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Monthly Newsletter  
May 2024

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



**NEXT MEETING:**

**DAV Headquarters at  
5441 15th Street NW, Bemidji, MN  
Monday, May 20 at 6:30pm**



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**CHAPTER OFFICERS**

- |                      |  |
|----------------------|--|
| COMMANDER:           | Gene Schwantes - (218) 556-4592  |
| SENIOR VICE:         | Darrel Baltzell  |
| JUNIOR VICE:         | Tom Annonson   |
| ADJUTANT:            | Jeff Meyer   |
| SERVICE OFFICERS:    | Tom Annonson - (218) 251-3025  |
| TREASURER:           | Jeri Harvey  |
| CHAPLAIN:            | Mike Gutz - (218) 444-5015   |
| JUDGE ADVOCATE:      | Ward Sutton  |
| SERGEANT AT ARMS:    | Bruce Tiegen   |
| OFFICER OF THE DAY:  | Glenn Agard  |
| LEGISLATIVE OFFICER: | Joe Vene   |
| HISTORIAN:           | Vacant   |
| EXEC. COMMITTEE:     | Bruce Tiegen, Gary Guggenberger, Andy Staudt,<br>Henry Hammerback, Jim Pinsonnault |

**CH. #7 UPCOMING HOLIDAYS & EVENTS**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| May 1st - May Day   | June 6th - D-Day: Allied Invasion of Europe began in 1944.   |
| May 2nd - National Day of Prayer  | June 14th - Flag Day -- US Army founded in 1775.   |
| May 6th -- DAV Chapter 7 Executive Meeting @ 1630 Hrs.                    | June 16th - Father's Day   |
| May 7th - Unconditional Surrender of all German Forces signed in 1945.    | June 17th -- DAV Chapter 7 General Membership Meeting @ 1830 Hrs.                                  |
| May 8th - Victory in Europe (V-E) Day                                     | June 19th - Juneteenth, commemorating the ending of slavery in the United States.                  |
| May 10th - Military Spouses Day   | June 20th - Summer begins.   |
| May 12th - Mother's Day   | June 22nd - Pledge of Allegiance recognized by Congress in 1942 - GI bill signed into Law in 1944. |
| May 15th - Peace Officers Memorial Day (Flags at Half Staff until Sunset) | June 25th - The Korean War began in 1950.  |
| May 18th - Armed Forces Day   | June 27th - National Post Traumatic Stress Awareness Day   |
| May 20th -- DAV Chapter 7 General Membership Meeting @ 1830 Hrs.          | June 30th - Post 9/11 GI Bill signed into law in 2008.   |
| May 22nd - National Maritime Day  |  |
| May 27th - Memorial Day (Flags at half-staff until Noon)                  |  |
| June 2nd - Ride for the Troops motorcycle fundraising event in Bemidji    |  |
| June 3rd -- DAV Chapter 7 Executive Meeting @ 1630 Hrs.                   |  |



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# COMMANDER'S CORNER

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Greetings Veterans,

On April 17th I went to Veterans Day on the Hill in St. Paul along with about 50 other people on our bus. When we got to the Armory in St Paul, we joined about 800 other Veterans and veteran supporters to hold the Veterans Rally at the State Capital Building in hopes of convincing our law makers to support and pass a standalone Veterans Bill. It was a sight to see that many people marching to the Capitol and crowding into the Rotunda to send our message loud and clear and now it is up to our law makers to get the job done!! Remember, voting for these law makers is this coming November and if they don't want to vote the will of their constituents, only party lines, then vote them out!!!!

We had a very crowded and productive meeting on April 15, between the Chapter, Executive Committee, and myself, we approved helping 5 veterans in need for a total of \$3895.27 for the month. We also approved our budget committee members that will help create our budget for the coming year. Bruce, Randy, Roger, and Pete volunteered to come up with a plan and work on our 100th Anniversary Celebration to be held on October 20 at the Eagles. I am sure that this group would be willing to accept your volunteering to help with this project, it is a very large undertaking, so, step up and say I can help!!!

Don't forget that we have medical equipment available for those in need, so far, reported in 2024 we have issued 103 items of medical equipment and have only received 51 donated items. So, if you have any pieces of medical equipment laying around and no longer needed, please feel free to donate so that we can continue to help more veterans.

