

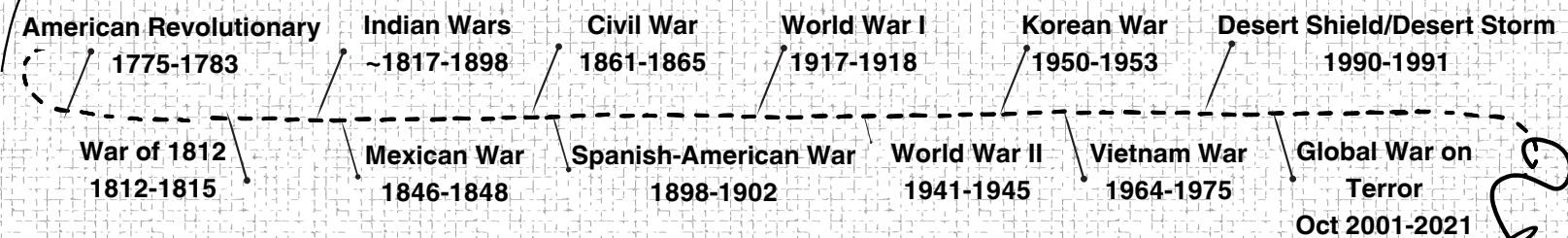
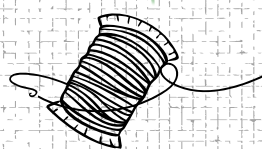
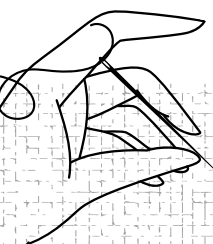
CHERISH YOUR ROOTS



Check out our homepage of www.davma.org OR Facebook @DAVMassachusetts throughout February, as each day we honor black veterans across the State



"From the Revolutionary War to the present day, black veterans have demonstrated unwavering dedication to the defense of our nation. Their stories are interwoven into the fabric of our military history..."
-1st Jr. Vice, Andrea Gayle-Bennet



Reminder



*All functions DAV or Auxiliary of Massachusetts host, or attend as a vendor, are listed on www.davma.org/events

*when adequate information and proper notice is supplied to the Department



COMMANDER, BOB KINSMAN

Our members and volunteers are our most precious assets. We are all proud of the tremendous work done by DAV Auxiliary National Commander AnnMarie Hurley. Please join us at the her DAVA National Commander's Testimonial Dinner on Saturday, April 20, 2024 in Quincy. Also, the DAV & DAVA Department of MA Joint Commanders' Testimonial is being planned for May. Watch for more information soon. On a more somber note, 1992-93 Past Department Commander Frank J. Drogo, Sr. passed away recently. Frank was part of the Navy's Underwater Demolition Team (now known as Navy Seals).

Department personnel performed a DAV ritual at his service. He will be missed. Frank's family remains active in the DAV Auxiliary.

DAV-MA Department Officers recently attended a Public Hearing on the HERO Act (Honoring, Empowering & Recognizing Servicemembers & Veterans) [H.4172] at the State House in Boston. Governor Healey's bill is the first comprehensive piece of veterans-focused legislation filed by a Bay State governor in over two decades. It includes 17 different spending & policy initiatives covering modernization of services, commitments to inclusivity and greater representation, and expansion of state veterans benefits. Healey said, "Our veterans have sacrificed so much for our country, and this transformative legislation marks an important step toward ensuring that Massachusetts supports them in return". DAV Department Commander Robert Kinsman and DAV National Officer Coleman Nee spoke highly of the proposed changes in this legislation, which is strongly supported by the DAV Department of Massachusetts.

Our DAV-MA Legislative Team is preparing for its annual visit to Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C. The 2024 DAV Mid-Winter Conference is scheduled for March 7-9 (travel days March 6 & 10) at the Crystal Gateway Marriott in Alexandria, VA. There is still time to join us. A DAV-MA Legislative Training Session for attendees will take place at BATV Studios, 390 Boston Road, Billerica, MA 01821 from 2:00-4:00 PM on Saturday, February 17, 2024, with a light lunch served at 1:00 PM. Reference materials including DAV's 2023-2024 Legislative Program book can be found on DAV's website at <http://dav.la/3n6>, while the 2024 DAV Critical Policy Goals are poster here:

https://www.dav.org/wp-content/uploads/CriticalPolicyGoals_Full_2024.pdf.

Mid-Winter

CONFERENCE



Don't forget to support the DAV CAN (Commander's Action Network). It is a very effective tool in getting support for National bills endorsed by the DAV. We are currently looking into a software program that may allow us to track State legislation similar to the way that the DAV CAN tracks National legislation. We would be the first DAV Department to do this. More to follow.

