

Vetera**N** Journal

"Serving Those Who Served"

NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY AND VETERANS AFFAIRS
December 2005



DMAVA Kicks-Off Veterans Outreach Program



The Veterans Affairs leadership (left to right) Gary Englert, Director of the Division of Veterans Services; Steve Abel, Deputy Commissioner; Bill Devereaux, Director, Division of

Veterans Programs and Frank Carlini, Director, Division of Veterans Healthcare pose in front of the I Owe You poster. Photo by Tech. Sgt. Mark Olsen, NJDMAVA/PA.

The New Jersey Veterans Affairs Team owes you a full explanation of your federal and state veterans benefits, entitlements, and services.

Did You Know that your N.J. team manages educational grants for veterans and eligible family members? **Did You Know** that your N.J. team would process your claim with the U.S. Dept. of Veterans Affairs and represent you at VA hearings? **Did You Know** that your N.J. team has a Veterans Service Officer that supports each county in the state? **Did You Know** that your N.J. team operates three state of the art Veterans Nursing Homes? **Did You Know** that

your N.J. team operates the most active State Veterans Cemetery in the nation? **Did You Know** that your N.J. team operates a transitional housing program for homeless Veterans? **Did You Know** that your N.J. team certifies all education and training programs in the state so that you may use you GI Bill benefits? **Did You Know** that your N.J. team maintains the NJ Vietnam and Korean War Memorials? **Did You Know** that your N.J. team will soon build a N.J. World War II Memorial?

To learn more about these programs and more, call 1-888-8NJ-VETS (1-888-865-8387).

Season's Greetings



Friends and Fellow Veterans,

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank you for the great support you have given the NJ Department of Military and Veterans Affairs. The pace over the past six weeks has been especially demanding; whether it was troop departures, Welcome Home Ceremonies or Veterans Day, you have been there to support us. Thank You!

Once again, we need the help of each and every Veteran activist in spreading the word about our latest initiative, **The Veterans Outreach Program**. Featured on the cover of this issue, we are undertaking this effort for two distinct reasons: to educate more of our veterans on benefits and to address issues raised in a series of recently released federal reports.

First, as I travel the state and talk with Veterans, it is surprising how many are not aware of the programs and services this Department provides to them and their families. The Outreach Program is designed to bring that message to as many people as possible, by staffing an informational display in heavily trafficked locations. You can help by spreading that word as well, anytime

you meet and speak with another Veteran.

Second, a series of recently released reports stated that New Jersey's Veterans receive less compensation from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs than Veterans in other states; a statement that is misleading. A New Jersey Veteran, with a specific, service-connected disability, receives exactly the same amount of compensation from the VA that a Veteran in any other state with the same disability. What does vary is the **average compensation** that our Veterans receive and New Jersey's is lower than the national average.

There are a number of demographic factors that influence this which are completely out of our control but, while we cannot change the average compensation, we can influence the number of claims submitted by our state. Nationally, ten percent of all Veterans receive some form of compensation from the VA for a service-connected disability. Of New Jersey's 600,000 Veterans, only eight percent receive such benefits. **This means that 12,000 NJ Veterans who could be receiving benefits are not!** Through the Veterans Outreach Program, we hope to find these individuals and assist them in filing the claims they are entitled to.

We at the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs will be working hard to ensure that **all** of New Jersey's Veterans know what their state and federal benefits are. To find out more about the program or your Veteran benefits, call **1-888-8NJ-VETS**.

Finally, on behalf of **Your Veterans Team**, please accept our **Best Wishes for the Healthiest and Happiest of Holiday Seasons!**



Veteran Journal

Richard J. Codey
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The **New Jersey Veteran Journal** is an official publication of the New Jersey Department of Military and Veterans Affairs and is intended to serve New Jersey's veterans, their families, friends, and concerned individuals and groups. All correspondence should be sent to the editor at: NJDMAVA, PAO-V, PO Box 340, Trenton, NJ 08625-0340.

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Message From The Governor

Dear Friends,

As my time as Acting Governor of New Jersey nears its end, I want to take the opportunity to thank everyone for their tremendous support through this difficult time in the history of our state. I think it is important to give special thanks to you, our veterans.

