

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, June 3, 2009

- Call to order – 09:30
- Invocation – Ralph Donais
- Pledge of Allegiance
- Recognition of visitors and guests and Commander’s of VSO’s
- Reports from: Chairman, Jerry Kyser- Al Holton is the new commander of the Purple Heart. Jerry announced that he will not be running for reelection for the UVLC in January. It is time to create interest for new leadership in the organization. Memorial Day had many celebrations. Thanks for your participation. Vice Chairman – Ralph Donais -Remember the 4 RAD (Retirement Activity Days) Rosemount 28 Aug; Camp Ripley 29Aug; Duluth 18 Sept. Mystic Lake is also in Sept.

1. State Agencies and MN Veteran Assistance Organizations

MN Dept of Veteran Affairs - Commissioner – Mike Pugliese-There was a bill tracking sheet that was handed out to highlight the strong points of the bills passed. The hope was to maintain the current budget and grow a little bit. This was accomplished. Total general fund spending for MDVA for FY10-11 is \$116.893M. The programs and service general fund base budget for FY10-11 is \$29,304M. The Veteran Health Care General Fund base budget for FY10-11 is \$87.589M. Minnesota GI bill funding is changed from a direct appropriation to an open appropriation with a \$6M spending cap, which is the level of funding currently appropriated to the program. To read HF1122 in its entirety, log onto www.leg.state.mn.us and search under House bills. Once on the status page, click on Chapter 94. Building 9 at the Mpls Vets Home will be torn down and a new state of the art facility will be constructed.

Communication Director-Anna Long: June 13 event for honoring Vietnam Veterans: On line registration is now open. It is a free event. If you do register you will receive a commemorative lapel pin. Call 651-296-2562 for more information or go online to mnhonorsvietnamvets.org. There is shuttle bus to the capitol from the MN fairgrounds.

The UVLC meeting will be July 8 in St Cloud.

MN Military Affairs – Nicole Lovald - New director of Military Outreach. Post deployment health assessment will be happening one year from the time that the military returns. Higher education will provide transfer credit guides that will work across the state so that there is transparency and guidelines across the state.

MN Assistance Council for Veterans (MACV)- Kathy Vitalis- There is \$500,000 on-going base funding for the FY10-11. Standdown event was successful; They served over 400 veterans. At Ramsey County courthouse there is a traveling memorial that is trying to put a face to homelessness.

MN Veterans Initiatives Center and Research Institute – VICTRI - Jimmie Lee Coulthard- Black Veterans of America will be setting up their office with VICTRI in building 11. A great part of VICTRI's mission is to work with the Valley Forge Project in Sauk Centre. The intent is to turn this into a training center and conference center. This program has partners with many other organizations across the country. The idea of wellness is at the core of the mission.

2. Federal Agencies

VA Regional Office –Julie Carey has been promoted to serve as a Division Team Leader working with finance and facilities. GSA owns the Whipple Building; there will be a complete renovation of the building due to stimulus money. The greatest concern is to serve the veterans and have a smooth transition.

VISN 23 – Jim Dank- Effective May 27, 2009 Dr Robert Petzel was appointed the acting Principal Deputy Under Secretary for Health in VA Central Office, Washington, DC. During his absence Cynthia Breyfogle, VISN 23 Deputy Network Director, will be the Acting Network Director and Dr. Marci Mylan, Associate Director, Mpls VAMC,, will serve as Acting Network Deputy Director. FY 09 was a 4% budget increase. This yr it is up 15 %. There was a handout given out with complete details. www.visn23.va.gov for more details. VISN 23 Receives \$18.6M for Rural Health Projects

Mpls VA Medical Center – Steve Kleinglass – Director-The new Fischer house is funded with private donations. The VA stimulus money and letters are being received in the mail currently. There are Town hall meetings being conducted in the northern tier communities for a outpatient clinic to be placed in one the communities. The exact location is not known.

With great sadness it was announced that Past VFW Commander Walt Larson passed away yesterday Tues, June 2, in a car accident. Walt has served in many Veteran leadership positions in Minnesota.

St Cloud VA Medical Center – Barry Bahl –July 8th is the date for the UVLC to meet in Saint Cloud. All of the clinical positions are now filled. Dr. Feyda is now on board as a Care Director. It is a struggle in rural MN to find Doctors. Growth continues in St Cloud. The new construction projects have helped with this growth. 1 out of 10 is from the dessert storm era. This will affect the programming. Ten years ago, 480 veterans were over 80 yrs old. This yr there is over 5,000. Applications are available June 10 through July 3, 2009 at the St Cloud VA Medical Center's Voluntary Service Office, for the 2009 Physically Disabled Veteran Deer Hunt. The hunt to be held October 6-8 at Camp Ripley in Little Falls, MN is the 17th annual event. CBOC will open in Brainerd on June 15th and Alexandria this fall.

