



Roy B. Hodges Chapter #128 ★ P. O. Box 670 ★ Converse, TX 78109 ★ 210-646-8249

## QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

MONTHLY MEETING: 4th Saturday • 11AM • Barbara Jordon Community Center • 2303 E. Commence St • San Antonio TX

### FROM THE COMMANDER

### 3<sup>RD</sup> & 4<sup>TH</sup> QUARTER 2013 ISSUE



Greetings Comrades,

As you may see, we've combined the 3rd and 4th quarter issues of the newsletter. While our chapter continues to be busier than ever, the past few months, we've only averaged about 25 members in attendance at our monthly meetings. This represents a mere 4% of our overall roster of nearly 600 members. I'm certain this low attendance will improve in the coming months.

So, I want to hear from you. Please take a moment and email me at [htray1931@gmail.com](mailto:htray1931@gmail.com). I'm sincerely interested in knowing what it would take to get our able-bodied members to regularly attend our monthly meetings. It's important everyone knows, sees, and participates in the charitable deeds we're achieving.

"We are family" and as such we grow stronger together in our efforts to support and assist our comrades. The old adage, "A family that plays together stays together" is true. Your presence, participation, and patronage is greatly needed to expand how much more we could do for our Comrades.

In the coming months, we have fundraisers, bingo nights, business events, and other volunteer services that necessitates more members participating to help and support our Brothers and Sisters.

Since publishing the 2nd quarter issue, our chapter has conducted bingo nights for veterans residing at the Kerrville and San Antonio VA Medical Centers. The joy, exhilaration, and gratitude expressed by the

families, staff and veterans for our brightening their day is priceless.

I personally want to thank all of the members who have volunteered throughout 2013. Whether it's been serving on a committee, collecting *Forget-Me-Not* donations at various locations, working the *Golden Coral fundraiser*, representing the chapter at DAV events, or partnering with other non-profits, I'm exceptionally grateful for your selfless service.

Our Thanksgiving Dinner will be Sunday, November 24, 2013, from 1pm-4pm at Second Baptist Church, located at 3310 E. Commerce St. (78220). This event is FREE to all active DAV members. For more information and to register, please contact Senior Vice Commander Alfred Alfaro (210) 333-4205 or email him at [aal-faro003@satx.rr.com](mailto:aal-faro003@satx.rr.com).

Your participation and support is needed and appreciated. Please note, due to the Christmas holidays, **THERE IS NO MEETING IN DECEMBER.** Our next meeting is Saturday, January 25, 2014.

In closing, as we enter the holiday season, be prayerful for those less fortunate and demonstrate the image of Christ by giving. Remember our mission of "Fulfilling our Promises to the Men and Women who Served."

Happy holidays,

*Howard T. Ray*  
Commander

#### CHAPTER OFFICERS

Commander	Howard T. Ray
Senior Vice Commander	Albert Alfaro
1 <sup>st</sup> Junior Vice Commander	Oscar Vick
2 <sup>nd</sup> Junior Vice Commander	Lillie Montgomery
Adjutant	Jerry Koebuck
Judge Advocate	Jay A. Johnson
Chaplain	Clarence H. Williams
Sergeant-at-Arms	Edward Giles
Treasurer	Janie Foxx

#### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Immediate Past Commander	Bettye Vaughan
Legislative Affairs	Lincoln Hardaway
Publicity	Jesse Jones, Jr.
Service Officer	Dr. Reginal Harris
Webmaster	Calvin Bateman
Member	Frank Brown
Member	Glenn Ellison
Member	James Hudson
Member	Phil Robinson

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**DAV 92<sup>ND</sup> NATIONAL CONVENTION**



**President Obama Announces National Plan to Address Veterans Issues**

**ORLANDO, Fla. (AP)** — President Barack Obama assured disabled veterans his administration is making progress on reducing a backlog of disability claims.

He stated in his address that there are commitments from 250 community colleges and universities to help veterans earn college degrees or get credentials to find jobs. He highlighted his comprehensive national plan to improve the ability to prevent, diagnose and treat PTSD and traumatic brain injuries and mental health issues earlier and better reduce suicides amongst veterans.



The president said, "After years of military service, you shouldn't have to wait years for the benefits you've earned." A few years ago,



the number of claims ballooned after the President made it easier for Vietnam veterans exposed to the herbicide Agent Orange to get benefits.

Access to benefits are easier for sufferers of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and Gulf War illnesses like malaria, West Nile virus or other infectious diseases.

