

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS

DEPARTMENT of TEXAS, HEADQUARTERS

BULLETIN

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JULY 2006

COMMANDER'S COMMENTS

From the Commander's Pen

GREETINGS FELLOW TEXANS

I hope everyone enjoyed the Department Convention and made it home safely.

The Convention was a great success and it was obvious to me that the membership has worked hard at growth and participation in the activities at the Chapter, District, and Department levels.

I was impressed at the delegate's participation on the Committees and workshops that Adjutant Armstrong scheduled this year. We have the best Department and members in our Organization, bar none. When we work together, we can accomplish anything we set out to do. This year I will be calling on you to work together to achieve our goals.

It was a true **Honor** you have given me to serve as you Department Commander for 2006-2007. I am humbled and thank your for this Opportunity to **SERVE** you through this upcoming year.

There are many issues that need our attention. My main objective is to address that as **Veterans** we receive the benefits we were promised, we fought for and we deserve! Each and every one of you makes a difference in achieving this goal. As I spoke to you before, contact your Representatives in the Congress and Senate. Get on the postcard writing Campaign to ensure we receive Mandatory Health Care Funding, along with other issues that affect Veterans and their dependents.

I am proud of your dedication to the service of your comrades as I witnessed an outpouring of over 25,000 dollars pledged to the support of the Department Service Fund. For without your support of this program we could not service our members and future members, which is what this organization is all about.

I had a nice visit with National 1st Junior

Vice Commander "Rob" Reynolds, as he is well informed and shared vital information with me on issues that he feels are important on the National level. We were very fortunate to have him as our guest this year.

I'm sure by now you are all aware of the grandiose blunder the Department of Veterans Affairs has made by losing so much personal information of not only the 2.5 million veterans and widows it serves, but the active duty personnel as well as the Reserves and National Guard's information that was compromised. This is not acceptable! You have probably received a letter from the VA explaining what happened and how to find out more information that could affect you. At of yet, there has been no activity that I'm aware of to panic and start closing credit card or bank accounts. This does not mean that you should not be observant of unusual activities on these accounts. It just means that thus far there are no indications any of this has occurred yet. More information is coming out on this daily and the VA has set up a website and toll-free number to track updates on this situation. The website is www.firstgov.gov and the toll-free number is 1-800-333-4636.

I'm looking forward to seeing all delegates that can attend the National convention in Chicago as these Conventions are always a learning experience. "I'm Hooked on Bobby" and look forward on giving him my support for higher office as well as participating in the planned activities.

I cannot end this article without mentioning how proud I am of the NSO's, DSO's and Bluecapper's that worked so hard to surpass our Membership Goal!

Rex Lloyd

Department Commander

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DEPARTMENT OFFICERS 2006-07

Commander	Rex Lloyd
Sr. Vice Cmdr.	Douglas "Doug" Herrle
1st Jr. Vice Cmdr.	Edgar "Ed" Meiser
2nd Jr. Vice Cmdr.	Teresa Johniken
Judge Advocate	Dennis R. Nixon
Chaplain	Charles Edwards
Past Dept Cmdr.	"Duke" Hendershot
Finance Committee:	
District I	John Goodman
District II	Jerry Black
District III	John Masterson
District IV	Larry Geddie
District V	Jay Johnson (Chairman)

MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN

THE DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS, DEPARTMENT OF TEXAS HAD THE FOLLOWING POPULATION SUMMARY AS OF, 6/14/2006:

Life Members	58,558
Part Life Members	22,874
Total Members	81432

2005/06 GOAL for full paid life members was: **58,503** Goal percentage as of 6/14/2006 100.09

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.

It is with great pleasure that my first report to the membership is a positive one. The hard and dedicated work of our NSO's and DSO's along with our blue cappers has put the Department of Texas over the top. It is with the effort of all the membership that this was accomplished. As of 06 June 2006, the Department goal was 100.02%. I am looking forward to working with you all this coming year, and hope to do the same next year.

Doug Herrle

Membership Chairman

ADJUTANT'S COMMENTS

The 2006 Department Convention is behind us and as Commander Lloyd commented, a lot of people worked hard to do what needed to done.

