

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS

DEPARTMENT of TEXAS, HEADQUARTERS

BULLETIN

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MAY 2006

COMMANDER'S COMMENTS

From the Commander's Pen

"Greetings Comrades"

By the time this newsletter reaches everyone we will be one month from the Department Convention. I hope that you all have started making plans and reservations as before you know it the deadline of 1 May will be here.

With all that has been going on the past few months, I have managed to attend two District Conventions. For those conventions I was not able to attend, one of my distinguished line officers were assigned to attend and I know that they did an outstanding job representing the Department.

I have visited the Dallas VA and the Houston VA along with Joyce Humes, the Auxiliary State Commander. In the next few weeks we are scheduled to visit the following VA locations; Amarillo on May 2ND, Big Spring on May 3RD, Waco and Temple on May 9TH. Outside of visiting a few chapters, that will conclude my traveling for the remainder of my term unless something un-expected comes up.

For those of the Killeen area this might be old news but to many out there this may be something of interest. On October 5TH 2005 the Texas Land Commission dedicated it's first of seven Texas State Veterans Cemeteries in Killeen, TX. The second ground breaking is scheduled for sometime in early 2007 in Mission, TX in the Rio Grande Valley. The third site will located in Corpus Christi; ground breaking to start sometime in October 2006 and completed in 2009. A fourth site is planned for Abilene but no dates have been set as of yet.

State Land Board Commissioner Patterson reminded attendees that as Texans, we have an obligation to not only provide our veterans with the best benefits and services available, but to keep the memory of their courage and devotion alive.

This cemetery is a unique partnership of local, state and federal resources. It represents a shining ex-

ample of how dedicated individuals can pull together for our Texas Veterans. For additional information call (800) 252-8387 or visit the web site at www.texasveterans.com.

Another bit of news is for the surviving spouse of a veteran. The Department of Veterans Affairs recently activated a new Web site aimed directly at spouses of military members who died on active duty and surviving spouses of veterans who died after serving their country. The site not only has links to the VA pages describing survivor benefits but also to other government sites that may offer valuable information and assistance. The Web site is located at www.vba.va.gov/survivors/.

Don't forget the following up-coming dates:
May 20TH Armed Forces Day; May 30TH Memorial Day; June 14TH Flag Day.

Yours in comradeship,
L. Duke Hendershot
Department Commander

MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN

**THE DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS,
DEPARTMENT OF TEXAS HAD THE
FOLLOWING POPULATION SUMMARY AS OF
4/16/2006:**

| | |
|-------------------|--------|
| Life Members | 58,027 |
| Part Life Members | 22,729 |
| Total Members | 80,756 |

This years GOAL for full paid life members is:

| | |
|---------------------------------|--------|
| Goal | 58,503 |
| Goal percentage as of 4/14/2006 | 99.19 |

Members to make goal 476

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

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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.

LET'S STEP UP

We're getting down to the wire, but as you can see from the numbers above our goal for Department is in sight. At this time of year many of us set new personal goals. Mine, besides getting the yard in shape, was to recruit at least three new members this month. I've got commitments on all three, but just the money on two. But I've found that if you tell a potential member what being a part of the Disabled Americans Veterans has done for you and how being a part of the BIG picture does make a difference, that they will want to be a member too. Also, as we work together to achieve a milestone, of recruiting (the millionth) member, remember the recruiter as well as the member that fully committed, will receive paid travel and lodging to the 2006 DAV National Convention in Chicago August 12 to 15. Your best odds at recruiting that member come from your sustained ability to attract new members and encourage others to fully commit. We're going to get this goal achieved this Membership Year, and I want this accomplishment to be a Texan!

Rex Lloyd

Membership Chairman

ADJUTANT'S COMMENTS

March and April were busy months. District Conventions have been held and new elections conducted. A change this year was that the District Commanders were installed at their respective conventions. This brought about a change in the makeup of the Department Executive Committee as each new Commander was installed and it caused the new ones to be writing this month's article. 3 of the 5 Districts now have new Commanders.

The sale of the convention hotel has been completed. What for the many past years has been the Fort Worth Holiday Inn South is now officially the Radisson. Our contract remains unchanged and I'll remind delegates to make their reservations by 1 May to get the DAV rate. Time is short so please don't delay.

