



& AUXILIARY MASSACHUSETTS NEWSLETTER



KEEPING OUR PROMISE TO AMERICA'S VETERANS

APRIL



DEDICATED
TO A SINGLE PURPOSE

Join us for a
**BRAMBLE TO
BENEFIT
Veterans**



DAV Department of Massachusetts
23RD ANNUAL
GOLF CLASSIC
KEEPING OUR PROMISE TO AMERICA'S VETERANS

Monday, June 19th, 2023
9am Registration 10am Shotgun Start

Blissful Meadows Golf Club
801 Chockalog Road
Uxbridge, MA 01569

Sponsorships

available!



**ALL PROCEEDS BENEFIT OUR
SERVICE PROGRAMS FOR
VETERANS AND THEIR FAMILIES.**

VOLUNTEER WITH US!

Click or Scan the QR Codes for more information!



UPCOMING EVENTS
Stay Connected via
FB and the calendar on
www.davma.org/events



IS YOUR CHAPTER
OR UNIT ACTIVE?
WE WANT TO SEE!

@DAVMASSACHUSETTS



COMMANDER RICHARD CONNOR

This month has been a very busy and exciting time for me. PDC Frank Whitty, National 2nd Jr. Vice Coleman Nee, Assistant Adjutant Mike Valila, and myself made our first trip to Norfolk prison this to restart the Incarcerated Veterans Program. Through our efforts we hope to get incarcerated veterans connected with their disability benefits, healthcare, and housing, all in the hope of reducing recidivism rates. We got a chance to meet with a few of our fellow veterans that are incarcerated. We will continue to make these trips to various prison facilities throughout the Commonwealth to educate veterans of the

benefits they are entitled to, and sit one-on-one to help them file claims. In fact, I received a letter this week from one of them thanking us for being there. We are hoping to be able to return in the future. We understand that there are over 300 veterans in this facility that may need assistance. We have been escalating the DAV name out in the public for those that need our services and contact information. Our

DAV transportation is again up and running which has helped us become more visible throughout the state. Please consider becoming a volunteer driver. It's a great way to help your local veteran community!

Chapters across the state are starting to see more and more veterans show up for meetings and many of them are willing to help. If we can ignite their interest and enlist their help, more will be accomplished. Please lend a helping hand to the new member, make them feel welcomed, and a part of the team!

I am looking forward to seeing many of you at the state convention in June where we will work together for the future of our fellow veterans.

SR. VICE BOB KINSMAN



The VA is currently offering a series of Town Hall Seminars on the PACT Act (the Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics Act of 2022) throughout MA & the Country. This new law expands VA health care and benefits for Veterans exposed to burn pits and other toxic substances. The next VA PACT Act Town Hall will be held at the Billerica Town Hall on April 15, 2023 at 10:00 AM (see attached).

We are looking into having an On-Site Tour of the Massachusetts State House. Watch for more information soon and let me know if you are interested. We are also gathering information on a Citizen's Legislative Seminar. The Citizens' Legislative Seminar (CLS) is a citizen program, organized by the Senate Office of Education and Civic Engagement, which aims to better educate the public on the functions of the Massachusetts State Legislature.

Please join & use the DAV Commander's Action Network (CAN), which is available here: <https://dav.quorum.us>. This is a national quick-reaction service that notifies our legislators of DAV support for bills that are important to veterans. At the last Department Executive Committee (DEC) Meeting, we learned how to influence the legislative process by Preparing a Resolution that will first be reviewed by the DAV Department of Massachusetts, then by the National staff at our Annual Meetings. If your proposed Resolution gets approved, it may be included by the DAV Legislative Team in next year's edition of DAV's Critical Policy Goals.

This is the time to submit your resolution (prior to the Department Convention). I have included a brief report on How to Write a Resolution for your use. If you need assistance on preparing your resolution, please contact me or Mike Valila.



