

**UNITED VETERANS COUNCIL**  
**“2007 VETERANS ORGANIZATION OF THE YEAR”**  
**An Ad-Hoc Alliance of Veterans Service Organizations in San Diego County**  
***“The Voice of the Veterans Community in San Diego”***  
**[WWW.SDUVC.ORG](http://WWW.SDUVC.ORG)**

**Veterans Museum and Memorial Center**  
**2115 Park Boulevard**  
**San Diego, CA. 92101-4753**  
**Phone: (619) 239-2300 or Email: [sdvmc@pacbellnet](mailto:sdvmc@pacbellnet)**

**Summary of Meeting**

**Saturday, April 28<sup>th</sup>, 2007**

**The Chairman:** The Chairman called the meeting to order at 9:38 A.M., and General Robert Cardenas led the Pledge of Allegiance, with Chaplain Darcy Pavich offering the Invocation. All Council Officers were present, along with seventy members of the Council and Guests.

Appropriate introductions were conducted, and The Chairman recognized and lauded the Past Chairmen of the Council and past, as well as present Veterans of the Year who were present.

The Chairman introduced Darcy Pavich, Chaplain of Veterans Village of San Diego (VVSD), and Coordinator for “Stand Down 2007”, which will be held at San Diego High School Upper Athletic Field from July 13 to July 15 2007. Mrs. Pavich indicated that this is the twentieth anniversary of this event, and gave a very informative PowerPoint presentation that addressed the history of “Stand Down” in San Diego, which cited some very interesting statistics taken from the last seven years of “Stand Down” events.

These statistics indicate that the average age of Veterans attending the event is from forty and sixty, and that the number of older Veterans participating is declining while the number of younger Veterans participating is increasing. The study also showed that there has been a decline in the number of “Homeless Court” cases over the past seven years, due in part to monthly Court sessions being held at St. Vincent De Paul for both Veterans and non-Veterans, and at VVSD for Veterans.

The study also shows that the number of homeless children under age twelve participating in the event has alarmingly increased over the past seven years. It also debunked the theory that “Stand Down” keeps providing the same service to the same individuals each year. Of 8,115 records compared for the last seven years, only 1.4% had attended each last seven years, 1.1% attended six of the last seven years, 2.4% attended five of the last seven years, 3.0% attended four of the last seven years, 8.1 % attended three of the last seven years, 9.8% attended twice in the last seven years, and 75% attended only once in the past seven years.

Last year in “Stand Down 2006”, eight-hundred and thirty-seven individuals participated, with 78.6% male Veterans, 4.4% female Veterans, 6.0% children under age twelve, 1.7% children under age eighteen, and 9.0% being adult dependants of Veterans.

Of this group, .4% had less than a sixth grade education, 6% did not graduate from High School, 44% had a High School Diploma or equivalent, 33% had some college or technical schooling, 5.2% completed sixteen years of education, 2.8% had some graduate work, and 9.2% did not answer the question concerning their educational background.

She then described how individuals could help “Stand Down 2007”. The overall event costs approximately \$50,000, not including the over 1,500 volunteers needed to provide for a successful event. Volunteer telephone lines will be open from May 1 to July 6, 2007. Tent Sponsors are needed to offset the \$500.00 rental cost of each tent. Corporations, organizations, or individuals who would like to sponsor a tent can call (619) 520-8389. Those willing to volunteer to provide event Security can call (619) 393-2012, and those willing to volunteer for other duties can call (619) 393-2011, and for general information, or to submit a participant application, or to make a donation, please call VVSD at (619) 497-0142. Interested parties can also visit VVSD’s website at [www.vvsd.net](http://www.vvsd.net) for more information and a listing of volunteer opportunities available.

Men’s, Women’s and Children’s clothing items, especially denim jeans, new men’s, women’s and children’s underwear, shoes, socks, sweats, bath towels and blankets are also needed for the participants. A Clothing Drive will be held at Veterans Village of San Diego, 4141 Pacific Highway, from 6:00 A.M to 3:00 P.M. on Tuesday, June 26, 2007. “Comfort Kit” items for approximately seven hundred individuals are also needed, to include toothbrushes, toothpaste, shampoo, combs, razors, shaving cream, soap and deodorant, or cash donations are accepted at \$6.00 per kit. Please call the Stand Down Coordinator at (619) 393-2040 or email her at [darcy.pavich@vvsd.net](mailto:darcy.pavich@vvsd.net) if your organization will be donating Comfort Kits, or making donations specifically for comfort kits. All donations can be dropped off at VVSD seven days a week, or you can arrange for the pickup of large quantities of items by calling (619) 497-0142.

