



THE LOUISIANA JOURNAL



2024 Mid-Winter Conference

Louisiana DAV Department held the Annual Mid-Winter CSO training and Business Session in Kenner, LA at the Double Tree Hotel led by it's new Dept. Commander Alfred Leger.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. COVER STORY/TABLE OF CONTENTS
2. CHAPTER MONTHLY MEETINGS
DEPARTMENT LEADERSHIP/FUTURE EVENTS
3. COMMANDER'S CORNER/ADJUTANT'S CORNER
4. SR. VICE COMMANDER'S CORNER
1ST. JR. VICE COMMANDER'S CORNER
5. 1ST. JR. VICE COMMANDER CONTINUED
2ND. JR. VICE COMMANDER'S CORNER
6. 3RD. JR. VICE COMMANDER'S CORNER
DEPARTMENT CHAPLAIN
7. TREASURER'S CORNER/JUDGE ADVOCATE'S CORNER
8. SGT. AT ARMS CORNER/WOMEN'S VETERANS
REPRESENTATIVE
9. WOMEN'S VETERANS REPRESENTATIVE CONTINUED
10. - MID WINTER'S CONFERENCE
11. MID-WINTER'S CONFERENCE
12. MID-WINTER'S CONFERENCE
13. MID-WINTER'S CONFERENCE
DAV AUXILIARY DEPARTMENT UNIT MEETING DATES
14. AUXILIARY COMMANDER'S NOTES
15. AUXILIARY SR. VICE COMMANDER'S NOTE
AUXILIARY JR. VICE COMMANDER'S NOTE
16. AUXILIARY ADJUTANT'S VOICE
17. AUXILIARY JR. ACTIVITIES CHAIRMAN
18. UNIT 2 COMMUNITY SERVICE CHAIRPERSON'S NOTE
CHAPTER 5 NEWS
19. CHAPTER 9 NEWS
20. CHAPTER 20 NEWS/CHAPTER 21 NEWS
21. CHAPTER 23 NEWS/CHAPTER 51 NEWS
22. UNIT 2 NEWS/VETERAN HOME PRESENTATIONS
23. VETERAN HOME PRESENTATIONS
24. IN MEMORIAM/FROM THE EDITOR
25. MEDIA AND TECHNOLOGY/COMMUNITY SPONSORS

CHAPTER MONTHLY MEETINGS

Chapter 2.... 1st Tuesday of the month
 Chapter 5... 2nd Monday of the month
 Chapter 7.... 4th Thursday of the month
 Chapter 8.... 1st Tuesday of the month
 Chapter 9..... 2nd Monday of the month
 Chapter 15.... 3rd Thursday of the month
 Chapter 17.... 1st Thursday of the month
 Chapter 19.... 4th Monday of the month
 Chapter 20..... 3rd Monday of the month
 Chapter 21..... 2nd Thursday of the month
 Chapter 23... .. 3rd Tuesday of the month
 Chapter 30... . . 1st Thursday of the month
 Chapter 32..... 2 Tuesday of the month
 Chapter 33..... 4th Tuesday of the month
 Chapter 37..... 3^r Tuesday of the month
 Chapter 41..... 2nd Thursday of the month
 Chapter 47..... 3rd Thursday of the month
 Chapter 50.... 2nd Thursday of the month
 Chapter 51.... 2nd Thursday of the month

Chapter 52....3rd Monday of the month

FUTURE EVENTS AND CONFERENCES

2025 Dav National Mid-Winter

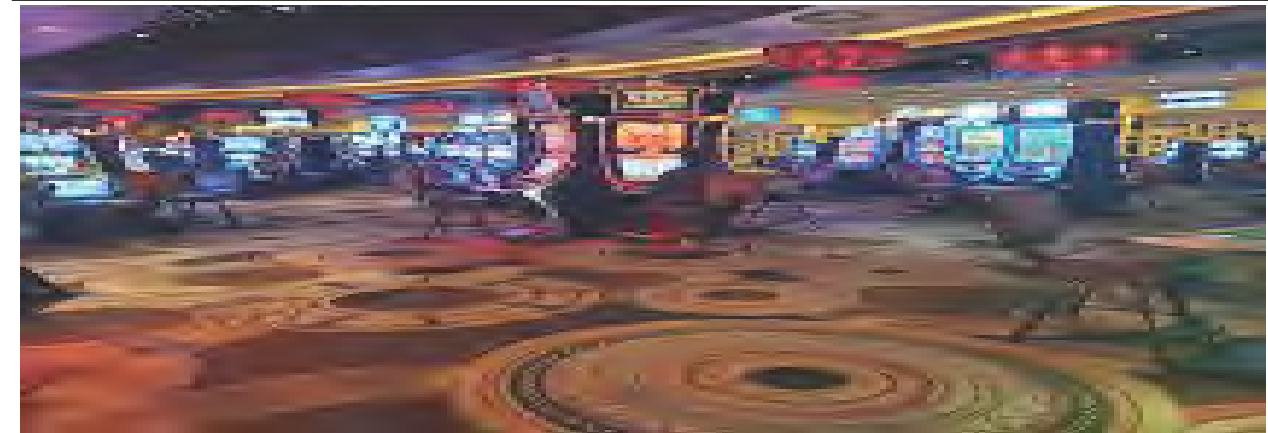
Conference

**February 23-26, 2025
 Crystal Gateway Marriott**

**1700 Jefferson Davis Highway
 Arlington, VA 22202**

Phone: 1-800-393-3680 or 703-920-3230 Group Name: Disabled American Veterans

Group Code: M-MN2DWW5 \$216 Single/ Double Reserve Online



2025 Louisiana Department State Convention

May 15-18 2025

THE DOUBLE TREE HOTEL

2150 Veterans Memorial Blvd.

Kenner, LA 70062

For Reservations Online booking link:

<https://www.hilton.com/en/attend-my-dav-state-conv-ma-2025>

DEPARTMENT LEADERSHIP

Commander Al Leger
Sr. Vice Commander Robert Chapman
1st Jr. Vice Commander Pamela Russell
2nd Jr. Vice Commander Donald Bryant
3rd Jr. Vice Commander Tony Plaisance
Sgt.-At-Arms Robert Gros
Chaplain Elton Strickland
Judge Advocate Tex Stevenson
Dept. Adjutant PDC Paul Hermann
Dept. Treasurer PNEC/PDC Kevin Wenthe
Louisiana Journal Editor Detra Fairley
Headquarters Office Information
Monday through Thursday
7:30am to 3:30pm
Closed State/Federal Holidays and the week.
Between Christmas and New Years Day.





