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Monthly Newsletter
April 2018

North Central MN Chapter #7
PO Box 564
Bemidji, MN 56619

NEXT MEETING:
New DAV Center on 15th Street NW
Bemidji, MN
Monday, April 16th at 7pm

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COMMANDER:	Dave Sterr - (218) 556-4633
SENIOR VICE:	Mike Zimmerman - (218) 252-2061
JUNIOR VICE:	Joe Vene
ADJUTANT:	David Myers
SERVICE OFFICER:	Walter James
TREASURER:	Jeri Harvey
CHAPLAIN:	Mike Gutz - (218) 444-5015
CHAPLAIN (ALT.):	Bruce Holden - (218) 467-3591
JUDGE ADVOCATE:	Bruce Holden - (218) 467-3591
SERGEANT AT ARMS:	Bruce Tiegen
OFFICER OF THE DAY:	Glenn Aagard
LEGISLATIVE CHAIR:	Joe Vene
HISTORIAN:	Steve Hauschildt
EXEC. COMMITTEE:	Bruce Tiegen, Steve Hauschildt, Tom Annonson - (218) 251-3025, torgor@lightspeed.net

NEW TOOL FOR TRACKING VETERAN'S BENEFITS CLAIMS APPEALS ANNOUNCED.

On March 23, 2018, the VA and U.S. Digital Service announced the launch of a new web tool to help Veterans Track their Benefits Appeals. This tool is designed to improve the Appeals Status process by increasing transparency and enabling Veterans to track the progress of their benefits claims appeals.

"It's important that our Veterans have the opportunity to track their appeals process in a timely and efficient manner," said VA Secretary David Shulkin. "For the first time ever, Veterans can see their place on the Board of Veterans' Appeals' docket, including the number of appeals that are ahead of them."

The tool, which went live March 21 on the VA's Vets.gov website, will allow Veterans to access detailed information about the status of their benefits appeals and will include alerts about needed actions, as well as estimates of how long each step of the process takes. Some Veterans who have previewed the new tool said it had given them hope and helped them understand that the process might take longer than expected.

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COMMANDERS CORNER

As winter comes to an end there is much anticipation for green trees, green grass and warm weather. I'm sure we will be working on repairs and upgrades to our building and property this year. There is always something on the docket when you have a building to tend to and trucks and trailers to keep in good condition.

This is a good time to point out what it takes to have a high functioning organization like ours. Our Chapter 7 DAV Members and Volunteers give of their time and dedication to work as a team to support the work of our organization. We expect that we will be very busy with our clothing program this year. The donations from the communities in our chapter area continue to increase, almost to the point where we can barely keep up sometimes. Our other fund raisers, mainly the "Forget-Me-Not" program, continue and are going well, also.

None of our programs could continue without our team of members and volunteers. The pace they maintain during our busy months is impressive. The clothing bins must be checked and emptied twice a week all year-round. On Tuesday, the DAV building comes alive with volunteers working on getting the semi filled with donations. It is hard work, but enjoyable when working with this amazing crew. When the Tuesday morning clothing work is complete, the crew tends to housekeeping things that need to be done to keep the building a safe and clean facility to work in. These folks are beyond generous with their time and just plain fun to be around. My hat's off to them and I think they are truly AMAZING!

I am also looking forward to another year as Commander, and I am looking forward, again, to working with the DAV officers. I find them a pleasure to work with, and I depend on their expertise to keep our program on the straight and narrow. The more we grow, the more complicated things can get. I repeat, my hat's off to them and I think they are truly AMAZING!

Commander Dave Sterr


The DAV's main mission is to help veterans in need. If you or someone you know is in need, the Veteran's Service Officer should be contacted by calling the Veteran's Service Office (333-4178). The officer will determine if the veteran qualifies for assistance and can then determine what funds or services are available to the veteran or a veteran's family member. Know also that we have a large supply of medical equipment items to offer our veterans (free of charge). Contact any of the DAV officers and they can help you connect with the person who can help you with securing an item you might need.



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THE DISABLED AMERICAN VETERAN NORTH CENTRAL MINNESOTA CHAPTER # 7 REGULARLY CONVENED ON 19 MARCH 2018 AT 1900.

- Opening Prayer
- Pledge of Allegiance

A. Roll Call of Officers to determine if quorum is present

OFFICERS

Commander: Dave SterrPresent
Senior Vice Commander: Mike ZimmermanPresent
Junior Vice Commander: Joe VenePresent
Adjutant: David MyersPresent
Treasurer: Jeri Harvey.....Present
Chaplain: Mike GutzPresent
Judge Advocate: Bruce Holden.....Present
Sergeant- at-Arms: Bruce TiegenPresent
Officer of the Day: Glen Agard..... Excused
Historian: Vacant N/A

B. Members Present: 25

C. Introduction of guests or visitors, prospective new members, and transfers to Chapter # 7.

Guests/Visitors: Mr. Henry Hammersback, a member of another chapter who is looking to transfer to chapter 7.

