

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS

DEPARTMENT of TEXAS, HEADQUARTERS

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BULLETIN

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MAY 2011

DAV COMMANDER

Dear Comrades,

We are rapidly approaching the end of another DAV Department of Texas operating year. This operating year, of course, will culminate with our 2011 Department Convention scheduled for June 3-5, 2011 at the Doubletree Hotel, 6505 IH-35 North, Austin, Texas. Consequently, if you haven't completed your convention hotel arrangements please do so at your earliest convenience. Designated telephone numbers are 512-454-3737 and 1-800-347-0330. As a note of caution for new Delegates and as a reminder for returning Delegates, the City of Austin has three Doubletree Hotels. The designated Doubletree Hotel for our Convention is located at **6505 IH-35 North**. For those traveling Southbound on IH-35, exit on 238 A (**to avoid adding extra miles to your trip, pay close attention not to use the 238 B exit**) and locate the hotel on your left; similarly, those traveling Northbound on IH-35, also take exit 238 A to find the Hotel on your right adjacent to Papedaux's Restaurant.

Let me applaud everyone who remains dedicated to making personal visits to Veterans by reaching out and supporting them on a daily basis. Let's not forget any of our Veterans needing our attention. For example they include: patients in VA Medical facilities, those housed in VA Homes, various Military Hospitals, your local Nursing Homes, those homebound Veterans, and some who are patients incarcerated in detention medical facilities. Also, be sure to remember to provide words of encouragement to numerous caregivers within your communities.

Finally, to paraphrase earlier comments I made, meeting our membership goal is very important to our DAV organization today and to insure our future sustainability. I also asked everyone to be advised that all members have the responsibility to

help support our membership goal that's being **facilitated** by Membership Chairman/Senior Vice Commander Ken Hackney. Another interpretation—**all** of us as DAV Members **own** the **responsibility** of increasing and achieving the Department's membership goal! So, let's avoid a last minute "full court press" to achieve our membership goal

James H Scott

State Commander
jscott4889@aol.com

DAVA COMMANDER

Hello Auxiliary,

I know you are working on the Annual Reports. These must be in the mail by May 1st.

The District Conference's are a good way to find out what the Units in your District are doing.

I have attended District V; District III and will attend District IV next weekend.

All the units are doing a lot of work for our Veterans and Families.

Thank you Auxiliaries!!!! Keep up the good work!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Sorry, I could not attend District I; as it is a great distance and was in conflict with District III.

I will be going to District II; on May 20th and 21st. Sylvia Shurgot, P.S.C. filled in for me in El Paso at District I. Thank you Sylvia!

The Department Convention this year will be June 3-5, 2011 in Austin.

Hope to see you all there!!!!!!

God Bless you all!

Joyce Brannen

State Commander
joycebrannen@netzero.net

MEMBERSHIP GOAL

Disabled American Veterans

LIFE MEMBER POPULATION: 52,227

LIFE GOAL: 53,006

PERCENT OF GOAL: 98.53%

DAV MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN

We are getting, closer, closer, closer and CLOSER. Not just to the Department Convention, but to our GOAL. I am proud of the recruiting that is going on throughout the great State of Texas. The NSO's are working, the DSO's are working. Most of all the Blue Cappers are working. It is good to see all of the Comrades of the DAV working together to make this organization the #1 veterans association in the country.

I keep getting good reports from the Chapters I have visited. I am getting good reports from our NSO and DSO offices. I met a man the other day that is a veteran but is not disabled. He had a Commander's Action Network sticker on his car. He asked me if he could sign up a member for the DAV. I told him to go ahead and refer them to the local chapter or have them sign up on line. He believes in the DAV.

Do you believe in the DAV? If so, let's work together to make this the strongest representative veterans organization. We can do it. But we must do it together.

Until next month, good luck and let's keep marching toward the prize.

