



(516) 887-7100 Fax (516) 887-7175

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS

DEPARTMENT OF NEW YORK, INC.
162 Atlantic Avenue, Lynbrook, New York 11563



November 2009 Newsletter
Volume 18 Number 5

MEMBERSHIP

Membership Status as of 11/17/09

Trial Members: 2,309

Part Life Members: 2,245

Full Life Members: 46,541

Total Members: 51,095

Goal for Full Life Members: 46,915 (99.20%)

VISITING THE TROOPS

Leo Ortiz, Department Commander

I had the privilege of accompanying members of the National Amputee Chapter #76 to Walter Reed and Bethesda Hospitals' in Washington, D.C. to visit with our returning disabled veterans. It is amazing to see how well they are responding to therapy. It brings back memories to the time I underwent rehab and was adapting to my prosthetic.

I attended the DAVA State Commander Marie's Testimonial Dinner in Syracuse, New York. Her theme was Flower Power, and if you heard any rumors about a hippie on the loose, it's true; it was me! Everyone had a fun time.

Agent Orange has left many of our brothers and sisters with disabling pain and suffering. I was so pleased to read that VA Secretary Shinseki did the right thing when he added three new diseases to the list of "presumed illnesses." They are Parkinson's, B Cell Leukemia and Ischemic Heart Disease.

Renovation of our new headquarters is going great. We will soon be dedicating the building.

From my family to yours, I extend a very happy holiday season!

God bless our troops, wherever they may serve.

A "CZAR" IS STILL A "TSAR"

Sidney Siller, Sr., PDC; Department Adjutant

A rose by any other name is still a rose. The czar nomenclature is spelled out phonetically as tsar. Czar Nicholas, murdered approximately a century ago, would be



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totally surprised that the sovereign title has spread into the highest reaches of our government.

Mr. Matt Flavin, a 29-year-old veteran, has been appointed director, to head a recently created White House Office of Veteran and Wounded Warriors Policy; and, as the Presidents liaison to veterans. His mission is to offer a “fresh perspective” to veterans.

To quote Director Flavin, a Navy veterans of Iraq and Afghanistan, “It’s changing the paradigm of outreach and making sure there is a conversation that is substantive and isn’t just political.”

This newly created office hasn’t received much media exposure. I learned about Director Flavin’s appointment from a small squib pasted on page 18 of the Veterans of Foreign Wars magazine for November/December 2009. It came as a surprise to me, only because I go back so long, that I remember being admonished by Capt. William F. McCauley, a veteran of “Black Jack’s Pershing Forces,” who chased Pancho Villa into Mexico in 1914. Capt. Bill admonished me to always remember two principles; “Don’t allow politicians to divide you by way of different wars (generational) and divide you by the branch of service (Army v Navy, or Marines v Army and the Navy). I have always been alert to the basic concepts or variations of the same.

I have serious questions, which arise as to the need for the creation of this new White House office.

These questions involve issues as to whether or not the office will be in the nature of one performing the duties of an ombudsman, or one that will be involved in the development of legislation; in the administration of veterans affairs; or designing new medical care for our fellow veterans.

I for one, admire new concepts; and modern technologies. On the other hand, I loathe proposals that would narrow, or abridge the benefits of our disabled veterans and their families.

At face value, the creation of this new office must presumptively be given a good faith acceptance. We must be certain that the Joint House and Senate Committee on Veteran’s Affairs exercise their right to accountability and transparency in the powerful area of veteran’s affairs.



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I am just as confident that our legislative office in Washington will let us know if ever there is a dilemma that we must contend with; created by the new White House office.

While we abide future developments, we wish Director Matt Flavin good luck, because we want everyone who works for the good and welfare of disabled veterans much success - even if he is a czar.

INFORMATION SEMINAR

On December 5th and 6th, 2009, our National and Department Service Officers will be hosting a DAV Veterans Information Seminar at DAV-NY Department Headquarters, 162 Atlantic Avenue, Lynbrook, New York 11563 from 10 am until 4 pm. The telephone number is (516) 887-7100.

