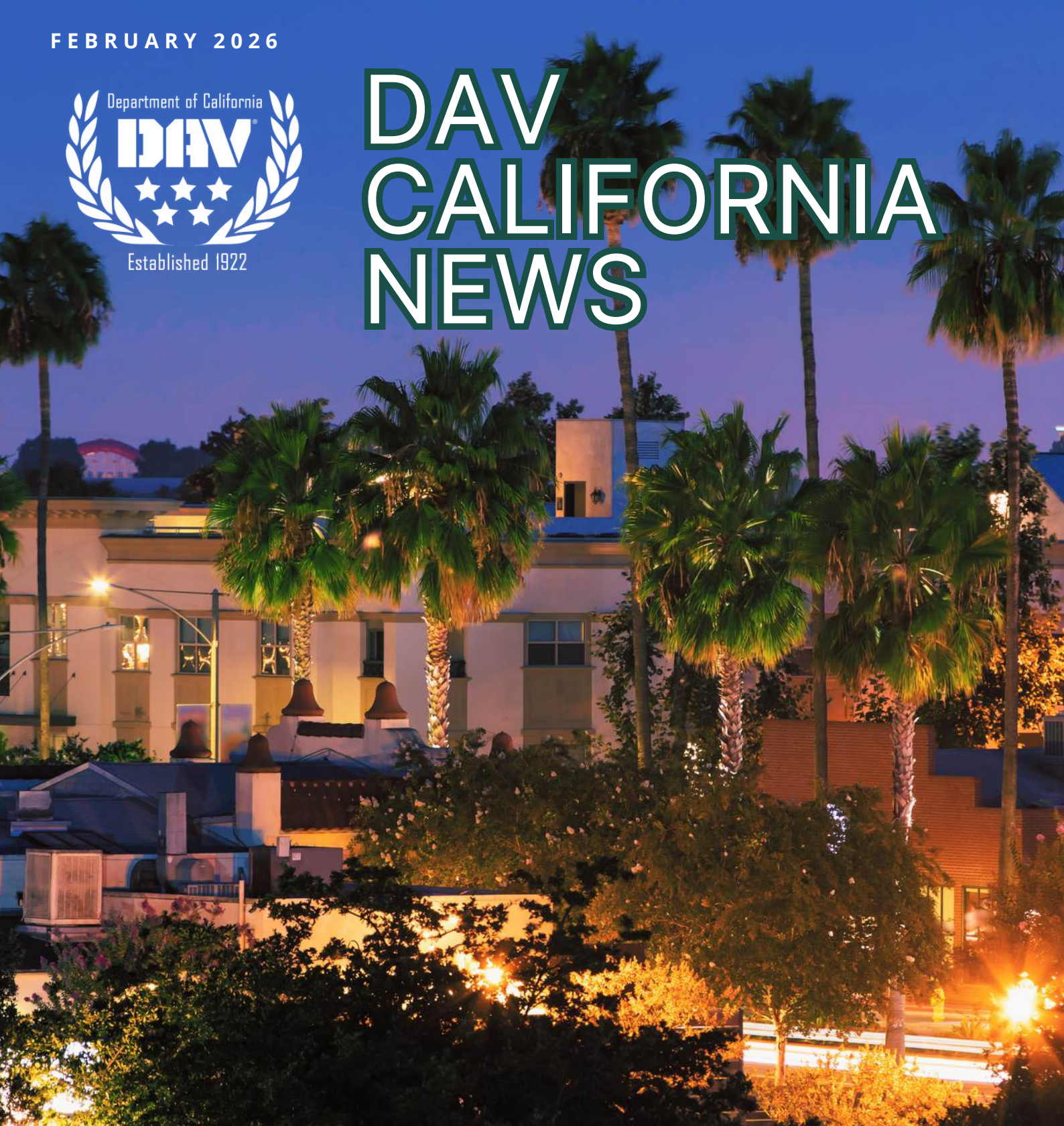


FEBRUARY 2026



# DAV CALIFORNIA NEWS



*Join us!*

**FOR OUR  
104TH CONVENTION  
MAY 20-23, 2026  
IN ORANGE, CA**

**MORE ON PAGE 1**

# Join us!

DAV CALIFORNIA'S  
104<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL CONVENTION

**MAY 20-23, 2026**

Hotel Fera Anaheim  
100 The City Dr.  
Orange, CA 92868  
714-634-4500  
Room rate: \$135/night



CLICK FOR  
MORE INFO



REGISTER BY  
WEDNESDAY,  
APRIL 15TH!

