

**Spring Conference  
DSD Meeting  
March 21st, 2024**

**Department Service Director - Cynthia Bailey**

**Call to Order - 3:47 p.m.**

**Invocation – Chaplain Coker-Bell**

**Oath of Allegiance – Terry Bolinger**

**Distinguished Guests – National 3<sup>rd</sup> Jr. Vice – PDC Cynthia Madison**

**National Service Officer – Will Bible**

**Department Commander – Wilton King**

**Department Adjutant – PDC Lisa Gregory**

**Roll Call:**

DSD Director, Cynthia Bailey (20)	<u>P</u>
NSO Supervisor, Andrew Dilbeck (Report given by Will Bible)	<u>P</u>
State CDCE “VAVS” Chairman, Chris Cheney (60)	<u>P</u>
Emergency Relief Committee Chair, Kassandra Benson (6)	<u>A</u>
Employment Committee Chair, Marcia Stewart (21)	<u>P</u>
Homeless Committee Chair, Francine James (6)	<u>A</u>
Incarcerated Veterans’ Assistance Chair, Jeff Ogilvie (7)	<u>P</u>
Women’s Committee Chair, Tyrelle Felder (33)	<u>P</u>
DSD Fundraising, Terry Bolinger (13)	<u>P</u>
DSD Assistant, Regina Lawrence (50)	<u>P</u>
DSD Assistant, Sharon Dorsey-Monroe ( )	<u>E</u>
DSD Secretary and LVAP Coordinator, Debbie Wood	<u>P</u>
Department Commander, Ex-Officio, Wilton King (33)	<u>P</u>
Department Adjutant, Ex-Officio, Lisa Gregory (7)	<u>P</u>
DSD Director, We Have a Quorum	<u> </u>

**Committee Reports:**

**Employment Committee – Marcia Stewart**

The Employment Committee is looking to have an event in June but they want to do something different than a job fair. The State of Virginia has job fairs going on all of the time. We want our event to work on preparing veterans on how to get the job they have applied for. We want to help them set up a portfolio that is electronic and feed them with the information they will need to get a job. If anyone has any ideas or if you would like to be a part of the committee, we will be set up in the hall so please stop by and talk to us.

### **DSD Fundraising – Terry Bolinger**

During the Fall Conference in October of 2023, \$282.00 was raised from the sale of patches and pins. The funds were sent to the Department Treasurer.

In addition to the patches and pins, Terry has a variety of t-shirts and ball caps for sale. Please see Terry after the meeting if you wish to purchase any of the items for sale.

### **Incarcerated Veterans Assistance Committee – Jeff Ogilvie**

The committee has been successful in have 2 meetings with the Virginia Department of Corrections (VDOC) every month through zoom. These meetings are open to everyone in the State. The in-person meetings are very difficult to hold due to the travel that everyone has to do to attend. We are still having trouble getting into the facilities but they are letting the Chaplains in to speak with the incarcerated veterans. We have reduced the background check criteria from 10 pages to 3 pages. We will be putting in another resolution to try to get more access to the facilities.

### **National Service Officer – Will Bible**

#### **Office Staff:**

**Andrew Dilbeck** – Supervisor

**Lewis Ramsey** – Assistant Supervisor

**Will Bible** – Fully trained NSO

**Morgan Bolan** – Newly trained NSO (all training completed)

**Julia Tolliver** – NSO in training (approx. 9 months of training remaining)

**Trinton Anestis** – Newest NSO

The office went through a rough spell but is now feeling a little more settled. We are looking to expand and hire a couple more NSO's in the future.

CSO/DSO training will continue to be in person training for a while longer. They are working on moving to the I-track system which is an in-home certification program. moving to the in-home certification program will allow them to use the time at conferences and conventions to do hands on training and go more in depth on DIC, Expenses and PACT ACT training.

The VA is trying to replace the Stakeholders Enterprise Portal (SEP). This is the portal that the NSO uses to enter claims neat and efficiently. National is asking the VA to turn that portal over to the NSO office. Some interviews were done with NSO officers to explain the benefits of keeping the SEP program. National is pushing to keep this program or implement a program that will satisfy the VA's needs and the NSO's needs. This is a big step toward moving to a completely paperless system, which is the ultimate goal.

The NSO office only did 393 printed claims so far this year. National wants as many claims as possible done electronically and sent to the VA the same day.

The phone lines continue to be an issue at the NSO office. The office had 2360 incoming/outgoing calls this year but there are so many people that complain about not being able to get a line through.

Please advise everyone to email the office with questions, all emails are put into a que and are handled in the order that they come in.

The automated system that is in place has some issues that are being addressed. The system will sometimes mis-interpret situations that need to be handled in person. It is also programmed to send out letters to the veterans if it comes across and issue that might be fixed in the office which confuses the veteran and causes them to call to get an explanation about the letter they received. It will be an ongoing process to get the automated system working at 100% but even at the level that it is producing now is quicker that not having it at all.

