



Communicator

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The COMMUNICATOR is the official publication of the California Association of County Veterans Service Officers (CACVSO). Opinions expressed are those of contributing writers and do not necessarily reflect opinions or policies of CACVSO officers, members, or the editorial staff. The newsletter reserves the right to edit, amend, or reject any contribution submitted for publication.

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President's Message

(Solano CVSO Ted Puntillo, President)

Happy summer. We had a great conference in San Diego and I wanted to thank our hosts from San Diego, Will Quintong and his staff for putting on such a great show. The Midway event was wonderful and we impressed the entire country with this kickoff event. Even better, Will got sponsors for the event and what could have cost our association some big bucks, cost us nothing. Thank you Will and your staff along with our Executive Director, Tom Splitgerber for working so hard on this very successful event and week.

The training was good and we had many people who took the national training and were accredited with NACVSO. This opens the door for other VSO accreditations. The slides from all the training sessions are available on the CACVSO website. <http://www.cacvso.org/education-and-training/> We also had our roster updated and placed on the CACVSO website. <http://www.cacvso.org/committees/> Terri Lopez and Yvette Mason have worked hard to be sure that this roster is up to date and available to all.

Please let me know if there are changes to your staffing and contact information. Congratulations to Hannah Williamson who was just appointed as the CVSO of Sacramento. I am sure she will do a great job and point Sacramento in the right direction.

We have finalized the MOU with Bergman and Moore to handle BVA appeals. We will get further training on this issue at the fall conference in Riverside. As you may know the conference is scheduled October 8 through the 13th. Most counties have October 9th as a holiday for Columbus Day. In our office we give the attending vet reps another Monday off to compensate them for this workday on a holiday. Each county can decide what they want to do to accommodate this situation.

At our business meeting we discussed supporting correctional type officers doing claims work in the state prisons. Our organization supported this legislation and the details and the WLU's will be discussed after the implementation of the legislation. Our organization also approved Jack Kirwan's contract as consultant for another year. We also heard that CVSO Chris Bingham will be retiring in August and we presented him with several plaques for his outstanding service to us and our veterans. He also stated he would be interested in filling the position left empty by Norm Gillette as our VA, CFR consultant. Chris would also bring great knowledge of Vet Pro and VBMS to the table. We will discuss this more when Chris retires. Our subvention reports are also due July 31. Please do not be late. If you are late for 15 days your BOS will get a letter from us notifying them of your tardy reports. Further tardiness could result in loss of subvention. Please call me if you need help getting these very important reports in.

Happy a great 4th of July and stay safe.....Ted

This Month's Featured County

Madera County, officially the **County of Madera**, is a county at the geographic center of the U.S. state of California. As of the 2010 census, the population was 150,865. The county seat is Madera. Madera County comprises the Madera, CA Metropolitan Statistical Area, which is included in the Fresno-Madera, CA Combined Statistical Area. It is located in the eastern San Joaquin Valley and the central Sierra Nevada. The south-easternmost part of Yosemite National Park is located in the county's northeast.





TIME & PLACE COMMITTEE

(Fresno County—CVSO Charles Hunnicutt, Chair)

Dates & Locations of Upcoming Conferences



October 8—13, 2017
*Marriott Convention Center
Riverside, CA*



February 25—March 2, 2017
Holiday Inn Capitol Plaza, Sacramento, CA



June 2 — June 8, 2018
Silver Legacy Hotel, Reno, NV

NewsLetter DEADLINE

***Last Thursday of the Month
Unless Notified Otherwise!***



Dear Kay.....

