

VALOR

VETERAN ★ ALLIANCE

November 2021

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Colleagues and friends,

I enter this month with a deep sense of gratitude to those who have served or continue to serve in the U.S. Armed Forces with honor. It is this service that protects the ideals of the democracy we cherish. I know that I do not have the internal fortitude to commit so selflessly to such service, this increases my appreciation and awe of those who undertake the difficult mission with unflinching dedication. It is easy to forget in our day-to-day lives the burden that these men and women carry for us whether their active duty service is completed or not. But make no mistake, such service, whether a handful of years or a career, defines and redefines a veteran's life in a hundred ways civilians too often don't understand.



Veterans are a minority in our ranks as Americans. Per the Department of Veteran Affairs, less than 10% of the United State's adult population are veterans and that number is declining as we continue to lose veterans. In the past 18 months we have lost many veterans to Coronavirus and veteran suicide numbers (cited as high as 22 a day) remain an unabated epidemic and scourge on the veteran community. These are unacceptable losses.

Service inextricably comes with a cost and that cost can never be fully foreseen at the outset, but the commitment to bear it sits with those who proudly and bravely enlist in the military to serve our country and protect our citizenry. On November 11th, we honor such service within a national day of recognition—Veterans Day. While I appreciate this recognition, I would hope that the service we honor would remain front of mind for every citizen every day of every year.

I know from my time with veterans, that they are both defined, and defy definition, by their veteran status. They are tied by their collective experiences, but represent diversity of thought, identity, self-expression, talents, struggles, and strengths. They are your neighbors, your religious leaders, your educators, your dog trainers, you name it - veterans permeate your everyday lives. Alas, unless you talk to them and know their story, you would not likely know they served from your simple engagements with them. Being a veteran, while a constant of their identity, is typically not something that remains on display for others.

So this Veterans Day, and every single other day, take the time to learn more about the veterans in your life and recognize what they have given to all of us and our democracy. I personally want to thank all my family members and friends who are veterans as well as all the veterans I work with at NDSU as allies, students, and VALOR Board Members, I am profoundly honored to know you all and I humbly thank you for your service.

Carol Cwiak, J.D., Ph.D.
VALOR Faculty Liaison

*"Duty, Honor, Country. Those three hallowed words reverently dictate what you ought to be, what you can be, what you will be."
~ Gen. Douglas MacArthur*



VCO Update
Jim Stoddard

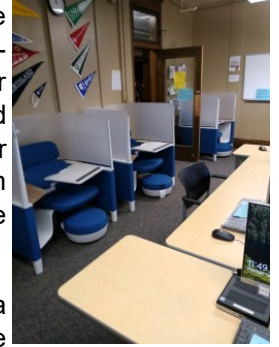
You can visit Jim on campus at the Veterans Educational Training Office in Ceres 329; or by phone at 701-231-9706; or by email at james.stoddard@ndsu.edu.

Health & Safety:
Covid-19

NDSU continues to emphasize safe practices and vaccination to reduce the spread of the virus on campus.

Face masks are required in the classroom and recommended in other situations where physical distancing of six feet or more is not possible. There are also reporting requirements for those who test positive for the virus. Let's all do our best to #ProtectTheHerd.

I'll start with my biggest news: the study furniture I ordered in March for the veterans' computer lab in Ceres Hall finally arrived! These study lounge workstations are ergonomically designed to provide more comfortable seating for a military person's sometimes damaged body and come with wrap-around screens to provide security, privacy, and a reduction in distractions. The four stations were purchased with a Campus Improvement Project grant from NDSU Student Government. I'm very grateful to the grant review committee for approving our request and supporting the military student community.



I invite all our military students to come give them a try! If you need a good place to get some work done in-between classes, and we hope this will be a good option for you. The computer lab is in Ceres Hall, room 319, and is open Monday through Friday from 8 AM - 5 PM. The lab desktop computer stations also have CAC readers for those needing to access DoD personnel, travel, or medical systems. We're doing our best to improve the space we have until a better option can be arranged. Our allies should come and take a look as well!

The other big news is that we have a cost-free opportunity to conduct a professional, comprehensive survey of NDSU's student veteran community, thanks to a partnership with NDSU Residence Life! Residence Life has purchased a package of survey modules, which includes a Campus Veteran Services module that we can run at no additional cost. We'll also have the ability to add up to 20 local questions to the pre-built survey questions if desired, and will be able to benchmark our institution's responses against other schools. We hope this survey will give us valuable data on the needs of our student veterans and support for maintaining or adding campus services.

