

Trump's Parade

According to a memo from the Pentagon on the parade President Trump wants, I've been asked by several people what I think of it. Here goes. While in the military, I marched in a few parades, mostly at basic training. Here is what it is like for the marchers. First, you get lots of practice. You make sure your uniform is clean, pressed and ready. You make sure your shoes are polished. Then you stand waiting for the parade to start, in uniform. During the parade, all marchers must be in step, march in a straight line, salute when required and appear professional. I never enjoyed any of them. However, the biggest reason to not hold it on Veterans Day as planned is because that is the day set aside to honor our Veterans along with those currently on active duty. I don't think making them march in a parade is much of an honor. Estimates of the cost range from \$10 million to \$30 million, according to White House budget director Mick Mulvaney. This amount could be used for our homeless Veterans. Newsweek reported that all 40,000 plus homeless Veterans could be fed three meals a day for over two weeks with \$10 million. The homeless number is from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). You may remember HUD Secretary Ben Carson wanted to spend \$31,000 for a dining set for his office. The money could reduce the number of months Veterans wait in order to get an appointment with some of our VA hospitals. Speaking of costs, I've found no report on director Shulkin reimbursing our country for any of the \$140,000 spent on his European vacation last year. While I'm complaining about department directors in D.C., did you hear the 60 minutes interview of Education Secretary Betsy DeVos? She wants to close public schools. As a graduate of public schools from first grade through Masters, I know our public schools are doing a great job. Thanks, teachers. Finally, I don't think teachers should be supplied with guns. I want them to teach.

Minnesota Legislative Update

A few bills have been introduced in the MN House and Senate. As you may know, Minnesota offers a homestead valuation exclusion for disabled Veterans. A bill has been introduced in the House to increase the amount for qualified disabled Veterans. The bill is now in the Taxes committee. In the Senate, a bill was introduced to add Veteran status to the list of data collected by the Secretary of State agency appointments. A companion bill is in the Senate for the House bill for a homestead exclusion. A legislative update has been scheduled for Thursday, 5 April at the Moorhead Library starting at 6:30 pm. We expect Sen. Eken, Rep. Marquart and Rep. Lien to attend and take your questions. This event is sponsored by Beyond the Yellow Ribbon Moorhead and the League of Women Voters of the Red River Valley.