
April 2015



**DOUG HERRLE CHAPTER 61
SEGWIN, TEXAS**



**DAV DOUG HERRLE CHAPTER 61 and DAVA
DOUG HERRLE UNIT 61
COMMANDERS COMMENTS
APRIL 2015**

Hello to all! This is our last edition of Commanders Comments and we want to thank all of you who have supported us during our terms as Chapter and Unit Commanders. We have enjoyed our terms and are honored that you chose us to lead these two great organizations. We are extremely proud of the good that we do for disabled veterans, their families and our community.

It has taken many of us awhile to regroup after losing Doug last May, but we never lost focus of our mission. For so many years he was our rock, our dedicated and committed leader who inspired all of us to be the best we can be, channeling that energy to help veterans. As many of you are aware, our Chapter Service Officers (CSOs) attend certification classes each year. This is vital to the services they deliver to our clients. But, nothing can replace the additional training received from Doug. He was the “go to” man. If he did not have the answer we needed, he knew where to find it. He was an incredible wordsmith, knowing how to concisely and effectively word appeals to get positive results. Just watching him come in each week was an inspiration, forgetting about his own disabilities to help others- it was not always physically easy for him, until finally he had to stop coming in. Clients continued to ask for him and it has taken time for them to trust other service officers. We could go on and on about Doug. Each and every one of us whose life he touched has stories to tell.

We want to thank all our officers for their dedicated support of us. Without their help and additional leadership we could not have accomplished all that we have. There's a lot that goes on behind the scenes to make things work and many times it is our officers who take on the responsibility of these tasks, without complaint, without hesitation. It is our officers who many times introduce new ideas for the betterment of our organizations. Their commitments extend beyond just attending a monthly meeting. They are the backbone of our organizations.

Continued

(Continued from Pg 1)

We also want to thank the members of both organizations who are always on-board for our various projects and events. While our membership rolls reflect large numbers on both sides, it is the dedicated few who are always on call and who can be depended upon to help. It is through your dedicated support that we succeed in our various ventures to assist veterans. Our Chapter and Unit work together in all that we do. Teamwork gets results.

A BIG THANK YOU to all who showed up last weekend to work their shifts at our Forget-Me-Not fundraiser at the Seguin Wal-Mart. Despite forecasts of inclement weather, we ventured out both Saturday and Sunday. Saturday we kept waiting for the forecasted rain that never came and on Sunday it was sunny and clear. Check out Terri's new "red glow" aka sunburn. Thanks to Wal-Mart and their most courteous employees for hosting us and to the generous donors who supported us.

Last Saturday our Honor Guard participated in a welcome home ceremony for Vietnam Veterans, held in Lockhart. While we were not able to attend, we have heard that it was a most moving and heartfelt event.

In closing, we remind you that election of Chapter and Unit officers will be conducted at our May meetings. We urge you to attend and to vote. This is your opportunity to select the leadership for your organization. We also ask that you support these men and women who are elected and are committed to giving of themselves to guide us in our mission of "keeping promises made to those who served", making lives better for disabled veterans and their families.

May God Bless You and Yours,
Phil Sierer, Commander, DAV Doug Herrle Chapter 61
Lynette Sierer, Commander, DAVA Doug Herrle Unit 61

DAVA COOKBOOKS NOW ON SALE

This is a fundraiser to benefit our DAVA Departmental (State) treasury. Each book costs \$15 and contains more than 300 recipes contributed by DAVA members, families and friends. We have a small supply of them at our Chapter House office. Once we sell these, we can get more until we sell all of them. Exact amount in cash, \$15, or a check made out to DAVA Unit 61 will be appreciated.

Our unit meets on the 2nd Tuesday of each month at 7 PM at the Chapter House. This is the same time and place that our Chapter meets.

