

NATIONAL CONVENTION PROCEEDINGS OF THE DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS

COMMUNICATION

FROM

THE NATIONAL ADJUTANT, THE DISABLED
AMERICAN VETERANS

TRANSMITTING

2011 NATIONAL CONVENTION PROCEEDINGS OF THE
DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS, PURSUANT TO
36 U.S.C. 50308 AND 44 U.S.C. 1332



October 10, 2011 - Referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs
and ordered to be printed

LETTER OF SUBMITTAL

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS

October 10, 2011

Hon. John Boehner
Speaker of the House of Representatives
Washington, DC

Dear Mr. Speaker:

As business manager of Disabled American Veterans, and as secretary of its National Convention, I hereby certify as to the authenticity of the reports and proceedings of our National Convention, held in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, and submit them to you through the office of this organization located in Washington, D.C., to be printed as a House document as originally authorized by 44 USC 1332 and in fulfillment of 36 USC 50308.

The National Convention proceedings include an independent audit report of all receipts and expenditures as of December 31, 2010, as described in 36 USC 10101.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Arthur H. Wilson', with a stylized, flowing script.

ARTHUR H. WILSON
National Adjutant
Chief Executive Officer

TABLE OF CONTENTS

JOINT OPENING SESSION, SATURDAY MORNING, AUGUST 6, 2011

Call to Order, Commander Wallace E. Tyson	1
Welcoming Remarks:	
Convention Chairman	2
Address, Deputy Mayor of Public Safety, Lieutenant Col. Jerry Sneed	3
Introduction of National Officers	4
Report to Convention, National Commander	5
Report to Convention, Auxiliary National Commander	7
Address, Manager for Community Relations for Ford Motor Co. Fund, Lynn Quigley	9
Presentations:	
Outstanding Disabled Veteran of the Year	10
Bugle Award	14
Outstanding Auxiliary Member of the Year	16
Presentations:	
George H. Seal Memorial Awards	16
Jesse Brown Memorial Youth Scholarship	17
Recess	18

FIRST BUSINESS SESSION, SATURDAY AFTERNOON, AUGUST 6, 2011

Call to Order, Commander Wallace E. Tyson	49
Credentials Committee Report	49
DAV Statement of Policy	50
Board of Director's Treasurer's Report	50
Report to Convention, National Adjutant Arthur H. Wilson	51
Report to Convention, Membership Director Anthony Baskerville	56
Committee Advisors	61
Delegates and Alternates to Convention Committees	62
Recess	70

SECOND BUSINESS SESSION, SUNDAY MORNING, AUGUST, 7, 2011

Call to Order, Commander Wallace E. Tyson	71
Credentials Committee Report	71
Address, Director of the Achilles Freedom Team of Wounded Vets, Genna Griffith	71
Report to Convention, Executive Director Barry Jesinoski	73
National Commander's Awards for Outstanding VA Employees	85
Outstanding Veterans Benefits Administration Employee of the Year	85
Outstanding Veterans Health Administration Employee	85
Outstanding National Cemetery Administration Employee of the Year	86
Report to Convention, National Director of Voluntary Services Michael Walsh	86
Report to Convention, National Legislative Director Joseph A. Violante	97
Report to Convention, National Service Director Garry J. Augustine	103
Constitution and Bylaws Committee Report	116
Committee on Finance Report	121
Committee on General Resolutions Report	121
Committee on Hospital and Voluntary Services Report	137
Committee on Legislation and Veterans Rights Report	163
Recess	189

TABLE OF CONTENTS (Continued)

THIRD BUSINESS SESSION, TUESDAY MORNING, AUGUST 9, 2011

Call to Order, Commander Wallace E. Tyson	190
Credentials Committee Report	190
Address, Secretary, Department of Veterans Affairs, Eric K. Shinseki	190
Constitution and Bylaws Committee Report	197
National Order of Trench Rats and the Imperial Council	197
Report to Convention, DAV Charitable Service Trust	198
Report to Convention, Gary Burns, National Service Foundation	213
Richard J. Cosgriff Pacesetting Performance Awards	216
Recess	237

FINAL BUSINESS SESSION, TUESDAY AFTERNOON, AUGUST 9, 2011

Call to Order, Commander Wallace E. Tyson	238
Nomination and Election of Officers	239
Report of Committee on Nominations	239
Final Credentials Committee Report	240
Introduction of Newly Elected National Executive Committee	240
Adjourn	247

DAV AUXILIARY SECTION	248
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MOTIONS

<u>Motion</u>	<u>Page</u>	<u>Action</u>	<u>Page</u>
Accept Commander's Report.....	7.....	Carried	7
Adopt DAV Statement of Policy	50.....	Carried	50
Accept Treasurer's Report	51.....	Carried	51
Accept National Adjutant's Report	56.....	Carried	56
Accept Membership Director's Report	59.....	Carried	59
Accept Barry Jesinoski's Report.....	84.....	Carried	84
Accept Constitution and Bylaws Committee Report.....	116.....	Carried	116
Accept Finance Committee Report.....	121.....	Carried	121
Adopt Committee on General Resolution.....	129.....	Carried	129
Adopt Committee on Employment.....	136.....	Carried	136
Accept Committee on Hospital & Voluntary Services.....	163.....	Carried	163
Accept Committee on Legislation & Veterans' Rights	188.....	Carried	188
Accept Charitable Service Trust Report	213.....	Carried	213
Accept National Service Foundation Report	236.....	Carried	236
Adopt Final Credentials Committee Report	238.....	Carried	238
Adopt Committee on Nomination of National Officers.....	239.....	Carried	239
Discharge the Credentials Committee.....	246.....	Carried	246

NATIONAL OFFICERS 2011-2012
DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS

National Commander

Donald L. Samuels, 544 Douglas Bend Road, Gallatin, TN 37066

Senior Vice Commander

Larry A. Polzin, 13336 Alder Grove Street, Sylmar, CA 91342

First Junior Vice Commander

Mary J. Bencivenga, P.O. Box 1404, Toms River, NJ 08754-1404

Second Junior Vice Commander

Joseph W. Johnston, 3760 St. Rt. 131, Williamsburg, OH 45176

Third Junior Vice Commander

Ron Voegeli, 702 Battery Creek Road, Beaufort, SC 29902

Fourth Junior Vice Commander

Frank Maughan, 731 W. 3750 North, Ogden, UT 84414-1448

National Judge Advocate

Michael E. Dobmeier, P.O. Box 6188, Grand Forks, ND 58206

National Chaplain

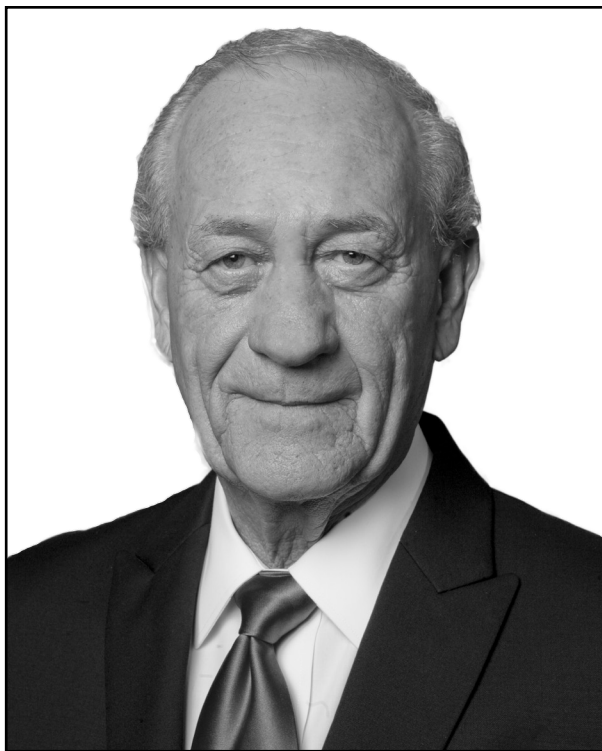
Rev. Dr. Charles W. Edwards, Jr., 8003 Manassas Drive, Austin, TX 78745

Past National Commander

Wallace E. Tyson, 6208 Lakebluff Place, Fayetteville, NC 28304-4632

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

First district: Mr. Leo R. Mooney, 379 West Royalston Rd, M-2, Athol, MA 01331
Second district: Mr. Dennis L. Krulder, 5 Hopkins Commons, Yaphank, NY 11980
Third district: Mr. Richard W. Schatz, 20 East Street, Cumberland, RI 02864
Fourth district: Mr. Joseph Harris, P.O. Box 48, Green Creek, NJ 08219
Fifth district: Mr. Robert Frederick Cudworth, 203 Stone Street, Moosic, PA 18507-1532
Sixth district: Mr. Jacob N. Stafford, 95 Chestnut Street, P.O. Box 274, Oceana, WV 24870-0274
Seventh district: Mr. Phil Condon, 8030 Casuarina Drive, Port Richey, FL 34668
Eighth district: Mr. Gerald E. Humphries, 108 Melrose Circle, Florence, MS 39073
Ninth district: Mr. Moses A. McIntosh Jr, 1124 Fox Den Road, Hephzibah, GA 30815
Tenth district: Mr. John Lamphere, 220 East Cass Street, Cadillac, MI 49601
Eleventh district: Mr. Joseph R. Lenhart, 14982 Cemetery Road, Wapakoneta, OH 45895
Twelfth district: Mr. Charles Vandenplas, 33 East 12th Street, Clintonville, WI 54929
Thirteenth district: Mr. James V. Thureau, 10917 Cocoa Beach Lane, Indianapolis, IN 46229
Fourteenth district: Mr. Joseph M. Litzinger, 4591 Homestead Circle, Grand Forks, ND 58201
Fifteenth district: Mr. David Bolton, 1685 Waters Edge Drive, Pleasant Hill, IA 50327
Sixteenth district: Ms. Delphine Metcalf-Foster, 187 Nantucket Lane, Vallejo, CA 94590
Seventeenth district: Mr. Tim Timmerman, P.O. Box 58, Flora Vista, NM 87415
Eighteenth district: Mr. William C. Baumann, 2033 Rose Cottage Way, Henderson, NV 89052
Nineteenth district: Ms. Pamela Fay Beale, 6704 Notting Hill Drive, Anchorage, AK 99504-4563
Twentieth district: Mr. Jay E. Johnson, 4915 Stoneleigh Drive, San Antonio, TX 78220
Twenty-first district: Ms. Marilyn Smith, P.O. Box 23, Fulton, AR 71838



Donald L. Samuels
National Commander
2011-2012
Disabled American Veterans



Wallace E. Tyson
National Commander
2010-2011
Disabled American Veterans

NATIONAL OFFICERS 2010-2011
DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS

National Commander

Wallace E. Tyson, 6208 Lakebluff Place, Fayetteville, NC 28304-4632

Senior Vice Commander

Donald L. Samuels, 544 Douglas Bend Road, Gallatin, TN 37066

First Junior Vice Commander

Larry A. Polzin, 13336 Alder Grove Street, Sylmar, CA 91342

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Fourth Junior Vice Commander

Ron Voegeli, 702 Battery Creek Road, Beaufort, SC 29902

National Judge Advocate

Michael E. Dobmeier, P.O. Box 6188, Grand Forks, ND 58206

National Chaplain

Rev. Dr. Charles W. Edwards, Jr., 8003 Manassas Drive, Austin, TX 78745

Past National Commander

Roberto Barrera, 300 Rolling Ridge Drive, Del Rio, TX 78840

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

First district: Roger H. Hamel, 77 Dorsey Street, Springfield, MA 01108
Second district: Dennis L. Krulder, 5 Hopkins Commins, Vaphank, NY 11980
Third district: Asiat A. Ali, 9 Seneca Avenue, Essex Jct., VT 05452
Fourth district: Joseph Harris, P.O. Box 48, Green Creek, NJ 08219
Fifth district: Timothy E. Birtle, P.O. Box 42709, Flinton, PA 16640
Sixth district: Jacob N. Stafford, 95 Chestnut St, P.O. Box 274, Oceana, WV 24870-0274
Seventh district: Chuck E. Heiney, 5749 Windermere Trace, Pace, FL 32571
Eighth district: Gerald E. Humphries, 108 Melrose Circle, Florence, MS 39073
Ninth district: Rodney S. Tucker, 142 Huntington Trail, Lexington, NC 27293
Tenth district: David C. Martin, 129 Viking Court, Battle Creek, MI 49017
Eleventh district: Raymond Hutchinson, 7134 Highland Trail East, Hillsboro, OH 45133
Twelfth district: Charles Vandenplas, 33 East 12th Street, Clintonville, WI 54929
Thirteenth district: Steven D. Girdler, 708 Apartment House Drive #9, Independence, KY 41051
Fourteenth district: Joseph M. Litzinger, 4591 Homestead Circle, Grand Forks, ND 58201
Fifteenth district: Kristine S. Childers, 11105 South 14th Street, Roca, NE 68430
Sixteenth district: Delphine Metcalf-Foster, 187 Nantucket Lane, Vallejo, CA 94590
Seventeenth district: Jimmie Snider, 221 West 57th Street #A-11, Loveland, CO 80538
Eighteenth district: William C. Baumann, 2033 Rose Cottage Way, Henderson, NV 89052
Nineteenth district: Lorren N. Davis, 3647 North Greenwich Way, Meridian, ID 83646
Twentieth district: Jay E. Johnson, 4915 Stoneleigh Drive, San Antonio, TX 78220
Twenty-first district: Timothy Hedgecock, 1316 NW Sheridan, #125, Lawton, OK 73505

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDERS

1921-22:	Robert S. Marx, Cincinnati, Ohio (deceased 1960)
1922-23:	C. Hamilton Cook, Buffalo, New York (deceased 1935)
1923-24:	James A. McFarland, Dalton, Georgia (deceased 1942)
1924-25:	Frank J. Irwin, New York, New York (deceased 1942)
1925-26:	John W. Mahan, Bozeman, Montana (deceased 1947)
1926-27:	John V. Cinnin, Chicago, Illinois (deceased 1955)
1927-28:	William E. Tate, Atlanta, Georgia (deceased 1949)
1928-29:	Millard W. Rice, Minneapolis, Minnesota (deceased 1980)
1929-30:	William J. Murphy, Santa Ana, California (deceased 1931)
1930-31:	H. H. Weimer, Chicago, Illinois (deceased 1955)
1931-32:	E. Claude Babcock, Washington, D.C. (deceased 1958)
1932-33:	William Conley, Los Angeles, California (deceased 1941)
1933-34:	Joe W. McQueen, Kansas City, Missouri (deceased 1969)
1934-35:	Volney P. Mooney, Jr., Los Angeles, California (deceased 1945)
1935-36:	Marvin A. Harlan, El Paso, Texas (deceased 1970)
1936-37:	M. Froome Barbour, Cincinnati, Ohio (deceased 1985)
1937-38:	Maple T. Harl, Denver, Colorado (deceased 1957)
1938-39:	Owen Galvin, Minneapolis, Minnesota (deceased 1956)
1939-40:	Lewis J. Murphy, South Bend, Indiana (deceased 1966)
1940-41:	Vincent E. Schoeck, Detroit, Michigan (deceased 1966)
August 16, 1941-August 15, 1943:	Lawrence R. Melton, Dallas, Texas (deceased 1978)
August 15, 1943-September 20, 1943:	William J. Dodd, Jersey City, New Jersey (deceased 1957)
1943-44:	James L. Monnahan, Minneapolis, Minnesota (deceased 1980)
1944-45:	Milton D. Cohn, Buffalo, New York (deceased 1968)
1945-46:	Dow V. Walker, Newport, Oregon (deceased 1957)
1946-47:	Lloyd F. Oleson, Ventura, California (deceased 1982)
1947-48:	John L. Golob, Hibbing, Minnesota (deceased 1976)
1948-49:	Jonathon M. Wainwright, San Antonio, Texas (deceased 1953)
1949-50:	David M. Brown, Akron, Ohio (deceased 1982)
1950-51:	Boniface R. Maile, Grosse Pointe, Michigan (deceased 2002)
1951-52:	Ewing W. Mays, Little Rock, Arkansas (deceased 1994)
1952-53:	Floyd L. Ming, Bakersfield, California (deceased 1975)
1953-54:	Howard W. Watts, Indianapolis, Indiana (deceased 1977)
1954-55:	Alfred L. English, Shelbyville, Tennessee (deceased 1987)
1955-56:	Melvin J. Maas, Chevy Chase, Maryland (deceased 1964)
1956-57:	Joseph F. Burke, Bayonne, New Jersey (deceased 1970)
1957-58:	Paul E. Frederick, Jr., Cincinnati, Ohio
1958-59:	David B. Williams, Boston, Massachusetts (deceased 1994)
1959-60:	Bill H. Fribley, Crestline, Kansas (deceased 1994)
1960-61:	William O. Cooper, Dallas, Texas (deceased 1990)
1961-62:	Francis R. Buono, Whitestone, New York (deceased 1977)
1962-63:	Peter L. Dye, Denver, Colorado
1963-64:	Douglas H. McGarrity, Allen Park, Michigan (deceased 1986)
1964-65:	William G. Dwyer, San Diego, California (deceased 1982)
1965-66:	Claude L. Callegary, Baltimore, Maryland
1966-67:	John W. Unger, Sr., Danville, Illinois (deceased 1970)
1967-68:	Francis J. Beaton, Fargo, North Dakota (deceased 1969)
1968-69:	Wayne L. Sheirbon, Seattle, Washington (deceased 1999)
1969-70:	Raymond P. Neal, Daly City, California
1970-71:	Cecil W. Stevenson, Jonesboro, Arkansas
1971-72:	Edward T. Conroy, Bowie, Maryland (deceased 1982)
1972-73:	Jack O. Hicks, Larue, Ohio
1973-74:	John T. Soave, Detroit, Michigan (deceased 1984)

1974-75: Walter T. Greaney, Jamaica Plain, Massachusetts (deceased 1994)
 1975-76: Lyle C. Pearson, North Mankato, Minnesota
 1976-77: Frank J. Randazzo, East Meadow, New York (deceased 2010)
 1977-78: Oliver E. Meadows, Godley, Texas (deceased 2005)
 1978-79: Billy O. Hightower, Grand Junction, Colorado
 1979-80: Paul L. Thompson, Baltimore, Maryland (deceased 1993)
 1980-81: Stan Pealer, Holts Summit, Missouri
 1981-82: Sherman E. Roodzant, Santa Ana, California
 1982-83: Edward G. Galian, New York, New York (deceased 2002)
 1983-84: Dennis A. Joyner, Apollo, Pennsylvania
 1984-85: Chad Colley, Barling, Arkansas
 1985-86: Albert H. Linden, Jr., Camp Springs, Maryland
 1986-87: Kenneth G. Musselmann, Huntington Beach, California (deceased 2009)
 1987-88: Gene A. Murphy, Sioux Falls, South Dakota
 1988-89: Billy E. Kirby, Clifton, Texas
 1989-90: Vernon V. Cardosi, Saugus, Massachusetts
 1990-91: Joseph E. Andry, Westerville, Ohio (deceased 2010)
 1991-92: Cleveland Jordan, Washington, D.C.
 1992-93: Joseph C. Zengerle, Washington, D.C.
 1993-94: Richard E. Marbes, Green Bay, Wisconsin
 1994-95: Donald A. Sioss, Miller Place, New York
 1995-96: Thomas A. McMasters, III, Sterling Hts., Michigan (deceased 2008)
 1996-97: Gregory C. Reed, Indianapolis, Indiana
 1997-98: Harry R. McDonald, Jr., Crestview, Florida (deceased 2008)
 1998-99: Andrew A. Kistler, Franklin, Pennsylvania
 1999-00: Michael E. Dobmeier, Grand Forks, North Dakota
 2000-01: Armando C. Albarran, San Antonio, Texas
 2001-02: George H. Steese, Jr., Fresno, California
 2002-03: Edward R. Heath, Sr., Mechanic Falls Maine (deceased 2005)
 2003-04: Alan W. Bowers, Royalston, Massachusetts
 2004-05: James E. Sursely, Apopka, Florida
 2005-06: Paul W. Jackson, Colorado Springs, Colorado
 2006-07: Bradley S. Barton, Tualatin, Oregon
 2007-08: Robert T. Reynolds, Alexandria, Virginia
 2008-09: Raymond E. Dempsey, Des Plaines, Illinois
 2009-10: Roberto Barrera, Del Rio, Texas
 2010-11: Wallace E. Tyson, Fayetteville, North Carolina

PROCEEDINGS OF THE 90th NATIONAL CONVENTION
OF THE DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS HELD AT
NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA
AUGUST 6, 2011
Joint Opening Session
- - -

The Joint Opening Session of the Disabled American Veterans and the Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary 90th National Convention convened in the Grand Ballroom on the First Level of the Hilton New Orleans Riverside Hotel, New Orleans, Louisiana on Saturday morning, August 6, 2011, and was called to order at 8:32 o'clock, a.m., by National Commander Wallace E. "Wally" Tyson.

COMMANDER WALLACE E. "WALLY" TYSON: Good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

COMMANDER TYSON: Welcome to the 90th Annual Convention of the Disabled American Veterans. (Applause) We've got a lot of work to do so let's get started.

I want to begin by thanking all of you for giving me the opportunity to lead this great organization. It has – serving as your National Commander is a serious responsibility but also one that I have loved. I've been impressed by the terrific job done by all of you as we carry out our mission.

Our National Service Officers and Transition Service Officers are the finest of any veterans' service organization on this planet. (Applause) Our Department and Chapter Service Officers are superb. (Applause) The Transportation Network drivers, the volunteers and our professional staff are the very best on this planet. (Applause)

I was deeply touched by the service of our National Service Officers during the recent outbreak of tornados. In Alabama, Missouri, and North Carolina and elsewhere I witnessed their compassion as they rendered disaster aid to disabled veterans and their families.

(Whereupon, National Adjutant Wilson and Commander Tyson had a sidebar conversation.)

COMMANDER TYSON: I told you folks the other day I would make several mistakes. (Laughter) For those of you recording, just rewind it. (Laughter) Let's do some real good things first with the business. Ladies and gentlemen, I'm doing it the right way. (Laughter) Good morning a second time.

(Response of "Good morning.")

COMMANDER TYSON: And welcome to New Orleans. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the New Orleans Dixieland Brass Band, "The Kinfolk Brass Band" came through the ballroom playing two songs, followed by a round of applause.)

COMMANDER TYSON: I now call to order the 90th National Convention of the Disabled American Veterans. (Applause) Now, here's something else you're going to do twice.

Let's give a warm round of applause for the Dixieland Performers, the Kinfolk Brass Band, a New Orleans original. (Applause) Arthur H. Wilson, National Adjutant, will read the Call to Convention.

ADJUTANT ARTHUR H. WILSON: The Constitution and Bylaws of the Disabled American Veterans state that the supreme legislative powers of this organization shall be vested in an annual convention, composed of the National Officers, the representatives from state Departments and Chapters.

In accordance with these directives, I, Arthur H. Wilson, National Adjutant, declare the 90th National Convention of the Disabled American Veterans to be convened at New Orleans, Louisiana, at 8:30 a.m., Saturday, August 6th, 2011. Consideration and disposition of business brought before this convention shall be conducted in accordance with the National Constitution and Bylaws now in force.

COMMANDER TYSON: As a reminder, we'd ask that everyone in attendance please turn off your cellular phones and other portable devices. Present Colors.

(Whereupon, the Colors were presented and posted by the Department of Massachusetts Color Guard.)

COMMANDER TYSON: Ladies and gentlemen, our National Anthem as presented by 12-year-old McKayla Reece, a member of Mount Airy Unit Number 61 North Carolina and Ambassador-Sweetheart for the Central Georgia Chapter Number 33.

(Whereupon, McKayla Reece sang the National Anthem, followed by a standing ovation.)

COMMANDER TYSON: Take a bow. (Applause) Ladies and gentlemen –

(Whereupon, the Color Guard withdrew.)

COMMANDER TYSON: Ladies and gentlemen, please join me in reciting our Pledge of Allegiance.

(Whereupon, the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.)

COMMANDER TYSON: Please join me in thanking the members of the Department of Massachusetts Color Guard. (Applause) Please be seated. I'd like to call on National Chaplain, Doctor Charles Edwards Junior, to lead us in prayer.

CHAPLAIN DOCTOR CHARLES W. EDWARDS JUNIOR: Let us bow heads in prayer. In this moment of quietness and reflection, we acknowledge You, our God, as creator and sustainer of all life. As we come together as Disabled Veterans and Auxiliary members from our many states and territories we gather this day, August 6th, 2011, to celebrate the beginning of our 90th National Convention and we ask Your blessings on our deliberations.

God bless our veterans and Auxiliary members here for they are doers of great deeds. They are pioneers of freedom. They are pathfinders of humanity. They are leaders of great causes. And, indeed, they are builders of a better world.

God bless our veterans and Auxiliary members here for the inspired enlightenment of their abilities, for the wisdom of their ambitions, and for the abiding value of their given achievements. Help us always to remember our missing in action, and those held as prisoners of war.

Let us always remember those whom we have lost this past year from among our midst. And we ask Your blessings on the men and women who now serve in our military services and we pray for those who have lost their lives on yesterday(sic) and for their families, for those who one day will be members of the greatest veterans' service organization, the Disabled American Veterans. In God we trust. Amen.

(Response of "Amen.")

COMMANDER TYSON: Before we begin our activities this morning, we will pause to recognize our POWs and MIAs.

We call your attention to this small table near the stage which occupies a place of dignity and honor near the head table. It is set for one, symbolizing the fact that members of our armed forces are missing from our ranks.

They are referred to as POWs and MIAs. We call them comrades. They are unable to be with their loved ones and families today so we join together to pay our humble tribute to them.

This table is set for one. It is small, symbolizing the frailty of one prisoner alone against his or against her suppressors. The tablecloth is white, symbolic of the purity of their intention to respond to the country's call to arms.

The single red rose in the vase signifies the blood many may have shed in sacrifice to ensure our freedom. It also reminds us of those they love who await their return. The yellow ribbon on the vase represents the yellow ribbons worn on the lapels of the thousands who demand with unyielding determination a proper accounting of our comrades who are not among us today.

A slice of lemon on the plate reminds us of their bitter fate. The salt sprinkled on the plate reminds us of the countless fallen tears of the families as they wait. The glass is inverted. They cannot toast with us this day. The chair is empty. They are not here.

The candle is reminiscent of the light of hope which lives in our hearts to illuminate their way home, away from their captors, to the open arms of a grateful nation. Let us pray to the Supreme Commander that all of our comrades will soon be back within our ranks. Let us remember and never forget their sacrifices. May God watch over them and protect them and their families.

At this time I have the honor of introducing a distinguished Louisiana gentleman. To get underway I'm pleased to present National Convention Chairman Eddie Figueron. (Applause) He is a past Department of Louisiana Commander. Eddie has been a member of the DAV since 1984 when he retired from the United States Air Force. (Applause)

Eddie's father served as Department of Louisiana Commander 25 years ago. And his mother was an Auxiliary State Commander. So the DAV is part of his family heritage. Let's get the show on the road by welcoming Eddie Figueron, our Convention Chairman. (Applause)

CONVENTION CHAIRMAN G. EDDIE FIGUERON: Commander Tyson, let's get this show on the road by welcoming myself. (Laughter) All right, again, thank you, Commander, for that warm introduction.

National Commander Tyson, National Adjutant Art Wilson, National Line Officers, Auxiliary National Commander Henry, distinguished and fellow DAV members, it is an honor to welcome you to the 90th National Convention of the Disabled American Veterans.

Louisiana is such a, much a concoction as gumbo, the spicy dish that has made it famous. The state has been strengthened by a rare combination of many nations and cultures; and Louisiana has kept the best of them.

So when it comes to food, fun, things to do, and places to go, you will have your pick of many fascinating activities, especially here in New Orleans, one of North America's most distinctive and culturally diverse cities.

Whether you call it "The Big Easy," the "Crescent City," or simply "N'Awlins," when the sun goes down, New Orleans will enchant you with a unique array of sights, sounds and tastes. This is more than a city; it's a legend. No city in the world takes fun more seriously than New Orleans.

Here is the real magic. It's in the music, the food, the architecture, and, of course, the people. The French Quarter has its jazz bands, beignets, and chicory coffee. There are the Cities of the Dead, the Mighty Mississippi, and, of course, Creole, Cajun, and crayfish, take your pick. New Orleans has it all.

Just a couple of trolley stops down the line you will find Jackson Square and Bourbon Street with its distinctive sounds and attractions. Near the hotel you can visit the Audubon Zoo, the Aquarium of the Americas, the World War II Museum – which is beautiful – and, of course, Harrah's Casino. For relaxation, catch a dinner cruise on a paddle wheeler or just stroll down the Riverwalk.

As you enjoy The Big Easy, please keep in mind the reason we're here – to do our very best to help the DAV remain the finest veterans' service organization in the world. (Applause) We are here to take care of business. There is a lot of work to be done.

And at this time I'd like to present a small gift to the DAV, DAV National Commanders as well as the National Adjutants. On behalf of the Department of Louisiana we hope you enjoy this. Put it on your desk or something. (Laughter)

(Whereupon, Chairman Figueron presented gifts of alligator heads to the DAV and DAVA Commanders and Adjutants.)

COMMANDER TYSON: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN FIGUERON: Yes. Shoot 'em. (Applause) So on behalf of the Department of Louisiana, the Department Commander Jeff Lee, and Department Adjutant Charles Holderman, it is an honor to be the host state of the 90th National Convention.

In the words of my good friends Boudreaux and Thibodeaux, and the National Convention Committee, "Laissez les bon temps roulez" – let the good times roll. (Applause)

COMMANDER TYSON: Thank you. Thank you, Eddie Figueron. There is not another one like you. (Laughter) The rest of us couldn't live with it. (Laughter) But we're willing to live with you. (Laughter)

Ladies and gentlemen, it is my pleasure to introduce to you New Orleans' Deputy Major of Public Safety. Retired Marine Lieutenant Colonel Jerry Sneed oversees the city's public safety departments.

Leading the city's police and emergency responders, his goal is to provide coordinated safety and security to citizens. He coordinates internal functions as well as external relations with other criminal justice entities to maximize the effectiveness of the facets of all the systems.

Ladies and gentlemen, please give a warm welcome to a proud veteran and our host for this week, Lieutenant Colonel Sneed. (Applause)

DEPUTY MAYOR OF PUBLIC SAFETY, LIEUTENANT COLONEL JERRY SNEED: I thank you very much. On behalf of Mayor Mitch Landrieu I want to welcome you to the City of New Orleans. And thank you for choosing New Orleans as where you decided to come and let the good times roll. (Laughter) Yes.

This is a unique city and we do appreciate you coming and sharing this important convention in the City of New Orleans. Again, Mayor Landrieu would have been here but he's got some other commitments and he asked me to attend in his place.

I'll be the first to admit that Mayor Landrieu is much younger, better looking and a better speaker and if he were here I'm afraid that when that band went through he would have been – they do this handkerchief thing down here called "second lining" and I think he would have been right along with the band. (Laughter) I don't do that stuff so. (Laughter)

But I'll tell you, there is nobody in city hall that's more honored to be here than I am because of the importance of your organization to our veterans. I thank you for what you do. You know, I thought I'd made my notes large enough where I didn't need these things. I apologize, but. (Laughter)

(Whereupon, Lieutenant Colonel Sneed brought out his glasses and put them on.)

DEPUTY MAYOR OF PUBLIC SAFETY AND LIEUTENANT COLONEL SNEED: Your organization is about – as a combat veteran and a retired Marine I think I do understand what you do and, again, it's quite an honor to be here.

You're an organization of 1.2 million special people. Your organization is very, very unique. You have very high standards in your acceptance. You have very, very strict rules of accepting your members.

You're an organization that understands things that I think most of our or many of our citizens today don't understand anything about – the service to their country in the military. With today's all-volunteer service it's getting even more unique and different for people to understand what it's all about to serve this great country in our military forces.

You know, again, you're unique. You're very selective. I'm sure there is not many of you here that growing up said, "Some day I want to be a member of the Disabled American Veterans organization."

First, you have to choose to serve this country with the unique and difficult task that imposes, just the every-day going and, you know, if you do it for 30 years, 20 years, 30 years, whatever, every two to three years moving to a different duty station and having children not very happy with you moving, losing their friends and so forth.

Then, you must obtain some disability in order to be a member of this unique organization. I think tomorrow has been dedicated Purple Heart Day for us to honor that day. I think many of you have that honor also.

With the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, your pool of potential members continues to grow. I was reading something the other day where the Air Force and Navy have lost 1,100 or have had 1,100 wounded in those wars where the Army and the Marine Corps has had 30,000 wounded in those occupations, which equates to 75 percent of those two organizations' total infantry units.

Speaking of those individuals, what a unique and terrific group they are. I've had the honor of being able to see some of them from time to time. Their "can-do" spirit and attitude after losing a limb or whatever took place for them, they're just amazing, amazing individuals that it's just an awe-inspiring time to be around them and seeing how there is absolutely no doubt in my mind they will not let it bother them. They will continue; they will strive.

So it's a pool that I encourage you to actively pursue because they will make your organization even stronger. Don't be too disappointed if they don't immediately jump on and or join your ranks because I also saw statistics the other day where about 13 percent of them are unemployed so there are some things that they're fighting through right now. But there is no doubt in my mind they will eventually want to be a member of this great organization.

Today's budget cuts are coming up. Your organization will have continued fights but they are fights that are worthwhile. And I encourage you, don't bow down to those fights. And I know you won't. It's important. Again, I thank you for what you do for our veterans and I thank you for what you do for our nation. I thank you for your service. I thank you for coming to New Orleans.

Now, on a more lighter note, ever since Katrina there is four things or three things you have to do when you are in the City of New Orleans; the fourth is your call. So I'd like to go through those.

One, stay in our great hotels; we need the revenue. (Laughter) Two, eat in all of our great, great – 30-pounds since retirement – great restaurants, (Laughter) especially the expensive ones; (Laughter) we need the revenue. (Laughter) Illegally park; (Laughter) we need the revenue. (Applause) Number 4 – completely your choice – get arrested; we need the revenue. (Applause)

One closing note, I said that one time and after the talk somebody came up to me and said, "Hey, Colonel, have you ever thought if you do Number 4 you get to come back and do Number 1, 2, and 3 all over again?" (Laughter)

So, again, I apologize. I have some other commitments. My phone has been ringing since I have been here so I've got to do some other things. But, again, thanks for choosing New Orleans. Thank you for what you do. Thank you for everything. Thank you. (Applause)

COMMANDER TYSON: Thank you, Colonel Sneed. New Orleans is a town near and dear to all of our hearts and we appreciate your world-class hospitality.

MR. JOHN "ROB" LEWIS: And now, let's meet your DAV National Officers: our Past National Commander and Chairman of the Board of Directors, from Del Rio, Texas, a rousing welcome for Bobby Barrera; (Applause) from Austin, Texas, your National Chaplain, a heavenly reception for the Reverend Doctor Charles W. Edwards Junior; (Applause) the pride of Grand Forks, North Dakota, our National Judge Advocate, Mike Dobmeier; (Applause) your Fourth

Junior Vice Commander, from Beaufort, South Carolina, Ron Voegeli; your Third Junior Vice Commander, from Williamsburg, Ohio, Joe Johnston; (Applause) your Second Junior Vice Commander, from Toms River, New Jersey, Mary Bencivenga; (Applause) your First Junior Vice Commander, from Sylmar, California, Larry Polzin; and last but certainly not least, your Senior Vice Commander, from Gallatin, Tennessee, old Rocky Top himself, let's hear it for Don Samuels. (Applause)

SENIOR VICE COMMANDER DONALD L. SAMUELS: I'm very pleased to introduce our National Commander, Wally Tyson. Elected a year ago at our National Convention in Atlanta, the Disabled American Veterans has been blessed with his leadership, his compassion for the disabled American veterans and their families.

A Vietnam War era veteran, Commander Tyson enlisted in the United States Army in 1972. After serving honorably for 12 years, he was medically retired as a sergeant first class.

Immediately following his medical retirement, he joined the Disabled American Veterans Chapter 46 in Fayetteville, North Carolina. While volunteering for the DAV, he earned his bachelor's degree in business administration from Methodist University at Fayetteville in 1989.

That same month he was appointed Adjutant for the Department of North Carolina. After years of service to his Department, he was recognized for national service when in 2005 he began his progression to his current post as being elected Fourth Junior Vice Commander of the Disabled American Veterans.

He also has served on the Ninth District Executive Committee, the National Executive and Finance Committee, the Interim Committee on Constitution and Bylaws, National Service Foundation Board of Directors, and as president of the State Commanders and Adjutants Association.

In addition to his work for the Disabled American Veterans, he has served as President of the North Carolina Veterans Council and was selected North Carolina's Disabled Veteran of the Year in 1995. Ladies and gentlemen, our outstanding National Commander, Wally Tyson. (Standing Ovation)

COMMANDER TYSON: Good morning, again.

(Response of "Good morning" and laughter.)

COMMANDER TYSON: I want to begin by thanking all of you for getting on the wrong page. (Laughter)

(Whereupon, Commander Tyson and Adjutant Wilson had a sidebar conversation.)

COMMANDER TYSON: Can I get my seven-year old grandson up here to figure this out. (Laughter)

First of all, (Laughter) I want to begin by thanking all of you for giving me the opportunity to lead this great organization. Serving as the National Commander, as any of my predecessors can tell you, is a serious responsibility, but also one that I truly love.

I have been impressed by the terrific job done by all of you as we carry out our mission. The National Service Officers and Transition Service Officers are the finest of any veterans' service organization. Our Department and Chapter Service Officers are absolutely superb. Our Transportation Network drivers, our volunteers, and our professional staff are the very best.

I was deeply touched by the service of our National Service Officers during the recent outbreak of tornadoes. In Alabama and Missouri and North Carolina and elsewhere I witnessed their compassion as they rendered disaster aid to disabled veterans.

DAV was the first veterans' service organization on the scene. It will always be in my memory how well they served the victims of these disasters. Please, let's give them all a big hand of applause for the great job they did. (Applause)

I traveled a lot this year. Everywhere I went there were warm receptions for the Disabled American Veterans. Our mission really resonates across the country and is carried out with dedication. I am very proud of the DAV.

We also enjoy an international reputation as well. At the World Veterans' Federation in Paris, the late Past National Commander William Cooper was honored with a federation service award. The DAV accepted it for the Cooper family. He led our great organization in 1960 and '61.

It was a day in which the DAV stood with our allies. And at the beaches in Normandy, I could see where my uncle came ashore on D-Day. It was a special moment for me. It redefined what the DAV has done over the last 91 years to help veterans.

Here at home, though, it's a different story. This year's political debate on federal funding and raising the debt ceiling has brought out some very troubling news. Some of the proposals being debated directly threaten veterans' benefits now and in the future. It has been made clear that veterans' health care and benefits are in the line of fire of the budget cutters.

The possible consequences of allowing our nation to default on our loan payments means that there'd be no money to pay for some government programs. President Obama made it clear that it wouldn't stop with Social Security. Included is veterans' disability compensation, which could suddenly stop if the debt ceiling is reached.

VA health care will continue, thank goodness. That's because the DAV stood up for veterans by supporting advance appropriations for veterans. (Applause) But what about the rest of the Veterans Health Administration? There we could see funding cuts. Also at risk are the new GI Bill, vocational rehabilitation, employment and dependent education programs.

I'm not pointing any fingers at any political party or any branch of government. There is enough fault to go around. (Applause) But what I am warning you about, that if we do not stand up for the benefits earned by our sacrifice for our beloved country, we will be tapped as a source for these funding cuts and we can't allow that to happen. (Applause)

I warn you to be vigilant, to be involved, to be proactive in support of the DAV's fight for adequate funding. No nation can exist for long by forgetting the sacrifices of its veterans. (Applause) And no nation can "promote the national defense" without caring for its veterans. (Applause) We need to let those in Washington know that taking our earned benefits is not a slam dunk. (Applause)

Most in our nation honors our service. I have witnessed that during a visit to the Intrepid Sea and Air Space Museum. The DAV is an important sponsor there along with a number of corporation giants.

I was impressed with the recognition we got as equals from these corporations because of our mission of service to veterans and our sacrifices on the field of battle. These corporations are clearly aware of what is at risk today, and they choose to stand behind American's veterans. (Applause) They are powerful allies.

At the National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic I saw severely injured veterans regain their sense of achievement and self-esteem. They took part in activities that might have been believed as impossible. DAV will continue to be a co-sponsor but without adequate funding will the VA continue its participation?

We have our supporters in Congress. I saw that up close and personal last spring. But, more importantly, it was you and your support that counted most. It was a thrill to get your tremendous support as I addressed a joint hearing of the House and Senate Veterans' Affairs Committees at our Mid-Winter Conference.

I was deeply grateful for your enthusiasm as we presented the DAV's legislative agenda to Congress. It is another memory I will treasure. And I want to thank our professional staff for preparing me in such an important task.

I can tell you this: we are powerful advocates for veterans because our advocacy program is so powerful. (Applause) Next year, and for many years after, we are going to need all the horsepower we can get just to keep what we have earned to this point. (Applause)

On two occasions I was able to meet with both the President and the Vice President. As National Commander I was able to speak to them one-on-one. I felt the responsibility of representing each of you before the leaders of our nation.

I am privileged to have had a role in presenting your interests and advancing our goals. It would not have been possible without your support.

As DAV National Commander I worked with our outstanding professional staffs. Their knowledge and commitment to protect our interests is without question. They are the ones who stand up to our government to ensure their responsibilities to veterans are met. We are blessed to have intelligent and knowledgeable leadership at every level of our organization.

National Adjutant Art Wilson is my close friend and excellent advisor. His wisdom and leadership result from a lifetime of service to veterans. His dedication and skills are the finest. I truly honor his friendship and trust his leadership. Ladies and gentlemen, he is one hell of a leader and manager of this team. (Standing Ovation)

Executive Directors Marc Burgess in Cold Spring, Kentucky, and Barry Jesinoski in Washington, D.C., provide unequalled guidance and foresight. They have enabled me to serve the needs of the DAV more successfully.

And I also want to express my thanks and appreciation to Dave Gorman who just retired as the Washington Headquarters executive director. All of our highly professional staffs really know how to carry out our mission. I can't thank them enough for their support this year.

I especially want to commend my line officers: Don, Larry, Mary, Joe and Ron. You have done a fantastic job.

And I also extend my deepest thanks to the Ninth District Committee man Rodney Tucker, my National Chief of Staff Bobby Williams, for helping me through the year.

My close friend, retired NSO Area Supervisor Ron Hope in Winston-Salem was a tremendous help. And my thanks to Past National Commander Alan Bowers who was a superb mentor all along the way, as were the other past National Commanders.

And my thanks to the Nominating Committees who allowed me to climb the ladder of national line officers to become National Commander. And thank you for all you have done for our veterans. It has been my pleasure to serve with you. In the future I will always be available to assist whenever and wherever needed.

Finally, thanks to all of you for your trust. Thank you for your support. And thank you for your service to our mission. I carry with me the thoughts of you all. I appreciate your good wishes and confidence. You have given me a lifetime of memories in one short year.

I have served you as my brothers and sisters. I could do no less. There is always more to do. I am confident that you, the members of the Disabled American Veterans, are up to any challenge.

Any goal is within your reach because of your dedication and your commitment. I am proud to be a Disabled American Veterans' member and the source of that pride rests in each one of you. Thank you sincerely for all that you do.

May God bless America and the men and women who have been placed in harm's way. God bless their families and may God always bless the Disabled American Veterans. Thank you and keep up the good work. (Standing Ovation)

SENIOR VICE COMMANDER SAMUELS: Commander Tyson, Wally, your superb leadership and devotion to the Disabled American Veterans will long be remembered. Thank you.

COMMANDER TYSON: Thank you. (Applause)

SENIOR VICE COMMANDER SAMUELS: I move to accept the National Commander's report.

MS. MICHELLE COLPAERT: Michelle Colpaert from the great state of North Carolina, Chapter 75, seconds that motion.

SENIOR VICE COMMANDER SAMUELS: All those in favor signify by saying aye; opposed. (Laughter) So ordered. (Applause)

COMMANDER TYSON: I would like to introduce the governing body of our organization, the National Executive Committee. Will you please stand.

(Whereupon, the members of the National Executive Committee stood and were recognized with a round of applause.)

COMMANDER TYSON: Honestly, I have 16 years of education. (Laughter) Bear with me. Wherever the DAV goes our Auxiliary goes with us. Auxiliary members are special partners of the DAV. They serve as our compassionate volunteers and our spokespersons for our organization. They help carry our banner very high.

This past year Susan Henry of Memphis, Tennessee, served as the Auxiliary National Commander. She has been very active since the day she joined in 1981. That gives her 30 years of service to this great organization. She has a remarkable record. Please join me in welcoming DAV National Commander Susan Henry. (Standing Ovation)

DAV AUXILIARY COMMANDER SUSAN HENRY: Good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

DAV AUXILIARY COMMANDER HENRY: It was some 30 years ago when I first joined the Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary out of appreciation for what this organization had done for my father.

It has been a true honor to serve as your Auxiliary National Commander. In the past year I have seen so many Auxiliary members giving freely of themselves to help our veterans and their families.

When I was elected in Atlanta at last year's convention I challenged everyone to take on a HATS campaign, HATS being an acronym meaning Helping All That Served. Through a relentless year-long effort we have been doing just that.

The HATS theme is a theme playing on my love of hats but it really is just another way to describe the mission we all share as members of the Auxiliary. I promised to achieve that mission three decades ago. And I continue to do so in memory of my father and my mother. I trust you will continue to do so for whatever personal reasons you have. We owe it to those who gave so much for us.

The HATS acronym is also, has a second meaning of Highlighting the Auxiliary, Adding value and programs, Training, and Strategic planning. The Auxiliary on the national, state and local levels has been doing just that throughout this year.

We have improved our membership – excuse me. We have increased and changed our membership eligibility criteria. We have greatly expanded on our electronic presence with improved online membership applications, information and training materials, e-mail blast, and participation in social media as well.

Traveling around the United States as a national representative this past year I have witnessed the outstanding work of Auxiliary members in volunteering at the VA hospitals directly or in the DAV's Van Transportation Program. We are the premier organization in VAVS.

We must continue to do so as this need is as strong today as it has ever been in our lifetimes. The same is true for the Auxiliary's other programs including Legislation, Americanism, Hospital, Community Service, and our Juniors program.

As we look back on a busy year it's a time to think of what we have achieved and where we are going. We remember the legacy we inherited and ask what we've done to take the movement further. I am proud to have been a member of the Auxiliary during this year and believe the time is right for the Auxiliary to take a progressive step forward.

The need for our services, programs and advocacy is critical. The veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan not only need our support but they need to be invested in our community. The families of today's warriors bear heavy burdens. They are also really busy people. For them to become involved in our cause we need to involve every family member and the Auxiliary has the availability for that.

It is my verdant hope that the Auxiliary and the DAV continue and even expand on our work together. It's my greatest wish that we can build upon the momentum we've built recently and move forward with a greater influence on those whose lives we touch.

Before closing I'd like to thank National Auxiliary staff in Cold Spring. It's been a true pleasure working with National Adjutant Judy Hezlep, Assistant National Adjutant Pat Kemper, and the entire Headquarters staff. I would also like to thank the DAV for all of the support for our Auxiliary and the help they have provided. It's been greatly appreciated.

I was quite fortunate to have served with National Commander Wally Tyson this year. It's truly been an honor. Wally and I attended many of the same functions and I must say he is truly a caring advocate for the disabled veteran.

Wally, it is my pleasure to present to you this award that says, "Presented to Wallace E. Tyson, DAV National Commander, in appreciation for distinguished service given to the DAV Auxiliary." (Applause)

(Whereupon, DAV Auxiliary Commander Henry presented DAV Commander Tyson with the plaque.)

COMMANDER TYSON: Thank you.

DAV AUXILIARY COMMANDER HENRY: In closing, God bless America. God bless those serving in harm's way and God bless those still sacrificing because of their service to this great nation. Thank you. (Applause)

I would also like to have our National Executive Committee stand and be recognized.

(Whereupon, the DAV Auxiliary National Executive Committee stood and was recognized with a round of applause.)

DAV AUXILIARY COMMANDER HENRY: Thank you. And the rest of the support for this year, the line officers have done a great job, if you would please stand.

(Whereupon, the DAV Auxiliary Line Officers stood and were recognized with a round of applause.)

DAV AUXILIARY COMMANDER HENRY: Thank you.

COMMANDER TYSON: Thank you, Susan. The DAV's role as an advocate for disabled veterans and their families is clearly visible in its nationwide Transportation Network. We have 179 hospital service coordinators around the country who arrange transportation for disabled veterans to and from VA medical facilities for treatment.

Since 1987 the National Organization, Chapters, Departments, and the National Service Foundation Columbia Trust have purchased 2,367 vans at a cost of more than \$51 million. (Applause)

Throughout our 90-year history the DAV has received unprecedented support from many resources. But there is only one – one – committed ally who has been with us since the beginning and continues to support our mission to build better lives for America's disabled veterans and their families, and that is Ford Motor Company. (Applause)

Joining us today with more good news about the long-standing Ford-DAV partnership, Lynn Quigley serves as manager for Community Relations for Ford Motor Company Fund and

Community Services. In this capacity she is responsible for the development of numerous Ford Motor Fund initiatives.

A long-time friend of the Disabled American Veterans, she has been a steadfast advocate whose service has contributed immeasurably to our long-standing relationship. Please give a warm welcome to Lynn Quigley. (Applause)

(Whereupon, "Mustang Sally" played as Ms. Quigley came to the podium.)

MS. LYNN QUIGLEY: Good morning, and thank you National Commander Tyson. Now, don't you think that music was a little bit better than "Ford Truck Man." (Laughter) It is so great to be back and to have this opportunity to speak with all of you again.

So I think you all know the history of Ford's relationship with DAV by now and how much we value this relationship. But just in case you don't, the relationship began in 1922, almost 90 years ago. And for the past 15 years we've partnered with DAV to help meet veterans' transportation needs through the DAV Transportation Network.

We've also supported the Jesse Brown Memorial Youth Scholarship Program for over 10 years and the Winter Sports Clinic, which my husband Kevin and I look forward to attending each year since 1999.

Likewise, you have shown appreciation to us by purchasing thousands of Ford vehicles through the Ford Partnership Recognition Program or X Plan, which is a discount on Ford vehicles for DAV members and their families. Since 2001 DAV members and your families have purchased more than 14,600 vehicles. That's phenomenal. Thank you very much. (Applause)

And so we're back this year with X Plan. And the great news is that this year we're offering DAV members an additional \$500 in bonus cash on top of X Plan pricing on eligible new Ford or Lincoln products. (Applause)

We also have information on Mobility Motoring, our adaptive equipment program, and we've brought a specially-adapted Transit Connect in case you'd like to take a look at that. The Transit Connect is located in the front lobby of the hotel here so hopefully you will have a chance to come out and see it.

And for the first ten veterans to visit the vehicle each day we have Ford hats and we also have key chains for any of those who have an opportunity to check out the vehicle.

My colleagues Faye and Christina are located just outside the ballroom so please be sure to stop by and see them. They'll be happy to provide you with information on both programs. And they're always happy to see all the veterans so please stop by and see them. And, in fact, they're also going to be accepting your vehicle surveys that were included in your welcome bag.

Each person to complete the survey will receive a pin – it's a Mustang Shelby GT500 pin. They're really cool with the cobra on them – and a chance to win one of six prizes.

And now I'd like to ask National Commander Tyson and National Adjutant Wilson if they would please join me at the podium.

(Whereupon, Commander Tyson and Adjutant Wilson joined Ms. Quigley at the podium.)

MS. QUIGLEY: Ford Motor Company began donating vehicles to DAV in 1996, and today I'd like to announce that we are proud to support the DAV through donation of another eight new E-350 passenger vans. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the Ford E-350 DAV vans on the floor at either side of the stage were unveiled.)

MS. QUIGLEY: This gift means that Ford has donated a grand total of 156 vehicles to the DAV. (Applause) And you know we are pleased to be able to do this because when you consider the priceless commitment to freedom and the sacrifices made by those who have served we will never be able to repay the debt owed. And we must never forget.

Please look at the screen to see this year's map which shows the vehicle donation locations. This year's recipients are VA medical centers in: Maine, (Applause) Nevada, (Applause) Delaware, (Applause) Idaho, (Applause) Vermont, (Applause) Oregon, (Applause) South Dakota, (Applause) and New Mexico. (Applause)

And now on behalf of every Ford Motor Company employee, I'd like to present you with this ceremonial check. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Ms. Quigley presented a ceremonial check to Commander Tyson and Adjutant Wilson.)

MS. QUIGLEY: I'd also like to announce that Ford Fund is continuing our support of the Jesse Brown Memorial Youth Scholarship Program with a donation of \$25,000. (Applause)

This gift honors Jesse Brown and is especially fitting for Ford to support since it honors volunteers and supports education, two very important values that Ford shares with DAV. On behalf of Ford Motor Company Fund I would like to present you with this check for the Jesse Brown Memorial Youth Scholarship Program. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Ms. Quigley presented a ceremonial check to Commander Tyson and Adjutant Wilson.)

MS. QUIGLEY: Thank you, National Adjutant Wilson. National Commander Tyson, would you please stay here with me and I would like to ask Auxiliary National Commander Henry to please join us.

(Whereupon, DAV Auxiliary Commander Henry joined Ms. Quigley and DAV Commander Tyson at the podium.)

MS. QUIGLEY: The DAV has a wonderful history and a bright future because of the strength of its leadership. In recognition of your hard work and dedication over the past year I would like to present to each of you a small gift from Ford Motor Company.

(Whereupon, Ms. Quigley presented gifts to Commander Tyson and DAV Auxiliary Commander Henry.)

COMMANDER TYSON: It's not the mustang. (Laughter)

MS. QUIGLEY: Thank you again for your hard work, and leadership. You have made a difference in the lives of many veterans over this past year.

In closing, on behalf of the more than 166,000 men and women of Ford Motor Company, I would like to recognize all of you for your dedication to service. Thank you for your bravery. Thank you for your loyalty. And thank you for helping to preserve our freedom. Enjoy the Convention and God bless America. Thank you. (Standing Ovation)

COMMANDER TYSON: Lynn, words cannot express our gratitude for Ford's ongoing compassion, kindness and support of our cause. By the way, Lynn, this generous \$200,000 donation allows DAV to purchase additional vans and continue more than 89 years of cooperation between two great American institutions. Thank you. (Applause)

It also impresses me greatly to say that since 1996 Ford has donated a total of 148 vehicles worth more than \$3.4 million. (Applause) As a worldwide leader in automotive engineering and innovation, Ford embodies the vision, the compassion and generosity that proves the bottom line isn't always about dollars and cents. (Applause)

Ford's commitment to our nation's sick and disabled veterans brilliantly illustrates the modern-day blueprint for responsible corporate citizenship in the United States of America. (Applause)

On behalf of the more than 1.2 million members of the Disabled American Veterans and Auxiliary, please accept our heartfelt thanks for your benevolent leadership and for making the needs of disabled veterans a priority. (Applause)

I would be remiss if I failed to also acknowledge Ford's ongoing support of the Jesse Brown Memorial Youth Scholarship program which recognizes deserving young men and women who donate their time and compassion to help sick and disabled veterans in VA medical facilities.

Since the year 2000 the Ford Motor Company Fund has donated \$425,000 to this scholarship fund. (Applause) Thank you, Lynn, and please extend our gratitude to Mr. Jim Vella, President of the Ford Motor Company Fund and all the dedicated folks on your team who help support the DAV's services and programs. We are most grateful. (Applause)

While he was seriously injured during a chopper extraction in combat in Vietnam, Joseph Cassilly suffered the type of devastating injury that is difficult for many of us to imagine. His back was broken in a long fall while climbing up a rope ladder to safety; and although he survived, he was left a quadriplegic.

An embodiment of the slogan "Army strong," this U.S. Ranger did not let this tragic turn of events ruin his life. Through his incredible courage and an unbreakable will, Joe became a force to be reckoned with in court and an advocate-warrior for disabled veterans. Please enjoy this video. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a video honoring the DAV Outstanding Disabled Veteran of the Year, Joseph Cassilly, was viewed)

* * *

I'm the oldest of eleven, I have eight sisters and two brothers. My dad was called up in the military when the Korean war started, in my senior year of high school, said Joe Cassilly. We were together just the day before he left to go off to Vietnam and but I just remember he was very concerned about going and I remember him telling me if I have to come back without a limb I'm not coming back at all, he actually said that to me the day before he left.

Ran into a friend of mine that was a Ranger that I went through infantry training with and I said hey we need guys in the Rangers. Everybody that was there was top of the line, it was a great group of people said Major Chuck Thomas. It was a great training it was a great unit, the spree de cur of that unit was the best, said Joe. He was eager to learn, he was 100% for what the Rangers

were doing. He was patriotic and he fit right in with a group of people that we assembled, said Maj. Chuck.

Basically we were the only Ranger unit handling the whole three core. I got, I arrived in Vietnam toward the end of May in 1970 and got hurt on October 17th. We were supposed to do a recon and we were supposed to be dropped in at this one place and for us what was shown on the map was somewhat intermittent stream we got down to the intermittent stream and it was a raging river, it was a gunner so I had a machine gun with 1000 rounds of ammo and someone should of grabbed me and said you shouldn't be carrying 120 lbs up the river when I only weight 160 lbs so I thought if I climb up there with the gun and someone starts shooting that would not only be the door gunner it might be me and we could lay down a lot of fire, but I look back like this were the skid was and when I did this my body shifted and I got caught in the down draft of the blades and grabs me and jerked me off the ladder and I land about 45 feet. My spine landed on the barrel of a M60 and I bent the barrel of a M60. I only know because the guys told me and I broke the vertebrae of my neck and I woke up being put in a new chopper, I was on a stretcher and a bunch of guys was running, they had sandbags or something on the side of my head to keep it from moving.

I was at the 25th Evac. Hospital when they brought him in and he was in good spirits when they brought him in. I finished my tour was married and drove up to see him and he was still the same guy been through valley forge amputation now he was getting ready to move on with his life. I was amazed that a 19 year old kid with that serious of injures was not going to let it stop him. He already know he was going to move forward in life, said Maj. Chuck.

I went to the community college, I already had a year worth credit before I started college. I went to the University of Arizona in Tuscan, got my degree in psychology and went to law school and from there went back to Baltimore, back to Maryland and went to the University of Baltimore. I knew a guy there that was a states attorney and I said can I do a internship in the states attorney office. When I got back I have to say I wore a chip on my shoulder I wore a Vietnam fatigue jacket with patches all over them. I just dare someone to say something to me. You are talking to a guy that just got back from Vietnam that the solution to a problem is to shoot someone and I was trying to tone it down. No one told the judge there was going to be student attorney in a wheelchair and the judge come on the bench and they said all rise and the judge came out and gave me a look and motioned to for me to stand up and I started arguing with the county to make the courthouse assessable and it ended up while I was still a law student I filed a lawsuit and sued the county executive to get them to put a ramp into the courthouse. It really astounded me that I would run into projects where well on the way to doing something but you don't mind putting something in concrete and it would be illegal. I would not sue the for money other than ask them to pay my cost for filing the suit. I wanted them to go back and get it legally and so I got a reputation as a crazy nut that would show up and sue if you were not going to do it right. So you get better attention and people listen to you and think that you know what you're talking about and we better pay attention or we will end up in court. It is important at that time once things were built I mean they were set for years so if you could get a hold of someone and make a change then the change would be in place 30 or 40 years for someone like me that came along after me in a wheelchair.

I worked on building a subway system in Baltimore, I got on a design group that worked making the subway system wheelchair accessible, they asked me to work on stadium design to build two new sports stadiums in Baltimore, the second stadium I was actually the chairman of the architectural design review committee, finished law school, passed the bar, I passed the bar actually before I even graduated, I wanted to try something different I wanted to have something to relax with and we had a local theater group that had audition for Oliver and thank god I had a great director who was just fine and said that we will just figure this out. Started teaching business law two nights a week and got a call from the states attorney's office calls me up and says I got two attorneys that are resigning from the office and I got to fill the positions, Do you want a job and I said Yes, and that was my entire job interview there. In 1982, the guy that was my boss at that time there was some issues, said Joe.

Joe was full of vigor he wanted to change things, he didn't like what he was seeing in the court room as far as some of the decision that the judges were making. The cops were coming by saying you are going to have to run, I didn't want to run but rigged a sign up in a Chevy El Camino.

I saw Joe one morning on the side of the road with a sign saying hi I'm Joe Cassilly vote for me States Attorney's office, vote for me. Believe me every military person, police officer and anybody that had any inkling of him that I could talk to. He rallied the troops up and we supported Joe to become States Attorney which he has been now going on 30 years .

I'm out in the community, I go to public meeting and if I know I'm in trouble because of some issue in the community I go to the public meeting. He's made it pretty clear here that we do not tolerate crime here in Hartford Co., it starts with the sheriffs dept. and its followed through with the states attorney office. Said Beverly Fidler.

One of the things that I would like to accomplish is for people with disabilities when I go through the world I want to make it easier for the guy behind me to get through the world. All that he has been through he has one of the biggest heart of anyone that I know, said Beverly. And for someone who's has disability and lived with a disability could have been bitter but he continued his public service and has since he left the military. It effect everything he does in life, just to get up in the morning he has to transfer out of the bed into a wheelchair everything in his life is affected. Watching Joe just navigate everyday to me speaks to his determination and his desire to no matter how difficult things are he is going to make it through.

I started writing a book and it just keep coming and then I realized that it just wasn't a series for short stories it was a theme and had a plot and let's do it. I'm going to write in my book what it is going to be like to be in a wheelchair and make that the main theme of the book I thought that hey if my book can kind of give some guy the same thing that I'm going through some inspiration then good.

Joe Cassilly is certainly deserving of the Outstanding Disabled Vet of the Year award in part for his passion for friends and family and veterans alike. Joe certainly goes out of his way to make sure that veterans who have become disabled in light of recent wars have it better than he did.

Join DAV, there were DAV people that came into Richmond VAMC to fill out paperwork then when I got back to Hartford Co. someone got a hold of me then to sign up to join. I have a immediate family, just to come someplace and not be alone. Joe's accomplishments are beyond measure to consider where he was previously the disabilities he incurred and what he has been able to do since that time is a true testament to one willpower.

His disability never got in his way he was always there giving it everything he had. I never quit, I think that is part of being a Ranger. He is dedicated to this community, dedicated to the county at a national level, with the national district attorneys association. Joe embodies what a prosecutor is, protect the innocent and hold the guilty accountable. If you do that well it has to be somebody that not only has life experience and common sense and compassion but you have to be tough and Joe Cassilly is all of them things.

He has all the attributes for someone who is outstanding if you look up the definition of the word. I can't imagine not being where I am, taking it easy or doing anything less then what I do. He has fire in his belly, I mean Joe enjoys every day that he is with us. People always way that you have done so great because you are in a wheelchair and I think what is the alternative, I don't want to think about the fact that I'm in a wheel chair I want to think about all the other things that I could be doing should be doing and want to be doing. I've done scuba diving, I've been in a hot air balloon, I've been in a sail plane, boats, swimming I don't know whatever it is I can think of to do I will go try and do it and have fun.

* * *

(Standing Ovation)

COMMANDER TYSON: Ladies and gentlemen, it is my honor and privilege to present the 2011 DAV Outstanding Disabled Veteran of the Year award to Joseph Cassilly, Baltimore, Maryland. (Standing Ovation) Ladies and gentlemen, please allow me to read what the award says: "To all who see these presents, greetings, Disabled American Veterans is pleased to acknowledge the contributions of Joseph Cassilly.

"We recognize your extraordinary commitment to veterans, your local community and the nation. From the earliest stages of your rehabilitation following your spinal cord injury during combat action in Vietnam, your optimism and strength of character have provided inspiration to your fellow veterans and their families.

"Through tireless advocacy, waging legal battles for handicap accessibility and one-on-one interaction with veterans throughout Maryland you have provided an exceptional example for all disabled veterans to follow.

"Despite severe physical challenges, you put the needs of our veterans first. Your humble spirit and positive attitude are a living testament to the DAV's mission of building better lives for disabled veterans and their families.

"On behalf of those who bear the scars of war, thank you for your leadership, integrity, and ongoing commitment to serving your fellow disabled veterans." (Standing Ovation)

(Whereupon, the plaque was presented to Mr. Cassilly by Commander Tyson.)

MR. JOSEPH CASSILLY: Thank you. National Commander Tyson, honored guests, fellow DAV and DAV Auxiliary members, and especially my family and friends with me today – my wife, Diana; my parents, Bob and Nancy Cassilly; my sister Jane and her husband Tom; my brother Bobby; daughter Hannah; son Luke; and my Uncle Peter.

I want to acknowledge DAV National Service Officer Ron Minter from Baltimore for nominating me. And I would especially like to thank Dan Clare and Rob Lewis from DAV Headquarters for the photos, the article in the magazine, and the video, guys, was great. I didn't know you'd found all those pictures of me. (Laughter)

The honor of this award is deeply significant and moving to me. As I accept it I acknowledge all of the men and women I have known who, because of their dedication and sacrifice and service to their country, never lived long enough to love spouses and children, to succeed in careers and to be recognized with awards.

If I were to take sole credit for the accomplishments that have merited me this award I would be the worst sort of fraud. And so I wish to thank those responsible for helping me become who I am.

First, I thank God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. (Applause) At the age of 19 I suddenly found myself without the use of my hands and legs. And I was only able to go on from day to day with faith that I would receive strength from God.

I thank God for the blessing of having been born in the United States of America. (Applause) Only in this country have I been able to challenge unfairness and the status quo sanctioned by those with influence and power and fight for and achieve change. Here I can enjoy freedom and opportunity.

I thank God for my parents. My dad, Sergeant Major Cassilly, taught me that the United States is about ideals and principles, that military service to this country is an honor and a privilege. He taught me that being a soldier is for the best and the brightest because to whom much is given, much is expected, and that the blessings of liberty are to be shared with those who are not born to them.

I thank God for my mother, Nancy. She sent a husband and two sons to wars. She taught me that we are not put on this Earth to experience – that we are put on this Earth to experience joy by helping others. She showed by her example that no matter what happens to us and what challenges life brings we always have the ability, if we want, to make others happy from the experience of meeting us.

I thank God for my brothers and sisters and their children, my uncles and aunts and cousins for always being there to help me. They have literally picked me off the ground, held campaign signs in the earliest dawns, on the coldest evenings, and always been my support.

I thank God for my wife Diana and her love. (Applause) She came into my life at a time when I was giving up. She inspired me with her love. She has done what everyone else has done and more.

After we were married I found the motivation to finish writing my book, to become president of the Maryland State's Attorney Association, and later president of the National District Attorney's Association. She is my heart.

You know, Commander Tyson, I thought this paper would be easier than that thing but. (Laughter) Diana and I wish to thank God for our shared children, Hannah, Joe – who we call Jed – Luke, Justin and Rebecca, for all their love and support and the pride that we feel in looking at the wonderful people that they are and the dreams they pursue.

And, finally, there are the blessings of our continual joy, grandchildren, Anna, Victoria and Nick.

I thank God for my disability. When I was 17, I met a high school classmate who had been paralyzed in an accident. Now I remember how uncomfortable I felt in looking at his situation. And God taught me about that situation.

Without this wheelchair I would never have had the understanding of the issues confronting persons with disabilities, nor would I have known the strength and motivation to confront them. And I thank God for his patience at my lack of patience with him that I express too freely.

I wish to thank the wonderful people who have worked in my office who make me look good. And I thank the thousands of people who have placed their trust by voting and working for me. So many people's efforts have contributed to my successes which the DAV is acknowledging.

I wrote a book, *Decoration for Valor*. Do you know what the decoration is? It's right there on the cover. No, it's not the women. (Laughter) It's the wheelchair.

The wheelchairs we use as well as prosthetic limbs, facial scars, disfigurement and the scars that we carry inside are symbols of our willingness to serve in the cause of freedom and should be worn and regarded as proudly as any medal. They are symbols of our courage to go on, to never quit, to never be defined by our disability but to prove our excellence by overcoming.

I am proud to say that I am a Ranger, that I have been honored by being admitted to that elite brotherhood of warriors. The men I serve with and meet at Ranger Rendezvous have a special bond. The regimental motto is Sua Sponte, meaning "Of their own accord."

You are a Ranger because of what you expect from yourself. That has been how I approach life in a wheelchair. I expected the efforts from myself and I did it because I could not be any different.

Every disabled veteran has it within themselves with support from family, friends or the community, including veterans' groups, to triumph over their disability of their own accord. The frustrations of our struggles and the apathy of society can be overcome by perseverance and kindness, not anger or bitterness.

I say to the young veterans, don't make the mistake I made and ignore your mental and emotional fitness. I came to regard mental health counseling not as a treatment for an illness but as a gym workout for my mind and spirit.

I never said it is easy but it is a mark of the strength of our souls and character that we drive on, that we never quit the field of battle, that we lead the way for the disabled veterans who follow us.

It falls to us to clear the path of architectural barriers and prejudice toward the disabled so that in the future returning wounded warriors can progress faster, unencumbered by these problems.

Thank you all members of the Disabled American Veterans for your service to our country and her veterans. And God bless you all. (Standing Ovation)

COMMANDER TYSON: On behalf of all of us, Joe, thank you for your service and the commitment you've made to building better lives for disabled veterans, all disabled people and your community.

You've mentioned that you wanted to make a difference for future veterans and the disabled early into your life as an advocate. We hope that this award will in some way measure – assure you that you have made an incredible difference and that it has been noted. (Applause)

The Bugle Award was created in 2005 to recognize the outstanding contributions of the media in support of the disabled veterans and the programs of the DAV. In the over-communicated world, so often the word "media" takes on a negative connotation. We think of television, tabloids, and sensationalism. We think of wars being fought as the public is distracted by gossip and celebrity folly.

We often forget the critical role of real journalists who courageously fight to bring truth to the light and to honor their constitutional charge. Our 2011 Bugle Award recipients embody the highest standards of personal and professional integrity, as was the courage and conviction to tell their story at any price.

In 2007 journalists and filmmakers Sebastian Junger and Tim Hetherington traveled to Afghanistan's Korengal Valley to embed with Battle Company, 173rd Airborne. From that experience the duo brought home the book or the war in books, articles and, most famous, the documentary film Restrepo which was nominated for an Academy Award earlier this year.

Sebastian and Tim courageously dug in with the combat soldiers in some very hostile terrain in order to tell the story of men who defended Outpost Restrepo. We are grateful to have such brave men who are willing to risk everything to tell the truth about combat.

Sadly, the award will be presented to Hetherington posthumously. The acclaimed filmmaker and photographer was killed by mortar fire on April 11, 2011, in the besieged city of Misrata, Libya, while covering the Libyan civil war.

The documentary feature film Restrepo stands as one of the all-time great meditations on combat. It is a beautiful, terrifying glimpse into the lives of young soldiers who live and die in the cold embrace of a craggy mountain outpost.

The Academy Award nomination Tim and Sebastian received for this film was fitting, but the real award will come as the film continues to stand the test of time and inform our debates on the cost of sending young men and women into harm's way.

Sebastian could not be here today to accept the award due to a professional commitment, however, he recorded this message to our National Convention.

(Whereupon, the following remarks were made via videotape)

MR. SEBASTIAN JUNGER: "Thank you, Commander Tyson, for those kind remarks. My colleague, Tim Hetherington and I wanted to make a movie that captured the experience of being a soldier in combat in Afghanistan.

"What we realized when we were out at OP Restrepo in '07-'08 was that the soldiers who were fighting this war in Afghanistan, those soldiers are not particularly political about the war.

"They have a very, very hard job. It costs them in many, many ways. Sometimes it costs them their lives. And they are not thinking in divisive ways about the war.

"And we wanted to make a movie that captured that. And I think that's one of the reasons that the military community has gravitated towards our movie.

"We've heard that it's helpful, it's therapeutic, it's cathartic, all these things that Tim and I couldn't have imagined when we began the project but now it is so gratifying to know that our work has served that purpose.

"Tragically, last April Tim Hetherington was killed in combat in the City of Misrata in Libya. He had dedicated his life to covering the human costs of war.

"And in April he became part of that cost. He was such an effective journalist and he and I were so close in part because he was such a very, very human person.

"He could laugh at himself. He connected with the soldiers out at Restrepo in just this extraordinary way. And he was also, he was very, very brave. And he was incredibly dedicated.

"At one point he broke his leg on a combat operation and he walked all night on a broken leg down off the top of a mountain because if he had been a crybaby about it and refused to walk on a broken leg he would have endangered the entire platoon.

"He walked all night on his broken leg so that everyone could get out of there safely. The Army surgeons later put a pin in his leg and fixed it.

"So I would like to – I would like to remember Tim and acknowledge his tragic passing a few months ago. And I'd like to give huge thanks to the DAV, Disabled American Veterans, for this incredible, incredible award that we got, that Tim and I got.

"We're deeply grateful and really very, very, very moved that we were able to touch the lives of veterans and soldiers in the United States. It's a fantastic thing for us. Thank you very much.") (Applause)

COMMANDER TYSON: Thank you, Sebastian, for your courage and commitment to journalistic excellence. Although this award is a time to celebrate the work of these two men, it is also a time to mourn the passing of Tim Hetherington who was a friend and a supporter of the Disabled American Veterans.

The British-born photographer who was known for his intrepid journeys into some of the darkest corners of the world in order to shine light on the horrors of world, his death is a tremendous loss to the journalism community and to the friends and supporters he had earned in the veterans' community.

Sebastian was kind enough to provide this video that chronicles the incredible dangers Tim faced to bring home the stories of our soldiers at Outpost Restrepo and to educate the world about how conflicts impact humanity. Thank you, again, Tim and Sebastian. We salute you for your courage. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the following remarks were made via videotape, interspersed with clips from Mr. Hetherington's conversations with troops and ending with a report of his death:

MR. TIM HETHERINGTON: "I don't even know where to begin. You know, I'm a filmmaker and I'm a photographer and I guess what really combines my work is that I have worked for the last ten years in conflict zones.

"I'm there as a witness and I'm just trying to record what I can in the very kind of frenetic environment.

"The last ten years of my life have been focused on the ideas of young men in conflict and, you know, I think that we back home have very preformatted ideas about what conflict is and what a war is and what's happening and what that means.

"And I really wanted to go out there and to show the nuance of the situation. I just wanted to show the texture of it. And that meant not just photographing just the combat but the guys, their time off when war is often very boring.

"You know in the same way that the soldier would say that they're fighting for 9-11, at the end of the day you kind of realize that they weren't, that they were just fighting for each other, that they were all young men just put together on the side of this mountain and all they were trying to do is survive and look after each other so they all got back home alive. That was it really. Nothing to do with war. Nothing to do with politics. You know, just that.

"One of the things about my work is that I work in very extreme circumstances and bring back the narratives from that to try to explain those circumstances to people. So I hope that when people look at my work that they come out feeling a little more informed.

"In war you see so many crazy things happening. I mean you see all sorts of different human emotions crystallize."

"And, you know, I try and obviously, you know, keep myself out of the way and out of danger but obviously you're in the situation."

"You know, I always realize when I go and cover conflicts how fragile life is. And that gives me a greater appreciation for everything that I have and the life I lead. And I really appreciate how lucky we are.")

COMMANDER TYSON: I want to welcome back a dear and long-time friend of the Disabled American Veterans. It is my honor to introduce you to former National Auxiliary Adjutant, Auxiliary Past National Commander Maria Tedrow. (Applause)

Her lifetime of work for the DAV and Auxiliary has become legendary. She's here today to introduce the Auxiliary Member of the Year. Please welcome Past National Auxiliary Commander and Adjutant Maria Tedrow. (Applause)

PAST DAV AUXILIARY NATIONAL COMMANDER AND ADJUTANT MARIA TEDROW: Commander Tyson, I don't believe you made one error in that. (Laughter) And it's all true. (Laughter) It's my pleasure to be here today and because I am really happy to be here in New Orleans.

You know what makes a National Convention exciting is the people. And everybody in here are heroes of some kind or another. And we're glad – we're glad to be here. And as the Disabled Veteran of the Year said, "Because of God."

We're blessed this year to have Valerie Lintz of Unit 1 in Phoenix, Arizona, as our Auxiliary Past National Commander's Outstanding Member of the Year. We are pleased to present this award to her in recognition of her contributions and dedication as a very active member of the Auxiliary. Valerie's efforts have enhanced the goals of the Auxiliary, the DAV and her community activities for veterans.

Valerie provides her professional expertise as a presenter on disability and rehabilitation services for the VA. She also volunteers to help aging and homeless veterans in obtaining their benefits. That includes assisting them in applying for state and federal benefits they are eligible for.

She works with them in completing all the complicated and time-consuming forms for Social Security, VA benefits, and health care. Many of her clients are veterans who have physical and mental disabilities. Valerie is a VAVS representative for the state and her Unit and she is active as a legislative affairs representative.

Everything she does supports the DAV's and Auxiliary's programs and volunteerism on behalf of the veterans. She has a commendable record of service and dedication which has earned her this award.

Ladies and gentlemen, the 2011 Auxiliary Member of the Year, Valerie Lintz. Valerie. (Standing Ovation) Valerie, we are proud to present you with this award which says: "DAVA Past National Commander's Award to Valerie Lintz, Outstanding Member of the Year, Presented August the 6th, 2011." Congratulations.

MRS. VALERIE LINTZ: Thank you. Thank you. When my Unit Commander Sharon Linton said that she wanted to nominate me for this award, I told her that I really didn't feel very outstanding; I'm just out there rattling around doing my thing. I'm honored deeply to receive this award and very much appreciate it.

One of the activities I'm involved in is a work team to promote the inclusion of individuals with disabilities in volunteering. And in our brochure there is a quote from Martin Luther King that says, "Everyone can be great because everyone can do something." So, everyone, go do something and be great. Thank you. (Applause)

COMMANDER TYSON: Thank you, Valerie. Our 2011 Seal Memorial Trophy Winners clearly demonstrate what volunteers can mean to our veterans. Their support of our sick and disabled veterans despite their own disabilities is a tribute to their dedication of our mission. They are there to serve those who have served and sacrificed.

J.T. Tate of Birmingham, Alabama, has been selected to receive the 2011 DAV George H. Seal Memorial Trophy for extraordinary volunteerism. J.T. has been volunteering for 25 years and has accumulated nearly 12,000 hours of donated services to veterans. (Applause)

J.T. arrives early at the Birmingham VA medical center refreshment station to make pots of coffee and to share in the fellowship of veterans arriving for their appointments. He's an important part of giving back to the veterans he serves. Please welcome J.T. Tate to accept this award. (Standing Ovation)

(Whereupon, Mr. Tate came forward to accept the DAV George H. Seal Trophy.)

MR. J.T. TATE: The only thing I would like to say is I thank you all for this and especially my director Pat Fisks of Volunteer Services who asked me about being nominated for Volunteer of the Year. Thank you. (Applause)

COMMANDER TYSON: Congratulations, J.T. Ada Perry of Lexington, Kentucky, has been volunteering at the Lexington VA for eleven years. She has given nearly 6,000 hours in support for veterans and their families.

She has been selected this year to receive the DAV Auxiliary George H. Seal Memorial Trophy. Ada assists veterans and family members by providing directions to various clinics and services and offering patient information.

Her helpfulness and positive attitude affect everyone she meets. Let's give our thanks to Ada Perry as she accepts her award. (Standing Ovation)

(Whereupon, Ms. Perry came forward to accept the DAV Auxiliary George H. Seal Trophy.)

MS. ADA PERRY: I just want to say how thankful I am that the Lord let me live this long and do the things that I do. I enjoy working with the veterans and with the volunteers. The VA has been, is a great and wonderful place. My late husband spent his last 12 years there and I feel like I'm giving something back now. Thank you for my award. (Applause)

COMMANDER TYSON: Congratulations, Ada. Volunteerism is one of the most important parts of our mission to serve disabled veterans and their families. And the DAV has more volunteers than any other veterans' service organization.

From our hospital volunteers to our local Transportation Network drivers, to our Local Veterans Assistance Program, we constantly reach out to sick and disabled veterans to deliver assistance by leading with our hearts. Let's give these volunteers a large hand and a round of applause. (Applause)

And, again this year we continue a tradition that honors one of the foremost advocates in the history of the veterans' movement. The Jesse Brown Memorial Youth Scholarship Program continues a legacy of service established by the late Secretary for Veterans Affairs, Jesse Brown. (Applause) His spirit and dedication live on, and his name continues to encourage and inspire future leaders to serve America's disabled veterans and their families.

We are proud to recognize eight of this year's top young citizens who volunteered a minimum of 100 hours at a VA medical center during the calendar year. Our scholarship winners have accumulated much as volunteers and have built lifelong bonds for the veterans they have served.

The first place scholarship of \$20,000 was awarded to Jack O'Sullivan, an avid student of veterans. (Applause) As a volunteer at the Edward Hines, Junior, VA Medical Center outside of Chicago, he recognizes that veterans have insight and knowledge that cannot be gained through reading history books.

His fascination with veterans and his family ties to the VA medical center led him to become a volunteer there for more than five years. With more than 800 hours of volunteer work, O'Sullivan is involved in a recycling project to reclaim silver from old X-rays, with the money earned from the project returned to the VA medical center budget to be used to help more veterans.

Today, it is our pleasure to present to him the top Jesse Brown Youth Volunteer Scholarship Award of \$20,000. Please join me in welcoming Jack O'Sullivan to receive his scholarship. (Standing Ovation)

(Whereupon, Commander Tyson presented Jack O'Sullivan with the Jesse Brown Memorial Youth Scholarship ceremonial check.)

MR. JACK O'SULLIVAN: It has been an honor to serve veterans as a volunteer for the past seven years. And this award is deeply appreciated. Thank you. (Applause)

COMMANDER TYSON: Congratulations, Jack. Jack is one of eight distinguished young volunteers to receive the Jesse Brown Youth Volunteer Scholarships ranging from \$5,000 to \$20,000 each. Let's give them all a big hand. (Applause) We congratulate Jack and all the recipients and young volunteers who are improving the quality of life of our veterans in the hospitals nationwide.

At this time, I would like to introduce DAV Auxiliary member Linda Acosta for a special presentation. (Applause)

MRS. LINDA ACOSTA: Welcome to Louisiana, people. Welcome. Have a good time and fun. I have a little something from the Auxiliary Louisiana for Wallace and Susan, Commanders, I'm sorry – (Laughter) the "Choot em" T-shirt (Laughter) from The Swamp People. You're official members to the club. There you go. So welcome to Louisiana.

(Whereupon, Ms. Acosta presented Commander Tyson and Commander Henry with official Swamp People t-shirts with "Choot em" on the front of the shirts.)

MS. ACOSTA: Again, thank you and you all have a good time. Thank you.

COMMANDER TYSON: With that I'm going to call on National Adjutant Wilson for any announcements. (Laughter)

UNIDENTIFIED DELEGATE: Choot-em, Art. (Laughter)

ADJUTANT WILSON: The first business session of the Convention will begin promptly at 1:15 this afternoon. The important business of approving the Statement of Policy of the Disabled American Veterans is scheduled at that time. We will hear the Board of Directors' Treasurer's report as well as my report. And the membership awards will also be presented.

Beginning this afternoon at 2:45 Convention Committees are scheduled to meet. For those of you that have been elected to Convention Committees, we ask that you be on time, please, at the room assigned for your meeting. We ask the Committees to complete their work just as soon as possible.

The National Commander's reception begins this evening at 7:00 o'clock in the Grand Ballroom.

Included in the Convention Program on Page 4 and on cards available through the Communications Office are links to Internet addresses where you can go to download photos, access speeches and follow the Convention. Please utilize these links and encourage your fellow members back home to do the same.

Included on the cards are DAV's Twitter and Facebook addresses and we encourage each of you who participate in social networking to follow us online and lend your voice to our online advocacy initiatives.

And, lastly, you are reminded that we will be giving away DAV briefcases to some lucky delegates attending this afternoon's Convention and each day thereafter. Remember, those names are announced; they must be present to win. That's all I have, Commander.

COMMANDER TYSON: Thank you, Art. Ladies and gentlemen, if you will rise I will ask the Chaplain to lead us in a closing prayer. Dr. Edwards.

CHAPLAIN EDWARDS: Our God, we offer our appreciation to our veterans and Auxiliary members here for we are grateful for their sacrifice, for their service which indeed has enabled the people of our nation to learn to do, do to earn, earn to live, and live to serve.

God bless all those gathered here and those service men and women who now defend and protect our nation. Be merciful to our honored dead, the memory of their lives because of their courage which inspires us to noble actions, and to the eternal preservation of our priceless liberty.

God bless all of us here. And awaken within our hearts the desire, the will, to accomplish the ideas for which this nation exists so that out of our determination and our endeavor there may emerge a better world, a world founded upon faith and understanding, a world dedicated to preserving and enhancing the individual rights and dignity of humankind, a world intent on loving and serving You, our God. In God we trust. Amen.

(Response of "Amen.")

COMMANDER TYSON: The Convention stands in recess until 1:15 this afternoon.

(Whereupon, the meeting recessed at 10:55 o'clock, a.m. on Saturday, August 6, 2011.)

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Disabled American Veterans

Financial Statements as of and for the
Year Ended December 31, 2010, and
Independent Auditors' Report



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INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT

To the Board of Directors of
Disabled American Veterans:

We have audited the accompanying statement of financial position of Disabled American Veterans (DAV) as of December 31, 2010, and the related statements of activities, functional expenses, and cash flows for the year then ended. These financial statements are the responsibility of DAV's management. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit.

We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. An audit includes consideration of internal control over financial reporting as a basis for designing audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of DAV's internal control over financial reporting. Accordingly, we express no such opinion. An audit also includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements, assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall financial statement presentation. We believe that our audit provides a reasonable basis for our opinion.

In our opinion, such financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of DAV at December 31, 2010, and the change in its net assets and its cash flows for the year then ended in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

Deloitte & Touche LLP

March 31, 2011

Member of
Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu Limited

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2010

ASSETS		LIABILITIES AND UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS	
CASH	\$ 4,228,589	LIABILITIES:	\$ 2,912,714
ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE	1,139,686	Accounts payable	1,771,175
INTEREST AND DIVIDENDS RECEIVABLE	102,769	Accrued expenses	15,702,366
SOLICITATION MATERIALS	1,438,917	Pension liability	48,989,407
PREPAID EXPENSES	3,211,372	Postretirement benefit obligation	1,143,702
INVESTMENTS	315,629,265	Other liabilities	2,599,943
PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT — Net	7,529,688	Deferred dues and service fees collected in advance	1,183,678
OTHER ASSETS	482,400	Deferred revenue	
LIFE MEMBERSHIP:		Life membership:	146,210
Cash	2,092,261	Accounts payable	
Receivables	5,987	Reserve for future distribution of life membership dues	59,454,502
Investments	57,502,464		
TOTAL	<u>\$ 393,363,398</u>	Total liabilities	133,903,697
		UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS	259,459,701
		TOTAL	<u>\$ 393,363,398</u>

See notes to financial statements.

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2010

SUPPORT AND REVENUE:

Support:	
Contributions received primarily from direct mail solicitations	\$ 99,629,259
Contributed services and facilities — primarily services	41,074,184
Bequests	9,168,123
Total support	<u>149,871,566</u>
Revenue:	
Membership dues and fees	5,386,896
Income from investments — net	7,665,134
List royalties	744,777
Miscellaneous revenue	38,775
Total revenue	<u>13,835,582</u>
Realized investment gains	<u>1,961,014</u>
Total support and revenue	<u>165,668,162</u>

EXPENSES:

Program services:	
National service program	42,875,721
Legislative service program	1,693,509
Voluntary service program	40,797,408
State services, disaster relief, and memorials	6,796,090
Publications and other communications	5,697,336
Membership program	9,016,206
Public awareness outreach	21,070,402
Total program services	<u>127,946,672</u>
Supporting services:	
Fundraising costs	32,580,986
Administrative and general	5,937,325
Total supporting services	<u>38,518,311</u>
Total expenses	<u>166,464,983</u>
EXCESS OF EXPENSES OVER SUPPORT AND REVENUE	(796,821)
CHANGE IN UNREALIZED APPRECIATION OF INVESTMENTS	<u>18,559,125</u>
EXCESS OF SUPPORT AND REVENUE AND CHANGE IN UNREALIZED APPRECIATION OF INVESTMENTS OVER EXPENSES	17,762,304
PENSION LIABILITY ADJUSTMENT	<u>2,718,236</u>
CHANGE IN UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS	20,480,540
UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS — Beginning of year	<u>238,979,161</u>
UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS — End of year	<u>\$259,459,701</u>

See notes to financial statements.

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS

STATEMENT OF FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2010

	National Service Program	Legislative Service Program	Voluntary Service Program	State Services Disaster Relief and Memorials	Publications and Other Communications	Membership	Public Awareness Outreach	Total Program	Fundraising Costs	Administrative and General	Total Supporting Services	Total
Scholarships	\$19,109,687	\$ 605,673	\$ 326,735	\$ -	\$ 838,610	\$1,058,469	\$ 929	\$ 21,940,103	\$ 3,724,851	\$ 3,717,300	\$ 7,444,151	\$ 29,382,254
Employee benefits	12,494,886	318,895	184,967		771,055	595,555		14,365,358	2,621,314	1,832,818	4,454,132	18,819,490
Payroll taxes	1,571,393	42,040	25,197		64,121	70,005		1,772,756	313,233	282,910	596,143	2,368,899
DAV transportation network — volunteers			39,260,696					39,260,696				39,260,696
Winter Sports Clinic			565,894					565,894				565,894
Columbia Trust			37,375					37,375				37,375
Disaster grants			18,5924					18,5924				18,5924
Disaster relief				576,820				576,820				576,820
State service program				3,779,001				3,779,001				3,779,001
Memorials				2,438,917				2,438,917				2,438,917
Scholarships			70,625					70,625				70,625
Expenses of national convention						745,174		745,174				745,174
Expenses of national commander						608,602		608,602				608,602
Travel and committees	2,459,887	123,590	57,457		21,207	79,623		2,741,764	34,969	190,906	225,875	2,967,659
Travel training, and relocation	1,813,488							1,813,488				1,813,488
Facilities	914,097	7,914	22,222	102	1,231,302	124,543	1,714	2,301,894	8,798,714	152,238	8,950,852	11,252,846
Postage and shipping	267,447	1,766	1,538		21,496	38,290		30,537	851,082	363,000	1,214,082	1,544,619
Equipment rental and maintenance	1,236,901	110,497	32,344		413,444	225,774	2,634	2,021,594	53,648	367,840	904,288	2,925,882
Supplies	88,571	1,505	362		40,056	1,114		131,608	29,545	125,630	155,175	286,783
Insurance	3,644,844	3,644,844			8,550	18,672		12,867	18,672	18,672	37,344	30,513
Telephone	861,529	114	140		550	13,578	20	876,387	182,852	189,796	372,648	1,248,935
Outreach services						26,749		26,749	92,405	195	92,600	338,196
Project costs					139,800			139,800				139,800
Printing of magazine	5,172				1,229,369			1,229,369				1,229,369
Cost of mailing materials					3,686	2,730		6,416				6,416
Heat, light, water, and power	236,018							236,018	34,301,870	295	34,302,165	34,302,165
Security service	143,245							143,245	531,418		531,418	767,436
Protection of property and equipment	46,776	6,568	1,994		76,415	40,488		125,673	158,675		158,675	301,920
Professional fees						743		743	814,025	404,719	1,158,744	1,373,493
Professional fees	75,312	381,681			354,300	88,208		899,501	925	136,868	1,036,369	1,851,312
Other expenses	28,508		22,344		19,989	2,486		52,227	298,214	557,437	855,651	1,755,152
Membership services						4,000,000		4,000,000	1,449	456,243	457,692	531,019
Allocations from (to) other departments	944,860				463,060	1,283,761	21,065,105	23,757,866	(20,731,140)	(3,025,646)	(23,756,786)	4,000,000
Total	\$42,875,721	\$1,693,509	\$40,797,408	\$6,796,090	\$5,697,336	\$9,016,206	\$21,070,402	\$127,946,672	\$ 32,580,986	\$ 5,937,325	\$ 38,518,311	\$166,464,983

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2010

CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES:

Change in unrestricted net assets	\$ 20,480,541
Adjustments to reconcile change in unrestricted net assets to net cash provided by operating activities:	
Noncash contributions	(230,083)
Change in unrealized appreciation of investments	(22,644,039)
Pension liability adjustment	(2,718,236)
Depreciation	1,839,153
Loss on disposal of property and equipment	12,575
Realized investment gains	(1,961,014)
Changes in operating assets and liabilities:	
Accounts receivable	985,255
Change in interest and dividends receivable	62,598
Solicitation materials	556,276
Prepaid expenses	253,207
Other assets	(224,900)
Accounts payable	862,802
Accrued expenses	7,071,757
Deferred dues and service fees	(36,516)
Deferred revenue	(965,980)
Other liabilities	439,710
Reserve for future distribution of life membership dues	5,083,737
Net cash provided by operating activities	<u>8,866,843</u>

CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES:

Payments for property and equipment	(1,343,330)
Proceeds from the sale of property and equipment	36,995
Purchases of investments	(298,336,869)
Proceeds from the sale of investments	<u>290,633,634</u>
Net cash used in investing activities	<u>(9,009,570)</u>

NET DECREASE IN CASH (142,727)

CASH — Beginning of year 6,463,577

CASH — End of year \$ 6,320,850

See notes to financial statements.

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

AS OF AND FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2010

1. ORGANIZATION

Disabled American Veterans (DAV) is a Congressionally chartered, not-for-profit service organization. Consisting exclusively of men and women disabled in our nation's defense, DAV is dedicated to one single purpose: building better lives for all of our nation's disabled veterans and their families. This mission is carried forward by:

- providing free, professional assistance to veterans and their families in obtaining benefits and services earned through military service and provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and other agencies of government;
- providing outreach concerning its program services to the American people, generally, and to disabled veterans and their families, specifically;
- representing the interests of disabled veterans, their families, their widowed spouses, and their orphans before Congress, the White House, and the Judicial Branch, as well as state and local governments;
- extending DAV's mission of hope into the communities where these veterans and their families live through a network of state-level departments and local chapters; and
- providing a structure through which disabled veterans can express their compassion for their fellow veterans through a variety of volunteer programs.

2. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Financial Statements — The accompanying financial statements have been prepared on the accrual basis of accounting.

New Accounting Standard Adopted — The accounting standard initially adopted in the 2010 financial statements described below affected certain note disclosures but did not impact the statement of financial position or statement of activities.

Fair Value Measurements and Disclosures — In January 2010, the Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB) issued FASB Accounting Standards Update No. 2010-06, *Fair Value Measurements and Disclosures*, which amends Accounting Standards Codification (ASC) Topic 820, *Fair Value Measurements and Disclosures* (originally issued as FASB Statement No. 157, *Fair Value Measurements*), adding new disclosure requirements for Levels 1 and 2; separate disclosures of purchases, sales, issuances, and settlements relating to Level 3 measurements; and clarification of existing fair value disclosures.

Cash — DAV maintains its cash in bank deposit accounts, which, at times, exceed federally insured limits. DAV has not experienced any losses in such accounts.

Solicitation Materials — Inventories are carried at the lower of cost or market, generally determined on the first-in, first-out basis.

Property and Equipment — Property and equipment are stated at cost, less accumulated depreciation, and at December 31, 2010, are composed of the following:

	Cost	Accumulated Depreciation	Net Book Value
Land and improvements	\$ 964,808	\$ 389,192	\$ 575,616
Buildings and improvements	10,543,402	7,117,807	3,425,595
Machinery and other equipment	23,374,516	20,273,008	3,101,508
Construction in process	426,969		426,969
Total	<u>\$ 35,309,695</u>	<u>\$ 27,780,007</u>	<u>\$ 7,529,688</u>

Depreciation is computed generally on the straight-line method over the estimated useful life of assets, which range from three to 50 years.

Contributions — Contributions received are recorded as unrestricted, temporarily restricted, or permanently restricted support depending on the existence and nature of any donor restrictions. All contributions are considered available for unrestricted use, unless specifically restricted by the donor. Support that is restricted by the donor is reported as an increase in unrestricted net assets if the restriction expires in the reporting period in which the support is recognized. Donated assets are recorded at their fair market value at the time of the gift.

Contributed Services and Facilities — DAV operates extensive programs through which volunteers contribute many hours of service to veterans; however, only the portion of those hours that are donated to veterans at medical facilities of the VA are tabulated. Of the 2,196,061 hours accounted for in 2010 — 1,883,007 are for the DAV’s Nationwide Transportation Network. Using a value per hour of \$20.85 developed by Independent Sector, an organization that provides oversight to nonprofit organizations in America, the value of these hours contributed to the DAV Transportation Network is \$39,260,696. This value, together with the value of certain contributed facilities, is recorded as support and expenses in the accompanying statement of activities and statement of functional expenses. The remaining 313,054 hours — valued at \$6,527,176, are contributed to the DAV VA Voluntary Service Program. This amount and the value of any other volunteer time have not been recorded in the accompanying statement of activities and statement of functional expenses, because such hours do not meet the technical requirements set forth in accounting standards for recognizing contributed services.

Salaries Expense — The salaries expense in the accompanying financial statements includes the cost of all national service officers and their support staff who work directly with veterans and their dependents in providing counseling and representation in obtaining benefits and services. This expense also includes DAV’s administrative and support staffs.

Income Taxes — As a not-for-profit service organization, DAV has received a determination from the Internal Revenue Service that it is exempt from federal income tax as a 501(c)(4) organization. Contributions made to DAV are tax deductible by the contributor as provided in Section 170 of the Internal Revenue Code.

Accounting for Uncertainty in Income Taxes — ASC Topic 740, *Income Taxes*, clarifies the accounting for uncertainty in income taxes by prescribing the recognition threshold a tax position is required to meet before being recognized in the financial statements. It also provides guidance on derecognition, classification, interest and penalties, disclosure, and transition. DAV applies ASC Topic 740 and notes no effect on its financial statements.

Use of Estimates — The preparation of the financial statements in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities, disclosures of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements, and the reported amounts of support, revenues, and expenses during the reporting period. Actual amounts could differ from those estimates.

Allocation of Joint Costs — In 2010, DAV incurred joint costs of \$46,811,345 for informational materials and activities that included fundraising appeals. Of those costs, \$21,065,105 was allocated to public awareness outreach (program services) and \$25,746,240 was allocated to fundraising costs.

3. INVESTMENTS IN SECURITIES

Investments are recorded at fair value. The fair value of DAV's investments is determined based on the quoted market prices of the related securities. Gains and losses on the sale of investment securities are recognized based upon the specific identification method and are reflected as a separate component of revenue for the investments in the general fund. DAV's policy is to report cash and cash equivalents within its trust accounts as investments.

The cost and fair value of general fund investments in securities and the net unrealized (depreciation) appreciation at December 31, 2010, are summarized below:

	Cost	Fair Value	Unrealized (Depreciation) Appreciation
Cash equivalents	\$ 1,993,825	\$ 1,993,825	\$ -
Corporate bonds	4,891,702	4,747,557	(144,145)
U.S. government securities	14,582,615	14,565,787	(16,828)
Common stocks	38,561,252	44,353,648	5,792,396
Mutual bond funds	110,671,667	111,660,646	988,979
Mutual equity funds	<u>124,287,005</u>	<u>138,307,802</u>	<u>14,020,797</u>
Total	<u>\$294,988,066</u>	<u>\$315,629,265</u>	<u>\$20,641,199</u>

General fund investment income is composed of interest and dividend income of \$7,665,134, net of investment management and custody fees of \$231,908.

The cost and fair value of life membership fund investments in securities and the net unrealized appreciation at December 31, 2010, are summarized below:

	Cost	Fair Value	Unrealized Appreciation
Cash equivalents	\$ 118,944	\$ 118,944	\$ -
Common stocks	5,552,824	6,126,970	574,146
Mutual bond funds	18,084,179	18,287,562	203,383
Mutual equity funds	<u>29,987,661</u>	<u>32,968,988</u>	<u>2,981,327</u>
Total	<u>\$53,743,608</u>	<u>\$57,502,464</u>	<u>\$3,758,856</u>

4. FAIR VALUE MEASUREMENTS

In accordance with fair value measurements and disclosures, DAV categorized its financial assets, based on:

- quoted prices in active markets for identical instruments (Level 1)
- quoted prices in active markets for instruments that are similar, or quoted prices in markets that are not active for identical or similar instruments, and model-derived valuations in which all significant inputs and significant value drivers are observable in active markets (Level 2)

At no time during 2010 did DAV have any financial assets requiring the use of inputs that are unobservable and significant to the overall fair value measurement (Level 3). The major categories for debt and equity securities are determined on the basis of the nature and risks of the investments. There were no significant transfers between Level 1 and Level 2.

The major categories of general fund financial assets measured at fair value on a recurring basis during the year ended December 31, 2010, are as follows:

Asset Category	Fair Value Measurement Using		
	Quoted Prices in Active Markets for Identical Assets (Level 1)	Significant Observable Inputs (Level 2)	Total
Money market funds	\$ 1,993,825	\$ -	\$ 1,993,825
Corporate bonds		4,747,557	4,747,557
U.S. government securities	14,565,787		14,565,787
Common stocks:			
Communication	16,659		16,659
Consumer discretionary	6,303,643		6,303,643
Energy	5,537,980		5,537,980
Finance	6,983,371		6,983,371
Health care	4,670,313		4,670,313
Industrials	5,988,237		5,988,237
Materials	2,715,279		2,715,279
Staples	3,880,528		3,880,528
Technology	6,931,247		6,931,247
Utilities	1,326,391		1,326,391
Total common stocks	44,353,648	-	44,353,648
Mutual funds:			
Domestic stock funds	75,685,501		75,685,501
International stock funds	50,612,290		50,612,290
Fixed-income funds	111,660,646		111,660,646
Real estate funds	12,010,011		12,010,011
Total mutual funds	249,968,448	-	249,968,448
Total general fund assets	\$ 310,881,708	\$ 4,747,557	\$ 315,629,265

The major categories of life membership fund financial assets measured at fair value on a recurring basis during the year ended December 31, 2010, are as follows:

Asset Category	Fair Value Measurement Using		
	Quoted Prices in Active Markets for Identical Assets (Level 1)	Significant Observable Inputs (Level 2)	Total
Money market funds	\$ 118,944	\$ -	\$ 118,944
Common stocks:			
Consumer discretionary	755,340		755,340
Energy	872,413		872,413
Finance	771,451		771,451
Health care	631,474		631,474
Industrials	804,454		804,454
Materials	523,805		523,805
Consumer staples	623,904		623,904
Technology	1,083,112		1,083,112
Utilities	61,017		61,017
Total common stocks	6,126,970	-	6,126,970
Mutual funds:			
Domestic stock funds	19,124,952		19,124,952
International stock funds	11,569,012		11,569,012
Fixed-income funds	18,287,562		18,287,562
Real estate funds	2,275,024		2,275,024
Total mutual funds	51,256,550	-	51,256,550
Total life membership fund assets	\$57,502,464	\$ -	\$57,502,464

5. LIFE MEMBERSHIP

Under the bylaws of DAV, any eligible person may become a life member. Amounts paid for membership are placed in separate life membership accounts and invested; the only withdrawals permitted from these accounts are amounts required to pay chapter, department, and national (DAV) per capita dues for services to be provided to the life members. Generally, life membership assets for DAV National Headquarters per capita dues are transferred to the general assets of DAV at the beginning of the membership year (July 1) and deferred and recognized as income in the statement of activities over the course of the membership year. The per capita chapter and department dues are distributed at the beginning of the membership year. The reserve for future distribution of membership dues represents the liability for the future life membership distributions to DAV National Headquarters, Departments, and Chapters to assist with providing member services.

The changes during 2010 in the reserve for future distribution of membership dues are summarized below:

Balance — January 1, 2010	\$ 54,370,764
Additions:	
Membership dues received	4,844,550
Earnings on invested assets — net	1,302,015
Gain on sale of investments	341,206
National organization support	4,000,000
Other income	<u>126,730</u>
Total additions	<u>10,614,501</u>
Distribution of membership dues:	
National headquarters	5,350,380
Local chapters	2,130,742
State departments	<u>2,134,556</u>
Total distribution of membership dues	<u>9,615,678</u>
Change in unrealized appreciation of investments	<u>4,084,915</u>
Balance — December 31, 2010	<u>\$ 59,454,502</u>

Life membership earnings on invested assets are comprised of interest and dividends of \$1,302,015 — net of fees paid of \$15,960.

6. PENSION PLAN AND POSTRETIREMENT BENEFITS

Pension Plan — DAV has a defined benefit pension plan covering substantially all of its employees. Benefits are based on years of service and employees' compensation. Contributions are intended to provide not only for benefits attributed to service to date, but also for those expected in the future. In 2010, DAV funded amounts in excess of the recommended actuarially determined contribution amount. Contributions to the plan are based on the projected unit credit actuarial cost method.

Other Postretirement Benefit Plans — DAV provides certain health care and life insurance benefits (other postretirement benefits) for its retired employees and their spouses. Substantially all of DAV's employees may become eligible for these benefits if they reach early retirement age and complete 20 years of service.

On April 1, 2010, the benefit obligation was remeasured in order to include the effect of health care reform. Since DAV's retirees are considered "Stand Alone," they are not subject to any mandated coverage change by health care reform. However, the excise (a.k.a. "Cadillac") tax that is set to begin in 2018 would apply and has been valued.

On July 1, 2010, the benefit obligation was remeasured to include the impact of plan design changes announced on said date. The retiree health care plan designs and most other qualifications or restrictions for participants and dependents remain in effect for plan year 2011 and later.

The measurement date for the plans is December 31, 2010. Summarized information for the plans is as follows:

	Pension	Other Postretirement Benefits
Accumulated benefit obligation	<u>\$ 61,691,594</u>	
Projected benefit obligation	\$ 72,117,064	
Accumulated postretirement benefit obligation (APBO)		\$ 48,989,407
Fair value of plan assets	<u>(56,414,698)</u>	
Unfunded status recognized	<u>\$ 15,702,366</u>	<u>\$ 48,989,407</u>

Summarized information of the plans for the year ended December 31, 2010, is as follows:

	Pension	Other Postretirement Benefits
Components of net periodic benefit cost:		
Service cost	\$ 2,484,476	\$ 1,542,151
Interest cost	3,516,288	2,694,530
Expected return on assets	(4,042,975)	
Amortization of net loss from earlier periods	2,119,871	
Amortization of prior service cost	31,964	1,525
Amortization of transition obligation		<u>204,498</u>
	<u>4,109,624</u>	<u>4,442,704</u>
Pension settlement cost	<u>3,684,625</u>	
Net periodic benefit cost	<u>\$ 7,794,249</u>	<u>\$ 4,442,704</u>
Components of pension and postretirement benefit changes:		
Amortization of transition obligation	\$ -	\$ 1,217,010
Amortization of prior service cost	31,964	2,394,611
Amortization of net loss from earlier periods	2,119,871	
Actuarial net loss during the year	(2,449,613)	(4,280,232)
Pension settlement loss	<u>3,684,625</u>	
Pension and postretirement benefit changes	<u>\$ 3,386,847</u>	<u>\$ (668,611)</u>

Amounts not yet recognized as a component of periodic pension at December 31, 2010, are as follows:

	Pension	Other Postretirement Benefits
Prior service cost	\$ 383,567	\$(1,438,990)
Net actuarial loss (gain)	<u>28,419,931</u>	<u>(280,154)</u>
Amounts recognized as reduction in (addition to) unrestricted net assets	<u>\$28,803,498</u>	<u>\$(1,719,144)</u>

The estimated net actuarial loss and prior service cost for the pension plan that will be amortized from unrestricted net assets and into net periodic benefit cost in 2011 are \$1,850,630 and \$31,964, respectively. The estimated prior service cost for the postretirement plan that will be amortized from unrestricted net assets and into net periodic benefit cost in 2011 will result in a gain of \$122,991.

	Pension	Other Postretirement Benefits
For the year ended December 31, 2010:		
Benefit expense (including pension settlement cost of \$3,684,625 related to lump-sum payment option under the plan) (net periodic benefit cost of \$7,794,249 offset by \$55,548 reimbursed by DAVA)	\$7,738,701	\$ 4,442,704
Actual return on plan assets	6,452,275	
Employer contribution	3,231,624	2,200,431
Plan participants' contributions		185,417
Benefits paid	8,103,750	2,385,848

Weighted-average rate assumptions used for the
December 31 valuation:

For year-end benefit obligation:

Discount rate	5.00 %	5.75 %
Rate of compensation increase	3.50	3.50

For annual benefit cost:

Discount rate	5.50 %	6.00% / 5.60%*
Expected return on plan assets	8.25	n/a
Rate of compensation increase	3.50	3.50

*Discount rate was 6.00% for January 1, 2010 results and remeasurement at April 1, 2010;
and 5.60% for remeasurement period at July 1, 2010.

The APBO and related benefit cost are determined through the application of relevant actuarial assumptions. DAV anticipates the increase in its health care cost-trend rate to slow from 9% in 2011 to 5% in 2016, after which the trend rate is expected to stabilize.

The DAV expects to contribute \$2.9 million to its pension plan in 2011.

The DAV's pension plan investment allocation at December 31, 2010, is as follows:

Asset Category	Percentage of Plan Assets
Equity securities	65 %
Fixed-income securities	33
Cash and cash equivalents	<u>2</u>
Total	<u>100 %</u>

The primary objective of the investment policy is preservation of capital with an emphasis on long-term growth without undue exposure to risk and in recognition of the cash flow needs of the plan. The asset allocation ranges are: 51% to 69% total equity securities, and 31% to 49% total fixed-income securities. Approximately 0.5% to 3% of the combined investments are to be in money market or other liquid funds (cash requirements).

The major categories of pension plan financial assets measured at fair value on a recurring basis during the year ended December 31, 2010, are as follows:

Asset Category	Fair Value Measurements Using		
	Quoted Prices in Active Markets for Identical Assets (Level 1)	Significant Observable Inputs (Level 2)	Total
Money market funds	\$ 1,370,813	\$ -	\$ 1,370,813
Corporate bonds		14,484,277	14,484,277
U.S. government securities	3,935,334		3,935,334
Common stocks:			
Communication	1,756,323		1,756,323
Consumer discretionary	2,458,286		2,458,286
Energy	2,158,032		2,158,032
Finance	4,174,702		4,174,702
Health care	2,920,659		2,920,659
Industrials	2,838,106		2,838,106
Materials	1,362,200		1,362,200
Staples	758,285		758,285
Technology	3,718,546		3,718,546
Utilities	143,476		143,476
Total common stocks	22,288,615	-	22,288,615
Mutual funds:			
Domestic stock funds	8,469,190		8,469,190
International stock funds	5,866,469		5,866,469
Total mutual funds	14,335,659	-	14,335,659
Total pension plan assets	\$41,930,421	\$ 14,484,277	\$56,414,698

In selecting the expected rate of return on plan assets, the DAV considers historical rates of return for the type of investments the plan holds, as well as future market expectations. Expectations are then applied to the target asset allocation to arrive at a weighted average of expected returns for the plan's portfolio of assets.

The pension plan benefit payments, which reflect expected future service, as appropriate, are expected to be paid are as follows:

Fiscal Years Ending	Benefit Payments
2011	\$2,775,426
2012	6,154,666
2013	6,056,743
2014	5,851,258
2015	5,698,690
2016–2020	25,086,639

The DAV has concluded that the prescription drug benefits available under their plan to some or all participants for some or all future years are “actuarially equivalent” to Medicare Part D. Thus, they qualify for the subsidy under the *Medicare Prescription Drug, Improvement and Modernization Act of 2003*. This expected subsidy offsets the employer’s share of the cost of the underlying postretirement prescription drug coverage on which the subsidy is based.

The other postretirement benefit payments and subsidy receipts, which reflect expected future service, as appropriate, are expected to be paid and received are as follows:

Fiscal Years Ending	Gross Benefit Payments	Gross Subsidy Receipts	Net Benefit Payments
2011	\$2,642,974	\$ (123,207)	\$2,519,767
2012	2,773,298	(139,974)	2,633,324
2013	2,868,268	(159,929)	2,708,339
2014	2,933,309	(181,261)	2,752,048
2015	2,866,501	(212,451)	2,654,050
2016–2020	15,979,634	(1,457,005)	14,522,629

DAV also maintains a defined contribution Salary Savings and Investment Plan for its employees. For qualified participating employees, DAV contributes a percentage of the employees’ base salary. DAV’s contributions in 2010 were \$1,986,547 and are included in employee benefits expense in the accompanying statement of functional expenses.

7. RELATED-PARTY TRANSACTIONS

Disabled American Veterans National Service Foundation — Some members of DAV’s Board of Directors also serve on the Board of Directors for the Disabled American Veterans National Service Foundation (the “Foundation”). The accompanying financial statements do not include the net assets (or changes therein) of the Foundation, which are held by the Foundation and available to DAV only through appropriation by the Foundation’s Board of Directors. The Foundation is a separate entity from DAV, operating under its own bylaws. Based upon financial statements at December 31, 2010, net assets of the Foundation were \$81,476,354. During 2010, DAV provided the Foundation with the use of DAV personnel for assistance with business operations and fundraising. For these services, DAV charged the Foundation \$168,081. Facilities and equipment are provided by DAV at no charge. Additionally, in 2010, DAV contributed \$37,375 to The Columbia Trust, a temporarily restricted fund established by the Foundation to provide funds for the service programs of needy DAV state departments and local chapters. At December 31, 2010, the Foundation owed \$163,825 to DAV, which is recorded as a receivable in the accompanying statement of financial position.

Disabled American Veterans Charitable Service Trust — Some members of DAV’s Board of Directors also serve on the Board of Directors for Disabled American Veterans Charitable Service Trust (the “Trust”). The accompanying financial statements do not include the net assets (or changes therein) of the Trust, which are held by the Trust and available to DAV only through grants approved by the Trust’s Board of Directors. The Trust is a separate entity from DAV, operating under its own bylaws. Based upon financial statements at December 31, 2010, net assets of the Trust were \$13,632,352. During 2010, DAV provided the Trust with the use of DAV personnel for assistance with business operations, fundraising, and grant programs. For the personnel services, DAV charged the Trust \$240,360. Facilities and equipment are provided by DAV at no charge. At December 31, 2010, the Trust owed \$253,741 to DAV, which is recorded as a receivable in the accompanying statement of financial position.

In 2010, the Trust distributed the following in support of DAV programs and services: \$33,000 — National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic, \$350,000 — Mobile Service Office Program, \$25,000 Jesse Brown Youth Scholarship Program, \$200,000 — National Transportation Network, and \$74,615 to assist disabled veterans and their families.

Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary —DAV provides services to the Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary (DAVA), which puts DAV in the position to influence operating policies of DAVA. The accompanying financial statements do not include the net assets (or changes therein) of DAVA, which are held by DAVA. DAVA is a separate entity from DAV, operating under its own bylaws. Based upon financial statements at December 31, 2010, net assets of DAVA were \$6,321,641. DAVA occupies space in the DAV National Headquarters’ building and also uses certain office equipment owned by DAV. No fees are charged for such usage. The value of these contributed facilities is estimated to be \$36,100 in 2010. Certain costs are paid by DAV on behalf of DAVA. Such costs are reimbursed by DAVA. In addition, DAV deposits contributions on behalf of DAVA and subsequently remits them to DAVA. At December 31, 2010, DAVA owed approximately \$53,485, for such costs, net of contributions receivable of \$21,123, which is recorded as a receivable in the accompanying statement of financial position.

Disabled Veterans’ LIFE Memorial Foundation, Inc. — One member of DAV’s Board of Directors also serves on the Board of Directors for Disabled Veterans’ LIFE Memorial Foundation, Inc. (DVLMF). The accompanying financial statements do not include the net assets (or changes therein) of DVLMF, which are held by DVLMF. DVLMF is a separate entity from DAV, operating under its own bylaws. Based upon financial statements at December 31, 2010, net assets of DVLMF were \$20,556,668. During 2010, DAV donated \$2,439,917 to DVLMF. At December 31, 2010, DAV owed \$962,933 to DVLMF, which is recorded as a payable in the accompanying statement of financial position.

8. SUBSEQUENT EVENTS

DAV evaluated subsequent events through March 31, 2011, which is the date the financial statements were available for issuance.

* * * * *

Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary National Headquarters

Financial Statements as of and for the
Year Ended December 31, 2010, and
Independent Auditors' Report



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INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT

To the National Finance Committee of
Disabled American Veterans
Auxiliary National Headquarters:

We have audited the accompanying statement of financial position of Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary National Headquarters (the "Auxiliary") as of December 31, 2010, and the related statements of activities, functional expenses, and cash flows for the year then ended. These financial statements are the responsibility of the Auxiliary's management. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit.

We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. An audit includes consideration of internal control over financial reporting as a basis for designing audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Auxiliary's internal control over financial reporting. Accordingly, we express no such opinion. An audit also includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements, assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall financial statement presentation. We believe that our audit provides a reasonable basis for our opinion.

In our opinion, such financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Auxiliary as of December 31, 2010, and the changes in its net assets and its cash flows for the year then ended in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

Deloitte : Touche LLP

March 31, 2011

Member of
Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu Limited

**DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS
AUXILIARY NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS**

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2010**

ASSETS		LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	
GENERAL ASSETS:		LIABILITIES:	
Cash	\$ 618,167	Accounts payable	\$ 854,705
Investments	6,975,761	Contributions distributable to state	
Accrued interest receivable	24,897	departments	309,085
Materials and supplies	20,004	Deferred membership fees	260,161
Prepaid expenses	3,527	Other liabilities	47,232
Other assets	1,090	Total liabilities	1,471,183
SERVICE PROGRAM ASSETS:			
Cash	38,449	LIFE MEMBERSHIP:	
Investments	305,388	Reserve for future distribution of life	
Receivable from General Fund	27,237	membership dues	\$ 804,752
DISASTER RELIEF PROGRAM			
ASSETS — Cash	13,168	NET ASSETS:	
		Unrestricted	6,172,263
EDUCATION LOAN PROGRAM ASSETS:		Temporarily restricted:	
Cash	61,745	Service Program	371,074
Investments	628,366	Disaster Relief Program	13,168
Notes receivable (less allowance of \$33,125)	348,259	Permanently restricted — Education	
Receivable from General Fund	375,474	Loan Program	1,413,844
LIFE MEMBERSHIP ASSETS:			
Investments	5,364,180		
Accrued interest receivable	27,991	Total net assets	7,970,349
Receivable from General Fund	412,578		
TOTAL	\$15,246,284	TOTAL	\$15,246,284

See notes to financial statements.

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS AUXILIARY NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2010

	Unrestricted General	Temporarily Restricted Service Program	Disaster Relief Program	Permanently Restricted — Education Loan Program	Total
SUPPORT AND REVENUE:					
Membership fees and mandates	\$ 169,007	\$ 4,288	\$ -	\$ 4,815	\$ 178,110
Life membership dues	484,624				484,624
Contributions	269,661	9,705		3,834	283,200
Contributed facilities	36,100				36,100
Sale of membership items	37,794				37,794
Conference and meetings	22,082				22,082
National convention	30,997				30,997
Interest and dividends	342,545	4,957		7,811	355,313
Realized investment gains	21,083				21,083
Net assets released from restrictions	34,642	(34,642)			-
Other	11,005				11,005
Total support and revenue	1,459,540	(15,692)	-	16,460	1,460,308
EXPENSES:					
Program services	1,024,698	4		39,205	1,063,907
Fundraising costs	209,228				209,228
General and administrative	196,558				196,558
Total expenses	1,430,484	4	-	39,205	1,469,693
EXCESS (DEFICIT) OF SUPPORT AND REVENUE OVER EXPENSES	29,056	(15,696)		(22,745)	(9,385)
CHANGE IN UNREALIZED APPRECIATION OF INVESTMENTS	73,964				73,964
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	103,020	(15,696)	-	(22,745)	64,579
NET ASSETS — Beginning of year	6,069,243	386,770	13,168	1,436,589	7,905,770
NET ASSETS — End of year	\$ 6,172,263	\$ 371,074	\$ 13,168	\$ 1,413,844	\$ 7,970,349

See notes to financial statements.

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS AUXILIARY NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

STATEMENT OF FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2010

	Program Services	Fund Raising Costs	General and Administrative	Total Expenses
Salaries and wages	\$ 239,219	\$ 13,573	\$ 40,369	\$ 293,161
Employee benefits	115,208	5,022	23,672	143,902
Distributions to state departments	128,800			128,800
Fundraising expenses		140,861		140,861
Payroll taxes	19,855	1,112	3,305	24,272
Conferences and meetings	79,079		8,798	87,877
Expenses of national convention	95,571			95,571
Cost of membership items sold	33,544			33,544
Printing, stationery, and office supplies	19,594	2,473	1,037	23,104
Expenses of national commander and officers	50,649			50,649
Contributed facilities	24,844	7,931	3,325	36,100
Postage	5,190	30,687	4,456	40,333
Travel	9,399		1,900	11,299
Professional fees		6,691	42,078	48,769
Service program benefits	34,642			34,642
Veterans Affairs Voluntary Services, memberships, and other awards	5,003			5,003
Other	203,310	878	67,618	271,806
TOTAL	<u>\$ 1,063,907</u>	<u>\$ 209,228</u>	<u>\$ 196,558</u>	<u>\$ 1,469,693</u>

See notes to financial statements.

**DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS
AUXILIARY NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS**

**STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2010**

CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES:	
Change in net assets	\$ 64,579
Adjustments to reconcile change in net assets to net cash used in operating activities:	
Change in permanently restricted education loan program	22,745
Change in unrealized appreciation in investments	(149,454)
Realized investment gains	(21,083)
Changes in assets and liabilities:	
Accrued interest receivable	46,279
Materials and supplies	41,683
Prepaid expenses and other assets	5,385
Accounts payable	241,642
Contributions distributable to state departments	55,637
Deferred membership fees	(65,802)
Reserve for future distribution of life membership dues	113,562
Due from General Fund	(843,658)
Other liabilities	23,065
Total adjustments	(529,999)
Net cash used in operating activities	(465,420)
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES:	
Purchases of general fund, service, and education loan investments	(4,817,683)
Sales of general fund and education loan investments	4,849,201
Purchases of life membership fund investments	(4,157,092)
Sales of life membership fund investments	4,534,701
Education loans	(85,000)
Collections from repayment of education loans	65,030
Net cash provided by investing activities	389,157
CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES — Permanently restricted education fund contributions and investment income	
	(22,745)
NET DECREASE IN CASH	(99,008)
CASH:	
Beginning of year	830,537
End of year	\$ 731,529

See notes to financial statements.

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS AUXILIARY NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AS OF AND FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2010

1. ORGANIZATION

Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary National Headquarters ("DAV Auxiliary") is a not-for-profit membership and service organization formed under the provisions of the National Constitution of Disabled American Veterans (DAV). DAV Auxiliary and its membership are organized for the betterment and improvement of the nation's disabled veterans and their families and for cooperation with all patriotic organizations and public agencies devoted to this purpose through volunteer work at veterans' hospitals, community service, educational assistance, legislative action, and encouraging good citizenship and patriotism.

2. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Financial Statements — The accompanying financial statements have been prepared on the accrual basis of accounting.

New Accounting Standards Adopted — The accounting standard initially adopted in the 2010 financial statements described below affected certain note disclosures but did not affect the statement of financial position or statement of activities.

Fair Value Measurements and Disclosures — In January 2010, the Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB) issued FASB Accounting Standards Update No. 2010-06, *Fair Value Measurements and Disclosures*, which amends Accounting Standards Codification (ASC) Topic 820, *Fair Value Measurements and Disclosures* (originally issued as FASB Statement No. 157, *Fair Value Measurements*), adding new disclosure requirements for Levels 1 and 2, separate disclosures of purchases, sales, issuances, and settlements relating to Level 3 measurements and clarification of existing fair value disclosures.

Cash — DAV Auxiliary maintains its cash in bank deposit accounts, which, at times, exceed federally insured limits. DAV Auxiliary has not experienced any losses in such accounts.

Contributions — Contributions received are recorded at their fair value and are classified as unrestricted, temporarily restricted, or permanently restricted support. All contributions are considered available for unrestricted use, unless specifically restricted by the donor. Support that is restricted by the donor is reported as an increase in unrestricted net assets if the restriction expires in the reporting period in which the support is recognized.

Deferred Membership Fees — DAV Auxiliary accounts for membership fees by deferring fees received in advance of the membership year (July 1 to June 30) and amortizing them to income ratably during the membership year for which they are paid.

Income Taxes — As a not-for-profit service organization, DAV Auxiliary has received a determination from the Internal Revenue Service that it is exempt from federal income taxes as a 501(c)(4) organization. Contributions made to DAV Auxiliary are tax deductible by the contributor as provided in Section 170 of the Internal Revenue Code.

Accounting for Uncertainty in Income Taxes — In July 2006, the FASB issued FASB Interpretation No. 48, *Accounting for Uncertainty in Income Taxes — an interpretation of FASB Statement No. 109*. This guidance was codified into ASC Topic 740, *Income Taxes*, effective July 1, 2009. ASC Topic 740 clarifies the accounting for uncertainty in income taxes by prescribing the recognition threshold a tax position is required to meet before being recognized in the financial statements. It also provides guidance on derecognition, classification, interest and penalties, disclosure, and transition. DAV Auxiliary applied ASC Topic 740, beginning January 1, 2009, and noted no effect on its financial statements.

