



The Communicator

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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Dear Fellow CVSO's

I know that many of you are reading this newsletter from home. My hope is that you have plenty to keep you busy and plenty of supplies to keep you and your family nourished. While the stores are crowded with people stocking up, don't forget that many of you can shop the military exchange online at shopmyexchange.com

In this uncertain time, it is important that our association have resources available to utilize. Right now, I am working on the final steps of a new contract with Marion Moses as our association's Executive Director. Many of you know Marion as the former Santa Clara CVSO, but all of you know her as the CVSO liaison for VetPro. She has also worked as a volunteer for our association as our treasurer. She will be handing the treasurer duties over to Joe Farotte from Monterrey County (Thank you, Joe!). Marion will help us continue to move this organization forward, we are so fortunate to have her!

The final steps of a new contract with Katrina Eagle is also in process. Katrina will be our association's new Education Consultant. Many of you know Katrina from her dynamic and engaging presentations that she gives on VA benefits entitlement at our training conferences. She is a lawyer based in San Diego and has a great personality and strong appreciation for the work that CVSO's do. We are very lucky to have Katrina!

Next month we will make a decision regarding continuing or cancelling our June conference. My hope is that we will be able to hold our conference and that everyone will be healthy enough to attend.

Sincerely,

Nathan D. Johnson

This Month's Featured County

Del Norte County is a county at the far northwest corner of the U.S. state of California, along the Pacific Ocean adjacent to the Oregon border. The county seat and only incorporated city is Crescent City. Residents pronounce the county name as Del Nort, not Del Nor-teh as would be expected in Spanish. The rural county is notable for forests containing giant Coast Redwoods, with some attaining heights over 350 feet (110 m). This northernmost county on the California coast also has scores of unique plants and flowers, dozens of species of coastal birds and fish, rocky primitive beaches and sea stacks, pristine rivers, and historic lighthouses. Del Norte is also known among Bigfoot enthusiasts as the location of the famous Patterson-Gimlin film, as well as being the location of some of the forest scenes used in Return of the Jedi.



VA



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

News Release

Office of Public Affairs
Media Relations

Washington, DC 20420
(202) 461-7600
www.va.gov

VA health app now available to Veterans across all mobile and web platforms

April 27, 2020, 11:00:00 AM

WASHINGTON — Through public-private partnerships with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), since early April, all Veterans have been able to securely connect to their health care data online.

Online Veteran health care records first only available on iOS operating systems, are now also accessible on Android mobile devices and web applications.

[iBlueButton](#) and [MyLinks](#) are free health information exchange apps providing Veterans the ability to securely access, manage and interact with their health information. They also make it easier for Veterans to set and achieve health care goals regardless of their device.

“Veterans having access across the board to mobile and web health app services increases interoperability and eases the flow of information, while keeping their personal data secure,” said VA Secretary Robert Wilkie. “Data security and Veteran’s consent are essential to maintaining trust and credibility with our stakeholders.”

A Veteran must first authorize access to their health information using a VA-approved [authentication method](#) before an app can access their data. At any time, the Veteran can revoke the privileges they’ve granted to these apps through their account settings on VA.gov.

iBlueButton, which makes critical health care information readily available to the Veteran, has been connected to VA’s [My HealththeVet](#) Blue Button since 2010. With this app, Veterans can generate an organized medical history from both VA and Medicare. In December 2019, the iBlueButton applications used the new VA Health API to create a new feature that organizes and visualizes a Veteran’s lab values.

MyLinks enables patients and caregivers to view and share aggregated health records, manage multiple family records, and store and share other important documents and images. Since January, MyLinks has leveraged the VA Health API to help Veterans and their caregivers securely share health information across the Veteran’s care team network of providers.

The apps allow VA [application programming interfaces \(APIs\)](#) to be available for developer use through the [Lighthouse developer portal](#). Lighthouse is an API platform that gives developers secure access to the VA data they need to build helpful tools and services for Veterans.

LEGISLATION

Veterans: the COVID-19 pandemic has had a big impact on the Legislature however business has been progressing with legislators, staff, consultants, and lobbyists working from home, teleconferencing, and meeting apps like Zoom. The Legislature has a constitutional requirement to pass a state budget and deliberate on the business of the people and the 2020 legislative year will go on. However, the impact that the pandemic has the state will certainly set the tone of debate for rest of the year.

