

MI DAV

FULFILLING OUR PROMISES

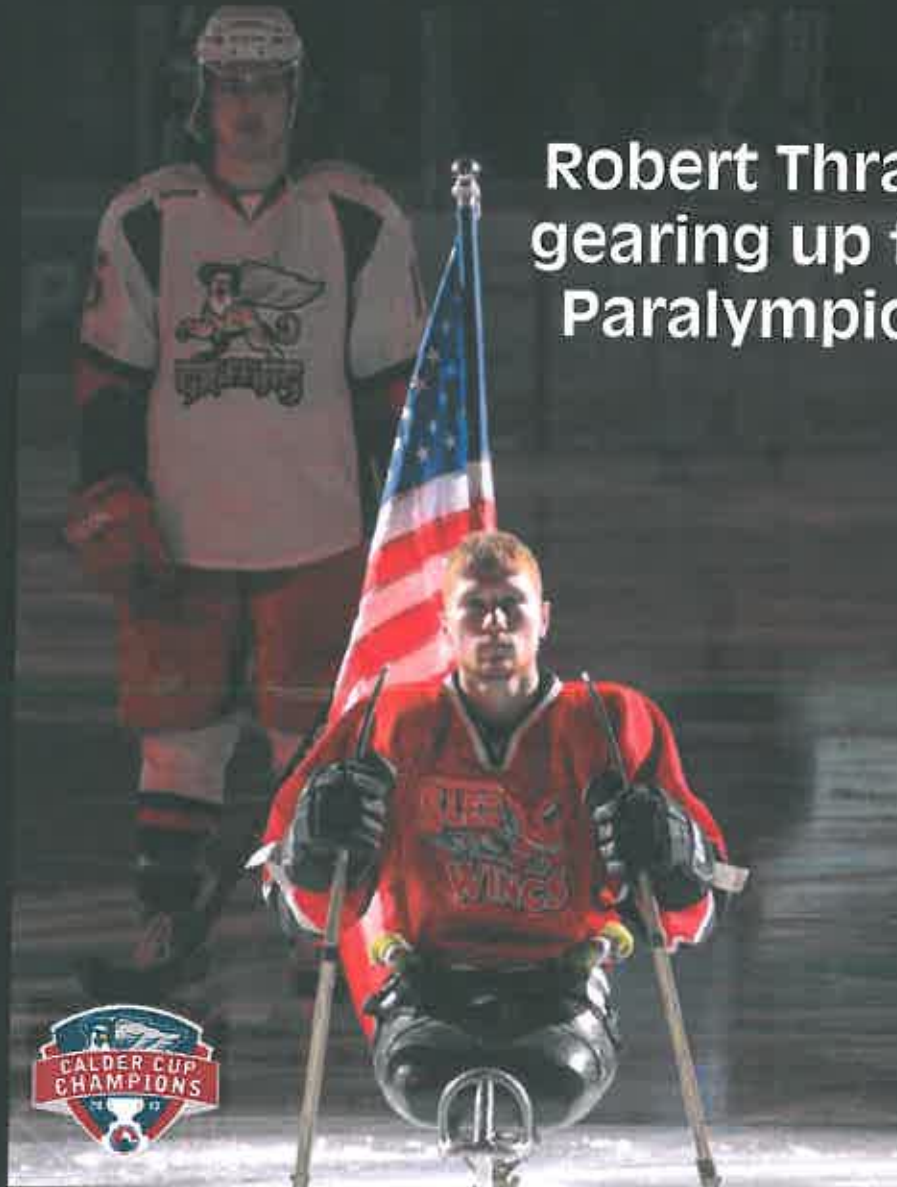


Michigan Disabled Veteran

Premiere Edition

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**Robert Thraikill, Jr.
gearing up for 2018
Paralympic Games**



January 1, 2014

**SELECTIVE
SERVICE
SYSTEM
BOARD
MEMBERS
NEEDED**

This letter is a targeted effort on my behalf to recruit civic-minded members of your organization to fill vacancies on Selective Service System Local Boards near their community. While there currently is no draft in effect, the federal government requires that a functional system be in place for readiness purposes. We currently have vacancies on Boards all over the State of Michigan – particularly in the following communities:

Allen Park, Bellville, Berkeley, Commerce Township, Dearborn, Dearborn Heights, Detroit, Farmington, Highland, Inkster, Lincoln Park, Oak Park, Pontiac, Romulus, Royal Oak, Taylor, Wayne

Serving on a presidentially-appointed Local Board is an honor and a privilege. Board members are citizen volunteers and serve their local community by protecting the rights of those individuals who are drafted. They ensure that young men who are drafted are able to serve their country, and those with lawful and legitimate reasons for not being drafted are not inducted into the U.S. military. I am seeking volunteers who are interested in this important civic duty, and hope that you can help by passing this information on to members of your organization.

While these uncompensated positions are indeed prestigious and important, the commitment is quite minimal. Once appointed, Board Members attend a local 6-hour training session within the first three years, and then only need complete a four-hour training session annually (which can be done at home on-line, if the Board Member prefers). In-person training typically is held at a public location near the Board Member's community.

If you would like more information, you can visit our website at www.sss.gov. If you or your colleagues are personally interested in becoming a Board Member, please contact me straight away at (248) 736-1841 or 734-214-4461 or at dkloc07@comcast.net. If you know of someone outside of your organization who might be interested in volunteering, please feel free to pass along my information.

Thank you for your time and for considering this important service to your country.

Sincerely,
Daniel M. Kloc
LTC, USAR
Area Office Coordinator



Anka Behavioral Health

The primary goal of the Anka Akron foundation is to link housing with on-going supportive services for Veterans experiencing homelessness.

Key goals of the program are:

- To enable homeless and formerly homeless Veterans to secure and retain housing
- To provide flexible, integrated services to support Veterans to stabilize acute and chronic heal and psychiatric conditions.
- To support Veterans to develop networks of peer support and cultivate personal coping mechanisms that can mitigate the stresses often associated with mental illness, addiction, and traumatic personal histories.
- To improve Veterans quality of life and overall heal and well being.

Eligibility: To qualify for Anka Akron services, an applicant must meet the following criteria:

- Male Veteran
- Homeless
- Current or history of mental health and/or addictive disorder

Anka Akron also welcomes Veterans with Physical disabilities, HIV/AIDS and Re-entry from the criminal justice system.

Services: Anka Akron Programs on going supportive services include:

- Service Coordination & Advocacy
- Peer Counseling
- Vocational & Employment Counseling
- Health Education
- Life Skills Development
- Recovery Support

**For more information, please contact:
Anka Akron
Veterans Transitional Housing Program
3258 Ringle Road
Akron, Michigan 48702
989-455-1933**



Executive Secretary Shawn Wilson with Tuskegee airmen at event in Detroit, Summer 2013.



Executive Secretary Shawn Wilson meets with President Barack Obama at the National Convention in Florida, August 2013.

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Commander's Message



**Les Schneider
State Commander**

Hello, fellow comrades! Happy New Year to all of you. It has been quite a first six months as Commander; I have been quite busy, ending last year with Veterans Day events across the state and, of course, the holidays.

My first six months were filled with visits to the Upper Peninsula and some of the chapters, as well as Iron Mountain VAMC and D. J. Jacobetti. I have also toured the Grand Rapids Home for Veterans and was part of the ribbon-cutting ceremony for the new canopy that was installed and

opened in November 2013. I also did the ribbon cutting for the new Thrift Store at the grand opening in October 2013.

Working with new State Executive Secretary Shawn M. Wilson has also kept me quite busy. In his short time with the Department, Shawn has revamped our image with the new logo, which is getting great response from chapters and members, as well as working on the 501(c)(3) status for the Department. This will be the savior of the Department by getting our name out there, as well as help Veterans and maintain the promise that all of us made to provide a better quality of life for Veterans and their families.

Membership is still down in the state; we need to get some younger new members into the organization to keep it going. There are a lot of young men and women coming home every day that genuinely need our help, not only for the support, but to help with their claims. Always carry some membership applications with you and anytime you meet a young Veteran, tell him about the DAV and what we do for Veterans.

We need to get a message out to the pub-

lic who DAV is and what we do; most people recognize the other Veterans' Organizations by name in the State. We need to make the DAV a name that everyone knows as well, and I believe our new logo will do just that.

I am looking forward to seeing new faces at the District meetings this year and at the annual State Convention in June. Department is making sure the State Convention is one that you will never forget. We have former Golden Knight Dana Bowman skydiving in during the opening session of the convention and then also speaking at the session. We also have additional motivational speakers who will be attending. If you know of a Veteran who may be interested in joining us at Convention to see the skydiving performance, please have them come up; it is a great way to introduce Veterans to our Organization and maybe sign up a few new members.

A big Thank You to the Department Staff, who are always there to help out and do a great job in keeping the Department running smoothly. ■

Sr. Vice Commander's Message on Membership

Happy New Year! I hope that everyone had a great and safe holiday season. With the New Year, we make a fresh start and some of us make resolutions. I ask that one of your resolutions be to sign up new members for your chapter and unit. If you are not the resolution type, then put it on your "to-do list" to sign up new members. How many of you have signed up one or more new members this year? If you have not, why? What is stopping you?

