



**FULFILLING OUR PROMISES**  
TO THE MEN AND WOMEN WHO SERVED

Disabled American Veterans, Department of Ohio  
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January, 2014

**FROM THE DESK OF DENNY HANNEMAN**

I would like to thank everyone for the warm wishes over the holidays. The cards and the telephone calls were greatly enjoyed. Darlene and I attended several Christmas parties with our DAV family and friends. We had a very wonderful time with food, and fellowship. We are sorry about the Christmas parties that we missed because of the weather. Winter snow came early this year.

The first part of December was the DAV annual Christmas Bingo Party at the Ohio Veterans Home in Sandusky. Many, many thanks for all the help our DAV Department's Volunteer Representative and Deputy-Representative did for putting the party together. Many DAV and DAVA Ohio Chapters have helped and assisted for many years. I want to thank each and every one who attended, worked, and provided food, and money to make it a very special holiday event for our veterans at the Sandusky Home.

I also want to remind you that the month of December has special history for our country. December 6<sup>th</sup>- On this day in 1884 in Washington, D.C. workers completed an impressive monument to the city's namesake and the nation's first president, George Washington. The monument was the tallest structure in the world at the time of its completion in December of 1884.

December 25<sup>th</sup>- On this day in 1914 just after midnight on Christmas morning, the majority of German troops engaged in World War I ceased firing their guns and artillery and commenced to sing Christmas carols. The so-called Christmas Truce of 1914 came only five months after the outbreak of war in Europe and was one of the last

examples of the outdated notion of chivalry between enemies in warfare. In 1915, the bloody conflict of World War I erupted in all its technological fury, and the concept of another Christmas Truce became unthinkable.

For those attending the C & A Midwinter conference in Washington D.C. February 22 – 26, 2014, please contact your representative and make an appointment to share concerns and issues of the DAV.

At the root of any democracy, there must be a means for citizens to make their government aware of their views and opinions. The simplest way to accomplish this is by voting. Another more direct way is to WRITE letters to your elected representatives to urge specific action or passage of upcoming legislation. Help the VETERANS and their families, help yourself – Write letters to your Representatives. The issues for the VETERANS and their families have had major problems these last several months, one for them being INCOME support.

**CONGRESS**

Before you write a letter to your representative, you need to know who he or she is. Obtain the names and districts of U.S. Senators at [Senate.gov](http://Senate.gov). and to identify members of the House of Representatives, go to [Writerep.house.gov](http://Writerep.house.gov). The mailing address will also be listed as well as a telephone number besides online E-mail.

**HEADING**

Members of Congress are addressed as the Honorable in all written correspondence. At the head of your letter, write The Honorable and then

the full name of your Senator or House Representative. On the following line, put the room number and either the house or senate office building. On the next two lines, write: United States Senate or United States House of Representative, Washington, D.C., and the appropriate ZIP code. Begin the letter with: Dear Senator or Dear Representative, followed by the last name of your rep.

**LETTERHEAD**

If you are writing as a representative of a company or organization, use professional letterhead. If you wish to send a personal note, be certain to include your full name and address. You may also wish to include an email address and phone number.

**TONE**

Regardless of the reason you are contacting your representative, your tone should be respectful and courteous. Address you representative as Mr., Mrs., or Ms. Throughout the letter and use a formal tone.

**CONTENT**

Write in a clear and concise manner, keeping the letter to a single page if possible. Give background information, but get to the point as quickly as you can. Also be sure to state if you live in the representative's district.

**CLOSING**

Conclude your letter by thanking your representative for his or her time and any hoped for effort on your behalf. Be certain to include a way for the legislator to get in touch with you.

Sign your name.

Send the letter with the correct postage. Thank you for taking the time to do this. Letters are very important to the DAV in getting our concerns addressed.

