COMMANDER’S CORNER
Gene Durand
Department Commander

Greetings Comrades: First, I would like to thank everyone for having elected me as your Department Commander. I will give the Department 100% and will represent you with honor and respect.

My goal for this year is Membership and working to get more women the benefits they deserve. Far too long, our sisters have been ignored. This year the (MALT), Mississippi, Alabama, Louisiana, and Tennessee, made for the first time in several years 100% on membership. I would like to see this continue for several more years. This is due to a lot of DAV members working hard.

As we make plans to have our Mid-Winter Conference in November, I encourage everyone to try to attend. There will be Service Officers Training and great information provided. Fun Night theme is the 50’s. Most of us remember those times.

I would like to thank PDC Paul Hermann and PDC Kevin Wenthke for all the help they have given me in the past few months. It is great to have the knowledge of these two men to rely on.

In the next few months, I plan to visit all the Chapters in the State. If I can be any help to anyone, please call me or email me. Thank you, all of you for what you do, and I look forward to seeing you at Mid-Winter. God bless all and God bless America.

FROM THE ADJUTANT
Paul Hermann
Department Adjutant

First and foremost, I would like to thank Department Commander Gene Durand for reappointing as the Department Adjutant, and to thank the PDCs & DECs for supporting his decision. I want to also thank everyone for a very successful State Convention. Congratulations to all the Nominees and the new Officers. I look forward to working with you throughout your term in office. I am available to anyone if you have any questions, need advice, or just want to complain. I expect it to be a very active year.

I attended National Convention in Orlando, Florida and had a great time. The Convention was very well represented by Louisiana and the 8th District. Steven “Butch” Whitehead, from Minnesota, was elected as our new National Commander. We look forward to his leadership in the upcoming year. Mississippi’s Dept. Commander, Jerry Bratton, will continue as the 8th National Executive Committee chair. We look forward to Jerry’s leadership in the district over the next year in office.

At National Convention we learned a lot of new information. The biggest change is the Membership Dues. Effective January 1, 2020, the Membership Dues will be increased to $300 for all new members, excluding members over 80 years of age. I enjoyed the few days with all our Line Officers, PDCs, and DAVA members that attended. We are fired up and ready to go. So I ask, are you ready to join us and make this Department even better? I hope the answer is yes.

We now have a new Membership Goal set by National Headquarters and the goal is very manageable. Our total number is 441. Chapter 2 = 31; Chapter 5 = 52; Chapter 7 = 22; Chapter 8 = 10; Chapter 9 = 12; Chapter 15 = 32; Chapter 17 = 24; Chapter 19 = 10; Chapter 20 = 29; Chapter 21 = 10; Chapter 23 = 17; Chapter 30 = 56; Chapter 32 = 10; Chapter 33 = 11; Chapter 37 = 10; Chapter 41 = 10; Chapter 47 = 10; Chapter 50 = 40; Chapter 51 = 18; Chapter 52 = 27.

Continued on Page 2
FROM THE ADJUTANT
Continued from Page 1

It is my opinion that every Chapter should be able to make their goal and win the Membership Competition for our Division. Now is a good time to recruit, because the dues are going up. Anyone that joins during the time frame between now and December 1, 2019 will save money. Last year the Department met its 100% Membership Goal, but not all Chapters accomplished this goal. Please remember, that it is just as important to recruit Auxiliary members as well as DAV members. We are all one family and my hope is that we will function that way.

I am requesting that everyone, if you have not done so already, go to DAV.ORG and sign up for the Commander’s Action Network (CAN). This program will allow you to be notified of every bill that is before the Congress & Senate. This is your way of supporting all bills relating to enhancing Veterans lives. Furthermore, they have the email ready for you just to submit to your appropriate Congressman/Senator. Please pass this on to your friends, family and co-workers and ask them to sign up. Help support our Brothers and Sisters-in-Arms and those that have already served.

DAV has a new volunteer program that we need to be talking about and pursuing. The program is called “VolunteerForVeterans.org”. This program allows a veteran to register for help with yard work, house cleaning, roofing issues, etc., and it allows veterans and non-veterans to register to assist veterans in need. The DAV will pay up the need/request with the provider. There is no/minimal charge for any of the services. It is imperative that we find veterans/widows and sign them up as a recipient of help from volunteers. Also, we need to get youth to sign up to volunteer to assist and help our Brothers and Sisters. These hours of volunteer service can be used for service hours for school and possibly assist them in receiving a College Scholarship through DAV.

As you can see, there are new and exciting things happening in the DAV. Remember, we need any pictures involving your Chapter events for the Journal. I am looking forward to our Mid-Winter Conference at the Bentley Hotel in Alexandria, (318) 442-2226. The Registration form has been sent out or you can find it on our website — “davlol.org”. Cutoff for Registration to Headquarters and the Bentley Hotel is November 1, 2019. All persons, including those there for CSO Training are required to register prior to the Registration Cutoff date. You will notice that the fees for Mid-Winter Convention have been raised to $40; this includes the Fun-Night on Friday night.