COMMANDER'S CORNER

ALFRED LEGER DEPARTMENT COMMANDER



Comrades,

I am very grateful for all of your continued support as your Senior Vice Commander. I was very sad to hear about Commander Terry Waite's resignation. I am going to do my best to complete the rest of the year as your Department Commander. I would hope that we continue to support the DAV Department of Louisiana to the best of our abilities.

In my travels to visit the five chapters assigned, I have discovered that we as a department have to change our ways of speaking to women veterans. I found a woman veteran in one of our chapters who has not been approached to join our ranks in the DAV. Not only that, she has never been asked to file her veteran's claim. I asked the chapter to jump on this immediately or I will come over to their chapter to file the claim for her!

In this time of year is when we as veterans must be even more vigilant to keep an eye on our brothers and sisters who served our great nation. Remember to try to do buddy checks a little more often over the holidays and then into January and February as loneliness may be even harder for some! As veterans I think we've all come to the conclusion that we must take care of each other as no one who has not served understands veterans!

A reminder that Line Officer's Call will be at Keys Park in Pineville, LA. January 18, 2025, starting at 10:00 am. The shirt color will be black. Thanks to PDC Gene Durand for setting the location for this meeting date. Thanks to Robbie Gros for stepping up when asked. Please support him as I feel you have supported me in my journey to represent all of you.

Alfred "Al" Leger
Department Commander



ADJUTANT'S CORNER

H. PAUL HERMANN, JR. PDC Department Adjutant



Happy New Year to everyone in the Department. Another calendar year has passed. I hope everyone had a GREAT and BLESSED Holiday Season, (Thanksgiving, Christmas, & New Year.) Now that all the partying has passed, let us get back to the Business of DAV.

There are approximately five (5) months left in our membership year. We need to recruit heavily for not only DAV, but DAVA. Remember that their fees have gone up to \$300.00, effective January 1, 2025. Also, remember with every member you recruit you are in the drawing for the Las Vegas trip, which includes airfare, hotel, and \$2,500.00. It is our job to recruit to help OUR Organization to reach its goal of 1,000,000 members. If everyone just recruited one (1) member in this department, we would have signed up over 10,000 members. Also, remember to throw out all membership applications that are expired. The cost to join DAV as a lifetime member is \$325.00.

I want to remind everyone in this Department that our DAV Mission is to enhance the lives of our fellow veterans and their families. It is not to enhance our lives. We are all volunteers. Reminder, that when you volunteer, you don't get paid for doing anything. Remember that this Organization was founded on free services to veterans and their families. I want everyone to keep this in mind when deciding how to spend the money donated to the Chapters by the American people. Also, a reminder that you cannot donate to any other veterans organization. I am not calling anyone out about what they do and how they do it. It is a friendly reminder of our purpose and the way we are expected to do business.

We have approximately five (5) months before our Annual State Convention. Remember that elections will be held prior to that, OERs are due no later than May 1, 2025, and all Convention reports (Delegate, Fundraiser request, Memorial List, Executive Committee Person) are due no later than April 1, 2025.

In closing, thank you for your support throughout the year that I have received. I look forward to continuing the strong year we have already had and making it even better.

SENIOR VICE COMMANDER'S CORNER
ROBERT CHAPMAN
Department Senior Vice Commander



Comrades,

Hello everyone

I would like to thank God for allowing me to see another day Thanks to each of you for allowing me to serve as your Department Sr. Vice Commander.

My goals for this year for the department is to see that each chapter become 100% in membership. Also, to help as many veterans and their families get the help and benefits that they so deserve. As veterans we all have a responsibility to each other . When we see one that needs your help please reach out to them. I am personally trying to do my very best to make this department and the MALT become the best that it can be.

So I am asking each of you to join me in doing so. I am looking for to seeing everyone at the DAV Department of Louisiana State Convention held in May.

Be blessed and enjoy the Holidays

Robert Chapman
 DAV Senior Vice Commander



1st. JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER'S
CORNER PAM
RUSSELL
Department 1st. Junior Vice Commander

Hello to all,

As the 1st. Junior Vice Commander, I have been working towards getting everyone I know to sign up for the Commander Action Network, as well as obtaining membership in the DAV. Trying to maintain our 100% for membership. Just a quick visit to the DAV website offers all of us so many different ways to participate in helping other veterans and their families.

There are opportunities to volunteer as a driver, service officer, hospital assistant, and no matter what your volunteer interests may be, there's a role you'll enjoy and the Local Veterans Assistance Program may be just what you're looking for. Whether it's grocery shopping or running errands for veterans in your community, doing yard work or painting a veteran's home, there's a need you can help fulfill.

I would like to stress that our junior members of the auxiliary are a very important part of our chapter as then can work towards obtaining several different grants that will assist them in their college years by volunteering. They are our future.

I have noticed that access to VA claims and medical files have been simplified finally by allowing the veteran and family member the ability to see what the status of our claims are at. It is relieving to the claimant to actually be able to see that their claim has been worked on. There are so many VA letters that can be printed and used to obtain additional benefits from private facilities, as well as our state. The website is available 24 hours a day. Don't be too proud to request a military discount!

1st JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER'S CORNER**PAM RUSSELL****Department 1st Junior Vice Commander Continued**

I am hoping to see a lot of our volunteers at the Annual Golf Tournament in March. It is always a fun event that is growing every year. If you have the time, don't hesitate to join us. We would love to have more help!

My healthvet is a very valuable tool in managing our healthcare. Secure messaging is a simple and sure way to correspond with your healthcare team with just about any of our concerns. Most inquiries are answered within three working days and become a part of your medical records, which is great for when you are trying to obtain a higher rating for a service connected disability.

You can also reorder your prescription medications through healthvet, but there is also an application that can be downloaded onto your phone for an even simpler time saver. There are many VA applications that are free to download and use by us. We should be sharing them with our veterans.

Finally, I am a certified veteran service officer and enjoy assisting those that need to file claims or obtain any other veteran benefits. I appreciate your faith in me serving as the Department 1st. Jr. Vice Commander and look forward to serving you and your family.

Pam Russell
1st. Junior Vice Commander

**2ND. JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER****Department 2nd. Jr. Vice Commander Donald Bryant**

Hello Comrades, I'd like to thank each one of you for your support and electing me as You Disabled American Veterans Department of Louisiana 2nd. Jr. Vice Commander.

VA Video Connect, or VVC, is a virtual care platform used to evaluate, diagnose and treat Veterans from the comfort of their home. VVC allows the provider to identify and assess the needs the patient and their family may have in the home environment. Seeing a person in their home eliminates unnecessary travel for the Veteran and their families, enhances communication and education and can help foster a smooth transition from hospitalization to home. To learn more about VVC.