St Paul Vets Center – Bernard Beamon – New staff member Vietnam Combat Veteran who will work with PTSD. Mobile counseling Center is a customized RV that will travel to remote area. It has the latest computer technology. There is one for the state of MN. It will be at the event on June 13. Brooklyn Park Veterans Center will be breaking ground soon. One therapist has been hired.

Ft Snelling Cemetery – Art Smith – Director-Andrew Matthews is the new assistant director.

| Total | May | Current FYTD | Total TD |
|--------------------|------------|---------------------|-----------------|
| Interments | 417 | 2538 | 185595 |
| Caskets | 154 | 1177 | 148797 |
| Cremation | 202 | 1105 | 35607 |
| Columbarium | 61 | 254 | 1424 |

Female Veteran total: 1,375

May 2009:

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|----------------|------------|---------------------|-----------|------------------|------------|
| WWII | 118 | Persian Gulf | 1 | Dependent | 145 |
| Korea | 92 | Peacetime | 15 | | |
| Vietnam | 45 | Iraq | 1 | | |

4,000 participated in the Memorial Day Ceremony. Sentimental Reflections Magazine did an article using Fort Snelling. Monument dedication will take place at Fort Snelling Cemetery on June 14 at 1 P.M. There is a group that would like to dedicate a monument to the cemetery from the Civil War. The expansion project is complete. There is now a project underway for renovation of the irrigation system.

July 2, 2009 there will be an event for Women Veterans Appreciation Night at the St Paul Saints Game. WWII, Korea, Vietnam, Cold War, Desert Storm, and OEF/OIF Women Vets will be honored on the field prior to the game with the Minnesota's 1st Missing Women Flight Formation Fly-over

Vets Employment & Training Service [VETS] – Jodi Bean-Veteran Career Fair. 60-70 employers were present. There were 800 veterans. Wells Fargo Veterans Recruiting event will be held for veterans employment Friday June 5, 2009 at 10a.m. in downtown Minneapolis in the Wells Fargo Tower. The State is working on a 5 year plan for a work force program.

3. Federal Congressional Senators and Representatives

Senator Amy Klobuchar –Greg Swanholm- The bill was passed to streamline the process of a paramedic from Iraq to qualify as training when they are reintegrated.

7th District Representative - Collin Peterson- Al Loehr-Veterans forum was held and well attended. It provided opportunity to explain benefits.

2nd District Representative – John Kline - Chaz Johnson-Presented a Legion of Merit award. Kline was at Normandy on Memorial Day. His father landed on Normandy on D Day.

3rd District Representative –Erik Paulsen – John-Paul Yates-Job creation through entrepreneurial act. This will assist veteran owned small business. Congressman also authored a bill to deal with the voting privileges of the overseas veterans.

4th District Representative- Betty McCollum- Connie Haddeland- Ramsey County Veteran service office has moved. The address is 90 W Plato Blvd. 651-266-2545. They have upgraded website and added more staff. PDMRA issue is being worked on. There are people nationwide that have not been reimbursed. They are ready, eligible and they deserve it. There is emphasis on multiple deployments and the impact on family. A veteran serving after 9-11 has the right for physical review board

Bill for Atomic Veterans. Updates those people who were exposed to the test sites.

Ralph Donais- June 14 10:00 Flag Ceremony at Veteran Lake in Ramsey. MN has fallen behind because the retirees are still taxed.

4. **Announcements – Members please pay your dues. The membership list is on the back of the agenda. Al Loehr stated that the UVLC is the only forum where the representatives are present for questions and answers.**
5. **Treasure report- \$4238.61.**
6. **New Business –The official application has been sent for requesting a plane to go to Camp Ripley. The request was made for October. 40 people may go on this flight. “Veterans on the Hill” should be established during the legislative session. Could we make it a program of the UVLC?**
7. **A motion was made by Jerry Nalpinski that in 2010 there would be a Veterans Day on the Hill to support Veterans’ issues during the legislative session. It was seconded by Lawrence Dean. The name was amended to be called “Activity Day on the Hill” at the capitol. The event date will be announced at a later date.**

**Adjournment/ Next Meeting 9:30 AM - Wed, July 8, 2009 at the ST Cloud VA Medical Center
Lunch will be served after the meeting.**