

Home health moves to study phase



Governor Jon S. Corzine signs legislation at the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Post 3020 in Delran on August 3, requiring the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs (DMAVA) to evaluate the resources, costs and benefits of providing home health care aides for qualified veterans. One of the bill sponsors Assemblyman Jack Connors (D-Camden, Burlington), left, is joined by Senator Diane Allen

(R-Camden, Burlington), New Jersey VFW State Commander Robert Pinto; New Jersey VFW Ladies Auxillary President Hazel Radcliff; Stephen Abel, Deputy Commission for Veterans Affairs and Al Bucchi, New Jersey VFW State Legislative Director. For more on the Home Health Care bill, turn to page 4. Photo by Kryn P. Westhoven, DMAVA/PAO.

DCVA's Message

Dear Veteran,

As I write this, I am attending the National Convention of the Veterans of Foreign Wars in Kansas City, Missouri. Governor Jon S. Corzine addressed the gathering and Maj. Gen. Glenn K. Rieth, The Adjutant General of New Jersey was in attendance to show support and congratulate George Lisicki of New Jersey on his elevation to the post of National Commander in Chief.



Stephen Abel, Deputy Commissioner for Veterans Affairs talks to New Jersey Network reporter Jerry Henry about the World War II Memorial in front the State House.

The Governor's continued support of New Jersey's Veterans epitomized by this trip is further reinforced by recent actions on his part, including signing legislation authorizing this department to study providing home health care to those Veterans who want to remain in their homes. The Department of Military and Veterans Affairs has also benefited from the high priority placed on Veteran issues by Governor Corzine. His support is shown by the current fiscal year funding for the World War II Memorial, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) hotline, the Veterans Haven expansion and the Yellow Ribbon Advisory Committee.

The Yellow Ribbon Advisory Committee on Returning Combat Veterans was established to identify emergent issues facing our newest veterans. The Committee, made up of a diverse group of veterans, community leaders and representatives of veterans support agencies, identified and prioritized issues into four categories; Health care, Family Support, Employment and Outreach. The Department has already begun work on many of the most critical issues. DMAVA recognizes and applauds the New Jersey Bar Association's offer of pro bono legal assistance. We are improving coordination between the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and New Jersey veterans, especially as concerns diagnosis and treatment of Traumatic Brain Injury. We continue to actively work to improve and expand outreach efforts to insure veterans are fully informed of their well-deserved entitlements and support.

In the last issue of the VeteraNJJournal, I praised the volunteer efforts of the veteran community in support of their comrades. This combined with the genuine concern and generous support of New Jersey's Chief Executive Officer, and the dedication of the staff at DMAVA significantly augments our efforts to serve those who have served us so well.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stephen S. Abel".

VeteraNJJournal

Jon S. Corzine

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Maj. Gen. Glenn K. Rieth

The Adjutant General

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Message from the Governor

Dear Veteran,

I am honored and humbled by the courage and conviction you have shown for our nation. Having served in the Marines, I couldn't be prouder of you — the men and women in our military who have devoted so much of their lives to serving this country and advancing the cause of freedom around the world.



Throughout the course of our history, Americans have made great sacrifices on behalf of their country. These sacrifices are born not out of ignorance or hatred, like our enemies, but born out of the desire to let others live free.

Then, those American heroes who return home ask only to raise their families, to live with dignity and to pursue the American dream represented by the flag they wore on their sleeve.

This is particularly vital in wartime when we need to make sure we are doing all we can to support the service-members deployed overseas, particularly by helping the families who are forced to cope with the absence of a father, mother, brother or sister.

With the recent health care debacle at Walter Reed Army Medical Center, those of us in public life recognized more than ever that we owe it to our veterans to ensure their needs are met.

That is why it was important to explore and consider new options for our veterans who require prolonged medical care. This past August, I signed legislation that requires the Adjutant General of the Department of Military and Veterans' Affairs to examine and evaluate the resources available as well as the costs and benefits of providing home health care services to eligible veterans. After a careful examination, the Adjutant General will submit a report to the Legislature detailing specific recommendations.

These alternative programs have the potential to allow veterans to receive the care they need from the comfort of their home while at the same time reducing long-term care demands on the Department of Military and Veterans' Affairs.

The report's recommendations will include details on the allocation of state funds necessary to meet the demand for veterans' home health care services and plans for working with Medicare, Medicaid, and private insurance companies to provide alternatives to veterans in the state. The report is to be submitted no later than 180 days after enactment of the legislation.

In New Jersey, we will continue to demonstrate our commitment to veterans through our actions. In 2008, we will spend \$1 million to provide support services for our returning veterans. In addition, we will spend \$1.3 million to provide services to returning veterans who are coping with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, making New Jersey one of only three states that provides these services and the only state that provides PTSD services to veterans' families. This year, we also expanded one of our veterans homes giving us the capacity to provide high-quality long term care to nearly 1,000 New Jersey veterans.

