

# UNITED VETERANS LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL OF MINNESOTA

Veterans Service Building

2<sup>nd</sup> Floor • 20 West 12<sup>th</sup> 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](http://www.mnuvlc.org)

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## UVLC Minutes –Wednesday, March 4, 2009

- **Call to order – 09:30**
- **Invocation – Jerry Kyser**
- **Pledge of Allegiance- Howard Wilson**
- **Recognition of visitors and guests and Commander’s of VSO’s**
- **VA Regional office: New Director- Dr Carol Fillman: She has worked for the VA all over the country from Hawaii to Atlanta. She joins the Regional office following 15 yrs as a hospital administrator. The VA Regional office is recognized as one of the best performing offices in the country and she wishes to continue to facilitate the growing pains in the pension center, loan and voc rehab areas. She feels fortunate to be in St Paul and will do everything that she can to have veterans get their benefits because after all they have given a very significant down payment.**
- **Reports from: Chairman, Jerry Kyser-Ralph Donais-From now until the 4<sup>th</sup> of July Ralph will be on the road. Send everything to Jerry during his absence [crazyjerry@hotmail.com](mailto:crazyjerry@hotmail.com) or 2674 MACKUBIN ST, Roseville, MN 55113 or call 651-338-2717 cell**

### 1. State Agencies and MN Veteran Assistance Organizations

- **MN Dept of Veteran Affairs - Dept. Commissioner –. Mike Pugliese -Most of the bills are policy driven vs. monetary requests. Brandy Wilson-women’s veteran coordinator-Oct 16-17, 2009 there will be a women’s conference to reach out to the women in the military. Women and their spouses. This conference will be at the Ramada Inn at the mall of America.**
- **MN Military Affairs – COL Eric Ahlness-MN delegation has signed on to support the PDMRA (Post-Deployment/Mobilization Respite Absence) issue. This bill will correct the earned leave that Reservists did not get after serving their deployment. These Men and Women earned their leaves and we want them to have it. The 34<sup>th</sup> ID is in Ft Lewis, WA. preparing for deployment. Three more NG Units from central and western MN will be deployed in March.**
- **Introduction of State Senator Sharon Erickson Ropes from Winona-She served as Navy officer for 5 years in the Navy Nurse Corps. Family has a long line of service. Co chair of the Senate Vet Committee. Particular interest is veteran’s health care. Involved with quality patient care in the veterans home. She supports additional funding for MACV to continue. We’ll get through this by working together. MN is looking at about 20% of the general fund that just won’t be there. Streamline and reforms will take place. Using all of the tools there will a 7 million dollar mix, some programs will not exist and others will be added. State is turning away retirees because of their 2<sup>nd</sup> career income being taxed.**
- **MN Assistance Council for Veterans (MACV)-Kara Cornils-Senate file 288 house file 266: May 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> StandDown event will take place at the Ft Snelling Army Reserve complex-496 veterans were served last year. Spring 2010 the Duluth home will open. It will offer 16 beds with 5 transitional housing units while the others will remain permanent. Vet Center mobile outreach vehicle is actively in training. They will work in conjunction with MACV. It will be a collaborative effort.**

## 2. Federal Agencies

- **VISN 23 – Dr Petzel, Director-President Proposes 2010 Budget for VA, there is a proposed \$5.5 million increase. Minneapolis VAMC SCI/D Center Opens. VA launches improved website for returning service members. <http://www.oefoif.va.gov> Patient safety week-March 8-14 : The power of partnership. Outreach to the community to please have veterans come forward and become aware of the services that there are to offer each of our veterans. Often times they do not come forward without the push and encouragement from friends and family. Received 1 billion from the stimulus for continuous care of the facilities.**
- **Mpls VA Medical Center – Steve Kleinglass – Director- Stimulus bill: Money for projects: Parking, roadwork will happen this next construction season. Spinal cord injury bldg. opened a few weeks ago. There are now 10 in house patients. There have been increases and they need to be managed in an appropriate way. Work load is up 3% from January. Operating 236 acute care beds. 70 in the community living side. The second Fischer house in fully funded yet it has not begun construction.**
- **St Cloud VA Medical Center – Joan Vincent – Construction on the new Lab and Respiratory Therapy is nearly finished and services will be moved to the new locations in April. The new Brainerd CBOC is also nearly finished and the move will take place in May. March 18<sup>th</sup> @ 2:00 marks the ribbon cutting for the MN NG Army Aviation Support Facility at the St Cloud Airport.**
- **Ft Snelling Cemetery – Art Smith – Director**

