

**UVC General Meeting
October 8, 2019
VFW Post 9644
2680 W. Hampden Avenue**

MINUTES

Call to order 9:15am – President Dennis Orr

Invocation, Moment of Silence – Ron Skaggs, Chief of Chaplain Services, RMR

Pledge of Allegiance – 1st Vice President Dick Young

Whole Health Coordinator – Rachel Thompson – They are starting classes with the philosophy of “what matters to you” rather than “what’s the matter with you” and are giving free flu shots before and after the meeting. She can be reached at 720-857-5932. The classes are held the 4th Thursday of the month and all veterans and their family members are welcome.

Welcome First Time Attendees and Visitors

- Ellen Fuller, Co-Chair of Wreaths Across America
- Greg Nelson – Colorado Realty Pros, a Veterans Association of Real Estate Professionals
- Carlos Ramirez – Audie L. Murphy Infantry Museum “Traveling”
- Jack Murphy, Staff Assistant to Rep. Diana DeGette

Roll Call, Dick Wilson, Membership Chair – He asked people to check their data on the web page and let him know if changes are necessary. Dick Young reminded the group that primary organizations need to designate their representative to UVC, as well as an alternate. According to the by-laws, only the primary organizations’ delegates can vote on legislative priorities. On other matters, the entire membership can vote.

Secretary – No report

Treasurer – Paul Gremse is the new treasurer, and will be reporting next month.

Special Award – Marvin Meyers Lifetime Achievement – Dennis Orr presented this award to Marvin Meyers, and congratulated him for the many hours he has volunteered on behalf of Colorado’s veterans.

Budget – Glenn Kataoka reported that budgeting for UVC is an ongoing process The banquet is the main source of income. Donations from member organizations are always welcome.

State Legislative Committee – Shelly Kalkowski reported that the committee has met, and is working toward establishing general goals for the session starting in January. Oct. 22 is the next meeting (9am at American Legion Post #1, 5400 Yale). She encouraged all primary member organizations to have their delegate attend. They will prioritize goals to send to the Executive Committee and will vote on them. If your organization has a specific bill in mind, please get that to Shelly Kalkowski or Robby Robinson as soon as possible. UVC usually contracts with a professional lobbyist, but there are inadequate funds right now. Dan Jablan has volunteered to support UVC on day to day basis *pro bono*. Steve Rylant suggested posting any draft goals on the web page. Once these are finalized they will be presented to

the General Meeting in November where will be voted on by the primary organizations. Once that happens, they send letters to all state legislators outlining UVC's legislative goals.

Banquet – Karen reminded the group of the date: April 19, 2020. She distributed Silent Auction Donation forms to get people thinking about what they could donate.

Federal Legislative Committee – Ed Aitken asked the primary member organizations to give him the name of their legislative chairs.

Assistant Regional Vice Presidents – Stephanie Vivirski reported she will be organizing mixers at breweries around the state to involve younger veterans in UVC's activities.

Colorado Board of Veterans Affairs – Sheila Scanlon noted that their next meeting will be Nov. 6 at Wings Over the Rockies. The public is invited. The new woman veterans license plate will be available in January.

Department of Military and Veterans Affairs - Rich Tremaine, Director

- His career has always been about helping veterans
- In 2014 he became a federal whistleblower about mismanagement in the Central Alabama healthcare system...9,000 veterans were waiting years for care
- He was exonerated by Secretary McDonald and was offered any post; he chose Colorado
- He has started a library to provide live webcasts
- He is adding diversity and inclusion as priorities
- He is interested in the issues of women veterans
- He wants to improve the relationship between county VSO's and their commissioners, providing training in best practices and what should be done with their funding
- Believes UVC should address legislation to provide additional funding to county VSO's

VSO's, Associate & Affiliate Announcements

Veteran and Military Student Services, CU's Anschutz Medical Campus – Tiffany Baker-Strothkamp

- Need mentors for the Boots to Suits Program for 20+ student veterans who need industry mentors.
- Nov. 6, 2019 –11:30am - Veterans Day Celebration
- Nov. 11, 2019 – 11:00am – Veterans Day Event, CU Denver, Tivoli Student Union

Wreaths across America – Ellen Fuller and Steve Best – Ceremony and wreath laying will be December 19, 10:00am at Ft. Logan. They asked for volunteers to help get pledges and/or laying the wreaths.

VFW – Steve Kjonaas – Mentioned several federal bills they are monitoring: HR4589 which is offering grants for veterans to travel to VA locations; SB2022 is the specially adaptive housing improvement act.

VAREP – Greg Nelson – Advocates for benefits & homeownership rights for veterans and active duty personnel.

Congressional Staff Reports

Sen. Cory Gardner – Steven Emmer

- Academy nominations
- Monitoring Veterans Mental Healthcare Improvement Act of 2019
- Always willing to take on case work

Cong. Jason Crow

- Academy deadline has passed
- Working on NDAA – National Defense Authorization Act
- Holding sustainable power roundtables (sustainable power for military facilities) in D.C. and Colorado

Cong. Diana Degette – Jack Murphy

- Co-sponsoring Accelerating Veterans Recovery Act
- Beginning selection for academy nominations
- Reach out to him for casework

Cong. Joe Neguse – Katrina Bishop

- Working on HR 3813 (holding independent contractors liable for their services)
- Academy nominations

Cong. Doug Lamborn – Tony Archer

- Veterans history project
- 2020 NDAA
- Veteran roundtables quarterly

VBA - Renaye Murphy – They will start taking Blue Water Navy claims in January. Applicants should bring recent medical proof of a presumptive condition being checked out by a VA Medical Center. They are trying to get digitized records from the Dept. of Defense to verify locations. Processed 18,000 claims last year.

VA ECHCS - Khristie Barker – They are changing their procedures for sharing health information per the Mission Act. The change moves VA from an “opt-in” to an “opt-out” model. Veterans who do NOT want their health information shared electronically can opt out by submitting VA Form 10-10164. She will get a copy to Steve Bender for the UVC Newsletter.

- VA now smoke free
- Oct. 10 stand-down with Project Homeless Connect at the Convention Center
- Oct. 24 next round of art for hospital
- Honor Bell hosting a dedication on Nov. 8 at RMR

Michael Kilmer – New Director of VA RMRMC – Spoke briefly about his background and how much he is looking forward to his new position.

Ft. Logan – Kevin Johnson

- Transferred oversight of Ft. Lyons National Cemetery to Pikes Peak NC
- State land acquisition is complete (50 additional acres)
- New cemeteries are coming to the Ft. Logan complex in Wyoming, Montana and Utah

President's Comments

- Had a successful pastoral conference on suicide
- UVC partnering with the Broncos to do a "VSO of the Week"
- Looking to do a women's night at the Colorado Avalanche
- Could anyone donate a PA system to UVC?

Benediction – Ron Skaggs, Chief of Chaplain Services, RMR

Karen A. Hone