

FEBRUARY 2012



### **2012 DAV TRANSPORTATION NETWORK VAN GRANT PROGRAM**

The 2012 van grant applications have all been evaluated. We will be purchasing 116 Ford Explorers, E-350, Ford Flex and Four Wheel Drive vehicles that will provide needed transportation services to disabled veterans unable to get to VA medical centers and clinics for medical care. As in the past, the National Organization, in partnership with the DAV National Service Foundation's Columbia Trust fund, and the generous support of many Departments and Chapters, will be donating these vehicles to the VA to be used in the DAV Volunteer Transportation Network.

The Departments will soon be receiving notices advising when the vehicles will be available for pick up from National Headquarters. We expect delivery to begin in April and to be concluded by June. Those Departments who have a balance due on their van grant requests should forward it to Nancy O'Brien, Director of Foundation and Workplace Giving. No vehicle will be released to Departments until the balance is paid. If you are not sure of the amount of any balance please feel free to contact me here at National Headquarters.

On behalf of those who use the transportation network and those who drive the vans, we thank you for your support of this valuable program.

### **MAJOR LEAGUE UMPIRE VISITS VA MEDICAL CENTERS**

*Retired Major League Umpire Larry Barnett* visited the following VA medical centers in January: Tampa, Bay Pines, Gainesville and Lake City, Florida.

### **VAVS NATIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING**

The 66th Annual VA Voluntary Service (VAVS) National Advisory Committee meeting will be held in Charleston, South Carolina, March 14 - 16, 2012. Although the host hotel for the meeting has been completely sold out, the Best Western Plus has been designated as the overflow hotel and is located at 146 Lockwood Drive, Charleston, South Carolina. Please contact the hotel directly at 888-377-2121 or local at 843-722-4000, to make reservations under the Voluntary Service National Advisory Committee Meeting group code: VAVS.

As your National Representative, I look forward to seeing many DAV VAVS Chairman, Representatives and Deputy Representatives, and volunteers in attendance.

## **NATIONAL SALUTE TO VETERAN PATIENTS**

The 2012 National Salute program was held during February 12 - 18. The week of February 14 each year is an opportunity to say thank you to a special group of men and women, more than 98,000 Veterans of the U.S. armed services who are cared for every day in Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) medical centers, outpatient clinics, domiciliaries, and nursing homes.

The 2012 Chairman for the National Salute to Veteran Patients is Mark Valley, Star of TV's Harry's Law. A graduate of West Point, he was stationed in Germany for five years and became fluent in German. During this time, he also was part of Operation Desert Storm.

His acting career began when he was discovered by an agent in Berlin. His first role was working in John Schlesinger's *The Innocent*, which starred Anthony Hopkins and was filmed in Germany. He continued working abroad and appeared in several more productions before returning to the United States to pursue his career further.

Mark Valley, or Brad Chase to Boston Legal fans, began in U.S. television with appearances in soap opera shows as *Another World*, playing the handsome Father Pete, as well as taking over the popular role of Jack Devereaux in the long-running *Days of Our Lives*.

Valley made an impact on television viewers with his lead role as Robert Greeley in the short-lived FOX series *Pasadena*, as well as in recurring roles on *ER* and *Once and Again*. He did guest roles in several other shows before becoming part of the ensemble cast of the ABC legal drama *Boston Legal* between 2004 and 2007.

In 2008, Mark got another big break as he was cast in a starring role on the J.J. Abrams sci-fi drama *Fringe* co-starring Aussie newcomer Anna Torv and Joshua Jackson.

During the National Salute, VA invites individuals, veterans groups, military personnel, civic organizations, businesses, schools, local media, celebrities and sports stars to participate in a variety of activities at the VA medical centers. The activities and events include special ward visits and valentine distributions; photo opportunities; school essay contests; special recreation activities and veteran recognition programs.

The week also provides an opportunity for the community to become acquainted with the volunteer opportunities within VAVS and Local Veterans Assistance Programs.

**2012 MID-WINTER CONFERENCE  
Voluntary Services Workshop**

A very successful conference was held at the Crystal Gateway Marriott in Arlington, Virginia, February 26-29, 2012.

The Voluntary Services Workshop held on Monday, February 27, focused on the DAV Transportation Network and the introduction of such programs as the Veterans Transportation Service (VTS) and the Rural Health Initiative by the Office of Rural Health (ORH). During the seminar we discussed how these programs will complement our existing program and how we can work together moving forward in our common mission of serving America's disabled veterans and their dependents.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you should have any questions about the information in this bulletin.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ron Minter". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Ron" and last name "Minter" clearly legible.

**RON MINTER**  
National Director of Voluntary Services

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