



State Department of Wisconsin, Inc.

July 2020



From the desk of State Commander Julie Hert

It's truly an honor and privilege that I'm serving as your Auxiliary Commander for the 2020-2021 term. A special thank you to Elizabeth Honaker, Immediate Past State Commander, for her guidance, support, and friendship. You set a high standard as our Commander and can take satisfaction with having touched the lives of our Veterans.

In terms of the coming year, the big story has been COVID-19. It's hard to believe that our State and National DAV & Auxiliary conventions have been cancelled. At a local level, we have seen Auxiliary Unit meetings cancelled across the Badger State. This is brand new territory for us personally and our beloved organization. We all recognize that many of our members may fall within the realm of being high risk and a Unit meeting is not worth the risk. In our modern world, we now wear face masks, conduct social distancing, and aggressively use hand sanitizer. While we are experiencing these changes within our lives, it should be recognized that our mission remains steadfast. We will support our Veterans so they can lead lives of dignity and respect.

In terms of the Way Forward, I would like to provide the following guidance. Regarding Unit meetings each area of our State is unique. In urban areas it appears there is a potentially higher rate for COVID-19 cases in comparison to rural counterparts. I would encourage each Unit Commander to contact their leadership team and check the pulse of the situation. Each County has a Public Health Department. I would encourage Unit Commanders to contact their local Public Health staff as they may assist you with your risk assessment of the situation. Each Unit has the autonomy to determine when the next meeting occurs. I also plan to contact by phone each Unit Commander over the next two months. It will be a great opportunity to touch base and enhance the rapport. The bottom line, it's all about our Units, our members and especially our Veterans.

If any immediate questions, please do not hesitate to contact me. My phone number is 920-379-1573 and my email address is as follows: hertjulie@yahoo.com. We have a phenomenal leadership team at the State Auxiliary level, if any questions regarding elections, constitution & by-laws please contact JA Rose Williams. If any questions regarding financial reports, please reach out to our Treasurer Ann Glende. Please connect with Patti Davis, Adjutant, regarding the functions, roles and responsibilities within a Unit. Again, we have some wonderful resources just a phone call or email away!

In closing, every State Commander has a motto or slogan that provides them guidance for the coming year. Mine is "Because they sacrificed, we serve". All goes well; I hope to see you all in the coming year!

From the desk of State Sr. Vice Commander Frank Wojak, III

Hello everyone. Thank you for allowing me to serve this year as the State Senior Vice Commander. This past year was very exciting for me. I visited a few VA Hospitals and Veterans Homes near me and had a chance to meet people. I have two very active juniors that are busy but came with me as much as possible.

I am excited to learn more as I continue to serve the state department. This will be a learning experience for me but I am ready for the task and will do the best job I can. I hope we have a great year. I look forward to working with you.

This year I will be working on membership for our state department. Right now we need 40 members to meet quota for 2020-2021. That may seem like a lot but I know we can achieve that. Let's work hard and get quota early. Everyone should be able to sign up at least one new member. Remember, over 80 year olds and juniors count towards quota.

Let me know what you do to recruit members. We can get this done together!

From the desk of State Jr. Vice Commander Wanda Brewer

I am Wanda Brewer, State Jr. Vice Commander.

It is a pleasure being elected to serve the Wisconsin DAV Auxiliary and DAV.

I'm looking to see how the Junior Auxiliary can help take us to the next level in methods of communication, civic knowledge, and adding to our numbers.

Again, I want to thank the state auxiliary for your vote of confidence.

From the desk of State Adjutant Patty Davis

Unit Adjutants – watch your mailbox. DAV Auxiliary National Headquarters recently sent out their annual mailing and we need to be sure we are looking at that information. If you have questions please let us know.

We have not yet sent out information on State Fall Conference because we are still monitoring the Coronavirus pandemic to see how things play out. We should know for certain whether the event will move forward around August 15. I suggest continuing to make your hotel reservations because they can always be cancelled in the event that we cannot meet.

On a state department level, I know many of our units are just now starting to meet again. Please remember that all units are required to have an election even if the officers are staying the same. Meetings done by phone, Skype, Zoom, FaceTime, etc. are not valid meetings. These types of technologies can be used to keep in touch with members; however, not business may be conducted. We realize some units may not meet until August or September. Be sure to notify all unit members of when your election will be held. This is required per the bylaws. Once your elections and installation is complete, please complete the annual officer report and submit it accordingly. Keep in mind, just because you did elections late this year doesn't mean you have to do them late for 2021-2022. If you do elections every April, you can continue to do so. 2020-2021 will just be a unique year and officers will serve shorter terms.

