



November 2010

November Tells the American Story

By Dick Steinberg – WestCare President and CEO

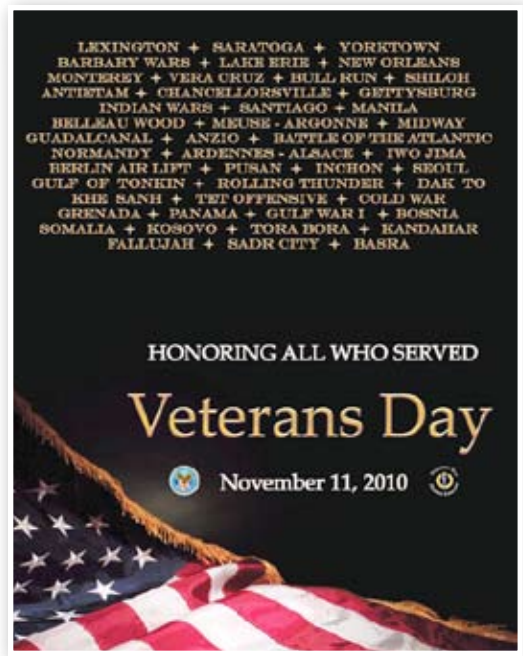
November 1, 2010, begins one more decade of Novembers . . . the month that reminds us of our American story.

Beginning with Election Day, we are reminded of our opportunity, as American citizens, to participate directly in the way in which our country is governed. I don't know about you, but every time I mark a ballot, I am both grateful and proud to be an American! This year, somehow, voting seems even more important. Campaigning is brutal. Rhetoric is loud. And the issues have never been more important . . . to our country, to our communities, to our families. Each vote contributes to our future. Thank you for your participation!

A week later this November, we will be celebrating Veterans' Day . . . celebrating a critical element in our American story: men and women willing to make the ultimate commitment and sacrifice for our country, for each one of us and for our American way of life. This

is a day that always takes me back. Although I have many memories of my military service, I find my reflection always focuses primarily on the inspirational men and women with whom I served (many about whom you have heard me speak and count as life-long friends). In many ways, it is my experience with these men and women that has shaped my professional life ever after. It has helped to shape my vision for and my pride in WestCare as it seeks every day to do as our motto states, "Uplift the Human Spirit." In addition to all that WestCare does, it extends its reach to our nation's Veterans throughout all existing programs. And now, it is seeking to do even more to meet the needs of our currently returning warriors. From our Veteran-specific programs in Fresno extending to housing and employment, to integrating what we know about the impact of combat experience on domestic violence issues into our women's programs, to dreaming of an international community where the "whole health" of Veterans and their families can be addressed, I have never been more proud of the work of our WestCare family with respect to our Veterans. Thank you for your contribution!

And then November will draw to an end as we all will be celebrating Thanksgiving Day . . . a third significant day in our American story occurring this month. I will celebrate it with my family as we give thanks for a year of many blessings . . . graduations, weddings, adoptions, births, cross-country moves, health challenges that have been overcome and another pecan pie. As we do so, I will also be giving thanks for all of you who have given so much of your selves in your commitment to our WestCare family. All that we do to remain true to our motto and to continue to extend our work to vulnerable populations, including our nation's Veterans, would be impossible without you. Thank you for your dedication!



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Overview of Veterans Day

Veterans Day, formerly Armistice Day, is the anniversary of the ending of World War I.

In the United States it is celebrated as a federal holiday on November 11. Veterans Day has been observed annually on this date since 1978, except for a brief period when it was celebrated on the fourth Monday of October.

History of Veterans Day

Following World War II, the name of the holiday was changed (enacted June 1, 1954) to Veterans Day to honor those who died in all American wars. The day has since evolved to primarily be a time of honoring living veterans who have served in the military during wartime or peacetime.

Veterans Day Facts

1.7 million

The number of veterans who are women.

9.7 million

The number of veterans who are age 65 or over.

2.4 million

The number of African American veterans.

Additionally, 1.1 million veterans are Hispanic; 272,000 are Asian; 159,000 are Native American or Alaska native; and 30,000 are native Hawaiian or from other Pacific islands.

(The numbers for each diverse group covers only those reporting as a single race.)

Number of states with 1 million or more veterans. These states are:

California (2.3 million), Florida (1.8 million), Texas (1.7 million), New York (1.2 million), Pennsylvania (1.2 million) and Ohio (1.1 million).

