



American Legion  
**MEL BAHER**  
COMMISSIONER



American Veterans  
**FRANK POCCHI**  
COMMISSIONER



Disabled American Veterans  
**DANIEL T. WEIST**  
COMMISSIONER



Veterans of Foreign Wars  
**THOMAS T. K. ZUNG**  
COMMISSIONER



Vietnam Veterans of America  
**BOB POTTS**  
COMMISSIONER

**ROBERT SCHLOENDORN**  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**JOHN C. MURPHY**  
SERVICE OFFICER MANAGER

## Cuyahoga County Veterans Service Commission

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### MINUTES

**DATE:** October 21, 2009 9:40 a.m.

**PRESENT:** Bob Potts, President  
Thomas Zung, Vice President  
Mel Baher, Secretary  
Frank Pocci, Commissioner  
Daniel Weist, Commissioner  
Robert E. Schloendorn, Executive Director

**ABSENT:** Thomas O'Donnell, Asst. County Prosecutor

**VISITORS:** John Evans, Sr., 13 District/American Legion  
Richard Danielson, Korean War Veterans of America, Post 69

**PURPOSE:** GENERAL MONTHLY MEETING

The meeting was called to order by the President, Bob Potts, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

A motion was made by Mel Baher and seconded by Dan Weist to dispense with the reading of the Consent Agenda as published. (All Commissioners have a copy of the minutes.)

**AYES:** Baher, Pocci, Potts, Weist, Zung. **NAYS:** None. Motion carried.

#### **COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS:**

##### Frank Pocci – AMVETS

- September 12<sup>th</sup>, I participated with the Italian American War Veterans Post 34 from Cleveland, and the Lorain and Youngstown posts, in a memorial ceremony held at the ITAM monument at the National Cemetery in Rittman, Ohio. Thirty-three veterans participated in the event. It has been agreed to hold this event every year in September.
- September 16<sup>th</sup>, the CCVSC Board held their open public meeting at the American Legion Post 91 in Berea, Ohio.
- I spoke with a teacher from Incarnate Word Academy who helps veterans at the VA hospitals and reviewed with her the services that the CCVSC provides. She told me that she does see veterans who are in serious need of financial help and, in some cases, may need help with claims. She now has the necessary information to contact the CCVSC.

- I arranged to send another box of brochures to the Cuyahoga County Public Library for redistribution to the branches as several of them have already run out of their supply.
- During a visit to the Home Family Club in Parma Hts., I had the opportunity to speak with the president of the Women's Auxiliary who was preparing a number of boxes for our soldiers in Afghanistan. I informed her of the services we provide so that they may refer any veterans who need help to our commission.
- Saturday, November 7<sup>th</sup>, VFW Post 3345 will be holding a Memorial Fund party at the Ford UAW Hall in Brook Park, Ohio. The donation is only \$5.00. Interested individuals may call Tom at 440-227-8555.
- September 25<sup>th</sup>, I attended the ITAM Post 34 meeting and luncheon where we voted on donations and scholarships. Membership was increased by 5 members bring the total number to 43.
- October 6<sup>th</sup>, I attended the AMVETS Post 80 General Meeting where I presented the 2010 Budget for approval.

#### Thomas Zung – VFW

- September 16<sup>th</sup>, the CCVSC held its outpost meeting at the American Legion Post 91 in Berea. We hold these outreach meetings twice a year and the Berea A.L. post may be one of the most successful and lively posts in Cuyahoga County. The next meeting to be held outside the commission will be in the spring of next year at the Euclid VFW Post 1056.
- Euclid VFW Post 1056 held their monthly meeting and the Post Commander reported about some veterans who were seeking help both financially and with their scholarship program money. The VA is sorely lagging behind and the CCVSC is helping with this scholarship educational issue. The Plain Dealer gave kudos to the CCVSC for responding to the problem.
- September 29<sup>th</sup>, I visited the Louis Stokes VA Hospital to inquire about the flu shots for our veterans. Reminder: the free flu shots are available to all veterans. Just bring your veterans ID card. The seasonal flu shots are being given on October 13<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, and 19<sup>th</sup> at the Wade Park VA Hospital in the 1<sup>st</sup> Floor Atrium. No appointment is needed.