Prospective new members: None present

Transfers in: None

D. Minutes of Previous Meeting:

The minutes of February 19th, 2018 were read. Andy Staudt pointed out that the "motion" discussed in item 1 of new business was in fact not a motion, because it had been approved. Wording of the minutes should be amended to reflect this. *Motion to approve minutes as amended was made by Andy Staudt, 2nd by Randy Hanevold. Motion carried.*

E. Financial Report for 1 –28 February:

Chapter treasurer Jeri Harvey gave a report. *Motion to accept the report as read was made by Andy Staudt, 2nd by Steve Hauschildt. Motion carried.*

F. Sickness or distress:

No sickness has been reported

G. New Member Obligation:

None

H. Communications:

There were four items received:

1. A thank you note from the director of the St Cloud VA recreation Activities for our donation of \$400.00
2. A thank you note from the MN State Veterans Cemetery Administrator for our donation.
3. A thank you from the Middle River Veterans Board of Directors for our donation.
4. A Thank you note from Fergus Falls Veterans Home director of volunteer services for our donation.

I. Committee Reports:

1. **Membership Report:** No new members
2. **Service Officer Report:** 7 veterans were assisted in various capacities.
3. **Legislative Report:** Joe Vene thanked the members for their attendance at the Veterans on the Hill event and discussed the importance of making our voices heard at upcoming events.
4. **Hospital Chaplain Report:** No report
5. **Entertainment:** Chairmanship of this committee is open.
6. **Fundraising committee:** Gun Show at the Armory on Saturday 24 March, and Sunday, 25 March.
7. **Newsletter Committee:** Need articles to be submitted no later than Thursday 22 March.

J. Old Business

1. Veterans on the hill update: 38 veterans were transported on a 55-passenger bus were transported to the State Capital. We will know more regarding funding as donations continue to come in and hope to close out this item at the April meeting.
2. After meeting with the Department Adjutant and two Past Department Commanders to address the issues brought forward by Tom Annonson, it was determined that the election of officers would stand, with the exception of the At-Large members of the Executive Committee. That election would need to be redone. At that point, the adjutant called for volunteers from the floor. The following expressed interest: Tom Annonson, Walter James, Glenn Aagard, Andy Staudt, Bruce Tiegen, Tara Schwinghammer, Randy Hanevold, Steve Hauschildt, and Gene Schwantes. Because of the number of candidates, each member present was given a slip of paper, and told to choose three. Ballots were gathered, and counted by David Myers, Bruce Holden, and Robert Sadoris. The following were elected to the Executive Committee as At-Large members: Tom Annonson, Bruce Tiegen, and Steve Hauschildt.

K. New Business

1. Commander Sterr pointed out that a historian was needed, and Steve Hauschildt volunteered. Commander Sterr appointed Steve to the vacant position.
2. Gene Schwantes reported that so far this year, there have been 9 issues of medical equipment, and 5 donations to the chapter of items to be donated. Tom Annonson suggested that this report be added to the monthly reports. Commander Sterr agreed, and this will be done.
3. Mike Gutz made the suggestion that all new members be issued blue "Garrison style" caps, once they have attended 5 meetings. The suggestion was made from the floor that all active members be issued the caps as well. Walter James made the motion, and Tara Schwinghammer seconded. *After further discussion, this motion has been tabled until May, when the budget committee will look at the issue, and make a recommendation.*
4. Robert Sadoris made the suggestion that the chapter donate to Stephen Whiteheads campaign for National Sr. Vice Commander. Walter James made the motion that we donate \$500.00 to Butch Whiteheads campaign, and Tom Annonson seconded the motion. Discussion was made suggesting that while this is legal, that it was a misuse of funds. Others disagreed. A vote was called, with 13 ayes, and 10 nays. Motion carried.

L. Executive Committee Action Items:

Commander Sterr brought forward the case of a Veterans spouse in need of a ramp. The total cost was \$1831.16. While this exceeds our normal donation, the ramp was needed so that the woman could get to Chemo. *Motion to pay this bill was made by Glenn Aagard, 2nd by Gene Schwantes. Carried*

M. Good of the Order:

Robert Sadoris pointed out that the Department had issued an invitation to a member (who had never attended a convention) to attend the upcoming State Convention free of charge.

Minute of silence was observed for our fallen comrades

N. Motion to adjourn:

Made by Walter James, 2nd by Andy Staudt. Carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 2030 hours. The next meeting will be held on 16 April 2018 at 1900 hours at the Chapter HQ.

