

DECEMBER 2025



DAV CALIFORNIA NEWS

Happy Holidays

**See you at DAV California Midwinter
in Laguna Hills in January**

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2026 Midwinter Conference

will be held at the
VOCO LAGUNA HILLS HOTEL
25205 LA PAZ RD
LAGUNA HILLS, CA 92653

DATE: JANUARY 23-24, 2026

Please Note!

Rooms at the VOCO are booked . If you still need a room you will need to find nearby accommodations. CSO training will be held at this event.

**CLICK HERE FOR INFO
ON CSO TRAINING**

Agenda

Friday, January 23, 2026

Membership Committee Meeting	8:00 AM
Claims & Service Commission	9:00 AM
Finance Committee Meeting	10:00 AM
CSO Training-Level 1	12:00-4:00 PM

Saturday, January 24, 2026

CSO Training- Level 2	8:00 AM-12:00 PM
CSO Q&A Session	1:00 PM-2:00 PM
Commander's Awards	2:00 PM
Legislative Update	2:30 PM
State Executive Committee	3:00 PM
Commander's Reception	6:00 PM



Also! RootSpace Wellness will be providing free services during Midwinter! To learn more, or inquire about booking a massage, click here!



CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

DAV CALIFORNIA CHAPLAIN
CYNTHIA "CEECEE" HIBBS

During the holiday season, history reminds us of the significance of peace, good will on earth and prayer.

In WW1, in 1914, the opposing sides spontaneously emerged from trenches to exchange greetings, sing carols, and even played football. On the western front, letters from soldiers describe German soldiers offering German tobacco, sharing plum pudding, and burying their dead. Soldiers were able to recognize the bonds we share in humanity.

As we gather among each other this season I pray that we are all able to set aside any conflicts or differences and come together with forgiveness, understanding, and love, to foster peace. Together we will be able to comfort and encourage each other, making this season a time to be treasured.

In WW2 , in 1944, General Patton delivered 250,00 Christmas cards to soldiers in the 23rd army with a prayer reading "Almighty and most merciful Father, we humbly beseech Thee, of Thy great goodness, to restrain these immoderate rains with which we have had to contend. Grant us fair weather for battle. Graciously hearken to us as soldiers who call upon Thee that, armed with Thy power, we may advance from victory to victory, and crush the oppression and wickedness of our enemies and establish Thy justice among men and nations. Amen". General Patton requested that all soldiers use it to pray for clear skies. On December 23rd God answered their prayers resulting in victory at the Battle of the Bulge. Prayer changes history. Battles are won not just by battalions but with hands raised.

I beseech you to raise your hands with me in prayer. Pray for strength and wisdom for our DAV leaders. Pray for our military here and abroad. Pray for health and prosperity for our families and love ones. And, pray that our DAV family continues to grow in size and in our mission to assist Disabled American Veterans and their families. Allow prayer to mold DAV history and watch God's hand unfold. May God Favor and Bless You All, Amen

SAVE
The DATE



COMMANDER'S TESTIMONIAL FOR ARMANDO HERNANDEZ
SATURDAY, APRIL 11, 2026 IN LEMOORE, CA
MORE DETAILS TO COME



DAVA COMMANDER'S MESSAGE

DAV CALIFORNIA AUXILIARY COMMANDER
SHAWN LEWIS

To Our DAV and DAVA Family: As your Auxiliary Commander, I wish to extend my deepest appreciation and warmest wishes for joy, peace, and happiness this Holiday and New Year season to every Veteran we serve, and to all the dedicated members and families of the Disabled American Veterans (DAV) and the Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary (DAVA). As the year closes, I enter a period of reflection, measuring our efforts against the profound sacrifices made by our Veterans. I often ask if I have done enough to support you and advance our vital mission. I can be hard on myself, because when it comes to serving those who have given so much for freedom, enough never truly feels like enough. But my heart is full of gratitude for the unwavering commitment within our ranks.

To our Veterans and their families: Your courage, resilience, and strength are the reasons we exist. To our DAV

and DAVA membership: You are the engine of our advocacy, the hands of our service, and the relentless voice fighting for promised care and benefits. Your partnership makes our mission a reality. You are not just the heartbeat of our community; you are the driving force ensuring no disabled veteran is ever left behind. It remains the highest honor to serve alongside you. As we celebrate this special time of year, I hope you find restorative moments of rest, warmth, and genuine connection with those you hold dearest. May this season bring comfort, shared laughter, and a renewed sense of purpose for the critical work ahead in the new year. Thank you for your service, your sacrifice, and your enduring dedication. Wishing you and yours a wonderful Holiday season and a healthy, prosperous Happy New Year—from my family to yours.

Shawn Lewis

Commander, DAV Auxiliary California

Donate Your Car!

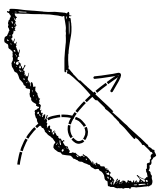


HAVE AN OLD OR EXTRA CAR?

DONATE IT TO DAV & HELP VETERANS IN CALIFORNIA!

CALL 833-227-4328 OR VISIT DAV.CAREASY.ORG





CHAPTER NEWS

MORONGO BASIN CHAPTER #60

On November 7, 2025 at the Formal Marksmanship Training Center in 29 Palms, these 16 marine volunteers were awarded certificates of appreciation for their unwavering support to DAV Morongo Basin Chapter #60's 11th Annual Air Rifle Shooting Competition in October. Thank you for making the event a success!