I will obtain the list of survey questions for the VALOR Board and our GI Bill Certifying Official's office to review, and then we just need to decide if there are other questions we want to add, when we want to run the survey, and how to promote it to ensure maximum participation by students. I believe Residence Life purchases this survey packet every few years, so it could turn into an ongoing way for us to assess NDSU's student veteran services.

My office has been following up the last few weeks on progress reports coming in from faculty on student veterans in their classes that may be at risk of failing their course. This is similar to feedback requested on student athletes and other designated populations. Thank you to all the faculty that have taken time to complete these feedback reports! We do review and assess every one of them, and then reach out to those students who require some kind of assistance.

At midterm, we did receive about 140 "at risk" progress reports covering about 95 individual veteran students. That's definitely troubling, but the good news is: that's only about 25% of our 382 fall term veterans, meaning about 75% did not have any "at risk for failing" concerns mentioned! And that's an improvement from fall of 2020, when almost 30% of our enrolled student veterans (135/454) had at least 1 "at risk" progress report.

We know that not all instructors provide this feedback, but it seems to show that the large majority of our veteran students are doing well in their studies. And most of the "at risk" reports we did receive indicated only minor or isolated problems.

There's been no information posted by the US Department of Veterans Affairs' "VITAL" program office about continuing its webinar series on supporting student veterans. In the past, these presentations by expert guest speakers have been done twice per semester (typically October and November during the fall semester) but there was no event last month, and nothing planned so far for November; I'll let you know if there are any changes!



Veteran's Voice

Craig Schwinden

VALOR Student Veteran Representative

Greetings to my fellow Student Vets!

This semester has sure flown by quickly. I registered for the spring semester this week and it was a strange feeling once I realized and considered that it was the last time, I must register for classes here at North Dakota State (well, hopefully, it is the last time).

November is here and it is time to think of the many veteran-focused events, the great people that are remembered and honored, and the opportunities we have available to us to once again, remind our fellow citizens of the honor, privilege, and sacrifices we have made, and continue to make, in the name of our country.

I would encourage you to make the

effort to reach out and participate in any veteran-related activities this month. There are so many things going on locally where you can help fellow veterans, enjoy the camaraderie of fellow veterans, and most importantly, keep our mission alive to remind all Americans that freedom is not free. You and your fellow veterans understand this better than any other segment of our population. In our society where it seems like every individual or group with a problem gets a voice, let us make sure our voice hangs around and is heard.

As I stated earlier, I registered this week for the spring semester. This reminds me to remind you about the expiration of certain COVID-related rules regarding G.I. Bill payments. I am specifically thinking about the monthly stipend that has been paid out at 100% for all classes including online-only courses. This will change with the spring semester. If you want to receive that full monthly stipend, you need to be registered for full-time in-person classes. Please remember this when registering, if you have already registered, be sure to review your selections.

I hope you'll take a good look at this month's issue of the VALOR newsletter as it is always one of the

better ones as November is "our" month! There is lots of interesting information as well as helpful information for you and our brothers and sisters in arms. Case-in-point, my article on the 40 & 8 boxcars which affected millions of people to include American servicemembers, American citizens, and our friends and Allies in Europe (even our former enemies in Europe). It is a story of how people can get along and help each other even if they have differences (which we always will have, right?). Well, not too long ago, the people of the earth forgot about those differences and helped other humans who were in a tough place after devastating wars.

How are you and yours? If you need some help, regardless of the kind of help, we are here. The long, cold winter season (sorry for the reminder) is on the way. Do not be afraid to ask for help if you need it.

Lastly, please enjoy the profile of November's Student Veteran of the Month, Beatrice Jaszczak. Beatrice serves in the United States Navy Reserve as an Electrician's Mate and is on her way to a degree in Natural Resource Management. Welcome to the team Beatrice!

If you have questions or comments, or ideas for future columns, email me at craig.schwinden@ndsu.edu.

REACH OUT

EVEN VETERANS NEED SUPPORT SOMETIMES

REACH.gov/SPM





Name: Beatrice Jaszczak

Major/Minor: Natural Resource Management with a minor in Geology

Originally from: Hallock, Minnesota

Current city: Moorhead, Minnesota

Career plans after college: Attend Law Enforcement Academy to become a Game Warden

Military Service/Awards: Navy, Interior Communications Electrician (IC) ; Naval Reserves, Electricians Mate (EM).

