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1999 NATIONAL CONVENTION PROCEEDINGS OF THE DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS

COMMUNICATION

FROM

THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY, THE DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS

TRANSMITTING

THE 1999 NATIONAL CONVENTION PROCEEDINGS OF THE DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS, PURSUANT TO 36 U.S.C. 90i AND 44 U.S.C. 1332

JANUARY 27, 2000.—Referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs and ordered to be printed

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NATIONAL ENCAMPMENTS OF VETERANS' ORGANIZATIONS;
PROCEEDINGS PRINTED ANNUALLY FOR CONGRESS

The proceedings of the national encampments of the United Spanish War Veterans, the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States, The American Legion, the Military Order of the Purple Heart, the Veterans of World War I of the United States, Inc., the Disabled American Veterans, and the AMVETS (American Veterans of World War II), respectively, shall be printed annually with accompanying illustrations, as separate house documents of the session of the Congress to which they may be submitted.

[Approved October 2, 1968.]

LETTERS OF TRANSMITTAL

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS,
October 30, 1999.

Hon. J. DENNIS HASTERT,
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 the proceedings of our National Convention, held in Orlando, Florida, August 21–25, 1999, and submit them to you through the office of this organization located in Washington, DC, pursuant to the provisions of Public Law 186 of the 72d Congress, as amended, to be printed as a House document in accordance with the authorization of section 1332 of title 44, United States Code.

The enclosed National Convention proceedings include an independent audit report of all receipts and expenditures as of December 31, 1998, as required by the provisions of section 3 of the Public Law 88–504, approved August 30, 1964.

Sincerely,

ARTHUR H. WILSON,
National Adjutant.

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NATIONAL OFFICERS 1999-2000

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS

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

Senior Vice Commander
Armando C. Albarran, 10114 Ironside, San Antonio, TX 78230

First Junior Vice Commander
George H. Steese, 4186 W. Terrace Avenue, Fresno, CA 93722

Second Junior Vice Commander
Edward R. Heath, Sr., P.O. Box 115, Mechanic Falls, ME 04256

Third Junior Vice Commander
Alan W. Bowers, 21 Bolton Road, Royalston, MA 01368-8929

Fourth Junior Vice Commander
James E. Sursely, 517 Spring Hollow Blvd., Apopka, FL 32712

National Judge Advocate
Edward G. Galian, 200 Atlantic Avenue, #1, Lynbrook, NY 11563

National Chaplain
Rev. Alfonso Todd, Jr., 505 South 26th Street, Saginaw, MI 48601

Past National Commander
Andrew A. Kistler, 802 Grant Street, Franklin, PA 16323

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

First district: John F. Gilpin, Jr., 485 Plain Street, Rockland, MA 02370
Second district: William Novak, Jr., 1231 Route 211 West, Middletown, NY 10940
Third district: Norman L. Newell, 34 Blaine Road, Hollowell, ME 04347
Fourth district: Albert E. Church, 75 Crown Street, Bristol, CT 06010
Fifth district: Vincent Darcangelo, 719 Patricia Drive, Hermitage, PA 16148
Sixth district: Thomas C. Johns, 4916 Ridgeview Lane, Bowie, MD 20715
Seventh district: Frank C. Tracy, 33343 Somerset Drive, Leesburg, FL 34788
Eighth district: Lloyd E. Helms, 5419 Foxglove Drive, Bossier City, LA 71112-4913
Ninth District: Richard Williams, Sr., 3725 Fairington Drive, Hephzibah, GA 30815
Tenth district: Ben Benzing, 3790 155th Avenue, Hersey, MI 49639
Eleventh district: Samuel E. Lanza, 614 Meadowbrook, SE., Warren, OH 44484-4552
Twelfth district: Dorothy R. Schilling, 6205 Hwy. V, Caledonia, WI 53108
Thirteenth district: James S. Powers, 910 Buckcreek Road, Greenfield, IN 46140
Fourteenth district: Dale D. Hafer, 161 Old Corvallis road, Hamilton, MT 59840
Fifteenth district: Mick Jones, 1019 Country Ridge, Jefferson City, MO 65109
Sixteenth district: Glen M. Halsey, 3044 Wolfe Court, Antelope, CA 95843
Seventeenth district: Robert E. Askew, 3183 Hillsdale Drive, West Valley, UT 84119
Eighteenth district: Floyd W. "Pete" Buell, 780 Foujtain Hills, Henderson, NV 89015
Nineteenth district: Bradley S. Barton, 4765 SW Chunut Court, Tualatin, OR 97062
Twentieth district: Leonard F. Humes, 9419 Stones River Drive, San Antonio, TX 78245
Twenty-first district: Wayne L. Douglass, Sr., 212 Charteroak, Hot Springs, AR 71901

Michael E. Dobmeier
National Commander
1999-2000
Disabled American Veterans

Andrew A. Kistler
National Commander
1998-1999
Disabled American Veterans

NATIONAL OFFICERS 1998-99

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS

National Commander
Andrew A. Kistler, 802 Grant Street, Franklin, PA 16323

Senior Vice Commander
Michael E. Dobmeier, P.O. Box 6188, Grand Forks, ND 58206-6188

First Junior Vice Commander
Armando C. Albarran, 10114 Ironside Drive, San Antonio, TX 78230

Second Junior Vice Commander
George H. Steese, 4186 W. Terrace Avenue, Fresno, CA 93277

Third Junior Vice Commander
Edward R. Heath, Sr., P.O. Box 115, Mechanic Falls, ME 04256

Fourth Junior Vice Commander
Alan W. Bowers, RFD #2, Bolton Road, Athol, MA 01331

National Judge Advocate
Edward G. Galian, 200 Atlantic Avenue, #1, Lynbrook, NY 11563

National Chaplain
Rev. Alfsonso Todd, Jr., 505 South 26th Street, Saginaw, MI 48601

Past National Commander
Harry R. McDonald, Jr., 6161 North Hwy. 393, Crestview, FL 32539

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

First district: John F. Gilpin, 485 Plain Street, Rockland, MA 02370
Second district: William Novak, Jr., 1231 Route 211 West, Middletown, NY 10940
Third district: Edward S. Lastowski, 945 Mammoth Road, Manchester, NH 03104
Fourth district: Albert E. Church, 75 Crown Street, Bristo, CT 06010
Fifth district: James E. Turner, Jr., 3520 North 24th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19140
Sixth district: Thomas C. Johns, 4916 Ridgeview Lane, Bowie, MD 20715
Seventh district: Jimmy Meeks, 802 Cedar Knoll Drive South, Lakeland, FL 33809
Eighth district: Lloyd E. Helms, 5419 Foxglove Drive, Bossier City, LA 71112-4913
Ninth District: Wallace E Tyson, P.O. Box 28146, Raleigh, NC 27611
Tenth district: Ben Benzing, 3790 155th Avenue, Hersey, MI 49639
Eleventh district: David A. Goliver, P.O. Box 3084, Elida, OH 45807
Twelfth district: Dorothy R. Schilling, 6206 Hwy. V, Caldeonia, WI 53108
Thirteenth district: James T. Ashby, 3207 Mildred Drive, Louisville, KY 40216
Fourteenth district: Dale D. Hafer, 161 Old Corvallis Road, Hamilton, MT 59840
Fifteenth district: Franklin C. Bergquist, 4255 S. Laura Lane, Wichita, KS 67216
Sixteenth district: Glen M. Halsey, 3044 Wolfe Court, Antelope, CA 95843
Seventeenth district: Banjamin Palomino, 457 Jones Avenue, Las Animas, CO 81054
Eighteenth district: Floyd W. "Pete" Buell, 780 Fountain Hills, Henderson, NV 89015
Nineteenth district: Harold E. Wiley, P.O. Box 447, Soap Lake, WA 98851
Twentieth district: Leonard F. Humes, 9419 Stones River Drive, San Antonio, TX 78245-2052
Twenty-first district: Robert D. Cohoon, 6104 Allison Drive, Oklahoma City, OK 73112

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. Clinnin, 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
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
1977-78: Oliver E. Meadows, Godley, Texas

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
1983-84: Dennis A. Joyner, Apollo, Pennsyvlania
1984-85: Chad Colley, Barling, Arkansas
1985-86: Albert H. Linden, Jr., Camp Springs, Maryland
1986-87: Kenneth G. Musselmann, Huntington Beach, California
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
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
1996-97: Gregory C. Reed, Indianapolis, Indiana
1997-98: Harry R. McDonald, Jr., Crestview, Florida
1998-99: Andrew A. Kistler, Franklin, Pennsylvania

PROCEEDINGS OF THE 78TH NATIONAL CONVENTION OF DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS HELD AT ORLANDO, FLORIDA

August 21-25, 1999

JOINT OPENING SESSION

August 21, 1999

The Joint Opening Session of the Disabled American Veterans and Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary convened in the Coronado Ballroom of the Coronado Springs Resort, Orlando, Florida, Saturday afternoon, August 21, 1999, and was called to order at 1:00 o'clock p.m. by Commander Andrew A. Kistler.

COMMANDER ANDREW A. KISTLER: Ladies and gentlemen, I hope you enjoyed our military service medley. (Applause)

I now call to order the 78th National Convention of the Disabled American Veterans.

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 National Convention, composed of the national officers and representatives of state departments and chapters.

In accordance with these directives, I, Arthur H. Wilson, national adjutant, declare the 78th National Convention of the Disabled American Veterans to be convened at Orlando, Florida at 1:00 p.m., Saturday, August 21st, 1999.

Consideration and disposition of business brought before this convention shall be conducted in accordance with the National Constitution and Bylaws now in force.

COMMANDER KISTLER: Audience, please rise. Present the Colors.

(Presentation of Colors)

COMMANDER KISTLER: Ladies and gentlemen, our National Anthem.

(Singing of National Anthem)

COMMANDER KISTLER: Please join me in the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag.

(Pledge of Allegiance)

COMMANDER KISTLER: Chaplain Todd, will you please give the invocation.

CHAPLAIN ALFONSO TODD, JR.: Again, Lord, You have called us from East, from the West, North and South, and all parts of the globe to be a part of this worthy experience of fellowship, of sharing ideals and directions into which we as an organization and organizations should attend to the business of disabled American veterans.

We pray now that You would touch our hearts, minds and souls and give us the insight and wisdom to be all that we can be in not only representing Your Kingdom on earth but representing men and women from the different parts of this great nation.

And Lord we thank You now for giving each one of us this grand opportunity to stand before You as a people of a great nation who have gone forth to say to the world, "Yes, we stand for peace, we stand for justice, we stand for equality." And many men and women of this great nation have suffered physically, spiritually and mentally, but we continue to say to the world, "We are a force to be reckoned with when it comes to lifting humanity."

We thank You now, Lord for this grand opportunity of representing disabled American veterans throughout this great land. In His Holy Spirit we pray. Amen.

COMMANDER KISTLER: You may be seated.

Ladies and gentlemen, please join me in thanking the members of the Department of Arizona Color Guard for posting of the Colors as well as Walt Disney's Caledonia Bagpipe Band. The Bagpipe Band performs daily at Epcot Canada and the United Kingdom Pavilions. (Applause)

Ladies and gentlemen, please join me in welcoming once again, from Epcot Center, Disney's prestigious vocal group, the Voices of

Liberty.

(Presentation)

COMMANDER KISTLER: We appreciate that wonderful performance. (Applause)

Ladies and gentlemen, look around and you will see a successful convention under way. Let me assure you that a successful National Convention requires countless men and women working together to ensure that our annual gathering is the most fun-filled, exciting and rewarding event of the year for all of us.

To successfully plan and accomplish a great National Convention requires wise leadership, commitment, unlimited drive and enthusiasm. Leading such a dynamic group of people is a tremendously rewarding challenge. Meeting the challenge this year is the National Convention chairman whose leadership style leave nothing to chance. That kind of man is Frank Tracy. (Applause)

Frank was a tail-gunner on a B-17 during World II. His plane was shot down over Leipzig, Germany on May the 12th, 1944. Frank was captured and held a prisoner of war until liberated in May of 1945. After the war, Frank attended Northwestern University in Boston, earning an engineering degree in 1951. He joined the Boston Edison Company where he worked for 36 years.

Frank and his wife, Idella, will celebrate their 54th wedding anniversary in October. They have five sons and ten grandsons.

Comrades and guests, please join me in welcoming the man behind the convention, Frank Tracy. (Applause)

MR. FRANK TRACY: Hi, gals and guys! Welcome! Welcome to the sunny state of Florida, and sometimes it rains, but not often. Thank you very much, Commander Kistler. Time does not allow me to thank all the people that have helped me this year to make this such a successful convention, but let me say thank you to the delegates from the Department of Florida who served on the committee. I really appreciate the hard work that they did. (Applause)

Bottom line: I want to thank the national commander, Mr. Kistler, the national officers of the National for posting the POW/MIA flag next to the DAV National Headquarters flag over here on your right. Thank you, thank you, thank you. (Applause)

National Commander Kistler, National Auxiliary Commander Dorsey, national officers and delegates and guests to this convention: It is my distinct pleasure to honor and welcome you to the great state of Florida and the 78th Annual National Convention. It appears this convention may be our largest in history. On behalf of all the Florida Disabled American Veterans and the Florida Ladies Auxiliary, we invite you to enjoy the convention and its many meetings, seminars and business sessions.

God! What a happy group out there. Really, really. It's unbelievable.

We also hope you use your free time to enjoy the many attractions here in Central Florida, including Disney World, Epcot and Universal Studios. There are numerous other attractions and many restaurants within a ten-mile radius. Take advantage of what the sunshine state has offered you. For us Floridians, Southern hospitality is just a fancy word for having a good time with good friends.

The Florida Citrus Commission, along with the Department of Florida, want you to enjoy the Florida orange juice that you were served, and it's right out in front of where you register. I want to thank my wife, Idella and Mary Sullivan. They are the gracious ladies who have been serving you since 6:30 this morning. (Applause) And they'll be there at 6:30 tomorrow morning, too.

Florida veterans population continues to rise each year. New vans continue to arrive in Florida each year to help keep up with the increasing veterans population. Volunteer drivers continue to transport veterans to and from VA facilities at a record pace. Veterans and their families from all over America have come to realize the many advantages of becoming a Florida resident.

So this week, instead of just visiting with us, I invite you to take advantage of and live our Southern hospitality by taking things slow and easy and, most of all, enjoy yourself, keep plenty of water on hand. Let's work for our common goal of having a

successful convention in the land of sunshine. May God bless you and God bless America. Thank you for the honor. (Applause) Thank you, Commander.

COMMANDER KISTLER: With his election to the most powerful political office in Central Florida, Mel Martinez is a living testament to the possibilities and opportunities in our country. Born in Cuba, Mr. Martinez left home and country at the age of 15, one of thousands of Cuban children brought to the United States through Operation Peter Pan organized by the Catholic Church at the height of the Cold War. Alone without his parents or command of the English language, he lived with two different foster families until he was reunited with his family four years later.

Mr. Martinez is a graduate of Florida State College -- go, Noles! -- where he received his undergraduate and juris doctorate degree. At FSU, he met his wife, Kitty, whom he married in 1970. They have three children.

Ladies and gentlemen, please join me in giving a very warm welcome of the DAV to Orange County chairman, Mr. Mel Martinez. (Applause)

MR. MEL MARTINEZ: Thank you very much. I appreciate that warm introduction and those kind remarks. I have to tell you that I am here to welcome you. As chairman of Orange County Government, it is my privilege in representing the people of Orange County, Florida to welcome you to our community. We're very proud to have your convention in our community.

You know, as an immigrant to this country and one who fled Communist tyranny, I am especially proud, not only to welcome you but to thank you for the sacrifices that you've made to ensure the blessings of liberty, to ensure that a person like myself could enjoy democracy, freedom and the opportunity that this country offers and have benefited by in allowing me to not only do the things that I've been able to do in my life, but also to reach a political office.

On the day that I took the oath of office as Orange County's chairman, I had a group of veterans there that I welcomed to that ceremony, because I especially wanted to thank them, as I would thank you today, for the fact that without their sacrifice, without your sacrifice, the electoral process, the opportunity to have an orderly transition of government, would not be possible in our country.

So I'm here to simply offer you a warm welcome to our community, to let you know that some of us adoptive Americans particularly appreciate the sacrifices that you made. I've always been amazed by the sense of sacrifice and loyalty that so many of you expressed in the way in which you fought for our country and for our ideals.

And I commend the DAV for the work that it does. For so many years, you have been the voice of those who otherwise would not be heard. And I do trust and hope that our country will keep faith with you as years go by, and that your sacrifices and your loyalty be rewarded with an equal amount of loyalty by our government and by our people for the sacrifices that you made.

But now let me tell you just a moment about our community and where you are today. Orange County is the home of Lake Buena Vista, which is this magic sort of spot of earth that we have in our community. Hasn't always been so. If you think it's a little warm today, let me just remind you that years ago Orange County was not called Orange County. In fact, it was called Mosquito County. And I'm ever so grateful for public relations reasons that we changed that name to something a little more acceptable like Orange County.

But our roots are agricultural, and it was citrus and cattle that defined this area in the early years. And later, of course, the miracle of Disney occurred, and we were transformed into a community of tourism and conventions. We're proud to welcome over 40 million visitors a year to our community, and we have over 100,000 hotel rooms to greet you and welcome you in.

But we also have a proud military history in our community. In the early days and during World War II, we had Orlando Air Base in our community. Later we also had McCoy Air Force Base, and I

remember as a youngster and as a new immigrant to this country absolutely fascinated watching the B-52s in and out of McCoy, which is now Orlando International Airport where you may have landed if you came by air to visit us.

And then, of course, in the middle-'50s, Lockheed-Martin, as it's called today, but Martin-Marietta Aerospace had a large facility here. Today it's Lockheed-Martin, and we're still proud to have them here. The Patriot missiles, some of those guidance systems were created and made here in our community. And until recently, we also had the Naval Training Center which trained so many of our fine Navy men and women.

Today we're still proud to host and be the home of the Joint Command for Simulation Technology Training, which is a high technology teaching and allowing our forces to be trained at less cost and less risk, etcetera.

But that just gives you a smattering of who we are and how we got to this point. I'm just once again so proud that you chose our community for your convention. I hope your organizers don't lose sight of the fact that maybe this is your largest ever, so I hope you'll come back. We hope to host you again.

But I as the chairman of this county government just wanted to take a moment to simply say thank you for your service, thank you for your devotion to our country, and thank you for coming to our community. (Applause)

COMMANDER KISTLER: Thank you for coming, Mr. Martinez. I know you're on a tight schedule, so we'll let you go at this time. (Applause)

Miss Candy Griffin of Frostproof, Florida, represents Florida's citrus industry as its goodwill ambassador. Miss Griffin is a fourth-generation Floridian native and has extensive knowledge of the citrus industry from participating in the family's successful citrus business. She is a 1998 graduate of the University of Florida. Go Gators!

Ladies and gentlemen, please give a warm DAV welcome to Miss Candy Griffin. (Applause)

MISS CANDY GRIFFIN: Thank you very much. First, I would just like to thank you for this opportunity to speak with you today. It is truly an honor to be among such an elite group of people.

I'm here today on behalf of the Florida citrus industry. My role as Miss Florida Citrus is to be a goodwill ambassador, a spokesperson for the Florida citrus industry. I travel throughout the world and I'm usually gone about 250 days out of the year. This job offers enormous opportunity, and some are not quite as delightful as this one has proven to be.

The citrus industry is an $8 billion industry and is the second largest industry in the State of Florida. The citrus we produce here is known throughout the world for its juiciness, sweetness and nutritional value. So I urge you that while you're here, take advantage of where you are and make certain you have some of the best citrus in the world. Drink a glass of grapefruit juice, have an orange, take an orange with you throughout your day. Just make sure that you do not leave this state without having a taste of what we're really known for.

Before I leave, I would like to just say welcome to Florida. Thank you. (Applause)

COMMANDER KISTLER: Ladies and gentlemen, serving as your national commander this past year has simply been extraordinary, and in just a few minutes I will share with you some of my best memories. But right now, I want to watch along with you a short film entitled, "DAV in the News." This film was produced by our National Communications Department and takes us along nostalgic, informative and sometimes whimsical remembrances of the life and times of the DAV during the past 12 months as presented through the pages of our own DAV Magazine.

(Film presentation, followed by introduction of national officers, whereupon, Senior Vice-Commander Michael E. Dobmeier assumed the chair.)

SENIOR VICE-COMMANDER MICHAEL E. DOBMEIER: Each year it is the pleasure of the national senior vice-commander to introduce the national commander for the purpose of presenting his report to the

convention delegates. This year, the honor falls on me to introduce a man who has continued the highest traditions of this great organization, a man whose commitment to the DAV stands as an inspiring example of leadership and dedication to us all.

An avid baseball player most of his childhood, Andy Kistler began a promising professional career with the Albany Cardinals following high school. But his career was cut short by injuries sustained during the Korean War. While serving with the U.S. Army during the frigid Korean winter of 1952, Sergeant Kistler lost both legs and part of his right hand when he tripped a land mine.

Undaunted by his injuries, Commander Kistler returned to his native Franklin, Pennsylvania to lead a life of outstanding service to his fellow disabled veterans and young people.

Just one year ago, the membership unanimously elected Andy to lead this organization as national commander, a post he has held with great honor and distinction. He is a man of purpose, a man of commitment, and someone who is unquestionably dedicated to service in our mission of building better lives for America's disabled veterans.

It is my pleasure and a genuine honor to present to you Andrew A. Kistler, national commander of the Disabled American Veterans. (Standing ovation)

COMMANDER KISTLER: Thank you. Thank you, Mike, for that warm introduction. You're very kind, but the gratitude you offered me must be shared by many other people who are helping to build a new spirit in the DAV. And Mike, one of them is you. (Applause)

Others include fellow line officers; the National Executive and Finance Committees; our national staff in Cincinnati and Washington, led by Art Wilson, Rick Patterson and Dave Gorman; our chapter, department and National Service Officers; chapter and department leaders throughout this great nation, including our HSCs; and all of our wonderful DAV and Auxiliary members, with a special note of praise for our volunteers.

When they asked Yogi Berra what makes a great manager, his answer was simple, "A great team." Much credit, therefore, must go to all of you. You're the ones, the great team who help the DAV to be the great organization it is.

Clearly, as a result of your collective efforts, the DAV continues to provide the very best possible service to our members and, indeed, to all our nation's 2.3 million service-connected disabled veterans, their dependents and survivors.

Let me offer a special word of thanks to Auxiliary Commander Evelyn Dorsey and National Adjutant Maria Tedrow. You're great people, and you have a great organization. You know how I feel about the Auxiliary. You will always have my support. (Applause)

My heart goes out to the Department of Pennsylvania and Tri-County Chapter 67; also to Dan Barry, Vince Darcangelo, Jim Wyatt and John Hoden. Each of you knows what you've done to make the past year possible for me, and I love you for it.

Whatever I have been able to accomplish as your national commander has been due in great part to the team spirit within the DAV. I've never considered myself to be a lone ranger.

Finally, I wish to express my deep gratitude to National Adjutant Art Wilson for his leadership, wise counsel and unwavering support and friendship. Art, I have the highest regard and admiration for your integrity and your professionalism. (Applause)

Directed, Art, by your guiding vision, the DAV operates as a model of excellence, a standard that other veterans service organizations strive to equal.

Fellow delegates to the 78th DAV National Convention, friends, family, honored guests: It has been a great privilege for me to serve as your national commander. I will treasure always the memories of places I've been and people I've met who make me extremely proud to be a part of this wonderful organization of ours.

Everywhere my travels have taken me, it has been a constant source of pride and inspiration to witness the caring and compassion of our members to their fellow disabled veterans and their families.

I have seen the dedicated men and women of the DAV pull out

all of the stops to ensure that disabled veterans are cared for, receive the benefits and medical treatment they were promised and are restored the pride and honor that rightfully belongs to every disabled American veteran.

Over the past year, I've come to understand how vitally important our volunteer activities are and have become. Whether donating their time as hospital volunteers, transportation network drivers, or pitching in at stand-downs, DAV members compassionately donate millions of hours in support of disabled and needy veterans. (Applause)

I have been most impressed, too, with the gratitude and thanks expressed in the eyes of those they served, the hospitalized vet, the sick and elderly veteran and the homeless veteran.

If I ever was unaware of the extent of the goodness that the DAV exemplifies, I learned this past year what kind of organization and the quality of people we have who belong to it. For nearly 80 years now, the DAV has built an unmatched reputation of service as a champion of the vital interests of our nation's former servicemen and women.

Reputations can be fickle, however. It is wise to remember that achievements are somewhat like yesterday's ball game. It's great to have won, but there's another game tomorrow. And if we're going to keep our hard-won reputation, we will need to concentrate on where we're going, not where we've been.

That's one of the reasons I'm so pleased to report that the DAV National Service Program is growing stronger every day and creating a better quality of life for our disabled American veterans. There are 250 National Service Officers, men and women, out there on the front lines working relentlessly for you, for your fellow disabled veterans, and families like yours. (Applause)

Last year, these dedicated professionals secured benefits for more than 220,000 veterans, their dependents and survivors, accounting for nearly $2 billion in new monthly and retroactive payments.

We should take a moment to say a prayer of thanks and support for these men and women who give so much of themselves to us every day. (Applause)

Some people are enshrined in history for what they did, others for what they said. Baseball philosopher Yogi Berra has both routes covered. He was elected to the Hall of Fame for his exploits on the diamond. He went on to become a well-respected coach and manager. But he has achieved another kind of fame for his utterances, both audacious and profound.

For example, "Anyone who goes to see a psychiatrist should have his head examined." (Laughter) Pretty hard to argue with that, isn't it?

He also noted that "You can observe a lot just by watching." (Laughter) He certainly wasn't wrong there either.

Still another quote clearly applies to the current uncertainties regarding the battle with Congress to protect veterans' benefits. I am referring to what is probably Mr. Berra's most famous statement. Do we all know it? "It ain't over till it's over." (Applause)

The battle to protect veterans' benefits is not over and probably never will be. As we face challenge after challenge to the benefits disabled American veterans have earned, colleagues like you are very, very important.

For those of you who took the time to register and vote during last year's election, I want to say thank you. There's very little doubt that your efforts had an impact. The concerns that were raised about the way Congress and the Administration have handled veterans issues certainly got some attention during election campaigns across the country.

Incumbent members of Congress and challengers alike reported that they heard from disabled veterans and their families.

But turning out to vote was only the beginning. The fact that Congress is now considering a VA appropriation bill that would add $1.7 billion to the President's original budget request is yet another example of the impact each of you has made in Washington.

Although a lot of people are now trying to take credit for

boosting veterans' funding, including the President who somehow found an additional one billion in the budget, you deserve the credit for forcing the issue of increased funding. (Applause)

Even with the proposed increase, this year's VA appropriation plan does little more than continue a decade-long trend of funding shortages. Comparing it with past budgets, it is clear that veterans' benefits and proper health care are in serious trouble.

That is why it's absolutely essential that we continue to insist that the Administration provide the necessary leadership and that Congress should provide adequate funding so the VA can do the job veterans were promised. (Applause)

Our organization represents 2.3 million disabled veterans, and it is the membership of the DAV that is charged with being the voice, the representative and the advocate for all the men and women who have sacrificed so much of themselves to make our nation safe and great. (Applause)

You, the individual disabled member, are an important element in everything we do. Each member strengthens our ability to generate grassroots support for legislative initiatives that are important to disabled veterans. Your letters, telegrams, e-mails, phone calls and personal contacts with Congress in support of the DAV issues are multiplied by every other member.

If each of us gave only ten extra minutes to the DAV each month, the net return is two million additional hours spent in support of our fellow veterans each year. This is reflective of the power that each of us possess and the strength of our organization. We, you and I together, have the collective strength and our collective will to get the job done. Together, we are one. (Applause)

We, you and I as individuals, must do our part to write those letters, to make those phone calls, to make our voices heard. Because the best way to educate 535 members of Congress is the same way they all count votes: one at a time. (Applause)

It is more important now than ever before that we and our families, as private citizens and constituents, communicate with our senators and representatives so they can know and understand our concerns. We must ensure that our elected officials understand that veterans' benefits are a continuing cost of war and a debt never to be forgotten. (Applause)

To succeed, we need to speak with a powerful unified voice that sends the clear, unmistakable message that Congress has a sacred obligation to the men and women whose service and sacrifices have guaranteed the freedoms that all Americans enjoy today. (Applause)

We must tell our members of Congress that we expect more than lip service or token increases in VA appropriations. We must tell them to put enough money into the VA health care system to keep America's promises to veterans. We must tell them that the VA can continue providing life-giving care to veterans only if it has the resources to do the job.

This country cannot afford to continue draining the lifeblood out of the hospitals and scores of clinics, nursing homes and other facilities that care for America's proud veterans. (Applause)

Someone once said that a speech is like a love affair. Any fool can start it, but it requires skill to end it. (Laughter)

I will be forever grateful to have closely experienced some of the wonderful work of the DAV. I'll never forget the pride and exhilaration expressed by hundreds of disabled veterans while achieving so many accomplishments at the National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic in Crested Butte, Colorado.

Who can ever forget the moment U.S. Marine Corps Colonel Phil Torres presented Bobby Barerra with his Marine Corps dress blue uniform, as the tears rolled down the face of the man who was honored with the second annual LIFE's Presidential Unsung Hero Award? Bobby couldn't wipe the tears away because he lost both arms in Vietnam. The audience, including myself, wept with him.

Nor will I forget facing a joint session of the House and Senate Veterans Affairs Committees to demand that our nation's political leaders make veterans a national priority.

And I will always remember that very special moment when the

DAV membership elected me its national commander. When I leave my post as your national commander, I will do so with joy and with pride, two words that best describe how I feel inside: Joy in the service to my fellow veterans and pride in our organization, our staff, our members and the great work that we do.

Blessed are the peacemakers, past and present. It has been a great privilege and honor for me to serve as your national commander. Thank you for this year, and thanks to all of those who helped make this year so remarkable. God bless you and God bless the DAV. (Standing ovation)

SENIOR VICE-COMMANDER DOBMEIER: Commander Kistler, Andy, your leadership and devotion to the DAV will long be remembered. Thank you. (Applause)

At this time, the Chair will entertain a motion to accept the national commander's report. Could you use the microphone, please.

MR. VINCENT P. DARCANGELO: Commander, Vincent Darcangelo, chief of staff to the national commander, makes a motion that the body accept the commander, Andrew A. Kistler's annual report.

MR. FRANK L. WEBB: Frank Webb, Delegate Number 9, Houston, Texas, in memory of P.D. Jackson, I so second that motion.

SENIOR VICE-COMMANDER DOBMEIER: Thank you. You've heard the motion and the second. All those in favor, say Aye; opposed. Motion carried. Thank you. (Applause)

Now we're going to ask National Adjutant Art Wilson to come forward for a special presentation.

ADJUTANT WILSON: Thank you, Mike. Andy, there are no words of thanks that I can express for your conscientious leadership as national commander of this great organization. Devoted members like you are a rarity. The DAV feels especially privileged and grateful for your service.

On behalf of the DAV and all the disabled veterans across America that we represent, it is my pleasure to present you with a small token of our appreciation for the effective role that you played as national commander of our great organization. With gratitude and pleasure, I want to present you with a print of the May-June cover of the DAV Magazine, one that you admired so greatly, which also served as this year's Memorial Day poster, signed by the artist, David Taylor. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Commander Kistler resumed the chair.)

COMMANDER KISTLER: If I could just digress for a moment, it was a very rainy night in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania with Art and I in the car with his wife, Mary, and he handed me a picture which is this picture, and said, "Do you think this would go great on the magazine?" And I said it would. And I think it's one of the finest pictures that I've seen, and I really appreciate that. (Applause)

At this time, I wish to introduce your National Executive Committee. Please hold your applause until I have introduced all the members. 1st District, John F. Gilpin of Massachusetts; 2nd District, William Novak, Jr. of New York; 3rd District, Edward S. Lastowski of New Hampshire; 4th District, Albert E. Church of Connecticut; 5th District, James E. Turner, Jr. of Pennsylvania; 6th District, Thomas C. Johns of Maryland; 7th District, Jimmy Meeks of Florida; 8th District, Lloyd E. Helms of Louisiana; 9th District, Wallace E. Tyson of North Carolina; 10th District, Ben Benzing of Michigan; 11th District, David A. Goliver of Ohio; 12th District, Dorothy R. Schilling of Wisconsin; 13th District, James T. Ashby of Kentucky; 14th District, Dale D. Hafer of Montana; 15th District, Franklin C. Bergquist of Kansas; 16th District, Glen M. Halsey of California; 17th District, Benjamin Palomino of Colorado; 18th District, Floyd "Pete" Buell of Nevada; 19th District, Harold E. Wiley of Washington; 20th District, Leonard F. Humes of Texas; and 21st District, Robert D. Cohoon of Oklahoma. (Applause)

And also of great assistance to me this year was my national chief of staff, Vincent Darcangelo; also officer of the day, Orval Williams; and sergeants-at-arms, Nicholas Viglione and Kirby Lindsey, all of Pennsylvania. (Applause)

The Honorable Togo West, Jr. was sworn in as Secretary of Veterans Affairs on May the 5th, 1998. Secretary West directs the Federal Government's second largest department responsible for a

nationwide system of health care services, benefit programs and national cemeteries for America's veterans and dependents.

Secretary West is an Army veteran and was commissioned as a second lieutenant in the Field Artillery Corps in 1965, and later served in the Judge Advocate General's Corps after completing law school. For his military service, he was awarded the Legion of Merit and the Meritorious Service Medal.

He moved over to the VA from the Department of Army, where he served as Secretary beginning in 1993. He also held a number of high-level government positions, including Assistant Secretary of the Army for Manpower and Reserve Affairs, Associate Deputy Attorney-General with the Department of Justice, General Counsel for the Navy and General Counsel for the Department of Defense.

Please welcome, if you will, the Honorable Togo D. West, Jr., Secretary of Veterans Affairs. Mr. Secretary (Standing ovation)

SECRETARY TOGO D. WEST, JR.: Thank you. Thank you for your welcome. Thank you for inviting me to join you here at this convention.

I thank your national commander, not only for the leadership to which your response has attested over this past year, but once again for an eloquent statement not only about volunteerism and about the efforts of this great organization, but about the issues of importance to veterans, yes, the issues with respect to our budget, with respect to leadership, with respect to the obligation of this nation.

I say to you in his presence, I heard in his statement the voice of a lion, a statement of obligations, of principles and priorities with which I as your Secretary of Veterans Affairs cannot disagree. I also heard in your response the sound of lions. So you'll forgive me if I feel a little bit like a kind of undeserving Christian as I speak to you.

You gather at this your last, your final convention of this century and of this millennium, at a time when, by all reports, by all accounts, this nation which you and all our fellow veterans have labored to secure, a time when this nation is experiencing a period of almost unparalleled success.

You know the reports from the news media that around the world America is viewed as the sole remaining super-power. Indeed, there are reports that in France we are referred to as a hyper-power, one of even greater influence and strength than a super-power.

Across this globe, wherever people are free or seek to be free, it is American values, American principles that outline and describe the aspirations of people the world over.

America's military who serve today in your image, following in your example of patriotism and dedication, are now, as they have been, the most powerful Army, the most powerful Navy, the most powerful Marine Corps, Air Force and Coast Guard the world over.

And our executive branch and our Congress have recently agreed that after a period of shrinkage in size like none since just before the Korean War, we as a nation will again pour resources into training, recruiting, equipping those men and women who carry the burden of this nation's security today.

Moreover, here at home even, there are reports that this nation is going through a period of economic growth and stability that has lasted for a long time and will last into the future, even as we consider recent reports, recent facts of the effects of the drought here in America and of the recent activity in the Asian economic situation.

This period of national strength is, yes, a gift from God. Even as our singers sang when they sang "America the Beautiful," "America, America, God shed His grace on thee," this period of security is also a gift from our nation's veterans, every single one of the 41 million who have served this nation in her almost two and a quarter centuries of life.

Veterans have served, especially America's disabled veterans, some three times over. First, because of their and your willingness to put on this nation's uniform and to demonstrate your patriotism, our patriotism to all who would look. Secondly, by going into harm's way and absorbing with your bodies the wounds and injuries intended to be inflicted by America's opponents and

enemies upon America, by accepting with your spirits and souls and minds the injuries intended to be afflicted by America's opponents upon the spirit of America.

And you've served a third time returning to your homes and communities where you strengthened your families after, in so many cases, necessary periods of intense medical care, of surgery and rehabilitation, strengthened your communities, and continue to this day to strength this nation by your devotion and through your participation in the organization in the way so magnificently described by your national commander.

It was the President who just last year at Veterans' Day may have put it as well as any. He said, "For those of us who do work in Washington and are privileged to look across the Potomac at those orderly rows graced with white crosses, white stars of David, white crescents, we in this nation are reminded that the successes of this nation in peace are based on the sacrifices of America's veterans in war."

Such sacrifices, such contributions to the life of this nation create, as has been reflected by prior speakers, a debt of unparalleled proportions, a debt of gratitude owed by this nation, all of us, to you, to our fellow veterans.

Debts, as you know, can be paid, especially a debt of gratitude, in several ways. First, we can simply remember as a nation, as we do on Veterans' Day and on Memorial Day, on national holidays like Independence Day, and, I believe, as many Americans do every single day of our national life. Secondly, we can say thank you as Americans, as many Americans do, as I do today. But thirdly, most importantly, Americans pay debts by action, by hard facts that can be ascertained. This debt needs to be paid by the action of your executive branch and your Congress.

That is why, even though, as has been pointed out, lots of people will take lots of credit, I am nonetheless pleased to have stood with the Vice-President two weeks ago as he announced that the Administration would send to Congress a request to increase the President's budget for 2000 by an additional billion plus dollars.

Why? Well, for the same reason that Justice Holmes had in mind when he said, "The best we can do for our country is to see as far as we can, to understand the forces at work behind the details, to hammer out as solid and first-rate a piece of work as possible, and to leave it unadvertised."

Or, put differently, that if I, if supporters of the veterans community on the Hill in Congress, if all of us who have some measure of authority or influence in this national life, do not care who gets the credit, then we ought to be able to get this budget and its increases through and enacted.

I'm proud for a second reason, that within hours after the Vice-President's announcement, yes, a committee of the Congress did respond and say that it would add an additional $700 million to that. And I'm proud of the fact that that billion seven is exactly the amount of the budgetary increase which VA sought in its first submission of the budget within the Administration and appealed.

But I'm prouder even of two more factors. They are these: The budget that we obtained from the Congress this year -- and let me say by a footnote, I think you are aware, certainly your leaders and your officers in Washington are aware, that we will know the exact amount rather late in the season, end of September, early October, because the VA, HUD, independent agencies' appropriation bill is almost the last one that Congress enacts traditionally. So as your commander said, your national commander said, we must all be watchful.

But even so, the budget that we enact this year for 2000, with an increase that now is clear will be no less than a billion and may well be between a billion seven or even two billion -- the Senate has still to be heard from -- will form the basis on which the budget for 2001 is calculated as well.

And so if things proceed as they appear in this budget cycle on the Hill, with an increase of as much as 1.7 billion, we will have first broken the cycle of flat appropriations at VA over the last few years. Second, establish a base on which appropriate increases in the VA health care budget can be reflected, not just

for one year, 2000, but for succeeding years as well.

Let me say to you that all of the results of this year's budget discussions, that result may be the most important.

What will happen with these increases? You already know that of the $1 billion plus proposed by the President, some 800 million is to go directly into health care operations to address the increasing complaints heard over this past year, that veterans are having to wait too long for their appointments for health care, to put resources directly into the system to deal with that.

Also, to address issues of homeless veterans, of spinal cord injury units, a specific $100 million is included to address long-term care, perhaps one of the nation's most serious health care problems, and especially so for our veterans. An additional $100 million to review and improve VA facilities.

But there is more. When I announced, attempted to defend our original budget in February, I pointed out that it was our plan to continue to increase the health care facilities devoted to our veterans. In addition to our existing 172 major medical centers, in addition to the now 600 out-patient clinics, a significant increase over the 191 in 1992, that we would open 89 new out-patient clinics across the nation in the fiscal year beginning in October. This money is to ensure that that occurs. More health care for more veterans.

Moreover, included in this budget will be 444 additional positions for processing claims, 164 of them completely new and additive, and the additional numbers taken from elsewhere in VA where those spaces have been freed up.

And perhaps as important as any initiative in this budget, which will be increased by congressional action I am convinced by the end of September, we are opening in the 12 months beginning just this past July, just last month, four new national cemeteries for our veterans, the largest number at any time since the national cemetery system was established. The first one was dedicated just last month in Saratoga, New York. The other three are in Illinois, the Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery; in Ohio and in the State of Texas.

The final point I would say about the significance of increases in this budget, increases that you have brought about, is that budgets are more than just the way in which we will use our resources. They are the statement by a nation of the value we place on the service of those of our colleagues who have worn this nation's uniform, have sacrificed and suffered for her.

And so the increases that are coming ought to be signals by America that whatever our circumstances economically or socially in this country, we will continue as our priority to support those in this nation who in times of crisis have supported her.

Yes, it is true that a number of people will seek credit for the budget increases, but it is also true, as your commander suggested, that these are increase decisions that weren't made in the executive branch or in the Congress. These are decisions that were made at Normandy, at Midway, at Iwo Jima by veterans who earned what this nation is giving, is providing.

These are decisions that were made at the Choson Reservoir, at Nchang, decisions made in the Tet Offensive and at Caisson, and peace-keeping operations in Somalia and in Lebanon, and Desert Storm and everywhere that men and women in the uniform of this nation have faced and faced down America's foes.

These are decisions that are made not because people who represent you in Congress or who represent and work for you in the executive branch are good people, although we think they are and that we are. Not because the American nation or the American people are generous, although we know they are, and we know that this nation is. But because these benefits have belonged to veterans from the day they set forth to serve this nation.

As I look at you, I think about the things that our veterans, our colleagues, America's disabled veterans, have endured for this nation. I'm reminded of the observance contained in the works of Alfred Lord Tennyson, in which one veteran leader, an old soldier, scarred, collects around him those who have fought with him, some missing parts of their bodies, others wounded in soul as well as in

body.

They reflect upon all that they have been through, and what yet will be their impact on the world and the nation around them. And their leader says in part these words: "Come my friends, it is not too late to seek a new world, for we are not of that strength which in old days moved heaven and earth. That which we are, we are: One equal tenor of heroic hearts made weak by time and circumstances, but strong in will to strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield."

America's veterans have never yielded in their belief in this nation, in their love of the American people, or their dedication to her strength and security, and this nation and her government must not and cannot yield in our support of those veterans.

God bless you for your sacrifice for this nation. God bless all who love you and whom you have loved. God bless the men and women who serve today in your example, in the uniforms of the services whose songs we heard earlier, Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines and Coast Guard.

And here as you meet for the last time in this millennium, may God bless as well the nation that has given to you and to me and to our children and our children's children life, liberty and opportunity, and to which you have given, to which we have given our loyalty, our service and our love. God bless you all. (Standing ovation)

COMMANDER KISTLER: Thank you, Mr. Secretary, for coming. We know you have a plane to catch, and we'll let you go.

Starting in 1966, Tom Brokaw has been appearing in homes of America as a reporter and an anchor for NBC News. A native of South Dakota, he is now the sole anchor and managing editor of NBC Nightly News with Tom Brokaw, and has been since 1983.

Last December, his book, "The Greatest Generation," was published and quickly catapulted to the top of New York Times' best-selling list. In his book, Brokaw tells the story of the generation of Americans who became of age during the Great Depression and World War II, and in his words, "went on to create the America we have today."

First, I would like to read a passage from his best-selling book on World War II, "The Greatest Generation," and I read in quotes:

> At a time in their lives when their days and nights should have been filled with innocent adventure, love and the lessons of the workday world, they were fighting in the most primitive conditions possible across the bloody landscape of France, Belgium, Italy, Austria and the coral islands of the Pacific.
>
> They answered the call to save the world from the two most powerful and ruthless machines ever assembled, instruments of conquest in the hands of fascist maniacs.
>
> They faced great odds and a late start, but they did not protest. They succeeded on every front. They won the war. They saved the world. They came home to joyous and short-lived celebrations and immediately began the task of rebuilding their lives and the world they wanted.
>
> They married in record numbers and gave birth to another distinctive generation, the Baby Boomers.
>
> They gave the world new science, literature, art, industry and economic strength unparalleled in the long curve of history.
>
> This generation was united, not only by a common purpose, but also by common values - duty, honor, courage, service, love of family and country, and, above all, responsibility for one's self.

For his recognition of the World War II generation, the DAV is honoring Mr. Brokaw with a scale model replica of the famous World War II era Willy's jeep. (Applause)

Unfortunately, Mr. Brokaw could not join us this day at this year's convention. He did, however, create a short video that we will play.

(Video presentation)

COMMANDER KISTLER: May I ask all the ladies and gentlemen in

the audience who served during World War II to please stand and be recognized. Ladies and gentlemen, please join me in a round of applause in appreciation of the sacrifices made more than half a century ago. (Applause) Thank you for that show of appreciation.

And for those of you who are World War II veterans, we thank you for your courage, your honor, your sacrifice for your country.

It is my honor once again to share the lectern with our DAV National Auxiliary Commander Evelyn Dorsey. (Applause)

During my term as national commander, I have had the pleasure and privilege of seeing her demonstrate the love, leadership and dedication that has so capably led the Auxiliary through this past year. As my Auxiliary counterpart, Evelyn has impressed me time and again with her untiring dedication, limitless compassion and her competent leadership in the Auxiliary.

Under Evelyn's capable leadership, the Auxiliary has been with the DAV every step of the way in the ongoing battle to protect the services and benefits disabled veterans and their families can count on.

Commander Evelyn and I have shared many travels and events promoting the mission of the DAV and Auxiliary during our terms. I can tell you without reservation that the Auxiliary was magnificently represented by this wonderful woman who has dedicated herself to helping the families of disabled veterans who sacrificed so much for their country.

Evelyn has been involved in Auxiliary activities for more than 23 years and is well aware of the Auxiliary's fine heritage. She is also acutely aware of the issues facing disabled veterans and their families.

Here to deliver her report to the National Convention, my friend and a truly exceptional woman, DAV Auxiliary National Commander Evelyn Dorsey. (Standing ovation)

AUXILIARY COMMANDER EVELYN B. DORSEY: Thank you, Commander Kistler, for your most gracious and warm introduction.

Good afternoon, national officers, past national commanders, distinguished guests, delegates and members of the Disabled American Veterans and Auxiliary. What a wonderful and exciting National Convention. Here we are in the heart of Disney World, where you can wish upon a star and be happy to know someone named Goofy. (Laughter) This is really a wonderland for children of all ages, and I am so honored to be here to share it with you.

Well, this is the grand finale to my wonderful year as your DAV Auxiliary national commander, and it certainly has been a dream come true for me to be so honored. But dreams don't come true without friends who love, support and work to make them come true. I have certainly been blessed with such friends, and at this time it is my pleasure to introduce them to you. They are the dedicated women of the DAV Auxiliary who helped guide our Auxiliary during the past year. Please hold your applause until I have introduced all of them.

Our National Senior Vice-Commander Paula Raymond from Alton, Illinois; our 1st Junior Vice-Commander Carol Grey from Grand Rapids, Michigan; 2nd Junior Vice-Commander Renee Jones, Gastonia, North Carolina; 3rd Junior Vice-Commander Linda Trulio, Maywood, New Jersey; 4th Junior Vice-Commander Janet Bennett, Reno, Nevada; Judge Advocate Shelia Allred, Concord, North Carolina; National Chaplain Gertrude Tidwell, Atoka, Oklahoma; and our Immediate Past National Commander Evelynne Dunn from Las Vegas, Nevada; our National Adjutant and Past National Commander Maria Tedrow; and our National Assistant Adjutant Judy Hezlep. Thank you, ladies. (Applause)

Next, I would like to introduce our National Executive Committeewomen. Again, please hold your applause until I've introduced them all. 1st District, Miriam Daley; 2nd District, Jeanne LePorte; 3rd District, Ann Kelley; 4th District, Florence Kehne; 5th District, Rebecca Anderson; 6th District, Hazel Meyers; 7th District, Grace McLaughlin; 8th District, Carolyn Johnson; 9th District, Betty Bryant; 10th District, Betty Benzing; 11th District, Florence McGovern; 12th District, Elaine Morris; 13th District, Edith Jackson; 14th District, Sandy Dobmeier; 15th District, Bonita Mitchell; 16th District, Dolores Wingett; 17th

District, Jean Jackson; 18th District, Helen Parcelle; 19th District, Norma Parker; 20th District, Joyce Humes; and 21st District, Sara Douglass. Thank you very much, ladies. (Applause)

There is one other group of special ladies here today that I must certainly acknowledge. Without them, our Auxiliary would surely not be the magnificent organization it is today. They are the women who have so wonderfully led us to this moment in history, the past national commanders of the Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary. Ladies, would you please stand wherever you are and be recognized. (Applause) Thank you.

Since our onset and for most of the 20th century, the DAV and Auxiliary have forged a partnership that has indeed been building better lives for America's disabled veterans and their families. At this 78th National Convention, the Disabled American Veterans and the DAV Auxiliary stand at the threshold of a new century, at the beginning of a new millennium, still dedicated to one single purpose: Building better lives for America's disabled veterans and their families.

As national commander of the DAV Auxiliary this year, my theme was, "In the spirit of service," because, in the spirit of service, all things are possible. I am so proud to say that the ladies of the Auxiliary have joined together in the spirit of service to make this year truly memorable through the abundant number of programs we provide to serve veterans and their families.

As we have stood shoulder to shoulder with the DAV throughout our history, we stood with you again this year in every facet of endeavor. From the halls of Congress to the sidewalks in front of VA medical facilities, we have confronted the assault of national budget cuts, the rape of VA medical facilities and the disregard for appropriate legislation on behalf of disabled American veterans and their families.

And know this, be it a year or a millennium, the DAV Auxiliary will continue to proudly stand with the DAV for as long as it takes to gain just and equitable treatment of our disabled loved ones who have sacrificed so much for this nation. (Applause)

It has been my privilege and honor to share this year with National Commander Kistler, to join him as he made his presentation to the Joint Veterans Affairs Committee in Washington, D.C., to share with him the wonder of disabled veterans experiencing miracles on a mountainside at the 13th National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic in Crested Butte, Colorado, and so much more.

Commander Kistler, your dedicated leadership has earned my respect, admiration and lasting friendship. God bless you. (Applause)

This has been a momentous year for me. I am blessed to have visited with and come to know so many wonderful Auxiliary and DAV members. I saw the love and care that went into the Sharing and Caring Riverboat Cruise for Disabled Veterans in Pittsburgh last September. I even had an opportunity to dance with veterans in wheelchairs during the event.

I enjoyed the gracious hospitality of the people of Birmingham, Alabama during Veterans Day, and the Auxiliary, DAV and wonderful people of Grafton, West Virginia on Memorial Day. I have been awestruck at the beauty and diversity of our wonderful country, visiting such states as Massachusetts, Missouri, Arkansas and Utah during special commander visitations.

I will always remember the tours of the VA medical centers and veterans homes, meeting our marvelous National Service Officers along the way. These visits gave me a first-hand opportunity to visit with veterans and witness the abundant love and care our volunteers bring to their work on behalf of hospitalized veterans. There is no doubt that volunteers are needed when you look at the smiles they bring to the faces of disabled veterans in the VA hospitals.

When I look out here today at disabled veterans, I see men and women who risked all for this nation and what it stands for. I see men and women who have suffered in order that we might enjoy the freedom this great nation represents.

Your suffering, your loss, has provided the opportunity and bounty that so many of us enjoy today. That's why you were willing

to go in harm's way and suffer the sacrifices you made. You are the champions of freedom, the defenders of liberty. It was to you to whom the promise was made, "To care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow and his orphan." Yet sadly, that care is lacking and, more frightening, it is far too often being eroded and threatened by the very national leaders who should be defending it. (Applause)

We cannot and we must not let this happen. We are bound in duty and mission to help disabled American veterans and their families who need us. We are nothing if we're not true to that simple truth.

Look closely into your communities, and you will see the survivors of war, the defenders of peace, freedom and liberty who need our help every day. You've seen them. Some of you have been them. Some are becoming them even now, veterans who have lost family and friends and face a lonely future, veterans who are homeless and in need of medical care, and veterans who face worsening health conditions as a result of their service-connected injuries.

Their struggle is our struggle. Making their lives better is our cause, and our cause is right.

We, you and I, are the winds of change in the coming millennium. Together, we can make a change for the better possible throughout the VA health care system. United, we can hold our national leaders accountable. Side by side, we can and will build better lives for America's disabled veterans and their families. (Applause)

These things I know, because whatever challenges we face in the future, the Auxiliary and the DAV will be there to face them in the spirit of service. God bless you all. (Standing ovation)

Commander Kistler, if you will just come forward again. You know we love you in the Auxiliary. You have certainly demonstrated your love and compassion and support for veterans. You've demonstrated that you are concerned about the Auxiliary. And so, on behalf of the Auxiliary, it gives me great pleasure to present this plaque to you, and it reads:

> Presented to Andrew A. Kistler in appreciation for distinguished service given to Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary, 1998-1999.

(Applause)

I would also like to make one other introduction, and that is the Auxiliary Convention chairman, Sunny Barzelogna from the State of Florida, the beautiful state here, Florida. And Sunny is also a past state commander. Sunny. (Applause)

God bless all of you. Thank you. (Applause)

COMMANDER KISTLER: Evelyn, thank you very much for that outstanding report. It has been my pleasure to work with you this past year.

Let me take you back to August of 1996. During a special ceremony at the Henry Ford Estate in Dearborn, Michigan, then Ford Motor Company chairman, Alex Trotman, presented the keys to 11 1996 Ford Econoline vans to the DAV's nationwide Transportation Network.

It was noted at that time that Ford's generosity represented more than a needed donation to a worthy cause; it was rather the continuation of a great tradition, a tradition and a relationship that began in 1922 when Henry Ford organized a caravan of Model Ts to drive veterans to DAV's 2nd National Convention in San Francisco. Thus began an alliance and a friendship that continues to today.

(Video presentation)

COMMANDER KISTLER: Many of you will recall last year's Capitol drive-away ceremony in Washington, D.C., during which the DAV's national organization and its departments donated 147 new Ford vans to the Department of Veterans Affairs. What a celebration that was!

Then, during last year's National Convention in Las Vegas, Ford pledged 12 additional vans to the DAV's Transportation Network. I'm sure it hasn't escaped anyone's notice that there are several new Ford vans adorning the convention area today. Some of them are shrouded in secrecy. Is it possible that as baseball

philosopher Yogi Berra once said, "It's deja vu all over again?"

Here to give us what can only be more good news is Ford Motor Company's director of governmental affairs for the Ohio Valley Region, Mr. Ray Byers. (Applause)

MR. RAYMOND L. BYERS, JR.: Thank you. Thank you, Andy. Some of you may be able to see where I'm sitting up here. I'm sitting beside Larry Barnett, and he's made it very clear, as he's been coaching me, "Be brief." (Laughter) To which -- he'll be up here later, and I'll say the same thing to him, "Larry, be brief for the sake of those people who've been sitting for a long time."

I've gone back and taken a look at the number of vans that we've donated, starting with the 11 and the ones we're going to do today, and we have a tradition that started with Pete Pestillo when he came to the convention, that we don't really donate the vans each year; we loan you the vans for one year, and following the successful use of that year's use of the vans, we give you those vans.

So the first thing I want to do is return to last year's presentation that Pete made in Las Vegas, and he loaned 12 vans for transportation. And then later in the year, we had a need for a van in Salt Lake City, so we added another one, so that was 13. And then we had the opportunity to create a tow vehicle for the ski clinic, so that was 14. So we loaned you 14 vans last year, and we're going to give them to you. (Applause)

This year, if you've gone outside, there are six of the transportation vans that we're going to loan you, and we're going to unveil in a few seconds the prototype of six homeless vans. But before I do that, I need to tell you -- I've been sitting here and I added up all the numbers that Gary Weaver and his people have given me -- since 1996, Ford has donated or given 49 vans, and in the transportation fleet as of the end of this presentation today, you're going to have 699 vans in transportation services for DAV around the country. (Applause) And I'd be less than honest to say that more than 80 percent of those happen to bear a big blue oval, which I'm very proud of.

But that notwithstanding, 699 to me is not a good number, and nobody up here knows this -- but I was sitting here adding this up -- I'm going to add one more to bring it to an even 700. (Applause)

Somewhere in the audience is the lady that works for me that puts this together. Her name is Joyce Dexter, and she's worked with a lot of you guys. Joyce now has the responsibility to go back and find one (laughter), because I didn't tell her I was going to do this.

But I want to come to what we really want to talk about. You've seen the pictures. Jim Powers had some pictures, a prototype of a homeless van for the homeless program. And we've got six of those vans we're going to bring today. We're going to unveil those, at least two of them. So if I could have some unveiling music so we can see the vans. (Standing ovation)

Andy, the vans are all yours. Put them to good use. Thank you. (Applause)

COMMANDER KISTLER: Thank you, Ray.

Because corporate citizenship is a social responsibility that Ford Motor Company takes very seriously, the generous heart of Ford is being felt throughout the community of disabled American veterans everywhere. On behalf of the more than one million members of the Disabled American Veterans, please accept our heartfelt thanks for providing these 12 beautiful Ford vans to our Transportation Network and the DAV Homeless Initiative. (Applause)

Ford Motor Company has made a wonderful contribution to improving the lives of millions of America's veterans, an asset that will never appear on Ford's bottom line, but it is priceless in the hearts of those whom Ford has helped. (Applause)

Our new Homeless Initiative gives new meaning to our credo, we don't leave our wounded behind. (Applause) These new vans will allow the DAV to reach out to homeless veterans, to bring them the help they need, and to offer the services they require. They won't be left behind on the street corners or in alleys, or freezing in the night air. They will be picked up by their fellow veterans, cared for by their fellow veterans and hopefully be given a new

start in life with the help of their fellow veterans.

In launching this new initiative, the DAV is saying that more than one million of us care and care a great deal. As National Adjutant Art Wilson has declared, we can save our homeless veterans one at a time. That's our goal; that's our dream.

Ford, through its generosity, is helping us reach that goal, to realize that dream, to eliminate the shame of homeless veterans in our nation.

So it is now my pleasure to honor those six departments selected to receive one of the six new specially designed Ford vans in recognition and support of the DAV Homeless Program. I am confident that your success will strengthen the DAV's commitment to our promise that we don't leave our wounded behind. Will the commanders from the following departments please come to the podium as you are called: Paul Jackson, Department of Colorado; Willy Lechausse, Department of Connecticut; Bill Caywood, Department of Indiana; Phil Campagna, Department of Maryland; Ed Finn, Department of Massachusetts; Patty Sobocinski, Department of Wisconsin.

Ladies and gentlemen, please give a big hand to these department leaders. (Applause)

Thank you, commanders, very much. (Applause)

I want to challenge every department and every chapter to look around your hometowns, your neighborhoods and find ways to help homeless veterans. They must no longer be the invisible person mostly ignored by our citizens and our government. The homeless veteran must be and rightfully so, a priority for all of us, and this initiative creates a program in which all of us can help. (Applause)

The Outstanding Disabled American Veteran of the Year represents an individual who has overcome personal, social and physical barriers to excel in life as an example to all. This individual inspires courage over fear, strength over hardship and achievement over seemingly insurmountable odds.

The Outstanding Disabled Veteran of the Year for 1999 is all that and much more. He is a man who has had one of the most precious gifts of all snatched from him in the war-torn jungles of Vietnam. That's where an enemy grenade robbed Michael A. Naranjo of his sight in 1968, but it is Michael's inspiring life that brings us here to honor him today. Please join me in viewing the following film which I believe will bring you some insight into this extraordinary human being.

(Video presentation)

COMMANDER KISTLER: Ladies and gentlemen, it is indeed an honor for me to introduce the artist who sees with his hands, Mr. Michael Naranjo, and to present him with the DAV's highest individual award on being selected as the Outstanding Disabled American Veteran of the Year. Mr. Naranjo. (Applause)

> National Commander's Award to the Outstanding Disabled Veteran of the Year, Mr. Michael A. Naranjo, for conspicuous and meritorious effort in overcoming a severe service-connected disability to the end that you have achieved success and a high order of accomplishment in your vocational effort of choice. Further, that such consistent and noteworthy accomplishment will ever serve as an inspiration and challenge to your comrades.

Signed, Andrew A. Kistler, National Commander, and Arthur H. Wilson, National Adjutant. (Applause)

MR. MICHAEL A. NARANJO: Thank you, National Commander Kistler. I would also like to acknowledge Arthur Wilson, our national adjutant; Evelyn Dorsey, our Auxiliary national commander; and Maria Tedrow, the Auxiliary national adjutant; Hector Salgado, from my home state, New Mexico; and someone extremely special in my life, my wife, my friend, Lori. She helps to make all things possible.

It is truly an honor to be chosen as the National Disabled American Veteran of the Year, and I accept this honor with great pride. Someone recently came up to me and asked me, "Now that you've been chosen the National DAV of the Year, what are you going to do now?" And, of course, there was only one answer that I could give. "I'm going to Disney World." (Laughter and applause) I've

always wanted to say that. (Laughter)

I must say I feel a bit guilty accepting this award. When in the process of creating a sculpture, it's simply too much fun to always be considered work. Now and then I'll give lectures and workshops to students, adults and, of course, veterans, and the comment that I hear most often in these workshops is, "I can't make anything." But by the end of the workshop, everyone is amazed what they've been able to accomplish. And it truly is amazing what we can accomplish in any aspect of life if we only try.

When our country called upon us to serve, we laid on the table our most prized possession, life itself, and we had to walk through a bit of hell to reach this moment here today. We carry within us our scars, and our external scars are visible for all the world to see. Our disability is our badge of courage. May we always wear it with pride. (Standing ovation)

COMMANDER KISTLER: At this time, I would like to ask Auxiliary National Commander Evelyn Dorsey to come forth for a special presentation.

AUXILIARY COMMANDER DORSEY: At this time, I would like to call to the podium our past national commander, Jane Troutman, for a special presentation. Jane.

MRS. JANE TROUTMAN: Thank you, Commander. The Past National Commander Award is presented each year to recognize the contributions and the dedication of an outstanding Auxiliary member, whose efforts have enhanced the goals of this Auxiliary and the parent organization.

Time doesn't permit me to tell you all of the work that this Auxiliary member does, but I will give you some highlights of her achievements. This lady headed up her Auxiliary's effort to receive, sort and distribute 900 pairs of house shoes. These were donated by the manufacturer of Deer-Foam house shoes. These were donated to the Lubbock State School, the Lubbock Christian Home and the Women's Protective Services.

As a regular volunteer at the food bank, she is responsible for the help there. She's also responsible and instrumental in the fall "You Can Share" fund-raiser for her food bank. She volunteers her time each week at the Women's Protective Services. She has encouraged her Auxiliary to continue the Women's Protective Service as a special project.

It is considered notable that this lady went out searching for the needs in the community that could involve the DAV Auxiliary, and thus has created much-needed interest and enthusiasm. She has involved members of her Auxiliary and in many cases acquainted them with areas of needs which they were not aware of.

The staff at both the food bank and the Women's Protective Service have given this lady the highest praise. She's dependable, enthusiastic, energetic, caring and willing to take on any task to be done.

In all that this Auxiliary member does, she shows her dedication and enthusiasm to the principles of our organization. We are indeed fortunate to have members with those outstanding qualities. You can certainly see why she has been selected for the Past National Commander's Award. This person is Mrs. Dorothea Turner of R.L. Ferguson Unit 44 of Lubbock, Texas. Dorothea, would you join me? (Applause)

Dorothea, on behalf of the past national commanders, it is a pleasure to present this plaque to you for the outstanding work that you have done for the Auxiliary over the years. Congratulations. (Applause)

MRS. DOROTHEA TURNER: Thank you so much. And I humbly accept this award, and I'm overwhelmed and honored to have this, and to get something like this for something I enjoy and love doing. Thank you and God bless all of you. (Applause)

COMMANDER KISTLER: It is a great pleasure to introduce our next guest. Now, I must warn you that when this gentleman is normally introduced, it is usually followed by a solid round of "boos," and I don't mean alcohol. Not out of disrespect, but because of great respect, because this man personifies our mission, to improve the lives of disabled veterans and their families.

Each year, this man visits 50 to 60 VA medical centers

bringing joy and laughter where there is despair and gloom. He stops by the bedsides of men and women veterans who rarely receive a visitor, much less a visit from such a well-known celebrity.

Of course, I'm talking about American League Umpire Larry Barnett, a man who made our Voluntary Services Celebrity Visitor Program what it is today.

Only last month, Larry announced his retirement as a professional umpire after 31 years on the field. In 1968, at age 23, he went to work in the American League. He was the youngest umpire.

In 1977, he joined the DAV by visiting veterans at VA medical centers. It was during one of these visits that he encountered a blind man who so enjoyed Larry's visit that tears came to those blind eyes when Larry began to leave. "Stay a little longer," the veteran begged. Larry did stay.

He stayed 22 years and is still here for all of us. Just as he brought his light to the blinded spirit of that veteran, he brings light to all veterans he sees, and to all of us in the DAV.

For example, in 1988, Larry was a finalist for the prestigious Presidential Medal of Freedom. In 1995, he received an honorary doctor of public service degree from Bowling Green State University for his long career in public service.

Today, DAV pays him a special honor for his compassion, his humor and his steadfast dedication to disabled veterans. Ladies and gentlemen, applaud or boo, but please join me in welcoming a DAV light that shines brilliantly just as it did for that blind man so long ago. Ladies and gentlemen, Mr. Larry Barnett. (Standing ovation)

MR. LARRY BARNETT: This is a tough group. I didn't think I'd ever get up here.

Ray, you did good. I thought Ford could have given another 12 vans. I tried to get it, but was not successful. (Laughter)

I just want to say thanks to the greatest veterans group in the world today, and that's you, the DAV. Thank you. (Applause)

At this time, I would like to introduce the most important person in my life, the mother of our two daughters, my best friend, and now on retirement probably someone that's going to have to watch after me even more, my first wife, Sharon. (Applause)

This 1999 has been, as I say, the three Rs of umpiring. First, I resigned my job; secondly, I rescinded that resignation; and after they most graciously accepted that rescission, I retired from being an umpire. (Laughter)

You know, I am from the great State of Ohio, and all the people that have traveled through Ohio -- let's hear it for Ohio. It's round on the ends and high in the middle. (Applause)

The State of Ohio is very tough with the Highway Patrol, and I remember there was an elderly couple driving from Cleveland on Interstate 71, and a young trooper pulled them over for speeding. And as he walked up to the car, the gentleman put the power window down, and the officer said, "The reason I stopped you, you were speeding."

He said, "Officer, I never speed. I just never do it." His wife sitting next to him in the front seat said, "Herbert, you always speed." He looked at her and he said, "Would you please be quiet?"

And with that, the officer also said, "I noticed when I walked up to your car, you did not have your seat belt on, and in Ohio, that's a state law. You must wear your seat belt." He said, "Well, when you stopped me, I pulled over, I reached over to take it off so I could get my license out of my rear pocket."

And his wife said, "Herbert, you never wear your seat belt. Why are you lying to this nice young man?" And with that, he's pretty perturbed at his wife, and he looked at her, and he said, "Would you please shut up?" The patrolman looked down in the window, and he said to the lady, he said, "Ma'am, does he always talk to you like that?" She said, "Only when he's drinking." (Laughter)

That's a tough day on Interstate 71.

I've got to tell you a couple of baseball jokes. I had the opportunity to work behind the late great Thurmon Munson, the great

catcher of the Yankees. And one day in New York I was working behind him, and Thurmon wasn't agreeing with a couple of calls I had made, so he's giving me a little static. I called time, moved around in front of home plate, bent over to dust it off, looked up, and I said, "Thurmon, if you don't shut your mouth, I'm going to bite your head right off your shoulders."

Well, he looked me right in the eye, and he had a big smile on his face, and he said, "Larry, you know, if you'd do that, you'd have more brains in your stomach than you've got in your head." (Laughter)

Knowing how close our national adjutant is to the Boston Red Sox, and me being a part of that '75 World Series -- of which in Boston today they blame me for throwing the tea in the harbor, enforcing school bussing and losing the '75 World Series (laughter) -- I remember they threatened to shoot me during the World Series that year, and at one time I had more security than Dr. Kissinger did, and he was Secretary of State at the time.

And I'll never forget in Game 7, I was at second base and Pete Rose from the big red machine was on second. Joe Morgan walked, and he came over to Pete during a pitching change for Boston, and I got right in between them, and Rose looked me right in the eye, and he said, "Larry, please get away from me. The guy may be a lousy shot." (Laughter)

You know, I know you've seen these arguments on TV, and you probably wonder what the manager has to say. Well, I never had that many arguments, but there are three reasons that we expel a person from the game: When he becomes personal in his remarks towards you as a person, your profession or your family heritage, he's no longer needed. (Laughter)

As a young umpire -- and when I first started in baseball, I was 18 years old -- a manager came out to me. He wasn't really excited. He said, "Young man, I'm just going to tell you one thing." He said, "You know, there hasn't been a marriage in your family in three generations." (Laughter) This really didn't make me too mad, but when it took me two weeks to figure out what he'd called me, I was really upset. (Laughter)

I must tell this story in honor of our national commander. Yogi Berra. He loves to quote Yogi, and Yogi has made some beautiful quotes in his life. But, you know, they gave him a dinner in New York, and as a gift, they gave him a huge grandfather clock. And rather than pay someone to carry this down and put it in his car, he decided he was going to save a few bucks and do it himself.

He did well getting to the elevator, to the lobby of the hotel, but when he came to the exit, the only way to get out was a revolving door. (Laughter) Now, you can imagine this little man carrying this big clock. When he finally negotiated his way out to the sidewalk, he bumped into a gentleman that was slightly drunk, and he looked at the guy, and he said, "Why don't you look out where you're going?"

The drunk looked at him and said, "Hell, why don't you wear a wristwatch like everyone else?" (Laughter)

You know, I must tell you at this time -- and I just told you that I'd retired. I'm without job. I have been drug free for 54 years. (Laughter) Don't want to go there.

I would just like to say a special thanks to Art Wilson and the more than one million DAV members from across this great nation that you have done for me over the last 24 years that I was lucky enough to be associated with you. I really do appreciate it, and I want to say a special thank you to everyone from DAV. And as I said, you can be very proud you are the Number 1 veterans group in the nation.

Thank you and give yourselves a big hand. (Applause)

I always say as I'm privileged and honored to go into a VA hospital, every day should be veterans day. Thank you and God bless you. Thank you. (Applause)

COMMANDER KISTLER: Larry, this is by no means a goodbye gift from the DAV. While you may be retiring from baseball, you are not departing from the DAV and the hospitalized veterans. We need you and they need you. (Applause)

Long may you serve, Larry, as our Friendship Ambassador for sick and disabled veterans. God bless you. (Applause)

Every year we recognize the commitment of DAV and Auxiliary volunteers through the George H. Seal Memorial Award. This special tribute is given to one DAV and one DAV Auxiliary member who best epitomizes the volunteer spirit of our organization through their selfless work with hospitalized veterans under the VA Voluntary Service Program.

Ladies and gentlemen, this year's George H. Seal Award winners are Robert Crawford from Lower Lake, California, and Mae Daugherty of San Antonio, Texas. (Applause)

Robert Crawford, a member of DAV Chapter 83 in Lower Lake, California, drives 250 miles a day to transport ill and disabled veterans to the San Francisco VA Medical Center.

He flawlessly directs the DAV's Lake County Transportation Network volunteers, serves in the hospital's Social Work Service, and even drives a 15-passenger DAV van, offering friendship and compassion to those he serves.

This is interesting because Mr. Crawford is 81 years old. (Applause) He has donated nearly 9,000 hours of service to his fellow disabled veterans during the past six years.

During World War II, Mr. Crawford survived three years of Japanese imprisonment following the fall of Bataan and Corregidor in the Philippines. First captured after the U.S. surrender of Bataan, Mr. Crawford, then a Navy pharmacist's mate, risked his life escaping with two others and commandeering a boat to the embattled fortress of Corregidor.

There he tended to the wounded during the five-month siege by the Japanese. He was again captured after the fall of Corregidor. Mr. Crawford received three Purple Heart medals for wounds suffered on Corregidor and four Bronze Stars.

In addition to his Transportation Network duties, Mr. Crawford volunteers at the local DAV National Service Office and donates his time to help VAVS staff with special events.

Mr. Crawford's dedication, leadership and positive attitude have become symbols of the Lake County Transportation Network. His quiet dignity and generosity personify the true meaning of giving uncompromising dedication and loyal friendship to America's veterans.

I am honored to introduce to you the DAV's 1999 recipient of the George H. Seal Memorial Trophy, Mr. Robert Crawford. (Standing ovation)

MR. ROBERT CRAWFORD: Commander, I don't know how to tell you this, but you made two mistakes. (Laughter) The first one is recommending me for this award, and the second one letting me near a microphone. (Laughter) Very sincerely, this is truly a great honor that you have bestowed upon me, you and your group. And for that I am very grateful and humble.

As you know, one rarely accomplishes great things without help from others. Therefore I need to acknowledge some people who have worked behind the scenes to make my presence here possible. The VA Medical Center in San Francisco and its director, Miss Sheila Kolan, are very wonderful people to even be near, let alone work for. Mrs. Leslie Buckman and her able assistant, Ronald Hunt, who is one of my supervisors, are excellent to work for and with. Mr. Mike Arnold, who is the DAV service officer in San Francisco, for the last five years of his tenure there, has given me the utmost cooperation in running the van system.

I also am involved with the VA, the GSA Van Service of the hospital. Mr. Rick Fernandez is the head of that department, and his assistant, Sean Powers. They are excellent to work with, and I do my utmost to help them with their transportation.

The person that should be standing here beside me accepting this award is Mr. Alan Nuhar. He's known around the hospital as my shadow. He's a little younger than I. Any project that I start to go into, Alan is there with me, sometimes ahead of me. He's a very, very dedicated man.

Then a person you never want to forget is your drivers. I think I have the best drivers in the system, and I have 15 of them. (Applause)

These are the people that make the system. Some of them you have to mother, some of them you have to direct, some of them you have to work with in different ways. But they all will back me 100 percent. They're always there available for any extra work that I have to do or any surprises that I have of a driver getting sick. I have excellent cooperation.

I'm a veteran fortunate enough to come back home from three and a half years in a Jap prison camp, but we have to go on, you know.

Any time that there's great pleasure, there's always some sorrow, and my friend Alan is in the hospital, very bad. I thank you all very much. (Applause)

COMMANDER KISTLER: Again, congratulations, Mr. Crawford. I'm not sure, but maybe as you get older, you might be able to work more than 12 hours a day. (Laughter)

Mrs. Mae Daugherty, a member of DAV Auxiliary Unit 5 in San Antonio, Texas, is a bright shining light at the Audie L. Murphy VA Medical Center in San Antonio. Despite her personal health problems, the serious illness of her husband, and the loss of all her personal possessions during last year's flood, Mae exemplifies dedication, courage and perseverance in her service to disabled veterans.

In addition, Mrs. Daugherty's superb baking talents and good humor provide an infectious spirit of hope at VAVS events. Known also for her tasty sandwiches and outstanding cakes, veteran patients make a point to attend events hosted by her Auxiliary unit.

For 18 years, Mrs. Daugherty has provided compassion and warmth to sick and disabled veterans in South Texas and leadership within the Auxiliary. Despite great personal hardships, she continues to plan and direct other volunteers.

Averaging more than 12 hours per week at the medical center, Mae's caring and compassion have won her the trust, respect and affection of all those around her.

It gives me great pleasure to introduce to you the 1999 DAV Auxiliary member recipient of the George H. Seal Memorial Trophy, Mrs. Mae Daugherty. (Standing ovation)

MRS. MAE DAUGHERTY: Thank you, Commander Kistler. To all the DAVA national officers, the DAV national officers, members and friends: This is a great honor and I'm very happy to accept it. I want to thank each and every one of you for your cooperation.

To my husband, George, I say thanks for your love and support for the last 54 years. And to my family who are a great help, and I don't know how we would have survived the flood without them. Also thanks to Donna Charles and her staff in the office of the Voluntary Service at the Audie Murphy VA Hospital for their support. They're a great group to work with and work for.

A special thanks to each of you veterans who have sacrificed so much for our great nation. Without you, we wouldn't have the freedom we enjoy today. We are blessed with so many freedoms that we don't often think about them or take the time to be thankful for them.

Many countries suffer tragically because of fear, persecution, hunger and oppression, issues that we never think about because of the freedom we have here today. Let us all count our blessings and remember those who have secured this liberty for our country. Liberty is the greatest freedom we can ever have.

I hope to continue to be active in the VAVS programs. I feel like this is one small way that I can make the lives of the hospitalized veterans a little happier. We are members of a great organization, and I am proud to say that I am a member of the Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary family.

I have a little poem I would like to close with. It's called "Love Note to a Veteran."

This is a love note, and it's here to say
Freedom would be lost without you today.
As we fly "Old Glory," the red, white and blue,
We'll never forget the sacrifice and all you've gone through.
The battles, the scars, the suffering the pain
Has helped our country its freedom to remain.

You're never forgotten, remember God cares.
You're in our thoughts and also in our prayers.
Carry these thoughts with you, look upon them each day,
Knowing you are remembered in a very special way.

Thanks again to each of you and may God bless you and God bless America. (Applause)

COMMANDER KISTLER: Congratulations, Mae. You don't have a bag of sandwiches there, do you? (Laughter)

1999 marks the fifth consecutive year 104 lucky DAV members are sharing in DAV's $250,000 sweepstakes. But the wealth of this annual sweepstakes benefits far more than our prize money winners. Proceeds from the DAV's $250,000 sweepstakes help to finance DAV department service programs year after year, and that makes us all winners. I want to personally thank all of those who participated in this fine program.

Milton E. Nadel, a life member of DAV Chapter 12, Coral Gables, Florida, is this year's $100,000 Grand Prize winner. (Applause) I wish Milton was here with us today, but sadly he passed away on July 1st. I know Milton was looking forward to being here with his lovely wife, Beverly.

So it's with mixed emotions, both pride and sadness, that on behalf of the DAV I extend our congratulations on her winning the grand prize. Please know, however, that I speak for everyone here when I say that we are profoundly saddened at the loss of your husband, Milton.

Ladies and gentlemen, accepting the DAV's Sweepstakes Grand Prize on behalf of her late husband, Mrs. Beverly Nadel. (Applause)

MRS. BEVERLY NADEL: The DAV is one of the most prestigious organizations. My husband, Milton E. Nadel was proud and honored to have been a life member until July 1st. On behalf of Milton, I want to express gratitude to the DAV for their generosity, their kindness and their caring.

I personally want to thank Jim Hall and Michael Walsh for assisting me personally through a very difficult period. I thank you all and continue your wonderful work. (Applause)

COMMANDER KISTLER: Ladies and gentlemen, I'll now have our national adjutant, Arthur Wilson, present the tickets that were selected at random to passes to Disney World Park.

ADJUTANT WILSON: Thank you, Commander. I think we've kept you waiting long enough. Our great information systems has drawn at random 30 registered delegates to this convention to receive two passes each to the Disney World Parks. It would be a combination of DAV members and DAV Auxiliary members.

The first one drawn was Paul A. Dance from Texas; Keith L. Gustin from Colorado; Julia T. Law from Maryland; Billy F. Jones, Sr. from New Mexico; Mary C. Parrish from Washington, D.C.; Paul H. Suscinski from Ohio; Raymond B. Desmond, Sr. from New York; Brenda L. Veach from Tennessee; Louis P. Cirillo from New York; Claude A. Nelson from New York; Shane L. Liermann from Colorado; Frances J. Costa from Massachusetts; Henri Opas from California; Thomas J. Machese from Nebraska; Nellie M. Smithee from Illinois; James E. Owens, Jr. from New Mexico; John J. Skorusa from Florida; Dixie N. Robertson from California; Polita T. Leader from California; Norman L. Newell from Maine; Vernon E. Schilling from Wisconsin; Joy A. Albee from Florida; John L. Haynes from Florida; Robert Salisbury from California; Jean M. Chapman from Utah; Michelle Charland, who is a registered guest, and I don't have a state; Stephen Painter from Oklahoma; Albert Canfora from Ohio; Joe Manning from Florida; and James N. Olson from Minnesota.