Well, summer isn't quit here just yet, but it is getting close, I hope you have a great spring and are able to get all of your planting done. Enjoy the upcoming seasons with family and friends and have a great spring and summer.

Stay healthy,  
Gene Schwantes

---

## VETERANS ON THE HILL DAY MESSAGE FROM TRENT DILKES DATED 18 APRIL 2024!

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Greetings all,

We are less than 24 hours removed from the largest Veterans Rally in recent Minnesota history. What a special day! I am so incredibly thankful for the amazing turnout, the enthusiasm, and the dedication of all involved. It would have been easy to stay home, but hundreds and hundreds of you chose to show up and make your voices heard.

A special thank you to everyone who made this event possible. The staff from the DAV, the volunteers who set up the armory the day before, the caterers who did an amazing job making sure everyone got fed, our sound magician Alex, and the staff from SnowGlobe who did a great job running the show and getting a thousand little details right. So, so many people are needed to make this day a success.

A huge shoutout to all of the local organizers who put together buses to get Veterans from all corners of the state to the rally. Without your efforts, we would not have set an attendance record. Your time and dedication are appreciated.

Everyone who showed up played an important role. There is strength in numbers. It gets the attention of lawmakers, the meetings you scheduled will have an impact beyond this session. Your attendance, your participation sends a message, "We are here, we are paying attention, we want action." The more of us who show up, the louder that message.

### **I have been asked: Did it make a difference?**

The answer is **YES**. On the sidelines of the rally in the rotunda I had a couple of lawmakers commit to trying to get even more done for Veterans this session. They saw your numbers, they saw our unity, they heard your voices and recognized this is a group that wants progress. Whether that translates into something more by the end of session we will see, but it is a victory either way. This will leave a lasting impression into next year.

I would also like to thank the leadership of the DAV MN for dedicating so many resources to this event. It costs money to rent the armory, sound system, stage, food, bus reimbursement, etc.. It uses resources to dedicate nearly our entire staff to helping with this event. I feel fortunate to be a part of an organization that recognizes this is an investment. Thank you to Commander Fields, Adjutant Whitehead, and the entire Executive Committee of DAV MN for their continued support of this event.

We were helped this year by a generous grant from the V4V- Minnesota Veterans 4 Veterans Trust and their support is greatly appreciated. I hope all who attended this year left feeling good, knowing you made your voice heard, and made a difference. I look forward to an even larger crowd next year. I will leave you with one of my favorite quotes:

"Decisions are made by those who show up." Sorkin  
Together- WE CAN!

Trent C Dilks  
Legislative Director  
Disabled American Veterans, Dept. of Minnesota  
20 West 12th St., 3rd Flr, St. Paul, MN 55155  
O: (651) 291-1212 C: (651) 788-3186

# THE DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS NORTH CENTRAL CHAPTER #7 REGULARLY CONVENED ON 15 APRIL 2024 AT 1830.

OPENING CEREMONY: \* OPENING PRAYER \* PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

A. ROLL CALL of OFFICERS to determine if a quorum is present.

<b>Commander</b>	<b>Gene Schwantes</b>	<b>Present</b>
<b>Senior Vice Commander</b>	<b>Darrell Baltzell</b>	<b>Present</b>
<b>Junior Vice Commander</b>	<b>Tom Annonson</b>	<b>Present</b>
<b>Adjutant</b>	<b>Jeff Meyer</b>	<b>Present</b>
<b>Treasurer</b>	<b>Jeri Harvey</b>	<b>Excused</b>
<b>Chaplain</b>	<b>Mike Gutz</b>	<b>Present</b>
<b>Judge Advocate</b>	<b>Ward Sutton</b>	<b>Present</b>
<b>Sergeant-At-Arms</b>	<b>Bruce Tiegen</b>	<b>Present</b>
<b>Officer of the Day</b>	<b>Glen Aagard</b>	<b>Present</b>
<b>Historian</b>	<b>Vacant</b>	<b>N/A</b>

B. Members Present: 20

C. Introduction of Guests or Visitors: Peter Kemmer

D. Minutes of Previous Meeting:

- Minutes were read and motion to accept made by Andy, 2d by Mike, the motion carried.

E. Treasurer's Report:

- The treasurer's report was not available for this meeting and will be read next month.