Use of Estimates — The preparation of the financial statements in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities and disclosures of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements and the reported amounts of revenues and expenses during the reporting period. Actual amounts could differ from those estimates.

3. INVESTMENTS IN SECURITIES

Investments are recorded at fair value. The fair value of DAV Auxiliary's investments is determined based on the quoted market prices of the related securities. Gains and losses on the sale of investment securities are recognized based upon the specific identification method and are reflected as a separate component of revenue for the investments. DAV Auxiliary's policy is to report cash and cash equivalents within its trust accounts as investments.

The cost and fair value of investments in securities and the net unrealized appreciation (depreciation) at December 31, 2010, are summarized below:

2010	Cost	Fair Value	Unrealized Appreciation (Depreciation)
General fund:			
Cash equivalents	\$ 34,586	\$ 34,586	\$ -
Corporate bonds	308,944	312,501	3,557
U.S. government securities	205,418	216,651	11,233
Mutual funds — equity	1,054,796	1,231,917	177,121
Mutual funds — fixed income	<u>5,217,204</u>	<u>5,180,106</u>	<u>(37,098)</u>
Total	<u>\$ 6,820,948</u>	<u>\$ 6,975,761</u>	<u>\$ 154,813</u>
Service Program — certificates of deposit	<u>\$ 305,388</u>	<u>\$ 305,388</u>	<u>\$ -</u>
Education Loan Program — certificates of deposit	<u>\$ 628,366</u>	<u>\$ 628,366</u>	<u>\$ -</u>
Life membership:			
Cash equivalents	\$ 52,704	\$ 52,704	\$ -
Corporate bonds	1,022,784	1,072,282	49,498
Mutual funds — equity	883,356	1,025,181	141,825
Mutual funds — fixed income	<u>3,261,617</u>	<u>3,214,013</u>	<u>(47,604)</u>
Total	<u>\$ 5,220,461</u>	<u>\$ 5,364,180</u>	<u>\$ 143,719</u>

4. FAIR VALUE MEASUREMENTS

In accordance with fair value measurements and disclosures, DAV Auxiliary categorized its financial assets, based on

- Quoted prices in active markets for identical instruments (Level 1)
- Quoted prices in the active markets for instruments that are similar, or quoted prices in markets that are not active for identical or similar instruments, and model-derived valuations in which all significant inputs and significant value drivers are observable in active markets (Level 2).

At no time during 2010 did DAV Auxiliary have any financial assets requiring the use of inputs that are unobservable and significant to the overall fair value measurement (Level 3). The major categories for debt and equity securities are determined on the basis of the nature and risks of the investments. There were no significant transfers between Level 1 and Level 2.

The major categories of financial assets measured at fair value on a recurring basis during the year ended December 31, 2010, are as follows:

Asset Category	Fair Value Measurements Using		
	Quoted Prices in Active Markets for Identical Assets (Level 1)	Significant Observable Inputs (Level 2)	Total
General fund:			
Money market funds	\$ 34,586	\$ -	\$ 34,586
Corporate bonds		312,501	312,501
U.S. government securities	216,651		216,651
Mutual funds:			
Domestic stock funds	1,110,232		1,110,232
International stock funds	121,685		121,685
Fixed-income funds	<u>5,180,106</u>		<u>5,180,106</u>
Total mutual funds	<u>6,412,023</u>		<u>6,412,023</u>
Total	<u>\$ 6,663,260</u>	<u>\$ 312,501</u>	<u>\$ 6,975,761</u>
Service Program — certificates of deposit		<u>\$ 305,388</u>	<u>\$ 305,388</u>
Education Loan Program — certificates of deposit		<u>\$ 628,366</u>	<u>\$ 628,366</u>
Life membership:			
Money market funds	\$ 52,704	\$ -	\$ 52,704
Corporate bonds		1,072,282	1,072,282
Mutual funds:			
Domestic stock funds	879,758		879,758
International stock funds	145,423		145,423
Fixed-income funds	<u>3,214,013</u>		<u>3,214,013</u>
Total mutual funds	<u>4,239,194</u>		<u>4,239,194</u>
Total	<u>\$ 4,291,898</u>	<u>\$ 1,072,282</u>	<u>\$ 5,364,180</u>

5. FREEDOM FOUNDATION

DAV Auxiliary has designated \$6,216 of unrestricted funds for the purpose of providing financial aid to elementary and secondary school teachers attending annual summer teaching seminars held at the Freedom Foundation, Valley Forge, Pennsylvania.

6. RESERVE FOR FUTURE DISTRIBUTION OF LIFE MEMBERSHIP DUES

Under the bylaws of DAV Auxiliary, any eligible person may become a life member. Amounts paid for membership are placed in separate life membership accounts and invested; the only withdrawals permitted from these accounts are amounts required to pay local units, state departments, and National Headquarters (DAV Auxiliary) per capita dues for services to be provided to the life members. Generally, life membership assets for National Headquarters per capita dues are transferred to the general assets of DAV Auxiliary at the beginning of the membership year (July 1) and deferred and recognized as income in the statement of activities over the course of the membership year. The per capita chapter and department dues are distributed at the beginning of the membership year. The reserve for future distribution of membership dues represents the liability for the future life membership distributions to DAV Auxiliary, Departments, and Chapters to assist with providing member services.

The changes during 2010 in the reserve for future distribution of life membership dues are as follows:

Balance — January 1, 2010	\$ 5,691,190
Additions:	
Membership dues received	315,212
Earnings on invested assets	251,634
Gain on sale of investments	<u>5,418</u>
Total additions	<u>572,264</u>
Deductions:	
Dues to National Headquarters	447,063
Dues to local units	25,721
Dues to State Departments	51,480
Investment fee	<u>9,927</u>
Total deductions	<u>534,191</u>
Change in unrealized appreciation of investments	<u>75,489</u>
Balance — December 31, 2010	<u>\$ 5,804,752</u>

7. DONOR RESTRICTED NET ASSETS

Education Loan Program — Donations from individuals and amounts received from each unit (local chapters) as a mandate for educational loans are recorded as permanently restricted assets from which loans are made to students in accordance with the by-laws of DAV Auxiliary. The maximum amount of an education loan is \$3,000 per year for a maximum of five years per student; the loan bears no interest and is to be repaid in seven years beginning 90 days after the student's graduation or withdrawal from school. Effective in 2011, the Education Loan Program is being discontinued and replaced with a Scholarship program. Scholarships in the amount of \$1,500 will be issued to selected Auxiliary member applicants.

Disaster Relief Program — Donations from units and individuals as a mandate for disaster relief are recorded as temporarily restricted net assets, which are used for members of DAV Auxiliary who are in need of temporary financial assistance due to natural disaster, such as flood, earthquake, etc. Benefits are paid directly to the individual.

Service Program — Donations from individuals and amounts received from each unit as a mandate for the Service Program are recorded as temporarily restricted net assets, which are used for persons eligible for DAV Auxiliary who are in need of temporary financial assistance in accordance with the bylaws of DAV Auxiliary. The total amount of assistance is limited to \$1,000 per individual and in the aggregate is limited to total temporarily restricted net assets. Benefits are paid directly to the service provider and not to the individual.

8. EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

All employees of DAV Auxiliary are covered by the Disabled American Veterans Retirement Plan, a defined benefit pension plan. The benefits are based on years of service and the employee's compensation. Contributions are intended to provide not only for benefits attributed to service to-date, but also for those expected in the future. In 2010, DAV charged DAV Auxiliary \$143,902 for its share of the retirement plan cost, as well as other benefits for employees, including health and life insurance and contributions to a defined contribution plan.

DAV provides certain health care and life insurance benefits for its retired employees and their spouses. All employees of DAV Auxiliary may become eligible for these benefits if they reach normal retirement age while working for DAV Auxiliary. In 2010, DAV did not charge DAV Auxiliary for these benefits.

9. RELATED-PARTY TRANSACTIONS

DAV Auxiliary occupies space in the DAV National Headquarters' building and also uses certain office equipment owned by DAV. No fees are charged for such usage. The value of these contributed facilities is estimated to be \$36,100 in 2010 and is included as revenue and expense on the accompanying statement of activities.

In 2010, DAV Auxiliary sold \$19,681 of its fraternal sales items inventory to DAV National Service Foundation (the "Foundation") to be sold alongside the Foundation's fraternal items. Estimated obsolescence was \$4,500, and a net amount of \$15,181 was reimbursed to DAV Auxiliary for the inventory.

Certain costs are paid by DAV National Headquarters on behalf of DAV Auxiliary. Such costs are reimbursed by DAV Auxiliary. In addition, DAV receives contributions on behalf of DAV Auxiliary and subsequently remits them to DAV Auxiliary. As of December 31, 2010, DAV Auxiliary owed approximately \$53,485 for such costs, net of the contributions receivable of \$21,123, which is included in accounts payable in the accompanying statement of financial position.

10. SUBSEQUENT EVENTS

DAV Auxiliary evaluated subsequent events through March 31, 2011, which is the date the financial statements were available for issuance.

* * * * *

FIRST BUSINESS SESSION

August 6, 2011

The First Business Session of the Disabled American Veterans 90th National Convention convened in the Grand Ballroom on the First Level of the Hilton New Orleans Riverside Hotel, New Orleans, Louisiana, on Saturday afternoon, August 6, 2011, and was called to order at 1:17 o'clock, p.m., by National Commander Wallace E. "Wally" Tyson.

COMMANDER WALLACE E. "WALLY" TYSON: The Convention will come to order. As a reminder, we'd ask that everyone in attendance please turn off your cellular phones and other portable devices.

UNIDENTIFIED DELEGATE: That means you, too, Wally.

COMMANDER TYSON: I got witnesses. (Laughter) Only those delegates at a microphone will be recognized. The delegate must state their name, chapter number and the state they represent. I will now call on Credentials Committee Chairperson Donald Day for his first report, Donald.

CHAIRMAN DONALD DAY: Comrade Commander and delegates, the National Convention Committee on Credentials was called to order for its first business session on August 6th, 2011, by the Committee advisors Michael E. Dobmeier and Anthony Baskerville.

The first order of business was the election of a Convention Committee chairperson and secretary. Donald Day of New York was elected as chairman and Warren Tobin of North Dakota was elected as secretary.

This is a partial report for informational purposes only and reflects the registration at August 5th, 2011, four p.m.

At the present time we have 469 Chapters, 47 Departments, 29 National Officers, 13 Past National Commanders, for a total of 942 delegates and 29 alternates and a total vote of 7,279. This completes the partial report of the Credentials Committee, Commander.

COMMANDER TYSON: Thank you, Don. Comrades, the Rules are a continuing part of our Bylaws. They are part of Article 3 and remain in effect continually. They are subject to amendment as provided in the Bylaws and do not require re-adoption. I will now ask the National Adjutant to read the DAV's Statement of Policy.

ADJUTANT WILSON: Thank you, Commander.

"The Disabled American Veterans was founded on the principle that this nation's first duty to veterans is the rehabilitation and welfare of its wartime disabled. This provision envisions:

"Number 1. High quality hospital and medical care provided by the Department of Veterans' Affairs for veterans with disabilities incurred in or aggravated by service in America's armed forces.

"Number 2. Adequate compensation for the loss resulting from such service-connected disabilities.

"Number 3. Vocational rehabilitation and/or education to help the disabled veteran prepare for and obtain gainful employment.

"Number 4. Enhanced opportunities for employment and preferential job placement so that the remaining ability of the disabled veteran is used productively.

"Number 5. Adequate compensation to the surviving spouses and dependents of veterans whose deaths are held to be service-connected under the laws administered by the Department of Veterans Affairs.

"Number 6. Enhanced outreach to ensure that all disabled veterans receive all benefits that they have earned and that the American people understand and respect the needs these veterans encounter as a result of their disabilities.

"It, therefore, follows that we will not take action on any resolution that proposes legislation designed to provide benefits for veterans, their surviving spouses and dependents which are based upon other than wartime service-connected disability.

"We shall not oppose legislation beneficial to those veterans not classified as service-connected disabled, except when it is evident that such legislation will jeopardize benefits for service-connected disabled veterans.

"And while our first duty as an organization is to assist the service-connected disabled, their surviving spouses and dependents, we shall within the limits of our resources assist others in filing, perfecting, and prosecuting their claims for benefits.

“Since this represents the principle upon which our organization was founded and since it is as sound at this time as it was in 1920, we hereby reaffirm this principle as the policy for the Disabled American Veterans.”

COMMANDER TYSON: The Chair will entertain a motion for the adoption of the DAV Statement of Policy. Mic 1 is recognized.

MR. ROLAND PAQUETTE: Roland Paquette, Chapter 20, the great State of Texas, moves for the adoption.

COMMANDER TYSON: Thank you. Is there a second? Mic 3.

UNIDENTIFIED DELEGATE: Commander (undistinguishable) does the second.

COMMANDER TYSON: I'm sorry. I have one from Mic 2. Thank you. There is a motion and a second. All those in favor; opposed. So ordered.

At this time I would also like to introduce and recognize my National Chief of Staff Bobby Williams, Officer of the Day James Neudorff. They're down here in the Ninth District. Thank you, gentlemen, for everything you've done for the last few years.

I would like call on the Board of Directors' Treasurer Rodney Tucker for his report.

TREASURER RODNEY S. TUCKER: National Commander Tyson, fellow members of the National Executive Committee, DAV members and guests, it is my honor and privilege to present a report on the financial affairs of our organization for the first six months period ending June 30th, 2011.

The DAV's contributions from fund-raising through that date were \$44.8 million from the mailing of 38.9 million solicitation pieces. By the year's end we expect to send 68.0 million pieces of fund-raising mail and generate an estimated \$92 million in gross distributions.

Under the Department Fund-raising program distributions to Departments in December 2010 and June 2011 totaled \$3.0 million. Since the program began in 1994, \$73.4 million has been distributed to Departments for their service programs. The Board would like to thank all of our Departments for their continued participation in this program and especially our members for their support.

As of June 2011 DAV received total support and revenue from all sources of \$86.5 million. Through June 2011 DAV had total expenditures of \$84.8 million, of which \$61.0 million was for service programs, 71.9 percent of total expenses.

It is important to remember that these expenses are for the federally-chartered purposes of our organization. Over the same period expenditures for fund raising and administration increased by 7.2 percent due primarily to the mailing of 4.9 million additional solicitation pieces.

As of June 30, 2011, the market value of our General Fund long-term investment portfolio is \$310.3 million, an increase of 17.5 percent over the same period of 2010. DAV's unrestricted net assets and/or net worth have increased to \$262.8 million a 15.6 percent increase from this time last year.

What is notable about our financial figures of this past two years is a very hardworking staff nationwide as well as at both Headquarters has been able to control our operating expenses while maintaining exemplary services to our disabled veterans and their families.

We are very proud of our employees and their terrific efforts to date. We continue to see a recovery in our financial position from its recessionary low of December 2008.

We are pleased to report that as of June 30th, 2011, the Life Membership Fund reserve was \$64.3 million. At a projected earning rate on investments of 6.7%, we estimate that the fund would be depleted by the year 2027, with 426,000 members remaining. I would like to thank the National Adjutant Art Wilson and his staff for all their hard work which makes this report possible.

Let me thank you, Commander Tyson, for the support I received in my role as the Board of Directors' Treasurer. It has been my honor to serve as the treasurer for this important Committee.

Commander, that concludes my report to the National Convention, a report I feel honored to offer. I thank you and move for the adoption of my report.

COMMANDER TYSON: Thank you Rodney for that very informative report. You heard the treasurer, his motion. Do I have a second to that motion? Microphone, please. Mic 1.

MR. PAQUETTE: Commander, Roland Paquette, Chapter 20, the greatest State of Texas, seconds the motion.

COMMANDER TYSON: Thank you, sir. You have heard the motion and you have heard the second. All those in favor signify by saying aye; opposed. So ordered. At this time you're going to hear some important remarks. Please pay attention.

In this rapidly changing world, our organization needs strong, consistently-adaptable leadership to maintain our position as the best of the best in veterans' affairs. During his years

as National Adjutant, Art Wilson has led our organization's day-to-day operations with a unique combination of professionalism, skill and dedication to our mission.

Thanks to his strong and steady hand, our organization has thrived in good times and weathered adversity and uncertainty. As you know, our economy has suffered tremendous difficulties of late. But despite those challenges, we have continued to serve millions of disabled veterans and their families and make a real difference in their lives.

Since his appointment as National Adjutant in 1994, his commitment to service, quality, integrity, and leadership has kept the DAV at the very top in the veterans' arena.

Art's insight and ability to recognize what is essential and necessary to enable us to fulfill our mission have continually moved our organization forward to achieve even greater success in building better lives for disabled veterans, their families and their survivors.

Ladies and gentlemen, please welcome our National Adjutant Arthur H. Wilson. (Standing Ovation)

ADJUTANT WILSON: Thank you, Commander. Thank you for such a real nice introduction. And thanks to all of you for that warm welcome and good afternoon to everyone. Commander Tyson, National Officers, staff, our special guests and, of course, you, our most important people, the members of the Disabled American Veterans.

Every year now I've had the honor and the privilege of reporting on the finest veterans' service organization in the world – (Applause) our organization is your organization – and what we, all of us together, have accomplished since we last gathered at last year's National Convention in Atlanta.

In just a few minutes you will see some video highlights of this past year but first I want to take a moment to put things in context so we can better understand and appreciate our successes as well as some of the challenges that lie ahead.

For nearly 91 years – and contrary to some people's thinking, I haven't been around quite that long (Laughter), almost (Laughter) – we've been dedicated to one single mission and that's a mission of service and advocacy for our wartime disabled veterans and their families and their survivors. And help them build better lives for themselves and those families.

We have not only had to adjust and deal with our own disabilities and challenges in order to help our comrades and their loved ones, but we've had to adapt to overcome outside forces such as indifference, ignorance, apathy, and even downright hostility to obtain and preserve the rights and benefits earned through our service and sacrifice.

Fortunately, and it's been no accident that we have made tremendous progress over these past nine decades. Economic and political challenges persist, and we are still in the midst of an economic slump. Unemployment among disabled veterans seems to be getting worse; and the types and extend of injuries and disabilities that our veterans suffer have taken a terrible toll on their families as well.

Even so, the picture certainly is not all gloom and doom. The fact remains that no other nation in the world provides such an extensive array of medical care, benefits and services to veterans than the United States of America.

And thanks in large part to our organization's dedication and commitment to our mission we continue to play a vital role in making sure that our nation honors its sacred obligation to disabled veterans and their families.

All of you, our volunteers, our Service Officers at every level, our Transportation Network drivers, our Hospital Service Coordinators, our Chapter and Department leaders and individual members keep the DAV solidly rooted in our legacy of service. We are extremely proud of what you do every day to fulfill our mission and I say thank you so much to you. (Applause)

Our legacy of service – and it is quite a legacy – has been carried forward by successive generations of disabled veterans now for 91 years. From our founding in the aftermath of the First World War and through the wars and conflicts spanning the 20th Century and on into the 21st Century, we have remained true to our mission. And if you look around this room you will see the men and women who have taken up our cause, not just for their generation but also for every generation of veterans.

As you know, membership is the lifeblood of our organization. And like any organization, we will need to replenish our membership as one generation ages and a new generation of disabled veterans becomes eligible to join our ranks. We need their ideas. We need their strength and their commitment to serve our fellow disabled veterans if our legacy is to endure.

I realize that much of the focus is on the young men and women returning from Iraq and Afghanistan who will eventually inherit the legacy that we've built. And we certainly want to bring them into the fold. However, we can't forget about those veterans who are entering a

stage of their lives when they have the time and the leadership knowledge we will need moving forward.

Many men and women who served this great country haven't yet received credit for the sacrifices they made and the security and prosperity our nation enjoys as a result of their courage. These disabled veterans have decades of experience under their belts. And in most cases they are more technologically savvy than the generations who have preceded them.

They have more time. They're settled in their careers and they are established in life enough to take on greater responsibilities and wise enough to step into leadership roles almost immediately. We need to harness their abilities and ensure they know what we offer and that they have a place at our table.

And for the most part we have been very fortunate to maintain our membership levels while other veterans' organizations have struggled. Our commitment to service and our credibility makes that possible. But we'll need some new faces and renewed energy within our current membership base to take charge and lead our chapters, our departments, and the national organization into the future.

Of course, we have already seen a number of our newest generation of disabled veterans join our organization. And many of them, I'm pleased to say, have taken their place among our National Service Officer corps.

As a matter of fact, I'd like to have all of our National Service Officers, both active and retired, stand and be recognized for the outstanding work that they do every single day to serve our nation's disabled veterans and their families. Ladies and gentlemen.

(Whereupon, all active and retired NSOs present stood and were recognized with a round of applause.)

ADJUTANT WILSON: Thank you all. Very well deserved. Our Transition Service Officers are also a source of pride for everything they do to help our men and women in uniform as they convert to veteran status. Our TSOs make sure that they know about their earned benefits, counseling them and filing claims at military installations throughout the country. Let's give them a round of applause for a job well done as well.

(Whereupon, all TSOs present stood and were recognized with a round of applause.)

ADJUTANT WILSON: It goes without saying that we are, of course, extremely proud of all of our Department Service Officers and Chapter Service Officers who are absolutely essential as the front line of our services to disabled veterans and their families. Please, all DSOs and CSOs, please stand and be recognized for your truly outstanding service.

(Whereupon, all Department and Chapter Service Officers present stood and were recognized with a round of applause.)

ADJUTANT WILSON: Thank you. What a great group of dedicated folks. That's why they call us the greatest service organization in the world. (Applause)

Speaking of dedication, I want to congratulate and thank all of our membership recruiters for doing such a superb job of building and maintaining DAV's strength. We know you, all of you, work very hard at letting prospective members know who and what the DAV is all about and how they could benefit from being part of our extraordinary organization. Thanks for all that you do as well. (Applause)

Now it's time to give you a brief video presentation of some of the highlights of this past year of DAV's services and advocacy. I think it's a record that we all can be very proud of. So, as they say, "let's roll the tape."

(Whereupon, a video of the Year in Review was viewed)

The DAV celebrated a significant landmark in 2010 – our 90th anniversary.

As we continue to evolve and grow to meet the needs of all our nation's disabled veterans and their families, we must all take a share of the pride we've earned through another year of unsurpassed service and advocacy.

In Atlanta, Wally Tyson was unanimously elected National Commander at one of the best attended conventions in years.

Commander Tyson joined many other celebrities and leading veterans' advocates when he participated in the formal groundbreaking ceremony last November to mark the beginning of the final phase of American Veterans Disabled for Life Memorial in Washington, D.C.

It was a very proud moment to witness the beginning of work on the memorial to honor all of our nation's disabled veterans...

One of our top priorities this year was to streamline the VA's claims processing system, so that veterans may be served quickly and correctly. DAV began working with the VA on more than three dozen pilot programs aimed at improving claims decisions.

One solid result is the fast-track system to decide Agent Orange-related claims for ischemic heart disease, leukemias and Parkinson's disease. Now in use is a computerized claims system that makes these decisions much faster.

Other pilot programs are proving to be successful – such as the disability benefits questionnaires, quick decisions on fully developed claims and rapid evaluation of claims.

Our national service staff has been a vital part in the development of these pilot programs. This spring, a DAV National Service Officer was invited to work with the VA on the development of the new Veterans Benefits Management System project.

This new system will be tested with a nationwide rollout to begin in 2012. This type of cooperation is strengthening the partnership between DAV and the VA. Utilizing the knowledge and skills of all our NSOs helps meet the needs of veterans. Many of the pilot programs are now very close to becoming standard operations in the VA.

As fall faded into winter, and then into spring, Congress was deadlocked on federal spending bills for most government agencies. A series of continuing resolutions, filled with cuts in federal spending, kept government running. But VA health care was unaffected because of DAV's successful fight for advance funding.

The Veterans Health Care Funding Reform and Transparency Act had already funded VA medical care for 2011 in the fiscal year 2010 appropriations act. This stabilized VA medical care funding when Congress failed to pass a budget.

At our Mid-Winter Conference, National Commander Tyson warned a joint meeting of the House and Senate Veterans' Affairs Committees that the DAV would not remain silent if Congress tried to balance the budget on the backs of veterans. Supported by hundreds of DAV leaders, Commander Tyson testified that DAV would be at the forefront of the battle to oppose cuts in veterans' benefits and services.

One lawmaker tested that resolve by proposing funding cuts for veteran's health care and disability compensation. That misguided plan was to freeze VA health care spending and reduce disability compensation to cut \$4.5 billion from programs and services.

Using our social networking tools, DAV launched a grassroots campaign that prompted thousands of phone calls, emails, and an engaged social networking response calling on the member to promptly reconsider. The response was so overwhelming that the proposal was quickly removed both from the lawmaker's Website and legislative consideration.

Many DAV legislative priorities were successful in the 111th Congress. The Veterans Benefit Act was approved containing dozens of bills to help disabled veterans.

The 2010 VA Conference Supporting Veterans at Home provided a wealth of information to those who care for a veteran loved one. The highlight was an emphasis on the importance of the Caregivers and Veterans Omnibus Health Services Act – an issue which was brought to the forefront by DAV. The conference in Arlington, Va., was a national training session to educate VA and related health care professionals about the initiatives of the Act.

It took the VA nearly a year to implement the program. The first draft rules of the program failed to meet the intent of Congress by limiting the number of eligible veterans. But in May, new draft rules were issued covering more veterans and VA began accepting applications almost immediately.

We were pleased that more veterans are now eligible for the caregivers program. But DAV will continue efforts to expand these benefits to all generations of veterans.

Hundreds of disabled veterans who suffered as a result of historically devastating tornadoes received the assistance of the DAV. Our corps of National Service Officers combed through devastated communities in Alabama, Missouri, North Carolina and Oklahoma to offer disaster aid. We did our utmost to provide disaster relief to eligible disabled veterans facing the new challenges of living without a home, food or clothing.

Just a few weeks ago, the DAV co-sponsored the 2011 National Training Summit on Women Veterans in Washington, D.C. This special event highlighted the unique needs of America's women veterans. Attended by about 700 women veterans from all branches and eras of military service, the Summit provided women veterans, their service providers, federal and state agencies and legislative staffs with a forum to review issues raised at the 2008 Summit and to gauge VA's progress on these issues.

This year marked the 15th anniversary of the Columbia Trust. In that time, more than 18.6 million dollars in grants have been made to augment grassroots service initiatives in communities nationwide. The Trust has surpassed our expectations in terms of the services our Departments and Chapters can offer.

Our Transportation Network grew by 107 new vans that departed National Headquarters last summer. They went on their way to VA facilities nationwide to take sick and disabled veterans to their medical appointments and return them home again. Those vans represented a combined investment of nearly \$2.7 million in Transportation Network purchases in 2010.

We expanded our rural outreach program by donating seven used Mobile Service Offices to Departments and a Chapter. The donation was made possible by the purchase of 10 brand new MSOs. Our offices on wheels have traveled nearly a million miles in the past 10 years providing veterans increased accessibility to benefits through our professional National Service Officers.

Last fall, we marked the 10th anniversary of working with Golden Corral restaurants' Military Appreciation Monday. And for the first time, contributions surpassed the million-dollar mark for the DAV. Over the last decade, Golden Corral has helped raise more than \$5 million to support local DAV service initiatives.

A grant from the GE Foundation enabled DAV to provide servicemembers at Walter Reed Army Medical Center with vital information on their rights and benefits. Our NSOs conducted a series of special outreach sessions to introduce our new generation of disabled veterans to DAV's free services. We also provided much-needed clothing, computer games, international telephone calling cards and other items thanks to the GE Foundation grant.

With our outreach communications, DAV is now a major player on social network sites like Facebook and Twitter.

Each day, the DAV is instantaneously publishing vital information about our programs and reaching out to the thousands of veterans who need our services. It's a whole new world out there, and the DAV is a prominent citizen.

The DAV was center stage at AirVenture in Oshkosh, Wisconsin last year. Called the "Super Bowl of Airshows," DAV took part in a week long "Salute to Veterans." The celebration included a parade of special veterans education forums conducted by our National Service Officers.

We honored some of the finest leaders in our history this year. One was our Washington Headquarters Executive Director David Gorman who retired after 40 years of tireless and effective service with the DAV.

A combat-disabled Vietnam combat veteran, Dave was appointed Executive Director in 1995. His responsibilities included oversight of the National Service, Legislative, and Voluntary Service Programs. He was the organization's principal spokesperson before Congress, the White House and the VA.

Dave enjoys a reputation as one of the nation's foremost experts regarding VA's complex array of services and programs designed to assist America's veterans and their families. I'd bet that every person in this room has directly benefited from David Gorman's professionalism and expertise. He has been an eloquent and skilled leader in a position that calls for both. David has given his life for DAV, and we wish him the best in his retirement.

Fortunately, the DAV remains in good hands. Washington Headquarters welcomed Barry Jesinoski as its new Executive Director this summer.

Barry, who began his DAV career in 1995 as a National Service Officer and has served our organization in numerous leadership roles throughout the country.

Formerly the DAV's HR Director, he holds the prestigious Senior Professional designation from the Human Resources Certification Institute.

We also saw the retirement of longtime National Communications Director Gary Weaver, whose contributions over 18 years helped ensure the widespread proliferation of DAV's message.

The DAV Air Show Outreach Program, DAV Day at the Ballpark, Autograph Cards for athletes and numerous other programs and achievements were possible through his leadership.

He was known also for helping the DAV spread its message through films. Nationally televised programs such as Korean War Stories, for which the DAV was awarded an Emmy by the Academy of Television Arts and Sciences were produced under his watch.

Sadly, former Inspector General Robert Gushee passed away this past winter. A Korean War era Army veteran, Bob ensured the DAV was living up to its own high standards in how we conducted our business. An attorney, the start of his DAV career found him advocating for veterans in Baltimore and at the Board of Veterans Appeals office in Washington, D.C. before being named the organization's Inspector General.

He is remembered for 21 years of service to disabled veterans and their families as an attorney and unparalleled advocate. He was a lion on behalf of our cause.

The DAV continues to evolve nine decades after our founding as we are prepare for a new century of service to this nation's disabled veterans.

Your dedication, commitment and leadership will make that possible.

Through your continued support, we will meet the needs, both old and new as we build better lives for all of our nation's disabled veterans and their families.

* * *

(Applause)

ADJUTANT WILSON: Well, I think you'll agree it has been another great year in our organization and for those that we serve. And let me just stress that none of what we have been able to accomplish would be possible without the continuous support and dedication of all of you and all of your comrades around this country, everyone throughout DAV. Thank you for all that you do.

After all the marching orders came directly from you right here at our National Conventions we've had some difficult times in the past year. Sadly, we saw the passing of Inspector General Bob Gushee, my very good friend. And you just saw a little note about that.

Bob, our Inspector General, was a strong man. He was tough when he had to be, but he was always fair. Bob's purpose was to maintain our high standards. And he recognized that if our organization was to continue to advance our cause and serve the greater good of disabled veterans we needed to hold ourselves accountable for the way that we conducted every aspect of our affairs.

He believed in what we did as an organization. He was passionate about the impact that we had on our community. And he was a true believer. He had so much care and compassion in his heart for the welfare of disabled veterans and he understood the deeper meaning behind this work. And for that he earned the highest respect and the deepest gratitude from all who benefited from his cause and his wise counsel.

I want to take this moment to thank his widow Rhonda for the support that she provided Bob which allowed him to dedicate such a vital service to our organization and our cause. (Applause) Rhonda is with us today. Rhonda, please stand.

(Whereupon, Mrs. Rhonda Gushee stood and was recognized with a round of applause.)

ADJUTANT WILSON: Thanks for being with us, Rhonda. Rest assured that Bob will always be remembered. And while the extent of his advocacy and service are nearly impossible to fully appreciate, we who benefited from his legacy will honor his name and contributions for generations to come.

Over the next few days we have a lot of important work to tackle together. We will give you some valuable information that we believe will have a lasting effect on the service, volunteer and grassroots advocacy programs that make everything possible.

I urge each of you to look closely at your Convention program and plan to attend as many seminars as you can. We want you to have a good time while you're here in the Crescent City, but we know that none of us can forget the importance of the work we'll accomplish throughout these events.

And I know you're anxious to get down to business so let me wind this up by thanking you for your attendance, your service, and the spirit that you bring to this Convention.

As I've said many times before, you are the lifeblood of our organization and the reason that we've enjoyed so many successes, particularly this past year. Together, we are building a dynamic legacy for the future. And your individual commitment to tomorrow's veterans is inspiring. Give yourselves a hand right now. Let's do it. (Applause)

Just one more thing. Well, maybe a couple of more things. (Laughter) But before I close, I'd like to recognize someone who has meant a great deal to me and the DAV personally. As you know, and you just saw reported in our Year in Review, Dave Gorman recently retired after 40 years of serving our nation's disabled veterans and their families right here in DAV.

I told him that cold day in January of 1971 when he joined our professional ranks was the beginning of a much better and more effective DAV. His work as a National Service Officer, senior member of our legislative and service teams, and the Washington Headquarters Executive Director has had a profound impact on the lives of countless disabled veterans and their families. In doing so, Dave consistently put his all into our success as an organization.

Thanks in large part to Dave's tireless efforts, veterans' health care and other programs have seen tremendous changes over the past few decades. His leadership and expertise have been instrumental in nearly every effort aimed at improving veterans' benefits and services.

Dave is widely regarded as one of the most respected leaders in the veterans' community. He will long be remembered as a warrior on behalf of disabled veterans and their families. He has fought the good fight and his victories will be enjoyed by generations to come.

And although he has moved on to a well-deserved retirement and a new chapter in his life, I know that he will always be there and be available should we need his sage advice and his

unequalled wisdom in the event of a crisis. Dave, would you please stand and be recognized for your faithful service to DAV.

(Whereupon, Mr. David Gorman stood and was recognized with a standing ovation.)

ADJUTANT WILSON: Thank you, again, Dave, for everything you have done for all this nation's disabled veterans and particularly our organization. And now I'd like to recognize our National staff for their hard work and dedication to our mission: Marc Burgess, our Executive Director and Chief Financial Officer who manages our National Headquarters in Cold Spring, Kentucky; Susan Loth of our Fund Raising Department and her staff; Tony Baskerville and everyone in the Membership Department; Dan Clare and his crew in the Communications Department; Randy Reese and the Human Resources staff; Bill Saunders and the Information Technology team; Nancy O'Brien who administers our charitable programs; Inspector General Ed Hartman and his staff; General Counsel Chris Clay; and, of course, Comptroller Anita Blum and her team who handle all of our financial matters.

And at our Washington Headquarters: Executive Director Barry Jesinoski and his team; Garry Augustine and the National Service Department staff; and Joe Violante and his team in our National Legislative Department. (Applause) I'm with you.

I also want to offer my sincere thanks to all of our support staffs at our Headquarters and our offices all around the country. Of course, my personal thanks and gratitude to two people who manage to keep things running smoothly, our Executive Secretaries Sally Miller and Amberly Jackson. (Applause)

With your support and dedication your National staff is able to carry forward our banner to accomplish the organization's goals and objectives.

I also want to thank the Auxiliary for all the support that they give to DAV. And from our volunteer programs to our legislative grassroots efforts and in their communities all across the country the Auxiliary is always there for our disabled veterans and their families.

So I say thanks to Auxiliary National Commander Susan Henry and National Adjutant Judy Hezlep. Thank you again for your leadership and your dedication.

And, finally, I want to offer a salute to the brave men and women in our armed forces whose service and sacrifice have kept our nation free and secure. (Applause)

One final thank you goes to your National Commander Wally Tyson. Wally, we've traveled around the world together this past year. You've provided unparalleled leadership, wisdom, consideration and understanding of what we do. Your commitment to leadership excels beyond what is describable. You've had a great year and you stand among the best that's ever served our organization. Thank you, sir.

COMMANDER TYSON: Thank you. (Applause)

ADJUTANT WILSON: Commander, that completes my report. And I thank you for the privilege, all of you, for serving you and this tremendous organization. And I know we will have a great convention. May God bless all of you. May God bless the DAV. And may God bless the men and women who are serving in harm's way. Thank you. (Applause)

COMMANDER TYSON: Thank you, Art. The Chair will entertain a motion to accept the National Adjutant's report. Mic 2.

UNIDENTIFIED DELEGATE: (Undistinguishable) State of Massachusetts, Commander, at this time I am honored and privileged to make a motion to accept the report by Art Wilson, a native son of Massachusetts. Thank you.

COMMANDER TYSON: Thank you. (Applause) May I have a second? Mic 2.

MR. ALBERT LINDEN: Mic 2. Al Linden, Delegate, Gator 90, Florida, home of Art Wilson's home Chapter, seconds the motion, for an outstanding report.

COMMANDER TYSON: Thank you, Al. (Applause) All those in favor signify by saying aye; anybody want to oppose? (Laughter) So ordered.

Now is the time to hear from the National Membership Chairman with his report on the status of the DAV membership. I call on the National Membership Director, Mr. Tony Baskerville. Tony. (Applause)

MEMBERSHIP DIRECTOR ANTHONY "TONY" BASKERVILLE: Thank you. National Commander Tyson, National Officers, distinguished guests, delegates to the 90th National Convention for the Disabled American Veterans, our history demonstrates that since the end of the First World War men and women leaving the military, whether due to disability, retirement, or career change, stepped into a world lacking in programs to accommodate their needs and the needs of their families and survivors.

This painful fact spawned the demonstration of the Bonus Army. It has solidified veterans of every era. Our sense of duty to our community is the soil on which DAV was planted and remains a motivating reason for membership.

The DAV's legislative programs are funded through membership dollars. And it takes a strong and active membership base to ensure our success in Washington, D.C., and in our communities throughout this land.

We have seen multiple generations of veterans making their mark upon our great cause. Each has built upon the legacy we enjoy today. But never in our history has our need for a united membership been more apparent than it is today.

As our brave young men and women are engaging in multiple combat tours in two wars they represent a small percentage of our population that carries the heavy burden in terms of our nation's defense.

Meanwhile, in the past five years the DAV has experienced the passing of more than 180,000 of our comrades. This past year we saw 41,379 members pass into that great beyond, and we can sadly project a loss of 3,000 members per month as we move forward.

This comes at a time when the DAV must look to increase in size and proportionately maintain our representation with the nation's growth population. To honor the contributions of those who have passed, we must remain steady and push forward.

We are fortunate to have maintained our numbers thus far. I believe the foundation of our success is rooted in our commitment to service as an organization. Our National Service Officers and excellent recruiters, through their diligent work, have done an amazing job for communicating the value of membership and the – and augmenting our ranks with new veterans.

But the need remains, and now is the time for each of us to recommit our efforts to recruiting, retaining and engaging veterans and their families in our communities.

Commander Tyson, I am pleased for the opportunity to report that we exceeded our 2010-2011 membership year goal by 2,867 life members. (Applause) Some 34 Departments exceeded their goals by at least 3,349 additional life members, with 907 Chapters either meeting or surpassing their annual goals.

I'm equally pleased to report that our National Service Officers and Transitional Service Officers, under the guidance of National Service Director Garry Augustine and his incredible staff, once again demonstrated the importance of just asking the question, "Would you like to join?"

Our NSOs recruited 6,469 part life and 5,586 full life members for a total of 12,055 new members in addition to 547 DAV Auxiliary members. (Applause) TSOs were able to recruit 223 part and 103 full life members for a total of 326 new members.

Later this week we will recognize our NSOs for their achievement in membership recruitment. As with all our recruiters, there are those who excel over and above and deserve all of our recognition.

I am pleased to announce the names of 24 NSOs who recruited 100 or more new members. If you are in the hall and you hear your name, please stand and we will recognize you all at the end.

Your top NSO recruiter for 2010-2011 with a total of 351 new members is Nicholas Bernardi from the State of New Jersey. (Applause) Also noteworthy are the accomplishments of some of his colleagues around the nation.

John Rodriguez of Chicago brought in 267 new members. (Applause) Tony Craig, Indianapolis, recruited 178 new members. And the list goes on: Clay Saucier, Columbia South Carolina, 178 members; Lamarr Couser from Baltimore, 164 members; Bryan Kerouac from South Carolina, 152 members; Justin Hart, Newington, Connecticut, 136 members; Richard Vaccari, Providence, Rhode Island, 134 members; Robert Anderson, Bay Pine, Florida, 134 members; Eric Emmerik, South Dakota, 126 members; Andrew Edwards of the state of – from Saint Louis, 122 members; Bill Gibney, New York, 122 members; Jon Price, Denver, Colorado, 120 members; Denise DeBlois, New Hampshire, 117 members; Timothy Grossman, Philadelphia, 115 members; Judy from Phoenix, 114 members; Colleen Sullivan from Newington, Connecticut, 109 members; Linda Mingo from Columbia – Columbus – from South Carolina, (Laughter), 108 members; Andrew Smith, West Palm Beach, 102; Darrell McKinney, Togus, Maine, 101; Michael Mills, New York City, 102; Daniel from Salt Lake, 102; Jacob Drost from Cleveland, 101; and Don Reed from Salt Lake City, 101. Let's give all of these National Service Officers a round for their hard work and their dedication. (Applause)

Commander Tyson, congratulations to you for such a successful membership year and to those NSOs and TSOs and hardworking members throughout this organization that helped bring our 2010-2011 total membership to 1,221,994 members. (Applause)

With that, Commander, would you please join me as we present to our delegates and guests DAV's 2010-2011 Membership Recruitment Award winners.

(Whereupon, Commander Tyson joined Membership Director Baskerville at the podium.)

MEMBERSHIP DIRECTOR BASKERVILLE: From the Tar Heel State, please welcome Larry Farmer who is representing Ron Holtberg as your Recruiter of the Year. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the Recruiter of the Year award was presented to Larry Farmer on behalf of Ronald Holtberg.)

MEMBERSHIP DIRECTOR BASKERVILLE: Ron recruited 252 new members to overtake Delbert Musgrave of Texas who had an impressive 190 members to his credit; Prospero Sodano from New York who gained 167 members for his Department; Sheila Sanders, last year's winner, who gained 128 members; and Michael Granger from the Department of Massachusetts who brought in 117 members. Ron's not here but will you tell Ron we really appreciate all the effort that he has made for us. Thank you.

MR. LARRY FARMER: Thank you.

MEMBERSHIP DIRECTOR BASKERVILLE: In the Division race for the coveted title of Department Commander of the Year, from Division I, Departments with more than 35,000 members, please join me in welcoming Past Department Commander Michael Steinbaugh from the great State of California. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the Division I award was presented to Past Department Commander Michael Steinbaugh.)

MEMBERSHIP DIRECTOR BASKERVILLE: From Division II, Departments with 18,000 to 34,999 members, please welcome David Valtinson who is representing Alfred L. Holtan from Minnesota. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the Division II award was presented to David Valtinson on behalf of Alfred L. Holtan.)

MEMBERSHIP DIRECTOR BASKERVILLE: From Division III, Departments with 10,000 to 17,999, please welcome Herman Evans who is standing in for Silas J. Dawson from South Carolina. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the Division III award was presented to Herman Evans on behalf of Silas J. Dawson.)

MEMBERSHIP DIRECTOR BASKERVILLE: From Division IV, Departments with 5,000 to 9,999 members, please welcome Department Commander Thomas E. Mullalley from Nevada. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the Division IV award was presented to Department Commander Thomas E. Mullalley.)

MEMBERSHIP DIRECTOR BASKERVILLE: And, from Division V, Departments with less than 5,000 members, the award is presented to Past Department Commander H.G. Krosschell from South Dakota. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the Division V award was presented to Past Department Commander H.G. Krosschell.)

MEMBERSHIP DIRECTOR BASKERVILLE: The General Jonathon M. Wainwright Award is presented to the Department whose members recruited the highest number of eligible veterans, part and full paid.

This year the award is once again presented to the Department of Texas (Applause) which added 1,721 new and part life members. To receive that award is Ken Hackney Commander from the Department of Texas. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the Jonathan M. Wainwright Award was presented to the Department of Texas.)

MEMBERSHIP DIRECTOR BASKERVILLE: The Judge Robert S. Marx Award is awarded to the Department with the highest percentage increase in life membership over goal. With a 103.59 percent increase, this year's award is again presented to the Department of South Dakota. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the Judge Robert S. Marx Award was presented to the Department of South Dakota.)

MEMBERSHIP DIRECTOR BASKERVILLE: Minnesota is still bleeding over that one. (Laughter) Each year three recruiters and three National Service Officers who recruited 100 or more new members during the membership year are randomly selected and given an opportunity to choose from some great prizes.

This year's lucky winners were Delbert Musgrove of Texas; Michael Granger from Massachusetts; George Antee from Louisiana; NSO Clay Saucier from South Carolina; NSO

Bryan Kerouac from South Carolina; and Eric Emmerick from South Dakota. Congratulations to all of you and to all of our award recipients.

Thanks to all of you who signed at least one new member. Your unselfish loyalty and dedication to our organization guarantees our long and stellar history of building better lives for disabled veterans and their families will be prevalent in the coming years.

In closing I want to repeat a mantra I've repeated for years: You never know who will join unless you ask. I encourage each of you here and all of your members to try to bring in a minimum of at least one new member to join our cause. It's one way you can shore up our mission of advocacy and comradeship for all who have served and sacrificed.

Commander Tyson, this concludes my report on the National Membership Department. And thank you.

COMMANDER TYSON: Thank you, Tony, for that excellent report. I'll entertain a motion to accept Mr. Baskerville's report. Mic 2.

MR. ROBERT BRANDT: Thank you, Commander. Bob Brandt, Commander, Department of Oklahoma, District 21, so moved.

COMMANDER TYSON: Mic 1. Mic 1.

MR. JOHN HOWELL: Commander, John Howell, from West Palm Beach, second the motion.

COMMANDER TYSON: Thank you, sir. All those in favor signify by saying aye; opposed. So ordered.

At this time I'd like to entertain a motion that the list of delegates and alternates selected by the 21 National Districts and the National Blind Veterans Chapter to serve on Convention Committees be admitted into the record of the proceedings of this Convention. May I have a motion, please. Mic 1.

ANNUAL REPORT OF
ANTHONY L. BASKERVILLE
NATIONAL MEMBERSHIP DIRECTOR
to the Disabled American Veterans
90th NATIONAL CONVENTION
NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA
August 6-9, 2011

NATIONAL COMMANDER WALLACE E. TYSON, NATIONAL OFFICERS, DISTINGUISHED GUESTS, AND DELEGATES TO THE 90TH NATIONAL CONVENTION OF THE DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS:

Our history demonstrates that since the end of the First World War, men and women leaving the military, whether due to disability, retirement, or career change, stepped into a world lacking in programs to accommodate their needs and the needs of their families and survivors.

This painful fact spawned the demonstrations of the Bonus Army and has solidified veterans of every era. Our sense of duty to our community is the soil on which the DAV was planted and remains the motivating reason for membership. The DAV's Legislative Programs are funded through membership dollars, and it takes a strong and active membership base to ensure our success in Washington, D.C. and in our communities throughout this land.

We have seen multiple generations of veterans make their mark upon our great cause. Each has built upon the legacy we enjoy today. But never in our history has our need for a united membership been more apparent than it is today. As our brave young men and women are engaged in multiple combat tours in two wars, they represent a small percentage of our population that carries a heavy burden in terms of our national defense.

Meanwhile, in the past five years the DAV has experienced the passing of more than 180,000 of our comrades. This past year we saw 41,379 members pass into the great beyond, and we sadly can project a loss of 3,000 members per month.

This comes at a time when the DAV must look to increase in size to proportionately maintain our representation with the nation's growing population. To honor the contributions of those who've passed, we must make a steady push forward.

We are fortunate to have maintained our numbers thus far. I believe the foundation of our success is rooted in our commitment to service as an organization. Our National Service Officers and excellent recruiters, through their diligent work, have done an amazing job of communicating the value of membership and augmenting our ranks with new veterans.

But the need remains, and now is a time for each of us to recommit our efforts on recruiting, retaining and engaging veterans and their families in our communities.

Commander Tyson, I'm pleased for the opportunity to report that we exceeded our 2010-2011 membership year goals by 2,867 life members. Some 34 Departments exceeded their goals by at least 3,349 additional life members, with 907 Chapters either meeting or surpassing their annual goals.

I'm equally pleased to report that our National Service Officers and Transition Service Officers, under the guidance of National Service Director Garry Augustine and his incredible staff, once again demonstrated the importance of just asking the question: "Would you like to join?"

Our NSOs recruited 6,469 partial life and 5,586 full life members for a total of 12,055 new members in addition to 547 DAV Auxiliary members. TSOs were able to recruit 223 part and 103 full life members for a total of 326 new members.

Later this week we will recognize our NSOs for their achievements in membership recruitment. As with all of our recruiters there are those who excel over others and deserve our recognition. I'm pleased to announce the names to 25 NSOs who recruited 100 or more new members. When you hear your name announced please stand and be recognized.

Your top NSO recruiter for 2010/2011, with a total of 351 new members, is Nicholas Bernardi, from Newark, New Jersey.

Also noteworthy are the accomplishments of some of his colleagues around the nation.

John Rodriguez of Chicago brought in 267. Tony Craig of Indianapolis recruited 178 members. The list goes on:

Clay Saucier, Columbia, South Carolina – 178
Lamarr Couser, Baltimore – 164
Bryan Kerouac, Columbia, South Carolina – 152
Justin Hart, Newington, Connecticut – 136
Richard Vaccari, Providence, Rhode Island – 134
Robert Anderson, Bay Pine, Florida – 134
Eric Van Emmerik, Sioux Falls, South Dakota – 126
Andrew Edwards, St. Louis – 122
William Gibney, Albany, New York – 122
Jon Price, Denver – 120
Denise DeBlois, Manchester, New Hampshire – 117
Timothy Grossman, Philadelphia – 115
Judy Orosco, Phoenix – 114
Colleen Sullivan, Newington, Connecticut – 109
Linda Mingo, Columbia – 108
Andrew Smith, West Palm Beach, Florida – 102
Darrell Brandon McKinney, Togus, Maine – 101
Michael Mills, New York City – 102
Daniel Rioux, Salt Lake City – 102
Jacob Drost, Cleveland – 101
And Donald Reed of Salt Lake City with 101 members.
Thanks to each of you for a job well done.

Commander Tyson, congratulations to you for such a successful membership year, and to those NSOs, TSOs, and hardworking members throughout this organization that helped bring our 2010/2011 total membership to 1,221,994.

Commander, please join me as we present to our delegates and guests DAV's 2010/2011 Membership Recruitment award winners:

From the Tar Heel State of North Carolina, please welcome the 2010/2011 Recruiter of the Year: Ronald Holtberg. Ron recruited 252 new members to overtake Delbert Musgrave of Texas, who had an impressive 190 members to his credit; Prospero Sodano of New York, who gained 167 members to his department; Sheila Sanders of Florida, who signed up 128; Michael Granger, of the Department of Massachusetts who brought in 117; and Karl Pfahler, South Carolina, who brought in 116 members. Please, let's give each of them a hand for their hard work and dedication.

In the Division race for the coveted title of Department Commander of the Year:

From Division I—Departments with more than 35,000 members, please join me in welcoming Past Department Commander Michael Steinbaugh of California; From Division II—Departments with 18,000 to 34,999 members, please welcome Past Department Commander Alfred L. Holtan of Minnesota; From Division III—Departments with 10,000 to 17,999 members, please welcome Past Department Commander Silas J. Dawson of South Carolina; From Division IV—Departments with 5,000 to 9,999 members, please welcome Past Department Commander

Thomas E. Mullalley of Nevada; And, from Division V—Departments with less than 5,000 members, the award is presented to Past Department Commander H.G. Krosschell of South Dakota.

The General Jonathan M. Wainwright Award is presented to the Department whose members recruited the highest number of eligible veterans, part and fully paid. This year the award is once again presented to the Department of Texas, which added 1,721 new part and fully paid members to their ranks.

The Judge Robert S. Marx Award is awarded to the Department with the highest percentage increase of Life members over goal. With a 103.59 percent increase, the year's award is presented to the Department of South Dakota.

Each year, three recruiters and three National Service Officers who've recruited 100 or more new members during the membership year are randomly selected and given the opportunity to choose some great prizes. This year lucky winners are:

Delbert Musgrave, Texas

Michael Granger, Massachusetts

George Antee, Louisiana

NSO Clay Saucier, South Carolina

NSO Bryan Kerouac, South Carolina

And NSO Eric Van Emmerik, South Dakota

Congratulations to all of you, and to all of our award recipients. Thanks to all of you who've signed at least one new member, your unselfish loyalty and dedication to our organization guarantees our long and stellar history of Building Better Lives will be prevalent in the coming year.

In closing, I want to repeat a mantra I've repeated for years: You never know who is willing to join unless you ask.

I encourage each of you here and all of your members to try and bring in, at a minimum, one new member to join our cause. It's one way you can shore up our mission of advocacy and comradeship for all who've served and sacrificed.

Commander Tyson, this concludes my report on the National Membership Department, thank you!

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MR. PAQUETTE: Roland Paquette, Chapter 20, Texas, makes the motion.

COMMANDER TYSON: Thank you, sir. Mic 1.

MR. ERNEST GOLAND: Mic 1. Ernest Goland, Chapter 4, I second the motion.

COMMANDER TYSON: Thank you. All those in favor signify by saying aye; opposed. So ordered.

I will now ask the National Adjutant to read the names of the Convention Committee Advisors that I have appointed and who received the approval of the National Executive Committee at its most recent meeting.

ADJUTANT WILSON: The Committee Advisors are Committee on Credentials, Michael Dobmeier and Anthony Baskerville; Committee on General Resolutions and Membership, Adrian Atizado and Chad Moos; Committee on Legislation and Veterans Rights, Joseph Violante and Jeff Hall; Committee on Constitution and Bylaws, Bradley Barton and Edward Hartman; Committee on Finance, Rodney Tucker and J. Marc Burgess; Committee on Employment, Harold Hicks and John Wilson; Committee on Hospital and Voluntary Services, Lee Ewing, Joy Ilem and Michael Walsh; Committee on Nomination of National Officers, Gene Murphy and Richard Marbes.

**2010 NATIONAL CONVENTION
New Orleans, Louisiana**

COMMITTEE ON CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS

DISTRICT	NAME (DISTRICT & ALTERNATE)	CHAPTER NO. & STATE
01 (Alt)	Kenneth J. Kooyman Vincent P. Reed Jr	MASSACHUSETTS 057 MASSACHUSETTS 025
02 (Alt)	D Dennis L. Krulder Richard T. Robinson	NEW YORK 125 NEW YORK 015
03 (Alt)	Denise M. DeBlois George W. Mathis	NEW HAMPSHIRE 019 MAINE 06
04 (Alt)	Paul D. Cobb John J. Grone	NEW JERSEY 067 NEW JERSEY 044
05 (Alt)	Raymond Greene Samuel Blow Jr	PENNSYLVANIA 07 PENNSYLVANIA 015
06 (Alt)	Alejandro D. Murphy Lugo	PUERTO RICO 07
07 (Alt)	Richard L. Tolfá Faye W. Patin	FLORIDA 084 FLORIDA 01
08 (Alt)	Carl L. Bailey Raymond M Arsement	ALABAMA 045 LOUISIANA 017
09 (Alt)	Wanda D. Autrey Charles W. Ryder	NORTH CAROLINA 020 NORTH CAROLINA 020
10 (Alt)	J Dave Boozer Kwan Cortez Tillman	MICHIGAN LENAWEE 020 MICHIGAN 119
11 (Alt)	Robert H. Bertschy James M. Bailey	OHIO 047 OHIO 117
12 (Alt)	Johnnie Baylark Jr John J. Honaker	ILLINOIS 06 WISCONSIN 03
13 (Alt)	Michael A. Whelihan Gregory C. Reed	INDIANA 052 INDIANA 03
14 (Alt)	Scott D. Berndt Kevin R. Grantier	MINNESOTA 039 MONTANA 03
15 (Alt)	James A. Shuey Edward D Bennett	NEBRASKA 07 IOWA 04
16 (Alt)	Michael R. Steinbaugh Richard A. Valdez	CALIFORNIA 07 CALIFORNIA 012
17 (Alt)	James Emerson Jr Jon C. Price Jr	COLORADO 07 COLORADO 021
18 (Alt)	Martin Anderson Bill G Dolan	HAWAII MAUI 02 NEVADA PAHRUMP 015
19 (Alt)	Bradley S. Barton Robert E. Lougee	OREGON PORTLAND 01 OREGON PORTLAND 01
20 (Alt)	Hilton J. Ferguson III Gilbert Lopez	TEXAS 014 TEXAS 114
21 (Alt)	Charles D. Stake Thomas A Campbell	ARKANSAS 057 OKLAHOMA 088
BLIND VETS (Alt)	Joseph F. Wallace William G Burgess	BLIND VETERANS NATL 01 BLIND VETERANS NATL 01

Advisors: Bradley Barton - Edward Hartman

**2010 NATIONAL CONVENTION
New Orleans, Louisiana**

COMMITTEE ON CREDENTIALS

DISTRICT	NAME (DISTRICT & ALTERNATE)	CHAPTER NO. & STATE
01	Marion B Heckel	MASSACHUSETTS #37
(Alt)	Cynthia M. Blais	MASSACHUSETTS #4
02	Donald Day	NEW YORK #28
(Alt)	William F. Gibney	NEW YORK #38
03	Benjamin F. Saxon	NEW HAMPSHIRE #19
(Alt)	Denis B. Backus	VERMONT #3
04	Charles J Picaroni	DELAWARE #1
(Alt)	Abraham J. Velez	DELAWARE #1
05	Kevin D. Noel	PENNSYLVANIA #8
(Alt)	Philip G. Arnold	PENNSYLVANIA #81
06	Raymond A. Chatary	MARYLAND #7
(Alt)	Margaret L. Steele	VIRGINIA #41
07	Lawrence DeAngelo	FLORIDA #94
(Alt)	John E. Howell	FLORIDA #42
08	Dennis R. Bell	LOUISIANA #30
(Alt)	Victor S. Lee	MISSISSIPPI #59
09	Algernon B. Hill	NORTH CAROLINA #1
(Alt)	Cleveland Bryant	NORTH CAROLINA #1
10	Rebecca A. Mott	MICHIGAN #61
(Alt)	Aylor Roger Gallagher	MICHIGAN #7
11	Dennis F. Hanneman	OHIO #77
(Alt)	Roger L Clark	OHIO #103
12	Robert J. Arens Jr	ILLINOIS #36
(Alt)	Roger F. Dorman	WISCONSIN #60
13	Duane M. Carr	INDIANA #3
(Alt)	Fred L. Battle	KENTUCKY #6
14	Warren J. Tobin	NORTH DAKOTA #31
(Alt)	Edward S. Sandau	SOUTH DAKOTA #1
15	Michael M. Dreiling	KANSAS #18
(Alt)	Kathleen M. Schultze	MISSOURI #1
16	James E. Guglielmoni	CALIFORNIA #144
(Alt)	Rich A N Jackson	CALIFORNIA #7
17	Terry D. Schow	UTAH #4
(Alt)	Ronald Justin Marble	COLORADO #16
18	Johnny N. Stewart	ARIZONA #2
(Alt)	Joel P Parker	ARIZONA #1
19	Francis P. Reding	WASHINGTON #6
(Alt)	Harold E. Wiley	WASHINGTON #46
20	John E. Hill	TEXAS #20
(Alt)	Ray Manning	TEXAS #17
21	Jerletta M. Halford	OKLAHOMA #9
(Alt)	Bennie L. Miles	OKLAHOMA #56
BLIND VETS	Paul W Kaminsky Sr	BLIND VETERANS NATL #1

Advisors: Mark M. Aaron - Michael E. Dobmeier - Anthony Baskerville

**2010 NATIONAL CONVENTION
New Orleans, Louisiana**

COMMITTEE ON EMPLOYMENT

DISTRICT	NAME (DISTRICT & ALTERNATE)	CHAPTER NO. & STATE
01	John V. Hogan	MASSACHUSETTS #13
(Alt)	Anita M. Reed	MASSACHUSETTS #25
02	Keith A. Robinson	NEW YORK #15
(Alt)	Popeye C G Whittingham	NEW YORK #23
03	Russell S. Manchester Jr	NEW HAMPSHIRE #1
(Alt)	Fred Adams	RHODE ISLAND #9
04	Timothy J. Kelly	CONNECTICUT #19
(Alt)	Justin B Hart	CONNECTICUT #47
05	Jeffrey S Petherbridge	PENNSYLVANIA #25
(Alt)	Vincent P. Darcangelo	PENNSYLVANIA #55
6	Richard E. Price	DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA #1
(Alt)	Robert Ray Boles USN Ret.	MARYLAND #26
7	Louis F. Reyes	FLORIDA #11
(Alt)	Frank A. Plescia	FLORIDA #42
8	Charles D Richmond	ALABAMA #28
(Alt)	Raybon L. Windham	MISSISSIPPI #11
9	John L. Finger Jr	NORTH CAROLINA #74
(Alt)	Jasper E Horne	NORTH CAROLINA #20
10	Douglas K Wells Jr	MICHIGAN #113
(Alt)	Robert C. Champine	MICHIGAN #130
11	Raymond Kershaw	OHIO #20
(Alt)	William R. Caine	OHIO #116
12	John L. Fredrickson	WISCONSIN #52
(Alt)	James R Mc Dermott	ILLINOIS #28
13	Timothy Wayne Duke Ret.	KENTUCKY #89
(Alt)	Joseph D. Weatherford	KENTUCKY #6
14	Richard S. Krajewski	NORTH DAKOTA #2
(Alt)	Cynthia L. Haberer	SOUTH DAKOTA #1
15	Terry Wayne Young	KANSAS #27
(Alt)	Kenneth G. Swann	MISSOURI #51
16	Kirk H. Johnson	CALIFORNIA #85
(Alt)	Barton K. Armelin	CALIFORNIA #23
17	Terry D. Schow	UTAH #4
(Alt)	Stevan L. Duke	UTAH #7
18	John Burden	ARIZONA
(Alt)	Kenneth Ginnery	ARIZONA #1
19	Thomas E Turner	OREGON #25
(Alt)	Robert L. Bigness	IDAHO #22
20	Robert Meaney	TEXAS #194
(Alt)	Timothy W Lindsey	TEXAS #20
21	Gregory A Dubin	OKLAHOMA #88
(Alt)	Donald R. Kaczynski	ARKANSAS #5

Advisors: John L Wilson - Harold J Hicks

**2010 NATIONAL CONVENTION
New Orleans, Louisiana**

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE AND DUES

DISTRICT	NAME (DISTRICT & ALTERNATE)	CHAPTER NO. & STATE
01	James F. Follis	MASSACHUSETTS #85
(Alt)	John J. Beadle	MASSACHUSETTS #56
02	Frank J. Cassella	NEW YORK #82
(Alt)	David H. Wilson	NEW YORK #82
03	Richard J. Vaccari	RHODE ISLAND #9
(Alt)	James R Laverdiere	MAINE #1
04	Albert E. Church II	CONNECTICUT #5
(Alt)	James W. Clynch	CONNECTICUT #12
05	Carmen A. DeSanti	PENNSYLVANIA #21
(Alt)	Robert C. Bartlow	PENNSYLVANIA #102
06	Dennis C. Hurley	WEST VIRGINIA #56
(Alt)	Curtis P. Holt	DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA #3
07	Fred R Bristol	FLORIDA #90
(Alt)	John E. Markiewicz	FLORIDA #1
08	Richard E. Patterson	ALABAMA #45
(Alt)	Kevin A. Wenthe	LOUISIANA #20
09	Bobby J. Huggins	GEORGIA #55
(Alt)	Willie Davis Jr	GEORGIA #18
10	David C. Martin	MICHIGAN #7
(Alt)	Ricky L. Barenbrugge	MICHIGAN #19
11	Will L. Davis	OHIO #144
(Alt)	David C. Uetterling	OHIO #36
12	Allen J. Anderson	WISCONSIN #52
(Alt)	Louis Vargas	ILLINOIS #103
13	John E. Peterson	INDIANA #15
(Alt)	William T. Caywood	INDIANA #60
14	Van D Karg	MINNESOTA #37
(Alt)	Kimberley J Callahan	MINNESOTA #18
15	Ronald J. Carr	MISSOURI #11
(Alt)	Ronald C. Hansen	NEBRASKA #2
16	Michael A. O'Brien USA Ret.	CALIFORNIA #85
(Alt)	Bryan A. Smith Jr	CALIFORNIA #144
17	Erin P Straub	COLORADO #5
(Alt)	Wendy K Smith	NEW MEXICO #32
18	Leroy B. Talmon	NEVADA #12
(Alt)	Archie Brito Jr	HAWAII #2
19	Brigitte G. Marker	OREGON #12
(Alt)	Saranna R. Hack	ALASKA #2
20	Robert C. Douglass	TEXAS #9
(Alt)	Harold C. Moreland	TEXAS #17
21	Richard T. Egan	ARKANSAS #7
(Alt)	Timothy D. Hedgecock	OKLAHOMA #56

Advisors: Rodney S. Tucker - John Marc Burgess

**2010 NATIONAL CONVENTION
New Orleans, Louisiana**

COMMITTEE ON RESOLUTIONS AND MEMBERSHIP

DISTRICTNAME (DISTRICT & ALTERNATE)		CHAPTER NO. & STATE
01	James H. Tanner	MASSACHUSETTS #10
(Alt)	Richard P. Langevin	MASSACHUSETTS #4
02	Thomas B. Reiter II	NEW YORK #38
(Alt)	Paul A. Morales	NEW YORK #28
03	Winston Dowland	VERMONT #22
(Alt)	Robert Arthur Pixley USA Ret.	VERMONT #15
04	John J. Malone	NEW JERSEY #81
(Alt)	Gerard M. Mulligan	NEW JERSEY #24
05	Bryan J. Held	PENNSYLVANIA #8
(Alt)	Timothy J Grossman	PENNSYLVANIA #25
06	Michael K. Dawson	WEST VIRGINIA #26
(Alt)	Robert Lee Wilcoxon USMC Ret.	MARYLAND #26
07	Bradley A. Bouters	FLORIDA #16
(Alt)	Gilbert G. Brown	FLORIDA #84
08	Edward L Gary	LOUISIANA #17
(Alt)	Wiley G. Strahan	MISSISSIPPI #56
09	Glenn D. Martin	GEORGIA #6
(Alt)	Burl Jimmerson	GEORGIA #33
10	Joseph M. Connelly	MICHIGAN #114
(Alt)	Robert Blevins	MICHIGAN #26
11	Herman Wesley Morton	OHIO #1
(Alt)	David T. May	OHIO #50
12	Kevin C. Johnson	WISCONSIN #3
(Alt)	Mark M. Aaron	ILLINOIS #1
13	Gary L. Rice USA Ret.	KENTUCKY #3
(Alt)	Robert Gregory Belak	KENTUCKY #89
14	David P. Valtinson	MINNESOTA #13
(Alt)	Michael E. Dobmeier	NORTH DAKOTA #2
15	Robert C. Willey	IOWA #6
(Alt)	Franklin C. Bergquist	KANSAS #4
16	Mariana M Raba	CALIFORNIA #6
(Alt)	Albert Cosey Jr	CALIFORNIA #35
17	Gary A. Lucus	WYOMING #11
18	Richard Didi Walker USAF Ret.	NEVADA #12
(Alt)	Joe A. Richardson USAF Ret.	NEVADA #12
19	Sarah J Royse	OREGON #11
(Alt)	Brian L. Alspach	IDAHO #22
20	Jose J Garcia	TEXAS #114
(Alt)	Bettie J. Vaughan	TEXAS #128
21	Jerry L. Borland	ARKANSAS #7
(Alt)	Paulino Acosta Jr	ARKANSAS #7
BLIND VETS	Junior R Farley	BLIND VETERANS NATL #1

Advisors: Chad Moos - Adrian M. Atizado

**2010 NATIONAL CONVENTION
New Orleans, Louisiana**

COMMITTEE ON HOSPITAL AND VOLUNTARY SERVICES

DISTRICT	NAME (DISTRICT & ALTERNATE)	CHAPTER NO. & STATE
01	William J. Patterson	MASSACHUSETTS #3
(Alt)	David F. Epps	MASSACHUSETTS #88
02	Chester Wisnesky Jr	NEW YORK #182
(Alt)	Leo Ortiz	NEW YORK #212
03	Raymond W Boucher	NEW HAMPSHIRE #1
(Alt)	Robert A. Nicodemus	VERMONT #3
04	Harry R. Newell Jr	CONNECTICUT #47
(Alt)	Spyros Spyropoulos	NEW JERSEY #44
05	Samuel Blow Jr	PENNSYLVANIA #15
(Alt)	Ronald V Boyden	PENNSYLVANIA #53
06	Mary H. Beamer	VIRGINIA #2
(Alt)	Samuel Paneto	PUERTO RICO #16
07	Salvator E. Uccello	FLORIDA #42
(Alt)	Joseph K. Jakuboski	FLORIDA #42
08	Jeffery R Lee	LOUISIANA
(Alt)	James Strzalkowski	MISSISSIPPI #5
09	William A Robinson	SOUTH CAROLINA #1
(Alt)	Boyd E. Fulmer	SOUTH CAROLINA #13
10	Stacey June Plunkett	MICHIGAN #4
(Alt)	Melissa A Peddle	MICHIGAN #129
11	Reynolds L. Robertson II	OHIO #63
(Alt)	Edward A Savel	OHIO #2
12	Charles Vandenplas	WISCONSIN #53
(Alt)	Dennis W. Thompson	ILLINOIS #103
13	Lee S. Ewing	KENTUCKY #89
(Alt)	Steven D. Girdler	KENTUCKY #19
14	Lacey M Engebretson	SOUTH DAKOTA #1
(Alt)	Eric J Van Emmerik	SOUTH DAKOTA #1
15	Jon E. Wille	IOWA #20
(Alt)	James E. Price	KANSAS #11
16	Eldra Jackson	CALIFORNIA #6
(Alt)	Sedgwick A Willingham USMC Ret.	CALIFORNIA #2
17	Donald Geist	COLORADO #7
(Alt)	Richard W. Morgan	COLORADO #7
18	Katherine A Baran	NEVADA #7
(Alt)	Joseph S. Penn USA Ret.	HAWAII #1
19	Wanda Stephanie Janus	OREGON #1
(Alt)	Salina B Norton	OREGON #1
20	Carolyn Ann Mitchell	TEXAS #5
(Alt)	Edgar H. Meiser	TEXAS #47
21	James L Scott	ARKANSAS #46
(Alt)	Frank S Alterman	ARKANSAS #7
BLIND VETS	James A. Hogan	BLIND VETERANS NATL #1

Advisors: Joy Jessica Ilem - Michael J. Walsh

**2010 NATIONAL CONVENTION
New Orleans, Louisiana**

COMMITTEE ON LEGISLATION AND VETERANS RIGHTS

DISTRICT	NAME (DISTRICT & ALTERNATE)	CHAPTER NO. & STATE
01	Emma J Sanders	MASSACHUSETTS #3
(Alt)	David M Fitzgerald	MASSACHUSETTS
02	William Novak Jr	NEW YORK #212
(Alt)	Howard Hazzard Brittain III	NEW YORK #135
03	Richard W. Schatz	RHODE ISLAND # 12
(Alt)	Shawn A. Jernigan	MAINE #6
04	Stephen Smith Jr	NEW JERSEY #27
(Alt)	John S. Carbone	CONNECTICUT #5
05	Robert F. Cudworth	PENNSYLVANIA #1
(Alt)	Jeffrey S Petherbridge	PENNSYLVANIA #25
06	Javish Nieves	PUERTO RICO #5
(Alt)	Calvin B. Cabarrus	WEST VIRGINIA #2
07	Albert H. Linden Jr	FLORIDA #90
(Alt)	Luz M. Ruiz	FLORIDA #86
08	David W Riley	ALABAMA #7
(Alt)	William J. Baker	ALABAMA #9
09	Ernest H. Stroud USAF Ret.	SOUTH CAROLINA #14
(Alt)	Christopher M. Maddox	SOUTH CAROLINA #13
10	Thomas E. Wendel	MICHIGAN #102
(Alt)	Todd M Peddle	MICHIGAN #129
11	Michael R. Stith	OHIO #35
(Alt)	John M Parker	OHIO #35
12	Ted Buck	ILLINOIS #28
(Alt)	Al Labelle	WISCONSIN #57
13	Jerome C. Baker	INDIANA #3
(Alt)	Ralph C. Purcell Jr	INDIANA #3
14	Lawrence W. Bouska	SOUTH DAKOTA #1
(Alt)	Robert J. Erickson	MINNESOTA #2
15	Roger Franklin	NEBRASKA #2
(Alt)	David R. Thornburg Jr	IOWA #20
16	Michael B. Burns	CALIFORNIA #95
(Alt)	Frederick Powers Jr	CALIFORNIA #20
17	Miles D Dahlby	WYOMING #1
(Alt)	Gary J Prescott II	NEW MEXICO #5
18	Robert S. Di Girolamo	ARIZONA #1
(Alt)	Michael Drawhorn	NEVADA #15
19	Karen M Key	WASHINGTON #9
(Alt)	Pamela F. Beale	ALASKA #7
20	Luis A. Cortes	TEXAS #114
(Alt)	Veda A. Lewis	TEXAS #9
21	Dennis C Hammons	OKLAHOMA #32
(Alt)	Grace Marilyn Smith	ARKANSAS #51
BLIND VETS	Richard Bugbee	BLIND VETERANS NATL #1

Advisors: Jeffrey C. Hall - Joseph A. Violante

2010 NATIONAL CONVENTION
New Orleans, Louisiana

COMMITTEE ON NOMINATION OF NATIONAL OFFICERS

DISTRICT	NAME (DISTRICT & ALTERNATE)	CHAPTER NO. & STATE
1	Daniel P. Stack	MASSACHUSETTS #3
(Alt)	Alan W. Bowers	MASSACHUSETTS #46
2	Sidney Siller	NEW YORK #23
(Alt)	Donald A. Sioss	NEW YORK #76
3	Asiat A. Ali	VERMONT #5
(Alt)	Ron Reilly	NEW HAMPSHIRE #4
4	Frank Dascoli	NEW JERSEY #24
(Alt)	John F. Opatovsky	NEW JERSEY #32
5	Albert Burlikowski	PENNSYLVANIA #76
(Alt)	Robert W. McClellan	PENNSYLVANIA #25
6	Cynthia Marie Madison	VIRGINIA #27
(Alt)	Stephanie A Cooper	DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA #3
7	Dennis A. Joyner	FLORIDA #16
(Alt)	Kenneth D. Wolfe	FLORIDA #101
8	George L. Martin	TENNESSEE #3
(Alt)	Sammy D. Rogers	TENNESSEE #17
9	Charles T. Pettigrew	SOUTH CAROLINA #13
(Alt)	Harmon L Evans	SOUTH CAROLINA #4
10	John P. Lamphere	MICHIGAN #39
(Alt)	Christopher M. Sardo	MICHIGAN #16
11	Joseph R. Lenhart	OHIO #73
(Alt)	Thomas K. Keller	OHIO #103
12	John R. Hoeft	WISCONSIN #17
(Alt)	Alfred C. Reynolds	ILLINOIS #17
13	Clarence N. Wright Jr	INDIANA #52
(Alt)	James S. Huff	KENTUCKY #4
14	Eugene A. Murphy	SOUTH DAKOTA #1
(Alt)	Joseph M. Litzinger	NORTH DAKOTA #2
15	Dennis L. Johnston	MISSOURI #1
(Alt)	William A. Bowman	NEBRASKA #7
16	Frederick Powers Jr	CALIFORNIA #20
(Alt)	Marlowe L. Benner	CALIFORNIA #59
17	Paul W. Jackson	COLORADO #7
(Alt)	Robert J. Addyman Jr	COLORADO #7
18	Thomas E. Mullalley	NEVADA #12
(Alt)	Frederick Carl Dauer	HAWAII #1
19	Michael D. Smith	IDAHO #1
(Alt)	Jerry L. Beale	ALASKA #7
20	Percy A. Spence III	TEXAS #17
(Alt)	Isaac J Bazile USAF Ret.	TEXAS #9
21	Robert A. Brandt	OKLAHOMA #32
(Alt)	James D Parker	ARKANSAS #7
BLIND VETS	Stephen Christopher Moffitt Sr	BLIND VETERANS NATL #1
(Alt)	Anthony Martino	BLIND VETERANS NATL #1

Advisors: Gene Murphy - Richard Marbes

COMMANDER TYSON: The Committee Advisors can pick up their Committee folders from the Resolutions Coordinating Office on the third floor. Before we conclude, I ask for our National Adjutant to come forward with any announcements.

ADJUTANT WILSON: Beginning at 2:45 today Convention Committees are scheduled to meet. Those of you who have been elected to a Convention Committee are asked to be on time in the room assigned for your meetings.

We ask the Committees to please complete their work just as soon as possible. Immediately following the conclusion of the Committee meetings, Committee chairs or secretaries should deliver their deliberations to the Resolution Coordinating Office.

The National Commander's Reception begins this evening at seven o'clock in the Grand Ballroom. That's all, Commander.

COMMANDER TYSON: All right. Thank you. As you heard the National Adjutant say, we are giving away the DAV briefcases to five delegates attending the Convention. And those lucky five are Mary Ray Emerson of Colorado; William F. Williams of Florida; Cindy Hanson, Georgia; Michael Sparks, Kentucky; and George Mathis, Department of Maine. (Applause) Congratulations.

ADJUTANT WILSON: Commander. I have one more announcement.

COMMANDER TYSON: Sure.

ADJUTANT WILSON: A black DAV briefcase was left in Meeting Room C16 yesterday. If you have found it, would you please return it to the National Headquarters Office on the second floor.

COMMANDER TYSON: Thank you, sir. Please rise. I will ask Dr. Edwards, National Chaplain, to lead us in prayer.

CHAPLAIN EDWARDS: Let us pray. Almighty God, Father of power and might, we thank You for the gift of committed, courageous, and dedicated people who have served in the armed forces of the United States, our country, and now serve as members of the Disabled American Veterans.

Thank You for our National Commander, Mr. Wallace E. Tyson. Thank You for our National Adjutant, Mr. Arthur H. Wilson. Thank You for each person gathered here within our great organization who have loved and defended our nation, those who have helped us pass on to the citizens of our country and the people of the world the blessings of the past – freedom, the challenge of the present – liberation, and the hope of the future – peace.

Now we ask to be blessed with wisdom always to guide us, patience to teach us, and hope to sustain us. Keep us within Your protective care. And may Your rest and may all of Your blessings rest and abide upon all of us. In God we trust. Amen.

(Response of "Amen.")

COMMANDER TYSON: The Convention stands in recess until nine o'clock tomorrow morning. Thank you.

(Whereupon, the meeting recessed at 2:24 o'clock, p.m., on Saturday, August 6, 2011.)

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS
SECOND BUSINESS SESSION
August 7, 2011
- - -

The Second Business Session of the Disabled American Veterans 90th National Convention convened in the Grand Ballroom on the First Level of the Hilton New Orleans Riverside Hotel, New Orleans, Louisiana, on Sunday morning, August 7, 2011, and was called to order at 9:00 o'clock, a.m., by National Commander Wallace E. "Wally" Tyson.

COMMANDER WALLACE E. "WALLY" TYSON: The Convention will please come to order. As a reminder, we ask that everyone in attendance please turn off your cell phones and portable devices. Please join me in the Pledge of Allegiance.

(Whereupon, the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.)

COMMANDER TYSON: Two. I will ask our National Chaplain to please lead us in prayer as we prepare to undertake this morning's business. Reverend Edwards.

CHAPLAIN EDWARDS: Dear God, You have given us light in the midst of darkness, love in the midst of loneliness, hope in the midst of despair. We thank You individually and collectively for giving us those gifts. Help us now to use them wisely and to share them effectively as we attempt to bring light, love and hope to those we serve.

Grant us the serenity, the peace of mind, the contentment to accept the things we cannot change, the courage, the fortitude, the commitment to change the things we can, and the wisdom to know the difference, and the wisdom to know that we do indeed make a difference.

Let Your presence go with us each day. Make us ready and willing to do what we can with what we have and crown our efforts with success. Guard and protect all of us who serve this great organization, the Disabled American Veterans. In God we trust. Amen.

(Response of "Amen.")

COMMANDER TYSON: Please understand, in order for a delegate to be heard at this Convention you must first be recognized by the Chair. Only those delegates at a microphone will be recognized. The delegate must state their name, Chapter number, and the Department they represent.

I will call on the Credentials Committee for its report, Chairman Donald Day.

CHAIRMAN DAY: Comrade Commander and delegates, the Credentials Committee met this morning at 8:00 a.m. at the Hilton New Orleans Riverside Hotel. Roll call showed that 1,101 delegates and 34 alternates have registered, which includes 46 Departments, 425 Chapters registered. There are 22 National Officers, 22 National Executive Committeemen, and 13 Past National Commanders currently registered for a total of 7,801 votes.

This partial report is for informational purposes only and it reflects the registration at the close of business at 4:00 p.m. August 6th, 2011. This completes the partial report of the Credentials Committee, Commander

COMMANDER TYSON: Thank you, Don. Since 1983, Achilles International has enabled people with all types of disabilities to participate in mainstream athletics. In 2004, because of the influx of disabled veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan, Achilles launched a Freedom Team of Wounded Veterans, an athletic program with a focus on setting goals and achieving them.

With the support of the DAV Charitable Trust, Achilles Freedom Team has sponsored over 1,000 disabled veterans to compete in races worldwide. (Applause) Representing the program today, please give a warm welcome to the Director of the Achilles Freedom Team of Wounded Vets, Genna Griffith. (Applause)

DIRECTOR GENNA GRIFFITH GIAMMATTEO: Thank you, National Commander Tyson, Assistant National Director of Communications Rob Lewis, members of the DAV, DAVA and the Charitable Service Trust, for your continuous support of the Achilles Freedom Team.

It is such an honor to be in a room filled with so many of our nation's heroes today who have served and sacrificed so much for this country.

The veterans' community is especially near and dear to my heart because I happen to be the granddaughter of two World War Two disabled veterans and just short of a year ago I became the wife of a disabled veteran. (Applause) Thank you.

My husband, Retired Captain Mark Giammatteo, lost part of his leg while serving in Iraq. He is doing great, though. I wish he could be here but unfortunately had to work. (Applause)

And another bit of information is I happened to be on this exact stage in 2003 at your Convention as a U.S.O. singer so this is truly a full circle moment for me. (Applause) I'm not going to break out into any tunes, though, today.

UNIDENTIFIED DELEGATE: Why not?

DIRECTOR GIAMMATTEO: Well, maybe later tonight. It was when I was a U.S.O. singer that I became acquainted with Achilles as we were asked to sing at the annual race in Central Park.

That day I watched in awe, witnessing many disabled veterans just months post-injury running on prosthetics and hand cycling. I was incredibly inspired by their strength and determination and became a volunteer, but I could not get enough so now I'm working for the charity full time.

This morning I have put together a slide show giving you an overview of our program and how we are helping the disabled veteran community. Let me get my glasses on here.

The Freedom Team is a goal-oriented program. We spend much time at hospitals such as Walter Reed introducing patients to the hand cycle wheelchair as it is an adaptive device that can be used very early on in recovery. Together with their physical therapists we facilitate regular workouts, giving the patients the opportunity to set goals of completing a short distance race.

We also bring in mentors – the World's Fastest Amputee – to hold clinics and bond with patients, encouraging them to get up and to continue challenging themselves physically.

The Annual Achilles Hope and Possibility five-miler held in Central Park is usually the first race they complete as the Freedom Team member. Each year we have over 5,000 participants celebrating the power of the human spirit. We host approximately 40 veterans for the weekend, giving them the opportunity to integrate back into society and feel that sense of competition again.

For many this is the event that increases their level of aspiration as they do what they thought would be impossible. And when they reach that finish line, they are surprised by their capabilities, generating a surge of self-confidence to take on the next challenge: competing in a 26.2 marathon. (Applause)

We host 15 of these marathons in major cities nationwide each year, 1 international marathon trip, coining it the Achilles Marathon Tour. Whether you are an 18-year old returning from OIF/OEF, or 65- to 70-year old Vietnam veteran, we have a spot for you on this team.

Amputees, paraplegics, quadriplegics, visually and hearing impaired, those who suffer from traumatic brain injury and PTSD, it doesn't matter what type of disability you have or how old you are, we will find a way for you to participate. Family members are also invited to be a part of the festivities.

We connect with the local community in each city as many will host meals for the team and take them on sightseeing excursions, giving the team an opportunity to bond and connect before marathon day. But all bets are off once they get to that start line as they instantly regain their competitive spirit. We are, in a sense, addicting them to achievement.

There is no greater moment than witnessing a family member cheering for their hero as he or she crosses that finish line, or watching their kids run up and admire that medal proudly displayed on their chest.

A marathon is a grueling 26.2 miles and to say you completed one with a disability is beyond impressive. But this concept of achievement is much, much more than just finishing a race. It is a stepping stone to having a successful, fulfilling life post-injury.

Many Freedom Teams will continue higher education, re-enlist in the military, or become motivated to seek other employment. I think that a potential employer would be quite impressed to see "marathon runner" noted on their resume. But with all this goal setting and achieving we still manage to have tons of fun.

We've been fortunate to have many celebrities join us at our events such as: Jon Voight, who was with us for the L.A. Marathon; Jon Stewart, just a couple of weeks ago ran with some of the vets in our Hope and Possibility Race; Glen Beck was there, too, racing with some of our vets.

The Donald hosted a meal for us at Mar-a-Lago in Florida. And last year we had – it was our honor to have Prince Harry join us for our Hope and Possibility Race, walking with many of the wounded vets. He spent hours and hours with the team. A wonderful, wonderful person.

Also, the Red Sox has honored our team, (Applause) the Yankees – (Applause) Yes, but I think I'm the only one who can say that I'm a Yankees and a Red Sox fan now because they're so good to us. And, finally, here are some of the outcomes when you put all of this together.

Major Dave Rozelle was the first leg amputee to run the New York City Marathon with the Freedom Team. And he also was the first amputee to return to Iraq. (Applause) Doc Daniel Jacobs joined us while a patient at Balboa Hospital in 2006 and just got cleared to be the first Navy Corpsman to return to combat as a leg amputee. (Applause)

Double-amputee Joe Beimfohr finished the 2008 New York City Marathon in a little under three hours and this past April finished second in the Boston Marathon, shedding 90 minutes off his time. (Applause)

Melissa Stockwell was the first female to lose a limb in OIF, joined us in a hand cycle in 2004 and last year ran her first half-marathon on her prosthetic leg and will be competing in the New York City Marathon this fall with us. (Applause)

And, finally, Corporal Todd Nicely was only the second quadruple amputee to survive combat wounds while serving in OIF and OEF. Could barely push his own wheelchair. Prince Harry had to assist him last year in our race. And, as you can see, five weeks ago he came back, returned with his platoon buddies and wife, running five miles in 66 minutes. (Applause)

These are just some of the 1,000 disabled veterans we have served since 2004. We are able to continue our mission because of the support of the DAV and the DAV Charitable Service Trust. We really encourage you to get involved and join us.

We'll be here today and tomorrow. My coworker Janet is here somewhere if she can wave so please come and talk to us if you have any questions. Thank you so much for your time. And God bless. (Standing Ovation)

COMMANDER TYSON: Thank you, Genna, for all the work you do on behalf of the Achilles Freedom Team.

As you know, Dave Gorman retired in June as the Washington Headquarters Executive Director after only 40 years of service to the DAV. (Laughter) It's a little soon if you ask me but, okay.

Today, in that crucially important position we welcome Barry Jesinoski, a veteran of the Persian War era. Barry, a native of Ottertail County, Minnesota, was appointed National Service and Legislative Headquarters Executive Director effective July 2nd.

Mr. Jesinoski represents the DAV at its finest. He is an intelligent and thoughtful leader who earns the respect of all those he meets. He is thoroughly familiar with the issues necessary to operate our Washington Headquarters, and is a powerful leader for disabled veterans before Congress and the current Administration.

In his new position, Barry's responsibilities include oversight of the DAV National Service and Legislative programs. He is also the organization's principal spokesperson before Congress, the White House and the Department of Veterans Affairs.

A Life member of DAV Chapter 2 in San Diego, California, Barry enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps in 1991 and was medically discharged in 1993. Please join me in giving a warm welcome to Washington Headquarters Executive Director Barry Jesinoski. (Applause)

WASHINGTON HEADQUARTERS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BARRY JESINOSKI: Good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

WASHINGTON HEADQUARTERS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR JESINOSKI: National Commander Tyson, distinguished guests and delegates to the 90th Convention of the Disabled American Veterans, as Executive Director of National Service and Legislative Headquarters in Washington, it's an honor and a privilege to present this annual report to the membership.

But I must note that since he just retired in June, as far as I am concerned this is really retired Executive Director David Gorman's report. That makes it an even greater honor for me.

Dave Gorman is one of the most respected leaders in the history of our cause. I'm honored to have this opportunity to succeed him and I assure our members and staff that I'll do my utmost to further our cause while leading our service and legislative programs with sincerity and integrity.

National Commander Tyson – (Applause) Thank you, Commander Tyson, for your inspired leadership and dedication to the DAV, our mission of service and hope for this nation's disabled veterans and their families.

Over the past year Commander Tyson has been a powerful force for the DAV, not only as our National Commander, but earning the respect of government officials in Washington and the admiration of countless people all across this great country of ours.

National Adjutant Wilson, I also want to express my appreciation and abiding respect to you. Your guidance, wise counsel, inspired leadership, and unwavering support have been invaluable for me.

Art's wisdom, vision, dedication, and professional experience and expertise have maintained DAV's outstanding financial position as the envy of other veterans' service organizations. He has demonstrated time and again the unique ability to combine sound business practices with steadfast commitment to our mission.

Of course, none of our success would be possible without the terrific work carried out by National Headquarters Executive Director Burgess and his superb staff and our employees in Cold Spring, Kentucky.

Auxiliary National Commander Susan Henry and Auxiliary National Adjutant Judy Hezlep have given all of us such great support as well. And I offer my deepest thanks to them. We would not be nearly as effective in our mission without the Auxiliary and all those members who work so hard on our behalf.

At Washington Headquarters, our team – Service, Legislative, Communications, our professional and support staffs alike – all work together toward the same goal: fulfilling our mission.

I would like to recognize the outstanding achievements of our team at National Service and Legislative Headquarters. National Service Director Garry Augustine is our superb – leads our superb program of service to disabled veterans and their families. Garry and his staff have done a remarkable job leading our corps of NSOs and TSOs in the successful completion of their mission.

National Legislative Director Joe Violante has provided outstanding leadership in advancing the legislative goals of the DAV in a very, very difficult political environment. Joe and his staff have excelled in making the policy-makers of our nation aware of the needs of disabled veterans and their families and advancing our issues and programs.

I am very proud of these seasoned professionals and their staffs who have had such great success this past year.

I also want to acknowledge a valued member of our team in Washington, Executive Secretary Sally Miller, who is extremely valuable in keeping things running very smoothly. My heartfelt thanks to Sally and the entire support staff for the tremendous job that they do and their dedication to our mission.

I am pleased to report that despite the impact of a very sluggish economy on our fund-raising, we have not compromised on our service programs. After all, service is at the very core of who we are and what we do.

In 100 offices – (Applause) In 100 offices throughout the United States and Puerto Rico we currently have about 240 NSOs and 30 TSOs diligently representing veterans and their families with claims for benefits from the VA and the Department of Defense.

Some of the free services offered by NSOs and TSOs include information seminars and counseling, as well as assistance to discharging service men and women through the Transition Assistance Program and the Disabled Transition Assistance Program.

Our NSOs also represent veterans and active-duty military personnel before Discharge Review Boards, Boards for Correction of Military Records, Physical Evaluation Boards, and other official panels. With outlays of \$38.7 million in 2010, these direct hands-on services make up the largest item of the DAV's budget for program services.

Over the years we have made tremendous progress in adopting state-of-the-art technology to assist veterans and their families in filing claims for benefits. NSOs have access to an impressive array of resources, including access to the extensive databases of the VA and our own Case Management System.

Having worked on the creation and implementation of this initiative, I am extremely gratified by its daily use and progress, and we will continue to work on system enhancements.

DAV maintains the largest staff of any group at the Board of Veterans' Appeals. We represent 29 percent of all cases decided by the BVA as of May of this year. DAV's highly skilled National Appeals Officers provide a valuable service to appellants by preparing an appellate brief prior to the Board reviewing a case.

DAV also continues our pro bono representation program for veterans seeking review in the United States Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims. In fiscal 2009 and '10 the BVA took action on more than 14,000 cases involving DAV clients. Each of those cases was reviewed to identify claims that were improperly denied. And thanks to DAV more than 500 of those cases were appealed to the court.

The Department and Chapter Service Officer Certification Training Program continues to be a great success. A tremendous amount of teamwork goes into serving those who have sacrificed so much for our freedom.

The National Service Department is extremely fortunate to have the cooperation, support and assistance of DSOs and CSOs from around the nation. And we want to ensure that each of them continues to receive the training and information necessary to assist those that we serve.

And during 2010 there were 1,409 DSOs and CSOs certified in 33 states. We encourage every Department to participate in this very worthwhile program.

More veterans leaving the military or returning from duty in Iraq and Afghanistan will benefit from DAV's Transition Service Program, which has been expanded to cover more military installations.

Thanks to a generous grant from the GE Foundation last year at our 89th National Convention, we have increased our staff of Transition Service Officers who assist separating service members at more than 100 military bases and treatment facilities across the country. (Applause)

Over the last year our TSOs conducted nearly 3,000 formal presentations for approximately 82,000 transitioning service members. They also filed more than 26,000 claims for VA benefits. They provided counsel and representation to active duty service members during their transition through the military's Disability Evaluation System as well. In 2010, DAV devoted \$1.8 million to this program.

The Mobile Service Office Program continues to increase veterans' access to the benefits our nation provides. During 2010, the MSOs were in service at numerous events, including stops in rural communities as well as at Harley-Davidson dealerships, air shows, and even NASCAR events.

The National Organization currently has 10 new specially-equipped MSOs on tour to make stops in communities across the country.

The Harley-Davidson Foundation continues to provide support to the MSO Program as well, following their pledge of \$1 million – and that's their second \$1 million pledge – earmarked for outreach services to veterans in their communities. In the past year we have visited 183 Harley-Davidson dealerships during our MSO tours. (Applause)

The DAV has always recognized the contributions and sacrifices women veterans have made for our country. The Department of Defense recognizes that a growing percentage of those serving in uniform are women. Now, as much as ever, women serve our country with pride, patriotism and honor equal to their male counterparts. (Applause)

The DAV is continuing its advocacy for women veterans on a variety of fronts. We have organized top-level forums designed to bring women veteran and government policy-makers together to openly express topics of concern.

The DAV is also actively involved in the congressionally-chartered VA Advisory Committee on Women Veterans; and its activities are monitored by a member of our Washington Headquarters staff. In addition, the DAV has its own Women Veterans Advisory Committee made up of women veterans from DAV's membership across the country.

The DAV continues to defend the benefits and services that help build better lives for America's disabled veterans. And we continue to rely on our organization's leaders, DAV Benefits Protection Team members, DAV Commander's Action Network members, and concerned individuals to educate Congress on legislation affecting benefits and services for service-connected disabled veterans.

We have worked hard this past year to ensure thoughtful and beneficial proposals to enhance current services are properly considered and acted upon. Concurrently, the DAV has worked equally hard against the passage of ill-advised recommendations such as those to balance the budget on the backs of disabled veterans and their families. (Applause)

Some significant legislation was enacted this year. The Veterans Benefit Act of 2010 is comprehensive, with a number of important provisions to disabled veterans and their families, including: an Automobile Grant indexed to the Consumer Price Index which will allow for annual adjustment; enhancement of disability compensation for severely disabled veterans who have difficulty using prostheses; aid and attendance benefits for veterans suffering from traumatic brain injury; an increase in Supplemental Service-Disabled Veterans' Insurance; an increase in Veterans Mortgage Life Insurance; an increase in the number of veterans who can participate in VA's independent living services and assistance program; and, also, an increase in the amount of burial and funeral expense benefits.

The Post-9-11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2010 expands and improves the Post 9-11 GI Bill that went into effect last year. And it simplifies and improves benefits in a fiscally responsible way.

Specifically, the Act enables veterans to use their benefit for vocational and on-the-job training, expands eligibility for the benefit to National Guardsmen who are activated for domestic assistance, and provides active duty troops with additional assistance to purchase books, as well as providing severely-injured veterans and their caregivers with additional time to use their benefits.

During the mid-term elections of 2010 members were elected – almost 100 new members were elected to the House, many of them occupying elective positions for the very first time. The House Veterans' Affairs Committee was particularly affected by the election. Only 12 of its previous 29 members were reelected.

Representative Jeff Miller, a long-time member of the House Veterans Affairs' Committee, was named Chairman of the Committee. Representative Bob Filner serves as Ranking Democratic Member.

And we confront an unusual circumstance in that all Subcommittee Chairmen on the House Veterans' Affairs Committee for this Congress, all of them, are freshmen members. This situation presents a challenge for our legislative staff because we have to educate the members of Congress about DAV – who we are and what we do – and our issues and our priorities.

Although political control of the Senate did not change as a result of the 2010 election, leadership of the Veterans' Committee did change. Former Chairman Akaka remains a member of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs but Senator Patty Murray was named Chairman for the 112th Congress. Senator Richard Burr continues as Ranking Republican Member.

Although the number of claims processed by the Veterans' Benefits Administration has grown to more than a million cases per year, the highest number ever, the volume of new and reopened claims filed continues to grow at an even faster pace.

More significant, the number of claims pending longer than VA's target of 125 days grew to nearly half-a-million over the past six months. That's a 60 percent increase just since the beginning of this year. Even worse, the errors found in VA's rating decisions are growing.

Over the past two years, VA Secretary Shinseki has focused VBA on breaking the backs of the backlog. However, we should all remember that the backlog is not the core problem; it is only a symptom. The true and overarching problems at VBA are quality and accuracy.

Now, if the VBA focuses on simply reducing the backlog number, it will not sufficiently address the basic issues nor prevent the backlog from growing once again. To achieve real and lasting success – (Applause) To achieve real and lasting success, VBA must focus on creating a modern, paperless benefits claims-processing system designed to decide each claim right the first time. (Applause)

And to their credit, VA Secretary Shinseki and the VBA senior leadership have openly acknowledged the problems at VBA and reached out to DAV and other VSOs to engage us in their work in developing reforms. Over the past two years, VA has implemented a multi-pronged transformation strategy to modernize its infrastructure and business processes.

One of the major problems in the current claims processing system is VBA's outdated information technology system. So a new electronic Veterans Benefits Management System or VBMS is being developed.

The new approach would allow claims to be processed in a paperless environment using rules-based decision support. Currently, VBA is field testing the VBMS in a few select regional offices with full national deployment scheduled for 2012.

VBA is also modernizing the methods and technologies it uses to interact with veterans as part of the Veterans Relationship Management system, which includes the e-Benefits program.

It should be noted that the VA invited DAV to participate in developing this new system and one of our own staff members provided valuable input to the project for a month this spring. And he has recently been asked to continue providing his insight as the project progresses.

VBA has also been conducting dozens of pilot tests of new business process improvements to reduce waiting times, increase production, and, hopefully, increase quality and accuracy.

While DAV has supported many of these pilots and applauded VBA's willingness to experiment, we continue to be concerned that given the impetus to reduce the backlog, VBA may ultimately favor IT and process reforms that increase speed and production rather than those that enhance quality and accuracy. We know that quality and accuracy are the essential cornerstones for reforming the claims processing system.

Over the next year DAV will finalize a comprehensive set of specific legislative recommendations for Congress and work with our VSO colleagues and the Veterans' Affairs Committees in the House and Senate to enact them into law.

We have already begun to assemble a broad coalition in Washington to support this legislative action but we will once again need to rely on the powerful grassroots advocacy of DAV members nationwide. While there are no quick or easy ways to fix the claims processing system, we remain optimistic that working together we can make significant progress toward a system in which disabled veterans claims are done right the first time.

All in all, your Washington staff has earned unparalleled respect as the top-notch professional veterans service organization, determined and committed to protecting and preserving the rights of our fellow disabled veterans.

Your program directors and their staffs have spent years as advocates and as NSOs representing veterans on a daily basis. They have also – they also have credibility that other groups don't have – they're all wartime, service-connected disabled veterans themselves.

To be sure, the staff at your Washington Headquarters has done an outstanding job providing the very best services to you and your families. But there is another critical ingredient. We would not be able to accomplish all that we have without you, our members. And that's a fact. (Applause)

So, on behalf of the entire Washington Headquarters staff, I want to thank you for making it possible for us to serve you. We couldn't do it without every one of you and the faith and the support you provide as we carry out the mission, our proud mission of service and hope for America's disabled veterans and their families. Thank you. (Applause)

(The following written annual report was submitted by Barry Jesinoski, Executive Director, DAV Washington Headquarters:)

Annual Report of
Barry A. Jesinoski
Executive Director Washington Headquarters
to the 90th National Convention
of the Disabled American Veterans
New Orleans, Louisiana
August 7, 2011

National Commander Tyson, distinguished guests, and delegates to the 90th National Convention of the Disabled American Veterans:

As Executive Director of National Service and Legislative Headquarters in Washington, it is an honor and a privilege to present this annual report to the membership. But I must note that it really is retired Executive Director David Gorman's report, and that makes it an even greater honor for me.

Dave Gorman is one of the most respected leaders in the history of our cause. I'm honored to have this opportunity to succeed him and assure our members and staff that I'll do my utmost to further our cause while leading our service and legislative programs with sincerity and integrity.

First, I want thank National Commander Wallace Tyson for his inspired leadership and dedication to the DAV and our mission of service and hope for this nation's disabled veterans and their families.

Over the past year Commander Tyson has been a powerful force for the DAV, not only as our National Commander, but earning the respect of government officials in Washington and the admiration of countless people all across this great country of ours.

He has been a steadfast advocate for our cause, and all of our nation's service-connected disabled veterans and their families owe him a great debt of gratitude for his efforts on their behalf. His achievements are a tribute to our commitment to service to this nation's veterans.

I also want to express my appreciation and abiding respect to our National Adjutant Arthur Wilson. His guidance, wise counsel, inspired leadership, and unwavering support have been invaluable for me and all of us in our efforts to serve you and your families.

Art's wisdom, vision, dedication, and professional expertise have maintained DAV's outstanding financial position as the envy of other veterans service organizations. He has demonstrated time and again the unique ability to combine sound business practices with steadfast commitment to our mission. Under Art's leadership, we are in the best position in our history to continue the work needed on behalf of our nation's disabled veterans.

Of course, none of our success would be possible without the terrific work carried out by National Headquarters Executive Director Marc Burgess and his superb staff and our employees in Cold Spring, Kentucky.

Auxiliary National Commander Susan Henry and Auxiliary National Adjutant Judy Hezlep have given all of us such great support. I offer my deepest thanks to them as well. We would not be nearly as effective in our mission without the Auxiliary and all those members who work so hard on our behalf.

At Washington Headquarters, our team—Service, Legislative, Communications; our professional and support staffs, alike—all work together toward the same goal: fulfilling our mission.

I would like to recognize the outstanding achievements of our team at the National Service and Legislative Headquarters. National Service Director Garry Augustine directs our program of outstanding service to disabled veterans and their families. Garry and his staff have done a

remarkable job leading our corps of National Service Officers (NSOs) and Transition Service Officers (TSOs) in the successful completion of their mission. National Legislative Director Joseph Violante has provided outstanding leadership in advancing the legislative goals of the DAV in a very difficult political environment. Joe and his staff have excelled in making the policy-makers of our nation aware of the needs of disabled veterans and their families and advancing our issues and programs. I am very proud of these outstanding professionals and their staffs, who have had such great success this past year.

I also want to acknowledge a valued member of our very fine team at Washington Headquarters, Executive Secretary Sally Miller, who is invaluable in keeping things running smoothly. My heartfelt thanks to Sally and the entire support staff for the tremendous job they do and their dedication to our mission.

Service

In fiscal year 2010, the Department of Veterans Affairs processed more than a million claims for disability benefits. Approximately 8 million veterans use the VA health care system, and that number is expected to grow in the years to come. As of 2010, more than 3.1 million veterans were receiving VA disability compensation. Medical and disability services for today's combat disabled veterans must be monitored for changes in the needs of veterans today as well as in the future.

National Service Program

I am pleased to report that despite the impact of a very sluggish economy on our fundraising, we have not compromised on our service programs. After all, service is at the very core of who we are and what we do.

In 100 offices throughout the United States and in Puerto Rico, approximately 240 NSOs, with the assistance of 30 TSOs assigned to various military installations, diligently represent veterans and their families with claims for benefits from the VA and the Department of Defense (DoD). Some of the free services offered by NSOs and TSOs include information seminars and counseling, as well as assistance to discharging service men and women through the Transition Assistance Program (TAP) and the Disabled Transition Assistance Program (DTAP). DAV's NSOs also represent veterans and active-duty military personnel before Discharge Review Boards, Boards for Correction of Military Records, Physical Evaluation Boards, and other official panels.

With outlays of \$38.7 million in 2010, these direct hands-on services make up the largest item in the DAV's budget for program services. Between January 1, 2010, and December 31, 2010, our NSOs and TSOs, all wartime service-connected disabled veterans, represented nearly a quarter of a million veterans and their families in their claims for VA benefits, obtaining for them more than \$4.5 billion in new and retroactive benefits.

Over the years, the DAV has made tremendous progress in adopting state-of-the-art computer technology to assist veterans and their families in filing claims for benefits. NSOs have access to an impressive array of resources, including access to the extensive databases of the VA and the DAV's Case Management System. Having worked on the creation and implementation of this initiative, I am extremely gratified by its daily use and progress, and we will continue to work on system improvements.

Mastery of an NSO's skills begins with a rigorous 16-month on-the-job training program, which provides the foundation for new trainees at National Service Offices nationwide. The DAV continues to provide the best representation available, and our NSOs are subjected to a comprehensive structured and continuing training program unparalleled in the field of veterans' affairs.

The DAV Structured and Continuing Training Program is certified by the American Council on Education (ACE). The DAV is the only veterans' service organization to have a training program recognized and certified by ACE.

National Appeals Office

The Board of Veterans' Appeals is the highest appellate level within the VA, and is responsible for entering the final decision on behalf of the Secretary of Veterans Affairs concerning appeals for entitlement to veterans' benefits. DAV's highly skilled National Appeals Officers (NAO's) provide an invaluable service to appellants by preparing an appellate brief prior to the Board reviewing a case. DAV maintains the largest staff of any group doing this work, representing 29 percent of all cases decided by the BVA.

Judicial Appeals

DAV continues its pro bono representation program for veterans seeking review in the United States Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims. In fiscal 2009-10, the BVA took action on more than 14,000 cases involving DAV clients. Each of those cases was reviewed to identify those in which a veteran's claim was improperly denied. Thanks to DAV, more than 500 of these cases were appealed to the court.

The substantial growth of this program would not have been possible without the coordinated efforts of two top-notch law firms – Finnegan Henderson of Washington, D.C., and Chisholm Chisholm & Kilpatrick of Providence, Rhode Island and Washington, D.C. Robert Chisholm (of the Chisholm firm) and Ronald Smith (of Finnegan) are accomplished members of the veterans bar, and DAV is pleased to have them in prominent roles in our enlarged program at the court. By this time next year, we hope to be able to report another substantial increase in the number of appeals which may be handled through this program.

Chapter Service Officers/Department Service Officers

The Department and Chapter Service Officer Certification Training Program continues to be a great success. A tremendous amount of teamwork goes into serving those who have sacrificed so much for our freedom. The National Service Department is fortunate to have the cooperation, support and assistance of DSOs and CSOs from around the nation, and we want to ensure that each of them continues to receive the training and information necessary to assist those we serve.

The training program contains information and instruction related to the DAV's mission and programs, general VA benefits and the legal and ethical responsibilities of a service officer. Upon successful completion of the program, participants receive certification as a DSO or CSO. This program helps to ensure the vitality and growth of our local service programs, both now and well into the future. During 2010, there were 1,409 DSOs/CSOs certified in 33 states. We encourage every Department to participate in this worthwhile program.

Outreach Programs

Information Seminars are a key outreach initiative offered by the National Service Department. This program is designed to educate disabled veterans and their families on specific veterans' benefits and services.

This outreach program generates considerable claims work on behalf of veterans and their families. The job of the NSO is to seek out veterans, to discover if they have a viable claim, and to follow that claim through to a successful conclusion. During 2010, our NSOs conducted 42 Information Seminars at various DAV Chapters and community facilities around the country with over 6,000 individuals in attendance. Information Seminars not only provide the opportunity for veterans to discuss VA benefits with DAV NSOs in their own community; they are a great way for local DAV Chapters to recruit new members and encourage Chapter grassroots involvement.

Transition Service Program

More veterans leaving the military or returning from duty in Iraq and Afghanistan will benefit from the DAV's Transition Service Program, which has been expanded to cover more military installations. Thanks to a grant from the GE Foundation last year at More veterans leaving the military or returning from duty in Iraq and Afghanistan will benefit from the DAV's Transition Service Program, which has been expanded to cover more military installations. Thanks to a grant from the GE Foundation last year at the DAV National Convention we have increased our staff of Transition Service Officers who are providing service to separating service members at more than 100 military bases and treatment facilities across the country.

Over the last year, TSOs conducted nearly 3,000 formal presentations to approximately 82,000 transitioning servicemembers. During that same time, our TSOs filed more than 26,000 claims for VA benefits. In addition, NSOs provided representation before Physical Evaluation Boards, Discharge Review Boards and Boards for Correction of Military Records. They also provided counsel and representation to active duty servicemembers during their transition through the military's Disability Evaluation System. In 2010, DAV devoted \$1.8 million to this program.

Mobile Service Office Program

The Mobile Service Office (MSO) Program continues to increase accessibility to the benefits our nation provides by reaching out to veterans where they live. Not all veterans are able to visit a National Service Office for various reasons, including distance, lack of transportation and health concerns. The MSO Program allows NSOs to take their expertise to claimants in their home towns. MSOs are equipped with laptop computers which give NSOs the ability to access

a multitude of benefit related information, including the ability to check the status of a claim. The roomy MSOs also offer private interview areas for confidential counseling and discussion with each claimant. During 2010, the MSOs were in service at numerous events, including stops in rural communities as well as at events held at Harley-Davidson dealerships, Air shows and NASCAR events.

The DAV National Organization currently has 10 new specially equipped MSOs on tour to make stops in communities across the country. During 2007, our MSOs traveled some 114,000 miles, visiting 815 locations. Our NSOs, with the assistance of DSOs and CSOs, interviewed 20,190 veterans and other potential claimants.

The Harley-Davidson Foundation continues to provide support to the MSO Program following their pledge of \$1 million earmarked for the purpose of providing outreach services to veterans in the community. In the past year, we have visited 183 Harley-Davidson dealerships during our MSO tours.

Employment Program

The DAV National Service Program works with the Department of Labor, VA, Office of Personnel Management, Congress, and other government agencies to ensure disabled veterans are treated fairly and equitably in the work force. Employment is the primary concern for most veterans making their transition to civilian life. Obviously, they are not only at a disadvantage due to being out of the job market while on active duty, they also have lost ground to their civilian counterparts who have advanced in their absence.

Disabled veterans have historically fared far worse than healthy veterans and other workers in the job market. DAV continues to devote significant resources to programs aimed at assisting disabled veterans in the job market. A primary goal is to seek legislation to enhance programs and services provided by the Departments of Labor; Veterans Affairs; Small Business Administration; Office of Personnel Management and other government agencies. We have also partnered with companies like Health Net Federal Services and Lockheed Martin as they seek servicemembers who are interested in bringing their significant talent, leadership and work ethic to their organizations. Our active involvement and oversight help to ensure disabled veterans get fair consideration in the job market.

Homeless Veterans

DAV's Homeless Veteran Initiative continues to be a priority of the organization to help homeless veterans break the cycle of poverty and isolation, and move from the streets toward self-sufficiency. Many of our Departments and Chapters are actively involved in the homeless initiative in their communities which helps focus the attention on the needs of homeless veterans.

Without question, proper assistance—including health care, substance abuse treatment, mental health services, education and job training—will enable homeless veterans to improve their situations and begin the transition to once again become productive members of the society they served and defended.

Women Veterans

The DAV has always recognized the contributions and sacrifices women veterans have made for our country. The Department of Defense recognizes that a growing percentage of those serving in uniform are women. Now as much as ever, women serve our country with pride, patriotism and honor equal to their male counterparts. The DAV is continuing its advocacy for women veterans on a variety of fronts. We have organized top-level forums designed to bring women veterans and government policy-makers together to openly address topics of concern.

The DAV is actively involved in the congressionally chartered VA Advisory Committee on Women Veterans, and its activities are monitored by a member of our National Service and Legislative Headquarters staff. In addition, the DAV has its own Women's Advisory Committee, made up of women veterans from DAV's membership across the country, which meets annually at DAV National Conventions. DAV continues its quest to enhance our NSO and TSO corps with eligible disabled women veterans.

Legislation

The DAV continues to defend the benefits and services that help build better lives for America's disabled veterans. We continue to rely on our organization's leaders, DAV Benefits Protection Team members, DAV Commander's Action Network (DAV CAN) members, and concerned individuals to educate Congress on legislation affecting benefits and services for service-connected disabled veterans. We have worked hard this past year to ensure thoughtful and beneficial proposals to enhance current services are properly considered and acted upon. Concurrently, the DAV has worked equally hard against the passage of ill-advised

recommendations such as those to balance the budget on the backs of disabled veterans and their families by limiting or cutting health care and other earned benefits.

Budget & Appropriations

The Administration's budget request for fiscal year (FY) 2012 included some modest funding increases for VA health care and benefits programs, but DAV has been concerned about whether this budget would sufficiently meet the needs of sick and disabled veterans who rely on VA. The results of a recent Government Accountability Office (GAO) report (see below) on VA's budget formulation process do not increase our confidence that VA is allowed by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to forecast its real, proven needs for resources, especially in health care.

Medical Care: The Administration's requested \$53.9 billion, which assumed collections in the amount of \$3.1 billion in place of direct appropriations. Alternatively The Independent Budget (IB) recommended \$55 billion for these accounts, an increase of \$3.5 billion above the proposed FY 2011 level, and \$1.1 billion higher than the Administration's request.

Medical and Prosthetic Research: The Administration's request of \$509 million would be a reduction of \$72 million from current research funding levels. The IB recommended \$620 million to cover documented inflation, to continue current research projects, to allow VA to better understand and develop treatments for the unique injuries and diseases of the veteran population.

Benefits Processing: The \$2 billion budget request for the activities of the Veterans Benefits Administration would be \$130 million less than the FY 2011 funded level. This reduction would take place during a time of great transition in VA's efforts to reform the benefits processing system – DAV's highest legislative priority.

Major Construction: The \$590 million Administration budget request for Major Construction would be \$604 million less than the \$1.194 billion Congress is considering for FY 2011. This is the single largest drop in funding for all VA accounts, more than 50 percent. This reversal was deeply concerning to DAV and all those who rely on VA for safe, contemporary facilities for delivery of our health care.

For Medical Care, the Administration requested approval of a "Contingency Fund" in the amount of \$953 million, based upon VA's uncertainty about whether the national economic situation will increase veterans' use and reliance on the VA health care system. As proposed, these funds would only be made available if VA requested their use, and received approval from OMB. Any amount not spent by the end of FY 2012 would be returned to the Treasury.

In addition, VA requested authority to carry over \$1.1 billion in FY 2011 Medical Care funds to be used for future spending in FY 2012 (\$500 million) and FY 2013 (\$600 million). VA testified it intends to reduce FY 2011 spending through the use of unspecified "efficiencies" this year.

Finally, the FY 2012 budget proposal includes a request for \$55.8 billion in advance appropriations for VA health care accounts in FY 2013, which assumes \$3.3 billion in collections. This would be an increase of \$1.9 billion over the Administration's FY 2012 request in the same account.

On June 14, 2011, after consideration of a series of floor amendments most of which were rejected, the full House of Representatives overwhelmingly voted to approve the funding levels as recommended by the Appropriations Committee. On June 30, Senate appropriators advanced their version of the appropriations bill, which closely matches the House-passed bill. However, the Senate bill provides \$581 million for VA medical and prosthetic research, \$72 million more than the Administration's request and the House-passed measure.

At the time of this report, the full Senate had not acted on this funding bill but was expected to do so after the August recess. We expect the House and Senate will hold a conference on this appropriations measure later this summer or fall. We will keep you updated on VA's budget as events warrant.

Government Accountability Office Report on Advance Appropriations

On June 14, 2011, the Government Accountability Office released its report on the VA budget, which was required by Public Law 111-81, the advance appropriations law. The GAO report confirms several of our concerns about gimmicks in this budget, including:

- \$1.1 billion carryover from this year (FY 2011);
- \$2.5 billion in "operational improvements;" and
- the so-called "contingency fund."

The GAO report also uncovered another \$2.5 billion that the Office of Management and Budget cut from the VA for FY 2012 and FY 2013 for needed equipment and maintenance.

DAV will request that both House and Senate Veterans' Affairs and Appropriations Committees conduct oversight hearings to ensure that we have an honest and transparent VA budget process in keeping with Congressional intent in passing Public Law 111-81.

Legislation Enacted

Veterans Benefits Act of 2010, Public Law 111-275, Enacted October 13, 2010

This law, originally H.R. 3219, is a comprehensive bill, with a number of important provisions to disabled veterans and their families, including:

- Automobile Grant, which now is also provided to veterans with severe burn injuries, has been increased from \$11,000.00 to \$18,900.00 and will be indexed to the Consumer Price Index to allow for annual adjustment;
- Enhancement of disability compensation for severely disabled veterans who have difficulty using prostheses; (criteria change more favorable to amputees – prior language “so near the [joint of the affected limb(s)]” preventing use of prosthesis is changed to “with factors” preventing use of prosthesis. Example, painful neuroma.)
- Aid and Attendance benefits for veterans suffering from Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI); (This means veterans with service-connected TBI may not meet the eligibility criteria for Special Monthly Compensation “R-2” [or special aid and attendance], so this change allows them to receive the additional compensation at the maximum level.
- Supplemental Service-Disabled Veterans' Insurance (SDVI or “RH”) has been increased from \$20,000.00 to \$30,000.00 for totally disabled veterans;
- Veterans Mortgage Life Insurance (VMLI) for disabled veterans has been increased from \$90,000.00 to \$150,000.00 effective October 1, 2011, and beginning in 2012 it will be increased to \$200,000.00;
- Increase in the number of veterans who can participate in VA's independent living services and assistance program from 2,600 to 2,700;
- Increase in the amount of burial/funeral expense benefits from \$300.00 to \$700.00, and increases the amount of plot or internment allowance from \$300.00 to \$700.00; both will be indexed to the Consumer Price Index to allow for annual adjustment.

Post 9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2010, Public Law 111-377, Enacted January 4, 2011

This bill expands and improves the Post 9/11 GI Bill that went into effect last year and it simplifies and improves benefits in a fiscally responsible way. Specifically, the Act enables veterans to use their benefit for vocational and on-the-job training, expands eligibility for the benefit to National Guardsmen who are activated for domestic assistance, provides active duty troops with additional assistance to purchase books, and provides severely injured veterans and their caregivers with additional time to use their benefits. Section 205 allows veterans with service-connected disabilities that participate in a program of vocational rehabilitation under chapter 31 of title 38, United States Code, who are also entitled to Post-9/11 GI Bill education benefits, to choose whether to receive the monthly housing stipend payable under the Post-9/11 GI Bill or a monthly subsistence allowance.

Mid-Term Elections – Changes in Key Committees

During the mid-term elections of 2010, control of the United States House of Representatives transferred from the Democrats to the Republicans. Almost 100 new members were elected to the House, many of them occupying elected positions for the very first time. The House Veterans' Affairs Committee was particularly affected by the election. Only 12 of its previous 29 members were reelected. Representative Jeff Miller (R-Fla.), a long-time member of the House Veterans' Affairs Committee, was named Chairman of the Committee for the 112th Congress. Representative Bob Filner (D-Calif.) serves as Ranking Democratic Member. We confront an unusual circumstance in that all Subcommittee Chairmen on the House Veterans' Affairs Committee for this Congress are freshman members. This situation presents a challenge for our legislative staff because we have to educate these new members of Congress about the DAV—who we are and what we do—and our issues and priorities. Also, many new Members of Congress had no understanding of or experience with VA, what it does, and what it means to disabled veterans, or of the Committee's long-term support and protection of benefits granted to veterans by previous Congresses. The overwhelming focus on the Federal deficit and debt situations has made our role ever more critical to ensure no erosion of VA benefits occurs in the haste of Congress to address the Federal financial and monetary situation.

Although political control of the Senate did not change as a result of the 2010 election, leadership of the Veterans' Committee did change. Former Chairman Akaka remains a member of

the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, but Senator Patty Murray (D-Wash.) was named Chairman for the 112th Congress. Senator Richard Burr (R-N.C.) will continue as Ranking Republican Member. We look forward to working with them and all the members of the Committees to bring about beneficial legislation for disabled veterans, their families and survivors. We are especially grateful to Senator Akaka and his staff for their exemplary and enlightened leadership in shepherding through to final passage a variety of helpful legislation for America's disabled veterans and their families. We are positive we will continue to see such leadership by Chairman Murray and her professional staff.

Reforming the Veterans Benefits Claims Processing System

Although the number of claims processed by the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) has grown to more than a million cases per year – the highest number ever – the volume of new and reopened claims filed continues to grow at an even faster pace. As a result, there were 832,674 claims for disability compensation and pensions awaiting action at VBA on June 30, 2011. This is an increase of over 68,000 claims since only the beginning of this year, and an increase of more than 350,000 since January 2010, a staggering 73 percent increase in pending workload in only 18 months. More significant, the number of claims pending longer than VA's target of 125 days rose from about 300,000 to nearly a half million over the past six months, representing a 60 percent increase since the beginning of this year. In total, more than 58 percent of all VA claims awaiting decisions at VBA have been pending longer than 125 days.

Even worse, the errors found in VA's rating decisions are growing (17 percent in 2010, and 23 percent in 2011 as measured by VBA and VA's Inspector General). As a consequence, today there are far too many disabled veterans making claims for veterans benefits, particularly disability compensation, who are waiting far too long and facing entrenched bureaucratic obstacles, and who ultimately will receive decisions that are far too often wrong.

Over the past two years, VA Secretary Shinseki has focused VBA on "breaking the back of the backlog." However, we should all remember that the backlog is not the core problem but is only a symptom. As shown here, the true and overarching problems at VBA are quality and accuracy. If the VBA focuses simply on reducing the backlog number, it will not sufficiently address the basic issues nor prevent the backlog from growing once again. To achieve real and lasting success, VBA must focus on creating a modern, paperless benefits claims-processing system designed to "decide each claim right the first time."

To their credit, VA Secretary Shinseki and the VBA senior leadership have openly acknowledged the problems at VBA and reached out to DAV and other VSOs to engage us in their work in developing reforms. Over the past two years, VBA has implemented a multi-pronged transformation strategy to modernize its infrastructure and business processes.

One of the major problems in the current claims processing system is VBA's outdated information technology system. As a remedy, a new electronic Veterans Benefits Management System (VBMS) is being developed. The new approach would allow claims to be processed in a paperless environment using rules-based decision support. Currently, VBA is field testing the VBMS in VA regional offices in Providence, Rhode Island and Salt Lake City, Utah, with full national deployment scheduled for 2012. VBA is also modernizing the methods and technologies it uses to interact with veterans as part of the Veterans Relationship Management system, which includes the "e-Benefits" program.

It should be noted that the VA invited DAV to participate in developing this new system and one of our staff members provided valuable input of the project for a month this spring.

VBA has also been conducting dozens of pilot tests of new business process improvements to reduce waiting times, increase production, and – hopefully – increase quality and accuracy. The newest and most important initiative is the Integration Laboratory VBA has established at the Indianapolis Regional Office. This new "I-Lab" is bringing together some of the best practices learned from these many pilots and synthesizing them to develop a more effective and efficient method of processing claims. VBA's new approach is to create different tracks for different types of claims, primarily based upon a complexity variable. Claims that have the fewest and easiest issues to be decided will be handled differently than those that present many and complicated issues. For example, one component of this new approach is the Fully Developed Claim (FDC) approach, already rolled out nationally. The FDC program allows veterans who file their claims complete with all of the outside evidence needed to rate the claims to undergo an expedited process that can cut weeks and even months off processing times. Another major initiative VBA has undertaken is the development of dozens of Disability Benefits Questionnaires (DBQs). These DBQs are intended to make it easier for veterans to present medical evidence in a standard format, particularly private medical evidence, in support of their claims.

While DAV has supported many of these pilots and applauded VBA's willingness to experiment, we continue to be concerned that given the impetus to reduce the backlog, VBA may ultimately favor IT and process reforms that increase speed and production, rather than those that enhance quality and accuracy. We continue to believe and assert to VA that quality and accuracy are the essential cornerstones for reforming the claims processing system.

