

ARKANSAS COMBAT VETERANS MOTORCYCLE ASSOCIATION 7-1
Grant Draft for the Tyson Foods Community Grant (Open at large Category)

“I only regret that I have but one life to give to my country.” Captain Nathan Hale, an American Soldier in the Continental Army during the Revolutionary War.

History:

The National Combat Veterans Motorcycle Association was founded in May of 2001, when 45 Veterans decided to form a nonprofit with one main objective: helping Veterans. The two things that brought the soldiers together were motorcycle riding and being Veterans from Combat Zones or Military Theaters.

The primary focus of the National CVMA is to raise awareness for the plight of POW's, MIA's and their families, and combat related medical conditions such as Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and Traumatic Brain Disorder (TBI). Every member pays yearly dues to the national organization which benefits Veterans and Veteran families through educational scholarships and endowments.

Today, the National CVMA has members located in all 50 states and living abroad representing all branches of the United States Armed Forces who support Veteran causes and ride motorcycles as a hobby.

In Arkansas, the State CVMA has grown from a small group of military friends riding together for fun and supporting other Veteran causes' to establishing eight Local CVMA chapters throughout the state, including the Arkansas Combat Motorcycle Association Chapter 7-1 in Central Arkansas. (CVMA 7-1)

Mission Statement:

The mission of the Arkansas Combat Veterans Motorcycle Association Chapter 7-1 is to support and defend those who have defended our country and our freedoms. Focusing on assisting Veteran care facilities to provide warm meals, clothing, shelter and guidance, or to simply tell another Veteran “Thank you” and/or “Welcome home.”

Members of the CVMA 7-1 offer support to Veterans in need throughout the Greater Little Rock and River Valley region. The group is diligent in sharing Chapter information with local shelters, food banks, and the Veteran Administration to distribute to Veterans and Veteran families

who may need assistance; all the members have one united purpose: to support Veterans in need. Their motto is Vets Helping Vets.

The CVMA 7-1 recognizes the physical, emotional, and financial struggles Veterans experience. The Chapter bands together to provide motel rooms, hot meals, clothing, hygiene products, haircuts, transportation, and counseling support. When asked how important the local Chapter is to the Veteran community, CVMA 7-1 Treasurer Joel Kimery responded,

“The CVMA 7-1 is a family who will stand and support any servicemen or military family in need. From the moment a young private enlists to the day a Veteran leaves this world for Fiddlers Green, Valhalla or wherever Warriors await the final call, the dedicated Brothers and Sisters of the CVMA 7-1 will be there. Whether the call is to help a military family during rough times, volunteer packing food boxes at the local food bank, or providing a shoulder to cry on when no civilian friends understand, in good times and bad, the members of the CVMA 7-1 will be there. Oh yeah...and there’s motorcycle riding!”

Community Partners and Achievements:

In lieu of membership dues, members of the CVMA 7-1 donate their time and support the organization via donations, fundraisers, and raffles held throughout the year. A designated 501c19 Veteran nonprofit organization, the CVMA 7-1 partners with local organizations to support Veterans, Veteran families, and to promote Veteran Service Awareness and Motorcycle Safety.

They partner with

- Annual Safety Day – a Motorcycle Safety Foundation Course provided by the Arkansas Motorcycle Safety Center in Little Rock, Arkansas
- Rock City Harley Davidson in Little Rock, Arkansas
- American Pie Pizza in North Little Rock, Arkansas
- Vets Best Friend - a service dog organization located in Cabot, Arkansas
- Feed the Veterans Food Bank in Beebe, Arkansas
- St. Francis House in Little Rock, Arkansas
- Arkansas State Veterans Home in North Little Rock, Arkansas.
- Veterans Day Memorial Parade Ride in Vilonia, Arkansas
- Toy Hill Drive benefiting the Marine Corps’ Toys for Tots in Little Rock, Arkansas
- White County Christmas for Kids Toy Drive
- Wreaths of Honor at the Arkansas State Veterans Cemetery in Sherwood, Arkansas
- Arkansas Military Funeral Honors Program, a division of the Army National Guard, located in North Little Rock, Arkansas
- Arkansas Patriot Guard Riders

The CVMA 7-1 has been locally recognized by the Veterans Administration for their local charitable works, along with receiving a Partnership Award from St. Francis House for Homeless Veterans, and a Community Service Award in April of 2018.

