DAV Auxiliary Making a Difference

CALIFORNIA NEWS

Volume 2, Issue 2 Summer/Fall 2014



Commander's Message

Mary Lou Caldwell
Commander

I am fresh back from our National Convention in Las Vegas, with a tote full of ideas. There was a common theme as I exchanged ideas and experiences with DAV and DAV Auxiliary members from different States; we come from different backgrounds but we are still the same. Many of our challenges are very similar, no matter where you live in this country. The diversity lies in the road we travel to a productive solution. It was the unanimous feeling that the DAV and DAV Auxiliary must work together for the health and growth of the organization. This philosophy was clearly delivered in the messages of our new National Commanders, DAV Auxiliary commander, LeeAnn Karg and DAV commander Ron Hope.

On this point California can be a model for other districts which are striving for better communication. The DAV and DAV Auxiliary in the Department of California have already signed a memorandum of understanding outlining the duties and relationships of the two branches of the DAV in California.

The California Auxiliary was well represented in Las Vegas; all of our line officers attended the convention, along with five past state commanders. In addition to these individuals, many Auxiliary Units sent delegates.

Significant changes to the National Bylaws were approved. There will no longer be a yearly membership. As of July 1, 2015 all memberships will be life memberships. Also on this date Junior memberships will become complimentary. These changes which will be enacted next July should make membership recruitment and retention more successful. You will be receiving more detailed information on these changes in the coming weeks.

Nationally The DAV is preparing for the first 5-k run/walk on the West Coast in San Diego on November 9, 2014. Be on the lookout for information in upcoming mailings. I will be in San Diego, with my husband Gordon as a volunteer, along our Adjutant Julie, and other Auxiliary member. I encourage members to volunteer for this event and help make it an over the top success. This is a wonderful way to work together while having a great time.

Thank you for your support!

Mary Lou



Congratulations! !

Membership of our Department is growing! We surpassed our National Quota for 2013-14.

Suzane Romero (pictured above center) of Unit #157, was awarded a snow globe from National for recruiting more than 15 members.

Also, at our recent National Convention, Unit #157 was recognized for its increased membership.



Membership News

John A. Medvigy
Sr. Vice Commander

I'm greatly honored to be reelected as Senior Vice-Commander, of what in my opinion, is the best Department of the DAVA! The main responsibility of my position is to be the Chair the Membership Committee. I'd like to convey my apologies to those Units that worked hard on membership this year and did not get recognized for their efforts. Through a glitch in communication, the information was not received, and awards were not given. Actions taken will prevent this again.

As '13-'14 came to an end, I went to San Diego for the annual Department Convention. For the Membership Committee, the two highlights were when DAVA National Commander Susan Miller praised the Department that had made quota for the first time in many years. She also presented Susie Romero, Unit #157, with the *"Reach For The Stars"* Snow Globe Award, awarded to those individuals who have recruited at least 15 new members in that year.

As '14-'15 began in July, things already looked great for the Department. When the Convention ended, Modesto Chapter told me they decided to start an Auxiliary Unit. At the end of June, Palm Springs Chapter asked for papers to start another Unit. New quotas have been set by National Headquarters for each Unit in the Department and a few have already attained. By the end of July, Unit #157 had already reached the quota for '14-'15 and I have heard other Units had, too. I hope all Units will notify me when they have achieved quota.

In August, I attended National Convention in Las Vegas, NV, and sat on the Legislation Committee. Many reports were submitted, but sadly, several reports were not viewed, as some categories had no information. To compete for an award, Units must have submitted hours for Federal, State ***AND*** Local. Each category carries the same number of points (30), so even if a Unit has hundreds of hours in two categories, it is virtually impossible to be considered without points in ALL areas.

Major changes have and/or will take place within the

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Americanism

Samantha Galliher
Jr. Vice Commander

It was my honor and privilege to attend the National Convention in Las Vegas this year as the Junior Vice Commander for the Auxiliary. During our District meeting I was nominated to be the representative for the Americanism Committee. I was excited as this would be my first opportunity to see what other Units were doing to show their support and discover new ideas that I could share with our District.