COMMANDER KISTLER: I will now ask the 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: Credentials, Michael J. Walsh, Edward G. Galian; General Resolutions and Membership, Rick Surratt; Legislation and Veterans Rights, Joseph A. Violante and Thomas L. Tomlinson; Constitution and Bylaws, Richard L. Sarrazin and Fred R. Bristol; Finance and Dues, Wallace E. Tyson and Richard E. Patterson; Employment, Bradley S. Barton

and Anthony L. Baskerville; Hospital and Voluntary Services, Jerry P. Steelman and Sloan H. Hoopes; Nomination of National Officers, Gene A. Murphy and William E. Leach.

COMMANDER KISTLER: Ladies and gentlemen, if you will please rise, we ask the chaplain to lead us in closing prayer.

CHAPLAIN TODD: Lord God, we come to the close of another session. We thank You for giving us the type of mind-set to recognize those who have done so much to improve the lives of many disabled veterans throughout this great nation. But more than that, we thank You for the joy, the spirit of friendship, the spirit of camaraderie. And we thank You for giving us this moment of realizing the needs of our veterans throughout this great nation and looking at men and women who have given of themselves, and recognizing that joy that only comes from Your Kingdom. And Lord, we thank You now. In His Holy Name we pray. Go in peace, and may God bless you. Amen.

COMMANDER KISTLER: This convention stands in recess until 9:30 Monday morning.

(Whereupon, the meeting recessed at 4:40 o'clock p.m., August 21, 1999.)

FIRST BUSINESS SESSION

August 23, 1999

The First Business Session of the Disabled American Veterans 78th National Convention convened in the Coronado Ballroom of the Coronado Springs Resort, Orlando, Florida, Monday morning, August 23, 1999, and was called to order at 9:30 o'clock a.m. by Commander Andrew A. Kistler.

COMMANDER ANDREW A. KISTLER: The convention will please come to order. In opening our First Business Session of the 78th National Convention of the Disabled American Veterans, it is proper and fitting that we render the due respect to the flag. Please join me in the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag.

(Pledge of Allegiance)

COMMANDER KISTLER: We will now be led in prayer by Chaplain Todd.

CHAPLAIN TODD: Lord God, we come again thanking Thee for another day's journey. We pray that this day will be one in which we will not only realize some of the business of this great organization, but share in the fellowship and the joy of knowing that we're working on behalf of those who are hurting, those veterans who are sick and their bodies are wracked with pain.

We just pray, Lord, that the standards that we set this day will motivate and stimulate us to be all that we can be in representing You. In His Holy Name we pray. Amen.

COMMANDER KISTLER: Please be seated.

In order for a delegate to be heard in this convention, he must be recognized by the Chair. Only those delegates at the microphone will be recognized. The delegate must state his name, chapter number and the state that he represents.

I now call on the Credentials Committee for its first report.

MR. RUSSELL SPALDING: Comrade Commander and delegates: The National Convention Committee on Credentials was called to order for its first business session at 8/23/99 by Advisors Michael J. Walsh and Edward G. Galian. The first order of business was the election of a Credentials Committee chairman. Russ Spalding was nominated chairman. There being no further nominations, Russ Spalding was elected chairman.

The next order of business was the nomination and election of a secretary. Mike Addesso was nominated and elected as secretary.

The Credentials Committee met this morning in the Coronado Ballroom S of Coronado Springs Resort. Roll call showed 1,311 delegates and 39 alternates present. This is a partial report for informational purposes only and reflects the registration at the close of registration at 4:00 p.m. on August the 22nd, 1999. At the present time, we have 540 chapters, 45 departments, 30 national officers, 13 past national commanders, for a total of 1,311 delegates and 39 alternates, with a total vote of 10,107.

This completes our report, Comrade Commander.

COMMANDER KISTLER: Thank you, sir.

Comrades, the Rules are a continuing part of our Bylaws. They are part and parcel of Article 3 and remain in effect continuously. They are subject to amendments as provided by the Bylaws.

Mike 2.

MR. KENNETH MUSSELMANN: Comrade Commander, Ken Musselmann, Chapter 19, California. Because of the condensed schedule of the convention this year, I think it would be appropriate for a couple of rule changes to take place, and I have suggested amendments to those Rules, if you would allow me to continue.

COMMANDER KISTLER: Go right ahead.

MR. MUSSELMANN: The first rule change I would like to propose is to amend Article 3, Section 3.10, Rule 23(b), which is on Page 17 of our Bylaws, and it's to delete the words "no later than 10:30 a.m." So Rule 23(b) shall read as follows:

> The final report of the Credentials Committee, the report of the Committee on Nomination of National Officers, and the election of national officers as designated in Article 7, Section 7.1 of these Bylaws, shall be in that order on the last day of convention.

And I make a motion to adopt this rule change.

COMMANDER KISTLER: Is there a second to that motion?

MR. BRUCE F. DAVENPORT: Commander, Bruce Davenport, Chapter 23, California, seconds the motion.

COMMANDER KISTLER: Question on the motion? There being no questions, all in favor say Aye; opposed. The Ayes have it.

MR. MUSSELMANN: The second change is to amend Article 3, Section 3.10, Rule 21 on Page 16, and this is to change the word "third" to the word "second" in that paragraph, so it will read, in part:

> All proposed amendments shall be read to the convention no later than the second day prior to the scheduled day of adjournment of the convention.

At this time, I'd like to make a motion to adopt this rule change.

COMMANDER KISTLER: Is there a second to the motion?

MR. DAVENPORT: Commander, Bruce Davenport, Chapter 23, California, seconds the motion.

COMMANDER KISTLER: Question on the motion? No questions? All in favor say Aye; opposed. Motion carried. Thank you.

I will now ask the national adjutant to read the DAV Statement of Policy.

ADJUTANT WILSON: Resolution:

> The Disabled American Veterans was founded on the principle that this nation's first duty to veterans is the rehabilitation of its wartime disabled. This principle envisions:
>
> 1. High quality hospital and medical care administered by the Department of Veterans Affairs for veterans with disabilities incurred in or aggravated by service in America's armed forces.
>
> 2. Adequate compensation for the loss resulting from such service-connected disabilities.
>
> 3. Vocational rehabilitation and/or education to help the disabled veteran prepare for and obtain gainful employment.
>
> 4. Enhanced opportunities for employment and preferential job placement so the remaining ability of the disabled veteran is used productively.
>
> 5. Adequate compensation to the widows and survivors of veterans whose deaths are held to be service-connected under laws administered by the Department of Veterans Affairs.
>
> 6. Enhanced outreach to ensure that all disabled veterans receive all benefits they have earned and that the American people 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 dependents and survivors which is 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.

While our first duty as an organization is to assist the service-connected disabled, their dependents and survivors, 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 KISTLER: The Chair will entertain a motion for the adoption of the DAV Statement of Policy. Mike 3, go ahead.

MR. RICHARD L. SARRAZIN: Dick Sarrazin, Chapter 5, San Antonio, makes the motion.

MR. ROGER H. SULLIVAN: Roger Sullivan, delegate, chapter 87, Florida, seconds.

COMMANDER KISTLER: Question on the motion? No question? All in favor say Aye; opposed. The Ayes have it.

Building better lives for all of our nation's disabled veterans and their families. This is the DAV's mission. It is first, last and always a mission of service.

For more than 30 years, Art Wilson has dedicated himself to serving disabled veterans and their families, first as a DAV National Service Officer -- the first Vietnam veteran to enter the DAV National Service Program -- moving up through the ranks of our NSO Corps to supervisory positions, then on to the National Appeals Office at the Board of Veterans Appeals in Washington.

Since Art's appointment as national adjutant in 1994, his steadfast leadership and uncompromising commitment to the organization's ideals has resulted in the phenomenal rebirth of the DAV.

Not only is he responsible for restoring the organization's financial health, Art has returned the DAV to its rightful position as the nation's foremost service organization. (Applause)

Ladies and gentlemen, here to give his remarks to the National Convention is my friend and your friend, National Adjutant Art Wilson. (Applause)

ADJUTANT WILSON: Thank you, Commander. You make me feel old. Good morning, everyone. I hope you were able to get out and enjoy yourself yesterday. I know I did. You know, as a matter of fact, this might be an appropriate time, Commander, for me to take credit -- it's the only thing I'm going to take credit for today -- is the weather we had yesterday. It took a lot of phone calls and a lot of lobbying, but we got it done.

You know, something else that I've really enjoyed this year has been working with a gentleman by the name of Andy Kistler. I can't tell you, Andy, what a pleasure it's been. You're a gentleman, a true professional, and an inspirational leader. Thank you for making this one of our best years yet. (Applause)

There's something that a few of you might not know about Andy, probably because he's such a quiet, modest man -- at least he is on the surface -- but I've come to know another side of Andy Kistler. He really knows how to make you feel good about the DAV. I say that because I've always thought that doing good and doing what's right for our fellow disabled veterans just came naturally. When you did it, it made you feel good.

But I have found out that when other people, especially people like Andy, tell you right from their heart how much he appreciates what the DAV stands for and how much being part of this wonderful organization means to him personally, believe me, it sends chills up and down your spine.

So Andy, I want you to know right from my heart, how much your friendship, how much your leadership has meant to me personally. You have given me, you have given all of us for that matter, a real sense of pride and joy in our organization and for what the DAV really is, for it's people like you that make everything that we do important and a satisfying part of our lives. Thank you, Andy, so

very much. (Applause)

I also want to express my sincere thanks to your officers and Andy's line and Mike Dobmeier, Armando Albarran, George Steese, Ed Heath, Alan Bowers, of course Ed Galian and, of course, Reverend Todd.

My thanks also to National Commander Evelyn Dorsey and Auxiliary Adjutant Maria Tedrow and their staffs. We work closely together. We have a wonderful partnership, and they're a good group, and I want to thank them personally.

And, of course, I thank our National Executive Committee and our National Finance Committee, and, of course, our interim committees that work so hard throughout the year.

But I especially want to say thank you to the wonderful folks all across this country who carry DAV's standard. They carry it so proudly every single day of their lives. The leaders in our chapters and our departments, our dedicated HSCs and our department service officers and our chapter service officers. And to every one of our amazing, amazing volunteers who give so much of themselves to help our veterans. My most heartfelt thanks to you all.

I offer my sincere appreciation to all of our DAV Headquarters staff, both in Washington and Cold Spring, as well as your National Service Officers and their staffs all across this country. These are the people, these are the backbone people of this great organization, and they represent what we're all about, and it's called service.

And if I might ask for a second, could I ask all the National Service Officers and their support staffs in the room to stand and be recognized, please. (Applause)

Commander, if you're going to permit me some time to share some personal thoughts with you, you know, watching the transition of DAV -- and I talk about the transition from the 20th to the 21st century -- as we cross this bridge to the new millennium, you have to get excited. It's a wonderful opportunity, it's a wonderful time. But it makes me, and I'm sure most of you, kind of review history and reflect on where we've been.

And I did that recently, and I don't pretend to come here and talk about my history, but I have to go back and think about when I came to DAV in 1966. I came from the United States Air Force. I had spent a couple of years in Vietnam. But I was in a VA hospital, like many of you were, and a friend of our family came to my mother and eventually to me and said, "Go to the DAV. You need help."

And I did, and that gentleman is going to be with us at this convention, and his name is Bill Bullock. Bill's a retired National Service Officer. He came out of Philadelphia, and he worked in Washington for a while. And then he talked to me about joining the DAV, and then he talked about coming to work for the DAV, and he introduced me to a guy that you all know by the name of Norman "Gabby" Hartnett, who got me interested in doing that.

And I went to work for DAV, and in eight short years after that, I served in seven different offices around the country. Sure, I was a National Service Officer, and I kind of worked up through the ranks, and I came to Washington, and I did all those nice things. I served as DAV's National Service director and five years ago became your national adjutant.

But I want to tell you something. I'm as concerned today as I was 33 years ago about the service to veterans of this country, what we do and how we do it. (Applause)

People have asked me -- you know, I'm still 18 (laughter), till I look in the mirror -- they ask me what my plans are for the future. Well, I don't have any plans for the future at this moment in my life, and the reason for that is I'm having too much fun doing what we do. It's really a wonderful process and an enjoyment to serve your fellow veterans and to serve the people of this country who provided this freedom. I find it fun, and I enjoy every single day.

You know, there's too much for us to do. Our future is so important. And when I say that to you, I think about how important is DAV, how important are we going to be? There is a need for this

organization.

And I want to cross a little bridge here and do something that I haven't normally done. But I'm moved by the fact that there's so many of you here in Florida in August and it's warm, and sure, there are some difficulties, but we get through that. But there's a gentleman with us today that served this organization for all of his life. He was a national commander 50 years ago. Ladies and gentlemen, he still serves this organization. He's 86 years young, and that's Mr. Boniface Maile, and he's sitting right over here. Boni. (Standing ovation) That's the trooper over there that keeps us going.

But I've got to tell you there's a parity to make here. Also in the room -- and we have an awful lot of young folks in DAV, whether you know it or not -- we have two of our younger members. They happen to be National Service Officers. One's Jennifer Culver from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and the other is Jim Gilman from Wichita, Kansas. Jennifer and Jim, would you stand to be recognized, please. Give us a wave. Where are you? (Applause)

Ladies and gentlemen, there are 60 years difference in the age of these folks, from Mr. Maile to the others, and I view that as a beginning.

You know, there always is a step that you have to take to make sure that something happens. Well, the DAV is ready. The DAV will always be ready to make sure that we provide unparalleled service to this nation's veterans. And if I might digress a minute and tell you a little bit about Mr. Maile, he's still serving today. He was national commander in 1950. In the year 2000, he's still going to be sitting on the Board of Directors of the DAV National Service Foundation. (Applause) That's activity.

In 1950, as national commander, Mr. Maile could have said, "Is there a continuing need for an organization like DAV? Are we going to continue to need an organization like this? Perhaps there won't be any more wars." And he was right on the threshold of the Korean War. Fortunately, he didn't say that. Fortunately, that wasn't the feeling of the organization, because look where we are today, and look what we do for people.

Look what happens in this organization every day. Could we say that now, will there be no more wars? Do we need to continue an organization like DAV which we commonly refer to as the last men's club? We won't say that, I don't think. I don't have a crystal ball. I don't think you do. We can't predict what's going to happen.

We do express some concern about the activity within our chapters and within our departments. Is it a concern that we don't get a lot of people to meetings in that kind of fraternal activity? Sure it's a concern. Is it catastrophic? I don't think so. We'd like to see greater activity. We'd like to see more people involved, but they are involved. Look at the volunteer hours. Look at what people do for other veterans. Look at the service programs, all of those kinds of things that we do.

Some say that, "You're going to end up as a paper organization." I hope not. But is that all bad? What do we know? You know what's really strength and what's really important is not only that feeling of that fraternal love that we have for DAV and our fellow man, but it's important for DAV that we have numbers, the strength in numbers, that you're vocal, that you vote, and that you make sure that people that you elect are accountable to veterans of this country.

You did it last year. You made it happen last year. For the first time in many years, veterans' issues became on the forefront of many political candidates. And that's because you band together. And that's where every one of us needs to be. That's what DAV's all about.

I hope that you are going to be around for another 20 or 30 years. I certainly plan to do that. I'm going to be around as long as it takes. Because, as I said, there are two things going on: 1. We're so important in what we do; and Number 2, it's having fun serving other people.

I want to continue to remind the American people the sacrifices that veterans have made for this country. It's so

important. We can't let the American public go unwillingly asleep without knowing about disabled veterans. They have to know about the sacrifices that we make. There's too much important business to do. I plan on staying active for this reason.

But because of that concern, last year I began to talk about what you will hear commonly referred to as a Strategic Plan. The DAV has to have a vision. We have to know where we're going to go; we have to know where we've been. So we started talking about a Strategic Plan, the theme of which will be, "The DAV, because the battle never ends."

You know, since our founding some 79 years ago, the DAV has been dedicated just to one single purpose: Building better lives for America's disabled veterans and their families. And in order to carry out this mission of service, we must adapt to a rapidly changing and sometimes unpredictable environment as we continue to meet the needs of those who we serve.

Whether it's ensuring that disabled veterans receive rightful compensation for their service-connected disabilities or operating a nationwide Transportation Network so that they can access the much-needed health care, or supporting unique rehabilitation opportunities for disabled veterans and providing a strong and assertive voice in Washington, D.C., the DAV has always been able to commit its necessary resources to get the job done, and we will continue to do that.

We all know that the 21st century will bring both enormous challenges and breathtaking opportunities for our organization, and that's why I commissioned a team of DAV managers last year to begin work on a Strategic Plan to ensure the continued viability and vitality of the DAV well into the next century.

This plan I'm talking about will be published and distributed to every DAV element in the near future, will have all the details and everything you'll need to know about our goals and our objectives for the next few years.

This morning, I'm going to try to give you a broad-brush picture of what we plan to accomplish, of course, only with your help. And believe me, we've taken a good hard look at where we are and where we've been, and have sought active input from all sides of our organization who helped us come up with where we need to go and how we're going to get there.

The strategic planning process was deliberately designed to include participation from all of our key constituent groups. The team gathered input from DAV leaders throughout the entire organization, including your department commanders and adjutants, your supervisory National Service Officers and, of course, representatives from both of our Headquarters staffs. Their insights have been incorporated into our Strategic Plan which, like the DAV, is intended to be responsive to the ever-changing needs of disabled veterans and their families.

The plan is a blueprint for the DAV to remain the greatest and the strongest veterans service organization in the world. America's disabled veterans deserve nothing less. (Applause)

Shortly after the plan is published, we'll then go to work to develop the implementation plans for the goals and the strategies that are outlined. These implementation plans will include specific actions, time lines, accountabilities, and matrix permitting us to track our progress.

The planning process was kicked off at a management interchange group held in October of 1998. At this important meeting senior DAV management staff conducted an internal and an exhaustive external analysis of the entire organization, examining its strengths, its weaknesses, its opportunities and its threats, and they're out there.

At the conclusion of the meeting, the strategic planning group was created and composed of representatives from both Headquarters. And to repeat what I said earlier, we knew that in order to be successful in this process, the plan had to include participation from all groups crucial to the mission of DAV.

Input from our field office staff was gathered at the National Service Officers Supervisor Conference in January. In March, our department commanders and adjutants were asked to identify key

issues through focus groups conducted at the DAV Midwinter Conference. And incidentally, it was remarkable that there was so much similarity in the issues that everyone talked about. Same themes and issues were discussed at each of those meetings.

So it's not surprising that the plan will remain true to DAV's values as our organization's vision, a guiding compass, if you will, that has shown the way for the past 79 years and will continue to do so well into the next century as long as there are disabled veterans and their families who need the help of the Disabled American Veterans.

This plan ensures that DAV will continue to fulfill our mission, building better lives for America's disabled veterans and their families, and believe me, we will do everything in our power to be mindful of our core values of service, quality, integrity and leadership. And we will continue to maintain the highest ethical standards as a charitable organization, through which our society can express its gratitude to the men and women who continue to pay the price of this nation's freedom.

Let me explain for just a minute about our core values. Service: Direct hands-on service is and always will be at the very heart of what DAV is and does. It's our mission to build better lives for America's disabled veterans, their family members and their dependents. It will always be foremost in everything that we do.

Quality: To continue to provide the highest possible quality representation and advocacy in service to veterans and their survivors.

Integrity: We will maintain the highest ethical and moral standards as a charitable service organization, remaining accountable to those who we serve as well as to those who support us.

And leadership: We will continue to provide unparalleled leadership in veterans affairs to guarantee the future of the world's best service organization anywhere in this country.

What do we need to accomplish in the next few years to get us to those objectives? First -- and this won't come as any surprise to anybody in this room -- we need a strong and active membership, which is at the very backbone of DAV. (Applause) Agreed.

So we will reinvigorate our recruitment efforts to get new members and find new ways to get our current members actively involved in chapter and department activities as well as the various volunteer and service programs. And we'll develop new incentives for membership recruiters so we can continue to have a strong involved membership well into the future.

Second, we must maintain the DAV's position as the Number 1 provider of top-quality professional service advocacy and volunteer programs for this nation's veterans. That means we have to be responsive to differing service and health care needs of our veterans, older and younger ones alike.

To meet those challenges, we'll make sure that we have adequate NSO staffing levels and sufficient resources when and where they are needed. We'll create new outreach opportunities, especially in local communities where veterans live, and will expand volunteer activities at veterans hospitals, clinics and nursing homes, where the traditional base of our volunteer programs began many years ago.

And third, we'll also enhance our department and chapter service programs and focus on coordination of our hospital service coordinators, department service officers and our volunteers. And, as you know, rapid changes in technology provide exciting opportunities for the DAV, but they also create tremendous demands on existing resources.

Keeping up with the changes in technology also means new and faster means of gathering and disseminating information to our membership and to our employees. This is especially significant, of course, in our DAV grassroots efforts. We'll make sure that our staff gets the training that they need to make use of modern computer technology and methods. And we will systematically evaluate and improve our business practices on a regular basis.

And the fourth, and one of the most extremely critical issues

we'll face is the need to attract, retain and develop effective leaders, whether they're volunteers or paid staff. It is a fact that the core of our volunteer base is aging and must constantly be replenished, even as the pool of younger members interested in assuming volunteer leadership roles is declining.

We will redouble our efforts to not only bring new members but to identify and encourage the best and the brightest among us to seek leadership roles in our chapters and our departments, to aspire to positions of national leadership, of course when they're ready to do that. We will foster greater membership involvement in our department and chapter service programs, and we'll find ways to breathe new life into the various volunteer programs.

Our fifth strategic goal is to build government and public support and their awareness of the important policy issues affecting disabled veterans and their families. You know like I know that it's very disheartening that veterans' issues are not perceived as a national priority by our government. In simple terms, the Administration and Congress have failed to honor this nation's commitment to veterans.

So as part of our ongoing strategy in this area, we must be more pro-active as opposed to being reactive. We must influence public policy, particularly regarding veterans' issues. And a key element of that is our resolve to increase the number of participation of those in our grassroots legislative lobbying activities.

Our final major goal is to refine our fund-raising programs and make use of innovative methodologies to the best of our advantage, because -- and let's face it, and you know this like I do -- without the financial support from the American public, the DAV would not be able to fulfill its mission of service to this nation's veterans.

And we will continue to differentiate the DAV from its competitors and promote greater awareness to those and let them know who we are and what we do. And that, ladies and gentlemen, is how we're going to keep the DAV on top of the pile. (Applause)

I know I've thrown a lot at you this morning in such a brief amount of time, but I can't stress enough that our Strategic Plan will affect every single aspect of DAV at the national level, at our department and chapters and, of course, at our Auxiliary units.

Every one of us in this room and all of our members across this great land have a very important role to play here in assuring that we continue to fulfill our mission of hope and service: From supporting efforts to maintain unparalleled preeminence in the world's best veterans organization and the very best service programs to recruiting new members so we have a strong and assertive voice where it's necessary in Washington; from increasing active member participation in some new and exciting volunteer programs right in your own communities and making sure that the general public is aware of and has a greater appreciation for the continued service of America's disabled veterans.

The goals that have been laid out will guarantee that the DAV will be there for disabled veterans and their families well into the 21st century because the battle for justice in veterans' rights just never ends. (Applause)

Now comes the hard part. It's time for you to think. I ask that you think a lot about our Strategic Plan. Consider the seriousness of it. Finally, I ask that you think creatively about our future, the DAV's future.

Doing that, at the same time, I am very pleased to report to you that the DAV continues to be this nation's leading veterans service organization and that we continue to do more than anyone else to make sure that this country's veterans, the men and women who have sacrificed and served for the cause of freedom, will never, never be forgotten, not ever. (Applause)

You know, we can get the attention of the American public and the press when we need to, but there are certain things that have to happen to make sure that we can keep that promise, and that's the DAV's very, very successful service programs. We provide the very best service to America's veterans and their families, thanks in large part to the American public who supports us so well. We

are very, very grateful indeed for that support.

But doing well financially only means one thing to me. It means that we can continue to do good things for veterans and do the right thing for veterans. It's as simple as that.

Before I close, I would be remiss if I didn't express some personal gratitude to my staff in Rick Patterson, who directs our National Headquarters at Cold Spring, and his staff of Bob Gushee and Chris Clay and Anita Blum at the head of our financial corps, Mike Walsh, Greg Jackson, all of those who work so very hard at National Headquarters to help serve you.

And thanks to Dave Gorman and the staff at our Washington Headquarters and Ken Wolfe and his staff, and Joe Violante and Jerry Steelman. Of course, I can't leave out our communications staff, who makes all of this possible, and Gary Weaver and his staff who do our magazine every couple of months who I believe has put together a first-class and the best veterans magazine anywhere in this country. (Applause)

I want to make sure that you know that I pass along my congratulations to all DAV employees, some 650 nationally. They're the ones that keep this wheel going round and round and round every day, and they make the DAV stay on top.

So with all my best wishes I say this to you: It's up to you and all of our DAV members nationwide. You're the ones who are going to make it happen. And I thank you so much for allowing me to serve this great organization and to serve you.

Thank you, Commander. (Standing ovation)

COMMANDER KISTLER: Thank you, Art, for that very fine report. And at this time, I will entertain a motion to accept our national adjutant's report. Mike 1.

MR. JAMES H. TANNER: Jim Tanner, adjutant, Joseph R. Harold Memorial Chapter 10 from the home state of Art Wilson, where I reside and live, where Art Wilson graduated high school, and gave the DAV Art Wilson, make the motion to accept the fine report.

COMMANDER KISTLER: Thank you, sir. Is there a second to that motion? Mike 3.

DR. HENRY H. SEIFER: I am Dr. Henry Seifer from the 12th District, Chapter 83, life member of the Disabled American Veterans, seconding this motion.

COMMANDER KISTLER: Thank you. Question on the motion? All in favor say Aye· opposed. Motion carried. (Applause)

Mike 2.

MR. CAMILLO BALSAMO: Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. My name is Camillo Balsamo. I'm representing Chapter 154, Punta Gorda, Florida. I am here as a delegate, but what I have on my neck right now is a guest. Well, we'll see if that gets straightened out. But in the meantime, I want to wish you all the best of good health and good fortune and God bless you. (Applause)

COMMANDER KISTLER: Thank you, sir.

Mike 3.

DR. SEIFER: This is once again Dr. Henry Seifer from the 12th District. It's my pleasure to say to you that I was terribly impressed by Comrade Wilson from his eloquent presentation, and he spoke of a Strategic Plan that excites me no end. I have been working for the last 35 years on a plan that would be of some help to his Strategic Plan, and I would like to present it to him.

COMMANDER KISTLER: I'm sorry to interrupt you, sir. I understand your point, but I think you're out of order at this present time. Thank you. If you have anything, Mr. Wilson would be glad to receive that at his office. Thank you, sir.

MR. TANNER: Mike 1. I'd like to clarify my identity. Jim Tanner from the State of Massachusetts.

COMMANDER KISTLER: Thank you.

I would like now to introduce National Membership Director Michael Walsh for his report and presentation of the Membership Awards.

MR. MICHAEL J. WALSH: Thank you, Commander Kistler. Good morning, everyone. This really has been an extraordinary past 12 months, hasn't it? Especially on a personal note, of course, the past six. Since I assumed the duties as the national membership director, I have noticed more than ever before how important a role

our members play in the course of our organization.

Because of that importance, I am pleased to present to you today the annual report and the Membership Awards for 1998-99. I think that for many this is the highlight of the convention, at least for those who are getting the awards and the Membership Department.

The recruiters who work so tirelessly to build our membership, I think, are among the finest and most dedicated members we have today. I know that it's not easy to recruit new members, especially full-paid members. But each recruiter, no matter how many they sign up, proves that membership remains the lifeblood of this organization.

If you will allow me, I would like to recognize those individuals who worked so hard within their chapters and departments and made it possible for us to maintain our high numbers. Please hold any applause until a later time. Those members who have recruited over 100 new members between July 1st, 1998 and June 30th, 1999, are: Daniel Barry of Pennsylvania; Carl Althaus of Kentucky; Michael Mastrean of Pennsylvania; Coy Hennis of North Carolina; Daniel Parker of Kentucky; Ken Musselmann of California; Stephen Combs, Kentucky; Jerry Lowenstein of North Carolina; Jeff Hall of Kentucky; Bruce Kaplan of Maine; Dave Goliver of Ohio; Roy Hansen of Minnesota; Robert Sinclair of Massachusetts; Alvin Robinson, North Carolina; Garry Augustine, Ohio; Gary Burns, Maine; William Gibney of New York; Ken Kooyman of Rhode Island; John Parker, California; Jeanette Genovese, Rhode Island; and Mark Van Meter of South Carolina.

And finally this year again, and for the seventh straight row, the top recruiter is New York's very own Prospero Sodano. (Applause) Come on up, Pros. No one has ever won this prestigious award so many times in succession. It's truly a reflection of his commitment to the DAV.

With this award, of course, comes the coveted sports coat. And, of course, now we've used every color in the rainbow. The good news is that we're still buying him the same size that we did seven years ago. Thank you very much, Pros. (Applause)

MR. PROSPERO SODANO: Good morning. I want to thank Mike Walsh and his staff in the Membership because any time I've called their office, they gave me all the equipment, they gave me mailing labels and everything. So there are a lot of members out there. Call up Headquarters for membership in your area and your zips, and they will give it to you. I'll be here next year to get another jacket. Goodbye! (Applause)

MR. WALSH: Again, congratulations on a job well done. It's people like Pros that make all the hard work so worthwhile. Hopefully it also challenges everyone else to reach for those attainable members that exist in all parts of our country. If he can do it, why can't we all?

The people I just recognized are the kinds of people who made it possible for us to finish the year with 1,400,094 members, 893,437 of who are full-paid members. We exceeded our goal this year by adding 5,317 new members. And I know that many of you have already started working on this year's new goals.

Commander, if you will allow me to assist you, I will now make the presentations for the division award winners. Beginning with the smallest division and making our way to the larger ones, I'm pleased to present the winner of Division 5, those departments with fewer than 5,000 members. This year, the Department of Hawaii, led by Commander Michael Gott, exceeded their goal by getting 96 new fully paid members. That's 102.66 percent of their goal. They barely beat out the Department of Alaska, who had been the king for so many years.

Commander Gott could not be with us today, but accepting the award is Present Commander Roger Evangelista. (Applause)

MR. ROGELIO EVANGELISTA: Commander Kistler and Membership Director Michael Walsh, fellow delegates: It's indeed an honor to address all of you today on behalf of the Department of Hawaii. Before I go any further, I'd like to recognize our National Service Officer from the department, Gary Nakamura. Gary, I know you're here; could you please stand? (Applause)

I would also like to recognize our NEC District Pete Buell. Pete? (Applause)

These two gentlemen have helped the department in trying to reach the goals. And as you folks all remember, the late Martin Luther King said, "I have a dream." But you as disabled veterans, you also have a dream, but your dream would be better because it's a reality, and the reality is to have your membership increase so that all disabled veterans can be members of this great organization. Thank you. (Applause)

MR. WALSH: In Division 4, those departments with between 5,000 and 9,999 fully paid members, the winner is the Department of Maine, who came in at 102.16 percent of goal, or 138 fully paid new members. Commander Norm Newell accepts the award. (Applause)

MR. NORMAN L. NEWELL: I'm going to keep it short here. It's really a privilege for me to be up here for two years in a row for this, and I couldn't do it if it weren't for Gary Burns and Bruce Kaplan. I'd like to thank them and all the members of Maine. Thank you. (Applause)

MR. WALSH: In Division 3, representing those departments with between 10,000 and 17,999, which was the closest race throughout the entire year, the Department of Iowa again wins, and the blazer is presented to Commander Dennis Heidick. (Applause)

MR. DENNIS L. HEIDICK: Greetings from the hawk-eye state. National Commander, National Membership Director Walsh, other national officers, fellow comrades: It is indeed a pleasure for me to be accepting this jacket today, but we have other great chapters on the State of Iowa who, along with our great department officers, have worked very diligently over the past few years.

I'd like to recognize some of those who've been instrumental in us attaining this award this year. Our National Service Officers Eric Bertrand and Rob Peterson have done a fantastic job; also our past department commander, Mac McLaskey; our immediate past department commander and present Membership chairman, Colin Busby; our department adjutant, Larry Jatho; and our assistant director, Larry Bowden.

But I'd be remiss if I didn't mention also my local chapter, who did a great year of recruiting this year, Chapter 29 in Fort Dodge, Iowa: Commander Art Dayton; our past commander, Max Landis; our Membership chairman, Ted Meyer. And this was truly a team effort. Everyone pulled together this year and did a good job. Thank you very much. (Applause)

MR. WALSH: The commander has asked that I mention -- the emblem that we put on these jackets are gold lettering with a green background to match the jackets. These things are all handmade, and they recognize the individual division itself. It's a pocket kind of thing.

This year, Division 2 was taken by Minnesota, and Department Commander Henry Sadler. This department picked up 378 fully paid members or came in at 102.43 percent of their goal. This division, of course, is made up of those departments who have between 18,000 and 34,999 members. Commander Sadler. (Applause)

MR. HENRY H. SADLER: Thank you. I just want to recognize a couple of people who were instrumental in this. We've got the greatest adjutant in the entire National. It's Roy Hansen over there. He's totally dedicated to membership. And if you want to know how to do it, talk to Roy. And also our Membership director last year was Wayne Blue, and also the fine members of the State of Minnesota who really went out and did it. Thank you. (Applause)

MR. WALSH: And finally, Division 1, the big guys, who have over 35,000 members. The award goes to the Department of California, who increased their membership by 1,712, for an exceptional feat indeed. Commander Al Tortolano accepts the sports coat this year. (Applause)

MR. ASTRO A. TORTOLANO: Oh, boy! This is overwhelming, I'll tell you. I'm happy and I humbly accept this award. But as you all know, it takes a lot of people to make something like this happen. So at this time, I would like to thank our department adjutant, Ken Musselmann, and his staff and the over 100,000 members in California that I have to share this jacket with. Thank you. (Applause)

MR. WALSH: Ladies and gentlemen, the two final award presentations are given to departments who attained the highest numerical gain in membership and the highest percentage gain. This year, the Wainwright Award for highest numerical gain is given to the Department of California, and accepting on behalf of them is Commander Tortolano again. (Applause)

MR. TORTOLANO: This is also unexpected, and we very gratefully accept this award on behalf of the Department of California, and thank you very much everyone. (Applause)

MR. WALSH: The Marx Award for the department who attains the highest percentage over goal goes to the Department of Hawaii. This award this time is very well deserved and recognizes them for their outstanding effort. Again accepting on behalf of the department is Roger Evangelista. (Applause)

MR. EVANGELISTA: I would like to thank the convention for this award on behalf of the Department of Hawaii. Could we have the people from the Department of Hawaii rise to be recognized also, although there are just a few. Come on, Hawaii! (Applause) Thank you.

MR. WALSH: Commander, this concludes the Membership Awards and report, and I thank you for allowing me to assist you today. It has been an honor to have worked alongside you during your year as national commander.

Thank you, and let's go sign up some members.

COMMANDER KISTLER: Thank you, Mike. (Applause)

I'll accept a motion to approve Mike's report. Mike 3.

MR. SPALDING: Russ Spalding, Chapter 20, Michigan so moves that we accept the Membership report and dismiss with a vote of thanks.

COMMANDER KISTLER: Thank you. May I have a second? Mike 1, go ahead.

MR. JACK FRANQUI, JR.: PDC Jack Franqui, Chapter 1, Arizona, seconds that motion.

COMMANDER KISTLER: Thank you, sir. Question? No questions. All in favor say Aye; opposed. Motion carried.

I'd like to call Wally Tyson, our National Finance Committee chairman for a report. Wally.

NEC 9TH DISTRICT WALLACE E. TYSON: Good morning. National Commander Kistler, fellow members of the National Executive Committee, DAV members and guests: Before I begin my report, please allow me to recognize my fellow members of your National Finance Committee: National Commander Andrew A. Kistler of Pennsylvania; the 11th District NEC David A. Goliver of Ohio; 6th District NEC Thomas C. Johns of Maryland; and 8th District NEC Lloyd E. Helms of Louisiana.

I would also like to recognize National Senior Vice-Commander Michael E. Dobmeier of North Dakota, and National Judge Advocate Edward G. Galian of New York. They serve the committee in a nonvoting capacity.

You have heard good news so far this morning from the national commander, National Adjutant Arthur Wilson, Membership Director Michael Walsh. It is my honor to continue that good news of the DAV. It is my honor and my privilege to present a report on the financial affairs of our organization.

During the first six months of this year, we sent out 40.8 million pieces of fund-raising mail. This amount is up 6.5 million pieces from the same period last year.

The DAV's income from direct mail solicitation as of June 30th stood at $47.6 million. And the net income came in at $28.3 million for the first half of 1999. This is slightly more than the $27.5 million in 1998.

By year's end, we will have dropped over 65 million pieces of fund-raising mail and we expect to generate some $96.4 million in gross revenues.

As for the department fund-raising program, I am pleased to report that each department received $3.70 per member. Now, that is 70 cents more than expected under the contracts with each department. This represents a total distribution of almost $3.9 million, all of which is designated to provide service to disabled veterans, their families and their survivors.

We thank all our departments and chapters for their continued support of this program, especially when speaking with our members, because it truly does so much to enhance the service programs offered by your departments.

In terms of the overall financial picture, our net worth climbed beyond $140 million as of June 30th, 1999. In addition to the fund-raising factors I've already discussed, the value of our investment portfolio increased to $154 million, an increase of 11.7 percent, quite a stellar performance in any financial environment, wouldn't you agree?

Under the leadership of National Adjutant Art Wilson, we have achieved a huge financial success. However, I must also point out to you that the financial reserves of the national organization are well within the guidelines established for departments and chapters of no more than two times last year's expenses.

Action by the national organization to reduce distribution to itself by a total of a $1.50 per member in addition to a favorable investment climate helped the Life Membership Fund. This fund is now worth $95 million. As it stands today, the fund will be depleted by the year 2045. This is an important improvement of 19 additional years over what we reported as of June 30th last year. This is very encouraging news. However, we will continue to watch this fund very closely.

Before closing, I would like to thank the other members of the National Finance Committee, National Adjutant Art Wilson, the DAV's professional staff, both in Cincinnati and Washington, for their prudent and successful management of our organization.

On behalf of the other members of the National Finance Committee, making sure we do our job correctly, I must offer a personal thanks on behalf of the five of us to Sandi Buchanan. We thank you for everything you've helped us accomplish this year.

I want to thank the members of the 9th District, Georgia, South Carolina and North Carolina, as well as my family, for their support and encouragement during what I consider two of the most wonderful years of my life as a member of the NEC. (Applause)

It has been wonderful, a tremendous experience, to be a part of such a dynamic service organization as the Disabled American Veterans.

Let me thank you, Commander Kistler, for the support I received in my role as the Finance Committee chairman. It has been my honor to serve you as the chairman of this most important committee.

Commander, delegates, this concludes my report to the National Convention, a report I feel honored to present to our delegates. Again, I thank you, and I move for the adoption of my report. (Applause)

COMMANDER KISTLER: Thank you, Wally, for that very informative financial report. At this time I will now accept the motion for Mr. Tyson's report from Mike 3.

MR. JAMES HORNSHAW: Jim Hornshaw, Chapter 22, Parksley, Virginia, a motion that we accept the financial report as read.

COMMANDER KISTLER: I'm sorry. Wally made the motion, sir. Would you do that again and make a second to the motion? Thank you.

MR. HORNSHAW: Jim Hornshaw, Chapter 22, Parksley, Virginia, District 6, seconds the motion.

COMMANDER KISTLER: Thank you. Question on the motion? All in favor say Aye; opposed. Motion carried. Thank you, Wally.

Deloitte & Touche

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS

Financial Statements for the Year Ended December 31, 1998 and Independent Auditors' Report

Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS

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Deloitte & Touche LLP
250 East Fifth Street
P.O. Box 5340
Cincinnati, Ohio 45201-5340
Telephone: (513) 784-7100

INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT

National Finance Committee
Disabled American Veterans:

We have audited the accompanying statement of financial position of Disabled American Veterans (DAV) as of December 31, 1998, 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 generally accepted auditing standards. 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 examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. An audit also includes 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, 1998 and the changes in its net assets and cash flows for the year then ended in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles.

Deloitte & Touche LLP

March 23, 1999

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
DECEMBER 31, 1998

ASSETS		LIABILITIES AND UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS	
ASSETS:		LIABILITIES:	
Cash	$ 2,684,667	Accounts payable	$ 4,596,932
Accounts receivable	1,455,807	Accrued expenses:	
Solicitation materials	3,227,859	Salaries and related taxes and withholdings	493,709
Prepaid expenses	2,970,346	Sick leave	4,196,988
Intangible pension asset (Note 5)	7,340,320	Medical	499,945
Investments (Note 2)	168,145,429	Pension (Note 5)	24,490,426
Property & equipment, net (Note 2)	11,517,398	Postretirement benefits (Note 5)	20,310,096
Life Membership:		Deferred dues and service fees collected in advance (Note 4)	3,623,895
Cash	500,695	Other	1,423,314
Investments (Note 2)	92,606,031	Life Membership:	
		Accounts payable	72,005
		Reserve for future distribution of life membership dues (Note 4)	93,034,721
		Total liabilities	152,742,031
		UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS (Note 3)	137,706,521
TOTAL	$290,448,552	TOTAL	$290,448,552

See notes to financial statements.

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DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 1998

SUPPORT AND REVENUE:	
Support:	
Contributions received primarily from direct mail solicitations (Note 2)	$ 90,584,185
Contributed services and facilities, primarily services (Note 2)	19,717,766
List royalties	1,971,602
Bequests	2,210,656
Total support	114,484,209
Revenue:	
Membership dues and fees (Note 4)	7,413,484
Income from investments	6,688,932
Gain on sale of investments	4,276,780
Miscellaneous	215,113
Total revenue	18,594,309
Total support and revenue	133,078,518
EXPENSES:	
Program Services:	
National Service Program	38,207,534
Legislative Service Program	677,404
Voluntary Service Program	20,107,107
State Services, Relief Programs, and Memorials	4,498,875
Publications and Other Communications	2,688,084
Membership Services	4,956,123
Public Awareness Outreach	15,122,670
Total Program Services	86,257,797
Supporting Services:	
Fund Raising Costs	29,959,237
Administrative and General Expenses	5,216,474
Total Supporting Services	35,175,711
Total Expenses	121,433,508
EXCESS OF SUPPORT AND REVENUE OVER EXPENSES	11,645,010
INCREASE IN UNREALIZED APPRECIATION OF INVESTMENTS (Note 2)	8,815,669
EXCESS OF SUPPORT, REVENUE AND UNREALIZED APPRECIATION ON INVESTMENTS OVER EXPENSES	20,460,679
ADJUSTMENT TO RECORD MINIMUM PENSION LIABILITY (Note 5)	(13,066,167)
INCREASE IN UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS	7,394,512
UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS, Beginning of year	130,312,009
UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS, End of year	$ 137,706,521

See notes to financial statements.

STATEMENT OF FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 1998

	National Service Program	Legislative Service	Voluntary Service Program	State Services, Relief Programs and Memorials	Publications and Other Communications	Membership Services	Public Awareness Outreach	Total Program Services	Fund Raising Costs	Administrative and General Expenses	Total Supporting Services	Total Expenses 1998
Salaries (Note 2)	$16,538,250	$282,885	$ 354,917		$ 407,842	$1,005,571	$ 2,270	$18,591,735	$ 4,587,700	$ 3,030,008	$ 7,617,708	$ 26,209,443
Employee benefits (Note 5)	12,278,726	110,814	130,702		167,202	724,671		13,412,115	1,886,183	2,123,030	4,009,213	17,421,328
Payroll taxes	1,271,835	20,224	30,199		32,838	77,391	244	1,432,731	410,359	262,284	672,643	2,105,374
DAV transportation network - volunteers			18,127,058					18,127,058				18,127,058
Winter sports clinic			335,341					335,341				335,341
Colorado Trust			500,000					500,000				500,000
Other grants	2,000		3,814					5,814				5,814
Disaster relief				$ 78,400				78,400				78,400
State Service Program				3,895,185				3,895,185				3,895,185
Memorials				525,000				525,000				525,000
Scholarship				290				290				290
Expenses of national convention						442,040		442,040				442,040
Expenses of national commander and committees						497,546		497,546				497,546
Travel and relocation	2,025,324	28,819	127,830		28,610	68,666		2,279,249	59,825	212,430	272,255	2,551,504
Facilities	1,590,708							1,590,708				1,590,708
Postage and shipping	314,545	27,535	39,541		790,091	274,243	12,866	1,458,821	6,244,000	28,406	6,272,406	7,731,227
Equipment rental and maintenance	284,844	1,615	1,415		135	4,316		292,325	313,917	446,446	760,363	1,052,688
Supplies	527,035	59,338	350,339		110,610	178,492	8,135	1,233,949	544,070	363,818	907,888	2,141,837
Insurance	83,774	754	30,648		558	558		116,292	23,464	135,980	159,444	275,736
Telephone	102,445	138	1,121		1,122	4,664		109,490	16,292	68,461	84,753	194,243
Outside service	238,256	6,911	64,363		19,805	12,693	7,528	349,556	734,624	195,229	929,853	1,279,409
Project costs	21,300	133,500	1,300		135,071			291,171				291,171
Printing of magazine					969,880			969,880				969,880
Cost of solicitation mailings - materials						500		500	28,240,636		28,240,636	28,241,136
Heat, light, water and power	100,418							100,418	334,777	408	335,185	435,603
Security service	83,108							83,108	184,939		184,939	268,047
Depreciation of property and equipment	822,597	82	7,899		14,414	7,605		852,597	503,231	643,348	1,146,579	1,999,176
Legal fees	22,222					(2,541)		19,681		90,326	90,326	110,007
Professional fees	357,989	3,200				99,014		460,203	80,305	711,689	791,994	1,252,197
Allocations to (from) other departments	1,386,986					1,536,261	15,091,627	18,014,874	(14,254,026)	(3,760,848)	(18,014,874)	
Other	155,172	1,589	620		9,906	24,433		191,720	48,941	665,459	714,400	906,120
Total, year ended December 31, 1998	$38,207,534	$677,404	$20,107,107	$4,498,875	$2,688,084	$4,956,123	$15,122,670	$86,257,797	$29,959,237	$ 5,216,474	$35,175,711	$121,433,508

See notes to financial statements.

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 1998

CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES:	
Increase in unrestricted net assets	$ 7,394,512
Adjustments to reconcile increase in unrestricted net assets to net cash provided by operating activities:	
Adjustment to record minimum pension liability	13,066,167
Depreciation and amortization	2,021,789
Increase in unrealized appreciation of investments	(8,815,669)
Loss on disposal of property and equipment	85,309
Investment gains	(4,276,780)
Changes in operating assets and liabilities:	
Accounts and interest/dividends receivable	344,120
Solicitation materials	(721,839)
Prepaid expenses	(284,990)
Accounts payable	1,283,719
Accrued expenses	3,047,668
Deferred dues and service fees and other	534,847
Reserve for future distribution of life membership dues	3,790,566
Net cash provided by operating activities	17,469,419
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES:	
Net cost of investment purchases	(8,486,336)
Payments for property and equipment	(3,889,369)
Proceeds from sales of property and equipment	5,723
Increase in life membership investments	(3,538,691)
Net cash used in investing activities	(15,908,673)
NET INCREASE IN CASH	1,560,746
CASH, Beginning of year	1,624,616
CASH, End of year	$ 3,185,362

See notes to financial statements.

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 1998

1. ORGANIZATION

Disabled American Veterans (DAV) is a Congressionally chartered, not-for-profit service organization. Made up 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 government;
- 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.

Investments - Investments are recorded at fair (market) 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, for general investments (also see Note 4), are reflected as a separate component of revenue.

The cost and market value of investments in securities and the net unrealized gain at December 31, 1998 are summarized below:

General	Cost	Market Value	Unrealized Net Gain
Cash equivalents	$ 17,135,976	$ 17,135,976	
Corporate bonds	46,062,432	46,830,734	$ 768,302
U.S. Treasury obligations	37,123,285	38,520,333	1,397,048
Common stocks	29,504,824	43,339,333	13,834,509
Common stock funds	14,775,793	21,128,672	6,352,879
Subtotal	$144,602,310	166,955,048	$22,352,738
Interest and dividends receivable		1,190,381	
Total		$168,145,429	
Life Membership			
Cash equivalents	$ 2,976,562	$ 2,976,562	
Corporate bonds	18,867,126	19,185,092	$ 317,966
U.S. Treasury obligations	11,959,258	12,412,358	453,100
Common stocks	32,269,242	53,062,478	20,793,236
Common stock funds	3,487,528	4,444,505	956,977
Subtotal	$ 69,559,716	92,080,995	$22,521,279
Interest and dividends receivable		525,036	
Total		$ 92,606,031	

Property and Equipment - Property and equipment are stated at cost less accumulated depreciation, and are composed of the following at December 31, 1998:

	Cost	Accumulated Depreciation	Net Book Value
Land and improvements	$ 936,465	$ 360,276	$ 576,189
Buildings and improvements	8,944,059	4,245,877	4,698,182
Machinery and other equipment	14,774,344	8,531,317	6,243,027
Total	$24,654,868	$13,137,470	$11,517,398

Depreciation is computed generally on the straight-line method over the estimated useful life of assets which range from 3 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.

Contributed Services and Facilities - DAV operates extensive programs through which volunteers contribute many hours of service to veterans; however, only a portion of those hours, those donated to veterans at medical facilities of the VA, are tabulated. Of the 2,374,029 hours accounted for in 1998 - 1,319,291 are for the DAV's Nationwide Transportation Network. Using a formula 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 $18,127,058. 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 1,054,738 hours -- valued at $14,492,100 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 is exempt from Federal income tax as a 501(c)(4) organization. Contributions made to DAV are tax deductible pursuant to Title 26 U.S.C., Section 170(c).

Use of Estimates - The preparation of the financial statements in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles 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 support, revenues and expenses during the reporting period. Actual amounts could differ from those estimates.

Allocation of Joint Costs - In 1998, DAV incurred joint costs of $41,921,186 for informational materials and activities that included fund-raising appeals. Of those costs, $15,091,627 was allocated to public awareness outreach (program services) and $26,829,559 was allocated to fund raising costs.

3. DESIGNATED NET ASSETS

Certain unrestricted net assets have been designated by DAV's National Finance Committee for scholarships and disaster relief. As of December 31, 1998, $258,127 is designated for assistance to disabled veterans and their families who have suffered losses resulting from natural disasters. Another $105,924 is designated for scholarships to children of disabled veterans who qualify scholastically and are in need of financial aid.

4. 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 life members. Generally, life membership assets for national 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 following summary represents the changes during 1998 in the reserve for future distribution of membership dues:

Balance, January 1, 1998	$86,627,286
Additions:	
Membership dues received	3,207,932
Earnings on invested assets	2,531,385
Gain on sale of investments	11,017,548
Total	16,756,865
Distribution of membership dues:	
National Headquarters	7,440,933
Local Chapters	2,459,486
State Departments	3,065,880
Total	12,966,299
Increase in unrealized appreciation of investments	2,616,869
Balance, December 31, 1998	$93,034,721

5. PENSION PLAN AND POSTRETIREMENT BENEFITS

The DAV adopted SFAS No. 132, "Employers' Disclosures about Pensions and Other Postretirement Benefits" in 1998. Adoption of this standard does not impact the reported results of operations or financial position, however, footnote disclosures have been changed from the disclosures previously required.

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. Effective January 1, 1998 the Plan was amended. The benefits for the participants of the DAV Retirement Plan were modified and these modifications resulted in a decrease of the pension benefit obligation of approximately $11,000,000. A Pension Equity Plan was implemented for employees hired after December 31, 1997. In 1998, 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.

DAV provides certain health care and life insurance benefits for its retired employees and their spouses. Substantially all of DAV's employees may become eligible for these benefits if they reach normal retirement age while working for DAV.

Summarized information for the plans is as follows:

	Pension	Other Postretirement Benefits
As of December 31, 1998:		
Projected benefit obligation	$ 77,659,347	
Accumulated postretirement benefit obligation		$ 45,276,000
Fair value of plan assets	48,989,082	288,000
Funded status	(28,670,265)	(44,988,000)
Accrued benefit cost recognized in the statement of financial position	(24,490,426)	(20,310,096)
For the year ended December 31, 1998:		
Benefit cost (including pension settlement cost of $7,664,000 related to lump sum payment option under the Plan)	11,190,785	5,413,000
Employer contribution	10,000,000	1,640,000
Plan participants' contributions		72,000
Benefits paid	(28,821,584)	(1,820,000)
Weighted-average rate assumptions used for the December 31 valuation:		
Discount rate	6.75 %	6.75 %
Expected return on plan assets	8.75 %	7.25 %

The provisions of SFAS No. 87, "Employers' Accounting for Pensions," required the DAV to record an additional minimum liability of $20,406,487 at December 31, 1998. This liability represents the amount by which the accumulated benefit obligation ($73,479,508) exceeded the sum of the fair market value of plan assets and accrued amounts previously recorded. The additional minimum liability was offset by a $7,340,320 intangible asset and resulted in a $13,066,167 charge to net assets.

The accumulated postretirement benefit obligation 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 9.5% in 1998 to 5.5% in 2017, after which the trend rate is expected to stabilize.

DAV also maintains a defined contribution Salary Savings and Investment Plan for its employees. For qualified employees electing to participate in the Plan, DAV contributes a percentage of the employees' base salary. DAV's contributions in 1998 were $825,093 and are included in employee benefits expense in the accompanying statement of functional expenses.

6. RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS

Disabled American Veterans National Service Foundation - The accompanying financial statements do not include the net assets (or changes therein) of the Disabled American Veterans National Service Foundation ("Foundation") which are held by the Foundation and available to DAV only through appropriation by the Foundation's Board of Directors. The National Service Foundation is a separate entity from DAV, operating under its own bylaws. Based upon audited financial statements at December 31, 1998, net assets of the Foundation were $22,958,497. During 1998, DAV provided the Foundation with the use of DAV personnel, facilities and equipment. For the personnel services, DAV

charged the Foundation $111,051. Facilities and equipment are provided by DAV at no charge. Additionally, in 1998, DAV contributed $500,000 to The Colorado 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, 1998, the Foundation owed $68,500 to DAV which is recorded as accounts receivable in the accompanying statement of financial position.

DAV Vietnam Veterans National Memorial, Inc. - The DAV Vietnam Veterans National Memorial, Inc. ("Memorial") was organized to maintain a national memorial to veterans of the Vietnam war. The Memorial is a separate entity from DAV, operating under its own bylaws. DAV provided the Memorial with certain personnel and administrative services and the use of its facilities and equipment for which no compensation was received. In the period from January 1, 1998 to March 10, 1999, the DAV Vietnam Veterans National Memorial, Inc. gifted the Memorial and other assets to the David Westphall Veterans Foundation, Inc. a New Mexico nonprofit corporation and the DAV Vietnam Veterans National Memorial, Inc. terminated its corporate existence on January 25, 1999.

Disabled American Veterans Charitable Service Trust - Disabled American Veterans Charitable Service Trust ("Trust") was established in 1986. The Trust is a 501(c)(3) tax exempt entity which receives most of its contributions from the Combined Federal Campaign. The Trust is a separate entity from DAV, operating under its own bylaws. During 1998, DAV provided the Trust with the use of DAV personnel, facilities and equipment. For the personnel services, DAV charged the Trust $34,820. Facilities and equipment are provided by DAV at no charge.

* * * * * *

Deloitte & Touche

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS AUXILIARY NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

Financial Statements for the Year Ended December 31, 1998 and Independent Auditors' Report

Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu

Deloitte & Touche

Deloitte & Touche LLP
250 East Fifth Street
P.O. Box 5340
Cincinnati, Ohio 45201-5340
Telephone: (513) 784-7100

INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT

National Finance Committee,
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, 1998 and the related statements of activities 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 generally accepted auditing standards. 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 examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. An audit also includes 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, 1998 and the changes in its net assets and its cash flows for the year then ended in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles.

Deloitte + Touche LLP

March 17, 1999

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS AUXILIARY
NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
DECEMBER 31, 1998 WITH COMPARATIVE AMOUNTS FOR 1997

ASSETS	1998	1997
GENERAL ASSETS:		
Cash and cash equivalents (Note 2)	$ 3,493,397	$ 3,202,453
Investments at fair market value (Note 2)	1,094,926	895,558
Accrued interest receivable	18,205	7,790
Materials and supplies	125,227	111,202
Prepaid expenses	17,541	17,985
Other assets	41,209	19,995
DISASTER RELIEF PROGRAM ASSETS - Cash and cash equivalents (Notes 2,5)	8,513	8,383
SERVICE PROGRAM ASSETS - Cash and cash equivalents (Notes 2,5)	194,104	162,625
EDUCATION LOAN PROGRAM ASSETS:		
Cash and cash equivalents (Notes 2,5)	869,356	819,072
Notes receivable (less allowance of $6,600 in 1998 and 1997) (Note 5)	172,788	176,574
LIFE MEMBERSHIP ASSETS:		
Cash and cash equivalents (Notes 2,4)	423,862	3,340
Accrued interest receivable	111,579	105,239
Investments at fair market value (Notes 2,4)	8,234,843	8,514,701
TOTAL	$14,805,550	$14,044,917

LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	1998	1997
LIABILITIES:		
Accounts payable - DAV National Headquarters	$ 266,201	$ 183,912
Contributions distributable to state departments	113,828	197,829
Accrued vacation and sick leave pay	100,323	117,811
Deferred membership fees (Note 2)	615,632	592,240
Other	7,561	9,489
Reserve for future distribution of Life Membership dues (Note 4)	8,770,284	8,623,280
Total liabilities	9,873,829	9,724,561
NET ASSETS:		
Unrestricted - General (Note 3)	3,686,960	3,153,702
Temporarily restricted - Service Program (Note 5)	194,104	162,625
Temporarily restricted - Disaster Relief Program (Note 5)	8,513	8,383
Permanently restricted - Education Loan Program (Note 5)	1,042,144	995,646
Total net assets	4,931,721	4,320,356
TOTAL	$14,805,550	$14,044,917

See notes to financial statements.

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS AUXILIARY
NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 1998 WITH COMPARATIVE AMOUNTS FOR 1997

	1998					
	Unrestricted General	Temporarily Restricted - Service Program	Temporarily Restricted - Disaster Relief Program	Permanently Restricted - Education Loan Program	Total	1997 Total
SUPPORT AND REVENUE:						
Membership fees and mandates	$ 485,901	$ 7,598		$ 8,532	$ 502,031	$ 502,457
Life Membership dues (Note 4)	722,298				722,298	705,732
Contributions (Note 2)	219,759	24,096	$ 1,530	13,566	258,951	351,503
Contributed facilities (Notes 2,7)	25,300				25,300	25,300
Sale of membership items, less related direct costs of $47,156	(5,154)				(5,154)	(4,515)
Conference and meetings	12,972				12,972	12,491
National convention	18,740				18,740	24,260
Interest income	233,622	7,127		24,400	265,149	201,880
Net assets released from restrictions	8,554	(7,154)	(1,400)			
Other	18,457	(188)			18,269	12,852
Total revenues	1,740,449	31,479	130	46,498	1,818,556	1,831,960
EXPENSES:						
Salaries and wages	381,230				381,230	381,135
Employee benefits (Note 6)	124,676				124,676	134,631
Distributions to state departments	137,669				137,669	159,462
Fundraising expenses	82,090				82,090	116,594
Membership drive expenses	97,468				97,468	136,959
Payroll taxes	30,720				30,720	31,005
Conferences and meetings	52,498				52,498	55,767
Expenses of National Convention	63,673				63,673	57,777
Printing, stationery and office supplies	37,900				37,900	41,777
Expenses of National Commander and officers	16,173				16,173	15,354
Contributed facilities (Notes 2,7)	25,300				25,300	25,300
Postage	56,668				56,668	59,254
Travel	30,037				30,037	28,072
Professional fees	12,800				12,800	12,350
Service program benefits	7,154				7,154	8,314
Disaster relief program benefits	1,400				1,400	6,732
VAVS, memberships and other awards	14,976				14,976	18,324
Other	34,759				34,759	39,355
Total expenses	1,207,191				1,207,191	1,328,162
CHANGES IN NET ASSETS	533,258	31,479	130	46,498	611,365	503,798
NET ASSETS, Beginning of year	3,153,702	162,625	8,383	995,646	4,320,356	3,816,558
NET ASSETS, End of year	$3,686,960	$194,104	$ 8,513	$1,042,144	$4,931,721	$4,320,356

See notes to financial statements.

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS AUXILIARY
NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 1998 WITH COMPARATIVE AMOUNTS FOR 1997

	1998	1997
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES:		
Change in net assets	$ 611,365	$ 503,798
Adjustments to reconcile change in net assets to cash provided by operating activities:		
Permanently restricted contributions and interest income	(46,498)	(71,708)
Change in assets and liabilities:		
Accrued interest receivable	(16,755)	6,389
Prepaid expenses and other assets	(20,770)	5,177
Materials and supplies	(14,025)	29,091
Accounts payable and accrued expenses	64,801	(56,207)
Deferred membership fees	23,392	(12,919)
Reserve for life membership dues	19,030	108,076
Contributions distributable to state departments	(84,001)	58,432
Other liabilities	(1,928)	2,755
Total adjustments	(76,754)	69,086
Net cash provided by operations	534,611	572,884
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES:		
Increase in general fund investments	(199,368)	(895,558)
(Increase) decrease in Life Membership investments	407,831	(618,667)
Education loans	(30,000)	(32,300)
Collections from repayment of education loans	33,787	36,100
Net cash provided by (used in) investing activities	212,250	(1,510,425)
CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES -		
Permanently restricted education fund contributions and interest income	46,498	71,708
NET INCREASE (DECREASE) IN CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS	793,359	(865,833)
CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS:		
Beginning of year	4,195,873	5,061,706
End of year	$4,989,232	$4,195,873

See notes to financial statements.

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS AUXILIARY
NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 1998

1. ORGANIZATION

The Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary National Headquarters (DAV Auxiliary) is a not-for-profit membership and service organization organized under the provisions of the National Constitution of the Disabled American Veterans (DAV). The 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. The DAV auxiliary is exempt from income taxes under Section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code.

2. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

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

The accompanying financial statements include certain prior year information summarized from DAV Auxiliary's 1997 financial statements. Such information does not include sufficient detail, and is not intended, to constitute a presentation in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles.

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.

Cash and Cash Equivalents - For the purpose of reporting cash flows, the DAV Auxiliary considers all highly liquid debt instruments purchased with a maturity of three months or less to be cash and cash equivalents.

Investments - The DAV Auxiliary records investments at fair (market) value. The fair value of the DAV Auxiliary's investments is determined based on the quoted market price of the related securities. Gains and losses resulting from the sale of securities are recognized at the time of disposition and are computed using the specific identification method.

The cost and market value of investments in securities and the net unrealized gain (loss) at December 31, 1998 are summarized below:

	Cost	Market Value	Unrealized Net Gain
Cash and cash equivalents	$ 472,517	$ 472,517	
Corporate bonds	4,452,125	4,511,588	$ 59,463
U.S. Treasury obligations	4,212,991	4,345,664	132,673
Total	$9,137,633	$9,329,769	$192,136

Deferred Membership Fees - The 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.

Use of Estimates - The preparation of the financial statements in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles 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. FREEDOM FOUNDATION

The DAV Auxiliary has designated $8,636 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.

4. RESERVE FOR FUTURE DISTRIBUTION OF LIFE MEMBERSHIP DUES

Under its by-laws life membership in the DAV Auxiliary is available to any person eligible for senior membership. Amounts paid 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 life members. Generally, Life Membership assets for national per capita dues are transferred to the general assets of the 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 dues are distributed to units and departments at the beginning of the membership year.

The following summary represents the changes during 1998 in the reserve for future distribution of dues:

Balance, January 1, 1998	$8,623,280
Additions:	
Membership dues received	345,953
Earnings on invested assets	610,976
Unrealized appreciation of investments	127,973
Total	1,084,902
Deductions:	
Dues to National Headquarters	722,298
Dues to Local units	79,346
Dues to State Departments	114,132
Investment fee	22,122
Total	937,898
Balance, December 31, 1998	$8,770,284

5. 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 in permanently restricted assets from which loans are made to students in accordance with the by-laws of the DAV Auxiliary. The maximum amount of an education loan is $1,000 per year for a maximum of four 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.

Disaster Relief Program - Donations from units and individuals are recorded as temporarily restricted net assets which are used for members of the 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 the DAV Auxiliary who are in need of temporary financial assistance in accordance with the by-laws of the DAV Auxiliary. The total amount of assistance is limited to $500 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.

6. EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

All employees of the DAV Auxiliary are covered by Disabled American Veterans Retirement Plan, a defined benefit pension plan. The benefits are based on years of service and the employee's compensation during the last three years of service. Contributions are intended to provide not only for benefits attributed to service to date, but also for those expected in the future. In 1998, DAV charged the DAV Auxiliary $79,910 for its share of the retirement plan cost.

DAV provides certain health care and life insurance benefits for its retired employees and their spouses. All employees of the DAV Auxiliary may become eligible for these benefits if they reach normal retirement age while working for the DAV Auxiliary. In 1998, DAV did not charge the DAV Auxiliary for these benefits.

7. **RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS**

The DAV Auxiliary occupies space in the DAV National Headquarter's building and also uses certain office equipment owned by the DAV. No fees are charged for such usage. The value of these contributed facilities is estimated to be $25,300 in 1998 and is included as revenue and expense on the accompanying statement of activities.

Certain costs are paid by DAV National Headquarters on behalf of the DAV Auxiliary. Such costs are reimbursed by the DAV Auxiliary.

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COMMANDER KISTLER: We will now hear from the Finance and Dues Committee by Arthur Cushing.

MR. ARTHUR S. CUSHING: Comrade Commander, officers and delegates: The National Convention Committee on Finance and Dues was called to order for its first business session on August 23rd, 1999 by the committee advisors, Wallace Tyson and Richard Patterson. The first order of business was election of a convention committee chairman. Arthur S. Cushing and William D. Brzezinski were nominated for chairman. There being no further nominations, nominations were closed, and Arthur Cushing was elected chairman. He's a certified public accountant.

The next order of business was the nomination and election of the secretary. James O. Stewart was nominated and elected as secretary of the committee.

The committee considered one resolution, Number 157, which was rejected.

The committee reviewed the proposed year 2000 budget with the committee advisors, and with the assistance of Comptroller Anita F. Blum. The proposed budget was referred to the National Convention Committee on Finance and Dues by the National Finance Committee with recommendation for adoption. Following completion of the committee's review, the committee voted unanimously for the National Convention to adopt the proposed 2000 budget.

The committee then expressed its thanks to the committee advisors, Wallace Tyson and Richard E. Patterson, who were aided by Comptroller Anita Blum, for their assistance in performing the work of this important committee.

Comrade Commander, this completes the report of the Committee on Finance and Dues, and I hereby move for the adoption of the report and ask that the committee be discharged with thanks of the National Convention. This was signed by all the members of the committee.

COMMANDER KISTLER: Thank you for that fine report. Is there a second to the motion? Mike 2.

MR. EARL L. FRAZIER: Earl Frazier, Chapter 148, Department of California, seconds it.

COMMANDER KISTLER: Thank you. Question on the motion? All in favor say Aye; opposed. The motion carried. Thank you, chairman.

We will now hear a report from the General Resolutions and Membership Committee by Chairman Glen Vogel.

MR. GLEN E. VOGEL, SR.: Comrade Commander and delegates: The National Convention Committee on General Resolutions was called to order for its first business session on August 23rd, 1999 by Committee Advisor Rick Surratt. The first order of business was the election of a convention committee chairman. Glen Vogel and James Tanner were nominated for chairman. There being no further nominations, nominations were closed; Glen Vogel was elected chairman.

The next order of business was the nomination and election of secretary. Herbert Lewis was nominated and elected as secretary of the committee.

The committee then proceeded to review the resolutions submitted, and I will now report to you the resolutions recommended for adoption by the National Convention. For the purpose of saving time, I will only read the number and RESOLVED portion of the resolution.

Resolution Number 52, supporting a strong national defense.

Number 53. Encourage all veterans to become registered voters and vote.

Number 100. To construct a monument to commemorate the sacrifices of America's disabled veterans.

Number 221. To condemn public desecration of the flag of the United States. (Applause)

Resolution Number 243. Appreciation to all those who were responsible for the success of the National Convention.

Number 244. Appreciation to Coronado Springs Resort.

Number 242. Appreciation for National Commander Andrew A. Kistler, and I'd like to read that resolution in its entirety. Resolution expressing appreciation to National Commander Andrew A.

Kistler.

WHEREAS, Andrew A. Kistler, a combat-disabled veteran of the Korean War, and life member of the Disabled American Veterans, has devoted himself to our organization and its cause throughout the nearly 20 years he has been a member; and

WHEREAS, despite the effects of serious disabilities from his war wounds, he has worked enthusiastically, energetically, diligently, and tirelessly to improve the lives of disabled veterans and their families; and

WHEREAS, his outstanding dedication, contributions and achievements have earned him recognition and numerous awards, including the honor of being named Pennsylvania's Disabled Veteran of the Year for 1993 - 1994; and

WHEREAS, after having served faithfully and with distinction in many positions at the chapter, state, and national level, earning the respect and confidence of our more than one million members, he was elected to our organization's highest office, National Commander; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Kistler performed his duties as National Commander with caring compassion, commitment, and character, yet was unshakable in the face of challenge, and held steadfast against all adversity; and

WHEREAS, through his genuineness, generosity and self-sacrifice, he stood as a beacon and touched, encouraged, and inspired all of us; and

WHEREAS, he fulfilled his duties as National Commander in an exemplary fashion and his legacy of good work, service, and perseverance will stand as a benchmark for future National Commanders; and

WHEREAS, though modest and unassuming, with his quiet courage and wisdom, he upheld with grace, dignity, and honor the highest traditions of the DAV and carried forward the unique spirit and special bonds we share as disabled veterans; and

WHEREAS, his leadership has been a bright, positive force that stands as a tribute to our great organization; and

WHEREAS, he has earned our affection, admiration, and highest esteem and deserves our praise, our thanks, and our gratitude; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 21st to 25th, 1999, expresses its members' deepest and heartfelt appreciation to Commander Kistler for his special contributions to disabled veterans, their families, and our organization;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we also extend our sincere appreciation to Commander Kistler's wife, Jean, for her assistance, support, and sacrifices during his year as DAV's National Commander.

Comrade Commander, this completes the report of the Committee on General Resolutions, and I move the adoption of these resolutions. Thank you.

(The above-mentioned resolutions follow.)

RESOLUTION NO. 052—LEGISLATIVE

TO 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 our guard down; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 21-25,

1999, goes on record urging Congress to provide adequate funds for the defense of our Nation both at home and abroad.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 053—LEGISLATIVE

TO 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 by providing adequate funding for veterans' benefits and health care; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. 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 all 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 stricter 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 Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, 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 DAV 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 DAV 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. 100—LEGISLATIVE

TO CONSTRUCT A MONUMENT TO COMMEMORATE THE SACRIFICES OF AMERICA'S DISABLED VETERANS

WHEREAS, it has been three decades since Americans were involved in a large-scale ground war that resulted in large numbers of significant, 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 daily face the threat of hostile action in Bosnia and other hot spots around the world, some of them coming home wounded, awareness of their sacrifices among the American people remains distressingly low; and

WHEREAS, the extent of this forgetfulness 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, historically the largest cohort in the veterans population; 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, the circumstances above 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., in order 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 statue or commemorative structure on the Washington Mall or in another very prominent location in our Nation's Capital would be extremely useful in permanently reminding the American people of the sacrifices made by disabled veterans; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, seeks the necessary approval and private financial support for the construction and maintenance of a monument honoring the sacrifices of those veterans disabled while in military service to their country and that such monument be placed in a prestigious location in the Nation's Capital, with a strong recommendation that it be placed on the Washington Mall.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 221—LEGISLATIVE

TO 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, courageous, 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 Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, shall go 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. 243—ADMINISTRATIVE

APPRECIATION TO ALL WHO ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE SUCCESS OF THE 78TH NATIONAL CONVENTION

WHEREAS, the success of the 78th DAV National Convention convened in Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, 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 Frank Tracy; 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 Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, 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 Orlando, Florida, 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 the Convention Chairman, Frank Tracy, and his entire Committee for providing personalized assistance to our friends and delegates during our Convention stay.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 244 ADMINISTRATIVE

APPRECIATION TO THE CORONADO SPRINGS RESORT FOR THE SUCCESS OF THE 78TH NATIONAL CONVENTION

WHEREAS, the assistance and cooperation of the Coronado Springs Resort was essential to the success of the 78th DAV National Convention, convened in Orlando, Florida; and

WHEREAS, the responsiveness of the hotel's employees to the requirements of the Convention was beyond compare, meriting the gratitude of the DAV's officers, delegates and staff; and

WHEREAS, the courtesy of the hotel staff to the delegates and guests at the Convention was superb throughout the entire course of the National Convention; and

WHEREAS, everyone associated with the hotel exhibited the highest degree of professionalism in all areas of their association with the National Convention; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, expresses its sincere gratitude to the Coronado Springs Resort and all of its employees for their exceptional assistance in making the convention a tremendous success.

COMMANDER KISTLER: Thank you, Chairman Vogel. Mike 1.

MR. FRANK J. DROGO: Frank Drogo, Braintree Chapter 29, past department commander, alternate national committeeman, recommends to second the motion.

COMMANDER KISTLER: Thank you. Question on the motion? All in favor, Aye; opposed. Motion carried. Thank you, Chairman Vogel. (Applause)

I would like to have Arthur Wilson make an announcement at this time.

ADJUTANT WILSON: Commander, it's important that we mention how we treat rejected resolutions. In accordance with Rule 9 -- and that's in the Bylaws at Page 12 and 13 -- rejected resolutions may be called up for consideration by proponents at the time the motion to discharge the said committee is in order, but before consideration of the motion. I think it's important that you all remember that in case it becomes an issue. Thank you.

COMMANDER KISTLER: We will now hear a report on the Employment Committee by Chairman Rae White.

MS. M. RAE WHITE: Comrade Commander and delegates: The National Convention Committee on Employment was called to order for its first business session on August 23rd, 1999 by the committee advisors, Bradley Barton and Anthony Baskerville. The first order of business was the election of the convention committee chairperson. M. Rae White was nominated for chairperson. M. Rae White was elected as chairperson.

The next order of business was the nomination and election of a secretary. Daniel Memmesheimer was nominated and was elected as secretary of the committee.

The committee then proceeded to review the resolutions submitted, and I will now read the report to you, the resolutions recommended for adoption by the National Convention. For the purpose of saving time, I will read only those resolution portions that were adopted.

011. Amend legislation that gives disabled veterans priority in affirmative action as a group within the other designated groups for which affirmative action is required.

Number 12. Support legislation to provide outreach and employment programs to women veterans.

Number 13. Support a National task force to recommend changes to Chapter 41, Title 38, United States Code.

16. Provide increased funding for the Transition Assistance Program and the Disabled Transition Assistance Program.

17. Improve employment placement for veterans rehabilitated under Chapter 31.

55. Support veterans' preference in public employment.

57. Increase the budget of Veterans Employment and Training Service.

59. Amend the Vocational Rehabilitation Program.

141. Amend the definition of "disabled veteran" for purposes of benefits administered under Chapter 42, Title 38, United States Code.

172. Support veterans rated ten percent or less, under certain circumstances, be authorized benefits under Vocational Rehabilitation.

187. Support legislation to enforce affirmative action for employment of disabled veterans.

188. Support legislation to allow disability retired service members to receive credit for years of military service in civil service retirement.

230. Rename the Department of Veterans Affairs Vocational Rehab and Counseling Service.

231. Amend the residency requirements for state directors and assistant state directors of the Veterans' Employment and Training Service.

232. Oppose the transfer of Veterans' Employment and Training Service to the Employment and Training Administration.

233. Amend Chapter 42, Title 38, United States Code, to include grants under affirmative action.

235. Expand authority for unpaid work experience.

236. Provide VR & C staff with state-of-the-art equipment.

237. Oppose limitation on subsistence allowance.

239. Support increased federal funding for homeless veterans initiatives.

240. Subject the United States Postal Service to proposed enhancements in veterans' preference.

241. Oppose the transfer of the Veterans' Employment and Training Service to the Department of Veterans Affairs Vocational Rehabilitation and Counseling Service.

Comrade Commander, this concludes my report. I move for the adoption of this report.

(The above-mentioned resolutions follow.)