Ken Hackney

Membership Chairman
davhackney@yahoo.com

ADJUTANT'S COMMENTS

We are planning a great Department Convention and I hope I will see many of you there. In order for you to make plans we have a 50/50 raffle planned as well as a raffle of a Kindle Reader and a digital camera. As usual we will have the Commanders reception Friday evening at no charge. The Commander's Banquet will be held Saturday night with tickets available at the price of \$25.

Teresa Johniken

Department Adjutant / Treasurer
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DISTRICT I

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Greetings Comrades,

First, I would like to thank our entire District I for electing me to be your District I Commander for a second consecutive term. It is an honor for me to be able to serve all of my Comrades for another year as Commander, and I am looking forward once again to working with every chapter.

I will be having surgery on April 18th. I hope to be back on my feet quickly with God's help and with each of your prayers to keep me safe and strong during the recovery.

I also ask that you continue to pray for our Past District I Auxiliary Commander Bertha Dryer who is also having surgery for cancer. With God's help, we will be looking forward to seeing all of you in Austin for the Department Convention in June.

I am so proud of each and everyone in District I; everyone made it possible to have one of the best District I Meetings in a long time. It just wouldn't be possible without each and everyone in the chapters.

I also want to thank our Department Adjutant Teresa Johniken and her husband for attending our District I Meeting. It was a real pleasure having you as our guests. Thank you once again!

I would like to thank Chapters 10, 165 and 187 for the hard work that they did in making it all happen. I take my hat off to all my Comrades; you did a great job and I thank you. I also want to extend a big thank you to Kent Hoffman for conducting the service officer training class and getting us recertified so we can continue our mission in serving veterans.

I would like to congratulate our newly elected and appointed officers for this next year:

- Commander Juan Ruiz, Jr., Chap 187
- Sr Vice Cmdr David Garcia, Chap 187
- 1st Jr Vice James Skipworth, Chap 47
- 2nd Jr Vice Richard Darden, Chap 36
- Chaplain Richard Penry, Chap 44
- Judge Advocate Jesse Dryer, Chap 10
- Adjutant Ed Meiser, Chap 47
- Off of the Day Richard Flores, Chap 187
- Sergeant at Arms Larry Hannan, Chap 36
- Dist I Finance Ed Meiser Chap 47
- Dist I Finance Alt Richard Penry, Chap 44

May God bless you and God bless the United States of America and the men and women in harms way who protect our country and her liberties each and every day.

Yours in comradeship,

Juan Ruiz Jr

District I Commander
papov@aol.com

Gordon Brett

District III Commander
gdauidb182@ouldrs.net

DISTRICT II

Once again I hope everyone is doing well in District II.

I am looking forward to seeing all of you at the Dist. II Meeting this month. Don't forget to call for your reservations at Howard Johnson's Hotel in Wichita Falls if you have not done so.

Once again I want to thank everyone in Dist. II for all you have done to stand behind me this past year. I have had an awesome time being your commander. A big thanks to all my line officers as well, you have been a big help to me this year.

Yours Forever in Comradeship,

Bobby Harris

Commander, District II
Veteranbob48@yahoo.com

DISTRICT III

Greetings, Comrades.....We at District III had our Meeting in College Station, April 9 and 10. Our new officers were elected, and installed by Department Sr. Vice Commander Ken Hackney. We send a sincere "Thank You" to Ken. Our new officers for 2011/12 are:

Commander	Gordon Brett
Sr. Vice Commander	Jennifer Kellogg
1 st Jr. Vice	Momerto Perez
2 nd Jr. Vice	Delbert Musgrave
Judge Advocate	James Thompson
Chaplain	Kristen Gholson-Dopkant
Adjutant	Robert Griffith
Finance Officer	Kristen Gholson-Dopkant
Alt. Finance Officer	Kathryn Henson

We hope you all will pray for us (especially the Commander !!) We need all the support you can give us from the District III Chapters. If any of us may be of assistance to you, please write or call. I will visit as many of the Chapters as I can during the year.