There are so many great things that you can do in your unit throughout the year to show your support. The overall goal of the committee is to select a winning unit that shows the most efforts in Americanism. Our group ended up choosing a Unit in South Dakota that, in our opinion, had gone above and beyond. Some of the things they did were to place flags at their local Veterans cemetery on Memorial Day, Veterans Day, and Fourth of July; hosting a Vietnam Veterans 50th Anniversary celebration, participating in the wreath ceremony on Memorial Day and Veterans day, visiting the local Veterans hospital, and having an essay and coloring contest with the local elementary schools and having an awards ceremony with over 300 students and their families. These were just some of the highlights this unit did throughout the year. Congratulations to all the units that showed their support and to the winner.... Wow!! Amazing Job!

I left the meeting feeling very inspired to share these ideas with both my local unit and with you. I encourage everyone to get together with their units and share ideas and make an effort to continue supporting the Americanism program. Whether it is through an essay contest, placing flags, participating in Veterans celebrations, I think we can all show our support and thanks to the men and women who have served.

I thank you for all your wonderful and amazing efforts. God Bless each and every one of you.

State Convention Highlights









This year's State Convention was held in San Diego. We were very honored that National Commander Susan Miller was our guest. During our time together, she helped answer many procedural questions. During her address to our SEC and guests, we played a Q&A game in which participants could demonstrate their knowledge of DAVA policies and procedures. Winners were awarded with various pins.

Sr. Vice Commander John A. Medvigy awarded cerrificates to over a dozen units who made or exceeded membership quota for 2013-14. Susan Romero from Unit #157 was recognized by National for her exceptional work in recruiting new members. For the first year in many years, our state department met our national membership quota. Thank you all who recruited and joined our department!

Fun night featured a 70's era band and carnival booths. Some people even dug deep into their closets and dressed for the occassion!

We are thrilled to announce that Commander Mary Lou Caldwell and Sr. Vice Commander John A. Midvidgy were elected to second terms! We welcome Samantha Galliher to the line as Jr. Vice Commander!

























Thoughts About Togetherness

Julie Weissman-Steinbaugh, PSC, Adjutant, NEC

LeeAnn Karg, our newly elected National Commander, has made "Together as One" her theme this year. State Commander Mary Lou Caldwell's continued theme is "Pulling Together". Although LeeAnn was our national guest last year, I don't think that she plagiarized! These two women are way too intelligent.

Instead, their themes speak to a basic organizational truth. We are desperately in need of "togetherness". The Merriam-Webster online dictionary defines the word *together* as, "with each other" or "in or into one group, mixture, piece, etc."

Sadly, our Department has many Units on hold or in the midst of disbanding. This is the norm in other states as well. Our beloved Auxiliary is in real danger. In this context, it is completely understandable why our leaders are urging all of to band together.

The question at hand is how to put this call "to be together" to work. On a State level, I am proud to have been part of the team responsible for the Memorandum of Understanding between the DAV and the DAV Auxiliary. This historic agreement outlines the internal operations of our groups. It provides a framework to create a more meaningful partnership.

State DAV Adjutant, Dan Contreras and I plan to seek out further ways to maximize our joint recruitment and retention efforts. Currently, DAV California offers its chapters an opportunity to send two members to our State Convention through its C-CAP program. We should reach out to all these participants to identify family members who would benefit by Auxiliary membership. Once these potential members are identified, we must show them the importance of joining together in supporting our veterans and ourselves.



PSC Recognized for Her Tireless Efforts

Alma Fowlkes, PSC was awarded Honorable Mention for 2014 PAST NATIONAL COMMANDERS' AWARD DAVA OUTSTANDING MEMBER OF THE YEAR.

Alma has been an active and Lifetime member of Unit #123 for almost 50 years. She has been the VAVS chairman for the DAV Auxiliary for at least 16 years. In addition she served as the VAVS Executive Chairperson for West Los Angeles Medical Center Executive Board and Town Hall Meeting. Along with her deputies she provides entertainment and fruit to the patients in the Nursing Home at West Los Angeles Medical center, The also serve as Hostesses for the Fisher House when they have events. She provides gifts to patients on Veterans Day, serves Pop Corn, assists with refreshments at patient activities hosted by other VA organizations.