Senate leadership is asking Senators to “reconsider their priorities and reduce the number of bills they carry accordingly”. The Senate Leader has also directed policy committees to compile a list of issues within their jurisdiction that need immediate attention as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Assembly leadership is leaving I to the committees to decide which bills will be heard that will best respond to the crisis. The legislature is scheduled to reconvene on May 4th.

There will still be important legislation concerning veterans, the National Guard, CalVet, and the military Families continuing to move through the process. The County Veterans Service Officers have been informed that their request for an increase in state funding to help veterans obtaining their VA benefits will continue to be pursued within the state budget process. The CVSOs will be asking veterans service organizations for their support and help in this effort, which was done in years past. We are still getting reports of which veterans and military related bills will continue to move forward. Here is a list of bills we have compiled so far which will continue to need your support. Veterans groups will continue to support these bills:

AB 1935-Voepel; Suicide study, women veterans.

Assemblyman Voepel has requested support for his bill AB 1935, which seeks to direct the California Department of Veteran Affairs to conduct a study to attempt to determine why female veterans Suicide rates are so high. The measure asks to the Department to report its findings to the California State Legislature.

AB 2046-Voepel; Disability Garnishment.

Assemblyman Voepel’s office has just

informed us that they will still be seeking to advance this bill. Under current law, government child support agencies cannot attach more than 5% of disability income if the obligor has less than \$2,000 in assets. This protection for very low-income obligors does not apply to veteran’s disability benefits recipients or to collections by private parties. Ab 2046 seeks to equalize the field by protecting disabled veterans in the same way that other non-veteran disabled obligors are protected.

AB 2494-Choi; Veterans transcript.

Assemblyman Choi has asked for support for his bill AB 2494, which seeks to request the UC system to conform to the same rules that the state’s community colleges (CCCs) and state universities (CSUs) regarding the review and creation of transferable credit from Service Member’s Joint Service Transcripts. In short, the bill will urge the UC’s to award course credit for prior military education, training, and service.

AB 2549-Salas; Licensing.

Assemblyman Rudy Salas is requesting support for his bill, AB 2549, which seeks to aid some military spouses in finding work when their husband or wife is transferred to California. Some spouses are licensed to perform services in other states but can’t engage in that business in this state because of licensing barriers. AB 2549 seeks to smooth the path for military spouses by adding registered dental assistant and registered dental assistant in extended functions licenses, and all licenses issued by the Dental Hygiene Board, the Board of Pharmacy, and the Board of Accountancy to the program for the temporary licensure process for specified licensed professions for military spouses. The DoD, Navy, and Marine Corps are working with the author on this bill.

AB 3045-Gray; Licensing.

Assemblyman Gray has requested support for his bill AB 3045, which will require most boards under the Department of Consumer Affairs to issue professional licenses to retired veterans and military spouses of active duty service members if they possess a valid and unrestricted license in that profession from another state.

Military families move 2.4 times as often as civilian families, and this fact is at odds with the trend among licensed professionals to move between states nearly 40% less often than average, in part because of the difficult licensing process. Failure to recognize our veterans’ unique experiences can discourage them from entering or remaining in the labor market and has led to unemployment rates among military spouses nearly four times that of the general population.

SB 907-Archuleta; Military children.

Senator Archuleta is authoring SB 907, which would help the children of military families by improving coordination between on-base Family Advocacy Program (FAP) and county child welfare service (CWS) offices. The bill would require, upon initial intake, county CWS offices to identify military children subject to child abuse and neglect allegations, and would clarify that a county CWS office has the authority to develop memorandums of understanding (MOUs) with local military installation FAP offices to coordinate investigations.

SB 1007-Hueso; Military retirement tax relief.

Senator Ben Hueso from San Diego is authoring SB 1007, which seeks to exclude from the state income tax, income received from retirement pay from the uniformed services.

SB 1018-Chang; Military Veterans Memorial Certificate.

