

*Olmsted County  
Veteran Services  
Veterans Advocate Newsletter  
January 2020*



**Free Musical Event to Honor Veterans, Presented by Letters from Home, Jan. 5**

Sunday January 5 at 3 p.m. Crossroads Church in Hastings will be hosting Letters from Home to honor Veterans, active duty military heroes, families and their children by reviving patriotism and uniting the nation thorough music.

Having traveled to over 40 states and to Normandy France for the 75th Anniversary of D-Day - Letters from Home brings back the style of the USO, with incredible high-energy performances featuring creator and founder Erinn Dearth, and self-proclaimed "tall-guy" Dan Bechmann, in a one of a kind live show featuring the music of WWII, Vietnam and beyond! The group was featured in an Emmy-award documentary in 2018, and recently featured in the national American Lifestyle Magazine. This show is open to the general public at no charge. Donations will be accepted for the Letters from Home Pat Dearth Veterans Performance Fund which offsets ongoing expenses for the national touring group.

For more information on this free event, please contact the event organizer, First Sergeant (1SG), Retired, United States Army, Dean W. Markuson at (651) 438-2208 (between 8 a.m. and 8 p.m.) or by email at [deanrvnvvet@aol.com](mailto:deanrvnvvet@aol.com).



# Veterans Employment Information Event

Thursday, January 9, 2020  
9:00 am – 1:00 pm  
500 Lafayette Road, St. Paul, MN 55101

## Learn more about applying and working for the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR)

### At the seminar, you will learn:

- How to set up DNR job searches and get notifications
- What jobs work for you and the education requirements associated
- How your military career fits with state employment
- What benefits you have working at the DNR as a veteran
- Tips for matching military skills and experience to position qualifications

### Information sessions will be offered throughout the day and staff will be available to answer questions about DNR career opportunities in fields such as:

- Communications & Public Relations
- Enforcement
- Engineering & Landscape Architecture
- Forestry, Fisheries & Wildlife
- Information Technology, GIS & Mapping
- Management & Operations
- Logistics, Maintenance & Safety
- Finance & Administration

### Registration is required & space is limited!

Register early to ensure availability in the session of your choice. Once your registration is confirmed, you'll receive a welcome packet with additional information. For assistance or questions, call 651-259-5371.

Sign up at the [event page](#)  
on [SignUpGenius](#)  
([tinyurl.com/dnrvets2020](http://tinyurl.com/dnrvets2020))



## Training Announcement

# Intro to DBE, TGB/Veteran Certification Process & Opportunities

Sponsored by the Office of Civil Rights & City of Rochester

<b>Description</b>	Intro new and existing small businesses to the DBE, TGB/Veterans Certification Process in Rochester and surrounding areas. Opportunities available with City of Rochester, DMC, MnDOT, Dept. of Admin equity in procurement.
<b>Topics</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DBE's</li> <li>• TGB/Veterans</li> <li>• Opportunities</li> </ul>
<b>Audience</b>	Existing & New Small businesses
<b>Date, Time, Address</b>	January 9, 2020 From 8:30 AM – 12:00 PM Rochester Headquarters 2900 48 <sup>th</sup> Street NW Rochester, MN 55901-5448 <a href="http://ihub/d6/locations.html">http://ihub/d6/locations.html</a>
<b>Registration (contact)</b>	For questions and to RSVP contact: <a href="mailto:orlanda.klinkhammer@state.mn.us">orlanda.klinkhammer@state.mn.us</a>
<b>Cost</b>	Free

Individuals who need a reasonable accommodation to participate in this event, please contact [Janet Miller](#), Disability Programs Coordinator, MnDOT Equity & Diversity Office.



# Traveling for the Winter? Call a VHA Traveling Veteran Coordinator ahead of time to ensure seamless care

## How to ensure seamless care while traveling

If you are enrolled in health care with VA, you will receive the same care while traveling as you would at home. A Traveling Veteran Coordinator will help coordinate with the alternate facility, but you need to tell your care team about your plans before you travel.