Over a half million veterans reside in New Jersey from our "greatest generation" of World War II veterans to those who have been serving on the front lines in Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom. You have served with distinction and make us all proud.

As President John F. Kennedy once said, "As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words, but to live by them."

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jon S. Corzine".

Sincerely
Jon S. Corzine

Home health care study moves ahead

Story and photo by Kryn P. Westhoven, NJDMAVA/PAO

The Delran Veterans of Foreign Wars meeting room was packed. In the audience of Post 3020 members and guests was Al Bucchi, the New Jersey State VFW Legislative Director, who eagerly awaited the state's chief executive to bring him closer to a goal.

When Governor Jon S. Corzine signed legislation on August 3, requiring the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs (DMAVA) to evaluate the resources, costs and benefits of providing home health care aides for qualified veterans, Bucchi finally saw progress on what seem an impossible journey.

"I have been working on this for six years," said Bucchi. "For the past one and half years it has been a concerted lobbying effort."

Assemblyman Jack Conners (D-Camden, Burlington) joked that it seemed that Bucchi was in the his legislative office almost every day. Conners, who is Chairman of Assembly's Veterans Affairs Committee and one of the sponsors of the Home Health bill, has become friends with the dedicated veterans advocate.

"By working with Medicare, Medicaid and private insurance companies we aim to provide those alternatives in the future so veteran patients can remain at home where many prefer to stay and that is the reality," said Conners. "You don't even have to be a veteran to appreciate being able to stay home for as long as you possibility can and be with the people who love you."

The bill looks at possible options for veterans health care according to Governor Corzine. "These alternative programs have the potential to allow veterans to receive the care they need from the comfort of their home while at the same time reducing long-term care demands on the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs," added Corzine.

The legislation requires the Adjutant General of the Department of Military and Veterans' Affairs to examine and evaluate the resources available as well as the costs and benefits of providing home health care services to eligible veterans.

"We need to put money where our mouth is and make sure that our veterans can actually have a choice about how they are going to live out their lives," Corzine said.

After a careful examination Maj. Gen. Glenn K. Rieth, The Adjutant General, will submit a report to the legislature detailing specific recommendations.

The report recommendations will include details on the allocation of state funds necessary to meet the demand for veteran home health care services and plans for working with Medicare, Medicaid, Department of Veterans Affairs and private insurance companies to provide alternatives to veterans in the state. The report is to be submitted no later than 180 days after enactment of the legislation.



Governor Jon S. Corzine speaks to veterans at the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 3020 in Delran as Assemblyman Jack Conners looks on.

"Home health care has tremendous potential to reduce long-term care costs and improve the quality of life of aging military veterans," said Assemblyman Jeff Van Drew (D-Cape May/Cumberland/Atlantic). "We should explore every opportunity to examine alternatives that would enable veterans to remain in their homes and communities and avoid placement in a nursing home or other long-term-care facility."

In 2003, half of federal VA's total extended care patient population received care in non-institutional settings.

"Funding and expanding home health services can ensure alternatives to long-term institutionalization for our veterans," Senator Peter Inverso (R-Mercer/Middlesex) said. "These alternative programs can provide reduced costs to DMAVA's long-term care system while keeping our veterans out of an acute care bed and at home, where many prefer to remain."

DMAVA will study not only costs but exactly how many veterans would be eligible for home health care. "So what portion, what percentage of that group needs immediate attention?" asked Stephen Abel, Deputy Commissioner for Veterans Affairs as he spoke on the potential that all veterans at some point in their life could need home health care.

"It is more essential than ever that states like New Jersey explore new avenues for supporting our military personnel and our veterans in every way possible," explained Conners. "We have an unshakable duty to do all that we can help the men and women who put their lives on the line to protect our freedom."

The legislation (A3281/S2305) was sponsored in the Assembly by Assemblypersons Conners, Mims Hackett Jr. (D-Essex), Nilsa Cruz-Perez (D-Camden/Gloucester) and Van Drew. It was sponsored in the Senate by Senators Inverso and Robert Martin (R-Essex/Morris/Passaic).

Veteran Homes win with Lottery money

By Brig. Gen. Frank R. Carlini, Director, Division of Veterans Health Services

On May 31, the New Jersey Lottery Commission kicked off its newest scratch off instant game "The Duke" at the New Jersey Veterans Memorial Home at Vineland.

The three game cards feature images of John Wayne and the World War II movies he starred in.

The Acting Executive Director of the Lottery Commission, William T. Jourdain, along with selected Vineland Home staff and residents, took a short ride in World War II era military vehicles to visit Todd's News Agency, a leading lottery ticket retailer in South Jersey.



It is fitting that the Lottery Commission utilized the Vineland Home to begin its campaign for the new instant game, since many of the residents are World War II veterans.

Furthermore, the three Veterans Memorial Homes receive roughly one-third of their operational budgets from the Lottery Commission, which translates to roughly \$23 million a year.

