



American Legion
MEL BAHER
COMMISSIONER



American Veterans
FRANK POCCI
COMMISSIONER



Disabled American Veterans
DANIEL T. WEIST
COMMISSIONER



Veterans of Foreign Wars
CLAYTON E. UZELL
COMMISSIONER



Vietnam Veterans of America
BOB POTTS
COMMISSIONER

ROBERT SCHLOENDORN
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Cuyahoga County Veterans Service Commission

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1849 Prospect Avenue • Suite 150 • Cleveland, OH 44115



MINUTES

DATE: July 6, 2011 9:30 a.m.

PRESENT: Mel Baher, President
Frank Pocci, Vice President
Bob Potts, Secretary
Clayton Uzell, Commissioner
Robert E. Schloendorn, Executive Director
Thomas O'Donnell, Asst. County Prosecutor
Lorri Slivka, Executive Secretary

ABSENT: Daniel T. Weist, Commissioner

VISITORS: None.

PURPOSE: GENERAL MONTHLY MEETING

The meeting was called to order by the President, Mel Baher, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

A motion was made by Bob Potts and seconded by Clayton Uzell to dispense with the reading of the Consent Agenda and to accept the agenda with the necessary corrections and/or additions. (All Commissioners have a copy of the minutes.) One item was pulled from the Consent Agenda to be discussed in Executive Session.

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

COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS

Bob Potts – VVA

- June 7th – I attended our monthly board meeting and membership meeting.
- June 24th – I attended a pre-trial conference at the federal courthouse concerning pending litigation.
- July 4th – I participated in the Lakewood 4th of July parade. I also attended the Crocker Park concert with the Beetles Band and the Cleveland Pop Orchestra and watched the fireworks display. While there, I talked with two veterans who needed assistance with claims. I referred them to our service officers for assistance.

- July 5th – I attended our monthly membership meeting. The speaker was Walter P. Knake, Jr., a clinical psychologist specializing in therapy and diagnosis of adult and children with emphasis on PTSD.

Clayton Uzell – VFW

- June 1st – I attended the CCVSC Board meeting.
- June 3rd – I attended the VFW District 7 Convention that was held three days at the Westlake Holiday Inn. On Friday, I attended a joint forum at 6:30 p.m. The general business meeting was at 7:30 p.m. At the joint forum I gave a short presentation on the CCVSC and passed out pamphlets. Our literature was also available at the registration table all weekend. During the business session, I gave a report on my safety chairmanship for the year and announced our Law Enforcement, Firefighter/EMT of the Year winners and spoke about the CCVSC and Thomas Moe's visit.
- June 4th – I attended schools of instruction on project requirements and gaming laws. I attended the Past District 7 Commander's luncheon and meeting. At 5:30 p.m., I attended a POW/MIA salute outside the main entrance. At the 6:00 p.m. banquet, I presented plaques to the Police/Fire/EMT winners after reading their winning entries. Sarha Hosta was the winner of the Brunswick Police Dept., and Ryan Golan was the winner of the Brunswick Fire/EMT Dept. I also presented a plaque to Post 9520 Brunswick Commander Thomas Chester and Chairman Ray Bayless for being the sponsoring post of the winners.
- June 5th – I attended the Sunday business meeting. The election of District 7 officers was held at 12:45 p.m. I was a member of the installing team and installed the newly elected officers. I attended the luncheon at the hotel after the installation was held.
- June 8th – I attended the CCVSC Level III Appeal meeting.
- June 14th – I, along with Frank Pocci and Steve Fernandez, attended a County Council meeting to discuss the CCVSC budget and advertising on RTA busses.
- June 15th – I attended the CCVSC Board meeting
- June 20th – I attended the VFW Post 7536 meeting. The post was presented with a certificate from the (adopt a unit) 256th task force combat support hospital "Operation New Dawn" and a flag that was flown on March 26, 2011 at combat operations base in Tikrit, Iraq. The certificate and flag will be framed and presented to the Mayor of Lyndhurst to be placed in the City Hall display case.
- June 22nd – I attended the CCVSC Level III Appeal meeting at 9:30 a.m., followed by a Special Meeting of the Board to discuss the 2011 Budget changes. At 4:00 p.m., I checked into the Holiday Inn in Independence, Ohio for the VFW State Convention which ran through Sunday, June 26th. Various meetings were held Wednesday until 8:00 p.m.
- June 23rd – I registered for the 91st Ohio VFW Convention at 9:30 a.m. At 10:00 a.m. I attended the Council of Administration meeting, at 1:00 p.m. the general business meeting, and at 7:30 p.m. the VFW Memorial service.
- June 24th – I attended the general business meeting at 9:00 a.m. and gave a report on safety programs turned in from throughout the state. Law enforcement/firefighters/EMT winners and business meeting lasted until 3:00 p.m. From 6:00-8:00 p.m. the District caucus was held to meet candidates running for office.
- June 25th – 8:00 a.m.-9:30 a.m. charities school was held.
9:30 a.m. – Joint sessions VFW/Ladies Auxiliaries, all State Commanders Awards / Outstanding Auxiliary President and District Presidents awards given.
11:30 a.m. – Past Commander's Luncheon
1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. – Convention general business session