Since we are delayed in our annual unit elections, that also means the roster for 2020-2021 will be delayed. That is also why it is so important to get those reports in once the unit has held elections.

Please remember that the state website is up and running. If you have suggestions, comments, or would like something posted, please get with Ann Glende. She would be happy to help. At the end of the day, we all have to work together to stay well. I look forward to working with you all again this year.

From the desk of State Treasurer Ann Glende

Well, 2020 sure ended differently, didn't it? Here we are in July, state convention, national convention, and national fall conference are all cancelled, and I am sure I am not alone when I ask myself, what in the world is next?!

All units Adjutants should have received the annual mandate letter. This is due no later than September 30, 2020. Please remember that VA Hospital and Veteran Home Representatives cannot receive disbursement of the hospital mandate until all payments have been made. Don't hold up this important distribution – get yours in today.

We are also now in the time that the annual financial report is due. I know we are facing unknown waters right now, but please work together and get this done so that all of our units meet the deadline of September 30, 2020. Units who do not submit the annual financial report are considered indebted and have no voice or vote. Don't do that to your members. Please reach out to me if you need help. I am a phone call, text, or email away. Also, don't forget to get your 990-N e-Postcards done. These are due no later than November 15, 2020. If you cannot do it, just let me know and I can for the unit. It is so expensive and difficult to get the tax-exempt status back once it has been revoked, so don't delay in getting this done.

Year-end financial figures for the state department will be mailed in the coming months. I want all units to take a good look at the VAVS donations. I know that the end of 2019-2020 was very odd, but we need to make sure that we are being good stewards of funds. Donations should be made to the VAVS Program and other DAV/A Programs. We cannot continue to make donations to community programs. We realize that they do great work, but if our donors wanted those funds to go

there, they would have donated to them. I'd love to see us get back to the "good old days" with hospital donations. The representatives count on the donations for programs. If you have been donating, make sure that you are sending them through the state department.

As always, I am always here! Take care, stay well, and hope to hear from you all, soon.

From the desk of State Judge Advocate Rose Williams

Hello all! I hope everyone is trying to adjust to the "new normal" and this finds everyone safe and well.

I am honored to serve you again this year as your State Judge Advocate! The position of Judge Advocate is as legal advisor to the State Commander and shall upon request of the State Commander render an opinion on all questions arising the State Department and on intraunit disputes. The Judge Advocates opinions are advisory only. Per our State Standing Rules, I am also the advisor to the Mae Holmes report.

I am a member of Schumann-Heink Unit #30, Stevens Point. I have been a member of the Auxiliary since 1990. I have served as adjutant/treasurer of my Unit for 10 years. I have never served in any other office in my Unit. Before Unit 30, I was active in Unit #54, Waupaca until the Unit had to merge with Unit #53, Manawa at which time my husband, Hank and I got enough members to get a charter for Unit #30 which folded several years before.

This has been a challenging time for our Units with trying to figure out when and where it is safe to hold a Unit meeting. My Unit will be meeting at my house in July. Since only about 6 members will come, it will be easy to social distance and take the proper sanitizing precautions.

Please remember when you are nominating and electing officers for the year, this must be done in person, even if you are electing the same officers. A new election must be done every year. This can be found in the National Constitution and Bylaws on page U-2 – Article VI – Election of Unit Officers. Also, on page U-3 – Article VII, Section 1: The Auxiliary Ritual must be used for installation. When the election is done, remember the Officer's Report is due to National and State Headquarters no later than 10 days after the election.

I am hoping we will all be able to meet soon, I sure did miss our State Convention!

As you all may know, the National Convention and DAVA National Fall Conference have been cancelled. These events are great learning opportunities.

I hope you all stay safe and healthy! REMEMBER: BE FAIR TO EACH OTHER!

From the desk of State Chaplain Linda Gresbach

Hello! I have the privilege of serving as our State Chaplain for this coming year. As Chaplain in a non-sectarian role I will provide prayers and invocations at conventions, conferences, and any meeting where prayers may be offered.