More than one-third of every lottery dollar is returned to support education and institutions, which includes the three veterans homes.

We are truly grateful for the support the Lottery Commission has provided to our veterans.

Bikers visit Homes

Story and photo by Lt. Col. Walter Nall, DMAVA-HRD

On June 16, employees, families and friends of the New Jersey Department of Military and Veterans Affairs participated in a day-long motorcycle run to visit residents at the three veterans' memorial homes.

The purpose of the motorcycle run was to increase the morale of the veterans and encourage interaction between the riders and residents. With guidance from the 42nd Regional Support Group Commander, Col. John Nunn, Cols. (retired) Jay Lovas and Michael Smith along with Lt. Col. Walter Nall and Kevin Hearn organized this year's event.

Thirty riders departed Lawrenceville for the 70-mile ride to the Vineland Veterans Home – the first leg of the trip. Upon arrival, an additional five riders were waiting to join the group.

At Vineland, the riders received a tour by the Chief Executive Officer, Joseph Romano. The residents came out to view the motorcycles and share their stories of 'riding with the wind'.

The riders left Vineland for the 100-plus-mile ride to Menlo Park where the veterans were waiting impatiently for the motorcyclists to arrive. Menlo Park provided refreshments and a cool area for the riders to relax and hold conversations with the residents.



Residents of the Vineland Memorial Home come out on their scooters to see the visiting motorcycles.

After Menlo Park, the riders made the final trip to Paramus. This leg of the trip came with a few challenges. First was weather, and the second was baseball. The riders drove through a rainstorm on the Parkway and the Yankees were playing the Mets. Despite those challenges, the riders safely made it to Paramus and were warmly received by the veterans.

The 1st Annual Veteran's Home Motorcycle Run was a huge success. The organizers look forward to improving the ride each year. If you are interested in participating with the group, please call 609-530-6841.

Building honors Medal of Honor recipient

By Gary R. Englert, Director, Division of Veterans Services; photos by Tech. Sgt. Mark Olsen, NJDMAVA/PA

The Administration-Maintenance Complex was dedicated during New Jersey's official Memorial Day ceremony at the Brig. Gen. William C. Doyle Veterans Memorial Cemetery on May 26.

The \$6.2 million facility will serve the state veteran's cemetery through the end of its useful life.

Burke, who entered military service in 1936 as a member of the New Jersey Army National Guard, was awarded the Medal of Honor by President Harry S. Truman, for his extraordinary heroism in Nuremberg, Germany, on April 17, 1945. Burke and his wife Kitty are buried at the Doyle Cemetery; he is the lone recipient of the nation's highest military honor to be interred there. A permanent display, honoring Frank Burke's life and service, is being created for the Administration building.

Beginning with the traditional cannon shot provided by the Colonial re-enactors of the First New Jersey Artillery, the parade of dignitaries and veterans organizations stepped off shortly before 11 a.m. The line-of-march was greeted at the dais by Governor Jon S. Corzine.

Following remarks by Maj. Gen. Glenn K. Rieth, the Adjutant General of New Jersey, and Governor Corzine, they were joined by Stephen G. Abel, Deputy Commissioner for Veterans Affairs for a posthumous presentation of the New Jersey Distinguished Service Medal to three of Burke's four children. An unveiling of the complex's dedication plaque and a ceremonial ribbon cutting followed immediately.

After the presentation of floral tributes by the state's veterans organizations, the ceremony closed with a rifle salute provided by Soldiers from the Joint Forces Headquarters, the playing of taps and an F-16 flyover by aircraft from the 177th Fighter Wing. Music was provided by the 63rd Army Band and two students from Bordentown Regional High School, who began the ceremony with "The National Anthem" and ended it singing "God Bless America."



(Above) Members of Maj. Francis X. Burke's family gather around the Medal of Honor recipients' grave site after ceremonies dedicating the new administration-maintenance complex in his honor. Veterans groups from around the state participated in the Memorial Day Ceremony (below).





Honoring the fallen on the boardwalk

Story and photos by Tech. Sgt. Mark Olsen, NJDMAVA/PA

The 54th Anniversary of the Signing of the Korean War Armistice and New Jersey Korean War Commemorative Medal Ceremony was observed on July 27 at the New Jersey Korean War Memorial located on the boardwalk in Atlantic City.

State Senator James “Sonny” J. McCullough (R-Atlantic), Honorable Richard E. Squires, National Executive Committeeman, American Legion; George Bruzgis, New Jersey State Commander and Thomas Falato, Deputy Program Chairman, Korean War Veterans Association, as well as Gary Englert, Director of Veterans Services at the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs addressed an audience filled

with members of various New Jersey veterans’ organizations and those who were there to honor those who served.

As part of the ceremony Stephen Abel, Deputy Commissioner for Veterans Affairs, presented New Jersey Korean War Service Medals to Korean War veterans.

The New Jersey Korean War Veterans Association in cooperation with the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs hosts this annual event and recognized 50 additional names engraved on the Memorial Wall.