The DAV-MA Legislative Committee is currently offering training on How to Prepare a Resolution. The Membership Committee is working enthusiastically to secure DAV Division I Honors (DAV-MA is still in 2nd place, only 1/4 of 1% out of the lead, and we really need your assistance in recruiting new members)! The Service & Charitable Committee is promoting our efforts to assist fellow veterans, so be sure to turn in your LVAP hours monthly. Advanced Service Officer Training is scheduled monthly. The Constitution & Bylaws Committee is completing a detailed review of our documents. All of our committees' welcome new members, so please join us. Finally, our Department Line Officers are completing Chapter Visits throughout the year.

Time is a scarce resource, and I want to thank you for the time you devote to assisting our fellow veterans and their families.



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@[DAVMASSACHUSETTS](https://www.facebook.com/DAVMASSACHUSETTS)

SR. VICE, BOB BRONSON



Below are bullet points from “DAV Critical Policy Goals” for 2024. In March of this year, DAV Department of Massachusetts will be in Washington DC to meet with our state representatives and ask for their support for legislation that will be submitted to them this year.

DAV Critical Policy Goals” for 2024

- Correct inequities for veterans receiving compensation benefits and provide parity in benefits for survivors
- Ensure the faithful implementation of the PACT Act and address gaps in toxic-exposure benefits
- Establish equity in VA care, services and benefits for women, LGBTQ+ and minority veterans
- Provide a full spectrum of long-term care options for service-disabled and aging veterans
- Bolster mental health resources to ensure reduction of veteran suicides
- Expand the VA’s capacity to deliver timely, high-quality health care to veterans

Once again, DAV Department of Massachusetts will have the largest contingent of DAV members attending the Mid-Winter Conference . I’m not telling you this to just brag, although that may be part of it. The point is that we, as an organization, understand that the most impact any Veteran can have to help other Veterans, is through legislation. The “Pact Act” is the perfect example of National Legislation that has positively impacted almost every living Veteran and their families. The “Hero Act” is the best example of State Legislation that has the potential of doing the same for Massachusetts Veterans and their families. I don’t want to imply that we don’t need to concentrate on the “one on one” interactions. They are truly the life blood of the DAV. We couldn’t exist as an organization without them, and they are not just important, they can be life saving for some Veterans. The bottom line, in my opinion, is that we need to continue to grow our organization to be able to support, not only the Veterans of today, but the Veterans of the foreseeable future, and the best way to do that is to continue to show everyone that DAV’s only purpose is to help and support all Veterans.



IST JR VICE, ANDREA GAYLE-BENNETT

I hope you are all having a great New Year and had memorable observances in recognition of Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Members of the DAV attended the 38th annual NAACP MLK breakfast in Mansfield Massachusetts. Chapter 64 honored the legacy of Dr King with an afternoon of service at Habitat PLUS last month. As we look ahead of Black History Month, let’s carry that spirit forward into the month dedicated to celebrating Black History.

February invites us to delve into the rich tapestry of African American history. This month we will celebrate the contributions of black veterans who have played pivotal roles in shaping our nation’s military legacy. Their stories that inspire and enrich our shared narrative will be part of an educational campaign highlighted on the DAVMA website, social media and this month’s newsletter. [See attached link for the first story in this series.](#)

I encourage each member to actively engage in outreach. When we welcome veterans of all backgrounds, it makes our community more representative and reflective of the incredible tapestry of military service. What Is Your Chapter doing this month to achieve their recruitment goals and increase DAV membership during this special month of celebration? Things we can all do:

- 1.Community Events: Host or participate in events that highlight and honor the diverse backgrounds of our members.
- 2.Outreach Programs: Actively engage with minority veteran organizations to create partnerships and broaden our reach. Each branch of the MA NAACP has a veteran service representative. Seek them out.

As we continue through the year, let’s remember that every day is an opportunity to learn, grow, and support one another. Let me know what your chapter is doing to achieve our membership goals. Please share your pictures. Your efforts are vital, and by sharing your initiatives, you can inspire others to join us on this important journey. Together, let’s make this Black History Month a time of reflection, celebration, and ACTION.

From the Revolutionary War to the present day, black veterans have demonstrated unwavering dedication to the defense of our nation. Their stories are interwoven into the fabric of our military history, and their sacrifices have paved the way for a more inclusive and equitable society. It is vital that we recognize and pay tribute to the heroic deeds of these individuals, who fought valiantly despite the adversity of segregation and discrimination.