New Jersey's veterans are among the most valuable of our state's resources. The pride and bravery you all have demonstrated throughout your careers has benefited everyone throughout the Garden State in every aspect of life. We are free, safe and prosperous thanks in great measure to our valiant servicemen and women.

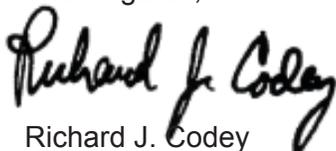
My job has been a little scary at times over the past year. However, when I think about the sacrifices made by our men and women in uniform, it puts everything in perspective.

A lot has happened over the past year, but I can tell you two things that did not happen: no new taxes and no scandals. I am so grateful for the opportunity I was given. While I never sought it, and never expected it, I tried to be the best Governor I knew how to be. With the help of leaders and supporters from throughout government and our communities, we were able to accomplish some remarkable things.

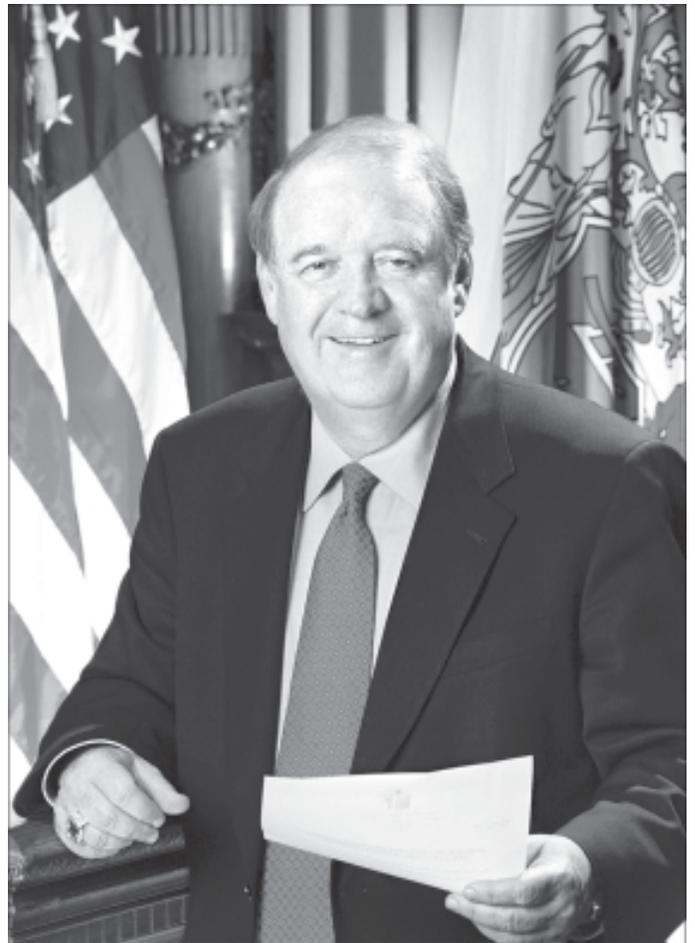
We passed the toughest ban on pay to play in the country. We made ethics training mandatory for every state worker. We restored the Public Advocate, and created the Inspector General. We persuaded the Giants and the Jets to work together to build a new stadium at no cost to the taxpayers. We cut the budget more than anyone ever has and still found the money to expand health insurance for the working poor. All this, and we made New Jersey a safer place, improving security in our schools and communities. We have taken great efforts to ensure that our veterans are given the services they need and deserve by extending benefits and standing up to the federal government when they threatened to cut funding for veteran's programs.

It's been an eventful year, but I am looking forward to returning my attention to my duties as Senate President. Thank you again for your support and your dedication. New Jersey's veterans will always be an important part of my focus as a public servant. After all you have given for us, I firmly believe it is the least I can do for you.

