



DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS
Building Better Lives for America's Disabled Veterans



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Chapter 7- Michigan

Message From the Commander

By: Jack Carmichael

I hope you enjoy the first edition of our Chapter 7 Newsletter. We feel that if you can't come to us, maybe we can reach you through this venue. We have a lot of things going on and we would like to keep you up to date with any changes that might effect you. We would also like to invite you to our meetings, they are held at Burnham Brook in Battle Creek, every third Tuesday at 7 p.m.
 Hope to see you there.

From the Editor's Desk

by: Jon Gambee

This is a call to arms. Your DAV Chapter 7 needs you! There are nearly 850 of you out there, surely there is a dozen or so who would be willing to become more involved in the Chapter. Currently there are less than that number who are called upon to do the bulk

of the work for the rest of us.

For you.

When your country called, you were quick to respond and the entire nation is grateful for your service. Now you are being called again to come to the aid of your

comrades in arms.

I know you lead a busy life. Guess what? So do the rest of us. Get in line, pal, it forms right behind Commander Jack M. Carmichael. It forms behind Bill Roush, your Adjutant. Get in line behind Executive Committeeman Thomas Lightbody or Service Officer David Martin. Behind Senior Vice Commander Carl Baker or Junior Vice Commander John Cash (no, not that Johnny Cash). There is still room behind Treasurer Frank Shepherd.

You think Roush isn't busy? Wrong. He's an easy guy to track down. That is when he isn't busy trying to organize and supervise the Operation Military Kids Program he initiated and is now helping get started in other chapters around the state. It's a program that provides comfort and joy to kids who's parent or parents are busy serving our country in such garden spots as Iraq or Afghanistan.

Maybe you can catch

VAVS Report

By: Tom Lightbody

As your VAVS Representative (Veteran Administration Volunteer Service), I am letting everyone know we have an interest in the patients at the Battle Creek VA Hospital. This interest is in easing their stay by giving them entertainment and activities to attend. These activities include such things as Bingo, the second Saturday of every month; watermelon in June; a carnival in October; a special Christmas in December and many other activities such as picnics and such.

If you are interested in assisting in these activities, call me at (269) 964-2400.

As your Executive Committee Representative and your Administration Board member, I am at your service to answer any question as to the state constitution and the state budget. If I cannot answer your question, I will contact the state office and get an answer.

As a long time member of Chapter 7, I have seen many members come and go. But the same ones seem to stay on to keep things going and this makes me wonder who is going to be there when we are gone. Please step up to the plate and assist us so you can take over when the time comes.

Continued

From David Martin

Under the presumption list for Agent Orange the VA added hypertension. Also, anyone who has served off the coast of Vietnam and who has the Vietnam Campaign Medal should reapply for compensation if they have any of the disabilities listed under the presumption list; i.e. diabetes mellitus Type II, prostate cancer.
 Contact Service Officer, David Martin at (269) 223-5106.

Adjutant's Report

by: **Bill Roush**



This being the first newsletter in over five years for our chapter, it will be good news to most of us in a long time. At present we have 884 members in our chapter. Most of us are not able to attend the meetings that take place on the third Tuesday of each month but we hope that more can and will attend as word gets around about what we are doing. We have a very active club and there is plenty of friendly comradeship

shared at each meeting.

We have members in Battle Creek, Marshall, Hastings and all over the four counties here in western Michigan.

At our meetings held at Burnham Brook in Battle Creek, we have an average of 15 members attend. I have more than 30 years in the DAV. I did not start to come to our meetings until seven years ago. My family came first and after the kids grew up and moved

out I started to come to the meetings. I know a lot of you members cannot drive at night and many others cannot attend for one reason or another. I would like to hear from anyone who cannot attend the meetings so we can get your ideas on how to keep you informed about what your chapter is doing.

In Hastings we have a carpool going and we could start one up in your town, also. I just need to hear from you. Enclosed in this newsletter is a list of officers and their phone numbers. You can call or write to me at my home address, which is 414 W. State Rd., Hastings, MI. 49058.

We will do our best to get a newsletter out every three months. Also, we plan to have a Christmas party on December 18. This will take place at Burnham Brook Center in Battle Creek. The party will take the place of our regular monthly meeting. At this party, we will host the Operation Military Kids- Barry County Chapter. Right now there are 13 kids. If you can make the party and need a ride, please contact one of the officers and we will make every effort to get you to the party.

