



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

Disabled American Veterans, Department of Ohio

November, 2016 Newsletter

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### **FROM THE DESK OF STATE COMMANDER DAVID BILINOVICH**

#### **THANKSGIVING**



November is the month that we as Americans celebrate Thanksgiving. Thanksgiving is the holiday where we remember the trials and tribulations of the pilgrims. The pilgrims were the first people who came to this New World to make a new life for themselves. Whom without the help of the native American Indians would not have survived and thrived. So, it is also an appropriate time for personal reflection as well as a time to give thanks for our own blessings.

I am thankful for your confidence in electing me as your Commander and for the support that I receive from so many of you. I am also grateful for the dedicated Officers and staff that work hard to make the DAV in Ohio successful. I also realize that I owe a debt of thanks to those in the DAV that have gone before us and like the pilgrims, who helped found this wonderful country as we know it, our predecessors created and successfully ran our wonderful veterans organization. They were truly pilgrims in their own right.

I, like you, am also grateful for my loving spouse, family and good friends. I look back at my time in military service with a new perspective and I am in awe of where my life has taken me. I am truly thankful to everyone who had helped to train, mentor and lead me. Without them, I would not be here today.

On a less serious note, I am also grateful that the Cleveland Cavaliers basketball team finally broke the Cleveland Curse in sports and that the Cleveland Indians baseball team made it to the World Series. I guess that I can also give thanks for the Cleveland Browns football team that will probably get the very first pick in the NFL draft. To those of you who root for the Cincinnati sports teams, you have my thanks and also my sympathy. And we can all give thanks and root for The Ohio State University sports teams.

November is not only the month that we as Americans switch back from Daylight Savings Time, dig out the snow shovels and vote for our elected officials, but it is also a time for reflection and thanksgiving. All of us have much to be grateful for. We should all take a moment to reflect and to rededicate ourselves to our country, our families and to the DAV. Happy Thanksgiving.

*David Bilinovich*  
State Commander



## IMPORTANT NUMBERS

<b>National Headquarters</b>	(877) 426-2838
<b>NSO Office, Cleveland</b>	(216) 522-3507
<b>NSO Office, Cincinnati</b>	(513) 684-2676
<b>Washington Office, DAV</b>	(202) 554-3501
<b>Cincinnati DSO</b> , Tom Kirstein	(513) 475-6443
<i>Tuesday, Thursday</i>	
Lisa Wilson	
(513) 475-6443	
<i>Monday, Wednesday, Friday</i>	
<b>Chillicothe DSO</b> , Charles Knipp	(740) 773-1141
<i>Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday</i>	
Ext. 7916	
<b>Dayton DSO</b> , Nikki Cochran	(937) 268-6511
<i>Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday</i>	
Ext. 2962	
<b>Wade Park DSO</b> , Walter Dryja	(216) 791-3800
<i>Monday, Wednesday, Friday</i>	
Ext. 3395	
<b>Columbus DSO</b> , Henry Snodgrass	(614) 257-5487
<i>Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday</i>	
<b>Parma DSO</b> , Richard Healy	(216) 739-7000
<i>Monday-Thursday</i>	
Ext. 2405	

## DATES TO REMEMBER

November 4-6, 2016	Fall Conference, Crowne Plaza, Dublin, Ohio.
November 14, 2016	Military Appreciation Monday at participating Golden Corral Restaurants.
November 19, 2016	Forget-Me-Not, Wayne County Ch. #44, Buehlers, Orrville, OH.
Feb. 26-Mar. 1, 2017	Mid-Winter Conference, Arlington, VA.
April 1, 2017	District 5 Meeting, Huron County Ch. #62, 1544 US Highway 20 West, Norwalk, OH. Time TBA
April 2, 2017	District 6 Meeting, Brooklyn-Parma Ch. #116, Memorial Hall, Parma, OH. Time TBA
April 30, 2017	District 7 Meeting, Alliance Ch. #50, 9540 McCallum Ave., Alliance, OH with Lunch at 12 noon and the Meeting at 1 p.m.
June 22-25, 2017	96 <sup>th</sup> Department of Ohio Convention, Columbus Marriott North, Dublin, Ohio.
July 29-Aug. 1, 2017	National Convention, New Orleans, LA.
Nov. 3-5, 2017	Fall Conference, Columbus Marriott North, Dublin, OH.
February 25-28, 2018	Mid-Winter Conference, Arlington, VA.
June 7-10, 2018	97 <sup>th</sup> Department of Ohio Convention, Columbus Marriott North, Dublin, Ohio.
Nov. 2-4, 2018	Fall Conference, Columbus Marriott North, Dublin, OH.