The Chairman then introduced Jennifer Town, Program Director for the Comprehensive Combat Casualty Care Center (C5) at the Naval Medical Center, San Diego. She briefed the Council on the status of the Center, to include a summary of the review groups that had visited the Center in addition to visits at Walter Reed Army Hospital in Washington, D.C. and Brooke Army Hospital in San Antonio, Texas.

The facility did have some “Best Practices” cited by these groups, to include the Balboa Career Transition Center, which is a partnership between the VA, Department of Defense and Department of Labor to include a VA Disabilities Counselor, VA Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor, and VA Social Worker/Case Manager in addition to the Department of Labor Staff onsite. The goal of the Center is to ensure a “Seamless Transition” for their patients from the military to the civilian environment, and gainful employment.

They continue to receive injured service members, and currently have fifteen amputees in their care. They will be receiving their first amputee directly from Landstuhl Army Hospital tomorrow, vice a transfer from Walter Reed Army Hospital or Bethesda Naval Hospital.

She also commented on the care provided to those service members who have incurred Traumatic Brain Injuries (TBI), the signature disability of this war. They are increasing the size of their Staff to attend the mildly injured TBI patients, and have collaborated locally with Sharp’s and Scripps Hospitals and the VA Medical Centers in La Jolla in treatment of these patients. The more severely injured TBI patients are currently being treated at VA Medical Centers in Palo Alto, California; Richmond, Virginia; and Minneapolis, Minnesota or Tampa, Florida.

They have found that proper case management is essential in the treatment of these individuals, which they shared with the visiting review groups, and consequently are increasing the number of Case Managers on their Staff to assist members with their Medical Boards and other issues. She also commented on recent media comparisons of the DOD and VA disability evaluation systems.

She lauded the various support organizations who have made themselves available to assist injured service members, and currently have three groups, the Navy’s Safe Harbor Program, the Marine for Life Program, and the Army Wounded Warrior (AW2) Program that have representatives at the Center assisting in

administrative non-medical issues that the service members experiencing. They also are receiving training from the Amputee Coalition of America to educate some of the Staff, Amputees and Community Volunteers to become Amputee Peer Visitors. They have also linked with the San Diego Community College to bring their Acquired Brain Injury Program to the Center in June.

She also commented on several other individuals who have visited the Center to assist in “standing up” their program, and that construction should be completed on their Physical Therapy/Occupational Therapy and Prosthetic Labs should be completed in August 2007.

The Chairman asked how local organizations could help the transitioning service members, and Jennifer mentioned that many of the outings on the recreational therapy rehabilitation need volunteers to accompany the patients during these outings, and she will provide that information to the Council in the future.

Steve Arends asked about how the Regional Chamber of Commerce and the Hotel/Motel Association of San Diego County has stepped forward to help the transitioning service members and their families. Jennifer reported that the Hotel/Motel Association has assisted in offering free lodging for transitioning service members while they are securing permanent housing in the area. Navy Region Southwest and Lincoln Housing have also assisted in offering priority assignment to Public/Private Venture Housing to transitioning service members with eleven units set aside for new arrivals to the area being treated by the Center.

Several members posed questions to Jennifer concerning the availability of service dogs and arts and crafts materials being made available to assist in therapy.

She also mentioned the upcoming “Welcoming Arms Festival” to be held at the Building 12 Ball Field on Saturday, May 12, 2007 from 11:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M. for returning medical personnel and their families who have been deployed overseas and those who work so hard on the Staff of Naval Medical Center San Diego and Naval Hospital Camp Pendleton. Individuals who would like to volunteer to assist in the Festival or have questions can call the Morale, Welfare & Recreation Department at (619) 532-7258 or (619) 532-5141.

**The Minutes:** The Chairman called for a review of the Minutes of the March 24, 2007, Council meeting. He called for corrections or additions, that need to be made, and hearing none, he entertained a Motion to approve the Minutes. Joe Ciokon made a Motion to approve the Minutes as published, which General Cardenas seconded. The Motion passed on a voice vote.

**Treasurer’s report:** The Treasurer described the ledger, to include receipts and expenditures since the March 24, 2007 meeting, and reported an ending balance of \$2,299.70 in the checking account and \$100.23 in the savings account, for a total of \$2,399.93.