These veterans' benefits experts will offer the best counseling and claim filing assistance you and your family can get – free of charge! You need not be a DAV member to take advantage of the DAV Service.

Please bring your VA Claim Number, Social Security Number, DD-214 and any pertinent medical records to the seminar.

RECORD REQUESTS

Source: www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records/special-notice.html

The National Personnel Records Center responds to over 1.4 million requests annually for copies of military personnel and/or medical records. Their goal is to provide timely responses in an efficient manner, so that veterans and their families obtain the information needed to qualify for benefits and entitlements.

Nearly half of all requesters seek only a copy of the separation document, which is the necessary document required for veteran benefits. However, about ten percent of the requests received ask for a copy of a file.

Since the 1970s, the standard procedure for replying to requests for entire files has been to provide only copies of key documents and extracts of vital information, rather



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than a copy of every document in a personnel and/or medical file. This approach avoids costly delays in reviewing and copying some documents -- such as leave papers, identification card applications, and clothing issuances -- that are not normally needed for benefit claim purposes. As a result, NPRC is able to respond to more requesters, faster, and at less cost to the taxpayers. Exceptions to this procedure are files more than 62 years old, US Marine Corps files, all certified legal cases, and all requests from the Department of Veterans Affairs. In these instances, all documents are provided.

This extract contains copies of all essential documents to certify entitlement to most rights and benefits associated with military service, to identify key events in a military career, and to identify significant events in health care. Personal data pertaining to third parties is redacted from the file, pursuant to Privacy Act provisions.

When only key documents and extracts are provided from the Official Military Personnel File and the Medical Record, the response package contains a copy of all separation documents and all of the following information if it is in the file:

- Military Services Dates
- Character of Service
- Promotions and Reductions
- Duty Stations and Assignments
- Foreign or Sea Service
- Military Schooling and Training
- Awards and Letters of Commendation
- Disciplinary Actions
- Lost Time
- Enlistments Contracts
- Entry and Separation Physical Exams
- Immunizations
- Dental Examinations
- Clinical Summaries/Cover Sheets

If, after receiving an extract of a file, a requester submits a follow-up request for additional information or documents, NPRC will automatically send copies of all the other documents in the file.



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Until recently, this policy was not explained when responding to requesters. As of September 28, 2009, all responses that contain file extracts include an explanation of the policy.

If you have questions about this policy, they should be directed to: Tom Mills, Assistant Archivist for Regional Records Services.

Thus, if a veteran/retiree needs or wants a COMPLETE copy of their military personnel record, they should submit a 2nd request, which clearly states, "This is a 2nd request for a complete copy – provide copies of ALL documents." The purpose of a request should be "Benefits". The best way to submit a request is online at: <https://vetrecs.archives.gov>.

A VETERANS DAY NOTE

Dear Fellow American,

I am honored to serve as National Spokesperson for the [*American Veterans Disabled for Life Memorial*](#). Thanks to your overwhelming support, the nation's first permanent memorial dedicated to disabled veterans across all service branches and histories of conflict is within reach.

On the eve of Veterans Day, we as a country take exceptional pride in the brave servicemen and women who stood guard over our nation's liberty. Almost a century after the first Veterans Day, we still recognize the importance of honoring those who served our nation's military.

Sadly, for more than three million veterans seriously injured in the line of duty, leaving the battlefield does not mark the end of their conflict. These permanently disabled heroes often carry home life-altering disabilities, stern reminders of the price of freedom. In honor of Veterans Day, please take a moment to reflect upon the tremendous sacrifices our country's veterans have made on our behalf, and how their courage profoundly impacts the freedoms we enjoy today.

Now is the time to come together as a nation to honor our disabled veterans. Your donation to the *American Veterans Disabled for Life Memorial* will ensure that all disabled veterans have a permanent place for solace and healing in our nation's capital,



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Washington D.C. Within full sight of the U.S. Capitol Building, the Memorial will serve as a constant reminder of the price of war and the unbreakable spirit of so many fellow Americans who have sacrificed so much in defense of our nation.