## NOTES FROM THE STATE ADJUTANT KENNETH MARCUM

### KAPPA SIGMA AT OHIO STATE



The Alpha Sigma chapter is comprised of 118 young men of a variety of majors ranging from biomedical engineering to finance to chemistry and beyond.

Alpha Sigma supports our national organization's philanthropic efforts, "A Greater Cause" and "Kappa Sigma Military Heroes Campaign." Over the past two years these efforts have led to over \$2,362,000 in philanthropic donations from national Kappa Sigma chapters. Our chapters at Ohio State continue to focus on directing the funds they raised towards veterans groups and programs.

Alpha Sigma has averaged surpassing the Ohio State all men's average over the past 5 years, has officers on undergraduate student government, Interfraternity Council, and other student organizations, They strive to provide an avenue to make an impact in our community, at our school and into the future.

This year the Kappa Sigma honored Capital City Chapter #3 of the Disabled American Veterans on October 7<sup>th</sup> at the Clock Tower in Columbus with a benefit that raised \$22,000. Chapter 3 embraced the members of Kappa Sigma in work projects for assisting veterans in the community and cookouts throughout the year. Kappa Sigma was particularly impressed with Chapter 3 partnering with several local organizations (including "The Ohio State University") to expand its collection and dissemination of the medical equipment. Some of this medical equipment recovered are power chairs, wheel chairs, hospital beds, walkers, etc.



### BATTLE OVER BENEFITS PUTS LEGISLATION ON HOLD

Rep. Jeff Miller, R-Fla., Chairman of the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs, postponed discussion of H.R. 5286—the VA Construction and Lease Authorization, Health and Benefits Enhancement Act—after DAV and other leading veterans service organizations (VSOs) pointed out to lawmakers that the bill would result in a 10-year reduction in cost-of-living or COLA benefits for veterans in the form of a round down.

This bill authorizes construction and renovation for a number of VA facilities. While we fully support construction and enhancement of VA's infrastructure, DAV expressed concern because the projects the bill authorizes rely on veterans to pay for them with their disability compensation.

That same day, DAV Washington Headquarters Executive Director Garry Augustine sent a letter to House Speaker Paul Ryan, R-Wis., and House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., explaining that the legislation would cost veterans dearly by rounding down the percentage increase in their disability compensation benefits.

"If enacted, this round-down would take more than \$1.6 billion from the pockets of ill and injured veterans, many of whom rely solely on this benefit to support themselves and their families," Augustine said in the letter.

Augustine said the 10-year cost-of-living adjustment would be the largest reduction in veterans benefits that Congress has sought in

recent history. Outpatient facilities should not be built “on the backs of veterans,” he said, calling for Congress to find other ways to come up with money to pay for the Department of Veterans Affairs’ construction projects.

We are calling on Congress to find a bipartisan solution to the funding problem. However, House Veterans’ Affairs Committee Chairman Jeff Miller (R-FL) offered no estimate on when this issue would be resolved, allowing the bill to move forward. “I look forward to hearing from these groups regarding their ideas for how to move forward with this important project without violating budget rules or adjusting other VA benefits and services,” he said.

### **HOW TO CELEBRATE VETERANS DAY**

Come Veterans Day, I often have good friends who call and write to say, “Happy Veterans Day,” or “Thinking of you today.” These are great messages, and it’s always good to hear from friends. The veterans in your life will enjoy hearing from you as well.