Dennis Hanneman  
Department Commander of Ohio, DAV

**IMPORTANT NUMBERS**

Nat'l. Hdqrs., DAV	(877) 426-2838
NSO Office, Cleveland	(216) 522-3507
NSO Office, Cincinnati	(513) 684-2676
Washington Office, DAV	(202) 554-3501
Cincinnati HSC, Tom Kirstein	(513) 475-6443
Dayton HSC, Leland Sink	(937) 268-6511
	Ext. 2962
Dayton HSC,	(937) 268-6511
Patricia Alteslane	Ext. 2962
Wade Park HSC,	(216) 791-3800
Walter Dryja	Ext. 3395
Chillicothe HSC	(740) 773-1141
Larry Queen	Ext. 7916
Columbus Clinic,	(614) 257-5487
Henry Snodgrass	
Parma Clinic,	(216) 739-7000
Richard Healy	Ext. 2405

**DATES TO REMEMBER**

January 7, 2014	Trench Rats Dugout Meeting, 9000 Reading Road, Reading, Ohio.
February 23-26, 2014	C&A Midwinter Conference, Crystal Gateway Marriott, 1700 Jefferson Davis Highway, Arlington, VA.
March 29, 2014	DAV and DAVA Commander's Dennis Hanneman and Mary Lou Miller Testimonial Dinner, The Findlay Inn, Findlay, Ohio.
April 5, 2014	5 <sup>th</sup> District Meeting, at 1 p.m., Norwalk, Ohio.
April 5, 2014	1 <sup>st</sup> District Meeting, Meeting to begin at noon, picnic to follow, Chapter #15, Veterans Park, 20 New London Road, Hamilton, Ohio.
April 6, 2014	6 <sup>th</sup> District Meeting, Summit County Chapter #35, Akron, Ohio.
April 12, 2014	National Commander Joseph Johnston's Testimonial Dinner, Cincinnati Netherland Plaza, Cincinnati, Ohio.
May 5, 2014	8 <sup>th</sup> District Meeting, 12 noon lunch, meeting at 1 p.m., Barnesville Chapter #121, Barnesville, Ohio.
June 26-29, 2014	Department of Ohio Convention, Crowne Plaza, Dublin, Ohio.
October 10-12, 2014	Fall Conference, Crowne Plaza, Dublin, Ohio.
June 18-21, 2015	Department of Ohio Convention, Crowne Plaza, Dublin, Ohio.
October 16-18, 2015	Fall Conference, Crowne Plaza, Dublin, Ohio.
June 23-26, 2016	Department of Ohio Convention, Crowne Plaza, Dublin, Ohio.
October 14-16, 2016	Fall Conference, Crowne Plaza, Dublin, Ohio.

## **NOTES FROM THE STATE ADJUTANT WILL DAVIS**

I hope the beginning of the New Year is going well for you and your family. Thank you for the invitations to Chapter Christmas Parties. Judy and I enjoyed attending several of the gatherings. It is exciting to see the smiles and sometimes the tears on the children's faces when the man in the red suit has a gift for them. Thanks again to the Chapters and their thoughtfulness during this time of year for our veterans and their families.

### **DAV Statement on the Budget Agreement**

I received the following e-mail from Joe Johnston, DAV National Commander:

To avoid another government shutdown in January, the House and Senate reached a bipartisan budget agreement last week covering both fiscal years 2014 and 2015. At that time, both the Senate and House Budget Committees stated that the agreement contained no provisions detrimental to disabled veterans. However, it is now evident that enactment of this agreement would cut future cost-of-living adjustments (COLAs) for military retirement pay received by veterans who retired due to medical reasons, including those who suffered combat wounds. This reduction of the military retirement COLA could shrink payments to disabled veterans by hundreds of millions of dollars over the next decade.

DAV is extremely disappointed to learn that this unconscionable policy is contained in the budget agreement that passed the Senate December 18, and we urge Congress to immediately repeal this unacceptable provision. Cutting benefits for medically retired veterans in order to reduce the deficit would be a major betrayal of those who have sacrificed so much for their country.

We do note that the budget agreement does not make any reductions in benefits paid to veterans by the Department of Veterans Affairs, including disability compensation payments. The full COLA for veterans' benefits approved by Congress last month will not be reduced by this agreement. However, working-age military retirees, if retired based on longevity or medically retired, would see their retirement pay increase at a slower pace than they would have received otherwise, one percent less, until they reach the age of 62, at which time

these payments would revert to normal cost-of-living increases pegged to the full rate of inflation, assuming no other change in law. The reduction in COLA will not become fully effective until the end of 2015.

DAV urges Congress to take swift action to repeal any cuts to military retirement pay for veterans who are medically retired.

