

Wednesday, April 4, 2012

Call to Order at 9:32 a.m.

Invocation

Pledge of Allegiance

Greetings: Recognition of visitors and guests. (Senator Franken arrives later.)

1. Federal Congressional Representatives and Senators

Senator Amy Klobuchar - Tim Cossalter: Senator Klobuchar is working with a coalition in the Senate to get legislation that's a bit more broad regarding the Veterans Skills to Jobs Act. This legislation would allow military training and experience adequate to satisfy someone for federal licenses such as EMTs, CDLs, etc. A question was asked Mr. Cossalter regarding where the bill is at right now. The answer was that it's in the process of getting into the committee, getting cosponsors to sign on. Patience is required as this can be a lengthy process. When the public is behind a bill, and let their voices be heard, this puts pressure on members of Congress to act. Another question was asked about the bill allowing Lao and Hmong guerrilla veterans to be buried in national veterans cemeteries in the U.S. Is there any discussion on the Senate side about a companion bill? Answer: Because the Hmong population in the U.S. is concentrated primarily in Minnesota and California, it's hard to get additional members of Congress to sign on. There is no bill number on the Senate side.

Senator Al Franken: Senator Franken mentioned his time spent at the Marshall Work Force Center yesterday. There are some cultural challenges between being in the military and back in the work force. Senator Franken mentioned he came of age for military service during the time of the Vietnam War. He was in college at the time and did not serve. He really had no relationship with the military until 1999 when Secretary Cohen's office called and asked him if he wanted to do a USO tour in Bosnia and Kosovo. He did these tours annually till about Christmas 2006, having gone to Iraq and Afghanistan four times each. He then became a candidate for the Senate, which ended the USO tours. Since he's been a Senator he's gone with a Congressional Delegation to Pakistan and Afghanistan where he would get all the top briefings, but he feels being a comedian in the USO tour was much more valuable because he would go to the DFAC several times a day and end up talking to everybody. He has a great deal of respect and feels a sense of obligation to provide for the troops, especially after the USO experience. Senator Franken was in Israel a few months ago and they have a very different system in that almost everyone serves in the military there except the ultra orthodox. Very different from the all-volunteer army we have. He feels the American public is "divorced" from the experience of the military because of this and it makes it difficult for the returning servicemembers. About midway through his USO tours, Franken went to Walter Reed. He mentioned how nervous he was and wondered how he could possibly ever cheer up these Wounded Warriors. He ended up leaving cheered up. He also mentioned meeting a vet along the way who had a service dog named Tuesday that helped this vet relax when he sensed the vet had PTSD symptoms coming on. Two weeks into his being in the Senate, a bill he authored was passed which paired 200 service dogs with 200 vets with invisible wounds. It's a three-year study looking at things like are there fewer hospitalizations, less cost of human care, more employment? Senator Franken has a Rural Veterans Health Care Bill in the Senate. It's cosponsored by Senator Boozman (R-ARK). The bill basically says VA's Office of Veterans Health, which has not been using its resources sufficiently, has to have a five-year strategic plan to use their funds more effectively, thus giving veterans who reside in rural areas access to better and more timely health care. Franken mentioned speaking to Secretary Shinseki at the MN State Fair about, among other things, the

Diabetes Prevention Plan Bill he authored. It's a 16-week program for people diagnosed as prediabetic. The program includes physical and nutritional training and it turns out 60 percent fewer become diabetic. This program will be piloted in the VA. Franken briefly mentioned he cosponsored Senator Klobuchar's PDMRA bill. Senator Franken was advised by two audience members that the VA, within the last 60 days, has changed their policy on emergency care and a veteran can go to a non-VA facility for emergency care until such time as they are stabilized and can be transferred to a VA facility.

7th District Representative Collin Peterson - Al Loehr: Not present

1st District Representative Tim Walz - Shawn Schloesser: Not present but asked the following be included in the minutes. Congressman Walz will be at the White House later today to see the President sign the Stop Trading on Congressional Knowledge (STOCK) Act into law. This bill, which bans insider trading on Capitol Hill, won full Congressional approval last month, years after Walz first introduced the legislation. Congressman Walz also met with veteran students at MN State University in Mankato this week to seek their input about the transition from military to academic life. A common theme was delays in VA payments for higher education. Walz promised to pursue improvements at the VA so answers can be obtained more quickly by veterans and college officials about claims, as well as changes that would allow checks to be sent sooner. He will continue to rally support around the Veterans Skills to Jobs Act (HR 4155), which would allow relevant military training as sufficient to satisfy requirements for federal licenses. Walz is the original cosponsor.