The loss of a dear friend this last summer made me realize that we need to be looking for many new members to make up our numbers, and hopefully they will become active members in the process. We all need to look in the mirror and get real with ourselves.

WE NEED younger members to mentor and encourage to step up into leadership

roles that our WWII through Vietnam time-frame veterans are filling. Not that I want those members to stop what they are doing; keep up the good work. I am just saying that if you don't get the younger generations active, your chapter will not continue as it is now or could be. At your next meeting, take a good look around and look to see who is the youngest one there. There should be several in each decade (30s, 40s, 50s, 60s and older) for your chapter to be looking at the future of your chapter. Everyone reminisces about "the good ol' days" (myself included); however, what we all need to do is look to the future. The future is a scary time for many; it means change and change is difficult. We need to embrace change for our chapters and units to grow into that near and far distant future.

You may have noticed that I mentioned "and unit" several times in this article. How



**Sr. Vice
Commander
Jo Linda White**

many of you are Auxiliary members? If you are not, shame on you; and yes, I am an Auxiliary member. At first I was hesitant to sign up, but I soon realized that it was just as important to be a member of both.

In conclusion: Membership, Membership, Membership. ■

Estate Planning

For information on including the DAV Department of Michigan in your estate plans, please contact us at 1-888-448-2328 or return this form.

Name: _____
Address: _____
City, State, Zip: _____
Phone: _____ Email: _____

Please complete and mail to:
Disabled American Veterans
Department of Michigan
17779 E. 14 Mile Road
Fraser, MI 48026

Moving Forward With a Fresh Start

— by Shawn M. Wilson, State Adjutant



It has been six months since I have been hired on as the State Executive Secretary/State Adjutant for the Disabled American Veterans Department of Michigan. Since coming on board with a fresh set of eyes (and what some would say a different outlook on the direction of our Department), I can state that we are quickly moving into a better position than we have been in some time.

Within the first 90 days, we have had our Constitution and Bylaws approved by DAV National for a 501(c)(3) that will make the Department self-sustaining, both now and into the future. This way we would not have to count on monies the State of Michigan may or may not have moving forward. Between this and the opening of our 2nd Thrift Store, we are moving in the right direction. There is still much more work that needs to be done for the 501(c)(3) and I am hoping to have it approved by the IRS before late 2014. In short, the 501(c)(3) allows a business to donate funds to a nonprofit organization and the funds they donate are tax-deductible. Most companies who are looking to donate to a Veteran Organization want to ensure that the organization they are donating to is a 501(c)(3), preferably. We will then disburse those funds to different causes, such as the Grand Rapids Home for Veterans and Jacobetti, or any other causes that fulfill our mission statement of providing a better quality of life for our Veterans and their families. WE NEED TO DO MORE FOR OUR VETERANS. This will allow us to do just that and to do it well.

Currently there is an all new website being built and should be completed by early 2014. The website is www.mi-dav.org and will have features that allow the user to make donations, sign up for membership and do estate planning. There will also be constant updates of upcoming events that we are doing as a Department and any other events that the chapters are planning, along with Veteran

causes that will be taking place in the State of Michigan. This site will be 100% interactive and will have many pictures of your fellow members and Veterans alike, so anyone can see what we are doing as a Department and encourage current members to be more active while increasing new membership at the same time.

We have also created a new branding for the Department of Michigan, as well; that way the general public knows who we are and what we do by simply looking at our logo and slogan. MI DAV has been seen in many publications throughout the state and the country, as a whole. So far we have been in USA Today Annual Veterans Affairs edition and the Michigan/Michigan State College Football and Basketball preview. MI DAV has been seen across the country as a Veterans' Service Organization that does plenty for their Veterans and members. The college preview has been sold to hundreds of thousands of people within the state at newsstands everywhere, so people know who we are and what we do, as well. This is just a simple start for us, but is much needed exposure so the public knows that we offer services, such as:

- Free service and advocacy, second to none
- Free transportation to VAMC appointments
- Fight to have (and continue to keep) benefits for Veterans
- A position that benefits should never be cut to balance a budget
- Empowering and improving the overall quality of life for our Veterans

These are the Pillars of MI DAV and we are just getting started.

Thank you for allowing me to serve as your State Adjutant and to empower our great organization into tomorrow. Together, we will serve our mission of fulfilling our promises to the men and women who served, while we continue to build a stronger MI DAV. ■

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POLICY

To bond the disabled together as a unit. To acquaint the members of the DAV and the public with the problems of the disabled and what the Department of Michigan, Disabled American Veterans, is doing to assist in overcoming their handicaps. To keep alive the Fires of Freedom that American ideals shall not perish from the earth. To promote the welfare of the Disabled American Veterans of the State of Michigan and the Nation.

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E-mail: headquarters@davmichigan.com

Facebook:

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/DAV-Department-of-Michigan/300117679186>

DAV Thrift Store

8050 N. Middlebelt Road, Westland 48185
Donation Line (866) 520-5328

New DAV Thrift Store

35660 Gratiot Avenue
Clinton Township
Michigan, 48038
Store Phone 586-790-4143
<http://www.davthriftmichigan.com>



Douglas Wells
Service Director

I have been deeply saddened by the ongoing national reports of our veteran brothers and sisters taking their own lives as a result of post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and/or traumatic brain injury (TBI). These deaths are always tragic and are not confined to those who served in our most recent conflicts. Studies show that veterans of all eras are at increased risk for suicide. I encourage all of you to look out for your fellow veterans. Veterans are one of our nation's most precious resources, and they should all be protected and cherished.

TBI is a jolt or blow to your head that changes the way your brain works. It can cause changes in the way you think, act and feel. PTSD develops after a scary experience in your life that also changes the way you think, act and feel. TBI and PTSD are both common in veterans who have had combat exposure. They can also occur in civilian life after events like accidents and assaults.

Veterans Affairs and the Department of Defense screen all service members for TBI as they are commonly reported following combat. The TBIs may be caused by blasts, motor vehicle accidents or

gunshot wounds. Being diagnosed with a TBI also increases the chance that you will also have PTSD. This depends on many factors, including how severe your TBI is. However, about 25 percent of people with a TBI also have PTSD.

Symptoms of TBI are different for everyone, and they don't always depend on how severe your injury was. That's because everybody's brain is different. Common symptoms include headaches, dizziness, tiredness, memory loss, slowed thinking and mood swings.

Traumatic events that can cause PTSD are events that cause fear and stress. TBI is just one example. Others include combat exposure, physical abuse, sexual assault and serious accidents. Symptoms include reliving the event in flashbacks or nightmares, avoiding situations or people who trigger memories of the event, feeling numb and feeling anxious and jittery.

TBI and PTSD can cause similar problems. These include:

- Feeling depressed
- Feeling anxious
- Having alcohol or drug problems
- Having trouble at home or at work

One of the most important ways you can help yourself overcome both PTSD and TBI is to learn as much as you can about these health issues and work closely with your medical team. Knowing what to expect and what you can do reduces worry and stress.

The good news is that counseling for PTSD may help TBI, as well. Two types of therapy that work well are cognitive processing therapy (CPT) and prolonged exposure therapy (PE). In CPT, you learn

about how to deal with your thoughts and feelings in a healthier way. In PE, you talk about your experience until the memory is no longer painful.

Many of the things you can do to help yourself recover from TBI will also help you recover from PTSD. Here are some of the self-care steps you can take:

- Share your feelings with friends and loved ones.
- Find ways to reduce stress, like deep breathing, listening to music or exercising.
- Be patient with yourself and make time for activities you enjoy.
- Get your family involved in your recovery. Don't try to go it alone.
- Get a good night's sleep. Try to go to bed and get up at about the same time every day.
- Avoid alcohol, drugs and tobacco.

Most people with TBI recover over time, but everybody's brain heals differently. Go at your own pace. Don't push yourself too hard. The same is true for PTSD. It takes time, and progress may come a little bit at a time.

Making bad decisions is a danger for people who are struggling with PTSD and TBI. Don't try to treat your symptoms with drugs or alcohol. Call your TBI team if you are struggling or if your symptoms are getting worse.

Lastly, if you have warning signs of suicide, go to the hospital, or call 911 or a suicide hotline (1-800-273-TALK or 1-800-273-8255) now. If your loved one is planning to attempt suicide, call a suicide hotline or 911 or take your loved one to the hospital. ■

Nature will continue to surprise us with the power of the unexpected, the true strength in weakness, and the attraction of emptiness.

By the time you read this article, much will have happened. We will have remembered all the saints who have gone home on the eve of All Saints Day. We will have taken time to pause and reflect and tell our veterans on Veterans Day, "Welcome Home." We will have given thanks for our many blessings on Thanksgiving Day and many of us will have helped to feed those who may not have as much as we have. We will have celebrated the holy days of faith in Decem-

ber. Now that all these days have come and gone, everybody is settling in for the winter season here in Michigan. Everything is in hibernation and we try to find glimmers of life as nature sleeps.

