CALIFORNIA DAVA NEWSLETTER

Volume 1, Issue 1 **July 2013**

Highlights from the State Convention

Julie Weissman-Steinbaugh
DAVA State Adjutant

We had many firsts at the 84th DAVA convention. Registration was done jointly with the DAV. This created a more united welcome for attendees. Our convention program contained information for both DAV and DAVA members. DAV Adjutant Dan Contreras ensured that the DAVA was represented on this year's California State pin.

Another first was the timing of the Joint Memorial Service. It was held on Thursday morning before our Business Session which encouraged greater attendance.

The Wise Owls' Club (which is made up of State Past State Commanders) also had its own 'first'; Joe Plescia, PSC and Joel Adema, PSC were initiated into their ranks. Congratulations to both MEN!

Our guest, National 1st Jr. Vice Commander, LeeAnn Karg was very impressed by the operations of our Department. During her presentation to our SEC, she spoke about DAVA's Strategic Plan. This document outlines our Mission and Values. It also presents Goals, Issues, and Strategies to ensure the growth of our Auxiliary. LeeAnn highly encouraged all Units to review this document. She also quizzed us about rules regarding DAVA membership. Correct answers were rewarded with candy!

Our Annual Forget-Me-Not Luncheon was held in a beautiful room which overlooked a lake. Convention Chair, Colleen Armelin created wonderfully patriotic themed centerpieces for the

Continued on page 4

Commander's Message



Mary Lou Caldwell
Commander

Thank you to all the auxiliary members for your friendship and support at the state convention in Sacramento. I am honored that you have chosen me as your commander for the year 2013-2014

My theme for the coming year is ***Pulling Together***, by strengthening bonds within the Auxiliary and working closer with the DAV.

In my small town of Sierra Madre, located in the foothills of the San Gabriel Mountains we have learned we have to pull together to continue to thrive. Through wild fires, earthquakes, mudslides, devastating wind storms, and now drought we pull together to make things work. Across generations we work together; Each according to their ability pulls part of the load in the same direction.
As a clinical Pharmacist in a major medical center, for 35 years I am accustomed to functioning as part of a team, and I plan to draw on these experiences in the coming year.

I have listened to your feedback and I know you want more information and better communication, and I completely agree.

Our Newsletter will be Quarterly and will be mailed to all unit Adjutants and available to ***All Members*** on line at the website www.dava-ca.com. You can print the newsletter and have your own copy.

Continued on page 2

Meet Our Jr. Vice Commander:

Jean White

It is an honor and privilege to be elected as your Auxiliary Junior Vice Commander for the Department of California. I began with the Auxiliary as a Junior member in Woodland Hills, Unit 73 and the Disabled American Veterans is very close to my heart. I served several years at the Unit level as Junior and Senior Vice and 3 years as Auxiliary Commander for Unit 73. I recently moved to Paradise, and can say it IS everything its name implies! I look forward to a great year as your Americanism chairperson.

Commander's Continued from page 1

National has spent several years and thousands of hours assessing the organization's strengths, weaknesses, and challenges and opportunities before arriving at the organizations strategic Plan which is a blueprint for the DAVA's future. This plan was presented at the National Convention in Las Vegas last year. The plan is intended to be flexible and responsive to the every changing needs of disabled veterans and their families.

It is my goal to familiarize the units and members with this three page document. A great deal of time, thought and experience went into the Plan's preparation.

Fundraising Success



Jill Dahlen
Fundraising Chair

The Auxiliary put the ***fun*** back in fundraising this year. We started in January with a successful mid-winter fundraising event of four great raffle baskets.

The momentum continued at Convention. Donations of raffle baskets were at an all-time high of ten amazing baskets. There were handcrafted items donated by members; a Purple Heart afghan and two prayer quilts. Although the final number has not been announced, it is around $3500.00. This is a fantastic showing of the auxiliary working together.

Something new this year was raising money for specific programs that the Auxiliary supports. During the DAV Sr. and Jr. Vice reception, Thursday night, there was a put your friend in jail for $1.00 and bail them out for $2.00. The money raised went to the Camp Korral 4 Kids. Everyone had a fun time at this event and we raised a lot of money too!

