



FULFILLING OUR PROMISES
TO THE MEN AND WOMEN WHO SERVED

Disabled American Veterans Department of New Mexico **NEWSLETTER**

Volume #1 Issue #2 Dec. 2015



From the desk of State Commander

I hope everyone had a great and safe Thanksgiving holiday. After several months of working with a local Boy Scout troop I was able to convince Tyler Sperry to do a service project at Department HQ. We got a facelift Nov. 7th as Tyler completed his Eagle Scout service project. The project consisted of raising the funds to complete the project, tree stump and brush removal, tree and bush trimming, landscaping, stucco repair and painting, replacing parking signs and striping the parking lot. Tyler had to present his project before several committees to obtain approval of the project which included Department Adjutant David Alderete and myself. He also presented his project to both Chapters that meet at Department (3 and 33). Once the project got the greenlight, Tyler assumed the duties of Project Manager, securing materials, a workforce, food and drinks for said workforce. Department gives a great big thank you to Tyler and his volunteers and the hundreds of hours worked to complete this project. Thank you to Tillery Dingler, Commander of Chapter 33 for donating and delivering the gravel needed for the project. Thanks to Chapters 3 and 33, who each donated \$300 towards the project. Also thanks to the two members of Chapter 3 that donated their time and my spouse and grandson who also helped with the project. The Eagle Project was a big success and saved Department money that can now be used to aid veterans, their spouses and children.

(Thank you letter from Tyler Sperry at right)

Continued on page 4.....

New Look for Department



Tyler Sperry

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Hi folks,

Our Disabled American Veterans

this is a note of thanks on this Veterans Day to all Disabled American Veterans. It is my honor to be the individual that you are known as in making my Eagle Service Project on or about November 2015 at the Disabled American Veterans (DAV), a helping hand for veterans building. From the financial support from DAV chapters provided to my parent, to those who came out and worked on my work days or provided equipment, to those who provided meals and support to the project. I thank you. I greatly appreciated all those who worked on my project but I especially want to thank my project mentor, Department Adjutant David Alderete, my project sponsor, Chapter 3 and Department Adjutant David Alderete and Chapter 33 Commander Tillery Dingler for his excellent direction of the project and material.

I have been involved in the repair on my project and property as well as for my Eagle Board of Review which I hope to carry out in the year. I will let you all know what I want to know and be using the Eagles as a starting point to help me on my Eagle Court of Honor when that occurs.

Thank you all for the hard and complex work.

God Bless Our Veterans
Tyler Sperry



Reprinted from Rio Grande Credit Union's Newsletter:

DAV Sock Drive

by Valerie Chavez

Isn't funny how just one person who sees a need sparks a passion in someone else and it becomes like a domino effect and more and more people become interested and involved in something that seemed so small in the beginning now is something so important impacts other people's lives!

That's how the veteran's sock drive began. A former RGCU employee named Jamie who is also the granddaughter of long time member David Alderete and Adjutant to the DAV of New Mexico saw a need, a need for socks for our veterans. When she began collecting socks from her coworkers, another coworker Carmela caught wind of what she was doing and wanted to take it to a higher level. Together they created the Veterans Sock Drive.

The past two years RGCU has pulled together as a family along with our members and has been able to give thousands of dollars and socks to those veterans in need. Last year teller supervisor Jan Cassiot and Carmela's moms group "Stitches of Love" donated 100 handmade quilts and 30 pillows.

For those who don't know about the DAV of New Mexico, they are an organization that helps support our veterans, veteran wives, veteran widows and their children. The DAV of NM has 19 chapters that they support in New Mexico. We currently have 6 business accounts for the DAV of NM. I was fortunate enough to be able to meet with David Alderete and my mission during this interview was to learn and share with my RGCU Family what the DAV of New Mexico does and why we support them. Let me tell you, they do so much more than I ever imagined.

The DAV of NM mission is to not only help support our New Mexico veterans but also their wives, widows and their children. The blankets and some of the socks are given to veterans who are in assisted living/nursing homes and veterans who reside at the VA hospital. This was very touching because a lot of the veterans at the VA hospital are in hospice or the mental ward and they are so grateful to have a warm blanket and pair of socks. Socks are also distributed to homeless veterans, women and their children who are in protected shelters from abusive husbands, and veteran women in shelters.