My last request for this Journal is to remember who we are and what we stand for in the Disabled American Veterans. We stand to enrich and better the lives of our veterans and their dependents. We should always remember to represent the Disabled American Veterans with integrity. Also, remember that all the DAV has is its name, and we should never do anything to tarnish it. May God bless our country, our State, and our VETERANS.
Vice Commander’s Views
From Senior Vice Commander
Mike McTierman

The upcoming Mid-Winter Conference is just around the corner and I hope to see you there. It is a time to get to know each other and find out what is happening around the state. At the National Convention there was a lot of information passed on to the membership, and this is a chance for you to learn about some of the information. One of the biggest changes is in the cost of membership, as most of you already know. Lifetime Membership will now be a flat fee for everyone, $300.00, as of January 1, 2020. The over 80 group will remain the same, No Charge.

As you know, Membership is and has been one of my pet peeves. I not only believe that we need to get more and more young people in the DAV; I believe that if we do not, we are a group that will cease to be a vital organization in the future. We did quite well this past year and we did exceed our Membership goal. Well done, but we cannot quit now. In my mind the question is still the same. Where are the young men and women? We need these people. They are the future of the DAV. They are the men and women with all the computer knowledge.

At the National Convention the past August, I met and played a round of golf with our new National Commander, along with several other members of the National Staff. Most are young, and most are full of energy. I can see the leadership that is going to take the DAV forward, and that is wonderful news. My point here is, where are we? We need the youth and their willingness to grow. The future of the DAV lies with the young men and women that are on the field today, those that are returning home now, those that are in school learning a trade, and those who are already working towards their future. WE NEED THEM NOW.

From 1st Jr. Vice Commander
Javis Tazzin

No formal column submitted.

Women Veterans Conference – Shreveport, April 6-7, 2019

Photo 1: Sr. Vice Comdr. Mike McTierman giving a short talk about the need for Women in the DAV. Photo 2: Commander Johnny Welch of Chapter 30 presenting literature and offering sign-up forms. Photo 3: Johnny Welch again offering information. Photo 4: One of the many tables at the Conference. All in total there were about 135 ladies there. Keynote Speaker was Louisiana Department of Veterans Affairs Secretary Joey Strickland.

2019 COMMANDERS & ADJUTANTS TRAINING – NATIONAL HQ
Vice Commander's Views
Continued from previous page

From 2nd Jr. Vice Commander
Belinda Hill

Hello everyone: I can’t believe that it’s September already. Time is really flying by! I had the pleasure of attending the National DAV Convention in beautiful Orlando, Florida. The Convention was very informative, as well as all the Department meeting. Now that the Convention is behind us, it’s time to get busy doing what our Mission Statement says, assisting veterans and their families. One way of doing this is with membership. Let’s all start early and try to accomplish this before the price increase in January. Let us not forget to assist the Auxiliary in recruiting members as well. Membership is everyone’s responsibility.

On August 24, 2019, I had the privilege of being invited to attend the ribbon cutting ceremony for the newly erected Purple Heart Bridge in Houma, LA. This event was held at the Veteran’s Park, which one of our own veterans had a big hand in getting erected in Houma, the late Roger Songe. His wife was in attendance for the ribbon cutting, along with members of Bayou Chapter 9. The ceremony was excellent and ended with the 21 gun Salute. After that, I attended a meet and greet for Chapter 33. It was great meeting, and some of the members of the Chapter and I encouraged them to get involved in the Chapter and the Organization. Look forward to seeing them at their next meeting.

One last comment, I want to thank the New Orleans DAV office for giving me the opportunity to do the last MSO Van trip. We went to West Monroe, Alexandria, Lafayette, and Denham Springs as the last stop. Thank you Donald Bryant, and Beverly James-Wills for the pleasure.

From 3rd Jr. Vice Commander
Kenneth Manuel

Hello everyone. I would like first to briefly introduce myself. I am a retired Navy Chief Petty Officer. I am married with 5 kids. My wife’s name is Sherry, and my kid’s names are Gabriel, Ava, Isaiah, Josiah and Jeremiah. I live in Eunice, and am also the current Commander for Acadiana Chapter 19 in Eunice. I am currently employed as a Veteran Navigator at my local college, LSUE. It is truly an honor to be elected into this position. I am excited to be on this journey. I am looking forward to visiting as many Chapters as possible this upcoming year.

This certainly gives me a chance to get to know my fellow Disabled Veterans personally.

Since elected as 3rd Jr Vice, I was able to attend two events on Memorial Day. The first was at the Southwest Community Center in Eunice. There were about 15 veterans there in attendance. The keynote speaker was VFW Post 8971 Commander Don Reber. It was a very touching ceremony. The second event was a Memorial Day Ceremony in downtown Eunice on 2nd Street. We had several veterans in attendance there, as well as a few Gold Star members. On August 21, 2019, I was able to attend the Female Veterans Statue Dedication Ceremony at the Southwest Louisiana Veterans Home in Jennings. The statue was donated by VFW Post 7321 Ladies Auxiliary. The keynote speaker was Louisiana Women Veterans President, Ms. Anna Sanders. It was a grand event with many veterans in attendance. It is great to see that our women veterans are getting the recognition they deserve.

Thank you all for electing me as your 3rd Jr Vice and I look forward to seeing everyone at the Mid-Winter Conference in November.

CHAPTER 50 – POW/MIA CEREMONY


“We cannot afford to forget any experience, not even the most painful.” - Dag Hammarskjold