



WARS & SCARS

The Story of Compassion & Service
for our Nation's Disabled Veterans

A HISTORY OF THE DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS



Mission Statement

Made up exclusively of men and women disabled in our nation's defense, the Disabled American Veterans is dedicated to one single purpose: building better lives for all of our nation's disabled veterans and their families.

his mission is carried forward by:

Providing free, professional assistance to veterans and their families in obtaining benefits and services earned through military service and provided by the Department of Veteran Affairs and other agencies of government;

Providing outreach concerning its program services to the American people generally, and to disabled veterans and their families specifically;

Representing the interests of disabled veterans, their families, their widowed spouses and their orphans before Congress, the White House, and the Judicial Branch, as well as state and local government;

Extending the DAV's mission of hope into the communities where these veterans and their families live through a network of state-level Departments and local Chapters; and

Providing a structure through which disabled veterans can express their compassion for their fellow veterans through a variety of volunteer programs.

**NATIONAL ADJUTANT &
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER**

Arthur H. Wilson

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS
& CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER**

Richard E. Patterson

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
WASHINGTON
HEADQUARTERS**

David W. Gorman

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

Thomas L. Wilborn

David E. Autry

Gary Weaver

Thomas K. Keller

CREATIVE DIRECTION

Gary Weaver

DESIGN

ID8 Design

PHOTOGRAPHY

Jim Calloway

Larry Scott

Library of Congress

National Archives

Bob Sehatz/Getty

Shawn Spence

Department of

Defense

Cincinnati Historical
Society Library

Associated Press

U.S. Army

U.S. Navy

U.S. Marine Corps

U.S. Air Force

PRINTING

The IPR Group

American Printing

Table of Contents

PREFACE		PAGE 1
CHAPTER 1	PENCILS ON STREET CORNERS	PAGE 3
	THE BEGINNING OF THE DAV	PAGE 6
CHAPTER 2	A NATIONAL ORGANIZATION IS BORN	PAGE 11
	TRIUMPHANT FIRST CONVENTION	PAGE 13
	FROM HIGH PRINCIPLES TO HARD WORK	PAGE 15
	DAV AUXILIARY FOUNDED	PAGE 17
	FUNDRAISING PROGRESS	PAGE 18
CHAPTER 3	BONUS MARCHERS & FALSE ECONOMIES	PAGE 21
	CHARTERED BY CONGRESS	PAGE 24
	IDENTOTAGS: A FUNDRAISING BREAKTHROUGH	PAGE 25
CHAPTER 4	THE MOST COSTLY WAR	PAGE 27
	RESPONDING TO A NEW GENERATION	PAGE 30
CHAPTER 5	KOREA AND THE COLD WAR	PAGE 35
CHAPTER 6	THE LONGEST WAR	PAGE 39
	THE DAV & VIETNAM VETERANS	PAGE 42
	A NEW NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS	PAGE 45
CHAPTER 7	CHANGING OF THE GUARD	PAGE 49
CHAPTER 8	NEW WARS AND A NEW ERA	PAGE 55
	YEARS OF CHANGE AND GROWTH	PAGE 58
CHAPTER 9	THE GULF WAR LEGACY	PAGE 65
	DEFINING MOMENT	PAGE 68
	NEW BEGINNINGS, NEW SUCCESSES	PAGE 70
CHAPTER 10	DECADE OF EXCELLENCE	PAGE 73
	BUILDING THE FUTURE	PAGE 75
	THE ACADEMY	PAGE 77
	WASHINGTON BATTLES	PAGE 78
	BUILDING UP PROGRAMS OF SERVICE	PAGE 80
	INCREASING SUPPORT	PAGE 84
	THE FIGHT FOR JUSTICE	PAGE 86
CHAPTER 11	THE NEW CENTURY AND WAR ON TERROR	PAGE 89
	WAR IN IRAQ	PAGE 98
	BUILDING THE VOLUNTEER LEGACY	PAGE 100
	KEEPING MEMORY ALIVE	PAGE 102
	SEAL OF APPROVAL	PAGE 106
CHAPTER 12	CENTURY OF HOPE	PAGE 111
ANNEX	NATIONAL COMMANDER TERMS	PAGE 117
	NATIONAL ADJUTANT TERMS	PAGE 121

PREFACE

Wars and scars—those are the hard facts of history that brought about the creation of the Disabled American Veterans. Compassion and service—those are the tools with which the DAV responds to our Nation’s disabled veterans and their families.

This great organization was formed as our country struggled to deal with the painful effects of World War I. At this moment our Nation is struggling once again with the impact of war—as American men and women face combat in Iraq, Afghanistan, and other nations.

A great deal has changed in the 85 years since the DAV was founded, but this much has remained the same: those who come home from war wounded and sick need the care and attention of a grateful nation. And our Nation’s citizens have an organization they can trust to serve as their vehicle of compassion for their wartime disabled veterans. Through the DAV, they can fully express their appreciation and their concerns for those whose bodies and minds have been forever scarred by war.

But the story on the pages that follow—the history of the Disabled American Veterans—is not a story of able-bodied people taking care of handicapped veterans. While it is certainly true that the American people have been invaluable partners in the DAV’s mission, the work of our organization has been a self-help proposition since the beginning. The DAV—disabled veterans helping disabled veterans—continues working cohesively to build better lives for all disabled veterans and their families!

As you read about the men and women of the DAV in the following chapters, please remember that all those mentioned are themselves disabled veterans, struggling with their own disabilities as they help others.

That’s what it’s all about in the DAV, and I don’t think anyone in America would have it any other way. Surely, it’s the best way for America’s disabled veterans.

Arthur H. Wilson
National Adjutant and
CEO





We had a common experience which bound us together, and we ought to continue through an organization of our own...an organization of us, by us and for us...

~ Robert S. Marx ~
