



Olmsted County Veteran's Service Office

Veteran Services
2100 Campus Drive SE, Suite 200
Rochester, MN 55904
(507) 328-6355



Mayo-Hiawatha #28

The DAV is dedicated to a single purpose, empowering veterans to lead high quality lives with respect and dignity. They accomplish this by ensuring that veterans and their families can access the full range of benefits available to them; fighting for the interests of America's injured heroes on Capitol Hill; and educating the public about the great sacrifices and needs of veterans transitioning back to civilian life.

Saturday, May 24, 2014, is the 5th annual "Thank A Veteran Celebration"

at all four Rochester Andy's Liquor Store locations from 11:00am to 2:00pm. Proceeds from this event are going to the SE MN beyond the Yellow Ribbon and Mayo/Hiawatha Chapter 28 of the MN Disabled American Veterans (DAV).

Special Features of this Event Include:

- Barbecued lunch available at all locations for a small donation:
- Andy's Crossroads - Pulled Pork by Pit Master Joe BBQ
- Andy's Market Place NW – Brats grilled by Great American Wines
- Andy's NE Wellner Dr - Homemade Brats by Schells Brewing Co
- Andy's Express SW – Brats off the grill and chips
- Thank a Veteran T-Shirts available for a donation
- Military Vehicles on Display
- Visit with the POW/MIA Riders and see their bikes at Andy's NE
- Have a bottle of Jack Daniels engraved for free with your branch of the military or other personal designs – from 11:00 to 4:00 at Andy's Crossroads and Andy's NE

Proceeds support the MN Disabled American Veterans Chapter 28 and the, Beyond the Yellow Ribbon SE MN Chapter

**NEXT DAV Meeting, Monday, June 9, Rochester Elks Lodge,
1652 Hwy 52 North
Rochester, MN 55901**

Saturday, May 31, 2014, is the

"4th Annual CPL Curtis M. Swenson Memorial Golf Benefit"

Willow Creek Golf Course, 1700 48th Street SW, Rochester, MN 55902

Registration 10:30am

Program 11:30am

Shotgun Start 12:00pm

Silent Auction

Meal Following play 6:00pm

\$90 per person/\$360 per team entry fee, includes 18 holes, cart and meal

Saturday, July 19, 2014, is the

"Hero Ride"

sponsored by Rochester Harley Davidson and VFW Post 1215.

Registration from 10:00am-12:00pm

Kickstands up at 12:15pm

Ride ends around 5:00pm

Location:

Starts at Rochester Harley Davidson in Rochester, Minnesota a 7110 Highway 14 East, Rochester, MN

Ends at VFW Post 1215 in Rochester, Minnesota

(16 6th Street SW, Rochester, MN 55904)

Registration:

-\$25 per rider

-\$10 per passenger

-Includes food at the end of ride

Held rain or shine. Ride ends at VFW Post 1215 with food and live entertainment. This is a 125 mile ride through Southeastern Minnesota to honor our fallen heroes.

Proceeds of the ride go to benefit programs of the

Disabled American Veterans (DAV) and

Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Post 1215.





U.S. CONGRESSMAN
TIM WALZ
 Representing the 1st District of MINNESOTA

Walz & Veterans Groups Meet with Local VA Officials to Talk Wait Times for Medical Care

May 14, 2014 Press Release
 Mankato, MN [5/14/14] – Today, Representative Tim Walz (MN-01) and a group of leaders from local veterans' service organizations visited U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) medical facilities in Mankato, Minneapolis and Rochester to request information from local officials about wait times for medical care. Walz is a member of the House Veterans Affairs Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations that is looking into the troubling allegations of a secret wait list for veterans at the Phoenix, Arizona hospital.

"As both a veteran and a member of this committee, I expect our warriors to receive the support and care they have earned and deserve. I will be the VA's strongest ally, but also their harshest critic when warranted. The allegations coming out of the Phoenix VA are extremely troubling and have rattled peoples' faith in the system. I am concerned that unless we get all of the facts on the table more damage will be done to the confidence of veterans seeking care. I appreciate the cooperation I'm receiving from local VA officials with my inquiry."

