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Calendar of Events

2009 Fall Conference October 30-November 1 - Holiday Inn, Hampton (\$71.00)

Veterans Day – November 11, 2009

2010 State Convention July 8-11 - Sheraton Richmond West, Richmond (\$99)

2010 Fall Conference October 29-31 Holiday Inn, Hampton (\$74)

2011 State Convention July 14-17 Roanoke Plaza Hotel & Holiday Inn, Roanoke

Manassas Veterans Day Parade

American Legion Post 10, Manassas, is sponsoring the 'Inaugural' Greater Manassas Veterans Day Parade on Saturday, November 7, 2009, at 11:00 a.m. in Old Town Manassas. This *first* Veterans Day Parade, to be televised locally on COMCAST cable, will honor our local WWII veterans, as well as all veterans, with performances by various military and high school bands, pipe and drum corps, military units, antique and modern military vehicles, and a flyover by a UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter.

We sincerely hope you will help us pay tribute to the veterans in the area by supporting us in this endeavor. The parade though staffed totally by volunteers is expected to cost about \$16,000. Our hope is that with generous sponsorships and ad sales that the parade will turn a profit. In that event, all proceeds from the parade will be donated to the Fisher House Foundation.

As our nation celebrates its 233rd birthday, please join us by honoring our Veterans by considering one of our major sponsorship packages and or ad in the Souvenir Program Book.

Please join us in creating a brilliant tradition in Manassas.

Additional information and pricing for ads and sponsorship packages is outlined on our website at www.manassasveteransparade.org. If you have any questions feel free to contact us at info@manassasveteransparade.org or at 703-369-4900.

"Gunny" Lewis, Post 10 Commander

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Army Guard To Inform Members Of Data Loss

ARLINGTON, Va., (8/4/09) – Members of the Army National Guard who could be affected by the theft of a laptop containing their personal data, will be notified through an official letter, Guard officials said here today.

About 131,000 former and current Army Guard members could be affected by the data loss, which occurred July 27 when a personal laptop owned by an Army Guard contractor was stolen, said Randy Noller, a spokesman for the National Guard Bureau.

The stolen laptop contained personal information on Soldiers enrolled in the Army National Guard Bonus and Incentives Program. The type of data includes names, Social Security Numbers, incentive payment amounts and payment dates.

The Army Guard will inform those Guard members who are determined to be impacted by this incident by mailing a letter to them, Noller said.

He added that notification of all individuals should be completed by next week.

The National Guard Bureau has set up a special Web page at <http://www.ng.mil>, and the Army Guard will have a toll-free call center available from 7 a.m. to 11 p.m. EST, Monday through Friday beginning Aug. 5. The number is 877-481-4957. Each features up-to-date news and information on the data compromise.

The Web site provides steps on how to check credit reports, how to guard against identity theft and who to call if a Guard member believes any fraudulent activity occurs with his or her personal information.

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Dr. Blume Recognized

Senator Tanner Berube of Alaska introduced the following resolution, which was read twice and referred to the following Boys Nation Senate Committee:

To recognize Dr. Blume for 38 years of service to Boys Nation.

Be it enacted by the Boys Nation Senate assembled that,

Whereas to acknowledge the 66 years of membership dedication to the American Legion and especially 38 years to Boys Nation;

Whereas Dr. Blume is a 74 year member of the Sons of the American Legion;

Whereas Dr. Blume had the honor to attend Virginia Boys State in 1941;

Whereas Dr. Blume has proudly given his service to this county as a World War II veteran;

Whereas Dr. Blume has served 48 years on the American Legion Virginia Boys State staff;



Whereas Dr. Blume has enlightened America' youth by working as a Professor at Virginia Tech, teaching social sciences for 36 years;

Whereas Dr. Blume honorably served the American Legion as Department Commander for Virginia in 1963 and 1964;

Therefore let it be resolved that Boys Nation 2009 formally says "thank you" Dr. Blume for serving this country, the American Legion and brightening the lives of thousands of Boys State and Boys Nation graduates.

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Legion to House: Protect The Troops! Stop The Photos

INDIANAPOLIS (Aug. 10, 2009) – The leader of the nation's largest veterans service organization called on the House of Representatives to protect the lives of American troops by immediately passing the Detainee Photographic Records Protection Act.

