



**DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS
DEPARTMENT OF SOUTH DAKOTA**

1519 W. 51st Street, Sioux Falls, SD 57105
 Phone (605) 332-6866 Fax (605) 338-5489
 E-Mail admin@davsd.org SD.dav.org
 www.dav.org

TO: DEPARTMENT OFFICERS, DEC, CHAPTERS, AND AUXILIARY UNITS
FROM: CHRISTINE SPEIRS, COMMANDER AND MARTY PENNOCK, ADJUTANT
SUBJECT: SEPTEMBER 2023 DAV MONTHLY REPORT
DATE: SEPTEMBER 1st, 2023

INFORMATION CONTAINED IN THIS MONTHLY REPORT IS TO BE PRESENTED AT YOUR MONTHLY MEETING EITHER BY THE DEC REPRESENTATIVE OR ADJUTANT. YOU SHOULD TRY TO HIGHLIGHT EACH OF THESE ARTICLES FOR YOUR MEMBERSHIP MEETING. YOU MAY USE ANY OF THESE ARTICLES FOR YOUR CHAPTER NEWSLETTER.

1. CHAPTER OFFICERS; DEC FORMS; FINANCIAL REPORTS; AND FORM 990 OR 990-N E-POSTCARD:

Adjutant Pennock requests Chapter Officers Report to DAV Department Headquarters and DAV National within ten days after the installation of newly elected or appointed Chapter Officers; the Annual Financial Report to DAV Department Headquarters and DAV National by *September 30, 2023*; and Form 990 or 990N to Department Headquarters by *November 15, 2023*. NOTE – NEW process to file OERs – See attachments at the end of this report.

Department Headquarters requested all Chapter’s Department Executive Committee (DEC) Forms to be forwarded to DAV Headquarters as soon as possible.

2. POPULATION SUMMARY: Life membership discount running June 1st, 2023 – March 31st, 2024.



Population Summary

Execution Date: 8/29/2023 12:20 53 PM

DCU No	DCU Name	Current Year						Goal		
		Goal Met	Total Trial	Total Part Life	Total Full Life	Total Paid Members	Total Members	Goal	Goal %	Goal Variance
40	Department of South Dakota		0	97	4,558	4,655	4,655	4,782	97.75%	-107
1	Arthur H Muchow #1		0	25	1,916	1,941	1,941	1,966	98.73%	-25
3	Rapid City #3		0	33	1,258	1,291	1,291	1,309	98.62%	-18
4	Coyote State #4	G	0	26	57	83	83	83	100.00%	0
6	Watertown #6		0	2	173	175	175	185	94.59%	-10
11	Northern Hills #11		0	7	366	373	373	381	97.90%	-8
13	Swanson O Connor #13		0	0	264	264	264	271	97.42%	-7
18	Oahe #18		0	1	212	213	213	223	95.52%	-10
19	Milbank-sisseton #19		0	2	91	93	93	102	91.18%	-9
22	Brookings #22		0	1	144	145	145	155	93.55%	-10
27	Davison County #27		0	0	77	77	77	87	88.51%	-10
Active			9							
All Large			1							
Merged			0							
On Hold				0						
Revoked						0				
Suspended								0		

DAV’s Life Membership Dues will increase to \$325.00 effective January 1, 2024.

3. SOUTH DAKOTA VETERANS COUNCIL: *The next SDVC meeting will take place September 20th, 2023*, in Rapid City, VFW Post 1273. The meeting will run from 9am to 12pm (MT).

4. DAV HOSPITAL TRANSPORTATION NETWORK: The 2023 DAV Transportation Network and Columbia Trust Grant Application was submitted for an Explorer 4WD, in Winner. This has been approved and the vehicle is ready to be picked up in Erlanger, KY.

5. DAV SOUTH DAKOTA FALL CONFERENCE: The date has been set for October 7th, 2023, at the DAV Home, in Sioux Falls, SD. A Commander's reception will take place on the night of October 6th, 2023. Travel reimbursement to this event will be on individual Chapters. Lodging is available at the following \$159.00 until September 22nd, 2023

Comfort Inn & Suites Avera Southwest

3721 W. Avera Drive, Sioux Falls, SD, 57108, US

(605) 593-0768

- Agenda Oct 6-7 Provided with RSVP
- Agenda for Joint Meeting Oct 7 Provided
- Agenda for DAV Meeting Oct 7 Provided

6. DAV 14TH DISTRICT FALL CONFERENCE: Kallispell, MT, October 14th – 15th. More information will follow the DAV Department of Montana Convention June 2-3, 2023. Department Commander Christine Speirs and Adjutant Marty Pennock will be representing the DAV Department of SD. If Chapters wish to attend, please let the DAV HQ know. Travel reimbursement will be on individual Chapters.

7. SDDVA ANNUAL BENEFIT SCHOOL

The SDDVA annual benefit school will be held in Sioux Falls September 5th -7th, 2023.

The training will be held at the SD Military Heritage Alliance (1600 W. Russell Street).

Lodging has been secured at the Sheraton (1211 N. West Avenue). The Sheraton will be honoring the \$75 state rate. Ask for the South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs block of rooms. Room block is only open until August 7th, 2023.

Adjutant Pennock received the following list of members attending the event. No other members are allowed to attend the event for the DAV. Travel reimbursement to this, is the Chapters' responsibility.

- Margaret (Peggy) Kirk / Dick Turnwall / Ed Simpson / John Price / Dennis Cutschall
- Christine Speirs / Mark Wolf / Tim Walsh / Dave Van Dine / Kim Hubers

UPDATED AGENDA

Tuesday – September 5

- 1:00 pm – Introductions and Brief SDDVA Update
- 1:15 pm – Survivor Outreach Services (David Dodson)
- 1:30 pm – Cornerstone Mission (Jade Ronk)
- 2:00 pm – Prosthetics (VA Staff)
- 3:00 pm – Break
- 3:15 pm – Nursing Home/Hospice Program (VA Staff)
- 4:00 pm – Caregiver Program (VA Staff)
- 5:00 pm – Target Practice at the Gun Range

Wednesday – September 6

8:00 am – VA Director Updates

9:00 am – Legislative Update and Fallen Hero Bridges Program (SDDVA) 9:45 am – Break

10:00 am – Vet Center Update and Suicide Prevention (VA Vet Center)

11:00 am – Care in the Community (VA Staff)

12:00 Noon – Group Lunch and Awards Ceremony (Sponsored by Keystone Treatment Center)

1:00 pm – PACT Act Update and Ratings (VA Staff)

3:00 pm – Tour State SD Veterans Cemetery

5:00 pm – Team Building Night Out at Great Shots (Sponsored by Great Shots and Sanford)

Thursday – September 7

8:00 am – Military Sexual Trauma (VA Staff)

9:00 am – Claim Development (VA Staff)

10:00 am – Break

10:15 am – Hearing and Memory Loss (Susan Irons)

11:00 am - Eligibility and Travel Pay (VA Staff)

12:00 Noon (Sponsored by Stockwell Engineers, Inc.)

1:00 Midwest Honor Flight Presentation – Jeri Smith and Shannon Phillips

1:30 pm – Phaser Program/Sanford Billing Issues (Paul Weckman)

2:00 pm – SD Native Homeownership Coalition (Tawney Brunsch)

2:30 pm – Adjourn

8. OTHER INFORMATION

- Kim Hubers – Dell Rapids Woman Named Disabled American Veteran of the Year
- DAV Auxiliary State Fundraiser Email – Jaci Worth
- PTSD Doesn't Mean You're Weak, or a Monster
- DAV Benefits Advocates Help Protect PACT Act Fraud
- Staff Appointment – Ron Minter
- File All Officer Election Reports Through MyDAV.org
- National Service Foundation Letter of Appreciation
- Volunteering: The Cornerstone of DAV Chapters
- Department of South Dakota 2023 Resolution Disposition List
- H.R. 4249/S.2294, the Veterans Exposed to Toxic (VET) PFAS Act
- H.R. 4886, the Aviator Cancer Examination Study (ACES) Act
- H.R., the Restore Veterans' Compensation Act of 2023
- H.R. 4061, to Establish and Exposure Registry and Studies on the Red Hill Incident
- H.R. 4424, the Vietnam Veterans Liver Fluke Cancer Study Act
- One Year After PACT Act Becomes Law, Outreach Continues
- Some Social Security Beneficiaries Need an Extra \$6,200 in 2023 to Maintain Buying Power
- Message From the Veterans Health Administration – 100 Years of VA Care of Women Veterans
- House Republican Vote to Block VA from Changing Motto to Include Female Veterans
- VA Funding Plan Passes House with More Controversial Provisions
- Six SD Nursing Homes on US Worst-Rated List
- Citing Staffing, Insufficient Funds, SD Nursing Home Will Close
- Event Honors Korean War Veterans
- 727th Poker Run – September 2nd, 2023 – Brookings SD
- Gunning For Our Heroes – September 7th, 2023, Wings of Valor
- National POW/MIA Recognition Day – September 15th
- 248th U.S. Navy Birthday Ball – October 14th
- Swanson O-Connor Chapter 13, Pheasant Hunt – September 20th or October 25th
- Disabled Veteran Deer Hunt

9. DEC MEETING – THE AMERICAN LEGION POST 8 – MARCH 27, 2024, 12 PM - 3 PM

10. DAV DEPARTMENT BULLETIN DEADLINE: *October 2023 BULLETIN: Submittal deadline: September 10th*. Email all reports, photos, stories to: adj@davsd.org.

Department Officers, Chapters, Auxiliary State Officers, and Auxiliary Units who wish to place an article in DAV Department of South Dakota Quarterly Bulletin should submit them by the deadline date – stated below. The DAV Department Officers ARE RESPONSIBLE for submitting their own articles.

11. DAV DEPARTMENT OF SOUTH DAKOTA QUARTERLY BULLETIN & MONTHLY REPORT:

If any of the DAV and Auxiliary members would like to receive the DAV Department Quarterly Bulletin and Monthly Report, please send your e-mail address to DAV Headquarters:

NAME: _____
PHONE: _____
E-MAIL: _____

You can either mail or e-mail the information to:
DAV Headquarters, 1519 W. 51st Street, Sioux Falls, SD 57105
E-mail: admin@davsd.org



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**DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS AND AUXILIARY
DEPARTMENT OF SOUTH DAKOTA
JOINT MEETING
OCTOBER 7, 2023
9:00 A.M. – 10:00 A.M.**

AGENDA

- I. OPENING PRAYER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
- II. WELCOME REMARKS**
 - **DAV DEPARTMENT COMMANDER CHRISTINE SPEIRS**
 - **DAV AUXILIARY STATE COMMANDER KAREN BOLTON**
- III. INVITED GUEST**
 - **SIoux FALLS VA HELATH CARE SYSTEM**
 - **SIoux FALLS VETERANS SERVICE CENTER MANAGER TRACEE METCALF**
- IV. DAV HOSPITAL TRANSPORTATION NETWORK - JOHN HUNTINGTON AND JACK POST**
- V. DAV LOCAL VETERAN ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (LVAP) – PEGGY KIRK**
- VI. VETERANS ADMINISTRATION VOLUNTEER SERVICES – JOHN HUNTINGTON, H.G. KROSSCHELL, GAYLORD HELMBRECHT, AND JACK POST**
- VII. DAV NATIONAL SERVICE OFFICER UPDATE – NSO OWEN RICHARDS and CODY ERICKSON**

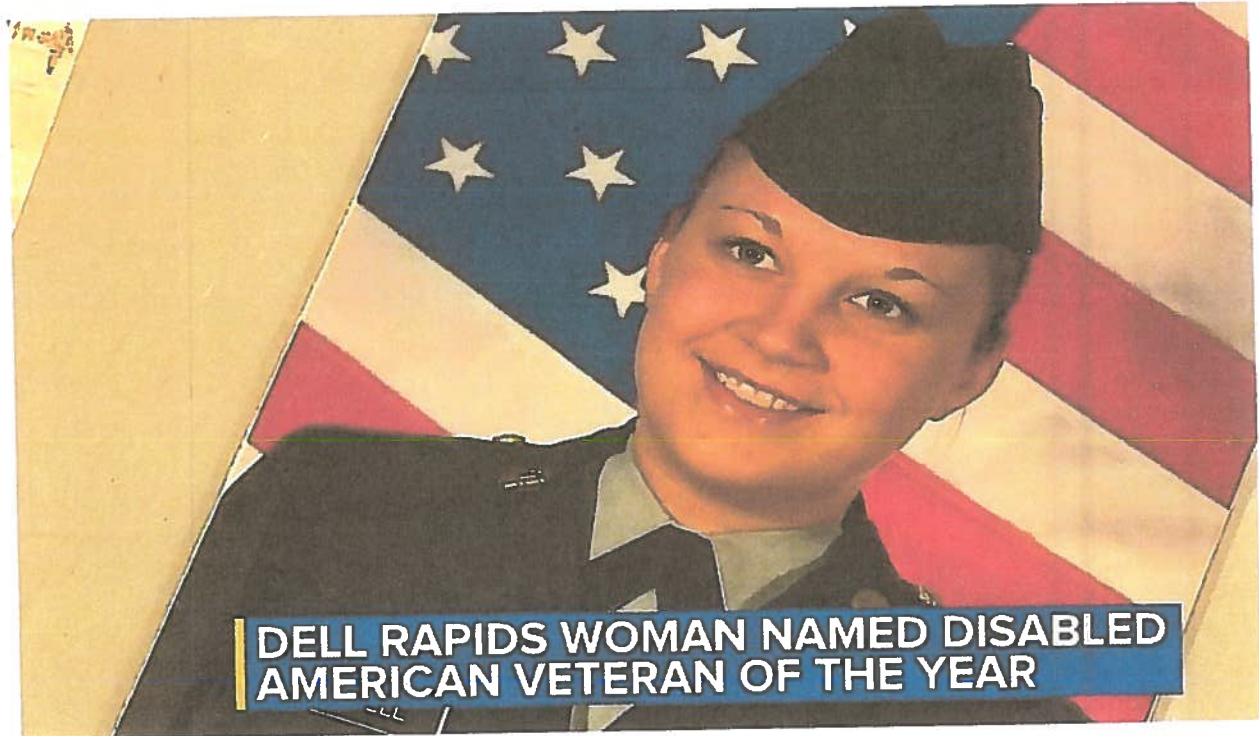


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DEPARTMENT FALL CONFERENCE
SATURDAY, OCTOBER 7th, 2023 - 10 AM

- I. Meeting Called to Order – Commander Christine Speirs**
- II. Opening Prayer - Chaplain Gaylord Helmbrecht**
- III. Pledge Of Allegiance – Sr. Vice Commander Mark Wolf**
- IV. Roll Call of DEC Members – Adjutant Marty Pennock**
- V. Approval of Executive Committee & Department Minutes**
- VI. Commander Report - Commander Christine Speirs**
- VII. Finance Report - Treasurer Gene Murphy**
- VIII. Reports**
 - A. DAV Department of South Dakota Service and Transportation –
Chairman Dan Francis**
 - B. Membership Committee Report – Sr. Vice Commander Mark Wolf**
 - C. Publicity Report – 1st Jr. Vice Commander Tim Walsh**
 - D. Judge Advocate/Inspector Report – JA/I Robert Hill**
 - E. Convention Committee – Ed Simpson**
 - F. Chaplain Report – Gaylord Helmbrecht**
 - G. Legislative Report – Adjutant Marty Pennock**
- IX. Unfinished Business**
 - A. Challenge Coins –1st Jr. Vice Commander Tim Walsh**
 - B. Chapter Officers, Financial Reports, & DEC Members**
 - C. Golden Corral’s Military Appreciation – H.G. Kroschell**
- X. New Business**
- XI. Good of the Order**
- XI. Prayer – Chaplain Gaylord Helmbrecht**
- XII. Adjournment**

Dell Rapids woman named Disabled American Veteran of the Year



RURAL DELL RAPIDS, S.D. (Dakota News Now) — Chickens and rooster crow and strut. Horses and a donkey graze. Children pet and chat with llamas, emus, and pigs. It's a scene straight out of a Norman Rockwell painting, and the real-life Old McDonald's farm.

