

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS

DEPARTMENT of TEXAS, HEADQUARTERS

BULLETIN

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Vol. 10 Issue 9

Chartered by Act of Congress 1932

MARCH 2006

COMMANDER'S COMMENTS

From the Commander's Pen

"Hello Comrades"

Well March is almost here and by the time you receive this news letter most of the District Conventions will soon be behind us, new officers will have been elected and we will soon start another year. That said, it is also time to start making your plans for attending the Department Convention. June will be upon us soon and for those of you who have not yet made reservations for the convention, you should consider doing it early to ensure you have the rooms needed (see Adjutant's column).

"Veterans Turn to Congress for Adequate Budget" That is the latest plea from our National Commander Paul W. Jackson. The Commander is urging Congress to fully fund Veteran's Health Care and provide the resources needed to ensure accurate and timely benefits for our veterans.

"Once again the Bush administration's budget has come up short of what is needed to honor America's commitment to veterans."

It is up to Congress to provide the needed funds to guarantee that the sick and disabled veterans have the timely health care that is needed and have earned through their service and sacrifices.

The President's budget plan contains a total of \$80.6 billion for the Department of Veterans Affairs. Included in the spending blueprint is nearly \$31.5 billion for veteran's health care. But an estimated \$2.8 million of that would come out of veteran's pockets. Under the Presidents plan certain veterans would be charged a \$250 annual enrollment fee for VA health care and their prescription co-payments nearly double from 8 to 15

dollars. Both of these proposals have been rejected in the past by Congress and again the DAV and other service organizations oppose this. We all need to get the word out to all our veterans, family members, and friends and people you know in other service groups to start writing letters, sending emails, phone calls and visiting your Representatives and again ask them to vote **no** to these unfair proposals. We again ask that you also ask your Representatives to support "Mandatory Funding or some combination of Discretionary and Mandatory Funding".

Commander Jackson finishes with saying that "this fundamental budget reform proposal would take the politics, guesswork and political gamesmanship out of VA health Care".

It is a tough pill to swallow to know that our Administration finds it so easy to send our troops into "Harms Way" yet so hard to do the right thing and ensure that when they come home the level of care they have earned will not be there for them.

Some of your Department officers, including myself, will be going to Washington DC the end of February and we will again pass this message on to them on your behalf.

I wish you all have productive and successful District Conventions and your training and Certification of your Chapter and Department Services goes well.

Thank you all for your dedicated support, service to our veterans and hard work.

Yours in comradeship,
L. Duke Hendershot
Department Commander

MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN

ralgina@houston.rr.com with the subject line "Membership Tips."

Rex Lloyd

Membership Chairman

THE DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS, DEPARTMENT OF TEXAS HAD THE FOLLOWING POPULATION SUMMARY AS OF, 2/14/2006:

Life Members	57,549
Part Life Members	22,387
Total Members	79,936

This years GOAL for full paid life members is:

Goal	58,503
Goal percentage as of 2/14/2006	98.37

Members to make goal 954

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

RECRUITING CAN TAKE YOU PLACES!

If you sign the one millionth fully paid life member you and your recruit will receive paid travel and lodging to the 2006 DAV National Convention in Chicago August 12th through 15th. Currently, DAV is under 15,000 full paid members shy of that goal.

I want to thank the Chapters that send me their newsletters as it is a great way for me to keep up with what is going on in your Chapter and community. Newsletters keep the membership informed on events and activities that the Veterans community has planned. Newsletters can also be used to engage new members and encourage participation. Just by putting out the new members name and a little information about them and their family can make them buy in to get involved in the Chapter.

As Cougar Hammons, Department of Oklahoma, said, " Getting young members won't be a difficult issue, but keeping them active is another story. It's hard trying to raise a family and manage a job and attend meetings. Departments and chapters need to encourage members and make involvement worthwhile. They need to get families involved and make sure wives feel comfortable at meetings. And they need to make sure all members feel like there are opportunities to participate and contribute."

If you have a membership tip to share please e-mail you ideas and comments to

ADJUTANT'S COMMENTS

Convention Hotel information: The hotel plans to change names in the near future. We are told to refer to the hotel as the Holiday Inn Ft. Worth South - soon to be a Radisson Hotel. **For reservations call (817) 293-3088, ask for the Reservations Department and request the DAV Group Rate (\$69 + tax).** The call to convention letters will be going out to chapters not later than 1 April which will allow chapters time to elect delegates, and those delegates time to make their reservations (deadline May 1) and travel plans. Your participation and involvement = success.

