

# DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS

DEPARTMENT of TEXAS, HEADQUARTERS

## BULLETIN

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AUGUST 2007

### COMMANDER'S COMMENTS

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for putting your faith in me and giving me the honor to serve as your Department Commander this year. I've worked very hard to get here and will continue to work hard throughout the coming year for our disabled veterans.

I hope everyone had a safe and happy 4<sup>th</sup> of July. I was asked to participate in Seguin's "Biggest Small Town Parade in Texas". We arrived at Chapter 61 early on the 4<sup>th</sup> to decorate our "float". We had the American and Texas flag, a flag for each branch of the service, and the POW-MIA flag. It was a great looking "float". As you all know our wonderful state has been inundated with rain. Wednesday was no exception but we were hopeful that it would hold off until the afternoon. As we got into line for the judging and the parade, it began to drizzle. Then come down a little harder and finally pouring down. In spite of ponchos and umbrellas we were drenched! Guess what? The parade was cancelled. But being the troopers that DAV (and DAVA) members are, the decision was made that the show (or parade) must go on. So we (and a few others) went through the parade route anyway, waving to the few die-hard parade watchers who stayed along the route. We really had a great time!

Speaking of the massive amounts of rain, I know that many areas in the state have been and continue to be flooded. I want to remind all the members that the DAV has a Disaster Relief Program. The program is set up to provide disaster relief to qualified veterans and their families. The veteran needing assistance only needs to contact their local NSO for the information. I know personally that this is a great program because I received their assistance when I, Terri and Don lost our home in the flood of '98. If you know of a veteran needing this assistance have them contact their local NSO.

Many questions have been asked about the DAV and the 3 law firms partnering up. What this is about is the DAV and these law firms have joined up to provide FREE assistance to injured soldiers at Walter Reed to get through the maize of the military's disability evaluation and rating system. This is causing confusion because of the stance the DAV has taken on attorneys representing veterans and soldiers on claims. The thing is that the DAV has no problem with them helping as long as it is Pro Bono, at NO cost to the veteran or soldier. They should not take a portion of the money meant to compensate veterans for service-connected injuries. They should step up because it is the right thing to do, take care of the men and women who take care of our country and freedom.

I hope to see many of you at our National Convention in New Orleans. Have safe travels.

Yours in comradeship,  
*Doug Herrle*

Department Commander

### MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN

**THE DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS,  
DEPARTMENT OF TEXAS HAD THE  
FOLLOWING POPULATION SUMMARY AS OF,  
7/14/2007:**

Life Members	60,634
Total Members	77,355

<b>This years GOAL for full paid life members is:</b>	
Goal	63,299
Members to make goal	2,665

I would like to take this opportunity to say "thank you" to everyone for allowing me to serve as your Sr. Vice Commander for 2007-2008. Along with this position also comes the responsibility of

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being Membership Chairman as appointed by the Dept. Commander.

I will certainly represent you to the best of my ability in both positions; as Chairman, I will definitely need your help. We have been warned by National, starting at the convention in Chicago, that Chapters & Departments would lose members who were 3 years in arrears in membership payments on July 1, 2007--and guess what--we (Department) did.

Crossing the fiscal date line, Dept. lost 5,549 members plus 1,081 life members for a total of 6,630. From Chapter 2 - 4,419 members plus 218 life for a total of 4,637. As of July 9, 2007, Department is at 95.79% of goal.

There's no doubt we have our work cut out for us, but with what I've witnessed these past years, I also have no doubt that all of us together as a team can do it. And here's the proof folks--last year Joe Noonan, NSO of San Antonio, recruited 114 new members; Bill Murray, Cmdr. of San Angelo Chapter 7, recruited 39 new members; Valente Alvarado, DSO of El Paso, recruited 33 new members. Department made goal for last year by at least 518. I commend all of you for your special efforts in accomplishing this.