#### Dan Weist – DVA

- I attended the VFW Post 7647 monthly meeting on October 7<sup>th</sup>. Unfortunately, my DAV post holds their meeting the same night, creating a conflict. I plan to rotate meetings in the future.

#### Mel Baher – American Legion

- Saturday, September 5<sup>th</sup>, was American Legion Post 91's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday.
- September 10<sup>th</sup>, the American Legion Post 91 Membership meeting was held at 8:00 p.m.
- September 11<sup>th</sup>, a Patriot Day Commemoration was held at 9:00 a.m. on the Berea City triangle, hosted by American Legion Post 91.
- September 13<sup>th</sup>, I attended the American Legion 13<sup>th</sup> District Fall Conference at American Legion Post 610 at 9:00 a.m.
- September 16<sup>th</sup>, the CCVSC held a 7:00 p.m. meeting at American Legion Post 91 as part of its outreach program.
- September 18<sup>th</sup>, American Legion Post 91 hosted the annual POW/MIA program at 7:00 p.m. on the pavilion.
- September 24<sup>th</sup>, the American Legion Post 91 Executive Board meeting was held at 7:00 p.m.

- September 28<sup>th</sup>, the American Legion 13<sup>th</sup> District Executive Board meeting was held at 7:30 p.m.

#### Bob Potts – VVA

- September 2<sup>nd</sup>, I attended my monthly board meeting and discussed ways to draw members to our meetings. We will not participate in the Sportsman Show because of the location and the inability to get volunteers.
- September 12<sup>th</sup>, I attended the District 2 meeting for the OSAVSC that was held in Medina. The meeting was on the services given by Medina VSC and what clients should expect from the veterans service commission.
- September 16<sup>th</sup>, I attended the monthly Membership meeting. We had a representative from the Ohio Sight Center give a talk on their service.
- October 6<sup>th</sup>, I attended the monthly Board meeting for the Chapter but we did not have enough officers attending to have a quorum. The meeting was canceled. Those present talked about joining other Chapters in the county so we can continue having events, and to get the State Vietnam Veterans of America Convention to Cleveland in 2010.
- October 17<sup>th</sup>, another Chapter member and I, presented the colors at Westlake High School for the meeting of the Teacher's Union.
- Because the October 19<sup>th</sup> Groundbreaking Ceremony at the Wade Park VA Hospital was postponed, I was able to attend a joint meeting at Congresswoman Marcia Fudge's Office to discuss veterans' benefits and ways of assisting them. Congresswoman Fudge is interested in finding a way to have a central information center for veterans to contact.
- October 20<sup>th</sup>, I attended our Membership meeting. Our speaker for the evening, Judy Sklarek, a vision-impaired veteran, did a talk on Hines Hospital in Chicago.

#### **STATE OF THE COMMISSION AND FINANCE REPORT (Attached)**

A motion was made by Mel Baher and seconded by Dan Weist to accept to report of the Executive Director as submitted.

AYES: Baher, Pocci, Potts, Weist, Zung. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

#### **OLD BUSINESS:**

It was noted for the record, that a letter from the Executive Director to Judge Nancy McDonnell regarding the current VVA appointment and upcoming American Legion appointment was sent October 20, 2009.

#### **NEW BUSINESS:**

The Executive Director submitted a letter to the editor in the Cleveland Plain Dealer supporting Issue I. If passed, the Ohio Department of Veterans Services would provide compensation to people serving active duty in the U.S. armed forces at any time during the Persian Gulf, Afghanistan and Iraq conflicts. These veterans would have to be Ohio residents at the start of active duty service and currently be Ohio residents. The state would provide stipends of \$100 a month - up to a total of \$1,000 - for the Ohio veterans and would provide stipends of \$50 a month - up to a total of \$500 - for Ohio veterans who served elsewhere during the conflicts. In addition, the family members of qualified deceased Ohio veterans could apply for a \$5,000 death benefit.

The Department of Veterans Affairs has extended Agent Orange benefits to service-connected Vietnam Veterans with three specific illnesses: B cell leukemia, such as hairy cell leukemia; Parkinson's disease; and ischemic heart disease.

Deb Fisher, Executive Director of the USO, contacted Dan Weist to see if the CCVSC could assist two minor daughters of a deceased veteran, coming in from out of town, who would like their mother to be buried in Missouri. The Executive Director is to gather more information and assist the family if possible.