2011-2012 Nominations & elections

7:00 p.m. – Convention Banquet – Honored Eagle Scout of the Year

12:00 midnight – POW/MIA salute in the north tower parking lot

- June 26th – 10:00 a.m. I attended the Ladies Auxiliary Installation of new officer 2011-2012 (wife Sandra was elected Chaplain)
- 1:00 p.m. – I attended the installation of VFW newly elected officers
- 3:00 p.m. – Reception at Parma VFW Post 1974
- June 27th – Past Presidents meeting/dinner was held. I called bingo for the ladies at VFW Post 1974 in Parma.

Frank Pocci – AMVETS

- June 7th – I attended the AMVETS General meeting and submitted my 2010 fiscal year financial report for review and approval prior to submitting our yearly tax report.
- June 20th – Combined meeting of the AMVETS and auxiliary was held at Perry Post 1971.
- June 21st – The Post 80 Honor Guard served at the Ohio Western Reserve National Cemetery in Rittman, Ohio.
- July 5th – I attended the Post 80 General meeting and gave my financial report for the month of June.

Other activities:

- June 14th – I attended the Cuyahoga County Council meeting where the CCVSC budget was discussed.
- June 17th – I attended a meeting with Mr. Dale Miller, Chair of the County Finance Committee for a preliminary review of our meeting with Council the following week.
- June 20th – I attended the Finance Committee meeting to review and respond to any questions relative to the CCVSC budget before its approval. We were asked to come back on June 28th with additional information.
- June 24th – I attended a meeting at the federal courthouse and met with the attorneys and judge for a preliminary review of the case of an employee who was dismissed by the CCVSC and subsequently filed a suit.
- The evening of June 24th, I participated in the Middleburg Heights Summer in the City parade. I had the opportunity to speak with Middleburg Hts. Mayor, Gary Starr, and two council members about the CCVSC, what it does for the veterans and how misrepresentative the newspaper articles were. They understood as they are aware of the role of the CCVSC. While distributing our brochures, I spoke to several veterans who spoke highly of the CCVSC and who referred two vets to our service department for likely claims. The spectators of the parade gave our CCVSC jeep heavy rounds of applause, stood and many saluted as we passed by.
- June 28th – I, along with the Executive Director and Finance Manager, met again with the county's Finance Committee to review information we furnished and answered any questions the members of the committee had.
- Along with the Executive Director, I helped formulate a response to the negative view articles in the Plain Dealer rendered regarding the CCVSC expenditures. The response had to be reduced to 200 words but was sent to the Plain Dealer.
- I sent the full 450 word response to the above mentioned PD articles to the Strongsville Post and asked that it be published.
- I attended the June general meeting of the American Legion Berea Post 91.

