



The Communicator

July – September 2021

Hello CACVSO Members! I hope that your summer has been full of fun and adventure. Taking time off from work is very important in this line of work and is one of the best ways that we can prevent burnout.

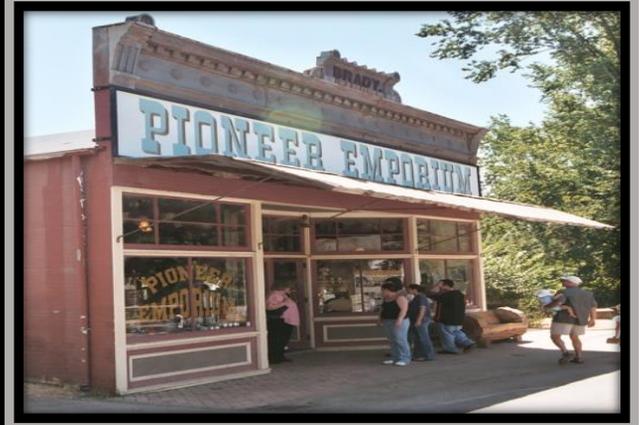
I hope that everyone benefitted from our June virtual training conference. Again, I want to thank our training committee for their efforts in planning the conference. During this pandemic, our association has not skipped a beat to ensure that Veterans and their families are cared for, and the training committee has been an important part of this ongoing effort. With that said, I am very excited to see most of you at our October in-person training conference in Shasta County.

I wish to highlight our finance committee. Marion Moses is the chair and leads all our association's efforts in establishing our association's annual budget and oversight of our treasurer. If you have good financial management discipline, please consider how you can also contribute to this essential work.

Congratulations again to Nevada, Trinity, and Madera counties on their technology grants. I hope that all counties in need will apply for this grant next year. Until next month, I hope that you enjoy this month's Communicator. Also, please keep in mind that the newsletter needs your monthly article submissions. Thank you!

Nathan D. Johnson
President





Tuolumne County is in the Sierra Nevada region in California and Yosemite National Park is in the Eastern part of the county. As of the 2020 census, the population is 53,899. The county seat and only incorporated city is Sonora. Tuolumne County is one of California's original 27 counties, Tuolumne was organized in 1850. The name Tuolumne is of Native American origin and has been given different meanings, such as Many Stone Houses. The original lines of Tuolumne County were not long established. In 1854 & 1855, the portion of the county that extended west into San Joaquin Valley was reorganized as Stanislaus County. Tuolumne County's 1,030,812 acers include federal lands such as Yosemite National Park, Stanislaus National Forest & Bureau of Land Management lands, and Indian reservations. Notable landforms include Table Mountain. Attractions also include Columbia State Park and Railtown in Jamestown. The National Registry of Historic places lists 34 properties and districts on the register.



A glimpse into Juneteenth history

Juneteenth is short for June 19th. It is celebrated as part of African American history, mostly in Texas and the South, to celebrate the end of slavery in the United States. It dates to 1865 when soldiers for the federal Union, led by Major *General Gordon Granger*, made it to Ashton Villa near Galveston, Texas with news that the Union won the war and human slavery was illegal. This was two and a half years after the Emancipation Proclamation was signed by the U.S. President Abraham Lincoln on January 1, 1863.

The enforcement of the Emancipation Proclamation in Texas was not made a reality until 1865, with General Granger's arrival with his Union regiment and the surrender of General Lee. This two and a half years delay in receiving the news of federal emancipation has generated many stories of how it was delivered to Texas.

Some say that the Union troops waited for Texas slaveholders to reap the last cotton harvests. Others say that the messenger was murdered on his way to deliver the news of the signing of the Emancipation Proclamation. Some commentators report that President Lincoln just did not have full authority over the region. In either case, Africans in Texas were freed **TWO AND A HALF YEARS after** the official historical date for independence of Africans in the United States.

