

Office of the Governor

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NEWS RELEASE

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RELEASE: July 30, 1999

Governor's Weekly Radio Addresses Vietnam War Stamp Unveiling

Gov. Christie Whitman provides a weekly radio message to radio stations throughout the state. Each week, the message focuses on a different concern or event of interest to New Jerseyans.

This week the Governor discusses the Vietnam War Stamp.

Attached is a text of the message.

The radio message can be accessed by calling the Governor's Actuality line at 609-292-3249. It will be available today, beginning at noon, and will run through the weekend.

Radio Message for July 30 Vietnam War Stamp Unveiling

Hello, this is Governor Christie Whitman.

This week the U.S. Postal Service celebrated the unveiling of a special stamp commemorating the Vietnam War at the New Jersey Vietnam Veterans' Memorial in Holmdel.

The stamp heralds the bravery and dedication of all the veterans who answered the call of service to our nation in Vietnam. It commemorates our past and gives us yet another opportunity to express our thanks to our noble veterans.

In New Jersey, we take special pride in our veterans. This pride has inspired our best efforts to give them recognition and support.

It is an honor that our state was selected to hold the stamp unveiling ceremony. New Jersey was chosen because we have done a particularly good job of saluting the men and women who fought and sacrificed for our country.

Tens of thousands of New Jersey's sons and daughters served in Vietnam. More than 1,500 never came home.

We owe them all an enormous debt.

Four years ago we dedicated the New Jersey Vietnam Veterans' Memorial as a lasting tribute to the servicemen and women who placed their nation first, above all else. It helps us remember that they served with an unselfish pride that ennobled them and that inspires us still.

But the memorial is about more than remembering. It is also about teaching and learning.

Last year, we opened a Vietnam Era Educational Center at the memorial -- the only one of its kind in the nation. Through pictures and words, as well as audio and visual accounts, it enables visitors to gain greater knowledge and understanding about the Vietnam War.

Of course, Vietnam was not the only war in which Garden State men and women put their lives on the line. That's why we are moving ahead with our plans to pay tribute to New Jersey's contributions in the so-called "forgotten war" in Korea.

We are well on our way toward our goal of completing a Korean War Veterans Memorial in Atlantic City by the summer of 2000.

While it's important to preserve memories, we must also fulfill our duty to care for and assist those who served and returned to New Jersey.

That's why we opened a new veterans home in Menlo Park earlier this year and expanded existing facilities around the state. And it's why we started a pilot home health care program for veterans in East Orange.

We're also helping veterans by working to increase their property tax deduction from \$50 to \$250 over the next few years. What's more, we set aside money last year to compensate 100 percent disabled vets who had been paying property taxes, unaware that longstanding state law exempts them. And, of course, throughout the years we have stood firm in our support of veterans' preference in civil service hiring.

All of this is our way of acknowledging the enormity of our debt to New Jersey's heroes.

Using the new commemorative stamp with pride is yet another way we can give our veterans the respect and admiration they deserve.

From all of us in New Jersey to all of you who have served the cause of freedom, we salute you and we thank you.

