



KEEPING OUR PROMISE TO
AMERICA'S VETERANS

& AUXILIARY

MASSACHUSETTS NEWSLETTER

December
2024



*WISHING YOU WARMTH, JOY AND
COUNTLESS BLESSINGS
THIS HOLIDAY SEASON!*



Stay Tuned!

Follow us on Facebook and
dagma.org/events for updates.



COMMANDER, BOB BRONSON

I hope everyone had a wonderful Thanksgiving. It's absolutely my favorite holiday. Friends, Family, Food, and Fun. What more could you ask for?

This past month I attended the first Veteran Service Organization Legislative meeting with the Office of Veterans Advocate - Bob Notch, Kate Watson - Policy Legislative Affairs and Research, and several others of his staff present. The other VSOs in attendance were the American Legion Department of Ma. - Commander, Nelson Blake and Department Adjutant, Lisa McPhee, the Vietnam Veterans of America Department of Ma. Commander - Gumersindo Gomez. The VFW couldn't make it but will be a part of all future meetings along with Council President for the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) - Al Paquin. After introductions we established that we will be meeting monthly by Zoom unless otherwise directed.

General Discussion of Issues Identified:

Role in supporting veterans who are not qualified for Chapter 115 benefits. Not all veteran agents provide the same level of services; some organizations redirect veterans from less effective veteran agents to better agents.

Transportation is a significant problem. The DAV is the only non-VA way for Veterans to receive transportation – Funding is needed. License plate revenue support of RECREATION at Soldiers' Homes – Accountability concerns: American Legion does not support the proposed loss of license plate fees to Veterans Homes.

Better explanations of the implementation of the HERO Act are needed. OVA is tracking implementation of the Act. Prior veteran beneficial laws have not been enacted by all state agencies. One of the reasons we know this is a problem is because it appears the Valor Act was never fully implemented, notably in the EOED's Division of Professional Licensing and HHS's Bureau of Health Professions Licensure.

Concern over some City/town councils not letting citizens speak during their hearings. OVA will accompany any agent or VSO who is being silenced like this. It is a violation of the law.

EOVS regulations [108 CMR 12.04 (2)] state "In addition to administering public assistance benefits under M.G.L. c. 115, the veterans' agent shall also assist veterans in obtaining VA compensation and pension." This requires MA veteran service agents to obtain both EOVS certification to administer M.G.L. c. 115, and US Department of Veterans Affairs accreditation as a claims agent.

Discussion of relative merits of municipal agents vs. regionalization. VSOs affect legislation via resolutions vs. bill drafting. Group conversation on the benefit of working together on a collective front with individual voices to push the legislation. All concurred.

Issues on the OVA plate include:

Tricare – the apparent shortage of providers – Transportation - Professional Licensing OVA shared its legislative issues to be proposed in the 2025-26 Legislative Session. In my opinion, this committee is one of the most positive steps forward for the state's Veteran Service Organizations and our ability to work together.

SR. VICE, ANDREA GAYLE-BENNETT



Greetings DAV Family,

We are well into the holiday season and finally received some rain. I extend my warmest wishes to each of you. I hope you take this time to relax, enjoy your loved ones, and reflect on the past year.

With the election behind us, we now turn our focus to the future, as we prepare for the upcoming 119th Congressional session. Our legislative efforts remain strong, and we are poised to make meaningful progress in advocating for the needs of veterans across the nation.

Resolutions adopted at the DAV 2024 National Convention in Phoenix, Arizona, are now available! These resolutions outline DAV's legislative priorities for the upcoming year and serve as a roadmap for advocating on behalf of disabled veterans. The full list can be found at https://www.dav.org/wp-content/uploads/Resolutions_2024_2025.pdf

I encourage everyone to actively engage in our DAV CAN Challenge and the Resolution Challenge as part of our ongoing efforts to make a difference for veterans. Your involvement truly matters, and I am confident that together, we can drive meaningful change. If you haven't already, sign up for DAV CAN by visiting <https://dav.quorum.us> to stay informed about legislation affecting veterans and their families. Encourage your family and friends to sign up too—they don't need to be DAV members to join and support this important mission! For a comprehensive list of DAV-supported legislation, visit <https://dav.quorum.us/bills/>.

