

All veterans are reminded that the fastest way to inquire and secure the benefits you have earned is by visiting your local County Veterans Service Office. A listing of these offices is available at www.cacvso.org or on CalVet's website at www.cdva.ca.gov/resources/database.aspx

REMINDER

President Obama Announces the Creation of a Joint Virtual Lifetime Electronic Record

TAKING CARE OF AMERICA'S GREATEST STRATEGIC ASSET AND IMPROVING THE HEALTH CARE SYSTEM FOR AMERICA'S VETERANS

WASHINGTON – On April 9, 2009, the President, along with Secretary Gates and Secretary Shinseki, announced that the Department of Defense (DOD) and the United States Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA) have taken the first step in creating a Joint Virtual Lifetime Electronic Record. Currently, there is no comprehensive system in place that allows for a streamlined transition of health care records between DOD and the USDVA. Both Departments will work together to define and build a system that will ultimately contain administrative and medical



information from the day an individual enters military service throughout their military career, and after they leave the military.

Access to electronic records is essential to modern health care delivery and the paperless administration of benefits. It provides a framework to ensure that all health care providers have all the

information they need to deliver high-quality health care while reducing medical errors. The creation of this Joint Virtual Lifetime Record by the two organizations would take the next leap to

►► PG 12

What's Inside

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Editor's Note:

Please enjoy the new look of the CalVet Newsletter. Share your thoughts with me at Jaime.Arteaga@cdva.ca.gov

CALVET
HOME LOANS



VETERANS!
You may be eligible for a
30-Year Home Loan.

— For more information contact CalVet at —
www.calvet.ca.gov/calvetloans or call
(866) 653-2510

Acting Secretary



Roger Brautigan, Acting Secretary
California Department of
Veterans Affairs

*You have
done your
duty and
earned
those
benefits...*

Every veteran in this state, by putting on his or her military uniform has earned various benefits that are provided by the federal government and the state of California.

You have done your duty and earned those benefits and we encourage you to learn about those benefits and help your brother and sister veterans learn about their benefits. This is not “Top Secret” information so share it with every veteran you come in contact with throughout your day.

In addition to finding out about your benefits you should keep informed about new benefits and services available to you. To help you do that our Veterans Service Division developed a “reintegration form.” A copy can be found on our website at www.calvet.ca.gov and a copy is also included in this newsletter.

A good example of a change that has been implemented that many of you may not have heard about because the mainstream media didn’t play it up as much as they should have is a new on-line resource known as the Network of Care for Veterans, Military personnel and families.

This new website provides access to and information about literally thousands of government, non-government and local services and benefits that are available right in your neighborhood.

It includes information like employment services; education resources; names of groups and people who will provide medical and mental health services for veterans – it is truly a one-stop-shop for social services, education benefits and jobs. The website address is: www.networkofcare.org and then click on the veterans link on the left side of the screen.

One last thing I want to talk about is a special program that I have made a priority for the time I am at this agency – it is PROJECT GOLD STAR.

Last year the Governor signed legislation that authorized the creation of a Gold Star Family License plate. These plates will be available to anyone who lost a son or daughter, father or mother, husband or wife, or grandchild in combat. The only catch with this new law is that we have to fund the development and programming of DMV computers without using the state general fund - an estimated \$300,000 cost. We’ve already got the design finalized and you can see that out at our website www.calvet.ca.gov; what we need from each of you is financial support.

I know most of you who are reading this know someone who didn’t come home, some family that now has a missing piece ... we’re asking that you help by giving to this cause in the memory of that fallen Californian. More information about PROJECT GOLD STAR and donation forms are included in this newsletter.

Thank you for supporting this important initiative and thank you for your selfless service to the nation.

NEWS FROM OUR veterans homes

BARSTOW

On April 2nd the home welcomed a group of 30 Kindergartners from Yermo Elementary school for an Easter egg hunt. The residents really enjoyed the event. We made rabbit ear headdresses and provided refreshments along with the egg hunt. One of the residents from the Skilled Nursing Unit who does not like to get involved with any activities, actually came out of his room to watch the children and wanted to have one of the bunny ears put on him.



Billy Criner



Nick Pasillas



VETERANS HOMES STATISTICS

JUNE 15, 2009

	Chula Vista	Barstow	Yountville
Domiciliary	122	106	636
Residential Care for the Elderly	19		45
Skilled Nursing	155	17	153
Intermediate Care		55	148
Acute Care			1
Memory Care			58

NEWS FROM OUR veterans homes

BARSTOW

IN MY

opinion

By Jaime Todd, MBA, LNHA
Administrator, Veterans Home of California, Barstow

Our government recently removed the ban on allowing images of the arrival at Dover Air Force Base of the caskets carrying our fallen warriors to be broadcast or published as they returned home.