I've already gotten the word that some recruiters are off to a good start for this year. I ask that everyone please join in and let's make Texas number one in 2008. It's a challenge that is very doable because of your sincere dedication.

A new way to help get the word out--I urge all Chapters to take advantage of National's offer to help set up a free Chapter Website for each Chapter. In today's world this is an excellent tool to let everyone know who you are, what you are all about, and where you are located (address, email, phone, etc.).

Just an important reminder from the "good old days"--Please don't forget the letters, phone calls, and personal visitations. In my book, this is still very important.

*Ed Meiser*

Membership Chairman

**ADJUTANT'S COMMENTS**

The 2007 Department convention was held in Austin June 22/24. It was a very successful event. The following Department officers were elected: Commander- Douglas G. Herrle; Sr. Vice Cdr.- Edgar Meiser; 1<sup>st</sup> Jr. Vice Cdr. Teresa Johni-

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ken; 2<sup>nd</sup> Jr. Vice Cdr. James Scott; Judge Advocate Dennis Nixon; Chaplain Charles Edwards.



**Who is this?** Oh yes, it's National 2<sup>nd</sup> Jr. Vice Cdr Bobby Barrera enjoying the singing at the Department Convention. Note the "Hooked on Bobby" T-shirts the Bob-ettes are wearing.

After being pointed out that the National organization publishes a financial report in the DAV magazine, a resolution was passed to have a quarterly financial report included in the Bulletin. It is provided below using Line numbers taken from the Annual Financial Report Form to conserve space. For those interested in viewing National's report in the DAV magazine, it can be found on page 32 of the May/June issue.

Financial Position 6-30-07		Annual Financial Report Line Number		
		Line	Admin	Service
Income Balances				
Note receivable	11,044.70	11	21,736.30	
CD	221,155.70	12	33,756.21	11,384.28
Checking	179,141.26	13	399.06	927.87
Savings	42,229.76	14		127,138.43
Investments	1,002,238.24	19	3,611.68	48.68
		21	17,406.96	5.00
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1,455,809.60</b>		<b>76,910.21</b>	<b>139,504.26</b>

Revised instructions for completing the Annual Financial Report Forms should have been received by all chapters. I would hope that all chapters have appointed an audit committee and will submit their balanced report by the due date of September 30.

**BASEBALL FANS!** Two Texas teams participate in DAV at the Ballpark, the Houston Astros

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and the Texas Rangers. The Astros' game date has come and gone but the Rangers date is Sunday, September 9 playing the Oakland A's. If you are in the D/FW area, purchase special priced tickets and enjoy the game. If your chapter would like to sponsor seats for veterans in the VA hospitals or nursing homes, contact me and I'll arrange to get the tickets for the chapter. PLAY BALL!

*Eldon Armstrong*  
Department Adjutant / Treasurer

**DISTRICT I**

We held our Department Convention on June 22/24 in Austin. We had a good Convention; it was a nice turnout. I wish we could have had a member from each District Chapter present. We had some good information passed out at the convention.

There will be a change to the Department bylaws changing "District Convention/s" to "District Meeting/s." The next District I Meeting will be held on Friday afternoon thru Sunday in Midland. The dates have not been set for the Meeting. When that information is available, I will ensure that all District Chapters are informed.

*Jesse Dryer*  
Commander, District I  
Telephone/Fax (915) 598-1025

**DISTRICT II**

Greetings District II

The rain in North Texas may have dampened the mood of The Fourth of July but the spirit of OLD GLORY was evident by the many parades that were still held and the many firework displays. The TV showed many cities with parades and the streets lined with flag waving men, women & children and OLD GLORY still being held high.

The DAV Department Convention was attended by many District II members so the District stood tall and proud again. I came away with new information from the sessions conducted as I'm sure many of you did and will carry it back to your chapters to use. I hope everyone had a safe trip home.