One of the most intriguing mysteries of creation is that the most decisive and stunning moments derive from the slimmest of margins. The slimmest margins have potential.

Out of the numberless kinds of cells in our universe, a couple of cells touch and cling to each other, not letting go until some multi-celled creature comes forth from this union and starts facilitating itself. That creature is you, a totally unique person. It is as if there was a specific plot that

took the promising shape of each of you.

One cannot say enough about the power of how totally unique each of you really are. One cannot say too much of how each of us can transform other lives by letting the goodness and kindness each of us possess be a guiding principle in our daily lives. We do not know how often we may have changed a life by a wise and kind word spoken inadvertently. By such inadvertent actions stunning memories are made.

Awaken your spirits from hibernation to go and be of service to God, to go and be of service to your country, and to go and be of service to your fellow veteran.

God bless each of you. God loves you and so do I. ■

— by Michael Knutson, Chaplain

— by John Michlig

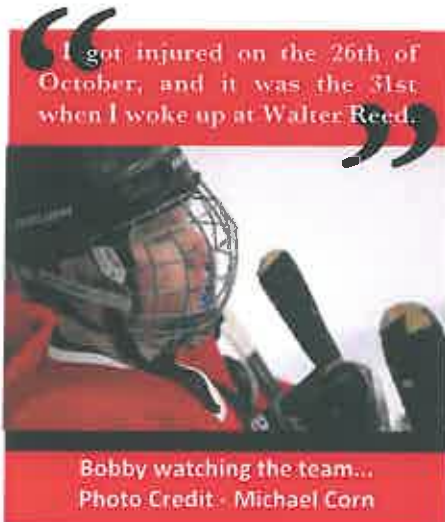
It was a special evening in late December, 2012, at Van Andel Arena for players and fans alike. That night, the Grand Rapids Griffins hockey team and fans honored Marine Corporal Robert Thraikill, Jr., who lost both legs in Afghanistan. Thraikill skated out to a thunderous ovation, decked out in the uniform of his new team, the Grand Rapids Sled Wings.

Not bad for a guy who never even played a moment of hockey before being introduced to the sport while recovering from injuries sustained in Afghanistan.

"I have no hockey background, so this is all new to me," he explains. "Everybody else, they've played hockey their whole lives, or they've actually watched hockey -- I don't even watch hockey."

Experience or not, Thraikill, who plays forward for the Sled Wings, is making an impression on his newfound sport. In August of this year he made the seventeen-player roster of the USA Sled Hockey Development Team. His newest mission is to get ready for the 2018 Paralympic Games in Pyeongchang, South Korea.

Thraikill's was nineteen years old and just a month into his first deployment in Afghanistan when he stepped on a pressure-plated improvised explosive device (IED), resulting in the traumatic amputations of both legs above the knee as well as extensive damage to his right hand.



"So from the 26th to the 31st, I don't remember anything that happened."

He would be at Walter Reed for the next 25 months.

"It wasn't a bad experience for me," he says. "Some people have a different experi-

The Grand Rapids Sled Wings



Photo Credit - Michael Corn

ence; some people are in the hospital ICU for month after month. I wasn't in the hospital that long. In fact, I was released to independent living on the base by Christmas."

Thraikill faced minor surgeries to deal with the shrapnel that peppered his lower body and maintenance of a colostomy bag, but was sure to avail himself to any and all activities that were offered.

"When I was at Walter Reed, I tried to do everything that I was able to. From the time I got there to the time I got out, I was doing therapy. I tried everything," he remembers. Staying active and focussed helped the time go by quickly; the facility kept up a good pace. One of Thraikill's primary goals was to master walking with prosthetics, and he attacked the challenge with gusto.

"I didn't have any problem regaining body strength or anything," Thraikill says. "The biggest ongoing problem I had after retiring was just having good prosthetics, good sockets, because it would change as I gained or lost weight and I'd have to get new sockets."

Walter Reed has a program providing amputees opportunities to try adaptive sports activities such as scuba diving, therapeutic horseback riding, basketball, cycling, running, and golf. And hockey.

"Walter Reed has a sled hockey team called the USA Warriors," Thraikill says. "The first time I tried it, I swore up and down that I'd never do it again -- I didn't like the sport."

Sled hockey -- called "sledge hockey" outside the US-- is the invention of a Stockholm, Sweden rehabilitation center. Developed in the 1940s, it was created by Swedes who wanted to continue playing the game despite disabilities. It's been played in

Europe since the 1970s, and arrived in the United States in 1989 via a national team based in Minnesota. The national governing body of the sport is the United States Sled Hockey Association (USSHA). Anyone with a disability preventing them from participating in "stand-up" hockey can participate, and it requires great upper-body strength. According to the Wheelchair Sports Federation, many able-bodied persons enjoy sled hockey as well, but are often at a disadvantage because they lack the upper-body strength of a wheelchair user.

Sled hockey, according to the USA Hockey Team web site:

"...follows most of the typical ice hockey rules with the exception some of the equipment. Players sit in specially designed sleds that sit on top of two hockey skate blades. There are two sticks for each player instead of one and the sticks have metal pics on the butt end for players to propel themselves. Goalies wear basically the same equipment but do make modifications to the glove. Metal picks are sewn into the backside to allow the goalie to maneuver."

Since its launch, sled hockey has been growing in popularity worldwide for persons with all manner of disabilities and is gaining more and more mainstream notice. USA Hockey, the national governing body for the sport of ice hockey in the United States, sponsors various programs and grants to help individuals and teams get equipped and established in the sport, and also helps develop players for national tournaments and the Paralympic Games.

Despite his early disdain for the game,

— Robert Thraikill, Jr. continued on page 12

**Information Application for Members
Seeking a Department of Michigan
Disabled American Veterans State Office**

Please complete and forward to:
DAV State Adjutant, 17779 E. 14 Mile Road, Fraser, MI 48026

This form **MUST** be received by the State Executive Secretary/Adjutant 10 days prior to the Annual State Convention.
Attach additional pages with application if needed.

Office Sought: Cmdr. Sr. Vice 1st Jr. Vice
 2nd Jr. Vice Chaplain Treasurer

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Telephone _____

Your Chapter No. and Location _____

_____ District _____

Why do you want this position? _____

Are you a member in Good Standing? _____

Do you belong to an active chapter? _____

Do you attend chapter meetings? _____

Are you active in your chapter? _____

How long have you been a DAV member? _____

Are you a chapter officer now? _____

If yes, what Office? _____

To what other veteran organizations do you belong? _____

Have you served as an officer in any of them? _____

What offices and when? _____

Are you now employed? _____

If yes, where and what type of work? _____

Are you reasonably free to travel? _____

Can you spend your own money? _____

Add any information you desire concerning training,

education and experience _____

Signature _____

CHAPTER ENDORSEMENT

The members of DAV Chapter # _____ recommend that the above candidate be considered for a Department Office as indicated. We will give him/her our support.

Chapter Commander _____ Date _____

Chapter Adjutant _____

District Commander _____

THIS INDIVIDUAL ENDORSED BY DISTRICT _____



**PRE REGISTRATION FORM FOR DAV
DEPARTMENT, CHAPTERS AND UNITS
2014 DAV STATE CONVENTION AND 2 DAY
SERVICE OFFICER CONFERENCE
CONVENTION: JUNE 6-8 ~ SERVICE OFFICER
CONFERENCE JUNE 4-5**

DAV/DAVA

**SERVICE OFFICER CONFERENCE AND
CONVENTION PRE-REGISTRATION**

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Phone: _____ Chapter/Unit Number: _____

****Certified Credentials must be presented at Registration Desk****

(If you are a Department Officer, Print Title and Chapter Number)

() I would like to be considered to serve on a DAV Convention Committee

*Note: Service Officer Registration covers all materials, as well as admittance to Thursday's Pie & Ice Cream Social

Service Officer Conference Registration Only: \$35.00

Convention Registration Only: \$30.00

Convention Registration and Banquet: \$55.00

Service Officer Conference & Convention Registration: \$60.00

Service Officer Conference, Convention Registration and Banquet: \$80.00

Extra Banquet Tickets: \$35.00 each
Number of Extra Tickets _____

NEW MENU ITEMS (Choose one (1) from the choices below)

() Bistro Filet paired with parmesan crusted chicken breast with lyonnaise potatoes and green bean almondine followed by strawberry shortcake for dessert

() Whitefish meal with with lyonnaise potatoes and green bean almondine followed by strawberry shortcake for dessert

**NO REFUNDS ISSUED FOR CANCELLATIONS
MADE AFTER MAY 23, 2014**

CHECK OR VISA/MASTERCARD ACCEPTED
CALL 1-888-448-2328 FOR ALL CREDIT CARD PAYMENTS
MAIL FORM WITH CHECK PAYABLE TO:
DAV DEPARTMENT OF MICHIGAN AND MAIL TO:
DAV Department Headquarters
17779 E. 14 Mile Road, Fraser, MI 48026
DEADLINE IS MAY 23, 2014**

Dana Bowman's Story



The Department of Michigan is pleased to welcome Dana Bowman to our State Convention in June 2014 at the Kewadin Casino & Hotel in Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan. Dana will be parachuting in and speaking during the Joint opening session.