2nd District Representative John Kline - Chaz Johnson: Congressman Kline recently received the Silver Helmet Award from the AmVets. This was in recognition for his work to get the Yellow Ribbon Program federalized. Kline continues his battle with the administration regarding the PDMRA issue. Somewhere around 48,000 service members are affected by this. "A promise made is a promise kept" is his adage. There will be more updates on that as warranted. Kline will be hosting a Job Fair on May 14 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Eagan Community Center. Last year, 92 companies were brought in. The requirement is that they must be hiring. It's not to just collect resumes. It's encouraging that a number of companies have responded that have not in the past because they did not have vacancies available. Regarding Service Academy, of the 25 people Kline offered nominations to eight have received appointments. Of those eight, three or four got additional nominations to Merchant Marines.

3rd District Representative Eric Paulson - John Paul Yates: Congressman Paulson signed on to HR 2051. This bill would make it mandatory for the VA to ensure a proper burial for a veteran's remains when there is no next of kin. Mr. Yates announced he will probably be going on leave to work on Congressman Paulson's reelection campaign, so this is likely the last UVLC meeting he will be at until after the election. Luke Hellier will be attending the meetings in his absence, and possibly Margaret Cavanagh (sp).

4th District Representative Betty McCollum - Connie Haddeland: The Military Construction Subcommittee of House Appropriations, on which Congresswoman McCollum is a member, has completed their hearings. Letters have now been submitted to the ranking member of the subcommittee, as well as the chairman, about what the members view as their priorities within the budget and what they would like to see maintained. Within McCollum's letter, she has indicated her support for full VA health care funding, including the President's proposal for the medical and prosthetic research component of the budget, as well as maintenance of the amount for military family housing. In conjunction with her work on this subcommittee, McCollum spent all day yesterday at Camp Pendleton. The emphasis of the day was to visit family services,

schools, day care, etc. She also met with Lt. Gen Thomas Waldhauser from South St. Paul, MN whom she went to high school with. He is about to leave Camp Pendleton to become the senior military assistant to Secretary Panetta. April 17 they will be hosting an Academy Information Night at Moundsview High School. The event is open to students, families, and schools from any Congressional District.

5th District Representative Keith Ellison - Mike Siebenaler: Not present

6th District Representative Michele Bachmann - Rachel Horn: Legislative Assistant Chase Kroll was in town last month. Ms. Horn arranged a meeting with him and members of the 934th. This two-hour meeting featured discussion about the restructuring within the Air Force. If you have any thoughts or concerns on this matter, please contact their office. They are in the information-gathering phase before this issue comes to a Congressional vote. Bachmann took a trip to Israel last month. She was able to meet the the Prime Minister there. Bachmann is aware of Israel's issues in the Middle East and is supportive of their position. She wants to make sure the U.S. continues a good relationship with Israel. Finally, she met with General Allen in D.C. last month. This was exciting for their office as the General only met with Speaker Boehner and some Senate leadership in addition to Bachmann. With her position on the House Permanent Committee on Intelligence, she was able to get some time with him. She is keeping veterans in mind as legislation moves forward.

8th District Representative Chip Cravaack - Brian Gordon: Last month Mr. Gordon mentioned Congressman Cravaack sent a letter to the NORAD Commander regarding the Duluth 148th Fighter Wing mission being sequestered. This month, he's able to meet with the Commander and discuss this issue (the 24-hour-alert mission that could be in jeopardy). Cravaack, along with Rep Duffy will be hosting the Twin Ports Job Fair on April 23 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., with 9 a.m. to 10 a.m. for veterans only. This will be in Superior, WI at the UWS Campus. Academy appointments have been coming in the last couple of weeks. Of the 18 interviewed, four have been offered an appointment. They are expecting two more to come in.