It's easy. Veterans can continue their VA health care in a different location while traveling. Even if you've temporarily relocated, simply tell your VA Patient Aligned Care Team (PACT) of your travel destinations, a temporary address, updates to phone numbers, arrival and departure dates and specific care concerns while you are traveling. Then, a Traveling Veteran Coordinator ensures care is coordinated per your provider's request, appointments scheduled, and eligibility are transferred to the alternate VA medical center.

Prescriptions during travel should also be discussed with your care team, prior to travel.

Most VA medical centers has a Traveling Veteran Coordinator. To notify VA of your upcoming travel, **call your local VA facility and ask for your VA Patient Aligned Care Team (PACT)**. Notifying VA 4-6 weeks in advance of travel is preferred to ensure seamless care.

“Traveling Veteran Coordinators and PACT teams work together to ensure Veterans receive the best possible planned care while traveling away from their home VA,” said Mallory Murray, Veterans Integrated Service Networks 8 Traveling Veteran Coordinator Lead.

Call VAMC Minneapolis Enrollment and Eligibility: 612-467-1991 or the main line: 612-725-2000

Also don't forget to update your address on file if your mailing address is changing. This can be done in minutes online on [VA.gov](https://www.va.gov).

While traveling, take advantage of the United State's 400+ National Parks – disabled Veterans are eligible for a [free National Park Service Lifetime Access Pass](#).

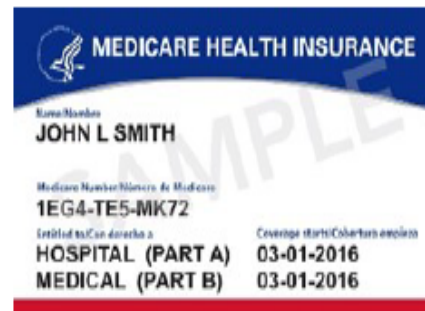
## Medicare Part A and B Premiums and 2020 Cost Sharing

Medicare Part A Deductible: \$1,408 per benefit period

Medicare Part A Coinsurance for Days 61-90: \$352 per day

Medicare Part Lifetime Reserve Days 91-150: \$704 per day

Medicare Part A Skilled Nursing Facility Coinsurance for Days 21-100: \$176 per day



### Medicare Part B Cost Sharing Amounts for 2020

Medicare Part B monthly premium: \$144.60 per month for most people. The Social Security Act contains a hold harmless provision that protects some people from paying a larger increase in the Part B premium.

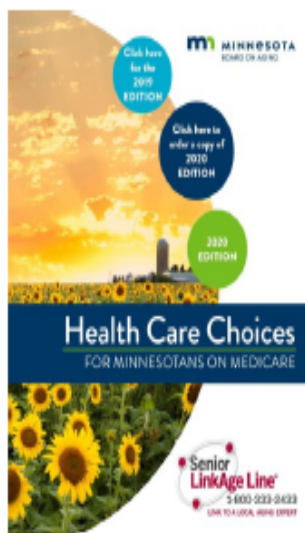
Medicare Part B annual deductible: \$198

### Medicare Part A premiums for people who do not get free Medicare Part A in 2020

Enrollees who have 30-39 work credits of coverage pay a monthly premium of \$252

Enrollees who have fewer than 30 work credits of coverage pay a monthly premium of \$458

Those who are dually eligible for Medical Assistance and have their premiums paid for by Medical Assistance are on programs known as the **Medicare Savings Programs**. If you have a monthly income less than \$1,426 as a single person and assets less than \$10,000 call Senior LinkAge Line® to see if you qualify for a savings program. Social Security has a low-income subsidy that helps with Part D premiums, deductibles and copays. If your income is less than \$1,581 you may qualify for extra help.



### 2020 Edition of Health Care Choices for Minnesotans on Medicare is available!

The comprehensive guide to all Medicare plan options in Minnesota is now available for viewing or download. Go to [www.mnhealthcarechoices.com](http://www.mnhealthcarechoices.com), [www.mnaging.org](http://www.mnaging.org) or call the Senior LinkAge Line® at 1-888-333-2433 to get your free copy.

**Medicare for Boomers Class is the first Tuesday of the month, 4:30-6:30 pm at the SEMAAA offices.** This class will give you an overview of the ABCD's of Medicare.