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The Department Convention is where the business of Department is conducted annually. All "cleared" Texas Chapters and Units may send delegates to cast the Chapter/Unit votes on issues that come to the floor. Texas presently has 93 Chapters, 43 of which were represented at convention by a total of 176 registered delegates. In addition to the work accomplished by the convention committees, there were meetings of the Scholarship, the Finance, and the Department Executive Committees. The last student in the Department Scholarship program graduated last December and that program is now on hold. The Finance Committee discussed the Administrative and the Service budgets for 2006/07 and the travel policy for those persons using Department funds. The Executive Committee then reviewed those recommendations and performed the final action on each issue. It was necessary to make some budget cuts because of projected income but still the Department of Texas, thanks to the added support of Chapters, will continue to have one of the best Department Service Officer programs in the DAV.

With the new Department Officer elections and the Commander's appointments, I am confident that your Department will perform up to your expectations. Support your chapters by attending the meetings, the DAVA Unit projects, your fellow veterans and their families, and we will have another successful year. If there is anything that Department can do for you, don't hesitate to contact me. If I don't know the answer to a question, I know the people who do have it.

Eldon Armstrong

Department Adjutant/Treasurer

DISTRICT II

"Hello Texas!"

I want to thank all of you who took the time to attend the 2006 Department Convention in Fort Worth. Congratulations to the new slate of officers and I am sure that you will do an outstanding job during the coming year.

Once again, another officer is taking part in putting together the article for District II. Let me introduce to you, our Senior Vice Commander, **Joel Jimenez**.

Hello District II. It was great to see all of you at the Department Convention. We all had fun. It was a good convention. A new slate of officers is ready for 2006-2007. I see good things coming. One theme I heard during this gathering is to re-

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mind you that you could and you would and you should and you will make a difference when it comes to better benefits for all veterans. Yes, by networking and all of us being a team, we can make a difference in helping one another get their well-deserved benefits they have coming to them. You must do your homework though.

Now, back to Cowtown and the Department Convention. Duke "Got the Boot" and now he is the newest PDC. We are proud of the great job he has done for the Department, and let us not forget his lovely wife, Pat. I know about her tremendous work and love for veterans. Thank you Pat...

I felt that at this convention there was more camaraderie, more ease, more cordial and more communication with the, NSO, DSO, TSO, CSO. And Dennis, we still love you, man. I got hooked by Bobby. We are going to be very fortunate and pleased in the near future with Bobby. And the winner isDennis Nixon.....what a vote. Thanks to Karla Clark (court reporter) for her hard work.

As I said before, it takes Grass Roots. Let's help one another get educated on how to properly upgrade a claim. That's right, how to upgrade. Let's share one another's information and help each other if we can. Veterans helping Veterans, that's what it will take. Be persistent, be truthful, be yourself, and don't be afraid to ask questions. Some of those that we elected know some answers and know the right people to get answers. I love veterans and I love you. We did for our country and now we must help those that don't know how to get the right help. We must have the love and compassion for one another because God wants it that way. So, with that, we can and will help our fellow comrades.

Joel Jimenez, Sr. Vice Cmdr. District II
Yours in service,
Gerald Cowan
Commander, District II

DISTRICT III

Our nation will celebrate its 230th birthday this July 4th. Imagine, each one of us has played an integral part in ensuring that our land remains land of the free and the home of the brave. As veterans, we love our country, have pride in our service to her, and have contributed intimately to her legacy. We have had the distinction of promoting, maintaining, and securing the continual quest of the ideals of our founding fathers. The luck of our

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birth gave each of us the privilege that so many people in the world envy and infiltrate our borders for that right. As you enjoy the holiday with your families, remember that the picnics, the family reunions, the fireworks, and all other celebrations of our liberty would not be possible without the continual blood sweat, and tears of our nation's armed forces.

I want to share some valuable information with each of you.

1. All chapter officer reports must be sent to the department and national headquarters within 10 days of the installation of officers and they must be installed within 30 days after being elected.
2. Financial Reports must be filed within 90 days of the end of the fiscal year, September 30. If your yearly income is below \$10,000 not counting per capita, your chapter sends its report only to Department.
3. ATTENTION All CHAPLAINS: The DAV will supply your chapter with free "Get Well" and "Sympathy" cards. Contact 1-877-426-2838 (toll free) to make your request.

Chapter #63 will be having a barbeque to celebrate the 4th of July on Saturday July 1st. All are invited to share in this lunch that begins at 11:00am. This is a fund raiser for the chapter.