It is fitting that this ban be removed: it is also honest, patriotic, and respectful. These images should be projected across our nation to remind us to take just a moment to acknowledge, revere, and love the men and women who made the ultimate sacrifice so that we, in the United States of America, can share—together—so many blessings and freedoms.

Worldwide, it is probably rare to find anyone who celebrates war; and that includes those who are in the business of preparing us for war. It was General William Westmoreland who reminded us that, “The military don’t start wars. Politicians start wars.”

In 1864, Robert E. Lee wrote to his wife: What a cruel thing is war: to separate and destroy families and friends, and mar the purest joys and happiness God has granted us in this world; to fill our hearts with hatred instead of love for our neighbors, and to devastate the fair face of this beautiful world.

Seeing those caskets return to our soil truly “devastates the fair face of this beautiful world.” As we look on those caskets, and at the memorials erected to the war dead everywhere, we must think of the all the families and friends whose “purest joys and happiness” were destroyed through the ages. The entire purpose of Memorial Day, and the laying of wreaths around the globe at the tombs of the fallen, is to remind us of our debt of gratitude.

Georges Clemenceau, one of the most inspiring patriotic leaders of France during WWI, wondered “I don’t know whether war is an war is an interlude during peace, or is peace an interlude during wars?” Sadly, we don’t think about our fallen heroes too often during the interludes; instead, we say, “Life goes on.” I say, “No...we just forget.” It is death that goes on... and on... and on for those who paid dearly for our every peace and each of our freedoms. We must never forget.

A small poem by John McCrea, a medical officer who eventually lost his life in World War I, provides a picture of how easy it is to just...forget.

In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly,
Scarce heard amid the guns below.
We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie
In Flanders fields. —John McCrea

Do not let the noise of moving on with life cause you to ever forget. When you see the photos on the TV screen from Dover Air Force Base, bow your head to acknowledge, honor, and respect the brave men and women who lost their lives for you.

Let us acknowledge, honor, and respect them here today. And let’s do it for as long as the flag of the USA flies freely over our homes.

Thank you fallen heroes. We hear your silence, loud and clear, within our hearts.

We won’t forget you.

We love you.

Rest in Peace

NEWS FROM OUR veterans homes

CHULA VISTA

By John Farrell



April was National Volunteer Month, and a very special time for the Chula Vista Veterans Home. Every day, from the Domiciliary, to the Business Office, to the Cafeteria, volunteers work hard to make life easier and a bit more comfortable for residents of the veterans home.

About 20 residents participate in the Compensated Member Helper Program, performing a wide range of services, 30 United States Department of Veterans Affairs Work Study students in service at the home, as well as a cadre of volunteers from the community, ranging

in age from 18 to 86, and motivated by personal commitment to being of service to others.

Dee Diaz, director of the volunteer program, says workers are encouraged to "sit down on the job." "It's not like most jobs," she said. "We have specific jobs to do, and they are important, but it's also important to relate to the residents one-on-one. So sometimes you see a volunteer just sitting and chatting with a resident, and that's a good thing."

Diaz says volunteers are often surprised to find that the joy and personal satisfaction they find in giving outstrips the actual service they provide.

"I get a chance to see that happen,"

she said, "and it is one of the things I enjoy most about my job."



Tireless volunteers serve food during the Resident Social.

Custom Quilts For Women Veterans

The Ladies Auxiliary of the Military Order of the Purple Heart joined with San Diego Canyon Quilters in early April, commemorating National Women's History Month by presenting unique handmade quilts to women veterans residing at the Chula Vista Veterans Home.

The Purple Heart Ladies provided the materials for the quilts, which were produced and created by members of San Diego Canyon Quilters, a local quilting society.

Quilter Judy Tadlock, representing the group, presented the quilts in a special ceremony at the Rose Garden Dining Room in the Skilled Nursing Facility. Tadlock said the quilting process is time-consuming and requires a great deal of both patience

By John Farrell

and skill. "Each quilt represents about 25 hours careful hand work," she said, "and not many have the time (or the patience) to participate. "They are very well made," Tadlock said. "The materials used were first-rate, and these quilts will last a long, long time."

Most of the quilts were made in the classic "Warm Wishes" pattern in a wide variety of colors. After the ceremony, quilters and members of the Ladies Auxiliary joined residents for lunch.



