CALIFORNIA DAVA NEWS

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COMMANDERS MESSAGE

Commander Joel Adema

Let me start with a Thank You to all of the units and members that have supported me. It was an action packed state convention that put me in the position of Auxiliary Commander. I am proud to be in that position. I am looking forward to the year ahead. Past State Commander Joe Plescia, the first male commander of the DAVA, and his line officers did an excellent job. We must not forget the role of the Auxiliary. We are here to help Veterans in any way possible. Julie our new Sr Vice, has an idea to change the Auxiliary's delivery of their message, that is to have information fairs. Both of these ideas are aimed at helping support the families of vets. These are great ideas. I am open to all

Continued on page 2

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

1 Commanders message; Membership

2 Surviving Spouse Seminar

3 Scholarship; Calendar of events

4 Americanism

Membership Chairman

I am so proud to have been elected our State's Auxiliary's Sr Vice Commander. I never thought I'd ever be a part of the DAVA Department of California. My husband Michael became an active member on the Chapter side. DAV was *his* thing. An Auxiliary was something my mother joined when we were kids; she had time on her hands. I certainly did not. What's more, the whole idea of the Auxiliary seemed like the place men sent their wives while they did "real" business, and that made me mad!

I'm not even sure why I went to my first meeting. I do remember that I was welcomed. This has not always been true in my life. You may or may not know that I have cerebral palsy and use a wheelchair. Much of my life I have struggled to find a community where I am accepted. The DAV Auxiliary is a special group. You listened patiently as I spoke. You invited me to join in on all of your activities without hesitation. You had the confidence in my abilities to appoint me to various positions. Most importantly, you became my friends.

I know that this newsletter is the only contact many of you have with DAVA. I share my personal experience in hopes

Continued page 3
MEMBERSHIP

Commanders message continued from page 1

ideas that will make our organization more visible. I am prepared to help where ever and whenever I can.

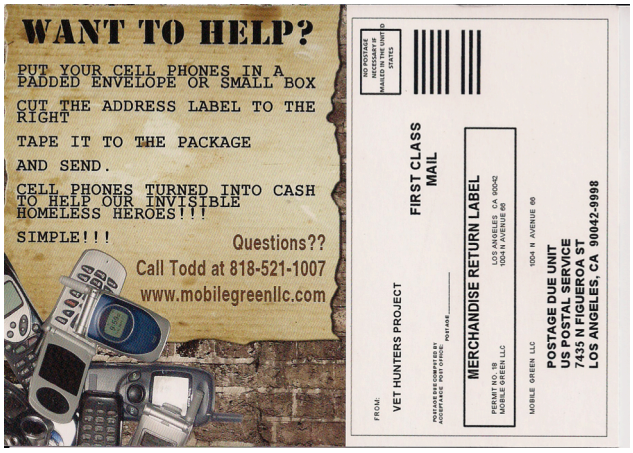
We must not forget membership is the life blood of the organization. This last year there was an exciting change made nationally in membership eligibility. We can now compete with other groups for new members. Now is the time.

The other programs we need to promote are The Freedom Foundation, Scholarships, Americanism and Support our Troops. We must focus on them. These programs need financial support from our units. We need to make sure the participants in these programs are members.

I am looking forward to the National Convention in New Orleans, LA. I plan on gathering as much information as possible. I want to learn how we can make DAVA Department of California stronger better. We need to always Be Prepared and help a Vet.

Thanks for your support.

Joel Adema



Surviving Spouse Benefits.