F. Communications:

- Savers reports 53 loaded trailers in the inventory; 12 cloth, 36, misc., and 5 of books. Also, Josh reports things are going well, and operations are smooth.
- National is promoting the upcoming national convention Aug3-6 which will be held in Phoenix this year.
- Veterans Campground on Big Marine Lake sent us an update on the upgrades and work they have accomplished at the campground as well as a request for additional funds.
- Trent Dilkes sent us an information packet to help us prepare for Veterans on the Hill this year, which promises to be bigger and better than ever.

G. Committee Reports:

- Membership: Bruce Tiegen, John Workman, and Rodney Olson are officially transferred in from their original chapters, with unanimous vote.
- Service Officer: Tom reports two separate Veterans were assisted by him this month getting them established with the VA to receive benefits they have earned.
- Hospital/Sickness and Distress: NA
- Legislative: Trent has identified two priorities for this current session, meaningful property tax relief for MN Veterans, and their survivors, and provide increased access to education for the spouses and dependents of our Veterans. To support these initiatives or get more information, contact Trent Dilkes, or sign up for MNfluence today for up to the minute information on legislative happenings.
- Entertainment: NA
- Publicity and Fundraising: Bemidji gun show at the Armory found Tom raising an additional \$1,307 for the chapter.

7. Medical Equipment: 25 issues and 15 donations.

8. Scholarship Committee: Deadline was today (4/14/24) to receive applications, we have received a lot of applications this year and the scholarship committee will meet on Monday 4/22/24 to select the six recipients.

H. Executive Committee Action Items: No actions were brought forward.

I. Old Business:

- Veterans Day on the Hill April 17, leaving Walmart parking lot 0600, with an anticipated return to Bemidji between 1830 and 1900, contact Tom for more info or to sign up. You do not need to be a Veteran to participate!
- Chapter 7 Officers and appointees were sworn in at the general meeting 4/15/2024. Congratulations to Cmdr. Gene Schwantes, Sr. Vice Darrel Baltzell, and Jr. Vice Tom Annonson.
- DAV Convention 4/25-27, Gene, Tom, and Ward will be attending.
- The idea of a special dinner at the Eagles Club was briefly discussed and then tabled for April.

J. New Business:

- Veteran in need; needed help with paying for new dentures, Andy made a motion to pay \$1100.00 towards the dentures and the motion was 2d by Randy and carried unanimously.
- Veteran in need; needing help with medical bills, Mike made the motion to provide \$1000 dollars towards the Veterans bill, 2d was made by Tom and the motion carried.
- DAV convention delegate nominees: Gene, Tom, and Ward. If you are interested in attending this year's spring convention on 25-27 April, please get a hold of the adjutant or the commander ASAP.
- There will be an open house at the Bemidji Veterans Home for anyone interested on 7/1/24 at 1300 hours.
- Budget committee was formed consisting of Tom, Andy, and Jim, motion to accept was made by Mike, 2d by Ron, motion carried.
- The Chapter is looking into possibly holding the July general meeting as well as monthly social visits to the Bemidji Veterans Home, more information will be shared as it becomes available.
- Tom reminded us that the "Let's Go Fishing" program kicks off in May, be sure to contact Adult Day Services to get on the schedule.
- Pete Kemmer shared that another program "fishingforlife.org" out of the twin cities offers fishing trips for Veterans and their families. Check out the bulletin board for contact info if you are interested.

K. Good of the Order:

- The American Legion is interested in having a joint organizational fish fry at the Bemidji Veterans Home, additional information will be shared when it becomes available.

L. Closing Ceremonies performed.

M. Motion to Adjourn:

- Motion by Mike, 2d by Andy. Motion carried.
- Meeting adjourned at 1956 hrs.
- Next meeting 5/20/2024



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# VETERAN OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES PROGRAMS

The following is a list of Organizations that cater to taking Veterans on outdoor events, usually at no cost to Veterans and some offer events that are also available to your family members as well. If you are interested in participating in any of these events and don't have access to a computer have a family member help you get in contact with them. Their contact info is listed on their home pages.