*Start dreaming about your free life
Start thinking about how you will keep busy
Start doing the things you never did
Start being happy and care free
Start planning your vacations
Start looking for new hobbies
Start organizing family get-togethers
Start thinking like a retiree*

*You did everything you could
To help your veterans
Despite the nasty challenges
No one ever saw you whine*

*Thanks for being so passionate and caring,
We are all at loss now that you are leaving.*

*Nevertheless—as an Association we all wish you
a Happy Retirement*

Kay Speers



LEGISLATIVE ADVOCATE REPORT

(By Pete Conaty and Dana Nichol, Legislative Advocates)

CACVSO
Communicator
Legislative Advocate's article
July 2017

By Pete Conaty:

Update on CalVet Strike Team budget issue

As we reported in the last issue of the Communicator, there had been a move in January to cut 16 positions from the CalVet Strike Teams. In conjunction with the Association President Ted Puntillo, Legislative Committee Chair Scott Holwell, and Budget Consultant Jack Kirwan, we were able to lobby the Legislature on the importance of these positions. The Legislature subsequently rejected the cuts and the funding was preserved for the 16 Strike Team positions. The final State Budget was signed by the Governor on June 27.

10th Annual Veterans of the Year Luncheon

The 10th Annual Veterans of the Year Luncheon took place on June 21 at the Sacramento Convention Center near the State Capitol. Members of the State Assembly choose a veteran from their legislative district to be honored for their military service as well as their work on behalf of veterans and the community. This year's event was attended by almost 400 legislators, honorees, guests, veterans service organizations, and corporate sponsors.

The CACVSO is a sponsor of this event and as such received recognition as a major sponsor which included mention on signage, the program, and during opening remarks by the Master of Ceremonies.

The CACVSO was represented at the event by CACVSO President Ted Puntillo. This year, Merced County CVSO John Ceccoli was honored by Assemblyman Adam Gray (D-Merced) as the Veteran of the Year for Assembly District 21 which encompasses all of Merced County as well as portions of Stanislaus County. John's bio as it appeared in the event program is pasted below.

JOHN CECCOLI US NAVY

John Ceccoli served on active duty in the US Navy from 2007-2015 and is currently serving in the US Navy Reserve. He was activated in 2016 and deployed as part of Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 11 to the Horn of Africa. John is currently assigned to Naval Air Station Lemoore, where he is a Petty Officer First Class. He has been awarded the Joint Service Achievement Medal, Afghanistan Campaign Medal, and the Armed Forces Reserve Medal. In 2015, John was appointed as the County Veterans Service Officer for Merced County, where he assists veterans and their dependents in the county to obtain their federal veterans benefits. John is also President of the Veteran Employment Committee.

Recognized by: ASSEMBLYMEMBER ADAM GRAY, District 21



Figure 1: Solano County CVSO and Association President Ted Puntillo and Kathy Puntillo.

CVSO Happenings

RAFFLE COMMITTEE



A SPECIAL THANKS TO EACH
AND EVERYONE OF THOSE
WHO BROUGHT YOUR PRIZE
RAFFLE GIFT TO
SAN DIEGO!





10TH ANNUAL
CALIFORNIA STATE ASSEMBLY

VETERANS OF THE YEAR LUNCHEON

SPONSORS AND SUPPORTERS

VETERAN SERVICE ORGANIZATION SPONSORS

American Legion, Department of California
AMVETS, Department of California
California Association of County Veterans Service Officers
Veterans of Foreign Wars, Department of California
Vietnam Veterans of America, California State Council

FOUR STAR SPONSORS

The Boeing Company
Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America

THREE STAR SPONSORS

Ashford University
California-Nevada Conference of Operating Engineers
Heroes Hall Veterans Museum at O.C. Fair
International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, Local #47
MUFG Union Bank N.A.
Pacific Gas & Electric
Sacramento Kings Foundation
Sierra Health Foundation

TWO STAR SPONSORS

AT&T
DeVry Education Group

ONE STAR SPONSORS

California Beer & Beverage Distributors
California Cable & Telecommunications Association
Civil Justice Association of California