Susan Linder, Adjutant

I decided to have a seminar at our State convention. I hope it will be the first of many. It was received well by all who attended. Paul Verela, NSO conducted the seminar and dispelled a lot of hear say. I am including a overview of the seminar as it was quite long. But it was very informative. I also have all the forms that are necessary to file. Paul stressed that we should all be prepared and have a plan in play. If you have a plan, then you don't have to get read in a time of stress. I am going to send out one package to each unit Adjutant. They can either make copies of the packet or individuals can contact me and I can send out the packet to them. Everyone needs this information but I do not want to spend the postage if there are members who are not ready or do not want to fill it out. If you have a computer or access to one the forms are on the VA website. You need form VA # 21-22 to declare the DAV as your representative. Just because they represent your spouse that does not entitle you to representation by the DAV. This is power of attorney so the DAV can handle your claim and help with your any benefits you may have. The process can take 9-12 months so do not delay. There are a lot of do's and don'ts so stay on top of things so you are not left in dire straights. You must notify the VA ASAP to stop the checks for his disability because when they find out they will ask for all money back and will reissue you the check for the month the spouse passed away. The application for DIC is VA form 21#534. It is the claim for several things. Right now your veteran needs to ask the VA for a statement of disability. Please read the article as it goes into detail and if you have questions call me or call the closest DSO or NSO. Some chapters now have CSO that have been trained. At mid-winter conference we will have a seminar of Champus benefits. Please try to attend and let us know other subjects I can bring to you. I am here for you.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

NATIONAL CONVENTION
August 6 - 9, 2011
Hilton New Orleans Riverfront
2 Poydras St
New Orleans, LA 70140
Telephone: 504.561.0500
$124 Single/Double

FALL CONFERENCE
September 29 - October 1, 2011
Hilton Cincinnati Netherland Plaza
35 West Fifth Street
Cincinnati, OH 45202
Telephone: 513.421.9100
Reservations: 1.800.HILTONS

NATIONAL CONVENTION
August 9 - 12, 2012
Bally's Las Vegas Hotel and Casino
3645 Las Vegas Blvd South
Las Vegas, NV 89109
Telephone: 1.800.634.3434
$112 Single/Double

FALL CONFERENCE
September 27 - 29, 2012
Lexington Downtown Hilton
369 W. Vine Street
Lexington, KY 40507
Telephone: 859.231.9000
$109 Single/Double

We must not forget to thank the DAV State department of California, for their generous

Membership
(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)
that some of you reach out to us, so we may include you in our community.
The DAV Auxiliary is our nation's best kept secret. Not enough people know about our organization. Worse yet many of those who do, share my original impressions and stay away. I don't believe we can talk too much about the importance of membership and belonging to this organization. We, the family members of disabled veterans, are a force that cares for veterans, supports the caregivers, and provides scholarships to eligible members. We can serve more people and in turn, bring in more members and volunteers. *By Julie Weissman-Steinbaugh*

Note from Scholarship Chairman:

Thank you to all of the units, chapters, and individuals who donated money to the DAVA scholarship fund this year. From these generous donations the scholarship committee was able to grant six $500.00 scholarships to needy applicants that meet the criteria. Thank you to Julie Steinbaugh and John Medvigy who helped me review the applicants. I will be sending application information out again to all of the chapters and units in January 2012 and the return

help each year in our financial needs. The office support is always there to give a helping hand or advice. Thank you so much.

AMERICANISM:

Chairman Jr. Vice DeDe Cole:

Hello there! Dede K. Cole here newly elected California DAVA State Jr. Vice Commander, and the newly elected Birmingham Hospital Chapter DAVA Unit #73 Commander. Thank You! Thank you! I have been preparing, for what feels like all my life… years to be blessed with an opportunity to serve. The men and women serving today in our military armed forces, live in my mind, heart and prayers 24/7.
I light a candle *every night* to thank all the service men and women who came before, came to serve this great country America paying the ultimate price to insure freedom for all within our borders.
I light a candle *every night* to thank all the injured service men and women, more than 37,000 in service today were injured in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, I thank them for carrying out this perpetual mission;

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To insure that no man or woman serving

There is a job to do!

This is a story of four people named, EVERYBODY, SOMEBODY, ANYBODY, AND NOBODY. There was an important job to be done and EVERYBODY was asked to do it. ANYBODY could have done it, but NOBODY did it. SOMEBODY got angry about that, because it was EVERYBODY'S job. EVERYBODY thought ANYBODY could do it. But NOBODY realized that EVERYBODY wouldn't do it. Consequently, it wound up that NOBODY told ANYBODY so everybody blamed SOMEBODY.



On Independence Day
we celebrate
the freedoms earned
by those who