

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS

DEPARTMENT of TEXAS, HEADQUARTERS

BULLETIN

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JULY 2007

COMMANDER'S COMMENTS

HELLO FELLOW TEXANS

By the time you read this the last gavel will have fallen on this year's Convention. You will have elected a new Commander and line officers and my stewardship in that position will have passed. For those who were unable to attend, I would like to thank you for allowing me the opportunity to have served you this past year as your Commander. For those who were in attendance, I'm sure I already have, but thank you again.

Looking back on the past year is overwhelming, as representing the Department of Texas was an exciting challenge and responsibility that was truly an honor I will always carry with me. Thank you again.

Now that I have looked back on the past year, it is time to look forward. We have to invite our new younger members to develop their leadership skills. Don't be afraid to share your knowledge with the new younger members of our organization preparing them to step into leadership roles. Mentor them so they will have the knowledge to carry the torch of commitment to the Disabled Veterans and their dependence as you have. We are the best service organization, bar none. It is our responsibility, no duty, to ensure that we continue to have the quality of members currently involved in the DAV, Department of Texas.

I am looking forward to my continued involvement in the DAV, as "getting the boot" is no more than a different pair of shoes for me to fill. I'm looking forward to seeing everyone in New Orleans at National. Travel safely and Godspeed.

Yours in comradeship,
Rex Lloyd
Department Commander

MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN

THE DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS, DEPARTMENT OF TEXAS HAD THE FOLLOWING POPULATION SUMMARY AS OF, 6/14/2007:

Life Members	61,686
Part Life Members	22,254
Total Members	83,940

This years GOAL for full paid life members is:

Goal	61,004
Members to make goal	We made it!

Membership is open to any man or woman, who was wounded, gassed, injured or disabled in line of duty during time of war, while in the service of either the military or naval forces of the United States of America, and who has not been dishonorably discharged or separated from such service, or who may still be in active service in the armed forces of the United States of America is eligible for membership in the Disabled American Veterans. Others, who are disabled while serving with any of the armed forces of any actions associated with the United States of America as allies during any of its war periods, who are American citizens and who are honorably discharged are also eligible.

OPERATION RECOGNITION

A young man left MacArthur High School in San Antonio in 1960 (before graduating) to join the Marine Corps. He began his military career (serving in many worldwide locations including Vietnam) at the age of 17. He went on to earn his GED while stationed in Okinawa. This young man proudly served his country for the next 21 years of his life, retiring in 1981. He got married, had a family, joined the civilian workforce, went on to earn a Bachelors degree in business in 1993, and retired from TWC in 2003 as a veteran's rep. He joined the DAV in 1982 and has been very active in the organization every since. While assisting veterans at his local Chapter home in 2006, an Auxiliary member (Frances Cuellar) told him about "Operation Recognition", a program set up to get diplomas for veterans. On May 27, 2007 that veteran (me) had the privilege of walking across the stage with the 2007 graduating class of MacArthur High School and receiving

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that high school diploma, 46 years later. Being as I am the first veteran from this school district to participate in this program, there was much media attention (3 radio and 2 TV interviews).

I am telling you this story for two reasons. The first is because I am so proud (as is Terri and Don) to have finally received my high school diploma (even if I did do it backwards). The second is to let all our Texas veterans know about this program.

In 2001, the Texas legislature passed the High School Diploma for Certain Veterans Act (TEC: 28.0251), also known as "Operation Recognition". This law allows vets and families of deceased vets from WWII, Korea, and Vietnam to receive their high school diploma if they left high school to serve in the armed forces. The veterans must have been scheduled to graduate after 1940 and before 1975 and have been honorably discharged.

To some it may seem silly to do this after so many years. But to me, and the other veterans who have already participated in this program, receiving a high school diploma is a milestone in your life. I want other veterans to know that it's never too late, you can do it. I just did it backwards, first college then high school.

Doug Herrle

Membership Chairman

ADJUTANT'S COMMENTS

Herman W. Morton, retiring Department Commander of Ohio, said it very well in his June Department Bulletin. I feel it's worth repeating in part. . .

"Newly elected chapter officers, and those in appointed positions, remember to cast *your own shadow* and do what is correct, and not simply go along just to get along. Honor your promises and oaths to do what is in the best interest of the DAV; you may be the new driving force to correct past wrongs or inconsistencies. We must not accept the status quo of how things are done if they are incorrect. It is essential we remain proactive to preserve our excellence. President Regan was noted for saying the term *status quo* was Latin for "the same old mess." Do not fall prey to how things were done in the past, or as some would tell you, "We have always done it this way," challenge the wrongs you see.

