

Spousal and Survivor Benefits Committee

Eastern Regions 1,2,3,4,5

Co-Chair, Beverly Pounds

August 2024

Jennifer Ellis, the Western Regions 6,7,8,9 Co-Chair and I have been working with our President, Sharon Hobbs, VP, Kathy Andres and Secretary, Nina Schöffel to put together a Spousal and Survivor Benefits Seminar which will be presented at our National Leadership Conference in Reno, Nevada August 19-24, 2024.

Along with our committees we have reviewed and made a few changes to our Spousal and Survivor Benefits brochure. We feel we have made the brochure not only informative but easier to find help. The new brochure goes hand in hand with our Paper Safes.

A special thanks to National AVVA President Sharon Hobbs and Special Advisors Nancy Switzer, Kathy Andres and Margret Wojciechowicz. Eastern Regions committee members Kim Biddle and Ann Rice.

Continuing to create a better everyday life for our Veterans and their families

Beverly Pounds

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SPOUSAL AND SURVIVOR BENEFIT
PROGRAM COMMITTEE REPORT
REGIONS 6-9 as of 8-2-2024

Committee Members:

Jennifer Ellis, Region 8 Director – Co-Chair S&S Benefit Program

Gail Dubois Brouard, Chapter 630, Louisiana

Craig Wade, VVA Dual Member Chapter 904, Alaska

Dawn Wait, Chapter 805, Oregon

Kathy Andres, National Vice President, Advisor

The 2024 Leadership and Education Conference is being held in Reno, Nevada at the Silver Legacy Hotel, August 20-24th. The VVA and AVVA are presenting multiple educational sessions which include Spousal and Survivor Benefit Seminar training. My co-chair, Beverly Pounds and myself along with Sharon Hobbs, are presenting a training opportunity for whomever would be interested in holding a S&SB Seminar. Beverly and I, along with Sharon Hobbs, Nina Schloffel, and a new VSO from Reno, have been working on the presentation together via GoTo meetings. We are excited about our presentation and look forward to working together.

Additionally, we are excited to unveil the new revised version of our Spousal and Survivor Benefits pamphlet. Those attending will have an opportunity to receive one and place an order by contacting the national membership department at membership@vva.org and request a specific number, give your name, chapter #, or state and a valid mailing address. When scheduling a seminar in your area make sure you are ordering the handouts, brochures and Paper Safes in advance.

As far as any updates regarding H.R. 1083, there are none. As of now there is a 33% probability of this bill passing.

The AVVA grief group recovery program, From Heartbreak to Hope, is continuing to flourish here in the west. I want to encourage all of you to request and participate in the training that Nina Schloffel has designed and implemented. Many of our Vietnam Veterans and their spouses are dying at an alarming rate thus creating a need for grief support. There are other grief groups that are very beneficial and can assist in the grieving process. We have discovered that this program can be yet another tool in the healing process. We have held ten meetings (1x month) since October 2023 that have benefited our Veteran community. If you have any questions regarding the training, please contact Nina or Kathy Andres, National Vice President, as they are the Co-Chairs of this program.

I look forward to seeing those on this committee, if attending in person, along with all of our AVVA/VVA family at the 2024 Leadership Conference.

Jennifer Ellis

S&SB Program Co-Chair

AVVA Region 8 Director

President, AVVA Chapter 805