Disabled American Veterans

Blind Veterans National Chapter #1

WEB SITE: http://www.davbvnc1.com/contents.htm

November – December 2017 Newsletter

Editor: Dennis O’Connell - Bvnc1@verizon.net

**"IF I CANNOT SPEAK GOOD OF MY COMRADE,**

**I WILL NOT SPEAK ILL OF HIM OR HER."**

OFFICERS OF THE BLIND CHAPTER

Commander Ron Lester (AZ) (Phone (520) 741-1217

Senior Vice Commander Leonard Pope (NJ)

1st Junior Vice Commander Herschel Harris (GA)

2nd Junior vice Commander Richard Lane (VA)

3rd Vice Commander Dennis O’Connell, PC (NY)

Judge Advocate Jim Hogan PC (CA)

Chaplain Ron Lester (AZ) Phone (520) 741-1217 Email: ronlester45@gmail.com

Adjutant/Treasurer Paul Kaminsky (FL) (also webmaster) Phone 904 291-0576 Email: pkjax@kaminsky.com

PLEASE, if you know of a member who is sick or deceased contact one of the above ASAPP.

MESSAGE FROM THE COMMANDER

I would like to encourage each of you to have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. I know this is a very lonely time for a lot of our Vets that have gotten older. I would encourage you to find a way to give out to someone that is in a condition that is worse than what you are. Maybe it is a friend that you have not contacted for a number of years. With all the things on Facebook and other technology we can find all of our old friends if we try; so give it a try and see if you can find those old friends; sometimes it is amazing.

I wrote a book a few years ago “I’m Blind What’s your Excuse?”; well I wrote up an article for the local paper about the book ; this guy I had gone to church with 50 some years before call me. He had joined the Air Force a year before I did. He became an Aircraft mechanic on the F-105. Anyway we got together at the 2017 DAV convention after 55 years not seem each other. Now we call each other one or two times a month.

So, you never know who you might run on to if we only look for opportunities.

I carry my cards with me all the time giving them out at the airport restrooms or a ride to the VA or to anyone that may help me get around.

Or any other place I might go.

I certainly want to thank all those that help us that are totally blind; you are a great blessing.

The thought that “I’m Blind what’s your Excuse?” always puts a smile on their face and they always come back with “I don’t have any excuses”.

May you be blessed this New Year and be in good health.

Dependency and Indemnity Compensation

Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) is a tax free monetary benefit paid to eligible survivors of military Service members who died in the line of duty or eligible survivors of Veterans whose death resulted from a service-related injury or disease

Eligibility (Surviving Spouse)

To qualify for DIC, a surviving spouse must meet the requirements below.

The surviving spouse was:

• Was married to the Veteran for at least one year, OR

• Had a child with the Veteran, AND

• Cohabited with the Veteran continuously until the Veteran's death or, if separated, was not at fault for the separation, AND

• Is not currently remarried

Evidence Required

Listed below are the evidence requirements for this benefit:

• The Veteran died from an injury or disease deemed to be related to military service, OR

• The Veteran died from a non-service-related injury or disease, but was receiving, OR was entitled to receive, VA Compensation for service-connected disability that was rated as totally disabling

• For at least 10 years immediately before death.

How to Apply

•Work with an accredited representative or agent OR

•Go to a VA regional office and have a VA employee assist you. You can find your regional office on our Facility Locator page

Father-Son Disabled Veteran Team Races on Tandem Cycle Donated by VA

November 18, 2017 - Dr. Ron Lester, 72, and his son, Rob Lester, 49, of Tucson, Arizona, competed in the 54-mile leg of El Tour de Tucson, a 106-mile bike race that loops around the city of Tucson. The 35th annual event attracted over 6,500 riders from around the world who found perfect autumn Arizona weather in a city known for its support of both cycling and veterans services. The pair rode with the sponsorship of VeloVets, an organization dedicated to providing cycling opportunities to disabled veterans for camaraderie and fitness.