To truly reform the veterans' benefits claims processing system, we must keep VBA and Congress focused on building up a new system for the future, not just knocking down today's "backlog." Together with our VSO colleagues, DAV has been working to ensure that VBA has the proper resources, tools and oversight to reach this goal. In particular, we have urged Congress to:

- Shift VBA's approach so that their primary goal is "deciding claims right the first time," not just "reducing the backlog";
- Provide aggressive oversight of VBA's myriad pilots to ensure that best practices are adopted and integrated into a new claims process focused on improving quality and accuracy;
- Ensure that the new Veterans Benefits Management System (VBMS) is provided sufficient time and resources to develop into a comprehensive, paperless, and rules-based platform for processing veterans' claims for benefits;
- Ensure that VBA's employee performance standards and work credit system create adequate incentives to increase quality and accuracy, not only speed or production; and,
- Ensure that VBA provides sufficient training to employees and tests all employees, including coaches and managers, on the skills, competencies, and knowledge required to do their jobs.

Over the next year, DAV will finalize a comprehensive set of specific legislative recommendations for Congress and work with our VSO colleagues and the Veterans Affairs Committees in the House and Senate to enact them into law. We have already begun to assemble a broad coalition in Washington to support this legislative action but we will once again need to rely on the powerful grassroots advocacy of DAV members nationwide. While there are no quick or easy ways to fix the claims processing system, we remain optimistic that working together we can make significant progress toward a system in which disabled veterans claims are done right the first time.

Conclusion

The success of the DAV continues in our endeavors surrounding service and legislation. Members of Congress, the VA, and other influential policy-makers in Washington can count on the DAV to speak with all the authority and conviction that our nine decades of service and advocacy have produced.

Your Washington staff has earned unparalleled respect as the top-notch professional veterans service organization, determined and committed to protecting and preserving the rights of our fellow disabled veterans.

Every one of your program directors and their staffs has spent years as advocates and NSOs representing veterans on a daily basis. They also have credibility that others who represent particular groups don't have...they are all service-connected disabled veterans themselves.

To be sure, the staff at your National Service and Legislative Headquarters in Washington has done an outstanding job providing the very best services to you and your families. But there is another critical ingredient. We in Washington would not be able to accomplish all that we have without you, our members. And that's a fact.

So, on behalf of the entire Washington Headquarters staff, I want to thank you for making it possible for us to serve you. We couldn't do it without every one of you and the faith and support you provide as we carry on the DAV's proud mission of service and hope for America's disabled veterans and their families.

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COMMANDER TYSON: Thank you, Barry. May I have a motion to accept Mr. Jesinoski's report, please. Mic 2.

MR. LeROY ACOSTA: Comrade Commander, Leroy Acosta, Dick Cosgriff San Diego Chapter 2, District 16, Department of California Commander, moves to accept the Executive Director Washington Headquarters' report.

COMMANDER TYSON: Thank you. May I have a second? Mic 1.

MR. SAL TORNATORE: Sal Tornatore, State of New York, seconds the motion for the fine report made by Barry. Thank you.

COMMANDER TYSON: All those in favor signify by saying aye; opposed. The motion is carried. (Applause)

WASHINGTON HEADQUARTERS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR JESINOSKI: There are thousands of outstanding employees working on behalf of veterans at the VA. Each year we select three of the most exemplary and we recognize them with the National Commander's Outstanding VA Employee awards.

An outstanding worker is selected from each of the Veterans Benefits Administration, Veterans Health Administration and the National Cemetery Administration. This year's recipients are fine examples of the best of the best at VA.

Shelly Mullins is Assistant Veterans Service Center Manager at the Nashville, Tennessee VA Regional Office. She was selected as the Outstanding Veterans Benefits Administration Employee for her efforts to deliver VA benefits to more than 500,000 Tennessee veterans and their families.

Shelly plays a key role in leading the Nashville Regional Office in attaining outstanding results in the delivery of compensation and pension benefits and services. She is extremely deserving of this award for her service to disabled veterans. Please welcome Shelly Mullins. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Shelly Mullins was presented with the National Commander's Award for Veterans Benefits.)

MS. SHELLY MULLINS: Thank you very much. This is quite an honor for me to stand before you and accept this award. Thank you, each and every one of you, for your service to our country. Because of you I have a job, I have a rewarding career where I have every day the privilege of serving you, our veterans, very deserving veterans of this nation.

I work at one of the regional offices. Part of the message we just heard is VBA, we have a lot of room for improvement. We are diligently striving to provide veterans with timely and accurate service. We have room for improvement. We are so fortunate that we have DAV partners working with us closely every day to help us to make sure we are making good decisions.

It's quite challenging. Nashville, in my opinion, is one of the best regional offices in the nation and we work hard every day. Every day is Veterans' Day. But it's not always enough. When you have over 12,000 claims pending any day it's really hard to prioritize which one is the most important, which one is the most deserving because they all are.

It's quite a challenge and I'm so lucky and blessed to be in front of you and say that each and every day I get to take part and help our veterans, help improve their lives and serve our veterans.

I was fortunate enough yesterday to attend one of the meetings and I'd like to echo one of the comments that I heard yesterday. Disabled American Veterans is the best service organization in this nation. Thank you. (Applause)

WASHINGTON HEADQUARTERS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR JESINOSKI: Thank you, Shelly. Peggy Lehman is the recipient of the Outstanding Veterans Health Administration Employee Award.

She is the Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation Supervisor at the Cincinnati, Ohio, VA medical center where she has directed the transformation of the Recreation and Creative Arts Therapy Program. This focuses on veterans becoming active participants in their lives.

Peggy has expanded the range of services available and improved the physical environment for veterans. Her qualities and accomplishments embody the values and the mission of the DAV. Let's give a nice hand to Peggy Lehman. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Peggy Lehman was presented with the National Commander's Award for Outstanding Member of the Veterans Health Administration.)

MS. PEGGY LEHMAN: Thank you. I want to take this opportunity to thank you for this prestigious award. I am both honored and humbled to receive this today.

I do share this recognition with the leadership at our Cincinnati VA medical center and the staff that I supervise who without their equal dedication to the disabled veterans and to our nation, I would not be standing here before you today.

As you heard, I do support the Rehab section of the VA medical center. And that encompasses many of our veterans, those with spinal cord injury, traumatic brain injury, those who are hearing impaired, most recently the returning OIF and OEF veterans.

We have built a program that sustains the VA veterans. Our team purposes mirrors that of the DAV in that we want to build better lives for all the disabled American veterans and for their families. We extend hope through a wide range of programs that cross many disciplines with the primary emphasis on those that do have some type of disability returning from war.

The DAV and the local chapters play an integral part in allowing us to do our job. The success stories that we have at our local VA I share with the DAV and the DAVA because without your financial support and your volunteerism that you give to us day-in and day-out we would not be able to serve the veterans in the way that we do.

In closing I want to thank you again for this recognition for doing something that I love to do every day. Thank you. (Applause)

WASHINGTON HEADQUARTERS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR JESINOSKI: Thank you, Peggy. The National Commander's Award for Outstanding Department of Veterans Affairs National Cemetery Administration Employee goes to John Shilling, foreman of the Great Lakes National Cemetery in Holly, Michigan.

There he ensures that last honors for deceased veterans are performed with the dignity and respect they and their families deserve. John is an example of excellence, compassion, hard work and results within the National Cemetery Administration. Let's pay our compliments to John Shilling. (Applause)

(Whereupon, John Shilling was presented with the National Commander's Award for Outstanding Department of Veterans' Affairs National Cemetery Administration Employee.)

MR. JOHN SHILLING: Well, I'm not much for words so I'm going to keep this short. Thank you. I'm very honored to receive this award. I've got to say this is the second time you've had the chance to touch my life. The first time was in 2002 when you helped my wife when she became a life member herself of the DAV. So with that I want to thank you and I applaud you for everything you do. (Applause)

WASHINGTON HEADQUARTERS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR JESINOSKI: Without question the recipients of the VA employee awards deeply care about those they serve. They provide the highest quality service to disabled veterans and their families and they take what they do very seriously.

The recipients of the Outstanding VA Employee Awards consider their work much more than a job. Each has a personal reason to ensure that veterans receive the best from each branch of the VA. Their work is part of their lives and their personal experiences are, in large part, the fundamental reason why they have chosen to serve our nation's veterans and their families.

The DAV is pleased to recognize them for what they and their colleagues do for our nation's veterans. They're making valuable contributions to the men and women who have served our nation with honor and devotion and for those who paid for our freedom with their sacrifices.

These awards are given with our deepest appreciation for what you do in putting veterans first. Once again, please give these outstanding VA employees a big round of applause. (Applause)

COMMANDER TYSON: It sure is easy to see why these individuals deserve this recognition. They are truly outstanding examples of the standard of excellence in the Veterans Administration. Thank you.

Michael J. Walsh joined DAV's professional staff in 1975 as a National Service Officer Trainee at the DAV's Pittsburgh office. With more than 35 years of service to the organization, today he serves as the DAV's National Director of Voluntary Service.

A combat disabled U.S. veteran from the Army, I would remind you, he was in the Vietnam War. He heads up a corps of DAV volunteers who, along with DAV Auxiliary volunteers, donate 2.3 million hours a year to volunteer work at our VA medical centers.

He also directs the nationwide DAV Transportation Network in which the DAV Hospital Service Coordinators arrange transportation for veterans who have no way to get to and from VA medical facilities.

The Network provides more than 7,000 – no, I'm sorry, it's a little larger than that – 750,000 rides for veterans per year. Thank you volunteer drivers. (Applause)

Additionally, Mr. Walsh directs and coordinates activities involving DAV co-sponsorships of the annual National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic which uses winter sports such as skiing to promote physical rehabilitation and therapy for veterans struggling to overcome the impact of profound disability.

The Clinic is the largest veterans event of its kind in the world. He also coordinates corporate sponsorship of the program. Please join me and provide a very warm welcome to our National Director of Voluntary Services, Michael J. Walsh. (Applause)

DIRECTOR OF VOLUNTARY SERVICES MICHAEL J. WALSH: Good morning, everyone.

(Response of "Good morning.")

DIRECTOR OF VOLUNTARY SERVICES WALSH: I think Wally just about gave my entire report. (Laughter) Thank you, Wally, for those kind remarks. National Commander Wally Tyson, National officers, and distinguished guests and delegates to the 90th National Convention of the Disabled American Veterans.

It's once again an honor to report to you about the efforts of thousands of men and women across America who share their time, talent and love with our nation's disabled veterans through the Voluntary Services Programs of the DAV.

This report focuses on the achievements of the past year. While our successes during 2010 and 2011 offer great cause for pride, though, let's remember that past accomplishments in and of themselves cannot answer today's needs.

To be effective today, we must build on yesterday's successes, transforming new and improved ideas into realities. We must ask ourselves what can we do to create a better life for disabled veterans and their families. Then we must take the action necessary to get the job done.

Volunteers span the full range of men and women in our society. The volunteer efforts of the poor are just as effective as those of the wealthy. You'll find America's youth and its senior citizens involved in volunteer activities. You'll find representatives of every religious, racial and ethnic group.

And do they get things done? You bet they do. Look at the successes of the many movements throughout, through which volunteers have acted to transform our society. These include involvement in such arenas as civil rights, women's suffrage, and, of course, veterans' rights.

Our very own organization, the DAV, was started by a group of volunteers who were inspired by an idea; and 90 years later our organization is achieving more than those original volunteers had ever imagined.

The following program descriptions represent statistics totaling money spent, the hours donated, and the number of people who participate in our volunteer effort. These figures can never fully represent the leadership and unselfish assistance provided by State VAVS Chairpersons, Hospital Representatives, Deputies, and individual volunteers.

No one can put a price on the programs like transportation to medical treatment, direct patient care, entertainment, and recreational and sporting activities. These statistics in this report merely measure what DAV and Auxiliary members, families and friends have done in accomplishing our organization's purpose. They cannot measure the gift our volunteers offer or the reward they receive in their own hearts.

The DAV Department of Veterans' Affairs Voluntary Service program is the largest of our volunteer initiatives. Through it, DAV volunteers provide a broad array of services to veterans in our nation's VA health care facilities. Under this program 12,420 DAV VAVS volunteers donated 2,009,270 hours in the 12 months ending September 2010.

With a group – (Applause) Thank you. With a group this large and the huge number of assignments they perform, you can imagine the extensive management effort that's carried out on a local level by the 19 State Chairpersons, the 140 VAVS Representatives, 159 Deputy Representatives, 7 Associate Representatives, and 1 Deputy Associate Representative.

The DAV volunteer effort is enhanced by a very active corps of 1,880 Auxiliary volunteers who donated 186,791 hours last year alone. Together, the DAV and Auxiliary volunteers provided over 2 million hours of VAVS service over the past year – considerably more than any other veterans' service organization.

This is equivalent – (Applause) This is equivalent to the VA having an additional 1,056 full-time employees with an estimated value of more than \$45 million in hourly wages alone. We have always enjoyed the success of a great corps of volunteers who volunteer in VAVS programs at VA medical centers as well as our Transportation Network.

Given the fact that not all volunteers live in close proximity to a VA medical center, the Local Veterans Assistance Program allows volunteers to provide needed services to veterans and their families in the local community and be recognized for that service.

We can't afford to have volunteers who currently volunteer in VAVS programs or drivers in our Transportation Network reallocate their volunteer time to this valuable program. We simply needed to create a program for those who want to do something for veterans and their families but could not due to their geographical location in relationship to VA facilities.

To date, a corps of 1,704 Local Veterans' Assistance Program volunteers from 23 states have gained the satisfaction of giving to others by donating 467,536 hours of service. These statistics are quite impressive and we invite all Departments and Chapters to get involved and make a difference.

Local Veterans Assistance Program volunteers may report volunteer time for a variety of activities which include, but not necessarily limited to: Chapter and Department Service Officer work; DAV-specific outreach efforts such as air shows, Harley's Heroes, National Guard mobilizations and demobilizations; and fund-raising efforts such as Forget-Me-Nots; and direct assistance to veterans, widows or families by doing yard work, home repairs, grocery shopping, and the list can just go on and on.

Because so many sick and disabled veterans lack transportation to and from VA health care facilities for needed treatment, DAV operates a nationwide Transportation Network. This program continues to show tremendous growth as an indispensable resource for veterans.

Across the nation, DAV Hospital Coordinators or HSCs operate 195 active programs. They have recruited 9,163 volunteer drivers who logged more than 27 million miles last year, providing transportation to over 700,000 veterans to and from VA health care facilities. (Applause)

Many of these veterans rode in vans DAV purchased and donated to VA health care facilities for use in the Transportation Network. DAV Departments and Chapters, together with the National Organization, have now donated 2,469 vans to VA health care centers nationwide at a cost of \$53,680,312.

This year we provided an additional 107 vans to VA medical centers that replaced many older vans or are being used to establish new routes to get under-served disabled veterans to and from treatment.

The George Seal Memorial Trophy, during its 33 years since its inception has, this award has become one of the most esteemed honors presented at the DAV National Convention.

VA medical center Volunteer Service Program Managers and DAV leaders throughout this nation are each encouraged to submit nominations for DAV and Auxiliary volunteers. J.T. Tate of DAV Chapter 4 in Alabama and the Birmingham VA medical center and Ada Perry of Unit Number 1 in Kentucky and the Lexington VA medical center were introduced to you at yesterday's Joint Opening Session.

The DAV and Auxiliary can be very proud of the service and dedication displayed by volunteers like J.T. and Ada and all the volunteers who each day, without fanfare or recognition, provide friendly service and compassionate support to disabled veterans. They are great people who make the DAV the great organization that it is.

The winners of the 2011 Jesse Brown Memorial Youth Scholarship have widely divergent interests, but they have one thing in common: they honor those who defended our nation's freedom by donating their time to assist disabled veterans.

The winner of this year's first place scholarship, Jack O'Sullivan, was introduced yesterday along with the announcement of the winners. They all have that rare combination of interest and empathy that comforts elderly patients and – yes, patients in the – who need someone to listen to them. DAV wishes each of them much success in their futures. (Applause)

Athletic programs for handicapped veterans have always been important to DAV. We have a long, proud history of leadership in efforts that encourage athletic activity among disabled veterans of all ages.

Working together with the VA, DAV leaders are committed to providing these men and women with opportunities to participate in sports which many thought would not be possible with their disabilities. This clinic is the largest rehabilitative clinic of its kind in the world.

During March 27th through April 1st of 2011, over 330 severely disabled veterans took part in the 25th National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic at Snowmass Village, Colorado. With almost 800 volunteers – including ski instructors, all of whom are certified in teaching the disabled – it was one of the best winter sports clinics ever conducted.

An annual event sponsored jointly by the DAV and VA, the clinic is open to veterans and active duty service members with visual impairments, spinal-cord injuries, certain neurological conditions, orthopedic amputations, and other severe disabilities.

We want to thank the sponsors of the 2011 National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic for their generous support. And a special note of thanks to the ever increasing number of DAV Departments, Chapters and Auxiliary entities who are committed to this event.

In 1992 we instituted the DAV Freedom Award at the National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic. It's given each year to the veteran who makes the most progress during the week, showing an outstanding courage and accomplishments in taking a giant step forward in the rehabilitation process.

On April 11, 2006, an Army Captain was leading a foot patrol in Anbar province in a town called Rawah on the Euphrates River. In an instant his life was forever changed. A suicide

bomber detonated explosives, claiming the life of his fellow soldier and inflicting damage to his brain and body.

Despite the challenges he faced, he and his wife have gone out of their way to bring light to the Traumatic Brain Injury issue and give the veterans who suffer in silence a voice.

The 2011 DAV Freedom Award was presented to Retired Army Captain Mark Brogan, a soldier whose energy, enthusiasm and spirit have been inspirational to coaches, volunteers and, most importantly, fellow participants. (Applause)

Continuing to provide a morale boost to disabled veterans, the DAV Celebrity Entertainment Program assures that hospitalized patients are not forgotten, that the American people still appreciate what they have done for all of us.

We are truly fortunate to sponsor some very talented people with a great deal of compassion for these veterans, so many of whom face long and lonely stays in hospitals, often far from family and friends.

Making more than 100 hospital visits last year alone, these wonderful people include Major League Baseball Umpires Larry Barnett and Jerry Layne, Actor Gary Sinise, a longtime supporter of veterans and the star of the hit TV series CSI: New York. In addition, they were incredibly generous about spending time with hospitalized soldiers and their families at VA medical centers across this country.

The DAV is indeed honored that such outstanding celebrities want to be a part of the DAV Celebrity Entertainment Program. We recognize the enormous demands they face, and we appreciate the gift of their valuable time. They have demonstrated that they are very deeply concerned about the needs of disabled veterans.

Many deserve our thanks for the great year the DAV volunteer programs have had. If it were not for their support the many programs mentioned in this report would not have been realized.

And I would like to take this opportunity to thank Laura Balun who heads up the Department of Veterans Affairs Voluntary Service Program, her staff, and the VAVS leadership teams at the many VA medical centers and clinics across this nation for their devotion and volunteerism.

The Voluntary Services Department during the past year has been very fortunate to have the support of DAV National Commander Wally Tyson and Auxiliary National Commander Susan Henry and their staffs, the National Officers, DAV Interim Hospital Committee, The Columbia Trust, National Service Foundation, and the Charitable Service Trust. Their assistance and support were essential ingredients of our 2010 success story.

And my sincere gratitude for the support of the staff of the National Headquarters led by Executive Director Marc Burgess and the staff of National Service and Legislative Headquarters led by recently retired Executive Director David W. Gorman and newly-appointed Executive Director Barry Jesinoski.

And my personal thanks to the Voluntary Services Support Specialist Linda DeMartino, Program Coordinator Joyce Barrett, Voluntary Services Administrative Secretary Amanda Menkedick, and Correspondents Wilma Henderson and Odie Hall for their invaluable assistance.

The successes reflected throughout this report were not be chance. National Adjutant Arthur Wilson has always been committed to DAV's Voluntary Services Program. And on behalf of the Voluntary Services Department we wish to thank him for his leadership and guidance and for having the confidence in me to use my talents in extending the DAV's mission of hope into VA medical centers and the local community.

And I would be remiss not to mention the true champions, the volunteer corps of the DAV and Auxiliary. Their devotion, compassion and commitment to the DAV's mission of building better lives for America's disabled veterans is truly second to none.

Thank you all for your continued support. And, Commander, this concludes my report. Thank you very much. (Applause)

(The following written annual report was submitted by Mr. Michael E. Walsh, National Director of Voluntary Services:)

ANNUAL REPORT
MICHAEL J. WALSH
NATIONAL DIRECTOR OF VOLUNTARY SERVICES
TO THE 90TH NATIONAL CONVENTION
OF THE DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS
NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA
AUGUST 6-9, 2011

NATIONAL COMMANDER WALLACE E. TYSON, NATIONAL OFFICERS, DISTINGUISHED GUESTS, AND DELEGATES TO THE 90TH NATIONAL CONVENTION OF THE DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS:

It's once again an honor to talk with you about the efforts of the thousands of men and women across America who share their time, talent and love with our nation's disabled veterans through the Voluntary Services Programs of the Disabled American Veterans (DAV).

Like all annual reports, this document focuses on the achievements of the past year. While our successes during 2010-2011 offer great cause for pride, though, let's remember that past accomplishments, in and of themselves, cannot answer today's needs. To be effective today, we must build on yesterday's successes, transforming new and improved ideas into realities. We must ask ourselves what we can do to create a better life for disabled veterans and their families. Then we must take the action necessary to get the job done.

Volunteers span the full range of men and women in our society. The volunteer efforts of the poor are just as effective as those of the wealthy. You'll find America's youth and its senior citizens involved in volunteer activities. You'll find representatives of every religious, racial and ethnic group. Do they get things done? Look at the successes of the many movements through which volunteers have acted to transform our society. These include involvement in such arenas as civil rights, abolitionism, women's suffrage, and of course veterans' rights. Let's remember that the Boston Tea Party, the Underground Railroad and the child labor movement were accomplished by volunteers. Our own organization, the DAV, was started by a group of volunteers who were inspired by an idea; and, 90 years later, our organization is achieving more than those original volunteers had ever imagined.

My point is very simple. You too can accomplish great and wonderful things! Trust that vision in your heart. Act on it. When apprehension threatens your dream, turn to the inner resources you'll find in your own heart. You know where they are. Those inner strengths will allow you to walk with confidence toward the future you've pictured in your soul.

This is important, because today's DAV and Auxiliary volunteers confront a new set of challenges and opportunities. Like the volunteers who founded the DAV, we must act on the ideas that will meet those challenges. We must make the most of any opportunity to help the disabled veteran who looks to us for help.

Even as the DAV celebrates its 90 years of service to America's disabled veterans and their families, the DAV Voluntary Services Program embarks on 65 years of volunteer service that has been second to none and a vital force of compassion in the lives of the veterans who populate the wards of the VA.

Today, as we celebrate the accomplishments of the DAV and all of the DAV volunteer programs, we really celebrate the wonderful people who have made our organization and its programs the envy of the veterans' community. I'd like to take a moment to salute those members and everything they've accomplished during the year just past. While we can and should be proud of our past achievements, we must also look ahead. We must determine where the DAV and Auxiliary will find new volunteers to meet the growing needs of our veterans, particularly those who are aging. After all, our volunteers are aging too, but maybe not as much. I've heard rumors that volunteering can keep you young!

If you're not already in the ranks of our volunteers, we need you. We need your time, your sensitivities, your ideas, and your help in making certain that America's veterans get the care they deserve. As you consider your own possible future role in our volunteer effort, please remember that there are more than enough opportunities to go around – not only at VA medical centers but in the communities where veterans live. Think of the unused skills and talents in our membership ranks! Think of the services we could offer veterans if more of us became involved!

The following program descriptions represent statistics totaling the money spent, the hours donated, and the number of people who participate in our volunteer effort. These figures can never fully represent the leadership and unselfish assistance provided by State VAVS Chairmen, Hospital Representatives, Deputies and individual volunteers. No one can put a price on programs like transportation to medical treatment, direct patient care, entertainment and recreational and sporting activities. No one can place a monetary value on doing for older veterans what they can no longer do for themselves. Nor could we place a dollar sign in front of the friendship one veteran extends to another...or the love an Auxiliary member holds out to a family much like their own. The statistics in this report merely measure what DAV and Auxiliary members, families and friends have done in accomplishing our organization's purpose. They cannot measure the gift our volunteers offer or the reward they receive in their own hearts.

DAV DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

VOLUNTARY SERVICES PROGRAM

The DAV Department of Veterans Affairs Voluntary Service program is the largest of our volunteer initiatives. Through it, DAV volunteers provide a broad array of services to veterans in our nation's VA healthcare facilities. Under this program, 12,420 DAV VAVS volunteers donated 2,009,270 hours in the 12 months ending September 2010.

With a group this large and the huge number of assignments they perform, you can imagine the extensive management effort that's carried out on a local level by 19 State Chairmen, 140 VAVS Representatives, 159 Deputy Representatives, seven Associate Representatives and one Deputy Associate Representative.

The DAV volunteer effort is enhanced by a very active corps of 1,880 Auxiliary volunteers who donated 186,791 hours last year. Together, DAV and Auxiliary volunteers provided 2,196,061 hours of VAVS service over the past year – considerably more than any other service organization. This is equivalent to the VA having an additional 1,056 full-time employees with an estimated value of more than \$45 million in hourly wages alone.

LOCAL VETERANS ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (LVAP)

In October 2007, we were happy to announce the creation of the Local Veterans Assistance Program (LVAP) to assist veterans and their dependents in their local communities that are not near a VA medical facility.

Opportunities have always existed for individuals to assist veterans and their dependents, and members of Disabled American Veterans (DAV) and the Auxiliary have always answered that call. We see examples of this each and every day aimed at meeting the main objective of our organization to build better lives for America's disabled veterans and their dependents.

We have always enjoyed the success of a great corps of volunteers who volunteer in VAVS programs at VA medical centers as well as our Transportation Network. Given the fact that not all volunteers live in close proximity to a VA medical center or other VA facility, the LVAP will allow volunteers to provide needed services to veterans and their families in their local community and be recognized for that service.

We can't afford to have volunteers who currently volunteer in VAVS programs or drivers in our Transportation Network reallocate their volunteer time in this new program. Our VAVS and Transportation Network volunteers are vital to the continued success of those programs and the veterans who rely on them each and every day. We simply needed to create a program for those who want to do something for veterans and their families, but could not due to their geographical location in relationship to VA facilities.

DAV is the only veterans' service organization which has a national volunteer recognition program to provide incentive awards for volunteers who provide service in activities in the name of DAV. LVAP volunteers will receive the same incentive awards as enjoyed by volunteers in the VAVS program.

To date, a corps 1,704 LVAP volunteers from 23 states have gained the satisfaction of giving to others by donating 467,536 hours of service. The statistics are quite impressive. We invite all Departments and Chapters to get involved and make a difference. Remember, LVAP volunteers will receive the same incentive awards as enjoyed by volunteers in the VAVS program.

And don't forget that youth volunteers who serve in the LVAP will also be eligible to apply for a scholarship through the Jesse Brown Memorial Youth Scholarship Program so long as they meet the minimum eligibility requirements for consideration.

LVAP volunteers may report volunteer time for a variety of activities which include, but are not limited to Chapter and Department Service Officer work; DAV specific outreach efforts (DAV Airshow Outreach Program, Harley's Heroes, National Guard mobilizations and demobilizations, etc.); fundraising efforts (Forget-Me-Not and other approved fundraisers) and direct assistance to veterans, widows, or families by doing yard work, home repairs, grocery shopping – the list abounds.

DAV HOSPITAL SERVICE COORDINATOR

TRANSPORTATION NETWORK PROGRAM

Because so many sick and disabled veterans lack transportation to and from VA healthcare facilities for needed treatment, DAV operates a nationwide Transportation Network. This program continues to show tremendous growth as an indispensable resource for veterans. Across the nation, DAV Hospital Service Coordinators (HSCs) operate 195 active programs. They've recruited 9,163 volunteer drivers who logged 27,221,727 miles last year, providing 702,796 rides for veterans to and from VA healthcare facilities. Many of these veterans rode in vans DAV

purchased and donated to VA healthcare facilities for use in the Transportation Network. DAV Departments and Chapters, together with the National Organization, have now donated 2,469 vans to VA healthcare centers nationwide at a cost of \$53,680,312.

At the DAV's 89th National Convention, Ford Motor Company donated seven Ford E-350, 12-passenger vans to the DAV Transportation Network. The VAMCs that received these vehicles were: Detroit, Michigan; Nashville, Tennessee; Salt Lake City, Utah; Fort Wayne, Indiana; Tacoma, Washington; Marion, Illinois and Washington, D.C. Ford has donated a total of 148 vehicles to the DAV Transportation Network since 1996.

This generous gift reflects Ford Motor Company's continued commitment to veterans. From the start, they have shown great interest in the DAV's mission of service and transportation to the many veterans who have no other means of getting to their VA medical appointments. Ford's participation with us is a real boost to the DAV Transportation Network program.

THE GEORGE H. SEAL MEMORIAL TROPHY

The George H. Seal Memorial Trophy recognizes an outstanding DAV and Auxiliary VAVS volunteer each year, people whose volunteer activities closely reflect the values that characterized the life of the late National DAV VAVS Representative George H. Seal.

During the 33 years since its inception, this award has become one of the most esteemed honors presented at the DAV's annual National Convention. VA medical center Voluntary Service Program Managers throughout the nation are each encouraged to submit nominations for DAV and Auxiliary volunteers. These nominations are then thoroughly evaluated by an independent committee of authorities in the field of voluntary service. The volunteers selected by the committee are brought to the DAV National Convention for the award presentation. After reviewing the nominations of DAV and Auxiliary volunteers, the committee chose as this year's winners:

DAV – J. T. Tate

Mr. J. T. Tate, a member of DAV Chapter 4, in Birmingham, Alabama has volunteered for 25 years and has accumulated 11,682 hours. It all began when DAV asked for volunteers and he heeded the call after just getting out of the service wanting to continue to work for veterans.

He arrives early at the Birmingham VA Medical Center (VAMC) refreshment station to make pots of coffee and share in the fellowship of veterans arriving for their appointments. Besides offering fresh coffee and plenty of friendship to the veterans he sees, Mr. Tate has volunteered in customer service, homeless veterans stand downs as well as serving as the VAVS Deputy Representative.

In addition to his VAVS duties, he is one of those dedicated volunteers who seek to help veterans at difficult times in their lives. Everyone he helps appreciate his sincere kindnesses.

DAV Auxiliary – Ada Perry

Ms. Ada Perry, an active member of DAV Auxiliary Unit 1, has served as a volunteer at the Lexington, Kentucky VA Medical Center for 11 years and has volunteered a total of 5,892 hours.

It all began for Ms. Perry who witnessed the care her late husband received at the Lexington VAMC and Nursing Home. They really were outstanding volunteers, so much so that she knew deep in her heart that she wanted to give back by volunteering too. Ms. Perry has overcome health obstacles of her own allowing her to relate all the more to the veterans and their families.

The first person veterans see and interact with when they visit the Lexington VAMC is Ada Perry and her fellow volunteers at the Information Desk. According to Greg Anderson, Chief of Voluntary Service, Ada serves as an excellent ambassador for the medical center and their volunteer program.

Mr. Tate and Ms. Perry will be presented with their awards during the opening session of the 2011 DAV and Auxiliary National Convention in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011.

The DAV and Auxiliary can be proud of the service and dedication displayed by volunteers like J.T. and Ada and all the volunteers who each day, without fanfare or recognition, provide friendly service and compassionate support to disabled veterans. They are great people and they help make the DAV the great organization that it is.

2011 JESSE BROWN MEMORIAL YOUTH SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

The Jesse Brown Memorial Youth Scholarship Program was created to honor outstanding young volunteers who are active participants in the VAVS and Local Veterans Assistance Program. The scholarships are awarded to deserving young men and women who have generously donated their time and compassion to sick and disabled veterans in their communities. The DAV is deeply appreciative of Ford Motor Company for helping DAV recognize the thousands of hours these outstanding students have donated to care for and comfort disabled veterans.

The winners of the 2011 Jesse Brown Memorial Youth Scholarships have widely divergent interests, but they have one thing in common – they honor those who defended our nation’s freedom by donating their time to assist disabled veterans.

1st Place	Jack O’Sullivan, Hines, IL VAMC	\$20,000
2nd Place	Eliana Hernandez, Miami, FL VAMC	\$15,000
3rd Place	Michaela Wahl, Wichita, KS VAMC	\$10,000
4th Place	Britney Heinbaugh, Louisville, KY VAMC	\$ 7,500
5th Place	Aaron Clark, Washington, DC VAMC	\$ 7,500
6th Place	Justine Hatton, Lexington, KY VAMC	\$ 5,000
7th Place	Jason Schultz, Milwaukee, WI VAMC	\$ 5,000
8th Place	Angel Vargas, Ft. Myers, FL VAOPC	\$ 5,000

Mr. Jack O’Sullivan is an avid student of veterans. As a volunteer at the Edward Hines, Jr., VA Medical Center, outside of Chicago, he recognizes that veterans have insight and knowledge that cannot be gained through reading history books. He says that veteran patients he’s encountered are a living history lesson. This 19 year old is inspired by the stories of the veterans he spends time with. He has that rare combination of interest and empathy that comforts elderly patients in the cardiology department who need someone to listen to them.

A volunteer for more than five years, Jack has earned the respect of medical center officials. With over 800 hours of volunteer work, he is involved in a recycling project to reclaim silver from old heart catheterization films. Money from the project is returned to the VA medical center budget to be used to help more veterans.

Jack, entering his second year of college at St. Louis University hopes to use the \$20,000 scholarship to study medicine. His long-term goal is to become a cardiologist or orthopedic surgeon working with veterans. This outstanding youth volunteer carries a grade point average of 4.0 with a course of advance classes. His character and the way he values veterans is unique. He is a remarkable example of the Jesse Brown Memorial Youth Scholarship winner.

Mr. Jack O’Sullivan will be presented with his scholarship during the opening session of the 2011 DAV and Auxiliary National Convention in New Orleans, Louisiana.

The selection committee once again stated that all of the nominees are very special volunteers and it was a difficult job to choose a winner. I wish we could award each of them with a scholarship. Each eligible nominee has been awarded a certificate of merit for outstanding volunteer performance in meeting the needs of disabled veterans.

NATIONAL DISABLED VETERANS WINTER SPORTS CLINIC

Athletic programs for handicapped veterans have always been important to DAV. We have a long, proud history of leadership in efforts that encourage athletic activity among disabled veterans of all ages. Working together with the VA, DAV leaders are committed to providing these men and women with opportunities to participate in sports which many thought would not be possible with their disabilities. This clinic is the largest rehabilitative clinic of its kind in the world.

More and more, doctors recognize it’s not enough to stabilize patients medically and send them home. Without an introduction to sports or recreation, the hospital will see that person again and again. Disabled people involved in sports generally experience fewer medical problems than those who aren’t, therapists say. Athletics help maintain cardiovascular conditioning, increase circulation to the extremities and avert skin breakdowns. Another advantage is that sports are community-based rather than hospital-based undertakings. The DAV believes disabled veterans should have the same opportunity as non-disabled individuals to participate in these activities.

During March 27-April 1, 2011, well over 300 severely disabled veterans took part in the 25th National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic at Snowmass Village, Colorado. With hundreds of volunteers – including ski instructors, most of whom are certified in teaching the disabled – it was one of the best winter sports clinics ever conducted. An annual event sponsored jointly by the DAV and VA, the clinic is open to veterans and active duty service members with visual impairments, spinal-cord injuries, certain neurological conditions, orthopedic amputations, or other severe disabilities.

We want to thank the sponsors of the 2011 National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic for their generous support. A special note of thanks to the ever increasing number of DAV and Auxiliary entities who are committed to this event. Our sponsors this year were:

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Philips Respironics
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Three Wire Systems

DAV Freedom Award – In 1992 we instituted the DAV Freedom Award at the National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic. It is given each year to the veteran who makes the most progress during the week, showing outstanding courage and accomplishments in taking a giant step forward in the rehabilitation process.

The award's inscription reads: "Your accomplishments during the National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic have proved to the world that physical disability does not bar the doors to freedom. We salute your desire to excel so that others may follow." Every year, one participant is chosen for The Disabled American Veterans Freedom Award for Outstanding Courage and Achievement.

A native of Tennessee, this year's Freedom Award winner started his journey while serving in the Army ROTC at the University of Tennessee. In May of 2002, he began his career as a US Army Cavalry Officer and was assigned to A Troop, 4th Squadron, 14th Cavalry, 172 Stryker Brigade Team at Fort Wainwright, Alaska. From there, our Freedom Award recipient, now a Captain, was deployed to Iraq to lead a platoon of infantry soldiers in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

On April 11, 2006, the Captain was leading a foot patrol in Anbar province in a town called Rawah on the Euphrates River. In an instant, his life was forever changed. A suicide bomber detonated explosives, claiming the life of his fellow soldier and inflicting violent damage to his brain and body.

Beyond survival, the road to recovery was difficult. With warrior spirit and amazing medical care, he set out on a path toward recovery. While his wife encountered what she described as something out of a horror film when she first encountered her husband after his injury, he was put back together again.

Though nearly losing his arm and having half of his skull removed to allow his brain to swell, the process of recovery restored his good looks. His speech came back relatively quickly. Though he completely lost hearing in his left ear as a result of his injury and endures traumatic stress, most people never know the extent of his recovery or the sacrifices he's made on behalf of our nation.

Despite the challenges he faces, he and his wife have gone out of their way to bring light to the TBI issue and give the veterans who suffer in silence a voice. From the halls of congress to leadership in veterans' service organizations, they have selflessly given of themselves to ensure our nation owes up to its obligation to those who've sacrificed in service.

At the National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic, this brave soldier has shown his warrior spirit on the slopes and in his interactions with his fellow veterans. He has put his leadership on display. He's contributed to our community and shown the true extent of his character.

In recognizing this soldier who suffers from an invisible wound, we also recognize his spouse, Sunny, and all the caregivers who so valiantly give of themselves to ensure the morale and quality of life for the ones they love. Not enough can be said about the efforts they undertake to make worthwhile lives and support our participants and cause.

The 2011 DAV Freedom Award was presented to retired Army Captain Mark Brogan, a soldier whose energy, enthusiasm and spirit have been inspirational to coaches, volunteers and – most importantly – fellow participants.

Clinic Statistics

Veteran Participants:

Total veterans: 335 *New veterans:* 101 *New OIF veterans:* 20
Male veterans: 296 *Women veterans:* 39 *Youngest participant:* 23 *Oldest participant:* 89

Branch of Service:

Army: 164 *Air Force:* 55 *Navy:* 67
Marines: 48 *Coast Guard:* 8

Periods of War:

World War II: 4 *Gulf War:* 37 *Korean War:* 7
Operation Iraqi Freedom: 60 *Vietnam War:* 62 *Operation Enduring Freedom:* 29

Locations:

State Represented: 46 *VA Medical Centers represented:* 86

The 26th National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic promises to be better and bigger and will be held March 30 through April 7, 2012, in Snowmass Village, Colorado.

DAV CELEBRITY ENTERTAINMENT PROGRAM

Continuing to provide a morale boost to disabled veterans, the DAV Celebrity Entertainment Program assures that hospitalized patients are not forgotten...that the American people still appreciate what they have done for all of us.

We're truly fortunate to sponsor some very talented people with a great deal of compassion for these veterans, so many of whom face long and lonely stays in hospitals, often far from family and friends. Making more than 100 hospital visits last year alone, these wonderful people include Major League Baseball Umpires Larry Barnett and Jerry Layne. Actor Gary Sinise, a longtime supporter of veterans and the star of the hit TV series CSI: New York performed with his "Lt. Dan Band" for convention-goers. In addition they were incredibly generous about spending time with hospitalized soldiers and their families at VA medical centers across the country.

The DAV is indeed honored that such outstanding celebrities want to be a part of the DAV Celebrity Entertainment Program. We recognize the enormous demands they face, and we appreciate the gift of their valuable time. They have demonstrated that they care very deeply about the needs of disabled veterans.

We continue to sponsor celebrities and several major and minor league baseball players at VA hospital visits by signing autographs, presenting patients with photographs and help brighten the day for sick and disabled veterans in VA healthcare facilities all across the country.

IN CLOSING

Many deserve our thanks for the great year the DAV volunteer programs have had. If it were not for their support, the many programs mentioned in this report would not have been realized.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Laura Balun, who heads up the Department of Veterans Affairs Voluntary Service Program, her staff, and the VAVS leadership team across the nation for their devotion to volunteerism.

The Voluntary Services Department during this past year has been very fortunate to have the support of DAV National Commander Wallace E. Tyson and Auxiliary National Commander Susan M. Henry and their staffs, the National Officers, DAV Interim Hospital Committee, The Columbia Trust, National Service Foundation, and the Charitable Service Trust. Their assistance and support were essential ingredients of our 2010 success story. My sincere gratitude for the support of the staff of National Headquarters led by Executive Director Marc Burgess, and the staff at National Service and Legislative Headquarters led by recently retired Executive Director David W. Gorman and Executive Director Barry Jesinoski. My personal thanks to Voluntary Services Support Specialist Linda DeMartino; Program Coordinator Joyce Barrett; Voluntary Services Administrative Secretary Amanda Menkedick and Correspondents Wilma Henderson and Odie Hall for their invaluable assistance.

We've experienced outstanding support from DAV's corps of National Service Officers and Hospital Service Coordinators who have played a vital role in support of the Voluntary Services Programs. The success of those programs can in part be attributed to their participation and support. The successes reflected throughout this report were not by chance. National Adjutant Arthur H. Wilson has always been committed to DAV's Voluntary Services Program and, on behalf of the Voluntary Services Department, we wish to thank him for his leadership and guidance and for having confidence in me to use my talents in extending the DAV's mission of hope into VA medical centers and the local community.

I would be remiss not to mention the true champions – the men and women and today's youth who care enough to make a difference in the lives of so many – the volunteer corps of the DAV and Auxiliary. As has often been said, "There is no higher distinction than service to others." And there are none more distinguished than the men and women who are out there right now, working to bring the comfort of love and the joy of life to our nation's disabled veterans and their families. Your devotion, compassion and commitment to DAV's mission of building better lives for America's disabled veterans is truly second to none.

Thank you.

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS VA VOLUNTARY SERVICE (VAVS) (October 1, 2009 through September 30, 2010)

NUMBER OF REGULARLY SCHEDULED VAVS VOLUNTEERS	14,300
NUMBER OF HOURS BY REGULARLY SCHEDULED VOLUNTEERS	2,196,061
NUMBER OF HOURS BY OCCASIONAL VOLUNTEERS	62,678
NUMBER OF HOURS BY ALL VAVS VOLUNTEERS	2,133,383

VAVS APPOINTED POSITIONS	
NUMBER OF STATE CHAIRMEN	19
NUMBER OF STATE CHAIRMEN ALSO SERVING AS REPRESENTATIVES	9
NUMBER OF REPRESENTATIVES	140
NUMBER OF DEPUTY REPRESENTATIVES	159
NUMBER OF ASSOCIATE REPRESENTATIVES	7
NUMBER OF DEPUTY ASSOCIATE REPRESENTATIVES	1
NUMBER OF APPOINTED POSITIONS	335
ANNUAL JOINT REVIEWS RECEIVED FOR THE YEAR	47

DAV TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM
(January 1, 2010 through December 31, 2010)

TOTAL NUMBER OF HOSPITAL SERVICE COORDINATORS (HSCs)	190
NUMBER OF VETERANS TRANSPORTED	638,654
TRANSPORTATION HOURS	1,427,308
TRANSPORTATION MILES	24,307,165

2010 NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION NETWORK GRANTS

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION NETWORK HSC PROGRAM GRANTS	\$ 273,622
NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION NETWORK VAN GRANTS (107 vans purchased and delivered in 2010)	\$ 2,661,600
2010 Total National Grant Expenditures	\$ 2,935,222

COMMANDER TYSON: Thanks, Mike. I'll entertain a motion to accept Mr. Walsh's excellent report. Mic 1.

UNIDENTIFIED DELEGATE: (Undistinguishable) Representative, VAVS, Chapter 23, Bronx, New York, on behalf of the great State of New York, on behalf of our outstanding New York leaders I move to accept the outstanding report from the National Director Michael J. Walsh.

COMMANDER TYSON: Thank you. Mic 2. Mic 1.

MR. LARRY DeANGELO: Mic 1.

COMMANDER TYSON: Mic 1.

MR. DeANGELO: Larry DeAngelo, Chapter 94, Florida, seconds that motion.

COMMANDER TYSON: Thank you. All those in favor signify by saying aye; opposed. So ordered.

ANNUAL REPORT of the
DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS
NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE DEPARTMENT
for 2010-2011 by
JOSEPH A. VIOLANTE
NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR
for presentation to
THE 90TH NATIONAL CONVENTION
New Orleans, Louisiana
August 6-9, 2011

NATIONAL COMMANDER WALLACE "WALLY" TYSON AND DISTINGUISHED DELEGATES:

On this occasion of the 90th National Convention of the Disabled American Veterans (DAV), I am pleased to provide a report on the status of the National Legislative Department. This report includes both an outline of current and upcoming steps necessary to attain the legislative goals established by our 1.2 million members and a summary of the legislative activities that occurred during the months since our previous National Convention.

The successes we achieved during the past year to protect veterans benefits from erosion and enhance services required the full commitment and support of DAV's leadership and the enduring dedication and participation of our membership. Therefore, let me acknowledge the highly effective manner in which National Commander Wally Tyson and the DAV National Line Officers communicated our message to our elected officials and to the American public. Let me especially acknowledge the essential support we receive from DAV's professional management, National Adjutant Arthur H. Wilson, now retired Washington Headquarters Executive Director Dave Gorman and his successor Barry Jesinoski, National Headquarters Executive Director Marc Burgess, and the professional staffs of the DAV National Service and Legislative Headquarters and National Headquarters. Of course, my own staff of the Legislative Department works diligently to keep abreast of new developments and ensure we respond with appropriate and timely action. Their dedication and hard work ensured the successes DAV has experienced during the last several years. Most of you know them, but just let me mention them by name: Deputy National Legislative Director Joy Ilem, Assistant National Legislative Director Adrian

Atizado, Assistant National Legislative Director John Wilson, Assistant National Legislative Director Jeff Hall and Legislative Support Specialists Lisa Bogle, Caren Wooley and Angela Kauffin. In addition, our efforts have been supported by three highly effective advisors, John M. Bradley, Peter Dickinson and Amy Hogan, who have worked tirelessly on our Stand Up for Veterans campaign as well as in health care and benefits policy and legislation.

Certainly, we rely heavily on DAV National Service Officers and DAV and Auxiliary officers and members to keep us informed and coordinate with our Benefits Protection Team Leaders in grassroots lobbying. We also rely on the efforts of the members of our grassroots program, the DAV Commanders Action Network—DAV CAN. In addition, we use numerous organizational resources to achieve our goals, including the latest innovations in electronic media to carry our message to legislators and the American public. Further, we continue to use the power of the Internet to communicate with public officials, our membership and the public. In today's fast-paced, competitive world, we must take advantage of every tool at our disposal.

Hearings

Since last year's National Convention, the DAV legislative staff has testified at 15 Congressional hearings, covering 52 bills and draft measures, as well as myriad other issues. Below is a summary of all of these hearings.

On September 16, 2010, DAV submitted testimony for the record of the House Veterans' Affairs Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity concerning the Post-9/11 GI Bill.

On September 16, 2010, DAV testified before the House Veterans' Affairs Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs concerning the effectiveness of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) training program for Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) employees who process disability claims.

On September 29, 2010, DAV testified before the House Veterans' Affairs Subcommittee on Health on 11 bills under consideration by the Committee.

On September 30, 2010, DAV testified before the House Veterans' Affairs Committee concerning the continuing cost of war.

On February 17, 2011, DAV testified before the House Veterans' Affairs Committee to discuss the views of the DAV and The Independent Budget concerning the fiscal year (FY) 2012 budget for VA.

On March 1, 2011, National Commander Wallace E. Tyson testified before a joint hearing of the House and Senate Veterans' Affairs Committees to present DAV's legislative agenda for the year.

On March 2, 2011, DAV testified before the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee to discuss the views of the DAV and The Independent Budget concerning the fiscal year 2012 budget for VA.

On March 3, 2011, DAV testified before the House Veterans' Affairs Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity concerning the FY 2012 budget, particularly in regard to the Department of Labor's Veterans Employment and Training Service.

On March 11, 2011, DAV testified before the House Veterans' Affairs Subcommittee on Health on the implementation plan for the Caregiver Assistance Program.

On March 17, 2011, DAV testified before the House Veterans' Affairs Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs concerning the FY 2012 budget for National Cemeteries, the American Battle Monuments Commission and the Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims.

On March 31, 2011, DAV testified before the House Veterans' Affairs Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity concerning the FY 2012 Budget for the Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment program.

On May 3, 2011, DAV testified before the House Veterans' Affairs Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs on seven bills under consideration by the Subcommittee.

On May 13, 2011, DAV testified before the House Veterans' Affairs Subcommittee on Health on the Federal Recovery Coordinator Program, and whether it has begun to fulfill its promise.

On June 8, 2011, DAV testified before the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee on 34 bills under consideration.

On June 13, 2011, DAV testified before the House Veterans' Affairs Subcommittee on Health regarding a recently released Government Accountability Office (GAO) report (GAO-11-530)—Actions Needed to Prevent Sexual Assaults and Other Safety Incidents to the Committee on the issue of the prevention of sexual assaults and other related safety incidents occurring in Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) health care facilities.

Enacted Legislation

Veterans Benefits Act of 2010, Public Law 111-275 - Enacted on October 13, 2010

This law, originally H.R. 3219, is a comprehensive bill, with a number of important provisions to disabled veterans and their families, including:

- Automobile Grant, which now is also provided to veterans with severe burn injuries, has been increased from \$11,000.00 to \$18,900.00 and will be indexed to the Consumer Price Index to allow for annual adjustment;
- Enhancement of disability compensation for severely disabled veterans who have difficulty using prostheses; (criteria change more favorable to amputees – prior language “so near the [joint of the affected limb(s)]” preventing use of prosthesis is changed to “with factors” preventing use of prosthesis. Example, painful neuroma.)
- Aid and Attendance benefits for veterans suffering from Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI); (This means veterans with service-connected TBI may not meet the eligibility criteria for Special Monthly Compensation “R-2” [or special aid and attendance], so this change allows them to receive the additional compensation at the maximum level.
- Supplemental Service-Disabled Veterans’ Insurance (SDVI or “RH”) has been increased from \$20,000.00 to \$30,000.00 for totally disabled veterans;
- Veterans Mortgage Life Insurance (VMLI) for disabled veterans has been increased from \$90,000.00 to \$150,000.00 effective October 1, 2011, and beginning in 2012 it will be increased to \$200,000.00;
- Increase in the number of veterans who can participate in VA’s independent living services and assistance program from 2,600 to 2,700;
- Increase in the amount of burial/funeral expense benefits from \$300.00 to \$700.00, and increases the amount of plot or interment allowance from \$300.00 to \$700.00; both will be indexed to the Consumer Price Index to allow for annual adjustment.

Post 9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2010, Public Law 111-377 - Enacted on January 4, 2011

This bill expands and improves the Post 9/11 GI Bill that went into effect last year and it simplifies and improves benefits in a fiscally responsible way. Specifically, the Act enables veterans to use their benefit for vocational and on-the-job training, expands eligibility for the benefit to National Guardsmen who are activated for domestic assistance, provides active duty troops with additional assistance to purchase books, and provides severely injured veterans and their caregivers with additional time to use their benefits. Section 205 allows veterans with service-connected disabilities that participate in a program of vocational rehabilitation under chapter 31 of title 38, United States Code, who are also entitled to Post-9/11 GI Bill education benefits, to choose whether to receive the monthly housing stipend payable under the Post-9/11 GI Bill or a monthly subsistence allowance.

Mid-Term Elections – Changes in Key Committees

During the mid-term elections of 2010, control of the United States House of Representatives transferred from the Democrats to the Republicans. Almost 100 new members were elected to the House, many of them occupying elected positions for the very first time. The House Veterans’ Affairs Committee was particularly affected by the election. Only 12 of its previous 29 members were reelected. Representative Jeff Miller (R-FL), a long-time member of the House Veterans’ Affairs Committee, was named Chairman of the Committee for the 112th Congress. Representative Bob Filner (D-CA) serves as Ranking Democratic Member. We confront an unusual circumstance in that all Subcommittee Chairmen on the House Veterans’ Affairs Committee for this Congress are freshman members. This situation presents a challenge for our legislative staff because we have to educate these new members of Congress about the DAV—who we are and what we do—and our issues and priorities. Also, many new Members of Congress had no understanding of or experience with VA, what it does, and what it means to disabled veterans, or of the Committee’s long-term support and protection of benefits granted to veterans by previous Congresses. The overwhelming focus on the Federal deficit and debt situations has made our role ever more critical to ensure no erosion of VA benefits occurs in the haste of Congress to address the Federal financial and monetary situation.

Although political control of the Senate did not change as a result of the 2010 election, leadership of the Veterans’ Committee did change. Former Chairman Akaka remains a member of the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs, but Senator Patty Murray (D-WA) was named Chairman for the 112th Congress. Senator Richard Burr (R-NC) will continue as Ranking Republican Member. We look forward to working with them and all the members of the Committees to

bring about beneficial legislation for disabled veterans, their families and survivors. We are especially grateful to Senator Akaka and his staff for their exemplary and enlightened leadership in shepherding through to final passage a variety of helpful legislation for America's disabled veterans and their families. I am positive we will continue to see such leadership by Chairman Murray and her professional staff.

Department of Veterans Affairs Fiscal Year 2012 Budget

The Administration's budget request for fiscal year (FY) 2012 included some modest funding increases for VA health care and benefits programs, but DAV has been concerned about whether this budget would sufficiently meet the needs of sick and disabled veterans who rely on VA. The results of a recent Government Accountability Office (GAO) report (see below) on VA's budget formulation process do not increase our confidence that VA is allowed by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to forecast its real, proven needs for resources, especially in health care.

Medical Care: The Administration's requested \$53.9 billion, which assumed collections in the amount of \$3.1 billion in place of direct appropriations. Alternatively The Independent Budget (IB) recommended \$55 billion for these accounts, an increase of \$3.5 billion above the proposed FY 2011 level, and \$1.1 billion higher than the Administration's request.

Medical and Prosthetic Research: The Administration's request of \$509 million would be a reduction of \$72 million from current research funding levels. The IB recommended \$620 million to cover documented inflation, to continue current research projects, to allow VA to better understand and develop treatments for the unique injuries and diseases of the veteran population.

Benefits Processing: The \$2 billion budget request for the activities of the Veterans Benefits Administration would be \$130 million less than the FY 2011 funded level. This reduction would take place during a time of great transition in VA's efforts to reform the benefits processing system – DAV's highest legislative priority.

Major Construction: The \$590 million Administration budget request for Major Construction would be \$604 million less than the \$1.194 billion Congress is considering for FY 2011. This is the single largest drop in funding for all VA accounts, more than 50 percent. This reversal was deeply concerning to DAV and all those who rely on VA for safe, contemporary facilities for delivery of our health care.

For Medical Care, the Administration requested approval of a "Contingency Fund" in the amount of \$953 million, based upon VA's uncertainty about whether the national economic situation will increase veterans' use and reliance on the VA health care system. As proposed, these funds would only be made available if VA requested their use, and received approval from OMB. Any amount not spent by the end of FY 2012 would be returned to the Treasury.

In addition, VA requested authority to carry over \$1.1 billion in FY 2011 Medical Care funds to be used for future spending in FY 2012 (\$500 million) and FY 2013 (\$600 million). VA testified it intends to reduce FY 2011 spending through the use of unspecified "efficiencies" this year.

Finally, the FY 2012 budget proposal includes a request for \$55.8 billion in advance appropriations for VA health care accounts in FY 2013, which assumes \$3.3 billion in collections. This would be an increase of \$1.9 billion over the Administration's FY 2012 request in the same account.

On June 14, 2011, after consideration of a series of floor amendments most of which were rejected, the full House of Representatives overwhelmingly voted to approve the funding levels as recommended by the Appropriations Committee. On June 30, Senate appropriators advanced their version of the appropriations bill, which closely matches the House-passed bill. However, the Senate bill provides \$581 million for VA medical and prosthetic research, \$72 million more than the Administration's request and the House-passed measure.

At the time of this report, the full Senate had not acted on this funding bill but was expected to do so after the August recess. We expect the House and Senate will hold a conference on this appropriations measure later this summer or fall. We will keep you updated on VA's budget as events warrant.

Government Accountability Office Report on Advance Appropriations

On June 14, 2011, GAO released its report on the VA budget, which was required by Public Law 111-81, the advance appropriations law. The GAO report confirms several of our concerns about gimmicks in this budget, including:

- \$1.1 billion carryover from this year (FY 2011);
- \$2.5 billion in "operational improvements;" and
- the so-called "contingency fund."

The GAO report also uncovered another \$2.5 billion that the Office of Management and Budget cut from the VA for FY 2012 and FY 2013 for needed equipment and maintenance. DAV will request that both House and Senate Veterans' Affairs and Appropriations Committees conduct oversight hearings to ensure that we have an honest and transparent VA budget process in keeping with Congressional intent in passing Public Law 111-81.

Key Legislative Initiatives

Since the early days of the 112th Congress, my staff and I have held dozens of meetings with new and returning members of the House and Senate, to educate them about DAV and our legislative priorities.

In February 2011, the IB for FY 2012 was released. The four coauthoring organizations of the IB, AMVETS, DAV, Paralyzed Veterans of America, and Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States, have worked in collaboration for 25 years to honor veterans and their service to our nation. Throughout the year, each organization works collaboratively to identify and address legislative and policy issues that affect the organizations' memberships, the broader veterans' community, the work of the Veterans Benefits Administration and that of the VA health care system, always with an eye to protecting and enhancing the federal benefits veterans have earned and deserve. The IB also presents our carefully developed estimates of funding needed to ensure that VA, the Department of Labor and the Federal Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims are properly funded to ensure protection and enhancement of veterans' benefits and services.

On March 2, 2011 House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi held her quarterly veterans' roundtable in which the DAV participated.

On May 25, 2011, the House Republican leadership held a roundtable on veterans' issues, in which the DAV participated.

On June 15, 2011, DAV was present with House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi and her leadership, along with other veterans service organizations, at a roundtable discussion on veterans' issues.

These roundtables are extremely important because they provide DAV with an informal forum in which to present our issues to congressional leadership. I firmly believe that DAV's successful Stand Up for Veterans campaign was a success because of our ability to sit down with leadership, discuss the issues and, along with other members of the veteran/military/family community, convince the leadership of the importance of passing our initiatives.

Reforming the Veterans Benefits Claims Processing System

Although the number of claims processed by the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) has grown to more than a million cases per year – the highest number ever – the volume of new and reopened claims filed continues to grow at an even faster pace. As a result, there were 832,674 claims for disability compensation and pensions awaiting action at VBA on June 30, 2011. This is an increase of over 68,000 claims since only the beginning of this year, and an increase of more than 350,000 since January 2010, a staggering 73 percent increase in pending workload in only 18 months. More significant, the number of claims pending longer than VA's target of 125 days rose from about 300,000 to nearly a half million over the past six months, representing a 60 percent increase since the beginning of this year. In total, more than 58 percent of all VA claims awaiting decisions at VBA have been pending longer than 125 days.

Even worse, the errors found in VA's rating decisions are growing (17 percent in 2010, and 23 percent in 2011 as measured by VBA and VA's Inspector General). As a consequence, today there are far too many disabled veterans making claims for veterans benefits, particularly disability compensation, who are waiting far too long and facing entrenched bureaucratic obstacles, and who ultimately will receive decisions that are far too often wrong.

Over the past two years, VA Secretary Shinseki has focused VBA on "breaking the back of the backlog." However, we should all remember that the backlog is not the core problem but is only a symptom. As shown here, the true and overarching problems at VBA are quality and accuracy. If the VBA focuses simply on reducing the backlog number, it will not sufficiently address the basic issues nor prevent the backlog from growing once again. To achieve real and lasting success, VBA must focus on creating a modern, paperless benefits claims-processing system designed to "decide each claim right the first time."

To their credit, VA Secretary Shinseki and the VBA senior leadership have openly acknowledged the problems at VBA and reached out to DAV and other VSOs to engage us in their work in developing reforms. Over the past two years, VBA has implemented a multi-pronged transformation strategy to modernize its infrastructure and business processes.

One of the major problems in the current claims processing system is VBA's outdated information technology system. As a remedy, a new electronic Veterans Benefits Management System (VBMS) is being developed. The new approach would allow claims to be processed in a paperless environment using rules-based decision support. Currently, VBA is field testing the VBMS in VA regional offices in Providence, Rhode Island and Salt Lake City, Utah, with full national deployment scheduled for 2012. VBA is also modernizing the methods and technologies it uses to interact with veterans as part of the Veterans Relationship Management system, which includes the "e-Benefits" program.

VBA has also been conducting dozens of pilot tests of new business process improvements to reduce waiting times, increase production, and – hopefully – increase quality and accuracy. The newest and most important initiative is the Integration Laboratory VBA has established at the Indianapolis Regional Office. This new "I-Lab" is bringing together some of the best practices learned from these many pilots and synthesizing them to develop a more effective and efficient method of processing claims. VBA's new approach is to create different tracks for different types of claims, primarily based upon a complexity variable. Claims that have the fewest and easiest issues to be decided will be handled differently than those that present many and complicated issues. For example, one component of this new approach is the Fully Developed Claim (FDC) approach, already rolled out nationally. The FDC program allows veterans who file their claims complete with all of the outside evidence needed to rate the claims to undergo an expedited process that can cut weeks and even months off processing times. Another major initiative VBA has undertaken is the development of dozens of Disability Benefits Questionnaires (DBQs).

These DBQs are intended to make it easier for veterans to present medical evidence in a standard format, particularly private medical evidence, in support of their claims.

While DAV has supported many of these pilots and applauded VBA's willingness to experiment, we continue to be concerned that given the impetus to reduce the backlog, VBA may ultimately favor IT and process reforms that increase speed and production, rather than those that enhance quality and accuracy. We continue to believe and assert to VA that quality and accuracy are the essential cornerstones for reforming the claims processing system.

To truly reform the veterans' benefits claims processing system, we must keep VBA and Congress focused on building up a new system for the future, not just knocking down today's "backlog." Together with our VSO colleagues, DAV has been working to ensure that VBA has the proper resources, tools and oversight to reach this goal. In particular, we have urged Congress to:

- Shift VBA's approach so that their primary goal is "deciding claims right the first time," not just "reducing the backlog";
- Provide aggressive oversight of VBA's myriad pilots to ensure that best practices are adopted and integrated into a new claims process focused on improving quality and accuracy;
- Ensure that the new Veterans Benefits Management System (VBMS) is provided sufficient time and resources to develop into a comprehensive, paperless, and rules-based platform for processing veterans' claims for benefits;
- Ensure that VBA's employee performance standards and work credit system create adequate incentives to increase quality and accuracy, not only speed or production; and,
- Ensure that VBA provides sufficient training to employees and tests all employees, including coaches and managers, on the skills, competencies, and knowledge required to do their jobs.

Over the next year, DAV will finalize a comprehensive set of specific legislative recommendations for Congress and work with our VSO colleagues and the Veterans Affairs Committees in the House and Senate to enact them into law. We have already begun to assemble a broad coalition in Washington to support this legislative action but we will once again need to rely on the powerful grassroots advocacy of DAV members nationwide. While there are no quick or easy ways to fix the claims processing system, we remain optimistic that working together we can make significant progress toward a system in which disabled veterans claims are done right the first time.

DAV 2011 Mid-Winter Conference

On February 27 through March 2, 2011, the DAV held its annual Mid-Winter Conference. The focal point of the conference was National Commander Wally Tyson's presentation to a joint session of the House and Senate Veterans' Affairs Committees to present DAV's legislative agenda for 2011. During the conference, DAV's national service and legislative staffs presented

key information on a variety of subjects of our concern to hundreds of members from across the country. DAV members in attendance used that week to visit their elected representatives on Capitol Hill, to present DAV's most important national legislative issues as well as their own issues of concern from their states and local congressional districts. This Mid-Winter conference experience is grassroots lobbying at its finest and most effective, and provides me and my staff the energy and ideas to conduct our work in Washington, D.C. throughout the year. I congratulate and thank all our members who attended this year's highly successful DAV Mid-Winter Conference and encourage your attendance at next year's Mid-Winter Conference.

Conclusion

In the upcoming year, we will deal with VA-related benefits and health issues from a position of strength and a devotion to purpose. DAV will continue to lead the way in helping solve the complex problems that have plagued the VA benefits claims process to ensure that all disabled veterans receive the full range of benefits they have earned through their service, and will do so in a timely manner. We will also work to ensure that the provisions in Public Law 111-163, the Caregiver and Veterans Omnibus Health Services Act of 2010, are implemented faithfully as we and Congress intended in pushing this legislation through to final passage, and that the provisions are expanded to include veteran caregivers of all generations. This legislation was written to forge a new paradigm of long-term care support services for severely wounded service members—and to acknowledge and fully support the sacrifice and vital role played by family caregivers of all generations of disabled veterans.

In the year ahead, undoubtedly a number of new issues will arise and we will face challenges to maintain the benefits disabled veterans have earned through their service to America. DAV stands ready to face these issues and challenges head-on with the unwavering support and strength of our membership. We need your strength and dedication to help us achieve these important goals. We need you to Stand Up for Veterans. If we don't, then who will?

Finally, I would be remiss if I didn't say more about the retirement of Dave Gorman who, for more than 20 years, has been a dear friend, co-worker, mentor, boss and role model to me. His dedicated service to the DAV and disabled veterans, their families and survivors for more than 40 years is inspiring. The respect he garnered from DAV staff and members, from the past several Administrations, numerous Secretaries of Veterans Affairs and Members of Congress and their staff is extraordinary. As the official voice of the Disabled American Veterans before the Administration and Congress, Dave was responsible for the great achievements in veterans' benefits and services accomplished by DAV in the past 16 years. All disabled veterans and family members owe him a debt of gratitude. Dave will be sorely missed, but I take great comfort in the fact that his replacement, Barry Jesinoski, has a long devoted history with the DAV, has a great mentor in National Adjutant Art Wilson, the total support of the dedicated staff at DAV National Service and Legislative Headquarters and the drive and commitment to ensure that Dave's legacy lives on and that DAV remains the premier veterans service organization.

In closing, I want to thank all DAV and DAVA members for their contributions during this extremely successful past year, a truly historic year for DAV and its membership. I call upon you to continue engaging with us, Congress and the Administration in fulfilling our organizational mission of building better lives for America's disabled veterans and their families.

ANNUAL REPORT
Garry J. Augustine
NATIONAL SERVICE DIRECTOR
to the DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS
90TH NATIONAL CONVENTION
August 6 – August 9, 2011

Revolutionizing Service with Advancements in Technology

It is my sincere pleasure as National Service Director to present to the delegates at the 90th National Convention my report of the continued success of the National Service Department. The Disabled American Veterans (DAV) continues to understand the vital importance of a strong voice to advocate for the rights and interests of disabled veterans and their families.

We continue to make positive strides toward fulfilling our promise to take care of those who have served in the United States Armed Forces. These brave men and women are committed to the country, and we must ensure that we do not falter in our responsibility to take care of those who return with injuries. Their injuries serve as daily reminders of the sacrifices that they made.

When Judge Robert S. Marx and 100 disabled veterans of World War I gathered in Cincinnati, Ohio, on December 25, 1919, it was the start of what would be the finest veterans service organization in the world. I can only imagine that Judge Marx would certainly be proud of the service we provide to America's disabled veterans, service that has evolved into today's finest, best trained, best equipped, and most dedicated veterans' advocates in the world. The DAV was founded because the government was not fulfilling its obligations to the Nation's wartime disabled veterans. Obviously, there was a need for representation and a strong voice within Congress. This still rings true today, and has been since the beginning of the veterans benefits process.

If history teaches us anything, it is that protecting our benefits will only become more difficult in the future. Needless to say, we must continue to develop initiatives to revolutionize the services we provide to our Nation's disabled veterans and their families.

Over the years, the DAV has made tremendous strides in acquiring and utilizing state-of-the-art computer technology to assist veterans and their families in filing claims for benefits. DAV National Service Officers (NSOs) have access to an impressive array of resources, including access to the extensive databases of the VA.

As American writer Stewart Brand observed, "Once a new technology rolls over you, if you're not part of the steamroller, you're part of the road." The world is rapidly changing with today's new technology and the DAV has responded to these never-ending changes and became part of the steamroller in order to continue to provide the best representation available to disabled veterans, their dependents, and survivors. The VA continues to develop a paperless claims processing system, and DAV is prepared to continue to provide consistent quality service and advocacy to disabled veterans and their families within this new system as we have always done. In keeping with today's technology, DAV has also embraced new technology and electronic networks and NSOs now have dual computer monitors and their computers have the most [up to date] programs and software available to remain compatible with the VA claims processing initiatives. NSOs are able to track cases right from their desks through a direct link with VA databases.

Throughout DAV's history we have continually adapted to the ever-changing needs of disabled veterans, their dependents, and survivors. As our business practices continue to evolve based upon the rapidly changing advancements in technology, we will continue to do everything possible to ensure all of our country's disabled veterans and their families receive the rights and benefits they have earned.

NATIONAL SERVICE PROGRAM

Building better lives for our nation's disabled veterans and their families. This is accomplished through service. Service has always been the mainstay of the Disabled American Veterans. Our largest endeavor in fulfilling the DAV's mission is our National Service Program. In 100 offices throughout the United States and in Puerto Rico, we employ a corps of approximately 240 National Service Officers (NSOs) and 30 Transition Service Officers (TSOs) who counsel and represent veterans and their families with claims for benefits from the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Department of Defense and other government agencies.

Veterans need not be members to take advantage of our assistance, which is provided free of charge. With outlays of \$38,768,385 in 2010, these direct services make up the largest item in our budget for program activities. Our NSOs and TSOs, all wartime service-connected disabled veterans, represented nearly a quarter of a million veterans and their families in their claims for VA benefits, obtaining for them more than \$4.5 billion in new and retroactive benefits.

NSOs function as attorneys-in-fact, assisting veterans and their families in filing claims for VA disability compensation, rehabilitation and education programs, pensions, death benefits, employment and training programs. They provide free services, such as information seminars, and counseling and community outreach activities such as the Mobile Service Office (MSO). NSOs also represent veterans and active duty military personnel before Discharge Review Boards, Boards for Correction of Military Records, Physical Evaluation Boards, the Disability Transition Assistance Program, the Transition Assistance Program and other official panels.

DAV NATIONAL SERVICE OFFICER TRAINING PROGRAMS

DAV National Service Officers continually train throughout their careers so that they are cognizant of the changes in all laws and regulations affecting veterans benefits. This constant training assures that all DAV NSOs are at the forefront of veterans advocacy. Our NSOs are highly trained professionals and skilled experts in developing and prosecuting veterans' claims through in-depth reviews of medical histories, in conjunction with application of current law and

regulations. They also review rating board decisions, informing veterans and their families of the appeals process and of their appellate rights.

The extensive preparation required for these essential services provided by NSOs begins with a 16-month on-the-job training program, which provides the foundation for new trainees. Trainees are instructed by tenured supervisory NSOs. The National Service staff at National Service and Legislative Headquarters administers and monitors the program and the instructors. An NSO's training does not stop after completing 16 months of initial training. In fact training never stops because the laws, regulations, and policies, which govern veterans' benefits, continue to change and grow in complexity. That's why equipping our NSOs with state-of-the-art computers and keeping their cutting-edge advocacy skills up to date is of paramount importance. The DAV is the only veterans service organization to have a training program certified for college credit by the American Council on Education.

In addition to these training programs, supervisory staff and selected NSOs from field offices across the country receive specialized instruction in management and leadership development. The goal is to produce the most highly trained representatives possible to serve veterans and their families.

NATIONAL APPEALS OFFICE

The Board of Veterans' Appeals (BVA) is the highest appellate level within the VA responsible for the final decision concerning entitlement to veterans benefits. About 96 percent of the claims before the board involve disability compensation issues. Our highly skilled National Appeals Officers serve appellants in the preparation of written briefs for BVA review and conduct formal hearings before Veterans Law Judges. We maintain the largest staff of any advocacy group, representing 29 percent of all cases decided by the BVA in 2010.

JUDICIAL APPEALS

DAV continues its pro bono representation program for veterans seeking review in the United States Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims. In fiscal 2009-10, the BVA took action on more than 14,000 cases involving DAV clients. Each and every one of those cases was reviewed to identify those in which a veteran's claim was improperly denied. Thanks to DAV, more than five hundred of these cases were appealed to the court. While we are still working toward our goal of appealing each and every significant case, it is hard to believe that just a few years ago, we had yet to crack the two hundred case per year mark.

The substantial growth of this program would not have been possible without the coordinated efforts of two top-notch law firms – Finnegan Henderson of Washington, D.C., and Chisholm Chisholm & Kilpatrick of Providence, Rhode Island and Washington, D.C. Robert Chisholm (of the Chisholm firm) and Ron Smith (of Finnegan) are two of the nation's most accomplished members of the veterans bar, and DAV is proud and pleased to have them in prominent roles in our enlarged program at the court. By this time next year, we hope to be able to report still another substantial jump in the number of appealed cases.

TRANSITION SERVICE PROGRAM

For those servicemembers making the all-important transition back into civilian life, DAV participates in Transition Assistance and Disabled Transition Assistance programs. Due to a generous grant provided by the GE Foundation, we have been able to increase our staff of Transition Service Officers.

Our TSOs provide benefits counseling and assistance to servicemembers filing initial claims for VA benefits at military installations throughout the country. By filing compensation claims at separation centers where service medical records and examination facilities are readily available, we are able to provide prompt service to these future veterans. Over the last year, our TSOs conducted nearly 3,000 formal presentations to 82,155 transitioning servicemembers. During that same time they filed 26,598 claims for VA benefits. Counsel and representation for active duty servicemembers during their transition was provided through the military's Disability Evaluation System. We devoted approximately \$1.8 million to this program in 2010.

MOBILE SERVICE OFFICE PROGRAM

The Mobile Service Office (MSO) Program continues to reach out to veterans in their own communities. Not all veterans are willing or able to visit a DAV office due to distance, transportation, health or other reasons. By literally putting our service offices on the road, assisting veterans where they live, DAV is increasing their accessibility to benefits. With 10 specially equipped Mobile Service Offices visiting communities across the country, this outreach effort generates a considerable amount of claims work from those veterans who may not otherwise have the opportunity to seek assistance at our National Service Offices. During

2010, our MSOs traveled more than 114,248 miles, visiting 815 cities and towns. Our NSOs interviewed 20,190 veterans and other potential claimants. The Harley-Davidson Foundation in August 2010 pledged a second \$1 million over four years to partner with the DAV to maintain the Harley's Heroes® program. During 2010, the MSOs visited 183 Harley-Davidson dealerships as part of this program. Nearly \$870,000 was expended for the Mobile Service Office program in 2010, which included 10 new MSOs replacing the aged fleet.

OUTREACH PROGRAMS

The National Service Department has the cooperation, support, and assistance of Department and Chapter Service Officers across the country. Each receives the training and information necessary to assist those we serve. Our Department and Chapter Service Officer Certification Training Program guarantee's the vitality and growth of our local service programs. This provides an environment where our Hospital Service Coordinators, Department and Chapter Service Officers, and volunteers work together for the common goal of service to disabled veterans. In 2010, DAV trained and certified 1,409 Department and Chapter Service Officers in 33 states.

During 2010, we conducted 42 Information Seminars at various Chapters across the country, with 6,603 individuals in attendance. These Information Seminars provide the opportunity for veterans to discuss VA benefits with our NSOs in their own community, giving Chapters an opportunity to recruit new members and encourage their involvement.

Since 2006, DAV NSOs have offered services at other community-based events, including participation with state and county fairs, air shows, Major League Baseball, the National Football League, and NASCAR.

WOMEN VETERANS

In historic numbers, women are serving our country with pride, patriotism and honor equal to their male counterparts. But women veterans use VA health care facilities and other earned benefits in lower numbers than their male counterparts. As a result, we advocate for women veterans on a variety of fronts. We have organized top-level forums designed to bring women veterans and government policymakers together to openly address topics of concern.

We are involved in the congressionally chartered VA Advisory Committee on Women Veterans. In addition, our own Women's Advisory Committee, primarily made up of women veterans from across the country, meets annually at our National Convention. We actively seek out and recruit women veterans for our National Service Officer corps.

EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM

Our National Service Program is responsible for the organization's employment-related program and works alongside the Department of Labor, the VA, the Office of Personnel Management, Congress and other government agencies to ensure that disabled veterans are treated fairly and equitably in the work force.

Historically, disabled veterans have not fared as well as non-disabled veterans and other workers in the job market. Our primary goal is to seek legislation and policies to enhance programs and services provided by the Departments of Labor and Veterans Affairs, the Small Business Administration, the Office of Personnel Management, and other government agencies. Our active involvement and oversight ensure disabled veterans get fair consideration in the job market.

HOMELESS VETERANS

Homelessness has been a constant presence in America's cities, towns, and rural areas for many years. Since the early 1980s, homelessness has been a regular focus of media interest and a topic of policy debate and remains one of America's most complicated and important social issues.

The DAV's Homeless Veterans Initiative is to seek legislation and policies to enhance programs and services to help homeless veterans break the cycle of poverty and isolation and move from the streets to self-sufficiency. Your National Service Officers and Department and Chapter members have participated in Stand Downs for homeless veterans nationwide, and on behalf of the National Service Staff, I extend thanks for all that each of you do to make a significant difference in the lives of homeless veterans and their families across the Nation.

RETIREMENTS

DAV NSOs are service-connected disabled veterans from all walks of life. They uphold the great principles of this organization and work to ensure that veterans and their families have legal representation and a voice when filing claims to the VA for benefits. NSOs understand their role as veteran advocates and are dedicated to the DAV's mission of service and improving the livelihood of veterans disabled during military service.

Our experienced professional NSOs who have retired this past year leave a legacy of commitment and dedication of serving their comrades as advocates for fair and equitable benefits. These individuals served their country in her hour of need and returned home, many with deep scars of war, to work on behalf of others disabled due to their military service. From the National Service Staff, we wish each of these NSOs a long and healthy retirement. We appreciate their efforts in support of our cause. For the record, those who retired this past year are: John Kessinger, Paul Sydorko, Gregory Jones, Ronald Hope, Gregory Seurer, Gary Weaver, and David Gorman.

DEATHS

We call to remembrance our National Service Officers whose demise occurred this year. As the Nation's veteran population rapidly declines -- the attrition takes its toll on our NSO ranks. These NSOs have provided services and helped improve the quality of life for scores of disabled veterans, their dependents, and survivors. We shall recall and preserve the legacy of the following departed NSOs: Denvel Adams, Bruno Hassen, Robert Jordan, John Keller, Verne Nygaard, Guillermo Pajo, and Karl Brown.

CONCLUSION

At this time, I wish to recognize the leadership, professionalism, and personal sacrifices made by our National Commander Wallace Tyson, and all of the National Line Officers; members of the National Executive Committee; the National Finance Committee; and the Officers and Board of Directors for both the National Service Foundation and Charitable Service Trust. I extend my thanks and salute you for a job well done.

I thank National Adjutant Arthur H. Wilson for his continued leadership, vision, and direction. Our success is a reflection of his tireless efforts to inspire and ensure quality and professionalism in all that we do. He has kept us focused on what it takes to bring to fruition our mission of service to disabled veterans and their families. In addition, I express my gratitude to National Headquarters Executive Director Marc Burgess and his team for their support of our goals and programs during the past year. I also want to welcome recently appointed Washington Headquarters Executive Director Barry Jesinoski. The Service Department looks forward to his leadership, his approach and participation in veteran affairs, and his direct involvement in management of the National Service Department.

I would like to extend a special note of thanks to recently retired Washington Headquarters Executive Director David W. Gorman. Dave joined the DAV's professional staff as a National Service Officer some 40 years ago. He kept us focused on what it takes to bring to fruition our mission of service to disabled veterans and their families. The Service Department will certainly miss his steadfast guidance, direction, and active involvement in managing the National Service Department; we are not only enriched but also more sound as an organization due to his involvement.

Appreciation is extended to the National Service Department staff members with whom I have the pleasure of working: Deputy National Service Director Brenda Kecskes and Assistant National Service Directors, Scott Trimarchi, Chad Moos, John Maki, and Jim Marszalek; and our staff of devoted Service Support Specialists, Emily Hall, Amanda Evans, and Theodora Taylor. Our successes are not single-handed. We receive the dedicated and capable assistance and cooperation of the DAV Auxiliary, Department and Chapter Service Officers, and Hospital Service Coordinators. Thank you all for your support.

Last and most important of all, I wish to thank our loyal and dedicated corps of National Service Officers, Transition Service Officers, and support staff members who advocate on behalf of America's disabled veterans and their families. The National Service Department will continue to do everything possible to ensure all of our country's disabled veterans and their families receive the rights and benefits they have earned.

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DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS
Recapitulation of Service Activities
July 1, 2010 through June 30, 2011

Office: National Totals

1. NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	79,411
2. COMPENSATION INCREASED	63,896
3. COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	89,840
4. PENSION	5,773
5. PENSION MAINTAINED	5,417
6. SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7. EDUCATION BENEFITS	38,664
8. MISCELLANEOUS	2,600
9. DEATH COMPENSATION	2,354
10. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	271
11. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS MAINTAINED	49
12. DEATH PENSION	1,072
13. INSURANCE	2
14. BURIAL ALLOWANCES	999
15. PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	22
16. TOTAL AWARDS	290,370
17. TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	\$308,569,235.00
18. TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	\$4,732,191,918.00
19. FULL AMOUNT	\$5,040,761,153.00
20. VA FILES REVIEWED	289,295
21. POWER OF ATTORNEYS	115,271
22. INTERVIEWS	189,336
23. RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	251,374
24. MILITARY AFFAIRS	55,963
25. SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	35
26. NEW CLAIMS	259,661
27. MEMBERSHIP	7,637
28. BRIEFINGS	3525
29. PARTICIPANTS	65861

Office: Phoenix, Arizona

1. NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	990
2. COMPENSATION INCREASED	614
3. COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	1,248
4. PENSION	59
5. PENSION MAINTAINED	39
6. SOCIAL SECURITY	70
7. EDUCATION BENEFITS	740
8. MISCELLANEOUS	46
9. DEATH COMPENSATION	44
10. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	1
11. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS MAINTAINED	0
12. DEATH PENSION	6
13. INSURANCE	0
14. BURIAL ALLOWANCES	18
15. PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16. TOTAL AWARDS	3,805
17. TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	\$3,624,906.00
18. TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	\$55,688,995.00
19. FULL AMOUNT	\$59,313,901.00
20. VA FILES REVIEWED	4,836
21. POWER OF ATTORNEYS	2,209
22. INTERVIEWS	6,549
23. RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	4,533
24. MILITARY AFFAIRS	8
25. SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	0
26. NEW CLAIMS	4,533
27. MEMBERSHIP	61
28. BRIEFINGS	0
29. PARTICIPANTS	0

Office: Sacramento, California

1. NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	319
2. COMPENSATION INCREASED	383
3. COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	351
4. PENSION	9
5. PENSION MAINTAINED	16
6. SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7. EDUCATION BENEFITS	0
8. MISCELLANEOUS	0
9. DEATH COMPENSATION	0
10. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
11. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS MAINTAINED	0
12. DEATH PENSION	0
13. INSURANCE	1
14. BURIAL ALLOWANCES	0
15. PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16. TOTAL AWARDS	1,079
17. TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	\$1,298,450.00
18. TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	\$26,307,986.00
19. FULL AMOUNT	\$27,606,436.00
20. VA FILES REVIEWED	1,025
21. POWER OF ATTORNEYS	297
22. INTERVIEWS	541
23. RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	1,011
24. MILITARY AFFAIRS	45
25. SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	0
26. NEW CLAIMS	1,364
27. MEMBERSHIP	47
28. BRIEFINGS	3
29. PARTICIPANTS	197

Office: Montgomery, Alabama

1. NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	2,052
2. COMPENSATION INCREASED	1,701
3. COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	2,887
4. PENSION	269
5. PENSION MAINTAINED	233
6. SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7. EDUCATION BENEFITS	977
8. MISCELLANEOUS	183
9. DEATH COMPENSATION	44
10. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
11. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS MAINTAINED	0
12. DEATH PENSION	36
13. INSURANCE	0
14. BURIAL ALLOWANCES	18
15. PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16. TOTAL AWARDS	8,400
17. TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	\$7,776,657.00
18. TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	\$119,971,634.00
19. FULL AMOUNT	\$127,748,291.00
20. VA FILES REVIEWED	6,117
21. POWER OF ATTORNEYS	2,248
22. INTERVIEWS	3,499
23. RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	5,622
24. MILITARY AFFAIRS	4
25. SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	0
26. NEW CLAIMS	5,176
27. MEMBERSHIP	129
28. BRIEFINGS	2
29. PARTICIPANTS	89

Office: Little Rock, Arkansas

1. NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	1,339
2. COMPENSATION INCREASED	1,990
3. COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	2,097
4. PENSION	131
5. PENSION MAINTAINED	114
6. SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7. EDUCATION BENEFITS	765
8. MISCELLANEOUS	70
9. DEATH COMPENSATION	39
10. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
11. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS MAINTAINED	0
12. DEATH PENSION	29
13. INSURANCE	0
14. BURIAL ALLOWANCES	20
15. PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16. TOTAL AWARDS	6,594
17. TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	\$6,412,495.00
18. TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	\$87,071,137.00
19. FULL AMOUNT	\$93,483,632.00
20. VA FILES REVIEWED	7,865
21. POWER OF ATTORNEYS	965
22. INTERVIEWS	5,469
23. RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	7,615
24. MILITARY AFFAIRS	1
25. SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	1
26. NEW CLAIMS	3,166
27. MEMBERSHIP	78
28. BRIEFINGS	0
29. PARTICIPANTS	0

Office: Oakland, California

1. NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	878
2. COMPENSATION INCREASED	1,015
3. COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	1,112
4. PENSION	96
5. PENSION MAINTAINED	42
6. SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7. EDUCATION BENEFITS	1,124
8. MISCELLANEOUS	41
9. DEATH COMPENSATION	46
10. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	2
11. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS MAINTAINED	0
12. DEATH PENSION	9
13. INSURANCE	0
14. BURIAL ALLOWANCES	18
15. PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16. TOTAL AWARDS	4,383
17. TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	\$4,530,037.00
18. TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	\$59,959,423.00
19. FULL AMOUNT	\$64,489,460.00
20. VA FILES REVIEWED	3,510
21. POWER OF ATTORNEYS	1,530
22. INTERVIEWS	6,638
23. RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	3,033
24. MILITARY AFFAIRS	221
25. SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	0
26. NEW CLAIMS	4,593
27. MEMBERSHIP	242
28. BRIEFINGS	45
29. PARTICIPANTS	1054

Office: Anchorage, Alaska

1. NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	566
2. COMPENSATION INCREASED	454
3. COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	420
4. PENSION	11
5. PENSION MAINTAINED	0
6. SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7. EDUCATION BENEFITS	526
8. MISCELLANEOUS	2
9. DEATH COMPENSATION	6
10. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
11. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS MAINTAINED	0
12. DEATH PENSION	0
13. INSURANCE	0
14. BURIAL ALLOWANCES	3
15. PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16. TOTAL AWARDS	1,991
17. TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	\$1,125,714.00
18. TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	\$19,765,610.00
19. FULL AMOUNT	\$20,891,324.00
20. VA FILES REVIEWED	1,581
21. POWER OF ATTORNEYS	693
22. INTERVIEWS	799
23. RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	1,460
24. MILITARY AFFAIRS	0
25. SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	0
26. NEW CLAIMS	1,508
27. MEMBERSHIP	41
28. BRIEFINGS	1
29. PARTICIPANTS	14

Office: Los Angeles, California

1. NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	1,451
2. COMPENSATION INCREASED	1,415
3. COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	1,465
4. PENSION	198
5. PENSION MAINTAINED	141
6. SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7. EDUCATION BENEFITS	2,268
8. MISCELLANEOUS	25
9. DEATH COMPENSATION	36
10. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	1
11. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS MAINTAINED	2
12. DEATH PENSION	27
13. INSURANCE	0
14. BURIAL ALLOWANCES	14
15. PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16. TOTAL AWARDS	7,043
17. TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	\$6,548,084.00
18. TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	\$76,197,832.00
19. FULL AMOUNT	\$82,745,916.00
20. VA FILES REVIEWED	4,915
21. POWER OF ATTORNEYS	2,583
22. INTERVIEWS	3,961
23. RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	4,490
24. MILITARY AFFAIRS	1,625
25. SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	0
26. NEW CLAIMS	4,998
27. MEMBERSHIP	142
28. BRIEFINGS	53
29. PARTICIPANTS	1,350

Office: San Diego, California

1. NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	4,395
2. COMPENSATION INCREASED	2,600
3. COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	2,487
4. PENSION	55
5. PENSION MAINTAINED	72
6. SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7. EDUCATION BENEFITS	330
8. MISCELLANEOUS	16
9. DEATH COMPENSATION	33
10. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	129
11. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS MAINTAINED	0
12. DEATH PENSION	4
13. INSURANCE	0
14. BURIAL ALLOWANCES	11
15. PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16. TOTAL AWARDS	10,132
17. TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	\$13,362,198.00
18. TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	\$223,432,323.00
19. FULL AMOUNT	\$236,794,521.00
20. VA FILES REVIEWED	7,843
21. POWER OF ATTORNEYS	3,821
22. INTERVIEWS	10,476
23. RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	7,188
24. MILITARY AFFAIRS	17,148
25. SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	1
26. NEW CLAIMS	5,701
27. MEMBERSHIP	53
28. BRIEFINGS	997
29. PARTICIPANTS	15998

Office: Denver, Colorado

1. NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	1,688
2. COMPENSATION INCREASED	2,305
3. COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	2,299
4. PENSION	156
5. PENSION MAINTAINED	48
6. SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7. EDUCATION BENEFITS	2,284
8. MISCELLANEOUS	73
9. DEATH COMPENSATION	79
10. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	10
11. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS MAINTAINED	2
12. DEATH PENSION	22
13. INSURANCE	0
14. BURIAL ALLOWANCES	23
15. PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16. TOTAL AWARDS	8,989
17. TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	\$7,642,287.00
18. TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	\$105,774,193.00
19. FULL AMOUNT	\$113,416,480.00
20. VA FILES REVIEWED	10,965
21. POWER OF ATTORNEYS	5,923
22. INTERVIEWS	4,466
23. RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	10,624
24. MILITARY AFFAIRS	3,945
25. SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	1
26. NEW CLAIMS	11,842
27. MEMBERSHIP	808
28. BRIEFINGS	78
29. PARTICIPANTS	1325

Office: Washington, D.C.

1. NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	111
2. COMPENSATION INCREASED	229
3. COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	109
4. PENSION	15
5. PENSION MAINTAINED	16
6. SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7. EDUCATION BENEFITS	10
8. MISCELLANEOUS	30
9. DEATH COMPENSATION	6
10. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	9
11. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS MAINTAINED	1
12. DEATH PENSION	11
13. INSURANCE	0
14. BURIAL ALLOWANCES	1
15. PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16. TOTAL AWARDS	548
17. TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	\$554,924.00
18. TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	\$10,456,293.00
19. FULL AMOUNT	\$11,011,217.00
20. VA FILES REVIEWED	4,770
21. POWER OF ATTORNEYS	1,453
22. INTERVIEWS	2,562
23. RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	4,659
24. MILITARY AFFAIRS	977
25. SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	0
26. NEW CLAIMS	2,099
27. MEMBERSHIP	10
28. BRIEFINGS	316
29. PARTICIPANTS	3230

Office: St. Petersburg, Florida

1. NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	4,954
2. COMPENSATION INCREASED	4,554
3. COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	5,300
4. PENSION	446
5. PENSION MAINTAINED	302
6. SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7. EDUCATION BENEFITS	2,904
8. MISCELLANEOUS	493
9. DEATH COMPENSATION	232
10. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
11. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS MAINTAINED	0
12. DEATH PENSION	101
13. INSURANCE	0
14. BURIAL ALLOWANCES	154
15. PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16. TOTAL AWARDS	19,440
17. TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	\$17,819,810.00
18. TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	\$265,237,683.00
19. FULL AMOUNT	\$283,057,493.00
20. VA FILES REVIEWED	15,526
21. POWER OF ATTORNEYS	7,417
22. INTERVIEWS	5,996
23. RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	13,502
24. MILITARY AFFAIRS	1,512
25. SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	4
26. NEW CLAIMS	16,795
27. MEMBERSHIP	132
28. BRIEFINGS	53
29. PARTICIPANTS	864

Office: Newington, Connecticut

1. NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	888
2. COMPENSATION INCREASED	448
3. COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	1,062
4. PENSION	33
5. PENSION MAINTAINED	42
6. SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7. EDUCATION BENEFITS	231
8. MISCELLANEOUS	5
9. DEATH COMPENSATION	17
10. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	19
11. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS MAINTAINED	0
12. DEATH PENSION	3
13. INSURANCE	0
14. BURIAL ALLOWANCES	0
15. PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16. TOTAL AWARDS	2,748
17. TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	\$2,838,177.00
18. TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	\$39,944,043.00
19. FULL AMOUNT	\$42,782,220.00
20. VA FILES REVIEWED	3,391
21. POWER OF ATTORNEYS	1,271
22. INTERVIEWS	2,853
23. RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	3,075
24. MILITARY AFFAIRS	74
25. SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	0
26. NEW CLAIMS	2,405
27. MEMBERSHIP	200
28. BRIEFINGS	1
29. PARTICIPANTS	100

Office: Board of Veterans Appeals

1. NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	0
2. COMPENSATION INCREASED	0
3. COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	0
4. PENSION	0
5. PENSION MAINTAINED	0
6. SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7. EDUCATION BENEFITS	0
8. MISCELLANEOUS	0
9. DEATH COMPENSATION	0
10. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
11. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS MAINTAINED	0
12. DEATH PENSION	0
13. INSURANCE	0
14. BURIAL ALLOWANCES	0
15. PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16. TOTAL AWARDS	0
17. TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	\$0.00
18. TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	\$0.00
19. FULL AMOUNT	\$0.00
20. VA FILES REVIEWED	10,343
21. POWER OF ATTORNEYS	42
22. INTERVIEWS	235
23. RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	323
24. MILITARY AFFAIRS	4
25. SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	0
26. NEW CLAIMS	92
27. MEMBERSHIP	0
28. BRIEFINGS	0
29. PARTICIPANTS	0

Office: Orlando, Florida

1. NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	371
2. COMPENSATION INCREASED	307
3. COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	419
4. PENSION	14
5. PENSION MAINTAINED	24
6. SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7. EDUCATION BENEFITS	0
8. MISCELLANEOUS	3
9. DEATH COMPENSATION	5
10. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
11. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS MAINTAINED	0
12. DEATH PENSION	1
13. INSURANCE	0
14. BURIAL ALLOWANCES	6
15. PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16. TOTAL AWARDS	1,150
17. TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	\$847,362.00
18. TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	\$12,638,088.00
19. FULL AMOUNT	\$13,485,450.00
20. VA FILES REVIEWED	1,525
21. POWER OF ATTORNEYS	754
22. INTERVIEWS	681
23. RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	1,470
24. MILITARY AFFAIRS	0
25. SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	0
26. NEW CLAIMS	1,098
27. MEMBERSHIP	0
28. BRIEFINGS	0
29. PARTICIPANTS	0

Office: Newington, Connecticut

1. NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	131
2. COMPENSATION INCREASED	166
3. COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	119
4. PENSION	7
5. PENSION MAINTAINED	5
6. SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7. EDUCATION BENEFITS	62
8. MISCELLANEOUS	2
9. DEATH COMPENSATION	4
10. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
11. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS MAINTAINED	0
12. DEATH PENSION	0
13. INSURANCE	0
14. BURIAL ALLOWANCES	2
15. PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16. TOTAL AWARDS	498
17. TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	\$394,271.00
18. TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	\$7,163,896.00
19. FULL AMOUNT	\$7,558,167.00
20. VA FILES REVIEWED	1,659
21. POWER OF ATTORNEYS	1,040
22. INTERVIEWS	3,341
23. RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	1,537
24. MILITARY AFFAIRS	2
25. SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	1
26. NEW CLAIMS	2,810
27. MEMBERSHIP	128
28. BRIEFINGS	0
29. PARTICIPANTS	0

Office: DC Nat'l Svc & Legis Hqtrs.

1. NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	0
2. COMPENSATION INCREASED	0
3. COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	0
4. PENSION	0
5. PENSION MAINTAINED	0
6. SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7. EDUCATION BENEFITS	0
8. MISCELLANEOUS	0
9. DEATH COMPENSATION	0
10. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
11. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS MAINTAINED	0
12. DEATH PENSION	0
13. INSURANCE	0
14. BURIAL ALLOWANCES	0
15. PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16. TOTAL AWARDS	0
17. TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	\$0.00
18. TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	\$0.00
19. FULL AMOUNT	\$0.00
20. VA FILES REVIEWED	1
21. POWER OF ATTORNEYS	10
22. INTERVIEWS	10
23. RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	0
24. MILITARY AFFAIRS	0
25. SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	0
26. NEW CLAIMS	0
27. MEMBERSHIP	0
28. BRIEFINGS	0
29. PARTICIPANTS	0

Office: West Palm Beach, Florida

1. NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	74
2. COMPENSATION INCREASED	184
3. COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	114
4. PENSION	1
5. PENSION MAINTAINED	1
6. SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7. EDUCATION BENEFITS	0
8. MISCELLANEOUS	0
9. DEATH COMPENSATION	3
10. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
11. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS MAINTAINED	0
12. DEATH PENSION	0
13. INSURANCE	0
14. BURIAL ALLOWANCES	0
15. PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16. TOTAL AWARDS	377
17. TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	\$352,236.00
18. TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	\$4,024,556.00
19. FULL AMOUNT	\$4,376,792.00
20. VA FILES REVIEWED	431
21. POWER OF ATTORNEYS	345
22. INTERVIEWS	1,942
23. RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	421
24. MILITARY AFFAIRS	0
25. SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	0
26. NEW CLAIMS	826
27. MEMBERSHIP	60
28. BRIEFINGS	0
29. PARTICIPANTS	0

Office: Atlanta, Georgia

1. NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	1,841
2. COMPENSATION INCREASED	1,987
3. COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	2,079
4. PENSION	128
5. PENSION MAINTAINED	81
6. SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7. EDUCATION BENEFITS	579
8. MISCELLANEOUS	40
9. DEATH COMPENSATION	20
10. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	1
11. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS MAINTAINED	0
12. DEATH PENSION	12
13. INSURANCE	0
14. BURIAL ALLOWANCES	6
15. PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16. TOTAL AWARDS	6,690
17. TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	\$5,535,339.00
18. TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	\$91,978,557.00
19. FULL AMOUNT	\$97,513,896.00
20. VA FILES REVIEWED	3,843
21. POWER OF ATTORNEYS	2,716
22. INTERVIEWS	4,814
23. RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	3,424
24. MILITARY AFFAIRS	2,460
25. SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	1
26. NEW CLAIMS	4,490
27. MEMBERSHIP	5
28. BRIEFINGS	37
29. PARTICIPANTS	1643

Office: Indianapolis, Indiana

1. NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	1,406
2. COMPENSATION INCREASED	1,987
3. COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	796
4. PENSION	116
5. PENSION MAINTAINED	54
6. SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7. EDUCATION BENEFITS	256
8. MISCELLANEOUS	126
9. DEATH COMPENSATION	61
10. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	3
11. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS MAINTAINED	0
12. DEATH PENSION	21
13. INSURANCE	0
14. BURIAL ALLOWANCES	13
15. PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16. TOTAL AWARDS	3,746
17. TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	\$3,123,691.00
18. TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	\$49,814,004.00
19. FULL AMOUNT	\$52,937,695.00
20. VA FILES REVIEWED	3,353
21. POWER OF ATTORNEYS	1,012
22. INTERVIEWS	1,764
23. RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	3,133
24. MILITARY AFFAIRS	34
25. SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	0
26. NEW CLAIMS	2,720
27. MEMBERSHIP	104
28. BRIEFINGS	0
29. PARTICIPANTS	0

Office: Louisville, Kentucky

1. NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	1,957
2. COMPENSATION INCREASED	1,529
3. COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	2,059
4. PENSION	191
5. PENSION MAINTAINED	80
6. SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7. EDUCATION BENEFITS	440
8. MISCELLANEOUS	24
9. DEATH COMPENSATION	58
10. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	2
11. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS MAINTAINED	0
12. DEATH PENSION	56
13. INSURANCE	0
14. BURIAL ALLOWANCES	14
15. PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16. TOTAL AWARDS	6,410
17. TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	\$6,377,878.00
18. TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	\$149,131,655.00
19. FULL AMOUNT	\$155,509,533.00
20. VA FILES REVIEWED	6,588
21. POWER OF ATTORNEYS	2,226
22. INTERVIEWS	1,072
23. RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	6,266
24. MILITARY AFFAIRS	501
25. SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	0
26. NEW CLAIMS	5,365
27. MEMBERSHIP	7
28. BRIEFINGS	23
29. PARTICIPANTS	683

Office: Boise, Idaho

1. NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	615
2. COMPENSATION INCREASED	815
3. COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	793
4. PENSION	43
5. PENSION MAINTAINED	22
6. SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7. EDUCATION BENEFITS	308
8. MISCELLANEOUS	14
9. DEATH COMPENSATION	18
10. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	5
11. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS MAINTAINED	1
12. DEATH PENSION	9
13. INSURANCE	0
14. BURIAL ALLOWANCES	8
15. PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16. TOTAL AWARDS	2,651
17. TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	\$1,942,826.00
18. TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	\$25,452,029.00
19. FULL AMOUNT	\$27,394,855.00
20. VA FILES REVIEWED	2,051
21. POWER OF ATTORNEYS	749
22. INTERVIEWS	2,839
23. RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	1,869
24. MILITARY AFFAIRS	9
25. SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	0
26. NEW CLAIMS	1,621
27. MEMBERSHIP	38
28. BRIEFINGS	5
29. PARTICIPANTS	164

Office: Des Moines, Iowa

1. NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	703
2. COMPENSATION INCREASED	359
3. COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	524
4. PENSION	92
5. PENSION MAINTAINED	48
6. SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7. EDUCATION BENEFITS	289
8. MISCELLANEOUS	11
9. DEATH COMPENSATION	25
10. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	2
11. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS MAINTAINED	0
12. DEATH PENSION	32
13. INSURANCE	0
14. BURIAL ALLOWANCES	18
15. PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16. TOTAL AWARDS	2,103
17. TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	\$1,605,027.00
18. TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	\$27,860,730.00
19. FULL AMOUNT	\$29,465,757.00
20. VA FILES REVIEWED	3,134
21. POWER OF ATTORNEYS	730
22. INTERVIEWS	623
23. RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	3,100
24. MILITARY AFFAIRS	0
25. SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	0
26. NEW CLAIMS	1,763
27. MEMBERSHIP	60
28. BRIEFINGS	0
29. PARTICIPANTS	0

Office: New Orleans, Louisiana

1. NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	726
2. COMPENSATION INCREASED	558
3. COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	1,299
4. PENSION	78
5. PENSION MAINTAINED	112
6. SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7. EDUCATION BENEFITS	404
8. MISCELLANEOUS	7
9. DEATH COMPENSATION	12
10. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	1
11. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS MAINTAINED	0
12. DEATH PENSION	5
13. INSURANCE	0
14. BURIAL ALLOWANCES	3
15. PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16. TOTAL AWARDS	3,205
17. TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	\$3,915,290.00
18. TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	\$51,371,301.00
19. FULL AMOUNT	\$55,286,591.00
20. VA FILES REVIEWED	2,657
21. POWER OF ATTORNEYS	1,208
22. INTERVIEWS	1,825
23. RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	2,507
24. MILITARY AFFAIRS	206
25. SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	0
26. NEW CLAIMS	1,705
27. MEMBERSHIP	23
28. BRIEFINGS	7
29. PARTICIPANTS	109

Office: Chicago, Illinois

1. NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	845
2. COMPENSATION INCREASED	808
3. COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	1,452
4. PENSION	100
5. PENSION MAINTAINED	121
6. SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7. EDUCATION BENEFITS	474
8. MISCELLANEOUS	22
9. DEATH COMPENSATION	41
10. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	20
11. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS MAINTAINED	0
12. DEATH PENSION	25
13. INSURANCE	0
14. BURIAL ALLOWANCES	13
15. PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16. TOTAL AWARDS	3,921
17. TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	\$3,786,998.00
18. TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	\$180,348,689.00
19. FULL AMOUNT	\$184,135,687.00
20. VA FILES REVIEWED	2,042
21. POWER OF ATTORNEYS	1,501
22. INTERVIEWS	2,592
23. RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	1,434
24. MILITARY AFFAIRS	160
25. SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	2
26. NEW CLAIMS	2,495
27. MEMBERSHIP	231
28. BRIEFINGS	4
29. PARTICIPANTS	156

Office: Wichita, Kansas

1. NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	698
2. COMPENSATION INCREASED	560
3. COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	747
4. PENSION	41
5. PENSION MAINTAINED	52
6. SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7. EDUCATION BENEFITS	294
8. MISCELLANEOUS	7
9. DEATH COMPENSATION	34
10. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	10
11. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS MAINTAINED	0
12. DEATH PENSION	7
13. INSURANCE	0
14. BURIAL ALLOWANCES	9
15. PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16. TOTAL AWARDS	2,459
17. TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	\$4,450,730.00
18. TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	\$48,314,959.00
19. FULL AMOUNT	\$52,765,689.00
20. VA FILES REVIEWED	381
21. POWER OF ATTORNEYS	705
22. INTERVIEWS	1,844
23. RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	250
24. MILITARY AFFAIRS	0
25. SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	0
26. NEW CLAIMS	1,785
27. MEMBERSHIP	93
28. BRIEFINGS	0
29. PARTICIPANTS	0

Office: Togus, Maine

1. NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	399
2. COMPENSATION INCREASED	496
3. COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	525
4. PENSION	33
5. PENSION MAINTAINED	24
6. SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7. EDUCATION BENEFITS	265
8. MISCELLANEOUS	48
9. DEATH COMPENSATION	24
10. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	13
11. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS MAINTAINED	0
12. DEATH PENSION	3
13. INSURANCE	0
14. BURIAL ALLOWANCES	14
15. PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16. TOTAL AWARDS	1,844
17. TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	\$1,748,908.00
18. TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	\$28,723,486.00
19. FULL AMOUNT	\$30,472,394.00
20. VA FILES REVIEWED	1,963
21. POWER OF ATTORNEYS	652
22. INTERVIEWS	1,978
23. RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	1,814
24. MILITARY AFFAIRS	1
25. SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	0
26. NEW CLAIMS	1,451
27. MEMBERSHIP	173
28. BRIEFINGS	0
29. PARTICIPANTS	0

Office: Baltimore, Maryland

1. NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	1,324
2. COMPENSATION INCREASED	1,089
3. COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	1,475
4. PENSION	37
5. PENSION MAINTAINED	56
6. SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7. EDUCATION BENEFITS	395
8. MISCELLANEOUS	4
9. DEATH COMPENSATION	10
10. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	2
11. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS MAINTAINED	2
12. DEATH PENSION	3
13. INSURANCE	0
14. BURIAL ALLOWANCES	0
15. PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16. TOTAL AWARDS	4,397
17. TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	\$3,708,393.00
18. TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	\$109,253,672.00
19. FULL AMOUNT	\$112,962,065.00
20. VA FILES REVIEWED	5,546
21. POWER OF ATTORNEYS	1,023
22. INTERVIEWS	3,123
23. RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	3,262
24. MILITARY AFFAIRS	2
25. SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	2
26. NEW CLAIMS	2,540
27. MEMBERSHIP	155
28. BRIEFINGS	0
29. PARTICIPANTS	0

Office: Detroit, Michigan

1. NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	1,360
2. COMPENSATION INCREASED	1,067
3. COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	1,400
4. PENSION	270
5. PENSION MAINTAINED	241
6. SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7. EDUCATION BENEFITS	417
8. MISCELLANEOUS	9
9. DEATH COMPENSATION	109
10. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	1
11. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS MAINTAINED	0
12. DEATH PENSION	85
13. INSURANCE	0
14. BURIAL ALLOWANCES	67
15. PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16. TOTAL AWARDS	5,026
17. TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	\$4,479,058.00
18. TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	\$83,150,758.00
19. FULL AMOUNT	\$87,629,816.00
20. VA FILES REVIEWED	5,457
21. POWER OF ATTORNEYS	3,781
22. INTERVIEWS	1,979
23. RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	3,686
24. MILITARY AFFAIRS	0
25. SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	0
26. NEW CLAIMS	7,648
27. MEMBERSHIP	0
28. BRIEFINGS	0
29. PARTICIPANTS	0

Office: St. Louis, Missouri

1. NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	2,090
2. COMPENSATION INCREASED	1,313
3. COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	2,463
4. PENSION	142
5. PENSION MAINTAINED	263
6. SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7. EDUCATION BENEFITS	3,019
8. MISCELLANEOUS	38
9. DEATH COMPENSATION	73
10. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	2
11. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS MAINTAINED	0
12. DEATH PENSION	32
13. INSURANCE	0
14. BURIAL ALLOWANCES	21
15. PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16. TOTAL AWARDS	9,456
17. TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	\$8,732,339.00
18. TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	\$104,522,041.00
19. FULL AMOUNT	\$113,254,380.00
20. VA FILES REVIEWED	6,584
21. POWER OF ATTORNEYS	3,561
22. INTERVIEWS	2,013
23. RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	6,324
24. MILITARY AFFAIRS	321
25. SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	0
26. NEW CLAIMS	6,608
27. MEMBERSHIP	212
28. BRIEFINGS	61
29. PARTICIPANTS	1070

Office: Cold Spring, Kentucky

1. NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	10
2. COMPENSATION INCREASED	0
3. COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	0
4. PENSION	1
5. PENSION MAINTAINED	0
6. SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7. EDUCATION BENEFITS	0
8. MISCELLANEOUS	1
9. DEATH COMPENSATION	1
10. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
11. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS MAINTAINED	0
12. DEATH PENSION	0
13. INSURANCE	0
14. BURIAL ALLOWANCES	0
15. PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16. TOTAL AWARDS	13
17. TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	\$24,216.00
18. TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	\$5,412,942.00
19. FULL AMOUNT	\$5,437,158.00
20. VA FILES REVIEWED	18
21. POWER OF ATTORNEYS	4
22. INTERVIEWS	5
23. RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	10
24. MILITARY AFFAIRS	0
25. SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	0
26. NEW CLAIMS	6
27. MEMBERSHIP	0
28. BRIEFINGS	20
29. PARTICIPANTS	20

Office: St. Paul, Minnesota

1. NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	2,557
2. COMPENSATION INCREASED	1,280
3. COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	2,636
4. PENSION	83
5. PENSION MAINTAINED	84
6. SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7. EDUCATION BENEFITS	424
8. MISCELLANEOUS	10
9. DEATH COMPENSATION	94
10. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	4
11. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS MAINTAINED	0
12. DEATH PENSION	22
13. INSURANCE	0
14. BURIAL ALLOWANCES	66
15. PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16. TOTAL AWARDS	7,260
17. TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	\$5,788,058.00
18. TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	\$83,596,404.00
19. FULL AMOUNT	\$89,384,462.00
20. VA FILES REVIEWED	6,954
21. POWER OF ATTORNEYS	2,226
22. INTERVIEWS	2,272
23. RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	6,659
24. MILITARY AFFAIRS	0
25. SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	2
26. NEW CLAIMS	5,579
27. MEMBERSHIP	113
28. BRIEFINGS	0
29. PARTICIPANTS	0

Office: Fort Harrison, Montana

1. NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	203
2. COMPENSATION INCREASED	228
3. COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	376
4. PENSION	16
5. PENSION MAINTAINED	29
6. SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7. EDUCATION BENEFITS	64
8. MISCELLANEOUS	31
9. DEATH COMPENSATION	8
10. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
11. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS MAINTAINED	0
12. DEATH PENSION	2
13. INSURANCE	0
14. BURIAL ALLOWANCES	1
15. PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16. TOTAL AWARDS	958
17. TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	\$823,661.00
18. TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	\$10,450,588.00
19. FULL AMOUNT	\$11,274,249.00
20. VA FILES REVIEWED	1,071
21. POWER OF ATTORNEYS	301
22. INTERVIEWS	437
23. RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	946
24. MILITARY AFFAIRS	0
25. SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	0
26. NEW CLAIMS	550
27. MEMBERSHIP	69
28. BRIEFINGS	0
29. PARTICIPANTS	0

Office: Boston, Massachusetts

1. NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	2,043
2. COMPENSATION INCREASED	1,524
3. COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	2,012
4. PENSION	84
5. PENSION MAINTAINED	90
6. SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7. EDUCATION BENEFITS	333
8. MISCELLANEOUS	13
9. DEATH COMPENSATION	47
10. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
11. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS MAINTAINED	3
12. DEATH PENSION	22
13. INSURANCE	0
14. BURIAL ALLOWANCES	14
15. PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16. TOTAL AWARDS	6,185
17. TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	\$5,660,683.00
18. TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	\$93,847,773.00
19. FULL AMOUNT	\$99,508,456.00
20. VA FILES REVIEWED	5,219
21. POWER OF ATTORNEYS	2,185
22. INTERVIEWS	3,748
23. RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	4,736
24. MILITARY AFFAIRS	0
25. SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	2
26. NEW CLAIMS	4,641
27. MEMBERSHIP	402
28. BRIEFINGS	0
29. PARTICIPANTS	0

Office: Jackson, Mississippi

1. NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	579
2. COMPENSATION INCREASED	553
3. COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	664
4. PENSION	199
5. PENSION MAINTAINED	36
6. SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7. EDUCATION BENEFITS	467
8. MISCELLANEOUS	0
9. DEATH COMPENSATION	20
10. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	1
11. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS MAINTAINED	0
12. DEATH PENSION	52
13. INSURANCE	0
14. BURIAL ALLOWANCES	3
15. PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16. TOTAL AWARDS	2,574
17. TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	\$2,034,228.00
18. TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	\$31,406,794.00
19. FULL AMOUNT	\$33,441,022.00
20. VA FILES REVIEWED	2,329
21. POWER OF ATTORNEYS	635
22. INTERVIEWS	1,112
23. RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	2,129
24. MILITARY AFFAIRS	495
25. SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	0
26. NEW CLAIMS	933
27. MEMBERSHIP	0
28. BRIEFINGS	5
29. PARTICIPANTS	74

Office: Lincoln, Nebraska

1. NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	417
2. COMPENSATION INCREASED	232
3. COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	567
4. PENSION	7
5. PENSION MAINTAINED	16
6. SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7. EDUCATION BENEFITS	120
8. MISCELLANEOUS	8
9. DEATH COMPENSATION	24
10. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
11. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS MAINTAINED	0
12. DEATH PENSION	0
13. INSURANCE	0
14. BURIAL ALLOWANCES	6
15. PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16. TOTAL AWARDS	1,397
17. TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	\$1,205,043.00
18. TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	\$16,570,643.00
19. FULL AMOUNT	\$17,775,686.00
20. VA FILES REVIEWED	2,914
21. POWER OF ATTORNEYS	604
22. INTERVIEWS	618
23. RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	2,766
24. MILITARY AFFAIRS	1
25. SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	0
26. NEW CLAIMS	1,911
27. MEMBERSHIP	53
28. BRIEFINGS	0
29. PARTICIPANTS	0

Office: Reno, Nevada

1. NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	598
2. COMPENSATION INCREASED	423
3. COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	534
4. PENSION	38
5. PENSION MAINTAINED	21
6. SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7. EDUCATION BENEFITS	139
8. MISCELLANEOUS	7
9. DEATH COMPENSATION	15
10. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
11. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS MAINTAINED	0
12. DEATH PENSION	0
13. INSURANCE	0
14. BURIAL ALLOWANCES	6
15. PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16. TOTAL AWARDS	1,781
17. TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	\$1,489,130.00
18. TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	\$25,022,535.00
19. FULL AMOUNT	\$26,511,665.00
20. VA FILES REVIEWED	1,648
21. POWER OF ATTORNEYS	606
22. INTERVIEWS	1,817
23. RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	1,389
24. MILITARY AFFAIRS	31
25. SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	0
26. NEW CLAIMS	1,228
27. MEMBERSHIP	43
28. BRIEFINGS	0
29. PARTICIPANTS	0

Office: Newark, New Jersey

1. NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	872
2. COMPENSATION INCREASED	710
3. COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	1,054
4. PENSION	53
5. PENSION MAINTAINED	77
6. SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7. EDUCATION BENEFITS	316
8. MISCELLANEOUS	33
9. DEATH COMPENSATION	22
10. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
11. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS MAINTAINED	0
12. DEATH PENSION	10
13. INSURANCE	0
14. BURIAL ALLOWANCES	11
15. PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16. TOTAL AWARDS	3,158
17. TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	\$2,841,539.00
18. TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	\$44,310,902.00
19. FULL AMOUNT	\$47,152,441.00
20. VA FILES REVIEWED	4,596
21. POWER OF ATTORNEYS	1,181
22. INTERVIEWS	3,059
23. RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	4,320
24. MILITARY AFFAIRS	8
25. SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	0
26. NEW CLAIMS	2,019
27. MEMBERSHIP	371
28. BRIEFINGS	0
29. PARTICIPANTS	0

Office: Albany, New York

1. NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	29
2. COMPENSATION INCREASED	15
3. COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	5
4. PENSION	2
5. PENSION MAINTAINED	2
6. SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7. EDUCATION BENEFITS	0
8. MISCELLANEOUS	0
9. DEATH COMPENSATION	1
10. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
11. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS MAINTAINED	0
12. DEATH PENSION	0
13. INSURANCE	0
14. BURIAL ALLOWANCES	1
15. PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16. TOTAL AWARDS	55
17. TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	\$43,934.00
18. TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	\$1,839,633.00
19. FULL AMOUNT	\$1,883,567.00
20. VA FILES REVIEWED	9
21. POWER OF ATTORNEYS	353
22. INTERVIEWS	1,162
23. RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	8
24. MILITARY AFFAIRS	0
25. SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	0
26. NEW CLAIMS	503
27. MEMBERSHIP	29
28. BRIEFINGS	0
29. PARTICIPANTS	0

Office: Las Vegas, Nevada

1. NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	0
2. COMPENSATION INCREASED	0
3. COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	0
4. PENSION	0
5. PENSION MAINTAINED	0
6. SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7. EDUCATION BENEFITS	0
8. MISCELLANEOUS	0
9. DEATH COMPENSATION	0
10. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
11. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS MAINTAINED	0
12. DEATH PENSION	0
13. INSURANCE	0
14. BURIAL ALLOWANCES	0
15. PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16. TOTAL AWARDS	0
17. TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	\$0.00
18. TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	\$0.00
19. FULL AMOUNT	\$0.00
20. VA FILES REVIEWED	28
21. POWER OF ATTORNEYS	464
22. INTERVIEWS	608
23. RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	28
24. MILITARY AFFAIRS	4
25. SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	0
26. NEW CLAIMS	780
27. MEMBERSHIP	25
28. BRIEFINGS	0
29. PARTICIPANTS	0

Office: Albuquerque, New Mexico

1. NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	1,338
2. COMPENSATION INCREASED	1,014
3. COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	1,672
4. PENSION	94
5. PENSION MAINTAINED	71
6. SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7. EDUCATION BENEFITS	373
8. MISCELLANEOUS	57
9. DEATH COMPENSATION	0
10. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
11. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS MAINTAINED	0
12. DEATH PENSION	6
13. INSURANCE	0
14. BURIAL ALLOWANCES	3
15. PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16. TOTAL AWARDS	4,668
17. TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	\$5,000,028.00
18. TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	\$92,319,616.00
19. FULL AMOUNT	\$97,319,644.00
20. VA FILES REVIEWED	2,955
21. POWER OF ATTORNEYS	1,195
22. INTERVIEWS	3,317
23. RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	2,777
24. MILITARY AFFAIRS	14
25. SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	0
26. NEW CLAIMS	3,048
27. MEMBERSHIP	42
28. BRIEFINGS	0
29. PARTICIPANTS	0

Office: Buffalo, New York

1. NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	436
2. COMPENSATION INCREASED	467
3. COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	545
4. PENSION	26
5. PENSION MAINTAINED	23
6. SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7. EDUCATION BENEFITS	740
8. MISCELLANEOUS	3
9. DEATH COMPENSATION	20
10. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
11. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS MAINTAINED	0
12. DEATH PENSION	5
13. INSURANCE	0
14. BURIAL ALLOWANCES	9
15. PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16. TOTAL AWARDS	2,274
17. TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	\$2,649,801.00
18. TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	\$26,413,343.00
19. FULL AMOUNT	\$29,063,144.00
20. VA FILES REVIEWED	4,527
21. POWER OF ATTORNEYS	350
22. INTERVIEWS	1,201
23. RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	4,270
24. MILITARY AFFAIRS	47
25. SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	0
26. NEW CLAIMS	979
27. MEMBERSHIP	63
28. BRIEFINGS	2
29. PARTICIPANTS	80

Office: Manchester, New Hampshire

1. NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	402
2. COMPENSATION INCREASED	241
3. COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	380
4. PENSION	4
5. PENSION MAINTAINED	6
6. SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7. EDUCATION BENEFITS	10
8. MISCELLANEOUS	3
9. DEATH COMPENSATION	7
10. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
11. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS MAINTAINED	0
12. DEATH PENSION	2
13. INSURANCE	0
14. BURIAL ALLOWANCES	2
15. PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16. TOTAL AWARDS	1,057
17. TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	\$964,256.00
18. TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	\$15,853,763.00
19. FULL AMOUNT	\$16,818,029.00
20. VA FILES REVIEWED	1,906
21. POWER OF ATTORNEYS	426
22. INTERVIEWS	1,922
23. RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	1,755
24. MILITARY AFFAIRS	0
25. SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	0
26. NEW CLAIMS	1,548
27. MEMBERSHIP	107
28. BRIEFINGS	0
29. PARTICIPANTS	0

Office: New York, New York

1. NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	644
2. COMPENSATION INCREASED	555
3. COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	738
4. PENSION	28
5. PENSION MAINTAINED	51
6. SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7. EDUCATION BENEFITS	0
8. MISCELLANEOUS	2
9. DEATH COMPENSATION	18
10. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	2
11. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS MAINTAINED	0
12. DEATH PENSION	3
13. INSURANCE	0
14. BURIAL ALLOWANCES	16
15. PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16. TOTAL AWARDS	2,057
17. TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	\$2,294,034.00
18. TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	\$34,437,000.00
19. FULL AMOUNT	\$36,731,034.00
20. VA FILES REVIEWED	4,226
21. POWER OF ATTORNEYS	1,181
22. INTERVIEWS	2,562
23. RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	3,906
24. MILITARY AFFAIRS	12
25. SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	0
26. NEW CLAIMS	2,850
27. MEMBERSHIP	67
28. BRIEFINGS	0
29. PARTICIPANTS	0

Office: Syracuse, New York

1. NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	0
2. COMPENSATION INCREASED	0
3. COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	0
4. PENSION	0
5. PENSION MAINTAINED	0
6. SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7. EDUCATION BENEFITS	0
8. MISCELLANEOUS	0
9. DEATH COMPENSATION	0
10. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
11. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS MAINTAINED	0
12. DEATH PENSION	0
13. INSURANCE	0
14. BURIAL ALLOWANCES	0
15. PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16. TOTAL AWARDS	0
17. TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	\$0.00
18. TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	\$0.00
19. FULL AMOUNT	\$0.00
20. VA FILES REVIEWED	34
21. POWER OF ATTORNEYS	23
22. INTERVIEWS	94
23. RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	27
24. MILITARY AFFAIRS	0
25. SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	0
26. NEW CLAIMS	58
27. MEMBERSHIP	2
28. BRIEFINGS	0
29. PARTICIPANTS	0

Office: Winston-Salem, North Carolina

1. NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	3,681
2. COMPENSATION INCREASED	2,378
3. COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	2,535
4. PENSION	75
5. PENSION MAINTAINED	52
6. SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7. EDUCATION BENEFITS	601
8. MISCELLANEOUS	15
9. DEATH COMPENSATION	35
10. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	3
11. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS MAINTAINED	0
12. DEATH PENSION	7
13. INSURANCE	0
14. BURIAL ALLOWANCES	9
15. PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16. TOTAL AWARDS	9,391
17. TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	\$8,237,984.00
18. TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	\$134,115,618.00
19. FULL AMOUNT	\$142,353,602.00
20. VA FILES REVIEWED	12,756
21. POWER OF ATTORNEYS	3,993
22. INTERVIEWS	2,467
23. RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	8,673
24. MILITARY AFFAIRS	3,291
25. SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	0
26. NEW CLAIMS	8,837
27. MEMBERSHIP	3
28. BRIEFINGS	77
29. PARTICIPANTS	5888