The backlog is shrinking due the VA taking steps to approve overtime for claims processors and [its] new automated claims website [www.eBenefits.va.gov](http://www.eBenefits.va.gov) that allows veterans to submit claims online.

At the publishing of this article, there were **780,000** claims pending with **496,000** considered backlogged. A claim is considered backlogged if it's been in the system for 125 days.

This is a **20%** reduction from the **611,000 claims** report at the end of **March 2013**.

*This is an excerpt from an article in The Associated Press. The entire story can be found at the source listed here.*

Superville, D. (2013, August 10). Obama: Progress made on disability claims backlog. Retrieved November 2013, from The Associated AP Associated Press



DAV National Convention



Joseph W. Johnston  
DAV National Commander



Commander Howard T. Ray  
Chapter #128



Texas Department Commander Juan Ruiz Jr.  
& 1<sup>st</sup> Junior Vice Commander Jay Johnson



Comrade Adjutant Jerry Roebuck  
Chapter #128



1st Jr. Vice Commander Oscar Vicks, Comrades  
Lillie Montgomery, & Lincoln Hardaway



Comrade Treasurer Janie Foxx  
Chapter #128



**EXPLORE IMPROVED VA BENEFITS WEBSITE**

[www.VA.gov/explore](http://www.VA.gov/explore)

**EXPLORE VA**

Select a Topic for More Information



**DEPENDENTS AND SURVIVORS**



**DISABILITY COMPENSATION**



**EDUCATION AND TRAINING**



**EMPLOYMENT SERVICES**



**HEALTH CARE**



**HOME LOANS AND HOUSING**



**LIFE INSURANCE**



**MEMORIAL BENEFITS**



**PENSIONS**



**Health Care**

VA operates the nation's largest integrated health care system, with more than 1,700 hospitals, clinics, community living centers, domiciliaries, readjustment counseling centers, and other facilities.



**Benefits**

VA administers a variety of benefits and services that provide financial and other forms of assistance to Servicemembers, Veterans, their dependents and survivors.



**Burials & Memorials**

VA operates 131 national cemeteries in the U.S. and Puerto Rico. Burial and memorial benefits are available for eligible service members, Veterans, and family members.

**DEPENDENTS AND SURVIVORS**

VA offers a variety of benefits and services to spouses, children, and parents of Servicemembers and Veterans who are deceased or totally and permanently disabled by a service-connected disability.

**DISABILITY COMPENSATION**

If you have disabilities, diseases, or injuries caused by or aggravated during active military service—no matter when you served—you may be eligible to receive monthly benefits.

Applying for compensation is different than applying for other benefits. It requires supporting documentation and proof of the claim or claims.

To receive compensation, you must have all of the following:

1. Medical evidence of a current physical or mental disability.
2. Evidence of an event, injury, or disease in service.
3. Evidence of a link between your current disability and the event, injury, or disease in military service.

**EDUCATION AND TRAINING**

VA can help you cover the cost of furthering your education and skills through benefit programs that may pay tuition, housing, training, and other costs.

**PENSIONS**

If you are a low-income wartime Veteran who meets certain service, income, and net-worth limits set by law—or are a surviving family member of a Veteran who meets the criteria—you may be eligible to receive tax-free supplemental income.

**LIFE INSURANCE**

VA can help you secure your, and your family's, future. Individual Servicemembers and Veterans, military and Veteran families, and those with service-connected disabilities have many different life insurance options.

**HOME LOANS AND HOUSING**

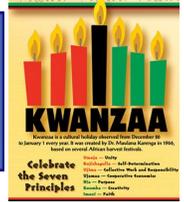
Through VA's home loan and housing programs Veterans and Servicemembers can get access to low-interest home loans or help refinancing an existing mortgage. VA home loans also can be used to buy, build, or improve a home; install energy-related features or improvements; and purchase a manufactured home and/or lot.

**EMPLOYMENT SERVICES**

You may be eligible for one-on-one support, counseling, and training to boost your skills and build your career through VA's Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment program, available to transitioning Servicemembers and Veterans. Family members caring for a service-disabled Veteran may also be eligible for career assistance, job training, and other services.

**This information is provided for educational purposes only. Please visit the improved VA benefits at [www.VA.gov/explore](http://www.VA.gov/explore).**





**FROM THE COMMANDER**

*3rd & 4th Quarter Report*

**Dear Auxiliary Members,**

**Thank** you for your support and participation throughout this calendar year.

**We've** achieved great successes and the future is bright. Some of us attended the 92<sup>nd</sup> National Convention in Orlando in August and 75<sup>th</sup> Department Convention in Austin in June. As of the writing of this article for the newsletter (September), **District V School of Instruction** was in the planning stages. The *School of Instruction* is a program which teaches and reaffirms the duties and responsibilities of unit officers, committee chairs and new members. Our unit plans to sponsor a large number of attendees.

