

UNITED VETERANS LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL OF MINNESOTA

Veterans Service Building

2nd Floor • 20 West 12th Street • St. Paul, MN 55155-2079



Army



Air Force



Marine Corps



Coast Guard



Merchant Marines



Navy

“A Consortium of Veterans, Military, and Auxiliary Organizations to exchange information and support issues relating to entitlements for Veterans, Military Retirees, the National Guard and Military Reservists, their dependents and survivors.”

UVLC Website – www.mnuvlc.org

UVLC Minutes –Wednesday, May 7, 2008

- **Call to order**
- **Invocation – Chaplain – Capt. Rittmaster**
- **Pledge of Allegiance was lead by Jerry Nalipinski**
- **Recognition of visitors and guests and Commander’s of VSO’s. Congratulations and Recognition to the newly Elected Commanders. Richard Jenkins for the Order of the Purple Heart and Dean Ascheman for the DAV.**
- **Reports from:**
- **Jerry Kyser-Chairman- Defenders of Democracy Days: Monday May 12th: Veterans have a free day at the History Center. Veterans will have a chance to look at a very rare copy of the Declaration of Independence that is valued at 8million dollars and free run of the MN Center from 9-5. Baker, Wadd and Williams Law firm and Veterans Organizations are sponsoring this. Saturday May 17th the Minnesota Vietnam Veterans Charity will sponsor the largest fly over the Capitol at 12:30 to showcase MN Aviation history. This is being done in conjunction with celebrating MN being 150 years old. May 18th the 4 National Guard F-16s will have a flyover the Capitol @ 7 P.M. Chairman Kyser was invited to attend MNDVA Leadership Conference at Camp Ripley May 21 to May 24th to talk about the UVLC and meet the New Commanders.**

1. State Agencies

- **MN Dept of Veteran Affairs -Christine Kiel-SF 3683-Conference Committee on Omnibus Agriculture, Military and Veterans Affairs policy bill concluded its work last week. Summaries of the provisions were listed in a handout that was distributed to the UVLC members and guests. The bill will be on the House and Senate floor next week for final approval. As a reminder, this bill does not have a funding provision. There were 205 bills for veterans bills that were intertwined into other bills. When someone says that they support veterans, they need to be aware of where the bills are placed into other bills. Next year is a full budget year. Please designate delegates from each of the organizations to be at the Capitol to represent these bills. Think Ahead.... We will need a greater force of support.**
- **MN Veterans Issues in the Legislative Process-WWII Women Veterans Event took place to honor women veterans on Thursday, May 8th at the 934th Officers Club on Post Road.**
- **MN Assistance Council for Veterans (MACV)- -Kara Cornils- Stand-down will have free shuttles from the drop in centers and the Dorothy Day center to the fort Snelling Army Reserve complex on May 12th and 13th. Welcoming ceremony at 2:00 on Monday, May 12th. Army band will be playing in the evening. June 18-22 fundraiser at Canterbury Downs; Honoring MN’s Veterans dedicated to our Freedoms.**

2. Federal Agencies

- **VA Regional Office- Julie Carie -Working diligently getting property tax exclusion letters in the mail. They are being mailed on a rolling basis. 70-100% non-permanent, \$150,000 exemption will go out first. They anticipate all letters to be in the mail by the end of next week. Vets are receiving four items-eligibility letters, welcome letter from MN DVA MN Dept of Revenue, Fact sheet, application that applies to the Vet's exclusion eligibility. There are 14,000 letters being sent out to vets.**
- **VISN 23-Dr Petzel-There was a hearing May 6th about suicide. Treated 112,000 separate veterans in the state since 2003. There are 444 Mental Health Specialists; they have added 300 mental health specialists in the past few years. The biggest issue is reaching out to the clients that need the services. The outreach efforts from the National Guard and CVSO's have helped. There is a new call service to contact every veteran who has not had contact with the Veterans Service. They need help from all of the service organizations to contact and refer the people to the services that are available.**
- **Mpls VA Hospital –Steven Kleinglass-Director was recognized as the DAV person of the year. Over the past 25 days there have been many prestigious visitors at the VA Hospital. The construction is continuing to proceed. Big news about adult day health care program. Struggling with space and outreach. Rented space on Cedar Avenue. 156 medical centers. 20 provide adult day health care. There are 75 individuals enrolled at the medical center. They get fewer services than those that are provided for in the med centers because of the providers. There will be more volunteers in the area centers. Closer to home would be an advantage. The VA should not be considered to be the Mecca of medical services. It is sometimes not the most convenient for the client. Parking is a huge problem. How long will the transition take place? Commanders' Task Force will be involved with dialogue about this issue. Volunteers need to be finger printed in order to be a volunteer driver as new criteria has been put in place by the federal government.**
- **St Cloud VA Hospital –Several staffing changes. Dr. Markstrom is the Permanent Chief of Staff. Jeremy Maurstad, DOM chief. Mickie Pittman-Leyendecker, WVPM, now seeing women veterans in clinic. Recruiting for nurses, physicians and psychiatrists. Opened urgent care and transition clinic on April 30. Saint Cloud has been selected as the only site in the VA for a Wind electric generator as part of the Presidents plan for alternative energy. St Cloud will host the UVLC meeting on the 9th of July.**
- **88th Regional Readiness Command-Sgt MAJ Janet Jones-the military expo will be held on May 16 and 17. The 16th will be dedicated to school children. The 17th us army drill team and army corps. Rock climbing wall and basic training for children, Air Guard and Historic Fort Snelling Museums will be open free of charge. For more information:
www.mnmilitaryexpo.org**
- **Ft Snelling Cemetery-Art Smith-Director-**