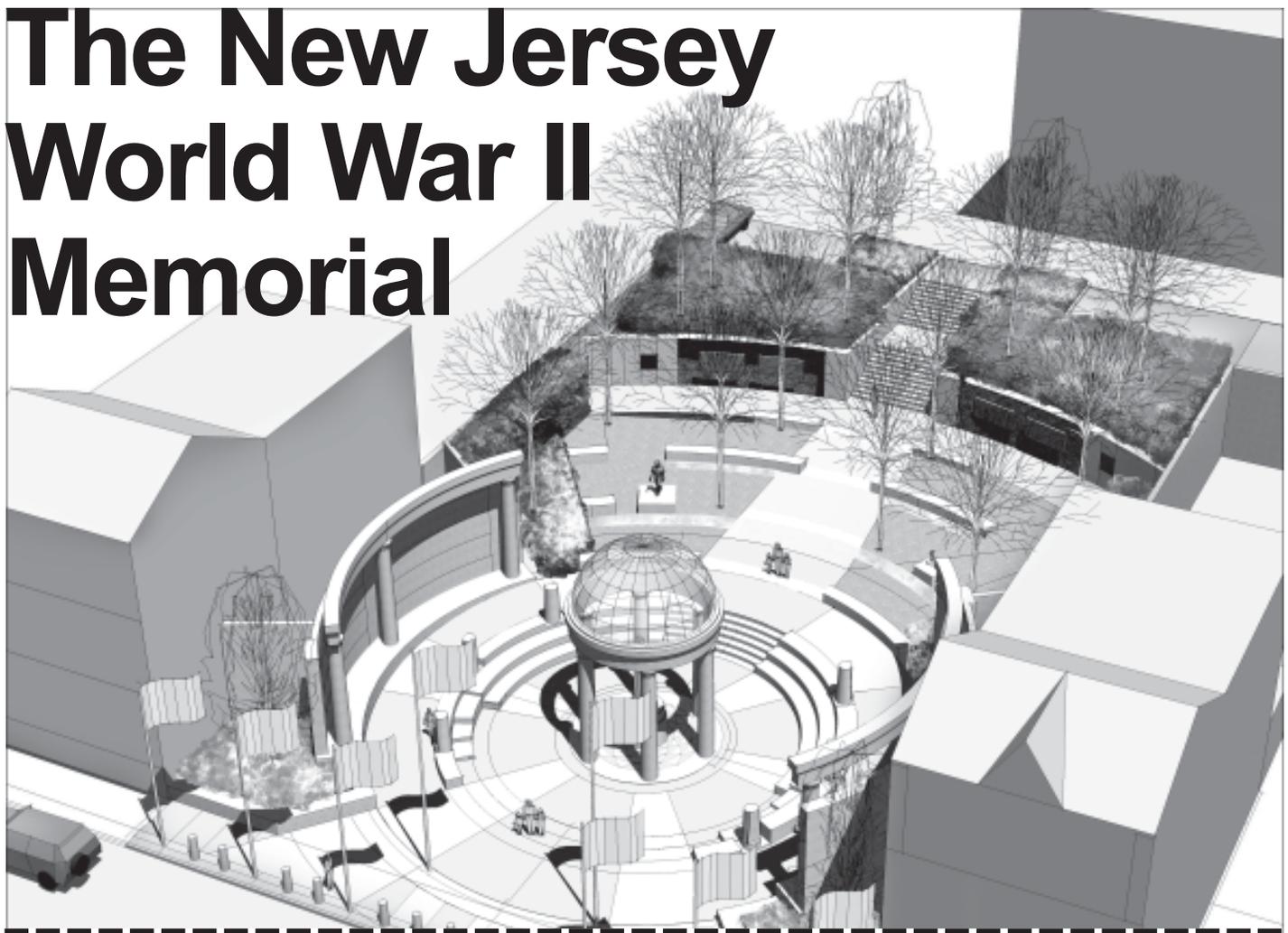
With regards,



Richard J. Codey
Acting Governor



The New Jersey World War II Memorial



State of 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. It is the Commission's goal to dedicate the WWII Memorial in the Fall of 2006. Time is quickly passing. We urge you to support the New Jersey World War II Memorial through a tax-deductible contribution.