Dana is a retired member of the U.S. Army's Special Forces and the Golden Knights skydiving team. Dana was also the Disabled American Veterans Outstanding Disabled Veteran of the Year 1995.

In February of 1994, while performing as a member of the Army's elite Golden Knights parachute team, Dana and his teammate, Sgt. Jose Aguillon, were performing a maneuver known as the diamond track when they collided mid-air at a combined speed of 300 miles per hour. Dana's left leg was severed at the knee and his right leg above the knee; Sgt. Aguillon died instantly. Nine months after the tragic accident, Dana turned his tragedy into a triumph when he became the first double-amputee to re-enlist in the United States Army. Skydiving with his Commander into the re-enlistment ceremony, making his dream a reality and making him the first to skydive with prosthetic legs. This achievement is just one example of Bowman's many successes under

adverse circumstances.

After re-enlistment, Dana became the U.S. Parachute Team's lead speaker and recruiting Commander. Dana has been fortunate to have the gift of giving speeches that touch so many, from the physically challenged to the able-bodied. He strives to show physically-challenged people that they can still work and excel in today's society and military.

Dana has given more than 1,000 speeches in the last few years and has been featured in magazines such as Sports Illustrated, Reader's Digest, People and many more. There have also been numerous television programs focused on Dana and his story, including Dateline, A Current Affair, Real TV and NBC Person of the Week. Dana will also be skydiving into Super Bowl XLVIII in February 2014.

Dana retired from the United States Army a First Class Sergeant in 1996 and spends a great deal of his personal time working with other amputees and disabled or physically challenged people, as well as spending time at different military hospitals helping and speaking with the wounded soldiers.

In addition to a full-time speaking career, Dana enjoys scuba diving, bicycling, snow and water skiing and skydiving. Using two hi-tech prosthetic legs designed by Hanger Prosthetics & Orthotics, Dana demonstrates his abilities to thousands of people each year. As Dana says, "It's not the disability...it's the ability."

State Convention Quickly Approaching at the Kewadin Casino in Sault Ste. Marie - June 6-8, 2014

**Service Officer Conference and Convention Attendees:
Make your reservations today at the Kewadin Casino & Hotel
by calling 1-800-539-2346 - Mention Group Code 1152 for the
DAV Convention to get the discounted room rate.**

Please join us for the 89th Annual State Convention to be held June 6-8, 2014 at the Kewadin Casino in Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan.

We will once again be hosting a two-day Service Officer Conference on Wednesday, June 4, and Thursday June 5. Service officers must attend both days in order to get certified and covered under the National Organization's indemnification program. The Service Officer training is designed to educate the DAV Chapter Service Officers to become more knowledgeable and efficient in processing claims for Veterans in their communities. New service officers (or those that just want to refresh their skills) are asked to attend. This will be a very informative and beneficial conference for all in attendance.

The joint DAV and DAVA opening sessions will start on Friday, June 6, 2014 at 11:00 a.m. in the Dream Makers Theater. Commander Les Schneider will preside over Department sessions and DAVA State Commander Anna Lockwood will be chairing the Auxiliary Convention sessions.

Those who plan on attending are asked to pre-register as soon as possible. The cutoff date for pre-registration is May 23, 2014. If you are planning on attending the banquet on Saturday night, you MUST pre-register to guarantee a banquet ticket; there will only be a few limited banquet tickets available at registration and once those are sold, the event will be closed. The Convention pre-registration form can be found in the magazine for DAV and DAVA.

Once again, Department will be reserving a motor coach from the Kewadin to help those who are unable to drive, or those who would like to save money on gas. The cost per person is \$80.00 and that is for round trip from one of the pick-up locations to the Kewadin and back. Please call the Department Headquarters if you are interested. We must have a full coach of 50 persons in order to book the coach, so if you are interested, please advise no later than May 1, 2014.

Also, DAV members who are interested in running for higher office are asked to complete the application in this magazine. This application is for the State Commander, Line Officer, Chaplain and Treasurer positions only. This application is due to the Department 10 days prior to the State Convention. Interviews will take place at the Convention.

MURDER MYSTERY



Friday, June 6, 2014

At Annual State Convention/Water's Edge

6:30 p.m. - Sign In

7:00 p.m. - Event Starts

Call Loraine Connelly for more information:

734-546-6968

From the Auxiliary

Auxiliary Commander's Message



**Auxiliary
Commander
Anna Lockwood**

Hello, everyone! I hope you all had a very good holiday season. As we are in the New Year, do not forget that there is

a Michigan Service and Support Fund to help pay rent, mortgage, utilities or medical a maximum of \$300.00 is available to those who qualify. There is also a National Service and Support Fund with a maximum of \$1,000.00 to help any Auxiliary member who is in financial need. So remember to take the extra step to help Veterans and their families.

Do not forget about our district meetings, please think about becoming a chairperson for your district, as you could be the one to take the extra step to get more to help our Auxiliary out.

Please do not be afraid to volunteer and ask our juniors to help and maybe some members will join in; call up someone to attend a Unit meeting with you.

With dwindling membership and low

attendance at most unit meetings, the survival of our remaining units is being threatened. I am reaching out to Auxiliary members who read this magazine and have not attended a unit meeting in a long time. Please take the extra step and give our Auxiliary a try again; remember, the Auxiliary is the backbone of the chapter.

Please do not forget about our Veterans in the hospitals. If your Unit would like to donate to a hospital, here are some of the items that are needed: socks, T-shirts, pajamas, hats and gloves. You can also just call the hospital nearest to you and they will send you a detailed list of what is needed.

Do not forget to get your Committee and Membership reports in on time.

Thank you and God bless all of you. ■

Ad Libs by Linda Walters, Auxiliary Adjutant

I'm usually not at a loss for words when I write these articles, but as the new State Adjutant, I'm not quite sure what I can or need to write about. (I don't want to step on any toes or lecture you.)

My learning this position comes with a lot of questions and uncertainty about what to do and if I'm doing things right. I am so thankful I have Carol to mentor me. I see many units (and chapters) who have officers who have had their position for five plus years and watch these units struggle when that officer can no longer fulfill that position and are not there to mentor the new officer. My unit has put into their standing rules that the Commander can only succeed themselves for one year then they must vacate the position. They can run for another office or after a year run for Commander again. I know in small units this can be a problem and therein is

another problem we face – membership. (I know, I know...I'm preaching to the choir.) But think about letting others get experience and be there to mentor them. Be prepared in case something happens... and yes, I will step down from this position in a few years so that I will be around to help and mentor someone else.

Although it's January think about your upcoming reports. Keep track of your activities, spring is just around the corner and you will soon need to turn them in. It will soon be time for Convention again.

Speaking of Conventions, if you are planning on going to National Convention and/or National Fall Conference, please let me or the Commander know. This will help us in case we need to buy some kind of supplies or if someone needs a roommate, etc. It's nice to know who may be going. ■

Sr. Vice Commander Gloria Boozer

Just a reminder: Units need to meet their membership quota by April 1st to be eligible for an award in the Mae Holmes Program. However, even if you don't reach your quota, NEC Donna Henshaw needs to receive a copy of your report, so she can do her National 10th District report. You still have a couple of months to reach your goal.

District 1 and 2 will be having a joint District meeting in April. Kathy Adams and I are planning a School of Instruction as the members stated they would like to have one. We welcome any ideas or suggestions on what you would like to have or see in the School of Instructions. ■

Womens Veterans by Jo Linda White, Chairman

I hope that the New Year has started out well for everyone and that your Christmas was a good one. It's a New Year and time to buckle down; time to invite your women veterans to come to your meetings and get them involved. Find out why they are not participating. One way is to send a letter out to your membership with a questionnaire and ask some straight questions and find out why members are not participating. Make the changes that you can to get member participation.

I want to make a challenge to all female DAV members not active to find out your chapter's meeting date, time and location and get active. Your contribution is important; get involved and help bring about change, one voice at a time. If you are an active woman veteran in your chapter, reach out to other women veterans and get some participation going.

There are many women veterans in our state and I would like input from

you about how things can be improved upon. What can we do to help you become involved in a local chapter? What can we do to help you become active in district and state functions? What are some of your concerns about becoming active? Would you be interested in a one day seminar to discuss women veterans' issues and have a few speakers? Please contact me at headquarters@davmichigan.com.

I look forward to hearing from you. ■

Auxiliary Commander Visit to Lansing

State Rep Ken Kurtz and Sen. Bruce Caswell welcomed Anna Lockwood, State Commander of the Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary to the State Capitol. "It was a great honor to welcome Lockwood to Lansing", Kurtz said, "Her work with men and women who gave given so much to protect our country and promises of freedom we offer is tremendous, and I look forward to continuing to work with organizations like hers to provide services to our veterans once they return home"

Lockwood said she hopes to continue to work with state lawmakers to provide greater services for returning veterans.