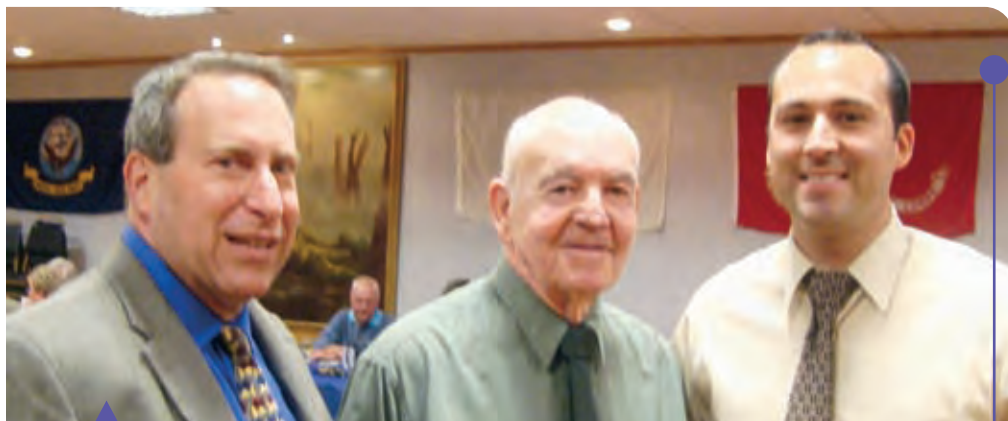
Judy Tadlock displays hand made quilts.

Joan DeMunbrun chats with Cheryl Perez.

NEWS FROM OUR veterans homes

GLAVC

GREATER LOS ANGELES AND
VENTURA COUNTIES



Louis Koff provides overview of West Los Angeles Veterans Home to The American Legion Post 283 members.

American Legion Post 283 Hosts GLAVC Staff

By Jeanne Bonfilio

Staff from the Veterans Homes of California for Greater Los Angeles and Ventura Counties (GLAVC), were invited to attend a recent American Legion dinner meeting and provide information on the new Veterans Home of California currently under construction.

Louis Koff, Administrator for the Veterans Home of California, West Los Angeles provided an interesting and informative overview and Power-Point presentation at The American Legion Post 283 in Pacific Palisades on Wednesday, May 20. Lee Barks-

dale, Post Commander and Robert Ryan, Post Adjutant welcomed Koff as he presented a construction update, as well as information on the application process for residency at the beautiful new home.

Construction is estimated to complete in mid-2010. A delicious dinner of roasted chicken was served, along with a scrumptious cheesecake dessert. The Department thanks American Legion Post 283 for their hospitality and continuing support of America's veterans.

"A Salute To Veterans" Benefits The William J. "Pete" Knight Veterans Home Of California- Lancaster

By Jeanne Bonfilio

Hundreds gathered at the Lancaster Center for the Performing Arts on Saturday, May 23, when approximately 50 members of the Boogie Woogie Mamas dance ensemble entertained to support veterans, namely the William J. "Pete" Knight Veterans Home of California—Lancaster.

The Boogie Woogie Mamas are a troupe of senior-age spectacular dancers, whose ages range from mid-50's to 84, some veterans themselves. They performed a variety of dance numbers, such as Broadway, musical theater, pop, country and jazz. The "Salute to Veterans" show featured military songs, and other pop music favorites made popular during World War II and the Vietnam War.

Tap and jazz dance numbers were thoroughly enjoyed throughout the two-hour performance. All proceeds from this wonderful show will benefit the Veterans Home. CalVet wishes to thank Joyce Pearson, Director and Barbara Adolph, Publicity Chair, and all of the wonderful members of the Boogie Woogie Mamas for their hard work and constant support of the William J. "Pete" Knight Veterans Home of California, Lancaster.



The Boogie Woogie Mamas

NEWS FROM OUR veterans homes

GLAVC

GREATER LOS ANGELES AND
VENTURA COUNTIES

Former Secretary Johnson Visits The Veterans Home Of California -- Ventura

Former CalVet Secretary Tom Johnson made a special visit to the Veterans Home of California–Ventura just prior to his retirement to get an up-close-and-personal tour of the exciting new site. Still under

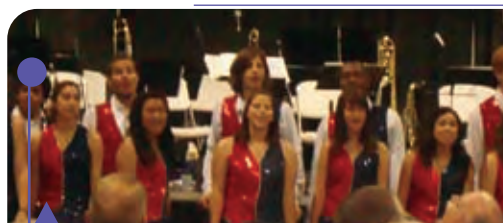
construction and estimated to open in the early fall, Johnson met with Administrator Brenda Manke, as well as members of various Veteran Service Organizations, on a personal walkthrough of the new veterans home.