NDSU activities/engagement: BSV, NRM Club

Community activities/engagement: Legion Post 214

An interesting tidbit about the veteran: My last name is pronounced "Josh-ick".

Favorite experience/memories/etc. at NDSU: Geology Class

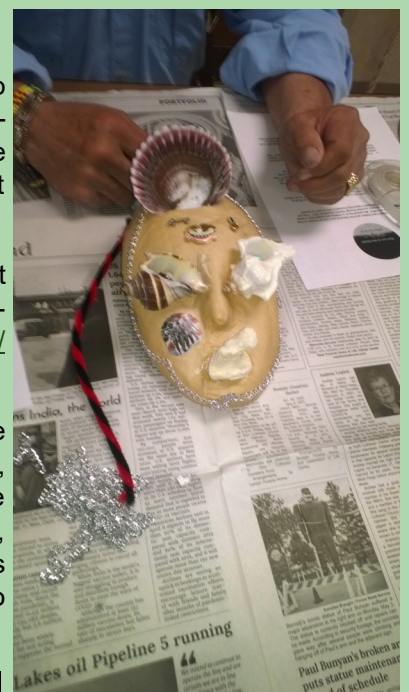


CALL TO ACTION: LOOK, LISTEN, AND LEARN

On **Wednesday, November 10th**, from **6-8 PM** those in the F-M area are invited to attend the Veterans' Performance Showcase, a free public reception featuring performances of **Warriors in the North** writing and music projects. You can get your free tickets [here](#). If you cannot attend the event in person, you can join the webcast via [Zoom](#) or [Facebook Live](#).

You can also view the **Warriors in the North: Healing Through the Arts Exhibit** at the Hjemkomst Center between October 6, 2021 and March 6, 2022. More information about both of these events can be found here: <https://www.hcscconline.org/warriors.html>.

If you have not had the privilege of attending an event like this in the past, you have missed an opportunity to gain powerful insight into veterans' identity, struggles, triumphs, and experiences. Such events provide attendees an opportunity to see the ways in which veterans have processed and expressed these experiences in art, writing, and spoken word. The effect is a powerful understanding of veterans' souls that leaves attendees cheering, laughing, and crying. Don't miss your opportunity to look, listen, and learn from our local veterans who have participated in this project.



An area veteran creating an item for the exhibit.

"There is a certain enthusiasm in liberty, that makes human nature rise above itself, in acts of bravery and heroism."

