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Monthly Newsletter  
May 2026

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



**NEXT MEETING:**

DAV Headquarters at  
5441 15th Street NW, Bemidji, MN  
Monday, May 18 at 6:30pm

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**CHAPTER OFFICERS**

COMMANDER:	Gene Schwantes - (218) 556-4592
SENIOR VICE:	Gary Guggenberger
JUNIOR VICE:	Andy Staudt
ADJUTANT:	Jeff Meyer
SERVICE OFFICERS:	Tom Annonson, David Chamness
TREASURER:	Jeri Harvey
CHAPLAIN:	Mike Gutz - (218) 444-5015
JUDGE ADVOCATE:	Ward Sutton
SERGEANT AT ARMS:	Bruce Tiegen
OFFICER OF THE DAY:	Glenn Aagard
LEGISLATIVE OFFICER:	Vacant
HISTORIAN:	Vacant
EXEC. COMMITTEE:	Bruce Tiegen, Henry Hammerback, Jim Pinsonnault, Lila Teunissen, Rodney Olson

**UPCOMING HOLIDAYS & EVENTS**

- May 1: May Day
- May 4: Star Wars Day
- May 5: Cinco de Mayo
- May 6: National Nurses Day
- May 7: National Day of Prayer
- May 10: Mother's Day
- May 15: Peace Officers Memorial Day
- May 16: Armed Forces Day
- May 25: Memorial Day



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# COMMANDER'S CORNER

Greetings Veterans,

It is finally starting to warm up, today, 4/22, upper 70's, next week highs in the 40's and still making ice at night, below freezing. I think they call it Minnesota's free roller coaster which comes every spring. Along with it comes the spring yard and garden work, take your time, don't overdo it, or your time might be cut short.


We had another good Chapter Meeting, elected the budget committee for 2026/2027, reported helping 3 Veterans in need, along with approving funds to replace 50 flags and flag poles for downtown Bemidji Hwy 197 street light poles due to last year's storm. The city does not provide any funds or labor for this; it is all done by the American Legion. If you would like to volunteer to help putting up or taking down, I am sure the Legion members would appreciate it.

May 16 at 9 am, flags will be put on Veterans graves at Greenwood Cemetery, VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED, just show up. For the Blackduck Woodcarvers Festival and the Beltrami County Fair, Volunteers are also needed to Staff the DAV Booth, let me know if you can Help.

I hope everyone will be able to enjoy our upcoming great summer and enjoy spending time with family and friends. The days are longer now, come join us for a Chapter Meeting and still drive home in the daylight and remember the DAV ANNUAL SUMMER PICNIC IS COMING UP, TENTATIVE DATE OF AUGUST 22.

As always, if you have any questions or concerns, please give me a call.

A Veteran Serving Veterans,  
Gene



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# THE DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS NORTH CENTRAL CHAPTER #7 REGULARLY CONVENED ON 20 APRIL 2026 AT 1830.

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

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

Commander	Gene Schwantes	Present
Senior Vice Commander	Gary Guggenberger	Excused
Junior Vice Commander	Andy Staudt	Present
Adjutant	Jeff Meyer	Present
Treasurer	Jeri Harvey	Present
Chaplain	Mike Gutz	Excused
Judge Advocate	Ward Sutton	Excused
Sergeant-At-Arms	Bruce Tiegen	Present
Officer of the Day	Glen Aagard	Excused
Historian	Vacant	N/A

B. Members Present: 17

C. Introduction of Guests or Visitors: None

D. Minutes of Previous Meeting: Read by Adjutant Jeff M., Tom made the motion to accept, Dave made the 2d, and the motion carried.

E. Treasurer's Report: March's Treasury report was read by treasurer Jeri H, Darrel makes the motion, Bruce made the 2d, motion carried.

F. Communications:

- 1) MACV has sent us their annual report for the year 2025, copy is available with the adjutant for your reading pleasure.
- 2) Marion Evans donated \$20.00 to the chapter and will be receiving a thank you letter.
- 3) Joyce Plinke donated \$10.00 to the chapter and will be receiving a thank you letter.
- 4) Veterans Campground has sent us an invitation to their centennial celebration May 22-24. The adjutant has the information/flyer and will post it on the bulletin board for interested individuals.