Bob Schloendorn met with representatives of the Cleveland Cavaliers concerning radio advertisements. No decision has been made and Bob will continue to negotiate.

The CCVSC Holiday Luncheon has been set for Friday, December 18<sup>th</sup> at Massimo Da Milano's Restaurant, 1400 West 25<sup>th</sup> Street, Cleveland, Ohio.

**GOOD OF THE ORDER:**

Bob Potts opened the floor to visitors for any comments or questions. The following bullet points were topics of discussion.

John Evans, Sr.

- John has returned as a representative for the VA and is scheduled to do a presentation at the McCafferty Clinic on 11/10/09 from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. He will distribute CCVSC pamphlets while there.
- He attended the American Legion Service Officer school in Delaware. Representatives from the Ohio Veterans Home, Regional Office, and the medical centers were there. The turnout was good and he felt it was very informative.

Richard Danielson

- He would like more assistance available for returning veterans to file claims.

It was agreed to have a representative at the CSU and CCC campuses once or twice a month to speak about CCVSC services and benefits.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

There were no items for Executive Session.

With no further business, a motion was made by Mel Baher and seconded by Thomas Zung to adjourn the meeting at 11:06 a.m.

AYES: Baher, Poggi, Potts, Weist, Zung. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

Bob Potts, President

Mel Baher, Secretary

**CONTACT INFORMATION**

Requests for Financial Assistance: Jennifer Mazzeo, Manager/Senior Investigator (216-698-2621)

Filing claims with the Dept. of Veterans' Affairs: John Murphy, Service Officer Manager (216-698-2637)

Memorial Affairs: Laurene Rutkowski, Manager (216-698-2655)

Mobile Meals Program: Terry Walker, Social Worker/Case Management Officer (216-698-2379)

Executive Director: Bob Schloendorn (216-698-2611)

Commissioners: Lorri Slivka, Secretary to the Board (216-698-2646)

# **CUYAHOGA COUNTY VETERANS SERVICE COMMISSION**

## **Progress Report on the State of the Commission**

**September, 2009**

**Issued by:**

### **The CCVSC Commissioners**

**Bob Potts – President, VVA**

**Thomas Zung – Vice President, VFW**

**Mel Baher – Secretary, American Legion**

**Daniel T. Weist – DAV**

**Frank Pocci – AMVETS**

**October 21, 2009**

**Submitted By: Robert E. Schloendorn – Executive Director**

The following report summarizes the progress and state of the Cuyahoga County Veterans Service Commission as of September 30, 2009:

**Executive:**

The Executive Director

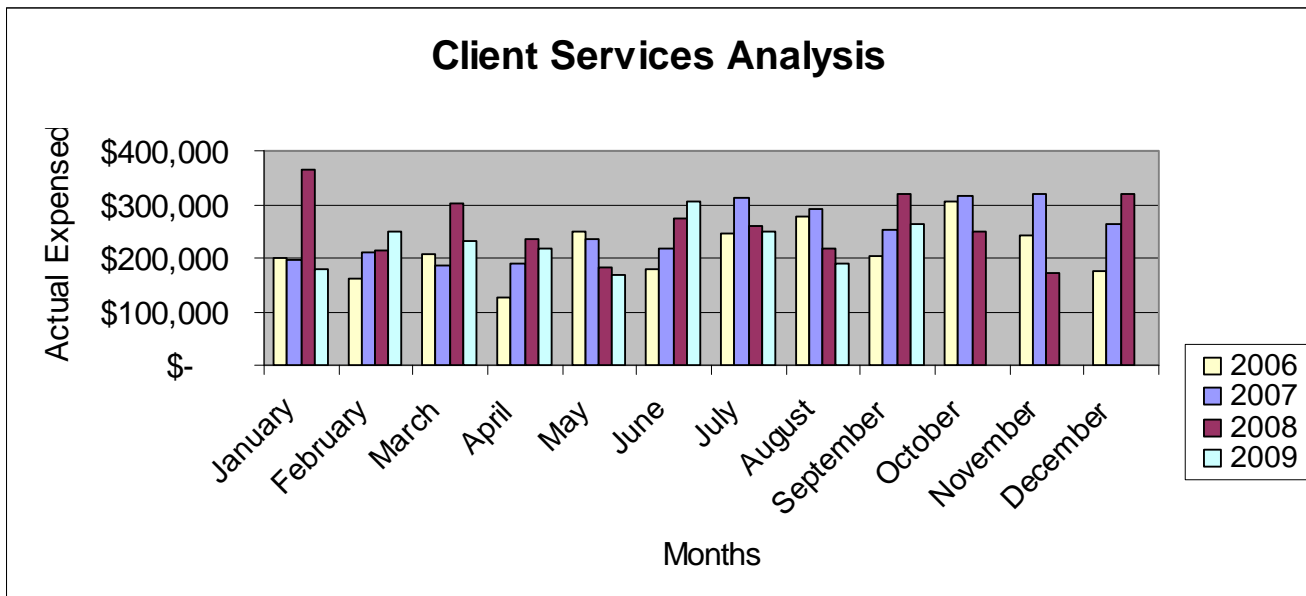
- Met weekly with general contractor, Deb Shaw, and each sub-contractor to discuss progress and new business.
- Attended Summit County Grand Opening ceremony.