Veterans Day is November 11th

War Veterans Could Benefit from Screening for Stress and Alcohol Problems

Ensuring Solutions to Alcohol Problems
– The George Washington University Medical Center

Soldiers returning to the U.S. from war zones may initially report few problems, but as time passes post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), alcohol problems and a host of other mental health issues could become serious concerns for returning soldiers, their families, and their employers. Typically, when a veteran returns home from a war zone, there is a period of euphoria that may mask developing problems brought on by PTSD. As returning soldiers settle back into their pre-deployment lives, stress and emotional problems become more evident. Employers can help veterans returning to work by ensuring that effective screening and intervention programs are available.

A recent study published in JAMA found that war-related substance use and mental health problems are likely to show up several months after returning home rather than just after the initial homecoming. Nearly 12 percent of active-duty and 15 percent of reservists had signs of alcoholism six months after returning from combat but less than one percent were referred to treatment. In addition, reservists who returned to civilian status had higher rates of mental health problems, and alcohol-related problems than their active-duty counterparts.

Screening for mental health and substance use problems can play an important role in identifying PTSD. According to the National Center for PTSD, people with PTSD are more likely to have alcohol use disorders. Likewise, people with alcohol use disorder often have PTSD. In fact, 60 to 80 percent



of Vietnam veterans who sought treatment for PTSD also had alcohol use disorders.

As part of welcoming veterans back to work, employers can encourage returning veterans to use company health benefits – like employee assistance programs and mental health care – to support healthy emotional responses to stress. Mental Health America provides the following tips to help employers and their veteran employees cope with returning to work:

- Create a welcoming environment by discussing any concerns with all staff prior to the employee's return.
- Update the employee as soon as possible on the status of the workload and any other changes that occurred during deployment.
- Give the employee time to readjust and get back into their previous routine while encouraging them to seek out guidance and support, as needed.
- Support the employee if re-employment proves difficult by talking about performance expectations and listening to the employee's concerns. Be prepared to offer additional career or health referrals if necessary.



WestCare Kentucky Welcomes Veterans from Eastern Kentucky

By Mike Williams – *Clinical Services Director*

When WestCare Kentucky gets the opportunity to serve a veteran, we see it more as a privilege and a chance to pay them back for their service to us and to our Country. Our veterans fight to preserve our freedom so that many of us do not have to. With this in mind, WestCare Kentucky is proud to spotlight Jonathan Michael Salyers, who we have affectionately nicknamed "Jarhead". Jonathan was born and raised the child of a single parent in Flemingsburg Kentucky, dreaming of becoming a Marine for as long as he can remember.

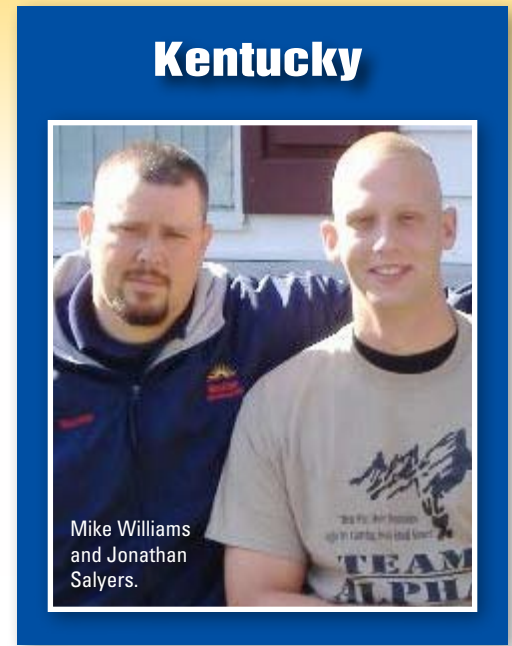
After graduating Fleming County High School class of 2003, he enlisted in the United States Marine Corps, with intentions of making his service to his country his career. On December 28, 2003, with the support of his mother and grandfather (who is his father figure), he was well on his way to making his dreams come true. Jarhead quickly excelled within the fellowship of the Corps, participating in combat training, and Military Occupational Specialty School, where he became a tank mechanic.

By this time, Jarhead had not even experimented with drugs or alcohol. However, after being in the service for about a year and a half, he had begun to use drugs and alcohol socially. When his grandfather passed away in March of 2005, his experimentation quickly progressed to addiction. Despite this progression into addiction, Jarhead continued to view his service as a career, bingeing when off duty and dedicated himself to his dream when on duty.

