



Department of Texas

NEWS BULLETIN

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December 2011

from the DAV Department Commander

I am hoping the Golden Corral went well for everyone. We have several chapters that were able to recruit some new members. I am so encouraged by the recruiting efforts of our Blue Cappers. Of course, I am always thankful to our NSO's and DSO's for their tireless efforts in serving our veterans.

We are in the busiest season of the year. I want to express my thanks to all of the chapters who have sent invitations to your Christmas party. I am only able to attend a minimal number. I could only wish I would be able to attend each one.

The elections are over and done. Proposition One which extended the Property Tax Exemption to the surviving spouse of any 100% Service Connected Veteran. This is a victory for all of us and I want to thank those who worked by contacting their state congressmen.

We are already getting our schedules together for the District Meetings. I am hoping to attend as many as I can. That is one reason I am so proud of our line officers. We are working together to make certain we stay in constant communication with National, Department, Districts and Chapters. After all, we were put into our positions by you, the Blue Cappers, and are here to serve you.

God Bless You All Until Next Time

★ KEN HACKNEY
dvhackney@yahoo.com

from the DAVA State Commander

As we move in to the month of December our life becomes a little more rushed and we feel the pressure to complete a long list of tasks in order to be ready for Christmas. Although we are busy preparing for the holidays we also have to remember that there are many disabled veterans and their families that need us. Units across this great state may want to consider checking around their area to see who may need help with food or simply a ride to the store.

The voters in Texas passed a proposition which allows all of the spouses of 100% service connected veterans to retain the property tax exclusion in the event of the death of the veteran. That is a great victory for many of us and certainly reinforces that Texans truly care about veterans.

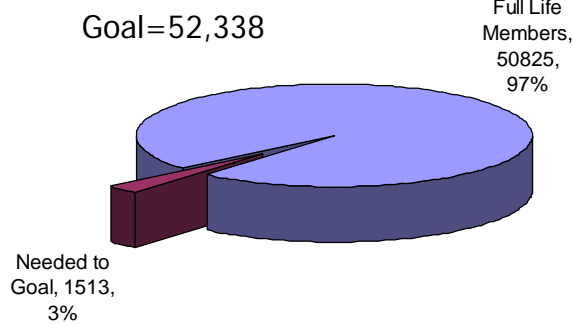
As we all know membership is the basis of our existence and we must ALL work diligently to increase our numbers. If you sign up a new annual senior member their membership will only cost \$15.00 for membership through June 30, 2013, I can not think of any better incentive than this. Did you know that you can obtain a list of prospective members by sending a written request to National DAVA Headquarters? All you have to do is include a list of zip codes in your area and they will send this list to you and/or labels.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish each of you a safe and happy holiday season from my family to each of yours.

★ CRAIG JOHNIKEN
craigjohniken@yahoo.com

Visit us online at www.davmembersportal.org/tx

needed to Goal 1,513



★ MEMBERSHIP GOAL
FISCAL YEAR 2011-2012

from the DAV Membership Chairman

December is here and we are drawing near to the end of 2011. We are still short of our membership goal, 52,338 members. At the end of the last quarter, September 30th, we were at 96.57%. It would be great to reach the goal by the end of the 3rd quarter. A great many veterans do not know how much we, as an organization, have to offer them. Make sure that you familiarize yourself with all of the benefits that are available. Think of yourself as a salesman, because that is what you are. You are selling people on the idea of becoming a member of the Disabled American Veterans. You certainly would expect someone who is trying to sell you a new car to be able to answer questions about that car. How does it operate and what comes with it? Pamphlets are available for you to use when recruiting. Don't just have them with you, know what is inside them. Benefits are also described on the Disabled American Veterans website. The best salesman is a dedicated knowledgeable member of an organization. Try to be the best salesman you can be. One more thing, once you have recruited a new member, get him or her to a meeting. Do your best to get them involved. That person will become another great recruiter. We are not looking for numbers, we are looking for people to work with us, share our goals and lead when needed. Everyone is needed to do their part. Let us work together to build a bigger, stronger and more dedicated DAV!

★ TOM PARKER
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from the DAV Adjutant

I would like to call your attention to the following change in the Department of Texas Bylaws. These assessments need to be mailed to Department Headquarters as soon as possible. A chapter that has not paid their assessment will not be cleared to vote at the Department Convention.

