

# Roy B. Hodges, Chapter 128 DAV

(Disabled American Veterans)

## Newsletter

Volume 2 Number 4

P. O. Box 670 Converse, TX 78109

Winter (December) 2012

### Commander's Corner

As we come to a close of another year, it has been a very active and productive one. I would like to take this time to thank all the members of the chapter that helped to make it successful. All of the hours volunteered for hospital visits at Audie Murphy and Kerrville is greatly appreciated by the patients there. The forget-me-nots at Lackland AFB and Ft Sam was a success thanks to the unselfish sacrifice of their time of several members. The Golden Corral afforded us an opportunity to talk about the DAV to the veterans while waiting in line. The Thanksgiving Fellowship proved to be just that, a time of fellowship for the comrades that attended. District Commander John Lombrano was our special guest. I attended the thrift Christmas party along with comrade Marvin Vaughan, adjutant Glen Ellison and his wife, Department 3rd Junior vice Jay Johnson and his wife Auxiliary Sr. Vice Jo Ann Johnson, Past Department and Chapter Commander Claude Boggs Sr. and his wife Past Department DAVA Commander Minnie Boggs. I was the guest of honor at the invitation of District Commander Lombrano for Chapter 14's Christmas party. It was a very festive affair with lots of door prizes and a visit from Santa.

My hope for the year 2013 for the chapter, is comradeship of harmony and working together for the betterment of the chapter.

### News You Can Use

Compiled by Adjutant Glenn Ellison

#### DAV, VA Focus on Women Veterans

You can often tell the men in a crowd who have served in the military. Whether it's a fresh haircut and clean shave or a certain posture or poise, male veterans are generally easy to spot. Women veterans, however, are much more difficult to identify, and it's still somewhat rare that they are asked about their service.

It's an unfair, though evolving, reality. One problem that keeps coming up for women who have served in the military is that many just do not realize they qualify as veterans. To help overcome that hurdle, the Loma Linda VA Healthcare System in California partnered with San Bernardino DAV Chapter 12 to host their seventh annual event to honor the women who have served our nation. This year's VA On the Move picnic event focused on one of the most important things for women veterans—their families.

"Our women veterans are so proud to have served, and we just wanted to make sure their families could see how proudly they served," said Lisa Roybal, the women veterans program manager for the Loma Linda VA Healthcare System and a 20-year Navy Nurse Corps veteran. "We also know the younger population of women veterans have families, and they want to include them, so we wanted to invite them all out to spend the day together."

#### Feds to End Paper Checks

Veterans and other federal benefits recipients have three months to make the switch to electronic payments, as the U.S. Treasury Department phases out paper check payments altogether.

This applies to beneficiaries of major federal programs, including Social Security and Veterans Affairs. All federal payments to individuals will be delivered electronically beginning March 1 of 2013.

#### VA Benefits Rise 1.7 Percent

President Obama has signed legislation providing a 1.7 percent cost of living adjustment (COLA) for 3.9 million recipients of VA disability benefits, dependency and indemnity compensation and pensions.

The COLA bill, which had been stalled in the Senate since late September was freed up on Nov. 13 and unanimously approved in time for the increase to be included in the checks received in January. Additional delay could have stalled payments until February or later.

## **Survey Finds Barriers to Hiring Veterans**

The Society for Human Resource Management reports that more companies have been hiring veterans during the past year and a half, but many companies said they had made no specific effort to recruit veterans, even with federal tax credits for hiring them.

The poll was conducted in January 2012 among 359 human resource professionals and reflected employment practices for the previous 36 months. The poll found that two-thirds of those responding had hired veterans in 2011, an 11-percent increase from 2010, but organizations with fewer than 100 employees were less likely to hire veterans in the previous 36 months than those with more workers.

The survey found that 82 percent of publicly owned for-profit companies and 91 percent of government agencies had hired veterans, but only 55 percent of privately owned for-profit companies had given jobs to veterans during the 36-month period. In addition, 71 percent of those who had not hired a veteran made no specific effort to recruit and hire veterans and had no plans to do so.

