

UNIFIED ARIZONA VETERANS (UAV), P.O. BOX 34338, PHOENIX, AZ 85067

**MINUTES OF THE UAV GENERAL MEETING HELD ON NOVEMBER 3, 2012
AT THE STATE VETERAN HOME, 4141 N. SILVESTRE HERRERA WAY,
PHOENIX, AZ 85012**

CALL TO ORDER: 10:00 a.m. by Chairman Lew Bradley, followed by Invocation by Chaplain Bo Bohach, and the Pledge of Allegiance.

PRESENTATION: “ Update: Save Our Sail Project (USS PHOENIX)” – Jim Denzien, Commander, Perch Base, U.S. Submarine Veterans, introducing Dan Moss, Project Leader

Dan Moss presented a brief history of how Perch Base Submariners got its name. He reported that the USS PHOENIX (SSN-702) is located at the Naval Shipyard at Bremerton, WA. It is awaiting deconstruction; its nuclear reactor has been buried. Weight of the sail and the fairwater planes: 35 tons, to be cut into 3 pieces. Perch Base has NAVSEA (Naval Sea Systems Command) approval for the sail and the upper part of the rudder which is scheduled to be cut off in 2015. Perch Base has a monument concept and is working with the City of Phoenix. A licensed contractor must be used. A City of Phoenix Contractor List was mentioned. Mel Brody suggested that Perch Base contact the contractor currently working on the Guns to Salute the Fallen memorial (guns from the USS ARIZONA and USS MISSOURI).

Regarding transporting the Sail and possible other parts to Phoenix, several trucking companies were mentioned: Swift, Knight, and L&N Trucking whose owner is a Vietnam veteran.

Several years ago, there was a PHOENIX Commission of volunteers working on the project to bring parts of the USS PHOENIX to the City, however, the PHOENIX Commission was decommissioned in 2009 due to budget constraints, and the project was taken up by the Perch Base Submariners.

Point of contact: Jim Denzien, Commander, Perch Base Submariners, email: jdenzien@cox.net

PRESENTATION: “How the Merritt Center Helps Veterans” – Betty Merritt, The Merritt Center and Lodge, Payson, Arizona

Betty Merritt reported that the Merritt Center, a 501(c) (3) nonprofit organization, helps returning combat veterans, male and female. The program consists of 4 weekends, the first 2 weekends consist of telling one’s story. The 4th weekend includes the spouse.

The program started in 2005 with Vietnam veterans. So far, 8 programs for men, and 6 programs for women. Veterans participate at no cost [the cost is \$150 for one veteran for one weekend (lodging, food, supplies) if someone wishes to sponsor a veteran]. A men's program is scheduled for January 2013; a women's program is scheduled for February 2013. Betty and her husband, a Korean War veteran, serve with no salary.

Point of contact: Betty Merritt, email: betty@merrittcenter.org

Betty's phone: 928.474.4268

Web site: www.merrittcenter.org

Mailing address: The Merritt Center, P.O. Box 2087, Payson, AZ 85547

October 6, 2012 MINUTES: Motion to approve by Carol Culbertson, seconded by Bernie Kaplan. Motion carried.

TWO TREASURER'S REPORTS presented by Treasurer Jesse Gersten. Reports are on file with the Secretary.

SICKNESS AND DISTRESS: It was reported that Dan Caldwell, Representative Schweikert's Office, was at the hospital with his wife in labor.

REPORTS:

1. VA Medical Center Phoenix – Karen Sparks reported that the Patient Advocate Office has moved to the Turquoise Clinic. She reminded us that the Phoenix Veterans Day Parade is Monday, November 12th. Parking at the VA Medical Center: nothing new to report. Karen reminded us to be sure to vote on November 6th!

2. National Memorial Cemetery of Arizona (NMCA) - Jerry Rainey, new Director, NMCA, reported that he arrived one month ago, having served previously in Eagle Point, Oregon; and Houston, TX. Funds have been received for a new columbarium project. The busiest days at the NMCA are Monday and Friday, about 30 internments daily. There is no backlog, with bookings 2-3 weeks out. Wreaths Across America Day is scheduled for December 15, 2012 across the nation. Welcome, Jerry!

3. Arizona Dept of Veterans' Services: Dave Hampton representing Director Strickland

Dave reported that Director Strickland is in Kingman. In October the Military Family Relief Fund Commission addressed 5 applications from soldiers for financial assistance, granting \$24,000. Regarding the Cemetery in Marana, AZ, the Dept of Veterans' Services has the deed in hand, it's official. The Tucson Veterans Home has 49 residents. The third residential wing is scheduled for early December. A fence will be built between the Tucson Veteran Home and the Tucson VA Medical Center.

The Camp Navajo project west of Flagstaff will consist of 60 acres for a planned Veteran Home and Cemetery. The deed has been sent to the Secretary of the Army. An architect will be selected.