Since last year’s ceremony there have been additional New Jersey service members identified who were killed in action during the Korean conflict.

Camp counselors-in-training visit Menlo



During their week at the New Jersey National Guard Youth Camp at the National Guard Training Center in Sea Girt the 29 counselors-in-training in the green t-shirts, made a trip to the Menlo Park Veterans Home. The future camp counselors spent several hours, playing bingo, bring residents into the fresh air and just spending time talking to the veterans. The youth camp is open to children and grandchildren of current or retired New Jersey Army or Air Guard members. This year's camp theme was 'Fit For Life' with 122 campers enjoying the ocean, varied activities and learning to better understand what it means to be in a family with a uniformed service member at the 13th annual camp. Photo by Amanda Balas, New Jersey National Guard Family Programs

Menlo residents dine with spouses

Story and photos by Staff Sgt. Barbara Harbison, NJDMAVA/PA

Menlo Park Veterans Memorial Home recently held their fifth annual Spouses' Dinner for residents of the home.

Dinner was served to more than 50 residents and their spouses giving them a reason to get dressed up, have the opportunity to dine with a loved one and provide respite for the care giver, according to Marcia Lasko, assistant supervisor of recreation at the home.

Below, David and Mary Dulack both residents of the Menlo Home enjoy the Spouse's Dinner. Insert right is the Dulack's as a young couple.



Strolling among the tables was Clarita Ramos playing her harp, giving the diners music to accompany their time with their special someone.

Photos of many of the couples at their wedding were pasted to the walls. David and Mary Dulack are both residents of the home sharing a room and life as they have for 55 years. David spent two years in the Navy and four years in the Army and is a Korean War vet.

Sandra and Braxton Williams, who have been married for 39 years also had dinner together.

Braxton is a resident and Sandra comes to the home every day to visit and found the dinner to be a nice time for togetherness.

Joseph Brandspiegel, CEO of Menlo Park Home said the dinner could not happen without the great team work. "This is a tremendous success with all our departments participating," he stated.



Sandra and Braxton Williams

Vineland residents get commissary

Story and photo by Tech. Sgt. Mark Olsen, NJDMAVA/PA

The Vineland Veterans Memorial Home commissary is open and ready for business.

With the assistance of Pineland Learning Center (PLC) students, residents will be able to purchase items ranging from toiletries to clothing.

This commissary will be run by the senior class Monday through Friday 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Saturday 12 to 4 p.m.

Prior to the ribbon cutting ceremony, Representative Frank A. Lobiondo (R-2nd District), Joseph Romano, Chief Executive Officer, Vineland Veterans Memorial Home; along with Frederick Eccleston, Executive Director, PLC, all spoke about the opportunities – both for the residents – as well as the students who will be running the commissary. Running the store is part of an ongoing project for PLC students as part of the school's transition program, which focuses on



learning work skills through a structured learning experience.

"This undertaking is a perfect fit for both the students and the veterans," observed Eccleston.

Fun is in the cards at Paramus

Photos by Paramus Veterans Home Recreation staff



Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 3616, above, visited the Paramus home to play blackjack with the residents. The group "Call Us Clowns" stops by Paramus, right. The merry makers have been weekly guests for the past nine months. Recently, not pictured in the efforts to fulfill unmet needs, American Legion Post 21 donated clocks and American Legion Post 170 from Rochelle Park donated a wheelchair.



Friday night's OK for KO

Story and photo by Tech. Sgt. Mark Olsen, NJDMAVA/PA

It was definitely a first for any of the Veterans homes.

On August 10, Vineland Veterans Memorial Home auditorium was turned into a scaled down version of Madison Square Garden.

American Legion Post 4 of Vineland sponsored the pugilistic competition in memory of former post commander Vernon N. Wolfe. Amateur boxers from the Vineland Police Athletic League (PAL) program sparred, punched and slugged their way to victory in 12 bouts.

The age of the fighters ranged from late teens to late 20's and almost every weight division was featured in the exhibition. Included in the fights were two matches featuring women – another first at the Vineland home.

Between matches, the fighters talked and posed for photos with the residents.

When asked if there would be another Friday Night Fights



for the Vets, Joseph Romano, Chief Executive Officer for the Vineland Veterans Memorial Home smiled and said don't count it out.

VA's Suicide Hot Line begins operations

To ensure veterans with emotional crises have round-the-clock access to trained professionals, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has begun operation of a national suicide prevention hot line for veterans.

"Veterans need to know these VA professionals are literally a phone call away," Secretary of Veterans Affairs Jim Nicholson said. "All service members who experience the stresses of combat can have wounds on their minds as well as their bodies. Veterans should see mental health services as another benefit they have earned."

The toll-free hot line number is 1-800-273-TALK (8255). VA's hot line, staffed by mental health professionals will take toll-free calls from across the country and work closely with local VA mental health providers to help callers.

To operate the national 24/7 hot line, VA is partnering with the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).