**Chairman’s comments:** The Chairman, Tom Richards, suggested that members invite their Veteran friends to attend the Council meetings, and when they receive emails from the Secretary, to forward them to all of their Veterans friends.

He announced that the San Diego North Chamber of Commerce is hosting a Golf Tournament at the Miramar Memorial Golf Course at MCAS Miramar on Wednesday, May 2, 2007, with registration at 7:00 A.M. and tee-off at 8:00 A.M. It will be a scramble format, and each threesome will sponsor an active duty member of the military in their foursome. The cost is \$130.00 per person. For more information, call (858) 487-1767, or visit their website at [www.sdncc.com](http://www.sdncc.com) or contact the Chamber by email at [events@sdncc.com](mailto:events@sdncc.com)

He mentioned the Escondido “Salute to the Military” monument, a privately-funded venture involving a monument with three bronze statues honoring those who have served in the “Past, Present and Future”, along with a “Wall of Courage” behind the statues bearing names of individuals who have served in the Armed Forces on Plaques. The Plaques are available at a cost of \$250.00. For more information, visit their website at [www.paradisecommunity.com](http://www.paradisecommunity.com) and click on “Military Tribute”, or call Marty Tiedeman at (760) 743-1474 or email to [tomart@sprintmail.com](mailto:tomart@sprintmail.com) or call Gale Pruitt at (760) 751-9528 or email [gale.pruitt@LTSP.com](mailto:gale.pruitt@LTSP.com)

He also mentioned the Independence Day Parade in Rancho Bernardo on July 4, and indicated that any individuals or organizations who would like to participate in the Parade should contact him.

He announced that the MCRD Command Museum Historical Society would hold their annual “Globe & Anchor” Salute on September 29, 2007. He will provide more information in the future on this event.

He indicated that he would be attending the State Veterans Commander’s Council on May 12 in Fresno, and if anyone has any particular issues they think should be raised at this Council please contact him. He will report on this Council meeting at next month’s UVC meeting.

He reported that he attended the Board Meeting of the San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce Military Affairs Committee, where he left flyers about the upcoming Veterans Seminar, Job & Resource Fair to be held June 2 at the VMCM. He indicated that he had received a call from the Chairman of that Committee earlier this week, and the Chairman was going to recommend that all of the members of the Regional Chamber of Commerce participate in our Job Fair.

He also attended a recent Navy League meeting where San Diego Mayor Jerry Sanders was the Keynote Speaker, and indicated that the Mayor has agreed to speak at the Veterans Seminar, Job & Resource Fair.

He then moved on to the issue of the Council’s Mission, Vision & Objectives Statement, which was approved with minor changes at the last meeting. He is now soliciting for volunteers to help implement the various articles of the Mission. He is looking for someone to coordinate establishing a support group for those suffering from PTSD and guide them to proper treatment, someone who is adept at Public Relations to help us communicate with the Media, City and County Governments, and other organizations to facilitate our efforts to promulgate information to Veterans in the Community. He would also like someone to volunteer as Coordinator for the prospective Veteran Speakers Bureau. Interested individuals should contact him.

**1<sup>st</sup> Vice Chairman’s comments:** Allen Miliefsky, the 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Chairman, reported that as a member of the Board of Directors of the Veterans Museum and Memorial Center, and on behalf of their Chairman, Will Hays, he would like to invite Veterans to attend the Board’s monthly meetings. By attending, individuals can learn more about what they plan for the Museum and its upcoming events, such as this evening’s Veterans Gala. The next meeting of the Board is at 6:00 P.M. in the lower hall of the Veterans Museum and Memorial Center on Wednesday, May 9<sup>th</sup>, 2007.

He also mentioned the upcoming baseball game between the Padres and Red Sox on Sunday, June 24<sup>th</sup>, for which tickets to 35 box seats have been provided to various organizations by the Jewish War Veterans for distribution to Veterans. The Council has one ticket left, which will be raffled at the end of the meeting.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Chairperson’s comments:** The 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Chairperson, Betty Nimits, commented on how expeditiously injured service members are now being evacuated to medical facilities Stateside from the battlefield. She considers it quite amazing how these young people are performing following treatment and

recuperation, which is a radical improvement over what she had seen during her twenty-five years of service in Navy Nurse Corps during three wars.