Now for recruiting, we have a lot of disabled soldiers who are returning and are in need of our assistance in their time of recovery. If you have time and are close to a VA Medical Center, stop by to visit them if only for a short period and I promise you that you will come away with a feeling of hav-

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ing done a good deed. My monthly trips to the Bonham VA to help them celebrate monthly birthdays are a joy to them and to the members of my Chapter that go. District II Commander AJ Jones and I will be making a visit to each Chapter throughout the year and we've already started locally. Please do not hesitate to contact any District II officer if you have any questions or concerns. Remember our motto "WE ARE ONE". Troops are returning daily through D/FW airport for R & R at terminal D, gate 22 if you get a chance, help put a SMILE on their faces and feel good about yourself.

Gene Allen  
Sr. Vice Commander, District II

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**Rainy Greetings District II**

As your District II Commander I'm asking that each of you mark your calendars now because the location and date are now set for the 2008 District II Meeting and I'm expecting this to be a great meeting and I hope to see each of you there with this much advanced notice: March 28-30, 2008 at the Holiday Inn Select - Richardson, TX.

I also expect nothing less than greatness and comradeship within each Chapter - "We Are One" - reach out and help each other when needed.

Remember to:

- Recruit new life members
- Visit Veterans in nursing homes
- Visit Veterans in the hospital
- Volunteer your services at a VA hospital
- Help your fellow Comrade

Yours in service,  
*AJ Jones*  
Commander, District II

**DISTRICT III**

Fire works, friends, neighbors, B B Q Chicken & Ribs followed with apple pie. Yes it was what we refer to as the 4<sup>th</sup> of July. As children yelled with excitement and toddlers cried at the noise while others sleep, feeling safe peacefully in their mothers arms while our other children are in a far off land fighting for the right of our freedom.

Since before the signing of the Declaration of Independence many of our young men and women have given their all; yes their lives and many came back a lot different than when they left for their country's freedom. It has been a high price to pay so lets keep reminding our children what the 4<sup>th</sup> of July is all about.

## Disabled American Veterans

That morning I received a call to pick up some items donated to our thrift store . The wind was blowing at a good pace but yet not too strong. As I drove down our country roads I saw many a flag pole with the stars and stripes so proudly blowing straight out. This my comrades made my heart feel so very proud to be a veteran of the United States of America and that I did serve for my Country.

We have a veteran, Bill Stacy of Ch 215, home after a fall and broken hip. He was in hospital and nursing care for 20 days. Good to have you back Bill.

Well August is upon us, so be careful out in the heat and carry water with you if you are going to be out for a long period of time. Remember to check on your elderly neighbors make sure that they are doing ok.

Also remember that our National convention is this month. You can send me your chapter news at ([tiredock@yahoo.com](mailto:tiredock@yahoo.com)).

And of course as always pray for our troops in harms way. District Chaplain Jerry Shumaker can be contacted at (325-388-5367) if you would like to talk with him.

Again, good luck to our newly elected Department officers for a hard job in front of them.

Yours in Comradeship,

*Roger Garza*

Commander, District III

## DISTRICT IV

Once again the Department had a successful and productive Convention. All those who attended saw that the DAV, Department of Texas is functioning. I regret that I could not attend due to unexpected and unplanned surgery. The Doctors say the probability of a positive outcome is high and that I should be able to actively participate in Department business sometime in August.

Obviously I did survive and, now, wish to congratulate the new Line Officers. Mr. Herrle will do us proud as the new Commander and welcome to Mr. James Scott. I also wish to thank immediate past Commander- Mr. Lloyd and our Department Adjutant- Mr. Armstrong for their fine performance during the past year. Let us all remember that to keep the Department of Texas as great as it is we must:

1. Recruit new members. We are fortunate in that most Veteran we talk to either have an adjudicated

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VA Disability, have applied for VA Disability or, have a Military Related Disability that they can apply for.

2. Volunteer to help other Veterans. There is an urgent need for Volunteers at VA Clinics, Hospitals and in the DAV Transportation System.