2. State Agencies and MN Veteran Assistance Organizations

MN Department of Veterans Affairs - Commissioner Shellito: Mike Gallucci, the new Deputy Commissioner who took Gil Acevedo's position, was introduced. Thanks was expressed to all who showed up at Legislative hearings. Without exception, the Chairs have acknowledged the veterans in the room. Your assignment: Continue to be watchful this year and start planning for next year. MN has about 60,000 veterans, 20,000 of whom are with the Guard and Reserve. The remaining 40,000 are the "silent majority." Everything happens locally. Veterans Organizations are the most integral part in the food chain to get the word out on veterans issues as they live in the community. Julie Eszlinger and Flowrean Orange were asked to stand. They work with women veterans. Also, Todd Kubinski, CVSO, was recognized. Julie announced that on June 18 a womens golf tournament will be held at The Wilds golf course. It's part of Tee It Up For the Troops. Harry Wisdom is organizing the event and asking men to drive the carts that day. Some of the money will be going to MACV for women veterans.

Deputy Commissioner Mike Gallucci: Mr. Gallucci gave a brief bio. He recently retired after 35 years as a Command Sergeant Major, starting off as a Corpsman in the Navy. His final assignment was in Georgia for the last two years taking care of wounded warriors. He applied for the job here in MN based on his research findings of how MN views its veterans and aging population in general. His goal is to not only take care of MN's veterans and the Veterans Homes now, but continuous strategic planning for the future so that MN can be on the cutting edge.

MN Veterans 2012 Legislative Info - Mike McElhiney: There are currently 136 total bills relative to veterans issues. There's about 68 when you have a companion bill. There are 16 bills related to bonding. Mr. McElhiney thinks about 36 bills will be passed. 22 will fall by the wayside. About 10 bills (20 individual bills) are to be determined. These bills are related to taxes and the tax omnibus bill has not been debated on the floor as of yet. Relative to the 16 bonding bills, they have everything they asked for on the Senate side with regard to MNDVA. On the House side, the Minneapolis Veterans Home, Phase 3 construction, Building 17 South, and the Central Pharmacy were not included in the bonding bill. Interestingly, there's a \$27 million ball field in St. Paul in the House version, which is the same price tag as the Mpls Veterans Home and the Central Pharmacy. Please continue to put pressure on your Representatives as regards veterans issues. There are 6 different bills, 3 total bills, relative to Honor Guard funding issues. An Honor Guard prioritization change bill has gone to the Governor's desk. HF 56 regarding USERRA law, is seen in about three places. This would enable a veteran to sue the state in a federal jurisdiction in the event their job is lost. That's expected to pass this year. HF 419 would reorganize the agencies based on functional areas as opposed to what their title is. It is likely to pass this year. There's been about 4 bills relative to veterans preference. HF 1821, the bill regarding vets preference and disadvantaged small business enterprises, is likely to also pass. There is a proclamation as regards Hmong veterans in about three places, and that is likely to pass. There are a lot of parts to the expansion of the MN GI Bill. The apprenticeship and OJT portion are likely to pass. It does not include everything they wanted, opening up the GI Bill for all generations to use it. The VRAP program in Congress, part of President Obama's Vow to Hire Heroes Act, will address what they're trying to address with the expansion. This would give about 26,000 veterans who have been unemployed for a certain amount of time identified through the Dept of Labor an additional year of the GI Bill. Everything the MNDVA has asked for is "staged," meaning they are in one House and have passed through the necessary committees to get to the floor for debate, or they're in another House. They will be on Easter break for a break, resume session, and continue to April 30. There's a foot in the door, now the game needs to be completed by continuing pressure on your Representatives. May 19 there will be a Women Veterans Boot Camp at Fort Snelling. June 18, Women Veterans Golf Tournament at The Wilds in Prior Lake. September 21, Women Military and Veteran Forum at Metropolitan State University. Someone asked about the status of the Voter ID bill. An e-mail was read stating that the MN House has given its final approval on this bill. The vote was on a straight party line with Republicans in favor of the amendment. Ralph Donais stated that just because something is in an omnibus bill does not mean it will go through. Stay on top of it.