**Good of the Order:** The Chairman called for issues pertinent to the Good of the Order.

John Smith indicated that he is serving as Chairman for the upcoming Memorial Day Ceremonies at both Ft. Rosecrans National Cemetery, and the Mt. Soledad Memorial, and still need volunteers. They will have a meeting of these Committees immediately following the Council meeting. Individuals interested in volunteering can call him at (619) 205-1406 or my email to [John.Smith@cdva.ca.gov](mailto:John.Smith@cdva.ca.gov)

He also mentioned the upcoming Veterans Village of San Diego 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Mark A. Neuman Charity Golf Tournament on Friday, June 8<sup>th</sup>, 2007 at the DoubleTree Golf & Tennis Resort in Rancho Penasquitos. It will begin with a Putting Contest at 10:30 A.M and Shotgun Start at 12:30 P.M., and the cost is \$150.00 per person. Interested parties can contact Mark Neumann at (858) 695-3005 or [man@eneumann.com](mailto:man@eneumann.com) Victoria Neumann at (760) 634-2590 or [vict@sdccu.net](mailto:vict@sdccu.net) Rod Stark at (619) 393-2034 or [rodney.stark@vvsd.net](mailto:rodney.stark@vvsd.net) or Al Pavich at (619) 393-2034 or [al.pavich@vvsd.net](mailto:al.pavich@vvsd.net)

Chuck Atkinson, President of the Veterans Association of North County (VANC), announced that the Association is working to acquire the old 10,000 square foot Police Building at 1617 Mission Avenue from the City of Oceanside, to establish a place where the twenty or so Veterans organizations in the North County that don't have their own facilities can share to hold their meetings and social events. The Association is pursuing their Charter and tax-exempt status, and these are progressing well. They are now awaiting the lease to be signed with the City, which is currently in the City Attorney's office.

The building is totally gutted, and will require a lot of work and materials to fix it up to usable conditions. The City Art's Commission is also interested in establishing a Veterans Memorial in the City, and would like to place it on the site the VANC Building will be at. Obviously, this will be a great financial endeavor, and anyone who would like to donate to the Building Renovation Fund or works in the electrical, mechanical, plumbing or construction trade and would like to donate labor and/or materials can contact him at (760) 941-4712 or by email to [chuckatkinson@cox.net](mailto:chuckatkinson@cox.net)

Alfonso Carmona from the VA Veteran Centers in San Diego County announced that the VA Veterans Center formally located in Vista has been relocated to San Marcos. Everyone is cordially invited to attend the Grand Opening of the San Marcos Veterans Center, located at the Community Center Hall, 1 civic Center Drive, San Marcos, on Tuesday, May 15<sup>th</sup> from 10:00 A.M. to 2:00 P.M Refreshments and appetizers will be served. For more information, you can call the Center at (760) 744-6914.

He also announced that the San Diego Veterans Center will be hosting a Workshop, organized by Able-Disabled Advocacy, focusing on how to start a small business. It is open to all Veterans, just not those with disabilities, and will be held on Wednesday, May 23<sup>rd</sup> from 1:00 to 4:00 P.M. The Center is located at 2900 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue, San Diego, (619) 294-2040. To make a reservation to attend this event, call Cindy Lemon at Able-Disabled Advocacy at (619) 231-5990, extension 315.

Ron Brand of the California Department of Veterans Affairs reported that there would be Groundbreaking Ceremonies for new State Veterans Homes in Lancaster on June 12<sup>th</sup>, Ventura on June 13<sup>th</sup>, and in West Los Angeles at the VA Facility on June 14<sup>th</sup>.

He also introduced Tim Abbott, who is the new District Manager for the CDVA Farm & Home Loan Program Office located at 1350 Front Street, Room 2023 in San Diego. Tim can be reached at (619) 525-3700, extension 203 or by email to [timothy.abbott@cdva.ca.gov](mailto:timothy.abbott@cdva.ca.gov) if you have any questions about the CALVET Farm & Home Loan programs for Veterans.

Tim thanked the members present for their support in retaining San Diego's CALVET Home Loan Office. He indicated that they have a new loan program at 5 ¼% interest on a thirty year loan of up to \$521,250.00 for manufactured or mobile homes on land, or up to \$125,000 on manufactured or mobile home in parks, and Veterans do not have secure their own lender. He encouraged interested parties to contact his office.