Office: Cincinnati, Ohio

1. NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	0
2. COMPENSATION INCREASED	0
3. COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	3
4. PENSION	0
5. PENSION MAINTAINED	0
6. SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7. EDUCATION BENEFITS	0
8. MISCELLANEOUS	0
9. DEATH COMPENSATION	0
10. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
11. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS MAINTAINED	0
12. DEATH PENSION	0
13. INSURANCE	0
14. BURIAL ALLOWANCES	0
15. PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16. TOTAL AWARDS	3
17. TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	\$2,895.00
18. TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	\$34,740.00
19. FULL AMOUNT	\$37,635.00
20. VA FILES REVIEWED	83
21. POWER OF ATTORNEYS	410
22. INTERVIEWS	474
23. RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	69
24. MILITARY AFFAIRS	136
25. SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	0
26. NEW CLAIMS	1,259
27. MEMBERSHIP	0
28. BRIEFINGS	8
29. PARTICIPANTS	168

Office: Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

1. NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	1,402
2. COMPENSATION INCREASED	1,243
3. COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	1,523
4. PENSION	120
5. PENSION MAINTAINED	111
6. SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7. EDUCATION BENEFITS	205
8. MISCELLANEOUS	22
9. DEATH COMPENSATION	54
10. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	5
11. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS MAINTAINED	0
12. DEATH PENSION	36
13. INSURANCE	0
14. BURIAL ALLOWANCES	24
15. PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16. TOTAL AWARDS	4,745
17. TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	\$4,924,501.00
18. TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	\$83,070,621.00
19. FULL AMOUNT	\$87,995,122.00
20. VA FILES REVIEWED	2,960
21. POWER OF ATTORNEYS	1,720
22. INTERVIEWS	5,425
23. RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	2,742
24. MILITARY AFFAIRS	3
25. SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	1
26. NEW CLAIMS	4,500
27. MEMBERSHIP	257
28. BRIEFINGS	0
29. PARTICIPANTS	0

Office: Fargo, North Dakota

1. NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	644
2. COMPENSATION INCREASED	540
3. COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	576
4. PENSION	55
5. PENSION MAINTAINED	27
6. SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7. EDUCATION BENEFITS	263
8. MISCELLANEOUS	14
9. DEATH COMPENSATION	27
10. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
11. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS MAINTAINED	0
12. DEATH PENSION	23
13. INSURANCE	0
14. BURIAL ALLOWANCES	30
15. PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16. TOTAL AWARDS	2,199
17. TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	\$1,843,134.00
18. TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	\$24,893,164.00
19. FULL AMOUNT	\$26,736,298.00
20. VA FILES REVIEWED	2,503
21. POWER OF ATTORNEYS	714
22. INTERVIEWS	939
23. RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	2,425
24. MILITARY AFFAIRS	1
25. SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	1
26. NEW CLAIMS	2,174
27. MEMBERSHIP	119
28. BRIEFINGS	0
29. PARTICIPANTS	0

Office: Muskogee, Oklahoma

1. NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	2,706
2. COMPENSATION INCREASED	1,847
3. COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	3,422
4. PENSION	111
5. PENSION MAINTAINED	108
6. SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7. EDUCATION BENEFITS	1,196
8. MISCELLANEOUS	30
9. DEATH COMPENSATION	71
10. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
11. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS MAINTAINED	0
12. DEATH PENSION	21
13. INSURANCE	0
14. BURIAL ALLOWANCES	23
15. PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16. TOTAL AWARDS	9,535
17. TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	\$8,767,415.00
18. TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	\$119,146,056.00
19. FULL AMOUNT	\$127,913,471.00
20. VA FILES REVIEWED	8,364
21. POWER OF ATTORNEYS	3,595
22. INTERVIEWS	3,089
23. RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	7,765
24. MILITARY AFFAIRS	222
25. SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	0
26. NEW CLAIMS	6,655
27. MEMBERSHIP	52
28. BRIEFINGS	48
29. PARTICIPANTS	1603

Office: Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania

1. NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	0
2. COMPENSATION INCREASED	0
3. COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	0
4. PENSION	0
5. PENSION MAINTAINED	0
6. SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7. EDUCATION BENEFITS	0
8. MISCELLANEOUS	0
9. DEATH COMPENSATION	0
10. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
11. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS MAINTAINED	0
12. DEATH PENSION	0
13. INSURANCE	0
14. BURIAL ALLOWANCES	0
15. PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16. TOTAL AWARDS	0
17. TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	\$0.00
18. TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	\$0.00
19. FULL AMOUNT	\$0.00
20. VA FILES REVIEWED	864
21. POWER OF ATTORNEYS	712
22. INTERVIEWS	2,547
23. RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	774
24. MILITARY AFFAIRS	3
25. SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	1
26. NEW CLAIMS	1,749
27. MEMBERSHIP	53
28. BRIEFINGS	9
29. PARTICIPANTS	695

Office: Cleveland, Ohio

1. NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	2,824
2. COMPENSATION INCREASED	1,379
3. COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	3,400
4. PENSION	394
5. PENSION MAINTAINED	534
6. SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7. EDUCATION BENEFITS	1,358
8. MISCELLANEOUS	264
9. DEATH COMPENSATION	150
10. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	4
11. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS MAINTAINED	36
12. DEATH PENSION	67
13. INSURANCE	0
14. BURIAL ALLOWANCES	30
15. PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16. TOTAL AWARDS	10,440
17. TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	\$12,956,817.00
18. TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	\$152,422,425.00
19. FULL AMOUNT	\$165,379,242.00
20. VA FILES REVIEWED	11,072
21. POWER OF ATTORNEYS	3,352
22. INTERVIEWS	2,721
23. RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	10,213
24. MILITARY AFFAIRS	16
25. SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	3
26. NEW CLAIMS	8,549
27. MEMBERSHIP	228
28. BRIEFINGS	0
29. PARTICIPANTS	0

Office: Portland, Oregon

1. NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	486
2. COMPENSATION INCREASED	588
3. COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	912
4. PENSION	70
5. PENSION MAINTAINED	74
6. SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7. EDUCATION BENEFITS	811
8. MISCELLANEOUS	8
9. DEATH COMPENSATION	15
10. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
11. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS MAINTAINED	0
12. DEATH PENSION	11
13. INSURANCE	0
14. BURIAL ALLOWANCES	3
15. PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16. TOTAL AWARDS	2,978
17. TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	\$2,741,175.00
18. TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	\$33,779,314.00
19. FULL AMOUNT	\$36,520,489.00
20. VA FILES REVIEWED	1,742
21. POWER OF ATTORNEYS	867
22. INTERVIEWS	1,278
23. RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	1,551
24. MILITARY AFFAIRS	1
25. SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	0
26. NEW CLAIMS	1,564
27. MEMBERSHIP	43
28. BRIEFINGS	0
29. PARTICIPANTS	0

Office: Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

1. NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	1,026
2. COMPENSATION INCREASED	847
3. COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	1,353
4. PENSION	81
5. PENSION MAINTAINED	98
6. SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7. EDUCATION BENEFITS	267
8. MISCELLANEOUS	41
9. DEATH COMPENSATION	30
10. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
11. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS MAINTAINED	0
12. DEATH PENSION	20
13. INSURANCE	0
14. BURIAL ALLOWANCES	14
15. PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16. TOTAL AWARDS	3,777
17. TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	\$3,059,008.00
18. TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	\$49,641,354.00
19. FULL AMOUNT	\$52,700,362.00
20. VA FILES REVIEWED	2,784
21. POWER OF ATTORNEYS	1,518
22. INTERVIEWS	1,374
23. RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	2,314
24. MILITARY AFFAIRS	2
25. SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	0
26. NEW CLAIMS	2,128
27. MEMBERSHIP	220
28. BRIEFINGS	0
29. PARTICIPANTS	0

Office: Providence, Rhode Island

1. NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	830
2. COMPENSATION INCREASED	423
3. COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	909
4. PENSION	12
5. PENSION MAINTAINED	166
6. SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7. EDUCATION BENEFITS	47
8. MISCELLANEOUS	5
9. DEATH COMPENSATION	19
10. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	2
11. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS MAINTAINED	0
12. DEATH PENSION	1
13. INSURANCE	0
14. BURIAL ALLOWANCES	3
15. PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16. TOTAL AWARDS	2,417
17. TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	\$1,875,914.00
18. TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	\$32,465,291.00
19. FULL AMOUNT	\$34,341,205.00
20. VA FILES REVIEWED	2,833
21. POWER OF ATTORNEYS	879
22. INTERVIEWS	2,348
23. RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	2,625
24. MILITARY AFFAIRS	0
25. SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	0
26. NEW CLAIMS	1,818
27. MEMBERSHIP	170
28. BRIEFINGS	0
29. PARTICIPANTS	0

Office: Nashville, Tennessee

1. NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	2,357
2. COMPENSATION INCREASED	3,257
3. COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	4,666
4. PENSION	176
5. PENSION MAINTAINED	268
6. SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7. EDUCATION BENEFITS	850
8. MISCELLANEOUS	25
9. DEATH COMPENSATION	58
10. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
11. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS MAINTAINED	0
12. DEATH PENSION	26
13. INSURANCE	0
14. BURIAL ALLOWANCES	28
15. PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16. TOTAL AWARDS	11,711
17. TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	\$16,121,819.00
18. TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	\$162,299,487.00
19. FULL AMOUNT	\$178,421,306.00
20. VA FILES REVIEWED	8,107
21. POWER OF ATTORNEYS	2,919
22. INTERVIEWS	2,852
23. RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	7,166
24. MILITARY AFFAIRS	2,082
25. SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	1
26. NEW CLAIMS	5,633
27. MEMBERSHIP	45
28. BRIEFINGS	40
29. PARTICIPANTS	60

Office: San Antonio, Texas

1. NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	25
2. COMPENSATION INCREASED	2
3. COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	2
4. PENSION	0
5. PENSION MAINTAINED	1
6. SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7. EDUCATION BENEFITS	42
8. MISCELLANEOUS	0
9. DEATH COMPENSATION	0
10. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
11. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS MAINTAINED	0
12. DEATH PENSION	0
13. INSURANCE	0
14. BURIAL ALLOWANCES	0
15. PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	12
16. TOTAL AWARDS	90
17. TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	\$155,304.00
18. TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	\$1,358,454.00
19. FULL AMOUNT	\$1,513,758.00
20. VA FILES REVIEWED	561
21. POWER OF ATTORNEYS	2,763
22. INTERVIEWS	14,271
23. RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	252
24. MILITARY AFFAIRS	1,606
25. SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	2
26. NEW CLAIMS	10,220
27. MEMBERSHIP	111
28. BRIEFINGS	176
29. PARTICIPANTS	2665

Office: Columbia, South Carolina

1. NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	1,292
2. COMPENSATION INCREASED	871
3. COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	1,862
4. PENSION	59
5. PENSION MAINTAINED	172
6. SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7. EDUCATION BENEFITS	111
8. MISCELLANEOUS	8
9. DEATH COMPENSATION	7
10. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
11. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS MAINTAINED	0
12. DEATH PENSION	4
13. INSURANCE	0
14. BURIAL ALLOWANCES	2
15. PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	8
16. TOTAL AWARDS	4,396
17. TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	\$6,331,002.00
18. TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	\$76,587,730.00
19. FULL AMOUNT	\$82,888,732.00
20. VA FILES REVIEWED	2,116
21. POWER OF ATTORNEYS	2,436
22. INTERVIEWS	5,783
23. RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	1,269
24. MILITARY AFFAIRS	85
25. SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	1
26. NEW CLAIMS	4,514
27. MEMBERSHIP	32
28. BRIEFINGS	3
29. PARTICIPANTS	60

Office: Waco, Texas

1. NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	3,596
2. COMPENSATION INCREASED	3,318
3. COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	5,144
4. PENSION	292
5. PENSION MAINTAINED	294
6. SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7. EDUCATION BENEFITS	2,996
8. MISCELLANEOUS	225
9. DEATH COMPENSATION	132
10. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
11. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS MAINTAINED	0
12. DEATH PENSION	31
13. INSURANCE	1
14. BURIAL ALLOWANCES	73
15. PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16. TOTAL AWARDS	16,102
17. TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	\$13,911,223.00
18. TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	\$239,135,146.00
19. FULL AMOUNT	\$253,046,369.00
20. VA FILES REVIEWED	15,442
21. POWER OF ATTORNEYS	6,641
22. INTERVIEWS	3,065
23. RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	14,247
24. MILITARY AFFAIRS	1,914
25. SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	0
26. NEW CLAIMS	11,791
27. MEMBERSHIP	362
28. BRIEFINGS	41
29. PARTICIPANTS	3,296

Office: Salt Lake City, Utah

1. NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	4,843
2. COMPENSATION INCREASED	972
3. COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	1,224
4. PENSION	65
5. PENSION MAINTAINED	37
6. SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7. EDUCATION BENEFITS	4,134
8. MISCELLANEOUS	72
9. DEATH COMPENSATION	17
10. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	6
11. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS MAINTAINED	0
12. DEATH PENSION	5
13. INSURANCE	0
14. BURIAL ALLOWANCES	3
15. PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16. TOTAL AWARDS	11,378
17. TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	\$7,799,902.00
18. TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	\$132,842,006.00
19. FULL AMOUNT	\$140,641,908.00
20. VA FILES REVIEWED	9,847
21. POWER OF ATTORNEYS	729
22. INTERVIEWS	2,595
23. RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	9,451
24. MILITARY AFFAIRS	202
25. SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	0
26. NEW CLAIMS	8,676
27. MEMBERSHIP	49
28. BRIEFINGS	17
29. PARTICIPANTS	598

Office: Sioux Falls, South Dakota

1. NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	515
2. COMPENSATION INCREASED	423
3. COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	991
4. PENSION	39
5. PENSION MAINTAINED	73
6. SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7. EDUCATION BENEFITS	513
8. MISCELLANEOUS	12
9. DEATH COMPENSATION	16
10. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
11. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS MAINTAINED	0
12. DEATH PENSION	8
13. INSURANCE	0
14. BURIAL ALLOWANCES	11
15. PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16. TOTAL AWARDS	2,601
17. TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	\$2,359,931.00
18. TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	\$31,086,113.00
19. FULL AMOUNT	\$33,446,044.00
20. VA FILES REVIEWED	2,008
21. POWER OF ATTORNEYS	450
22. INTERVIEWS	1,611
23. RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	1,888
24. MILITARY AFFAIRS	2
25. SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	0
26. NEW CLAIMS	1,464
27. MEMBERSHIP	67
28. BRIEFINGS	0
29. PARTICIPANTS	0

Office: Houston, Texas

1. NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	2,658
2. COMPENSATION INCREASED	1,675
3. COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	4,258
4. PENSION	145
5. PENSION MAINTAINED	156
6. SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7. EDUCATION BENEFITS	233
8. MISCELLANEOUS	63
9. DEATH COMPENSATION	48
10. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	2
11. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS MAINTAINED	0
12. DEATH PENSION	17
13. INSURANCE	0
14. BURIAL ALLOWANCES	2
15. PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16. TOTAL AWARDS	9,257
17. TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	\$33,027,286.00
18. TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	\$425,604,955.00
19. FULL AMOUNT	\$458,632,241.00
20. VA FILES REVIEWED	9,463
21. POWER OF ATTORNEYS	2,418
22. INTERVIEWS	6,126
23. RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	9,035
24. MILITARY AFFAIRS	2
25. SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	0
26. NEW CLAIMS	12,753
27. MEMBERSHIP	177
28. BRIEFINGS	0
29. PARTICIPANTS	0

Office: White River Junction, Vermont

1. NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	162
2. COMPENSATION INCREASED	128
3. COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	76
4. PENSION	3
5. PENSION MAINTAINED	7
6. SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7. EDUCATION BENEFITS	1
8. MISCELLANEOUS	1
9. DEATH COMPENSATION	3
10. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
11. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS MAINTAINED	0
12. DEATH PENSION	0
13. INSURANCE	0
14. BURIAL ALLOWANCES	1
15. PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16. TOTAL AWARDS	382
17. TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	\$349,420.00
18. TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	\$6,522,038.00
19. FULL AMOUNT	\$6,871,458.00
20. VA FILES REVIEWED	1,248
21. POWER OF ATTORNEYS	330
22. INTERVIEWS	870
23. RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	1,129
24. MILITARY AFFAIRS	0
25. SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	0
26. NEW CLAIMS	1,103
27. MEMBERSHIP	88
28. BRIEFINGS	0
29. PARTICIPANTS	0

Office: Roanoke, Virginia

1. NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	1,794
2. COMPENSATION INCREASED	2,266
3. COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	2,254
4. PENSION	85
5. PENSION MAINTAINED	68
6. SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7. EDUCATION BENEFITS	602
8. MISCELLANEOUS	8
9. DEATH COMPENSATION	32
10. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	2
11. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS MAINTAINED	1
12. DEATH PENSION	10
13. INSURANCE	0
14. BURIAL ALLOWANCES	9
15. PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16. TOTAL AWARDS	7,331
17. TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	\$6,114,317.00
18. TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	\$155,766,264.00
19. FULL AMOUNT	\$161,880,581.00
20. VA FILES REVIEWED	4,750
21. POWER OF ATTORNEYS	3,701
22. INTERVIEWS	1,926
23. RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	2,654
24. MILITARY AFFAIRS	4,244
25. SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	3
26. NEW CLAIMS	5,595
27. MEMBERSHIP	53
28. BRIEFINGS	552
29. PARTICIPANTS	12599

Office: Milwaukee, Wisconsin

1. NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	882
2. COMPENSATION INCREASED	939
3. COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	1,799
4. PENSION	101
5. PENSION MAINTAINED	128
6. SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7. EDUCATION BENEFITS	476
8. MISCELLANEOUS	20
9. DEATH COMPENSATION	91
10. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	2
11. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS MAINTAINED	1
12. DEATH PENSION	21
13. INSURANCE	0
14. BURIAL ALLOWANCES	41
15. PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16. TOTAL AWARDS	4,501
17. TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	\$5,565,621.00
18. TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	\$65,143,300.00
19. FULL AMOUNT	\$70,708,921.00
20. VA FILES REVIEWED	4,754
21. POWER OF ATTORNEYS	997
22. INTERVIEWS	3,558
23. RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	4,500
24. MILITARY AFFAIRS	11
25. SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	2
26. NEW CLAIMS	2,987
27. MEMBERSHIP	77
28. BRIEFINGS	0
29. PARTICIPANTS	4116

Office: Honolulu, Hawaii

1. NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	179
2. COMPENSATION INCREASED	309
3. COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	260
4. PENSION	2
5. PENSION MAINTAINED	2
6. SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7. EDUCATION BENEFITS	0
8. MISCELLANEOUS	0
9. DEATH COMPENSATION	0
10. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	1
11. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS MAINTAINED	0
12. DEATH PENSION	1
13. INSURANCE	0
14. BURIAL ALLOWANCES	0
15. PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16. TOTAL AWARDS	754
17. TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	\$927,372.00
18. TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	\$18,873,806.00
19. FULL AMOUNT	\$19,801,178.00
20. VA FILES REVIEWED	583
21. POWER OF ATTORNEYS	1,426
22. INTERVIEWS	1,644
23. RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	512
24. MILITARY AFFAIRS	7,295
25. SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	0
26. NEW CLAIMS	2,278
27. MEMBERSHIP	545
28. BRIEFINGS	327
29. PARTICIPANTS	4116

Office: Seattle, Washington

1. NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	2,012
2. COMPENSATION INCREASED	1,896
3. COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	1,948
4. PENSION	109
5. PENSION MAINTAINED	70
6. SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7. EDUCATION BENEFITS	1,335
8. MISCELLANEOUS	45
9. DEATH COMPENSATION	119
10. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	1
11. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS MAINTAINED	0
12. DEATH PENSION	20
13. INSURANCE	0
14. BURIAL ALLOWANCES	62
15. PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	2
16. TOTAL AWARDS	7,619
17. TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	\$7,630,846.00
18. TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	\$112,968,768.00
19. FULL AMOUNT	\$120,599,614.00
20. VA FILES REVIEWED	5,252
21. POWER OF ATTORNEYS	3,808
22. INTERVIEWS	4,842
23. RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	4,613
24. MILITARY AFFAIRS	4,892
25. SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	2
26. NEW CLAIMS	7,227
27. MEMBERSHIP	13
28. BRIEFINGS	539
29. PARTICIPANTS	5098

Office: Cheyenne, Wyoming

1. NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	277
2. COMPENSATION INCREASED	320
3. COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	280
4. PENSION	17
5. PENSION MAINTAINED	6
6. SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7. EDUCATION BENEFITS	54
8. MISCELLANEOUS	6
9. DEATH COMPENSATION	6
10. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
11. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS MAINTAINED	0
12. DEATH PENSION	8
13. INSURANCE	0
14. BURIAL ALLOWANCES	6
15. PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16. TOTAL AWARDS	980
17. TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	\$667,672.00
18. TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	\$10,042,998.00
19. FULL AMOUNT	\$10,710,670.00
20. VA FILES REVIEWED	8,657
21. POWER OF ATTORNEYS	3,252
22. INTERVIEWS	3,160
23. RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	8,412
24. MILITARY AFFAIRS	78
25. SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	1
26. NEW CLAIMS	8,150
27. MEMBERSHIP	223
28. BRIEFINGS	0
29. PARTICIPANTS	0

Office: Huntington, West Virginia

1. NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	307
2. COMPENSATION INCREASED	462
3. COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	497
4. PENSION	6
5. PENSION MAINTAINED	37
6. SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7. EDUCATION BENEFITS	131
8. MISCELLANEOUS	2
9. DEATH COMPENSATION	10
10. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	3
11. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS MAINTAINED	0
12. DEATH PENSION	4
13. INSURANCE	0
14. BURIAL ALLOWANCES	8
15. PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16. TOTAL AWARDS	1,467
17. TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	\$4,339,530.00
18. TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	\$57,154,871.00
19. FULL AMOUNT	\$61,494,401.00
20. VA FILES REVIEWED	2,183
21. POWER OF ATTORNEYS	422
22. INTERVIEWS	1,264
23. RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	1,783
24. MILITARY AFFAIRS	0
25. SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	0
26. NEW CLAIMS	1,160
27. MEMBERSHIP	1
28. BRIEFINGS	0
29. PARTICIPANTS	0

Office: San Juan, Puerto Rico

1. NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	614
2. COMPENSATION INCREASED	759
3. COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	1,512
4. PENSION	350
5. PENSION MAINTAINED	170
6. SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7. EDUCATION BENEFITS	91
8. MISCELLANEOUS	207
9. DEATH COMPENSATION	18
10. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
11. SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS MAINTAINED	0
12. DEATH PENSION	68
13. INSURANCE	0
14. BURIAL ALLOWANCES	5
15. PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16. TOTAL AWARDS	3,794
17. TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	\$3,506,441.00
18. TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	\$62,229,890.00
19. FULL AMOUNT	\$65,736,331.00
20. VA FILES REVIEWED	2,527
21. POWER OF ATTORNEYS	1,020
22. INTERVIEWS	2,209
23. RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	1,954
24. MILITARY AFFAIRS	3
25. SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	0
26. NEW CLAIMS	1,201
27. MEMBERSHIP	31
28. BRIEFINGS	11
29. PARTICIPANTS	795

COMMANDER TYSON: At this time I would like to call on Chairman Brad Barton of the Committee on Constitution and Bylaws for his report.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER BRADLEY S. BARTON: Good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER BARTON: Comrade Commander and delegates, the National Convention Committee on Constitution and Bylaws was called to order for its first business session on August 6th, 2011, by Committee Advisors, Brad Barton and Edward Hartman.

The first order of business was the election of a Convention Committee chairman and secretary. Brad Barton was elected chairman and Michael Whelihan, as secretary.

This year there were four resolutions considered by the Committee. None were recommended for adoption by the National Convention. Comrade Commander, this Committee, the first reading of the report of this Committee on the Constitution and Bylaws and the Committee stands in recess upon the call of the Chair.

COMMANDER TYSON: Thank you, Brad. In accordance with Rule 9, now is the time for any rejected resolutions to be read. Are there any rejected resolutions you wish read? Thank you. We will hear the final report on the Constitution and Bylaws Committee at Tuesday's Business Session. Thank you, Brad.

Following military service as a commissioned infantry officer in the United States Army, William B. "Barry" Owenby began his tenure with the General Services Administration in 1985 and progressed to serve as a senior procurement official and contracts manager of major design and construction projects.

In 1995, the Public Buildings Service began reorganization and Mr. Owenby became Chief of Procurement for the Property Development Division with a contracting portfolio exceeding \$2 billion.

In 1997, Mr. Owenby was recruited by the American Battle Monuments Commission to support the National World War II Memorial on the National Mall. In 2000, the Battle Monuments Commission designated him as the Memorial's Project Executive, with responsibility for managing the Memorial's design completion and construction.

His responsibilities included coordination with White House and relevant Congressional staffs, and ensuring coordination with members and staffs of the Commission of Fine Arts and the National Capital Planning Commission.

The National World War II Memorial was dedicated on Memorial Day weekend 2004, three months ahead of scheduled completion and well within budget.

Mr. Owenby retired from federal service on December 31st, 2004, having received A.B.M.C.'s Distinguished Service Medal. The following year he accepted a position with New England Stone Industries as the Mid-Atlantic Vice President.

In March of 2007, the Disabled Veterans LIFE Memorial Foundation engaged him as Project Executive for the American Veterans Disabled for Life Memorial. Please give a rousing welcome to a man whose work will immortalize the service and sacrifices of disabled veterans and their families, Mr. Barry Owenby. (Applause)

MR. WILLIAM B. "BARRY" OWENBY: Good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

MR. OWENBY: National Commander Tyson, National Adjutant Wilson, distinguished guests, National line officers, ladies and gentlemen, it's a privilege and an honor to be able to provide you with an update on our progress in transforming the Memorial from a concept to a reality.

And although we've encountered some challenges along the way, I think all of you, especially in light of the last few weeks of focus on the National Debt, instinctively know that getting anything done in our Nation's Capital takes time, a lot of patience, and, most importantly, perseverance.

I've heard your National Adjutant remark that thinking about all the agencies and commissions and laws in Washington that we have had to deal with and their acronyms – the CWA, the CFA, the NCPC, the NPS, the DOT, the NCMC, the AOC, the DDOT (Laughter) – sent him to bed thinking about alphabet soup. (Laughter)

Well, for me it's more like playing Scrabble, but you know in Scrabble you don't know your score until the game is over. I'd like to give you a brief recap of where we've been and how far we've traveled.

The Memorial is subject to the Commemorative Works Act and requires approval from the United States Commission of Fine Arts, the National Capital Planning Commission, and, finally, by the Secretary of the Interior. The Secretary's approval is managed by the National Park Service who will oversee and maintain the Memorial following its dedication.

In July of 2009 we received final approval from the Commission of Fine Arts. In July of 2010 we received final approval from the Planning Commission, and that review body commended the Foundation and the design team for a design that will be universally accessible by all people who visit the site, including persons with visual and hearing impairments.

Immediately following Planning Commission approval we began the process of completing construction drawings and specifications, and resolving both design and maintenance issues with the Park Service. We also began finalizing the selection process for our general contractor.

The day before Veterans Day, November 10th, last year, was a gorgeous day in Washington and the Memorial's Ceremonial Groundbreaking was attended by more than 500 people, including the Speaker of the House, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, the Deputy Secretary of Transportation, the Memorial's spokesman Gary Sinise, and many DAV members who could make the trip.

In December we finalized all the design issues with the Park Service and in early February we submitted our formal request for the Memorial's construction permit. In April the Parks Service responded to our request.

They acknowledged that we had fulfilled all the requirements for the permit, but would not issue a permit until the issues regarding certain street infrastructure work – work that must precede the Memorial's construction – were resolved and completion of that work foreseeable.

Now, to fully appreciate the delays and obstacles with building the Memorial, I need to go back more than six years to the selection of the Memorial site. Our Foundation's Board was insistent that the site location was as important as the design. After touring 12 possible sites, many in remote areas of the District of Columbia, the Board identified the current site, in the footprint of the U.S. Capitol Building and adjacent to the Rayburn House Office Building.

This site provided the important visibility to the Congress and would assure maximum exposure to the millions of visitors coming to Washington each year. However – and it's a big however – the site presented enormous construction issues and challenges. And here are just a few.

The site is on top of the Interstate 395 tunnels. Five utility companies – high-voltage, water, sewer, telephone, and data communications – have facilities on and running through the site. The current location of "C" Street might provide a straight line to the Rayburn Building for a truck bomb.

And, to complicate things, the Memorial's Congressional Authorization only allowed us to construct the Memorial, not fund or manage street closure and improvements and relocation of utilities. So it was necessary for us to persuade Congress and the District of Columbia to take on and fund these public infrastructure improvements to prepare the site for our construction.

Fortunately, veterans – and particularly disabled veterans – have many friends in the House, the Senate, and the Executive branch who recognize your service and sacrifice, and support the need to finally recognize your heroism with this Memorial.

I am very pleased to report – (Applause) Thank you. I am very pleased to report that Phase I of the public infrastructure work is fully-funded with construction to begin this fall; hopefully in the next 30 days. This will be followed – (Applause) Thank you. This will be followed by Phase II, final street work and relocation of utilities and then the construction of the Memorial can begin.

To assure the actual Memorial construction moves quickly when the infrastructure improvements are complete, we have already begun the significant offsite work.

In April we executed the contract with our General Contractor, Tompkins Builders. Tompkins is one of Washington's oldest and largest, most reputable contractors, having built the Lincoln Memorial Reflecting Pool, the East Wing of the National Gallery, several prominent Federal courthouses, and the World War II Memorial on the Mall. This year they are celebrating their 100th Anniversary.

Tompkins has already begun purchasing and fabricating materials for the Memorial, to include fountain pumps and piping, stainless steel and other required metals, electrical equipment and the Memorial's stone, which constitutes a significant portion of the construction cost.

The Memorial's stone is being provided by North Carolina Granite, a leading national fabricator with a long history in Washington. I think I just saw the National Commander smile. (Laughter)

They supplied the stone for the Lincoln Memorial Reflecting Pool, the Memorial Bridge which crosses the Potomac at the entrance to Arlington National Cemetery, and the paving stone for the World War II Memorial.

They've also provided the stone for the Amoco Building in Chicago, the Albert Einstein Memorial, and for North Carolina's Veterans Park which was dedicated just last month in Fayetteville on July the 4th.

The images you see and are seeing are the control samples for the three types of granite for the Memorial – Bethel White for the Wall of Gratitude, Virginia Mist for the paving stone; and St. John's Black for the fountain and the reflecting pool.

North Carolina Granite has obtained all the raw blocks of this stone and will begin fabrication later this month – 14621 is our project number for all the stone.

I also wanted to share this photo of a plaque at one of the fabrication buildings at the quarry. To me it embodies North Carolina's – North Carolina Granite's commitment to honoring our veterans.

Sergeant Martin or Lieutenant Martin was one, jumped in to Normandy at D-Day, and he served on their Board of Directors for 25 years and you can see he was awarded the Purple Heart.

In May we executed the contract with the Memorial's sculptor, acclaimed artist Larry Kirkland. His commissioned works have been installed at Penn Station in New York City, the City of Denver, the California Museum of Science, and the American Red Cross Headquarters and the National Academies of Science, both in Washington, D.C.

Work will soon begin on the Memorial's glass walls. The three walls consist of a total of 5 – I'm sorry, of 48 laminated 5-ply panels of Starphire glass with inscriptions and images embedded in the interior panes. And this is the same glass that is used in the apache helicopter, the B-2 bomber, and the new mine-resistant personnel vehicle.

Another prominent feature of the Memorial is the flame in the center of the star-shaped fountain. After extensive safety-system testing and finalizing the Memorial's mechanical components and operating systems, the fabrication of the flame device will begin this fall.

We have taken up all the slack possible to begin construction as soon as we can and we are doing everything possible to shorten the Memorial's construction time.

It is important to remember that our mission is more than just the construction of the Memorial. It is our responsibility to educate the public of your service and your sacrifice, to bring attention to your needs, and to assure that you receive respect and honor for your service to our country. And as such I want to briefly mention two recent initiatives.

We have produced the Disabled Veterans Curriculum that was distributed to 5,000 schools around the country. This DVD includes teaching materials for use in Grades 3 through 8. If you'd like a copy to share with your local school officials or teachers, please stop by our booth or contact the Foundation office.

Secondly, the American Veterans Disabled for Life Silver Dollar, authorized by Congress last year – and only two commemorative coins are authorized each year. The coin was produced by the U.S. Mint last year.

In addition to the recognition and honor of disabled veterans, each coin provides \$10 towards the construction of the Memorial. The coin sales provide \$2.8 million for the Memorial's construction. There are a few coins remaining for sale at both our booth and at the DAV Store.

Before I finish I want to say to this Convention that in so many respects this is truly your Memorial. And it is your Memorial in so much more than financial contributions and tangible support.

While the Memorial pays tribute to all of America's disabled veterans, past present and into the future, I'd like you to take note that the Memorial's glass walls, the walls that tell the story of disabled veterans' call to duty, pride of service, their courage and sacrifice, and strength of purpose, these walls contain a quote from a DAV life member.

They contain a quote from a DAV Outstanding Veteran of the Year honoree. They contain a quote from a current DAV National Service Officer and two quotes – and quotes from two DAV National Commanders. Now they are powerful quotations that resonate with courage, sacrifice, loyalty and honor – words representative of the DAV.

On behalf of our Foundation, I'd like to acknowledge and express our appreciation for all the support we've received from the Congress and to those who assist in guiding us around and through the Capitol.

We would also be remiss in not thanking our spokesman, Gary Sinise, for his personal and public support of the Memorial and the continuing support of his new foundation. But, most importantly, we want to thank you, the Disabled American Veterans, for your unwavering support of this Memorial.

Since the very beginning in 1998 DAV has been a driving force behind the Memorial. And when I say "DAV," I mean the National Headquarters in Cold Spring, Kentucky, the Service and Legislative Headquarters in Washington, State Departments, Chapters, Auxiliary Units, Trench Rats, and members.

And when I say "driving force" I'm not just talking about financial support. DAV has made enormous in-kind donations of vital resources to promote the Memorial to members of Congress, state legislatures, corporate donors, and the public.

And this support includes everything from advertisements in the DAV Magazine to promotion at air shows to management of our financial operations. And I am very proud and honored to announce that the DAV is the largest donor to this Memorial. (Applause)

I would like to close by promising that we have been and will be both persistent and relentless in delivering to America a memorial that honors and bears witness to those who have borne the deepest wounds and scars of war: America's disabled veterans.

We pledge to you that we will continue to do all that's necessary to get your Memorial constructed sooner rather than later. Thank you. (Applause)

COMMANDER TYSON: The American Veterans Disabled for Life Memorial is a project near and dear to all of our hearts. As many of you are aware, our very own National Adjutant Arthur Wilson has taken a lead role to make the Memorial a possibility.

Mr. Wilson is a co-founder and President of the Memorial. Adjutant Wilson, I would be very grateful if you would take the microphone for a special presentation.

ADJUTANT WILSON: Thank you, Commander. Thank you, Barry. And you thought it was going to be easy to build a memorial. (Laughter)

Since we began this journey nearly 14 years ago, the construction of the Memorial has run into numerous obstacles because of the number of federal departments and agencies, local government entities and private utility and data companies located at the site approved for the Memorial.

By 2000 we had succeeded in getting the Memorial authorized by Congress. And by 2005 the site was approved and the initial design concept accepted. And we were well on our way towards raising the funds necessary to build the Memorial.

However, when you do business in Washington, there seems to be never-ending bureaucratic obstacles that need to be navigated before anything gets done on any project. And while that isn't all bad because it protects the footprint of our Capital, it sure is frustrating.

History tells us that building a memorial in Washington takes an average of 17 years. So, incredible as that sounds, we are ahead of schedule by Washington standards. (Laughter)

The Memorial Foundation had the good fortune about that time to gain the assistance of the Downey and McGrath Group who have been for several years helping the DAV be more successful in promoting the national policies to support disabled veterans.

The Downey and McGrath Group, headed by two former members of Congress, Tom Downey and Ray McGrath, donated – emphasis, donated – their time and efforts to help the Memorial Foundation cut through the bureaucratic red tape and secure the remaining approvals and federal funding needed to pay for the associated street infrastructure work and other vital projects that have been necessary to precede with the Memorial's construction.

With their long and distinguished service in Congress and their continued involvement in promoting sound public policies in their post-congressional careers, we could not have asked for two better champions for the Memorial.

At the time Tom and Ray volunteered – and again I emphasize the word “volunteered” – it was hoped that the situation could be resolved with maybe one very well-placed phone call. If only things worked that way in Washington.

Unfortunately, due to circumstances beyond our control, it became apparent that this would be a much longer fight. Every time they removed one obstacle, another one appeared in our path. However, this did not deter Downey and McGrath Group from continuing their voluntary service to the Foundation.

Over the last several years Tom and Ray and their dedicated professional staffs have devoted hundreds of hours to this cause, meeting with members of Congress, Cabinet members, and key advisors to the President, as well as local government officials and staff to help us get the Memorial built.

It is in no small measure due to their efforts that we have been able to achieve the significant progress that Mr. Owenby just reported to you.

Now, wearing my DAV cap, I also want to acknowledge them and thank them for their dedicated efforts assisting DAV in the successful Stand up for Veterans campaign over the last four years.

The campaign has resulted in the enactment of historic legislation to provide for advance appropriations for VA health care funding, better testing and treatment for post-traumatic stress disorder, and traumatic brain injuries.

It also provides better health care and access for women veterans and expanded benefits for services for caregivers of disabled veterans.

There is no question in my mind that their continued dedication of services on behalf of the DAV and the Memorial Foundation will be equally successful and result in the timely completion of the American Veterans Disabled for Life Memorial in Washington, D.C.

Accordingly, I would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to the Downey and McGrath Group for their efforts on behalf of our nation's veterans. Tom Downey is with us this morning. Tom. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Adjutant Wilson presented Mr. Downey with a plaque.)

ADJUTANT WILSON: Let me just tell you what the award says.

In grateful appreciation, the Disabled American Veterans and its 1.2 million members wish to convey our deepest appreciation and heartfelt thanks to Thomas J. Downey, Chairman, and Raymond J. McGrath, President, of The Downey McGrath Group, and their dedicated professional staff for their selfless contributions of service, skills and expertise towards the construction of the American Veterans Disabled for Life Memorial in Washington, D.C.

This Memorial will consecrate the honor of millions of disabled veterans from all wars and provide our nation with a place to commemorate and memorialize their service and sacrifice.

The contributions of Messers Downey and McGrath in support of the American Veterans Disabled for Life Memorial have been invaluable and are fully deserving of the highest accolades for this service and for their continuing commitment and work to help the DAV build better lives for our nation's disabled veterans and their families.

August 7th, 2011. And signed by National Commander Tyson and myself.

Thank you Downey and McGrath. (Applause)

MR. THOMAS J. DOWNEY: Thank you. Thank you, Art, and thank you, Wally. And the real thanks goes to all of you American heroes, one and all. I cannot tell you how much this means to me and to Ray and to all the members of our organization. We are honored to be able to play a small role in paying you back for all that you have given us.

It has been a remarkable journey to work with Barry and Rick and Joe Violante and the incredibly dedicated professionals on the staff at the DAV. We've done a lot of meetings. But I want to, if you will permit me, to tell you a little story about why you mean to much to all of us.

Recently a woman in my office, Maggie McCloud had celebrated her 20th anniversary of working for me. She started working for me when I was a member of Congress and she's been with me through my public and private life.

Twenty years ago Maggie met and fell in love with a young Marine by the name of Trane McCloud. For those of you who were in the Navy or in the Marine Corps, you know what the term "mustang" is. A mustang is an enlisted man who works his way up to become an officer.

Trane had a distinguished Marine career. When he graduated from college in 1989 he enlisted in the Corps and he was on the last contingent of Marines on the battleship Missouri before it was decommissioned. She met him when he was at Officers Candidate School in Quantico.

Well, Trane had one of the most remarkable careers in the Marine Corps but at his core he was a grunt and he wanted to be a combat officer. And he served as a platoon commander. And he served in the Congress of the United States representing the Marine Corps in Joe Wilson's office.

He also served and got his master's in journalism while he was in the Corps. But a combat position was what he wanted and it's what he got. He was the operations officer of the Second Battalion, Third Marines, headquartered right near the Haditha Dam in Iraq.

On December the 4th while leading a mission of 16 Marines the helicopter that he was on developed engine trouble and they had to evacuate the helicopter. He was the last one out. And of the 16 Marines, 4 didn't make it. And Trane was one of those four.

When Trane died I remember when I heard the news falling to my knees and crying to my wife that I didn't think this was possible. This war for too many of our people in our country is an abstraction. They have really not been asked to sacrifice, the people of our country.

The sacrifice in this war has been borne by the men and women who have fought it or the families who have waited at home for loved ones to return. I have been given two very large tax cuts over the last couple of years. That has been my sacrifice, and for others who have been successful in business.

Well, Trane's death means something more to me and it should mean something more to all of us as citizens. It must mean that there is a role for us as citizens to honor his service by recognizing the issues that confront our country honestly and openly. All of you who have served and sacrificed understand this intuitively but not all of our people do.

We are at a crossroads in this country. In the months to come the Congress will decide whether or not to begin to try and balance the budget of our nation by cutting more or a

combination of cutting and revenue. I ask you, when I was in the Congress the DAV out on Long Island held my feet to the fire.

They were not afraid to ask me tough questions, to demand clear answers. And they came armed with something that you really can't fight. They came armed with facts and the truth about what was happening.

Now I'm going to ask you in the next couple of months to turn off your TV, read articles about the budget and come to your own conclusion about what is right and what is not right. I hope you will come to this conclusion, that there needs to be sacrifice but that sacrifice needs to be borne by everyone. And that sacrifice does not need to be borne by the people who have been sacrificing. (Applause)

The sacrifice must be borne by all of us who have had a free pass. And for those of you who are Vietnam-era veterans you have a special responsibility. There was nobody there to welcome you home. In that war that was controversial you bore some of that controversy.

That is a great lesson our country has learned recently, that while our conflicts may be controversial the men and women who have served and suffered are not. They are heroes. (Applause)

Rich folks need to pay a little bit more. We all need to think a little more clearly. (Applause) We are Americans. We will solve this problem together. And I know that in the next couple of months we're going to need your help to talk to members of Congress and make them see clearly what needs to be done.

You know, there is an old myth that the Marines stand guard over the gates of heaven. (Cheers) I believe that myth. But I believe that those guards are also looking down at us and they want us to step up just one more time for them. Please, don't let them down. (Standing Ovation)

COMMANDER TYSON: Thank you, Art. Thank you, Mr. Owenby. And, of course, thank you Mr. Downey for your firm's tireless work on our behalf. (Applause)

Next is the report from the Committee on Finance. If I can ask the chairman, Al Church, to come forward to give the report.

CHAIRMAN ALBERT CHURCH: Comrade Commander and delegates, the National Committee on Finance was called to order on August 6th, 2011, by the Committee Advisors Rodney Tucker and J. Marc Burgess.

The first order of business was the election of a Convention chairman and a secretary. Al Church was elected as chairman and Richard Patterson was elected secretary. The Committee recommended no resolution for adoption.

The Committee then next reviewed the proposed 2012 budget with the Committee advisors and with the assistance of Comptroller Anita F. Blum. The proposed 2012 budget was referred to the National Convention Committee on Finance by the Board of Directors with the recommendation for adoption.

Following completion of the Committee's review, the Committee voted unanimously to recommend to the National Convention adoption of the proposed 2012 budget. The Committee then expressed its thanks to the Committee advisors Rodney Tucker, J. Marc Burgess and Comptroller Anita Blum for their assistance in performing the work of this important Committee.

Comrade Commander, this completes the report of the Committee of Finance.

COMMANDER TYSON: You made the motion? Did you make the motion.

CHAIRMAN CHURCH: I make the motion that the Committee be dismissed.

COMMANDER TYSON: The chairman has made the motion. May I have a second? Mic 2.

MR. LARRY WALLS: Larry Walls from Chapter 45, State of North Carolina, I make a motion – I second that motion.

COMMANDER TYSON: Thank you. In accordance with Rule 9, now is the time for any rejected resolutions to be read. Are there any rejected resolutions you wish read? Hearing none, all those in favor signify by saying aye; opposed. Thank you. So ordered.

At this time I'll call upon Chairman Kevin Johnson for the report on the Committee of General Resolutions and Membership.

CHAIRMAN KEVIN JOHNSON: Comrade Commander and delegates, the National Convention Committee on General Resolutions was called to order on August 6th, 2011, by the Committee Advisors Adrian Atizado and Chad Moos.

The first order of business was the selection of a Convention Committee chairman and secretary. Kevin Johnson was elected as chairman and Sarah Royce was elected as secretary.

The Committee then proceeded to review the resolutions submitted and I will now report to you the resolutions recommended for adoption by this National Convention. For the purpose of saving time I will read only the number and the purpose of the resolutions.

Resolution 036, seeking the immediate release of any Americans who may still be held captive from all wars;

Resolution 037, condemn public desecration of the flag of the United States;

Resolution 038, encourage all disabled American veterans to become registered voters and to vote;

Resolution 039, support the construction of a courthouse for the United States Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims;

Resolution 040, support for joint POW/MIA accounting command;

Resolution 075, support legislation to ensure military retirees receive all benefits they were promised;

Resolution 077, to support a strong national defense;

Resolution 122, to support former POW slave labor claims against Japanese firms;

Resolution 179, to oppose any authorization for use of members of the Armed Forces for human experimentation without their knowledge and informed consent;

Resolution 180, to support move to renew prisoner of war/missing in action discussions;

Resolution 181, to support construction of a memorial to commemorate the sacrifices of America's disabled veterans;

Resolution 223, appreciation to the Hilton New Orleans Riverside for the success of the 90th National Convention;

Resolution 224, appreciation to all who are responsible for the success of the 90th National Convention;

Resolution 225, appreciation to National Commander Wallace E. Tyson. According to tradition, I will read Resolution Number 225, appreciation to National Commander Tyson, in its entirety.

"Expressing appreciation to National Commander Wallace E. Tyson:

"WHEREAS, Disabled American Veterans National Commander Wallace E. Tyson, a native Tarboro, North Carolina, is a service-connected Vietnam era veteran; and

"WHEREAS, Commander Tyson served more than 12 years in the United States Army with assignments including the 101st Airborne Division, First Armored Division, and 37th Transportation Group in Germany, Second Armored Division at Fort Hood, Texas, and the U.S. Army Recruiting Command; and

"WHEREAS, while serving as Station Commander of the Army Recruiting Center in Batesville, Arkansas, Commander Tyson began having severe medical issues that resulted in his medical discharge in December 1984; and

"WHEREAS, Commander Tyson returned to his native state and immediately joined Kimberly County DAV Chapter 46 in Fayetteville, North Carolina; and

"WHEREAS, during this time he continued his education, obtained a Bachelor of Arts in Business Administration; and

"WHEREAS, Commander Tyson was appointed adjutant for the DAV Department of North Carolina in June 1989, a position he continues to serve in today; and

"WHEREAS, Commander Tyson has been instrumental in the growth of the Department of North Carolina from 17,000 members in 1989 to more than 35,000 members in 2010; and

"WHEREAS, Commander Tyson received the Order of the Long Leaf Pine Award, the highest civilian honor bestowed by the governor of North Carolina for meritorious service to the citizens of North Carolina; and

"WHEREAS, Commander Tyson uses every opportunity to promote the value of DAV membership and the superior services provided by DAV volunteers, DAV Chapter, Department and National Service Officers to everyone with whom he comes in contact with; and

"WHEREAS, Commander Tyson has held many offices throughout his long tenure with DAV including Ninth District Executive Committeeman, a member of the National Executive and Finance Committees and Chairman of the National Finance Committee, four years as a member of the Interim Committee on Constitution and Bylaws, President of the State Commanders and Adjutants Association, and as a member of the National Service Foundation Board of Directors; and

"WHEREAS, Commander Tyson became a line officer as First Junior Vice Commander at the 2005 National Convention and was elected National Commander at the 2010 National Convention in Atlanta, Georgia;

"NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6th through 9th, 2011, expresses its members' heartfelt appreciation and profound gratitude to Commander Tyson for his selfless service and dedication to his fellow disabled veterans, their families, and the DAV.

Comrade Commander, this completes the report of the Committee on General Resolutions. On behalf of the Committee I move the adoption of these resolutions and that the Committee be discharged with the thanks of the National Convention.

(The above-mentioned resolutions follow:)

RESOLUTION NO. 036—LEGISLATIVE

SEEK THE IMMEDIATE RELEASE OF ANY AMERICANS WHO MAY STILL BE HELD CAPTIVE FOLLOWING WORLD WAR II, THE KOREAN WAR, THE VIETNAM WAR, AND OPERATIONS ENDURING FREEDOM AND IRAQI FREEDOM AND THE RETURN OF THE REMAINS OF ANY AMERICANS WHO DIED DURING THESE WARS

WHEREAS, the members of the Disabled American Veterans are deeply concerned for the thousands of American Servicemen still unaccounted for in the aftermath of World War II, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, the Persian Gulf War, and the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq; and

WHEREAS, numerous efforts by high level American delegations, including members of Congress, have visited Southeast Asia in continuing efforts to solve the mystery of the whereabouts and fate of our missing in action from that war; and

WHEREAS, the brave families of these missing Americans continue to live in uncertainty and anguish regarding their missing sons and husbands; and

WHEREAS, there are still today more than 78,000 unaccounted for following World War II, some 8,000 from the Korean War, over 1,700 in Southeast Asia from the Vietnam War, and two from Operations Enduring and Iraqi Freedom, who have not been forgotten; and

WHEREAS, the Disabled American Veterans was extremely disappointed with the timing of our government's decision to normalize relations with the government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam (SRV), prior to the fullest possible accounting of our POW/MIAs from Southeast Asia; and

WHEREAS, the Disabled American Veterans believes that the SRV can increase its unilateral efforts to account for Americans still missing in action, especially those who were last known alive in captivity; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, urges the U.S. Government to ensure this issue be considered as one of America's highest priorities, accelerating efforts to obtain the release of any American who may still be held captive and obtain the fullest possible accounting of those still missing and the repatriation of the remains of those who died while serving our Nation; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we urge the government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam to increase its unilateral efforts to account for American POW/MIAs, including locating and making available remains of Americans last known alive in captivity that have not previously been returned.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 037—LEGISLATIVE

CONDEMN PUBLIC DESECRATION OF THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

WHEREAS, the U.S. Supreme Court, by a 5-4 decision, has ruled that public desecration of the American Flag, as a form of free speech and expression, is legal and permissible; and

WHEREAS, the American Flag—"Old Glory"—is our National Ensign, the proud and beautiful symbol of our country's precious, free heritage; and

WHEREAS, this symbol, in the form of our irreplaceable "Stars and Stripes," has been carried and defended in battle, revered and cherished by its citizens, and viewed as a beacon of hope and fulfillment by all the world since it was first unfurled at the birth of our Nation; and

WHEREAS, the Constitutional First Amendment guarantee of freedom of speech was not intended by our Founding Fathers to enable individuals—who do enjoy unfettered freedom to express their views, no matter how abhorrent, in both oral and written form—to publicly and contemptuously desecrate our beloved flag; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, goes on record as condemning any individual or group who shall at any time publicly and willfully desecrate the flag of the United States.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 038—LEGISLATIVE
ENCOURAGE ALL DISABLED VETERANS TO BECOME
REGISTERED VOTERS AND VOTE

WHEREAS, members of the Disabled American Veterans served their country during time of war in order to preserve the rights and privileges of life in this land of the free; and

WHEREAS, one of the most precious of those rights is the right to vote; and

WHEREAS, the United States Congress and the President's Administration have failed to fulfill their obligation to our Nation's disabled veterans, providing inadequate funding for veterans' benefits and health care; and

WHEREAS, the United States Congress and the President's Administration have targeted veterans' programs for unwarranted spending cuts and reductions under the mistaken and misguided theory that veterans do not base their vote on veterans' issues; and

WHEREAS, the failure of disabled veterans to register and vote will result in the perpetuation of this theory; and

WHEREAS, because of their disabilities, disabled veterans have more difficulty than their nondisabled peers in complying with some of the more strict requirements in voter registration laws; and

WHEREAS, there exists an urgent need for veterans, their families and all Americans concerned about veterans' issues to make their voice heard by becoming registered voters and exercising their vote in local, state, and federal elections; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, encourages 100 percent of our members to become registered to vote and thereby strengthen our organization's ability to preserve and improve our system of veterans' benefits and services; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that all Disabled American Veterans Departments and Chapters initiate and operate voter registration drives targeted at increasing voter registration among veterans and their families; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that all Disabled American Veterans Departments, Chapters, and members are encouraged to ensure that all veterans and their family members are able to get to polling locations to vote.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 039—LEGISLATIVE
SUPPORT THE CONSTRUCTION OF A COURTHOUSE FOR THE UNITED STATES
COURT OF APPEALS FOR VETERANS CLAIMS

WHEREAS, veterans and other persons claiming benefits from the Department of Veterans Affairs have benefited substantially and materially from the jurisprudence of the United States Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims ("Court"); and

WHEREAS, the Court has existed for more than twenty years; and

WHEREAS, the Courtroom, chambers, and other space is inadequate to meet the present and future needs of the Court and those it serves; and

WHEREAS, it is in the interests of veterans and their dependents that the Court be accorded the same respect enjoyed by other appellate courts of the United States; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, shall take such actions as may be necessary or advisable in support of legislation to authorize and fund the construction of a suitable and appropriate courthouse for the United States Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 040—LEGISLATIVE
SUPPORT FOR JOINT POW/MIA ACCOUNTING COMMAND

WHEREAS, members of the Disabled American Veterans (DAV) have long been deeply committed to achieving the fullest possible accounting for U.S. personnel still held captive, missing and unaccounted for from all of our nation's wars; and

WHEREAS, personnel and funding for the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command (JPAC) have not been increased at a level commensurate with the expanded requirement to obtain answers on Americans unaccounted for from all of our country's wars and conflicts; and

WHEREAS, it is the responsibility of the U.S. government to account as fully as possible for America's missing veterans, including – if confirmed deceased – the recovery of their remains when possible; and

WHEREAS, the DAV deeply appreciates Vietnam's 2009 proposal to expand the pace and scope of POW/MIA accounting cooperation, including use of US Navy vessels for underwater operations; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Congress recently passed the Defense Authorization Bill mandating that the Department of Defense develop the capability to identify a minimum of 200 remains per year beginning in 2015; thus requiring additional funding and personnel to carry out strategies, programs and operations to resolve this issue and obtain answers for the POW/MIA families and our nation's veterans; and

WHEREAS, this accounting effort should not be considered complete until all reasonable actions have been taken to achieve the fullest possible accounting; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, remains steadfast in its commitment to the goal of achieving the fullest possible accounting for all U.S. military and designated civilian personnel missing from our nation's wars; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we call upon our government to support personnel increases and full funding for the efforts of the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command, the Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office, the Life Sciences Equipment Laboratory, the Armed Forces DNA Laboratory, including specific authorization to augment assigned personnel when additional assets and resources are necessary; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DAV calls upon Congress to immediately appropriate the funds necessary to increase personnel and resources of the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command, the Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office, the Life Sciences Equipment Laboratory, and the Armed Forces DNA Laboratory to enable reaching the identification goals set forth in the Defense Authorization Bill.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 075—LEGISLATIVE

SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO ENSURE THAT MILITARY RETIREES RECEIVE ALL BENEFITS THEY WERE PROMISED WHEN THEY ENTERED THE ARMED FORCES

WHEREAS, men and women who enter military service set aside their personal lives, goals, and opportunities to wear the uniform and bear the burdens of our Nation's defense; and

WHEREAS, these men and women were promised certain benefits, such as free medical and dental care for life, full retired pay based on longevity of service, and other benefits, to entice them to remain in the military and make it a career; and

WHEREAS, our Government has reneged on many of its promises to provide these benefits to military retirees; and

WHEREAS, our Nation has a compelling moral duty to honor its pledges to military retirees; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, supports legislation to require our Government to provide military retirees with all benefits promised them.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 077—LEGISLATIVE SUPPORT A STRONG NATIONAL DEFENSE

WHEREAS, the United States military forces are responsible for the defense of this Nation and its interests abroad; and

WHEREAS, the United States has recently been called upon to intervene in various conflicts; and

WHEREAS, a strong national defense led to the defeat of Communism in Eastern Europe; and

WHEREAS, U.S. interests continue to be challenged throughout the world, requiring our military forces to be deployed in protection of world freedom; and

WHEREAS, we can never let down our guard; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, goes on record urging Congress to provide adequate funds for the defense of our Nation both at home and abroad.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 122—LEGISLATIVE
SUPPORT FORMER PRISONER-OF-WAR SLAVE LABOR
CLAIMS AGAINST JAPANESE FIRMS

WHEREAS, during World War II, in the Pacific Theater, over 33,000 American military personnel were captured and interned by the Japanese as prisoners of war (POWs); and

WHEREAS, over 12,500 of those POWs died in captivity and this heavy loss of life gives a good indication of the horrid conditions that existed in the Japanese POW camps; and

WHEREAS, these POWs suffered from a lack of adequate food, clothing, shelter, and medical care, suffered interrogation and torture, endured unthinkable abuse and brutality under the hands of their captors; and

WHEREAS, many of these POWs were transported to mainland Japan, and were forced into slave labor where they were required to work for private Japanese companies under horrible conditions and suffered many types of cruel punishment and human rights abuses; and

WHEREAS, since the end of World War II, neither the Japanese government nor those private Japanese companies that enslaved our fighting men have offered to make restitution for the abuses and injuries suffered, nor have they offered an apology for their actions; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. government has never actively sought to have fair compensation and restitution paid to these former POWs who were deprived of all human dignity during their service to their country; and

WHEREAS, in 1999, the California Legislature unanimously passed a statute allowing claims for compensation for these former POWs to go forward in the courts, irrespective of the running of the statute of limitations; and

WHEREAS, since this law was passed, suits have been filed by American veterans captured by the Japanese during World War II and later enslaved by Japanese companies; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Department of State opposes the legal actions of the former American POWs to obtain compensation from Japanese companies and has filed papers in court proceedings that would have the effect of stopping the court cases of these former POWs from ever going forward under any court; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Justice opinion, if adopted, would nullify the action of the California Legislature in seeking to open the courts for American POWs pursuing fair compensation for the harm suffered; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, supports fair and just compensation for the injuries suffered by all American POWs at the hands of their Japanese captors, and the slave labor they were forced to perform by private Japanese companies during World War II; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we urge the Administration to work with all parties involved in this issue to resolve the claims of these former POWs against the private Japanese companies in an expeditious manner.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 179—LEGISLATIVE
OPPOSE ANY AUTHORIZATION OF USE OF MEMBERS OF THE
ARMED FORCES FOR HUMAN EXPERIMENTATION WITHOUT
THEIR KNOWLEDGE AND INFORMED CONSENT

WHEREAS, those who serve in our Nation's Armed Forces make personal sacrifices to maintain our national security; and

WHEREAS, members of the Armed Forces should be accorded special respect and the gratitude of us for whom they serve; and

WHEREAS, their willingness to sacrifice and relinquish their liberty does not surrender their natural right to determine what shall be done with their own bodies and their right to personal dignity; and

WHEREAS, it is unethical and a trespass against the person to use servicemembers for human experimentation without their knowledge and consent; and

WHEREAS, our Government has in the past used military members as human guinea pigs to test the effects of harmful and injurious substances on the body; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, opposes any rule or provision that would authorize use of servicemembers for human experimentation without their knowledge and informed consent.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 180—LEGISLATIVE
SUPPORT MOVE TO RENEW PRISONER-OF-WAR/MISSING IN ACTION DISCUSSIONS

WHEREAS, the Disabled American Veterans has long been and is now deeply committed to accounting for United States personnel previously listed as prisoner, missing and unaccounted for from the Korean War and all of our nation's past wars; and

WHEREAS, the Disabled American Veterans recognizes the utility and importance of bilateral discussions with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), separate from those held on strategic issues, in an effort to reach agreement for proceeding with POW/MIA accounting cooperation; and

WHEREAS, the Disabled American Veterans also recognizes the lead time required between renewing bilateral discussions and restoring actual operations; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, supports renewing direct bilateral humanitarian talks with the DPRK regime for the purpose of restoring the agreements and processes required to account for unreturned Korean War veterans.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 181—LEGISLATIVE
SUPPORT CONSTRUCTION OF A MEMORIAL TO COMMEMORATE
THE SACRIFICES OF AMERICA'S DISABLED VETERANS

WHEREAS, it has been three decades since the end of the Vietnam War, where large numbers of our youth served in a combat theater and with thousands of combat-related casualties; and

WHEREAS, though the public's reaction to veterans in the aftermath of the Persian Gulf War was exceptionally warm, even the high feeling associated with Operation Desert Storm dissipated long ago; and

WHEREAS, the memory of smaller military actions at the Khobar Towers Barracks in Saudi Arabia, and in Grenada, Beirut, Panama, and Somalia faded with shocking rapidity, dying away even as combat-disabled veterans were still undergoing initial treatment of their wounds; and

WHEREAS, even as Americans now daily face the threat of hostile action in Afghanistan, Iraq, and in the war against terrorism around the world, some of them coming home wounded, awareness of their sacrifices among the American people is not fully known and appreciated; and

WHEREAS, the extent of lack of awareness and appreciation can only increase as the number of veterans in the population as a whole inevitably declines as a result of the passing of those who served during World War I, World War II, the Korean War, and Vietnam; and

WHEREAS, other than the ultimate sacrifice of life itself on the field of battle, no one has given more for the freedom of our Nation and her people than the veterans disabled in all of America's wars and armed conflicts; and

WHEREAS, these circumstances demonstrate a pressing need for permanent, high-profile action to bring the immense sacrifices of disabled veterans to a deeper level of public consciousness; and

WHEREAS, commemorative structures have been placed in distinguished locations throughout Washington, D.C., to commemorate causes and persons of great merit, and the sacrifices of disabled veterans deserve at least as much attention as any of these; and

WHEREAS, a commemorative structure in a prominent location in our Nation's Capital would be extremely useful in permanently reminding the American people of the sacrifices made by disabled veterans; and

WHEREAS, the Disabled American Veterans collaborated with philanthropist Lois Pope to form the Disabled Veterans' LIFE Memorial Foundation to bring about the construction of the American Veterans Disabled for Life Memorial; and

WHEREAS, Congress enacted Public Law 106-348 to authorize the Foundation to undertake fundraising and construct a memorial on Federal Lands near the United States Capitol; and

WHEREAS, success of this most worthy project will require the dedicated effort and support of many persons, as well as the continued support of the Disabled American Veterans; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, supports construction of the American Veterans Disabled for Life Memorial to honor the sacrifices of those veterans disabled while in military service of their country.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 223—ADMINISTRATIVE
APPRECIATION TO HILTON NEW ORLEANS RIVERSIDE FOR THE
SUCCESS OF THE 90TH NATIONAL CONVENTION

WHEREAS, the excellent service and ambience of the Hilton New Orleans Riverside contributed greatly to the success of the 90th National Convention of the Disabled American Veterans convened in New Orleans, Louisiana; and

WHEREAS, the courteous team members of the hotel staff ensured the comfort and satisfaction of the DAV officers, delegates and guests; and

WHEREAS, the classic setting, friendly environment, numerous amenities helped make the 90th National Convention a truly memorable experience; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, expresses its deepest appreciation for the Hilton New Orleans Riverside and to its entire staff for their friendly, personalized attention which helped make the 90th National Convention a resounding success.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 224—ADMINISTRATIVE
APPRECIATION TO ALL WHO ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE SUCCESS
OF THE 90TH DAV NATIONAL CONVENTION

WHEREAS, the success of the 90th DAV National Convention convened in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, depends on the total cooperation and unselfish devotion of the state, county, and local officials; and

WHEREAS, the success of this National Convention is also attributed to the Department and local Chapters and Units of the DAV and DAVA, particularly to Convention Chairman G. Eddie Figueron; and

WHEREAS, we wish to commend all the news media for their encouragement and assistance at all of our Convention activities; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, expresses its sincere appreciation to all groups and/or agencies whose dedication to our principles has made our Convention a successful one; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we wish to extend to the citizens of New Orleans, Louisiana, our deepest gratitude for their personal interest in our great organization; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we wish to extend our appreciation to all of the distinguished guests who participated in our convention and support the ideals and principles of our great organization; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we extend our gratitude to Convention Chairman G. Eddie Figueron, and his entire Committee for providing personalized assistance to our friends and delegates during our Convention stay.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 225—ADMINISTRATIVE
EXPRESSING APPRECIATION TO NATIONAL COMMANDER WALLACE E. TYSON

WHEREAS, Disabled American Veterans National Commander Wallace E. Tyson, a native of Tarboro, North Carolina, is a service-connected Vietnam era veteran; and

WHEREAS, Commander Tyson served more than 12 years in the United States Army, with assignments including the 101st Airborne Division, 1st Armored Division and 37th Transportation Group in Germany; 2nd Armored Division at Fort Hood, Texas; and the U.S. Army Recruiting Command; and

WHEREAS, while serving as Station Commander of the Army Recruiting Center in Batesville, Arkansas, Commander Tyson began having severe medical issues that resulted in his medical discharge in December 1984; and

WHEREAS, Commander Tyson returned to his native state and immediately joined Kimberly County DAV Chapter 46 in Fayetteville, North Carolina; and

WHEREAS, during this time, he continued his education, obtaining a Bachelor of Arts in Business Administration; and

WHEREAS, Commander Tyson was appointed Adjutant for the DAV Department of North Carolina in June 1989, a position he continues to serve in today; and

WHEREAS, Commander Tyson has been instrumental in the growth of the Department of North Carolina from 17,000 members in 1989 to more than 35,000 members in 2010; and

WHEREAS, Commander Tyson received the "Order of the Long Leaf Pine" award, the highest civilian honor bestowed by the Governor of North Carolina, for meritorious service to the citizens of North Carolina; and

WHEREAS, Commander Tyson uses every opportunity to promote the value of DAV membership and the superior services provided by DAV volunteers, DAV Chapter, Department and National Service Officers to everyone with whom he comes in contact; and

WHEREAS, Commander Tyson has held many offices throughout his long tenure with DAV, including 9th District Executive Committeeman; a member of the National Executive and Finance Committees and Chairman of the National Finance Committee; four years as a member of the Interim Committee on Constitution and Bylaws; President of the State Commanders and Adjutants Association; and as a member of the National Service Foundation Board of Directors; and

WHEREAS, Commander Tyson became a line officer as 4th Junior Vice Commander at the 2005 National Convention and was elected National Commander at the 2010 National Convention in Atlanta, Georgia; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, expresses its members' heartfelt appreciation and profound gratitude to Commander Tyson for his selfless service and dedication to his fellow disabled veterans, their families, and the DAV.

* * *

COMMANDER TYSON: You have heard the motion. May I have a second? Mic 3.

MR. FRANK MAUGHAN: Commander, Frank Maughan, Department of Utah, seconds the motion.

COMMANDER TYSON: Thank you, sir. In accordance with Rule 9 now the time for any rejected resolutions to be read. Are there any rejected resolutions you wish read? Hearing none, all those in favor signify by saying aye; opposed. Thank you. So ordered. Kevin, my thanks to you and the Committee for a fine job on the resolutions.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, sir.

COMMANDER TYSON: Next is the report, Committee on Employment. I call upon Terry Schow for that report.

CHAIRMAN TERRY D. SCHOW: Comrade Commander and delegates, the National Convention Committee on Employment was called to order on August 6th, 2011, by the Committee Advisors Harold Hicks and John Wilson.

The first order of business was the election of a Convention Committee chairman and secretary. Terry Schow was elected as chairman and Greg Dubin was elected as secretary.

The Committee then proceeded to review the resolutions submitted. And I will report to you the resolutions recommended for adoption by this National Convention. For the purposes – for the purpose of saving time I will read only the number and purpose of the resolutions.

Number 153, provide reasonable transition period for all service disabled veteran-owned small businesses following the death of the veteran;

Number 213, support veteran preference in public employment;

Number 214, provide adequate staffing, funding and permanency for Veterans' Employment and Training Service;

Number 215, support legislation enhancing government-wide goal for participation by small business concerns owned and controlled by service-disabled veterans;

Number 216, support licensure and certification of active-duty service personnel;

Number 217, provide increased funding for Transition Assistance and Disabled Transition Assistance Program;

Number 218, oppose using DVOP, LVER to work on or process public assistance programs and to reinforce mandate to assist, the mandate to assist veterans;

Number 219, increase staffing levels at the VA Voc Rehab and Employment Service;

Number 220, support increasing the Voc Rehab and Employment Chapter 31 Subsistence Allowance to a rate equal to the Post-9-11 GI Bill Assistance program under Chapter 33 for veterans of all eras and conflicts;

Number 221, support outreach and employment of women veterans, especially disabled women veterans; and

Number 222, drop the 12-year rule to request the VA Voc Rehab Benefits under Chapter 31, leaving the date to apply for the benefits open-ended.

Comrade Commander, this completes the report of the Committee on Employment. On behalf of the Committee I move the adoption of these resolutions and that the Committee be discharged with the thanks of the Convention.
(The above-mentioned resolutions follow:)

RESOLUTION NO. 153—LEGISLATIVE
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO PROVIDE FOR A REASONABLE TRANSITION
PERIOD FOR ALL SERVICE-DISABLED VETERAN-OWNED SMALL
BUSINESSES TO RETAIN THEIR FEDERAL PROTECTED STATUS FOLLOWING
THE DEATH OF THE DISABLED VETERAN

WHEREAS, section 308, Public Law 108-183, the Veterans Benefits Act of 2003 established a procurement program for Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Business (SDVOSB); and

WHEREAS, Executive Order 13360, Contracting with Service-Disabled Veterans' Businesses, directs all Federal agencies to provide opportunities for SDVOSBs to increase their Federal contracting and subcontracting opportunities; and

WHEREAS, Public Law 109-4621, the Veterans Benefits, Health Care, and Information Technology Act of 2006 established a "Veterans First Contracting Program" specifically for the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to increase business opportunities with the VA for SDVOSBs; and

WHEREAS, SDVOSBs and other small businesses are the focus of Public Law 111-240, the Small Business Jobs Act of 2010 (SBJA 2010), which provides enhanced opportunities for SDVOSBs to compete for Federal project and subcontracting opportunities; and

WHEREAS, the SDVOSB small business category has encouraged many disabled veterans to take the personal risk of establishing small businesses with the support of their families, their own personal financial resources, the VA and, in some cases, commercial institutions; and

WHEREAS, these SDVOSBs have created new job opportunities for American citizens and, in many cases, have hired other disabled veterans and veterans during very challenging economic times; and

WHEREAS, by passing the SBJA 2010, the Federal government acknowledges that it is essential to create and grow small businesses in order to create new jobs and help the country recover from a most severe recession and provide for future job growth; and

WHEREAS, the SDVOSB category requires the disabled veteran to own at least 51 percent of the stock in the business and remain active in the day-to-day operations of the business in order for the business to maintain its SDVOSB status; and

WHEREAS, the enabling legislation for the SDVOSB program does not currently include a provision dealing with the treatment of the business after the death of the veteran owner; and

WHEREAS, since loss of the company's SDVOSB status would put the disabled veteran's investment, family heirs, and employees at severe risk due to either downsizing or closing the business due to loss of Federal procurement opportunities and thus, laying off the workers; and

WHEREAS, section 8127 (h)(2)(C), Public Law 109-461, (specifically for the VA only) allows for a ten-year transition period to a surviving spouse of a 100 percent disabled veteran or a veteran who dies as a result of a service-connected disability; and

WHEREAS, allowing the surviving spouses or heirs of disabled veterans to have a reasonable transition period for the SDVOSB program would help to maintain the jobs created by the SDVOSBs for disabled veterans, veterans and other employees and will not unduly put these individuals at increased financial risk and hardship due to likely job loss or downsizing of the business; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, supports the enactment of legislation that will provide for a reasonable transition period for all SDVOSBs, not covered by Public Law 109-461, to retain their SDVOSB status with the Federal government following the death of the disabled veteran via a surviving spouse, children, or heirs and thus, allowing the business to restructure over time without necessarily downsizing, laying off workers, or closing down.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 213—LEGISLATIVE
SUPPORT VETERANS' PREFERENCE IN PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT

WHEREAS, the Disabled American Veterans strongly supports federal, state, and local veterans' preference laws; and

WHEREAS, many disabled military personnel are relieved from active duty prior to the end of their enlistment period by being placed on “terminal leave,” and they do not receive their discharge papers (DD FM 214) until the official end of their military service; and

WHEREAS, they are not considered veterans by Federal Agencies and Administrations, State Employment Security Agencies (SESAs)/State Workforce Agencies (SWAs) because they have not received their DD FM 214; and

WHEREAS, the current administration issued Executive Order 13518, Employment of Veterans in Federal Government in 2009, in an effort to improve the federal hiring process for veterans; and

WHEREAS, although important improvements were made to streamline the hiring process and to educate hiring managers, between FY 2010 and the first two quarters of FY 2011 the number of veterans hired has only increased 0.9 percent and the number of disabled veterans hired has increased by 3 percent for the same period with only a few federal agencies hiring the majority of such veterans; and

WHEREAS, while the Office of Personnel Management monitors federal agencies’ veterans hiring trends as part of Executive Order 13518, it has not correlated this with Veterans Employment Special Hiring Authorities monitored by the Disabled Veterans Affirmative Action Program plans to identify patterns and practices to determine if systemic discrimination may be a factor in underperforming agencies; and

WHEREAS, federal agencies generally have not taken a proactive position on identifying patterns and practices of veterans’ preference employment discrimination violations; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, supports veterans’ preference in federal, state and local employment; enforcement provisions and increased accountability for agencies’ veterans’ hiring compliance; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans supports entitlement of hiring individuals honorably separating from the military who are not yet in possession of their DD FM 214 to positions of employment within federal agencies during the 180-day period beginning on the date the individual is honorably discharged, if they are otherwise qualified for the position; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans supports appropriate recognition and enforcement of systemic veterans’ preference discrimination; broader utilization of veterans and disabled veterans hiring preference; and substantive improvement of recruitment and hiring of veterans generally and service-disabled veterans specifically; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans urges Congress to mandate that disabled military personnel placed on “terminal leave” prior to the end of their official enlistment period who have served honorably, be considered veterans by Federal and State Agencies and Administrations.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 214—LEGISLATIVE
PROVIDE ADEQUATE FUNDING AND PERMANENCY FOR
VETERANS’ EMPLOYMENT AND/OR TRAINING PROGRAMS

WHEREAS, the extended economic downturn has had a greater impact on veterans generally and disabled veterans specifically than many other groups; and

WHEREAS, there are numerous veterans’ employment and training programs reaching out to provide critical assistance but are in need of adequate staffing and funding; and

WHEREAS, these programs include the Veterans’ Employment and Training Service of the Department of Labor, National Veterans Training Institute and the Small Business Administration, Disabled Veterans’ Outreach Program, Local Veterans Employment Representative program, Homeless, and others; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, seeks and supports adequate funding and permanency for all veterans’ employment and training programs.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 215—LEGISLATIVE
SUPPORT LEGISLATION ENHANCING GOVERNMENT-WIDE GOAL
FOR PARTICIPATION BY SMALL BUSINESS CONCERNS OWNED AND
CONTROLLED BY SERVICE-DISABLED VETERANS

WHEREAS, Section 502, Public Law 106-50, the Veterans Entrepreneurship and Small Business Development Act of 1999, codified “the Government-wide goal for participation by small business concerns owned and controlled by service-disabled veterans shall be established at not less than 3 percent of the total value of all prime contract and subcontract awards for each fiscal year;” and

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU) has the Center for Veterans Enterprise (CVE), which maintains VA’s database of veteran-owned small businesses (VOSBs) and service-disabled veteran-owned small businesses (SDVOSBs) as well as serving as an advocate for VOSBs, SDVOSBs, historically underutilized business (HUB) zone businesses, and woman-owned small businesses; and

WHEREAS, the database, www.vetbiz.gov vendor information pages (VIP), lists businesses that are 51 percent or more owned by veterans and is the only one within the federal government; and

WHEREAS, the VIP was originally established to act as a single-source database of certified VOSBs and SDVOSBs to supply all federal agencies and prime contractors information to assist the federal government with achieving the not less than 3 percent goal of set-aside contracts for SDVOSBs and/or contracts being awarded to SDVOSB or VOSB concerns, as mandated in Public Law 106-50; and

WHEREAS, while section 8127 (f)(4), Public Law 109-461, required verification of veterans’ ownership of listed SDVOSBs and VOSBs, as well as verification of the service-disabled status of SDVOSBs, the federal agencies tasked with ensuring set-asides and timely, comprehensive verification have failed to do so; and

WHEREAS, according to the VA Office of Inspector General report, “Audit of Veteran-Owned and Service Disabled-Owned Small Business Programs,” Report Number 10-02436-234, dated July 25, 2011, 32 of 42 statistically selected businesses that were reviewed, 76 percent were either ineligible to participate in the programs or were ineligible for the awarded contracts; and

WHEREAS, few government agencies have met much less exceeded the set-aside program goal for disabled veteran-owned businesses; and

WHEREAS, based on Section 1347, Public Law 111-240, the Small Business Jobs Act of 2010, SDVOSBs, HUB zone businesses, woman-owned small businesses and small businesses now have the same meaning, thus providing parity to each of these businesses when competing for contracts; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, calls for all government agencies to meet the set aside goal of not less than 3 percent of the total value of all prime and subcontract awards going to businesses controlled by service-disabled veterans each fiscal year; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Congress should enact legislation requiring the federal government make set-asides mandatory rather than goals, and should require under-performing federal agencies to make up any shortfalls in the subsequent fiscal year, AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Congress should revise the enforcement penalties for misrepresentation of a business concern as a VOSB or SDVOSB from a reasonable period of time as determined by the Secretary to a period of not less than five years, AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Congress must ensure adequate resources are available to OSDBU to expedite verification of VIP business listing eligibility and all federal agencies to effectively monitor and hold accountable those agencies that are not meeting the set aside goal of not less than 3 percent, and require all federal agencies to list in their annual reports their prior fiscal year’s actual percentage of meeting this goal, the results of which will serve as an annual report card on which agencies need the most assistance in the development and implementation of stronger contracting plans.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 216—LEGISLATIVE
SUPPORT LICENSURE AND CERTIFICATION OF
ACTIVE DUTY SERVICE PERSONNEL

WHEREAS, the Department of Defense (DOD) establishes, measures, and evaluates performance standards for every occupation within the Armed Forces, providing some of the best vocational training in the nation to its military personnel; and

WHEREAS, that training is not recognized as fulfilling the training or educational certification and licensure requirements of applicable civilian equivalent occupations by each of the states of the union; and

WHEREAS, many former military personnel, certified as proficient in their military occupational career, are not certified or licensed to perform a comparable job in the civilian workforce once they leave the military; and

WHEREAS, there are many occupational career fields in the Armed Forces that could translate to a civilian occupation if DOD, in collaboration with states, unions and certifying/licensing entities would expand its training curriculum to meet the various certification and licensure requirements of applicable civilian equivalent occupations or forge some other path to doing so; and

WHEREAS, once DOD expanded its training to meet the requirements of civilian equivalent career paths, service members could take certification or licensure equivalency examinations to gain journeyman status on a par with the military occupation level of proficiency for the state in which they plan to reside; and

WHEREAS, the state in which the military member plans to reside could then confer the appropriate journeyman equivalent status upon them; and

WHEREAS, as military members continue in the service, additional training or education could be counted as continuing training or education credits thereby allowing them to retain certification and/or licensure status; and

WHEREAS, Public Law 109-461, the Veterans Benefits Health Care and Information Technology Act of 2006, codified at Section 4114, title 38, United States Code, recommends that the Department of Labor's (DOL) Assistant Secretary for Veterans' Employment and Training may carry out a demonstration project on credentialing to facilitate the seamless transition of members of the Armed Forces to civilian employment by selecting at least 10 military occupational specialties with a skill or set of skills that is required for civilian employment in an industry with high growth or high worker demand; and

WHEREAS, as part of this recommended demonstration project, the DOL was to cooperate with appropriate Federal, State, and industry officials to reduce or eliminate barriers to providing a credential, certification, or license to a veterans' active duty military occupational specialty skill, training or experience specialty, but it never came to pass; and

WHEREAS, this specific demonstration project has yet to take place just as there has been little progress generally on the elimination of employment barriers that impede the transfer of military job skills to the civilian labor market; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, supports the elimination of employment barriers that impede the transfer of military job skills to the civilian labor market; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans urges Congress to fund this DOL demonstration project so it can be carried forward to completion and be used as a springboard to facilitate development of all occupational career fields in the Armed Forces in such a manner as to meet the various certification and licensure requirements of applicable civilian equivalent occupations; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans urges Congress to engage in a national dialogue, working closely with the Administration generally, and DOD, VA and DOL specifically, as well as state governments, employers, trade unions, and licensure and credentialing entities to establish a clear process so military training meets civilian certification and licensure requirements for the states in which they choose to live once they leave the military.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 217—LEGISLATIVE
PROVIDE INCREASED FUNDING SO MEMBERS OF ALL SERVICE
BRANCHES AND COMPONENTS ATTEND THE TRANSITION ASSISTANCE
PROGRAM AND THE DISABLED TRANSITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

WHEREAS, Public Law 101-510, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1991, codified at sections 1141-1150 of title 10, United States Code, authorized comprehensive transition assistance benefits and services for separating service members and their spouses, and required that the Transition Assistance Program (TAP) and Disabled Transition Assistance Program (DTAP) be established and maintained; and

WHEREAS, the transition from military service to civilian life is very difficult for most veterans who must overcome many obstacles to successful employment; and

WHEREAS, TAP and the DTAP were created with the goal of furnishing separating service members with vocational guidance to aid them in obtaining meaningful civilian careers; and

WHEREAS, currently TAP and DTAP workshops are available but not mandatory for active duty service members, except for the Marine Corps, prior to separating from active duty, nor typically afforded to members of the National Guard and Reserve; and

WHEREAS, continuation of TAP and DTAP is essential to easing some of the problems associated with transition, as is periodic review of training methodology and the collection and analysis of course participant critiques to ensure the program is fulfilling its intended objective; and

WHEREAS, these programs have not been updated in such a way as to remain viable in the face of improvements in technology, and there is no follow-up to determine if those attending have found gainful employment; and

WHEREAS, the level of TAP and DTAP funding and staffing is inadequate to support the routine discharges per year from all branches of the Armed Forces; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, goes on record urging Congress to provide adequate funding for TAP and DTAP, establishing scheduled periodic review of training methodology and delivery of services, collection and analysis of course critiques to ensure the program is meeting its objective and follow-up with participants to determine if they have found gainful employment; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans urges Congress to make TAP/DTAP mandatory for all those leaving military service including members of the National Guard and Reserve.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 218—LEGISLATIVE
OPPOSE USING DISABLED VETERANS' OUTREACH PROGRAM
SPECIALISTS AND LOCAL VETERANS' EMPLOYMENT REPRESENTATIVES
TO WORK WITH OR PROCESS PUBLIC ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

WHEREAS, the United States Department of Labor's Veterans Employment and Training Service administers programs to assist veterans with their employment and training needs; and

WHEREAS, Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program Specialists (DVOPS) provide intensive services to disabled veteran and veterans with barriers to employment in finding work, and Local Veterans' Employment Representatives (LVERs) work with nondisabled veterans, informing them of employment opportunities, and perform outreach to community businesses to locate employment opportunities; and

WHEREAS, many state employment agencies are utilizing DVOPS and LVERs to work on public assistance related programs, including food stamps, which diverts DVOPS/LVERs from their prime mission, which is to assist veterans with their employment and training needs; and

WHEREAS, Public Law 105-220, the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 required at least one impact study be carried out in such a way as to provide a valid assessment of the effectiveness of the Jobs for Veterans State Grants (JVSG) Program, the funding vehicle to state workforce agencies where DVOPS and LVERs are employed; and

WHEREAS, according to a Government Accountability Office report, "Disabled Veterans' Employment: Additional Planning, Monitoring, and Data Collection Efforts Would Improve Assistance," GAO-07-1020, little is known about the effectiveness of the employment and training programs because of the five (5) state workforce agencies visited to assess whether outcomes can be attributed to their programs through an impact study, about half of all those programs have not had a performance review since 2004; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, opposes utilizing DVOPS/LVERs to work with or process public assistance programs; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans recommends Congress fund an impact study to provide a valid assessment of the effectiveness of the entire JVSG Program that provides funding to state workforce agencies where DVOPS and LVERs are employed.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 219—LEGISLATIVE
INCREASE STAFFING LEVELS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION AND EMPLOYMENT SERVICE

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E) Service is charged with preparing service-disabled veterans for suitable employment or

providing independent living services to those veterans with disabilities severe enough to render them unemployable; and

WHEREAS, transition of disabled veterans to meaningful employment relies heavily on VA's ability to provide vocational rehabilitation and employment services in a timely and effective manner, but the demands and expectations being placed on the VR&E Service are exceeding the organization's current capacity to effectively deliver a full continuum of comprehensive programs; and

WHEREAS, the service has been experiencing a shortage of staff nationwide because of insufficient funding, which, as a result, has caused delays in providing VR&E services to disabled veterans, thus reducing veterans' opportunities to achieve successful timely rehabilitation; and

WHEREAS, to increase emphasis on employment, the service has begun an initiative titled "Coming Home to Work," an early outreach effort to provide VR&E services to eligible service members pending medical separation from active duty at military treatment facilities which will require additional staff to maintain efforts nationwide; and

WHEREAS, even though the focus of the VR&E program has drastically changed to career development and employment, it is not clear, despite VR&E's addition of over 80 employment coordinators, whether VA is able to meet the current and future demand for employment services; and

WHEREAS, in addition, the current 60 days of employment as the standard for a veteran to be considered fully employed is insufficient given that employers typically require longer probationary employment timeframes; and

WHEREAS, many veterans may not be receiving suitable vocational rehabilitation and employment services in a timely manner due to inconsistent case management with lack of accountability for poor decision making; delays in processing initial applications due to staff shortages and large caseloads; declaring veterans rehabilitated before suitable employment is retained for at least six months; inconsistent tracking by the electronic case management information system; and a failure to follow up with veterans and employers; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, supports a strengthening of VA's VR&E program to meet the demands of disabled veterans by providing increased staffing and funding, a more timely and effective transition into the workforce and providing placement follow-up with employers for at least six months; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans supports VR&E Service transitioning to a results-based criteria to evaluate and improve employee performance with a higher emphasis placed on academic training, employment services and independent living to achieve the goal of rehabilitation of severely disabled veterans.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 220—LEGISLATIVE
SUPPORT INCREASING THE VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION AND
EMPLOYMENT CHAPTER 31 SUBSISTENCE ALLOWANCE TO A RATE
EQUAL TO THE POST-9/11 EDUCATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM UNDER
CHAPTER 33 FOR VETERANS OF ALL ERAS OF CONFLICT

WHEREAS, our nation established veterans' programs to repay or reward veterans for their extraordinary service and sacrifices on behalf of their fellow citizens, especially those veterans disabled as a result of military service; and

WHEREAS, these programs include the Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E) program for service-connected disabled veterans with employment handicaps; and

WHEREAS, the post-9/11 GI Bill under title 38, United States Code, Chapter 33 provided a more financially lucrative subsistence allowance than the current VR&E Chapter 31 program; and

WHEREAS, passage of Public Law 111-377, the Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Improvement Act, on December 16, 2010 specified that veterans with service-connected disabilities participating in vocational rehabilitation under Chapter 31 of title 38, United States Code, who are also entitled to Post-9/11 GI Bill education benefits, can choose whether to receive the monthly housing stipend payable under the Post-9/11 GI Bill or the monthly subsistence allowance provided for in Chapter 31; and

WHEREAS, passage of this law resolved this financial disparity which could have ultimately forced service-connected disabled veterans with employment handicaps to either utilize a program less financially supportive to them and their families than their non-disabled counterparts, or opt out of vocational rehabilitation for the more financially beneficial Post 9/11 GI Bill; and

WHEREAS, while those eligible for the Post-9/11 GI Bill can now choose the greater benefit, those veterans from other eras of conflict cannot thus establishing an inequity in veterans benefits; and

WHEREAS, our nation's first duty to veterans is the rehabilitation and welfare of its service-connected disabled; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, supports raising the subsistence allowance of the Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment program under Chapter 31 to a rate equal to the housing allowance available through the Post-9/11 GI Bill under Chapter 33 for veterans of all eras.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 221—LEGISLATIVE
SUPPORT OUTREACH AND EMPLOYMENT OF WOMEN VETERANS

WHEREAS, many women who have served in the military are not aware of services available to them through State Employment Security Agencies/State Workforce Agencies and are therefore less likely to obtain employment and training assistance than their male counterparts; and

WHEREAS, over the last decade there has been a definite increase in the number of women in need of employment and training services; and

WHEREAS, because of the reduction in federal programs and the reduction of jobs for women in the private sector, the number of unemployed women veterans continues to increase; and

WHEREAS, workforce trends indicate only job-ready and highly skilled women veterans are able to find career employment; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, urges Congress to enact legislation to establish and fund special programs and outreach to women veterans, especially disabled women veterans, in need of employment assistance from the nation's basic labor exchange system and training assistance through programs operated under the Workforce Investment Act; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans calls for additional training to be provided to service providers to address the delivery of services to and the underrepresentation of women veterans in career employment.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 222—LEGISLATIVE
DROP THE 12-YEAR RULE TO REQUEST DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS
AFFAIRS VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION BENEFITS UNDER CHAPTER 31,
LEAVING THE DATE TO APPLY FOR THAT BENEFIT OPEN-ENDED

WHEREAS, the Disabled American Veterans is dedicated to one single purpose: building better lives for all of our nation's disabled veterans and their families; and

WHEREAS, not all disabled veterans are aware of their possible entitlements to VA Vocational Rehabilitation programs at the time they are awarded for service connection for disabilities; and

WHEREAS, not all awards of service connection are rated high enough to be awarded Chapter 31 benefits; and

WHEREAS, not all disabled veterans are under the impression that they need vocational rehabilitation until later, often after the current 12-year rule excludes them from the benefit they need and would otherwise have been entitled to; and

WHEREAS, the VA puts no time limit on when a veteran may claim his or her disability, the VA also does not put a time limit on requesting another service-connected benefit; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, seeks legislation to eliminate the 12-year limitation to apply for VA vocational rehabilitation, leaving a veteran's dates of entitlement open ended.

* * *

COMMANDER TYSON: You have heard the motion. May I have a second? Mic 2.

MR. ERNEST GOLDEN: Ernest Golden, District 9, Chapter 4, North Carolina, seconds the motion.

COMMANDER TYSON: Thank you. In accordance with Rule 9 now is the time for any rejected resolutions to be read. Are there any rejected resolutions you wish read? Hearing none,

all those in favor signify by saying aye; opposed. Thank you. So ordered. The Committee is dismissed subject to the call of the Chair.

I would like to call upon Chairman Rick Newell for the report of the Committee on Hospital and Voluntary Services, Rick.

CHAIRMAN RICK NEWELL: Thank you. Comrade Commander and delegates, the National Convention Committee on Hospital and Voluntary Services was called to order on August 6th by Committee Advisor Lee Ewing, Joy Ilem and Michael Walsh.

The first order of business was the election of a Convention Committee chairman and secretary. Rick Newell was elected chairman and Lacey Engebretson was elected secretary.

The Committee then proceeded to review resolutions submitted. I will report to you the resolutions recommended for adoption by this, the National Convention. For the purpose of saving time I will read only the number and the purpose of the resolution.

Number 042, support amendment of Title 38 U.S.C. to provide dental care to all enrolled veterans within the VA health care system;

Number 043, support legislation to require the President, Vice President, and members of Congress to receive health care solely from the VA; (Applause) thank you; (Laughter)

Number 047, support legislation to create separate office and appropriation for VA national rehabilitative special events;

Number 049, support a Congressionally authorized demonstration project through the VA for veterans with Alzheimer's Disease using other traditional modes of care;

Number 080, oppose collection of third-party benefits for the treatment of service-connected disabilities; Number – I'm sorry, that was 080;

Number 082, top priority access for service-connected – service-connected veterans within the VA health care system;

Number 151, oppose means testing service-connected veterans for VA health care;

Number 182, improve VA purchase programs including non-VA emergency care, fee basis, contact care, and CHAMP VA;

Number 183, support Congressional oversight of federal vigilance to provide for research, care and improved surveillance of environmental health, environmental hazardous exposure;

Resolution 184, provide adequate support to state veterans' homes by supporting per diem program, Construction Grant programs, changes in how the VA reimburses state homes and for care of severely disabled veterans;

Number 185, support equal medical services and benefits for women veterans;

Number 186, support enhancement of long-term health care services to service-connected veterans;

Number 187, support enhancement of medical services through modernization of the Department of Veterans Affairs Health Care infrastructure;

Number 188, Congress and the Administration must assure full implementation of legislation to guarantee sufficiently timely and predictable funding for the Department of Veterans Affairs Health Care programs;

Number 189, to continue adequately funding and sustained the VA veterans centers programs and facilities;

Number 190, support legislation to establish a comprehensive program for traumatic brain injury rehabilitation and require the Departments of Defense and Veterans Affairs to corroborate to ensure proper screening, diagnosis, treatment for all veterans with possibility of traumatic brain injury;

Resolution 191, support legislation to repeal co-pay for medical care and prescriptions in VA and DoD;

Number 192, support legislation to extend entitlement to CHAMP VA until graduation of full or part-time students;

Resolution 193, support provisions of comprehensive VA health care services to eligible veterans;

Resolution 204, improve reimbursement for non – Oh, 194. I'm sorry. I apologize; ensure timely access to quality VA health care and services;

Number 195, support legislation to provide comprehensive support services for caregivers of severely-wounded, injured and ill veterans of all eras;

Number 196, support legislation and policy changes to authorize scholarships for new mental health petitioners in exchange for agreement to serve veterans in community-based outpatient clinics and readjustment counseling veteran centers of the VA;

Number 197, protect veterans from employment discrimination when seeking health care for service-connected conditions;

Number 198, reduction of co-pay for medication from VA medical centers to be equal or less, lower price co-payment for the same medication offered within the private sector;

Number 199, support the repeal of beneficiary travel pay deducted for service-connected disabled veterans and increase the beneficiary travel reimbursement rates;

Resolution 200, support program improves and enhanced resources for VA medical health programs to achieve readjustment of new war veterans and continual effective mental health care for all enrolled veterans needing such services;

Number 201, to ensure full funding and resources for poly-trauma units at VA medical centers;

Number 202, to oppose recommendation for eligible military retired veterans to prohibit from receiving health care at both DoD and VA facilities;

Number 203, support sufficient resources for VA health care for veterans living in rural and remote areas; Number 204, improve reimbursement for non-VA emergency health care for service for enrolled veterans;

Number 205, support sustained sufficient funding to improve service for homeless veterans;

Number 206, enhance the civilian health and medical programs of Department of Veterans Affairs CHAMP VA services;

Number 207, support legislation to improve VA programs designed to prevent and treat substance abuse disorders in veterans;

Number 208, require a veterans' attending physician to provide medical opinion in support of a claim for DAV – I'm sorry, VA disability compensation benefits requested;

Number 209, support programs to provide psychological support, mental health counseling services for families of members of veterans suffering from PTSD, depression and other mental health challenges;

Number 210, encourage the Department of Veterans Affairs to submit a candidate for the George H. Seal Memorial Award;

Number 211, encourage the Department of Veterans Affairs to submit a candidate for the Jesse Brown Memorial Youth Scholarship Program;

Number 212, support policies to require VA to allow veterans to be accompanied by service and guide dogs when seeking care at VA facilities;

Number 226, to extend appreciation to the Southeast Louisiana Veterans Health Care System for the success of the 90th National Convention.

Comrade Commander, this completes my report on Hospital and Volunteer Services. On the behalf of the Committee I move the adoption of these resolutions and that the Committee be discharged with the thanks of the National Convention.

(The above-mentioned resolutions follow:)

RESOLUTION NO. 042—LEGISLATIVE

AMEND TITLE 38, UNITED STATES CODE, TO PROVIDE DENTAL CARE TO ALL ENROLLED VETERANS WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS HEALTH CARE SYSTEM

WHEREAS, the Disabled American Veterans recognizes that oral health is integral to the general health and well being of a patient, and is part of comprehensive health care; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) health care system is mandated under section 1712, title 38, United States Code, to provide outpatient dental services to veterans rated 100 percent service connected, to veterans who were held prisoner of war, or to those who have sustained dental trauma in performance of military service; and

WHEREAS, irrespective of service-connected disability, title 38, United States Code, section 1701(9) defines "preventive health services" as a broad collection of VA health services that improve, protect and sustain the general health and well-being of veterans enrolled in VA health care, to include "such other health-care services as the Secretary may determine to be necessary to provide effective and economical preventive health care;" and

WHEREAS, according to the 2000 report by the Surgeon General of the United States, Oral Health in America, individuals who are medically compromised or who have disabilities are at greater risk for oral diseases, and, in turn, oral diseases further jeopardize their health, and that oral diseases are progressive and cumulative and become more complex over time, and can affect economic productivity and compromise the ability to work, and often significantly diminishes the quality of life; and

WHEREAS, VA maintains oral and dental programs within its health care system; NOW
THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, supports legislation to amend title 38, United States Code, section 1712, to provide outpatient dental care to all enrolled veterans.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 043—LEGISLATIVE
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO REQUIRE THE PRESIDENT, VICE PRESIDENT, AND
MEMBERS OF CONGRESS TO RECEIVE HEALTH CARE EXCLUSIVELY FROM THE
DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

WHEREAS, even though veterans' health care is funded through an advance appropriation, it is still at the discretion of Congress to provide the level of funding necessary for the veterans' health care system; and

WHEREAS, the President and many members of Congress insist that the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) health care system is adequately funded; and

WHEREAS, VA is recognized as the best health care system in the United States, and for providing high quality health care services; and

WHEREAS, by using the VA health care system, the President, Vice President, and members of Congress would be in a better position to understand the resource needs of VA to enable it to provide timely quality health care to our nation's veterans; and

WHEREAS, similar to the members of the military, the President, Vice President, and most Members of Congress are required to spend a significant amount of time away from their homes, families, and friends while Congress is in session; and

WHEREAS, because of the patriotism, devotion, and sacrifices of our President, Vice President, and Members of Congress, ours is the most free nation on earth, where our citizens enjoy unequalled rights, privileges, and prosperity; and

WHEREAS, the President, Vice President, and Members of Congress should therefore be granted the privilege of using the VA health care system for their medical needs; and

WHEREAS, if the President, Vice President, or member of Congress is a veteran, he or she would be classified into the proper priority group for purpose of receipt of VA medical care; and

WHEREAS, if the President, Vice President, or member of Congress is not a veteran, he or she would be classified as a non service-connected veteran in either Priority Group 7 or 8, depending on their income; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, supports legislation to require the President, Vice President, and Members of Congress to enroll for VA medical care services and receive health care exclusively from the VA health care system.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 047—LEGISLATIVE
SUPPORT CONGRESSIONAL FUNDING FOR THE CREATION OF A DEPARTMENT OF
VETERANS AFFAIRS REHABILITATIVE SPECIAL EVENTS OFFICE

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and several Congressionally chartered veterans service organizations cosponsor national rehabilitative special event programs for veterans receiving health care from VA medical facilities; and

WHEREAS, the VA currently has a program within the Office of Public Affairs tasked with oversight of the national rehabilitative special events; and

WHEREAS, these rehabilitative programs, which include the National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic, National Veterans Wheelchair Games, National Veterans Golden Age Games, National Creative Arts Festival, and the National Veterans Summer Sports Clinic focus on rehabilitation of many severely disabled veterans and, as such, these events should be the responsibility of the Veterans Health Administration, not the Office of Public Affairs; and

WHEREAS, while these programs showcase the preventive and therapeutic values of sports, fitness, and recreation, which are key factors in VA's extensive rehabilitation programs, they are also extremely beneficial to veterans, helping many to overcome or mitigate the physical and emotional impact of severe disabilities; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, supports legislation to create an office within the Veterans Health Administration to oversee these rehabilitative special

events and to provide a separate appropriation in the VA budget for the national rehabilitative special events so VA can continue to contribute its share of the funding; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that responsibility for rehabilitative special event programs should be transferred from the Office of Public Affairs to the Veterans Health Administration.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 049—LEGISLATIVE
SUPPORT A DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS ALTERNATIVE CARE MODEL
PILOT PROJECT FOR VETERANS WITH ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE

WHEREAS, based on prevalence rates, it is estimated that over 550,000 veterans suffer with dementia, including more than 300,000 enrolled for VA health care; and

WHEREAS, Alzheimer's disease is the most common form of dementia accounting for at least 50 percent of cases; and

WHEREAS, veterans with Alzheimer's could benefit from a designated program to address their unique health care needs; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, urges Congress to authorize an Alzheimer's demonstration project at a Department of Veterans Affairs facility or facilities; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this pilot project be uniquely designed for veterans with Alzheimer's disease, using other than the routine medical or psychiatric care models, and should include Alzheimer's research as an integral part of the veteran's treatment program.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 080—LEGISLATIVE
OPPOSE THIRD-PARTY PAYMENTS FOR SERVICE-CONNECTED DISABILITIES

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA's) primary mission is to provide high quality medical care to veterans eligible by reason of their service-connected disabilities; and

WHEREAS, VA is authorized to recover or collect the cost of care from a third-party health insurer when insured veterans receive health care from VA for non service-connected conditions; and

WHEREAS, the collection of payments from a third party for the treatment of veterans' service-connected disabilities would abrogate VA's and the Federal Government's responsibility to provide such care and may result in increased premium payments to veterans; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, opposes any legislation that would require VA to recover third-party payments for the care and treatment of a veteran's service-connected disabilities.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 082—LEGISLATIVE
SUPPORT TOP PRIORITY ACCESS FOR SERVICE-CONNECTED VETERANS WITHIN
THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS HEALTH CARE SYSTEM

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Veterans Health Administration (VHA) has issued national directives and policies to affirm its commitment to providing top priority access to hospital care and medical services to veterans with service-connected disabilities, regardless of the percentage disability of service-connected rating, in absence of compelling medical reasons to the contrary; and

WHEREAS, many VA facilities are struggling to fulfill this mandate because of budget pressures, insufficient local resources and saturation of available capacity because of patient workloads; and

WHEREAS, Disabled American Veterans continues to receive complaints from service-connected veterans who are being denied priority access to VA health care services, or report their access to care is being delayed; and

WHEREAS, due to inadequate resources, VHA at times has been forced to establish waiting lists and implement other types of health care rationing, absent compelling medical reasons; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, supports strict enforcement by the VHA, including VHA network and medical center directors, of governing policies providing service-connected veterans priority access to care, unless compelling medical reasons affecting other veterans prevent such priority from being extended to them.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 151—LEGISLATIVE
OPPOSE MEANS TESTING SERVICE-CONNECTED VETERANS FOR
DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS HEALTH CARE

WHEREAS, Public Law 104-262 requires zero percent service-connected disabled veterans to be means tested in order to receive treatment in a Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) medical facility; and

WHEREAS, countless thousands of veterans have relied on the ability to receive care at VA medical facilities for decades and now face the possibility of losing access to VA medical care because of income levels, consequently causing them undue financial hardship, pain and suffering; and

WHEREAS, these zero percent service-connected disabled veterans have been relegated to the lowest eligibility categories for care and, in some cases, below non service-connected veterans; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, supports the exclusion of service-connected disabled veterans from the requirements of means testing for treatment or service received at VA medical facilities and the inclusion of zero percent service-connected disabled veterans in Priority Group 3.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 182—LEGISLATIVE
IMPROVE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS PURCHASED CARE PROGRAM

WHEREAS, current law authorizes Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) medical facilities to purchase non-VA care for scarce medical specialists only when VA facilities are incapable of providing necessary care to veterans, when VA facilities are geographically inaccessible to veterans, and in certain emergency situations; and

WHEREAS, non-VA purchased care includes non-VA Emergency Care, Fee Basis, Contract Care, and the Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs (CHAMPVA); and

WHEREAS, approximately 40 percent of disabled veteran's enrolled in the VA health care system receive some of their care from a non-VA health care provider; and

WHEREAS, veterans who seek reimbursement from VA are paying for part of their care because VA will at times approve only a portion of the costs of private medical services or inpatient hospital days of care; and

WHEREAS, VA's antiquated and cumbersome Information Technology infrastructure used to manage the authorization, claims processing, and reimbursement for services acquired non-VA purchased care program is a disincentive for private providers to care for service-connected disabled veterans; and

WHEREAS, reimbursement to private providers through Fee program are based on limited rates and have not kept pace with medical inflation; and

WHEREAS, service-connected veterans in the Fee program are unable to receive needed treatment from a private provider due to the amount payable and delayed payment by VA; and

WHEREAS, VA does not currently assign a Care or Case Manager to assist disabled veterans to access and coordinate non-VA care when they must or are authorized to receive such care; and

WHEREAS, the quality of care from private providers and the veterans continuity of care are not monitored, and the care received does not become part of a veterans electronic health record; and

WHEREAS, VA does not track purchased private care for eligible veterans, such as related costs, health outcomes, or veteran satisfaction levels; and

WHEREAS, the complex legislative authority, decentralized structure, and the inadequate funding to local VA facilities for non-VA purchased care continue to erode the effectiveness of this necessary health-care benefit; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, urges Congress and the Administration to conduct strong oversight of the non-VA purchased care program to ensure service-connected disabled veterans are not encumbered in receiving non-VA care at VA's expense; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans urges VA to establish a non-VA purchased care coordination program that complements the capabilities and capacities of each VA medical facility and includes care and case management, non-VA quality of care and patient safety standards equal to or better than VA, timely claims processing, adequate reimbursement rates, health records management and centralized appointment scheduling.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 183—LEGISLATIVE
SUPPORT CONGRESSIONAL OVERSIGHT AND FEDERAL VIGILANCE TO PROVIDE
FOR RESEARCH, HEALTH CARE AND IMPROVED SURVEILLANCE OF DISABLING
CONDITIONS RESULTING FROM MILITARY TOXIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL
HAZARDS EXPOSURES

WHEREAS, veterans of all military conflicts from the World Wars to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have been exposed to environmental hazards and man-made toxins, including mustard gas, herbicides, pesticides, cold and other adverse weather conditions, chemical, biological and radiological agents, “burn pits,” and other combat and military occupational exposures; and

WHEREAS, returning from war, some veterans subsequently suffer disabling conditions and symptoms of illnesses that may be difficult to medically diagnose, and not be immediately identified as consequential to such dangerous exposures; and

WHEREAS, research conducted by the National Institutes of Health, the Departments of Defense (DoD) and Veterans Affairs (VA), and other federal departments and agencies, have focused on associations linking toxic and environmental exposures with subsequent health status of veterans (and in the case of Vietnam veterans, some of their children); and

WHEREAS, sustained funding for such research is necessary to ensure veterans receive high quality health care services and adequate compensatory benefits to which they are entitled due to diseases or injuries incurred from hazardous military exposures; and

WHEREAS, in studies mandated by Congress in public law, the National Academy of Sciences continues to review and evaluate scientific literature to determine whether associations exist that connect a variety of military exposures and certain physical disorders within populations of veterans; and

WHEREAS, effective evidence-based medicine to treat individual patients with acute or chronic diseases must rely on scientifically valid biomedical research and peer-reviewed literature;
NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, urges Congress to actively oversee its established mechanism of delegation to the National Academy of Sciences and VA to determine validations of, and develop equitable compensation policy for, environmentally exposed veterans, respectively; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans urges Congress to provide adequate funding for research to identify all disabling conditions and effective screening and treatment for such disabilities that may have been caused by exposure to environmental hazards and man-made toxins while serving in the armed forces of the United States; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans urges greater collaboration between DoD and VA to share necessary deployment, health and exposure data from military operations and deployments, in order to timely and adequately address the subsequent health concerns of disabled veterans, whatever the causes of those disabilities; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans intends to closely monitor programs of care within the Veterans Health Administration to ensure veterans disabled by exposure to environmental hazards and man-made toxins receive effective high quality health care, that the biomedical research and development programs of the Department are fully addressing their needs.

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RESOLUTION NO. 184—LEGISLATIVE
PROVIDE ADEQUATE SUPPORT TO STATE VETERANS HOMES BY SUPPORTING
THE PER DIEM PROGRAM, THE CONSTRUCTION GRANT PROGRAM, AND
CHANGES IN HOW VA REIMBURSES STATE HOMES FOR CARE OF SEVERELY
DISABLED VETERANS

WHEREAS, State Veterans Homes were founded for Union soldiers and sailors following the American Civil War, and have ably served veterans for nearly 150 years; and

WHEREAS, under title 38, United States Code, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is authorized to make aid payments to States that maintain State Veterans Homes, and to make grants to States for their construction and major improvements; and

WHEREAS, currently there are 142 State Veterans Homes, most as member institutions of the National Association of State Veterans Homes (NASVH), in all States and in Puerto Rico, that provide hospital, skilled nursing, rehabilitation, long-term care, dementia and Alzheimer's care, domiciliary care, respite care, end of life care, and adult day health care, daily to almost 30,000 veterans and their dependents; and

WHEREAS, Title 38, United States Code, authorizes VA to make per diem payments to the States for veterans residing in State Veterans Homes, and the State Veterans Home program is recognized as the lowest-cost among all institutional nursing care alternatives used by VA; and

WHEREAS, Title 38, United States Code, authorizes VA to pay a per diem payment up to 50 percent of the national average cost of care in State Veterans Homes; and

WHEREAS, under the State Extended Care Facilities Grant Program the federal government provides grants to cover up to 65% of the cost to construct, expand, rehabilitate or repair a State Home, with States required to cover a minimum of 35% of the cost of projects in matching funding; and

WHEREAS, Section 211 of Public Law 109-461, the Veterans Benefits, Health Care, and Information Technology Act of 2006, required VA to reimburse State Veterans Homes for the full cost of care provided to veterans with 70% or higher service-connected disabilities or who require nursing home care for service-connected disabilities; and

WHEREAS, the final regulations implementing Section 211 of Public Law 109-461 did not achieve the intent of Congress to create a new option for long term care for the most seriously disabled service-connected veterans, and as a result some State Homes already providing such care faced reductions in their federal reimbursements, thereby threatening their continued financial viability, while other State Homes have refrained from admitting veterans with service-connected disabilities under this arrangement; and

WHEREAS, the National Association of State Veterans Homes has been working with VA for two years since the promulgation of these regulations to arrive at a mutually agreeable solution to implement the intent of Congress to provide an additional, and financially viable option for the most severely disabled veterans seeking long term care; and

WHEREAS, recognizing the growing long-term health care needs of elder veterans, the State Veterans Home program will increasingly serve a vital purpose and will continue to be a major partner with VA in meeting the health care needs of aging veterans; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, supports an adequate VA per diem payment to State Homes of not more than 50 percent of the national average cost of providing care in a State Veterans Home, as authorized by law; AND

BE IT BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans supports sufficient funding for the State Home Construction Grant Program; AND

BE IT BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans supports legislation to allow States more flexibility in caring for veterans with service-connected disabilities at State Veterans Homes as Congress intended with the enactment of Public Law 109-461; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans urges the President and Congress to pledge their full support to the State Veterans Home program because that program is the most cost-effective institutional nursing care alternative available to VA for sick and disabled veterans with long-term care needs.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 185—LEGISLATIVE

SUPPORT EQUAL MEDICAL SERVICES AND BENEFITS FOR WOMEN VETERANS

WHEREAS, there are over 1.8 million women veterans comprising eight percent of all veterans nationwide with 200,000 women currently serving in the armed forces; and

WHEREAS, the number of women serving in the United States military has increased during Operations Enduring and Iraqi Freedom (OEF/OIF), and last year alone, according to the Veterans Health Administration (VHA), VA experienced a 20 percent increase in the number of women using VA health care, compared to 17 percent increase over the previous 6 years combined; and

WHEREAS, women constitute the fastest growing segment of new users in the VA health care system with women representing 6 percent of all veterans who use VA health care services; and the number of women veterans using VA health care has doubled in the last decade; and

WHEREAS with a majority of the new women veteran users of VA care being under the age of 30 and of child-bearing age, these women's needs represent new challenges to the current model and delivery of VA health care, which has traditionally focused on men; and

WHEREAS, the VA 2008 Report of the VA Under Secretary for Health Workgroup on Provision of Primary Care to Women Veterans identified a number of critical issues related to the delivery of health care in the VA health care system including the systemic fragmentation of primary care delivery for women; too few proficient, knowledgeable providers with expertise in women's health and a number of identified outpatient quality disparities for women veterans; and

WHEREAS, a March 2010 Government Accountability Office (GAO) report confirmed many deficiencies in VA health care still exist for women veterans including the ability to fully ensure privacy and a safe comfortable environment for women veterans at all VA facilities and suggested VA revise key policies and improve oversight; and

WHEREAS, many women seeking VA health care find certain services difficult to obtain or health care personnel unprepared to understand or deal with their unique health care needs; and

WHEREAS, the OEF/OIF population has been studied and it has been determined that women OEF/OIF veterans are more likely to use VA services than their male counterparts, with 52 percent of women OEF/OIF veterans having receiving VA health care, indicating the need for improved quality, comprehensive and gender-specific care services for women within the VA health care system; and

WHEREAS, significant numbers of women veterans, including those returning from military deployments, are the primary caregivers or sole caregivers of dependent children, which limits their ability to access services in inpatient, intensive outpatient, or residential settings that have traditionally been available to address post-deployment mental health readjustment needs; and

WHEREAS, increasing numbers of women are serving in combat theaters and seeking VA health care services following military service; therefore, VA must be prepared to anticipate the specialized needs of women veterans who were catastrophically wounded, suffering amputations, blindness, spinal cord injury, post-traumatic stress or traumatic brain injury, or who were sexually assaulted; and

WHEREAS, although it is anticipated that many of the medical problems for men and women veterans returning from combat operations will be similar, VA must address the specific health issues and barriers to care that pose special challenges for women; and

WHEREAS; an alarming number of women report military sexual trauma and need specialized mental health services from VA; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6 - 9, 2011, seeks to ensure the provision of health care services, inclusive of gender-specific services, by VA to eligible women veterans are provided to the same degree and extent that services are provided to eligible men veterans, inclusive of counseling and/or psychological services incident to combat exposure or sexual trauma; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we urge VA to strictly adhere to stated policies regarding privacy and safety issues relating to the treatment of women veterans and to proactively conduct research and health studies as appropriate, review its women's health programs, and seek innovative methods to address their barriers to care, thereby better ensuring women veterans receive the quality treatment and specialized services they so rightly deserve.

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RESOLUTION NO. 186—LEGISLATIVE SUPPORT ENHANCEMENT OF LONG-TERM HEALTH CARE TO SERVICE- CONNECTED DISABLED VETERANS

WHEREAS, historically the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) occupied a leadership position in fostering many long-term care programs now routinely available in the private sector, founded the medical specialty of geriatrics in conjunction with affiliated schools of medicine, and led the nation in biomedical research on aging, gero-psychiatry and chronic illnesses prevalent in the elderly veteran population; and

WHEREAS, today tens of thousands of service-connected veterans depend on the VA to meet their health care needs in post-acute and long-term care settings; and

WHEREAS, there is also a subset of service-connected veterans with chronic and terminal illnesses who need long-term care and will need institutional placements; and

WHEREAS, VA estimates that by 2012, the number of veterans aged 85 or older will rise from 337,000 to approximately 741,000, an increase of 120 percent; and

WHEREAS, as our nation's veteran population ages, VA will face an ever increasing demand for long-term care services of all kinds; and

WHEREAS, in 1996 the Veterans' Health Care Eligibility Reform Act, Public Law 104-262, reformed eligibility for VA health care toward a more holistic approach in providing service-connected disabled veterans a lifetime of care, but did not appreciably alter veterans' eligibility for VA institutional long-term care services; and

WHEREAS, in 1999, the Veterans Millennium Health Care and Benefits Act, Public Law 106-117, significantly enhanced VA's non-institutional long-term care services and required such services be provided to any veteran for a service-connected disability and to any veteran who is service connected 50 percent or greater disabling, yet VA is only required to provide institutional long-term care to any veteran for a service-connected disability and to any veteran who is service connected 70 percent or greater; and

WHEREAS, unresolved long-term care policy issues within Congress, the VA leadership, and the Office of Management and Budget leave VA facilities to determine locally their own mix of institutional and non-institutional approaches in providing long-term care, thereby relegating long-term care to a "second tier" of health care service and expectations within the VA system; and

WHEREAS, the success of non-institutional and home-based long-term care is critically dependent on the ability of veterans' caregivers, whether they be family or friends, to assist in their care; and

WHEREAS, VA long-term care services, especially alternative, non-bed, community- and home-based programs, are not uniformly available in all VA health care facilities; and

WHEREAS, the present state of VA's long-term care program is now lagging behind its rich history as an early leader in caring for aging veterans, and is in danger of falling behind non-VA health care systems

WHEREAS, VA has not optimized its relationship with State veterans homes to ensure veterans in need of institutional and alternative forms of long-term care may avail themselves of State home facilities to consider all options for its provision; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, supports legislation to expand the comprehensive program of long-term care services for service-connected disabled veterans regardless of their disability ratings, and urges VA, in conjunction with key stakeholders, including other federal agencies and the States, to develop a strategic long-term care plan to invigorate and re-engineer VA-operated, purchased, and subsidized long-term care services.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 187—LEGISLATIVE

SUPPORT ENHANCEMENT OF MEDICAL SERVICES THROUGH MODERNIZATION OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS HEALTH CARE INFRASTRUCTURE

WHEREAS, the Veterans Health Administration of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is the largest integrated health care system in the United States, with over 1,400 sites of care, including comprehensive medical centers, community-based outpatient clinics (CBOCs), nursing homes, readjustment counseling "Vet Centers," residential rehabilitation treatment programs, and other facilities for the delivery of health care; and

WHEREAS, the majority of VA's capital infrastructure was designed and built under an earlier concept of health care delivery founded on centralized hospital inpatient episodes of care; and

WHEREAS, VA needs to modernize its health care system and programs to meet veterans' current and future health care needs while providing optimal efficiency and enhanced access to the system of care; and

WHEREAS, the conclusion of the Capital Asset Realignment for Enhanced Services (CARES) initiative visualized a need for over \$1 billion annually in VA major medical facility construction, over a period of several years, to make VA health care a modern and accessible system for the care of sick and disabled veterans; and

WHEREAS, VA has internally identified needs for more than \$10 billion in capital facilities improvements and new construction in the post-CARES years; and

WHEREAS, the fiscal year 2010 VA Major and Minor Construction appropriations act provided \$1.9 billion, \$127 million above the President's request and \$256 million above the 2009 appropriated level; and

WHEREAS, for fiscal year 2012, the President proposed only \$1.2 billion for all VA construction accounts, \$500 million less than the fiscal year 2010 appropriated level; and

WHEREAS, as of April 2011, the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have produced 654,348 injured and ill war veterans who have enrolled in VA health care and who will need a variety of comprehensive VA health care services for decades, alongside the existing enrolled veteran population of over 8.3 million individuals from earlier service periods and wars; and

WHEREAS, given VA's expected continuing costs for new major medical facility construction, consolidation and modernization, VA is considering plans to revise its construction policy to emphasize primary and specialty outpatient services, with complex and intensive inpatient services to be provided through affiliated arrangements with non-VA institutions and other private partners; and

WHEREAS, VA has adopted "Strategic Capital Investment Planning" (SCIP) as its primary means of projecting capital needs and budgets beginning in fiscal year 2012; and

WHEREAS, the VA's primary mission is to meet the needs of sick and disabled veterans through complex inpatient and rehabilitative hospital care, outpatient primary and specialty care, therapeutic residential care, and long-term care, in government facilities operated by VA for the exclusive benefit of veterans; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention, assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, urges VA to continue its efforts to request adequate funding in future budgets to ensure at minimum that VA fulfills the intent of its CARES initiative while examining other needs beyond those identified within the five-year period of the CARES initiative with the SCIP methodology; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Congress should carefully monitor any intended VA changes in infrastructure that could jeopardize VA's ability to meet veterans' needs for specialized VA medical care and rehabilitative services, or be the cause of diminution of VA's established graduate medical and other health professions education and biomedical research programs, consequential to deployment of any new facilities model of health care delivery; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Disabled American Veterans urges Congress to continue to provide appropriated funding sufficient to fulfill the needs for infrastructure identified through the CARES process, plus any other infrastructure needs VA identifies and justifies through the SCIP program.

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RESOLUTION NO. 188—LEGISLATIVE

CONGRESS AND THE ADMINISTRATION MUST ASSURE FULL IMPLEMENTATION OF LEGISLATION TO GUARANTEE SUFFICIENT, TIMELY AND PREDICTABLE FUNDING FOR DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS HEALTH CARE PROGRAMS

WHEREAS, the Disabled American Veterans (DAV) believes that sick and disabled veterans, through their extraordinary sacrifices and service, earned the right to health care provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA); and

WHEREAS, VA health care programs provide essential services for six million veterans annually, including more than 2 million service-connected disabled veterans who rely on VA as their primary health care provider; and

WHEREAS, demand for VA health care services has grown dramatically, with enrollment rising from less than 2 million to more than 8.3 million veterans over the past 15 years, thereby requiring greater VA resources to meet this demand; and

WHEREAS, DAV worked for more than two decades to reform the budget process in order to assure sufficient, timely, and predictable funding for VA health care programs; and

WHEREAS, DAV developed and supported new legislation to assure sufficient, timely and predictable funding for VA health care through the technique of advance appropriations, as well as through new transparency and accountability requirements covering VA health care budget requests; and

WHEREAS, spurred by DAV, Congress enacted Public Law 111-81, the Veterans Health Care Budget Reform and Transparency Act, a law that requires advance appropriations for certain VA health care programs; and

WHEREAS, Public Law 111-81 requires VA to provide two-year budget estimates for health care programs, including the reasons and bases under those estimates, and also requires the Government Accountability Office (GAO) to report on VA's budget estimates for health care programs, including examination of internal funding estimates forecast by VA's actuarial model; and

WHEREAS, in order to fully implement the advance appropriations law, VA must provide detailed estimates of its budgetary needs for medical care services each fiscal year for the following two fiscal years; and

WHEREAS, GAO must study and report to Congress and the public each VA budget submission, including an evaluation of VA's budget estimates compared to the forecasts made by VA's internal forecasting model; and

WHEREAS, Congress must enact an advance appropriation each year for VA medical services accounts; and

WHEREAS, the level of funding provided under an advance appropriation may from time-to-time need to be adjusted since the advance fiscal year becomes the next fiscal year, both because newer data may change VA's budget forecasts, as well as to provide funding for newly authorized or expanded health care programs enacted into law after the approval of a particular year's advance appropriation; and

WHEREAS, DAV as well as the Congressional sponsors of the advance appropriations concept anticipated that full implementation of Public Law 111-81 would require continued oversight from Congress, as well as by the interested veterans service organizations, including DAV; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, calls on Congress and the Department of Veterans Affairs to take all actions necessary to ensure full implementation of Public Law 111-81, the Veterans Health Care Budget Reform and Transparency Act.

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RESOLUTION NO. 189—LEGISLATIVE

ADEQUATELY FUND AND SUSTAIN THE SUCCESSFUL READJUSTMENT COUNSELING SERVICE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AND ITS HIGHLY EFFECTIVE "VET CENTER" PROGRAM

WHEREAS, in 1979, Congress authorized the establishment of the Readjustment Counseling Service, an independent counseling activity within the then-Veterans Administration's Department of Medicine and Surgery; and

WHEREAS, in 1980 VA opened the first "Vet Center" to provide readjustment services and psychological counseling to Vietnam combat veterans suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder and other conditions related to combat exposure and their experiences in Vietnam; and

WHEREAS, the Vet Centers, now today numbering nearly 300 locations nationwide, have proven to be a most useful and effective tool to assist veterans suffering from psychological problems primarily associated with combat exposure and the psychological effects on individual veterans engaged in such military activities, as well as their immediate family members; and

WHEREAS, the Vet Center program has been most successful counseling veterans from all prior conflicts needing such readjustment services, including World War II, the Korean War, the War in Vietnam, the Persian Gulf War, and now veterans of combat service in Operations Enduring and Iraqi Freedom; and

WHEREAS, Vet Centers lead all VA mental health programs in conducting veteran-to-veteran peer counseling services, wherein veterans who have themselves experienced post-deployment mental health issues related to their military experience are trained to provide counseling to those still suffering ill effects; and

WHEREAS, the Readjustment Counseling Service and its Vet Centers provide a cost-effective and highly beneficial service to veterans of all eras, as well as to their families when counseling family members is beneficial to the recovery of the veteran; and

WHEREAS, Vet Centers, in cooperation with the U.S. Army Casualty Assistance Office, are providing sensitive bereavement counseling services to immediate families of thousands of military service personnel who lost their lives in Operations Enduring and Iraqi Freedom; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, commends the work of the Readjustment Counseling Service and of its Vet Centers of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and encourages the Vet Centers to maintain their level of excellence in caring for combat veterans; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans urges the President, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, and the Congress of the United States, to ensure sufficient, timely and predictable funding for the Readjustment Counseling Service, to enable its Vet Centers to continue expanding and extending their rehabilitative and readjustment services, including in more rural communities, to veterans of past, present and future military service, and to their family members when necessary to aid in the recovery of veterans suffering the latent effects of combat exposure.