Last week, Walz joined the House Veterans Affairs Committee in voting unanimously to subpoena certain emails and written correspondence from VA officials, including VA Secretary Eric Shinseki, in an effort to provide oversight and get to the bottom of allegations of a "secret wait list" at the Phoenix, Arizona VA hospital. There is no evidence of a "secret wait list" at Minnesota VA facilities, but Walz is asking for a full accounting of the data and the appointment scheduling process used locally. Specifically,

Walz questioned local VA officials about "wait times" veterans are experiencing when seeking care locally. **"My goals are to get to the bottom of what happened in Phoenix and determine whether these allegations are widespread in the VA across the country. This includes getting a full accounting of the scheduling process used at our local VA facilities. Ultimately, any problems that are discovered must be fixed, people must be held accountable, and the VA must restore veterans' full faith in the system. Veterans who need medical care can't be discouraged from seeking treatment or turned away when they need services."**

UPDATE:

The VA recently provided Walz with the following information regarding appointment wait times (See links below). It should be noted that this is not a full accounting of the data nor does it fully answer Representative Walz's questions he laid out in his May 9 letter to VISN Director Murphy. While Representative Walz was told during the meeting that there was no evidence of a secret wait list in Minnesota, he is still demanding from the VA a full accounting of the data and scheduling processes used in order to verify what he was told and to get full answers to the questions laid out in his May 9 letter.

Rochester VA Clinic: (507) 252-0885
Minneapolis VAMC 1-866-414-5058
Primary Care: Ext 1100
Audiology: Ext 2375
Eye Clinic: Ext 3451



May is Mental Health Month

Each year millions of Americans face the reality of living with a mental health condition. During the month of May, NAMI and the rest of the country are bringing awareness to mental illness. Each year we fight stigma, provide support, educate the public and advocate for equal care. Each year, the movement grows stronger. In 2013, President Obama proclaimed May as National Mental Health Awareness Month and brought the issue of mental health to the forefront of our nation's thoughts. We believe that these issues are important to address year round, but highlighting these issues during May provides a time for people to come together and display the passion and strength of those working to improve the lives of the tens of millions of Americans affected by mental illness.

State Veterans Cemetery set to open in Preston, MN, Spring 2015.

Burial is open to all Veterans discharged from active military service under conditions other than dishonorable. Their spouses, minor children, and under certain conditions, unmarried adult children, are also eligible for burial. Eligible spouses may be buried, even if they predecease the Veteran. Also eligible for burial are members of the reserve components of the Armed Forces, the National Guard, and the Reserve Officer Training Corps who die while on active duty for training or performing service or who have 20 years of service of the Armed Forces creditable for retired pay.





**Olmsted County Veteran Service Officer
Jennifer Shumaker**

I would like to introduce myself! I started as a new Olmsted County Veterans Service Officer on April 7, 2014 and will be working out of the 2100 Campus Drive SE, Suite 200, Rochester, MN location, along with Nathan Pike and Neil Doyle.

I am a seasoned MN Army National Guard Veteran with over 25 years experience in motor transport and maintenance operations. I currently serve with 1-125th Field Artillery Battalion, G Company, 134th Brigade Support Battalion out of St. Peter, MN. I currently am in the role of Master Driver's Trainer. I have served two active duty deployment tours, Operation Iraqi Freedom, June 2004-February 2006, Minnesota, New Jersey, and New York. Operation Enduring Freedom, June 2009-August 2010, Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan, Kuwait, and Indiana .

I am passionate about working with veterans and I bring much experience to this office in regard to veterans benefits and outreach. I look forward to meeting and working with the Olmsted county veterans!



PTSD Support Group

SEMCIL's Veteran Services Program 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. Maybe you need to talk or just be in the company of your extended Veteran family. The support group will be a place for Veterans to share, heal and talk about their experiences in dealing with PTSD. We will be there for each other.

We are our brothers and sisters keepers because the oath we took to never leave a fallen comrade has no expiration date. For many of us, combat veterans, there are daily reminders of combat stress.

The group will be facilitated by Jennifer Shumaker, Veteran and Olmsted County Veterans Service Officer.

Upcoming meetings:
Thursday, May 22, 2014
NO MEETING IN JUNE
Thursday, July 3, 2014
Thursday, July 31, 2014

6:30pm-8:30 p.m.