Project Statement:

The Combat Veteran Motorcycle Association 7-1 stands ready to honor those who have served by gifting the use of their Funeral Caisson to vets who have no family.

Centrally located in Arkansas, the CVMA 7-1 assists as homeless Veteran funeral escorts in the southern and mid-western states when the Arkansas Military Funeral Honors Program, a division of the Army National Guard, places a call on social media for volunteers to stand in the absence of loved ones.

The CVMA 7-1 takes a very active role in honoring Veterans for their service. They volunteer as pallbearers, stand in absence of family, in the motorcycle motorcade, to providing the hand-crafted wooden Military Caisson transporting the honored Veteran to their final resting place.

The CVMA is dedicated to and surrounded by Brothers and Sisters when they receive their final salute.

“For a Veteran, being alone is probably the worst possible feeling you can have.” Patricia Terry, a Retired Combat Veteran and PR Officer for the CVMA 7-1 shared during an interview with local new station Thv11, Terry went on to add *“Basically, they are our Brother or Sister, so for us it’s a show of respect, and a good way to make sure their memory is kept. Without volunteers from the CVMA 7-1 to come say their goodbyes, a fellow Veteran would have gone to the grave alone.”*

The National CVMA only has 2 Funeral Caissons for military processions; the Arkansas CVMA 7-1 Funeral Caisson is one of those. Retired Army Sergeant First Class Doyle "Timex" Duggin, in honor of his son Staff Sergeant Samuel C. "Sam" Duggin, who was killed in a motorcycle accident in July of 2010, rebuilt the Harley Davidson motorcycle his son had been riding into a Trike to pull a beautiful, fully restored, hand-crafted wooden Funeral Caisson he had purchased. Timex then donated both the rebuilt Trike and the Funeral Caisson to CVMA 7-1 to be used in Veteran processions in memory of his son Sam.

As fate would have it, Timex would be the first CVMA member to receive the honor of riding in the Funeral Caisson as he was tragically killed in a car accident on his way to volunteer at a Christmas Toy Drive in December 2011. Both father and son, were United States Military Combat Veterans and members of the CVMA 7-1, their names along with every Veteran who has taken their last ride within the Funeral Caisson are forever remembered with a brass nameplate affixed to the side.

As of September 2019, the CVMA 7-1 Funeral Caisson has been used in 27 Veteran funeral processions, and with an increased demographic of elderly and homeless Veteran population, the Chapter expects the need for the Funeral Caisson to increase as well.

Problem Statement:

The CVMA 7-1 Funeral Caisson service is free of charge and available upon official request to any Veteran's family or Unclaimed Veteran in the State of Arkansas. When a request is received, the Trike and Funeral Caisson are trailered to the funeral home where it provides a beautiful display of honor and respect. However, with only donations used to cover the Funeral Caisson maintenance, parts replacement, and storage, most of the Chapter budget is allocated to maintaining the Caisson.

Currently the CVMA 7-1 is looking for additional support to help with the Caisson Project. The Chapter would like to rebuild the engine in the Trike, as the mileage is high and becoming unsafe to ride; all the tires on the Caisson, Trike and Transport Trailer need to be replaced. As a means of preventative maintenance the CVMA 7-1 is also looking to vinyl wrap the outside of the trailer to protect it from the elements and prevent further deterioration, furthermore, the vinyl wrap will provide a mobile site to promote the nonprofit work the CVMA 7-1 performs and its sponsors. Lastly, any additional funds from sponsors will go towards brass name plates, fuel costs, and storage fees as the Caisson must be kept in a climate-controlled storage facility.

Project Budget:

The CVMA works with a budget that generally doesn't exceed \$3000.00 throughout the year. In lieu of membership dues, members of the CVMA 7-1 support the organization by donating their time and monetary donations at fundraisers and raffles held throughout the year.

The CVMA 7-1 has 6 Chapter Officers, although none receive any financial compensation and no stipends are paid to workers or volunteers. Any outside monetary donations are used to gift Veterans in need, maintain the Funeral Caisson, purchase new member Chapter patches, fundraising events, and saved into the Emergency fund.