Upcoming Events

- Apr 18. Chapter Honor Guard at Lockhart Veteran Welcome Home Event. Chapter is invited as well.
- Apr 18&19. Chapter Forget Me Not at Walmart.
- May 16. Fire & Iron MC 5th annual Doug Herrle Memorial Run. Players Sports grill, Seguin.
- May 25. Memorial Day Observance. Guadalupe County Memorial Park off SH-46.
- Jun 11-13. DAV Department of Texas Convention. Doubletree Hotel in Austin.
- Jun 13. Freedom Fiesta/Flag Day. Golden Corral, New Braunfels.
- July 4. Seguin Parade.
- Oct 3-4. DAVA Forget Me Not. Walmart, Seguin.

Our New Members

Tyber Carter-Pflugerville
Andrew Inseimann-Garden Ridge
Afredo Jemenez-Seguin
John Johnston-Schertz
Jerry Medina-Seguin
Natalie Swisher-New Braunfels
James Warnasch-Stockdale
William Weaver-Gonzales
Ira Zamora-Selma

Our Transferred Members

Robert Beezy Jr.-Seguin

The Chapter 61 Staff.

Chapter Officers:

Commander	Phil Sierer
SV Commander	Gary Elley
JV Commander	JJ Chapa
Treasurer	Bella Wiatrek
Chaplain	Richard Cusson
Adjutant	Marlin Howze
SAA	Leon Garcia
Honor Guard	Juan DeLeon
Service Officer	Marlin Howze

Unit Officers:

Commander	Lynette Sierer
SV Commander	Leigh Harrelson
JV Commander	Joyce Farr
Treasurer/Adj	Terri Herrle
Chaplain	Jeanne Garriott
SEC	Terri Herrle
Alt SEC	Jeanne Garriott

This Newsletter is Edited and Published by DAV Chapter 61

PO Box 325, Seguin, TX 78156

We are located at 425 Vaughn Street, Seguin, TX. 78155 or call 830-379-3299

Service Hours: 9am to 1pm
Tuesday & Wednesday

Monthly Business Meeting:
2nd Tuesday of the Month

PTSD Groups:

Every Tuesday, 12 am-1pm and 1:30-2:30pm

VCZ: Tue-Wed, 9am-3pm

Seeking Safety: Wed. 7:30pm-9pm

For the most up to date news, please visit our web site at

<http://www.davmembersportal.org/chapters/tx/61>.

You may Bookmark the site and refer often to see what's happening.

Thoughts from the Chaplain

God's Strength and Joy

Do you need more strength and joy in your life? The Bible tells us that in God's presence there is fullness of joy — the most abundant and complete! And when you have His joy, you have His supernatural strength. There's nothing that can come against you when you are filled with the strength and joy of the Lord.

And do you know where God is? His Spirit is alive in every believer, but in His Word He promises that He inhabits, or manifests, in the praises of His people. That means when you begin to praise and worship God, either corporately in a church setting or privately in your personal time, God is there. You are with Him. Anytime you feel depleted or overwhelmed, just begin to sing a song of praise to Him. Declare His goodness and faithfulness. Draw near to Him, and He will draw near to you. He'll fill you with His joy and strength so that you can live as a new person all the days of your life!

As your Chaplain, I am available to all members of Doug Herrle Chapter #61 and their immediate family for discussion of any spiritual matter or counseling. Please feel free to contact me at 4Verterans@hotmail.com or by calling me at (830) 491-8009.

May God's strength, joy, peace and blessing be with all of you.

Chaplain Richard Cusson

Binnacle List

Comrade JJ Chapa-recovering, Comrade Robert Brouard-Recovering, Comrade Basil Karm's Wife (Marie) entered Hospice, Comrade Dennis Roy-out of hospital, recovering. Comrade John Blackburn has passed on to the Great Commander. Please keep our Comrades and their families in your prayers

Reminder

Bible Study is offered at the Chapter House every Wednesday afternoon from 1:30 PM usually finishing up by 3 pm. We have open and engaging discussions while we explore the Word of our Lord and find what he has to offer us. Come, join us. We are currently studying Proverbs.

