



Washington State Veteran's Employee Resource Group

# VERG Informer – October 2015

## From the Chair

### Changing of the Guard...Election Results

Time, like water, continues to flow on and in the blink of an eye, another year has rolled by and as a result, congratulations are in order as the Veteran's Employee Resource Group (VERG) held their annual elections mid-May through early June.

The outgoing chair, Cat Nichols (DVA) reflected on her tenure as VERG Chair. "I believe we've set an amazing precedent this year and I look forward to continuing to serve in 2016 as the Past Chair. This year the VERG has had many significant accomplishments and special emphasis projects that have resulted in a 40% increase in veteran hires across the state enterprise."



Lonnie Sikes, VERG Chair

The new Chair and Co-chair (Lonnie Sikes (DOL) and Jennifer McDaniel (LOT) indicated that this year will be a year of re-commitment for the VERG. "We will renew our commitment to getting the word out, regarding the VERG mission and purpose." stated Co-Chair Jennifer McDaniel. "Our focus will be on membership, continuing the current momentum and really "selling" the VERG across the State Enterprise." VERG members will make a significant "Marketing the Effort" because there many great things going on, but many people are not aware. We will be pushing the reinforcement of knowledge and support and improving our current products that include newsletters, lunch and learning events, job fairs, workshops, and the establishment of VERGs at the agency level."

## In this Issue:

- Elections Results (Page 1)
- Veteran Salute (Page 1-2)
- State Veteran's Day Activities (Page 3-4)
- Resources (Page 5)

## HONORING ALL WHO SERVED In times of War – In times of Peace

### Glenn Sorensen (WW II)

Glenn Sorensen died Monday, September 30th of natural causes at his home in Sacramento County's Wilhaggin area at the age of 101.

Glenn was a 27-year-old pilot stationed with the U.S. Army Air Corps, Oahu on Dec 7, 1941, when the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor. He survived the attack and went on to fly 84 bombing missions in the South Pacific as a member of the 42nd Bombardment Squadron.

Mr. Sorensen recounted some of his wartime experiences in a Sacramento Bee story commemorating Pearl Harbor Day in 2014. Mr. Sorensen told a Bee reporter that he was wiping down his black 1937 Buick when the attack on Pearl Harbor began. He climbed into his car and sped to the flight line and awaiting aircraft, only to find the planes and hangars destroyed. Three rounds struck his Buick sedan, but missed him.

Mr. Sorensen's son, Glenn Sorensen Jr., described his father as a modest man who didn't push the limits, a character trait that served him well as a pilot. He liked to say that he made the same number of landings at airports as takeoffs. There was one exception, his son said, when his plane was damaged by Japanese fire during a raid, forcing him to land on the beach of a South Pacific island. Mr. Sorensen's mother was notified that her son was missing in action. She learned a few days later that he and his crew had repaired the plane and made it back to their base.



Glenn Sorensen Continued...

Mr. Sorensen flew sorties during 1942's Battle of Midway, for which he was awarded the Silver Star, the nation's third-highest military honor for valor. He also endured the jungles of Guadalcanal, where his squadron saw battle.

He returned stateside after contracting dengue fever. He eventually was sent to Ardmore, Okla., where he served as flight director for the base, training B-17 crews for the European theater. Glenn Sorensen Jr. said his father, who left the military in 1945 with the rank of lieutenant colonel, never talked much about his war experiences. He joined a Pearl Harbor survivor's organization and paid for a lifetime membership, but he attended only one meeting. "He always looked forward, rather than backward," his son said.

Mr. Sorensen was born Aug. 1, 1914. His parents, Ray and Lucy Sorensen, grew grapes on a 40-acre ranch outside Fowler in Fresno County. He and two younger sisters grew up working on the farm, but "he thought life on the farm was unbelievably dull," his son said. "Sunday was the only day he got to go into town, to go to church."

Mr. Sorensen attended Fresno State College for two years, majoring in psychology. But it was the Depression, and he decided he should pursue a field with better job prospects. He had a girlfriend at UCLA, his son said, so he enrolled at Woodbury Business School in Los Angeles and earned a degree in business administration. He went to work after graduating, but by early 1941 it appeared that the United States would soon enter the war. Mr. Sorensen decided to enlist in the military, rather than wait to be drafted. Glenn Sorensen Jr. said his father had mechanical skills learned on the farm and flying appealed to him.

During a visit home in 1943, the War Department assigned Mr. Sorensen to speak to community groups. After speaking at a Baptist church in Fowler, he was introduced to Vernice DeVoe Hines, who was home from Stanford University. "About 14 to 16 dates later," his son said. "they were married." The couple celebrated 68 years together before Vernice Sorensen died in 2011.

After the war, Mr. Sorensen went to work for West Sacramento-based California Liquid Gas Corp. The company's owner and founder, Morris Rowles, was a mentor to Mr. Sorensen, who became the firm's vice president. He helped establish and oversee 500 retail dealers in 11 western states, often piloting his Beechcraft TravelAir to visit the various locations.

We salute you for your dedication and service to our nation. We will always be indebted to you.



## Veteran's Day Recognition Events

Adjutant General's Office (AGO): **November 3<sup>rd</sup>** (*AGO personnel only*)

**Time: TBA**

**Location: Chief Sealath training room; Downtown Seattle Office**

- Vince Standing Deer-Gomes will be speaking about the Native American experience in American wars.
- There will be a display honoring AGO co-workers and family members who are veterans.

