



## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

- ***Calendar of Upcoming Events***
- ***Va. Veterans Cemetery Establishes Garden***
- ***UVA Military Appreciation Day***
- ***Va. Post 110 Presents Flag***
- ***American Legion Urges Compassion***
- ***Commander Hill Outlines Priorities***
- ***Virginia Legionnaires Do It Again!***

---

### **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

---

### **Virginia Veterans Cemetery Amelia Establishes Memorial Garden**

AMELIA, VA- Although most veterans receive in-ground burial or in-ground or above-ground inurnment, the Virginia Veterans Cemetery, Amelia also memorializes veterans who have no remains. Until earlier this month, 12 veterans were memorialized with granite markers in the cemeteries memorial garden section, located at the outskirts of the cemetery; however, in early September, with the permission of the families, the memorials were relocated to a more prominent location.

"The existing memorials garden section was to the right of the administration building, bordering the road to the maintenance compound," said Dan Kemano, Cemeteries Director for the Virginia Department of Veterans Services. "Visitors rarely went into that area of the cemetery, so no one saw the memorials."

The new location of the memorial garden is at the main cemetery entrance, to the left of the U.S., State, and POW/MIA flags and at the beginning of the scenic woods walkway. Space for 50 memorials has been allocated for the new memorial garden. "This location provides visitors with a view of the chapel, flags, other gardens, and the woods walkway," pointed out Kemano.

Future plans for the cemetery call for a scatter garden where families can scatter the cremated remains of their loved ones. The woods walkway will be enhanced with additional trees and granite benches donated by family members. Kemano hopes veterans service organizations will eventually donate service-related memorials for placement within the wooded area along the walkway. "We want the woods walkway to be a peaceful place where families and friends can come for reflection," said Kemano.

The Virginia Veterans Cemetery, Amelia is one of two state-operated veterans cemeteries. A second cemetery, the Albert G. Horton, Jr. Memorial Veterans Cemetery is located in Suffolk. A third cemetery, located in Dublin, is in the early phase of construction. The cemeteries are operated by the Virginia Department of Veterans Services.

Service members who were honorably discharged qualify for burial in one of Virginia's veterans cemeteries. A grave site, opening and closing of the grave for the veteran, placement of a government grave marker, and perpetual care of the site are provided to the veteran at no charge. Veterans' spouses and eligible dependent children may be interred for a small fee, currently three hundred dollars. Ω



# VIRGINIA CAVALIERS FOOTBALL | 2009

## Military Appreciation Day

Saturday, November 14 vs. Boston College

**\$25 Reserved**  
 for all active or retired military personnel  
 ENTER PROMO CODE:  
**USA**  
 on [Virgiasports.com](http://Virgiasports.com)  
 Click on Tickets > Online Promotions

In honor of your service and commitment to our country, Virginia athletics would like to offer you and your family a special ticket offer for Virginia football. Purchase online at [VirginiaSports.com](http://VirginiaSports.com) and save \$17 off the single ticket price.

### 3 WAYS TO ORDER (starting 6/8/09)

#### Online

- Go to [VirginiaSports.com](http://VirginiaSports.com)
- Click on Tickets
- Click on Online Promotions
- Enter the Promo Code: USA

#### In-Person

Show your Military ID at the Virginia Athletics Ticket Office in Bryant Hall: Monday - Friday, 9 AM - 5 PM

#### By Phone

Call 800-542-UVA1



To order:  
**800-542-UVA1**  
[VirginiaSports.com](http://VirginiaSports.com)





*Photo Right:*

*Joe Brady (left), Commander of Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 392, and Wes Latchford, Commander of American Legion Post 110, hold an Honor and Remember flag presented to VFW Post 392 by American Legion Post 110 in appreciation for allowing Post 110 to utilize its facilities for its monthly meetings and programs.*



## **Virginia Post 110 Presents Honor and Remember Flag**

On September 1st, 2009, American Legion Post 110 of Virginia Beach presented its sister organization, Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Post 392, with an Honor and Remember Flag in appreciation for VFW Post 392's allowing Post 110 to utilize its facilities for its monthly meetings and programs.

On December 29, 2005, Corporal George Anthony "Tony" Lutz II, U.S. Marine Corps, was killed by a sniper's bullet while on patrol in Fallujah, Iraq. His father, George, a resident of Chesapeake, Virginia, began a quest to establish a universally recognized symbol that specifically acknowledges the American service men and women who never made it home. Thus the Honor and Remember Flag - a National Campaign of Remembrance - was conceived.