WRITING A RESOLUTION



PACT ACT OVERVIEW



**STATEMENT OF POLICY
FOR RESOLUTIONS**



PACT ACT TOWN HALL



1ST JR VICE BOB BRONSON

Spring is officially here and with it comes warmer weather and the chance to get out and interact with more people. It's this interaction that offers more opportunity to increase membership in the DAV. Yesterday I stopped into a large home improvement store. Upon entering, I was solicited by a gentleman handing out doughnuts. Far be it from me to pass by a free Bavarian. He asked if I was part of one of their reward programs and I told him that I had already signed up for their Veterans discount. He looked at my hat, saw the F4 on it and asked if I had worked on them, to which I said yes. He said that he was a KC135 engine mechanic when he served. I saw the opportunity and asked if he had signed up for VA health care or if he had any disabilities that he sustained during his service. He said that he lost hearing in one of his ears while serving but because he remained in the Air Force for a few more years, he didn't think he would be eligible to apply for compensation. I told him that he was wrong, and I gave him one of my DAV business cards. I then asked him to call the following number, 800-827-1000 and request to have an "Intent to File" submitted. Will I get a call back from him? I don't know, but I have at least planted a seed and maybe down the road he'll see the value of our organization and make a call to join the DAV.

The bottom line is that you never know when you may have an opportunity to not only help a fellow Veteran, but to promote the DAV. Helping is what we do and that is what will draw interest in becoming a member.

2ND JR VICE ANDREA GAYLE-BENNETT



Spring has Sprung! President George H.W. Bush launched the 1000 Points of Light campaign in 1991 and established April as National Volunteer Month. DAV's mission celebrates the impact volunteers have on our veteran's lives and encourages active volunteerism. On behalf of the DAV department of MA, I honor and salute the unparalleled services of ALL the DAV volunteers who have given countless hours for the betterment of veterans and the local community.

Shout out to Chapter 64 for receiving their 3rd letter of recognition and coin from DAV National Commander Joseph "Joe" Parsetich for their community outreach at the Topsfield Fair, their work with Habitat PLUS, and their scholarship program.

As a reminder we are looking for nominations for the national DAV scholarship program and the Lynn/Swampscott DAV Chapter 64 scholarship program. Each chapter should have received the report from "DAV Voluntary Services that lists all youth volunteers that meet the criteria and are eligible to apply for the national scholarship. If you did not receive the report, please let me know.

What are YOU doing to serve this month? Share your photos on social media and include the hashtags #DAVMA and #NationalVolunteerMonth.

Don't forget to complete both of your MONTHLY volunteer reports!

DAVMA Service Form:

<https://forms.gle/cLQA4Moqtm3LVcw86>



VAVS Form 60: Monthly Reporting Form 60 – LVAP (xlsx).

If you have not completed these forms in the past, You can go back up to 3 years on the VAVS 60.(Fiscal Years 2019-2020, 2020-2021, 2021-2022)





3RD JR VICE DENNIS DEVINE

As you know March has been a pretty busy month. We had our DEC meeting, and then a dinner banquet honoring 2nd Jr Vice Coleman Nee for the South Boston Parade. Coleman is a proud member of Chapter 3 and National 2nd Jr Vice was the Chief Marshal for the St. Patrick's Day Parade. We had approximately 15 members participate. I would like to thank Herb Colon for putting a Color Guard together for the Parade. A big Thank You to Patrick Arabie's son and daughter, along with my grandson Bryan. The 3 of them carried the Chief Marshal's banner the full length of the 3.5 mile parade!

Coleman proudly carried the Irish Sheleighleigh during the Parade. I'd like to give a big thank you to Janet Pratt, Ann Marie Hurley, Elizabeth Butters, and Monique Holder from the Auxiliary for coming out, as well as our members from the Department, Frank Whitty, Bob Kinsman, Cindy Blais, Phil Gerety, Patrick Arabie, Stan Pratt, and Charlie Cook. A job well done considering the circumstances of low 30's temps with howling winds. A great time was had by all!