MN Military Affairs - Lt. Col Sandy Best and Annette Kuyper: On March 30 the MN National Guard participated in a media briefing and tax workshop, along with the IRS and Dept of Revenue. It featured Senator Klobuchar. There is free tax preparation for Active Duty National Guard Reserve members and their families. For more info, go to the Beyond the Yellow Ribbon website. Yesterday they participated in an event with Senator Franken at the Marshall Work Force Center. It included a DEED briefing on the initiatives they are promoting to hire MN veterans. It also included a briefing on the BCT and the 3,089 MN National Guard members who are currently deployed. On April 3 there was a Constitution reception at the MN History Center. Now displayed is the original Constitution and two MN original Constitutions and the Bill of Rights. These will be on display through July. Go to the Secretary of State's website for more info. On April 10 there will be an Air Force Association meeting where they plan to present MN National Guard plans and challenges for 2012. At the end of this month is the

National Guard Association of Minnesota Conference. Lieutenant Governor Prettner Solon will be speaking at the banquet. On March 30, they received notification that the Secretary of the Air Force approved adding an F-16 active association at the 148th Fighter Wing in Duluth. There was a total of six F-16 active associations added. What that means is funding for aircraft increased to 18 primary aircraft. The objective of a total-force initiative is to meet the Air Force operational mission requirements by aligning equipment, missions, infrastructure and manpower resources within the Air Force to enable more efficient use of the assets. 52 regular Air Force personnel will join the 148th Fighter Wing and share in the training. This includes 4 pilots, 40 maintainers, some operational support and enlisted supervision. The PDMRA and veterans employment are some key primary objectives. They appreciate the entire MN Congressional delegation's support to make that happen. Members are returning home and will all be home by May 4. The desire is to have this issue resolved so that those members can benefit from the time off with their families and to secure employment the PDMRA would provide. Lt. Col Best mentioned that Flo Orange is a member of the National Association of Black Military Women. Between last month's UVLC meeting and this one, she was successful in incorporating a MN chapter. This organization is not only for Black women, however, but open to all sister servicemembers. A question was asked regarding if deployed servicemembers have to request for an extension to file their taxes. The answer given is that that is an automatic extension given to those members.

Annette Kuyper: There are Yellow Ribbon Networks in all 63 Armory and Air Base Communities, plus an additional 100-plus Networks. Last Friday Apple Valley, Burnsville, Dakota County, Scott County and Oakdale were recognized. It takes 9 months to a year for a community to be designated as a Yellow Ribbon Community. They have to make a commitment in every key area. On June 1 they will be in Faribault to recognize them as a Yellow Ribbon Community. General Craig McKinley, Chief of National Guard Bureau, will be in attendance. An employment resource team was sent over to Kuwait to prepare servicemembers for employment in the form of resumes, networking, and interview prep. They will be replicating what the team did in Kuwait. Corporate professionals will be paired with DEED Veterans Service Representatives to prepare for job seeking. Please help with their messaging: Any company looking to hire veterans needs to post on Positively Minnesota and connect with the Work Force Center veteran rep in their area. The DEED website has all the veteran reps listed across MN. Any veteran seeking employment needs to connect with their rep in those Work Force Centers as well. That is where everyone is meeting to employ veterans. In answer to an audience question about Yellow Ribbon, there are currently 26 companies, 8 counties, and over 100 communities which equate to about 70 networks, with more proclamation ceremonies scheduled through this year.

MN Assistance Council for Veterans (MACV) - Kathy Vitalis: On April 21, Buster's Sports Bar & Grill in Mankato is having a fundraiser which the proceeds going to MACV. Check out their website where the list all of their upcoming events. The next Legal Clinic will be in Rochester on May 1 from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. This clinic is being held because Mayo Clinic will have all of its national attorneys in for a conference and they need to do a service project. The next Legal Clinic in the Twin Cities will be May 8 at the VAMC from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the Flag Atrium. MACV will have a team at the DAV golf tournament. May 28, Memorial Day, Iraqi vet/musician Matthew Griswald will be holding a fundraiser for MACV at the Fine Line Music Cafe. On June 2, the American Legion Riders will start a charity ride for MACV at the Veterans Home and end at Building 47. Hotel Sofitel will be catering a meal for the riders at

Bldg 47 at the end of the ride. The annual MACV fall dinner will be late September with a date TBD. The women veterans home in St. Paul is not yet in MACV's control, but it's passed both boards of directors and they have given the current tenants notice to move out. They hope to have possession of the home by the end of May. This will be transitional housing. Ms. Vitalis has been approached by a group of Iraqi vets who are students at Mankato State University and have formed a vets club. Many of these people are former MACV clients. They are forming a MACV softball team. They need \$800 and they so far have \$420.