ARTICLE I - DEPARTMENT CONVENTION
*SECTION 1.

* Para (a). Each chapter shall be assessed the following to be deposited in the Department Convention Fund:

- \$5.00 - 100 members or less
- \$10.00 - 101 to 1,000 members
- \$15.00 - 1,001 to 3,000 members
- \$20.00 - 3,001 members or more

For example, if your chapter has 650 members, it will owe \$10.00.

from the DAVA Adjutant

Hello All. By the time you receive this news letter, we will have celebrated Veterans Day and Thanksgiving. I wish to extend my personal thanks to each and every Veteran in the State of Texas for your service. I truly appreciate my freedom and now without your devotion I would not have it. I hope each of you had a very enjoyable Thanksgiving with your loved ones. My family and I wish each of your and yours a very Happy Holiday season.

I would like to thank you each of you who attended the Annual State School of Instruction. I would like to extend a few special thanks to the ladies of Seguin #61 and Universal City #17 for assisting with the luncheon. I would like to thank the Junior Members from Houston #9 and Universal City #17 who helped the acting Sgt-at-Arms pass out the paperwork and assist with other matters. It is always nice to have the junior members assist us. I think we had a very good time and the attendance was awesome. The chairmen gave very informative presentations. I certainly appreciate the time and effort each put in.

★ TERESA JOHNIKEN
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★ RUTH GATES
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Just a brief update; the donations for the VAVS Christmas Fund continue to come in so I will have a final total to share with you in the next news letter. I want to personally thank all the chapters and units that have donated to this fund. I know the gifts the hospitalized veterans will receive will brighten their days.

Let's continue to move forward with increasing our membership. There is a new incentive membership program effective 10/01/2011 for senior members. By paying \$15.00 a person can become a new senior member through June 30, 2013. Remember that might be a good Christmas present for the person that has everything else.

The newly printed State Standing Rules are ready for sale for \$1.00 each. Please forward me a request and payment to State Headquarters if you need one or some for your unit.

from the DAV District I Sr Vice Commander

Greeting Comrades,

I pray that you and all your family members are in the best of health and spirit. I hope everyone enjoyed their holidays in the month of November, which was very busy for some chapters. I would like to express my thanks to all of District 1 for your dedication and devotion in participating in events in your city in representing your chapter and the DAV Organization. It's very important that you show a strong presence in the community and let them see the unity within the DAV. The Golden Corral Military Appreciation Night paid off for several chapters. Some chapters, such as 36 and 44, did extremely well, and chapter 58 Tall City did superbly well. Congratulations, to those chapters who worked all 13 days. That shows dedication. Hopefully, next year those chapters who did their best will do a little better. I commend all of District 1 for your support and job well done. Good News, Proposition 1 for widows of 100% deceased veterans is finally approved which will authorized them to continue the property tax exemption. Hopefully, begin next year a huge victory for our veterans in the State of Texas. Thank you to all who supported this Proposition. The Christmas/New Year's Holidays are approaching very soon. And I would like to wish District 1 and their families a blessed Merry Christmas and Happy 2012. May God keep everyone safe and healthy.

★ DAVE GARCIA
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from the DAV District II Commander

Comrades:

Once again I hope everyone in District II is doing well. Hope everyone is full of Thanksgiving Turkey and getting ready for Christmas. Christmas is also a time of thanks giving for the freedoms we still enjoy.

I hope all the Chapters in District II got the letters I sent out about the district meeting. If for some reason your chapter did not receive one, please let me know. If a chapter wants to have a raffle to help support the meeting such as a 50/50 drawing or a raffle of any kind, remember it has to be approved with the Dept. Executive Committee. Some of the other line officers and I will be going to Tyler to finalize some things for the district meeting. If a chapter would like to post the colors, I still need a color guard. Drop me a line on email at veteranbob48@yahoo.com or give me a call at 940-389-1922.

My wife Patsy and I want to wish everyone a very MERRY CHRISTMAS & a HAPPY NEW YEAR. Don't forget those who may not have much for Christmas so many are still without jobs, so if you can help please do so. God has been good to me this year so I plan on being more courteous and not so short when at the Mall or at Wal-Mart, some times letting the other person have a parking space is better than getting upset. Now I know I am getting older. How does that saying go? Not as lean, not as mean, but still a Marine. I know what they are talking about now because I don't run as fast either. Most of all lets not forget those in our military who want be home for Christmas keep them in your hearts, because without our troops we would have no FREEDOM.