My HealthVet is Va's secure, web-based personal health record. Veterans can access their health records, a Health Education to learn more about telehealth and virtual care in VA go to Telehealth VA.

Donald W. Bryant
Department 2nd Junior Vice Commander



3RD. JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER**Department 3rd. Jr. Vice Commander TONY
PLAISANCE**

This year has not gone as I would have wanted. There are still things that I wanted to accomplish. I am still learning and trying to figure out how to let the people and veterans in our area know that we are here and available to help them should they need it. Last year I had a portion of my left lung removed due to lung cancer. This has caused me to spend a lot of time at the VA and kept me from doing the work that I needed to do to promote my chapter and the DAV. So far with the help of the new members in our chapter we have started a DAVA Unit. I hope that this will help us grow our chapter and spread awareness of what we can accomplish together.

I want to thank everyone for their support and help. I look forward to working with our team to build on the accomplishments of last year and to continuing to grow and expand our mission into the new year.

Tony Plaisance

Department 3rd Jr Vice Commander

**Chaplain's Comments****ELTON STRICKLAND
Department Chaplain**

Greetings from Chaplain Strickland: I want speak to everyone about Grief.

Grief is the emotional response to loss, such as the death of a loved one, a divorce, or a serious illness. It can feel like intense sadness, shock, numbness, denial even anger. Grief can cause physical problems. Life is hard and we are going to go through dealing with loss. We are all going to go through some tough times in life and those tough times will cause us pain. Our response to whatever we are going through is very important. The reason I say this is because when we respond to our struggles during those tough times, God wants us to be a blessing to someone else that's experiencing the pain they are going through.

II Corinthians 1:4 says that God comforts us in all our troubles why so that we can comfort others in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God. My brothers and sisters once we respond to our grief, the Lord then wants us when we are able to allow our pain to become our ministry message. This is what God does. He turns our mess into a message because our ministry comes out of our pain. God also let's us know we are not alone. We are not by ourselves. We have his promises from his word that he will never leave us nor would he forsake us.

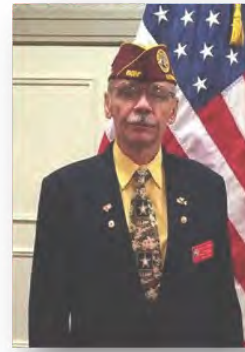
I pray that this message help all that are going through something that's beyond your control to trust in the Lord and lean not to your own understanding and in all your ways acknowledge God and he will direct your path . Have a Merry Christmas and a blessed New Year.

Elton Strickland
Department Chaplain





**TREASURER'S TURN KEVIN
WENTHE, PNEC/PDC
Department TREASURER**



Comrades,

As we bid farewell to 2024, it's incredible to think about the memories and achievements we've shared over the past year. With a renewed sense of enthusiasm and optimism, we eagerly anticipate the exciting opportunities and accomplishments that 2025 will bring.

First and foremost, I extend my heartfelt thanks to all the members and guests who attended the LA Mid-winter Conference in Kenner. Special appreciation goes to the DAV Commander, Adjutant, and all the line officers for their dedication and hard work during the conference. Additionally, we owe a huge thanks to our Auxiliary members for organizing and hosting a fantastic fun night that everyone enjoyed immensely.

Now that all chapters have successfully submitted their financial reports and 990s, it's the perfect time to get your financial documentation in order for the new year. As we are now six months into the financial fiscal year, staying on top of your paperwork will ensure a smooth transition when July arrives.

Looking ahead, it's time to start planning for our highly anticipated Department Golf Tournament, scheduled for March 21st. We are calling on volunteers to assist with setup, cooking, registration, and clean-up. We also encourage each chapter to sponsor a hole and contribute at least one door prize to make this event a great success. I had the pleasure of attending several Chapter Christmas Dinners in December. The incredible food and camaraderie were truly heartwarming, and I am grateful for these cherished moments.

In closing, I hope that each of you had a wonderful Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Let's embrace the new year with enthusiasm and work together to achieve even greater success in 2025.

Kevin Wenthe, PNEC, PDC
Department Treasurer



LAW TALK

"TEX STEVENSON"
Department Judge Advocate



YOUR PROPERTY TAX OPTIONS

Almost all property owners are aware of the homestead exemption of the first \$75,000 of your home's fair market value off of your parish's tax (city taxes still have to be paid) and you have to reside in the home. Your home is assessed at 10% of its value and that's why it appears as \$7,500 on your tax bill.

But did you know that as a veteran you can reduce your tax bill even more? The Louisiana Constitution was amended in 2022 to allow many more disabled veterans the ability to increase their homestead exemption amount when they have a service-connected disability rating of fifty (50) percent or more by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. If your disability rating is 50%-69% the fair market value (FMV) of the first \$100,000 is exempt from parish taxes; 70%-99% the first \$120,000 of the FMV is exempt; 100% disability rating is completely exempt from parish property taxes regardless of the FMV! It also applies to the deceased veteran's spouse as long as they do not remarry and remain in the home.

There is an additional 100% homestead exemption for surviving spouses of those who have given their lives to protect us while on active duty (Law Enforcement, Armed Service Members, Firefighter, Paramedics, EMT's , etc.).

There is further relief is you over age 65 and make less than \$100,000 adjusted gross income you can get a Special Assessment Level (SAL) . These assessment freezes mean that your assessed value of your home will never go up as long a you and your spouse live in the home and have not increased its value by 25% by improvements.

Your local Parish assessor has information and forms for you to apply for these benefits but it only occurs when the rolls are open annually for the next years taxes. Usually this is in August of every year but check with your local assessor for those dates.

Tex Stevenson,
Department Judge Advocate



**From the Sgt.-at-Arms
Robert Gros Department
Sgt-at- Arms**

It is my sincerest wishes that each and every one of you have a Very Merry Christmas and a Happy, Healthy Prosperous New Year!

I'd like to take this moment to offer my deepest and most sincere appreciation to PNEC/PDC Eddie Figueron for the recommendation. To Department Commander Al Leger for the appointment, the Department Line Officers and all Past Department Commanders for their support and especially to the DEC for the vote to approve my appointment to the office of Department Sergeant at Arms. It's all of your support and confidence in me that makes me proud to be in service to you, the DAV as a whole and especially to all of my fellow Veteran's and their Dependents, for they are the real reason I'm in the DAV. I joined the DAV because this is where I feel I can help the most. I've always made time for Veteran's organizations from Adjutant for Post 3's Son's of the American Legion to being Bingo Director for Post 3 American Legion to Treasurer for the same post as well as filling various positions in two Honor Guard Units. I've even gone as far as working a couple of funerals by myself. It's very hard to fold the flag alone, but volunteering is very important to me!

