

County Commissioners Consolidated Report 2014 -2015

Date: May 12, 2015
9:00 AM

Reference: The Utah County Veterans Service Organization Consolidated Report

TO: Utah County Commissioners

With every negative issue in our lives there are positives to build on. The best thing that happened to our Veterans was to get a letter to sunset our contract for our Veterans Service Organizations. The biggest shock of my 38 years of service and 30 years of community and state service was a city manager to tell me "We do not owe the Veterans anything." I was told this on three occasions. To hear that was shocking, humbling, hurtful" but ever so true". We were not saying that anyone owed us anything but I felt our prominence of his job managing the Veterans pool, and giving him a managerial position and job would have been a wake up call especially for him when Veterans were relevant to this community. All the Veterans Service organizations had fallen into membership slumps, apathy set in and attendance was sporadic. We never thought we would become homeless. We veterans had gone silent for several years. That silence needed to be awakened and our communities "WE Ourselves" needed to be renewed with action, purpose, and vitality to add remembrance of their long history for this community with the history on our walls from the Spanish American War to present. It is our responsibility to tell our story. Veterans Services have to again be responsible to report their service action in city, county and state councils. We must report to leaders of their relevancy and what they do. Our Veteran Service Organizations needed to be reminded also that our Mayors, City Council Members and local leaders are not members of our historical organizations anymore and their historical compassionate service fraternities.

My Goal today is to thank our County Commissioners for accepting our past failures and allow us a new vision so that we never hear again from our community that we are not doing our community duties. I do not ever want to hear from my community that "We do not owe the Veterans anything" because of our silence. And I want to be the Veterans leader to earn our communities respect not for what we did serving our Country, but for what we are doing everyday.

Where I carry a personal resentment for that comment I owe personal gratitude. I want to say Thank you. We needed that integrity and opinion of our youthful leadership to tell us we weren't using the space they give you so they are going to give it to someone that will use it. You see where a negative but truthful comment came out we needed to regain our prominence of SERVICE and again regain our respect through SERVICE and report our relevancy to our community. Thank you Commissioners for your faith in us in allowing us to serve in Utah County. Our service has grown from a city to a county responsibility. It is with gratitude you gave us that challenge.

Again we thank you for the opportunity to have a home in the Old Historical Courthouse. Your confidence and support has allowed us to conduct business in a place of honor that gives Utah County Veterans the honor and respect they have earned through their selfless service to this country and to the service they continue to give to this City, community, county and state.

We thank you for the continued support and recognize our County supporters. County Parks, Don Nay, Brady, Deleen and Lorna in Scheduling and set ups, Gary Smith and Gary Swartz, Keys and repairs and hanging memorabilia. We also wish to thank your Staff especially Casey, and Debbie for their involvement in scheduling, advising and supporting us.

The Utah County Veterans Service Organization is established from the beliefs and goals of The American Legion a belief of the 4 pillars. This purpose is intended to cover all Veteran Service Organizations. Therefore, helping you understand my experience I have categorized our Mission into the American Legion Four Pillars to accomplish our Utah County Veterans Service Organizations goals. They are as follows: Veteran's Rehabilitation, Americanism, Child welfare and National Security.

The prepared a detail Consolidated Report is presented before you. I will only brief you on the highlights of our accomplishments that enhance our Veterans Services Please ask questions if you see interest in others.

The 2014 Daily Consolidated Report is available at your request to validate the Volunteer hours and mileage presented. The major high points of our success are based on The Utah County Veterans Service - 4 Pillars. Americanism, National Security, Child Welfare, and Veteran Rehabilitation.

AMERICANISM

- O Attended all Mayors Veterans Councils
 - Memorial Day Ceremony
 - Veterans Day Ceremony
 - Freedom Village “Honor Walk” – Freedom Festival Village Days – Utah County Veterans Memorial

- O Started Utah County Veterans Service Councils – Community Council - every 3rd Thursday. Attendance is growing.

- O Boys and Girls State
 - Timpview and Provo High School Boys and Girls State (5 Boys 5 Girls)
 - Supported and testified Utah State Legislation Boy and Girl State.
 - Received \$50,000 With a return of 1.2 Million on Boy State Scholarships and 2.5 Million on Girl State Scholarships in education.

- O American Legion Eagle Scholarship:
 - Sponsor scholarships for Eagle Scouts through the Utah Parks Council to apply for the \$10,000.00 and the 3 - \$8,000 scholarship available
 - Conrad Smith from Timpview H.S. represented Provo at National.
 - Established Eagle Scout Courts of Honor Presentations, Presenting Flags sponsored by Congressman Chaffetz Office to our newly honored Eagle Scouts.