Along with the Honor and Remember Flag, VFW Post 392 was presented with a certificate of appreciation from Post 110 recognizing both Posts' on-going partnership in mutual helpfulness, a strong national security, taking care of veterans, mentoring youth, and promoting patriotism and honor.

House Resolution 1034, introduced by Congressman Randy Forbes, (VA-4th) seeks to amend Title 36, United States Code, to designate the Honor and Remember Flag as an official symbol to recognize and honor members of the Armed Forces who died in the line of duty. This is the same process by which The National League of Families POW/MIA Flag was designated as the symbol of our Nation's concern and commitment to resolving as fully as possible the fates of Americans still prisoner, missing, and unaccounted for.

In March 2009, a resolution for endorsement began its way through the official channels of the Veterans of Foreign Wars. The Department of Virginia is also working towards adopting a resolution endorsing recognition of the Honor and Remember Flag by The American Legion. The Commonwealths of Pennsylvania and Virginia are currently writing adoption legislation to formally endorse the Honor and Remember Flag. Ten cities in Virginia, Pennsylvania, Texas, and North Carolina, have also adopted resolutions officially recognizing the Honor and Remember Flag.

Men and women have been serving in the United States military and dying for their country for more than 200 years. They represent a unique and distinct category of individuals, along with the families that sent them, that deserve a symbol of recognition, a visual emblem of honor.

Ω



## **The American Legion Appeals to Congress for Compassionate Treatment of Women Veterans**

WASHINGTON (Sept. 10, 2009 ) - In his first address before Congress, the newly elected leader of The American Legion has called upon lawmakers to "compassionately address" the needs of women veterans.

National Commander Clarence E. Hill, testifying before a joint session of the U.S. House and Senate Veterans Affairs Committees, urged lawmakers to acknowledge that service women deployed to today's theaters of war are, in fact, serving in combat zones.

"The demographic of the American veteran is changing," Hill said. "We now have a much more diverse veterans' population than in past generations. This diversity includes a growing and significant number of women veterans who sacrifice no less than their male counterparts. In this war without a front there are no safe areas. As such, women who historically were not severely wounded in previous conflicts are returning home with limbs missing, terribly burned, or blinded."

Hill, who began his one-year term as head of the nation's largest veterans service organization just two weeks, added that closer daily contact between male and female service members has "unfortunately led to military sexual trauma issues which must be addressed compassionately."

He also noted that the change in the military's makeup will require the meeting of new fiscal and logistical challenges in the service of those coming home. "Timely access to quality health care, the new G.I. Bill, and other veterans' benefit programs must adjust and adapt to the needs of this 'newest generation' of wartime veterans. Hundreds of thousands of OIF (Operation Iraqi Freedom) and OEF (Operation Enduring Freedom) veterans are now using their VA health care benefits, increasing the workload of a health care system that was overburdened before the war began," Hill said. " It is a sacred and time honored obligation of The American Legion to make sure those veterans have the services they need and timely access to the care they have earned and deserve."

The Legion commander's testimony was presented to members of the House Committee on Veterans Affairs, chaired by Rep. Bob Filner, D-Calif., and the Senate Committee on Veterans Affairs, chaired by Senator Daniel Akaka, D-Hawaii, this morning. The forty page Legion presentation contained proposals for the Department of Veterans Affairs Fiscal Year 2011 budget and applauded Filner for his proposal to require Medicare to reimburse VA for the treatment of eligible veterans' injuries, illnesses and conditions. The Legion also urged Congress to take measures to increase access to veterans health care, especially in rural areas, to redouble efforts to address the issues of an aging veteran population as well as veterans suffering the effects of Gulf War illness, traumatic brain injury, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and exposure to toxic substances such as Agent Orange.

The enormous backlog of unprocessed and partially processed veterans' claims was also noted in the Legion presentation with potential solutions advanced. Suggestions were also made to improve and make more equitable the terms of the newly enacted Post 9/11 GI Bill that is now providing educational benefits to new military veterans.

Testimony is presented annually to lawmakers by The American Legion shortly after Congress reconvenes for its fall session.

*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.*

Ω



## **The American Legion Leader Outlines Priority Items for Congress**

WASHINGTON (Sept. 10, 2009 ) - The newly elected leader of The American Legion has spelled out the veterans service organization's seven leading priorities for Congress.