This petting zoo on [Willow Meadows Farm](#) just outside Dell Rapids is the environment where Kim Hubers feels most at home.

That's because the stay-at-home mother of four *is* home. The zoo is hers, but for a few weeks in autumn, it's also her business on Saturdays and Sundays, when her family opens it to the public.

"It brings out joy in people," Hubers said. "You'll see adults that let go and act like kids. Most adults, we grow out of that and we forget to enjoy, and have joy and play. It brings kids out of their shell."

This includes autistic kids who hesitate to talk to anyone, until their eyes light up when they connect with an animal.

For Hubers personally, pets and farm animals were the therapy that helped her through a rough childhood of a parental alcoholism, violence, and her mother's struggles with cancer.

And over the last eight years, her four-legged farm friends have helped her cope with the post-traumatic stress disorder suffered from nightmares and injuries she endured during her year in the Iraq war two decades ago.

”They give me a reason to get up every morning, outside of my kids,” Hubers said. “They gave me a purpose. They gave me something to give back to. They gave me love back. It’s very therapeutic, whether you need therapy or not. They have done a lot to help me, to help me when I’m having a down day and to help me when I don’t know what direction I’m headed.”

Spend five minutes with Hubers, her four children, and her 100 creatures — outside in the petting zoo, plus plenty of dogs, cats, and reptiles inside — and you’d never guess she is battered head to toe from war injuries and suffered from a traumatic brain injury and PTSD that causes her to shake and cry at the sight of an airplane show or the sound of fireworks.

The invisibility of her plight is exactly why Hubers had to battle with Veterans Administration for seven years to receive disability benefits for herself, and why she has spent the next five years fighting for other vets’ rights, particularly young Gulf War veterans like her.

Hubers is the commander for the Sioux Falls area chapter of Disabled American Veterans. She has tirelessly fundraised, donated her own trucks and farm equipment for DAV floats and displays at local parades, and opened her petting zoo to other veterans for their own animal therapy.

These are some of the reasons the DAV honored Hubers with the National Commanders Award as the 2023 Disabled Veteran of the Year. She accepted the award on Aug. 5 at the DAV National Convention in Atlantic City, N.J.

“I don’t know if I’m processing it well,” Hubers said. “I don’t really like being in the limelight, but if I have something to stand behind, then I feel OK about it. There’s probably a million other veterans they could have chosen.

“They told me the reason they picked me is that they knew that several things in my story would connect to a lot of different people. And when I received my reward in New Jersey, there were dozens and dozens of veterans that came up and talked to me and shared their story.”

Hubers’ own military story started when the Armstrong, Iowa, native enrolled in both ROTC and the South Dakota Army National Guard while she was a student at South Dakota State University in Brookings.

“When people ask me ‘what was it like to be in the military,’ I talk about Iraq and say ‘everything that’s good in my life came out of my service, and everything bad or a challenge in my life came out of my service.’”

In 2003, Hubers was deployed to Iraq for Operation Iraqi Freedom, where she met her future husband Clinton. Together they saw the literal beginning of the war, when the border was being crossed.

“When we drove through that first time, the oil wells were on fire,” Hubers said. “There were babies on the side of the road, begging us for food and water. Heart-wrenching. Heart-wrenching. Scary. Awful.”

Hubers drove a heavy palletized load system truck for up to 18 hours a day — from before sunrise until after dusk. A particularly dark episode came when a boy riding a bicycle was run over by a truck in Hubers’ convoy while he was trying to weave through it. Hubers had been “holding off half of the town on a bridge by ourselves” with one other soldier, a Marine.

“When I got back to our trucks, they had taken the boy in an ambulance, but me and another Sergeant had to help clean the rest of the road off.”

That sort of incident continues to haunt Hubers in motherhood. She didn’t let her oldest children drive their bicycles into town until they were ages 17 and 13, “and I was terrified the whole time.”

The physical toll Hubers’ body took was also severely stifling. Back then, the driver’s seat of her off-road vehicle were not bolted to the floor. The spring underneath the seat would “bottom out.” As the truck jumped through sand dunes, Hubers’ helmet-protected head would hit the ceiling, slamming her back into her seat. That pounding lasted 18 hours a day for a year.

According to the DAV website, Hubers has arthritis and bursitis throughout her joints, eight screws in her shoulders, crippling back pain, decreased function in six cranial nerves, including the vagus nerve, which affects digestion, heart rate and the immune system.

Plus, “there was a lot of neurological stuff,” Hubers said. “A lot of migranes and weird neurological things started happening to me. There’s a lot of toxic exposure stuff that I deal with on a daily basis, and I’ll have it for the rest of my life.”

Her injuries not only led to the Army cutting off her ROTC scholarship, it forced her into retirement from a passion that she was hoping to turn into her life’s work. She badly wanted to serve in Afghanistan during Operation Enduring Freedom, but was not allowed.

And yet, because she never looked, acted, or behaved like a disabled veteran, she could not prove to the VA that her injuries came from her service, and she didn’t receive any VA benefits for seven years.

“I’ve been told, ‘you’re too young to have these problems,’” Hubers said. “I’ve been told ‘you’re too weak, you need to exercise more,’ and then it turned out I needed double knee surgery.”

A pediatricist even accused Hubers of lying about her medical issues just so she could receive pain killers, only to find out six weeks later that both her ankles and feet had collapsed, and that she had bone lesions and a foot fracture.

“I had taken all four of my little kids in there four times to see him before he would listen to me,” Hubers said. “(Gulf War veterans) have a lot of unexplained, odd things that we deal with that are invisible and hard to pinpoint. So, a lot of veterans from this new era go far and beyond and

really struggle to get the medical community to listen to us, to acknowledge us, and to actually keep trying to answer for us.”

Not receiving disability benefits means Hubers and her husband scuffled to stay financially afloat. She wanted to pass her love of animals on to her kids, but could not afford to take them to agritourism spots like the very one they now have on their property.

Hubers became desperate but still determined. Instead of giving up her fight, researched ways to find medical experts to examine her further. She begged her physician to call and set up an appointment for her at one of the three VA’s War Related Illness and Study Centers in the country. The facility eventually in New Jersey flew her in for examination.

“I had a team of six doctors that worked with only me for a week, and they were objectively able to identify 125 different medical issues,” Hubers said.

That’s the most they had ever seen. Hubers used that diagnosis to fill out Department of the Army work compensation forms called “line of duty determinations.”

A full decade after her service in Iraq was complete, she had all but one document approved and started receiving benefits. The Veterans Administration is still denying her one of her proposed compensations.

Her road to volunteering for veterans started with her road to recovery from all the physical and psychological bludgeoning from both her days in combat and being separated from her fellow soldiers, which she compares to “losing my family overnight.” Hubers didn’t know how to deal with that loss and didn’t even put her retirement certificate in a frame for seven years because she could not handle the pain of the reminder she could no longer serve.

But then, she met service officer who encouraged her to come to a local DAV meeting, “and I felt like I got my family back,” Hubers said. “I felt like I had support back. I felt like I had a place where I belonged — a place where I could serve others again, because most of us who join the military, we want to serve others.”

Hubers decided to take the experience of her hard-earned victory with the VA and fight for benefits for other veterans — particularly ones like her who have “invisible” maladies, and particularly Gulf War vets. She joined the DAV five years ago, and was named commander — the highest rank in the local chapter — last year.

“Kim Hubers — man, this woman’s amazing,” said Hubers’ friend Heather Kettelson, who has helped Hubers raise funds for the DAV. “She stands true to who she is and she just loves people. She has a heart that’s bigger than anyone that I’ve ever met.

”She is a champion. She is a warrior. She has gone through so many different things, and yet she shows up every single day for her family.”

Hubers found out about her National Commanders Award via a phone call from the National Commander himself while in Jamaica on a family vacation, during which she and Clinton renewed their wedding vows.

“Veteran suicide, veterans having mental health issues — that’s incredibly significant,” Hubers said. “Making that connection, feeling like you’re not alone, feeling like there’s somebody else that’s going through or has been through it — that saves lives.”

And so, Hubers’ has a message to any vet facing financial, medical, and mental health issues — especially those who are homeless.

“You’re not alone,” Hubers said. “None of us do anything alone. That’s not the military way. We’re here for each other. We support each other. If you’re struggling, somebody else is going through the same thing, or has. Reach out. Not only are you going to be helping yourself, but you are going to be helping somebody else to do what matters to them. If you go to another service member, they’re going to be nothing but fulfilled in helping you.

“We have a network of veterans here who knows somebody who knows somebody that can connect you to whatever it is that you need, and you don’t have to be alone. Veterans never have to be alone.”

Hubers will open her farm petting zoo to the public every Saturday and Sunday from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m., starting Sept. 30 and finishing on Oct. 22. More information can be found on the [Willow Meadows Farm website](#).

Admission is \$5 for both adults and kids, but those age 3 and under are allowed in for free.

“If you’re willing to bring a three-year-old to be outdoors, you deserve to get in free,” Hubers said. “When my kids were young, we had a hard time doing things. We couldn’t go to some of the agritourism places because it was expensive and we didn’t have the money to do it. So, one of things with our farm we’ve made a priority is for it to be affordable for all families, and everybody is welcome.”

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cfo

From: Jacqueline Worth <jaciworth1993@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, August 7, 2023 8:05 PM
To: Admin; Wanda Mix (wandarmix@gmail.com)
Cc: Karen Bolton
Subject: DAV Auxiliary State Fundraiser
Attachments: IMG_8746.jpg

Hello,
Could you please distribute to your Chapter and Unit Commanders & Adjutants?
Thank you!

Hello!
The State DAV Auxiliary is hosting a T-shirt fundraiser to help continue our programs for Veterans. The t-shirt was designed by a Junior Auxiliary Member.

The T-shirts are \$15 and if you would like to order one, please let Jacqueline Worth know prior to September 15. The T-shirts will be delivered to State Headquarters for pick-up during Fall Meeting. You must pay for the T-shirt at the time of order placement as Jacqueline will NOT be at the Fall Meeting this year. If you prefer to have your shirt shipped, you will need to pay for shipping.

The following T-Shirt sizes/colors are available:

Medium - Slate (3) and White (4)

Large - Slate (1), Black (4), Mid Blue (3), Turquoise (2), White (5)

XL - Red (1), Speckled Red (4), Army Green (4), Speckled Dark Gray (5), Dark Gray (4), White (3)

XXL - Dark Gray (5), Mid blue (5), Dark Blue (5), White (5)

3XL - Green (3), Black (5), Gray (1), blue (1), White (1), Turquoise (4), Maroon(1)

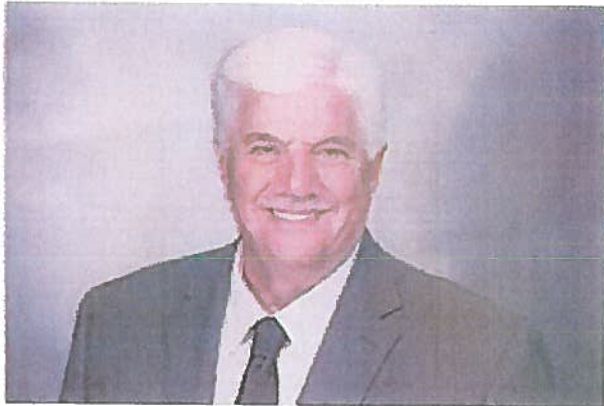
4XL - Green (1), Black (3), Gray (4), blue (1), White (3)

Orders may be placed by either emailing: jaciworth1993@gmail.com or by calling her at 605-484-5430.

Thank you!

PTSD DOESN'T MEAN YOU'RE WEAK, OR A MONSTER

POSTED ON AUG 7, 2023 BY JOE PARSETICH



Joe Parsetich is a service-connected disabled [Air Force](#) veteran of Vietnam who was elected national commander for Disabled American Veterans in August 2022.

It's been 55 years, but I can still hear the whizzing and feel the concussive force of incoming rocket and mortar fire at Tan Son Nhut Air Base in Vietnam. It's a chilling feeling, but not nearly as horrific as witnessing another human being's life violently come to an end.

I was only 17 when I volunteered to go to war, loaded with youthful naivete that meant I never expected to bear witness to that kind of cruelty and carnage.

Although I didn't know it then, the truth is that my time in Vietnam would live with me long after I returned home. For many years, I couldn't shake the echoes of the enemy rockets whistling past my post, and I carried with me the memories of those who lost their lives on the battlefield.

I shouldered the burden of surviving Vietnam for decades until 2009, when I woke up in an intensive care unit. That's because, after 59 years, I no longer saw my life as valuable. I saw myself as an unworthy burden and attempted to end it.

Had I not failed in doing so, my post-traumatic stress disorder ([PTSD](#)) would have served as a sniper's bullet shot decades ago from thousands of miles away and amounted to another kill for the enemy.

Since my diagnosis, I have a better understanding of what PTSD is and how to mitigate its effects on my daily life. I'm fortunate in that regard, but I know the reality is that what works for me may not work for others. PTSD isn't a one-size-fits-all condition, because it manifests differently in each patient. Some are still yearning for peace while finding ways to lessen the severity of its impact on their lives. Others are completely overwhelmed by its symptoms, which can pervade every aspect of daily life.

Tragically, many of our fellow Americans do not properly understand the condition.

While I cannot speak for every afflicted veteran, I am comfortable asserting that having PTSD does not mean someone is weak or broken. Having PTSD doesn't mean someone is on the verge of a violent outburst. It also doesn't mean they are a risk to their employer. Having PTSD means someone suffered trauma and is experiencing a natural reaction to it. There shouldn't be any stigma involved in that.

I'm fortunate to have woken up in that hospital, and I've made it my mission ever since to let others know they aren't alone. The military does a beautiful thing when it brings people from every walk of life together under the same flag, unit and mission. But the tragic reality is that far too many veterans, especially those suffering from PTSD, feel isolated and alone. That can be deadly.

