

**United Veterans Coalition of Colorado
General Meeting
Tuesday, November 12, 2019
VFW Post 9644
2680 W. Hampden Avenue**

MINUTES

Call to Order 9:15am – 1st Vice President Dick Young

Invocation, Moment of Silence – Jay Bobick

Pledge of Allegiance – 1st Vice President Dick Young

Welcome and Introductions –

- Nicole deNaray – Advocating for VCLC in Pikes Peak Region
- Albert Gonzalez, new State Commander of American GI Forum

Roll Call and Report – Dick Wilson

Secretary Report – Karen noted that minutes are posted on the web page. Steve Rylant moved (David Francavilla seconded) to accept the minutes as posted. Motion passed.

Treasurer's Report – Paul Gremse – Presented to Executive Committee per the President's request.

Guest Organizations

Forgotten Heroes – Barry Fiore

This organization gives medals to veterans who didn't get them

Wounded Warrior Project – Greg Morton

Started by giving out backpacks to those medically evacuated back to the states

Started in 2003, and now have 135,000 members. Mind, body, economic empowerment

And engagement are the areas they work in. The idea is to get the veteran out of the house.

Military Order of the Purple Heart – Dr. David Andrews

4 chapters statewide for combat wounded veterans. They are congressionally chartered.

Have auxiliary as well for relatives of recipients. Small but national. Have a robust legislative Program

Pikes Peak VCLC – Nicole de Naray

Nicole described her advocacy to get a Veterans' Community Living Center in Colorado Springs

To serve the Pikes Peak Region. They hope to get a bill introduced to build this by December 1.

Membership Committee

Chairman Dick Wilson asked the following potential members to tell about their organization:

Veterans Association of Real Estate Professionals – VAREP’s Government Affairs Department is working to have VA loans presented to all buyers. They try to educate vets and active duty military by holding housing summits.

Audie Murphy Traveling Museum – They try to educate the public about him. For Veterans Day, they outfitted youth in vintage uniforms for the Parade.

Doos Outfitters Ministry – They use camping and hunting to treat PTSD and other mental health conditions.

These prospective members will be voted on at the November meeting.

Budget Committee – Glenn Kataoka

Glenn distributed a budget, and he asked all committee chairs to submit their own budget for needed funds to support their activities (e.g. Communications Committee printing a brochure about UVC).

Legislative Committee – Robby Robinson and Shelly Kalkowski

They distributed copies of the draft legislative goals. Les Kennedy moved (Ida Tholen seconded) to accept the goals as written. The committee developed them, and the primary organizations prioritized them. The vote has to be unanimous among primary members. She sent priority requests to 17 organizations and got 11 responses. She then averaged the scores to rank them. Questions were raised on if a quorum was necessary; it was not. The goals were accepted unanimously. They will now remove “draft” and send to state legislators to gauge their interest. Sheila Scanlon wondered about getting bipartisan support, and Shelly agreed they would strive for that. Dan Jablan, UVC’s lobbyist, will help. January 8 is the start of the session. They plan to send letters to all legislators with a copy of the goals.

Colorado Board of Veterans’ Affairs – Sheila Scanlon

The Board met last week, and the Chair signed a letter to the Federal delegates in support of repealing the widows’ tax. They are working on a presentation to county commissioners on how to best utilize the funds they get to support their VSO. Next meeting is December 6, and she will email the location.

Dept. of Military & Veterans Affairs – Ben Mestes

Their grant program (trust fund and assistance grants) will open December 1 and close March 1, no exceptions. They have developed a webinar about the applications; Dick Young suggested he post it on UVC’s website to publicize it more.

VSOs/Affiliates/Associates

Les Kennedy – Encouraged all members to support UVC financially. Paula Sarlls of the Women’s Marine League, said they would donate \$400; Tony Jones said the American Legion will be donating \$1,000. Joe Davalos of American GI Forum asked to see a specific budget with fundraising goals.

Gold Star Wives – Patti Sampers
VA is honoring them with a Certificate of Achievement

Across America Wreaths– Steve Best
He encouraged people to order wreaths; there are over 160,000 veterans interred at Ft. Logan. He could also use help moving people and wreaths before 10:00am on December 14. There will be a short program at 10am, and then the wreath laying will follow. All are welcome.

Banquet – Bernie Rogoff and Karen Hone

Bernie told the group that due to health reasons, he needs to resign as Banquet Chair. In his honor, the Jewish Veterans Post 344 is donating a sound system to the UVC, plus \$100 cash. The group thanked Bernie for all his work over the years, and gave him a standing ovation. Karen emphasized the sales flyer was distributed and ready to go. She encouraged people to spread the word.

Congressional Representatives

Senator Cory Gardner – Steven Emmer
Following SB2661 which would establish a suicide/mental health crisis hotline

Congressman Lamborn – Anthony Archer
Working on NDAA
Providing support for the construction of a Veterans Community Living Center in the Pikes Peak region
100% of Colorado’s delegation is in favor of repealing the widows’ tax – need to clarify that

State Veterans Commission – Community Living Centers – Karen Kowalski

Met at Homelake on October 17 – excellent visit.
Nursing Home Administrator in Rifle resigned; Exec. Dir. Is filling in for her
Commissioners have a continuing focus on both organizational & financial issues
Robby Robinson, Dick Young, and Karen K. are very active with this group

VISN 19, VA Regional Office, VA cemetery, ECHCS

VBA – Chris Holly
Blue Water Navy – 72,000 letters were sent to veterans, asking them to submit claims. They will start processing them January 1, 2020. Cheyenne infrastructure upgrades are almost complete.

VAECHCS – Khristie Barker

She has looked into the Million Vet Program, and will put something in the UVC newsletter
PTSD Unit – Design is complete and funding is approved for the Center. Will go out to bid soon.

Replica Honor Bell – This is now displayed in their foyer

Sheila thanked Khristie for her work on the women veterans exhibit

VA Rocky Mountain Regional Medical Center – Dr. Michael Kilmer

He will be holding a “hot topic” session after this meeting. He is re-designing the stakeholder meetings to make sure everyone communicates clearly and are on the same page. They will restart as quarterly sessions. The concern about parking availability was raised; Dr. Kilmer is too new to comment on the status of this, and he will have a response next month.

Meet adjourned at 11:00am.

Karen A. Hone
Secretary