**Finance Department**

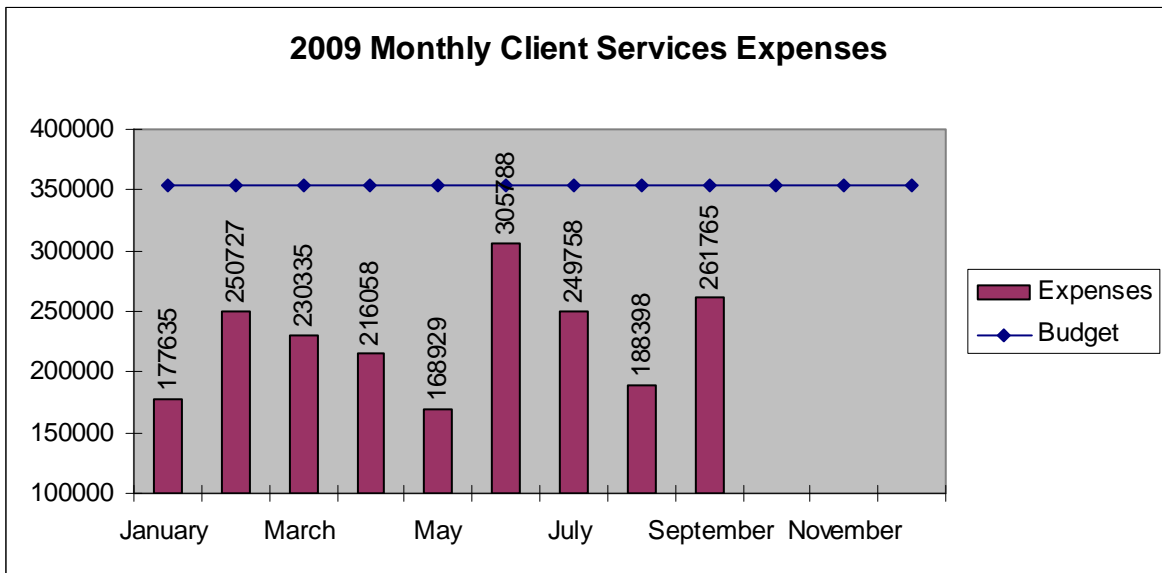
Below are selected September reports from the CCVSC Finance Department. The following charts/graphs depict the overall expenditures by area and type.

**Client services include: Financial Assistance for Medical, Food, Infant Layette, Personal Hygiene, Shoes & Clothing**

**Comparative Chart Analysis**



## Actual 2009 Expenses



## Total 2009 Expense Analysis

	Total Budget	YTD Expenditure	YTD Encumbr	Remaining Expenditures	2008 Projection	Budget Variance
<b>Salaries</b>	1,651,412	1,227,138	-	451,561	1,678,699	(27,287)
<b>Fringe Benefits</b>	640,989	406,984	-	230,922	637,906	3,083
<b>Commodities</b>	47,419	32,302	-	13,070	45,372	2,047
<b>Contract Services</b>	849,408	200,459	501,329	511,329	711,788	137,620
<b>Controlled Expenditures</b>	260,106	93,325	-	166,781	260,106	-
<b>Client Services</b>	3,946,028	2,049,392	12,331	1,065,000	3,114,392	831,636
<b>Other Expenditures</b>	456,295	181,968	117,618	134,872	316,840	139,455
<b>Capital Outlay</b>	331,350	40,980	171,130	280,150	321,130	10,220
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	8,183,007	4,232,548	802,408	2,853,685	7,086,233	1,096,744



