

**Disabled American Veterans
Lewis & Clark Chapter 3
P.O. Box 25
Fort Harrison, MT 59636-0025
Newsletter November 2010**

Commander's Corner: As usual, the end of the year and the holiday season has snuck up on all of us again. With this in mind, the Chapter has set the annual holiday dinner for Thursday, December 2, 2010. The Chapter will furnish: the main courses, including one of Kevin's wonderful briskets and turkey and mashed potatoes with gravy, fresh rolls, and a Cheese plate selection, Coffee, Ice Tea, Cups, Paper Plates, Napkins, Water, Some Soft Drinks, Ice and Condiments. The dinner will be held at the American Legion Post # 2, 3095 Villard Ave., on the corner of Villard and Custer, in Helena. All members, their families, friends and guests are welcome; we hope that all will have a good time and a good meal. We can start gathering about 5:30 P.M. The Chapter food will get there in time for all to eat between 5:30 and 6:00.

Please attend and bring family and friends and have a good time with your fellow DAV and DAVA members. I hope to see many of you at the Dinner. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me. **Paul Kroenke, Commander.**

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From the Chapter #3 Webmaster: The Chapter Website is now functioning and I have updated it with copies of the prior newsletters for 2010. To look at the old newsletters, upcoming functions and the newest information available from National DAV just go to the website which is at <http://www.davmembersportal.org/chapters/mt/03/default.aspx> . There are links which you can follow from the Chapter Website to other sources of information on the latest happenings in veteran services.

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DAV Washington Update from the DAV Membership Newsletter: With Congress itching to get out of town to prepare for November's mid-term elections, lawmakers left more than 80 pieces of legislation on the table. Fortunately, a key package of bills for veterans was addressed before the lengthy recess. The Veterans' Benefits Act of 2010 (H.R. 3219) was passed by the Senate Sept. 28th and cruised through the House Sept. 30th. The bill, which addresses some of DAV's top legislative priorities, is bound for President Obama's desk, where it is expected to be signed into law. Provisions include increasing the automobile assistance allowance from \$11,000 to \$18,900. It allows for annual increases based on the Consumer Price Index, and expands eligibility for the benefit to veterans and service members with severe burn injuries. The amount of supplemental insurance for totally disabled veterans increases from \$20,000 to \$30,000 and the limit of veterans mortgage life insurance for disabled veterans rises from \$90,000 to \$150,000, and then to \$200,000 beginning in 2012. The DAV has been urging Congress to make these improvements in veterans benefits for several years.

Home Adaptation Grants Expanded: the VA adopted a final rule effective Oct. 25 that will expand eligibility for specially adapted housing and special home adaptation grants for permanently and totally disabled veterans and armed service members. The new rule makes both types of grants available to those who suffered extensive burns limiting movement of two or more limbs or at least one limb and the trunk. It also makes special home adaptation grants available to permanently and totally disabled veterans and service members who lose or lose use of both hands, those with severe burns that limit their range of motion in two or more limbs or one limb and the trunk of the body and those with inhalation injuries.

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More from the Membership Newsletter (Nine Diseases Linked to Service in Southwest Asia, Gulf War): The VA has published final regulations that list nine infectious diseases to conditions that are presumed to be linked to service in Southwest Asia, including Iraq, Afghanistan and the first Gulf War, for veterans submitting claims for health care and disability compensation. These regulations, which are effective Sept 29, affect veterans who served in the Southwest Asia Theater of operation, beginning with the Gulf War on Aug. 2, 1990, through the current war and those who served on or after Sept. 19, 2001, in Afghanistan. The presumption of service connected disability includes the long-term health effects associated with brucellosis, campylobacter jejuni, coxiella burnetii (Q fever), malaria, mycobacterium tuberculosis, nontyphoid salmonella, shigella, visceral leishmaniasis and West Nile virus. Montana veterans seeking more information or assistance with a claim for service connected disability may contact the Disabled American Veterans National Service Office at Fort Harrison.

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Chapter Meetings: The Chapter continues to meet on the forth Thursday of each month at the Helena American Legion Post #2, 3095 Villard, (Corner of Custer and Villard). Meeting Time is 6:00 P.M. These are open meetings and all members are very welcome to attend. The Leadership welcomes you all with open arms. We hope you will come and give us some new ideas that we can work for the good of our members.

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Volunteers still needed at VA: Volunteers are still needed at the VA hospital and clinics throughout the State. DAV members willing to spend a little time helping veterans can become volunteers through the VA Voluntary Service Program. They have many positions where we can be of service. Especially if you can help in the DAV's Transportation Program you are both needed and welcome to join the many members and auxiliary who are already giving their time to this effort. Contact Voluntary Services at Fort Harrison for additional information.

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