



FULFILLING OUR PROMISES
TO THE MEN AND WOMEN WHO SERVED

Disabled American Veterans, Department of Ohio

December, 2017

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FROM THE DESK OF STATE COMMANDER JAMES BAILEY



All who have served on active duty have experienced at least one Christmas season far away from family or friends. My “missing” Christmas season in the Republic of Vietnam in 1969. That time of the year was extremely hard for me, just as it was, and is, for many of our deployed service men and women.

Our enemies do not allow us to celebrate the Christmas season in a joyous fashion. We must be on guard, vigilant and alert. This is the most difficult time of the year to be separated from loved ones. War and conflict knows no holiday.

I recently walked and viewed the Vietnam Memorial Wall in Washington, D.C. That walk left me to wonder how many of our gallant warriors on December 25th, never experienced the next day. Many of the names etched on the Wall are permanently etched in my memory.

It is easy to say: “Let us all remember our troops overseas during the Christmas season!” and then we carry on with all of our Christmas season activities in Ohio. But how many of us really understand the sacrifices that our military personnel are making for us? Does the general public understand the void that war inflicts on our military families?

As members of the Disabled American Veterans, we can remind those around us of the emotional importance of this time of the year to our troops thousands of miles from home. And while we keep them in our thoughts, we should also remember our nation’s other troops on the far-flung fronts that never make newspaper headlines.

From the frozen outposts of the DMZ in South Korea to the restoring of vital services in the heart of hurricane devastated Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands, tens of thousands of Americans maintain lonely vigils during the Christmas season. Still others prowl the seas, protecting our shores from afar. Their missions and their sacrifices should never be taken for granted or forgotten.

We no longer have a polarizing figure like Bob Hope and his Annual Christmas Tour to remind the general public of the sacrifices made by our service men and women. My recollection is that every Bob Hope Christmas Tour show ended with the cast and multitude of troops singing “Silent Night.” Many emotions were displayed on the faces of our troops while singing this song. It was heart-wrenching, and deeply impacted the general public.

Bob Hope is no longer with us, but his legacy and many of the servicemen and women for whom he performed are still around. Those men and women now are our veterans we are older now. Many for whom reside in nursing homes or hospitals. Many are service-connected disabled and are living with their visible and invisible wounds.

While we remember those serving, and those who have served, let us also remember the caregivers of our disabled veterans. Studies indicate that caregivers of our disabled veterans. Studies indicate that caregivers improve patients’ health and reduce hospital readmissions. Our 2017 DAV legislative initiative is directed toward recognizing the importance of veteran caregivers of **all** eras. They deserve the support that they have earned. If passed, this legislation would be the best Christmas present ever for our caregivers and the veterans they support with their tireless efforts!

These men and women veteran caregivers may not wear a uniform, but they sacrifice for our nation all the same. We owe them a debt of gratitude for their sacrifices, especially during this Christmas season. The **least** we can do is to give these caregivers more than a

IMPORTANT NUMBERS

National Headquarters (877) 426-2838
NSO Office, Cleveland (216) 522-3507
Washington D.C. Office, DAV (202) 554-3501
Cincinnati DSO, Tom Kirstein (513) 475-6443
 Tuesday, Thursday
 Lisa Wilson (513) 475-6443
 Monday, Wednesday, Friday
Chillicothe DSO, Charles Knipp (740) 773-1141
 Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday Ext. 7916
Dayton DSO, Nikki Cochran (937) 268-6511
 Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday Ext. 2962
Wade Park DSO, Walter Dryja (216) 791-3800
 Monday, Wednesday, Friday Ext. 3395
Columbus DSO, Henry Snodgrass (614) 257-5487
 Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday
Parma DSO, Richard Healy (216) 739-7000
 Monday-Thursday Ext. 2405
Veterans Crisis Hotline
1-800-273-8255
Press 1

passing thought. As we enjoy our Christmas season, keep in mind that someone in a uniform, and someone supporting them, made that all possible.

Merry Christmas, and Happy New Year!!

Remember, WE SHOULD, WE CAN, and WE WILL!

James Bailey
State Commander

DATES TO REMEMBER

February 25-28, 2018	Mid-Winter Conference, Arlington, VA.
April 21, 2018	DAV Commander James Bailey and DAVA Commander Marlene Zwiebel Testimonial Dinner, Wapakoneta, OH
June 22-24, 2018	97 th Department of Ohio Convention, Columbus Marriott North, Dublin, Ohio.
July 14-17, 2018	2018 National Convention, Grand Sierra Resort and Casino, Reno, Nevada
November 2-4, 2018	Fall Conference, Columbus Marriott Northwest, Dublin, OH.