**Rochester Elks Lodge,
1652 Hwy 52 North
Rochester, MN 55901**

For more information contact:

SEMCIL
Phone: 507-285-1815

"Supporting people with disabilities to become self-directed and valued community members"



Olmsted County Veteran's Services

SOLDIERS FIELD VETERANS MEMORIAL



Rochester Minnesota

Memorial Day Celebration

May 26, 2014

Location: Soldiers Field Veterans Memorial

Address: 300 7th Street SW, Rochester, MN 55902

Times: 9:45am Parade; 10:30am Program

Admission: Free

Memorial Day SkiDox Water Ski Show



May 26, 2014 - May 26, 2014

Location: Fisherman's Inn

Address: 8 Fisherman Drive NW,
Oronoco, MN 55960

Times: 1pm

Admission: Free

Enjoy a patriotic Memorial Day ski show on Lake Zumbro performed by the SkiDox water ski team!



Olmsted County Veteran's Services



Education

Yellow Ribbon Program

Effective May 16, 2014 VA is no longer accepting initial participation agreements, modifications to existing agreements, or withdrawals from the Yellow Ribbon Program.

A list of participants in the Yellow Ribbon Program for the 2014 - 2015 academic year will be posted on the website in early June. Institutions should review the Cover Letter and Frequently Asked Questions prior to any submissions, modifications, or withdrawals from the Yellow Ribbon Program; especially to determine whether they should submit a new open-ended agreement or to continue to honor the terms of existing open-ended agreements. For more information, visit:

http://www.benefits.va.gov/GIBILL/yellow_ribbon/Yellow_Ribbon_Info_Schools.asp

GoArmyEd Federal Tuition Assistance

On Sunday, 18 May 2014, Release 8.3 automated the One Year and Ten Year TA Eligibility requirements. wrong data element is being collected for the MGIB Eligibility Start Date from the National Guard and Reserve personnel systems and that many Soldiers were erroneously put on the One-Year Service Eligibility hold. If you have erroneously been put on this hold please contact your local education center to have the hold deferred. The secretary of the Army implemented policy changes to FTA eligibility in January 2014. Soldiers are eligible to use FTA after one year of service following completion of initial military training (AIT, WOBC and BOLC). FTA for post-bachelor's degree is available after 10 years in service. For more information, see the policy change at

https://www.goarmyed.com/docs/pdf/2014_TA_Policy_Changes_Soldier_Q_A_V1.pdf

Other upcoming local events

Marine Corp League Meeting
Tuesday, May 27, 7pm, American Legion
315 First Ave NW, Rochester, MN 55901

Salvation Army Donut Day, Friday, June 6
10:30am-1:00pm, Peace Plaza, 1st Ave SW &
1st St SW, Rochester, MN 55902

Scott Hosier Veterans Roundtable,
From Pearl Harbor to the Occupation of Japan
Monday, June 9, 7:00pm at Rochester Assembly
Church,
4240 18th Ave NW, Rochester, MN 55901
\$5.00 donation appreciated, Students: Free

VFW Post Meeting
Tuesday, June 10, VFW Post 1215
16 6th Street SW, Rochester, MN 55902

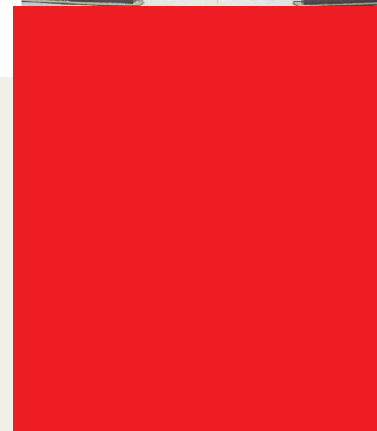
**Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans invites
you to participate in a free Legal Clinic
FOR VETERANS, CHILD SUPPORT & FAMILY, EM-
PLOYMENT, BENEFITS, EXPUNGEMENT, DEBT
COLLECTION, WILLS**

Thursday, June 26, 2014 | 10am – 3pm
Fillmore County Office Building
902 Houston St NW-Room 108, Preston, MN 55965

Annual July 4th Celebration Downtown Rochester
Fireworks begin at dusk, Silver Lake Park



“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.”



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