I also have friends who ask, “Is there more I can do,” or “How should a non-veteran celebrate Veterans Day?” Here are a few ideas:

#### **1. Serve**

November 11th is set aside every year to honor those who have served our country through military service. What better way to recognize their service than by deploying in your community in their honor? Find a way to serve in your local community. Let a veteran know that you are serving in his or her honor. Find opportunities here:

- <http://www.allforgood.org/>
- <http://www.volunteermatch.org/>

If service is your calling, consider taking on a more extended service opportunity. Programs like AmeriCorps and Teach for America offer incredible opportunities to begin or continue a life of service. Gen. Stanley McChrystal is leading a new initiative called the Aspen Institute Franklin Project, which calls for all young Americans to have the opportunity to do a service year.

#### **2. Learn**

Words like bravery and sacrifice can sound abstract. They become real when we learn about people who have lived those values. Read a great book about what veterans have done for this country. Here are a few that I recommend:

- “Washington: A Life” by Ron Chernow
- “Unbroken: A World War II Story of Survival, Resilience, and Redemption” by Laura Hillenbrand
- “One Bullet Away: The Making of a Marine Officer” by Nathaniel Fick

#### **3. Support**

President John F. Kennedy once said, “As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words, but to live by them.” It’s very likely that your city, county, school, or workplace hosts some kind of Veterans Day celebration. Make your way there. Show the veterans in your community that you support them.

#### **4. Connect**

As each day passes and more World War II and Korean War veterans leave us, we live in a country with fewer and fewer veterans. Today, many people don’t know a veteran who served overseas in Iraq or Afghanistan — less than one percent of Americans have served in the military since September 11, 2001.

And yet the odds are that you do have veterans at your school, on the job, and in the community. Veterans are your neighbors, coworkers, and classmates. Veterans Day is a great day to thank them for their service, and even better, to learn more about them. Start by saying, “Happy Veterans Day; can you tell me about your service?”

#### **5. Welcome**

Many people are unsure about what to say to veterans — especially to those who have recently returned. One of the best things that you can say is simply, “welcome home.”

#### **6. Invest**

When veterans come home, they have a tremendous amount to offer the country. These men and women are assets, and there are a number of organizations that work with them to see that they can use their talents to build stronger communities here at home. Check out these organizations and think about making a contribution:

- The Mission Continues (full disclosure: I’m the founder of this organization)
- Team Rubicon
- Team Red, White, and Blue

#### **7. Be Grateful**

Everything we enjoy is possible only because those before us have served and sacrificed. Spend time with family and friends, and as you celebrate Veterans Day, reflect on the legacy of service that has ensured our freedom as Americans.

### **HISTORY OF THE VETERANS DAY NATIONAL COMMITTEE**

In his 1954 Veterans Day Proclamation, President Dwight D. Eisenhower called for the formation of a Veterans Day National Committee to oversee national planning and coordination of the Veterans Day observance. He named the Administrator of Veterans’ Affairs, Harvey V. Higley, as Chairman of committee and called upon the heads of all departments and agencies of the executive branch of the government to assist the committee in every way possible.

Administrator Higley called together leaders of veterans’ groups and asked them to serve on the committee. The original committee consisted of associate chairmen from the following organizations: The American Legion, American Veterans of World War II and Korea (AMVETS), Disabled American Veterans, Marine Corps League, United Spanish War Veterans, and the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States.

The full committee consisted of representatives from: the American National Red Cross; American Veterans Committee, Inc.; Army Mutual Aid Association; Army and Navy Union, U.S.A.; Blinded Veterans Association; Catholic War Veterans of the U.S.A.; Coast

Guard League; Disabled Officers Association; Fleet Reserve Association; Jewish War Veterans of the United States; Military Order of the Purple Heart, Inc.; Military Order of the World Wars; National Jewish Welfare Board; National Society – Army of the Philippines; National Tribune; Navy Mutual Aid Association; Regular Veterans Association; United Indian War Veterans, U.S.A.; and the Women's Forum on National Security. Many of these organizations continue to serve on the current Veterans Day Committee.

The committee meets three times a year in Washington, D.C., to plan Veterans Day activities, including selecting a national Veterans Day poster, recognizing regional observances that serve as model events to honor America's veterans, and hosting the national ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery.