- O Flag Program: Bought Flags and brackets for every classroom that did not have them At Timpview High School and Provo High School.

- O State Chair Americanism Programs

- O Flag Presentations and Displays
 - Freedom Festival Flag Retirement Ceremony
 - “Remembering Utah’s Fallen.” Tribute to Utah’s Gold Star Families with 167 Gold Star family members present With Patriot and Legion Riders lining the Walk of Honor” Blue, Gold Star and MIA and POW families Tribute.” Girl Scouts Evolution of the Flag, Troop 51 Retiring the colors.
 - Freedom Festival Patriotic Services – Laura Bush
 - Host Department Executive Committee Meeting of The American Legion
 - Timpview Veterans Day Tribute
 - Congressman Chaffetz Military Interviews
 - Arts Festival (National Colors)
 - Utah County Fair
 - Freedom Festival at Provo Storytelling
 - Freedom Festival at Provo Speech contest
 - Freedom Festival at Provo Star and Stripes Riverwoods
 - Provo Historical Court House Display on Rotundra for Visitors and Scout Tours
 - Denny’s Veterans Fund Raiser (Springville)

- Received 2 Proclamations
 - “American Legion Birthday Proclamation” March 15th Mayor Curtis.
 - Received the “Proclamation for Veterans Day”

- Hosted The American Legion
 - National Commander
 - National 1st Vice Command
 - The American Legion National Commander Elect

- Hosted District Meetings
 - VFW
 - DAV
 - American Legion District Meetings

- Hosted
 - State Convention – Department of Utah – American Legion Banquet
 - BYU ROTC Ball

- Attended National American Legion Convention in August, Houston, TX

- Blood Drives
 - Starbucks – Runners Corner
 - University of Utah ROTC
 - Martins Collision
 - Appleby’s
 - Macey’s Food and Drug Store

- Flipped Pancakes for Kiwanis 4th of July Celebration

- Presented ROTC / JROTC Military Excellence Awards and Scholastic Excellence Medals
 - Army BYU ROTC
 - Air Force ROTC
 - Army JROTC Independence High School
 - Air Force JROTC Provo High School
 - University ROTC Banquet Dining Out

- The School; Award Medal Program: The Award is based on Courage, Honor, Leadership, Patriotism, Scholarship and Service. These awards are given to the most outstanding Boy or Girl in these categories, which if cultivated, result in better Citizenship. “This is the highest honor awarded American Youth by The American Legion”.
 - Timpview - 3 Awards
 - Provo High School – 2 Awards

- Memorials and dedications.
 - Sponsored painting the Flag Pole Fort Douglas
 - Landscaping of Fort Douglas Gold Star (911 Slurry)
 - Utah “Fallen Warrior Memorial”
 - Served Colonial Flag Advisory Board Sandy “Utah Veterans Freedom Memorial”
 - Fund raiser Chairman “Special Forces Memorial” and Dedication. at Draper

- Attended MIA/POW Honor luncheon

CHILD WELFARE:

- O Chartered Sons of The American Legion again hitting 100% Membership (2nd year)
- O Sons of the American Legion Campout 3 days Strawberry
- O Collected \$3,700 for National Emergency Fund (NEF) American Legion
- O Chaired Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts involvement in Flag Retirement and Flag Evolution.
- O Established "Eagle Scout Courts of Honor" Consists of a Ceremony to present Flags to Eagle Scouts Sponsored by Congressman's Chaffetz office.

NATIONAL SECURITY:

- O Attended 2 Yellow Ribbon Ceremonies for Soldier being deployed.
- O Hosted the 19th Special Forces Deployment Yellow Ribbon
- O Presented 48 "Certificates of Commitment" for High School Seniors being activated For Basic Training after graduation. (Operation Grass roots)
- O Grass Roots Program supporting Active Duty Recruiters in our County (Wasatch Front Advisory Board) Qtrly Meetings
- O Gave Pledge of Allegiance – State Rotunda – Traditional Marriage Conference
- O Sponsored Marine BN being deployed to help set up a Marine Library in Area if Operation. Charitable fund 501 (c) (3) support
- O Completed Employer Support for the Guard and Reserve Training. ESGR Military Outreach Coordinator for Utah O Completed Employer Support for the Guard and Reserve Training. ESGR Military Outreach Coordinator for Utah

VETERAN'S REHABILITATION"

- O Rural Veteran's Forum Payson Veterans Home
- O Co-Sponsored a Veterans Welcome Home Banquet.
- O Hero's2Hire
 - Salt Lake City
 - Provo County Convention Center
 - South Town. Sandy
- O Veterans Treatment Courts:
 - Veterans Treatment Court Mentors
 - Coordinator for the Court. Writing the District 4 Mentor's Handbook for Veterans Treatment Court
 - Completed National 48 Hr. Training Webinar
 - Completed 3 day National Training in Salt Lake City, at Matheson Courthouse for Certification.
 - Scheduled for Court Training in Tulsa in August)
 - Sponsor Projects for Veterans Court Ordered Community Service and Veterans in need

- Veterans Centers
 - UVU
 - Westminster Colleges.