So, rather than shying away from this unsettling topic that too many veterans like myself have come to know, I encourage my fellow Americans to go beyond the headlines to learn more about what PTSD is and isn't. Doing so will not only shed the stigma associated with this invisible scar of war, it can also save a life.

Veterans and service members experiencing a mental health emergency can contact the Veteran Crisis Line at 988, Press 1. They also can text 838255 or chat online at [VeteransCrisisLine.net](https://www.veteranscrisisline.net).

DAV BENEFITS ADVOCATES HELP PREVENT PACT ACT FRAUD

POSTED ON AUG 8, 2023



Many veterans have noticed the recent influx of advertisements and solicitations from companies aggressively seeking to legally represent veterans in filing a VA claim for presumptive conditions authorized by the Honoring our PACT Act. Veterans should be aware that these companies may be seeking a portion of their VA benefits.

To avoid being a target of fraud, veterans are urged to be cautious of law firms or companies that use frequent communications and try to establish a sense of urgency, as well as for-profit companies that use "VA" within their name or media advertisements and state they want to provide representation for a PACT Act claim. Entities that engage in this type of solicitation and marketing practices have a financial incentive that indicates they will charge a veteran a fee for representation.

DAV benefits advocates at all levels provide best-in-class service, free of charge, and are ready to help file a VA disability claim. Please contact your local DAV service office by visiting benefitsquestions.org.



National Headquarters
860 Dolwick Drive
Erlanger, KY 41018
tel 859-441-7300
toll free 877-426-2838
dav.org

National Service & Legislative Headquarters
807 Maine Avenue SW
Washington, DC 20024-2410
tel 202-554-3501
fax 202-554-3581

TO: National Executive Committee
Past National Commanders
Department and Chapter Commanders and Adjutants
Commanders and Adjutants Association
All Employees
DAV Auxiliary National Adjutant

FROM: Barry A. Jesinoski, National Adjutant

DATE: August 14, 2023

SUBJECT: Staff Appointment

With the concurrence of National Commander Nancy Espinosa, I am pleased to announce the appointments of Assistant National Voluntary Services Director Ron Minter as deputy national voluntary services director; National Service Officer Lamarr Couser as assistant national employment director; and Associate National Legislative Director Naomi Mathis as assistant national legislative director.

All three of these dedicated advocates have proven themselves to be strong champions on behalf of their fellow veterans. Each began their careers as national service officers and has shown tremendous leadership and potential.

Ron was appointed as assistant national voluntary services director in March 2018 at National Headquarters. He's played an integral role in supporting and leading a corps of dedicated DAV and Auxiliary volunteers, who donate millions of hours annually to support veterans. He also helps direct DAV's Transportation Network and the annual National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports and Golf Clinics, which are both co-presented by DAV and VA.

Ron enlisted in the U.S. Navy from his home state of Texas in 1990. He was medically discharged in 1995. In 1999, he left the Veterans Benefits Administration after being accepted into Class VIII of the DAV National Service Officer Training Academy in Denver, Colorado.

He apprenticed at the service office in Waco, Texas, where he continued to serve until 2007 when he was transferred to Baltimore, Maryland. There he was promoted to supervisor in 2009.

He is a member of life member of DAV Chapter 3 in Waco, Texas.

Naomi, a combat-disabled Air Force veteran of the Iraq War, was appointed associate national legislative director in July 2022. She will continue to advance policies to improve the lives of disabled veterans, their families and survivors. Throughout her DAV service, Naomi has leveraged her personal story to spread the word about DAV's mission, including appearing in DAV's public service campaigns.

Naomi enlisted in the Air Force in 2000, serving with the 728th Air Control Squadron. In 2003, she deployed to Iraq. She was medically retired in 2007.

Shortly after her medical retirement in 2007, she joined the DAV team as a transition service officer at Keesler Air Force Base in Biloxi, Mississippi. She apprenticed as a national service officer in Bay Pines, Florida in 2018.

A native of Queens, New York, Naomi is a life member of DAV Chapter 10 in Arlington-Fairfax, Virginia.

Lamarr joined the DAV team in 2007 as an apprentice in Baltimore, Maryland. A service-disabled Navy and Army National Guard veteran, he served in Somalia, Iraq and Kuwait before retiring from the Virginia Army National Guard in 2014.

He became senior national service officer in the Washington, D.C. office in 2011, and for the past nine years has supervised the DAV office in Baltimore.

As assistant national employment director at National Headquarters, he will support and help lead DAV's efforts to connect veterans and spouses with employment through job fairs, outreach to employers and other programs and initiatives that enhance and empower veteran and military families.

An active DAV member, he served as the DAV Department of Maryland commander in 2013 and Judge Advocate in 2009. He is a life member of Chapter 33 in Jessup, Maryland.

We are thrilled to have these three on our team. I have complete faith and confidence that they'll use their years of understanding the veteran experience to ensure promises are kept and veterans are enabled to achieve their highest potential after being forever changed in service. We look forward to their contributions.

With sincere appreciation,



Barry A. Jesinoski
National Adjutant

BAJ:dsb



National Headquarters
P.O. Box 145550
Cincinnati, OH 45250-9960
tel 859-441-7300, option 7980
toll free 888-236-8313, option 7980
dav.org

TO: All Department and Chapter Commanders and Adjutants
FROM: Douglas K. Wells, Jr., National Membership Director
DATE: August 15, 2023
SUBJECT: File all Officer Election Reports through MyDAV.org

I'm pleased to share the news that DAV has streamlined the process of filing Officer Election Reports for our members and staff. Going forward, all reports will be filed through MyDAV.org. This move will simplify the records maintenance process while improving security and increasing transparency.

For those who are not already signed up at MyDAV.org, I encourage you to register now so you can gain access to your DAV record as well as the ability to request new membership cards, manage and make payments, and much more.

Communicating changes in chapter leadership is now as easy as submitting a revised report. When an Officer Election Report is submitted, email notifications will automatically be sent to department and chapter line officers, as well as the adjutant, treasurer and officer authorized to receive mail. However, once a report is submitted, you will not be able to submit a revised Officer Election Report until the officers are validated into the membership system.

If you need help filing a report on MyDAV.org, you can ask department leaders to assist you with the process. Any other questions about submitting Officer Election Reports can be sent to OfficerReportInfo@DAV.ORG.



Douglas K. Wells, Jr.
National Membership Director

DKW:cmm

cc: National Executive Committee
DAV National Line Officers
DAV National Service Supervisors



Officer Election Report
User Guide for
DAV and Auxiliary Users

Welcome to the Officer Election Report

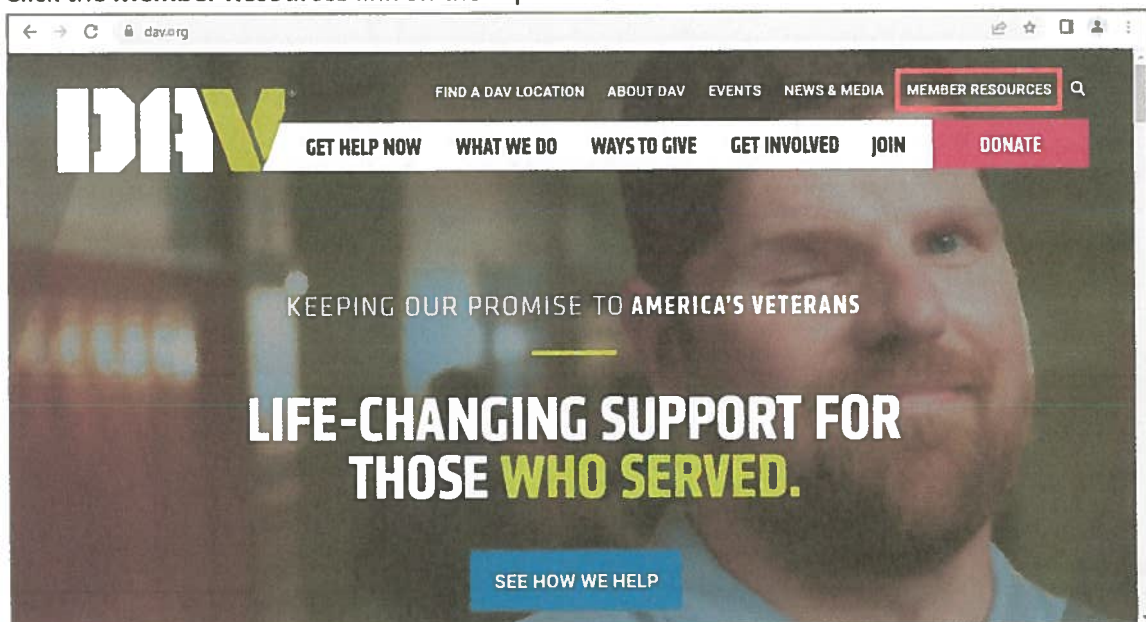
The Officer Election Report (OER) is another one of the online tools accessible through your Membership CRM Page on MyDAV.org.

Register or Sign in to MyDAV.org

If you haven't already registered for login credentials for MyDAV.org, or if you need help logging in, utilize the tools available on the Member Resources site on DAV.org.

Locate resources to help access MyDAV.org

1. Navigate to DAV.org.
2. Click the **Member Resources** link on the top menu.



3. Scroll down to the **Register or Sign-in to MyDAV.org** section.
4. Click the appropriate button.

Button	Action
Register	If you haven't previously signed up, complete the New User Registration form and submit it for processing. You will receive a confirmation email when your login credentials are ready to use.
Sign-In	Use your login credentials to access your MyDAV.org resources.
MyDAV.org Manual	This user guide provides an overview of the self-service repository, as well as steps to assist in registering or accessing the site. It also includes descriptions of the available resources.



KEEPING OUR PROMISE TO
AMERICA'S VETERANS

Welcome to the Officer Election Report.....	1
Register or Sign in to MyDAV.org	1
Locate resources to help access MyDAV.org	1
Work with an Officer Election Report.....	3
Access an OER	3
Complete a new OER	7
Email Notifications	13
Set your primary email address	13



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Register or Sign-in to MyDAV.org

DAV is excited to offer access to [MyDAV.org](#)! Once you're registered and validated you'll have access to your DAV record, be able to request new membership cards, manage and make payments toward your membership dues, and much more! DAV officers will also have access to a wide-variety of reports and other functions.

[Registration instructions](#)

REGISTER

SIGN-IN

MYDAV.ORG MANUAL

COMMUNICATE WITH US BY TEXT!

You can now get membership information and answers to your questions sent straight to your phone.

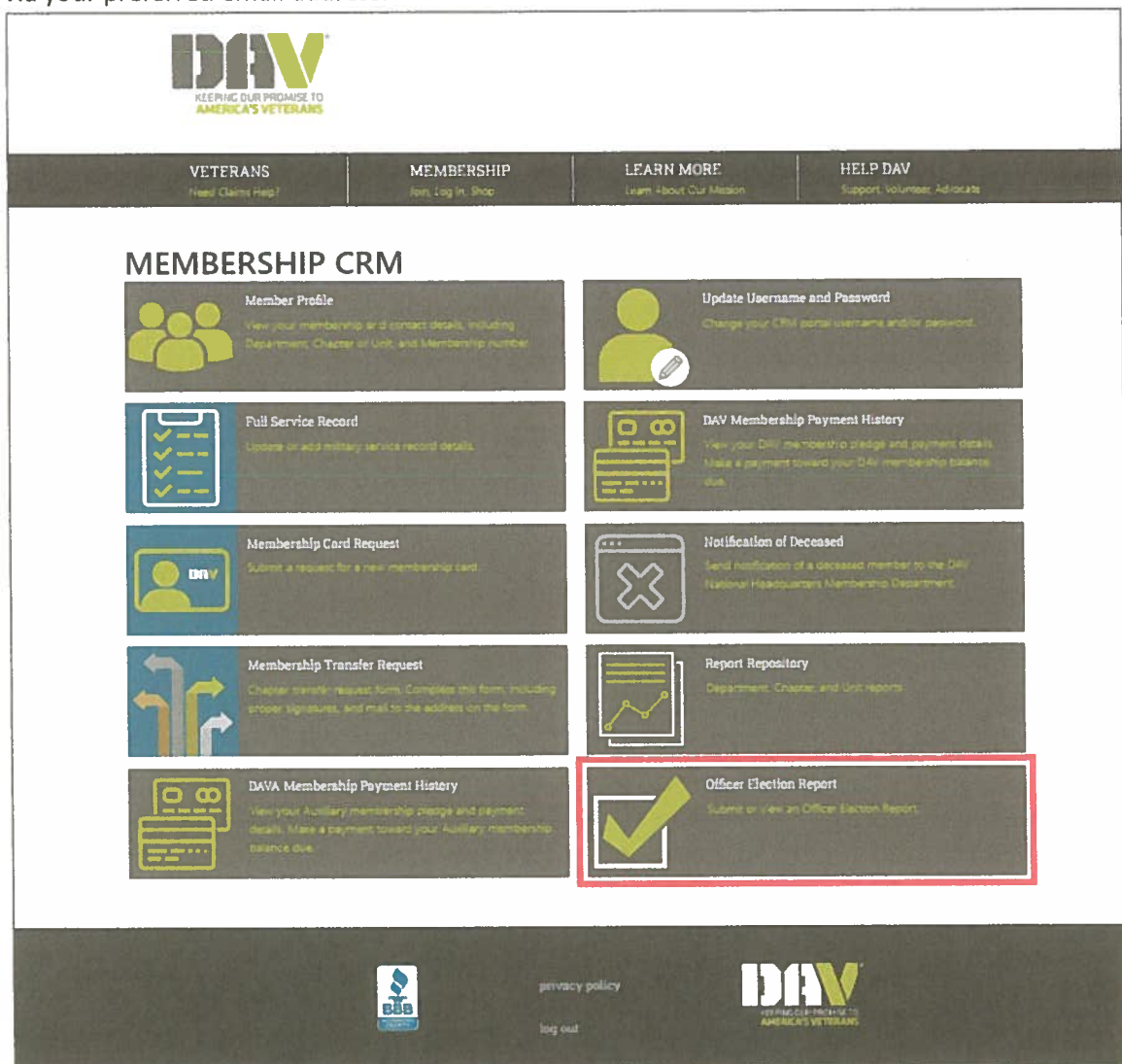
Work with an Officer Election Report

If you have access to view and/or edit an Officer Election Report (OER), the button will appear at the bottom right of the Membership CRM Page.

The main OER screen gives you visibility into each report available for your department/chapter/unit.

Access an OER

1. Log in to your Membership CRM Page on MyDAV.org.
Note: See [Register or Sign in to MyDAV.org](#) in this guide for assistance.
2. Click **Officer Election Report**.
Note: See [Email Notifications](#) in this guide to ensure you receive messages related to the OER via your preferred email address.