The committee also has an interest in ensuring that younger generations understand the true meaning of Veterans Day, and the sacrifices veterans have made to secure and defend the freedoms of the United States of America. To this end, the committee produces a teacher resource guide and distributes it to schools nationwide. The guide includes suggested activities for Veterans Day programs and information for students of all ages.

### **10 VETERANS BENEFITS YOU MAY NOT KNOW ABOUT**

Many veterans know about the basic health care and education benefits available to them through the Department of Veterans Affairs: Tricare and the GI Bill. While these benefits alone are substantial, numerous other programs help provide more benefits to veterans and their families. Even within the health care and education programs are little-known benefits to improve the lives of veterans and help ease the financial burden of medical care or other expenses. Here are 10 veterans' benefits you haven't heard about that all veterans should see if they qualify for.

#### **1. Long-term Care**

Long-term care is expensive, but often necessary to provide care for aging relatives. Through the Aid and Attendance program, many veterans are eligible to receive money to cover the cost of nursing homes, assisted living programs and other long-term care options. With the ability for couples to receive up to \$25,020 a year, the Aid & Attendance benefit will help take care of a significant portion of long-term care costs. Surviving spouses of veterans are also eligible to receive up to \$13,560 a year to cover their long-term care costs.

#### **2. Caregiver Support**

Should you choose to take care of an ailing Veteran at home, the Department of Veterans Affairs offers a caregiver support program. While this program does not offer any monetary support to caregivers, they are provided with a free support line and a caregiver support coordinator to help navigate military benefits and the stress of care giving.

#### **3. Death Benefits**

When a veteran dies, families have a few unique benefits available to them. A U.S. flag may be requested to drape over the casket and families may request a Presidential Memorial Certificate to honor the deceased loved ones service. The Department of Veterans Affairs also provides free headstones or grave markers.

#### **4. Certification Programs**

In addition to receiving credits to use toward a college degree, the GI Bill offers up to \$2,000 to help cover the cost of certification courses or other vocational training programs. This benefit will work well for veterans who wish to change careers or pursue a career path that does not require a college degree.

#### **5. Transferring GI Bill Credits**

Unused credits through the GI Bill may be transferred to spouses and dependents of veterans. There are service limits required to transfer the benefits.

#### **6. Free Tax Preparation**

Veterans and their family have access to free tax preparation services through the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance offices on military bases. The individuals who work in the offices have expertise working with the complicated nature of military-related tax issues.

#### **7. Life Insurance**

Many veterans have trouble obtaining traditional life insurance, particularly if they sustained an injury during their time of service. Through the Service members' and Veterans' Group Life Insurance program, veterans may receive up to \$400,000 in life insurance. This program also offers competitive premium rates.

#### **8. Mortgage Help**

Veterans having trouble making their mortgage payments are eligible for repayment assistance through the Department of Veterans Affairs. Options for help include special repayment plans, loan forbearance and loan modification programs. Additional benefits are available for veterans with VA loans and for homeless veterans.

#### **9. VA Foreclosures**

The VA maintains a list of homes serviced by VA loans that have gone into foreclosures. Veterans have the ability to search the list of VA acquired properties and purchase homes at a discount. You do not have to be a veteran to search the properties, but all properties qualify for VA financing.

#### **10. American Corporate Partners**

American Corporate Partners connects veterans with top companies to help them obtain a job after their time of service. Along with being connected to job opportunities, veterans have the opportunity to receive one-on-one mentoring and other career development services.

Read more: <http://militarybenefits.info/10-veterans-benefits-you-may-not-know-about/#ixzz4MKM02yqq>

*Kenneth Marcum*  
State Adjutant

## **CHAPTER FINANCIAL REPORTS**

A review of Chapter Financial Reports on file at Department Headquarters clearly show that numerous Chapters are in violation of DAV, Department of Ohio Bylaws, Article V, Section 1, "The assessment of 20% of the net profit of each Chapter's most successful fundraising project during its current fiscal year; 3% of the net revenue from all other Chapter finance-raising projects of each chapter; and 20% of each Forget-Me-Not Drive, the annual proceeds from Bingo and concessions shall be considered in determining the year's most successful fundraising project."