~ Alexander Hamilton

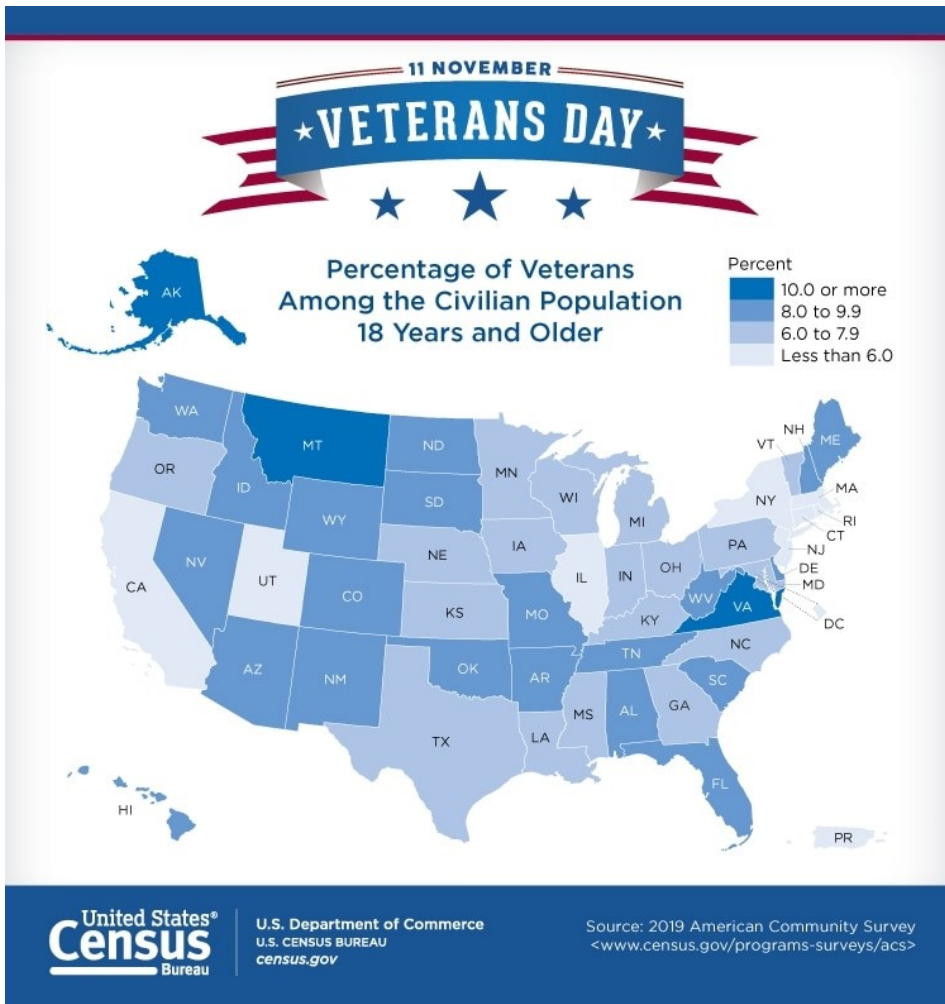
Fire Watch

Brennan Lemar and Devon Patton, BSV

As we cross the halfway mark through this Fall 2021 semester, we'd like to look back and reflect on how far we've come since this time last year. NDSU is thriving with students back on campus and for those that are still unable to attend in person the options to attend virtually have only improved. BSV is not exempt from this increase in student involvement. Our first two meetings went very well, there were a lot of great ideas and resources brought forward that we are looking to build on. It has been fantastic to see our newer members invest themselves in this organization and share their desire to help BSV make NDSU a more inclusive place for veterans. This is a trend that we hope continues throughout the year!

Our next meeting is on Tuesday, November 2nd at 5:30 PM in the Meadow Lark room of the Memorial Union. This will be the second month of BSV featuring speakers at our monthly meeting in an effort to bring resources directly to NDSU's Student Veterans. Jerry South from the NDSU Career and Advising Center will be presenting on how to translate military experience to a civilian resume. We are keenly interested to hear what advice Mr. South has to offer. Our December meeting will feature a speaker from the Wounded Warrior Project. If you or someone you know may be interested in speaking at one of our upcoming meetings, we encourage you to contact us.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank the students, staff, and faculty at NDSU that have served or are currently serving in our nation's military. It is your sacrifices that make our way of life a possibility.



Freedom is never free.

SIX SKILLS VETERANS HAVE THAT YOUR BUSINESS NEEDS.

Learn how these skills make veterans ideal employees

Motivation, Accountability, Discipline. Essential qualities you want in your employees and why military veterans can be an ideal fit for your organization.

Veterans possess many highly desirable traits employers look for in job candidates. Consider these top six skills that a veteran can bring to your company.

LEADERSHIP
Experience and discipline lead them to take charge of their own actions and influence those around them.

TEAMWORK
Veterans work well with others. Mission success depended on interpersonal skills and working with people from all walks of life.

WORK ETHIC
They know the importance of time management and are well-equipped to self-motivate and stay on task.

ACCOUNTABILITY
Pride of performance means they hold themselves accountable and take ownership of their actions.

ADAPTABILITY
Handling rapidly changing situations means thinking fast, remaining calm and exercising creative problem-solving skills.

TECH SAVVY
Many veterans are trained to operate and repair highly complex systems, machines and technology with speed and efficiency. Valuable skills for any business.

Consider a military veteran for your next hire. For skilled, motivated, loyal, and dependable employees, veterans possess essential skills and outstanding qualities that transition well to civilian employment.

Career Corner

Jerry South, Assistant Director, Career Coaching, NDSU Career and Advising Center



While in the military it was very easy to determine what to where to work each day. The government pretty much laid out your clothes for you, similarly to how your mom might have done when you were a kid. Maintaining a professional image was pretty cut and dry as well...clean, pressed and serviceable uniform, hair, jewelry, and makeup within standards directed in policy and enforced by leadership.

Now you have the freedom to pick out and wear whatever you want. Grow your hair out, cut and dye it however you like, wear as much makeup as you feel or like, etc. and most likely no one will question your choices. Your image is what you make it, not what someone else tells you it should be.

