



April 5, 2026

April 2026

DAV DISPATCH

News from Adam Klein Chapter #3, Bismarck, North Dakota

OFFICERS

Commander:

Lamar Kruckenberg

Sr. Vice Commander:

Tom Newton

Jr. Vice Commander:

David Schall

Chaplain:

Leslie Ross

Treasurer/Adjutant:

Mark Landis

Auxiliary Commander:

Linda Otto

Auxiliary Adjutant

Bonnie Leingang

MEETINGS

1st Thursday, 7 p.m.

4023 State Street

Bismarck, ND

EMAIL

aklein3dav@gmail.com

MAILING ADDRESS

P.O. Box 915

Bismarck, ND 58502-0915

Flag Sojourn Reaches Bismarck for National Celebration

As our nation prepares to celebrate the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, the National Sheriff's Association is sponsoring a trip around the country for Old Glory. A single U.S. Flag is carried with reverence on a sojourn to each state and is raised in a proper ceremony. On March 19th, the flag was raised at the Burleigh County Courthouse. Honor Guard units from the local veterans service organizations, including the DAV, participated in the ceremony. Burleigh County Sheriff and DAV member Kelly Leben (pictured on the right) delivered remarks. The flag sojourn will continue until it has been raised in all states, ending its journey in Washington, DC on Independence Day 2026. Flag Sojourn 250 honors our nation's most prized symbol and pays tribute to all of our countrymen and women, including those who have given their lives in service to the ideals the flag represents.



VA Updates

The VA is making progress on the electronic health record system. The current system relies on 1980s architecture and does not communicate well with other platforms. The new system will allow seamless transition of records from the Department of Defense to the VA. Obtaining DOD records has typically slowed the disability claim process, and the new system should address that issue. It will also feature integration across the VA system. Currently, veterans health records are assigned to a specific station (such as Fargo) and are not visible to VA hospitals and clinics in other network service areas. That continues to be an issue for traveling veterans. The electronic health records system is an excellent concept, but we have heard this before and the project has been delayed several times. However, VA officials appear confident it will happen. The target date is May 2027. *(More Updates on Page Two)*

Chaplain Chats

As winter loses its grip and the first signs of spring emerge, we are reminded that renewal is not just something we witness in nature - it is something we participate in. This season, often associated with Easter, speaks to the universal promise that what feels worn, burdened, or uncertain can give way to growth, purpose, and new opportunity. Longer days and warmer light invite us to step forward again - with steadiness, with intention, and with hope.

Renewal does not happen all at once. It happens in small, deliberate steps. It is found in choosing to keep going, in reaching out, in standing back up when the weight of the past tries to hold us down. This is where our mission as the Disabled American Veterans becomes so important.

Every claim we assist with, every veteran we stand beside, every barrier we help remove - this is renewal in action. It is how we turn promise into reality. It is how we ensure that service does not end when the uniform comes off.

(Continued on Page Two)



Message from the Commander

As I write this on March 29th, also known as Vietnam War Veterans Day: I would like to offer my welcome home. Adam Klein Chapter #3 will be hosting our DAV Department Convention this year in Bismarck. This year, we have planned a shortened program in order to make the convention more affordable and convenient. The event is always a great time and much information is shared. We are also sponsoring another meal at First Lutheran Church in April. It is also a great time and lots of laughter. We will have knoephla, sauerkraut, and sausage for the meal prior to our April meeting.

LaMar Kruckenberg, Commander

Visit us at <https://www.aklein3dav.org>

Keeping Our Promise to America's Veterans

VA Updates (*Continued*)

April 2026

The new Bismarck VA clinic is now in the design phase. Groundbreaking should be scheduled in the near future, with opening projected in 2027.

The Fargo VA is hiring a new dentist, orthopedic surgeon, general surgeon, and oncology nurse practitioner.

Foster care for veterans will be expanded in the Bismarck area.

A new parking ramp has been approved for construction on the south side of the Fargo VA campus. Work is scheduled to begin in 2027.

The nationwide disability claim backlog has been reduced to about 60,000, indicating a 65% reduction since January 2025. A claim is considered part of the backlog if it is more than 125 days old. The average processing time has been reduced to 82 days. North Dakota veterans have 1,429 pending claims, with 270 claims in the backlog.

The Fargo VA is in the process of hiring more counselors for the Veterans Readiness & Employment (VR&E) program. Formerly known as vocational rehabilitation, the program assists disabled veterans with career training, life skills, and job placement.

The Bismarck Vet Center is currently understaffed and is interviewing candidates for counselor positions. The Mobile Vet Center will soon resume operations.

Chaplain Chats (*Continued*)

We are not just advocates; we are part of a larger commitment - to restore dignity, to open doors, and to make sure that no veteran walks alone. The work we do matters because the people we serve matter.

Spring reminds us that growth requires effort, but also belief that what we are building today will make tomorrow stronger.

So let this season be a call forward: To continue serving with integrity; to lead with compassion and accountability; to remain steady in our purpose, even when the work is difficult; and most importantly, to remember that every action we take carries forward a promise - to care for those who have borne the cost of service.

May this season bring you renewed strength, clear purpose, and the quiet confidence that your work is making a lasting difference. Together, we continue the mission.