**Certain Veterans Can Now Be Part of a Class Action Lawsuit:** The U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims, who in a 6-3 decision, correctly granted the plaintiffs' motion for class certification. The plaintiffs in this case were service members who were involved in the cleanup of radioactive plutonium in Palomares, Spain, after a B-52 Stratofortress bomber collided with a KC-135 refueling tanker on January 17, 1966. The collision caused two thermonuclear bombs to impact the ground and detonate, spreading radioactive debris for miles. More than 1,400 service members were sent to the assist in cleanup and monitoring efforts, some of whom were exposed to very large quantities of radioactive material. This is the first time the U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims has permitted a class action lawsuit in an individual appeal of a Board of Veterans' Appeals (BVA) decision. After this decision, it will be easier for other classes of veterans with similar claims to file appeals from decisions of the BVA.

**How Veterans Can Access Commissaries and MWR Facilities:** Starting Jan. 1, 2020, there will be expanded access for Commissaries, Military Service Exchanges, and Morale, Welfare and Recreation facilities for newly eligible veterans. Next month, veterans who received a Purple Heart, were former POWs, or veterans with a service-connected disability rating will be able to physically access on-base facilities that were previously off limits to those veterans. Veterans seeking access to military installations will require identification. Veterans can use their current VA-issued Veterans Health Identification Card (VHIC). If a veteran is ineligible for a VHIC, DOD will temporarily accept the VA Health Eligibility Center Form H623A that indicates Priority Group 8E and an acceptable identification credential, like a REAL-ID-compliant driver's license or a U.S. passport. [Learn more:](https://www.militaryonesource.mil/media/news-and-releases/dod-coast-guard-welcome-back-disabled-veterans) <https://www.militaryonesource.mil/media/news-and-releases/dod-coast-guard-welcome-back-disabled-veterans>

### **MPR WWII Veterans Project**

Minnesota Public Radio News is looking to connect with World War II Veterans for a project commemorating the 75th anniversary of the end of the war. Please contact MPR photojournalist Evan Frost at [efrost@mpr.org](mailto:efrost@mpr.org), or by phone at: (612) 770-4785.



#VETRESOURCES

## FISHER HOUSE

Fisher House Foundation works to support Veterans and their families while they are being treated at Military and VA medical centers.

VA



U.S. Department  
of Veterans Affairs

[www.VA.gov/VetResources](http://www.VA.gov/VetResources)

### Stay at Fisher House

A Fisher House is “a home away from home” for families of patients receiving medical care at major military and VA medical centers. The homes are normally located within walking distance of the treatment facility or have transportation available. There are 86 Fisher Houses located on 25 military installations and 37 VA medical centers. Many more houses are under construction or in design. These homes offer free, temporary lodging to military and Veterans’ families, allowing them to be close to their loved one during a medical crisis. It also allows them to focus on what’s important—the healing process. Find and contact your Fisher House [here](#).

### Hero Miles

Eligible recipients of airline tickets through the [Hero Miles program](#) are limited to wounded, injured, or ill service members *not eligible for airfare funded by the government*. Family members and close friends who are not eligible for government-funded flights may also receive round trip travel between their home and the medical center where the service member is receiving treatment. Participating airlines include Alaska Airlines, American Airlines, Delta Air Lines, Frontier Airlines and United Airlines.

### Hotels for Heroes

Service members receiving medical treatment and their families or close friends may receive a free hotel room through the [Hotels for Heroes program](#). This option is available if they are *not eligible for reimbursement from the government*. Participating hotel groups include Best Western, Choice Hotels, Hilton, La Quinta Inns and Suites, Marriott and Wyndham.

The Fisher House Foundation also manages a [grant program](#) that supports other military charities and [scholarship funds](#) for military children, spouses, and children of fallen and disabled Veterans.



The Minnesota Zoo salutes our troops with special discounts and promotions throughout the year. Individuals eligible for military discounts and promotions include current, former, and retired members and family members of the US Military, National Guard, and Reserve in the United States (including Puerto Rico). Valid military ID or proof of military service is required. No other discounts apply and not valid for special programs or exhibits.

