







# A veteran's take on kneeling for the anthem

Photo by Joe Robbins / Getty Images

Alejandro Villanueva (#78), an Army veteran, of the Pittsburgh Steelers stands by himself in the tunnel for the national anthem prior to the game against the Chicago Bears at Soldier Field on September 24, 2017 in Chicago, Illinois.

**Glen Able**  
Contributing Writer

I'm a black Navy veteran and I believe in peaceful protest. Somewhere along the way it appears we have lost respect for people who choose to protest peacefully. The media has flooded the nation with the demonstrations that are violent and unacceptable. However, when people choose to protest in a peaceful matter, they are often criticized and frowned upon. A perfect example of this is the kneeling during the national anthem, which professional football players are currently doing. As a black male having served active duty in the United States Navy, you may be curious as to my position on this matter. Would I kneel or stand? What people are failing to realize is that this is a form of peaceful protest. After witnessing how violent the protests on

this one matter around the country have become, should we honestly be criticizing this method of it? How would you suggest a professional athlete protest this matter? Should he/she go stand on the street along with everyone else? Or better yet, maybe they should have a press conference stating how they feel about the matter and just forget they are not only representing themselves, but their team as well. You might be asking at this point, "Why during the national anthem? That is not an appropriate time to be protesting." Technically, that's when the entire world is watching, so why not? What better time to get your point across than when you have the attention of millions of Americans? Is it not the right of every American to protest in a way he/she chooses? Isn't that why we volunteer to serve in the Armed Forces, to keep the ideology that this country

was founded on alive? The anthem means something different to every American. To me it represents the hopes, dreams, goals and peace of Americans. Shouldn't equality be the goal of this nation? People join and fight so we have the right to choose how we would like to protest, assuming it is in a peaceful way. Is that not what is taking place when the profes-

would stand. Because that's my choice. I don't choose to protest in that way. At this point, you are probably calling me a traitor to my people - Uncle Tom, or whatever other insulting name you can manifest. However, I simply don't choose to protest this way. Yes, I absolutely stand behind black Americans fighting the racial injustice and police brutality and

problem with peaceful protest. It's the right of every American to protest in a way he/she decides to, if it doesn't violate the rights of others. If this is the only way to start the uncomfortable conversation about racial injustice then shall be it. People are choosing to focus on how they are choosing to protest rather than trying to solve the reason these players are acting in this manner but focusing rather. These are my thoughts on the matter and mine alone. I don't expect you to change the way you feel about this issue. I'm simply asking you to keep an open mind and not be judgmental. I hope this article has caused some type of emotion for you, my reader, and has challenged you to think about what is going on. Before you criticize how people choose to demonstrate their opinion on a certain matter, ask yourself, "Are they doing it peacefully? Are they within their rights?" In my opinion there are much bigger issues than criticizing people who are protesting in a peaceful matter.

**"Before you criticize how people choose to demonstrate their opinion on a certain matter, ask yourself, 'Are they doing it peacefully? Are they within their rights?'"**

Glen Able, Contributing writer

sional athletes are kneeling during the anthem? A peaceful non-verbal form of protest. If you disagree with this type of protest, would you rather something more violent and drastic take place? As a black American veteran, would I kneel or stand? Personally, I

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# Nursing students educate the community on prescription drug disposal

## Memorial Union hosts “Got Drugs? Pitch Your Pills” event

**Jacob Notermann**  
Dakota Student

In the wake of the national opioid epidemic being declared a public health crisis, students at the University of North Dakota took action on the issue. Last Thursday, a class of 12 clinical nursing students held an event promoting proper protocol for disposing old or unwanted medications. The event “Got Drugs?

most common issue is the access for children getting their parents’ medications or digging through the garbage and then that can lead to more harmful events such as drug overdose or toxic effects.” Carlee Miller, another third-semester nursing student, said turnout for the event was higher than anticipated. The surrendered medications were handed over to the University Police Department, which

And that’s dangerous.” She went on to mention the environmental impact not properly disposing medications can have, including medications tampering with the city’s water supply and animals consuming them while going through garbage cans. “With the opioid crisis going on in the community, that’s been a big reason as to why we felt that this was an appropriate event to hold and educate people about,” Miller said. “And then we also have information about other locations people can drop off medications.”