DAV Meeting Minutes

Guadalupe County, TX Chapter 61

DATE: 04/14/2015

TIME: 7PM

Chapter House, 425 Vaughan St., Seguin TX 78155

CALL TO ORDER:

Prayer by Chaplain Richard Cusson

Flag Honors: Y

Joint Meeting Chapter and Unit

- ❖ Apr 18 & 19. Chapter Forget-Me-Not drive at Walmart. Oct 3 & 4. Aux Drive at Walmart.
- ❖ Polar Plunge is reported as being successful. Cadet Justin Gregg of the Southwest Texas University Army ROTC thinks delivered a donation check for a little over \$1500. Good job to the ROTC and Southwest Texas University.
- ❖ 13 June. Freedom Fiesta will be observed by the DAV at the Golden Corral in New Braunfels on Flag Day. Will start around 8am.
- ❖ DAV Department of Texas Convention is 11-13 June. If you think you will attend, get your name to the Adjutant quickly to be put on the delegate list.
- ❖ 4th of July. Seguin Parade will be on a Saturday, so it should be pretty big. AS usual, DAV will be a player.
- ❖ 18 April. Lockhart's "Welcome Home Veterans" event. IS expected to be big with Governor in attendance. DAV members are meeting at the Chapter House to ride up together at 10am. Lunch at 11am, Program begins at Noon.
- ❖ Tickets for the Fire & Iron MC "Doug Herrle Memorial Ride" are still available. Get some. Or sell some, whichever. Chapter 61 benefits directly from this event put on by the local Fire and Iron Fire Fighters.
- ❖ Memorial Day planning meeting will be 15 April, 3pm, at the American Legion Post 245 on Kingsbury St. Memorial Day will be on the 25th of the month on the Observed Holiday. This year, the service will be held at the Guadalupe County Memorial Park off SH-46 between Seguin and New Braunfels.
- ❖ Auxiliary retires.

Roll call of officers by Marlin Howze, Adjutant

Commander:	Present X	Absent
Sr. Vice Commander:	Present X	Absent
Jr. Vice Commander:	Present X	Absent
Treasurer:	Present	Absent X (Excused)
Chaplain:	Present X	Absent
Adjutant:	Present X	Absent
SAA:	Present X	Absent

Total officers & members present: 19 (Sign in sheet available)

Chapter had a quorum: Yes

Seven (7) Members shall constitute a quorum. 2 members present shall be elected officers.

Guests: None

ORDER OF BUSINESS:

Names of New Members: Tyber Carter-Pflugerville, Andrew Inseimann-Garden Ridge, Alfredo Jemenez-Seguin, John Johnston-Schertz, Jerry Medina-Seguin, Natalie Swisher-New Braunfels, James Warnasch-Stockdale, William Weaver-Gonzales, Ira Zamora-Selma.

Names of Transferred Members: Robert Beezy Jr.-Seguin.

(New members and those who have not been previously initiated must be initiated at their 1st meeting and their names recorded in minutes.)

Members Receiving Oath: Ira Zamora, David Phillipe, Jon Rhoads.

Welcome to all our new members.

READING OF THE MINUTES: Stand as posted. (The commander asks if there are corrections to minutes. Hearing none he/she would declare the minutes are approved as read or posted. If there are corrections, the minutes would be adopted as amended by unit vote.)

Minutes are posted on Chapter Website, bulletin board, and emailed via Newsletter.

TREASURER'S REPORT: From Feb01 to 28, 2015.

Beginning: \$28,093.89. Ending: \$27,847.12.

Motion to accept: Comrade Bill Owen, 2nd by Comrade Jon Rhoads, carries.

Full report available for viewing on request.