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RESOLUTION NO. 190—LEGISLATIVE

SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO ESTABLISH A COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAM FOR
TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY REHABILITATION AND REQUIRE THE DEPARTMENTS
OF DEFENSE AND VETERANS AFFAIRS TO COLLABORATE TO ENSURE PROPER
SCREENING, DIAGNOSIS AND TREATMENT FOR ALL VETERANS WITH POSSIBLE
TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY

WHEREAS, traumatic brain injury (TBI) has been called the signature injury of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq; and

WHEREAS, blast injuries from improvised explosive devices (IEDs) that shake or compress the brain within the skull often cause devastating and permanent damage to brain tissue; and

WHEREAS, veterans with severe TBI and polytrauma will require extensive rehabilitation and life-long personal and clinical support, including neurological, medical and psychiatric services, and physical, psycho-social, occupational, and vocational therapies; and

WHEREAS, VA must ensure programs are adapted to meet the unique needs of the newest generation of combat service personnel and veterans, while VA continues to address the needs of older veterans with severe physical disabilities as well as post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and other combat-related mental health challenges; and

WHEREAS, VA reports that it is tailoring its programs to meet the unique needs of severely injured Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom veterans by assigning case managers to each TBI and polytrauma patient and putting a greater emphasis on understanding the problems of families during the initial care and long-term rehabilitation of these patients; and

WHEREAS, we remain concerned about capacity and whether VA has the resources and staff necessary to provide intensive rehabilitation services, treat the chronic physical, emotional and behavioral problems that would be benefitted by long-term therapeutic residential facilities, and to fully support families and caregivers of these seriously brain-injured veterans; and

WHEREAS, TBI can also be caused without any apparent physical injuries when a veteran is in the vicinity of an IED detonation; and

WHEREAS, veterans suffering from the milder form of TBI may experience a variety of symptoms including headaches, irritability, sleep disorders, memory problems and depression; and

WHEREAS, emerging literature strongly suggests that even mild TBI may have long-term mental health and medical consequences and symptoms are often comorbid with post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, and post-traumatic visual syndrome that can further confound diagnosis and treatment; and

WHEREAS, generations of veterans from earlier wars and conflicts may have suffered TBI but this injury went unrecognized, or was treated as mental illness; and

WHEREAS, milder forms of TBI may not be detected immediately and DoD and VA have not developed systemic and proven methodologies to identify, treat, document and monitor individuals who sustain mild-to-moderate TBI, in particular those with the mild version; and

WHEREAS, a 2008 RAND Corporation study recommended “a substantial, coordinated, and strategic research effort,” to close the significant gaps in knowledge that exist in understanding the prevalence, prognosis, effective treatment, and costs of addressing needs of veterans with traumatic brain injury; and

WHEREAS, veterans with TBI and polytrauma benefit from the joint Defense and Veterans Brain Injury Center, a collaboration that provides clinical care, education and research for active duty personnel and veterans with TBI; and

WHEREAS, more than half of U.S. servicemembers seriously injured in Iraq or Afghanistan and admitted to Walter Reed Army Medical Center suffer from TBI; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, supports legislation that would require VA and DoD to coordinate efforts to address mild and moderate TBI and concussive injuries and establish a comprehensive rehabilitation program, including establishment of therapeutic residential facilities, and deployment of standardized protocols utilizing appropriately formed clinical assessment techniques to recognize and treat neurological and behavioral consequences of all levels of TBI and all generations of veterans who suffer the lingering effects from earlier injuries; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans urges that any TBI studies or research undertaken by VA and DoD for the current generation of TBI-injured veterans include older veterans of past military conflicts who may have suffered similar injuries that went undetected, undiagnosed, and untreated.

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RESOLUTION NO. 191—LEGISLATIVE
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO REPEAL COPAYMENTS FOR MEDICAL CARE AND
PRESCRIPTIONS IN DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AND DEPARTMENT OF
DEFENSE (TRICARE)

WHEREAS, through service to their Nation in which they made extraordinary sacrifices and contributions, veterans have earned the right to certain benefits in return; and

WHEREAS, because of the patriotism, devotion, and sacrifices of our veterans, ours is the most free nation on earth where our citizens enjoy unequalled rights, privileges, and prosperity; and

WHEREAS, as the beneficiaries of veterans' service and sacrifice, the citizens of our grateful nation want our Government to fully honor our moral obligation to care for veterans and generously provide them benefits and health care entirely without charge; and

WHEREAS, copayments are a feature of health care systems in which some costs are shared by the insured and the insurer in a contractual relationship between the patient and the for-profit company, or of health care through other Government programs in which the beneficiary has not earned any right to have the costs of health care benefits fully borne by taxpayers; and

WHEREAS, since the seminal RAND Health Insurance Experiment, which gave rise to the use and increase of copayments, deductibles, and coinsurance rates to reduce health expenditures, research has questioned the adverse effects of copayments on health outcomes particularly for patients with chronic disabilities; and

WHEREAS, asking veterans to pay for part of the benefits a grateful nation provides for them is fundamentally contrary to the spirit and principles underlying the provision of benefits to veterans; and

WHEREAS, copayments were initially imposed upon veterans using the Department of Veterans Affairs health care system under urgent circumstances and as a temporary necessity to contribute to reduction of the Federal budget deficit; and

WHEREAS, Congress has forgotten or abandoned the traditional benevolent philosophy of providing free benefits to veterans as repayment for the unusual rigors, risks, and personal deprivation they underwent for the good of our country; and

WHEREAS, Congress has made copayments a permanent feature of some veterans' health care services, and

WHEREAS, based on practices in the private sector, the Secretaries of Veterans Affairs and Defense in the recent past, moved to dramatically increase copayments and fees for medical care and prescription medications, as if operating a commercial enterprise; and

WHEREAS, as a continuing cost of national defense and as our Nation's foremost moral obligation, veterans' benefits must remain a first priority of our Government; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention, assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, calls for legislation to repeal all copayments for military retirees' and veterans' medical services, prescribed medication, and disposable and durable medical equipment and supplies.

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RESOLUTION NO. 192—LEGISLATIVE
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO EXTEND ELIGIBILITY TO THE CIVILIAN HEALTH AND
MEDICAL PROGRAM OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

WHEREAS, children of certain veterans are provided medical care under the Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs (CHAMPVA) program; and

WHEREAS, a child of a veteran is eligible for CHAMPVA if the veteran is rated permanently and totally disabled due to a service-connected disability, was rated permanently and totally disabled due to a service-connected condition at the time of death, died of a service-connected disability, or died on active duty, and the dependents are not eligible for DoD TRICARE benefits, and

WHEREAS, the eligibility of a child for CHAMPVA ends at the age of 18, unless enrolled in an accredited school as a full-time student, at the age 23 as a full-time student, marries, or as a stepchild and no longer lives in household of the sponsor; and

WHEREAS, current law requires private health plans and insurers to offer coverage to adult children of beneficiaries regardless of the child's financial dependency, marital status, enrollment in school, residency or other factors; and

WHEREAS, children of severely disabled veterans and survivors of veterans who have paid the ultimate sacrifice should not be penalized or otherwise not be allowed to enjoy the same right and privileges as other citizens of a grateful nation; and

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, supports legislation to extend the eligibility of a qualifying veteran's child for CHAMPVA; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans support legislation to extend eligibility for CHAMPVA until an eligible child's graduation from an approved course of full-time education.

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RESOLUTION NO. 193—LEGISLATIVE
SUPPORT THE PROVISION OF COMPREHENSIVE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS
AFFAIRS HEALTH CARE SERVICES TO ENROLLED VETERANS

WHEREAS, it is the policy of the Disabled American Veterans that veterans should be afforded quality and timely health care services by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) because of their honorable service to our Nation; and

WHEREAS, it is the conviction of the Disabled American Veterans that quality health care for veterans is achieved when health care providers are given the freedom and resources to provide the most effective and evidence-based care available; and

WHEREAS, the Veterans Health Administration plays a critical role in the delivery of health care services to our Nation's sick and disabled veterans, is the largest direct Federal provider of health care services, the largest clinical training ground for the health professions, and a leader in medical research; and

WHEREAS, although the veterans health care system is provided advance appropriations for medical care, it is still at the discretion of Congress to provide sufficient funding; and

WHEREAS, in the past, because of restricted appropriations levels, VA has been forced at times to restrict, ration and deny access to health care implicitly promised in connection with veterans' military service; and

WHEREAS, the VA health care system must be provided sufficient funding to ensure, at a minimum, the following standards are met:

- Promote and ensure health care quality and value, and protect veterans' safety in the health care system;
- Guarantee access to a full continuum of care, from preventive through hospice services, including alternative and complementary care such as yoga, massage, acupuncture, chiropractic and other non-traditional therapies;
- Receive adequate funding through appropriations for care of all enrolled veterans;
- Fairly and equitably distribute resources to treat the greatest number of veterans requiring health care;
- Furnish the gender-specific, quality and quantity of services necessary to meet the needs of a growing population of women veterans;
- Provide all medications, supplies, prosthetic devices and over-the-counter medication necessary for the proper treatment of service-connected disabled veterans;
- Preserve VA's mission and role as a provider of specialized services in areas such as blindness, burns, amputation, traumatic brain injury, spinal cord injury and dysfunction, mental illness, and long-term care;
- Maintain the integrity of an independent VA health care delivery system as representing the primary responsible entity for the delivery of health care services to enrolled veterans;
- Modernize its human resources management system to enable VA to compete for, recruit and retain the types and quality of VA employees needed to provide comprehensive health care services to sick and disabled veterans; and
- Maintain a strong and veteran-focused research program; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, supports legislation that embodies the concepts and principles enumerated above and establishes certainty to clearly defined VA health care services for enrolled veterans.

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RESOLUTION NO. 194—LEGISLATIVE
ENSURE TIMELY ACCESS TO QUALITY HEALTH CARE AND MEDICAL SERVICES

WHEREAS, sick and disabled veterans' demands for care at many Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) facilities have overwhelmed VA's current capacity; and

WHEREAS, given VA's limited resources, in some cases, VA is forced to ration care leaving many of its 8.5 million enrolled veterans to wait long periods for primary, specialty, and dental care appointments; and

WHEREAS, VA does not currently have a reporting system that accurately measures waiting times and creates auditable data to properly manage its health care capacity and identify additional resources needed to ensure timely access to VA care; and

WHEREAS, VA should identify and immediately correct the underlying problems that contribute to excessively long waiting times for primary, specialty, and dental care for veterans in VA facilities nationwide; and

WHEREAS, short-term solutions, such as staff reassignments, redirection of patients to alternative sites of VA care, and restrictions of individual practitioners' available time with each patient while adding additional appointments to their daily schedules, can provide some immediate relief, but are only temporary solutions; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, urges the VA to request sufficient resources and staff to reduce waiting times so sick and disabled veterans can achieve timely access to all medically necessary services within the VA health care system.

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RESOLUTION NO. 195—LEGISLATIVE
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO PROVIDE COMPREHENSIVE SUPPORT
SERVICES FOR CAREGIVERS OF SEVERELY WOUNDED, INJURED, AND ILL
VETERANS FROM ALL ERAS

WHEREAS, severely disabled veterans present great challenges to the Department of Defense (DoD) and the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), for acute, rehabilitative and long term care health needs; and

WHEREAS, immediate family members and dependents historically were involved early in the care and rehabilitation of severely injured veterans, especially when that care was being provided in DoD and VA facilities, but these caregivers received little to no relief; and

WHEREAS, families or other individuals caring for severely wounded and disabled veterans must shoulder a great and lifelong burden as home and institutional caregivers and attendants, often giving up or severely restricting employment, retirement, education and social interactions that are taken for granted in the normal course of life, and suffering severe financial and personal penalties as a consequence of that attendance, in order to care for a severely disabled loved one; and

WHEREAS, in the absence of such caregivers, the burden of direct care would fall on institutions and other DoD and VA facilities, at significantly higher financial cost and a reduced quality of life for severely injured veterans; and

WHEREAS, the United States government owes its highest obligation to those who are put in harm's way at the call of the Nation, and become severely disabled as a consequence of that service; and

WHEREAS, Public Law 111-163 requires VA to establish two distinct and unequal caregiver assistance programs where eligibility is based primarily on when the veteran was injured rather than the needs of the caregiver; and

WHEREAS, in equity and fairness, caregivers of severely injured veterans should be afforded generous relief, assistance, and care for the duration of the lives of veterans injured in military service to our Nation; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, supports full and timely implementation of Public Law 111-163 to provide comprehensive supportive services to caregivers of veterans severely injured, wounded or ill from military service; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans supports legislation that would expand eligibility for comprehensive caregiver support services, including but not limited to financial support, health and homemaker services, respite, education and training and other necessary relief, to caregivers of veterans from all eras of military service.

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RESOLUTION NO. 196—LEGISLATIVE
SUPPORT LEGISLATION OR POLICY CHANGES TO AUTHORIZE SCHOLARSHIPS
FOR NEW MENTAL HEALTH PRACTITIONERS IN EXCHANGE FOR COMMITMENTS
TO SERVE VETERANS IN COMMUNITY-BASED OUTPATIENT CLINICS AND
READJUSTMENT COUNSELING VET CENTERS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF
VETERANS AFFAIRS

WHEREAS, the nation faces a looming shortage of practitioners in mental health, including physicians, nurse practitioners, psychologists, mental health therapists and other counselors; and

WHEREAS, the needs of the newest generation of war veterans suffering the effects of post traumatic stress disorder and other mental health challenges, combined with the continuing mental health needs of older generations of veterans, may overwhelm VA's capacity to properly treat them with qualified providers so that they can recover from these illnesses; and

WHEREAS, after serving our nation, veterans should not have their health care needs neglected by the VA because VA lacks the capacity to serve them; and

WHEREAS, recent public laws have authorized VA to expand the types and numbers of mental health and other services VA must make available to veterans, their caregivers, dependents and survivors; and

WHEREAS, an existing scholarship program under chapter 76, title 38, United States Code, targeted to physicians, nurses and a variety of other health professions, has been highly successful in recruiting new practitioners to VA careers, and has expanded and improved care to sick and disabled veterans; and

WHEREAS, VA's 768 Community-Based Outpatient Clinics and 300 Readjustment Counseling Service Vet Centers do not directly participate in the existing scholarship program as an aid to their local recruitment and employment efforts; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, supports legislation or administrative policy changes in the existing scholarship program to make its benefits available more broadly within both the Community-Based Outpatient Clinics and Readjustment Counseling Service Vet Centers of the Department so that these facilities will be able to adequately meet the needs of veterans of all generations who need mental health services and psychological counseling to aid in their recoveries.

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RESOLUTION NO. 197—LEGISLATIVE
PROTECT VETERANS FROM EMPLOYMENT DISCRIMINATION WHEN SEEKING
HEALTH CARE FOR SERVICE-CONNECTED CONDITIONS

WHEREAS, many of this nation's young men and women have answered the call to serve in the Armed Forces; and

WHEREAS, Congress, through the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA), provides protection from employment discrimination for persons to perform military duty; and

WHEREAS, the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act requires employers to release employees to perform military duty; and

WHEREAS, many of the soldiers, airmen, sailors, and marines who perform military duty sustained service-connected disabilities; and

WHEREAS, under USERRA, employers are required to make reasonable accommodations regarding these disabilities, however, currently employers are not specifically required by law to allow veterans with service-connected disabilities to be absent from the workplace to receive treatment for these disabilities; and

WHEREAS, necessary medical care can be provided through the Department of Veterans Affairs health care system or a private provider for service-connected veterans; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, urges Congress to extend protection under the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act to encompass treatment of service-connected disabilities at Department of Veterans Affairs health care facilities or other private health care facilities.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 198—LEGISLATIVE
SUPPORT REDUCTION OF REQUIRED COPAYMENTS FOR MEDICATIONS
PRESCRIBED BY DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS MEDICAL CENTERS
FOR VETERANS TO BE EQUAL TO OR LESS THAN COPAYMENTS CHARGED BY
PRIVATE SECTOR PHARMACEUTICAL SOURCES

WHEREAS, the Disabled American Veterans has approved a longstanding resolution opposing copayments for medical care and prescription medications for military retirees and veterans; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has periodically increased medication copayments, from the original charge of \$2.00, to \$9.00 per 30-day supply of each prescribed medication for some enrolled veterans; and

WHEREAS, Congress has not agreed to eliminate copayments for VA health care services and medications, despite the origin of the requirement that was justified as a “temporary” measure to reduce the federal deficit; and

WHEREAS, numerous private sector commercial pharmaceutical outlets make medications available for much lower copayments than VA charges veterans in VA care, in some cases as little as \$4.00 per 30-day supply; and

WHEREAS, in many instances VA clinicians prescribe over-the-counter medications to veterans that would cost far less if purchased in a commercial pharmaceutical outlet (but also including VA’s own Veterans Canteen Service) than charges in copayments for the same medications; and

WHEREAS, VA medication copayments cause an undue financial hardship for many sick and disabled veterans who need relief due to their high health care costs and fixed incomes; and

WHEREAS, although DAV adamantly opposes health care and medication copayments for military retirees and veterans, DAV believes VA should not charge veterans required copayments that exceed copayments charged by large commercial pharmaceutical sources, and should not charge copayments that exceed the full retail prices of prescribed over-the-counter medications that are sold in the Veterans Canteen Service; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National convention in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, supports legislation that will reduce the amount of medication copayments paid by veterans to be equal to, or less than, the lowest price copayments charged by private sector commercial outlets to veterans and non-veterans; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Congress should prohibit VA from charging medication copayments that exceed the retail cost of over-the-counter medications sold by Veterans Canteen Service retail stores.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 199—LEGISLATIVE
SUPPORT REPEAL OF BENEFICIARY TRAVEL PAY DEDUCTIBLE FOR SERVICE-
CONNECTED DISABLED VETERANS AND INCREASE AND SUSTAIN BENEFICIARY
TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT RATES

WHEREAS, the Secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is authorized under section 111 (g)(1) of title 38, United States Code, to pay a travel allowance to certain service-connected veterans for VA examination, medical treatment, or care; and

WHEREAS, Public Law 110-387 required VA to reduce to \$3.00 and freeze the deductible, but service-connected disabled veterans are still subject to the deduction from the amount otherwise payable for each one-way trip unless the Secretary determines in an individual case that such deductible would cause severe financial hardship; and

WHEREAS, veterans will now receive a flat rate of 41.5 cents per mile for all travel effective November 17, 2008; and

WHEREAS, service-connected disabled veterans eligible for beneficiary travel should not have to help defray the cost of travel, in the form of a deductible, to and from a VA medical facility for medical examination, or health care treatment; and

WHEREAS, it is grossly unfair for the VA Secretary to impose the deductible upon service-connected disabled veterans seeking treatment for a service-connected condition and service-connected veterans rated 30 percent or more when traveling in connection with any disability; and

WHEREAS, adequate travel expense reimbursement is directly tied to access to care for many veterans, and is not a luxury; and

WHEREAS, VA, in consultation with the Administrator of General Services, the Secretary of Transportation, the Comptroller of the United States, and representatives of veterans service

organizations, is required to conduct periodic investigations on the actual cost of travel incurred by veterans traveling to and from a VA facility for a covered purpose; and

WHEREAS, after analyzing and adopting the findings of the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) report on the mileage rates for a privately owned automobile, the General Services Administration (GSA) determined that the per mile operating costs for the official use of a privately owned vehicle is 55 cents per mile; and

WHEREAS, VA continues to maintain that increasing veterans' beneficiary travel rate to a rate more comparable to the GSA approved rate would result in a reduction of funds available for direct medical care to our nation's veterans; and

WHEREAS, VA should not have to choose between providing direct medical care services to sick and disabled veterans or providing adequate beneficiary travel payments so that veterans can gain access to their medical appointments for treatment; and

WHEREAS, when rates do not cover the cost of travel, veterans without resources are likely to delay health care delivery until their needs may be critical resulting in higher healthcare costs and poorer health status; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, supports legislation to repeal the Secretary's authority to impose a deductible for service-connected disabled veterans from the amount payable for beneficiary travel pay for medical examination, treatment, or care; AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans urges VA to adopt the IRS mileage reimbursement rate to protect against erosion of the value of the benefit due to inflation; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans urges VA to include a line item in its budget for the cost of increasing veterans' beneficiary travel reimbursement rates to a more reasonable amount so that it can make the needed adjustment without the reduction in funds for direct medical care to sick and disabled veterans.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 200—LEGISLATIVE

SUPPORT PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT AND ENHANCED RESOURCES FOR DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAMS TO ACHIEVE READJUSTMENT OF NEW WAR VETERANS AND CONTINUED EFFECTIVE MENTAL HEALTH CARE FOR ALL ENROLLED VETERANS NEEDING SUCH SERVICES

WHEREAS, current research findings indicate that war veterans from Operations Enduring and Iraqi Freedom (OEF/OIF) are at higher risk for post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and other mental health challenges; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) reports that veterans of these current wars have sought care for a wide range of medical and psychological conditions, including mental health conditions, such as adjustment disorder, anxiety, depression, PTSD, and the effects of substance abuse; and

WHEREAS, as of April 2011, VA reported that of the 654,348 separated OEF/OIF veterans who have sought VA health care since fiscal year 2002, a total of 331,554 unique patients had received a diagnosis of a possible mental health disorder and over 177,149 of the enrolled OEF/OIF veterans had a probable diagnosis of PTSD (not including veterans seen at VA's Vet Centers or those not enrolled in the VA health care system); and

WHEREAS, VA has improved access to mental health services at its 800-plus community-based outpatient clinics (CBOCs), but such services still are not readily available at all sites; and

WHEREAS, we remain concerned about the capacity in specialized PTSD programs and the availability of VA substance-use disorder programs of all kinds, including inpatient detoxification and long-term residential treatment beds; and

WHEREAS, although additional funding has been dedicated to enhancing and improving capacity in these programs, VA mental health providers continue to express concerns about sustained resources to support, and consequent rationed access to, these specialized services; and

WHEREAS, VA is establishing new Vet Centers to meet increasing demand for readjustment counseling services; however, we are concerned that VA staffing should also be increased in existing centers to ensure all veterans—including previous generations of war veterans—who need help at VA Vet Centers can gain ready access to readjustment services; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Defense and VA share a unique obligation to meet the health care, including mental health care and rehabilitation needs, of veterans who are suffering from readjustment difficulties as a result of wartime service; and

WHEREAS, suicide is a special concern among recently deployed veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan with several reports in the media that veterans who subsequently committed suicide had sought care at VA but had been placed on waiting lists inappropriately; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National convention in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, supports program improvement and enhanced resources for Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) mental health programs, including its Vet Centers, to achieve readjustment of new war veterans and continued effective mental health care for all enrolled veterans needing such services.

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RESOLUTION NO. 201—LEGISLATIVE
SUPPORT FULL FUNDING AND RESOURCES FOR POLYTRAUMA UNITS AT
DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS MEDICAL CENTERS

WHEREAS, catastrophically injured veterans returning home from Operations Enduring and Iraqi Freedom are transferred to one of five polytrauma rehabilitation centers within the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) located in Tampa, Richmond, Minneapolis, San Antonio and Palo Alto, for intensive care and long-term restoration and rehabilitation; and

WHEREAS, 17 additional VA medical centers have been designated as polytrauma network sites, located in Boston, Syracuse, New York City, Philadelphia, Washington DC, Augusta, Lexington, Cleveland, Indianapolis, Hines, St. Louis, Houston, Dallas, Tucson, Denver, Seattle, and Los Angeles; and

WHEREAS, the care provided in these five specialized polytrauma centers and 17 polytrauma network sites is extraordinarily expensive and complex, often addressing complications from multiple amputations, traumatic brain injuries, multiple shell fragment wounds, and other catastrophic injuries; and

WHEREAS, these veterans spend long periods at polytrauma centers recovering from their combat injuries; and

WHEREAS, since VA's current nursing home capacity is primarily designed to serve elderly veterans, not younger ones, VA must make every effort to create an environment for these veterans that recognizes they have different needs; and

WHEREAS, having the support of their families and friends is an integral part of the veteran's treatment and recovery process; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, calls on the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to request and allocate sufficient resources for polytrauma centers and polytrauma network sites to ensure these centers include adequate space and other services for veterans' rehabilitation, social, and recreational needs and dedicated space, including therapeutic residential facilities, for disabled veterans and family members who must often stay for extended periods to assist in veterans' recovery and rehabilitation.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 202—LEGISLATIVE
OPPOSE RECOMMENDATION THAT MILITARY RETIRED VETERANS BE
PROHIBITED FROM RECEIVING HEALTH CARE FROM BOTH DEPARTMENT OF
DEFENSE AND DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS FACILITIES

WHEREAS, military retired veterans were promised and earned lifetime health care through the Department of Defense (DOD) for completion of the required period of military service; and

WHEREAS, as veterans, they are separately entitled to the same health care provided to eligible veterans generally through the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA); and

WHEREAS, one of the two health care systems may offer advantages that the other does not offer; and

WHEREAS, a veteran's use of this dual entitlement to receive the best services of both systems does not constitute unnecessary duplicate use of health care services or duplication of costs to the Government; and

WHEREAS, entitlement to care under one system is not itself justification to end separate entitlement to care through the other system; and

WHEREAS, by virtue of their service and sacrifices, veterans have earned special benefits that are separate and in addition to benefits the government provides to other citizens; and

WHEREAS, enrollment in VA or DOD health care, especially in the case of service-connected disabled veterans, should never become a bar or obstacle to the receipt of benefits from either of these health care systems; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention, assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, opposes any action to restrict health care eligibility for military retired veterans in either the DOD or the VA health care systems.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 203—LEGISLATIVE
SUPPORT SUFFICIENT RESOURCES FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS
AFFAIRS TO IMPROVE HEALTH CARE SERVICES FOR VETERANS LIVING IN
RURAL OR REMOTE AREAS

WHEREAS, 44 percent of today's active duty military service members and tomorrow's veteran population list rural communities as their homes of record; and

WHEREAS, approximately 40 percent of veterans enrolled for Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) health care are classified by VA as veterans living in rural or highly rural areas; and

WHEREAS, after serving our nation, veterans should not have their health care needs neglected by the VA because they choose to live in rural and remote areas far from major VA health care facilities; and

WHEREAS; Public Law 109-461 authorized VA to establish the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Office of Rural Health to promulgate policies, best practices and innovations to improve services to veterans who reside in rural areas; and

WHEREAS, both houses of Congress on numerous occasions have attempted with legislation to address unmet health care needs of veterans who make their homes in rural and remote areas; and

WHEREAS, beginning in fiscal year 2009, Congress has provided VA \$250 million annually in funding to support enhancements to rural health care; and

WHEREAS, VA has funded over 500 projects and programs, authorized new mobile rural clinics in VISNs, appointed "Rural Health Consultants" in each of VA's 21 VISNs, and is conducting regularly scheduled meetings of VA's Veterans Rural Health Advisory Committee; and

WHEREAS, VA receives no Congressional appropriations dedicated to support establishment of rural community-based outpatient clinics but must manage those additional expenses from within available Medical Services appropriations provided by Congress; and

WHEREAS, VA has established and is operating over 768 community-based outpatient clinics, of which 375 are located in areas considered by VA to be rural or highly rural; and

WHEREAS, VA must ensure the number of its Readjustment Counseling Centers ("Vet Centers") in rural and highly rural areas is sufficient to meet the demands for counseling of rural veterans in need of psychological readjustment after serving in combat deployments; and

WHEREAS, VA cannot cost-effectively justify establishing additional remote facilities in areas with sparse veteran populations given current circumstances; and

WHEREAS, historically, VA has had difficulty securing sufficient funding through the Congressional discretionary budget and appropriations process to ensure basic and adequate access for the care of sick and disabled veterans; and

WHEREAS, Congress has enacted Public Law 111-81, the purpose of which is to secure advance appropriations for the delivery of VA health care services, including services in rural areas; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, fully supports the right of rural veterans to be served by VA, but insists that funding for additional rural care and outreach be sustained and not be the cause of reductions in highly specialized VA medical programs needed for the care of sick and disabled service-connected veterans.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans insists that if Congress intends to continue to provide enhanced VA health care access to rural veterans, Congress must include appropriations for that specific purpose in advance appropriations acts.

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RESOLUTION NO. 204—LEGISLATIVE
IMPROVE REIMBURSEMENT POLICIES FOR NON-DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS
AFFAIRS EMERGENCY HEALTH CARE SERVICES FOR ENROLLED VETERANS

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans (VA) provides enrolled veterans a uniform benefits package that emphasizes preventive and primary care, and provides a comprehensive health care benefit plan including hospital, outpatient and long term care; and

WHEREAS, a health care benefits plan is incomplete without a provision for emergency care; and

WHEREAS, a significant number of service-connected and non service-connected enrolled veterans rely on VA as their exclusive health care provider; and

WHEREAS, VA medical center recorded telephone greetings universally announce: “If you have a life-threatening emergency, please hang up and dial 911”; and

WHEREAS, city, county and voluntary emergency fire and rescue services must conform to State first-responder and fire rescue laws, and under such laws, must transport patients to designated facilities equipped with certified emergency room capabilities; and

WHEREAS, VA facilities, with few exceptions, do not qualify under State or Federal laws as “emergency receiving facilities” for critically ill or injured patients under transport by first responders, nor do they offer 24-hour coverage for emergency care, and thus do not generally receive such cases; and

WHEREAS, VA frequently denies emergency service claims from private health care facilities submitted by service-connected veterans on the basis that VA was “available” for the care of that veteran in that circumstance; and

WHEREAS, title 38, United States Code, in defining the term “emergency treatment” for purposes of VA reimbursement, provides “that a prudent layperson reasonably expects that delay in seeking immediate medical attention would be hazardous to life or health;” and

WHEREAS, VA, in making its decision on a veteran’s qualification for reimbursement after a perceived and claimed emergency, should take into account that in the circumstances of an emergency situation a veteran eligible under title 38, United States Code, for emergency care reimbursement may not have had any choice in receiving care at a non-VA facility due to the circumstances of that situation; and

WHEREAS, title 38, United States Code, restricts reimbursement for emergency care to that of VA acting in last resort, in cases in which veterans possess no other coverage, have a liability to the emergency-service provider, and have utilized VA health care resources within a 24-month period of the emergency event; and

WHEREAS, Public Law 110-387 requires VA to reimburse eligible veterans for emergency treatment of a service-connected disability, a non service-connected disability associated with and held to be aggravating a service-connected disability, or any disability of a veteran that is service connected permanent and total; and

WHEREAS, this law was passed to address barriers to emergency care and reimbursement for such care for disabled veterans due to VA’s narrow interpretation of the existing authority for emergency care; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, supports legislation to amend title 38, United States Code, to eliminate the provision that requires enrolled veterans to have received care from VA within the 24-month period prior to date of the emergency care; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans urges the VA to provide for a more liberal interpretation of the law for reimbursement of veterans who have received emergency care at non-VA facilities; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans urges the Veterans Health Administration to review and reform its policies with respect to evaluating whether a veteran, in seeking intervention in a perceived life- or health-threatening emergency situation, has the power to divert first responders from private emergency receiving facilities to VA facilities.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 205—LEGISLATIVE SUPPORT SUSTAINED SUFFICIENT FUNDING TO IMPROVE SERVICES FOR HOMELESS VETERANS

WHEREAS, compared to non-veterans, veterans are at higher risk of homelessness; and

WHEREAS, many veterans experience post-deployment readjustment conditions such as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), substance use disorders acquired during or worsened by their military service, or traumatic brain injuries that may make their participation in the workforce difficult or impossible, making them more prone to homelessness; and

WHEREAS, according to statistics from Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and the National Coalition for Homeless Veterans (NCHV), about two-thirds of homeless veterans do not receive the help they need to transition from homelessness to become productive citizens; and

WHEREAS, other federal, state, and local public agencies—notably housing agencies and health departments—need to improve coordination with VA to address the housing, health-care, and supportive services needs of these vulnerable veterans; and

WHEREAS, with greater numbers of women serving in military deployments, along with increased identification of and a greater emphasis on care for victims of sexual assault and war-related trauma, new and more comprehensive housing and child care services are needed; and

WHEREAS, according to VA, in 2010, nearly 119,500 homeless veterans were served by VA's specialized homeless programs; and

WHEREAS, in the next 10 years, it is projected that significant increases in services over current levels will be needed to serve aging Vietnam veterans, women veterans, and combat veterans of America's current military operations in Afghanistan and Iraq; and

WHEREAS, a wide variety of public and private programs are in place to assist veterans in preventing or overcoming chronic homelessness, but these programs are often underfunded; and

WHEREAS, in 2010, Opening Doors, Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness was launched and the VA Secretary began a campaign to end homelessness among veterans through enhanced collaboration with other federal, state, faith-based, veterans service organization and community partners; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, urges Congress to sustain sufficient funding to support the VA's initiative to eliminate homelessness among veterans in the next five years and strengthen the capacity of the VA Homeless Veterans program to include: increasing its mental health and substance-use disorder programs capacity, provide vision and dental care services to homeless veterans as required by law, and improve its outreach efforts to help ensure homeless veterans gain access to VA's specialized health and benefits programs; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we urge Congress to continue to authorize and appropriate funds for competitive grants to community-based and public organizations including the Department of Housing and Urban Development to provide health and supportive services to homeless veterans placed in permanent housing.

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RESOLUTION NO. 206—LEGISLATIVE ENHANCE THE CIVILIAN HEALTH AND MEDICAL PROGRAM OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS SERVICES

WHEREAS, the Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), known as CHAMPVA, is a health benefits program in which the VA shares the cost of certain health services with eligible beneficiaries; and

WHEREAS, eligible beneficiaries include: the spouse or child of a veteran who VA rated 100 percent permanently and totally disabled for a service connected disability; the surviving spouse or child of a veteran who died from a VA-rated service-connected disability, or who, at the time of death, was rated 100 percent permanently and totally disabled; or the surviving spouse or child of a military service member who died on active duty, and the primary caregiver of a veteran seriously injured during military service on or after September 11, 2001; and

WHEREAS, VA medical centers are authorized to provide services to CHAMPVA beneficiaries under the CHAMPVA In House Treatment Initiative (CITI) program at no cost to the beneficiary but are provided at the discretion of the VA Medical Center director and available only on a space-available basis, after the needs of veterans are met; and

WHEREAS, the CHAMPVA beneficiary is responsible for an annual \$50 deductible for medical services rendered and 25 percent of reasonable and customary charges for patient care and pharmaceuticals, up to \$3,000 each year if the local VA medical facility does not participate in the CITI program and the beneficiary must seek care in the private sector; and

WHEREAS, beneficiaries who are chronically ill can incur out-of-pocket medical care costs up to \$3,000 per year and such costs can cause undue financial burden on a severely disabled veteran and family members; and

WHEREAS, numerous health care services such as dental care, institutional and home-based long-term care, and vision are not routinely covered under CHAMPVA; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, supports legislation to make the CHAMPVA program more comprehensive, including dental care, institutional and home-based long-term care, and vision and reduce the catastrophic cap on CHAMPVA services

to a more reasonable amount to lower the out-of-pocket costs for beneficiaries who do not live near a VA medical facility that participates in the CHAMPVA CITI health care program; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans supports the CITI program and urges VA Medical Center directors to make that program available to CHAMPVA beneficiaries when resources are available.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 207—LEGISLATIVE
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO IMPROVE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS
AFFAIRS PROGRAMS DESIGNED TO PREVENT AND TREAT SUBSTANCE USE
DISORDERS IN VETERANS

WHEREAS, the misuse and abuse of alcohol and other addictive substances continues to be a major health problem for many Americans, including many of our nation's veterans; and

WHEREAS, substance use disorders result in significant health and social deterioration and financial costs to veterans, their families and the nation; and

WHEREAS, data from a Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) national study showed that 40 percent of VA outpatients reported hazardous use of alcohol, and 22 percent reported full alcohol abuse, but only 31 percent reported being counseled about alcohol use; and

WHEREAS, substance use disorders are associated with family instability, decreased worker productivity, and declining health status; and

WHEREAS, combat exposure has placed veterans from Operations Enduring and Iraqi Freedom (OEF/OIF) at higher risk for posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) as well as a wide array of other medical and psychological conditions, which may be associated with veterans' increased use of substances; and

WHEREAS, VA offers few integrated treatment programs that would work to address both the substance use disorder and PTSD, depression, anxiety or other medical or mental health conditions which may cause or exacerbate veterans' inappropriate use of substances; and

WHEREAS, in some locations, VA lacks timely access to a complete continuum of available services (from detoxification to rehabilitation) to treat substance use disorders; and

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, supports program improvement and enhanced resources for VA substance use disorder programs to achieve a full spectrum of evidence-based accessible and available treatment, including effective integrated treatment programs for veterans with co-morbid mental health and substance use disorder conditions, regardless of their place of residence.

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RESOLUTION NO. 208—LEGISLATIVE
REQUIRE A VETERAN'S ATTENDING DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS (VA)
PHYSICIAN TO PROVIDE A MEDICAL OPINION WITH REGARDS TO A CLAIM FOR
VA DISABILITY COMPENSATION BENEFITS WHEN REQUESTED

WHEREAS, section 5103A of title 38, United States Code, prescribes that the Secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) shall assist a veteran by providing a medical examination or obtaining a medical opinion when such an examination or opinion is necessary to make a decision on a claim for disability benefits; and

WHEREAS, section 17.38 of title 38, Code of Federal Regulations, requires Veterans Health Administration (VHA) health care providers, when requested and under certain limited circumstances, to provide descriptive statements and opinions for VA patients with respect to patients' medical condition, employability and degree of disability; and

WHEREAS, VHA Handbook 1605.1 provides that veterans may request statements from VHA health care providers regarding their medical conditions and/or opinions for submission in support of their claims for VA benefits; and

WHEREAS, this Handbook further requires in response to such a request, VHA health care practitioners provide a statement or opinion describing a patient's medical condition, and when the health care provider is the individual's treating physician, and is unable, or deems it inappropriate, to provide an opinion or statement, such physician must refer the request to another health care provider for the opinion or statement; and

WHEREAS, VHA Directive 2008-071 reversed and vacated its previous policy that required VA health care practitioners to provide veterans a medical opinion with respect to a current medical condition and possible relationship to a veteran's military service; and

WHEREAS, this Directive only requires a statement that includes observation of current medical status and suggests any request from a veteran for a medical statement in support of a claim for VA benefits be referred to the Veterans Benefits Administration; and

WHEREAS, VA strives to be the provider of choice for all of its enrolled veterans by offering a comprehensive medical benefits package for which a significant number of service-connected disabled veterans who seek treatment at VA medical facilities, rely solely on VA for all their health care needs; and

WHEREAS, through education, training, and experience, a VA physician who provides medical care to veteran patients has special insight of the veteran's experience and the diseases and disabilities common to military service; and

WHEREAS, the unwillingness of certain VA physicians to provide statements or opinions for veteran patients is inconsistent with the goal of the VHA to provide comprehensive care and places a serious burden on veterans who depend on VHA for their care and who may not be able to afford a private medical opinion; and

WHEREAS, due to conflicting written policy, there is currently no standard Department-wide interpretation and implementation of a VA policy for a VHA practitioner to provide a medical opinion with regard to a claim for VA disability compensation benefits when requested; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, urges VA to develop and implement a consistent policy requiring VHA health care practitioners to provide medical statements or opinions to veterans when requested in conjunction with their claim for VA benefits and to ensure full compliance of such policy.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 209—LEGISLATIVE
SUPPORT PROGRAMS TO PROVIDE PSYCHOLOGICAL SUPPORT AND MENTAL
HEALTH COUNSELING SERVICES TO FAMILY MEMBERS OF VETERANS
SUFFERING FROM POST TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER, DEPRESSION, AND
OTHER MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES

WHEREAS, veterans exposed to combat and other hardship deployments are known to be at risk for development of post-deployment mental health conditions such as post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression and other serious mental health challenges; and

WHEREAS, left untreated or inadequately treated, a veteran suffering the chronic effects of PTSD, depression or other mental illnesses, may suffer marriage and relationship breakdown, under-employment or loss of employment, financial hardship, social alienation, and even homelessness, or involvement with the justice system; and

WHEREAS, a combat-exposed veteran who is not appropriately counseled for the psychological effects of PTSD or depression stands at greater risk of emotional and mental decompensation, whose consequences often fall directly on family members and dependents of such veteran; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) embraces recovery from mental illness as its guiding principle in all VA mental health programs, including the involvement of veterans' loved ones as a part of recovery; and

WHEREAS, involvement of family members and dependents is often vital to a veteran's eventual recovery from mental illness; and

WHEREAS, title 38, United States Code, subsection 1712A(b)2 authorizes the VA Readjustment Counseling Service, through its Vet Center program, to provide psychological counseling and other necessary mental health services to family members of war veterans under care in such Vet Centers, irrespective of service connected disability status; and

WHEREAS, Congress enacted section 301 of Public Law 110-387 for the express purpose of authorizing marriage and family counseling in VA facilities to address the needs of veterans' families, including spouses and other dependent family members of veterans who are experiencing mental health challenges with attendant marital or family difficulties; and

WHEREAS, Congress enacted sections 101-103 of Public Law 111-163 for the purpose of authorizing a wide array of support, care and counseling services for personal caregivers of severely injured or ill veterans from all eras of military service; and

WHEREAS, title 38, United States Code, section 1782 authorizes a program of counseling, training, and mental health services, including psychological support, for immediate family members of disabled veterans who need care for service connected disabilities; who have service connected disabilities rated at 50 percent or more disabling; who were discharged or retired from the armed forces for injuries or illnesses incurred in line of duty; who are World War I or Mexican Border Period veterans; who were awarded the Purple Heart; who are former prisoners of war; who were exposed to radiation or toxic substances; or, who are unable to defray the expenses of their care; and

WHEREAS, title 38, United States Code, section 1781, authorizes a program of health care, including certain mental health services, for immediate family members and dependents of a veteran who is totally and permanently disabled from service connected disabilities, or who died from disabilities incurred during military service; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, calls on the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to establish new and effective programs to ensure that veterans who are enrolled in VA health care not only receive adequate care for their wounds and illnesses, including mental health-related illnesses, and but that when appropriate their family members—whether family caregivers, spouses or other family dependents, receive necessary counseling, including psychological counseling, training and other mental health services authorized by law to aid in the recovery of veterans.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 210—LEGISLATIVE

ENCOURAGE THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS TO SUBMIT CANDIDATES FOR THE GEORGE H. SEAL MEMORIAL AWARD PROGRAM

WHEREAS, the Disabled American Veterans (DAV) created the George H. Seal Memorial Award Program as a means to recruit, retain and recognize volunteers who serve disabled veterans in Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) medical facilities and the local community; and

WHEREAS, the George H. Seal Memorial Award annually recognizes the remarkable efforts of an outstanding member of the DAV and DAV Auxiliary (DAVA) who willingly donate their time and energy to disabled veterans in VA Voluntary Service Programs; and

WHEREAS, at the beginning of each calendar year, the DAV solicits every VA Voluntary Service Program Manager to nominate one deserving member of the DAV and DAVA from their facility in order to be considered for the George H. Seal Memorial Award with little response; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in the National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, strongly encourages each Voluntary Service Program Manager at every VA medical facility to submit the name of a deserving member of the DAV and DAVA to be considered for this prestigious award in appreciation of their dedication and service to America's veterans through their voluntary service efforts.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 211—LEGISLATIVE

ENCOURAGE THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS TO SUBMIT CANDIDATES FOR THE JESSE BROWN MEMORIAL YOUTH SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

WHEREAS, the Disabled American Veterans (DAV) created the Jesse Brown Memorial Youth Scholarship Program (JBMYSP) as a means to recruit young volunteers and to recognize the efforts of America's young volunteers who serve disabled veterans in Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) medical facilities and the local community; and

WHEREAS, the JBMYSP will award a total of \$75,000 in 2012 to 8 deserving youth volunteers in the form of a first place \$20,000 scholarship; a second place \$15,000 scholarship; a \$10,000 third place scholarship, two \$7,500 fourth place scholarships and three \$5,000 scholarships; and

WHEREAS, at the beginning of each calendar year, the DAV solicits every VA Voluntary Service Program Manager to nominate one deserving youth volunteer from their facility in order to be considered for one of the scholarships, but with little response; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in the National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, strongly encourages each Voluntary Service program manager at every VA medical facility to submit the name of a deserving youth volunteer to be considered for one of the scholarships in appreciation of their dedication to serving America's veterans through their voluntary service efforts.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 212—LEGISLATIVE
SUPPORT POLICIES TO REQUIRE THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS (VA)
TO ALLOW VETERANS TO BE ACCOMPANIED BY SERVICE AND GUIDE DOGS
WHEN SEEKING CARE AT VA FACILITIES

WHEREAS, trained guide dogs and other trained service dogs can have a significant role in maintaining functionality and promoting maximal independence of individuals with disabilities; and

WHEREAS, some veterans with disabilities such as blindness, deafness, mental illness, and epilepsy and other seizure disorders are specifically aided by service and guide animals employed for these purposes by persons with such disabilities; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs issues guide and service dogs to veterans enrolled in VA health care when therapeutically indicated; and

WHEREAS, the Veterans Health Administration of the Department of Veterans Affairs has published guidance requiring each VA health care facility to maintain a policy on the admission of guide and service animals to VA premises; and

WHEREAS, each VA medical facility is expected to maintain reasonable policies on the control and admittance of such animals that accompany veterans on their medical visits to VA facilities; and

WHEREAS, veterans have reported that certain VA facilities do not permit service and guide dogs to accompany them into facilities, including primary care or mental health clinic appointments, while other facilities permit them into certain designated areas; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, urges that VA carry out its policies to permit reasonable access to VA facilities by service and guide dogs to veterans consistently throughout the system; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Disabled American Veterans urges VA to complete its plan to conduct thoroughgoing research to determine the most efficacious use of guide and service dogs in defined populations, in particular veterans with mental health conditions, and to broadly publish the results of that research; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Congress should enact legislation setting forth VA standards for admission to VA properties and management of service and guide animals that are equivalent to rules applicable to every other private and public structure in the United States as dictated by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 226—ADMINISTRATIVE
EXTEND APPRECIATION TO THE SOUTHEAST LOUISIANA VETERANS
HEALTHCARE SYSTEM, NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA, FOR THE SUCCESS OF THE
90TH DAV NATIONAL CONVENTION

WHEREAS, the cooperation and professionalism extended to the delegates and guests of the 90th National Convention of the Disabled American Veterans and Auxiliary was laudable; and

WHEREAS, many of the delegates to our National Convention were in need of medical treatment and required the assistance of prosthetic equipment to attend the National Convention; and

WHEREAS, in response to these requests, the health care officials from the Southeast Louisiana Veterans Healthcare System, staffed and maintained a compassionate and high-quality outpatient clinic and prosthetic service within the Hilton New Orleans Riverside; and

WHEREAS, the medical care and prosthetic services rendered to the delegates to this 90th National Convention were extended in a highly compassionate and professional manner; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, expresses its sincere gratitude and appreciation to Southeast Louisiana Veterans Healthcare System, New Orleans, Louisiana, for the professional and skillful medical care delivered to the delegates to this 90th National Convention and for contributing to the overall success of this Convention.

* * *

COMMANDER TYSON: You have heard the motion. May I have a second? Mic 1.

MS. WANDA JANUS: Wanda Janus, Chapter 1, Department of Oregon, District 19, seconds the motion.

COMMANDER TYSON: Thank you. In accordance with Rule 9, now is the time for any rejected resolutions to be read. Are there any rejected resolutions you wish read? Hearing none, all those in favor signify by saying aye; opposed. Thank you. So ordered.

At this time I would like to call upon Chairman David Riley for the report on the Committee on Legislation and Veterans' Rights.

CHAIRMAN DAVID RILEY: Good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

CHAIRMAN RILEY: Comrade Commander and delegates, the National Convention Committee on Legislation and Veterans' Rights was called to order on August 6th, 2011, by the Committee Advisors Joseph A. Violante and Jeff Hall.

The first order of business was the election of a Convention Committee chairman and secretary. David Riley was elected as chairman and Bill Novak was elected as secretary.

The Committee then proceeded to review the resolutions submitted and I will now report to you the resolutions recommended for adoption by this National Convention. For the purpose of saving time I will read only the number and purpose of the resolutions.

Resolution 007, amend Title 38 U.S.C. to provide ten-year protection for service-connected disability evaluation;

Resolution 008, opposing any proposal that would offset payments of Social Security Disability Insurance benefits or any other federal benefit by the VA compensation;

009, oppose any recommendations by any commission to reduce or eliminate benefits for disabled veterans;

Resolution 10, oppose subjecting compensation to means testing;

Resolution 011, oppose reduction, taxation or elimination of veterans' benefits;

Resolution 12, supporting a change in regulatory requirements for a temporary total rating under Section 4.30 of Title 38 C.F.R.;

Resolution 13, reduce the ten-year rule for dependency and indemnity compensation;

Resolution 14, redefine service in Vietnam to include service in the waters offshore;

Resolution 15, provide a temporary total rating for the period that an amputee has a new prosthetic device constructed;

Resolution 16, exempt disability compensation in determining or determination of eligibility for government programs;

Resolution 17, oppose complete revamping of the 1945 rating schedule;

Resolution 18, support legislation to provide for service-connection for disabling conditions resulting from toxic and environmental exposures;

Resolution 19, support legislation to remove the prohibition against concurrent receipt of SVP and DIC;

Resolution 20, support legislation to award special monthly compensation under provisions of Title 38, United States Code, Section 1114(R)(1) to veterans with anatomical loss or loss of use of three extremities;

Resolution 21, support interest payments for VA retroactive rewards of one year or more;

Resolution 22, support legislation to provide a realistic increase in VA compensation rates to address loss of quality of life;

Resolution 23, support legislation to link disabled veterans disability compensation increases to the federal Employee Pay Comparability Act or current Consumer Price Index, whichever is greater;

Resolution 24, oppose regional dispersion of the Board of Veterans Appeals;

Resolution 25, support legislation to require the United States Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims to decide each of an appellant's assignments of error;

Resolution 26, support legislation to revise the appeal period for VA decisions;

Resolution 28, support legislation to cap attorneys' fees for benefits counseling and claims services before the VA;

Resolution 29, mortgage protection life insurance for 100-percent service-connected veterans;

Resolution 30, support an increase in the VA burial allowance for service-connected veterans and provide for automatic annual adjustments;

Resolution 31, amend the Home Improvement and Structural Alterations program;

Resolution 32, provide educational benefits for dependents of service-connected veterans rated 80 percent or more disabled;

Resolution 33, support legislation that would exempt the benefits paid to war-time service-connected disabled veterans from the pay-go, cut-go provisions of the Budget Enforcement Act; Resolution 34, extend the space-available air travel aboard military aircraft to 100 percent service-connected disabled veterans;

Resolution 35, extend commissary and exchange privileges to service-connected disabled veterans and their dependents;

Resolution 58, disability compensation increase;

Resolution 59, oppose any change that would redefine service-connected disability;

Resolution 61, supporting legislation to provide presumptive service connection to atomic veterans for all recognized radiogenic diseases;

Resolution 62, increase the grant for autos or other conveyances available to certain disabled veterans;

Resolution 63, authorize automotive adaptive equipment eligibility to any veteran who has a service-connected disability that inhibits the ability to safely operate a motor vehicle;

Resolution 64, compensate Persian Gulf veterans suffering from illness circumstantially linked to their service in the Persian Gulf War;

Resolution 65, opposing lump sum payments for service-connected disabilities;

Resolution 66, support legislation to remove prohibition against concurrent receipt of longevity retirement pay and veterans' disability compensation;

Resolution 67, support legislation providing that SSB payments not be withheld from VA disability compensation payments;

Resolution 68, opposition to the imposition of time limits for filing compensation of claims;

Resolution 70, supporting legislation to provide for waiver of premiums for Supplemental Service Disabled Veterans Insurance;

Resolution 71, provide an open period to apply for service disabled veteran insurance;

Resolution 74, increase the face value of service disabled veterans insurance;

Resolution 90, expand POW presumptions;

Resolution 124, remove two-year time limit for reimbursement of burial funeral expenses;

Resolution 141, eliminating the delimiting date for eligible spouses and surviving spouses for benefits provided under Chapter 35;

Resolution 144, support adequate funding for all VA programs;

Resolution 145, minimum compensation for hearing loss with use of hearing aid;

Resolution 146, presumptive service connection for tinnitus and hearing loss under certain conditions;

Resolution 169, support a more modern, accurate and up-to-date audiological testing process and rating schedule criteria to better determine entitlement to service-connection and for disability compensation;

Resolution 170, provide increase in the specially-adapted housing grant and temporary residence allowance grants;

Resolution 171, urge greater cooperation among DoD, VA and Congress on easing the burden of establishment of service-connection for residuals of military sexual trauma;

Resolution 172, opposing the permanent rounding-down of COLAs and veterans benefits;

Resolution 173, support reasonable presumptive period for undiagnosed illnesses for Gulf War veterans;

Resolution 174, support legislation to allow all veterans to recover amounts withheld as tax on disability severance pay;

Resolution 175, support reform in the Veterans Benefits Administration disability claims process;

Resolution 176, reduce premiums for service-disabled veterans insurance;

Resolution 177, improve collaboration between DoD and VA on the delivery of services through the Integrated Disability Evaluation System;

Resolution 178, support the use of surplus federal properties to house homeless veterans and their families.

Comrade Commander, this completes the report of the Committee on Legislation and Veterans' Rights. On behalf of the Committee I move for the adoption of these resolutions and that the Committee be discharged with the thanks of the National Convention.

(The above-mentioned resolutions follow:)

RESOLUTION NO. 007—LEGISLATIVE PROVIDE A 10-YEAR PROTECTION PERIOD FOR SERVICE-CONNECTED DISABILITY EVALUATIONS

WHEREAS, section 110, title 38, United States Code, now provides for the protection of all disability compensation evaluations that have been continuously in effect for 20 or more years; and

WHEREAS, permanency should be conceded for disability compensation ratings which have been in effect for 10 years without change in evaluation with no further examination scheduled; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, supports amendment of section 110, title 38, United States Code, to provide that disability evaluations continuously in effect at the same evaluation rate be protected after a period of 10 years.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 008—LEGISLATIVE
OPPOSE ANY PROPOSAL THAT WOULD OFFSET PAYMENTS OF SOCIAL SECURITY
DISABILITY INSURANCE BENEFITS OR ANY OTHER FEDERAL BENEFIT BY
DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS COMPENSATION

WHEREAS, consideration has been given to proposing an offset of Social Security Disability Insurance Benefits by payments of any other Federal benefit; and

WHEREAS, the adoption of such a measure would reduce the overall income provided to those service-connected veterans who have a compensable disability and who also suffer a permanent and total disability for purposes of Disability Insurance Benefits from the Social Security Administration; and

WHEREAS, such an offset would work a grave and undue hardship on all totally disabled service-connected veterans and their families by drastically reducing their total income; and

WHEREAS, benefits received from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) or under military retirement pay and other Federal programs have differing eligibility criteria as compared with the earned payments of Social Security Disability Insurance Benefits; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, opposes any measure which proposes to offset the payment of any other Federal benefit or earned benefit entitlement by VA compensation payments made to service-connected disabled veterans.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 009—LEGISLATIVE
OPPOSE ANY RECOMMENDATIONS BY ANY COMMISSION TO REDUCE OR
ELIMINATE BENEFITS FOR DISABLED VETERANS

WHEREAS, American citizens owe their freedoms and way of life to disabled veterans who made extraordinary personal sacrifices and who suffer lifelong disabilities as a consequence; and

WHEREAS, those who serve in our Armed Forces stand ready to endure any hardships and expose themselves to any hazards on behalf of their country and our citizens, and

WHEREAS, our Government did not hesitate in asking them to give life or limb if necessary, and

WHEREAS, our elected officials surely should not renege on our reciprocal obligation when our disabled veterans ask for so comparatively little in return; and

WHEREAS, we, as a Nation, have no more important indebtedness nor greater moral obligation than the indebtedness and obligation we have to disabled veterans; and

WHEREAS, some elected officials nonetheless prefer to denigrate the suffering of disabled veterans, conveniently ignore this debt, and shirk this national responsibility; and

WHEREAS, any shameful effort on the part of legislators to find ways to avoid compensating disabled veterans, especially in time of war, is unprecedented; and

WHEREAS, our Government continues to establish commissions to review veterans benefits and entitlements in an effort to balance the budget; and

WHEREAS, honorable and great nations of conscience do not abandon their wounded warriors; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, remind our elected officials of our undebatable responsibility to fairly and fully compensate veterans for all the effects of disabilities incurred or aggravated in the line of duty as provided in the equitable standards of current law and regulations; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans vigorously opposes any recommendations made for the purpose of reducing, adding limitations on, or eliminating benefits for service-connected disabled veterans or their families.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 010—LEGISLATIVE
OPPOSE SUBJECTING COMPENSATION TO MEANS TESTING

WHEREAS, the citizens of our Nation have heretofore honorably recognized their indebtedness to those who sacrificed in the service of their country by providing compensation as restitution for the personal injuries or diseases suffered in such service; and

WHEREAS, a disabled veteran is rightfully entitled to restitution for the effects of service-connected disability during its continuation, without regard to good fortune or income of the veteran or spouse from sources wholly independent of the Government's obligations to the veteran; and

WHEREAS, it is fundamentally unfair for the Government to seek to disclaim its obligation to disabled veterans or their survivors merely because of the receipt of other, unrelated income; and

WHEREAS, notwithstanding the special status of disability and dependency and indemnity compensation, there are efforts to reduce or eliminate them where the veteran or spouse, or survivor has other income; and

WHEREAS, this degrades compensation by providing it to the extent of the veteran's or survivor's economic needs rather than as a measure of restitution equal to personal losses, thereby disassociating compensation from that which merits it and associating it with factors which govern purely gratuitous and welfare benefits; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, opposes any scheme to means test disability and death compensation.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 011—LEGISLATIVE
OPPOSE REDUCTION, TAXATION, OR ELIMINATION OF VETERANS' BENEFITS

WHEREAS, veterans' benefits are earned benefits paid to veterans and their families for their service to the Nation; and

WHEREAS, veterans' benefits are part of a covenant between our Nation and its defenders; and

WHEREAS, certain government leaders have continued to attack veterans' benefits in an attempt to tax those benefits, reduce them, or eliminate them completely; and

WHEREAS, these attacks recur with regularity and serious intent; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, vigorously opposes reduction, taxation, or elimination of veterans' benefits.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 012—LEGISLATIVE
SUPPORT A CHANGE IN REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS UNDER SECTION 4.30 OF
TITLE 38, CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS, TO PROVIDE FOR A TEMPORARY
TOTAL RATING FOR INCAPACITATION OF MORE THAN 21 DAYS

WHEREAS, with advances in modern medicine and increasing emphasis on more efficient use of health care resources, health care providers are being encouraged to utilize suitable alternatives to inpatient care; and

WHEREAS, as a consequence, veterans are often treated through home health services or convalesce at home rather than in the hospital; and

WHEREAS, convalescent ratings are currently only authorized where inpatient or outpatient treatment resulted in surgery or immobilization of a major joint by cast; and

WHEREAS, there are instances where the veteran's treatment did not involve surgery or casting of a major joint, but the veteran has undergone healing, convalescence, or a therapeutic course in the home, with a duration of more than 21 days; and

WHEREAS, exacerbation of a service-connected disability sometimes makes work activities contraindicated for periods of more than 21 days; and

WHEREAS, in such instances, the therapeutic course, convalescence, or restriction from work would occur in the home in lieu of hospitalization for more than 21 days; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, supports a change in section 4.30, title 38, Code of Federal Regulations, to provide for a temporary total rating if treatment or exacerbation of a service-connected disability results in a condition of temporary

total incapacity for employment or temporary unavailability for employment by reason of home health care or ambulatory care, bed rest or confinement to the home, or contraindication of work activities for more than 21 days.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 013—LEGISLATIVE
REDUCE THE TEN-YEAR RULE FOR DEPENDENCY AND INDEMNITY
COMPENSATION

WHEREAS, Section 1318 (b) (1), title 38, United States Code, provides Dependent & Indemnity Compensation (DIC) benefits for survivors of certain veterans noted totally disabled for ten or some years; and

WHEREAS, the financial status of the surviving spouse is compromised due to the care required by the totally disabled veteran and provided by the surviving spouse; and

WHEREAS, the surviving spouse, acting as care-giver for the veteran, most in many case limit or give up her career, or put his or her career on hold; and

WHEREAS, it is inherently unfair that the surviving spouse should have this additional burden placed on her for 10 years or more before he or she can qualify for DIC when this veterans passes; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, support legislation to reduce this ten-year rule for DIC qualification to a more reasonable period of time.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 014—LEGISLATIVE
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO CLARIFY THAT SERVICE IN THE REPUBLIC OF
VIETNAM FOR PURPOSES OF BENEFITS BASED ON EXPOSURE TO HERBICIDES
INCLUDES SERVICE IN THE WATERS OFFSHORE

WHEREAS, over the decade from 1961 to 1971, our military forces sprayed approximately 21 million gallons of herbicide agents in Vietnam; and

WHEREAS, these herbicide agents, the most common of which was designated “Agent Orange,” contained the contaminant dioxin, one of the most toxic substances known to humankind; and

WHEREAS, the dispersion and deposition of, and human exposure to, dioxins were not limited to areas directly sprayed, inasmuch as it is acknowledged that the chemical was carried away from the areas of application by canals, rivers, and streams, and that airborne particulates were carried by wind drift; and

WHEREAS, Congress has therefore provided that, for purposes of establishing or presuming service connection for a disability or death as related to herbicide exposure, a veteran who, during active military, naval, or air service, “served in the Republic of Vietnam during the period beginning on January 9, 1962, and ending on May 7, 1975, shall be presumed to have been exposed during such service to [a] herbicide agent . . . unless there is affirmative evidence to establish that the veteran was not exposed to any such agent” during that service; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has arbitrarily interpreted “served in the Republic of Vietnam” to mean only service on land areas of Vietnam and not waters offshore within its national boundaries; and

WHEREAS, the exclusion of territorial seas or waters from the term “Republic of Vietnam” is contrary to the plain and unqualified language of the law and illogical insofar as its premise is that herbicides could be carried away from the area of application across any expanse of land but not equal or lesser expanses of water; and

WHEREAS, various illnesses have been linked to and are presumed due to exposure to these herbicide agents; and

WHEREAS, veterans who served on ships no more distant from the spraying of these herbicides than many who served on land are arbitrarily and unjustly denied benefits of the presumption of exposure and thereby the presumption of service connection for their herbicide-related disabilities; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, supports legislation to expressly provide that the phrase “served in the Republic of Vietnam” includes service in the waters offshore.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 015—LEGISLATIVE
PROVIDE A TEMPORARY TOTAL RATING FOR THE PERIOD
THAT AN AMPUTEE HAS A NEW PROSTHETIC DEVICE CONSTRUCTED

WHEREAS, it takes four to six weeks to manufacture a prosthetic device; and
WHEREAS, many employers will not accept an amputee back on the job without his or her artificial limb; and

WHEREAS, the veteran who does not have an artificial limb is incapacitated and unable to perform gainful employment; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Schedule for Rating Disabilities does not contain any provision to provide this temporary total rating; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, supports legislation to amend the 1945 VA Schedule for Rating Disabilities to provide a temporary total rating for the period involving the replacement of a prosthetic device.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 016—LEGISLATIVE
SEEK LEGISLATION TO EXCLUDE VETERANS' DISABILITY COMPENSATION
FROM COUNTABLE INCOME FOR PURPOSES OF ELIGIBILITY TO BENEFITS AND
SERVICES UNDER OTHER GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS

WHEREAS, by virtue of their service and sacrifices, disabled veterans deserve special benefits that are separate and in addition to benefits the government provides to other citizens; and

WHEREAS, compensation for the effects of service-connected disabilities is counted as income in determinations of eligibility for other government benefits and programs, such as low-income housing through the Department of Housing and Urban Development; and

WHEREAS, the value of compensation is negated and its purposes are defeated when a veteran's receipt of compensation is used to reduce or deny entitlement to government benefits or services available to other citizens; and

WHEREAS, when a veteran's compensation is offset against other entitlements, it is in effect deducted from the programs generally available to other citizens, and the veteran really receives nothing additional for his or her disability and is thus not compensated; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, seeks legislation to exclude veterans' disability compensation from countable income for purposes of entitlement to benefits or services under other government programs.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 017—LEGISLATIVE
OPPOSE A COMPLETE REVAMPING OF THE 1945 RATING SCHEDULE

WHEREAS, the 1945 Schedule for Rating Disabilities, adopted and used by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has served America's disabled veterans quite adequately; and

WHEREAS, the 1945 Schedule for Rating Disabilities incorporates a policy of "average impairment" and that policy has treated all veterans with like disabilities equally and fairly in spite of age, education or work experience; and

WHEREAS, the current 1945 Schedule for Rating Disabilities does actually encourage disabled veterans to seek vocational rehabilitation training in order to become a more productive wage earner without penalty for doing so; and

WHEREAS, the 1945 Schedule for Rating Disabilities has been modified and upgraded many times when advances in medical science dictates a change in a particular disability rating might be necessary, or additions to the Schedule have been incorporated to cover injuries, affirmatives and illnesses unique to some theatre of operations; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, goes on record as adopting a policy that would strongly oppose any wholesale changes to the 1945 Schedule for Rating Disabilities by any group, organization, committee, consortium or act of Congress.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 018—LEGISLATIVE
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO PROVIDE FOR SERVICE CONNECTION
FOR DISABLING CONDITIONS RESULTING FROM TOXIC
AND ENVIRONMENTAL EXPOSURES

WHEREAS, veterans of all military conflicts from the World Wars to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have been exposed to toxic and environmental exposures such as mustard gas, herbicides, cold weather, chemical, biological agents and other combat operation exposures; and

WHEREAS, veterans may not know for years or decades about the toxic or environmental conditions they were exposed to during military service; and

WHEREAS, returning from war, veterans subsequently suffer from disabling conditions that are not immediately identified as a result of such exposures; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Defense (DoD) has not always been willing to publicly share information regarding exposures during military service with other government departments or agencies or with the individuals involved; and

WHEREAS, research conducted by the National Institutes of Health, DoD and the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), and other federal agencies have focused on relationships between toxic and environmental exposures and health outcomes of veterans and pending claims; and

WHEREAS, such research is necessary to ensure veterans receive high quality health services and benefits they are entitled due to diseases or injuries resulting from deployment exposures; and

WHEREAS, in studies mandated by Congress, the National Academy of Sciences continues to review and evaluate scientific literature to determine whether a link exists between exposure and certain physical disorders; and

WHEREAS, VA and DoD must collaborate and share necessary deployment, health, and exposure data to better address the health conditions experienced by disabled veterans; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, vigorously supports the VA's expeditious handling of veterans' claims and the payment of fair and just compensation for all conditions associated with the veteran's service and related exposure to toxic and environmental hazards.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 019—LEGISLATIVE
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO REMOVE THE PROHIBITION AGAINST
CONCURRENT RECEIPT OF SURVIVOR BENEFIT PLAN PAYMENTS AND
DEPENDENCY AND INDEMNITY COMPENSATION

WHEREAS, the Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) payments are payments of an insurance annuity and the retired military member pays premiums for this coverage; and

WHEREAS, Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) is paid to the surviving spouse of a service member, retiree or veteran who dies of a service-connected condition; and

WHEREAS, these two programs are unrelated to each other; and

WHEREAS, under current law SBP payments are reduced, by the amount of DIC received; and

WHEREAS, this offset is extremely unfair to the approximately 61,000 spouses whose service member faithfully paid premiums in anticipation of a fair annuity based on premium payment; and

WHEREAS, there should not be a statute of limitation to apply for SBP as the current six-year statute of limitation has severe and adverse consequences on survivors; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, support legislation to repeal the offset between SBP annuity payments and DIC Compensation Payments; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the six-year statute of limitation should be waived if the offset between DIC and SBP is removed.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 020—LEGISLATIVE
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO AWARD SPECIAL MONTHLY COMPENSATION UNDER
THE PROVISIONS OF TITLE 38, UNITED STATES CODE, § 1114(r)(1) TO VETERANS
WITH ANATOMICAL LOSS OR LOSS OF USE OF THREE EXTREMITIES

WHEREAS, veterans with anatomical loss or loss of use, or a combination of anatomical loss and loss of use, of three extremities are significantly impaired in their ability to perform personal functions; and

WHEREAS, veterans with loss or loss of use of three extremities require the assistance of others for the ability to dress and undress themselves, or to keep themselves ordinarily clean and presentable, or to perform frequent adjustment of special prosthetic or orthopedic appliances, or to attend to the wants of nature, or to protect themselves from hazards or dangers incident to their daily environment; and

WHEREAS, these factors are considered basic criteria for determining the need for regular aid and attendance by the Department of Veterans Affairs; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, supports legislation to award special monthly compensation under the provisions of Section 1114(r)(1), title 38, United States Code, to veterans with anatomical loss or loss of use of three extremities.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 021—LEGISLATIVE
SUPPORT INTEREST PAYMENTS FOR DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
RETROACTIVE AWARDS OF ONE YEAR OR MORE

WHEREAS, Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) claimants are often denied timely receipt of their rightfully earned benefits due to prolonged bureaucratic delay in the VA adjudication process and/or through clear and unmistakable error on the part of VA Rating Board authorities; and

WHEREAS, under current law and regulation, VA claimants who incur indebtednesses to the United States government, in addition to the principal amount of such indebtednesses, are assessed and must pay interest charges; and

WHEREAS, in 1982, Congress enacted the Prompt Payment Act, Public Law 97-177, to require federal agencies to pay their bills to outside vendors on a timely basis or pay interest penalties to the outside vendors when payments are made late; and

WHEREAS, VA claimants who are denied timely receipt of their rightfully earned benefits do not receive interest payments from the government and therefore incur a loss of investment income, which could have been received had they received their earned benefits in a timely fashion; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, seeks the enactment of legislation that would require the VA to pay interest on all retroactive benefit awards in excess of one year.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 022—LEGISLATIVE
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO PROVIDE A REALISTIC INCREASE IN
DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS COMPENSATION RATES
TO ADDRESS LOSS OF QUALITY OF LIFE

WHEREAS, the Veterans' Disability Benefits Commission (the Commission) was established by Public Law 108-136, the National Defense Authorization Act of 2004 to address several measures, one of which was loss of quality of life; and

WHEREAS, current law requires that the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Rating Schedule compensate service-disabled veterans for average impairment of earning capacity; and

WHEREAS, the Commission concluded early in its deliberations that VA disability compensation should recompense veterans not only for average impairments of earning capacity, but also for their inability to participate in usual life activities and for the impact of their disabilities on quality of life; and

WHEREAS, the Institute of Medicine reached the same conclusion; moreover, it made extensive recommendations on steps to develop and implement a methodology to evaluate the impact of disabilities on veterans' quality of life and to provide appropriate compensation; and

WHEREAS, the Commission concluded that the VA Rating Schedule should be revised to include compensation for the impact of service-connected disabilities on quality of life; and

WHEREAS, for some veterans, quality of life is addressed in a limited fashion by special monthly compensation for loss of limbs or loss of use of limbs; and

WHEREAS, the Commission urged Congress to consider increases in some special monthly compensation awards to address the profound impact of certain disabilities on quality of life and to assess whether other ancillary benefits might be appropriate; and

WHEREAS, while a recommended systematic methodology is being developed for evaluating and compensating for the impact of disability on quality of life, the Commission recommended that an immediate interim increase of up to 25 percent of compensation be enacted; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, supports the enactment of legislation to provide a realistic increase in VA compensation rates to address loss of quality of life.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 023—LEGISLATIVE
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO LINK DISABLED VETERANS DISABILITY
COMPENSATION INCREASES TO THE FEDERAL EMPLOYEES PAY
COMPARABILITY ACT OF 1990 OR THE CURRENT COST-OF-LIVING ALLOWANCE
TIED TO THE CONSUMER PRICE INDEX, WHICHEVER IS HIGHER

WHEREAS, increases in disability compensation to disabled veterans have traditionally been as a result of cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) increases each year; and

WHEREAS, the calculations regarding COLAs are the domain of the Social Security Administration, using a formula that has been directly linked to the Consumer Price Index since 1975, prescribed by law when calculating any COLA increase; and

WHEREAS, in general, a COLA is equal to the percentage increase in the Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) from the third quarter of one year to the third quarter of the next, and if there is no increase, there is no COLA; and

WHEREAS, the formula that derives the level of increase is tied to the U.S. economy on a very broad basis; stagnant economic activity does not mean disabled veterans' cost of living is flat; in fact, as they age and suffer from associated illnesses of aging, their costs increase; and

WHEREAS, it is unfair that disabled veterans are denied necessary increases in disability payments due to a formula that actually has little to do with the costs they bear; and

WHEREAS, disabled veterans disability compensation has not kept pace with the rest of the economy, even in years when there were COLA payments, disability benefits lagged; and

WHEREAS, the Federal Employees Pay Comparability Act (FEPCA) of 1990, was enacted to achieve some measure of pay comparability between federal government workers and non-federal workers doing similar jobs with increases based on the Employment Cost Index minus 0.5 percent; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, supports legislation linking disabled veterans disability compensation increases to FEPCA, or the current COLA tied to the CPI, whichever is greater.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 024—LEGISLATIVE
OPPOSE REGIONAL DISPERSION OF THE BOARD OF VETERANS' APPEALS

WHEREAS, veterans and other claimants for veterans' benefits may appeal erroneous decisions of the various and geographically dispersed benefit offices and medical facilities of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA); and

WHEREAS, inaccuracy and lack of uniformity are pervasive among the claims decisions of the many VA field offices; and

WHEREAS, one board, the Board of Veterans' Appeals (Board) situated adjacent to VA's Central Office and policymaking center in Washington, D.C., hears all appeals; and

WHEREAS, appellants, Board members, and taxpayers derive numerous benefits from an appellate board housed in one centralized location, some of the more obvious of which are:

- availability of the collective expertise of the entire board
- professional interaction and association among Board members and staff
- shared and uniform training
- common and shared goals and responsibilities
- economies of scale from pooled resources and the most efficient workload distribution, with the flexibility and capacity to readjust the workload as necessary between members and support staff

- a positive environment and employee incentives for developing creative solutions and innovations to meet and overcome the challenges inherent in a system of mass adjudication of claims
- more efficient and effective centralized case management and storage
- more effective centralized board administration and hands-on employee oversight;

and

WHEREAS, Congress created the Board after repeated failed experiments with various configurations of regional appellate panels that were plagued by persistent inefficiencies and problems and were proven impractical and poorly suited to properly dispose of veterans' appeals; and

WHEREAS, indications are that consideration is being given within certain quarters of VA to dismember the Board and scatter its decision makers among the VA field offices or among various regions of the Nation; and

WHEREAS, such regional reorganization of the Board would be extremely unwise, wholly unwarranted, and not in the best interests of veterans or taxpayers; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, categorically opposes any decentralization of the Board of Veterans' Appeals.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 025—LEGISLATIVE

SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO REQUIRE THE UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS FOR VETERANS CLAIMS TO DECIDE EACH OF APPELLANT'S ASSIGNMENTS OF ERROR, DIRECTLY ORDER THE AWARD OF BENEFITS WHERE APPROPRIATE TO REMEDY ERRORS FOUND, AND ACCEPT APPELLANT'S REJECTION OF CONFESSIONS OF ERROR BY THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

WHEREAS, Congress passed the Veterans' Judicial Review Act of 1988 (VJRA) and created the United States Court of Veterans' Appeals (currently the U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims) (the Court); and

WHEREAS, the VJRA granted the Court the authority to decide all relevant questions of law and to hold unlawful and set aside or reverse any finding of material fact adverse to the claimant, which is clearly erroneous; and

WHEREAS, due to long delays in claims processing at the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), it can take veterans years to get their appeals before the Court; and

WHEREAS, in many appeals, the Court will ignore the appellants' legal arguments and remand an appeal to the Board of Veterans' Appeals (Board) based on the General Counsel's confession of error that the Board failed to provide adequate reasons or bases for its decision to deny the benefit; and

WHEREAS, a remand for reasons or bases allows the VA to reopen the evidentiary record and obtain other evidence to support the continuation of the denial; and

WHEREAS, a veteran must appeal to the Court a second time and, in some cases, a third or fourth time to obtain a decision on the merits of his or her appeal; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, supports legislation that would require the Court to decide each assignment of error made by an appellant in an appeal to the Court and to reverse any such errors found; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Court should have the authority to modify or remand any Board decision found to contain any error or errors, that the authority to modify should include the power to order an award of benefits in appropriate cases, and that an appellant should be expressly permitted to waive confessions of error made by the appellee.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 026—LEGISLATIVE

SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO REVISE THE APPEAL PERIOD FOR DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS DECISIONS

WHEREAS, Congress has created a benevolent system for the administration of veterans' benefits and services; and

WHEREAS, under this benevolent system, veterans currently have one year to initiate appeals of adverse decisions; and

WHEREAS, current Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) statistics show that more than 40 percent of appeals are filed within one month of the adverse decision and 92 percent are filed within 180 days of such decisions; and

WHEREAS, many VA regional offices will wait until after the one-year appeal period has expired before actively working the claim regardless of when the appeal is received; and

WHEREAS, the Disabled American Veterans has a proposal, the 21st Century Claims Process, which would improve the timeliness of VA decisions with the implementation of a searchable electronic database for claims; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, supports legislation to revise the appeal period to 180 days, with an automatic extension of 180 days at the request of the veteran, with the implementation of a searchable electronic database for claims.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 028—LEGISLATIVE
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO CAP ATTORNEYS' FEES FOR BENEFITS COUNSELING
AND CLAIMS SERVICES BEFORE THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF
VETERANS AFFAIRS

WHEREAS, our nation established veterans' programs to repay or reward veterans for their extraordinary service and sacrifices on behalf of their fellow citizens; and

WHEREAS, in the spirit in which special benefits are provided to especially deserving beneficiaries, our citizens intended these benefits to be dispensed through an open, helpful, and informal system in which the government is duty bound to receive every claimant as entitled and provide every reasonable assistance in developing and shepherding the claim through the entire administrative process while affording consideration of all legal avenues toward granting every benefit that can be supported in law; and

WHEREAS, the programs are also designed in a manner that ensures veterans and their families will receive the full measure of aid from disability compensation and other monetary payments without taxation and with protections that ensure they are not diverted into the pockets of others who have no entitlement to them; and

WHEREAS, Congress has set the rates of these modest benefits to be minimally adequate for their intended purposes, such as assisting disabled veterans and their families in purchasing the necessities of life or obtaining services necessary to ameliorate the effects of disability, and the amounts provided do not contemplate or allow for any reduction or diminishment in buying power such as will occur when a portion is diverted to attorneys; and

WHEREAS, acquiescence in any general situation in which obtaining veterans' benefits required hiring an attorney and surrendering portion of disability compensation or other benefits obtained to the attorney fundamentally contradicts and undermines the spirit of the benefit programs created solely to aid and meet the special needs of disabled veterans and their dependents and survivors; and

WHEREAS, it is inappropriate for Congress to disavow the government's obligation to ensure veterans receive the benefits due them by passing them off to the legal profession where their plight might well depend on or be determined by their potential for producing attorney fees; and

WHEREAS, in 2006, Congress passed legislation, Public Law 109-461, the Veterans Benefits, Health Care and Information Technology Act of 2006, which allowed attorneys to charge a veteran a fee for counseling and claims service following the filing of a Notice of Disagreement; and

WHEREAS, the initial intent of veterans benefits recognized that no disabled veteran should have to pay an attorney significant fees to obtain the benefits that a grateful nation provides and the veteran is rightfully due; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, seeks legislation to provide for a reasonable cap on the amount of fees an attorney can charge veterans for benefits counseling and claims services before the Department of Veterans Affairs.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 029—LEGISLATIVE
EXTEND ELIGIBILITY FOR VETERANS' MORTGAGE LIFE INSURANCE TO SERVICE-
CONNECTED VETERANS RATED PERMANENTLY AND TOTALLY DISABLED

WHEREAS, Veterans' Mortgage Life Insurance (VMLI) is presently available to veterans entitled to the special adapted housing award under section 2101(a), title 38, United States Code; and

WHEREAS, service-connected veterans rated as permanently and totally disabled cannot obtain mortgage life insurance through commercial insurance companies; and

WHEREAS, their widows and dependents must bear an undue hardship upon the death of such veterans; and

WHEREAS, section 407 of Public Law 111-275, the Veterans Benefits Act of 2010, increased VMLI for disabled veterans from \$90,000 to \$150,000, effective October 1, 2011, and to \$200,000 effective January 1, 2012; and

WHEREAS, the VMLI program provides mortgage life insurance to severely disabled veterans and service members who have also received a Specially Adapted Housing grant from the Department of Veterans Affairs; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, seeks the enactment of legislation which would extend VMLI to service-connected veterans who are rated as permanently and totally disabled.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 030—LEGISLATIVE
SUPPORT AN INCREASE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
BURIAL ALLOWANCE FOR SERVICE-CONNECTED VETERANS AND
PROVIDE FOR AUTOMATIC ANNUAL ADJUSTMENTS

WHEREAS, in 1973, the National Cemetery Administration established a burial allowance that provided partial reimbursement for eligible funeral and burial costs, with a payment of \$2,000 for service-connected burial allowance, \$300 for non service-connected burial allowance and \$300 for non service-connected plot allowance; and

WHEREAS, passage of Public Law 111-275, the Veterans Benefits Act of 2010, resulted in an increase in both plot allowance and burial allowance from \$300 to \$700 for non service-connected deaths in Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) facilities, effective October 1, 2011; and

WHEREAS, this same law does not increase the \$2,000 for burial and funeral expenses for service-connected deaths outside of VA facilities, nor is it indexed to the Consumer Price Index for annual adjustments; and

WHEREAS, the plot allowance introduced in 1973 was an attempt to provide a plot benefit for veterans who did not have reasonable access to a national cemetery, neither the plot allowance nor the burial allowance was intended to cover the full cost of a civilian burial in a private cemetery; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9 2011, supports legislation to increase the burial allowance payable at a rate equal to that of inflation since 1973 in the case of death due to service-connected disability regardless of the place where the death occurred, and to provide for automatic annual adjustments indexed to the rise in the cost of living.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 031—LEGISLATIVE
AMEND THE HOME IMPROVEMENT AND STRUCTURAL ALTERATIONS PROGRAM

WHEREAS, under section 1717, title 38, United States Code, the Home Improvement and Structural Alterations (HISA) program, veterans with service-connected disabilities or veterans with non service-connected disabilities may receive assistance for any home improvement necessary for the continuation of treatment or for disability access to the home and essential lavatory and sanitary facilities; and

WHEREAS, a HISA grant is available to veterans who have received a medical determination indicating that improvements and structural alterations are necessary or appropriate for the effective and economical treatment of his/her disability; and

WHEREAS, a veteran may receive both a HISA grant and either a Special Home Adaptation (SHA) grant or a Specially Adapted Housing (SAH) grant; and

WHEREAS, the HISA improvement benefit provides up to \$6,800 to service-connected veterans, and up to \$2,000 to non service-connected veterans as a result of the Caregiver and Veterans Omnibus Health Services Act of 2010; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, calls for a reasonable increase to the HISA improvement benefits for veterans.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 032—LEGISLATIVE
PROVIDE EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS FOR DEPENDENTS OF
SERVICE-CONNECTED VETERANS RATED 80 PERCENT OR MORE DISABLED

WHEREAS, chapter 35, title 38, United States Code, extends educational assistance to the dependents of service-connected veterans who are evaluated as permanently and totally disabled; and

WHEREAS, there are many service-connected veterans rated 80 percent and 90 percent disabled, whose dependents cannot afford to attend an institution of higher learning or pursue a vocational endeavor because of the reduced earning ability of such veterans; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, seeks the enactment of legislation which would extend educational assistance under chapter 35, title 38, United States Code, to the dependents of veterans who have a service-connected disability rating of 80 percent or more.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 033—LEGISLATIVE
SUPPORT LEGISLATION THAT WOULD EXEMPT THE BENEFITS PAID
TO WARTIME SERVICE-CONNECTED DISABLED VETERANS FROM THE
“PAY-GO/CUT-GO” PROVISIONS OF THE BUDGET ENFORCEMENT ACT

WHEREAS, wartime disabled veterans have earned the benefits and services they, their dependents and survivors receive from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) as a result of the injuries sustained during their period of wartime service; and

WHEREAS, the benefits and services received by wartime disabled veterans as a result of their service-connected disabilities is an extension of the costs of war; and

WHEREAS, this country has a moral obligation to continue to care for these citizen-soldiers who have risen in defense and support of the ideals of this great nation and who have returned to civilian life with service-connected disabilities; and

WHEREAS, the benefits and services provided to America’s veterans, dependents and survivors have not caused this nation’s deficit problems; and

WHEREAS, the so-called “pay-go”/“cut-go” provisions of the Budget Enforcement Act require any new benefits or services to be paid out of existing benefits or programs, in effect, requiring one group of disabled veterans to give up a benefit or service so that another worthy group of wartime disabled veterans can receive benefits or services to which they are entitled; and

WHEREAS, Persian Gulf War veterans suffering from ailments associated with their service in the Persian Gulf War are compensated from funds generated by cutting the benefits of other service-connected veterans and their survivors; and

WHEREAS, the benefits and services provided to wartime disabled veterans are unique and not a “welfare benefit;” NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, supports legislation to exempt VA benefits and services provided to service-connected disabled veterans, their dependents and survivors from the “pay-go”/“cut-go” provisions of the Budget Enforcement Act.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 034—LEGISLATIVE
EXTEND SPACE-AVAILABLE AIR TRAVEL ABOARD MILITARY AIRCRAFT
TO 100 PERCENT SERVICE-CONNECTED DISABLED VETERANS

WHEREAS, totally disabled service-connected veterans have sacrificed greatly in terms of their impairments and loss of earnings capacity; and

WHEREAS, more than any other living group of Americans, such veterans should be eligible for all benefits and privileges that the Congress may provide; and

WHEREAS, such totally disabled veterans should be extended the same privileges as other personnel currently authorized to utilize space-available military air travel; and

WHEREAS, the extension of such travel to totally disabled service-connected veterans would not place any additional burden upon the administration of this program; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, seeks the enactment of legislation that would extend space-available air travel aboard military aircraft to all 100 percent service-connected disabled veterans to the same extent and under the same conditions as is currently provided to retired military personnel.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 035—LEGISLATIVE
EXTEND COMMISSARY AND EXCHANGE PRIVILEGES TO
SERVICE-CONNECTED DISABLED VETERANS AND THEIR DEPENDENTS

WHEREAS, current Department of Defense regulations authorize military commissary and exchange privileges to a broad category of active and retired military personnel, their dependents and survivors; and

WHEREAS, veterans injured while in service to their nation have earned the privilege to use commissary and exchange stores; and

WHEREAS, the recent downsizing of the military jeopardizes the continued profitable operation of military and exchange stores; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, supports legislation to extend commissary and exchange privileges to service-connected disabled veterans and their dependents.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 058—LEGISLATIVE
INCREASE DISABILITY COMPENSATION

WHEREAS, it is the historical policy of the Disabled American Veterans that this Nation's first duty to veterans is to provide for the rehabilitation of its wartime disabled; and

WHEREAS, the percentage ratings for service-connected disabilities represent, as far as can be practicably determined, the average impairment in earning capacity resulting from such disabilities in civil occupations; and

WHEREAS, compensation increases should be based primarily on the loss of earning capacity; and

WHEREAS, disabled veterans who are unable to work because of service connected disabilities should be entitled to compensation payments commensurate with the after-tax earnings of their able-bodied contemporaries; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, supports the enactment of legislation to provide a realistic increase in Department of Veterans Affairs compensation rates to bring the standard of living of disabled veterans in line with that which they would have enjoyed had they not suffered their service-connected disabilities.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 059—LEGISLATIVE
OPPOSE ANY CHANGE THAT WOULD REDEFINE SERVICE-CONNECTED
DISABILITY OR RESTRICT THE CONDITIONS OR CIRCUMSTANCES UNDER WHICH
IT MAY BE ESTABLISHED

WHEREAS, current law authorizes service connection for disabilities incurred or aggravated during service in the United States Armed Forces in the line of duty; and

WHEREAS, various proposals have been made to limit service connection to disabilities caused directly by the performance of duty; and

WHEREAS, disability incurred in the line of duty is sometimes not directly due to a job injury but may be due to less obvious factors attributable to the Armed Forces environment; and

WHEREAS, proof of a causal relationship may often be difficult or impossible notwithstanding an inability to disassociate the disability from service-related factors; and

WHEREAS, current law equitably alleviates the onerous burden of establishing performance of duty or other causal connection as a prerequisite for service connection; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, opposes changes in current law so as to redefine or restrict service connection.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 061—LEGISLATIVE
SUPPORT LEGISLATION AUTHORIZING THE PRESUMPTION OF SERVICE
CONNECTION FOR ALL RADIOGENIC DISEASES

WHEREAS, members of the United States Armed Services have participated in test detonation of nuclear devices and served in Hiroshima or Nagasaki, Japan, following the detonation of nuclear bombs, including “clean-up” operations at test sites; and

WHEREAS, the United States Government knew or should have known of the potential harm to the health and well-being of these military members; and

WHEREAS, atomic veterans served their country with honor, courage, and devotion to duty; and

WHEREAS, remedial legislation passed by Congress in 1984 has not been effective in ensuring that all atomic veterans are compensated for their radiogenic diseases; and

WHEREAS, by the Department of Veterans Affairs’ (VA’s) own admission, approximately 50 claimants have obtained disability compensation or dependency and indemnity compensation pursuant to Public Law 98-542, the Veterans’ Dioxin and Radiation Exposure Compensation Standards Act; and

WHEREAS, the Government has spent tens of millions of dollars to provide dose reconstruction estimates which do not accurately reflect actual radiation dose exposure; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, supports legislation to provide presumptive service connection to atomic veterans for all recognized radiogenic diseases; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that all veterans involved in “clean-up” operations following the detonation of nuclear devices should be considered atomic veterans for all benefits and services provided by VA.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 062—LEGISLATIVE
INCREASE THE GRANT FOR AUTOMOBILES OR OTHER CONVEYANCES
AVAILABLE TO CERTAIN DISABLED VETERANS

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) provides a grant to assist eligible disabled veterans and servicemembers in purchasing specially equipped automobiles or other conveyances; and

WHEREAS, when originally established, the amount of the grant was set at an amount sufficient to cover the full cost of lower-priced automobiles; and

WHEREAS, later amendments established grants in amounts representing 80 percent of the average cost of automobiles; and

WHEREAS, the amount of the automobile allowance has not been adjusted regularly concurrent with increases in the costs of automobiles, resulting in substantial erosion of the value of the benefit due to inflation; and

WHEREAS, the current grant of \$18,900 represents about 66 percent of the total average cost of automobiles based on most current available pricing; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, supports legislation to increase the automobile grant to an amount representing 80 percent of the average cost of new automobiles.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 063—LEGISLATIVE
AMEND PROVISIONS REGARDING ELIGIBILITY FOR AUTOMOBILE ADAPTIVE
EQUIPMENT TO INCLUDE ANY VETERAN WHOSE SERVICE-CONNECTED
DISABILITY INHIBITS HIS/HER ABILITY TO SAFELY OPERATE A MOTOR VEHICLE

WHEREAS, section 3902, title 38, United States Code, and section 17.119(a), title 38, Code of Federal Regulations, restrict the eligibility for adaptive equipment to those veterans who qualify for the automobile grant as specified in section 3901, title 38, United States Code; and

WHEREAS, not all veterans whose service-connected disabilities prohibit the safe operation of a motor vehicle meet the requirements of section 3901, title 38, United States Code; and

WHEREAS, these service-connected disabled veterans should be provided the adaptive equipment necessary to safely operate a motor vehicle; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, supports the enactment of legislation that would authorize the Department of Veterans Affairs to provide or assist in

providing the adaptive equipment deemed necessary to any veteran whose service-connected disability interferes with the safe operation of a motor vehicle.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 064—LEGISLATIVE
COMPENSATE PERSIAN GULF WAR VETERANS SUFFERING
FROM ILLNESSES CIRCUMSTANTIALLY LINKED TO THEIR
SERVICE IN THE PERSIAN GULF WAR

WHEREAS, the Disabled American Veterans has a significant concern regarding the multitude of ailments reported by a growing number of Persian Gulf War veterans who were exposed to both identified and unknown health hazards; and

WHEREAS, Persian Gulf War veterans were exposed to numerous and various environmental health hazards, including smoke from oil field fires and other petroleum agents, depleted uranium, chemical and biological elements, desert parasites, vaccines, chemoprophylactic agents, and vehicle paints; and

WHEREAS, primary investigations and multifarious studies have thus far failed to identify the source or sources of these ailments; and

WHEREAS, the scientific/medical community's inability to identify the source(s) and pathological nature of the disease has caused considerable anxiety for these veterans and their families; and

WHEREAS, there appears to be a commonality of ailments plaguing Persian Gulf War veterans; and

WHEREAS, these ailments have been unofficially labeled "Persian Gulf Syndrome," "Multiple Chemical Sensitivity," and "Chronic Fatigue Syndrome"; and

WHEREAS, these brave veterans suffering from these unknown ailments are often prevented from providing for their own basic needs and for the needs of their families; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, vigorously supports the Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA's) expeditious handling of Persian Gulf War veterans' claims and the payment of fair and just compensation for those diagnosed and undiagnosed conditions associated with their service in the Persian Gulf theater or related exposure to certain chemical, biological, and environmental toxins; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we strongly urge that these Persian Gulf War veterans continue to receive priority medical treatment for those ailments that may be associated with their service in the Persian Gulf; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we vehemently urge VA, the Department of Defense, and the Department of Health and Human Services to continue to cooperate in tests and studies to unlock the mysteries surrounding the ailments suffered by Persian Gulf War veterans, including the possibility of exposure to chemical agents by United States military personnel.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 065—LEGISLATIVE
OPPOSE LUMP-SUM PAYMENTS FOR SERVICE-CONNECTED DISABILITIES

WHEREAS, disability compensation is paid monthly to an eligible veteran on account of and at a rate commensurate with diminished earning capacity resulting from the effects of service-connected disease or injury; and

WHEREAS, such compensation, by design, continues to provide relief from the service-connected disability for as long as the veteran continues to suffer its effects at a compensable level; and

WHEREAS, by law, the rate of compensation is determined by the level of disability present, thereby requiring reevaluation of the disability upon a change in its degree; and

WHEREAS, various entities have suggested lump-sum payments as a way for the Government to avoid the administrative costs of reevaluating service-connected disabilities and as a way to avoid future liabilities to service-connected disabled veterans when their disabilities worsen or cause secondary disabilities; and

WHEREAS, such lump-sum payments would not, on the whole, be in the best interests of disabled veterans but would be for Government savings and convenience; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, opposes any change in law to provide for lump-sum payments of VA disability compensation.

* * *

RESOLUTION 066—LEGISLATIVE
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO REMOVE THE PROHIBITION AGAINST
CONCURRENT RECEIPT OF MILITARY RETIRED PAY AND VETERANS'
DISABILITY COMPENSATION FOR ALL LONGEVITY RETIRED VETERANS

WHEREAS, current law provides that service connected veterans rated less than 50% who retire from the Armed Forces on length of service may not receive disability compensation from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) in addition to full military retired pay; and

WHEREAS, these disabled veterans must therefore surrender retired pay in an amount equal to the disability compensation they receive; and

WHEREAS, this offset is extremely unfair to veterans who have served faithfully in military careers inasmuch as these veterans have earned their retired pay by virtue of their long service to the Nation and wholly apart from disabilities due to military service; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans at the National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, supports legislation to repeal the offset between military longevity retired pay and VA disability compensation.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 067—LEGISLATIVE
SUPPORT LEGISLATION PROVIDING THAT SPECIAL SEPARATION
BENEFITS PAYMENTS NOT BE WITHHELD FROM DEPARTMENT OF
VETERANS AFFAIRS DISABILITY COMPENSATION PAYMENTS

WHEREAS, as a result of the downsizing of our military forces, many career military personnel have left service prior to becoming eligible for longevity retirement pay; and

WHEREAS, these individuals are entitled to separation pay; and

WHEREAS, many of these individuals also become eligible for Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) disability compensation; and

WHEREAS, VA General Counsel, in an opinion rendered on June 22, 1992, held that any monies received as a result of the Special Separation Benefit (SSB) must be recouped from any VA disability compensation payment; and

WHEREAS, SSB payments are in no way related to a disability; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, supports legislation to clarify that SSB payments are not disability payments and therefore should not be recouped from VA disability compensation payments.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 068—LEGISLATIVE
OPPOSE THE IMPOSITION OF TIME LIMITS FOR FILING COMPENSATION CLAIMS

WHEREAS, veterans suffer lifelong impairments from disabilities incurred in connection with military service; and

WHEREAS, compensation is a benefit available to service-connected veterans at any time they choose to claim it; and

WHEREAS, veterans who, for whatever reason, do not initially desire to claim and receive compensation should not forfeit the right to claim and receive it at some later time; and

WHEREAS, no reason other than defeating delayed claims exists for imposition of a statute of limitations on compensation claims; and

WHEREAS, the Veterans' Claims Adjudication Commission, created by Congress to study the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) claims processing system, suggested a time limit for filing compensation claims as a way to reduce VA's workload; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, opposes any change in law to limit the time for filing compensation claims.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 070—LEGISLATIVE
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO PROVIDE FOR WAIVER OF PREMIUMS FOR
SUPPLEMENTAL SERVICE-DISABLED VETERANS' INSURANCE

WHEREAS, section 1922A(a), title 38, United States Code, provides for supplemental Service-Disabled Veterans' Insurance (S-DVI) for totally disabled veterans, in an amount not to exceed \$20,000; and

WHEREAS, section 1922A(d), title 38, United States Code, provides that, "no waiver of premiums shall be made in the case of any person for supplemental insurance granted under this section;" and

WHEREAS, such prohibition of premium waiver is based on the Servicemen's Indemnity Act of 1951, which states in part, "[t]he amount of insurance placed in force hereunder. . .at the time of the insured's application for waiver hereunder, may not exceed \$10,000" (section 1912(d), title 38, United States Code); and

WHEREAS, such denial of waiver on supplemental Service Disabled Veterans' Insurance for totally disabled veterans constitutes an inequity based on prior established standards; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, supports legislation to allow for the waiver of premiums, for any and all Supplemental S-DVI for totally disabled veterans that may be authorized by existing and future legislation; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the criteria for total disability waiver of premiums, as mandated in section 1912 of title 38, United States Code, be maintained.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 071—LEGISLATIVE
PROVIDE AN OPEN PERIOD TO APPLY FOR SERVICE-DISABLED
VETERANS' INSURANCE

WHEREAS, service-connected disabled veterans are entitled to apply for Service-Disabled Veterans' Insurance (S-DVI) within two years from the date the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) grants service connection for any disability; and

WHEREAS, many eligible veterans, due to financial difficulties and problems associated with readjustment to civilian life, did not apply for this insurance within the 2-year eligibility period; and

WHEREAS, many of these service-connected disabled veterans are now prepared and can afford to purchase this insurance but are not able to purchase comparable insurance coverage in the private sector; and

WHEREAS, precedent has been established to extend previously closed "eligibility periods" for certain other VA benefits and services, including insurance; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, seeks the enactment of legislation that would authorize an "open period" for eligible service-connected disabled veterans to apply for coverage under the S-DVI Program.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 074—LEGISLATIVE
INCREASE THE FACE VALUE OF SERVICE-DISABLED VETERANS' INSURANCE

WHEREAS, certain veterans are eligible for National Service Life Insurance under section 1922, title 38, United States Code; and

WHEREAS, honorably discharged veterans released from active military duty on or after April 25, 1951, found by the Department of Veterans Affairs to be suffering from a disability or disabilities for which a compensable evaluation would be payable, shall, upon application, be granted insurance by the United States Government under section 1922(a), title 38, United States Code; and

WHEREAS, this insurance is non-participating with no dividends payable; and

WHEREAS, many of these veterans are uninsurable by private insurance companies as a result of their service-connected disabilities; and

WHEREAS, inflation has rapidly increased and diminished the value of the insurance since the maximum was set at \$10,000; and

WHEREAS, Section 401 of Public Law 111-275, the Veterans Benefits Act of 2010, increases Supplemental Service Disabled Veterans Insurance (S-DVI) for totally disabled veterans from

\$20,000 to \$30,000, effective October 1, 2011, but does not increase S-DVI coverage for other service-connected disabled veterans with lower disability ratings; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, supports amendment of section 1922(a), title 38, United States Code, to increase the maximum amount of insurance coverage available under S-DVI.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 090—LEGISLATIVE
EXPAND PRISONER-OF-WAR PRESUMPTIONS

WHEREAS, former prisoners-of-war (POWs) suffered cruel and inhumane treatment, together with nutritional deprivation at the hands of their captors, which resulted in long-term adverse health effects; and

WHEREAS, POWs were subjected to numerous and varying forms of abuse dependent upon the place, time, and circumstance of their captivity by the enemy; and

WHEREAS, for this reason, former POWs suffer from a wide range of physical and psychological maladies; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, supports legislation which would add those medical conditions which are characteristically associated with or can be reasonably attributed to the POW experience as presumptive disorders for former POWs; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans urges passage of legislation that would expand eligibility for Dependency and Indemnity Compensation to surviving spouses of certain former POWs, who died prior to September 30, 1999, and who were rated totally disabled at the time of death for a service-connected disability for a period of not less than one year.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 124—LEGISLATIVE
REMOVE TWO-YEAR TIME LIMIT FOR REIMBURSEMENT OR DIRECT
PAYMENT OF BURIAL AND FUNERAL EXPENSES

WHEREAS, claims for reimbursement or direct payment of burial and funeral expenses must be received by VA within two years of interment or cremation of the deceased for non service-connected deaths, per section 3.1601(a), title 38, United States Code; and

WHEREAS, this time limit only applies to non service-connected deaths; and

WHEREAS, this variance creates a more restrictive standard for those whose deaths do not involve a service connected cause; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, opposes the two-year time limit currently in law and seek legislation to remove this unfair time limit.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 141—LEGISLATIVE
ELIMINATE THE DELIMITING DATE FOR ELIGIBLE SPOUSES AND
SURVIVING SPOUSES FOR BENEFITS PROVIDED UNDER
CHAPTER 35, TITLE 38, UNITED STATES CODE

WHEREAS, dependents and survivors eligible for Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) education benefits under Chapter 35, title 38, United States Code, have ten years in which to apply for and complete a program of education; and

WHEREAS, this ten-year period begins either from the date a veteran is evaluated by the VA as permanently and totally disabled from service-connected disabilities or ten years from the date of such veteran's death due to service-connected disability; and

WHEREAS, in many instances, because of family obligations or the need to provide care to the veteran, spouses or surviving spouses may not have had an opportunity to apply for these benefits; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, seeks the enactment of legislation which would eliminate the delimiting date for spouses and surviving spouses for purposes of benefits provided under Chapter 35, title 38, United States Code.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 144—LEGISLATIVE
SUPPORT ADEQUATE FUNDING FOR ALL DEPARTMENT
OF VETERANS AFFAIRS PROGRAMS

WHEREAS, understaffing of Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) programs in recent years has hampered the VA's ability to effectively administer programs intended to benefit this nation's veterans; and

WHEREAS, continued efforts by the Office of Management and Budget to reduce the VA budget will lead to further deterioration of all VA programs; and

WHEREAS, this nation's first concern should be to fulfill its obligation to those who served in the military services in defense of this country; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, seeks and strongly supports adequate funding for all VA programs.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 145—LEGISLATIVE
PROVIDE FOR A COMPENSABLE RATING FOR HEARING
IMPAIRED VETERANS REQUIRED TO USE A HEARING AID

WHEREAS, a significantly high number of veterans with hearing impairments have a zero percent or non-compensable rating for high frequency hearing loss; and

WHEREAS, most veterans who have such a rating with the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) experience significant difficulties with such hearing loss in ordinary daily living; and

WHEREAS, the VA Schedule for Rating Disabilities provides a compensable rating of 10 percent for other minor disabilities such as a partial loss of one finger, mild skin conditions, tender scars and, in some cases, for the residuals of an episiotomy scar; and

WHEREAS, the VA should recognize those veterans who are impacted by high frequency hearing loss; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, supports granting veterans with high frequency hearing loss a compensable rating (10 percent) when it has been medically determined that the veteran requires and has been issued a hearing amplification device.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 146—LEGISLATIVE
SUPPORT PRESUMPTIVE SERVICE CONNECTION FOR
TINNITUS AND HEARING LOSS

WHEREAS, veterans of the armed services who served in combat or in certain occupational specialties have a high incidence rate of hearing loss or tinnitus as a direct result of acoustic trauma; and

WHEREAS, many pre-service and discharge examinations, particularly for World War II and Korean conflict veterans, were usually accomplished with the highly inaccurate whispered voice test; and

WHEREAS, veterans, in those cases, were not afforded a comprehensive audiological examination upon entrance and discharge from military service; and

WHEREAS, in recent years, the second leading disability granted service connection by the Department of Veterans Affairs was for hearing loss or tinnitus; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, supports entitlement to service connection on a presumptive basis for any veteran suffering from hearing loss or tinnitus, which manifests itself to a degree of 10 percent or more within a year of discharge from military service, and the evidence shows the veterans participated in combat or worked in a position or military occupational specialty likely to cause acoustic trauma.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 169—LEGISLATIVE
SUPPORT PROMULGATION BY THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
OF A MORE MODERN, ACCURATE AND UP-TO-DATE AUDIOLOGICAL
TESTING PROCESS AND RATING SCHEDULE CRITERIA TO BETTER
DETERMINE ENTITLEMENT TO SERVICE CONNECTION FOR HEARING
LOSS AND LOWERING THE THRESHOLD FOR DISABILITY COMPENSATION

WHEREAS, present testing for hearing loss is conducted in a sound-proof chamber with the use of noise isolating ear phones, contrary to ordinary, daily living circumstances contending with a variety of competing sounds and noise; and

WHEREAS, modern audiological equipment is used to measure both the ability to hear and speech recognition by repeating complete sentences subjected to varying levels of “artificial” background noise; and

WHEREAS, testing in sound-proof chambers with the use of noise isolating ear phones and “artificial” background noise work to the disadvantage of veterans; and

WHEREAS, hearing impairment is only considered a disability when controlled audiometric testing finds the auditory threshold in any of the frequencies 500, 1000, 2000, 3000, 4000 Hertz is 40 decibels or greater, or, when auditory thresholds for at least 3 of these frequencies are at 26 decibels or greater, or when speech discrimination is 94 percent or less; and

WHEREAS, disability compensation for service-connected hearing impairment is based upon the combination of percentage of speech discrimination and puretone threshold average resultant of controlled audiometric testing at the 1,000, 2,000, 3,000 and 4,000 Hertz ranges only; and

WHEREAS, many veterans’ daily lives are adversely affected as a result of service-connected hearing impairment, but are not compensated as a result of the inability to meet the high threshold set forth in the VA Schedule for Rating Disabilities; and

WHEREAS veterans with hearing loss rated as high as Moderate to Severe may not receive compensation from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) at more than a non-compensable (0%) rating; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, supports a change in audiometric testing methods by using state-of-the-art equipment and up-to-date procedures, which take into consideration the effects of non-artificial background noise, full sentence hearing and lower auditory threshold for determining hearing impairment; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans finds the threshold for a compensable rating is too high to benefit many veterans who are truly disabled by the extent of their service-connected hearing loss and VA should lower the threshold and define a more equitable system of determining disability compensation for service-connected hearing loss.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 170—LEGISLATIVE
PROVIDE INCREASE IN THE SPECIALLY ADAPTED HOUSING GRANT AND
SEPARATE TEMPORARY RESIDENCE ADAPTATION GRANTS

WHEREAS, section 2101(a), title 38, United States Code, authorizes a Specially Adapted Housing (SAH) grant to veterans who have incurred service-connected disabilities consisting of loss or loss of use of both lower extremities, total blindness together with loss or loss of use of one lower extremity, or loss or loss of use of one lower extremity together with either the loss or loss of use of an upper extremity or other organic disease that requires use of a wheelchair or the use of braces, crutches, or canes or severe burn injuries; and

WHEREAS, the purpose of this grant is to enable such severely disabled veterans to construct, purchase, or remodel homes with structural features to accommodate special needs; and

WHEREAS, the current \$60,000 maximum amount authorized for this grant, although it can be used up to three times for the aggregate \$60,000 maximum, is insufficient to allow such veterans to make all necessary adaptations and modifications; and

WHEREAS, Public Law 109-233, the Veterans’ Housing Opportunity Benefits Act of 2006, authorized the VA to provide Temporary Residence Adaptation (TRA) grants for veterans who have service-connected disabilities for certain combinations of loss or loss of use of extremities and blindness or other organic diseases or injuries when those veterans reside in but do not intend to permanently reside in a residence owned by a family member; and

WHEREAS, assistance may not exceed \$14,000 for veterans who have a permanent and total service-connected disability as a result of the loss or loss of the use of both lower extremities, such as to preclude locomotion without the aid of braces, crutches, canes, or a wheelchair; and

WHEREAS, the assistance may not exceed \$2,000 for veterans who have a permanent and total service-connected disability rating due to blindness in both eyes with 5/200 visual acuity or less and the disability includes the anatomical loss or loss of use of both hands.

WHEREAS, this grant will be adjusted annually as a result of passage of Public Law 110-289, the Housing and Economic Recovery Act of 2008, based on a cost-of-construction index, but the TRA grant will not; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, LA, August 6-9, 2011, supports legislation which would provide a realistic increase in the grant as well as annual cost-of-living increases; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Congress should separate the TRA grant as a stand-alone program so that the grant amount would not count against the overall grant for SAH.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 171—LEGISLATIVE

URGE GREATER COOPERATION AMONG DEPARTMENTS OF DEFENSE, VETERANS AFFAIRS AND CONGRESS ON EASING THE BURDEN OF ESTABLISHMENT OF SERVICE CONNECTION FOR RESIDUALS OF MILITARY SEXUAL TRAUMA, AND FOR IMPROVING THE AVAILABILITY OF RECORDS ASSOCIATED WITH EVIDENCE OF MILITARY SEXUAL TRAUMA

WHEREAS, the Disabled American Veterans maintains a longstanding resolution from our membership that advocates an open process to govern establishment of service connection for diseases and injuries incurred in or aggravated in the line of duty during service in the United States armed forces;

WHEREAS, establishing a causal relationship between injury and later disability can be daunting due to lack of records or certain human factors that obscure or prevent documentation or even basic investigation of such incidents after they occur;

WHEREAS, military sexual trauma is evermore recognized as a hazard of service for one percent of men serving and upwards of 20 percent of women serving in the armed forces and later represents a heavy burden of psychological and mental health care for the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA);

WHEREAS, an absence of documentation of military sexual trauma in the personnel or military unit records of injured individuals prevents or obstructs adjudication of claims for disabilities of this deserving group of veterans injured during their service, and may interrupt or prevent their care by VA once they become veterans;

WHEREAS, the Department of Defense (DOD) has established an office of Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPRO) to establish department-wide policies and procedures for the handling of sexual assault and injury cases for active military service members and members of reserve and Guard units, including documentation, records retention and protection of the privacy of the individuals involved in such cases;

WHEREAS, both DOD and VA have agreed on some procedures that would govern documentation sufficient to justify service connection of sexual assault and other military sexual trauma;

WHEREAS, presumptive service connection may be established in existing law (section 1112, title 38, United States Code) and statutory regulation (section 3.307, title 38, Code of Federal Regulations) for certain diseases that manifest to a degree of ten percent or more disabling within a date certain from date of discharge; and

WHEREAS, bills have been introduced in Congress that, if enacted, would ease rules associated with documentation of sexual trauma in an effort to provide equitable relief to those suffering these effects while protecting the confidentiality of such records and the individuals about whom they are maintained; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, supports continuing and stronger efforts by VA, DOD and Congress to ease the burden of establishment of service-connected disability from the effects of military sexual trauma by making evidentiary records more readily available; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Disabled American Veterans urges VA to use existing legal precedent for establishing presumptive service connection for illnesses associated with

military sexual trauma when symptoms consistent with such trauma manifest in a veteran to a degree of ten percent or more disabling within a date certain, set either by Congress or the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, from date of discharge from military service.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 172—LEGISLATIVE
OPPOSE THE PERMANENT ROUNDING DOWN OF COST-OF-LIVING
ADJUSTMENTS IN VETERANS' BENEFITS

WHEREAS, to maintain the worth of veterans' benefits, they must be adjusted to keep pace with the rise in the cost of living; and

WHEREAS, permanently rounding down the adjusted rates to the next lower dollar amount will erode the value of these benefits over time and thus not keep pace with the rise in the cost of living; and

WHEREAS, permanently rounding down veterans' cost-of-living adjustments (COLAs) unfairly targets veterans for convenient cost savings for the Government; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, opposes permanent rounding down of COLAs for veterans' benefits.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 173—LEGISLATIVE
SUPPORT REASONABLE PRESUMPTIVE PERIOD FOR UNDIAGNOSED
ILLNESSES FOR GULF WAR VETERANS

WHEREAS, thousands of Gulf War veterans still suffer from chronic unexplained physical symptoms; and

WHEREAS, the numerous symptoms experienced by sick Gulf War veterans are not well understood and the causes of such symptoms remain elusive and answers could likely remain evasive for some time; and

WHEREAS, there currently is little significant research on long-term health effects of many of the agents Gulf War veterans were potentially exposed to during the Gulf War; and

WHEREAS, additional research into the long-term health effects of exposures is needed, a fact confirmed in a September 2000 report by the Institute of Medicine on the health effects of exposures during the Gulf War; and

WHEREAS, the presumptive period for undiagnosed illnesses was extended until September 30, 2011; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, urges that legislation be enacted to extend the presumptive period for service connection for ill-defined and undiagnosed illnesses to a reasonable period.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 174—LEGISLATIVE
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO ALLOW ALL VETERANS TO RECOVER
AMOUNTS WITHHELD AS TAX ON DISABILITY SEVERANCE PAY

WHEREAS, money received as a result of personal injury or disability is not taxable; and

WHEREAS, disability severance pay is paid to a military member as a result of injury or disease suffered during military service; and

WHEREAS, the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) has, and continues to, tax military disability severance pay as regular income; and

WHEREAS, a United States District Court has held that military disability severance pay is nontaxable income; and

WHEREAS, the IRS has acquiesced in the District Court holding; and

WHEREAS, the three-year statute of limitations prevents veterans who have been discharged for more than three years from recovering the nontaxable money withheld by the IRS; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, strongly supports legislation which would allow all veterans to recover nontaxable income withheld from their disability severance pay, notwithstanding the three-year statute of limitations which would otherwise prevent such recovery.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 175—LEGISLATIVE
SUPPORT REFORM IN THE VETERANS BENEFITS
ADMINISTRATION'S DISABILITY CLAIMS PROCESS

WHEREAS, Congress has created a system for the administration of veterans' benefits and services; and

WHEREAS, veterans currently have to wait for extended periods for rating decisions to be made on those claims; and

WHEREAS, some "Duty to Assist" requirements, while protecting veterans rights, may needlessly increase the length of time it takes to process claims and unnecessarily increase the number of hours required to process claims adding to the increasing claims backlog and delays; and

WHEREAS, the VA currently authorizes an appeal election decision period of up to one year before the appeal is adjudicated, yet 92 percent of veterans submit their appeal election letters within the first six months of that one-year time frame; and

WHEREAS, currently, remands from the Board of Veterans' Appeals (Board) due to errors in processing claims are sent back to the Appeals Management Center (AMC), which has a poor record of proper development and also returning them to the Board in a timely manner; and

WHEREAS, changes to the current ineffective claims processing system would provide for a greater level of accountability of the performance of rating specialists by allowing them to correct and learn from their own errors; and

WHEREAS, the current process awards quantity of work rather than both quantity and quality due to the current work credit system; and

WHEREAS, veterans who currently have cases coming up for appeal with the Board must opt out of the VA Regional Offices (VAROs) jurisdiction if they want any new evidence to be considered by the Board; and

WHEREAS, the current process mandates that Supplemental Statements of the Case be crafted each time new evidence is submitted to the VARO until jurisdiction is waived by the veteran; and

WHEREAS, an electronic accessible, searchable database and claims management system capable of converting all claims-related paperwork into secure, official electronic documentation shortly after receipt instead of weeks is essential to both the safeguarding of official records and a necessity in this digital era, and will help to move the claims process into the 21st century; and

WHEREAS, with an electronic, searchable database and claims management system, certain revisions to VA's current practices, regulations and/or laws must be undertaken, such as: revisions in the duty to assist provisions; the length of the appeals period; the ability of the Veterans Benefits Administration to have new evidence considered by the Board unless the veteran requests waiver of VARO jurisdiction; the elimination of the AMC; and full spectrum claims management accountability standards up and down the adjudication process; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, supports legislation that fulfills the above criteria, significantly reducing the backlog and ensures that all claims are decided correctly the first time.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 176—LEGISLATIVE
SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO REDUCE PREMIUMS FOR SERVICE-DISABLED
VETERANS' INSURANCE CONSISTENT WITH CURRENT LIFE EXPECTANCY

WHEREAS, the United States Government provides life insurance to servicemembers because the increased hazards of military service make them an unacceptable risk for the commercial insurance market; and

WHEREAS, coverage for servicemembers may be continued after service under policies issued or programs overseen by the Department of Veterans Affairs; and

WHEREAS, the extra-hazard costs of insuring veterans in poorer health by reason of service-connected disabilities should be borne by the Government; and

WHEREAS, Congress created the Service-Disabled Veterans' Insurance (S-DVI) program in 1951 by Public Law 82-23, the Insurance Act of 1951, to provide life insurance to service-connected disabled veterans at standard rates; and

WHEREAS, under Public Law 82-23, S-DVI premiums are based on rates a healthy individual would have been charged when the program was established in 1951, in accordance with 1941 mortality tables as prescribed by section 1922, title 38, United States Code; and

WHEREAS, because life expectancy has improved since the inception of the SDVI program, premiums based on the higher mortality rates of 1941 no longer fulfill congressional intent to provide life insurance to service-connected disabled veterans at standard rates; and WHEREAS, because service-connected disabled veterans are paying premiums higher than today's standard rates, they are, in effect, subsidizing their own service-connected disabilities; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, supports legislation to amend section 1922 of title 38, United States Code, to provide that SDVI premiums will be based on current mortality tables.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 177—LEGISLATIVE
IMPROVE COLLABORATION BETWEEN THE DEPARTMENTS OF
DEFENSE AND VETERANS AFFAIRS ON THE DELIVERY OF SERVICES
THROUGH THE INTEGRATED DISABILITY EVALUATION SYSTEM

WHEREAS, the President's Commission on Care for America's Returning Wounded Warriors recommended that the Departments of Defense (DOD) and Departments of Veterans Affairs (VA) "...should create a single, comprehensive, standardized medical examination that the DOD administers. It would serve DOD's purpose of determining fitness and VA's of determining initial disability level;" and

WHEREAS, this examination must be completed as a prerequisite to completing the military separation process with VA responsible for handling this as they have the demonstrated expertise to do so; and

WHEREAS, a Disability Evaluation System (DES) pilot project premised on the Commission's recommendation was launched by the DOD and the VA in 2007; and

WHEREAS, using lessons learned from the DES pilot, DOD and VA are now transitioning from the legacy DES to an Integrated Disability Evaluation System (IDES) in 140 locations, with the goal of expediting the delivery of VA benefits to all out-processing service members; and

WHEREAS, DOD and VA had indicated they have goals to deliver VA benefits to 50 percent of service members within the 295-day (active component) and 305-day (reserve component) targets; and

WHEREAS, no guidance has been issued on how disagreements about service members' ratings will be resolved beyond the Physical Evaluation Board informally requesting that the VA rating office reconsider the case; and

WHEREAS, 30 DAV Transition Service Officers provide regular assistance at 100 military installations as part of a joint VA-DOD Benefits Delivery and Discharge Program, which provides transition assistance to separating service members who incurred disabilities related to their military service; and

WHEREAS, service members participating in IDES do not have similar access to representation from a veterans service organization (VSO) and instead must rely on advisory services of military counsel; and

WHEREAS, most service members undergoing IDES are unaware of the complexities of disability adjudication and retirement systems, their interests in the IDES process would be best served by being represented by an informed service officer of a chartered VSO; and

WHEREAS, we believe all those transitioning from military service to civilian life due to a disability should be afforded the benefit of representation by an advocate before the fact; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, urges the DOD and VA to take all the steps necessary to deliver VA benefits to 100 percent of service members within the 295-day (active component) and 305-day (reserve component) target; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DOD and VA should develop clear guidance on resolving disagreements about service members' ratings between DOD and VA; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DOD must ensure service members participating in IDES are systematically encouraged to seek representation from a VSO as an option to the advisory services of military counsel.

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RESOLUTION NO. 178—LEGISLATIVE
SUPPORT THE USE OF SURPLUS FEDERAL PROPERTIES TO
HOUSE HOMELESS VETERANS AND THEIR FAMILIES

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) continues to develop housing opportunities for homeless and at-risk veterans based on their Building Utilization Review and Repurposing initiative, which identified unused and underused buildings at existing VA properties; and

WHEREAS, this repurposing of properties is based on using those with the potential to become new housing opportunities for homeless or at-risk veterans and their families through public-private partnerships and VA's enhanced-use lease program, allowing VA to retain ownership of the land and determine and control its reuse; and

WHEREAS, this project will support VA's goal of ending veteran homelessness by providing safe, affordable, cost-effective, and sustainable housing for veterans on a priority basis; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011, supports efforts to expand housing for homeless veterans and their families through the redevelopment of unused and underused federal buildings.

* * *

COMMANDER TYSON: You have heard the motion. May I have a second? Mic 1.

MS. KAREN KEY: Commander, Karen Key, District 19, so moves for a second on that.

COMMANDER TYSON: Thank you. In accordance with Rule 9, now is the time for any rejected resolution to be read. Are there any rejected resolutions you wish read? Hearing none, all those in favor signify by saying aye; opposed. So ordered, unanimously.

Thank you, David, and the Committee. Ladies and gentlemen, in case you didn't recognize that distinguished veteran, that was last year's Veteran of the Year for the DAV, David Riley. (Applause)

At this time I will ask the National Adjutant, Mr. Wilson are there any announcements.

ADJUTANT WILSON: Our next Business Session will begin Tuesday morning at 9:30. We will start off with Committee reports, including the final report of the Constitution and Bylaws Committee. We will have a special guest join us as well. The Department of Veterans Affairs Secretary Shinseki will be addressing our members and our Convention at that time.

We will also introduce the Imperial Counsel of the National Order of Trench Rats followed by reports from the Charitable Service Trust and the National Service Foundation. Tuesday's session will conclude with nominations and election of officers in the afternoon session.

Since DAV's 73rd National Convention in Chicago, when he was presented with the DAV National Commander's Award, Actor Gary Sinise has been a prominent voice who has used his celebrity status to advance our cause.

Beginning this evening at eight o'clock you can enjoy the fantastic musical concert with Gary Sinise and his Lieutenant Dan Band. Doors will open – doors will open for the show at 7:30 p.m.

And, as a reminder, we are going to give away some more DAV briefcases. But before I read those names, there is a Nominating Committee meeting beginning at one o'clock today in the Magnolia Room.

They've got to make this print bigger. I can't see this stuff. (Laughter) The winners for the briefcase today – and, as a reminder, you should be present to win and contact Membership Director Tony Baskerville if your name is called: Ronald Marbles from Colorado, Bradley Bouters from Florida, Franklin Bergquest from Kansas, Billy Miles from Maryland, and Richard Manes from Missouri. That's all I have, Commander. (Applause)

COMMANDER TYSON: Thank you, Adjutant Wilson. Ladies and gentlemen, please rise and I will ask Reverend Edwards, the Chaplain, to lead us in a closing prayer.

CHAPLAIN EDWARDS: God our helper in time of trouble, God our comfort in time of unrest, God our peace in the midst of turmoil, God our father, we thank You for the men and women here gathered, for our commitment to one single purpose, building better lives for all disabled American veterans and their families.

Thank You, our God, for this nation where truth and beauty prevails in spite of trouble, unrest and turmoil. God bless America. And let us as Americans be always thankful for God's blessings. In God we trust. Amen.

(Response of "Amen.")