During the upcoming District Conventions, some Districts will be conducting Chapter Officer training. This is an area that requires re-visiting on a regular basis. As new officers are elected, all to often they have not been trained on how to perform the duties required of them. Our organization, just like the military, has published rules and regulations that we are required to follow. In their proper order they are:

National Constitution, Bylaws and Regulations (NEC) published each year following the National Convention.

Constitution and Bylaws of the DAV Department of Texas published each year after the Department Convention.

Chapter Constitution and Bylaws, which hopefully are reviewed on a regular basis.

National also publishes two **guides** that chapter officers should refer to: **Officers Guide** and **Official Ritual of the DAV.** Does a "guide" contain regulations? A guide is only a guide that may be useful in the running of the chapter.

Once the above references have been studied, attention should be directed to the requirement to submit the two required reports, the Officer Report Form and the Annual Financial Report. Failure to submit either of these two reports can result in the suspension of the chapter's charter or, worst-case scenario, the revocation of the charter and the closure of the chapter. I would encourage all chapter officers attending District or Department conventions to bring their reference books, report forms, and a list of questions they may have in hopes of getting some straight answers.

Disabled American Veterans

Veterans helping veterans. . .How? It's a people thing and it's the people in your chapters who are the ones that may be able to provide that help. It's a team effort; identify what help is needed, find the talent to provide that help, and see that it happens. It's a win-win situation. The person/s needing help get it, the people providing the help feel good about it, and we've done what the DAV was designed to do.

Eldon L. Armstrong

Department Adjutant / Treasurer

DISTRICT I

Comrades this is a last reminder of our District I convention to be held March 10-12. Hope all of you have made plans to attend. I am looking forward to seeing and speaking to all of you again. Several newsletters ago I invited all chapter commanders to submit items of interest or events that they wanted to share with the other chapters in the District; so far only one chapter has taken me up on my offer. If there is something you want me to include in my article get it to me by the 1st. of the month prior. Chapter Commander David Garcia of 187 wanted to thank the Department Executive Committee for their approval of a fund raiser so the chapter can build a chapter home on the property that it owns. With elections approaching I urge every chapter to sponsor a voter registration drive and to look into how you can help older and disabled vets get to polling places, or if hospitalized or in nursing homes, to obtain absentee ballots. This is a function that you can include your auxiliary in. Speaking of the Auxiliary, if your chapter does not have one you need to look into how to set one up. Having an auxiliary can be a huge asset. Back to elections, all of us need to get informed on our elected officials positions on veterans issues and vote accordingly. If you do not, you will have no right to gripe when you lose all or part of your benefits. Lastly I consider the Department Bulletin to be "OFFICIAL CORRESPONDENCE" so I request that you read my column and any other information to your members at each months meeting as outlined in your guide to "ORDER OF BUSINESS". Let's keep all of our members informed not just commanders and adjutants.

W. "Ted" Monette

Sr. Vice Commander, District I

DISTRICT III

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District III Convention: The District III Convention will be March 24 -26, 2006 in Waco at the Hilton Hotel, 113 South University Parks Drive. Please do not forget to make your reservation at 1-254-754-8484, state that you are with the DAV/DAVA. Service Officer Certifications starts early in the morning. Make sure you are there on time!

Please remember to send your delegates and alternates list and your list of deceased comrades to Kristen Gholson-Dopkant, 810 Mountain View Cove, Pflugerville, Texas 78660-3840 by March 15, 2006.

DAV 29: Chapter 29 received a donation from the City of Killeen - a surplus Dell computer, complete with monitor, and network connections. The "old" computer (64Khz, 4 MB Hard Disk) was retired from duty! The membership approved going into the Internet, so we now have an e-mail address for the Chapter- dav29@clearwire.net. The DAVA Auxiliary took over the Chapter kitchen and had a wonderful Breakfast. That's the way to stand in, folks! The Chapter Nominations Committee reported out on their work. Chapter Officer Elections will be on 4 March 2006. The District III Adjutant will conduct the Elections, and the new officers will be installed immediately after the elections.

