

Support Veterans In Your Life

We can all play a role in preventing suicide: Your actions could help save a life. Here are simple ways to support a Veteran or Servicemember in your life or your community who may be going through a difficult time:

Learn About Resources

- **Call the Veterans Crisis Line:** If a Veteran you know is immediately at risk for suicide, call **1-800-273-8255** and **Press 1**, chat online at VeteransCrisisLine.net/Chat, or text to **838255** for free, 24/7 confidential support.
- **Share a self-check quiz:** Help a Veteran assess whether mental health treatment would be beneficial by sharing the link to www.VetSelfCheck.org.
- **Help a Veteran facing homelessness:** Connect a Veteran with support by contacting the National Call Center for Homeless Veterans at **1-877-424-3838**.
- **Support a Veteran experiencing a substance use disorder:** If you are concerned a Veteran you know may be misusing alcohol, opioids, or other drugs, encourage them to take a confidential assessment and learn about effective treatments at www.mentalhealth.va.gov/substanceabuse.asp.
- **Find local resources:** Locate mental health treatment and services near you at VeteransCrisisLine.net/ResourceLocator.



Spread the Word in Your Community

- **Share videos of real Veterans:** Visit MakeTheConnection.net to watch and share videos of Veterans and their loved ones sharing their stories of overcoming mental health challenges.
- **Download and share materials:** Visit VeteransCrisisLine.net/SpreadTheWord to get flyers, social media content, newsletter articles, and more to share with your networks and in your community.
- **Host a suicide prevention training:** Contact your local Suicide Prevention Coordinator to schedule a training for your organization and obtain mental health information and materials at VeteransCrisisLine.net/ResourceLocator.
- **Organize community events:** Bring together local mental health experts and clinicians to share information and educate your community about VA mental health resources. Download our community outreach toolkit at www.va.gov/nace/docs/myVAoutreachToolkitPreventingVeteranSuicidesEveryonesBusiness.pdf.
- **Volunteer together:** Staying involved in the community can help Veterans feel less alone. Contact VA Voluntary Service to find opportunities in your area at www.volunteer.va.gov.

Start a Conversation

- **Learn to recognize the warning signs of suicide risk:** Visit VeteransCrisisLine.net/SignsOfCrisis.
- **Talk openly about suicide:** Let a Veteran know you're there, you care, and you're ready to listen. Learn more at VeteransCrisisLine.net/StartTheConversation.
- **Connect with Coaching into Care:** Help a Veteran's family member or friend learn constructive ways to talk with a Veteran about their concerns and treatment options. Call **1-888-823-7458**.
- **Learn about gun safety:** Visit VeteransCrisisLine.net/GunSafetyVideo and share this [gun safety video](#) to raise awareness of simple actions that can save lives.

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS



MINOT
Chapter No. 4

Minot, North Dakota

Meetings Held 2nd Thursday
of each month

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Twice A POW; Forever An Inspiration

In 1942, a young man named Richard Keirn turned 18 and joined the United States Army Air Forces. Two years later, in June of 1944, he joined the 100th Bomb Group in England known as "The Bloody Hundredth" and was the co-pilot in a B-17. On September 11, 1944, high above the Ore Mountains on the Czech-German frontier, a formation of B-17G Flying Fortresses escorted by P-51 Mustang Fighters clashed with the Germans in a ferocious air battle. Keirn's plane was hit. The Captain was severely wounded and ordered everyone to bail out, including Keirn. Keirn landed in an open field and was quickly taken as a Prisoner of War (POW) by the Germans. He was interrogated and shipped off to Stalag Luft 1 in Barth, Germany, where he was held prisoner until the camp was liberated by the Russians just after Victory in Europe (VE) Day on May 8, 1945.



Colonel Richard "Pop" Keirn
After Vietnam & ready to fly again. 1973

Keirn returned home to start a family with his new bride and kept his flying status as an instructor pilot. Keirn later checked out in the F-4C Phantoms and was declared "combat ready" and was shipped to Ubon, Thailand, as Assistant Operations Officer. Twelve days after being "in-country," Keirn filled in for another pilot on sick call and was the Command Pilot for a mission over Hanoi. On July 24, 1965, during a heavy monsoon storm, Keirn's Phantom took a hard-vertical hit and was later identified as the first American aircraft downed by a Russian made Surface-to-Air Missile. Keirn's co-pilot did not survive the hit, however, Keirn parachuted to the side of a mountain and was captured the next day. Keirn fractured both ankles, sustained flash burns on his face and upper body, and carried a piece of shrapnel in his leg until he was released. Keirn's wife and two teenage children were told they lost contact and he may be dead. It wasn't until a famous photo

surfaced during an abusive POW parade (see cover photo) through Hanoi that Keirn's family found out he was alive.