## **DAV Legislative Goals: Greeting the New Congress**

When the 113th Congress convenes in January, DAV will be prepared to advocate for our legislative priorities. They include providing comprehensive support services for caregivers of severely wounded, injured and ill veterans from all eras. The current law covers only comprehensive support for caregivers of veterans who served after Sept. 11, 2001.

The legislative priorities are based on resolutions approved at our 91st National Convention in August and will be presented to lawmakers to initiate legislation intended to fulfill our nation's promises to the men and women who served.

In addition to the caregivers initiative are resolutions to support sufficient funding for VA health care and equal medical services and benefits for women veterans. DAV also calls for a comprehensive program for traumatic brain injury rehabilitation and stiff opposition to any effort to privatize VA health care services and programs.

“Our members and their grassroots support for our legislative initiatives are a powerful force urging members of Congress to do the right thing,” said Washington Headquarters Executive Director Barry Jesinoski. “DAV’s Commander’s Action Network (DAV CAN) is a crucial tool for our members to tell lawmakers of our positions on veterans’ legislation, and we urge all of our members to sign up at <http://capwiz.com/dav/mlm/signup>.”

## **Invitation to Participate in Research Study**

### **Relationship Satisfaction Among Female Veterans and their Intimate Partners:**

Female soldiers (active duty or veteran) and their same or opposite-sex spouse or partner, 18 years and older, and involved in a marriage or marriage-like commitment for 1+ years, are invited to take part in a research study that examines relationship satisfaction for both the veteran and her spouse or intimate partner, and possible relationships to post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) symptoms and other stressors. The veteran or spouse/partner do not have to have PTSD to participate. Your participation is encouraged. Participation is voluntary and participants will complete an online anonymous survey. If interested in participating, please visit <http://ehmensurveys.webs.com>.

## **Disaster Relief**

DAV has always been there when disaster strikes to offer aid and assistance to affected veterans and their families. Your financial donation to DAV's Disaster Relief Program can make an immediate impact in the lives of your fellow veterans. Individuals, Chapters and Departments who would like to support our veterans in the aftermath of Super Storm Sandy should send their assistance to DAV National Headquarters earmarked in the subject line of contributions to "DAV Disaster Relief Fund":

DAV National Headquarters  
Attn: Disaster Relief Program  
3725 Alexandria Pike  
Cold Spring, KY 41076

### **DAV Skill Gets Quick Rating for Veteran**

As Vietnam veteran Charles Welch lay in a hospital bed recovering from a massive stroke and neurosurgery, he urgently asked to notify Indianapolis National Service Office Assistant Supervisor Donald Inns of his condition and tell him to take care of the veterans he had referred to DAV.

With his left side paralyzed by the stroke and unable to clearly speak, Welch struggled for a week to write a message to his wife, Jean, to call DAV. Then Welch's daughter, Kristina Welch Sandrick, recognized he was writing "DAV."

"He kept putting Donald Inns name on the dry-erase board," said Welch's wife, Jean. "It was hard to read at first, and we finally realized what he was telling us."

"I had introduced Inns to many other veterans who needed claims help," Welch explained. "After I suffered the stroke, I was very insistent that Jean get in touch with him. I kept trying to tell her to call Don.

"My concern was not about me," he added. "It's the mission of DAV to help veterans, but I couldn't assist at this point." The 64-year-old Navy veteran and member of Chapter 2 in Bedford, Ind., had used DAV claims representation in 2008 for Agent Orange-related service connection for Type II diabetes, with secondary disabilities, and was thoroughly impressed with DAV's services.

### **DAV Sees Progress, Concerns in Claims System**

DAV has endorsed the VA's programs to resolve the claims backlog in testimony during hearings before two House panels, but pointed out to lawmakers that problems in the Veterans Benefits Management System (VBMS) could jeopardize its ability to achieve success.