Feeling a sense of duty Jarhead voluntarily requested deployment to Iraq on three occasions. However he was instead deployed to Africa, where he served as part of a peace keeping operation due to religious conflicts, and ironically, drug trade. While in Africa his unit confiscated large amounts of weapons and Heroin. His addiction reared its head again, as he and his fellow marines began to use the drugs they confiscated. Upon his return to the United States, his drug of choice changed due to availability, this is when he tested positive for OxyMorphone. On 2/12/2010 Jonathan Michael Salyers was discharged with an "Other than Honorable Discharge" due to a failed drug screen.

Upon his return to civilian life, his addiction continued and again progressed. Jarhead soon found himself in the Boyd County Detention Center. This legal intervention resulted in his first treatment intervention at WestCare Kentucky's Hal Rogers Appalachian Recovery Center.

Jarhead came to us on July 8th 2010, where he began his journey to self-exploration and recovery. With the structured milieu, the therapeutic community, and the fellowship of the Twelve Steps, he has thrived. "Being here is not a hard decision for me, the structure, and the fellowship are familiar to me, it gives me a sense of belonging," stated Jonathan. He is the popular choice for public and family facility tours, oversees the facility weight room, and leads the house in the daily pledge of



Mike Williams and Jonathan Salyers.

Allegiance and hanging of our country's flag. Jarhead has committed to his family, his country and his program daily, and with his personal growth has chosen to stay with us for 180 days rather than the minimum 90. "The relationships that I have made with the staff and the counselors, I wouldn't trade for anything, coming here is the best choice I have ever made."

He has re-committed himself to his dream and he hopes that through his desire to put recovery first, everything that he puts second will become first class. "This has been a life-changing experience for me it has helped me to figure out who I am and what I want to do, I cannot begin to count all the things that WestCare has done for me, having a chance to get better with the support of people who care about me is what I needed."

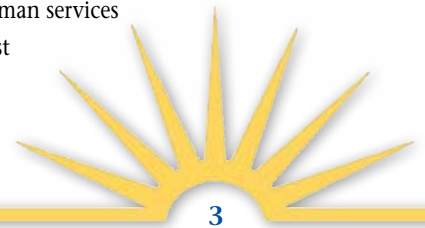


Fresno Nonprofit Aids Homeless Veterans

Written by Business Journal Staff – 04 October 2010

A grant of \$526,500 from the Department of Veterans Affairs will allow Fresno nonprofit WestCare California to provide shelter for homeless veterans. The grant is part of a \$41.9 million allotment from the DVA to 40 states in order to help community groups provide 2,568 beds to homeless veterans this year. About \$26.9 million of the grants will help renovate, rehabilitate or acquire space for 1,352 transitional housing beds while a second group of awards, valued at \$15 million, will immediately fund 1,216 beds at existing transitional housing for homeless veterans.

WestCare California, which has provided a wide spectrum of health and human services in the last 30 years, will use the funding to secure 28 beds and one van to assist homeless veterans. The projected population of veterans in the U.S. is over 23 million. More than 87 thousand live in Fresno, Kings, Madera and Tulare counties.



Happy Thanksgiving

Origins of Thanksgiving

The first interesting thing to point out is that the feast shared with the Wampanoag Indians and the first mention of Thanksgiving are really not the same event. During the first winter in 1621, 46 of the 102 pilgrims died. Thankfully, the following year resulted in a plentiful harvest. The pilgrims decided to celebrate with a feast that would include 90 natives who helped the pilgrims survive during that first winter. One of the most celebrated of those natives was a Wampanoag who the settlers called Squanto. He taught the pilgrims where to fish and hunt and where to plant New World crops like corn

and squash. He also helped negotiate a treaty between the pilgrims and chief Massasoit.

This first feast included many fowl, though it is not certain that it included turkey, along with venison, corn, and pumpkin. This was all prepared by the four women settlers and two teenage girls. This idea of holding a harvest feast was not something new to the pilgrims. Many cultures throughout history had held feasts and banquets honoring their individual deities or simply being thankful for the bounty. Many in England celebrated the British Harvest Home tradition.