However, when it comes to maintaining a professional image in civilian attire, it can be a whole different ball game. Companies want you to dress a certain way, meet their 'uniform' standards, and fall in line with their perception of acceptable attire...just like the military all over again...but different. This is especially true when it comes to interviewing for a job or an internship. Employers want you to fit into their paradigm of professional attire, not what current fads or society says is acceptable. For example, it is the 'in style' for men to wear form fitting dress pants that are a bit shorter in the leg so their socks or ankles show. Or for a woman to wear leggings instead of slacks. One might think they look dressy so it must be ok to wear them for an interview, right? Wrong.

So how do you know what is appropriate to wear. A good rule of thumb is to dress one level above the day-to-day attire for the job you are interviewing for. So, if you are interviewing for a labor-intensive type job where jeans, t-shirt and maybe some safety PPE are worn, business casual (dress pants and a collared shirt or sleeved blouse) is appropriate. If that type of clothing is the daily attire, business professional (add a suit jacket/blazer and tie) would be the interview attire. But this still doesn't answer the question about faddish or modern style of professional clothing.

The best way to answer this question is this: dress to the style of the generation interviewing you. What is appropriate business attire that they would wear, and mirror that or something close to it. You can still stay modern to some degree, but be conscious of what they would find appropriate. Research the company and find pictures of their employees' attire and judge the approved fashion based upon those images. You can also call HR or the front office and ask what the recommended interview attire is for that particular company or department. Of course, you can always stop in the Career and Advising Center to ask the questions, as well as check out clothes for free from our Career Closet.

18.8 Million

Veterans in the U.S.

4.8 Million

Veterans with disabilities

1.1 Million

Veterans with mental health issues

37.2 Thousand

Homeless Veterans



North Dakota is home to over 50,000 veterans.

Civilians enjoy their time because soldiers sacrifice their time.
~ Amit Kalantri



valor.veteran.alliance.organization/

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New Dog in Town**Military and Veteran Certification Office**

On your trek around campus, you might run into a couple of new residents at NDSU - Newman and Todd Yackley.

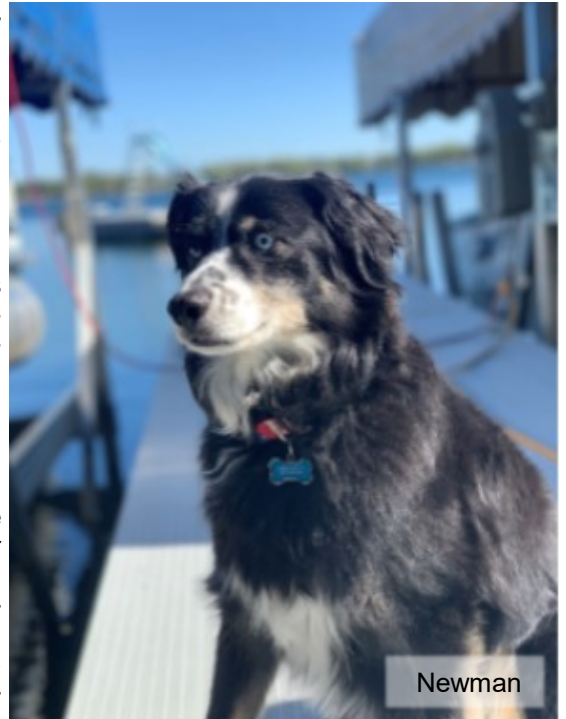
Newman is an 8-year-old Miniature Australian Shepherd who resides in Ceres Hall along with his veteran handler, Todd Yackley. The two have been a team since 2015 and were certified through Patriot Assistance Dogs in Detroit Lakes in 2016.

While Todd and Newman are both new to their new role on campus, they are not new to NDSU or the Fargo-Moorhead area. Todd is NDSU's new School Certifying Official in the Military and Veteran Certification Office. He comes to us from Macon, Georgia where as a government service employee he was a management analyst for the Air Force.



Todd Yackley

Todd spent 25 years active duty Air Force, both as an enlisted member and later as an officer. His diverse service career gave him experience in education. He taught at the military level, both as an enlisted member and later at NDSU teaching ROTC. He also worked as a contractor for the Minnesota Army National Guard, and was a certified facilitator for the Air Force during his stint as a civilian employee. During his time in Minnesota, Todd also spent some time at MSUM as a transfer counselor.