"Never listen to the wisdom of a fool." Your Constitution & Bylaws are there to guide you, protect you, and teach you. Therefore, when some-

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thing does not "feel" right, or if there is a "sense" something is wrong, arm yourself with knowledge of the Mission Statement, the Constitution & Blaws, and the Official Rituals of the DAV. There is no secret to a well-managed organization; it is simply having everyone do as they have been trained. Nevertheless, there will be those with the temerity to blatantly ignore the standards expected from our elected and appointed officials. Therefore, members must hold their officers to task when chapter activities are conducted outside the DAV National or Department guidelines. Remember, "Effective leadership must be earned repeatedly!"

As DAV National Adjutant Art Wilson said, none of us are going to be here forever, so we need to develop new leadership from the bottom to the top of the flow chart. That includes training at all levels of the organization and preserving the best practices that improves services to veterans. GEN Omar Bradley said, "...an essential qualification of a good leader is the ability to recognize, select and train junior leaders." Time is not going to wait for us to get ready, we must be ready, and that means having in place the ability to meet the needs of our future warriors and their families"

Don't you agree that retiring Commander Morton said it very well?

Eldon Armstrong

Department Adjutant / Treasurer

DISTRICT I

Since my last newsletter, we lost one of our past Department Commanders, Ernie Brock. I was assigned to represent Department and I also represented District I at the funeral home. Ernie was a member of Borderland Chapter 10.

Washington-U.S. military commanders are talking with Iraqi militants about cease-fires and other arrangements to try to stop the violence, the No. 2 American commander said. And he suggested he might not be able to strictly meet the September deadline for telling Congress whether President Bush's military buildup in Iraq is working. Lt. Gen Raymond Odierno said commanders at all levels are being empowered to reach out for talks with militants, tribes, religious leaders and others in the country.

Have you gotten your pneumonia shot? The Army Medical Department is working to reduce the suffering and death caused by the widespread failure of older beneficiaries to get pneumonia vaccinations. Getting the shot when you're age 65 or older

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should protect you for the rest of your life. You can get it any time of year and Medicare Part B will pay for it. Also known as the pneumococcal shot, the pneumonia vaccine is safe, highly effective and has no side effects. Also, getting the flu vaccine shot annually is highly encouraged.

Yours in comradeship,
Jesse Dryer

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

DISTRICT II

Greetings:

A recent Conference Call by Commander A J Jones with District II Officers revealed areas of concerns that seem common to Chapters, and provided unity to establish goals and objectives. A technology new to most of us, it works well to share information, knowledge, and experience in a brief time with many people. As there are no travel time and expenses to staff meetings, Conference Calls may directly address concerns such as how to achieve goals and objectives, and coordinating membership activity. For example, after discussion of how District Officers may effectively visit Chapter meetings in a coordinated, cost effective, and controlled manner, a method of contacting Chapters, scheduling visits, and eliminating repeated visits was established by appointing a Contact Officer to coordinate these activities. Further, Conference Call discussions addressed efforts by Chapters to help in-active members to participate in Chapter activities, and therefore to provide the important benefit of Comradeship. ...

As a Vietnam Veteran, I feel certain that activity with the DAV has been most important in my effort to recover a well-balanced working relationship with those I serve, and those whom I serve with. There are many other Veterans "out-there" engaged in this same struggle for balance. With compassionate brotherhood, we can help provide this balance. Our efforts must be continuous. ...

Your Country Needs You ... Again ...
Yours in service,
Jerry

Malone

1st Jr. Vice Commander, District II

+++++

District II now has a motto: "We Are One".

You'll shortly be seeing the motto everywhere and on everything. I'm expecting for District

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II to become the best DAV District in Texas. The District Officers and I have set the following goals for 2007/2008:

- Increase the DAV District II Life Membership
- Increase Chapter attendance and participation
- Increase Nursing Home visits
- Increase Volunteer participation at the VA Hospital
- Reach out and help our fellow comrades
- Better communication throughout District II
- Team building throughout District II
- A visit to each District II Chapter
- Create a District II website

Everyone's help is needed to accomplish these goals and I'm expecting nothing less than the best.

At this time I'm asking each Chapter Commander to notify the District II Chaplin, Samuel Baker @214-208-3732 when chapter members are hospitalized or in case of deaths.