District III Commander: Commander Villaronga visited Chapter 198 in Kingsland for their Election of Officers. Commander Schumaker was re-elected as Commander. Congratulations to him for a job well done. We had a great visit, spending some time at the Chapter's Thrift Shop, which seems to be doing a great job in the Community. Commander also visited Chapter 63 in Palestine for their election of a Commander. Eldon Armstrong, as Department representative ran the election. The new Commander is Charles McShan. Congratulations on your election, and I hope to see you at the District Convention.

Adjutant, District III says: "Please remember to visit the hospitalized veterans. How nice would it be to share some time with those less fortunate in the VA hospital! Since I spent months in one myself, I know how wonderful it can be to have a smiling face around to cheer up your spirits. It gets very lonely. You could even get your local elementary schools to make cards for them. I have done this; the veterans feel very appreciated with these small gifts and tokens of good tidings.

I would like to take this opportunity to "Thank" several people, chapters, and units, who out of the goodness of their hearts, were kind

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enough to assist one of my students and her family in having a wonderful Christmas. Through donations of money and items, this family had the best Christmas of ALL. Thank you to Chapter and Unit #215, Chapter and Unit #219, Roger Garza, Mr. And Mrs. Ned Stewart, Mr. and Mrs. Billy Wright, Mr. and Mrs. Boyd Epting, Sam Pagan, and Martha Burghart. You have truly touched me and made so many happier than ever! It was fun collecting the items, purchasing things, wrapping them up for the family, and delivering them to their simple home. The spirit of Christmas was alive and well in the hearts of these individuals and organizations. Thank you, again for your generosity. I will never forget your unselfish gifts, your outpouring of love, and your help towards this family, who were down on their luck. God bless you all."

If your chapter or auxiliary, would like to place any information on the activities of said in the Department Newsletter, please write our adjutant, Kristen Gholson-Dopkant, 810 Mountain View Cove, Pflugerville, Texas, 78660-3840 by the 5th day of each month.

See you in Waco! Have a safe trip and do not forget to bring your ideas and your enthusiasm. We want to have the best convention ever. Look forward to seeing all of you! God bless and have a wonderful month.

For the Commander,
Kristen Gholson-Dopkant
Adjutant, District III

DISTRICT IV

I just returned from a visit with Chapter 126 located in Baytown. I enjoyed meeting the members and was honored to install their newly elected officers. I would like to once again thank this Chapter for their hospitality during my visit.

I hope everyone is making their plans for the Spring Convention scheduled for April 1-2, 2006. I believe you will be pleased to hear that Eldon Armstrong, Department of Texas Adjutant has agreed to attend and have a seminar on various reports as well as how to utilize the DAV website. I have used this site on several occasions including my chapters Officers Report and I do believe you will be impressed by the time you can save as well as the information that you can access. For ex-

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ample last week we had two new members attend our meeting and for the life of me I could not come up with a book that had the Obligation for membership printed in it.....to the website we went, printed it and never missed a step. Eldon will have many tricks to show you so please be sure you check the agenda for this educational seminar. If you have an ad or a donation please get it in to me ASAP, the program/memory book is coming along very well and is definitely something you will be proud to take home and save.

Chapter 83 Auxiliary is working hard to make sure that there will be a nice hospitality room available during the convention. I can assure you that this group of ladies has it together and you will be pleased.

By the time this is printed I will be returning from Mid-winter Conference being held in Washington DC. This will be my first time to attend and I am looking forward to it. Hopefully I will have some interesting information to pass along upon my return.

I am looking forward to seeing each of you at the convention!

Yours in Comradeship,
Teresa Johniken
Commander, District IV

DISTRICT V

There are virtually hundreds of books available extolling the virtues of good or effective leadership; however, there are few if any books on good followership. This is interesting considering the definition of a leader is someone who has followers. So, an effective leader is someone whose followers do the right thing. Simply defined, good followership is the ability or behavior of an individual to positively support the leadership and mission of an organization.

This doesn't suggest we should simply exercise blind obedience, nor should we allow self involvement in anything illegal, immoral, or unethical. Bringing this closer to home, we need to determine what we can do individually and as a body to make easier the job and efforts of our various levels of leadership within our Disabled American Veterans organization. There are numerous everyday examples to draw from at the Chapter, District, Depart-

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ment, and National levels. As I write this article, I am reminded of the following words.

WRECKERS

I watched them tearing a building down,
A gang of men in a busy town.
With a ho-heave-ho and a lusty yell,
They swung a beam and the side wall fell.

I asked the foreman, "Are these men skilled,
And the men you'd hire if you had to build?"
He gave a laugh and said, "No indeed!
Just common labor is all I need.