We had our first By-law committee meeting this month too. We have proposed many new changes that will bring our Department into this new era, and make it more inclusive to all. I have made phone calls to Chapters to offer assistance with no replies back. Please reach out if you are in need of assistance updating your bylaws to include hybrid/virtual option. This must be completed by Department convention in June. Please see QR Code for the memorandum from National on this subject. We had a meet and greet in West Roxbury that was very successful for both claims and recruiting new members. Consider hosting similar events in your area. I will help you organize them if you'd like. I try to talk to veterans whenever I can. You never know if they are members, or in need of assistance with benefits. Please also speak to spouses, as a lot of them have questions regarding survivor benefits or DIC. You can recruit them for the Auxiliary as well! We are all in this together, so let's all work together!





ADJUTANT DANIEL STACK

The core of DAV has always been our Service Officers. I want to personally thank each of our Department and Chapter Service Officers for their continued hard work in assuring that veterans and their families are always taken care of and given the best service we can provide. With our recent purchase of new equipment for our DSO offices at VA facilities across the state, to include the Soldiers' Homes, we will ensure our Service team has the equipment necessary to submit claims in an expedient manner, and assist more veterans. If you are interested in becoming a Service Officer, please speak to your chapter and register for our upcoming Level I & II DSO/CSO Training at Convention!

DAV's Service Officers are available to help veterans and family members navigate the process of filing for benefits and help them understand how laws may affect the application process and their eligibility under PACT Act. Many veterans who served during certain eras, in certain locations, or who had previously been diagnosed with one or more presumptive conditions may now qualify for expanded support and disability compensation, even if they were denied previously. To find your local office, please click or scan the QR code.



VA will attempt to contact veterans and survivors who were previously denied benefits and may be newly eligible under the Honoring our PACT Act, but we encourage them not to wait and to re-file now. If you believe that you or a loved one qualifies for these expanded benefits, please do not hesitate to reach out to our Service Officers to begin the application process.

The Department HSC Golf Tournament is coming up June 19th. This tournament is to benefit all of us as a department, so please get involved! Sign up a team from your chapter, share with community partners and fellow veterans, and work to get sponsorships! Each sponsorship that comes in from a chapter or individual will be put into a drawing to win a prize! Thank you in advance for your hard work on this!

Department Convention is around the corner June 8-11th at the Doubletree Hilton in Leominster, MA. Please make sure you have your Service Officer Nomination Forms and Officer Election Reports complete and sent in to the Department. Only those who are listed on the Service Officer Nomination Forms will be allowed to participate in the Level I & Level II DSO/CSO training this year. Without this training, you will not have liability coverage when completing claims, nor will you be able to do claims under the name of DAV. Claims work is the core of our organization, so please make sure you have this taken care of if interested in becoming or maintaining your DSO/CSO certification.

SUICIDE PREVENTION REMINDER:

AS OF JANUARY 17, 2023, VETERANS IN SUICIDAL CRISES CAN RECEIVE FREE EMERGENCY HEALTH CARE IN ANY VA OR NON-VA HEALTH CARE FACILITY REGARDLESS OF WHETHER THEY ARE ENROLLED IN VA CARE. THIS NO-COST CARE CAN EXTEND TO INPATIENT OR CRISIS RESIDENTIAL CARE FOR UP TO 30 DAYS AND OUTPATIENT CARE FOR UP TO 90 DAYS. THIS NEW POLICY WAS REQUIRED UNDER THE VETERANS COMPREHENSIVE PREVENTION, ACCESS TO CARE, AND TREATMENT (COMPACT) ACT OF 2020, WHICH WWP SUPPORTED. LEARN MORE ABOUT HOW TO USE THIS BENEFIT PLEASE CLICK OR SCAN THE QR CODE.