G. Committee Reports:

1. Membership: 1 new member, Tom Gerken, welcome Tom!
2. Service Officer: Updated Veterans Benefit Handbook is available, please see Dave for your own copy.
3. Hospital/Sickness and Distress: Tom is now Living in 217 of the Huckleberry Neighborhood
4. Legislative: NA
5. Entertainment: NA
6. Publicity and Fundraising:
7. Medical Equipment: 9 Issues, 9 donations.
8. Scholarship Committee reports that the application deadline (15 April) is set with 12 applications received.

H. Executive Committee Action Items: Executive Committee has no business this month for the general meeting

I. Old Business: Tim from Meyer's sign will be trying to apply the signage to the bins on 4/22/26.

Veterans on the Hill, to date, 28 pax, 19 from Park Rapids, and 8 from Bemidji. Tom has already requested the 47 pax bus.

Pick up at the Calvary Lutheran church at 1400 hours, Commander Gene and Bruce will be handling it.

Darrel reports there will not be any caps for the 250-year celebration.

J. New Business:

Budget committee needs to be formed, it will have Jeri H., Jeff M., Gary G, and Gene S. We will need three people to volunteer; Andy S. Darrel B. Jim P. volunteered to join the budget committee this year, Steve made the motion to accept these three onto the budget committee, Rodney made the 2d and the motion was approved to accept these three to our budget committee.

Veteran in need request from Shane, widow of disabled Army Veteran, requesting help with purchase of clothes dryer in the amount of \$702.48. Approved by executive committee.

Veteran in need request from Shane, needing help purchasing propane in the amount of \$449.79, which was approved by the executive committee.

Veteran in need request from Luke, also needing help purchasing propane in the amount of \$390.00, which was approved and paid by commander Gene.

Beltrami County fair, do we want to attend and what will it cost? Dave volunteered to sit in the booth, Tom intends to sit in the booth. Tom reports he anticipates a cost of approx. \$400.00. This is a budgeted item and therefore no vote was required.

Beltrami Co Wood Carvers Festival needs someone to sit in DAV booth. Dave reports he is available if needed. Adjutant will register for the event.

Our local American Legion (Ralph Gracie Post #14) sent us a fundraising letter asking for donations to help replace the flags lost in last year's storm. Darrel made the motion to donate \$1000.00 for replacement flags, Dave made the amendment to \$4000.00 and Darrel amended his initial motion. Dave then made the 2d motion, and the motion to donate \$4000.00 to Ralph Gracie # 14 was approved. Jeri also stipulated in the discussion that there should be some kind of mutual PR where both organizations get the publicity for it.

Tom is requesting help for putting out flags at the cemetery on the 16th of May at 0900, any one interested see Tom, the adjutant, or the Commander if you need more information.

K. Good of the Order: There is another scam making the rounds within the Veteran Community, promising Veterans they can get 100% compensation. There is a contract to sign and fees required and, in the end, you get nothing. Please remind Veterans you know that compensation comes approval can only be had by the VA and there are never any costs or fees associated with the claim. See your CVSO for more compensation information.

L. Closing Ceremonies performed.

M. Motion to Adjourn: Motion by Darrel and second by Henry. Motion carried.

➤ Meeting adjourned at 1919

➤ Next meeting 5/18/2025 @1830.

## CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

This article was written on Easter, therefore the last several days of Christ's life comes to mind. As a result, let's take a break in our discussion in The Book of Ephesians and reflect on some of the events during Passover and the experiences of Christ during that time. Many of Christ's experiences during His arrest, trial and execution were written in the scriptures of centuries past. No other time in history could these prophecies of Christ take place by people doing specific things, yet having no idea their actions had already been written about centuries ago. Let's examine some of these events.

Many people today are adamant about keeping politics out of religion; this can be seen in many ways, such as our forefathers writing the first amendment of our constitution, certain churches whose congregations don't want to hear about politics from the pulpit. In spite of all this, it's interesting to note that during Christ's trial the two enormous forces of political and religious zeal accompany by mob rule clashed with one another. Specifically in regards to the self preservation concerns of the leaders in both spheres (politics / religion) who were not interested in justice at all. This includes several violations of both Roman and Jewish criminal procedure, law, while making the trial, conviction and sentence of Christ completely illegal in so many different ways. Jesus' experience and the things he said on the cross, to include the soldiers bargaining for his clothes by casting lots are all covered in Psalm 22. As a result, Jesus knew he had to go through this experience to not only complete the prophecies written in the Old Testament, but to be an atonement for all of our sins, this is seen in Matthew 26:53-54, Luke 24: 44-46 and Matthew 16:21. Keeping in mind Jesus did not want to go through it all and even asked God the Father if there was possibly some other way of accomplishing this mission. Yet the one thing that kept him focused on his mission and going through this experience was "the joy that was set before him, he endured the cross, scorning its shame and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God" (Hebrews 12:22).

