, the program has allowed VA to provide additional support and services to Family Caregivers to eligible veterans injured in the line of duty on or after 9/11/2001. Under the caregiver program, relatives or friends who care for eligible veterans can receive a stipend, training, access to health insurance, counseling and respite care.

#### **Veteran Eligibility**

1. The veteran incurred a serious injury in LOD, on or after 9/11/2001.
2. Because of the qualifying serious injury, the veteran requires another person (Caregiver) to assist the veteran with the management of personal care functions required in everyday living.
3. The serious injury renders the veteran in need of personal care services for a minimum of six continuous months.
4. It is in the best interest of the veteran to participate in the Caregiver Support Program.
5. The veteran will receive ongoing care from a Patient Aligned Care Team (PACT) or other VA health care team as a requirement for participation in the program.
6. The veteran agrees to receive ongoing care at home after VA designates a family caregiver.
7. Personal care services that would be provided by the Caregiver will not simultaneously be provided through another individual or entity.

#### **Caregiver Eligibility**

1. The Caregiver must be at least 18 years of age.
2. The Caregiver must be either the veteran's spouse, son, daughter, parent, step-family member or extended family member or someone who lives with the veteran

Full time.

3. Prior to approval, the Caregiver will be provided with training and must be able to demonstrate the ability to assist the veteran with personal care functions required in everyday living.

The MISSION Act expands eligibility to eligible veterans and their Caregivers from all eras. Under the law, expansion will begin when VA certifies to Congress that they have fully implemented a required IT system. The expansion will occur in two phases beginning with eligible veterans who incurred a serious injury in LOD on or before May 7, 1975, with further expansion beginning two years later.

#### **Application Details**

- The required application is VA Form 10-10CG. If the veteran is not currently enrolled in VA health care, both the VA Form 10-10 EZ for VA health care services and the application for the Caregivers Program 10-10CG will need to be completed.
- The application must be completed and signed by both the veteran and their primary caregiver.
- The application can be hand carried to a Caregiver Support Coordinator at a local VA Medical Facility for walk-in processing.
- It can be mailed to:

Family Caregivers Program  
Health eligibility Center  
2957 Clairmont Road NE, Suite 200  
Atlanta, GA 30329-1647