



By Andy Marshall, Executive Director

December 2017

As of November, 2017 our membership was 63, 451. We need 1, 176 to make goal this year.

State Commander Frank Chicollo's Message

It was a pleasure to attend several Veterans' Days ceremonies as the Commander of DAV. The parade at James Haley VA Hospital was amazing. It has been many years since I participated in a parade as nice as the one held at James Haley VAH. It's unfortunate that there are not a lot more parades on Veteran's Day as a way to recognize our Nation's veterans. It seems as if more often the ceremonies are held in a park rather than on the streets. How can more people watch and participate in other parades, i.e., Thanksgiving Day Parade, New Year's Day Parade then a parade to honor our Nation's Veterans.

I hope everyone had a great Thanksgiving. We are now at that time of year when we spend more time with family and loved ones. I, as our Department Senior and Junior vice Commanders, will be visiting numerous chapters in the next few months. I will also attend a few Chapter Christmas parties.

I am looking forward to seeing many of you at the Chapter Service Officer's Certification Training and Midwinter Conference at Lake Mary. We hope to exceed our prior record of 204 Chapter Service Officer's participate in our CSO Certification Program. Remember, a Chapter Service Officer is our front line for service and membership recruitment. Service should be every chapter's priority.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!



Department Senior Vice Commander Brad Bouter's Message

I hope you all got stuffed at Thanksgiving. After visiting several chapters the past few months, I have noticed some chapters are missing having basic information and documents to operate a proper DAV chapter and it's meetings. I suggest all Chapter Commanders and Adjutants ensure they have the following documents at their chapter meetings:

A current copy of DAV National Constitution & Bylaws. (WWW.DAV.Org)

A current copy of the Department of Florida's Constitution and Bylaws. (WWW.DAVMembersPortal.org/FL)

A copy of your Chapter's Constitution & Bylaws.

A copy of the DAV Official Ritual (WWW.DAV.Org)

An up to date Department Directory. (Department Adjutant send one to each Chapter via e-mail)

I hope to see you at the Department's Mid-Winter Conference. Our goal is to have at least one member from each chapter attend our Midwinter Conference and Department Convention. Chapter's should attend and participate in Department activities. This is a way to obtain information and socialize with members from other chapters and see what they do in their communities.

Our National Representative at this year's Midwinter Conference will be National Commander Delphine Metcalf-Foster, the first female National Commander of any Veteran's Service Organization.

Department Junior Vice Commander Maryann Keckler's Message

This last month was a very busy month for me. I along with Department Commander Frank Chicollo participated in the Veteran's Day Parade held at James Haley VAH. The following day, Veteran's Day, I assisted with a local golf tournament for my Chapter (Chapter 67). On Monday, I volunteered at the local Golden Corral to help raise money for our local chapter.

As your VAVS Representative at James Haley VAH, I am working on the annual Christmas party for inpatients at the hospital.

I look forward to seeing you at the upcoming Mid-Winter Conference in January. Will see you in my travels also.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Chaplain's Message by Chaplain Chip

I hope all of you had a blessed Thanksgiving. Now it's time to continue our very festive time of year. Remember, December 7 is Pearl Harbor Day.

At sundown, December 12th begins the seven day eight night celebration of Chanukah which celebrates two things: a miracle in which one-days worth of oil burned in lamps for eight days and the victory of the Jewish freedom fighters over the Syrian-Greek forces that tried to wipe out Judaism. In a larger sense, Chanukah celebrates a reaffirmation of freedom and a recommitment to the spiritual quest.

On December 25th, we have the Christian celebration of the birth of Christ. The current celebration as we know it began under the Roman Emperor Constatine. Emperor Constatine met with Christian leaders and together they agreed to change the celebration of the winter solstice to celebrate the birth of Christ.

After coming into the house they saw they saw the Christ Child with his mother Mary; and they fell to the ground and worshiped him. Then opening their treasures, they presented to Him gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.

