



VETS NEWS ND

ND DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

ISSUE 03 DECEMBER 2015



Newsletter

The purpose of this newsletter is to inform readers of local events, community programs, Veteran-related news, and provide information on Veterans' benefits and other resources. This newsletter, in addition to our website and Facebook page, will keep Veterans and their families up-to-date on current events and hopefully serve as an informational guide to various topics, such as education benefits or filing claims.

North Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs Mission Statement

The mission of the North Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs is to assist veterans of North Dakota and their dependents in obtaining all benefits to which they are entitled, both federal and state, either by direct contact or through the assistance of the County and Tribal Veterans Service Officers.

North Dakota State Approving Agency Mission Statement

The North Dakota State Approving Agency works in cooperation with its partners; (1) to promote and safeguard quality education and training programs for all veterans and other eligible persons; (2) to ensure greater education and training opportunities that meet the changing needs of Veterans; and (3) to advocate and support the GI Bill® resources available for those programs.



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2nd WDAY Honor Flight Planned

Three weeks after about 90 veterans were sent to Washington, D.C. on the WDAY Honor Flight, another is already planned.

The announcement was made on the Jay Thomas Show on 970 WDAY Wednesday afternoon.

Donations are already coming in, Julie and Lawson Stephenson, owners of Stephenson's Drywall and Lathing, are giving \$2,000.

Jerome Tappe, co-owner of The Big Lot in Moorhead and of Nereson's of Detroit Lakes, says he'll donate \$100 for every car sold through the end of next week.

The flights cost around \$186,000.

World War II and Korean Veterans who haven't been on a previous flight are still able to apply by calling or going to the website. The flight could be held in May.

To Apply:

Call: 218-284-6667

Website: wdayhonorflight.areavoices.com

Story and Photo via WDAY TV



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North Dakota Veterans News

Group Meets Goal to Place Wreaths at North Dakota Veterans Cemetery

The Bismarck Squadron of the Civil Air Patrol has met its goal of raising enough money to place wreaths on each of the more than 5,600 headstones at the North Dakota Veterans Cemetery south of Mandan.

The project is part of a national effort known as Wreaths Across America.

The Civil Air Patrol will sponsor a wreath-placing ceremony on **Dec. 12** at the cemetery. It will be one of more than 1,000 ceremonies held simultaneously across the country.



Story and Photo via KFGO

Military Opens All Combat Roles to Women; Marines had Sought Some Exceptions

Women can compete for all U.S. Military jobs, including front-line combat posts, Defense Secretary Ash Carter said on [December 3rd], overriding Marine Corps objections in a historic move to strike down gender barriers in the armed services.

“As long as they qualify and meet the standards, women will now be able to contribute to our mission in ways they could not before.” Carter told a Pentagon news conference.

“They’ll be allowed to drive tanks, fire mortars, and lead infantry soldiers into combat. They’ll be able to serve as Army Rangers and Green Berets, Navy SEALs, Marine Corps infantry, Air Force parajumpers and everything else that was previously open only to men,” he said.



Read more about this story on our Facebook page or at inforum.com.

Photo via Reuters



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PTSD Support App - PTSD Coach

The PTSD Coach app was designed for servicemembers and veterans who have PTSD. This app provides readily available tools to manage PTSD-related symptoms and stress and supports servicemembers and veterans with self-assessments, symptom-tracking capabilities, educational materials, and coping skills to address and monitor stress.

The app can chart scores from self-assessments and suggest ways for managing stress, including educational materials and links to resources.

For more information visit: mobile.va.gov/app/ptsd-coach

Search for PTSD Coach in the App Store on iPhone or Android.



Frequently Asked Questions: The GI Bill

Are VA Education Benefits Taxable?

No. Any veterans' benefits paid under any law administered by the Department of Veterans Affairs should not be reported as income to the IRS. You will not receive a W-2 from the VA.

How is my housing allowance paid if I'm not a full-time student?

Under the Post-9/11 GI Bill, a veteran enrolled at more than one-half time can qualify for a monthly housing allowance based on DoD's BHA rate for an E-5 with dependents. VA determines eligibility by calculating the rate of pursuit.

For more information, contact Rhonda Schauer,
Director, State Approving Agency at:

(701) 328-5445 or at www.nd.gov/veterans

What is the Post-9/11 GI Bill eligibility for Active Duty Veterans?

Veterans who have served at least 90 days of active duty service after September 10, 2001 and received honorable discharge will qualify for the Post-9/11 GI Bill. To qualify for a full benefit, a veteran must have served at least 3 years of active duty after September 10, 2001.

What if I receive a failing grade?

You will receive what is called a "punitive grade" for that class. The grade you receive counts in your overall degree progress, albeit negatively. You may take the class again in an attempt to receive credit towards graduation and you may receive GI Bill payment for the re-taking of the class.



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December Events for Vets



You're Invited!

Holiday Party and Silent Auction
American Legion Post 2 and Unit 2

December 8, 2015

Legacy Ballroom, American Legion Post 2
505 3rd Avenue North, Fargo



6:00 pm

Cocktail Hour, Silent Auction, Red River Valley Veterans Concert Band Performance

7:00 pm

Dinner, Speeches and Presentations

8:00 pm

Silent Auction Closes

\$15 per person, dinner being prepared by Commander Christopher Hanson and a team of cooks from both the Post and the Auxiliary

RSVP BY FRIDAY, DECEMBER 4TH!

Contact Vetta Loveland at 237-4040 (daytime) or Marcy Schmidt at 232-1327 (after 5:00 pm) to RSVP!

Fargo VA Blood Drive

The Fargo VA is hosting a Blood Drive!

December 14th from 10:30 AM to 2 PM

The United Blood Services Bloodmobile will be located on the northwest side of the Fargo VA Medical Center.

To schedule an appointment to donate, go to bloodhero.com and click Donate Blood.

Harwood American Legion Christmas Present Bingo

Where: Harwood American Legion
101 Benefit Ln.
Harwood, ND

When: Dec. 5th, Dec. 12th, and Dec. 19th
Noon, 12:30 PM, and 1 PM

Spread the word! The more people that play, the larger the pots get!



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December Events for Vets

Come fill your Christmas Stocking!

Military children and families, bring your stocking and stop by your local Family Assistance Center for FREE stocking stuffers!
(while supplies last)

December 7th through the 21st

Bismarck—Military Service Center, 1850 E. Bis. Expressway (8am-5pm) 701-333-4800

Minot—Reserve Center, 3420 2nd St. NE (9am-4pm) 701-420-5861

Fargo—Military Service Center, 2219 12th St. N, Ste B (8am-5pm) 701-451-6090

Grand Forks—Armory, 1501 48th St. S (9am-4pm) 701-792-4568

Devils Lake—Reserve Center, 4417 Highway 20,
building 6400 (9am-5pm) 701-665-7896

Thanks!

Toys donated by community members at local Dollar Tree Stores with the support of Operation Homefront.

For more information, contact:

JJ Fankhanel 701-451-6109

jonathan.j.fankhanel.ctr@mail.mil



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