Newman

Newman has been by Todd's side since he was diagnosed with PTSD in 2015 and received a recommendation from his VA psychiatrist to get a service dog. Todd didn't get Newman in the typical way Patriot Assistance Dogs are assigned. In their program, they pair veterans and first responders with dogs by allowing the dog to select the member. The pair then go through training together before finally getting certified as a trained pair. Newman was donated by a breeder in the area who knew of Todd's condition and felt that Newman would be beneficial for him. After receiving the okay from the program director, Newman conquered all the tasks required for certification and Todd and Newman became an official team.

If you want to know more about Todd's story or the benefits of having a service dog, feel free to stop by the Military and Veterans Certification Office in Ceres Hall, room 211. Of course, you can always stop by to discuss certification of benefits and grab a cup of coffee.

Calling all pre-vet/pre-med/life science student veterans!

Hi, my name is Liam Broughton and I am a veteran and veterinarian (vet²) and I have a PhD in life science. I served with the 101st Airborne Division Bravo Company 3rd Battalion 187th Infantry. Having experienced that transition from military life to higher education, I understand the culture shock and travails associated with this change. For example, once I ETS'd I moved directly from the barracks to the dorms. My college roommate habitually would leave our dorm room open and unsecured. Talk about giving me apoplectic fits having just come from the barracks where this would be viewed as heretical!

The reason I am writing today is I would like to offer my experience, knowledge and resources to other student veterans pursuing degrees in veterinary medicine or life sciences to help them accomplish their goals. I can offer insight into my choices and how I arrived where I am today and potentially provide experiences in diagnostic veterinary medicine for students going on to veterinary/medical school. Any student veterans that are interested, please contact me a liam.broughton@ndsu.edu.

Allies and others that would like to directly connect with student veterans to discuss their areas of interest and expertise in the newsletter (as Liam has done above), please reach out to carol.cwiak@ndsu.edu.

COMING UP

November

National Family Caregivers Month	Month of Nov.
Warrior Care Month	
National Veterans & Mil. Family Month	
National Veterans Small Bus. Week	November 1-5
Marine Corps Birthday	November 10
Veterans Day	November 11
Armistice/Remembrance Day	November 11

December

Civil Air Patrol Birthday	December 1
Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day	December 7
U.S. National Guard Day	December 13
National Wreaths Across America	December 18

Connect Locally via Facebook

NDDVA

facebook.com/NDDVA/

DAV North Dakota

facebook.com/davnorthdakota/

American Legion Post 2

facebook.com/americanlegionpost2/

American Legion Post 21

facebook.com/legionpost21/

North Dakota American Legion

facebook.com/NDAmericanLegion/

Dilworth VFW Post 1223

facebook.com/VFW-Post-1223-106022496155155/

Fargo VFW Post 762

facebook.com/fargovfwclub/

West Fargo VFW Post 7564

facebook.com/VFW7564.org/

North Dakota Veterans Educational Training

facebook.com/VeteransEducationalTraining/

Bison Student Veterans

facebook.com/BisonVeterans

VALOR

facebook.com/valor.veteran.alliance.organization/

Local Events

On **Wednesday, November 10th**, from 6-8 PM attend the **Veterans' Performance Showcase** at the Hjemkomst Center in Moorhead, MN. You can also view the **Warriors in the North: Healing Through the Arts Exhibit** at the Hjemkomst Center between October 6, 2021 and March 6, 2022. More information about these events can be found here: <https://www.hcscconline.org/warriors.html>

On **Veterans Day, Thursday, November 11th** there are many **free meals, sales, deals, and discounts specifically for veterans**. See: <https://militarybenefits.info/veterans-day/>. There are also many local ceremonies and events in honor of Veterans Day put on by community veteran groups, check with individual groups' Facebook pages to see what is planned (see the links to the left).



On **Monday, Nov 15th**, 1-4 PM (offered the 3rd Monday of every month): **Free, walk-in legal clinic** to help low-income veterans with civil legal matters at the Fargo VA's Community Resource and Referral Center (CRCC). Note: this service is not at the VA hospital; the CRCC is on 1st Ave N in downtown Fargo, next to the Federal Courthouse.