The "call to convention" letters should have been received by all chapters and I look forward to receiving your chapter's delegate list. Registration will begin Thursday afternoon, 1 June and will continue until noon on Saturday. The joint meeting will begin at 0900 Friday June 2, District meetings

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around 1100 to elect committee members, and the first DAV business meeting at 1300. Hopefully all delegates will be seated by 0900 and all convention business will be conducted in a timely manner. Let's all work toward that end.

Eldon Armstrong

Department Adjutant / Treasurer

DISTRICT I

I hope this finds everyone anticipating our Dept. convention in June. We need to make a good showing and impress the rest of the state with how alive and active we are. As we start planning our summer and fall events, let's share their time and place with the chapters near ours so we can have large turnouts instead of small to medium ones. I know its a little late in the game but make sure your officers are elected and the report is sent forward so they can be sworn in at the Dept. convention if they wish to be, also elect your delegates. Look forward to seeing all of you in June.

YOUR 2006-2007 Officers: COMMANDER TED MONETTE, SR.VICE JESSE DRYER, 1st.JR VICE LEO ENGLE, 2nd.JR VICE WILLIAM MURRY111, JUDGE ADVOCATE RONALD HEARN, CHAPLAIN GLORIA HICKMAN, FINANCE COMMITTEEMAN JOHN GOODMAN ALSO ADJ., ALT. FINANCE COMMITTEEMAN CHARLES F HOOD,JR.

W. "Ted" Monette

Commander, District I

DISTRICT II

"Hello Texas!"

As stated in my last article, my plan was to attend the Bun Lilly Unit #16, Americanism Program at Mt. Pleasant. I did get to attend and spoke on Americanism and Patriotism. I also attended the Dallas Unit # 31 Americanism Program where I again spoke on Americanism and Patriotism and had the honor of installing the 2006-2007 officers for Chapter # 31. It was evident that a lot of hard work and planning had gone into both of these programs and all who attended enjoyed them.

The more often that I speak and take part in Americanism Programs, the stronger my feelings of Patriotism becomes. I hope that Americanism Programs would have the same affect upon each of you.

Since my last article I attended the District I Convention in Abilene, the District III Convention in

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Waco and the District IV Convention in Nacogdoches. Each of these conventions was well attended and the hospitality was excellent. I am sorry to say that due to unforeseen circumstances I was unable to attend the District V Convention.

There are many items on my agenda for the coming year. Some of the items I feel that are very important are:

1. Increasing DAV membership.
2. Increased attendance in your chapters.
3. Preserving our chapter charters.
4. Increased volunteer services.
5. Guaranteed VA Funding.
6. Strong coalition of all veteran organizations.

Remember, we are a team and I will always appreciate your suggestions and contributions that will be of benefit to this organization.

I want to report to you that Past District II Commander, Jack Layne, has been undergoing major surgery at the Dallas VA Hospital and would ask that you keep him in your prayers.

As you go about your daily activities, wherever that might be, reach out a hand and greet a military man or woman. Thank them for serving their country in order that we might have our freedoms. Let us not forget the veterans who are housed in VA Veteran Homes, VA Hospitals, Texas Veteran Homes, and local nursing homes.

Americans have so much to be proud of. This country has been blessed by so many of our brave men and women who have secured our freedoms through their service. Many have placed their lives on the line to defend our nation.

Yours in service,
Gerald J. Cowan
Commander, District II

DISTRICT III

The District III Convention was very good. Commander Ron Minter, DAV Chapter 3, did a fine job with the help of his chapter members and the Auxiliary Commander Joyce Brannen. Thank you again for all of the hard work which lead to very successful convention. I want to thank everyone for my election to this most esteemed position. I feel honored that you have confidence in my abilities to lead out District forward.

The District III Officers elected for the 2006-2007 year are as follows:

CDR James Prochnow Chapter #4
Sr. Vice Roger Garza Chapter #215

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| | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------|
| 1 st Jr. Vice James Wood | Chapter #234 |
| 2nd Jr. Vive John Kleindienst | Chapter #3 |
| Judge Advocate Billy Wright | Chapter #219 |
| Chaplain Kristen Gholson-Dopkant | Chapter #173 |
| Commander appointments: | |
| Officer of the Day Lou De La Fuente | Chapter #219 |
| Sgt.-At-Arms Jimmy Perkins | Chapter #173 |
| Adjutant Kristen Gholson-Dopkant | Chapter #173 |
| Women's Vet Rep Felicia Weston | Chapter #111 |

Past Department Commander Gerald Cowan installed our newly elected officers.