## American Heroes Outdoor TV

<https://www.americanheroesoutdoors.com/applications/>

## Band of Brothers Outdoors

<https://www.bandofbrothersoutdoors.com/>

## Brady Oberg Legacy Foundation

<https://bradyoberglegacyfoundation.org/>

## Fishing With Vets

<https://fishingwithvets.org/>

## Mandatory Fun Outdoors

<https://mandatoryfunoutdoors.org/>

## Middle River Veterans Outdoors

<https://mrveteransoutdoors.com/>

## Minnesota Veterans Outdoors

<https://www.mnvetsoutdoors.org/>

## Warriors and Walleyes

<https://warriorsandwalleyes.org/>

## Wounded Warrior Guide Service

<https://wwgsmn.org/>

## MILITARY HOLIDAYS AND OBSERVANCE DAYS THROUGHOUT THE YEAR:


- May 1 – Silver Star Banner Day – Per Congressional resolution, it is an “Official Day to honor wounded, ill, and injured Veterans”.
- May 7 – Military Spouse Appreciation Day – This date recognizes the service and sacrifices of military spouses.
- May 13 – Children of Fallen Patriots Day – A Day to honor the children left behind by the brave men and women who gave their lives while defending our freedom.
- May 15 – Armed Forces Day - Observed on the third Saturday every May, this is a day dedicated to paying tribute to men and women currently serving in the U.S. Armed Forces.
- May 31 – Memorial Day - A solemn occasion to honor the men and women who died while serving in the military.

## UPCOMING DAV MN OUTDOOR EVENTS

The Minnesota DAV Department's Outdoor program has scheduled their upcoming events and posted them on their website. Check them out at: <https://davn.org/events-activities/events-for-veterans/>

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# \$100 FOR 100 YEARS

IN RECOGNITION OF MINNESOTA DAV CHAPTER #7'S 100 YEAR ANNIVERSARY, THE CHAPTER HAS DECIDED TO GIVE EACH REGISTERED DAV CHAPTER #7 MEMBER \$100.00 TOWARDS THEIR ELECTRIC BILL. WITH HIGH INFLATION, COST OF GROCIERS SKY ROCKETING, MEDICATIONS, INCREASING INTEREST RATES, ETC. WE REALIZE THAT ALL VETERANS ARE HAVING A HARD TIME MAKING ENDS MEET. IT IS DAV'S MISSION TO HELP VETERANS IN NEED AND DURING THESE TIMES, WHAT BETTER WAY TO HELP VETERANS THEN TO HELP OUR OWN MEMBERS!! JUST CONTINUE PAYING YOUR ELECTRIC BILL LIKE YOU NORMALLY DO AND APPROXIMATELY IN THE MONTH OF OCTOBER YOU SHOULD SEE A \$100.00 CREDIT APPLIED TO YOUR TOTAL BILL.

IN ORDER TO BE ELIGIBLE FOR THE ONE PAYMENT, THE VETERAN MUST MEET AND PROVIDE THE FOLLOWING REQUIREMENTS:

- MUST BE A MINNESOTA DAV CHAPTER #7 MEMBER (OR WIDOW/ WIDOWER) AND ON THE DAV NATIONAL MEMBERSHIP ROSTER FOR DAV CHAPTER #7.
- MEMBERSHIP MUST BE EFFECTIVE BY JANUARY 31, 2024.
- MEMBER MUST PROVIDE A COPY OF THEIR ELECTRIC BILL WITH THEIR NAME, ACCOUNT NUMBER, ADDRESS, AND PHONE NUMBER, AND ELECTRIC PROVIDER NAME, PAY TO ADDRESS, AND PHONE NUMBER ON IT FROM ONE OF THE FOLLOWING MONTHS: MAY 2024, JUNE 2024, OR JULY 2024. THIS INFORMATION MUST BE TURNED IN BY SEPTEMBER 1, 2024 DEADLINE, NO EXCEPTIONS!!!!!!
- DOES "NOT" EFFECT LIFETIME LIMIT FUNDS.
- DAV CHAPTER #7 WILL PAY \$100.00 TOWARDS MEMBERS ELECTRIC BILL ACCOUNT, APPROXIMATELY IN THE MONTH OF OCTOBER 2024.
- NO CASH WILL BE GIVEN TO ANY MEMBER, ALL MONEY WILL BE PAID DIRECTLY TO ELECTRIC PROVIDER!!!!
- DUE TO LOGISTICS, ONLY MEMBER ACCOUNTS WITH MINNESOTA ADDRESSES WILL RECEIVE THE PAYMENT.
- MUST BE A MEMBER IN "GOOD STANDING."