RESOLUTION NO. 011—ADMINISTRATIVE

AMEND LEGISLATION THAT GIVES DISABLED VETERANS PRIORITY IN AFFIRMATIVE ACTION AS A GROUP WITHIN THE OTHER DESIGNATED GROUPS FOR WHICH AFFIRMATIVE ACTION IS REQUIRED

WHEREAS, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 gave new and deserved emphasis to the employment problems of people with disabilities and recognized them as a specific group who needs special consideration; and

WHEREAS, the attempt is made in other laws to also address these problems, specifically the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 for the handicapped and title 38, United States Code, Chapter 42, for

disabled veterans who have barriers to employment. Additionally, the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, mandates non-discrimination in employment practices covering race, religion, age, sex, and national origin. Many employers are required to have a written Affirmative Action Plan" in order to avoid discrimination against any of these groups; and

WHEREAS, title 38, United States Code, Chapter 42 also contains specific requirements for federal contractors and federal agencies to take affirmative action to hire and promote minorities and disabled veterans. However, in actual practice there is no breakdown by priority of affirmative action for minorities, disabled veterans, or the handicapped as specific groups; and

WHEREAS, recognizing the high incidence of employment problems among disabled veterans is not enough. In order to implement the plans and ensure actual practice of affirmative action, the disabled should be considered separately from minorities for preferential treatment by all entities who have affirmative action requirements under law; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, goes on record urging Congress to enact amending legislation that gives disabled veterans priority in affirmative action as a group within the other designated groups for which affirmative action is required.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 012—LEGISLATIVE

SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO PROVIDE OUTREACH AND EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS TO WOMEN VETERANS

WHEREAS, many women who have served in the military are not aware of services available to them through State Employment Security Agencies (SESAs) in the United States and are therefore less likely to obtain employment and training than their male counterparts; and

WHEREAS, over the last decade, there has been a definite increase in the number of women veterans 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 and underemployed 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 Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, goes on record urging that: (a) Congress enact legislation to establish and fund special programs and outreach to women veterans in need of employment assistance through programs operated under the Workforce Investment Act, and (b) additional training in the needs of women veterans, be provided to the veteran staff of all SESAs to correct the inequities in the delivery of services and the under-representation of women veterans in career employment.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 013—LEGISLATIVE

SUPPORTING A NATIONAL TASK FORCE TO RECOMMEND CHANGES TO CHAPTER 41, TITLE 38, UNITED STATES CODE

WHEREAS, Congress and the American people have made it clear that providing employment services for veterans is a national responsibility; and

WHEREAS, the responsibility of providing veterans employment services has been delegated by Congress to the United States Department of Labor-Veterans' Employment and Training Service (USDOL-VETS) through the State Employment Security Agencies

(SESAs); and

WHEREAS, Local Veterans Employment Representatives (LVERs) and Disabled Veterans Outreach Program Specialists (DVOPS) are the individuals responsible for the provision of services provided to veterans; and

WHEREAS, the LVER program was created by the Servicemen's Benefits Act of 1944 and the DVOP program was created by the Carter Economic Stimulus Package of 1977; and

WHEREAS, title 38, Chapter 41 has not been changed to incorporate the incredible technological opportunities that are now available; and

WHEREAS, the national workforce development system must be in a position to respond to the customers' requirements, both veterans and employers; and

WHEREAS, for the workforce development system to respond to our customers' needs and to carry us in to the next century, we must update and modernize title 38, United States Code, Chapter 41; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, goes on record supporting a national task force to write proposed changes to title 38, United States Code, Chapter 41. The task force would be comprised of veterans service organizations, USDOL-VETS, Department of Veterans Affairs, House and Senate Veterans' Affairs Committees, SESAs, Veterans' Program Administrators, Interstate Conference of Employment Security Agencies, Inc., International Association of Personnel in Employment Security, and the Job Service Employer Committee/ National Employer Committee; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Congress of the United States should direct the USDOL-VETS Assistant Secretary to act as liaison and as a partner in the development of new language to be submitted to Congress for legislative change; and that all parties mentioned above as the task force be included as full partners in this endeavor.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 016—LEGISLATIVE

PROVIDE INCREASED FUNDING FOR THE TRANSITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (TAP) AND THE DISABLED TRANSITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (DTAP)

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, the continuation of TAP and DTAP is a much-needed and meaningful step toward easing some of the problems associated with this transition. The ultimate goal of the TAP and DTAP is for these individuals to receive vocational guidance to obtain meaningful careers; and

WHEREAS, the level of funding and staffing is inadequate to support the estimated 250,000 discharges per year projected by the Department of Defense through the year 2000; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, hereby goes on record urging Congress to provide adequate funding for TAP/DTAP.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 017—LEGISLATIVE

IMPROVE EMPLOYMENT PLACEMENT FOR VETERANS REHABILITATED UNDER CHAPTER 31

WHEREAS, disabled veterans completing the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Chapter 31 vocational rehabilitation training program are too infrequently placed in jobs leading to meaningful

careers in their chosen occupation; and

WHEREAS, Public Law 96-466 requires the State Employment Security Agencies (SESAs) to "provide all services and assistance necessary to enable disabled veterans to become employable and to maintain suitable employment"; and

WHEREAS, both Disabled Veterans Outreach Program Specialists (DVOPS) and Chapter 31 Counselors are often unfamiliar with all the various avenues through which disabled veterans can receive employment related services, but compete with each other for numerical success in making placements; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, does hereby urge and recommend that (a) SESAs, VA Vocational Rehabilitation, and the Department of Labor Veterans' Employment and Training Service, who are partners under a formal memorandum of understanding, make a coordinated effort to network with these public and private entities; and (b) form a professional team that will cooperate to provide maximum placement of Chapter 31 disabled veterans at the lowest possible cost; and (c) accomplish this through readiness assessment for Chapter 31 disabled veterans and sharing of resources and information by all members of each community placement team.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 055—LEGISLATIVE

SUPPORT VETERANS' PREFERENCE IN PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT

WHEREAS, the Disabled American Veterans has strongly supported federal, state and local veterans' preference laws; and

WHEREAS, attempts are being made to weaken, dilute and circumvent existing veterans' preference laws; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, supports veterans' preference in federal, state and local employment.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 057—LEGISLATIVE

TO INCREASE THE BUDGET OF THE VETERANS EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING SERVICE

WHEREAS, the Veterans Employment and Training Service (VETS), Department of Labor presented the fiscal year 2000 budget to Congress in February 1999 which will fund the various employment programs administered by the VETS; and

WHEREAS, the funding of such programs includes the Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP) and Local Veterans Employment Representative (LVER) Program, the Transition Assistance Program (TAP), the Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program, the Workforce Investment Act (WIA)/One-Stop Program, new initiatives such as the development of TAP programs overseas, Internet information and strengthening the relationships between federal contractors for placement of veterans into federal jobs; and

WHEREAS, the funding proposed by the VETS falls short of what the Disabled American Veterans would consider a sufficient budget to support all the programs the Department of Labor administers for veterans in need of economic and labor assistance; and

WHEREAS, the funding for DVOP and LVER programs, due to the cost of living increases in each state, supports far fewer positions than Congressionally mandated. These programs should be fully funded to the extent called for under the Congressional intent; and

WHEREAS, with the implementation of the WIA, there will be an additional 2,500 one-stop centers where veterans will go for employment assistance. By law, there must be 1,600 fully funded LVER positions and 2,000 DVOP positions. The proposed VETS funding

will support only about 2,400 positions nationally. This is 600 staff short of what is needed to provide services to veterans; and

WHEREAS, the VETS is only requesting $7.3 million to fund Section 168 of the WIA, formerly the Job Training Partnership Act, Title IV-C, to assist veterans in new skill technology, retraining in modern skills and skill training in areas that have been economically devastated, this is clearly insufficient; and

WHEREAS, the VETS is to advocate employment programs for veterans, yet has bowed to the wishes of the Administration which has ignored veteran employment issues or has chosen to remove veterans programs by contracting the VETS services to private contractors or move these services to another agency, such as the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) (H.R. 606); and

WHEREAS, the VA has no existing employment delivery system, nor does it have the necessary staff to operate such a program and the VA would ultimately contract out these services; and

WHEREAS, the result would be to put all existing employment staff (more than 2,500 veterans, most of whom are disabled veterans) on the unemployment rolls and the cost would exceed the current budget with low-end contractors; and

WHEREAS, the men and women who served and are currently serving in the Armed Forces of the United States of America are getting a clear message that the United States does not care for its veterans; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, supports legislation to lobby Congress and the VETS for a budget that will adequately address the needs of the veterans who require employment assistance; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans draft language in H.R. 606 which will retain employment services with the Department of Labor and with the VETS to address the needs of the veteran, the active duty service member who receives TAP, and veterans who require other assistance from the Department of Labor.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 059—LEGISLATIVE

AMEND THE VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION PROGRAM

WHEREAS, under current law, qualified and eligible disabled veterans are entitled to 48 months of education or training assistance under vocational rehabilitation; and

WHEREAS, the disabled veteran must start and complete this program within 12 years following the determination of eligibility; and

WHEREAS, many disabled veterans are unable to complete their training and attain suitable employment within 48 months and others are unable or don't need training within 12 years following initial eligibility; and

WHEREAS, other vocational rehabilitation programs in the private sector and federal sector do not impose similar restrictions; and

WHEREAS, we believe disabled veterans deserve no less; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, seeks legislative change that would eliminate these two restrictions.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 141—LEGISLATIVE

AMEND THE DEFINITION OF "DISABLED VETERAN" FOR PURPOSES OF BENEFITS ADMINISTERED UNDER CHAPTER 42, TITLE 38, UNITED STATES CODE

WHEREAS, Chapter 42, title 38, United States Code, defines a

disabled veteran as one who is rated 30 percent or more service-connected disabled or as one who was discharged or released from active duty because of a disability incurred or aggravated in the line of duty; and

WHEREAS, disabled veterans continue to bear a disproportionate unemployment rate and have not received adequate assistance under Chapter 42, title 38, United States Code; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, supports legislation to amend section 4211 of title 38, United States Code, to redefine the term "disabled veteran" as "one who has a compensable service-connected disability under laws administered by the Department of Veterans Affairs or one whose discharge or release from active duty was for a disability incurred or aggravated in the line of duty.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 172—LEGISLATIVE

SUPPORT VETERANS RATED 10 PERCENT OR LESS, UNDER CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES, BE AUTHORIZED BENEFITS UNDER VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

WHEREAS, current law does not allow veterans with service connection of 10 percent or less to participate in the Department of Veterans Affairs vocational rehabilitation program; and

WHEREAS, some veterans in this category are unable to continue in their chosen profession due to their service-connected disability (ies); NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, supports legislation that would allow veterans with service-connected disabilities rated 10 percent or less, but due to those disabilities can no longer work in their chosen profession, to be eligible for vocational rehabilitation.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 187—LEGISLATIVE

SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO ENFORCE AFFIRMATIVE ACTION FOR EMPLOYMENT OF DISABLED VETERANS

WHEREAS, Congress has enacted a law requiring an affirmative action program for disabled veterans in federal employment; and

WHEREAS, many disabled veterans now working for the federal government are not being afforded the opportunity for training, details to jobs for training and qualification experience, and other assignments which would provide them with the necessary training and experience needed for promotion to higher grades; and

WHEREAS, other targeted special interest groups, under other affirmative action programs, are provided training, details to jobs, assignments to special projects, and even details to higher graded positions and have been, at many activities, appointed high graded mentors who guide them in their career progression; and

WHEREAS, career managers, personnel officers, EEO compliance personnel and others have not provided for or implemented the type of affirmative action program that was the Congressional intent; and

WHEREAS, there currently does not exist a method or procedure for enforcing the provisions of the current law and regulations; and

WHEREAS, without enforcement, there are no penalties to be imposed on functional and personnel management; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, supports legislation to provide for enforcement provisions to ensure that career managers, personnel officers, and others live up to the intent of the Disabled Veterans Affirmative Action Program

for federal government employees.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 188—LEGISLATIVE

SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO ALLOW DISABILITY RETIRED SERVICE MEMBERS TO RECEIVE CREDIT FOR YEARS OF MILITARY SERVICE IN CIVIL SERVICE RETIREMENT

WHEREAS, military personnel who are not injured from an instrumentality of war during time of war and then receive a disability retirement deserve the full benefits of their disability retirement; and

WHEREAS, men and women who are retired for disability from the military and seek employment with the federal government cannot count their few years of service toward civil service retirement unless they waive the receipt of disability retired pay; and

WHEREAS, retired reservists can draw retirement from civil service and the military service for the time of service rendered both the military and civil service during the same period of years without reduction to their civil service time or any requirement to waive military retired pay in order to receive civil service retirement and can count their military active service time toward civil service retirement; and

WHEREAS, many of these Reserve and National Guard personnel can and do receive credit for many years of active duty service time, draw severance pay for up to a full year of their active duty military pay, then elect to join the military reserves or National Guard and concurrently work for the civil service and they are allowed to count their years of active military service toward civil service and military reserve/guard retirement; and

WHEREAS, ex-servicemen and women who only draw Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) compensation for their service-connected disability can receive both the VA compensation and civil service retirement pay without waiver of one for the other; and

WHEREAS, equity should dictate that ex-service personnel who were disabled with less than ten years of service and who were retired because of their service-connected disabilities (not for length of service) should be allowed to draw military retirement and count those years toward their civil service retirement the same way that those active duty personnel who were forced to join, after many years of active service, the military reservist/guard units and can count the same time for retirement from the reserves/guard and civil service; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, supports legislation to change the law which now prohibits disabled military retirees; disabled from any cause, except willful misconduct, and who served during a period of declared national emergency, war, or police action, to be entitled to count their service time towards both civil service retirement and Ready Reserve or National Guard retirements; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the veteran who elects to count his time toward both military and civil service retirement be required to pay a sum equal to 7 percent of their military pay into the civil service retirement trust fund or FERS (without interest) to cover the pay they received during those years, for the purpose of counting their time toward civil service retirement.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 230—LEGISLATIVE

RENAME THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION AND COUNSELING SERVICE

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs Vocational Rehabilitation and Counseling Service (VR&C) has plans to rename the service to reflect the goal of employment; and

WHEREAS, the agency's suggested new title of "Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Programs" does not specify the recipients of the programs—disabled veterans; and

WHEREAS, VR&C indicated there was some reluctance by veterans to be identified by the term "disabled" because that would add the stigma of inability perceived by potential employers; and

WHEREAS, we believe that identifying the program as being for disabled veterans would not provoke such perceptions, and would, in reality, serve as an inducement for potential employers to hire disabled veterans who participated in the program; and

WHEREAS, we strongly believe that the name "Vocational Rehabilitation for Employment of Disabled Veterans" clearly communicates the mission of VR&C, but also serves as an inducement for employers that hire those who complete the program and are ready to return to productive lives and independence through employment; NOW

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, goes on record urging the Department of Veterans Affairs Vocational Rehabilitation and Counseling Service to rename the service "Vocational Rehabilitation for Employment of Disabled Veterans" which identifies the mission of the program.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 231—LEGISLATIVE

AMEND THE RESIDENCY REQUIREMENTS FOR STATE DIRECTORS AND ASSISTANT STATE DIRECTORS OF THE VETERANS' EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING SERVICE

WHEREAS, the Congress of the United States has enacted legislation providing for a Veterans' Employment and Training Service within the Department of Labor; and

WHEREAS, the Act provides that the State Director and the Assistant State Director of the Veterans' Employment and Training Service shall be a veteran, and at the time of appointment shall be a bona fide resident of that state for at least two years; and

WHEREAS, this provision prohibits promotional opportunities for Assistant State Directors to other states and restricts them to their own states; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, goes on record in support of a waiver to substitute two years' experience as an Assistant State Director or DVOP or LVER in lieu of the current residency requirements, thereby allowing them the opportunity to compete for State Director positions as they become vacant.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 232—LEGISLATIVE

OPPOSE THE TRANSFER OF THE VETERANS' EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING SERVICE TO THE EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING ADMINISTRATION

WHEREAS, Vice President Gore has established a "National Performance Review" to make recommendations to improve government; and

WHEREAS, it recently came to the attention of the Disabled American Veterans that a recommendation is included in that review to transfer Veterans Employment and Training Service to Employment and Training Administration; and

WHEREAS, part of that proposal abolishes all the positions at the regional level, as well as the State and Assistant State Director positions; and

WHEREAS, this proposal effectively eliminates VETS; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, opposes any efforts by this Administration to transfer VETS

to ETA.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 233—LEGISLATIVE

AMEND CHAPTER 42, TITLE 38, UNITED STATES CODE, TO INCLUDE GRANTS UNDER AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

WHEREAS, section 4212, chapter 42, title 38, United States Code, currently requires federal contractors to take affirmative action on behalf of disabled veterans; and

WHEREAS, current law does not provide for recipients of federal financial assistance, to include grants to states, to take affirmative action on behalf of veterans; and

WHEREAS, most federal agencies provide grants to universities, colleges, transportation systems, and others who are not required to take affirmative action; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, requests that section 4212, title 38, United States Code, be amended to include "recipients of federal financial assistance" be covered for affirmative action purposes.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 235—LEGISLATIVE

EXPAND AUTHORITY FOR UNPAID WORK EXPERIENCE

WHEREAS, certain disabled veterans pursuing a program of training under vocational rehabilitation may, as part of that program, participate in an unpaid work experience situation with either the federal, state, or local governments; and

WHEREAS, similar authority does not exist for unpaid work experience with private sector employers; and

WHEREAS, private sector employers may provide meaningful training in such a program; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, seeks legislative relief that would allow these disabled veterans to participate in unpaid work experience with private and not-for-profit sector employers.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 236—LEGISLATIVE

PROVIDE VR&C STAFF WITH STATE-OF-THE-ART EQUIPMENT

WHEREAS, the current Director of the Department of Veterans Affairs Vocational Rehabilitation and Counseling Service has no direct line of authority over the approximately 700 employees located throughout the Regional Office structure; and

WHEREAS, these individuals are responsible to and report to the Regional Office Director; and

WHEREAS, these individuals rely on the goodwill of the Regional Office Director to provide them with needed support including current technological support to include computers, faxes, and even telephones, which are necessary to expedite and streamline the processes and will result in earlier enrollments into a program; and

WHEREAS, it has been reported by the recently established "Design Team" set up to review how vocational rehabilitation does business, some VR&C offices do not have this type of equipment and in at least one instance, they do not even have phones; and

WHEREAS, this type of equipment is essential to help disabled veterans attain their employment goals; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 21-25,

1999, seeks change that would assure the Regional Office Directors are held accountable and all VR&C Staff at the Regional Office level be provided state-of-the-art equipment in order for them to efficiently perform the duties of providing vocational rehabilitation and employment services to disabled veterans.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 237—LEGISLATIVE

OPPOSE LIMITATION ON SUBSISTENCE ALLOWANCE

WHEREAS, the Director of Department of Veterans Affairs Vocational Rehabilitation and Counseling (VR&C) Service established a "Design Team" following criticism by Congress that they were not providing adequate employment services to disabled veterans; and

WHEREAS, the "Design Team" was charged with reviewing how the VA does business and make recommended changes; and

WHEREAS, one proposal under consideration would be to provide disabled veterans in a vocational rehabilitation program a single payment for compensation and subsistence allowance; and

WHEREAS, one dollar amount being considered is $900 per month; and

WHEREAS, certain disabled veterans are receiving compensation at an amount higher than $900 and therefore would not be eligible to receive subsistence allowance; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, opposes any action to limit the amount of subsistence allowance because of an amount of compensation being received.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 239—LEGISLATIVE

SUPPORT INCREASED FEDERAL FUNDING FOR HOMELESS VETERANS INITIATIVES

WHEREAS, estimates have put homelessness among veterans as high as 280,000 or about 35 percent of the total homeless population, and these numbers may be a gross underestimate due to the fact many homeless veterans may not be counted because they are living with a parent, relative, or friend; and

WHEREAS, the demographics which make up the homeless veteran population are very diverse and include veterans of every race, creed, and color, and ever increasingly more women, children, and families; and

WHEREAS, there is no single cause of homelessness nor no single cure for it, and the reasons for homelessness vary to include physical, mental and economic problems, substance abuse and, in some cases, separation or divorce; and

WHEREAS, there exists a critical need for homeless veterans nationwide to receive very basic medical care, financial counseling, vocational training, and rehabilitation and in some cases family counseling, in order to achieve a fair and reasonable chance to break the vicious cycle of homelessness and despair; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs has been deeply involved and has actively initiated and operated various outreach and assistance programs to address the unique needs of homeless veterans such as the Homeless Grants and Per Diem Program and has worked with dozens of communities at veterans' "Stand Down" operations to create new opportunities for homeless veterans and their families; and

WHEREAS, federal funding for homeless veterans programs is woefully inadequate as evident by the fact that Congress authorized only $10 million for fiscal year 1999 veterans' programs and the President's fiscal year 1999 budget requested only $2.5 million for homeless veterans' programs and will only help 3,600 homeless veterans; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans

in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, supports increased federal funding for homeless veterans initiatives such as "Stand Downs" to provide comprehensive medical care, mental and psychiatric care, vocational training and rehabilitation, employment and financial counseling, and family counseling, urging that appropriate agencies such as the Department of Veterans Affairs Department of Labor, Department of Health and Human Services, Department of Defense, and other federal, state, and local entities assist in this effort; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that each DAV chapter and department become actively involved in a local, state or federal homeless veteran program, thus living up to the mandate, "we don't leave our wounded behind," by helping to give these veterans a hand up and not a hand out in returning as productive members of society.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 240—LEGISLATIVE

SUBJECT THE UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE TO PROPOSED ENHANCEMENTS IN VETERANS' PREFERENCE

WHEREAS, Congress is currently considering legislation to provide certain protections and enhancements to veterans' preference in federal civil service; and

WHEREAS, this legislation would include all federal agencies including the Postal Service; and

WHEREAS, the Postmaster General of the United States has contacted the Postal Board of Governors indicating his concern that such changes to veterans' preference would be "onerous" to the Postal Service; and

WHEREAS, the Postal Service should be subject to the veterans' preference provisions; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, supports legislation that would provide additional protections and other enhancements to veterans' preference and that such legislation should include the Postal Service and the Postmaster General be informed of our strong opposition to his language directed to the Postal Board of Governors.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 241—LEGISLATIVE

OPPOSE THE TRANSFER OF THE VETERANS' EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING SERVICE TO THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION AND COUNSELING SERVICE

WHEREAS, veterans' employment programs began after World War I when the U.S. Employment Service helped place returning veterans in civilian jobs; and

WHEREAS, since 1980 the Department of Labor (DOL)/Veterans' Employment and Training Service has been headed by the Assistant Secretary of Labor for Veterans' Employment and Training; and

WHEREAS, DOL/VETS' primary responsibilities include:

- Administering veterans' employment program grants (totaling $157 million in fiscal year (FY) 1998) that fund nearly 3,000 state employment service Disabled Veteran Outreach Program Specialists and Local Veterans Employment Representatives.

- Administering JTPA IV-C grants (totaling $7.3 million for FY 1998) and, after July 1, 2000, successor veterans' workforce investment programs. The successor programs, established by the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) of 1998, will serve recently separated and service-connected disabled veterans, veterans with significant barriers to employment, and veterans of a war, campaign, or

expedition. WIA directs DOL/VETS to coordinate veterans' workforce investment programs with related Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) programs and activities, and authorizes not less than $7.3 million for each FY from 1999 through 2003.

- Administering homeless veterans' reintegration project grants ($3 million in FY 1998).

- Facilitating TAP workshops for separating servicemembers. DOL/VETS currently authorizes states to allocate up to five percent of their veterans' employment state grants for TAP workshop facilitation and augments this allocation with a national contract for supplemental facilitation ($1.5 million for FY 1998), as well as funding to purchase and ship TAP materials (approximately $400,000 annually).

- Monitoring veterans' preference for federal employment, in cooperation with the United States Office of Personnel Management (OPM). The Veterans Employment Opportunities Act of 1998 requires the Secretary of Labor to investigate complaints of alleged violations of veterans' preference rights to federal employment and attempt to resolve them.

- Supervising the listing of jobs by federal contractors and the subsequent referrals of qualified veterans.

- Administering a $2 million contract to operate the National Veterans' Training Institute, which provides training for federal and state employees involved in the direct delivery of employment and training related services to veterans; and

WHEREAS, DOL/VETS is organized with a national, 7 regional, and 52 state-level offices by statute; and

WHEREAS, the VA has no experience in employment referral and assistance; and

WHEREAS, DOL would continue providing employment related services to non-veterans, creating a duplication of services detrimental to veterans; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, goes on record opposing all legislative efforts to transfer the Department of Labor Veterans' Employment and Training Service to the Department of Veterans Affairs.

MR. FRAZIER: Mike 2. Earl Frazier, California, Chapter 148 moves the second.

COMMANDER KISTLER: Question on the motion? All in favor say Aye; opposed. Motion carried.

MS. WHITE: I also was making a motion to dismiss my Employment Committee.

COMMANDER KISTLER: Mike 2.

MR. FRAZIER: Earl Frazier, California, Chapter 148, so moves the second.

COMMANDER KISTLER: Question on the motion? All in favor say Aye; opposed. Motion carried.

MS. WHITE: Thank you.

COMMANDER KISTLER: Thank you, Rae, for that report.

At this time, I would like to introduce Past National Commander Harry R. McDonald, Jr. for a presentation.

MR. HARRY R. McDONALD, JR.: Thank you, Commander. You know, long, long ago in a galaxy far away when I was national commander, I had a disabled veteran that spoke to me. He was a wheelchair veteran, and he could not get out of his wheelchair and get into a van. So they had to transport him in an ambulance. It was quite uncomfortable and quite expensive.

So I spoke to Mr. Wilson about raising funds to buy a bus, and

he said, "Go for it!" So I'd like to thank the Department of Florida who supported this and all the people that supported it.

And at this time I would like to ask Ms. Julie Catallier, the director of the VA Medical Center in Biloxi, to come forward to receive the keys to the brand-new 1999 bus that's sitting out front. This bus will be used to transport patients between the Pensacola Out-Patient Clinic and the Biloxi VA Medical Center. Julie, it's a pleasure to give you this. (Applause)

MS. JULIE CATALLIER: Good morning and thank you for this delightful opportunity to come and accept this bus, which is Number 5 for us. I tell my staff that nothing good in life happens without a champion to make it happen, and our champion is Commander McDonald.

I can't think of any initiative which more perfectly exemplifies the mission of the DAV for service than these vans. This is literally the lifeline for many of our patients who receive care, who would not otherwise have a way to go to the clinics and hospitals they so desperately need for their well-being.

On behalf of those veterans, I thank all of you who made this a possibility, and most especially our Santa Claus, Commander McDonald. Thank you for having me. (Applause)

COMMANDER KISTLER: At this time, I'd like to have our national adjutant with some good news.

ADJUTANT WILSON: Good news! Well, we just drew some more names this morning for park passes, so I'm going to announce the winners and where they're from, and you can pick up those passes in the Cancun Room at the National Headquarters Office.

The first one is Andrew Barnhouse, who is registered as a guest. The second one is Donald E. Hanson from Washington State. The third one is Daniel Barry from Pennsylvania. Now, I didn't have anything to do with that. The fourth one is Loretta Rethard from Oklahoma. The fifth one is Richard Levasseur from New York. That's another New York winner. Nick B. Herrera from Texas; John J. Kerrigan from New Jersey; Billy L. Johnson from Washington, D.C.; Dr. Hammon, who is registered as a VIP; James F. Gilman from Kansas. I mentioned your name this morning, Jim. Elly Steese-Bradley, who's registered as a guest; Alexe M. Baker from Georgia; Glenda G. Simon from Texas; Gary P. Burns from Maine; and Jesse Earl Long, Jr., who's registered as a guest. (Applause)

COMMANDER KISTLER: Thank you.

MR. FRANK L. WEBB: Mike 2. Frank Webb, DAV Chapter Number 9, Houston, Texas. On the remarks of the lady who received that van, I volunteer at the VA hospital in the Transportation Department. We need drivers. We need them bad in all areas, and we need transportation. And if you have the time, go out and volunteer and feel good. Thank you.

COMMANDER KISTLER: Thank you, sir. (Applause)

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 the convention committees be admitted into the record of the proceedings of this convention. I'll accept a motion. Mike 2.

MR. MUSSELMANN: Ken Musselmann, Lakewood Chapter 19, California, so moves.

COMMANDER KISTLER: Thank you. Mike 3.

MR. SPALDING: Russ Spalding, Chapter 20, Michigan, supports.

COMMANDER KISTLER: Thank you. Question on the motion? All in favor say Aye; opposed. The motion's carried.

(Whereupon, the following are DAV National Convention Committees.)

1999 NATIONAL CONVENTION, ORLANDO, FLORIDA

District	Name (Delegate and alternate)	Chapter No. and State

COMMITTEE ON CREDENTIALS

01..... John F. Gilpin, Jr..... Massachusetts 050
(Alt).... Frank J. Drogo..... Massachusetts 029

1999 NATIONAL CONVENTION, ORLANDO, FLORIDA - Continued

District	Name (Delegate and alternate)	Chapter No. and State
02.....	Roger N. Petucci.....	New York 185
(Alt)....	Joel A. Lopez-Perez.....	New York 144
03.....	Louis T. Folcarelli.....	Rhode Island 001
(Alt)....	Roger A. Bourgery.....	Vermont 003
04.....	Richard E. Manners.....	New Jersey 014
(Alt)....	Chris M. Boutilette.....	New Jersey 001
05.....	William F. Coley.....	Pennsylvania 014
(Alt)....	Rafael A. Ramirez.....	Pennsylvania 008
06.....	German Bravo-Perez.....	Puerto Rico 001
(Alt)....	Paul M. Hickok.....	West Virginia 018
07.....	Mary L. Redding.....	Florida 016
(Alt)....	Michael Adesso.....	Florida 133
08.....	Raymond W. Slaten.....	Alabama 051
(Alt)....	Jimmie W. Harris.....	Alabama 076
09.....	Thomas F. Graham.....	Georgia 070
(Alt)....	John M. Burgess.....	Georgia 001
10.....	Russell Spalding.....	Michigan 020
(Alt)....	Howard W. Beebee.....	Michigan 008
11.....	James S. Britton.....	Ohio 037
(Alt)....	Jack P. Moga.....	Ohio 116
12.....	Sidney Bick.....	Illinois 047
(Alt)....	Dennis F. Kinney.....	Wisconsin 003
13.....	Kerry L. Baker.....	Kentucky 155
(Alt)....	Harry S. Gaylord.....	Kentucky 149
14.....	Richard J. Bradsteen.....	North Dakota 002
(Alt)....	Victor C. Hass.....	North Dakota 004
15.....	Francis E. McLaskey.....	Iowa 010
(Alt)....	Dennis L. Heidick.....	Iowa 029
16.....	Patrick J. Carroll.....	California 012
(Alt)....	Ruben R. Trejo.....	California 039
17.....	Edwin G. Cooke.....	New Mexico 029
(Alt)....	Kent A. Hoffman.....	Colorado 007
18.....	Anthony D. Mangine.....	Arizona 011
(Alt)....	Phillip R. Seward.....	Arizona 011
19.....	Sarah J. Royse.....	Washington 046
(Alt)....	Michael C. Kiser.....	Washington 005
20.....	James T. Hall.....	Texas 009
(Alt)....	William C. Manning.....	Texas 088
21.....	William H. Hunter.....	Arkansas 030
(Alt)....	Glenn C. Norton.....	Oklahoma 060
Blind Vets		
	Robert H. Dawson.....	Blind Veterans 001
(Alt)	None.....	

Advisors: Michael J. Walsh and Edward G. Galian

COMMITTEE ON CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS

01.....	Thomas J. Daley.....	Massachusetts 049
(Alt)....	John F. Regan.....	Massachusetts 114
02.....	Claude A. Nelson.....	New York 047
(Alt)....	Sal R. Tornatore.....	New York 019
03.....	Kenneth J. Kooyman.....	Rhode Island 017
(Alt)....	None.....	
04.....	Maurice E. Ames.....	Connecticut 048
(Alt)....	David W. Williams.....	Connecticut 047
05.....	Jennifer M. Culver.....	Pennsylvania 090
(Alt)....	Metro Lynn.....	Pennsylvania 004
06.....	David L. Tannenbaum.....	Virginia 015
(Alt)....	Ralph E. Carroll.....	District of Columbia 001
07.....	John C. McCarthy.....	Florida 004
(Alt)....	Charles C. Perkins.....	Florida 040
08.....	James M. Cox.....	Louisiana 030
(Alt)....	Roy E. Curran.....	Louisiana 030
09.....	Elbert T. Townsend.....	North Carolina 011
(Alt)....	Barbara A. Harley.....	Georgia 010

1999 NATIONAL CONVENTION, ORLANDO, FLORIDA - Continued

District	Name (Delegate and alternate)	Chapter No. and State
10.....	Morris Penermon.....	Michigan 001
(Alt)....	Donald J. McLean, Sr.....	Michigan 114
11.....	Arthur W. Sprankel.....	Ohio 003
(Alt)....	Raymond H. Hutchinson.....	Ohio 063
12.....	George M. Isdale, Jr.....	Illinois 022
(Alt)....	Richard E. Marbes.....	Wisconsin 003
13.....	Gregory L. Dearborn.....	Kentucky 003
(Alt)....	Stephen C. Combs.....	Kentucky 006
14.....	James V. Hamann.....	Minnesota 002
(Alt)....	David P. Marshall.....	Montana 002
15.....	Dale R. Akeman.....	Missouri 010
(Alt)....	None.....	
16.....	Kenneth Musselmann.....	California 019
(Alt)....	Robert Salisbury.....	California 023
17.....	Ian E. Briggs.....	Utah 008
(Alt)....	Jerome D. Gordon.....	Colorado 001
18.....	Jack E. Ware.....	Arizona 018
(Alt)....	Eric R. Jackson.....	Arizona 002
19.....	Anne M. Ruppert.....	Alaska 002
(Alt)....	Raymond E. Guise, Jr.....	Oregon 011
20.....	Richard L.Sarrazin.....	Texas 005
(Alt)....	Glenda G. Simon.....	Texas 027
21.....	Harold D. Pinney.....	Oklahoma 003
(Alt)....	Robert D. Cohoon.....	Oklahoma 085
Blind Vets		
	Rubin Martinez.....	Blind Veterans 001
(Alt)....	Theodore Romig, Jr.....	Blind Veterans 001

Advisors: Richard L. Sarrazin and Fred R. Bristol

COMMITTEE ON EMPLOYMENT

01.....	Gerard A. Bussiere.....	Massachusetts 050
(Alt)....	George F. Fincel.....	Massachusetts 074
02.....	Alvin Lee Burks.....	New York 076
(Alt)....	Richard Levasseur.....	New York 154
03.....	Robert D. Wayss.....	New Hampshire 004
(Alt)....	Manuel C. Chavez.....	New Hampshire 004
04.....	Herbert G. Henn.....	New Jersey 032
(Alt)....	Francis S. Mazzei.....	Connecticut 008
05.....	M. Rae White.....	Pennsylvania 050
(Alt)....	Vincent P. Barcangelo.....	Pennsylvania 055
06.....	Michael J. Piper.....	Maryland 021
(Alt)....	Eliud S. Rodriguez.....	Puerto Rico 016
07.....	Albert M. Sorrentino.....	Florida 030
(Alt)....	Ernest F. Hartman.....	Florida 094
08.....	Lee R. Richard.....	Louisiana 017
(Alt)....	William J. Lane.....	Louisiana 030
09.....	Kevin C. Koon, Jr.....	Georgia 010
(Alt)....	Eddie L. Baumgardner.....	South Carolina 030
10.....	John F. McComb.....	Michigan 013
(Alt)....	Roy A. Redmond.....	Michigan 002
11.....	Jesse R. Stefanics.....	Ohio 009
(Alt)....	Calvin R. Hall.....	Ohio 102
12.....	James J. Ferrara.....	Illinois 055
(Alt).....	T. L. Snyder-Starich.....	Wisconsin 019
13.....	Joseph M. Johnson.....	Indiana 028
(Alt)....	Paul W. Smathers, Jr.....	Kentucky 016
14.....	Delbert J. Foster, Jr.....	South Dakota 001
(Alt)....	Paul W. Smathers, Jr.....	North Dakota 031
15.....	Everett F. Wilson.....	Nebraska 047
(Alt)....	Donald Houska.....	Iowa 020
16.....	Glen M. Halsey.....	California 006
(Alt)....	John M. Parker.....	California 154
17.....	Douglas K. Wells, Jr.....	Utah 006
(Alt)....	Ronald D. Lester.....	Colorado 007

1999 NATIONAL CONVENTION, ORLANDO, FLORIDA - Continued

District	Name (Delegate and alternate)	Chapter No. and State
18.....	Ralph G. Boling.....	Arizona 002
(Alt)....	Chad E. Moos.....	Nevada 001
19.....	Daniel Memmesheimer.....	Washington 005
(Alt)....	Shane Slade-Compton.....	Washington 033
20.....	Douglas G. Herrle.....	Texas 061

1999 NATIONAL CONVENTION, ORLANDO, FLORIDA - Continued

District	Name (Delegate and alternate)	Chapter No. and State
(Alt)....	Jose T. Garcia.....	Texas 014
21.....	Bobby W. Hines.....	Oklahoma 032
(Alt)....	Wayne L. Douglass, Sr.....	Arkansas 005

Advisors: Bradley S. Barton and Anthony L. Baskerville

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE AND DUES

01.....	Arthur S. Cushing.....	Massachusetts 017
(Alt)....	Arthur F. Kingsley.....	Massachusetts 083
02.....	Anthony L. Mirando.....	New York 145
(Alt)....	John J. Skyler.....	New York 113
03.....	Paul R. Bisson.....	Maine 004
(Alt)....	None.....	
04.....	Edward F. Norman.....	Connecticut 006
(Alt)....	Christine L. Bell.....	Connecticut 017
05.....	Orval A. Williams.....	Pennsylvania 073
(Alt)....	Joseph H. Buhl.....	Pennsylvania 053
06.....	Joseph T. Gatling.....	District of Columbia 003
(Alt)....	Larry L. Campbell.....	West Virginia 018
07.....	Larry O. Kyser.....	Florida 023
(Alt)....	Salvator E. Uccello.....	Florida 152
08.....	Hubert Alexander.....	Tennessee 070
(Alt)....	Ronald S. Campbell.....	Tennessee 070
09.....	James O. Stewart.....	South Carolina 067
(Alt)....	Gerald Jones.....	North Carolina 018
10.....	Harvey D. Slotman.....	Michigan 002
(Alt)....	John D. Terry.....	Michigan 001
11.....	Douglas E. Lay.....	Ohio 142
(Alt)....	Shannon Ray Clyburn.....	Ohio 108
12.....	Philip C. Kreisa.....	Wisconsin 019
(Alt)....	Robert L. Donahue.....	Illinois 042
13.....	James T. Ashby.....	Kentucky 003
(Alt)....	Fred A. Sutton.....	Indiana 009
14.....	Lee Roy Walker.....	Minnesota 002
(Alt)....	Charles M. Drust.....	South Dakota 003
15.....	William H. Gann.....	Kansas 034
(Alt)....	Frederick F. Herman.....	Nebraska 002
16.....	Joel C. Devenish.....	California 043
(Alt)....	Henri Opas.....	California 073
17.....	John L. Richard.....	New Mexico 003
(Alt)....	Lonnie L. Beck.....	New Mexico 003
18.....	W. D. Brzezinski.....	Nevada 011
(Alt)....	Frank J. Greenwood.....	Nevada 004
19.....	Raymond P. Selken.....	Oregon 001
(Alt)....	Daryl L. Testone.....	Oregon 001
20.....	Edgardo Alemany.....	Texas 005
(Alt)....	H. L. Stewart.....	Texas 063
21.....	Buford B. Brown.....	Oklahoma 043
(Alt)....	Jimmie S. Foster.....	Oklahoma 032

Advisors: Wallace E. Tyson and Richard E. Patterson

COMMITTEE ON GENERAL RESOLUTIONS AND MEMBERSHIP

01.....	James H. Tanner.....	Massachusetts 010
(Alt)....	Joseph A. Costa.....	Massachusetts 056

1999 NATIONAL CONVENTION, ORLANDO, FLORIDA - Continued

District	Name (Delegate and alternate)	Chapter No. and State
02.....	Carmen A. Vitale.....	New York 001
(Alt)....	Brian E. Austin.....	New York 001
03.....	Leonard F. Dudley.....	Rhode Island 001
(Alt)....	Stanley J. Hoy.....	New Hampshire 001
04.....	Bradford James.....	New Jersey 003
(Alt)....	John G. Kerrigan.....	New Jersey 041
05.....	Albert Lockhart El.....	Pennsylvania 014
(Alt)....	Donald B. Davis.....	Pennsylvania 014
06.....	Harry E. Yaukey, Sr.....	Maryland 036
(Alt)....	Stephen D. Perkins.....	Virginia 029
07.....	Herbert A. Lewis, Jr.....	Florida 013
(Alt)....	Kim Virgil.....	Florida 029
08.....	Ralph G. Reinagel.....	Tennessee 070
(Alt)....	James E. Collins.....	Tennessee 038
09.....	Coy W. Hennis.....	North Carolina 020
(Alt)....	Kenneth R. Cline.....	South Carolina 033
10.....	Alfred L. Hindes.....	Michigan 003
(Alt)....	Haarold E. De Forest.....	Michigan 129
11.....	Michael D. Moehl.....	Ohio 142
(Alt)....	Rebecca A. Martin.....	Ohio 108
12.....	Richard L. Fear.....	Wisconsin 009
(Alt)....	Robert Jansky.....	Illinois 022
13.....	Glen E. Vogel, Sr.....	Indiana 045
(Alt)....	Carl E. Althaus.....	Kentucky 155
14.....	Wayne W. Blue.....	Minnesota 001
(Alt)....	James C. Wilson.....	Minnesota 023
15.....	Robert D. Ford.....	Missouri 002
(Alt)....	John F. Roets.....	Kansas 004
16.....	Kenneth J. Wingett.....	California 048
(Alt)....	Milton W. Farmer.....	California 039
17.....	Louis E. Torrez.....	Colorado 006
(Alt)....	Thomas E. Vialpando.....	Colorado 007
18.....	Edward W. Johnson.....	Nevada 007
(Alt)....	Tamara K. Scrogham.....	Arizona 020
19.....	Robert Haltiner.....	Oregon 004
(Alt)....	Norman Minor.....	Washington 004
20.....	Jyles D. Garrett.....	Texas 063
(Alt)....	Paul S. Hilliard.....	Texas 003
21.....	Kevin R. Grantier.....	Oklahoma 007
(Alt)....	Stephen Painter, Jr.....	Oklahoma 029
Blind Vets		
	Charles O'Braden.....	Blind Veterans 001
(Alt)....	Richard D. Holden.....	Blind Veterans 001

Advisor: Rick Surratt

COMMITTEE ON HOSPITAL AND VOLUNTARY SERVICES

01.....	Richard Stentiford.....	Massachusetts 080
(Alt)....	Francis M. Stentiford.....	Massachusetts 080
02.....	Bernard L. Robidoux.....	New York 185
(Alt)....	Leo Ortiz.....	New York 005
03.....	Raymond S. Sanchas.....	Rhode Island 013
(Alt)....	Robert A. Nicodemus.....	Vermont 003
04.....	Harry R. Newell.....	Connecticut 047
(Alt)....	Berton L. Francoeur.....	Connecticut 018
05.....	William J. Zwick.....	Pennsylvania 001
(Alt)....	Alfred Battitori.....	Pennsylvania 065
06.....	Philip J. Campagna.....	Maryland 018
(Alt)....	Carlos M. Gomez.....	Puerto Rico 001
07.....	Robert F. Melville.....	Florida 085
(Alt)....	G. Joseph Peck.....	Florida 004
08.....	Dick L. Lewis.....	Alabama 051
(Alt)....	Carl L. Bailey.....	Alabama 045
09.....	Robert E. Miller.....	North Carolina 043
(Alt)....	William L. Coward, Sr.....	Georgia 040

1999 NATIONAL CONVENTION, ORLANDO, FLORIDA - Continued

District	Name (Delegate and alternate)	Chapter No. and State
10.....	Joseph Parys.....	Michigan 051
(Alt)....	Dennis R. Rogala.....	Michigan 114
11.....	Albert G. De Bliss.....	Ohio 116
(Alt)....	David C. Uetterling.....	Ohio 036
12.....	Vernon E. Schilling.....	Wisconsin 001
(Alt)....	Enrico Fontana.....	Illinois 016
13.....	Robert F. Christensen.....	Indiana 025
(Alt)....	Daniel R. Parker.....	Kentucky 089
14.....	Donald S. Skillings.....	Minnesota 022
(Alt)....	Frank J. Jones.....	South Dakota 003
15.....	Albert C. Vleck.....	Nebraska 002
(Alt)....	Harold C. Wisely.....	Missouri 001
16.....	Henry A. Veillette.....	California 073
(Alt)....	Mariana M. Raba, M.D.....	California 006
17.....	Richard A. Hatz.....	Colorado 007
(Alt)....	Louis E. Torrez.....	Colorado 006
18.....	Carl Vacco.....	Arizona 001
(Alt)....	Daniel J. Manzanares.....	Arizona 008
19.....	Emelda Henson.....	Idaho 002
(Alt)....	Mallory Ann Hansen.....	Oregon 028
20.....	Kandis A. Myers.....	Texas 017
(Alt)....	Andrew Flemming.....	Texas 009
21.....	Paul N. Bancroft.....	Arkansas 007
(Alt)....	Loretta J. Rethard.....	Oklahoma 085
(Alt)....	Robert E. Lougee.....	Oklahoma 007

Advisors: Jerry P. Steelman and Sloan H. Hoopes

COMMITTEE ON LEGISLATION AND VETERANS RIGHTS

01.....	John P. Rogers.....	Massachusetts 010
(Alt)....	Timothy E. Voner.....	Massachusetts 114
02.....	John J. McGuire.....	New York 030
(Alt)....	Nicola L. Luciani.....	New York 018
03.....	Gregory S. Holmes.....	Maine 015
(Alt)....	Timothy C. Seavey.....	Maine 015
04.....	Justus Kehne, Jr.....	Delaware 008
(Alt)....	Charles A. Kashner.....	Delaware 001
05.....	George I. Ford, Sr.....	Pennsylvania 014
(Alt)....	None.....	
06.....	Jacob N. Stafford.....	West Virginia 056
(Alt)....	Barbara Pittman.....	District of Columbia 005
07.....	Richard E. Giese.....	Florida 028
(Alt)....	David Clayman.....	Florida 152
08.....	H. C. Franklin, Jr.....	Mississippi 048
(Alt)....	Dennis K. Moody.....	Mississippi 017
09.....	Wesley D. McKelvey.....	North Carolina 046
(Alt)....	John R. Huston.....	Georgia 046
10.....	Lowell G. McKeehan.....	Michigan 114
(Alt)....	James D. Boozer.....	Michigan 020
11.....	Frank J. Tentler.....	Ohio 001
(Alt)....	Harlan F. Plummer.....	Ohio 071
12.....	Charles E. Bille.....	Wisconsin 040
(Alt)....	Charles J. Ellis.....	Illinois 008
13.....	Joseph S. Carroll.....	Indiana 052
(Alt)....	Martin J. Main.....	Indiana 052
14.....	Henry H. Sadler.....	Minnesota 010
(Alt)....	Jon D. Larson.....	Minnesota 017
15.....	Prezell Frazier.....	Iowa 020
(Alt)....	Gregory R. Holloway.....	Nebraska 007
16.....	Don J. Pouliot.....	California 002
(Alt)....	Paul T. Bannai.....	California 100
17.....	Kenneth B. Wright.....	Utah 008
(Alt)....	Ian E. Briggs.....	Utah 008
18.....	Clarence Kamai, Jr.....	Hawaii 002
(Alt)....	Rogelio Evangelista.....	Hawaii 002

1999 NATIONAL CONVENTION, ORLANDO, FLORIDA - Continued

District	Name (Delegate and alternate)	Chapter No. and State
19.....	David N. Harris.....	Washington 041
(Alt)....	Michele L. Vickery.....	Washington 002
20.....	Claude J. Boggs, Sr.....	Texas 128
(Alt)....	Jim D. Roos.....	Texas 001
21.....	Robert E. Lougee.....	Oklahoma 007
(Alt)....	David Reeves.....	Oklahoma 007

Advisors: Joseph A. Violante and Thomas L. Tomlinson

COMMITTEE ON NOMINATION OF NATIONAL OFFICERS

01.....	Edward R. Finn.....	Massachusetts 010
(Alt)....	Thomas J. Daley.....	Massachusetts 049
02.....	Sidney Siller.....	New York 023
(Alt)....	Louis P. Cirillo.....	New York 028
03.....	Norman L. Newell.....	Maine 001
(Alt)....	Jeanette M. Genovese.....	Rhode Island 001
04.....	Salvatore Lo Sauro.....	New Jersey 015
(Alt)....	Joseph P. Trulio.....	New Jersey 009
05.....	Jim Wyatt.....	Pennsylvania 115
(Alt)....	James E. Turner.....	Pennsylvania 014
06.....	Joseph Reeves.....	Virginia 041
(Alt)....	Robert T. Reynolds.....	Virginia 010
07.....	Dennis A. Joyner.....	Florida 104
(Alt)....	Albert H. Linden, Jr.....	Florida 004
08.....	James L. Burleson.....	Mississippi 006
(Alt)....	Wilbur L. Trahan.....	Mississippi 005
09.....	James R. Murray.....	North Carolina 012
(Alt)....	Alexe M. Baker.....	Georgia 010
10.....	Thomas A. McMasters, III.....	Michigan 129
(Alt)....	David E. Smith.....	Michigan 003
11.....	Samuel E. Lanza.....	Ohio 011
(Alt)....	Joseph R. Lenhart.....	Ohio 073
12.....	Dorothy R. Schilling.....	Wisconsin 019
(Alt)....	Raymond E. Dempsey.....	Illinois 042
13.....	Michael A. Whelihan.....	Indiana 052
(Alt)....	James V. Thurau.....	Indiana 052
14.....	Eugene A. Murphy.....	South Dakota 001
(Alt)....	Joseph M. Litzinger.....	North Dakota 002
15.....	Mick Jones.....	Missouri 017
(Alt)....	Aaron A. Bura.....	Kansas 036
16.....	Michael W. Tempesta.....	California 001
(Alt)....	Astro A. Tortolano.....	California 011
17.....	Caroline D. Mason.....	Colorado 021
(Alt)....	John Wiedeman.....	Colorado 008
18.....	Joseph J. McDowell.....	Arizona 020
(Alt)....	Gary K. Nakamura.....	Hawaii 001
19.....	Helen H. Barkley.....	Alaska 002
(Alt)....	Harold E. Wiley.....	Washington 046
20.....	Bruce W. Burgess.....	Texas 005
(Alt)....	Alphonso R. Altieri.....	Texas 057
21.....	Irvin D. Eddy.....	Oklahoma 057
(Alt)....	Leo E. Dowling.....	Oklahoma 026

Blind Vets

	Floyd O. Britting.....	Blind Veterans 001
(Alt)....	Robert L. Williams.....	Blind Veterans 001

Advisors: Gene A. Murphy and William E. Leach

COMMANDER KISTLER: Ladies and gentlemen, I will ask Chaplain Todd to lead us in prayer.

CHAPLAIN TODD: And as we reflect on today's meeting, let us also reflect on those men and women and boys and girls who are suffering the devastation of the hurricane in Texas. May we pause for a moment.

Lord God, we know that so often in the devastation of wind and rain, often men and women and boys and girls are caught up in the seriousness of devastations. We pray now that you will give them the wherewithal to overcome situations and circumstances in Texas that may have left them homeless, that may have left individuals hurting physically, mentally and spiritually. For we know that many here are concerned because of families and friends and neighbors and loved ones. Ease their conscience and mind. Touch them with Your finger of mercy and give them peace.

And Lord, we praise Your Name now for all You've done and all You shall do. In His Holy Name we pray. Amen.

COMMANDER KISTLER: The convention stands in recess until 1:00 o'clock this afternoon.

(Whereupon, the meeting recessed at 11:15 o'clock a.m., August 23, 1999.)

SECOND BUSINESS SESSION

The Second Business Session of the Disabled American Veterans convened in the Coronado Ballroom of the Coronado Springs Resort, Orlando, Florida, Monday afternoon, August 23, 1999, and was called to order at 1:00 o'clock p.m. by Commander Andrew A. Kistler.

COMMANDER ANDREW A. KISTLER: The convention will please come to order.

Please stand and join me in the salute to the flag.

Chaplain Todd, will you please offer prayer.

CHAPLAIN TODD: We come again to resume our minds towards the business at hand. We pray that for those of you who are concerned about the devastation in Texas that your minds are at peace in knowing that the devastation has somehow missed the mass of people in that part of the world and country.

We pray now, Lord, that as we think on the realities of Your Spirit, that we'll remember Paul Bisson of Maine who has been hospitalized. Touch him with Your finger of mercy.

And Lord, we praise Your Name now for that peace that surpasses all human understanding. In His Holy Name we pray. Amen.

COMMANDER KISTLER: We will now hear from Hospital and Voluntary Services Committee Chairman Hank Veillette.

MR. HENRY A. VEILLETTE: Good afternoon. Comrade Commander and delegates: The National Convention Committee on Hospital and Voluntary Services was called to order for the first business session on August 23, 1999 by the committee advisors, Sloan Hoopes, Virginia, and National Director of Voluntary Services Jerry Steelman, and assisted by Associate National Legislative Director Dick Wannmemacher.

The first order of business was the election of a convention committee chairman. Hank Veillette was nominated and elected chairman. The next order of business was the nomination and election of a secretary. Philip Campagna, 6th District, Maryland, was nominated and elected as secretary of the committee.

The committee then proceeded to review the resolutions submitted. 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 RESOLVED portion of the resolutions.

Category on funding, Resolution 084. Support adequate funding for VA health care program, including staff. I move the adoption of Resolution 84, Comrade Commander.

COMMANDER KISTLER: Is there a motion to approve the adoption of this resolution? Mike 1.

MR. CARL VACCO: Carl Vacco, State of Arizona, Chapter 1, seconds that motion.

MR. VEILLETTE: Comrade Commander, I withdraw that. I'm sorry. I should have read all the resolutions from the very beginning.

COMMANDER KISTLER: Excuse me for just a moment. Could I ask for a withdrawal of that motion, please?

MR. ELWOOD A. LECHAUSSE: Woody Lechausse, Chapter 17, Manchester, Connecticut, moves for withdrawal of the motion.

MR. VACCO: I second that motion. Carl Vacco from Chapter 1 in Arizona.

COMMANDER KISTLER: Thank you. We'll do that because he wants to read all of them first. Thank you.

MR. VEILLETTE: Resolution 146. Support legislation that would provide additional funding for the community based outpatient treatment clinic.

Resolution 160. Support legislation to extend CHAMPVA entitlement to children until graduation of full-time students.

Resolution 184. Oppose the imposition of user fees for outpatient care at military medical facilities.

Resolution 115. Support adequate medical services and benefits for women veterans.

Resolution 171. Provide consistently adequate gender-appropriate treatment and facilities by the VA health care system.

Resolution 008. Support a change in law to allow veterans 50 percent or more disabled who reside outside of the United States to receive medical care for all conditions.

Resolution 139. Support VA paying their fair share of the cost of caring for veterans residing in state veterans homes.

Resolution 138. Support adequate salary and pay levels for VA physicians, dentists, and nurses.

These are committee resolutions:

Resolution 222. Support legislation which provides service-connected veterans priority within the VA health care system.

Resolution 223. Urge VHA to end inappropriate billing for treatment of service-connected conditions.

Resolution 224. Support provisions of emergency health care in non-VA facilities to veterans enrolled in the VA's health care system.

Resolution 225. Support enhancement of long-term health care to veterans.

Resolution 226. Oppose an increase in or extension of VA health care co-payments.

Resolution 227. Support the provision of comprehensive Department of Veterans Affairs health care services to entitled veterans.

Resolution 228. Oppose third-party payments for service-connected disability.

Resolution 084. Support adequate funding for all Department of Veterans Affairs Programs.

Resolution 229. Urge the Department of Veterans Affairs to impose guidelines to preclude inappropriate use of nonphysicians for disability examinations.

Resolution 245. Extend appreciation to Electric Mobility Veterans' Assistance Division for the success of the 78th National Convention.

Resolution 246. Extend appreciation to the VA Outpatient Clinic in Orlando, Florida and the VA Medical Center in Tampa, Florida, for the success of the 78th National Convention.

Comrade Commander, this completes the report of the Committee on Hospital and Voluntary Services, and I move the adoption of these resolutions, and that the committee be discharged with the thanks of the National Convention. Thank you, Comrade Commander.

(The above-mentioned resolutions follow.)

RESOLUTION NO. 008—LEGISLATIVE

SUPPORT A CHANGE IN LAW TO ALLOW VETERANS RATED 50 PERCENT OR MORE DISABLED WHO RESIDE OUTSIDE OF THE UNITED STATES TO RECEIVE MEDICAL CARE FOR ALL CONDITIONS

WHEREAS, under current law, veterans who reside outside the United States who are rated by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) as 50 percent or more disabled are restricted from receiving medical care for medical conditions other than those service connected or any disability associated with and held to be aggravating a service-connected disability; and

WHEREAS, under title 38, United States Code, section 1710 (a)(1)(D), veterans rated as being 50 percent or more disabled are

entitled to medical treatment for any disability; and

WHEREAS, eligible veterans residing outside the United States should not be treated any differently than those residing within the United States; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, supports legislation to amend title 38, United States Code, section 1710 (a)(1)(D), to provide health care eligibility for medical treatment of any disability to veterans rated 50 percent or more disabled and residing outside the United States.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 084—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 the country; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, seeks and strongly supports adequate funding for all VA programs.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 115—LEGISLATIVE

SUPPORT ADEQUATE MEDICAL SERVICES AND BENEFITS FOR WOMEN VETERANS

WHEREAS, women veterans accounted for 4.3 percent of the total veteran population in 1990, by the year 2000 women will represent 5.3 percent of all veterans, and by 2040 they will make up about 11 percent of the total veteran population; and

WHEREAS, women have always provided meaningful contributions to our armed services over the course of our Nation's history, most recently exemplified by the 33,000 women who served honorably in Southwest Asia performing combat and combat support functions; and

WHEREAS, a recent General Accounting Office report found that problems continue to confront women veterans when attempting to gain access to VA health care services and VA remains unable to fully ensure privacy for women veterans; and

WHEREAS, many women seeking VA health care find services unavailable or personnel unprepared to understand or deal with their specific needs; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, seeks enactment of legislation mandating the provision of health care services, inclusive of gender-specific services, by VA to eligible women veterans to the same degree and extent that services are provided to eligible male veterans, inclusive of counseling and/or psychological services incident to sexual violence, AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we urge VA to strictly adhere to stated policies regarding privacy issues relating to the treatment of women veterans and to proactively seek innovative methods to ensure women veterans receive the treatment they so rightly deserve.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 138—LEGISLATIVE

SUPPORT ADEQUATE SALARY AND PAY LEVELS FOR VA PHYSICIANS, DENTISTS, AND NURSES

WHEREAS, chronic underfunding of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) medical care program continues to hamper the VA's ability to provide timely, complete and quality health care services to veterans; and

WHEREAS, physicians, dentists, and nurses form the basic framework and nucleus for the provision of health care services to veterans; and

WHEREAS, there continues to exist a genuine crisis in the VA's ability to recruit and retain an adequate number of qualified health care providers; and

WHEREAS, a significant factor in the ability to hire qualified health care providers is adequate pay that is competitive with the private sector; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, seeks the enactment of legislation providing for adequate salary and pay levels for VA physicians, dentists, and nurses.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 139—LEGISLATIVE

SUPPORT VA PAYING THEIR FAIR SHARE OF THE COST OF CARING FOR VETERANS RESIDING IN STATE VETERANS HOMES

WHEREAS, state veterans homes were founded for Civil War veterans in the late 1800s and have served veterans for over 100 years; and

WHEREAS, under the provisions of title 38, United States Code, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is authorized to make aid payments to states maintaining state veterans homes subject to the provisions of title 38, Code of Federal Regulations, section 18.13; and

WHEREAS, there are 93 state veterans homes in 42 states throughout the United States, with more being added annually; and

WHEREAS, the VA State Veterans Home Program has proven to be a cost-effective provider of quality care services to the Nation's veterans who require domiciliary, nursing home, and hospital care; and

WHEREAS, VA promotes the care and treatment of veterans in state veterans homes as one means to attain the goal of developing and maintaining the highest possible quality of patient care for eligible veterans; and

WHEREAS, VA has stated their commitment to increase VA's share of state home per diem to 33 1/3 percent of the national average cost of providing care in a state veterans home; and

WHEREAS, title 38, United States Code, authorizes the State Home Construction Grant Program which is funded by VA at 65 percent of total costs for construction of new state veterans homes and renovation of existing facilities; and

WHEREAS, VA has not kept pace with states grant applications for construction of new state veterans homes and renovation projects; and

WHEREAS, title 38, United States Code, authorizes VA to make per diem payments for veterans residing in state veterans homes, and the State Veterans Home Program is recognized as the lowest cost alternative among all nursing care alternatives used by VA; and

WHEREAS, recognizing the growing long-term health care needs of older veterans, the State Veterans Home Program will continue to be a vital health care provider and the lowest cost alternative for veterans needing long-term nursing care; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, fully supports the legislative objectives of the National

Association of State Veterans Homes (NASVH) to receive from VA a per diem payment that equals 33 1/3 percent of the national average cost of providing care in a state veterans home; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans urges the Congress of the United States to fully fund state veterans home construction grants Priority One projects for fiscal year 2000; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans supports a ranking system whereby state home construction grant requests would be prioritized, in the year they are received, utilizing current VA needs criteria. Grant requests received in future years would be prioritized in the same manner with the understanding that they will not receive funding until projects submitted in previous years are funded; however, a state without a state veterans home automatically becomes eligible for funding for its first home regardless of the year its request is received; 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 as it is the most cost-effective nursing care alternative used by VA.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 146—LEGISLATIVE

SUPPORT ADDITIONAL FUNDING FOR COMMUNITY-BASED OUTPATIENT CLINICS NOW AND IN THE FUTURE

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has seen fit to change the face of its operations from inpatient to outpatient treatment systems; and

WHEREAS, the VA has chosen to bring health care to veterans with its program of Community-Based Outpatient Clinics (CBOCs); and

WHEREAS, such CBOCs are being funded from current hospital operating budgets, thus reducing even further the VA's ability to adequately care for veterans at its hospital sites; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, supports additional funding for the CBOC programs now and in the future.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 160—LEGISLATIVE

SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO EXTEND CHAMPVA ENTITLEMENT UNTIL GRADUATION OF FULL-TIME STUDENTS

WHEREAS, children of certain veterans are provided medical care under the CHAMPVA program; and

WHEREAS, a child's eligibility, which otherwise terminates at age eighteen, continues to age twenty-three when such child is pursuing an approved full-time course of education; and

WHEREAS, while attending school, these children generally continue to be dependent upon the veteran or surviving spouse and are unable to provide for their own medical care; and

WHEREAS, continuing medical care eligibility under CHAMPVA until graduation would further the goal of aiding a veteran's child while pursuing an education and alleviate financial hardship that might otherwise interrupt a child's education; NOW

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, supports legislation to extend eligibility to CHAMPVA until an eligible child's graduation from an approved course of full-time education.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 171—LEGISLATIVE

PROVIDE CONSISTENTLY ADEQUATE GENDER-APPROPRIATE TREATMENT AND FACILITIES BY THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS

AFFAIRS HEALTH CARE SYSTEM

WHEREAS, current Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) policies require gender-oriented facilities for inpatient and outpatient treatment at VA medical facilities; and

WHEREAS, many of these facilities do not, in fact, provide appropriate and distinct gender-specific inpatient rooms, bathrooms, treatment rooms, and outpatient chaperoning for the privacy and dignity of female veteran patients; and

WHEREAS, we believe the VA needs to provide consistent, stricter guidance and enforcement of its stated gender-sensitive policies; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, vigorously supports legislation that would require stricter adherence by VA medical facilities to stated policies providing separate and distinct female inpatient rooms, bathroom facilities, equipment, and inpatient/outpatient female attendants during examining procedures to assure privacy and dignity to female veteran patients.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 184—LEGISLATIVE

OPPOSE THE IMPOSITION OF USER FEES FOR OUTPATIENT MEDICAL CARE AT MILITARY MEDICAL FACILITIES

WHEREAS, military retirees have earned the right, by virtue of service to this Nation, to utilize military medical facilities to meet their medical care needs and those of their dependents; and

WHEREAS, this earned benefit has been established by the Congress through the enactment of legislation entitling military retirees and their dependents to utilize military medical facilities to meet their medical care needs; and

WHEREAS, the charging of a user's fee would adversely impact upon military retirees' financial and medical well-being; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, opposes any proposal that will require military retirees, or their dependents, to be charged a user's fee in order to obtain outpatient medical services at military medical facilities.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 222—LEGISLATIVE

SUPPORT LEGISLATION WHICH PROVIDES SERVICE-CONNECTED VETERANS PRIORITY WITHIN THE VA HEALTH CARE SYSTEM

WHEREAS, Public Law 104-262 repealed section 1712 (i) of title 38, United States Code, which prescribed regulations to ensure that special priority be provided in furnishing medical services and any other outpatient medical care to service-connected veterans; and

WHEREAS, current law does not ensure that service-connected veterans will be given priority for medical services; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention, assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, supports legislation that provides that service-connected veterans will be given priority for VA medical care unless compelling medical reasons indicate otherwise.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 223—LEGISLATIVE

URGE THE VETERANS HEALTH ADMINISTRATION TO END INAPPROPRIATE BILLING FOR TREATMENT OF SERVICE-CONNECTED CONDITIONS

WHEREAS, by law, Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is

required to bill health insurance carriers for treatment provided to veterans for nonservice-connected medical conditions; and

WHEREAS, VHA often inappropriately and illegally bills third-party payers for care related to service-connected conditions; and

WHEREAS, during the past year, the DAV has witnessed a number of cases of VA inappropriately billing veterans' private insurers for treatment of conditions related to service-connected disability(ies); and

WHEREAS, this unlawful billing is either deliberate or occurs through carelessness; and

WHEREAS, medical care for veterans who risked their lives to defend our Nation is the responsibility of the federal government and not veterans' private insurers; and

WHEREAS, treatment for service-connected disabilities must be financed through Congressional appropriations; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention, assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, urges VHA to establish and implement procedures to ensure that third-party insurers are not inappropriately billed for the treatment of service-connected disability(ies).

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 224—LEGISLATIVE

SUPPORT THE PROVISION OF EMERGENCY HEALTH CARE IN NON-DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS FACILITIES TO VETERANS ENROLLED IN VA'S HEALTH CARE SYSTEM

WHEREAS, any health care plan is incomplete without provisions for emergency care; and

WHEREAS, current law limits VA's authority to pay for emergency services that veterans receive outside the VA health care system; and

WHEREAS, VA provides enrolled veterans a uniform benefits package that emphasizes preventive medicine and primary care, and provides a comprehensive health care benefit plan, including inpatient and outpatient treatment; and

WHEREAS, the VA enrollment system has declared itself to be a "Health Care Plan;" NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention, assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, supports legislation to amend title 38, United States Code, to authorize veterans to receive emergency medical care in private medical facilities at VA expense.

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RESOLUTION NO. 225—LEGISLATIVE

SUPPORT ENHANCEMENT OF LONG-TERM HEALTH CARE TO VETERANS

WHEREAS, many veterans who use VA for their health care need post-acute and long-term care services; and

WHEREAS, VA long-term care is restricted and unevenly funded; and

WHEREAS, demand for post-acute and long-term care services in the veteran population is increasing and predicted to grow by 13 percent over the next five years; and

WHEREAS, VA should invigorate and re-engineer the core of VA-operated services to meet new demand for long-term care; and

WHEREAS, long-term care should be afforded to any veteran in need of such care for a service-connected disability, and to any veteran who is in need of such care and who has a service-connected disability rated at 50 percent or more; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention, assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, supports legislation to amend title 38, United States Code, to establish a comprehensive program of extended care services for veterans.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 226—LEGISLATIVE

OPPOSE AN INCREASE IN OR EXTENSION OF VA HEALTH CARE COPAYMENTS

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA's) mission is to provide high quality medical care to veterans eligible by reason of their honorable military service; and

WHEREAS, Congress authorized VA to collect copayments for treatment of nonservice-connected conditions as a temporary measure to achieve savings for deficit reductions; and

WHEREAS, large budget surpluses are projected over the next decade; and

WHEREAS, under ordinary circumstances, veterans should not have to pay for benefits accorded them by a grateful Nation; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention, assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, opposes any legislation that would require the VA to increase or extend the Congressional authority for collection of copayments for the care and treatment of veterans.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 227—LEGISLATIVE

SUPPORT THE PROVISION OF COMPREHENSIVE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS HEALTH CARE SERVICES TO ENTITLED VETERANS

WHEREAS, it is the position 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, for well over a decade, VA has been faced with the dilemma of ever-increasing demand for medical care and perennially inadequate, decremental budgets; and

WHEREAS, because of various statutory and administrative barriers, veterans are denied adequate health care implicitly promised in connection with their military service; and

WHEREAS, there is a continuing and critical need to clearly define eligibility for VA care, ensure necessary services will be provided and the system will be sufficiently funded; and

WHEREAS, The VA health delivery system must encompass, as a minimum, the following:

* Promote and ensure health care quality and value, and protect veterans in the health care system;

* Entitlement to guaranteed access to a full continuum of care from preventive through hospice;

* Guaranteed funding through adequate appropriations, third-party reimbursements and Medicare subvention;

* Fair and equitable distribution of resources in treating the greatest number of veterans having priority to VA health care;

* Provision for the use of all medications, supplies, prosthetic devices, and other over-the-counter medications necessary for the proper treatment of service-connected disabled veterans;

* Preserving VA's mission and role as a provider of special services in areas such as blindness, amputation, aging, mental health, and long-term care;

* Maintaining the integrity of an independent VA health care delivery system as representing the primary responsible entity for the delivery of health care services to entitled veterans;

* Maintaining a strong and veteran-focused research program; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention, assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, supports legislation following the concepts and

principles embodied above—establishing an entitlement to VA health care services for clearly-defined veterans.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 228—LEGISLATIVE

OPPOSE THIRD-PARTY PAYMENTS FOR SERVICE-CONNECTED DISABILITY

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA's) mission is to provide high quality medical care to veterans eligible by reason of their service-connected disabilities; and

WHEREAS, the VA has the right to recover or collect the cost of care from a third-party health insurer when insured veterans receive health care from the VA for nonservice-connected conditions; and

WHEREAS, the collection of payments from a third party for the treatment of veterans' service-connected disabilities would abrogate the VA's and 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 Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, opposes any legislation that would require the VA to recover third-party payments for the care and treatment of a veteran's service-connected disability(ies).

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 229—LEGISLATIVE

URGE THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS TO IMPOSE GUIDELINES TO PRECLUDE INAPPROPRIATE USE OF NON-PHYSICIANS FOR DISABILITY EXAMINATIONS

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), through its compensation and pension examinations section, has historically recognized the importance of a complete medical examination in order to properly evaluate a veteran's disability; and

WHEREAS, examinations should include complete neurological and psychiatric examination, and other special examinations indicated by the physical condition; and

WHEREAS, an incomplete examination, especially in the neurological and psychiatric fields, is a common cause of incorrect diagnosis, which frequently leaves the Veterans Benefits Administration in doubt as to the presence or absence of disabling conditions at the time of the examination; and

WHEREAS, an incomplete examination delays the adjudication of monetary benefits as well as the treatment of complex medical conditions; and

WHEREAS, many questions of cause and effect of functional impairment are beyond the competency of non-physicians; and

WHEREAS, individuals with qualifications less than those held by a physician do not possess the training and/or level of proficiency to cope with the complexities of performing compensation and pension examinations; and

WHEREAS, where examinations such as cardiology, neurology, gynecology, pulmonary, podiatry, orthopedics, gastrointestinal, and psychiatry require specialized medical opinions; and

WHEREAS, the medical examiner maintains the responsibility of furnishing, in addition to the etiology, anatomical, pathological, laboratory and prognostic data required for ordinary classification, full descriptions of the effects of disability upon the veteran's ordinary activity; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, urges the VA to impose binding guidelines that would preclude the utilization of a non-physician in performing VA compensation or pension examinations that are solely within the competence of a physician.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 245—ADMINISTRATIVE

EXTEND APPRECIATION TO ELECTRIC MOBILITY VETERANS ASSISTANCE DIVISION FOR THE SUCCESS OF THE 78TH NATIONAL CONVENTION

WHEREAS, the cooperation and professionalism extended to the delegates and guests of the 78th National Convention of the Disabled American Veterans and Auxiliary was beyond reproach; and

WHEREAS, many of the delegates to our National Convention were in need of products and services that improve the quality of life for their mobility impairment; and

WHEREAS, in response to this need, Electric Mobility provided 50 scooters to be used at our 78th National Convention in order to assist members in overcoming mobility impairment; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, expresses its sincere appreciation to Electric Mobility for the donation of scooters to the delegates to this 78th National Convention.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 246—ADMINISTRATIVE

EXTEND APPRECIATION TO THE VA OUTPATIENT CLINIC IN ORLANDO, FLORIDA AND THE VA MEDICAL CENTER IN TAMPA, FLORIDA, FOR THE SUCCESS OF THE 78TH NATIONAL CONVENTION

WHEREAS, the cooperation and professionalism extended to the delegates and guests of the 78th National Convention of the Disabled American Veterans and Auxiliary was beyond reproach; and

WHEREAS, many of the delegates to our National Convention were in need of quality 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 VA Medical Center, Tampa, Florida and VA Outpatient Clinic, Orlando, Florida, staffed and maintained a compassionate and high-quality outpatient clinic and prosthetic service at Disney's Coronado Springs Resort; and

WHEREAS, the medical care and prosthetic services rendered to the delegates to this 78th 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 Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, expresses its sincere appreciation to the VA Medical Center, Tampa, Florida and VA Outpatient Clinic Orlando, Florida, for the professional and skillful medical care delivered to the delegates to this 78th National Convention and for making this Convention a memorable one.

MR. LECHAUSSE: Woody Lechausse, Paul P. Barker Chapter 17, Manchester, Connecticut, seconds the motion.

COMMANDER KISTLER: Thank you. Is there a question on the motion? There being no question, all those in favor say Aye; opposed. Motion carried. Thank you very much.

Intelligence, experience and wise leadership are the hallmarks of our organization's management team. And DAV Washington Headquarters Executive Director Dave Gorman certainly embodies all those qualities and more.

Dave has been with the DAV for more than a quarter of a century, making worthy contributions to our mission while gaining valuable experience in both our National Service and National Legislative Departments before assuming his duties as executive director of the DAV Washington Headquarters in 1995.

Truly a man for all seasons, Dave Gorman is responsible for the day-to-day performance of our Service, Legislative and Volunteer operations. And now here's Dave Gorman to present his report to our convention. (Applause)

MR. DAVID W. GORMAN: Thank you, Commander. National Commander Kistler, distinguished guests, and delegates to the 78th National Convention of the Disabled American Veterans: As Executive Director of the your DAV Washington Headquarters, it is truly an honor and a privilege for me to present this annual report.

First, however, I want to thank National Commander Andy Kistler for his truly inspiring leadership and rock-solid commitment to the DAV and our unified mission of service and hope to disabled veterans and their families.

Over the last year, Andy Kistler has evolved into something more than DAV's national commander. Each of you needs to know that he has gained a much deserved and genuinely earned reputation in Washington, D.C. and across this great country, a reputation as a fighter and a forceful, outspoken advocate for all disabled veterans, all the way from the White House at one end of Pennsylvania Avenue to the Capitol at the other end of Pennsylvania Avenue.

Under Commander Kistler's watch DAV has prospered. And, as a result, all 2.3 million service-connected disabled veterans have reaped the benefit.

A truly remarkable year, Commander, and one for which we all owe you our deepest gratitude. (Applause)

I also want to express my deep respect and sincere gratitude to our National Adjutant Art Wilson. I can't say enough about how vital Art's sound guidance, his wise counsel, and his steadfast support have been for all of us in our efforts to provide you and your families with the very best service possible.

I stand before you today and say without any hesitation, exaggeration nor, I believe challenge that Art Wilson has over the last five years successfully refocused DAV in a way none of us have previously seen nor could we have anticipated.

His vision, his commitment and his savvy have put DAV's financial house back in order. In fact, we are now in an excellent position to move forward and do the work on behalf of our nation's veterans that we need to do.

And his unique understanding and unrelenting passion toward the very cornerstone of our great organization, service, is, quite candidly, unequalled in the entire arena of veterans affairs. Thanks, Art. (Applause)

Of course, none of what we have been able to accomplish in Washington would be possible without the outstanding support and work carried out by Rick Patterson and his great professional staff at National Headquarters in Cold Spring, Kentucky.

As we gather this week to reflect on the DAV's activities during the past year, we know the future holds tremendous promises and also presents us with a great many new challenges.

The various programs and services the DAV provides are constantly being evaluated and improved so we can continue to meet our future head-on with strength and with confidence and conviction.

As you know, your National Service Program, under the expert direction of National Service Director Ken Wolfe, remains the backbone of the DAV. It is, without doubt, the finest, the most professional veterans' advocacy program in this entire nation.

Not only is our National Service Officer corps growing, but the quality of our NSOs keeps improving as well. Art Wilson's vision and his foresight, together with his steadfast commitment to service and excellence has been the driving force behind the DAV's National Service Officer Training Academy in Denver, Colorado.

Upon graduation of Class VIII on September 10 of this year, the DAV will have hired, trained, and replenished your NSO corps with 199 new National Service Officers. All of these young men and women became disabled in service during the Persian Gulf War and hostilities in Panama, Grenada, Somalia, and Bosnia. Veterans from these conflicts now make up a full 80 percent of our National Service Officer corps.

And I also want to assure you that your National Service Officers are on the very cutting edge of the technology revolution. The DAV has successfully completed our own automation project that

now allows every National Service Officer in the country instantaneous desk-top access to the full array of laws, regulations and other information vital to the successful representation of you and disabled veterans across the country.

This project means the DAV will continue to enhance its role as the leading advocate for our nation's disabled veterans and their dependents well into the future.

Later on, you'll be hearing a lot more about our legislative battles, but I want to say a word about National Legislative Director Joe Violante and your DAV legislative team. We all owe these folks a great deal of thanks for their untiring efforts going about protecting your rights on a day-to-day basis.

It seems that every time we turn around, we're faced with yet another devastating attack on veterans programs, not the least of which was a proposed flat-line budget for veterans' health care which the Administration, including Secretary of Veterans Affairs Togo West, claimed would be completely adequate for the upcoming year.

Well, we know better, and we asked for your help, and you all responded. You reached into an arsenal of weapons that we had used before to let your members of Congress know that veterans are upset, and we would not sit idly by while an inadequate budget for VA was being debated. And you made the difference.

I'm happy to report that I believe we have now found a new weapon and an extremely effective one. As Adjutant Wilson mentioned this morning, on Memorial Day weekend, DAV departments and chapters held rallies at 129 different locations across the country. Thousands of DAV members and supporters all came together all across this country to demand adequate federal funding for veterans' health care.

And those rallies caught the attention of many in Congress and in the Administration. And I know that many of you in this room, in fact probably all of you, helped organize and took part in this unprecedented and very successful grassroots campaign. And I want to thank you for everything you did to make these rallies a tremendous success.

Allow me to share a thought with you about advocacy. Advocacy is, by its very nature, a team effort and endeavor. The very life and vitality of the DAV's advocacy successes lies at the grassroots. It is there, in your departments and in your chapters that our cause thrives and endures. We know that without strong, deep roots a tree cannot grow, it cannot weather a storm; that the strength of any building is in its foundation.

It is to you, DAV members, most of all, that we owe our success as an organization. Because it is you, after all is said and done, that is the very essence of the DAV. You, individually and collectively form the roots and the foundation of the DAV.

That same team effort and spirit is exemplified by your Washington, D.C. staff, and it was so well showcased when we went to work to plan our Memorial Day rallies. Your National Service Department went right to work to contact each National Service Office across the country to put a plan in motion.

Although there was only about a month to plan the rallies, your NSOs took the challenge to heart and contacted your departments and your chapters. Together, like only DAV'ers can, the plan began to take shape and each developed a life of its own.

Soon National Service and Legislative Headquarters phones were ringing off their hooks. It seemed everyone was involved, and everyone had a great idea and a great plan to make their particular rally not only work, but make each of them a success story unto themselves.

Your National Service staff worked closely with your National Legislative staff, who developed all the necessary factual information about the various issues facing VA and veterans. Your National Communications staff took that information and put it into very clear and concise terms which made our message impossible to mistake.

The very best idea, however, and plan means nothing if it is not effectively delivered. And did you ever deliver! DAV members all across our nation effectively delivered a message that was

impossible to ignore. Each and every one of you should be as proud of yourselves as we all are of you. And please, when you return home to your department or your chapter, pass on our thanks to all of those who were also involved.

Now, I don't want to draw too much of a conclusion about these rallies, but just a few weeks ago, while Congress was talking about the VA appropriations bill, the President came along and said he had found another billion dollars for veterans. Now that ought to tell you something about the impact of your hard work on this issue.

But if it doesn't, just listen to this. We're looking at a House Appropriations Committee bill that now calls for $1.7 billion above the current amount proposed for veterans health care. It is the largest proposed increase that anyone can recall, a testament not so much to anybody in the Administration nor in Congress, but to you, who made your voices heard.

But, as always, we must keep up the pressure so members of Congress will know that veterans are expecting them to do the right thing and that we're watching to see what they do when the time comes for them to stand up and be counted.

As a matter of fact, in the Benefits Protection Team Seminar on Tuesday, we'll be asking you to send postcards with a personal message from you to your senators and your representatives urging them to provide adequate funding for lifesaving VA medical care to millions of this country's warriors, former warriors and veterans.

As for the DAV's already-outstanding volunteer programs, what can I say but that they just keep getting better and better. Under the guiding hand of National Director of Voluntary Services Jerry Steelman, your VA Voluntary Service Program, our Hospital Service Coordinator Program, and the DAV Transportation Network continue to be the envy of many across the country. And there's only one reason: Each of you and the thousands of DAV volunteers all across this country who continue to give so much of yourselves to help brighten the lives of your fellow veterans and their families.

The DAV's Transportation Network Program continues to show tremendous growth as an indispensable resource for veterans. DAV Hospital Service Coordinators have recruited nearly 6,000 volunteer drivers who logged more than 22 million miles last year alone, taking some 654,000 veterans to and from VA medical facilities. And those veterans rode in vans donated by the DAV.

Since the DAV Transportation Network began in 1987, your departments and chapters, together with the national organization, have donated 890 vans to VA medical centers nationwide. Those donated vans are valued at more than $17 million.

The DAV Voluntary Services Program, which involves so many of you in this room, is the largest of our volunteer initiatives. DAV volunteers bring hope and they bring light into the lives of hospitalized veterans and their families every single day. During the past year, DAV and Auxiliary volunteers together provided nearly two and a half million hours of VAVS service, more than any other single veterans service organization. Let me repeat that number: two and a half million hours, an outstanding accomplishment made up of nothing but love, devotion and commitment.

Our National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic just keeps getting better each year. What we call "Miracles on the Mountainside" continues to change the lives of severely disabled veterans. This year we were honored and pleased to have the Vice-President's wife, Tipper Gore, join us in Mount Crested Butte. And she will always be remembered with fondness and with warmth by those whose life she touched.

After all, disabled veterans helping other disabled veterans has been the hallmark of the DAV for more than 79 years. The disabled veterans who founded our great organization understood that principle, just as we do today.

We who carry on that proud legacy know that by working as a team, we can accomplish much more than we ever could by going it alone. Teamwork among our membership, our chapters and departments, and the national organization makes for a real winning combination.