*Individual Donors:
Eagle: \$1,000 and up
Falcon: \$500 - \$999
Hawk: \$100 - \$499
Osprey: \$25 - \$99
Other: \$ _____*

Name

Phone

Address/City/State/Zip

Memorial donations are payable to: Treasurer, State of New Jersey
Indicate on check: NJ WWII Memorial

*Mail to: WWII Memorial Commission
c/o Dept. of Military and Veterans Affairs-DVS
PO Box 340, Trenton, NJ 08625-0340
Contact: 609-530-7049*



WW II Memorial Receives Funds



WW II Memorial Receives Donation From Gala

Deputy Commissioner Steve Abel (second from right) receives a \$5,000 donation for the N.J. World War II Memorial from Eric Spevak, master of ceremonies at the 4th Annual Veterans Gala Dinner Dance held in Cherry Hill. Jewish War Veterans Post 126 and the American Legion Post 38 hosted the event. Also pictured is Eric's mother-in-law, the wife of a WW II Veteran and WW II Veteran Arthur Seltzer. Photo courtesy Eric Spevak.



American Legion Donates Money For Memorial

The American Legion's Department of New Jersey presented the first installment in a \$25,000 pledge to support the construction of the World War II Memorial at Veterans Park in Trenton. Stephen G. Abel, Deputy Commissioner for Veterans Affairs, center, accepts the \$5,000 check from Raymond Zawacki, Department Adjutant, left and Joseph Gugliuzza, Department Commander, right. Photo by Kryn P. Westhoven, DMAVA/PA.

VVMF Celebrates 10th Anniversary



Maj. Gen. Glenn K. Rieth (left) - The Adjutant General of New Jersey and retired Col. Stephen G. Abel (right), Deputy Commissioner for Veterans Affairs, present a flag flown by the 150th General Support Aviation Battalion, New Jersey Army National Guard to Beverly Fedorko-Ott, President and Kelly Watts, Executive Director, Vietnam Veterans Memorial Foundation. Photo by Roman Martyniuk.

On Oct. 27, the New Jersey Vietnam Veterans' Memorial Foundation celebrated its 10th Anniversary and held its Third Annual Gala, "A Salute to Patriotism" at the Vietnam Era Educational Center and the Robert B. Meyner Reception Center, located on the grounds of the PNC Bank Arts Center, Holmdel. This event brought together corporate, political and veterans' community leaders to recognize and honor veterans and those who are dedicated to helping veterans.

Former Georgia Senator Max Cleland and Maj. Gen. Charles F. Bolden, Jr., both provided stirring remarks. Severely wounded during his tour in Vietnam, Senator Cleland headed the Veterans Administration during the Carter Administration and his advocacy on behalf of veterans is well known. Maj. Gen. Bolden, a decorated Vietnam veteran flew four missions aboard the Space Shuttle. The gathering was also treated to a superb precision drill demonstration by a troop from the Rahway High School Marine Junior ROTC Unit.



GOVERNOR ELECT OBSERVES VETERANS DAY

By Tech. Sgt. Mark Olsen, photos by Sgt. 1st Class Kryn Westhoven and Tech. Sgt. Mark Olsen, NJDMAVA/PA

Senator Jon Corzine, the Governor-elect of New Jersey, was the keynote speaker at the annual Veterans Day ceremony at the Brig. Gen. William C. Doyle Veterans Memorial Cemetery Nov. 11.

Senator Corzine spoke about the importance of Veterans Day and the debt the country owed its veterans. Following his speech Senator Corzine and Maj. Gen. Glenn K. Rieth presented the Bronze Star Medal for Valor to

Gunners Mate First Class Harry Bataille for his service in World War II. The Cemetery Advisory Council also held a flag retirement ceremony wherein the ashes of 2,450 American Flags were buried on the grounds of the cemetery chapel. The Brig. Gen. William C. Doyle Veterans Memorial Cemetery, dedicated in 1986, is the only state-operated veterans' cemetery. For more information on the cemetery, go to www.state.nj.us/military/cemetery/index.html



***“It Is Not Right To Use Words
And Then Turn Our Back On
Deeds.”***

**SENATOR JON CORZINE, GOVERNOR-ELECT OF NEW
JERSEY**



New Veterans Benefits Promotional Items

By the Veterans Benefits Bureau



As part of the concerted outreach program now underway within the Division of Veterans Programs, two new items have been introduced to help broaden the impact of the department's efforts.



