



The United Veterans Coalition of Colorado
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PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Dick Young



You will soon be receiving your Invitation to attend our UVC Accolades and Remembrances Awards Luncheon, to be held on May 18, 2022, starting at 11:30, at the Littleton Elks Lodge 1650 at 5749 South Curtis Street, Littleton. The Luncheon is free to us, thanks to the veterans group there that are very active in helping veterans and those groups that work with them. We are asking all who want to come to pay tribute to and thanks to a handful of those individuals and groups that will be receiving our UVC awards. As part of the celebration, we will also recognize and pay homage to Steve Rylant and Michelle Mallin who both gave so much to the UVC.

We are asking you to make reservations as indicated on the Invitation, as seating is somewhat limited there, and while we want a full house, we don't want people coming who did not make reservations and therefore won't have a seat.

Also in the works, is the detailed planning that must be done for our

50th Birthday, which will take place on October 15 at the quite impressive Gaylord Hotel located out close to Denver International Airport. As this will be our only major fundraiser for the year, it is important that all of us think about those we know who actively support veterans causes and might want to help with our UVC efforts. After all, it is a Fund Raising Gala. So, while this Gala will help us raise the funds we need to do all that we are doing to help veterans through our 120 member organizations, it is the one time of the year when many of our Member organizations attend, by either sending several of their members to attend, or buying a table which helps even more.

And, as always, if you are or know someone who has a little time and enjoys volunteering to help others, particularly veterans and veterans groups, even if it is a small job, your time can sure be put to good use. Just contact me at dickyoung123@gmail.com.

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State Legislative Committee
Shelly Kalkowski, Co-Chair
Robbie Robinson, Co-Chair
Dan Jablan, Legislative Liaison

The next UVC Member Meeting will be
April 12th on Zoom

April 1 marks the 80th day of the Colorado General Assembly's 2022 session. Here's an update on the bills your State Legislative committee is tracking:

- HB22-1329 2022-23 Long Bill (Budget) has been closely monitored by the UVC in support of the Department of Military and Veteran's Affairs budget request which originally included a request for a new Women Veteran Service Officer (VSO) for the Division of Veteran's Affairs. While the current bill does provide an additional FTE position it is not specifically in support of women veteran programs. Instead, it states in a footnote "that at least 1.0 FTE for which the Department is appropriated funding shall be responsible for developing and implementing an equitable, diverse, and inclusive outreach program for veterans of the armed services."

- To date five bills and one concurrent resolution garnered UVC support positions.

- HCR22-1003 Extend Homestead Exemption to Gold Star Spouses is the concurrent resolution that aligns with UVC's Number One goal for this session. The action passed unanimously through the first committee of reference and is now waiting to be addressed in House Appropriations. If passed by both chambers and signed by the governor, this resolution will place a referendum on the November ballot extending the State's Homestead Act property tax exemption to Gold Star Spouses. The Homestead Act is created in Colorado's Constitution, rather than statute, and it can only be amended by the voters.

- HB22-1102 Veterans and Military Status in Fair Housing adds veteran and military status to the protected classes included in the state's fair housing practices. The bill passed both chambers and is now at the governor's desk. →

- HB22-1219 Veterans Resource Information Clearinghouse Online Portal provides annual appropriations and allows for a third-party contractor for the previously approved online resource database managed by the Division of Veteran's Affairs. It's also waiting to be addressed in House Appropriations.

- SB22-116 Increase Occupational Credential Portability adds a military occupational specialty to the types of occupational credentials that qualify a person for a credential though the occupational credential portability program. This bill passed out of the Senate and assigned to House Business Affairs & Labor.

- SB22-093 Expand Senior and Veteran Property Tax Exemptions died early in committee.

- SB22-190 United States Space Force Special License Plate will create a Colorado license plate available to serving members or veterans of the US Space Force. The plate will be consistent with similar plates available to serving members or veterans of the US Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps and Coast Guard. Introduced this past week, the UVC has yet to take a position but will most likely be in support.

Additional bills being monitored include HB22-1093 Updates to Bingo and Raffles Law; SB22-010 Pretrial Diversion for Person with Behavioral Health; SB22-021 Treatment Behavioral Health Disorders Justice System, and SB22-079 Dementia Training Requirements Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment Department of Health Care Policy and Financing Rules.





The All Veterans Honor Guard (AVHG) was established in 1993 after the US military ceased providing military honors to departing veterans (except for military retirees) at Fort Logan National Cemetery. The AVHG originally consisted of one team who provided 78 military honors in 1993. In 2021 five AVHG teams provided 1,554 military honors for departing veterans.

Although the AVHG is served by nearly 70 dedicated veterans, we are losing members who can no longer serve because of health issues or advanced age. While new members are joining our ranks our membership continues to decline. Should the AVHG discontinue to provide military honors, many veterans may not receive military honors.

Join the AVHG

Veterans are encouraged to join an existing AVHG team and veterans' service organizations are welcomed to form a new team to help serve our noble cause.

Contact us today:

Phone: 303-927-7615

Email: honorguard@allveteranshonorguard.org



Warriors Write Retreat at Sylvan Dale Ranch

Submitted by Ida Tholen

The Heart J Center for Experiential Learning hosted the Warriors Write Retreat for female veterans the weekend of 11-13 March at the Sylvan Dale Guest Ranch, located just west of Loveland, Colorado to inspire women veterans to write their stories and get them published. Three workshops were held throughout the weekend with local female writers providing the tools and empowerment needed to help women make their voices heard. "Claire Boyles opened the door, Kerrie Flanagan gave us the tools, and Laura Pritchett showed us how to walk through the door and get started using the tools. The key is that we now have the permission from the world and from ourselves to tell our stories, because stories matter," Laura Armstrong said in her closing remarks. Laura is the founder of the Heart J Center for Experiential Learning.

The women veterans also enjoyed some Peaceful Breath exercises provided by Bianca and a watercolor workshop taught by Adrienne Sommers. Saturday evening was spent by the campfire with the women talking, laughing, and enjoying each other's company.

This is a monthly program for women veterans from all branches, all years. They will gather in person and by zoom each month to write, learn, tell stories and connect. New members are welcome. These meetings will be two hours long on either Saturday or Sunday.