Jerry Rainey, Director, NMCA, took a few minutes to explain how the 75-mile distance ruling came about. It is the policy of the VA/Veterans Affairs to provide the service of a Veterans cemetery within 75 miles of 90 percent of the Veterans across the country. Data shows that a 75-mile radius defines the effective “service area” of a Veterans cemetery.

4. UAV Board of Directors - Chairman Bradley

Over 500 guests participated in the Arizona Veterans Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony. Feedback on the Induction Ceremony is very positive.

5. UAV Legislative Committee – Chairman Lionel Sanchez

Legislative Committee Chair Sanchez reported that the Copper Shield Award Ceremony will take place on Wednesday, February 13th, at the Mission Palms Tempe Hotel, 60 E. 5th Street, Tempe. Representative Heather Carter will be the Recipient of the 2013 Copper Shield Award (Legislator of the Year).

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

1. Upcoming December 7, 2012 Remember Pearl Harbor Ceremony – Judy Hatch, Event Co-Chair

Co-Chair Judy Hatch reported that the event will be bigger than ever with the Payson High School Band participating as well as the Flyover. There will also be a groundbreaking ceremony regarding the “Guns to Salute the Fallen.”

NEW BUSINESS/OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS:

1. Report of the 2013 Nominations Committee – Judy Hatch, Ron Capek, and Bob Skopac

On behalf of the Nominations Committee, Judy Hatch presented the following UAV Slate:

Chair – Bob Madden
Vice Chair – Terry Araman
Secretary – Carol Culbertson
Treasurer- John Burden
Directors – Gene Crego, Phil Hanson, Reggie Yates

Additional nominations from the floor will be taken at the December 1st UAV Meeting. Elections will be conducted at the December 1st UAV Meeting, followed by the Installation of Officers and Directors.

With thanks to the Nominations Committee for their volunteer work!

2. Secretary Culbertson will be visiting family in Hawaii November 20 to December 4th. Acting UAV Secretary taking the December 1st Minutes will be Carol McKnight, MOWW Representative to the UAV.

GOOD OF THE ORDER ANNOUNCEMENTS:

1. Operation Holiday – Arizona: Toni Grimes and Brandi Shannon presented Operation Holiday - Arizona, which helps bring holiday spirit to military and veteran families with children under the age of 18. Brandi has been coordinating adopt-a-family programs since 2003. Donors commit to purchasing presents for the children (valued at \$50 per child), and non-perishable food and/or gift cards for a holiday dinner for the entire family (valued at \$100). Tax-deductible donations, small and large, are welcome; mail to: WACVA – Chapter 68, P.O.Box 32163, Phoenix, AZ 85063. Deadline: December 1st. Point of contact: Brandi Shannon at: brandiohaz@yahoo.com or 623.694.5357.

2. Wreaths Across America – Help place wreaths at 550 cemetery locations nationwide, deadline: December 15, 2012. \$15 cost with \$5 going to Gold Star Wives (contact: Pat Kelly, Gold Star Wives, 602.973.6744, phxpatkelly@aol.com)

3. Friday, November 9th, 9 am: Veterans Employment Initiative – Press Conference at City Hall, Phoenix. This was the subject of Mayor Stanton’s presentation at our October 6th UAV meeting. Point of contact: Melissa Lange at email: melissa@southwestveteranschamber.com

4. Friday, November 9th: Gilbert Veterans Day event at Higley High School in Gilbert.

5. Saturday, November 10th: Daisy Mountain Veterans Day Parade in Anthem.

6. Monday, November 12, 8:30 am: Northwest Valley Veteran Ceremony, Desert Brass Band, Guest Speaker: George Cushing.

7. Monday, November 12, 12:30 pm: Ribbon cutting at Tempe Beach Park (David Lucier)

8. Saturday, November 17: ASU vs. Washington State game – Salute to the Military – Free tickets at Vet Tix (David Lucier)

9. Tuesday, November 27, 11:30 am Optional lunch, 12:30 pm free program:
“Submarines Past & Present” power point presentation, Naval Order of the US,
Arizona Commandery, Macayo’s Restaurant, 4001 N. Central Avenue, Phoenix 85012
(point of contact: Carol Culbertson, email: claudehc@yahoo.com)

10. Arizona Veterans Hall of Fame Society (AVHOFS) – Rick Romley, President,
reported that the AVHOFS is forming an AVHOF Foundation , and establishing a
Memorandum of Understanding with the Veterans Heritage Project (teacher Barbara
Hatch and Cactus Shadows High School). Thirteen (13) high schools now participate
in the Veterans Heritage Project.

50/50 Raffle Winner: Jim Katzenberger, \$37, UAV Treasury: \$37.00.

**Next Meeting: Saturday, December 1, State Veteran Home, Liberty Hall, 10 am to
Noon.**

Closing prayer was given by Chaplain Bohach.

Meeting adjourned at 11:45 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/CAROL CULBERTSON
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