- Completed training Employer Support for the Guard and Reserve
ESGR Military Outreach Coordinator for Utah
 - Presentations to 3 Yellow Ribbon deployments

- Working to initiate the use of Hyperbaric Oxygen Treatment for Veterans ‘Pro Bono’ Dr Sherman Johnson. (Therapy that help eliminate drug usage)

- Veterans Owned Business
 - Partnership Board Member

- Veterans Loan Conference
 - Planning Committee 1st Conference May 7th

- Sponsoring Bike Across America June 15th, 2015 Tom LaTallion. (Leaving from Provo)

- Funeral Details.
 - Participated several Funeral Details
 - Presented the colors 1 Funeral Detail
 - Mention: Spanish Fork, Orem, and Lehi Collectively over 300 burials

- Met with Secretary of Veterans Affairs
 - Eric Shensiki – VA issues effecting Veterans
 - Secretary McDonald Thursday May 9th.

- Sponsored 2 day Volkswalk for Suicide Awareness and Prevention.

- Worked with BYU Interns
 - Established Net work for Suicide and Awareness Prevention
 - Andrew Wilson took the lead and chaired this program and launched it 30 April

- Visitation to Veterans in Hospitals and Nursing Homes.
 - Decorated 3 Trees at the George Whalen Veterans Administration Hospital
 - Worked in George Whalen’s Hospital Christmas Gift Shop
 - Operation Home Front collected, boxed, taped and shipped 5000 stockings and bags of toys and Candy from Dollar Stores all over the state.
 - Collected Dollar stores toys in Orem, Provo and Lehi 5000 stockings.
 - Through Operation Home Front we collected and distributed 621 books to Payson and Salt Lake nursing homes libraries. And help support toys for the Payson nursing Home Sub for Santa ‘Santa Zone’

- Distributed several hundred Veterans Baskets to home bound Veterans in Utah County. Of that we distributed 85 identified veterans in Provo and Orem nursing homes.

- Visited Nursing Homes to talk about ‘Pension Poachers.’ (Attorney’s, Aids, special support groups fraudulently giving free VA Benefits and selling them products they did not need).

- Attended C.R. England Dedication Ceremony. Working to see that Veterans are treated fairly and report hires (150 – 300 Nation wide monthly)

Commissioners Support:

The continued use of Facility and office in the Courthouse and Limited use of the trails.

Media. Help us to broadcast the great things Veterans do. They will not pat themselves on the back or look for recognition. They will continue to be the "Silent Warriors" that they always have always been and will do things that have been done since the Civil War. When we are gone we hope that others like ourselves will pick up and carry the torch that has been carried by our predecessors. Our plea is to continue to acknowledge them because they will not ask for this recognition.

We are a dying generation and the generation that Ronald Reagan spoke about when he said "We are only one generation from losing our freedom and liberty." That is how we are in our Veteran Service Organizations if we lose interest in what has been here for years. We are not asking or demanding respect and we openly acknowledge that we still must earn it through Service we provide. It is disappointing that we do not get the support we want to give due to other distracting Headliners in the newspapers and TV News. Due to Headliners that are being broadcast we do not see the honored youth and recognition given to promote Eagle Scout Scholarships, Boys State and Girls State Scholarships, and Oratorical Scholarships. Every Organization has Scholarships. These add up to thousand of dollars lost in our community county and state because we cannot get media to help us promote these Scholarship opportunities for our youth.

Again Thank You. The contribution of the Facilities alone has been a significant improvement to the growth of the Utah County Veteran Service Organizations. You have given them back pride, honor and respect. And we humbly thank you for your gracious support.

In Summary:

We have documented 2337 Volunteer Hours, 14,312 Miles and over \$11,690.90 spent on Awards, Scholarships and Youth programs. We have donated over \$3,700 to National Emergency Fund. And also unreported Service volunteer hours and miles from our community service organizations and other thousands of dollars I cannot report,. Thank you for your continued Support. I am prepared to answer any question you may have.

For God and Country

Randy D. Edwards
Utah County Veterans Service Coordinator
Old Historic Courthouse, RM 311
801-224-6168 (Cell)
801-224-7477 (Home)
801-226-7240 (Fax)