**Assistance Department:**

September financial assistance totaled \$261,765, up from \$188,398 issued during August and down from \$320,045 issued in September of 2008. Year to date client assistance for 2009 is \$2,049,393 and YTD for 2008 was \$2,367,295 down \$317,902.

The September Financial Assistance Department activity report follows below.

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>September 2009</b>	<b>September 2008</b>
Number of clients seeking hardship assistance	1017	910
Total applications taken	890	782
Applications Withdrawn	(157)	(256)
Applications Denied	(33)	
Total applications approved for hardship assistance (with trans.)	700	526
Transportation only approvals	(482)	(223)
F/A applications approved	218	303

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>YTD 2009</b>	<b>YTD 2008</b>
Number of clients seeking hardship assistance	8637	7319
Total applications taken	7593	5351
Applications Withdrawn/Denied	(1826)	(1592)
Total applications approved for hardship assistance (with trans.)	5767	3759
Transportation only approvals	(3752)	(1748)
F/A applications approved	2015	2011

During September, 2009, 63 veterans applied for assistance for the first time bringing the 2009 YTD total to 470. Of the 63 new claims, 38 were approved, 6 were partially approved, 1 was approved at Level III, 2 were denied and 16 were withdrawn. In September 2008, 53 veterans applied for assistance for the first time bringing the 2008 YTD total to 478.

**Listed below is a breakdown of appeals for the month of September, 2009.**

Number of workdays	19
Cases on hand beginning of month	12
Cases received	+41
Cases worked	<u>-39</u>
Cases on hand end of month	14

	<b>September</b>	
<b>Appeal Officer Appeals</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>YTD</b>
Cases approved	7	26
Cases denied	25	180
Cases denied/withdrawn, no show	3	41
Cases withdrawn	4	18
No determination at Level II (Referred to Level III)	0	0
Cases referred back to Financial Asst./Social Worker	0	8
*Cases not eligible for appeal	<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>274</b>

	<b>September</b>	
<b>Board Appeals</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>YTD</b>
Cases approved	15	122
Cases denied	6	56
Cases withdrawn	0	2
Cases verifying fraud	4	15
Asst. rescinded due to false statements on application	0	0
Fraud expunged	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>203</b>

### **Medical and Other Transportation:**

September medical assistance expensed for transportation totaled \$6,987 for the month, \$6,987 for bus tickets and \$0 for taxi services.

### **Medical and Dental Programs:**

Medical payments for September amounted to \$3,550 with \$2,530 expensed for Dental and \$1,020 for Vision. Year to date medical expenses totaled \$40,846. Dental payments year to date are \$35,390 and Vision year to date payments are \$4,175.

\$0 in Miscellaneous Medical payments were expensed in August. Year to date Miscellaneous Medical payments are \$1,281.

### **Memorial Affairs Department:**

\$5,994 was expensed during September, 2009 for indigent veteran funeral expenses, down \$8,986.94 from September, 2008. During September, 6 indigent burials were approved. The burials were for 2 Air Force, 1 Marine, 0 Navy and 3 Army veterans.

### **Following are the 2009 Year to Date statistics for Memorial Affairs:**

	<u>Sept.</u>	<u>2009</u> <u>YTD</u>	<u>Sept.</u>	<u>2008</u> <u>YTD</u>
DD14 Search	93	1230	194	1588
Benefits Counseling	1069	8406	659	8259
Undelivered-Incorrect Headstones/Research	17	277	53	487
Presidential Memorial Certificates	108	1508	163	1833
National Cemetery Referrals	63	1357	222	2078
Blue Star Service Banners	1	8	4	33

## Veterans Service Officers:

Following are some of the major statistics reported by VSO Melinda Halliburton for the month of September, 2009 for the Brecksville satellite office.