THANK YOU FROM THE AUXILIARY

We want to thank all of you that donated and helped with our Annual Auction at the Fall Conference. Thanks to you we made a total of \$1,568.

2017-2018 STATE OFFICERS

State Commander: James Bailey
Sr. Vice Commander: John Plahovinsak
1st Jr. Vice Commander: John Parker
2nd Jr. Vice Commander: David Weeks
Executive Committee: Timothy Dibble
Robert Habern
PDC (2016-2017): David Bilinovich



L to R: PDC Robert Bertschy, Canton Golden Corral owner, Nikki Zehner, DAV Commander James Bailey greeted veterans at the Golden Corral event, November 13, 2017.

DEPARTMENT OF OHIO MEMBERSHIP

As of *November 30, 2017*, the Department Membership Report stands at 32,261 members. The Department is 97.74% of goal and 674 members below the yearly goal of 29,889. Total full life membership is 29,215.

RECOGNITION OF DAV MEMBERS
2017 OHIO VETERANS HALL OF FAME

We know you don't volunteer for recognition. You volunteer to help others!

Your fellow veterans, as well as members of your communities at large, appreciate and benefit from your volunteerism. We, your DAV and DAVA family, are especially proud of your volunteer service!

Particularly at Christmastime, it is appropriate to recognize our volunteers for all that you do. Thank you for your service!

The State of Ohio recently bestowed special recognition on six of our members, by induction into the Ohio Veterans Hall of Fame. Over the years, that honor has been bestowed on many DAV members! Those recent recipients of that honor are:

Howard B. Friend, Youngstown Ch. #2

Howard B. Friend served in the U.S. Army during World War II. Before his retirement, Howard served as a high school teacher and principal, and as the first superintendent of the Mahoning County Joint Vocational School. "Howdy" often says his happiest and proudest times are spent promoting and volunteering for the Youngstown YMCA and its Camp Fitch. He was chair of the Camp Fitch 75th Anniversary Celebration, the YMCA Capital Fund Drive, the YMCA Boys Work Committee, the YMCA Board of Trustees, and served as the YMCA Board Vice President and Co-chair of the 100th Year Camp Fitch.

John A. Evans Sr., Buckeye Ch. #8

John A. Evans, Sr. served in the U.S. Air Force and U.S. Army in the Vietnam War. After his military career, John experienced firsthand the unfavorable welcome home as a Vietnam veteran. He promised himself then that when he had more time, he would make sure he would do whatever he could to support all veterans. Upon retiring, John began volunteering at the Louis Stokes Cleveland VA Medical Center. He currently serves as the American Legion VA Voluntary Services Deputy-Representative. In 2016, John received the Cleveland VA Medical Center Volunteer of the Year/You Make a Difference Award and the VA Voluntary Services Superior Service Award for 17,500 volunteer hours, including significant hours spent with seriously mentally ill veterans. John's service and advocacy ensures these veterans have everything they need to engage successfully in their treatment and recovery.

Francis M. Luciotti, Robert L. Cox Memorial Ch. #23

Francis Luciotti served in the U.S. Air Force in the Korean War. Frank retired from the Department of Defense after a total of 38 years in both military and civil service capacities. Since 1988, Frank has devoted his life to supporting others, particularly veterans, through his service in the Knights of Columbus, VFW, AMVETS and Disabled American Veterans, organizations that enabled him to leverage his connections for the betterment of the Licking County community. Frank also has held volunteer and leadership positions, including serving on the Chalmers P. Wylie Veterans Volunteer Advisory Committee. He was recognized as 2009 Veteran of the Year by

the Licking County Veterans Service Committee, and served as the 2017 Grand Marshal of the Newark Ohio Memorial Day Parade.

David W. Taylor, Willie Marcum Ch. #72

David W. Taylor served in the U.S. Army in Vietnam. David is a life member of the Military Order of the Purple Heart, Special Forces Association Northeast Ohio Chapter, VFW, Disabled American Veterans and Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 385. Under David's leadership, Medina's annual Memorial Day Parade includes the participation of all area veterans' organizations and is the community's largest parade. He is a founding member of The Joint Veterans Coalition of Medina County, working with the Medina County Veterans Service Office and bringing together 23 Medina County veteran organizations for the purpose of connecting veterans and informing veterans about benefits, programs, services and upcoming events. David spearheaded the Medina County Veterans Memorial Hall of Fame Modernization Capital Campaign raising \$500,000 to renovate the 60-year-old facility.