**Office Statistics:**

Files Reviewed This Month – 1,823

Files Reviewed This Year – 30,000

Email Responses – 9,903

Printed Claims – 393

Incoming/Outgoing Calls – 2,360

Rating Board Appearances – 19,100

Appellan Briefs – 156

New Claims through SEP – 219

Uploads – 782

Regular Mail – 6,118

New Service Connection Claims This Month – 20,744

Total Office Activities – 100,000

**Local Veterans Assistance Program (LVAP) – Debbie Wood**

Total LVAP Hours from July 2023 – February 2024 – 127,668

Chapter Total – 92,788

Auxiliary Total – 34,880

Top 5 Chapters:

#1 – Chapter 6 – 34,572 Hours

#2 – Chapter 13 – 9,483 Hours

#3 – Chapter 22 – 9,062 Hours

#4 – Chapter 58 – 5,906 Hours

#5 – Chapter 50 – 4,386 Hours

Chapters with hours turned in by the 1<sup>st</sup> week of the month are:

7,9,13,21,22,33,34,45,48,52 and 58

Chapters that have fallen behind on reporting their hours are:

2,5,10,15,17,19,24,28,31,40,47 and 57

The importance of including Birth Dates on the Chapter LVAP form for each member was discussed. The Birthdate for an individual is the only constant on the form.

Having the Birth Dates included will alleviate the confusion of a member changing chapters due to moving to a new area. If the member can't be identified by address or chapter # then they will be listed as a new member and their previous LVAP hours will not move with the individual.

The Department officers along with a few others have been visiting different chapters to train them on how to report their hours correctly on the LVAP Spreadsheet. This is a great effort to boost the LVAP hours overall for Virginia and get the chapters that were not reporting on board.

### **Closing Remarks – Cynthia Bailey**

**Patches and Pins** – DSD Bailey is working with a company to get a patch but there are proprietary issues because a new company cannot create an exact duplicate of what the previous company created. The patch will be tweaked a little so we are taking suggestions on what the patch should look like. Please email DSD Bailey at [dsddav@gmail.com](mailto:dsddav@gmail.com) if you have any ideas. We are running into the same issue with the pins that are used to trade at conventions so it is taking a little longer to get the design issues worked out. We do have a new LVAP Award pin designed and are hoping to have those ready to give out at the Department Convention in June.

**HSC's, Drivers and DSO's** – The Transportation System is in desperate need of HSC's (Hospital Service Coordinators) and volunteer drivers so if you know of anyone that is interested being a HSC or in driving veterans to appointments, please contact DSD Bailey. We are working on getting the Richmond Transportation System back in operation as soon as possible. Thanks to PDC Cuff, the Salem Transportation System is ready to start back up. The Department also needs more DSO's. If you are interested in a DSO position, please let DSD Bailey know.

**Committees** – The committees will be getting new members at the Department Convention in June. If you are interested in being on a committee, please see your Chapter Commander. Please note that if you are considering being on a committee, you are not just taking a title or filling a seat. You are volunteering yourself to be a part of something and you need to make sure you are willing to be active in helping that committee reach new goals. If all committee members do their part, it lessens the amount of work that each member has to do. If you get on a committee and it ends up being more than you can handle, please don't just quit. Go to the committee chair and the line officer and give them the chance to get a replacement for you. This is the only way we can move forward in getting the veteran's the help they need when they come to us.

**Department Commander King** – Thanked all of the Chapter LVAP coordinators for letting the line officers come in and talk to them about the LVAP program. The reason for this training is because we were getting less than 50% of the chapters reporting their LVAP hours. The visits by the line officers were very successful in getting more chapters on board with reporting their hours.

Commander King reiterated what DSD Bailey said about the importance of volunteering to be on a committee. He said that only 2 committee members that started were still active. This situation caused the 2<sup>nd</sup> Junior Vice to run the membership committee along with his duties as a line officer.

We seem to have committee members that stay active for the first half of the FY and then when January hits after the holiday, the members stop participating, please remember that the position is active for a year. Before you ask to be on a committee, go to the Department website and read the committee reports so you will have an idea what each committee is doing. It is also easy to get new members in the DAV when individuals find out about our Service Department and what our committees offer.

Commander King thanked Department Chaplain Coker-Bell. She has been doing a great job. She will be conducting the Memorial Service at 8:30am tomorrow morning. The doors will be locked at 8:30 so we don't have her service interrupted by those showing up late and opening the doors. Please try to get seated 5-10 minutes early. We also ask that if you want to have someone honored in the memorial service, you get the information to Chaplain Bell in a timely manner as she has a slide with all names and pictures, if provided. If she is not informed soon enough, she cannot add that person to the slide.

The meet and greet will be at 6:00pm this evening. Please do not load up on food, this is not meant to be a dinner so make sure there is enough for everyone to get a plate before going back for seconds.

Commander King asked that all Chapter Commanders stay for a short meeting at the end of this session.

**Prayer – Chaplain Coker-Bell**

**Flag Salute – DSD Bailey**

**Meeting Adjourned – 4:53 pm**