I will promise to have Chapter III comments in each Newsletter. If you have any special events or if you have any members who you want to remember, let me know.

Yours Comradeship,

DISTRICT IV

Greetings Comrades,

I want to thank everyone in District IV for the opportunity of serving as your Commander for 2010 – 2011. I have found this to be a learning experience, answering all of the questions, asked by the Chapters, serving on the Department Executive Committee, and putting together the Spring District Meeting, in Galveston, Texas. I never knew the extent of the position that I was elected to. Thank you again for your confidence.

By this time we will have had our Spring 2011 District IV Meeting in beautiful Galveston, Texas. I pray that everyone attending found it to be fun and productive and had a safe trip home.

Yours in Comradeship

John Gamble

Commander, District IV
jgamble1940@yahoo.com

DISTRICT V

Greeting Comrades, it's been a month since our Annual Spring Meeting in march, we are all back to our chapter home or meeting place and conducting our normal routine of fulfilling our duties on programs within the DAV organization. One of our goals is to help our veterans fill out their disability claims. As such, veterans should file disability claims with VA officials promptly through one of our service representatives. All this is because if a disease is recognized as presumptive for service connection their benefits may be retroactive to the date of filing their disability claims. For information, the VA maintains a website (www.vba.va.gov/bin/21/rates/) of benefits tables. Another key goal in the DAV organization is membership for our chapters; there are many disabled veterans that are not DAV members. There are several ways we can seek-out eligible disabled veterans and one way is short of conducting a membership drive is to have an invite open house within one's meeting place. Also remember that many disabled veterans do go to the VA hospitals and/or clinics for treatment, so, it all depends on how you may be attracting our disabled veterans to join a

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chapter of their choice within the perspective living area or a chapter they may want to attend instead. As we all seek-out disabled veterans, there is still a lot of Iraq and Afghanistan disabled veterans who are DAV members. We need to recruit our younger disabled veterans to be part of our chapter membership and fill key leadership roles as Vietnam veterans filled key leadership positions held by WWII and Korean disabled veterans before us.

A reminder to all chapters to complete your delegate and alternate list for the upcoming convention in Austin (June 3-5, 2011). Again, as previously mentioned in my last article, I encourage all chapter commanders that may not be able to attend or have a delegate member at the Department Convention to please provide me with any issues I may bring up at the convention on your behalf. While I may not be able to vote for you, I can still bring up issues or concerns a chapter may want brought up at the convention for discussion.

As District V Commander, I have attended and participated in the Pilgrimage to the Alamo, Fiesta Flambeau Parade and All Veterans Memorial Service during the Fiesta San Antonio which was held April 7-17, 2011. I have also participated in a JROTC Awards Ceremony held at Thomas A Edison High School.

Memorial Day will take place on May 30, 2011. There may be a possible change on the usual site this year. The Business and Administration Office has moved to the East side of the cemetery location, located on Fredericksburg Street between San Antonio BLVD and Brownsville Dr. Information will not be available until two weeks prior to Memorial Day as to the actual ceremony site; new office phone number is 210-820-3891. The ceremony usually takes place on or about 9:00 or 9:30 am, so if at all possible arrive around 8:00 AM for parking and seating arrangements. I hope to see many chapter members from San Antonio and the surrounding area.

Stand Up For Veterans, and may God Bless America

Javier Patron

District V Commander
javierpatron@sbcglobal.net

BPT / LEGISLATIVE REPORT

Greetings Comrades.

We are in the process of seeing an attempt to erode Veterans Benefits in the name of a Balanced

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Budget. No, I am not an alarmist. Think of the following – No New Taxes, the need to reduce entitlements (Medicare, Social Security, and Veterans Benefits) to achieve a Balanced Budget as Promised in Political Ads and Speeches. No you say – they tell us “we thank you for your service” and “we love our Veterans”. Talk is cheap, you can’t take it to the bank. Remember – Entitlements include Veterans Benefits.