Total interments	405	Current FYTD	2,621	Total to Date	179,186	Total Female Vets
Caskets	198		1,319		145,907	1,322
Cremations	198		1,074		32,734	
Columbarium	33		228		545	
- **Memorial Day at the fort Snelling Cemetery will be named "A Grateful Nation Remembers" Patrick Calahan- Marine Veteran is the keynote speaker. MN State Band will be there at 9 A.M. The ceremony will begin at 10 A.M. on May 26th.**

- **Jody Bean Assistant Director of Veterans' Training and Service. Kevin Nagle, director of VETS for MN, couldn't make it to the UVLC meeting. Jody and Kevin are the two formal investigators for USERRA (Uniformed services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act) There have been 30 cases this year. There were 30 cases total last year. They are working on employee outreach to increase awareness.**

4. Federal Congressional Senators and Representatives

- **Senator Norm Coleman –Andy Davis-3 time combat vet is the new case worker for the Senator. Senate passed housing bill. Current fed bill triples protection time for vet in foreclosure. Co sponsor with the GI bill. Guard has 2,600 administrative leave policies. Pilipino bill. Amendment failed.**
- **7th District Representative-Collin Peterson-Al Loehr-Thank you to Senator Coleman for his steadfastness in support of the veterans' GI bill. Sid Schmuchler is going to be recognized by the governor for all of his support in the legislative process on May 8th at the Capitol.**
- **2nd District Representative-John Kline-Chaz Johnson-cosigned onto all of the GI reform bill post 911 GI bill vet education improvement act.HR 41102 educational benefits for guardsmen.**
- **3rd district Representative-Jim Ramstad-Margaret Cavanaugh-house vet affairs committee revamping of the GI bill. This does not coincide with what the senate did. Reimburse veterans for emergency care. Rep Ramstad will be visiting the Fischer house on the 19th of May.**
- **4th District Representative-Betty McCollum-Josh Strakar-Congresswoman McCollum directed a letter to the Sec of Def about concern due to the failure to issue PDMRA Post-Deployment Mobilization Respite Absence program benefits to Reserve Component Soldiers who were eligible but released from active duty before the program was implemented. This affects the nearly 2,400 Minnesotans who served one of the longest terms of deployment.**
- **8thDistrict Representative-James Oberstar-Alana GI supplemental bill. Veterans outstate residents and their care. MN Military Families: Your children deserve the opportunity of recognition and thanks for their military family service and sacrifice. Gov Pawlenty would like to send a letter to dependent military children. To register www.minnesotaveteran.org/child**

5. Meeting in Recess for 10 minutes

- 6. Old Business –Treasurers report: \$6,254.55 amount. Jimmie Lee will contact the VFW about the dues. There will be a State Legislature report card to determine who has voted for the veteran issue. \$100 dues from Vietnam Veterans will be added to the treasury deposit.**

SF2869 is what the veterans need to support. UVLC should send a letter to all the senators. – To be taken under advisement by Chairman

New Business: \$200 should be given to the Women's Veterans event. Accept a friendly amendment to raise that to \$400. Motion Passed. 235 people will be present to honor the women who served in WWII. Jerry will call Julie Jenson and present her with the check after the meeting.

There was a recommendation to have the business meeting at 9:00. It was stated that the reason for having the meeting at 9:30 is because there are several that travel all the way from St. Cloud.

Tom Shaw asked to have a letter written from the UVLC to Steve Kleinglass to have the day care stay at the VA. Discussion: We need to take a wider perspective of the concern. Let's wait it out.

Ralph commented that this is due to a draw down of the military and the VA facilities.

Jimmie Lee says that there is so much involved in this discussion. We need to get all the information and give the Mpls. VA a chance to work it out. The Chairman is to call Christine Keil to ask if the UVLC can participate in the Commander Task Force meeting this week where the issue will be discussed.

**It was moved and seconded that we send a letter to Kleinglass to maintain the current center.
Motion Failed**

Discussion about having the Veterans Affairs Committee stand alone next year when the bills are written instead of being with Agriculture and Economics Committee

Adjournment/ Next Meeting 9:30 am, Wed, June 4, 2008 at Building 9

There were 44 members and guests in attendance

Respectfully submitted by Jana Kyser