



SOUND OFF!

VOL. I, NO 1 THE NEWSLETTER OF VETERANS UNITED FOR TRUTH, INC.

FIRST CALL

Welcome to the first issue of **SOUND OFF!**, the bi-weekly newsletter of **VETERANS UNITED FOR TRUTH, INC.** www.vuft.org.

The newsletter will provide you with periodic news on items and issues vital to our mission of serving the active duty military and veterans and their families. Our newsletter is organized along the daily sequence of bugle calls (excluding Mess Call – bring your own).

Each issue will cover:

- Introductory material on the theme of the issue in **FIRST CALL**
- Wake-up calls on critical actions that you can take to further our mission in **REVEILLE**
- Updates of the actions and progress of the organization in **ASSEMBLY**
- Letters from members in **MAIL CALL** – short please
- Analysis of current federal and state legislative actions in **RECALL**
- News, good or bad, to incite you to act in **RETREAT**
- Notice of gatherings and opportunities for personal participation in **TO THE COLOR**
- Summary of current issues in **TATTOO**
- Vital war statistics and passing of prominent military figures or our members in **TAPS**

Each section will be short and to the point – so that you can easily read the newsletter in one sitting and gain useful information in the process.

We welcome submissions for each section, as long as they are short and to the point. We will soon make provision for longer submissions on the website www.vuft.org which already provides for Forums. *Sanford (Sandy) Cook, Vice Chair, temporary editor.*

REVEILLE

On Wednesday, July 27, 2005, Senators Debbie Stabenow (D-MI) and Tim Johnson (D-SD) will offer an amendment to the DoD Authorization Bill (S. 1042) to provide mandatory funding for veterans health care. With the recent news of a veterans health care budget shortfall, we may have a window of opportunity to enact mandatory veterans health care funding. Please go to the Disabled American Veterans (DAV) site at

<http://capwiz.com/dav/issues/alert/?alertid=7869471&type=CO>

and send an email to your Senators to support the amendment.

ASSEMBLY

The Board met on 16 July with several serious decisions being taken.

We confirmed that we are a national organization with state chapters, and amended our bylaws to reflect that mission. We are encouraged by the organizational efforts beginning in North Carolina, and being explored in Ohio, Rhode Island, and Virginia (and Arizona in late breaking news.)

We talked more about the possibility of a “March on Washington”, a prospect that has encouraged many to join us, and has excited most of us. We decided that a march may very well be part of whatever we do around Memorial Day weekend in May 2006, but that it is important to stress that our mission is to get legislators to do their job; and, that the most important thing that we can do when we get to DC is to call out our legislators and get them to act responsibly. Marching is great, but effective action is better!

Bob Handy, our chair, announced that we had acquired our first two honorary Advisory Committee members, Governor George Dukakis, and Art Hicks, a Tuskegee Airman. Please let Bob know (bhandy@vuft.org) if you have a prominent ex-military person to nominate for our Advisory Committee.

MAIL CALL

As this is our first issue, we have no letters to the editor. If you have a submission for any of our columns, or a general letter that you would like to have posted, please forward your submission to scook@vuft.org.

RECALL

California Legislative Proposal “California Shared Sacrifice Act of 2005”, is bogged down in the Audit Committee. We are working the issue hard and will be pursuing it over the weekend and next week in Sacramento. Politicians are going to have to learn the hard way that when vets say we want support, and they shine us off, there are consequences! We have been quiet too long!

TO THE COLOR

July 29, 7 PM – California Democratic Veterans’ Caucus meeting at Sacramento Radisson Hotel, Leisure Lane.

Saturday, September 24 – March, Rally & Anti-war Fair

Gather 11:00 AM at the Washington Monument

<http://www.unitedforpeace.org/article.php?list=type&type=91>

TATTOO

All of our legislation issues center around the evidence of poll-based reactions by Congress; get some attention and they pass a bill. This makes good press, but it doesn’t deal with our identification of the fundamental problem:

- Congress can pass all the bills they want, and can allocate all the money they think is necessary.
- The Executive Branch, specifically DoD, VA, DoL can take the money from Congress and write all the rules and set up all of the programs they want.
- Unless the aid and benefits get to the troops on the ground WHEN THEY NEED IT, and the benefits get to their families WHEN THEY NEED IT, and Guardsmen and

Reservists get their jobs back IMMEDIATELY when they come home, the system doesn't work, the money is wasted, and we dishonor their service.

TAPS

Stanley S. Lane, LTC, USA (Ret) – 1902-2005: Veteran WWI, WWII, Korea
<http://www.latimes.com/news/local/state/la-me-lane19jul19,1,523267.story>

William Westmoreland, GEN, USA (Ret) – 1914-2005
<http://www.nytimes.com/2005/07/19/international/asia/19westmoreland.html?ex=1137384000&en=85d667314433ff13&ei=5087&excamp=GGGNwestmoreland>

Iraq/Afghanistan –17 March 2003

KIA	1,876
W/I-IA	18,219
Iraqi (mil + civ)	35,980

Thankfully, all of our members are still with us.

NOTE: WE plan to publish our newsletter every two weeks (10th and 25th) starting next month. We are looking for an editor. Please let us know at scook@vuft.org.