At issue is the release of images depicting the treatment of battlefield detainees. After a judge ordered that the photographs be released in response to a request by the American Civil Liberties Union, the Obama administration sided with The American Legion in blocking the dissemination of the images which could inflame tensions and incite violence against U.S. troops.

"In an editorial in the Wall Street Journal this spring, I wrote 'A picture may be worth a thousand words, but is it worth the death of a single American soldier?' It is clear that the Obama administration, the U.S. Senate and the leadership of the U.S. military agree that it is not. Now it's time for the House of Representatives to answer the question," said American Legion National Commander David K. Rehbein.

Language prohibiting the release of the photographs has passed the Senate three times since May, but some House Democrats are blocking the current bill, in spite of its support by President Obama. Rep. Michael K. Conway, R-Texas, and Rep. Heath Shuler, D-N.C., are threatening to use a discharge petition, which requires signatures from 218 members, to force the legislation to the floor.

"Americans who truly support the troops can demonstrate that support by flooding the House of Representatives with phone calls, emails, faxes and letters demanding that members vote and pass this legislation which we know would protect the troops," Rehbein said. "Let your representative know where you stand. If it's a choice between the ACLU and the safety of our troops, I am convinced that the American people would choose the troops every time."

In 2005, Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman Gen. Richard B. Myers said, "It is probable that al Qaeda and other groups will seize upon these images... as grist for their propaganda mills, which will result in, besides violent attacks, increased terrorist recruitment, continued financial support and exacerbation of tensions between Iraqi and Afghani populaces and U.S. and coalition forces... Riots, violence and attacks by insurgents will result." Current JCS Chairman Adm. Mike Mullen and the rest of the military leadership share Myers concern.

"We do not know if the photos document real abuse or allegations that can be taken out of context," Rehbein said. " But glimpses into mistakes of the past, could very well have adverse impact on peace in the future. Nothing productive can come from release of these photos."

With a current membership of 2.5-million wartime veterans, The American Legion was founded in 1919 on the four pillars of a strong national security, veterans affairs, Americanism, and youth programs. Legionnaires work for the betterment of their communities through more than 14,000 posts across the nation.

Contact: Craig Roberts – (202) 263-2982; Cell – (202) 406-0887; Joe March or John Raughter – (317) 630-1253

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HAPPY NEW YEAR!

VA&R reporting year that is. And what a nice year it was! VA&R received 93 reports from the then 216 Posts in the Department for a respectable 43%. Especially notable were the number of Post Service Officers reported at 83. The number of claims they processed was a whopping 776! That's an average of just over 9 per SO. In addition to that 226 of our comrades were provided employment services and 160 vets were offered training opportunities. A huge "THANK YOU" to our Department Service Officer sub-committee for your untiring efforts to provide the training for these dedicated comrades. Paul Laskey, Andy Babic, Jim Holt, Doug Refvik, Chuck Gudis and the 20 Posts that sponsored service clinics, "YOU ROCK"! Also hearty "Congratulations" to Ms. Alberta Nikolai, Springfield Post 176, on her selection for the Citation of Meritorious Service this year! Just a note, please show up to receive award, Lew Lipscomb was/is awfully hard on my peepers!

Another shining star(s) I gleaned from the reports were the efforts of our VAVS volunteers. 267 regularly scheduled volunteers (those that have completed orientation and been certified at their local medical centers) donated 27,794 hours to our hospitalized comrades. 518 occasional volunteers donated 12,345 hours at local and some not so local facilities. Charles 'Chuck' Gudis has been appointed as the Department VAVS coordinator and is working day and night to ensure our comrade veterans are not forgotten. Chuck reported that 9 – 100 hour pins, 8 – 300 hour pins, 6 – 500 hour pins, 3- 1,000 hour pins, 3- 2,000 hour pins, 3 – 3,000 hour pins and 1- 5,000 service pin were awarded this past year! In addition, the Richmond VAMC issued 104 Certificates of Appreciation for volunteer hours amassed as of 9/30/08. Well Done! The Salem VAMC, led by Herm Prilipp conducted their annual 'Summer Carnival', with 15 Posts serving food and entertaining over 150 patients and family members. At Hampton VAMC, Representative Jim Holt and 6 local Posts' members sponsored their annual 'Country Fair' with over 250 patients and volunteers being fed and entertained. Roscoe Eagle, Representative for the Washington D.C. VAMC and his staff coordinated luncheons for residents of their Community Living Center, a Welcome Home OIF/OEF celebration for over 850 veterans, and provided on site coordination for a visit by Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric Shinseki as just a part of their busy year. Sam Garman, Representative at the Martinsburg, W.VA. VAMC and his associates continue to provide quality care to the patients and community, which included this past summer 36 youths who served over 2,000 hours at the facility!