Cranberry-Tangerine Relish – Makes 6-8 servings – Recipe courtesy Bobby Flay



Ingredients:

- 3 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 1 large Spanish onion, finely diced
- 2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- 3 tablespoons grated fresh ginger
- 2 cups tangerine juice
- 1/4 cup light brown sugar
- 1 pound cranberries
- 2 tangerines, segmented
- 1 tablespoon grated tangerine zest

Directions:

Melt butter in a medium saucepan over medium-high heat. Add onion, garlic, and ginger and cook until soft. Add tangerine juice and brown sugar and bring to a boil. Add half of the cranberries and cook until they pop. Add remaining cranberries and cook for 5 minutes. Remove from the heat and add tangerines and zest. Transfer to a serving bowl and serve at room temperature.

Turkey Fast Facts

What do you know about turkeys? Test your turkey knowledge with this fun trivia quiz!

1. Here turkey, turkey, turkey . . .

- Turkeys are able to adapt to a wide variety of habitats. However, most turkeys are found in hardwood forests with grassy areas.
- The best time to see a turkey is on a warm clear day or in a light rain.

2. They what?

- Turkeys have heart attacks. When the Air Force was conducting test runs and breaking the sound barrier, fields of turkeys would drop dead.
- Turkeys can drown if they look up when it is raining.

3. Eat, sleep, gobble

- Turkeys spend the night in trees. They fly to their roosts around sunset.
- Turkeys fly to the ground at first light and feed until mid-morning. Feeding resumes in mid-afternoon.

- Gobbling starts before sunrise and can continue through most of the morning.

4. Eyes in the backs of their heads?

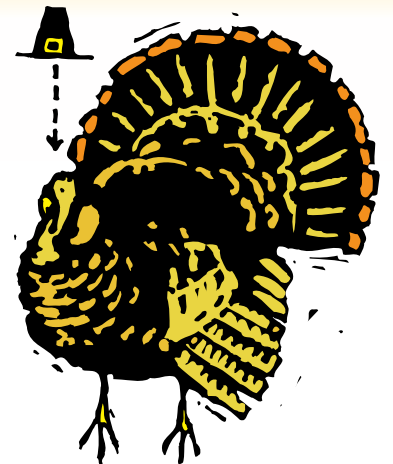
- A wild turkey has excellent vision and hearing. Their field of vision is about 270 degrees. This is the main reason they continue to elude some hunters.

5. And they're fast, too!

- A spooked turkey can run at speeds up to 20 miles per hour. They can also burst into flight approaching speeds between 50-55 mph in a matter of seconds.

5. So close, yet so far . . .

- Benjamin Franklin wanted the national bird to be a turkey.



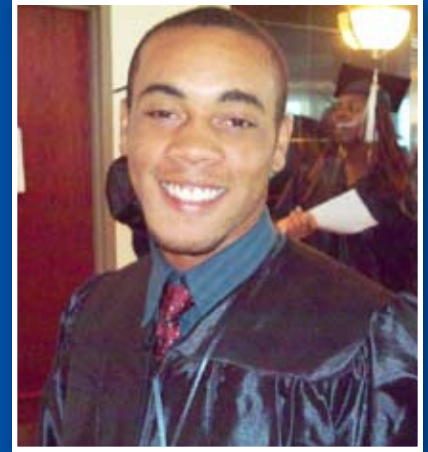
WestCare Emerge – 2009-2010 GED Success

By Jana Balacki – *Gulf Coast Area Director*

“E MERGE” is WestCare-Gulfcoast’s residential program for males who are generally court ordered to participate in substance abuse treatment. They can be referred by the courts, any legal system, self-referred, or by family members or friends. Participants in this treatment program all have a serious substance abuse problem or a co-occurring disorder, many of them do not graduate from high school. As part of this Modified Therapeutic Community Model program we offer educational assessment for every resident and a GED/High School Diploma program. This program is staffed and run by Pinellas County teachers, Wes Koenig and Joanne Brunozzi. Both of these very dedicated teachers have been with this residential program since 2001.

For the 2009-10 school years, 20 of 22 WestCare clients who took their GED tests earned their diplomas. One client was a National Honors Graduate and seven participated in the Pinellas Countywide Graduation Ceremony held at The Mahaffey Theatre in St. Petersburg, FL on Thursday evening, August 26, 2010. “The seven graduating participants were the most we ever had walked together” stated Wes Koenig and Joanne Brunozzi, ABE/GED/VPI Instructors at Emerge. One student/client’s family traveled all the way from New York to celebrate their son’s achievement. Of the 224 county wide participants, two of our clients were last in line, which brought a hail of applause from over 3,000 family, friends and attendees in the audience. We closed the place down so to speak! Of special note, our guys conducted themselves in a dignified manner customary for such an occasion. Congratulations to the hardworking staff in the Gulf Coast who have contributed to the programs success!!