Former CalVet Secretary Tom Johnson and Administrator Brenda Manke on walkthrough of Ventura Veterans Home.

Also present during the tour, led by Viola Construction Manager Bob Gibbons, were Elizabeth Vandenburg and Mary Ann Foote from Soldiers' Angels, who have been donating their time and efforts, as well as many wonderful items for future veterans home members. Joining them were Korean War Veteran Rudy Garcia and Paul Bramson, from American Veteran Flagpoles and Flag Company and also a member of the Ventura Chamber of Commerce. All are dedicated advocates for veterans and strongly support the Veterans Home of California–Ventura.

As always, Secretary Johnson took a hands-on and hat-less approach during the walkthrough, personally examining all of the residents' rooms, dining room, kitchen, common areas, and even spent time looking at the generators and outdoor areas.



Lancaster High students provide entertainment.

Veterans Home Staff Support Lancaster High School's "Pride Of The Nation"

The 6th annual "Pride of the Nation" dinner and dance honoring scores of veterans in the Antelope Valley, was held at the Poppy Pavilion at the Antelope Valley Fairgrounds in Lancaster on May 16, Armed Forces

Day. Coordinated by dedicated students from Lancaster High School under the direction of history teacher Jamie Goodreau, the event was attended by nearly 1,000 guests, including veterans from World War II, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, the Cold War, Desert Storm and the current wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Staff from the Veterans Homes of California for Greater Los Angeles and Ventura Counties (VHC-GLAVC), was on hand to provide important information about the newest and most exciting addition to the Antelope Valley: the William J. "Pete" Knight Veterans Home of California, Lancaster. Fact sheets and applications for residency

at the beautiful home, brochures on benefits for California veterans and employment information were provide by Lisa Grod, Administrator and Jeanne Bonfilio, Public Information Officer. The new facility, estimated to open in the early fall of this year, has been strongly supported by the high-desert communities and the grand opening is eagerly anticipated. Other participants included representatives from the Antelope Valley Blue Star Mothers, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall, and Dog Tags for Soldiers' Kids, all non-profit organizations which assist and support veterans.

NEWS FROM OUR veterans homes

YOUNTVILLE



World War II Honor Flight a Monumental Success

By Lou Zauner

Friday, May 8, was an extraordinary day for 26 Yountville Veterans Home Members, when World War II veterans boarded United Airlines Flight 120 for a non-stop trip to Washington D.C. This was at the courtesy of the Honor Flight Network and a dream-making donation of \$64,000 from the AMVETS Service Organization. A monumental amount of work went into the planning and organization of developing a Northern California hub for flights sponsored by the non-profit organization. This network is dedicated to providing all expense paid tours for veterans to visit Washington D.C. to view their nation's tributes to them. This Honor Flight was the inaugural flight for Northern California, the Yountville Veterans Home and its qualified World War II Veterans.

Along as escorts were nineteen guardians assigned to help the physically limited travelers. These guardians were family members, Honor Flight and AMVETS

volunteers, and dedicated individuals such as Yountville Councilman Bill Dutton and American Canyon Mayor Leon Garcia, who also is employed by the Yountville Veterans Home in the Nursing Department. All guardians paid their own expenses and, with tender loving care, protected all against harm and mishap. And totally successful they were!

Saturday, May 9, was tour-day with both guided and self-guided tours to the memorials and monuments. The World War II Memorial; the always tear-evoking Vietnam Memorial; the haunting Korean Memorial; the monuments dedicated to the Air Force, Navy, Marines and Coast-Guard; and Arlington National Cemetery and its hundred-of-thousands of white markers, and Our Tomb of the Unknown Soldier—all stunning reminders of our Country's wars and sacrifices.

Now the camaraderie that was built among the visiting veterans' group was demonstrated by the

flurried exchange of pictures and war stories of the trip. In fact, we were very lucky to have been part of the World War II era. Yes, a strange statement to make, but it was a time when the entire nation came together to fight a known and common enemy. Military and service personnel, defense workers, food and material providers were all for each other and working together. E Pluribus Unum—"Out of Many, One."

This Memorial Day will, for me, be an important reminder of that horrific worldwide Armageddon that destroyed the lives of 50 million people in both casualties and untold misery. I will shed tears, and I will remember what the Honor Flight trip meant for me—our 16 million strong uniformed fighting machine and the army of civilians behind that actually did save the entire world from tyranny. I only wish we could see our nation once again with such solidarity. The "Greatest Generation?" You bet!

Roots & Raves

TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION
SUBMITTED BY EMPLOYEES

Speak
your mind,
we're
listening.

