

OCTOBER 2011



DAV TRANSPORTATION NETWORK

Ford Motor Company has once again made it possible for the DAV to purchase and donate eight Ford E-350, 12-passenger vans to the DAV Transportation Network (TN). The donation took place during the opening session at the 90th National Convention in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 6-9, 2011. The VA medical centers that received these new vehicles were: Wilmington, Delaware; Boise, Idaho; Las Vegas, Nevada; Togus, Maine; Albuquerque, New Mexico; Roseburg, Oregon; White River Junction, Vermont and Sioux Falls, South Dakota. Ford has donated a total of 156 vehicles to the program since 1996.

Ford Motor Company's continued commitment to veterans displays their great interest in the DAV's mission of service and transportation to the many veterans who have no other means of getting to their VA medical appointments. Ford's participation is a fantastic boost to the DAV Transportation Network program.

Thank you for your dedicated efforts to make your Transportation Network such an invaluable service for many disabled veterans across America.

2012 DAV VAN GRANTS

Information is being forwarded to all National Officers, Departments and Chapters, Supervisory National Service Officers, and Hospital Service Coordinators regarding the 2012 Van Grant Program. The DAV's Transportation Network is perhaps the largest and most important volunteer program in existence. DAV and Auxiliary volunteers and a growing number of generous citizens provided over 1.5 million hours and drove 27 million miles, providing free rides to 704,054 veterans.

Pricing information along with the minimum share amounts for Chapters and Departments will be included in the announcement. I ask that you carefully review the van grant criteria and fully and correctly complete the application forms provided with the announcement. The completed applications must be received by December 2, 2011. We expect that delivery will be made in late spring/early summer 2012. Please note that payments for the approved grants must be received by April 1. No vehicle(s) will be released prior to receipt of payment.

WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA

Christmas Eve, 1944 – Corporal Stanley Wojtusik and other American POWs captured by the Germans during the “Battle of the Bulge, loaded on a train to be transported to a prison camp. The three box cars carrying the prisoners were unmarked and came under Allied fire. “You could hear the cars and men being hit, and the screaming,” recalls Wojtusik. “Here we were, we couldn't run or even move. It was Christmas Eve. What else could we do? So we all

joined hands and sang Silent Night – to comfort one another in that terrible time. Many in the other two cars were killed that night yet our lives were spared.” That became known as the Christmas they never had.

Since 1992, when Morrill Worcester of Harrington, Maine, first donated 5,000 evergreen wreaths to Arlington National Cemetery to be laid on the graves of our fallen heroes, their goal has been to remember those who gave their lives while serving our country. In 2007, the nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization Wreaths Across America was established to continue and expand this great effort along with a national network of volunteers. In 2010, Wreaths Across America laid over 220,000 memorial wreaths at 545 locations in the United States and beyond. They accomplished this with help from 902 fundraising groups, private sector support, and donations.

This year, in honor of Stanley Wojtusik and all veterans – regardless of religious beliefs or creed – as well as active duty personnel and their families, we want to give those laid to rest at Arlington National Cemetery “the Christmas they never had.” On December 10, 2011, they plan to lay wreaths on 225,000 graves at Arlington and countless others across the nation in tribute to the service, sacrifice and commitment of our men and women in uniform. To learn more about how you can help and join in this national effort, go to www.wreathscrossamerica.org.

Wreaths Across America is another meaningful opportunity to volunteer and may be reported as volunteer activity for Local Veterans Assistance Program purposes as well as the Jesse Brown Memorial Youth Scholarship Program hours.

LOCAL VETERANS ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (LVAP)

The Local Veterans Assistance Program (LVAP) was created with the intent to find new ways to recruit and engage new members and volunteers to many of the DAV programs.

Through LVAP, any volunteer activity that contributes to our mission of building better lives for disabled veterans and their families is recognized – therefore, volunteering is no longer limited to VA facilities alone.

Volunteers might perform yard work, help someone run errands, set up a computer system, clean out the gutters, shovel snow from a sidewalk, assist with cooking or cleaning, paint or perform home repairs – any task that might help and brighten a veteran’s life. This is also an opportunity for people who have specialized skills to use their talents and experience to touch the lives of those who’ve served. Are you a former teacher, electrician, accountant, social networking guru, healthcare specialist, etc.? Is there an unmet need in your community? There is always something that you can do to enrich the lives of veterans in your community.

DAV and Auxiliary volunteers can receive credit for donating time to further the DAV’s mission. Participation in sanctioned fundraising activities, outreach efforts, service officer activities and other official DAV and Auxiliary duties are all deserving of recognition through LVAP.