I can easily wreck in a day or two
What builders have taken a year to do."
I thought to myself as I went my way,
Which of these roles have I tried to play?
Am I a builder who works with care,
Measuring life by the rule and square?
Am I shaping my deeds to a well made plan,
Patiently doing the best I can?

Or am I a wrecker, who walks the town,
Content with the business of tearing down?

I urge all to be a stepping stone rather than a stumbling block to insure successful accomplishment of the DAV's mission of providing service. Focus on the mission—we do great things when we work together and exercise good followership

James Scott

Commander, District V

BPT / LEGISLATIVE REPORT

Veterans Turn to Congress for Adequate Budget

The Disabled American Veterans is urging Congress to fully fund veterans health care and provide the resources needed to ensure the accuracy and timeliness of the disability compensation system.

"Once again the Bush administration's budget plan has come up short of what's needed to honor America's commitment to veterans," said DAV National Commander Paul W. Jackson. "It is up to Congress to provide the funds needed to guarantee that sick and disabled veterans have timely access to high quality medical care and the full range of benefits they have earned through their service and sacrifice."

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The President's budget plan contains a total of \$80.6 billion for the Department of Veterans Affairs. Included in the spending blueprint is nearly \$31.5 billion dollars for veterans health care. However, an estimated \$2.8 billion actually would come out of veterans' pockets, not the federal treasury. Certain veterans would be charged a \$250 annual enrollment fee for VA care and see their prescription co-payments nearly double from \$8 to \$15. Both proposals, which the DAV and other veterans service organizations oppose, and Congress has consistently rejected, have been part of the administration's budget request in the past.

Although the veterans budget has increased in recent years, there still is a significant gap in funding to meet the needs of sick and disabled veterans. This year the DAV is urging Congress to increase the overall VA medical care budget by 11 percent over the 2006 level, to \$32.8 billion. Included in that amount is a 13 percent boost for direct medical services to sick and disabled veterans and a 10 percent increase in funding for medical and prosthetic research.

The DAV again strongly recommends replacing the current discretionary appropriations method with full mandatory funding, or some combination of discretionary and mandatory funding," said Jackson. "This fundamental budget reform proposal will take the politics, guesswork and political gamesmanship out of VA health care."

Other recommendations from the DAV include \$1.4 billion for the Veterans Benefits Administration to hire additional staff, as well as to improve training and information technology within the Compensation and Pension Service. The DAV also calls for adding staff and program improvements within the VA's Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Service. "The VA needs to make a substantial investment in resources and training to overcome the persistent backlog in pending claims that have delayed and wrongly denied disability benefits to veterans and their families," said Jackson.

As the budget and appropriations processes progresses, the DAV has called on its members to wage an all-out campaign to ensure that adequate resources are provided to meet

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the needs of America's disabled veterans and their families.

"America's disabled veterans and their families are a strong, vital political force, and we must continue to hold our elected representatives accountable for their actions regarding veterans issues," Jackson said.

The 1.3 million-member Disabled American Veterans, a non-profit organization founded in 1920 and chartered by the U.S. Congress in 1932, represents this nation's disabled veterans. It is dedicated to a single purpose: building better lives for our nation's disabled veterans and their families. For more information, visit the organization's Web site www.dav.org.

Jim Roos

BPT/Legislative Chairman

VAVS REPORT

Hello again,

By the time you read this epistle, the VA's Hospitalized Veterans Day will have passed you by until next year. The program is a way to show those vets that they are not only cared about, but they are also loved. Volunteers from all the service groups and VA staff members make the occasion an unforgettable experience. Waco's hospital will have Dallas Cowboy Cheerleaders present to bring smiles to veterans and have pictures taken with them. I feel a fever coming on.

The Temple hospital is having Miss Texas grace it's doorway to bring smiles to it's veterans. The Temple and Waco hospitals are typical of all the VA hospitals in the state. Valentine cards drawn by school children and candy and cookies and balloons are given to lighten the vets day. Every vet in the hospital will receive a bag of smiles. Shouldn't you have been there?

Yours in Service,

Kirk Bennett

Department VAVS Chairman

DAV AUXILIARY COMMANDER



Have you been reading the papers lately? Or watching TV? Seems like all we see and hear

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about is unseemly or unethical activities going on in Washington. We know there are many good Representatives and Senators. Mostly we hear about those who aren't quite so good. They let their wish for power or riches corrupt their common sense and these few give everyone a bad name. Some of the younger people among us who might consider going into politics must be giving it second thoughts these days – and that's a shame because we are going to need them someday. Try and encourage youth in your lives to be community, politically, environmentally active. And more. You never know where their path may lead.