- I stopped by the Strongsville VFW Post 3345 to make sure they had a supply of the CCVSC brochures and spent some time there with a couple of veterans dismissing the negative articles in the Plain Dealer. They said they knew better and that the PD seemingly likes to do is publish only what sounds negative.
- I did communicate to the PD reporter, Laura Johnston, that her article came across negatively; I asked why nothing was published of what I had to say. She subsequently published a clarification on the on-line blog, but still incorrectly stated the commissioners' salary. I replied to that again correcting her and she responded that she had, apparently, been given bad information.
- On the afternoon of June 24th, I attended the Italian American War Veterans general meeting where we reviewed the Post's finances, discussed the misrepresentative articles in the PD regarding the CCVSC and we discussed the Post's participation in the Dept. of Ohio Convention to be held at Lorain Post #1 on July 17th.

Mel Baher – American Legion

- June 5th – American Legion 13th District Summer Convention was held at American Legion Post 572. New officers were elected for the ensuing year. I was elected National Delegate to attend the annual convention in Minneapolis, MN, to be held August 25th - September 1st.
- June 9th – American Legion Post 91 membership meeting was held at 7:00 p.m.
- June 10th – I delivered a CCVSC supplied flag case to the widow of a veteran in Middleburg Hts.
- June 14th – American Legion Post 91 held its annual Flag Day ceremony in the Post pavilion. Several city council members were in attendance. Refreshments were served following the ceremony.
- June 23rd – American Legion Post 91 E-board meeting was held at 7:00 p.m.
- June 24th – I attended a pre-trial conference with Commissioners Pocci and Potts concerning pending litigation.

Upcoming events for July 211

- American Legion State Convention is scheduled for July 1st-3rd in Columbus, Ohio.
- July 3rd – I am scheduled to be the announcer for the annual Independence Day parade to be held at 7:00 p.m.
- July 14th – American Legion Post 91 membership meeting is scheduled to be held at 7:00 p.m.
- July 28th – American Legion Post 91 E-board meeting is scheduled to be held at 7:00 p.m.

Dan Weist – DAV (Report read by President Baher)

- June 9th – I attended a meeting in Columbus, Ohio to address Representatives on HB 153.
- June 15th – I attended my monthly VFW meeting.
- June 17th – I attended a meeting with the County Finance Committee for a preliminary review of the CCVSC budget.
- I have had several conversations with Attorney, Mike Moses, concerning a veteran's court and the state budget bill regarding the veterans service commissions.

STATE OF THE COMMISSION AND FINANCE REPORT (Attached)

A motion was made by Bob Potts and seconded by Frank Pocci to accept the report of the Executive Director as submitted.

AYES: Baher, Pocci, Potts, Uzell. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS:

The Executive Director was asked to forward a letter to Jack Schron of the County Council stating the Board's position on the re-issuance and re-use of the flags provided to decorate veterans' graves. The Board is guided by Ohio Revised Code 5901.34 and adamantly opposes any initiative that would provide the flags for any reason other than that for which they were purchased.

NEW BUSINESS:

Discussion took place concerning veterans court funding. No resolution was made.

A motion was made by Bob Potts and seconded by Frank Pocci to accept the revised "Flexitime Policy" dated July 6, 2011, as submitted by the Executive Director.

AYES: Baher, Pocci, Potts, Uzell. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

"The Overview of Duties of Officers and Board of Commissioners of the Veterans Service Commission Policy" dated September 6, 2006 was tabled to the next meeting for a review by the Assistant Prosecutor.

A motion was made by Bob Potts and seconded by Frank Pocci to accept the revised "Vacation Leave for Part-Time Employees" dated September 6, 2007, as submitted by the Executive Director.

AYES: Baher, Pocci, Potts, Uzell. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

GOOD OF THE ORDER:

Bob Potts mentioned Project 100,000 (also known as McNamara's 100,000) that was a 1960s program by the United States Department of Defense to recruit soldiers that would previously have been below military mental or medical standards. Many of these veterans do not have proof of being a Vietnam veteran and do not qualify for benefits from the VA because military troops were out of Vietnam by 1973, but many of the McNamara's 100,000 were still boots on the ground. Bob noted that some of our clients may not have the means to fully understand the process of obtaining assistance from our Commission.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

A motion was made by Frank Pocci and seconded by Clayton Uzell to go into Executive Session to discuss pending litigation involving a former employee and a response to County Council concerning the CCVSC 2012 Tax Budget.