When you sign up your friends and family for DAV CAN, be sure to email Fred Deckert (Chapter 30) at dbqiowa@yahoo.com with your name, your chapter, the names of the people you signed up, and the date. Fred is tracking this information and remember—awards will be presented at the state conventions for participation!

I'm thrilled to share that I've already signed up 14 people for DAV CAN—can anyone top that? The challenge is on! Let's see who can rise to the occasion and make an even bigger impact!

A special shout-out to Cory Hasselmann and Albert McCarthy—they've already submitted resolutions and are leading the way! Who's next to join them? Let's keep the momentum going and show just how powerful our voices can be. The challenge is on!

Let's finish the year strong and step into 2025 with renewed energy and focus. Wishing you and your families a happy and healthy holiday season!

To Join the Commander's Action Network, Please visit davcan.org or click this button





1ST JR VICE, DENNIS DEVINE

As the holiday season approaches and the madness of shopping begins, I would like to wish all my brothers and sisters safe travels and a wonderful holiday season.

I recently had the opportunity to meet and serve lunch to extraordinary veterans in the Spinal Cord Unit at West Roxbury VA Medical Center. Thank you Stan Pratt for including me having the privilege

to give them aid. Many of the patients have a long road ahead of them and were so grateful to just have someone to talk to and to share memories with. If any of you can visit a veteran over the holidays, please do so. It's an extremely rewarding experience. Also, please check in on the elderly veterans in your chapters. Depression at this time of year is common. A visit or phone call could have a huge impact on their life.

As mentioned previously, we must remember that our strength lies in numbers. Right now, our numbers are dwindling. They are going down faster than what we can record. We must try to put in motion a way to add members. One way is to go over your chapter membership list and pick out the ones who have not completely paid their membership dues. Until they finish paying, they don't count as a member. I'm pretty sure each chapter membership list has about 15-20 unpaid members. By paying the balance due, our department numbers will go up.

On a sad note, I wish to express my condolences to Chapter 10 (Chelsea) on the unexpected death of their Commander, Olivia Walsh. May she rest in peace.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all!

2ND JR VICE GENE MCGREEVY

With the start of Fall and days getting shorter, temperatures getting cooler, people start to stay more inside. What better time to reach out to veterans that do not have anyone to talk too or interact with.

Last month I introduced the 129 Club. That's 120 minutes a month that we can reach out to veterans that need some company. There are all kinds of ways to reach these individuals, you could check with your VSO in your town or city. They have listings of veterans on various state programs that would always appreciate some company.

The VA facilities have CLC wards where veterans are always looking for interaction with someone besides the nursing staff. This past weekend Westover 11 had a picnic at the Leeds facility for the residents, we spent 4 hours sitting talking and eating. One of the Airforce vets talked about his time SAC stationed all over the world. His wife said that she has not been so excited in a long time. Another talked about his time in Korea. These guys just enjoyed talking to another vet and somebody new. The same thing happened at the Veterans Home in Holyoke. These vets appreciate the interaction.

It doesn't take much to improve the quality of life for a veteran. Join the 120 Club and soon receive a highly coveted and prestigious 120 Club Pin that is currently in design.

Do not forget to turn in your LVAP and SENA forms to Deb Olsen Department Auditor. If your Chapter needs anymore information on the 120 Club Pin and how to receive this highly valued pin contact me at emcgreevy@aol.com

Let's get in to the community and show what the DAV does.

Volunteer Volunteer Volunteer Volunteer



Upcoming Events:

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

3RD JR VICE PHIL NADEAU

Hope everyone had a great Thanksgiving with family and friends. We will be celebrating Christmas soon so don't forget about our Veterans who may not have any family or friends around, who are in Nursing homes and or in our Soldiers home. Bring a wreath or a small Christmas tree or just visit and talk to them. I will be visiting a few of the local nursing homes myself.

We had our bylaws meeting this past month and we worked on Article 9, Section 9-3 Page 20. We have made great strides in updating the by-laws. We will continue to work hard on the by-laws. Our next Zoom meeting will be December 30th 6pm. Anyone can participate, so please join us!

