

United Veterans Coalition of Colorado
General Meeting
Tuesday, December 10, 2019
VFW Post 9644
9:00am

MINUTES

Call to Order – President Dennis Orr at 9:00am

Invocation, Moment of Silence – Dr. Diane Ricci, Lt.Col., Chaplain, Jefferson County VSO

Pledge of Allegiance – 1st Vice President Dick Young

Welcome & Introductions – No new attendees

Roll Call – Dick Wilson Ed Aitken is excused

Described the outreach that he is spearheading to get new members across the state
Has 7 people on his team

Primary Organization Reps Present:

Joe Davalos American GI Forum
Gary Force, American Legion
Jim Craig, DAV
Gold Star Wives, Patti Sampers
Jewish War Veterans
Marine corps league, Jim Craig
MOAA, Shelly Kalkowski
VFW, Steve Kjonaas
VVA, Stan Paprocki

Membership Committee – Dick Wilson

New Member Applications

Colorado Springs Vet Center
Veterans Legacy Program @ D.U.

Doss Outfitters (not here, he's in Nebraska)
Audie Murphy Traveling Display (not here)

Vote on

Tony Jones moved (and Les Kennedy seconded it) to accept VAREP as an Associate Member
Passed unanimously
VAREP – Greg Nelson, Lucas Solano Homeless vet relocation program and information about
VA loans

Treasurer's Report – Paul Gremse

The checking account balance is \$17, 419.62
These donations have been received as of today:
1000 Gary Force
400 Women's Marine Association
100 Veterans Legacy Project
Upon motion duly made and seconded, the Treasurer's report was accepted.

Secretary Report - Karen Hone Minutes are on the web page, www.uvcoc.org

Guest: Transforming Glory Warrior Care

Susan & Mike Smith

Faith-based Christ-centered 501(c)(3) organization

They offer coaching, mentoring and spiritual care, compassionate support for:

PTSD, combat trauma, grief & loss, transition & re-integration, marriage counseling

No cost to warriors or their spouses

Would like to form collaborative relationships with other programs

Guest: Innovage

Sandy Rogers

Represents Innovage and the Pace program

All inclusive care for the elderly..been around for years. For 55+ individuals struggling to live at home

Provides all healthcare, dental, vision, hearing, rehab & mental health, medication at no cost

Ever once enrolled in the program

They are a VA community partner, serving over 270 veterans in Colorado through 6 Pace centers

Transportation is provided at no charge to and from doctors' appointments and the centers

Award – Dennis Orr noted that the officers were going to present an “Outstanding Achievement” award to Phil Andreski for his ongoing work with UVC on the Legislative Committee and as Regional Representative.

Budget Committee – Glenn Kataoka Distributed updated budget. Will try to get it online.

Legislative Committee – Shelly Kalkowski

Margaret Sebern reported that the repeal of the SBP-DIC offset, aka “Widow’s Tax” has been included in the final version of NDAA 20, which is expected to pass the House and Senate and be signed by Trump into law within the next 1-2 weeks. The offset will be phased out over 3 years, beginning January 2021, with full SBP annuities restored by January 2023. SSIA will continue until that time. Widows who had transferred their SBP to their child to avoid the offset, and saw it end when their child aged-out, will be allowed to reselect what was intended to be the widow’s lifelong benefit. Thank you to the VSO’s and our entire Colorado delegation for their strong collective efforts to end this decades long injustice.

Shelly noted that the partial income tax deduction passed in 2018 goes into effect with the 2019 taxes.

She and Robby Robinson delivered personal letters to all state legislators, with a copy of the UVC 2020 legislative goals. They will be setting up meetings with leadership to determine their interest in any of the UVC topics. In particular, they will set up a time with Pete Lee, who is advocating the construction of a Veterans Community Living Center in Colorado Springs.

They are looking for “champions” for several topics (i.e. a volunteer to take the lead): veterans’ courts, and Community Living Centers.

Tentative date for “Military Appreciation Day” at the State Capitol is February 7, 2020.

Shelly also reminded the group to visit noradsanta.org on Christmas Eve.

Federal Legislation – Steve Kjonaas reminded the group that \$1300/month is the amount that is being denied for widows. He will keep the group updated.

Banquet – Karen Hone pointed out the new brochure that features the keynote, Dr. Janine Davidson, President of Metro State University. She encouraged everyone to pitch in and help make this year the best yet. Michelle Mallin will be organizing the silent auction online; it will be open 30 days before the Banquet, and will allow attendees to bid even if they cannot attend the event. She invited anyone interested in helping to meet on Thursday, Dec. 12, 10:30 at American Legion Post #1. Once this is set up, she would like each person to publicize this to their membership and their own network. She'll develop a special flyer describing the process.

Regional Vice President – Stephanie Vivirski mentioned that the Wreaths Across America event is this coming weekend. Younger veterans will be gathered at the Dive Inn to watch the Army-Navy game. The Womens Veterans Alliance will be meeting December 15 at the Hampton Suites in Cherry Creek.

Co. Bd of Veterans Affairs – Sheila Scanlon reported that they attended a training session for county commissioners. They are educating them on how it benefits their county to obtain funding for a VSO.

The new license plate for women veterans will cost \$50 one-time.

Next Meeting is January 3 at VARO in Lakewood, 9:00am

The February meeting will be in Colorado Springs; date to be confirmed once they know the Military Appreciation Day schedule.

DMVA Division of Veterans Affairs East – Carissa Snyder presented a commemorative license plate to Sheila Scanlon for all her work in accomplishing the production of such a plate. They have two open positions for state VSO's; interested candidates can apply on-line.

VSO's, Associates & Affiliates – Steve Best reviewed the schedule and help needed for the Wreaths Across America project on Saturday. It will begin at 10am.

Sheila Scanlon noted that tomorrow the Womens Marine Association will make breakfast and have presents for marines and sailors.

Tiffany Baker-Strothkamp of CU Denver reported these dates and events:

Adopt A Vet, Monday Dec. 16, 10am at VCLC Fitzsimons. No need to register

Welcome Day at CU Denver, Jan. 20, 11am, Tivoli Student Union

Scholar Program – They offer instruction in math, science, writing, study skills, VA benefits,

Healthcare, employment, home loans, transition skills

She can be reached at www.vmss@ucdenver.edu

Gov/Congressional Staff

Sen. Cory Gardner – Steven Emmer reported that they have been working on implementing the 988 national suicide hotline. They have also been working on finalizing the NDAA.

State CLC Administration and Commission Karen Kowalski said Dick Young, Robby Robinson and Bill Hanna are trying to set a meeting with the Lt. Governor. The new northern Colorado clinic is behind the Harley Davidson dealership on I-25.

ECHCS -Christie Barker – 18 Dec. partnering with Boeing on handing out suits

19 Dec. resource fair

Monthly VSO stakeholder meetings will begin again, and the locations will rotate

Dan Warvi is retiring

Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment – Jim Ziruolo reported that they have 6 offices, 40 FTE, and they serve 3,400 veterans. It now takes less than 30 days to process an application for Chapter 31 services, and they had over 500 positive outcomes last fiscal year. Vets are obtaining suitable employment and are able to provide for themselves and their families. The Director, Renaye Murphy, sends her warmest holiday greetings and all the best for the coming new year.

Communications Committee – Dennis Churgovich The group is putting together a brochure that has generic information about UVC. Hope to have it ready for the January meeting.

Ralph Bozella alerted the group that a veteran should not pay for an examination ordered by a contractor.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:50am.

Karen A. Hone
Secretary