AYES: Baher, Pocci, Potts, Uzell. NAYS: None. Motion carried. (10:50 a.m.)

A motion was made by Bob Potts and seconded by Frank Pocci to come out of Executive Session and return to the regular order of business.

AYES: Baher, Pocci, Potts, Uzell. NAYS: None. Motion carried. (11:22 a.m.)

The above items were discussed in Executive Session. No action was taken.

With no further business, a motion was made by Bob Potts and seconded by Frank Pocci to adjourn the meeting at 11:24 a.m.

AYES: Baher, Pocci, Potts, Uzell. NAYS: None. Motion carried.


Mel Baher, President


Bob Potts, Secretary

CONTACT INFORMATION

Requests for Financial Assistance:	Jennifer Mazzeo, Manager/Senior Investigator (216-698-2621)
Filing claims with the Dept. of Veterans' Affairs:	Melinda Halliburton, Service Office Manager (216-698-2639)
Memorial Affairs:	Laurene Rutkowski, Manager (216-698-2655)
Social Work Dept.:	Terry Walker, Manager, Social Worker/Case Management (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

May, 2011

Issued by:

The CCVSC Commissioners

Mel Baher –President, American Legion

Frank Pocci – Vice President, AMVETS

Bob Potts – Secretary, VVA

Daniel Weist –DAV

Clayton E. Uzell – VFW

July 6, 2011

Submitted By: Robert E. Schloendorn – Executive Director

The following report summarizes the progress and state of the Cuyahoga County Veterans Service Commission as of May 31, 2011:

Executive:

The Executive Director

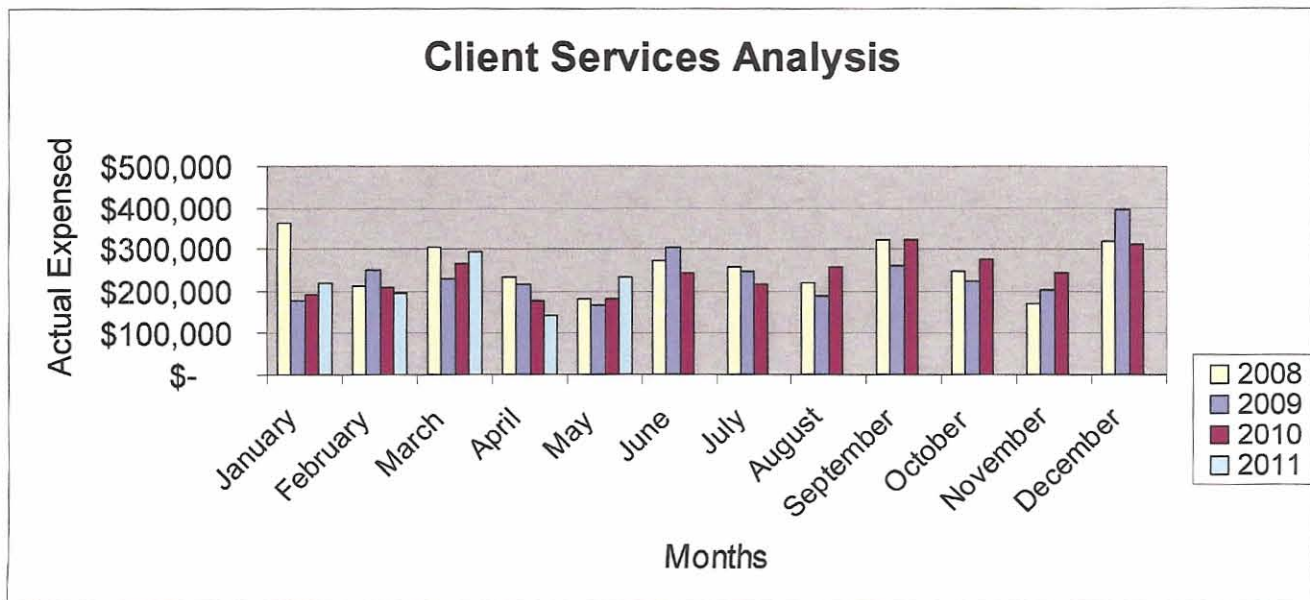
- Met with Sara Decara – the Assistant County Prosecutor.
- Attended Western Reserve Advisory Council meeting.
- Met with the County Council.