Another first this year was a silent auction. There were three beautiful birdhouses made and donated by Dennis Weber, PSC. This was a very successful fundraiser and something to keep in mind for next year.

The product sales went well with baseball caps and candy bars being added to the selection along with the t-shirts. If you would like to purchase any of these items for your Unit or Chapter please let me know and we can make arrangements. These would make nice prizes for your Christmas parties or summer picnics. The state raffle prizes this year of a Kindle, Canon Camera and Sony TV were as always a huge success.

I would like to thank everyone for helping with this year's fundraising activities.

Membership Report

Mary Lou Caldwell,
Chair

2013 was a very good year for Membership! I'm proud to announce that Unit 22 has successfully re-opened. Special thanks to Kathy Salazar, their newly elected Commander, for all her efforts.

Membership received a donation of $300 through the efforts of James Bogan. These funds were earmarked for Life Membership payments. All active units were entered in a drawing for 6 awards of $ 50 each to be applied to **Life** membership payments. Units 84, 70, 92, 6, 13, and 23 each received a ***credit*** to be used toward **Life** Membership payments.

Unit 22 and Unit 157 each won $50 for most new members. Pat Spaulding, Unit 157, and I won $25 for being our Department's top recruiters. Congratulations to all!

Legislative Update

Alma Fowlkes,PSC,
Chair, 2012-13

One of the bills on DAV's legislative agenda is HR 32: Military Surviving Spouses Equity Act. This bill would eliminate the unfair, but required, offset of amounts paid in dependency and indemnity compensation from Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) annuities. Survivors who live on fixed incomes would benefit tremendously from the extra income this bill would provide.

HR 32 was referred to a congressional committee on January 3, 2013. *Govtrack.us* predicts that there is only a 48% chance that the Bill will get past committee.

You can make a difference! Please contact your Representatives and ask them to support HR 32: Military Surviving Spouses Equity Act.

Freedoms Foundation



Jill Dahlen,
Chair

Good news for the Freedoms Foundation. It looks like we will be able to send students to the American Leaders Youth Summit in 2014. This is a three-day conference for high school students, sophomore to senior age level. The conference includes students from all over the United States. This is an educational experience that will not be forgotten. Students have the opportunity to study current issues, develop leadership skills, and explore the foundation of the American political process.

When funds are available the Auxiliary tries to send from 3-4 students to the conference. The requirements for a student to be eligible are a minimum 3.0 grade point average, a letter of recommendation, and a letter from the student expressing their desire to attend.

This is an Auxiliary sponsored event and all tuition and transportation for the students and chaperone are paid in full by the Auxiliary. The average cost is about $1000.00 per person.

Information regarding the conference for 2014 will be sent out to the Units later this year. This will include dates and applications for students. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions regarding Freedoms Foundation.

Thank you for your support and contributions, without it we would be unable to send students to this excellent program.

Chaplain's Corner

Betty Quintana, Chaplain

Thank you for all your confidence in my moral integrity to be the chaplain. I assure you all that I will strictly and impartially fulfill all my duties as chaplain.

My husband, Ralph, and I are extremely family-oriented. We both feel the Disabled American Veterans and the DAV Auxiliary are a part of our extended family. We have a lot of brothers and sisters.

As chaplain I want to be diverse, intercultural, and non-denominational. My main goal is to help and support people in need.

Our prayers are with the men and women who are risking their lives each day to protect our great country.

Kindness of thought…

Convention Continued from pg 1

tables. The event was a fitting tribute to Gold Star Mothers. These women have lost sons and daughters in the service to our country.

Outside our meetings we all had a lot of fun. Monterey Bay Veterans, INC. offered free cruises up the Sacramento River. Karaoke night offered many of us an opportunity to show off our musical "talents". Fun Night was held at Thunder Valley Casino. In addition to gambling, many of us braved over 100 degree weather to see Cheap Trick, Pat Benatar, and Neil Giraldo in concert.

At our Final Business Session, elections were held: Mary Lou Caldwell was elected Commander; John Medvigy was elected Sr. Vice Commander; Jean White was elected Jr. Vice Commander; June McJunkin was elected Treasurer; and Donna Stinnett was re-elected as Judge Advocate.