Volunteerism is crucial for the DAV because it provides essential support to Veterans who may face significant challenges accessing healthcare, benefits, and social connections after their service. Allowing volunteers to directly assist with transportation, companionship, advocacy, and other vital needs that might not be fully covered by federal government programs. Ultimately contributing to r overall wellbeing and quality of life, as well as helping their dependents realize their benefits rightfully earned by the veteran spouse and or parent.

Even if you're not a CSO, our volunteerism is more than welcomed, it's encouraged! I can't tell you how many times I've helped veterans and or their families by cutting grass, doing lite carpentry work, doing dishes or just hanging the American Flag in their front yard. So, get out into your community and help a veteran. It's what being a DAV member is all about!

Robbie Gros
Department Sergeant at Arms



**DEPARTMENT WOMEN VETERANS REPRESENTATIVE
SANDY FRANKS
NOTES AND UPDATES
Calling All Women's Veterans**

Hello my SHEROE Friends

Happy New Year to each of you. I hope you have a happy, healthy and prosperous 2025. Many of us will make resolutions for the new year and a recent report reflects the number one resolution is to save more money, next is improve physical health, third to improve mental health and fourth, learn something new. There are many resources to help us reach our goals and one I've taken advantage of is the Whole Health program at my local VA Medical Center. The Whole Health program supports your health and well-being. Whole Health centers around what matters to you, not what is the matter with you. This means your health team will get to know you as a person, before working with you to develop a personalized health plan based on your values, needs, and goals. If you are interested in learning more log on to va.gov/wholehealth. The program offers a lot of information and resources to help you be a healthier YOU in 2025.

I was privileged to attend our National Convention in Phoenix in August. It is always such a joy to see DAV members from all over the country, see old friends and make new ones, all with a common goal to serve Veterans. The number of women Veterans at the convention continues to grow each year. A recent report from the VA reports that the number of women veterans using Veterans Health Administration (VHA) services has tripled since 2001, growing from 159,810 to over 550,000 today. In fact, women make up 30% of all new VHA patients and 63% of women veteran patients in VHA have a service-connected disability. DAV recognizes these statistics and is a leader in addressing the needs of women Veterans. During the convention, DAV Assistant National Legislative Director and Air Force veteran Naomi Mathis presented findings and recommendations from DAV's report Women Veterans: The Journey to Mental Wellness. Following the presentation, DAV moderated a candid panel discussion featuring Mathis, Army veteran Juliet Taylor and Army veteran Kim Hubers. Please take the time to go to DAV.org/ women veterans to see what YOUR DAV is doing for all women Veterans.

So, what's a good movie to watch in the new year? I suggest the "6888", the story about the 6888th Central Postal Directory Battalion, nicknamed the "Six Triple Eight". The Six Triple Eight, (Netflix), offers a long-overdue tribute to the 6888th Central Postal Directory Battalion, the only all-Black, all-female battalion to serve overseas during World War II. Directed by Tyler Perry, the film tells the story, inspired by true events, of the women who were tasked with sorting millions of pieces of backlogged mail for U.S. soldiers in Europe. While vital to the war effort, their service has largely been overlooked until recently. The 6888th had 855 women and was led by Major Charity Adams. The group motto was "No mail, low morale". It is an inspiring story and a glimpse into the struggles of the military women who paved the way for our service. Watch it on your own or get a group of women Veterans to watch together. Don't forget the popcorn.

**DEPARTMENT WOMEN VETERANS REPRESENTATIVE
SANDY FRANKS**

NOTES AND UPDATES

Calling All Women's Veterans



If you have not registered for MyDAV.org please log on to DAV.org and do so. It is your personal DAV account and the website is very informative. Also, while on the site, take a moment to register for the Commanders Action Network (CAN). This gives you the opportunity to support legislation that is being proposed by DAV to help and support Veterans. Some other websites that you should bookmark and visit periodically are

- Department of Veterans Affairs at VA.gov
- Louisiana Department of Veterans Affairs at vetaffairs.la.gov
- Center for Women Veterans at va.gov/womenvet
- DAV.org
- DAV Department of Louisiana at DAVDOL.org
- DAV.org/womenveterans

Please share this information with other women Veterans. Knowledge is power and the more we know the more power we have.

Our state convention is in mid-May and it will be here before we know it. Please plan to attend the convention and the Women Veterans Conference. Our time together at state meetings really energizes me and I would like to visit more of you during the year. Please consider getting a group of women Veterans together for lunch or just a gathering and let me know when and where, I'd love to attend.

Another opportunity to gather women Veterans together is June 12th. June 12th is Louisiana Women Veterans Day so please plan a celebration of YOU, a Louisiana Woman Veteran and your Veteran sisters. Learn more about this day at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Women_Veterans_Day.

Thank you for your friendship and for your service to our great country.

Respectfully
Sandy Franks

DAVDOL Women Veterans Coordinator



A Veteran's Stand Down was held at the Magnolia Care Center 16950 Florida Blvd. Baton Rouge, LA 70819 on September 13, 2024, for veterans and their families. DAV Chapter 5 hosted the event along with American Legion Post 505 and other local veteran organizations. A live band, food and clothing items were given away. Speakers were provided concerning benefits and assistance with claims were provided.



MID-WINTER CONFERENCE 2024

CSO TRAINING

Special Thank you to the Department and to our National Officer Ms. Beverly James for the first-class training. Members from the Department of Louisiana along with members from Mississippi and Alabama were present during the Mid-Winter Conference in Kenner, LA. Shown in the photo below.



MID-WINTER CONFERENCE 2024

Standing Committee Meetings



Department Treasure PNEC/PDC Keven Wenthe giving the Finance and Budget Report at the Departments Finance and Budget Committee meeting at the Mid-Winter Conference in Kenner, La. Seated also were Department Senior Vice Commander Robert Chapman, Department Adjutant Paul Hermann and Department Administrative Asst. Detra Fairley

MEDIA AND TECHNOLOGY TRAINING

Chapter 20 Member Nicole Wenthe gave an excellent and super informed class on the Department of Louisiana's new Social Media platforms to include Best Practices and Do's and Don'ts.



MID-WINTER CONFERENCE 2024



Members of the DAV Auxiliary PSC/Sgt. At Arms Shelia Stephens, National Cmdr. Daniel Contreras, Left. To the right second row: Unit 50 Member Barnetta Maryland, NSO Supervisor Beverly James and Senior Vice Commander Janice Chapman are shown in the Hospitality Room on Friday Night.