ANY QUESTIONS???? CALL 218-556-4592

COMMANDER GENE SCHWANTES

# RESTAURANTS & BUSINESSES IN BEMIDJI THAT GIVE A MILITARY / VETERANS DISCOUNT EVERY DAY

*Remember to ask for your discount when paying your bill.*

## **Restaurants:**

Country Kitchen  
Culver's  
Green Mill  
Papa Murphy's  
Raphael's  
Minnesota Nice  
Simonson's  
Perkins  
Pizza Ranch  
Slim's  
Taco Bell  
Dave's Pizza  
Keith's Pizza  
Hardee's  
Buffalo Wild Wings  
Bar 209  
Red Stu  
Giovanni's  
Dunkin Donuts  
Ruzy's  
Mi Rancho  
NorthStar Speakeasy  
Lazy Jack's  
Tapatios

## **Businesses:**

Skip's Auto Repair  
Home Depot  
Ace on the Lake  
St. Michael's  
Dunham Sports  
Bemidji Woolen Mills

This list is, to the best of my recollection, all the places where I have gotten a Veteran's Discount every time I have visited their establishment. There may be more in the area that I have missed. If you know of others, please let me know so that I can add them to the list next month.

Tom Annonson, Newsletter Editor

Text: (218) 251-3025 • Email: [torgor@lightspeed.net](mailto:torgor@lightspeed.net)

## **ATTENTION**

**In June the Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs will be holding a  
50th Anniversary Vietnam War Commemoration event!**

Thursday the 13th thru Saturday the 15th from 10AM till 6PM at the Mall of America there will be:

- Historical displays from the Minnesota Military and Veterans Museum.
- The American Veterans Traveling Tribute Wall.
- Various Veterans benefits and Community Services information booths.

On Friday June 14th at 11AM in the Mall of America Huntington Bank Rotunda they will be holding a Commemorative program and brunch honoring Vietnam Veterans and their Families.

FREE RIDES

# 2024 - BEMIDJI VAN - 2024

## DAV NORTHWEST TRANSPORTATION DATES

FREE RIDES

### JANUARY

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### NOVEMBER

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### DECEMBER

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## FREE RIDES To All Veterans and Caregiver (if needed)!

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## CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

Greetings to all you Disabled American Veterans and Auxiliary Members, all of you who are near, far, or wherever you are. The Veterans on The Hill Day was an outstanding event, well attended by all from across our wonderful State of Minnesota. Thank you, Tom Annonson, for your leadership, your friendship, and your service to our organization for this event. Among other concerns, veteran suicide and homelessness were brought to the attention of our elected officials with Governor Walz as speaker.

An appointment was made with our State House Representative Matthew Grossell to discuss several concerns affecting veterans and family members. We concluded our meeting with the bottom line mentioned by Representative Grossell; continue to pray for God's comfort, direction, and wisdom, while at the same time pushing back against the ideas of people in government, who want to take away our freedoms, support, and security.

Representative Grossell was asked about the number of illegal aliens in Minnesota who are making a mockery of our immigration laws and wish to do Minnesotans harm. His response was that the population of Minnesota had doubled since the year 2020. A day prior to leaving for St. Paul - Veterans Day on The Hill, I was made aware of a letter recently written by Representative Grossell to our Chapter 7, where he wrote about a number of mismanaged situations facing Minnesota\*. We brought the letter with us to our appointment with Representative Grossell as a basis for our conversation. Representative Grossell was asked, in light of all the situations being mismanaged, how he was able to manage the stress of constantly having to deal with these issues at the Capitol. His response was prayer and depending on Christ's promise of the Holy Spirit always being with him.

As we proceed to continue living through this year and the years ahead. Let's pray, stay close to Jesus' promises, Father's guidance, and Holy Spirit's comfort. As a membership let's continue to support, pray and be with one another, if for any reason, you need to talk with someone, please reach out to someone whom you trust, as always Jeff Meyer is available too. Give us a call when you need help. Our prayer for all of you is to have the courage to ask for help, to receive healing for any trauma experience, and to understand you are not alone. None of us are getting any younger, and to know God's goodness, tolerance, kindness, love, and sacrifice for you, are all reasons to change your mind and have a relationship with Christ.

\* If anyone is interested, a copy of that letter is at our Chapter 7, Dave Sterr Memorial Headquarters building.

Mike and Julie Gutz

## AUXILIARY COMMANDER'S CORNER

Hello all,

A quick reminder that we will be holding our regular meeting at 6:30 pm on May 20th at the Chapter headquarters building. I hope to see many of you there and that our ranks are growing.

Sarah Gast



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