VA is the largest provider of mental health care in the nation. This year, the Department will spend about \$3 billion to provide mental health care to about 1 million vets yearly.

New Jersey Counseling Hotline
1-866-VETS-NJ 4 U
(1-866-838-7654)

Ocean County opens Job Bank

With the largest population of veterans of any county in the state, Ocean County has teamed up with the federal Veterans Administration to open a Job Bank in the county.

For more than 30 years the VA has offered vocational training assistance for Ocean County vets, but with the signing of the new agreement, the partnership expands.

On hand for the ribbon cutting were Bill McLemore, VA Assistant Secretary of Intergovernmental Affairs, Duane Honeycutt, director of the Newark VA Regional Office and Bill Devereaux, program coordinator for the New Jersey Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, along with representatives of veterans organizations and the county's Veterans Service Bureau.

Under the partnership with the VA, the Veterans Administration will actively have staff members on site at the county's Veterans Service Bureau, 1027 Hooper Ave., Toms River, Building 2, to assist veterans in finding a job, said Veterans Service Bureau Director John P. Dorrity.

Returning war veterans wanting more information on the new program can contact the Veterans Bureau at 732-929-2096 or call 732-349-6106 for an appointment.



Grandson makes World War II donation

Stephen G. Abel, Deputy Commissioner for Veterans Affairs, New Jersey Department of Military and Veterans Affairs accepts a \$516 donation to the World War II Memorial from Austin Mueller, who collected donations in memory of his grandfather, who was a World War II veteran. A recent high school graduate from Sea Girt, Austin will be an incoming freshman at Coastal Carolina University in Conway, S.C. Austin collected \$258 and wrote a personal check to match that amount. His donation is an inspiration to young and old alike. More individual efforts like this would go a long way to achieving the fund raising goals for the memorial.

Photo by Ellen Stein, NJDMAVA-MA

VA Research develops new prosthetic ankle

Veterans with lower-leg amputations can look forward to having a prosthetic ankle-foot that matches their natural ease of motion, thanks to research funded by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and conducted by researchers from the Department and two top universities.

Researchers say the new ankle-foot prosthetic is the first in a new family of artificial limbs. It will replicate natural motion by propelling people forward using tendon-like springs powered by an electric motor.

Through VA-funded research, the Center for Restorative and Regenerative Medicine, a partnership among the Providence VA Medical Center in Rhode Island, Brown University and Massachusetts Institute of Technology, developed the new prosthesis.

VA expects to spend more than \$1.2 billion this year on prosthetics, sensory aids, glasses and hearing aids.

Vets with wings help wounded warriors

By Samantha L. Quigley, American Forces Press Service

Sometimes all it takes for a wounded veteran to begin healing is being surrounded by family and friends. That's the premise on which the Minnesota-based Veterans Airlift Command was founded.

Walter Fricke, founder of the nonprofit organization and a former Army aviator, knows having family and friends nearby can aide a wounded vet's recovery. "I was a helicopter pilot in Vietnam, and I was wounded while flying a helicopter," he said.

Fricke said he spent about six months in a military hospital with 700 miles separating him from his family. It was only after his family members gathered the resources to visit him that his condition, which had actually begun to decline, started turning around.

Years after Fricke made a full recovery, he realized there was again an unmet need. Wounded veterans of the global war on terrorism are recovering at military medical facilities and Veterans Affairs hospitals across the country, sometimes far from their home and families.

With the mission of providing "air transportation for medical and other compassionate purposes to wounded warriors, veterans and their families through a national network of volunteer aircraft owners and pilots," he began Veterans Airlift Command.



Started in spring 2006 with nine aircraft, Veterans Airlift Command flew its

first mission, which involved a young Marine.

In fact, that's how the first mission came about. A young injured Marine had traveled from his home in Melbourne, Fla., to Jacksonville, N.C., to receive his Purple Heart and other awards. The trip took 13 hours and required four layovers. The Marine's father, in an effort to make things easier for his son's return trip, contacted the Military Severely Injured Center, which put him in touch with Veterans Airlift Command. "We flew him home in two and a half hours, nonstop," Fricke said.

The organization operates with very little overhead and works with donations that include the pilots' time, use of their planes and fuel. "We now have well over 200 aircraft in our system," Fricke said, adding that the number of volunteer pilots has grown without any formal advertising.

The organization has been working with USA Cares and the groups travel request hotline, 1-866-784-8917 Fricke said.

The group prefers requests come to them via their Web site, www.veteransairlift.com.

Musical group to appear at Homes this fall

The group "Re-Creation!" will be coming to all three Veterans Memorial Homes bringing their 32nd edition of American music to entertain residents and veterans. Every Re-Creation program ends with a rousing patriotic salute to our nation's veterans.