Happy Chanukah and Merry Christmas. Have a blessed month and see you in January at our Mid-Winter Conference.



MISCELLANEOUS NEWS

Effective December 11, the DAV St. Petersburg National Service Office will discontinue its appointment only policy to assist clients at their office. They will return to prior policy of no appointments and seeing clients on first come first serve basis from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm. The office will remain closed after 12:00 pm on Wednesdays for training purposes. Phone calls will be returned from 8:00 am.

The VA recently completed additional updates in their 1945 Schedule for Rating Disabilities with two recent updates to rating dental disabilities and endocrine system.

TESTIMONIAL DINNERS REMINDER

A reminder we will be hosting two testimonial dinners at our Conference in January.

On Thursday evening, we will honor Past National Commander and Past Department Adjutant/Executive Director Al Linden for his 30 years as our Department Adjutant. Under Al's stewardship, our Department's financial status grew to our current assets of over \$4 million.

On Saturday evening we will honor our DAV & DAVA Commanders Frank Chicollo and Betty Hess. **The theme will be the 1960's. This will be a time to drag out you old hippie jeans, glasses, hairdo's, jean jackets, tie dyed shirts, peace signs, etc.**

The 1960's a time of Peace, Love, War, Civil Rights, Space Exploration, Folk Music, The British Invasion, Assassination, Vietnam War, Cassius Clay, Riots, TV Shows like Beverly Hillbillies, Green Acres, Twilight Zone, Star Trek, Munsters, Movies like Good, Bad & the Ugly, Psycho, Sound of Music, Mary Poppins, Spartacus and The Graduate.

Below, Dr. Martin Luther King giving his "I Have A Dream" speech.



LEGISLATIVE NEWS

On October 26, 2017, Representative Stevan Pearce (NM) introduced H.R. 4146, the Disabled Veterans Life Insurance Act of 2017, a bill that would improve Service Disabled Veterans Insurance (S-DVI).

Currently, premium rates for S-DVI are based on the Commissioners 1941 Standard Ordinary Table of Mortality. This legislation would no longer use mortality rates from 1941 but would be based on the current industry standards and reduce premium payments.

To apply for S-DVI today, the application must be received within two years from the last date a service-connected disability is granted. If enacted, this bill would change the period from two years to ten years. H.R. 4146 would also increase initial life insurance coverage from \$10,000 to \$95,000.

Currently, supplemental coverage is available for additional costs. If H.R. 4146 is passed, it will increase the amount of supplemental coverage from \$30,000 to \$115,000.

DAV supports this bill as it aligns with DAV Resolutions Nos. 218 and 220. Please use the prepared email or draft your own to urge your Representative to be a co-sponsor of H.R. 4146.

We appreciate your support for DAV and your grassroots efforts in the DAV Commander's Action Network. Your advocacy makes DAV a highly influential and effective organization in Washington, DC. Your voice makes a difference and we would not be as effective without you.

Thank you for all you do for America's veterans and their families.

Click the link below to log in and send your message:

https://www.votervoice.net/BroadcastLinks/4sPd_QQoMAfBbgHJhMtyA

On November 2, 2017, President Trump signed Public Law 115-75, which provides a cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) increase of 2 percent, effective December 1, 2017, for veterans disability compensation and dependency and indemnity compensation (DIC) for survivors and certain other benefits. This increase matches the COLA provided to Social Security recipients.

This COLA benefits injured and ill veterans, their families and survivors by helping to maintain the value of VA benefits against inflation. Without annual COLAs, many disabled veterans, who sacrificed their own health and family life for the good of our nation, may not be able to maintain the quality of life they deserve.

We thank Representative Mike Bost (IL), Chairman of the House Veterans' Affairs Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs for introducing H.R. 1329-the *Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 2017*, and Congress for final passage of the bill on October 25, 2017.