Also, remember, we have an active Auxiliary and they meet at the same site on the same night as the men. If you can attend a meeting, please bring your spouse.

Operation Military Kids

by: **Bill Roush**

In July, 2005, the National Guard and DAV of Michigan signed an agreement to expand Outreach Support for National Guard Families. Our chapter covers Barry, Calhoun and Eaton counties. Barry County is the only county that has set up an Operation Military Kids team. We are currently working with Kent County. We need help in all counties, but it is a long and slow process.

When National Guard, Army Reserve and other military parents living in civilian communities are mobilized, their children suddenly have different needs. Now they are "military kids" but they still look the same to teachers, friends, and the rest of the community. Their lives are turned upside down. Many of their usual support systems may no longer be adequate. Extensive media coverage of on-going military operations create daily anxiety. These new "military kids" need to connect with other youth in similar situations. They seek friends and adults who can empathize and can help them cope with their new world.

Army Child and Youth Services, Army National Guard and Reserve, Boys & Girls Clubs of America, Military Child Education Coalition, schools and 4-H clubs are partnering to reach out to military youth ... before, during and after their parents are deployed. This outreach effort is called Operation Military Kids. You can log on at www.operationmilitarykids.org or call me at (269) 945-2605 for more information on how to get involved and help these kids.

The DAV Chapter 7 meets the third Tuesday of every month at the Burnham Brook Center, 200 West Michigan Avenue in Battle Creek. If you need a ride, check out the List of Officers elsewhere in this publication.

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him on one of the weekends he is handing out balloons and flags at the fair or Forget-Me-Nots at the local grocery store parking lot.

Try Lightbody. You should be able to catch him between trips to the VA Hospital, where he and others go to bring a little joy into the lives of too many veterans who cannot get out and about.

David Martin is not too busy. Don't be discouraged by the fact that the VA has closed down much of its operation, forcing David to split his time between the VA facility in Battle Creek and Grand Rapids. He still finds the time to give a helping hand to every single veteran who comes through the door, helping them get through the paperwork and red tape that slows us all down.

Commander Carmichael should be an easy man to track down. Maybe you can catch him between trips all over west Michigan to transport fellow veterans to the VA Hospital for a scheduled appointment. Don't even try to keep up with Frank Shepherd, you can't do it. He's a tireless worker at the national level, the state level and the local level.

OK, we agree, we're all busy. But too busy to help a fellow Disabled Veteran?

These fellows aren't too busy.

The time to become more involved in helping fellow veterans is now. You don't have to commit to 20 hours a week, just come to one of our meetings and see what everyone else is doing and grab on to something you can help at. It may be a one time event, it may be once a month. But it can make a difference.

You can make a difference.

Tim Trittschuh pilots project to use biobased products

Tim Trittschuh, a mechanic at Fort Custer National Cemetery (FCNC) and a member of DAV Chapter 7, took part recently in a project in which more than 90 pieces of equipment used on the 770 acre facility used biobased products designed to conserve oil.

As a result of his efforts, Trittschuh and FCNC has been honored with the prestigious 2007 White House Closing the Circle Award.

The project was sponsored by the United Soybean Board (USB). Trittschuh said he was eager to try biobased

products because they were homegrown and less damaging to the environment.

Trittschuh is a mechanic at FCNC, where more than 20,000 veterans lay in their eternal resting place.

"One backhoe operator told me that the hydraulic filter clog light does not come on as much as it did with the petroleum-based hydraulic oil," Trittschuh said. "He also mentioned that, overall, the hydraulic system seems to be getting 'smoother.' But you can't expect overnight results, it took a few operating hours for these

benefits to take effect."

Trittschuh has the job of keeping the equipment running smoothly at FCNC. As part of the project, more than 40 categories of biobased products, products made from natural, renewable, domestically produced resources like soybean oil, were used on the FCNC equipment.

These products include biodiesel fuel, lubricants, two-cycle engine oil and others designed to help reduce air and water pollution, the generation of hazardous waste and the use of potential toxic substances.

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You can read the Newsletter and get the minutes of every meeting by accessing the Chapter 7 website at www.http.davmembersportal.org/chapters/mi/07