

UNITED VETERANS COMMITTEE OF COLORADO (UVC)

<http://unitedveteranscommittee.com>



UVC
P.O. Box 31261
Aurora, CO 80041-1261

Minutes

(10 Feb 2009)

MEETINGS AT VFW POST 9644
0900 hours
2680 W Hampden Ave
Englewood, CO 80110-1906
303-789-9733

West of Sante Fe on highway 285. First traffic light, turn right (Brady Court) and follow curving road to top of hill. VFW Post on left OR Turn North on Federal, and then right on Hampden and VFW Post will be on your right.

NEW WEB ADDRESS:

<http://unitedveteranscommittee.com>

Email: uvcorg@comcast.net

1. CALL TO ORDER 0900
2. INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG
3. MOMENT OF SILENCE FOR POW/MIA's.
4. WELCOME & INTRODUCTION (Note: Agenda items were covered out of sequence to accommodate schedules of speakers, but are presented here as planned, for consistency and convenience of those familiar with our standard agenda sequence.)
 - First Time Attendees/Visitors welcomed
 1. Corrine Hogg, MOPH and new (effective ___Feb) Arapahoe County VSO
 2. Henry Mondragon – Jefferson and Arapahoe County VSO, will serve only Jeffco when Corrine comes on Board.
 3. Gina Salazar – Dep Dist Dir, 2nd Cong Dist, - Cong Jared Polis
 4. Peggy Kearns, ECHCS, new Assoc Director (Intro by Lynette Roth).
 5. Rick Duncan, State Director, VoteVets.org, advised that they are the largest post 9/11 veterans advocacy group. Webpage is www.votevets.org
 6. Myron Spanier – Constituent Advocate, 6th Cong Dist, Cong Mike Coffman
 7. Shantel Rhoufiry, Veterans Program Assistant, US Dept of Labor
 8. CMS Arleen Heath, 460SW Command Chief, Buckley AFB
 - Special Speakers –
 1. LTC William Medina, Cmdr, Denver Army Recruiting Batln provided update of current status of Army recruiting, to include enlistment bonuses and incentives and referrals.
 2. Jason Crowe – Chair, UVC White Paper Committee, assisted by Ralph Bozella and Artie Guerrero, briefed assembly on WHITE PAPER drafted to factually present status of Fitzsimmons VA hospital initiative, White Paper was voted and approved by members and copies distributed. White Paper and cover letter are on our website at http://www.unitedveteranscommittee.com/Fitzsimmons_VA.htm
5. ROLL CALL – quorum present
6. REPORTS:
 - a) Secretary – minutes approved as published
 - b) Treasurer – Report accepted as presented
7. ORGANIZATIONAL REPORTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS:
 - Women Marines – Paula Sarlls**
 - announced the 66th anniversary celebration of the Women Marines at noon on Feb 21 at the Castle Café, 4th & Wilcox
 - Thanked all members for their support and prayers during Tony's final days. Also thanked the VA and reported that VA support was excellent.
 - Advised that the VA wants all vets to register.
 - American Legion - Jim Gillis reported that**
 - The Legion's midyear conference supported LTC Medina by swearing in about 200 new military personnel, and thanked LTC Medina for his outstanding recruiting work.
 - The Legion is preparing for their annual trip to visit our state congressional delegation and advocate with them for our veterans and active duty military personnel.
 - VWIN – Edmee Hills reminded us that legislation has passed and their long sought "Office of Survivors Assistance" is scheduled to open in late Spring. Also, their other goal of a establishing a National Veterans' Widows and Widowers Day is nearing completion.**

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LIBERTY DAY – Andy McKean distributed a booklet containing the text of the Constitution, the Declaration of Independence, and quiz-type flash cards, discussed their goal to have all 5th graders study the constitution and reminded us that March 16th, James Madison's birthday is Liberty Day, and that September 17th is constitution day. Contact info for further information is www.LibertyDay.org or 303.333.3434, or 866.718.3434, or LibertyDay@aol.com

CO Dept of Labor & Employment – Joyce Johnson announced they are partnering with Voc Rehab, Traumatic Brain Injury Trust, Dept Mil Vet Affairs to provide a Colorado Veterans Resource Directory, a new website, and requested input on nonprofit organizations to list on the website. Send web info to Kelly.brown@state.co.us

American Guaranty Reverse Mortgages – John Mansch & Patty McElhinney advised that they provide educational presentations on the benefits and misconceptions of reverse mortgages. They speak to groups or are available for individual consultation. Contact at 303.748.7703

Aurora Veterans Affairs Commission – Pamela Bennett announced the Aurora Veterans Affairs Commission Veterans forum will be on March 12th.

VFW Dept of Colorado – Steve Rylant announced the National VFW Mid-Winter Conference, Feb 18-21 in Louisville Ky; the March 28-29 VFW Dept of Colorado Conference, and the April 17th National VFW Legislative Conference.

Denver Southeast Rotary - Don Oatley distributed a flyer and announced the 4th Annual Colorado Veteran's Appreciation Breakfast, Sat, Mar 14th, 8-10 AM @ Wings over the Rockies Air & Space Museum. Nick Arvin, author of "Articles of War" will be keynote speaker. RSVP to Scott Smith, 303-437-2900 or sasmith9@comcast.net.