And your team at Washington Headquarters all work together toward the same goal: Building better lives for all of America's disabled veterans.

As you know, this year has been a challenging one, and next year, as we head into a presidential election, promises to be very interesting, to say the least.

But, as we all know, the future belongs to those who are best prepared for it. And rest assured, the DAV is prepared to meet the future head on.

The DAV is still the very best advocate for veterans and is well recognized as such by members of Congress, the VA, and other influential policymakers in Washington, D.C. When the DAV speaks, they listen. They don't always agree with us or do what we want them to do, but they do listen, and please remember the Memorial Day rallies as a testament to that.

And that's because your Washington staff, backed by our membership, has earned its reputation as highly trained professionals, determined and committed to protecting and preserving the rights of our fellow disabled veterans. But in spite of everything, we in Washington would not be nearly so effective without you, our members. And that ladies and gentlemen, is a fact. It's a hard fact.

So, on behalf of the entire Washington Headquarters staff, I want to thank you for making it possible for us to serve you. It's truly an honor to do so. We couldn't do it without every one of you and the faith and the support that you've put in us to carry on the DAV's proud mission of service and hope for America's disabled veterans and their families.

Thank you so very much. (Applause)

COMMANDER KISTLER: Thank you, David, for that fine report.

I will now entertain a motion to accept the report of the executive director. Mike 1.

MR. DROGO: Frank Drogo, Braintree Chapter 29, Massachusetts, past state commander, alternate national executive committeeman from District 1. I'd like to move to accept the report made by another Massachusetts native, Mr. Gorman.

COMMANDER KISTLER: Is there a second to that motion? Mike 1.

MR. FRANQUI: PDC Jack Franqui, Chapter 1, Phoenix, Arizona, seconds that motion.

COMMANDER KISTLER: Thank you. Question on the motion? All those in favor, say Aye; opposed. The motion carried. Thank you. (Applause)

(The following written annual report was submitted by Mr. Kenneth D. Wolfe, National Service Director:)

Changes of the New Millennium

As National Service Director, it is my privilege to report on the achievements of the National Service Department and the changes of the new millennium effecting service to this nation's disabled veterans, their dependents, and survivors.

This year the Disabled American Veterans (DAV) has engaged in numerous battles to retain our system of benefits administered by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). These benefits were earned, bought, and paid for with the blood of veterans such as yourselves. Battles associated with the creation of new benefit programs necessary to care for our aging veteran population and battles for our newest veterans suffering the long-term, undiagnosable health effects of the Persian Gulf War have been raging in Congress.

With the leadership provided by National Commander Andrew A. Kistler and his Line Officers we do not fear these battles . . . and this year for the first time we called upon our National Service Officers, Departments, and Chapters to pull together and support a nationwide Memorial Day rally campaign to draw attention to the devastating budget blows being dealt to the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) by both the Congress and Administration. As always, you heeded the battle call and did what was right for all veterans . . . past, present, and future. I just want to say thanks to each and everyone of you who helped organize, publicize, and participated in this very successful endeavor which brought

national attention to the budget plight of the VHA.

I would like to name just a handful of significant VA recommendations and changes already announced for the new millennium: The Congressional Commission on Service-members and Veterans Transition Assistance released its report to Congress. The report proposes upgrading the Montgomery GI Bill education benefits program, broadening the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) Transition Assistance Program, providing transitional health care for veterans and their families, and better coordination of VA and DoD health care delivery and medical research. The VHA launched an aggressive campaign against the hepatitis C infection; incorporated pain as the fifth vital sign along with temperature, blood pressure, pulse, and respiration, and took the lead on a $20 million effort with the DoD to conduct large-scale, multi-center clinical trials of two potentially effective treatments for the undiagnosed illnesses effecting Gulf War veterans. And the list continues to grow . . . .

I also want to report on a most important issue affecting each and every veteran in the year 2000, ***"the millennium bug"*** referred to as Y2K. We urged the VA to address this important issue and put a back-up plan in place. Speculation on this topic is far reaching and we thought you would like to know the current status of the VA in this regard.

The Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) has reported and assured us that all necessary computer modifications and upgrades have been made and all VA benefit checks will be delivered on schedule. The VA has been working with the Department of Treasury, which prepares VA payments for both direct deposits and checks. The Department of Treasury has been working with the Federal Reserve to ensure direct deposits will be successfully transmitted electronically to the individual bank accounts of veterans. The VA has also met with the Postal Service to ensure that there will be no problems with the delivery of checks. The precautions VA has taken will ensure you receive your benefit payment timely even in cases where banking institution computers may not be Y2K compliant.

In addition, if you receive a regular, recurring monthly payment, your December 1999 payment will be paid on December 30, 1999, rather than January 1, 2000, because banks will be closed on December 31, 1999, and January 1, 2000.

VA medical facilities, services, and equipment have been updated and will not be affected. Your VA automated records should also be safe and available, because all VHA and VBA computers are Y2K compliant according to VA. The VA warns veterans to "beware of ploys that use fear to separate you from your money." The VA has placed a fact sheet containing this information and much more which can be accessed through the VA's Internet Home Page at www.va.gov.

As I just reported, changes of the new millennium are everywhere . . . veterans benefit programs are not exempt. Change is ever-present and the future of the battle-tested DAV is bright . . . let me tell you why. It has been said and we believe: ***"The best way to predict the future is to create it."*** In the famous words of a warrior-philosopher from 100 BC, ***"Those who are victorious plan effectively and change decisively . . . ."*** Thanks to the foresight of National Adjutant Arthur H. Wilson, the National Service Department is confident that our organizational strategic plan unveiled at this convention is effective and decisive just like a road map. A road map which will take us beyond the millennium gateway and well into the 21st century toward our ultimate destination of ***"building better lives for all our nation's disabled veterans and their families."***

Frederick Wilcox said: ***"Progress always involves risk; you can't steal second base and keep your foot on first."*** Yes, it takes courage to change which incorporates some degree of risk. Taking risks to change means moving forward while others are waiting for better times. Taking risks to change means moving forward while others are waiting for proven results. Taking risks to change means moving forward while others are waiting for applause on their past performance.

Well, I'm going to tell you . . . the National Service Department is moving ahead and not looking back as we continue our

quest to find the best people and solutions to serve this nation's disabled veterans and their dependents. We carefully screen, interview, hire, and train only wartime service-connected disabled veterans for this role. These men and women are extraordinary; they are professionals; and they are the finest veterans advocates in the world. We call them National Service Officers (NSOs) and there are 250 of them sitting in the audience right now.

Located in 69 offices across the United States and Puerto Rico, the DAV's professional corps of NSOs helps veterans and their families in claims for benefits from the VA, the armed forces, the Social Security Administration, and other government agencies. All services are provided free of charge and DAV membership is not a prerequisite.

DAV NSOs are skilled professionals, trained experts in developing disabled veterans' cases by reviewing pertinent legislation, regulations, guidelines, and medical histories. In representing veterans and their families, NSOs function as attorneys-in-fact for the veterans and families they represent. Their counseling on the full range of veterans' benefits and programs provided under federal, state and local law is indispensable. They assist veterans and their families in filing claims and providing representation before the VA, Social Security Administrative Law Judges, and various military boards and panels.

Because all DAV NSOs are wartime service-connected disabled veterans themselves, they too have suffered and endured the hardships associated with the VA's bureaucratic red tape and seemingly never-ending delays of claims development and processing. These consummate professionals secured VA benefits for 218,949 veterans and members of their families during the year ending June 30, 1999. In all, the monetary VA benefits secured for veterans and their families this year totaled $2.3 billion in new monthly and retroactive benefits.

NSO Training Academy

The rapid attrition of our Vietnam-era NSO corps led to the creation of the NSO Training Academy which became operational July 11, 1994. I'm pleased to announce that on October 30, 1998, DAV's NSO Training Academy Class VII graduated and 22 new NSO Trainees were deployed throughout the United States to NSO Offices for an additional twelve (12) months of on-the-job training. At this time 25 more students of Class VIII of the NSO Training Academy which began on May 17th of this year are hard at work in the classroom at the University of Colorado at Denver. Upon graduation September 10, 1999, the DAV will have hired, trained, and replenished our NSO corps with 199 new National Service Officers disabled in service during the Persian Gulf War and during hostile campaigns involving Panama, Grenada, Somalia, and Bosnia which constitutes 80% of the NSO corps.

Speaking of risks and changes . . . as I said last year: ***"Imagine, if you can, where the DAV would be today, had the DAV Training Academy investment not been explored and undertaken."*** You can also anticipate veterans now serving in Kosovo to join our ranks and take up our mission of caring for America's disabled veterans.

Structured and Continuing Training Program

Our commitment to excellence in training has never been stronger. Our NSOs are the best trained advocates of any veterans service organization, bar none. Keeping their cutting-edge advocacy skills up to date is of paramount importance especially with today's fluid and often randomly changing interpretations of existing veterans law. In fact, the proper application of laws can change with the stroke of a judge's pen. It is for these reasons we constantly inform, revise, train, and test the skills of our NSOs. The DAV Structured and Continuing Training Program allows supervisors to provide current real-time training. Upon completion, NSOs take computerized on-line tests which are graded by computer and immediately made available for competency reviews.

We don't just say our NSOs are the best - they are the best, and we prove it everyday.

Board of Veterans Appeals

In the event of an appeal, the DAV is well prepared to assist veterans and their families. The highest level of appeal inside the VA claims processing system is the Board of Veterans Appeals (BVA or Board) in Washington, D.C. The DAV maintains a highly skilled staff of National Appeals Officers to represent veterans before the BVA, the largest staff of any group doing this work. DAV National Appeals Officers represented claimants in 34% of all cases decided by the BVA in 1998. Far more cases than any other organization, that figure alone demonstrates the confidence veterans and their families place in DAV representation.

At the end of 1998, the BVA and the DAV completed a project to determine why remanded appeals were taking, on average, over 400 days before they were returned to the Board for final review. The DAV reviewed 9,177 cases remanded by the Board in which the DAV was the authorized representative. From this review we came to the conclusion that local VA Regional Offices in many instances needed to improve existing controls in seeing that remanded appeals are "expeditiously handled" as required by the Veterans' Benefits Improvement Act of 1994 (Pub. L. 103-446). This project resulted in a number of improvements in the handling and control of remanded appeals, accomplished by sharing information with the Board and the VBA.

During fiscal year 1998, the Board conducted nearly 5,000 personal hearings held at VA Regional Offices, the BVA in Washington, D.C., and by video conferencing. In all the Board conducted 1,151 video conference hearings, which represents a four-fold increase over the 233 held the previous year. The DAV continues to provide representation at all levels to include providing representation to those who visit the Board in Washington, D.C., who have not previously elected a veterans service organization (VSO) as their accredited representative.

The DAV's National Appeals Officers presented 12,354 informal hearing presentations to the Board for appellate review. This total continues to reflect that the DAV represents the majority of appeals considered by the Board. From those cases considered by the Board, 995 issues of service connection were favorably resolved; 1,507 issues of increased ratings were allowed; 483 miscellaneous issues were established; and 8,265 issues were remanded to VA Regional Offices for additional development. These figures reflect the DAV's continued commitment in providing only the very best representation to our nation's wartime disabled veterans, their dependents, and survivors.

United States Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims

The DAV continued its position of leadership in court litigation on behalf of veterans and their dependents over the past 12 months. The Judicial Appeals Office filed new appeals in a total of 152 cases during the 12 months ending May 31, 1999. This was an increase of 19 over a similar period one year earlier, when 133 appeals were taken. Most importantly, unparalleled success continues to be the hallmark of DAV representation of veterans in the courts of the United States. Persons appealing generally succeed approximately 20 percent of the time before federal courts. However, the decision of the BVA was reversed, vacated and remanded, or the appeal was settled in 158 appeals in which the DAV provided representation between June 1, 1998, and May 31, 1999. In cases accepted by the DAV only two decisions of the Board were affirmed during the same period. This is an extraordinarily remarkable record of achievement, of which we can all be rightly proud.

The DAV's Court of Veterans Appeals Office was re-designated as the Judicial Appeals Office early in 1999. This change in name was made in response to Congressional action which renamed the Court of Veterans Appeals the United States Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims. The functions of the DAV's office remain

unchanged.

The DAV continues to monitor all decisions of the BVA in which the DAV represented the appellant. All appeals denied by the BVA are automatically referred to the Judicial Appeals Office where the staff reviews the Board's decision for the purposes of determining whether further appeal to the court should be taken. The DAV is one of the few organizations which takes the initiative in this manner to ensure that all appropriate appeals are taken to court so that wrongful denials are overturned.

Administrative Review Program

As you know technical proficiency is the trademark of the DAV National Service Officer corps. NSOs review every VA rating decision made for veterans who appoint the DAV as their representative. The purpose in this review is to ensure the accuracy of the decision and correct all noted deficiencies. The Administrative Review (AR) Program facilitates the correction of decisions through a streamlined administrative remedy rather than the appellate process. The AR process is used explicitly for situations involving policy or procedure of more than local significance, questions concerning the adequacy or applicability of regulations, and other administrative instructions.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I am proud to say our trademark is safe. With the exception of a single AR pending final disposition . . . every AR submitted by NSOs this past year to the National Service Department which were accepted and subsequently forwarded to VA Central Office for review has been granted.

Military Affairs

Military affairs encompasses a host of services provided by NSOs. This past year NSOs represented 71 former service members before Discharge Review Boards and 196 before Boards for Correction of Military Records.

NSOs also provided counsel and representation for 171 active duty service members during their transition through the military's Disability Evaluation System (DES) which primarily consists of Medical Evaluation Boards (MEB) and formal hearings before Physical Evaluation Boards (PEB).

For those enlisted soldiers, sailors, and airmen as well as officers making the all-important transition back into civilian life, the DAV offers formal Transition Assistance Programs (TAP) and Disabled Transition Programs (DTAP). Based on the needs of the community and the military bases being serviced, these seminars range from short oral presentations to others consisting of full VA benefit descriptions, VA medical record reviews, and filing of VA claims for disability and educational benefits. This past year the DAV conducted 8,600 transition presentations serving more than 27,600 separating veterans. We view these programs and the delivery of DAV services to these separating new veterans as absolutely critical, and we hope to expand and collocate DAV services along with the VA at all military pre-discharge/separation sites.

Our National Appeals Office at the BVA has also initiated a Career Awareness Program (CAP) in the Washington, D.C., area for Generals and flag officers of the United States Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, and Coast Guard. We participate by providing these officers with information and assistance, prior to their retirement, on a full range of benefits and services available following their many years of honorable service to our nation.

Employment

Deputy National Service Director for Employment Anthony L. Baskerville is responsible for issues affecting transition of our nation's separating veterans into the civilian workforce and the availability of real job opportunities for service-connected disabled veterans and veterans with significant barriers to employment. He is also responsible for monitoring several agencies

and pending legislation. He works with the Executive Branch and Congress on program development and oversight.

DAV has testified before committees of Congress on issues relating to small business initiatives; programs for homeless veterans; re-employment rights; transition assistance, and VA vocational rehabilitation.

We also serve on various committees responsible for assessing the employment and training needs of the nation's veterans. Such needs may include education, training, employment, re-employment, and vocational rehabilitation, among others.

Our active involvement and oversight is to make sure disabled veterans get fair consideration in the job market. NSOs are unable to provide representation due to the adversarial process involved; however, they may provide veterans with information on their rights in filing complaints with the appropriate government agencies when veterans feel they've suffered discrimination based on their service-connected disabilities.

Homeless Veterans

At least 275,000 veterans are homeless on any given night, according to VA estimates. More than 500,000 veterans experience homelessness annually. Veterans most likely to become homeless are those with disabilities, chronic illnesses, low incomes, lack of family and community support, and histories of mental illness or substance abuse. DAV NSOs and our Departments and Chapters, working with local agencies, are seeking out and assisting homeless veterans. Some DAV Chapters and Departments have established shelters, provided clothing, and arranged for counseling and medical care giving these homeless veterans an opportunity to become self sufficient. As veterans they earned the right to share in our nation's wealth.

On March 15, 1998, during the DAV Mid-Winter Conference, National Adjutant Arthur H. Wilson announced a new initiative to assist DAV Departments and Chapters to create homeless veterans programs or enhance existing programs. In January 1999, National Commander Andrew A. Kistler notified all Department Commanders and Adjutants that demonstrable excellence in providing service to homeless veterans would be supplemented by a generous donation of six 1999 Windstar vans from the Ford Motor Company. Congratulations go out to the fantastic homeless veterans programs operating in Colorado, Connecticut, Indiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, and Wisconsin. Proof that "We don't leave our wounded behind."

Disaster Relief

When floods, tornadoes, earthquakes, and other natural catastrophes strike, misfortune falls on everyone in the affected region, but a veteran's disability only makes an already tragic ordeal even more difficult to cope with. At such a terrible time, DAV NSOs go to the area, search out disabled veterans, and when needed provide grants on the spot from the DAV's Disaster Relief Fund. So very often, this fund has made the difference for disabled veterans who needed a temporary roof over their heads, a hot meal, or some clean clothes. This past year we have provided 200 disaster relief grants to veterans and their families totaling $74,300.00. This demonstrates how the National Organization, Departments, and Chapters work together, in the midst of a crisis, to ensure we take care of all disabled veterans.

Women Veterans

Despite progress, women veterans still use VA health care and other earned benefits at lower levels than their male counterparts, a problem that urgently calls out for solutions. Today, women make up 14 percent of our armed forces. By the year 2010, women will comprise well over 10 percent of the veteran population. In an effort to be more responsive to women veterans, the VA has designed special services and programs to meet their unique health care

needs. The mission of the VA Center for Women Veterans is to assure that women veterans receive benefits and services on a par with male veterans, encounter no discrimination in their attempt to access these services, are treated with respect and dignity by VA service providers, and act as the primary advisor to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs on all matters related to programs, issues, and initiatives for and affecting women veterans.

The VA established a division within the National Center for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, the Women's Health Science Division, the first of its kind in the country. Based at the Boston VA Medical Center, the center conducts clinical research programs addressing trauma-related problems of women veterans. Also, eight Women Veterans Comprehensive Health Centers have been established to develop new and enhance existing programs that focus on the unique health care needs of women veterans. These centers, strategically located throughout the country, are structured under a primary care model that provides a coordinated approach to the provision of medical, surgical, and psychological care for women patients. These centers are located at the VA medical centers in: Minneapolis, Minnesota; Chicago, Illinois; Tampa, Florida; Durham, North Carolina; Los Angeles and San Francisco, California; Boston, Massachusetts; and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

The DAV is represented on the federally charted VA Advisory Committee on Women Veterans. These committees provide valuable insight on the needs of women veterans with respect to health care, compensation and rehabilitation benefits, outreach programs, and other programs administered by the VA. VA facility visits are completed annually to obtain viewpoints on women veterans issues in order to provide a foundation for developing recommendations and advice that are fair and comprehensive.

Persian Gulf War

The DAV takes an active role in ensuring that Persian Gulf War veterans suffering from illnesses related to their Persian Gulf War service are provided health care and are adequately compensated for their disabilities. In 1998-1999 DAV provided oversight and feedback to committees of the Department of Defense and the VA that deal with Gulf War scientific and health care issues. We were also invited to participate in meetings and hearings conducted by the Special Oversight Board for Department of Defense Investigations of Gulf War Chemical and Biological Incidents.

Clearly, many veterans who served in the Persian Gulf are suffering from a range of physical disabilities, chronic ailments, and unexplained illnesses. These are very real physical problems, many of which are still evolving and the cause of which still remains unclear. Effective treatments in many cases have yet to be developed, and even where treatment could be helpful, it is not uniformly provided to ill veterans.

Obviously, these problems are a major concern of the DAV. The progress that might be expected given the passage of time, money spent, and programs put in place is not what it should or could be. Current scientific evidence does not point to any single Gulf War syndrome. Rather, there is a constellation of symptoms and illnesses whose cause or causes elude explanation at this time.

Seemingly, the biggest challenge facing Persian Gulf War veterans is the difficulty they have comprehending and complying with the VA's complex and confusing rules and regulations for obtaining health care and compensation benefits. Within the VA there is also widespread misunderstanding of its own policies, programs, and processes related to Persian Gulf War veterans. Some VA health care providers do not know what needs to be done when performing veterans physical examinations required for participation in the VA's Persian Gulf Registry. In addition, not all of the VA's decision makers grasp what is required to properly process Persian Gulf War-related disability claims. This situation has contributed to poor program planning and implementation across the board for Persian Gulf War veterans. The DAV is continuing to monitor these problems and concerns and make recommendations to the government agencies responsible for implementing these programs.

In 1999 we also saw a major shift in the efforts of the government agencies conducting and sponsoring research into possible exposures found in the Persian Gulf. This shift has been from an almost exclusive focus on chemical weapons to a more balanced inquiry which includes work on medical doctrines to include the anthrax immunization policy, pyridostigmine bromide (PB) pills, pesticides, oil well fires, depleted uranium, and other possible environmental exposures.

Although much work is yet to be done, there are positive developments indicating that the DoD and the VA have learned from the diminished credibility and public criticism resulting from their initial failure to adequately address Persian Gulf War veterans', concerns. The establishment of the Office of the Special Assistant for Gulf War Illnesses (OSAGWI) in 1996 has increased the flow of information to veterans and the public about various events during the Persian Gulf War which may have affected the health of veterans who served there. The new Special Oversight Board for Department of Defense Investigations of Gulf War Chemical and Biological Incidents, created in April of 1998 by the President, chaired by the Honorable Warren B. Rudman former Senator from New Hampshire, will provide a vehicle for continued monitoring of OSAGWI's work in the future. The VA has also begun to overcome the institutional inertia that characterized its early effort into Persian Gulf War programs and has stepped up its efforts to effectively identify and treat sick Persian Gulf War veterans. Although far from perfect, these efforts are an encouraging step in the right direction.

The DAV will continue to advocate and be at the forefront of Persian Gulf War veterans issues and concerns. Through our efforts on Capital Hill and in outreach efforts across America, we continue to ensure that adequate health care and compensation are provided for this new heroic generation of sick and disabled veterans who answered our nation's call to arms.

Retirements

Our experienced professional NSOs that have retired this past year will forever denote a page in the DAV's history. These men and women served their county in her hour of need and returned home, many with engraved scars of war, to serve their fellow comrades as advocates for the fair and equitable benefits earned. From the National Service Staff, we wish each of these NSOs good health and happiness during retirement. We appreciate their commitment and dedication to our cause. For the record those who retired in the past year are: William H. Conroy, Jr.; Harry G. Erway, III; Larry A. Polzin; Joseph F. Guido; Allan D. Hunter; James P. Perkins; Albert L. Aviles; Robert B. Winterstien; Mallory A. Hansen; Raymond Callaway; Eugene Davis; Dennis W. Gooden; Charles D. Luttjohann; William B. Cady; Robert E. Timmons; William T. Caywood; Stanton W. Lore, Jr., and Allan J. McCroskey.

Deaths

As the nation's veteran population declines, the ranks of our departed comrades who provided services to so many and changed the quality of life for scores of disabled veterans, their dependents, and survivors increases. We shall recall and preserve the legacy of the following departed NSOs: Robert L. Poole; Harold J. Revord; Arthur J. Wegman; David A. Jeter; George J. Samolinski, and George T. Watkins.

Conclusion

At this time, I would like to thank National Adjutant Arthur H. Wilson; National Headquarters Executive Director Richard E. Patterson and his staff for the support provided to the National Service Department and I thank Washington Headquarters Executive Director David W. Gorman for his steadfast guidance, direction, and active involvement in helping to manage the National Service Department.

I also thank National Legislative Director Joseph A. Violante; National Director of Voluntary Services Jerry P. Steelman; National Director of Communications Gary C. Weaver; National Director of Human Resources Gregory M. Jackson; National Director of Charitable Programs Nancy L. O'Brien; National Membership Director Michael J. Walsh; and all of their staffs for the assistance they have provided the National Service Department.

Appreciation is also extended to the National Service Department staff members of whom I have the pleasure of working with: Deputy National Service Director for Employment Anthony L. Baskerville; Assistant National Service Director Samuel D. Sabino; Assistant National Service Director Robert P. Plante; and I would like to take this opportunity to introduce the newest member of the National Service Staff, appointed May 8, 1999, Associate National Service Director Edward R. Reese, Jr.

The spirit of cooperation with the DAV Auxiliary and assistance from the Chapter Service Officers, Department Service Officers, and Hospital Service Coordinators greatly contributes to the success we have achieved this past year.

Last, but most important of all, we thank our loyal and dedicated professional corps of National Service Officers and support staffs who advocate on behalf of veterans and deliver the services mandated by DAV's chartered purpose.

Let us not forget, that as we sit here today, there are men and women in the armed forces performing duty in hostile areas around the globe. They are in Bosnia, Kosovo, Egypt, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and how about the 35,000 American troops stationed along the 38th parallel on a 150 km DMZ separating North and South Korea. The armistice was signed in 1953; however, there are combat patrols being conducted today in an effort to preserve this fragile peace. Our mission of ***"building better lives for all our nation's disabled veterans and their families"*** is not over. Our obligation to future generations of disabled veterans, their dependents and survivors is a heavy responsibility which we willingly and readily accept.

RECAPITULATION OF SERVICE ACTIVITIES

JULY 1, 1998 THROUGH JUNE 30, 1999

OFFICE: MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA

1.	NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	186
2.	COMPENSATION INCREASED	570
3.	COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	710
4.	PENSION	69
5.	PENSION MAINTAINED	40
6.	SOCIAL SECURITY	2
7.	EDUCATION BENEFITS	304
8.	MISCELLANEOUS	38
9.	DEATH COMPENSATION	27
10.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
11.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
12.	DEATH PENSION	21
13.	INSURANCE	0
14.	BURIAL ALLOWANCES	117
15.	PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16.	TOTAL AWARDS	2,087
17.	TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	$1,168,088.00
18.	TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	$19,384,095.00
19.	FULL AMOUNT	$20,552,183.00
20.	VA FILES REVIEWED	1,505
21.	POWER OF ATTORNEYS	713
22.	INTERVIEWS	2,343
23.	RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	1,160
24.	MILITARY AFFAIRS	2
25	SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	1
26.	NEW CLAIMS	992
27.	MEMBERSHIP	95

OFFICE: PHOENIX, ARIZONA

1.	NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	650
2.	COMPENSATION INCREASED	1,374
3.	COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	1,253
4.	PENSION	219
5.	PENSION MAINTAINED	107
6.	SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7.	EDUCATION BENEFITS	130
8.	MISCELLANEOUS	122
9.	DEATH COMPENSATION	84
10.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	1
11.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
12.	DEATH PENSION	11
13.	INSURANCE	1
14.	BURIAL ALLOWANCES	264
15.	PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16.	TOTAL AWARDS	4,216
17.	TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	$2,640,838.00
18.	TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	$39,888,559.00
19.	FULL AMOUNT	$42,529,937.00
20.	VA FILES REVIEWED	4,911
21.	POWER OF ATTORNEYS	1,494
22.	INTERVIEWS	3,336
23.	RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	3,647
24.	MILITARY AFFAIRS	543
25.	SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	0
26.	NEW CLAIMS	3,432
27.	MEMBERSHIP	179

OFFICE: LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS

1.	NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	538
2.	COMPENSATION INCREASED	1,245
3.	COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	1,476
4.	PENSION	413

RECAPITULATION OF SERVICE ACTIVITIES - Continued

JULY 1, 1998 THROUGH JUNE 30, 1999

5.	PENSION MAINTAINED	76
6.	SOCIAL SECURITY	2
7.	EDUCATION BENEFITS	549
8.	MISCELLANEOUS	79
9.	DEATH COMPENSATION	113
10.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
11.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
12.	DEATH PENSION	103
13.	INSURANCE	0
14.	BURIAL ALLOWANCES	213
15.	PHYSICAL EVALUATION AWARDS	0
16.	TOTAL AWARDS	4,807
17.	TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	$2,488,377.00
18.	TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	$34,796,236.00
19.	FULL AMOUNT	$37,284,613.00
20.	VA FILES REVIEWED	13,707
21.	POWER OF ATTORNEYS	4,994
22.	INTERVIEWS	3,754
23.	RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	12,076
24	MILITARY AFFAIRS	459
25.	SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	33
26.	NEW CLAIMS	6,428
27.	MEMBERSHIP	67

OFFICE: LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

1.	NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	1,291
2.	COMPENSATION INCREASED	2,139
3.	COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	1,911
4.	PENSION	429
5.	PENSION MAINTAINED	145
6.	SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7.	EDUCATION BENEFITS	748
8.	MISCELLANEOUS	215
9.	DEATH COMPENSATION	163
10.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
11.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
12.	DEATH PENSION	54
13.	INSURANCE	46
14.	BURIAL ALLOWANCES	407
15.	PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16.	TOTAL AWARDS	7,548
17.	TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	$3,377,458.22
18.	TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	$55,292,837.27
19.	FULL AMOUNT	$58,670,295.49
20.	VA FILES REVIEWED	12,162
21.	POWER OF ATTORNEYS	5,581
22.	INTERVIEWS	5,294
23.	RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	6,138
24.	MILITARY AFFAIRS	3,691
25.	SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	0
26.	NEW CLAIMS	4,224
27.	MEMBERSHIP	182

OFFICE: SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

1.	NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	978
2.	COMPENSATION INCREASED	1,877
3.	COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	1,183
4.	PENSION	156
5.	PENSION MAINTAINED	1,808
6.	SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7.	EDUCATION BENEFITS	405
8.	MISCELLANEOUS	13
9.	DEATH COMPENSATION	98
10.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	7

RECAPITULATION OF SERVICE ACTIVITIES - Continued

JULY 1, 1998 THROUGH JUNE 30, 1999

11.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
12.	DEATH PENSION	17
13.	INSURANCE	1
14.	BURIAL ALLOWANCES	280
15.	PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16.	TOTAL AWARDS	6,942
17.	TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	$3,707,969.30
18.	TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	$70,483,060.66
19.	FULL AMOUNT	$74,191,029.96
20.	VA FILES REVIEWED	5,419
21.	POWER OF ATTORNEYS	1,767
22.	INTERVIEWS	3,059
23.	RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	4,415
24.	MILITARY AFFAIRS	147
25.	SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	0
26.	NEW CLAIMS	2,877
27.	MEMBERSHIP	222

OFFICE: DENVER, COLORADO

1.	NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	829
2.	COMPENSATION INCREASED	1,361
3.	COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	1,319
4.	PENSION	571
5.	PENSION MAINTAINED	30
6.	SOCIAL SECURITY	1
7.	EDUCATION BENEFITS	930
8.	MISCELLANEOUS	139
9.	DEATH COMPENSATION	78
10.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	2
11.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
12.	DEATH PENSION	100
13.	INSURANCE	0
14.	BURIAL ALLOWANCE	204
15	PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16.	TOTAL AWARDS	5,564
17.	TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	$2,813,489.00
18.	TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	$43,814,416.04
19.	FULL AMOUNT	$46,627,905.04
20.	VA FILES REVIEWED	5,363
21.	POWER OF ATTORNEYS	988
22.	INTERVIEWS	1,873
23.	RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	3,896
24.	MILITARY AFFAIRS	0
25.	SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	1
26.	NEW CLAIMS	1,340
27.	MEMBERSHIP	128

OFFICE: HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT

1.	NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	120
2.	COMPENSATION INCREASED	354
3.	COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	488
4.	PENSION	43
5.	PENSION MAINTAINED	18
6.	SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7.	EDUCATION BENEFITS	202
8.	MISCELLANEOUS	4
9.	DEATH COMPENSATION	17
10.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
11.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
12.	DEATH PENSION	2
13.	INSURANCE	0
14.	BURIAL ALLOWANCES	114
15.	PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16.	TOTAL AWARDS	1,362

RECAPITULATION OF ACTIVITIES - Continued

JULY 1, 1998 THROUGH JUNE 30, 1999

17.	TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	$951,711.03
18.	TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	$9,916,838.64
19.	FULL AMOUNT	$10,868,549.67
20.	VA FILES REVIEWED	760
21.	POWER OF ATTORNEYS	200
22.	INTERVIEWS	559
23.	RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	964
24.	MILITARY AFFAIRS	0
25.	SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	0
26.	NEW CLAIMS	343
27.	MEMBERSHIP	18

OFFICE: V.A. REGIONAL OFFICE, WASHINGTON, D.C.

1.	NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	267
2.	COMPENSATION INCREASED	355
3.	COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	291
4.	PENSION	141
5.	PENSION MAINTAINED	13
6.	SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7.	EDUCATION BENEFITS	72
8.	MISCELLANEOUS	18
9.	DEATH COMPENSATION	36
10.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
11.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
12.	DEATH PENSION	9
13.	INSURANCE	0
14	BURIAL ALLOWANCES	50
15.	PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	49
16.	TOTAL AWARDS	1,301
17.	TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	$728,231.00
18.	TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	$16,971,158.33
19.	FULL AMOUNT	$17,699,390.13
20.	VA FILES REVIEWED	2,093
21.	POWER OF ATTORNEYS	744
22.	INTERVIEWS	2,364
23.	RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	1,078
24.	MILITARY AFFAIRS	421
25.	SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	0
26.	NEW CLAIMS	820
27.	MEMBERSHIP	96

OFFICE: ST. PETERSBURG, FLORIDA

1.	NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	1,647
2.	COMPENSATION INCREASED	3,595
3.	COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	3,656
4.	PENSION	673
5.	PENSION MAINTAINED	179
6.	SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7.	EDUCATION BENEFITS	1,372
8.	MISCELLANEOUS	138
9.	DEATH COMPENSATION	383
10.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
11.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
12.	DEATH PENSION	116
13.	INSURANCE	5
14.	BURIAL ALLOWANCES	967
15.	PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16.	TOTAL AWARDS	12,731
17.	TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	$7,204,439.00
18.	TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	$109,909,968.05
19.	FULL AMOUNT	$117,114,407.05
20.	VA FILES REVIEWED	18,867
21.	POWER OF ATTORNEYS	3,589
22.	INTERVIEWS	4,720

RECAPITULATION OF ACTIVITIES - Continued

JULY 1, 1998 THROUGH JUNE 30, 1999

23.	RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	12,754
24.	MILITARY AFFAIRS	0
25.	SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	0
26.	NEW CLAIMS	9,522
27.	MEMBERSHIP	362

OFFICE: ATLANTA, GEORGIA

1.	NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	341
2.	COMPENSATION INCREASED	1,040
3.	COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	842
4.	PENSION	177
5.	PENSION MAINTAINED	63
6.	SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7.	EDUCATION BENEFITS	213
8.	MISCELLANEOUS	16
9.	DEATH COMPENSATION	104
10.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
11.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
12.	DEATH PENSION	52
13	INSURANCE	0
14.	BURIAL ALLOWANCE	172
15.	PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16.	TOTAL AWARDS	3,020
17.	TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	$1,798,063.00
18.	TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	$29,134,166.00
19.	FULL AMOUNT	$30,932.229.00
20.	VA FILES REVIEWED	2,703
21.	POWER OF ATTORNEYS	606
22.	INTERVIEWS	1,628
23.	RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	1,627
24.	MILITARY AFFAIRS	0
25.	SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	0
26.	NEW CLAIMS	1,111
27.	MEMBERSHIP	89

OFFICE; HONOLULU, HAWAII

1.	NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	135
2.	COMPENSATION INCREASED	234
3.	COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	348
4.	PENSION	19
5.	PENSION MAINTAINED	7
6.	SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7.	EDUCATION BENEFITS	86
8.	MISCELLANEOUS	37
9.	DEATH COMPENSATION	15
10.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
11.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
12.	DEATH PENSION	1
13.	INSURANCE	0
14.	BURIAL ALLOWANCES	45
15.	PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16.	TOTAL AWARDS	927
17.	TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	$558,002.00
18.	TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	$10,304,297.00
19.	FULL AMOUNT	$10,862,299.00
20.	VA FILES REVIEWED	938
21.	POWER OF ATTORNEYS	253
22.	INTERVIEWS	1,111
23.	RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	865
24.	MILITARY AFFAIRS	298
25.	SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	0
26.	NEW CLAIMS	865
27.	MEMBERSHIP	64

RECAPITULATION OF ACTIVITIES - Continued

JULY 1, 1998 THROUGH JUNE 30, 1999

OFFICE: BOISE, IDAHO

1.	NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	222
2.	COMPENSATION INCREASED	582
3.	COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	428
4.	PENSION	126
5.	PENSION MAINTAINED	96
6.	SOCIAL SECURITY	3
7.	EDUCATION BENEFITS	237
8.	MISCELLANEOUS	6
9.	DEATH COMPENSATION	17
10.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	3
11.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
12.	DEATH PENSION	9
13.	INSURANCE	0
14.	BURIAL ALLOWANCES	6
15.	PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16.	TOTAL AWARDS	1,735
17.	TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	$978,364.00
18.	TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	$13,853,203.00
19.	FULL AMOUNT	$14,836,567.00
20.	VA FILES REVIEWED	1,543
21.	POWER OF ATTORNEYS	673
22.	INTERVIEWS	2,547
23.	RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	1,299
24.	MILITARY AFFAIRS	629
25.	SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	44
26.	NEW CLAIMS	2,990
27.	MEMBERSHIP	73

OFFICE: CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

1.	NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	526
2.	COMPENSATION INCREASED	1,025
3.	COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	812
4	PENSION	332
5.	PENSION MAINTAINED	422
6.	SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7.	EDUCATION BENEFITS	246
8.	MISCELLANEOUS	124
9.	DEATH COMPENSATION	52
10.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	1
11.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
12.	DEATH PENSION	23
13.	INSURANCE	42
14.	BURIAL ALLOWANCES	332
15.	PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16.	TOTAL AWARDS	3,937
17.	TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	$1,996,450.13
18.	TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	$39,797,184.45
19.	FULL AMOUNT	$41,793,634.58
20.	VA FILES REVIEWED	5,597
21.	POWER OF ATTORNEYS	1,106
22.	INTERVIEWS	1,708
23.	RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	4,272
24.	MILITARY AFFAIRS	13
25.	SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	21
26.	NEW CLAIMS	2,557
27.	MEMBERSHIP	146

OFFICE: INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA

1.	NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	466
2.	COMPENSATION INCREASED	1,148
3.	COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	745
4.	PENSION	356

RECAPITULATION OF ACTIVITIES - Continued

JULY 1, 1998 THROUGH JUNE 30, 1999

5.	PENSION MAINTAINED	215
6.	SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7.	EDUCATION BENEFITS	388
8.	MISCELLANEOUS	161
9.	DEATH COMPENSATION	62
10.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	13
11.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
12.	DEATH PENSION	36
13.	INSURANCE	0
14.	BURIAL ALLOWANCES	131
15.	PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16.	TOTAL AWARDS	3,721
17.	TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	$2,342,063.17
18.	TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	$25,817,408.02
19.	FULL AMOUNT	$28,159,471.19
20.	VA FILES REVIEWED	4,169
21.	POWER OF ATTORNEYS	538
22.	INTERVIEWS	1,020
23.	RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	3,734
24.	MILITARY AFFAIRS	28
25.	SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	27
26.	NEW CLAIMS	1,988
27.	MEMBERSHIP	67

OFFICE: DES MOINES, IOWA

1.	NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	172
2.	COMPENSATION INCREASED	533
3	COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	704
4.	PENSION	199
5.	PENSION MAINTAINED	486
6.	SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7.	EDUCATION BENEFITS	169
8.	MISCELLANEOUS	177
9.	DEATH COMPENSATION	30
10.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	95
11.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	1
12.	DEATH PENSION	51
13.	INSURANCE	31
14.	BURIAL ALLOWANCES	105
15.	PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16.	TOTAL AWARDS	2,753
17.	TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	$1,525,609.00
18.	TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	$21,176,057.00
19.	FULL AMOUNT	$22,701,666.00
20.	VA FILES REVIEWED	1,803
21.	POWER OF ATTORNEYS	174
22.	INTERVIEWS	618
23.	RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	2,095
24.	MILITARY AFFAIRS	0
25.	SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	0
26.	NEW CLAIMS	775
27.	MEMBERSHIP	12

OFFICE: WICHITA, KANSAS

1.	NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	328
2.	COMPENSATION INCREASED	543
3.	COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	912
4.	PENSION	82
5.	PENSION MAINTAINED	416
6.	SOCIAL SECURITY	2
7.	EDUCATION BENEFITS	188
8.	MISCELLANEOUS	70
9.	DEATH COMPENSATION	46
10.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0

RECAPITULATION OF ACTIVITIES - Continued

JULY 1, 1998 THROUGH JUNE 30, 1999

11.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
12.	DEATH PENSION	74
13.	INSURANCE	0
14.	BURIAL ALLOWANCES	141
15.	PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16.	TOTAL AWARDS	2,802
17.	TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	$1,280,565.00
18.	TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	$18,651,774.00
19.	FULL AMOUNT	$19,932,339.00
20.	VA FILES REVIEWED	2,524
21.	POWER OF ATTORNEYS	787
22.	INTERVIEWS	1,918
23.	RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	2,261
24.	MILITARY AFFAIRS	0
25.	SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	2
26.	NEW CLAIMS	2,258
27.	MEMBERSHIP	79

OFFICE: LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY

1.	NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	636
2.	COMPENSATION INCREASED	1,689
3.	COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	1,872
4.	PENSION	1,004
5.	PENSION MAINTAINED	150
6.	SOCIAL SECURITY	3
7.	EDUCATION BENEFITS	157
8.	MISCELLANEOUS	117
9.	DEATH COMPENSATION	112
10.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	1
11.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
12.	DEATH PENSION	295
13.	INSURANCE	0
14.	BURIAL ALLOWANCES	357
15.	PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16.	TOTAL AWARDS	6,393
17.	TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	$3,427,827.00
18.	TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	$53,874,964.10
19.	FULL AMOUNT	$57,302,791.10
20.	VA FILES REVIEWED	1,746
21.	POWER OF ATTORNEYS	2,007
22.	INTERVIEWS	1,186
23.	RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	5,757
24.	MILITARY AFFAIRS	33
25.	SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	0
26.	NEW CLAIMS	3,691
27.	MEMBERSHIP	137

OFFICE: NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA

1.	NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	113
2.	COMPENSATION INCREASED	443
3.	COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	732
4.	PENSION	59
5.	PENSION MAINTAINED	16
6.	SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7.	EDUCATION BENEFITS	28
8.	MISCELLANEOUS	4
9.	DEATH COMPENSATION	8
10.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	4
11.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
12.	DEATH PENSION	6
13.	INSURANCE	0
14.	BURIAL ALLOWANCES	2
15.	PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16.	TOTAL AWARDS	1,415

RECAPITULATION OF ACTIVITIES - Continued

JULY 1, 1998 THROUGH JUNE 30, 1999

17.	TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	$933,533.00
18.	TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	$17,336,592.90
19.	FULL AMOUNT	$18,270,125.90
20.	VA FILES REVIEWED	2,287
21.	POWER OF ATTORNEYS	641
22.	INTERVIEWS	2,457
23.	RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	1,449
24.	MILITARY AFFAIRS	0
25.	SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	16
26.	NEW CLAIMS	2,949
27.	MEMBERSHIP	14

OFFICE: TOGUS, MAINE

1.	NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	146
2.	COMPENSATION INCREASED	618
3.	COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	453
4.	PENSION	34
5.	PENSION MAINTAINED	149
6.	SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7.	EDUCATION BENEFITS	186
8.	MISCELLANEOUS	4
9.	DEATH COMPENSATION	17
10.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
11.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
12.	DEATH PENSION	1
13.	INSURANCE	0
14.	BURIAL ALLOWANCES	72
15.	PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16.	TOTAL AWARDS	1,680
17.	TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	$4,896,360.27
18.	TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	$45,458,820.72
19.	FULL AMOUNT	$50,355,180.99
20.	VA FILES REVIEWED	1,728
21.	POWER OF ATTORNEYS	315
22.	INTERVIEWS	2,957
23.	RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	1,918
24.	MILITARY AFFAIRS	2
25.	SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	0
26.	NEW CLAIMS	397
27.	MEMBERSHIP	285

OFFICE: BALTIMORE, MARYLAND

1.	NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	314
2.	COMPENSATION INCREASED	745
3.	COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	562
4.	PENSION	96
5.	PENSION MAINTAINED	413
6.	SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7.	EDUCATION BENEFITS	418
8.	MISCELLANEOUS	26
9.	DEATH COMPENSATION	22
10.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
11.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
12.	DEATH PENSION	8
13.	INSURANCE	0
14.	BURIAL ALLOWANCES	57
15.	PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16.	TOTAL AWARDS	2,661
17.	TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	$1,412,728.00
18.	TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	$18,124,100.08
19.	FULL AMOUNT	$19,536.828.08
20.	VA FILES REVIEWED	2,598
21.	POWER OF ATTORNEYS	460
22.	INTERVIEWS	1,560

RECAPITULATION OF ACTIVITIES - Continued

JULY 1, 1998 THROUGH JUNE 30, 1999

23.	RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	1,869
24.	MILITARY AFFAIRS	5
25.	SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	5
26.	NEW CLAIMS	1,127
27.	MEMBERSHIP	64

OFFICE: BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS

1.	NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	546
2.	COMPENSATION INCREASED	1,727
3.	COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	1,240
4.	PENSION	86
5.	PENSION MAINTAINED	36
6.	SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7.	EDUCATION BENEFITS	494
8.	MISCELLANEOUS	44
9.	DEATH COMPENSATION	81
10.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
11.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
12.	DEATH PENSION	16
13.	INSURANCE	1
14.	BURIAL ALLOWANCES	382
15.	PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16.	TOTAL AWARDS	4,653
17.	TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	$23,746,906.13
18.	TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	299,537,201.99
19.	FULL AMOUNT	$323,284,108.12
20.	VA FILES REVIEWED	7,495
21.	POWER OF ATTORNEYS	1,220
22.	INTERVIEWS	4,115
23.	RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	3,560
24.	MILITARY AFFAIRS	0
25.	SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	0
26.	NEW CLAIMS	3,328
27.	MEMBERSHIP	374

OFFICE: DETROIT, MICHIGAN

1.	NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	238
2.	COMPENSATION INCREASED	836
3.	COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	937
4.	PENSION	437
5.	PENSION MAINTAINED	495
6.	SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7.	EDUCATION BENEFITS	235
8.	MISCELLANEOUS	83
9.	DEATH COMPENSATION	93
10.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
11.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	1
12.	DEATH PENSION	187
13.	INSURANCE	6
14.	BURIAL ALLOWANCES	363
15.	PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16.	TOTAL AWARDS	3,911
17.	TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	$1,977,130.00
18.	TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	$29,658,807.00
19.	FULL AMOUNT	$31,635,937.00
20.	VA FILES REVIEWED	7,927
21.	POWER OF ATTORNEYS	1,377
22.	INTERVIEWS	1,091
23.	RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	3,620
24.	MILITARY AFFAIRS	0
25.	SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	3
26.	NEW CLAIMS	4,618
27.	MEMBERSHIP	54

RECAPITULATION OF ACTIVITIES - Continued

JULY 1, 1998 THROUGH JUNE 30, 1999

OFFICE: ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA

1.	NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	693
2.	COMPENSATION INCREASED	1,261
3.	COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	1,267
4.	PENSION	263
5.	PENSION MAINTAINED	156
6.	SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7.	EDUCATION BENEFITS	634
8.	MISCELLANEOUS	221
9.	DEATH COMPENSATION	98
10.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
11.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
12.	DEATH PENSION	74
13.	INSURANCE	0
14.	BURIAL ALLOWANCES	178
15.	PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16.	TOTAL AWARDS	4,845
17.	TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	$2,991,255.00
18.	TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	$42,095,737.00
19.	FULL AMOUNT	$45,086,992.00
20.	VA FILES REVIEWED	6,804
21.	POWER OF ATTORNEYS	1,390
22.	INTERVIEWS	1,631
23.	RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	5,395
24.	MILITARY AFFAIRS	686
25.	SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	0
26.	NEW CLAIMS	3,489
27.	MEMBERSHIP	175

OFFICE: JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI

1.	NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	128
2.	COMPENSATION INCREASED	491
3.	COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	654
4.	PENSION	197
5.	PENSION MAINTAINED	58
6.	SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7.	EDUCATION BENEFITS	139
8.	MISCELLANEOUS	22
9.	DEATH COMPENSATION	33
10.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	3
11.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
12.	DEATH PENSION	48
13.	INSURANCE	0
14.	BURIAL ALLOWANCES	53
15.	PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16.	TOTAL AWARDS	2,836
17.	TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	$1,038.187.00
18.	TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	$15,310,870.00
19.	FULL AMOUNT	$16,349,057.00
20.	VA FILES REVIEWED	1,249
21.	POWER OF ATTORNEYS	237
22.	INTERVIEWS	789
23.	RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	865
24.	MILITARY AFFAIRS	0
25.	SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	0
26.	NEW CLAIMS	807
27.	MEMBERSHIP	46

OFFICE: ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI

1.	NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	879
2.	COMPENSATION INCREASED	1,574
3.	COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	2,201
4.	PENSION	306

RECAPITULATION OF ACTIVITIES - Continued

JULY 1, 1998 THROUGH JUNE 30, 1999

5.	PENSION MAINTAINED	361
6.	SOCIAL SECURITY	4
7.	EDUCATION BENEFITS	1,652
8.	MISCELLANEOUS	100
9.	DEATH COMPENSATION	79
10.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	3
11.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
12.	DEATH PENSION	53
13.	INSURANCE	0
14.	BURIAL ALLOWANCES	262
15.	PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16.	TOTAL AWARDS	7,474
17.	TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	$3,871,210.00
18.	TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	$58,346,297.80
19.	FULL AMOUNT	$62,217,507.80
20.	VA FILES REVIEWED	5,710
21.	POWER OF ATTORNEYS	2,209
22.	INTERVIEWS	1,993
23.	RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	4,384
24.	MILITARY AFFAIRS	0
25.	SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	27
26.	NEW CLAIMS	5,560
27.	MEMBERSHIP	161

OFFICE: FORT HARRISON, MONTANA

1.	NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	119
2.	COMPENSATION INCREASED	292
3.	COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	237
4.	PENSION	59
5.	PENSION MAINTAINED	17
6.	SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7.	EDUCATION BENEFITS	23
8.	MISCELLANEOUS	13
9.	DEATH COMPENSATION	5
10.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
11.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
12.	DEATH PENSION	8
13.	INSURANCE	2
14.	BURIAL ALLOWANCES	54
15.	PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16.	TOTAL AWARDS	829
17.	TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	$747,038.00
18.	TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	$8,575,103.00
19.	FULL AMOUNT	$9,322,141.00
20.	VA FILES REVIEWED	410
21.	POWER OF ATTORNEYS	213
22.	INTERVIEWS	1,288
23.	RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	661
24.	MILITARY AFFAIRS	0
25.	SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	0
26.	NEW CLAIMS	334
27.	MEMBERSHIP	8

OFFICE: LINCOLN, NEBRASKA

1.	NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	247
2.	COMPENSATION INCREASED	507
3.	COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	366
4.	PENSION	60
5.	PENSION MAINTAINED	321
6.	SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7.	EDUCATION BENEFITS	146
8.	MISCELLANEOUS	22
9.	DEATH COMPENSATION	27
10.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0

RECAPITULATION OF ACTIVITIES - Continued

JULY 1, 1998 THROUGH JUNE 30, 1999

11.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
12.	DEATH PENSION	57
13.	INSURANCE	0
14.	BURIAL ALLOWANCES	84
15.	PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16.	TOTAL AWARDS	1,837
17.	TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	$1,000,634.00
18.	TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	$14,635,204.00
19.	FULL AMOUNT	$15,635,838.00
20.	VA FILES REVIEWED	1,278
21.	POWER OF ATTORNEYS	517
22.	INTERVIEWS	456
23.	RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	1,132
24.	MILITARY AFFAIRS	16
25.	SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	7
26.	NEW CLAIMS	867
27.	MEMBERSHIP	0

OFFICE: MANCHESTER, NEW HAMPSHIRE

1.	NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	273
2.	COMPENSATION INCREASED	555
3.	COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	1,130
4.	PENSION	27
5.	PENSION MAINTAINED	73
6.	SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7.	EDUCATION BENEFITS	124
8.	MISCELLANEOUS	16
9.	DEATH COMPENSATION	11
10.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	1
11.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
12.	DEATH PENSION	12
13.	INSURANCE	0
14.	BURIAL ALLOWANCES	0
15.	PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16.	TOTAL AWARDS	2,222
17.	TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	$1,631,941.00
18.	TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	$22,260,927.00
19.	FULL AMOUNT	$23,892,868.00
20.	VA FILES REVIEWED	4,352
21.	POWER OF ATTORNEYS	525
22.	INTERVIEWS	1,667
23.	RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	2,871
24.	MILITARY AFFAIRS	0
25.	SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	8
26.	NEW CLAIMS	913
27.	MEMBERSHIP	62

OFFICE: NEWARK, NEW JERSEY

1.	NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	438
2.	COMPENSATION INCREASED	771
3.	COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	1,217
4.	PENSION	36
5.	PENSION MAINTAINED	40
6.	SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7.	EDUCATION BENEFITS	179
8.	MISCELLANEOUS	65
9.	DEATH COMPENSATION	49
10.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	13
11.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
12.	DEATH PENSION	148
13.	INSURANCE	0
14.	BURIAL ALLOWANCES	57
15.	PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16.	TOTAL AWARDS	3,013

RECAPITULATION OF ACTIVITIES - Continued

JULY 1, 1998 THROUGH JUNE 30, 1999

17.	TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	$1,776,543.51
18.	TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	$27,061,652.24
19.	FULL AMOUNT	$28,838,195.75
20.	VA FILES REVIEWED	3,944
21.	POWER OF ATTORNEYS	1,133
22.	INTERVIEWS	2,535
23.	RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	1,984
24.	MILITARY AFFAIRS	0
25.	SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	10
26.	NEW CLAIMS	1,752
27.	MEMBERSHIP	97

OFFICE: ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO

1.	NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	365
2.	COMPENSATION INCREASED	921
3.	COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	609
4.	PENSION	132
5.	PENSION MAINTAINED	260
6.	SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7.	EDUCATION BENEFITS	234
8.	MISCELLANEOUS	55
9.	DEATH COMPENSATION	71
10.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	5
11.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
12.	DEATH PENSION	71
13.	INSURANCE	3
14.	BURIAL ALLOWANCES	223
15.	PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16.	TOTAL AWARDS	2,944
17.	TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	$1,799,543.00
18.	TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	$31,216,029.00
19.	FULL AMOUNT	$33,015,572.00
20.	VA FILES REVIEWED	2,662
21.	POWER OF ATTORNEYS	887
22.	INTERVIEWS	2,670
23.	RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	1,911
24.	MILITARY AFFAIRS	0
25.	SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	3
26.	NEW CLAIMS	2,168
27.	MEMBERSHIP	190

OFFICE: NEW YORK, NEW YORK

1.	NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	564
2.	COMPENSATION INCREASED	1,056
3.	COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	1,539
4.	PENSION	74
5.	PENSION MAINTAINED	321
6.	SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7.	EDUCATION BENEFITS	20
8.	MISCELLANEOUS	61
9.	DEATH COMPENSATION	54
10.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	3
11.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
12.	DEATH PENSION	19
13.	INSURANCE	0
14.	BURIAL ALLOWANCES	318
15.	PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16.	TOTAL AWARDS	4,029
17.	TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	$2,417,542.05
18.	TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	$47,611,418.20
19.	FULL AMOUNT	$50,028,960.25
20.	VA FILES REVIEWED	7,997
21.	POWER OF ATTORNEYS	1,506
22.	INTERVIEWS	3,625

RECAPITULATION OF ACTIVITIES - Continued

JULY 1, 1998 THROUGH JUNE 30, 1999

23.	RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	4,656
24.	MILITARY AFFAIRS	1
25.	SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	3
26.	NEW CLAIMS	2,252
27.	MEMBERSHIP	237

OFFICE: ALBANY, 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	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	14
21.	POWER OF ATTORNEYS	162
22.	INTERVIEWS	753
23.	RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	10
24.	MILITARY AFFAIRS	31
25.	SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	6
26.	NEW CLAIMS	324
27.	MEMBERSHIP	76

OFFICE: BUFFALO, NEW YORK

1.	NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	296
2.	COMPENSATION INCREASED	808
3.	COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	1,032
4.	PENSION	76
5.	PENSION MAINTAINED	195
6.	SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7.	EDUCATION BENEFITS	1,511
8.	MISCELLANEOUS	42
9.	DEATH COMPENSATION	58
10.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	1
11.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
12.	DEATH PENSION	7
13.	INSURANCE	2
14.	BURIAL ALLOWANCES	179
15.	PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16.	TOTAL AWARDS	4,207
17.	TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	$2,205,722.70
18.	TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	$30,605,672.56
19.	FULL AMOUNT	$32,811,395.26
20.	VA FILES REVIEWED	7,378
21.	POWER OF ATTORNEYS	464
22.	INTERVIEWS	1,288
23.	RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	6,492
24.	MILITARY AFFAIRS	0
25.	SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	0
26.	NEW CLAIMS	1,103
27.	MEMBERSHIP	91

RECAPITULATION OF ACTIVITIES - Continued

JULY 1, 1998 THROUGH JUNE 30, 1999

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	4
7	EDUCATION BENEFITS	0
8.	MISCELLANEOUS	0
9.	DEATH COMPENSATION	0
10.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
11.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
12.	DEATH PENSION	0
13.	INSURANCE	0
14.	BURIAL ALLOWANCES	0
15.	PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16.	TOTAL AWARDS	4
17.	TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	$35,994.00
18.	TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	$126,352.00
19.	FULL AMOUNT	$162,346.00
20.	VA FILES REVIEWED	237
21.	POWER OF ATTORNEYS	262
22.	INTERVIEWS	1,327
23.	RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	4
24.	MILITARY AFFAIRS	3
25.	SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	12
26.	NEW CLAIMS	2,486
27.	MEMBERSHIP	54

OFFICE: WINSTON-SALEM, NORTH CAROLINA

1.	NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	599
2.	COMPENSATION INCREASED	1,632
3.	COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	1,142
4.	PENSION	261
5.	PENSION MAINTAINED	247
6.	SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7.	EDUCATION BENEFITS	539
8.	MISCELLANEOUS	45
9.	DEATH COMPENSATION	61
10.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
11.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
12.	DEATH PENSION	29
13.	INSURANCE	0
14.	BURIAL ALLOWANCES	224
15.	PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16.	TOTAL AWARDS	4,779
17.	TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	$2,767,517.00
18.	TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	$42,647,623.00
19.	FULL AMOUNT	$45,415,140.00
20.	VA FILES REVIEWED	4,754
21.	POWER OF ATTORNEYS	2,428
22.	INTERVIEWS	1,256
23.	RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	3,353
24.	MILITARY AFFAIRS	36
25.	SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	11
26.	NEW CLAIMS	3,694
27.	MEMBERSHIP	34

OFFICE: FARGO, NORTH DAKOTA

1.	NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	199
2.	COMPENSATION INCREASED	422
3.	COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	387
4.	PENSION	166

RECAPITULATION OF ACTIVITIES - Continued

JULY 1, 1998 THROUGH JUNE 30, 1999

5.	PENSION MAINTAINED	104
6.	SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7.	EDUCATION BENEFITS	295
8.	MISCELLANEOUS	39
9.	DEATH COMPENSATION	46
10.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
11.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
12.	DEATH PENSION	94
13.	INSURANCE	4
14.	BURIAL ALLOWANCES	62
15.	PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16.	TOTAL AWARDS	1,818
17.	TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	$836,070.00
18.	TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	$11,208,514.00
19.	FULL AMOUNT	$12,044,584.00
20.	VA FILES REVIEWED	2,364
21.	POWER OF ATTORNEYS	554
22.	INTERVIEWS	1,004
23.	RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	1,099
24.	MILITARY AFFAIRS	0
25.	SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	0
26.	NEW CLAIMS	1,295
27.	MEMBERSHIP	76

OFFICE: CLEVELAND, OHIO

1.	NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	704
2.	COMPENSATION INCREASED	1,942
3.	COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	3,142
4.	PENSION	406
5.	PENSION MAINTAINED	4,703
6.	SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7.	EDUCATION BENEFITS	685
8.	MISCELLANEOUS	89
9.	DEATH COMPENSATION	224
10.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	6
11.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	1
12.	DEATH PENSION	1,260
13.	INSURANCE	0
14.	BURIAL ALLOWANCES	637
15.	PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16.	TOTAL AWARDS	13,799
17.	TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	$7,277,327.64
18.	TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	$97,180,436.12
19.	FULL AMOUNT	$104,457,763.76
20.	VA FILES REVIEWED	12,903
21.	POWER OF ATTORNEYS	2,112
22.	INTERVIEWS	1,382
23.	RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	11,385
24.	MILITARY AFFAIRS	5
25.	SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	0
26.	NEW CLAIMS	6,855
27.	MEMBERSHIP	244

OFFICE: CINCINNATI, OHIO

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

RECAPITULATION OF ACTIVITIES - Continued

JULY 1, 1998 THROUGH JUNE 30, 1999

11.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	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	212
21.	POWER OF ATTORNEYS	778
22.	INTERVIEWS	962
23.	RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	157
24.	MILITARY AFFAIRS	112
25.	SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	9
26.	NEW CLAIMS	1,702
27	MEMBERSHIP	23

OFFICE: MUSKOGEE, OKLAHOMA

1.	NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	281
2.	COMPENSATION INCREASED	1,093
3.	COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	1,281
4.	PENSION	618
5.	PENSION MAINTAINED	420
6.	SOCIAL SECURITY	1
7.	EDUCATION BENEFITS	309
8.	MISCELLANEOUS	241
9.	DEATH COMPENSATION	79
10.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	1
11.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
12.	DEATH PENSION	155
13.	INSURANCE	75
14.	BURIAL ALLOWANCES	370
15.	PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16.	TOTAL AWARDS	4,924
17.	TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	$3,054,208.72
18.	TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	$36,862,222.08
19.	FULL AMOUNT	$39,916,430.80
20.	VA FILES REVIEWED	3,745
21.	POWER OF ATTORNEYS	1,020
22.	INTERVIEWS	2,066
23.	RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	3,022
24.	MILITARY AFFAIRS	0
25.	SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	0
26.	NEW CLAIMS	3,944
27.	MEMBERSHIP	120

OFFICE: PORTLAND, OREGON

1.	NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	285
2.	COMPENSATION INCREASED	1,004
3.	COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	911
4.	PENSION	316
5.	PENSION MAINTAINED	166
6.	SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7.	EDUCATION BENEFITS	463
8.	MISCELLANEOUS	44
9.	DEATH COMPENSATION	45
10.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	1
11.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
12.	DEATH PENSION	29
13.	INSURANCE	0
14.	BURIAL ALLOWANCES	224
15.	PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16.	TOTAL AWARDS	3,488

RECAPITULATION OF ACTIVITIES - Continued

JULY 1, 1998 THROUGH JUNE 30, 1999

17.	TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	$2,388,144.00
18.	TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	$34,322,975.00
19.	FULL AMOUNT	$36,711,119.00
20.	VA FILES REVIEWED	3,364
21.	POWER OF ATTORNEYS	590
22.	INTERVIEWS	855
23.	RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	2,906
24.	MILITARY AFFAIRS	0
25.	SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	6
26.	NEW CLAIMS	2,393
27.	MEMBERSHIP	86

OFFICE: PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA

1.	NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	669
2.	COMPENSATION INCREASED	1,911
3.	COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	1,340
4.	PENSION	365
5.	PENSION MAINTAINED	153
6.	SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7.	EDUCATION BENEFITS	392
8.	MISCELLANEOUS	97
9.	DEATH COMPENSATION	69
10.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	1
11.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
12.	DEATH PENSION	54
13.	INSURANCE	100
14.	BURIAL ALLOWANCES	378
15.	PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16.	TOTAL AWARDS	5,529
17.	TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	$2,638,654.00
18	TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	$50,335,174.00
19.	FULL AMOUNT	$52,973,828.00
20.	VA FILES REVIEWED	4,923
21.	POWER OF ATTORNEYS	1,771
22.	INTERVIEWS	2,860
23.	RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	3,414
24.	MILITARY AFFAIRS	0
25.	SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	0
26.	NEW CLAIMS	2,585
27.	MEMBERSHIP	168

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	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	3
21.	POWER OF ATTORNEYS	68
22.	INTERVIEWS	379

RECAPITULATION OF ACTIVITIES - Continued

JULY 1, 1998 THROUGH JUNE 30, 1999

23.	RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	9
24.	MILITARY AFFAIRS	0
25.	SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	0
26.	NEW CLAIMS	261
27.	MEMBERSHIP	4

OFFICE: PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA

1.	NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	386
2.	COMPENSATION INCREASED	1,128
3.	COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	1,608
4.	PENSION	261
5.	PENSION MAINTAINED	230
6.	SOCIAL SECURITY	5
7.	EDUCATION BENEFITS	275
8.	MISCELLANEOUS	141
9.	DEATH COMPENSATION	53
10.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
11.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
12.	DEATH PENSION	85
13.	INSURANCE	2
14.	BURIAL ALLOWANCES	342
15.	PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16.	TOTAL AWARDS	4,516
17	TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	$2,253,870.00
18.	TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	$36,522,969.00
19.	FULL AMOUNT	$38,776,839.00
20.	VA FILES REVIEWED	3,765
21.	POWER OF ATTORNEYS	1,003
22.	INTERVIEWS	1,823
23.	RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	2,601
24.	MILITARY AFFAIRS	2
25.	SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	2
26.	NEW CLAIMS	2,792
27.	MEMBERSHIP	222

OFFICE: PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND

1.	NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	225
2.	COMPENSATION INCREASED	735
3.	COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	541
4.	PENSION	116
5.	PENSION MAINTAINED	166
6.	SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7.	EDUCATION BENEFITS	145
8.	MISCELLANEOUS	5
9.	DEATH COMPENSATION	33
10.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	1
11.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
12.	DEATH PENSION	19
13.	INSURANCE	0
14.	BURIAL ALLOWANCES	166
15.	PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16.	TOTAL AWARDS	2,152
17.	TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	$1,057,404.00.
18.	TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	$19,462,306.00
19.	FULL AMOUNT	$20,519,710.00
20.	VA FILES REVIEWED	2,891
21.	POWER OF ATTORNEYS	616
22.	INTERVIEWS	1,982
23.	RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	1,754
24.	MILITARY AFFAIRS	0
25.	SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	0
26.	NEW CLAIMS	948
27.	MEMBERSHIP	216

RECAPITULATION OF ACTIVITIES - Continued

JULY 1, 1998 THROUGH JUNE 30, 1999

OFFICE: COLUMBIA, SOUTH CAROLINA

1.	NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	482
2.	COMPENSATION INCREASED	845
3.	COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	1,304
4.	PENSION	247
5.	PENSION MAINTAINED	117
6.	SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7.	EDUCATION BENEFITS	375
8.	MISCELLANEOUS	82
9.	DEATH COMPENSATION	48
10.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	6
11.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	3
12.	DEATH PENSION	48
13.	INSURANCE	16
14.	BURIAL ALLOWANCES	129
15.	PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16.	TOTAL AWARDS	3,706
17.	TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	$2,038,603.00
18.	TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	$30,698,662.60
19.	FULL AMOUNT	$32,737,265.60
20.	VA FILES REVIEWED	2,187
21.	POWER OF ATTORNEYS	939
22.	INTERVIEWS	2,371
23.	RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	2,993
24.	MILITARY AFFAIRS	10
25.	SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	0
26.	NEW CLAIMS	2,288
27.	MEMBERSHIP	227

OFFICE: SIOUX FALLS, SOUTH DAKOTA

1.	NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	206
2.	COMPENSATION INCREASED	401
3.	COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	435
4.	PENSION	74
5.	PENSION MAINTAINED	54
6.	SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7.	EDUCATION BENEFITS	355
8.	MISCELLANEOUS	37
9.	DEATH COMPENSATION	30
10.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	3
11.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
12.	DEATH PENSION	30
13.	INSURANCE	1
14.	BURIAL ALLOWANCES	63
15.	PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16.	TOTAL AWARDS	1,689
17.	TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	$894,422.00
18.	TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	$11,299,723.00
19.	FULL AMOUNT	$12,194,145.00
20.	VA FILES REVIEWED	1,641
21.	POWER OF ATTORNEYS	295
22.	INTERVIEWS	710
23.	RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	1,265
24.	MILITARY AFFAIRS	0
25.	SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	0
26.	NEW CLAIMS	1,229
27.	MEMBERSHIP	52

OFFICE: NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE

1.	NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	648
2.	COMPENSATION INCREASED	1,452
3.	COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	1,323
4.	PENSION	462

RECAPITULATION OF ACTIVITIES - Continued

JULY 1, 1998 THROUGH JUNE 30, 1999

5.	PENSION MAINTAINED	148
6.	SOCIAL SECURITY	2
7.	EDUCATION BENEFITS	227
8.	MISCELLANEOUS	79
9.	DEATH COMPENSATION	53
10.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
11.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
12.	DEATH PENSION	56
13.	INSURANCE	0
14.	BURIAL ALLOWANCES	152
15	PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16.	TOTAL AWARDS	4,602
17.	TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	$2,712,285.24
18.	TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	$42,600,186.77
19.	FULL AMOUNT	$45,312,472.01
20.	VA FILES REVIEWED	1,251
21.	POWER OF ATTORNEYS	1,329
22.	INTERVIEWS	741
23.	RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	2,581
24.	MILITARY AFFAIRS	0
25.	SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	9
26.	NEW CLAIMS	1,517
27.	MEMBERSHIP	37

OFFICE: WACO, TEXAS

1.	NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	1,052
2.	COMPENSATION INCREASED	3,405
3.	COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	2,896
4.	PENSION	945
5.	PENSION MAINTAINED	270
6.	SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7	EDUCATION BENEFITS	920
8.	MISCELLANEOUS	424
9.	DEATH COMPENSATION	204
10.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
11.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
12.	DEATH PENSION	218
13.	INSURANCE	2
14.	BURIAL ALLOWANCES	493
15.	PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16.	TOTAL AWARDS	10,829
17.	TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	$5,143,869.00
18.	TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	$83,752,462.94
19.	FULL AMOUNT	$88,896,331.94
20.	VA FILES REVIEWED	9,808
21.	POWER OF ATTORNEYS	3,667
22.	INTERVIEWS	2,796
23.	RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	7,494
24.	MILITARY AFFAIRS	0
25.	SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	0
26.	NEW CLAIMS	4,470
27.	MEMBERSHIP	207

OFFICE: HOUSTON, TEXAS

1.	NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	1,162
2.	COMPENSATION INCREASED	2,210
3.	COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	1,867
4.	PENSION	507
5.	PENSION MAINTAINED	1,453
6.	SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7.	EDUCATION BENEFITS	254
8.	MISCELLANEOUS	121
9.	DEATH COMPENSATION	99
10.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	4

RECAPITULATION OF ACTIVITIES - Continued

JULY 1, 1998 THROUGH JUNE 30, 1999

11.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
12.	DEATH PENSION	291
13.	INSURANCE	0
14.	BURIAL ALLOWANCES	349
15.	PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16.	TOTAL AWARDS	8,317
17.	TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	$4,222,915.16
18.	TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	$79,134,343.92
19.	FULL AMOUNT	$83,357,259.08
20.	VA FILES REVIEWED	8,153
21.	POWER OF ATTORNEYS	1,076
22.	INTERVIEWS	3,099
23.	RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	6,845
24.	MILITARY AFFAIRS	0
25.	SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	1
26.	NEW CLAIMS	1,757
27.	MEMBERSHIP	171

OFFICE: SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS

1.	NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	46
2.	COMPENSATION INCREASED	6
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	0
12.	DEATH PENSION	0
13.	INSURANCE	0
14.	BURIAL ALLOWANCES	0
15.	PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	122
16.	TOTAL AWARDS	174
17.	TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	$218,576.00
18.	TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	$3,225,682.00
19.	FULL AMOUNT	$3,444,258.00
20.	VA FILES REVIEWED	460
21.	POWER OF ATTORNEYS	1,810
22.	INTERVIEWS	5,340
23.	RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	135
24.	MILITARY AFFAIRS	1,073
25.	SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	3
26.	NEW CLAIMS	2,942
27.	MEMBERSHIP	125

OFFICE: SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH

1.	NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	209
2.	COMPENSATION INCREASED	415
3.	COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	534
4.	PENSION	42
5.	PENSION MAINTAINED	2
6.	SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7.	EDUCATION BENEFITS	112
8.	MISCELLANEOUS	10
9.	DEATH COMPENSATION	32
10.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
11.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
12.	DEATH PENSION	3
13.	INSURANCE	0
14.	BURIAL ALLOWANCES	101
15.	PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16.	TOTAL AWARDS	1,460

RECAPITULATION OF ACTIVITIES - Continued

JULY 1, 1998 THROUGH JUNE 30, 1999

17.	TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	$1,024,328.00
18.	TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	$13,120,131.00
19.	FULL AMOUNT	$14,144,459.00
20.	VA FILES REVIEWED	2,493
21.	POWER OF ATTORNEYS	370
22.	INTERVIEWS	897
23.	RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	1,846
24.	MILITARY AFFAIRS	533
25.	SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	0
26.	NEW CLAIMS	490
27.	MEMBERSHIP	68

OFFICE: WHITE RIVER JUNCTION, VERMONT

1.	NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	86
2.	COMPENSATION INCREASED	197
3.	COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	240
4.	PENSION	52
5.	PENSION MAINTAINED	61
6.	SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7.	EDUCATION BENEFITS	38
8.	MISCELLANEOUS	4
9.	DEATH COMPENSATION	5
10.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	1
11.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
12.	DEATH PENSION	12
13.	INSURANCE	0
14.	BURIAL ALLOWANCES	13
15.	PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16.	TOTAL AWARDS	709
17.	TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	$572,105.96
18.	TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	$7,452,909.60
19.	FULL AMOUNT	$8,025,015.56
20.	VA FILES REVIEWED	1,701
21.	POWER OF ATTORNEYS	282
22.	INTERVIEWS	1,579
23.	RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	1,189
24.	MILITARY AFFAIRS	126
25.	SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	0
26.	NEW CLAIMS	615
27.	MEMBERSHIP	35

OFFICE: ROANOKE, VIRGINIA

1.	NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	471
2.	COMPENSATION INCREASED	720
3.	COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	1,062
4.	PENSION	100
5.	PENSION MAINTAINED	17
6.	SOCIAL SECURITY	1
7.	EDUCATION BENEFITS	532
8.	MISCELLANEOUS	15
9.	DEATH COMPENSATION	45
10.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
11.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
12.	DEATH PENSION	8
13.	INSURANCE	0
14.	BURIAL ALLOWANCES	123
15.	PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16.	TOTAL AWARDS	3,094
17.	TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	$1,977,129.00
18.	TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	$29,531,092.00
19.	FULL AMOUNT	$31,508,221.00
20.	VA FILES REVIEWED	757
21.	POWER OF ATTORNEYS	1,498
22.	INTERVIEWS	1,619

RECAPITULATION OF ACTIVITIES - Continued

JULY 1, 1998 THROUGH JUNE 30, 1999

23.	RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	3,676
24.	MILITARY AFFAIRS	0
25.	SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	0
26.	NEW CLAIMS	3,833
27.	MEMBERSHIP	64

OFFICE: SEATTLE, WASHINGTON

1.	NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	1,371
2.	COMPENSATION INCREASED	1,641
3.	COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	1,699
4	PENSION	245
5.	PENSION MAINTAINED	83
6.	SOCIAL SECURITY	1
7.	EDUCATION BENEFITS	815
8.	MISCELLANEOUS	39
9.	DEATH COMPENSATION	77
10.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
11.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
12.	DEATH PENSION	21
13.	INSURANCE	1
14.	BURIAL ALLOWANCES	244
15.	PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16.	TOTAL AWARDS	6,237
17.	TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	$3,790,191.70
18.	TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	$59,838,587.73
19.	FULL AMOUNT	$63,628,779.43
20.	VA FILES REVIEWED	4,919
21.	POWER OF ATTORNEYS	2,551
22.	INTERVIEWS	1,957
23.	RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	3,719
24.	MILITARY AFFAIRS	0
25.	SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	3
26.	NEW CLAIMS	3,853
27.	MEMBERSHIP	230

OFFICE: HUNTINGTON, WEST VIRGINIA

1.	NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	289
2.	COMPENSATION INCREASED	592
3.	COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	548
4.	PENSION	277
5.	PENSION MAINTAINED	31
6.	SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7.	EDUCATION BENEFITS	170
8.	MISCELLANEOUS	54
9.	DEATH COMPENSATION	17
10.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
11.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
12.	DEATH PENSION	32
13.	INSURANCE	0
14.	BURIAL ALLOWANCES	149
15.	PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16.	TOTAL AWARDS	2,159
17.	TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	$1,310,976.00
18.	TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	$22,353,746.00
19.	FULL AMOUNT	$23,664,722.00
20.	VA FILES REVIEWED	2,419
21.	POWER OF ATTORNEYS	456
22.	INTERVIEWS	1,579
23.	RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	2,084
24.	MILITARY AFFAIRS	0
25.	SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	0
26.	NEW CLAIMS	1,592
27.	MEMBERSHIP	21

RECAPITULATION OF ACTIVITIES - Continued

JULY 1, 1998 THROUGH JUNE 30, 1999

OFFICE: MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN

1.	NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	470
2.	COMPENSATION INCREASED	1,293
3	COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	1,518
4.	PENSION	292
5.	PENSION MAINTAINED	172
6.	SOCIAL SECURITY	3
7.	EDUCATION BENEFITS	713
8.	MISCELLANEOUS	119
9.	DEATH COMPENSATION	49
10.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
11.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
12.	DEATH PENSION	58
13.	INSURANCE	0
14.	BURIAL ALLOWANCES	234
15.	PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16.	TOTAL AWARDS	4,921
17.	TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	$2,877,663.00
18.	TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	$39,373,224.00
19.	FULL AMOUNT	$42,250,887.00
20.	VA FILES REVIEWED	6,047
21.	POWER OF ATTORNEYS	926
22.	INTERVIEWS	1,691
23.	RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	5,297
24.	MILITARY AFFAIRS	555
25	SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	8
26.	NEW CLAIMS	2,121
27.	MEMBERSHIP	157

OFFICE: CHEYENNE, WYOMING

1.	NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	91
2.	COMPENSATION INCREASED	123
3.	COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	119
4.	PENSION	136
5.	PENSION MAINTAINED	3
6.	SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7.	EDUCATION BENEFITS	119
8.	MISCELLANEOUS	24
9.	DEATH COMPENSATION	3
10.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
11.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
12.	DEATH PENSION	0
13.	INSURANCE	0
14.	BURIAL ALLOWANCES	5
15.	PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16.	TOTAL AWARDS	623
17.	TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	$338,702.00
18.	TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	$4,411,977.00
19.	FULL AMOUNT	$4,750,679.00
20.	VA FILES REVIEWED	611
21.	POWER OF ATTORNEYS	118
22.	INTERVIEWS	450
23.	RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	508
24.	MILITARY AFFAIRS	0
25.	SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	0
26.	NEW CLAIMS	341
27.	MEMBERSHIP	11

OFFICE: WILMINGTON, DELAWARE

1.	NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	39
2.	COMPENSATION INCREASED	135
3.	COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	107
4.	PENSION	15

RECAPITULATION OF ACTIVITIES - Continued

JULY 1, 1998 THROUGH JUNE 30, 1999

5.	PENSION MAINTAINED	9
6.	SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7.	EDUCATION BENEFITS	23
8.	MISCELLANEOUS	7
9.	DEATH COMPENSATION	6
10.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
11.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
12.	DEATH PENSION	2
13.	INSURANCE	0
14.	BURIAL ALLOWANCES	30
15.	PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16.	TOTAL AWARDS	373
17.	TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	$180,442.00
18.	TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	$2,763,564.50
19.	FULL AMOUNT	$2,944,006.50
20.	VA FILES REVIEWED	1,005
21.	POWER OF ATTORNEYS	114
22.	INTERVIEWS	544
23.	RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	416
24	MILITARY AFFAIRS	0
25.	SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	0
26.	NEW CLAIMS	454
27.	MEMBERSHIP	5

OFFICE: DALLAS, TEXAS

1.	NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	5
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	0
12.	DEATH PENSION	0
13.	INSURANCE	0
14.	BURIAL ALLOWANCES	0
15.	PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16.	TOTAL AWARDS	9
17.	TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	$0.00
18.	TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	$0.00
19.	FULL AMOUNT	$0.00
20.	VA FILES REVIEWED	7
21.	POWER OF ATTORNEYS	277
22.	INTERVIEWS	1,382
23.	RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	1
24.	MILITARY AFFAIRS	0
25.	SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	1
26.	NEW CLAIMS	442
27.	MEMBERSHIP	1

OFFICE: OKLAHOMA CITY, OKLAHOMA

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

RECAPITULATION OF ACTIVITIES - Continued

JULY 1, 1998 THROUGH JUNE 30, 1999

11.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	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	0
21.	POWER OF ATTORNEYS	166
22.	INTERVIEWS	3,136
23.	RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	0
24.	MILITARY AFFAIRS	0
25.	SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	0
26.	NEW CLAIMS	248
27.	MEMBERSHIP	24

OFFICE: SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA

1.	NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	1,303
2.	COMPENSATION INCREASED	1,022
3.	COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	955
4.	PENSION	74
5.	PENSION MAINTAINED	68
6.	SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7.	EDUCATION BENEFITS	1,080
8.	MISCELLANEOUS	32
9.	DEATH COMPENSATION	95
10.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	1
11.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
12.	DEATH PENSION	4
13.	INSURANCE	91
14.	BURIAL ALLOWANCES	204
15.	PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16.	TOTAL AWARDS	4,929
17.	TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	$3,089,900.00
18.	TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	$41,723,883.00
19.	FULL AMOUNT	$44,813,783.00
20.	VA FILES REVIEWED	7,429
21.	POWER OF ATTORNEYS	1,247
22.	INTERVIEWS	4,179
23.	RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	4,913
24.	MILITARY AFFAIRS	329
25.	SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	0
26.	NEW CLAIMS	3,918
27.	MEMBERSHIP	192

OFFICE: RENO, NEVADA

1.	NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	316
2.	COMPENSATION INCREASED	664
3.	COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	574
4.	PENSION	118
5.	PENSION MAINTAINED	81
6.	SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7.	EDUCATION BENEFITS	396
8.	MISCELLANEOUS	27
9.	DEATH COMPENSATION	16
10.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
11.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
12.	DEATH PENSION	18
13.	INSURANCE	0
14.	BURIAL ALLOWANCES	142
15.	PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16.	TOTAL AWARDS	2,352

RECAPITULATION OF ACTIVITIES - Continued

JULY 1, 1998 THROUGH JUNE 30, 1999

17.	TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	$1,054,158.00
18.	TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	$17,791,452.00
19.	FULL AMOUNT	$19,025,610.00
20.	VA FILES REVIEWED	1,639
21.	POWER OF ATTORNEYS	505
22.	INTERVIEWS	1,203
23.	RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	1,434
24.	MILITARY AFFAIRS	0
25.	SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	0
26.	NEW CLAIMS	849
27.	MEMBERSHIP	35

OFFICE: MIAMI, FLORIDA

1.	NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	4
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	0
12.	DEATH PENSION	0
13.	INSURANCE	0
14	BURIAL ALLOWANCES	0
15.	PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16.	TOTAL AWARDS	4
17.	TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	$0.00
18.	TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	$0.00
19.	FULL AMOUNT	$0.00
20.	VA FILES REVIEWED	58
21.	POWER OF ATTORNEYS	36
22.	INTERVIEWS	985
23.	RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	0
24.	MILITARY AFFAIRS	0
25.	SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	0
26.	NEW CLAIMS	49
27.	MEMBERSHIP	4

OFFICE: SAN JUAN, PUERTO RICO

1.	NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	62
2.	COMPENSATION INCREASED	355
3.	COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	723
4.	PENSION	236
5.	PENSION MAINTAINED	567
6.	SOCIAL SECURITY	0
7.	EDUCATION BENEFITS	148
8.	MISCELLANEOUS	43
9.	DEATH COMPENSATION	76
10.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	8
11.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	0
12.	DEATH PENSION	68
13.	INSURANCE	0
14.	BURIAL ALLOWANCES	79
15.	PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	0
16.	TOTAL AWARDS	2,365
17.	TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	$1,474,523.90
18.	TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	$18,597,589.33
19.	FULL AMOUNT	$20,072,113.23
20.	VA FILES REVIEWED	1,737
21.	POWER OF ATTORNEYS	626
22.	INTERVIEWS	1,910

RECAPITULATION OF ACTIVITIES - Continued

JULY 1, 1998 THROUGH JUNE 30, 1999

23.	RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	1,327
24.	MILITARY AFFAIRS	0
25.	SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	7
26.	NEW CLAIMS	876
27.	MEMBERSHIP	50

OFFICE: NORFOLK, VIRGINIA

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	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	0
21.	POWER OF ATTORNEYS	1,283
22.	INTERVIEWS	0
23.	RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	0
24.	MILITARY AFFAIRS	7,691
25.	SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	0
26.	NEW CLAIMS	1,702
27.	MEMBERSHIP	39

OFFICE: NAS MIRAMAR SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA

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	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	25
21.	POWER OF ATTORNEYS	21
22.	INTERVIEWS	25
23.	RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	0
24.	MILITARY AFFAIRS	48,486
25.	SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	0
26.	NEW CLAIMS	6
27.	MEMBERSHIP	0

RECAPITULATION OF ACTIVITIES - Continued

JULY 1, 1998 THROUGH JUNE 30, 1999

OFFICE: TOTAL NATIONAL SERVICE OFFICE REPORT

1.	NEW SERVICE CONNECTIONS	26,531
2.	COMPENSATION INCREASED	57,612
3.	COMPENSATION MAINTAINED	59,382
4.	PENSION	13,285
5.	PENSION MAINTAINED	16,507
6.	SOCIAL SECURITY	34
7.	EDUCATION BENEFITS	21,799
8.	MISCELLANEOUS	4,189
9.	DEATH COMPENSATION	3,603
10.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	189
11.	SPECIAL ENTITLEMENTS	6
12.	DEATH PENSION	4,827
13.	INSURANCE	432
14.	BURIAL ALLOWANCES	11,102
15.	PHYSICAL EVALUATION BOARDS	171
16.	TOTAL AWARDS	281,949
17.	TOTAL MONTHLY INCREASES	$146,663,797.63
18.	TOTAL RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS	$2,157,423.444.64
19.	FULL AMOUNT	$2,304,087,242.27
20.	VA FILES REVIEWED	243,151
21.	POWER OF ATTORNEYS	70,264
22.	INTERVIEWS	124,452
23.	RATING BOARD APPEARANCES	188,242
24.	MILITARY AFFAIRS	65,986
25.	SOCIAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES	289
26.	NEW CLAIMS	142,751
27.	MEMBERSHIP	6,952

(The following written annual report was submitted by Mr. Jerry P. Steelman, National Director of Voluntary Services.)