The screenshot shows the MyDAV.org Membership CRM interface. At the top is the IDAV logo and navigation tabs for VETERANS, MEMBERSHIP, LEARN MORE, and HELP DAV. The main content area is titled 'MEMBERSHIP CRM' and contains several interactive buttons. The 'Officer Election Report' button, located at the bottom right of the grid, is highlighted with a red border. It features a green checkmark icon and the text 'Officer Election Report' and 'Submit or view an Officer Election Report'.



3. The features on this screen:

Feature	Description
A	A drop-down list of all OERs available in the system. Choose a membership year from the list to reduce the rows in the table to that single record. Filter the table by Status or Last Modified By , as necessary.
B	The Start button is available for the upcoming membership year as long as all previous OERs are in an Approved status.
C	The Revise button is available for the most current approved OER only. Use this to update current officers, meeting information, or department/chapter/unit contact information.
D	The View button will open a read-only printable report for the Membership Year chosen.
E	The Status column indicates the status for each OER. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Not Started – A new report.• Submitted – A report that has been sent for approval. While in this status, no additional changes can be made.• Rejected – A report that contains errors that must be resolved.• Approved – A newly submitted or revised OER is accepted and applicable updates have been made in the CRM. This information will appear in all membership reports.
F	Choose to show 5, 10, or all available OERs in the table by changing the number of entries.
G	Use the Search field to find OERs for a particular year. For example, if you type "2007" in the field, 2 records – 2006/2007 and 2007/2008 display.



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VETERANS

Need Claims Help?

MEMBERSHIP

Join, Log In, Shop

LEARN MORE

Learn About Our Mission

HELP DAV

Support, Volunteer, A

[BACK TO MEMBERSHIP CRM](#)

Frederick R. Bristol Mem. #19

Showing 1 to 5 of 23 entries

Membership Year	Status	Last Modified By	
2023 / 2024	Not Started		Start B
2022 / 2023 - Revision	Approved	April	Revise View C
2022 / 2023	Approved		View D
2021 / 2022	Approved		View
2020 / 2021	Approved E		View

F Show entries

Previous

1

2

3

4

5

Next

Search: G



KEEPING OUR PROMISE TO AMERICA'S VETERANS

Note: Below is an example of a printable OER, rendered by clicking the View button.

[BACK TO OER LANDING PAGE](#)

OFFICER ELECTION REPORT

PRINT/DOWNLOAD

Organization:	Membership Year:	Report Status:
AUX	2021 / 2022	Approved
Department:	Chapter/Unit:	
16 - AUX Kentucky	19 - Frederick R. Bristol Mem. #19	
Election Date:	Installation Date:	
3/19/2021	3/19/2021	
Officer Authorized To Receive Mail:	Judith	16019
Commander:	April M.	16019
Senior Vice Commander:	Carla L.	16019
1st Junior Vice Commander:	Micah C.	16019
Adjutant:	Betty S.	16019
Treasurer:	Sandy	16019
State Inspector General:		
Legislative Chairman:		
Membership Chairman:		
Chaplain:		
Sergeant-at-Arms:		
Judge Advocate:		
Elected State Executive Committee Member:		
Alternate State Executive Committee Member:	Patricia S.	16019



KEEPING OUR PROMISE TO AMERICA'S VETERANS

Complete a new OER

1. Click **Start** for the appropriate OER.
Note: See [Access an OER](#) in this guide for assistance.
2. Complete the appropriate fields.
Note: All mandatory fields are identified with ***Required**.
Note: Gray fields are read-only. If changes are needed, please contact the Membership Department.

[BACK TO OER LANDING PAGE](#)

OFFICER ELECTION FORM

Organizational Details

Organization: AUX	Membership Year: 2023 / 2024
Department: 16 - AUX Kentucky	Chapter/Unit: 19 - Frederick R. Bristol Mem. #19
Employer ID (EIN): 23	Date of Annual Election: *Required mm/dd/yyyy
State: KY	Date of Installation: *Required mm/dd/yyyy
City: Erlanger	Election Month: March
Web Site Address: 	

Meeting Details

Address of Regular Meetings: 860 Dolwick Dr	Meeting Day of Week: Tuesday
City: Erlanger	Meeting Week(s): <input type="checkbox"/> First <input type="checkbox"/> Second <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Third <input type="checkbox"/> Fourth <input type="checkbox"/> Last
State: 	Meeting Month(s):

3. Make updates to the **Meeting Details, Officers, and other information, as necessary.**
Note: All contact details are pre-filled with information from the previous OER.
 - a. Click the **X** to remove an Officer, as necessary.



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Officers Commander

Member:
April M.

Name: April M.
Mailing Address: 13
City: N
State:
Zip: 4

Membership #: 16
Telephone: (513)
Email:

Senior Vice Commander

Member:
Catherine L.

Name: Catherine L.
Mailing Address: 6
City: C
State:
Zip: 4

Membership #: 16
Telephone: (513)
Email:

1st Junior Vice Commander

Member:
Vacant Officer

Name: Vacant: Officer

- b. To add or replace an Officer, click the **magnifying glass** if you do not know the membership number.
- c. Enter the criteria to locate the individual and scroll down to click **Search**.
Note: The search results only display the members of the department/chapter/unit for which you are submitting the report. If the person does not appear, they are not eligible for the position.



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Contact Details

Officer to Receive Mail:

Vacant Officer



Membership #:

Update with primary contact information from officer's constituent record

Address for Mail:

Telephone

207 Bluegrass Ave

(606) -922

City:

Newport

State:

KV

Zip:

41071-2801

Officers Commander

Member:

April M.

Name: April M.

Mailing Address: 1342

City:

State:

Zip: 41

Member Search

Searching for Officer to Receive Mail

Lookup ID / Member ID

Membership #

Last Name

First Name

Middle Name

Suffix

Cancel



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AMERICA'S VETERANS

Member Search

City

State

ZIP/Postal code

Phone

Include Deceased
 Check Nickname
 Check Aliases

SEARCH

Cancel

- d. Locate the appropriate person and click **Select** to add the information to the OER.

Member Search

Search Results:

Max of 100 members returned.

Constituent	April M.	Status:
Lookup:		Active
158	Suffix:	Department:
Membership	Date of Birth:	16 - AUX
Number:	19	Kentucky
1601	Full Address:	Chapter/Unit
Membership		#:
Account		19 - Frederick
Type:		R. Bristol
Full Life		Mem. #19
Name:	OH, 45157-	SELECT

Cancel

4. Scroll down and double-check all information to be submitted for review.



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AMERICA'S VETERANS

Review

Organizational Details Meeting Details

Department: 16 - AUX Kentucky

Chapter/Unit: 19 - Frederick R. Bristol Mem. #19

Employer ID # (EIN): 23

Date of Annual Election: 03/19/2019

Date of Installation: 03/19/2019

Revision Change Date: 06/12/2023

Meeting Day of Week: Tuesday

Meeting Months: January, March, May, July, September, November

Meeting Weeks: Third

Meeting Time: 5:30:00 PM

Address of Regular Meetings: 860 Dolwick Dr

City: Erlanger

State: KY

Zip: 41016-2774

Web Site Address:

Officer Assignments

Commander: April M.

Senior Vice Commander: Catherine L.

1st Junior Vice Commander: Vacant Officer

Adjutant: Betty S.

Treasurer: Betty S.

Legislative Chairman:

Membership Chairman:

Judge Advocate:

Chaplain:

Sergeant-at-Arms:

Elected Executive Committee Member: April M.

Alternate Executive Committee Member: Patricia S.

Officer Authorized to Receive Mail: Betty S.

Address for Mail: 860 Dolwick Drive

City: Erlanger

State: KY

Zip: 41071-2801

Telephone: (606) -922

Fax:

5. Once the information is verified, enter your **Membership Number** to sign the report.
Note: If you have multiple memberships, be sure to use the membership number associated with the department/chapter/unit OER you are signing.
6. Click **Submit**.
Note: Once the **Submit** button is clicked, you will not have access to make additional changes unless the report is rejected (and sent back to update errors) or approved.
Note: If you are not ready to submit the report for approval, click **Save** to keep your changes for submission at a later time. Saved reports will be automatically deleted after 15 days.



KEEPING OUR PROMISE TO
AMERICA'S VETERANS

Sign And Submit

You acknowledge that by clicking on the "Save", the "Submit" or similar button on this website, you are indicating your intent to sign the relevant document or record and that this will constitute your signature. Electronic signatures, whether digital or encrypted, are intended to authenticate this writing and have the same force and effect as manual signatures.

Signed By Title Of Officer:

**Commander, Officer Authorized April M.
to Receive Mail, Elected
Executive Committee Member**

Signed By Name Of Officer:

Signed By Officer Membership ID #:

1601

SAVE

SUBMIT

7. Review the confirmation message, indicating you have successfully submitted the OER to the Membership Department for review and approval.
8. Click **Done**.

[BACK TO OER LANDING PAGE](#)

Your Officer Election Report has been submitted. Thank you!

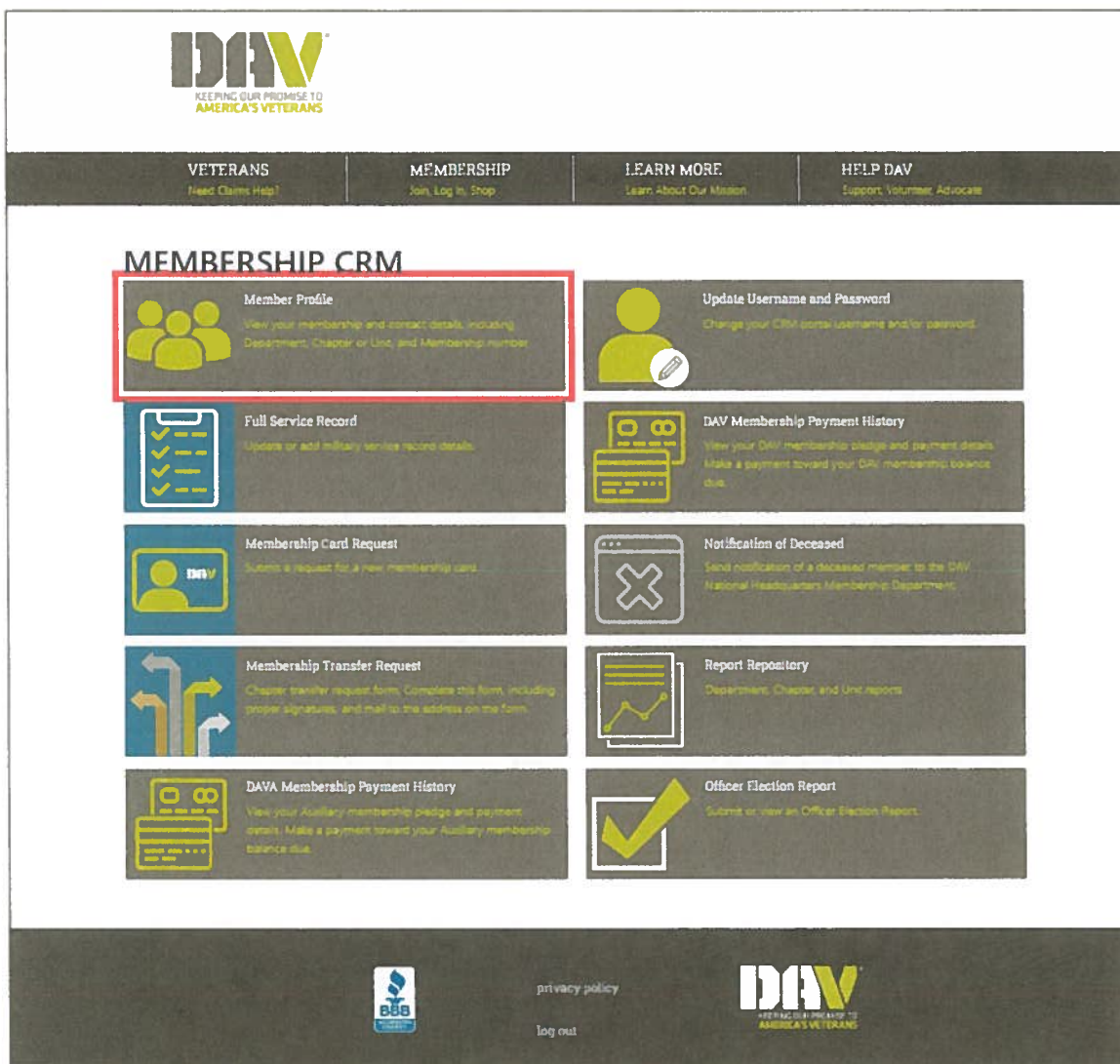
DONE

Email Notifications

All email communication that occurs as a result of actions taken on the OER will go to the email that is set as Primary in your MyDAV.org profile. This email may be different than the one you use to log in to MyDAV.org.

Set your primary email address

1. Log in to your Membership CRM Page on [MyDAV.org](https://mydav.org).
Note: See [Register or Sign in to MyDAV.org](#) in this guide for assistance.
2. Click **Member Profile**.



The screenshot shows the MyDAV.org Membership CRM interface. At the top is the IDAV logo and a navigation bar with four categories: VETERANS (Need Claims Help?), MEMBERSHIP (Join, Log in, Shop), LEARN MORE (Learn About Our Mission), and HELP DAV (Support, Volunteer, Advocate). Below this is the 'MEMBERSHIP CRM' section, which contains a grid of ten options. The 'Member Profile' option, which includes an icon of three people and the text 'View your membership and contact details, including Department, Chapter or Unit, and Membership number', is highlighted with a red rectangular border. Other options include 'Update Username and Password', 'Full Service Record', 'Membership Card Request', 'Membership Transfer Request', 'DAVA Membership Payment History', 'DAV Membership Payment History', 'Notification of Deceased', 'Report Repository', and 'Officer Election Report'. At the bottom of the page, there are logos for BBB and a privacy policy link, along with a 'log out' button and the IDAV logo.

3. Within your **Member Profile**, scroll down to the **Email** section.



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DAV
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VETERANS
Need Claims Help?

MEMBERSHIP
Join, Log In, Shop

LEARN MORE
Learn About Our Mission

HELP DAV
Support, Volunteer, Advocate

MEMBER PROFILE

[Back to Membership CRM](#)

Your memberships

Department: 16 - AUX Kentucky	Chapter/Unit: Frederick R. Bristol Mem #19
Status: Active	Account Type: Full Life

4. Select the appropriate email as **Primary**.

5. Click **Submit**.

Email

Work: TJones@dav.org

Primary

[Edit](#) [Delete](#)

Home: familyemail01@gmail.com

Primary

[Edit](#)

[Add New](#)

SUBMIT



National Service Foundation

P.O. Box 145525, Cincinnati, OH 45250-5525
(877) 426-2838, Option 6 • nsf@dav.org • nsf.dav.org

RECEIVED AUG 23 2023

August 17, 2023

DEPARTMENT OF SOUTH DAKOTA
1519 W 51st St
Sioux Falls, SD 57105-6648

Dear DEPARTMENT OF SOUTH DAKOTA:

I was truly moved by your generosity when I accepted your gift of \$500.00 on behalf of the DAV National Service Foundation at the 2023 DAV National Convention in Atlantic City, New Jersey. You are changing the lives of veterans, and I cannot thank you enough for your care and compassion!