VETERANS ON THE HILL DAY 12 MARCH 2018



Marching up to the Capitol from the Veterans Administration Building.



One of the other meeting rooms waiting for the Representatives from their Districts to arrive.



The upper levels were lined with Veterans and families during the opening program as well.

As can be seen from the pictures, we had a very good turnout from Veterans from all over the State for the Veterans on the Hill day this year. Our bus picked up Veterans and their spouses from the Bemidji Walmart (28), Kabakona Corners (1), the former Akeley VFW (3) and at the truck stop in Motely (6). Of the 58 Veterans and Spouses originally signed up, several of them from Crookston, Park Rapids and Brainard got together and opted to carpool from their respective areas, so we ended up with 38 people making the bus trip with us to St Paul. The ride down to St Paul was abuzz with conversations about the various topics to be discussed with our Representatives and members of the different Committees dealing with Veterans issues.

Donations from the Bemidji American Legion and VFW Posts, DAV Chapters #38(Park Rapids) and #22(Brainard), the Minnesota Am Vets and the Minnesota DAV Foundation covered the cost of the bus (\$1500) and the Bemidji DAV Chapter #7 covered the cost of the great buffet lunch at the Golden Corral in Maple Grove on the way home (\$455.75). Coffee, doughnuts and water were provided for morning snacks, along with a donation of 4 dozen assorted muffins from Raphael's Bakery & Cafe in Bemidji.



One of the several meeting rooms where we able to meet with our Representatives after the opening ceremonies.



In the Capitol Rotunda during the opening and greeting ceremonies.

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CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

We are living in an offensive and hypersensitive world. Many subjects once understood to be separate in the past, are now coming together as a single issue resulting in a variety of misunderstandings, lack of discernment and undeniable cruelty. This lack of wisdom has created a culturally offensive atmosphere. As a result, many people have been uncharacteristically labeled unfairly. This applies to many veterans. The cultural climate we live mirrors the description given by the scriptures (II Timothy 3:1-9).

Jesus Christ dealt with offenses too. Most of the ideas people found offensive from Jesus was the result of processing the things He said (John 6:60-66). Essentially there was a clash between two worldviews-perceptions, Jesus heavenly worldview and their religious and cultural worldview. In the case of Jesus' activities and statements He was not trying to push people away, rather he was challenging their perceptions and commitment to Him as disciples. All the people Jesus was working with had a very good understanding of the Old Testament and were very familiar with Moses. Jesus was challenging them to go beyond their perspectives because at the time, the people considered Jesus as a great prophet - like Moses. Jesus was trying to show them He was superior to Moses (Hebrews 1:1-2). As a result, Jesus was challenging them with heavenly and spiritual insights that the people found to be very offensive. Kind of sounds like today, people continue to have their perceptions challenged regarding who really was Christ.

There is a clash that exists between people who really have no idea (but think they know everything) about being a veteran and those who lived through our many different kinds of experiences. As veterans, many of us are simply trying to survive the experiences we lived through, while living in the moment. There are so many veterans hurting and as we all know, there are times when the media, our own government, veteran service organizations, friends and families really do not understand us because their perspectives are different from ours. It is true, there are specific relationships we want to avoid, such as those who do not have our best interests in mind. Some examples are those who only want to use us for one reason or another, while being overly pushy and opinionated. It seems they are only interested in control. As the scriptures show, Jesus himself had people leave Him because they could no longer use and control Him the way they wanted, even though He loved them (John 6).

These differences of perspectives and worldviews does not make it easy on us, friends, family or our veteran service organizations (AAPTSDA, AMVETS, DAV, MCL, MOPH, NABVETS, PVA, TREA, TROA, VFW) who are constantly challenging non-veteran perspectives, especially when those perspectives countermand all the good efforts from others who are trying to help. There are instances when the media, our own government, friends and families do help, it seems like it has to do more with a shared perspective and the relationships we have with certain people. These relationships are worth their weight in gold with a lot of healing and enjoyment. We want to be in relationships that are good, kind, honest, and helpful. These relationships allow us time to sense the freedom and liberty God has for us through His mercy. These kinds of relationship dynamics are true for us today. It is such a breath of fresh air to be with people who have a good sense of camaraderie, who work hard at honoring others and continue with the purpose God has for their lives. As we are always reminded at the end of our meetings by our commander; "If I cannot speak good of my comrade, I will not speak ill of him or her".

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Mike Gutz



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AUXILIARY CORNER

We had a great meeting on 4/19/18. State Adjutant LeeAnn Karg joined us. We had our election and LeeAnn installed our new officers. Spring convention is May 3-5, and we need live and silent auction items. If you have anything to donate, please bring it to the April meeting, also bring in the small toiletries again.

Our new officers are:

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Jr. Vice Commander Sarah Haack

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