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## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** National Executive Committee  
Past National Commanders  
Department Commanders and Adjutants  
All Employees and Retirees

**FROM:** J. Marc Burgess, National Adjutant

**DATE:** Oct. 5, 2020

**SUBJECT:** Death of Past National Legislative Director John Heilman

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It is with regret that I advise you of the death of John F. "Rick" Heilman, DAV past national legislative director. He passed away on Monday, Sept. 28, 2020.

Heilman enlisted in the Marine Corps and served from 1957 to 1961 before attending Temple University in Philadelphia. Upon graduating in 1966 with a bachelor of arts degree in history and political science, he returned to the Marine Corps and served as an officer in Vietnam with "B" Company, 1st Reconnaissance Battalion, 1st Marine Division. He was medically retired in 1968 as a 1st lieutenant after suffering combat wounds that resulted in the loss of one leg.

In 1969, Heilman joined the DAV staff as a national service officer apprentice in Albuquerque, N.M., where he was a life member of Chapter 32. The next year, he transferred to Cleveland, Ohio. In 1972, he was appointed assistant national legislative director. He was promoted to deputy national legislative director in 1976 before his appointment to his final post in 1978. He retired in 1994.

The respect Rick earned as an advocate from his fellow veterans endured beyond his years of service for DAV. He was on point for his fellow veterans as they returned from Vietnam and took the lead on many of the most important issues DAV faced in his era. Our thoughts are with his family, friends and fellow veterans who will remember him. The impact of his service will endure long beyond his time on earth.

Rick is survived by his wife, Marilyn, and his six children, which includes Jack Heilman, who served as a national service officer for over 10 years.

Due to the ongoing pandemic, a memorial service may be held in the spring.

Expressions of sympathy may be sent to:

The Heilman Family  
289 Franklin Drive  
Burnsville, NC 28714

May he rest in peace.

  
J. Marc Burgess  
National Adjutant