"As State Commander for the DAV



Auxiliary, I wanted to visit the Capitol in Lansing and meet with our elected leaders to share with them that our organization is always ready to serve those in need" she said.

Hillsdale Daily News, November 2013

Past Auxiliary National Commander and State Treasurer's Message



Past Auxiliary National Commander & State Treasurer Carol Grey

I grew up in the Auxiliary. As a junior member, I helped with ice cream socials at the chapter home, marched in parades, sewed cancer pads at Grandma Biddle's with Auxiliary members; was sent to the Grand Rapids Veterans Home for Bingo parties and helped deliver muffins to veterans who could not come to the activity room.

As a senior member, I attended my first State Convention the year Ray Dagen (my uncle) was elected as DAV Department Commander; Mable Dagen, my mother's sister was Auxiliary Department Commander in 1966-67 and married to Ray Dagen; in 1975, I was elected Chaplain for the Department and subsequently held that position until 1983 when I was elected 2nd Jr. Vice Commander. I was elected Department Commander in 1987, and with the exception of 1995-1998 and 1999-2002, I was State Adjutant until

retiring in 2013.

Nationally, I was appointed history chairman for 1992-93 and again in 1993-94. In 1995 and 1996, I was elected as National Chaplain. In 1997, I was elected as National 2nd Jr. Vice Commander and continued up the line, and was elected National Commander in 2000 in Reno, Nevada. My year as National Commander was both interesting and exciting. To start, Armando Albarran, the DAV National Commander and I discovered that we both were elected to the national line as 2nd Jr. Vice Commanders and that we are each identical twins. We were also the only National Commanders to be elected in one century and complete our terms in the next century.

As National Commander, I was afforded the opportunity to attend the Winter Sports Clinic in Snowmass, Colorado; sit next to Commander Albarran as he made his presentation to the Joint Veterans Affairs Committee; attend the inauguration of President George W. Bush in 2001 on the Capitol Grounds, plus many festivities of the inaugural days. On the way home from the inauguration, I flew into LaGuardia Airport and saw the Statue of Liberty for the first time. While on that flight, I took pictures and on September 11, 2001, realized that one of the pictures was of the Twin Towers.

In 2005, I was elected as National Judge Advocate and remained in that position until stepping aside in 2010.

At the 2013 National Convention, I was again elected as National Judge Advocate.

In my unit, Wood-Tazelaar #11, I serve as Adjutant/Treasurer. Aunt Mable (as she has come to be called by many members in Michigan and a couple of other states) is also an active member in our unit where she is our hospital chairman. Aunt Mable also started as a junior auxiliary member and December 14, 2013, she will celebrate her 90th birthday.

The many DAV and Auxiliary members I have met on this journey are truly dedicated to the principles of the Auxiliary – COMRADESHIP, LOYALTY, DEVOTION AND SERVICE – as well as our mission statement of "Making a difference in the lives of disabled veterans and their families."

Of all the places I have been, the people I have met and the opportunities I have enjoyed, there is one that is uppermost in my memories. In the Denver airport while waiting for the flight that would take us to Snowmass and the Winter Sports Clinic, I met a gentleman in his wheelchair. I asked him if he had ever attended this event. He said this would be his first time to be there, so I asked him what he planned to do. His answer was not what I thought I might hear – he said he was going to practice falling down.

His answer is engraved on my mind. We may try something new and we may not be successful, but as long as we keep getting up, even though we may again fall, as long as we continue to try, we will attain our goals. ■

Chapter Corner

Attention All Members of Wood-Tazelaar Chapter and Unit 11

Muskegon's Chapter and Unit 11 will be closed January and February 2014 due to the high cost of heat, electricity and snowplowing. The meeting December 12, 2013 will be the last meeting until March 13, 2014. For questions or information, contact Al Hekkema at 231-744-1746.

Special Notice to All Washtenaw County Chapter 13 Members

Washtenaw County DAV Chapter 13 meets the third Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. at the Graf-O-Hara VFW Post 423, 2330 S. Wagner Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106 (Between Ann Arbor and Saline)

Special Meeting Dates

March 8, 2014 at 7:00 p.m. for Nomination of Officers

April 15, 2014 at 7:00 p.m. for Election of Officers

May 20, 2014 at 7:00 p.m. for Installation of Officers

Happy Holidays to you and your family; may the New Year bring you good health and happiness. As always, your wonderful cooperation is deeply appreciated. Thank you for all you do for our Chapter. Submitted by **Commander Gary Bourdeau & Adjutant August Wallman**

Calhoun County Chapter 7 – Flags for School Classrooms

This project started in May 2013, in Barry County. Chapter 7 has five school districts composed of 28 schools, K-12. My goal was to place a "Classroom Flag" in every classroom in the county. I am happy to say that this was completed by the second week of September this year.

I enlisted the help of Chapter 7 members and the help of the local American Legion Post 45 in Hastings for the installment of these flags.

Our Governor Rick Snyder has called for all students to be given the chance to say "The Pledge of Allegiance" before starting their school day. Ninety percent of our classrooms do not have a U.S. Flag. I had hoped to rectify this and I did. In Barry County, there were 250 flags given out and installed. A total cost of \$2,361.00 was raised by me writing to 59 businesses in our county. I received donations that totaled \$2,512.20.

In October I sent out for 250 more flags and 500 Pledge of Allegiance comic books, 500 of Our Country's Veterans comic books, 500 of Our Country Flag comic books and 500 coloring books for 1st and 2nd graders. The other books will go to the 3rd through 6th grades. I have ordered 10 DVDs on Flag education for 7th and 8th graders. The donations are still coming in and we are now looking at the schools in Battle Creek to start the process.

Submitted by **William Roush, Chapter 7 Americanism Chairman**



Pictured, L-R: Chapter 7 member Bill Roush, Chapter 7 member Russ Hammond and American Legion Member Gary Wiczorkek.

Tawas Bay Chapter 130 had two special events in November 2013

Past Chapter Commander Robert Champine was awarded a plaque for his 35 years of service, Past Sr. Vice Commander Raymond Maynard was awarded a certificate for his 12 years of service and Past Treasurer James Monaghan was awarded a certificate for his 7 years of service. Current Commander Terry Madick presented the awards.

Chapter 130 also hosted a PTSD awareness seminar at their chapter with guest speaker Dr. Mark Highsmith from the Saginaw VA mental health division. The event was a success.



Pictured is Tawas Chapter 130 Commander Terry Madick presenting certificates and jackets to Past Chapter Commander Robert Champine for 35 years of service, Raymond Maynard for 12 years of service and James Monaghan for seven years of service.



Pictured, L-R: Chapter Commander Terry Madick, Speaker Dr. Mark Highsmith and Chapter 130 Adjutant Karen Zeiders.

TAPS

Chapter 14

Carl Poest

Chapter 33

Lowell D. Davenport

Chapter 39

William C. Greene

Chapter 64

William A. Hoffman

Chapter 68

Bernard C. Crater

Chapter 73

Michael E. Estill

Past Department Commander

John McCullough

Unit 6/Past Auxiliary Commander

Rena Penny

Past Department Commander

Chapter 20

Russell Spalding

Past Auxiliary Commander

Erna Lydman-Schaedig

Entries for this column must be submitted to Department headquarters, in writing, no later than 45 days after the member's death. Send notice to: DAV, Attn: TAPS, 17779 East Fourteen Mile Road, Fraser, MI 48026. You may also send entries via e-mail to: michelle@davmichigan.com

8th Annual Thomas McMasters Golf Outing

This year marked the 8th Annual Thomas McMasters golf outing at Selfridge Air National Guard Base golf course in Harrison Township, Michigan on August 24, 2013.

The weather was fantastic as the golfers started out early in the morning and continued all day with sunshine. Golfers were treated to fresh donuts in the morning provided by Chairman Paul Klosterman. Sgt. Michelle Sroka donated the beer at the turn and during the banquet. A big thanks to Michelle!

This year's raffle items were crowd pleasers! A TV, Blu-Ray Player, BBQ grill and outdoor patio fire pit to name a few, as well as numerous silent auctions that included golf outings throughout the state of Michigan and the Upper and Lower Peninsula, as well as sports memorabilia.

The Department would like to thank Chairman Paul Klosterman,

Michelle Sroka, Charlene Myers and Julie Sun for all their help soliciting donations and a big thank you to Terry Budzinski, Silvana Pellerito, and Jessica Budzinski for all the hard work with registration. Let's not forget all of our volunteers: Nancy Klosterman, Josie Costa, Jason Zielke, Jo Linda and Kevin White and Beth Gonzales; we could not have done it without all of you.

We are looking for volunteers for next year's outing. We need people to solicit for gifts, corporate donations and get teams to play at the outing. Remember just because you may not live where the outing is, does not mean that your local gifts are not needed; we get gifts from all over the state. You do not need to be a member to help us make the event a success. If you are interested or know of someone who would be interested, please complete the coupon below and mail it to the Department.