Convention ended with the traditional, "Commanders' Reception". This year, a DJ/Vocalist entertained. We all left Sacramento, tired but re-energized to serve veterans with disabilities and their families.

Auxiliary Service Support Fund

Dolores Wingett,
Chair

DAVA stands by our members in times of need through our Department's Auxiliary Service Support Fund.

Senior Members who find they are temporarily unable to meet outstanding financial obligations such as utility bills, mortgage payments, hospital bills, etc. can obtain one-time financial assistance up to, but not more than, $500. During 2012-13, two requests were honored.

There is a simple application process. Details can be found on our website or by calling our State Adjutant.

Congratulations!!



DAVA National Educational Scholarship Fund

Josephine Majorana, University of Pennsylvania

PFC Richard De Wade Memorial Fund

Devon Farnan, CSU San Diego

DAVA California Scholarship Fund

Zachard Kinzel, College of Western Idaho

Thomas E. Williams, CSU Sacramento

Reminders from Headquarters

- **Membership Initiation** — Members are not required to be initiated in order to be considered a member in good standing. The membership initiation may be given at a business meeting held for the purpose of officer elections. Units do not vote on acceptance of new members.

- **Life Membership** — Down payment for a life membership is $20. If a life membership is not paid in full at the end of three membership years, the membership shall continue only as long as there are sufficient funds to make the annual distribution. This plan essentially extends the payment time beyond the three-full-membership year requirement so long as the member pays enough on their life membership each year to make the July 1 membership distribution. Remember that dues paid on an annual membership may not be applied toward a life membership.

- ***Unit Decisions*** *— Unit officers do not have the authority to arbitrarily overrule or change unit decisions agreed upon by the unit body at a regular business meeting. All decisions must be documented in meeting minutes.*

- **Unit Mail** — It is the responsibility of unit adjutants to receive all unit correspondence. As the designated recipient to receive the mail, adjutants have the duty to see that the information is shared with officers and members. It is not the personal mail of the adjutant. Communication is the key to success!

- **Unit Meetings** — Units are required to have a minimum of four meetings per year. However, more meetings are encouraged to maintain momentum for Auxiliary projects and services. Be creative with those “non” monthly meetings. Invite guest speakers; schedule a pot-luck and invite potential members; review DAV legislative endeavors and have a round table discussion about ways to communicate with lawmakers.

Elected & Appointed Officers

COMMANDER
Mary Lou Caldwell
Unit #19
(626) 355-8941

SR. VICE COMMANDER
John Medvigy
Unit #157
(661) 366-6666

JR. VICE COMMANDER
Jean White
Unit #73
(530) 876-0306

IMMEDIATE PAST COMMANDER & Adjutant
Julie Weissman-Steinbaugh, PSC
Unit #7
(510) 926-2529

TREASURER
June McJunkin
Unit 6
(530) 673-3859

CHAPLAIN
Betty Quintana
Unit 92
(760) 243-3032

Judge Advocate
Donna Stinnett, PSC
Unit 106
(530) 532-4207

NEC Representative
Dori Yuen Bogan, PSC
Unit 11
(530) 532-4207

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

FALL CONFERENCE

HILTON CINCINNATI NETHERLAND PLAZA

OCTOBER 3 – 6, 2013

DAV / DAVA MID WINTER CONFERENCE

CROWNE PLAZA HOTEL, SAN DIEGO

TIME SPECIAL EVENT

JANUARY 24 – 26, 2014

NATIONAL MID WINTER CONFERENCE

CRYSTAL GATEWAY MARRIOTT

FEBRUARY 23 – 26, 2014

DAV / DAVA DEPT OF CALIFORNIA ANNUAL CONVENTION

CROWNE PLAZA HOTEL, SAN DIEGO

JUNE 6 – 9, 2014

DAVA DEPT. OF CA: www.dava-ca.com

We're on the Web!

DAVA, DEPT OF CALIFORNIA

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Sante Fe Springs, CA 90670

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

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City, State 98765-4321