**Our** fundraiser, the *Forget Me Not Tea*, was a success! Heartfelt thanks to the unit members who contributed. Your generous contributions and participation were significant in our support in assisting the Fisher Houses, Audie Murphy VA Medical Center, and Camp Corral Military Children's Summer Camp. Some of the funds were used to defray costs associated with assembling welcome packets for needy military families visiting San Antonio to be with their wounded warrior.

**Remember**, we meet every other month. So our next meeting is in November and our subsequent meeting in January 2014. A certain date for this meeting will be communicated in timely manner so you can plan accordingly. Your support and participation in the **"CALL'EM ALL"** telephone system that notifies unit members of meetings, events, and other unit functions as highly successful. As with new undertakings, we'll continue to *"work the bugs out"* to improve our use of this communication method. I appreciate all suggestions and constructive comments.

**As** we celebrate this holiday season, please keep in your prayers our families, loved ones, and those in need. We will sorely miss our first unit chapter member, Rev. Curtis Michael, for his invaluable contributions, loyalty and faithfulness. Let's continually pray for his wife, Mary and the Boggs family.

**Again**, please accept my sincere gratitude for your support and participation of our unit activities.

Until next time,  
*Joanne C. Johnson*  
Commander

For more information on the Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary visit [www.auxiliary.dav.org](http://www.auxiliary.dav.org).

**JOINT EDUCATION SESSION**

A joint session of the DAV/DAVA at the Barbara Jordan Center on July 27, prior to the DAV general members meeting, for a presentation from our special guest speaker, Valerie Taylor, RN, BSN, *Senior Placement Specialist Certified Assisted Living Manager*, for South Texas Alternative Choice, LLC (STAC). Ms. Taylor discussed the mission and services of STAC, which offers families choices for long-term care of loved ones. The presentation very informative and well received by the those in attendance.—Article & photos, courtesy of Comrade Jesse Jones, Jr., Chapter Publicity Officer



- DAVA commander, Joanne Johnson introducing the Guest Speaker (*top left*)
- Mrs. Valerie Taylor, Guest speaker (*lower left*)
- DAV/DAVA members in attendance for joint session (*above*)

BINGO at AUDIE MURPHY VA MEDICAL CENTER—San Antonio, Texas



On August 5, a team of members from the chapter provided BINGO entertainment and refreshments for the veterans at Audie Murphy VA Medical Center, in San Antonio, Texas. Our team consisted of (from left to right): Chaplain Clarence Williams, Comrade Henry Gallon, Sr., Comrade Sammy Washington, 1<sup>st</sup> Jr. Vice Cdr. Oscar Vicks, Comrade Otis Montgomery, Comrade Jesse Jones, Jr, and Comrade James Hudson. Our team leader was Sr. Vice Cdr. Albert Alfaro, who is pictured in front. To his right, are Joshua Gleason and Idos Gleason, Comrade Hudson's sons. We are grateful for faithfully supporting the chapter. -Article and photo are courtesy of Comrade Jesse Jones, Jr., Chapter Publicity Officer

On October 7, a team of members from the chapter provided BINGO entertainment and refreshments for the veterans at Audie Murphy VA Medical Center, in San Antonio, Texas. Our team consisted of (from left to right): 1<sup>st</sup> Jr. Vice Cdr. Oscar Vicks, Comrade Walter Bowman, Comrade Jesse Jones, Jr, and Comrade James Hudson. Our team leader was Sr. Vice Cdr. Albert Alfaro, who is pictured in front with his wife, Mrs. Anita Alfaro. A very special thanks to Mrs. Alfaro for unselfish support of this event.



-Article and photo are courtesy of Comrade Jesse Jones, Jr., Chapter Publicity Officer

CHAPTER MEETING PHOTOS



Comrade Janie Foxx, being sworn in as new chapter Treasurer during the October general meeting by Commander Ray while Sr. Vice Commander, Albert Alfaro looks on.-Photo courtesy of Comrade Jesse Jones, Jr., Chapter Publicity Officer



Commander Ray welcomes visitors Comrade Edwin Thorp, Army veteran, and Comrade Jerry Hampton, retired Army veteran. Both gave brief introductions to include their military service and expressed an interest in becoming DAV members of Chapter #128. We are happy to have them join us. -Photo courtesy of Comrade Jesse Jones, Jr., Chapter Publicity Officer

RECRUIT MILITARY® Connecting military veterans and employers nationwide.