Outgoing District III Commander Raul Villarronga did a fine job during the convention and is planning to run for higher office within the DAV Department of Texas. A special "Thank you" to Kristen Gholson-Dopkant for a great job in putting together a flawless agenda which ran as smooth as silk with no problems.

I appointed Felicia Weston, NSO Waco, Chapter #111, as District III Women's Veteran's Representative. I encourage each chapter to appoint someone to serve in this capacity. District III scheduled a meeting of all such chapter representatives on Saturday, April 22, 2006. More information to follow on the Women's Veteran's Reps.

Our next District III Convention will be in Bryan/College Station, hosted by Chapter and Unit #200 on March 16-18, 2007. Commander Floyd Wells has made arrangements for the convention to be at the Ramada Inn with room rates of \$59.95 plus tax per night.

Have a great and safe Easter holiday. Any questions or problems, contact me at (512) 255-2969 or kggholson@hotmail.com

Yours in Comradeship,
Jim Prochnow
Commander, District III

DISTRICT IV

The District IV Convention just concluded 3 weeks ago and it has already been a busy time.

I was elected at the Convention held in Nacogdoches. The Convention was well attended and all there were pleased by the facility and the hospitality of our hosts, our DAV comrades.

Since being elected I have had an opportunity to meet with the Commanders of chapters 15 (GalTex) and 230. We discussed issues related to membership and the importance of Chapter participation in the business of DAV. We agreed that District conventions were an important part of maintaining contact between the Chapters and also of

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getting information from Department to the Chapters. Small Chapters often do not attend Department functions and so feel left out of the "flow".

I encouraged both Chapters to send Delegates to the Department Convention in June. I also provided the hotel Phone Number and the advice that reservations needed to be made by May 1 if they wanted the discounted rate. The Ft. Worth per diem rates were also provided.

Wolf Biendfeld

Commander, District IV

DISTRICT V

By consensus of opinions our District V 58th annual convention was a great success. Joint Opening Session speakers included the likes of District V's Department of Texas DAV Auxiliary Commander Joyce Humes, Department of Texas Sr. Vice Commander Rex Lloyd, and several local dignitaries. Coupled with the highly inspirational presentation (also referred to as Fire and Brimstone) made by Department Sr. Vice Commander Lloyd, another highlight of the session was Texas State Representative Carlos Uresti's presentation of the Bronze Star and Purple Hearts medals to WWII Veteran and DAV Chapter 14 member Manuel E. Lopez. This was District V's efforts to correct a situation of years past where our government had mailed the medals to Comrade Lopez. Other participants of the medal ceremony included Chapter 14's Dave Sweeney who read the citation and nephew of the recipient and Chapter 14 Commander James Harris who was the medal bearer.

At the Joint session we also officially recognized the more than 50 years existence for Bill Johnson Chapter #121, Harlingen, Texas. Leland Kerr, their Chapter Adjutant/Treasurer assisted by providing highlights on the Chapter's history.

The banquet keynote speaker was Susan Pamerleau, MGen USAF Ret. and currently Senior Vice President, Military Affairs, USAA insurance company. Gen Pamerleau a member of the DAV, provided sound insight on several DAV related issues, and spoke directly to our special guests – Afghanistan and Iraq war injured from the Brooke Army Medical Center, Fort Sam Houston, Texas.

The highlight of the banquet was the introduction of our special guests of 12 war injured patients, their guests and several medical support staff members. All of these warriors demonstrated their gratitude for being recognized by the DAV as we attempted to show our appreciation for their

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sacrifice. Kudos to Norma Gallegoz, NSO on the Frank Tejada DAV office staff, who provided these war veterans a superb impromptu overview on the purpose and role of the DAV during the queuing process before the banquet.

Finally, the District V officers for 2006-2007 are: yours truly as Commander; Albert Owens, chap. 5, Sr. Vice Commander; Percy Spence III, chap. 17, Jr. Vice Commander; Rev. Dr. Curtis Michael, chap. 128, Chaplain; Travis Briggs, chap. 14, Judge Advocate; David Cuellar, chap. 14, Adjutant; Jay Johnson, chap. 128, Finance Rep; and Percy Spence III, chap 17, Finance Rep. Alternate. Thanks again to all committee members, participants, supporters, and delegates who made the event a success. We look forward to continue working with all DAV chapter members in helping to ensure completion of the DAV's mission.