When Baggy Clothes Don't Hide the Fact One is Obese - PART II

By Jaime Arteaga

In the previous issue I told you about my struggle with obesity and the decision to have the lap band installed to help me lose weight. In this issue I will tell you about my experiences in finding a doctor to perform the surgery and steps I had to take to get my butt and stomach on the operating table.

Deciding on weight loss surgery was a difficult and agonizing first step I chose to take. The life I was living was, quite frankly, not a life worth living. The next step was deciding what procedure I would undergo. After much thought about the options available, I decided on the lap band, which involves a ring installed laparoscopically around the mouth of the stomach. It is then filled with saline solution to get it to partly close the stomach opening thus greatly reducing the amount of food allowed to enter. This seemed like the logical procedure for me because my commitment to weight loss surgery was minimized because I could always have it removed if complications ensued. Well, at least that was the justification I came up with.

Secondly, I had to find a doctor willing to take me on as a patient,

and this because of insurance issues, became the bigger problem. It seems that there are many doctors available who will perform weight loss surgery on you, provided of course, you pay cash. I in fact did not have the \$10,000 to \$30,000 it could cost. While the first doctor I approached was more than willing to do lap band surgery, he did in fact want his money up front (in case I kicked the bucket after surgery). Same thing with the second and third doctors I approached. Finally, in a last ditch effort to find a local doctor, I searched the Internet once more and found a doctor at U.C. Davis Medical Center (UCD) that looked promising.

The fact that U.C. Davis Medical Center is a Center of Excellence for weight loss surgery didn't even register with me until I began the actual process. The process begins with mandatory attendance of an informational meeting in a basement conference room at UCD in the company of fellow obese, morbidly obese, and super morbidly obese individuals. The sight of huge obese people in wheelchairs almost made me never want to eat a hamburger again. Almost!



At this meeting, UCD experts discussed the different weight loss options available to us, depending of course on the desires of our insurance carriers. After showing us pictures of the different procedures, hearing testimonials from individuals who had successfully lost weight with surgery, and a long PowerPoint presentation on additional cosmetic surgery available to us after our weight loss, the time came for questions and answers.

I, of course, inquired about the lap band procedure, given that I had investigated it extensively. The answer I got was something I was not ready for. In simple layman terms, that procedure is not performed at UCD any more. I would have to settle on gastric bypass or other procedures. This totally deflated me and sent me into a depressive state because I felt that gastric bypass was just a bit too dangerous and risky for me.

►► PG 10

◀ PG 9

My first appointment with my doctor came about 3 months later. At this meeting I actually was able to meet and discuss my options, as well as listen to why the lap band procedure was out of the question. Simply put, my doctor informed me that he was not comfortable with the statistics available for review. In Europe, where lap bands have been used for at least 10 years they discovered that approximately 65% had to be taken out within 5 years because of health problems associated with them. My doctor thought that number was too high and so suggested gastric bypass, a procedure much more common, perfected, and with less side-effects, of course, one of these being death. Of course this procedure would be done laparoscopically, unless something came up that forced my doctor to perform the surgery by opening up my abdomen.

The process of preparing for surgery took at least five months. The first thing I had to do was sign a statement where I promised to follow all guidelines and restrictions. These included agreeing to pay the portion my health insurance wouldn't, promising to lose at least 31 lbs before surgery, stop smoking and stop drinking carbonated drinks and those with caffeine for life, and giving up alcohol until at least 6 months after surgery. Of course I agreed to everything.

One aspect of my surgery experience that gave me much peace of mind was that I was put through an

extensive array of exams and procedures in preparation for surgery. I underwent a sleep study where I was diagnosed with sleep apnea (no wonder I was so tired all day), extensive blood work, a couple EKGs, chest x-rays, a sonogram, and a few more procedures I don't remember any more. I was surprised to find out that other folks undergoing weight loss surgery with other doctors in other locations had not been put through the battery of tests I had. At least I knew my doctor had checked for any potential problems that could arise which could compromise my efforts.

“promising to lose at least 31lbs before surgery, stop smoking...and caffeine for life”

My projected surgery day was announced and I went on a 1,200 per day calorie diet. The weight started to come off while the anticipated day arrived. But as bad luck would have it, that day came and went, and I did not get surgery because my EKGs were nowhere to be found. Scheduling another EKG meant waiting another couple of weeks and then hopefully a date and time would be available to schedule me for surgery. I was so upset that I ended up gaining back 10 pounds of the 25 I had managed to lose. In case you are wondering why we must lose weight before surgery, it's because one of the first places we lose weight is in our liver, and a lighter liver means the doctor will have an easier time performing the surgery.

