



Department of California
Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation
Anita Biggs, Chairman

BULLETIN 6
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Happy New Year!

Buffalo Soldiers", motto: "Ready and Forward". "We Can, We Will"

This holiday our Unit Buffalo Soldiers were "Ready and Forward" and proved "We can, We Will" Unit members worked overtime and extra hard to bring cheer to many of our state's Veterans and their families. Our Hats are off to YOU! Thank you for providing Christmas parties for children, hospitalized and ambulatory veterans! I have received reports that many of you hosted Veterans Resource Fairs, Stand Downs, food and clothing drives, helped and fed the homeless, I could go on and on. Just knowing of the great works our members are performing is extremely heart-warming and reminds me daily about how proud we should be to belong to the world's largest patriotic women's organization. Let's make this another fantastic year of honoring the service of our Veteran!

WELCOME HOME!!!



Welcome home, and thank you!

The marked end of the Iraq War will bring home many of our military service personnel. As the American Legion website announces "***As the Iraq generation comes home, please make sure they feel welcome at your Post***". Please visit The American Legion website at www.legion.org to learn of more ways to help returning veterans. We can do our part by helping those returning to make their transition seamless and supportive by offering services we already have. Don't forget to say Welcome Home and Thank You!

AWARDS

There are many opportunities for your Unit and/or District to receive some well-deserved recognition for your outstanding contributions and service to the Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation program.

Department Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Awards:

1. Best Overall VA&R Program (Unit) awarded to the Unit Chairman with the best report with supplemental (500 words): send to Department Chairman
2. Best Overall VA& R Program (District) awarded to the District Chairman with the best report with supplement (500 words): send to Department Chairman
3. 100% Reporting to District Chairman
4. Award will be given to the Unit and District with the most NEW Volunteers registered in the VA Voluntary Service program.
5. Award will be given to the Unit and District with the highest per capita donations to Patients Remembrance/Gift Shop and the Department VA&R Fund.

National Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Awards:

See attached two-page listing of National Awards. Unit members are eligible for most awards of these awards, unless the description indicates "Department". Please refer to the "How To Guides" and the Plan of Action to learn additional ways to earn awards by visiting National's website: www.alaforveterans.org.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

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Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Awards

1. Honoring Their Service Award
A citation plaque will be presented to the Unit that implements and carries out the Most Outstanding Event that brings honor and recognition to our veterans and/or service members at any VAMC or VA facility, veterans home, Fisher House, vet centers, homeless veterans shelter or any facility where more than 60 percent of the residents are veterans. Entry must be typewritten in narrative form not to exceed 1,000 words. Pictures and newspaper articles may be included but not to exceed six pages. Entry cannot be in bound book or hard cover. Cover sheet must include Unit name and number, address, Unit Chairman's name, address and phone number, date and location where the event was held. Submit to national committee member Rosemarie Hauck by June 1, 2012.
2. Department VA&R Program Awards
A citation plaque will be presented to the Department Chairman in each Division who reports the Most Outstanding Overall VA&R program as per the goals stated in this Plan of Action. Entry must be typewritten in narrative form not to exceed 1,000 words. All entries must be postmarked by June 1, 2012, and sent by the Department Chairman to the National Division Chairman.
3. Field Service Volunteer Hours Award
A citation plaque will be presented to a Field Service volunteer serving the greatest number of hours from April 1, 2011 – March 31, 2012, in each Division for Junior and senior members. Units should send their nominees to the Department Chairman, who is responsible for informing Units of the due date. Unit is required to certify hours of any nominee – the Department Chairman may ask for this information. The Department Chairman will then send the top hour volunteer Junior and senior volunteer to the National Division Chairman by June 1, 2012.
4. Home Service Volunteer Hours Award
A citation plaque will be presented to a home service volunteer serving the greatest number of hours from April 1, 2011 - March 31, 2012, in each Division for Junior or senior members. Units should send their nominees to the Department Chairman responsible for informing Units of the due date. Unit is required to certify hours of any nominee – the Department Chairman may ask for this information. The Department Chairman will then send the top hour volunteer Junior and senior volunteer to her respective National Division Chairman by June 1, 2012.
5. National Veterans Creative Arts Festival (NVCAF) Contribution Recognition
The NVCAF will recognize Departments that contribute at the Bronze, Silver and Gold level. This recognition will be made at the 2012 festival. ALA National Headquarters will submit qualifying donations to NVCAF staff in July. Donations considered are those received in the national office August 1, 2011, through June 30, 2012.
6. Unit VA&R Program Awards
A citation plaque will be presented to a Unit Chairman in each Division reporting the Most Outstanding Overall VA&R program as per the goals stated in this Plan of Action. Entry must be typewritten in narrative form not to exceed 1,000 words. Units will submit entries to the Department Chairman by her required date. All entries must be postmarked by June 1, 2012, and sent by the Department Chairman to the National Chairman.

