

VA Homeless Funding Restored

Here is some bad and good news. On 22 September 2017, the VA director David Shulkin decided to divert about \$460 million dollars from a program funded to help homeless Veterans find affordable housing. That was the bad news. Since that time, many Veterans organizations, homeless groups and the National League of Cities lobbied Director Shulkin until he issued the following statement "There will be absolutely no change in the funding to support our homeless programs." That is the good news, but we should thank the groups who made the director restore the funding. Notice that the VA director did not eliminate the program, but removed the funding which in effect does the same thing. We continue to watch actions taken in D.C. This will be especially true if the proposed tax bill passes and adds over a trillion dollars to the national debt. The next step for D.C. is to start cutting programs. The VA may be a target.

I've found some disturbing things here in Green Valley and some really good things about Veterans. While at a local Legion post, one of the members apparently is a Adolf Hitler fan because he was praising Hitler's actions. It was pretty strange. On a positive side, the local American Legion Riders, Auxiliaries and Posts, working with the VA in Tucson, all host fund raising events and donate funds to local and regional Veterans support groups.

As you may remember, the American Legion was formed at the end of WWI, held its first convention in Minneapolis in 1919 and will hold its 100th again in Minneapolis in 2018. The Legion is encouraging local Legions to help celebrate with local activities and events. The Moorhead Legion along with the Beyond the Yellow Ribbon Moorhead is doing that. We received a small grant to hire a person to do research on our local Legions. We decided to include local VFWs in our project. Our researcher has been working for the past couple months, collecting information and interviewing people. Some stories are now on-line at vssa.us which stands for Veterans Still Serving America. Please check it out and send me information and comments.

A couple weeks ago, we found a small guy (about 12 inches tall) in a red suit sitting on our patio wall. We believe he is a Julenisse and are taking no chances. According to Norwegian traditions, the Nisse are spirits and must be treated with respect. So, we made a special place for him in our home. Tradition also says that we must leave him a bowl of rice porridge or rommegrot with a large pat of butter on winter solstice. Doing so will bring good luck to us and our home. If we don't, the Nisse may do mischief such as tying animal's tails together. We have a couple cats and we really don't want that to happen! We hope everyone has a wonderful holiday season and a great new year.