Military Action Group (MAG) - Jerry Kyser: On March 9 they went with the Legislators up to Camp Ripley where they had a MAG meeting. Mr. Kyser testified on Bill 1597 yesterday, which was authored by Senator DeKruif and is similar to Rep Dettmer's veterans preference bill with Mn/DOT. It includes both heavy highway, which is construction, and the preliminary things such as surveying and planning. Ralph Donais mentioned there was a presentation in Ripley for the Honor and Remember Flags. Mike LaBelle is the MN chapter director. It's a flag they've come up with to honor and remember all veterans. When you order one, they will put the name of a deceased veteran of your choosing at the bottom of the flag. Jim Hamann mentioned a bill that would allow all active duty, retirees, 100 percent disabled veterans, and all dependent card holders to be able to fly Space A. This is a federal bill. The next MAG meeting is April 20 at 9 a.m., 300 B. The next Honor Flight is full. April 28, Humphrey Terminal 2, 10:30 p.m. is when they come back. Color Guards at the terminal would be appreciated. Military cadets and officers will be there saluting them. The 451st band will also be there.

ADAPT - Dr. Abi Fewitz with the U of M: Not present

3. Federal Agencies

VA Regional Office - Director Antione Waller: Mr. Waller had his one-year anniversary at the St. Paul VARO this past November. He and his family are settled into a new home in Farmington. Mr. Waller mentioned Ron Woolery, Change Management Agent, who was at the UVLC meeting a few months ago. Mr. Woolery's role is to increase the ability to communicate how the VARO proceeds through this challenging time of transformation. The VA is going through a complete overhaul of how they process claims. This is a three-pronged approach: How the VA outreaches to the veterans and veterans organizations, how they train their personnel, and looking at their current processes and how to do things in a more timely way through technology. Their goal is to have no claim over 125 days old and increasing the level of quality to 98 percent. Regarding the budget, there have not been a lot of increases overall. This has not impacted their staffing. There are 752 VA employees at the RO in Minnesota. The greatest impact is how they will continue their outreach in the communities. The St. Paul RO ranks No. 1 in the nation in the amount of time it takes to process a claim on average (105 days), and their level of quality is in the top 5 percent nationally at 91 percent accuracy. Mr. Waller pointed out the VA is taking all steps necessary to try and secure veterans' records, especially with the vulnerabilities that exist with increased technology. One item that has increased efficiency, and was pioneered in St. Paul, is Record Opinion Review. Physicians from the VAMC come over and assist at the RO in evaluating claims from a medical treatment standpoint. This is efficient as it cuts down on the amount of medical exams conducted in order to evaluate a claim. An initiative was undertaken in St. Paul last August called the Simplified Notification Letter (SNL). This simplifies the VA's notification of Rating Decisions to the veterans. They've seen it is taking less time to rate a claim using this method. Internally, they have implemented Quality Review Teams to ensure they are catching every claim before it is finalized to make sure there are no errors. Mr. Waller mentioned the VA will be communicating a lot more through eBenefits. You can have access to your own

records, as well as submit claims through a process that is more efficient. Beginning in June, Floors 2-6 at the Whipple Federal Building will be completely renovated and the RO will start moving into those floors. A question was asked about DBQs, Disability Benefits Questionnaires. This allows for a veteran's private physician to fill out a form with checked boxes that relate to a disability the veteran has that he or she is being evaluated for or claiming. It does not require any additional VA exam to prolong the process, but is an aid in evaluating a claim. There are about 88 questionnaires out there now based on disability.