Florida



Thanksgiving Non-Alcoholic Beverage

Warm Cranberry Apple Wassail

Ingredients:

- 1 48-ounce bottle (or 6 cups) Cranberry Juice Cocktail
- 2 cups apple juice
- 4 3-inch cinnamon sticks
- 1 teaspoon whole allspice
- 1/4 teaspoon ginger
- Orange slices, garnish
- Whole cloves, garnish



Directions:

Combine all ingredients, except garnishes in a large saucepan. Heat to boiling, reduce heat and simmer 10 minutes. Strain punch to remove spices. Pour into a heat-proof punch bowl or individual serving mugs. Garnish with orange slices studded with cloves, if desired. Makes about 12 6-ounce servings.



Thanksgiving Calories, Without the Guilt

By Salynn Boyles – *WebMD Health News*
Reviewed by Elizabeth Klodas, MD, FACC

Just Have a Plan for Getting Your Diet Back on Track, Experts Say

No matter how earnestly you resolve not to overindulge this Thanksgiving, you will probably eat more than you should. After all, a typical Thanksgiving meal can add up to 3,000 calories or more. And if you snack throughout the day or eat two big meals, you could easily double that for the day.

One of the biggest culprits? Pecan pie. A single slice with whipped cream has about 800 calories – more than a meal's worth of calories in a single dessert.

You won't find much that's low calorie elsewhere, either, unless your feast happens to have a raw veggie plate. Here's how some other Thanksgiving favorites stack up:

- Roasted dark and white meat turkey with skin – 450 calories
- Homemade stuffing with gravy – 600 calories
- Cranberry relish – 200 calories
- Candied sweet potatoes – 400 calories
- Green bean casserole – 190 calories
- Pumpkin pie with whipped cream – 400 calories
- Cup of eggnog – 400 calories

Who even wants to think about how long it would take to work all that off! So what's a dieter to do?

WebMD contacted three well-known experts to get their take on Thanksgiving feasting. Their advice: Enjoy the day, and get back on track Friday. "It's not the easiest time to eat sensibly and I don't advise trying very hard," says NYU professor of nutrition Marion Nestle, PhD, MPH, who wrote the 2006 book *What to Eat*.

"My approach is to pick and choose," she tells WebMD. "I taste everything, keep the servings really small, and save room for seconds of the foods I really like. But if family dynamics mean that the cook will never forgive you if you don't eat the food, it's best to eat the food, enjoy every bite, and deal with dieting later in the week." Physician John La Puma, MD, says even totally out-of-control days won't lead to significant weight gain if you have only few of them a year.



WestCare Wellness Watch



An accomplished cook who has adopted the pseudonym 'ChefMD,' La Puma is the author of the book *ChefMD's Big Book of Culinary Medicine*.

La Puma recommends choosing four days a year as "feast days" when you can eat and drink anything you want in any quantity you want. "I think the idea of feasting that Thanksgiving represents is kind of lost in American society because we tend to feast all year long," he tells WebMD.

"The problem isn't Thanksgiving, it is the fact that many people don't stop eating between Thanksgiving and the New Year," he says. Pete Thomas was once one of those people. "Before I lost weight I viewed Thanksgiving as a day to gorge myself and eat everything in sight," Thomas tells WebMD. "That turned into a month of gorging between Thanksgiving and Christmas."

In November 2005, Thomas walked away from the finale of NBC's *Biggest Loser* \$100,000 richer after losing 185 pounds in nine months. Now a motivational speaker, Thomas specializes in helping extremely obese people lose weight. Thomas' strategy for staying in control during the holidays involves planning. "If you plan to get some exercise the morning of Thanksgiving and the morning after, that will go a long way to keeping you on track," he says. "And develop a plan for holiday eating so you don't eat everything in sight." Some of Thomas' other tips include:

- Enjoy the foods you really love in reasonable portions, but skip the foods you don't.
- Plan activities to compliment the day that everyone can do together. "Make it about more than just the food," he says.
- If you are the cook or are contributing to the holiday meal, make a dish that you like that meets your nutritional needs.
- Clear the table and put the food away immediately after the big meal and send food home with guests.
- Have reasonable expectations.