DEPARTMENT INSPECTOR, PDC DEB OLSON



AFR's: Chapters are still working on their AFR. We fully understand that this is a new process and for those who are not tech savvy this process is challenging, but the department will help you through it, if you reach out. Not contacting us to let us know you are having an issue is not a solution. We want to get through this first year, address issues with National, so we can plan a proactive approach to training next year.

990's: All 990n's for chapters and units that are required to file such, have been completed. If it is required that your chapter files a 990 long form, please send a copy to the department for our records upon your submission to the IRS.

CSOs: The department has 110 certified CSO across the state with 17 DSOs stationed at our 5 VA hospitals, both Soldiers' homes and a couple of outposts. You are our front line, the mission, the membership, and volunteerism, start with you.

DSO (Department Service Officers) and CSO (Chapter Service Officers) please complete both the LVAP and the SENA (Service Encounter & Needs Assessment) 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. Go to <https://DAVMA.org>, Membership, Member Portal, forms, monthly reporting to complete forms.

LVAP and SENA: LVAP (LOCAL VETERANS ASSISTANCE PROGRAM) forms for November 2024 are due to the department as soon after your chapter meeting as possible. If you have not submitted your hours for this fiscal year, please do so. If possible, please keep the months separate. Your chapter can complete Sena forms as well to help track needs in your community. The LVAP and Sena forms can be completed by any member, including auxiliary, assisting veterans in their communities. Your time counts when assisting a veteran. Leave no one behind, show them we care. There are scholarships available for the youth that volunteer assisting veterans, spread the word.

I want to thank everyone who has submitted their hours. As of November 29th, over 11,275 volunteer hours from 174 individuals in 19 chapters have reported hours for this fiscal year. Keep up the magnificent work.

The Department of Massachusetts will announce the dates and location of the department convention in the coming weeks.

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.

Keep the spirit of the season alive in all you do throughout the year. May your Lord watch over and guide you in all you do always.



ADJUTANT MIKE VALILA

As we reflect on the year 2024, DAV Department of Massachusetts stands proud, celebrating a year filled with remarkable achievements, unwavering commitment, and profound impact on the lives of veterans and their families. Our organization has thrived this year, thanks to the tireless efforts of our service officers, dedicated volunteer drivers, devoted Line Officers, vibrant chapters, and innumerable volunteers.

From the outset, our service officers have played an instrumental role in ensuring that veterans receive the support they need to navigate the complexities of benefits, claims, and services. Their expertise, empathy, and advocacy have empowered countless veterans to secure essential benefits, leading to improved quality of life for many. The challenges faced by our veterans are multifaceted, and our service officers have met these challenges with tenacity and skill, providing personalized assistance that truly makes a difference.

Our volunteer drivers deserve special recognition for their selfless contributions throughout the year. With a commitment to helping veterans access necessary medical care and VA appointments, these dedicated individuals have logged thousands of miles, ensuring that transportation barriers do not prevent our heroes from receiving crucial services. Their kindness and reliability shine brightly, demonstrating what it means to serve those who served us. Thank you 3rd Jr Vice Commander Phil Nadeau for helping build this program over the past year. Special thanks to Rachele Gallant for stepping up to the plate to assist in ensuring this critical service continued without any break. We look forward to the continued growth of this program under our new Hospital Service Coordinator (HSC), Donna Main. Welcome to the team Donna!

This year, our Line Officers have exemplified leadership through their active engagement and commitment to the mission of DAV. By fostering collaboration between chapters and supporting grassroots initiatives, they have bolstered our outreach efforts and strengthened our community bonds. Their vision and strategic planning have led to innovative programs that address the evolving needs of veterans and their families, ensuring that no veteran is left behind. Their next task is revitalizing our Districts, so please be on the lookout for their calls and emails in the coming weeks.

Our chapters have been nothing short of extraordinary. Across Massachusetts, they have organized numerous events, fundraisers, and awareness campaigns to make DAV a household name for veterans in need of service, and promote veteran-related issues. These local efforts have united communities and created a ripple effect of support and understanding for the sacrifices made by our servicemen and women. The camaraderie and fellowship cultivated within these chapters foster a sense of belonging among veterans, enriching their lives and reinforcing the spirit of DAV.