On June 25th, I will be performing with a 150 member choir in Carnegie Hall, New York City to celebrate Mozart's 250th birthday. Our church choir has been practicing a year for this concert. We will be singing, "The Coronation Mass" of Mozart. This is a once in a lifetime opportunity, and I am honored to have this privilege bestowed upon me at my age.

Best wishes for a speedy recovery goes out to District III Sr. Vice Commander Roger Garza, who has had several setbacks in his health. Our thoughts and prayers are with you. If you need help, contact me at (512) 255-2969 or the adjutant at (512) 251-9747.

Yours in Service,
James "Jim" Prochnow
Commander, District III

DISTRICT IV

By now most have recovered from the Department Convention or have gotten reports. To all of you who missed it, you missed a good Convention. There was business that affects the future and wellbeing of your organization. There was camaraderie and sharing of issues and "stories".

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There were 2 hospitality suites. There were 2 banquets since the Commanders Reception included food. There was training for Chapter Officers. In other words, you should have been there.

The Memorial Service was excellent in its solemnity and the way it honored our fallen Comrades.

The only negative I saw was the fact that so many of us have forgotten the basics of Courtesy. The Banquet and the Reception were times to honor guests and the elected officers. The food was good, but the purpose was higher than the standard "stuff your face". We wanted to honor our own officers and the distinguished guests. Many of the Delegates missed the Reception and Banquet and so failed to give respect to our guests and their fellow Comrades in DAV.

My suggestion is: go to Conventions and participate in all activities. You will get more out of your membership and you will help your Comrades.

Yours in Comradeship,
Wolf Biedenfeld
Commander, District IV

DISTRICT V

Another successful Department Convention is history. Congratulations are certainly in order for PDC's Duke Hendershot and Joyce Humes, and their respective 2005-2006 Executive Staffs. Similarly, best wishes to new Department Commanders Rex Lloyd and Alice Armstrong and their 2006-2007 Executive Staffs.

Speaking of our convention, permit me to offer some thoughts on how I believe delegates can help improve the overall environment of this important event. These views were derived from my observations of several Department of Texas Conventions.

First, I am fully aware the DAV does not have a dress code. Consequently, what we have usually seen at our conventions is dress and apparel ranging from the optional wear blue/black sport coat and grey trousers combination, to a variety of dress in between including shirts with no collars, and shorts. Again, while there is no official DAV dress code, I sincerely believe in what the "Good Book say" that there is a time and place for everything. Interpretation--each of us has an individual responsibility to dress as appropriately as possible while representing the DAV in a public venue.

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Secondly, a few words about proper decorum, particularly during our designated business sessions. One well recognized definition of "decorum" is "Appropriateness of behavior or conduct." Consideration of this definition coupled with a review of rules outlined in Robert's Rules of Order should aid delegates regarding acceptable behavior. Fortunately, yelling from the floor before being properly recognized, or ignoring the Commander or Adjutant requests to approach the microphone, etc to address participants are not examples of appropriate conduct or behavior.

Now then, to answer the sure to be asked question of, "Who does he think he is?" Just a DAV Life Member who would like all to take personal responsibility for ensuring a great convention becomes even better in the future. I have witnessed other veteran organizations conduct conventions with their membership appropriately dressed while displaying acceptable behavior. Therefore, I know we can do the same.

Respectfully yours,
James Scott
Commander, District V

BPT / LEGISLATIVE REPORT

BENEFITS PANEL NIXES SSDI, VA COMPENSATION OFFSET

Amid growing controversy over the scope of its congressional mandate, the Veterans' Disability Benefits Commission has voted to conduct a narrowly defined study into the issue of Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) benefits for veterans who receive VA disability compensation.

By an 11-2 vote, the commissioners agreed to limit its study of the issue to four distinct areas, which does not include consideration of an offset between SSDI and VA disability compensation. The commission, however, would be allowed to collect data on SSDI usage by disabled veterans to better understand issues such the impact of one or both benefits on the veteran's quality of life, underutilization by veterans who are eligible for benefits under both programs and how to expedite claims for service-connected disabled veterans who may be eligible for SSDI as well as VA compensation. The commission also would be able to explore the feasibility of granting waivers for disabled veterans who had not met the minimum Social Security insurance payment requirements for SSDI legibility.

