



THE DISPATCH

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THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE COLORADO DEPT. OF MILITARY AND VETERANS AFFAIRS

Supporting Veterans on Colorado's Western Slope

Parker White, DMVA Public Information Officer & Legislative Liaison

The Western Region One Source (WROS) in Grand Junction, Colorado is a comprehensive resource center for Veterans and their families. The facility was created with the goal of providing a single location where Veterans can access a wide range of services and support. Built out of a Colorado National Guard Armory, the WROS offers a one-stop-shop for Veterans who need assistance and resources to help them transition to civilian life.

From health care to education and beyond, the facility hosts a wide range of programs and services designed to meet the needs of Veterans and their families. This includes access to medical care, mental health services, rehabilitation services, job training and placement services, as well as information on college programs and financial aid. The WROS also provides assistance with finding affordable housing, home ownership programs, and foreclosure prevention.

“The Western Slope Veteran community can often end up isolated from the rest of the State,” said DVA Director David Callahan in a recent testimony to the State Legislature. “The WROS helps the Division stay connected.”

In addition to its services, it also serves as a source of information and advocacy for Veterans. The WROS works to educate the public and policymakers on the needs of Veterans and to ensure that Veterans receive the benefits and support they have earned. It also provides Veterans with a voice, advocating on their behalf to secure the resources they need to succeed.

The one-stop center also provides a safe and welcoming space, where Veterans can receive the help they need, connect with others who have faced similar challenges, and build a sense of community. It also offers a variety of support groups and events, where Veterans can come together and share their experiences, build relationships, and support each other.



Cemetery Administrator Angela Ingalls (left), WROS Administrator Joanne Iglesias (middle), and State Senator Janice Rich (right), smile for a photo at the WROS during a stand-down event.

The WROS is supported by a wide range of stakeholders beyond the DMVA, including non-profit organizations, and private sector partners. These organizations provide funding, resources, and expertise to help the WROS achieve its mission of serving Veterans and their families. Through community outreach the DVA has been able to rally the support of volunteers and community members, who play a critical role in helping to meet the needs of Veterans and their families.

“It’s a part of the community out there,” continued Callahan. “They have Veteran coffee breakfasts, Tai Chi, and other events every month that bring the Veteran community in Grand Junction together.”

The Western Region One Source is a vital resource for Veterans and their families on the Western Slope. With its knowledgeable and experienced staff, comprehensive range of services, and supportive environment, the WROS helps Veterans navigate the complex maze of benefits and services available to them so they can reach their full potential. Whether you are a Veteran seeking health care, education, housing, or employment, or simply need information and support, the WROS is here to help.

Go to Page 2 for an update on the DMVA's actions in the State Legislature.

Check Page 3 for new Professional Development Opportunities, Hails and Farewells, and Job Openings!

Legislative Update: DMVA actions at the Capitol

Parker White, DMVA Public Information Officer & Legislative Liaison

The Department of Military and Veterans Affairs is part of the executive branch of the Colorado government. As a result, all State employees ultimately report to the Governor.

While the Governor has significant authority over much of the State government. There are a couple of areas where his powers are limited: the creation of laws and the setting of the State budget. These two items are up to the legislature.

Passing a law through the State government is very similar to passing one through the US Congress. All State laws begin in the legislature, where they are sponsored by either a State Representative or Senator.

Once a sponsor is secured, the new bill is drafted and run through whichever chamber the initial sponsor is a member of, the House of Representatives or the Senate.

Once a bill has passed through the initial chamber, it is sent to the other chamber for passage. Once it has passed through both chambers of the legislature, it is sent to the Governor's desk where it is either vetoed or signed into law.

This process affects you as state employees in multiple ways including the creation of new positions in the department, major changes in salary, and how state law affects the department, which can lead to changes in workload or responsibilities.

As the legislative liaison, it is my job to represent the DMVA at the Capitol. Working through the Governor's office, I take steps to ensure that legislation that would harm the department is not passed.

It is also my job to ensure that certain legislation *does* get passed. I work hand in hand with the Governor's office and State legislators to pass bills that will benefit the department and the employees in it.

The State legislative session runs from January to May each year. This year, the DMVA is running two agency bills through the State legislature. This article will explain what they are, where they are in the process, and how they will benefit you if they pass!

HB23-1053: Cemetery Gifts, Grants, and Donations

HB23-1053 is a bill that will allow the Veterans Memorial Cemetery of Western Colorado to expend the gifts, grants, and donations that it takes in each year.

This bill was initially sponsored in the House by Representatives Anthony Hartsook (R) and David Ortiz (D). It was picked up in the Senate by Senators Rachel Zenzinger (D) and Janice Rich (R).

This bill passed through the House nearly unanimously and will be headed to the Senate in the coming weeks.

Should this bill pass, it would significantly benefit the Veterans Cemetery by allowing them to source other methods of funding for grounds improvement, maintenance, and infrastructure development. Thus, allowing State employees to have a greater impact on the Veterans community on the Western Slope.

SB23-036: Removing the Division of Veterans Affairs from Property Tax Exemption Verification

I know that title is a mouthful, but this bill will greatly help alleviate the workload on employees under the Division of Veterans Affairs!