COMMANDER KAYLA VALILA



Spring and warm weather is upon us, as is our upcoming May State Executive Committee (SEC) Meeting. We are seeking interested, motivated members to submit their Fact Sheet to join the state line. Similar to a unit officer having responsibilities, a state line officer's duties encompass the state and are outlined in the State Standing Rules (SSR). I am happy to answer any questions from interested members, so please do not hesitate to reach out.

I painfully must share with you that Debra Geary has resigned from her role as Sr. Vice Commander, and her state appointed positions, effective immediately for personal reasons. I would like to express our sincerest gratitude of Deb's efforts, compassion, enthusiasm and years of service to veterans and their families. It has been a pleasure working beside her and wish her all the best.

Per our bylaws and effective immediately, Genevieve Downey has accepted the move up to Senior Vice Commander, and Carole Evangelista has also accepted the move up to 1st Junior Vice Commander. As to not create an undue hardship on the officers, appointments and membership with this change so late in the year, duties will remain as they were at the beginning of the fiscal year through the end of the fiscal year. In addition, per our bylaws, the now vacant role of 2nd Jr. Vice Commander is appointed by the Commander to finish the remainder of the year. With confirmed acceptance of the role, I would like to appoint Allison Devine as 2nd Jr. Vice Commander. Allison is an Auxiliary member of Unit 3, and daughter of Dennis Devine, DAV MA's current 3rd Jr. Vice Commander. She has participated and volunteered in many events and ceremonies for veterans and their families. Her continued involvement with the Auxiliary and unwavering support to veterans and their families, with the concurrence by majority vote at our next SEC, I feel Allison will be a welcomed addition to the line.

To alleviate any confusion, the duties of each officer, appointment or role for the remainder of the 2022-2023 year is outlined below.



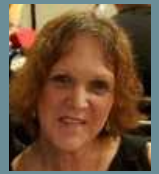
Sr. Vice Commander
Genevieve Downey
Membership Chair
PSC Breakfast



1st Vice Commander
Carole Evangelista
Legislation Chair



2nd Vice Commander
Currently Vacant
Assist officers as needed



Asst. Adjutant
Diane Sullivan
Hospital Raffle

In case you missed it above in Liz's section, National Annual Report forms are near due. Never completed reports and have questions? CONTACT US- We are happy to help!

COMMANDER'S CHALLENGE

Submit your DAV Auxiliary State of MA Unit's completed National Annual Report forms to Liz before deadline of April 28, 2023.

Should you accept this challenge, any Auxiliary unit of MA that submits completed reports to Liz before her deadline of April 28, 2023 will receive a mystery surprise for their unit!



Want to LEVEL UP and double that mystery surprise? Bring five (5) of your unit members to the May SEC meeting.

Let us sustain and surpass the exceptional work we do. By leading the way, being the best at what we do, together, we will continue to set the bar high and set the standards of service for our veterans and their families. Accept nothing less.

-Commander Kayla Valila



ASST. ADJUTANT, DIANE SULLIVAN

Just a quick note to let you know that the raffle is chugging along. We still have a lot of tickets to sell, so please contact me if you need more! Remember to make your checks payable to the DAVA Dept of MA. Please note on your check if it is for tickets (include stubs if for sold tickets) or if it is a donation.

Please mail all checks addressed to Diane Sullivan, 83 Bay State Avenue, Somerville, MA 02144.

We ask that all money, tickets and ticket stubs be in by May 3rd. Thanks for all your support!

HOSPITAL FUNDRAISER REPORT

PNC, PSC, JUDGE ADVOCATE, FRAN COSTA

Now that spring is here, we need to start thinking about convention which brings State Standing Rules proposed amendments to the forefront.

Reminder that any proposed amendments must be to me in writing with your name and a rationale for the amendment either by email at f102447@aol.com, or by postal mail.

Deadline to be addressed must be to me no later than April 24th.