The issue of SSDI and VA disability compensation became a highly charged one after the

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commission's March 16-17 meeting when move to sidestep proper procedures and hold a secret ballot on the matter was postponed. The commission chairman then asked for, and received, support from the House and Senate Veterans' Affairs and Armed Services committees to expand the study of veterans benefits to include SSDI, which was strongly opposed by the DAV. Many in the veterans community also became concerned that the study would set the stage for a recommendation to offset SSDI and VA disability compensation, something the commission has denied.

Jim Roos

BPT/Legislative Chairman

Women Veteran's Representative

I am pleased that Commander Lloyd appointed me to serve as the 2006- 2007 Women Veteran Coordinator. I realize there are many issues that we all are interested in as well as many problems we have encountered. What I believe is that if we help each other all of the problems can be solved, the questions answered and we can work as a support system for each other.

My goal for this year will be to locate information and answers to your questions and concerns. I only know my personal questions so I need your help! I am asking you to write me, call or email me at tjohniken@yahoo.com to let me know what I can do to help you. As far as I know at this point I do not have a way of obtaining all Texas women's addresses it would be helpful if you would contact me with this information so perhaps we can start a database where new information can be distributed quickly.

If you attend the National Convention there is a seminar available each year directly related to women veterans which I hope everyone that can attend will.

Women have been an important part of the military in the United States since the American Revolution which continues in larger proportions every year. Your needs are unique and we must demand that legislators and the Department of Veterans Affairs address those needs when making their budget decisions and expansion plans. Once again though we have to work as a group and the true answer to a lot of issues would be solved with mandatory funding. If the money is available there

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is no excuse not to meet our needs as well as our brothers' needs.



I had the distinct pleasure of attending Mid Winter Conference this year. The picture above is of the Women Veterans Memorial located in D.C. for those who have not had the pleasure of seeing it, I wanted to share it with you. I look forward to hearing a response from each of you so that we can work together.

Yours in service
Teresa Johniken

Women Veteran's Representative Appointee

DAV AUXILIARY COMMANDER



Hello Auxiliary Members,

A lot of business, a lot of sharing of information, a lot of awards to units that went "all out" this past year, and a lot of fun took place at our Texas State Convention in Fort Worth. We enjoyed having our National guest, Senior Vice Commander Donna Tanner with us along with 116 auxiliary members and guests. Our thanks to Convention Chairman Ann Crowell for her work to make our convention such a success.

The delegates voted to approve the Finance Committees recommendation to raise our **State Mandates to \$25**, and annual **Junior Memberships to \$1.00** effective June 1, 2006. Remember, our State Standing Rule 5 states, "Each Unit shall pay a mandate to the State Department within thirty (30) days following the close of each State

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Convention." The mandate shall be used to defray State operating expense."

Other changes in the State and District By-laws will be provided in our 2006-2007 State Standing Rules, District Standing Rules, and Rules of the State Convention book.

Your 2006-2007 State Officers are:

Commander	Alice Armstrong #42
Sr. Vice Cmdr	Clarice Konieczny #139
1 st Jr. Vice Cmdr	Mary Bergeron #6
2 nd Jr. Vice Cmdr	Sylvia Shurgot #36
Judge Advocate	Betty Hall #9
Adj/Treasurer	Patti Rapisand #10
Chaplain	Mary Michaels#128
IPSC	Joyce Humes #114

National Senior Vice Commander Donna Tanner installed the newly elected State Officers, State Executive Committeepersons and District Commanders.

The Auxiliary Forget-Me-Not Luncheon was highlighted by Commander Joyce Humes' sister Ann, who "roasted" her as only a sister could. The fun filled stories of a houseful of sisters growing up "in the good ole days" was punctuated with songs and poems. Thank you Ann for your program, and thank you Joyce for your year of service and friendship as State Commander.

Now we are looking forward to the August National Convention in Chicago. Texas' own Bobby Barrera will be running for a higher office. Let's all get "Hooked on Bobby" and help him move up to DAV National 2nd Jr. Vice Commander.

The Auxiliary Fall Conference will be in Cincinnati, Ohio October 5-7 at the Holiday Inn Cincinnati Eastgate, toll free number 888.465.4329 for reservations. National Headquarters has sent the information to your Unit Adjutant and she will share it with you at your next Unit meeting. Be sure to get your reservations made early for this informative and interesting National program. I want to extend a special invitation to our male members to attend the Fall Conference. This is a great way to learn more about the Auxiliary and all the things we can do to help our Disabled Veterans. Our National Officers do a super job providing us with lots of information, skits and fun programs.