We hope to see you at the Hotel Fera this May for our Annual Convention! This year we will be highlighting and honoring our Vietnam Veterans. We also look forward to hosting our National Membership Director, Lamarr Couser. We will have a Friday fun night featuring a stellar lineup of comedians that have been featured on Netflix, HBO, NBC and more. Since this year's convention is near Anaheim, there is lots for the family to do nearby (like Disneyland!).

Our annual convention is always a great time to connect with your Veteran community and learn how to get more involved. See you there, DAV and DAVA California family!

A NIGHT OF APPRECIATION, CELEBRATION, AND LAUGHS

Disabled American Veterans

**COMEDY  
NIGHT**



Featuring Host, Mike Cano, and comedians, J.T. Turner, Thom Tran and Carlos Oscar!

# DAV AND DAVA HOLDS MIDWINTER CONFERENCE IN LAGUNA HILLS

On January 23-24, 2026, DAV California returned to holding the Midwinter Conference in person at the lovely Voco hotel in Laguna Hills, and the conference was a great opportunity for reconnection. It was great to see everyone and congratulations to all of our Chapter Service Officers who got trained and certified! The work you do for our Veterans is invaluable. It's always special to connect with the DAV family. Thanks to our DAV Auxiliary Commander, Shawn Lewis, we celebrated Delphine Metcalf-Foster's birthday while we were there, and our Legislative Chair, J.R. Wilson briefed attendees on the process of writing resolutions (for more info, click [HERE](#)). Please remember to submit your resolutions to headquarters before April 20! Click [HERE](#) to view more event photos! Thank you to all of you who turned out for this and made our 2026 Midwinter Conference a success.





**YOU'RE INVITED TO  
DAV CALIFORNIA COMMANDER**

**ARMANDO HERNANDEZ'S  
TESTIMONIAL DINNER  
APRIL 11, 2026**

**AT TACHI PALACE HOTEL & CASINO  
17225 Jersey Ave. Lemoore, CA 93245**

**5:00 PM COCKTAILS  
6:00 PM DINNER & PROGRAM**

*Call (559) 924-7751 to reserve a room.*

*Request the "DAV" group rate  
(\$189/night available until March 28th)*

*Business casual attire requested. Please keep it classy*



# DAVA COMMANDER'S MESSAGE

DAV CALIFORNIA AUXILIARY COMMANDER  
SHAWN LEWIS

First of all, I am so proud of this organization. Our Midwinter Conference was a big success, and the turnout reflected that. We welcomed members we hadn't met before, heard thoughtful and creative ideas, and shared open, honest conversations about where we are and where we're going. The energy in the room (and on Zoom) was strong, positive, and motivating.

This conference also demonstrated the strength of the partnership between DAV and DAVA. With a foundation of mutual respect, we are growing and moving forward together.

But, more than anything, Midwinter reminded me of what we look like when we show up for one another. Our officers, members, volunteers and supporters aren't just participating, they are stepping up, sharing ideas, listening, and setting DAVA up for a successful future.

Seeing that play out at Midwinter got me thinking about two leadership mindsets we see across DAVA: altruist and altruistic pragmatist. An altruist leads with heart. They see the need, and their instinct is compassion. Someone needs help, so we help. That heart is the foundation of DAVA and always will be.

An altruistic pragmatist also leads with heart — and asks one more question: How do we do this in a way that lasts? How do we support one another without burning out? How do we keep moving forward while protecting the organization and the people who make it work?

I picture a valley of dry bones; all the pieces are there, but scattered, worn down, and disconnected. Good intentions alone don't restore strength. What makes the difference is people coming together with clarity, structure, shared responsibility, and breath — so everything can stand strong again. Whatever your title, your role in the structure is important.