VISN 23 - Judy Johnson Mekota: They are currently busy preparing for their budget briefings with the Secretary at the end of this month, as well as presenting their Strategic Capital Investment Plan. Ms. Johnson Mekota highlighted a few items from the handout she had available, including VA for Vets. This is a website that facilitates the reintegration, retention and hiring of veteran employees at the VA. What's unique to this website is it provides online training and personalized services for supervisors, HR professionals, hiring managers and coworkers who work with veteran employees. On April 5 and 6, the Fargo VA is sponsoring a "Clothesline Project" in honor of Sexual Assault Awareness Month. During this event, veterans get the opportunity to decorate and display t-shirts that represent their personal story of how military sexual trauma has affected their lives. Also highlighted from the handout is Make the Connection. This is a new website launched by the VA in November, the purpose of which is to make veterans realize they are not alone in their experiences.

Minneapolis VA HCS - Acting Director Barry Sharp: Regarding the new Starbucks at the VAMC, there was very little, if any, veterans service involvement in the planning of this project. Mr. Sharp apologized for that, saying there should have been input from them, as well as union partners. Where the new Starbucks will be located, by the current outpatient entrance, will become a secondary entrance once the parking garage project is complete and the visitors entrance will become the primary entrance. The flag atrium will be rearranged to accommodate more seating. The net result will be a loss of seating for ten and about ten square feet. With Mr. Sharp today is Steve Shaleen (sp), facilities manager, as well as John Simpson, director of the canteen, who can answer questions about this project. In the future as the project progresses, they will do a better job of communicating to this body so there are no surprises that impact our veterans.

St. Cloud VA HCS - Patricia Aljets, Program Manager Recreation and Voluntary Service: Jess Behrends has been hired as the new Caregiver Support Coordinator. Regular audiology exams as well as x-rays are now offered at the Brainerd CBOC. There have been a couple of proposals to provide physical therapy at the Brainerd and Alexandria CBOCs. That's part of the Rural Health Initiative. The proposals were proposed for further review. This week in St. Cloud, they are undergoing a visit from CARF, which is the body that accredits their Voc Rehab as well as Homeless Programs. Historically they have done very well in those reviews. Their Voc Rehab Program has been a national leader. Building 49 construction continues. April 6 is their Former POW program. Their speaker this year is Kevin Hermanning, who was one of the youngest people to be held hostage at the US Embassy in Iran from 1979 to 1981. April 19 is volunteer recognition. They annually feel about \$2.5 million in impact because of the donations and the value of the donated time. May 17 there will be a seminar called Managing Depression.

Ft. Snelling Cemetery - Brad Butler: They are about to enter their mowing and trimming season. They just want fresh flowers out there, other than around Easter and Memorial Day, and there are ten days in which to pick them up after those holidays. Last month there were 366 total interments. For this fiscal year they have done 2,285. Total interments at Ft. Snelling, 198,855

and they are expecting to go over 200,000 this year. There are a total of 1,611 female veterans, with 8 buried last month. The Rifle Squad has performed a total of 60,258 honors services and they did 180 last month. Ralph Donais mentioned that at 10 a.m. on June 14, which is also Flag Day, the FRA is going to dedicate a memorial monument for the departed Fleet Reserve, Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard personnel interred at Ft. Snelling. Family who have FRA members buried at Ft. Snelling are invited to attend.

Vets Employment & Training Service (VETS) - David Seay: Mr. Seay is the Assistant State Director for VETS. Their new State Director is Retired Command Sergeant Major Scott Mills. Now that they are fully staffed, they will be able to be present at more meetings. Their primary responsibility is that of being the enforcement authority for the USERRA law. Mr. Seay is the main investigator for that for the State of Minnesota. Yvette Mills will also be trained and will be an investigator within the next six months. If anyone has questions regarding the USERRA law, their phone no. is 651-259-7511. Other areas they are responsible for, they have several competitive grants within the State of Minnesota; for example, they work with MACV. Then there is the Jobs for Veterans state grant with the DEED. There is going to be a career fair on July 11 at the Earl Browne Heritage Center in Brooklyn Park from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. There will be a veterans employment workshop from 9 to 10 a.m. about getting the most out of a career fair. From 10 to 11 a.m. veterans in attendance will have priority over the general public.