February 2009

Total Internments	327	Current FYTD	1773	Total to date	183,057
Caskets	184		890		147,620
Cremations	108		713		34,502
Columbarium's	35		170		935

Female Veterans Total: 1,360

February 2009: WWII:98 Korea:38 Vietnam:43 Persian Gulf:1 Peacetime:13

Dependent:134

### Introduction of State Rep Terry Morrow-St Peter, MN – Assistant Majority Leader

There is a budget that has to be balanced for 4 years. There is a desire to pass the pension taxation bill. The bill has not come through the committee yet. It was a feel good thing and the amount was too low. Where do you get the \$20 million dollars from? There is no back up as to where the money is derived. There is a need to look at the income that the state will generate by having the retirees enter into a second career. The Rep Newton/Severson bill HF715 on Service Disabled Veteran Owned Businesses passed muster and is going through the same procedure in the Senate. There needs to be better coordination of transportation from the smaller communities to the veteran homes in both the twin cities and St. Cloud. – Morrrows email - [terry.morrow@house.mn](mailto:terry.morrow@house.mn)

## 2. Federal Congressional Senators and Representatives

- **Senator Amy Klobuchar –Kelly Scanlan-Office was involved with getting citizenship for one of the National Guard from Germany so that she could be deployed. Martin is in the process of deployment. Greg is doing the case work for veterans.**
- **7<sup>th</sup> District Representative - Collin Peterson- Al Loehr-Pres Obama 55.9billion for discretionary funding for the veterans. New GI bill has had subcommittee hearings.**
- **1st District Representative –Tim Walz - John Pierce-18 nominated for the academy and 9 were accepted. HR 1016 advanced appropriations for the VA. Purple Heart stamp act. VA budget: There is a 10% increase in the VA budget. 2 page summary of the VA budget.**

- **2<sup>nd</sup> District Representative – John Kline - Chaz Johnson-Co sponsoring retirement restoration act. HR 775 military surviving spouses act. Increase the size of the army and Marine Corps. Appointed to the intelligence committee. Hiring wounded warrior Iraq war veterans to do military case work. Yellow ribbon oral history exhibit is in Faribault.**
- **3<sup>rd</sup> District Representative –Erik Paulsen – John Yates & Margaret Cavanaugh- Margaret was recognized for her years of service with congressman Ramstad. Her dedication to her attendance at the UVLC has been greatly appreciated.**
- **4<sup>th</sup> District Representative- Betty McCollum- Connie Haddeland-Key Legislation Co-sponsored by congresswoman McCollum 111<sup>th</sup> congress March 2009. the handout can be obtained by e-mailing [connie.haddeland@mail.house.gov](mailto:connie.haddeland@mail.house.gov)**
- **6<sup>th</sup> District Representative- Michele Bachmann – Tara Westby-POW/MI bill Any thoughts on legislation call and this will be passed on to Washington.**
- **8<sup>th</sup> District Representative – James Oberstar- Melissa Jabas**

**4. Announcements – Chairman – Please send membership dues to:**

**Jimmie Lee Coulthard  
UVLC Treasurer  
201 West Roosevelt St  
River Falls, WI 54022 Cell # 612-735-7276**

**Meeting in Recess for 10 minutes**

- 5. Old Business – Financial report: \$4,955.13 is in the checking account. \$450 of dues was collected since the last meeting.**
- 6. New Business – Discuss a Budget for 2009- Total expenses are \$1,270. The report card scenario has been tables due to the budget issues. The proposed budget was accepted.**
- 7. The Non Profit report will be activated at the end of March.**
- 8. There are efforts to secure an airplane to bring the meeting to Camp Ripley in August. July 8<sup>th</sup> is the meeting in Saint Cloud.**
- 9. Veteran of the Lake Resort has an opportunity for volunteering to do a hand on work week. Tom Rask gave this announcement.**

**Adjournment/ Next Meeting 9:30AM, Wed, April 1, 2009 at Building 9 Auditorium on The Mpls VA Medical Center Campus – Attached to VISN 23 Building**

**There were 50 people in attendance.**