Currently, the Division of Veterans Affairs spends over 1,000 hours a year verifying documents surrounding property tax exemptions for disabled veterans before sending them to county tax assessors.

However, due to modernization improvements in the US Department of Veterans Affairs at the federal level, most Veterans can fill these documents out themselves and sending them to their own tax assessors.

This bill will change State law to remove the Division from having to do this each year.

This bill was initially sponsored by Senators Byron Pelton (R) and Lisa Cutter (D). It was picked up in the House by Representatives Ryan Armagost (R) and David Ortiz (D).

Currently, this bill is at the Senate Appropriations Committee.

Should this bill pass, it would take a massive workload off the shoulders of State employees in the Division of Veterans Affairs. This would allow the hours previously spent doing verifications, to be used to better serve Veterans throughout the State of Colorado.

If you are interested in tracking this legislation, you can do so through the Colorado Legislature's website seen below!

<https://leg.colorado.gov>

Professional Development Opportunity

**REBOOT YOUR CAREER AND
LEARN ABOUT GOODWILL'S
LIFT IT TRAINING!**



Goodwill of Colorado's LIFT IT Training program offers CompTIA A+, Network+ and Security+ training free of charge to eligible participants. These certifications help members of the community advance their career in the IT and Cybersecurity fields. Each IT Training course provides hands-on learning workshops, soft skills overview workshops, online videos, textbooks, practice quizzes and a paid voucher for the certification exam. All classes offer a flexible schedule and can be taken alongside full-time employment. *Join us for a FREE hybrid information session to learn about our program and how you can get started.*

Date: Thursday, February 16, 2023

Time: 5:30 pm

In-Person Locations: 6850 Federal Blvd Denver, CO 80221 or 1460 Garden of the Gods Road Colorado Springs, CO 80907

Zoom Option: RSVP to ITTraining@goodwillcolorado.org to receive the link.

RSVP at ITtraining@goodwillcolorado.org

or (719) 367-4160.

Learn more at goodwillcolorado.org/services/it-training



Job Listings

The DMVA currently has multiple job openings, and we are always looking for amazing people to join our family.

See below for current openings:

-Air National Guard Patrol Officer

Greeley, CO

-Airfield and Facility Ground Maintenance

Arapahoe County, CO

-Environmental Compliance Manager

-Arapahoe County, CO

-Heavy Equipment Shop Mechanic II

Arapahoe County, CO

-Pipe Mechanic II

Arapahoe County, CO

-Pipe Mechanic Trades II

Denver, CO

-Purchasing Agent

Arapahoe County, CO

Hails and Farewells

The DMVA both welcomes and says goodbye to employees each month. Please see below to give warm welcomes to new faces and best wishes to those moving on in their careers!

Hails:

Alexander Nukols – Civil Air Patrol Manager

Breanna Bang – Web Developer

Joo Kang – Budget Director

Farewells:

Bel Subba – Trainee Transportation MTC

Briana Ontiveros – Social Services Specialist III

Jesse Maestas – Structural Trades II

Kevin Wright – Air Traffic Cont. II

Marilee Bagley – Budget Analyst I

Rita Thompson – Budget Analyst I

Robert Ealom – Transportation MTC II

Samantha Johnson – HR Specialist II

-Regional Field Environment Protection Specialist

Arapahoe County, CO

-Soldier and Family Readiness Specialist

Arapahoe County

-Transportation Maintenance Work Leader

Arapahoe County

Past Events

Division of Veteran Affairs:

-The Division of Veterans Affairs participated in Military and Veterans Appreciation Day at the Colorado State Capitol on Feb 10th. The event included 17 Joint Resolutions supporting the Military and Veterans in the State. It also included support from defense industry and multiple Veterans groups.

Civil Air Patrol:

- The Colorado Wing and Pikes Peak Composite Squadron hosted an in-person Training Leaders of Cadets (TLC) Basic Course at Peterson Space Force Base in Colorado Springs on January 21st. TLC-B is designed to prepare adult leaders to contribute as Cadet Programs Officers on a squadron staff.

CO National Guard:

- The COARNG and COANG supported the National Western Stock Show Military Appreciation Night with tactical vehicles, a national anthem singer, and several service members who rode in a stagecoach, at the Denver Coliseum, Jan. 17

Upcoming Events

Division of Veteran Affairs:

-The Colorado Board of Veterans Affairs will meet on the 3rd of March to discuss ongoing initiatives surrounding the service of Veterans in Colorado.

Civil Air Patrol:

- CAP Cadets will present the colors in both houses of the Colorado General Assembly at the Colorado State Capitol, Denver, Feb. 16.

- A Search and Rescue Exercise will take place outside Boulder, Feb. 18-19. Aircrews from across the state will operate out of their home airports and will perform practice sorties primarily involving aerial photography of locations during simulated disaster situations.

CO National Guard:

- The Adjutant General of Colorado Brigadier General Laura Clellan and senior staff members will celebrate their 30-year partnership with Slovenia in Slovenia, March 6-11. They will meet with civilian and military officials about the history and future of the State Partnership Program.