### **Issue Brief:**

#### **Women Veterans**

Women make up nearly 15% of our active forces, 18% of the Guard and Reserve, and 20% of new military inductees. There are 2.2 million women veterans. To date, more than 100,000 women veterans of Iraq and Afghanistan have utilized VA health care. On leaving service, 31% of women veterans carry both physical and mental health conditions, as compared with 24% of male veterans. Many women veterans are the primary caregivers for their children. With this as a possible barrier, 10% of scheduled appointments are canceled or rescheduled. The VA has launched a pilot childcare program at several VA medical centers. This service is available to any veteran qualifying for VA health care, provided they are attending a scheduled health care appointment. DAV urges VA to continue its outreach and gender specific media initiative as well as its gender specific research on women veterans better understand the unique impact of military service on women's lives and health, especially women who have served during wartime deployments.

Commander Hanneman, with the approval of the Executive Committee, appointed the following women veterans to be on the Women Advisory Committee: Linda Mingo, Chapter 63, Wendy L. Hayes, Chapter 72, and Patricia Alteslane, Chapter 9.

#### **VA Mental Health Care**

Since the wars began in Iraq and Afghanistan, more than 2.4 million service members have deployed, often multiple times. It is estimated that about 11-20% of Iraq and Afghanistan veterans, 10% of Gulf War, and 30% of Vietnam veterans have experienced PTSD, which is linked to psychiatric conditions, substance use disorders (SUD) and unemployment. It is noted that timely care and early intervention can improve veterans' quality of life, prevent long-term consequences of

SUD, prevent chronic illness and suicide, promote recovery and minimize the long-term disabling effects of chronic mental health problems. DAV urges Congress and VA to make participation in the Transition Assistance Program mandatory for all discharging service members.

### **Fixing VA's Benefit Claims Processing System**

Veterans Benefits Administration's (VBA) workforce has doubled over the past decade, but the number of veterans filing claims rose from 600,000 to over 1.4 million in 2012, and the number and complexity of claims issues per veteran has risen. In order to achieve lasting success in eliminating the backlog, VBA must remain focused on creating a claims processing system focused on quality, accuracy, accountability and timeliness that is designed to decide each claim right the first time. DAV urges congress to develop legislation and support policies that supports the use of private medical evidence in rating decisions and expands the use of interim ratings for veterans who file complex and multi-issue disability compensation claims.

### **Membership**

When recruiting veterans for the DAV, mention some of our not so well known benefits such as, savings when buying a Ford or Lincoln vehicle, real estate service, discount on car rentals, and DAV members can qualify for preferred pricing on the latest Apple products. For more information on membership benefits, go to [dav.org](http://dav.org) home page under membership. I challenge each member to recruit one member this month. With numbers there is power.

### **Volunteer**

There is always a need for volunteers. Contact your local VA medical center to see what opportunities they have for volunteers. You could work directly with veterans or make those all important phone calls reminding veterans of their upcoming appointments. To learn more about volunteering, visit <https://www.dav.org/contact-us/>

### **Wreaths Across America**

The DAV was well represented in WAA at Sunset Cemetery on December 14. Approximately, 440

wreaths were placed on veterans' grave sites. Thanks to each and everyone that helped with this meaningful event.

### **Mid-Winter Conference**

DAV's Mid-Winter Conference is February 23-26, 2014, Crystal Gateway Marriott, Arlington, VA. Now is the time to get your appointment made to visit your elected official and let your voice be heard.

### **Hollywood Christmas Parade**

What could top the 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Division Band, Camp Pendleton, Billy Ray Cyrus, Buzz Aldrin with "Buzz The Balloon" sponsored by the DAV, other than the National Commander Joe Johnston and Vicki in the Hollywood Christmas Parade. Great job Joe and Vicki on representing the DAV.

Congratulations to PDC Tom Keller on being recognized by the University of Cincinnati English Department.

<http://www.utube.com/watch?V=QkSkXUeqWlqg>

Remember PDC Nick Border in your thoughts and prayers, he recently had back surgery. Nick is home and recuperating. Wishing him a speedy recovery. PDC James Britton is having some health issues, remember him in our thoughts and prayers.

God Bless America, God Bless our Troops and May God Bless the DAV!

### **THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU**

Thanks to all the DAV Chapters, DAV Auxiliary members and individuals who donated money and worked at the Sandusky Ohio Veterans Home on December 1<sup>st</sup> for the annual DAV pizza party and bingo. Thanks to your generosity and caring the residents had a wonderful afternoon and the time we spent with them brightened up their holiday season. I also want to wish each and every one a Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays.

Raymond Hutchinson, Hospital Chairman