



UVC NEWS

INAUGURAL ISSUE FEB 2012

United Veterans Council of San Diego County

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Welcome to the Inaugural Issue of the UVC News, the newsletter of The United Veterans Council of San Diego County! The intention for 2012 is to publish this once a month news issue as an information source for San Diego County Veterans and for subscribed organizations and associations that support and serve Veterans in the region, with additional 'second' issues in months when emerging matters may so require. Newsletter content will be provided by the UVC Executive Board and other UVC members. Any interested party may submit calendar entries of events held by Veterans and/or for Veterans, to be considered for inclusion in the **UVC News Calendar**. The UVC reserves the prerogative to limit length of entries and to decline entries. This issue is sent to all current recipients of UVC emailings. Reader feedback on the **UVC News** is welcome at the email and postal addresses above. New subscription requests are welcome. Recipients may unsubscribe by a "decline" email or letter.

Message from the Chairman: Jack Harkins, Marine

I am honored to serve as Chairman of The United Veterans Council of San Diego County and to have the privilege to work with the most diligent, productive, and distinguished community of Veterans in our nation. My concept of the UVC is, I trust, much like most of you hold: A Forum For Information and a Marketplace Of Ideas, for and among an affiliation of (1) individual Members – i.e., Veterans, family members, friends, and supporters – within and outside San Diego County, and (2) Member Organizations – Veteran Service Organizations & other non-profit entities, as well as commercial corporations providing services or support to Veterans or to Veteran-benefit purposes, and (3) government representatives from Federal, State, County, & City levels, as well as elected officials. Trusting also in the value that we place on **Teamwork**, I invited the February 25 General Session to enact the terms "**UVC Member**" and "**UVC Member Organization**" to identify persons and organizations cited above in (1) and (2), who share in informing and supporting Veterans. That action was unanimously approved with the specification that identification as "Member of the UVC" means **only** the opportunity to share the work & rewards of the 'UVC Team' and to be on the 'UVC Rolls' and does **not** impose any formal obligation, responsibility, or allegiance.

I institute this newsletter to provide more communication & response opportunities than the single monthly two-hour General Sessions afford.

I intend to guide & edit **UVC News** while it finds its proper tone & targets, through the next several issues (there, now it is clear where to direct criticisms!). This issue is very long – I do not apologize, except for its February launch – and I hope that readers will study the '**Calls to Action**' and will at least scan other content (you should not miss the Executive Board pictures!); and....I hope that some of this is enjoyed.

Semper Fidelis, Your Chairman, *Jack Harkins*

In This UVC News Issue

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Women Veterans History Room at Veterans Museum and Memorial Center

News to Use:

JANUARY & FEBRUARY GENERAL SESSION MEETINGS’ HIGHLIGHTS

UVC EXECUTIVE BOARD 2012 Members

Invitations:

Women’s Military History Day March 4 at Veterans Museum & Memorial Center.

A day of recorded and filmed history and “Living History” Open to all at no charge.

10:00 – 12:45 Films on Women’s Service Organizations in US Military

1:00-4:00 Women Veterans Tell Their Own Stories: WWII to OIF/OEF

Veterans Museum & Memorial Center 2115 Park Blvd, Balboa Park:

619.239.2300 <http://veteranmuseum.org/>

“U.S. Marine Corps Battle Color Ceremony” March 10, 2:30, MCRD San Diego

The Marine Corps Silent Drill Platoon and **The Drum & Bugle Corps** Perform.

Visitors should arrive at least one hour prior to the performance.

American Ex-POW Recognition & Display Day April 10, 10am – 4pm

Local Veterans Who Are Ex-POWs share incarceration stories: WWII, Korea, Vietnam.

Open to all at no charge.

Veterans Museum & Memorial Center 2115 Park Blvd, Balboa Park

619.239.2300 <http://veteranmuseum.org/> **SDPOW.ORG**

“USS San Diego (LPD-22)” Commissioning Ceremony May 19, in San Diego

Navy League’s San Diego Council announces the Commissioning of the “USS San Diego” an amphibious Landing Platform Dock ship, the newest ship in the US Navy fleet, and the third named for the City. She is also homeported here. Public ceremony: Sat May 19, 10:00 at ‘Navy Pier’ (Midway’s pier). Find your opportunity to support / attend at: **www.lpd22.com**

Calls to Action

“UVC 2012 Priorities” Set, Announce, and Promote.