Finally, December 8, 2009 arrived, my long-awaited surgery date. I had my sister drop me off at 7:00 a.m. at the hospital to begin the check-in process. She was not able to stay

with me because she was taking care of my mom, who was a little sick and couldn't accompany me at the hospital, even though she really wanted to. It's amazing how lonely one feels as we wait to be taken into the operating room. I met my anesthesiologist and main operating room registered nurse at about 9:45 a.m. and was finally wheeled into the operating room at 10:15 a.m. I was so happy to see my doctor; finally a face I was familiar with. The last thing I remember before going into a deep sleep was my doctor telling me "Are you ready for your new life?"

Employees are encouraged to submit articles to the editor, Jaime.arteaga@cdva.ca.gov

CALVET
HOME LOANS

VETERANS!

You may be eligible for a 30-Year Home Loan.

For more information contact CalVet at www.calvet.ca.gov/calvetloans or call (866) 653-2510

in other news...

Opportunity Knocks and California's Wounded Warriors Answer

By Rick Reed
Disabled Veterans Business
The California Alliance

They seek to be business owners, employers and entrepreneurs after serving their country. For two days in Irvine, California disabled-veteran suppliers and government, utility and private industry buyers sat down face-to-face to do business together. The Disabled Veterans Business Enterprise Alliance (DVBE) Annual "Keeping the Promise 2009" Business Expo is the country's largest disabled veteran business event.

Held each May in Irvine, CA, one thousand business-to-business matchmaking meetings took place with California disabled-veteran owned companies. Business relationships were established with procurement officers from State, Federal agencies, utilities and buyers from more than 55 major American companies to make the DVBE Alliance's annual "The Keeping the Promise 2009" business expo a major success for veterans. Two-term Alliance President, Robert Brown, said, "KTP was bigger, better and leading the way in helping disabled veterans create businesses and realize opportunity promised for service to country. The excitement generated by this year's Business Matchmaking was electric. From the membership meeting right through the last business matchmaking appointment!"

Outstanding leadership and coalition building efforts by the California Department of General Services (DGS) helped bring an elite

group of major corporate supporters to the event including major sponsors ATT, Flexiciser, Union Bank of California and Apple, CVS/Caremark, Lockheed Martin, PG&E, Southern California Edison, Southwest Gas, Associated General Contractors, Blue Shield of California, Chevron, Genentech, Kaiser Permanente, McKesson, Metropolitan Water, Nevada Energy, Plantronics, Sempra Energy, Northrup Grumman and The Port of Long Beach.

The DVBE Annual John K. Lopez Award was presented to Don Gonneville for his tireless efforts to establish the free Alliance University business-training program. The Freedom Fighter Award was given to State Senator Jeff Denham for leadership and support for disabled veterans in the California Legislature, while the Preston Youth Correctional Facility was honored with the M.K. Madding Award.

The DVBE Alliance also honored Hall of Fame Baseball Legend and longtime military supporter Tommy Lasorda at the America's Heroes luncheon and created a student scholarship in his name. A highlight for all at the Expo featured the swearing-in ceremonies for 25 newly inducted military recruits to all branches of the U.S. Armed Forces.

For more information, photos from KTP 2009 or to learn more about DVBE certification visit www.cadvbe.org or call 916-446-3510. Media contact: Rick Reed 916-704-0080.

UPCOMING EVENTS

JUN 09

JUNE 19-21

91st American Legion Department of California Annual State Convention
Bill Siler (415) 431-2400
<http://www.calegion.org/html/convention.html>
Riverside

JUNE 19-23

89th Annual Veterans of Foreign Wars, Department of California Convention
http://www.vfwca.org/images/2009_ConventionPackage.pdf
Ontario

JUNE 20-27

72nd American Legion California Golden Boy's State Program Governor's Inauguration June 25, 2009, 10am Timothy D. Aboudara or Brent Aboudara
brent.aboudara@sen.ca.gov
(916) 651-4755
Sacramento

JUNE 25-26

CalVet Board Meeting
Bonnie Kelly, (916) 653-2041
Lancaster

JUNE 27

70th Annual Jewish War Veterans of the USA, Department of California, State Convention
Alvin Selnick, PDC, (714) 527-8507 or (714) 321-6854
Culver City

▶▶ PG 12

JUL 09

JULY 1

Groundbreaking Ceremony, VA Palo Alto Healthcare System Mental Health Center, 10am