MID-WINTER CONFERENCE 2024

MID-WINTER CONFERENCE 2024

FUN NIGHT HIGHLIGHTS



MEMORIAL CEREMONY



Mid-Winter Memorial Service was led by Dept. Chaplain Elton Strickland and assisted by Dept. Admin. Assist. Detra Fairley, for local chapters and units. Seen in the top photo along with Dept. Senior Vice Cmdr. Robert Chapman and Dept. Cmdr. Alfred Leger and DAVA State Commander Linda Durand. Middle left photo DAVA Senior Vice Cmdr. Janis Chapman along with DAV Senior Vice Commander Robert Chapman. Middle right photo: Dept. 2nd. Jr. Vice Commander Donald Bryant and DAVA Second Jr. Vice Commander Marlene Comeaux.

A Night of food, fun, music and a generous donation from BARKSDALE FEDERAL CREDIT UNION

MID-WINTER CONFERENCE 2024

MID-WINTER CONFERENCE 2024

Opening Business Session Mid-Winter Conference

Opening Business Session Mid-Winter Conference



The Mid-Winter Open Session was held on Sunday, November 17, 2024. The guest speakers shown from left to right are: National DAV Commander Daniel Contreras and LDVA Secretary Charlton Meginley.



This Year's Mid-Winter Conference Business Session included the National Commander Daniel Contreras pinning the Department Commander Alfred "Al" Leger and installing the Department Sergeant at Arms Robert Gros. Shown in the bottom left photos.



NOTES FROM THE AUXILIARY COMMANDER'S TALK

Linda Durand

UNIT MONTHLY MEETINGS

Unit 2 First Tuesday of the Month

Unit 7 4th Thursday of the Month

Unit 8 1st Tuesday of the Month

Unit 17 1st Thursday of the Month

Unit 20 4th Sunday of the Month

Unit 21 2nd Thursday of the Month

Unit 30 1st Thursday of the Month

Unit 50 2nd Thursday of the Month

Unit 51 2nd Saturday of the Month

STATE LEADERSHIP

Commander

Linda Durand

Sr. Vice Commander

Janis Chapman

Jr. Vice Commander

Marlene Comeaux-PSC

Chaplain

Audrey "JoJo" Hopkins

Judge Advocate

Betty Lou Lane-PSC

Adjutant/Treasurer/PSC/NEC/Nat. 3rd JVC

Kathleen Wenthe

Immediate Past State Commander

Shelia Stephens-PSC

First, I want to thank all our Unit members. Effective teamwork begins and ends with communication. I encourage all of you to share what works for you and any ideas to help grow our wonderful organization.

When you act on your own accord, it sets the tone for the organization. It tells others that incentive is expected. There may be mistakes of action, but I guarantee you the mistakes of action are far less regrettable than the mistakes of inaction. It is better to err on the side of daring than the side of caution.

As Coach Tom Landry said, "Setting a goal is not the main thing. It is deciding how you will go about achieving it and staying with your plan." I tell my grandchildren every day, you have competition every day because you set such high standards for yourself that you must go out every day and live up to that.

As your State Commander I have tried to attend as many events as possible. I attended the National Convention in Phoenix, AZ. Also, DAVA National in Indiana, to MALT Mid-Winter Conference and Louisiana Mid-Winter Conference in Kenner, LA. It was the most informative Convention.

Thank you, Kathleen Wenthe, you always do a beautiful job. Every Unit should try to send their members to Mid-Winter. The information they come home with is so valuable in many areas.

Again, thank everyone for your support and Prayers.

Blessings,

Linda Durand
State Auxiliary Commander

NOTES FROM THE
AUXILIARY SENIOR VICE
COMMANDER'S VOICE
Janice Felder-Chapman



Greetings from your DAVA Sr. Vice Commander

First, I want to say thanks to almighty God for keeping me through these trying times. It has been a rough year but by the grace of God I am still standing.

I would like to thank each of you for all your prayers and support in the untimely death of my sister Mary Thomas. Thanks from the bottom of my heart.

It has been a very busy year. This year I set a goal to advance our AUXILIARY membership. My goal is to increase membership for my Unit and for the State Department as well. I am well on my way. I recently signed over 30 new members for Unit 50 including DAV Chapter 50. I set a goal of recruiting 50 new members for this unit and I am well on my way.

We would like to continue this increase again for 2024/2025. So if you would please join me this year to make this happen again. I want to encourage each of you to sign up just one new member between now and State Convention in May.

I will continue to work on membership and assisting our local chapter's in this state as well as others. I am looking forward to seeing everyone at the State Convention held in May 2025 at the Double Tree Hotel in Kenner, LA.

I pray that everyone of you have a very Merry Christmas and a Prosperous New Year.

Janice Felder-Chapman,
DAVA Senior Vice Commander



NOTES FROM THE AUXILIARY JUNIOR VICE
COMMANDER'S VOICE
PSC MARLENE COMEAUX

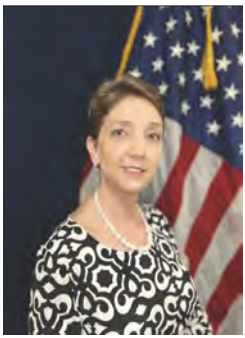
It has been my pleasure to have been elected as your State Jr. Vice Commander. I hope everyone had a Happy Thanksgiving and a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

I have been very busy going to National Convention in Phoenix, to Fall Conference in Lawrenceburg, IN and to the District 8 meeting held in Franklin, Tennessee. My Unit#2 in Lafayette has been busy with events such as sponsoring Bingo at Southwest LA Veterans Home in Jennings, manning an information table at the Veterans Cup Golf Tournament held in Lafayette, Fundraising at Golden Corral for the weekend of Veterans Day, sending about 700 Christmas Cards to the residents of the 5 LA VA Nursing homes, donating socks and t-shirts to St. Michael's Veterans Homeless Shelter, having Forget-Me-Not Fundraising Drives and participating at a Veterans Outreach Event in Opelousas. I am anxious to see what upcoming events will be held in the new year.

In this Journal, I would like to write about the Legislative Program. One of the easiest ways to get involved with the Legislative Program, is to join (CAN) Commander's Action Network. It is really easy to join, you only need to input your name, address and email address. Then, whenever an important bill comes up in the US House of Representative or the US Senate, you will be sent an email prefilled and addressed to your individual US Representative or US Senator. All you need to do is "Click It" and the email is automatically sent to your Representative or Senator. I hope that you choose to join CAN as it's really simple to let our elected officials know how we feel about Legislation that concerns our Veterans and their Benefits.