One last item I'll leave you with: You may contact myself or any District II Officer at any time for questions or concerns that you might have.

Yours in service
AJ Jones
Commander
214-724-4444

DISTRICT III

Greetings fellow veterans,

Hopefully, the rain has given us a rest for a time. It has been weather much needed by our farmers. With August and September coming, be sure to stay cool and to drink plenty of water.

With the Department Convention behind us, which I hope many of you had a chance to attend, we, now, look forward to the National Convention. This year it will be at the Hilton New Orleans Riverside in New Orleans, La. The dates are August 11-17, 2007. Our National District meeting will be August 10 where we elect delegates to the various committees. Please call the following number for reservations, (504) 584-8667.

We have Independence Day this month to enjoy and to celebrate with care and safety. Remember our troops stationed in harms way; they ensure our opportunity to honor and to be festive this day, the 4th of July, in a state of freedom.

During my visit to Stephenville Chapter #234, Commander Gauge and the members gave me a warm welcome and a great lunch. I enjoyed meeting with everyone. The DAVA #215 Com-

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mander, Deena Lee, accompanied me on the trip. She was greeted by DAVA #234 Commander Robin Rich. While speaking with James Wood, I was informed that they are building a Memorial Wall at the National Vietnam War Museum in Mineral Wells, Texas. If you are interested in helping, please contact him at (254) 968-2358.

Please remember our fellow members, Billy Wright, who was in hospital for blood clots, and Jimmy Perkins, who was in the hospital for kidney stones. We send them prayers for a safe recovery.

Austin Chapter #219 volunteered many hours of help at the "Moving Vietnam Wall," which came to Austin. Commander Billy Wright and Marvin Roberson placed the POW/MIA table in front of the wall. His chapter members manned the "table" for the three (3) days. DAVA #219 member, Kristen Dopkant, made one hundred cards for the troops being deployed to Iraq. As the visitors waited for the names of their veterans, Kristen and David asked them to sign the cards. All of them had many signatures and are, now, in the hands of our soldiers.

Have a safe month of July. Is it not a wonderful day, when you wake up in the arms of freedom? Remember our soldiers who are giving up their lives on a daily basis for this privilege and this right.

Now a word from our DAVA District III commander.

District III did well over the Memorial Day holidays. The ceremony at the Killeen's State veterans cemetery was fantastic. It included the dedication of the Central Texas Fallen Heroes Memorial commemorating those service members from Central Texas that have given there all in the Afghanistan-Iraq war. One memorial for each year, with the names of deceased engraved in front and the picture of the service member on the other side. Since we are still at war we will be adding to this monument each year.

Prior to Memorial Day the Dignity Memorial Traveling Vietnam Wall visited the area. Erected in the cemetery it attracted over 70,000 visitors in 3 days. DAVA Unit 29 helped prepare the flowers and place them on each grave. We now have close to 500 graves in the cemetery. The Patriot Riders were prominent participants at both events. The events in the local area gave us the opportunity to reflect on what Memorial Day is all about.

It is still over a month away, but the National Convention in New Orleans is almost upon us. Make your reservations ASAP, and let me remind you that there are no refrigerators

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or microwaves in the rooms, so if you need refrigeration for medications, don't forget to bring your coolers. The toll free number to River Side Hilton is 1-800-445-8667. Again make your reservations now!!!

I hope to see all of you there in New Orleans. Have a safe trip.

Julia Villaronga District III DAVA Commander
Phone 254-289-3333

I wish to thank Commander Villaronga for her information and assistance to the Disabled American Veterans.

Yours in Comradeship,

Roger Garza

Commander, District III

DISTRICT V

Hello District V Comrades,

July brings about the celebration of our National Birthday. This should bring about a need for doing what is right for our veterans. This past month saw us remembering those that have gone on before us giving their most for our freedom. Here in San Antonio there were several events to help us remember and to bring about recognition for those that have been injured in war. One event was the Memorial Service at Ft. Sam Houston National Cemetery. Then, there was a car show at Audie Murphy Veterans Hospital. Also, many chapters or organizations had Forget-Me-Not fund raisers to raise money to help other veterans. The Memorial Service at Ft. Sam Houston was very good and it helped us to remember those that had given their all for us. Then, back at Audie Murphy the car show was well attended both by the public coming out to see the cars on display and the patients from the hospital. It gave the public a chance to not only see some great cars, but also to visit with some of the patients. There were some great door prizes for the participants in the car show, and lots of items that had been donated for the raffle. All the money raised went to the hospital for patient recreation.