Vet Center - Carl Sporer: Not present

Announcements: Ralph Donais mentioned Commissioner Shellito, along with Chaplain Morris, developed Beyond the Yellow Ribbon, which has now gone nationwide. Mr. Donais wanted to personally thank them for this and will be getting a form of recognition set up from the UVLC. **CVSO Todd Kubinski** was introduced to the group. The CVSOs hosted Veterans Day on the Hill this year. A team of five CVSOs from around the state are currently flying to Camp Shelby to start help bring home the troops. It's something they've been doing since the inception of the Yellow Ribbon Program. As a result of this, 99 percent of National Guard members are currently enrolled in the VA health system and almost all of them have been in to see their CVSOs. If you have any questions, their website is MACVSO.org. There is a great directory on there along with contact info.

Meeting adjourned at 12:05 p.m. followed by short recess

Business meeting Commenced at 12:10 p.m.

Old Business:

Treasurer's Report: Balance as of March 1, 2012: \$5,564.17. There were no deposits and expenses of \$144.75. Balance as of April 2, 2012: \$5,419.42. Three organizations have paid their dues, although Mr. Rask has not had the opportunity to put them in the bank yet. There is almost 83 percent completion of organization dues. The five organizations that have not paid yet are: Fleet Reserve Association, Jewish War Veterans, MN Air Guard Museum, Tiger Base LLC, and Women Marines. Mr. Donais mentioned there is an outstanding bill from the webmaster for the website. The UVLC is on Facebook and Twitter and Dave monitors that.

Mr. Donais mentioned he got the Bylaws out to the volunteers to review them. They should be ready for the May meeting.

Mr. Donais also mentioned that often at the Capitol it is just he and Jerry Kyser at the meetings. Sometimes Bob Connor is there as well. With the UVLC and the MAG, there should be 50 or 60 people in the room. They need support down there.

New Business:

Julie Eszlinger mentioned they would like to get the WWII women to the golf event. In case they need some money, can they come to the UVLC? Both Mr. Donais and Mr. Kyser responded by saying yes, let Ms. Eszlinger know what she may need. Ms. Eszlinger said her biggest concern is the WWII ladies not being able to get to the event transportationwise. Ms. Vitalis said MACV has two vans and she would be honored to help.

Mr. Donais said last Sunday, in conjunction with Vietnam Veterans Day, there was an event at the Forest Lake American Legion which he attended. There were four nurses who served in Vietnam and gave a testimonial of their experiences. Mr. Donais said he broke his leg in Vietnam, so he went through many of the facilities the nurses were talking about. To that end, Mr. Donais would like to see the Vietnam Vets in MN rally around the issue of the Hmong Rebels. While in Forest lake he said, "How many of you would be here today had those rebels not attacked the North Vietnamese on the Ho Chi Minh trail, had not kept those two regiments bottled up in Northern Laos?"

Jerry Nalipinski mentioned on April 11 there will be a presentation at the White House to the Servicemans Center. If he gets a time, he will e-mail it to Ralph. Mr. Donais followed that up by saying the Armed Forces Servicemans Center can always use volunteers.

Jerry Kyser mentioned his wife Jana, who was the secretary at the UVLC for a number of years, will be undergoing breast cancer surgery on April 18. Prayers are appreciated.

Jim Hamann mentioned the Korean government has been honoring veterans since 1975. They start in May and go through the first part of October. They pick up the whole tab for ten days. The only thing the veteran has to pay is half the airfare. The Korean Government is going to do this until 2013. The Ministry of Patriots and Veterans Affairs eligibility requirements are that the veterans served in or supported ground, naval or air operations in the Korean Theater between June 25, 1950 and October 15, 1954. Family members of deceased or disabled veterans are eligible to participate in the "Korean Revisit Program." Contact info: KWVA Revisit Korean Program, c/o Military Historical Tours, 131 Centerpointe Way, Suite 202, Woodbridge, VA 22193-5285. Phone No. 1-800-722-9501. Marines can contact: Marine House Association, 3850 Wilshire Blvd, Suite 200, Los Angeles, CA 90010. Phone No. 213-736-5290

Motion to adjourn by Lawrence Dean, seconded by Jerry Nalipinski. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 12:25 p.m.

Next UVLC meeting will be Wednesday, May 2, 2012 at 9:30 a.m. Bldg 9