If any Auxiliary Member needs to contact me, I can be reached the following ways: 337-277-9017 PO Box 1338 Scott, LA 70583 or Mcomo1027@cox.net

May God Bless the USA and its Veterans and their families.



NOTES FROM THE AUXILIARY
 ADJUTANT'S THOUGHTS

Kathy Wenthe

PNEC/PSC/National 1st. Junior Vice Commander

As we welcome a brand-new year, it is hard not to marvel at how quickly the previous one flew by. While time seems to have moved at lightning speed, it left us countless cherished memories to look back.

First, I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to all Auxiliary members, guests, and Junior Auxiliary members who participated in our Louisiana Mid-Winter Conference this past November. Your support and patience during my presentation were appreciated, and I am working on finding a way to make the presentation accessible for those who could not attend. Thanks to everyone's contributions, the conference was a resounding success. The Fun Night particularly memorable—what a fantastic evening of camaraderie and laughter! I still haven't found that baby's daddy! LOL

A special shout-out to everyone who contributed to our fundraising efforts! Thanks to your generosity, our Senior Vice/Fundraising Chairman raised an impressive **\$2,840** for the Auxiliary, and the Junior members raised **\$303** for their chosen programs. I'll be reaching out to those who participated to determine which programs they'd like to support and will update the Department of Louisiana Auxiliary Facebook page accordingly.

I am also thrilled to share exciting news: the Department of Louisiana Auxiliary is in the process of forming two new units—congratulations to Bayou Unit #9 and Acadian #19! We look forward to presenting your charters soon and welcoming you officially. Mark your calendars! The annual DAV Golf Tournament is just around the corner on March 21st. Volunteers are needed to assist with setup, cooking, registration, and cleanup., we encourage units to sponsor a hole and contribute at least one prize. More details will be shared in the coming weeks.

Annual Report paperwork will be sent to each unit and is due by April 15th. You'll receive one hard copy of each form, but they can also be downloaded and completed with the fillable forms from the National DAV Auxiliary website. Submit one signed copy to me and retain a copy for your records. I'll handle submission to the National Chairpersons and NEC.

Each unit is required to hold an Annual Officer Election. Notices must be sent to members (excluding juniors) at least 10 days before nominations and/or elections. Nominations, election, and installation can occur during the same meeting.



NOTES FROM THE AUXILIARY
 ADJUTANT'S THOUGHTS

CONTINUED

Kathy Wenthe

PNEC/PSC/National 1st. Junior Vice
 Commander

- Only life members in good standing are eligible to vote.
- Absentee voting is not permitted.
- Elections must be conducted via written ballot unless there is only one candidate, in which case a voice vote is acceptable.
- Units must elect a State Executive Committee member and an alternate to represent them at the State Convention. If changes occur before the convention, a new election is required, along with an updated officer report submission.

Recruiting new active members is vital to our success. National Auxiliary offers an exciting incentive for membership: a chance to win a **free vacation in sunny Fort Myers Beach, Florida!** Let's work together to grow our Auxiliary family.

You must now disregard **ALL Auxiliary applications and brochures** that you currently have in your possession. With the new rate increase, you will need to order new applications and brochures from national by sending them an email to dava@dav.org and requesting the material be mailed to you. Take time to remind all of your members to discard the old literature and order new material. The new life time membership rate is now **\$300.00** for 18 to 79 years of age.

As we move forward, I want to thank each of you for your unwavering support and dedication. This journey with the National Auxiliary wouldn't be possible without the love and encouragement of my husband, Kevin. He reminds me every day why we do what we do—caring for veterans and their families is a privilege and a joy.

I hope you all had a holiday season filled with love and that this new year brings blessings to you and your family. Let's continue to honor and thank our service members, veterans, and caregivers each day.

Warm regards,

Kathleen Wenthe, PNEC, PSC

LA State Dept. Adjutant

**NOTES FROM THE
AUXILIARY JUNIOR
ACTIVITIES CHAIRMAN**

Heather Patterson
Youth are Our Future

I would like to start off by stressing the importance of getting the Junior Auxiliary members involved in every way possible, from volunteering to help in the community, to just being present at the many events that take place, not only to show their support and willingness to help but to learn from the older generation. Let's face the cold hard truth... the Juniors are the future of the DAV and DAVA to keep it active and continuing to help everyone that is in need, weather it is a small task to them it could mean the world to the veterans they are helping.

The first week in October every year the DAV has a food booth at the local fair that we spend months before and after to get things ready to serve and educate the public on the importance of this organization. The Junior members are no stranger to hard work and look forward to helping, big shout out to Zane, Cooper, Abby and Tasha as well as all the Leesville High School JR. JROTC members who volunteer and put in all those long hours for the week.

October 12, 2024, at the Zwolle Tamale Festival, our very own Jack Redell Unit 20 Junior Auxiliary member Zane volunteered to help DAV Sabine unit 21 with any and everything they needed in preparation for the festival.

November 2024 at the Mid-Winter conference in Kenner, la Jack Redell Unit 20 Junior members stepped up once again. Junior members Zane, Cooper, Tasha and Abby all stepped up and sold snacks between each meeting to raise money for veteran organizations in need. Cooper and Zane also interviewed several members of the DAV about their personal experience while in the armed forces but also why the DAV and DAVA are so important in the communities. Cooper and Zane both agreed the most fun during the event was learning from and interviewing DAV National Commander Dan Contreras who has left a lasting impression on both these young men.

Our Juniors look forward to the banquet every year, so they get to help out with selling raffle tickets and helping with the live auctions. These juniors are the best.

Sincerely,

Heather Patterson
Junior Activities Chairman



Juniors are the future of the DAV and DAVA and we need to continue to stress how important it is for the help and hard work they contribute and compassion they have for the generation they are representing.

CAPITAL CITY CHAPTER 5 NEWS

**A NOTE FROM UNIT 7 COMMUNITY SERVICE CHAIRPERSON
TIA LOUDIN**

As Community Service Chairperson, I would like to mention a few things that we, as DAV-Auxiliary members can do to further help our veterans. With Winter right here on us, we need to be conscience of our homeless veterans and do what we can to reach out to them. That may look like offering them a warm meal, a blanket, a care package with thick warm socks, gloves, a stocking cap, and some Hot Hands had and toe warmers. There are things that we can do all year round to reach our veterans as well. We can volunteer at our local VA Hospitals whether it be direct or indirect contact with the patients. I know personally that the volunteer services coordinators need a lot of help getting things done behind the scenes that directly benefit the patients there. We can volunteer to take a local veteran or their family member to a doctor's appointment or just visit with them or call them. It is astonishing just how many of our veterans have absolutely no one to interact with and when we reach out and say "I was just thinking about you and wanted to check on you" that touches their hearts beyond belief. So, please, consider doing some of these things or think of other ways to touch the lives of those who fought so hard for ours.