James Scott

Commander, District V

BPT / LEGISLATIVE REPORT

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."

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

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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 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.

Jim Roos

BPT/Legislative Chairman

VAVS REPORT

Hello again,

I visited the Houston VA hospital with our Dept. Cmdr. and State Aux Cmdr. on April 3rd. It's al-

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ways a good to see these two and bask in their enthusiasm. I know, get out the tissue and get the brown off, but it's true. When we met with Director Edgar Tucker, his Chief of Staff Thomas Horvath, Assist. Administrator Suzanne Klinker, and Head of Nursing Lottie Lockhart, they asked pertinent questions about treatment of vets. Honest answers were given that included troublesome areas and how they were rectifying them. I really was surprised by the candor that Dir. Tucker and his staff showed. They were also very proactive in their plans for treatment of veterans at the hospital and the areas covered by clinics. Time is short and I really need to thank VAVS Program Manager Bryan Dick and Service Specialist Nikki Verbeck for all that they did in setting up the meeting and the tour. Great tour and it is a beautiful hospital.

Up next is Amarillo and Big Springs in May. Till then. . .

Kirk Bennett

Department VAVS Chairman

Women Veteran's Representative

Women Veterans: The Shoulders We Stand on Today and Tomorrow

Today more than 200,000 active duty women are a vital part of the United States Armed Forces. Their future will be along side the already 1.7 million women that are now recognized as the fastest growing Veterans population in America.

We can reflect on history to recall famous women such as Margaret Corbin and Mary McCauley, who was a heroine in the Battle of Monmouth in 1778; also the legendary Molly Pitcher, fought in the battle of Fort Washington in 1776.

Officially the nursing military corps was born in 1901 during the Spanish-American War as an auxiliary of the Army. Then the Navy followed the Army's lead establishing its own nursing corps.

At the conclusion of WWI, nearly 34,000 women served as nurses in the Army, Navy, Marines, and Coast Guard. At that time the service women did not have a military rank nor did they receive benefits provided to men in the military and to male veterans.

The military women's significant contributions in WWI established the importance of women to the armed forces. This is considered the turning point in the history of women veterans.

WWII was the time when women served in large numbers. Everyone that could go to war did. Acceptance of the women that volunteered was not

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easy, both in Congress and the military; the learning curve was straight up.

It was during WWII when women were first given full military status with the establishment of the Women's Army Corps (WAC) by Congress in 1943. At the end of WWII, it was General Eisenhower that advocated legislation which was passed in 1947 making the WAC part of the regular Army and Reserve. A year later, President Truman signed the Women's Armed Service Integrations Act, making women permanent members of the regular and reserve forces of the Army, Navy, Marines, and the newly created Air Force. Then another year later 1949, the Air Force Nurse Corps was recognized as a separate branch of the Air Force.

During Korea, the number of women in service hit a high of 48,700 and was reduced down to 35,000 at the end of the Korea War.

The next initiative to increase the number of women in service came during the Vietnam War in 1968. P.L. 90-130 in 1967 was meant to remove statutorily any obstacles to women becoming high ranking military officers.

I believe the beginning of the trend toward greater gender equality in the military was with the start of the all-volunteer force (AVF) in 1973. To retain women in service, steps were taken to make the military more "family friendly" to encourage career women to stay in the service. In 1973, 55,000 women were in the active duty military compared to today when more than 212,000 are on active duty, according to the Department of Defense.

The VA estimates and projects veteran populations, out to the year 2020. Those projections show that male veterans will decrease and women veterans will increase every year continuing forecast to the year 2020.

The Department of Veterans Affairs reported at the end of September 2004, that 163,027 women veterans were receiving service connected compensation, which represents 9.6 percent of the total estimated population of women veterans. Among male veterans, the estimated population receiving compensation is only slightly higher, which is 10.4 percent.

It is noteworthy that in 1994 the rules were established by the Defense Secretary Les Aspin that women would be exempt from assignments in small direct ground combat units, or from co-locating with such units, also lifting long-standing bans on women serving in other combat related roles. Beginning in the early 1990's, women flew combat

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aircraft, manned missile emplacements, served on ships in the gulf, drove convoys in the desert, and assumed other roles making exposure to combat more likely.

According to the Army, their newly created Combat Action Badge will honor any eligible soldier exposed to perilous combat conditions, affecting thousands of soldiers not in the infantry, which will include many women.