Another important part of this position is to send out greeting cards to our members. If a member has passed away or if a member is in the hospital dealing with serious medical issues-these are certainly prayer worthy and card worthy occasions. But the cards don't have to be just for serious occasions. What about a couple celebrating their 50th anniversary, or 60th, or 70th? Or how about special birthdays like turning 75, 80, or 90? It would be real nice to get a card from our Auxiliary to let them know we are thinking of them.

Also, if a DAV member has passed away it is important to check if the spouse or other family members belong to the DAV or Auxiliary. We can express our sympathy and show our respect by sending cards to the family at such a difficult time.

This year will be the first time that we will have our Memorial Display. It will be done in place of a Memorial service while still respectfully honoring our departed DAV and Auxiliary members. It will be available for everyone to come and see it and pause to reflect on it's meaning.

Until we can meet in person, I hope all of you stay happy and healthy. Congratulations to our new Officers and may you have a successful year.

From the desk of King Veterans Home Representative Rose Williams

Hello from King!

Unfortunately, the King Veterans Home is still closed to volunteers. We really miss our monthly bingo

games at the different halls.

June 28, would have been our annual DAV/A King Day. We are not able to be there in person, but we sure are there in spirit!

The King Recreation Committee will be meeting for the first time since March on July 8 at the VFW hall in Waupaca. We will take all precautions at the meeting. We actually asked members of the committee if they wanted to meet and we got about a 50/50 response, yes or no.

Here is an update from the July 8 Rec Committee meeting:

The King Home may be closed to visitors and volunteers until September 2021.

The Veterans Organizations can still make donations, but the staff at King cannot reach out to us, we can, however, email them and ask for a list of needs. Two staff were at the meeting and we did get a list from them.

The commissary is only accepting new clothes with tags and health care donations. If you want to make a material donation, you have to contact Nick Peskie at King, tell him what it is and if he accepts it, you can go to the check point at King, tell them Nick approved it and drop it off. Shelley Jandt's position will not be filled.

I still want to thank you all for your generous donations! We can't wait to get back and put them to good use! Stay safe, stay well.

From the desk of Zablocki VAVS Representative Patty Davis

COVID-19 is still affecting much of our activities throughout the VA Medical Center. We are still continuing to provide coffee for the various floors and the patients really enjoy that. We are already starting to plan our annual Thanksgiving Dinner for the patients, and hope to make this one of the best years yet. More information will be forthcoming on how you can support this special program.

We are continuing to find new and creative ways to bring joy to veterans in the hospital, especially now when they cannot have visitors. We have been working with Voluntary Services and participating in virtual meetings with the Center Director on what the next steps of opening our facility will be.

Thank you to each individual, unit, and chapter who has supported the Zablocki VAVS Fund. The veterans greatly appreciate everything we are able to do for them, and we wouldn't be able to do that without each of you!

Betty J. Wimmer Outstanding Member of the Year 2019-2020

The Betty J Wimmer Auxiliary Member of the Year committee is honored to announce that Rita Fuchs from West Allis Unit #19 is the winner. Rita is currently serving as Unit Chaplain, VAVS Deputy for Zablocki VAMC and is a member of the State Audit Committee.

Rita volunteers in the DAV Transportation office one day a week, assists at forget-me-not drives and brat fries, and helps coordinate volunteers for special events at Zablocki VAMC.

She crochets butterflies to attach to Easter baskets for Children's Hospital, and volunteers at: Jen's Sweet Treats for special fundraisers; visually impaired Patriots motorcycle group; raising money for AED equipment for Cudahy sports; Flight of a Lifetime event to raise money for honor flights; and as a cashier at Cudahy 4th of July city event. Rita is also involved with rehabbing and rehabilitating dogs.

Rita is always willing and ready to volunteer wherever needed. Both veterans and transportation drivers enjoy visiting with her. She is dedicated to the mission of the DAV and DAV Auxiliary. Congratulations, Rita. We are so proud of you.

Betty J Wimmer Auxiliary Member of the Year Committee - Sharon Banning, Betty J Wimmer, Al Glende and Sandy Fear

You've Made It This Far...

We want to see who is reading this newsletter!!! Can you guess which area of Wisconsin had our first unit? The person who guesses closest to the area (by miles) will win a prize. Bonus prize if you know what the unit number is and what year they were chartered!! Send your guesses to Ann Glende, 520 Spring Street, Elsmere, KY 41018. You can also call Ann at 859-240-6554, text her, or email her at annsobocinski@gmail.com. Please have your guesses in by August 1, 2020. Good luck!!