Tia Loudin
Community Service Chairperson
Paul P. Benoit Memorial
Unit #7



Chapter 5 participated in the Denham Springs Fall Festival held every year.. The Fall Festival was held Saturday, October 5, 2024 in Denham, Springs La. Chapter Commander Dr. L.C. Thomas and along with members from SMP and Volunteers of America. The event was held for veterans, their families and the community.

BAYOU CHAPTER 9 NEWS



Members of Bayou Chapter 9 along with the Members of New Unit 9

JACK REDELL MEMORIAL CHAPTER 20 NEWS



Jack Redell Memorial Chapter 20 received its new van for the DAV Transportation Network. Always looking for volunteers to step-up and become Drivers.



Comrade Terry Newman and PDC Mason Causey and other members of Chapter/Unit 20 participated in Wreaths Across America 2024 at the Central Louisiana Veterans Cemetery in Leesville, LA.

JACK REDELL MEMORIAL CHAPTER 20 NEWS



Jack Redell Memorial Chapter/Unit 20 Christmas Dinner, December 13, 2025. Around 75 folks attended. DAV and DAVA Commanders with their spouses were in attendance. Members from other Chapters and Units, as well as guest. Guests were introduced by PSC and Unit Cmdr. Shelia Stephens along with PDC Mason Causey Chapter Adjutant. The Jr. Unit members assisted with serving the food which was also manned by PNEC/PDC Chapter Treasurer Kevin Wenthe. Remarks were given Dept. Commander Al Leger also by PNEC/PSC Unit Adjutant/Treas. Kathy Wenthe and PNEC/PDC Dept. Treasurer/Chapter Treasurer Kevin Wenthe. Tracy Kerlin with Barksdale Federal Credit Union was present to receive a plaque from the Department of Louisiana in appreciation of all the hard work and labor of love that goes into their fundraising efforts for the DAV Dept. of LA. During the Mid-Winter Conference, her along with Tricia Turner presented a check to the Dept. for over \$23,000.00. Barksdale Federal Credit Union Rocks!

SABINE CHAPTER 21 NEWS



Chapter 21 participated in the Zwolle Tamale Fiesta.

Chapter and Unit 21 Annual Christmas Party was held on December 12, 2025. There were many fun games played by those attending the event seen in the photos below.



CHAPTER 23 WESTBANK NEWS

Chapter of the First Female Dept. Commander for the State of Louisiana



The 14th Annual Veterans Luncheon hosted by the City of Hammond Recreational Department was held on November 7, 2024 at the City of Hammond Recreation Center (shown in the above photos). DAV Chapter 23 Westbank member Dr. Ernest Marcelle was the honoree. Department Adjutant Paul Hermann along with DAV Chapter 50 Member BPTL Mack Bailey were guest speakers. Adjutant Paul Hermann, BPTL Mack Bailey along with PDC Chapter 23 Adjutant Belinda Hill is shown with Member Dr. Ernest Marcelle. Shown in the last three photos are DAV Chapter 23 Westbank members honoring veterans by placing flags on veterans graves at the Rest lawn Cemetery.

CHAPTER 51 GENERAL CLAIRE CHENNAULT FLYING TIGERS NEWS



Chapter and Unit 51 events for 2024 are shown in the photos listed above. The first (3) photos shown are the Chennault Museum Airshow held in May. Photo (4) are at the Louisiana Delta Veterans Annual Festival held in November. The Last (3) photos are the Annual Holiday Potluck.

LAFAYETTE UNIT 2 NEWS



Shown in the photos above are a list of activities that Unit 2 were involved in. The first photo list the officers from (left. to right.) Phyllis Bertrand(Treasurer), Corinne Manning (Adjutant) Marlene Comeaux (Commander) Jerri Rambin (Sr. Vice Commander) and Marcella Tweedel (Jr. Vice Commander). The second photo shows Commander Marlene Comeaux having lunch with PSC Sheila Stephens , PNEC/PSC/Nat. 1st. Jr. Kathleen Wenthe and State Auxiliary Commander Linda Willis attending lunch at National Convention in Phoenix. The third photo shows Chapter 2 Commander Ken Grove speaking at the Veterans Cup Golf Tournament. The fourth pare Unit 2 members attending the Veterans Cup Golf Tournament. The fifth photo are Chapter and Unit 2 Members along with Golden Corral Manager for Veterans Day. Seen in the last photo is Commander Comeaux delivering socks and T-shirts to St. Michaels Veterans Homeless Shelter.



VETERAN HOMES PRESENTATIONS

Veteran Home Presentations were held on December 12, 2024 at the Southeast Louisiana Veteran Home in Reserve, La. Shown in the first photo from left to right are Dept. 2nd JVC Donald Bryant, LDVA Deputy Asst. Secretary Matt Duhon, Dept. Adjutant Paul Hermann, Administrator Brian Freemin, Dept. Commander Al Leger, PDC Belinda Hill, Associate Administrator Charles Scott Conner and Monique Bechet. The bottom photo was a \$500.00 check presented to Northwest Louisiana Veterans Home photo from left to right are Dept. 2nd JVC Donald Bryant, LDVA Asst. Deputy Secretary Matt Duhon, Dept. Adjutant Paul Hermann, Administrator Wesley Pepitone, Dept. Cmdr. Al Leger, and PDC Belinda Hill.

VETERAN HOMES PRESENTATIONS CONTINUED



Top left photo: On December 12, 2024 a check in the amount of \$500.00 was presented from DAV Department of Louisiana to Northeast Veterans Home. Administrator Marquita Mahaliak is shown with Dept. Cmdr. AL Leger Leger. The top right photo shows Southwest Louisiana Veterans Home on December 12, 2024 receiving a check in the amount of \$500.00 from DAV Department of Louisiana. Administrator Darla Price is seen in photo with Department Commander Al Leger. Bottom left photo: On December 12, 2024 Louisiana Veterans Home in Jackson, Louisiana was presented a check in the amount of \$500.00 from DAV Department of Louisiana. Administrative Director Ashlyn Hilburn is shown in the photo with Department Commander Al Leger. Also representing DAV Department of LA were (left to right)in all photos: Department 2nd. JVC Donald Bryant, LDVA Deputy Asst. Secretary Matt Duhon, Department Adjutant Paul Hermann and PDC Belinda Hill for each presentation.