2014 Golf Outing Volunteer Form

Name: _____
 Address: _____
 City, State, Zip _____
 Phone: _____ Email: _____

Please mail to: DAV Department of Michigan
 17779 E. 14 Mile Rd., Fraser, MI 48026
 Thank you for your support. Any questions,
 please call 1-888-448-2328

The DAV Transportation Network

The purpose of this program is to provide transportation for veterans to and from their scheduled medical appointments at VA Medical Centers throughout Michigan. To use this service you must have a scheduled medical appointment and be able to get on and off the van without assistance. The vans are not handicapped-accessible. These vans are purchased through various fundraising efforts from members of the community for the area being served, as well as through donations at the Chapter and Department level with possible additional funding from the DAV National Columbia Trust. Once purchased, the vans are then donated to the VA for the sole purpose of transporting veterans to their medical appointments at VA medical centers, who may otherwise have no way of getting there for treatment. In 2012, just under 800,000 free rides were given to veterans nationwide.

Our goal at Department is to provide you with as much information as we can regarding pick up and drop off points and contact phone numbers here in the state of Michigan. Please be patient with us as we need the cooperation of many volunteers, HSCs and the voluntary services division at each VAMC to collect this information and make this available to you at the click of a button.

Our volunteer drivers and coordinators are highly valued to the DAV; without them this program would not exist. In 2014 we are launching a new website and we are hopeful that we will have this information available to you online early in the year. In the meantime, please contact the phone numbers listed below (and ask for voluntary services) as a starting point to get more information when you are in need of transportation to an appointment at a VA Medical Facility.



DETROIT VAMC Voluntary Services 313-576-1000	ANN ARBOR VAMC Voluntary Services 734-845-3467	SAGINAW VAMC Voluntary Services 989-497-2500
BATTLE CREEK VAMC Voluntary Services 269-966-5600	GRAND RAPIDS CBOC Voluntary Services 616-365-9575	IRON MOUNTAIN VAMC Voluntary Services 906-774-3300

New Director of Targeted Outreach & Performance Management for the State of MI



Nick Cook is the new Director of Targeted Outreach and Performance Management for the Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency. Nick will oversee the MVAAs VSO program and work in coordination with the Michigan Veterans Coalition, other Service Organizations and community groups to ensure Michigan Veterans have predictable and quality access to their benefits and other resources. Born and raised in Lansing, Nick served 12 years on active duty in the Army where his last assignment

was in the Office of the Chief, Legislative Liaison, HQDA as a congressional fellow and then as a legislative liaison. Nick was commissioned as an Armor officer from the United States Military Academy in 2001. As a lieutenant, Nick was assigned to A Troop, 1-4 CAV,

1st Infantry Division serving as a Tank Platoon Leader, Scout Platoon Leader and Troop Executive Officer. As the Executive Officer, Nick deployed to Samarra, Iraq during OIF. After the Armor Captain's Career Course, he commanded A Troop, 1-4 CAV, 41BCT, 1st Infantry Division during the "Surge" in Baghdad. He then served as the Aide-de-Camp to the Commanding General of the 1st Infantry Division at Fort Riley, KS. Nick's awards and decorations include the Bronze Star Medal (2nd Award), Meritorious Service Medal (2nd Award), Valorous Unit Award (4th Award), Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, Iraqi Campaign Medal, the Combat Action Badge and the Parachutist Badge. Nick has BS in Civil Engineering from the United States Military Academy and a MPS in Legislative Affairs from the George Washington University. Nick is married to the former Sarah Mann of Dimondale, MI and they reside in Grand Ledge with their three children Ben, Sophie and Adeline.

Thraikill quickly began getting the hang of puck pursuit, stick skills, and skating technique. "After a while I started doing it more and I started feeling like, 'I can do this, I just gotta work hard enough and I'll be able to do it.' I was a quick learner; I stuck to it."

While playing on the Walter Reed team, Thraikill attended a USA Sled Hockey Select Camp, where players are evaluated by National Team, Development Team, and Sled Select Camp staff for positions on the National Development Team. Because he was brand-new to the sport, Thraikill skated in a "standard bucket" and did not make the cut.

He remembers: "The first time I tried out at the camp, anybody could get in the sled I had. It wasn't made for an amputee. After playing more I got a custom bucket so I could go faster and fine-tune everything to get better at it. Most amputees who are playing on a team--really into it--they have a custom bucket that forms to the legs. If you really want to play hockey, you gotta have the right equipment that's made for you."

And now, Thraikill really wanted to play hockey. At the first Development Camp, he met a player from the Grand Rapids sled hockey team. "He's like, 'We have a team in Michigan!' I had no idea." He introduced him to the team and the players, and soon Thraikill was a member of the squad.

"I'm a hands-on learner," he explains. "If someone shows me a play and I do it enough, it'll become muscle memory and I'll know how to do it. It's still all new to me--I'm still learning, still getting 'hockey knowledge.'"

Thraikill retired from the Marines in a wheelchair even though he knew he could have done so wearing his prosthetics. "I had other things on my mind to get mentally ready to live as an amputee, the fact that everything I do is different. Once I retired, I felt I needed to get into the mind-set where I wake up in the morning and put on my prosthetic legs and do everything just like every-

one else. With or without my legs, I can do anything anyone else can.

"I could just sit here and do nothing and not play hockey, but I couldn't do that. I want to better myself and stay active and stay fit. That's something everybody wants to do."

Surgery after retirement to remove a bit of shrapnel near a nerve in his leg has made it possible to wear prosthetics for daily activities. Thraikill prefers his "shorties" around the house because they make it easier to reach things on the ground--and they put him at the approximate height of his three year-old son, Zekiah. When out-and-about, he dons his Genium prosthetic legs and gets around without a cane.

Meanwhile, Thraikill has been accumulating more and more hockey skills and strategy. "Things like hand position on your sticks for more momentum; getting your blades closer together at the bottom of your sled," he explains. His fellow players are generous with tips and advice.

"But that all stops when we're on the ice and it's game time," he laughs.

The hard work has paid off. Thraikill attended a second USA Sled Hockey Development Camp and got the call a few days later notifying him that he'd made the roster.

"I enjoy the camaraderie," he explains. "I don't know how to explain it; it's a team sport--its not like one man can play as a whole team."

Thraikill also enjoys monoskiing in snow and water, and is looking forward to moving into a house being built for him by the Homes for Our Troops organization. For now, he's glad to be able to spend time with his family as his new post-military life comes together, and relishes the memory of that evening last December at Van Andel Arena.

"It was great to have the opportunity to skate out there with the flag," he says.

Here's to seeing him do it again at the 2018 Paralympic Games in Pyeongchang, South Korea!

Department of Michigan Service Officers

Ann Arbor VAMC
2215 Fuller Road
Room B157A

Ann Arbor, Michigan 48105
Phone: 734-845-3839

Battle Creek VAMC
5500 Armstrong Road
Building 2, Room 077
Battle Creek, Michigan 49037
Phone: 269-223-5106

Detroit VAMC
4646 John R St., Room A1013
Detroit, Michigan 48201
Phone: 313-576-3508

Toni Moses
Grand Rapids VA Outpatient Clinic
3019 Coit NE, Room 1115
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49505
Phone: 616-365-7576
Annette Dennis

Grayling
Crawford County Building
200 W. Michigan Avenue
Grayling, Michigan 49738
Phone: 989-344-3861

Terry Fillmore
Iron Mountain VAMC
325 East H Street
Iron Mountain, Michigan 49801
Phone: 906-779-3194

Joe Marczak
Saginaw VAMC
1500 Weiss Street
Saginaw, Michigan 48602
Phone: 989-497-2500 Ext. 13382

Ron McNally
Transportation Chairman
and DSO David Downer

Detroit National Service Officers
Patrick V. McNamara Federal Bldg.
477 Michigan Avenue, Rm. 1200
Detroit, Michigan 48226
Phone: 313-964-6595
Fax: 313-964-6576

Director: Douglas K. Wells
Asst. Director: Kwan Tillman
NSO Rick Barenbrugge
NSO Todd Peddle
NSO Albert Hughes
NSO Jason Zielke
NSO Robert McClelland
NSO Nicholas Koulchar

Department of Michigan Thrift Store Locations



NEW DAV Thrift Store NOW OPEN

8050 E. Middlebelt Road
Westland, Michigan 48185
Store Phone: 734-513-6020

New Store Address:
36660 Gratiot Avenue
Clinton Township, Michigan 48038
Store Phone: 586-790-4143

DONATION PICK-UP LINE: 1-866-520-5328

Slow Process...Long Deserved!



Bob Blevins
Past Department
Commander

It was 1983 and my wife and I were on vacation in Yellowstone. I observed a fellow Veteran in a wheelchair, with a Marine Flag hanging off the backside. Naturally, I approached him and struck up a conversation.

I could see he had lost both his legs. This Vietnam Vet had recently purchased a small camping van, and it was adapted to allow him to operate it. He told me he had developed cancer from Agent Orange and was determined to see as much of the United States as possible.