Below is a budget estimate of Project Caisson:

- 1) Motorcycle Maintenance for Trike
 - a) Rebuild Engine \$4000
 - b) General Maintenance every 5000-20,000 miles \$1000
 - c) Valve & Chain Adjustments 18,000 miles \$1500
 - d) Insurance \$1500
 - e) Motorcycle Tires x 3 \$1000
 - f) Gas \$1000

2) Funeral Caisson	
a) Polish and Sealant	\$200
b) Tires x 2	\$500
3) Transport Trailer	
a) Vinyl Wrapping	\$4000
b) Tires x 4	\$1000
4) Administrative Costs	
a) Emergency Fund	\$3300
b) Caisson Website	\$400
c) Advertising	\$500
d) Brass Nameplates	\$100
Total	\$20,000.00

Goals, Objectives, & Methods:

Goal: Create a Caisson Maintenance Budget

- Objective 1: Create Go Fund Me Account
- Objective 2: Create Additional Fundraising Events
- Objective 3: Find sponsors to add to the Transport Trailer Vinyl Wrap

- Methods 1: Develop strong business relations and build Social media following
- Methods 2: Promote Chapter during fundraising events via community partners
- Methods 3: Have a big annual fundraising event

One of the goals the CVMA 7-1 had was to create an event each year to help support the Caisson Project. The goal became a reality this year when the CVMA 7-1 partnered with the Rock City Harley Davidson Company to create a Labor Day event called Rumble in the Rock (RIR). The two-day festival held in September 2019 highlighted local Veteran organizations, motorcycle safety, as well as showcased the musical talents and artists from across the state.

The RIR was a success, and the Chapter hopes attendance will grow each year. A portion of the proceeds for RIR went towards the Caisson Project as well as the Feed the Vets Food Pantry in Beebe, Arkansas.

Other proposed methods to support Project Caisson:

- Attend outdoor festivals and local events with the Trike, Transport Trailer, and Funeral Caisson. By allowing the general public to view the Trike and Funeral Caisson up close, the emotional experience provides the perfect opportunity for Chapter members to speak to

individuals about the nonprofit work the Chapter performs, the Caisson Project, and the ongoing need for support.

- Website and Social Media updates regarding Project Caisson and Foundation Sponsors.
- Vinyl Wrap on the Transport Trailer will serve as a large mobile billboard promoting the CVMA 7-1 and our Foundation Sponsors.

Future Funding:

The Arkansas Combat Veterans Association has made a huge impact on the Veteran community throughout Central Arkansas and is committed to providing the Funeral Caisson to Arkansas' Military Heroes. As the CVMA 7-1 continues to grow, the Chapter looks to expand our grant-seeking program, as well as continue to hold our Annual Labor Day Fundraising event.

We respectfully ask the Tyson Foods Community Grant Program to join the Arkansas Combat Veterans Association Chapter 7-1 as a Five Star Benefactor and choose the Caisson Project for a \$20,000.00 unrestricted grant. The patronage from the Tyson Foods Community Grant Program will enable the CVMA 7-1 organization to continue to provide free funeral services to Veterans, as well as complete crucial maintenance to the Trike, Funeral Caisson and Transport Trailer.

“We are forever indebted to those who have given their lives that we might be free.” President Ronald Reagan, Captain of the United States Army Air Forces during WWII.

The shortage of affordable housing, livable income and access to healthcare has made the homeless Veteran population a public health issue. Many homeless Veterans suffer from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, substance abuse and other mental health problems; limited employment opportunities, the lack of family and social support cause Homeless Veterans to become disoriented and detached from family and loved ones. Over time the desire to seek help is lost making homeless Veterans one of the highest populations for suicide rates, in addition, 95% of all homeless Veterans die early deaths from Cardiovascular disease, cancer or respiratory infections from decades of living on the streets and in shelters.

Sadly, 22 Veterans die each day from committing suicide.

Of the 70,000 Homeless U.S. Veterans living in America, nearly half of the Veteran population are retired soldiers who served during the Vietnam War era; producing a geriatric homeless Veteran population who are at high risk for health complications. In Arkansas, 10% of the population, have been identified as homeless Veterans. The members of the CVMA 7-1 believe every Veteran deserves full military honors, especially Veterans who die alone.