I encourage you to visit www.avdlm.org and make a contribution to help the Memorial become a reality. No amount is too small. To date, the Memorial has raised more than 90% of the public funding needed to break ground. Please become a part of history and join us in helping bring this dream, to life.

Sincerely,
Gary Sinise

BUFFALO VA GETS AWARD FOR PROSTHETICS

Aaron Mason (WIVB)

Recognized for outstanding service and care, On November 16, 2009. the Department of Veterans Affairs presented the VA Hospital in Buffalo with the National Prosthetic Facility of the Year award. The Buffalo VA was singled out for its outstanding service and care to the disabled veterans who come through its doors.

Frederick Downs, the Chief National Prosthetics and Clinical Logistics Officer, said "Each individual here has the passion it takes to do the job. Each person here has deep roots in the community and as I interviewed each one of them, it was obvious that all the work they do comes right from the heart."

The award was presented on National Prosthetics Day, during a vendor fair at the hospital showcasing prosthetic equipment and devices.

**FREE DRUG DISCOUNT CARD SAVES MONEY AND RAISES FUNDS
FOR DAV**

DAV Press Release

Cincinnati – November 6, 2009 – Disabled American Veterans announced the launch of a free prescription drug discount card that offers savings up to 75% and when the card is used, 50 cents will be donated to the DAV from the United Networks of America.

The free prescription drug cards may be used by anyone, regardless of age, income, or existing health coverage. In a time when non-profit organizations are seeing a



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decline in charitable contributions, this is a perfect way to support America's veterans and also save money on prescriptions.

Save money and support the DAV today! To download the Drug Discount Card go to <http://www.davrxcard.com>. Simply provide your name and print the card right from your computer. Every card is pre-activated and can be used immediately.

“We are pleased to offer this benefit to the public. With our brave Americans leaving the battlefields of Iraq and Afghanistan, DAV's services and advocacy are critical,” says Arthur H. Wilson, DAV National Adjutant. “While 50 cents might not sound like much, it adds up quickly, assisting us in our ongoing efforts to build better lives for America's disabled veterans and their families.”

Cardholders can choose from any of the more than 57,000 national and local pharmacies, including most chains, and may even mail-order a 90-day supply of their medication. By showing the card once at your pharmacy, you will continue to get the discounts for the life of the program.

There is no application process, no membership fee, and no restrictions or limits on frequency of use. Cardholders and their family members may use the cards as their primary plan or to help reduce co-payments or cover prescriptions not covered by their current insurance plan.

The program ensures cardholders get the best deal on their prescriptions – paying the lowest price available.

TAPS

Department has been notified that the following comrades have been called into final formation above:

William M. Kusy, Chapter #185, September 19, 2009

Albert R. Nielsen, Sr., Chapter #153, October 9, 2009

Andrew Efimenco, Chapter #153, October 26, 2009

Department and the membership extend deepest sympathies to the family members, friends and comrades of these fallen heroes. May each one rest in honor.



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Please feel free to call, write or e-mail Headquarters at davny@optonline.net if you have a loss in your Chapter that you would like to include in this column.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

2010 National Mid Winter Conference

February 28, 2010 to March 3, 2010
Crystal Gateway Marriott
1700 Jefferson Davis Highway
Arlington, VA 22202
703-920-3230
\$189.00 Single/Double Occupancy

2010 State Executive Committee Meeting

March 12, 2010 to March 14, 2010
Hudson Valley Resort
400 Granite Road
Kerhonkson, NY 12446

2010 New York State Convention

June 27, 2010 to June 30, 2010
Hudson Valley Resort
400 Granite Road
Kerhonkson, NY 12446

2010 National DAV Convention

July 31, 2010 to August 3, 2010
Hyatt Regency Atlanta on Peachtree Street
265 Peachtree Street NE
Atlanta, GA 30303
404-577-1234
\$129.00 Single/Double Occupancy