Action Call: Know and use the newly adopted UVC 2012 Priorities. Guide your own actions and communications to promote and enhance these Priorities. State our Priorities to all whom you contact who can exert influence in the San Diego region and beyond.

The UVC February General Session approved three proposed “2012 United Veterans Council of San Diego County Priorities”, and decided that they be announced widely and be promoted to enhance Veterans lives in the region. Our 2012 UVC Priorities are set with identifying titles and concise descriptions of each priority’s purpose and/or actuation, so as to enhance government agencies’ & service organizations’ individual member awareness, for the refinement or revision of their own actions & procedures, as well as the organizations’ corporate activities & policies & regulations.

“2012 UVC Priorities”

Veterans Employment. Veterans having access to & preference for rewarding jobs.

Promote through: 1. Employers’ awareness of severe under-employment of the Veteran population. 2. Employers’ appreciation of the myriad attributes of Veterans that increase success in the workplace. 3. Increasing the reach & effectiveness of career preparations and of job placement services.

4. Advancing Government incentives for employing Veterans.

Veterans Housing & Shelter. Veterans to be housed or sheltered - not homeless.

Promote by: 1. Obtaining increased assistance to individual Veterans for low cost/no cost housing. 2. Obtaining San Diego City and County increased Designation / Acquisition of properties titled for Veterans in Federal Housing Choice Program of HUD property inventories.

3. Strengthening and increasing regional Annual Homeless Count by Participation and Publication, and Follow-Through to Assist the counted Homeless Veterans.

Veterans Enrollment for Services. Veterans all to be enrolled with the U. S. and California Veterans departments for receipt of all benefits.

Promote by: Supporting Veterans Transition services outreach. Advocating for VA and California DVA mandatory inclusion in military transition assistance program sessions with service members prior to discharge. Establishing Volunteer transition assistance teams for VA and CDVA to support enrollment during Military and Veterans Departments transition sessions.

“ASPIRE CENTER” New VA Healthcare Residential Rehabilitation Treatment Program for Transitioning Veterans

Action Call To Veterans: Consider the San Diego City Council upcoming ‘Aspire Center’ Decision on a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for VA San Diego Healthcare to Operate ‘Aspire Center’ in an Old Town San Diego Neighborhood in 2012.

The February UVC General Session enacted a Formal UVC Position Favoring Approval of the San Diego City Conditional Use Permit for the VA “Aspire Center” Residential Rehabilitation Treatment Program to Operate at the Property Leased by the VA on San Diego Avenue in Old Town.

The VA San Diego Regional Healthcare System's “Aspire Center” is a Residential Rehabilitation Treatment Center that will prevent and treat Veteran homelessness while assisting in the recovery and rehabilitation of selected Veterans, through multiple treatment modes. The Aspire Center will serve men and women Veterans, especially of the Iraq and Afghanistan campaigns and including those with mild traumatic brain injury, who require intensive rehabilitation care for an average of 60 to 120 days, but not hospitalization. The need is acute, as the many Veterans now present or returning here with these conditions will, if not cared for so well as residential rehabilitation does, result in more homeless cases and in preventable anguish and despair in those who should be exulting in their records of service to a grateful society and taking their new places of welcome in that society.

This program will provide services to our Veterans who have served our country with honor and distinction. Helping these individuals reintegrate to civilian life in a vibrant and positive setting is beneficial to our community, our city and our country.

Key features that merit our support of the Aspire Center:

1. Participating Veterans have been "Honorably" discharged and voluntarily chose to participate in the program.
2. Aspire Center program is limited to 40 Veterans.
3. The building lease for Aspire Center is centrally located and in a mixed-use community.
4. The location for Aspire Center has access to public transit and is near other VA services
5. The VA has over 107 of these programs nationwide - not one is in San Diego - yet we have more Veterans and active duty military than anywhere else in the world

The nation and our community owe these Veterans a debt of gratitude and we must not repeat our society's past mistakes by allowing resentment and rejection of Iraq and Afghanistan War Veterans in the same unfortunate manner that Vietnam Veterans were treated upon their return home in the 1960's and 70's. All of these Veterans have protected us and now we must take care of them and support them. A Veteran who has served our country with honor and voluntarily enters a program to improve their well being needs to be supported.