Monies owed to Department of Ohio DAV after conducting a Forget-Me-Not Drive are immediately sent along with the applicable completed form. The 20% and 3% assessments must be paid NO LATER than September 30 of each year.

Those Chapters writing checks at either our Fall Conference and/or our June Convention are certainly welcome to use this time frame to pay required assessments. By writing checks at these functions, you will gain recognition for helping fulfill DAV's mission as well as satisfy the requirements of our Constitution & Bylaws.

Any questions or comments please feel free to call me at (740) 604-0475 or (614) 221-3582.

*Frank Williams*

PDC/Department Inspector

## **THE VETERANS' POPULATION WILL CONTINUE TO DECREASE, WHILE THE VA HEALTH CARE NEEDS WILL INCREASE**

From 1995 to 2024, the three-decade decline in the number of veterans will continue, according to a recent RAND Corporation Report, released in 2016. This Report focused on veteran demographics and health care needs and was one of three assessments prepared by the RAND Corporation, under auspices of the Veterans Choice Act of August of 2014.

In terms of demographics, the RAND Report noted that as the veteran population continues to shift to the South and the West, there will be substantially fewer veterans in the Northeast and the Upper Midwest, including the State of Ohio.

The RAND Report projected that the veterans' population would decrease by 19% to 17.4 million veterans between the time period of 2014 to 2024. In 1995, there were 27.9 million veterans in the overall population base and the number of VA patients were only 2.51 million veterans.

Although the total number of veterans (in the overall population base) will decrease, the number of veterans utilizing VA health care will increase and it is expected to peak at 6 million veterans in 2019. This has resulted from expanded eligibility and higher reliance on VA services by newer veterans. The RAND Corporation projects that the number of veterans will eventually decrease to 5.9 million by 2024.

A majority of the veterans using the VA are older and sicker. Approximately 52% of current VA patients are older than age 65. These veterans have most likely been deployed and are more likely to have a higher rate of chronic mental and physical health conditions than other veterans.

For example, 19% of VA patients receive treatment for cancer, while only 11% of the non-veteran population base receive treatment for cancer. In terms of diabetes, 30% of VA patients receive treatment for diabetes, while only 17% of the non-veteran population base receive treatment for diabetes. In terms of mental health conditions, 25% of VA patients receive treatment for mental health conditions, while only 13% of the non-veteran population base receive treatment for mental health conditions.

The relatively high rates of these conditions for VA patients—combined with otherwise rare conditions related to combat, such as limb loss, traumatic brain injury, blindness, and severe burns—mean that many VA providers handle a patient mix that differs from what most community providers typically see.

The median age of the veterans using VA services will continue to increase, according to the RAND Report, and veterans are projected to become more geographically concentrated between the years 2014 to 2024. However, the veterans who depend the most on VA health care services tend to be younger and poorer and live in rural areas. These veterans generally lack health care services from other sources.

Nineteen (19%) percent of VA patients in 2024 are projected to be Iraqi and Afghanistan veterans, up from 12% in 2014. The demand for specific types of health care is expected to grow, such as pain management, neurology and dermatology. The RAND Report projected that the demand for these services might significantly outpace the supply.

A detailed survey conducted by RAND revealed that a vast majority of veterans were able to obtain their VA appointments within 2 weeks of their preferred appointment date. More than 90% of appointments for existing patients and 80% of appointments for newer patients occur within 14 days of the preferred date.

However, the average number of days that veterans wait for appointments "varies tremendously" among VA facilities. The waiting times are highly variable by location and type of care. Some veterans in some facilities face very long wait times, such as almost 40 days for a primary care appointment at the extreme.

In terms of geographic access to VA facilities, 93% of all veterans live within 40 miles of some type of VA health care facility. However, only 55% of these veterans live within 40 miles of a VA Medical Center and only 26% of them are close to a VA Medical Center with full specialty health care services.