Behind every successful initiative lies the hard work of our many volunteers. This year, they have exhibited unmatched dedication, stepping up to fill various roles that have propelled our mission forward. Whether it's assisting at events, providing administrative support, or lending a hand in outreach efforts, their enthusiasm and passion have been invaluable to our cause. Each volunteer brings unique talents and perspectives, enhancing our ability to serve the veteran community more effectively.

As we celebrate these accomplishments, it is crucial to acknowledge the collective spirit of compassion and camaraderie that defines DAV Department of Massachusetts. Each person involved in our organization plays an essential part in advocating for our veterans, whether big or small, and together we have made significant strides in improving the lives of those who served.

Looking ahead to the upcoming year, we are filled with optimism and determination to expand our reach and deepen our impact. With the continued support of our service officers, volunteer drivers, Line Officers, chapters, and volunteers, we are poised to tackle new challenges and seize new opportunities.

Thank you to everyone who has contributed their time, energy, and resources to DAV Department of Massachusetts. Your hard work and dedication have not gone unnoticed and together, we will continue to build a brighter future for our veterans and their families. Here's to another successful year ahead!

Department of Massachu



STATE COMMANDER, LIZ BUTTERS

Hello Everyone. I know this is the December newsletter, but it's worth mentioning how busy the latter part of November was with activities that occurred after the November newsletter was published.

I volunteered at the phone bank at Gardner on November 8 for the WRKO Radiothon with DAV Commander Bob Bronson and DAV & Auxiliary volunteers. On November 9 Commander Bronson & I were at the DAV 5K Boston opening ceremony at Castle Island, after which SVC Cindy Legge & I manned the DAV & Auxiliary table.

On November 10 Commander Bronson & I, along with DAV & Auxiliary officers and members, and the DAV color guard, took part in the Veterans Day observance at the Massachusetts National Cemetery in Bourne. Veterans Day, November 11, I participated in the Marshfield Veterans Day parade with Marshfield Memorial 35 Chapter & Auxiliary members. We had the honor of witnessing Congressman Bill Keating presenting Chapter 35 member John Ahern, a Vietnam army veteran, with a Bronze Star with V device – the 4th highest military decoration for valor. Mr. Ahern also received Commonwealth citations from Senator Patrick O'Connor and Representative Patrick Kearney.

My thanks to each of you for all you do for our veterans and their families. I wish you & yours a joyous holiday season & a healthy, prosperous New Year. As you celebrate, please keep our veterans, active military and their families in your thoughts and prayers, especially those who are unable to join their family celebrations this year.



SR. VICE COMMANDER, CINDY LEGGE

Tickets are starting to come in for the DAVA State fundraiser to benefit the patients in our VAMC's and Soldiers' Homes. Thank you all for your continued support of the hospital fundraiser.

Checks should be payable to the DAVA Department of MA, and mail them to Cindy Legge, 7 Fuller Drive, Plymouth, MA 02360.

Some envelopes were mistakenly addressed to me at 7 Fuller Avenue and were returned to senders.

If you want more tickets, please let me know by email at cllegge@aol.com or by telephone at 508-367-4576.

The holidays are fast approaching, and I wish you and your families Happy Thanksgiving, Merry Christmas & a Happy New Year.





ADJUTANT, JANET PRATT

Communication is key to our success as an Auxiliary. Your State Officers are here to serve you and members are free to contact them with questions. Please remember, however, that Units or members that have questions should follow the DAVA National Constitution and Bylaws and MA State Standing Rules regarding lines of communication prior to addressing questions to State or National Officers. It is important the chain of command of Unit-State-National is followed.

Please if you know the date of your unit's installation, please send the request to the Adjutant by the end of February. The information needed is the date, place, and time. Who your unit is requesting to be the installing officer. Whether this is an open or closed installation and if you want a full suite or a smaller one.

The SEC is open to all DAVA members who would like to attend. Only the SEC or the alternate (if the SEC delegate is not present) can make a motion and vote. All are welcome to attend.