### **Winter Promotion**

**November 11, 2019 – January 1, 2020**

#### **Minnesota Zoo**

Military personnel receive free admission, free parking, and half-price admission for family members.

#### **SSA Gift Shops**

Military personnel receive 20% discount on purchases, excluding promotional and clearance items.

#### **Lancer Food Service**

Military personnel receive 20% discount on food purchases, excluding free-standing kiosks and alcohol.

### **All Year Long**

#### **Minnesota Zoo**

Military personnel receive \$2 off regular admission and \$1 off regular admission for family members.

### **June 28 – July 5, 2020**

#### **Minnesota Zoo**

The Minnesota Zoo salutes our troops with special discounts and promotions throughout the year. Individuals eligible for military discounts and promotions include current, former, and retired members and family members of the US Military, National Guard, and Reserve in the United States (including Puerto Rico). Valid military ID or proof of military service is required. No other discounts apply and not valid for special programs or exhibits.

Military personnel receive free admission, free parking, and half-price admission for family members

#### **Gift Shops**

Military personnel receive 20% discount on purchases, excluding promotional and clearance items.

#### **Lancer Food Service**

Military personnel receive 20% discount on food purchases, excluding free-standing kiosks and alcohol.

# Center for Grief Education and Support



## ONGOING PROGRAMS

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### COFFEE & CONVERSATION GROUP

A group for anyone who has experienced the death of a loved one.

#### Third Thursday of each month

January 16 – 6:00-7:00 p.m.

#### Fourth Wednesday of each month

January 22 – 9:00-10:00 a.m.

### NEWLY BEREAVED GROUP

A group for anyone who has experienced the death of a loved one within the last six months.

#### First Thursday of each month

January 2 – 6:30-8:30 p.m.

#### Second Wednesday of each month

January 8 – 9:00-11:00 a.m.

#### Third Thursday of each month

January 16 – 12:00-2:00 p.m.

### PREGNANCY AFTER LOSS

A group for parents who have lost a baby and are now pregnant again. Please contact CGES for more information.

### PREGNANCY & INFANT LOSS

A group for those who have lost a baby through miscarriage, stillbirth, at the time of birth or within the first month after birth.

#### Second Thursday of each month

January 9 – 6:30-8:00 p.m.

### DROP-IN TEEN DAYS

A group for teens grades 7-12 in a safe, creative space where they can share their story of loss.

#### Third Wednesday of each month

January 15 – 4:30-5:30 p.m.

### SURVIVORS OF SUICIDE GROUP

A group for those who have lost someone close to them through suicide.

#### Third Wednesday of each month

January 15 – 6:00-7:30 p.m.

### STEPPING STONES

A group for ages 65 and younger who have lost a spouse or significant other.

#### Fourth Monday of each month

January 27 – 6:30-8:00 p.m.

### VETERANS LOSS & TRANSITION DISCUSSION GROUP

A discussion group lead by Timothy J. Haskamp, LICSW, Bereavement Counselor, and Vietnam War veterans who are CGES volunteers. The group focuses on themes of grief, loss, and change.

#### First & Third Monday of each month

January 6 & 20 – 6:00-7:00 p.m.

### PET LOSS GROUP

A group for those who have lost a pet through death.

#### Second Wednesday of each month

January 8 – 5:00-6:00 p.m.

## SPECIAL PROGRAMS

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### ADULT GRIEF GROUP/YOUNG LOSS GRIEF GROUP

These ten-week groups provide a safe, confidential place to learn about the process of grieving and teaches practical coping strategies to manage the experience of accepting the reality of the loss. Offered in Spring, Fall and Winter. Registration is required.

### MOVING AHEAD: REBUILDING YOUR LIFE

When we lose a loved one, we find ways to accept the reality and gradually discover the extent of our losses. As our journeys continue, we begin to look at what we can rebuild for ourselves; what life holds for us. Registration is required.

### MANAGING HOLIDAYS AND SPECIAL DAYS

A training and workshop session providing an opportunity to explore the difficulties associated with mourning during special days and steps to manage those experiences. This program is available to any adult, child or family member in the community. Offered in Spring and Fall. Registration is required.