8. UVC COMMITTEES

- Legislative Committee – George Thomas announced the legislative hearing dates for HB1039 (Instate tuition for vets), and SB-056 (Trinidad Nursing Home). Also reported that possible legislation is for a one-stop center for Vets benefits is being worked.
- Banquet Committee – Ken Melcher advised that Sec. Shinseki has been invited to be our speaker.
- Membership Committee – George Palmateer reported on new applicants

9. COLORADO BOARD OF VETERANS AFFAIRS – George Thomas reported that although the Veterans Trust Fund got back \$2.9m last year, this year's state budget crunch may try to squeeze up to \$4.8m from the fund. The state board had proposed stabilizing the VTF at 55% giving and 45% saving but may go to 90% giving to support veterans needs. Also announced that the CBVA would meet later in the day at 1330 hrs at the DMA.

10. VETERANS NURSING HOME COMMISSION – no report

11. VETERANS NURSING HOME ADMINISTRATION – Heather Terhark (Pinon Mgt) reported that Rifle and Trinidad recently had their surveys, and Rifle is showing improvement. Fitzsimmons had a slight census drop, Homelake is continuing its culture change plan, and Florence is doing well.

12. CONGRESSIONAL STAFFERS

Senator Udall's Office –

Senator Bennett's Office –

Congressional Dist. 1 – DeGette –

Congressional Dist. 2 – Polis – Gina Salazar reported that

- Cong Polis fully supports the veterans and a state-of-the-art VA medical facility that supports and addresses the specialized needs of our service men and women – especially spinal cord injuries disability and rehabilitation
- Cong Polis' office met with Lynn Lyons, CU Gov't Affairs to ask for a joint CU letter to UVC. CU agreed. Effort had been coordinated with Laura Holman of PVA.

Congressional Dist. 3 – Salazar –

Congressional Dist. 4 – Markey –

Congressional Dist. 5 – Lamborn –

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Congressional Dist. 6 – Coffman – Myron Spanier reported that Cong Coffman has been appointed to three committees – Armed Services, Natural Resources, and Small Business, and he has signed on and supports a new freestanding VA facility at Fitzsimmons.

Congressional Dist. 7 – Perlmutter – Bill Holen

- acknowledged UVC's work on the VA Hospital White Paper
- announced that Rep Perlmutter would be meeting with Sec Shinseki on Thursday
- and that Rep Perlmutter talked with AF Asst Sec Billings to promote locating the new AF Cyber Hq in Colorado.

13. VISN 19, VARO, VA National Cemetery NCA, VA ECHCS, VA DALC, Fort Logan

1.) VISN 19 – Anita Urdiales reported that

- a. Sec Shinseki took office 1/21 and appointed W. Scott Gould as Dep Sec'ty, and Tammy Duckworth as Ass't Sec OP/A
- b. There has been a national press release that the Suicide Prevention Hotline is effective
- c. VISN19 has formed with other groups to develop proposals for grants from the office of Rural Health. They are looking for proposals that will have broad impact, will improve access, and have clearly defined outcomes. TM is included
- d. Mental health continues to be a priority, with more mental health dollars.

2.) VARO – Janice Jacobs reported

- a. 7369 rating claims pending
- b. A fully developed claims pilot to process disability claims in 90 days or less.
 - i. 10 claims received to date
 - ii. Average decision time is 13 days.

3.) Ft. Logan – Joe Turnbach announced 336 interments in January and 171 cremations, and reminded us that on the 2nd Saturday of each month at 1000hrs there is a service to provide military honors to veterans interred in the previous month who did not for some reason receive honors.

4.) ECHCS – Lynette Roff reported overall growth of 5%.

- A new "relaxation" of veteran benefits will include some category 8 personnel and approximately 265,000 additional veterans.
- Seven new medical providers are coming on board temporarily to work down the backlog. Exam rooms will be used weekday evenings to support that effort.
- Reminded us that the 2010 Wheelchair Games are coming to Colorado.

14. DMVA / DVA – Bill Conroy reminded us that when preparing our state taxes there is the check off box to designate money for the State cemeteries.

15. OLD BUSINESS - none

16. NEW BUSINESS: - none

17. ANNOUNCEMENTS AND COMMENTS – Warren Tellgren announced that VFW Post 9644 would be hosting a Sr Citizen free Lunch on Saturday Feb 14th.

18. ADJOURN 1101

19. Next Meeting: 10 March, 2009

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Shapiro Secretary UVC 3/2/2009

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James C. Bobick, UVC President, 303-699-1575

George Dale Thomas, 1st VP, 303-751-8252

Ralph Bozella, 2nd VP; 303-776-3890

Warren Tellgren, Immediate Past Commander, 303-912-4927

Michael N. Shapiro, Secretary, 303-619-2276

Glenn Kataoka, Treasurer, 303-795-4343

Marvin Meyers, Legislative Committee Chairman, 303-694-9022;

Nathan M. Gorman, Legislative Liaison, 303-221-2231.

Larry Carrol, Judge Advocate 303-794-2894

Budget Committee – Ken Melcher, 303-341-9170

Nominating Committee – Warren Tellgren, Immediate Past Commander, 303-912-4927

Awards Banquet Committee – Ken Melcher, 303-341-9170

Membership Committee – George Palmateer, 303-279-7593

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