A first shot at Veterans is in HB 1 from the House Veterans’ Committee – Rep. Culbertson Chairman. This includes elimination of HUD Housing Vouchers for Homeless and Low Income Veterans. We need to advise ALL of our Texas Representatives that We Will Not Abandon Our Comrades. Since it is “hidden” in HUD Funding I guess they figure we will not notice.

You may ask: How will they get at Veterans Benefits?” Easy – it has already started. Step 1 – Delay the process of Awarding Benefits, slow discourages the Disabled Veteran – as Representative Culbertson stated “if improvements in the processing system require additional funds it won’t happen.” Step 2 – Deny cost of living raises. Step 3 – Create barriers to veterans access to VA Health Care. Step 4 – Delay the Implementation/Regulation Process for new categories of disabilities, many Parkinson’s Veterans have been waiting over 12 months to receive awards – these are severely disabled veterans. You can probably see some other things that keep veterans from receiving the benefits promised and earned – “We thank you for your Service” is cheap.

State of Texas – ALL Field staff of the Texas Veterans Land Board are laid Off as of 6/30/2011 – learn Facebook, TWEET or TWITTER – still happening, They have their notices. Texas Veterans Commission will lose 20 of the 100 Veterans Staff assigned to help veterans File claims – this hits disabled veterans hard because the claims process is going to become slower and more complicated.

If you thought that the funds disabled veterans receive is considered an asset to Texas you will be disappointed – Susan Combs, the State Comptroller, in a written opinion states: there is No significant impact on State Revenues from benefits paid to disabled veterans. When you consider that there is over \$ 1.5 Billion paid annually to Texas Disabled Veterans with at least \$ 80 million of that collected in Sales Tax it appears that Ms. Combs does not care about disabled veterans and she cannot count \$s well enough to do the Comptroller Job.

Disabled American Veterans

If you care about your veteran comrades write your Congressional Representative (or FaceBook, Tweet and Twitter them) If you care about the future of Veterans Benefit Programs RECRUIT new members – numbers count

WE are all in the same boat – START BAILING – Speak up at local meetings, Speak to local Congressional Staff. Do not accept “I Love and Respect you” as acceptable payback for your sacrifice.

Remember – If we do NOT ACT NOW we will Look at OUR Current Veteran Benefits as “the good old days”.

G. “Wolf” Bielefeld

BPT/Legislative Chairman

Wolf.Biedefeld@va.gov

VAVS

As gas prices continue to soar, volunteers may find it difficult to keep pace with their voluntary commitments. Even if you must limit your volunteering due to costly travelling expenses, stay committed to giving your time and talents in other ways. You are greatly appreciated and always needed. Remember, phone calls are a way for you to still brighten someone’s day! In addition, when you cannot make it to the VA hospital, you can still volunteer in your local area to assist a veteran.

Congratulations to Francis Mathie of Big Spring, TX who received a National Commander’s Citation for reaching a volunteer milestone by volunteering over 25,000 hours.

I am Jackie Bazile your Department VAVS Chair, you may contact me at home at (281) 993-4872, cell: 281-627-3070 or by email at jjace4u@aol.com for more information on the VAVS Program.

Jackie Bazile

VAVS Chairperson

jjace4u@aol.com

FINANCE CHAIRMAN

Howdy from the West Texas Dust Bowl, I hope and pray that everyone has been spared from all the disasters that are going around these last few weeks. I know the wild fires are taking a toll in various locations around the state; please take extra precautions to stay safe.

I tended to do a little preaching at the District I Meeting, and I’d like to share a little of it with the rest of Texas. It has to do with communications in regards to health and welfare of fellow comrades.

A large majority of us have friends across the state, and all too often we’re not aware of a severe illness

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or death in our own district, let alone clear across the state.

Once again, I encourage you to let your District Commander know so he or she can include it in his or her article in the Department Bulletin, or notify the Dept. Adjutant directly.