HONORARY SUPPORTERS / SPECIAL THANKS

Pete Conaty & Associates– Dana Nichol, Laurie Conaty • Reeb Government Relations– Seth Reeb
Frederick A. Romero – Photographer • Right at Home – Videographer, Dan Parker
Jenny Callison, John Spangler, George Wiley, Aaron Sleichter

PRINTING PROVIDED BY

California Professional Firefighters, President Lou Paulson

DESIGN AND PRODUCTION PROVIDED BY

McNally Temple Associates, Inc. – Michelle Seghezzi, Deb Rasmussen and Kelli Reid

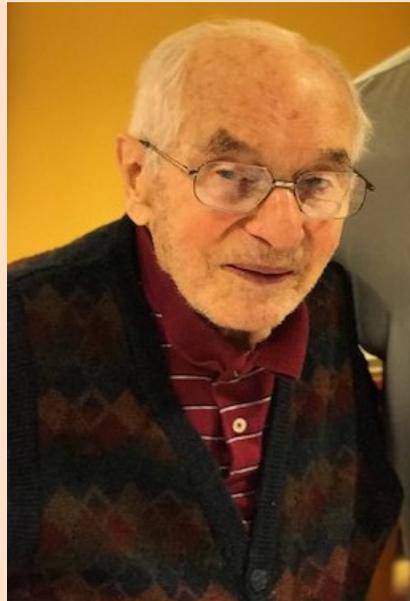
SIGNAGE PROVIDED BY

California State Association of Counties

Figure 2: Sponsorship signage was prominently displayed around the event on 12 square-foot boards. The CACVSO was a major sponsor.



Mort—
Do you remember how excited
you were when you turned
5 yrs. old?..... No?
Well, let us help you!!
You should be almost
20 times as excited.



Celebrating 18 years of age, plus 81 years of Experience!

*The CACVSO is so lucky to have a friend like you
who is so smart, witty, good looking
and also as loving and professional.*

*Don't get so flattered—we are just being nice
because it was your birthday.
We weren't lying about the professional part though.*

Happy 99th B-Day Mort!

VA Secretary Formalizes Expansion of Emergency Mental Health Care to Former Service Members With Other-Than-Honorable Discharges

Secretary Announced Plans to Expand Coverage

WASHINGTON — Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) today released finalized plans that lay the framework for providing emergency mental health coverage to former service members with other-than-honorable (OTH) administrative discharges.

This is the first time a VA Secretary has implemented an initiative specifically focused on this group of former service members who are in mental health distress.

“Suicide prevention is my top clinical priority,” said Secretary Shulkin, also a physician. “We want these former service members to know there is someplace they can turn if they are facing a mental health emergency — whether it means urgent care at a VA emergency department, a Vet Center or through the Veterans Crisis Line.”

Effective July 5, all Veterans Health Administration (VHA) medical centers will be prepared to offer emergency stabilization care for former service members who present at the facility with an emergent mental health need. Under this initiative, former service members with an OTH administrative discharge may receive care for their mental health emergency for an initial period of up to 90 days, which can include inpatient, residential or outpatient care.

During this time, VHA and the Veterans Benefits Administration will work together to determine if the mental health condition is a result of a service-related injury, making the service member eligible for ongoing coverage for that condition.

Since Secretary Shulkin announced his intent in March to expand VA mental health coverage to service members with OTH administrative discharges, VA has worked with key internal and external stakeholders, including members of Congress, Veterans Service Organizations and community partners on the issue.

DATES OF INTEREST



JUNE 2017

- 6 D-Day
- 14 Army Birthday
- 14 Flag Day
- 18 Father's Day
- 20 American Eagle Day

JULY 2017

- 4 Independence Day
- 23 Parent's Day
- 27 Nat. Korean War Day

AUGUST 2017

- 4 Coast Guard Birthday
- 5 Purple Heart Day
- 19 National Aviation Day
- 21 Senior Citizens Day

ANSWER TO RIDLLE ON PAGE #8 IS:

A PADLOCK

STAMP