For examples on how to implement each objective in this Plan, refer to the *How To* component at the end of this section.

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7. VAVS VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR AWARD/ALA NAC NOMINEE
The Department VA&R Chairman or ALA Department director of hospital volunteers will make nominations for consideration. A Department nomination must be prepared in a narrative format not to exceed 500 words and may include up to two letters of recommendation. This nomination is due to the national VAVS deputy by June 1, 2012. This award will be made to the nominee who has given extraordinary service to our nation's veterans through the ALA VA&R program and the VAVS program. Specifically this nominee must serve in an established VA assignment and be defined as a regularly scheduled volunteer. In addition, we are looking for an individual who is actively involved working with veterans in any one of the following areas: outpatient clinics; nursing homes; homeless veteran programs; hosted veteran-related functions outside the VA; or visiting veterans confined to their homes (as assigned by VAVS). The national winner will receive \$500 to be donated to the VAVS facility of her choice or to Veterans Creative Arts Festival and in recipient's name, and she will be profiled in the national *Auxiliary* magazine. In addition, the ALA will forward her name as our candidate for the VAVS National Advisory Committee Volunteer of the Year.
8. Volunteer Recruitment & Service Department Award
A citation plaque will be presented to the Department in each Division with the largest increase of regularly scheduled volunteers and regularly scheduled volunteer hours at a VA Medical Center from April 1, 2011 – March 31, 2012. The award winner will be determined by the national VAVS representative through verification of Department hours and number of volunteers as recorded by VAVS.
9. 100 PERCENT VAVS MEETING ATTENDANCE
An "Attendance Card" will be awarded to each representative and deputy who has 100 percent attendance to VAVS committee meetings at her assigned facility. The national VAVS representative will verify the winners from VA records.
10. 10,000 – Hour Volunteer Service Award
A special volunteer citation will be awarded to the eligible volunteer and a \$100 donation will be sent, in the eligible volunteers' name, to the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival Fund. Volunteer must have accrued 10,000 hours of volunteer service in a VA facility. Verification of hours must be received at National Headquarters by June 1, 2012.
11. 20,000 – Hour Volunteer Service Award
A special volunteer citation will be awarded to the eligible volunteer and a \$200 donation will be sent, in the eligible volunteers' name, to the National Creative Arts Festival Fund. Volunteer must have accrued 20,000 hours of volunteer service in a VA facility. Verification of hours must be received at National Headquarters by June 1, 2012.
12. Homeless Veterans Outreach Award
The ALA, TAL and SAL come together annually to select a Department that has done an outstanding job in the area of homeless veterans outreach. Award nominations are solicited each fall and the winners are recognized at national convention and the National NCHV Conference held each June in Washington, D.C. For more information, visit www.ALAforVeterans.org.
13. Hour Bar Recognition For Field, Home and Hospital Volunteers
Volunteers are recognized when specific hour milestones are reached: 50, 100, 300, 500, and 1,000. After the first 1,000 hour bar is awarded, the next bar will be earned in 1,000 hour increments. Hour bars are provided at no cost to Departments; however, the appropriate pin (from which the hour bar is affixed) can be obtained from Emblem Sales at the Department's expense. For further information, see *Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation: A Guide for Volunteers*.