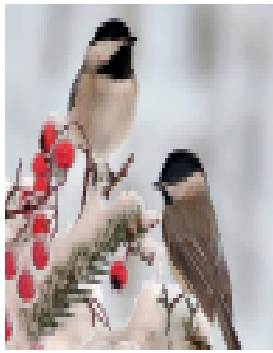
### MEMORIES OF THE HEART

The evening includes candle lighting, music, reflections, and a reading of the names being remembered. Reception prior to the service. Held the first Tuesday in December.

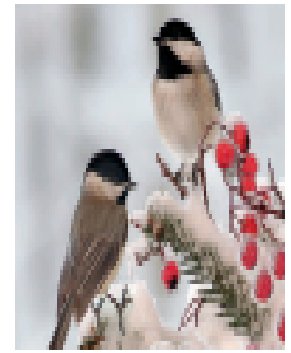
### TREE OF MEMORIES

Annual lighting of the Tree of Memories. Located on the Seasons Hospice administrative office grounds. Lit on the first Tuesday in December, the tree will remain illuminated throughout the holiday season. Open to the public.

We offer individual counseling by appointment. All sessions and groups are held at the Center for Grief Education and Support.



# January 2020



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2 Newly Bereaved Group 6:30-8:30 p.m.	3	4
5	6 Veteran Loss & Transition Discussion Group 6:00-7:30 p.m.	7	8 Newly Bereaved Group 9:00-11:00 a.m. Pet Loss Group 5:00-6:00 p.m.	9 Pregnancy & Infant Loss 6:30-8:00 p.m.	10	11
12	13	14	15 Teen Drop-In 4:30-5:30 p.m. Survivors of Suicide 6:00-7:30 p.m.	16 Newly Bereaved Group 12:00-2:00 p.m. Coffee & Conversation 6:00-7:00 p.m.	17	18
19	20 Veteran Loss & Transition Discussion Group 6:00-7:30 p.m.	21	22 Coffee & Conversation 9:00-10:00 a.m.	23	24	25
26	27 Stepping Stones 6:30-8:00 p.m.	28	29	30	31	

Center for Grief Education and Support





**ROCHESTER VA RED CARPET EVENT**  
**REMEMBER THE VA HAS MOVED!!!**

Would you like to learn how to navigate the VA system? Come join us for an informational meeting for new and established patients.

Some of the topics that will be covered:

- **Primary Care** including chronic disease management, patient education, and health promotion
- **Immunizations**
- **Mental Health Services** with on-site staff and telemedicine capability linked to providers in Minneapolis
- **Tele-Healthcare** with Minneapolis providers
- **Laboratory Services**
- **Minor Procedures**
- **Women's Health Care**
- **Mental Health**
- **Co-Managed Care**
- **Pharmacy Management**

**Thursday, January 16, 2020**  
Every 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of the month at **2:00pm**  
At the Rochester VA Clinic  
3551 Commercial Drive SW  
Rochester MN 55902



### **PTSD Support Group**

SEMCIL, and Olmsted County Veteran Services is offering a support group for Veterans that have been diagnosed with PTSD, or those who have signs and symptoms of PTSD, and their family members. Sometimes the most painful injuries aren't physical. Whether it's PTSD, TBI, combat stress, or any other mental health condition, we're here to help you get through it. The group will be facilitated by Jennifer Shumaker, Veteran and Olmsted County Veterans Service Officer.