God Bless each and everyone

★ BOBBY HARRIS
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from the DAV District III Commander

Greetings to all my Comrades in District III The Holiday Season is upon us. It seems we just finished the season from last year. Oh, well....I'm just getting old. This is a good thing, except I have more senior moments. We finished the Veterans Day celebration with a parade in down town Palestine. We at the DAV decorated a float, as did the American Legion and the Vietnam Veterans of America. All told, the parade was a huge success.

★ GORDON BRETT
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In addition, all the veterans visited nursing homes in the area, as well as individual veterans just to say hello and ask if there was any way we could help them. We just scattered like a covey of quails. All we veterans got a huge lift from this, as did the veterans in the nursing homes. We are active in the local areas, visiting some nursing home every month.

We are having our holiday meal on the 10th of December, a Saturday. It will consist of all the traditional fixings. We will invite all our volunteer van drivers to this meal, and let them know just how much we appreciate all their work. Without them, the van program would not exist.

I have just sent a letter to all the Commanders in our District, outlining the 2012 District III Meeting, to be held in Killeen. Chapter 147 in Killeen has graciously agreed to be our Host Chapter next year. I know they will do a fine job. I fully expect greater participation from District III next year. More about this later.

from the DAV District IV Commander

Greetings Comrades,
Congratulations to all of our veterans who participated in the 2011 Veterans Day parades and ceremonies in and around the Houston Metro area and surrounding areas, and participating in the annual Golden Corral event. It was such a great experience to be involved with the Golden Corral veteran's appreciation event each year gets better and better. Thank you to all of our service men and women, past, present, and future for your service to our nation. To share in an event that is in support of our service men and women, that's what the Disabled American Veterans are all

★ ISAAC BAZILE
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about service. Let's continue to support veterans' membership because that is life's blood of the DAV. Remember our host Chapter for the 2012 District Meeting, let's support them and encourage other chapter commanders to submit a list of your line officers with photos to our host chapter. I encourage the District IV staff to do the same. Letters have already gone out to the different chapters asking for support in this event. I believe it will be a meeting to remember and that it will be enjoyed by all who attend let's help to make it a success.

Thanksgiving and Christmas are quickly approaching and its the time of year we focus on being thankful for the many blessings we have, lets not forget those who are less fortunate than we, invite someone to Thanksgiving or Christmas dinner or visit those veterans who are unable to get out and enjoy the holidays. Let's say thank you by doing something for a veteran, service member, or someone you've never met before.
Happy Holidays!

from the DAV District V Commander

Veterans Day: Pleased to have seen the following DAV Chapters 5, 14, 25, and 128 attend the Veterans Day Ceremony at Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery and participating in laying the Chapter's Wreath. Also, thank you to all District V Chapters for their attendance and participation in Veterans Day within their area.

Veterans Day Parade: Delighted to see many of our DAV Chapter members participated in the parade whether walking or riding on the many different decorated vehicles for the parade.

Service Awards: As District V Commander, I attended the LeRoy V. Greene, Jr. "Bexar County Outstanding Veterans/Community Service Awards. This year's awards honorees were Pct 1 – Robert K. Otto, Pct 2 – Bruce Alford, Pct 3 – Jack Trawick, and Pct 4 – Andrew Roca. These members are also DAV member. The recipient of the LeRoy V. Greene, Jr. Memorial Awards for 2011 is Bruce Alford.

Picnic: Thank you to DAV Chapter 5 Commander JR Garza and chapter members for their kind

★ JAVIER PATRON
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invitation to Chapter Five's annual picnic. Always glad to participate in a chapter's event.

Banquet: Thank you to DAV Chapter 128 (Roy B. Hodges) Commander Bettie Vaughan and chapter members for the invitation to attend the 2nd Annual Thanksgiving Fellowship Banquet and Awards Ceremony. The banquet program was an outstanding ceremony and its performance not only illuminated but also explicates great leadership amongst its chapter members.

Chapter 14: My sincere apologies to the Commander and members for leaving off their attendance at the DAV National Convention. Chapter 14 members are always attending DAV National Conventions years after year which greatly supports the DAV National Convention programs.