Richard Farrand announced that "Heroes to Hometowns" has a new website at [www.heroestohometowns.org](http://www.heroestohometowns.org) and that he can be reached at [sunny@heroestohometowns.org](mailto:sunny@heroestohometowns.org)

Rob LaBrech indicated that he is not a Veteran, but when he had visited the Wounded Warriors Center at Camp Pendleton several months ago, he was so moved by that experience that he decided to hold a fundraising event. He subsequently called the USS Midway Museum and decided to rent it out. As a part of "Heroes on the Harbor" event, a night to honor our wounded American Warriors will be held on Friday, June 15<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 P.M. on board the USS Midway Museum, benefiting the Injured Marine Semper Fi Fund. Advance tickets are \$70.00 before May 15<sup>th</sup>, \$60.00 for military personnel, and \$85.00 per person after May 15<sup>th</sup> or at the door. The event will feature live music from New York's "BIG SHOT" Billy Joel Tribute Band, the "Corvelles" and "Married by Elvis". Heavy Hors d'Oeuvres, Wine and Chocolate will be served, with fireworks and a silent auction. To learn more, visit [www.heroesontheharbor.com](http://www.heroesontheharbor.com) or call (858) 794-0164.

A.J. Wilson, Executive Board member of the San Diego Elite Small & Disabled Veterans Outreach Business Network, reported that the 4<sup>th</sup> annual National Convention of Small and Disabled Veterans Businesses would be held at the West Point United States Military Academy in New York from August 8<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup>, 2007. Registration for the event is open until June 29<sup>th</sup>. Those interested in attending can visit their website at [www.elitesdvob.org](http://www.elitesdvob.org) or by calling (877) 430-3889.

Terry Jensen announced that the UVC, in concert with the County Veterans Employment Committee, State Economic Development Department, and several others, will host a "Hire a Hero, Hire a Vet" Veterans Seminar, Job & Resource Fair will be held at the Veterans Museum & Memorial Center, 2115 Park Boulevard, San Diego, on Saturday, June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2007 from 9:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M. The Seminar on Veterans issues will be held in the Museum and the Job & Resource Fair will be in tents on the grassy knoll behind the Museum. Mayor Jerry Sanders will be one of the Luncheon Speakers. They are still seeking employers and resource providers for the event. Interested parties can contact him at (619) 590-3959 or by email to [TJensen@edd.ca.gov](mailto:TJensen@edd.ca.gov)

Nathanial Donnelly of the Student Veterans Organization (SVO) at San Diego State University announced that on May 12<sup>th</sup>, 2007, the San Diego State Aztecs will have a "Veteran's Day Baseball Game" at 12:30 P.M. at Tony Gwynn Stadium against Brigham Young University. A member of the SVO will throw out the first pitch, the ROTC Color Guard will present the Colors, the SVO will be recognized during the game, and after third inning, they will recognize all Veterans in attendance. Interested parties should RSVP to him at [n.donnelly.svo@gmail.com](mailto:n.donnelly.svo@gmail.com) The first 300 SVO members and their guests will receive a complimentary Tony Gwynn hat.

Stuart Hedley of the Pearl Harbor Survivors announced a Memorial Day Program to be held at El Camino Memorial Park on Monday, May 28<sup>th</sup>, 2007 at 1:30 P.M. The address is 5600 Carroll Canyon Road, San Diego, CA For more information, call (858) 453-2121.

Robert Lewis spoke about the "Internet Café" that is being established at the VA Medical Center, which should open in July, and will be open five days a week, eight hours a day. He indicated that computer-literate volunteers are needed to help Veterans operate the computers. Interested volunteers can call the Center at (858) 552-8585.

Clint Steed, the UVC Webmaster commented that there are many events going on, but they are not being reported to him or the UVC Secretary for posting on the UVC website. They should be sent to the webmaster through the website at [www.sduvc.org](http://www.sduvc.org) or by email to him at [webmaster@sduvc.org](mailto:webmaster@sduvc.org) and to the Secretary at [slanghoff@cox.net](mailto:slanghoff@cox.net) as early as possible for posting on the website and distribution to our network. Please include flyers as attachments if they are available.

He also reminded everyone that the Transition Assistance Centers at the Fleet and Family Support Centers or Marine Corps Community Centers exist to assist transitioning service members in finding employment, and encourage everyone to refer those needing assistance to these facilities.

Robert Cassell of the Internal Revenue Service presented Certificates of Appreciation to the United Veterans Council, the Chula Vista State Veterans Home, Bob White, Joel Gregg and Scott Langhoff for their assistance and support of this year's Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program.