Thanks to your generosity, ill and injured veterans will have transportation to medical facilities to access healthcare. Veterans wounded in our country's defense will be able to access the benefits they earned through their sacrifices. Family caregivers will receive urgently needed support. Often overlooked populations, like female and homeless veterans, will get the attention and aid they deserve. And more!

Your gifts to the Foundation ensure DAV will always be there for every veteran who turns to us in need. And your impact truly adds up.

That's why gifts totaling \$100 or more during a given year are recognized on the Foundation's *Honor Roll of Benefactors* virtual wall located at <http://nsf.dav.org> under *Donor Recognition*. Your gift today, and all future gifts you make to the Foundation, will be added to your total lifetime contributions.

Thank you for addressing the real needs of veterans through your support of the Foundation.

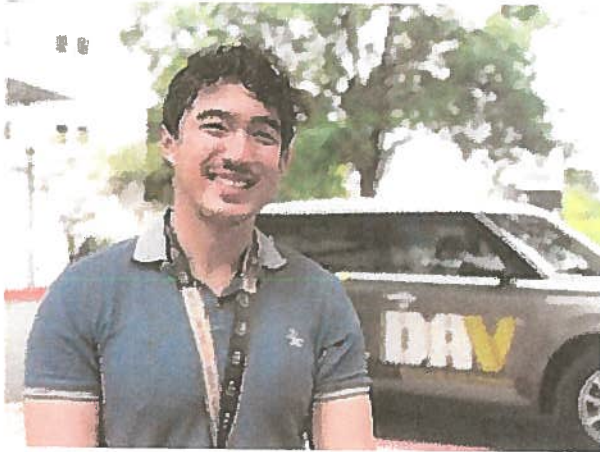
Caring for veterans, together!

Andrew Marshall
President

The full amount of your gift is tax-deductible to the extent of the law since we provided no goods or services to you in relation to your contribution.

VOLUNTEERING: THE CORNERSTONE OF DAV CHAPTERS

POSTED ON AUG 22, 2023 BY JOHN KLEINDIENST



There's no better way for DAV members to show they care about their fellow veterans than by prioritizing volunteerism.

When we give our most precious resource—our time—to volunteer, we live out our promise to care for our brothers- and sisters-in-arms. **We show them that they matter.**

Volunteering also allows us to grow our recognition and reputation within our communities. This means ill and injured veterans who've never heard of a DAV benefits advocate can learn about the Department of Veterans Affairs benefits they've earned from their service. More people will rally around DAV to champion the causes we fight for in Congress. Our volunteers will inspire others to ask what they can do to serve veterans, too.

Bottom line: A vibrant, healthy, growing chapter is one that prioritizes volunteerism.

Organized, effective community-based volunteering starts with a chapter's Local Veterans Assistance Program (LVAP) coordinator. This member's role is to recruit volunteers, inform people about service opportunities, and track and report volunteer hours.

(Read more about the role and responsibilities: [PDF LVAP User Manual](#))

Accurately reporting hours to DAV Voluntary Services is a big part of an LVAP coordinator's job. Those numbers feed into the national statistics, which we're mandated to report to Congress as a part of our Congressional charter.

Many chapter activities count towards LVAP hours including:

- Department and Chapter Service Officer hours.
- DAV outreach events including seminars, workshops, training and disaster relief.
- Fundraising activities like Forget-me-Not drives, Golden Corral events, and local DAV 5K races.
- Grassroots legislative activities to promote DAV legislative efforts.
- Planning and holding local Homeless Veteran Stand Down events.
- Planning and participating in special events including Memorial Day and Veterans Day ceremonies, state fairs and parades.
- Any hours dedicated to directly assisting veterans and their families. Examples include yard work, home repairs, grocery shopping, caregiver respite, and rides to medical appointments using a personal vehicle.

VolunteerforVeterans.org is a great way to promote and connect interested volunteers with the needs of veterans in your community. The site has links to online forms for both people wanting to help and people needing help. When we receive one of these forms, someone from the Voluntary Services department will reach out to make arrangements.

The site also has links to information for people interested in driving vehicles for DAV's Transportation Network and DAV scholarships for student volunteers.

Volunteering for veterans must be a cornerstone activity of every DAV chapter. When it is, our members bolster camaraderie with the veteran community, show fellow veterans they matter, and grow support for the causes we fight for.

That's the promise we made. That's the promise we must keep.

From: [Lisa Booke](#)
 To: [AG](#)
 Cc: [Christine Somers \(christine2@msa.com\); Martin Pennek \(martin_l.pennek@gmail.com\)](#)
 Subject: DAV Department of South Dakota Resolution Disposition
 Date: Wednesday, August 23, 2023 10:21:27 AM
 Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image003.png](#)

Dear Department of South Dakota,

Thank you for submitting resolutions for consideration at DAV's National Convention. As you may be aware, resolutions adopted each year at the national convention make up our National Legislative Program and are only effective until the next national convention. These resolutions reflect the collective will of DAV members and serve as a guide for policy decisions and advocacy efforts on behalf of our nation's ill and injured veterans.

For those resolutions received from your department, the attached describes its final disposition, of which there are three possibilities:

- Adopted,
- Rejected as Duplicate, and
- Rejected.

DAV DEPARTMENT	NEW RESOLUTION NO.	RESOLUTION TITLE	COMMITTEE RESOLUTION DISPOSITION
South Dakota	459	Support legislation to reduce the 10-year rule for dependency and indemnity compensation	Rejected as Duplicate
South Dakota	460	Oppose any recommendation by any commission or other source to reduce or eliminate benefits for disabled veterans	Rejected as Duplicate
South Dakota	461	Oppose reduction, taxation, or elimination of veterans benefits	Rejected as Duplicate
South Dakota	462	Oppose the long term rounding down of COLAs in veterans' benefits	Rejected as Duplicate
South Dakota	463	Support legislation that would exempt the benefits paid to wartime service-connected disabled veterans from the "pay-go/cut-go" provisions of the Budget Enforcement Act	Rejected as Duplicate
South Dakota	464	Amend the law to provide ten-year protection for service-connected disability ratings	Rejected as Duplicate
South Dakota	465	Oppose any proposal that would reduce payments of department of veterans affairs disability compensation by payments of social security disability insurance or any other federal benefit paid to a veteran	Rejected as Duplicate
South Dakota	466	Support interest payments for Department of Veterans Affairs retroactive awards of one year or more	Rejected as Duplicate
South Dakota	467	Expand presumptions for service connection for former POWs	Rejected as Duplicate
South Dakota	468	Support legislation to allow all veterans to recover amounts withheld as tax on disability severance pay	Rejected as Duplicate
South Dakota	469	Support legislation to provide for realistic cost-of-living allowances	Rejected as Duplicate
South Dakota	470	Support legislation to exclude veterans' disability compensation from countable income for purposes for eligibility for benefits and services from other government programs	Rejected as Duplicate
South Dakota	471	Support oversight of VA's practices in evaluating disability claims for residuals of military sexual trauma	Rejected as Duplicate
South Dakota	472	Oppose subjecting disability compensation and DIC to means testing	Rejected as Duplicate
South Dakota	473	Remove the delimiting date for Persian Gulf War illnesses	Adopted
South Dakota	474	Extend eligibility for mortgage protection life insurance for 100% service-connected veterans	Rejected as Duplicate
South Dakota	475	Support legislation to cap attorneys' fees for benefits counseling and claims services before the VA	Rejected as Duplicate
South Dakota	476	Support a change in regulatory requirements rating under section 4.30 under title 38, CFR, to provide for temporary total rating for incapacitation of more than 21 days	Rejected as Duplicate
South Dakota	477	Support legislation to provide a temporary total disability compensation rating for an amputee veteran while a new prosthetic device is developed and delivered	Rejected as Duplicate
South Dakota	478	Support legislation authorizing the presumption of service connection for all radiogenic diseases and eliminate dose exposure estimate requirements	Rejected as Duplicate
South Dakota	479	Support legislation to award special monthly compensation at R(1) to veterans with anatomical loss or loss of use of three extremities	Rejected as Duplicate
South Dakota	480	Support an increase in the Department of Veterans Affairs burial allowance for service-connected veterans and provide automatic annual adjustments	Rejected as Duplicate
South Dakota	481	Support legislation to provide a realistic increase in VA compensation rates to address loss of quality of life	Rejected as Duplicate
South Dakota	482	Oppose regional dispersion of the Board of Veterans' Appeals	Adopted
South Dakota	483	Support legislation to require the US Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims to decide each of appellant's assignments of error	Adopted
South Dakota	484	Increase benefit rate for the home improvement and structural alterations grant	Rejected as Duplicate
South Dakota	485	Support legislation to grant the president, vice president and members of congress the privilege to use the Veterans Health Care System and to receive their care exclusively from the VA.	Rejected as Duplicate
South Dakota	486	Provide comprehensive dental care to all service-connected veterans	Rejected as Duplicate
South Dakota	487	Ensure sufficient resources for VA research to improve care and benefits for veterans exposed to military toxic and environmental hazards	Rejected as Duplicate
South Dakota	488	Support effective care for veterans with dementia within the Department of Veterans Affairs	Rejected as Duplicate
South Dakota	489	Support legislation to provide prompt medical screening and treatment for all veterans exposed to depleted uranium	Rejected as Duplicate
South Dakota	490	Expand eligibility for VA to provide hospital, medical services and nursing home care to veterans of World War II and the Korean conflict	Rejected as Duplicate
South Dakota	491	Improve the care and benefits provided to veterans with service-connected disabilities affecting the ability to procreate through assisted reproductive technology	Adopted
South Dakota	492	Support State Veterans Home program	Rejected as Duplicate
		Support a change in the method of collecting LVAP hours from the current monthly submission by each chapter hours in excel to using a kiosk or computer for data entry in	

South Dakota	493	combination with any smart device that can log into a website	Rejected
South Dakota	494	Support congressional funding for the creation of a VA national rehabilitative special events office	Rejected
South Dakota	495	Seek the immediate release of any Americans who may still be held captive following any war and the return and identification of the remains of any Americans who died during these wars	Rejected as Duplicate
South Dakota	496	Encourage all disabled veterans to become registered voters and vote	Rejected as Duplicate
South Dakota	497	Condemn public desecration of the flag of the United States	Rejected as Duplicate
South Dakota	498	Support the construction of a courthouse for the United States Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims	Rejected as Duplicate
South Dakota	499	Oppose any authorization of use of members of the Armed Forces for human experimentation without their knowledge and informed consent	Rejected as Duplicate
South Dakota	500	Support the declaration of March 6 as Persian Gulf War Veteran Day	Rejected
South Dakota	501	Support VA medallion for all veterans interred in private cemeteries	Rejected
South Dakota	502	Support effort by DAV national to create and implement on-line training and certification courses for Level I and Level II DSOs and CSOs	Rejected
South Dakota	503	Support DAV national creation and implementation of an online training course covering DAV history and veteran programs	Rejected
South Dakota	504	Support Clear2Connect coalition to assist in alerting veterans of the availability of this captioning system and to work with the coalition to combat any efforts by the FCC to reduce or otherwise impede the availability and use of this service	Rejected
South Dakota	505	Support resolution to endorse a federal charter for the Native American Indian Veterans, Inc. (NAIV)	Rejected
South Dakota	506	Support licensure and certification of active duty service personnel	Rejected as Duplicate
South Dakota	507	Provide educational benefits for dependents of service-connected veterans rated 80 percent or more disabled	Rejected as Duplicate
South Dakota	508	Support veterans' preference in public employment	Rejected as Duplicate
South Dakota	509	Support veterans' preference in public employment	Rejected as Duplicate

Generally, because only one resolution is adopted on a specific issue, duplicate or similar resolutions received from other departments would necessarily be rejected as a duplicate. Nonetheless, the fact that we often receive multiple resolutions on a particular subject reflects its importance among DAV members. If you have a question about the disposition of any resolution, please call the legislative department at (202) 314-5241.

If you submitted resolutions in support of an individual for national office, that resolution was considered by the Committee on the Nomination of National Officers, but not adopted or rejected as other resolutions are. A resolution can be rejected for a number of reasons, but the most common are that the issue or action is outside the scope of DAV's Statement of Policy or the requested action is a local matter or related to a state-specific issue such as state property tax exemption for service-connected disabled veterans. Resolutions pertaining to the administration of the DAV are referred to the attention of the appropriate department head of the national organization.

We greatly appreciate your department's participation in the resolution process as it is integral to DAV's legislative program and our ability to take action or a formal position on specific issues on behalf of DAV members.

Sincerely,

Joy J. Ilem
National Legislative Director



A JOINT MESSAGE FROM DAV and the DAV Auxiliary

August 1, 2023

H.R. 4249/S. 2294, the Veterans Exposed to Toxic (VET) PFAS Act

DAV supports the Veterans Exposed to Toxic (VET) PFAS Act. These companion bills, H.R. 4249/ S. 2294, would provide presumptive service connection for veterans exposed to perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) at military installations.

PFAS are man-made chemicals, that do not break down in the environment and are present in fire-fighting foams (or aqueous film forming foam; AFFF) used by both civilian and military firefighters.

In the 1970s, the Department of Defense (DoD) began using AFFF to fight fuel fires. The release of these chemicals into the environment during training and emergency responses is a major source of PFAS contamination of ground water on military bases. Per DoD, it is estimated that over 700 U.S. military installations have PFAS contaminated water supplies.

Even given the overwhelming amount of water contamination, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) does not currently recognize any diseases related to PFAS exposure. The VET PFAS Act would add high cholesterol, ulcerative colitis, thyroid disease, testicular cancer, kidney cancer, and pregnancy-induced hypertension as presumptive diseases to PFAS exposure. In 2022, the National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine released a report that confirms these positive associations.

Additionally, this bill would allow health care for veterans and family members who were exposed to PFAS on military installations and develop the same recognized diseases.

Consistent with DAV Resolution No. 072, we support the VET PFAS Act, as it would provide presumptive diseases for veterans and health care for veterans and their families exposed to PFAS toxins.

We call on you to contact your elected officials to urge them to co-sponsor and support the VET PFAS Act H.R. 4249/S. 2294. Thank you for joining DAV in the toxic exposure fight for veterans and their families.

Take Action!



A JOINT MESSAGE FROM DAV and the DAV Auxiliary

August 22, 2023

H.R. 4886, the Aviator Cancer Examination Study (ACES) Act

DAV supports H.R. 4886, the Aviator Cancer Examination Study (ACES) Act. The bill would require the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to study the incidence of cancer among individuals who served on military air crews.

Military aircrew personnel may experience occupational exposure to galactic cosmic radiation, ultraviolet radiation and non-ionizing intra-cockpit radiation, leading some to speculate about an increased risk of malignancy. In 2020, a retrospective study of Air Force air crews found there were over 900 incidents of cancer. However, the study had its limitations and found no difference in the cancer rates between pilots and other military officers.