Ours is an organization that will always remember the sacrifices of disabled veterans and for 54 years now we have demonstrated this through the DAV and Auxiliary VAVS programs. Today I would like to take a moment to salute all of those DAV and DAV Auxiliary members who have made our organization and its programs the envy of the veterans' community. Although this report focuses on the past year's successes, let's also focus on the future. While we can and should be proud of our achievements, we must also look ahead. Let us focus on innovation in volunteerism. Let us focus on where the DAV and Auxiliary will find new volunteers to meet the growing needs of veterans, particularly those who are aging. 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.

Our volunteer programs have withstood the test of time and will continue to soar to new heights in the years to come.

Indicative of the dynamic expansion of DAV Voluntary Services, National Commander Andrew A. Kistler endorsed National Adjutant Arthur H. Wilson's appointment of Edward E. Hartman as Associate National Director of Voluntary Services, effective May 1, 1999. Mr. Hartman joined the DAV professional staff in 1995 as a member of Class II at the DAV National Service Officer Training Academy in Denver, Colorado. After successfully completing the arduous academic program and graduating, Mr. Hartman was assigned as an NSO Trainee at the National Service Office in Washington, D.C. In 1996, he was appointed National Appeals Officer at the DAV's Board of Veterans Appeals Office. He later was promoted to Assistant Supervisory NSO at the Washington, D.C., National Service Office where he served with outstanding proficiency until his most recent appointment. Please join the DAV Voluntary Services staff in welcoming Mr. Hartman to our outstanding program.

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 present 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 her own. The statistics in this report merely measure what DAV members, DAV families, and DAV 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 VAVS program is the largest of the DAV's volunteer initiatives. Through it, DAV volunteers provide a broad array of services to veterans in our nation's VA medical facilities. Under this program, 8,052 DAV VAVS volunteers donated 2,054,167 hours in the 12 months ending March 31, 1999.

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 34 State Chairmen, 184 VAVS Representatives, 29 Associate Representatives, 298 Deputy Representatives, and six Associate Deputy Representatives.
The DAV volunteer effort is enhanced by a very active corps of 2,324 Auxiliary volunteers who donated 347,282 hours last year. Together, DAV and Auxiliary volunteers provided 2,401,449 hours of VAVS service over the past year -- more than any other service organization. This is equivalent to the VA having an additional 1,155 full-time employees with an estimated value of $32,995,909.26 in hourly wages alone.

DAV HOSPITAL SERVICE COORDINATOR
TRANSPORTATION NETWORK PROGRAM

Because so many sick and disabled veterans lack transportation to and from VA medical facilities for needed treatment, the 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 192 active programs. They've recruited 5,882 volunteer drivers who logged 22,660,146 miles last year, taking 654,256 veterans to and from VA medical facilities. Many of these veterans rode in vans the DAV donated to VA medical facilities for use in the Transportation Network. DAV Departments and Chapters, together with the National Organization, have now donated 890 vans to VA medical centers nationwide at a cost of $17,015,947.84.

At the DAV's 77th National Convention, Ford Motor Company loaned 14 vans to VA medical centers to be used in the DAV Transportation Network. We are very pleased that after having evaluated the usefulness of the loan of these vans, Ford Motor Company has permanently donated those vehicles to the following VA medical centers: San Diego, California; Denver, Colorado; Grand Junction, Colorado; Bay Pines, Florida (outstationed in Naples); West Palm Beach, Florida; Iowa City, Iowa; Baltimore, Maryland; Boston, Massachusetts; El Paso, Texas; Oklahoma City, Oklahoma; Altoona, Pennsylvania; Salt Lake City, Utah; White River Junction, Vermont; and Martinsburg, West Virginia.

This generous gift was the result of several months of meetings and planning with Ford representatives. From the start,

they showed 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.

As a further demonstration of their commitment to the DAV Transportation Network, Ford is donating the use of six additional 1999 Ford Super Club Wagon XL, 15-passenger vans, for one year. This will take place during the Opening Session, at this National Convention here in Orlando. The VAMCs receiving these vans are: Northern California Healthcare System (outstationed at the Sacramento VA Outpatient Clinic); Wilmington, Delaware; Columbia, South Carolina; Memphis, Tennessee; Richmond, Virginia and Walla Walla, Washington.

DAV HSCs do more than coordinate transportation; they also help veterans file claims for VA benefits. During the past year HSCs have completed 75,116 VA claim forms, referring 21,049 veterans to DAV National Service Officers for professional benefits assistance. They've also conducted 206,383 telephone and personal interviews. DAV HSCs and VAVS volunteers form a hospital-based service program that thousands of veterans have come to know and trust for help whenever it's needed.

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 22 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 Chiefs of Voluntary Services throughout the nation are each allowed to submit nominations for one DAV and one DAVA volunteer. These nominations submitted by VA medical centers throughout the nation are then thoroughly evaluated by an independent committee of authorities in the field of voluntary service. The two volunteers selected by the committee are brought to the DAV National Convention for the award presentation. After reviewing the nominations of 70 DAV volunteers and 33 Auxiliary volunteers, the committee chose as this year's winners:

Robert C. Crawford

Mr. Crawford, 81, a member of DAV Chapter 83 in Lower Lake, California, drives 250 miles a day to transport ill and disabled veterans to the San Francisco VA Medical Center. He flawlessly directs the DAV's Lake County Transportation Network volunteers, serves in the hospital's Social Work Service, and even drives a 15-passenger DAV van, offering friendship and compassion to those he serves.

Mr. Crawford represents the DAV with honor and professionalism. A former POW of the Japanese during World War II, he is one of the most positive people you'll ever meet. He accepts every assignment and performs excellently. In the last six years, he has donated more than 8,822 hours of service to his fellow disabled veterans.

Mr. Crawford said his "can do" attitude is a product of his tough upbringing in the coal camps of West Virginia. The hard times taught him acceptance, but only after fighting to the end. He displayed that attribute in surviving three years of Japanese imprisonment following the fall of Bataan and Corregidor in the Philippines. First captured after the U.S. surrender of Bataan, Mr. Crawford, then a Navy Pharmacist's Mate, risked his life by escaping with two others and commandeering a boat to the embattled island fortress of Corregidor. There he tended the wounded, on his own near the end, during the five-month siege by the Japanese. He was again captured after the fall of Corregidor. Mr. Crawford received three Purple Heart medals for wounds suffered on Corregidor and four Bronze Stars.

Mr. Crawford's spirit to help his fellow disabled veterans and his zest for life led him to the DAV Voluntary Service Program. His dedication, attentiveness, leadership, and positive attitude

have become symbols of the Lake County DAV Transportation Network.

In addition to his DAV Transportation Network duties, Mr. Crawford serves the Social Work Service as guest speaker at local schools. Last year, he was the guest speaker at the Bay Area POW/MIA Recognition Day Ceremony. He also volunteers at the local DAV National Service Office and donates his time to help VAVS staff with special events. He donates more than 20 hours a week as a DAV VAVS volunteer.

Mae Daugherty

Mrs. Daugherty, 72, a member of DAV Auxiliary Unit 5 in San Antonio, Texas, is a bright and shinning light at the Audie L. Murphy VA Medical Center in San Antonio. Despite her personal health problems, the serious illness of her husband, and the loss of all her personal possessions during a flood last year, she exemplifies dedication, courage, and perseverance in her service to disabled veterans.

In addition, Mrs. Daugherty's baking talents and good humor provide an infectious spirit of hope at VAVS events. Known for her tasty sandwiches and outstanding cakes, veteran patients make a point to attend events hosted by her Auxiliary Unit. She makes a point of offering help with dignity to sick and disabled veterans and her outstanding organizational skills ensure that patient activities and fund raising events operate smoothly. Disabled veterans praise her calm and caring manner.

For 18 years, Mrs. Daugherty has provided compassion and warmth to sick and disabled veterans in South Texas and leadership within the Auxiliary. Mrs. Daugherty is filled with enthusiasm. Despite great personal hardship, she continues to plan and direct other volunteers and is an excellent role model and mentor for other volunteers. She is a credit to the DAV Voluntary Services program and an outstanding leader in the Auxiliary.

In addition to her direct involvement with disabled veterans, Mrs. Daugherty serves as Chairperson of the VAVS Executive Committee and has worked on the committee for several years. She is more than willing to jump in at the last minute to make sure that service programs come off right for veterans.

Averaging more than 12 hours a week serving sick and disabled veteran patients, Mrs. Daugherty's caring and compassion have won the trust, respect, and affection of all those around her. Mrs. Daugherty provides visionary leadership as the VAVS works to implement new programs and to meet new challenges. She is enthusiastic and dedicated to serving veterans in new ways. She also involves her Auxiliary Unit in new programs.

The role of volunteer does not end at the Audie Murphy VA Medical Center for Mrs. Daugherty. She is very active in the DAV Auxiliary, serving in numerous positions from Unit Chaplain to DAVA State Commander.

The DAV can be proud of people like Mr. Crawford and Mrs. Daugherty for the service and dedication they display everyday. Whenever any of us wears the DAV emblem, we know that it is a symbol of greatness because of people like Bob and Mae and all the others 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 a great organization.

The selection committee once again stated that all of the nominees are very special volunteers and it was a very, very difficult job to choose only two individuals. Each nominee has been awarded a certificate of merit for outstanding volunteer performance in meeting the needs of hospitalized veterans.

SPORTS FOR THE DISABLED

Athletic programs for handicapped veterans have always been important to the 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.

The Veterans' Advisory Committee on Rehabilitation previously cited a study in which Kathy Stokes, Ph.D., reported that "the health care needs of those not involved in sports activities were three times higher than those involved in some type of sporting program." *Modern Healthcare Magazine* states that sports offer a better quality of life, improved self-confidence and self-esteem, and a way for many newly disabled people to adjust to their handicaps. Athletic activity provides a new and very necessary social outlet, while improving physical endurance and maintaining physical fitness.

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 encounter fewer medical problems than those who aren't, therapists say. Athletics maintain cardiovascular conditioning, increase circulation to the extremities, and help 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 to participate in these activities as those who aren't handicapped.

The National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic -- In March 1999, 300 disabled veterans from 40 states took part in the 13th National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic at Crested Butte, Colorado. With more than 432 volunteers -- including 180 ski instructors, most of whom are certified in teaching the disabled -- it was the largest and best Winter Sports Clinic ever conducted. An annual event sponsored jointly by the DAV and VA, the clinic is open to veterans with visual impairments, spinal-cord injuries, certain neurological conditions, orthopedic amputations, or other severe disabilities. Veterans disabled in World War II, Korea, Vietnam, the Persian Gulf War, and Bosnia were represented. Our sponsors this year were:

Host: Ford Motor Company.

National: Johnson & Johnson Family of Companies; Prince Bandar bin Sultan; Sprint; The Coca-Cola Company.

Gold: DAV California Rehabilitation Foundation, Inc.; DAV Chapter 1, Phoenix, Arizona; DAV Department of Colorado; American Country Countdown with Bob Kingsley; Astra Pharmaceuticals; Baxter Healthcare Corporation; Bayer Corporation; Eli Lilly and Company; 3M Healthcare; Veterans Canteen Service/Burger King; Vietnam Veterans of America, Inc., Chapter 57; Wallace Computer Services, Inc.; Zeneca Pharmaceuticals.

Silver: DAV Prescott Chapter 16, Inc.; Advanced Prosthetics & Orthotics, Inc.; Eastman Kodak Company; Fifth Third Bank; Hoechst Marion Roussel; GE Medical Systems; Braun Medical, Inc./McGaw; Parke-Davis Pharmaceuticals; Pfizer, Inc.; Mr. & Mrs. Edward A. Powell, Jr.; ROHO, Inc. & CROWN Therapeutics, Inc.; Schiff, Kreidler-Shell, Inc.; Science Applications International Corporation (SAIC); Sequent Computer Systems, Inc.; Mary C. Thomas.

Bronze: AMSUS Sustaining Members; Bowlers to Veterans Link; CANON U.S.A., Inc., (Government Marketing Division); C. R. Bard, Inc.; Great Brands of Europe, Inc./Evian; Federated Wholesale, Inc.; Pharmacia and Upjohn; Radventures, Inc.; The Fischer Family; The Orthotics & Prosthetics National Office; The Taylor Family (Paul, Lori, and Brooks); Xerox Corporation.

Contributor: AMFIT, Inc.; Richard J. Gibbs; John F. Heilman, Jr.; List Directors, Inc.; Mail-Well Envelope; Mary E. Moore Family Foundation; National Order of Alley Cats; Nikon, Inc.; Judy and Kevin Oliphant; Rolls-Royce, Inc.; Robert C. Thomas; United Voluntary Services; Chapter #23, Inc.

Supplier: Boeri Sport USA; Boulder Gear; Gerry Sportswear Company; M&M/MARS; Monark Sporting Goods, Inc./ELAN; Perigee Sportswear; Sport Obermeyer LTD.; Wigwam Mills, Inc.

Using the theme "Miracles on a Mountainside," the clinic promotes rehabilitation by helping physically disabled veterans develop sports skills through a wide variety of adaptive workshops. With assistance from hundreds of volunteers, the clinic breaks down physical and emotional barriers that could otherwise block

participation in these sports. It allows the veterans to regain lost self-confidence and find their own limits. The workshops focus on such sports skills as downhill and cross-country skiing, wheelchair basketball, scuba diving, wheelchair self-defense, and snowmobiling.

The 14th National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic promises to be better and bigger and is scheduled to be held March 25-31, 2000, at Crested Butte, Colorado.

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 his or her rehabilitation process. This annual award is sponsored by His Royal Highness Prince Bandar bin Sultan, Ambassador of Saudi Arabia. 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." This year's recipient of the DAV Freedom Award is James A. Milliken, a life member of DAV Chapter 6, South Bend, Indiana. The 51-year-old Army veteran of the Vietnam war was severely wounded in 1968 when an enemy booby trap exploded, resulting in the amputation of his right leg, above the knee and the left leg, below the knee.

Golf for the Disabled -- Golf is one of the fastest growing and most popular sports in America, perhaps in the world. Recognizing this fact, the DAV and DAV Charitable Service Trust support two golf programs that promote rehabilitation and a more active lifestyle for disabled veterans:

National Amputee Golf Open Championships -- The DAV National Commander's Trophy honors the disabled veteran who puts in the best overall performance at the National Amputee Golf Association (NAGA) championship tournament. Additionally, it recognizes the contributions the winner has made in his or her own community in furthering the opportunities of disabled individuals. Last year's 50th annual tournament at the Spencer T. Olin Golf Course, Alton, Illinois, August 4-6, 1998, drew 101 entries, 47 of them veterans. The winner of the DAV National Commander's trophy was Alan Feltner of Melbourne, Florida.

Mr. Feltner is a life member of DAV Chapter 129, Satellite Beach, Florida. A native of Columbus, Ohio, Mr. Feltner is a combat disabled veteran who served as a Navy Corpsman with the 26th Marines in Vietnam. He received enemy gunshot wounds during a combat operation in 1969 that resulted in the loss of his left leg. He was wounded while attempting to aid a Marine struck down by enemy gunfire. He was presented the Bronze Star Medal for his heroic actions during the operation.

First Swing Golf -- This is the DAV's 10th year of involvement with the First Swing instructional golf program for the disabled. With support from the DAV Charitable Service Trust, this program provides therapists throughout the country with instruction on the rehabilitation benefits of golf. Use of golf therapy at hospitals and rehabilitation center has brought the game back into the lives of many who played before becoming disabled. It has also introduced the sport to countless handicapped people who never dreamed golf would be part of their lives. During 1998, 31 First Swing seminars and Learn to Golf Clinics were conducted. Participants included 512 therapists; 802 physically challenged people, 187 of whom were disabled veterans; 65 professional golf instructors and 75 others.

DAV CELEBRITY ENTERTAINMENT PROGRAM

Continuing to provide a morale boost to hospitalized veterans, the DAV Celebrity Entertainment Program assures these patients that they 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 and NASCAR driver Dale Jarrett who races for the Ford Motor Company in the NASCAR Winston Cup Series. The DAV is indeed honored that such outstanding celebrities want to be a part of the DAV Voluntary Service 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.

IN CLOSING

It's been a tremendous year for DAV volunteer programs, and many deserve our thanks. If it were not for their support, the many programs mentioned in this report would not be possible.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Jim Delgado, who heads up the Department of Veterans Affairs Voluntary Service Program, his staff, and the VAVS leadership teams across the nation for their leadership and devotion to volunteerism.

The Voluntary Services Department during this past year has been very fortunate to have the support of the DAV and Auxiliary National Commanders Andrew A. Kistler and Evelyn B. Dorsey, and staff of the DAV and its Auxiliary; the National Line Officers, National Executive Committee, National Finance Committee, National Service Foundation, and the Charitable Service Trust. Their assistance and support was an essential ingredient of our 1998 success story. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the staff of National Service and Legislative Headquarters led by Executive Director David W. Gorman, and the staff at National Headquarters in Cincinnati led by Executive Director Richard E. Patterson. My personal thanks to Associate National Director of Voluntary Services Ed Hartman, along with Linda DeMartino and Linda Chester, National Service and Legislative Headquarters Support Staff, for their invaluable assistance. We've experienced outstanding support from DAV's corps of National Service Officers. Hospital Service Coordinators have played a vital role in support of Voluntary Service 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 totally supportive of DAV's Voluntary Service Program and, on behalf of the Voluntary Services Department we wish to thank him for his leadership and guidance.

I would be remiss not to mention the true heroes; those people who care enough to make a difference in the lives of so many, the volunteer corps of the DAV and Auxiliary. On behalf of the DAV, I would like to thank all of you for your devotion, compassion, and commitment to DAV's mission of building better lives for America's disabled veterans.

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS
VA VOLUNTARY SERVICE (VAVS)
April 1, 1998, through March 31, 1999

NUMBER OF REGULARLY SCHEDULED VAVS VOLUNTEERS	8,052
NUMBER OF HOURS BY REGULARLY SCHEDULED VOLUNTEERS	1,995,801
NUMBER OF ASSIGNMENTS BY REGULARLY SCHEDULED VOLUNTEERS	9,691
NUMBER OF VISITS BY REGULARLY SCHEDULED VOLUNTEERS	319,305
NUMBER OF HOURS BY OCCASIONAL VOLUNTEERS	58,366
NUMBER OF VISITS BY OCCASIONAL VOLUNTEERS	10,306
NUMBER OF HOURS BY ALL VAVS VOLUNTEERS	2,054,167
NUMBER OF VISITS BY ALL VAVS VOLUNTEERS	329,611

VAVS APPOINTED POSITIONS

NUMBER OF STATE CHAIRMEN	17
NUMBER OF STATE CHAIRMEN ALSO SERVING AS REPRESENTATIVES	17
NUMBER OF REPRESENTATIVES	184
NUMBER OF DEPUTY REPRESENTATIVES	298
NUMBER OF ASSOCIATE REPRESENTATIVES	29
NUMBER OF ASSOCIATE DEPUTY REPRESENTATIVES	6
NUMBER OF HONORARY REPRESENTATIVES	4
NUMBER OF APPOINTED POSITIONS	555
ANNUAL JOINT REVIEWS RECEIVED FOR THE YEAR	89

TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM

(The following DAV Transportation Statistics reflect the data gathered from January 1, 1998, through December 31, 1998)

TOTAL NUMBER OF HOSPITAL SERVICE COORDINATORS (HSCs)	192
NUMBER OF VETERANS TRANSPORTED	654,256
TRANSPORTATION HOURS	1,245,378
TRANSPORTATION MILES	22,660,146
HSC PERSONAL INTERVIEWS	163,709
HSC TELEPHONE INTERVIEWS	206,383
HSC NSO REFERRALS	21,049
HSC VA FORMS COMPLETED	75,116

1998 NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION NETWORK GRANTS

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION NETWORK HSC PROGRAM GRANTS	$270,372.00
NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION NETWORK VAN GRANTS (147 vans purchased and delivered in 1998)	$3,234,300.00
1998 Total National Grant Expenditures	$3,504,672.00

(The following written annual report was submitted by Mr. Joseph A. Violante, National Legislative Director.)

As your National Legislative Director, I have the pleasure of reporting to you the DAV's legislative activities and accomplishments over the past year. It is with great pride that I do so because we have much to be proud of as members of America's foremost advocacy organization for disabled veterans and their families. Each year as I present this report, it gives me an opportunity to pause and reflect, not only on the important role the DAV plays, but also on the truly remarkable efforts of so many individuals and the culmination of all that they do for our cause.

Therefore, before I share with you the highlights of the year, let me acknowledge that advocacy in the legislative arena is inherently and necessarily a team effort. From the time the legislative stage is set, and as the forces contend and the events unfold, the DAV draws on all its assets to assure we achieve the goals of our great organization and its many noble undertakings. Those assets are the wisdom, talents, strengths, and dedication concentrated in the members in our organization's national, district, state, chapter, and Auxiliary leadership, as well as the legendary strength that resides in our motivated and energized

members at the grassroots level. First, we obviously could not have achieved what we did without the support, direction, and inspiration of our National Commander, National Adjutant, and the Executive Director of our National Service and Legislative Headquarters in Washington. Let me therefore offer my sincere appreciation to Commander Kistler, Art Wilson, and Dave Gorman for all the aid and encouragement they provided to me and my staff during this challenging year in Washington.

On the Washington scene, the DAV's Legislative Staff again demonstrated that they are always at the head of the column in the march for justice for our Nation's veterans. This occasion gives me the opportunity to recall all their tireless labors during the past year and thank them. For myself, and I am sure for all disabled veterans, my thanks to Deputy National Legislative Director Rick Surratt, Associate National Legislative Director Dick Wannemacher, and a staff member who just joined us during the year, Associate National Legislative Director Joy Ilem. This fine staff has itself received invaluable administrative support from our Secretary for the Legislative Department, Lisa Bogle. Accordingly, I want to acknowledge and express my gratitude for Lisa's hard work on behalf of the legislative program. Incidentally, another individual works with us so regularly that he is almost like a member of the legislative staff. Past National Commander Oliver Meadows provides us insight and guidance, especially on the most troublesome issues. We value and appreciate Oliver's help.

Integral to every part of DAV's mission is our corps of highly trained National Service Officers. Do not think that their responsibilities are limited to representing veterans in their claims. Our DAV National Service Officers do many things, but one of the most important is the prominent role they play in legislative activities, and it seems like we must call on them more and more frequently every year. One thing is for certain, when we call on them, we can rely on them, because they never fail to answer the call. Also, it is only logical that we draw on their unique expertise and proven devotion when matters get complicated or the going gets tough on veterans' issues. We are a self-confident organization, and for my part, I firmly believe much of that is attributable to having the most dedicated service officers in the business available when we need them to tackle the most urgent challenges that arise. This year, DAV National Service Officers all over the country organized and managed Memorial Day rallies to call attention to and create a national awareness of the inadequate budget for VA health care. For that and for their support to the Legislative Staff on a multitude of other issues and activities, I am very grateful. They deserve thanks from all of us.

An individual who has gone above and beyond the call of duty to get our message out is Auxiliary National 2nd Junior Vice Commander Renée Jones. I therefore want to note our sincere appreciation for her outstanding work in keeping the Auxiliary involved in our legislative program.

Without the involvement of DAV and Auxiliary members in departments and chapters across the breadth of this Nation, none of us could accomplish the things we accomplish in the DAV, however. To do what you do as members and you do so much reveals the very best of your nature and your character. That character is then imputed to the DAV, and the DAV is seen as a forceful but responsible and honorable organization. Thousands of you contacted your elected representatives to urge them to act fairly and honor our national obligation to care for disabled veterans. Of course, the Benefits Protection Team spearheads and coordinates that effort. The life and vitality of the DAV is at the grassroots; that is where our cause thrives and endures. We know that without strong roots a tree cannot weather a storm, that the strength of a building is in its foundation. To you, the members, most of all, we owe our success because you are the DAV's strong roots and foundation. Once again, we have remained upright despite forces of the storms that threatened veterans' rights, and we continue to tower above others because of the support in our firm foundation.

During the year, we fulfilled the DAV's mission by advancing

the cause of disabled veterans and meeting the challenges thrust upon us. We closely monitored Government actions on veterans' issues and took a variety of our own actions for this purpose. Because of the attack on veterans' disability compensation by Congress so it could fund over-budget spending on transportation programs and because of Congress' declining support for veterans, the DAV took special steps in the months leading up to the 1998 Congressional elections to increase awareness among veterans and their families about the need to register and vote. We provided DAV departments with materials for voter registration drives and disseminated information on how to register and vote.

As a part of our campaign to encourage veterans to vote, we included a veterans' voter survey in the September/October 1998 issue of the *DAV Magazine*. As of the election, we had received almost 70,000 responses. More than 98% of the survey respondents said they planned to vote in the November 1998 election, compared with just over 94% who reported that they voted in the 1996 election. More than 54% said they had contacted their elected representatives to express their outrage at the way the 105th Congress had handled veterans' issues. More than 98% of those who responded indicated that actions on veterans' issues could influence their decision to vote for or against their elected representatives in the next election. The DAV reported these results to Congress. Naturally, our survey provoked some reactions from members of Congress. The survey succeeded both in providing information on the views of veterans and in sending a clear message to members of Congress that veterans do watch their actions and that veterans often choose who they will vote for on the basis of those actions.

During the first half of 1998, Congress had accomplished very little on behalf of veterans. The congressional leadership had been preoccupied with a massive tax cut package. However, by early August, it had become apparent that the tax cut had no chance of passage in the 105th Congress. Critics labeled it the "do-nothing Congress." At the same time, Congress was immersed in the impeachment proceedings, and, for a time, most regular congressional business seemed to come to a halt. After our National Convention in late August, the national election was looming, and we were in the final days of the 105th Congress. There was still no final appropriations bill for VA. Throughout the year, the DAV had been pressing for adequate funding for VA programs. We had in March 1998, established a service through Western Union in which veterans and others could send a letter to their House and Senate members to urge increased funding for VA. By the time we discontinued the service at the end of September, more than 12,000 persons had used it, meaning that more than 36,000 letters had been sent. Congress was unable to complete work on the appropriations bill before the beginning of fiscal year (FY) 1999 on October 1, 1998. After continuing VA operations under funding in a continuing resolution, Congress passed the bill and the President signed it on the 21st of October. Fortunately, because of its inability to pass a budget resolution to map out spending and reductions in Government programs, Congress did not impose any changes in law to discontinue or reduce veterans' entitlements, other than the change in law on compensation for smoking-related illness earlier in the year. The appropriations bill included some modest increases for health care and other costs.

In addition to our efforts on the budget, we testified on several occasions and pressed for passage of several bills to improve veterans' programs in the final months of the 105th Congress. In July we testified before the House Veterans' Affairs Committee to provide our views on the handling of the claims of Persian Gulf war veterans by the Department of Veterans Affairs, and on the problem of hepatitis C virus and cerebral malaria among veterans. We informed the Committee of some of the unique problems associated with medical examinations and claims adjudication in cases where Persian Gulf veterans suffer from undiagnosed illnesses. We urged enactment of legislation to presume exposure to certain environmental hazardous toxins for any veteran who served in the war in the Persian Gulf. We called the Committee's

attention to DAV Resolution No. 214, adopted at our 1997 National Convention, to support compensation for illnesses circumstantially linked to the war in the Persian Gulf. We observed that VA needed to develop clear guidelines for screening and treating veterans with hepatitis C. We urged further studies on the relationship between cerebral malaria and neuropsychiatric problems.

Also in July 1998, the DAV testified in a hearing before the Subcommittee on Health of House Veterans' Affairs Committee concerning the issue of veterans' needs for specialized treatment and rehabilitation. We expressed concerns about delays and other problems related to furnishing prosthetics and sensory aids for veterans. We also made several recommendations to improve other specialized treatment and rehabilitation programs.

In August 1998, we testified before the House Veterans' Affairs Committee to offer our views on the current law and practices regarding court-ordered payments of alimony and child support out of veterans' benefits. We pointed to the inconsistent interpretation of the law among the states and the abuses that have resulted from the various courts' misinterpretation and abuses of the law. We urged an amendment to the law to remedy these problems and result in more just resolution of these matters.

In September, the DAV provided testimony before the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee about the challenges VA faces in providing quality health care to veterans. We expressed serious concerns about VA's future ability to meet veterans' health care needs within the constraints of the budget, and we identified areas where mechanisms of quality measurement and assurance are inadequate or lacking.

Through special efforts, we were able to get bills introduced in both the House and Senate to authorize the Disabled Veterans' LIFE Memorial Foundation to erect in Washington, D.C., a memorial honoring disabled veterans. Representatives Sam Johnson of Texas and John Murtha of Pennsylvania sponsored the bill in the House. Senators John McCain of Arizona, Max Cleland of Georgia, Paul Coverdell of Georgia, and Bob Kerrey of Nebraska sponsored the companion bill in the Senate. These bills have been reintroduced in the 106th Congress. The establishment of a memorial in Washington involves review and approval by several entities and is a slow and cumbersome process. We are continuing to negotiate through these procedures.

Before the 105th Congress adjourned in late October 1998, it did pass a major piece of veterans' legislation, the Veterans Programs Enhancement Act of 1998, Public Law 105-368. This law provided a cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) of 1.3% for compensation and dependency and indemnity compensation. This law made many various changes pertaining to Persian Gulf veterans' health care, veterans' education and employment, burial benefits, housing benefits, and medical care. Among its major provisions were the following:

'.authority for the National Academy of Sciences to determine if there is an association between illnesses suffered by veterans and their service in the Persian Gulf

'.extended authority for medical care for Persian Gulf veterans through December 31, 2001

'.increase in the special pension for Medal of Honor recipients from $400 to $600 a month

'.authority for VA to provide a memorial marker for certain members of the Armed Forces whose remains are unavailable for interment

'.authority for VA to provide medical treatment for cancer of the head or neck to veterans who were administered nasopharyngeal radium in service

'.extended authority to counsel and treat veterans for sexual trauma through December 31, 2001

'.authority to pay accelerated death benefits to terminally ill persons under the servicemembers' and veterans' group life insurance programs.

Separate provisions pertaining to Persian Gulf veterans were enacted in another bill. The Omnibus Consolidated and Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act, 1999, Public Law 105-277, included

authority for the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to establish a presumption of service connection for illnesses found by scientific studies to be associated with exposure to hazardous toxins in the Persian Gulf. This law also authorized studies to determine which veterans may have been exposed to toxins while serving in the Persian Gulf.

The 106th Congress convened on January 6, 1999. Of course, the new Congress opened with a clean slate, and its new business began immediately. A major part of that business was work on the budget for FY 2000. The congressional budget process formally began when the President submitted his proposed budget to Congress on February 1, 1999. The President's budget proposed no increase in the appropriation for veterans' health care, and would reduce medical care staffing by nearly 8,000. The budget did recommend 164 additional employees for the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) to decide compensation and pension claims.

For the 13th consecutive year, the DAV, along with AMVETS, VFW, and PVA, released the *Independent Budget* to coincide with release of the President's budget. According to the calculations of the *Independent Budget*, the President's appropriation request for health care is $3 billion below the level of funding needed just to continue services at their current level. Many in Congress cited the *Independent Budget* assessment in criticizing the Administration's budget as inadequate. In a February 11, 1999, hearing on the President's budget proposal before the House Veterans' Affairs Committee, the DAV raised concerns about the proposed health care funding and several other of the budget recommendations. The concerns about the budget request for health care were again raised in a February 24, 1999, hearing before the Subcommittee on Health of the House Veterans' Affairs Committee. During the hearings, and in various press releases and other statements, Subcommittee and full Committee members from both political parties leveled harsh criticism at the President's proposed budget for veterans' health care. Because the funding level recommended in the President's budget would require that VA substantially reduce medical care to veterans and perhaps even require closure of facilities, the DAV and the three other organizations involved in the *Independent Budget* met several times to coordinate a nationwide campaign to create awareness of the problem and energize the membership of the organizations.

In late February 1999, the DAV added a new service, through a link on our Internet web site at www.dav.org, by which DAV members and others could access current information on pending legislation of interest to veterans and send prepared statements to their elected representatives on important issues. From its initiation, this service was used to focus attention on the problems with the health care budget. Members could send prepared letters on the budget via electronic mail to their Senators and House member by following a few simple steps on their computers.

In the DAV's annual legislative presentation before the joint hearing of the House and Senate Veterans' Affairs Committees on March 17, 1999, National Commander Kistler focused much of his impassioned testimony on the dire consequences if the President's budget for health care is not increased to more realistic levels. Commander Kistler cited an internal memorandum from VA's Under Secretary for Health to the VA Secretary that indicated the President's budget put VA in a "serious and precarious" situation that could lead to the "very real prospect" of "mandatory employee furloughs, severe curtailments of services or elimination of programs, and possible unnecessary facility closures." The Commander related to the Committees the already unacceptable circumstances in which seriously ill veterans must wait months for clinic appointments. He called on Congress to provide adequate funding to avoid further degradation of the VA health care system.

On March 24, 1999, the DAV and several other veterans' organizations held a press conference on the grounds of the U.S. Capitol to protest the budget. Various members of Congress attended and spoke to reporters about the budget. In the budget resolution passed on March 24, 1999, at the urging of Senators Tim Johnson (D-S.D.) and Paul Wellstone (D-Minn.), the Senate voted 99-

0 to add $3 billion to the amount requested by the President for veterans' health care. The House budget resolution that followed on March 25, 1999, added only $1.1 billion. On April 14, 1999, the budget conferees from the House and Senate reconciled the difference by agreeing to add $1.7 billion for health care. The conference report was passed by both chambers on April 16. Although the budget resolution is to guide the amount appropriated, it is not law and can be deviated from, and the $1.7 billion was still deemed not enough. Our battle for adequate funding continued, therefore. We again called upon the membership to contact their elected representatives to urge that they support an increase of $3 billion for veterans' health care.

During this same time, the Government began to project large budget surpluses. That did not show signs of convincing Congress to provide the full measure of funding needed by VA, however. The DAV had already begun planning for nationwide Memorial Day rallies to protest the budget. The DAV and the other co-authors of the *Independent Budget* also began work on a video tape of the four National Commanders speaking about the crisis involving the budget. In May, the Appropriations subcommittees learned that their allocations for FY 2000 spending would be substantially reduced, about 10 to 12% below last year's level, thereby placing any increase in VA funding in serious jeopardy.

On Memorial Day weekend, the DAV held rallies at 129 locations, mostly at or near VA medical centers. For the most part, these rallies were well-attended and received local and some national media coverage. Members of Congress attended and spoke in support of increased funding at some of the rallies. The rallies caught the attention of many in Congress and the Administration. The DAV's Legislative and Communications staffs are continuing to work on other grassroots activities to continue the momentum created by the rallies. News from Capitol Hill has indicated that work on VA's appropriations bill and others was being delayed because of resistance among the subcommittee chairmen to the reduced spending ordered by the congressional leadership. Recently, the House leadership has increased pressure on the subcommittee chairmen to complete work on their bills. Indications now are that the VA-HUD Appropriations Subcommittee will mark up its bill on July 19, 1999. If the bill does not provide sufficient funding for VA, we will of course send out to the grassroots another call to action. As of this writing, visitors to our legislative service on the Internet have sent 4,879 messages to their congressional members concerning the budget. Each of you should view any vote on appropriations bills as a test of your members' commitment to veterans. We must keep up the pressure on this matter so that members of Congress will know that veterans are expecting them to do the right thing and are watching to see what they do when the time comes for them to stand up for the veterans.

Although the Legislative Staff has devoted a great deal of time and effort to the budget crises, we have also steadily pressed forward on a number of other legislative matters pertaining to veterans. We have testified before congressional committees on several issues and have been following congressional action on several bills.

On March 18, 1999, we appeared before the House Committee on Government Reform, Subcommittee on National Security, Veterans' Affairs and International Relations, to provide our views on critical issues facing VA. We informed the Subcommittee that, in many ways, VA is an agency in crises, and observed that insufficient funding must bear a major share of the blame for the current state of VA and veterans' programs. In addition to many of the challenges related to providing health care to an aging veterans population, we informed the Subcommittee of the unique problems of Persian Gulf veterans and the many difficulties related to claims processing.

During a March 25, 1999, hearing before the Subcommittee on Benefits of the House Veterans' Affairs Committee, we presented the DAV's views on the effectiveness of VA's administration of the benefits programs. As the major problem affecting the timely, efficient delivery of benefits, we pointed to VA's dismal quality

in claims processing and pointed to the large claims backlogs and long delays in claims processing that result from the high error rates and consequent necessity to rework many claims. We discussed the strengths and weaknesses in VA's plan to reform its claims processing system.

Both VA and Congress have been studying ways to change VA's delivery of health care to millions of veterans. This is in reaction to fundamental changes in, and rethinking of, health care delivery in the private sector. Beyond VA's necessity to stay abreast of changes in the methods of health care delivery to remain as efficient and effective as private institutions, VA is faced with a necessity to change its health care delivery to correspond to the changing needs of an aging veteran population. Much in the way VA administers health care is controlled by legal restraints. Therefore, Congress has approached changes to VA health care by considering changes to VA's legal authority to provide certain types of care. On May 19, 1999, we testified before the House Veterans' Affairs Committee, Subcommittee on Health, to offer our views on a committee draft bill that would make several changes in the law governing the provision of health care to veterans. This bill has been designated as the "Millennium Health Care Plan" and has since been introduced as H.R. 2116.

The aging of the veteran population has also placed an increased demand upon VA's National Cemetery Administration. The increased mortality rate of veterans, primarily World War II veterans, has prompted Congress to question whether VA is adequately prepared to meet the increased need for burial space in veterans' cemeteries. The DAV provided its assessment on this issue in testimony before the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations of the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs on May 20, 1999. We expressed particular concerns about VA's lack of a long-range plan to meet the future burial needs of veterans and the effects of budget restraints.

Also in May 1999, the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee invited the DAV to present its views on several bills before the Committee for consideration. In the May 20, 1999, hearing we testified in support of provisions in a draft bill that would authorize a COLA for compensation and DIC, authorize VA to expand the circumstances under which VA can furnish long-term care to veterans, enhance VA's authority to lease property, expand and extend the ending date for assistance to homeless veterans, authorize VA to provide specialized drug and alcohol treatment to active duty members, and make several other changes to programs for veterans.

We testified before the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs, Subcommittee on Benefits, on June 10, 1999, regarding several pending bills. With the exception of some provisions in H.R. 605 to change retirement provisions for members of the Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims (formerly the Court of Veterans Appeals), upon which we had no position, we testified in support of all the other bills as follows. H.R. 690 would establish presumptive service connection for bronchiolo-alveolar carcinoma developing in veterans exposed to radiation during service. H.R. 708 would reinstate an otherwise eligible surviving spouse's entitlement to medical care, educational assistance, and home loan guaranty when that surviving spouse has lost entitlement to these benefits because of remarriage and the disqualifying marriage is later terminated by death or divorce. H.R. 784 would establish entitlement to DIC for surviving spouses of certain former prisoners of war who were totally disabled at the time of death. H.R. 1214 would require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to establish a comprehensive quality assurance activity for the benefit programs. H.R. 1765 would authorize a COLA for compensation, DIC, and the clothing allowance.

On June 16, 1999, we again testified before the Subcommittee on Benefits of the House Veterans' Affairs Committee regarding several additional bills. H.R. 1247 would expedite establishment of a World War II memorial in Washington and authorize fundraising to pay for it. We advised the Subcommittee that we have no resolution on this issue but that we do not oppose passage of the bill. H.R. 1476 would direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to

establish national cemeteries in the three areas of the Nation determined to be most in need of a new veterans' cemetery. We advised the Subcommittee that, although we have no resolution on this matter, we had no objection to the bill. H.R. 1484 would authorize certain funding for assistance to homeless veterans. Consistent with a DAV resolution, we testified in support of H.R. 1484. H.R. 1603 would provide permanent eligibility for VA home loans to former members of the Selected Reserve. DAV had no position on this bill but did not object to its passage. H.R. 1663 would designate a memorial being built at Riverside National Cemetery as a national memorial to honor recipients of the Medal of Honor. Again, we had no resolution on this but indicated we were not opposed to its passage. H.R. 2040 would require a comprehensive study to asses the capacity and projected demand for burial space in the national cemeteries, as well as needed repairs at the cemeteries. We had no position on this bill because of the lack of a DAV resolution but did not oppose it.

In addition to these bills, several others have been introduced since the 106th Congress was convened. Some of the ones of greatest interest to disabled veterans are:

'.H.R. 44, H.R. 65, H.R. 303, H.R. 1764, and S. 789 providing for concurrent receipt of military retired pay and VA compensation under provisions which range from full concurrent receipt to special benefits for military retirees with service-connected disabilities rated from 70-100% (provisions for special pay for military retirees rated 70-100% disabled were also included in H.R. 1401, passed in the House, and S. 1059, passed in the Senate)

'.H.R. 71 and H.R. 80 would clarify that veterans' benefits are excluded from gross income for tax purposes

'.H.R. 135 would improve veterans' access to emergency medical care in non-VA medical facilities

'.H.R. 355 would provide that all persons retiring from the Armed Forces shall be entitled to all benefits they were promised when they entered the Armed Forces

'.H.R. 362 would extend commissary and exchange privileges to veterans rated 30% or more and their dependents; S. 183 would authorize 30% or more disabled former prisoners of war to use commissary and exchange stores; and H.R. 475 would extend use of the military health care system and commissary stores to the unremarried former spouse of a longevity retired servicemember when the spouse was married to the member for at least 17 years during the member's service

'.H.R. 430 and S. 329 would extend eligibility for medical care to veterans who have been awarded the Purple Heart

'.H.R. 652 would increase the burial allowance for certain veterans

'.H.R. 711 would exempt veterans' organizations from regulations prohibiting solicitation of contributions on postal property

'.H.R. 832 and S. 72 would restore benefits for tobacco-related disabilities

'.H.R. 1020 and S. 71 would establish a presumption of service connection for certain veterans suffering C-type hepatitis

'.H.R. 1160, H.R. 1387, and S. 1215 would authorize headstones or markers for marked graves of veterans

'.H.R. 1182 would make improvements to the Montgomery GI Bill by increasing benefits for members who reenlist and other enhancements

'.H.R. 1286 would expand the list of diseases presumed service connected based on radiation exposure (and S. 4 was amended to include provisions to expand the list of diseases presumed service connected on this basis)

'.H.R. 1432 would require VA to pay for long-term nursing care for 50% or more disabled veterans

'.H.R. 1509 and S. 311 would authorize the Disabled Veterans' Life Foundation to establish in Washington, D.C., a memorial honoring disabled veterans

'.H.R. 2116 would establish a program of extended care services for veterans and make other improvements in VA health care

'.S. 190 would authorize space-available air travel on

military aircraft for 100% service-connected disabled veterans

Various provisions from several of these bills, including provisions for compensation and DIC COLAs, have been combined in bills recently marked up by the House and Senate Veterans' Affairs Committees. These bills are H.R. 2280, passed in the House, and S. 1076.

At the time of finalization of this report, we were continuing our campaign to secure a higher level of funding in the health care appropriation. Indications are that all our efforts have created an awareness in Congress of the need to add substantially to the amount recommended in the President's budget. We are also optimistic of passage of a COLA for compensation and DIC and many of the improvements to veterans' programs included in H.R. 2280 and S. 1076. In addition, we are working with the staff of select members of the House and Senate to have a bill we drafted introduced. This bill would restore VA's duty to assist veterans in developing their claims, preclude the courts from imposing their own self-serving rules on the administrative claims process, require the Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims to reverse VA findings of fact when they are not consistent with the benefit-of-the-doubt rule, and prohibit the Court from allowing VA to limit the issues the Court will decide in veterans' appeals to the Court. Our efforts to achieve justice for disabled veterans continue.

As we go forth in our endeavors, we are not only in the final days of the 20th century, but we are also on the eve of a new millennium. As always, some things are likely to remain unchanged, while, at the same time, the future holds many uncertainties. Since the beginnings of recorded history, the contest between good and bad, justice and injustice, has manifested in wars. As Albert Einstein observed, "As long as there are sovereign nations possessing great power, war is inevitable." Our Nation has endured four major wars and a number of substantial other conflicts in this century alone. We, as disabled veterans, are a consequence of those struggles for social justice.

Veterans' contributions in the building of this Nation demonstrate the importance of the role of the veteran to our future existence, prosperity, and growth. In pressing our cause, we must often remind our Government that we owe our very existence as a nation to veterans. Our national security has always been based on the commitment of those who have served in our Armed Forces. This service has been at the expense of personal loss to those who have borne the burden. To serve, veterans relinquish personal freedoms and set aside personal lives and goals. They typically suffer loss of economic opportunity. Too often, this service has required the sacrifice of veterans' health, and in many instances, the supreme sacrifice, the loss of life itself. Not only our future strength and national prestige, but our continued existence depends on this willingness to serve. In return, the Nation must commit itself to care for its veterans. There exists, then, a mutual commitment, and the Government cannot be allowed to renege on its obligation to veterans, particularly those disabled as a result of their service. It is the DAV's mission to ensure that it does not. The necessity for our continued advocacy is likely to remain.

It is true that the future holds many uncertainties in our struggle for veterans' rights. That alone presents a formidable challenge because to win, we must begin to prepare for tomorrow's fight today. The only way we can address tomorrow's needs it to take advantage of today's opportunities. If we did not prepare for the future by acting in the present, we would almost certainly fail. Our vigilance and our forward-looking approach to the fulfillment of our mission have been the key to our past successes. Therefore, they will be essential to our future success. Remain mindful that, while we have many powerful enemies, our greatest enemy would be our own complacency if we allowed that to happen.

In the words of Horace Gregory, "Remember that old wars remain unfinished, That men fail, fall, and are replenished." Until all of America's wartime disabled veterans and their families have been cared for, our old wars remain unfinished. I look forward to working with all of you in the upcoming year to meet the challenges we are certain to face and to continue our unfinished toil.

COMMANDER KISTLER: I would now like to introduce Deputy National Service Director for Employment Tony Baskerville for the presentation of the Employment Awards. Tony. (Applause)

MR. ANTHONY BASKERVILLE: Good afternoon. Mr. Commander, it gives me a great sense of pride to present to you today the 1999 Employment Award winners.

Rodney T. Simmons of the Office of Employment Security of Fayetteville, North Carolina has been selected as the Outstanding Local Veterans Employment Representative for this year. Mr. Simmons has been cited as an exemplary individual who provides service in helping veterans in his community to find employment.

Mr. Simmons does his job so well that his wife decided that she would take him to Germany with her, but he's here represented by his local manager, Glenn C. McQueen, who will accept the awards for both Mr. Simmons and the manager in the office there in Fayetteville, North Carolina.

MR. GLENN C. McQUEEN: First of all, good afternoon. This is indeed a pleasure for me to be here today. And to the members of the Disabled Veterans of America, on behalf of the Fayetteville Joblink Career Center, the Employment Security Commission, all the veterans represented at the center as well as the staff, I would like to say thank you for this honor. It is indeed a pleasure to receive this award.

Fayetteville itself is a very unique area that takes pride in its own, and is dedicated to doing that. We plan to continue this effort to ensure that veterans in Cumberland County receive the best help that they can and require and so justly deserve. A special thanks to the commander of DAV Chapter 46 and his membership of Fayetteville.

On behalf of Mr. Rodney Simmons, I must say thank you. Mr. Simmons is not able to be here because of his relocation, but I will make sure that he gets this particular award. And I would wish you all a successful convention. Thank you. (Applause)

MR. BASKERVILLE: James D. Blank is a retired captain of the Air Force who joined the staff at the San Mateo County Office of the Employment Development Department back in 1993. Mr. Blank has exemplified himself as California's Outstanding Disabled Veterans Outreach Program participant. Mr. Blank is here today to speak to us, along with his office manager, Judy Martin, of the local office in San Mateo County Employment Office.

I think you'll find something very unique about Captain Blank. Please come on up. (Applause)

MR. JAMES D. BLANK: I want to take this opportunity to thank everyone, particularly from the Department of California and my post, Chapter 16. I'm past commander. But to get here is not just the things that I've accomplished there, but it's a team effort. And the staff in my office, especially our LVR, Cheryl Schafer, whose energies include our web page and putting together a local TV show -- we've come up with a real unique job fair this year for our veterans. We're going to do a live broadcast on the Internet. So come October, check out our web page, www.vecsamnet.org, and you'll see our employers locally and our veterans and their family members or spouses who are looking for opportunities for employment, because without our spouses' support, like mine, Lisa over here, we wouldn't be here.

But the last thing I'd like to impart with you today is that some of the inspiration that we have, the challenges to achieve these accomplishments come from the local veterans, the citizens in our community. And one of our brothers, Ira Davis, a 50 percenter who's a member of our local chapter who passed on earlier this year, was the chairman of our local committee. And I'd like to receive this award in his memory and to those challenges that he gave me. Thank you. (Applause)

MS. JUDY MARTIN: Good afternoon. On behalf of the State of California Employment Development Department, it is with great pleasure and honor that I accept this award. The State of California Employment Development Department will continue our support to ensure that veterans and especially disabled veterans receive priority in employment.

James Blank is an example of a Disabled Veteran Outreach

Program representative who goes beyond the call of duty in assisting disabled veterans to reach economic stability. Jim, it is indeed a privilege to work with you and to support you. Thank you.

And I also wish to thank each and every one of you for the good job that you have done. Thank you. (Applause)

MR. BASKERVILLE: Test and Experimental Services Company, TESCO, of Fort Hood, Texas is our Outstanding Large Employer of the Year. TESCO, which provides a variety of support to the Army Operations Field Test in Fort Hood, Texas and other locations nationwide, has an outstanding record for hiring veterans and disabled veterans. Veterans make up 54 percent of its work force. Currently, 36 percent of its work force of 135 full-time workers and more than 300 part-time employees, are veterans, and an additional 18 percent have service-connected disabilities.

It gives me great pleasure to bring forward today the representative of TESCO, Judy Brady, to accept the award on behalf of TESCO. (Applause)

MS. JUDY BRADY: Thank you. First of all, I would like to thank my boss, Brigadier-General Retired Grail Brookshire, who went on vacation and missed this. That's why he sent me instead. But I would like to accept this award on behalf of all of those veterans that have walked through our doors before today, the ones that we have employed today, and the ones that will walk through our doors tomorrow. Thank you. (Applause)

MR. BASKERVILLE: Outstanding Small Employer of the Year, Allied Security, works with the North Carolina Employment Security Commission. Disabled Veterans Outreach Program specialists, and local EVRs to seek out veterans for its staff. Currently 75 of its 270 employees are disabled veterans.

We don't have a representative here today with us from Allied, and I have asked that the department commander, Bobby Williams from the Department of North Carolina, please accept this award on their behalf. (Applause)

MR. ROBERT WILLIAMS: It's my pleasure to accept this award on behalf of Allied Security. This company, along with many other companies in North Carolina, puts veterans first, and that's where it needs to be. Thank you very much. (Applause)

MR. BASKERVILLE: Commander, that concludes the awards for the 1999 National Commander Employment Awards. (Applause) Thank you, sir.

COMMANDER KISTLER: Thank you, Tony, for a fine job.

At this time, I would like to bring back to the podium our national adjutant, Mr. Art Wilson, for a special announcement.

ADJUTANT WILSON: Thank you, Commander. You know, the DAV National Service Foundation helps to provide a lasting income to fund DAV programs and services. Gifts to the Foundation are used in support of goals and the mission of DAV, including providing support to the DAV National Service Program and other service initiatives.

Dick Cosgriff, a disabled World War II veteran, was originally elected president of the National Service Foundation over 20 years ago, 1976, and has served in that capacity ever since.

And during the 1990 National Convention, President Cosgriff expressed a desire to provide recognition to our National Service Officers for their support of the Foundation. I was then DAV's National Service director, and he asked me to develop a recognition plan for the Foundation. No small task, I might add.

So the National Service Department went to work, and the following year, at our National Convention in New Orleans, the Foundation adopted a plan to demonstrate its expression of gratitude to National Service Officers.

Thus was born the DAV NSO Pacesetting Performance Award for the National Service Foundation which is presented each year to the National Service Office leading its respective membership division in donations to the Service Foundation. Since the first awards were presented in 1991, the competitive spirit brought about by the awards has resulted in tremendous growth for the Foundation.

In that year, NSOs accounted for contributions to the Foundation totaling $198,000. In comparison, in 1998,

contributions attributed to NSOs exceeded $700,000. This phenomenal growth in contributions attributed to the NSOs, and the overall growth of the Foundation comes primarily from the concept envisioned by President Cosgriff.

During the March 1999 meeting of the National Service Foundation, the Board of Directors discussed at great length the many, many accomplishments of President Cosgriff. A motion was made to rename the Pacesetting Performance Awards to the Richard J. Cosgriff Pacesetting Performance Awards, in honor of the man who has devoted the past 53 years of his life to helping disabled veterans and their families. To no one's surprise, the motion passed unanimously.

Ladies and gentlemen, please join me now in a warm welcome to the president of the DAV National Service Foundation, Mr. Richard J. Cosgriff. Dick. (Standing ovation)

MR. RICHARD J. COSGRIFF: Art, I want to thank you for your remarks. I didn't expect them. I didn't know it was going to happen, but now I have to make a report on top of that. Thank you again, Art.

National Commander Kistler, National Adjutant Art Wilson, national officers, delegates and guests: It is with pride and great pleasure that I present the annual report of the DAV National Service Foundation.

The Foundation takes pride in helping DAV's national organization fund their programs of service to disabled veterans and their families. We've achieved great milestones over the past year. And if you're a Foundation supporter, I know you share in that pride, whether the support comes from your chapter, Auxiliary unit or dugout; also from your department, DAV Headquarters, and also the DAV Auxiliary Headquarters; and also from you as an individual.

I congratulate you and thank you very much. After all, what would the Foundation be without you, if you weren't there to help us, expressing your compassion for our nation's disabled veterans through our program? That's why I see the Foundation's program as your program. Our work embodies your concern for your fellow disabled veterans and their families, an expression of deep kindness at the core of your heart that you give what you give.

As the Foundation's president, I was assisted during the 1998-99 year by our distinguished board members: National Commander Andrew Kistler; the Foundation's vice-president, National Adjutant Art Wilson; Secretary-Treasurer Bill Leach; Directors Boni Maile, Gary Burns and Past National Commander Dennis Joyner; and National Finance Committee Chairman Wally Tyson. We appreciate their efforts in your behalf during the past year.

We also want to thank Charitable Programs Director Nancy O'Brien and her staff at National Headquarters. Their assistance, efficient, thorough and first rate, is very essential to the Foundation's success.

Buoyed by our record growth, the Foundation confronts the future with great confidence. On December 31st -- we operate, as you know, on a calendar year -- on December 31st, 1998, we reported total assets of $22,959,000, an 18 percent increase over the previous year.

Our assets showed the following trends: 36 percent increase in the General Fund, which stood at $10,500,000 at year's end; a 14 percent increase in the Perpetual Rehabilitation Fund, which ended the year with $10,300,000; and the Colorado Trust included more than $1.9 million. I also want to report that we have $193,794 in the NOTR Special Legislative Fund.

During the past year, the Foundation has done a great deal of work to enhance the services offered by the national organization to disabled veterans and their families. Two key factors of our ongoing work include office furniture and equipment for our National Service Offices, and financial support of medical studies to help establish medical testimony to support veterans' claims.

The DAV National Service Foundation does not engage in any public solicitation. Instead, we rely on the support of DAV and Auxiliary members, and the leaders of DAV and Auxiliary at every level have earned our deep appreciation. Individual chapters,

Auxiliary units, our departments, the Trench Rats, and dedicated DAV and Auxiliary members play a fundamental role. From the bottom of our hearts, we want to thank you.

The past year we saw an astounding 16 percent increase in the number of awards that we presented to our foremost donors, and these 223 awards included: Certificates of -- now, these are all awards for just this past year -- Certificates of Commitment to 20 chapters and two Auxiliary units that contributed at least $1 for each member in their ranks; Certificates of Commitment to 24 departments that gave at least $10 for each of their chapters in their department; and 145 Commendation Plaques to donors whose cumulative giving has topped $1,000 during the past year. And the Grand Memorial Honor Roll Plaque at DAV National Headquarters in Washington, D.C. honored an additional 32 donors, recognizing them for their total contributions of $5,000 or more.

In the year ended December 31, the DAV National Service Officers -- this is astounding -- were responsible for donations of $701,562, an increase of nearly $120,000 over the previous year. And I believe we owe the National Service Officers around the country a vote of thanks. (Applause)

At this time, I'd like to call on Director Ken Wolfe who will assist in recognizing the winning National Service Offices by category, based on the contributions received.

In Division I, from Togus, Maine, Gary Burns, Supervisor. (Applause)

MR. GARY BURNS: Thank you very much. A few minutes ago, the gentleman from California who received an Employment Award, mentioned the team, and I want to tell you we've got an excellent team up in Maine. In order to win this award every year, eight or nine years in a row, 1990, whenever exactly it started, you have to have a good team. I want to thank the department and the membership up there; National Service Office Secretary Kathy Hogdon, who compiles the figures every week and sends them out to Headquarters in Kentucky to Nancy O'Brien's office; Bruce Kaplan, NSO Bruce Kaplan, does an excellent job; Department Commander Norm Newell, and all the people up there that contribute to make this possible. Thank you. (Applause)

MR. COSGRIFF: You have to admit, that's the shortest Irish speech you'll ever hear. (Laughter)

From Division II, from Syracuse, New York, Harry Schultz, supervisor. (Applause)

MR. HAROLD E. SCHULTZ: Thank you very much. Boy, this is nice. The last plaque -- I'm going to have a spot on my wall now where that was. This is beautiful. I would like to take just a moment -- I've got about 12 pages here; it won't take me very long. I would like to thank you, Dick. It's an honor to receive this award named in your honor. Thank you for all you've done for the National Service Foundation.

I'd like to take this opportunity also to thank all those generous donors, many of whom are in this room today, and who without, and whose donations without, we could not have achieved the success that we've achieved.

I am grateful to accept this award for the fourth consecutive year on behalf of all those responsible. The award was made possible through the hard work of many people and dedication to the DAV: my associate, Paul Brewer; my secretary, Ann Stephanini; the staff of the DAV office in Buffalo, New York; Brian Austin, Paul Wockerman, Chaney Tupis, Bob Porter, Dave Ross and their support staff.

I'd also like to thank Nancy O'Brien and her staff for all the assistance throughout the past years. She's a great help, and her staff is a great help.

We all know that as a nonprofit organization the DAV relies on donations, and I encourage each and every one of you and your chapters and departments to continue contributing, and I challenge the other DAV National Service Officers to try to top me, because I plan on being back next year. Thank you. (Applause)

MR. COSGRIFF: Division III, from St. Louis, Missouri, Bill Beachum, supervisor. (Applause)

MR. WILLIAM BEACHUM: Thank you, Mr. Wolfe, Mr. Cosgriff.

It's indeed a pleasure that I accept this award on behalf of some very worthy people. We have an outstanding network of Service Officers throughout the State of Missouri, our department and chapter Service Officers, but also those generous donors throughout the State of Missouri and our Department of Missouri. This goes to them, their very diligent and vigorous efforts throughout this past year to make this award possible.

Most importantly, I'd like to mention our National Service Office staff in St. Louis: Assistant Supervisor Vic Price; our National Service Officers Ken Hale, Jack Bickerton, John Williams and our staff, our support staff in St. Louis, for making all of this possible. And I feel confident that we will be back next year also. Thank you very much. (Applause)

MR. COSGRIFF: Division IV, from Boston, Massachusetts, Dan Stack, supervisor.

MR. DANIEL P. STACK: Thank you very much, Mr. Cosgriff. I, too, would like to echo the words that have been said by my fellow supervisors previously. It takes a team effort in order to win this particular award. In Boston, I'm very fortunate that I have the backing of the department under the direction of Ed Finn, our department commander, and our department adjutant, Tom Daley.

But even more significantly, I have basically the backing of the National Service Officers, and I'd like to thank John Rogers, Bob Sinclair, Leroy Kennedy, Mac Carpenter and Tim Voner for their fine effort.

But the biggest thank you really goes out to the clientele. When you win an award like this, it goes to show that the National Service Officers have definitely done their job, and therefore, the members that we have represented want to thank us, and they thank us by contributing significantly to the National Service Foundation.

We're going to continue that great work so we continue to get this award. Thank you. (Applause)

MR. COSGRIFF: That last award brings back fond memories of an old-timer that you probably, some of you, I know a lot of you remember Joe Harold of Boston. Joe used to say -- poor Joe met an untimely death, as you know, from an accident. But Joe used to say, "We're going to keep our money in Massachusetts because we need it up there for our service and our disabled veterans." So, it was an honor to have you up here today. Thank you.

In Division V, from St. Petersburg, Florida, Andy Marshall, supervisor. (Applause)

MR. ANDY MARSHALL: Thank you, Dick. Commander Kistler, Adjutant Wilson: It's a pleasure to accept this award on behalf of the 23 employees, up to 23 employees, of the St. Petersburg National Service Office. We appreciate this award for the third consecutive year. Without the staff that I have, including National Service Officers and support staff, this would not be possible.

I'd also like to thank the leadership of the Department of Florida, our commander, Chuck Heiney, and our adjutant, Al Linden, for their support. We appreciate what you do for us.

And we have been recipients of the money donated to this Foundation. We have new furniture in our office in St. Petersburg, new computer equipment, new programs to keep up with technology to better serve you, and we appreciate it. Thank you. (Applause)

MR. COSGRIFF: I think at this time, we owe Ken Wolfe a round of applause for the job that he's done in restoring the confidence in the DAV Service Foundation and in the National Service Officers in the offices throughout the country. Thanks again, Ken. (Applause)

Ken doesn't want to make a remark at this time. Thank you again, Ken.

All funds remain invested in the Trust Division of the Cincinnati's Fifth Third Bank. Our annual audit was done by Deloitte and Touche, whose report will be incorporated in the official record of this convention. As a charitable organization, we have to report annually to the IRS.

The National Order of Trench Rats Fund shows a balance of $193,794. I am submitting to Commander Kistler at this time a

check in the amount of $7,887, the amount of interest earned on this gross figure during the past year. Commander, here's your check.

COMMANDER KISTLER: Thank you. I appreciate it. I would like to thank the Trench Rats for the check they just handed to me, and you saw the quick movement over to the other side of the table. But this just goes to show the spirit and the togetherness that the DAV shows for its support to our veterans, their families, their widows and their children. Thanks again very much.

MR. COSGRIFF: Thank you, Commander. (Applause)

As mentioned earlier, the Colorado Trust is an idea introduced three years ago by National Adjutant Art Wilson. In introducing that idea, Art will always be remembered in the annals of the Disabled American Veterans for coming up with this idea.

It is maintained as a separate fund within the National Service Foundation, and its use is restricted for programs of service to disabled veterans and their families. Expenditures for service projects are decided with advice from representatives of each of the DAV's 21 districts.

Since its inception, over $3.9 million has moved through the Colorado Trust. This includes a $500,000 grant from the Department of Colorado which got the Trust under way, and that was the initial grant that started this program, and Art came up with the idea. Thanks again, Art. Contributions from chapters and departments and members from across the nation helped maintain this fund. And matching funds -- and this is a big asset to you, the members and their families -- matching funds from the DAV's national organization, and appropriations from the National Service Foundation which supervises the trust.

We've made some well-chosen grants totaling in excess of $3,500,000 to chapters and departments. These have been used to support the Transportation and Hospital Service Coordinator Programs and other worthy service initiatives at the local and state levels.

Almost from the beginning, we've had chapters and departments with more funds than opportunities to serve. And we have had others -- and you know who you are -- without resources to fund important services they wanted and needed to provide.

Thanks to the Colorado Trust, we've reached some equilibrium. Wealthier chapters and departments enjoy an immense opportunity to make sure no disabled veteran loses out on DAV services which less fortunate chapters and departments would be unable to provide without the help from the Colorado Trust.

My thanks to the chapters, departments and members whose generosity enables the Trust to fulfill its mission. I also want to thank the national organization which has matched one for one every dollar that our chapters and departments have given to the Colorado Trust. And I think we owe Art Wilson a hand of applause for that. (Applause) Thank you very much.

Mr. Commander, this concludes my report. And as tradition would have it, the Foundation stands ready to accept contributions and donations from the convention floor. These donations will be placed in the Perpetual Rehabilitation Fund, the Trench Rats Fund or the Colorado Trust as so designated. Thank you very much, Commander.

I'd like to announce at this time two checks already, a check from Eduardo Posado for a hundred dollars -- thank you -- and Mike Dobmeier for a hundred dollars, and from the Disabled American Veterans Tri-County Chapter 67, $1250. That was to the Colorado Trust. And to the DAV National Service Foundation, another $1250. Thank you very much, Commander.

MR. ASTRO A. TORTOLANO: We want to thank you for the wonderful job you're doing. Al Tortolano, the department commander for the Number 1 state, California. We would like to be the first to present you with this small check to the DAV Colorado Trust on behalf of the Department of California in the amount of $50,000.

MR. COSGRIFF: Thank you; $50,000!

MEMBER: Richard, on behalf of the Disabled American Veterans in Fresno, California, I'd like to present this check to the Foundation for $2500.

MR. COSGRIFF: Thank you very much, Mike.

MR. GORDENCIO REXNO: Mr. Chairman, Gordencio Rexno Reno, disabled American, Long Beach Chapter, Department of California. I'd like to present a thousand dollar check for Service Foundation.

MR. COSGRIFF: Thank you very much.

MR. RENO: And also I would like to present another check from Alex Andreas on behalf of his son, Artemio Andreas.

MR. COSGRIFF: Thank you very much.

MR. HAROLD P. MENZEL: I'm Harold Menzel. I'm from the Department of Missouri, and on behalf of the Department of Missouri, I'd like to contribute to you $1,000 for the National Service Foundation and $1,000 for the Colorado Trust.

MR. COSGRIFF: Thank you very much, sir.

MR. RAY LANDRY: Ray Landry, commander, Machado Memorial Chapter 11. We are proud to be part of the Number 1 in the country for membership. Also we are proud to have Al Tortolano, past commander, now in National and now department commander, State of California. We'd like to present to you a check for $500.

MR. COSGRIFF: Thank you very much, Ray.

MR. DAVID C. GERKE: David Gerke, Chapter 2, Kansas City, Missouri. On behalf of the chapter, I have a check for $7,500, National Service, and a check for $7,500 for the Colorado Trust.

MR. COSGRIFF: Thank you very much, sir.

MR. EDWARD R. FINN: Ed Finn from the Department of Massachusetts, state commander; Tom Daley, state adjutant. Also the state where Art Wilson came from. We give the Trust $1,000.

MR. COSGRIFF: Thank you, sir.

MR. STEPHEN D. PERKINS: Steve Perkins, commander, Department of Virginia. Comrade Cosgriff, on behalf of the Department of Virginia, I'd like to present you with this check of $1,000 to the National Service Foundation.

MR. COSGRIFF: Thank you very much, sir.

MR. DAVID L. TANNENBAUM: Dave Tannenbaum, adjutant for the Department of Virginia. At this time, I'd like to make two presentations from chapters that were unable to be here. First is a $1,500 donation from Archer T. Gammon Chapter 19, Danville, Virginia, and a pledge for $300 from Prince William County Chapter 15.

MR. COSGRIFF: Thank you, sir.

MR. ROBERT MAXWELL: Bob Maxwell, Chapter 3, Department of Virginia. I'd like to present this $1,000 check for the Service Foundation. Also, I would like to pledge $500 from myself in honor of Ron Burke and Jim Clem.

MR. COSGRIFF: Thank you very much.

MR. EDWARD JOHNSON: Ed Johnson, department commander for Nevada. I want to invite each and every one of you to beautiful Reno next year for our National Convention, and I have two checks here, sir: one for a hundred dollars from Chapter 12, Henderson, Nevada, and one for a hundred dollars from the Department of Nevada.

MR. COSGRIFF: Thank you, sir.

MR. GREGORY R. HOLLOWAY: Greg Holloway, commander, Chapter 7, from the great state of Nebraska. I would like to give you a check, as we do every year, for a hundred dollars. And I would be remiss not to thank the National Service Foundation for supplying us with the greatest Service Officer in the nation, Dave Thomason.

MR. COSGRIFF: Thank you, sir. Thank you very much.

NEC 6TH DISTRICT THOMAS C. JOHNS: Tom Johns, treasurer, Omaha Beach Chapter 7, the great free state of Maryland, proudly present a thousand dollar check from the chapter to the Foundation.

MR. COSGRIFF: Thank you very much.

MR. JOHN F. ROETS: John Roets of Chapter 4, Wichita, Kansas, and I have a check for the Foundation for $500.

MR. COSGRIFF: Thank you, sir.

MR. CHRISTOPHER D. HARL: I'm Chris Harl from Arlington-Fairfax Chapter 10, Department of Virginia. I have a check for you from our Chapter 10 for a hundred dollars.

MR. COSGRIFF: Thank you very much.

MR. GEORGE D. PLETCHER, SR.: George Pletcher, department commander of Georgia. I have two checks, one for the Colorado

Trust, $500, and one for the National Service Foundation, $500.

MR. COSGRIFF: Thank you, sir. Thank you very much.

MR. MICHAEL J. GETTY: Getty, commander, Chapter 2, San Diego, California. We present a check to Mr. Cosgriff for $2,500. And we have a check from Disabled American Veterans, Escondido, Chapter 70, $500; and Mr. and Mrs. Getty, $100.

MR. COSGRIFF: Thank you very much, commander.

MR. AARON A. BURA: Aaron Bura, commander, Department of Kansas. We would like to present you a $500 check for the National Service Foundation.

MR. COSGRIFF: Thank you very much, sir.

MR. HARVEY E. MARKEN: Harvey Marken, commander, Chapter 11, Salina, Kansas. I'd like to present you with a thousand dollar check for National Service Foundation.

MR. COSGRIFF: Harvey, thank you very much.

MR. CHARLES E. HEINEY: Chuck Heiney. I have three checks here from the Department of Florida. I have one for the Perpetual Fund for a hundred dollars. I have one from Largo, Chapter 143, for $200. And here's $25,000 for the Colorado Trust.

MR. COSGRIFF: Thank you, sir. Thank you very much.

MR. CLEM D. CAFFEY: Clem Caffey from Louisiana Chapter 30, the largest and the most active in the state. I have three donations, one in the memory of Jesse Camp and his wife, and then one from in memory James Bryson, and then from our chapter, we donate to the National Fund $3,000.

MR. COSGRIFF: Thank you very much, Clem. Appreciate it.

MR. DAVID T. MAY: Dave May, commander of the Blind Veterans National Chapter. I'd like to present you a check from the Blind Veterans National Chapter for $100.

MR. COSGRIFF: Dave, thank you.

MR. JACK W. REDELL: Jack Redell, commander, Louisiana. I have a $500 check for you, and I have $5,000 for your Trust Fund.

MR. COSGRIFF: Jack, thank you.

MR. JACOB N. STAFFORD: Jacob Stafford, Wyoming, McDowell County Chapter 56, West Virginia Oceana, $290, a dollar plus for each member.

MR. COSGRIFF: Thank you, sir.

NEC 14TH DISTRICT DALE D. HAFER: I'm Dale Hafer with the 14th District. We have a collection that we took in honor of Hiram Fuller and Robert Hannah for the PRF Fund. Thank you.

MR. COSGRIFF: Thank you very much, sir.

MR. RICHARD L. FEAR: Richard Fear, senior vice-commander, great state of Wisconsin. I'd like to present a check to the National Service Foundation for $1500, sir.

MR. COSGRIFF: Dick, thank you very much.

MEMBER: On behalf of Chapter 19, West Allis, Wisconsin, we give a check for $200 for Milwaukee Service Officers, and on behalf of my husband and myself to the National Service Foundation -- who reopened our claims two years ago, and I was increased and my husband became a hundred percent in June -- we give you a thousand dollars.

MR. COSGRIFF: Thank you very much.

MR. GEORGE M. ISDALE, JR.: George Isdale, Department of Illinois. I have two checks, one for the National Service Foundation for a thousand dollars, and one for the Colorado Trust for $5,000.

MR. COSGRIFF: Thank you very much.

MR. RAYMOND P. SELKEN: Hi! I'm Ray Selken. I'm the senior vice-commander and adjutant of the Portland DAV Chapter Number 1, the largest bingo hall in the State of Oregon, and we are turning over our per capita we received to the National Service Foundation in the amount of $4,057. Thank you.

MR. COSGRIFF: Thank you very much.

MR. CHARLES J. ELLIS: Charles Ellis. I am outgoing Golden Rodent of the Royal Colony, and I present this check for $500 to the Service Foundation.

MR. COSGRIFF: Thank you, sir.

MR. CRAIG STRAUSS: On behalf of the National Service Officers, the National Guild of Attorneys in Fact would like to present to you two checks totaling $1700 for the National Service

Foundation, and another check for the Colorado Trust for $1700.

MR. COSGRIFF: Thank you.

MR. ROGELIO EVANGELISTA: Roger Evangelista. On behalf of the Department of Hawaii, we pledge $500 to the National Service Foundation and $500 to the Colorado Trust, and from Chapter Number 2, Maui, we pledge a hundred dollars to the National Service Foundation.

MR. COSGRIFF: Thank you, sir.

MR. JIM D. ROOS: Jim D. Roos from Houston, Texas. Please accept this check for $2500 from San Jacinto Chapter 1 in the memory of Bob Pugh, a former member of our chapter, and he was the oldest living member before he died, National Service Officer.

MR. COSGRIFF: Jim, thank you.

MRS. CAROLINE D. MASON: Hello! Caroline Mason, senior vice-commander, Department of Colorado, presents a check from the department for $5,000 to the Colorado Trust. Thank you.