Keirn spent the next 7 years and 7 months as a POW until finally returning home in February of 1973. Keirn retired as a Colonel in June of 1976, after 33 years of service. As a POW in WWII, his nickname was "Junior" because he was one of the youngest officers. As a POW in Vietnam, his nickname was "Pop" because he was older than most and was viewed as a fatherly figure. He cared for many of the POWs while in camp and many attributed their survival to his guidance. As fate would have it, one of those young Vietnam POWs would later meet Keirn's grandson, Dr. Cory Keirn.

Cory Keirn is Colonel Richard "Pop" Keirn's grandson and works as a physical therapist at James A. Haley Veterans' Hospital (JAHVH) in Tampa, FL. Dr. Keirn received a consult for a patient in the surgical intensive care unit to evaluate his status. When Dr. Keirn introduced himself, the patient immediately gave him a closer look. The patient asked Dr. Keirn if they had ever met, stating "I know you from somewhere." The two men had never met, but once Dr. Keirn repeated his last name, the patient had tears running down his face. The patient asked Dr. Keirn if he had family that served in the military, and once Keirn replied yes, the patient asked if his name was Pop?

The patient told Dr. Keirn how Pop saved his life as a POW and cared for his wounds. He told Dr. Keirn about the beatings and interrogations Pop took for all the other prisoners and how "if it weren't for Pop, I'd never survived."

Cory Keirn never joined the military, but the call to service was indelibly engraved in his DNA and he found another way. His father, Steve Keirn, became a strong advocate for Veterans, having lost his father, Pop, at a young age. He also found his way to serve the same way his dad did for so many others.

Cory was always fascinated with biomechanics and helping others, but he never thought physical therapy was his calling. Cory was a student at JAHVH while in Physical Therapy school and later was accepted for the orthopaedic residency program. He was later hired as a full-time employee and loves serving veterans and active duty soldiers every day.

Just like his grandfather, he takes care of those who have sacrificed everything to protect our freedom.

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS



ADAM KLEIN
Chapter No. 3

Bismarck, North Dakota

Meetings Held 1st Thursday
of each month at 6:30 pm
AmVets Club

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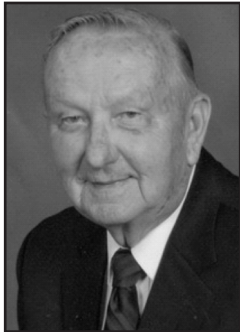
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Jerome Krejci DAV Chapter 2 Memorial Scholarship

Jerome Krejci was indeed a special human being. Jerome was raised on the family farm outside of East Grand Forks, Minnesota and was a graduate of Sacred Heart High School.



Jerome Krejci

Jerome joined the North Dakota National Guard at age 17 and served as a Sergeant in M Company of the 164 Infantry.

He was activated and served in the United States Army during the Korean War.

After training in the US, Jerome went to Korea and saw action with the

24th Infantry Division.

Jerome was awarded the Bronze Star and was also awarded a Purple Heart with Oak Leaf Clusters.

Jerome was proud of his service to his country while also saying throughout his life that war was, "No way for countries to solve their differences".

Jerome was a life member of the Andy Nomland Chapter 2 Grand Forks, ND.

He was a member for six decades. Jerome held many offices at the local, state and national level.

He was a much loved man and will be missed by everyone that knew him and his memory of all the lives he touched will always be with us.



Left to Right: Diane Krejci (daughter of Jerome), Cadet Brooke Guttormson, Mike Krejci (son of Jerome)

UND Army ROTC Cadet Brooke Guttormson received the second annual Jerome Krejci DAV Chapter 2 Memorial Scholarship from Diane Krejci and Mike Krejci during Award Ceremonies May 4, 2017 at the UND ROTC Armory.

Cadet Guttormson received a Scholarship, a framed Certificate of Excellence with a Medal from the Andy Nomland Chapter 2 Grand Forks for her high academics of a GPA of 3.5 or higher, proven leadership abilities, high moral character, excellent adherence to military discipline and patriotic understanding of the importance of the Reserve Officer Training Corps.



Certificates of Excellence, Medals and a Scholarship were presented by Andy Nomland Chapter 2 during Award Ceremonies for UND Army ROTC May 4, 2017 UND ROTC Armory. Pictured Left to Right: William Boner, Commander DAV Chapter 2 (2016-2017), Larry Holweger, Department Commander ND DAV 2017-2018, Diane Krejci, Cadet Brook Guttormson, Cadet Dylan Barber, Mike Krejci and PDC Roy Fillion.

Below Left: Department Commander ND DAV Larry Holweger (2017-2018) presented Cadet Dylan Barber a Medal and framed Certificate for Academic Excellence, dependability, good character, and adherence to military discipline, and patriotic understanding of the importance of the Reserve Officer Training Corps during award ceremonies.

Below Right: Commander William Boner, Chapter 2 Grand Forks presented a scholarship check for \$1,000 to Cadet Brook Guttormson during award ceremonies at the ROTC UND Armory May 4 2017. Left to Right: Diane Krejci, Commander Boner, Cadet Guttormson and Mike Krejci.