Remember comrades, we have an obligation to give money to the service of others. This is the main reason we exist, to help other veterans, by making sure that our elected officials remember us and to provide services to other veterans. Keep these things in mind as you meet.

Yours in Comradeship,

Albert Owens

Commander, District V

BPT / LEGISLATIVE REPORT

Veterans Funding Increase Praised

WASHINGTON, May 24—Draft legislation to boost funding for veterans programs to \$87.7 billion next year is being hailed as a major victory by organizations representing millions of America's former defenders.

The \$109.2 billion bill crafted by the House Military Construction and Veterans Affairs Appropriations Subcommittee provides \$43.29 billion in discretionary funding for the Department of Veterans Affairs. "This represents a significant, much-needed investment in health care and the benefits delivery system for our nation's sick and disabled veterans," according to AMVETS, Disabled American Veterans, Paralyzed Veterans of America and Veterans of Foreign Wars.

The four veterans' service organizations said the bill provides a \$6 billion increase in VA health care funding, exceeding their own recommendation by \$294 million. "This is the first time that lawmakers have surpassed our recommendations in the 21 years that we have been publishing *The Independent Budget*," the groups noted. The bill also funds the VA biomedical research program at \$480 million, as recommended in *The Independent Budget*, an increase of \$68 million over the 2007 funding level.

In addition to the increase for veterans medical care and construction projects, the bill includes enough funding for the VA to hire more than 1,000 new employees to tackle a large backlog of almost 640,000 disability compensation claims. Cutting the backlog would reduce the time veterans must wait for a decision on their benefits, which averages 177 days for an original claim and more than two years for initial appeals.

"The proposed increase in VA funding is a recognition that caring for our veterans is a continuing cost of national security and a willingness to provide the resources to meet those needs," the groups said. They praised Subcommittee Chairman Chet Edwards (D-Texas) for his leadership in crafting the measure, as well House Budget Committee Chairman John Spratt (D-S.C.), Appropriations Committee Chairman David R. Obey (D-Wis.) and Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) for their support of additional funding for veterans programs.

The Independent Budget provides the nation's decision-makers a veterans' perspective on

federal spending and national policy priorities for veterans programs. These recommendations are well-considered policy and funding proposals based on the actual needs of the men and women these programs were created to serve. As a comprehensive, authoritative policy document, *The Independent Budget* focuses on funding recommendations for veterans health care, benefits delivery, medical facilities construction, veterans' cemeteries and other so-called discretionary programs that will be needed in the coming fiscal year.

The 1.3 million-member Disabled American Veterans, a nonprofit organization founded in 1920 and chartered by the U.S. Congress in 1932, is dedicated to a single purpose: building better lives for our nation's disabled veterans and their families. (www.dav.org)

Jim Roos

BPT/Legislative Chairman

VAVS REPORT

Thanks to all who put together our Department Convention. It was wonderful to see old friends and make new ones.

Reports and Paper Work, Chapters, Districts and Department we all have to do it. In order to keep things in line, running smoothly and neatly organized it requires paper work. A small price to pay to keep us legal. Whether it's done monthly, quarterly or annually... the rewards are great. Knowing it is complete takes a load off our minds. We get the satisfaction of a job well done and knowing the many members we have helped.

VAVS hospital representatives are responsible for ensuring that each DAV volunteer has a V.A.V.S. Form 20 on file with National and that their hours are credited each month. Your Chief of Volunteer Services should print you a form VS 26 every month to show who and how many certified hours each volunteer has. This time should be put on a V.A.V.S form 50 and 51, and sent to National. If you have any problems you may send a copy of your VS26 to National or call them at 1.877.426.2838 and ask for Volunteer Services. The professionals there are easy to talk to and are eager to help. If you have any questions, I will be happy to help. Please call 1.979.244.8141 or e-mail me at ecram@davispc.com.

As always, I send a **Special Thank You** to all volunteers who make it happen.

Marce Hill

Department VAVS Chairman

Women Veteran's Representative

DAV AUXILIARY COMMANDER



We have all come a long way in a short time. When I think back to my enlistment in 1974 and speak to young ladies I have met that are now active duty it is quite clear how much things have changed. There is a sense of equality that my generation was not afforded. I am very proud to have been a part of the history of women who served in the military.

We take journeys each year, each month, each day of our lives. Some of these journeys are for pleasure and we call them vacations. We also take journeys called "life events". We face new situations, new actions needed, and we call them simply "Life".

