Treasurer's Turn

Kevin Wenhe.

PNEC/PDC

Fellow Comrades,

The deadline for your Financial Report to be completed and sent in is September 30. If you are having difficulties in completing the Report, please give me a call. As a reminder, the 990N is due no later than November 15. Again, if you are having difficulties in completing the 990N, give me a call.

I would like to congratulate all the newly elected Department Officers. Commander Gene Durand and all of his Line Officers are off to a great start! Thank you Officers for your hard work and dedication to the DAV. Mid-Winter Conference is approaching fast. It’s only a few short months away, so if you haven’t gotten registered or your room reserved, then you should do so without delay! There is going to be great CSO Training at the Conference. Don’t miss out on that training, as things change throughout the year!

Now is the time to get those memberships in to National before the change takes place on January 1, 2020. The new membership cost will be a set amount for all, rather than based on your age. Sign them up NOW!

Lastly, I will have a few caps, jackets and shirts for sale. I will accept payment of cash, check, and debit/credit card. I will NOT be carrying a fully loaded trunk of the shirts, caps or jackets from this point forward. If you would like to have a shirt, cap or jacket for the Mid-Winter Conference, then you must contact me no later than November 1 to place the order. I will bring it to the Conference, where you will then pay for it. I can be reached at 337-208-3825. See you all in Alexandria at the Mid-Winter Conference.

Chapter 19 Installation

Acadiana Chapter 19 held its installation of officers on April 22, 2019. The Installation was performed by State Commander John Mercer. The officers sworn in were Commander Kenneth Manuel, Senior Vice Commander Al Leger (not pictured), 1st Jr Vice Bud Wall, 2nd Jr Vice Miguel Pousson, 3rd Jr Vice Larry Lejeune, 4th Jr Vice Roger Vaillon, Finance Officer Jasper Manuel, Chaplain David Darbonne and Adjutant Ronald Domingue. Congratulations to all on your elected positions. Let's have a great year.
Veterans Get to Tell Their Stories to Library of Congress

BY GEORGE MORRIS | G.MORRIS@THEADVOCATE.COM  |  Jun 8, 2019  |  8:00 pm

Libraries are places to get information, but recently the East Baton Rouge Parish Main Library was the place where information was being gathered—in many cases, before it might be lost forever. The Veterans History Project, a program of the Library of Congress, recorded the stories of about two dozen area military veterans who showed up on the Saturday before Memorial Day. Volunteers also plan to collect more stories at several assisted-living homes to add to the project’s archives. It’s all part of an effort that started in 2000, said Andrew Huber, liaison specialist with the Veterans History Project. U.S. Rep. Ron Kind, D-Wis., came up with the idea after he recorded his father and uncle sharing some of their World War II stories at a family gathering. “He realized if this was so valuable to him and his family, we should be doing this for all the World War II veterans,” Huber said. “The next time Congress was back in session, they introduced a bill.”

The project, however, isn’t limited to World War II veterans. It includes interviews from veterans who served in World War I and every era since then, including those who are leaving service now. The project has more than 110,000 collections, which includes interviews, diaries, photos, letters, journals and original artwork, all of which is available to the public at loc.gov/vets/. It’s the first time the Library of Congress has come to Baton Rouge, said Jennifer Cramer, director of LSU’s T. Harry Williams Center for Oral History. The LSU Libraries, the USS Kidd Veterans Memorial and the America, My Oyster Association joined the EBR Library in the effort locally. “We want to preserve these histories of our veterans,” said Bea Gyimah, president of America, My Oyster Association. “We want them to know they have a story that is worth listening to. Most importantly, everyone has a story in America.”

The veterans came from all branches of service, and the interviews focused on each one’s personal experiences. George Livers Jr., of Baton Rouge, was a B-17 tail-gunner for 16 bombing missions over Germany in World War II. His last mission ended early when his plane was shot down after bombing Dresden on March 17, 1945. Livers was able to avoid being captured and stayed on the run for two weeks in enemy territory before being liberated by the Soviet Army, which was attacking Germany from the east. He was taken overland to Iran before being shipped back to England. “At first, I thought they’d rather shoot me, but I finally convinced them I was a friend of theirs,” Livers said. “By the time I got back to my outfit, all the shooting war was over.”

Leroy Poydras, 98, of Baton Rouge, only wished he could have been part of the shooting. Serving in the Navy aboard two battleships, two patrol craft, two transports and an oil tanker in World War II, Poydras sailed into dangerous water, but his hand held a spatula. When he finished high school in Lafayette, Poydras couldn’t afford to attend college, and he said he was too proud to take a job cutting grass for 50 cents a yard. He enlisted in the Navy, earning $21 a month. In that era, however, most African-Americans were given limited choices—cleaning, cooking or waiting tables in the officer’s mess, Poydras said. “I didn’t like that,” he said. “I tried to get out. They didn’t let me go.” Poydras said a patrol craft officer from New York named Thurber apparently hadn’t read the memo. “He called me in his office,” Poydras said. “He said, ‘You’ve got too good a mind to be in the ... mess. What are you doing there?’ I said, ‘Uncle Sam wouldn’t let me go anywhere else.’ Blacks couldn’t do anything but be stewards, regardless of what you had up here. ‘He said, ‘I’ll write Washington, D.C.’’ He wrote Washington. Washington didn’t write him back; they sent him a cablegram back, told him ‘no.’” After the war, Poydras earned a bachelor’s degree in biology and a master’s degree in chemistry and taught science in high school and college.

History, however, is the subject of this project, which didn’t end at the library. In addition to volunteers being trained to record interviews, the Veterans History Project accepts individual submissions. Go online to loc.gov/vets for information.