BILLS AND COMMUNICATIONS: (see list in file)

- ❖ Ltr: SA NSOs - CSO Certificates, Ltr: DAV Nat'l HQ – 50 year Charter Plaque has been sent, Ltr: IANDS – Thank You and Invitation.

SICKNESS & DISTRESS:

- ❖ Comrade JJ Chapa-recovering, Comrade Robert Brousard-Recovering, Comrade Basil Karm's Wife (Marie) entered Hospice, Comrade Dennis Roy-out of hospital, recovering. Comrade John Blackburn has passed on to the Great Commander. Please keep our Comrades and their families in your prayers.

LEGISLATION

DAV Legislative Report **April** 2015

Several important veterans' bills have been introduced in the 114th Congress.

H.R. 333 and S. 271: Full concurrent receipt. These authorize full concurrent receipt for retirees with a service-connected disability rated less than 50 percent, including Chapter 61 disability retirees with less than 20 years of service.

H.R. 303: Concurrent receipt. This authorizes full concurrent receipt of military retired pay and veterans' disability compensation for retirees with regular or Guard/Reserve retirements, regardless of disability rating.

H.R. 969 and S. 681: Blue water Navy veterans. This authorizes potential veterans' benefits to Navy veterans who served onboard ships in the territorial waters of Vietnam, facing possible exposure to Agent Orange.

H.R. 216: Develop a long-term veteran's strategy. This requires the Secretary of the VA to establish a Chief Strategy Office to advise the Secretary on long-range VA planning.

S. 172: Access to appropriate immunizations. This establishes quality measures and metrics to ensure veterans receive immunizations at correct times as set forth by the Secy of Health and Human Services.

S. 170 and H.R. 218: CHAMPVA children's protection. This increases the maximum age for children eligible for medical care under the CHAMPVA program to age 26, similar to other TRICARE and insurance provided under the Affordable Care Act.

S. 210: Military spouse job continuity. This bill provides a \$500 tax credit to military spouses who must pursue new licensing or certification in a new state due to their service member's military ordered move.

H.R. 1594, the Military Surviving Spouse Equity Act. The repeals a law known as the "widow's tax," an unfair penalty that forces thousands of military survivors to forfeit their earned benefits. Currently, military survivors forfeit part of or their entire military Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) annuity when receiving Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) from the Department of Veterans Affairs

In March VA Secretary Robert McDonald announced the VA is changing the way it determines eligibility for health care. They no longer requires veterans to disclose their **net worth**. Net worth is determined by combining a veteran's income and assets. Prior to this decision, a veteran's net worth was used to determine eligibility for health care and cost of copays. In yesterday's announcement, the VA will now consider a veteran's gross household income and deductible expenses as factors for determining health care eligibility and cost responsibility.

The VA claims **backlog** fell to 194,000, a 68 percent reduction from two years ago. In 2013, the VA amassed over 611,000 disability claims. Quality of claims decisions has increased from 83 percent in 2011 to 91 percent today. A related challenge is the backlog of appealed claims. When an initial claim is denied, veterans have the right to appeal to the Board of Veterans Appeals. These claims take on average 1,000 days — almost three years — to adjudicate.

Forty-four Purple Hearts and Defense of Freedom Medals were presented to victims and families at a ceremony today at Fort Hood, Texas. The medals recognize the sacrifice of the 13 killed and 31 who were wounded on Nov. 5, 2009.

VA Expands Eligibility for Choice Program - it changes the way it calculates distance when determining eligibility for the Choice Program. No more travel using "as the crow flies," or straight line distance.

The four military services are now offering **COOL** (Credentialing Opportunities On-Line) assistance to help soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines find information regarding civilian certification and licensing requirements related to their Military Occupational Specialties.

MIAs/POWs Identified:

There are 83,000 missing and unaccounted for Americans from World War II forward, yet many families of the missing have yet to provide a family reference sample to assist in DNA identifications. There are remains available that cannot be identified without these references.