As we complete another Easter holiday, let us never forget the costly sacrifice of God doing everything for us. The terrible burden God placed on himself (Christ as part of the trinity) in order to give us a life in Christ. What a beautiful demonstration of sacrificial love and commitment to accomplish such a burdensome mission. Take care and blessings to you all. Mike - DAV and Linda - Auxiliary.



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## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Volunteers are needed to help place the flags on the Veteran's graves at the Greenwood Cemetery on May 16th at 10 am and then retrieve them on May 30th also at 10am. For any further information you can contact either Steve Jewett (218) 760-2626 or Tom Annonson (218) 251-3025

## GREENWOOD CEMETERY MEMORIAL DAY PROGRAM

Bring the family and friends and join us for the Memorial Day remembrance ceremony and program at the Greenwood Cemetery on Monday the 25th of May starting at 10am. A hot dog, chips, and soda lunch will be served at Lazy Jacks following the program.

Remember to bring a chair with you if you need one as seating is not available at the cemetery.

## NATIONAL: NATIONAL MEMBER NEWS

The link below is to the National's web page that highlights some of the activities of Chapters and members from around the Country. The page has some interesting accounts of the various things that might spark some ideas that other Chapters might consider incorporating in their local areas of influence.

Check it out at <https://www.dav.org/news-media/member-news>

## NATIONAL: NATIONAL LEGISLATION NEWS

Keep up with legislation at the National Level by visiting <https://www.dav.org/about-dav/legislation>



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# NORTH CENTRAL MN DAV AUXILIARY #7: APRIL MEETING MINUTES

Unit Minutes - 04/20/2026; 6:32 pm

DAV Building 15th St, Bemidji MN, 56601

In Attendance: Sara Gast Commander, Marie Lamon Sr Vice Commander, Linda Engesether Chaplain, Mya Eichstadt, Treasurer, Heather Eichstadt Adjutant, Haley Reynolds Senior Member,

## CALL TO ORDER:

Prayer by: Linda Engesether

Pledge by: Sara Gast

Purpose given by: Marie Lamon

Eligibility given by: Sara Gast

Roll call of officers by: Heather Eichstadt

## Commander: Present

Sr. Vice Commander: Present

Jr Vice Commander: Absent

Treasurer: Present

Chaplain: Present

Adjutant: Present

**Quorum Met:** 3 Officers, 3 Member.: Total 6; 1 (SEC)

**Installation of Officers Completed: All the Same officers kept and installed via the installation ceremony. Read by Linda Engesether**

## Order of Business:

Transfers: None

Visitors: None

New members initiated: None

Minutes read by: Heather Eichstadt, for March minutes.

Linda Engesether made a motion, Mya Eichstadt second the motion with all approved.

Treasurer's report given by: Mya Eichstadt for March

## Bills and Communications:

- Communication - None
- Bills - None
- VAVS donation - \$1500.14 spent with receipts
- Items for Convention
  - Silent Auction Baskets - Spent -Mens \$152.92 / Womens \$146.59
  - Auction donation \$150- Bird Bath, Outdoor rocking chair - \$142.62 (\$1.86 to be redeposited)
  - Diana donated a toaster for the auction as well

**Sickness and Distress:** Tom and his continued healing; Maria sister-in-law and her cancer fight; Diana and Paul for their health and wellbeing. Linda and her health.