COMMANDER TYSON: The Convention stands in recess until 9:30 Tuesday morning.
(Whereupon, the meeting adjourned at 11:26 o'clock, a.m. on Sunday, August 7, 2011.)

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THIRD BUSINESS SESSION

August 9, 2011

The Third Business Session of the Disabled American Veterans 90th National Convention convened in the Grand Ballroom on the First Level of the Hilton New Orleans Riverside Hotel, New Orleans, Louisiana, on Tuesday morning, August 9, 2011, and was called to order at 9:30 o'clock, a.m., by National Commander Wallace E. "Wally" Tyson.

COMMANDER TYSON: The Convention will please come to order. As a reminder, we ask that everyone in attendance please turn off your cell phones and any portable devices. Please rise. Please join me in the Pledge of Allegiance.

(Whereupon, the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.)

COMMANDER TYSON: Two. Ladies and gentlemen, I will ask Chaplain Edwards to lead us in prayer.

CHAPLAIN EDWARDS: None of us work alone. We are part of a great team. We need each other. Gracious Heavenly Father, we offer our thanks to you for the gift of life and for the service rendered by the members of the Disabled American Veterans.

Father, we ask that You continue Your blessings on all of the people gathered here at this great Convention who so graciously give of their time and their talents in serving others. Grant that those here today may freely receive as they have freely given.

May feelings of worth and accomplishment continue to be theirs. And may we all remember that what is given in love is retained in eternity. Bless and protect us as we continue to build better lives for American's disabled veterans. And bless our veterans for we realize that it has been through their efforts, their dedication and commitment to duty that our country has continued to remain free. In God we trust. Amen.

(Response of "Amen.")

COMMANDER TYSON: Please be seated. Thank you, Reverend Edwards. At this time I will remind you once again that in order for a delegate to be heard at this Convention you must be recognized by the Chair. Only those delegates at a microphone will be recognized. Upon being so recognized the delegate must state their name, their Chapter, and the state they represent.

I would like to call Chairman Donald Day for a report of the Credentials Committee. Don.

CHAIRMAN DAY: Commander and delegates, the National Convention Committee on Credentials met this morning in the Rosedown. Roll call showed 1,127 delegates and 34 alternates present. This is a partial report for informational purposes only and reflects the registration as of 4:00 p.m. on August 8th, 2011.

At the present time we have 431 Chapters, 46 Departments, 7 National Officers, 17 National Executive Committee members; 13 Past National Commanders, for a total of 1,127 delegates and 34 alternates, and a total vote count of 7,833. This completes the partial report of the Credentials Committee, Commander.

COMMANDER TYSON: Thank you, Don. This is a reminder that registration will close this morning at 10:00 a.m. Ladies and gentlemen, guests to this 90th Convention, it gives me great pleasure to introduce Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki.

On December 7th, 2008, he was nominated by President Barack Obama to lead the Veterans Administration. He was confirmed by the Senate on January 20th, 2009, and sworn in as the seventh Secretary of Veterans Affairs on January 21, 2009.

Secretary Shinseki graduated from the United States Military Academy at West Point. He served two tours in the Republic of Vietnam where he was twice wounded. And, as a disabled veteran, he is a life member of DAV Chapter 5 in Hawaii.

During his distinguished military career he was Commanding General, the United States Army, Europe and Seventh Army; Commanding General, NATO Land Forces, Central Europe; and Commander of the NATO-led Stabilization Force in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

In 1999, General Shinseki was appointed Chief of Staff of the Army. After 38 years of service in uniform he retired from the Army in 2003.

Ladies and gentlemen, it is my sincere honor to introduce to you a fellow member of the United States Army, (Cheers) Secretary of Veterans Affairs and a DAV life member, General Eric K. Shinseki. (Standing Ovation)

THE HONORABLE ERIC K. SHINSEKI: Thank you all very much. Thank you. Thank you very much. Very warm welcome. It's always great to be here with the DAV. And it's one of the high points of my association here as the Secretary is being a member, as Wally has indicated, of this service organization.

Thanks for the tribute to the Army, Wally, but I do see the Air Force prominently displayed right here in the middle. (Laughter) Well, thanks for the very kind introduction, Wally, and thanks for your leadership of DAV as well.

Let me acknowledge some of your leadership here: Bobby Barrera, I know is in the audience our here, your Board Chair; Don Samuels, your Vice, Vice Chair as well as Vice Senior Commander; Art Wilson, National Adjutant; Barry Jesinoski, Executive Director with whom I work quite routinely;

Susan Henry and Judy Hezlep, Commander and Adjutant, respectively, of the Auxiliary; Joe Cassilly, our Disabled Veteran of the Year, congratulations to Joe; and other disabled vets, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen. I'm honored to be here.

I'm honored to be addressing you once again at your annual National Convention. This is the fifth time in the last two-and-a-half years that I've been able to do this. And, as I've said before and I say again, I'm very thankful to President Obama for the opportunity and the privilege to serve in this capacity and to be able to do what I can in helping veterans.

You know, you don't get many do-overs in life. And for me this is a do-over. I get to care for the folks that I went to war with in Vietnam 40 years ago. I get to care for the youngsters I sent to war as a Service Chief as the Army Chief of Staff.

And I get to care for two giants, those who saved the world during World War II, one of our darkest moments in history, and then those – (Applause) and then those who marched to the guns in Korea in 1950. (Applause)

Now, like some of you, I grew up in Vietnam. I went to war with a generation of patriots who were equally tough, determined, courageous and capable of unbelievable acts of courage and sacrifice. It is sometimes said that we honor the fallen by how we care for the living, the ones who made it home. And that's what President Obama and what I and VA have been committed to for the past two-and-a-half years.

Just as you chose to hold your National Convention here in New Orleans, where Hurricane Katrina's effects are still being felt six years later, VA also recently held its leadership conference here, for much the same reason that you're here. And that's to provide work opportunity, jobs to folks that need it.

And we'll be back here next week, VA will, to conduct our National Veteran-Owned Small Business Conference and Exposition. Next week's event is a training event. It will provide unprecedented opportunity for both veteran-owned and service-disabled veteran-owned businesses to build capacity, to grow their businesses, to connect directly with VA's procurement decision makers.

Over 3,400 people are already registered. About 1,500 of them are small business, veteran-owned small business owners. So we're looking forward to a very, very productive week.

Additionally, we recently awarded 7 of our 15 major VA contracts. Seven of those 15 contracts, information technology, T-4 information technology contracts, were awarded to service-disabled, either service-disabled or veteran-owned small businesses, (Applause) all in our effort, again, to give veterans the opportunity to compete.

Now, out of those 15 contracts when they're all left we are requiring all the awardees of those contracts to meet aggressive subcontracting goals for service-disabled and veteran-owned small businesses on their teams.

Historically we know veterans hire veterans. And so in boosting the number of veteran-owned small businesses, it is our way of intending to increase veteran employment opportunities with veterans having the opportunity to employ others.

Incidentally, 30 percent of our own VA workforce are veterans. And our goal is to up that to 40 percent. When I say 30 percent of our VA workforce are veterans, that's over 100,000 people. So our effort is to raise that to 40 percent here in the future. (Applause)

Now, furthermore, as you know we've broken ground here on a new medical center in New Orleans to replace the one that Katrina destroyed. The project will provide almost 3,000 construction jobs for the period of, you know, while the work is underway. But when the new medical center opens its doors in 2014, it will offer New Orleans some 2200 – 2,200, high-quality, permanent jobs at an average salary of \$95,000 a year.

VA brings about \$1.6 billion in revenue to this state annually and providing not only much needed care and benefits to over 300,000 veterans who live in this area but also much needed jobs for Louisiana.

These are tough economic times and that's been especially true for veterans. As of June of this year one million veterans remain unemployed. And the jobless rate for post-9-11 veterans was 13.3 percent, a particularly hard hit generation.

And as troops return from Iraq and Afghanistan, an additional one million service members are projected to leave the military between 2011 and 2016. So we need to get our programs going here.

So last Friday the President, I think, as some of you know – I was off continent when it happened, but the President announced on Friday – again demonstrating both his unwavering commitment to those who defend the nation and his deep concern about the unique challenges facing them – took action and announced four new initiatives to directly impact this unemployment for veterans condition.

First, a Returning Heroes Tax Credit for firms that hire veterans who are unemployed, a maximum of \$2,400 in tax credit for every short-term unemployed hire, and \$4,800 for every long-term hire.

Also, the existing Wounded Warrior Tax Credit for all veterans with service-connected disabilities will continue with an increase for firms that hire veterans with service-connected disabilities who are long-term unemployed, a max credit to them of \$9,600 per veteran.

So when we hold the small business conference here next week you know this is going to be a subject of discussion and teaching and emphasis with all of our small business owners.

Second, a Presidential call for a career-ready military. VA will work closely with the Department of Defense, other federal departments and the President's economic and domestic policy teams to develop reforms to ensure that every member of the service receives the training, education and credentials needed to successfully transition to the civilian workforce or to pursue higher education.

A success-oriented transition program here, you're either getting folks into work or being successful in school under the GI Bill. And included in the design is a "reverse boot-camp" extending the transition period to give service members more counseling and guidance to prepare them for civilian careers.

And the idea here is I think if we can spend nine weeks getting you ready to go to your first military unit we should be able to spend the right amount of time getting ready to get you to go home and compete successfully in the business world. (Applause)

Third, better transition to the private sector for all veterans. And this is a Department of Labor lead that will establish an enhanced career development and job search service package for transitioning veterans.

And, last, the President's challenge to the private sector to hire or train 100,000 unemployed veterans or their spouses by the end of 2013. So four major initiatives that the President put on the table last Friday.

When I took this job two-and-a-half years ago the President handed me two priorities, two basic priorities: first, make things better for veterans, which is, you know, was a given – but that's what Friday's job announcement was really all about, to make things better for veterans; and then the second priority that he gave me was to transform the Department of Veterans Affairs so that it better served veterans throughout the 21st Century.

Pretty strategic guidance when you think about it: serve veterans, do it better; transform for the future. He didn't say what or how or when. He expected me to figure that out.

So, as you know, I didn't grow up in VA. I spent, you know, my formative years in the Army. I'm not a clinician. I'm not a doctor or a nurse. So there was a lot of learning for me to go through that first year. And most of you watched me struggle a little bit in implementing the new GI Bill without any automation tools for what was in 2009 a massive, brand-new program.

But I listened. I went around and talked to various groups and wanted to know what was on your minds. Well, implementing the new GI Bill was something that was declared important. A new law directed VA to implement it on the fly. And so we did it.

Everything had to be done by stubby pencil because we didn't have any automation tools at the time. But we put 173,000 youngsters into college that fall, that first semester, the hard way, by hand.

At the same time – and I say that looking across the table here and I see the DAV has come into the 21st Century with all the high-speed technology here. We didn't have this when we started the GI Bill in VBA. We have it today.

At the same time that we put 173,000 youngsters into college by hand we fast-tracked development of IT tools that are, today, administering this new GI Bill program for over 518,000 veterans and family members who are in college as we speak under this GI Bill program.

When you add VA's other educational assistance programs, Voc Rehab, Montgomery GI Bill, when you add that to the number, the number of veterans and family member students exceeds 840,000. So a tremendous investment in veterans' education. (Applause)

We haven't stopped there. This fall we will expand that GI Bill program to provide vocational training and other non-degree job opportunities for veterans who want to work but who aren't necessarily interested in setting in a college classroom for four years. Another opportunity for veterans to add value to their communities.

And I think if you were able to see the U.S.A. Today front page this morning you would see an article that talked just about this, veterans working a job site that are working at Ground Zero, replacing the World Trade Center. That's what we're talking about.

And this fall kids that want to do that will have an opportunity to go on to vocational training in the same way kids are able to get back into college in the new GI Bill. So this expansion is going to touch the broad cross-section of all of our young veterans.

There are clear lessons, at least for me, from implementing the new GI Bill. First, VA is tough and agile enough to implement a new program on the fly, which we did. Second, as it does that it is also innovative enough to simultaneously develop the new tools that it will need to better administer that new program over the long haul.

What that told me is that we have good, dedicated and creative people who come to work at VA every day and we just need to incentivize and motivate them. My job is to grow and develop them for long-term leadership responsibilities to this important department and to provide them the right tools which have been lacking.

Now the President provided not only strategic guidance, he also provided his personal support in a number of ways. He also assured the availability of much needed, scarce resources to address long-standing issues. And then he allowed me as Secretary the freedom to make decisions and to act.

Well, two-and-a-half years ago as I walked around and listened to folks, here are some of the things you told me and asked me to go to work on. First, too many veterans could not access VA services and benefits and when they tried the claims process was difficult to navigate – some said near impossible – creating a massive backlog in disability claims.

In fact, some veterans suggested that VA was waiting for them to die so it wouldn't have to pay their benefits. Pretty strong stuff for a new Secretary to hear. But, okay, I got the picture. I asked you to give me a chance to try to fix a backlog that had been years in the making. I just needed resources and some time.

You also told me it was wrong for any veteran in this country to be homeless and I agreed with you. In fact, the President was ahead of both of us on this based on his own insights from his time on the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee and he decided to do something about it.

Some of you told me that VA had an attitude problem, that we didn't always treat veterans with dignity and respect and that women veterans, in particular, were not being well served in many cases. (Applause)

It was not that we were doing anything disrespectful, but that our entire system was heavily male-oriented. And so when women veterans came to visit us, they didn't feel particularly welcome or comfortable. Okay. We needed to do something about both of these perceptions.

Finally, you felt we were too slow to react to real changes in veterans' lives. An example here might be the impact of rising gas prices or the cost of medications. On those two items I would just say three-and-a-half years ago the beneficial travel rate was \$.11 per mile with gas prices soaring. Today it is \$.415 per mile and we have controlled co-pay costs of medications to the benefit of all veterans for the last year-and-a-half and we'll continue to do that.

In response to – (Applause) Thank you. Now, having heard all these comments and requests for the Secretary's focus, we put together in VA a budget proposal that we then submitted to the President.

In response to those budget proposals to address all these concerns and a number of others – these were not the only concerns – I think you all recall President Obama increased VA's 2010 budget – a little bit of history here – to \$115 billion in 2010, a 16 percent increase over the \$99.8 billion budget I inherited in 2009, the largest single year increase in over 30 years.

This year the 2011 budget grew to \$126.6 billion and the President's 2012 budget request for next year, which is currently before the Congress, is for \$132.2 billion to care for veterans.

Now, I will tell you, very few organizations public, private, profit, non-profit, have had this kind of resourcing support over three budget cycles as VA has. And I'm thankful to the President for his leadership, standing firm with this department. Every bit of it is needed to fix long-standing issues in this department.

Thanks to the President we have a clear direction, we have predictability in resourcing, and unwavering leadership support. Now it's up to us to deliver.

While, there will be likely some adjustment to the President's 2012 budget request that's currently before the Congress and our 2013 budget proposal that's about to be submitted veterans remain very high priorities with President Obama. I know that personally. And I can tell you personally it goes deep with him.

That commitment will be reflected in the care and benefits VA continues to provide the men and women who served us and our nation in its darkest hours and their families and our survivors.

In keeping his promises to veterans, the President' past budgets have enabled us to address some of the early concerns you asked me to take on when I arrived.

Access. To your concerns from 2009 that not enough veterans could access VA's benefits and services, we have made measurable progress in outreaching to veterans who did not know about VA or their earned benefits or had lost faith in us some time ago.

Streamlining initiatives to improve veterans' access to health care has increased the number of enrolled veterans by nearly 800,000 in the last two-and-a-half years, a 10 percent increase. We will continue to press in this area and to broaden our appeal to women veterans.

With women's program coordinators at each major medical center, with over 1,200 providers having received advanced training in women's health care, and with our efforts to give women veterans their own larger voice through a National Women's Summit, which we just conducted, we believe we are doing the right things and anticipating the coming surge in women veterans.

Now, with two operational campaigns still underway and continuing economic challenges here at home, VA's mission is clear and compelling for veterans' long-term well being. We in VA must be more demanding on ourselves to get every penny out of every dollar, every second out of every minute of running time on the investments we make on behalf of veterans. No opportunities for wasted energy.

Now, when the last combatant comes home from Iraq and Afghanistan in a few years, as will happen, DoD's missions maybe over but VA's requirements will still be growing. We know that historically, something that is likely to continue for another decade or more beyond that point.

And what we have to be careful of is that "mission accomplished" doesn't mean a drop in the VA budget. We must be vigilant to not create another Vietnam generation whose unaddressed medical needs continue to challenge its members even today. (Applause)

Homelessness. Two thousand nine you told me no veteran should live homeless in this rich and powerful country. Well, I've never been able to fix a problem that I couldn't see. And so we have begun creating a registry of homeless veterans. We can't help them unless we know who and where they are and what they need.

So we're working with the Housing and Urban Development Department, with Labor, with Education, with Defense, state and local governments, non-profits and volunteers, all to get a reliable registry so we can attack the root causes of this homeless problem.

VA's progress has been significant. Since 2008 VA has permanently housed over 29,000 homeless veterans, in many cases families as well. Another 30,000 have been assisted through the Homeless Call Center and we've hired approximately 330 homeless or formerly homeless veterans to provide peer support and to help ease the suffering of other veterans who find themselves homeless.

We intend to reduce the number of homeless veterans to below 60,000 by June 2012 – less than a year away – with the goal of ending this national embarrassment in 2015. (Applause)

I know when I say "homeless veteran" the image that comes to most minds are someone swathed in a, you know, blankets and coats sleeping on a heating grill someplace. That's the usual image that comes to people's minds. And that's an accurate one.

But what we've learned over the past two-and-a-half years is that we cannot end veterans' homelessness through street rescues – and that's what I call this, the rescue part of ending homelessness – through street rescues alone. We must develop robust prevention initiatives that protect an at-risk population that is difficult to define and see.

But we know that this at-risk population exists because veterans lead the nation, continue to lead the nation in homelessness, depression, substance abuse, suicidal ideation, and are, we're well up there in joblessness as well.

So unless we're conducting a full-court press in all of these areas, substance abuse, suicidal ideation, mental health, and attacking joblessness, unless we're doing a full-court press, street rescues of the estimated 80,000 homeless veterans alone won't be enough.

Now the VA is leading the fight against homelessness with all of our substantial capabilities: primary medical and dental care; mental health; substance abuse treatment; education, the new GI Bill among others; case management; housing; jobs counseling.

Importantly, street rescues must continue but they have never defined the entire problem. We are outreaching to states and the communities to collaborate at the local levels with non-profit partners who know the homeless situation firsthand in each of their communities. They are our partners in all of this, about 400-500 of them out there.

We're also conducting justice outreach to support the creation of veterans courts which would remand veterans – those facing minor charges, petty crimes, and repeated substance abuse offenses, driving while intoxicated – remand those veterans, instead of sending them to prison remand them to VA for treatment in lieu of incarceration. (Applause) We've got a pretty good successful track record here and we know we can turn people around.

We're also working with state and federal prisons, about 1,300-1,310 of them in the country, state and federal prisons. We're into about 950 of those prisons to afford veterans being released from prison an opportunity to break the cycle of incarceration-homelessness-incarceration. We think we can help them. We're committed to ending veterans' homelessness by 2015. And we are after it. (Applause)

The claims backlog, you asked me to fix the backlog in disability claims and I've committed to ending it in 2015 by putting in place a system that processes all claims within 125 days – no longer than 125 days, not an average of 125 days and not in 125 days, no longer than 125 days – and at a 98 percent accuracy level.

Of all the things you asked me to take on, this is the one that's been the most challenging, taking a bit longer to achieve momentum. But we have a number, a host of promising options that are being piloted today in a number of places in the country.

And we expect them to begin paying off in 2012 as we begin fully automating the disability claims process. Our success in automating the new GI Bill program on the fly gives us a measure of confidence that we will soon have the automation tools needed to begin beating this backlog down in the near term.

Attitude, two years ago you told me that some in VA had an attitude problem and so since last December with input and recommendations from a variety of panels, workgroups, VA senior leaders, we've settled on five core values that underscore the moral obligations inherent in VA's missions: integrity, commitment, advocacy, respect, and excellence.

Integrity, commitment, advocacy, respect and excellence. For the past two months VA leaders have been leading discussions and answering questions about these core values and how we came to settle on these five. Teaching what they mean is important if we are to achieve the long-term cultural change that assures veterans that they will always be treated with dignity and respect.

This is an education process that will go on indefinitely, long after my time – routine reinforcement by leadership for the present workforce and required instruction training for all new employees. Our values are more than just words. And I'll go through them with you here in a few seconds. They represent our commitments to veterans, family members and other beneficiaries whom we serve.

Now, if you take the letter of each of those: integrity, commitment, advocacy, respect and excellence, take the first letters of those words and it creates an acronym for you that reminds each VA employee of the importance of their role in this department.

And when you do that the acronym that results is I CARE; I CARE. Now, I know at least some of you in the audience will wonder whether this is a cute marketing device to spur conversation. I'll tell you, it's not. It sort of fell out that way. And we were pleased the way it fell out.

These core values come together as five promises we make as individuals and as a department to the veterans we serve. Let me tell you why. Integrity, because I CARE, I will act with high moral principle, adhere to the highest professional standards, and maintain the trust and confidence of all with whom I engage.

Commitment, because I CARE, I will work diligently to serve veterans and other beneficiaries, be driven by an earnest belief in VA's mission, and fulfill my individual and organizational responsibilities.

Advocacy, because I CARE, I will be truly veteran-centric by identifying, fully considering and appropriately advancing the interests of veterans and other beneficiaries.

Respect, because I CARE, I will treat all those I serve and with whom we work with dignity, showing respect to earn respect.

Excellence, because I CARE, I will strive for the highest quality and continuous improvement, be thoughtful and decisive in leadership, and be accountable for my actions, willing to admit my mistakes, and rigorous in correcting them.

Now in time I hope you will see our core values demonstrably at work in our daily conduct of VA business. You have my assurance that these are promises VA has embraced and that's what the education process is about. And if you can't accept the promise, you don't need to be with us. But you have my assurance that these promises have been embraced with serious dispatch.

So with your help and support we've had more than two good years for veterans. There is still much more to be done, but we do have momentum in key areas and clear directions for the future.

We will not fail to honor the dedication and selflessness of the men and women we serve, warriors like Army Ranger Sergeant First Class Joe Kapaczewski who was severely wounded by an Iraqi grenade which shattered his right leg, extensively damaged his entire right side of his body, severing a nerve and an artery in his right arm.

Doctors feared he would never walk again, let alone fulfill his wish of returning to the Ranger Regiment, becoming a Squad Leader. Then, again, most of us don't appreciate fully iron will. In Sergeant Kapaczewski's words, "I don't like people telling me I can't do something." Kapaczewski had been serving with the Rangers since May 2002. When he was wounded in 2005 he was on his fifth combat deployment. After multiple surgeries, slowly regaining use of his right arm and enduring unimaginable pain, he made the courageous call to have his right leg amputated below the knee, opting for greater mobility and faster recovery with a prosthetic leg.

So in March 2007 the right leg was removed. Five months later Kapaczewski was running. After six months he rejoined the Ranger Operations Company, which is sort of a phased-in transition process, at Fort Benning.

Ten months after surgery Kapaczewski completed Army PT Test, a 5-mile run, a 12-mile road march with 40 pounds of gear. In March 2008, one year after his surgery, he became the only amputee ever to assume combat duties in the Ranger Regiment as a Squad Leader. (Applause)

I'm looking for him. I want to know whether or not he is a member of DAV. (Laughter) He has since deployed four more times. He's been promoted to platoon sergeant, received the Bronze Star with V for Valor for helping save a severely-wounded comrade in battle.

Kapaczewski is a member of the 9-11 generation. More than 5 million Americans have served in military during the past decade. Three million of them joined after 9-11 knowing full well that they would be deploying to combat. And, still, they joined.

Their accomplishments are extraordinary: unseating the Taliban; pushing the al Qaeda from its sanctuaries; capturing Saddam Hussein; delivering justice to Osama Bin Laden; and then training Iraqi and Afghan forces, even now underway, still a dangerous mission; teaching them to defend their own countries.

The 9-11 generation includes more than a million spouses and 2 million children of service members, many of whom have lived their entire lives in a nation at war. Many more military women have served in combat than ever in history. Hundreds of thousands of troops have deployed multiple times.

They've all borne a heavy burden on behalf of the nation. But despite the enormous strains of ten years of continuous operations, our military remains as strong as it has ever been.

Sergeant Joe Kapaczewski's 9-11 generation is defined just as every previous generation of America's veterans, by the virtues of selfless service, by sacrifice, by devotion to duty. These men and women who serve and have served are the flesh and blood of American exceptionalism. know that term is used a lot, used a lot without much clear definition. But for me these men and women and our veterans are the definition of American exceptionalism: the living, breathing embodiment (Applause) – the living, breathing, embodiment of our national values and our special place in the world.

It's been a great pleasure being with you once again this morning. May God bless our men and women in uniform. God bless our veterans. And may God continue to bless this wonderful country of ours. Thank you all very much. (Standing Ovation)

COMMANDER TYSON: Thank you, Mr. Secretary. It is, as always, an honor and a privilege. Thank you, again. (Applause) Just last month the DAV was very pleased to co-sponsor the 2011 Training Summit on Women Veterans. It was a most worthwhile and informative event. We were also gratified when Secretary Shinseki asked Women Veterans to offer their observations on their experiences with the VA as part of his continuing efforts to improve access to health care and other services to them.

I am pleased to report that during our Women Veterans Seminar we asked the more than 150 participants to complete a survey on VA services. And we will be presenting them to the Secretary when we return to Washington. (Applause)

I would like to call upon Chairman Brad Barton for the final report of the Committee on Constitution and Bylaws. Brad.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER BARTON: Good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER BARTON: Comrade Commander and delegates, I will now proceed with the final reading of the report of the Constitution and Bylaws Committee. This year there were no resolutions favorably considered by the Committee for adoption by this National Convention.

Comrade Commander, this completes the report of the Committee on Constitution and Bylaws. I move for the adoption of my report and ask the Committee be discharged with the thanks of the National Convention.

COMMANDER TYSON: You have heard the motion. May I have a second? Mic 2.

MR. STEPHEN SMITH: Steve Smith, Commander, Department of New Jersey, seconds that motion.

COMMANDER TYSON: Thank you. All those in favor signify by saying aye; opposed. So ordered. Thank you.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER BARTON: Thank you, Commander.

COMMANDER TYSON: Good job. Now, please join me in welcoming incoming Imperial Golden Rodent Franklin Brown, Imperial Red-Eyed Gnawer Albert Sorrentino and the Imperial Council of the National Order of Trench Rats. (Boos)

(Whereupon, the National Order of Trench Rats entered the room and advanced to the podium.)

IMPERIAL RED-EYED GNAWER ALBERT SORRENTINO: Good morning.

(Response of "Good morning" and "Boo.")

IMPERIAL RED-EYED GNAWER SORRENTINO: I got to know something. Are there any rats in this house? (Booing) All right. Usually, we stand up here and let you know what's going on with the Trench Rats. We're going to change that.

In the last couple of months our country was looking upon us and our benefits in a weird way. A couple of weeks ago on Facebook I saw a letter from our National Commander supporting us and our benefits and the way we live.

And I want to thank our National Commander Wally Tyson, our National Adjutant Art Wilson and the National staff because if it wasn't for them we couldn't be here. Let's hear it. (Applause) We never give up. We're in this fight together. (Applause)

While I was on Facebook I asked all the Rats in the United States to stand up for what they believe in, to fight for our rights. I'd like to present this check to our National Commander.

(Whereupon, Commander Tyson joined Mr. Sorrentino at the podium.)

IMPERIAL RED-EYED GNAWER SORRENTINO: To DAV Columbia Trust for \$4,000. (Applause)

(Whereupon, on behalf of the Imperial Council of the National Order of Trench Rats Mr. Sorrentino presented Commander Tyson with a check.)

IMPERIAL RED-EYED GNAWER SORRENTINO: God bless America and God bless all of you. (Applause)

INCOMING IMPERIAL GOLDEN RODENT FRANKLIN BROWN: I'm Franklin Brown. I'm the new Imperial Golden Rodent.

IMPERIAL RED-EYED GNAWER SORRENTINO: Incoming Golden Rodent.

INCOMING IMPERIAL GOLDEN RODENT BROWN: I'm the Incoming Golden Rodent for 2011-2012. I would like to say if you're not a member of the Trench Rats you don't know what kind of fun you're missing. We are a fun group. We like to have fun.

And during the times that you're in the meetings here we are having a good time somewhere in the building. And I'd like to welcome – I'd like to welcome each and every one of you that's not a member to please approach somebody that's a Trench Rat and talk to them about what we really do. And we try to help out in hospitals around this country.

To Commander Tyson, I want to thank you for allowing us to be part of your group. That's all I have. Thank you. (Applause)

IMPERIAL RED-EYED GNAWER SORRENTINO: Commander, thank you so much for what you do for us. God bless.

(Whereupon, the "Bad to the Bone" played as the National Order of Trench Rats withdrew from the ballroom.)

COMMANDER TYSON: We need to thank the National Order of Trench Rats for that nice, nice, \$4,000 donation to The Columbia Trust. (Applause) For those of you that, like me, can't spell "Columbia Trust," we'll fill in the blank, you just write in the amount. (Laughter)

This year's Convention marks 15 years since Dick Marbes finished his term as our National Commander. And while for many that achievement marks a culmination of years of service, it seems like today it was only a beginning for the Past National Commander Marbes.

As an Air Force veteran, Dick lost his right leg in military service and was medically retired in 1958. Two day's – I'm sorry. Two decades after his injury his continued service in the DAV earned him recognition as Department of Wisconsin's Disabled Veteran of the Year. (Applause)

In 1991, he was named by his state's governor to represent all veterans on the Wisconsin State Board of Veterans Affairs. He continues to serve our community and his home state as a driver and coordinator with the DAV Transportation Network program.

This May, Dick was recognized by the VA for 12,500 hours of voluntary service and given an Outstanding Service Award. Ladies and gentlemen and guests, please give a warm welcome to Mr. Richard Marbes, Chairman of the DAV Charitable Service Trust. Dick. (Applause)

CHAIRMAN RICHARD E. MARBES: Go back? I think I heard that. Thank you very much, Commander Tyson, for that very kind introduction and I thank you on behalf of the entire Board of the Trust.

As Chairperson let me introduce the Trust's governing board. They are Vice Chairman Art Wilson; Secretary-Treasurer Dave Tannenbaum of Florida; and our Directors: National Commander Wally Tyson, Gene Murphy from South Dakota, Dennis Nixon from Texas; and Jerry Steelman of Minnesota. With the support of these Board members I am pleased to present our annual report for the year ended December 31, 2010.

As inheritors of the DAV's long legacy, we know too well that the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan are not truly coming to a close. For many of the young men and women injured on the battlefields today and those who have been home for many years, war will be fought every day for the rest of their lives. And though they are receiving an outpouring of support from the public, there are unmet needs that the DAV Charitable Service Trust is striving to meet.

We face a turning point as we meet here in New Orleans today. Even as our troops fight on, more and more Americans have entered a sadly misguided post-war mindset. Their attention has turned to other things: the economy, gas prices, the budget deficit, and even a presidential election that's still more than a year away.

The awareness of you proud veterans here today and all who support the Trust fuels our ongoing mission to build better lives for all disabled veterans and their families.

Today's wars pose immense challenges for the VA which never was prepared for the massive fallout from today's wars and is still trying to catch up. The VA is reeling from an enormous influx of claims and from considerable increases in the number of patients relying on VA health care.

Today, veterans from Afghanistan and Iraq join those disabled in prior wars trying to deal with a system that's straining to meet their many unique needs. For disabled vets in pain and without hope, the Trust is truly crucial.

That's why I come to you, my fellow members of the Disabled American Veterans and DAV Auxiliary, with heartfelt gratitude today. You stand beside the patriotic Americans who support our cause through the Trust, who act as a buffer between our veterans and the cold realities of neglect, indifference and despair.

Since formation of the DAV Charitable Service Trust in 1986, you have promoted our great mission. Your loyalty has allowed us to partner with the VA, state veterans' programs and other organizations to address unmet needs.

In 2010 alone, contributions from compassionate Americans enabled the Trust to devote \$3.7 million to rehabilitative services, crisis outreach, employment assistance, and so much more. And, as a trust administered by and for disabled veterans, we are committed to efficient, effective use of every penny entrusted to us.

For the eighth year in a row, the DAV Charitable Service Trust has received a four-star rating from Charity Navigator. (Applause) Thank you. And our measure of success, only 7 percent – 7 percent – of our budget is used for fund-raising and administration. And what an enviable achievement that is.

Such able management allows the Trust – (Applause) Such able management allows the Trust to fully address a broad range of complex challenges that face America's disabled veterans.

Most people know the DAV for its highly capable claims assistance, its service-connected membership, and its advocacy on behalf of disabled veterans and their families. In this work the Trust provides vital assistance.

Thanks to gifts from individuals and generous corporations like the Ford Motor Company and the Harley Davidson Foundation, the Trust supports the vital work of DAV's National Transportation Network and its Mobile Service Offices.

At this point let me thank the wonderful volunteers who donated an incredible one-and-a-half million hours driving 25.5 million miles as part of our National Transportation Network in 2010. Thank you and thanks to all the members who donate time to so many volunteer efforts. (Applause)

Your activities bear out the disabled vets' model that rests at the core of the DAV's work. That self-help concept often permits the DAV and the Trust to touch veterans' lives in a way that's simply impossible for others.

And that may explain why ASI Government employees in Arlington, Virginia, last year selected the Charitable Service Trust to receive their Choices for Charity award of \$10,000, which we used to help deliver vital DAV services.

The Trust also extends the reach of the DAV by providing grants to support programs and organizations doing great work for disabled vets around the country. Through the Trust we're giving today's disabled veterans valuable opportunities and assistance that the VA cannot provide alone.

For instance, by partnering with SEGS 4 VETS the Trust provides disabled vets with the latest in mobility technology. Through this program more than 525 Segways are helping wounded troops and disabled veterans to live active, independent lives.

Trust donors also support a broad range of rehabilitative and therapeutic programs including adaptive sports and outdoor retreats, arts programs, yoga, service dog programs, and equine therapy. These programs make sure that veterans suffering from complex wounds like brain injury and PTSD have every possible chance to find healing.

Through these programs, which address both physical and mental disability, the Trust also addresses chronic problems like homelessness and substance abuse among disabled veterans. By tackling the root causes of these issues, problems like untreated mental health conditions, we can help disabled veterans lead happier and more productive lives.

Since 2008, the number of homeless veterans has been cut in half, thanks to the drive of the VA and organizations like the Trust. But for the 107,000 veterans and family members who experienced homelessness on any given night in 2010 the Trust was there to support programs that provide emergency relief, things like food, shelter, clothing and medical assistance.

Staggering rates of unemployment among disabled veterans is also a key area of concern for the Trust. While joblessness took its toll on many Americans during this last deep recession, young veterans continue to face far higher rates of unemployment than the general population.

And among veterans with obvious disabilities, some reports indicate an unemployment rate as high as 47 percent. And that is a truly devastating number. You and I know that integral, productive employment is often the best therapy we can offer those disabled in service.

And that's why grants from the Trust support a wide array of job-related programs. For instance, a partnership between the Trust and the National Association of Corrosion Engineers is giving disabled veterans and their families a unique chance to fill critical jobs.

Trust grants also reach out by supporting efforts to provide transportation and emergency financial assistance, as well as helping family members cope with the injury or loss of loved ones.

I'm truly proud of what you and I have accomplished since the DAV founded the Charitable Service Trust. Thanks to the great generosity of so many in 2010, there are far more achievements than I could possibly share in this brief report.

But even as I thank all of you individuals, foundations, corporations, for making the Trust a powerful agent in our quest to build better lives for disabled veterans, I must stress that the need is great and growing today.

These are tough days for disabled veterans and their families. And I hope you will go back to your community as an ambassador of the great mission of the DAV Charitable Service Trust.

Year after year you have come through as a champion for the cause of the DAV Charitable Service Trust. And I'm confident that you won't let me down this year – this absolutely crucial, critical year. Tell people about the Trust's work, especially those who give through the United Way and the Combined Federal Campaign, the CFC.

And let me speak most directly to our exceptional National Service Officers, our Transition Service Officers, and Hospital Service Coordinators. Your promotion of the Trust is essential because you work side-by-side with the government employees and military personnel who make such a huge difference through the CFC.

Your position also gives you a unique opportunity to share our message during the coming United Way campaign and other workplace giving drives. Truly, the Trust and the disabled veterans we serve are counting on you.

All of us must be involved, as DAV Chapters, Auxiliary Units, Departments and individual members. You can determine the success of these vital campaigns as you urge your friends, your family members and others in your community to get involved. Together we are the voice for disabled veterans across America.

And as I end my report I would like to acknowledge Nancy O'Brien who administers the Trust and her very capable staff back at National Headquarters who are a marvelous resource to all the Board of Directors as we continue our day-to-day operations.

And to each and every one of you I thank you from the very bottom of my heart for what you have done to touch the lives of disabled veterans and for what you will continue to do in promotion of the Trust's vital work in the coming year.

Thank you. God bless you and God bless the U.S.A. (Applause)

Disabled American Veterans (DAV) Charitable Service Trust

Financial Statements as of and for the Years
Ended December 31, 2010 and 2009, and
Independent Auditors' Report



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INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT

To the Board of Directors of
Disabled American Veterans (DAV)
Charitable Service Trust:

We have audited the accompanying statements of financial position of Disabled American Veterans (DAV) Charitable Service Trust (the "Trust") as of December 31, 2010 and 2009, and the related statements of activities, functional expenses, and cash flows for the years then ended. These financial statements are the responsibility of the Trust's management. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audits.

We conducted our audits in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. An audit includes consideration of internal control over financial reporting as a basis for designing audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Trust's internal control over financial reporting. Accordingly, we express no such opinion. An audit also includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements, assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall financial statement presentation. We believe that our audits provide a reasonable basis for our opinion.

In our opinion, such financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Trust at December 31, 2010 and 2009, and the changes in its net assets and its cash flows for the years then ended in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

March 31, 2011

Member of
Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu Limited

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS (DAV) CHARITABLE SERVICE TRUST

STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2010 AND 2009

	2010	2009
ASSETS		
CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS	\$ 979,121	\$ 1,052,792
INTEREST AND DIVIDENDS RECEIVABLE	32,635	34,867
CAMPAIGNS' PLEDGES RECEIVABLE — Net of allowance for uncollectible pledges of \$519,864 in 2010 and \$528,501 in 2009	423,549	410,812
PREPAID EXPENSES AND OTHER	21,343	16,117
INVESTMENTS — Includes charitable gift annuity reserve balances of \$7,247,097 and \$6,941,576 in 2010 and 2009, respectively	<u>16,921,984</u>	<u>15,021,154</u>
TOTAL	<u>\$18,378,632</u>	<u>\$16,535,742</u>
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		
LIABILITIES:		
Accounts payable — DAV	\$ 253,741	\$ 238,259
Accounts payable — other	2,349	278
Annuity payment liability	<u>4,490,190</u>	<u>4,463,431</u>
Total liabilities	4,746,280	4,701,968
UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS	<u>13,632,352</u>	<u>11,833,774</u>
TOTAL	<u>\$18,378,632</u>	<u>\$16,535,742</u>

See notes to financial statements.

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS (DAV) CHARITABLE SERVICE TRUST

STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2010 AND 2009

	Unrestricted	
	2010	2009
SUPPORT AND REVENUE:		
Contributions — net of assessment fees and provision for uncollectible pledges of \$514,979 in 2010 and \$545,839 in 2009	\$ 4,547,274	\$ 4,185,437
Contributions of charitable gift annuities — net	122,247	276,704
Bequests	306,559	752,944
Interest and dividend income — net	182,250	213,773
Loss on sale of investment securities	(190,985)	(238,885)
Total support and revenue	<u>4,967,345</u>	<u>5,189,973</u>
EXPENSES:		
Program services	3,768,030	3,786,152
Management and general	67,205	67,445
Fundraising	215,868	197,318
Total expenses	<u>4,051,103</u>	<u>4,050,915</u>
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS BEFORE CHANGE IN UNREALIZED APPRECIATION OF INVESTMENTS	916,242	1,139,058
CHANGE IN UNREALIZED APPRECIATION OF INVESTMENTS	<u>882,336</u>	<u>1,382,644</u>
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	1,798,578	2,521,702
NET ASSETS — Beginning of year	<u>11,833,774</u>	<u>9,312,072</u>
NET ASSETS — End of year	<u>\$ 13,632,352</u>	<u>\$ 11,833,774</u>

See notes to financial statements.

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS (DAV) CHARITABLE SERVICE TRUST

STATEMENTS OF FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES
FOR THE YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2010 AND 2009

	2010			2009		
	Program Services	Management and General	Fundraising	Program Services	Management and General	Fundraising
EXPENSES:						
Allocations to charitable programs	\$3,675,925	\$ -	\$ -	\$3,700,733	\$ -	\$ -
Grant proposal processing	44,655	29,770	171,122	38,484	25,656	167,114
Administrative charges						
Travel		1,462			1,462	
Advertising	24,716	1,648	6,591	23,993	1,600	6,398
Printing, postage, and supplies	6,310	6,310	26,091	6,124	6,124	14,238
Legal fees		815	6,840			6,840
Professional fees	14,440	14,440		15,364	15,364	
Insurance	1,984	1,984		1,454	1,454	
Other expenses		3,206	5,224		2,981	2,728
TOTAL EXPENSES	<u>\$3,786,030</u>	<u>\$67,205</u>	<u>\$215,868</u>	<u>\$3,786,152</u>	<u>\$67,445</u>	<u>\$197,318</u>
			<u>\$4,051,103</u>			<u>\$4,050,915</u>

See notes to financial statements.

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS (DAV) CHARITABLE SERVICE TRUST

STATEMENTS OF CASH FLOWS FOR THE YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2010 AND 2009

	2010	2009
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES:		
Change in net assets	\$ 1,798,578	\$ 2,521,702
Noncash contributions	(173,396)	-
Adjustments to reconcile change in net assets to net cash provided by operating activities:		
Change in unrealized appreciation of investments	(882,336)	(1,382,644)
Loss on sale of investment securities	190,985	238,885
Changes in operating assets and liabilities:		
Interest and dividends receivable	2,232	22,237
Campaigns' pledges receivable	(12,737)	31,839
Prepaid expenses and other	(5,226)	3,985
Accounts payable — DAV and other	17,553	23,095
Net cash provided by operating activities	<u>935,653</u>	<u>1,459,099</u>
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES:		
Purchase of investments	(94,922,809)	(6,642,987)
Proceeds from the sale of investments	<u>93,886,726</u>	<u>5,231,165</u>
Net cash used in investing activities	<u>(1,036,083)</u>	<u>(1,411,822)</u>
CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES:		
Proceeds from contributions reserved for investment subject to annuity agreement	815,752	809,296
Payments to annuitants	<u>(788,993)</u>	<u>(764,443)</u>
Net cash provided by financing activities	<u>26,759</u>	<u>44,853</u>
NET CHANGE IN CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS	(73,671)	92,130
CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS — Beginning of year	<u>1,052,792</u>	<u>960,662</u>
CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS — End of year	<u>\$ 979,121</u>	<u>\$ 1,052,792</u>

See notes to financial statements.

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS (DAV) CHARITABLE SERVICE TRUST

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

AS OF AND FOR THE YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2010 AND 2009

1. ORGANIZATION

Disabled American Veterans (DAV) Charitable Service Trust (the “Trust”) is a not-for-profit service organization formed under the laws of the District of Columbia for the purpose of receiving and disbursing funds for the betterment and improvement of the nation’s disabled veterans and their families.

2. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Financial Statements — The accompanying financial statements have been prepared on the accrual basis of accounting.

New Accounting Standards Adopted — The accounting standard initially adopted in the 2010 financial statements described below affected certain note disclosures but did not impact the statement of financial position or statement of activities.

Fair Value Measurements and Disclosures — In January 2010, the Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB) issued FASB Accounting Standards Update (ASU) No. 2010-06, *Fair Value Measurements and Disclosures*, which amends Accounting Standards Codification (ASC) Topic 820, *Fair Value Measurements and Disclosures* (originally issued as FASB Statement No. 157, *Fair Value Measurements*), adding new disclosure requirements for Levels 1 and 2, separate disclosures of purchases, sales, issuances, and settlements relating to Level 3 measurements and clarification of existing fair value disclosures.

Cash and Cash Equivalents — The Trust considers all highly liquid debt instruments purchased with a maturity date of three months or less to be cash equivalents and are stated at cost, which approximates fair value. The earnings credit received on the Trust’s checking accounts were \$2,011 and \$1,326 in 2010 and 2009, respectively. The Trust maintains its cash in bank deposit accounts, which, at times, exceed federally insured limits. The Trust has not experienced any losses in such accounts.

Income Recognition — In 2010, the Trust was a member of Independent Charities of America (ICA) and Military, Veterans & Patriotic Service Organizations of America (MVPSOA). ICA and MVPSOA are charitable agency federations, certified by the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) to participate in the annual Combined Federal Campaigns (CFC), as well as state and corporate workplace giving campaigns. The Trust recognizes contribution revenue as an increase in unrestricted net assets when notification of the campaign designations is received and also recognizes an allowance for uncollectible pledges. Pledge receivables that are outstanding for more than one year are written off in their entirety. Pledges receivable of \$423,549 are expected to be received in 2011. Amounts received from accounts previously written off are recognized as contribution revenue when received.

As a member of MVPSOA during 2010 and 2009, the Trust was assessed a portion of MVPSOA’s annual operating budget based on the relative amount of total pledges made to the Trust compared with the sum of all member agency pledges. Pledges designated to MVPSOA (versus a member agency) and other revenue, such as interest income, are shared among all member agencies in this same proportion. Therefore, if MVPSOA’s revenue exceeds expenses, the member agencies share the excess income. This

excess income is distributed in the following year. The Trust recognizes such distribution as an increase in unrestricted net assets when received. The Trust received \$179,654 and \$174,442 in 2010 and 2009, respectively, for excess income recognized by MVPSOA in 2009 and 2008.

Contributions and Bequests — Contributions and bequests received are recorded as unrestricted, temporarily restricted, or permanently restricted support depending on the existence and nature of any donor restrictions. The Trust recognizes contributions and bequests with donor-imposed restrictions that are met in the same period as unrestricted contributions and bequests. The Trust received noncash contributions of \$173,396 in 2010 and \$18,575 in 2009.

Income Taxes — As a not-for-profit service organization, the Trust has received a determination from the Internal Revenue Service that it is exempt from federal income tax as a 501(c)(3) organization. Contributions made to the Trust are tax deductible by the contributor.

Accounting for Uncertainty in Income Taxes — ASC Topic 740, *Income Taxes*, clarifies the accounting for uncertainty in income taxes by prescribing the recognition threshold a tax position is required to meet before being recognized in the financial statements. It also provides guidance on derecognition, classification, interest and penalties, disclosure, and transition. The Trust applies ASC Topic 740 and notes no effect on its financial statements.

Use of Estimates — The preparation of the financial statements in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities and disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements and the reported amounts of revenues and expenses during the reporting period. Actual results could differ from those estimates.

3. INVESTMENTS IN SECURITIES

Investments include investment of contributions and charitable gift annuity agreements (see Note 6). Investments are recorded at fair value. The fair value of the Trust's investments is determined based on the quoted market prices of the related securities. Gains and losses on the sale of investment securities are recognized based upon the specific identification method and are reflected as a separate component of revenue for the investments. The Trust's policy is to report cash and cash equivalents within its trust accounts as investments.

The cost and market value of investments and the unrealized (depreciation) appreciation at December 31, 2010 and 2009, are summarized below:

	Cost	Market	Unrealized (Depreciation) Appreciation
2010			
Cash	\$ 628	\$ 628	\$ -
Money market investments	590,361	590,361	-
Other short-term investments — variable rate notes	4,841,140	4,840,454	(686)
U.S. government securities and corporate bonds	4,882,009	4,915,524	33,515
Common stocks	3,886,980	4,670,215	783,235
Mutual funds	<u>1,608,458</u>	<u>1,904,802</u>	<u>296,344</u>
Total	<u>\$ 15,809,576</u>	<u>\$ 16,921,984</u>	<u>\$ 1,112,408</u>
2009			
Cash	\$ 5,294	\$ 5,294	\$ -
Money market investments	4,537,004	4,537,004	-
Other short-term investments — variable rate notes	296,100	296,100	-
U.S. government securities and corporate bonds	4,206,182	4,251,637	45,455
Common stocks	3,908,598	4,008,767	100,169
Mutual funds	<u>1,837,904</u>	<u>1,922,352</u>	<u>84,448</u>
Total	<u>\$ 14,791,082</u>	<u>\$ 15,021,154</u>	<u>\$ 230,072</u>

Interest and dividend income is composed of interest and dividend income of \$182,250 and \$213,773, net of fees paid to trustees of \$51,795 and \$46,923, in 2010 and 2009, respectively.

4. FAIR VALUE MEASUREMENTS

In accordance with fair value measurements and disclosures, the Trust categorized its financial assets based on

- quoted prices in active markets for identical instruments (Level 1)
- quoted prices in active markets for instruments that are similar, or quoted prices in markets that are not active for identical or similar instruments, and model-derived valuations in which all significant inputs and significant value drivers are observable in active markets (Level 2)

At no time during 2010 did the Trust have any financial assets requiring the use of inputs that are unobservable and significant to the overall fair value measurement (Level 3). The major categories for debt and equity securities are determined on the basis of the nature and risks of the investments. There were no significant transfers between Level 1 and Level 2.

The following are the major categories of the Trust's financial assets measured at fair value on a recurring basis during the years ended December 31, 2010 and 2009:

2010 Asset Category	Fair Value Measurements Using		
	Quoted Prices in Active Markets for Identical Assets (Level 1)	Significant Observable Inputs (Level 2)	Total
Cash	\$ 628	\$ -	\$ 628
Money market investments	590,361		590,361
Corporate bonds		454,704	454,704
U.S. government securities	9,301,274		9,301,274
Common stocks:			
Communication	189,811		189,811
Consumer discretionary	709,824		709,824
Energy	522,509		522,509
Finance	528,570		528,570
Health care	514,466		514,466
Industrials	923,197		923,197
Materials	209,529		209,529
Staples	192,042		192,042
Technology	880,267		880,267
Total common stocks	4,670,215	-	4,670,215
Mutual funds:			
Domestic stock funds	1,888,622		1,888,622
Fixed-income funds	16,180		16,180
Total mutual funds	1,904,802	-	1,904,802
Total assets	<u>\$ 16,467,280</u>	<u>\$ 454,704</u>	<u>\$ 16,921,984</u>

2009	Fair Value Measurements Using		
	Level 1	Level 2	Total
Assets:			
Cash	\$ 5,294	\$ -	\$ 5,294
Money market investments	4,537,004		4,537,004
Other short-term investments — variable rate notes		296,100	296,100
U.S. government securities and corporate bonds	3,028,276	1,223,361	4,251,637
Common stocks	4,008,767		4,008,767
Mutual funds	1,922,352		1,922,352
Total assets	<u>\$ 13,501,693</u>	<u>\$ 1,519,461</u>	<u>\$ 15,021,154</u>

5. RELATED-PARTY TRANSACTIONS

DAV personnel assist the Trust on a limited basis in administering its business operations, fundraising, and grant programs. For these personnel services, the Trust reimbursed DAV \$240,360 and \$231,254, in 2010 and 2009, respectively. As of December 31, 2010 and 2009, the Trust owed DAV \$253,741 and \$238,259, respectively. DAV provides the Trust with the use of facilities and equipment at no charge.

In 2010 and 2009, the Trust granted \$645,000 and \$650,000, respectively, to the DAV National Service Foundation, Columbia Trust Fund for the DAV National Transportation Network Van Grant Program.

In 2010, the Trust distributed the following in support of DAV programs and services:

National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic	\$ 33,000
Mobile Service Office Program	350,000
Jesse Brown Youth Scholarship Program	25,000
National Transportation Network	200,000
Assistance to disabled veterans and their families	74,615

In 2009, the Trust distributed the following in support of DAV programs and services:

National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic	\$ 38,000
Mobile Service Office Program	1,000,000
Jesse Brown Youth Scholarship Program	25,000
National Transportation Network	200,000
Assistance to disabled veterans and their families	163,980

In performing the duties of their positions, DAV's National Commander and National Adjutant serve on the Board of Directors of the Trust.

6. ANNUITY PAYMENT LIABILITY

The Trust enters into charitable gift annuity agreements with donors. In the statements of activities, contributions of charitable gift annuities of \$122,247 and \$276,704 for the years ended December 31, 2010 and 2009, respectively, is net of \$375,681 and \$283,718, respectively, of changes in activity related to such split interest agreements. The Trust recognizes an annuity payment liability as the present value of the future cash flows expected to be paid to the donors and their beneficiaries using a discount rate of 5%, as of December 31, 2010 and 2009.

There are various state statutes and regulations that govern not-for-profit entities that enter into charitable gift annuity agreements with donors. As required by various state statutes and regulations, the Trust segregates the deposit of charitable gift annuity proceeds and reserves a portion for fulfillment of future annuity obligations. The required minimum balance of the reserve account is maintained and invested in accordance with applicable state statutes, the fair market value of which is \$5,524,475 and \$5,214,998, as of December 31, 2010 and 2009, respectively.

In addition to this reserve account, the Trust is required by California and Tennessee statutes to maintain segregated reserves for future obligations to charitable gift annuity donors residing in California and Tennessee. The fair market value for the California reserve account is \$1,688,391 and \$1,726,578, as of December 31, 2010 and 2009, respectively. The fair market value for the Tennessee reserve account (new in 2010) is \$34,231 as of December 31, 2010. The minimum required balance of the segregated accounts for California and Tennessee donors is calculated and invested in accordance with applicable California and Tennessee statutes and regulations.

The Trust also maintains the minimum amount of unrestricted net assets as required by any state for the acceptance of charitable gift annuities, which is \$1,000,000. The total unrestricted net assets that are subject to state statutes or regulations (calculated as the reserve funds (investments), less the annuity payment liability) amounted to \$2,756,907 and \$2,478,145, as of December 31, 2010 and 2009, respectively.

7. SUBSEQUENT EVENTS

The Trust evaluated subsequent events through March 31, 2011, which is the date the financial statements were available for issuance.

* * * * *

COMMANDER TYSON: Thank you, Dick. May I have a motion to accept that wonderful report?

MS. HOLLY C. HOPPE: Mic 3.

COMMANDER TYSON: Mic 3 is recognized.

MS. HOPPE: Holly Hoppe, PDC, State of Wisconsin, a proud member of Dick Marbes' home chapter, Number 3, Green Bay, Wisconsin, makes a motion to accept his report.

COMMANDER TYSON: Thank you, Holly. May I have a second?

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER ROBERT REYNOLDS: Mic 1.

COMMANDER TYSON: Mic 1.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER REYNOLDS: Robert Reynolds, Chapter 10, Arlington-Fairfax, Department of Virginia, District 6, seconds that motion.

COMMANDER TYSON: Thank you, Rob. All those in favor signify by saying aye; opposed. So ordered.

The National Service Officer, as we all know, is a unique individual, but within this group of outstanding individuals there are a few that rise to the top. One of those individuals is Gary Burns. A combat-disabled Vietnam veteran who served with the 101st Airborne, Gary has given much of his life to assisting veterans.

After being wounded he was befriended by the late NSO John McPherson who gave him the opportunity to serve disabled veterans as a National Service Officer beginning on January 5, 1970. His career as an NSO spanned 30 honorable years before his retirement in 2000. Gary served as Department Commander in Maine and is currently Department of Maine Treasurer.

He has been a member of the National Service Foundation Board since 1996 and was elected president in 2001. Through his guidance and foresight he has helped build better lives for disabled veterans and their families for decades. Ladies and gentlemen, it is an honor to present my good friend and yours, Mr. Gary Burns. (Applause)

PRESIDENT GARY BURNS: Thank you, Commander Wally Tyson, for your kind words and kind introduction. Adjutant Wilson, National Officers and delegates and guests, as President of the DAV National Service Foundation let me begin, please, my annual report by introducing our Board of Directors.

Again, Vice President is National Adjutant Arthur Wilson; Secretary-Treasurer Dennis Joyner from the State of Florida – I'm sure he's at a Committee meeting; and our Directors, please: National Commander Wally Tyson; Sal Tornatore from the State of New York was up here; now he's down with Nancy; Alan Bowers, Massachusetts; Daniel Contreras from the State of California; and Bobby Barrera our Immediate Past National Commander also serves as an Ex Officio and Chair of the DAV's Board of Directors.

And I want to mention also in this introduction down to my left Nancy O'Brien the Administrator of the Foundation whom I cannot do as well as I might do without Nancy. Thank you very much.

Almost eight years, eight long years of war, combat operations in Iraq, officially ended in 2010. Yet even as this long and deadly chapter of our history is coming to a close, the brutal toll that a decade of war has taken on our service men and women became ever clearer.

Let me share with you some of the alarming statistics that have fortified the Foundation's mission to ensure care for America's disabled veterans. By the end of 2010 more than 625,000 veterans of Iraq and Afghanistan had sought treatment through the VA health care system, adding a staggering 10,000 patients to the system per month.

Three-hundred-thirteen thousand of these veterans, or more than half, were diagnosed with at least one mental health condition. New studies reveal that one of the three younger veterans suffers from post-traumatic stress – PTSD, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. Yet only a fraction of these men and women have received adequate treatment. And, finally, studies estimate that one in every five veterans of today's wars has a traumatic brain injury also known, as you know, as TBI.

There is no doubt with only 1 percent of Americans serving, ten years of war has placed a tremendous burden on today's troops and their families. Multiple tours – sometimes as many as five or six – have put our service men and women at great risk for serious injury and disability.

And as unprecedented numbers of veterans come home with catastrophic wounds, more and more spouses and other loved ones are taking on the role of full-time caregiver.

It is with these challenges in my heart that I offer my sincerest gratitude for the nearly \$2 million in donations and bequests to the Foundation and its Columbia Trust in 2010 – 2 million.

And it is with great pride that I tell you, my fellow DAV members and all of our generous supporters, that through prudent investment the Foundation ended the year with net assets totaling \$81.4 million.

That's a real comfort because you trust the Foundation not only to address the immense needs that all our disabled veterans face today, but also to provide for these courageous men and women in the years to come.

While no one can predict what the future will bring, the Foundation does its best to anticipate the need and to build a solid base of financial support for all disabled veterans. So that 20, 30 and even 50 years from now –

(Whereupon, President Burns leaned down slightly toward Adjutant Wilson.)

PRESIDENT BURNS: – and I think probably by then you'll be retired, right? Okay. (Laughter) – when the war in Afghanistan and Iraq will be a distant memory for most, the DAV will be there to assist our nation's disabled veterans.

Entrusted with such a large and vital mission, the Foundation is committed to being good stewards of each and every dollar it receives. That's why I'm pleased to report that fund-raising and administrative costs accounted for less than 20 percent of our total disbursements or more than – of more than \$2.2 million in 2010. (Applause) Thank you.

That means that \$.80 out of every dollar given to the Foundation went directly to the men and women it was intended for. And in this time of great need, that is a crucial accomplishment.

In 2010 the Foundation spent \$1.8 million for program services to support the DAV's work to provide immediate assistance to disabled vets and their families.

Through the National Service Program, these appropriations helped to provide professional NSOs with the tools and equipment needed to help disabled vets navigate the claims process – things like reference manuals, office furniture, copiers and more.

In 2010 the Foundation also provided much-needed assistance for veterans whose struggle to receive benefits reaches the U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Appeals. The Foundation's grant helped increase the DAV's pro bono representation by 300 percent.

This grant is helping to ensure that all disabled veterans have access to the best possible legal representation at this vital stage in the claims process at absolutely no cost.

Another exciting Foundation grant is helping the DAV partner with award-winning photojournalist Nina Berman to shed light on the life-threatening consequences of burn pit exposure.

Through a powerful series of personal profiles, the Foundation – of personal profiles, the Foundation is hopeful that this grant will finally help get these disabled vets and their families the recognition and the assistance they have long deserved.

Another proud accomplishment in 2010 involved The Columbia Trust. Now in its 15th year, this initiative boasts – boasts, I had it right the first time – boasts a phenomenal record of service and assistance to disabled veterans, with allocations of nearly \$18.2 million for worthy service projects since 1996. That's 18.2 million.

And in 2010 alone the Foundation made grants totaling \$839,000 to advance the work of the National Transportation Network; Hospital Service Coordinators; Department Service Programs; and various other local and state service initiatives.

It is because of generous support from patriotic members like you that The Columbia Trust has exceeded all expectations time and time again.

As I thank you for making so many great programs possible through the Foundation, I also salute the National Organization, which has matched each and every dollar given to The Columbia Trust over the last 15 years – each and every dollar.

I'm also proud to recognize the enduring commitment of the National Order of Trench Rats for the special Legislative Fund it maintains with the Foundation.

It is my great pleasure to present National Commander Wally Tyson with another check from the Trench Rats. This one is for \$5,468, the amount this fund earned last year. At the request of the Trench Rats, this gift is restricted to support the DAV's National Legislative Program. Commander, Tyson. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Gary Burns presented Commander Tyson with a check from the National Order of Trench Rats.)

PRESIDENT BURNS: I don't know what that first check was, Commander, but here is another one right here, \$5,488.45.

(Whereupon, Gary Burns presented Commander Tyson with the check from the National Order of Trench Rats.)

COMMANDER TYSON: Thank you very much.

PRESIDENT BURNS: From the Trench Rats. Yes, sir. (Applause) Today as we celebrate the accomplishments of the Foundation in 2010, and as we recommit to another year of great work on behalf of all disabled veterans – disabled brothers and sisters, excuse me – I ask you to review the Annual Report included in your Convention packet.

In it you will find more information about the challenges facing disabled veterans today, and you'll learn more about what the Foundation is doing to meet this growing need.

But you'll also find a list of people and organizations who gave generously to the Foundation in 2010. Please take special note of the special benefactors whose exceptional generosity earned them a place or an upgraded position on our Grand Memorial Honor Roll of Distinguished Donors.

Achieving the highest levels of prestige within the Foundation, these distinguished gifts are honored through plates and stars on the plaques that line the walls of the National Service and Legislative Headquarters in Washington, D.C.

Most of these gifts represent the generosity of individuals or family foundations. Some reflect the compassion of corporations or organizations. But standing before this Convention today I'd like to give special recognition to DAV Chapters and Departments that reached new goals this year.

They include Shreveport Bossier Chapter Number 30, Louisiana; (Applause) – you notice I put that little French twist in there because I'm from the State of Maine so I know something about this, I do; (Laughter) the Department of Nevada; (Applause) Columbia Chapter 194 in New York; (Applause) and Black Mountain Chapter Number 12 in Nevada. (Applause)

Let me also, please, thank the following Chapters whose gift totals reached \$1,000 or more during 2010. I'm proud to report that one of those Chapters is John F. Kennedy Chapter Number 6 in Bangor, Maine; (Applause) and Command Sergeant Major Jose Rodriguez Chapter 16 in Puerto Rico. (Applause)

The hard work and generosity of these Chapters in 2010 will keep on giving for years to come, helping the Foundation to ensure that no disabled veteran is ever forgotten.

As I hold these Chapters and Departments up as shining examples, let me also thank the individuals, couples, family foundations, companies and other organizations who earned special recognition. In all, 112 took a place on the Grand Memorial Roll, Honor Roll or attained a National Service Foundation Commendation during 2010.

And the number of Chapters and Departments earning Certificates of Commitment during last year rose to 46. I encourage you to look at these names in your Annual Report. As you do so, you will see also the names of all who made a gift of \$100 or more to a fund within the Foundation in 2010.

Finally, if you donated at any level during 2010, this report is a testimony to the work you accomplished through the National Service Foundation. For such a great year I salute you. And I mean that most sincerely.

There is another special group that deserves our recognition today, both for their daily devotion to assisting disabled vets and for their special role in helping the Foundation to reach new heights of financial success. And that is National Service Director Garry Augustine and his team of National Service Officers who work tirelessly on behalf of disabled vets across this country.

Their commitment to excellence makes an immediate and lasting difference in the lives of disabled vets and their families. But through gifts made in their honor NSOs also build a legacy of lasting devotion through the Foundation.

Through this year's Pacesetter Performance Award the Foundation recognizes each NSO in each division who has the largest cumulative total contributions made in his or her name, based on their outstanding service. Garry Augustine, would you come up here, please, help me honor these National Service Officers which, in fact, it is an honor for me to do so.

(Whereupon, National Service Director Garry J. Augustine joined President Burns at the podium.)

PRESIDENT BURNS: Scotty? Okay. Division 1, National Service Officer William Gibney from Albany, New York, with a total of \$8,645. Congratulations, William. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the Division 1 Richard J. Cosgriff Pacesetter Performance Awards was presented to William Gibney of the Albany, New York, office.)

PRESIDENT BURNS: Thank you, William. Keep it under two minutes, okay?

MR. WILLIAM GIBNEY: Under two minutes. Thank you very much. I'd like to accept this on behalf of the or in recognition of the generosity of the Disabled American Veterans of the great Department of New York.

It would not have been possible without the combined efforts of the National Service Officers, Department Service Officers and Chapter Service Officers whose efforts on a daily basis made this possible. Thank you very much. (Applause)

PRESIDENT BURNS: Division Number 2, NSO Ron Minter serving in the Baltimore Office and whose gift total was \$5,840. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the Division 2 Richard J. Cosgriff Pacesetting Performance Awards was presented to Ron Minter of the Baltimore, Maryland, office.)

PRESIDENT BURNS: Step right up. Congratulations.

MR. RON MINTER: I just would also like to thank the Department of Maryland, the Chapters, the Chapter Service Officers and the National Service Officers within our office and our support staff for their efforts over the past year. Thank you. (Applause)

PRESIDENT BURNS: Congratulations. I want to mention, also, Assistant National Service Director Scotty Trimarchi is assisting the National Service Director in presentation of these gifts.

Division 3 National Service Officer Len Harris who has been up here I think every time since we've been doing this of Saint Louis with total contributions of \$64,153. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the Division 3 Richard J. Cosgriff Pacesetting Performance Awards was presented to Leonard K. Harris of the Saint Louis, Missouri, office.)

PRESIDENT BURNS: Congratulations.

MR. LEONARD K. HARRIS: Thank you. This is great, another year. I think this is eight or nine trophies we have in the office but it wouldn't be possible without the generosity of the Great State of Missouri. I'd like them to be recognized if they would stand up and thank you for all the support that you provide us at the National Service Office. It's wonderful. Thanks. (Applause)

PRESIDENT BURNS: Thank you, Lenny. Division 4 representing the National Service Officer in Boston, Mr. William Patterson, who in fact is the National Service Officer credited with \$12,275. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the Division 4 Richard J. Cosgriff Pacesetting Performance Awards was presented to William Patterson of the Boston, Massachusetts, office.)

PRESIDENT BURNS: Congratulations. Step right up here.

MR. WILLIAM PATTERSON: Thank you very much. On behalf of the State of Massachusetts and the Boston office of the Disabled American Veterans I'm accepting this award. And I do have to say one thing, that my brother who is retired NSO Richard Patterson swore that if I embarrassed him he'd kill me. (Laughter) Thank you. (Applause)

PRESIDENT BURNS: That's more than Rick ever brought in, William. (Laughter) That's very good. Rick Patterson, spends; he brings it in. Division 5 National Service Officer Andrew Smith of our West Palm Beach Office in, of course, the State of Florida, with a total of \$4,725. Congratulations. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the Division 5 Richard J. Cosgriff Pacesetting Performance Awards was presented to Andrew Smith of the West Palm Beach, Florida, office.)

PRESIDENT BURNS: Congratulations. We can get our picture taken right here. Thank you.

MR. ANDREW SMITH: First I have to thank Florida. (Applause) They have a fantastic NSO group. They are led by Andy Marshall. It's been five years. I'm going to put this up on the office so that he can see it when he fills out my evaluation. (Laughter) Mostly I have to thank my wife who has given me 25 fabulous, fantastic years. That got recorded, right? Thank you very much. (Applause)

PRESIDENT BURNS: Congratulations. I thank you from the heart for all you have helped the Foundation accomplish. And that brings us to our time-honored tradition. Your gifts, large or small, will help us raise the bar in service to disabled veterans.

And we're going to do it a little slower this year and hope we get all the numbers correctly. And I'd like to begin. I have a few up here right now that I'd like to recognize. The first check that we received or one of the first is Oak Hill – Oak Cliff Chapter Number 32 in Dallas, \$300; Chisholm, Chisholm and Kirkpatrick Law Firm, \$10,000.

I have a check that was given to me just prior to our gathering from Alan and Dale Zurich from the State of Illinois for \$1,200. And get this one – listen to this one – yesterday this was given to us from the law firm of Finnegan Law Firm, Washington, D.C., in the amount of \$100,000. (Applause) That's right. One hundred thousand dollars. Yes.

Come on up and give us what you have. We appreciate it. Welcome. I have a check here in the amount of \$2,500 for the National Service Foundation. Ron, thank you very much.

UNIDENTIFIED DELEGATE: Yes, sir. (Applause)

PRESIDENT BURNS: That was \$2,500. Step right up there and read it.

UNIDENTIFIED DELEGATE: On behalf of Gary Weaver, Retired National Director of Communications, I'd like to present this check for \$1,000 on behalf of Gary and his family. This is a large check, certainly, but usually Gary makes them and they're about this big. Thank you very much. (Applause)

PRESIDENT BURNS: Thank you. Appreciate that. Get that, Nancy? Okay. Here we go. Come on up here. I know this guy. Come on up, Ray. Welcome.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER RAYMOND E. DEMPSEY: On behalf of the Moral Rearmament League, enclosed is our third annual donation to the National Service Foundation. And this year the MRL is giving the total of \$1,500 to the Foundation. Thank you. (Applause)

PRESIDENT BURNS: Thank you. Appreciate it. Come right up, please. Welcome.

MR. ALBERT BURLIKOWSKI: Thank you. Al Burlikowski, Department of Pennsylvania State Commander. The Department of Pennsylvania wishes to donate \$1,000 to the National Service Foundation. (Applause)

PRESIDENT BURNS: Thank you, sir. That's \$1,000. Speak into that thing.

MR. PHILIP A. FIUMARA JUNIOR: Philip A. Fiumara, Junior, from Chapter 76, Pittsburgh. I want to thank you all for doing your services to this country and thank you for joining the DAV. I want to donate first of all a check of \$1,000 to the National Service Foundation. (Applause)

PRESIDENT BURNS: Thank you.

MR. QUINCY HAWFIELD: Quincy Hawfield, Commander of Chapter 51, South Carolina. I'd like to present a check for \$250 in honor of our NSO Linda Mingo. (Applause)

PRESIDENT BURNS: You guys all together? Come on up, then.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I'm the Junior Commander of Chapter 88, Wagner, Oklahoma. And I would like to present a check to the National Service Foundation of \$599.26. (Applause)

PRESIDENT BURNS: Thank you. I said, "Are they with you?" And he said, "Never seen then before in my life." (Laughter) Come right up, please.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: On behalf of the Department of Oklahoma, Bob Brant, Commander, I'd like to present a check for \$500 to the Foundation. (Applause)

PRESIDENT BURNS: Thank you.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Thank you.

PRESIDENT BURNS: Good morning. Speak right into that thing.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Good morning. As the Commander of the State Department of Missouri we present \$2,000 for the National Service Foundation in honor of our outstanding NSOs. (Applause)

PRESIDENT BURNS: Appreciate it. Right into that mic, please.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: On behalf of Chapter 1 of the State of Missouri I have a check here for \$5,000. (Applause)

PRESIDENT BURNS: Wow. Thank you. Hi. Good morning.

MR. MARK CYR: Good morning. Mark Cyr, Commander, Chapter 2, Kansas City, Missouri. I have a check for \$20,000 in honor of Len Harris and our NSOs in Saint Louis. (Applause)

PRESIDENT BURNS: Thank you.

UNIDENTIFIED DELEGATE: On behalf of Chapter 17 of Missouri I'd like to present \$1,000. (Applause)

PRESIDENT BURNS: Did you get that, Nancy? Okay. Please. Thank you. Hi, Shawn. Good morning.

UNIDENTIFIED DELEGATE: On behalf of Chapter 6, Bangor, Maine, a check for \$250.

PRESIDENT BURNS: John F. Kennedy.

UNIDENTIFIED DELEGATE: That's the John F. Kennedy Chapter up in Maine.

PRESIDENT BURNS: Thank you. Thank you. Good morning, Commander.

MR. GEORGE MATHIS: Good morning. George Mathis, State Commander from the State of Maine. We would like to donate a check for \$1,900 to the National Service Foundation. But I would also like to take special recognition to Chapter 10, Presque Isle, Maine, Smart-Ricker, with their membership number of 277 included in this \$1,900 a check for \$500. (Applause)

PRESIDENT BURNS: Thank you. Thank you. Okay. Please. Yes, sir.

MR. JOHNNIE BAYLARK: Good morning, everyone. My name is Johnnie Baylark. I'm commander for the Department of Illinois.

PRESIDENT BURNS: Excuse me. Is that on?

MR. BAYLARK: Okay. Good morning, again.

PRESIDENT BURNS: It's on now.

MR. BAYLARK: It's on. My name is Johnnie Baylark. I'm the commander for the Department of Illinois and we would like to make a donation to the National Service Foundation in the amount of \$5,000. (Applause)

PRESIDENT BURNS: Thank you.

MR. BAYLARK: Can I get a quick picture?

PRESIDENT BURNS: Oh, sure. You want a picture?

MR. BAYLARK: Yes.

PRESIDENT BURNS: Right here. Sure. Just don't sell it.

MR. ALFRED REYNOLDS: I'm Al Reynolds, senior vice commander, Chapter 17, Department of Illinois. We have a check for the Foundation for \$5,000. (Applause)

PRESIDENT BURNS: Thank you. Appreciate it. Come right up, please. Welcome.

MR. JOHN HOOD: Good morning. My name is John Hood. On behalf of the Dick Cosgriff Chapter 2, San Diego, California, we'd like to donate \$3,000 to the Columbus(sic) Trust Fund and \$3,000 to the National Service Foundation. (Applause)

PRESIDENT BURNS: Thank you. Good morning.

UNIDENTIFIED DELEGATE: On behalf of the Department of Wisconsin, as myself as state commander, for the National Service Fund for Oconto Chapter Number 45 I'd like to donate \$100; for DAV Chapter 19, home of the first place Milwaukee Brewers, for the National Service Foundation I would like to donate \$1,000.

And on behalf of the Department of Wisconsin, home of the World Champion Green Bay Packers and the Wisconsin Badgers I would like to donate \$1,700 to the National Service Foundation. (Applause) And on behalf of myself, department commander and a member of Chapter 3, home Chapter of Mr. Richard Marbes, I would like to donate \$100 to the Charitable Service Foundation. Thank you. (Applause)

PRESIDENT BURNS: Thank you. Nancy, that \$100 to the Charitable Service Foundation was cash. Okay.

MR. CLARENCE BROWN: My name is Clarence Brown. I'm the chaplain for the State of South Carolina. I'd like to give \$100 for the HSCs of the Department of Georgia. (Applause)

PRESIDENT BURNS: Thank you. Thank you very much. Nancy, that's also cash. Hey, good morning.

MR. JAMES STEWART: Jimmy Stewart from the great State of South Carolina and home of the NCAA back-to-back South Carolina (undistinguishable), baseball, Division 1. DAV Service Foundation, \$250 personal check; and DAV Winter Sports Clinic \$250 personal check.

PRESIDENT BURNS: Thank you, sir. Good morning, how are you doing?

MR. HARMON EVANS: Good morning. I'm Harmon Evans, senior vice commander for the Department of South Carolina. We would like to make a donation to the National Service Foundation for \$500 with a check. (Applause)

PRESIDENT BURNS: Thank you. Step right up to that mic there.

MR. MIKE DREILING: Department Commander Mike Dreiling from the State of Kansas. I'd like to donate \$500 for the National Service Foundation. Thank you. (Applause)

PRESIDENT BURNS: Thank you, sir. Appreciate that. Good morning.

MR. BENJAMIN SAXON: Good morning. I'm Benjamin Saxon, senior vice commander of New Hampshire. I'm here representing the State of New Hampshire and my Commander Ed Brown. I have one check here from Department for \$500, one check from Chapter 4 from Portsmouth for \$100; and one check from Chapter 19 of Concord for \$50. (Applause)

Also, for the National Service Foundation – those were for The Columbia Trust. For the National Service Foundation I have one check for \$500 from the Department of New Hampshire; one check for \$100 from Chapter 4 of Portsmouth, and one check for \$50 from Chapter 19 of Concord. (Applause)

PRESIDENT BURNS: Thank you, sir. Appreciate it.

UNIDENTIFIED DELEGATE: Thank you.

PRESIDENT BURNS: Good morning.

UNIDENTIFIED DELEGATE: On behalf of the men and women of DAV Chapter 9, James T. Hall, Houston, Texas, we'd like to make a donation of \$3,000 to the National Service Foundation. (Applause)

PRESIDENT BURNS: Good it? Okay. Step right up there and speak right up, please.

UNIDENTIFIED DELEGATE: On behalf of Blue Bonnet Chapter 20, Department of Texas, we'd like to present \$500 to The Columbia Trust. (Applause)

PRESIDENT BURNS: Thank you, sir. Hi. Come on. Step right up here.

MR. DOUGLAS SALVATERRA: Doug Salvaterra, junior vice, Shreveport-Bossier, Chapter 30. And on behalf of Shreveport-Bossier, Chapter 30, I would like to present the DAV Memorial Foundation with \$5,000; and the National Service Foundation with \$15,000. (Applause)

PRESIDENT BURNS: Thank you.

MR. RICHARD W. SCHATZ: Richard W. Schatz, PDC, Department of Rhode Island. On behalf of our commander, Fred Adams, and the membership of the Department, \$300 to the National Service Foundation.

Now, changing hats, as commander of (undistinguishable) Chapter 12 of the Department of Rhode Island and its members, \$500 to the National Service Foundation.

And on a personal note, on behalf of my wife, Anne Marie Schatz, National Executive Committee, Third District-elect, and myself, DAV National Third District-elect, \$300 in the memory of Margaret K. Tyson. (Applause)

PRESIDENT BURNS: Thank you, Richard. Good morning. Speak right up into that mic.

MR. WINSTON DOWLAND: Yes. I'm Winston Dowland, commander for the Disabled American Veterans in the State of Vermont. With the hard work of our NEC, Asiat Ali, we are glad to donate, every Chapter in our Department from Vermont, \$500 from the Department; \$100 to Chapter 3; \$25 from Chapter 4; \$25 from Chapter 7; \$100 from Chapter 5; \$25 from Chapter 9; \$25 from Chapter 15; \$25 from Chapter 21; and \$500 from Chapter 22.

PRESIDENT BURNS: Every Chapter.

MR. DOWLAND: Every single Chapter from our state. Also, every Chapter donated to the Foundation. Department is \$500; \$100 from Chapter 3; \$25 from Chapter 4; \$25 from Chapter 7; \$100 from Chapter 5; \$25 from Chapter 9; \$25 from Chapter 15; \$25 from Chapter 21; and \$500 from my Chapter 22. Thank you very much. (Applause)

PRESIDENT BURNS: Thank you. Come on in. All right, right in there.

MR. CHAD RICHMOND: Chad Richmond, adjutant, Department of Alabama. And on behalf of Alabama's PDCs I would like to give the National Service Foundation a check in the amount of \$400 in memory of PDCs Hugh Halbrook, (undistinguishable) Davis, Bill Blankenship, and Jimmy Harris.

PRESIDENT BURNS: Thank you. (Applause) Good morning. Step right up here.

MR. MARK WISCHMANN: Mark Wischmann, Department Adjutant for Delaware. We want to make a donation from our Department to the National Service Foundation in recognition of our commander, PDCs, alive and deceased for \$200.

PRESIDENT BURNS: Thank you. (Applause) Hi, Joe.

UNIDENTIFIED DELEGATE: Good morning, Gary. On behalf of Omaha Beach Chapter Number 7, Bowie, Maryland, \$1,000 for the National Service Foundation. (Applause)

PRESIDENT BURNS: Good morning. Speak right up in that thing.

MR. BOB ADAM: On behalf of the great State of Colorado – my name is Bob Adam and I'm Commander of Chapter 7. We will donate \$5,000 to The Columbia Trust.

PRESIDENT BURNS: Five Thousand. (Applause) Thank you. Good morning.

MR. FRANK CASSELLA: Good morning. My name is Frank Cassella. I'm the commander, Department of New York. From the gracious State of New York I have several presentations to make for the fund. The first is the Disabled American for LIFE Memorial Fund, is for \$25,000. (Applause)

The second, The Columbia Trust Fund, \$10,000; (Applause) the third check is the National Service Foundation, \$1,000. (Applause) I'd like to mention the Past Department Commanders from our state, Leo B. Wheeler, Frank Calderal, Charles Coke, Charles H. Burkhart, Kenneth Weaver, David Caltz, Joseph Belvedere, Frank Randazzo, Chester Jones, and George McCluskey.

Lastly, the National Service Foundation, \$500 in memory of Donald D. Adams, the Past National Adjutant. Thank you. (Applause)

PRESIDENT BURNS: Good morning. Welcome.

MR. ELDR A JACKSON: My name is Eldra Jackson. I'm the commander for Chapter 6, Sacramento. And I'd like to make a donation from Chapter 6, \$3,000 to the National Service Foundation. (Applause)

PRESIDENT BURNS: Good morning, Dan.

MR. DANIEL CONTRERAS: Good morning. Dan Contreras, Department Adjutant, State of California. First, a check for \$2,000 from the DAV Charities of Central California to the National Service Foundation. On behalf of our over 100,000 members, first national junior vice and chairman of our Finance Committee, Larry Polzin, George Steese, the president of our DAV Foundation, three checks totaling \$76,000. (Applause)

PRESIDENT BURNS: Thank you, Dan. That's a tough act to follow. How are you doing? Step right up.

MR. FRANK FORBES: I'm Frank Forbes with Nashville Chapter 3, Tennessee, the home Chapter for Senior Vice Commander Don Samuels. I'm also (undistinguishable) National Order of Trench Rats, Dugout 371, Knoxville, Tennessee. And the Nashville Dugout would like to present this check for \$100 for the DAV LIFE Memorial Fund. Thank you. (Applause)

PRESIDENT BURNS: Please.

MR. GEORGE MARTIN: I'm George Martin, past Department Commander of Tennessee. We have \$2,500 for, from the Department of Tennessee to the Winter Sports Clinic. Also, we have \$2,500 from Don Samuels' campaign in honor of the Nashville NSOs. (Applause)

PRESIDENT BURNS: Good morning. Thank you, sir.

MR. RICHARD TOLFA: Richard Tolfa, Commander of the Sunshine State of Florida. I'd like to present this check for \$100 to the Service Foundation in honor of our Past Department Commander John Markiewicz. (Applause)

PRESIDENT BURNS: Good morning.

MR. JOHN MARKIEWICZ: I'm John Markiewicz, Past Department Commander for the Department of Florida. It is my honor to present a check for \$1,000 to the National Service Foundation from the Department of Florida.

PRESIDENT BURNS: One thousand?

MR. MARKIEWICZ: One thousand.

PRESIDENT BURNS: Thank you, sir. (Applause) Please. Good morning.

MS. CYNTHIA MADISON: Good morning. Good morning. I'm Cynthia Madison from the great State of Virginia. I am the Department Commander. On behalf of the Department I'd like to present a check for \$1,000 to the National Service Office. (Applause)

PRESIDENT BURNS: Thank you. Good morning, Tom.

MR. THOMAS KELLER: Tom and Sally Keller are giving a contribution in honor of the man who put this organization back together in the 1990s – I've been pleased to follow him for years and years – Art Wilson. (Applause)

MR. FRANK WILLIAMS: Frank Williams, Department Adjutant, Buckeye State of Ohio, \$1,000 from the Department, Columbia Trust. (Applause)

PRESIDENT BURNS: Thank you, sir.

MR. WILLIAMS: You're welcome.

PRESIDENT BURNS: Good morning.

MR. DAVID MAY: Good morning. David May, Past Department Commander for the Department of Ohio. On behalf of Alliance Chapter 50, I have a donation of \$1,500 for the National Service Foundation in honor of our dedicated Chapter and Unit 50 volunteers.

PRESIDENT BURNS: Thank you, sir. (Applause) Fifteen hundred. Good morning.

MR. JAMES E. PRICE: I'm James E. Price from Salina, Kansas, and Chapter 11. We're giving \$300 from the Chapter and \$50 from –

PRESIDENT BURNS: Step right up and say that again, please, \$300.

MR. PRICE: Chapter 11, Salina Kansas and \$50 from I and my wife.

PRESIDENT BURNS: Three hundred? Thank you. Much appreciated. Good morning.

MR. WILEY STRAHAN: I'm Wiley Strahan from the Department of Mississippi, on behalf, \$1,000.

PRESIDENT BURNS: Thank you. Got that? One thousand. Thank you. Good morning.

MR. GERALD E. HUMPHRIES: Good morning, Gary. Gerald Humphries, Chapter 11, Jackson, Mississippi, a donation in the name of Gerald E. Humphries, Retired NSO, for a thousand bucks.

PRESIDENT BURNS: Thank you. Thank you. Good morning.

MR. JAMES PARKER: Good morning. I am James Parker, Adjutant for the Department of Arkansas. I came before you last year and I presented you with a \$100 check in honor of my dad James Junior Parker.

This year I want to add to it and I want to add \$100 in memory of my mother. She loved this organization and if we'd have sent her address labels six times a day she would have sent in a donation six times a day. (Applause)

PRESIDENT BURNS: Thank you.

MR. PARKER: I'd now like to introduce you to my state or my Department Commander, Don Kaczynski.

MR. DONALD KACZYNSKI: I'm the Department Commander of Arkansas. And for the great state of Arkansas with the great Ozark Mountains I'd like to present a check for \$1,000. (Applause)

MR. JUAN LOZANO-NIEVES: My name is Juan Lozano-Nieves, Department Commander, Department of Puerto Rico. On behalf of the Department of Puerto Rico we donate \$300; \$100 Chapter 5; \$100 Chapter 7; and \$150 Chapter 1.

PRESIDENT BURNS: Chapter 1. Thank you. (Applause) Good morning.

MR. ALEX MARTINEZ: Alex Martinez, Supervisor for the National Service Office in San Juan, Puerto Rico. I want to personally deliver a check from (undistinguishable) which is very gracious and thanking us and honoring the office, the National Service Office in San Juan, Puerto Rico. Thank you very much.

PRESIDENT BURNS: How much is it?

MR. MARTINEZ: Excuse me. For \$1,000. (Applause)

PRESIDENT BURNS: Thank you. Good morning.

MR. DOUG WELLS: Good morning. I'm Doug Wells, President of the National Service Officer Guild. Gary, as President of the Guild it is my privilege to present to you a check on behalf of the Guild for \$500.

PRESIDENT BURNS: Well, thank you. (Applause) Good morning.

MS. KATHERINE BARAN: Hi. Katherine Baran from Carson City Chapter 7 of Nevada. I have a check from, on behalf of Chapter 7 for \$100.

PRESIDENT BURNS: Thank you.

MS. BARAN: Thank you.

PRESIDENT BURNS: Appreciate it. Good morning.

MR. RICHARD WALKER: Good morning, sir. Richard Walker, Black Mountain Chapter 12, Henderson, Nevada, would like to donate a check for \$500.

PRESIDENT BURNS: Five hundred?

MR. WALKER: Yes, sir. (Applause)

PRESIDENT BURNS: Thank you, sir. Good morning.

MR. FRED WAGAR: Good morning. I'm Commander Wagar from the great State of Nevada, the host of the 2012 Convention. "What happens in Vegas stays in Vegas" so come out and have a good time.

At this time on behalf of the Department we'd like to donate a check for \$1,200 to the DAV National Service Foundation on behalf of all Service Officers who do a great job across the country.

PRESIDENT BURNS: Thank you. Appreciate it. (Applause) Good morning.

MS. PAMELA BEALE: Good morning. Pam Beale from the State of Alaska. For Metro Chapter 7 I have \$100 for the National Service Foundation – an IOU. I'll get the money up here today. I also have \$1,000 for the Disabled Veterans for LIFE and this is from Metro Chapter 7. And from our Department of Alaska we have \$2,000 for the Disabled American Memorial Fund. (Applause)

PRESIDENT BURNS: Thank you. Please. Good morning.

MR. SMITH: Good morning. Stephen Smith, Commander, Department of New Jersey, the proud state of Second National Junior Vice Commander Mary B.

And I have a few checks to present this morning: one to the National Service Foundation for \$2,500; the Winter Sports Clinic for \$2,500; and The Columbia Trust, \$2,500. I also have two checks from Chapter 24 from Toms River, New Jersey, National Service Foundation \$100; and The Columbia Trust, \$100. Thank you. (Applause)

PRESIDENT BURNS: Thank you. Appreciate it. Good morning.

MR. MICHAEL DAWSON: Good morning. Mike Dawson, Commander, Department of West Virginia. I'd like to donate \$2,000 to the National Service Foundation from the Department of West Virginia. (Applause)

PRESIDENT BURNS: Good morning.

MR. DENNIS HURLEY: Good morning. Dennis Hurley, Chapter 56, West Virginia. I'd like to donate \$500 in the, to the National Service Foundation for (undistinguishable). (Applause)

MR. JACOB STAFFORD: Jacob Stafford, District 6, made up of West Virginia, Virginia, Maryland, D.C., and Puerto Rico, pledges \$3,000 to the National Service Foundation. Thank you. (Applause)

PRESIDENT BURNS: Thank you. Good morning.

UNIDENTIFIED DELEGATE: Good morning. From District 14 I have \$150 for the Disabled Veterans LIFE Memorial.

PRESIDENT BURNS: That's cash.

UNIDENTIFIED DELEGATE: Cash.

PRESIDENT BURNS: A hundred bucks.

UNIDENTIFIED DELEGATE: One hundred fifty.

PRESIDENT BURNS: One hundred fifty, excuse me.

UNIDENTIFIED DELEGATE: From Gene Murphy I have a check for \$100 to the DAV National Service Foundation in the memory of Roger Andall. And then I have a check for \$250 from Chapter 1 of South Dakota for the Service Foundation honoring NSO Eric Van Emmerick.

PRESIDENT BURNS: Thank you. Fantastic. (Applause)

MR. HAROLD MULLENBERG: Harold Mullenberg from the Department of South Dakota. For the National Service Foundation I'm giving you a check for \$500.

PRESIDENT BURNS: Thank you, sir. Five hundred.

MR. DAVID VALTINSON: I'm David Valtinson, Commander of Minnesota. I have a check from the Disabled American Veterans Department of Minnesota to the Disabled Veterans for LIFE Memorial for \$3,000, and also a check from the Minnesota DAV Foundation to the Disabled Veterans LIFE Memorial Foundation for \$3,000. (Applause)

PRESIDENT BURNS: Thank you. Good morning.

UNIDENTIFIED DELEGATE: As a proud member of the William C. Malia Chapter 1, Scranton, Pennsylvania, the second-oldest Chapter in the nation, I make a \$100 donation to the DAV National Service Foundation. (Applause)

PRESIDENT BURNS: Good morning.

MR. MICHAEL SMITH: Good morning. Mike Smith, Department of Idaho. We have a \$500 check for the Service Foundation, Gary Owens. (Applause)

PRESIDENT BURNS: Good morning, guys. Step right up there.

MR. RICHARD BUGBEE: Thank you, sir. Good morning. I am Richard Bugbee, the Commander of the Blind Veterans National Chapter Number 1. I have a check for \$1,000 from the membership of the Blind Chapter going to the NSF in honor of Floyd Britting, Past Commander of the Blind Chapter. (Applause)

PRESIDENT BURNS: Thank you, sir.

MR. BUGBEE: Thank you.

PRESIDENT BURNS: Hi. Step right up.

UNIDENTIFIED DELEGATE: Good morning. From the Department of Arizona, Manuel Rodriguez Commander, we'd like to donate a check for \$2,000 to the DAV Homeless Veterans Initiative. Thank you. (Applause)

PRESIDENT BURNS: Thank you. Two thousand dollars. Yes, please.

MR. EMANUEL J. DICKSON: My name is Emanuel J. Dickson. The Department of Georgia would like to donate \$500 to the National Service Foundation. (Applause)

PRESIDENT BURNS: Thank you.

MS. HARRIET STATEN: Harriet Staten, Adjutant for the State Department of Georgia. We would also like to donate \$500 to The Columbia Trust. (Applause)

PRESIDENT BURNS: Thank you very much.

MR. STEPHEN GARRETT: Stephen Garrett, I'm the Supervisor of the National Service Office in Oakland, California. And on behalf of Staff Sergeant (undistinguishable) Hogan, United States Army, third tour, Gulf War on Terror, Life Member of Ozie Boler Chapter 21, Vallejo, California, and granddaughter of Past Department Commander and current NEC, District 16, California, Delphine Metcalf-Foster, we present this \$200 to the National Service Foundation.

PRESIDENT BURNS: Two hundred dollars cash.

MR. GARRETT: Two hundred cash. (Applause)

PRESIDENT BURNS: Thank you.

MR. JOHN OPATOVSKY: John Opatovsky, Chapter 32, New Jersey, a \$500 check to The Columbia Trust. (Applause)

PRESIDENT BURNS: Thank you. Thank you, sir.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER ALAN BOWERS: Al Bowers, Past National Commander. Art, I just want you to know, I talked to my accountant and Terry says it's okay. Five hundred dollars from Terry and me. Thanks. (Applause)

PRESIDENT BURNS: Good morning.

MR. JOHN CAMMICK: Good morning. John Cammick, Chapter 46, Massachusetts, \$200. (Applause)

PRESIDENT BURNS: Thank you. Appreciate that. Thank you. That's cash, also, Nancy. Okay? Please.

MR. BROADDUS: Gene Broaddus from the State of Colorado. I'd like to offer a check for \$500,000(sic) to the Disabled LIFE Memorial to be built in Washington, D.C. (Applause)

PRESIDENT BURNS: That's five thousand? Five thousand. Five thousand. Thank you very much. Very kind.

ADJUTANT WILSON: Art Wilson, Delegate, Chapter 90 in Florida, donates \$500 in memory of Bob Gushee. (Applause)

PRESIDENT BURNS: That concludes – no? Okay.

COMMANDER TYSON: It doesn't conclude anything. I've got the microphone. (Laughter)

PRESIDENT BURNS: I want to get out of here. (Laughter)

COMMANDER TYSON: You don't want to leave yet.

PRESIDENT BURNS: Okay. I'm right here.

COMMANDER TYSON: On behalf of my wife I want to thank all of you for your donations upon learning of her passing earlier this year. On behalf of myself as National Commander – you've got to give to lead – \$5,000 to The Columbia Trust. (Applause)

PRESIDENT BURNS: All right. Anyone else wants to make a contribution down the line? (Laughter) Thank you very much for your generosity. That is the end of the report from the National Service Foundation. And I am honored to be a part of this fine group. Thank you very, very much. Appreciate it. (Applause)

ADJUTANT WILSON: Just so you know, contributions for the National Service Foundation, the Charitable Service Trust, The Columbia Trust and the Disabled Veterans LIFE Memorial Foundation total \$385,000 this morning. (Applause)

COMMANDER TYSON: Thank you, Gary, for that excellent report.

Disabled American Veterans National Service Foundation

Financial Statements as of and for the
Years Ended December 31, 2010 and 2009, and
Independent Auditors' Report



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INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT

To the Board of Directors of
Disabled American Veterans National Service Foundation:

We have audited the accompanying statements of financial position of Disabled American Veterans National Service Foundation (the "Foundation") as of December 31, 2010 and 2009, and the related statements of activities, functional expenses, and cash flows for the years then ended. These financial statements are the responsibility of the Foundation's management. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audits.

We conducted our audits in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. An audit includes consideration of internal control over financial reporting as a basis for designing audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Foundation's internal control over financial reporting. Accordingly, we express no such opinion. An audit also includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements, assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall financial statement presentation. We believe that our audits provide a reasonable basis for our opinion.

In our opinion, such financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Foundation at December 31, 2010 and 2009, and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the years then ended in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

March 31, 2011

Member of
Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu Limited

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION

STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2010 AND 2009

	2010	2009
ASSETS		
CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS	\$ 1,911,167	\$ 748,097
INTEREST AND DIVIDENDS RECEIVABLE	86	284,450
ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE	9,192	72,073
INVENTORY — Net of \$18,500 and \$16,000 reserve for obsolescence in 2010 and 2009, respectively	258,795	249,158
PREPAID EXPENSES	5,961	30,543
INVESTMENTS	79,644,194	73,048,846
DEVELOPMENT IN PROCESS	-	128,987
TOTAL	\$ 81,829,395	\$ 74,562,154
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		
LIABILITIES:		
Due to DAV	\$ 163,825	\$ 171,944
Due to DAV Legislative Program	5,468	6,071
Other liabilities	183,748	88,293
Total liabilities	353,041	266,308
NET ASSETS:		
Unrestricted:		
General	13,200,963	11,154,369
The Columbia Trust	1,974,979	1,553,969
Perpetual Rehabilitation Fund	26,532,709	25,315,054
Accumulated net unrealized appreciation of investments	1,356,643	1,318,076
Total unrestricted	43,065,294	39,341,468
Temporarily restricted:		
The Columbia Trust and other	36,721,062	35,491,423
Accumulated net unrealized appreciation (depreciation) of investments	1,474,704	(752,339)
Total temporarily restricted	38,195,766	34,739,084
Permanently restricted	215,294	215,294
Total net assets	81,476,354	74,295,846
TOTAL	\$ 81,829,395	\$ 74,562,154

See notes to financial statements.

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION

STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2010 AND 2009

	2010			2009		
	General, The Columbia Trust Perpetual Renewal Fund (Unrestricted)	The Columbia Trust Perpetual Renewal Fund (Temporarily Restricted)	National Order of Ratons (Permanently Restricted)	General, The Columbia Trust Perpetual Renewal Fund (Unrestricted)	The Columbia Trust Perpetual Renewal Fund (Temporarily Restricted)	National Order of Ratons (Permanently Restricted)
PUBLIC SUPPORT AND REVENUES:						
Public support — contributions and bequests	\$ 1,217,655	\$ 759,730	\$ -	\$ 954,224	\$ 784,640	\$ 5,000
Net assets released from restrictions	<u>761,528</u>	<u>(761,528)</u>		<u>1,162,778</u>	<u>(1,162,778)</u>	
Revenues:						
Interest and dividend income — net	956,492	890,218		939,303	854,192	1,793,495
Gain (loss) on sale of investment securities	2,078,382	341,199		(2,420,383)	(117,076)	(219,399)
Sales of fraternal items	<u>398,652</u>			<u>372,178</u>		<u>872,178</u>
Total revenues	3,944,496	1,231,417	-	1,709,158	737,116	-
Total public support and revenues	<u>5,923,679</u>	<u>1,229,639</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>3,826,160</u>	<u>358,978</u>	<u>5,000</u>
EXPENSES:						
Program expenses:						
Operating expenses in accordance with	889,519			1,389,817		1,389,817
Transfers to DAV National Headquarters and	86,426			365,552		365,552
other organizations	637,244			669,958		669,958
Costs of fraternal items sold	<u>184,422</u>			<u>136,589</u>		<u>136,589</u>
Other program expenses						
Total program expenses	1,797,611	-	-	2,561,916	-	2,561,916
Management and general expenses	305,169			157,094		157,094
Fundraising expenses	<u>135,640</u>			<u>127,694</u>		<u>127,694</u>
Total expenses	<u>2,238,420</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>2,846,704</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>2,846,704</u>
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS BEFORE CHANGE IN NET UNREALIZED APPRECIATION OF INVESTMENTS	3,685,259	1,229,639		979,456	358,978	5,000
CHANGE IN NET UNREALIZED APPRECIATION OF INVESTMENTS	38,567	2,227,043		5,169,349	5,037,541	
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS AFTER CHANGE IN NET UNREALIZED APPRECIATION OF INVESTMENTS	3,723,826	3,456,682		6,148,805	5,396,519	
NET ASSETS — Beginning of year	<u>39,341,468</u>	<u>34,739,084</u>	<u>215,294</u>	<u>33,192,663</u>	<u>29,342,585</u>	<u>210,294</u>
NET ASSETS — End of year	<u>\$43,065,294</u>	<u>\$38,195,766</u>	<u>\$215,294</u>	<u>\$39,341,468</u>	<u>\$34,739,084</u>	<u>\$215,294</u>

See notes to financial statements.

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION

STATEMENTS OF FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES FOR THE YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2010 AND 2009

	2010			2009		
	Management and			Management and		
	Program	General	Fundraising	Program	General	Fundraising
EXPENSES:						
Allocations to charitable programs	\$ 925,162	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 925,162	\$ -	\$ -
Costs of fraternal items sold	637,244			637,244		
Grant proposal processing	49,001			49,001		
Administrative charges		49,001	73,863		44,094	66,761
Travel		19,185		122,864	15,512	
Postage and shipping	116,987	9,053	28,380	19,185	7,394	27,585
Printing, stationery, and supplies	52	24,660	22,515	154,420	22,699	23,339
Advertising	42,603			47,227	37	
Legal fees			6,840	42,603		
Professional fees		27,546		6,840	30,025	6,840
Project costs	25,000			27,546		
Insurance		3,295		25,000	2,620	
Registration fees		90	4,042	3,295	15	3,169
Awards		8,158		4,132	4,569	
Miscellaneous	1,562	164,181		8,158	30,166	
				165,743		
TOTAL	\$1,797,611	\$305,169	\$135,640	\$2,238,420	\$157,094	\$127,694
						\$2,846,704

See notes to financial statements.

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION

STATEMENTS OF CASH FLOWS FOR THE YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2010 AND 2009

	2010	2009
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES:		
Change in unrestricted and temporarily restricted net assets	\$ 7,180,508	\$ 11,545,324
Adjustments to reconcile change in unrestricted and temporarily restricted net assets to net cash provided by operating activities:		
Change in unrealized appreciation of investments	(2,265,610)	(10,206,890)
(Gain) loss on sale of investment securities	(2,420,581)	219,399
Loss on disposal of development-in-process assets	128,987	-
Changes in operating assets and liabilities:		
Interest and dividends receivable	284,364	27,306
Accounts receivable	62,881	(25,978)
Inventory	(9,637)	194,557
Prepaid expenses	24,582	(28,088)
Due to DAV	(8,119)	(14,667)
Due to DAV Legislative Program	(603)	(1,100)
Other liabilities	95,455	(94,917)
Net cash provided by operating activities	<u>3,072,227</u>	<u>1,614,946</u>
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES:		
Purchases of investments	(137,278,624)	(56,983,277)
Proceeds from sale of investments	135,369,467	54,671,010
Purchases of development-in-process assets	-	(97,656)
Net cash used in investing activities	<u>(1,909,157)</u>	<u>(2,409,923)</u>
CASH FLOW FROM FINANCING ACTIVITY —		
Contributions of permanently restricted assets	-	5,000
NET CHANGE IN CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS	1,163,070	(789,977)
CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS — Beginning of year	<u>748,097</u>	<u>1,538,074</u>
CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS — End of year	<u>\$ 1,911,167</u>	<u>\$ 748,097</u>

See notes to financial statements.

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

AS OF AND FOR THE YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2010 AND 2009

1. ORGANIZATION

Disabled American Veterans National Service Foundation (the "Foundation") is a financial auxiliary of the Disabled American Veterans (DAV). The purpose of the Foundation, as set forth in Article 3 of the Articles of Incorporation, is as follows:

"To receive and maintain a fund or funds of personal or real property, or both, to solicit and obtain contributions from the public, and, subject to the restrictions set forth in the Articles of Incorporation, to use and apply the whole or any part of the income and principal of said fund exclusively for the promotion of social welfare (including incidental nonpartisan legislative activity in furtherance of such purpose) within the meaning of Section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code, primarily for the assistance, aid, maintenance, care, support, and rehabilitation of disabled veterans and their dependents, either directly or by contributions to the DAV, a Congressionally-chartered organization, or any chapter or department thereof."

2. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Financial Statements — The accompanying financial statements have been prepared on the accrual basis of accounting.

New Accounting Standards Adopted — The accounting standard initially adopted in the 2010 financial statements described below affected certain note disclosures but did not affect the statements of financial position or statements of activities.

Fair Value Measurements and Disclosures — In January 2010, the Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB) issued FASB Accounting Standards Update No. 2010-06, *Fair Value Measurements and Disclosures*, which amends Accounting Standards Codification (ASC) Topic 820, *Fair Value Measurements and Disclosures* (originally issued as FASB Statement No. 157, *Fair Value Measurements*), adding new disclosure requirements for Levels 1 and 2, separate disclosures of purchases, sales, issuances, and settlements relating to Level 3 measurements and clarification of existing fair value disclosures.

Cash and Cash Equivalents — The Foundation considers all highly liquid debt instruments purchased with a maturity date of three months or less to be cash equivalents and are stated at cost, which approximates fair value. The earnings credit received on the Foundation's checking accounts were \$2,110 and \$2,044 in 2010 and 2009, respectively. The Foundation maintains its cash in bank deposit accounts which, at times, exceed federally insured limits. The Foundation has not experienced any losses in such accounts.

Inventories — Inventories are carried at the lower of cost or market, generally determined on the first-in, first-out basis. Inventory consists of fraternal items to be sold.

Contributions — Contributions received are recorded as unrestricted, temporarily restricted, or permanently restricted support, depending on the existence and nature of any donor restrictions. Donated assets are recorded at their fair market value at the time of the donation.

Unrestricted Net Assets — All unrestricted contributions and bequests to the Foundation are designated by the Board of Directors (the “Board”) for permanent investment in a Board-designated endowment fund, known as the Perpetual Rehabilitation Fund, as a reserve for future needs.

Investment income derived from these invested amounts are included in the General Fund and used for current operations of the Foundation or appropriated by the Foundation for use by the DAV.

The Foundation has adopted an investment policy for the Perpetual Rehabilitation Fund. It is commingled with temporarily restricted investments. The primary goals of the investment portfolio are safeguarding of the assets; maximization of return on the interest, dividends, and appreciation of capital; and avoidance of undue interest rate risk in the fixed-income portion of the portfolio. The portfolio performance objective is to exceed a custom benchmark of 60% Russell 3000/40% Barclays Intermediate Government Credit over a five-year period and a full market cycle.

The Foundation relies on a total return strategy in which investment returns are achieved through both capital appreciation (realized and unrealized) and current yield (interest and dividends). The Foundation targets a diversified asset allocation that places a greater emphasis on equity-based investment to achieve its long-term return objective within prudent risk constraints.

The Foundation’s unrestricted Board-designated endowment for the years ended December 31, 2010 and 2009, had the following activity:

	2010	2009
Public support — contributions and bequests	\$ 1,217,655	\$ 954,224
Revenues:		
Interest and dividend income — net	956,492	939,303
Gain (loss) on sale of investment securities	2,079,382	(102,323)
Sale of fraternal items	<u>908,622</u>	<u>872,178</u>
Total public support and revenues	<u>5,162,151</u>	<u>2,663,382</u>
Expenses:		
Transfers to DAV National Headquarters and other organizations	86,426	365,552
Cost of fraternal items sold	637,244	669,958
Other program expenses	733,423	180,683
Management and general	305,169	157,094
Fundraising	<u>135,640</u>	<u>127,694</u>
Total expenses	<u>1,897,902</u>	<u>1,500,981</u>
Change in unrealized appreciation of investments	<u>38,567</u>	<u>5,169,349</u>
Total change in unrestricted Board-designated endowment fund	<u>\$3,302,816</u>	<u>\$6,331,750</u>

For 2010 and 2009, respectively, the Board has designated \$1,974,979 and \$1,553,969 as total unrestricted net assets for The Columbia Trust and are not included in the Board-designated endowment fund. The Columbia Trust recorded an increase of unrestricted net assets of \$421,010 in 2010 and a decrease of unrestricted assets of \$182,945 in 2009. No unrealized appreciation (depreciation) of investments is designated to The Columbia Trust’s net assets.

Temporarily Restricted Net Assets — Funds contributed to The Columbia Trust are matched 100% by DAV, up to a maximum of \$3,000,000 per year. In 2010 and 2009, The Columbia Trust received \$37,375 and \$67,320, respectively, in contributions, which were matched by DAV. In 2010 and 2009, The Columbia Trust received \$645,000 and \$650,000, respectively, from the DAV Charitable Service Trust (CST) to be used for the DAV National Transportation Network Van Grant Program. In 2010, The Columbia Trust also received \$40,000 from an unrelated third party to be used for the DAV National Transportation Network Van Grant Program.

As of December 31, 2010 and 2009, The Columbia Trust held \$797,622 and \$1,096,905, respectively, in money market funds.

Permanently Restricted Net Assets — Contributions by the National Order of Trench Rats for the DAV Legislative Program are permanently restricted. Investment income of \$5,468 and \$6,071 in 2010 and 2009, respectively, from the National Order of Trench Rats DAV Legislative Fund is transferred to DAV and is temporarily restricted for use by DAV's Legislative Program.

Income Taxes — As a not-for-profit service organization, the Foundation has received a determination from the Internal Revenue Service that it is exempt from federal income taxes as a 501(c)(4) organization. Contributions made to the Foundation are tax deductible by the contributor.

Accounting for Uncertainty in Income Taxes — ASC Topic 740, *Income Taxes*, clarifies the accounting for uncertainty in income taxes by prescribing the recognition threshold a tax position is required to meet before being recognized in the financial statements. It also provides guidance on derecognition, classification, interest and penalties, disclosure, and transition. The Foundation applies ASC Topic 740 and notes no effect on its financial statements.

Use of Estimates — The preparation of the financial statements in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities and disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements and the reported amounts of revenues and expenses during the reporting period. Actual results could differ from those estimates.

Development in Process — In 2010, the Foundation determined that the software application that had been in development since 2006 did not meet, in its current state, the organization's business needs. Additionally, further development of the application would not provide any tangible value to the investment. Therefore, the loss of \$128,987 is recorded as a component of Miscellaneous expenses in the management and general section of the Statement of Activities for 2010.

3. INVESTMENTS IN SECURITIES

Investments are recorded at fair value. The fair value of the Foundation's investments is determined based on the quoted market prices of the related securities. Gains and losses on the sale of investment securities are recognized based upon the specific identification method and are reflected as a separate component of revenue for the investments of the Foundation. The Foundation's policy is to report cash and cash equivalents within its trust accounts as investments.

The cost and market value of investments and the unrealized appreciation (depreciation) at December 31, 2010 and 2009, are summarized below:

2010	Cost	Fair Value	Unrealized Appreciation (Depreciation)
Cash	\$ 1,360	\$ 1,360	\$ -
Money market investments	2,774,641	2,774,641	-
Common stock	8,928,775	9,715,193	786,418
Fixed-income mutual funds	29,558,253	30,082,203	523,950
Equity mutual funds	<u>35,549,818</u>	<u>37,070,797</u>	<u>1,520,979</u>
Total	<u>\$ 76,812,847</u>	<u>\$ 79,644,194</u>	<u>\$ 2,831,347</u>
2009			
Cash	\$ 13,542	\$ 13,542	\$ -
Money market investments	18,962,781	18,962,781	-
U.S. Treasury notes and corporate bonds	26,618,232	27,022,243	404,011
Common stock	18,607,888	20,310,826	1,702,938
Equity mutual funds	<u>8,280,666</u>	<u>6,739,454</u>	<u>(1,541,212)</u>
Total	<u>\$ 72,483,109</u>	<u>\$ 73,048,846</u>	<u>\$ 565,737</u>

4. FAIR VALUE MEASUREMENTS

In accordance with fair value measurements and disclosures, the Foundation categorized its financial assets, based on

- quoted prices in active markets for identical instruments (Level 1)
- quoted prices in active markets for instruments that are similar, or quoted prices in markets that are not active for identical or similar instruments, and model-derived valuations in which all significant inputs and significant value drivers are observable in active markets (Level 2)

At no time during 2010 did the Foundation have any financial assets requiring the use of inputs that are unobservable and significant to the overall fair value measurement (Level 3). The major categories for debt and equity securities are determined on the basis of the nature and risks of the investments. There were no significant transfers between Level 1 and Level 2.

The major categories of general fund financial assets measured at fair value on a recurring basis during the years ended December 31, 2010 and 2009, are as follows:

	Fair Value Measurements Using		
	Quoted Prices in Active Markets for Identical Assets (Level 1)	Significant Observable Inputs (Level 2)	Total
2010			
Asset Category			
Cash	\$ 1,360	\$ -	\$ 1,360
Money market investments	2,774,641		2,774,641
Common stock:			
Consumer discretionary	1,214,003		1,214,003
Energy	1,394,149		1,394,149
Finance	1,220,357		1,220,357
Health care	981,884		981,884
Industrials	1,278,988		1,278,988
Materials	829,816		829,816
Staples	989,115		989,115
Technology	1,709,808		1,709,808
Utilities	97,073		97,073
Total common stock	9,715,193	-	9,715,193
Mutual funds:			
Domestic stock funds	29,009,843		29,009,843
International stock funds	8,060,954		8,060,954
Fixed-income funds	30,082,203		30,082,203
Total mutual funds	67,153,000	-	67,153,000
Total assets	\$ 79,644,194	\$ -	\$ 79,644,194
2009			
	Fair Value Measurements Using		
	Level 1	Level 2	Total
Assets:			
Cash	\$ 13,542	\$ -	\$ 13,542
Money market investments	18,962,781		18,962,781
U.S. government securities and corporate bonds	10,091,340	16,930,903	27,022,243
Common stock	20,310,826		20,310,826
Equity mutual funds	6,739,454		6,739,454
Total assets	\$ 56,117,943	\$ 16,930,903	\$ 73,048,846

Investment income is composed of interest and dividend income of \$1,846,710 and \$1,793,495, net of fees paid to trustees of \$39,406 and \$143,637, in 2010 and 2009, respectively.

5. RELATED-PARTY TRANSACTIONS

DAV personnel assist the Foundation on a limited basis in administering its business operations and fundraising program. For these services, the Foundation reimbursed DAV \$168,081 and \$154,949, in 2010 and 2009, respectively. At December 31, 2010 and 2009, the Foundation owed DAV \$163,825 and \$171,944, respectively. DAV provides the Foundation with the use of facilities and equipment at no charge.

As discussed in Note 2, DAV contributed \$37,375 and \$67,320 to The Columbia Trust in 2010 and 2009, respectively. In 2010 and 2009, CST made a contribution of \$645,000 and \$650,000, respectively, to The Columbia Trust for the DAV National Transportation Network Van Grant Program.

In 2010, DAV Auxiliary sold \$19,681 in its fraternal items to the Foundation to be sold alongside the Foundation's fraternal items. Estimated obsolescence was \$4,500, and a net amount of \$15,181 was reimbursed to DAV Auxiliary for the inventory.

In performing the duties of their positions, DAV's National Commander and National Adjutant serve on the Foundation's Board. The Chairman of DAV's Board of Directors serves as an ex officio member of the Foundation's Board.

6. GRANTS AND EXPENSES OF THE COLUMBIA TRUST

At December 31, 2010 and 2009, the grants and expenses of The Columbia Trust are as follows:

	2010	2009
Grants to DAV chapters and departments in accordance with The Columbia Trust:		
Hospital Service Coordinator Program	\$ 176,900	\$ 383,375
National Transportation Network Van Grant Program	626,836	925,142
Other grants to service programs	35,000	35,000
Miscellaneous expenses	1,782	2,206
Grant proposal processing	<u>49,001</u>	<u>44,094</u>
Total	<u>\$ 889,519</u>	<u>\$ 1,389,817</u>

In 2010 and 2009, The Columbia Trust's grants and expenses totaled \$889,519 and \$1,389,817, respectively. In 2010, temporarily restricted net assets of \$761,528 and designated, unrestricted net assets of \$127,991 were used. In 2009, temporarily restricted net assets of \$1,162,778 and designated, unrestricted net assets of \$227,039 were used. The temporarily restricted net assets used, of \$761,528 and \$1,162,778, are shown as "Net assets released from restrictions" in the accompanying statements of activities for 2010 and 2009, respectively.

Net assets are released from restrictions by incurring expenses to satisfy the restricted purposes or by occurrence of other events specified by donors.

7. SUBSEQUENT EVENTS

The Foundation evaluated subsequent events through March 31, 2011, which is the date the financial statements were available for issuance.

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COMMANDER TYSON: May I have a motion to accept the report from President Burns for the National Service Foundation?

MR. MATHIS: Mic 3.

COMMANDER TYSON: Mic 3.

MR. MATHIS: George Mathis, Commander, State of Maine, I'd like to take the pleasure of making a motion to accept such an eloquent report given by such a distinguished gentleman, Gary Burns.

COMMANDER TYSON: Thank you, George. May I have a second?

FOURTH DISTRICT NEC JOSEPH HARRIS: Mic 2.

COMMANDER TYSON: Mic 2.

FOURTH DISTRICT NEC HARRIS: District 4, Joseph Harris, representing New Jersey, Connecticut, and Delaware, seconds that motion.

COMMANDER TYSON: Thank you, Mr. Harris. All those in favor signify by saying aye; opposed. So ordered. Will you please welcome Mr. Joe Connelly of Michigan, the newly-elected President of the Commander and Adjutants' Association for 2011-2012. (Applause)

MR. JOSEPH CONNELLY: Good afternoon, Commander Tyson, National Judge Advocate, National Adjutant Art Wilson, members, fellow delegates, good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

MR. CONNELLY: I proudly was elected National President of the State Commander and Adjutants' Association on Sunday. I pledge our complete support for the National Organization and to sponsor the Mid-Winter Conference, our Commander and Adjutants' Orientation at Headquarters and the Winter Sports Clinic next year.

Next year will be the 50th Annual Orientation and I urge you if you haven't been there, come. You will learn a lot. Now, at this time, National Secretary Adjutant, President, National Secretary-Treasurer Dave Tannenbaum will read the newly-elected officers and committees.

MR. DAVID TANNENBAUM: Thank you, Mr. President. At this time I'd like to read into the record the names of our officers for the 2011-2012 membership year.

President Joseph Connelly from the great State of Michigan; Vice President Floyd Watson of Wyoming. Six members of our Executive Committee: Teresa Johniken from Texas, Dennis Krulder from New York, Danny Oliver from Oklahoma, Brenda Reed from Iowa, Chad Richmond from Alabama, and Warren Tobin from North Dakota.

Our Immediate Past President is "Ranger Rick," Bill Anton from Nevada. Secretary-Treasurer, Dave Tannenbaum from Florida. Assistant Secretary-Treasurer, Rita Alberegg from Virginia.

Jimmy Stewart, Past President and Judge Advocate from South Carolina. Chaplain Brian Wilner from Georgia. Assistant Chaplain Ernie Stroud from South Carolina. Sergeants-at-Arms: Leo Ortiz from New York and Faye Lyon from Washington State.

Members of our Resolutions Committee: Bob Brandt from Oklahoma; Robert Wilcoxon from Maryland; Sarah Royce from Washington. Members of the Audit Committee, Robert Burchee from Ohio; Ed Meisner from Texas; Michael O'Reilly from Washington State; and Charles Vandenplas from Wisconsin.

The members of our Constitution and Bylaws Committee: Carl Bailey from Alabama; Delphine Metcalf-Foster from California; Michael Dryling from Kansas; and Tim Timmerman from New Mexico.

And our Special Projects Committee: Don Kaczynski from Arkansas; John Ashmore from South Carolina; Jeff Lee from Louisiana; and, finally, Dave Spurgeon from Arkansas. That completes the list of our officers for 2011-2012.

COMMANDER TYSON: Thank you.

MR. CONNELLY: Thank you, Mr. Secretary. At this time would National Commander Tyson and National Adjutant Wilson please come forward. I have a couple of checks for you.

(Whereupon, Commander Tyson and Adjutant Wilson joined Mr. Connelly at the podium.)

MR. CONNELLY: Commander Tyson, Adjutant Wilson, I have a \$100 check in honor of Past President William Anton and \$1,500 for the National Foundation. I am greatly honored to give these to you and thank you. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Mr. Connelly presented Commander Tyson and Adjutant Wilson with the two checks.)

COMMANDER TYSON: Thank you, Joe. And congratulations on your election to the office. At this time I will ask Bill Taylor, Chairman, and Vince Darcangelo of the POW/MIA Interim Committee, for a presentation.

MR. WILLIAM B. TAYLOR: Mr. Wilson. Good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

MR. TAYLOR: I hope all of you are enjoying your stay here in New Orleans. Art gave me plenty of money last night but it wasn't quite enough to fill the crap tables. (Laughter)

Commander, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, the POW Committee wishes to present this flag to a patriot as well as an outstanding former Marine. I thought all of you would clap for the Marine. (Applause)

MR. TAYLOR: His service to this country is well recognized as well as his service to one of the greatest organizations that ever was and that's the Disabled American Veterans. At this time we would ask that Senior Vice Commander Don Samuels step forward.

(Whereupon, Senior Vice Commander Donald Samuels joined Mr. Taylor and Mr. Darcangelo at the podium.)

MR. TAYLOR: Don, you and I have been friends for many, many years as NSOs and now you have moved on to bigger and better places. (Laughter) We would like to present this POW flag to you and ask that you display this flag proudly and always remember that the men and women who served in this country are always at risk of being POWs and MIAs. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Mr. Taylor presented the POW/MIA flag to Senior Vice Commander Samuels.)

SENIOR VICE COMMANDER SAMUELS: Thank you, Bill. Appreciate it.

MR. TAYLOR: Thank you.

COMMANDER TYSON: Art, do you have any announcements, please?

ADJUTANT WILSON: The Nominating Committee will meet fifteen minutes after the session concludes this morning in the Magnolia Room. If you are on that Committee, please go directly there for your deliberations.

This afternoon's final business session will begin promptly at 1:30. We will start off with the important business of nominations and election of officers. Please be on time if you can. This evening's activities include introduction of the National Officers at six o'clock followed by delicious food and great entertainment.

As a reminder, we are giving away a DAV briefcases to five delegates attending the Convention. If your name is called and you are in the hall please see Tony Baskerville up here on the stage just as soon as we adjourn to get your briefcase.

You must be present to win, so they tell me. Patricia Hicks from Alabama; Donna Thames from Georgia; William Sturgis from New York; Harry Shamlee from Virginia; and Donald McGowen from Wisconsin. That's all I have, Commander.

COMMANDER TYSON: Thank you, Art. Reverend Edwards will you please lead us in prayer.

CHAPLAIN EDWARDS: Let us pray. Our God, we thank You for the opportunities and challenges of life that help us to develop character, courage, and conviction. We realize that our efforts are insufficient without Your help and our achievements are incomplete without Your blessings.

We pray that You will give us continued wisdom and understanding that we might accomplish the mission which is ours – building better lives for all American disabled veterans and their families.

Now may the strength of God sustain us; may the power of God preserve us; may the hand of God protect us; may the shield of God defend us; and may God bless all the men and women of the Disabled American Veterans. And let us as DAV members always remember our POWs and MIAs. In God we trust. Amen.

(Response of "Amen.")

COMMANDER TYSON: Thank you, Reverend Edwards. The Convention stands in recess until 1:30 this afternoon.

(Whereupon, the meeting recessed at 11:47 o'clock, a.m. on Tuesday, August 9, 2011.)

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FINAL BUSINESS SESSION

August 9, 2011

The Final Business Session of the Disabled American Veterans 90th National Convention convened in the Grand Ballroom on the First Level of the Hilton New Orleans Riverside Hotel, New Orleans, Louisiana, on Tuesday afternoon, August 9, 2011, and was called to order at 1:33 o'clock, p.m., by National Commander Wallace E. "Wally" Tyson.

COMMANDER TYSON: The Convention will come to order. As a reminder one more time, we ask that you turn off your cell phones like the Commander is doing (Laughter) and other portable devices. In opening this afternoon's business session it is fitting and proper that we once again render respect due to the flag. Hand salute.

(Whereupon, the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag was recited.)

COMMANDER TYSON: Two. We will now be led in prayer by the Reverend Edwards, National Chaplain.

CHAPLAIN EDWARDS: Our Father in Heaven, we thank You on behalf of those gathered here for the ability and nobility to remember You in our deliberations. Be near always, our God, to guide us in our decisions, to comfort us in our failures, and to keep us humble in our successes.

We pray that this time we share will draw us closer together as individuals. Be with us as we meet our commitments serving this outstanding veterans' organization, the Disabled American Veterans.

May we be filled with pride because of the Chapters, Districts, and Departments in which we serve, the country – the home of the brave – the land – the freedom we defended – the Creator, the God in whom we trust. Amen.

(Response of "Amen.")

COMMANDER TYSON: Please be seated. As a reminder, in order for a delegate to be heard at this Convention you must be recognized by the Chair. Only those delegates at a microphone will be recognized. Upon being so recognized, the delegate must state their name, your Chapter number, and the state they represent.

I would like to remind everyone that registration of delegates is now closed. I will call upon Chairman Donald Day for the final report of the Credentials Committee. Don.