While reflecting back on how things were back then (1974) it had been a long time since I had recalled the fact that when I joined the Army I was a WAC for about 1 year before women were brought into the regular Army. I also remembered looking at pictures of my Mom who was in the Army in the late 1940's and how funny I thought the pictures were.

Our Veterans faced a journey when they joined the Armed Forces. For far too many of them, the journey turned into a major "life-changing event". Today, a new generation of our Military Forces is facing the same "life-changing events". Many will come home as disabled veterans.

So I did a little research and here are a few of the changes.

That is why I'm asking each auxiliary member to continue the **Mission of Service** to our one-of-a-kind Veterans organization. Although a lot of us are getting tired, we must realize that we have to stand up for today's, and tomorrow's, veterans. For those who suffer from injuries or illness, gasses, or germ warfare, the DAV and the Auxiliaries can play a vital role in their lives. Their war was to protect our country, our democracy, and our freedoms. Every auxiliary member faces the war to protect our Veterans rights and benefits for the service they gave to us.



Each one of us has served a country that we are all proud of. You are a part of history that cannot be denied you. I hope you will take the time to be a mentor for the women who are now serving and reach out to them when the need arises.

Focus on the positive reason you joined and the service we render to our Veterans and to our communities and remember that just as our military needs large numbers of manpower, we too need large numbers of manpower to get our mission done. We need YOU!

Have a wonderful and safe July 4th while you are celebrating your independence and having the good fortune of being a citizen of the greatest nation on earth.

My last mission request is 2-fold. Attend your Auxiliary meetings, do whatever you are able to do to, no matter how large or how small the task, to support the ideals we stand for, the **Mission of Service** to Veterans. And then there is the **Mission of Membership** to assure our younger Veterans that the DAVA will be there for them. Won't you please, invite at least one person to join the DAV Auxiliary? I guarantee there are many people out there that are waiting to find out how to join the most important military support group in the nation!

Yours in service
Teresa Johniken
Women's Veteran Department Appointee

Thank you for your service and support this past year. I don't know how to tell you how proud I am of all you, for your hours spent with those who

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look to us for encouragement, help, a smile, or an acknowledgement that they are important to us. My year has been filled with truly amazing and positive "life-changing events". Thank you for the honor of allowing me to serve you as the Texas State Auxiliary Commander. And thank you for continuing to make our **Mission...Possible!**

Alice Armstrong
Commander, DAV Auxiliary

The Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary had the following Population Summary as of 6/14/2007:

Life Members	6,050
Total Members	6,761

THIS YEARS GOAL is:

Goal	7,053
Goal percentage	95.86

UNDER Goal	292
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ITEMS OF INTEREST

PDC Gerald Cowan accepted a \$2,500 donation to the Department Service Fund from the Carrollton-Farmers Branch Rotary Club.

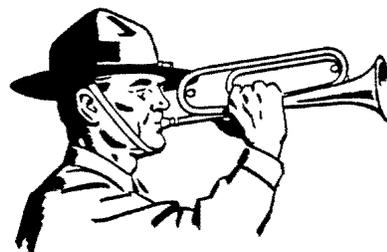
Unbelievable! On June 11, VA Secretary James Nicholson dedicated the expanded Dallas Consolidated Mail Outpatient Pharmacy (CMOP). This automated facility fills an average of 44,000 prescriptions per day! Each order is personally checked by a pharmacist. It was an unbelievable tour. Watching this process reminded me of a newspaper cartoon oh so many years ago titled "Born 40 years too soon."

PRAYER LIST

Prayers are needed for the following:

Dennis Foran, Ch 54 has experienced additional medical problems.

Etta Meshell's daughter, Marie Hester who was also PSC Mary Choate's sister, passed June 07.



TAPS

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

Earnest O. Brock, Past Department Commander 1978-79 passed May 2007

William M. Henson, Past Cdr Ch 7, passed away Tuesday, May 15, 2007.

Mary L. Crouch, Past Cdr Unit 78, passed Feb 8, 2007

William D. Robertson, Ch 42, passed May '07

Walter Moran, Ch 47, husband of PSC Clara Lewis-Moran, passed June 07.

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.
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To:



National Executive Committeeman Gerald Cowan accepted a donation to the Department Service Fund from the Carrollton-Farmers Branch Rotary club. He then presented a "thank you" plaque to Rotary President, Dr. Bobby Burns.