Finance Department

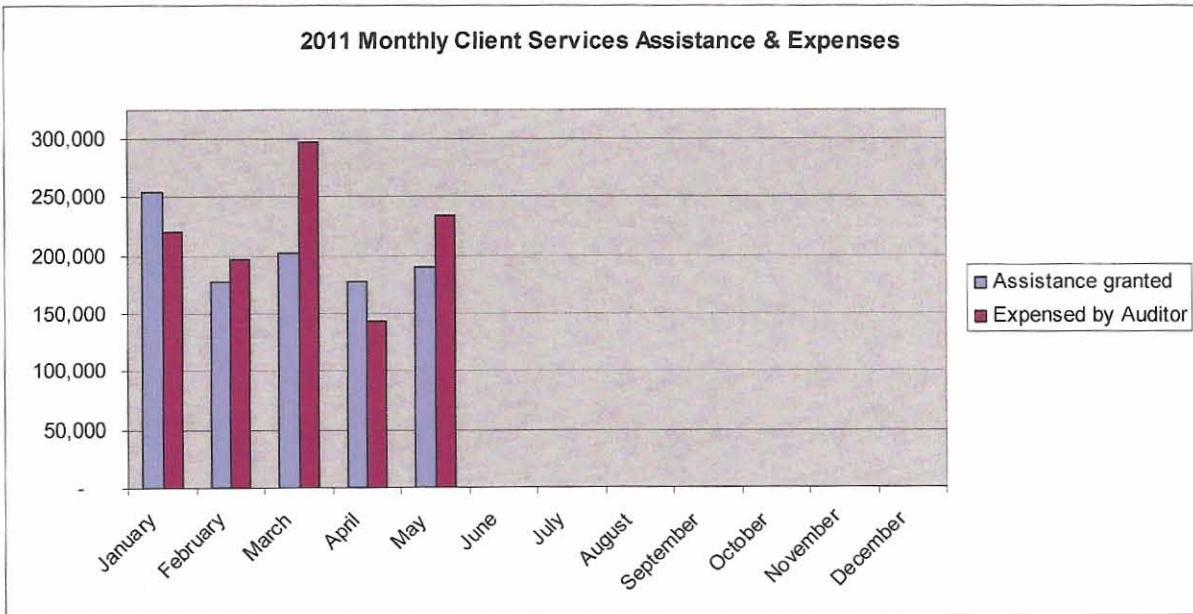
Below are selected May reports from the CCVSC Finance Department. The following charts/graphs depict the overall expenditures by area and type.

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

Comparative Chart Analysis



Actual 2011 Expenses



Total 2011 Expense Analysis

	Total	YTD	YTD	Remaining	2011	Budget
	Budget	Expenditure	Encumbr	Expenditures	Projection	Variance
Salaries	1,766,047	713,447	-	967,537	1,680,984	85,063
Fringe Benefits	618,116	242,900	-	331,533	574,433	43,683
Commodities	25,556	8,673	-	12,587	21,260	4,296
Contract Services	573,114	174,460	362,902	358,040	532,500	40,614
Controlled Expenditures	301,320	42,642	-	258,678	301,320	-
Client Services	3,693,517	1,092,134	-	2,100,000	3,192,134	501,383
Other Expenditures	399,783	96,452	25,332	162,255	258,707	141,076
Capital Outlay	18,788	-	6,288	6,288	6,288	12,500
Total Expenditures	7,396,241	2,370,708	394,522	4,196,918	6,567,626	828,615

Assistance Department:

May financial assistance totaled \$234,455 up from \$143,108 issued during April and up from \$183,056 issued in May of 2010. Year to date client assistance for 2011 is \$1,090,135 and YTD for 2010 was \$1,028,599, up \$61,536.

The May Financial Assistance Department activity report follows below.