2ND JR VICE DENNIS DEVINE



Service and Charitable in my opinion is the foundation of our organization. We volunteer to assist veterans at our VA Medical Centers, Soldier Homes, in our communities, and sometimes right at home with our neighbors, family, and friends! This volunteerism is important not only to the veterans whom we come into contact with and are assisting, but also to our organization. We all need to do a better job of keeping track of these volunteer hours, and reporting them all monthly. I know a lot of us feel as though we are “not looking for credit or praise” for the work we do, but as an organization this reporting is vital. When we meet with Legislators it shows them the footprint and impact we have within the community and the state, making us a trusted voice to listen to. When we speak to donors and sponsors, it shows them where their donations are going, as we are a service driven organization.

For these reasons I am hoping that all of you will join me in ensuring our Department has 100% compliance with our Monthly reporting moving forward. If you are not currently reporting your LVAP hours, or completing our Department's SENA report monthly, please begin doing so! These reports help us to identify areas that are in greater need of support, or what types of support/services are needed in different areas around the state. It also assists us on the Chapter, Department, and National Organization level when we compile this information to present to potential sponsors/donors, and to our Legislators to show data points of how many services we are supplying, referrals we are giving, and volunteerism our members are providing. You can find both our LVAP and SENA reports on davma.org by visiting the members portal, clicking on the forms tab, then expanding the “Monthly Reporting” menu, and clicking on the report you would like to complete. If you experience any troubles, or have any questions, please contact me, or one of our Line Officers. We would be happy to assist you and answer any questions.

February is Black History Month. I just read an article in the “Bay State Banner” about Monique “Moe” Holder. Moe is currently our 2nd Jr. Vice Commander in Chapter 3 (Boston). An Army veteran, Moe was a combat medic and the recipient of two bronze stars. She also played 13 years of women's tackle football and is the first female football official of color within the Association of Independent Football Officials (AIFO). Currently she works in Boston for the DOD. I am honored to call her my friend. Her parents must be extremely proud of her accomplishments. I know we are in DAV Chapter 3. On February 24th I will be attending a Black Veterans Appreciation Lunch with “Moe”. If anyone is interested in details or would like to attend, please contact me at franden68@gmail.com.

3RD JR VICE EUGENE MCGREEVY

Good day Department Of Massachusetts.

In January the Bylaws held its last meeting. All updates were added to the Department Bylaws and will be presented to the Department at the next DEC meeting.

I would like to thank the committee members for taking the time and participating in the time in the discussions about making the Department Bylaws current. Most of the changes have to do with electronic communication.

During the month I also worked with Chapter 68 Commander Jessie McKnight in preparing a display for Black History Month.

The display will focus on the contribution of Black Veterans, this will be held at the Holyoke Mall on February 9th and 10th on the second floor of the Holyoke Mall. The hours will be from 10am to 6pm. Everyone is welcome to attend. The display will be from the civil war to present.

The National Salute to Veteran Patients will be held February 12th to 16th in Leeds and the other VA Hospitals in the State. Anyone who would like to volunteer sometime during that week would be greatly appreciated. Veteran patients really appreciate the visits as some of them don't get any visitors. There will be activities every day from 1:00pm to 4:00pm. There will also be coffee and pastry served every morning that week in the front of the hospital volunteers are more than welcome to serve coffee.

DEPARTMENT INSPECTOR DEB OLSON



The Department is in the process of reviewing all AFRs. The chapter Commanders, Adjutants and Treasurers will receive an email when completed letting them know if the AFR is accepted as received or if further info is needed.

LVAP (LOCAL VETERANS ASSISTANCE PROGRAM) forms for January 2024 are due to the department within the first week of February. Please send them to dolson@davma.org, they will be forwarded to National and the 2nd Jr Vice Dennis Devine. DSO (Department Service Officers) and CSO (Chapter Service Officers) please remember to also complete Mass monthly reporting form SENA (Service Encounter & Needs Assessment). Go to <https://DAVMA.org>, Membership, Member Portal, forms, monthly reporting to complete forms. These reports can be completed by any member assisting veterans in their communities.

I want to thank everyone who is submitting their hours. Please continue the magnificent work, just a reminder if you have not submitted an LVAP for this year please do so. We can use those numbers when we see our congressional team during mid-winter. Please complete the SENA on-line, the matrix from this will help us to identify needs in our communities, write resolutions, and seek funds and support to address these needs.

As you are looking for tools to aid in your roles as chapter leaders check out what is available from National, <https://mydav.org> and www.dav.org. MYDAV is personalized to your position in your chapter. Explore what is available to you and your chapter members so that your chapter has the tools it needs to grow and thrive. New reports and tools are continually being added for your chapter's use.

