



# 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

Connie Serhienko

### MEETINGS

1st Thursday, 7 p.m.

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Bismarck, ND

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## Department Picnic Planned at ND Veterans Home

The DAV Department of North Dakota is sponsoring a picnic at the North Dakota Veterans Home in Lisbon on Thursday, June 22nd. All DAV members are welcome to attend the picnic. The meal is provided by the DAV at no cost to residents, volunteers, and guests. DAV volunteers do the cooking. The department has sponsored an annual picnic for several years. The residents always enjoy visitors. There is usually a game or two of bingo following the meal. Our chapter will provide transportation in the chapter van, and we will send more details about a week before the event. DAV members also receive credit for volunteer hours. This event is in addition to the chapter picnic in Bismarck in July.



## Free Local Transportation to Medical Appointments

Bis-Man Transit in Bismarck is now offering transportation at no cost to veterans for their local medical appointments. They provide paratransit and fixed route (bus) services in Bismarck and Mandan. Paratransit is "door to door" service for those who are unable to use the bus route due to disability. Veterans must be approved for paratransit service prior to scheduling a ride. The application is available on [www.bismantransit.com](http://www.bismantransit.com). Veterans may also call (701) 258-6817 to request a paper application. A form of government-issued identification (ND driver license with a "V" indicator, Veterans Health ID card, veteran ID card issued by the VA, etc.) will be required to verify veteran status. Bus vouchers may soon be available for veterans who do not qualify for paratransit service. Bis-Man Transit is reimbursed by the North Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs for this service until funds are exhausted. This program is not related to the Veterans Transportation Network, which transports veterans to the Fargo VA Hospital for medical appointments.

**\*\*\*No Chapter Business Meetings in June or July\*\*\***

## Chaplain Chats



Dear members of the DAV, as we enter the month of June and embrace the warmth of summer, let us reflect on our journey as members. This is a time to honor your sacrifices and celebrate the resilience that defines our community. May the spirit of camaraderie and compassion guide us as we support one another and prioritize our well-being. In the season of abundance, let us extend a helping hand to those in need and embody the values of service and unity. May this summer be filled with joy, peace, and endless possibilities.

With gratitude and admiration, Chaplain Leslie Ross

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VA Updates  
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## Message from the Commander



Summer is upon us and in full swing. Summer brings outdoor and family activities. Please enjoy all things in North Dakota. We live in a wonderful state that has much to offer. Consider a day trip to Medora as well as our many state parks. Fort Lincoln is a fantastic day trip with many historical structures as well as a great place for a picnic. At our next meeting in August, we will be serving BBQ brisket with macaroni & cheese infused with bacon and brisket.

LaMar Kruckenberg, Commander

**\*\*\*Save the Date - Chapter Picnic July 25th at Sertoma Park\*\*\***

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

*Keeping Our Promise to America's Veterans*

# \*\*\*UPDATES FROM THE VA\*\*\*

The pandemic health emergency officially ended on May 11, 2023. As a result:

- The VA no longer has authority to vaccinate spouses and caregivers
- Less telework will be authorized for VA staff
- Telemedicine will continue in a reduced capacity
- Vaccines and tests are still available for veterans upon request
- Face masks are no longer required in outpatient and administrative settings within the VA hospital and clinics

Rollout of the Joint Electronic Health Record system has been “rocky” and has been paused until some issues have been resolved. Infrastructure projects to support the proposed system will continue.

The Fargo VA Health Care System budget is well-resourced for the current fiscal year, which ends September 30<sup>th</sup>.

The VA plans to offer toxic exposure screenings every five years. Thus far, 42% of enrolled veterans within the Fargo system have been screened.

The Fisher House project is receiving outstanding financial support. The legislative bodies of North Dakota and Minnesota have authorized funds to support the project. Private donations are also accepted. The Fisher House project in Fargo remains in the land acquisition stage.

The VA is beginning to send some specialists from Fargo for appointments in outpatient clinics. Specialty care also continues to be offered through community care.

Community care is generally scheduling appointments within two weeks after primary care referral. That means the scheduling portion is completed and the actual appointments may be later.

The VA is working on paper beneficiary travel claims received as of March 20<sup>th</sup>. Electronic claims are processed in a more timely manner.

Nationwide, the VA has received 578,000 PACT Act claims and has processed 288,000. North Dakota veterans have submitted 1,584 PACT Act claims. 987 have been processed with awards totaling \$4.1 million.

The VA is adding eight sites for processing PACT Act claims.

The Fargo VA Regional Office now has 85 employees, an increase of more than 30 during the current fiscal year. However, the VA is still hiring claim adjudicators.