The RAND assessment noted that the quality of care delivered by the VA health care services is generally equal to or better than care delivered in the private sector. The VA has long played a national leadership role in quality measurement of its services.

The RAND Report recommends that in order to meet the demands on the health care system over the short term, the VA health system needs to substantially increase its capacity. The RAND Report suggests that this can be accomplished by increasing the number of physicians, granting VA advanced practice nurses full practice authority and expanding the use of virtual care.

Other recommendations include publicizing comparisons of VA waiting times to those of the private provider; improve and

expand data collection; and offer simpler policies for billing and reporting requirements.

*John J. Plahovinsak*  
2nd Junior Vice Commander



### **DAV VAVS PROGRAMS AT OUR OHIO VETERANS HOME**

On October 5, 2016, **DAV VAVS REP Dale J. Smith** presented several donations, to Kimberly Lewallen, Volunteer Coordinator, Ohio Veterans Home (OVH), on behalf of Department of Ohio, Disabled American Veterans. One of the checks will support DAV monthly Birthday Luncheons at the OVH. Another check was for our annual contribution to the OVH Christmas Joy program. Also, Dale received funds from Department of Ohio, to support DAV's annual Christmas Bingo and Pizza Party scheduled for December 4, 2016. On behalf of all the OVH veterans we serve, please thank DAV Department of Ohio's continuous support for OVH programs. If your chapter would like to assist Dale with a service program at the OVH please give him a call at 440.537.2012.

### **DAV TEAM OHIO TRADITIONS CONTINUES ON DECEMBER 4, 2016**

DAV & DAV AUXILIARY members share a little Christmas Spirit with the veterans at the Sandusky Ohio Veteran Home (OVH) on the first Sunday in December. Mark your calendar for 12/4 and bring a few friends with you to work the OVH Christmas Party. This is a great service project for Chapters and Auxiliary Units to come together to provide a wonderful Christmas Party for our OVH veterans. It will include Bingo (prizes), Pizza, Christmas cookies, and friendship. You have an open invitation to join us and help DAV TEAM OHIO provide some Holiday Spirit. We have two bingo parties going at the same time, one in the Veterans Lounge and the other one in the Auditorium. Our Volunteers work together to pass out the pizza and Christmas cookies while the bingo crew keeps the bingo games running smooth. We start at 1:30 pm and most times we're done around 3 pm. For more information please give Dale Smith, DAV VAVS REP, a call at 440.537.2012. We're blessed to have DAV & DAVA members who are committed to continue our Traditions to serve our veterans at the Sandusky OVH. Fulfilling our Promises to the Men and Women Who Served. Hope to see you on December 4, 2016.

### **DAV DONATION FOR CLEVELAND VAMC CHRISTMAS GIFT SHOP (GPF #1041)**

David May, DAV VAVS REP, at Cleveland VAMC presented a donation to Cleveland VAMC newly appointed Voluntary Services Chief Kristy CoieDay. Kristy transferred in from VAVS Pittsburgh. Cleveland VAVS project, "Christmas Gift Shop," purchases gifts to pass out in early December for our men and women who are inpatient veterans (over 700). This is a big project so if your chapter or unit is looking for a small service project we could use your help. If you need more information please give David May a call at 330.806.9910. Make your check payable to "Cleveland VAMC" and mark the memo area "Christmas Gift Shop, GPF #1041, Christmas Gifts." Another service project I would recommend would be the "Art and Crafts" for inpatient veterans. "Arts and Crafts General Post Fund number is GPF # 1062." I thank you in advance.



*David May*  
PDC/Assistant Hospital Chairman

### **MOBILE SERVICE OFFICE AT CINCINNATI CHAPTER 1**



DAV Chapter 1 brought the Mobile Service Office (MSO) on wheels to the VFW Hall, 9000 Reading Road, on August 24, 2016. They were there to help with claims and answer any questions. Ron Fischer, WCPO Channel 9 photographer interviewed National Service Officer Bill Cvelbar, from the National Service Office in Cleveland, Ohio.

*Edward Brown*  
Cincinnati Ch. #1 Commander