We are approaching the nomination and election of officers' season. The Chapter Warrant Request form can be found on the www.davma.org website, membership, member portal, forms, chapter/district forms. This form is to be completed and submitted to Department Headquarters as soon as an installation date is set by the chapter.

The Chapter Service Officer nomination form is also available online. Within the next couple of months, we will be asking chapters to submit the names of members for training and certification.

The Chapter's OER (Officer Election Report) is to be completed on-line via www.MYDAV.ORG. Please fill it out completely including email addresses. All officers should have a current email. The Department is here to assist. Be watching for emails from National on the proper procedure.

When possible, please complete all forms online, filling in all the required information. Hopefully one day you will only have to put in their membership number and the form will self-populate. Until then we need to add ALL the information required, double checking phone numbers and email addresses especially.

Of special interest – Do you know there may be money out there just waiting for you to claim, maybe it's an old bank account or a refund from a utility company. To find out if your chapter (or maybe even yourself) have unclaimed funds check out www.findmassmoney.gov

If you need any assistance or if you have any questions, concerns, or suggestions please contact your line officers, we were elected or appointed to serve you. We all stand at the ready, we are an email or a phone call away. Thank you for all you do in your community. Keeping the Promise.



ADJUTANT MIKE VALILA

It is with a great sense of pride that I announce both the Department and the following Chapters have received National's recognition as well as a battle streamer for meeting their membership goals. I would like to congratulate the following Chapters and their members for successfully answering the call of duty by reaching their 2022-2023 membership recruiting goals: 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 9, 11, 27, 30, 35, 42, 68, 91, 92, 96, 122.

You all should have received your battle streamers to display on your Chapter's colors. Thank you for helping secure the legacy of our organization and for decades to come that streamer will remind future generations of your accomplishments!

National 1st Jr Vice Commander Coleman Nee, Department Commander Bob Kinsman, Sr. Vice Commander Bob Bronson, and I attended the public hearing on Tuesday January 23rd at the State House in Boston and provided both verbal and written testimony to the Joint Committee on Veterans and Federal Affairs in support of Governor Maura Healey's Hero Act, Bill H4172. We are also closely following H4162 An Act relative to property tax relief for 100% disabled veterans, and will keep you posted on any movement once the House goes back into session.



Mid-Winter Conference training will be held on Saturday, February 17th at 390 Boston Road, Billerica MA from 2-4pm. Training is mandatory for all members who plan to attend Mid-Winter Conference this year (March 6-10th) in Washington, D.C. This training will be hybrid, so you can attend via Zoom if you are unable to travel. In other related news, the Department will be sending three 12-passenger vehicles down to Mid-Winter this year to transport members. If you would like to travel to/from Mid-Winter at no cost, please contact Department Inspector PDC Deb Olson at dolson@davma.org to reserve your seat.

We are excited to announce the upcoming release of DAV's third report focusing on the challenges faced by and unique needs of our nation's women veterans—Women Veterans: The Journey to Mental Wellness, Supporting women veterans' mental health and preventing suicide through gender-tailored care.

DAV will be hosting a Capitol Hill lunch and learning event to brief congressional staff on the findings and recommendations in the report, on February 27, 2024, at the Capitol Visitor Center, Room SVC 201-00. This event will be open to the public, but seating is limited.

If you would like more information about the event, please contact the National Legislative Department at LegislativePublic@dav.org.

The report will be officially released and posted to DAV's website on February 27, 2024.



[Click to here](#) for the latest Great American Heroes Podcasts with guests like [Paul Wahlburg](#), [Lisa Hughes](#) from [WBZ TV](#), [Matt Scott](#) from [MBA Mortgage](#) and [Elle Rueger](#) from [Soledier Socks](#).



STATE COMMANDER, DIANE SULLIVAN

We are one month into 2024 and for the most part the weather has been okay, for the Boston area anyway. I'm looking forward to attending the mid-winter conference in March. Especially getting to see National Commander AnnMarie Hurley place a wreath at the tomb of the unknown soldier. The last time I was in Washington was to see National Commander Fran Costa place the wreath, another honor. Ann Marie's testimonial is coming up in April

I hope that many of you can attend. At the March SEC meeting we are planning on doing a mock installation so that everyone can see a proper installation. Please plan to attend. We will also review a couple of the annual reports. The reports again, will not be read in March but per standing rules reports must be given to Janet the State Adjutant to be included in the minutes. If you want us to review any report in particular, please let Janet or myself know. Again, if anyone has any questions or concerns, please let me know.

