

Washington Issues and Thanksgiving

In my 26 October column, I wrote about the Trump administration looking at privatizing the VA. It wasn't getting much attention at the time. However, last week MSNBC did a report on it and several Veterans organizations have come out opposed to plans to privatize the VA, according to the Military Times website. VA Secretary David Shulkin told Congress in his confirmation hearing that it 'would not happen under my watch'. We must make sure it does not happen. Contacting our US Senators and Representatives is a very good idea. I have used both private health care, Sanford and the VA health care and they seem equal in service. The VA, however, is much better trained to work with the special needs of Veterans. Recently, Sweetie and I talked with a retired VA hospital nurse who worked with PTSD and other related conditions. She believes in the VA health care system.

Another issue facing Veterans and non-Veterans alike is the plan by the FCC to eliminate net neutrality. Net neutrality, as it exists today, prohibits the telecommunications industry to charge more for some web services. For example, a Internet service provider could charge customers more to stream movies from Netflix than from Hulu. Or a provider could charge less to stream UND hockey games than stream NDSU football. Contacting our Senators and Representatives is critical.

Sweetie, Bev and I had a wonderful Thanksgiving at the Green Valley Legion post 66. We are getting to know more people here and are thankful for that. Speaking of thankful, there are some folks I want to thank for helping me along my way. From my high school, I am forever grateful for my high school math teacher, Ethel Torgerson and my speech and drama teacher May Larson. When I was at the induction center in Fargo, going into the Air Force, the liaison person took me in his office and gave me the real story of what to expect in the Air Force, including a special language test, which I passed and was assigned to a Russian program at the University of Indiana. While a student at MSUM, I met and became friends with Larry MacLeod, who was very encouraging and provided excellent advice. Larry served in WWI in the Army Air Corps. My mentors at MSUM are very important. Bob MacLeod encouraged me to apply for a position with him, Eileen Hume, MSUM's first feminists opened my eyes to the inequality between the sexes and Don Engberg who was the driving force for me to become the Computer Center director. Bette Midgarden and David Crocket were the best, supporting my plans to expand the computer presence on campus and state-wide.

My two stepsons, Chris and Ryan have become responsible and caring adults and still put up with me. The person I'm most thankful for is, of course, my Sweetie Bev. Bev is smart and can carry on a conversation on almost any topic. But best of all, she convinced me that spending the winter in a warm climate was a good idea. Thanks to all.