3. Attend events for Veterans, especially ones for the returning ones from Iraq and Afghanistan. They need guidance and support. Eventually they will consider membership in the DAV based on the memories they have of the individuals who were there when they needed them.

Yours in Comradeship,

*Wolf Biedenfeld*

Commander, District IV

## DISTRICT V

Hi Again Comrades,

The Forth of July was an exciting day for letting Freedom Rain. On my first official visit as District V Commander, I went to Seguin to participate in their Forth of July Parade. The thoughts of not going because of weather conditions crept in my mind, but I went along with the DAVA District V Commander (my wife). We arrived in Seguin, and we were told the Parade was still on. To put a long story short, the rain started up again, and the officials called off the Parade. We were already wet from the rain, and we were on their float (an open trailer decorated with flags). All on the float decided weather never stopped our military duties and certainly does not stop the ones defending our freedom now so why should we let it stop us! Therefore, with several other floats and a band in front of us, we did the parade route. There were fans still out under umbrellas or porches to watch. We had a great time and realized that Veterans, especially Disabled Veterans, are determined to let **FREEDOM RAIN!**

I hope your Forth of July was just as exciting as ours, don't forget to let Freedom Rain. Embrace all Disabled Veterans no matter what war or conflict they served in. Remember they were fighting for their country and following the orders of the Commander In Chief.

*Albert Owens*

Commander, District V

**BPT / LEGISLATIVE REPORT**

**VHA CONDUCTS 2007 SURVEY OF ENROLLEES**

The Veterans Health Administration (VHA) will be conducting the 2007 update of its national VHA Survey of Enrollees. The purpose of the survey is to provide information that is incorporated into annual VHA projections of enrollment, utilization and expenditures, as well as into a variety of high-level budget- and policy-related analyses.

The survey collects information on a random sample of 42,000 veterans enrolled in the VA system, who participate in an approximately 15-30 minute telephone survey.

Each Veterans Integrated Service Network will have approximately 2,000 enrollees surveyed. The survey will be fully initiated July 8, 2007. Interviewing will continue for 8 weeks.

The survey asks basic information that is not reliably available, such as health insurance, days spent in non-VA care and employment status. Improvements in the survey since it was last conducted in 2005 include more detailed questions on health insurance and, in particular, prescription coverage. A small portion of veterans will be asked why they choose to use VA health care.

The Disabled American Veterans (DAV) encourages veterans who are selected to participate to give their time and provide full, complete, and accurate information to help the VA collect this critical data.

*Jim Roos*

BPT/Legislative Chairman

**VAVS REPORT**

Let me begin by saying Congratulations to Department Commander Douglas Herrle and his line officers!

I can't believe that 2007 is half over! Time has really flown by. Speaking of time and how fast it passes reminds me that now would be a good time to ask you all to take whatever measures are necessary to ensure that your volunteers are being credited with the proper number of hours in a timely manner. Congratulations to the VAVS Deputy Reps that have been appointed to work with the Representatives responsible for tracking and reporting this time well spent. The VAVS seminar that many of you attended at the Department Convention provided the necessary forms that should be sent to National on a monthly basis. Texas has

the best volunteers in the Country and we want to make sure they are recognized for all their hard work.

You may reach me at 979-244-8141 or [ecram@davispc.com](mailto:ecram@davispc.com) with any questions concerning Volunteerism. I would appreciate the opportunity to serve you.

Always, a **Special Thank You** to all volunteers who make it happen.

*Marcie Hill*

Department VAVS Chairman

**Women Veteran's Representative**

I read an article recently entitled "Fibromalgia or crazy?" This article dealt with symptoms of the disease as well as causes. It was fascinating to me since many of the symptoms I experience myself. There has never been a physician of mine that checked me for this condition.