In addition to distributing socks and blankets they also assist veterans with helping them obtain VA benefits, provide wheel chairs for those who don't have 100% disability with the VA, providing used clothing and jackets, distributing canned goods and turkeys for the holidays as well as providing toiletries and underwear to VA patients. They also help provide financial assistance with utility bills for those who are in great need.

I absolutely love this organization because they do what they can to help our New Mexico veterans and their families. So many veterans are in need and are suffering from PTSD or devastating injuries and may not know how to integrate back into society. They also may be sick due to being exposed to dangerous chemicals while serving in other countries. Sometimes our veterans are alone and without family. The DAV is there to help them through these tough situations.

I know this initiative and the people involved in this great cause have personally touched my life and have inspired me to do more for our veterans and appreciate my freedom in this country. Much more importantly it has changed how I view my dad. I always have looked up to him, but now I also see him as a hero who has sacrificed so much so that others can live freely.

RGCU let us come together once again and show our support to our New Mexico Veterans.



From The Desk of the State Adjutant

This year has proven to be a challenging one in that the normal course of everyday business has changed somewhat dramatically. Although unconventional, some of the new Chapter Commanders and Adjutants have found themselves dealing directly with the State Commander Gene Weber. He wants to take a more active and direct role in the course of the DAV's everyday business. I know that some of you have found this to be confusing as it has always been the role of the State Adjutant to handle the day-to-day operations of the DAV. It has been a challenge for us as well, but be assured that we are here to assist and support you as always.

The DAV Department has experienced a new surge of energy on projects and endeavors that can only serve to enhance and improve means of distributing information to Chapters and perhaps even the communities surrounding the Chapters throughout the state. This newsletter being one of these endeavors and the creation of a website being another. The idea was brought up to me by Department Secretary Celisa Dickson and she convinced me of the advantages and, being the "geek" techie that she is, has been off and running to try and get the website up and live by the end of the year. Celisa has proven to be a blessing to Department and I can't thank her enough for her assistance and devotion.

This year's Thanksgiving Turkey drive really proved successful thanks to Unit 3 member Dorothy Chavez who spearheaded a turkey drive for Chapter and Unit 3 in her community of Barelvas in southwest Albuquerque. She called me the week of November 16th and informed me that Pastor John Hill of the Albuquerque Rescue Mission wanted to donate turkeys for veterans and their families. Over 40 turkeys were donated and distributed throughout the Albuquerque area. In addition to this donation, we received 5 turkeys from AUI, Inc., a local construction company, which was facilitated by Celisa's friend Jean-Marie Bridge, a project coordinator at AUI. For the trimmings, Department received generous donations from the NSO (Gary Prescott, Director), and Chapters 3 and 5. We were able to purchase trimmings to go with all the turkeys, including pumpkin pie and Cool Whip!, and still had funds leftover to stock our food pantry into the New Year and beyond.

Other endeavors undertaken recently were the exterior refurbishment of Department (see page 1) and the RGCU/DAV Sock Drive. This was originally started about three years ago at the VA Medical Center's Rio Grande Credit Union branch. The history and more information on this partnership can be found on page 2 in an article reprinted from RGCU's newsletter. This year's drive has proven to be incredibly successful with the donation of boxes and boxes of socks and 50 lap blankets sewn by Jan Gassiot, Teller Supervisor of the RGCU San Pedro branch. I can only hope that the relationship between Rio Grande Credit Union and DAV Department of New Mexico continues to flourish. **THANK YOU RIO GRANDE CREDIT UNION!**

It is with a heavy heart that I announce my resignation of the post of State Adjutant as of December 2, 2015. I've enjoyed working with all of you and wish my successor the best.



RGCU VA Sock Drive

RGCU staff took time to deliver a collection of 2029 pairs of socks and several handmade quilts and pillows to the DAV Department of New Mexico on Wednesday, November 25. These items will be distributed to hospitalized veterans around the state.

From The Desk of the State Commander (cont.)

"Status quo" isn't the norm anymore as DAV National by-laws and positions change, therefore we all need to adapt to what's best for the DAV/DAVA. My commitment to you all at our convention in June was that I'm here to make things better for my successor next year and visit each Chapter in the state. You be the judge of what we have accomplished. Department had to install a new heater November 25th at a cost of \$1800 so we will be warm this winter. We also have a roof that leaks and needs repair after we get bids.