Youth volunteers who don’t live near VA facilities can take advantage of LVAP hours which are eligible toward application for the Jesse Brown Memorial Youth Scholarship so long as they meet the minimum eligibility requirements for consideration.

2012 JESSE BROWN MEMORIAL YOUTH SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Nominations Being Accepted December 1, 2011 – February 26, 2012

Summer is over and all across America today's youth are attending school, some may be in their junior or senior year of high school with plans for attending college. Why not encourage them to participate in the DAV VAVS Volunteer Program at a local VA medical center or in our Local Veterans Assistance Program (LVAP)?

We are confident that more students will get involved if they are aware of the generous scholarships available as well as the vast opportunities to help veterans. Many academic programs include volunteer work as a course requirement, and students may as well volunteer in their local VA medical centers. Some of the benefits of volunteering at a local VA medical center may include: scholarships for college, job experience, healthcare career possibilities, providing assistance to hospitalized veterans, completing high school volunteerism requirements and community involvement.

Eligibility

- Scholarships can be awarded to any volunteer who is age 21 or younger and has volunteered for a minimum of 100 hours during the previous calendar year. All volunteer hours must be credited to the Disabled American Veterans.
- Scholarships can be used at any accredited institution of higher learning; to include universities, colleges, community colleges, vocational schools, etc.
- Scholarships must be utilized in full prior to the recipient attaining the age of 25, or within 6 years of receiving the scholarship, whichever is later.
- Family members of the DAV national organization employees are eligible to receive a scholarship.
- Nominations for this award may be submitted by the Voluntary Service Program Manager at a VA medical center, DAV Departments, Chapters and other subordinate units, such as the Auxiliary, or the student may complete a self-nomination form which is available on-line. In addition, the DAV and DAVA Representatives and their Deputies and Hospital Chairpersons are also encouraged to submit a nomination.
- All nomination packets should include a nomination form, the student's essay discussing "What volunteering has meant to me" (essay should be 750 words or less) and any supporting documentation which you would like to have considered by the Selection Committee.

Our Volunteer Registration Form, Nomination Form, or Essay Form, which can be accessed on http://www.dav.org/volunteers/jesse_brown_scholarship.html should be completed and mailed to: Disabled American Veterans, National Headquarters, Voluntary Services Department, 3725 Alexandria Pike, Cold Spring, KY 41076.

**VAVS NATIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR AWARD**

The VA Voluntary Service National Advisory Committee has announced their Annual Volunteer of the Year award. While un-related to the DAV's George H. Seal Memorial Awards, the recognition is prestigious and worthy of consideration for outstanding DAV volunteers.

Nominations will be accepted for two awards (one male and one female) to be selected by the Executive Committee of the VA Voluntary Service National Advisory Committee (NAC) and will be presented during the committee's annual meeting. This award recognizes volunteers who have given extraordinary service to our nation's veterans.

Please read the attached award criteria for nominating volunteers whose achievements meet the necessary requirements. Also attached is the nomination support form to be completed as part of the nomination preparation process. As your National Representative, I must receive the completed forms and any supporting documentation sent to my attention at Disabled American Veterans, National Headquarters, Voluntary Services Department, 3725 Alexandria Pike, Cold Spring, KY 41076, no later than December 23, 2011.

MAJOR LEAGUE UMPIRES VISIT VA MEDICAL CENTERS

Retired Major League Umpire Larry Barnett visited the following VA medical centers in August and October: Huntington, West Virginia; Lexington and Louisville, Kentucky; Indianapolis, Indiana; Tomah, Madison and Milwaukee, Wisconsin; North Chicago and Hines, Illinois.

Major League Umpire Jerry Layne visited the following VA medical centers in July, August, September and October: Palo Alto and San Francisco, California; Baltimore Rehabilitation and Extended Care Center and Baltimore, Maryland; Washington, D.C.; Bronx, New York; Detroit and Ann Arbor, Michigan; Seattle and Tacoma, Washington; Philadelphia and Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; Atlanta, Georgia; Boston, Brockton and West Roxbury, Massachusetts.

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



RON MINTER
National Director of Voluntary Services

RM:lrd
Attachments

VAVS National Advisory Committee (NAC) Volunteer of the Year

This Award Program permits the NAC to honor members who have given extraordinary service to our Nation's Veterans.

The Executive Committee of the NAC coordinates this program. The Executive Committee (EC) works closely with the NAC and a selection committee established for reviewing nominations.