The race was the first for the duo on the custom-built tandem provided by the VA a few years earlier to Dr. Lester, a blind Vietnam veteran. The pair came in 12th of 17 tandem teams and were squarely in the middle of the pack for the leg overall. Rob, a Gulf War vet, became interested in individual cycling for fitness and to address his service-related PTSD. He was familiar with the logistics of riding in a large group after participating in RAGBRAI in July 2017. Dr. Lester, who rides primarily to get out in the community, found starting the leg with 1,100 riders a bit more challenging. While the duo rides faithfully several mornings each week, Dr. Lester was thankful he and Rob had done a few long rides to get accustomed to the demands of the race. The pair initially intended to tackle the 76-mile leg but decided on the shorter route as the race neared.

Dr. Lester joined DAV in the 1970’s after serving 11 years in the Air Force. He was medically retired due to his vision loss and suffers the effects of Agent Orange exposure. He is currently the commander and chaplain of the National Blind Chapter #1. In addition to his service to the DAV, Dr. Lester hosts a weekly Internet radio show called “Special Needs Watch” on bpnradio.com. He is the author of two books about his life and overcoming disability, information about which can be found at www.drronlester.com.

Father and son plan to continue their morning tandem rides in anticipation future races. “El Tour was a fantastic experience, “said Dr. Lester. “We should only get stronger as we keep working at it.”

EMAIL FROM A FRIEND

Just had a new app installed on my I Pod Touch.

It’s called “See A I”

Don’t know if you’ve heard of it? Appears more useful than KNFB Reader.

Features include; print reader, short reader for small printed (I used it to identify my mail) It can identify objects, facial recognition, bar code reader, and best of all; it’s a FREE! Download!

Check it out.

Caregiving Around the Clock!

Are you a Veteran or a caregiver? There can be around-the-clock responsibilities; VA is here to support you! VA’s Caregiver Support Program offers a range of online courses, face-to face classes, telephone support, and peer mentoring to caregivers of Veterans from all eras. Learn more by visiting our website

www.caregiver.va.gov.

With VA's Caregiver Support Line assistance is just a quick phone call away. Whether you're in need of immediate assistance or have questions about what services you may be eligible for, the caring licensed professionals who answer the support line can:

• Tell you about the assistance available from VA.

• Help you access services.

• Connect you with the Caregiver Support Coordinator at a VA Medical Center near you.

• Just listen, if that's what you need right now.

If you're just getting started with VA, calling the Caregiver Support Line is a great first step to take to learn more about the support that's available to you.

COMPUTER TIP

From Hines Alumni.org

If you have a PDF that is an image or if you want to create a DAISY book, we have a conversion tool on our website to do this. Simply visit our website: www.hinesalumni.org and go to the E-Footlocker. There you will find the conversion tool. Launch the conversion tool and follow the four easy steps to create your accessible document.

CHAPLIN’S CORNER

Having a Calm Spirit

A man of understanding is of a calm spirit.

Proverbs 17:27

Woodrow Wilson faced a tough re-election campaign in 1916, and many people expected him to become a one-term president. The economy was faltering, World War I was looming, and the times were bleak. Wilson’s advisors were worried. But this is how Secret Service Agent Edmund Starling later described Wilson:

The President would have been worried too had he not been trained, as I was, in the Presbyterian doctrine of predestination. He was completely calm, having decided that he had done his best to fill the job and his future in it was in the hands of God.

Not all people are Christians and not all Christians are Presbyterians and we may have somewhat different views about predestination, but every believer should acknowledge God’s control of all the circumstances of our lives. He is on His throne. He works all things together for our good, and He threads the tapestry of history according to His foreordained plan.

When you prayerfully make a difficult decision, leave it in God’s hands and experience His peace. We can maintain a calm spirit. As Lord over all, He reigns over all the circumstances of life.

The Bible is the one supreme source of revelation…. It is the only guide of life which really leads the spirit in the way of peace and salvation.

Woodrow Wilson

***GOD BLESS AMERICA***!