In the case of death of a fellow comrade, of course there are many ways to show honor; I would urge you to consider making a donation to the Department Service Fund in memory of him or her.

As you already know, the money from the DSF is used to pay our Department Service Officers so they can provide a free service of helping with claims to disabled veterans. What better way to honor our deceased than to help to provide a service to other veterans.

Then inform the family and loved ones of the deceased of the honor shown on your behalf; they will be so appreciative of your thoughtfulness.

As Dale Carnegie once said, “You have it in your power to increase the sum total of this world’s happiness now. How? By giving a few words of sincere appreciation to someone who is lonely or discouraged. Perhaps you will forget tomorrow the kind words you say today, but the recipient may cherish them over a lifetime.”

So true, and so easy to do...Blessed are those that can give without remembering, and receive without forgetting.

Still looking forward to seeing old friends and making new friends at the Department Convention; hope to see you there.

Have a blessed Memorial Day as we remember.

Yours in Comradeship,

Ed Meiser

Finance Committee Chairman

edgar_meise@msn.com

CHAPLAIN’S CORNER

Hello Everyone,

What a difficult time we live in! There are so many uncertainties, the gas prices, grocery prices, wars and rumors of wars. This is a reflection of Revelation, but that is not the Book I want to focus on right now. Daniel lived in uncertain times as well, and this is what he said in Daniel 6:25-27. “Then King Darius wrote: To all peoples, nations, and languages that dwell in all the earth: Peace be multiplied to you. I make a decree that in every dominion of my kingdom men must tremble and fear before the God of Daniel. For He is the living God, and

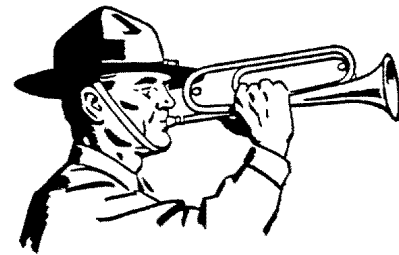
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steadfast forever; His kingdom is the one which shall not be destroyed, and His dominion shall endure to the end. He delivers and rescues, and He works signs and wonders in heaven and on earth, Who has delivered Daniel from the power of the lions." Yes, Daniel had just been delivered from the lions den. He had kept the focus on God, and he prayed that God would intervene. We must keep the faith and pray that God will deliver us from the tests that we are put in. God loves us and wants to assist us, but we must pray, read His word, and earnestly seek His face. We need to pray for our troops around the world especially those that are in harms way. Please remember also to pray for the leaders of our country, state and cities. Our DAV leaders especially need the prayers as they go before the leaders of our country and state on matters concerning veterans' affairs. These are uncertain times, but we must remember that God is in control and He will have mercy and grace upon us if we ask Him.

Albert Owens

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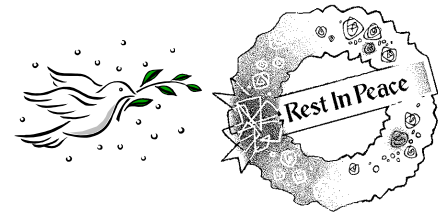
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Department and the membership extend deepest sympathies to the family members, friends, and comrades of these fallen heroes. May each one rest in honor.

Don McFarland

Chapter 126



Please feel free to call, write, or e-mail the Adjutant's office if you have a loss in your family, Chapter, or Unit that should be included in this column.

*DAV DEPARTMENT OF TEXAS
CONVENTION
JUNE 3-5, 2011*

*DOUBLETREE HOTEL
6505 I-35 NORTH
AUSTIN, TEXAS*

IT IS DEFINITELY THE PLACE TO BE !!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Charles Redding (Born 7-12-15) WW II veteran and member of Chapter 42 is still going strong as an advocate for DAV



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To:



**MEMORIAL DAY IS MAY 30, 2011 TAKE THE TIME TO
REMEMBER THOSE WHO GAVE THE ULTIMATE
SACRIFICE**