

October 27, 2022

Region 8 Report

Jennifer Ellis, Director

Since my last report, I did attend the VVA/AVVA Leadership Conference, unfortunately day two I became severely ill with Covid and Bronchitis. I was incapacitated until Saturday where I was finally without a high fever for over 24 hours and safe to be among others. I regret not being able to give my speech on our Spousal and Survivor Benefit program but I am grateful to Sharon Hobbs for covering for me as she did a fantastic job.

As for the individual states in Region 8, the following is an update from each of the new State Representatives whom I spoke with and requested written reports from.

Washington: Stephen Jordon, State Representative, has been working towards incorporating the State of Washington. Bobbie Morris, Incorporation Chair, has been coaching him throughout the process and at this point he is awaiting the final steps to be completed. Growth takes time and I appreciate Stephen's enthusiasm and diligence. He also relayed to me that he is training for a position as VSO in his area which will enhance his skills as the new State President.

Oregon: Ruth Feliciano, State Representative, is participating in the SOVO projects along with her Chapter 805 business. **Southern Oregon Veteran's Organization** which is made up of 19 individual Veterans organizations that are working together to restore the services at our VA Roseburg Medical Center. I also participate alongside Ruth as the group meets bi-monthly to collectively press forward in this endeavor. We have accomplished a great deal thus far such as adding a Non-Binding Resolution to our Douglas County election ballot. This is an Advisory Question concerning Restoring Full Services to our Roseburg VA Hospital. "Do you believe that full services should be restored at the Roseburg VA Hospital?" We attended our county board of commissioners meeting where they publicly stated their support of the restoration as the changes will affect our community businesses, medical practices which are already overloaded and housing market.

Ruth and I will soon be traveling to the Oregon State Council Meeting, November 19<sup>th</sup> in Lebanon, Oregon to give a report on AVVA's achievements in the state and region.

Montana: Willa Burgess, State Representative, whom I also spoke with and who submitted a progress report to me, has been very busy connecting with other chapters and organizations throughout the state of Montana. Willa has traveled from her home base in Kalispell, MT to Bigfork, Mt to Columbia Falls, MT to Libby, MT and back again. The Veterans in Chapter 1087 have a 16 ft cargo trailer set up with a vendors window that they take to local fairs, festivals etc. throughout the state. Both Veterans and Associates sell military hats, patches, pins to raise funds as well as have an opportunity to communicate with Veterans and their families regarding Toxic exposure, Suicide awareness, PTSD, PTSD II, and resources they may need and have difficulty locating. On one of her stops she met with Senator Tester and VA Reps regarding the effects and changes made by the passing of the PACT ACT. I am looking forward to the growth in Montana because of the efforts of Willa Burgess.

Alaska – No active AVVA presence at this time.

Idaho – No active AVVA presence at this time.

Wyoming – No active AVVA presence at this time.

Region 8 is steadily growing in membership and I hope to connect with members in the other states that are eager to become active. I have contacted the POCs on record but they have moved on and are not interested in AVVA. I relayed these updates to Nina Schloffel who passed them onto the Web Master.

John Birch, Region 8 Deputy Director, has been battling some health issues but hopefully is on the mend and can continue to work with me in the growth of our region.