CHAIRMAN DAY: Comrade Commander and delegates, this is the final report of the Credentials Committee and reflects the total registration as of 10:00 a.m. on August 9th, 2011.

There are 1,127 delegates and 34 alternates registered which includes 46 Departments and 431 Chapters. There are 7 National Officers, 17 National Executive Committeemen and 13 Past National Commanders currently registered. The total vote is 7,833. At this time I would like to extend my thanks to all of the Committee members and ask them all to stand and be recognized.

(Whereupon, the Credentials Committee members stood and were recognized with a round of applause.)

CHAIRMAN DAY: Stay standing. Stay standing. Committee, I want you up, up on your feet. Thank you. Because we would like to thank our advisors, Michael Dobmeier and Tony Baskerville, for their ever-present expertise. Thank you. (Applause)

Comrade Commander, that completes the final report of the Credentials Committee. On behalf of the Committee I move for its adoption.

COMMANDER TYSON: You have heard the motion. May I have a second? Mic 1.

MR. KENNETH KOOYMAN: Ken Kooyman, Department of Massachusetts, Chapter 57, second the motion.

COMMANDER TYSON: Thank you, Ken. All those in favor signify by saying aye; opposed. So ordered. I will now call on Dennis Joyner, Chairman of the Nominating Committee, for his report.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER DENNIS JOYNER: Thank you, Commander Tyson. Comrades and delegates, the National Convention Committee on Nomination of National Officers was called to order for its first business session on Saturday, August 6th, 2011, by Committee Advisors Gene A. Murphy and Richard Marbes.

The first order of our business was the election of a Convention Committee chairman and secretary. Dennis Joyner from Florida was elected as chairman and Fred Powers, California, was elected as secretary. The Committee met, as we said, on Saturday. We met again Sunday and we had our final meeting today.

The Committee interviewed ten candidates and the Nominating Committee recommends the following individuals for the National offices.

For the office of National Commander, Donald L. Samuels of Tennessee; (Applause)
for the office of National Senior Vice Commander, Larry A. Polzin of California (Applause)

for the office of National First Junior Vice Commander, Mary J. Bencivenga of New Jersey; (Applause) for the office of National Second Junior Vice Commander, Joseph W. Johnston of Ohio; (Applause) for the office of National Third Junior Vice Commander, Ronald L. Voegeli of South Carolina; (Applause) for the office of National Fourth Junior Vice Commander, Frank Maughan of Utah; (Applause) for the office of National Judge Advocate, Michael Dobmeier of North Dakota; (Applause) for the office of National Chaplain, Doctor Charles W. Edwards Junior of Texas. (Applause) Comrade Commander, this completes the report of the Committee on Nominations of National Officers. On behalf of the Committee I move the adoption of this report.

COMMANDER TYSON: You have heard the motion. May I have a second? Mic 1.

MR. KOOYMAN: Ken Kooyman, Massachusetts, Chapter 57, second the motion.

COMMANDER TYSON: Thank you. All those in favor signify by saying aye; opposed. So ordered. You have heard the report of the Committee on Nomination of National Officers and they have nominated Donald Samuels of Tennessee for National Commander. Here to second the nomination is Department of Tennessee Commander Sammy Rogers.

MR. SAMMY ROGERS: Comrade Tyson and my fellow DAV members, it is a great honor for me as Commander of the Department of Tennessee to second the nomination of Don Samuels for high office of National Commander of the Disabled American Veterans.

Like many of you, I have known Don for quite some time, and I am proud to call him friend. He has dedicated his life to helping his fellow disabled veterans and their families as a DAV National Service Officer, assistant commissioner of the Tennessee Department of Veterans Affairs, and a very active member of the DAV.

His commitment to our mission of building better lives for disabled veterans and their families and survivors is without question. He has always represented DAV extremely well in every capacity, as witnessed by his steady rise within the leadership of our great organization.

I can think of no one else better to lead our organization at this crucial time than – excuse me – in our crucial time in our history than Don Samuels.

Don has demonstrated his leadership on the battlefield, in the recovery and rehabilitation as a combat-disabled Marine Corps veteran of the Vietnam War, and in his many years of service to disabled American veterans and their families.

And I ask that everybody here today join me and the entire Tennessee delegation to elect one of our own as your National Commander of the Disabled American Veterans.

Thank you for this privilege to speak to you here today about one of the very best that the DAV has ever had to represent you and your interests in Washington, throughout this great country of ours, and throughout the world.

It is with distinct honor, joy and pride of the Tennessee Department to second the nomination of Don Samuels for high office of National Commander of the Disabled American Veterans. Thank you. (Applause)

COMMANDER TYSON: Thank you, Commander Rogers. The Chair will now call for any further nominations for the office of National Commander. Are there any further nominations? Are there any further nominations? Are there any further nominations?

If there are no further nominations I close the nominations and declare Donald Samuels elected as National Commander and instruct the National Adjutant to cast one unanimous ballot for his election. (Applause)

ADJUTANT WILSON: I, Arthur H. Wilson, National Adjutant of the Disabled American Veterans, hereby cast one unanimous ballot for Donald Samuels for the office of National Commander. (Standing Ovation)

COMMANDER TYSON: The Nominating Committee has nominated Larry Polzin for the office of National Senior Vice Commander. I now will call for any further nominations for National Senior Vice Commander.

Are there any other nominations for Senior Vice Commander? Are there any other nominations for Senior Vice Commander? Are there any other nominations for National Senior Vice Commander? Hearing none, I declare Larry A. Polzin elected as National Senior Vice Commander. (Applause)

The Nominating Committee has nominated Mary Bencivenga for the office of National First Junior Vice Commander. I now call for any other nominations for National First Junior Vice Commander.

Are there any other nominations for First Junior Vice Commander? Are there any further nominations for First Junior Vice Commander? Are there any further nominations for National

First Junior Vice Commander? If there are no further nominations, I will close the nominations and declare Mary Bencivenga elected as National First Junior Vice Commander. (Applause)

The Nominating Committee has nominated Joseph Johnston of Ohio for the office of National Second Junior Vice Commander. I will now call for any further nominations for National Second Junior Vice Commander.

Are there any further nominations? Are there any further nominations? Are there any further nominations? If there are no further nominations, I will close the nominations and declare Joseph Johnston elected National Second Junior Vice Commander. (Applause) Congratulations, Joe.

The Nominating Committee has nominated Ron Voegeli from South Carolina for the office of National Third Junior Vice Commander. I will now call for any further nominations for National Third Junior Vice Commander.

Are there any further nominations for the office of Third Junior Vice Commander? Are there any further nominations for the office of Third Junior Vice Commander? Are there any further nominations for the office of Third Junior Vice Commander? Hearing none, I close the nominations and declare Ron Voegeli, South Carolina, elected National Third Junior Vice Commander. (Applause)

The Nominating Committee has nominated Frank Maughan of Utah for the office of National Fourth Junior Vice Commander. I will now call for any further nominations for National Fourth Junior Vice Commander.

Are there any nominations for National Fourth Junior Vice Commander? Are there any nominations for National Fourth Junior Vice Commander? Are there any further nominations for National Fourth Junior Vice Commander? Hearing none, I declare the nominations closed and declare Frank Maughan elected as National Fourth Junior Vice Commander. (Applause)

The Nominating Committee has nominated Michael Dobmeier for the office of National Judge Advocate. I will call for any further nominations for National Judge Advocate. Are there any further nominations for the office of National Judge Advocate?

Any further nominations for the office of National Judge Advocate? Any further nominations for the office of National Judge Advocate? Hearing none, I close the nominations and declare Michael Dobmeier elected as National Judge Advocate. (Applause)

The Nominating Committee has nominated the Reverend Charles Edwards for the office of National Chaplain. I will now call for any further nominations for National Chaplain. Are there any further nominations for the office of Chaplain? Are there any further nominations for the office of Chaplain?

Are there any further nominations for the office of National Chaplain? If there are no further nominations, I close the nominations and declare Reverend Charles – drew a blank – Charles Edwards (Laughter) as elected National Chaplain. (Applause) I will now instruct National Adjutant Art Wilson to cast one unanimous ballot for these offices.

ADJUTANT WILSON: I, Arthur H. Wilson, National Adjutant of the Disabled American Veterans, cast one unanimous ballot for Larry Polzin as National Senior Vice Commander; Mary Bencivenga for National First Junior Vice Commander;

Joseph Johnston for National Second Junior Vice Commander; Ron Voegeli for National Third Junior Vice Commander; Frank Maughan for National Fourth Junior Vice Commander; Michael Dobmeier for National Judge Advocate; and Doctor Charles Edwards for National Chaplain. (Applause)

COMMANDER TYSON: At this time I would like to ask the newly-elected officers and their spouses be escorted to the stage please.

(Whereupon, the newly-elected officers and families were escorted to the stage.)

COMMANDER TYSON: Delegates, ladies and gentlemen and guests, at this time I would like to call upon National Commander-Elect Don Samuels for his remarks. (Applause)

COMMANDER-ELECT DONALD L. SAMUELS: Thank you. Thank you, National Commander Tyson, National Commander – National Adjutant Wilson, Department and Chapter Commanders, Auxiliary members, and honored guests and friends, and my fellow members of the Disabled American Veterans.

Thank you all very much. Thank you for this humbling opportunity to serve you. It is an immense honor and responsibility that I take very seriously.

You can be sure that I will put my all into carrying out the great traditions of this organization, working tirelessly for every disabled veteran, for their families and their survivors. Together, we will continue standing up for veterans and keeping our pledge to leave no veteran behind. (Applause)

When I was discharged from the Marine Corps in 1969, I came to a crossroads. At that point in my life – a young, wounded Vietnam veteran dealing with a disability – my life could have taken many different directions. But the DAV was there for me with much-needed help.

Then they offered me a chance to help my fellow veterans. And I will tell you, I have been hooked on this, the finest veterans' service organization anywhere, ever since. (Applause)

Being elected into this office is well beyond anything I could have ever imagined when I first became a National Service Officer. But now that I am here you can count on me to always remember our one mission – improve the quality of life for disabled veterans, for their families, and for their survivors. (Applause)

It would only be right to start by thanking some of the incredible people who really made this a reality for me. Thanks to the entire Eighth District led by NEC Gerald Humphries and to the entire Department of Tennessee, particularly my Department Commander Sammy Rogers, my Past Department Commander George Martin, the Tennessee Auxiliary and the Eighth District Auxiliary.

Would those of you from the Department of Mississippi, Alabama, Louisiana, and Tennessee please stand, if you can.

(Whereupon, the Eighth District stood and was recognized with a round of applause.)

COMMANDER-ELECT SAMUELS: You are truly one of the premier groups in this great organization. And I would not be up here without your longtime support. I am going to do my best to make all of you proud. Thank you. (Applause)

A very special thanks to my entire family who are here behind me. My daughter Deborah Wright and her daughter, my granddaughter, Hollie, are here.

(Whereupon, Deborah Wright and Hollie stood and were recognized with a round of applause.)

COMMANDER-ELECT SAMUELS: As are my son Don Junior and his wife Tawana; their son, my grandson, Don the Third.

(Whereupon, Tawana and Donald Samuels Jr., and Donald Samuels III stood and were recognized with a round of applause.)

COMMANDER-ELECT SAMUELS: My son is a U.S. Marine Master Gunnery Sergeant and a combat veteran of Desert Storm and the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan; and he's a DAV member of Nashville Chapter 3. (Applause) Nicole Samuels, my youngest son's wife, is here.

(Whereupon, Nicole Samuels stood and was recognized.)

COMMANDER-ELECT SAMUELS: My youngest son, Staff Sergeant Joshua, cannot be here today. He is a flight engineer in the United States Marine Corps and is currently deployed to Italy in support operations in that region. He is a veteran of combat tours, also, in Iraq and Afghanistan. (Applause) My youngest daughter Patricia and her husband Junior Harris is here.

(Whereupon, Patricia and Junior Harris stood and were recognized with a round of applause.)

COMMANDER-ELECT SAMUELS: I have seven other grandchildren who are not able to be here today. I also have some close personal friends of mine down front I want to recognize. My sister-in-law Patty and her husband Bob Peacock.

(Whereupon, Patty and Bob Peacock stood and were recognized with a round of applause.)

COMMANDER-ELECT SAMUELS: Bob was submariner in the U.S. Navy. Vader Stultz, a U.S. Marine Vietnam veteran, and his wife Wanda.

(Whereupon, Vader and Wanda Stultz stood and were recognized with a round of applause.)

COMMANDER-ELECT SAMUELS: Midge Straub and Chuck Straub. Chuck's a retired Air Force veteran.

(Whereupon, Midge and Chuck Straub stood and were recognized with a round of applause.)

COMMANDER-ELECT SAMUELS: Vader, Chuck and Bob are all disabled veterans and are life members of the DAV. (Applause) And, most importantly, I want to thank my wife, Sandy.

(Whereupon, Sandy Samuels stood and was recognized with a round of applause.)

COMMANDER-ELECT SAMUELS: You know, she has supported my work with veterans for many, many years. She tells me a lot, "There is a veteran at the front door" of our home. I ask, "How do you know it's a veteran?" She says, "Because they have a VA letter in their hand." (Laughter)

Disabled veterans have always been a part of my life. I would like to congratulate Commander Tyson on an outstanding year. Commander, you have made all of us proud and will be a very tough act to follow. (Applause) Thank you for your deep dedication to disabled veterans.

Lastly, because of the leadership, vision and dedication of Art Wilson, our professional staffs in Cold Spring and Washington continue to take this organization to new levels, further

distinguishing the DAV as the unquestioned leader among veterans' service organizations. We owe all of you our sincere appreciation and thank you.

Art was a highly respected National Service Officer when I first came aboard. Everyone was aware of his technical abilities and we all looked up to him. I believe the DAV is what it is today, which is the best, because Art – because Art remembers what the DAV is all about and ensures everyone around him understands it too. Thank you, Art. (Applause)

It is such an honor to stand before you. No other organization's membership body can match your dedication. Your service to the men and women whose service and sacrifice have kept American strong and free cannot be matched.

I am very much looking forward to this year and the challenges that will come with the current stormy atmosphere in Washington and a very important election year just around the corner. No matter, we stand ready to work with the government so that the needs of veterans are understood and addressed in a way that will improve the care and quality of life for disabled veterans and their families.

Standing up for veterans also means making sure everyone knows how to get needed care. We, as veterans helping veterans, need to aide those who are suffering. They need to know about the hotlines the VA has set up, about the VA facilities affecting free and immediate care. We need to know what symptoms to watch for and we need to help other veterans and their families and friends understand the real truth about Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.

To have a successful tour I need everyone to continue charging forward. Our grassroots organization sets DAV apart from everyone else. All of us, our blue caps, in particular, we need to ensure our government knows that the VA urgently needs to modernize the disability benefit claims processing system.

Not only does the VA need to get claims through much faster, they must get them through correctly the first time. (Applause) This means we need Chapter and Department leaders to take an active role themselves. We must lead from the front and be mentors to inspire newer members to help ensure our future.

That said, we need to really embrace our younger disabled veterans, showing them they are needed to help ensure our future. Every single veteran is important to our success.

I am excited about continuing our relationship with Harley-Davidson during my term. The Harley's Heroes program is doing great things for veterans by getting our Mobile Service Office into communities around the nation, helping us bring benefits, education and counseling to our veterans free of charge to them and their families. I appreciate Harley-Davidson's commitment and I appreciate our skilled counselors who are developing and prosecuting veterans' claims.

Our Voluntary Service Program is as strong as ever, making sure that the sick and disabled veterans are not left behind, taking them to their medical appointments, getting them the care they need and earned.

Our volunteers are in the hospitals, visiting disabled veterans at home, going where the government cannot or will not go. The DAV is leading the way and I am proud to be a part of this organization and even prouder to have been chosen to lead it. Please, could all of our volunteers who are present stand, if you can, so you can be recognized?

(Whereupon, all DAV volunteers present stood and were recognized with a round of applause.)

COMMANDER-ELECT SAMUELS: Our largest endeavor in fulfilling that mission is our Service program. Clearly our unparalleled program is the backbone of the DAV, extending from the Chapters through the Departments to the National level. For those of you who make it your mission to serve, I sincerely thank you.

Our Transition Service Officers, National Service Officers, Department and Chapter Service Officers are on the frontlines, carrying our flag, continuing the outstanding tradition of service. They are meticulous, ensuring that every earned benefit is received. I am particularly proud of the jobs they do and they are most deserving of our support.

You know, after about 20 years as an NSO myself, I am well aware of the dedication it takes to properly provide the level of service that we as an organization pledge to deliver.

Our CSOs, DSOs, TSOs, and National Service Officers have never wavered in their commitment to serve our nation's service-connected disabled veterans, their families and survivors. No one has more impact on our organization's ability to meet our primary mission. No one has more impact on our organization's stellar reputation.

And I believe no one has a tougher task than those of you representing veterans and their families with claims for benefits from the government. In addition to the long hours, often

frustrating circumstances, and tedious tasks, a service officer must have a solid understanding of the claims process in its complex entirety.

Recognizing the vital importance of Chapter and Department Service programs to the fulfillment of DAV's overall mission of service to veterans, National offers the highly-acclaimed Department and Chapter Service Officer Certification Program.

I feel strongly that every single service officer in the entire organization should complete this program during my term as your National Commander. The program is designed to enhance the knowledge and professionalism of the non-accredited Department and Chapter Service Officer.

Claims work is covered in detail, explaining the adjudication process from start to finish, providing the knowledge necessary to creating a successful and quick claim. It also covers benefits, entitlements, compensation, pensions, and several other imperative topics.

In short, it will make you an effective service officer, an asset to your community. It would be an asset to your community. Please, could all of our service officers who are here please stand if you can be recognized.

(Whereupon, all service officers present stood and were recognized with a round of applause.)

COMMANDER-ELECT SAMUELS: As combat in Iraq, Afghanistan and other places draws down, and as more and more active duty and recently discharged veterans learn about the Disabled American Veterans, we will continue seeing more and more veterans knocking on our doors in need of our help.

Please ensure you are prepared to provide them with the very best service possible because they deserve it. Those veterans, their families and this wonderful organization depend on you to be ready.

Thank you so much for this opportunity, this responsibility and this honor. God bless you. God bless those still serving. God bless the DAV. And God bless America. Thank you. (Standing Ovation)

(Whereupon, Commander Tyson presented the National Commander's cap to Commander-Elect Samuels.)

COMMANDER TYSON: Very good. Don, if you will allow me, we have a special presentation for you direct from Italy.

(Whereupon, Staff Sergeant Joshua Samuels addressed the Convention via video:

STAFF SERGEANT JOSHUA SAMUELS: "First off, let me say congratulations. The DAV is in good hands with you as its leader. I have never met an individual more dedicated to America and its veterans. I am sorry I can't be there but, as you know, work must continue.

"It makes me extremely proud to know you will be helping to improve the lives of our returning service members and their families. And I'm also very proud of knowing how you have helped and continue to help veterans from previous engagements.

You are a great American and a great father. Congratulations. I love you.") (Applause)

COMMANDER TYSON: Aren't surprises nice? Ladies and gentlemen, it is my pleasure to introduce to you, your new National Senior Vice Commander, Larry Polzin.

SENIOR VICE COMMANDER-ELECT LARRY A. POLZIN: Thank you, Commander, newly-elected Commander Don Samuels. It's great to say "Commander Samuels." (Applause)

National Adjutant Art Wilson, and all my fellow comrades out there and all of the staff members at Washington and Cincinnati, I sincerely would like to take this moment to thank each and every one of you for your fine support and trust in me to lead this organization at a higher level this coming year.

I would also, at this time, like to introduce my wife Judy who has traveled with me this past year once again. And this is our anniversary present today – you promoted me.

(Whereupon, Judy Polzin stood and was recognized with a round of applause.)

SENIOR VICE COMMANDER-ELECT POLZIN: And I would like to thank all the states that I visited over the past for your warm hospitality and your dedication that you show to all our disabled veterans in helping our veterans have better lives throughout the year.

Also, I'd like to ask the members of the Sixteenth District to please stand to be recognized and thank you all for your support.

(Whereupon, the members of the Sixteenth District stood and were recognized with a round of applause.)

SENIOR VICE COMMANDER-ELECT POLZIN: Thank you. And to all of you, it has been a great and wonderful learning experience this past year. I've learned a lot and I'm looking forward to serving one of the best and the greatest organizations one more year. Thank you. (Applause)

COMMANDER TYSON: Next, the First Junior Vice Commander-Elect Mary Bencivenga. (Applause)

FIRST JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER MARY J. BENCIVENGA: Thank you, Commander Tyson. Thank you, Line Officers. And thank you, Adjutant Art Wilson for your leadership. And I ask you to continue mentoring me as I serve you this one more year.

I also want to thank the DAV staff. They are so professional. It's incredible. It's the best organization that I've ever seen in my lifetime. The Nominating Committee, I thank you for all of your hard work. That is a grueling thing to do. And thank you for the opportunity for one more year.

But ultimately all of you in this room is the reason I am standing here today. Thank you to New Jersey, Commander Steve Smith, Adjutant Steve Duncan; District 4, which is New Jersey, Connecticut and Delaware; the NEC is Joe Harris. And from my home Chapter I have Jerry Mulligan and Frank Dascoli. Please stand up now and be recognized.

(Whereupon, the members of the Fourth District stood and were recognized with a round of applause.)

FIRST JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER-ELECT BENCIVENGA: You are my troops, all of you in District 4. And I thank you for your hard work each and every day.

Now most dear to my heart is the National Service Officers. We happen to have a real star in New Jersey, Nicholas Bernardi. Are you here Nick? All right, well, please stand. And all the NSOs, please stand. All NSOs, please stand.

(Whereupon, Mr. Bernardi and the NSOs stood and were recognized with a round of applause.)

FIRST JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER-ELECT BENCIVENGA: The National Service Officers are really a true powerhouse of the Disabled American Veterans. And I just thank you so much for giving your life to disabled American veterans because that's really what it amounts to.

And for my family, all of you in this room are my family. But at this time I would like for all of my sister veterans to stand up and be recognized. And if you can't stand, please raise your hand.

(Whereupon, all the women veterans present stood and were recognized with a round of applause.)

FIRST JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER-ELECT BENCIVENGA: You're incredible. Thank you so much. With me are my children Paul and Sarah. Would you please stand?

(Whereupon, Paul and Sarah Bencivenga stood and were recognized with a round of applause.)

FIRST JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER-ELECT BENCIVENGA: Paul and Sarah, I want to thank you for your support and your love and thank you for coming with me to this Convention. (Applause) And, lastly, lastly I must mention my husband Brandon.

Right now he is working so hard. He is working two jobs. And he is unable to be here in body but I assure you he is with me in spirit everywhere I go. And I love you Brandon and I can't wait to be home to see you again. (Applause)

God bless you. God bless our troops. And God bless the Disabled American Veterans. And thank you so much. (Applause)

COMMANDER TYSON: From the Buckeye State, please welcome Second Junior Vice Commander-Elect Joe Johnston.

SECOND JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER-ELECT JOSEPH JOHNSTON: Thank you, my friends and comrades, for electing me to serve you and the Disabled American Veterans as your Second Junior Vice Commander.

I can think of no greater honor than to be a part of the National leadership of this most excellent organization. You can rest assured that I will dedicate myself to the principles and the established missions and goals of this organization for the future years to come.

Commanders Wally and Don, you've been my examples. You've rendered me your friendship and your support. And I know you understand that those feelings of support and mutual friendship are reciprocal.

Art, thank you for being my friend, my counselor, and for all of the great commitments and leadership that you bring to the DAV every day.

To my family present with me today, my wife Vicki and my son Michael.

(Whereupon, Vicki and Michael Johnston stood and were recognized with a round of applause.)

SECOND JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER-ELECT JOHNSTON: I love both of you very much and thank you for all the love that you've given me in return, even though I don't deserve

it. (Laughter) To the Ohio Buckeyes, thank you for your understanding, your support, your love, your friendship and confidence in me through these many years. Please stand and be recognized.

(Whereupon, the members from the State of Ohio stood and were recognized with a round of applause.)

SECOND JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER-ELECT JOHNSTON: To all disabled American veterans, my brothers and sisters, my friends, you all are my inspiration. You're the greatest group of veterans in this land.

And, finally, I would be remiss if I did not thank Almighty God who has shown me this calling to support our nation's veterans and their families. May God bless you all and certainly may God continue to bless the United States of America. Thank you. (Applause)

COMMANDER TYSON: Now please welcome one of my neighbors, the Third Junior Vice Commander-Elect from South Carolina Mr. Ron Voegeli. (Applause)

THIRD JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER-ELECT RON VOEGELI: Good afternoon.

(Response of "Good afternoon.")

THIRD JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER-ELECT VOEGELI: National Commander Wally, National Adjutant Art Wilson, National Commander-Elect Don Samuels.

I just want to come up here and I want to thank God for giving me the opportunity to be here today as a disabled American veteran that I can look at disabled American veterans when they come to see me to do service work, that I can have empathy and understand what they're talking about and listen to them.

I think it gives us all an insight instead of looking at someone that has a limb missing or a disablement of some kind. It gives us a better understanding and they understand that we understand. And we work their claims.

Second, I'd like to thank my wife, Sandra, who has been by my side for the last 40 years. Sandra, please stand up.

(Whereupon, Sandra Voegeli stood and was recognized with a round of applause.)

THIRD JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER-ELECT VOEGELI: We have five children. I'm not bringing all my grandkids up here, I tell you that. (Laughter) They'd tear this place down. I'd like to thank the people who have been behind me. Over in the right hand corner of the front row is the Ninth District and the great states of North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia. Please stand up.

(Whereupon, the members of the Ninth District stood and were recognized with a round of applause.)

THIRD JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER-ELECT VOEGELI: And I'd like to thank Rodney Tucker, the NEC for the last two years, and the brand new one over here, Moses McIntosh.

(Whereupon, Rodney Tucker and Moses McIntosh stood and were recognized with a round of applause.)

THIRD JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER-ELECT VOEGELI: I appreciate the Nominating Committee letting me come through for one more year. I appreciate everyone voting for me. I appreciate all your support, all your help. And I look forward to doing the best that I can as long as I can for all of you, every one. I thank you very much. (Applause)

COMMANDER TYSON: Please welcome the National Fourth Junior Vice Commander-Elect Frank Maughan. (Applause)

FOURTH JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER-ELECT FRANK MAUGHAN: I'd like to start my talk by saying unaccustomed as I am to speaking in front of the public but the last time I heard somebody say that they launched into a 22.5 minute speech and I'm not going to do that. (Laughter)

I'd like to thank my Chapter and the Department of Utah for allowing me the opportunity to compete for this position. I'd like to thank the Department of Wyoming and Colorado and New Mexico for lending their support. District 17, will you rise and be recognized.

(Whereupon, the members of the Seventeenth District stood and were recognized with a round of applause.)

FOURTH JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER-ELECT MAUGHAN: I'll be on my own tonight at the Installation. My bride of 46 years has just had her second hip operation five weeks ago and she decided that the heat, the humidity, and the crush of people were probably not conducive to her ability to motivate herself for the long haul.

I look forward to being able to represent each of you and each of those who you represent wherever Disabled American Veterans ask me to go and do whatever they ask me to do. I'm grateful for this opportunity. May God bless each of you. God bless those serving. God bless America. Thank you. (Applause)

COMMANDER TYSON: Ladies and gentlemen, please welcome the National Judge Advocate Michael Dobmeier. (Applause)

JUDGE ADVOCATE-ELECT MICHAEL E. DOBMEIER: Thank you, Commander Wally, Adjutant Wilson, friends. I don't know about if you're getting tired of seeing me but I'm not getting tired of seeing you. (Laughter)

But I can tell you that none of us at this table take this for granted. We know that this is a one-year term. And we're all ready, willing and able to serve. And before I get in trouble please meet my wife, Sandy.

(Whereupon, Sandra Dobmeier stood and was recognized with a round of applause.)

JUDGE ADVOCATE-ELECT DOBMEIER: And Commander Samuels, we've got your back.

COMMANDER-ELECT SAMUELS: Thank you, sir. (Applause)

COMMANDER TYSON: Now I'm going to get it right this time. Please welcome the Reverend Dr. Charles Edwards. (Applause)

CHAPLAIN-ELECT CHARLES W. EDWARDS JUNIOR: Indeed, God has blessed me. He has blessed me in terms of being elected once again to serve this great and outstanding organization. I would like to thank the Nominating Committee, the members of the C&A, and specifically the members of the great State of Texas. Will you stand, please.

(Whereupon, the members from the State of Texas stood and were recognized with a round of applause.)

UNIDENTIFIED DELEGATE: You started in South Carolina. (Laughter)

CHAPLAIN-ELECT EDWARDS: It did start. My first membership was Chapter 4 in South Carolina. (Applause) I want you to know that I need your prayers and I will be praying for all of you. God bless all of you, my brothers and sisters of the Disabled American Veterans. Thank you. (Applause)

COMMANDER TYSON: We will continue with the unfinished business of the Convention. National Adjutant Wilson, would you please read the list of newly-elected National Executive Committee members.

ADJUTANT WILSON: The following members have been elected to the National Executive Committee for the two-year term 2011-2013: First District, Leo Mooney; Third District, Richard Schatz; Fifth District, Robert Cudworth; Seventh District, Philip Condon; Ninth District, Moses McIntosh, Junior; (Applause) Eleventh District, Joseph Lenhart; Thirteenth District, James Thureau; Fifteenth District, David Bolton; Seventeenth District, Timothy Timmerman; Nineteenth District, Pamela Beale; Twenty-First District, Marilyn Smith. (Applause)

COMMANDER TYSON: At this time I will entertain a motion to discharge the Credentials Committee with the thanks of the Convention. Mic 1.

MR. KOOYMAN: Ken Kooyman, Department of Massachusetts, Chapter 57, so moves.

COMMANDER TYSON: Thank you, Ken. Mic 2.

MR. LAWRENCE D'ANGELO: Larry D'Angelo, Florida, seconds that motion.

COMMANDER TYSON: Thank you. We have a motion and a second. All those in favor please signify by saying aye; opposed. So ordered. Believe it or not that concludes today's agenda. (Applause) Art, do you have any announcements?

ADJUTANT WILSON: I do. (Laughter) As a reminder – this is very, very important, please – to all National Executive Committee men, including those newly-elected, they will meet, the National Executive Committee will meet immediately following adjournment of this Convention at the Napoleon Ballroom on the third floor. And that's immediately so we can get into a swearing-in ceremony that will be held at that time and all NEC Alternates should also attend this swearing-in ceremony.

The Board of Directors will meet immediately following the NEC meeting in the Versailles Ballroom, also on the Third Floor.

The presentation of the National Officers will begin at six o'clock this evening right here in the Grand Ballroom followed by a reception.

The Meanies, a band named from the Beatles Yellow Submarine Song, form a hot six-pack band. Beginning at eight o'clock, it's a musical experience for all ages. So come on by and enjoy the evening filled with ceremony, food, music and entertainment. Thank you, Commander. (Applause)

COMMANDER TYSON: Thank you, Art. Chaplain Edwards, will you please lead us in a closing prayer.

CHAPLAIN EDWARDS: Eternal Father, we render to You acknowledgement of Your supreme dominion over all of us and gratitude for Your watchfulness as we come to this, the close of the 90th National Convention of the Disabled American Veterans.

As we come to the end of this wonderful experience, we ask that You will refresh and renew and send us on courageously as we go to serve America's disabled veterans. Be merciful to our honored dead, the memory of their lives because of their courage, which inspires us to noble actions and to the eternal preservation of our priceless liberty. Be with those who are prisoners of war and missing in action. And in Your mercy may we, the members of the Disabled American Veterans, find Your peace.

Grant us from above this day the challenge of high endeavor, the beauty of a humble spirit, the strong courage and will to advance the interests and work for the betterment of all disabled American veterans. Keep us safe as we journey to our various destinations. In God we trust. Amen.
(Response of "Amen.")

COMMANDER TYSON: Will you please maintain your position. Will the Department of Massachusetts Honor Guard please retire the Colors.

(Whereupon, the Colors were retired.)

COMMANDER TYSON: Two. Ladies and gentlemen, the 90th National Convention of the Disabled American Veterans is now adjourned. We'll see you next year in Las Vegas. (Applause)
(Whereupon the meeting adjourned on Tuesday, August 9, 2011, at 2:38 o'clock, p.m.)

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DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS AUXILIARY
89th NATIONAL CONVENTION
Hilton New Orleans Riverside Hotel
New Orleans, Louisiana
August 7, 2011
First Business Session
- - -

The First Business Session of the Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary convened in the Grand Salon C/D on the First Floor of the Hilton New Orleans Riverside Hotel, New Orleans, Louisiana, on Sunday morning, August 7, 2011, and was called to order at 9:08 o'clock, a.m., by National Adjutant Judith Hezlep.

ADJUTANT JUDITH C. HEZLEP: National Sergeant-at-Arms please present National Commander Susan Henry to the platform.

(Whereupon, the Sergeant-at-Arms escorted Commander Susan M. Henry to the platform.)

ADJUTANT HEZLEP: National Sergeant-at-Arms please have the National Officers escorted to the platform. National Chaplain, Chris Easley.

(Whereupon, National Chaplain Christopher J. Easley was escorted to the platform.)

ADJUTANT HEZLEP: National Fourth Junior Vice Commander Linda Stake.

(Whereupon, Fourth Junior Vice Commander Linda Stake was escorted to the platform.)

ADJUTANT HEZLEP: National Third Junior Vice Commander LeeAnn Karg.

(Whereupon, Third Junior Vice Commander LeAnn B. Karg was escorted to the platform.)

ADJUTANT HEZLEP: National Second Junior Vice Commander Susan Miller.

(Whereupon, Second Junior Vice Commander Susan K. Miller was escorted to the platform.)

ADJUTANT HEZLEP: National First Junior Vice Commander Donna Adams.

(Whereupon, First Junior Vice Commander Donna M. Adams was escorted to the platform.)

ADJUTANT HEZLEP: National Senior Vice Commander Patty Rapisand.

(Whereupon, Senior Vice Commander Patrice Rapisand was escorted to the platform.)

ADJUTANT HEZLEP: National Judge Advocate Kathy Wiley.

(Whereupon, Judge Advocate Kathryn A. Wiley was escorted to the platform.)

ADJUTANT HEZLEP: Immediate Past National Commander Kay Egan.

(Whereupon, Immediate Past National Commander Kay Egan was escorted to the podium.)

ADJUTANT HEZLEP: National Sergeant-at-Arms please have our National Convention Chairman Linda Acosta escorted to the platform.

(Whereupon, Convention Chairman Linda Acosta was escorted to the platform.)

ADJUTANT HEZLEP: National Sergeant-at-Arms, please have the Past National Commanders escorted to the chairs in the front of the room.

(Whereupon, the Past National Commanders were escorted to the chairs in the front of the room as their names were called.)

ADJUTANT HEZLEP: Lucille McCarthy, Past National Commander from Florida; Betty Hall, Past National Commander, Texas; (Applause) Maria Tedrow, Past National Commander from Ohio; (Applause)

Jane Troutman, Past National Commander, North Carolina; (Applause) Paula Raymond, Past National Commander, Illinois; (Applause) Carol Gray, Past National Commander, Michigan; (Applause)

Past National Commander Renee Jones, North Carolina; (Applause) Past National Commander Linda Trulio, New Jersey; (Applause) Past National Commander Judy Steinhouse, North Dakota; (Applause)

Past National Commander Donna Tanner, Massachusetts; (Applause) Past National Commander Sandy Dobmeier, North Dakota. (Applause) Where did you hear the word "strut" to the front? (Laughter)

National Sergeant-at-Arms please have the State Commanders or the individual casting the State vote escorted to the front in their seats, please.

(Whereupon, the State Department Commanders were escorted to the chairs in the front of the room as their names were called.)

ADJUTANT HEZLEP: Alabama, Josephine Pike; (Applause) Arizona, Cathy Price; (Applause) Arkansas, Linda Sipes; (Applause) California, Joel Adema; (Applause) Colorado, Doris DiSalvo; (Applause)

(Whereupon, someone whistled loudly.)

ADJUTANT HEZLEP: Who did that come from? Delaware, Sarah Kashner; (Applause) Florida, Billie Christian; (Applause) Georgia, Shirley Mauldin; (Applause) Illinois, Bernice

Vargas; (Applause) Idaho, Ramona Moss; (Applause) Indiana, Lisa Peterson; (Applause) Iowa, Connie Bolton; Kansas, Sandra Szymanski; (Applause) Kentucky, Charlyn Davis-Hager; (Applause) Louisiana, Betty Carter; (Applause) Maine, Sylvia Heath; (Applause) Maryland, Carol Simmons; (Applause) Massachusetts, Jacqueline Herrick; (Applause) Michigan, Linda Walters; (Applause) Minnesota, Marilyn Hardt; Mississippi, Peggy Bell; (Applause) Missouri, Janice Howard; (Applause) Montana, Mary Ghee; (Applause) Nebraska, Rebecca Bowman; (Applause) Nevada, Carolyn Walker; (Applause) New Hampshire, Wanda Furbish; (Applause) New Jersey, Barbara Malone; (Applause) New Mexico, Brenda Moore; (Applause) New York, Janice Bailey; (Applause) North Carolina, Shirley McIntire; (Applause) North Dakota, Judy Steinhouse; (Applause) Ohio, Denise Proffitt; (Applause) Oklahoma, Cheri Brandt; (Applause) Oregon, Christina Fairin; (Applause) Pennsylvania, Loretta Nosko; (Applause) Rhode Island, Donna Folcarelli; (Applause) South Carolina, Clyrissa Brown; (Applause) South Dakota, Karen Bolton; (Applause) Tennessee, Sandy Martin; (Applause) Texas, Craig Johniken; (Applause) Utah, Helene Pockrus; (Applause) Vermont, Camilla Cook; (Applause) Virginia, Linda King; (Applause) Washington, Micki Kraft; (Applause) West Virginia, Ellen Griggs; (Applause) Wisconsin, Rose Williams; (Applause) Wyoming, Margaret Lucas; (Applause) Puerto Rico, Noemi Burgos. (Applause) National Sergeant-at-Arms, present and post the colors of Louisiana.

(Whereupon, the Colors for the Department of Louisiana were presented and posted.)

ADJUTANT HEZLEP: National Sergeant-at-Arms, please present the National colors.

(Whereupon, the National Colors were presented.)

ADJUTANT HEZLEP: National Sergeant-at-Arms, post the National Colors.

(Whereupon, the National Colors were posted.)

ADJUTANT HEZLEP: National Sergeant-at-Arms, please dismiss the Color Bearers.

(Whereupon, the Color Bearers were dismissed.)

ADJUTANT HEZLEP: You're dismissed. We will now have a prayer by National Chaplain Christopher Easley.

CHAPLAIN CHRISTOPHER J. EASLEY: Before we ask the Lord to bless us and this Convention, let us please have a moment of silence in respect and remembrance for the 30 brave souls that gave their life this weekend defending the world from tyranny and oppression. May God be with them and their families.

(Whereupon, a moment of silence was observed.)

CHAPLAIN EASLEY: Let us pray. Oh, great, merciful God, thank You for allowing us to gather here for the DAVA National Convention. We thank You for giving the men and women the idea and foresight to create the DAV and the DAVA.

We know, Lord, without these great leaders we would not have the care and benefits to help our nation's disabled veterans and their families.

Lord, as we go about our meetings at this Convention, open our hearts and minds so that we may gain knowledge to take back to our homes, our units, and our communities.

Lord, we ask that You be with our friends and family back home. Keep the safe so we may be able to be with them when we return home.

Lord, we ask that You be with our service men and women as they defend the world from terror and spread the gift of democracy. Give them the comfort in their hearts that they know that You are with them and their loved ones.

Lord, we ask that You be with the families of those who have paid the ultimate price and now stand in Your ranks. Comfort them and let them know that they were not alone for You are with them to guide them to heaven.

We ask that You be with our veterans and families for many may carry the physical signs of battle but many more cover the mental ravages of battle in their minds.

Lord, give them the strength to carry on and continue their service to you, their families, their country and their fellow veterans. God bless America and God bless the DAVA. Amen.

(Response of "Amen.")

ADJUTANT HEZLEP: Thank you. The Pledge of Allegiance will be led by National Americanism Chairman LeeAnn Karg.

THIRD JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER LeeANN B. KARG: Free your hands. Stand at attention. Place your right hand over your heart and repeat with me the Pledge of Allegiance to our Flag.

(Whereupon, Third Junior Vice Commander and Americanism Chairman LeeAnn B. Karg led the Pledge of Allegiance.)

COMMANDER SUSAN M. HENRY: The National Anthem will be performed by Ruth Henry.

(Whereupon, the National Anthem was sung by Ruth Henry.)

ADJUTANT HEZLEP: Very good. Thank you. You may be seated. The Constitution and Bylaws of the Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary state that the supreme legislative powers of this organization shall be vested in the Annual National Convention composed of National Officers and representatives of the state Departments and Units.

In accordance with these directives I, Judith C. Hezlep, National Auxiliary Adjutant declare that the 89th National Convention of the Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary be convened in at New Orleans, Louisiana.

Consideration and disposition of business brought before this Convention shall be conducted in accordance with the National Constitution and Bylaws now in force. To all present take due notice thereof and govern yourselves accordingly.

At this time I'd like to present to you your Auxiliary National Commander from Tennessee, although she doesn't talk real funny, (Laughter) Susan Henry. Thank you, Susan. Have a good Convention. (Standing Ovation)

COMMANDER HENRY: Good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

COMMANDER HENRY: I'm glad to see all of you here, wide awake, ready to conduct business. The first order of business will be hearing from – where did she go? – National Convention Chairman Linda Acosta. (Applause)

NATIONAL CONVENTION CHAIRMAN LINDA ACOSTA: Good morning, everybody.

(Response of "Good morning.")

NATIONAL CONVENTION CHAIRMAN ACOSTA: Good morning. Let's go.

(Response of "Good morning.")

CONVENTION CHAIRMAN ACOSTA: How are you all doing? I hope you all are enjoy yourselves. We appreciate all of you all being here. And I want you all to have a good time.

Forget-me-not Luncheon, if you missed out, you're going to miss out really bad. So welcome, again. We appreciate you all being here in Louisiana.

We love our state so welcome, again. And I have two little things that Judy might not like but I have a gift for Judy and Susan, some chocolate, white chocolate alligators. (Laughter)

COMMANDER HENRY: I like chocolate.

CONVENTION CHAIRMAN ACOSTA: It's chocolate, Judy.

COMMANDER HENRY: Thank you.

CONVENTION CHAIRMAN ACOSTA: Yes, it's white chocolate alligators. This comes from a special company from where I am from, special disability adults and children, they have their own chocolate factory.

And it's unbelievable what they can do, unbelievable. So God bless you all. Have a good Convention. Thank you all for being here. (Applause)

ADJUTANT HEZLEP: Thank you.

COMMANDER HENRY: I would like to introduce and have them stand once again, the Past National Commanders: Lucille McCarthy, (Applause) Maria Tedrow, (Applause)

Betty Hall, (Applause) Jane Troutman, (Applause) Paula Raymond, (Applause) Carol Gray, (Applause) Renee Jones, (Applause) Judy Steinhouse, (Applause) Donna Tanner, (Applause)

Linda Trulio, (Applause) Kathryn Wiley, (Applause) Sandy Dobmeier (Applause) – she's way back there – and Kay Egan. (Applause) Thank you.

I will now call on Past National Commander Judy Steinhouse to bring greetings.

(Whereupon, Past National Commander Judy Steinhouse advanced to the podium.)

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER JUDY M. STEINHOUSE: National Commander Susan, National Adjutant Judy, Assistant

Adjutant Pat, Line Officers, Past National Commanders, delegates, guests and friends, on behalf of the Past National Commanders, welcome to N'Awlins. (Laughter)

Commander Susan, we wish you a very successful Convention and I think that from the start of it it's going pretty good. But on behalf of the Past National Commanders we'd like to present you with this little gift. Wrapping is wonderful, right?

(Whereupon, Commander Henry was presented with a gift from the Past National Commanders.)

COMMANDER HENRY: My kind of wrapping. More alligators. It's a heavy alligator.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER STEINHOUSE: And we wish, again, for you to have a very successful Convention.

COMMANDER HENRY: It's a Forget-me-not paperweight. (Applause) Thank you.

(Whereupon, Past National Commander Steinhouse withdrew from the podium.)

COMMANDER HENRY: How many people in here are first-timers? Please stand.

(Whereupon, first-time attendees stood and were recognized with a round of applause.)

COMMANDER HENRY: Okay. If you would please be seated but raise your hand the Junior Pages are going to pass out a first-timer ribbon we would like to have added to your badge.

And that way if you have a question, just ask somebody who is not wearing a first-timer ribbon.

(Laughter) And we will, and everybody else will know, you know, to give you information as needed.

(Whereupon, the Junior Pages distributed the first-timer ribbons.)

COMMANDER HENRY: Would the Outstanding Member of the Year, Valerie Lintz, please stand and be recognized.

(Whereupon, Mrs. Lintz stood and was recognized with a round of applause.)

COMMANDER HENRY: Thank you. Anyone making or seconding a motion must go to the microphone, state their name, their Unit and state Department, and wait to be recognized.

You must go to the microphone so our court reporter, Tracy, over here can get everything in the minutes. If you don't go to the microphone, we will pause while you do go to a microphone.

Would the Credentials Chairman, Karen Majors, please come forward to give the preliminary report from the Credentials Committee.

CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN KAREN MAJORS: Madame Commander, National Officers, delegates and guests, the Credential report is as follows: total Units registered, 355; total Departments registered, 49, for a total of 404.

Delegates registered, 380; alternates registered, 28; other registered, 66; for a total of 474. Total Unit votes, 239; total Department votes, 49; National Officers votes, 7; Past National Commander votes, 10; for a grand total of votes of 305.

COMMANDER HENRY: As is obvious, the computer did not correctly calculate the correct votes for the unit registration so we can't adopt this. We will work on getting it corrected very quickly.

SENIOR VICE COMMANDER PATRICE RAPISAND: We are going to have a change in the schedule so I have a great surprise for all of you. We're going to begin the Convention with Susan Henry's report. At this time I would like to present to you our National Commander, Susan Henry. (Applause)

COMMANDER HENRY: Thank you. In Atlanta, Georgia, on August 3rd, 2010, you have me the privilege of serving this organization's highest office by electing me as National Commander. Thank you for your confidence and support.

This has been a tremendous year. I've done a lot of traveling this year representing the DAV Auxiliary. And throughout the year I have been amazed at how much work the DAV Auxiliary is doing to support and help built better lives for America's disabled veterans and their families.

In anticipation of a busy and active year I had a necessary minor knee surgery on August 20th. It was timed so that I would be off the crutches for the boat ride in Pennsylvania and completely healed by National Fall Conference.

As usual, the best laid plans never go as planned. On Labor Day, September 6th and 7th, I traveled to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, for the Sharing and Caring boat ride.

This is an amazing weeklong event in which the various service organizations bring in veterans from seven or more nursing homes in three states to go on a riverboat ride and have lunch.

It also includes presenting a Memorial Wreath and a dance contest. The veterans look forward to this field trip all year long. And I want to thank National Junior Activities Chairman Laurie Stopyra for meeting me there and escorting me through this event.

September 29th through October 3rd found me in Cincinnati for National Fall Conference. Even though I was still using a wheelchair and got sewer gas poisoned, as did several others of us, Fall Conference itself was great.

Based on a recommendation from the Strategic Planning Committee we replaced a portion of the program skits with the First Annual Carnival. So there was more information about the DAV Auxiliary and more fun.

November 9th and 10th I traveled to Washington, D.C., for the groundbreaking ceremony for the American Veterans Disabled for LIFE Memorial. The National Monument is within the view of the Capitol Building and honors all veterans disabled during military service.

This was an impressive, star-packed event with speeches by Lois Pope, Gary Sinise, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, VA Secretary Eric Shinseki, former VA Secretary Anthony Principi, DAV Past National Commander Bobby Barrera, and more.

I left immediately following the program to catch a flight to Birmingham, Alabama, for the National Veterans Day parade and programs. I changed into formal clothes in the airport bathroom because my timing was that close.

We went straight to the National Veterans Award Dinner and I've never been anywhere with so many generals in the same room. There were 67 of them on the podium. (Wow)

On Veterans Day I participated in a beautiful Memorial Service and then attended the World Peace Luncheon. This was followed by riding in the longest parade I've ever seen. And this was a great experience.

November 19th and 20th I attended my own Eighth District meeting where they asked me to present, in Louisiana. In December of 2010 the Constitutional changes concerning the membership eligibility and the office of Chaplain were ratified.

This membership eligibility change now means that any extended family member of a veteran is now eligible for membership in the DAV Auxiliary.

I spent the rest of my year explaining that although people who were not directly related to a disabled veteran are now eligible for the DAVA our mission of helping build better lives for disabled veterans and their families has not changed.

January 5th through 9th I traveled to Lake Mary for Florida's Mid-Winter Conference. They have an excellent program and training session.

I cut short my visit to Florida to attend the Memorial Service for Past National Commander/ Past National Judge Advocate Sheila Allred in Concord, North Carolina, along with National Adjutant Judy Hezlep on January 8th.

January 19th and 20th found me at Tennessee's Mid-Winter where I also am the State Judge Advocate. January 21st through 23rd I was in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina for the Ninth District meeting. NEC/PNC Jane Troutman had an excellent idea workshop with the concept of WIN – What's Important Now.

We had a great breakfast at a biker bar (Laughter) where we found the owner held this breakfast weekly and was donating all of the proceeds to locals who needed assistance – usually a medical or a mortgage expense, child care so the mother could start working, youth groups, whatever she found in the community. This is a different person or group received the proceeds every week. What a community service project.

On February 23rd I traveled to Kansas City, Missouri. The state officers joined me for a tour of the World War I Museum. Then on to Unit 2's annual Americanism program which is put on by the Americanism chairman and the Unit's juniors. They all came out even though it was snowing heavily.

I left there on the 25th after a very slippery cab ride, a missed flight, a delayed flight; and I still made it to Washington, D.C., earlier than my originally scheduled time. (Laughter)

On February 26th I was honored to represent the DAV Auxiliary in the official Army Wreath-Laying Ceremony at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery. This ranks as one of the best experiences of my life.

Later that same week, on March 1st, I was again privileged with the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to sit at the table with DAV National Commander Wally Tyson and the DAV National staff as they presented their annual presentation to the Joint House/Senate Veterans Affairs Committee.

This year rather than presenting the DAV's legislative agenda to Congress the topic was called DAV 101 and it was basically to educate the Committee on who the DAV is and what we do since about 80 percent of the committee's members are brand-new.

On March 17th through 20th I visited Utah for their annual spring luncheon. I enjoyed a tour of the State House, the Mormon Church complex, and attending a Mormon Tabernacle Choir performance in Salt Lake City.

The luncheon was held in Ogden, Utah, at the George H. Wayland State Nursing Home. It was a nice time meeting the Auxiliary members and the nursing home residents and their families as we did a quick tour of the facility.

March 26th through April 1st was the second highlight of my year. I attended the Winter Sports Clinic in Snowmass, Colorado. Vice President Joe Biden and family made a surprise visit to the opening session of the event and came back the next morning to downhill ski with the veterans until he was unexpectedly recalled to Washington.

I tried to do everything I could with the participants and the DAV attendees. I went with the veterans to the rifle and archery range, the climbing wall, cross country skiing. We listened to Chubby Checker. Amazing amounts of energy and fun.

This is a therapeutic event that really does change the lives of the veterans that participate and truly deserves the name "Miracles on the Mountainside." I found out that not every veteran that attends the Winter Sports Clinic is eligible for the DAV.

They are not all service-connected disabled veterans but they are all eligible for the DAV Auxiliary, so (Applause) think about it. The DAV Auxiliary is currently a bronze sponsor of

this event and as they're all eligible for the Auxiliary I really think we should increase our sponsorship of this.

April 2nd through 3rd I attended the National Finance Committee meeting in Cincinnati, Ohio. And Aura Lee Nicodemus did a great job on conducting that meeting.

April 8 through 10th was my Testimonial Dinner in Memphis, Tennessee. Attendees enjoyed a tour of Memphis and Graceland. And thank you to everyone who attended and made this a wonderful and memorable event for me.

April 15th through 17th found me and the tornadoes that kept following me in Raleigh, North Carolina, for the DAV National Commander Wally Tyson's Testimonial Dinner.

April 28th through May 2nd I was in Aguadilla, Puerto Rico, for a very good convention. And I want to say thanks to Commander Noemi Burgos and Eliana Aguilar for translating for me and their great hospitality.

While in Puerto Rico I heard that the Navy SEALs had killed Osama Bin Laden, a promise kept, even though it took ten years to do so.

May 5th through 7th I attended Idaho State Convention in Idaho Falls. With another flight change that resulted in me arriving five hours earlier than scheduled and many confusing phone calls to the State Adjutant, B.J. Collier, I ended up at a great convention held by State Commander Sandy Doutre.

May 19th through 22nd I enjoyed the Arkansas State Convention with National Fourth Junior Vice Commander Linda Stake, National Hospital Chairman Kim Stake, and their Commander Andrea Hall.

Yes, Commander Tyson and I called the hogs. And beware of the lazy song monkeys coming to a fall conference near you. (Laughter)

May 26th through 31st I participated in my personal Memorial Day tradition of creating the Tennessee State Department Convention book materials for the Auxiliary's convention and attending a Memorial Day picnic in Munford, Tennessee.

June 1st through 4th found me in Ocean City, Maryland, for a good convention with Commander Ruth Wilcoxen.

I saw the Boardwalk and I made sure to walk in the very cold Atlantic before I left so that I could be in two oceans within the same week because on June 8th through 12th I went across the Pacific to Honolulu, Hawaii, for their state Convention.

I visited Pearl Harbor and the Arizona National Monument and then went to the Punchbowl National Cemetery. What an emotional and educational day.

At the Auxiliary opening session I was greeted by Commander Lorna Kakesako and every member of the Auxiliary wearing hats to play on my theme of Helping All that Served – HATS.

I extended my stay and moved over to the Island of Maui for some R and R. Didn't want to leave but, alas, I did have to return to work.

On June 22nd through June 26th I landed in Boston, got a rental car to drive 60 miles to Fitchburg, not recognizing that that was going to be a four-hour drive. (Laughter) Amazing traffic.

Commander Elizabeth Eldridge held an excellent convention and the formality of this convention is very moving and beautiful. Even with the ceiling leaking on us in the banquets it was still a great convention.

It was great to be with so many friends, including National VAVS representative Fran Costa and VAVS Deputy Nancy Mooney and Donna Tanner, Past National Commander.

I left Fitchburg to drive four hours over to Kerhonkson, New York, for their convention starting in the evening of June 26th through the 29th.

New York had a great convention full of food and fun and Commander Nicole Barbuto managed to get all of the business of the convention accomplished between meals. (Laughter)

I attended and presented at the DAV Commanders and Adjutants Orientation in Cincinnati, Ohio, July 9th through 12th. For the Auxiliary members attending with their spouse we had roundtable discussions all day on Monday and Tuesday morning at National Headquarters.

Thanks to National Adjutant Judy Hezlep and Assistant Adjutant Pat Kemper for setting this up and answering all the questions as they were asked. And I've got to tell you, it was some very good discussions and ideas.

I am also a member of the Strategic Planning Committee and have participated in most of the calls this year. Some of the successes this year include fillable report forms online; improvements to the Auxiliary Website, including Constant Contact to collect email addresses and send out mass emails; a "donate now" button; and an active social media presence.

For training I implemented a boot camp at, for officers at National Convention and held a Commanders and Adjutants Training at the Fall Conference, including making a CD of all the information available to all members.

If you didn't get a CD and you want one, contact Headquarters. They are here. You can purchase one for five bucks.

As a member of the National Education Scholarship Committee I reviewed all of the applications – 50-plus this year. Scholarship makes it more interesting.

I have attended most of my Unit meetings and volunteer monthly at the Millington Health Care Center Nursing Home as well as working full time for FedEx Express.

I must take this time to thank the members of my Unit, Millington 116. Stand up, Gail, Carolyn, Dorothy, Ruth, Jen.

(Whereupon, the members of Millington Unit 116 of Tennessee stood and were recognized with a round of applause.)

COMMANDER HENRY: The state Department of Tennessee.

(Whereupon, the members of the Department of Tennessee stood and were recognized with a round of applause.)

COMMANDER HENRY: And the rest of my district, the Eighth District.

(Whereupon, the members of the Eighth District stood and were recognized with a round of applause.)

COMMANDER HENRY: Thank you. I also need to thank my employer for allowing me the opportunity to swap time so that I could travel so much this year.

And, specifically, I need to thank my family, Ruth Henry and Dr. Jennifer Utley; (Applause) and my second set of parents, Doug and Lynda Shepherd. Linda is the National Sergeant-at-Arms. (Applause) Dorothy Robinson and my good friend and mentor Past National Commander Renee Jones. (Applause)

Most of all I of course need to thank my parents for getting me involved in this organization. (Applause) They provided the example of what it means to be a volunteer and a truly altruistic person.

I would be remiss if I did not also thank National Adjutant Judy Hezlep and Pat Kemper for their hard work this year. (Applause)

My theme for the year is HATS. That acronym had two meanings: Helping All That Served by Highlighting the Auxiliary, Adding value and programs, Training, and Strategic planning.

And I want to say thanks to everyone for helping us accomplish these goals and ensure that the DAV Auxiliary is truly completing our mission of helping build better lives for disabled veterans and their families. Thank you. (Standing Ovation)

SENIOR VICE COMMANDER RAPISAND: Well, Susan, thank you so much for representing the Auxiliary in so many places. Was that not the busiest schedule you have ever heard of?

COMMANDER HENRY: Plus I worked full time.

SENIOR VICE COMMANDER RAPISAND: Yes. You worked full time, too. But what I want to ask you – and I know you did some wonderful things – Chubby Checker is still around?

COMMANDER HENRY: Yes. And he still dances. That's what everyone else thought. Eighty years old and he still dances and sings tremendously.

SENIOR VICE COMMANDER RAPISAND: That's insignificant to everything else. She's had a great year and we'd like to thank you.

We can't approve her speech until we get our credentials straightened out so at this time I'm going to give the microphone back to Susan and she can work it in.

COMMANDER HENRY: Karen, would you return, please.

CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN MAJORS: Okay, once again, total Units registered 355, total Departments registered, 49; that's a total of 404. Delegates registered, 380; alternates registered, 28; other registered 66; for a total of 474.

Total Unit votes, 1,199; total Department votes 49; National Officers 7; Past National Commanders votes, 10; for a grand total of votes of 1,265. Madame Commander, I move that we accept the Credentials report.

COMMANDER HENRY: Karen Majors has made the motion to accept the Credentials report. Do I have a second?

MRS. IRIS BRZEZINSKI: Iris Brzezinski, Unit 13, Nevada, I second it.

COMMANDER HENRY: Thank you. Is there any discussion? All in favor; opposed. The motion carried. The first order of business is the adoption of the National Convention Rules. They were on your chair when you came in today.

I need – I'm going to allow you a few minutes to read the Convention Rules and please note that there is a new Convention Rule Number 21.

(Whereupon, the delegates were allowed a few minutes to review the Convention Rules.)

COMMANDER HENRY: Okay, may I have a motion to accept the Convention Rules as printed? Turn it on down at the very bottom, at the edge. Where the microphone changes from a very wide body to a very slim body there is a switch. How about over here?

MS. DEBRA CHRISTIAN: Commander Christian, Texas – go ahead.

MS. ANN SCHATZ: Commander, this is Ann Schatz, Rhode Island, District 3. We do not have copies.

COMMANDER HENRY: We will have to get them from the chairs over here. Hold on one moment. Are there any more somewhere in the back of the room?

UNIDENTIFIED DELEGATE: There are.

COMMANDER HENRY: If you have extras, please pass them this direction.

(Whereupon, copies of the Convention Rules were distributed to those having none.)

COMMANDER HENRY: Okay. Okay, I will now entertain a motion to accept the Convention Rules as printed.

MS. SHIRLEY McINTIRE: Madame Commander, Shirley McIntire, Commander for North Carolina. Since we have a new rule, should we not vote on that and discuss that prior to accepting the total rules?

COMMANDER HENRY: We have to have a motion and a second so we can start.

MS. McINTIRE: I make a motion that we accept the Standing Rules –

COMMANDER HENRY: Convention Rules.

MS. McINTIRE: – as printed.

COMMANDER HENRY: Convention Rules.

MS. McINTIRE: Convention Rules as printed and read.

COMMANDER HENRY: Thank you. Do I have a second?

MS. AURA LEE NICODEMUS: Aura Lee Nicodemus, Byron Morris Unit 3, Vermont, I second that.

COMMANDER HENRY: Discussion.

JUDGE ADVOCATE AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER KATHRYN A. WILEY: Kathryn Wiley, National Judge Advocate and Past National Commander, I will – I move to amend the motion to approve as printed by striking out Rule Number 21 and Rule Number 21 is to go back to the Interim Committee for further review to properly come before the Constitution and Bylaws Committee of the Convention as these rules are part of our National Constitution and Bylaws and must properly come before the Convention Committee for discussion before coming to the floor.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER CAROL A. GRAY: Carol Gray, Michigan 11, seconds the motion.

COMMANDER HENRY: We have a motion and a second to amend the Auxiliary National Convention Rules by removing from the printed version, removing Rule 21 and leaving the remaining rules in place. Is there any further discussion?

All in favor of the amendment; opposed. The amendment has carried. All in favor of the motion, of the original motion to approve the Convention Rules as amended signify by saying aye; opposed. The motion carried.

At this time may I have a motion to accept the agenda subject to changes?

MS. BRZEZINSKI: Iris Brzezinski, Sunrise Mountain Unit 13, Nevada. I move that we accept the agenda with exceptions.

COMMANDER HENRY: Thank you. Do I have a second?

MS. KIMBERLY STAKE: Commander.

COMMANDER HENRY: Yes.

MS. STAKE: Over here. Kim Stake, 57, I second that motion.

COMMANDER HENRY: Kim Stake, Arkansas 57, seconds the motion. Is there any discussion? All in favor; opposed. The motion carried.

Will the National Sergeant-at-Arms please escort Dolly Mercer to this podium.

(Whereupon, Dolly Mercer was escorted to the podium.)

COMMANDER HENRY: Will the junior who is supposed to run the video please come forward. At this time it is my pleasure to introduce Dolly Mercer.

Dolly is a graduate of the University of North Carolina, Greensboro, and has been employed with Golden Corral for the past 25 years, working in both the operations and marketing areas.

Her current position as Consumer Promotions and National Events Manager gives Dolly responsibility for all cost-marketing efforts within Golden Corral.

However, the two largest programs and the nearest to her heart are working with children and with the military and military families.

Dolly is here this morning to talk about a Golden Corral project that combines children and the military and how Golden Corral is giving back something more tangible than dollars: a week of a lifetime for kids. Let's welcome Dolly Mercer. (Applause)

MS. DOLLY MERCER: Good morning. Commander, thank you. She's already made me tear up. Those of you that know when I'm, I am nervous I tear up. But when it's really near and dear to my heart, it's easy to do.

But thank you for having me here this morning. I am glad to be here. I have not spoken to your Auxiliary. I have spoken to the gentlemen quite a few times, been at a lot of the state conventions as well as the National Convention.

I was in February in Washington and spoke briefly about this new project that we were just kicking off in the spring.

Before I talk a little bit about Camp Corral we do have a video that's going to say so much more than I could ever say about it. So I promise you I brought my own tissue so start searching.

The first three minutes of the video is the kids having a wonderful time. And then when those soldiers, the parents and the counselors start talking, you'll be just mopping up the tears.

So I think you will – I hope you will enjoy the video and so first I want to get back to my little talk to say that thank you, all of you who have participated in Golden Corral's Military Appreciation Monday.

I know a lot of you help solicit for contributions for your state and local chapters. We're glad to help you. We're starting on our eleventh year of partnership.

It's been a wonderful partnership. And I hope you know that in 2010 – that was our tenth year of Military Appreciation – the DAV Chapters raised over a million dollars. (Applause)

And I promise you that my best efforts will be behind 2011 to make sure that Golden Corral and the DAV working together, that we will raise another million dollars. So that's our goal. (Applause)

So, as I said, this morning I wanted to share a little bit about Camp Corral. I think you all got the brochure. If you didn't I have more. It kind of briefly outlined what we were doing.

Golden Corral wanted to extend our thank you to the military and as Susan said, included with our love of children – we do a lot with Children's Miracle Network – and this seemed to be the best of both words.

You know, help our military heroes and help children. So Golden Corral has opened a free camp for children of the military. And this summer, the month of July was our pilot program.

We had three one-week sessions. We had 400 children that came to camp for a week. And I'm not going to tell you all the things they did because you will be able to see it in the video.

But we had 16 states represented, even though this single camp was at an established 4-H camp that we partnered with. It was in North Carolina, in Ellerbe, North Carolina, which I had never heard of it either.

It's about 45 minutes west of Fayetteville, North Carolina, so the Fort Bragg area, down that way. It was an established 4-H camp, as I said. They had all the counselors, the training, and the facilities.

So this seemed, you know, like our partnership with you, the best way to go. It seemed the best thing to do with 4-H. They know what we're doing. We can supply the kids and the dollars and they can supply everything else that was needed.

So our goal was 83 percent of the children that went to camp were from parents or a parent that had just returned from Iraq or Afghanistan with families that had KIAs or multiple wounded or disabled.

And then when the camp was not quite full, by word of mouth only this year, we opened it up to other military families. So we had quite a few with the DAV with grandparents called and asked if their kids could come. And, of course, we said yes.

So we are going to expand this. Like I said, this was our pilot year. We are going into four states that have been confirmed: Texas, Colorado, Georgia and North Carolina.

We are still looking to see if we can't expand into more states. But our goal is to take a few states each year until we're in every state so that kids can go to camp. (Applause)

So get your tissues and if you want to run the video, please.

(Whereupon, the Camp Corral video was presented.)

MS. MERCER: Did I not tell you? The kids had a wonderful time. A lot of the people speaking was, were the counselors. They showed, told you how much the kids were enjoying it.

And the, when we got ready for the second week we were down about 25 kids; different circumstances came up that they didn't come. So we called the kids who went to the first week and they're like, "Oh, yes, can I come back? Can I come back?" (Laughter)

And the same thing happened at the third week. So we had some kids, including that large guy that said he got the sexy cannonball award, he was there all three weeks. (Laughter) He and his sister said they loved it. But there were several of the kids that got to be there all week.

As I said, this is going to be ongoing. Our Chairman of the Board, you know, said this is it. So you know where that comes from. This is it.

We're going to make this a big success like we try to do everything else that we're giving back to the community. We would love to have your involvement. We haven't figured out how yet but I think you all will be talking about that.

I am available for questions for a minute or two. I promised them I wouldn't take more than about 15 minutes and I know my video was long.

But I thought you needed to see the whole spectrum of the kids having fun to show you what they did and then the counselors talking and then the parents that were grateful.

I do need to tell you that I talked to a couple of the parents – well, I was there five different days. So, you know, I had a good time. And if they'd have had a place to plug in my hot rollers I'd have probably stayed longer, but. (Laughter)

This was a nature camp so it really wasn't right down my alley very much. But I did enjoy my time there. I talked to a lot of the parents coming and going. And so many of the parents were like, "Thank you for doing this."

And I'm, you know, "Of course we're glad to do it." And then I say, "What are you all going to do?" And they're like, um, they don't want to answer.

And then they're going, I had several of them say, "We're just going to eat by ourselves." "We're going out to dinner with no kids." "We're going to the movies."

So it was like more heartwarming that we're giving the parents a break from the kids and the kids a break from whatever stressful situation is going on at home. So we hope we helped two groups and made two sets of people happy by doing this.

So I don't know if we have time for questions or if there is a question or – I'll answer it if I can. If I don't have the answer, I'll be glad to get back with you.

MS. IRISH SPENCER: Good morning.

MS. MERCER: Good morning.

MS. SPENCER: Irish Spencer, Unit 20, North Carolina. I want to say – it's not a question but I want to say a big thank you because we had children that participated.

MS. MERCER: Oh, great.

MS. SPENCER: And it was absolutely, positively fabulous. Thank you and Golden Corral.

MS. MERCER: Thank you. We're glad to hear it. (Applause) Did anybody else in the room have children that attended? As I said, we had 16 states.

Now this was, as I said, in Ellerbe, North Carolina, about 90 minutes west of Fayetteville. We had children from Oregon, Texas, Maryland, and besides the states bordering North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, Tennessee, Georgia.

But these were the others that thought enough, heard about it, and wanted their kids to come. And we didn't have any stipulation. The kids could come from anywhere. There was no nomination committee.

Go online to the Golden Corral Camp Corral Website. Sign up. We called you back. I mean it wasn't you've got to qualify; you're got to do whatever. It was if this was a military child they were more than welcome.

So maybe you don't have any questions? Well, thank you, again, so much for inviting me. (Applause) I'm glad we had the opportunity. And I hope we can do something together with Camp Corral. (Applause) Thank you. Appreciate it. Sorry for the tears.

COMMANDER HENRY: I now call on Senior Vice Commander to finish the Commander's report.

SENIOR VICE COMMANDER RAPISAND: We will now entertain a motion to accept Commander Susan Henry's personal report.

FIRST JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER DONNA M. ADAMS: Donna Adams, First Junior Vice Commander, I move that we accept the Commander's report.

SENIOR VICE COMMANDER RAPISAND: Do I have a second?

SECOND JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER SUSAN K. MILLER: Susan Miller, Second Junior Vice Commander, seconds.

SENIOR VICE COMMANDER RAPISAND: Do I need to repeat the motion? Okay, Donna Adams and Susan Miller. Okay? All those in favor; opposed. We have a unanimous acceptance of Susan's report. (Applause)

COMMANDER HENRY: I will now call on Finance Committee Chairman Aura Lee Nicodemus for the National Finance Committee report and budget review.

(Whereupon, Finance Committee Chairman Aura Lee Nicodemus advanced to the podium.)

COMMANDER HENRY: The financial report and the budget is on the back of the entire packet. It's the very last page. And they were all in your packets. And the budget, the proposed budget is the back page.

FINANCE COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN AURA LEE NICODEMUS: National Commander Susan Henry, National Officers, Past National Commanders, delegates, family and friends, good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

FINANCE COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN NICODEMUS: The National Finance Committee meeting was held April 2nd, 2011, at 1:00 p.m. at the Hilton Cincinnati Airport Hotel in Florence, Kentucky.

The voting members of the Committee present were Susan Henry National Commander; Etta Bowers, District Number 6 NEC; Jean Sursely District Number 7 NEC; Sylvia Shurgot, District Number 20 NEC; and myself, Aura Lee Nicodemus, District Number 3 NEC.

Those present without a vote were National Senior Vice Commander Patrice Rapisand, National Adjutant Judy Hezlep, and Assistant National Adjutant Pat Kemper. The purpose of the meeting was to set up and adopt a budget for the 2012 year.

At this time I would like to thank the Committee and the staff for all of their help. The budget was included in your registration packets. And at this time I move for adoption of the budget.

COMMANDER HENRY: Aura Lee has moved for the adoption of the budget. Do we have a second?

MS. DEBRA CHRISTIAN: Commander Christian, Tyler, Texas, I'd like to second. I move that we accept this as our budget for the coming year.

COMMANDER HENRY: You second?

MS. CHRISTIAN: Yes.

COMMANDER HENRY: Okay. Your name is Christian?

MS. CHRISTIAN: Yes. Commander Christian, Unit 6, Tyler, Texas.

COMMANDER HENRY: Thank you.

MS. CHRISTIAN: All right.

COMMANDER HENRY: We have a motion and a second. Is there any discussion? All in favor; opposed? The motion carried.

FINANCE COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN NICODEMUS: The Finance Committee would like to bring a couple of items to your attention. In the Fiscal Year 2010 the Education Loan Fund's net income was \$6,448.

With the change to a scholarship fund donations will be needed now more than ever to assist our members in their quest for higher education. This year the Education Scholarship Committee awarded 52 scholarships amounting to \$79,500.

Likewise, the Service Support Fund's net income for the Fiscal Year 2010 was \$15,696 and a total of \$34,642 was expended to assist 40 DAV Auxiliary members in financial distress.

As you can imagine, the need for financial assistance to our members hardest hit by the struggling economy is growing.

If we continue providing the financial support required by these two funds at our current pace and without generous donations, these funds could be depleted in just a few years. Both are wonderful programs and need the support of all of us. Thank you.

COMMANDER HENRY: The Constitution and Bylaws Committee Chairman will come forward for the first reading of the proposed Constitution and Bylaw amendments.

This is a reading only. Please hold all questions and comments until the second reading. Past National Commander Judy Steinhouse, again.

(Whereupon, Past National Commander Judy Steinhouse advanced to the podium.)

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS CHAIRMAN AND PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER JUDY STEINHOUSE: National Commander, National Adjutant, National Officers, Past National Commanders, delegates and guests to this 89th National Auxiliary Convention, the National Constitution and Bylaws Convention Committee met in the Grand Salon Suite A-6 at 1:00 p.m. on August 6th, 2011. Our advisor was Kathy Wiley and Carol Gray was elected as our secretary.

Before I go through the reading of the Constitution and Bylaws amendments I would like to recognize the members of this Committee. Please stand. Please hold your applause until they have all been recognized. District Number 1, Donna Tanner; District Number 2, Diane Wisnesky; and I'm going to murder some of these names. I apologize beforehand. District Number 3, Ann Young; District Number 4, Sarah Kashner; District Number 5, Loretta Nosko; District Number 6, Linda King; District Number 7, Lucille McCarthy; District Number 8, Fairee Bridges; District Number 9, R. Renee Jones; District Number 10, Carol Gray; District Number 11, Joyce Hutchinson; District Number 12, Patty Davis; District Number 13, Tracy Tucker-Arnett, District 14 was myself; District 15, Janice Howard; District 16, Josephine Benner; District 17, Jean Jackson; District 18, Sharon Linton; District 19, Micki Kraft; District 20, Greg – oh, Greg, I'm going to – Craig, I'm going to ruin your name – Johniken, thank you; District 21, Linda Oliver. Thank you very much. (Applause)

As the National Commander has said, this is strictly a reading. Everybody got their copies? Insert before National Constitution on a page by itself the following mission statement:

Mission Statement. Making a difference in the lives of disabled veterans and their families.

The rationale for this: The Strategic Committee adopted a Mission Statement/Unique Selling Proposition and recommends that it be included in our Constitution and Bylaws.

Page N-27, Article VII, Membership, Section 3, delete Section 3 and replace with new Section 3, Membership Applications. All applications for membership shall be on printed form, online, or verbally through Auxiliary National Headquarters.

Page N-39, Article X, Local Units, Section 1, Paragraph 3, delete Paragraph 3, new Paragraph 3 will then read:

At least ten – ten in parenthesis – new senior members must accompany each charter application. Upon request, national and/or state at-large memberships may be considered as new senior members in the formation of a new charter. Transfer and junior membership may be added after the ten new senior memberships.

Rationale: At-large members include as new – included as new charter members would expedite the formation of urgently and immediately needed new units.

Page N-45, Article XII, Offenses, Penalties, Appeals and Lawsuits, Section 2, Notice and Hearings – excuse me – insert new Paragraph “e”. New Paragraph “e” will then read:

E. Notwithstanding any other provision of these Bylaws and pending completion of an investigation or hearing, the National Commander may temporarily suspend a member if in his or her sole discretion he or she determines that a suspension is in the best interest of the organization and shall be effective immediately.

Rationale: This wording was inadvertently deleted when this section was changed in the 2010 National Convention.

Page S-6/7, Article IV, Duties of State Officers, Section 4, State Treasurer, insert new Paragraph “4” to read: All funds received in the name of the Disabled – DAV Auxiliary must be deposited within 30 – parenthesis 30 – calendar days of receipt.

If adopted, old Paragraph 4 becomes Paragraph 5.

Page U-6, Article XI, Duties of Unit Officers, Section 3, Adjutant, insert new Number “4”. New Number 4 will then read:

4. Bring all correspondence including letters, newsletters, membership information, notices, etc cetera, to the unit meetings and make available to all unit members.

If approved, Items 4 through 10 will be renumbered as 5 through 11.

Page U-8, Article XI, Duties of Unit Officers, Section 4, Treasurer, insert new Paragraph “5”. New Paragraph 5 will then read:

5. All funds received in the name of the DAV Auxiliary must be deposited within 30 – parenthesis thirty – calendar days of receipt.

If approved Items 5-6 will be renumbered as 6-7.

Page U-20, Regular Meeting, Patriotic Instructor, insert the words “or render the appropriate salute” after the word “heart.” Patriotic Instructor will then read:

Free your hands, stand at attention, place your right hand over your heart or render the appropriate salute, and join in the Pledge of Allegiance to our Flag: “I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

Page U-21, Regular Meeting, Junior Vice Commander, insert the text “its Auxiliary, or a veteran not dishonorably discharged,” between “veterans” and “are”. Paragraph will then read:

Junior Vice Commander. The family and extended family members of any person or a deceased person, eligible for membership in the Disabled American Veterans, its Auxiliary, or

a veteran not dishonorably discharged, are eligible for membership in the Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary.

Page U-27, Installation of Officers, Paragraph 7, delete the word “our” before “veterans” and insert “America’s” and delete the words “whose name we proudly bear.” Paragraph 7 would then read: The fact that you have been selected by members of this Auxiliary for your respective offices shows that they have confidence in your ability and that they feel assured you will strictly and impartially discharge all duties incumbent upon you.

They confide the welfare of this Auxiliary to your keeping and they are expected at all times to respect your position.

Let their confidence, therefore, be fully justified by your fidelity. Let us all remember gratefully the heroism of America’s veterans.

Realizing fully these responsibilities, are you willing to assume the obligation of your office?

The National Constitution and Bylaws also had two recommendations to make. The first recommendation was to notify those who submitted a proposal that were not accepted by the Constitution and Bylaws Committee.

Recommendation Number 2 was that – the recommendation was to have the rules that govern the National Convention no longer be part of the Bylaws and be added as an appendix item.

We will have a second reading of these where we will vote on all these after the National Commander has called the necessary caucuses. Thank you.

COMMANDER HENRY: We will now go into our awards programs in the various categories. Monetary awards are given in each category of each program to the first place winning Units and the checks will be mailed out from National Headquarters after the Convention.

Just as a reminder, if your Unit wins, please come forward immediately to receive your Award. If no one is here from that Unit, will the state delegate please come forward to receive that award. LeeAnn Karg, Americanism.

THIRD JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER LeeANN B. KARG: Good morning, everybody.

(Response of “Good morning.”)

THIRD JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER KARG: Could I have Velma Steinman come forward? She’s the chairman of the Americanism Committee.

(Whereupon, Velma Steinman advanced to the podium.)

THIRD JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER KARG: I’m going to just take this quick opportunity while Velma is coming up to thank all the members that served on my Committee. You did a fantastic job. I really appreciated it.

AMERICANISM CHAIRMAN VELMA STEINMAN: Good morning.

(Response of “Good morning.”)

AMERICANISM CHAIRMAN STEINMAN: Good morning, National Commander Susan, National Adjutant Judy, National Assistant Adjutant Pat, National Line Officers, Past National Commanders, delegates and guests.

Gosh, my stomach is kind of jumping. (Laughter) The Committee on Americanism met at 1:30 p.m. in the Grand Salon in C-18.

Our advisor was National Americanism Chairman LeeAnn Karg. Her guidance and patience during the process was invaluable and an excellent learning experience for all.

Before we begin the awards I would like to recognize our secretary, Joyce Humes – excuse me – and our Committee members – and if I butcher their names, please forgive me in advance:

Sandra Fincel; Harvey Levine; Sally Ann Campagnone; Kathy – excuse me – Picaroni; LeeAnn Reeder; Paul Clamp, Senior; Sandy Martin; Evelyn Bryant; Barbara Macomb; Dorothy Clark; Sandy Resner; Charlotte – Charlyn Davis-Hager; Samantha Forcier; Joe Adema; Anneliese Rauber; Patricia Burden; Freeman Marr; Joyce Humes and Leslie Ivey. (Applause)

The following awards were judged to be the best in their category for the National Americanism Awards. Group 1 for members 10 to 50 Harry Murrell, Unit 28, Tennessee.

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

AMERICANISM CHAIRMAN STEINMAN: Group 2, 51 to 100 members, Antonio A. Hernandez, Unit 25, Texas. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

AMERICANISM CHAIRMAN STEINMAN: Group 3, 100 members to 200 members, John T. Hensley, Unit 96, Florida. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

AMERICANISM CHAIRMAN STEINMAN: Group 4, 201 members or over Cactus, Arizona Unit 2. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

AMERICANISM CHAIRMAN STEINMAN: For the Special Americanism Awards for Group 1, 10 to 200 members, John T. Hensley, Florida, Unit 96. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

AMERICANISM CHAIRMAN STEINMAN: Group 2, 200 members and over Cactus, Arizona Unit 2. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

AMERICANISM CHAIRMAN STEINMAN: The Committee submitted the following recommendations: please list actual names of the delegates that attended the program, not just city officials.

And the state Department, we would like to recommend that the state Departments give more instruction to their committee chairs on how to fill out the forms. Thank you. (Applause)

COMMANDER HENRY: Donna Adams, Membership awards.

FIRST JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER DONNA M. ADAMS: Good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

FIRST JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER ADAMS: Aren't we excited? (Cheers) We have to start out with membership, membership, membership. (Applause)

The awards for the membership categories this year are Group Number 1, for increases and Group Number 1 is 10 to 50 members, with a 14 member increase Unit Number 38, Orange Park, Florida. (Applause) Somebody here?

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

FIRST JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER ADAMS: Group Number 2, 51 to 100 members, Unit 148, Agnes M. Taylor – I don't know what state –

(Response of "Florida.")

FIRST JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER ADAMS: – Florida, with a 22 member increase. (Applause) Is there nobody here? Come on up Unit 148, Florida.

COMMANDER HENRY: They are not here.

FIRST JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER ADAMS: They are not here. Thank you.

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

FIRST JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER ADAMS: Group Number 3, 101 to 200 members, Clayton Durham Unit 28, South Carolina, with 41 member increase. (Applause) Is there someone here from that Unit? I think so. And I think she's excited. (Applause) Come on Shirley Ashmore. Run. Run. Run. (Laughter)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

FIRST JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER ADAMS: Group Number 4, 201 and over, with a 31 member increase, Danny Bruce Unit 28, Indiana. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

FIRST JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER ADAMS: The award for the new Unit with the most new members, with 40 new senior members, goes to Gold Coast Unit 133, Florida. (Applause) Here she comes. (Laughter)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

FIRST JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER ADAMS: The award for the Department with the largest percentage increase over quota, with 101.94 percent increase over quota goes to the state Department of Puerto Rico. (Applause) Congratulations. That's 101.94 percent increase over quota.

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

FIRST JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER ADAMS: The Department with the largest numerical increase over quota, with 21 members over quota, is the state Department of Tennessee. (Applause) Is there anybody here from Tennessee? (Laughter)

COMMANDER HENRY: A whole bunch of us out there.

FIRST JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER ADAMS: A whole bunch.

(Whereupon, a representative from the Department of Tennessee came forward to accept the award.)

FIRST JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER ADAMS: And, let's have a drum roll, the top membership recruiter for the whole organization of all 51 states and territories, a member from Ohio that recruited 32 new senior members: from Unit 63, Joyce Hutchinson. (Applause) Come. Come up. Where are you, Joyce? (Applause)

(Whereupon, Joyce Hutchinson came forward to accept her award.)

FIRST JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER ADAMS: Now, just in case you didn't know, if you wanted to work at getting this award next year, first off you get wall hanging, bragging rights. (Laughter)

And then you also get a very nice check which will weigh more thanks to the bragging rights. So I hope next year you all work at membership, membership, membership. (Applause)

COMMANDER HENRY: Thank you. We will now move on to Community Service with Linda Stake.

FOURTH JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER LINDA S. STAKE: Thank you, Commander. Would my Community Service Chairman please come up.

(Whereupon, the Community Service Chairman advanced to the podium.)

FIRST JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER STAKE: When I was called yesterday I left her with all the information and said, "Turn this in, please. And if it's not right, let me know." So she did a good job.

Marie, I appreciate you being chairman of this Committee and I would like to say before she announces everything that this Committee worked really hard. They had a lot of decisions to make.

And I think this is one of the hardest things to work on. I don't know how many of you have been on Community Service Committees, but it's tough. And I appreciate all your hard work. And, Marie, thank you for all you did. (Applause)

UNIDENTIFIED DELEGATE: Okay. National Commander Susan, Adjutant Judy, Assistant Pat, officers, Past National Commanders, delegates and guests. Community Service, we met in Room A-3 at one o'clock on the sixth of August.

Our advisor was Linda and our secretary – would she please stand up – Jessica Gonzales. Is she in here? I guess not.

Okay, the members of, on Community Service: District 1 was Gloria Follis – please stand as I announce your name; from District 2, Helen Mazza; District 3, Jeanne Gideon;

I may get these names wrong; District 4, Barbara Malone; District 5, Amy Buterbaugh; like I said; District 6, Miriam Boles; I was from District 7; District 8, Helen Faye Miller; District 9, Alycia Hill; District 10, Jessica Gonzales; District 11, Judy Uetterling; District 12, June Marheine; District 13, Tana Penland; District 14, Kim Kraushar; District 15, Breanne Chandler; we had nobody from District 16; District 17, Olive Tomlin; District 18, Carolyn Walker; nobody from District 19; District 20, Joanne Johnson; and District 21, Rhonda Bower. Thank you, ladies. I know we had a hard time on this. (Applause)

Okay, Group 1 from 10 to 50 members – I'm sorry, 10 to 50 members, is Dick M. Lynch, from Georgia, Unit 27. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

UNIDENTIFIED DELEGATE: Group 2, 51 to 100, Vancouver, Unit 4, Washington. (Applause) Yes, Vancouver, Washington. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

UNIDENTIFIED DELEGATE: Okay, Group 3, 101 to 200 – and I did not, did not, judge in that Committee. I was in the 10 to 50 group – John T. Hensley Unit 96 from Florida. (Applause) I want to let you know that clear. I did not judge that part.

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

UNIDENTIFIED DELEGATE: Group 4, 201 members and over, Frances J. Beaton Unit 1, North Dakota. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

UNIDENTIFIED DELEGATE: Okay, here is some of the recommendations from the Committee. States, please – you know, when you have your Mid-Winter Conference you go over your committees and stuff. Make sure they follow directions on the report.

Make sure all numbers match, you know, with your membership. And no four and five pages – that was the biggest thing – only the front and back of the report. And write clearly so that the Committee can read. Thank you. (Applause)

FOURTH JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER STAKE: Thank you, Marie and thank you members. I could not believe all the Community Service when the reports were turned in. It is just amazing, over \$5 million of valued gifts and hours and everything. Thank you so much. (Applause)

COMMANDER HENRY: Hospital, Kim Stake. (Applause) And she looks the part. (Laughter)

(Whereupon, Hospital Committee Chairman Kimberly Stake advanced to the podium.)

NATIONAL HOSPITAL COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN KIMBERLY M. STAKE: Thank you, Commander. While my chairman is getting up here I would like to say I had a typo. (Laughter)

(Whereupon, Hospital Convention Committee Chairman Dorothy Reese advanced to the podium.)

NATIONAL HOSPITAL COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN STAKE: On the information that was handed out, as we printed them, under “miles traveled” I put 20,000 miles. Well, like I said, typo. It was 200,194 miles instead of 20,000. So I apologize for that. Chairman.

HOSPITAL CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN DOROTHY REESE: Thank you, Kim. National Commander Henry, National Adjutant Hezlep, National Officers, Past National Commanders, delegates, guests of this 89th National Auxiliary Convention, my name is Dorothy Reese and I was chairman of the Committee.

The National Hospital Convention Committee met in the Grand Salon, Room B-7 at 1:00 p.m. on August the 6th, 2011. Our advisor was Kim Stake. And our secretary, if she would you please stand, was Noreen Campbell. Thank you. (Applause)

Those that were on the Committee, would you please stand, and hold your applause: from District 1, Lillian Halpin; District 2, Matilda Brooks; District 4, Renee Blow; District 6, Grace James;

District 7, Linda Logo – Lugo; District 8, Carolyn Sensat; District 9, myself, Dorothy Reese; District 10, Nancy Mitchell; District 11, Carol Parker-Park; and I didn’t hiccup on that one; (Laughter)

District 12, Carolyn – Carla Reynolds; District 13, Mabel Holloway; District 14, Mary Ghee; District 15, Rose Mary Miller; District 16, Debbie Adema; District 17, Jenny Addyman;

District 18, Deborah Campbell; District 20, Jean Scott; District 21, Noreen Campbell. And they all did a great job. We had a lot of questions going on. We had some guests that were present. And they also participated by just listening.

And I want to thank those that were present. They learned a lot. And I think anybody should serve on any of the Committees. This way you get more information on it. And I thank – whoops. I thank you all. (Applause)

The following Units were judged to be the best in their category for the National Hospital Awards. Group 1, 10 to 50 members, Dick M. Lynch Number 27, Georgia. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

HOSPITAL CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN REESE: Now, I’m from Georgia. I was on that Committee but I only backed away. I did not – oh, shut up. (Laughter) My sister over here is giving me trouble.

But I did, but I did, when it came down to the final judging there were two groups, there were two Units and I said I cannot participate in this; it’s your decision. And that’s what they went with.

Group 2, 51 to 100, Raul F. Lopez, Number 95, Texas. (Applause) Nobody is here?

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

HOSPITAL CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN REESE: Group 3, 101 to 200, Radcliff Number 156, Kentucky. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

HOSPITAL CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN REESE: Group 4, 201 members and over – and this was such an exceptional report. I wished everybody did the same thing. It’s Roll of Honor Number 120, New York. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

HOSPITAL CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN REESE: Our recommendations are that when we get into these committees that we have a copy of all the rules for each member that’s on that committee instead of trying to read it to them and let them comprehend.

It’s really difficult to do that. So if they could make extra copies of the rules that would help. And, also, better explanations on the forms. Thank you very much. (Applause)

NATIONAL HOSPITAL COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN STAKE: I would just like to say thanks to all the gals and for their time, their patience with us. We had some people that had served that, they were first-timers, hadn’t seen the reports.

And I, you know, I just told them, you know, I am here to advise unless you need some clarification. And we needed a lot of clarification so we talked. And I think that they are going to be able to take back some stuff to their state departments and even to their units.

And we didn’t disqualify anybody because of a state error, states writing on their forms. We didn’t penalize you for that. Or we didn’t disqualify you because you didn’t know the name of your unit. (Laughter)

That came – I’m going to pick on Donna because that came out of Arizona, (Laughter) her unit, (Laughter) her unit. So I just want to say thanks to everybody for doing this with me. (Applause)

COMMANDER HENRY: Junior Activities, Laurie Stopyra.

(Whereupon, National Junior Activities Committee Chairman Laurie Stopyra advanced to the podium.)

NATIONAL JUNIOR ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN LAURIE A. STOPYRA: Would my chairman, Monica Stroud, please come to the podium.

(Whereupon, Junior Activities Convention Committee Chairman Monica Stroud advanced to the podium.)

JUNIOR ACTIVITIES CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN MONICA STROUD: Good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

JUNIOR ACTIVITIES CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN STROUD: Before I even start I want to tell you that there is quite a few of you that are going to have new names. (Laughter) Including myself. (Laughter) My last name is Stroud. (Laughter) Anyway. National Commander – where'd she go?

COMMANDER HENRY: Right here.

JUNIOR ACTIVITIES CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN STROUD: Okay. National Adjutant Hezlep, to the National Officers, Past National Commanders, delegates and guests of this 89th National Auxiliary Convention, the National Junior Activities Convention Committee met in the Grand Salon B-12, First Floor, at 1:00 p.m. on August the 6th, 2011.

Our advisor – here is where we start – was Laurie Stopyra. And our secretary was Linda Acosta. There's a "c" in there? (Laughter) Acosta. We're starting out real good.

When I read your names – I'll mention the districts so if you recognize some part of it (Laughter) you should stand. Okay?

District 2, Janice Bailey; thank you; District 2, Wanda Furbish;

(Response of "Three.")

JUNIOR ACTIVITIES CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN STROUD: Okay, District 3. (Laughter) District 4, Christine Shaw; District 5, Laurie Stopyra; District 6, Barbara – I think that's an "L" – Lorber;

District 7, Ramona Williams; District, 8, Linda Acosta; District 9 – I'm going to get this one right, that was myself; (Laughter) all right, District 10, Sandy Mudgett; District 11, Denise Proffitt;

District 12, Kathryn Pasternik; District 13, Virginia Finney; District 14, Jantima Retzer; District 15, Ardith Dillard; District – there was no District 16;

District 17, Dorothy Resaline; I think that's what it is; District 18, Diane Stover; District 19, Virginia Finney; District 20, Darlene Spence; District 21 –

(Whereupon, someone in the audience called out "Jamie Parnell.")

JUNIOR ACTIVITIES CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN STROUD: – thank you. (Laughter) I couldn't get anyone to read that one. If we could have – (Applause)

You know, if we could have voted on the pictures of these children, they all would have been a winner. They were the most – oh, they were so pretty, so cute, some of the little ones, and even the boys, good looking kids.

Group 1, 1 to 25 members, Unit 4, Washington State, Vancouver. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

JUNIOR ACTIVITIES CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN STROUD: Group 2, 26 to 50 members, Betsy Lane, Unit 169, Kentucky. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

JUNIOR ACTIVITIES CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN STROUD: Group 3, 51 to 100 members, Willingboro, New Jersey, Number 42. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

JUNIOR ACTIVITIES CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN STROUD: Group 4, 101 and over, Elizabeth Towne, Unit 43, Kentucky. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

JUNIOR ACTIVITIES CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN STROUD: Our Junior Activities Book went to C.R.A. Doc 41, Portsmouth, Virginia. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

JUNIOR ACTIVITIES CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN STROUD: Our National Junior Award – all right. (Applause) Okay, I'll start again. National Junior Award, 15 to 17, Kaitlyn Hager, Pikeville, Kentucky, Number 134. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Kaitlyn Hager came forward to accept her award.)

JUNIOR ACTIVITIES CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN STROUD: I also understand that today is her birthday. (Applause) National Junior Award for 11 to 14, Kathryn Hopland, Harry Murrell Unit 28, Tennessee. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Kathryn came forward to accept her award.)

JUNIOR ACTIVITIES CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN STROUD: And the National Junior Award, 7 to 10, Haley Ellsey, Unit 10, John Dunn, Arkansas. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Haley came forward to accept her award.)

JUNIOR ACTIVITIES CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN STROUD: Now the recommendations that we had was a lot of the – okay, a lot of the states wrote on the papers. So our suggestion was to use the little pasty tabs that you can put on there instead of writing on them.

We also thought that they needed better guidelines for the Junior Book and, also, the juniors to do the work themselves, regardless of the handwriting.

That was a hard one to make a decision on because I think we all know that even the kindergarteners today can use computers. But some of them get, you know. So make sure the juniors actually do, do their own work. I thank you. (Applause)

NATIONAL JUNIOR ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN STOPYRA: You know what? If you all sing real loud you could drown me out. Let's sing "Happy Birthday" to Kaitlyn.

(Whereupon, "Happy Birthday" was sung to Kaitlyn Hager, followed by a round of applause.)

NATIONAL JUNIOR ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN STOPYRA: All the states that sent in papers to me, all the children that did, all the work that they did, it was over 40,000 hours. And I want everyone to give them a hand because they really did a great job. (Applause)

COMMANDER HENRY: Thank you. Legislative, Susan Miller. I should be able to say that name.

SECOND JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER SUSAN K. MILLER: Will the chairman, Jerald Royse, please come up.

(Whereupon, Jerald Royse advanced to the podium.)

SECOND JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER MILLER: And I want to thank everyone who served on the Legislative Committee. They did a really good job.

And some of them even volunteered, they didn't have to be told, "This is what you're going to do." I was surprised because it's not the most interesting one to judge. (Laughter) But they did a really good job.

You know, it's more fun to see the junior pictures and how cute they are than all the laws.

COMMANDER HENRY: Okay, we have a clerical error occurring so we're going to skip Legislative for now and we are going to move on to VAVS, Fran Costa.

(Whereupon Frances J. Costa advanced to the podium.)

NATIONAL VAVS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN FRANCES J. COSTA: Good morning, everyone.

(Response of "Good morning.")

NATIONAL VAVS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN COSTA: I would like to ask Ann Glende if she would come up, please.

COMMANDER HENRY: She's here.

NATIONAL VAVS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN COSTA: I feel like I need to wear ten-inch heels when I'm with these youngsters. Would you like to give the report?

VAVS CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN ANN GLENDE: Sure. Why not.

NATIONAL VAVS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN COSTA: And there is the list. Okay?

VAVS CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN GLENDE: All right. Hello.

(Response of "Hello.")

VAVS CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN GLENDE: Let's see, National Commander, National Adjutant, National Officers, Past National Commanders, delegates and guests.

The National VAVS Convention Committee met in the Grand Salon A-4 one o'clock on Saturday, August 6th. Our advisor was Fran Costa. Anna Lisa Van Curen was our secretary, if she could stand.

The following members served on the Committee: District 1, Fran Costa; District 2, Priscilla Levine; District 3, Donna Folcarelli; District 4, Leila White; District 5, Anna Lisa Van Curen;

District 6, Elizabeth Swift; District 7, Ilean Dennis; District 8, Josephine Pike; District 9, Shirley McIntire; District 10, Patricia Julien; District 11, Vicki Johnston;

District 13, May Ewing; District 14, Lois McCarron; District 15, Rebecca Bowman; District 16, Julie Weissman -

(Whereupon, people called from the audience "Steinbaugh.")

VAVS CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN GLENDE: That one. Yes. (Laughter) District 17, Susan Dahlby; District 18, Kathryn Price; District 20, Kathleen Critz; District 21, Jennifer Hammons. (Applause)

The following units were judged to be the best in their category for the National VAVS awards: Group 1, 10 to 50 members, Harry Murrell Unit Number 28, Tennessee. (Applause) (Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

VAVS CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN GLENDE: Group 2, 51 to 100 members, Raul Lopez Unit 95, Texas. ((Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

VAVS CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN GLENDE: Group 3, 101 to 200 members Lexington, Unit Number 1, Kentucky. ((Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

VAVS CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN GLENDE: And, Group 4, 201 members and over Jacksonville, Unit Number 1, Florida (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

VAVS CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN GLENDE: The following recommendations were submitted. The first one is to please print legibly and fill out the heading completely.

Fill out the report properly and completely and re-read before submitting. Add under "Section 1" in area for uncertified hours of volunteering. Include as much detail as possible for Sections 2 through 4.

Include the name if your unit if applicable and the city. And include a space between total of Section 3 and total value line of Section 2 and 3. That's it. (Applause)

NATIONAL VAVS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN COSTA: Thank you, everyone who submitted reports. We had an excellent committee and I want to thank Ann for all that she did. She made a great chairman.

It's really important – and I heard about names of units on reports. If you look at your charter and you actually have a memorial name on your charter as opposed to your city or town, use that name as the name of your unit and then under city or town put the other because you are associated with a given person or a memorial that that unit was named for or your chapter name. If you're not sure check with your chapter what their name is. Thank you. (Applause)

COMMANDER HENRY: History Book, Linda Bailey.

(Whereupon, National History Book Committee Chairman Linda Bailed advanced to the podium.)

HISTORY BOOK NATIONAL COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN LINDA L. BAILEY: Hello. How is everybody today?

(Response of "Hello" and "Wonderful.")

HISTORY BOOK NATIONAL COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN LINDA L. BAILEY: Do we miss the history hotties and our cupcakes? (Laughter) So far I can't find the cupcakes. Can my chairman, Miss Mabel Rogers, come up here?

(Whereupon, Mabel Rogers advanced to the podium.)

HISTORY BOOK CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN MABEL ROGERS: Good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

HISTORY BOOK CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN ROGERS: Yes, it's not morning at my house. It was a privilege to serve as your National Department History Book Chairman.

And we had several committee members. And our secretary was Debbie Hall. Would Debbie please stand and then I'll follow that with our Committee members. Thank you, Debbie.

(Whereupon, Deborah Hall stood and was recognized with a round of applause.)

HISTORY BOOK CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN ROGERS: And our members were from District 2, Cheryl Connors; would you please stand; okay; from District 3 was Roberta Bugbee; she had some nice pens; is Roberta in here?

Moving on to Carol Simmons; she's District 6; District 7 was Julie Rollerson; I hope I'm not crucifying these names; I'm from District 8; District 9 is Clarissa Brown;

Moving on to District 10, Carol Lee; District 11 was Debbie Hall; District 12 was Evelyn Colter; District 13, Carla Bowman; District 14, Karen Bolton; District 15, Marilyn Tomlinson;

District 16, Susan Linder; District 17, June Schow; District 18, Pat Egel; District 19, Eve Davis; District 20 was Herschel Cunningham. And our winners are – (Applause)

Oh, you all want to give those ladies an applause and I thank you for your great efforts.

And the following state department was selected to receive the National State Department History Book Award. And that state department was from the great state of Michigan. (Applause) History Book chairman was Jill Wagner – Wager? Wager. Wager. Is Jill here?

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to receive the award.)

HISTORY BOOK CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN ROGERS: Thank you, Jill. And our Committee made some recommendations. The books might not be in order according to guidelines, overall neatness and make sure the books are not bulky.

And make sure to have plenty of documentation and pictures. There were some really good entries and I thank you for allowing me to serve. (Applause)

HISTORY BOOK NATIONAL COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN BAILEY: Now we had – we had only four books this time. We'd really like to see the states get more involved in doing their books.

And if anyone has any special pictures I would love to have them of Commander Susan. I do have one – I have a small gift to give out for the person that gave the most impressive picture of Commander Susan.

COMMANDER HENRY: Meaning the worst.

HISTORY BOOK NATIONAL COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN BAILEY: And ironically it was her sister Ruth gave me a picture. And the photograph is in Susan's book under "Special Memories" and it is a picture of her, Don Samuels – both with hats – unknown date, unknown time, and unknown agenda. (Laughter) There was a bed behind 'em. (Laughter)

But I've enjoyed being Susan's National History Chairman. But everybody that's got photographs, if you all would send either disk or pictures to National Headquarters, there will be a second book finished up for Susan for me to present to her.

And I will see you all tomorrow at the Forget-Me-Not Luncheon. Thank you, Susan. (Applause)

COMMANDER HENRY: Okay, Susan Miller to finish the Legislative report.

(Whereupon, Susan Miller and Jerald Royse advanced to the podium.)

CONVENTION LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN JERALD ROYSE: Still good morning to everyone.

(Response of "Good morning.")

CONVENTION LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN ROYSE: Commander, Adjutant, National Commander Judy, National Adjutant – and I have a mind warp so I'm going to have fun with the names today, too. I cheat. I use notes, whatever is available.

Okay, National Adjutant Judy – Judy, Judith – I can't speak. I'd like to also National Officers, National guests, Past Department Commanders, and delegates.

Okay, I will read off the roll of our people that was on my Committee. And I would ask that they stand. If I have trouble with your last name, please forgive me.

Okay, District 1, Allen Herrick – Herrick, okay, Allen Herrick; Carrie Robinson, District 2; District 3, Aura Lee – thank you – Nicodemus; okay, 4, Dorothy McDonald; 6, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9 – oh, okay. Okay. Okay.

District 5 I don't have a name there; okay 6, Ellen Griggs; District 7, Willie Hawkins; District 8, Peggy Bell; District 9, Shirley Ashmore; District 10, Linda Walters;

District 11, Judy Lenhart; District 12, Rose Williams; District 13, Mildred Brown; District 14, Mary Lou Weber; District 15, Rene Holloway; District 17, Martin (undistinguishable);

District 18, Deborah Parker; District 19, myself; District 20, Belinda Hackney; and District 21, Linda Spears. (Applause)

I'd like to thank all of you for helping me on this Committee. They did an outstanding job. I like the way they did it. They broke it down into groups.

We could break it down into an even amount of people and take each division and hand just one to each – one of them to each, you know, so we could rotate them around without having to spend all day sitting there going through one at a time and passing it down to 18 people to look at.

So, now, our meeting was held in the Salon B-10 room. We convened at 1300 hours or 1:00 o'clock on August 6th, 2011. Our advisor was Susan Miller. Our secretary was Deborah Parker.

Okay, the following for Groups 10 to 50, Harry Murrell, Dickson, Tennessee. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

CONVENTION LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN ROYSE: Okay. For 51 to 100, Saint Mary's, California, Maryland. (Applause) That's the way she's got it written. That's the way it's written on there.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Who wrote this? Deborah Parker. Where is Deborah? Is there a Saint Mary's in California, Maryland? That's it? That's right? She's right. We thought she was wrong. (Laughter) Congratulations.

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

CONVENTION LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN ROYSE: Okay. For 101 to 200, John T. Hensley, Lake – however, Florida. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

CONVENTION LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN ROYSE: And 201 members and over, Roll of Honor, 120, Tanaka, New York. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative came forward to accept the award.)

CONVENTION LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN ROYSE: We had a few recommendations. One was to give us a report grading sheet, shorter – and shorter boxes on the front to allow the front total, back total and grand total.

Put boxes on back for more information or give us note pads and pencils because of our not writing on the form at all it's a little hard to sit there and try to do some of this tallying and stuff without a worksheet or work pad.

And I'd like to thank everyone for letting me do this. It's been very educational and I thank you. (Applause)

COMMANDER HENRY: And, finally, the best one, Mae Holmes, Patty Rapisand.

SENIOR VICE COMMANDER RAPISAND: Well, Susan said the best one but I will tell you that everybody who is – there are no losers in any of these reports. Everybody did a magnificent job and I applaud everyone in this room for all your hard work. (Applause)

The chairman of our Committee was Ruth Gates from Texas.

(Whereupon, Mae Holmes Convention Committee Chairman Ruth Gates advanced to the podium.)

MAE HOLMES CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN RUTH GATES: That's right. Thank you, ma'am. Madame Commander, Miss Henry, Madame Adjutant Judy, Line Officers, Past National Commanders, members and guests, it is my privilege to stand here before you today and present your Mae Holmes reports.

First and foremost I'd like to introduce "Team Mae Holmes" as we are lovingly called amongst ourselves. District 1, Nancy Mooney; please stand when your name is called;

District 2, Marie Sternecker; District 3, Diana Gehring; District 6, Estelle Baker; District 7, Betty Hess; District 8, Fanny Holland; District 9, Geraldine Evans; District 10, Lorraine Connelly; District 11, Phyllis Murphy; District 12, Bernice Vargas; District 13, Arveeda Gordon; District 14, Marilyn Hardt; District 15, Shirleen Rath; District 16, June Adema; District 17, Margaret Lucas who was also our secretary; District 18, Michael Hurley; District 19, Christina Fairin; myself from District 20; District 21, Cheryl Brandt. I'd like to thank each of the members for their participation in the Committee. (Applause)

The National Mae Holmes report is as follows. The National Mae Holmes Committee, Convention Committee met in the Grand Salon C-13 at 1:00 p.m. on August the 6th, 2011.

Our advisor was Patty Rapisand, National Senior Vice Commander. Our secretary was Margaret Lucas. She was appointed by the majority of the Committee.

The following units were judged to be the best in the categories for the National Mae Holmes Awards. Group 1, 10 to 50 members, Steven Points 30, Wisconsin. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative from the unit came forward to accept the award.)

MAE HOLMES CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN GATES: Group 2, 51 to 100, Anderson Number 40, South Carolina. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative from the unit came forward to accept the award.)

MAE HOLMES CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN GATES: Group 3, 101 to 200, Beaufort County Number 48, North Carolina. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative from the unit came forward to accept the award.)

MAE HOLMES CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN GATES: Group Number 4, over 200, 201 members or over, Titusville Number 109, Florida. (Applause)

(Whereupon, a representative from the unit came forward to accept the award.)

MAE HOLMES CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN GATES: All right, now that all the recipients have made it up here, there were some recommendations from the Mae Holmes Committee I'd like to share with the Convention.

We would like to remind the states to submit only the first place award winner from the state department. Number 2, we request that instructions to the Convention Committee include a reminder that the quota must be met by April 1st so that we can verify each report has met quota.

Number 3, we request that the support documents be attached to the report and the numeric amount on the report match the documents. That is the Mae Holmes report. Thank you for allowing me to serve you. And it has been my pleasure to be here with you all today. (Applause)

COMMANDER HENRY: We will now recess and reconvene at 2:00 o'clock this afternoon. However – don't leave – before you leave the room the Districts should caucus concerning the Constitution and Bylaws.

We will meet at 2:00 o'clock for the Benefits Seminar followed by the second reading of the proposed Constitution and Bylaws changes, amendments. So okay, hang on.

Okay, all the members of the Americanism Committee, anyone want to claim? We have your lost and found, hat and bag. Okay, once again you will now caucus and then we will reconvene at 2:00 p.m.

(Whereupon, the meeting recessed at 11:55 o'clock, a.m., on Sunday, August 7, 2011.)

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DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS AUXILIARY
89th NATIONAL CONVENTION
Hilton New Orleans Riverside Hotel New Orleans, Louisiana
August 7, 2011
Second Business Session
- - -

The Second Business Session of the Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary convened in the Grand Salon C/D on the First Floor of the Hilton New Orleans Riverside Hotel, New Orleans, Louisiana, on Sunday afternoon, August 7, 2011, and was called to order at 2:07 o'clock, p.m., by National Commander Susan Henry.

COMMANDER HENRY: At this time I would like to extend – oh, there she is – my appreciation to National Service Officer Tracey Torres of the Roanoke, Virginia, Office for addressing our group and we look forward to your presentation. Tracey. (Applause)

MS. TRACEY TORRES: Thank you, Susan. Thank you, Judy, for inviting me here today. I was asked to talk about death benefits. Now, a little secret about me, I'm not really good behind the podium. I'm one of those pacers so, so I'm going to grab this if I can.

(Whereupon, Ms. Torres removed the microphone from the stand.)

MS. TORRES: Okay, and I'm going to go pace. Okay, this is something that's kind of hard for people to talk about. It's hard for people to realize. This is something that I make it my mission to discuss with all the veterans that come in to my office and with the informational seminars that I am dedicated to giving.

Because the reality is that we are born; we die. Right? And the thing about death is you don't know when it's coming but the very best thing to do is to be prepared.

(Whereupon, the photographer took a photograph of Ms. Torres.)

MS. TORRES: And it's all about preparedness and taking publicity shots. (Laughter) Okay? It's all about being prepared. Now, I know a lot of you spouses are the powers behind the veterans.

There are times when I'm doing an interview and I'll ask the veteran something and he will look at the spouse and she will provide the ready answer, to the point where I stop looking at the veteran and I just look at the spouse and, "Ma'am, what's the periods of service?" "What was his job?" (Laughter) And I get a clearer, more concise, well-organized interview when the spouse is there than I ever get when the veteran is there.

So, first and foremost, I would like to thank you ladies for being the power behind those veterans. I want to thank you for your service and for your dedication and for making the DAV and the veterans that are among that, the organization, the people who we are.

Okay? So why don't you guys give yourselves first and foremost a round of applause because you definitely deserve it. (Applause) That's it? No more energy than that for yourselves? (Applause) Thank you.

That's right. You all deserve it. Believe me; I've met some of your husbands. Some of you all deserve the Purple Heart, the Medal of Honor, (Laughter) the Silver Star. You know? Okay, so are we ready to be informed?

(Response of "Yes.")

MS. TORRES: All right, let's be informed because I don't want to take up too much of your time. Okay, first of all, let's think about this.

Whether your spouse is 10 percent service-connected or 100 percent service-connected, when he passes away or she passes away, for the male spouses in here, that ends. Right?

Now, the Department of Veterans Affairs will tell you that your VA compensation is not for you to build your life on. That it is not for you to use to pay your bills. That's not for you to depend on.

How many people who receive VA compensation don't depend on it? I depend on mine. I use mine to feed my kids. That's an unrealistic expectation.

So if you've been married for even a year, that's money that you put in your income and that you live on, you depend on. It could be your mortgage payment. It could be your car payment, whatever. When that veteran passes, it stops.

Now I gave one of these benefits once and I had – I had a lady come up to me. She goes, you know what, Tracey, the way you talk, you act like there is going to be a quiz at the end. (Laughter) Is there going to be a quiz? (Laughter)

And I was like, yes, ma'am, but it will be about 10 to 15 years from now when he passes away and that's the worst time to have a quiz because now you've lost someone you've built your life with, your help mate, in theory, right? (Laughter) So, you know.

So like I'm talking about you, huh? But you know someone that you depended on 40-30 years. You know, I mean your life is changed overnight. And now I'm telling you, you've got to think about things.

You've got to think about money. You don't care about money at that point, right? But it's so very important. You've got to care about it.

And that's why in this book – some of you guys got them and some of you guys didn't and I'll address that in a minute – but in this book is a section that you have the veteran fill out now so that you're informed for then because you might not be thinking about it.

Or the woman beside you might not be thinking about it but you will and you can help her out –right? – because we're a team and we'll help each other out here. Okay?

So you've got to be like, "Susie, I know you just lost him, but honey you're going to have to take care of yourself now, too." Okay? So that's the quiz. And I want all of you guys to get an A on that quiz. Okay? Because we're grading on a curve here so everyone is going to get an A.

Okay, so, know that DIC payment, the first benefit I'm going to talk about – I'm going to talk about the money. Let's lead with the money – is Dependent Indemnity Compensation.

It's called DIC. Okay? That one is if you have a veteran who dies of a service-connected disability. What is a service-connected disability?

That is a disability in which the VA has determined is related to service in some way shape or form. There are different ways they can do that but that's what DI – what service-connected means.

So for example, your spouse dies of complications due to diabetes and that's listed on the death certificate, then it is a service-connected disability.

So it's very important that you all understand what his or her service-connected disabilities are. All right? You need to know that. You need to know what they are service-connected for and for how long because that's the first question that they're going to ask you when you come for help.

That's another thing – you do not have to do it alone. The same veterans' service organization that has helped your husband with his claim – because it doesn't have to be the DAV – can help you as well get your benefits. Okay? You don't have to do it alone.

The first thing they're going to ask you is, do you have a copy of his DD-214? Where is the death certificate? And did he die – do you think that this cause of death is related to his service? Okay?

And to know that you've got to know what he is service-connected for. And that's why I love the spouses that come in because they know what he is service-connected for.

(Whereupon, a cell phone rang.)

MS. TORRES: You know, in my Chapter we charge \$5 for that. I'm just saying. (Laughter) I don't know how much you guys – \$5.00? Well, inflation is rough, ain't it? (Laughter)

Okay, so – I wonder if I get a cut of that \$5 today? Probably not, huh? Okay, so, anyway, you need to know what he is service-connected for.

(Whereupon, a question was asked from the audience, away from a microphone.)

MS. TORRES: Okay, we have a question here. What we're going to do because questions are okay. I'm going to have Dominique Maestas. She is a National Service Officer –

MS. DOMINIQUE MAESTAS: Maestas, please.

MS. TORRES: Maestas. Sorry. I'm nervous. She is out of Baltimore, Maryland. And she's going to control the mic so that everyone can hear the question because it was a good question.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Hi, Tracey. I'm Julie. I'm from Unit 11 in Clearwater, Florida. And I just wanted to say, is it okay that if God forbid anything happens anytime soon, which I hope it doesn't to anybody in here, that their Chapter NSO does the same type of help that you're asking for?

MS. TORRES: Yes. You can go to a Chapter Service Officer, a Department Service Officer, or a National Service Officer. Okay? They're not all as cute as me but any of them can help you. (Laughter) Okay?

The key is to get help. Okay? (Laughter) She said none of them are as cute as me. I love you guys. I'm going to stay here instead of going got my own meetings. (Laughter)

But, yes, any, on any level can assist you. So if it's more convenient for you to go to a Chapter or a Department, absolutely go. Okay?

Now, let's talk about that death certificate because it's really important that you understand that because usually when you look at a death certificate they will put "respiratory failure" or "cardiac arrest" as the cause of death.

Now, we all stop breathing and our heart stops beating and we die. Okay? That usually is what happens. Or they might say "other conditions" as to what is related to the cause of death.

What is important to know is – this is why it's important to know the service-connected – there are things that can lead or contribute to death; for example, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.

The question that you need to ask the doctor is, "Doctor, could this condition have caused my significant other to lose a day out of their life?" Okay? So now when you look at PTSD, there is anxiety.

There could be hypertension. There could be sleep apnea. There is conditions that can lead to death. It might not be the primary cause of death, but it could allege death. Are we understanding me? I see some nods.

(Whereupon, an unidentified person asked about murder.)

MS. TORRES: You know what, it's funny, murder is not included, you know. (Laughter) I did have a spouse actually ask me that once during an interview. But I think we're going to keep our eye on you and your husband, though. (Laughter)

Right now he's worth too much money? Okay, so what you do is you ask the doctor to put that down as a secondary cause of death. But you're looking at stuff like PTSD. It could be asthma. It could be diabetes, things like that.

Things that are hard are the knee conditions, the shoulder conditions. So that's why sometimes I'll tell a veteran it's important to fight for the things for service-connection that can lead to a cause of death.

Now, a lot of veterans come to me and they'll be like with erectile dysfunction. "Oh, I have erectile dysfunction. It's so important with erectile dysfunction."

I'm like, "Are you going to die of erectile dysfunction?" (Laughter) Your wife might, but I don't know if you will. (Laughter) So, you know – so it's really important that they look at the PTSD and the stuff like that. Okay?

Because we want them to take care of you as much as – okay, get your minds out of the gutters now. (Laughter) Joke over. We need to move on. See, now you've got me there. (Laughter)

I lost my train of thought. PTSD. Yes. That's why it's really important to get things like, that can lead to a cause of death as a service-connected condition. Okay? So, ladies, please guide your – and gentlemen, please guide your significant other to things like that and understand it.

And then talk to the doctor. It's better to talk to the doctor when it originally happens than have to go back 10-15 years later and try to get them to amend the death certificate because they will do it usually closer to the cause or you know the date of the death than years and years later because things happen and they may not remember and they're more uncomfortable and it might be harder.

Your family doctor can amend the death certificate as well. Usually it's just a – especially if he's well or he or she is well acquainted with the veteran. So those are things that I sometimes recommend when they come in. Okay? So DIC is a big one.

The thing with DIC, it has no income requirements. And I'm going to go over this very briefly because I know I'm starting to take time so.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Can you answer a question? If a DIC claim is a "slam dunk," it's been 10 years, ya-da, ya-da, ya-da; they've been married their 2 years, all this, why does it take so long to process?

MS. TORRES: Okay, first I never say "slam dunk" because the VA doesn't recognize that. (Laughter) Because I've had things that I thought was a slam dunk in my mind and they've denied it.

And then I go and I will go to a VA employee and I will be, like why are we here? I'm going to use you a lot. You're going to be my – just so you know. All right? I'll be, like why are we here? You know. But that's a good question.

What the VA has done, in an effort to streamline the claims process they're doing what is called "Centralization of Claims." So instead of like Roanoke doing it, Maryland doing their own claims, they're sending all the claims to Philadelphia. Sounds like a good idea in theory, right?

(Response of "No.")

MS. TORRES: No, it sounds like a stupid idea in theory, right? And that's what the reality is. So now all these claims nationwide, so if all of you guys had a claim, all your claims are going to go to –

(Response of "Philadelphia.")

MS. TORRES: Philadelphia. And I met the guy from Philadelphia who is in charge of Philadelphia. And he is like, "Tracey, oh, my God, we have 300 new employees we're training up."

I wasn't by myself but I felt like he was talking to me. "We have 300 people we're training up and they're really excited and ready to go and claims are only going to take two or three months to get these DIC and pension claims going through."

"And the VA is so dynamic we're going to make this happen. Here is my phone number. If you ever have any problems, you call me." Two days later it was disconnected. They never heard of him again. He was gone. (Laughter)

Meanwhile, the claims are taking a long, long time. Half those new people that they hired have quit. So that's why the claims are taking a long time to adjudicate. But let me tell you how you can get around that. Dominique, you have a question back there.

Let me tell you how you can get around that. Okay? Let me tell you how to – this is a big secret, all right? So you might have to write this down. I'm going to tell you how to reduce the time of your claim status. Are you ready?

Be prepared and have the evidence upfront. Be prepared and have the evidence upfront. VA employees are like most of us. Basically the human creature is a lazy creature.

If you have kids you will know this is true because they don't want to do it unless it's easily done or quickly done. Right? They will put the big stuff aside and they will do the easy stuff first.

If you have all your information readily prepared in a nice, neat packet, guess which one they're going to do first? They're going to do yours first, even if yours is not the first in line.

They might find one that's all disorganized and needing more adjudication or more development and they're going to be like, I'll get to that one later. Oh, look at this one.

That's why the best kept secret of the VA is to be prepared, to have your ducks in a row. And that's why this is so very important. Yes, Dominique.

MS. ROSE WILLIAMS: Hi. I would just like to make a statement. This is kind of based on personal experience. My husband died in a VA center, in the VA hospital. But the cause of death was not related to his disability.

And we knew he was sick but at the time he died and the doctor comes in immediately and says, "Do you want an autopsy?" I said, "No" because that's the last thing on my mind. Then I got chastised by my CVSO for not getting an autopsy done.

MS. TORRES: Okay. Can you – for the record can you just state your name and unit, please?

MS. WILLIAMS: Rose Williams, Unit 30, Wisconsin.

MS. TORRES: Wisconsin? I've been there. It's too cold there for me. (Laughter) I can't handle the cold. When you've got ice inside there is a problem. (Laughter)

In terms of autopsies and stuff like that, I mean he or she shouldn't have really chastised you for that because the VA is not looking for whether or not there is an autopsy.

The biggest thing comes on what that cause of death is. If the autopsy would have more streamlined it into a cause of death that could be related to service, then that would be the biggest issue.

The biggest thing that I'm concerned about is what the cause of death is on that death certificate. Okay? Because if – you have one behind you.

And I'm going to ask, if we can keep the questions, that wasn't really a question, that was a suggestion for everyone.

But if we can keep the questions not personal, keep them general, because we all care about our own claim more than anyone else cares about it so let's just keep it general.

But the death certificate is what is the most important thing, what it says on that death certificate because that's what the VA is going to look at.

And if the cause of death is not listed on that death certificate, it is very unlikely that you're going to get that claim adjudicated, especially in a timely manner.

Okay? I'm not saying it won't happen. I'm just saying that it may take a very, very long time. And I've already told you how Philadelphia is. Okay? All right? So basically that's the DIC.

MS. BARBARA McCOMB: Barbara McComb, Unit 18, Michigan. One of the things you also need to do with that death certificate is make sure everything is spelled correctly, including what they put down for the cause of death because it could make the difference between skin, blood, organs. If it's not done correctly, then you may not get what you need, that DIC.

MS. TORRES: Very good suggestion. Thank you, ma'am. And my brother is a doctor and he is one of the worst spellers in the world. It amazes me. But he gets well paid for not spelling very well.

But, anyway, yes. Sorry. She just had a very funny comment. But, anyway, that is a good suggestion. However, don't – don't take too long to file your claim, looking for the perfect death certificate. Okay? You know what I mean?

Because it's more important to get this stuff together and get it in than to look for that perfect, perfect paperwork, the perfect, you know, packet. We want a complete packet; it doesn't have to be a perfect packet. Okay? All right, so DIC.

Now, a different type of death benefit when we talk about money, it's normally called "Widow's Pension." It is more politically correctly called "Survivor's Pension."

Now the thing about survivor's pension is it's based on income. Okay? Income. Now, the question becomes, what does the VA consider income? Anything you have or will have that is currency in the United States is considered income by the VA.

It goes from anything from Social Security benefits all the way to lottery winnings. If you get it, they want to know it and they will count it as income.

So, it is a dollar-for-dollar match for the pension; so you could be awarded the survivor's pension but not receive any money because of your income. Okay? So that's why I like to push the DIC because you could be a multi-millionaire and – Dominique, it's over there – and keep your hand up so she can see you.

So you can be awarded the pension and not receive any money and that's a harsh reality. Okay? So that's why, like I said, I like to go towards the DIC as a first choice.

So, for instance, if you are getting the veteran's Social Security and then he had an insurance, an insurance policy that paid out, they will count that all as income.

And the only way that you can reduce that income is for un-reimbursed medical expenses, dental expenses and legal expenses. Okay? Are we good with that? Yes, ma'am.

MS. HELENE POCKRUS: Helene Pockrus from Utah. Does that include house payments and your home?

MS. TORRES: For – what do you mean, for income?

MS. POCKRUS: Yes. If you have a home, do they consider that?

MS. TORRES: Honey, they don't care about how much you're putting out. They care about what is coming in.

MS. POCKRUS: So if you owe a house payment –

MS. TORRES: No. They don't care about the house payment. They do ask about the asset of the home, but they don't care how much outgoing you have. You see what I mean? They only care about what is coming in, how much money you have coming in.

So let's say I have \$5,000 coming in and I am supposed to have \$6,000 going out, the VA doesn't care about that. All they care is about the \$5,000 coming in, in terms of pension.