STAND UP FOR VETERANS, and may God Bless America

from the Women Veteran Coordinator

More Women Veterans Firsts:

Lt Edith Greenwood was awarded The Soldiers Medal in 1943 for heroism during a fire at a military hospital in Yuma Arizona - the first woman to receive this award. The first woman to receive The Air Medal was Lt Elsie S. Ott awarded for her actions in 1943 as an air evac nurse. As the flight nurse on the first intercontinental air evacuation flight, 2nd Lt. Elsie S. Ott demonstrated the potential of air evacuation in January 1943. An Army nurse who had never flown in an airplane and had no air evacuation training, she successfully oversaw the movement of five seriously ill patients from India to Washington, D.C. This six-day trip would have normally taken three months by ship and ground transportation. For her actions on this historic flight, Ott received the first Air Medal presented to a woman, and she also received formal flight nurse training. Barbara Olive Barnwell was the first woman awarded the Navy-Marine Corps Medal for heroism in 1953. Barbara Barnwell, a SSGT from Pittsburgh Pennsylvania and a member of the Marine Reserve, saved a soldier from drowning in 1952. Colonel Oveta Culp Hobby, the first Director of the WAC, was the first woman to receive The U.S. Army Distinguished Service Medal in 1945. Source: userpages.aug.com/captbarb/firsts.html

★ JENNIFER KELLOGG
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Does VA provide maternity benefits?

VA provides maternity benefits to eligible women Veterans. Public Law 111-163 authorizes VA to furnish health care services, for not more than 7 days, to a newborn child of a women Veteran who delivered the child in a VA facility or in another facility pursuant to a VA contract for such care. Children born to women Veterans who served in Vietnam may also be eligible for monthly monetary benefits, medical care, and vocational training if they have certain birth defects linked to their mother's service. Contact the nearest VA regional office on the nationwide toll-free number, 1-800-827-1000, for information and eligibility requirements, or visit VA's home page at www.va.gov.

Source: www.va.gov

How can I receive gender-specific services, including Pap smears, mammography, prenatal and childcare?

Apply for VA health care enrollment by completing VA Form 10-10EZ which may be obtained by visiting, calling, or writing any VA health care facility or Veterans' benefits office. You can also call toll-free 1-877-222 VETS (1-877-222-8387) or access the form on the Internet at www.va.gov. The provision of health care to non-Veteran children is limited to those instances where specific authority is given to VA by law. Contact your local VA health care facility and ask to speak with the Women Veterans Program Manager (white pages of the telephone directory under U.S. Government, Department of Veterans Affairs).

Source: www.va.gov

BPT/Legislative Report

I hope that all of you that read this have Happy Holidays. There are many at this time of the year and we should celebrate them all. I hope you all made at least one Veterans Day event. Whether it was the parade or the free eats. There aren't many thank you's out there so enjoy them. The Golden Corral especially since so many veterans go there. It was a great place to socialize, eat free, fund raise and recruit. I hope all chapters did some good at this event. I hope you all voted on 11/8/2011. We won the property tax abatement for the widows but, I regret to say, not overwhelmingly as it should have

★ WOLF BIEDENFELD
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been if all Texas veterans had voted. Please remember, if you do not vote for yourselves and your families you will eventually have NO benefits. Veterans fought and served so that all Americans would have the right to vote. Our sacrifice does NOT excuse us from voting.

I know many of you are tired of the in Washington. The "games", the "hidden agendas", and the "take to the brink so the public will not know what we are doing". The Super Committee will announce a solution the day before the deadline – we will not know it until we are stuck with it. You can't speak with your senator or congressman if you don't know the proposals. It's a neat way to avoid nasty constituent calls. And, what does all this mean? Senator Cain said it best, "it's a legislated solution, and if we don't like it we can just pass another law". I really like his honesty even if it is not very reassuring about solutions to our economic problems. I do not want to support any candidate that plans to cut my economic and healthcare throat. We need to vote as informed veterans. We are entitled to hear how candidates will help, not hurt, disabled veterans. We need to recruit so that our votes weigh as heavily as the money from campaign contributors. We need to remember the old time saying at dances – "we need to go home with the one that brought us".

from the DAV VAVS Chairperson

Greetings to a very special group of people, all of our volunteers in the D.A.V. & D.A.V. Auxiliary, and also to everyone in the DAV & DAVA who contribute so much in so many different ways to help support the mission of our great Organization.