I gave him my card and told him when he got to Michigan to look me up.

He quickly told me that Michigan was a state he would not be able to visit.

Asking him why, he responded: "Michigan is one of the FEW states that requires a Disabled Veteran to pay to park or camp in their State Parks." He further advised that he would also have to purchase a fishing license without any discount or consideration.

Later that summer, I approached a lifelong friend who was the Senate Majority Floor Leader in Lansing. He told me to write a Bill and he would get it before the Legislature. That was 1983. I wrote a Bill that would allow any Disabled Veteran free fishing and hunting, along with free access into State Parks and Campgrounds. That Bill was passed, but "died" in Committee. Through the years, I've managed to get this Bill re-introduced dozens of times. Each time it would be passed and would later "die" in Committee.

Three years ago, I wrote a Resolution to support this Bill and it was supported at our State Convention. The Bill was again re-introduced and "died" in Committee.

Then this past March, the Governor signed into Law a small part of that Bill that would allow 100% totally Disabled Veterans, or those who are unemployable, free hunting and fishing.

What happened next can only be described as truly a collective effort.

Jason Allen, the Senior Deputy Director of the Michigan Department of Military and Veteran Affairs got behind this effort and promised to help me get this finished. This new Veteran's Agency headed by Governor-appointed Jeff Barnes is determined to give Veterans many of the things that are long overdue.

After my term as your State Commander, I became active in a Veterans Group that was led by Greg Andrews and his staff at the Department of Natural Resources in Marquette. There were representatives of nearly all the Veterans' Organizations, as well as support groups that were created to aid and assist Returning and Recovering Veterans.

Everyone was supportive; phone calls and meetings began to happen. Every one of those people and organizations deserves the credit for the following News:

Beginning May 2014, as part of the Governor's "Operation Freedom Outdoors", all totally disabled and unemployable Veterans will receive free hunting and fishing licenses, along with no fees for use of State campgrounds or parking.

What's next? To get this program inclusive to allow any and all disabled Veterans the same privileges that totally disabled Veterans will enjoy.

Lessons learned:

1. There is truly strength in numbers.
2. Our Disabled American Veterans is the primo organization that supports the needs and concerns of disabled Veterans.
3. We must maintain and grow our numbers to ensure we can continue to do what "WE" do best. ■



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- U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Purchase, Rate/Term, Refinance and Cash-Out Refinance options
- No down payment required fixed and adjustable rates available.

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U.S. Navy Commander 28 Years of Service, WWII Pilot**

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313-732-9095 Office
Brink.Cawley@SPM1.com
NMLS#138501



DAV Department of Michigan Contribution Card

All donations are tax deductible.

Enclosed please find my contribution of \$ _____

Please use this contribution for:

- Membership Program
 VA Hospital Program
 Hospital Transportation Program
 Service to Veterans
 Use my contribution as needed

Visa and MasterCard also accepted, Please call
1-888-448-2328 to make a donation with your credit card.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Please complete and mail to:
Disabled American Veterans, Department of Michigan
17779 E. 14 Mile Road
Fraser, MI 48026

**COMMANDERS JOINT TESTIMONIAL DINNER HONORING
DAV STATE COMMANDER LES SCHNEIDER &
DAVA STATE COMMANDER ANNA LOCKWOOD
FRIDAY, APRIL 11, 2014**

**Kensington Court, 610 Hilton Blvd., Ann Arbor, MI 48108
(Overnight Accommodations same as for District 1 & 2 meeting)**

Members are encouraged to reserve by: March 28, 2014

Social Hour begins at 6:00 p.m. (Cash Bar) ~ Dinner will be served at 7:00 p.m.

Enclosed is a check for _____ # _____ tickets at \$35.00 per person

Name: _____ Chapter / Unit # _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____ Phone: _____

Please check your selection for meal:

Chicken Picatta (Or) Roasted Honey Mustard Pork Loin (Or) Butternut Squash Ravioli

Make Check payable to: Loraine Connelly and mail to
32148 Camborne Lane, Livonia, Michigan 48154

AUXILIARY FORGET- ME-NOT LUNCHEON AT STATE CONVENTION

**SATURDAY, JUNE 7, 2014 AT 11:30 a.m.
TAHQAMENON FALLS ROOM**



TICKET PRICE \$17.00

NUMBER OF TICKETS NEEDED: _____

Name: _____ Unit # _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____ Phone: _____

MENU: Deli Buffet w/various meats and breads, various salads, petit fours and brownies

Ticket(s) will be placed in your convention registration envelope.

Pre-Registration Deadline is May 23, 2014

Tickets will also be on sale at convention.

Make check payable to: DAV Dept. of Michigan and mail along with your payment to:
DAV Department of Michigan, 17779 E. 14 Mile Road, Fraser, Michigan 48026

DISTRICT 1 & DISTRICT 2 JOINT MEETING
Saturday, April 12, 2014 Starting at 9:00 a.m.
Moose Lodge 782, 5506 Stony Creek Road, Ypsilanti, Michigan 48197

Members are encouraged to Pre Register using this coupon

Name: _____ Chapter # _____

Unit # _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____ Phone: _____

Mail along with registration fee of \$8.00 PER member attending, include additional members on separate paper and mail along with check payable to: Thomas Dempster

Mail to: DAV Chapter 114, 30905 Plymouth Rd., Livonia, MI 48150

Overnight Accommodations are available at:

Kensington Court

610 Hilton Blvd

Ann Arbor, MI 48108

734-761-1799

Room Rate: \$99.00

Holiday Inn Express

600 Briarwood Circle

Ann Arbor, MI 48108

734-761-2929

Room Rate: \$99.00

Ann Arbor Marriott

1275 South Huron St.

Ypsilanti, MI 48197

800-228-9290

Room Rate: \$99.00

PRE REGISTRATION DEADLINE IS: April 4, 2014

Meeting Registration will begin at 8:00 a.m. / Lunch will be served.

DISTRICT 4 & DISTRICT 5 JOINT MEETING
Saturday, March 29, 2014 Starting at 9:00 a.m.

Members are encouraged to Pre Register using this coupon

Name: _____ Chapter # _____

Unit # _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Mail along with registration fee of \$8.00 PER member attending, include additional members on separate paper and mail along with check payable to:

Ron Schrieber

513 Jefferson Blvd.

Roscommon, MI 48653

**MEETING LOCATION
 IS STILL BEING DETERMINED
 AT TIME OF PRINTING DEADLINE
 FOR THIS ISSUE
 PLEASE MAIL COUPON AND PAYMENT
 AND YOU WILL RECEIVE
 A FLYER STATING LOCATION
 AND HOTELS NEARBY**

PRE REGISTRATION DEADLINE IS: March 17, 2014

DISTRICT 6 MEETING
Saturday, April 26, 2014 Starting at 9:00 a.m.

Members are encouraged to Pre Register using this coupon

Name: _____ Chapter # _____

Unit # _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Mail along with registration fee of \$8.00 PER member attending, include additional members on separate paper along with check payable to:

Jim Provost

415 Bishop Woods Road

Marquette, MI 49855

**MEETING LOCATION
 IS STILL BEING DETERMINED
 AT TIME OF PRINTING DEADLINE
 FOR THIS ISSUE
 PLEASE MAIL COUPON AND PAYMENT
 AND YOU WILL RECEIVE
 A FLYER STATING LOCATION
 AND HOTELS NEARBY**

PRE REGISTRATION DEADLINE IS: April 14, 2014

Camp Liberty

“Truly Bringing Them Home . . .
Helping Them Heal”



Nearly Fifty Thousand U.S. soldiers have been wounded in the wars in Iraq or Afghanistan over the past 12 years. Their full reintegration back into their families, jobs and communities is often made more difficult with not only their loss of limbs or other serious visible injuries for some, but the many, many more of them that are coping with the issues associated with the “Invisible Wounds” of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and traumatic brain injury (TBI). All too often, as things become more difficult over time, they turn to coping strategies and behaviors that are not acceptable and can be harmful. Homelessness, Suicide, Joblessness, Incarceration and Divorce are all too often the by-products of their failure to successfully reintegrate. Far too many fall victim to depression and addictions and fail to get the help they need and deserve.

Rick Briggs, Major USAF (Retired), a SAC Navigator, and their exceptional Leadership Team of top professionals, have selected a beautiful site along the banks of the River Raisin in the Irish Hills area of southern central Michigan on which to start Camp Liberty. Their initial 137 acre inclusive recreation facility was created to provide an environment conducive to the therapeutic experience facilitated by a natural wilderness setting coupled with one of the nation’s leading cognitive rehabilitation programs. Through their inclusive outdoor recreation opportunities and adaptive equipment and accessible facilities, Camp Liberty support programs are designed to aid in the rehabilitation and reintegration of U.S. military service members, Veterans and their families. They also host other programs that are effectively engaged helping individuals develop life skills or face health challenges.

