

Carry The Load national relay aims to restore the true meaning of Memorial Day. The 2019 Carry The Load will be held from 25 April to 26 May 2019 at various locations throughout the United States. Carry the Load is a 501(c)3 organization co-founded by two Navy SEAL Veterans who wanted to restore the true meaning of Memorial Day. Carry The Load is dedicated to providing active, meaningful ways to honor and celebrate the sacrifices made by our nation's heroes — military, veterans, first responders, and their families. What started as a mission to restore the true meaning of Memorial Day has broadened to include more than just our military heroes and more than just the one holiday. Carry The Load works to bring all Americans together to participate in honoring our nation's heroes every day. The Carry The Load relay team will travel across the country during the month of May to provide an active way to connect Americans to the sacrifices of those who have served. Three routes will be followed by walkers and cyclists across the country handing off the American flag every 5 miles for 32 consecutive days. More than 11,500 miles will be covered, providing a chance to get out the message about honoring our nation's heroes. Families, friends, and strangers alike are able to walk these 5 miles and roughly two hours together during the Relay sharing stories as well as hearing stories of loved ones who have sacrificed for this country. This, in turn, ensures that the legacies and memories of our nation's heroes never fade. Some participants also choose to carry packs with weight in them or pictures of loved ones attached thus signifying their response to the question Carry The Load asks, "Who Are You Carrying?" Twenty-seven National Cemeteries will be included in this year's relay as walkers and travel towards Dallas, TX.

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and the Department of Health and Human Services' Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) convened seven teams March 27-29 in Arlington, Virginia, for the Mayor's Challenge to Prevent Suicide Among Service Members, Veterans and their Families. Suicide is a major public health concern that affects everyone. It is estimated 45,000 Americans, including 6,000 Veterans, die by suicide each year.

Each year the Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs provides about 90 grants to selected organizations in Minnesota whose mission and purpose is to assist Veterans and their families. The grant application process is now open until 26 April. Check it out at <https://mn.gov/mdva/resources/federalresources/grants/>

The Minnesota legislature is in session and one of the bills being considered is the construction of a new Veterans Home in Bemidji, Montevideo and Preston. Our area is represented by Senator Kent Eken, Representative Ben Lien and Representative Paul Marquart. Please contact them about Veterans concerns and any other issue. Following the MN session, these three legislators will be at the Moorhead Public Library giving an update on all actions of the Legislature.