JR WILSON NAMED VETERAN OF THE YEAR

Past State Commander and DAV California's Legislative Director, Gerald "JR" Wilson was selected by Assemblywoman Lori D. Wilson as the 2025 Veteran of the Year for the 11th Assembly District. He was presented with this recognition in Antioch where family, friends, and local leaders and community members gathered to celebrate his service. Not only has he effectively served in a variety of ways with DAV, he also founded the Delta Veterans Group in 2012 to address growing homelessness among fellow veterans. Every other year he brings together the Stand Down on the Delta, a four day event that has become one of the most impactful veteran support events in the region.



"As a member of the Governor's Military Council and someone who represents thousands of veterans across the Delta, I am honored to recognize JR Wilson for his unwavering commitment to those who have served," said Assemblywoman Wilson. "JR's service didn't end when he came home. He saw a need in his community and built something that changed lives. His leadership reflects the best of our district and the values we strive to lift up every day." Antioch Mayor, Ron Bernal was in attendance, and a resolution from Supervisor Diane Burgis' office was presented as well.

PARTNERSHIP THAT WORKS: MY EXPERIENCE AT THE 5TH ANNUAL TURKEY GIVEAWAY

What an incredible day of service and camaraderie! I, Dana Palmer, was deeply honored to participate in the DAV Chapter #12, and Auxiliary Unit #12, 5th Annual Turkey Giveaway as the California State Department Auxiliary Senior Vice Commander. My heartfelt thanks go out to Chapter #12 and DAV California State Department Commander, Armando Hernandez. I especially want to thank DAV State Senior Vice Commander, Jose Mendoza, for reaching out, including the Auxiliary, and hosting such a truly wonderful event. Being on the ground and seeing the dedication firsthand was truly inspiring. I was thrilled to work alongside Auxiliary Unit #123 Jr. Vice Commander, Jeanie Price, and our dedicated members from Unit #12, who generously volunteered their time to help execute the event. The success of the day was a beautiful testament to what we can achieve when we stand united.

Community Power in Action

The giveaway was extremely well-organized, ensuring hundreds of our local veterans and their families were supported with holiday meals and vital resources. The comprehensive resource fair was a hub of assistance, thanks to our generous community partners. The ceremony included powerful speeches and special remarks from local, state, and federal leaders, as well as DAV officials and other key supporters who champion our veterans' causes.



Gratitude to Every Volunteer!

The seamless, warm spirit of the event was possible thanks to a massive, collective effort. In addition to our Chapter and Auxiliary members, there was a great number of community volunteers. It was a joy to watch veterans leave with smiles, personally escorted to their cars after receiving food and produce, swag bags, gift cards, clothing items, and lunch.

This event confirmed the strength of the bond between the Chapter and the Auxiliary, and it shows the tremendous positive impact we have when we work side-by-side. I look forward to many more opportunities for Chapter and Auxiliary collaborations in the future as we continue to serve those who served us.



Bravo and job well done to everyone involved!

*By Dana Palmer,
Sr Vice Commander, DAV Auxiliary,
California State Department*

ATWATER/MERCED CHAPTER #31

On December 11th, Jenny Nicole's Old School Bakery from Merced hosted DAV Atwater/Merced Chapter 31 second annual Christmas dinner. Thank you to the local businesses and individuals that donated, and made the event special for our disabled Veterans, families and guests. Top Donors were: Bayne Bookkeeping, G St Auto Care, Jenny Nicole's Bakery, Enchanting Events, Eric Doss, and Robert Tomasetti. Special guests included State Commander, Armando Hernandez, and his Chief of Staff, CJ Cantu. We were also joined by department Chaplain and District 5's SEC, Cee Cee Hibbs. Everyone had a wonderful dinner, participated in a white elephant gift exchange/game and Santa was there to also memorialize the evening.



CONNIE OWENS OF #31 VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR

On Veterans Day, before Merced's Veterans Day parade, Chapter #31 member Connie Owens was honored by California's 27th District Assemblywoman, Esmeralda Soria. Connie Owens was a Master Sergeant in the US Air Force, is a Goldstar mom, an active member of Chapter #31, and she continues to work with veterans and their families to improve their lives. Assemblywoman Soria presented her with a certificate recognizing her as the district's 2025 Veteran Volunteer of the Year.

NAMED VETERAN



Chapter #31 members Left to Right: Maria Lopez, Ed Skelton, Connie Owens, Esmeralda Soria, Mikel Wegner, Ken Reid, Elyse Redden

SUPPORT OUR VETERAN THRIFT STORES NEAR YOU!

Do you have clothing or household goods to donate? Reach out to your nearest veteran thrift operation and set up a pick up today!

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

800-238-8387
donatedav.org



Your donations provide injured and ill veterans with rehabilitative services & financial support through the DAV California Rehabilitation Foundation.

FRESNO AREA

559-237-0273
valleyveteransthift.org

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA:

veteransthiftstores.com

Oceanside

800-894-2486
1624 South Coast Hwy.
Oceanside, CA 92054

El Cajon

800-894-2486
1130 E Main St.
El Cajon, CA 92021

Spring Valley

619-337-9244
1049 Elkelton Blvd.
Spring Valley, CA 91977

Chula Vista

800-894-2486
881 Broadway
Chula Vista, CA 91911

POMONA AREA

800-238-8387
davpickupservice.org