MR. COSGRIFF: That's great. Colorado does a great job for us. Thank you.

MR. BOBBY G. WILLIAMS: Bobby Williams, Department of North Carolina, $1,000 to the Service Foundation.

MR. COSGRIFF: Thank you very much.

MR. RALPH H. SCHROEDER: Ralph Schroeder, senior vice-commander, Chapter 1, St. Louis, Missouri. I sent the check to Cincinnati for $2,000. They have it.

MR. COSGRIFF: Thank you, Ralph.

MR. DON POULIOT: Dick, it's a pleasure to give you a little bit of personal money. I've been saving aluminum cans, and as a result, believe it or not, I have been giving a hundred dollars every year for the last 15 years, a personal check, because it's a lot of fun up here watching Dick do his thing. However, as of today, the hundred dollars makes $1900 that I've donated personally.

MR. COSGRIFF: Thank you.

MR. CLAUDE A. NELSON: Claude Nelson, commander of the Department of New York. I have a check here for the Service Foundation for $1,000, and I also have a check for $25,000 for the Colorado Trust. The great empire state is proud to do this. Thank you.

MR. COSGRIFF: Thank you very much.

MEMBER: From the 3rd District, commander also, the chapter commander of Louisville Chapter 6, Louisville, Kentucky. We would like from our chapter to present you $500 to the National Service Foundation.

MR. COSGRIFF: Thank you very much, sir. Appreciate it.

MR. WAYNE W. BLUE: Wayne Blue, department commander from the great state of Minnesota. I have a check here for the Perpetual Rehab for $2500, to the Charitable Trust for $500. I'm also the adjutant for the Minneapolis Chapter 1. Here's a check for $5,000 for the National Service Foundation and $5,000 to the Charitable Trust. And that's $2 for every member in Minneapolis Chapter 1. And that brings us up to $112,000 we've donated to the Foundation so far.

MR. COSGRIFF: Wayne, thank you. A total of $15,000.

MR. LLEWELLYN SNOWBECK: Lew Snowbeck, Minneapolis Number 1. Here's a hundred dollars for the Foundation, a hundred dollars for the Charitable Trust.

MR. COSGRIFF: Thank you very much.

MR. NORMAN L. NEWELL: Norm Newell, Department of Maine. I'd like to present you with a National Service Foundation check for $500 in memory of Chris Ann Burns.

MR. COSGRIFF: Thank you, Norman.

MEMBER: I've forgotten my checkbook, but please accept this IOU for $400, which will bring my total to $1,000 for the Service Foundation.

MR. COSGRIFF: Thank you. We won't let you forget, don't worry.

MEMBER: On behalf of Evelyn Harrison, Department of Delaware, $100.

MR. COSGRIFF: Thank you very much.

MR. FRANCIS E. McLASKEY: Francis McLaskey from Chapter 10,

Cedar Rapids, $200 for the Colorado Trust Fund.

MR. COSGRIFF: Thank you, Francis.

MR. DONALD J. McLEAN, SR.: Don McLean, commander, Chapter 114, Livonia, Michigan, $100 for the National Fund.

MR. COSGRIFF: Thank you, sir.

MR. ROBERT A. NICODEMUS: Bob Nicodemus, Department of Vermont commander. I'd like to present you with a check for $1,000 for the National Service Foundation.

MR. COSGRIFF: Thank you again.

MR. GILBERT G. BROWN: Gil Brown, commander, Greater Daytona Chapter 84. To the National Service Foundation a check in the amount of $1,250.

MR. COSGRIFF: Thank you, sir.

MR. JAMES L. BURLESON: Jim Burleson, department commander of Mississippi, a check for $1,000 to the National Service Foundation in honor of our recently deceased department adjutant, Mr. John Bell.

MR. COSGRIFF: Thank you very much, Jim.

MR. GERALD E. HUMPHRIES: Gerald E. Humphries, Chapter 11, Jackson, Mississippi, Department of Mississippi. I wish to present this donation from our chapter for $1,000 in honor of John A. Bell, our department adjutant who passed. He was a dear friend of mine.

MR. COSGRIFF: Thank you much, Gerry.

MR. VICTOR J. LAMPE: Vic Lampe, commander of Cincinnati Chapter Number 1, the mother chapter of this great organization, the DAV. I've got a check here for $5,000 in honor of Judge Robert Marx, the first national commander and the founder of this organization. And I also want to say that I heard you bought furniture for some NSOs. This past year, we spent over $10,000 in supplying new furniture for our NSO Office in Cincinnati, Ohio.

MR. COSGRIFF: I certainly appreciate it, I want to assure you.

MR. PHILIP J. CAMPAGNA: Phil Campagna, commander for the State of Maryland, and I'm pleased to donate for the department a thousand dollars to the National Service Foundation.

MR. COSGRIFF: Thank you very much, Phil.

MR. RONALD J. LEADER: Ron Leader, Tri-Cities Chapter 95, California. I have the chapter's check for $300. And I also have a check where my wife and I talked it over -- we decided to pass on going to another amusement park while we're here -- so this is $200 for the food we would have bought had we gone.

MR. COSGRIFF: Thank you, Ron.

MR. GEORGE MALOOF: A donation from George Maloof. The National Service Officers are to be commended for the work they're doing. I've worn out four cars going over 600,000 miles transporting veterans. I believe you're doing a tremendous job, and I'll do whatever I can for you. George Maloof, Chapter 18, Andover, Mass.

MR. COSGRIFF: The Service Officers are doing a great job. Thank you.

MR. MULLER: You are, too.

MR. R. D. SAMUELSON: Dick Samuelson, Chapter 22, Colorado. I have a thousand dollars here for the National Service Foundation and a thousand dollars, Colorado Trust.

MR. COSGRIFF: Thank you, sir.

MR. JOHN H. DELAWRENCE: I'm Commander John Delawrence of Chapter Number 7 from the great state of Virginia. I'd like to say at this time we previously donated $500 to the National Service Foundation, so now we'll give you a check for a $100 to the Charitable Trust.

MR. COSGRIFF: John, thank you very much.

MR. DONALD HOUSKA: Don Houska, senior vice-commander, Chapter 20, Des Moines, Iowa, a check for $1,000 for the National Service Foundation.

MR. COSGRIFF: Thank you, sir.

MR. WILLIAM H. HUNTER: I'm William Hunter, Department of Arkansas commander, and on behalf of the department, I have pleasure to present to you this $1,000 donation for the National Service Foundation.

MR. COSGRIFF: Thank you, Bill.

MR. RONALD H. TUMAN: Ron Tuman, Department of Pennsylvania. Sorry, Dick, my adjutant's not here with the check. We sent this facsimile for a thousand dollars, National Service Foundation.

MR. COSGRIFF: We won't let you forget. Okay, Ron. Thank you.

MR. HARRY MCDONALD: Dick, because I believe in service, and my wife believes in service, there's a donation from myself, my wife, Marilyn, our three children, Terry, Michael and Tracy, a thousand dollars.

MR. COSGRIFF: Commander, thank you very much.

We'll have some figures for you in a minute as far as the totals. Oh, we didn't bring an adding machine, so we'll have to wait till tomorrow to make the announcement. Thank you again very much. (Applause) We'll make the announcement as soon as we get the figure.

COMMANDER KISTLER: Mr. Cosgriff, as usual, thank you very much for the fine work you're doing. (Applause)

I would now ask for a motion to adopt Mr. Cosgriff's report. Mike Number 3.

MR. DELBERT J. FOSTER, JR.: Delbert Foster, 14th District, Department of South Dakota, makes a motion to accept the report.

COMMANDER KISTLER: Thank you. Mike 3, go ahead.

MR. SPALDING: Russ Spalding, Chapter 20, Michigan, supports the motion.

COMMANDER KISTLER: Seconds the motion. Thank you. Is there a question on the motion? All in favor, Aye; opposed. The Ayes have it. The motion is carried.

Deloitte & Touche LLP

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION

Financial Statements for the Years Ended December 31, 1998 and 1997 and Independent Auditors' Report

Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu International

Deloitte & Touche

Deloitte & Touche LLP
250 East Fifth Street
P.O. Box 5340
Cincinnati, Ohio 45201-5340
Telephone: (513) 784-7100

INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT

Board of Directors,
Disabled American Veterans
National Service Foundation:

We have audited the accompanying statements of financial position of the Disabled American Veterans National Service Foundation (the "Foundation") as of December 31, 1998 and 1997 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 generally accepted auditing standards. 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 examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. An audit also includes 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, 1998 and 1997, and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the years then ended in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles.

Deloitte & Touche LLP

February 12, 1999

Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION

STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION
DECEMBER 31, 1998 AND 1997

	1998	1997
ASSETS		
CASH, (including $748,382 and $235,765 relating to The Colorado Trust in 1998 and 1997, respectively) (Note 2)	$ 1,173,257	$ 288,295
INTEREST AND DIVIDENDS RECEIVABLE (Note 2)	119,782	139,200
PREPAID EXPENSES	23,707	14,253
INVESTMENTS - Marketable securities (including $1,196,071 and $2,285,810 relating to The Colorado Trust in 1998 and 1997, respectively) (Note 2)	21,728,388	19,139,639
TOTAL	$23,045,134	$19,581,387
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		
LIABILITIES:		
Due to DAV (Note 3)	$ 68,500	$ 42,578
Due to DAV legislative program (Note 2)	7,887	8,914
Other liabilities	10,250	10,116
Total liabilities	86,637	61,608
NET ASSETS (Note 2):		
Unrestricted net assets:		
General	6,472,633	4,693,089
The Colorado Trust	1,000,000	1,000,000
Perpetual Rehabilitation Fund	10,325,967	9,086,403
Accumulated unrealized appreciation of investments	4,033,703	3,019,924
Total unrestricted net assets	21,832,303	17,799,416
Temporarily restricted net assets - The Colorado Trust	932,400	1,529,069
Permanently restricted net assets - National Order of Trench Rats		
DAV Legislative Fund	193,794	191,294
Total net assets	22,958,497	19,519,779
TOTAL	$23,045,134	$19,581,387

See notes to financial statements.

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS
NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION

STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 1998 AND 1997

	1998				1997			
	General, The Colorado Trust, Perpetual Rehabilitation Fund (Unrestricted)	The Colorado Trust (Temporarily Restricted)	National Order of Trench Rats (Permanently Restricted)	Total	General, The Colorado Trust, Perpetual Rehabilitation Fund (Unrestricted)	The Colorado Trust (Temporarily Restricted)	National Order of Trench Rats (Permanently Restricted)	Total
PUBLIC SUPPORT AND REVENUES (Notes 2,3):								
Public support - contributions and bequests	$ 1,239,564	$ 1,128,251	$ 2,500	$ 2,370,315	$ 810,083	$ 1,069,575	$ 2,500	$ 1,882,158
Net assets released from restrictions (Note 4)	1,795,842	(1,795,842)		-	721,567	(721,567)		
Revenues:								
Interest and dividend income	620,705	70,922		691,627	610,955	55,991		666,946
Gain on sale of investment securities	1,484,450			1,484,450	1,321,244			1,321,244
Total revenues	2,105,155	70,922		2,176,077	1,932,199	55,991		1,988,190
Total public support and revenues	5,140,561	(596,669)	2,500	4,546,392	3,463,849	403,999	2,500	3,870,348
EXPENSES:								
Program:								
Grants in accordance with The Colorado Trust (Note 2)	1,795,842			1,795,842	721,567			721,567
Transfers to DAV National Headquarters (Note 1)	149,587			149,587	85,514			85,514
Total program expenses	1,945,429			1,945,429	807,081			807,081
Supporting services	176,024			176,024	155,303			155,303
Total expenses	2,121,453			2,121,453	962,384			962,384
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS BEFORE UNREALIZED APPRECIATION OF INVESTMENTS	3,019,108	(596,669)	2,500	2,424,939	2,501,465	403,999	2,500	2,907,964
INCREASE IN UNREALIZED APPRECIATION OF INVESTMENTS	1,013,779			1,013,779	1,092,921			1,092,921
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS AFTER UNREALIZED APPRECIATION OF INVESTMENTS	4,032,887	(596,669)	2,500	3,438,718	3,594,386	403,999	2,500	4,000,885
NET ASSETS, Beginning of year	17,799,416	1,529,069	191,294	19,519,779	14,205,030	1,125,070	188,794	15,518,894
NET ASSETS, End of year	$ 21,832,303	$ 932,400	$ 193,794	$ 22,958,497	$ 17,799,416	$ 1,529,069	$ 191,294	$ 19,519,779

See notes to financial statements.

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION

STATEMENTS OF FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES FOR THE YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 1998 AND 1997

	1998	1997
ADMINISTRATIVE CHARGES (Note 3)	$ 111,051	$ 92,555
TRAVEL AND RELATED EXPENSES	15,049	11,609
INSURANCE	3,532	3,503
PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	3,700	3,550
AWARDS	729	4,594
PRINTING, POSTAGE AND SUPPLIES	10,457	11,720
REGISTRATION FEES	60	65
INVESTMENT TRUSTEE FEES	31,097	27,189
MISCELLANEOUS	349	518
TOTAL SUPPORTING SERVICES	$ 176,024	$ 155,303

See notes to financial statements.

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION

STATEMENTS OF CASH FLOWS
YEARS ENDING DECEMBER 31, 1998 AND 1997

	1998	1997
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES:		
Change in unrestricted and temporarily restricted net assets	$ 3,436,218	$ 3,998,385
Adjustments to reconcile change in unrestricted and temporarily restricted net assets to net cash provided by operating activities:		
Increase in unrealized appreciation on investments	(1,013,779)	(1,092,921)
Gain on sale of investment securities	(1,484,450)	(1,321,244)
Changes in operating assets and liabilities:		
Interest and dividends receivable	19,418	(37,230)
Contribution receivable		583,650
Prepaid expenses	(9,454)	308,579
Due to DAV	25,922	(4,135)
Due to DAV legislative program	(1,027)	(1,130)
Other	134	(9,765)
Net cash provided by operating activities	972,982	2,424,189
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES:		
Purchases of investments	(14,999,373)	(16,581,949)
Proceeds from sale of investments	14,908,853	14,380,056
Net cash used by investing activities	(90,520)	(2,201,893)
CASH FLOW FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES:		
Contributions of permanently restricted assets	2,500	2,500
NET INCREASE IN CASH	884,962	224,796
CASH, Beginning of year	288,295	63,499
CASH, End of year	$ 1,173,257	$ 288,295

See notes to financial statements.

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS NATIONAL SERVICE FOUNDATION

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 1998 AND 1997

1. NATURE OF OPERATIONS

The 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 Disabled American Veterans, 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.

Contributions - Contributions received are recorded as unrestricted, temporarily restricted or permanently restricted support depending on the existence and nature of any donor restrictions. The Foundation recognizes contributions with donor imposed restrictions that are met in the same period as unrestricted contributions.

Unrestricted Net Assets - All contributions and bequests to the Foundation are designated by the Board of Directors (the "Board") for permanent investment in the Perpetual Rehabilitation Fund as a reserve for future needs. Investment income derived from these invested amounts is used for current operations of the Foundation or appropriated for use by DAV. Donated assets are recorded at their fair market value at the time of the donation. The Board designated $1,000,000 for The Colorado Trust, which is included in unrestricted net assets.

Temporarily Restricted Net Assets - In 1996, The Colorado Trust was established to provide funds for service programs of needy DAV state departments and local chapters. Funds contributed to The Colorado Trust are matched 100% by DAV, up to a maximum of $3,000,000 per year. In 1998 and 1997, respectively, The Colorado Trust received $178,251 and $194,575 in contributions which were matched by DAV. In 1998 and 1997, DAV made an additional contribution of $321,749 and $305,425, respectively, to The Colorado Trust.

Permanently Restricted Net Assets - Contributions by the National Order of Trench Rats for the DAV Legislative Program are permanently restricted. Investment income of $7,887 and $8,914, in 1998 and 1997, respectively, from the National Order of Trench Rats DAV Legislative Fund are transferred to DAV and are temporarily restricted for use by DAV's Legislative Program.

Investments in Securities – Investments, which consist of equity securities, corporate bonds and U.S. Treasury Notes, are recorded at fair or market value. The fair value of the Foundation's investments is determined based on the quoted market price 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.

The cost and market value of investments in securities and the net unrealized gains at December 31 are summarized below:

1998	Cost	Market	Unrealized Gain
Cash Equivalents	$ 1,895,822	$ 1,895,822	
Corporate Bonds	4,916,277	4,995,698	$ 79,421
U.S. Treasury Notes	3,806,109	3,939,633	133,524
Common Stocks	6,407,344	10,113,060	3,705,716
Common Stock Funds	669,133	784,175	115,042
Total	$17,694,685	$21,728,388	$4,033,703
1997			
Cash Equivalents	$ 2,459,226	$ 2,459,226	
Corporate Bonds	3,237,694	3,269,520	$ 31,826
U.S. Treasury Notes	4,261,853	4,294,958	33,105
Common Stocks	5,510,942	8,459,453	2,948,511
Common Stock Funds	650,000	656,482	6,482
Total	$16,119,715	$19,139,639	$3,019,924

Income Taxes - As a not-for-profit service organization, the Foundation has been approved as exempt from federal income taxes as a 501(c)4 organization. Contributions made to the Foundation are tax deductible by the contributor.

Use of Estimates - The preparation of the financial statements in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles 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. RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS

The DAV provides the Foundation with the use of DAV personnel, facilities and equipment. DAV charged the Foundation $111,051 and $92,555 in 1998 and 1997, respectively, for personnel services.

At December 31, 1998 and 1997, the Foundation owed $68,500 and $42,578, respectively, for personnel services. Facilities and equipment are provided by the DAV at no charge.

In 1998 and 1997, respectively, the DAV Charitable Service Trust made a $450,000 and a $375,000 contribution to The Colorado Trust for the DAV National Transportation Van Grants administered through The Colorado Trust.

As discussed in Note 2, DAV contributed $500,000 to The Colorado Trust in both 1998 and 1997.

In performing the duties of their positions, the DAV's National Commander and National Adjutant serve on the Board of the Foundation. The DAV National Finance Committee Chairman serves as an ex officio member of the Board.

4. NET ASSETS RELEASED FROM RESTRICTIONS

Net assets are released from restrictions by incurring expenses to satisfy the restricted purposes or by occurrence of other events specified by donors and are summarized as follows:

	December 31,	
	1998	1997
Grants to DAV chapters and departments in accordance with The Colorado Trust:		
Hospital Service Coordinator Program	$ 228,060	$384,204
National Transporation Network Van Program	1,493,784	327,119
Grants	64,000	10,000
Miscellaneous expenses	9,998	244
Total	$1,795,842	$721,567

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COMMANDER KISTLER: Our next guest is someone who really needs no introduction. One of the disability movement's most articulate leaders, Chad Colley lost both legs and an arm in Vietnam combat. Having served as DAV national commander in 1984-85, he chairs two committees vital to the DAV's mission today.

As chair of the DAV Charitable Service Trust, he heads the DAV's efforts to seek funding from such workplace giving programs as the Combined Federal Campaign and the United Way.

Having won several medals in national and international events for severely disabled skiers, including two gold medals at the 1994 Paralympics in Lillihammer, Norway, Mr. Colley also chairs the DAV Committee for the National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic, one of the most extraordinary rehabilitation programs ever organized for the nation's most profoundly disabled veterans.

In 1970, the DAV honored Mr. Colley as National Outstanding Disabled Veteran of the Year, and in 1986, President Ronald Reagan named him Handicapped American of the Year.

Ladies and gentlemen, please give a warm welcome to our friend and comrade, Mr. Chad Colley. (Standing ovation)

MR. CHAD COLLEY: Commander Kistler, Adjutant Wilson, national officers, comrades and guests: It is with honor that I present, for the very first time, the annual report of the DAV Charitable Service Trust. Not just the first time I've ever given it; the first time it's ever been done in our 13-year history.

The DAV Charitable Service Trust was founded in 1986 to respond to the rapidly growing needs of disabled veterans and their families in the wake of huge government spending cuts. As you recall, during that period, certain VA programs and those of other federal agencies and departments were under spending constraints as a result of the mounting federal deficit.

The DAV, ever true to our charter, refused to stand on the sidelines as the efforts to cut veterans spending increased each year, and the political climate of neglect and forgetfulness became more callous.

Additionally, the Trust was also created to assist donors who wish to support the DAV through special gift arrangements, such as pledges through the Combined Federal Campaign, the United Way, state and corporate workplace campaigns, and through employee matching gifts. We are extremely pleased to provide this vehicle to our friends and our supporters.

The beneficiaries of the Charitable Service Trust are disabled veterans who rely on a variety of service programs. not only those of the DAV and the VA, but of other public and private organizations.

The DAV Charitable Service Trust's goal is primarily to address the real and continuing needs of disabled veterans. Among those, but certainly not totally inclusive of the kinds of things we do, are to provide shelter and other assistance to homeless veterans. We meet the special needs of veterans suffering from extraordinary disabilities such as blindness and amputation. We support physical and psychological rehabilitation projects which help some of our nation's most profoundly disabled veterans.

The scope of the Charitable Service Trust also extends to help our families, the families of disabled veterans. Where our government has made promises it did not keep, the DAV fulfills those promises to the fullest extent possible.

The Trust, like you, never forgets our mission is to improve the lives of disabled veterans and their families.

In 1988, the Trust received pledges totaling $729,000 from workplace campaigns. But the economic declines in the early '90s caused the annual workplace campaigns to fall from $603,000 in 1990 to $366,000, our low point, in 1993.

But new DAV initiatives and the outstanding work of our National Service Officers began to turn things around. The workplace campaign donations grew from 473,000 in 1994 to a record fifth increase year in a row of $865,000 in 1998.

The Charitable Service Trust is very proud of this record and the hard work by so many in the DAV, including our National Service Officers. But listen. How many times have you ever heard it said, "The tide of the battle was turned because of the unflagging

efforts of our NSOs"? And so it was this time.

Let me tell you how they did it. Each year, our NSOs are instrumental in developing new contributors to the Charitable Service Trust. The NSOs, among all their other jobs, attend CFC kickoffs and fairs to acquaint federal employees and civilian government workers with the benefits of this Trust. They tell them who we are, and they tell them what we do.

And they accomplish this by using new marketing materials developed each fall to promote the Trust and by their own passion and by their own experience. Bulletin board posters, easel displays, and free give-away coasters and other materials that we have provided that deliver the message of the DAV Charitable Service Trust are effective.

During 1998, I'm proud to tell you that the Trust provided $450,000 to the DAV National Transportation Network Van Grant Program to ensure that veterans have transportation to VA medical facilities. We granted more than $77,500 to provide food and shelter to homeless veterans; in addition, medical, vision and dental aids as well. We awarded $45,000 to support significant therapy initiatives. We designated $15,000 to help a volunteer support program specifically targeted at elderly veterans. And we spent more than $23,000 to meet the special needs of blinded veterans and those who are amputees.

As you can see, most of our funds go to help homeless, sick and disabled veterans, but there are some other programs I'd like to tell you about, programs that distinguish and show the pride of the DAV.

One significant project the Trust has supported involves the Association of Birth Defect Children. The Trust assisted in their drive to gather important data on children of veterans exposed to Agent Orange in Vietnam, as well as other environmental hazards in the Persian Gulf and elsewhere.

The Trust helped fund research conducted by the Prosthetics Research Foundation which resulted in the development of the "Seattle knee," a new prosthetic device that is now worn by over 55,000 veterans.

The Trust provided funds for a study conducted by the Portland State University Foundation that assisted in determining whether low levels of radiation produced long-term health effects among exposed veterans. This research could have far-reaching consequences in addressing the issue of VA disability compensation for veterans who suffer certain cancers and other conditions.

The Trust continues its commitment to Outward Bound programs which offer a unique opportunity for veterans suffering from post-traumatic stress order. Now I'd like to take a moment of personal privilege and tell you about exactly how this works. Once you have undergone a significant physical disability, there's a real down-side to that. Many people are able to get over that, and some linger for years trying to deal with this.

Ten years or so ago, I was asked to go and observe an Outward Bound training programs specifically for veterans who were coming out of PTSD clinics, substance abuse clinics, guys that just still had that black cloud of their experience in Vietnam disability over them. One of the ideas of the Outward Bound program is to return these men to an opportunity to where they remember themselves in their youth, the teamwork that they were involved with, how to meet a challenge and overcome it.

And every single one of these Outward Bound programs, there is one monumental task that all the participants must work together with in order to overcome. Usually it's a river to be crossed or something of that nature, a big physical barrier. Well, the class that I was asked to observe, their big challenge was me. Every place they went, I had to go, every tree they climbed, they had to haul me up, up the cliffs, across -- we camped out in this big muddy field, and it took every bit of their efforts to do that.

But I tell you, to a man and certainly myself, we felt a resurgence of pride, a sense of teamwork and accomplishment, and realized that life does go on, once you devote yourself to the task at hand.

These programs bring new confidence, new hope and a new lease

on life to thousands of veterans in our nation.

The Trust's support of National Amputee Golf Association's "First Swing" initiative helps amputee veterans gain new assurance in their abilities and move into the mainstream of life.

I and the other members of the DAV Charitable Service Trust Board, National Commander Andy Kistler, Vice-Chairman National Adjutant Art Wilson, Secretary-Treasurer Lew Snowbeck from Minnesota, Member Dick Marbes of Wisconsin, Member Jack Peluse of Pennsylvania, and Member Dave Tannenbaum from Virginia, are proud of this record of achievement with you as we continue to grow each year.

We cannot, the Board cannot say enough about the collective efforts of our staff, led by Nancy O'Brien, a monumentally talented individual who serves the initiatives of the DAV so very well.

When the Charitable Service Trust made its first grant in 1988, $111,000 was awarded to seven veterans programs which benefited 326,000 veterans. In 1998, we provided $611,000 to help hundreds of thousands of disabled veterans and their wives and families.

We began the Charitable Service Trust with a dream, but in 1998 that support and revenue totaled $953,000, and that wasn't a dream, that was a reality. By the end of the year, our unrestricted net assets were $1,095,800.

But comrades, ladies and gentlemen, don't measure the effectiveness of this Trust by what we collect or the monies we grant. You've got to put some hair and some skin on what we do. Think of one disabled veteran, one individual. He might be homeless. He might be faced with the combined effects of his disability. He may be a person that needs to access certain services that are available to him through the Federal Government or state or local agencies. He's a guy with a need. He's a guy with a need that you met through the efforts of the Charitable Service Trust.

Or think of one veteran or one spouse whose life is stressed or suffering, who had that suffering mitigated by you through the Charitable Service Trust. That's what we do, and that's why we exist.

The DAV Charitable Service Trust looks to you for support, and I want to encourage all of you to promote the Trust by giving through your workplace campaigns for those of you that are involved, and to others, I want you to tell them exactly what the Trust does.

And I want to thank you in advance because I know that you will carry the message, carry the word of the work of the Trust in your hearts as you go back to your chapters, to the VA facilities where you work and to your work places all throughout this nation. And thanks to you for sharing part of our dream.

Mr. Commander, this concludes my report. (Applause)

COMMANDER KISTLER: Talking about needs, when I came down the mountain, I certainly needed some help, and guess who was there helping protect me? Chad on the left and then on the right, and everywhere I looked he was there to make sure I didn't go in the woods. Thank you, Chad, and thank you for that report.

I'll entertain a motion to accept Chad's report. Mike 1.

MR. ANTHONY D. MANGINE: Tony Mangine, Chapter 11, Yuma, Arizona, the true sunshine state of the nation, moves to accept the report.

COMMANDER KISTLER: Thank you. Is there a second to that motion? Mike 3.

MR. DELBERT FOSTER, JR.: Delbert Foster, 14th District, South Dakota, seconds.

COMMANDER KISTLER: Thank you. Question on the motion? All in favor; opposed. Motion carried. Thank you, Chad.

Will you please join me in welcoming Imperial Golden Rodent Jimmie S. Foster, Imperial Red-Eyed Gnawer John Engwiller, and the Imperial Council of the National Trench Rats. (Boos)

MR. JOHN D. ENGWILLER, SR.: Thank you, brothers, and welcome to our 75th Annual Meeting of the National Order of Trench Rats. July 13th, 1924 is when we were chartered, and we stand before you again proudly, and tomorrow we'll make some donations and be even

prouder.

At this time I'd like to introduce for some brief remarks our Imperial Golden Rodent, Jimmie Foster. (Boos)

MR. JIMMIE S. FOSTER: Thank you for your patience. Ours is very long. I can only say we appreciate the support and the continuity of the national officers of this organization. Since 1956, I have been a rat. Since 1965, my first appearance at this stage, I was a rat. And today on the going out, I'm still a rat. (Boos) We simply come to show our respect to you, hoping those of you who have not quite made up your mind, you will understand why we're here, what we do by what we've done. Thank you very much. (Applause and boos)

MR. ENGWILLER: Okay. Each officer will come forward and give about a one-minute speech, okay? Okay. For purposes of introduction, our Imperial Silver Rodent Larry Polzin; our Imperial Blue Rodent William Brzezinski; Imperial Turquoise Rat Frank Cummings; Imperial Bubonic Plague Bernard Walkowiak; Imperial Black Plague Charlie Johns; our Imperial Iron Claw Gerald Horton; our Imperial Nightingale Joel Devenish; our doc, called the Imperial Cure Rat, Albert Sorrentino.

Our Imperial Executive Rat Vernon Christian; our Imperial Executive Rat Edward Lastowski; our Imperial Executive Rat William Phillips; Imperial Executive Rat Robert Auchu; Imperial Executive Rat Terrence Flick; Imperial Executive Rat Andrew Magner; Imperial Executive Rat Carl Carter. I called him out of turn because he was late getting gowned up. Imperial Executive Rat Raymond Drake; Imperial Executive Rat Michael Stokes; Imperial Executive Rat Clarence Viator; Imperial Executive Rat Leo Dowling.

Okay. Here's the grandfathers of the organization, the Imperial Rodents: Harry Warburton, Number 74; and the best-looking guy up here, Imperial Rodent 73, myself, John Engwiller; Imperial Rodent 72 Curt Guigelaar; Imperial Rodent 70 Paul Bailey; Imperial Rodent 69 Fred Sutton; Imperial Rodent 67 George Zoscsak; Imperial Rodent 75 Oswald Pederson; Imperial Rodent 54 Coleman Hewett; Imperial Rodent 49 Alfred Grajek; Imperial Rodent 39 Sam Vigil; and our oldest in number, Imperial Rodent 37 Charles Merrifield.

Before I give out some awards to the national officers for their cooperation in the past years, I proudly have been the Imperial Red-Eyed Gnawer for five, this is, I believe, my fifth year, and the cooperation between the National Disabled American Veterans and our National Order of Trench Rats has been fantastic. Tomorrow, we will be hopefully presenting some money to the Service Foundation and to the Colorado Trust. The amount that we've donated to date is approximately $211,000 to the National Service Foundation, and I hope this continues. (Applause)

At this time, if our national commander would come forward. Being our 75th anniversary, I'd like to present this to Andy Kistler, National Commander, 1998-99, Disabled American Veterans, from the National Order of Trench Rats Imperial Council. It's quite heavy, Andy, so don't drop it on your foot. Thank you.

COMMANDER KISTLER: Thank you. (Applause)

MR. ENGWILLER: Of course, the national commander gets the big rat, and Art Wilson -- are you present? For Art, I've got a little bit smaller rat to sit on his desk and look at him, and also our 75th anniversary pin. It's an alligator with the rat riding on its back. (Applause)

MR. FOSTER: I've got to take a minute. Very few people here remember my beginning, but I am impressed with the continuity of our national adjutant and his service. I remember when he came to the national adjutant's office. I've watched him take his time, taking one job at a time and doing it good. And we love you for that. (Applause)

MR. ENGWILLER: These rats are hand-carved. There's not a one of them that's alike. It's not a mouse; it's a rat, I guarantee you. We checked it out.

Dave Gorman. Again, Dave, for the cooperation in appreciation of the Trench Rats in your leadership position. (Applause)

Richard Patterson. Richard, thank you for all your help. Appreciate it. (Applause)

Robert Gushee, is he available? Okay. I'll entrust it to

someone that it will get to his office.

And Mike Walsh, is he present?

Okay. We will leave these entrusted with the staff of the National, and it's our pleasure and privilege to be able to present to these fine gentlemen, and we appreciate the help that we've had all year. (Applause)

COMMANDER KISTLER: Jimmie, we don't want you to leave. Remember the evening we spent in Oklahoma and had a chat with everybody, right? I'd like to present you with an appreciation reward for your distinguished service and dedication to the DAV over the years, Jimmie. Thank you very much.

MR. FOSTER: Thank you. (Applause) You know, I remember I observed those other gold capes coming, same expression. Now I understand the feeling. National Commander, I'm not saying goodbye, but send for me if you need me. (Applause)

MR. ENGWILLER: In the far corner, dressed in our Rat's outfit is Frank Russo. We always have our mascot, and I thank you.

This concludes our introduction. We'll see you tomorrow when our officers come and give out some money. Thank you. (Applause and boos)

COMMANDER KISTLER: I will now call on Chairman David Tannenbaum of the Constitution and Bylaws Committee. This will be the first reading only. There will be no discussion or vote.

MR. DAVID TANNENBAUM: Thank you, Commander. Comrade Commander and delegates: The National Constitution and Bylaws Convention Committee was called to order at their first business session on August 23rd, 1999 by Committee Advisors Messrs. Fred Bristol and Richard Sarrazin. First order of business was the election of a convention committee chairman. Dave Tannenbaum was nominated for chairman. There being no further nominations, nominations were closed, and Dave Tannenbaum was elected chairman.

The next order of business was the nomination and election of a secretary. Thomas Daley from Massachusetts was nominated and elected as secretary of the committee.

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 RESOLVED portions of the resolutions. On Wednesday at the next business session, copies of these resolutions will be placed on all of the seats for your information.

Resolution Number 198. To amend the Bylaws of the National Bylaws, Article 3, National Convention, Section 3.1.2, Election of National Executive Committee Members, to add a new Paragraph 3 as follows:

> Paragraph 3. Voting for all purposes at district meetings held at the National Convention shall be based on voting strength as determined under Section 3.6.

Resolution Number 199. To amend the National Bylaws, Article 9, Chapters, Section 9.3, Financial Records, Reports, Paragraph 1. It's to delete the last two sentences and insert the following:

> If, in the opinion of the national organization or the state department, a financial audit of the chapter is necessary and the national commander or state commander so authorizes it, such audit will be conducted by the national organization or state department at chapter expense. The above provision shall not exempt the chapter from the requirement of filing an annual financial report with the state department.

Resolution Number 200. To amend the National Bylaws, Article 10, Auxiliaries and Their Subordinate Units, Section 10.2, Financial Records, Officer Reports, Women's Auxiliary and NOTR, Paragraph 2. To delete the last two sentences and insert the following:

> If, in the opinion of the national organization or the state department, a financial audit of the subordinate unit is necessary and the national commander or state commander so authorizes it, such audit will be conducted by the national organization or state department at the expense of the subordinate unit. The foregoing provision shall not exempt a

subordinate unit from the requirement of filing an annual financial report with the state department.

Number 201. To amend the National Bylaws as follows. Article 11, Membership, delete and substitute as follows: Section 11.4, Duration of Membership.

For membership to be valid for any membership year, it must be initiated or renewed by a minimum payment of dues of $20 as specified in Section 11.9. Additional payments may be made at any time. The full amount as specified under the provisions of Section 11.9, Paragraph 2 may be paid at any time. When the membership is paid for in full, it continues throughout the member's life, except as otherwise specified in these Bylaws. If not paid in full, membership shall continue only so long as there are sufficient funds to make distribution under Section 11.10, after which, membership must be renewed. On renewal, the member's account shall reflect full credit for previously paid installment amounts.

Section 11.6, Basic Rights and Privileges.

No member shall be expelled or limited in any of the rights and privileges of membership, except as hereinafter specified in Article 16. He or she shall have all the benefits of chapter, state department and national membership.

Section 11.9, Membership Dues.

Paragraph 1. Minimum dues shall be $20 and shall be for the membership year or any part thereof. The membership year starts July 1st and ends the following June 30th. Dues will be applied toward becoming a member for life and will be credited directly in the individual's membership account as established under Paragraph 2 below. Once the appropriate full membership amount has been paid into the account, no further payment shall be required.

Paragraph 2. Those eligible who have not attained the age of 41 before July 1st of the current year may become a member for life upon payment of $150; those who are between the ages of 41 and 60, upon payment of $125; those who are between the ages of 61 and 70, upon payment of $100; and those who have attained the age of 71 or over, upon payment of $75.

Paragraph 3. Notwithstanding anything in this article to the contrary, upon attaining the age of 80, no person eligible for membership shall be required to pay either initial dues or the balance due of any existing account and shall be immediately declared a member for life in the Disabled American Veterans.

Resolution 202. To amend the National Bylaws, Article 11, Section 11.10, Paragraphs 1, 2 and 3, to omit the following words: "provided there are sufficient funds in the members' account," and to capitalize the word "the" immediately thereafter.

Comrade Commander, this concludes the initial report, first reading of the Constitution and Bylaws, and we are prepared to continue this at the next business session. This report has been signed by all members of the Constitution and Bylaws Committee. Thank you.

COMMANDER KISTLER: Thank you, David.

Next we will have a report on Legislation and Veterans Rights Committee by Chairman Dick Giese.

MR. RICHARD E. GIESE: Comrade Commander and delegates -- Mr. Wilson, I understand I have the rest of the afternoon? -- the National Convention Committee on Legislation and Veterans Rights was called to order for its first business session on August 23rd, 1999 by Committee Advisors Joe Violante and Tommy Tomlinson. The first order of business was the election of a convention committee chairman. Dick Giese was nominated for chairman. There being no further nominations, nominations were closed and Dick Giese was elected chairman.

The next order of business was the nomination and election of the secretary. Don Pouliot of California was nominated and elected secretary of the committee.

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 RESOLVED portions of the resolution.

Resolution Number 4. Provide educational benefits for dependents of service-connected veterans rated 80 percent or more disabled.

Resolution Number 5. Extend commissary and exchange privileges to veterans with service-connected disability and their dependents.

Resolution Number 9. Authorize the maximum reimbursement allowance for automobile equipment.

Resolution Number 10. Amend Section 143(1) (4) of title 26, U.S. Code, to include veterans who served after January 1st, 1977 within the definition of "qualified veteran" for purposes of eligibility for home loans funded by tax-exempt mortgage revenue bonds issued by certain states.

Resolution Number 19. Provide for compensable rating for hearing-impaired veterans with hearing aids.

Resolution Number 20. Provide full military honors at all national cemeteries.

Number 26. Support a change in regulatory requirements for a temporary total rating under Section 4.30 of title 38, Code of Federal Regulations.

Number 28. Support legislation to provide presumptive service connection to atomic veterans for all recognized radiogenic diseases.

Number 29. Liberalize criteria for Agent Orange claims.

Resolution Number 31. Support a change in the payment of certain accrued benefits upon death of a beneficiary.

Resolution Number 32. Raise the estate limit applicable to certain incompetent and institutionalized veterans.

Resolution Number 33. Oppose the reduction, taxation or elimination of VA benefits.

Resolution Number 34. Oppose the indexing of VA disability compensation benefits.

Resolution Number 35. Oppose any proposal that would offset payments of Social Security disability insurance benefits or any other federal benefit by VA compensation.

Resolution 36. Extend eligibility for Veterans Mortgage life insurance to service-connected veterans rated permanently and totally disabled.

Resolution Number 39. Provide headstones and markers for all veterans.

Resolution Number 40. Support cost-of-living adjustment for dependents' educational assistance programs.

Resolution 42. Supporting adequate funding for all VA programs. (Applause)

Resolution Number 46. Extend military commissary and exchange privileges and space-available air travel to certain service-connected disabled veterans.

Number 47. Support of a COLA for military retirees.

Number 48. Seek the immediate release of any Americans who may still be held captive from World War II, Korea and Vietnam. (Applause)

Number 50. Oppose any authorization to use members of the Armed Forces for human experimentation without their knowledge and informed consent. (Applause)

Number 51. Allow for the payment of fees, expenses and court costs under Equal Access to Justice to unsupervised nonattorney representatives practicing before the Court of Veterans Appeals.

Resolution Number 62. Expand POW presumptions.

Number 66. Authorize automobile adaptive equipment eligibility to any veteran who has a service-connected disability that inhibits the ability to safely operate the motor vehicle.

Number 71. Increase the face value of service-disabled veterans insurance, RH.

Number 72. Provide an open period to apply for service-disabled veterans insurance, RH.

Number 90. Support legislation to repeal the prohibition against service connections for smoking-related illnesses.

Number 91. Oppose redefining service connection.

Number 92. Oppose lump-sum payments for service-connected disabilities.

Number 97. Oppose any reduction in veterans programs.

Number 98. Oppose the use of VA-generated savings for purposes other than restoring VA benefits and services.

Number 99. Support legislation to ensure that military retirees receive all benefits promised them. (Applause)

Number 102. SMCK for loss of female mammary gland.

Number 103. A disability compensation increase.

Number 104. Support of legislation to provide that special separation benefits, or SSB, not be withheld from VA disability compensation payments.

Number 105. Oppose to subjecting compensations to means testing.

Number 111. Support legislation that would exempt benefits paid to wartime service-connected disabled veterans from the pay-go provision of the Budget Enforcement Act.

Number 121. Provide higher ratings for repugnant and disfiguring scars of the trunk or extremities.

Number 130. Oppose a freeze in the rates of VA disability compensation benefits.

Number 132. Eliminate the delimiting date for spouse in the VA's Chapter 35 of title 38, United States Code education program.

Number 154. Support legislation to allow the VSOs, veteran service officers, to solicit contributions on Post Office property.

Number 164. A ten-year protection for service connection elevations.

Number 166. Provide a temporary total rating for the period that an amputee has a new prosthetic device constructed.

Number 194. To increase the service-connected burial allowance.

Number 195. Oppose reorganization of the VA as a bureau of the Department of Defense. (Applause)

Number 203. Urge the Department of Veterans Affairs to investigate advance funding or factoring agreements offered to veterans by commercial concerns.

Number 204. Support legislation to restore the government's duty to assist claimants for veterans benefits.

Number 205. Allow all veterans to recover amounts withheld as a tax on disability severance pay.

Number 206. Oppose the permanent rounding down of COLAs in veterans benefits. (Applause)

Number 207. Restore protections against unwarranted awards of veterans benefits to third parties in divorce actions.

Number 208. Oppose to the imposition of time limits for filing compensation claims.

Number 209. Support legislation to preclude inappropriate remands from COVA to the Board of Veterans Appeals.

Number 210. Oppose reduction of the appeal period for VA decisions.

Number 211. Oppose any change in the scope of the review of VA decisions by the Board of Veterans Appeals.

Number 212. To compensate Persian Gulf veterans suffering from illness circumstantially linked to their service in the Persian Gulf War. (Applause)

Number 213. Increase the grant for automobiles or other conveyance available to certain disabled veterans and to provide for automatic annual adjustments based on the increase in the cost of living.

Number 214. Provide an increase in the specially adapted housing grant authorized by Section 2101(a) of title 38 of the U.S. Code.

Number 215. Support legislation to provide for waiver of premiums for supplemental service-disabled veterans insurance, RH.

Number 216. Extend space-available air travel aboard military aircraft to 100 percent service-connected disabled veterans. (Applause)

Number 217. Provide for commencement of payment period for temporary total ratings for compensation as of the date of entitling event.

Number 218. Support legislation to require judicial enforcement of the statutory benefit-of-the-doubt rule.

Number 219. Support legislation to make claims procedures of the Department of Veterans Affairs exclusive.

Number 220. To provide for an adequate number of National Cemeteries.

One I think that we might have overlooked here -- we may or may not -- I'll read it again. Resolution Number 30. The concurrent receipt of VA disability compensation and military longevity retirement pay. (Applause)

Comrade Commander, this completes the report of the Committee on Legislation and Veterans Rights, and 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. 004—LEGISLATIVE

PROVIDE EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS FOR DEPENDENTS OF SERVICE-CONNECTED VETERANS RATED 80 PERCENT OR MORE DISABLED

WHEREAS, chapter 35 of 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 Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, seeks the enactment of legislation which would extend educational assistance under chapter 35 of title 38, United States Code, to the dependents of veterans who have a service-connected disability rating of 80 percent or more.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 005—LEGISLATIVE

EXTEND COMMISSARY AND EXCHANGE PRIVILEGES TO VETERANS WITH SERVICE-CONNECTED DISABILITY 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 Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, supports legislation to extend commissary and exchange privileges to service-connected disabled veterans and their dependents.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 009—LEGISLATIVE

AUTHORIZE THE MAXIMUM REIMBURSEMENT ALLOWANCE FOR AUTOMOBILE EQUIPMENT

WHEREAS, the price of automobile and adaptive equipment for automobiles continually exceed the cost of inflation; and

WHEREAS, reimbursements to seriously disabled service-connected veterans by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) does not adequately cover the cost of automobile adaptive equipment; and

WHEREAS, automobile manufacturers do not provide itemized invoices on new vehicles with their one price system, especially new vehicles in the upper price ranges; and

WHEREAS, the one price system for new automobiles adversely affects the reimbursement to seriously disabled service-connected veterans for adaptive equipment; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, calls on the VA to survey automobile manufacturers to determine the current costs of adaptive equipment and propose, and publish after public comment, rules containing a schedule for reimbursement of such costs based on an equitable formula.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 010—LEGISLATIVE

AMEND SECTION 143(1) (4) OF TITLE 26, UNITED STATES CODE, TO INCLUDE VETERANS WHO SERVED AFTER JANUARY 1, 1977, WITHIN THE DEFINITION OF "QUALIFIED VETERAN" FOR PURPOSES OF ELIGIBILITY FOR HOME LOANS FUNDED BY TAX-EXEMPT MORTGAGE REVENUE BONDS ISSUED BY CERTAIN STATES

WHEREAS, the state of Oregon and four other states (Alaska, California, Texas, and Wisconsin) issue tax-exempt mortgage revenue bonds to fund programs that provide low interest home loans to certain veterans; and

WHEREAS, Federal law currently defines "qualified veteran" for purposes of these programs as any veteran who served on active duty at some time before January 1, 1977; and

WHEREAS, veterans of later periods of active service should also be afforded this benefit as a matter of equity; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, supports legislation to amend paragraph (4) of subsection (1), section 143, of the Internal Revenue Code to read "**Qualified veteran.**—For the purposes of this subsection, the term 'qualified veteran' means any veteran who meets such requirements as may be imposed by the law of the state issuing such qualified veterans' mortgage bond" and to make any conforming technical amendments necessary.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO 019—LEGISLATIVE

PROVIDE FOR A COMPENSABLE RATING FOR HEARING IMPAIRED VETERANS WITH HEARING AIDS

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 Rating Schedule provides a compensable rating of ten 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 Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, 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. 020—LEGISLATIVE

PROVIDE FOR FULL MILITARY HONORS AT ALL NATIONAL CEMETERIES

WHEREAS, many active and open National Cemeteries do not have the means to provide full military honors to our departed fellow comrades; and

WHEREAS, many of these active and open cemeteries do not have the support of local veterans organizations in close proximity to the cemeteries; and

WHEREAS, those National Cemeteries which do receive the support of local veterans organizations to provide military honors are beginning to experience a severe shortage of volunteers; and

WHEREAS, with the aging of our volunteer members who do perform military honors, the stress and strain of multiple burials outdoors in the elements and for long periods of time is taking its toll on our volunteer members; and

WHEREAS, younger active duty personnel who are trained in military protocol would be better suited to provide such military honors, the last tribute to our departed comrades, regardless of rank; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, supports legislation that provides for the Secretary of Defense to ensure that, upon request, a funeral honors detail is provided for the funeral of any veteran.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 026—LEGISLATIVE

SUPPORT A CHANGE IN REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS FOR A TEMPORARY TOTAL RATING UNDER SECTION 4.30 OF TITLE 38, CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS

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 Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, supports a change in section 4.30 of 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. 028—LEGISLATIVE

SUPPORT LEGISLATION AUTHORIZING PRESUMPTIVE

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; 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 providing compensation to those atomic veterans suffering from radiogenic diseases; and

WHEREAS, by the VA's own admission, approximately 50 claimants have obtained disability compensation or dependency indemnity compensation pursuant to Public Law 98-542; 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 Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, supports legislation to provide presumptive service connection to atomic veterans for all recognized radiogenic diseases.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 029—LEGISLATIVE

LIBERALIZE CRITERIA FOR AGENT ORANGE CLAIMS

WHEREAS, herbicides, the most potent known as Agent Orange, were used extensively and in great quantities in Vietnam; and

WHEREAS, many veterans were exposed in varying degrees to these toxic defoliants and continue to suffer diseases of unknown origin; and

WHEREAS, more than 250,000 Vietnam veterans, concerned over this exposure to herbicides, have been entered on the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Agent Orange Registry; and

WHEREAS, the National Academy of Sciences, in studies mandated by the U.S. Congress, continues to review and evaluate scientific data to determine whether a direct link exists between dioxin exposure and certain physical disorders; and

WHEREAS, the Disabled American Veterans continues to support the premise that such exposure is the proximate cause of certain health disorders; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, supports liberalizing the criteria for herbicide-related claims, including placing burden of proof for the award of disability compensation on the U.S. Government and not on the individual veteran, and making the U.S. Government responsible for providing needed medical attention, examination, care and treatment, as required by sound medical judgment, and where appropriate, awarding service-connected compensation on the basis of sound medical/scientific findings; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that those veterans now carried on the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Agent Orange Registry be given the opportunity for a prompt examination by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to ascertain dioxin levels, and to determine whether shared medical conditions exist among them.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 030—LEGISLATIVE

SUPPORT CONCURRENT PAYMENTS OF VA DISABILITY COMPENSATION AND MILITARY RETIREMENT PAY

WHEREAS, ex-servicemembers who are retired from the military on length of service must waive a portion of their retired pay in order to receive disability compensation from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA); and

WHEREAS, it would be more equitable if the laws and regulations were changed to provide that in such cases the veteran would be entitled to receive both benefits concurrently since eligibility was established and earned under two entirely different sets of enabling laws and regulations; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, supports legislation and changes in applicable regulations which would provide that a veteran who is retired for length of service and is later adjudicated as having service-connected disabilities, may receive concurrent benefits from the military department and from the VA without deduction from either.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 031—LEGISLATIVE

SUPPORT A CHANGE IN THE PAYMENT OF CERTAIN ACCRUED BENEFITS UPON DEATH OF A BENEFICIARY

WHEREAS, section 5121 of title 38, United States Code, sets forth the requirement for payment of accrued benefits upon death of a beneficiary and limits accrued benefits to periodic monetary benefits due and unpaid for a period not to exceed two years; and

WHEREAS, the current appeals process, including a favorable Board of Veterans' Appeals decision and payment of retroactive benefits can take considerably longer than two years; and

WHEREAS, the spouse and/or dependent children are part of the veteran's "family unit" and suffer the financial loss incurred during the appeals process; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, supports legislation which would provide for payment in full of all due and unpaid accrued benefits to the spouse or dependent children.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 032--LEGISLATIVE

RAISE THE ESTATE LIMIT APPLICABLE TO CERTAIN INCOMPETENT, INSTITUTIONALIZED VETERANS

WHEREAS, current law requires the suspension of VA disability compensation, pension and emergency officers' retirement pay in the case of mentally incompetent veterans who have neither a spouse nor child and who are being furnished hospital treatment, institutional or domiciliary care at U.S. government expense once the estate of such veterans equals or exceeds the sum of $1,500.00 (not to be continued until the estate is reduced to $500); and

WHEREAS, this is discriminatory treatment towards this single group of veterans; and

WHEREAS, this $1,500 estate level conceivably can cause financial hardship to such veterans; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, supports legislation to remove the estate limit for incompetent veterans.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 033—LEGISLATIVE

OPPOSE REDUCTION, TAXATION, OR ELIMINATION OF VETERANS' BENEFITS

WHEREAS, veterans' benefits are earned benefits paid to veterans and their families as a direct result of their service to the United States Government; 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 are occurring on a more frequent basis, with more and more attacks every year; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, vigorously supports the protection of veterans' benefits from taxation, cutbacks, and elimination.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 034—LEGISLATIVE

OPPOSE THE INDEXING OF VA DISABILITY COMPENSATION BENEFITS

WHEREAS, the Administration and the Office of Management and Budget have proposed that future adjustments in VA service-connected disability compensation benefits shall be automatically "indexed" to changes in the Consumer Price Index (CPI); and

WHEREAS, adjustments of the benefit levels in this most important VA program have always been determined through legislative action by the U.S. Congress; and

WHEREAS, over the years such legislated increases have resulted in more realistic levels for disabled veterans, improvement in other compensation related entitlements and a continued and active Congressional oversight of the entire compensation program; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, goes on record as being strongly opposed to the automatic indexing of future adjustments in the VA service-connected disability compensation program.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 035—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, there has been consideration 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 to the earned payments of Social Security Disability Insurance Benefits; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, 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. 036—LEGISLATIVE

EXTEND ELIGIBILITY FOR VETERANS' MORTGAGE LIFE INSURANCE TO SERVICE-CONNECTED VETERANS RATED PERMANENTLY AND TOTALLY DISABLED

WHEREAS, VA Mortgage Life Insurance is presently available to veterans entitled to the special adapted housing award under section 2101(a) of 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; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, seeks the enactment of legislation which would extend VA Mortgage Life Insurance to service-connected veterans who are rated as permanently and totally disabled.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 038—LEGISLATIVE

RESTORE ELIGIBILITY AND INCREASE BURIAL AND PLOT ALLOWANCE

WHEREAS, all veterans who have served their country honorably and faithfully are entitled to a decent burial and final resting place; and

WHEREAS, the amount payable by the VA as a burial allowance ($300) and the amount payable as a plot allowance ($150) have remained constant for many years in spite of the inflationary spiral; and

WHEREAS, Public Law 97-35, effective October 1, 1981, restricted the eligibility for the $300 burial allowance, greatly reducing the number of veterans who previously qualified; and

WHEREAS, Public Law 101-508, enacted in November 1990, reduced the number of veterans who would have otherwise been eligible for the $150 plot allowance; and

WHEREAS, these restrictive measures enacted over time were intended purely as cost-savings measures without regard to intrinsic value of this final honor which was bestowed by a grateful Nation; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, supports legislation to (1) increase both the VA burial and plot allowance to a level reflecting the inflationary impact of the intervening years, (2) restore entitlement to the VA burial allowance to those categories of veterans eliminated by Public Law 97-35, and (3) restore entitlement to the VA plot allowance to those categories of veterans eliminated by enactment of Public Law 101-508.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 039—LEGISLATIVE

SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO PROVIDE A HEADSTONE OR MARKER FOR ALL VETERANS

WHEREAS, section 2306 of title 38, United States Code, authorizes the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to furnish appropriate government headstones or markers at the expense of the United States only for the *unmarked* graves of veterans interred in public or private cemeteries; and

WHEREAS, veterans interred in a national cemetery, post, or veterans' cemetery owned by a state are furnished an appropriate headstone or marker at the expense of the United States; and

WHEREAS, it is inappropriate and unfair to deny veterans and their families their rightful recognition of service to the United States by limiting the availability of headstones or markers at

government expense to gravesites of veterans who have no other marker; and

WHEREAS, the Disabled American Veterans desires that the U.S. Congress take appropriate action to correct this injustice and inequity to America's veterans and their families; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, supports legislation to amend section 2306(a) of title 38, United States Code, by deleting the word "unmarked," thereby authorizing the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to furnish appropriate government headstones or markers at the expense of the United States for all graves of veterans interred in public or private cemeteries notwithstanding the presence of other markers on the grave site.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 040—LEGISLATIVE

SUPPORT LEGISLATION FOR A COST-OF-LIVING ADJUSTMENT FOR THE DEPENDENTS EDUCATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

WHEREAS, the VA provides educational assistance to children and spouses of veterans whose service-connected disabilities are rated permanently and totally disabling and to eligible survivors of veterans who die from service-connected disabilities or whose service-connected disabilities were totally disabling for 10 years or more prior to death; and

WHEREAS, the monthly benefit rate of this program has not been regularly adjusted to keep pace with the rising costs of education; and

WHEREAS, the costs of education are known to have risen substantially, and the value of this educational assistance has been allowed to erode year after year becoming less and less effective in accomplishing the purpose for which the program was intended; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, supports Congress adjusting the monthly benefit rate of Survivors and Dependents Education Assistance under title 38, United States Code, to offset the rising educational costs since the last adjustment and amend the law to provide for annual cost-of-living adjustments.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 042—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 the country; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, seeks and strongly supports adequate funding for all VA programs.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 046—LEGISLATIVE

EXTEND MILITARY COMMISSARY AND EXCHANGE PRIVILEGES AND SPACE-AVAILABLE AIR TRAVEL TO CERTAIN SERVICE-CONNECTED DISABLED VETERANS

WHEREAS, disabled enlisted personnel who were discharged from military service prior to October 1, 1949—the effective date of the Career Compensation Act—are not entitled to disability retirement from the Armed Forces; and

WHEREAS, many service-connected disabled veterans have been deprived of the various benefits which all other disabled retired military personnel have enjoyed; and

WHEREAS, due to inflation, service-connected disabled veterans receiving VA compensation as a sole source of income are experiencing difficulties in keeping pace with the increased cost of living; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, supports legislation which would extend military commissary and exchange privileges, as well as space-available air travel aboard military aircraft, to enlisted personnel who were discharged from active military service prior to October 1, 1949, for a service-incurred injury or disease rated by the Department of Veterans Affairs as 30 percent or more disabling and who retained at least a 30 percent evaluation for a period of five years from the date of separation from active duty.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 047—LEGISLATIVE

SUPPORT COST-OF-LIVING ADJUSTMENTS FOR MILITARY RETIREES

WHEREAS, COLAs for military retirees were reduced or eliminated as a result of legislation during 1986 and 1993; and

WHEREAS, other categories of federal annuitants and beneficiaries—Social Security and VA service-connected disability compensation and nonservice-connected pension recipients, for example—were not subject to these same COLA restrictions; and

WHEREAS, it is basically unfair—especially in the case of military disability retirees—to provide a COLA to one category of federal beneficiary while withholding such an adjustment from another category; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, supports legislation which would ensure the timely extension of COLAs to military retirees when similar adjustments are being authorized for beneficiaries in the Social Security and VA benefit programs.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 048—LEGISLATIVE

SEEK THE IMMEDIATE RELEASE OF ANY AMERICANS WHO MAY STILL BE HELD CAPTIVE FOLLOWING WORLD WAR II, THE KOREAN WAR, AND VIETNAM WAR 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, and the Vietnam War; 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 these brave men without success; 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, and over 2,100 in Southeast Asia from the Vietnam War who have not been forgotten; and

WHEREAS, the DAV was extremely disappointed with the timing of President Clinton's decision to normalize relations with the government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, prior to the fullest possible accounting of our POW/MIAs from Southeast Asia; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, 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 passage of legislation that would direct the heads of federal departments and agencies to fully disclose to the American public information concerning United States personnel classified as prisoners of war or missing in action from World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we urge the U.S. Government not to establish most favored nation status with the Socialist Republic of Vietnam until the government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam provides the U.S. Government with the fullest possible accounting of over 2,100 personnel classified as prisoners of war or missing in action from the Vietnam War.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 050—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; and

WHEREAS, the Food and Drug Administration plans to make final a temporary rule allowing administration of experimental drugs to military members without their knowledge and informed consent; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, opposes any rule or provision that would authorize use of servicemembers for human experimentation without their knowledge and informed consent.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 051—LEGISLATIVE

SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO ALLOW FOR THE PAYMENT OF FEES, EXPENSES, AND COURT COSTS UNDER SECTION 2412 OF TITLE 28, UNITED STATES CODE, EQUAL ACCESS TO JUSTICE ACT, TO UNSUPERVISED NONATTORNEY REPRESENTATIVES PRACTICING BEFORE THE U.S. COURT OF APPEALS FOR VETERANS CLAIMS

WHEREAS, attorneys practicing before the United States Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims (the Court) are allowed to collect reasonable attorney fees, expenses, and court costs pursuant to the provisions of section 2412 of title 28, United States Code, Equal Access to Justice Act (EAJA), in cases where the government was not substantially justified in withholding benefits or services; and

WHEREAS, the Court allows nonattorney representatives employed by veterans' service organizations to practice, unsupervised, before the Court; and

WHEREAS, DAV attorneys and nonattorney representatives practice before the Court; and

WHEREAS, the Court has recently determined that DAV's nonattorney representatives are not entitled to reasonable fees, expenses, or court costs pursuant to EAJA; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, supports legislation which would allow unsupervised nonattorney representatives to obtain EAJA fees under section 2412 of title 28, United States Code.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 062—LEGISLATIVE

EXPAND POW 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 different physical and psychological maladies; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, 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 we urge passage of legislation that would expand eligibility for Dependency and Indemnity Compensation to surviving spouses of certain former POWs, who were rated totally disabled at the time of death for a service-connected disability and who had been diagnosed as having a disease subject to presumption of service connection for former POWs.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 066—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 of title 38, United States Code, and section 17.119(a) of 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 of 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 of 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 Orlando, Florida, August 21-25,

1999, 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. 071—LEGISLATIVE

INCREASE THE FACE VALUE OF SERVICE DISABLED VETERANS INSURANCE (RH)

WHEREAS, certain veterans are eligible for National Service Life Insurance (NSLI) under section 1922 of 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) of title 38, United States Code; and

WHEREAS, this insurance, commonly referred to as RH 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; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, supports amendment of section 1922(a) of title 38, United States Code, to increase the maximum amount of insurance coverage available under the Service Disabled Veterans Insurance (RH).

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 072—LEGISLATIVE

PROVIDE AN OPEN PERIOD TO APPLY FOR SERVICE DISABLED VETERANS INSURANCE (RH)

WHEREAS, service-connected disabled veterans are entitled to apply for Service Disabled Veterans Insurance (RH) within one year from the date the 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 one 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 Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, seeks the enactment of legislation that would authorize an "open period" for eligible service-connected disabled veterans to apply for coverage under the Service Disabled Veterans Insurance Program.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 090—LEGISLATIVE

SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO REPEAL THE PROHIBITION

AGAINST SERVICE CONNECTION FOR SMOKING-RELATED ILLNESSES

WHEREAS, until recently smoking of tobacco was an activity fully accepted by society and not only condoned but encouraged and subsidized by the Armed Forces; and

WHEREAS, because the Armed Forces and the military environment encouraged smoking among servicemembers, higher percentages of veterans smoke or have a history of smoking than the general population; and

WHEREAS, the Government rejects the tobacco companies' defense that responsibility for the health effects of smoking is with the individual who personally chose to smoke but relies on that same excuse to prohibit compensation for service-incurred smoking-related illnesses in veterans; and

WHEREAS, the Government has imposed a dual standard against veterans because it has not sought to hold other Federal beneficiaries personally responsible and prohibited benefits for smoking-related illnesses; and

WHEREAS, Congress conveniently seized upon the personal choice-personal responsibility excuse and enacted the prohibition against service connection for smoking-related illnesses solely to finance over-budget spending on politically popular transportation programs and not because of any genuine public policy considerations; and

WHEREAS, for all the foregoing reasons, the enactment of this prohibition was an extreme injustice against America's disabled veterans; NOW

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, supports legislation to repeal the prohibition of service connection for smoking-related illnesses.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 091—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, there are various proposals 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 Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, opposes changes in current law so as to redefine or restrict service connection.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 092—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 so 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, the Veterans' Claims Adjudication Commission, created by Congress to study the Department of Veterans Affairs claims processing system, has 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 Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, opposes any change in law to provide for lump-sum payments of VA disability compensation.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 097—LEGISLATIVE

OPPOSE ANY REDUCTION IN VETERANS' PROGRAMS

WHEREAS, there is a concerted effort to streamline and make more efficient the federal government; and

WHEREAS, the Vice President's National Performance Review ("Reinventing Government") makes numerous recommendations which impact on the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA); and

WHEREAS, several of those recommendations appear to be directed at cost-saving measures rather than efficiency and effectiveness; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, urges Congress to reject any proposed intention to "streamline" government that would reduce or diminish the VA's ability to properly serve and care for our Nation's veterans.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 098—LEGISLATIVE

OPPOSE THE USE OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS GENERATED SAVINGS FOR PURPOSES OTHER THAN RESTORING VA BENEFITS AND SERVICES

WHEREAS, a former Office of Management and Budget Director proposed to use savings from reductions in veterans' benefits and services to revamp the welfare system; and

WHEREAS, the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Acts of 1990 and 1993 required VA to cut veterans' programs by more than six billion dollars, which include the loss of compensation payments for certain incompetent veterans, elimination of vocational rehabilitation for some service-connected veterans, elimination of entitlement to Dependency & Indemnity Compensation for remarried surviving spouses and the elimination of cost-of-living increase for the Montgomery G.I. Bill educational benefits; and

WHEREAS, in addition, the fiscal year 1996 budget proposed by Congress for veterans' benefits and services called for a seven-year freeze in spending levels for health care and general operating expense, ignoring the fact that the Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA's) current spending levels do not permit the timely delivery of health care and benefit determinations; and

WHEREAS, the use of VA-generated savings should be used for restoring VA benefits and services which have been taken away from America's veterans over the past several years; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans

in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, goes on record as strongly opposing the use of VA-generated savings for purposes other than restoring VA benefits and services.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 099—LEGISLATIVE

SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO ENSURE THAT MILITARY RETIREES RECEIVE ALL BENEFITS WHICH WERE PROMISED THEM 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 Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, supports legislation to require our government to provide military retirees with all benefits promised them.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 102—LEGISLATIVE

PROVIDE SPECIAL MONTHLY COMPENSATION FOR LOSS OF FEMALE MAMMARY GLAND

WHEREAS, section 1114(k) of title 38, United States Code, and section 3.350(a) of title 38, Code of Federal Regulations, grants special monthly compensation for loss of use of one hand, one foot, both buttocks, one or more creative organs; blindness -- one eye having light perception only, deafness -- both ears having the absence of air and bone conduction; and complete organic aphonia with constant inability to communicate by speech; and

WHEREAS, there is a significant hormonal interrelationship between the female mammary glands and the female reproductive system; and

WHEREAS, the female mammary glands can be a necessary postpartum accessory organ; and

WHEREAS, severe physical disfigurement and complete loss of use results from the removal of the female mammary gland; and

WHEREAS, major reconstructive surgery or utilization of a prosthesis is necessary to replace the amputated organ; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, supports legislation to amend section 1114(k) of title 38, United States Code, to add the anatomical loss of a female mammary gland.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 103—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 diseases and injuries in civil occupations; and

WHEREAS, compensation increases should be based 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 Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, supports the enactment of legislation to provide a realistic increase in VA 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. 104—LEGISLATIVE

SUPPORT LEGISLATION PROVIDING THAT SPECIAL SEPARATION BENEFITS PAYMENTS NOT BE WITHHELD FROM VA DISABILITY COMPENSATION PAYMENTS

WHEREAS, as a result of the downsizing of our military forces, many career military personnel are leaving service prior to becoming eligible to longevity retirement pay; and

WHEREAS, these individuals are entitled to separation pay; and

WHEREAS, many of these individuals are also eligible to 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 Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, supports legislation to clarify that SSB payments are not disability payments and therefore should not be recouped from VA disability compensation payments.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 105—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 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 death compensation, there are efforts to reduce or eliminate it 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 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 Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, opposes any scheme to means test disability and death compensation.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 111—LEGISLATIVE

SUPPORT LEGISLATION THAT WOULD EXEMPT THE BENEFITS PAID TO WARTIME SERVICE-CONNECTED DISABLED VETERANS FROM THE "PAY-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" 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 are not a "welfare benefit"; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, supports legislation to exempt VA benefits and services provided to service-connected disabled veterans, their dependents and survivors from the "pay-go" provisions of the Budget Enforcement Act.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 121—LEGISLATIVE

AMEND SECTION 4.118 OF TITLE 38, CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS, TO ALLOW FOR A MORE EQUITABLE RANGE OF RATINGS FOR SCARS OF TRUNK AND EXTREMITIES

WHEREAS, section 4.118 of title 38, Code of Federal Regulations, diagnostic code 7800, provides for ratings of visible scars of head, face, and neck from 0 percent to 50 percent depending on degree of repugnancy and disfiguring conditions; and

WHEREAS, section 4.118 of title 38, Code of Federal Regulations, diagnostic codes 7803 and 7804, only allows a maximum 10 percent rating for other scars of the body; and

WHEREAS, scars of the trunk of the body or extremities can be just as repugnant, disfiguring, and psychologically damaging when viewed at a public beach, locker room, or other communal situations which require removal of clothing; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, supports legislation to allow for a range of ratings from 0 percent to 50 percent for scars of the trunk and extremities which is consistent with the rating for scars of the head, face, and neck.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 130—LEGISLATIVE

OPPOSE A FREEZE IN THE RATES OF VA DISABILITY COMPENSATION

BENEFITS

WHEREAS, no segment of our society is more deserving of federal benefits and services than those veterans who have incurred disabilities while serving their country honorably in time of need; and

WHEREAS, under the guise of "reducing federal expenditures," proposals have been advanced to freeze the current rates of VA disability compensation benefits; and

WHEREAS, the disability compensation benefits of service-connected disabled veterans should be periodically adjusted to reflect inflationary pressures and the rise in the costs of goods and services; and

WHEREAS, service-connected disabled veterans, who have suffered so much for their country, should not be expected to endure further hardships such as would occur should a cost-of-living adjustment be denied to their benefits; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, opposes any freeze in the VA disability compensation program if such program is singled out (from all other major federal entitlement programs) for such treatment.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 132—LEGISLATIVE

ELIMINATE THE DELIMITING DATE FOR ELIGIBLE SPOUSES AND SURVIVING SPOUSES FOR BENEFITS PROVIDED UNDER CHAPTER 35 OF TITLE 38, UNITED STATES CODE

WHEREAS, dependents and survivors eligible for VA education benefits under chapter 35 of title 38, United States Code, have 10 years in which to apply for and complete a program of education; and

WHEREAS, this 10-year period begins either from the date a veteran is evaluated by the VA as permanently and totally disabled from service-connected disabilities or 10 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 Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, seeks the enactment of legislation which would eliminate the delimiting date for spouses and surviving spouses for purposes of benefits provided under chapter 35 of title 38, United States Code.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 154—LEGISLATIVE

SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO ALLOW VETERANS' ORGANIZATIONS TO SOLICIT CONTRIBUTIONS ON POST OFFICE PROPERTY

WHEREAS, the Disabled American Veterans (DAV) was founded on the principle that this Nation's first duty to veterans is the rehabilitation of its wartime disabled; and

WHEREAS, it is the first duty of the DAV to assist the service-connected disabled, his widow and survivors; and

WHEREAS, DAV chapters and departments provide assistance to hospitalized and needy veterans such as donations to VA Medical Centers, financial assistance to needy veterans, meal programs, temporary housing, and transportation programs; and

WHEREAS, the efforts of the DAV on behalf of this Nation's wartime-disabled veterans augments the government's legal and moral obligation to wartime disabled veterans; and

WHEREAS, postal regulations, now being enforced, prohibit any solicitation on post office properties; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, supports legislation to allow veterans' organizations to solicit contributions on postal property.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 164—LEGISLATIVE

PROVIDE A 10-YEAR PROTECTION PERIOD FOR SERVICE-CONNECTED DISABILITY EVALUATIONS

WHEREAS, section 110 of 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 Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, supports amendment of section 110 of 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. 166—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 to his employment until he has his artificial limb; and

WHEREAS, the veteran who does not have an artificial limb is incapacitated and unable to perform gainful employment; and

WHEREAS, the 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 Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, 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. 194—LEGISLATIVE

SUPPORT AN INCREASE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS BURIAL ALLOWANCE FOR SERVICE-CONNECTED VETERANS

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) provides service-connected veterans a $1,500.00 burial allowance; and

WHEREAS, the VA burial allowance for service-connected veterans has been in effect for approximately 20 years. The current burial allowance has been overcome by inflation, it is unrated, and is grossly unfair when compared to the current economic conditions; and

WHEREAS, we believe the current burial allowance of $1,500.00 should be increased; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, request that the VA increase the current provision which provides for service-connected veterans' burial allowance.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 195—LEGISLATIVE
OPPOSE REORGANIZATION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AS A BUREAU WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

WHEREAS, the people of the United States, through Federal law, in recognition of this Nation's debt to its veterans, established a Federal Department dedicated to serving veterans' needs; and

WHEREAS, a public policy group called the Heritage Foundation, apparently not appreciating the priority of this Nation's obligation to its veterans, in its report entitled "Mandate for Leadership IV," recommended in the name of government efficiency that the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) be abolished and reorganized as a bureau under the Department of Defense; and

WHEREAS, the fiscal year 2000 budget proposed by the Clinton Administration recommends several alternatives for moving VA discretionary accounts into the Defense function; and

WHEREAS, veterans deserve a Federal Department whose focus is solely upon providing them with the compassionate service they have earned through their special sacrifices; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, opposes such abolishment of VA as a Federal Department and reorganization as a lesser agency under the Department of Defense.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 203—LEGISLATIVE

URGE THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS TO INVESTIGATE ADVANCE FUNDING OR "FACTORING" AGREEMENTS OFFERED TO VETERANS BY COMMERCIAL CONCERNS

WHEREAS, benefits provided through the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) are intended to relieve the effects of disabilities and other economic disadvantages for veterans and their dependents; and

WHEREAS, to safeguard these benefits against loss and to ensure they are not diverted to or siphoned off by third parties, Congress enacted legislation making veterans' benefits nonassignable; and

WHEREAS, certain commercial companies nonetheless entice veterans to assign their future compensation payments to the companies in exchange for smaller amounts advanced as lump sums; and

WHEREAS, this defeats the public policy principles underlying the nonassignability provisions in section 5301 of title 38, United States Code, because a portion of government payments become profits benefiting commercial concerns; and

WHEREAS, such "factoring" arrangements may in effect be comparable to interest on loans that violate usury laws; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, urges the VA, through its Inspector General, to investigate these practices to determine if they involve violations of law warranting referral for prosecution or other remedial action.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 204—LEGISLATIVE

SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO RESTORE THE GOVERNMENT'S DUTY TO ASSIST CLAIMANTS FOR VETERANS' BENEFITS

WHEREAS, our grateful Nation bestows special benefits upon veterans because of our indebtedness to them for their extraordinary sacrifices and contributions in maintaining our national security and defense; and

WHEREAS, it would be inconsistent with the high esteem we have for veterans and contrary to the benevolent goals of veterans' programs to treat claimants for veterans' benefits as ordinary

litigants or applicants for government assistance; and

WHEREAS, it would be inappropriate for veterans seeking compensation for service-incurred disabilities and other benefits to be confronted by a resistant, contentious, or even an indifferent, passive bureaucracy; and

WHEREAS, in recognition of veterans' special status and in furtherance of the goals of veterans' programs, Congress created a unique system for benefits administration that is intended to furnish claimants every reasonable assistance in obtaining benefits to which they are entitled; and

WHEREAS, this assistance has always included help in gathering the evidence necessary to substantiate entitlement to benefits sought; and

WHEREAS, the courts have misinterpreted the law to require that claimants must first, without any government aid, submit certain preliminary evidence before the Department of Veterans Affairs has any duty to assist them; and

WHEREAS, this interpretation of the law defeats the long-standing duty to assist inasmuch as it conditions government assistance upon the claimant's first having done alone the very thing the claimant needs assistance with; and

WHEREAS, many claimants are elderly and ill; and some claimants have limited ability to obtain release of records from public and private sources because of level of education and lack of understanding; and yet others suffer from serious mental illness or are homeless and lack even the resources to correspond with records sources; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, supports legislation to restore the government's duty to fully assist claimants in developing their claims for veterans' benefits.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 205—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 Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, 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. 206—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 unfairly singles out veterans for a disproportionate and unfair burden in deficit reduction; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, opposes permanent rounding down of cost-of-living adjustments for veterans' benefits.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 207—LEGISLATIVE

RESTORE PROTECTIONS AGAINST UNWARRANTED AWARDS OF VETERANS'BENEFITS TO THIRD PARTIES IN DIVORCE ACTIONS

WHEREAS, disability compensation and other veterans' benefits were intended and should be provided solely to fill specific needs of veterans; and

WHEREAS, Congress intended to exempt veterans' benefits from the claims of third parties to ensure that such benefits were not voluntarily assigned or through legal processes diverted to purposes or persons other than for which they were intended; and

WHEREAS, for purposes of support payments in divorce actions, state courts and the Supreme Court of the United States have arbitrarily created exceptions to the protection for veterans' benefits Congress established in section 5301 of title 38, United States Code, thereby forcing veterans to surrender their benefits to third parties, contrary to the intent of Congress; and

WHEREAS, the courts show little understanding or appreciation for the principle that veterans' entitlements are awarded solely to veterans because of their personal sacrifices, contributions in the defense of our Nation, or consequent personal suffering associated with service-connected disabilities and for that reason should not inure or vest to the benefit of others who have no natural right or valid legal interest in such benefits; and

WHEREAS, courts have, for example, shown no hesitation to force disabled veterans to surrender their disability compensation and sole source of sustenance to able-bodied ex-spouses as alimony awards; and

WHEREAS, there is a lack of uniformity in how the various courts treat veterans' benefits in divorce actions because the courts act according to their own will rather than any consensus on the meaning and intent of the law; and

WHEREAS, this situation creates a need for Congress to intervene to override the effect of the law given by the courts; to restore meaning, equity, and uniformity to the law; and to reinstate safeguards against veterans' benefits being siphoned into the pockets of persons who have no right to such benefits; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, supports legislation to amend section 5301 of title 38, United States Code, to restore protections against unwarranted awards of veterans' benefits to third parties by prohibiting courts from directly ordering payment of such benefits to third parties, other than dependent children when justified by the circumstances, and by prohibiting courts from taking notice, or the inclusion of, amounts received as veterans' benefits in determining such awards.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 208—LEGISLATIVE

OPPOSE THE IMPOSITION OF TIME LIMITS FOR FILING COMPENSATION CLAIMS

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 Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, opposes any change in law to limit the time for filing compensation claims.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 209—LEGISLATIVE

SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO PRECLUDE INAPPROPRIATE REMANDS FROM THE COURT OF APPEALS FOR VETERANS CLAIMS TO THE BOARD OF VETERANS' APPEALS

WHEREAS, appellants, but not the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), may appeal decisions from the Board of Veterans' Appeals (BVA) to the United States Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims (the Court); and

WHEREAS, only appellants have the right to challenge the BVA decision, therefore; and

WHEREAS, the Court nonetheless remands cases for further action and a new decision by the BVA based on the VA's motions for remand which contain the VA's arguments of error in its own decision; and

WHEREAS, this practice allows the VA to appeal its own decision, to deprive appellants of their right to an independent review of BVA's decisions by the Court, allows the VA to avoid scrutiny of BVA's decision and consideration of errors specified by appellants, and allows the VA to attempt to gather new evidence on remand in an effort to provide after-the-fact justification for the prior denial; and

WHEREAS, appellants are not permitted remands merely to allow them to strengthen their cases; and

WHEREAS, permitting the VA to take cases back from the Court to the BVA, allows the VA an unfair advantage and is therefore prejudicial to appellants seeking independent review; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, supports legislation to constrain the Court from remanding cases to BVA for reasons argued by the VA, over appellants' objections, and to prevent remands which permit the VA to search for additional evidence in an attempt to justify the BVA denial.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 210—LEGISLATIVE

OPPOSE REDUCTION OF 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, unlike with other legal processes where fairness to opposing parties, practical considerations, and matters of administrative and judicial convenience justify shorter appeal periods, no such reasons exist within the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) system where service to veterans is paramount; and

WHEREAS, the Veterans' Claims Adjudication Commission, created by Congress to study the VA claims processing system, has recommended a reduction of the appeal period from one year to 60 days; and

WHEREAS, the length of the current appeal period is not responsible in any way for the claims backlog and related problems the Commission was created to study, the real cause being the ratio of workload to production capacity; and

WHEREAS, a reduction of the appeal period will therefore not increase VA's efficiency nor reduce the claims backlog; and

WHEREAS, a reduction in the appeal period would be an unnecessary reduction of veterans' rights under the pretense of improving the VA claims and appeal processes; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, opposes any change in law to reduce the period for appealing VA claims decisions.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 211—LEGISLATIVE

OPPOSE ANY CHANGE IN THE SCOPE OF THE REVIEW OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS DECISIONS BY THE BOARD OF VETERANS' APPEALS

WHEREAS, claimants for veterans' benefits currently have a right to full review of adverse Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) decisions on appeal to the Board of Veterans' Appeals (BVA); and

WHEREAS, BVA allows a large percentage of the appeals it considers because it finds that benefits are wrongfully denied in many cases; and

WHEREAS, the Veterans' Claims Adjudication Commission, created by Congress to study the VA claims and administrative appeals processes, has suggested restricting the scope of BVA's review to reduce types of errors it can overturn and therefore the number of appeals it can allow; and

WHEREAS, such a restriction would deny justice to many veterans who would receive favorable decisions by BVA under the current full review; and

WHEREAS, such a change would represent a change in the Government's long-standing philosophy toward veterans, placing administrative convenience and Government savings through denial of meritorious claims above the Nation's obligation to fairly treat and care for its veterans; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, opposes any change to restrict the scope of BVA's review of VA claims decisions.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 212—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 been unable to identify the source or sources of these ailments; and

WHEREAS, the scientific/medical community's inability to

identify 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 Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, vigorously supports the Department of Veterans Affairs 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 and subsequent exposure to certain chemical, biological, and environmental toxins; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we strongly urge that these Persian Gulf War veterans 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, DoD, and HHS 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 U.S. military personnel.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 213—LEGISLATIVE

INCREASE THE GRANT FOR AUTOMOBILES OR OTHER CONVEYANCES AVAILABLE TO CERTAIN DISABLED VETERANS AND PROVIDE FOR AUTOMATIC ANNUAL ADJUSTMENTS BASED ON THE INCREASE IN THE COST OF LIVING

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 $8,000 represents only about 36 percent of the total average cost of automobiles based on most current available pricing; and

WHEREAS, the automobile grant must be adjusted annually if it is to keep pace with the rise in the cost of living and remain a meaningful amount; NOW

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, supports legislation to increase the automobile grant to an amount representing 80 percent of the average cost of new automobiles; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this legislation should provide for automatic annual adjustments in this allowance based on the increase in the cost of living.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 214—LEGISLATIVE

PROVIDE AN INCREASE IN THE SPECIALLY ADAPTED HOUSING GRANT

AUTHORIZED BY SECTION 2101(a) OF TITLE 38, UNITED STATES CODE

WHEREAS, section 2101(a) of title 38, United States Code, authorizes a onetime specially adapted housing grant to veterans who have incurred the service-connected conditions of blindness, with loss or loss of use of one lower extremity, multiple loss or loss of use of extremities, and/or loss of functions which affect balance or propulsion; and

WHEREAS, the purpose of this grant is to enable such severely disabled veterans to provide necessary structural adaptations and modifications in their homes for comfort and egress; and

WHEREAS, the current $43,000.00 maximum amount authorized for this grant is insufficient to allow such veterans to make all necessary adaptations and modifications; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, supports legislation which would provide a realistic increase in the grant authorized by section 2101(a) of title 38, United States Code.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 215—LEGISLATIVE

SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO PROVIDE FOR WAIVER OF PREMIUMS FOR SUPPLEMENTAL SERVICE DISABLED VETERANS' INSURANCE

WHEREAS, section 1922A(a) of title 38, United States Code, provides for supplemental service disabled veterans' insurance for totally disabled veterans, in an amount not to exceed $20,000; and

WHEREAS, section 1922A(d) of 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 Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, supports legislation to allow for the waiver of premiums, for any and all supplemental Service Disabled Veterans' Insurance 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. 216—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 Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, seeks the enactment of legislation which 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. 217—LEGISLATIVE

SUPPORT CHANGE IN LAW TO PROVIDE FOR COMMENCEMENT OF PAYMENT PERIOD FOR TEMPORARY TOTAL RATINGS FOR COMPENSATION AS OF DATE OF ENTITLING EVENT

WHEREAS, prior to the addition of section 5111 to title 38, United States Code, by Public Law 97-253, the payment period for temporary total ratings for compensation purposes under paragraphs 29 and 30 of the VA *Schedule for Rating Disabilities* commenced the date of award of the temporary total rating based on the date of entrance into the hospital for service-connected disability, the date of institution of hospital treatment for a service-connected disability, or the date of qualifying outpatient treatment for service-connected disability; and

WHEREAS, section 5111, added by Public Law 97-253, now provides that the payment period for such temporary total ratings does not commence until the first day of the calendar month following the month in which the award is effective, except where hospitalization or treatment commences and terminates in the same month; and

WHEREAS, veterans under a temporary total service-connected disability are, under section 5111, deprived of any increase in compensation to offset the total disability during the first month in which temporary total disability occurs; and

WHEREAS, this deprival and consequent delay in the payment of increased compensation on account of total disability often jeopardizes the financial security of disabled veterans and often unfairly causes them hardship; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, supports legislation seeking an exemption of the temporary total ratings from this provision of section 5111 of title 38, United States Code.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 218—LEGISLATIVE

SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO REQUIRE JUDICIAL ENFORCEMENT OF THE STATUTORY BENEFIT-OF-THE-DOUBT RULE

WHEREAS, the benefit-of-the-doubt rule in law mandates that the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) will resolve any question of fact in favor of the claimant when the evidence in support of the fact alleged is at least of equal weight as that in opposition; and

WHEREAS, VA can therefore lawfully find against a claimant on a question of fact only where the greater weight, a preponderance, of the evidence is against the claimant; and

WHEREAS, the Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims is charged with enforcing the laws governing VA claims decisions; and

WHEREAS, the Court will uphold VA's decisions on questions of fact unless they are "clearly erroneous"; and

WHEREAS, under the clearly erroneous standard applied by the Court, a finding of fact against a claimant need only to be supported by a plausible basis in the record to be upheld; and

WHEREAS, the effect of judicial review under the clearly erroneous standard is to render the benefit-of-the-doubt rule

unenforceable because VA's finding of fact against a claimant will not be reversed even though unsupported by a preponderance of the evidence and even though only supported by far less evidence such as is sufficient only to constitute a plausible basis; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, supports legislation that would require the Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims to hold unlawful and set aside any finding of fact by the VA against a claimant that is not reasonably supported by a preponderance of the evidence.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 219—LEGISLATIVE

SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO MAKE CLAIMS PROCEDURES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS EXCLUSIVE

WHEREAS, Congress designed the claims procedures of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to be informal, nonadversarial, and helpful to claimants for veterans' benefits; and

WHEREAS, when Congress enacted legislation to end the long-standing statutory preclusion against judicial review of VA decisions, it stated its intent to preserve the informal, nonadversarial, and helpful characteristics of the administrative claims process; and

WHEREAS, Congress expressly stated its intent that the courts were not to superimpose their own rules on those prescribed in title 38, United States Code, and in regulations of the Secretary of Veterans Affairs in accordance with title 38; and

WHEREAS, the courts have ignored congressional intent and have imposed a variety of new rules upon the administrative process to serve the courts' own purposes; and

WHEREAS, this self-serving action by the courts has fundamentally changed the VA claims processes in the very ways Congress sought to avoid; and

WHEREAS, this has resulted in increased formalities and made the process more complex and burdensome for claimants and VA, merely to accommodate the courts' desire for a more formal record like that produced in adversarial litigation; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, supports legislation to make procedures of VA exclusive for the administrative claims process.