Gainful employment with military-friendly employers. www.RecruitMilitary.com.

"We stand committed to helping veterans connect with employers to help them take the next step in their careers."



Due to Christmas holidays, we are not meeting in the month of December.

'FORGET-ME-NOT' FUNDRAISERS TO SUPPORTS VETERANS



Pictured here ← from left to right: Treasurer Janie Foxx, 2nd Jr. Vice Commander Lillie W. Montgomery and 1st Jr. Vice Commander Oscar L. Vicks.



Pictured here ← from left to right: Comrade Otis Brown, Comrade Gordon E. Henderson and Sr. Vice Commander Albert Alfaro.



Our chapter continues the DAV's tradition, dating back to February 24, 1926. "The first **Forget-Me-Not** drive was held to raise funds to support DAV services and assistance desperately needed by veterans disabled in World War I." The little, blue **Forget-Me-Not** came about because WWI soldiers remembered seeing *blue spring flowers* growing on the graves of their comrades and allies who were killed during the war.



These fund drives are important in our efforts to provide support and services to veterans. This year we held drives on **October 5, 19, and November 2, and 3**. On these days, members volunteered 2-hour blocks at pre-selected locations at Joint Base San Antonio Fort Sam Houston and Joint Base San Antonio Lackland Air Force Base.



—Photos courtesy of Comrade Jesse Jones, Jr., Chapter Publicity Officer

GOLDEN CORRAL GIVES MEALS AND MILLIONS TO DAV

On November 2 and 3, members of our chapter volunteered 2-hour blocks during our annual *Golden Corral Fundraiser* at 2301 Pat Booker Road, in Universal City.

In addition to our efforts, this marked the **12th year** of Golden Corral's *Military Appreciation Monday*. According to the press release, over **375,000** veterans and active duty military nationwide were served a free dinner buffet and beverage.



Golden Corral reports 2013 was a record year, raising more than **\$1,260,000** for the Disabled American Veterans organization. These funds will be used by state and local chapters to assist veterans. We sincerely thank Golden Corral for providing to date, over **3.7 million** free meals and contributing over **\$7.4 million** to the DAV. -

CONGRATULATIONS COMRADE EDWARD E. GILES

Roy B. Hodges Chapter #128 extends hearty congratulations to Comrade Edward Earl Giles, Chapter Sergeant-At-Arms, on his marriage to his sweetheart, Miss Deniesa Elaine Sanders. The nuptials took place Saturday, November 23, at Rose of Sharon Ministries.

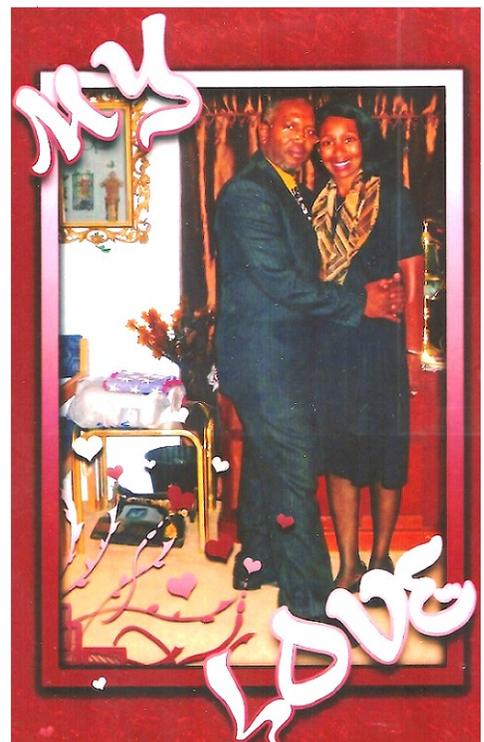
Their eloquent wedding ceremony was officiated by Pastor Herschel Giroux of Bone of My Bone Church. All guests were invited to join the bride and groom for at their reception which was held at St. Paul United Methodist Church. —Photo and graphic design courtesy of Comrade Edward Giles.