## Report of Committees:

**Membership:** None

**Americanism:** Day on the hill April 23rd 2026

**Hospital:** None

**Community Service:** Linda visited with her veteran weekly and veteran couple. Marie supporting and helping Tom.

**Legislation:** Visit the website, Flyer provided with QR code

**Junior Activities:** No new updates

**VAVS:** Linda will deliver items bought for donation for the hospital this weekend

**Ways and Means:** none at this time.

**Other Committee reports:** None

## Unfinished Business:

- Supplies for Bags - Linda brought a list of supplies that we currently have in place: See attachment of list.
  - Sara looked into sizes of bags - Little in size 15.5X12.75 up to 17X13.4 (most reasonable in cost) ULINE - No options;
  - Oriental Trading: 12@ 16.99-32.99= \$1.08-2.75 a piece
  - Amazon - Good to U:10 Colors
    - 40 - 29.99= .75 a piece
    - 100 - 59.99= .60 a piece
  - Shappy: 10 colors
    - 50 - 32.99 = .66 a piece
    - 60 - 38.99 = .65 a piece
    - 100 - 57.98 = .58 a piece
- Hobby Lobby - Out of price range
- Linda Engesether made motion to order in bulk, Haley Reynolds seconded motion.
- Marie Lamon will look into the needs for The Minneapolis VA Fisher House - a place to stay for VA family members while family is being cared for in the hospital or Minneapolis VA home. Idea for a donor for 2025-2026. Linda will talk at convention for further information as well - Tabled for next meeting in June.
- Pillow cases for the Bemidji Veterans Home - have 15, need 21 more. Will plan to push forward to 2026 donation - Linda Engesether to donate material and to purchase for the pillow cases tabled for July meeting - will discuss in June about sewing party.
- Heather to find Bemidji DAV #7 Standing Rules for the June meeting - Linda

## NEW BUSINESS:

- DAV Convention 2026 Duluth MN is April 30-May2 - RM cost \$140 +tax
- Linda Engesether makes a motion to not have a meeting in May, due to most officer will be gone on a trip, Mya Eichstadt second motion
- Idea for a meal at meeting and bingo will discuss further at the June meeting.
- Mya discussed changing banks from Deerwood to First National Bank of Bemidji. Linda will look into the process at convention.

**Money March:** No information at this time.

**Remarks for the good of the organization:** Thank you to all the Veterans for your service. Thank you to the Auxiliary members for your help and assistance and for coming to the meeting and supporting the organization, the Veterans and their families.

## Closing Ceremony Completed

- **Meeting Adjournment at 7:19PM**

Meeting Minutes Respectfully Submitted by: Heather Eichstadt Adjutant

Not meeting will be held in May - Next meeting planned for June.

## NATIONAL: GAMERS: STREAM FOR DAV ON TWITCH

Posted on Feb 19, 2026

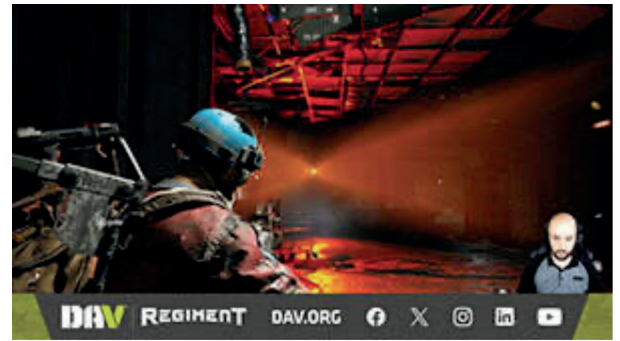
Join DAV's community where gaming meets service. We're harnessing the immense power of Twitch to connect with veterans and their families in new, dynamic ways. Our channel offers a diverse lineup, including veterans news; critical legislative updates; and exclusive interviews with lawmakers, policymakers and subject matter experts.

During our community gaming streams, DAV members take the lead, playing their favorite games while connecting with a vast online audience—many of whom are new to DAV's mission. This is a powerful, organic way for you to personally highlight the great work and impact being made every day at the department and chapter levels.

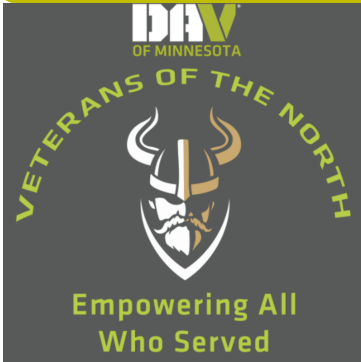
We are looking for you! DAV is actively seeking members interested in streaming on our Twitch channel.

And get this: Your time livestreaming for DAV can be recorded as LVAP (Local Veterans Assistance Program) hours, making this a unique and impactful way to showcase your community service.

To learn more about DAV gaming and livestreaming and to become a streamer for DAV, visit [dov.org/dav-gaming-and-livestreaming](https://dov.org/dav-gaming-and-livestreaming).



## MINNESOTA: DAV OF MN PODCAST



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## VA: SWITCH FROM DS LOGON TO LOGIN.GOV OR ID.ME BY SEPTEMBER 30

After Sept. 30, 2025, Veterans will have two secure options to sign in to VA.gov and VA mobile apps—a Login.gov account or ID.me account. Most Veterans have already made the switch. If you're still using a DS Logon username and password, we want to make sure you're prepared when this option is discontinued by the end of September.