**Legislative reports:** The Chairman called for the Legislative reports.

**U.S. House Legislation:** John Smith commented on HR 327 "*The Joshua Omvig Veterans Suicide Prevention Act*", HR 797 "*The Dr. James Allen Veteran Vision Equity Act*", HR 1284 "*The Veterans Compensation Cost of Living Adjustment Act of 2007*", and HR 1538, "*The Wounded Warriors Assistance Act of 2007*". He thanked Congressman Bob Filner for all of the work he has done on advancing these issues.

**U. S. Senate Legislation:** The Senate Legislative Chair remains unfilled. The Chairman mentioned that at the recent County Veterans Advisory Council meeting, it was mentioned that the U.S. Senate does not seem to have much legislation pending on Veterans issues. He inquired about this to Senator Jim Webb's office, who is on the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee, and learned that several Bills are "in the works" involving Gulf War Syndrome Research and the Montgomery GI Bill for Life, as well as efforts to ensure a "Seamless Transition" for our Service members.

For more research on Veterans legislation, visit [www.thomas.loc.gov](http://www.thomas.loc.gov)

**State Legislation:** Steve Arends commented on AB 389, which would fund the budgets of the County Veterans Services Offices throughout the State. He also indicated that CDVA Secretary Thomas Johnson recently released the Veterans' Outreach Strategy Report, a study that addresses efforts taken throughout the State to reach Veterans who are not actively involved with Veterans Service Organizations. It is available at [www.cdva.ca.gov](http://www.cdva.ca.gov) under "Veterans Outreach". He also mentioned the status of Assembly Bills AB 418, 581, 950, and Senate Bills S 272 and S. 630.

He also mentioned the very successful recent VFW Legislative Day in Sacramento.

**Veteran's Museum and Memorial Center:** Will Hays reported on behalf of RADM Rod Melendez, Director of the Center, and mentioned the upcoming showing of the movie "Winged Victory" on Saturday, May 5<sup>th</sup> at 1:30 P.M., which is a WWII film featuring the B-24 Liberator. Admission is \$7.00 for Museum Association members and \$10.00 for the Public. Popcorn and refreshments will be available.

They also are still in need of volunteers to act as Docents and other positions at the Museum, and the fun part is being a Docent on Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday, when groups of 15 to 20 fifth grade students come in to tour the Museum. Interested parties can contact the Museum at (619) 239-2300 or by email to [sdvmc@pacbellnet](mailto:sdvmc@pacbellnet)

**VA San Diego Healthcare System:** Roger Fetzer reported on behalf of Gary Rossio, Director of the VA Healthcare System in San Diego, and indicated that the growth rate in the VA's patient care is about 1% nation-wide, and that the growth rate in patient care in the San Diego VA Healthcare System is 2.5%. They are now treating 4,839 Veterans from the Global War on Terrorism, which increases by about 32 new Veterans every week. He indicated they were working to improve their telephone appointment system.

**VA San Diego Regional Office:** Lily Fetzer, Director of the VA San Diego Regional Office, commented on VVSD's "Stand Down", and how it serves as a model for other "Stand Down" events across the Nation that she's experienced. She indicated that they have hired seven more Rating Specialists and Veterans Service Representatives, all of which are recently discharged Veterans, and that they also are receiving more 300 more claims than their monthly average in March. They post their job announcements on [www.usajobs.gov](http://www.usajobs.gov) as well as recruiting for VA Regional Office jobs at the local Job Fairs.

She mentioned that their average processing time for a disability claim is now 108 days, and that the average time to process the claims of our seriously injured Global War on Terrorism Veterans claims is 27 days. She also expressed her pleasure at the success of the Career Transition Center at the Naval Medical Center in San Diego, and the VA's participation in that operation, along with the Department of Labor and the State Economic Development Department.

She reported that there is a current construction project underway at the Regional Office for a secured parking area, and that in response to complaints that the office could not be found, they now have a huge sign advertising the VA Regional Office and Outpatient Clinic in Mission Valley on the northeast corner of Qualcomm Way and Rio San Diego Drive.

**VA National Cemetery at Ft. Rosecrans:** General Bob Cardenas reported on behalf of Bill Livingston, Director of the National Cemetery at Ft. Rosecrans, and indicated that Bill Livingston is back from temporary duty in Florida. He also indicated that the Marine Corps has sent a report to Congressman Bilbray's office which stated that the Environmental Impact Statement and the Record of Decision for land use at the Annex at MCAS Miramar would not be signed by the Secretary of the Navy until October. As a result, the Cemetery will probably not be ready for "in-ground" internments until December of 2008 or January of 2009 at the latest, however, the \$19.5 million dollars in funding is still available. He also reported that the Ft. Rosecrans National Cemetery Support Foundation has attained 501 (c)(3) status, with a Board of Directors, and that they meet the first Monday of each month at Noon at the National University Headquarters on Torrey Pines Road.