STATE TREASURER, PSC JEAN SHIFFLETT

I would like to Thank all the Auxiliary Units that have sent in their 2023-2024 Mandates. I will be contacting any Auxiliary Unit that has not sent them in to date. This will give me an opportunity to say hello.

Anyone needing a check for reimbursement should contact me at 617-827-1911 immediately so I can request a warrant from the State Adjutant. Checks will not be issued without a warrant.

FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT: PSC SANDY FINCEL CHAIRMAN

The Finance Committee will commence (if needed) at 9:30 AM ½ hour prior to the March 16th, 2024 SEC Meeting in Malden MA. Request for monies should be in writing 10 days in advance of the SEC Meeting either by email to gorsfincel@gmail.com or USPS mail to Sandy Fincel, 2 Smith St. Apt 1, Gloucester, MA. 01930. Thank you.

COMMUNITY SERVICE CHAIRPERSON, NANCY MOONEY

This is the month that celebrates Valentine's Day, a day to spread LOVE. May I suggest perhaps your unit and juniors could make cards and give them to veterans in your community. Remember a veteran in your neighborhood by taking a card or a small gift to them. Do not forget to take a small remembrance on Valentine's Day to the veterans in the VA nursing facilities, or to local Nursing homes, or another place to take some might be to your local Senior Center or Community Center. This act of showing you care and send love surely will brighten a veteran's day. I know these veterans in your community will appreciate your kindness. Do not forget the veterans in the Chapters as well, they sometimes get overlooked. Happy Valentine's Day to you all. Thank you for continuing to support the veterans in your community!

ADJUTANT, JANET PRATT

National Annual Report Forms were sent to all unit adjutants. Units are encouraged to complete and return the forms to me by the April 26, 2024, deadline to receive the recognition they deserve for their advocacy and work supporting our veterans and their families. The DAV/DAVA State Convention this year will be held June 7- 9 2024 at the Double Tree Hilton, 99 Erdman Way, Leominster, MA 01453. \$159.00/night + taxes.

For reservations call 978-534-9000 Dail 0 to speak with a front desk agent and mention code 91E to make your reservation over the phone. Members should inform me by email of their committee preferences. A sign-up sheet for judging committees will also be available at the March SEC DAVA. The DAVA SEC Meeting will be held March 16, 2024 at LT. Dexter W. Clifford Chapter 85. The address is 85 Willow St, Malden Ma 02148. 9:00 a.m. Coffee Hour – 10:00 a.m. Meeting All members are welcome to attend.

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TO: Department and Chapter Commanders and Adjutants and Members

FROM: Barry A. Jesinoski, National Adjutant

DATE: January 30, 2024

SUBJECT: Special documentary screening for DAV members

I'm excited to share with you an opportunity for DAV members to experience a powerful documentary film that inspires hope and reduces the stigma around mental health in the veteran community.

Directed by Emmy Award-winner Jack Youngelson, [HERE. IS. BETTER.](#) is a feature-length film that follows four veterans on their journeys to overcoming the debilitating effects of PTSD through a variety of treatments. It has been hailed as "one of the most moving films I have seen in years" by Dominic Patten of Deadline and "full of silent courage" by the New York Times. Watch the trailer [here](#).

Thanks to the generosity of the filmmakers, DAV members will be able to access the film, for free, through a customized virtual platform, from Feb. 27 through March 27. While members can watch the film on their own, we strongly encourage chapters and departments to gather in person for a screening. Doing so will help foster group discussion, community support and the sharing of resources. The film team has graciously offered to waive license fees for all DAV groups who are interested in hosting a screening. To take advantage of this opportunity, [simply complete this form](#) and the film team will provide you with everything you need, including access information, discussion materials and more.

This opportunity coincides with the release of DAV's latest report, *Women Veterans: The Journey to Mental Wellness*, which provides an in-depth look at the unique factors contributing to the staggering rate of suicide and other negative mental health outcomes among women veterans. The report will be available at womenveterans.org beginning Feb. 27.

For questions related to the screening, please email edepompei@dav.org.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Barry A. Jesinoski', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Barry A. Jesinoski
National Adjutant

**Do you enjoy driving?
Do you want to help Veterans?**



DEPARTMENT OF MASSACHUSETTS

TRANSPORTATION NETWORK

DAV Transportation Network is in need of Volunteer Drivers to transport Veterans to and from Veteran Affairs (VA) medical appointments.

**Join a team of dedicated individuals and volunteer for Veterans today!
CHOOSE DAYS & HOURS THAT WORK FOR YOU TO VOLUNTEER.**

**FOR MORE INFORMATION,
PLEASE CONTACT US:
HSC@DAVMA.ORG
(413) 435-6870**



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