The ACES Act would require the VA to enter into an agreement with the National Academies of Science, Engineering and Medicine to study the incidence and mortality among individuals who served in the regular or reserve components of the Navy, Air Force, or Marine Corps as air crew members of a fixed-wing aircraft.

DAV strongly supports H.R. 4886 in accordance with DAV Resolution No. 087, which calls for studies and presumptive service connection for diseases related to the numerous hazardous exposures facing our active military members. This legislation will assist in determining if those who served on air crews are more likely to develop cancer.

Please contact your Representative and urge them to co-sponsor and support H.R. 4886, the ACES Act. Thank you for your advocacy for our nation's veterans, their families and survivors.

Take Action!



A JOINT MESSAGE FROM DAV and the DAV Auxiliary

H.R. 3489, the Restore Veterans' Compensation Act of 2023 August 24, 2023

The Restore Veterans' Compensation Act of 2023 (H.R. 3489) would afford justice for ill and injured veterans by eliminating the unfair practice of VA recouping separation payments, which are based on their military service, and differ from Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) disability compensation.

VA disability compensation can often be the difference between making ends meet and homelessness for many of our nation's disabled veterans, which is why the practice of withholding a veteran's VA disability compensation due to a non-related military separation benefit must end.

This legislation is in accordance with DAV Resolution No. 092, which calls for eliminating the unfair practice of the VA recouping separation payments from military service and allowing veterans to receive their VA disability compensation payments.

Please contact your Representative and urge them to support H.R. 3489—the Restore Veterans' Compensation Act of 2023

Take Action!



A JOINT MESSAGE FROM DAV and the DAV Auxiliary

August 29, 2023

H.R. 4061—to Establish an Exposure Registry and Studies on the Red Hill Incident

The Red Hill Underground Fuel Storage Facility was originally completed by the Navy in 1943. It includes 20 underground fuel storage tanks for a total storage capacity of approximately 250 million gallons. The fuel stored at the Red Hill facility is used by ships and aircraft based at Joint Base Pearl Harbor–Hickam.

On May 6, 2021, 20,000 gallons of fuel leaked from a storage tank at the Red Hill facility. The fuel sat in the drain line for the next six months, until the drain line ruptured and released the fuel, where it then flowed into the ground surrounding the facility and into an underground aquifer. The Navy's water well nearest to the Red Hill facility was found to be heavily contaminated with diesel and petroleum hydrocarbons associated with gasoline.

A survey jointly conducted by the Department of Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found that 87% of individuals surveyed reported being sickened and 37% of those surveyed reported seeking medical care to address their symptoms.

H.R. 4061 would require the Department of Health and Human Services to establish an exposure registry and conduct epidemiological studies to assess negative health outcomes due to the water contamination.

The Navy water system serves approximately 93,000 people on Joint Base Pearl Harbor–Hickam and we must determine the negative long-term health impacts caused by the contaminated water supply. DAV supports this legislation in accordance with DAV Resolution No. 087, to assist in determining presumptive diseases and health care for veterans exposed.

Please urge your Representative to support and co-sponsor H.R. 4061. Use the prepared email to take action today. Thank you for all you do for America's ill and injured veterans and their families.



A JOINT MESSAGE FROM DAV and the DAV Auxiliary

August 31, 2023

DAV is pleased to support H.R. 4424, the Vietnam Veterans Liver Fluke Cancer Study Act, legislation directing the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to conduct an epidemiological study on the prevalence of cholangiocarcinoma in veterans of the Vietnam era. Bile duct cancer (cholangiocarcinoma) is a cancer of the biliary duct system, which includes the gallbladder, bile ducts, and certain cells inside the liver.

One risk factor for bile duct cancer is past infection with tiny parasitic worms called liver flukes, which are found in the fresh waters of Southeast Asia. Veterans who ate raw or undercooked freshwater fish during their service in Southeast Asia, such as Vietnam veterans, might have been infected. Currently, there are no available studies to show that bile duct cancer occurs more often in Vietnam veterans than in other groups.

The Vietnam Veterans Liver Fluke Cancer Study Act can help determine if environmental exposures faced by Vietnam veterans can be linked to bile duct cancer. DAV supports this legislation in accordance with DAV Resolution No. 087.

Please urge your Representative to support and co-sponsor H.R. 4424. Use the prepared email to take action today. Thank you for all you do for America's ill and injured veterans and their families.

ONE YEAR AFTER PACT ACT BECOMES LAW, OUTREACH CONTINUES

POSTED ON AUG 21, 2023 BY JIM MARSZALEK



Over the last few years, unaccredited representatives have bombarded veterans with advertisements on how they can assist and expedite their Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) disability claim. With massive marketing budgets and deceptive tactics, these businesses have continued to overpromise and underdeliver for veterans.

Unaccredited companies do not have to perform background checks on their employees and cannot be held liable if a veteran complains about the service they received. They prey on a veterans' frustration with the VA claims process and charge extravagant rates and fees for their assistance.

Unaccredited representatives have proliferated since the signing of the Honoring our PACT Act last August. The PACT Act, which was championed through years of DAV advocacy efforts, is the largest and most comprehensive expansion of veterans benefits for toxic and environmental exposures. It reduces bureaucratic obstacles for an estimated 3.5 million veterans who seek VA benefits due to burn pit exposures during the wars in Iraq, Afghanistan and other hostile locations.

The law added new presumptive conditions related to burn pit exposure, meaning veterans who served in overseas locations with active burn pits no longer have to prove their exposure or establish direct service connection if diagnosed with ailments listed in the law that are known to cause such conditions.

In its first year, veterans and their survivors have filed more than 770,000 PACT Act-related claims with the VA. The filing period to receive retroactive compensation for

PACT Act claims ended in August, and all claims submitted moving forward will be based on their filing date.

But with more than 1 out of 7 eligible veterans already filing a PACT Act-related claim, DAV outreach efforts are off to a good start. However, we must continue to work to ensure every veteran knows about these new benefits and how they can file a VA claim for free with expert representation.

To help veterans avoid becoming a target of an unaccredited actor, make sure you refer them to our information seminar schedule or their nearest DAV service office. That information can be found on our website, davy.org.

Our national service officers are experts in veteran benefits and provide best-in-class service, free of charge. DAV departments and chapters also have additional capacity to provide assistance with their volunteer service officers.

One of the most effective methods of outreach from our departments and chapters is hosting information seminars in their community. Information seminars allow DAV to educate veterans and their families on the full suite of benefits that are potentially available to them, including as related to the PACT Act.

These events are essential to combating unaccredited representatives who are trying to siphon the disability compensation that veterans have rightfully earned.

To request an information seminar, departments and chapters can contact their nearest national service office to schedule an event.

You can find the 2023 information seminar schedule at davy.org/get-help-now/veteran-topics-resources/information-seminars/ or contact your nearest DAV service office by visiting benefitsquestions.org.



The Senior Citizens League (TSCL) is an affiliate of TREA: The Enlisted Association (TREA), governed by TREA members and consists of hundreds of thousands of active senior citizens concerned about the protection of their Social Security and Medicare benefits.

Ed Cates,
TSCL Chairman

Some Social Security Beneficiaries Need an Extra \$6,200 in 2023 to Maintain Buying Power

The Senior Citizens League (TSCL) latest study on Social Security Buying Power found that the average person who retired before 2000 (those age 85 and older) would need an extra \$516.70 more per month (\$6,200 in 2023) than they currently get just to maintain the same level of buying power as in 2000.

In our latest research conducted in 2022, we analyzed the purchasing power of Social Security benefits and its correlation with the rising costs typically faced by seniors. The study revealed a significant decline, with Social Security benefits experiencing a 40% loss in buying power since 2000. This marked the most substantial decrease in purchasing power observed since the initiation of our research in 2010.

Our most recent analysis found that the erosion of buying power has somewhat moderated to 36%. Although this represents a slight improvement compared to the previous year, it still stands as one of the most substantial losses in purchasing power documented by our study, second only to the figures recorded in 2022.

Our study compares the growth in the COLA since 2000 with increases in the price of 38 goods and services typically used by retirees over the same period. This year buying power was most impacted by the sharp rise in food items, electricity, rental housing, repair, maintenance of vehicles, and a stunning 16% increase in the cost of dental care. Topping our list of fastest-growing items? EGGS!

According to our findings, the study revealed that Social Security benefits have experienced a cumulative increase of 78% due to Cost-of-Living Adjustments (COLAs) since 2000. However, typical senior expenses until February 2023 have grown at a higher rate of 41.4%.

To provide some context, the average monthly Social Security benefit in 2000 amounted to \$816. Over the years, with the implementation of COLA increases, this benefit grew to \$1,453.20 by 2023. Nonetheless, due to the considerably faster rise in retiree costs compared to the rate of COLA adjustments, our study discovered that a monthly Social Security benefit of \$1,969.80 would be necessary to maintain the same purchasing power as in 2000. This amounts to an additional \$516.70 per month compared to the current benefit amount.

Social Security benefits buy less today than in 2000. For every \$100 of goods or services that retirees bought in 2000, they could only buy \$66 worth today.

The table, on the next page, illustrates the top ten fastest-growing costs for older consumers from March 2022 to February 2023.



WHAT ARE THE FASTEST GROWING COSTS OVER THE PAST YEAR?

Item	Cost in Mar. 2022 Average cost \$ or numeric data*	Cost in Feb. 2023 Average cost \$ or numeric data*	Percent increase since Mar. 2022
1. Eggs, Grade A, large (doz.)	\$2.01	\$4.21	110%
2. Apples, all varieties (lb.)	\$1.68	\$2.09	24%
3. Bread, white (loaf)	\$1.61	\$1.90	18%
4. Coffee (lb.)	\$5.41	\$6.35	17%
5. Dental visits, out of pocket, over 65	\$1,029.55	\$1,073.82	16%
6. Electricity (kilowatt hr.)	\$.15	\$.17	13.3%
7. Motor vehicle maintenance and repair	329.992	372.572	13%
9. Chicken (lb.)	\$1.72	\$1.89	10%
10. Rental housing	361.083	391.141	8%

*Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, data through March 2022. Where no average prices are available, numeric data are used.

TSCL supports four reforms to protect buying power of Social Security benefits:

- Provide a modest boost to the benefits of all retirees to better protect them from falling into poverty and to strengthen retirement income.
- Tie the annual COLA to a seniors' consumer price index such as the Consumer Price Index for Elderly (CPI -E). This index tends to show inflation growing at a modestly faster rate than the CPI-W in many years
- Guarantee a minimum COLA of no less than 3%. The guarantee is fundamental in years when inflation goes negative, and no COLA is payable at all.
- Adjust the income thresholds that subject Social Security benefits to taxation for inflation to allow beneficiaries to keep more of their benefits.

TEAM TSCL NEEDS CANDIDATES FOR ITS 2023-2024 BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Requirements: Candidates must have been a member of TREA for at least three years and be at least 18 years of age. No elected member of TREA or TREA National Auxiliary Boards of Directors may serve concurrently as a Trustee (except the National President and the Treasurer, who shall be exempt from all other qualifications).

Interested TREA Members should submit resumes on TREA Form 100-3, located on TREA's website. Resumes will be accepted until the day prior to TSCL's Annual Membership Meeting in September. Term Length: 3 yrs.

Questions? Please contact Shannon Benton – sbenton@tsclhq.org, 703-548-5568, or, Ed Cates, Chairman – ectrea@comcast.net

MESSAGE FROM THE VETERANS HEALTH ADMINISTRATION

100 Years of VA Care for Women Veterans August 25, 2023

September 14 marks a century of VA providing health care to the courageous women who have served our nation in uniform. On that day in 1923, the National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers approved the first hospital spaces for women Veterans.

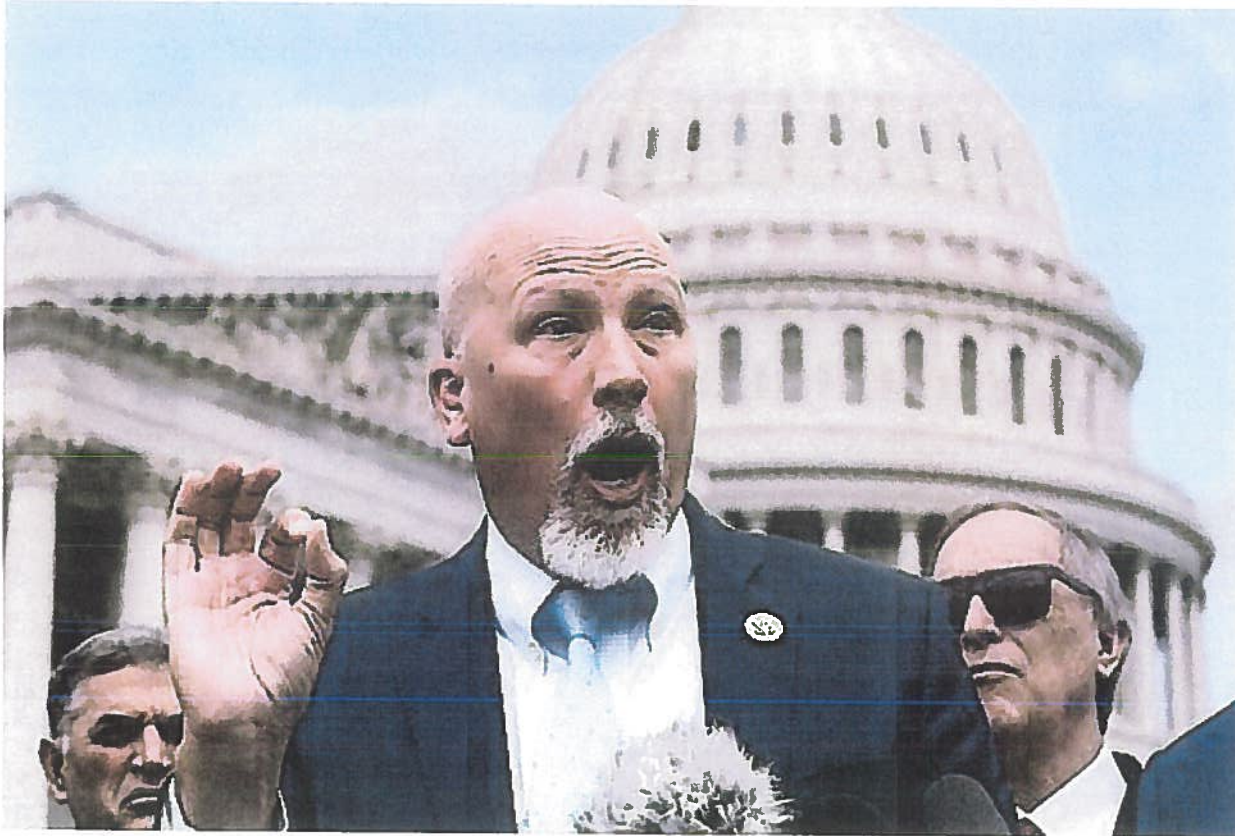
At the time, there were approximately 52,000 women Veterans, 25 percent of whom were disabled and eligible for care. Today, women are the fastest-growing group of Veterans—and VA is adapting and evolving to meet their needs.