I hope all of you have gotten off to a good start in your Units this New Year. Keep in mind our State Adjutant is always there to answer your questions or direct you to someone who can answer questions.

A reminder – The goal at this time is to make membership quota by **APRIL 1st**. There are many ways to get new members. You can ask people direct. Set up tables when you have fundraisers. You can plan a membership drive locally or through the mail with the labels from National and State (ordered from National). Don't forget the Juniors. They do count for quota. Most of all don't forget the men. You can sign up sons, grandsons and great grandsons as well, along with all those girls. You might even get some new ideas on activities with them on board. You can sign up your husband also if he is eligible. Just a few ideas.

Once again I am looking forward to the District conventions. I've been receiving letters in the mail from the different Districts and I'm making my plans to attend. Hope you are doing the same and I hope to see you there.

Joyce Humes

Commander, DAV Auxiliary

DAV AUXILIARY ADJUTANT

The Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary had the following Population Summary as of 2/14/2006:

Life Members	5,948
Total Members	6,747

THIS YEARS GOAL is:

Goal	7,153
Goal percentage	94.32
UNDER Goal	408

**From the National website;
HAPPENINGS AT HEADQUARTERS:**

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LIFE MEMBERSHIP: Members are still using the old applications and this is causing problems since the amounts were increased July 1, 2005. The word is increased. The down payment increased from \$25.00 to \$40.00 and the smallest amount is \$140.00 for 71 to 79 years of age. Any member 80 or older gets a complimentary life membership. No more junior applications. The new application takes care of all memberships. If you do not have the new applications which state the new life membership amounts on the back order them.

Don't cause a problem when signing up a new member. Any recruiter should be aware of the amount of the unit's annual dues and the amount of life membership. If you have questions concerning membership check the application in the magazine or go to DAV.org, then click on DAV Auxiliary and it will help you.

REPORTS: Soon the units will be getting officer report forms and financial report forms. Remember that all members must be notified of elections and an audit must be completed prior to the installation and the financial report must be submitted within 10 days after installation. Each report must be filed annually. The unit must submit a completed officer report form annually indicating the newly elected and appointed officers or the unit is placed on "hold" and could be revoked after a period of time. A financial report must be filed in order for the unit to have the privilege to vote at a state convention or national convention.

Don't forget to send the pink copies of your Annual Financial Report and your Officer Report to the DAV Department Adjutant at 2305 Oak Lane Suite 225, Grand Prairie TX 75052.

Yours in service,
Patti Rapisand
Adjutant, DAV Auxiliary

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

Peaceful Conflict Resolutions

Respect the right to disagree.

Express your real concerns.

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Share common goals and interests.

Open yourself to different points of view.

Listen carefully to all proposals.

Understand the major issues involved.

Think about probable consequences.

Imagine several possible alternative solutions.

Offer some reasonable compromises.

Negotiate mutually fair cooperative agreements.

Dr. Charles E. Edwards, Jr.

Department Chaplain



TAPS

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

Horace C. Young, Executive Officer for Chapter 147 for many years.

James P. Heidler, Chapter 147 passed 1/16/06.

Alexander Nemar, Chapter 63 Commander for 5 years, passed 1/21/06.

Peter Klein, Chapter 42 passed 2/9/06.

Department and the membership extend deepest sympathies to the family members, friends, and comrades of these fallen heroes. May each one rest in honor.



Please feel free to call, write, or email the Adjutant's office if you have a loss in your family, Chapter, or Unit that should be included in this column.

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Bulletin
Department of Texas, Inc.
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CHAPTER 6 TYLER



CHAPTER 41 WICHITA FALLS

MOBILE SERVICE OFFICE (VAN) STAFFED WITH A NATIONAL SERVICE OFFICER/DEPARTMENT SERVICE OFFICER TO ASSIST VETERANS IN AREAS WHERE THERE IS A NEED. THIS IS AN IMPORTANT SERVICE PROVIDED BY OUR ORGANIZATION. SUBMIT REQUEST TO THE NSO SUPERVISOR FOR YOUR AREA (WACO, HOUSTON, SAN ANTONIO).