John Smith, Chairman of the Ft. Rosecrans National Cemetery Memorial Day Ceremony Committee, reported that this year's Ceremony would take place on Memorial Day, Monday, May 28, 2007, beginning at 10:00 A.M.

The Chairman indicated that buses, sponsored by various groups to include the Marine Corps League would be available to provide round-trip transportation for attendees from the parking lot adjacent to the Veterans Museum & Memorial Center to Ft. Rosecrans National Cemetery on Memorial Day, departing from the Museum at 8:30 A.M.

Joe Brunner added that the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Service would also be held at the Veterans Museum and Memorial Center on Monday, May 28, 2007, beginning at 7:00 A.M.

**California State Veteran's Home – Chula Vista:** Jane Bergman reported on behalf of Gil Acevedo, Administrator of the of the State Veteran's Home in Chula Vista, will celebrate it's seventh Anniversary in May, and will have their Founder's Day Celebration on Saturday, May 12<sup>th</sup>, 2007, as a "Country Fair" with

a Barbeque that day. They currently have 370 residents at the Home. She lauded Bob White for the outstanding Income Tax Service he provided to their residents over the past few months.

**CALVET Board:** Colin “Jim” Shadell, Member of the CALVET Board and a Resident at the Chula Vista State Veterans Home indicated that the next CALVET Board meeting would be in San Diego on June 15<sup>th</sup>, 2007 at the Veterans Museum and Memorial Center at 9:00 A.M. All Veterans in the Community are encouraged to attend. He also commented on the delay in the release of the CALVET E-Newsletter following each Board meeting, and that they are working to correct that problem and get the newsletter out promptly.

**San Diego County Veterans Service Office:** Tom Splitgerber, Director of the County Veterans Service Office, reported that he had received a call last Friday morning from Tom Johnson, the Secretary of the California Department of Veterans Affairs indicating that they have reopened the Position of Chief of the Veterans Services Division as a paid appointed position. Anyone who might be interested in applying for this position should contact Tom Splitgerber at (619) 531-4545 or by email to [Tom.Splitgerber@sdcounty.ca.gov](mailto:Tom.Splitgerber@sdcounty.ca.gov)

**Veterans Village of San Diego:** Darcy Pavich reported on behalf of Al Pavich, Director of Veterans Village. She indicated that the Downtown Breakfast Rotary Chapter #33, and the Point Loma Rotary Chapter are painting the second floor of the new barracks facility at VVSD today, which will add 45 more beds to the complex. They expect to begin building on the second 112-bed unit and counseling center, which will house their employment office, medical facilities and intake office sometime in late June.

**“One VA” Report:** The Chairman of the “One VA” Committee, Pete Houben, reported that the front entrance to the Medical Center will reopen on June 11, 2007. He indicated that the San Diego Health Care System finally received its’ Fiscal Year 2007 budget, about six months late, and that now their concern is what will be made available for Fiscal Year 2008 funding, as it is an election year. He indicated that the next “One VA” meeting would be on Wednesday, May 16, 2007 at 9:30 A.M at the VA Regional Office.

Joe Brunner stated that the theme for the Veterans Day Parade this year is “Honoring Those Who Serve Veterans”, and that the Honorary Grand Marshals will be the VA Regional Office, VA Health Care, Veterans Village of San Diego, County Veterans Service Office employees, amongst others to be announced.

**San Diego County Veterans Advisory Council:** Nancy Owen, Chairperson of the Council, and indicated that their next meeting on Saturday, May 12<sup>th</sup>, 2007 at 9:30 A.M., which is also the Founders Day Celebration at the State Veterans Home in Chula Vista, would be held at the Veterans Home vice the Veterans Museum & Memorial Center. She also indicated that they are partnering with the UVC to accomplish the goal of improving communication amongst Veterans in the Community.

**San Diego County United Veterans Association:** John Weaver, Chairman of the Association, reported that they still need volunteers to assist in a variety of positions with the Parade. The Association and Parade Committee meet the second Thursday of each month at 6:00 P.M. in the lower hall of the Veterans Museum and Memorial Center, with the next meeting being on May 10, 2007.