David H. Dilly, Coshocton Ch. #74

David Dilly served in the U.S. Air Force in the Vietnam War. For nearly two decades, David has taken great pride in assisting veterans, widows and their dependents as a past Coshocton County Veterans Service Officer and current Commissioner. He has attended more than 690 military funerals. David was instrumental in the implementation of the Coshocton County KIA Memorial Bridge Project that named 96 bridges after fallen Coshocton County war heroes. Since 2012, he has accompanied numerous veterans and their guardians on Honor Flights, and has coordinated their lodging, meals and transportation. He has lobbied Congress for mineworkers and their dependents' healthcare and pensions, even though he is not eligible for such healthcare. He is a recipient of the Buckeye State Sheriffs' Association Civilian Citation Award and the Ohio State Department of Labor Mine Safety & Health Administration Award for saving a young boy's life by administering CPR.

Holly S. Koester, John N. Nemuth Ch. #108

Holly Koester served in the U.S. Army from 1981 until being injured in 1991. Holly is a graduate of Cleveland State University, and serves as a substitute teacher for grades K-8. In 1996, she started racing in marathons, and is the first person to complete a marathon in all 50 United States in a wheelchair. She attended her first National Veteran Wheelchair Games in 1991 and has attended every year since as an athlete and mentor. She is sports director and secretary for the Buckeye Chapter Paralyzed Veterans of America. The National PVA has honored Holly with the Speedy Award, the highest honor that the group bestows. Holly is a peer counselor for newly injured spinal cord veterans at the Cleveland VA and a motivational speaker who has addressed veterans' organizations, school groups and attendees at Memorial Day and Veterans Day ceremonies.

As your Adjutant, I was privileged to meet the VOTY inductees for dinner and to attend their induction ceremony.

It is an honor to work with these and all of our DAV volunteers.

Mike Stith
Adjutant, DAV, Department of Ohio

Recruitment of DAV Members

A vast pool of potential DAV members are out there, not only in the nation, but also here in the State of Ohio. Ways to recruit the large number of potential members into our ranks was discussed before the Department Membership Committee during the 2017 Fall Conference.

According to Department of Veterans Affairs FY15 statistics, 8.97 million veterans are enrolled in VA health care and 4.26 million veterans receive VA disability compensation. With 1.3 million current DAV members, this means that over 3 million veterans are eligible to join the DAV as new members.

According to Ohio Department of Veterans Services FY16 statistics, 796,267 veterans reside here in Ohio. Of these, 378,147 receive VA disability compensation. With 29,369 DAV Life Members in Ohio, nearly 350,000 Ohio veterans are eligible to join DAV as new Ohio members.

Membership Committee representatives Richard Blue and Tom Moss agree that the dual keys to increased membership are **action** and **visibility**. **Action** is defined as chapters conducting activities to assist veterans. **Visibility** is defined as keeping the public informed of those chapters activities.

Chapters that engage in activities to assist veterans have a high degree of visibility and attract new members. Activities, such as Forget-Me-Not drives and participation at community events, increase the visibility of chapters and attract new members.

Membership Committeeman Carl Johnson suggests coordinating chapter activities with activities of your local County Veterans Service Commission. This would increase your chapter's visibility and attract new DAV members.

State Commander James Bailey recognizes the importance of the Membership Committee. To promote chapter visibility, Commander Bailey tasked the Committee to recruit twelve chapters that did **not** conduct Forget-Me-Not drives last year to conduct one in 2017-18.

As of the 2017 Fall Conference, five of those chapters have responded, by scheduling or conducting Forget-Me-Not drives this year. "This is very encouraging! Chapter visibility will lead to increasing our overall membership," said State Commander Bailey.

DAV National has established a FY 2017-18 Department of Ohio recruiting membership goal of 931 Full Life Members. With the assistance of our chapters and members, and with guidance from the Membership Committee, Commander Bailey is very optimistic that the goal will be met.

The membership goal focus is on recruitment of Full Life Members, as well as on converting Part-Life Members to Full Life Members. From July 1, 2017 to the present, ninety-three members have joined the DAV just from the efforts of the National Service Officers and District Service Officers. However, almost all of these new DAV members were Part-Life Members and do not count toward the Department's membership goal.

Attendees of the 2017 Commanders & Adjutants Conference noted that a large number of potential DAV members are over 60 years of age and retired. Within this category, many are 80 years of age,

and are eligible to join our ranks without any dues requirement. Attendees were advised to consider recruiting these veterans.

Increased membership is the goal of the Department Membership Committee. Progress has been made! Eight chapters already have met their goals! Commander Bailey and the Membership Committee asks that all of our chapters continue to work on membership, to meet or exceed our goal.

John Plahovinsak
DAV Department Membership Committee
Chairman

CHRISTMAS AT THE OHIO VETERANS HOME IN SANDUSKY

The Annual Department of Ohio, Disabled American Veterans Christmas Party held at the Ohio Veterans Home in Sandusky on Sunday, December 3, 2017 was a success. Many volunteers attended to assist with the event and the veterans enjoyed the festivities.