DAV
DEPARTMENT OF LOUISIANA
Annual Golf Scramble Tournament
4 Person Teams - 8:30 AM Shotgun Start
GRAND RIDGE GOLF CLUB
LULING, LA
March 21, 2025

Entry Fee \$400.00 per team which includes Green Fees and 2 Carts per team, plus food and prizes. Three places and others; closest to hole and longest drive. 100% of the proceeds will go to the Louisiana Veterans - Men and Women who were disabled defending our country.

For more information, call 504-784-0525.

IN MEMORIAM

DAVA MEMBER MARY FELDER THOMAS

AUGUST 19, 1956- OCTOBER 09, 2024



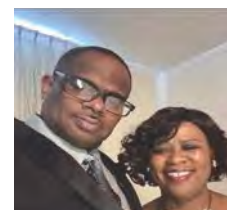
Funeral Services were held Saturday, October 26, 2024 for Mary Felder Thomas at the House of Praise C.O.G.I.C. in Walker, LA. Pastor Richard Harbor officiating.

Mary loved spending time with her family traveling to conventions with the DAV/DAVA . Mary was the Senior Vice Commander of Unit 50 DAV Auxiliary Florida Parish in Springfield, LA She was faithful and persistent in participating in the Conventions for the Department of Louisiana.

Mary served very faithfully at her Church New Sunrise Missionary Baptist Church under the leadership of her Pastor Richard Harbor until her passing. Mary also enjoyed watching old western movies. She loved playing bingo and her bingo family. She was a very loving, kind and giving person. She had a heart of gold. Her doors not only to family but friends as well.

Mary leaves to cherish her memories one daughter La'Kenya Thomas, grandsons, Kenneth D. Thomas(Theresa), Stevenson Grant, Jr. and Jamarion Thomas, and Robert O'Bryan Thomas, Jr.; granddaughters, La'Kentra N. Thomas, Stephaneshia A. Thomas (Eric), great grand kids: Tristain Thomas, Saint Thomas, Sebashtin Thomas, Gianna Thomas, Braylianna Turner, Audrianna Turner, Kobe Elhamed, Zyla Elamed, Charlie Davis, Elijah Warner and Eric Warner, III, brother Alfred Carter Jr., (Megan); sisters, Janice Felder-Chapman (Robert), Tracey Carter Smith (Charles), Gracie Felder Dunn and Cheryl Carter-Parker, Pinkie Scott-Williams (Floyd); sisters in law, Learly Thomas-Miller, Della Thomas-Perkins and Doris Thomas -Thigpen (Robert); brothers -in-law, Pastor Eddie (Glenda) Thomas; Pastor Edgar (Marvette) Thomas, Odell (Della) Thomas, Bruce (Karen) Thomas, and Donald Ray Thomas; twenty-six nephews ad fourteen nieces whom she helped reared as her own, especially Kasey Felder and Measha Carter, best friends Barnetta Maryland, Rita Jones, Elder Antoinette Rider, The Slap Crew of Denham Springs, La very special co-workers, uncle Larry Carter and Aunt Irene Carter. A host of other relatives and friends.

Mary was preceded in death by her husband, Harry Thomas Sr, mother Gracie Carter; stepfather, Alfred Carter, maternal grandparents, Jam and Luvenia Travis-Felder, sons, Harry J. Thomas, Jr. and Robert O'Brian Thomas, Sr.; sisters, Bertha F. Simmons, Cynthia A. Felder and Ethel S. Carter-Garner; nephews, Eddie D. Felder and Marcee Felder; nieces, Kelley Dianne Felder and Kelley Gracieanna Carter.



Happy New Year!

Thank you for the hard work and dedication shown in making the Mid-Winter Conference a great success! Special thanks to the DAV Auxiliary for all of their assistance with Registration. Congratulations to our New Department Commander Alfred Leger and our New 2024-2025 Line Officers. Congratulations are also to the New Department Sgt. At Arms Robbie Gros.

Best wishes are extended to former Department Commander Richard Terry Waite. God's continued blessings to you in all of your future endeavors.

It has been said that a picture is worth a thousand words. Line Officers please remember to keep your articles between 200 and 300 words about the things you are trying to accomplish as you ascend as a Line Officer.

Chapters/Units if you have submissions, please send them in shortly after an event occurs, while things are still fresh in your mind of what happened. Things to remember when submitting an Article for the Journal.

Please include a paragraph about the photo being submitted. Please identify the individuals in the photo and tell them something about the event that you are writing about.

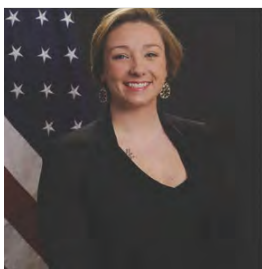
When sending articles and pictures, please send the text as a word document.

When sending pictures from phones or cameras: send the photo in the actual size or largest size.

The next Louisiana Journal will be published by the last week in April and no later than the 1st week of May 2025. It is very important that you submit your Journal Article information before the deadline of April 01, 2025. **"Remember to be early is on time and to be on time is to be late!" This is quoted by Department Adjutant Paul Hermann, Jr.**

I look forward to seeing everyone at the 102nd Annual State Convention held May 15, 2025 through May 18, 2025 held at the Double Tree Hotel in Kenner, LA.

MEDIA AND TECHNOLOGY DEPARTMENT



Media & Technology

Social Media Best Practices and Online Security for DAV & Auxiliary Members

Engaging Through Social Media

The Department of Louisiana maintains an active social media presence to support veterans and share vital information. Follow and engage with our official accounts @davdol1920 and @davauxla to help extend our reach to veterans who need DAV's services.



"Social media is not just about sharing information—it's about building trust and connections within our veteran community. When we maintain professional standards online, we honor our mission and the veterans we serve."
— Marc Burgess, DAV National Adjutant

Maintaining Professional Standards

Representing DAV on social media requires adherence to our organization's standards. The DAV National Stylebook and Language Guide outlines proper use of brand assets and messaging to maintain consistency and professionalism across all chapters.

Handling Negative Content

When encountering negative posts about DAV, members should avoid direct public engagement. Instead, report misinformation through official channels or notify department leadership for private resolution.



Call to Action

Social media remains one of our most effective tools for connecting with veterans and sharing DAV's mission. We encourage all members to:

1. Follow our department accounts @davdol1920 and @davauxla
2. Share official DAV content with their networks
3. Stay informed about our online security guidelines
4. Report any suspicious online activity targeting veterans



By working together and maintaining professional standards online, we can better serve our veterans and their families. Thank you to everyone who attended our Mid-Winter social media training. We look forward to offering additional training at upcoming conventions.

Remember to connect with us on social media and help spread awareness of DAV's mission to empower veterans to lead high-quality lives with respect and dignity.

Nicole Wenthe
media@davdol.org

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