HELLO!
from Unit 33
Greenfield



The focus of DAV Auxiliary Unit 33's monthly meeting in Greenfield was working on a winter veterans project. Together, members joined to assemble 25 homeless kits filled with essential items. These will be used in outreach initiatives to help those in need.



FRANCES COSTA, PNC/PDC JA



Christmas and New Years are rapidly approaching. Best wishes for a blessed and peaceful holiday season.

Remember those who will not be with family during these holidays and long winter months. Special acts of kindness will brighten their lives. Remember to Remember because "only by the Grace of God go I". Merry Christmas to all.

During this time where things do down, I urge each officer both State and Unit to please read your National Constitution and Bylaws book as well as State Standing Rules. They answer many questions and explain duties and obligations of your respective office. See you in March at SEC.

FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT, PSC SANDY FINCEL CHAIRMAN

The Finance Committee will commence (if needed) at 9:30 AM ½ hour prior to the SEC Meeting March 8, 2025. 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.

STATE TREASURER, PSC JEAN SHIFFLETT

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

If your unit has not yet paid its 2024-2025 State Mandate fee of \$30, please do so immediately. Make checks payable to **DAVA Dept. of MA** and send to me at 109 Edgehill Road, E. Braintree, MA 02184.

The 990-N must be completed no later than November 15, 2024.

ALLISON DEVINE, 1ST JR VICE COMMANDER



Now is the time for that final push to sign up new members at the Membership rate of \$250. Sign up new members with a \$20 down payment before December 31st to lock them in at the lower rate. As of January 1, 2025 the new rate will be \$300.

So just how do you recruit new members?

1. Personal Invitations: The most effective method is often the simplest. Ask someone to join!
2. Reach Out to DAV Members: Invite Disabled American Veterans (DAV) members to join the Auxiliary.
3. Family Connections: Encourage your family members to join. The DAV Auxiliary is a family-oriented organization, and involving multiple generations can strengthen both families and our community.
4. Advertising: Utilize local media, social platforms, and community events to spread awareness about the DAV Auxiliary and its mission.

One final item: I ask that each unit challenge their current active members to sign up at least 1 new member in the 2024/2025 year.

DCU No	DCU Name	Current Year					Quota				
		Goal Met	Total Junior	Total Part Life	Total Full Life	Total Paid Members	Total Members	Quota	Quota %	Quota Variance	
20	AUX Department of Massachusetts		189	302	2,894	3,196	3,385	3,430	98.69 %	-45	
1	Bay State #1		22	14	1,382	1,396	1,418	1,420	99.86 %	-2	
2	Queen City #2		0	4	45	49	49	50	98.00 %	-1	
3	Silver Star Jfk Mem #3		19	11	112	123	142	147	96.60 %	-5	
4	Worcester #4		10	14	150	164	174	179	97.21 %	-5	
9	Wm. S. Greene #9		5	6	51	57	62	63	98.41 %	-1	
11	Westover #11		7	4	16	20	27	28	96.43 %	-1	
27	Somerville #27	G	12	123	239	362	374	371	100.81 %	3	
29	Braintree #29		33	66	231	297	330	342	96.49 %	-12	
33	Scott Vetterling #33	G	3	6	37	43	46	46	100.00 %	0	
35	Marshfield Memorial #35		4	28	119	147	151	153	98.69 %	-2	
40	E. A. Twomey Sr. #40		22	0	100	100	122	126	96.83 %	-4	
47	Billerica #47	G	1	6	24	30	31	31	100.00 %	0	
56	Westcott Houghton #56		46	4	241	245	291	302	96.36 %	-11	
57	W. F. Reardon #57		2	7	17	24	26	27	96.30 %	-1	
96	Cape Cod #96		3	3	112	115	118	121	97.52 %	-3	
110	Tewksbury Ma #110	G	0	6	18	24	24	24	100.00 %	0	
National Totals				3,365	8,727	106,447	115,174	118,539	119,304	99.36%	-765

Happy Holidays!

2ND JR. VICE COMMANDER, DOROTHY RAYMOND

H.R. 9525, the Service Dogs Assisting Veterans Act (SAVES Act)

This Bill would establish a 5 year pilot program and require the Secretary of VA to award grants to nonprofit organizations to assist in providing service dogs to eligible veterans. This would also cover training and provide each veteran veterinary insurance for the service dogs. It would also include reimbursement for any follow-up training deemed appropriate and a veterinary insurance benefit for the life of the service dog.