As for me...I'm getting there. The VA&R Committee as you know swings a wide loop! The language is full of acronyms and initials. VA&R of course is Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation, VAVS of course is Veterans Administration Volunteer Services, VAMC of course is Veterans Administration Medical Center, (4 in Department, 8 in VISN 6). VISN 6? Veterans Integrated Service Network (21 total throughout nation), containing, for us 16 CBOC's (Community Based Outpatient Clinics). OIF/OEF – Operation Iraqi Freedom/Operation Enduring Freedom, Nursing homes are out – Community Living Centers are in. TFA's, H2H, VSO, the list goes on and on. I will "endeavor to preserve." Another fine mess I've gotten into. BUT...I am honored and privileged to work with all the above mentioned folks as we endeavor to serve our comrades where "the rubber meets the road." You are my heroes. You are the ones that give your time, money, hands, ears, and yes Love on a daily basis, unequivocally and unselfishly. I SALUTE YOU!

I stand ready to assist in any way I can. Call, write or email at your convenience.

Ike Kelley

7010 Church Road, Petersburg, VA. 23803

804-862-9302 – wileynva@aol.com

VA&R Committee Chairman

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New Southwest VA Veterans Cemetery Grant Awarded

(Letter from the Department of Veterans Affairs)

August 12, 2009

Dear Mr. Clevinger:

I am pleased to inform you that the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is awarding a grant in the amount of \$7,218,366 for 100 percent of allowable costs associated with the establishment of the Southwest Virginia Veterans Cemetery in Dublin, Virginia (VA Project VA-07-04). The Commonwealth of Virginia submitted a formal Application for Federal Assistance for the project on July 14, 2009.

The grant will fund the first phase of construction consisting of approximately 24 acres. Construction plans include a main entrance, full casket and cremain burial areas, columbaria, a memorial garden and scatter burial area, roads, an assembly area, a committal shelter, a maintenance building, landscaping and supporting infrastructure. Interment areas will include 5,167 standard burial plots; 2,750 pre-placed crypts; 500 in-ground cremains; and 625 columbarium niches.

The cemetery will provide burial benefits for 60,000 Veterans and their families in Virginia. The nearest national cemetery is VA's Mountain Home National Cemetery in Mountain Home, Tennessee, which is approximately 134 miles away. The nearest State cemetery is Virginia Veterans Cemetery in Amelia, Virginia, which is approximately 178 miles away.

The Notification of Award is being sent to the Commissioner of the Virginia Department of Veterans Services, Mr. Vincent M. Burgess, the official representative of the Commonwealth for this Federally-assisted project. A similar letter is also being sent to the House and Senate leadership of the Veterans' Affairs Committees and the Appropriations Subcommittees.

Sincerely,
John R. Gingrich
Chief of Staff
Department of Veterans Affairs
Office of the Secretary

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Virginia Wounded Warrior Program Seeks Regional Director for Southwest Virginia

RICHMOND— The Virginia Wounded Warrior Program (VWWP) seeks a regional director to manage program activities in southwestern Virginia. The regional director monitors and coordinates mental health and rehabilitative services support for Virginia veterans, members of the Virginia National Guard, and Virginia residents in the Armed Forces Reserves not in active federal service. The regional director ensures that services are available within the region to support family members affected by a covered military member's service and deployment. And, the incumbent ensures availability of timely assessment and treatment for combat stress and



traumatic brain injuries resulting from service in combat areas. To apply for this position, visit https://jobs.agencies.virginia.gov/applicants/jsp/shared/search/SearchResults_css.jsp.