Indicator	May 2011	May 2010	% Change		
Number of clients seeking hardship assistance	839	663	26.5%		
Total applications taken	680	565	20.4%		
Applications Withdrawn	(61)	(77)	20.8%		
Applications Denied	(57)	(53)	7.5%		
Total applications approved for hardship assistance (with trans.)	562	435	29.2%		
Transportation only approvals	(375)	(253)	48.2%		
F/A applications approved	187	182	2.7%		

Indicator	YTD 2011	YTD 2010	% Change		
Number of clients seeking hardship assistance	4144	3451	20.1%		
Total applications taken	3476	2952	17.8%		
Applications Withdrawn	(297)	(496)	40.1%		
Applications Denied	(256)	(217)	18.0%		
Total applications approved for hardship assistance (with trans.)	2923	2239	30.5%		
Transportation only approvals	(1973)	(1288)	53.2%		
F/A applications approved	950	951	.1%		

During May, 2011, 36 veterans applied for assistance for the first time bringing the 2011 YTD total to 202. Of the 36 new claims, 27 were approved, 0 were partially approved, 2 were denied and 7 were withdrawn. In May, 2010, 54 veterans applied for assistance for the first time bringing the 2010 YTD total to 219.

Listed below is a breakdown of appeals for the month of May, 2011.

Appeal Officer work days	13
Cases on hand beginning of month	10
Cases received	+34
Cases worked	<u>-39</u>
Cases on hand end of month	5

<u>Appeal Officer Appeals</u>	<u>May</u> <u>2011</u>	<u>YTD</u>
Cases approved	4	23
Cases denied	28	126
Cases denied/withdrawn, no show	4	21
Cases withdrawn	<u>3</u>	<u>21</u>
Total	39	191

<u>Board Appeals</u>	<u>May</u> <u>2011</u>	<u>YTD</u>
Cases approved	13	60
Cases denied	12	52
Cases withdrawn	1	1
Cases verifying fraud	<u>6</u>	<u>8</u>
Total	32	121

Medical and Other Transportation:

May assistance expensed for transportation totaled \$9,757 for the month, \$9,392 for medical bus tickets and \$365 for needs based bus tickets. Year to date transportation totaled \$49,021.50. Year to date medical transportation totaled \$46,961.50 and needs based transportation totaled \$2,060.

Medical and Dental Programs:

Medical payments for May amounted to \$2,262 with \$1,232 expensed for Dental and \$1,030 for Vision. Year to date medical expenses totaled \$15,155. Dental payments year to date are \$12,180 and Vision year to date payments are \$2,975.

\$0 in Miscellaneous Medical payments were expensed in May. Year to date Miscellaneous Medical payments are \$0

Memorial Affairs Department:

\$13,745.81 was expensed during May, 2011 for indigent veteran funeral expenses, down \$1,554.46 from May, 2010. During May, 17 indigent burials were approved. The burials were for 3 Air Force, 4 Marine, 3 Navy and 7 Army veterans.

Following are the 2011 Year to Date statistics for Memorial Affairs:

	<u>May</u>	<u>2011 YTD</u>	<u>May</u>	<u>2010 YTD</u>
DD-214 Search	113	524	117	530
Benefits Counseling	946	4475	909	4774
Undelivered-Incorrect Headstones/Research	8	46	13	54
Presidential Memorial Certificates	120	569	138	645
National Cemetery Referrals	67	270	90	438
Blue Star Service Banners	1	7	1	6
Indigent Burials	17	58	8	51

Veterans Service Officers:

Following are some of the major statistics reported by VSO John Murphy for the month of May, 2011 for the Brecksville satellite office.

	<u>May</u>	<u>YTD</u>
Compensation DIC Claims & Follow ups	27	140
Pension claims and follow ups	12	59
Medical	3	15
Power of Atty. to Service Organizations	7	40
Misc. Applications/Correspondence	158	550
All Other	<u>18</u>	<u>125</u>
Total	225	929

Following are some of the major statistics reported by VSO's Iris DeHart and Libby Jenkins for the month of May, 2011 for the Wade Park satellite office.