Joe Brunner, Parade Committee Chairman, added that the Veterans Day Parade does not happen by magic, it takes a little work, and they will appreciate the efforts of anyone who can volunteer to help!

**Mt. Soledad Memorial Association:** John Smith reported on behalf of Bill Kellogg, President of the Association, and reminded everyone present that the Mt. Soledad Memorial Day Ceremony would be held

on Monday, May 28 2007 at 2:00 P.M., honoring President Ford with a commemorative plaque. He also indicated that the event would include a Military aircraft fly-over.

**USS Midway Museum/CNRSW:** Joe Ciokon reported on behalf of Rear Admiral “Mac” McLaughlin U.S. Navy (Retired), President of the San Diego Aircraft Carrier Museum Association and Commander, Naval Region Southwest, and indicated that the UDT/SEAL Association is planning their West Coast Reunion at Coronado for the second week of August 2007. Any former UDT/SEALS, or anyone who ever supported Seals or worked with SEALS is invited to join the Association.

He also commented that the Aircraft Carrier USS REAGAN (CVN-76), recently returned from three months of a “Surge Operation” deployment to the Western Pacific, mainly to keep North Korea in check, and that the USS GEORGE WASHINGTON (CVN-73) is accelerating her repairs in the Shipyard so she can replace the USS KITTY HAWK (CV-63) in Yokosuka, Japan, in 2008.

He commented on the recent “Blue Angel” loss, which is very tragic, and very rare for the Team.

He also reported that Carl Kent has been selected as the new Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps, a thirty-one year Veteran of the Marine Corps with thirteen months of Service in Iraq during Operation Iraqi Freedom.

He also commented on the recent opening of the new 125,000 square foot Commissary at Naval Station San Diego.

He also commented on the MIDWAY’s planned Memorial Day and Legacy Week activities, which will kick off with their annual Wreath Remembrance Ceremony on the Flight Deck at 9:00 A.M. on Saturday, May 26, 2007. Ceremony attendees can visit the Museum the same day at no charge! There will be a variety of events occurring during Legacy Week, beginning on Monday, Memorial Day, May 28, 2007 through June 1, 2007. For more information, contact Scott McGaugh, at [smcgaugh@midway.org](mailto:smcgaugh@midway.org) or (619) 398-9250. Information is also available at their website, which is [www.midway.org](http://www.midway.org)

**Old business:** The Chairman called for Old Business or Correspondence, and hearing none, he called for New Business.

**New business:** The Chairman called for any other Motions or New Business that needed to be brought before the Council. He brought up the November and December Holiday meeting schedule issue that was discussed at the last meeting. The November proposal would have the monthly UVC meeting held November 24, 2007 be held on November 17, 2007, and to hold a December meeting on December 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2007, whereas we would not normally have a December meeting. John Smith made a Motion to hold the November 24 meeting on November 17, which Steve Campbell seconded. The Chairman called for the Question, and the Motion passed on a voice vote.

The Chairman then entertained a Motion for the Council to have a monthly Meeting on December 22, 2007. John Smith made said Motion, which Steve Campbell seconded. The Chairman called for the Question, and the issue was too close to call by voice vote. The Chairman then called for a show of hands, and the issue of having a monthly meeting in December was defeated.

The Chairman called for any other new business, and hearing none, the Chairman mentioned that there will be a Memorial Day Ceremony at 2:00 P.M. on Monday, May 28, 2008 at Mt. Hope Cemetery, honoring the Civil War Congressional Medal of Honor Recipient James Thompson.

He also mentioned that as a Mentor for the Student Veteran Organization at San Diego State University, he was made aware of a recent opinion-editorial article in the SDSU Daily Aztec, entitled “Troops Gone Wild”, written by Michael Erler, a Political Science Senior and Senior Columnist, which he read some excerpts from. It will be distributed via our email network for all to review and provide feedback back to the Chancellor of the University.

Several members provided additional comment on the article. The Meeting was adjourned at 11:35 A.M.

1<sup>st</sup> Vice Chairman Allen Miliefsky conducted the Baseball Ticket Raffle, with John Smith drawing the winning ticket. Steve Campbell won the ticket!

The next Meeting of the United Veterans Council of San Diego County will be at 9:30 A.M. on Saturday, May 26, 2007 in the Lower Hall of the Veterans Museum and Memorial Center in Balboa Park.

Recorded by:

Approved by:

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