The Virginia Wounded Warrior Program Southwest Virginia is jointly managed by the Mt. Rogers Community Services Board and New River Valley Community Services and employs two dedicated case managers. Since June 1, the VWWP team has contacted numerous local agencies and organizations with information about the program. Team members have presented at speaking engagements and established relationships with the Salem VA Medical Center (VAMC) and the Mountain Home VAMC in Tennessee. They have built strong partnerships with Brain Injury Services of Southwest Virginia and the regional offices of the Department of Rehabilitative Services. The team has established interagency referral and assessment forms and is managing services for veterans and families throughout Southwest Virginia.

VWWP Southwest Virginia hosted the first regional training program for community service providers on July 10, 2009. This training provided education about working with veterans with TBI, navigating the VA system, assisting veterans with state and federal benefits, and understanding military culture. Participants included community services board and brain injury services staff as well as professionals from the Virginia Employment Commission, Virginia Department of Veterans Services, and other human services professionals. Future events and meetings have been scheduled with veterans service organizations, the Department of Corrections, and a job fair hosted by the Virginia Army National Guard. Additional training seminars for professionals as well as veterans and family members will be hosted.

The Virginia Wounded Warrior Program was authorized by the 2008 General Assembly and is charged with ensuring that veterans who have experienced stress-related injuries and traumatic brain injuries in combat, and their families, receive timely assessment, treatment, and support. A study by the RAND Corporation reports that more than 30 percent of returning service personnel “have a mental health condition or reported experiencing a traumatic brain injury.”

The General Assembly appropriated \$4.4 million over the current biennium to fund the Virginia Wounded Warrior Program. These funds are being used to build capacity in the community service boards, traumatic brain injury service providers, and other community-based service providers as well as to provide training for service providers. Services to veterans and their families include mental health, substance abuse, and traumatic brain injury services in addition to case management, outpatient, family support, and rehabilitation services.

For more information about the Wounded Warrior Program, visit www.virginiaforveterans.com.

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World War II Veterans Urged To Visit Their Memorial October 17, 2009

No Charge For Participating Veterans

Honor Flight Historic Triangle Virginia Plans Second Trip

Honor Flight Historic Triangle Virginia will host its second bus trip for World War II veterans to the World War II Memorial in Washington, D.C. on October 17, 2009. Veterans wishing to go on the trip should visit <http://honorflighthtva.org/veteran/> to download the application.

Please submit your application as soon as possible so we can plan for the trip. If you have questions or comments, contact us at honorflighthtva@cavtel.net or if you prefer, call us at 1-877-424- VETS.

Honor Flight Historic Triangle Virginia Inc. is a Williamsburg based organization formed in October 2008. Our goal is simple: to take by bus every World War II veteran in the Historic Triangle Area (Hampton Roads, Tidewater, and even Richmond) who is able and has not been to Washington to visit their memorial. We must do this now before all our veterans of that war leave us. Veterans pay nothing for the trip. Buses will depart from Virginia Beach and Williamsburg, but may also depart from Richmond if we have a sufficient number of travelers from that area.

Our volunteers organize the veterans for travel, arrange the travel both to and from Washington, and arrange all activities and meals in Washington. The trip is completed in one day, spending several hours at the World War II Memorial, then visiting the Korean War Memorial, Vietnam Wall, Lincoln Memorial, the Marine Corps War Memorial, and Arlington Cemetery.

We also need volunteers for the trip to serve as guardians. These volunteers will serve as guides or as a guardian for a veteran in a wheelchair. To volunteer, visit <http://honorflighthtva.org/guardians/>.

We are an affiliate of the national group Honor Flight Network, which began this activity in 2005 and began flying veterans to Washington on commercial charter aircraft in 2006. There are now about 40 hubs or cities from which trips, mainly by air, originate. Due to our proximity to Washington, our trips are by bus. National Honor Flight Network provides us with technical and travel support, and helps arrange activities in Washington D.C. We are funded 100% by private and commercial donors. We are supported by many veterans organizations in the region.

Please see how you can help by visiting <http://honorflighthtva.org/donations/>.

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