National Commander Clarence E. Hill, just two weeks into his one-year term, testified before a joint session of the U.S. House and Senate Veterans Affairs Committees this morning, succinctly outlining the Legion's continuing concern over funding of the Department of Veterans Affairs , VA's huge caseload backlog and the fate of VA medicine in light of impending changes in the nation's health care system.

Hill submitted 40 pages of written testimony to committee members, but also offered a few minutes of oral testimony in a packed Cannon House Office Building caucus room. Among the hundreds witnessing the commander's testimony were Legion leaders from across the nation who had made an annual pilgrimage to Washington to visit their congressional representatives as well as a contingent of wounded warriors from nearby Walter Reed Army Medical Center whose presence inspired two standing ovations.

Hill summarized his brief remarks by declaring seven "priority items" for congressional consideration. These included what he called "timely, predictable and sufficient" appropriations "to support the Department of Veterans Affairs' delivery of quality health care to the nation's veterans." The commander also reiterated the Legion's argument that VA health care be kept autonomous and not rolled into any national health care plan.

Hill also urged passage of twin House and Senate bills that would enable Medicare reimbursement to the VA for medical treatment of eligible veterans, plus improved screening of and treatment for traumatic brain injury and post traumatic stress disorder.

The Legion commander also urged changes in the newly enacted Post 9/11 G.I. Bill that would expand financial aid to include veterans who wish to pursue vocational and trade school educational opportunities rather than just those presented in colleges and universities. He also encouraged improved regulation of the Local Veterans' Employment Representative (LVER) and Disabled Veterans' Outreach (DVOP) programs at the state level to help bolster employment opportunities for veterans.

An oft-repeated topic of discussion during the commander's testimony was the huge backlog of unprocessed and partially processed VA disability claims. Some sources say the number of claims in the backlog now approach one-million. The Legion leader said that improved training and retention of case workers, plus the institution of measures to, as he put it, "get it right the first time," thus avoiding repeated and extensive processing of claims, will help free the logjam. Hill and the Legion drew praise for offering solutions to the vexing problem, rather than simply express alarm about it.

Praise was also offered by committee members to each other for their largely bipartisan efforts to address the needs of the nation's military veterans. The most passionate statement in this regard was made by Bernie Sanders, the Independent senator from Vermont. "I voted against the war in Iraq," he proclaimed, "but no matter whether you favor a war or oppose it, it is wrong to blame those who put on the uniform." His comment elicited loud applause. Testimony is presented annually to lawmakers by The American Legion's national commander shortly after Congress reconvenes in its fall session.

*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.*



*Photo courtesy of PDC Brett Reistad*

### **Virginia Legionnaires Do It Again!**

Congratulations to Virginia Legionnaires for winning the 2008-2009 William Randolph Hearst Trophy at the National American Legion Convention in Louisville, Kentucky. I had the honor of accompanying Department Commander Ron Miluszewski, Immediate Past Commander Les Clevinger, and Department Adjutant Dale Chapman on the stage at the National Convention to receive the trophy from National Commander David Rehbein. If you are not already aware, the William Randolph Hearst Trophy is awarded to the Best Americanism Program in the American Legion. This trophy recognizes all the hard work and effort of that all Virginia Legionnaires put into the Americanism Program here in Virginia. So my hat is off to all of for all that you do every day as veterans still serving America.

I would be remiss if I did not also mention that it would have not been possible for Virginia to win this trophy had it not been for the reporting done by all the posts last May. The time and effort by the Legionnaires at the post-level to document your Post Americanism Activities in the Department Americanism Report and the Consolidated Post Report made it possible for Virginia to win this prestigious award. Thank you for all that you do!

So please keep up doing what you are doing to support our veterans, children and communities. And while you're at, please remember to capture the information for your annual reports.

I hope to see everyone at the Fall Conference in Hampton, Virginia on October 30 - November 1, 2009. We hope to be showing off the William Randolph Hearst Trophy at the Americanism meeting on Saturday morning.

John Kokernak  
Department Americanism Chairman

Ω



***Help Earn \$30,000/YR or more For Veterans' Programs in The Dept. of VA.***

***By Simply Subscribing FREE to "The Virginia Legionnaire" E-Mail Newsletter.***

***Subscribe Today and Promote The E-Newsletter to Your Post Members and Fellow Veterans...  
Its FREE and More Subscribers Earns More Money For YOUR Veterans Programs.***