“It’s become more grass roots-y,” said Mary Stein, EBR Library assistant director.

2019 Mississippi State Convention
Greetings fellow DAV Veterans and members of the DAVA: It has been a very fast year. I want to THANK YOU, GOD for answering the prayers of each of you. It is a pleasure to be your Chaplain and I am seeking new ways to reach out to those DAV/DAVA members and families who need a kind word, a prayer, or just a hand to hold. I am depending on the Commanders, Adjutants, and Chaplains of each Chapter to lead the way in ministering to the needs of their Chapels members. I respectfully ask that I be included in the process, so I can help if possible. I will try and visit 1-2 chapters before the next State Convention in May.

I would like to encourage all to look for ways to continue to serve your fellow veterans. I will be a functioning member of the DAV/DAVA, and I ask that of each of you. Membership means we are all necessary Parts of the Whole. Membership means we are different, but we still work together. Membership means everything we say and do is based on a Biblical Foundation of love. Remember our Motto. “If I cannot speak good/well of my fellow veteran/member, I WILL NOT SPEAK ILL OF HIM OR HER”. I will be a unifying DAV/DAVA member. Unity is critically important, and each of us as a DAV/DAVA member must strive to be a unifier. You are never to be a divisive force. Gossip and negative talk are both destructive to the DAV/DAVA. Forgiveness and Unity are to be your mantra. I will not let the DAV/DAVA be about my preferences and desires. Remember, we are all parts of the whole. Be a servant to others, especially the sick, widowed, and those who are in need. The word servant is mentioned 57 times in the New Testament.

The biblical servant was often a person who worked in a household but it also refers to our role as Christians. Jesus said; we must be last of all and servant of all. Paul wrote in Philippians 2:5-11. “Make your own attitude that of Christ Jesus”. We are all to be servants, to put others first and to keep the unity of the DAV/DAVA. I will pray for my leaders, both in the DAV/DAVA, local chapters, state and national officers/officials. Our Nation is in serious trouble and we must all pray for God’s intervention and that our leaders will seek GOD’s guidance in their decision-making. Pray for each other’s physical and mental health.

I will treasure DAV/DAVA membership as a gift. There are two ways to view membership. The first and often the most common approach is one can look at DAV/DAVA membership as that in a country club. Everything is for our benefit and someone else does all the work and we get the benefits. What happens when the country club member is asked to contribute? What happens if the member is asked to serve on a committee or to work on some project, etc? Being a member has some legalistic approach and you may do so begrudgingly. Country club membership is not about working; it’s about being served. Many get mad when asked to do something for the club and a common response is “I did my time; it’s someone else’s time” Some get angry at the leadership, citing they get paid for it and/or they have all the spotlight on them. They are just lazy and trying to get out of work.

The second concept of membership and most important approach is the Biblical attitude in that of seeing serving as a gift, something to be treasured. Membership means we have the opportunity to serve and give, rather that thinking we are being forced to do so. Our entire attitude is changed when one looks at membership in a biblical manner. Jesus served his subjects throughout his short time on earth and suffered and died for our sins providing us a way to receive eternal salvation. When one receives the free gift of salvation through Jesus Christ, we are to assume the body of Christ. We are to be humbled and honored to serve our Lord and to love those around us. Jesus wants us all to be in unity toward one another and to be servants. So it is with the DAV/DAVA. Please do not take your membership for granted, but see it as a gift, a way to serve others and to be a part of something so much greater than one member. Remember again, your Savior died on a cross for your sins, and in doing so opened the door for salvation. All you have to do is step through and accept Jesus as your Lord and Savior. Become that body of Christ and beginning serving others and become a functioning member. You can be an eye, an ear, a hand, a back, etc. in serving Jesus. So it can be in the DAV/DAVA. Everyone has something to give to the good of the organization.

I look forward to the remainder of the year in serving the needs of my fellow veterans and the DAVA as best I can by my ability and with GOD’s guidance. I have Get Well Cards and Sympathy cards to send to those who need them, but the key again is informative and TIMELY contact from my fellow DAV Veterans and DAVA colleagues. I am easy to reach via any method you choose as provided: Wade Jenkins, 136 Jenkins Road, Forest Hill, LA 71430-8759; HP (318) 748-4840, HP (318) 229-0246; fatboydwj@gmail.com or dwjenkins@davdol.org.
Chapter 23 Recent Events

(1) Purple Heart Ribbon Cutting Ceremony; (2) Karen Trahan and Donald Bryant; (3) Chapter 23 Commander Raymond Williams awarding Tommy Doucet (The Marine) DAV State Volunteer of the Year Award; (4) DAV Chapter 23 swore in new member Terry Jackson; (5) Donald Bryant placing the Membership banner on DAV Flag for Chapter meeting its goal.

(1) Gene Trahan, Cecil Trahan, Belinda Hill, and Gene Durand; (2) Chapter 33 meet and greet. Terry Waite cutting the cake. (3-4) At National Convention.

(1) MSO Van last ride; (2) National Convention.

244th U.S. Army Ball
Submitted by Larry Jones, DAV Chapter 37

On June 22, 2019, The 244th U.S. Army Ball was held at the National World War II Museum, New Orleans, LA. The Legion of Mars Board members Mike Turner and Larry Jones were contacted and asked if they could locate and invite one Army veteran from World War II, Korean War, and Vietnam War as honored guests. We were pleased to fulfill the request and were also invited to escort our guests. All of us were honored by name and service by the MC. Our WWII guest George Mazzeno was honored with a standing ovation and later in the program helped New Orleans Mayor LaToya Cantrell cut the Army Birthday Cake. The three honored war veterans and CDR Larry L. Jones are all members of Disabled American Veterans (DAV) Chapter 37, Jefferson, LA.