Kerri.childress@va.gov

(650) 858-39259

2nd Annual OEF/OIF Welcome Home, 10am to 1pm, Gene Peterson (925) 372-2837

gene.peterson@va.gov

Palo Alto

JULY 4

"Americafest 2009," 83rd Annual 4th of July Celebration & Fireworks at the Rose Bowl

12am-9 pm, (626) 577-3101

www.rosebowlstadium.com

Pasadena

AUG 09

AUGUST 13-14

CalVet Board Meeting

Bonnie Kelly (916) 653-2041

Santa Maria

SEP 09

SEPTEMBER 13-14

2009 CalVet Women's Veterans Conference II

<http://www.cdva.ca.gov/Resources/WVConferences.aspx>

Los Angeles

Electronic Records



delivering seamless, high-quality care, and serve as a model for the nation.

The President understands that those who serve and have served our country in uniform are America's greatest strategic asset. The President's commitment to the sacred trust we have with those who serve is clear in both DOD and USDVA budgets and in the strong leadership of Secretaries Gates and Shinseki.

The President believes that the quality of care that our veterans receive should never be hindered by budget delays. He has shared this concern with Secretary Shinseki, and they have worked together to support advanced funding of veterans medical care. What that means is a timely and predictable flow of funding from year to year, but more importantly, that means better care for our veterans. The President was pleased to see that the Senate-passed budget supported this concept in a bipartisan manner.

The Department of Defense Budget will:

- * Fully protect and properly fund the growth in military end strength in the base budget. This means completing the growth in the Army and Marines while halting reductions in the Air Force and the Navy.
- * Continue the steady growth in medical research and development by requesting \$400 million more than last year.

* Recognize the critical and permanent nature of wounded, ill and injured, traumatic brain injury, and psychological health programs. This

means institutionalizing and properly funding these efforts in the base budget and increasing overall spending by \$300 million. The department will spend over \$47 billion on healthcare in FY10.

* Increase funding by \$200 million for improvements in child care, spousal support, lodging, and education.

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Budget will:

- * Increase funding for the Department of Veterans Affairs by \$25 billion above baseline over the next five years.
- * Dramatically increase funding for veterans health care.
- * Expand eligibility for veterans' health care to over 500,000 veterans who were previously denied care by 2013.
- * Enhance outreach and services related to mental health care and cognitive injuries, including post-traumatic stress disorder and traumatic brain injury, with a focus on access for veterans in rural areas.
- * Invest in better technology to deliver services and benefits to veterans with the quality and efficiency they deserve.
- * Provide greater benefits to veterans who are medically retired from service.
- * Combat homelessness by safeguarding vulnerable veterans.
- * Facilitate timely implementation of the comprehensive education benefits that veterans earn through their dedicated military service.

http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/President-Obama-Announces-the-Creation-of-a-Joint-Virtual-Lifetime-Electronic-Record/

GOLD STAR FAMILY LICENSE PLATE

GOLD STAR FAMILIES

In September 2008 Gov. Schwarzenegger signed SB 1455 (Cogdill), the Gold Star Family License Plate bill, to authorize a family member of a member of the Armed Forces who was killed while serving on active duty in the military to apply for a special license plate with a design containing a Gold Star and the words "Gold Star Family." Those who have had a family member killed while serving on active military duty - have made a very painful sacrifice for our country.

The Gold Star Family License Plates must be produced at no cost to the state's General Fund, so fundraising is necessary. The California Department of Veterans Affairs is actively seeking donations to pay for the costs of implementing the program (estimated to be \$300,000). For this purpose, we have created Project Gold Star. All of the money collected by Project Gold Star will be deposited into the Gold Star Family License Plate Account. These funds will be used by to cover the costs of producing the plates.

Anyone interested in donating can visit our website www.calvet.ca.gov/vetfund/goldstar.aspx or fill out the form on the next page and fax their pledge to Project Gold Star. You can also donate by a check made payable to Project Gold Star. Checks can be mailed to:

PROJECT GOLD STAR
1227 O STREET, ROOM 314
SACRAMENTO, CA, 95814

For more information, please call 916-503-8095



DONOR LEVELS

★ **DIAMOND**
\$25,000 and above

★ **PLATINUM**
\$15,000 - \$24,999

★ **GOLD**
\$5,000 - \$14,999

★ **SILVER**
\$1,000 - \$4,999

★ **BRONZE**
\$100 - \$999

★ **COPPER**
\$50 - \$99

★ **CONTRIBUTOR**
\$1 - \$49

Project Gold Star Donation Form



I pledge to support Project Gold Star

Please complete this section or attach a business card.