The group's tour of New Jersey includes:

Vineland VMH	Oct. 30	2 p.m.
VA Medical Center-Lyons	Oct. 31	2 p.m.
Menlo Park VMH	Nov. 1	2 p.m.
Paramus VMH	Nov. 2	2 p.m.
VA Medical Center-E. Orange	Nov. 3	2 p.m.

The group members have been cited as "*America's Ambassadors to Hospitalized Veterans*" for providing the only program of its kind in America. Re-Creation receives support from the Bowlers Victory Legion, the Veterans Fund, Help Hospitalized Veterans and the Elks National Veterans Service Committee.

Nicholson to leave as VA Secretary

WASHINGTON — Secretary of Veterans Affairs, Jim Nicholson announced his resignation to President George W. Bush, effective no later than October 1, 2007.

In his letter of resignation, Nicholson thanked the President for the honor of serving him and our Nation's veterans in this key post at such a "critical time in our nation's global war on terror."

"The VA is a dynamic organization dedicated to serving our nation's finest citizens – our veterans," Nicholson said. "It has been an honor and privilege to lead the VA during this historic time for our men and women who have worn the uniform. We have accomplished so much and the VA is always striving to improve our services to veterans."



Jim Nicholson, Secretary of Veterans Affairs speaking at Paramus Veterans Home in 2006

Nicholson said he wants to return to the private sector. "This coming February, I turn 70 years old, and I feel it is time for me to get back into business, while I still can."

Nicholson left the private business world over 10 years ago, where he ran a successful residential development and construction company.

Nicholson, a Vietnam Veteran, was sworn in as Secretary of Veterans Affairs on February 1, 2005 to head the department that treats more than one million patients a week.

VA health care available in South Jersey

Photo and story by Tech. Sgt. Mark Olsen, NJDMAVA/PAO

Health care is no longer a bridge and a state away for South Jersey veterans.

"Today is another good day for South Jersey veterans, who can now receive basic eye and ear care here at the Veterans Memorial Home in Vineland," stated Rep. Frank A. LoBiondo (R-2nd District).

The Veterans Affairs (VA) Medical Center in Wilmington has set up optometry and audiology outpatient clinics at the Vineland Home for South Jersey veterans. VA medical staff will be available at the clinics twice a month. In addition, podiatry services are available one day a week through the Vineland Outpatient Clinic located at 1051 Sherman Ave.

Prior to this, veterans had to travel to Wilmington for even the most basic eye, ear and foot care.

"We are able to bring these services closer to the veterans," said Michael S. Rybicki, Director, Community Based Outpatient Clinics, VA.

While optometry and audiology services have been available since 2006, the VA has increased its staff presence at the outpatient clinics. An additional part-time physician was added in April and a licensed practical nurse has been approved as well.

Since its opening in March 2006, the audiology clinic, which is open every other week, has seen more than 200 patients.

Another major improvement in optometry services is that,



L-R: Michael S. Rybicki, Director, Community Based Outpatient Clinics, VA; Rep. Frank A. LoBiondo (R-2nd District), Steve Gallerizzo, Associate Director of Wilmington VA Medical Center and Joseph Romano, Chief Executive Officer, Vineland Veterans Memorial Home, pose in front of the Audiology and Ophthalmology offices at the Vineland Veterans Home.

beginning this July, "we have an electronic link with Wilmington," noted Steve Gallerizzo, Associate Director of Wilmington VA Medical Center. "(The optometrist) can access patient's medical records through a secure network link."

So through the efforts of the Vineland Home, Representative LoBiondo and the VA, the growing outpatient needs of Vineland and South Jersey veterans are finally being met.



Vets Haven benefits from golf event

The New Jersey Chapter of International Association Workforce Professionals (IAWP) held a golf tournament for Veterans Haven. Chapter President Angel Llerena, is joined by chapter members Patsy Fox, Michael Mrvichin and Suzzane Guibert as they present a check to Robert Sauselein, Superintendent of Veterans Haven and Gary Englert, Director of Veterans Services on July 19. IAWP member Robert Fletcher was instrumental in Veterans Haven being selected by the chapter as their project for this year which provided a total of \$3,735.43 to the facility. A big thank you to all the IAWP members for their support. Photo by Kryn P. Westhoven, NJDMAVA-PAO

Outreach kiosk visits new malls

A veteran picks up a copy of the Veterans Guide, right, during the visit of the Outreach Kiosk at Bridgewater Commons in July.

The mall in Bridgewater and an August visit to Newport Centre in Jersey City were first time visits for the 'One Mall A Month' outreach program allowing Veterans Service Officers to speak to residents of Somerset and Hudson counties.