Okay? Do you have a question here? Okay, hold on. I'm going to recognize questions from Dominique just to keep it flowing, keep this organized.

MS. MARILYN MILLER: Okay, if you have money like an IRA already there, it's not considered money coming in, correct?

MS. TORRES: No. They consider that income.

MS. MILLER: Even though it's already in the bank and everything?

MS. TORRES: They're going to – they're going to ask about any assets like that, IRAs, CD, any – yes, stocks, bonds; anything like the VA considers income.

So if you're diligent and you're a good planner, and you manage your money well, technically the VA kind of uses that against you.

MS. MILLER: Marilyn Miller, Suwannee Memorial 126 in Florida.

MS. TORRES: Thank you. Okay, so they will count that as income. Survivor benefits are counted as income. That's why – you see why that death certificate and the DIC – oh, I didn't tell you guys.

Did I tell you guys the amount of the DIC? No. It's wrong in the book. The book is outdated. The amount of DIC is 1154 – \$1,154.

Now, if your spouse is service-connected at 100 percent they're getting, what, \$2,824? Right? So you built your life on \$2,824; he passes away and now you're looking at \$1,154.

There is a kicker. If you have been married for eight or more years, \$286, so you're looking at about approximately, what, \$1,400? Okay. There is a big difference, huh. That's why you've got to be educated.

It's scary, scary. Because the last time I looked they weren't lowering mortgage payments and gas prices and, you know, they don't cut breaks on those, credit card payments. Okay?

So keep your hand up. As soon as she gets – I think we have a question here, ma'am.

MS. TRACY ARNETTE: The question is, how long does a veteran have to be service-connected for and how long does the widow need to be married to the veteran before he passes? And how long does the benefit last?

MS. TORRES: The benefit lasts for life, for the life of the spouse or until you remarry. Okay? So you only get one love of your life. Okay?

MS. MAESTAS: Tracey, remember the 56-year rule. If you have – if you're getting DIC and you're 56 years old, after you turn 56 and you meet a new "love of your life" –

MS. TORRES: Yes.

MS. MAESTAS: You can keep that DIC and whatever your new spouse has. But you have to be over the age of 56.

MS. TORRES: All right. And – where was I? So, 1154, there is an eight-year kicker. What was your other part of your question, ma'am?

MS. ARNETTE: How long does he have to be disabled for from his – Tracy Arnette, Unit 1, Lexington, Kentucky – how long my husband has to be rated as disabled. I've heard ten years.

MS. TORRES: Well that's – that's 100 percent permanent and total.

MS. ARNETTE: My husband is 100 percent permanent and total –

MS. TORRES: No, I'm just answering in general because I don't have to be – I don't have to be 100 percent. (Laughter)

(Whereupon, someone made a comment from the floor, away from the microphones.)

MS. TORRES: Yes, on Bourbon Street. I remember seeing you out there. (Laughter) You don't have to be because remember we said the death has to be – because like Donna said.

She said a slam dunk. Remember? And she said ten years – ten years, 100 percent. Right. But the thing is, though, you don't have to be 100 percent ten or more years. That's when you're supposed to get into that "slam dunk" zone.

(Whereupon, First Junior Vice Commander Donna Adams asked a question without a microphone.)

MS. TORRES: Well, yes, because of the – usually because of the centralization. But I could be 50 percent service-connected for PTSD, right? And oh, I've got a new lady sitting here.

Well, boy, you're sly; I didn't even see you get here. So let's say her and I are married, right? Lucky dog, you. (Laughter) And I'm 50 percent service-connected for PTSD. Right?

I pass away. She can – if it's on the death certificate she'll still get the DIC. You see what I mean? It's, that's still possible. I don't have to be 100 percent permanent and total for ten or more years.

Now, you're starting to get into the more slam dunk – and don't quote me on that because I don't use that term but you get more into a slam dunk with the 100 percent ten or more years. Okay? It's supposed to be easier. It's supposed to be easier. Okay? Yes, ma'am.

MS. CAROL PARKER-PARK: Yes, Carol Parker-Park, Unit 35, Ohio. If the non-service spouse dies prior to the veteran, do the children, can the children receive benefits?

MS. TORRES: Yes, ma'am. Good question. DIC can be for children. And they don't have to all reside in the same household. So survivor benefits, it extends past the spouse. It's also for the children. Okay?

Very good question. Thank you. Any you need to come to Ohio; you've got smart people there. Sorry, ma'am.

MS. SHARON JOHNSON: Sharon Johnson, Unit 86, Tennessee. What are the qualifications for the survivor's children to achieve that benefit?

MS. TORRES: Pretty much they need to be the children, the legal children of that veteran because you don't have to be married to that veteran.

Suppose you decide to kick him to the curb and then he dies, but you have children from him, you can still apply for DIC based on the – the age limit – and make sure I get this right – it applies to 25 – where is Dominique – 25 or 26 or still in school, unmarried and they still have to be in school. Okay?

MS. MAESTAS: And not in the military, either.

MS. TORRES: Oh, yes. They can't be in the military. Yes, they can't be in the military themselves.

MS. ROBYN KENNY: Robyn Kenny from Hutchinson Unit 37. I was just wondering if the military person has retired and is 100 percent disabled, do they still qualify for DIC?

MS. TORRES: Now, see, that's an interesting question because you cannot get DIC and SVP. You can get one or the other or the greater benefit, whichever is the greater benefit. And usually it's the DIC. Okay?

Did everyone understand the question for spouses of retirees? What the VA will do is they will give that money back. The money that was paid into the SVP, they will reimburse that to you.

That's send back by DFAS. But you can only get one benefit or the other. Okay? You don't get – you can't double-dip. No double dipping here. All right?

MS. MAESTAS: One more question.

MS. TORRES: Oh, no, we have two more. We have one over there that's been very patient. Yes, ma'am.

MS. GLORIA CARDENAS: Gloria Cardenas, Unit 121. My question is I got approached by a widow, a lady, whose husband had passed away several years before who was in the process of receiving a claim.

He was already disabled and apparently he was trying to get an increase or something but he died. She was asking does she still, can she still pursue that claim?

MS. TORRES: Heck, yes. And I encourage it. It's a little bit harder. It's a little bit harder because if the VA needs anything, you know, like needs to do what is called a "Compensation and Pension Examination" or things like that, the veteran is, of course is passed away. Right?

However, that's, that's where medical records come from. Right? So, absolutely, because I'm going to talk about something later so I've got to move on about accrued benefits.

What accrued benefits are is if the veteran has a claim and the claim was pending for two years, right? And they adjudicate that claim and there is a retro payment you're entitled to those accrued benefits. You see what I mean? So absolutely.

They've changed the law to where the widow can say, "I still want this claim to be adjudicated." All right.

MS. CARDENAS: Is there a limit?

MS. TORRES: On the number of years? Do it right away because after a while what they do is they take the claim file and they retire it. You see what I mean?

They retire it and they take it out of the regional office and they put it into another regional office. And it's in a graveyard and they're human and things get discombobulated and are hard.

But I have a lady right now that I'm helping do that. The only thing is, like I say, it is hard because you don't have the veteran's memories. You don't know where he was.

If they need anything it's harder to do. You don't have his word for anything or her word for anything. But it's possible and I've gotten one granted. You know. So I absolutely encourage that. All right.

MS. CARDENAS: Thank you.

MS. TORRES: You're welcome, ma'am. That was a good question. Yes, Dom.

MS. SYLVIA HEATH: Sylvia Heath, Unit 11, Lewiston, Maine. I also wanted to say the difference with the retirement and the DIC is taxability. The DIC is non-taxable. The retirement is taxable, isn't it?

MS. TORRES: You're absolutely correct. My supervisor came from your state, from Maine. Why did you have to send her to my way, huh? (Laughter)

No, actually, she's really good. Gidget. She misses you guys, just so you know. You can tell her I said that. Gidget Rizzo is my supervisor. Okay, so thank you for that. That's a good comment, very helpful. So, and that's true as well.

So now we've talked about – a little hidden thing in there is accrued benefits so let's say that your spouse is already receiving benefits – now it depends on the date of death as to how much accrued benefits.

So let me tell you, let me give you a little secret: once a veteran dies, send the money back. I don't care what the date of death is, or don't spend it. Okay? Do not spend it.

The VA will calculate how much accrued benefits you're entitled and then they will issue another check. Otherwise what they'll do is they will create a debt and they will – they will come after you. Yes, ma'am.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Is not the pension date on the first day of the month or the last day of the month?

MS. TORRES: Actually, compensation is paid on the first day of the month.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: So what you got on November 1 or August 1 is for the rest of August.

MS. TORRES: No. It is actually for July.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: So for the prior month.

MS. TORRES: Yes. Right. So that's why the date of death becomes really important. The very first thing you need to do with the VA upon the veteran's demise is you need to notify the VA.

If you go through a veteran's service organization such as the Disabled American Veterans, which is certainly not the only veterans service organization out there, have your Service Officer, be it a Chapter, Department or National Service Officer, notify the VA of the veteran's demise. Okay?

Because what they'll do is they'll put that in the system and then they will figure out, they will ask for the death certificate and they will figure out what the accrued benefits are. Okay?

Now, the only time government agencies talk effectively is when it's money out of your pocket. So they will find out that the veteran passed away. They will contact IRS. They will contact the Social Security, the DMV.

Every 90 days those computers talk and they update each other. And it's always to the negative; it's never to the positive. Okay? So notify them right away.

If accrued benefits are provided, they will give them to you because, please, debts, a debt with the government is a very, very, very nasty thing that you will wake up one day and all, the money will be gone from the account. You know. They snatch it quick. Okay? Yes, ma'am.

MS. SUSAN LINDER: Susan Linder, Unit 73, California. We just had this seminar at our state Convention and one of the main things that I really took away from this is as soon as your spouse passes away to make sure you get that Form 2124 filled out and become your own entity with the DAV – 2122, I'm sorry – become your own entity. Just because your spouse is represented does not mean you are.

MS. TORRES: Correct. The 2122 is specific to the individual. So if the Disabled American Veterans represented your spouse, it does not, it is not given to you.

Vice-versa, if he was with VFW, AmVets, PVA, that doesn't mean that you cannot go to them or vice-versa. Because he was with the DAV doesn't mean that you have to go with us. Okay?

Okay, that's a good question. Let me explain what a Power of Attorney is, okay, in a veterans' service organization. There are – you know, because there are attorneys out there, too, that will try to charge you so that's a very good point.

A Power of Attorney, what that means is – caught you guys switching this time. This time I was paying attention. You're not messing with my mind this time. (Laughter)

We represent veterans and their dependents, okay? We offer free services to represent your interest in front of the Department of Veterans Affairs. That is what our mission is in life. That's why I get up in the morning. Okay? That's my job. All right?

And the DAV does that every day for everybody. But what you need to do is you need to sign that Form 2122. Come in, talk to a Chapter Service Officer, Department Service Officer or a National Service Officer such as myself.

We will assist you with signing that form. And that will allow us to go to the VA and ask the VA questions about that, about you; and it will allow the VA to answer those questions. Without the Power of Attorney the VA will tell me, here is your hat; there is the door; get out.

They won't answer the questions, which is good because you want your privacy, right? You don't want anyone to just go in and start looking at your stuff. So that's what the Power of Attorney is.

It is not a civil Power of Attorney. So I cannot go into your bank account and take your money. If I could, I'd be a lot better dressed. (Laughter) Okay?

So it doesn't do that because I have people who are nervous about that because, you know, especially in the military, you know those Power of Attorneys in the military, you've all heard – it's not that kind of Power of Attorney. It's only with the Department of Veterans Affairs. Okay?

You can only have one representative. So if you decide that it's the VFW, you can change it later but you can't have the VFW and the DAV at the same time. Okay? Now, before we take this question, I was asked to take a short break. Oh, you need the microphone, don't you?

COMMANDER HENRY: We have a guest – I forgot what – I forgot what level you are. Second Junior Vice from the DAV Mary Bencivenga has asked to speak for a moment.

(Whereupon, Disabled American Veteran Second Junior Vice Commander Mary J. Bencivenga was escorted to the podium amid a round of applause.)

DAV SECOND JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER MARY J. BENCIVENGA: Commander, Past National Officers and current Line Officers, I want to thank you so much for the opportunity to address you.

It is extremely important what you do each and every day. And I apologize, Tracey, because I was actually enjoying the show. (Laughter) She is filled with information so please take heed to what she says.

The main reason that I am here this afternoon is to honor you and to thank you. Each and every one of you in this room really make up the backbone of the Disabled American Veterans and I know that.

And I just wanted to let you know that I appreciate everything that you do because we would not shine as we do without you. And I thank you for all the work that you're doing right now.

And that's really it. That's all I wanted to say. Enjoy the conference and please if you see me in the hall stop me. (Applause)

COMMANDER HENRY: Thank you, Mary.

MS. TORRES: Back to the show. Thank you, Susan. It's like a flurry of activity now. I just want to say that I've heard, I've been lucky enough to hear Mary B. talk several times and I've never met a more sincere person.

She is very modest, too, because actually she is history. Once she – Mary's trying to get out of here as fast as possible. (Laughter)

But once she becomes the National Commander she will actually be the first female National Commander for any veterans' service organization. (Applause) Mary, you're awesome. (Applause) How exciting is that? You know.

MS. STAKE: Excuse me, ma'am. Could I interrupt real quick before she leaves?

MS. TORRES: Yes.

MS. STAKE: Hey, Mary, are you a member of the Auxiliary? (Laughter) Do you think as a member of our Auxiliary when you go back to your meeting challenge those guys that are not members to join this week. (Applause)

MS. TORRES: Mary, you didn't know you were going to have homework, huh? (Laughter) You're leaving with homework. Actually, she does and I've heard her do that. Thank you, Mary.

Just so you know, I do, too. And the National Organization encourages us to do the Auxiliary as well as the DAV. Like, myself, my mother is a veteran; my sister is a veteran; and my father was a veteran.

So I have Auxiliary memberships all over the place as well. So it's very important because there are crossovers. (Applause) You know. Okay, so where were we? We were talking about accrued benefits, correct?

(Response of "Yes.")

MS. TORRES: All right. Are you guys still in – are you still engaged? Are you still interested in this?

(Response of "Oh, yes.")

MS. TORRES: All right. Okay, so it's always good to start with the money. So now we know about DIC. We know about the survivor's pension. Correct?

(Response of "Yes.")

MS. TORRES: So we know about all that. So let's talk about the not – well, there is some other money. It's the burial benefit.

Now, if you're a veteran, if you're just a spouse of a veteran, not service-connected, you know has never been adjudicated, there is a benefit of \$300, up to \$300 burial benefit. Okay? Did I hear another phone go off back there?

(Response of "Yes.")

MS. TORRES: Yes, I did, didn't I? Someone cut it off quick. But that's all right. We'll get you next time. But it's \$300. Okay? Susan, I'm going to raise some money for you.

Okay, if they are a service-connected veteran the burial benefit is up to \$2,000. See the difference?

(Response of "Yes.")

MS. TORRES: Two thousand dollars, up to \$2,000. That can cover the cost of food, flowers, burial expenses, hotels. And it doesn't matter who spends the money.

So suppose Aunt May, Aunt Judy, Aunt Sue, Uncle Fred all contribute to the funeral, you guys are all going to trust me because I'm the cutest to gather up all the receipts – not really, you're very cute too, sir. (Laughter) You're going to gather up all the receipts and I'm going to do the one-time claim to the VA. Okay?

And realistically it's probably going to come to more than \$2,000. I think on TV they say the average cost of a funeral is \$10,000. So it's going to come up to more. But the VA will pay up to \$2,000.

So let's say I get the maximum \$2,000; then I can give Uncle Fred his money back, Aunt Judy hers back. I don't know if I want to give you your money back. I think you owe me some money. (Laughter)

Okay, I'm going to keep that money. Well, I'm going to give you your money back because you're looking at me like you'll shake me if I don't so I'm going to give you your money back. (Laughter) So that's how that works. Okay?

You want to have all the receipts upfront because, remember, the claim goes faster if you have all those receipts, right? And it's a one-time thing.

So you've got to make sure you keep that receipt, okay? All that is done at the same time, all right? So that's burial expenses. All right, no questions about burial expenses? All right, now keep in mind that –

MS. MABEL HOLLOWAY: Mabel Holloway, Unit – Kentucky. That \$2,000 you’re saying, talking about, is that, does that include the burial funeral expenses?

MS. TORRES: Yes.

MS. HOLLOWAY: As part of the funeral expenses?

MS. TORRES: Yes.

MS. HOLLOWAY: If it’s \$7,000 funeral expenses –

MS. TORRES: You’re going to get up to \$2,000 back. That’s it, maximum.

MS. HOLLOWAY: Thank you.

MS. TORRES: Yes. That’s why I told my kids to call the government, put me in a pine box and just the easiest way to go, least expensive.

Because, you know, you do – you have the right to be buried in a National and State Cemeteries, some of which are very, very nice. And those are options for you. And then they – a lot of those costs are covered as well. Okay?

If you choose to be cremated, then those costs will be covered, some of those costs will be covered as well. I think they give you an urn and then they give you the plaque to put on it.

MS. MAESTAS: Well, actually, the cemeteries are expanding now and they’re looking at new creative ways that veterans want to be memorialized, including underwater burials.

MS. TORRES: Yes, the Navy.

MS. MAESTAS: And they’re also doing like a bulk burial where the veteran is cremated and instead of spreading his ashes out to sea or in a park and having to get permission for it, you can go to a National Cemetery and it has like a chute and you just open the door to the chute and you can bury the ashes there and you can take the urn home.

And it’s a huge tank that collects of nothing but other veterans. And so the VA has found that veterans from a certain unit are going to this cemetery right here. And so the VA is picking up on that and they are, have made that available to veterans as well.

MS. TORRES: So, basically, you want to go to your state and find out what is available in your state. And, you know, you can think outside the box.

If, Lord forbid, you precede the veteran, you may want to make decisions as to where you want to be buried. Some of them, they won’t let you reserve. Like in California they won’t let – the state cemeteries won’t let you reserve a plot.

But if the widow or the spouse precedes the veteran, they will bury the widow first and then that’s how you reserve the spot. So, that’s the only way you can reserve it. Okay?

MS. MAESTAS: See, you guys hold the seat for them.

MS. TORRES: You hold the seat for them. (Laughter) All right? Yet, again, you’re doing something for them. All right?

MS. EDITH JACKSON: I want to ask – I’m Edith Jackson. I might be from Kentucky or Florida. But at any rate I want to ask you a question about now on that \$2,000, do you have to – I mean the person that I wanted to ask about has been gone for a year but I don’t know that they got the \$2,000. Can you go back and get that or it had to be done right then.

MS. TORRES: No. You have – if it’s only been a year you can go back.

MS. JACKSON: You can go back?

MS. TORRES: Yes. Yes, if it’s only been a year you can go back. Okay? And I would encourage them to do so as quickly as possible. Okay? What the VA will do is if you put in a claim with a duplicate claim – where did Dom go? Oh, she’s got another question. Okay. You’re welcome.

But the VA will look that up because all the claims are kept together. And if that’s already been paid out, then it’s been paid out. Okay. And this is what happens, too, all right?

If you have a veteran who has been married multiple times and you’re not the first spouse, you want to make sure that you’re listed properly on his benefits because otherwise it’s a race to the VA. (Laughter)

And the fastest person wins, though – you all are laughing. I get yelled at a lot for that. Okay? The fastest person wins but the VA will figure out who is legally married.

And please don’t get mad at me but sometimes the spouse who thinks they’re legally married to the veteran is not the spouse that the VA says that the veteran is legally married to so you might want to see the divorce papers. Okay?

(Whereupon, a member called out “and keep a copy.”)

MS. TORRES: Okay, and keep a copy. Safeguard that. So make sure that he is being paid for you because it does matter whose name is on there.

Because if he is getting paid for Mary and he kicked Mary to the curb – sorry – and now he’s married to Patty, right, technically he’s not getting paid for Patty; he’s getting paid for Mary.

The VA is not recognizing Patty. So if he does, that dirty dog, they're going to pay her if she gets there first. Right? Oh, and she's going to go for it, right, so that's something that you've got to be really, really careful. I don't know how you're going to have that discussion but have it. Okay? (Laughter) Yes, ma'am.

MS. MARY ALDERETE: I'm Mary Alderete, Unit 3. I have a brother that's not service-connected but my sister takes, she takes care of his money. Can she collect for when he dies?

MS. TORRES: Well, see, this is – she can if he is a veteran. She can put in a claim. Okay? If there is – it's harder to do if he's not already service-connected. But it's not impossible to do.

MS. ALDERETE: Because he does go to the VA hospital.

MS. TORRES: Okay, so he might – he might be getting a non-service-connected pension. He might be getting – he might be adjudicated for – or he might be service-connected at a zero percent and get health care. The circumstances might – there might be different circumstances. But she can still do that.

MS. ALDERETE: Oh, okay.

MS. TORRES: What she needs to do is if she's the fiduciary of that veteran she needs to find out where he is at and what – she needs to educate herself so in the case of his demise she knows.

MS. ALDERETE: Okay. Thank you.

MS. TORRES: You're welcome, ma'am. Okay, so, now we've talked about multiple marriages, right? Which that never happens to anyone in here, I'm sure. (Laughter) That will never be an issue with anyone in here, okay?

But she who gets to the VA fastest wins, (Laughter) basically, okay? All right. Hold on. Hey, Dom, when you get done over there, you have another question by this lady here.

MS. MATTES: Okay. I'll be right over there. I've got one here.

MR. JERALD ROYSE: Jerry Royse, Chapter 11, Oregon. Do the VA claims honor common-law marriages?

MS. TORRES: You've got a very deep, Barry White kind of voice. (Laughter) It sent shivers down my spine. (Laughter) It depends on the state. If the state recognizes it and they, the couple carries themselves as man and wife, then they will recognize it.

The State of California, for instance, does not recognize common-law marriages so they will not do it. You must be married for at least a year to the veteran in order to get it.

I met a couple the other day that have been living together for 26 years. I was shocked and amazed. And I asked her – because he just had a stroke – I'm like, "Are you ever going to get married?"

She goes, "Why do I need to marry him?" And I was like, "I can give you about 1,400 reasons why you might want to marry him."

Because I have seen it to where the veteran will be like, okay, I will marry you and then he dies at nine months. There was a case in California when I was out there that that happened. And guess what the VA said?

(Response of "No.")

MS. TORRES: No. The VA was like, heck no. My supervisor argued it. Jim Galliher at the time, he's the supervisor. He did argue it. And he got it granted. I mean he argued it.

If you ever met Jim Galliher you would know, they probably just granted it to shut him up. (Laughter) But it was granted but that's not an everyday occurrence. So it's at least a year of marriage.

So if you're living with him now and you're not married, you might want to marry him or at least plan it carefully. Keep him alive for a year, on CPR for a year. (Laughter) Okay?

MS. ARNETTE: Tracy again from Kentucky. Quick question. On your VA recognizing you as spouse, go to your DEERS, too. The VA recognized me as my husband's wife. Went to DEERS, used the military ID. DEERS had him his first wife as his wife. We had to change those records, too.

MS. TORRES: Yes. Yes, DFAS-DEERS, yes, you want to do all that. Okay? I've just got to do a shout-out to Virginia. I have to. My girls from Virginia, where are you all at? (Cheers) Yes, I just woke all of you all up, huh? You're too used to me.

MS. MAESTAS: Well, wait a minute, Tracy. If you're going to call out Virginia, I need to call out Unit 88 of District 21 because that is my unit. (Applause)

MS. TORRES: I think half of them left. (Laughter)

MS. MAESTAS: They're on duty.

MS. TORRES: All right, so I know we have more questions. Let me go through the rest of the stuff and then we'll just take questions, just real quick.

You also have entitlement to a Presidential Certificate. You will get a certificate signed by the current President of the United States. If you don't like Obama, don't ask for it now because Obama is the only to sign it.

If you really loved Reagan, well, he's dead anyway so you're not going to get it. (Laughter) But you've got to do it from the current president. Okay?

There are also things like, for instance, the – I like how you all do that. That's sharp. That, yes, they are very good. That's sharp how you do that. You ought to take that over across the hallway. (Laughter)

MS. MAESTAS: Hey, hey, hey. That's another duty for us.

MS. TORRES: I don't think that the veterans over there could do it as good, as precise. Yes, sir.

CHAPLAIN EASLEY: When it comes to the flag that's presented – oh, sorry. Chris Easley, Alamo Unit 5, Texas. When it comes to the flag, how many flags are you allowed?

MS. TORRES: Good question. Well, no, technically at government expense one. At government expense you're authorized one. Yes. Okay. Check with your state, the National Guard.

They will do a burial honors based on the rank of the veteran. Okay? I have a friend in Virginia who his National Guard, they're a Navy National Guard Unit that does that. They're very professional.

They're very tight about it. They're very good about it. So check with your state if you want to have a military funeral with military honors. They will present the flag to you, play taps.

They will – depending on the rank they will do a so-many-gun salute. It is the most beautiful thing in the world. For those of you who have been to a military funeral, you've seen it. You know.

Okay, I'm going to give my girl here a hug. Sorry. All right, okay, so then there is – I'm fickle. Okay, also, there is certificate – we said the certificate. The memorial, so the headstones will be provided for.

They will pay for the plaque on the urn if there is a cremation. Dominique already mentioned if they want to be buried with Obama – not Obama, Osama (Laughter) and dumped in the water. They can do that, too. They'll do that kind of funeral. Okay?

Basically if you look in the pamphlet – for those of you who got a pamphlet it tells you in general what those benefits are.

Again, when the test comes go to your Chapter, Department or National Service Officer, okay, and ask them what benefits to which you are entitled. We can help you with that and we can provide the forms.

I will say again though the DAV is the premier organization for service – and I say that modestly – there are other veterans service organizations for you: VFW, AmVETS, Military Order of the Purple Heart.

There is help for you. There are attorneys who will help you; however, they will charge you. Okay? That's right. There is state benefits – I want you to say that. You have a very good voice.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: You also have state benefits' counselors and a lot of states have county benefits counselors. And also under circumstances, some circumstances, PVA can do a very good job, too.

MS. TORRES: Yes. Get help. It doesn't matter where you go. The Gold Star Wives, some of you guys are probably members of that, right? Awesome organization. They love me in Virginia. I don't know why. But it's an awesome organization. They're helping, too. Okay?

Get help. You don't have to pay for it. So you know those organizations that say I will help you, please don't pay for it. These benefits you've already earned. You shouldn't have to pay for it on top of it. Okay?

All right, so what we'll do is with your permission we'll take – pick a number – a couple more questions and then I'll let you guys move on, okay? So now it's up to Dominique which way she goes.

MS. MAESTAS: Okay, before I take the next question I need to bring out my Maryland Auxiliary because I just transferred there and I had a point of order. (Applause)

MS. TORRES: Is Maryland alive back there because that was kind of. Yes, ma'am.

MS. POCKRUS: You mentioned that survivors' benefits are tied to income. Are the DIC benefits tied to income?

MS. TORRES: No, ma'am.

MS. POCKRUS: Thank you.

MS. TORRES: You're welcome. Oh, ma'am, can you get back. I need your name and unit, please.

MS. POCKRUS: Helene Pockrus, Utah.

MS. TORRES: Thank you. I lived in Utah for a while. It was a very beautiful state. Loved the skiing there. That's how I broke my toe. No, just joking. (Laughter)

Who didn't get a book? No, God. I tell you what, make sure you give it out to somebody. I'm going to put it on you. (Laughter) Be nice to her. Okay.

MS. GERTIE DUPLCHAIN: Hi, my name is Gertie Duplechain from Unit 17, in Lake Charles. I'm a widow twice over and I did get two flags.

MS. TORRES: Oh, yes. Yes, because you have –

MS. DUPLCHAIN: She said one per –

MS. TORRES: One per, yes.

MS. DUPLCHAIN: And I donated it to what we call in Lake Charles the Avenue of Flags. And they maintain them and keep them in air conditioned rooms and they have them dry cleaned and for the Fourth of July they display every one of them.

MS. TORRES: Oh, very good.

MS. DUPLCHAIN: It's awesome to see.

MS. TORRES: Yes. Awesome. That sounds beautiful. Yes, that's a good point. Hold on. Donna, I love you. (Laughter)

FIRST JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER ADAMS: Chris Easley was asking about an extra flag. If you go to your attendant National Cemetery so many folks donate them back that you can probably get one from there.

But the National flags actually come from the Post Office and so your local mortuaries and that and funeral homes get them through the Post Office.

But the easiest thing is when you go to make the funeral arrangements you tell the funeral director and they pretty much will take care of all of that as far as getting hold of the National Cemetery and making sure there is a flag in there. Donna Adams. (Laughter)

MS. TORRES: I want you guys to notice something. And my kids have made me really aware of this. I don't know everything. I don't. I act like I do sometimes but I don't know everything.

That's why I am comfortable with letting other people say information and that's something that we all need to remember. Sometimes the best advocate is the one sitting beside you – not all the time. Sometimes take it with a grain of salt.

But sometimes the best advocate is the person sitting beside you. Okay? Because you have a wealth of knowledge up here, apparently, you know. You've got a wealth of knowledge.

Take advantage of that knowledge. If you don't know, ask. And I'm sure any of these ladies and gentlemen sitting up here if they don't know the answer they will be able to find someone who does and direct you in the right direction. Okay?

All right, one more question and then let's call it a night, day, afternoon, evening. No more questions?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Hey, Tracey.

MS. TORRES: Yes, ma'am.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Inquiring minds want to know, how did you break your toe, sweetie? (Laughter)

MS. TORRES: Skiing in Utah. I'm service-connected for a visual field cut. So I was going through a hallway. My daughter was rushing me. And 99.9 percent of my body made it. (Laughter) The other part didn't.

And how many people have teenagers? No one has teenagers? Or used to have teenagers, have kids? (Laughter) So you didn't ask this but I'm going to tell you anyway, I wanted to wither to the floor or fall to the floor and wither in pain but my daughter was watching me so instead I was just like, okay. Because you know how they laugh at you.

So I'm like, "Honey, you need to take me to the emergency room." She's like, "Why?" I'm like, "Just go get your car keys." "I don't have gas in my car." (Laughter)

I'm like, "You're not going to have a car if you don't take me to the emergency room right now." (Laughter) So that's how I broke my toe.

MS. MAESTAS: Tracey, last question.

MS. TORRES: Yes, ma'am.

MS. SANDRA SZYMANSKI: Sandra Szymanski from Kansas. How do we get hold of a book?

MS. TORRES: Okay, very good question. I love how that works out. See, God always has a plan. Okay, I need for the department representatives to raise their hand.

MS. MAESTAS: Commander or adjutant.

MS. TORRES: Commander or adjutant to raise your hand. We ran out of books because National didn't know how many to send because hey didn't know there were so many beautiful people and they were going to be coming to this.

MS. MAESTAS: And please keep them up so I can make sure I get these forms to you.

MS. TORRES: And then the books can be ordered from the National Organization. You don't have to be a department adjutant or commander to get them.

If you go on the DAV.org then you can order them directly from the National Organization. You can – you got some? You got – okay, I know you. Okay, so you can get them if you ask your National Service Officer but me, personally, I have the in my office as well.

Chapter or Department Service Officers may have them but they can get them from the National Office for you as well. Okay? And then Dominique is going to be getting to you guys as quickly as possible.

All right, while she is handing those out, I would really – again, I would like to thank you guys for having me come and letting me speak. It has been a privilege and an honor, like I say.

And I know you guys – oh, wait a minute. There is something else I forgot. I forgot to tell you guys about a new law. It's not just benefits. Instead it's caregivers. Okay?

I need to tell you about the new law for caregivers because there is a benefit that the veteran already gets for – it's called "Aid and Attendance" where the VA will pay them to have a caregiver.

It doesn't have to be a military or I mean a medical person. There is a new law where you will get additional funds over that. Okay? They will pay you as a caregiver. So it's CG Form 1010.

Yes, well, right now the thing is that it's limited to a certain period of war. They're trying – yes, they're trying to expand it. It's the first step in I think a long battle.

I think you would all agree with me. So but it is out there. The law is out there. Okay? The changes have come. All right. (Applause) All right, thank you guys for having me. Have a wonderful Convention. I really enjoyed it. (Applause)

COMMANDER HENRY: Tracey, Dominique, thank you very much. It was a very informative and entertaining program. (Applause) To start with, we have a few housekeeping things.

Number 1, we had a photographer in here taking pictures with the awards, Joe Chanelle; and he will have those pictures on Facebook, the DAV and the DAVA Facebook page this afternoon. (Applause) Or that's the plan. (Laughter)

Number 2, up on the Third Floor, near the escalators if you are coming from the Nor'Easter Luncheon check and see if you have lost your Forget-Me-Not ticket.

Number 3, we have a missing tan Coach purse. If anyone has seen a purse, please let us know.

Number 4, we have a missing silver – in a silver case, Olympic – (Whereupon, someone called out "black case.")

COMMANDER HENRY: Oh, in a black case – (Whereupon, "black case" was called out again.)

COMMANDER HENRY: Silver Olympic camera missing. And on the positive side, we found an earring last night. (Laughter) If you lost an earring last night before the reception, please come up and show the mate and you can have it. Okay.

We are waiting. There is still an issue with the Credentials reports so we are waiting on that.

And in the meantime you know that we have the Education Scholarship Program, the Service Support Fund, Winter Sports Clinic, and any POW/MIA Foundation and any other donations you are prepared to make we are willing to accept at this time.

Please come forward and start on this side and we will come across the stage and exit on this side.

Okay, the Department of Illinois has donations for the National Service Fund, the National Scholarship Fund, the Freedoms Foundation – okay, she said I can go back and announce the amounts: \$200 for the Service Fund; \$200 for the Scholarship Fund.

And then Unit 103 Will County, Illinois – it's very small print there – for the Freedoms Foundation, \$75; Service Fund, \$75; and Scholarship Fund, \$75. Thank you very much. (Applause)

Okay, State Department of Florida, for Service Support Fund, \$1,000. (Applause) Thank you, Florida.

UNIDENTIFIED DELEGATE: Department of Massachusetts, the National Service Fund, \$100; National Scholarship Fund, \$100; Unit 72, \$25 for the National Service Fund.

COMMANDER HENRY: Thank you. (Applause)

UNIDENTIFIED DELEGATE: On behalf of the Department of Arkansas may I present this check for the Auxiliary Service Support Program for \$200; and this check to the National Education Scholarship Program for \$100. (Applause)

COMMANDER HENRY: And you figured out your bank.

UNIDENTIFIED DELEGATE: Yes, we did. (Applause)
UNIDENTIFIED DELEGATE: From the State Department of Missouri, \$200 for the Winter Sports Clinic. (Applause)

COMMANDER HENRY: Thank you. From the Department of New York for the Scholarship Fund, \$250; and for the Service Fund, \$350. (Applause) Thank you, Department of New York.

UNIDENTIFIED DELEGATE: Thank you.

UNIDENTIFIED DELEGATE: Department of New Jersey for the Educational Fund, \$100. (Applause)

UNIDENTIFIED DELEGATE: Department of New Jersey for the National Service Fund, \$100. (Applause)

UNIDENTIFIED DELEGATE: This is from the Wood County Unit 32 of West Virginia, \$100 for the Service Support Fund. And for any veterans that need food, we have a large food pantry. (Applause)

COMMANDER HENRY: Thank you. Okay, the Department of Vermont for the Ed Loan Fund, \$100; and for the Service Support Fund, \$100. (Applause)

UNIDENTIFIED DELEGATE: Department of Ohio, Service Support Fund, \$300; and the Scholarship, \$275. (Applause)

UNIDENTIFIED DELEGATE: From the Department of Idaho, the DAV Auxiliary presents National Service Officer Support Program, \$100; and then to the National Education Program, \$100.

COMMANDER HENRY: Thank you. (Applause)

UNIDENTIFIED DELEGATE: From the Department of Kentucky, \$25 for the National Service Fund and \$25 for the National Education Fund. (Applause)

UNIDENTIFIED DELEGATE: From the Department of South Carolina, \$200 for the Service Support Fund; \$225 for the Scholarship Fund; four applications for membership and one transfer form. (Applause)

UNIDENTIFIED DELEGATE: From the Department of Iowa, \$50 for the Hospitalized Veterans Riding Project; \$25 Education Loan; \$50 Auxiliary Service; \$25 Freedom Foundation; and from my Commander's Project for Veterans Voices, \$287.50. (Applause)

COMMANDER HENRY: Okay. From the Department of Georgia, National Service Fund, \$100; Education Fund, \$100. Okay. I'm just going to put that one over there. And the Hospitalized Veterans Riding Program, \$100. (Applause) Thank you.

And a personal donation from Ronnie Bergquist for the Service Support Fund, \$100. (Applause)

Okay, we need a photo op. (Laughter) The State of Florida needs another photo op. And while we're doing that, Pat is coming in hopefully with our new numbers. Are there any other donations? We want to thank you for all of these donations. (Applause) Thank you.

Okay, I call on Karen Majors, the Credentials Chairman, to come and present the updated Credentials report.

(Whereupon, Karen Majors advanced to the podium.)

CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN MAJORS: Madame Commander, National Officers, delegates and guests, the Credentials report is as follows: total units registered, 355; total departments registered, 49; for a total of 404.

Delegates registered, 380; alternates registered, 28; other registered, 66; for a total of 474. Total unit votes, 1,200; total department votes, 49; National Officer votes, 7; Past National Commander votes, 11; for a grand total of votes of 1,267.

Madame Commander, I move that we accept the Credentials report.

COMMANDER HENRY: Do we have a second?

MS. STAKE: Commander, Kim Stake, 57 Arkansas, I second this motion.

COMMANDER HENRY: Thank you. We have a motion by Credentials Chairman Karen Majors and a second by Kim Stake. Is there any discussion? All in favor; opposed. The motion carried.

And we are now ready for the second reading of the Constitution and Bylaws.

(Whereupon, Past National Commander Steinhouse advanced to the podium.)

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER AND CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS CHAIRMAN STEINHOUSE: Everybody got their copies ready? Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary proposed Bylaw amendments 2011.

Insert before National Constitution on a page by itself the following mission statement:

Mission Statement. Making a difference in the lives of disabled veterans and their families.

The rationale: The Strategic Committee adopted a Mission Statement/Unique Selling Proposition and recommends that it be included in our Constitution and Bylaws.

I move for the adoption of this amendment.

COMMANDER HENRY: Do we have a second?

MS. MARY GHEE: Madame Commander, Mary Ghee from Montana I second.

COMMANDER HENRY: Mary Teague of Montana –

MS. GHEE: Ghee. Ghee.

COMMANDER HENRY: Ghee? Mary Ghee of Montana seconds the motion. Please go to the mic and be prepared if you can. We've got yours. Is there any discussion? All in favor; any opposed. The motion carried.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER AND CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS CHAIRMAN STEINHOUSE: Page N-27, Article VII, Membership, Section 3, delete Section 3 and replace with new Section 3, Membership Applications. All applications for membership shall be on printed form, online, or verbally through Auxiliary National Headquarters.

Madame Commander, I move for the adoption of this amendment.

COMMANDER HENRY: Is there a second?

MS. ACOSTA: Linda Acosta, Unit Number 10, Louisiana, seconds the motion.

COMMANDER HENRY: We have the motion and a second. Is there any discussion? All in favor; opposed. The motion carried.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER AND CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS CHAIRMAN STEINHOUSE: Page N-39, Article X, Local Units, Section 1, Paragraph 3, delete Paragraph 3, new Paragraph 3 will then read:

At least ten – ten in parenthesis – new senior memberships must accompany each charter application. Upon request, national and/or state at-large memberships may be considered as new senior members in the formation of a new unit. Transfer and junior memberships may be added after the ten new senior memberships.

Rationale: At-large members included as new charter members would expedite the formation of urgently and immediately needed new units.

Madame Commander, I move for the adoption of this amendment.

MS. BRZEZINSKI: Iris Brzezinski, Sunrise Mountain Unit 13, Nevada, I second the motion.

COMMANDER HENRY: Is there any discussion? Go to a microphone, please.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER AND PAST NATIONAL ADJUTANT MARIA TEDROW: Madame Commander, it's just a clarification. In here it says a new "charter" and it was read as a new "unit" I believe. So is charter correct?

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER AND CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS CHAIRMAN STEINHOUSE: Yes, charter is correct. I'm sorry if I read "unit." My apologies.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER AND PAST NATIONAL ADJUTANT TEDROW: Thank you. Thank you.

FIRST JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER ADAMS: Donna Adams, Junior Vice, I don't understand the transfer and junior memberships being added after the new ten seniors. Are we putting the junior members on the charter?

COMMANDER HENRY: That has always been the policy. That line did not change from the previous. Is there any further discussion? All in favor; opposed. The motion carried.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER AND CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS CHAIRMAN STEINHOUSE: Page N-45, Article XII, Offenses, Penalties, Appeals and Lawsuits, Section 2, Notice of Hearing, insert new Paragraph "E". New Paragraph "E" will then read:

E. Notwithstanding any other provision of these Bylaws and pending completion of an investigation or hearing, the National Commander may temporarily suspend a member if in his or her sole discretion he or she determines that a suspension is in the best interest of the organization and shall be effective immediately.

Rationale: This wording was inadvertently deleted when this section was changed in the 2010 National Convention. Madame Commander, I move that this amendment be adopted.

COMMANDER HENRY: Do I have a second?

MS. DEBORAH HALL: Debbie Hall, Unit 50, Ohio, seconds that motion.

COMMANDER HENRY: Thank you. Is there any discussion? All in favor; opposed. The motion carried.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER AND CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS CHAIRMAN STEINHOUSE: Second page. Pages S-6/7, Article IV, Duties of State Officers, Section 4, State Treasurer, insert new Paragraph "4" to read: All funds received in the name of the DAV Auxiliary must be deposited within 30 – 30 in parenthesis – calendar days of receipt.

If adopted, old Paragraph 4 becomes Paragraph 5. Madame Commander, I move for the adoption of this motion.

MS. RAMONA GANONG: Ramona Ganong, Unit 38, seconds that motion, New Mexico.

COMMANDER HENRY: Thank you. Is there any discussion? All in favor; opposed. The motion carried.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER AND CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS CHAIRMAN STEINHOUSE: Page U-6, Article XI, Duties of Unit Officers, Section 3, Adjutant, insert new Number "4". New Number 4 will then read:

4. Bring all correspondence including letters, newsletters, membership information, notices, etc cetera, to all unit meetings – excuse me, to the unit meetings and make available to all unit members.

If approved, Items 4 through 10 will be renumbered as 5 through 11. Madame Commander, I move for the adoption of this amendment.

MS. DUPLCHAIN: Madame Commander, Gertie Duplechain, Unit 17, Lake Charles, Louisiana, I second the motion.

COMMANDER HENRY: Is there any discussion? All in favor; opposed. The motion carried.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER AND CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS CHAIRMAN STEINHOUSE: Page U-8, Article XI, Duties of Unit Officers, Section 4, Treasurer, insert new Paragraph "5". New Paragraph 5 will then read:

5. All funds received in the name of the DAV Auxiliary must be deposited within 30 – 30 in parenthesis – calendar days of receipt.

If approved Items 5-6 will be renumbered as 6-7. Madame Commander, I move for the adoption of this amendment.

MS. SHIRLEY McINTIRE: Commander, Shirley McIntire, Unit 5, State Commander for North Carolina, I second the motion.

COMMANDER HENRY: Is there any discussion? All in favor; opposed. The motion carried.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER AND CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS CHAIRMAN STEINHOUSE: Page U-20, Regular Meetings, Patriotic Instructor, insert the words "or render the appropriate salute" after the word "heart." Patriotic Instructor will then read:

Free your hands, stand at attention, place your right hand over your heart or render the appropriate salute, and join in the Pledge of Allegiance to our Flag: "I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

Madame Commander, I move for the adoption of this amendment.

MR. WILLIAM SUMLER: Bill Sumler, State of Arizona, Treasurer, I second that motion.

COMMANDER HENRY: Bill – what Unit?

MR. SUMLER: I thought I gave my state office, Unit 20.

COMMANDER HENRY: Is there any discussion? All in favor; opposed. The motion carried.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER AND CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS CHAIRMAN STEINHOUSE: Page U-21, Regular Meeting, Junior Vice Commander, insert the text "its Auxiliary, or a veteran not dishonorably discharged," between "veterans" and "are". Paragraph will then read:

Junior Vice Commander. The family and extended family members of any person or a deceased person, eligible for membership in the Disabled American Veterans, its Auxiliary, or a veteran not dishonorably discharged, are eligible for membership in the Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary.

Madame Commander, I move for the adoption of this amendment.

COMMANDER HENRY: Do I have a second?

MS. BRZEZINSKI: Iris Brzezinski, Unit 13, Nevada, I second the motion.

COMMANDER HENRY: Is there any discussion?

MS. SARAH KASHNER: Sarah Kashner, Unit 1, State of Delaware, we have a question with the fact that when we read our Blue Book it states – what we're trying – I think what we're trying to add is the part where it says we're not having a veteran not dishonorably discharged.

I would actually like to see if written this way and I'll explain my rationale in a moment, Junior Vice Commander will say,

"The family and extended family members of any person or deceased person eligible for membership in the Disabled American Veterans or a veteran not dishonorably discharged"

– deleting that part “its Auxiliary” – “are eligible for membership in the Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary.”

And the reason why is because we’re saying that we want them to join the Auxiliary but we really don’t want people who are dishonorably discharged to join the Auxiliary.

And I think we’re double – I think we’re saying it twice. I’m just saying when I’m looking at my handbook where it says where eligibility is, we’re saying it twice. Well, you read it then.

COMMANDER HENRY: Okay. I just want to make sure that I understand this and everybody because I saw some question marks.

The “its Auxiliary” portion is applying to the family members of current members – of members of the Auxiliary are eligible even if they are not the direct family of the disabled veteran or the veteran.

The dishonorably discharged segment, the not dishonorably discharged, matches what is in the front, in the Constitution portion.

(Whereupon, Ms. Kashner began speaking away from the microphone.)

COMMANDER HENRY: You have to come back to the mic.

MS. KASHNER: If we’re going to say “its Auxiliary” then we need to state it’s our Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary, not “its”. Who is “its”? What is “its”? It is the DAV Auxiliary. This is what we are proud of. Why are we being called “its”?

COMMANDER HENRY: Okay. So what is your – what is your motion to amend? To insert DAV?

MS. KASHNER: If you’re going –

COMMANDER HENRY: In front of “Auxiliary.”

MS. KASHNER: If we’re going to keep “its Auxiliary” instead of saying “its Auxiliary” put “Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary.”

MS. TRACY TUCKER ARNETTE: Tracy Tucker Arnette Unit 1, Lexington, Kentucky, seconds that amendment.

COMMANDER HENRY: Okay, we have an amendment to replace “its” with “Disabled American Veterans” –

(Response of “Auxiliary.”)

COMMANDER HENRY: Auxiliary is already there so we would simply replace the word “its” with “Disabled American Veterans.” We have a motion and a second. Is there any discussion on the amendment? All in favor of the amendment; opposed. The motion carries. Now we need to vote on the original motion. Kay.

IMMEDIATE PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER KAY EGAN: Kay Egan, Immediate Past National Commander. I need a point of clarification. If a person is dishonorably discharged from the Army or any other military branch, are they considered a veteran?

(Response of “No.”)

IMMEDIATE PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER EGAN: So we have to change the wording.

COMMANDER HENRY: That’s what it already says – a veteran.

IMMEDIATE PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER EGAN: Can a dishonorably discharged person be a veteran?

COMMANDER HENRY: They are still considered a veteran but they do not receive all of the benefits is what I am told.

IMMEDIATE PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER EGAN: See, that’s my question.

COMMANDER HENRY: Yes. From what I am told they can still use the title “veteran” but they can’t receive all of the benefits. I don’t know the legalities on that. Does –

FIRST JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER ADAMS: Donna Adams, Junior Vice Commander, do I understand that this is – this change is simply what the Junior Vice Commander reads during the ritual and opening session of the meeting?

We’re not doing anything with changing eligibility for the membership. This is just for the portion in our meetings where we open the meeting and the Senior Vice Commander says their portion and the Junior Vice Commander says their portion. Is that?

(Response of “That’s correct.”)

FIRST JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER ADAMS: Thank you.

COMMANDER HENRY: Okay, we have approved the amendment and now we are voting to accept the change as a whole or as amended. Is there any further discussion?

(Whereupon, there were multiple requests to read the paragraph.)

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER AND CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS CHAIRMAN STEINHOUSE: The amended paragraph would then read:

Junior Vice Commander. The family and extended family members of any person or a deceased person eligible for membership in the Disabled American Veterans, Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary, or a veteran not dishonorably discharged, are eligible for membership in the Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary.

COMMANDER HENRY: All in favor; opposed. The motion carried.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER AND CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS CHAIRMAN STEINHOUSE: Page U-27, Installation of Officers, Paragraph 7, delete the word “our” before “veterans” and insert “America’s” and delete the words “whose name we proudly bear.” Paragraph 7 would then read:

The fact that you have been selected by members of this Auxiliary for your respective offices shows that you have the confidence – that they have confidence in your ability and that they feel assured you will strictly and impartially discharge all duties incumbent upon you.

They confide the welfare of this Auxiliary to your keeping and they are expected at all times to respect your position.

Let their confidence, therefore, be fully justified by your fidelity. Let us all remember gratefully the heroism of America’s veterans.

Realizing fully these responsibilities, are you willing to assume the obligation of your office?

So am I. Madame Commander, I move for the approval of, adoption of this amendment. You got me all confused. (Laughter)

MS. GANONG: Ramona Ganong, Unit 38, New Mexico, I second that motion.

COMMANDER HENRY: Is there any discussion?

MS. STAKE: Commander, Kim Stake, 57, Arkansas. What is the rationale for this change?

COMMANDER HENRY: Do you want to explain it? The original rationale for this change was many people interpret “whose name we proudly bear” as being a spousal name and that is no longer true in many cases.

MS. STAKE: But many times it’s not. And I think if we’re going to amend this one way, why can’t we go ahead and put in America’s but also leave whose name we proudly bear? Does that make sense?

(Response of “No.”)

MS. STAKE: Okay, you guys are wanting to take out the part that says – let me get these glasses back on – whose name you proudly bear, right? Now that’s – some people interpret that as one thing; some will interpret that as another.

So why – why can’t we just say after “let us all remember gratefully the heroism of America’s veterans and whose name we honorably bear”. Now what would be wrong with that?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Well, because not everybody has the same name.

MS. HEATH: Sylvia Heath, Unit 11, Lewiston, Maine. I don’t really have a side on this but I just – I was on this Committee.

It’s “whose name we proudly bear” is whether you are talking about the whole DAV, which some people think of; other people think of who was my sponsor when I went in. And at that time was it my dad, was it my spouse, was it my son.

Now we have veterans coming in themselves and there have been many of them or some of them I guess asking “I’m my own name; I’m sponsoring myself so I don’t want to say this” and that’s where that came from. I don’t know if that you know does it for you but that’s the argument.

COMMANDER HENRY: Thank you.

MS. STAKE: Okay. I understand that. You know. If you put “and whose name we” – you know, leave the line in instead of taking it out. Put the word “and” in front and let it go on “and whose name.”

(Responses of “No.”)

COMMANDER HENRY: Okay, Pam Hogan.

MS. PAMELA HOGAN: Pam Hogan, Unit 13, State Department of California. There are a whole heck of a lot of people there that do not “bear” their spouses name; to “bear someone’s name” means that you have taken their name.

We have plenty of males who do not “bear” their female veteran’s name. We have granddaughters who do not bear their grandfather’s name.

And, personally, for years I have eliminated it and said “whose names we proudly share.” So I’m all for deleting this. I just don’t think – I think it’s rather archaic thinking.

MS. LINDA SIPES: Linda Sipes, Arkansas Unit 7. I interpret it as being the organizational name we proudly bear.

(Responses of “Yes” and applause.)

MS. SIPES: And it wouldn't matter whether the person saying "I bear that name" is disabled or not; we are bearing the name of the Disabled American Veterans. (Applause)

MS. STAKE: So now why can't we – why can't we go ahead and add the American part and leave the name we bear?

COMMANDER HENRY: Okay. Kim, you have to make it in a motion.

MS. SIPES: Linda Sipes, Department of Arkansas, Unit 7. I make a motion that we put in "American heroes" –

COMMANDER HENRY: Just insert the word?

MS. SIPES: America's heroes.

COMMANDER HENRY: American's veterans?

MS. SIPES: Okay, I'm sorry, "American veterans" and leave the remainder of it "in whose name we proudly bear".

COMMANDER HENRY: Is there a second? Failing –

MS. JANICE HOWARD: Janice Howard, Unit 51, State Department of Missouri, I second this motion.

COMMANDER HENRY: Okay. We have a motion and a second. If you want to leave the phrase "whose name we proudly bear" you are going to vote for the amendment.

If you want to remove the phrase "whose name we proudly bear" you are going to vote against the amendment. All in favor; opposed. Sounded like the nays had it.

It sounded as if the nays had it. That was the amendment only. Okay, so now we are voting for the –

MR. SUMLER: Point of order. You can't do a voice (undistinguishable).

COMMANDER HENRY: He is calling for a roll call.

MR. SUMLER: Point of order, Chairman, Commander. That was a voice vote that was too close to call so it would need to go to a hand vote or a ballot.

COMMANDER HENRY: Bill, you need to state your name and unit number again.

MR. SUMLER: Bill Sumler, State Department of Arizona, Unit 20.

COMMANDER HENRY: There you go. Okay, we have a call – go to a microphone.

MS. LOIS McCARON: Point of order. Could you please repeat the motion because people did not understand what they were voting on. Repeat the motion as it was worded.

COMMANDER HENRY: Repeat – Lois, your name, unit number.

MS. McCARON: Lois McCaron, Minnesota Unit 39.

MS. SIPES: Linda Sipes, Department of Arkansas, Unit 7. I make a motion that we delete the word "our" before "veterans" and insert "America's" but keep the words "whose name we proudly bear."

COMMANDER HENRY: This is a clarification or a repeat of what we just voted on that was very close. And the clarification says insert the word "our" or after the word "our" insert –

(Response of "No.")

COMMANDER HENRY: Wait. Sorry. I'm saying it backwards, too. Delete the word "our" before "veterans" and insert "America's" and maintain or keep the words after "veterans" "whose name we proudly bear."

So the sentence would read: "Let us all remember gratefully the heroism of America's veterans whose name we proudly bear." If you vote for you would be voting for that wording to be in. If you vote against, you will be removing the phrase "whose name we proudly bear." Is that clear?

(Response of "Yes.")

COMMANDER HENRY: Okay. Okay, one moment, please. Go ahead to the mic. One moment. Now that you understand the question, we have a request for a roll call vote. Do you want to try a voice vote again or go for a roll call?

(Response of "Roll call.")

COMMANDER HENRY: Okay. We will have a roll call vote on this amendment. For that purpose we will have a three-minute caucus. Okay, I recognize the microphone.

MS. McDONALD: Dot McDonald, Unit 44, New Jersey. I thought this organization represented the Disabled American Veterans so why wouldn't that phrase say the "heroism of the Disabled American Veterans" whose name we proudly bear?"

COMMANDER HENRY: It could if someone made that in a motion. We have an active motion on the floor so that will have to be an amendment after this amendment.

MS. McDONALD: Okay.

COMMANDER HENRY: And we have a roll call vote for this amendment. Okay?

MS. MERILYN McDONALD: Marilyn McDonald, Unit 57, Florida.

COMMANDER HENRY: Quiet. Yes, ma'am.

MS. McDONALD: On Page N-7 of the Blue Book, Number 3 – no, Number 2, voting shall be by (undistinguishable) voice except when a roll call is demanded by the Chair or by at least five state department delegates from five separate National Districts.

COMMANDER HENRY: I am the Chair. We demanded a roll call vote.

UNIDENTIFIED DELEGATE: As the Chair you do not need – you do not need five of us to back you up?

COMMANDER HENRY: No.

UNIDENTIFIED DELEGATE: Okay.

COMMANDER HENRY: It says “or.” Right, you do understand that this is going to take a long time? Here we go. A roll call vote, the one – one person from each unit will announce the unit's votes.

The state delegate will announce their own vote. Past National Commanders will announce their own vote. Officers will announce their own vote.

MS. SUZANNE SEYBOLDT: Madame Commander, this is Sue Seyboldt from Pennsylvania, Unit 73. I make a motion we just table this for now because there is a lot of confusion in this, a lot.

JUDGE ADVOCATE WILEY: I second that table. (Laughter)

COMMANDER HENRY: We have a motion to table this and – we have a motion by Sue Seyboldt and a second by Kathryn Wiley –

JUDGE ADVOCATE WILEY: Kathryn Wiley, National Judge Advocate, PNC. Got it?

COMMANDER HENRY: All in favor – there is no discussion on a table. All in favor; opposed. Done. (Applause) Okay, you may sit down. Caucus is over.

Okay, we tabled the amendment. We still have the motion open. If you want this go to back to Committee would somebody please make a motion to table the initial motion? (Laughter)

MS. GRACE JAMES: Grace James, Unit 11, Virginia, I would make a motion to table this entire article.

JUDGE ADVOCATE WILEY: Kathryn Wiley, National Judge Advocate, PNC, I second that motion.

COMMANDER HENRY: All in favor; opposed.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER AND CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS CHAIRMAN STEINHOUSE: Okay, just to –

(Whereupon, someone called from the audience “bang the gavel.”)

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER AND CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS CHAIRMAN STEINHOUSE: I'm not the commander. I can't do that. I did it, anyway. Who cares? Just to make everything nice and clear in case you forgot, the National Constitution and Bylaws Committee did have two recommendations and I want to repeat those two recommendations.

One, notify those who submitted a proposal that were not accepted by the Committee. So if any of the people put in a suggestion or put in any proposed amendment and we did not do it, we'll tell you that we did not do it.

Rules that govern the National Convention no longer be part of the Bylaws and are added as an appendix. This will be something that will be given to the new Constitution and Bylaws Committee as a possible proposed change. So we'll take care of that at that time. I thank you very much.

COMMANDER HENRY: Thank you. (Applause) Okay, while they're in here we would like to recognize office staff Melody Whitaker and Bunny Close. (Applause) And thank you for hurrying in with the adding machines and getting us all set up.

At this time I would like to call on Kay Egan for the Education Scholarship Report.

IMMEDIATE PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER EGAN: Well, that's a relief, isn't it?

(Response of “Yes.”)

IMMEDIATE PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER EGAN: Madame Commander and friends, the Scholarship Fund was born out of the National Education Loan Fund of last year, the year 2009 to 2010.

I think we can consider this change a success as we received 57 applications this year. (Applause) Nicer yet, we were able to grant 56 of these applications. (Applause)

The reason that the 57th was not awarded was that it did not meet the required GPA average of 2.5. It happens, folks. It happens.

However, it is my understanding at this point that not all of the 56 checks have been sent out because some of the recipients have opted, perhaps, not to take it.

They've found that they did not need the money; they got the money from other sources; or that they opted not to go to school.

So the figure that you heard this morning from the Finance Committee of the amount of money that was awarded is correct because 56 times 1,500 is \$84,000. And that's a tidy chunk of change.

But you know, whatever it was, 84,000-75,000, whichever, we could not have done that without the generous support of this organization to the Scholarship Fund. On behalf of the applicants and recipients I thank you very much. (Applause)

As Chairman of the Committee, I am very grateful that you made this possible. Please, please, continue to support this worthwhile endeavor that this organization has taken.

And hopefully in the very near future we can increase the amount over the \$1,500 – in the very near future.

We are in the process of revising the judging sheet as well as tweaking some of the questions in the application itself.

Personally, I look upon this as a work in progress. As time and needs change, so then we have an obligation to keep up with them and make the application reflect this.

We welcome any suggestions you might have. Let's keep it timely and to the benefit of the students of the future. Come the installation of new officers, I bow out as Scholarship Chairman, much to my regret. But that's the way it goes.

And I wish good luck to the new Chairman, Ms. Susan. And I thank her for her input into this year's preparation.

I also want to thank Patty Rapisand for her input in judging the applications (Applause) and Melody Whitaker from staff as being the person on staff that we relate to. Thank you very, very much. (Applause)

COMMANDER HENRY: And now we will hear from Sandy Dobmeier, the Strategic Planning Committee report.

(Whereupon, Past National Commander Dobmeier advanced to the podium.)

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER SANDRA DOBMEIER: Good afternoon, everyone.

(Response of "Good afternoon.")

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER DOBMEIER: I'll keep my remarks very brief on the Strategic Planning Committee. I just want to give you a little update and I know some of you are maybe not real familiar with the Strategic Planning Committee and the work it's doing.

The Strategic Plan is a living document for our DAV National Auxiliary. And it's done in order to help our organization move forward and constantly improve our organization.

It's an ongoing work in progress and it will never be completed as our organization needs to constantly plan for the future of our organization.

I would like to thank all of the core Committee members as well as all the Subcommittee members who have been helping to continue the work and help our National Auxiliary.

Totally volunteer and it takes a lot of time and effort and I want to thank all of you personally. You've done a great job.

The Strategic Planning Committee has three Committees as part of it. They are the membership, communication and technology and standard operating policies.

And several goals of each one of these Committees have been completed and each Committee as well as National Headquarters are continuing to work to accomplish more for our organization.

I will give you a brief listing of, an overview of some of the changes and accomplishments that have taken place since our last Convention.

Of course the biggest one was the membership eligibility change, expanding our membership. Last December that was finally approved. And several things have happened in regard to that to help get the word out.

New membership applications were done. There is a new membership brochure. Fliers have been sent out to all the units, state departments, and are being inserted in mailings that are going out from National Headquarters.

It's been posted on the DAV as well as the DAV – the DAV Auxiliary as well as the DAV Facebook and websites. And there was also a full page on the Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary membership eligibility in the DAV Magazine to help promote and get more members.

How many of you have signed up for the Auxiliary e-newsletter? Good job. The rest of you need to do so.

Our Auxiliary has the capability to send out mass emails now so if you have an email please get yourself signed up so that you will receive not only the newsletter but also other announcements and information from National Headquarters. It's very easy to do.

And how many of you use Facebook? Good choice. And how many of you that use Facebook are friends of the DAV Auxiliary? All those hands that were just up should all have been up again. Please get signed up to do so.

Using social media is a great way for us to spread our word about our Auxiliary and to help us gain new members. I think all of us know that the younger people are very well technology-connected and using social media so it's a great way for us to reach them, also getting them active in helping us.

In your packets that you received in your Convention bag you will find a blue sheet in there that has Disabled American Veterans Communications Tools. That was done by one of our Subcommittee members. Ann Glende, thank you very much for all of your work on that.

But you can read through that and pretty much be very, have the directions of how to get connected if you're having questions on it, how to use the Website, the Website addresses, the email newsletter, social media, for getting onto Facebook and Twitter.

So it's got some great directions for you there so please if you have any questions on it, use it or just give National Headquarters a call. (Laughter) They'll get you helped out as well because it is very important.

Another change, then, Susan mentioned it in her remarks, also, is that we now have a "Donate Now" button that is on our Website.

So anyone wishing to make donations to our Auxiliary can click on the button online and just make a donation that way. And that's a great way for units and state departments and individuals to make memorial donations.

Many times instead of sending flowers it might be nice to send a card saying a donation has been made to the National DAV Auxiliary in your name. So that's a great way to do that as well.

And National Headquarters is also working with the DAV on fund raising for other fund-raising projects and possibilities for our Auxiliary.

All the report forms – how many filled them out online this year? The report forms, they are fillable online so if you did not do it you will find your world a whole lot easier if you do it next year.

They are fillable so it makes it much easier than having to squeeze it all onto a typewriter or handwriting them. So please use those tools that we've made available.

Also, the Auxiliary Manual and the Bylaws have been updated. They will need updating again, now, but the last ones were all made and those are all up on the Website as well.

Another goal that the Committee had was getting the carnival theme implemented for the 2010 Fall Conference which did take place and plans are being made to have another carnival again this year.

A presentation was made on leadership at last year's Fall Conference because education was one thing that came out very strong in our meeting with the delegation at the National Convention to include more education with our meetings, our conferences and conventions.

And training was also provided for Convention representatives and National Commanders and Adjutants. Education/training for attendees at our upcoming National Convention, which is right now, of which how many of you enjoyed the education this afternoon on the benefits? (Applause) Thank you.

And I think that's a great thing to be able to have some information to take home with you to help those people that we all know that might need a little more information and to have some sources for them. And there will also be more education available at the Fall Conference as well.

Please remember that membership is the backbone to our organization. We've got that membership opened up now for that eligibility. But we also – it isn't going to happen by itself.

We still have to sign them up. It's much easier, it's much broader, but we still have to do the work. You still have to get out there and sign them up and also get them active.

Anyone having any ideas or suggestions for the Strategic Planning Committee, we welcome them and we want to hear from you so please, if you have ideas and suggestions, give them to National Headquarters or you can just email them, whatever is easiest.

But we do want to hear from you because you have great ideas and suggestions and that gives more things for the Committee to be working on and in setting our next set of goals that we'll want to start working on.

Thank you very much. And if you have questions, don't be afraid to catch me in the hall or – someone is coming to the mic. Okay, go ahead.

MS. IRISH SPENCER: Irish Spencer, North Carolina, Unit 20. Do we have permission to use this link on our unit sites as well as our state sites? That makes it like super easy, especially your Facebook.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER DOBMEIER: Yes.

MS. SPENCER: Your Twitter. So we don't have to sign a release form or anything like that through National?

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER DOBMEIER: I don't see a problem with it.

MS. SPENCER: Okay. Thank you. No release form. We don't need a release.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER DOBMEIER: No.

MS. SPENCER: Okay.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER DOBMEIER: Not to link to our current site. Yes, Jean.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I'm Jean from Number 7, Lakewood, Colorado. You mentioned Facebook and Twitter and all of that and how the young people are into this.

Well, my suggestion is that we recruit the younger people – we as old people have ran the younger people off. Let's get those young people in here because they understand that Twitter and Facebook and all that. (Laughter)

I'm of the old school. (Applause) I am illiterate – I am computer illiterate. I have a computer but there are some of the old ones like me that do not even have a computer.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER DOBMEIER: We definitely all have things that the younger generation can be helping us with in technology for all of our units and state departments.

Back to the previous question, links to the official organization are fine. Is that correct? Okay. Thank you very much.

COMMANDER HENRY: What was the rest of that?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I'm sorry. I'm in communications and when you give a group the carte blanche to – don't do a release form that means anybody has now got permission to link your sites.

And I just would like to suggest that a release form be developed and sent to the units or the state commanders and if someone is going to use your links that they sign off and be responsible or you're going to have it all over the place and it might not be used in a positive manner. Just a suggestion.

COMMANDER HENRY: We'll work with you to figure that out and help provide us more information so we understand that better. See Sandy Dobmeier. (Laughter)

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER DOBMEIER: Thanks, Susan. Yes, Renee.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER R. RENEE JONES: Madame Commander, Renee Jones, Past National Commander and a member of the Strategic Planning Committee core group. It has certainly been an honor to work on this Committee for the last two years.

Most of you who know me know that since the age of 17, I've been very active, involved in the DAV Auxiliary. And my goal every day is to make a difference in the lives of disabled veterans and their families.

That being said, it is with much thought and regret that I would like to resign from the Strategic Planning Core Committee. Thank you.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER DOBMEIER: That's fine, Renee. And I would like to personally thank you for everything that you have done.

You have moved this organization farther ahead, especially in that technology and communications department that she was chairman of that Subcommittee.

And a lot of things happened because she knows a great deal about communication and technology that I had no clue about. And you've done a great job helping us. Thank you. (Applause) Thank you.

COMMANDER HENRY: Judy, no announcements?

ADJUTANT HEZLEP: No.

COMMANDER HENRY: Okay. At this time – yes, ma'am. Come to the mic.

FOURTH JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER STAKE: Linda Stake, National Fourth Junior Vice Commander. I have two things. One is membership.

And in the mail this year I got something from the National Headquarters. And it was congratulations to me from our Membership Chairman, Donna Adams. And it was a little pin with a star that said, "You are a star." And that was for signing up at least 10 members.

And I wanted to – if you did not get one, would like for you to work on getting one for the upcoming year. It was really neat. And I'm going to try and, if I can find it in my stuff – I've got so much stuff in my room – try and wear that tomorrow.

Another thing, on the educational scholarship, what if someone did not go this fall but wanted to go in the next session? Would that still count?

COMMANDER HENRY: Yes, they could start in the spring semester; however, the application period is the same. So they still had to turn in their application by March 31st. And the amount instead of being \$1,500 for the year would be \$750.

FOURTH JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER STAKE: Okay, I need to pass that on to someone. Thank you very much.

COMMANDER HENRY: Judy Steinhouse.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER STEINHOUSE: Judy Steinhouse, Past National Commander, if I may be able to make an announcement regarding the Past National Commanders?

COMMANDER HENRY: Yes, ma'am.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER STEINHOUSE: The Past National Commanders should meet in the main lobby of the hotel by the revolving door at 5:45 this evening for our Past National Commander's Dinner.

Please be there at 5:45. The DAV is providing our transportation so we wouldn't – the rest of those lovely ladies and myself are going to go to supper tonight. Thank you. (Applause)

COMMANDER HENRY: Thank you. Another quick reminder, since we still have the "found" Forget-Me-Not ticket, when you go to the Forget-Me-Not you must have your ticket.

If you paid for and did not receive your ticket, then you need to check where? You need to check in the Headquarters Office in the Burgundy Room on the First Floor. Okay?

After today's session, even though we're going to recess, we need a prayer. Chris. Hang on. Gertie.

MS. DUPLCHAIN: Madame Commander, I just wanted to ask you, on your registration thing that you're wearing you have points on there. Some people have some points; some people don't have points.

Everybody is asking what they're about. Gertie Duplechain, Unit 17, Lake Charles, Louisiana. Got it in the back door.

COMMANDER HENRY: Okay, if you have signed up a DAV member, you get points; and when you get "x" number of points, you can order an item from the DAV system.

MS. DUPLCHAIN: Very good. Thank you.

COMMANDER HENRY: That is all that points is. It is mainly for the DAV.

(Response of "No.")

COMMANDER HENRY: But the Auxiliary can sign up and get the credit.

MS. LOUISE BOHLINGER: Louise Bohlinger, Unit 13, Virginia. I just left the DAV store. And my little label says 24 points. I have never gotten any DAV members. I have signed up grandchildren. And now I have 24 points.

COMMANDER HENRY: Yes. We were just yelled at and said that they also count Auxiliary members. But Pat Kemper is telling us we think that is, once again, a flaw in their system. But we are not sure. (Laughter)

The – yes, if you have points you'd better use them at the DAV because we don't accrue points, to our knowledge. Thank you.

MS. ACOSTA: I want to say something but after the prayer. Okay? So everybody please stay. It will take me five minutes.

CHAPLAIN EASLEY: All right, let us pray. Our Lord in heaven, thank You for allowing us to gather here together in comradeship, loyalty and service, devoted service to our America's disabled veterans.

Let us all remember why we are here, which is to serve our veterans and their families. Let us go out and have fun tonight so that way we might be rested for our events tomorrow.

Let us all remember those soldiers that lost their life this weekend defending our freedom. Let's remember their families, keep them in our prayers. Amen.

(Response of "Amen.")

COMMANDER HENRY: Linda Acosta is recognized.

MS. ACOSTA: Okay, just a little Boudreau joke to keep you all going the rest of the day. Okay, Boudreau and Thibodeau are two little friends here in Louisiana that get picked on. And they're not too smart, okay?

They're in church and Boudreau snores the whole time the homily is going on. So the preacher pays Thibodeau to wake him up during the homily, \$50. So this went on for a month.

They ended the month. Boudreau is snoring again. So the priest talked to Thibodeau. He said, "What's going on? I'm paying you \$50." He said, "Yes, but Boudreau is paying me \$100 to let him sleep." (Laughter)

COMMANDER HENRY: We are in recess until 9:00 a.m. Monday, August 8th.

(Whereupon, the meeting was recessed at 4:27 o'clock, p.m., on Sunday, August 7, 2011.)

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS AUXILIARY
89th NATIONAL CONVENTION
Hilton New Orleans Riverside Hotel New Orleans, Louisiana
August 7, 2011
Third Business Session
- - -

The Third Business Session of the Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary convened in the Grand Salon C/D on the First Floor of the Hilton New Orleans Riverside Hotel, New Orleans, Louisiana, on Monday morning August 8, 2011, and was called to order at 9:12 o'clock, a.m., by National Commander Susan Henry.

COMMANDER HENRY: It is my pleasure to introduce to you Dr. Alfonso Batras, Chief Officers of Readjustment Counseling Service for the Department of Veterans Affairs.

He has direct oversight of the 300 vet centers, 500 mobile vet centers, and over 1,900 vet center staff providing readjustment services to war-zone veterans and their families across the United States, to include Puerto Rico, Alaska, Hawaii, the U.S. Virginia Islands, American Samoa, and Guam.

Dr. Batras is a service-connected disabled Vietnam veteran. He received the 2002 Presidential Distinguished Service Rank Award for Senior Executives after Presidential Meritorious Service Rank Award, to include a Presidential Citation for vet center field work in saving veterans' lives.

Dr. Batras currently has an adjunct academic appointment at the Uniformed Services of Health Sciences Medical School. Dr. Batras began his career serving warriors as a psychologist at a family service section at Ireland Army Hospital, Fort Knox, Kentucky.

Like other veterans, he continued his education and received his Ph.D. in psychology at the University of Colorado Boulder before becoming the team leader of the East Los Angeles Veterans Center.

Dr. Batras has worked in the vet center program since the early 1980s and been recognized as a national and international leader in pioneering the development and provision of services for combat veterans with combat-related trauma. Dr. Batras. (Applause)

ALFONSO BATRAS, Ph.D.: Good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

DR. BATRAS: That's great for so early in the morning. (Laughter) First of all, thank you, for the introduction and the honor of being here.

What I want to do today is tell you a little bit about who we are, what we do, and then hopefully get time to answer some of your questions that you might have about the work that I do for veterans and their families.

I have some of my staff here today. Our local team leader from New Orleans is standing in the back in the blue coat there. Her name is Michelle Milonas. She has a little stand outside of the vet center so if you need information or want to talk a little bit further about things, she is available for you.

To my right is Michael Fisher, OIF veteran, injured in OIF, works in my office currently and an intern from the HAKU program. Nancy Koreau is to his left.

About who I am, I am the son of a World War II veteran. I served in Vietnam. And my son served in Iraq. So I know a little bit about service to country.

And I know that for me, anyway, this is not just a job, it's a mission. And for me it's continuing the motto of never leaving other warriors behind.

As we hear sad news about the tragedy in Afghanistan involving our service members over the weekend I'd like to remind people that every one of those veterans has a family.

And they need to multiply that when they look at these events because, let me tell you, there is a lot of people impacted by these tragic events. And what a set of heroes we have in our military and continue to serve country in such an honorable way.

I wanted to tell you something else before I start. Families are critical to any services that the VA provides the veteran.

You don't optimize recovery or services unless you involve the family because a lot of times it's the family members who identify issues with the members.

And a lot of times it's the family members who transcend bureaucracies and try to assist the veterans in getting through a myriad of challenges in accessing care.

And it's the families who help to heal the veterans once they return. So I applaud you because all of you family members are heroes in my book and thank you for what you do for our country.

I'm technically challenged so you will have to put up with me. (Laughter) I promise you I won't bring you death by PowerPoint. (Laughter) I will shoot through them and make sure that we provide – this is who we are in simple language.

I want you to note that from day one we've had eligibility for families at the vet centers. And our job is to make sure that they consent, that very, very thing short line between active military and civilian status in or near their communities.

These are some of the services that we provide to include individual and group counseling, family counseling on military-related issues. I will talk later about the bereavement services that we rolled out.

We do the bulk of outreach and treatment of sexual trauma within the VA. We go and do outreach. We're at most DMOV events, meeting the returning warriors, PTHRAs, and the like. We will talk a little bit more about that, also.

We assess and treat the whole person so we're going to look at employment as part of the services that we provide, an extension through whatever your state and other programs may have for returning veterans.

We'll screen for substance abuse and other related issues. And, of course, benefits, we will direct veterans to the appropriate resources, whether it be VBA or one of your representatives, many of whom are housed in our vet centers across the country.

We began in 1979 to treat the Vietnam veterans. And this is where the program got started. I know that in the early days the DAV had a lot to do with developing these services and in fact had one of the first projects earmarked for helping Vietnam veterans readjust back to civilian life.

So we were started in '79 and we actually were built on the back of the Vietnam experience. And many of our employees were Vietnam veterans.

In brief, these are some of the things that we provide that I believe have been contributors to our success. One is that most of my staff are veterans like myself who understand the military culture, the sacrifices and what it's like to be in the military.

We stress confidentiality for veterans who want to access care and can't because of stigma or afraid that it will impact on their jobs, their national clearances, etc cetera, etc cetera. And, believe me, stigma is alive and well.

And the confidentiality really is helpful. That doesn't mean that the records are always confidential. What it means is that the veteran has informed consent. We will release the record once he knows or she knows where those records are going.

Veteran satisfaction, we live off of it. I will talk to you a little bit later about what that entails. If the veterans are not happy, we won't have vet centers or VA for very long. So it's our job to make sure that we are addressing the veterans and their families' needs.

And if we don't do a good job of that – we focus on improving our services wherever we find problems. Just the ability to see families I think has been a very powerful ally in our services.

Again, adjusting our services, we've changed a lot over the years because you have to. And I'll update you on some of the changes that have occurred in the last few years. We're adaptive and flexible.

We have evening hours. We work over weekends. We are where the veterans are. Most DMOVs are on weekends. And our staff is out there in many ways doing the job and trying to meet the needs of the returning veterans.

We offer culturally confident services. Our main culture is the military. But we also focus on diversity, whether it's ethnic or racial or gender. We make a strong effort to understand what the culture is in the veterans that we serve.

So, for example, in Puerto Rico most of my staff – all of them, actually – are Puerto Rican. On our vet center on Hopi all of the employees are Hopi. And in Fargo, North Dakota, they're either Swedish or Nordic. (Laughter) We reflect the community.

So the composition of the community should drive what your service providers provide and should be sensitive to and hire, by the way. And, of course, outreach we will talk about a little bit later.

So who are my staff? We have about 1,900 staff nationwide, a drop in the bucket in terms of budget and for a national program very small. We think of ourselves as mean and lean (Laughter) and try to provide as much as we can with what we have.

Over 72 percent currently of our staff are veterans. Most of those are combat veterans. I've hired – I've made an effort to recruit the new troops, the OEF/OIF cohort. So at any one time about a third of all our employees have served in Afghanistan and Iraq, like Mike has.

And you need to hire the young folks into the VA and the vet centers because they're the ones that are going to make that empathic connection with the younger folks.

If I go and do outreach with the younger troops, they're going to look at me the way I used to look at the World War II veterans when my dad got back. Okay? Different music, different set of folks.

If you recruit people to reflect those differences, you're going to be much more successful. And it's also true for our sexual trauma program.

And according to my daughter the best thing the vet centers do is over 42 percent of all staff are women because she claims women do it better. I have no proof to the contrary. (Laughter)

Veteran satisfaction, for years, for 14 years we've been measuring veteran satisfaction at vet centers. Ninety-seven percent, the average over the last 12 to 14 years, would recommend a vet center to another veteran and would rate our services as being high.

That's what we live by, in essence. So I know that we are providing something useful to them. And I know that if I don't, we won't get those kinds of results.

Employees, these are all external measures, by the way. So somebody comes in every year and we do what is called a One-VA Survey of all employees. We are the gold standard in VA or out of VA for employee satisfaction.

If you want to look through that, those are the things that they're rated on: the type of work; work conditions; direct supervision.

They're rating all the elements within the vet centers and we do statistically significant on all of those measures that are positive. The only one we failed at is bureaucracy. (Laughter)

Then they rate the (undistinguishable) of the organization, measures like safety, climate, cooperation, diversity, acceptance, those types of measure. And we do quite well on all of those measures also.

And these are some of the things that we rate high. We're entrepreneurial because we're always changing and can adapt to the needs.

Again, if we have a vet center that has a high number of homeless veterans we will tailor that vet center to address those needs in the community. If we need a lot of counseling capacity we adjust those also.

These are the number of people that we saw in Fiscal Year 2010. We saw 191,508 veterans, uniques, meaning new to the Fiscal Year. And we provided 1.27 million visits. That's a lot of visits for an organization that small.

About 40 percent of all veterans' accessing care any one year do not go to any other VA element. These are going to be your doctors, your nurses, your high-level administrators who do not want to be seen as accessing mental health care and can come to a vet center. Police officers and fire people are two of our strongest components of that.

And you don't have to be diagnosed to get an entry into our vet center. We're actually a public health model. We promote early intervention, education and sustaining people in their readiness capacity and restoring them.

I submit to you that the earlier you intervene the better your chance of normalizing the process for those returning troops who are coming back.

I'm going to talk a little bit about what we're doing with families but families, we had 16,000 families actually come in, representing about 72,000 visits.

Okay, here we go. I'm going to take you through kind of a very quick series of programs that I think would be of interest to you.

In 2004 Secretary Principi authorized me to have, to hire 50 in-country veterans from what was then the Global War on Terrorism. This was before we had an OEF/OIF. So we intervened early.

What I wanted to do was hire a cadre of outreach workers who could go out and encounter veterans. I used to have a rounded forehead. (Laughter) You know, it takes a lot of effort sometimes to change things and get people to change things around.

It's like somebody once said, the VA is like a carrier; you know, it takes it a long time to make a turn. Well, we're more like a PT boat, you know; we try to do the kinds of things that need to be done. And the Secretary authorized me to hire 50 of them again to do outreach.

They had to be in-country veterans, meaning they had served in OEF/OIF. This is one of them. This is our Team Leader in Austin, Texas, name is Jamie Hamilton. She has done two tours.

She went in Iraq as a mechanic and Afghanistan for the same thing. She is married to a combat veteran, also from OIF. And so between the two of them I think the family had like seven tours.

We're dealing a lot with families that have had multiple tours, especially the National Guard and Reserve component, as they activate. And that's something new for us, multi-tour family members.

This is Elaina McSwain. She is our Team Leader in Tacoma, Washington. She was an executive officer and convoy commander in Iraq; and that's her doing outreach at Fort Louis, Washington. And she's a great, great employee.

This is our OEF/OIF Specialist in Tucson. Christopher is a Ranger for life and came into our program as an outreach worker. And that's him on the right during an outreach PDHRA event.

This is Rafik Rajah. And that's him in Afghanistan on the left. And that's him with President Clinton. By the way – that's not President Clinton but (Laughter) President Obama. I'm getting old. My memory is fading. (Laughter)

I haven't met President Obama but my G-WATs have. They have a way of outreaching and meeting folks and encountering them. They're very good at doing the outreach component.

Now, let me tell you something about all the employees you just saw. We hired them as outreach workers. Two of them have completed, through their GI Bill, their MSWs and they're now working for us as counselors.

The other thing we try to do is to develop our employees. Mike just got his MSW from Catholic University in Washington, D.C.

We are more likely to retain veterans if we assist them in their recovery, getting their education and supporting them through the process so they can come back and work for us.

And those are the kinds of things that we like to promote. So about 50 percent of them have moved on and have gotten degrees, and mostly masters degrees. And I think that's a great way for the VA to assist these returning folks and get them their education.

Of the new cohort, just the vet centers, we've seen over 40 percent of all the returning OEF/OIF combat veterans in the vet center. And this is through verification with an identifier provided to us by DoD.

We've seen a lot more but we don't document those as official count. But we see a lot of veterans during outreach events and other places where we do not, we do not count them as part of our service provision group.

By the way, I understand that the slide that I'm going to show you – let me introduce this a little bit differently. Gary Trudeau runs a cartoon and it's got a character named B.D. who is a Vietnam veteran who goes back to Iraq and loses a leg and then winds up at the Walden Vet Center.

Gary spends a lot of time, as I do, at Walter Reed. Jim Mayer, for those of you who know Jim Mayer, a DAV member, conducts a lot of work at Walter Reed and trained both myself and Trudeau on how to be a coach for a period of time so he's very familiar with the system.

So he started this vet center. Let me further introduce it by telling you that most of our referrals come from family members. The family member is the first to note differences in the returning warrior. And they will see the differences.

A lot of times they don't know what to do with those issues or assist the veteran because the veteran may not want to access care or feel that there is something wrong with them.

It's called "readiness" in the military. Nothing wrong, you know, you can do anything. And that's what the military is about and you need to understand that. But it's not something that's wrong with the warrior; it's their culture. And that's what we were all trained to do.

And a lot of times the endorphins are on when you are in the military. You're wired. You're ready to fight. You're trained that way. It's really difficult to turn that switch off when they get home.

So things like communication can be impacted. I remember my mother telling me about how different my dad was when he returned from World War II and my dad never talked about anything because men didn't do that. Warriors didn't do that.

We don't talk about these things. For one thing, it's the culture. The other thing is, how do you explain to a fellow family member what you have just gone through?

My belief, that a lot of that is protective behavior of the family. And it interferes with communication. And it interferes with intimacy and other issues. So that for us is a big barrier.

I remember even back when we started the vet center family members walking in and saying, "Look, I know my husband has a problem. He won't come in. Why don't you go hog tie him and bring him in?" (Laughter)

Can't do that. Some of these Marines are pretty tough and you've got to be careful with that. But it's not something that we can do. So we will work with the family and try to engage the veteran to come in through education.

And we will create the environment where they can come in. Number 1, he will be seen automatically. There is no enrollment required at the vet center. You don't need to be enrolled.

There is no co-payments at the vet center. We will see you very quickly and we will schedule you and we will get you through the system the best that we can.

And the other combat veterans on my staff, he or she, are a conduit to creating that type of relationship and level of trust, meeting someone who you believe will understand you.

Now, I'm going to show you a little film but let me tell you that this film was done by – the producer is a student at U.S.C. He did it pro bono. He's an Iraqi War veteran. And everybody here is on my staff and created all by OEF/OIF combat veterans.

(Whereupon, a film was viewed.)

DR. BATRAS: Almost at no cost and let me tell you, these young folks are very smart and they know how to get things done so I'm very pleased with, with their product.

We began in the program in '79 providing services for military-related problems. There wasn't a lot of I think education or information available to the families I believe at that time because we were transforming. So in the early days there was very little family work.

The Secretary of the VA authorized us to hire a family therapist at every vet center and we are in the process of doing it. I believe we are halfway there. So we're going to be providing more extensive capacity at every vet center for provision of family work.

In a little while you will also see why we're doing more of this but it's an extension of services to more adequately address the need of the family members during the recovery process.

This is what we're seeing. The new cohort of veterans is bringing with them a higher demand for family members to be seen. They want their families included. They want to be involved.

Believe it or not, we have parents of veterans walking in with the veteran. They're very informed. It's a whole new group. They're very educated. They want to know what's going on and what services.

And they want to check out the services. They want to know whether you – meaning us – can provide the kind of services that they need.

And the trend, we have two measures here. One is families will come in for sessions with the veteran. But you know what? A lot of veterans walk in with family issues by themselves. They don't want to bring in the family. And that's available also.

So we process a lot of veteran visits where it is about family. It's about relationships with the family, many of them that can be impacted during the transition back home. So we're showing a real high trend of increase in that arena and we're moving to address it.

Okay, in 2003 we had some events occurring as the war unfolded. Mostly we had family members of those that had been killed in action, especially the National Guard component, walking into vet centers wanting services, someone to talk to about their experience. They weren't eligible.

Eligibility did not cover the family member for that kind of service. So I don't – I'm not in the business of turning the family member who lost a loved one away from services. This is what challenged us.

So, again, flat head, I began the process. You know who Charlie the Tuna is?

(Response of "Yes.")

DR. BATRAS: That's me. (Laughter) But I don't go away. You know? If I believe in something I think it's incumbent upon me to address the issue and either be solidly turned away, which I have been – don't go away; I just suppress it.

But that's something that to me was just not acceptable so once again the Secretary authorized me to do it initially, which is to provide bereavement counseling services to surviving parents, spouses, children, and siblings, in other words the entire family.

Now that's pushing it if you know the VA. It wasn't just the next-of-kin; it was the whole family. By the way, I'm a family therapist in training so you will know my bias.

And I think, again, what I am telling you is something I really believe in, that the family needs to be involved, to include any service member, including accidental deaths while on active duty, to include a group that was not included before and that was the Reserves and the National Guard folks who, by the way, make up about 50 percent of the fighting force.

And that's how we got started. We've, I'm happy to report to you that we've seen 70 percent of all the KIAs in Iraq and Afghanistan through this program and that it's fully vetted through DoD.

You can't do it alone so I took the time to go and actually form an agreement. The referrals are made mostly by (undistinguishable) officers from all services to the vet center.

Our gold standard is once being informed to contact the family within two days and then secondly to see the family within – I mean within two hours and then see the family within two days. I'm sorry.

And we travel. We do a lot of travel in this program. We go to the, where the family is. And it's not something that's well understood.

Originally I was told or by many experts that what I would find is impacted grief and all kinds of complex situations where they were grieving.

That's not what we found. Mostly what we found are families that are in a supportive military community that have to move off base from that supportive community very quickly.

And they have to make a transition to family life. They have to find a job. They have to put their kids in school. And we've done a lot of that. Anything that's needed we will do.

And when they see our counselors they are very grateful because a lot of times if Mike were to respond to one of those calls the family sees their own child in the folks.

And a lot of them have adopted our vet centers. In fact, we have a lot of vet centers where the family members have brought in uniforms and belongings of the deceased and we display them. So it's their vet center and they're processing stuff that to them is very, very important.

And we've had very good success. And that includes, by the way, suicides both in-country and out-of-country, which really is the more difficult of the cases that we process.

So that's gone extremely well. By the way, that's now legislated. It's the law so I don't have to be going every few years hoping that the next Secretary will provide that service.

Next, what I want to tell you about is something that I wish we could bring to your conference maybe next year. It's our mobile vet centers. We have 50 of them across the country.

They are – they've been extremely productive. This is our outreach tool to the D-MOV sites. Whether it's the National Guard or active military bases we deploy these. They're state-of-the-art mobile vet centers.

They're not Winnebagos. They're not vans. We prefer to call them vet centers because they have a lot of capacity. I have seen vehicles like this deployed successfully by the DAV for many years. And I have accompanied them.

And when I was out in the field you could always depend on the DAV to transport our veterans and go out and provide benefits so that's an extension of a, once again, of a DAV product that we refined.

They can do counseling. We have two individual counseling rooms that can provide counseling. By the way, they run on lead-free fuel. They're not very expensive, relatively speaking. They're about 130 grand to put out on the road.

They're designed to provide a multitude of services. Besides the counseling we have an exam table, a lock box, and refrigerator so we can actually take a nurse.

And we are taking nurses on outreach to rural areas to provide screenings and those types of services which I think are very well received.

And it's also an emergency response vehicle which I will show you in a second. It can be transformed and we can put litters on it. We've already tested them. We can put two of these in a C-5 Galaxy.

And the next time we have a hurricane or a disaster I will guarantee you they will be deployed because they will come under our FEMA structure and we will deploy them to wherever they are needed. So they're great in that sense.

The last thing I want to tell you about the vehicle is that – by the way, they have state-of-the-art VSAT encrypted satellite so we can access CPRS records from the medical centers.

We can access our own records from them. And we're in the process of sharing some of them with DoD in some joint ventures.

One of the uses was Fort Hood. My Team Leader from Madison, Wisconsin, was deploying to Iraq, was at Fort Hood. She was one of the ones who was shot at that particular incident.

Upon hearing about the disaster we deployed three mobile vet centers to Fort Hood in response to that. We put – a regional manager in Dallas put together a great team from around many vet centers and they responded.

We were there the day after the disaster and we were both in Fort Hood and outside the gate at Fort Hood providing services. I want you to note that we saw about 8,200 veterans both inside of Fort Hood and outside of Fort Hood during those three weeks so we touched a lot of people.

That's the team on the upper right that was put together by Ms. Engle and the regional office. We had a parade. We participated a lot in the community recovery process. They were placed outside the Wal-Marts.

These mobile vet centers are now deployed at homeless stand downs where we go out in different areas and we do provide services to homeless veterans in different communities. And I think they've been used quite well.

Red River flooding, we deployed two of them. The hospital shot so we had a triage unit and an administrative unit so we could keep services open to the veterans in the Fargo area.

We've been out to reservations. This is the flooding on Rocky Boy's Indian Reservation in Montana. They went down and we were able to, again, sustain their services through the use of these mobile vet centers.

They go a lot to rural areas. This is an event in Greeley, Colorado, where they have a big rodeo every year. A lot of veterans in these areas and they're doing a great job.

It's not just the vehicle that's impressive. Inside this particular mobile vet center is a Marine Corps sergeant major. He drives it and he travels around the State of Wyoming, from Cheyenne.

He understands veterans quite well. And it's unbelievable how many Marines he knows out in those areas. And he attracts the Marines. So it's not just the vehicle. We put war veterans inside those vehicles as drivers and as counselors and that's very effective.

We've opened up a 24-7 call center. We actually didn't open it up. We had no money for this. We rolled in all our 800 numbers and 900 numbers and we put them all on one site so we collapsed them into one site. They're on 24-7. They're staffed by veterans and family members.

And I have another product produced by the same producer and staff that worked at this call center, including Mike Fisher, by the way, who coordinated this particular event. And here it is. (Whereupon, a short film was viewed.)

DR. BATRAS: By the way, we could make any of these videos available to you if you want to either use them on your outreach or your work that you do or your Websites. They're available. We can make them available for your use.

You notice that we included family members on our staff at this particular site. We have a lot of families calling in and we always try to link them up if we can with another family member who would understand and have the time to talk to them.

We are connected to the, with a warm hand-off, meaning you don't have to get off the phone. So we have a veteran in crisis, we can direct them to the VA National Hotline, the Crisis Line, the former Suicide Hotline so they don't have to get off the line.

We also have 24-7 connection, warm hand-off, for primary care. So we can direct the veteran to a nursing station where they can talk to a nurse or a doc and they will schedule you into the VA medical center to address those issues.

We do follow-up on every person so we don't let them just come in and make a call. We will follow up to make sure that they got to where they need to get to. And if not we will continue to work with them and perform those tasks.

We have an advantage over a lot of other systems, to my knowledge, in that we have the VA medical centers, we have mental health; we have resources available for our disposal in an integrated way because we can share people back and forth.

But in many rural communities there may not be a VA C-BOC or other services. So we will work and partner with the local agencies. Whatever is in that community that can provide a service, we are networked into. And there is a lot of those in many areas.

In a lot of areas there may be a lapse or an absence, if you will, of trained counselors. That's just the way rural American is. You may not get someone who – so we have a contract for fees program that we've operated since day one.

We actually have over 300 private contractors, mostly in rural areas, that we contract with to provide those services. And it's an extension. It could be a community mental health center.

It could be a psychiatrist in a rural area. It could be a psychiatric nurse. And they provide those services, so an extension of the vet center program where we touch more sites that are available.

And essentially they have the same requirements as any VA quality assurance process. So we monitor them to make sure that they're providing the adequate services.

The increase in TBI injury and the like has brought in some new challenges. We will screen. We have the minimal screening for TBI. We make a lot of referrals to the medical centers. We're dealing a lot with that.

We're integrated with the new caregiver office that is being developed. I'm not sure exactly what role. Probably our family capacity or provision will be incorporated into that. We have other projects that we're working on to provide more extensive services.

Although we will work with and refer medical problems to the VA medical center, that is not our forte. We are not the experts on neurological injury, especially things that we don't understand quite well and those kinds of things.

However, we co-manage the veterans with the medical centers and we provide them the bulk of counseling on the outside in most rural areas where they are not available to provide the mental health care.

The last thing I want to talk to you about is some of the things we're doing with the evidence-based approaches that are rolling out. The IOM reviewed the efficacy of treatment for Post Traumatic Stress Disorder about three years ago.

They determined that at that point that no current psychotherapy or medication showed any efficacy for the treatment of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.

So after that I think the research community and clinicians are searching for models of treatment for Post Traumatic Stress Disorder that are scientifically-based and, quote, evidence-based. And so they are moving ahead with those.

We are training with them as they roll out to get our folks trained in the latest treatment modalities. That is a building process in which, again, in a scientific manner they will move forward and try to assess what is the most effective way to do this.

I'm sure that will be the trial for TBI for many years as they look for ways of not only diagnosing but the treatment of mild concussive kinds of injuries which seems to constitute a lot of the mild TBI cases.

We're very good at the more severe cases. This is a brand-new field that we'll be moving on. So we are fully vetted in that process. We have our own folks who are trained. We, in turn, are training them.

My own experience, I have been at this thing for 30 years, just at the vet center when you combine all of the years that I've been working with this since its inception.

I found three things that really matter about the treatment of PTSD. Number 1 is that the provider care about the veteran and actually make an empathic connection with them and have their interest at heart. I think that's really critical.

I'll tell you, I can train a clinician who really doesn't care in all kind of technique and I don't think they'll be as effective as someone who does care that I then train.

So the caring to me is critical in the service delivery. You must have people who are invested in the wellbeing of the veteran. And that goes a long way in doing that. I think that's very, very critical as we move on this.

So hopefully, you know, restricting it to "x" sessions or this process and that process will be augmented by another individual who truly has the veterans' and the families' interest at heart and will follow up and will not just do an intervention and then you're gone kind of thing.

On the other hand, both are necessary. You do need the research. You need to find out what care, what is effective with the veteran.

The other thing is you must involve the family in the process. The family is critical to the recovery of the veteran. If they're not informed, and if you don't make an attempt to include them, you won't be half as successful as you will be if you do.

Thirdly, as a warrior I can tell you that, like many others, I went into the military service to serve my country. And it's my community – it's my country that sent me to war, the whole community.

In Vietnam that got a little bit fragmented. I think we've done a correction with the new cohort of veterans based on some bad experience about what happens when the community gets divided.

And I think, quite frankly, that the community, the country, must be vested and is the prime agent for receiving them back and taking care of them.

Because it's your community who authorizes you to go and defend the country, it should be your whole community who welcomes you back. So at all levels I think it is incumbent upon all of us to work together to make sure that we provide everything we can for these returning veterans.

I would add that the quality of care has to be there. We can – we should be able to offer the very best that we have for you and for your returning service member. And I know there is a lot of veterans in this audience also.

If 12 or 13 percent of the fighting force in Iraq and Afghanistan were women, we've had to change our program to accommodate them also, because a significant other may be a male now when you have a female veteran.

It's going to require a lot of transformation at the VA and the vet centers to try to fully accommodate those veterans.

And I think – I mean fully accommodate. I think we should provide the whole range of services that we provide any other veteran to women veterans to make them feel welcome.

With that I'll stop my propaganda (Laughter) and open it up for discussion and see if you have any questions or comments. Yes, ma'am.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I didn't know what TBI meant.

DR. BATRAS: TBI is traumatic brain injury. It's something that we looked at because of the nature of the war with the IEDs and the repeated exposure to concussive injury including, you know, the IED experience.

So it means traumatic brain injury. No other questions? I really appreciate you having us. We will be around if you have any questions. One more? Okay. (Applause)

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Is this on? Okay. My question is, you were saying that you don't – there is no any charge to the vets. How is this program funded?

DR. BATRAS: We're in the VA so we're funded by taxpayer dollars. We're different in that we're mostly a niche organization dedicated to combat veterans; and it's in our structure that we eliminate all barriers to care that would prohibit a veteran from coming in and getting care.

In essence we're kind of an anti-stigma, you know, less bureaucratic access portal. We make a lot of referrals to the VA medical centers.

We did a survey 2009. Seventy percent of all the referrals to the VA medical center mental health were first contacted by a vet center person and then we referred them in to the proper care. And so in a way that kind of demonstrates our outreach. Okay. Yes, ma'am.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Good morning. We have a member of our unit who tells the story about her brother returning from Vietnam and he had all the symptoms that you describe.

His wife tried to get help at the time. And she didn't know where to go to and he wouldn't receive help. If this were to happen today, that 800 number that you – that 877 number that you gave us, would that be the step that a person would take?

We have a lot of wounded warriors returning to Fort Sam Houston and in contact with some of the spouses we see that they have this same problem.

Eventually he did kill his wife and he ran away and they haven't found him yet. So if we come up against this set of circumstances, would the first thing we would tell them to do would be to call the number and then they could get help from there?

DR. BATRAS: The number would be one of two resources. The other is the vet center. If you have a crisis in line, send them to your nearest vet center or call the vet center and then talk to them and make the referral. We will make an effort to contact the veteran.

Last year we had 258 instances where we went out and met the veteran in crisis outside of the vet center and resolved the issue. So kind of make an assessment if it looks eminent there is something very wrong, then I would go to the vet center first.

But the call center is a safe way for a family member to call and talk to somebody else and get advice about either their coming into the vet center and talking to someone.

A lot of times the veteran will follow the family member. If you come into the vet center just to get information usually the veteran will follow. That's been my experience.

If they don't then, you know, I would make – and, again, depending on the veteran, if you assess that there might be something wrong we will try to make an intervention.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Thank you.

DR. BATRAS: You're welcome.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Good morning.

DR. BATRAS: Good morning.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I'm recently married to a Vietnam era vet and what I – I need questions answered so would I talk to his social worker or get somebody myself or how would I do that?

DR. BATRAS: I would contact your nearest vet center. Where do you live?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Las Vegas area.

DR. BATRAS: We have two vet centers there, one in Henderson and one in Las Vegas. I would call the vet center, schedule a time, come in, talk to my Team Leader. His name is Joe Steele.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yes.

DR. BATRAS: We have counselors there that would be very glad to talk to you and have you come in.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Thank you.

DR. BATRAS: Good luck. Again, thank you for the – oh, one more question.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I want to thank you for your storefront facilities. They're less intimidating. Those that do not want to walk through the VA hospital doors can, you know, walk through the doors of the vet center.

I want to ask you, with veterans that we service and that we know on a personal level that are still active duty, what is the process for them and PTSD?

DR. BATRAS: We take a lot of calls from the, at our call center from active military. We don't restrict that. So they can come in and talk to another veteran and process.

A lot of times it's talking to another veteran. I personally can tell you that what I was looking for was someone who understood what Vietnam was about, what the experience was about.

It's not that – a lot of times it's not that they don't want to talk about it; it's that, you know, it is something that's very difficult to talk about because of the nature of the job and the work that we do. It's very difficult.

So finding that empathic person – and, by the way, the veteran chooses where they get the help. You know what I mean? The veteran chooses where they access care.

And having someone available to talk to, even if it's a fellow DAV member, anyone that can talk to them were they can process and establish that relationship, I call it an empathic connection, meaning someone who understands you, cares about you, and can guide you to the right place.

Now, I didn't mention but one other legislation that passed is that they're opening up the vet centers to active military. So in the process of looking at that and regulating, meaning that, we will be able to provide services to active military.

Part of that, remember, was during the National Guard and Reserve, when they come back they would be seen at a vet center. They activate and they go back and then we stop services. The family was not eligible.

So this will take care of a lot of the continuity issues where the family can still receive service, family members, at the vet center while their individual is deployed. And as we work our way through it we're going to get better.

Here is my goal. I think the better that DoD and VA collaborate, share information across the continuum, the better off the warrior is going to be. (Applause)

But I have to tell you, those of us outside of the military, you know, there are a lot of people who don't understand the military and the mission.

The military is about readiness and fighting a war. You have to understand that in order to do that. So we have to work all of those out and understand their mission and understand our mission because it's the veteran that gets caught in between those systems.

So the better the transition, the better we work together I think down the road the better services we're going to be able to provide.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: When you incorporate the active duty will the confidentiality continue?

DR. BATRAS: Yes. It's in the legislation. We will see what the command has to say about that. (Laughter) Again, we need to work these things out and the understanding of how we're going to do that.

We already see a lot of active military. We have MOUs and MOAs all over this country where they ask for something and we provide it, like Fort Hood. It's their troops. You know, they're going to let you in or they're not.

But when they let you in you can optimize more services but understanding it's their troops while they're activated and we have to – we have to look at that without blaming anyone or not understanding the process, if you know what I mean. Yes, sir.

MR. JOHN HONIKER: Yes. I'd just like to – I'm John Honiker, Vice Commander, District 3, Chapter 3, Green Bay, Wisconsin. I'd just like to reinforce what you said about talking to other people or finding people you can talk to.

I came back from four tours in Vietnam in 1967 and was stationed in Florida. And we didn't know anything and nobody wanted to tell us anything it seemed like.

Even my own family didn't want to talk about it because they'd been, their idea of what went on in Vietnam was so badly slanted by the media.

But I was on the Blackwater River one day just outside of Pensacola, Florida, fishing and I met this old, elderly gentleman who was fishing and we sat down and he was a Korean War POW.

In the two years before that man passed away we spent near about every weekend out on the Blackwater River laughing together, crying together, and doing a lot of fishing. (Applause)

DR. BATRAS: Thank you for your service.

MR. HONAKER: And I am what I am today because of him.

DR. BATRAS: Thank you for your service, sir. Okay, thank you. (Applause)

COMMANDER HENRY: Thank you for coming in and speaking with us. If you had History Books, please pick them up from the office. Junior Activities Chairman, where are the Junior History Books?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: When the Committee met I had to leave right before it was over and the chairman said that she would take them back to Judy and Pat's room. So I am assuming that's where they are.

COMMANDER HENRY: Can we get a confirmation of that? I was told that some History Books were – they weren't found, weren't returned.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Commander, I was looking for one and they did come up with it last night.

COMMANDER HENRY: Okay, thank you.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: They did find them.

COMMANDER HENRY: Okay, thank you. If you are going to the Forget-Me-Not Luncheon, it is at 12:30 today. You must bring your ticket.

If you didn't go across the room after you registered and paid for your ticket and pick up a ticket, you will need to go to the office right now and get that straightened out. Go – and the Auxiliary Office is in the Burgundy Room just across the hall.

But you will need your ticket in hand. And you, we will all be entering through Door A. All of the other doors are blocked. We will only be entering through Door A.

At this time we are recessed to reconvene at 9:00 a.m. on Tuesday, August 9th. (Applause)

(Whereupon, the meeting was recessed at 10:15 o'clock, a.m., on Monday, August 8, 2011.)

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DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS AUXILIARY
89th NATIONAL CONVENTION
Hilton New Orleans Riverside Hotel New Orleans, Louisiana
August 9, 2011
Final Business Session
- - -

The Final Business Session of the Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary convened in the Grand Salon C/D on the First Floor of the Hilton New Orleans Riverside Hotel, New Orleans, Louisiana, on Tuesday morning, August 9, 2011, and was called to order at 9:06 o'clock, a.m., by National Commander Susan Henry.

COMMANDER HENRY: Good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

COMMANDER HENRY: I now call the final business meeting to order. We will begin with a prayer by Chaplain Christopher Easley.

CHAPLAIN EASLEY: There is nothing stronger than the heart of a volunteer, Lieutenant Colonel James H. Doolittle. This prayer is a prayer for our country in the Chaplain Service Book of Prayers.

Almighty God, You have given us this great land as our heritage. We humbly pray that we may always remember Your generosity and faithfully do Your will.

Bless our land with honest industry, truthful education, and an honorable way of life. Defend our liberties and strengthen our resolve of the people who have come from throughout the world to make America their home.

Lead us to choose the harder right instead of the easier wrong. Help us to appreciate the opportunities that are ours as we struggle to bring harmony to an unsettled world.

May we balance our concern for justice with a willingness to display mercy and may our concern for security be tempered with willingness to take risk, which will produce the worthwhile change for the good of all people.

Oh Lord, we pray for Your guidance as we work together for the best interest of our communities, our nation, our world, and the ultimate goal of peace. When times are prosperous let our hearts be thankful. And in troubled times, may our deepest trust be in You. Amen.

(Response of "Amen.")

COMMANDER HENRY: We will now have the pledge by Americanism Chairman LeeAnn Karg.

THIRD JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER KARG: Free your hands, stand at attention, place your right hand over your heart or render the appropriate salute and join with me in the Pledge of Allegiance to our flag.

(Whereupon, the Pledge of Allegiance was led by Third Junior Vice Commander Karg.)

COMMANDER HENRY: Judy, we have another –

ADJUTANT HENRY: Brand new.

COMMANDER HENRY: – brand new member, approximately 20 minutes old now. (Laughter) His name is Dominic Beadle and here is his dues until he turns as senior member. (Applause) Is his grandfather in here? No?

(Response of "No.")

COMMANDER HENRY: He's not in here but he paid his complete membership. Patty Rapisand.

SENIOR VICE COMMANDER RAPISAND: Good morning, everyone.

(Response of "Good morning.")

SENIOR VICE COMMANDER RAPISAND: Well, we have a busy schedule this morning and before we get into our session I would just like to say one thing. This year the Auxiliary has made great progress.

We've made great strides under the leadership of Susan Henry. And I would just like all of you to please let's give Susan a round of applause, a standing ovation. Thank you so much for all your service. (Standing Ovation)

COMMANDER HENRY: Thank you. Let me jump in a chair. (Laughter) Thank you very much. It has truly been a privilege to serve this organization. We have another lost and found.

(Whereupon, the lost and found item was promptly claimed.)

COMMANDER HENRY: Okay, that was a quick claimant. Okay, we're completing all the lost and founds this morning. Gloves – so I'm thinking Pages and Junior Pages – with a keychain. Oh, they were separate? Oh, excuse me. Gloves. Keychain.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: And the keychain tells you where it's from.

COMMANDER HENRY: Yes, but they were giving them away so I don't know who it belongs to. (Laughter) Okay, both will be up here.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Did they ever find the purse?

COMMANDER HENRY: We do not know. We have not heard. Okay, hopefully – are we done with the lost and found?

MS. FRANCINA CLAYTON: Madame Chairman, Francina Clayton, Great Falls Unit 2. At the Lieutenant Dan thing I found a Blue Tooth headset. I turned it in at the front desk.

They said they were going to put it in the Security lost and found. So if somebody lost one of those cell phone Blue Tooths, that's where it will be.

COMMANDER HENRY: Thank you. The National Adjutant will now call the roll of the newly-elected National Executive Committee members and alternates. As your name is called, please come forward for the purpose of installation.

(Whereupon, the newly-elected National Executive Committeewomen and alternates advanced to the front of the room as the National Adjutant called their names.)

ADJUTANT HEZLEP: District 1, NEC Nancy Mooney, Alternate Sandra Fincel; District 3, Ann Schatz NEC, Alternate Wanda Furbish; District 5, NEC Suzanne Seyboldt, Alternate Amy Buterbaugh;

District 7, NEC Diane Franz, Alternate Debbera McLaughlin; District 9, NEC Dorothy Reese, Alternate Cheryl Faglier; District 11, NEC Dorothy Clark, Alternate Jeanette Scott; District 13, NEC Tana Penland, Alternate Linda Bratcher;

District 15, NEC Rebecca Bowman, Alternate Veronica Bergquist; District 17, NEC Ellen Timmerman, Alternate Ernestine Bennett; District 19, NEC Christina Fairin, Alternate Robi Riley; District 21, NEC Kimberly Stake, Alternate Leslie Ivy.

COMMANDER HENRY: You are requested to remain silent during the ceremony of installation. As newly-elected National Executive Committee members and alternates, are you willing to assume the oath of your office?

(Response of "I am.")

COMMANDER HENRY: Place your right hand over your heart, pronounce your name and repeat after me the oath of your office.

"I, Susan Henry, having been selected as a National Executive Committee member or alternate of this Auxiliary, do most solemnly pledge myself to faithfully and impartially perform in letter and spirit all duties of the office I am about to enter.

"I promise to obey the lawful orders of my superior officers and exact the obedience of others thereto to the best of my ability and means. When my successor has been duly selected and installed I promise to surrender all property of the organization in my possession, all of which I now affirm."

You may lower your hands. Members, be seated. Delegates, members and guests, I now present to you the National Executive Committee members and alternates of the Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary. (Applause)

I trust you will aid them in the performance of their duties. And with your help their term of office will be highly successful. About face for photos. (Applause) You may return to your seats.

We had a brief question earlier of which Department had the most number of delegates here. I will give you one guess: The Department is Texas with 42 delegates. (Applause)

Would the Credentials Chairman, Karen Majors, please come forward to give the final Credentials report.

(Whereupon, Credentials Committee Chairman Karen Majors advanced to the podium.)

CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN MAJORS: Good morning.

(Response of "Good morning.")

CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN MAJORS: Madame Commander, National Officers, delegates and guests, this will be the final reading of the Credentials report.

And, also, the DAV IT Department has made corrections to their previous calculations. And according to them these are supposed to be the final credentials. (Laughter)

Total units registered 192; total departments registered, 42; for a total of 234; delegates registered, 385; alternates registered, 27; members and guests, 91; for a total of 503.

Total unit votes, 1,207; total department votes, 42; National Officer votes, 7; Past National Commander votes, 10; for a total of votes, 1,266. Madame Commander, I move that we accept the Credentials' report.

COMMANDER HENRY: Do we have a second?

MS. BRZEZINSKI: Iris Brzezinski, Sunrise Mountain Unit Number 13, Nevada, I second the motion.

COMMANDER HENRY: Thank you. Any discussion? All in favor; opposed. The motion carried. And thank you, Karen, for your work.

Would the Chairman of the Nominating Committee please come forward to give the Committee report.

(Whereupon, the Past National Commander, Past National Adjutant and Nominating Committee Chairman Maria Tedrow advanced to the podium to give her report.)

NOMINATING COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN MARIA TEDROW: Good morning, Madame Commander, National Officers, and all the members out there.

(Response of "Good morning.")

NOMINATING COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN TEDROW: It's time to give the Nominating Committee report but first I'd like to introduce to your our advisor who was Kay Egan. Kay, would you please stand.

(Whereupon, Immediate Past National Commander Kay Egan stood and was recognized with a round of applause.)

NOMINATING COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN TEDROW: We had a very good Committee. And before I give the report I'd just like to make a couple of comments and that is that anyone can run for National Office providing they have met the eligibilities.

And everyone that belongs to the DAV Auxiliary has some kind of talent. And it doesn't matter whether you're 18 or 80, you still can contribute to this organization.

Now some people are afraid of the Nominating Committee. (Laughter) And that's why they don't want to run. Well, we've tried to improve on the Nominating Committee.

You're not called any longer at midnight. And you're not put through a grilling testament of your personality. What we go on is what you submit and what you have done as far as your time in the organization.

And we try to get out at a good time. But we also have fun. So when you come before the Nominating Committee we're just looking for people that will contribute to this organization and we're not there to hurt your feelings or anything.

So give it some thought. If you have people that have talent in your organization, in your chapter or states, you know, give them a little push – not too hard, just a little push. (Laughter) Okay.

And if you have any questions, don't ask them because I'm not going to answer them. (Laughter) The Nominating Committee of the Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary held their first meeting on Saturday, August the 6th, 2011.

We hereby wish to submit the following slate for your consideration to serve as the 2011-2012 officers. Before I submit the slate, remember, you cannot accept the slate. Each office must be opened to the floor.

All right, here we go. I want each officer that's named to stand because, believe it or not, there are some people that don't know you.

Commander, for Commander, Patrice or Patty Rapisand. (Applause) Senior Vice Commander Donna Adams. (Applause) First Junior Vice Commander Susan Miller. (Applause)

Second Junior Vice Commander LeeAnn Karg. (Applause) Third Junior Vice Commander Linda Stake. (Applause) Fourth Junior Vice Commander Laurie Stopyra. (Applause) Judge Advocate Kathryn Wiley. (Applause)

And I want to say thank you to the secretary who did a great job, Jane Troutman, Jane. (Applause) And now for the real workers of this Committee: Jacqueline Herrick, District 1; (Applause) District 2, Lucita Christian; (Applause) District 3, Ann Schatz; (Applause) District 4, Dorothy Kasher; (Applause) and that's wrong, Dorothy, it's Kashner; I don't have my glasses on; District 5, Suzanne Seyboldt; (Applause) District 6, Ruth Wilcoxon; (Applause) District 7, Miss Trouble, Merilyn McDonald; (Applause) District 8, Cornelia Cobb; (Applause) District 9, Jane Troutman; (Applause) District 10, Gloria Boozer; (Applause) District 11, Maria Tedrow; (Applause) District 12, Paula Raymond; (Applause) District 13, Brigitte Rice; (Applause) District 14, Robin Carney; (Applause) District 15, a new grandmother, Veronica Bergquist; (Applause) District 16, Pamela Hogan; (Applause) District 17, Earnestine Bennett; (Applause) District 18, William Sumler (Applause) – Sumler; sorry about that William. Are you here? Well, then he doesn't know I did that, does he? (Laughter) District 19, Barbara Reding; (Applause) District 20, Betty Hall; (Applause) and District 21, Mary Roden. (Applause)

And I want to thank all the Committee at this time for your hard work and the discussions that we had and the fun we had, because we do laugh in the Committee, believe it or not.

Madame Commander, this is the slate that we wish the floor to consider.

COMMANDER HENRY: When two or more candidates are nominated for any one office roll calls shall continue until completed unless a candidate withdraws. The person receiving the majority of the roll call votes shall be elected.

I wish to thank all the members of the Nominating Committee for their efforts and time. And I would like at this time to discharge the Nominating Committee and all other Convention Committees.

At this time would the officers please leave the podium and return to their Districts for the purpose of nomination and election.

(Whereupon, the National Officers withdrew from the podium.)

COMMANDER HENRY: Bye, Kay.

IMMEDIATE PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER EGAN: Bye.

COMMANDER HENRY: Is everyone ready? You have heard the report of the Committee on Nominations. Patrice "Patty" Rapisand has been nominated by the Committee for the office of National Commander. Are there any other nominations?

Hearing none, I declare the nominations closed for the office of National Commander. All those in favor of Patrice Rapisand for the office of National Commander signify by saying aye; opposed.

UNIDENTIFIED DELEGATE: Madame Commander, may I approach?

COMMANDER HENRY: You may.

(Whereupon, the delegate advanced to the podium.)

UNIDENTIFIED DELEGATE: National Commander Susan, National Officers, members, guests, Patty Rapisand has been a member of the Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary since 1980.

Patty is eligible for membership through her husband David. She is also eligible for membership through her dad who was a World War II veteran that survived the Bataan Death March and escaped to Corrigedor. He was taken prisoner by the Japanese and was there for three-and-a-half years.

Patty is a life member of the Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary and affiliated with Borderland Number 10 in El Paso. She has served as State Adjutant of Texas since 1990 – we believe when you get a good one you keep them – (Laughter) and as Assistant Adjutant ten years prior.

Patty has served as National Fourth, Third, Second, First and now presently National Senior Vice Commander. Patty is a senior buyer for Lockheed Martin, a major aeronautics manufacturer, in Fort Worth, Texas.

She is active in several Lockheed Martin organizations. Patty is active in community organizations. Patty is very active in her church. She is a life member of the PTA.

She and her husband David participate in many Lena Pope Home – which is a home for troubled children – fund raisers and volunteer programs.

Patty is a graduate of the University of Texas at El Paso, majoring in business administration. She is also an active alumni(sic) of the University of Texas at El Paso.

David and Patty are the parents of three wonderful sons. Remember the program "My Three Sons"? (Laughter) Well they are wonderful, let me tell you. And they are all members of the Auxiliary.

Patty has been a terrific mentor to many members during her tenure of office as Texas State Adjutant. Patty is a wonderful, loving friend, and I really feel like she's a second daughter to me.

Ladies and gentlemen, it is my honor to second the nomination for Patty Rapisand for National Commander. Thank you. (Applause)

COMMANDER HENRY: As we have all voted, the ayes have it and Patty Rapisand has been elected to the office of National Commander. (Standing Ovation)

Donna Adams has been nominated by the Committee for the office of National Senior Vice Commander. Are there any other nominations? Hearing none, I declare the nominations closed for the office of National Senior Vice Commander.

All those in favor of Donna Adams for the office of National Senior Vice Commander signify by saying aye; opposed. The ayes have it and Donna Adams has been elected for the office of National Senior Vice Commander. (Applause)

Susan Miller has been nominated by the Committee for the office of National First Junior Vice Commander. Are there any other nominations? Hearing none, I declare the nominations closed for the office of National First Junior Vice Commander.

All those in favor of Susan Miller for the office of National First Junior Vice Commander, signify by saying aye; opposed. The ayes have it. And Susan Miller has been elected to the office of National First Junior Vice Commander. (Applause)

COMMANDER HENRY: LeeAnn Karg has been nominated by the Committee for the office of National Second Junior Vice Commander. Are there any other nominations?

Hearing none, I declare the nominations closed for the office of National Second Junior Vice Commander. All those in favor of LeeAnn Karg for National Second Junior Vice Commander signify by saying aye; opposed.

The ayes have it. And LeeAnn Karg has been elected to the office of National Second Junior Vice Commander. (Applause)

Linda Stake has been nominated for the Committee – by the Committee for the office of National Third Junior Vice Commander. Are there any other nominations?

Hearing none, I declare the nominations closed for the office of National Third Junior Vice Commander. All those in favor of Linda Stake for the office of National Third Junior Vice Commander signify by saying aye; opposed.

The ayes have it. And Linda Stake has been elected to the office of National Third Junior Vice Commander. (Applause)

Laurie Stopyra has been nominated by the Committee for the office of National Fourth Junior Vice Commander. Are there any other nominations? Hearing none, I declare the nominations closed for the office of National Fourth Junior Vice.

All those in favor of Laurie Stopyra for the office of National Fourth Junior Vice Commander signify by saying aye; opposed. The ayes have it. And Laurie Stopyra has been elected to the office of National Fourth Junior Vice Commander. (Applause)

Kathryn Wiley has been nominated by the Committee for the office of National Judge Advocate. Are there any other nominations? Hearing none, I declare the nominations closed for the office of National Judge Advocate.

All those in favor of Kathryn Wiley for the office of National Judge Advocate signify by saying aye; opposed. The ayes have it. (Applause) And Kathryn Wiley as been elected to the office of National Judge Advocate. (Applause)

The election having been completed, I now ask the National Sergeant-at-Arms to come to the podium for the purpose of introducing the National Executive Committee members and the juniors who have served as Pages.

(Whereupon, Sergeant-at-Arms Shepherd and Pages advanced to the podium.)

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS LYNDIA S. SHEPHERD: Good morning.

(Response of “Good morning.”)

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS SHEPHERD: I would start out with our Pages: Dorothy Robinson; Ruth Gates – come forward, please; Angelyn Scott; Yvonne Pitts; Earnestine Bennett; Robyn Kenney; Kim Stake; Barbara Reding; Abigail Gates.

Now for our Junior Pages and they have been very helpful and very cooperative. And I’d like to thank them personally for doing such a good job because, after all, that is the life of this organization if we get the juniors in there where they can move forward. (Applause)

As I call your name, would you come forward, please: Chloie Badaserie; Whitney Cassidy; Bryce Hammond; Hailey Hammond; Joey Heath; Ernest Hauser; Alex Litzinger. Have we not got any?

COMMANDER HENRY: Joey is slowly making his way.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS SHEPHERD: Okay. Vincent Oliver; Cameron Richards; Randall Richards; Abby Seyboldt; Brandon Van Curen; Devin Van Curen; Megan Barber; Madison Barber; Sophia Ciseron; Kaitlyn Hager; Oliver Forward; Tenicia Cassidy or Kennedy; Taylor Baker; Tina Williams; A.J. Baker.

Some of the juniors that I did not call your name, would you please come forward. Does that get all of our Pages, our Junior Pages? (Applause)

Now would our Color Bearers come forward, please, from Louisiana: Lorice Cole; Clara Dahl; Gail Sutton; Mabel Rogers.

Now would our NECs come forward as I call your name: District 1, Nancy Mooney; District 2, Diane Wisnesky; District 3, Aura Lee Nicodemus; District 4, Leila White;

District 5, Suzanne Seyboldt; District 6, Etta Bowers; District 7, Jean Sursely; District 8, Patricia Hicks; District 9, Barbara Snell; District 10, Lorraine Connelly;

District 11, Marcella Brewster; District 12, Ann Glende; District 13, Arveeda Gordon; District 14, Sandra Dobmeier; District 15, Velma Steinman; District 16, Josephine Benner;

Susan – excuse me, District 17, Susan Darby; District 18, Yvonne Pitts; District 19, Barbara Reding; District 20, Sylvia Shurgot; District 21, Linda Oliver. (Applause)

I would like to thank all the Pages, all the NECs that have been so cooperative with me. And I have enjoyed working with each one of them because this was a learning experience for me. (Laughter) And thank you very much. (Applause)

COMMANDER HENRY: Our Pages and Junior Pages did a wonderful job. Thank you all. (Applause) At this time the Pages are dismissed. (Applause) They love me so much they don't want to leave. (Laughter) That's what they said, not me.

(Whereupon, the Sergeant-at-Arms and Pages withdrew from the podium.)

COMMANDER HENRY: Is there any further business to come before this Convention? Hearing none, I now declare the 89th National Convention of the Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary hereby adjourned.

We will immediately go into the Installation of National Officers followed by the National Executive Committee meeting. Please remain in your seats.

(Whereupon, the meeting adjourned at 9:53 o'clock, a.m., on Tuesday, August 9, 2011.)

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