LVAP (Local Veterans Assistant Program) is a DAV National program monitored by each DAV Department. This is a voluntary program and not meant for one person to keep track of their entire Chapters' hours. We should keep track of our hours as we work them, not wait until the end of the month and try to remember what we did to help veterans. LVAP hours are not VA hospital or clinic hours worked. Any questions pertaining to the program should be directed to Department. This is a volunteer program for which you, as an individual, will be recognized by DAV National for helping veterans and reporting those hours to your Department. Two forms are required to be filled out in their entirety: LVAP form 21 is a one-time registration, while LVAP form 60 is to be filled out by the end of each month and faxed or mailed to Department. LVAP 60 item #6 refers to Department Service Officer or Chapter Service Officer hours, and item #9 is a catch-all column in which you can log hours that do not apply to items #6-8. LVAP hours reported for New Mexico since July are over 3150. Keep up the good work guys! Forms were emailed to each Chapter, but if you need them resent or would like us to send you hard copies, contact Department.

December 11th, Department will be having our third annual Holiday Potluck held at 2511 Utah following the Department State Executive Committee Meeting (11:30-1). We hope to see you there! Department wishes all of you the very best Christmas possible and a very safe and Happy New Year.

I have visited ten of the nineteen Chapters so far this year and hope to get to the rest soon. If your Chapter is doing anything special, please let Department know so we can include it in the quarterly Newsletter.

The Department gun raffle is off to a slow start, but we hope it will pick up after the holidays. So far, in five months, we have raised \$4685.00 with a proposed income budgeted at \$16,422. I would like to thank Forrest Barka and Robert Aplin and his wife for their help selling tickets at the Sportsman's Warehouse. We need all Chapters and members to help with this endeavor, so get out there and sell, folks! As mentioned in the last Newsletter, there will be many more opportunities to help out at the Sportsman's Warehouse, so if you have a couple hours you could spare, give Department a call.

DAV membership requirements are listed on page 46-48 of the National by-laws and need to be followed. We as DAV members need to continue to encourage potential members to join. Recourses are available by zip code of eligible veterans. If your Chapter is interested in obtaining a list, contact Department with a list of zip codes.

Lastly, don't forget to mark your calendars for our Annual Convention which is set for June 9-11, 2016. Chapter Service Officer training will be held on June 8th from noon-4 at the Elegante. And, as always, we at Department are here ready and willing to help any way we can.

Engene (Gene) Weber, Commander
Office (505) 294-6193 or Cell (505) 401-5907

Departed Comrades



Ronald L. Budagher, Chapter 3
Jesus B. Campos, Chapter 3
Manuel Garcia, Chapter 3
Charles F. Sanchez, Chapter 3
Fred Saddler, Chapter 5
Graham R. Eskridge, Chapter 6
James A. Wells, Chapter 6
Benjamin Franklin Stair, Jr., Chapter 7
John P. Stark, Chapter 7
Doug Blaine, Chapter 19
Ronald F. Dauffenbach, Chapter 21
Kee Btsicity, Chapter 21
Weldon L. Duke, Chapter 21
Andrew Trujillo, Chapter 21
John S. Aragon, Chapter 29
Ralph Chavez, Chapter 29
Richard U. Conant, Chapter 29
Joseph A. Laurenzano, Sr., Chapter 29
Edward J. Martinez, Chapter 29
Robert E. DeRemer, Chapter 29
Glen Michael Baird, Chapter 33
Roger Baker, Chapter 33
Richard C. Gonzales, Chapter 33
Charles E. Savary, Chapter 38

(This information is compiled from what is received by Department. If you have information on a departed comrade that was not included in this list, let us know and we will make sure they are listed in the following issue of the Newsletter.)

Do you have information you'd like to share with the DAV Community? Do you have a fundraiser or event coming up? Let us know and this space could be yours in the next issue. Coming March 2016...



The Golden Corral/DAV Partnership for Military Appreciation Day which took place on Veterans Day, Wed, Nov. 11th, 2015 was once again a success, with over 2000 veterans served in the Albuquerque area alone. Pictured below are members of Chapter 33, Tillery Dingler, Carl McBride, Chaplain Ed McBride and Al Sena, supporting veterans during the fundraiser. Thanks to all Chapters and members that participated.



THE DAV TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM IS IN NEED OF A FEW GOOD MEN AND WOMEN TO VOLUNTEER AS POV DRIVERS TO HELP OUR STATE'S VETERANS GET TO AND FROM THEIR NECESSARY MEDICAL APPOINTMENTS. TO VOLUNTEER, OR FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT LUPE CRUZ, TRANSPORTATION COORDINATOR, AT (505) 265-2821