On **Thursday, November 18th**, from 12-1 PM, NDSU's "Including U" discussion series will host (on Zoom) a **panel discussion on Veteran Perspectives on Campus**. These sessions are open to all of the NDSU community: faculty, staff, and students. Panel participants are TBD. <https://ndsu.zoom.us/j/97428576932?pwd=aEJ6K1Y4NINDUm1BQXJiY04yR21EZz09>.

"America's Veterans have served their country with the belief that democracy and freedom are ideals to be upheld around the world."
~ John Doolittle

\$\$\$\$\$ Do you need money for an emergency? Check out **NDSU's Emergency Fund** info. \$\$\$\$\$



Veterans Day: 40 & 8 to Victory and Friendship

*How the “40 Hommes/8 Chevaux” Voitures (boxcars)
Saved Europe & Built International Goodwill*

By Craig Schwinden

American “doughboys” loaded onto a 40 & 8 boxcar heading to the Western Front in World War I. (Photo Courtesy of The WWI Centennial Commission)

When America joined the First World War and started to send her sons to France to help defeat the Axis Powers, those sons of America were often moved to the front via train. A familiar sight to the American “doughboys” were the 40 & 8 rail cars, named so because they carried 40 men or 8 horses to the front.

Like many modes of military transportation, they were not built for comfort. However, the G.I.s appreciated it over walking the many miles to the Western Front where they would have arrived with sore feet and worn-out boots. Because of this, riding on one of the uncomfortable and unpleasant 40 & 8s became a symbol of pride.

Once the war was over, these cars helped deliver goods to war ravaged areas of Europe and France. They also were used to return our doughboys to the coast where they would board ocean liners for the trip home to the States after successfully waging and ending the savages of World War I. That appeared to be the end of the 40 & 8s as far as the American servicemembers were concerned...or was it?

After the much more devastating and far more accurately named World War II, Europe was truly a disaster area. Starvation, disease, and death threatened to send the continent into a modern dark age, help was needed immediately. When noted columnist and Nobel Peace Prize nominee, Drew Pearson, read that the Russians were being ‘thanked’ and ‘congratulated’ for sending trains of grain to the devastated areas of Europe, he thought to himself, why can’t Americans do that to help our European Allies? Surely, America can gather up more supplies and ship them across the Atlantic than the Communists he wrote in his daily columns printed throughout the land. Thus, the idea of the “Friendship Train” was born.



A ‘Friendship Train’ from the people of Fresno, CA, filled with goods for the people of Europe. (Photo Courtesy of The WWI Centennial Commission)

The first Friendship Train left Los Angeles, California, on November 7th, 1947, full of supplies of dry goods for the people of Europe. The train passed through 11 states while traversing the country on its way to New York City where it would board ships bound for France. By the time the train reached New York, it consisted of 270 cars full of goods at an estimated value of forty million U.S. dollars (in 1947 dollars). This was a gift from the people of the United States and was not part of the relief provided for in the Marshall Plan (named after the WWII General of the Army and then-U.S. Secretary of State George Marshall).

A couple of years later, French citizens, in response to the kindness of their American friends across the Atlantic, returned the favor. In 1949, as a gesture of thanks, the French people organized the ‘Merci Train’ and sent 49 (continued on page 10)



The emblem of the ‘La Societe des Quarante Hommes et Huit Chevaux’ (The Society of Forty Men & Eight Horses)
(Photo Courtesy of fortyandeight.org)

Veterans Day: 40 & 8 to Victory and Friendship

(Continued from page 9)

of the 40 & 8 boxcars loaded with French treasures and hand-crafted gifts from the citizens of France. The cars were stamped with the “40 Hommes/8 Chevaux” (40 men or 8 horses) stencil just as they were during the First World War. Each of the 48 states in the Union received one of the cars as did the District of Columbia.

In 1920, under the umbrella of the American Legion organization, the La Societe des Quarante Hommes et Huit Chevaux (The Society of the 40 Men and 8 Horses) was formed. It is still in existence today and headquartered in Indianapolis, IN, although it no longer has formal ties to the Legion. They are very active in charities supporting child welfare programs and nurse training scholarships (among others). The members are called “Voyageurs Militaire” (military travelers). You must be invited to become a member by a current member, but there are no special requirements beyond that. Membership is open to all current and honorably discharged military servicemembers.

The train given to the State of North Dakota is one of 43 voitures still in existence. North Dakota’s Merci Train was refurbished in 2005. It is currently housed in Bismarck at the State Historical Society and Museum. Visit the museum to see all the treasures that were given to the people of North Dakota by French citizens.



