

## **Minnesota Activities in Support of Our Troops**

The Family Readiness Group (FRG) Annual Training will be March 29-31, 2019 at Chase on the Lake in Walker. The training event brings commanders, first sergeants, military points of contact, Family Readiness Group Leaders and FRG statutory volunteers together. This training is important as it ensure the Family Readiness goals and the commander's vision can be established and carried out by volunteers, in accordance with State Family Programs and Minnesota National Guard FRG guidelines. The mission of the Family Readiness Group is to encourage self-reliance among members by providing information, referral assistance, and mutual support. FRGs achieve readiness by providing an atmosphere and an agenda of activities, which builds cohesiveness among unit members. FRGs serves as the conduit between the command and family members. There is no rank in the family readiness groups and that is the key to its success. All soldiers and family members are members of the FRG. Common goals of FRGs include: Welcoming service and family members into the unit. Developing relationships that enable effective communication. Fostering a sense of belonging to the team in all family members. Creating forums for family members to develop friendships and support each other. Establishing communication networks. Providing and participating in formal FRG professional development training.

On Sunday 10 February, the Twin Cities Walleyes Unlimited organization will be hosting a Military Youth Ice Fishing Clinic at the Veterans Campground, Marine, MN.

Central MN Remembers Vietnam will be hosting a film and video of the war on Thursday 21 February at 9:30 am at the Whitney Senior Center in St. Cloud, MN. The event will examine how Hollywood has depicted war through feature films, videos and documentaries and discuss films such as The Green Beret, Born on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July and others.

The Beyond the Yellow Ribbon (BTYR) office in St. Paul announced the hiring of a new coordinator, Jeremiah Miller for the southern region in MN. Miller joins Rachel Johnson serving the northern region and Mike Windsperger of the central region. The three offices work with local BTYR organizations supporting our local Guard units, deployed men and women and active duty service members. Our local BTYR will hold its monthly meeting on 14 February at 9:30am, VFW Post 1223, Dilworth. Everyone interested in helping our organizations is welcome to attend.

In national news, the Department of Veterans Affairs announced its cooperation in the National Salute to Veteran Patients week, February 10-16,2019. Honestly, I have never heard of this week before, but am spreading the word. According to the VA news release, last year, schools, community groups and youth organizations nationwide sent more than 288,000 valentines to hospitalized Veterans. Over 75,000 volunteers nationwide provide over 12 million hours volunteering to help hospitalized Veterans. Our VA hospital is located in north Fargo plus we have a Veterans Home in Fergus Falls, MN and Lisbon, ND.