- Air Force Chief MSG. Edwin E. Morgan, 6252nd Combat Spt Grp, lost over Laos on March 13, 1966.
- Army SSG Bunyan D. Price Jr., 34th AR Reg, 1st Cav Div, lost in Vietnam on May 2, 1970.
 - Army SSG Bunyan D. Price Jr., 20, of Monroe, N.C. and
 - Sgt. Rodney L. Griffin, 21, of Mexico, Mo., - 34th Armor Reg, 1st Cav Div were passengers aboard a UH-1H helicopter that was forced to make an emergency landing in Cambodia after coming under heavy enemy ground fire.
- Army Air Forces 2LT Harry B. McGuire, 718th Sqn, 449th Bomber Grp, 15th Air Force, lost over Italy on Jan. 30, 1944.
- Army Air Forces 2LT Edward F. Barker, HQs Sqn, 8th Air Service Grp, lost over Papua New Guinea on Sept. 30, 1944.
- Army Air Forces 2LT Alvin Bleethe, 393rd Fighter Sqn, 367th Fighter Grp, 9th Air Force, lost over Germany on Nov. 26, 1944.
- Army Air Forces 2LT Stephen V. Biezis, 575th Bombardment Sqn, 391st Bombardment Grp, 9th Air Force, lost over Germany on Dec. 23, 1944.
- Army Air Forces 2LT John W. Herb, 1st Air Division, 359th Fighter Group, 368th Fighter Squadron, lost over Germany on April 13, 1945.
- Army SGT Wallace J. Dawson, Company L. 3rd Bn, 9th IN Reg, 2nd IN Div, lost in South Korea on Feb. 14, 1951.

REPORT OF COMMITTEES:

- ❖ Membership: 9 new members. 1 transferred member(s).
- ❖ CSO: (Full report available)
 - Service Ofcrs. Feb 2015: Tot Vets Seen 141, Tot Hrs Used 210, Tot Hrs Avail 396.
 - Chaplain Hours: 45 hrs

- Individuals: Linda Truax-13 hrs, Jaime Cervantez-7.5.
- Honor Guard Hours: Jan: 6 events, vols, 349 hrs.
- Constitution and By Law Committee. Following two readings of the revised C&B, membership approved the revisions. Final has been mailed to Department Judge Advocate for review.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

- ❖ See Joint for other Old Business.

NEW BUSINESS:

- ❖ Pay Insurance premium for Chapter House, \$1882. Motion by Comrade Jimmy Dickerson, 2nd by Comrade Leon Garcia, carried.
- ❖ Convention is coming up, need names for the delegates. Get them to the Adjutant.
- ❖ Veterans Outdoors Coalition (VOA) donation \$150. Motion by Comrade Juan Deleon, 2nd by Comrade Leon Garcia, carried.
- ❖ Comrade Linda Truax (Historian/PA) is starting a Chapter History book with Comrade Warren Walls. Looking for Chapter information/pictures for the book.
- ❖ Comrade Linda Truax brought up concerns over need for exterior repairs to brick fascia and other elements of the Chapter House. Discussion on how to attack these problems.

GOOD of the ORDER

- ❖ Comrade Warren Walls wants to know who would be interested in joining a model building club. Contact Comrade Walls for more information.
- ❖ Second round nominations for Chapter 61 Officers:
 - Cdr-Gary Elley
 - SV Cdr-JJ Chapa (Written Acceptance)
 - JV Cdr-Leon Garcia
 - Treas-Bella Wiatrek. (Written Acceptance)
 - Chaplain-Richard Cusson
 - Positions will be voted on at next meeting.

Moment of Silence. Remembrance of fallen comrades.

Motion for Adjournment:

Motion by Richard Cusson, 2nd by Leon Garcia, motion carried.

CLOSING CEREMONY: __x__ Salute __x__ Closing Prayer by Chaplain Cusson

Next meeting will be 7 PM, on May 12th, 2015.