H.R. 9324, the Protecting Veteran Access to Telemedicine Services Act

This bill would permanently extend a pandemic-related exemption that allows the Department of the VA health care professionals to deliver, distribute, and dispense medically necessary controlled substances to veterans via telemedicine, even if they cannot physically visit a VA facility.

H.R. 6330, the Veterans Sentinel Act

This bill would require the Department of the VA to establish a pilot program and the working group within the Office of Suicide Prevention to gather and analyze data on veteran suicides and attempted suicides that occur on VA property.

H.R. 4372, the Deliver for Veterans Act

The VA may pay up to \$26,417 towards the purchase of a specially equipped vehicle for veterans with service-connected disabilities that prevent them from driving. However, this amount does not include shipping costs for the vehicle – which can be expensive if the veteran lives in a rural area or on an island far away from the mainland. This Legislation would include the shipping cost to deliver a vehicle to service-disabled veterans that is entitled to the VA Adaptive Vehicle Grant.

S. 2975, the Road to Access Act

Many veterans continue to experience challenges in obtaining reimbursement for travel to their VA medical appointments. This act will ensure that veterans receive the travel reimbursements they deserve by improving the payment and processing of travel allowances, making it easier for them to access the care they need.

H.R. 7920, the Agriculture Grants for Veterans Education and Training Service Act or AG Veterans Act.

This bill would establish a program for the Secretary of Agriculture to award competitive grants to eligible entities to support the establishment and enhance farming and ranching opportunities for veterans.

S. 4929, the Lethal Means Safe Storage for Veterans Suicide Prevention Act

This bill would create a grant program for certain organizations to provide a gun safe and/or firearm lock box for veterans who request one. The bill would also require the VA and its' Community Care Network medical providers to undergo annual training on suicide prevention and the importance of storing guns safely.

H.R. 8371, the Senator Elizabeth Dole 21st Century Veterans Healthcare and Benefits Improvement Act

DAV supports H.R. 8371 as it aligns with several DAV resolutions and will help to fulfill the promise of caring for our nation's ill and injured veterans. It is also supported by the majority of the veterans' community.

THE ARTHRITIS CORNER



Jingle All the Way

The Arthritis Foundation is celebrating 40 years of Jingle Bell Run, the original festive race for charity. We invite you to run or walk, wear your favorite holiday gear, and make a real difference while celebrating four decades of impact. Let's lace up, hit the pavement and jingle all the way to a cure! Find an event near you at arthritis.org/events/jbr

Managing Health in Cold Weather

Whether you are planning to participate in Jingle Bell Run or just want to enjoy some other outdoor activities, check out the tips and tools below to be ready when the cold moves in.

Weather & Arthritis Index – See how today's weather forecast and upcoming conditions could potentially affect your pain level. arthritis.org/weather

10 Tips for Cold Weather Exercise – Stay active on cold days to ease your arthritis by following these helpful suggestions. <https://arthr.org/3ZmRyjg>



ARTHRITIS & THE MILITARY WEBINARS: Managing Chronic Pain and Mental Health December 5 • 6:30 p.m.

Join us on December 5th at 6:30pm ET to explore the impact of mental health on chronic pain, with a focus on the experiences of military service members and veterans, during this free webinar. Our panel features veterans and experts in rheumatology, complementary medicine, and pain management. <https://arthr.org/3AWECHv>

Uncovering the Puzzle of Spinal OA for the Military and Veteran Community

In this recorded webinar, experts shed light on osteoarthritis in the spine, specifically for the military and veteran community. Led by Dr. Krishna Nirmel, the presentation covers the causes, symptoms, and treatment options for spinal osteoarthritis, aiming to provide valuable information and support for these communities. <https://arthr.org/419VII8>

For more information or to get in touch with the local Massachusetts Office reach out to **Erica D'Agostino at (857) 327-5688** or by email edagostino@arthritis.org. All of our resources for Military & Veterans Services can be found at www.arthritis.org/veteran