I strongly encourage you to support the VA Healthcare System's Aspire Center in Old Town, by urging the San Diego City Council to approve the Conditional Use Permit. We want these young men and women to be welcomed in every community of our city and accepted as productive members of society as they come home.

Contribution on CA Tax Form 540 To The "California Veterans Home Fund"

Action Call To Veterans: Consider making a voluntary donation to the "California Veterans Home Fund" that was created by law introduced by California State Assemblyman Nathan Fletcher to benefit Veterans Homes, by allowing donations to be made when filing California Income Tax Returns to the State Franchise Tax Board. Donated funds are disbursed equitably among all the State Veterans Homes.

The opportunity to contribute to the "California Veterans Home Fund" is available again on the 2011 CA Income Tax Form 540. Use CA Income Tax filing to Donate to 'The California Veterans Homes Fund', per CA law introduced by Assemblyman Nathan Fletcher.

We can donate to the Veterans Home Fund when we file in any of three situations:

If receiving a Refund, we can donate some or all of our refund to the Fund, and we can even add additional donated dollars to the Fund above the amount of a Refund if we donate all the Refund and still want to give more to Veterans Homes.

If paying a Tax, we can donate to the Fund by adding additional donated dollars to the amount we pay in Tax Due.

If not Paying Tax nor Receiving Refund, we still will file a return, and we can make a donation to the Fund by sending a payment that is a Contribution Only amount to Franchise Tax Board when we file.

On California Resident 2011 Form 540 2EZ Line 26, under "Voluntary Contributions" & on 2011 Forms 540, Line 110 and 540A, Line 110, under "Contributions", by marking a listing for CA Veterans Homes - Code 417.

Tell friends & associates also: If CA Veterans Homes collect \$250,000 this tax year then the CA Veterans Home Fund donation option will also be on the Forms for following tax years!

Women Veterans History Room, Veterans Museum & Memorial Center (VMMC)

Action Call To Veterans: Visit the Women Veterans History Room at the VMMC, see its attractive, pristine status, ready for pinnacle additions from the superb collection of Historic Womens' Military Uniforms that are in the VMMC Vaults ready for display when new display cases can be obtained and installed; and then make a donation for the purpose of completing the Women Veterans History Gallery.

The call to action says it all, except if you are not able to visit the Museum soon. In that case, please go the VMMC Website, www.veteransmuseum.org, view the story there and use the Home Page's 'Newsletters' button to see the latest news about the Women's Room; then, make that donation in the name of a Woman Veteran you respect and love.

"So Close...", is how the Museum Board of Directors and Staff all speak of the Women's Room now. We are proud of its renovated beauty, and we are eager for it to fully blossom!

JANUARY & FEBRUARY GENERAL SESSION MEETINGS' HIGHLIGHTS

Our January 28th General Session was, of course, the first Session conducted since the new UVC Executive Board Officers were installed. The Session was successful in **several** ways: well-attended with 64 participants; well-served with a Navy League presentation on the new USS San Diego commissioning here on May 19th; well-provided with reports from all the area U.S. Government and California Government agencies: VA Health, VA Regional Office, VA Cemeteries, Navy Medical Center, Cal Veterans Home, County Veterans SVC Office; well-actioned with approvals by the Session members to:

1. Keep the four current standing Committees and the Committee Chairs and for the Chairs to be joined to the UVC Executive Board
2. Establish UVC's 2012 Priorities and promulgate them after they enacted by the whole of the February Session
3. Open a new Veterans Museum and Memorial Center bank account titled "United Veterans Council of San Diego" and transfer some funds from the existing account so as to affirm a bona fide 'tax-exempt donation acceptance account';

[continuing with 'the Session was..'] well-seasoned with lively engagement by attendees on the weighty matters such as: the 'Aspire Center' as reported by Dr Robert Smith, the "California Veterans Home Fund" option with CA income tax filers to 'designate' and to donate when filing for the 2011 tax year, and finally, the new bank account action.

A new 'Agenda-on-Screen' mode, with computerized slides and images projected to an on-stage screen, was quite well received and will be carried on through all 2012 UVC Sessions.