The outreach kiosk makes return visits to malls for the fall months with daily hours from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., all three days of the visit:

Livingston Mall	Sept. 12-14	(Medal ceremony on Sept. 13 at 10:30 a.m.)
Deptford Mall	Oct. 2-4	
Brunswick Square Mall	Oct. 30, 31 & Nov. 1	(Medal ceremony on Oct. 31 at 10:30 a.m.)
Quaker Bridge Mall	Nov. 27-29	

Photo by Kryn P. Westhoven, NJDMAVA/PAO



American Legion donates

American Legion Post 414 of Lawrence donated three \$750 checks, one for each of the New Jersey Veterans Memorial Homes on Aug. 16. Pictured left to right are Charles Brothers, Post 414 historian; Joe Brandspiegel, CEO Menlo Park VMH; Nick Loveless, American Legion Post 414 Commander; Joe Romano, CEO Vineland VMH; Doris Neibart, CEO Paramus VMH and Dave Snedeker, Post 414, Post Service Officer.

American Legion Post 414 donated \$500 earlier this year to support the World War II Memorial. Photo by Tech. Sgt. Mark Olsen, NJDMAVA/PAO

Veterans Haven receives donated vehicles

Veterans Haven recently received a 1993 Chevy Conversion Van to be given to a resident of the transitional housing program. The vehicle was donated by Carlton Golden Sr. of Creamridge. Over the past several months a 1989 Ford LTD was donated by Mr. and Mrs. Robert Sawyer of Cherry Hill. And three vehicles were provided by VFW Post 3020 in Delran. Post 3020 bought the vehicles, a 1989 Oldmobile Cutlass, a 1990 Ford Thunderbird and a 1990 Jeep Cherokee and had a mechanic go over them before they were donated. VFW members Al Bicchi and Tom Farrell headed up the effort. Veterans Haven obtained a 1991 Chevy Caprice and a 1995 Ford Crown Victoria from the Winslow Township's municipal fleet at a cost of only \$1 per vehicle. These vehicles will enable the residents to seek employment beyond the range of the local public transportation system and significantly increase their chances of improving their quality of life.



Echo Taps at Doyle Cemetery

Gary Englert, Director of Veterans Services, left and Iven Dumas, Assistant Superintendent of the Brig. Gen. William C. Doyle Veterans Memorial Cemetery join the four buglers who participated in the national Echo Taps event on Armed Forces Day May 19. The buglers included Jonathan Perosa and David Stichler both of Pemberton Township, Frank Richetti from Brick and Earl Fahnstock of Cherry Hill. The volunteers who played a cascade of 'Taps' to honor uniformed service members past and present, ranged in age from 11-year old Perosa to Richetti, who is 84. Photo by Kryn P. Westhoven, NJDMAVA/PAO

Hometown Heroes

By Monica Banca, VSO Warren & Hunterdon Counties

On May 12, Grandfather John Reed and Granddaughter Kristinia Steinmetz shared a moment and basked in the glow of their accomplishments.

Reed, a World War II combat veteran and Silver Star recipient and Steinmetz, an Iraq veteran, draw close as they share family stories. The pair was honored at the annual Warren County Veterans Recognition Ceremony in Belvidere.

Veterans received the Warren County Distinguished Military Service medal, a matching lapel pin, and a certificate from members of the Board of Chosen Freeholders.

The medal is an important symbol of a community's belated appreciation for the sons and daughters who gave so much in patriotic service to America.

Reed believes all combat veterans have suffered Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and now he prays that their families receive their rightful inheritance; "the wisdom and compassion forged from painful experiences." The inheritance



he left for his granddaughter now will be left to her children, that inheritance will be the stories about the war.

Stories shared with each other and the love instilled in them for all war veterans, you feel the compassion they share for others.

Hopefully their inheritance will inspire all.

From the Front Lines

VSO news from across the state

By Chris Kulkosky, DMAVA-DVS

Bill Burrows is the senior Veteran's Service Officer stationed at the Vineland Veterans Memorial Home. In a recent case, through a thorough and exhaustive interview, Burrows discovered that a disabled veteran was greatly under-evaluated for his disabilities: post traumatic stress disorder, heart disease, asthma and back injury.

This veteran had been a prisoner of war, a factor that was significant for proper VA compensation.

Through careful gathering of medical evidence and arrangement of VA medical examinations, a case was presented to the VA by Burrows for an increase in compensation. The veteran received a retroactive check for \$20,815 to compensate him for prior year's underpayments and his monthly compensation was doubled to \$2887. Burrows used knowledge of the VA system and persistence to get the ex-POW the compensation he deserved.

Bob Del Percio is the second of two Veteran's Service Officer working for veterans at the Vineland Memorial Home. An interview with a World War II veteran took a decided turn when Bob discovered that the VA had made a mistake in evaluating the veteran's foot condition back in 1957.

Del Percio appealed this 40-year-old error and compelled the VA to award retroactive compensation to the deserving veteran. Correction of this error led to receipt of a check for \$29,094 to make up for 40 years of lost compensation at the 10 per cent rate. Knowledge of the law and incisive advocacy won the day for this veteran.

As usual, unsung, but equally devoted to the welfare of veterans, Catherine Raniolo, secretary of the Vineland Veterans Service Office, prepared and presented all the crucial documents in these two cases, to ensure a successful result. Teamwork and advocacy strengthen the hands, and claims of our compensation worthy veterans.