Gordon Granger Military Record

Born	November 6, 1821 Joy, Wayne County, New York
Died	January 10, 1876 (aged 54) Santa Fe, New Mexico Territory
Place of burial	Lexington Cemetery, Lexington, Kentucky
Allegiance	United States of America Union
Service/branch	United States Army Union Army
Years of service	1845–1876
Rank	Major General
Commands held	Army of Kentucky IV Corps XIII Corps Department of Texas District of New Mexico
Battles/wars	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Mexican–American WarBattle of Contreras•Battle of Churubusco•Battle of Chapultepec•American Civil War•Battle of Wilson's Creek•Battle of New Madrid•Siege of Corinth•Battle of Chickamauga•Battle of Missionary Ridge•Battle of Mobile Bay•Battle of Fort Blakeley

VA to Automatically Review Agent Orange Veterans' Claims

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced its plans on May 27, 2021, to automatically review disability claims benefits for veterans living with Parkinsonism, bladder cancer, and hypothyroidism—three presumptive conditions related to their exposure to Agent Orange. Advocacy led to these three conditions being added to the list of presumptions through the Fiscal Year 2021 National Defense Authorization Act, in December 2020. These 3 additional conditions follow the Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act (P.L. 116-23) that guarantees veterans who served off the shores of Vietnam can access VA health care and benefits related to their exposure from Agent Orange. This is a significant win for Vietnam era veterans. Many of have waited a long time for these benefits.

In the announcement, VA confirmed it will apply the provisions of court orders related to *Nehmer v. U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs*. Vietnam-era veterans and their survivors, who previously filed and were denied benefits for one of these three new presumptive conditions, **will have their cases automatically reviewed without the need to refile a claim.** Affected veterans and survivors will receive letters from VA informing them of their claim's status.

Current AO recognized presumptive

- | | |
|-------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Bladder Cancer (new 2021) | AL Amyloidosis |
| Chronic B-cell Leukemia | Chloracne or similar types of |
| Hodgkin's Disease | Acneiform disease |
| Multiple Myeloma | Diabetes Mellitus Type 2 |
| Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma | Hypothyroidism (new 2021) |
| Prostate Cancer | Ischemic Heart disease |
| Respiratory Cancers including lung cancer | Parkinson's disease |
| Soft Tissue Sarcomas other than | Parkinsonism (new 2021) |
| Osteosarcoma, Chondrosarcoma, | Peripheral Neuropathy (early onset) |
| Kaposi's Sarcoma, or Mesothelioma | Porphyria Cutanea Tarda |

VA also announced it initiated rulemaking to consider adding respiratory conditions, which may include asthma, sinusitis, and rhinitis, to the list of chronic disabilities, based on an association with military service in Southwest Asia, Afghanistan and Uzbekistan during the covered periods of conflict.

Refill or Renew? Getting VA Prescriptions

Find out if you need a prescription refilled or renewed

When you run out of your VA prescription medication, do you know how to get more? VA pharmacies can process most of your prescription refill requests. Keep in mind that there are certain cases when VA may not be able to offer a refill. Instead, you may need a *renewal*. A renewal is a different kind of request, and it's important to remember the difference.

Refill requests vs. renewal requests

Providers determine how many prescription refills you can request between appointments. If you need more medication and have no refills left or the prescription is expired or discontinued, you'll need to **request a renewal**.

How to request a prescription refill

Prescription refills can be requested online via [My HealtheVet](#), on the Rx Refill-mobile app, by phone, or through the mail. To make sure you get your medication before you run out, request refills at least 15 days before you need it. You can even schedule a refill the day your medication arrives. The medication won't be processed for shipping until its **fill date**.

How to request a prescription renewal

Start thinking about renewing your prescription as soon as you have zero refills left. Requesting a renewal of a VA prescription could be as simple as reaching out to your provider. You can ask for a renewal via **Secure Messaging** (*sign in required*), phone, or during an appointment. The phone number on most prescription labels can direct you to an automated pharmacy line for renewal requests without needing to talk to anyone.

Prescriptions and copayments can be hard to navigate. VA has resources available to help. To access all the best features of My HealtheVet, like tracking prescription deliveries, upgrade to a **Premium account**.

Veterans and Advocates,

We need your help to waive fees on “veteran” designated driver’s licenses.

The DMV offers a “veteran” designation on driver’s licenses and identification cards, allowing veterans to easily access benefits available to them without having to present their discharge papers. The DMV, however, charges \$5 for designated driver’s licenses and identification cards. [AB 1151 \(Smith\)](#) would waive this fee.

Will you take a few minutes to [send a letter in support of AB 1151](#) today? Use our simple, fast, [online letter-writing tool](#) to send a letter to your Assembly Member today.

Veterans have made significant sacrifices to serve this country and should not have to pay for the distinction of possessing a “veteran” designated driver’s license of identification card.