	<u>Sept.</u>	<u>YTD</u>
Compensation DIC Claims & Follow ups	55	483
Pension claims and follow ups	23	197
Medical	9	57
Power of Atty. to Service Organizations	14	124
Misc. Applications/Correspondence	53	655
All Other	<u>44</u>	<u>318</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>198</b>	<b>1834</b>

Following are some of the major statistics reported by VSO Robert Erb for the month of September, 2009 for the Wade Park satellite office.

	<u>Sept.</u>	<u>YTD</u>
Compensation DIC Claims & Follow ups	53	445
Pension claims and follow ups	24	159
Medical	6	73
Power of Atty. to Service Organizations	22	173
Misc. Applications/Correspondence	94	385
All Other	<u>58</u>	<u>385</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>257</b>	<b>1620</b>

**September performance indicators report for the VSO division indicates the following activities were accomplished:**

**September  
2009**

	VETERAN				DEPENDENT			
	2008	YTD '08	2009	YTD '09	2008	YTD '08	2009	YTD '09
Compensation/DIC Claims	34	427	68	561	1	36	3	66
Follow-up Pending Claims	91	1017	104	858	10	67	8	50
Pension Claims	23	293	32	233	7	112	8	127
Follow-up Pending Claims	33	503	49	517	30	321	15	245
Medical	22	260	33	248	4	34	1	18
Notice of Disagreements	11	95	4	64	0	9	0	4
Appeals & Waivers	9	83	25	147	2	7	0	5
Eligibility Verification Reports	3	63	2	95	2	39	0	50
Change of Address	8	77	0	9	1	7	0	1
Education Assistance	7	44	9	73	0	16	2	22
Cert. Eligibility - Home Loan	2	41	8	18	0	4	0	1
Insurance Discharges, Request for copy	0	2	1	13	1	12	0	7
Headstone/Marker Application	143	1293	98	950	13	160	1	40
Referrals to Other Agencies	7	148	33	182	3	24	3	22
P of A Service Organization	66	715	64	597	6	157	9	112
Misc. Application/Corresp.	160	2152	268	2179	33	317	53	342
Ohio Veterans Home	5	70	4	34				
Burial Benefits					3	45	2	23
High School Diploma Applications	3	36	2	23				
Discharge Upgrades	1	38	14	98				
10-10 EZ Forms	0	22	0	7				
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>628</b>	<b>7379</b>	<b>818</b>	<b>6906</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>1375</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>1138</b>

**% Chg**  
24.1%

**% Chg. YTD**  
-8.1%

**TOTAL (Vet + Dep)**

'08	YTD' 08	'09	YTD' 09
346	4116	916	6270
47	478	7	251
393	4594	923	6521

Interviews: Service Dept. Clients	315	3798	811	5562	31	318	105	708
Fin. Asst. Referrals	45	446	7	237	2	32	0	14
Office YTD	360	4244	818	5799	33	350	105	722
Phone Calls	1947	20586	1976	18189				

## **Information Systems:**

### **eVetAssist**

The signature pad needs to be activated in the Transportation application by the developer.

### **RFP/Move to first floor**

The majority of cabling and fax hookups are now complete. Additional network cable capacity is on order. The network is now running at full speed rather than one tenth speed as it previously did. The wireless network is now operational. Work continues on implementing the connectivity in the Board Room.

### **Scanning and Microfilming.**

Catch-up microfilming is being completed and should be done in the next month or two.

### **New PC Installation**

Network software troubleshooting is still being worked on with Novell. It has proven to be difficult to get network technical support from the vendor.

### **Mainframe**

Mainframe applications have been “mothballed” just in case they are ever needed. However, we are currently only using the “lookup” capability to answer historical questions.

### **County Ombudsman Office:**

No new information or problems were reported regarding the CCVSC.

**Ohio Veterans Home Network:**

During August 5 veterans were transported to the Sandusky home for tours and admission evaluations.

The waiting list for the Ohio Veterans Home includes 37 veterans waiting for nursing home standard care, 7 veterans for nursing home special care, 0 veteran for the domiciliary and 6 for the domiciliary plus.

**Department of Veterans Services:**

The next Department of Veterans Services Advisory Committee is scheduled for October 22, 2009.

**Submitted by:**

**Robert E. Schloendorn  
Executive Director**