Name: Mr. / Mrs. / Ms. _____

Organization: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone: _____ Fax: _____

E-mail: _____

Name of donor(s) as it should be acknowledged: _____

Enclosed is a donation of \$ _____

Payment Options:

I would like to donate via credit card:

Bankcard Account Number: _____ Exp. Date: _____

Amount: \$ _____ MasterCard __ Visa __

Cardholder Name (please print): _____

Cardholder Signature: _____ Date: _____

I pledge \$ _____ over a _____ year period.

___My first pledge payment of \$ _____ is enclosed.

Please mail a pledge reminder to me: annually ___ monthly ___ quarterly ___
semi-annually ___ other _____

I would like to contribute a gift in-kind: _____

Memory/Honor:

My donation is in memory of: _____

My donation is in honor of: _____

Please mail an acknowledgement to: (name) _____

(address) _____

Public Recognition: Acknowledge this commitment? Yes _____ No _____

Signature

Date

Please make checks payable to the **Project Gold Star** and return or fax the completed form to:

Project Gold Star
1227 O Street, Rm 314, Sacramento, CA 95814. Telephone: 916.503.8095; **FAX: 916.653.2291**

Email: roz.jauregui@cdva.ca.gov

Over 700 Schools Partner with USDVA to Help Veterans Pay for Education

On June 5, 2009, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA) announced that it has entered into more than 700 agreements with institutions of higher learning across the nation to participate in the Post-9/11 GI Bill's "Yellow Ribbon Program."

<http://www1.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=1694>

Assistant Secretary Duckworth Honored with Women of Distinction Award

On June 5, 2009, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Assistant Secretary for Public and Intergovernmental Affairs L. Tammy Duckworth was honored by AAUW/NASPA along with four other women at the University of Maryland, College Park. She accepted the Women of Distinction Award during the 2009 National Conference for College Women Student Leaders.

<http://www1.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=1696>

WWII Veterans Compete in National Veterans Golden Age Games

Forty World War II Veterans are reuniting at the world's largest sports and recreational competition for senior Veterans June 1-5 in Birmingham, Alabama, at the 23rd National Veterans Golden Age Games. The Games are open to all U.S. military Veterans age 55 or older who receive care at a U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA) medical facility. More than 700 Veterans have registered to compete.

<http://www1.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=1689>

USDVA Web Site Helps College Counselors Aid Veterans

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA) has launched a new Web site to strengthen the connection between college and university mental health professionals and the Veterans of the Iraq and Afghanistan conflicts now studying on their campuses.

<http://www1.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=1686>

USDVA Studies Advanced Prosthetic Arm

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has announced a three-year study of an advanced artificial arm that easily allows those with severe limb loss to pick up a key or hold a pencil.

<http://www1.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=1687>

Secretary Shinseki Announces \$215 Million in Projects for Rural Veterans

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA) has provided \$215 million in competitive funding to improve services specifically designed for Veterans in rural and highly rural areas.

<http://www1.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=1680>



STATE OF CALIFORNIA

VETERAN REINTEGRATION PROJECT

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
1227 O STREET
SACRAMENTO, CA 95814



WWW.CALVET.CA.GOV



First Name

MI

Last Name

Mailing Address after Separation

City

State

Zip Code

Email

Branch of Service

Telephone

()

Date of Discharge

My concerns/priorities include:

☐ State Benefits

☐ Education

☐ Employment

☐ CalVet Home Loans

☐ TBI/PTSD

☐ Healthcare

☐ Transportation

☐ Women Veterans Roster

☐ Disabled Veterans Business Enterprise

☐ Financial Assistance

☐ Compensation & Pension Benefits

☐ Veterans License Plate Program

☐ Legal Assistance

☐ College Fee Waiver for Dependents

I request and authorize release of the above information to the California Department of Veterans Affairs and the Employment Development Department. I certify that this request has been made freely, voluntarily, and without coercion and that the information given above is accurate and complete to the best of my knowledge. I understand this information shall be used solely for outreach and to assist me receive my veteran benefits and shall not be subject to public disclosure. **NOTE:** Out of state veterans information will be forwarded to their State's Department of Veteran's Affairs.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

MAIL TO:

VETERANS SERVICES DIVISION

1227 O Street, Room 105

Sacramento, CA 95814

OR FAX: (916) 653-2563

Send completed form to California Department of Veterans Affairs
ATTN: Veterans Services



in closing...

CalVet Secretary Tom Johnson, 2/04 to 5/09. Thanks for your commitment and loyalty to veterans while leading CalVet. Enjoy your retirement in the company of your family and friends.

Photograph By: Jaime Arteaga

CalVet News

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