Please help us tell the Assembly that the veterans’ community strongly supports AB 1151!

Thank you for your support!

CVSOs and California's Veterans Win!!

It's finally happened – the decades-long effort to secure ONGOING funding for CVSOs at the \$11 million level has successfully crossed the finish-line!

The 21/22 California State Budget (AB 128), recommending the increase, was officially signed and announced by the Office of the Governor on June 30, 2021 and goes into effect July 1st. We are grateful to all who have expended time, effort and emotion in this Herculean effort. We are particularly thankful for Jack Kirwan, Budget Consultant Extraordinaire; Pete Conaty, long-time lobbyist and Consiglio di Famiglia; Dana Nichol and Seth Reeb, lobbyists and stalwart, Sac-town warriors; our current President Nathan Johnson and numerous other members of CACVSO. As discussed at the business meeting on June 30th, your Executive Board will be meeting with CALVET in August to collaborate on a plan for the distribution of these additional funds.

In addition to the increased \$5.4 million for CVSOs the Governor's budget also contains the following:

- Department of Veterans Affairs provides \$10 million in one-time funding for the second year of implementation of a new long term care electronic health record system in the Veterans Homes of California and headquarters.
- Allocates \$15 million General Fund in 2021-22 to address deferred maintenance projects at the Veterans Home of California. Specific funding will go to replacing air-handling units at Veterans Home of California-Barstow and elevator renovations at the Veterans Home of California-Yountville.
- Approves budget bill language to provide an extension of the liquidation period to complete infrastructure upgrades for the nurse call system at the Barstow Veterans Home.
- Provides a one-time augmentation of \$7,725,000 from the Federal Trust Fund from the United States Department of Veterans Affairs to support efforts to prevent, prepare for and respond to COVID-19 in the eight Veterans Homes of California.
- Provides \$296,000 General Fund for the Preliminary Plans (\$132,000) and Working Drawings (\$164,000) phases for the columbarium expansion at the Northern California Veterans Cemetery (NCVC) in Igo, California. The scope includes the construction of ten new columbaria, each consisting of 100 niches on each side, totaling 2,000 additional niches; new walk-ways, ramps, curbs and gutters; landscaping; and irrigation.

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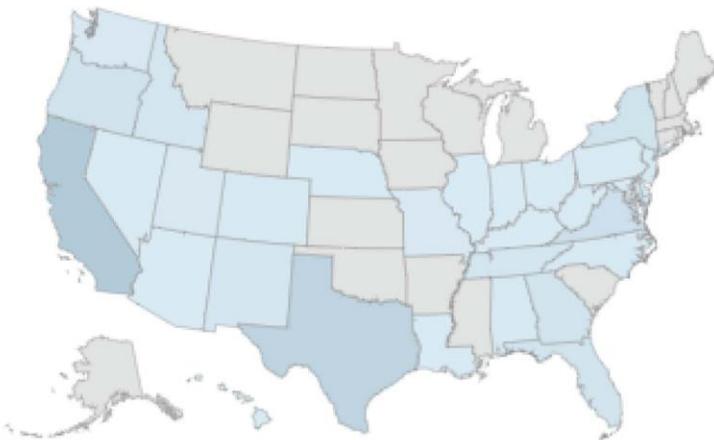
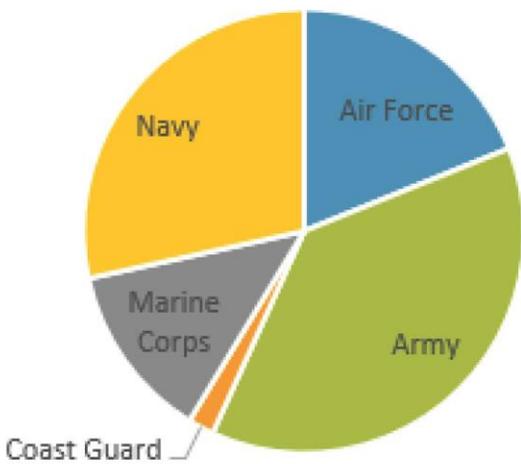
- Allocates \$954,000 General Fund for the Construction Phase of the water system upgrade at the Northern California Veterans Cemetery ***in Igo***, California. Completion of working design phase was delayed due to the due diligence obligations required by the State and additional requirements set forth by the State Fire Marshal. Due to this delay, the construction phase that was originally funded in the 2019 Budget Act expired as the funds were not encumbered or expended by the specified dates in the 2019 Budget Act. In addition, the overall project costs have increased by \$113,000 to reflect additional escalation and because the 2019 proposal omitted costs for due diligence and extended SFM review.
- Provides a re-appropriation to extend the liquidation period to complete the Rector Creek Instream Flow and Fish Condition Assessment Study for June 2023.
- Approves an augmentation of \$330,000 General Fund and 3.1 positions in 2021-22 and \$588,000 General Fund and 6 positions annually to realign levels of care in the Barstow Veterans Home as outlined in the 2020 Veterans Homes of California Master Plan and the 2021 Barstow Report.
- Re-appropriates \$7,833,000 in Public Buildings Construction Fund for the construction phase of the Steam Distribution System Renovation project at the Veterans Home of California-Yountville (VHC-Yountville).
- Adopts a one-time augmentation of \$2.1 million General Fund in 2021-22 for the required renovations for the water treatment plant at the Rector Reservoir near the Veterans Home of California-Yountville (VHC-Y).
- Approves a re-appropriation of \$500,000 from the Budget Act of 2018, Control Section 6.10 to complete the Americans with Disabilities Act restroom upgrades in the Administration Building of the Yountville Veterans Home. Additionally, CalVet requests an extension of the liquidation period to complete the nurse call-system project in the Eisenhower Building of the Yountville Veterans Home.
- Provides \$5.4 in ongoing funding to County Veteran Support Offices to support increased staff outreach and workload associated with improved outreach.
- Approves \$25 million to support organizations that provide supportive services to homeless or at-risk veterans.
- Allocates \$20 million to help fund 1,200 permanent supportive housing units for homeless and at-risk veterans at the West Los Angeles VA Medical Center Campus.



