

2010 ANNUAL REPORT

City of San Francisco Veterans Affairs Commission

The year started with a somewhat elongated **Election of Officers** process, which eventually included a public election **resulting in the installation of Commissioner JAMES GUGLIELMONI as President; Comm. Raymond WONG, Vice President, and Comm. Dara WONG as Secretary.**

After resolution of election issues **the Commission initiated work in areas that are more particularly relevant to veterans of our current and recent conflicts.** Commissioners **Varni** and **Caldera** were instrumental in development of a **new Veterans Club and Assistance Center at City College**, which, by years' end, had evolved to a viable on-campus organization, with numerous 'student veterans' participating. The Vets Club is especially helpful in full utilization of available Education Benefits of the new "Post 9/11 GI Bill" for the 500 student/Vets on the City College campus. **Based on the success of the Vets Club at City College, the Commission will seek encourage similar facilities for Vets at other colleges and Universities within the city.**

Another issue that the VAC spent considerable energy on during 2010 involved **space requirements and usage plans of our home, the War Memorial Veterans Building.** Working closely with the **War Memorial Veterans Commission**, VAC members advised and assisted in development of **Space Requirements for Veterans organizations after the planned remodel and seismic retrofit.** At several meetings during the year, the **VAC also expressed unanimous support for future leasing of building space to Veterans Service Organizations (like Swords to Plowshares, and the USO).** The net impact of these initiatives is ***to insure that the War Memorial Veterans Building remains first and foremost, a facility dedicated to service beneficial to the growing San Francisco Veterans Community.***

Additional initiatives introduced during the year included:

- Research into **viability of development of a Veterans Court (in San Francisco)**, based on models of recently established Veterans Courts in San Diego, and New York. **Comm. Guglielmoni** has taken the lead in further development.
- Research into viability of establishing **protocols for identification of Veterans within the Homeless Community in San Francisco** for use in the Census Bureau Questionnaires. **Comm. Noetzel** has taken the lead in further development.
- Research into viability of development of a **San Francisco Health Department 'Base-Line Study' to monitor SF Veterans (and their progeny) for deleterious health effects due to exposure to Depleted Uranium Munitions** in most recent conflicts. **Comm. Noetzel** has taken the lead in further development.
- Research into viability of **reduction or elimination of fees for SF Street Vending Licenses for Veterans.** **Comm. Gibbs** has taken the lead in further development.

Official VAC CORRESPONDENCE initiated during the year included:

- **Letter of appreciation** to the Presidio Trust for **establishment of the Japanese/American Veterans Exhibit and National Cemetery Overlook** in the Presidio.
- **Letter to SF Mayor and Government** urging Planning Commission approval and **support for plans to convert the facility at 150 Otis Street into permanent housing for homeless veterans.**
- **Letter to War Memorial Board of Trustees** in support of the **Memorial Court Veterans Memorial Project.** Commissioner Levin has been appointed to the Working Group Advisory Committee for development of the project.
- **Letter to SF Mayor and Government** detailing **allegations of misconduct** and malfeasance of a former American Legion Commander, and **requesting formal investigation.**

ANNUAL EVENTS organized and/or supported by VAC Commissioners.

Once again, in 2010, the traditional **Memorial Day Ceremonies and Veterans Day Parade** were organized by **Commissioners R. Champagne, R. Wong, and W. Levin.** It is notable that for the 48th consecutive year, **Commissioner Renie Champagne** has taken the lead in organization of the annual Veterans Day Parade in San Francisco. And once again, Commissioners **W. Levin** and **R. Wong** organized yet another impressive Memorial Day event in the Presidio, this time **providing a special 60th anniversary salute to Korean War veterans.**

COMMISSIONERS INDIVIDUAL (anonymous) EFFORTS on behalf of Veterans.

- Several VAC Commissioners publicized and participated in events specifically designed to serve **Homeless Veterans in the Bay Area**. These included a Bay view area “**Homeless Connect**” event; the “**East Bay Stand Down**” event, and the November “**Project Homeless Connect 36**” event at the SFVAMC Downtown Clinic.
- As an officer in the **Disabled Veterans of America (DAV)**, a VAC Commissioner participated year-round efforts to help wounded vets attain appropriate VA benefits.
- In ongoing efforts to **find jobs and careers** for returning veterans, VAC Commissioners participated in planning and presentation of the **annual Ft. Mason Job Fair** under auspices of the **California Employment Development Department (EDD)**, where scores of employers are matched to job-seeking vets.
- A VAC Commissioner wrote the Executive Summary for a **Department of the Army Study** on the parallel effects of two of the signature injuries of ‘post-9/11’ conflicts, namely; **Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)** and the more recent incidents of **Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)**.

PERSONNEL CHANGES on the Commission

The appointment term of **Commissioner Jill BUCK** expired at the end of January. As she resides outside San Francisco, she will not be seeking a new appointment.

In July, by way of encouraging addition of more veterans from the “post-9/11 conflicts”, the **Board of Supervisors added two new seats to the Commission, increasing authorized strength to 17 members**. The Charter modification **specifically designated one of the new seats for a female veteran**. Recruiting efforts bring the VAC to full strength continue.

In August, **Anthony Alfidi was appointed as a new Commissioner**. Major Alfidi continues his service in the Active Reserve, and brings new expertise to the Commission as its first veteran of the Iraq/Afghanistan conflicts.

COMMISSIONERS ATTENDANCE RECORD – VAC Monthly Meetings, 2010

Meeting of:													
NAME	Ja	Fe	Ma	Ap	Ma	Jun	Jul	Au	Se	Oc	No	De	
1. Guglielmoni	P	P		X	P	P	P	X	A1	P	P	P	P
2. R. Wong		P	P	X	P	P	P	X	P	P	P	P	P
3. Baldonado		P	P	X	P	P	P	X	P	A1	A1	P	P
4. Caldera	P	P	X	P	P	X	P	P	P	P	P		X = No Meeting
5. Cauley		A1	A2	X		A1	P	P	X	A1	A1	P	A2 A2
6. Champagne		P	A3	X		P	P	P	X	P	P	P	A2 A2
7. Gibbs		P	P	X		P	P	P	X	P	A1	P	P
8. Gruwell		P	P	X		P	P	P	X	A1	P	A1	P
9. Levin	P	P	X		P	P	P	X	P	P	A1	P	P
10. Noetzel		P	P	X		P	P	P	X	P	A1	P	P
11. Thompson		P	P	X		P	P	A1	X	P	P	P	P
12. Varni		P	P	X		P	P	A1	X	P	A1	P	P
13. Wilkerson		P	P	X		P	P	P	X	P	P	P	P
14. D. Wong		P	P	X		P	P	P	X	P	P	P	P
15. Buck		P											(Note: Term expired 1/31/10)
15. Alfidi										P	P	P	P

NOTES:

A1 = Absent; excused
A2 = Absent; illness
A3 = Absent; family illness

RATIFICATION AND SUBMITTAL:

This ANNUAL REPORT was RATIFIED, as written, by the Veterans Affairs Commission at its General Meeting on 4 April, 2011, and subsequently submitted, as required by Charter, (at Article X1; Sec. 5.105) to the Mayor and Board of Supervisors of the City of San Francisco as the Official 2010 Annual Report of the S.F. Veterans Affairs Commission, as undersigned by 2010 Commission President...

James Guglielmoni, Commissioner and
2010 VAC President