Senator Chang has asked for support on her bill, SB 1018. This bill seeks to establish a Governor’s Memorial Certificate Program. This bill would also require the program to send information accompanying the memorial certificate informing the survivors of a deceased veteran of benefits and services available. One of the real values of this bill is that the survivors will be directed to those who can assist them with any military or veterans benefits they may be eligible for. One CVSO I spoke with this week assisted a widow who was living on \$1400 per month and on the way to becoming homeless. The CVSO inquired into her husband’s military history and ended up filing a claim for Agent Orange benefits. That widow was just awarded a monthly VA payment of \$1600 per month and a retractive lump sum payment of \$190,000. Legislation like the Veterans Driver’s License bill and this bill help reach people who would have never known they were eligible for vet benefits. The legislation that the CSCVC supported in 2014 creating the Vet Driver’s license and required all applicants to visit a CVSO, has resulted in California’s veterans receiving over \$179 million in cash benefits.

By Seth Reeb

Minutes of the General Business Meeting Winter Conference 2020



Opening

The regular meeting of the CACVSO General Business Meeting was called to order on February 24, 2020, in Sacramento by President, Scott Holwell and reconvening on February 27, 2020 by incoming President, Nathan Johnson. Proceeding with Pledge of Allegiance and Invocation by our Chaplain, Mike McManus.

Counties Present

All counties were present at time of roll call excluding Alameda, Amador, Eldorado, Madera, Marin, Merced, San Mateo, Santa Cruz, Stanislaus, and Trinity.

Approval of Minutes

Proposal: Approve minutes submitted electronically to CVSO's. Motion: Bob Johns

Seconded: Ken Cruickshank

Passed or Failed: Passed

Correspondence President, Scott Holwell No correspondence received.

President Report President, Scott Holwell

Discussion: Executive committee review on CVSO funding \$11 million; Nominations for Executive Board and leadership openings to be conducted; the need to create homeless veteran committee; Annual Reports for Capitol visit; time/place of future locations for trainings and mentor program deferring to committee reports.

Mentor Report Chair, Nathan Johnson

Discussion: The mentor program had training at Merced in May and October in Napa was cancelled. Training consists of strategic planning, reports to CalVet, and how to use VetPro. Counties are invited to a neutral county; therefore, to not target any one county. Going forward, need someone in charge of Southern California. Hosts need to be able to setup, have access to a conference room, projector, internet, establish agenda/trainings to CVSO's. Neighboring counties can mentor each other and apply for reimbursement from CalVet. We train our own, teach our own, mentor our own, guide our own.

Feedback: recommend North, South and Central hosts. Mentoring one day during the conference such as Fridays.

Legislative Report Lobbyist, Seth Reeb

Discussion: This year top priority is \$11 million AB2688. Bill educates legislature what it is about. Important that we get out there and educate legislature. Roughly 32 legislatures left in office that have heard these bills before. AB408 introduced last year, has been amended this year to address outdated form PCGL112. This form will no longer be required. CVSO's will be able to issue form in its place. S3020 is federal bill to get \$200 million to CVSO's nationwide. It is grant funding that you'll have to put in for. Template has been sent out to members. We need to get letters out to congressman for support. House resolution 5566 is same bill for congress. Lobby day has been changed to doors to Capitol opening at 7:30 am; Legislative day starting at 8 am; Presentation at 9:30 am, then released to talk to legislators. We will not hand annual reports at capitol.

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Legislative Report Chair, Ted Puntillo

Discussion: Attending Capitol is very important. Vet reps are welcomed. Knowing process is better for us. AB2688 asks \$500 million extra dollars for us. This could be a double in subvention money. Think about what you would do with that. Homelessness is top priority. We need to show that we can help with the homeless situation. One way is to have a rep specific to this. Every county has a legislative committee, we need the counties to support our legislation. Every county is going to support if it means bringing in more money. Templates for support will be sent out. Chair needs copy of these support letters. This is for our own collective good. Veteran organizations are supporting this bill. Legislative visit go to page 12 and 13 in annual report, go to your county, use talking points “state you have how many veterans;” and go to column 5 “state we brought in this amount of money tax free.” Two topics homelessness and how much money we bring in. Economic rule number 7. Economy is doing well, and we are a part of this. We are in second place nationwide behind Texas.



By-Laws Report Chair, Dell Pratt No Report.

