



# DAV DISPATCH

## News from Adam Klein Chapter #3, Bismarck, North Dakota

### OFFICERS

**Commander:**

Lamar Kruckenberg

**Sr. Vice Commander:**

Tom Newton

**Jr. Vice Commander:**

David Schall

**Chaplain:**

Leslie Ross

**Treasurer/Adjutant:**

Mark Landis

**Auxiliary Commander:**

Linda Otto

**Auxiliary Adjutant**

Connie Serhienko

### MEETINGS

1st Thursday, 7 p.m.

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Bismarck, ND

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## Freedom Riders Raise Funds to Support DAV Programs

The Freedom Riders Motorcycle Club in Bismarck raised a record amount of funds with their charity auction, with a significant portion going to our DAV chapter. They also support other organizations and special events in the community. They have contributed to the DAV since 2007. Their donation forms the majority of our annual budget, with a focus on helping veterans and families. The 43rd Annual Freedom Riders Motorcycle Classic took place March 23-24 at the Bismarck Hotel & Convention Center. Eleven chapter members took shifts at our table.



## Chapter Awards Scholarships to Veterans and Families

The chapter awarded 14 scholarships for the 2024-2025 school year, including one veteran and 13 eligible family members. The scholarship awards are \$1,000 each. The Gene L. Kouba Memorial Scholarship Fund was established in 2011. Gene had a long career as a veterans advocate before his untimely passing in 2011, including terms as chapter commander and department commander. Since inception, more than 60 students have received scholarships, some for multiple years. The scholarship fund is possible because of the generosity of our supporters, most notably the Freedom Riders Motorcycle Club.

## Participation is Key to Veterans Rights and Benefits

We have achieved a new record of 626 members, a net increase of seven since the March newsletter. One of the six mission essential tasks of the DAV is to "Fight for the rights of ill and injured veterans on Capitol Hill." A critical task is for every DAV member and our supporters to register for the DAV Commanders Action Network at DAVCAN.org., where you can view all of the bills supported by the DAV and add your support to them by sending a message to our Congressional delegation, urging them to act. Please sign up! - David Schall, Junior Vice Commander

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## Chaplain Chats

**Hebrews 6:10:** GOD is not unjust; He will not forget your work and the love you have shown Him as you have helped His people and continue to help them. The DAV is dedicated to a single purpose: Empowering veterans to lead high-quality lives with respect and dignity. Helping is a noble endeavor that encompasses various acts of kindness and support. Whether extending a helping hand, providing aid, or lending a listening ear, being of service entails a genuine commitment to the well-being and satisfaction of those in need. It involves acts of generosity, compassion, and selflessness, aimed at making a positive difference in someone's life. Being of service means embodying empathy, understanding, and reliability, striving to meet the diverse needs of others with care, dedication, integrity, honor, and justice. Through acts of service, individuals can forge meaningful connections, inspire change, and contribute to empowering ill and injured veterans with respect and dignity. We can with God's help.

*Leslie Ross, Chaplain*

## Message from the Commander

Spring has sprung and we look forward to the warm weather adventures of summer. Some dates to remember: On April 11th we will be serving at Heavens Helpers Soup Café. We have had a fantastic response from the membership and look forward to a great event. The department convention will begin May 3rd in Minot. We will have several items for discussion, please make every effort to attend the convention. The chapter will reimburse \$250 per delegate.

**On the menu:** Baby back ribs with a Doctor Pepper glaze and potato salad, served at 6:30 p.m.

*LaMar Kruckenberg, Commander*



Visit us at <https://www.aklein3dav.org>

*Keeping Our Promise to America's Veterans*

# \*\*\*VA Updates\*\*\*

- Portions of the PACT act that were scheduled for implementation by 2032 have been accelerated and are effective immediately. Specifically, veterans who experienced toxic exposure in service, regardless of era or location, may be eligible to enroll in VA health care and be assigned to Priority Group 6. If exposure is not presumptive, the VA will research records and make a determination. The VA has sent letters to two million veterans nationwide who were previously denied enrollment due to income guidelines. The VA wants veterans to not only enroll, but also choose VA for their health care.
- There are two positions open in the Medical Eligibility office in Fargo.
- New contracts have been awarded for the VA clinics in Dickinson and Williston, effective July 1, 2024.
- The Fargo VA has recently hired two new psychiatrists and some other specialty care providers.
- Nurse recruiting and retention has been very stable within the Fargo VA Health Care System.
- Acquisition of land for the Fisher House in Fargo is back to square one. The property previously under consideration did not work out.
- There are slightly more than 200 beneficiary travel claims pending in Fargo. The goal is to process claims within five business days.
- A new parking ramp is in the design phase. The ramp will be on the south side of the Fargo VA hospital, resulting in a net gain of 100 parking spaces.
- The Whole Health Addition project was stalled but progress has resumed.
- Updates are planned for the interior of the hospital, including new carpet, paint, and wallpaper.
- Average processing time for disability compensation claims is 149 days, and 1.4 million claims have been processed nationwide during the current fiscal year.
- Fargo Veterans Service Center Manager Paula Heitmann will retire on May 31<sup>st</sup> after 33 years of service in the VA.
- There will be a PACT Act informational event at the Bismarck AMVETS on April 30<sup>th</sup>.