Nominees for this award must participate in established VAVS assignments, serve as an RS volunteer and meet one of the following criteria:

- 1) Volunteer with hospitalized Veterans
- 2) Volunteer with Veterans at Outpatient Clinics
- 3) Volunteer with Veterans in Community Living Centers
- 4) Volunteer with homeless Veterans
- 5) Volunteer with Veterans and Veterans groups in the community
- 6) Host Veterans' functions in the Lodge, Post, Chapter, i.e. Memorial Day, July 4th and Veterans Day observances, etc. that qualify as a VAVS assignment
- 7) Host Veterans' functions outside the Lodge, Post Chapter i.e., fishing trips, day at the races, sporting events, etc. that qualify as a VAVS assignment.
- 8) Visit Veterans confined to their homes as a VAVS assignment
- 9) Adopt-A-Veteran

Those eligible for the award are: NAC member organizations with emphasis on VAVS Representatives, Deputy Representatives, members who visit the VA Medical Centers, Community Living Centers, etc. or work at Lodge, Post Chapter veteran functions either within or outside the Lodge, Post, Chapter. **Nominees must participate in established VAVS assignments and serve as an RS volunteer.**

There will be two recipients (1 male and 1 female) per year.

NOMINATIONS MUST BE SUBMITTED IN NARRATIVE FORMAT WITH NAME AND NAC ORGANIZATION IN THE UPPER LEFT HAND CORNER.

The narrative is not to exceed 500 words and must be submitted to the EC Chairman by December 31st of each year on organization letterhead. Letters of recommendation may be submitted with the narrative. VA Staff making recommendations for this award must send the nomination to the National Representative of the organizations to which the nominee is a member for preliminary judging. Failure to do so will invalidate the nomination.

The Selection Committee with the assistance of the EC will select the winners. The awardees will be presented with a suitably inscribed plaque at the annual meeting of the NAC.

NAC Volunteer of the Year Award Nomination Support Form

NAC Volunteer of the Year Award Nomination Support Form

Name of Volunteer _____ Male _____ Female _____ Year _____

Organization _____ VA Facility _____

Nomination Submitted by _____ Date Prepared _____

Purpose: This form should be completed as part of the preparations for submitting a nomination for any volunteer who is being considered for the NAC Volunteer of the Year Award. This award recognizes volunteers who have given extraordinary service to our nation's veterans. Two award recipients (one male and one female) are selected each year by the Executive Committee of the VA Voluntary Service National Advisory Committee (NAC).

Nomination Procedure: The required format for nomination submissions is letter style, between 300-500 words. It is recommended that a completed copy of this form be attached to the nomination letter as a supporting document. Letters of support from local VA facilities are also allowed to accompany each submission. All local nominations must be submitted to the affiliated volunteer's National VAVS Representative who will select the organization's candidate to be forwarded to the VA Voluntary Service Office on the national letterhead of the nominating organization.

Criteria: Nominees for this award must participate in established VAVS assignments, serve as a regularly scheduled volunteer and meet one of the criteria listed below. To assist in development of the formal nomination letter, complete each of the sections below, as applicable for the potential nominee, making sure to clearly distinguish between current volunteer activities and past volunteer activities.

Criterion	Description of Volunteer Activities in Year of Nomination (Current)*	Description of Volunteer Activities in all preceding years*
a. Volunteer with hospitalized veterans.		
b. Volunteer with veterans at outpatient clinics.		
c. Volunteer with veterans in community living centers.		

*Use additional sheets if necessary

NAC Volunteer of the Year Award Nomination Support Form

Criterion	Description of Volunteer Activities in Year of Nomination (Current)*	Description of Volunteer Activities in all preceding years*
d. Volunteer with homeless veterans.		
e. Volunteer with veterans and veterans groups in the community.		
f. Host veterans' functions outside the Lodge, Post, Chapter, e.g., Memorial Day, July 4 th .		
g. Veterans Day observances, etc., that qualify as a VAVS assignment.		
h. Host veterans' functions outside the Lodge, Post, Chapter, e.g., fishing trips, day at the races, sporting events, etc., that qualify as a VAVS assignment.		
i. Visit veterans confined to their homes as a VAVS assignment.		

*Use additional sheets if necessary

NAC Volunteer of the Year Award Nomination Support Form

Criterion	Description of Volunteer Activities in Year of Nomination (Current)*	Description of Volunteer Activities in all preceding years*
j. Adopt-A-Veteran.		

Additional Considerations	Description of Volunteer Activities in Year of Nomination (Current)	Description of Volunteer Activities in all preceding years
Other factors involving VAVS assignments the nominator believes are noteworthy.		

*Use additional sheets if necessary