Fly your Flag on the 4th of July, and have a safe and happy holiday.

Alice Armstrong
Commander, DAV Auxiliary

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The Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary had the following Population Summary as of 6/14/2006:

Life Members	6,015
Total Members	6,847

THE 2005/2006 GOAL was:	7,153
Goal percentage	95.72
UNDER Goal	306

ITEMS OF INTEREST

DEPARTMENT CONVENTION 2007 will be held June 22/24 in Austin, TX at the DoubleTree Hotel, 6505 Interstate Highway-35 North. Phone number for reservations is 800-347-0330 under the Group Name of Disabled American Veterans, Department of Texas. Room rates are \$80 plus tax. **Please record this information.**

Department is actively seeking invitations from delegations or cities in the Department Districts for the 2008 Convention. The Adjutant can give you the space requirements for you to give to interested hotels. Please submit all invitations to the Department Adjutant.

DAV van purchase program by Chapters 2006/07. The Executive Committee budgeted only \$12,000 for the co-pay for vans this coming fiscal year. Chapters must raise the total cost of the van and at the close of the submission period, that amount will be prorated and returned to the chapters in equal amounts. One van request results in a \$12,000 refund to the chapter; two request in \$6,000 to each chapter; four request in \$3,000, etc.

2006 DAV at the Ballpark! Once again this year there are two games scheduled in Texas, the Houston Astros vs St. Louis Cardinals on July 8 and the Texas Rangers vs the Cleveland Indians on Sept 3. If you are a baseball fan, get your specially priced tickets and support this program.

National Bylaws Article 19, section 19.2 states in part that the names and addresses of the members of the DAV and its Auxiliary, in whatever format, shall not be used for commercial purposes, or for any purpose other than one directly connected to the Organization. **Do your part in this!**

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FROM THE DAV NATIONAL WEB PAGE
DO YOU REMEMBER THIS?

RED SKELTON AND THE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

From the Red Skelton Hour, January 14, 1969

"Getting back to school, I remember a teacher that I had. Now, I only went through the seventh grade. I left home when I was 10 years old because I was hungry. (laughter) And...this is true. I worked in the summer and went to school in the winter. But, I had this one teacher, he was the principal of the Harrison school, in Vincennes, Indiana. To me, this was the greatest teacher, a real sage of...of my time, anyhow.

"He had such wisdom. We were all reciting the Pledge of Allegiance one day, and he walked over. This little old teacher...Mr. Lasswell was his name. He said:

'I've been listening to you boys and girls recite the Pledge of Allegiance all semester and it seems as though it is becoming monotonous to you. If I may, may I recite it and try to explain to you the meaning of each word?

- I** me, an individual, a committee of one.
- Pledge** dedicate all of my worldly goods to give without self-pity.
- Alle-giance** my love and my devotion.
- To the Flag** our standard, Old Glory, a symbol of freedom. Wherever she waves, there's respect because your loyalty has given her a dignity that shouts freedom is everybody's job.
- [of the] United** that means that we have all come together.
- States** individual communities that have united into 48 great states. 48 individual communities with pride and dignity and purpose, all divided with imaginary boundaries, yet united to a common purpose, and that's love for country.
- [of America] and to the Republic** Republic ... a state in which sovereign power is invested in representatives chosen by the people to govern. And government is the people and it's from the people to the leaders, not from the leaders to the people.
- For Which It Stands One Nation** One Nation ... meaning, so blessed by God.
- Indivisible** incapable of being divided.
- With Liberty** which is freedom, the right of power to live one's own life, without threats, fear, or some sort of retaliation.

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And Justice the principle or qualities of dealing fairly with others.

For All For all ... which means, boys and girls, it's as much your country as it is mine.

And now boys and girls let me hear you recite, the Pledge of Allegiance.'

"I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and to the republic for which it stands, one nation, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."

Since I was a small boy, two states have been added to our country, and two words have been added to the Pledge of Allegiance - 'under God.' **Wouldn't it be a pity if someone said, 'That is a prayer,' and that would be eliminated from schools, too?"**

Red Skelton



TAPS



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

Lee Roy Reuther, Oil Capitol # 21, passed 5-12-06.
James, Kimbro, Ch 83, passed 5-8-06.

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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