Thomas concludes: "You probably won't lose weight during the holidays, but with careful planning you can avoid gaining weight."

National Drug Facts Week is November 8-14

Have any plans for the second week of November? We have an idea for something you can do with your friends at school – join in on NIDA’s first annual National Drug Facts Week (NDFW), November 8-14 and plan an event to shatter the

myths about drugs and drug abuse – and perform a service for your community at the same time.

National Drug Facts Week is about giving teens a forum to ask questions and get the facts about drugs and drug abuse from the experts who know –

scientists who study the brain. No preachy messages. Just solid answers backed by science. Check out “National Drug Facts Week” on Facebook and see what may be going on near you. If you can’t find an event in your area, start one of your own.

All you need to do to get started is:

1. Come up with an event to host during NDFW.
2. Find an advisor to help out, along with an expert to answer questions.
3. Tell us about it by registering your event on our official NDFW event list.

If your community is in denial about the drug problems it has, your event can shine a light on the situation. Hosting an event is also a great thing to have on your résumé, and shows your commitment to an important issue facing young people today.

If you host an event, let us know. Yours could be one of those we will highlight right here on the Sara Bellum Blog.

<http://teens.drugabuse.gov/blog/plan-an-event-for-the-first-ever-national-drug-facts-week/>

<http://www.drugfactsweek.drugabuse.gov/planyourevent.php>

Just solid answers backed by science. Check out “National Drug Facts Week” on Facebook and see what may be going on near you. If you can’t find an event in your area, start one of your own.



Sheridan Staff Team-Building Day

By Charlene Hamann – Recreation Therapist

WestCare Sheridan staff kicked off the month of October with a team-building day filled with structured activities such hula hoop relays, “get to know you” group interviews, blanket flips, water brigade team challenges, and a burger and hot dog cookout. Team activities were led by supervisors and the recreation therapist. Along with beautiful October weather, staff enjoyed time getting to know each other, reminiscing about other positive events over the past years, learning how to double dutch and participating in their own leisure activities on the front lawn of the Sheridan Correctional Center. The day was deemed a huge success, enjoyed by all with hopes of another team-building day in the near future. VI staff was terrific and everyone had a great time. We can’t wait until next year!



Leslie Balonick jumping rope.

Illinois

'YO Court' Gives Hope to Young Adults with Addictions

News Report by Benjamin Chambers – October 1, 2010

A new Las Vegas court for young adults 18 to 24 who have serious drug problems gives them a chance to turn their lives around, the Las Vegas Review Journal reported Sept. 19.



Youth Offender Court, or "YO Court," is unusual in that participants don't qualify because of drug charges. Instead, they are referred from traffic court, often because of fines that go unpaid because of their drug habits. Many have failed other treatment programs.

The court was created in April by Judge Cedric Kearns, who had already launched a successful adult drug court serving repeat offenders. He started "YO Court" because he wanted to intervene earlier in the cycle.

Similar to other drug courts, participants report to Kearns in court every other week. He rewards those who do well with praise and incentives, and sanctions those who do not with electronic monitoring and jail time.

Unlike most drug court judges, Kearns goes a step further and stops by their homes on a regular basis to check on their progress. "I truly believe they know I care about their success, but they also know I won't play around if they're playing around," Kerns said.

He also takes their stage of recovery into account.

"I don't treat them all equally, I treat them all fairly. Some have fried their brains more than others. Some of them are in different stages of addiction, and you have to treat those differently."

His stern but caring approach seems to be effective. Participant Sarah Lang, in recovery from heroin abuse, said, "When I go stand in front of him, I feel like I'm standing in front of my dad, and my father is disappointed in what I've done."

Lang, 24, had used drugs since age 13 and overdosed several times. She recently celebrated 150 days sober. "There's been so many times that I should not have woken up," she said. "If it wasn't for Judge Kerns, I wouldn't have had a second chance."

Even participants who aren't doing well seem to see YO Court as a source of hope. Emily Hoeffner, 19, was jailed by Kearns twice in the past month.

"Some people don't get another chance," Hoeffner said. "They either OD, lose everything, end up on the streets or end up in prison. I get another chance."