**ALL THAT I HAD EXPECTED, YET SO MUCH MORE**  
By Edward Earl Giles

*I had proclaimed Great Expectations to overtake me throughout the year  
Open doors of favor and opportunity coming from both far and near  
Blessings upon my loved ones, my family expanding form shore to shore  
Who could have imagined how God would provide this and so much more...*

*I prayed that God would send me an angel to serve as guardian over my life  
A shoulder to lean on—a pillar of support while navigating a world full of strife  
You became the answer—I knew it once you walked through the door  
God had blessed me with all that I had expected, yes, this and so much more!*

Excerpt from poem printed in wedding program. (©2013)





IN MEMORIAM ...

Mr. William H. Craig  
Mr. Jeffry Lynn Harris  
Rev. Curtis Michael  
Mr. William E. Taylor

...GONE BUT NEVER FORGOTTEN

*Here's to those who choose to be warriors  
And their helps good and true;  
They're fighting for American values;  
They're fighting for me and you.*

by Joanna Fuchs

Excerpt from poem "Honor Our Military."

**Bexar County Tax Assessor-Collector**, Albert Uresti, reports that the 10-Month Payment Plan for Senior Citizens, Disabled Persons, and/or Disabled Veterans, as well as the Pre-Payment Plan and Automatic Deductions (recurring payments) for all citizens are now a reality as promised.

If you're rated 100% SERVICE-CONNECTED DISABLED VETERAN or as 100% UNEMPLOYABILITY and receive compensation from the VA, you may qualify for an exemption of property taxes.

If you are the SURVIVING SPOUSE of a disabled veteran who qualified for the 100% DISABLED VETERAN'S exemption, you may qualify to continue the property tax exemption. You must have been married to said disabled veteran at the time of their death **and** you have **not** remarried **and** the property was your residence homestead **and** remains your residence homestead.

For more information, visit [www.bcad.org](http://www.bcad.org) or call the Bexar County Appraisal District at (210) 224-2432.

NEWSLETTER DISCLAIMER

The Newsletter Committee, at the discretion of the Executive Committee, reserves the right to refuse to publish any material submitted. In the event of a refusal, the submitter may contact the Editor for an explanation. Every effort is made to screen submissions for legality, accuracy, and content. Materials submitted are for publishing consideration only. The creator of the submission retains ownership based on copyright laws. The Newsletter Committee, at the discretion of the Executive Committee, will publish advertisements it deems appropriate and conforms to the stated mission and vision of the Disabled American Veterans. Any revenue collected from advertisers will be deposited into the chapter account and disperse in accordance with the bylaws and constitution of the organization. Each subscriber to this newsletter is responsible for the accuracy of their electronic mail address. It is the responsibility of the subscriber to notify the Newsletter Committee of changes to contact information. Roy B. Hodges Chapter #128 Quarterly Newsletter is a copyrighted publication. However, we encourage duplication and dissemination for educational and informational purposes only. 

Each issue a space will be reserved to honor any fallen Comrades and their family members. If you'd like submit something for publishing in the chapter newsletter, please email it to the Editor at [AskDrReg@gmail.com](mailto:AskDrReg@gmail.com). Feel free to send an obituary, a photo, or a brief write-up to commemorate their service, support, and comradeship. We reserve the right to edit the content.

2014 MID-WINTER CONFERENCE

The DAV Mid-winter Conference will be held in Arlington, VA from February 23rd — 26th, 2014.

2014 NATIONAL CONVENTION

The DAV & DAV Auxiliary National Convention will be held in Las Vegas, NV from August 9th — 12th, 2014.

ONGOING EVENTS

MOBILE SERVICE OFFICES

DAV's Mobile Service Office (MSO) program brings benefits counseling and services to veterans and their families where they live. Aided by Department and Chapter Service Officers, NSOs travel to communities across the country to help veterans develop and file claims for benefits administered under federal, state and local laws. MSOs travel the country helping veterans.

INFORMATION SEMINARS

The work of DAV's National Service Officers extends well beyond their offices and deep within the veterans community. Part of their outreach activities involves DAV's Veterans Information Seminars. This program is designed to educate veterans and their families on veterans' benefits and services.



DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS

ROY B. HODGES CHAPTER #128

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FIRST CLASS POSTAGE



Send questions/comments to Dr. Reginal D. Harris, Editor [AskDrReg@gmail.com](mailto:AskDrReg@gmail.com)



NEWSLETTER SENT BY EMAIL. INFORM CHAPTER ADJUTANT IF YOU PREFER IT BY MAIL.

Next Chapter Meetings

- Saturday, January 25, 2014
- Saturday, February 22, 2014
- Saturday, March 22, 2014

Executive Committee 10AM  
General Meeting 11AM

Due to Christmas holidays, we are not meeting in the month of December.