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Battlefields2Ballfields.org
Founded by Mike Pereira

We are providing scholarships to veterans and service members from ALL branches across the United States



DONATE TODAY

*Over 400 scholarships
have been awarded*



what's new?

Announce New VSOs

- ✓ Bill Cook, Plumas County
- ✓ Shawn Bondon, Trinity County

Make is cute
and snazzy
CT

✓ Remind the
CACVSO
peeps to
submit new
hire names-
slackers! 😊

★ Amy- Don't
forget to add
the picture of
SLO's award!

I never saw
that!! 😞 AH

Remind readers to
Google Gordan
Granger from page
3- SUPER
fascinating
military service!

Hey-Should we remind
everyone to email
conference photos to Sam
for the 75th ?

sisdell@co.del-norte.ca.us

YES!

~~Man- they
should know~~
by man
CT



35TH ANNUAL READERS POLL
2021

BEST
OF S L O C

Go Team Go!

New Times

THIS CERTIFICATE IS PRESENTED IN RECOGNITION FOR HAVING BEEN VOTED

WINNER

BEST VETERANS SUPPORT ORGANIZATION

*SLD County
Veterans Services*

Up Coming Conference
October 11th -15th in
Redding California
Mardi Gras Theme Dinner
Banquet

Winter Conference
February 20th -25th in
Sacramento
Formal Attire
75th Anniversary



Bing Cherry-Amaretti Treats

Ingredients

- *1 envelope unflavored gelatin
- *1/3 cup cold water
- *1 cup sour cream
- *1/2 cup sugar
- *1 tablespoon lemon juice
- *1/2 teaspoon almond extract
- *1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
- *2 cups coarsely chopped fresh Bing or other dark sweet cherries, divided
- *1 cup heavy whipping cream
- *1 cup coarsely crushed amaretti cookies (about 16 cookies)



Optional toppings: Fresh mint leaves, Bing cherries and additional crushed amaretti cookies

Directions

In a small saucepan, sprinkle gelatin over cold water; let stand 1 minute. Heat and stir over low heat until gelatin is completely dissolved. Let stand 5 minutes.

Place sour cream, sugar, lemon juice, extracts, 1 cup cherries and gelatin mixture in a blender; cover and process until cherries are pureed. Transfer to a large bowl.

In a small bowl, beat cream until soft peaks form. Remove 1/2 cup whipped cream; reserve for topping. Gently fold remaining whipped cream into cherry mixture. Fold in crushed cookies and remaining chopped cherries. Divide mixture among 8 dessert dishes. Refrigerate at least 2 hours.

Serve with reserved whipped cream and optional toppings.