National Legislative Director Joseph A. Violante told the July 18 hearing of the House Oversight and Government Reform's Subcommittee on National Security, Homeland Defense and Foreign Operations that there are "some reasons to be optimistic" that VA's changes in the claims processing system could succeed.

"These problems have persisted for decades," Violante said. "The Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) has taken important steps toward comprehensively transforming the claims processing system."

"The backlog is a symptom, not the root cause, of the problem," he said. "In order to achieve real and lasting success, the VBA must instead remain focused on creating a claims processing system that is carefully designed to get each claim done right the first time."

Violante credited recent improvements in claims processing to VA Under Secretary for Benefits Allison Hickey's direction. "The open and candid attitude of the VBA's leadership, particularly Under Secretary Hickey, led toward developing a true partnership with DAV and other veterans service organizations which assist veterans in filing claims."

## **Announcements**

### **Hospitalized Comrade**

Our Chaplain, Comrade Henry Gallon, was hospitalized at Methodist Hospital located on Floyd Curl Drive in Medical Center on Wednesday, December 19, for a bone marrow transplant. He may be hospitalized for up to three weeks. He has requested that no flowers be sent due to the nature of his condition but visitors will be welcome. Please contact Adjutant Ellison for more information..

### **2013 – 2014 Chapter Officers**

The Nominating Committee is reminding all Roy B. Hodges, Chapter 128, DAV members who would like to run for chapter office that all offices are open. Members who desire to run for office should submit an application to the Nominating Committee at the regular January 2013 chapter meeting or contact a committee

member to receive an application. Committee members are: Comrade Jay Johnson, Claude Boggs, Sr., and Marvin Vaughan.

## **Something To Think About**

Roy B. Hodges, Chapter 128, DAV was organized by veterans who were seeking a place of belonging and continued service to comrades and country when such choices were severely limited for African American service men and women. It was the founder's desire to band together so that their individual strength could be maximized and multiplied thus insuring that the their needs and the needs of the groups to follow could be better served. Many of that founding group are no longer able to make their voices heard in the cause of veterans rights and benefits. Only those who stand on the founder's shoulders are here today to raise a voice for better and more equitable treatment for those who pay the price for the freedoms that we all cherish and enjoy.

The 2012 chapter year has ended and we look forward to 2013. In retrospect the chapter accomplished much but there is much left to be accomplished. One member can accomplish, two members can accomplish more, three members can accomplish much more. When we work together and all contribute just a little more than is expected the level of our accomplishment is beyond measure. 2013 presents each chapter member with a choice. As members we can chose to be one and do nothing or little, or we can join another and do more, or we can all pull together to make the level of our accomplishment exceed our greatest dreams. It is an individual choice with a decision to build or allow deterioration and disintergration.. As a member of Roy B. Hodges Chapter 128, DAV which choice will you make. Will your decision take you in the direction of deterioration and disintergration or will you join the ranks of those who join together to build a brighter tomorrow for those who follow?

**May you enjoy Spiritual, Physical, Mental, Social, and Financial  
health wholeness and healing in the coming year.**

**Roy B. Hodges, Chapter 128 DAV**  
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## Application for Nomination to Elected Office

1. Directions: This form is to be used for those chapter members who desire to run for elected office. The criteria for consideration to be placed on the ballot are:

- Member in good standing – life member or current on dues payment
- Active in the chapter – attending at least 8 of last 12 chapter meetings
- Participating in at least four chapter activities during the previous 12 month period
- Recommended by other chapter member
- Any chapter member can recommend to the Nominating Committee the name of a member for election to elected office

2. Circle the position for which you seek office

- |                           |                       |                           |
|---------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| Commander                 | Senior Vice Commander | 1st Junior Vice Commander |
| 2nd Junior Vice Commander | Treasurer             | Chaplain                  |

3. List how you meet the general qualifications for office in this chapter

4. State how you are qualified for the office that is circled above

5. Will you serve in any office to which you may be elected?    Circle one    Yes            No

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date Submitted \_\_\_\_\_

How to contact \_\_\_\_\_

Day telephone

Other