Here's what it looks like when we're at our best:

- Heart without structure can lead to burnout. But, heart with structure helps people stay engaged
- Good intentions alone can stall progress. But, Good intentions with follow-through move us forward
- Avoiding hard conversations may feel kind in the moment, but, having respectful, honest conversations helps us grow
- Carrying everything alone wears people down, but sharing responsibility builds stronger teams

I truly believe we are on the road to accomplishing much more in the coming months. We have momentum and purpose, and we'll need both our compassion and common sense to keep this organization strong.

As your Department leaders, our commitment is to walk alongside you with empathy, clarity, and care to continue building an organization that is welcoming, inclusive, and ready for the future.

Thank you for your time, your ideas, and the many ways you show up for one another.

# SPOTLIGHT ON YOUTH LEADERSHIP! CHRISTOPHER BAILEY RECOGNIZED BY DAVA

The Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary, Department of California, is proud to spotlight Christopher Bailey — a dedicated leader and the future of DAVA.

A member of Unit 117, Christopher serves as Senior Vice Commander and Department Legislative Chairperson. He is the inaugural recipient of California's revised Youth Leadership Program and is representing their Department at the National Midwinter Conference.

Christopher actively serves Veterans through outreach at the Mare Island VA Clinic and Department events across Northern California. Beyond the Auxiliary, he is a student at UC Berkeley and was selected as one of just 55 students for a highly competitive public service internship in Washington, D.C.

Christopher leads with compassion, purpose, and a deep commitment to those who have served. He represents the next generation of leadership and the bright future of DAVA.

*“Christopher leads because he cares. He listens, learns, and steps up when it matters.”*

— Shawn Lewis, DAVA California Commander



Volunteer **DRIVE** to help veterans



**DO YOU HAVE A CURRENT VALID DRIVER'S LICENSE AND ONE DAY PER WEEK AVAILABLE? VETERANS IN CALIFORNIA NEED YOUR HELP!**

*Volunteers use VA-provided vehicles to transport patients from their homes to their VA appointments and back. A background check and physical will be required, at no cost.*

**CALL 562-404-1266  
TO BECOME A VOLUNTEER DRIVER!**



# HAVE POLICY IDEAS?

*Help Create Change &  
Write a Resolution!*

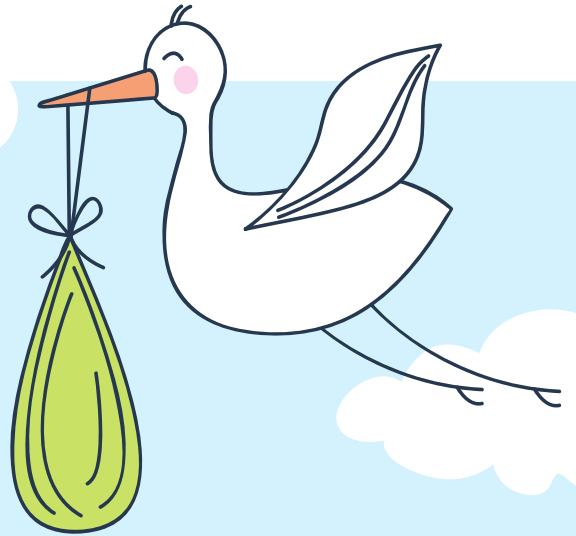
## REMINDER!

Resolutions are due  
April 20! Click here  
to learn more!



## *It's a Unit!*

The Auxiliary is just weeks away from opening a brand new Unit! It's been a long time coming, but people showed up, stayed patient and collaborated. DAVA Commander, Shawn Lewis, asked the questions, sent the follow-ups, and worked diligently alongside Department Commander, Armando Hernandez and members of Chapter #1. Good job staying the course and working as a team! There is much that is possible when the DAV and DAVA work together and congrats to Commander Lewis and the Auxiliary team on this new Unit in Fresno!



## ***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](http://DAV.CAREASY.ORG)**



# **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 Elkilton Blvd.  
Spring Valley, CA 91977

### Chula Vista

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

## **POMONA AREA**

800-238-8387  
davpickupservice.org