The General Session meeting of February 25th was one with strong attendance, 67 total, and distinguished guests to bring presentations and greetings: Rear Admiral Mac McLaughlin, USN Retired, President and CEO of the USS Midway Museum, who brought a very vivid On-Screen portrayal of the Midway Museum Board's "Veterans Park" proposal for developing a public park on the 'Navy Pier' (the pier that is Midway's home), and Mr. Lee Gutierrez, the Deputy Secretary of the California Department of Veterans Affairs (CDVA) who emphasized CDVA's call for assistance to mentor and assist young Veterans in transition, and David Silva of CA Employment Development Department presenting Veterans Employment Focus. This Session was our adoption of physical seating and aisle arrangements to make possible the monthly Veterans Memorial Church services for recently departed Veterans to start at 12:00 noon, one-half earlier than the start has been for about two years. The effect was beneficial for the Memorial Service. As related in above passages of this newsletter edition, Session members were unanimous in adopting the 2012 UVC Priorities, in enacting a Position In Favor of the 'Aspire Center' Conditional Use Permit, and in establishing Membership terms for UVC Individual Members and Member Organizations. Both January and February Sessions concluded by 11:30 am, and we are firmly committed to adjourning by that time at every Session, as consideration to all.

UVC EXECUTIVE BOARD 2012 Members



Chairman
Jack Harkins

Jack Harkins is a retired Marine officer with a 35 year Marine Corps career that included 9 years enlisted service 1965-1975, and then commissioned service until 2001. He served 2 combat tours in Vietnam, 1966 – 1968; combat duty in Somalia 1993; commanded Marine Wing Support Squadron 373 1995-1997; retired in May 2001 from duty as Deputy Chief of Staff for Installations and Logistics, Marine Corps Air Bases Western Area. He entered private business and managed facility construction of information technology and communication centers in California, Nevada, and Washington, until he accepted a Marine Corps civilian staff position to direct Installations and Logistics functions for Commander Marine Corps Air Bases Western Area 2002-2009, during which he made the site selection for a Veterans cemetery on MCAS Miramar property that became Miramar National Cemetery in 2010. UVC service is nine years; current additional services: Veterans Museum & Memorial Center Board of Directors, Veterans Week San Diego Chairman, San Diego Veterans Coalition, One VA Community Advisory Board, San Diego Military Advisory Council.

His memberships are: Marine Corps Association Life Member, Military Order of the Purple Heart Life Member, Military Order of the World Wars Perpetual Member, and Veterans Of Foreign Wars Life Member.



1st Vice-Chair
Kathy Bruyere

Kathy Bruyere is a retired U.S. Navy Captain, and continues to serve with dedication and distinction in causes supporting Veterans and the Naval Service and National Security. She has served several years in the UVC, including a Board term as advisor on women's issues.



2d Vice-Chair
Toni Lopez

Antonia Lopez (Toni) retired from the U.S. Navy after a 25 year career. She served as an enlisted member 1980 – 1994; then as an officer 1994-2005. She served in the Gulf War, Desert Shield, and Desert Storm in addition to serving in Fallajah, Iraq for her final deployment. After serving eleven years as a Navy Physician Assistant, she entered private practice with a group medical practice where she still enjoys seeing patients. She is active as 2nd Vice Chair of the United Veteran Council, Board member to the Military Women's Luncheon, Commissioner to the Aging and Veterans for the City of La Mesa.

UVC EXECUTIVE BOARD 2012 Members Continued



Treasurer
David Moran

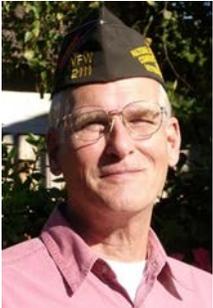
David Moran served 30 years in the U.S. Naval submarine and surface nuclear propulsion program with enlisted service from 1966 to 1979 on Fleet ballistic Missile and Fast Attack Submarines. He was commissioned as a Limited Duty Officer in 1979. Served on the USS Long Beach, commissioning crew of the USS McKee, COMSUBGROUP Five, COMSUBRON Eleven, COMNAVAIRPAC and COMNAVSURFPAC staffs. He has been participating in the UVC for 4 years and is currently serving as the treasurer. David worked for Solar Turbines following naval service, is a registered tax preparer and a Veteran of Foreign Wars Life Member.