The important role of women in the military plays a vital part in our nation's defense. Women veterans will require veteran services that focus on gender specific needs. The debt owed to all of our veterans demands nothing less than access to quality health care and benefits.

This review in history shows the recent rapid growth of women veterans. I encourage veterans and Veterans Service Organizations to recognize the changing veterans' population and realize an untapped resource is women veterans.

Yours in service

Delilah Washburn

Women's Veteran Department Appointee

DAV AUXILIARY COMMANDER



Hi everyone –

I started writing this newsletter on my way to Houston to tour the Michael E. DeBakey VA Hospital. Dept. Commander Hendershot, my husband Leonard and I met with Director Tucker and some of his staff: Bryan Dyck - Chief of Volunteer Service; DAVA/ VAVS Rep - Betty Hall; and the Department DAV/VAVS Rep - Kirk Bennett and many others. We were escorted on our tour by Nikki D. Vorbeck. She took us to Prosthetics where we saw all kinds of processes for making body parts that are needed by our veterans. Then onward to various other areas. We got to see one of their robots named JEWEL, which they said was one of the most popular things visitors want to see. From there we went to the ER section where we were shown around. This is a very large hospital and they have a valet program of which they are very proud.

I told y'all before that I was going to get to see different parts of Texas this spring and I am. To-

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day coming to Houston I took a beautiful picture of bluebonnets and we also saw buttercups (prim-roses) and yellow daisies alongside the road. To me it was especially beautiful because we aren't seeing too many of them near San Antonio due to the lack of rainfall.

We've also been traveling to the different District Conferences and get to see a lot of countryside. Planned or not. On our way to Nacogdoches, we got off on the wrong road and saw a lot of country. Ended up on OSR and couldn't figure out what it meant until later when we saw a sign that said "Old San Antonio Road".

A couple of reminders:

- I hope all of the units have remembered to send in their annual reports to State which need to be there by **May 1st**.
- All units should send the pink copy of their financial and officer reports to the DAV office after their elections. Department adjutant Armstrong needs them to make sure of addresses, etc... for the next Department Directory.
- State mandates need to be paid every year and they are due after the State Conference when the new year begins in July.

Our State Conference will be in Fort Worth at the Radisson Hotel from June 2nd-4th. The phone number is **(817) 293-3088**. The address is:

100 Alta Mesa East Blvd.
Fort Worth, TX 76134

I hope to see all of you there.

Joyce Humes
Commander, DAV Auxiliary

DAV AUXILIARY ADJUTANT

The Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary had the following Population Summary as of 4/16/2006:

| | |
|---------------|-------|
| Life Members | 5,987 |
| Total Members | 6,811 |

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THIS YEARS GOAL is:

| | |
|-------------------|------------|
| Goal | 7,153 |
| Goal percentage | 95.22 |
| UNDER Goal | 342 |

Announcing the DAV Auxiliary State Commanders Tea

Kel-Lac Auxiliary Unit #114 invites the officers and members of the Texas Units of the DAV Auxiliary to attend the State Commanders Tea in Honor of State Commander Joyce E. Humes

The Tea will be held Saturday, May 13, 2006 2 p.m. – 4 p.m. at the Atonement Lutheran Church located at 735 Cedarhurst, San Antonio, Texas 78227

We look forward to seeing you there.

RSVP to: Earlene Cole #210 – 673-8836

Sharon Thornton #210-670-1376

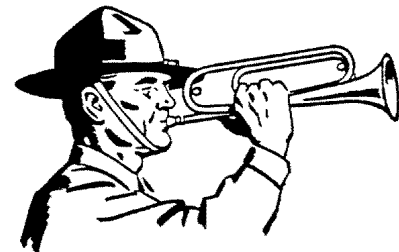
Yours in service,
Patti Rapisand
Adjutant, DAV Auxiliary



PRAYER LIST

Prayers are needed for the following:

Jack Layne, Chapter 137 presently in the Dallas VA Hospital recovering from major surgery.



TAPS

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

Cloyde C. Pinson, Chapter 42, passed 4-14-06

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To:



The one person, Cloyde Pinson Sr., 99% responsible for getting this cemetery in Dallas, moved the remains of his son on April 12, 2006, PFC Cloyde Pinson Jr, USMC, KIA in Vietnam. Less than a week later, on April 18, Cloyde Sr. was laid to rest beside his son.



Cloyde Pinson Jr, PFC USMC KIA 1967



Cloyde Pinson Sr. and daughter Diane