5 Questions with Vince Cummings

Vocational Specialist – San Joaquin Valley Veterans

Vince Cummings is the Vocational Specialist at San Joaquin Valley Veterans under our Workforce Investment Act (WIA) contract. He is a veteran and has been a very valuable resource for the veterans we serve. He was recently nominated to be the Chair of the VEC committee that coordinates our local Stand Down event and yearly Job Fair for veterans.

1. What is the best thing about your job?

Helping others. I love success stories. To see someone overcome obstacles in life and triumph makes it worthwhile.

2. What are your hobbies?

Riding and repairing motorcycles. Working on projects to improve my home.

3. What is your dream vacation and why?

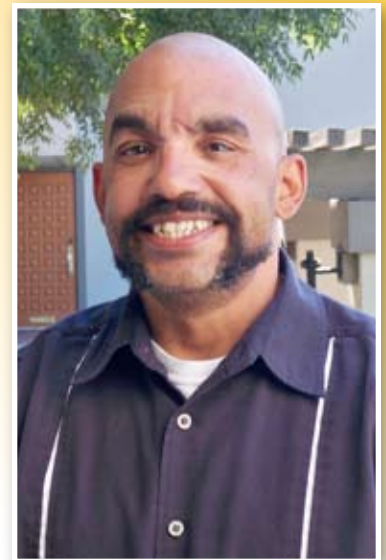
I would love to vacation on the Island of Majorca. It's a small island in the Mediterranean, 300 miles of the coast of Spain. Very beautiful.

4. If they made a movie about your life, which actor should play you? And why??

Vin Diesel, Why? Duh!

5. Where do you see yourself in 5 years?

I would like to be a program director.



Thought for the Month

"You can't direct the wind, but you can adjust your sails."



WestCare Charity Golf Tournament

By Sharon Yates Steinberg

– Major Gifts Coordinator, WestCare Endowment

Old and New friends all came out to participate in the Golf Tournament presented by WestCare's National Celebrity Advisory Council. Baseball Pitcher Rollie Fingers participated in the tournament; and presented the awards at the dinner afterwards. (His team took first place!) The weather was lovely at the SouthShore Golf Club at Lake Las Vegas. We even had Early Clover and Kristy Love judging the 08th hole for a hole-in-one that was never to happen. We had a Trike from Las Vegas Trikes sitting on the eight hole as prize for a hole-in-one! Although nobody won the Trike, it was rumored that Early and Kristy entertained the golfers with song.

The dinner afterwards was delicious and the music was provide by Early Clover and The Soul Drifters, Kristy Love and Rheda K. Solo. The view at SouthShore is breathtaking, and the crowd soaked it up.

CEO/ President Richard E. Steinberg's Father Mark Steinberg came out to play. At 90 years young, he stills plays golf every week. Mary Ann Hoban and Dick Thomas, supporters of WestCare since its inception, were out to show their continued support as well. WestCare employees, Board members, Community Councils, and the Celebrity Council members, were all well represented.

Siena Golf Academy came out to analyze the golf swings of all the golfers. We had Hooters helping to sponsor our event, the bright white and orange track suits, were a nice touch at such an elegant Golf Club. We offered a silent auction and raffle prizes too.

Events like this one and the Gala in July get our name out in new audiences. We get the opportunity to have fellowship with employees, volunteers, and new friends. We have wonderful corporate donations from the Chukchansi Hotel and Casino, the Venetian, RC Wiley, LV Trikes, and many others, which have made events of this level possible.

We would like to thank Bill Burney and Mark Beard of SouthShore Golf Club and Kim Tyler of Hooters for their hard work. Our Celebrity Advisory Council and WestCare Volunteers also make this possible.

We will post pictures on our Website soon, at www.westcare.com

Mark Steinberg poised to put.