Secretary
Evelyn Thomas

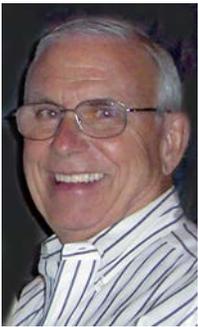
On May 17, 1986 at 17, Evelyn Lynn Thomas made the conscience decision to become a public servant and enlisted into the U.S. Armed Forces. She served in two military branches: The Army National Guard, as a Material Storage and Handling Specialist with Company G 949th Main Support Battalion out of Temple, Texas, and The Marine Corps, as a Professional Baker with the 1st Marine Division Headquarters Supply Company and with Weapons and Field Training MCRD. In 1991, she was Honorably Discharged as a combat veteran. She graduated from Mira Costa College and California State University San Marcos respectively with an Associate Degree in General Studies, a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration, a Social Science Teaching Credential, and finally a Master of Arts in Education with a focus towards Teaching, Learning, and Leadership. She has taught at several middle schools and high schools in North San Diego County. In 2009, she established The Sanctuary Project Veterans, as an activist outreach ministry to advocate for service members, veterans, and families impacted by Don't Ask Don't Tell (DADT). In 2010 along with other veterans, handcuffed herself to The White House fence, to protest and advocate for the Repeal of DADT. In a culmination of her activism work, she was invited to The White House to witness the signing of the bill she holds most important since The Voting Rights Act. Evelyn had the opportunity to thank and hug President Barack Obama for supporting the largest population impacted by DADT; that is Women of Color. She is an elected member of The San Diego Central Committee. She is a member of The National Association of Black Veterans (NABVETS). Since April 2011, she is a member of The United Veterans Council of San Diego as Secretary.

UVC EXECUTIVE BOARD 2012 Members Continued



Legislative
Chair
Steve Arends

Steve Arends is the UVC Legislative Committee Chair, having served on this committee for several years. Since 2004 Steve has also served on the VFW's National Legislative Committee and since 2001 as the Legislative Rep on the San Diego County Board of Supervisors' Veterans Advisory Council (VAC). He's also been the Co-Chair of the San Diego "One VA" Community Advisory Board since 2010, and a member since 2001. Steve served on the City of Chula Vista's Veterans Advisory Commission from 1995-2002, and since 2001 on the San Diego County VAC. Steve is a retired Navy Captain, and Naval Aviator, having served on active duty 1966-1994. He's especially proud of being an unrestricted Naval Aviator, i.e. a Navy helicopter pilot. And proud to have been one of the founders and still active as a Director of the Chula Vista Veterans Home Support Foundation, a City of Chula Vista sponsored 501(c)(3) charity which supports the 300+ elderly and disabled veterans residing at our California Veterans Home in Chula Vista.



Communications
Chair
Bob Phillips

Bob Phillips served on active duty for two years as an officer in the U. S. Navy. Since that time, he has spent over 40 years in the marketing, advertising and public relations business. He founded and managed three successful marketing communications companies, two of which were sold prior to founding Phillips Marketing in 1989. Bob has been deeply involved in San Diego veteran community activities including the last 12 years with the Mt. Soledad Memorial Association, Inc. He has represented that organization at the United Veterans Council for the last six years. He has also been active in helping develop sponsorships for the San Diego Veterans Day Parade. Besides his associations in the veteran communities, he has served on the boards of a number of non-profit philanthropic organizations.



Combat Stress
Chair
Mike Sloan

Michael I. Sloan is a Marine combat veteran, and a veteran of the Maryland Army National Guard. Mike has degrees from the American University, BS in international studies in Washington D.C., Masters of Information Sciences from George Washington University in Washington D.C. Mike worked many years as a federal contractor, and contractor for numerous civilian firms in large scale integration work. Contracting with or for such firms as SAIC, ASEC, ATT, MCI, Sprint, SMS in addition to his own firm of MIS consulting. Mike is the co-founder of American Combat Veterans Of War (ACVOW) and has been active in the San Diego Veterans community since 2000. He is a life member of the Military Order of the Purple Heart, Disabled American Veterans, and the Khe Sahn Veterans association.