We continue to invest in improving access and quality of care for women Veterans. We have expanded services to include gynecological care, breast and cervical cancer screenings, contraceptive counseling, and menopause management. We recognize the challenges faced by women Veterans dealing with military sexual trauma, PTSD and depression, and are enhancing women's mental health support to address these issues effectively.

Thank you to everyone working to improve women's health at VA, and to all of the women Veterans who continue to serve their fellow Veterans in our system.

Please help us honor women Veterans and observe this extraordinary milestone together by joining us on September 14 at 1:00 p.m. ET for a live celebration with VA Secretary Denis McDonough and a panel of women Veterans: <https://site-62002947.bcvp0rtal.com>

House Republicans Vote to Block VA from Changing Motto to Include Female Veterans



Rep. Chip Roy, R-Texas, a member of the House Rules Committee, joins other lawmakers from the conservative House Freedom Caucus at a news conference to voice their objections to the debt limit deal reached by Speaker of the House Kevin McCarthy, R-Calif., and President Joe Biden, at the Capitol in Washington, Tuesday, May 30, 2023. (AP Photo/J. Scott Applewhite)

27 Jul 2023

Military.com | By [Rebecca Kheel](#)

The Republican-controlled House voted late Wednesday to block the [Department of Veterans Affairs](#) from updating its motto to include female veterans.

The VA would not be able to "modify or remove any display" of the mission statement it adopted 64 years ago under an amendment passed as part of an annual VA spending bill. The motto refers only to male veterans and was based on a line in President Abraham Lincoln's second inaugural address: "To care for him who shall have borne the battle and for his widow, and his orphan."

The new motto chosen by the VA hews closely to the original but acknowledges women who have served the country, as well as other surviving [spouses](#) and family members: "To fulfill President Lincoln's promise to care for those who have served in our nation's military and for their families, caregivers and survivors."

VA Secretary Denis McDonough announced the motto change in March, timed for Women's History Month. The announcement came after two surveys of 30,000 veterans, focus groups and years of lobbying by advocacy groups, mostly prominently the Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America.

But Republicans have bristled at what they claim are efforts to "erase" Lincoln's quote.

"It's a good quote," Rep. Chip Roy, R-Texas, who sponsored the amendment, said on the House floor. "It's an historic quote. The fact is we should not use taxpayer dollars to allow this administration to unilaterally change the VA's historic motto and erase the words of President Lincoln to appease the radical left and advance yet another one of their cultural revisionist efforts."

The amendment, which was approved on a nearly party-line, 221-212 vote, would effectively prevent the VA from adopting the new motto.

The amendment adds to an array of provisions Republicans [already inserted into the bill](#) targeting VA efforts to be more welcoming to historically marginalized groups of people, including language to bar the department from providing abortions or gender-affirming health care.



The Department of Veterans Affairs announced in March 2023 that it adapted a new motto that better reflects the nation's veterans and will be replacing the old motto at VA facilities. Removal of signs and permanent etchings on buildings, however, has yet to begin, as seen at VA headquarters on July 26. (Photo by Patricia Kime)

Partisan policy riders are often added to initial drafts of annual government spending bills, only to be taken out during negotiations on the final bill that becomes law.

But the volume of riders in this year's House bills, coupled with far-right lawmakers' demands to keep them in and enact deep cuts to non-military and non-veterans government spending, may mean lawmakers won't be able to fund the government by the end of the fiscal year on Sept. 30 without acquiescing to some of the hard-liners' demands.

Prior to McDonough's announcement, VA officials would sometimes use more gender-neutral language in internal messages, but the original wording is still emblazoned on bronze plaques on more than half of the department's buildings.

The VA has estimated the total cost to replace or remove all plaques, stationery or other signs bearing the old motto will be less than \$2 million. That includes signs the Trump administration installed at all 145 VA cemeteries in 2020 as it strongly resisted calls to change the motto.

So far, no signage has been changed to the new motto, McDonough said at a news conference Wednesday, adding that the department expects to roll out its plans to replace signage after August.

While McDonough would not comment directly on his stance on the House amendment, he said he feels "very strongly" he made the right decision on the motto.

"On Sunday afternoon, I heard again from a senior, very senior, veteran how excited she is and how appreciative she is of the new mission statement," McDonough said.

Democrats in Congress sharply criticized Roy's amendment.

"This is 2023," Rep. Debbie Wasserman Schultz, D-Fla., the ranking member of the House Appropriations Committee subpanel in charge of VA spending, said on the floor. "It's hard to imagine that we are actually debating a motto on the floor of the House of Representatives and having a member of Congress suggesting that that motto should remain exclusive of women."

One Democrat, Rep. Mary Peltola of Alaska, crossed party lines to support the amendment, and two Republicans, Reps. Brian Fitzpatrick of Pennsylvania and Nancy Mace of South Carolina, opposed the amendment.

The House is expected to approve the full VA spending bill Thursday afternoon largely along party lines. It will then need to be reconciled with the Senate's VA spending plan, which received bipartisan support in the Senate Appropriations Committee last month and does not include any of the controversial policy riders contained in the House bill.

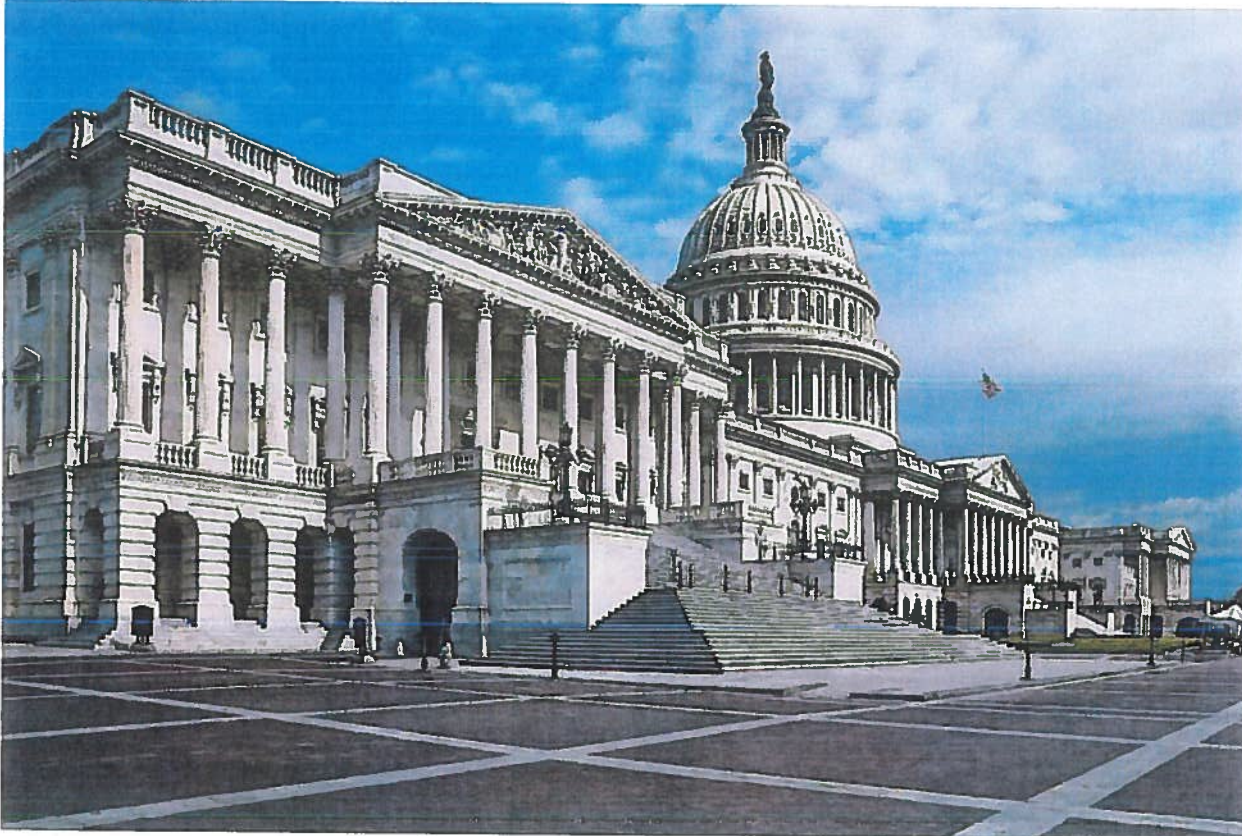
The White House earlier this week threatened to veto the House VA bill because of "partisan policy provisions with devastating consequences."

-- *Patricia Kime contributed to this report.*

VA funding plan passes House with more controversial provisions

By [Leo Shane III](#)

Thursday, Jul 27



The Capitol in Washington, D.C. on July 1, 2021. (J. Scott Applewhite/AP) House Republicans responded to [President Joe Biden's veto threat](#) on their Veterans Affairs appropriations bill by adding even more [controversial social issues](#) into the measure, further complicating negotiations on how to fund veterans programs into next year.

On Thursday, the chamber advanced a [\\$320 billion funding measure for the Department of Veterans Affairs](#) for fiscal 2024, which would give the agency its largest budget ever. The final 219-211 vote was along party lines, with only Republicans backing the plan.

The cost of the spending plan matches what [White House officials requested earlier this year](#) and has not been a sticking point in negotiations. Rather,

Democrats objected to amendments included in the bill which would bar [VA officials from providing any abortion services](#), severely limit health care options for transgender veterans, and bar department facilities from displaying the [LGBT pride flag](#) at any time.

“VA Is a place where all veterans should feel welcomed, included, and cared for,” said Rep. Debbie Wasserman Schultz, D-Fla., and ranking member of the House Appropriations Committee’s panel on veterans issues, ahead of the vote. “All veterans means all veterans. And what this bill does is shameful.”

On Monday, the White House issued a veto threat on the appropriations bill, the first to be voted on by the House this year. Officials cited the “partisan policy provisions with devastating consequences” included in the measure as the reason for the president’s opposition.

But the threat only served to embolden House Republicans, who added several other amendments opposed by Democrats ahead of final passage.

They included provisions barring VA leaders from [changing the department’s motto to gender-neutral language](#); eliminating the department’s Office of Resolution Management, Diversity and Inclusion; [loosening gun ownership restrictions for veterans found incapable](#) of managing their estates; and prohibiting VA from enforcing any COVID-19 mask mandates.

Republican lawmakers said the moves are needed to rein in partisan policies put in place under the current administration. They also praised the overall package as critical to fulfilling the nation’s promise to its former military members.

“This bill makes good on that promise by fully funding veterans health care while ensuring our veterans get the medical treatment and benefits they deserve,” said Rep. Kay Granger, R-Texas and chairwoman of the House

Appropriations Committee. “The bill also prohibits funding to be used for biased and controversial programs.”

The measure now heads to the Senate for consideration, but Democratic leaders there have already said that they’ll oppose many of the provisions that led to the presidential veto threat. That leaves the future of the appropriations plan in doubt.

The Veterans Affairs bill — which also includes several billion dollars for military construction projects — is the only one of the 12 appropriations bills that Congress must adopt by Oct. 1 to fully fund the federal government.

Lawmakers are scheduled to go on a six-week recess starting Friday. When they return, they’ll have fewer than 20 legislative days to reach agreement on a long-term or short-term budget deal or risk triggering a partial government shutdown.

6 SD nursing homes on US worst-rated list

TUESDAY, AUGUST 15, 2023 | ARGUS LEADER

Makenzie Huber
South Dakota Searchlight

Six of South Dakota's 98 nursing homes are on a federal list of the nation's worst-rated care facilities.

Five of the facilities are eligible for a special program to improve quality of care through increased regulatory oversight, and the other one is already in the program.

The five eligible South Dakota facili-

Ratings

Continued from Page 1A

Because the number of special-focus facilities is capped, eligible facilities – even those that have earned CMS' lowest ratings for quality – can't be named a special-focus facility until other homes in the same state that are already in the program are terminated from Medicare and Medicaid or improve and "graduate" from the program.

That's a process that can take four years or more. As a result, there are several homes in each state that are deemed eligible for special-focus status due to ongoing quality-of-care issues, but can't actually enroll in the program. It's also why four of the five eligible South Dakota facilities have waited between 18 and 26 months on the list. Bennett County is the most recent addition, spending three months on the list so far.

Typically, the homes that are deemed eligible for special-focus designation have about twice the average number of violations cited by state inspectors; they have more serious problems than most other nursing homes, including harm or injury to residents; and they have an established pattern of serious problems that has persisted over a long period of time.

ties as of the July report from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services are Avantara Norton in Sioux Falls, Bennett County Hospital and Nursing Home in Martin, Dells Nursing and Rehabilitation Center in Dell Rapids, Firesteel Healthcare Center in Mitchell and River View Healthcare Center in Flandreau.

One facility, Good Samaritan Society Sioux Falls Center, has been participating in the Special Focus Facility program for over two years. Two other South Dakota facilities are already in the program.

Avantara Norton : The 110-certified bed facility in Sioux Falls is owned by for-profit company Legacy Healthcare. The home has been cited for 20 deficiencies in the last year and has been fined nearly \$125,000 by the federal government since 2021.

The home was cited for cleanliness, safety hazards and staffing issues. It received a serious deficiency in its October 2022 report for failing to provide enough water to maintain a resident's health. The resident was in "immediate jeopardy" due to staff not properly monitoring and ensuring the resident drank enough water. Because of dehydration, the resident had frequent emergency room visits due to thick urine, frequent UTIs, constipation, skin problems and poor dental health, according to the report.

Additionally, the report revealed that a staff member who'd previously been fired from the facility because of a substantiated allegation of abuse and neglect was rehired by the facility. The history was found after a resident alleged that the staff member had verbally

abused them and left them sitting on a toilet seat "for a long time" until another staff member could hold them up, since the resident couldn't walk by themselves. The staff member was fired again.

Bennett County Hospital and Nursing Home : The 27-certified bed nonprofit facility in Martin has been cited for three deficiencies in the last year and has been fined nearly \$79,000 since 2021.

In its most recent recertification inspection report from April 2022, citations included infection control concerns, improperly dispensing psychotropic medications to residents and risk of safety hazards – specifically regarding residents who smoked outdoors without proper staff supervision. The facility has a nurse turnover rate of 94.4% every 12 months.

Dells Nursing and Rehab Center : The 48-certified bed facility has one deficiency reported in the last year, but it was cited for 32 deficiencies during one survey in November 2021, including an "immediate jeopardy" deficiency for residents because it did not implement proper COVID-19 precautions. The facility was fined \$96,415.

Firesteel Healthcare Center : The 150-certified bed facility is owned by for-profit company EmpRes Healthcare Management. So far this year, the home has been cited for four violations. The home has been fined nearly \$150,000 since 2021 – over \$100,000 due to a Janu-

violations since 2020.

Nursing homes are identified as special-focus facilities based on their last three standard health survey inspections. Special-focus facilities must meet more stringent criteria two times in a row to be eligible for graduation. The Good Samaritan Center needs to meet the criteria one more time to graduate from the list.