PSC, COMMUNITY SERVICE CHAIR NANCY MOONEY

Some helpful hints to help you fill out your year-end report for the Community Service work you have done during the year.

Important things to remember.

- Check that your heading is completed, if not your report will be disqualified.
- Your work must have concentrated on veterans in the community not to be confused with services preformed for veterans at a VA facility. This program is for veterans and their families in the community, but not a family member
- Use the information published in the Community Service Table of Values as a guideline to establish your dollar amounts. Please note if your total exceeds \$1,000.00 you must attach an itemized report explaining the donations.
- Make sure you put the work performed in the category that it is related to the activity, as stated on the form.
- Be sure the Unit Commander or Chairman signs the report.

I have suggested many ways during the year to show our support to the veterans in our community. Now, let's show all the work you have done by completing your Community Service Year End Report. The year end reports are a great learning tool as they provide ideas and projects that can be shared with other units. Thank you for all your efforts showing our Veterans in our community that we care!



Westcott Houghton Unit 56, North Attleboro, MA potluck supper for Ch. 56 veterans on Valentine's Day.



FINANCE COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN, SANDY FINCEL

Reminder: There will be a budget meeting immediately after the SEC meeting on May 13, 2023. All members of the finance committee are required to attend this meeting including the Commander, Senior Vice Commander and Treasurer.

Any requests for money to be considered at this meeting must be in writing 10 days prior to the meeting either by USPS mail or e-mail to Sandy Fincel at gorsfincel@gmail.com. No requests are allowed from the floor as it says in our budget rules.



DAV AUXILIARY MA STATE ADJUTANT, LIZ ELDRIDGE



SAVE THE DATE: JUNE 8, 2023 – DAV & DAVA Joint Testimonial for Department & Auxiliary commanders Richard Connor and Kayla Valila will be at the Double Tree Hilton, 99 Erdman Way, Leominster, MA 01453. Ticket & meal information will soon be sent by email to chapter and unit members.

2023 Auxiliary Unit Reminders – Please refer to the attached reminders sheet for annual reports and unit officer nominations and elections.

2023 DAV & Auxiliary State Convention – Unit members who wish to participate on reports judging committees must be at the convention hotel by Noon on Thursday, June 8, 2023.

2023 DAV & Auxiliary National Convention – Attached is National Convention Tentative Agenda and National Convention Travel Information for the 2023 convention at Harrah's Resort, Atlantic City, NJ.

National Annual Report Forms were sent to all unit adjutants. Units are encouraged to complete and return the forms to me by the **April 28, 2023, deadline** to receive the recognition they deserve for their advocacy and work supporting our veterans and their families.

Officer Report Forms: Completed forms must be submitted to National HQ no later than 10 days following Unit installation of officers. Please ensure names & addresses are properly spelled and phone numbers & email addresses are current.



**2023 AUXILIARY
UNIT REMINDERS**



**NATIONAL CONVENTION
TRAVEL INFORMATION**



**NATIONAL CONVENTION
AGENDA**

Are you a veteran in need of transportation to your VA medical appointments?

Transportation Network Volunteer Drivers are certified through the VA and are here to help!

For requests within the Boston VA Medical System to include:

Brockton, W. Roxbury, Jamaica Plains, Bedford, or Outpatient VA Facilities, please call: 617-295-7001

For requests within the Central/Western MA VA Medical System to

include: Leeds, Worcester, or Outpatient VA Facilities, please call: 413-582-3078.

For more info, please scan/click the QR Code below.



**Interested in transporting veterans for VA medical appointments?
Become a Volunteer Driver today!**

Scan or click the QR Code below and complete the application. In the comment section at the bottom, please state you would like to become a **DAV Transportation Network Volunteer Driver.**

VOLUNTEER

For more info, please contact
Hospital Service Coordinator (HSC)

Terry Mate

Phone: 617-295-7001

Email: trobert@davma.org