Alma has participated in countless community service projects which benefit all areas of society. She co-founded the Yvonne B Burke Senior and Community Center in 2008 as a non profit community center serving disadvantaged populations in South Los Angeles. She pushed the project form the selection of the plot of land to the completion and occupation of the building. She was never too proud to roll up her sleeves and work. She is a people person who is able to motivate people to greater achievement.

Our Department is truly blessed to count Alma as one of our own!

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next year. First, effective immediately, the number of members present for quorum has been changed from five to four, and one member must be the Commander or Senior Vice. The next change, effective 01 July 2015, Junior members will no longer need to pay fees until the age of 18, but Juniors will be encouraged to start payments towards Life membership. Once these payments are started, the price for Life membership will be locked-in, even if increases are made in age categories in the future. Finally, it was decided that Annual memberships will be eliminated, also effective 01 July 2015. Also, life membership will start with $20, with nearly unlimited length of time to complete payments.



Togetherness Continued from page 4

It is time, actually way past time, for Auxiliary members to dedicate ourselves to "togetherness"! Firstly, as individuals, let's commit ourselves to seeking out disabled veterans and their families to ask to participate in our activities. Secondly, I call upon Unit leadership to follow your State Department's lead by mending any broken fences with your Chapter if they exist. Thirdly, work with DAV members to rebuild our amazing organizations.

Only together will we continue our service to disabled veterans and their families.



Chaplain's Corner

Betty Quintana, Chaplain

Hi to all my DAV and Auxiliary members. We have just returned from Las Vegas from attending the DAV National Convention. The Convention was very informative. We need to continue to pray for our government and their decisions they are making for our VA system, so our Veterans can get the proper care that is needed. May we pray each day for world peace and for the active duty members that are in harm's way. God Bless you all.



What are National Mandates?

Each membership year, national headquarters shall withhold the sum of twenty five dollars ($25.00) from each unit's per capita distribution to cover the national mandates in order for the unit to be eligible to vote at a national convention.

National Convention 2014

Las Vegas, NV





























Member Resources



Financial Hardship Assistance

DEPARTMENT OF CALIFORNIA AUXILIARY VETERANS FUND:
Provides a one-time grant up to $1,000 to pay bills.
http://dava-ca.com/docs/AUXILIARY%20VETERANS%20FUND%20APPLICATION.pdf

NATIONAL DAVA SERVICE SUPPORT FUND:
Assists those who find they are temporarily unable to meet outstanding financial obligations such as utility bills, mortgage payments, hospital bills, etc. This is a one-time grant of up to $1,000.
http://auxiliary.dav.org/membership/Programs.aspx



Scholarships

STATE OF CALIFORNIA DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS AUXILIARY SCHOLARSHIP:
Provides financial assistance for books.
http://dava-ca.com/services.htm **Deadline: May 1, 2015**

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS AUXILIARY NATIONAL EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIP FUND:
Amount of a scholarship can be up to, but not more than $1500 per year for a maximum of 5 years. **Deadline: March 15, 2015**
http://**auxiliary**.dav.org/membership/documents/**ScholarshipApplication**.xls

Jesse Brown Scholarship:
It recognizes outstanding young volunteers who give of their time by awarding annual scholarships that may be used to continue their education.
http://auxiliary.dav.org/membership/documents/scholarshiprules.pdf

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
Samantha Galliher
Unit #2
(530) 876-0306

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
Alma Fowlkes, PSC
Unit #123
(310) 410-4549

NEC Representative
Julie Weissman-Steinbaugh, PSC
Unit #7
(510) 926-2529

ALTERNATE NEC
Melissa Valdez
Unit #12
(909) 838-2634

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Sante Fe Springs, CA 90670

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED



MIDWINTER CONFERENCE

January 23-24, 2015
Doubletree
1 Doubletree Dr.
Rohnert Park, CA 94928
(707) 584-5466

DEPARTMENT CONVENTION

June 10-13, 2015
Peppermill Resort & Casino
2707 S. Virginia St.
Reno, NV 89502
(775) 826-2121