See RATINGS, Page 2A

ary 2021 infection report regarding a lack of COVID-19 control that placed several residents in "immediate jeopardy" of harm.

In its most recent recertification inspection report from January, citations included improper dispensing of psychotropic medications to residents and infection control concerns.

Riverview Healthcare Center : The 49-certified bed facility in Flandreau, owned by for-profit company EmpRes Healthcare Management, has been cited for four total state and federal violations so far this year. It's been fined \$117,000 since 2021.

In its most recent recertification inspection report from February, citations included improper ulcer prevention and improper food preparation and storage.

Good Samaritan Society Sioux Falls Center : The 98-certified bed nonprofit nursing home was flagged for "immediate jeopardy" to its residents in November 2020 for a lack of infection control regarding the COVID-19 pandemic. It was placed on the special-focus facilities list in May 2021, where it was cited for 11 deficiencies in December 2021 and 10 deficiencies in June 2022. The home has been fined four times – for a total of \$122,000 – for violations since 2020.

The home was found in compliance during its last state inspection report in April and met criteria for its latest federal inspection.

Citing staffing, insufficient funds, SD nursing home will close

MONDAY, AUGUST 28, 2023 | ARGUS LEADER
Makenzie Huber
South Dakota Searchlight

A third South Dakota nursing home will close this year — citing short staff, rising costs and years of insufficient Medicaid reimbursement. More than 15

South Dakota nursing homes have closed since 2017.

The Bennett County Nursing Home in Martin operated at a loss of over \$1.3 million in the first six months of 2023, CEO and Bennett County Hospital Administrator Michael Christensen wrote

\$79,000 since 2021.

Closing

Continued from Page 1A

community.

“We need to make a drastic change,” Christensen wrote, to avoid a situation that “could cause the entire organization to go under.”

The facility said it will help its 33 residents find new care “as close to home as possible” before it closes. The 48-bed facility had a 68.75% occupancy rate as of Aug. 3, 2022. The closest nursing homes to Martin include the White River Health Care Center, about 76 miles away, and the Oglala Sioux Lakota Nursing Home, about 50 miles away in Rushville, Nebraska.

The Bennett County Nursing Home is ranked among the nation’s worst along with five other South Dakota facilities. It has been cited for three deficiencies in the last year and has been fined nearly

in an open letter to local newspaper The Lakota Times. The nursing home will close on Oct. 13.

The facility is part of the Bennett County Hospital system, which offers pharmaceutical, hospital, ambulance and home health services around the

About 97% of the Bennett County Nursing Home residents are covered by Medicaid, Christensen said. Christensen wrote that the organization feels “the agony” of the decision and is “heartbroken that South Dakota has chosen to set such low rates that have not kept up with the increasing business costs.”

“We are among the lowest reimbursed nursing homes in America’s lowest-reimbursing state or territory,” Christensen wrote. “As of March 2023, 26,514 nursing homes in America and our state are paid more than we are by Medicaid to care for residents with the same needs. As much as 400% more.”

The Legislature approved an increase to a 100% Medicaid cost reimbursement rate for community support providers that rely on government funding, such as nursing homes, during the 2023 legislative session. But an industry expert has said the increase means the reimbursement will cover only about 92% of the cost for the next year, because service costs aren’t updated frequently enough to address inflation and other factors. The Legislature revisits and sets reimbursement rates each session.

And last session’s help has come too late for nursing homes like Bennett County, according to South Dakota Health Care Association Executive Di-

rector Mark Deak. The rural Pine Ridge Reservation area. The organization is building a new hospital, and Christensen said closing the nursing home will ensure the organization can survive and continue serving the

See CLOSING, Page 2A

“As our state’s population continues to age in the years to come, we must make sure we are doing all we can to preserve access to long term care across our state,” Deak wrote in an emailed statement.

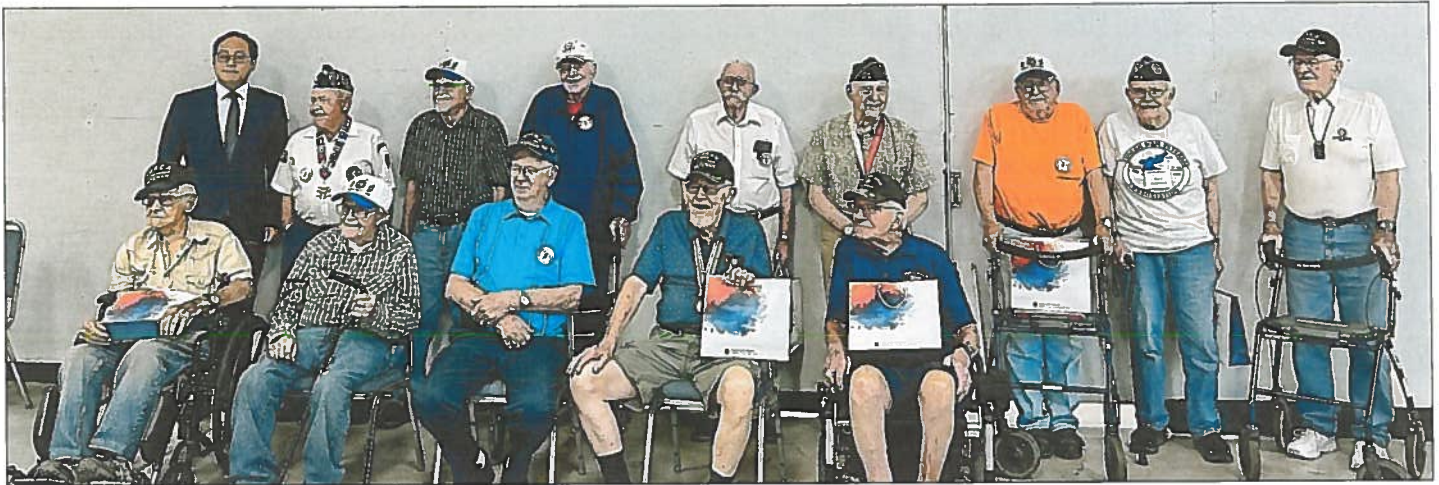
The U.S. Census Bureau estimates that more than 27% of South Dakota’s population will be over age 60 in seven years — an increase of 38% from 2012.

Rep. Chris Karr, R-Sioux Falls, introduced a bill last session that would have required a yearly updated cost report for nursing homes and other community service providers, and introduced a bill that would have required lawmakers to reimburse community service providers at 100% every year.

Both were rejected by the Senate, but lawmakers agreed to sign a letter of intent with the state Department of Social Services and the Governor’s Bureau of Finance and Management to annually update information to determine reimbursement rates for providers.

The Legislature is currently studying the long term care crisis in the state, planning to introduce legislation for the next legislative session (which begins in January) and recommendations to address problems — including much of what Bennett County cited as reasons for closing.

LOCAL/STATE



Courtesy photos

Above: A group of area Korean War veterans was honored at a Korean War/Defense Veterans Appreciation Day event at the Brookings County Outdoor Adventure Center.

Bottom left: Consul Insu Kim from the Consulate General of the Republic of Korea presents the Ambassador Peace Medal to Magnus Olson. Below: right: Kim addresses the event.

Event honors Korean War veterans

BROOKINGS— An event that was sponsored by the Brookings DAV Chapter No 22 and the Korean War Veterans Association Chapter No. 194 was held on July 29, 2023, the event, the Korean War/Korean Defense Veteran Appreciation Day, was held in Brookings.

Often the Korean War is reported as the “Forgotten War” because it occurred so close to the end of WWII and before the Vietnam War.

The highlights of the day included the presence of Consul Insu Kim from the Consulate General of the Republic of Korea, 13 Korean War Veterans who served in Korea from 1950 to 1954, and several other veterans who served in South Korea after 1954 and a lot of family members.

Approximately 80 people attended the event and there was a Korean War / Defense exhibit set up for everyone to view.

At noon the official program kicked off with the master of ceremonies and organizer of the event, Bob Hill, retired Army Sgt. 1st Class and the local Commander of Brookings DAV Chapter 22.

After welcoming remarks and introduction of guests the 2023 South Dakota Senate Commemoration 809, which honors South Dakotans sacrifices to keep the Republic of Korea free, was read to the gathering followed by Brookings County Resolution proclaiming July 29, 2023, as the Korean War / Korean Defense Veterans Appreciation in Brookings County.

Brookings County resident Magnus Olson was then



presented the Ambassador of Peace Medal by Consul Insu Kim. After the presentation Consul Kim gave remarks thanking South Dakotans for their sacrifices and support throughout the years.

He also recognized that South Dakota lost 160 military members during the Korean War and seven from



Brookings County. Several veterans brought their extended families to the event.

At the end of the event everyone left realizing that they are “Not forgotten” any more.

— From Brookings DAV Chapter No 22

19TH ANNUAL CHARITY

POKER RUN



727TH DAY

SEPTEMBER 02, 2023
DACOTA BANK CENTER
FORMERLY SWIFTEL CENTER
824 32ND AVE, BROOKINGS, SD

REGISTRATION

\$20 PER PERSON
BEGINS AT 10A.M.
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6TH STREET & MAIN AVENUE

\$500 BEST HAND
PLUS OTHER GREAT PRIZES


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GUNNING FOR OUR HEROES

A Clay Pigeon Shoot to Benefit Wings of Valor Lodge

★ ★ ★ SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES ★ ★ ★

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 7, 2023

45618 278th Street | Parker, South Dakota

3:00-6:30

EVENT SPONSOR | 10,000

- Opportunity to welcome attendees at the beginning of Gunning For Our Heroes
- Feature Company Logo
- Two (2) Station Shooters and four (4) guests

SHACK DOOR SPONSOR | 6,000

- Feature Company Logo on Shack
- One (1) Station Shooter and four (4) guests

FOOD SPONSOR | 5,000

- Feature Company Logo
- One (1) Station Shooter and two (2) guests

MARKET SPONSOR | 4,500

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- One (1) Station Shooter and two (2) guests

CLAY PIGEON SPONSOR | 3,500

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- One (1) Station Shooter and two (2) guests

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- One (1) Station Shooter and two (2) guests

STATION SPONSOR | 500

- Feature Company Logo
- One (1) Station Shooter and two (2) guests

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

- 3:00 GUESTS ARRIVE**
- VENDORS, DEMOS**
- TOUR FACILITY**
- TRAP SHOOT**
- 5:00 DINNER**
- 5:30 PROGRAM**
- 6:00 AUCTION**



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National POW/MIA Recognition Day

Though not here...



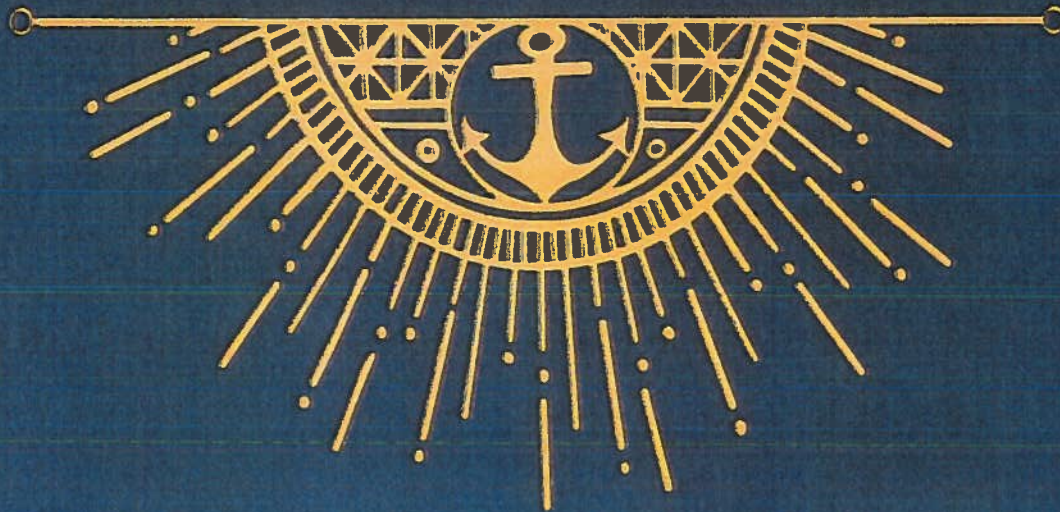
their sacrifice is not forgotten

The Sioux Falls POW/MIA Ceremony will be held at **Veterans Memorial Park, 1021 W. Bailey Street, on 15 September 2023 at 6:30pm**. Bring your lawn chair. In case of bad weather, the ceremony will be held at the VFW/American Legion Armory 1700 W. Russell Street, Sioux Falls. Reception to follow at the VFW/American Legion Armory.

September 15, 2023 | **#NotForgotten** | www.dpaa.mil |



248th U.S. Navy Birthday Ball



October 14th, 2023

5:00 p.m. - 12:00 a.m.

Hosted at:

Minnehaha Country Club 3101

West 22nd Street Sioux Falls, SD 57105

Ticket Prices

E4 & Below

\$45

E5 - E6

\$55

E7 & Above

\$70

Retirees & Veterans

\$70

Civilians

\$70

Please contact HM2 Nimmo

for tickets

Sflsnb2022@gmail.com or

(605) 336-2402

Service Members: Service Dress Blues

(Formal Attire Authorized After Ceremony)

Retirees & Vets: Service Dress Uniform or Black Tie

Civilians: Black Tie



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APPRECIATION HUNTS FOR SERVING**



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**SWANSON O'CONNOR CHAPTER 13, DAV
ANNUAL PHEASANT HUNT X2**

WEDNESDAY, 20 SEP 2023

at

Hecla Hunting Farms

and / or

WEDNESDAY, 25 OCT 2023

at

Family of Duane Riedel's food plots

Hunt site there will be breakfast sandwiches, rolls, coffee, water, bars.

Lunch will be provided by *Ken's SuperFair Foods & Shell Express* of Aberdeen. Or by *Jimmy Johns* of Aberdeen.

There will be nice prize drawings and plenty of good shooting!

A drawing will be held for one (1) shotgun and (1) .22 caliber rifle along with numerous gift certificates. If your chapter wishes to contribute prize items, please bring them with. Everyone usually has their names drawn for some prize.

Requirements:

- These hunts are by invitation only.
- You must be a DAV member unless approved by the Chairperson.
- You must be pre-registered with either the Committee Chairman Ron Lindner Ph. (605) 228-0768, or E-mail lindnerre@gmail.com Or Mark Wolf Ph (605) 380-7420 or E-mail mwolf@nvc.net.
- You are responsible to have a valid South Dakota hunting license.
- No body can bring unruly hunting dogs TO SECOND HUNT and **NO DOGS** allowed at Hecla Hunting Farms.
- No last-minute hunter show-ups are allowed. All hunters must be pre-registered and by invitation only please.
- RSVP with \$ 35.00 on-site refundable security deposit by 01 SEP 2023.

Disabled Veteran Deer Hunt

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&

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10 total permits will be awarded. More information along with registration instructions can be found in the application.

