

Vets Views VA Health benefits and call for appointments!
26 May 06

So, did you get out to the local Memorial Day events? Why not? Is one day a year to honor our fallen comrades sufficient? Maybe our nation should observe a similar event every few months.

Now hear this: This is important! If you "signed up" for VA health benefits, by filling out that blue form, called a 10-10, and if you enrolled in the system prior to 16 January 2003, then you're good to go, right?

WRONG!! There's one more piece to this: You must also **use** the VA health system/benefits in some capacity, during the time you're enrolled. If you signed up in, say 1999 or 2001, and have never been to any VA health facility, you could be in trouble. I'll put it this way, if you want to keep your name in the VA "will", you better at least go there once every couple years for a check-up, or get some co-pay drugs, or something! If not, they can and will, dis-enroll you, which means when you try to re-enroll, you may end up in that group of folks who are over the income/asset limit and will not be serviced by the VA health system. Troops, this is a biggie, so if you have any questions at all, call me! Bottom line: If you've never been to the Fargo VA medical facility, go!

Support Our Troops license plates are still available at the local License Bureau, so come on now, go get them! The Bureau tells me they are not giving out very many, but I have seen a few more around the county, so thanks to those who have picked up these plates. I know the monies collected will go only to help our veterans, and nothing else, so why not visibly show your support?

From time to time, I am called away from the Roseau office, there are quarterly conferences in Fargo, where all the county VSOs (Veterans Service Officers) meet face to face with the VA Medical Center personnel and we fight it out hand to hand. Well, at any rate, we do meet face to face and we try to resolve differences of opinion as to how our vets are being treated by the VA, or we just get to know the people there better, so if we ever need to, we can "call in" any blue chips we might have with a certain medical specialty or office there. From what I've seen, we've been able to bring some good results back; one of the areas in which we have made progress is Audiology. Also, we have spring, summer, and fall training conferences, where we meet with the Federal and State VA experts, and receive training and updates to rules and regulations, etc. We need to attend these events to maintain our State Certification. So, why am I telling you this? Two reasons: **1**. Sometimes the office is closed

because I am out of town. **2.** If you really want/need to see me, please call and make an appointment, that way, I'll be there when it's convenient for you, and I'll have time to research your issues. If you just show up at the courthouse, I might have someone in my office already, and you'll have to wait, or come back later. So, your option--you choose.

Remember this, if my office hours don't work for you, call me and I'll meet you on a weekend or an evening, or whenever we can get together.

Over and Out