	<u>May</u>	<u>YTD</u>
Compensation DIC Claims & Follow ups	117	459
Pension claims and follow ups	36	197
Medical	12	98
Power of Atty. to Service Organizations	44	216
Misc. Applications/Correspondence	265	1442
All Other	<u>91</u>	<u>473</u>
Total	565	2885

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

**May
2011**

	VETERAN				DEPENDENT			
	May 2010	YTD '10	May 2011	YTD '11	May 2010	YTD '10	May 2011	YTD '11
Compensation/DIC Claims	54	261	54	335	10	20	8	33
Follow-up Pending Claims	96	378	237	987	6	24	18	106
Pension Claims	10	79	19	115	12	79	17	70
Follow-up Pending Claims	42	246	68	386	12	109	55	286
Medical	29	172	15	146	2	23	3	15
Notice of Disagreements	5	43	3	14	0	0	3	3
Appeals & Waivers	10	56	8	42	2	3	2	3
Eligibility Verification Reports	7	78	3	83	1	18	4	52
Change of Address	0	0	6	24	0	0	1	7
Education Assistance	10	48	13	84	2	13	1	14
Cert. Eligibility - Home Loan	3	20	1	11	0	0	0	0
Insurance	2	3	1	4	0	1	0	0
Discharges, Request for copy	92	505	80	480	1	6	6	28
Headstone/Marker Application					1	1	2	2
Referrals to Other Agencies	16	101	65	347	1	6	8	30
P of A Service Organization	60	287	61	353	7	52	17	80
Misc. Application/Corresp.	347	1342	772	3983	41	187	106	618
Ohio Veterans Home	3	14	4	25				
Burial Benefits					3	15	5	15
High School Diploma Applications	0	8	0	13				
Discharge Upgrades	6	41	5	28				
10-10 EZ Forms	0	0	14	75				
TOTAL	<u>792</u>	<u>3682</u>	<u>1429</u>	<u>7535</u>	<u>101</u>	<u>557</u>	<u>256</u>	<u>1362</u>

**%
Chg
88.7%**

**%
Chg.
YTD
110%**

TOTAL (Vet + Dep)

	'10	YTD '10	'11	YTD '11
	882	4180	1448	7463
	11	59	0	0
	893	4239	1448	7463

Interviews: Service Dept. Clients	781	3623	1448	7463	101	557	0	0
Fin. Asst. Referrals	11	59	0	0	0	0	0	0
Office YTD	792	3682	1448	7463	101	557	0*	0
Phone Calls	2631	10943	2277	12065				

*eVetAssist not separating dependents. Working to correct.

Information Systems:

KnowledgeTree

The regular KnowledgeTree server has been repaired and operating system software is being re-installed. Following setup, the KnowledgeTree software and documents will be transferred from the temporary server. Then the KnowledgeTree upgrades (2) will be applied.

Windows 7 Desktop Upgrade

The Windows 7 upgrade to agency PC's is complete. Several small problems that appeared have been corrected.

Networking issues

We are studying the requirements for implementing Microsoft Active Directory to replace Novell network software by the end of this year. This will probably require some additional hardware and software to implement. It will also require some training in Active Directory software. The ISC is currently being trained on this software.

VARO disconnection of Service Officer access to "backdoor" to Call Center

Our Veteran Service Officers now have to use the National Call Center phone number (800-827-1000) to check claim status, update information, etc. This can, and does, often result in long wait times compared to calling the Cleveland VARO directly. The Cleveland direct access number is no longer an option. We need to find a better way to connect to the VA systems via a faster network connection via DSL or cable modem. The county firewalls and proxy server combined with the locked-down VA PC software currently prevent us from accessing the VA systems directly from our PC's.

Ohio Veterans Home Network:

In May two veterans were transported to the Sandusky home for tours and admission evaluations.

The waiting list for the Ohio Veterans Home includes 20 veterans waiting for nursing home standard care, 5 veterans for nursing home special care, 0 veterans for the domiciliary and 7 for the domiciliary plus.

Department of Veterans Services:

The next meeting for the Department of Veterans Services Advisory Committee is scheduled for August 18, 2011.

Submitted by:

Robert E. Schloendorn
Executive Director