For those who missed the event or want to properly dispose old medications in the future, there are do-it-yourself methods. Some include mixing all of the unwanted pills with wet dirt, kitty litter or coffee grounds in order to dissolve the contents. All of the important information on the bottle labels should then be blacked out with a permanent marker. “A lot of the information isn’t really brought to the forefront of people’s minds unless they see statistics and see people actively participating in events like this,” Salwei said. “I feel it’s been really impactful as a student to see all the hard work you put in towards something that’s such a serious cause in our community today.” The event wasn’t only informative regarding medications. It also served as a mechanism for nursing students to

show the impact nurses have on the community. “A lot of people don’t realize that this is some-

awareness that nurses are involved in all areas of health and that public health nursing has a very

both sides of the counter. “We each had a part in organizing advertising and all the logistics of the program to see what it would be like as a public health nurse to advocate for your community and for the safety and the environment,” Salwei said. Other local medication drop-off sites include the Grand Forks Law Enforcement Center and the East Grand Forks Police Department. Both of these locations, as well as the University Police Department, will accept the pills at any time.

“It’s a major event, especially with children in the home. Often, the most common issue is the access for children getting their parents’ medications or digging through the garbage and then that can lead to more harmful events such as drug overdose or toxic effects.”

Paige Salwei, Third-semester nursing student

“Pitch Your Pills” was housed in the Memorial Union, where students and the community at large partook in an educational and environmental cause. Paige Salwei, a third-semester nursing student, was one of the students running the event. She said her public health course set up the “group intervention project” in order to promote public health in the community. “It’s a major event, especially with children in the home,” Salwei said. “Often, the

was then submitted to the medication drop box that can be regularly found at the University Police Department. “Oftentimes, people just aren’t aware that you don’t want to just throw your pills in the garbage because that can result in drug-seekers going through your garbage, which is a problem,” Miller said. “I think a lot of people just don’t think about the proper way, and then they just fill up in their medicine cabinet. When they do think about it, they just throw them away.

“A lot of people don’t realize that this is something nurses do, necessarily. I think people think of nurses in the hospital setting, but just bringing awareness that nurses are involved in all areas of health and that public health nursing has a very widespread outreach in the community.”

Carlee Miller, Third-semester nursing student

thing nurses do, necessarily,” Miller said. “I think people think of nurses in the hospital setting, but just bringing

widespread outreach in the community.” Salwei said the event was a great learning experience for those on

**Jacob Notermann** is a staff writer for Dakota Student. He can be reached at [jacob.notermann@und.edu](mailto:jacob.notermann@und.edu)

### Grand Forks medication drop-off sites

**Grand Forks Law Enforcement Center**  
122 S 5th St #123, Grand Forks, ND 58201

**East Grand Forks Police Department**  
520 Demers Ave, East Grand Forks, MN 56721

**University Police Department**  
3851 Campus Rd, Grand Forks, North Dakota 58202



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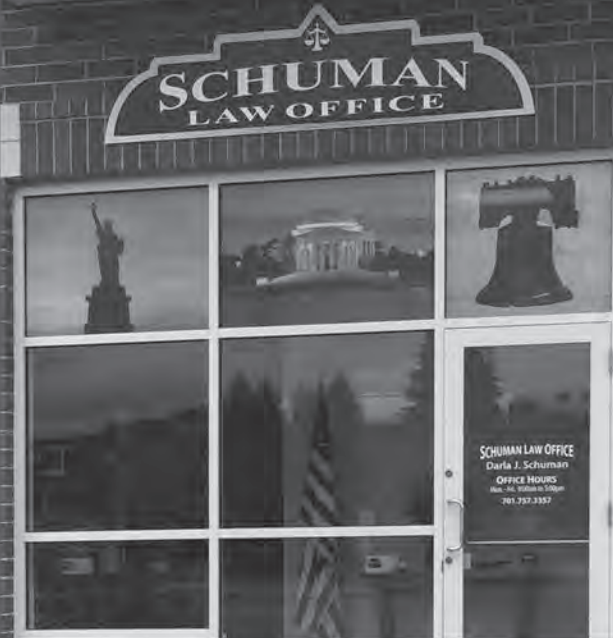
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