### How to Transition

1. Visit [Creating an account for VA.gov](#) for detailed instructions on setting up your Login.gov or ID.me account.
2. Follow the step-by-step guide to create your account and verify your identity.
3. Use your new account to access VA services online as you did before.

## VA: IMPORTANCE OF MAINTAINING YOUR VA ID CARD

As a Veteran receiving health care, one of the most crucial assets you possess is your VA ID card. It's imperative to understand why maintaining and updating your VA ID card is essential and how you can ensure it remains functional.

### Identification at VA Facilities

Your VA ID card serves as your primary identification at VA facilities. Whether you're seeking medical care, accessing benefits, or attending appointments, this card is vital. It streamlines the identification process, reducing potential human errors and allowing seamless access to your personal files and medical records.

### Check-in for Appointments

When you have appointments at VA facilities, your VA ID card is a necessity for check-in. It helps staff quickly verify your identity, ensuring a smooth and efficient process.

### Updating Your VA ID Card

If you need to update your VA ID card, visit the enrollment office at your local VA facility. No appointment is necessary for this process. The staff at the enrollment office are there to assist you in updating your information. Don't hesitate to ask any VA employee for guidance or assistance. They are more than willing to help you navigate the process of updating or obtaining a new VA ID card.

### Inspecting Your VA ID Card for Serviceability

#### Image Accuracy

Ensure that the photo on your card accurately reflects your current appearance. If not, it might be time for an update.

#### Expiration Check

Regularly check the expiration date on your VA ID card. An expired card might hinder your access to services and benefits. If your card has expired or is about to, it's crucial to visit the enrollment office for renewal.

#### Ensuring Barcode and Card Information Accuracy

Your VA ID card's barcode and information play a pivotal role in swiftly accessing the benefits and services you're entitled to as a veteran. Regularly inspecting and ensuring the integrity of these components is essential for a hassle-free experience when utilizing your card at VA facilities. If you notice any issues with the barcode, information accuracy, or physical wear on the card, promptly address them by seeking a replacement or an update at your nearest VA enrollment office.

Maintaining and updating your VA ID card is pivotal for ensuring a smooth experience when accessing VA services and benefits. Whether for medical care, benefit claims, or appointments, a functional and up-to-date VA ID card simplifies the process. The VA is committed to assisting veterans in this regard, providing the necessary resources and support for a hassle-free experience.

Veterans have sacrificed and served our nation, and the VA ID card is a token of appreciation and commitment to providing the care and support deserved. By keeping your VA ID card current and well-maintained, you're taking a proactive step to ensure that you receive the benefits and services you've rightfully earned through your service to the country.

## MILITARY HOLIDAYS AND OBSERVANCE DAYS THROUGHOUT THE YEAR:

- May 1: Silver Star Service Banner Day
- May 8: Military Spouse Appreciation Day
- May 8: VE (Victory in Europe 1945) Day
- May 13: Children of Fallen Patriots Day
- May 15: Women's Army Corps Founded (1942)
- May 16: Armed Forces Day
- May 22: National Maritime Day
- May 25: Memorial Day

# MINNESOTA: 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://davmn.org/events-activities/events-for-veterans/>

March 17- March 21 Late Winter Getaway- applications close Jan 5  
April 13-April 18 Grand Canyon National Park Hike and Explore, applications close Jan 23

## NATIONAL: COMMANDER'S ACTION NETWORK (CAN)

To stay informed and take action to support federal legislation and policies affecting veterans, their families and survivors, please join DAV CAN (Commander's Action Network).

To enroll, go to the DAV.org website and do a search for the "Commander's Action Network" it will direct you to a results page and there you will find the link to sign up and become an active participant in the program. Once you are enrolled you will periodically receive emails with "canned" letters to your individual representatives on legislative matters pertaining to veterans' issues that are currently before them in Congress encouraging them to act on behalf of all veterans that the proposed bill in question is addressing. Simply click the "take action" button at the bottom of the email and the letter will automatically be sent.

## VETERANS ON THE HILL

Veterans on the Hill, Annual spring event in Minnesota to advocate for veteran friendly legislation. April 23, 2026



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FREE RIDES

# 2026 - BEMIDJI VAN - 2026

## DAV NORTHWEST TRANSPORTATION DATES

FREE RIDES

### JANUARY

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

### FEBRUARY

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28

### MARCH

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

### APRIL

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

### MAY

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

### JUNE

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

### JULY

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

### AUGUST

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

### SEPTEMBER

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

### OCTOBER

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

### NOVEMBER

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

### DECEMBER

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

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