**Labor and Industries: November 10<sup>th</sup>** (Open to the public)

**Time: 11:00AM to 12:00PM**

**Location: L&I Auditorium**

- The 15th annual Veterans Day Celebration Ceremony is set for 11:00 to Noon on Nov. 10th in Tumwater. Frank Buchheit will be the guest Speaker.
- There will be a slide show of L&I Veterans.
- Wall of Honor - a display honoring L&I co-workers who are veterans.
- The auditorium will be filled with displays and memorabilia for you to view.
- Veterans will receive a note from Director Joel Sacks.

**Department of Licensing: Veteran's Day Networking Lunch on November 10<sup>th</sup>** (Open to the public)

**Time: 11:30 am to 1 pm**

**Locations: HLB, Room 406E and Black Lake 2, Room 209**

- Honoring veteran's in DOL workplaces by holding potlucks on Nov. 10<sup>th</sup>. Providing an opportunity to network with each other and to just "burn some daylight".
- DOL invites all DOL veterans and/or spouses (including veterans outside of Olympia) to submit digital photos of you (family pics are welcome) in uniform or family member in uniform. Your photos will be part of a rotating slideshow that can/will be shared.

**Department of Natural Resources: (Open to the public)**

**Time: November 1-14, 2015**

**Location: Rotunda of the Natural Resource Bureau**

- The second annual Military Service Member Recognition banner will be displayed. The banner is 82" (wide) x 204" (height) and displays a photo of the veteran, highest rank achieved, duty station and branch of service.

**Washington State School for the Blind (WSSB)**

**Time: November 9-13 Military Display**

**Location: November 12 VA Hospital**

- From 9-15 November, the WSSB will be sharing document that will highlight veteran employees and family members. It will include photos of themselves/family members and it will be emailed and posted in several locations around the agency.

- Additionally, on November 12, the WSSB will be visiting the VA Hospital and their students will be celebrating by creating something personal and delivering it to the Veterans at the Vancouver VA Hospital. Students will be making tea light candle holders in woodshop, stain glass candle holders in crafts and the DLS students will be making goodies.

**Department of Corrections (November 4, 2015)****Time: 11:00AM-1:00PM****Location: Courtyard and Large Conference Room**

- The event will consist of a posting of the colors in the buildings courtyard and will move to the large conference room where a banner will be displayed for all DOC veterans who served to sign, a silent table will be present, a flag folding ceremony, and words from guest speaker, COL (RET) Michael P. Courts.
- DOC veterans are encouraged to wear something that represents their branch of service and bring memorabilia.
- All veterans attending will receive a "Thank you for your Service" wristband.

**International Association of Workforce Professionals (November 10, 2015); Open to the Public****Time: 12:00PM-1:00PM****Location: State Capitol Campus Veterans' Memorials** (World War II Memorial, Winged Victory Monument, Medal of Honor Memorial, POW-MIA Memorial, Vietnam Veterans Memorial, and ending at the Korean War Memorial)

- 24<sup>th</sup> Annual salute to veterans. Ceremony begins at the World War II Memorial located on the north edge of the State Capitol's West Campus next to 11th Ave.
- The event will consist of Speakers, Music, and a Bugler. The event will be emceed by Don Meseck.



## Resources

Below is a great link to a site that provides assistance to veterans with employment and necessary training.

<http://www.nasaa-vetseducation.com/>

This link will take you to the Washington State Transition Counsel website that discusses partnerships between public and private organizations that enables every service member to successfully transition into civilian employment and career opportunities in Washington.

<http://www.dva.wa.gov/about-wdva/washington-state-military-transition-council-wsmtc>

The site below links to a list of resources including county work source, education and many other resources to assist veterans.

<http://www.dva.wa.gov/State-County-Federal-Contacts>

The link below is a link providing assistance to veterans with finding employment.

<http://www.dva.wa.gov/benefits/employment>

The Washington State Patrol (WSP) has established a link to a website to identify individuals who applied to be a trooper and believe they were not given their Veteran's preference points on prior applicant tests.

[www.wspveteranlitigation.com](http://www.wspveteranlitigation.com)



DO YOU HAVE IDEAS OR INFORMATION TO DISSEMINATE? SUBMIT YOUR INFORMATION WITH A COMMUNICATIONS REQUEST AND THE COMMUNICATIONS TEAM WILL TAKE ACTION!

### CONTACT:

NEWSLETTER: BECKY BOUTILIER (DSHS) EMAIL: BOUTIB@DSHS.WA.GOV  
 SOCIAL MEDIA: FLETCHER MANSFIELD (DFW) EMAIL: FLETCHER.MANSFIELD@DFW.WA.GOV  
 WEBPAGE: PAUL CRUZ (DVA) EMAIL: PAULCR@DVA.WA.GOV

"In May 2013, Governor Inslee signed Executive Order 13-01 on employment opportunities for transitioning service members within Washington State".

### Communication's Sub-Committee Roster

Stacey Moore (HCA)  
 Becky Boutilier (DSHS)  
 Richard Worthy (DES)  
 Fletcher Mansfield (DFW)  
 Tommy Simpson (DOH)  
 Sheryl Whitcomb (L&I)  
 Bob Euliss (RCO)  
 Lara Adonis (DSHS)  
 Paul Cruz (DVA)  
 Cathrene Nicholas (DVA)  
 Rocio Ochoa-Geesaman (LNI)  
 Angie Hong (DNR)  
 Wayne Gilbert (UTC)  
 Bill Allman (HCA)