Joe Battito at the Middlesex office assisted a widow in receiving benefits for her first husband who died in World War II. The claim began in 2005 and she received \$17,000 in retroactive payments. Another veteran will now be receiving an additional \$1,000 a month, plus a special housing grant and \$14,000 in retroactive benefits.

Correction: in the May Veteran Journal issue, on page 7, it was stated that the widow of World War II veteran would be receiving \$1,200 a year for the rest of her life. In fact, she will receive \$1,200 a month tax-free for the rest of her life.

Remember to have VA your claim re-evaluated every few years

"SERVING THOSE WHO SERVED"

NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY AND VETERANS AFFAIRS VETERANS SERVICE OFFICES

Atlantic/Cape May

Appt. pending, VSO
Lonna Remsen, Sec.
1601 Atlantic Avenue,
7th Fl.
Atlantic City 08401
609-441-3060/3061
Fax: 609-441-3899

Bergen

Robert Maulano, VSO
Luz Isip, Sec.
385 Prospect Avenue,
3rd Fl.
Hackensack 07601-2570
201-996-8050/8051
Fax: 201-996-8009

Burlington

Charles Piscopo, VSO
Bernadette Whitman, Sec.
555 High St.
Suite 6A
Mt. Holly 08060
609-518-2273/2274
Fax: 609-518-2275

Camden/Gloucester

William McDonnell, VSO
Appt. pending, VSO
Diane Rosci, Sec.
215 Crown Point Rd.,
Suite 300
Thorofare 08086
856-853-4184/4185/4186
Fax: 856-384-3781

Essex/Union

Moise Abraham, VSO
Carolanne Guzzi, Sec.
1196 Chestnut Street
Elizabeth 07201-1053
908-820-3133/3134
Fax: 908-965-2954

Hudson

Edna Jones, VSO
Helen Banks, Sec.
438 Summit Avenue,
3rd Fl, Rm. 302
Jersey City 07306-3158
201-798-7040/7051/7026
Fax: 201-798-7036

Mercer

Appt. pending, VSO
Theresa Tomecheck, Sec.
28 W. State Street, 5th fl.
PO 671, Room 514
Trenton 08625-0671
609-292-5880/5881
Fax: 609-633-6852

Middlesex/Somerset

Joseph Battito, VSO
Lillian Pacheco, Sec.
711 Jersey Avenue
2nd Fl.
New Brunswick
08901-2102
732-937-6347/6348/6349
Fax: 732-937-6417

Monmouth

Donald McNamara, VSO
Carolyn Brown, Sec.
630 Bangs Avenue
Suite 320
Asbury Park 07712-6904
732-775-7009/7005
Fax: 732-775-3612

Fort Monmouth VA Clinic
8 a.m. – 4 p.m.
(Wednesday - Thursday)
732-532-4496

Ocean

Joseph Salzano, VSO
Phyllis Goffin, Sec.
James J. Howard
Outpatient Clinic
970 RT 70
Brick 08724-3550
732-840-3033/3034
Fax: 732-840-0399

Passaic

Leonard E. Johnson, VSO
Titus Osuagwu, Sec.
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William Burrows, VSO
Robert Del Percio, VSO
Catherine Raniolo, Sec.
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Fax: 856-696-6499

Sussex/Morris

Bruce Stanley, VSO
5 South Park Drive
Newton 07860-5000
973-383-4949/1363
Fax: 973-383-1272

Dover

(Wednesday)
973-366-8347

Warren/Hunterdon

Monica Banca, VSO
Lisa Szymanski, Sec.
550 A Route 57
Port Murray 07865-9482
908-689-5840/5845
Fax: 908-689-5879

Flemington

(Wednesday)
908-284-6146

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Newark

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Joseph C. Bucco Jr., VSO
Michael Dorobis, Sec.
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Newark, 07102-3174
973-297-3230
Fax: 973-648-2356

Philadelphia

David Joost, VSO
5000 Wissahickon Ave
Philadelphia, PA 19144
215-381-3054
Fax: 215-381-3459

For information on your veterans entitlements call toll-free
1-888-8NJ-VETS, or go online to:

www.state.nj.us/military/veterans/index.html

The New Jersey World War II Memorial



The New Jersey World War II Memorial at Veterans Park (Trenton)

Today fewer and fewer Americans have a personal connection or awareness of the sacrifices and courage of New Jersey's World War II Veterans and Generation.

Time is quickly passing.

We urge you to support the New Jersey World War II Memorial through a tax-deductible contribution.

Individual Donors:

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- Hawk: \$100 - \$499
- Osprey: \$25 - \$99
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* Indicate on check: NJ WWII Memorial
Make check payable to: "Treasurer, State of New Jersey"

Mail to:

WWII Memorial Commission
c/o Dept. of Military and Veterans Affairs-DVS
PO Box 340 Trenton, NJ 08625-0340

For more information contact (609) 530-7049