* * *

RESOLUTION NO. 220—LEGISLATIVE

PROVIDE FOR AN ADEQUATE NUMBER OF NATIONAL CEMETERIES

WHEREAS, veterans who have served their country honorably and faithfully are entitled to a decent burial and final resting place; and

WHEREAS, these veterans should be assured of this final benefit; and

WHEREAS, the National Cemetery Administration of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has indicated it expects annual veteran deaths to increase nine percent from 550,000 in 1998 to 601,000 in 2003, and peak at 620,000 in 2008; and

WHEREAS, the VA is not committed to build cemeteries in the geographical areas of the United States in which the need for burial space for veterans is greatest, but rather only evaluate the potential establishment of additional national cemeteries in areas of the country identified in the 1987 and 1994 reports to Congress within the framework of the Department's strategic planning and budgeting process; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled in Orlando, Florida, August 21-25, 1999, urges the VA to develop a plan to establish national

cemeteries in areas of the United States determined to be in need of such cemeteries to meet the increasing burial needs of veterans and their families.

COMMANDER KISTLER: Thank you very much, Dick. I'll entertain a second to that motion. Mike 2.

MR. NICK LUCIANI: I make a second to accept the motion. Nick Luciani, Department of New York, junior vice-commander, Chapter 18.

COMMANDER KISTLER: Thank you. Is there question on the motion? All in favor, Aye; opposed. The Ayes have it. The motion is carried.

Thank you very much, Dick.

ADJUTANT WILSON: Well, I'm going to give you the last of the winners of the Disney Park tickets.

Paul Edward Fox from Kansas; Frank Desanna, who's registered as a guest; Harry E. Yaukey, Sr. from Maryland; Alfred W. Grajek from Illinois. Nicholas Dilthey is a guest. Ernest E. O'Brien from Massachusetts; Douglas G.Herrle from Texas; Richard J. McCoy from New Jersey; Carter Hall, who's a guest; Oliver E. Meadows from Texas; Joseph M. Johnson from Indiana.

Bob Uth, who we have as a VIP, and I want to tell you something. You don't know anything about Bob Uth. Bob is the one who has produced all of our videos that you saw on Saturday.

Jerome D. Gordon from Colorado; Daniel Memmesheimer from Washington. Are you ready for this one? Edward G. Galian from New York. I'll tell you I didn't do it.

COMMANDER KISTLER: Thank you.

We will now ask Chaplain Todd to close with prayer.

CHAPLAIN TODD: May the grace of God and the sweet communion of His Holy Spirit rest, rule and abide with each one of us henceforth and forevermore. Amen.

COMMANDER KISTLER: The convention stands in recess until 8:30 Wednesday morning.

(Whereupon, the meeting recessed at 3:30 o'clock p.m., August 23, 1999.)

FINAL BUSINESS SESSION

August 25, 1999

The Final Business Session of the Disabled American Veterans 78th National Convention convened in the Coronado Ballroom of the Coronado Springs Resort, Orlando, Florida, Wednesday morning, August 25, 1999, and was called to order at 8:30 o'clock a.m. by Commander Andrew A. Kistler.

COMMANDER ANDREW A. KISTLER: The convention will please come to order. All rise. Join me in the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag.

(Pledge of Allegiance)

COMMANDER KISTLER: Chaplain Todd, would you lead us in prayer?

CHAPLAIN TODD: Lord God, we come now with those who have reached new heights and new levels of understanding of this great organization by attending meetings and workshops and sharing insight as members who represent veterans, disabled veterans throughout this great land, and we thank You.

And Lord, we bring before You those who are sick among us, like Ernie Balcom and others who have given a lot of time and talent and resources to this great organization. And Lord, for those who have families in Texas who have experienced the devastation of a hurricane, we pray that You'll continue to give them that peace that surpasses all human understanding in knowing that You still are a Great God, and this still is a great land called America.

Lord, we come now to this final chapter of this week in this great convention. We pray that you'll continue to give us the type of wisdom and understanding that will continue to be a part of our lives as disabled American veterans and representatives of this great organization. And Lord, we thank You for these moments of fellowship. In His Holy Name we pray. Amen.

COMMANDER KISTLER: In order for a delegate to be heard at this convention, he must be recognized by the Chair. Only those delegates at a microphone will be recognized. Upon being so recognized, the delegate must state his name, chapter number and the state he represents.

I will now call on the Constitution and Bylaws for a final report.

MR. TANNENBAUM: Commander, convention delegates, I will now proceed with the second reading of the proposed changes to the Constitution and Bylaws. In the interest of time, I will read only the resolution number and the RESOLVED portions of the resolutions, copies of which have been placed on your seats.

Resolution Number 198. RESOLVED to amend Article 3 of the National Bylaws of the Disabled American Veterans by adding or omitting text as follows: Section 3.12, Election of National Executive Committee Members. Add a new Paragraph 3 as follows:

> Paragraph 3. Voting for all purposes at district meetings held at the National Convention shall be based on voting strength as determined under Section 3.6.

I move for the adoption of Resolution Number 198.

COMMANDER KISTLER: Second to that adoption? Mike 2, go ahead.

MR. JOHN F. REGAN: Regan, 114, Massachusetts, seconds the motion.

COMMANDER KISTLER: Thank you. Question on the motion? All in favor, say Aye; opposed. The Ayes have it.

MR. TANNENBAUM: Resolution Number 199. RESOLVED to amend Article 9 of the indicated sections of the National Bylaws of the Disabled American Veterans by adding or omitting text as follows. Article 9, Chapters, Section 9.3, Financial Records, Reports, Paragraph 1. Omit the last two sentences and insert instead the following:

> If, in the opinion of the national organization or the state department, a financial audit of the chapter is necessary and the national commander or state commander so authorizes it, such audit will be conducted by the national organization or state department at chapter expense. The above provision shall not exempt the chapter from the requirement of filing an annual financial report with the state department.

I move for the adoption of Resolution Number 199.

COMMANDER KISTLER: Is there a second to the motion? Mike 3.

MR. ROBERT N. PETUCCI: Robert Petucci, Chapter 185, New York, seconds that motion.

COMMANDER KISTLER: Thank you. Question on the motion? All in favor say Aye; opposed. The Ayes have it. The motion's carried.

MR. TANNENBAUM: Resolution Number 200. RESOLVED to amend Article 10 of the National Bylaws of the Disabled American Veterans by adding or omitting text as follows: Article 10, Auxiliaries and Their Subordinate Units, Section 10.2, Financial Records, Officer Reports, Women's Auxiliary and NOTR, Paragraph 2 omit the last two sentences and insert instead the following:

> If, in the opinion of the national organization or the state department, a financial audit of the subordinate unit is necessary and the national commander or state commander so authorizes it, such audit will be conducted by the national organization or state department at the expense of the subordinate unit. The foregoing provision shall not exempt a subordinate unit from the requirement of filing an annual financial report with the state department.

I move for the adoption of Resolution Number 200.

COMMANDER KISTLER: Mike 2.

MR. REGAN: Mike 2, John Regan, 114, Massachusetts, so seconds.

COMMANDER KISTLER: Question on the motion? All in favor, say Aye; opposed. The Ayes have it. The motion is carried.

MR. TANNENBAUM: Number 201. RESOLVED to amend Article 11 of the National Bylaws of the Disabled American Veterans by adding or omitting text as follows: Article 11, Membership, Section 11.4,

Duration of Membership.

For membership to be valid for any membership year, it must be initiated or renewed by a minimum payment of dues of $20 as specified in Section 11.9. Additional payments may be made at any time. The full amount as specified under the provisions of Section 11.9, Paragraph 2 may be paid at any time. When the membership is paid for in full, it continues throughout the member's life, except as otherwise specified in these Bylaws. If not paid in full, membership shall continue only so long as there are sufficient funds to make distribution under Section 11.10, after which, membership must be renewed. On renewal, the member's account shall reflect full credit for previously paid installment amounts.

Section 11.6, Basic Rights and Privileges.

No member shall be expelled or limited in any of the rights and privileges of membership, except as hereinafter specified in Article 16. He or she shall have all the benefits of chapter, state department and national membership.

Section 11.9, Membership Dues.

Paragraph 1. Minimum dues shall be $20 and shall be for the membership year or any part thereof. The membership year starts July 1st and ends the following June 30th. Dues will be applied toward becoming a member for life and will be credited directly in the individual's membership account as established under Paragraph 2 below. Once the appropriate full membership amount has been paid into the account, no further payment shall be required.

Paragraph 2. Those eligible who have not attained the age of 41 before July 1st of the current year may become a member for life upon payment of $150; those who are between the ages of 41 and 60, upon payment of $125; those who are between the ages of 61 and 70, upon payment of $100; and those who have attained the age of 71 or over, upon payment of $75.

Paragraph 3. Notwithstanding anything in this article to the contrary, upon attaining the age of 80, no person eligible for membership shall be required to pay either initial dues or the balance due of any existing account and shall be immediately declared a member for life in the Disabled American Veterans.

I move for the adoption of Resolution Number 201.

COMMANDER KISTLER: I'll accept a second from Mike 2.

MR. ALBERT H. LINDEN, JR.: Al Linden, delegate, Gator 90, Florida, seconds the motion.

COMMANDER KISTLER: Thank you. Question on the motion? All in favor, say Aye; opposed. The Ayes have it. The motion is carried.

MR. TANNENBAUM: Resolution 202. RESOLVED to amend Article 11 of the National Bylaws of the Disabled American Veterans by adding or omitting text as follows: Article 11, Section 11.10, Paragraphs 1, 2 and 3, to omit the following words: "provided there are sufficient funds in the members' account," and capitalize the word "The" immediately thereafter.

I move for the adoption of Resolution Number 202.

COMMANDER KISTLER: Mike 2 for a second.

MR. REGAN: John Regan, 114, Massachusetts, so seconds.

COMMANDER KISTLER: Thank you. Question on the motion? All in favor, say Aye; opposed. The Ayes have it. The motion is carried.

MR. TANNENBAUM: That completes the reading and adoption of the resolutions pertaining to amendments to the National Bylaws.

The Constitution and Bylaws Committee considered one resolution which I will read at this time, and it applies to the letter that is on your seats from National Judge Advocate Galian.

RESOLVED that the following resolution, having been supported by a majority of the Convention Constitutions and Bylaws Committee, be submitted to the National Convention and recommended for its adoption: Resolution Number 249.

WHEREAS, the Disabled American Veterans National Constitution and Bylaws Committee, meeting at its convention in Orlando, Florida, this 23rd day of August, 1999 and the

Interim Constitution and Bylaws Committee have both concurred in the comments and interpretations of the National Judge Advocate with respect to the usage of the DAV overseas cap; NOW

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that it is the sense of the convention assembled this 25th day of August, 1999 in Orlando, Florida that the comments and interpretation of the National Judge Advocate in his letter to the National Adjutant dated July 26th, 1999 regarding the usage of the DAV overseas caps is correct.

I move for the adoption of Resolution Number 249.

COMMANDER KISTLER: Mike 2 for a second.

MR. REGAN: John Regan, Massachusetts Number 114, so seconds.

COMMANDER KISTLER: Thank you. Question on the motion? All in favor, say Aye; opposed. The motion is carried.

MR. TANNENBAUM: Commander, that completes the resolutions that the committee recommended for adoption. At this time, I would like to thank our two committee advisors, Fred Bristol and Dick Sarazzin for their aid and assistance. And I move that the committee recommendations report be accepted and that the resolutions be adopted and that the committee be dismissed with thanks of the convention.

COMMANDER KISTLER: Is there a second on the motion? Mike 2.

MR. REGAN; John Regan, 114 Massachusetts, so seconds.

COMMANDER KISTLER: Thank you. Question on the motion? All in favor, say Aye; opposed. Motion carried and we thank you. (Applause)

Will you please welcome Jim Tanner of Massachusetts, newly elected president of the Commanders and Adjutants Association for 1999 and 2000. (Applause)

MR. JAMES H. TANNER: Thank you, Commander Kistler. Members at the head table, delegates to this convention: It gives me a privilege to represent the Commanders and Adjutants Association for the upcoming year, and we reaffirm our strong commitment to this great national organization.

I would like to recognize and introduce elected officers and appointed officers of the Commanders and Adjutants Association. Behind me we have Vice-President James O. Stewart. On the Executive Committee is Irvin Eddy, James Clem, Gregory Reed, Wally Tyson, Clifford Percy and Don Schmitt. (Applause) The immediate past president is Harry Yaukey.

The appointed officers of the C&A this year are: Secretary-Treasurer David Tannenbaum; Judge Advocate Tom Daley; Chaplain George Le Porte; Sergeants-at-Arms Russell T. Henderson, Steve Perkins, Dave Goliver; Assistant Secretary-Treasurer Sloan Hoopes.

On the Resolutions Committee are J. McDowell, William Hunter, Jimmy Baker. The Audit Finance Committee is Tom Johns, Bill Novak, Woody Lechausse. Constitution and Bylaws is John Gilpin, Carl Bailey, Bill Hunter. Special Projects: Rob Reynolds, Jim Powers, Jack Franqui, Dan Stack, Dave Goliver and Wayne Douglass.

Thank you, Commander, for the privilege of announcing the C&A officers.

Before I leave, the C&A would like to present a check to the DAV National Service Foundation for $1500.

COMMANDER KISTLER: We'll certainly accept that. (Applause) Thank you. Thank you and congratulations one and all.

Will you please welcome the newly elected Imperial Golden Rodent of the National Order of Trench Rats, Larry A. Polzin of California. (Boos)

MR. LARRY A. POLZIN: Thank you. It is with great pleasure that the National Order of Trench Rats makes the following donation at our 75th Anniversary Rendezvous here in Orlando, Florida. To the Colorado Trust Fund, $2,000; to the National DAV Service Foundation, $1,000. To date, the National Order of Trench Rats has donated over $211,500 to the DAV Service Foundation.

This year has been a trying year for the Trench Rats, but our membership continues to grow, more so in fact that the volunteers of the Trench Rats is even greater. It is hard to estimate this year's total dollars donated within the VAVS programs, but it is estimated that over $100,000 was given in dollars and donated

items. We only hope that next year we can stand before you with even greater numbers and greater donations.

Thank you for your total cooperation and support this year as both organizations strive in helping our veterans, widows and their dependents.

I'd like to turn these two checks over.

We have one more donation to give. A resolution here, one of our departed Imperial Golden Rodents:

God has seen in His infinite wisdom to call to the great beyond Jack E. Follis, Imperial Golden Rodent Number 56; and

WHEREAS, he did in fact diligently as an imperial officer help lead the National Order of Trench Rats to its prominent position it holds today in the service to the disabled American veterans;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the National Order of Trench Rats assembled at this 75th National Rendezvous in Orlando, Florida, that we recognize his outstanding service by contributing a sum of $100 in the memorial to him to be placed in the Rehabilitation Fund of the Disabled American Veterans Service Foundation, the income of which shall be used from time to time toward the maintenance of the nationwide rehabilitation activities of the disabled American veterans and their dependents; and

IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED that his name be inscribed on the memorial honor roll so all may see and appreciate his sacrifices and devotion to the cause of the Disabled American Veterans exemplified by Jack E. Follis, Imperial Golden Rodent 56, 1980-1981.

Thank you. (Applause)

COMMANDER KISTLER: Thank you very much and congratulations.

The registration of delegates is now closed. I will now call for a final report of the Credentials Committee.

MR. SPALDING: Comrade Commander, National Adjutant, national officers, national staff and delegates: This is the final report and reflects the total registration at 4:00 p.m., August the 24th, 1999. At the present time, we have 558 chapters, 46 departments, 30 national officers, 13 past national commanders, for a total of 1,362 delegates and 41 alternates, for a total vote of 10,289.

Comrade Commander, this completes the final report of the Credentials Committee, and I move its adoption.

COMMANDER KISTLER: Is there a second to the motion? Mike 2.

MR. HARVEY D. SLOTMAN: Harvey Slotman, 10th District, Chapter 2, Grand Rapids, Michigan, so supports.

COMMANDER KISTLER: Question on the motion? All in favor, say Aye; opposed. The motion is carried.

MR. SPALDING: Thank you, Commander.

COMMANDER KISTLER: Thank you, sir.

I now call for the Committee on Nomination of National Officers.

MR. DENNIS A. JOYNER: Comrade Commander and delegates: The National Convention Committee on Nomination of National Officers was called to order for its first business session on August 23rd, 1999 by Committee Advisors Bill Leach and Gene Murphy. The first order of business was the election of a convention committee chairman. Dennis Joyner from Florida was nominated for chairman. There being no further nominations, Dennis Joyner was elected chairman.

The next order of business was the nomination and election of a secretary. Mike Tempesta of California was nominated and elected as secretary of the committee.

Eight candidates were interviewed, and the following individuals are recommended to serve as national officers for the Disabled American Veterans for 1999-2000. For the office of national commander, Mike Dobmeier from North Dakota; for the office of national senior vice-commander, Armando Albarran from Texas; for the office of national 1st junior vice-commander, George Steese from California; for the office of national 2nd junior vice-commander, Ed Heath from Maine; for the office of national 3rd junior vice-commander, Alan Bowers from Massachusetts; for the office of national 4th junior vice-commander, Jim Sursely from

Florida; for the office of national judge advocate, Edward Galian from New York; and for the office of national chaplain, the Reverend Alfonso Todd, Jr. from Michigan.

Commander Kistler, this completes my report, and I move for its adoption and the discharge of the committee with a vote of thanks.

COMMANDER KISTLER: Is there a second to that motion? Mike 2.

MR. JAMES E. BIXBY: Jim Bixby, Chapter 29, Massachusetts, seconds the motion.

COMMANDER KISTLER: Question? All in favor, say Aye; opposed. The Ayes have it. The motion is carried. Thank you. (Applause)

You have heard the report of the Committee on Nomination of National Officers, and they have nominated Michael Dobmeier for national commander. Here to second that nomination is Greg Seurer of North Dakota.

MR. GREGORY A. SEURER: National Commander Kistler, National Adjutant Wilson, national officers, ladies and gentlemen: It is with great pleasure that the Department of North Dakota seconds the nomination of Michael E. Dobmeier for the high office of national commander of the Disabled American Veterans.

Leadership, dedication to our mission and service to our fellow veterans are all necessary qualities to lead this great organization. Mike Dobmeier has all these qualities and has demonstrated them in an outstanding manner throughout his life.

Mike served in the United States Navy until 1972 when a submarine fire changed his life forever. He suffered second- and third-degree burns over 30 percent of his upper body when an engine crankcase oil heater exploded, spraying him with flaming oil. He was evacuated to the Naval Hospital at Bremerton, Washington and later to Brook Army Hospital in San Antonio, Texas, where he underwent extensive skin grafting and lengthy hospitalization.

He fought through long, slow months of hospitalization and painful rehabilitation, yet he never gave up. Even though he was left severely scarred and had every reason to be an angry and embittered young man, he never gave up on himself, his nation or his fellow disabled veterans.

Ladies and gentlemen, Mike Dobmeier's a man who has never given up, and he never will. He's a man who has vowed to live life to its fullest and demonstrates that vow every day. Disabled veterans in North Dakota are proud of the leadership he's brought our state, proud of the outstanding service as he's moved through the chapter and department offices and proud of his work on behalf of all of us as a national officer.

Through it all, Mike's wife, Sandy, and his family have been his partners. They've stood by his side in the toughest of times and shared in the pride of his accomplishments.

Mike is a committed, articulate spokesman for disabled veterans and their families, and he will never give up our fight for what's right, and in every word and action he will never let us forget that we are the proud men and women who served and sacrificed when our country called.

Delegates to the 78th National Convention of the Disabled American Veterans, on behalf of the proud DAV members of North Dakota, the 14th District, and everyone who's proud to call him friend, I hereby humbly second the nomination of Michael E. Dobmeier for office of national commander of the Disabled American Veterans. (Applause)

COMMANDER KISTLER: The Chair will now call for any further nominations for the office of national commander. The Chair will now call for any further nominations for the office of national commander. For the third time, the Chair will now call for any further nominations for the office of national commander. Mike 3.

MR. PAUL W. SMATHERS, JR.: Comrade Commander, I move that nominations be closed and the adjutant be directed to cast a unanimous ballot for Mike Dobmeier as commander.

COMMANDER KISTLER: I need a second to that motion. Mike 3.

MR. PETUCCI: Robert Petucci, Chapter 185, New York, seconds that motion with happiness.

COMMANDER KISTLER: All in favor, say Aye; opposed. Motion carried.

Mr. Adjutant.

ADJUTANT WILSON: I, Arthur H. Wilson, national adjutant of the Disabled American Veterans, hereby cast one unanimous ballot for Michael Dobmeier for the office of national commander. (Standing ovation)

COMMANDER KISTLER: The Nominating Committee has nominated Armando Albarran for the office of national senior vice-commander. I will now call for any further nominations for national senior vice-commander, once. I will now call for any further nominations for national senior vice-commander, twice. I will now call for any further nominations for national senior vice-commander, three times.

If there are no further nominations, I will close the nominations and declare Armando Albarran elected as national senior vice-commander. (Applause) Congratulations.

The Nominating Committee has nominated George Steese for the office of national 1st junior vice-commander. I will now call for any further nominations for national 1st junior vice-commander, once. I will now call for any further nominations for national 1st junior vice-commander, twice. I will now call for any further nominations for national 1st junior vice-commander, three times.

If there are no further nominations, I will close the nominations and declare George Steese elected as national 1st junior vice-commander. (Applause) Congratulations, George.

The Nominating Committee has nominated Edward Heath for the office of national 2nd junior vice-commander. I will now call for any further nominations for national 2nd junior vice-commander, once. I will now call for any further nominations for national 2nd junior vice-commander, twice. I will now call for any further nominations for national 2nd junior vice-commander, three times.

If there are no further nominations, I will close the nominations and declare Edward Heath elected national 2nd junior vice-commander. (Applause)

Mike 2.

MR. CHARLES MERRIFIELD: Merrifield from Kentucky. I make the motion we dispense with the rules of the convention and adopt the slate.

COMMANDER KISTLER: That, sir, is out of order.

The Nominating Committee has nominated Alan Bowers for the office of national 3rd junior vice-commander. I will now call for any further nominations for national 3rd junior vice-commander. I will now call for any further nominations for national 3rd junior vice-commander. I will now call for any further nominations for national 3rd junior vice-commander, the third time.

If there are no further nominations, I close the nominations and declare Alan Bowers elected as national 3rd junior vice-commander. (Applause)

The Nominating Committee has nominated James Sursely for the office of national 4th junior vice-commander. I will now call for any further nominations for national 4th junior vice-commander. I will now call for any further nominations for national 4th junior vice-commander. I will now call for any further nominations for national 4th junior vice-commander for the third time.

If there are no further nominations, I will close the nominations and declare James Sursely elected as national 4th junior vice-commander. (Applause)

The Nominating Committee has nominated Edward Galian for the office of national judge advocate. I will now call for any further nominations for national judge advocate. I will now call for any further nominations for national judge advocate. I will now call for any further nominations for national judge advocate, the third and final time.

If there are no further nominations, I will close the nominations and declare Edward Galian elected as national judge advocate. (Applause)

The Nominating Committee has nominated Reverend Alfonso Todd for the office of national chaplain. I will now call for any further nominations for national chaplain. I will now call for any further nominations for national chaplain. I will now call for any further nominations for national chaplain for the third and final

time.

If there are no further nominations, I close the nominations and declare Reverend Alfonso Todd elected as national chaplain. (Applause)

I will now instruct the national adjutant to cast one unanimous ballot for these officers.

ADJUTANT WILSON: I, Arthur H. Wilson, national adjutant of the Disabled American Veterans, cast one unanimous ballot for Armando Albarran for national senior vice-commander; George Steese for national 1st junior vice-commander; Edward Heath for national 2nd junior vice-commander; Alan Bowers for national 3rd junior vice-commander; James Sursely for national 4th junior vice-commander; Edward Galian for national judge advocate; and Reverend Alfonso Todd for national chaplain. (Applause)

COMMANDER KISTLER: I would request that all of the wives of the elected officers come to the stage, please, and their families. Wives, families and children. (Applause)

I will now ask our new national commander for any remarks he may have. (Applause)

COMMANDER-ELECT MICHAEL E. DOBMEIER: Thanks, Andy. National Commander Kistler, National Adjutant Wilson, national officers, honored guests, friends and delegates to the 78th National Convention of the Disabled American Veterans: Thank you for the confidence you've placed in me. (Applause)

I've just been given the best job I could ever imagine, but believe me, folks, I'm humbled at the prospect of standing before so many who have done so much for this great organization.

I'd like to briefly thank those most responsible for me being here: Past National Commanders Lyle Pearson, Gene Murphy, Dick Marbes and Tom McMasters for appearing with me before the Nominating Committee; my Campaign Committee, and especially Greg Seurer, who was kind of like the Energizer bunny. He's full of enthusiasm and he's full of ideas, and he put his whole heart into this thing.

National Adjutant Art Wilson, whose steady hand has led us back to a sound management and fiscal position. (Applause). And the members of the Departments of North Dakota, South Dakota, Minnesota and Montana, the small but mighty 14th District, for their support both personally in their time and their talents, and their financial support during this campaign. And all of you present for having the faith to elect me as your national commander.

Please allow me to introduce my family whose love and loyal support has enabled me to be here. My wife of 24 years, and your Auxiliary 14th District NEC, Sandy (applause); daughter, Michelle and son Mark (applause); my sister, Susi, her husband, Joe Litzinger, and their children, Tim, Amy and Kathy (applause); my sister, Becky, and her husband, Dean Wong (applause); my brother, Perry, his wife, Susan, and son, Jon (applause); and last, but not least, my mother, Marian Welwood, who at this time is almost as proud of me as I am of her. (Applause)

At least three things have remained unchanged since the DAV's creation nearly 80 years ago. (1) We cannot assume that Congress or anyone else will look out for disabled veterans. Indeed, we know many legislators have veterans programs in their gunsights and will cut or eliminate them if we don't watch them very closely. It's a reality that politicians have to cater to competing interests, and if we fail to protect our interests, funding for veterans programs will be diverted elsewhere.

Someone once defined politics this way: Politics is the gentle art of getting votes from the poor and campaign funds from the rich by promising to protect each from the other. In our case, we have to make sure they don't take funds from veterans programs and give them to some other group that manages to be more aggressive, more determined, more vocal or better organized than we are.

(2) It follows that we have to remain well organized and have strength in numbers to get the attention of elected officials, the very principle underlying the DAV's formation. This hasn't changed, and we can safely assume that it never will.

(3) The third thing that's remained unchanged, I am very proud to say, is that the DAV has continued to be a leader in the area of veterans service and legislation. The DAV was founded on the principle that this nation's first duty is to care for its wartime disabled, their dependents and their survivors, and that mission will never, ever change. (Applause)

The game they are playing in Washington is hard-hearted and complicated and unforgiving. There is no sentimentality about it. And while it's true that we have friends in the VA, in the Congress and elsewhere in Washington, there are also people, powerful people, who think it costs too much to provide quality medical services for our veterans.

In reality, though, the VA with 17 and a half billion dollars in expenditures, treating 3.4 million veterans, has a per-patient cost nearly a thousand dollars lower than Medicare. Furthermore, the VA provides a wide range of specialized care tailored to meet the unique needs of veterans. Spinal cord injury medicine, blind rehabilitation, amputee programs, advanced rehabilitation, prosthetics, post-traumatic stress disorder treatments, mental health services and long-term care are at the very heart of the VA health care system. Unquestionably, the VA does much better at providing those kinds of veteran-specific services than the private sector.

Top-notch research at VA facilities benefits all Americans, not just veterans. VA medical prosthetic and health service researchers have received Nobel Prizes. Major breakthroughs pioneered by the VA include the cardiac pacemaker, the CAT scan, and the development of radio-immune assay techniques which are invaluable to the entire health care profession.

The VA was also responsible for discovering a cure for tuberculosis and leads the nation in geriatric research, education, training and long-term care.

Veterans need and deserve a quality and efficient VA medical system, and so do America's taxpayers. (Applause) Thank you.

Instead of clamoring to dismantle the VA medical system, the wiser policy would be to provide sufficient funds to strengthen this invaluable resource. Congress must protect and improve the veterans health care system. This country cannot afford to continue draining the lifeblood out of the hospitals and scores of clinics, nursing homes and other facilities that care for America's proud veterans.

And in purely material terms, we can ill afford to lose the thousands of dedicated health care professionals and support staff who provide high-quality care and contribute to the economic stability of communities across this country.

That's why the DAV is watching developments so closely. We want to make sure that dollar savings alone don't drive the decisions being made in our nation's capital. After all, if the bottom line is all that matters, disabled veterans and their families can and will be heard. That's something the DAV cannot allow to happen. (Applause)

You and I must stand firm in our defense of the rights we've earned. Our departments and chapters must be ready to go into action immediately whenever our legislative team in Washington needs to rally the troops. I'm not worried, because you've proven that you're seasoned forces, prepared for battle on the legislative front.

DAV members across this country have been urging their senators and representatives to reject the drastic cuts called for in the budget blueprint. These cuts would mean hundreds of thousands of disabled and needy veterans would be denied health care. Veterans hospitals and clinics would have to eliminate medical and nursing staff positions and cut back on health care services.

We did not risk our lives and health for America only to find out that in our time of need, the health care we have earned is now threatened. (Applause)

Congress has a responsibility to provide sufficient federal funding each year to cover the cost of health care for our nation's sick and disabled veterans, and the DAV is here to see that

Congress does the right thing. (Applause)

To help get that job done, our department and chapter leaders must stay active in the DAV's grassroots efforts to ensure that the VA benefits and services are not further diminished, not only by a budget-minded Congress, but by an uninformed one as well. We must remind Congress that we're a vigorous, responsible, nationwide organization that intends to keep fighting at the polls and elsewhere for needed veterans programs. (Applause)

We need you to maintain contact and relationships with your legislators or members of their staffs. We need you to keep an established network within your states that remains ready to swing into action when we call on you. We need you to be knowledgeable and to stay informed on veterans issues, so you can discuss them convincingly with your government officials. You and other members like you are essential to our effectiveness, and these things are essential to your effectiveness.

This is a goal and a challenge worthy of our best efforts. I hope each of you will answer our call to action, and I'd like to know right now: Are you with me?

(Response of "Yes," with applause)

COMMANDER-ELECT DOBMEIER: I also want to praise our chapter and department leaders for the invaluable partnership they've shown in other areas as well. During the past year, we've identified problem areas that needed work, and we worked on them. We found opportunities, and we went after them. We, you took the ball and ran with it, and it shows.

We didn't do it with mirrors or magic. We did it with imagination, hard work, sound investment in people and programs, and hands-on management. You have every reason to be proud of those accomplishments. (Applause)

For nearly 80 years, commitment and positive action have allowed the DAV to establish an unmatched reputation of service to our nation's veterans and their families. Disabled veterans deserve the best: the best health care delivery system, the best counseling, the best veterans service programs a grateful nation can provide. (Applause)

We are all about insuring that our veterans get the best. The DAV is bringing new hope into those lives, and it's marching forward with the standard of justice in its hand. And I thank you, each of you in this room, for carrying that standard today and on into the future.

We'll continue to move forward in all the other services we provide, whether that be our National Service Program, voluntary service, our Transportation Network, employment, legislation, membership and more.

And as the DAV builds for the future, I am certain we will face more than our share of adversity. A wise man once said, "Progress always involved risk. You can't steal second base and keep your foot on first." Change provides opportunities to make new friends, form new alliances, see a different perspective, change ourselves for the better, and make life better for others.

Yes, it takes courage to change, to risk. It takes courage to think creatively about what if. It takes courage to break through barriers. A famous writer once said, "We all see and understand the need for change and instinctively avoid it at all costs."

Taking risks means moving forward while others are waiting for better times. Taking risks means moving forward while others are waiting for proven results. Taking risks means moving forward while others are waiting for applause on their past performance. The greatest risk of all, however, is to take no risks, to make no changes, because ultimately all that any of us can do is to do our part during our time.

We cannot re-write the past, nor can we guarantee the future, but we can and we must be vigilant in the time given to us. (Applause)

Let me conclude with these thoughts. In the end, we are an intensely human and humane business. People turn to us. Families turn to us when they need the special help we provide. They come to us with their trust, with their hope, and, quite often, their prayers. And we must, we absolutely must, help meet their needs.

That is the business we are in. We must do it with compassion, with wisdom and with understanding. It is enormously challenging. It is also enormously rewarding.

There's a story of the lamps that hung outside Albert Schweitzer's jungle hospital, and on the lamps were these words, "Here at whatever hour you come, you will find light and help and human kindness."

To me, that's what the DAV is all about, because here when people come, we will provide light and help and human kindness. (Applause) It is something that I and all those who work for the DAV will always honor, will always cherish and will always provide, because in the end, it is why we exist.

I pledge to do my best to ensure that the DAV will continue its crusade to make sure that service-connected disabled veterans and their families receive the full measure of care our government has promised.

I thank you again for your confidence that you've placed in me and look forward to working with all of you in the coming year. Have a safe trip home. God bless you and the United States of America. (Standing ovation)

COMMANDER KISTLER: Thank you, Mike, for that inspiring speech.

I will now call for any remarks from our newly elected national senior vice-commander, Armando Albarran. (Applause)

SENIOR VICE-COMMANDER-ELECT ARMANDO C. ALBARRAN: Thank You, God, for this life. National Commander Kistler, National Adjutant Art Wilson, national officers, guests, families, national staff, my fellow members of the 78th National Convention: I'd like to say I pledge to you -- first of all, I'd like to say thank you for electing me as your senior vice-commander for your vote and your confidence. (Applause)

I would like to pledge to you that I will continue to promote the goals and the mission of this great organization in making sure that we build better lives for disabled veterans and their families. (Applause)

I would like to recognize the person that has given me the support 365 days, my partner, my friend, my wife, and we'll be celebrating our 30th anniversary in 30 days. Would you please stand up and be recognized. Tillie, I love you. (Applause)

In addition, I would also like to recognize my district, my campaign personnel. If you are here present, please stand as I call your name. Bill Morin, Joe Garcia, Bruce Burgess, Dennis Nixon, Glen Neal, Larry Getty, and the whole delegation of the Department of Texas. Will you please stand now and get recognized. (Applause)

I would like to say again thank you for the opportunity to continue to serve you as a national officer. Thank you very much and God bless. (Applause)

COMMANDER KISTLER: Thank you, Armando.

We will now hear remarks from our newly elected 1st national junior vice-commander George Steese. (Applause)

1ST JUNIOR VICE-COMMANDER-ELECT GEORGE H. STEESE: Commander Kistler, Newly Elected Commander Mike Dobmeier, National Adjutant Art Wilson, staff members, fellow officers, families, guests, but most of all members: Thank you for your confidence that you've had in me over the past couple of years, and to elect me to a third year as a national officer.

I have a few people to recognize right now. My wife could not be here today due to a family emergency. However, my daughter, Elly, and her husband, Gary (applause); my sister, Cindi (applause); and the woman who's been with me since the beginning, my mother, Esther. (Applause)

I also have to look to my left and thank the 16th District for their support. California is a great state. My mentor, Ken Musselmann, has really pushed me along and has been a very good friend of mine. A very, very close friend is Mike Tempesta, who is very active in California and nationally. Dick Cosgriff, thank you for your support. Dave Phillips, who has been a true friend all along. All of the members of District 16, you mean a lot to me. I wouldn't be here without you.

But now also, to the rest of the members and delegates of this nation. I have met many of you. I have enjoyed your company, your hospitality. But most of all, I truly enjoy representing you. Thank you very much. (Applause)

COMMANDER KISTLER: Now we will hear from our newly elected national 2nd junior vice-commander, Edward Heath. (Applause)

2ND JUNIOR VICE-COMMANDER-ELECT EDWARD R. HEATH, SR.: Thanks, Commander Andy. Last year, I just have to remember that I tried thanking individually everyone east of Honolulu, Hawaii, and I'm going to cut my list a little shorter this year. But I do have some people I need to thank, beginning with the 3rd District, Maine, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Vermont, and all those good people, and particularly Gary Burns and my state commander, Norm Newell up there. If you guys would stand up, if you're in the audience. (Applause)

We're a little bit disrupted in Maine because we had one of our delegates go to the hospital the day before yesterday, I believe, with a heart attack, and he may undergo surgery as soon as he's able to here, and he's not in real good shape, Paul Bisson. And so please have Paul in your prayers, and we'd appreciate it a lot.

I also want to say it's been a great pleasure to be with Andy this year. What a team player and what a great baseball player this guy would have made. It's been great.

And Mike, those encouraging words that you put out to us, I'm sure that you're going to have everybody trying to give you all the support that they gave Andy, and I'm really looking forward to it. Thanks a lot.

And never, ever will I stand up anywhere and thank people without thanking all of my former colleagues from Florida. They're always with me. It was great to be back in Florida with great people. Thank you all. (Applause)

Boy, am I going to be in trouble if I don't -- my wife Sylvia has traveled with me all across the country this year, and she's up here. I didn't think she was going to be here. I thought she was going to be stuck taking care of our four-year-old grandson down there, but she made it, and then I forgot she made it. Sylvia. (Laughter and applause)

COMMANDER KISTLER: Thank you, Ed.

Now we will call on our newly elected national 3rd junior vice-commander, Alan Bowers. (Applause)

3RD JUNIOR VICE-COMMANDER-ELECT ALAN W. BOWERS: Thank you, Andy. Commander Kistler, Adjutant Wilson: If I may start, I'm going to start by introducing my wife so I don't get in the same problem that Ed did. Fellow delegates, my wife, Terri. (Applause) Thank you for your loving support continuing.

To the delegates from Massachusetts, to Past National Commander Vern Cardosi, Commander Ed Finn, Adjutant Tom Daley, and all of the delegates from Mass, your support has been terrific. I am truly humbled. Would you please stand, Massachusetts. (Applause)

To NSO Supervisor Dan Stack and the troops in Boston -- as a matter of fact, to all the NSOs across the country, you build better lives every single day. As a matter of fact, you are a great reason for the reputation that this organization has. Thank you very much, NSOs. (Applause)

To each of you who is a delegate at this convention, by virtue of the fact that you are a delegate, you are a leader in the DAV. It is your department folks and your chapter members who have designated you to represent them. When you act in your community, you care for other disabled veterans, you show your neighbors what the DAV is all about. By your acts, you help build and protect the reputation of the DAV. Thank you for all you do for our organization. (Applause)

COMMANDER KISTLER: Thank you, Alan.

I will now call upon our newly elected national 4th junior vice-commander, James Sursely. (Applause)

4TH JUNIOR VICE-COMMANDER-ELECT JAMES SURSELY: National Commander Andy Kistler, fellow officers, Adjutant Wilson, national staff, delegates, members and friends: Let me first of all say

thank you very much for this tremendous honor where you've elected me to be your national 4th junior vice-commander.

Secondly, and certainly not paled by the first, is the opportunity to have this take place in my home state of Florida. It's just a remarkable opportunity, not only for me, but for all the people of District 7 in the State of Florida. (Applause)

I certainly didn't get here today and accomplish this by myself, so let me start out and say thank-yous to a great number of people who've made this possible. Right down in front of us here with District 7 in Florida, I've had the opportunity to have the leadership and guidance of three past national commanders, Dennis Joyner, Al Linden, my campaign chairman, Harry McDonald; also co-chairman, Andy Marshall, supervisor of the National Service Office in Bay Pines, and his staff.

A special thank you to Seminole Chapter 30 in Sanford, Florida; my home chapter right here, Central Florida Chapter 16; and to all the members of the entire State of Florida who've encouraged me and patted me on the back and sent me on my way here to this opportunity with the national office. Thank you very much. (Applause)

You know, there's a saying that behind every successful man is a loving and supporting wife, and I'm certainly proud to announce that my wife, Jeannie is here with me today. Jeannie, would you please stand up? (Applause) Certainly without her love and support over the years, and care of my children and family, the ability for me to be here and have the time to dedicate to the DAV certainly wouldn't be possible.

Kind of an interesting story this morning. Jeannie may be getting a little gun-shy when it comes to national conventions. Last year when we were in Las Vegas, we got a call that my son had had to have emergency surgery, not anything that was real serious, but obviously a little scary.

Last night when I got back to the room, my son had injured his ankle at football practice and then fell in the bathtub taking a shower last night. And I think my daughter Mary woke up this morning before school with the flu. So Jeannie may not be too sure if there's any connection to these national conventions or not, but I hope that's the end of it.

I want to just say this and briefly comment that I viewed my candidacy for national office as a twofold picture: one of a challenge and that of opportunity. On the challenge part, I feel like it's a tremendous challenge for me to live up to the former example in professionalism and integrity of the great national line officers that we have, and I look forward to serving with them; the challenge to work with the great national staff that we have in Cold Springs and in Washington, D.C.

On the opportunity side, I look forward to the opportunity to give something back to an organization that has done so much and meant so much to me over the years, and for that, I am gratefully appreciative. Thank you very much. (Applause)

COMMANDER KISTLER: Thank you, Jim, for those remarks.

We will continue with the unfinished business of the convention.

Well, throw me out! (Laughter)

Our newly elected judge advocate, Edward Galian. (Applause)

JUDGE ADVOCATE EDWARD G. GALIAN: What am I, an asterisk here? Commander Kistler, Adjutant Art Wilson, the entire national staff and the newly elected officers, re-elected officers: It's really a pleasure and honor to be here again. I don't know how you follow the kind of act that you've just now seen amongst all these newly elected fellows that came up here.

Mike, that was probably one of the best acceptance speeches I've ever heard, and I've heard a lot of them. Don't you all agree that this guy can really pour it on? (Applause)

And I want you to know, Andy, Andy Kistler, that you've been my hero for the last 12 months up to now. But I'll forgive you anyway.

I would like to thank a couple of people who have really been so helpful to me in my job as the judge advocate. One, or course, would be Bob Gushee, with whom I commune almost every day on the

telephone, in writing, by fax or whatever. The man is just a bundle of information and knowledge, and I don't know how I'd get along without Bob.

And I tell you, there's a man here that works behind the scenes, and I don't think the convention would be what it is were it not for Fred Bristol. Is Fred here in the hall? Because if he is, I want him to stand up. This is a man that knows the Bylaws -- thank you very much, Fred (applause) -- he knows the Bylaws better than anybody I ever met, and his guidance and assistance has been invaluable to me.

Finally, last but not least, I would like to thank my friends from the State of New York. They are, I think, the salt of the earth. And I'm not just talking about those who live in New York City or New York State; I'm talking about all you other New Yorkers who have escaped or become refugees.

In particular, I blame Al Linden for grabbing off about half his membership from our ranks. Musselmann, you did pretty good in California. Arizona doesn't do badly either. I think if we got all of the members back that escaped from the Department of New York, we'd have the biggest department in the entire world. But thank you all, New Yorkers, and thanks everybody else, too.

I just want to say at this point that we've got a great organization, and I think it's going to be even greater under the guidance of Mike in the future and with the backing of Andy Kistler, who's done a fantastic job. I personally think that both these men are probably the biggest aid at this time that this organization could ever hold.

So thank you all very, very much for whatever you have done and will be doing in the ensuing year. (Applause)

I would like to at this time introduce to you, those of you who don't know, my mainstay, my guidance at home, my lovely wife, Janet Galian. (Applause) She's the boss, and I'm going to say what she always tells me not to say: We've been married 52 years. (Applause) My real gal. Thank you very much, and thank you for your support. Bye-bye.

COMMANDER KISTLER: It sounded like he was abandoning me, but at the end I think he made up, and Ed, I'm sorry for anything I've done to forget that you're back there. I know you've been behind me all year. (Laughter)

Now we'll have remarks from our newly elected chaplain, Alfonso Todd. (Applause)

CHAPLAIN TODD: It's me again, and I thank God for the opportunity to represent this great organization and my fellow comrades. To my fellow national officers, National Adjutant, guests and my comrades of the 78th Convention: I thank you for the confidence that you have in me in representing God and country. (Applause) I appreciate it.

I'd like to also thank the men and women from District 10 from the State of Michigan. Would you stand, please? (Applause)

I'd also like to thank my wife, who's the DAVA chaplain for the State of Michigan, Jerlean. (Applause) Yes, we have two chaplains in the family. Can you imagine?

This has been a good year for the national chaplain in writing articles, and many of you have commented on those articles, and I thank you. However, there was one article that was not printed, and I continue to laugh about it because I had a good time writing it. The only good article I wrote, I thought, all year. I left the convention last year fired up, and I called our politicians uncircumcised Philistines. (Laughter) It wasn't acceptable. (Laughter) You didn't know it, did you, Mike?

But it's a privilege and honor to represent God and country. And Gary Weaver and Jim Chaney are great guys, I tell you. They're just great. Let's just give them a hand. (Applause) And the reason is this, is that yesterday we had over 60 people to attend our Chaplain Workshop, and I think each one of us, after we left that session, we committed ourselves. Right, fellows; right, girls? We've committed ourselves to raising the standard of chaplaincy in the DAV.

And our intent is to establish a solidified handbook for chaplains on the state and local level, so all of us can be reading

and sharing the same information at memorial services and the rituals in our chapters. But more than that, moving off into the next millennium with chaplains who are able to say without a shadow of doubt that they represent God and country, and that DAV and DAVA is the best veterans organization in this country and which we know. (Applause)

Again, we thank each one of you for having confidence in our ability to represent this great organization, and we thank you for sharing your comments and attending our memorial services. And our hope and our prayer is that each one of you will continue in good health, and may God bless you and God bless America. (Applause)

COMMANDER KISTLER: Thank you, Rev. Todd, for those remarks.

Now, we will continue with the unfinished business of this convention. I will entertain a motion to discharge the Credentials Committee. Mike 2.

MR. THOMAS A. McMASTERS, III: Commander, Tom McMasters, past national commander. I so move.

COMMANDER KISTLER: There's been a motion. Is there a second? Mike 2.

MR. THOMAS W. LAVRICH: Thomas Lavrich, Chapter 36, District 5. I second the motion.

COMMANDER KISTLER: Question on the motion? All in favor, say Aye; opposed. The motion is carried.

Mr. Adjutant, will you read the list of the newly elected members of the National Executive Committee?

ADJUTANT WILSON: What follows is the elected members of the National Executive Committee for the year 1999 through 2000. District 1, John F. Gilpin, Rockboro, Massachusetts; District 3, Norman Newell, Hollowell, Maine; District 5, Vincent Darcangelo, Hermitage, Pennsylvania; District 7, Frank Tracy, Leesburg, Florida; District 9, Richard Williams, Sr. from Georgia; District 11, Samuel E. Lanza, Warren, Ohio; District 13, James S. Powers, Greenfield, Indiana; District 15, Mick Jones, Jefferson City, Missouri; District 17, Robert Askew, West Valley, Utah; District 19, Bradley S. Barton from Oregon; and District 21, Wayne L. Douglass from Hot Springs, Arkansas.

Those are the newly elected officers, Commander.

COMMANDER KISTLER: Rev. Todd, would you lead us in the closing prayer?

CHAPLAIN TODD: Precious Lord, as we come to the close of another grand opportunity to serve our veterans, we pray that each of us will remember our mission and the task that's set before us.

Lord God, we pray that You'll protect each one of us as we travel back to the areas of our homeland, our homes.

And Lord, we pray that You will give our officers of this great organization a very special unction of Your Holy Spirit, so that each one of us will press towards the mark of our high calling in representing veterans, especially disabled veterans and their dependents.

And Lord, we thank You now for the love and fellowship that have been shared with each one of us. We thank You, Lord, for the peace and the calmness that we've been able to carry out our responsibilities. And Lord, we thank You for another day's journey. In His Holy Name we pray. Amen.

COMMANDER KISTLER: Please remain standing. We will ask the Arizona Honor Guard to retire the Colors.

(Retirement of Colors)

COMMANDER KISTLER: Ladies and gentlemen, the 78th National Convention of the Disabled American Veterans is now adjourned.

(Whereupon, the meeting adjourned at 10:10 o'clock a.m., August 25, 1999.)

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PROCEEDINGS OF THE 77TH NATIONAL CONVENTION OF DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS AUXILIARY HELD AT ORLANDO, FLORIDA

August 21-25, 1999

OPENING BUSINESS SESSION

August 23, 1999

The Opening Business Session of the Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary 77th National Convention convened in Fiesta Ballroom 5-6 of the Coronado Springs Resort, Orlando, Florida, Monday morning, August 23, 1999, and was called to order at 9:25 o'clock a.m. by Adjutant Maria M. Tedrow.

ADJUTANT MARIA M. TEDROW: National Sergeant-at-Arms, will you please present National Commander Evelyn Dorsey to the platform. (Applause)

National Sergeant-at-Arms, will you please have the national officers escorted to the platform. We have Gertrude Tidwell, national chaplain from Oklahoma. We have Shelia Allred, national judge advocate from North Carolina. We have Jan Bennett, 4th junior vice-commander from Nevada. We have Linda Trulio, 3rd junior vice-commander from New Jersey. We have Renee Jones, 2nd junior vice-commander from North Carolina. We have Carol Gray, 1st junior vice-commander from Michigan. And we have Paula Raymond, senior vice-commander from Illinois. (Applause)

And now we have our National Convention chairman, Sunny Barzelogna from Florida. Would you please escort her to the platform? (Applause)

All right. And now we will have the past national commanders. National Sergeant-at-Arms, would you please see that the past national commanders are escorted down here to the front of the room. We have Past National Commander Lucille McCarthy from Florida. We have Past National Commander Pauline Wright from Colorado; Past National Commander Nelda Wilson from Illinois; Past National Commander Dorothy Van Hoy from Missouri; Past National Commander Chris McGuire from Maryland; Past National Commander Florence Valgardson from Utah; Past National Commander Betty Hall from Texas; Past National Commander Sally Wilton from Arizona; Past National Commander Loneita Shoemaker from Arkansas; Past National Commander Katherine Pearson from Minnesota; Past National Commander Claudia Roy from Vermont; Past National Commander Jane Troutman from North Carolina; Past National Commander Barbara Hicks from Arizona; Past National Commander Margaret Hass from that "you betcha" state of North Dakota; Immediate Past National Commander Evelynne Dunn from Nevada. (Applause)

And now we would like to present the commander or other officer that will be casting the vote for their state department, and because we are in the great state of Florida, we will present the Florida commander first: Ramona Lange of Florida; Billie Schultz, Alabama; Ellie Williams, Arizona; Senior Vice-Commander Sharon Hunter of Arkansas; California's commander, Donna Stinnett; commander of Colorado, Kathy Phelps; commander of Delaware, Merrilee Hickman; and commander of our national commander's state department, Mary Parrish; Commander Naomi Oates of Georgia; Commander Gloria Coltrin of Idaho; Commander Wilma Tripp of Illinois; Commander Carolyn Bugucki of Indiana; and the treasurer of Iowa who is representing their department, Kathy Weatherly; commander of Kansas, Betty Bergquist; commander of Kentucky, Doris Jamison; Debby Newell of Maine. She's 1st junior vice.

The commander of Maryland, Jean Skelton; the commander of Massachusetts, Maureen Fluet; the commander of Michigan, Deborah Emery; the commander of Minnesota, Gwen Skillings; the commander of Mississippi, Patricia Smith; the commander of Missouri, Amy Barnhouse; and Betty Marshall of Montana; the commander of Nebraska, Arvis Wilson; the commander of Nevada, Rose Thomas; the commander of New Hampshire, Ann Young; the commander of New Jersey, Dorothea Campanelli; the commander of New York, Kathleen Tedesco; the commander of North Carolina, Margaret Snelling; the commander of North Dakota, Anna Bradsteen; the commander of Ohio, Marcia

Mills; the commander of Oklahoma, Mamie Painter; the commander of Oregon, Marcia Read; the commander of Pennsylvania, Gloria Rexrode; the commander of Rhode Island, Marion Baker; the commander of South Carolina, Ruby Nelson; the 1st Junior vice-commander of South Dakota, Shirley Joachim.

Tennessee, Susan Henry; Texas, Beverly Barron; Utah, June Schow; Vermont, Neva Langston; Washington, Carolyn Minor; West Virginia, Linda Campbell; Wisconsin, Patricia Sobocinski; Wyoming, Mildred Long; and Puerto Rico, Gladys Seda, past state commander. (Applause)

Now, will the national sergeant-at-arms please present the State Colors of our host state, Florida?

(Presentation of Colors)

Will the national sergeant-at-arms now present the National Colors?

(Presentation of Colors)

ADJUTANT TEDROW: Will the national sergeant-at-arms post Colors.

(Posting of Colors)

ADJUTANT TEDROW: At this time, we will have the prayer by our national chaplain, Gertrude Tidwell.

CHAPLAIN GERTRUDE E. TIDWELL: Shall we pray, ladies. And while we are in prayer this morning, let's remember Dorothy Otts, our beloved sergeant-at-arms, who's very ill. And also let's pray for the people where the hurricane has come into the State of Texas.

Thank You, Lord, once again, where You have brought us together. We pray for a successful convention. We ask Your blessings upon our officers as they lead us through our business sessions. Guide our hearts in the ways of right as we make decisions in our committees, seeking our outstanding units for the year. Let us realize that their accomplishments are also our accomplishments. We all strive for the same goal for the veterans and their families.

We ask in Your Name that You heal the sick, console the bereaved and go with each of us throughout the day. Amen.

ADJUTANT TEDROW: And now we will hear from Linda Trulio, our Americanism chairman.

3RD JUNIOR VICE-COMMANDER LINDA TRULIO: Free your hands, stand at attention, place your right hand over your heart, and join me in the salute to our flag.

(Pledge of Allegiance)

ADJUTANT TEDROW: Would our musician please play for all of us, "God Bless America." Let's sing it this morning.

You may be seated. And at this time, National Sergeant-at-Arms, would you please see that the Color bearers and pages are dismissed.

The Constitution and Bylaws of the Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary state that the supreme powers of this organization shall be vested in the Annual National Convention composed of the national officers and representatives of the state departments and units. In accordance with these directives, I, Maria M. Tedrow, national Auxiliary adjutant, declare the 77th National Convention of the Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary be convened at Orlando, Florida.

Consideration and disposition of business brought before this convention shall be conducted with the National Constitution and Bylaws and the Ritual of the Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary as most recently amended.

To all present, take due notice thereof and govern yourselves accordingly.

I have the opportunity to introduce to you someone that I have worked very closely with this previous year.

Every commander gives something to this office and to each member of this organization. And this year it has been no exception. We have had as our leader a most gracious lady, who is eloquent in her speech and gracious in her manner, who has conducted herself accordingly, even though there has been sorrow within her own family. She has still risen to her duty.

And I can't think of anybody that I would rather introduce

this morning or at any time than our national commander, Evelyn Dorsey. (Standing ovation)

COMMANDER EVELYN B. DORSEY: Thank you. And good morning. How about just reaching over and hugging the person next to you. Just give everybody a hug. Stand if you have to.

Isn't it great to be here? This is such a beautiful place, and this is a place where we can go back and reflect on our childhood on fun things we used to do when we were a few years younger. This is fantasyland at its best. And I am hoping that you're going to avail yourselves of everything that is being offered here to make your stay enjoyable.

I certainly welcome all of you to the 77th National Convention. It is an honor to be here as your national commander this year in this fun place.

All of you who are here for the first time, would you please stand? How great! Give them a round of applause. (Applause) We certainly welcome you here. We are glad that you took the time out of what I'm sure is a busy schedule to come to the convention.

And it is also my hope that you're going to learn some things here today, you're going to meet some friends, some new friends, and that, most importantly, you're going to go back and spread the word about the DAV Auxiliary, what you've seen, what you've heard, the reports that are going to be presented. Go back and share it with your units and encourage others to come next year. Or, better yet, encourage them to come next month to our National Fall Convention.

We're ready to get into the business of this convention. At this time, I would like to bring to you the lovely lady with the certainly appropriate name from Florida. She is our National Convention chairman this year, Sunny Barzelogna. Let's give her a warm welcome. (Applause)

MRS. SUNNY BARZELOGNA: Good morning. Oh, you sound so nice. Commander Evelyn, national officers, past national commanders, members and guests at this convention, and on behalf of the DAVA State Department of Florida and all the delegates, we welcome you to the sunshine state. Welcome to Florida. We hope you enjoy it.

It is an honor to serve as your National Convention chairman, and with pleasure I invite you to see the many attractions that we have here in Orlando and the surrounding area. I know a lot of you have already seen this, but if you plan on staying a few more days, which I have heard that some of you are, please get out and see some of these attractions.

Here within Disney World, we have our first and foremost, the Magic Kingdom. This is a must for children and adults also. There is the newest attraction, Animal Kingdom Park, Typhoon Lagoon, Epcot Center, MGM Studios, Universal Studios, Disney Blizzard Beach and much more.

In the surrounding areas, very close to here, in Kissimmee, just across the Expressway on 192, you will find the Flying Tigers Museum and Magnificent China. Both are well worth seeing.

Located on International Drive off of I-4, you have Ripley's Believe-It-Or-Not Museum, also Sea World. The children would love it. But if you decide to go, do not sit in the front rows or you will think you're in a hurricane by the time you get out.

Downtown Orlando is Church Street Station. Here you can enjoy an evening of dining, shopping and just enjoy yourself. It is off I-4, Exit 38.

If you enjoy the old-fashioned knights and jousting matches, try Medieval Times. It is a dinner theater. It is located off 192 in Kissimmee. It is not far, and it makes for a very enjoyable evening if you like eating with your fingers, because they have no silverware.

Orlando is known for the city of lakes, and there are many. Orlando is also the home of the University of Florida.

I-4 is the main artery through Orlando. If you go east, you wind up in Daytona Beach, home of the International Speedway, and they also have tours now that you might want to check on. Further up is St. Augustine, the oldest town in Florida, and has many, many attractions. On the east coast is the Kennedy Space Center. The Space Museum, is really something to see and is worth your time in

seeing it.

I can't begin to name everything that is available for tourists to enjoy. We have plenty of beaches to enjoy, as Florida is surrounded on three sides by water.

I-4 West will bring you to Tampa, home of the Buccaneers, for tourists to enjoy. In this area, you have the Cypress Gardens and Busch Gardens.

Tuesday is our Forget-Me-Not Luncheon, and I hope to see many of you attending. The entertainment will be great. Don't be surprised if you are asked to participate in some small way.

I'll take just a moment now to introduce the ladies that have been most helpful in preparing for this convention. No one can do things alone. And I am very fortunate to have so many Auxiliary members that are willing and want to help in some small way.

As I call your names, ladies, would you please stand. Nina Beverly, Kay Egan, Millie Douglas, Marilyn McDonald, and all of the Florida delegates. (Applause) I couldn't do without my left and right arms: Marge Duffy and Lucille McCarthy. They are always there when I need anything. (Applause) Ladies, I truly appreciate every one of you. there are so many to be thanked that I just can't name them all.

Commander Evelyn, Florida wishes you the best convention ever, and we hope you enjoy your stay with us. We wish you a very successful and productive convention.

Anyone going outside, I must remind you of the heat. Please be very careful and watch that you drink plenty of water. We have had serious problems already with DAV members outside who have been rushed to the hospital for the heat.

In closing, I want to thank Maria Tedrow for the confidence she placed in me by appointing me National Convention chairman. It has been fun, hard work and an honor for me to serve in this capacity. I hope I have fulfilled your confidence in me.

Thanks again for the support and all your help. I could not have done it alone. And if I can be of further assistance to anyone, you can find me running around here some place. Thank you very much. (Applause)

COMMANDER DORSEY: Thank you. She certainly had a lot to tell you about this area, so if you don't feel welcome or if you need more info, see Sunny. She'll take care of you. Thank you so much.

ADJUTANT TEDROW: National Sergeant-at-Arms, is the guest still out there? Would you just bring him in, and at this time we're going to have a special presentation for our national commander, but I would like to give you a little background on the guest before he comes down here.

His name is Kenneth C. Pant, and he is presently retired, but he served as the VIST, Visually Impaired Service Team, coordinator, for the Tampa Veterans Hospital. He was responsible for ensuring all qualified blinded veterans received the opportunity to attend blind rehabilitation training.

He joined the Service in 1957 and received the Bronze Star with oak leaf clusters, the Army Commendation Medal, Meritorious Service Medal, Good Conduct Medal, and the Vietnamese Meritorious Service Medal First Class. He was medically retired as legally blind from the U.S. Army in the grade of major in 1974.

Mr. Pant is a recipient of the Chapel of Four Chaplains Bronze Medallion, and he resides in Tampa, Florida with his wife, Juda. They have two married children, a son and daughter, and are the grandparents of several grandchildren. (Applause)

MR. KENNETH C. PANT: If you'll give me just a moment here, I've got to organize myself. Good morning, ladies. That was a beautiful opening, and I really enjoyed being a witness to it this morning.

First of all, I'd like to address Evelyn and the National Board and all the delegates of the state departments -- sounds just like home -- and all you members and sisters. It is my privilege here this morning to represent the Chapel of Four Chaplains, located in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

And the significance of the Chapel of Four Chaplains dates back to World War II, the sinking of the U.S. Army Transport DORCHESTER in the North Atlantic during the height of World War II.

It was the volunteer chaplains who were aboard that ship that gave encouragement and strength and hope to the 902 men who were aboard that ship the night of February 3rd, 1943, when that ship was torpedoed and sank with the loss of life of 688 men.

The character of these individuals, I think, is the most important part of the story about the four chaplains. First of all, George L. Fox had served in World War I. He actually lied about his age and got into the Medical Corps, and received the Silver Star for bravery on the battlefield, having gone out under a gas and barrage attack to save many wounded soldiers, including getting wounds himself.

And when he left the military after World War I, he returned home to his place in Vermont, became an accountant, a family man, and later on, he was called to the ministry in the Methodist Church. And so when World War II started, he told his wife that he had to go. He knew what the men would be facing there in the battlefield, and he thought it was his place to go. And so in 1942 he enlisted.

A rabbi, Alexander D. Goode, was very close by Washington, D.C. He lived in New York. He was known as an athlete and a scholar. When he was called to the rabbinic duties, he served a synagogue close by in New York, and when the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier brought back the first unknown dead of World War II, he walked 30 miles the one way, 30 miles from New York to Washington to Arlington, to observe that ceremony. It made such a profound effect on him that he enlisted.

He was in the National Guard at the time and active, but he felt it was his call, and so he went.

Another, the youngest of the four chaplains, Clark V. Poling, was the seventh generation of Dutch Reformed ministers in his family. And he told his dad, he said, "Dad, I don't want to be behind any desk in any safe place in a church." He said, "I want to be out there with the boys."

And his dad said, "Son, I don't think you understand, but the highest mortality rate among any servicemen in the military is among the chaplains." This really kind of surprised me, too. Because they're unarmed, they cannot defend themselves, and yet they're out there in the heat of battle.

And his dad said, "Son, I'll pray for you." And his young son said to him, "Dad, don't pray that I survive this. Pray that I can have the courage and the strength and the understanding of the men so that when called upon, I can be adequate to do my duty."

The last one is Father John P. Washington. Father Washington was from Newark, New Jersey, grew up in a real rough neighborhood. In fact, he was a leader then, too, because he was a member of the 12th Street Gang Southside. And so there's only one thing that Father Washington loved to do more than fight, and that was sing, and apparently -- I kind of, you know, not really knowing the man, kind of think he had a beautiful Irish tenor voice.

And on the night when the ship was torpedoed, the four chaplains were giving solace to the men. Somehow, after all the lights went out on the ship, they found their way to the deck, and they found a foot locker, the four chaplains, and they started giving out the life vests to each one of the men who didn't have them. Then the locker was empty. They took off their vests and gave them to four young men.

They locked arms together, and they started praying and singing, and it was said that Father Washington's voice could be heard as the ship slid below the waves. Now, this was the ultimate sacrifice that a person, any person could give for his fellow man.

None of us here probably will ever be called upon to make that kind of sacrifice. But the memory of what these men did has to be and must be preserved, because volunteerism in this country, in the United States, is probably the most precious product that we have going for us, that is characteristic of our nation. And they are the epitome of it.

But down through the ages, the four chaplains, which -- actually the chapel was dedicated by Harry S. Truman in 1951. They decided that they would recognize individuals who had given outstanding volunteer services to their nation irrespective of

race, creed or religious origin or faith.

And so each year they have chosen to recognize certain individuals who have gone above and beyond that call to life really, and have dedicated themselves in public and civic service, in religious organizations, in civic organizations and any place that their help and services were needed to their fellow men.

And it is indeed a privilege and honor for me to be here today to recognize one of your own members to receive a bronze medallion in recognition for that outstanding public service, that selflessness and dedication to others. And with this this morning, I would like to recognize your national commander, Evelyn, for this award. (Applause)

Evelyn, I have a plaque here. It's signed by James Earl Pearce, who is the chaplain for the Chapel of Four Chaplains in Washington. It's a beautiful memento that I'm sure you will enjoy showing off.

And now I have the medal. I'd like to show this to the membership here. This is the embossed medallion, the bronze medallion, and it contains the emboss of the four chaplains. And it has Evelyn's name on the back and the date of the award and when the award was presented. (Applause) Evelyn it gives me a thrill to hang this around your neck. Congratulations.

COMMANDER DORSEY: Thank you.

MR. PANT: Thank you very much.

COMMANDER DORSEY: Oh, this is going to be hard to get through, I'm telling you. Pray for me. I would now like to again introduce to you a special group of ladies, a group that I've certainly admired when I was sitting out there over the years and listening to them. And the only advice I can give to you about them is to tell you, if you don't know them, you should get to know them. There is so much knowledge, so much love, so much that they can offer and have offered to this organization, and I'm proud to know all of them. They're beautiful.

Our past national commanders. And would you please hold your applause again until I've called all of their names. Past National Commander Lucille McCarthy, please stand and face the audience; Past National Commander Pauline Wright; Past National Commander Nelda Wilson; Past National Commander Dorothy Van Hoy; Past National Commander Florence Valgardson; Past National Commander Chris McGuire; Past National Commander Maria Tedrow; Past National Commander Betty Hall; Past National Commander Sally Wilton; Past National Commander Loneita Shoemaker; Past National Commander Katherine Pearson; Past National Commander Shelia Allred; Past National Commander Claudia Roy; Past National Commander Jane Troutman; Past National Commander Barbara Hicks; Past National Commander Margaret Hass; and our Immediate Past National Commander Evelynne Dunn.

Let's give them a big round of support. (Applause) A great bunch of ladies. Thank you, thank you.

Past National Commander Margaret Hass, would you come to the podium, please?

MRS. MARGARET HASS: I've been here so many years and watched this, and yet I'm always surprised at what's happening. I'm always having such a good time, I think. I'd like to bring greetings to our commander from the past national commanders that are here, a lovely bunch of ladies which I'm so proud to be a part of.

It's been a joy to be in the line-up for so many years, but to get to this point and be here and see this wonderful group of people that have come to help us plan our work and enjoy what we have done in the past year.

And Evelyn, we have a gift for you from the past national commanders. We are so proud of you as an officer to the line, and now you are commander, and you're doing a wonderful job. And we know we're going to have a great convention. We love you, and we look forward to the day when you can join us. (Applause)

COMMANDER DORSEY: Thank you.

At this time, I'm going to excuse those of you who are serving on the Nominations Committee. I understand you're still working, and I know you have things that you must do. So those of you who are on the Nominations Committee, you may leave.

Sara Douglass, you are the exception. You have to stay to give your report, and then you may leave.

Would the Credentials chairman come forth and give a preliminary report?

MRS. NINA BEVERLY: Good morning. National Commander Evelyn, national officers, past national commanders, members and guests: The Credentials report is as follows. Total units registered, 285; total departments registered 44; total, 329. Delegates registered, 591; alternates registered, 37; guests registered, 72; total, 700. Total unit votes, 1,955; total department votes, 44; national officers, 8; past national commanders, 14; grand total of votes, 2,021.

Madam Commander, I move that this report be adopted.

COMMANDER DORSEY: Do I hear a motion that the preliminary report of the Credentials Committee be accepted as read? I ask for a second.

MRS. RAMONA LANGE: Ramona Lange, State Department of Florida. I second that motion.

COMMANDER DORSEY: It has been motioned and seconded that the preliminary report of the Credentials Committee be accepted as read. All those in favor, signify by Aye. The Ayes have it. Thank you.

The first order of business is the adoption of the National Convention Rules. Printed copies of the Rules have been furnished to each of you. The Chair will now entertain a motion for adoption of these Rules. You didn't get them when you came in? Okay. Would you raise your hand, those who do not have the Convention Rules, and would the pages please come forth.

ADJUTANT TEDROW: National Sergeant-at-Arms, I believe that we also have Bylaws that need to be passed out. Would someone pass out the budget, somebody pass out the Convention Rules, and somebody pass out the Bylaws?

COMMANDER DORSEY: Would some of the pages work from the front back, and others from the back down toward the front? I think it would expedite the distribution.

May I remind you that you are to go to the mike to address the body. There are mikes now in each aisle. Thank you.

Now, is there a motion?

MRS. TERRY DOWNEY: Madam Commander, Terry Downey, Unit 64, Massachusetts. I move that the Convention Rules be adopted.

COMMANDER DORSEY: Is there a second?

MRS. JACQUE ELHAGE: Jacque Elhage, Department of Louisiana. Second.

COMMANDER DORSEY: It has been moved and seconded that the Convention Rules be adopted. All those in favor. Are there any objections? The Ayes have it. The Rules are adopted.

At this time, I'm going to ask our national senior vice-commander, Paula Raymond to come to the podium to preside. Thank you.

(Whereupon, Senior Vice-Commander Paula K. Raymond assumed the chair.)

SENIOR VICE-COMMANDER PAULA K. RAYMOND: Good morning. We are going to ask Commander Evelyn to give her report now.

COMMANDER DORSEY: Thank you, Paula. I was indeed honored to be elected the national commander at our 1998 National Convention in Las Vegas, Nevada. My year has been a very busy but a most rewarding experience. I have fond memories of places visited, new friends, and hospitality beyond description. Everywhere I've traveled, I saw the Auxiliary displaying love, support and dedication in the spirit of service.

My year began in September 1998 with a riverboat cruise for disabled veterans in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The event was sponsored by Sharing and Caring, Incorporated. Many veterans organizations were in attendance, and I was delighted to be a part of this annual fun-filled event as we sailed the Ohio and Monongahela Rivers.

It was very evident that a lot of planning went into making this a special event, and that every veteran on board enjoyed the games, entertainment and scrumptious buffet. I even got a chance to dance with wheelchair-bound veterans.

I enjoyed myself so much, I went the second day on the cruise. The cruise runs for four days. I was able to go two days, and it was a marvelous time.

Later in the month, I made my way to the Galt House in Louisville, Kentucky, for our National Fall Conference. This was a very informative and productive conference, which continues to grow in attendance. We had fun, but we also learned a lot about the Auxiliary and its programs and activities. The national officers, my All-Star Team, were superb in presenting their programs for the year.

In November, I was invited to participate in the Annual Veterans Day ceremonies honoring veterans in Birmingham, Alabama. I was pleasantly surprised to see that I would ride in the parade in a specially decorated Auxiliary car. This was a first for me. It looked as if all of Birmingham had turned out that day for the parade.

In December I went to Randolph, Massachusetts for a commander's visit. In February, I attended the 13th District meeting in Louisville, Kentucky. I also visited the Ernestine Schuman Heink Unit Number 2 in Kansas City, Missouri for their Americanism program. The award-winning essays read by the young people who wrote them were the highlight of the evening.

My testimonial held in March was a special time in my life. Sincere, heartfelt thanks to all who came or sent congratulatory wishes and for making it a lovely affair for me and my family.

Later I attended the Disabled American Veterans Mid-Winter Conference in Alexandria, Virginia. It was my pleasure to bring greetings from the Auxiliary and to have the opportunity to attend several of the DAV seminars.

I was also very honored to be seated at the table with Commander Andrew Kistler as he gave the DAV testimony before the Joint House and Senate Committee on Veterans Affairs.

The following week, I traveled to Crested Butte, Colorado to participate as a volunteer in the DAV Annual Winter Sports Clinic. What a memorable experience it was to see disabled veterans performing miracles on the mountain. Their determination and enthusiasm was infectious and humbling. I even enjoyed my first snow mobile ride up the mountain. What a thrill. Grandmothers do have fun.

I went on to Little Rock, Arkansas for my second commander's visit.

On April the 10th, I attended DAV National Commander Andrew Kistler's testimonial in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. It has indeed been a pleasure to serve along with this fine gentleman, a dedicated man.

The following week, I traveled to Salt Lake City, Utah for another commander's visit.

All of these visitations were wonderful events. I am continually awestruck by the beauty and diversity of our country. My thanks for the invitations and planning visits to historical and other interesting sites. I really enjoyed all of the programs you planned, the receptions, the luncheons and, of course, the delicious food.

I will always remember the tours of the VA medical centers, the veterans homes, and meeting our National Service Officers. These tours gave me the opportunity to talk with veterans and staff, observe how much our volunteers do, and to see how much we are still needed.

Also in April, the National Finance Committee met in Florence, Kentucky. My thanks to the members for the time spent compiling our annual budget. It was a pleasure to be a part of this hard-working committee.

At the end of April, I traveled to Sheridan, Wyoming for my first state convention.

In May, I attended the National VAVS Advisory Committee meeting in Richmond, Virginia. I later attended the unveiling of the Veterans Honor Rolls at a special ceremony in Arlington National Cemetery in Washington, D.C.