Likewise, we appreciate your support for service-disabled veterans and your grassroots efforts in the DAV Commander's Action Network, which helped get this critical legislation enacted. Please share this information on all of your social media sites. Thank you for all you do for America's veterans and their families.

This alert is for your information only. No further action is required at this time.

Click the link below to log in and send your message:

<https://www.votervoice.net/BroadcastLinks/Ts7Lp3rwUpBgUcamEkTKng>



MILITARY DISCOUNT



Lowe's is proud to offer 10% off eligible purchases every day to active military personnel. Effective January 5th, 2018, enrollment will be required to continue receiving the military discount. Visit Lowe's.com/Military to enroll. Create or log in to your existing MyLowe's account and follow the on-screen instructions. We want to ensure your experience is simple. If you do not have a computer or Internet or would like additional assistance enrolling, please see an associate in store.

Enroll today at Lowe's.com/Military

See associate or Lowe's.com/Military Terms for terms and conditions.

PROUD RECIPIENT OF THE FREEDOM AWARD

We're honored to be recognized in 2016 by the US Department of Defense for our continued commitment to our military members.



ational Guard and Reserve members.

CHAPTER SERVICE OFFICER CERTIFICATION TRAINING
January 17 1:00 pm to noon January 20, 2018

In order to be certified as a DAV Chapter Service Officer you must attend training to receive your certification. Presenters include Chief Judge Robert Davis of the United States Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims; Robert Reynolds, PNC, Deputy Under Secretary for Disability Assistance, VA Central Office; John Kleindiest, VAVS Director DAV National Headquarters Cold Spring, KY; Scott Hope Deputy Service Director for Training DAV Service Headquarters Washington, D.C.; Department of Veterans Benefits Director, Service Center Manager and Assistant Service Center Manager St. Petersburg VARO and Veterans Hospital Directors.

Following the CSO Certification Program, our Department Mid-Winter Conference begins. Topics include Chapter Officer Training; Legislative updates (pending acceptance of Senator Nelson appearance); Benefits Protection Team Training; Officer reports; DSO reports; Testimonial dinners honoring our DAV & DAVA Department Commanders and Al Linden, PNC.

Both DAV and DAVA National Commanders will be at our CSO Training and Conference.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

December 7	Pearl Harbor Day
December 12	Hanukkah Begins
December 13	National Guard Birthday
December 20	Hanukkah Ends
December 21	First Day of Winter (Up North Especially)
December 24	Christmas Eve
December 25	Christmas Day
December 31	New Years Eve



Judge Advocate Message John Markiewicz



Article 10, Section 10.2 of the Department of Florida Constitution & Bylaws requires each Chapter adopt its own Constitution, Bylaws and Regulations. The Chapter's Constitution & Bylaws must not conflict with those of the Department or National Constitution & Bylaws. Further, these documents or amendments thereto must first be approved by the Department Judge Advocate and then by the National Judge Advocate and it also requires each Chapter provide the Department Executive Director with an approved copy of their Constitution & Bylaws, Articles of Incorporation and the State of Florida's approval letter containing the Corporation Number once they have been signed and approved.

The proper way to submit new Constitution & Bylaws or amendments/revisions thereto, is to send three copies of the full document to the Department of Florida Headquarters with the proposed revisions/amendments included and identified in red (or underlined if in black), and with an approval page for the signature of the Department and National Judge Advocates. The Department Judge Advocate will keep one copy for the Department and will sign and forward the remaining two copies to the National Judge Advocate. After approval by the National Judge Advocate, a copy will be retained at National Headquarters and the remaining copy will be returned to the Chapter with the required signatures by the Department and National Judge Advocates.

In this age of computers and printers there is no reason to take shortcuts nor to submit revisions/amendments with pen and scratch outs and scribbled changes that are at times, difficult to read. You are strongly encouraged to download the Model Constitution & Bylaws on the National Headquarters website and fill in the blanks on your computer.

Happy Hanukkah and Merry Christmas.