Time/Place Report President, Scott Holwell

Discussion: National training won't return near us until around year 2024. San Luis Obispo has a new VSO, will revisit that request in future. Future scheduled conferences are as follows:

Winter 2020-Holiday Inn Sacramento-Feb 23-28

Summer 2020-Crescent City-The Lighthouse Inn June 21-26 Fall 2020-Nevada County-Gold Miners Inn Oct 19-23 Winter 2021-Holiday Inn Sacramento Feb 21-26

Summer 2021-Tuolumne County-Black Oak Casino Resort June 13-18 Fall 2021-Shasta County-Sheraton Redding Hotel at the Sundial Bridge. Winter 2022-Sacramento-Feb 20-25

Summer 2022-San Diego (Possibly host NACVSO) Fall 2022-Sonoma

Winter2023-Sacramento-Feb 19-24 Summer or Fall 2023-San Luis Obispo(?)

Finance Report Chair, Ted Puntillo No Report.

Citations Report Chair, Scott Holwell No Report.

Funding Process Report Chair, Grant Gautsche

Discussion: Subvention manual changes on how it's currently written. Thank you to those turning in their reports on time. Issues we have discussed: 8 weeks rule, need to change wording for exception of initial claim awards coming in sooner so that anything filed after is auditable; when two claims are filed but receive one award letter, change wording so that we can post one award dollar amount and 0 award for additional claim; Government verifications, clarify one verification per government agency, per veteran, per year. Should be separate. Delegation authority letter change to annually unless there is a change. Interested in being a member, please join us. Looking to add VA form 21-4138 used for A&A and dependent parent form to be included as auditable.

Feedback: Should be able to take an award for claims granted “treatment only.” Calvet has been miscalculating 50%, counties that are hitting 50% limit, is not in law it's in regulation. We need to put section in bill that has findings in legislature. 50% limit should be eliminated from regulation. We should try and Quantify/Qualify actual savings to state such as healthcare in which we could put into annual report. Suggestion for DVS40 to have grace period during phasing of new forms.

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Education and Training Report Chair, Virginia Wimmer Discussion

Strategic Planning Report Chair, Scott Holwell No report.

Veterans Home Report Chair, Deborah Eskew No report.

Automation Report Chair, Vacant No Report.

License Plate Report Chair, Vacant No Report.

NACVSO Report Chair, Tom Splitgerber No Report.

Disaster Relief Report Chair, Rhonda Murphy No Report.

Cemetery Report Chair, Vacant Started construction at Ford Ord.

Newsletter Report Chair, Jessica Allmon No Report.

Nominations and Elections Report Chair, Ted Puntillo

Discussion: Every county will get a ballot with open positions listed.

Nominate President: Nathan Johnson

Motion: David Rose Seconded: Bob Johns Passed or Failed: Passed

Nominate 1st Vice: Jessica Allmon Motion: Ruth Wong

Seconded: David Rose

Passed or Failed: Passed

Nominate 2nd Vice: David West Motion: Yvette Mason Seconded: Ken Cruickshank Passed or Failed: Passed

Nominate Sgt-at-arms: Andrew Norwood Motion: Nathan Johnson

Seconded: Scott Holwell

Passed or Failed: Passed

Nominate 1yr Trustee: Celestina Traver Motion: Andrew Norwood

Seconded: Joshua Dhanens

Passed or Failed: Passed

Nominate 2yr Trustee: Frank Guevara Motion: Ruth Wong

Seconded: Jessica Allmon

Passed or Failed: Passed

Nominate 3yr Trustee: Chele Beretz Motion: Tom Jackson

Seconded: Nathan Johnson

Passed or Failed: Passed

Incoming President Report President, Nathan Johnson

Discussion: Introduced himself to members. Would like to get to know each member and looking into moving association forward; Maintain importance of conferences and to make them even better; Increasing money



Continued on next page

coming from the state; maintain committees and establishing committees for what is important to association.

Sworn in Sgt-at-arms Andrew Norwood.

Treasurer Report Treasurer, Marion Moses

Discussion: Treasurer report. Status of budget 43% execution, a gain of 23.7 % in revenue. Reserve fund

\$167,000, Disaster Relief Fund balance \$2,607 and collected \$378 at this conference. Hospitality balance

\$3,031, expenditures \$439 with raffle generating overall balance of \$4,824. Conference breakdowns, \$20,230 NACVSO revenue, sold \$2,600 in banquet tickets. Total conference revenue \$58,857. Conference costs, still awaiting final numbers for travel, printing costs were cut in half, food and beverage costs for conference was

\$21,000. We normally run-on break-even basis for conferences. 166 registrants for this conference. Registration site viewed 1,200 times all over the country.