Yes, "Tis the Season." We're right smack in the middle of the Christmas Holidays. This is the time of year when we can make that extra special effort to make a difference in some one's life, especially those that are confined to nursing homes or hospital beds. Many times the only humans they see for weeks on end are the staff.

Sadly, in many cases, you may be the only outside contact they have to experience a little joy and happiness. Many times all they want is a friendly face, a little of your time, a listening ear, and maybe a word or two of encouragement.

Doesn't cost you anything, and you'll both feel like a million.

For those living at home in the community that can't quite fend for themselves, it's no different. The more vivid your imagination, the more choices you have to give someone a more Merry Christmas and a Happier New Year.

How about things like a gift certificate to the barber or hair salon, maybe a locally owned restaurant, or getting an oil change or car wash or even a detail. Maybe trips to the grocery store or other shopping; a visit to the library or a book store, or maybe a treat to a movie or special show or sports event. And there's always the opportunity to help at home with the lawn, garden, house cleaning, and miscellaneous repairs and maintenance. The list is endless.

Despite what the majority think, you don't have to spend "Benjamins" on others to make them happy; the most precious and priceless gifts of all come from the bottom of your own heart.

You see, Christmas is about caring for others and giving them hope and encouragement for the future. And when we care about others, we care about our communities and our nation, and the benefits come back a thousand-fold in many ways we couldn't imagine.

Regardless of what it may be, I sincerely thank all of you for your support in the mission of the Disabled American Veterans Organization in helping to "Build better lives for all of our nation's disabled veterans and their families." Thank you for caring for all veterans and the betterment of all mankind. I would like to extend a huge West Texas "MERRY CHRISTMAS & HAPPY NEW YEAR" to Yuki in Killeen, TX & Judy in Sylmar, CA and all DAV & DAVA members of this great Lone Star State of Texas.

May you have a blessed holiday season with your family, loved ones, and extended families; and may your blessings be many!

★ ED MEISER
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Items of Interest

Hello Comrades

This year has passed us by very quickly, and it is time for nominations for the National Commanders Awards Program to honor outstanding individual within the Department of Veterans Affairs, Veterans Health Administration, (VHA), Veterans Benefit Administration (VBA) and National Cemetery Administration (NCA), also the Veteran of the Year Award for 2012. The following award should be submitted by the end of January 2012. We all know of some outstanding and dedicated individuals who are deserving of these awards. We as Disabled American Veterans need to recognize these individuals for their services to veterans. It is time for each of us to let these individuals know that we are aware of the services and dedication to our veterans. Texas has more of these individuals than most states and we should be well represented at the National Convention. Let's point these individuals out and give them the recognition they deserve for serving the great veterans of our nation. Qualifications and rules for the nominations can be found on the Department website. Under the Department publications, applications and forms to be submitted for these awards are found under each award bulletin. Upon completion, forms need to be sent to the Department for consideration. Your assistance and participation is greatly appreciated. Thank you for your efforts.

For those of you on the Internet check this out. We wish all marching bands performed like this one!

<http://youtu.be/MjPmmCtHmfE>

★ ACROSS THE STATE

from the DAV Chaplain

Greetings my fellow Comrades:

It appears that this special time of the year is upon us. It is called Advent season and we should be preparing for the Birth Of Christ. Thank You, God, for this season. A chance to remember, once again, all You have done for us. When we meet with family and friends in joyful celebration, may we look at what we have, not what we have lost. Bless our festivities with Your Presence, as we praise Your Name. Psalm 100:4 Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise. Be thankful to Him, and bless His name. Amen. I feel like I need to remind you that I am your state Chaplain and I welcome any concerns you may be having. If you are ill or any family members, I will be happy to pray for them. Happy Thanksgiving and Merry Christmas to you and yours.

God Bless You.

My contact information is meizie2050@aol.com and my phone number is (956) 230-0653

★ MEIZIE LOFTON
meizie2050@aol.com

Deepest Sympathies

Department and the membership extend deepest sympathies to the family members, friends, and comrades of these fallen heroes. May each one rest in honor.

- Ron Revis Chapter 150
- Eric Solomos Chapter 9
- Gwane Sanford Chapter 81

Please feel free to call, write, or email the Adjutant's office if you have a loss in your family, chapter, or unit that should be included in this column.

★ FALLEN HEROES
may each one rest in honor

Disabled American Veterans
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