I then went on to Grafton, West Virginia for its 132nd Annual Memorial Day program. The weekend of activities included wreath

laying at the State National Cemetery and town monuments, and another parade that I got to ride in. This, too, was an impressive observance at the grassroots level.

In June, I went to state conventions in North Carolina, Puerto Rico, Illinois, Iowa and New York. It was a joy to see and talk with the juniors in attendance. Thank you all again for your warmth, hospitality and your gifts.

I regret I could not visit Florida and Maine earlier in the year due to the illness and subsequent passing of my daughter, Frances. Many of you will remember she was here last year, and how happy she was to be here. Words cannot express how much me and my family appreciate your many acts of kindness, your comfort and love during this traumatic period.

To the national officers, the National Executive Committeewomen, and committee chairmen, I sincerely appreciate your time, your support and your commitment. Thank you for being on my All-Star Team this year. To you, the ladies of the Auxiliary, let me commend you for all you do for our veterans and communities in the spirit of service.

Mary Parrish, you are indeed a dear friend. You have done so much to make this a great year for me. You promised me you would do it, and you have stuck with me. I thank you so much for your unselfishness.

To my granddaughter, Regina, who has been my page for the years that I've come up the chairs, I want to thank you, Regina. I'm very proud of her. She taught summer school this year, so she really didn't have much of a time off. She came out about a week and a half ago.

And I said, "Do you really think you can make this?" Because it's been a traumatic time for her, too. She lived with my daughter. And she said, "No, I want to go. Mom --" Fran "-- would want me to go, and I'm going. I'm going to be with you." And I appreciate that. I don't take her love and the deeds she does -- I don't take it for granted, so I want to publicly acknowledge my thanks and love to her.

Finally, to our national adjutant, Maria, saying thank you seems so inadequate for all you do for all of us. However, it is said that words from the heart touch the heart. So from my heart to yours, thank you. I am very appreciative. To your staff as well, I'm very appreciative.

Again, I want to thank you all for this wonderful privilege of serving as your national commander this year. Look to the future in the spirit of service. God bless you. (Applause)

SENIOR VICE-COMMANDER RAYMOND: Thank you very much, Evelyn. That was a beautiful report. And I want you to know how very proud I was to be a member of your All-Star Team.

And at this time, I move the acceptance of Commander Dorsey's report.

MRS. BEATRICE ALBANESE: Beatrice Albanese, Unit 9, New Jersey. I second that motion.

SENIOR VICE-COMMANDER RAYMOND: The motion has been made and seconded that we accept the national commander's report. All in favor; opposed. Motion carried. Thank you.

(Whereupon, Commander Dorsey resumed the chair.)

COMMANDER DORSEY: At this time, I would ask the chairman of the National Finance Committee to come forth and give her report.

MRS. SARA DOUGLASS: Good morning, ladies. Commander Dorsey, Adjutant Tedrow, national officers: It has been my privilege to serve you this year as the National Finance chairman. The committee has met four times this year to attend to matters pertaining to the finances of the Auxiliary.

In April, the committee met in Florence, Kentucky to set up a proposal budget for the year 2000. After looking at the past budget and much discussion on how things like the economy, the membership and programs affect the organization's income and disbursements, the committee agreed on a budget to present for approval.

I would like to thank the members of this committee for their knowledgeable input and their dedication to the purpose of the committee. Ladies, as I call your names, would you please stand.

Bonita Mitchell, District 15; Carolyn Johnson, District 8; Jeanne LePorte, District 2. Thank you, ladies.

And, of course, Commander Dorsey was on the committee. And a special thanks goes to Adjutant Tedrow and Judy Hezlep for furnishing us with the forms and schedules to do our work from.

Madam Commander, at this time, I would like to make the motion that the proposed budget be accepted by the DAV Auxiliary as the budget for the year 2000.

COMMANDER DORSEY: Is there a second?

NEC DISTRICT 15 BONITA MITCHELL: Madam Commander, Bonita Mitchell, NEC from 15th District, and a member of the Ernestine Schuman Heink Unit Number 2 of Kansas Missouri. I second that motion.

COMMANDER DORSEY: It has been motioned and seconded that the budget for the year 2000 be adopted. Are there any questions? Those in favor. The Ayes have it. The budget is adopted. Thank you, Sara, for a wonderful job. Thank you.

At this time, we will have the Membership Awards. Monetary awards are given in each category of each program to the first-place winner. Checks will be mailed out from National Headquarters after the convention to the winners. Our Membership chairman, National 1st Junior Vice Carol Gray, will come and make this report.

1ST JUNIOR VICE-COMMANDER CAROL A. GRAY: Commander Evelyn, Adjutant Maria, officers, past national commanders and delegates: It has indeed been an honor to serve as the National Membership chairman this past year. I regret we did not make quota, but I do not feel we failed, because we only fail when we stop trying, and when you hear the numbers of those that are receiving awards for membership, you will know why.

And congratulations to the following departments who made their quota: Idaho, Indiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Jersey, New York and Wisconsin. Congratulations, ladies. (Applause) And to the National Districts of 1, 2, 4 and 10, who also made their quota. (Applause)

Now, in Louisville, I brought this canvas with me, and it had all these little stars on it. And now at the end of this year, I finished. All of your departments are listed on here. On the bottom here in gold are the departments who made quota, and in sparkly blue, your national districts. Evelyn, I would at this time like to present it to you to try and get it home.

And, you know, we do have several new members. We have them here. This is their first convention. We have a lot of new members in our units. And there's one thing that Maria told me years ago when I was privileged to present a charter to a new unit in Michigan, and that was don't forget them. These new ladies that you've signed up, please don't forget them.

Also, I'd like to take a moment to read something to you that I got off the Internet that's very appropriate for our members:

> Yesterday I met a stranger. Today this stranger is my friend. Had I not taken the time to say "Hello" or return a smile, or shake a hand or listen, I would not have known this person. Yesterday would have turned into today and our chance meeting would be gone. Yesterday I hugged someone very dear to me. Today they are gone, and tomorrow will not bring them back. Wouldn't it be nice if we all knew tomorrow would be here.

And now for the fun part, the awards. In Group 1, we have a three-way tie. And as I call your names, would you please come down here. Group 1, membership of 10 to 50, the member increase: George Washington Carver Number 78, Alabama, ten members; Crow Wing County Number 22, Minnesota, with a ten-member increase; and Everett Dorsey Number 143, Ohio, with a ten-member increase. (Applause)

If you would come up here and get your certificates. And as Commander Evelyn told you, the monetary award will be mailed.

In Group 2, 51 to 100 members, Dearborn County Number 75, Indiana with a 21-member increase. (Applause)

From Group 3, 101 to 200 members, with a 46-member increase, Inland Lakes Number 39, Cadillac, Michigan. (Applause)

COMMANDER DORSEY: Ladies, if I may, I think we should show some enthusiasm. Membership is not hard to achieve, you know that, those of you out -- so let's show some enthusiasm for those who have made it. (Applause) Let's give them some cheers and try to find out what they're doing. Maybe we can meet ours.

1ST JUNIOR VICE-COMMANDER GRAY: And in Group 4, 201 and over, with 155-member increase, Colonel S.D. Foster Number 76, Pennsylvania. (Applause)

And Group 5, the new unit with the most new members, 30 members, goes to Whitehall Number 142, Ohio. (Applause)

In Group 6, the department with the largest percentage increase goes to the State Department of Idaho. (Applause) And also Idaho was also the first department who made quota this year. Come on, Gloria.

MRS. GLORIA COLTRIN: I just want to say I think Idaho's the greatest state in the United States. Thank you.

1ST JUNIOR VICE-COMMANDER GRAY: In Group 7, the department with the largest numerical increase, with an increase of 115 members, goes to the State Department of Michigan. (Applause)

MEMBER: This is marvelous, and I have to say that this is not an individual thing, that our group had a marvelous Membership chairman, and our parent organization supported us, and they campaigned for us and in every way. Without them, we couldn't have done it. It was a membership effort, and we all worked together. Thank you.

1ST JUNIOR VICE-COMMANDER GRAY: Now for special Membership Awards. The Auxiliary member this year who signed up the most new members -- she signed up 61 new senior members -- Patricia Hall, Pennsylvania Number 76. (Applause)

MEMBER: I'd like to thank our workers. They work hard on our membership, and it gives me great pleasure to take this back to her. Thank you. (Applause)

1ST JUNIOR VICE-COMMANDER GRAY: And in second place -- this lady signed up 50 new senior members -- Joyce M. Hutchinson, Ohio 63. (Applause)

MRS. JOYCE M. HUTCHINSON: I really appreciate this award, and it's a great honor, because two of the Auxiliaries that we started in the State of Ohio this past year also won the last two awards. So it makes us feel proud. Thank you. (Applause)

1ST JUNIOR VICE-COMMANDER GRAY: Thanks again to all of you. Commander Evelyn, it's been an honor to serve you, to serve with you. And we have one full year left in this century to work on membership. Let's get going so we can face the 21st century full strength. (Applause)

COMMANDER DORSEY: Thank you, Carol. Thank you. Membership is the backbone of this organization.

Would the chairman of the Constitution and Bylaws Committee come forth to present the first reading of the Bylaw changes, Past National Commander Lucille McCarthy.

MRS. LUCILLE McCARTHY: Good morning, everyone. During this meeting, all of you have received a copy of the Bylaw amendments that are being proposed by the 1999 Convention Constitution and Bylaws Committee for your consideration. This will be the first reading of these amendments. There will be no discussion or voting at this time.

The first amendment is Article I, National Convention, Page N-5, Section 4, Delegates, Paragraph 4. Amend by deleting "Ceremony" after the word "Initiation" and by deleting "her" and inserting "an elected" before the word "alternate."

Article I, National Convention, Page N-5, Section 4, Delegates, Paragraph 4 would then read:

> A delegate to a National Convention shall not be allowed to vote until she is properly registered, dues paid for the convention year, has received the Membership Initiation, and is not indebted to the organization. A member shall not cast a vote in the National Convention in more than one representative capacity, or be registered as a delegate from more than one unit. In the absence of any delegate, her vote shall be cast by an elected alternate.

The rationale is: Deleting the word "Ceremony" after

"Membership Initiation," would make this conform with other sections of the Bylaws. Deleting "her" and inserting "an elected" before "alternate" would clarify that when a unit has more than one delegate, an elected alternate is not associated with any particular delegate.

Article III, Duties of National Officers, Page N-15, Section 5, National Judge Advocate, Paragraph 2, Line 2. Amend by deleting "state standing rules" and inserting after "and/or amendments" the words "to state standing rules."

Article III, Duties of National Officers, Page N-15, Section 5, National Judge Advocate, Paragraph 2 would then read:

> She shall review all supplements to state bylaws and/or amendments to state standing rules. She shall advise each state department as to any discrepancies prior to the upcoming National Convention.

The rationale is: This change in Paragraph 2 would provide corrected procedures.

The next amendment is Article II, State Officers, Page S-2, Section 3, Delegates, Paragraph 4, last sentence. Amend by deleting "her respective" and inserting "an elected."

Article II, State Officers, Page S-2, Section 3, Delegates, Paragraph 4, would then read:

> A member shall not cast a vote in the state convention in more than one representative capacity, or be registered as a delegate from more than one unit. In the absence of a unit delegate, her vote shall be cast by an elected alternate.

The rationale is: When a unit has more than one delegate, an elected alternate is not associated with any particular delegate.

The next amendment is Article IX, Supplement to State Bylaws/State Standing Rules, Page S-16, Section 1: Supplement to State Bylaws/State Standing Rules. Note: Line 4, insert "and notification" after the word "review."

Article IX, Supplement to State Bylaws/State Standing Rules, Page S-16, Section 1: Supplement to State Bylaws/State Standing Rules would then read:

> NOTE: If a state department reprints their state standing rules, three copies shall be submitted to National Headquarters for review and notification by the national judge advocate prior to their distribution.

Rationale: This change will establish the complete procedure provided by the national judge advocate upon receiving reprinted state standing rules.

You will find attached to your copy of these proposed Bylaws a proposed resolution which will be read at this time. This resolution does not require a second reading, and we will be voting on this resolution immediately following its having been read. The Proposed Resolution for 1999 National Convention is:

> WHEREAS, during previous meetings of the Interim Constitution and Bylaws Committee, discussion was held concerning Standard Local Unit Bylaws. It was determined by the committee to reformat the Standard Local Unit Bylaws to conform with the National and the Standard State Bylaws; and
>
> WHEREAS, reformatting, also known as "housekeeping," consists of only those changes which are comprised of grammatical, rhetorical, semantic and typographical corrections, and such other arrangements and positioning of material which shall not thereafter require approval of the National Convention delegates as amendments;
>
> RESOLVED that at this time, the National Convention Constitution and Bylaws Committee is submitting the following resolution to the 1999 National Convention delegates for their approval; and
>
> RESOLVED that the national adjutant be permitted to print the reformatted Standard Local Unit Bylaws.

Madam Commander, I move that this proposed resolution be adopted.

COMMANDER DORSEY: Is there a second?

MRS. NAOMI OATES: Comrade Commander, Naomi Oates, Department of Georgia, second the motion.

COMMANDER DORSEY: It has been moved and seconded that the

proposed resolution be adopted. Are there any questions? Those in favor. Any objections? The Ayes have it. The resolution is approved.

Thank you. And, as stated, we will vote on the proposed changes after the second reading.

We are going to now go into our other reports and awards. 3rd Junior Vice-Commander Linda Trulio, would you come forward and present the Americanism report and awards?

3RD JUNIOR VICE-COMMANDER TRULIO: Good morning, everyone. National Commander Evelyn, national officers, National Adjutant Maria, past national commanders, delegates and friends of our big family of the Disabled American Veterans and Auxiliary: It has indeed been an honor and a privilege for me to serve as your national 3rd junior vice, and especially as the Americanism chairman.

And I'm sure at the end of this year when we look back on Evelyn's All-Stars, as all the stars join together, including all of the units out there, we will look back at this year like a comet that soared across our galaxy and into the new millennium with our Auxiliary.

The National Americanism Committee representatives from all the districts met in the Coronado Ballroom A at 10:00 a.m. on August 22nd, 1999. Our secretary was Barbara McComb of Unit 3, Michigan. The following units were judged to be the best in their category for the National Americanism Award.

In Group Number 1, 10 to 50 members, was Dickinson Unit Number 8 in North Dakota. (Applause)

The group that was judging this particular group also gave an honorable mention to Jackson County Unit 69 in Illinois and wanted it to be mentioned. (Applause)

In the category of Group 2, 51 to a hundred members, the winner is Lehigh Acres Unit Number 94 in Florida. (Applause)

And the group judging this particular group also wanted it mentioned that Valley City Number 24 in North Dakota should receive some mention. (Applause)

MEMBER: Thank you all very much.

3RD JUNIOR VICE-COMMANDER TRULIO: In Group Number 3, 101 to 200, the winner is Bergenfield 32 from New Jersey. (Applause)

And this group also wanted to make note of a unit that also did a lot of work, John Hershey Number 96 in Florida. (Applause)

And in the last group, Group Number 4, 201 members or over, Grand Forks Number 2 in North Dakota. (Applause)

And now for the Special Americanism Award. It was almost a unanimous decision for the whole group. The award goes to Seguin Number 61 in Texas. (Applause)

And now I'd like to acknowledge the people who are the representatives from the districts, and would you all stand as I call your name. And just hold your applause till the end.

From District Number 1, Mary Bixby; Number 2, Kathleen Tedesco; Number 3, Wanda Lee Furbish; Number 4, June Becker; Number 5, Katherine Watkins; Number 6, Ruth Mitchell; Number 7, Bea Williams; Number 8, Joyce Campbell; Number 9, Aileen Warchak; Number 10, Barbara McComb; Number 11, Judith Uetterling; Number 12, Mary Scarsdale; Number 13, Jan Walters; Number 14, Gwen Skillings; Number 15, Amy Barnhouse; Number 16, Claudia Getty; Number 17, Becky Lovato; Number 18, Amy Wright; Number 19, Kathryn Wiley; Number 20, Patricia Rapisand; and Number 21, Gertrude Tidwell. (Applause)

Thank you, ladies, for all your hard work, and I urge and encourage you to keep up the good work with your patriotism and your Americanism, and get into our schools and educate our children. Thank you. (Applause)

COMMANDER DORSEY: Thank you, Linda, for a fine year as our Americanism chair.

ADJUTANT TEDROW: As the names are called out, or the numbers, if you'd come down here, you know, at one time. If they would read out the awards and give the unit and the number, and then they could all be coming down here?

Because, you know, there's a possibility that we might be able to stay a little longer this morning and finish. So let's try to

do that. Of course, we would have to have a recess before we had Constitution and Bylaws. All right? Thank you.

COMMANDER DORSEY: That sounds like a winner.

All right. I'm going to now call our chairman of our Community Service Program to come forth, and that's Janet Bennett, our 4th junior vice-commander.

4TH JUNIOR VICE-COMMANDER JANET W. BENNETT: Good morning, ladies. National Commander Evelyn, National Adjutant Maria, national officers, past national commanders, delegates, members and guests: It is my pleasure to introduce to you the Community Service Convention Committee chairman, Monica Stroud from District 9. (Applause)

And while Monica is coming down, I would like to thank all of you for your wonderful reports. You know, when I look at the reports and I see the number of seniors that do the work, I sometimes wonder how you get it all done. So give yourselves a great hand. You did a wonderful job. Thank you. (Applause)

MRS. MONICA STROUD: Good morning. National Commander, National Adjutant, national officers, past national commanders, delegates and guests of this 77th National Auxiliary Convention: The National Community Service Convention Committee met in the Fiesta Ballroom 1 at 10:00 a.m., August 22nd, 1999. Our advisor was Janet Bennett. Our secretary was Deborah Newell. She was elected and appointed.

The following units were judged to be the best in their category for the National Community Service Awards. Group 1, 10 to 50 members, Unit 29, Oakland, Maryland. (Applause)

Group 2, 51 to 100 members, Unit 63, Dover, New Jersey. (Applause)

Group 3, 101 to 200 members, Unit 1, Milwaukee, Wisconsin. (Applause)

Group 4, 201 members or over, Unit 9, Macon, Georgia. (Applause)

As I read the names of the ladies that were on that team. would you all please stand. And if I mispronounce your name, like I told you yesterday, please forgive me.

I've got District 1, Antoinette Pagnotta; District 2, Kazue Luciani; District 3, Deborah Newell; District 4, Marie Corvasce. District 5 was absent. District 6, Sylvia Harl. District 7 was absent. District 8, Helen Riddick; District 9, Monica Stroud; District 10, Lorene Penermon; District 11, Ramona Leach; District 12, Carol Ellis; District 13, Norma Ziemet; District 14, Anna Bradsteen. District 15 was absent. District 16, Leona Galloway; District 17, Jean Chapman; District 18, Dee Jascur; District 19, Gloria Coltrin; District 20, Delfina Rosales; District 21, Pauline Stewart.

And what I'd like to say to you, ladies is that we worked hard, but we had fun. We did a lot of laughing, but it took teamwork, and that's what it's all about. And I tell you, it was an honor and a privilege to work with you. Thank you so much. (Applause)

COMMANDER DORSEY: Thank you, Jan. That's always a hard report to judge; there's so much that goes on in community service.

Hospital chairman, Addie White. There she is. Would you come forth, Addie?

MRS. ADDIE WHITE: Good morning. To Commander Evelyn, to National Adjutant Maria and her staff, and to the officers, and to all the delegates of this 77th Convention: It is indeed a pleasure to be here as the chairman of the Hospital Program.

And before I go into this, I would be remiss if I did not thank the many volunteers in the units and the sponsored volunteers in the juniors for all the work that they presented to the patients of the non-VA hospital facilities. I would not have been able to record all of the many hours and the donations and the miles traveled had it not been for them, and I would like at this time to toss many coins of thanks to all of you.

And to the members receiving the badges and to the sponsored volunteers in juniors receiving the certificates of appreciation, congratulations to you. And I know you will continue to be special people helping special people, because I know you would have to

feel just wonderful when you would leave these facilities because of all the many smiles and all of the happy, happy people.

Because I know when I go in there -- and some of these people have not had visitors for quite some time, and you are the ones that would bring those smiles to those people there. And I really want to thank you for your work that you've done to support this program this year.

At this time, it is indeed a pleasure for me to present to you the convention chairman of the Hospital Committee, Brenda Reed of District 8, who will come and present to you the recipients of the awards for the non-VA hospital program. Brenda.

MRS. BRENDA REED: Thank you. One thing I've learned, the older I get, everything either wears out, falls out or spreads out. (Laughter) And I've also learned that people in the North do not understand what LA stands for, because they sent my bag to Los Angeles instead of to Lower Alabama. (Laughter) Fortunately, it did return.

National Commander Evelyn, National Adjutant Maria, national officers, past national commanders, delegates, guests: The National Hospital Convention Committee met in the Fiesta Ballroom at 10:00 a.m. on August 21st. Our advisor was Addie White. Betty Benzing from District 10 was our also elected and appointed secretary. She graciously volunteered.

It was very hard to judge these awards. We had so many of them, and they were just all wonderful. And it was very hard to narrow it down. And it took us the full time to do it. But the following units were judged to be the best in their category for the National Hospital Non-VA Awards.

Group 1, 10 to 50 members, Mountain Top Number 29, Oakland, Maryland. (Applause)

Group 2, 51 to 100 members, North Hudson Number 9, Weehawken, New Jersey. (Applause)

Group 3, 101 to 200 members, Admiral William F. Halsey Number 73, Elizabeth, New Jersey. (Applause)

Group 4, 201 members and over, Lieutenant V. O. Fryer Number 88, Schenectady, New York. (Applause)

The members who served on this committee, if you would stand when I call your name, please, so that you can be recognized. District 1, Elaine Blazejowski from Massachusetts; District 2, Helen Gasper, New York; District 3, Marian Baker, Rhode Island; District 5, Katherine Clinton from Pennsylvania; District 6, Ellen Griggs from West Virginia; District 7, Barbara McFadden from Florida; District 8 was myself; District 9, Barbara Smeal from North Carolina; District 10, Betty Benzing from Michigan; District 11, Judith Lenhart from Ohio; District 12, Nancy Colby from Illinois; District 13, Carolyn Vogel from Indiana; District 14, Marilyn Barton from Minnesota; District 15, Letty Warchola from Missouri; District 17, Xyla Wagner from Colorado; District 18, Rose Thomas from Nevada; District 19, Karen Haltiner from Oregon; and District 20, Minnie Boggs from Texas.

Give these ladies a hand, because they certainly had their work cut out for them. (Applause)

The committee did come away with two recommendations. One of them is really a necessity. I know we tell you that we're not going to disqualify you because you don't fill in some of the blanks. Well, we have to when you don't fill in how many senior members you have, because we don't know where to put you. So ladies, please remember to fill out everything in that heading, especially where it says "Total Senior Members," because this is judged by category, and we do have to know in which category to judge you so that we can be fair in doing that.

We also had a recommendation to clarify the point system and to get that clarification out to the states and the units, because some states were getting four points if you filled in all the blanks, even if you put a zero, and some states, you know, were getting the five points divided up, depending on how well you had done in each category. So we do need to get some clarification out on that.

Thank you. (Applause)

COMMANDER DORSEY: Thank you, Addie, for a fine job on

Hospital.

Our Junior Activities chair, Judy Lucas. Judy, are you there, for your report? She's coming. Okay. While she's coming, would all the juniors in the back just stand. Turn around and look at our juniors back there. Juniors, please stand. Give them a hand. (Applause) They're working here at the convention. There's more of them. There's some over in the corner. They're scattered, but they're here and they're working. We're very happy to have them here.

MRS. JUDY LUCAS: National Commander Evelyn, National Adjutant Maria, national line officers and past commanders: This year it's been a challenge. The group that we worked with really worked hard trying to figure out on these awards. So they spent two hours trying to give everybody justice on these.

I would like my chairman, Sadie Davis, to please come up.

MRS. SADIE DAVIS: Good morning, everybody. National Commander Evelyn, National Adjutant Maria, national officers, past national commanders, delegates and guests of this 77th National Auxiliary Convention: We met in the Fiesta Ballroom 9 at 10:25 on August 22nd, 1999. Our advisor was Judy Lucas, and our secretary was Sue Hollingsworth.

I hope that I can take a moment to give praise to the veterans. Most of us enjoy the liberties that are offered in this country. Just make sure you give the veterans credit for it. And if you take a moment and listen, veterans have a lot to say.

I remember a story of a family that a veteran had passed on to me I'd like to share with you. And I can remember this as though it were yesterday. These two fine potatoes came over here on the Mayflower. They worked hard and soon amassed a great fortune and were able to live in style. After that, they had a little baby potato, who was gracious, smart and beautiful.

So one day, she told her mother, "Mom, I want to get married," and her mother said, "Well, who do you want to marry?" She said, "Well, I've been watching Tom Brokaw, Bryant Gumbel and Dan Rather." And her mother said, "Ooh, those are 'common taters.'" (Laughter and applause)

I thought that something like that might calm everybody down, especially me. (Laughter) You are an awesome group to have, to meet, and you're beautiful.

The following units were judged to be the best in their category for the National Junior Activities Award.

Group 1. That's 1 to 25 members, Oakland, Maryland, Unit 29. (Applause) Oakland, Mountain Top Unit 29.

Group 2, 26 to 50 members. That's Grants Pass Unit 11, and that's the Department of Oregon. (Applause)

Group 3, 51 to 100 members. Valley City, North Dakota, and that's Unit 24. (Applause)

Group 4. That's 101 and over, and that's Lieutenant Vibert O'Friar, and that's Unit 88 in New York. (Applause)

Junior Activities Book. That's Kingman Unit 10, Arizona. (Applause)

If the teenagers are here, the Miss Teenage and the Junior Miss, please come up and receive your award. National Miss Teenage, that's Angela Ficociello, Braintree Number 29. (Applause) National Junior Miss, Rebecca L. Clark, Pendleton. That's from Georgia, Unit Number 10. (Applause)

The committee submitted the following recommendations. Each state send exactly one for each category, and they recommend a certificate of appreciation for participation in this activity or an honorable mention for runner-up.

As we call the names of the people who participated on this committee, would you please stand, and I would like to also point out that this was a diligent committee, and they worked hard to get the job done. Would you please give them a round of applause. (Applause)

District 1, that's Ellen Drogo; District 2, Helen Mazza; District 3, Jeanne Gideon; District 4, Elizabeth Sabatino; District 5, Rhea Lynn; District 6, Mildred Velazquez; District 7, Jill Manning; District 8, Sadie Davis; District 9, Naomi F. Oates; District 10, Joan Slotman; District 11, Linda Kimmel; District 12,

Patty Sobocinski; Carolyn Bugucki; Mary Lou Webber; Karen Gordon; Joan Fletcher; Janeen Henson; Nancy W. Herrera; and Margaret Sue Hollingsworth. (Applause)

Someone from the Arizona group needs to come up and get the book. That's from Unit 10, Kingman.

MRS. LUCAS: Our girls did a lot of work this year and, like I said, it was very hard judging, and the reason why our committee came up with a recommendations is because we see all these girls putting in this hard work and not getting, you know, something back from it. And I think we need to recognize them. And we really thank you. (Applause)

Thank you very much. Thank you, Evelyn.

COMMANDER DORSEY: Thank you, Judy. We're indeed proud of our juniors, because we know that they are the future of this organization. They are so beautiful.

I see the juniors from Oklahoma have a display in the back. If you have a moment, on your way out, just take a peak at it. It's very nice.

Legislation. Renee Jones is going to come forth and rumble.

2ND JUNIOR VICE-COMMANDER R. RENEE JONES: Thank you, Commander. National officers, past national commanders, members and guests: Before I start my remarks, I would like to ask our convention committee chairman to please come forward.

And while she is doing that, first of all, let me say thank you to each and every one of you who definitely made a difference regarding legislative issues this year. You definitely put on the boxing gloves, and you put down the powder puffs. But your job is not over.

When you registered this week and they gave you your name badge, they also gave you a little piece of card that looks like this. And as they handed it to you, they said, "Here are the addresses of your representatives, and inside your packet you will find postcards" that look like this. And this white piece of paper on one side tells you exactly what you need to write on the back of this postcard, along with the names and addresses of your senators and representatives.

The DAV will mail these. All you have to do is turn them in to the appropriate department, or, if you would like, if you will see that I receive them, I'll be happy to drop them off at the correct office. If you do not have your postcards, I have plenty at the head table. If you will wait until the meeting is over, I'll be happy to share them with you. You can drop your postcards off there for me as well. If you do not have your card that has the message or the address of your representatives, that's okay; I have that, too.

Again, thank you, and at this time I would like to present to you Sharon Hunter, who was the convention committee chairman from District 21. (Applause)

MRS. SHARON HUNTER: Good morning. National Commander Evelyn, National Adjutant Maria, national officers, past national commanders, delegates and guests: Juanita Frazier, District 8 served as the secretary; our capable advisor was Renee Jones. The committee met August 22nd in the Coronado Ballroom B at 10:30.

The units selected as winners were:

Group 1, 10 through 50 members, Mountain Top 29, Oakland, Maryland. (Applause)

Group 2, 51 through a hundred is W.R. Hold 47, Killeen, Texas. (Applause)

Group 3, 101 through 200 was DAV Roll of Honor 120, Kenmore, New York. (Applause)

Group 4, 200 and over members, Greater Daytona 84, Holly Hill, Florida. (Applause)

Now I'd like to introduce those serving on the committee and ask each one to stand as I call your name. Susan Ann Stulsky; Deborah L. Barbuto; Sherry Holmes; Rose N. Henn; Wanda Ball; Beatrice Stevenson; Henrietta N. Condon; Nita R. Frazier; Ruby Nelson; Corinne Jansen; Maria J. Mills; Wilma N. Tripp; Mildred Brown; Darlene B. Brody; Mary J. Peeler; Janet M. Guise; Joyce E. Humes; and myself. (Applause)

Congratulations to all the winners and thank you.

We do have some recommendations. We need more detail on the bill content, to read instructions each year, make sure reports are neat and legible. State adjutants should send out copies of forms sent out by National for the current year. Form needs a space for the number of members who actually participated in the Legislative.

2ND JUNIOR VICE-COMMANDER JONES: In closing, let me say thank you to all of those of you who signed up to be on my legislative e-mail listing. If I do not have your e-mail address, if you'll see that I get it, I'll be sure to add you to that. Thank you for taking that information and sharing it with your units and the chapters in your area. I've heard lots of great comments, and I really do appreciate that.

One final thing. If you are on line, be sure to check out the DAV's web site, www.dav.org. That information has legislative up-to-date information as well.

Thank you, Commander. (Applause)

COMMANDER DORSEY: Now, we did say that we were willing to stay and finish up and not come back after lunch, did we not?

(Response of, "Yes.")

COMMANDER DORSEY: Okay. Just wanted to be sure. And we're going to move ahead as rapidly as we can, and hopefully we'll be out of here a little after 1:00 and you'll be free for the rest of the day.

I see some husbands at the door. I think they're looking for some of you for lunch, but we'll ask the pages to pass the word that we're still in session, and we'll be finished when we're finished. (Laughter and applause)

The Mae Holmes chair is our senior vice-commander, Paula Raymond. Would you come and give your report?

SENIOR VICE-COMMANDER RAYMOND: Well again, the Mae Holmes Committee elected a chairman, Beverly Barron, and while she is coming forward, I want to tell you that this committee worked very, very hard. Mae Holmes is the Cadillac of the program awards. It was not easy judging. I will tell you that in counting, unless I miscounted -- now I could be off by one or two -- as of the 1st of April, there were 367 units that had made quota and qualified for the Mae Holmes report. (Applause)

There was one state department, and that was Idaho, and my congratulations to the State Department of Idaho and to each of the units, and to the rest of you, because I know you all tried very hard.

MRS. BEVERLY BARRON: The National Mae Holmes Convention Committee met in the Fiesta Ballroom Number 8 at 10:45 on August 22nd, 1999. Our advisor was Paula Raymond, and we elected as secretary Lyn Helms.

The following units were judged to be the best in their category for the National Mae Holmes Awards.

Group 1, 10 to 50 members, Unit 8, Delaware. (Applause)

Group 2, 51 to 100 members, Unit 18, Oahe, South Dakota. I hope I pronounced that right. (Applause)

Group 3, 101 to 200 members, Unit 113, Port St. Lucie, Florida. (Applause)

Group 4, 201 members or over, Unit 167, Cada-Haddon, Florida. (Applause)

This was hard to judge these reports. There were so many good reports.

Honorable mention. I would like to mention that Unit 42, Marietta, Wisconsin, with 10 to 50 members, we would like to mention those people; Elkhart 19, Indiana; and Number 7, South Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Those were all good reports. If we could have given two, we would have given those also. (Applause)

I would like to introduce the people, the members who helped me on this committee. Like I said, it was a hard committee to judge. We worked very, very hard. We gave careful, careful consideration on everything that we did.

District 1 -- would you please stand as I read your name -- Jacqueline Fossiano; District 2, Betty J. Nelson; District 3, Lucy A. Getchell; District 4, Jennie Bizon; District 6, Mary E.C. Parrish; District 7, Grace A. McLaughlin; District 8, Jo Ellen Henry; District 9, Lyn Helms; District 10, Penny Pegenau; District

11, Carolyn Reed; District 12, Sandra K. Fear; District 13, Dorothy McDaniel; District 14, Lee Ann Karg. If I'm mispronouncing these names, please forgive me, ladies.

District 15, Betty J. Bergquist; District 17, Cora S. Crossley; District 18, Rita Roe; District 19, Carolyn A. Minor; myself; District 21, Mamie Lee Painter.

Please give these ladies a big hand of applause. They worked very, very hard. (Applause)

We did have some recommendations that were submitted by the committee. We recommended that mileage should be eliminated on the hospital non-VA.

This committee has also suggested that a copy of the community service, the VAVS and the hospital reports all have a copy of that report attached when they're sent to National by the state.

Another recommendation, if itemizing, whatever you're itemizing, whenever you put that on the back please put the number. There was a lot of itemization, and it was very hard to figure out just exactly where they went. So, when you do that, please put that number on there.

That's it. Thank you very much, all of you, and I hope you have a wonderful stay the rest of this convention. It's been great so far, hasn't it? (Applause)

SENIOR VICE-COMMANDER RAYMOND: Thank you all very much.

COMMANDER DORSEY: Thank you, Paula.

History is Ann Jones. She will come forth now and give us the state department history book winners.

MRS. ANN M. JONES: Good morning, ladies. It's nice to see you in person as opposed to through the lens of the camera today.

First of all, our chairman was Elizabeth Fancher. Will Elizabeth, Libby, please come forward, please? And while she's coming up, I'd like to introduce the members of the State History Book Committee. District 1, Nancy Coulombe; District 2, Margaret Mazza. If you ladies will stand. District 3, Grace Boland; District 4, Teresa Delle-Tezze; District 5, Sadie Turner; District 6, Jean Skelton; District 7, Bunny Brennerman; District 8, Patricia Smith; District 9, Patricia King; District 10, Ruth Hines; District 11, Elizabeth Fancher; District 13, Wilma Christensen; District 14, Tammy Ryberg; District 15, Barbara McVicker; District 17, Afton Ficarra; District 18, Helen Parcelle; District 20, Mary Choate; District 21, Juanita Dowling.

Thank you very much, ladies, for your time. (Applause)

I am proud to announce that we had six history books this year. And I want to recognize every single state that submitted a book. We had beautiful books from Arkansas, Michigan, Alabama, Maryland, Massachusetts and Texas. Thank you, ladies. (Applause)

I want you to know that our group that conducted the judging worked overtime, because they wanted to make sure that every book was given total consideration.

Now, I know it's getting late, and I normally sit down for a while. We kind of go numb in our behinds. But I want to tell you something that might perk you up, because the lady of the book that wins the award today will be receiving from Maria Tedrow a check for $100. (Applause)

For those of you who were at Fall Conference and for those of you who read your Bulletin, that was a choice made by Maria to hopefully encourage those folks out there to submit the history books, because it's a heck of a lot of work, but, ladies, the results are beautiful.

I will now turn this over to Libby Fancher, who will tell you who our winner was.

MRS. ELIZABETH FANCHER: Hello, everybody. I'm so glad to be here. It was truly a pleasure serving on this History Book Committee. National Commander, National Adjutant, national officers, past national commanders, delegates, guests of this 77th National Auxiliary Convention: It was great serving on this committee and to be named chairman of this committee, which I consider such a great, great honor.

The National State Department History Book Convention Committee met in the Fiesta Room Number 4 at 10:15 on August the 22nd, 1999. Our advisor was Ann Jones. She did a terrific job.

And our secretary was Barbara McVicker.

These were beautiful history books. There's a lot of time put in this. Every state should do it.

The following department was selected to receive the National State Department History Book Award -- you're going to be so proud -- the State of Maryland. (Applause)

And I want to tell you, the lady that was the History chairman that prepared this book, she followed her instructions, and she took a lot of pictures. She put a lot of work in this, and I want to congratulate her. Edna Jones was her name.

MRS. JONES: Commander Evelyn, thank you for having appointed me as National History Chairman.

COMMANDER DORSEY: Thank you, and thank you to all of the departments who submitted your books. Maybe next year we'll have more. Last year we only had two; this year we had six, so we're moving up. That's good.

VAVS chair, Vicky Grier, come and give the VAVS report. And accompanying her is our deputy VAVS rep, Ruth Koon.

MRS. VICKY GRIER: Always save the best for last. Good afternoon. We are here to do the VAVS, and would our chairman come forth, please We had the opportunity to work with a great bunch of women, and everybody had good reports. And Commander, Ruth and I would like to thank you in the spirit of service for bestowing us with this chairmanship. We enjoyed it.

And this is our chairman, Beatrice Albanese, sweetest lady in the world, after we calm her down.

MRS. BEATRICE ALBANESE: Good afternoon, everyone. The Convention Committee for the VAVS Awards met in Fiesta Room 7 at 10:00 o'clock yesterday morning, and we have chosen as your winners:

Ten to 50 members, Katherine Early Unit 29, Mountain Top, Oakland, Maryland. (Applause)

Fifty-one to a hundred members, Vi Hoffman Unit 18, William F. Steel, Appleton, Wisconsin. (Applause)

One hundred and one to 200, Bea Hogan, would be Unit 32, Oakcliff, Dallas, Texas. (Applause)

Two hundred and one and over, which is the National Headquarters, Unit 5, William E. Young, San Antonio, Texas. (Applause)

Our Thelma Feighner, which is the too-far-from-the-hospital award, goes to Unit 3, Bismarck-Mandan, Bismarck, North Dakota. (Applause)

The recommendations from the committee are that they keep their explanations simple and just to give a little explanation on how you get the items to the hospital, because some of the reports said that there were no volunteers going to hospital. We'd like to know how you got them there.

I would like to thank the rest of the committee and have them recognized at this time. District 1, Theresa Kenfield; for District 2, Jane Willard; District 3, Beverly Cleveland; District 5, Jeanne Zwick; District 6, Carol Lee Simmons; District 7, Christine Cervizzi; District 8, Mary Roberson; District 9, Margaret Snelling; District 11, Mary Baker; District 12, Elaine Morris; District 13, Doris Jamison; District 14, Karen Haan; District 15, Kathy Weatherly who, incidentally, was our secretary. I'm sorry, Kathleen; I didn't mention your name. District 16, Joan Christensen; District 17, June Schow; District 18, Karen Narcaroti; District 20, Dorothea Turner.

Our advisor, of course, you know is Vicky Grier. Thank you. (Applause)

MRS. GRIER: Again, thank you, ladies.

COMMANDER DORSEY: Thank you, Vicky and Ruth for doing a great job this year as the VAVS chairs.

Our national adjutant will come with announcements at this time.

ADJUTANT TEDROW: Are you still willing to keep going? We're almost there. We're almost there. Okay. The only announcement I have to make is Florida has been great down here. I want to thank you so much. They have an abundance of gifts, and we are not going to have an afternoon session, so we're going to give some gifts out

today. But, of course, we're having a Forget-Me-Not Luncheon tomorrow. And they'll also give some gifts out then.

I will also be giving out five -- courtesy of National Auxiliary Headquarters -- five tickets to Disney, when we come back in from the meeting.

And at this time, the national commander has asked me to make this announcement, that there will be a 15-minute recess, at which time you will meet with your district and caucus concerning the Constitution and Bylaws.

And will the sergeant-at-arms see that the Nominating Committee is notified that we are in a 15-minute recess, and that they are to come back in for the second reading of the Constitution and Bylaws. Thank you.

(Whereupon, a short recess was taken.)

COMMANDER DORSEY: Let's come back to order. We will now have the second reading of the changes to the Constitution and Bylaws by our committee chairman, Past National Commander Lucille McCarthy.

MRS. McCARTHY: National Commander Evelyn, National Adjutant Maria Tedrow, past national commanders, national officers and delegates assembled: The 1999 National Convention Constitution and Bylaws Committee was called to order by Advisor National Judge Advocate Shelia Allred on Sunday, August the 22nd, 1999 at 10:00 a.m. Lucille McCarthy was elected chairman and Loneita Shoemaker as secretary. All proposed Bylaw amendments and one resolution were reviewed by the Bylaws Committee.

It was a pleasure serving as chairman of the Bylaws Committee, and I wish to thank and recognize the following ladies who served with me. Would all committee members please stand as your name is called and remain standing until all committee members have been introduced.

District 1, Maureen Fluet; District 2, Lucita Christian; District 3, Ann Young; District 4, Sophie Mate; District 5, Gloria Rexrode; District 6, Hazel Meyers; District 8, Susan Henry; District 9, Doris Hoffman; District 10, Bernice Sebring; District 11, Joyce Hutchinson; District 12, Bernadine Errett; District 13, JoAnn Laws; District 14, Miriam Kiser; District 15, Judith McLaskey; District 16, Donna Stinnett; District 17, Pauline Wright; District 18, Barbara Hicks; District 19, Marcia Reed; District 20, Betty Hall; and District 21, Loneita Shoemaker, who also served as secretary. I thank you all. (Applause)

My special thanks also to National Adjutant Maria Tedrow for providing copies of the proposed Bylaw amendments in time for the first reading. Also my thanks to National Judge Advocate Shelia Allred for advising the committee during our meeting.

We will now have the second reading of the proposed Bylaw amendments.

Article I, National Convention, Page N-5, Section 4, Delegates, Paragraph 4. Amend by deleting "Ceremony" after the word "Initiation" and by deleting "her" and inserting "an elected" before the word "alternate."

Article I, National Convention, Page N-5, Section 4, Delegates, Paragraph 4 would then read:

> A delegate to a National Convention shall not be allowed to vote until she is properly registered, dues paid for the convention year, has received the Membership Initiation, and is not indebted to the organization. A member shall not cast a vote in the National Convention in more than one representative capacity, or be registered as a delegate from more than one unit. In the absence of any delegate, her vote shall be cast by an elected alternate.

Madam Commander, I move that this amendment be adopted.

COMMANDER DORSEY: It has been motioned that this amendment be adopted. Is there a second?

MRS. SOPHIA MATE: Madam Commander, Sophia Mate of New Jersey 41 seconds the motion.

COMMANDER DORSEY: It has been moved and seconded that this amendment be adopted. Those in favor; opposed. Amendment adopted.

MRS. McCARTHY: Article III, Duties of National Officers, Page N-15, Section 5, National Judge Advocate, Paragraph 2, Line 2. Amend by deleting "state standing rules" and inserting after

"and/or amendments" the words "to state standing rules."

Article III, Duties of National Officers, Page N-15, Section 5, National Judge Advocate, Paragraph 2 would then read:

> She shall review all supplements to state bylaws and/or amendments to state standing rules. She shall advise each state department as to any discrepancies prior to the upcoming National Convention.

Madam Commander, I move that this amendment be adopted.

COMMANDER DORSEY: Is there a second?

MRS. MILLIE DOUGLAS: Millie Douglas, Unit 111, Florida, seconds the motion.

COMMANDER DORSEY: It has been moved and seconded that this amendment be adopted. Is there any discussion? Those in favor; those opposed. Ayes have it. Approved.

MRS. McCARTHY: The next amendment is Article II, State Officers, Page S-2, Section 3, Delegates, Paragraph 4, last sentence. Amend by deleting "her respective" and inserting "an elected."

Article II, State Officers, Page S-2, Section 3, Delegates, Paragraph 4, would then read:

> A member shall not cast a vote in the state convention in more than one representative capacity, or be registered as a delegate from more than one unit. In the absence of a unit delegate, her vote shall be cast by an elected alternate.

Madam Commander, I move that this amendment be adopted.

COMMANDER DORSEY: May I hear a second?

MRS. NINA BEVERLY: Nina Beverly, Unit 6, St. Augustine, Florida. I second.

COMMANDER DORSEY: It has been moved and seconded that this amendment be adopted. Is there any discussion? Those in favor. Any objections? Approved.

MRS. McCARTHY: The next amendment is Article IX, Supplement to State Bylaws/State Standing Rules, Page S-16, Section 1: Supplement to State Bylaws/State Standing Rules. Note: Line 4, insert "and notification" after the word "review."

Article IX, Supplement to State Bylaws/State Standing Rules, Page S-16, Section 1: Supplement to State Bylaws/State Standing Rules would then read:

> NOTE: If a state department reprints their state standing rules, three copies shall be submitted to National Headquarters for review and notification by the national judge advocate prior to their distribution.

Madam Commander, I move that this amendment be adopted.

COMMANDER DORSEY: Is there a second?

MRS. SANDY SCHULMAN: Sandy Schulman from New Jersey recommends that this be adopted.

COMMANDER DORSEY: It has been motioned and seconded that this amendment be adopted. Is there any discussion? Those in favor; opposed. Motion approved.

Thank you, Lucille, for a fine job. Thank you very much.

At this time, we're going to ask our chairman of our Education Loan Fund to come forth and give her report, Chairman Phyllis Greaney.

MRS. PHYLLIS GREANEY: Thank you, Evelyn. I would first of all like to thank the members of the committee this year who were our National Commander Evelyn Dorsey; our Immediate Past National Commander Evelynne Dunn; and our new member, Senior Vice-Commander Paula Raymond. We had a great year.

And again, I'd like to talk to you a little bit about the cost for higher education. And, as you know, I've been talking for some time about how it keeps increasing each year and the difficulties for the average family to be able to afford college.

While we have not increased our loan for some time, we were giving families and students up to a thousand dollars per year for a period of four years. Well, this year we decided we could increase it, and so that we have increased the amount to $1500 per year, up to $1500 per year, for the same amount of time, four years.

And we could not have done this if it wasn't for the generosity of all of you who are here today and those at home, who

have been generous to the Educational Loan Fund. It is such a worthy cause, and it is getting so difficult for families to be able to afford higher education.

You know the 1500 isn't going to pay for their college education, but it's a supplement to whatever federal loans they may have gotten or other scholarships. And we do look at the need, of course, and the fact that the student should have a grade point average of 2.0 and higher.

And also another change is that for some time now we have been saying that we could only take one student per family per year. That meant that one student could come this year and another could apply next -- in the same family, only one person. The next one, second child, could come the following year. And again, the loans are for four consecutive years. So I'm pleased that we were able to do that and again, it's only been because of your generosity that we can.

Another change in the Ed. Loan was that for some time now we were saying just one person, and we now have changed that to multiple births will be considered.

And there's not too much more I can say, except keep up the good work. We continue to need your monetary help. Thank you. (Applause)

Here I had this nice note here to read to you, and I'm walking off without doing it. I'm sorry. Our students are very, very nice people, and are very grateful to all of us for the help that we're giving. But I did want to read you this letter that had come to us recently from a boy who was making his last payment on his loan. He said:

> Thank you so much for this loan. It was such a help when I was going to school, and the payment plan was so easy. I have included an extra hundred dollars in this last payment so that you can put it to good use to help other students as you have helped me. Thank you again for this wonderful program and of the organization.

So I thought you would like to know that you are appreciated. (Applause)

COMMANDER DORSEY: If there are any delegates or departments, units, that would like to make a contribution to Phyllis for the Ed. Loan Fund, would you come forward now, line up for those presentations. Our Auxiliary Support Fund, Freedom Foundation, any other donations you wish to make, come at this time, please.

MEMBER: This is from the Department of New York. I'd like to present two checks, one to the National Education Loan Fund for 482 and National Service Fund for 487 from the Department of New York.

MRS. GREANEY: Thank you so much.

MEMBER: From the Department of Tennessee, we have a check for 200 for the Educational Loan Fund, a check for 100 for the National Service Fund, and I also have checks for $50 for Freedom's Foundation and Service Fund from Unit 98, Tennessee.

MRS. GREANEY: Thank you so much.

MEMBER: Department of Mississippi, we have a hundred dollars for the Education Fund and a hundred dollars for the National Service Fund.

MRS. GREANEY: Thank you.

MEMBER: I'm from Shelby County Number 70, and we have a $2,000 for the National Service Foundation, 1,000 for the Educational Loan Fund, 500 for the Freedom Foundation.

MRS. GREANEY: Thank you.

MEMBER: State Department of North Dakota has a hundred dollar check for the National Educational Loan Fund and the National Service Fund for a hundred dollars.

MRS. GREANEY: Thank you.

MEMBER: From Unit 49, New Jersey, a hundred dollars for the Service Fund and a hundred dollars for Educational Loan.

MRS. GREANEY: Thank you very much.

MRS. JACKI FOSSIANO: Jacki Fossiano from Cape Cod, Massachusetts. Here's something for the Ed. Loan and a check for the Service Fund in memory of my mother.

MRS. GREANEY: Thank you, Jacki.

MEMBER: This is from the Department of Pennsylvania, a

hundred dollars for the National Educational Loan Fund and a hundred dollars for the National Service Fund.

MRS. GREANEY: Thank you very much.

MEMBER: On behalf of the members of the Ernestine Schuman Heink Unit Number 2, Missouri, I'd like to present you with a check for $300 for the Educational Loan Fund.

MRS. GREANEY: Thank you.

MEMBER: On behalf of the State of Ohio, I'd like to present this check for $500 for the Educational Loan Fund and $500 for Freedom's Foundation.

MRS. GREANEY: Thank you.

MEMBER: On behalf of the State of Idaho, I'd like to present this check for a hundred dollars for the National Education Program and also a hundred for the National Support Program.

MRS. GREANEY: Thank you very much.

MEMBER: The Department of Virginia, $100 for the Freedom Foundation.

MRS. GREANEY: Thank you.

This check is from DAV Auxiliary Unit 24 for $10. Thank you very much. This was a check from the DAV Auxiliary Unit 24 from Illinois, and it was for $10. The person who donated it is kind of shy and didn't want to come up to the mike.

MEMBER: On behalf of the State Department of Indiana, we'd like to present the Women Service Foundation with a check for $500 and the Education Loan Fund a check for $100.

MRS. GREANEY: Thank you so much.

MRS. SHARON HUNTER: Sharon Hunter, senior vice, the State of Arkansas, wants to give a check for the Service Support Fund and Educational Loan Fund.

MRS. GREANEY: Thank you very much.

MEMBER: Once again, Delaware goofed and didn't bring a check, but I've got an IOU here for $50 for the Educational Loan Fund.

MRS. GREANEY: Thank you so much.

MRS. ARIANA PELCMAN: This is for the Education Fund in memory of Frances Rothwell, daughter of Evelyn Dorsey, for $50, from my grandmother, commander of Delaware, Merrilee Hickman, and myself, Ariana Pelcman.

MRS. GREANEY: Thank you so much.

MEMBER: On behalf of Quad City 53, Granite City, Illinois, we have a $500 check for the Freedom Foundation.

MRS. GREANEY: Thank you.

MEMBER: On behalf of the Department of Kentucky, I present $250 for the Educational Loan Fund, $100 for the Service Fund, and from Unit 3 of Elizabethtown, Kentucky, I present $100 for the widows.

MRS. GREANEY: Thank you very much.

MRS. KAREN ECCLES: Karen Eccles from Alton Unit 3, Alton, Illinois. I have two $100 checks here for the Auxiliary Service and Support Fund and one for the Educational Loan Fund.

MRS. GREANEY: Thank you very much.

MEMBER: On behalf of the State of Vermont, I'd like to present to you this check for the Educational Loan Fund and the National Service Program.

MRS. GREANEY: Thank you so much.

MEMBER: On behalf of the PSCs of New Hampshire, I'd like to give a donation to the National Service Foundation.

MEMBER: On behalf of the Department of New Hampshire, I have a donation for the Educational Loan Fund and the National Service Foundation.

MRS. GREANEY: Thank you so much.

MEMBER: On behalf of the Department of Michigan, we have a hundred dollar donation to the Educational Loan Fund and 200 to the Service Relief Fund.

MRS. GREANEY: Thank you so much.

MEMBER: On behalf of the Oliver Buehrle Unit 17, Jefferson City, Missouri, we have a check for a hundred dollars for the Service Fund.

MRS. GREANEY: Thank you.

MEMBER: On behalf of North Carolina Unit 18, I have a small check to be split between the Educational Loan Fund and the

Freedom's Foundation, and we realize that no value is too small.

MRS. GREANEY: That's great. Thank you.

MEMBER: Phyllis, on behalf of Donna Tanner, I'd like to give you a check for $25, and on behalf of myself and my husband for all the Auxiliary support for my granddaughter, we'd like to make you this donation of $50 for the Ed. Loan Fund, and from the Department of Massachusetts, a check for $500 for the Service Fund. My daughter was a recipient of the Ed. Loan at one time, and it really was great for her to be able to do the extra. So nothing is too small to give to this fund.

MRS. GREANEY: Thank you, Fran; thank you, Donna.

MEMBER: On behalf of the Department of Georgia, I present $125 to the National Ed. Loan Fund, $25 to the Freedom's Foundation, $25 for the Hospital Veterans Writing Program, and $100 to the National Service Fund.

MRS. GREANEY: Very nice. Thank you.

MEMBER: The Nor'easter Luncheon Committee voted to donate these surplus funds from the luncheon to the Service Fund.

MRS. GREANEY: Very nice. Thank you.

MEMBER: From the delegation of the 9th District, we wish to donate on behalf of our deceased members $50 for the Service Fund.

MRS. GREANEY: Thank you.

MEMBER: I'm giving a hundred dollars because you know that the young people are our future, and every little bit helps. Thank you.

MRS. GREANEY: Thank you so much.

MEMBER: Liberty Bell 96 in Pennsylvania, a hundred dollars for the Service Fund and a hundred dollars for the ... (inaudible)

MRS. GREANEY: Thank you so much.

MEMBER: I'd like to give a personal donation in memory of my sister. And Marie, who didn't want to get up here, would like to give a small donation to the Service Fund in memory of her husband.

MRS. GREANEY: Thank you.

MEMBER: On behalf of the Department of New Jersey, I'd like to present this check to the National Education Loan Fund, and included in our department check is a donation from one of our units, 32 in New Jersey. I would also like to present a check for our Service Fund, and included in that check are donations from Unit 42 and Unit 32 of New Jersey. And I'd like to present this check for Freedom's Foundation, and included in our department check is a donation from Unit 32. Thank you.

MRS. GREANEY: Thank you.

MEMBER: On behalf of Unit 47 from Jamestown, I would like to present this check for the National Education Loan Fund.

MRS. GREANEY: Thank you so much.

MS. SANDY SHULMAN: My name is Sandy Shulman. I'm from New Jersey, and I would like to present a personal check for the Service Fund.

MRS. GREANEY: Thank you.

MEMBER: From my granddaughters, Rachel and Rebecca, in memory of their mother, for the Service Fund.

MRS. GREANEY: Thank you.

MRS. CHERYL JOHNSON: I'm Cheryl Johnson from Unit Number 6, Marietta, Georgia. A personal check in memory of my mom, Mary Bea Howard. The Educational Loan.

MRS. GREANEY: Thank you so much.

MEMBER: On behalf of Past National Commander Marjorie Maguire, $400 for the Freedom's Foundation.

MRS. CORNELIA COBB: I'm Cornelia Cobb from Alabama. I would like to give a $100 check to the Service Fund in honor of my son-in-law who can no longer help us in our homeless ministry.

MRS. GREANEY: Thank you.

On behalf of Maria, the Service Fund and for me, the Ed. Loan, I want to thank all of you. (Applause)

ADJUTANT TEDROW: As Phyllis said, she was giving you thanks for both us, and that's true. The Service Fund is growing, and I have a question to ask. How many in this room no longer have their eligibility living? How many of you are widows? The numbers, sorry to say, are growing.

That's what this fund is all about. You don't know how good

it is to be able to help, even if we cannot pay in full, to be able to get some of the financial debts or assist with some of these financial debts.

I just want to say one thing. Get the word out to the membership. They do not have to come to a unit, they do not have to go to a unit and, you know, ask for help, and the unit submits it to us. They can write directly to us, or if you know of someone that needs our assistance, you can write to us.

The only thing I have said and I will continue to say is if a member is within your unit and they need assistance, and you have the money, help them a little bit, then go ahead and forward it on to us and we'll help them a little bit more.

But I want to thank you very much. I appreciate everything and every penny that we get from the membership for any, any program that we have. Thank you very much. (Applause)

COMMANDER DORSEY: Thank you, Maria, and I certainly second what you just said. The contributions that we give mean so much to others.

Well, you've been a beautiful audience this morning and going into this afternoon, but we are really now down to the wire. So at this time, Maria, do you have any announcements for us?

(Lost and found announcements)

ADJUTANT TEDROW: The Forget-Me-Not Luncheon is being held tomorrow, Tuesday, and not Wednesday. We're going to have great entertainment. We're going to have a great national commander. We're going to have a lot of fun. Today is the last day that we are selling tickets. So if you want to go, then when you leave here, check with the registration desk because we will not be selling this afternoon.

The NOAC will meet immediately following the Forget-Me-Not Luncheon in Fiesta Room 6.

(Further lost and found announcement)

ADJUTANT TEDROW: Wednesday morning, 8:30, because we want to go through our elections and the installation and give you a little time before the reception starts, so try to be in here as close to 8:30 -- try to be in here before 8:30 because after 8:30, whoever enters that door -- sergeant-at-arms, are you listening, national sergeant-at-arms, are you listening? Anyone who comes through that door after 8:30 does not get a ticket. (Applause) Okay?

COMMANDER DORSEY: There's a special presentation to be made, and I'm going to ask Pat if you'll come forward now quickly.

MRS. PAT RESLER: Good afternoon already. Some years ago, we had -- I'm sorry. I'm Pat Resler from North Dakota. Some years ago, we had an auction at our state convention, a pair of bunnies that were bought by Hiram Fuller, who was Katherine Pearson's brother. And he gave them to then National Commander Shelia Allred.

But our understanding was, a few years ago, she lost her prayer bunnies in her house fire. And my girls kept teasing her, "Where's Penny and Peter?" And I said, "Well, they lost Penny and Peter in the fire." "Well, Mom, you'd better make her another pair."

So I promised her I'd bring her a new pair of bunnies, and a touchy doll for her newest addition to her family. So, Shelia, here's Peter and here's Penny, and here's Touchy. (Laughter and applause)

JUDGE ADVOCATE SHELIA ALLRED: Thank you so much.

MRS. RESLER: It took me three years to make them.

COMMANDER DORSEY: Thank you. That's very thoughtful.

We'll give you the report on Wednesday morning how much we collected today.

Now, that brings us down to the end for the day. We will have our drawing after we have our closing prayer. I see you waving those tickets at me. Would the chaplain come and give us our closing prayer?

CHAPLAIN TIDWELL: Shall we pray? Lord, we ask Your blessings and care for all present as we depart for the day. Thank You for the productive time we have spent together. Watch over us and bring us back rested and ready to meet the challenges of another day. We pray for our sick and bereaved. Father, if it be Your will, we pray You lift them up and heal and console them. Go with

us now and be with us when we return. Amen.

COMMANDER DORSEY: We are recessed, and we will reconvene on Wednesday morning at 8:30 a.m. Pass the word. Have a great afternoon.

(Whereupon, the drawing took place, following which the meeting recessed at 1:30 o'clock p.m., August 23, 1999.)

SECOND BUSINESS SESSION

August 25, 1999

The Second Business Session of the Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary 77th National Convention convened in Fiesta Ballroom 5-6 of the Coronado Springs Resort, Orlando, Florida, Wednesday morning, August 25, 1999, and was called to order at 8:35 o'clock a.m. by Adjutant Maria M. Tedrow.

ADJUTANT MARIA M. TEDROW: At this time, I would like to introduce to you our National Auxiliary Commander Evelyn Dorsey of D.C. (Applause)

COMMANDER DORSEY: Good morning. Are you "Disney-ed" out? Oh, there's so much to see!

Well, let's start our meeting like we did the Opening Session by reaching over and giving the person next to you a hug. That'll get them stimulated for the morning. That'll get us going.

Okay. Let's come to order. Our national chaplain, Gertrude Tidwell, will come and give the morning prayer, after which our Americanism chairman and National 3rd Junior Vice-Commander Linda Trulio, will come and make the Pledge of Allegiance.

CHAPLAIN TIDWELL: Good morning. Shall we pray? Heavenly Father, we give You thanks for another day to spend with our Auxiliary family. As we go through this day, give us strong ties of friendship, pride in the accomplishments of others, wisdom to broaden our knowledge, so that we can share this with others, all the special things about our organization, love in our hearts for You, our God, our country and our sisters in this great organization. These things we pray. Amen.

(Pledge of Allegiance)

COMMANDER DORSEY: National Sergeant-at-Arms, would you come to the podium for the purpose of introducing the National Executive Committeewomen and those members who served as pages?

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS IRIS BRZEZINSKI: Good morning. I would like to introduce all of these ladies who helped me make my job real easy. I've had a very good time doing this. I got to boss all these people around.

From District 1, Miriam Daley; District 2, Jeanne LePorte; District 3, Ann Kelley; District 4, Florence Kehne; District 5, Rebecca Anderson; District 6, Hazel Meyers; District 7, Grace McLaughlin; District 8, Carolyn Johnson; District 9, Betty Bryant; District 10, Betty Benzing; District 11, Florence McGovern; District 12, Elaine Morris; District 13, Edith Jackson; District 14, Sandy Dobmeier; District 15, E. Bonita Mitchell; District 16, Dolores Wingett; District 17, Jean Jackson; District 18, Helen Parcelle; District 19, Norma Parker; District 20, Joyce Humes; District 21, Sara Douglass. (Applause)

Personal pages: Joan Fletcher, Margaret Snelling, Mayola Winston, Dorothea Campanelli, Karen Eccles. Who did I forget? Gloria Winger, Gloria Boozer. Junior pages: Ann Hollingsworth, Rebecca Witt, Angela Ficociello, Rachel Witt, Sara Ann Coursey. (Applause)

These two back here are personal pages. Rebecca and Rachel are personal pages. (Applause) Their last name is Witt.

Thank you. (Applause) They are not dismissed.

DISTRICT 7 NEC GRACE A. McLAUGHLIN: Iris, on behalf of all the NECs and the pages, we would like to make a little presentation to you. It has been our pleasure to work with you and for you and for the organization, and we hope that you have a great year.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS BRZEZINSKI: Thank you. And you are dismissed. (Laughter and applause)

COMMANDER DORSEY: I want to give a special thank you to Iris Brzezinski who stepped in at the last minute to serve as our

national sergeant-at-arms. She stepped in in the spirit of service, and I think she's done a fine job. Thank you again, Iris. (Applause)

At this time, I will call Past National Commander Evelynne Dunn to the podium.

IMMEDIATE PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER EVELYNNE DUNN: Good morning, ladies. I have a special message here from someone who I know is very special to all of us. When I was elected national commander, my family and I adopted her into our family, and ever since that time, she's called me "Momkins," so I would like to read a message that she sent for all of you.

> Commander Evelyn, national officers, past national commanders, delegates and guests: It is with deep regret that I am unable to attend this year's National Convention. Although my health prohibits me from making the trip, I will be there in spirit. I will mostly miss your smiling faces, the Forget-Me-Not Luncheon and trading pins. I want each and every one of you to live it up and have a grand time as if I'm right there in the room with you.
>
> Also, I wish to thank all of you for the many cards, letters, phone calls and faxes that I have received. They have gone a long way toward brightening up my days. I appreciate you all for keeping me and my family in your thoughts and prayers. I know the overwhelming outpouring of love and support was due to the hard work of my 21 favorite ladies in the National Executive Committeewomen for getting the word out to all of the states, and for all the hard work I am truly grateful.
>
> When God answers my prayers, I will see you at the Y2K celebration. Love and kisses, Dorothy Otts.

Thank you (Applause)

COMMANDER DORSEY: We know Dorothy's spirit is here with us.

I want to also acknowledge our national musician. I did not call her name on Monday, but I think she, too, has done a fine job. And let us thank her with a round of applause. (Applause) Nancy, you're great. Thank you so much.

The Nominating Committee chair will come forth at this time to give the report of the Nominations Committee.

While she's coming, I want to appoint three tellers. District 6, Edith Hines, would you come forth? I'm just looking out among you. District 4, Bea Albanese. I'm trying to see in the back. I can't see too far back there. District 9 -- is Mattie Brooks back there? Come forth, Mattie. Thank you. I'm going to ask you ladies to serve as tellers.

MRS. JANE TROUTMAN: National Commander Dorsey, National Adjutant, national officers, past national commanders, delegates and guests: Before I go into the slate, I would like to thank the Nominating Committee and introduce them at this time.

I would like to introduce Donna Tanner from District 1, if she will stand and remain standing; District 2, Dolores Robidoux; District 3, Claudia Roy; District 4, Dorothea Campanelli; District 5, E. Jimmi Hayes; District 6, Marjorie L. C. Maguire; District 7, Marilyn McDonald; District 8, Winona Gamble; District 10, Gloria Boozer; District 11, Ann J. Offutt; District 12, Nelda Wilson; District 13, Edith Jackson; District 14, Margaret E. Hass; District 15, Dorothy M. Van Hoy; District 16, Alma Fowlkes; District 17, Florence Valgardson; District 18, Sally Wilton; District 19, Deborah Mazza; District 20, Louise Rapisand; District 21, Sara A. Douglass.

I'd also like to specially acknowledge Claudia Roy, who was the secretary, and also to the immediate past national commander, Evelynne Dunn, who was the advisor.

Please give these ladies a round of applause. (Applause)

The Nominating Committee of the Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary held their first meeting on Sunday, August the 22nd. We are pleased to submit the following slate for your consideration to serve as the 1999-2000 officers. They are as follows:

Commander, Paula Raymond, Illinois; senior vice-commander, Carol Gray, Michigan; 1st junior vice-commander, Renee Jones, North Carolina; 2nd junior vice-commander, Linda Trulio, New Jersey; 3rd

junior vice-commander, Jan Bennett, Nevada; 4th junior vice-commander, Gertrude Tidwell from the State of Oklahoma; chaplain, E. Bonita Mitchell, Missouri; judge advocate, Shelia Allred, North Carolina. Thank you. (Applause)

COMMANDER DORSEY: Thank you, Jane, and to your committee again for all of the long hours you put in. I wish to thank all of 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.

Would the Credentials chair come forth to give the final Credentials report?

MRS. NINA BEVERLY: Good morning. National Commander, national officers, past national commanders, members and guests: The Credentials report is as follows. Total units registered, 293; total departments registered, 44, for a total of 337. Delegates registered, 614; alternates registered, 38; guests, 78, for a total of 730. Total unit votes, 1,998; total department votes, 44; national officers, 8; past national commanders, 14, grand total of votes, 2,064.

I move that this final Credentials report be adopted.

COMMANDER DORSEY: It has been moved that the final Credentials report be adopted. Do I hear a second?

MRS. ANN JONES: Ann Jones, Arizona, seconds.

COMMANDER DORSEY: It has been moved and seconded that the final Credentials report be adopted. All those in favor. Objections? Ayes have it. Adopted.

At this time, would all of the officers please leave the podium and go back to your respective districts. This is for the purpose of nomination and election of officers.

You have heard the report of the Committee on Nominations. Paula Raymond has been nominated by the committee for the office of national commander. Are there any other nominations?

MRS. ECCLES: Madam Commander Evelyn, Karen Eccles, Unit 3. May I approach the podium, please?

COMMANDER DORSEY: Yes, you may.

Are there any other nominations? Are there any other nominations? Hearing none, I declare the nominations closed.

MRS. ECCLES: Good morning. National Commander Evelyn, National Adjutant Maria, national officers, past national commanders, DAV Auxiliary members and distinguished guests: I am humbled and very proud to second the nomination of Paula K. Raymond for the great prairie State of Illinois for the office of national commander.

Paula is a life member of Unit 3 in Illinois and has served all offices on our local unit, state and national levels. She has served her state Illinois, with complete understanding and compassion. She has climbed up the ranks in the National and traveled to other states, many who got to know her friendly smile and outgoing personality.

Through the years, we have told you about her family, friends, job and etcetera. All of this pretty much remains the same. Her husband, Byron, travels a lot with his job. Sometimes one of them zips out as the other one "zags" in. Byron is unable to be here due to some foot surgery. Her son, Darren, my brother, is in his eighth year with the U.S. Navy. And then, of course, there's me. I am the third generation of the DAVA in our family.

Please note, if elected, Paula will take her position seriously and serve you well, and together you go courageously into the year 2000, a new millennium and challenge to all. Let's go for it!

So now, on behalf of Illinois delegation and the members of the State of Illinois, it is an honor to second the nomination for Paula Raymond for the office of national commander. Thank you. (Applause)

COMMANDER DORSEY: All those in favor of Paula Raymond as national commander, signify by saying Aye; those opposed. The Ayes have it, and Paula Raymond has been elected the national commander for the 1999-2000 year. Congratulations, Paula. (Applause)

Carol Gray has been nominated by the committee for the office of national senior vice-commander. Are there any other

nominations? Are there any other nominations? 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 Carol Gray for the office of national senior vice-commander signify by saying Aye; those opposed. The Ayes have it, and Carol Gray has been elected to the office of national senior vice-commander. (Applause)

Renee Jones has been nominated by the committee for the office of national 1st junior vice-commander. Are there any other nominations? Are there any other nominations? Are there any other nominations? Hearing none, I declare the nominations closed for the office of national 1st junior vice-commander.

All those in favor of Renee Jones for the office of national 1st junior vice-commander, signify by saying Aye; those opposed. The Ayes have it, and Renee Jones has been elected to the office of national 1st junior vice-commander. (Applause)

Linda Trulio has been nominated by the committee for the office of national 2nd junior vice-commander. Are there any other nominations? Are there any other nominations? Are there any other nominations? Hearing none, I declare the nominations closed for the office of national 2nd junior vice-commander.

All those in favor of Linda Trulio for the office of national 2nd junior vice-commander, signify by saying Aye; those opposed. The Ayes have it, and Linda Trulio has been elected to the office of national 2nd junior vice-commander. (Applause)

Janet Bennett has been nominated by the committee for the office of national 3rd junior vice-commander. Are there any other nominations? Are there any other nominations? Are there any other nominations? Hearing none, I declare the nominations closed for the office of national 3rd junior vice-commander. (Applause)

All those in favor of Janet Bennett for the office of national 3rd junior vice-commander, signify by saying Aye; those opposed. The Ayes have it, and Janet Bennett has been elected to the office of national 3rd junior vice-commander. (Applause)

Gertrude Tidwell has been nominated by the committee for the office of national 4th junior vice-commander. Are there any other nominations? Are there any other nominations? Are there any other nominations? Hearing none, I declare the nominations closed for the office of national 4th junior vice-commander.

All those in favor of Gertrude Tidwell for the office of national 4th junior vice-commander, signify by saying Aye; those opposed. The Ayes have it, and Gertrude Tidwell has been elected to the office of national 4th junior vice-commander. (Applause)

E. Bonita Mitchell has been nominated by the committee for the office of national chaplain. Are there any other nominations? Are there any other nominations? Are there any other nominations? Hearing none, I declare the nominations closed for the office of national chaplain.

All those in favor of E. Bonita Mitchell for the office of national chaplain, signify by saying Aye; those opposed. The Ayes have it, and E. Bonita Mitchell has been elected to the office of national chaplain. (Applause)

Shelia Allred has been nominated by the committee for the office of national judge advocate. Are there any other nominations? Are there any other nominations? Are there any other nominations? Hearing none, I declare the nominations closed for the office of national judge advocate.

All those in favor of Shelia Allred for the office of national judge advocate, signify by saying Aye; those opposed. The Ayes have it, and Shelia Allred has been elected to the office of national judge advocate. (Applause)

The election having been completed, will all of the current officers return to their stations on the podium? The tellers are dismissed. Thank you.

We are just moving along smoothly this morning. This is great.

The national adjutant will now come and call the roll of the newly elected National Executive Committeewomen and alternates. As your name is called, please come forward for the purpose of installation.

ADJUTANT TEDROW: At this time, I will call the newly elected National Executive Committeewomen and their alternates. We will begin with District 1. National Executive Committeewoman from District 1 is Dorothy Young. If you would please come down here. And her alternate is Louise Barrett. Would you please stand alongside the sergeant-at-arms.

District 3, Marie Clancy, and her alternate is Pamela Cleveland. District 4, Jennie Bizon, NEC, and her alternte is Merrilee Hickman. Jeanne Zwick is District 5, and Rhea Lynn her alternate. Sunny Barzelogna, NEC, District 7, and her alternate, Nina Beverly. District 9, National Executive Committeewoman Ruth Koon, and her alternate is Mattie Brooks.

District 11, NEC Judy Uetterling, and the alternate, Joyce Hutchinson. District 13, NEC Norma Zemet, and her alternate is Jan Walters. We had a resignation of an NEC in District 14, and so we now have as the NEC, Sandy Dobmeier, and her alternate is Mary Lou Webber. District 15, NEC Rosemary Gallagher. Her alternate, Judy McLaskey. District 17, NEC Cora Crossley and her alternate is Afton Ficarra. District 19, Deborah Mazza, NEC, and her alternate is Karen Haltiner. And District 21 is M. Sue Hollingsworth, NEC, and her alternate is Sara Douglass.

National Commander, you have before you the newly elected National Executive Committeewomen and their alternates for the purpose of installation.

COMMANDER DORSEY: You are requested to remain silent during the ceremony of installation.

As newly elected National Executive Committeewomen and alternates, are you willing to assume the oath of your office?

(Response of, "Yes.")

COMMANDER DORSEY: Place your right hand over your heart, pronounce your name and repeat after me the oath of your office. I, Evelyn Dorsey, having been selected as a National Executive Committeewoman 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 to her all the property of the organization in my possession, all of which I now affirm.

You may lower your hands.

Delegates, members and guests: I now present to you the National Executive Committeewomen and alternates of the Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary. I trust you will aid them in the performance of their duties. With your help, their term of office will be highly successful.

Ladies, would you about face. (Applause) You may return to your seats. Thank you.

We will now go into the installation of the newly elected national officers. Paula, have you selected your installing officer?

National Sergeant-at-Arms, will you escort Past National Commander Nelda Wilson to the podium?

I understand there are family members outside. Would the pages allow them to enter, please and bring them down front? Thank you. Newly elected officers go to the back of the room as well.

ADJUTANT TEDROW: While we are waiting for one of the members of the family of the newly elected commander, rather than waste a little time, I'd like to make some announcements. First of all, you know we have the Fall Conference next month, the 24th, 25th and 26th in Louisville, Kentucky at the Galt, and all members are welcome.

I have been asked to put in the Happenings at Headquarters, but now that I have the opportunity, I will also state it here. There have been some people that have come to me and said, "Would you please inform the members when they are wearing a pin of the organization" -- I'm talking about an officer's pin -- "that it is not a piece of costume jewelry. It is to be worn over the heart, not on the collar, not on the hat, not on the sleeve, but over the heart." So I've done that.

We will be going directly into the National Executive Committee meeting as soon as this convention is adjourned in this same room. All chairmen that may have been approached by the newly elected commander are to remain in this room, along with the National Executive Committee. At that time, you will hear who the appointees are.

And there will also be, following that, a very brief Finance Committee meeting.

The convention next year, of course, you know where it's going to be. It's going to be in Reno.

I've had people come up and say that the convention went well. I would be remiss if I did not thank all of the delegates for helping make it go well. We couldn't have done it without your patience, without your understanding, and without your help. And that's why we're able to expedite this.

You would notice today that there were not any seconding speeches for the officers. A second, as our judge advocate pointed out, is not needed for a nomination, and the officers were instructed this year to put out their own brief resumes so you would have it there. What did you think of the idea? (Applause)

Now, one other thing, and then I hope they'll be ready. Even though Mickey Mouse Land is enjoyable, and I know you've had a lot of fun, I know that it's been an expensive vacation for all of you. But you have still been very generous to the national organization and its programs.

I told you I would read out the amounts that we collected. For Freedom's Foundation, your generosity amounted to $2,200; for Hospitalized Veterans Writing Project, $25; for the Educational Loan Fund, $4,337; and for the Service Support Program, $6,116.25 -- (applause) -- making a grand total of $12,678.25. We thank you. Thank you.

COMMANDER DORSEY: There are two people in the room who I want to acknowledge for all their support, not only at this convention but others, and you see them, they go about doing their work, and we just, I guess, almost take them for granted, too. But I certainly want to acknowledge our most capable recorder, Holly Delai. She sits there and she catches everything we say. (Applause) I'm sure that's quite a task.

And then, of course, I could not forget my dear friend here, Jim Hall, the photographer, of the DAV. (Applause) He is definitely a friend of the Auxiliary.

Let's give them a big round of applause. (Applause) Thank you, both of you, for all you do for us.

Are all of our people in place now? No.

ADJUTANT TEDROW: The dates for the convention next year will be August 19th through the 24th at the Reno Hilton; rate $98 plus tax. And again, our Fall Conference, September the 23rd to the 25th, Galt House. Room rate 82, single/double; 92, triple; and $102 for a quad. As anybody knows that has been at the Galt House, when you register for a room, you get a small suite, so there's ample room in there for more than one person. And that rate is $82.

Installation information, officers and NECs are to meet in the Coronado Ballroom at 1:00 o'clock, and I'll announce that again at the Executive meeting, Coronado Ballrooms S through T at 1:00 o'clock this afternoon.

I've been requested to announce something else, which I was going to do at the NEC meeting, that we will have the National Executive Committee meeting at the Fall Conference on Thursday at 10:00 o'clock in the morning. So if you belong to the National Executive Committee, you should be in there for that meeting. It's at 10:00 o'clock on Thursday morning. And the officers and chairmen are to come in on Wednesday evening. They will be notified.

At this time, I'm going to call the roll of the newly elected officers, and as I call the roll, will they please come down and step to the left of the conductress? Are you ready? Okay. Here we go.

For national commander, would you please bring Paula Raymond down? National Senior Vice Commander Carol Gray; National 1st

Junior Vice-Commander Renee Jones; National 2nd Junior Vice-Commander Linda Trulio; National 3rd Junior Vice-Commander Janet Bennett; National 4th Junior Vice-Commander Gertrude Tidwell; National Chaplain E. Bonita Mitchell; National Judge Advocate Shelia Allred.

Past National Commander Nelda, the officers are in place for the purpose of installation.

MRS. NELDA WILSON: As a newly elected officer, are you willing to assume the oath of your office?

(Response of, "I am.")

MRS. WILSON: Place your right hand over your heart, pronounce after me your name and repeat the oath of office. I, Nelda Wilson, having been selected as a national officer of this Auxiliary, do most solemnly pledge myself to faithfully and impartially perform in letter and in 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 to her all the property of the organization in my possession, all of which I now affirm.

You may lower your hands.

Delegates, members and guests, I now present to you the national officers of the Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary. I trust that you will aid them in the performance of their duties, and with your help their term of office will be highly successful. (Applause)

Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the national commander to the podium, and all the other national officers may assume their position.

Paula, may I see you a moment? I give to you the gavel, emblem of your authority. Use it wisely, have fun. We always do. And I want you to know that 27 years ago today exactly is when this was presented to me. So good luck to you. (Applause)

COMMANDER DORSEY: This has been a great convention, and you have made it so. (Applause) There were changes, but we conformed and we adapted, and everything worked out great. I want to thank you for coming, and I wish for all of you a safe journey back home.

The business of this convention having been completed, I now declare the 77th National Convention of the Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary hereby adjourned.

We will move immediately into our Post-NEC meeting. At this meeting, the families of the newly installed officers will be introduced, so if you'll just be patient a little longer you'll hear from them. And our newly elected commander will preside at this meeting.

(Whereupon, the meeting adjourned, August 25, 1999.)