Dick Thomas and Mary Ann Hoban



Mark and Muriel Steinberg at postgolfing Dinner at SouthShore



November Calendar



NOVEMBER 3

Veteran Support - MN Law Students
11:00am PT/1:00pm CT (VICTRI, Mi)

CAC Monthly Report Due - 12:00pm
(Executive Committee)

NOVEMBER 4

California Graduation - 6:30pm
(Tower Theatre, Fresno, CA)

NOVEMBER 9

CAC MN - 8:30am PT/10:30am CT
(VICTRI, Minneapolis, MN)

Nevada - Honoring Those Who Serve

NOVEMBER 11

Veteran's Day Parade in Fresno, CA

NOVEMBER 16

Nevada - CAC - 12:00pm PT/3:00pm ET
(MLK at Alta)

NOVEMBER 17

Executive Committee Meeting - 8:00am
(877-723-6296/4532#)

NOVEMBER 23

CAC MN - 8:30am PT/10:30am CT
(VICTRI, Minneapolis, MN)

12:00pm MHA Committee Meeting
(END Offices)

NOVEMBER 25

Thanksgiving Observed

NOVEMBER 26

Day After Thanksgiving Observed



WestCare California/SJVV Host Third Annual Women Veterans Conference

By Barbara Ward – Deputy Secretary, Women and Minority Veterans Affairs / State of California

The California Department of Veterans Affairs held its third Annual CalVet Women Veterans Conference at the Clovis Veterans Memorial Building on October 7th and 8th. The conference theme was: “A Legacy and Story: Women Serving with Honor.” Over 200 women veterans and service providers attended this year’s conference which is expected to grow in size each year. The conference organizer, Barbara Ward, Deputy Secretary for Women and Minority Veterans, was extremely pleased with the support provided by the local Clovis community, Fresno VA Medical Center and West Care’s San Joaquin Valley Veterans, led by Seanna Herring.

The representatives have usually read about women veterans and their challenges but it becomes a reality when they hear the stories directly from women veterans who have endured so much during their service to our country. The legislative panel included Congressman Jim Costa; Sarah Moffat, Sen. Feinstein’s office; Dawn Steele, Congressman Radanovich office; Kelly Gill, Congressman Costa’s office and Shannon Major, Senator Cogdill’s office. The women veterans proudly become the voice for California’s 167,000 women veterans. Various work shops were presented on both days of the conference.

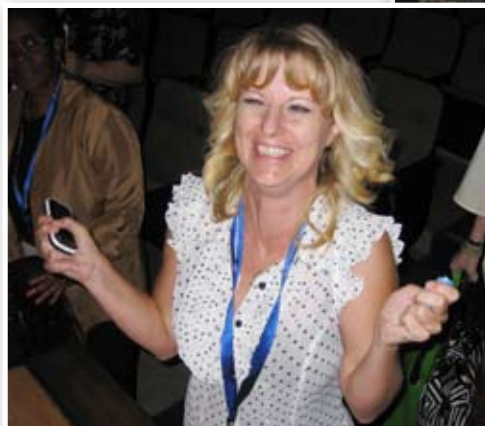
The Woman Veteran of the Year Award was presented to Patricia Jackson-Kelley, Southern California and Lucy Lori Sammons, Northern California. The conference was viewed to be extremely successful conference by everyone in attendance. Women veterans participated in a raffle drawing that included many donations from supporters of the annual conference. Many homeless women veterans were able to attend the conference due to donations and sponsorships. The major sponsors of this year’s conference were Pacific Gas and Electric Company, DeVry University and AMVETS. The 2011 conference will be held in San Diego in October.



Women veterans shared stories and offered ideas to a panel of legislative representatives, including Congressman Jim Costa, third from right.

This conference serves to educate women veterans throughout the state about their state and federal benefits, provides a tremendous networking opportunity and presents the latest updates on issues that are relevant to women veterans from all eras. The speakers were dynamic, ethnically diverse and considered to be experts in their areas. They traveled from as far away as Washington DC and as close as Fresno and Palo Alto. The list included Dr. Bettye Moseley-Brown, Assistant Director of the Center for Women Veterans; Brigadier General Mary Kight, The Adjutant General of California’s National Guard; Major General Angela Salinas, Director, Manpower Management Division, headquarters, US Marine Corps; Dr. Lori Katz, Long Beach VA; Dr. Samina Iqbal, Palo Alto VA; Dr. Stephanie Covington, LCSW; and Kayla Williams, Iraq Veteran and author. One of the highlights of the conference was the legislative forum which afforded women veterans a rare opportunity to share their concerns directly with Congressional and state legislative representatives.

WestCare employee Tracy McWilliams reacts to winning two tickets to see Cher perform in Las Vegas! She and her husband also got backstage access at the October 23rd concert.



Dr. Stephanie Covington, LCSW with Dr. Lori Katz, Long Beach VA.

California



WCCA Deputy Administrator Lynn Pimentel shares a light moment with Brittney Beer from our San Joaquin Valley Veterans program