Camp Liberty’s extensive all-volunteer network and support programs help Veterans review the challenges they are facing and connect them with public and private support services. This helps them address issues associated with health care, Veterans benefits and programs, employment and other difficulties. Camp Liberty’s projected temporary and transitional housing for Veterans will provide beautiful, free accommodations while they are involved

with recreation and/or rehabilitation.

Based on availability and priority, this will help some families get their feet on the ground and their lives moving forward. A portion of housing will be built by Veterans through the Zero-Day Veteran’s construction trades job training program. A Memorandum of Understanding with Zero-Day provides the opportunity for them to learn various construction, project management, and business skills. These are critical services for post-deployment and under employed National Guard and Reserve personnel.

Camp Liberty is a program, not a location. As a template, it has been designed to be duplicated by other recreation facilities around the nation. The property for the first Camp Liberty was acquired in Brooklyn, Michigan and is adjacent to the beautiful Sharonville State Game Area. The Sharonville state land offers an additional 6,000 acres for hiking, hunting, canoeing, fishing, target shooting and more. Game observation and hunting opportunities include deer, squirrel, rabbit, grouse, woodcock, pheasant, duck, goose, and wild turkey. Camp Liberty lies on the north side of Austin Road between Manchester and Napoleon. It is 15 miles southeast of Jackson and 30 miles southwest of the Ann Arbor VA. It is about ten miles west of one of the nation’s 21 VA Assisted Living TBI Veteran Facilities run by Eisenhower Center.

In addition to being so accessible to the main population center of Michigan, Camp Liberty has received exceptional support from many state and federal agencies whose missions align with those of Camp Liberty. Our use of natural resources, the development and implementation of an exceptional wildlife habitat plan, and the overall mission to aid those with disabilities and life challenges, is a mission that many people can get behind. Any outdoors person can testify to the power of Mother Nature’s remedy for things that bother a troubled soul.

Camp Liberty’s campaign goal is to raise \$3 million dollars by the end of 2014, which will go toward facilities, programs, and 3 years of operations. The facilities plan provides for building a \$450,000 main lodge, a caretaker home to be staffed

by a 100% disabled Purple Heart Iraq Veteran and his family, a “Program Center,” a multi-use “Chapel,” 4-5 individual log homes for visiting families, and a park. The Site Plan will also accommodate numerous group gathering areas, a bonfire pit, a hoop house, a wandering butterfly garden, a tree house with rope bridges, 3 accessible ground observation/hunting blinds, 3 elevated observation/hunting blinds, numerous tree stands, two ponds with accessible docks, an accessible duck blind, an outdoor chapel/reflection area, a special wetlands area with about a mile of trails/walking paths, a pavilion picnic area, an accessible canoe launch.

The plan is designed to serve about a thousand Veterans and family members and other programs. While the primary focus will always be on our service men and women and their families, Camp Liberty will also look to host various faith based organizations to include men’s ministries, as well as provide for youth programs, disability groups, and organizations that serve those with life challenges.

Ideally located in Michigan’s fun-filled Irish Hills area, our guests will have opportunities to travel to near-by wineries, and the dozens of beautiful lakes and streams that dot the landscape. Whether it’s the bright lights of the big cities or the quiet solace of walks through the wilderness of Michigan out-of-doors, there is plenty of

— Camp Liberty continued on back inside cover



History of the POW/MIA Flag as a Recognized Symbol



In 1971, Mrs. Mary Hoff, a MIA wife and member of the National League of American Prisoners and Missing in Southeast Asia, recognized the need for a symbol of our POW/MIAs. Prompted by an article in the Jacksonville, Florida *TIMES-UNION*, Mrs. Hoff contacted Norman Rivkees, Vice-President of Annin & Company that had made a banner for the newest member of the United Nations, the People's Republic of China, as a part of their policy to provide flags to all UN member nations. Mrs. Hoff found Mr. Rivkees very sympathetic to the POW/MIA issue, and he, along with Annin's advertising agency, designed a flag to represent our missing men.

Following League approval, the flags were manufactured for distribution. The flag is black, bearing in the center in black and white, the emblem of the League. The emblem is a white disk bearing in black silhouette the bust of a man, watch tower with a guard holding a rifle and a strand of barbed wire; above the disk are the white letters POW and MIA framing a white 5-pointed star; below the disk is a black and white wreath above the white motto YOU ARE NOT FORGOTTEN.

Concerned groups and individuals have altered the original POW/MIA Flag many times; the colors have been switched from black with white to red, white and blue to white with black; the POW/MIA has, at times, been revised to MIA/POW. Such changes, however, are insignificant. The importance lies in the continued visibility of the symbol, a constant reminder of the plight of America's POW/MIAs.

On March 9, 1989, a POW/MIA Flag which flew over the White House on the 1988 National POW/MIA Recognition Day, was installed in the United States Capitol Rotunda as a result of legislation passed overwhelmingly during the 100th session of Congress. The leadership of both Houses hosted the installation ceremony in a demonstration of bipartisan congressional support. This POW/MIA Flag, the only flag displayed in the United States Capitol Rotunda, stands as a powerful symbol of our national commitment to our POW/MIAs until the fullest possible accounting for Americans still missing in Southeast Asia has been achieved.

On August 10, 1990, the 101st Congress passes U.S. Public

Law 101-355, which recognized the National League of Families POW/MIA Flag and designated it "as a symbol of our Nation's concern and commitment to resolving as fully as possible the fates of Americans still prisoner, missing and unaccounted for in Southeast Asia, thus ending the uncertainty for their families and the Nation."

Beyond Southeast Asia, it has been a symbol for POW/MIAs from all American Wars.

The importance of the National League of Families POW/MIA Flag lies in its continued visibility, a constant reminder of the plight of America's POW/MIAs. Other than "Old Glory", the POW/MIA Flag is the only flag ever to fly over the White House, having been displayed in the place of honor on National POW/MIA Recognition Day since 1982.

With the passage of Section 1082 of the 1998 Defense Authorization Act during the first term of the 105th Congress, the POW/MIA Flag will fly each year on:

- Armed Forces Day - (3rd Saturday in May)
- Memorial Day - (Last Monday in May)
- Flag Day - June 14
- Independence Day - July 4
- National POW/MIA Recognition Day (3rd Friday of September)
- Veterans Day - November 11

The POW/MIA Flag will be flown on the grounds or the public lobbies of major military installations as designated by the Secretary of Defense, all Federal National Cemeteries, the National Korean War Veterans Memorial, the National Vietnam Veterans Memorial, the White House, the United States Post Offices and at official offices of the Secretaries of State, Defense and Veteran's Affairs and Director of the Selective Service System.

Call the League update line for the latest information, 24-hours a day at 202-659-0133. To make inquiries, call 202-223-6846 or send an email to natlleague@aol.com or write The National League of POW/MIA Families, 1001 Connecticut Avenue, N.W., Suite 919, Washington, D.C. 20036-5504.

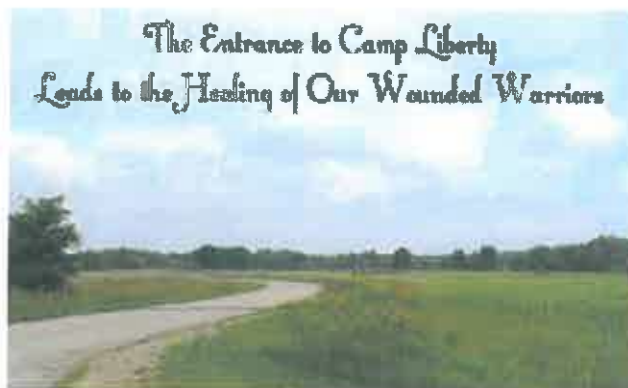
— by Harvey Slotman, POW/MIA CHAIRMAN

— Camp Liberty continued from page 16

fun and therapeutic things to do at and near Camp Liberty.

What differentiates Camp Liberty from other national recreation programs is their direct tie-in to the Eisenhower Center's exceptional rehabilitation programs. As one of the premiere TBI cognitive rehabilitation providers, Eisenhower Center provides Camp Liberty with an option for education, advocacy, support and awareness for service members and Veterans coping with "Invisible Wounds." No other program in the nation can match Camp Liberty's complete recreation and reintegration programs backed with rehabilitation. "Truly bringing them home . . . Helping them heal."

To learn more about Camp Liberty and how you can help, please visit www.camp-liberty.org or call Rick Briggs at (810) 908-1901 for more detailed information. ■



Michigan Disabled Veterans
17779 East 14 Mile Road
Fraser, MI 48026

hope|center
in Macomb

Loving God | Loving People | Serving Our Community

For more information, please visit their website at:
www.hopecentermacomb.org

Hope Center is a non-profit, volunteer driven, human services organization. Their purpose and desire is to address the hunger crisis and respond to the needs of residents in Macomb County. They are meeting this need through their no cost, client choice food pantry. Their mission is to transform lives, one family at a time.

Address: 33222 Groesbeck Hwy., Fraser, Michigan 48026
Pantry Phone: 586-294-4673 Administrative
Office Phone: 586-491-2924

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