**Thursday, January 30, 2020**

**Thursday, February 20, 2020**

**630pm-800pm**

**VFW**

**2775 43rd Street NW**

**Rochester, MN 55901**

**Jennifer Shumaker**

**(507) 328-6324**

**[shumaker.jennifer@co.olmsted.mn.us](mailto:shumaker.jennifer@co.olmsted.mn.us)**

# Financial Literacy Program

Spending with Knowledge  
Saving with Purpose



## Free Financial Workshops 2020 Winter Schedule!

Take the 1st Step to Financial Wellness

Call (507) 721-9204 or [Register Online](#) at  
[www.ccsomn.org/financial-literacy-program/](http://www.ccsomn.org/financial-literacy-program/)

### January

**Tues Jan. 14, 2020 5:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.**

Rochester Public Library/ Meeting Room B \*101 2nd St SE Rochester, MN 55904

**Thurs Jan. 30, 2020 2:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.**

Hawthorne Education Center /Room 314 \* 700 4<sup>th</sup> Ave SE Rochester, MN 55904

### February

**Thurs Feb. 13, 2020 5:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.**

United Way Building/ Meeting Room A \*903 W. Center St Rochester, MN 55902

### March

**Tues March 10, 2020 5:00 p.m.- 8:00 p.m.**

Rochester Public Library/ Meeting Room B \*101 2nd St  
SE Rochester, MN 55904

**Wed March 25, 2020 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.**

Hawthorne Education Center /Room 206 \* 700 4<sup>th</sup> Ave  
SE Rochester, MN 55904



Walk-Ins Welcome!!

Financial Goals

Budgeting

Saving

Credit

Debt



Catholic Charities of Southern Minnesota

# LOCAL MEETINGS

## **Rochester American Legion Post 92**

915 21st Ave SE  
Rochester, MN 55904  
3rd Tuesday of each month

7pm  
Auxiliary Unit 92  
3rd Tuesday of each month  
5:30pm  
Sons of the American Legion  
2nd Thursday of each month  
6PM

Legion Riders  
3rd Thursday of each month  
7pm  
Marine Corps League  
2nd Tuesday of each month  
7pm

## **Rochester VFW Post Meeting**

2775 43rd St. NW  
Rochester, MN 55901  
2nd Tuesday of each Month VFW Post 1215  
7pm

## **Byron American Legion Post 119**

505 Frontage Road NW, Byron, MN  
3rd Monday of the month  
7pm

## **Vietnam Veterans of America**

Meets 4th Monday each month  
at 7:00pm,

Vietnam Veterans Spouse Support Group  
Meets 4th Monday each month  
At 7:00pm

Thor Detachment 606 Marine Corp League Meeting  
4th Tuesday of the month, 7pm  
MOPH

3rd Thursday of the month 6pm  
VFW Post 1215  
2775 43rd St NW, Rochester, MN 55901

## **Stewartville American Legion Post 164**

1100 2nd Ave NW, Stewartville  
Meeting 3rd Monday each month, 7:30pm

## **Stewartville VFW Post 8980**

1100 2nd Ave NW, Stewartville  
Meeting 1st Monday each month, 7pm

## **DAV Meeting**

1652 Hwy 52 N, Rochester, MN 55901  
2nd Monday, of each Month Rochester's Elks Lodge  
5:30pm dinner, meeting at 6:00pm

## **Korean Veterans**

Every Monday at Grandmas Kitchen  
1514 N Broadway, Rochester, MN 55906  
(Silver lake plaza)  
8 AM

## **Kasson American Legion Post 333**

212 West Main Street , Kasson, MN 55944  
Third Thursday of the month, 8pm

## **Chatfield VFW Post 6913**

9- 2nd St SW, Chatfield, MN  
2nd Monday of the month 7:00pm

## **Eyota American Legion Post 551**

2nd Monday each month 6:30pm  
11 Madison Ave NW  
Eyota, MN 55934  
Legion Riders  
4th Wednesday each month 7:30pm

## **Pine Island American Legion Post 184**

2nd Monday of the month 7PM  
108 1st Ave SE  
Pine Island, MN

## **Oronoco VFW Post 9647**

First Monday of each month 7pm  
Auxiliary meeting same time, separate meeting  
5 MN Avenue S  
Oronoco, MN 55960

## **Dodge Center American Legion Post 384**

401 Highway St W  
Dodge Center, MN 55927  
2nd Monday each month 7pm

*“To promote the interests and welfare of veterans, their dependents and survivors and to enhance their quality of life through counseling, claims assistance, education, advocacy and special projects.”*

Veteran Services  
2100 Campus Drive  
SE, Suite 200  
Rochester, MN 55904

*Olustad*  
COUNTY OF