I started looking into causes of this disease and found many references to women veterans. One article discussed that a physical injury could be the onset of this problem. I also found a couple of research articles that seem to be related to PTSD.

If you are suffering from the following symptoms you may have fibromalgia:

- Severe fatigue
- Headaches
- Irritable bowel syndrome
- Irritable bladder
- Cognitive and memory problems
- TMJ or temporomandibular joint disorder
- Restless leg syndrome
- Pelvic pain
- Noise and temperature sensitivity
- Anxiety or depression
- Skin color changes

If you are experiencing any of these problems discuss it with your health care provider so a determination can be made. If a diagnosis is made, is it due to your military service? Contact a NSO for further information on these possibilities.

I hope you all had a safe and Happy 4<sup>th</sup> of July and look forward to seeing you in New Orleans!

Yours in service  
*Teresa Johniken*

Women's Veteran Department Appointee

**DAV AUXILIARY COMMANDER**



**Alice Armstrong, thank you for a wonderful year as our state auxiliary Commander, you had done a wonderful job. I hope that I can only follow in your footsteps with a small footprint of my own.**

**HELLO AUXILIARY MEMBERS:**

What a great state convention in Austin. If you missed it – you missed a great opportunity to see your state auxiliary in action. Reports given were great. I will not go into details on how many hours and donations that our state auxiliary contributed toward our disabled American veterans.

If your Unit had a representative at our state convention, they should give you their report.

Congratulations are in order for your new state officers, elected state officers are:

**State Commander: Clarice Konieczny**, District IV Unit Brenham #139.

**Sr. Vice Commander: Mary Bergeron**, District V San Antonio Unit #5.

**1<sup>st</sup> Jr. Vice Commander: Sylvia Shurgot**, District I Taylor County Unit #36.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Jr. Vice Commander: Mary Michaels**, District V San Antonio Unit 128.

**Judge Advocate: Betty Hall**, District IV Unit #9.

**Chaplain: Joyce Brannen**, District III Unit #3.

**CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL. BETTY HALL, PNC, THANK YOU FOR INSTALLING ALL THE OFFICER'S. IT WAS A GREAT DAY.**

As my first official duty as Commander of the Auxiliary of Texas, I was to take our National Guest, Sandra Dobmeier, back to the airport. I did good—real good—traffic would not let me enter the freeway where I wanted to so we went a few miles out of the way, but we managed to get to the airport in plenty of time. Sandra will remember her visit here in Texas. Now down to serious business—Auxiliary members—I have set your goals high this year, membership-membership-I know that we all can meet our quotas. We even can exceed our quotas. I want the State of Texas to meet and exceed our membership quota—and I know you can do it. There are a lot of new members out there. We just have to find them. Get excited about the auxiliary and keep doing the

great work that you do, taking care of your veterans and their families.

Keep your membership active and keep them involved. There is nothing any better than having an active auxiliary, them active. This is why this year's motto will be **SNAG'EM HOOK'EM AND KEEP'EM**. I believe that most of you know that I enjoy fishing—haven't got to do much lately—cause of all sorts of reasons but that is what is with the motto: **KEEP'EM ACTIVE ALWAYS BE GRACIOUS**.

Hope each one of you had a happy birthday—July 4<sup>th</sup>—celebrating the birth of your country and all the freedoms that we enjoy. Thank your veterans for your freedoms and not your politicians. We love our political leaders but sometimes we have to wonder—where they are??? Don't forget about National Convention in New Orleans in August. Bring yourself—spouse—better half—significant other or just come yourself and enjoy. We will all have a great time. Thank you for all your support in advance and on behalf of my line officers, thank you for serving in this great organization.