Proposal: To accept financial report Motion: Tom Jackson

Seconded: Ruth Wong Passed or Failed: Passed

Proposal: Pay Bills Motion: Ken Cruickshank Seconded: David Rose Passed or Failed: Passed

Raffle Report Chair, Rhonda Murphy No report.

Unfinished Business President, Scott Holwell No Report.

New Business In-coming President, Nathan Johnson

Discussion: Grants to association for tech and program/service for counties to compete for.

Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned on February 27, 2020 by in-coming President, Nathan Johnson. The next General Business Meeting will be held in Crescent City on Monday, June 22, 2020. Exact room location will be distributed prior to conference.

Minutes submitted by: Yvette Mason



Did you have any staff or office changes???
your Secretary needs to know.....

San Luis Obispo County Appoints Combat Vet as New Veterans Services Officer



The County of San Luis Obispo Administrative Officer Wade Horton has appointed Army veteran and Atascadero resident Morgan Boyd to serve as the County's new Veterans Services Officer, effective Monday, March 16.

The County of San Luis Obispo Administrative Officer Wade Horton has appointed Army veteran and Atascadero resident Morgan Boyd to serve as the County's new Veterans Services Officer, effective Monday, March 16.

"Morgan is a battle-tested leader that will bring a thoughtful approach working with his team and nonprofit organizations to best serve our communities' veterans," Horton said.

As Veterans Services Officer, Boyd will oversee the County's Veterans Services Office to provide advocacy and benefit services for the thousands of veterans and their dependents who live in San Luis Obispo County. He will manage a staff of about eight full-time equivalent employees and an annual budget of about \$962,000.

"I am honored to serve as our County's next Veterans Services Officer and will continue to build upon my predecessor's efforts to provide our community's veterans with access to the benefits that they earned while serving our country," Boyd said of his new role.

Boyd previously served in the United States Army from 2001 to 2014 in a variety of roles including Company Commander, Regimental Assistant Intelligence Officer and as an enlisted Cavalry Trooper. He served in combat tours in both Iraq and Afghanistan. Since then he has been a small business owner, a Cal Poly instructor, and most recently a program manager for the County's Treatment Courts and Drug Testing Unit in the County's Behavioral Health Department.

The mission of the Veterans Services Office is to promote the health, safety, and welfare of local veterans and their dependents or survivors by advocating on their behalf to the Department of Veterans Affairs and other service organizations in order to provide them with the benefits and services that they have earned. The office's Administrative Services Officer Hans Poschman served for several weeks as Interim Veterans Services Officer after the former VSO was tapped to serve as the County's new Central Services Officer in January 2020.

A calendar page with a red ribbon graphic. The ribbon is thick and has a slightly textured appearance, curving across the top and bottom of the page. The calendar grid is visible in the background, with numbers 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, and 29 visible. The text "Upcoming Events" is written in a large, blue, serif font, centered on the page.

Upcoming Events

2020 Summer Conference

Crescent City, CA

Monday, June 22, 2020—Friday, June 26, 2020

<https://thelighthouseinn Crescent City.com/>

<https://www.fly Crescent City.com/>

2020 Fall Conference

Grass Valley, CA

Monday, October 18, 2020—Friday, October 23, 2020

<https://www.goldminersin Grass Valley.com/>

DATES OF INTEREST

May 2020

- 1 Lei Day
- 5 National Teacher Day (yep homeschool counts)
- 6 National Skilled Trades Day
- 13 Children of Fallen Patriots Day
- 18 Supply Chain Professional Day
- 21 I Need A Patch For That Day
- 25 Memorial Day
- 31 Save Your Hearing Day

Awareness Weeks

- 3-9 Flexible Work Arrangement Week
- 6-12 National Nurses Week

Monthly Observances

- ALS Month
- Asian American & Pacific Islander Month
- Mental Health Month
- Worldwide Home Schooling Awareness Month

- Stone—Emerald
- Flower—Lilly of the Valley