One of the boxcars of the French ‘Merci’ Train. This car was given to the State of North Dakota as a gift from the People of France. This photo was taken shortly after it was refurbished in 2005. (Photo Courtesy of the North Dakota State Historical Society)

The History of Veterans Day

Veterans Day was originally known as “Armistice Day,” to signify the anniversary of the cease fire agreement made to end World War I. The armistice between the allied forces and Germany was put into effect on the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month in 1918. The official end of World War I (with a signed treaty) was not until June of 1919.



In 1938, Armistice Day became a legal holiday. Congress changed Armistice Day to Veterans Day in 1954 to include the veterans who fought in War II and the Korean War to also be honored on the holiday. In the interest of providing Federal employees a three-day weekend, Congress put in effect the “Uniform Holiday Bill” from 1971-1977. This moved Veterans Day from the set date of November 11th to the nearest Monday. Through this six year period, many Americans still continued to observe Veterans Day on November 11th. President

Gerald R. Ford thought the change instituted in 1971 was confusing and unnecessary and changed Veterans Day back to its original date in 1978 where it remains today. *Source: Excerpted from [Kelsey Pelzer, 9/11/21](#)*

The Impact of the Coronavirus on Veterans at VA Hospitals and Medical Centers (Source: [Aaron Kassraie, 10/29/21](#)): “As coronavirus deaths nationwide surpassed 743,000, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) medical system (which includes care homes and health care centers) exceeded 16,000 deaths, an increase of 1,136 in a month. Those 16,046 deaths include only veterans diagnosed at VA hospitals and medical centers.

Since the pandemic began in mid-March 2020, 228 workers in 98 VA facilities have died. The total includes 11 workers at the VA system in Indiana, eight in New Jersey, and seven each at facilities in Dallas and Gainesville, Florida.

The VA has recorded more than 363,000 COVID-19 cases in all 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. That’s an increase of 22,868 cases in a month, for a total of 363,412 cumulative cases as of Oct. 30.

A cluster of three VA facilities in the Los Angeles area has up to 12,814 cases (the most nationwide), adding 428 over the past month. Cases in the New York City region during the same period rose by 96, to 7,083. Three centers in the Chicago area also showed a jump in cases (an additional 233), bringing their total to 10,552.”

I AM A VETERAN By Andrea Christensen Brett

You may not know me the first time we meet
I'm just another you see on the street
But I am the reason you walk and breathe free
I am the reason for your liberty

I AM A VETERAN

I work in the local factory all day
I own the restaurant just down the way
I sell you insurance, I start your IV
I've got the best-looking grandkids you'll ever see

I'm your grocer, your banker
Your child's schoolteacher
I'm your plumber, your barber
Your family's preacher
But there's part of me you don't know very well
Just listen a moment, I've a story to tell

I AM A VETERAN

I joined the service while still in my teens
I traded my prom dress for camouflage greens
I'm the first in my family to do something like this
I followed my father, like he followed his

Defying my fears and hiding my doubt
I married my sweetheart before I shipped out
I missed Christmas, then Easter
The birth of my son
But I knew I was doing what had to be done

I served on the battlefield, I served on the base
I bound up the wounded
And begged for God's grace
I gave orders to fire, I followed commands
I marched into conflict in far distant lands

In the jungle, the desert, on mountains and shores
In bunkers, in tents, on dank earthen floors
While I fought on the ground, in the air, on the sea
My family and friends were home praying for me

For the land of the free and the home of the brave
I faced my demons in foxholes and caves
Then one dreaded day, without drummer or fife
I lost an arm, my buddy lost his life

I came home and moved on
But forever was changed
The perils of war in my memory remained
I don't really say much, I don't feel like I can
But I left home a child, and came home a man

There are thousands like me
Thousands more who are gone
But their legacy lives as time marches on
White crosses in rows
And names carved in queue
Remind us of what these brave souls had to do

I'm part of a fellowship, a strong mighty band
Of each man and each woman
Who has served this great land
And when Old Glory waves
I stand proud, I stand tall
I helped keep her flying over you, over all

I AM A VETERAN



*"It's about how we treat our veterans
every single day of the year.*

*It's about making sure they have
the care they need and the benefits
that they've earned when they come home.*

*It's about serving all of you
as well as you've served
the United States of America."*

~Barack Obama



"In valor there is hope." ~Publius Cornelius Tacitus