**JUST REMEMBER**

**SNAG'EM HOOK'EM KEEP'EM**

**State Auxiliary Commander**

*Clarice Konieczny*

**DAV AUXILIARY PAST COMMANDER**

It was exciting to have such good attendance at our 2007 State DAVA Convention. I have so many of you to thank for making it a success but the Editor said I could not list each persons name as it would take up the whole bulletin, so, please consider yourself thanked from the bottom of my heart. I do want to acknowledge the officers, the chairpersons, those who helped at registration, Craig Johniken for serving as Convention Chair, and Unit 84 for their beautiful decorations (which they donated as prizes at the banquet), DAVA coffee mugs, the entertainment for all 3 social events, and for their cash contributions throughout the year, and to all Units who donated to DAVA State this year. Thank you for the gifts you bestowed on me, and your warm hospitality when I visited your Units and events.

I would ask just one favor of those who attended the convention - please *share* the information that you received there with your Unit members. Thank you all, and God bless each of you.

*Alice Armstrong*



**DAV AUXILIARY MEMBERSHIP**

The Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary had the following Population Summary as of 7/14/2007:

Life Members	5,984
Total Members	6,461

**THIS YEARS GOALS ARE:**

Membership Goal	6,970
Goal percentage	92.70

<b>UNDER Goal</b>	509
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**ITEMS OF INTEREST**

The W.R. Hold Chapter 147 in Killeen is in the process of submitting plans and all necessary paper work to the Texas Land Board for approval of a Disabled American Veterans Memorial to be placed along the memorial walkway at the Central Texas State Veterans Cemetery located on Highway 195 about 6 miles south of Killeen. This was the first State of Texas Veterans Cemetery that opened in January 2006.

The chapter will accept donations from Chapters and individual Disabled American Veteran members. Chapter Commander Theron L. Johnson says "this is a memorial for the DAV, Department of Texas, and paid for by our membership not merchants, we want to do this for our selves". Once approved a dedication date will be set and announced. The memorial will state that it is dedicated by the Disabled American Veterans, Department of Texas. The memorial will have an 18 inch bronze DAV emblem and emblem of the military services and will state on it, "Dedicated in memory of all our Disabled American Veterans who served our country with honor. Disabled American Veterans, Department of Texas".

Any chapter or individual member wanting to make a donation can mail it to W.R. Hold Chapter 147, PO Box 1149, Killeen, TX 76540-1149, please mark as a memorial donation. For additional information call Commander Johnson at (254) 634-7918. The minimum cost will be just under \$2,900 depending on the quality of the granite stone.

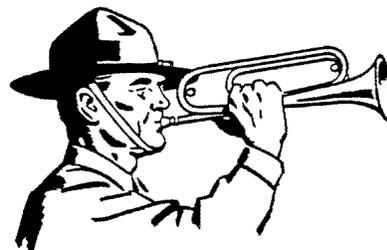
Theron Johnson and his wife Gail C. Johnson are the volunteer coordinators for the veteran's cemetery.

**PRAYER LIST**

*Prayers are needed for the following:*

**Richard Stewart**, Adj Ch 42, diagnosed with cancer.

**TAPS**



Department has been notified that the following comrades have been called into final formation above:

- Thomas D. Carr**, Ch 14 passed February 2007
- Richard I. Carty**, Ch 14 passed February 2007
- Arthur Porcella**, Ch 14 passed February 2007
- Gerald R. Larson**, Ch 14 passed February 2007
- John A. Appleton, Jr.** Ch 14 passed April 2007
- John H. Rich** Ch 137 Passed 24 May 2007
- Harry L. Gans**, Ch 14 passed May 2007
- Clement H. Will**, Ch 14 passed June 2007
- Kenneth Staley** Ch 17 passed June 2007
- Arthur Fagen**, Ch 14 passed June 2007

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



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.

**Disabled American Veterans  
Bulletin  
Department of Texas, Inc.  
2305 Oak Lane. Suite 225  
Grand Prairie, TX 75051-4896**

**NON PROFIT  
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Permit #269**

**To:**



**A surprise for our very own Bobby Barrera at Department Convention  
His very own song performed by Glenn Lenderman and the Bob-ettes!**