A new patriotic magnet (left) is now available for distribution as well as a new bumper sticker (above).

The magnet has the Counseling Hotline phone number, while the bumper sticker shows the new Veterans Benefits contact number. Both items utilize a patriotic background in highlighting the contact information. These items will be included in future outreach mailings and will be used as giveaways at future outreach events.

Students Organize Care For Medal Of Honor Monument

Audubon High School students and the Audubon community recently founded the Project Memorial Foundation to honor and maintain Audubon's Congressional Medal of Honor monument.

The non-profit organization objectives are: to maintain the Congressional Medal of Honor monument; to continue to promote awareness of the town's Congressional Medal of Honor recipients: Nelson V. Brittin, Edward C. Benfold and Samuel M. Sampler; to create a scholarship for a graduating Audubon High School senior(s) with career plans that include community service; and, in conjunction with the high school students, to provide services for veterans and other members of the Audubon community.



Bill Devereaux, Director Veterans Programs poses with the Project Memorial Committee (l-r): Julie Pierre, Kristin Morris, Alysoun Wright and Joanna Halliburton in front of Audubon's Congressional Medal of Honor monument.

Veterans' Kiosk: Coming To A Mall Near You



Photo by Kryn Westhoven, NJDMAVA/PA

General manager of the Quakerbridge Mall, John Ferreira, left, is greeted by Stephen G. Abel, Deputy Commissioner for Veterans Affairs at the department's outreach kiosk at the mall in Mercer County during the Veterans Day weekend. Also pictured are Chris Kulkosky, Veterans Program Training Officer; Joe Battito, Veterans Service Officer from New Brunswick and Ed Weisenhorn, Director of Volunteer Services at the Menlo Park Veterans Home.

The Veterans Kiosk will visit Menlo Park Mall – Jan. 26-28, Livingston Mall – Feb. 16-18, and Brunswick Square Mall – March 23-25.

Medicare Prescription Drug Plans

From Veterans Healthcare Services

For the first time in history **Medicare** will be offering **prescription drug coverage** beginning **Jan. 1, 2006**.

Are you eligible? If you are currently receiving **Medicare**, then the answer is **Yes**, regardless of your income.

Who will provide your medication? In New Jersey, a significant number of companies have been authorized by the federal government to offer **Medicare Part D Prescription Drug Plans (PDP)** to New Jersey's Medicare recipients. Each PDP charges a different monthly premium and offers different drug coverage.

Who decides on your PDP? *Each* Medicare recipient must make their **own** decision as to which PDP they will choose. **You** must choose a PDP based on the medications you are taking daily.

How will you know which PDP to choose? You may ask your primary healthcare provider (Medical Doctor) and /or your local pharmacist or you may contact the **State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP)** office in your County and discuss the various PDPs with them in order to make your decision. One note however, your local pharmacist can assist but, by law, cannot recommend a PDP.

When do you have to make a decision on which PDP to choose? Beginning on **15 November 2005**,

you may sign-up for a Medicare D-PDP. **You** and your family, your doctor or your SHIP representative can look at all the different PDPs and pick the one that is best for you. **You** must ensure that the PDP you choose covers the medications/ drugs you take each day. Additional assistance may be obtained from the Social Security Administration and/or the state Medicaid office.

Do I have to sign-up for this program? The Medicare D-PDP in a **voluntary** program. However, if you **do not** choose and sign up for a PDP by **May 15, 2006**, and then wish to enter the program, you will have to pay a substantial penalty for your prescriptions every month for the rest of your life. The benefits package (PDP) program will be activated on **Jan. 1, 2006**.

Additional information may be obtained from the Internet at www.medicare.gov, or by calling **1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227)**.



VA Announces "Fulfilling The Commitment" Initiative

From the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)

Last week, Department of Veterans Affairs Secretary R. James Nicholson announced the "Fulfilling the Commitment — Coming Home to Work" initiative at a three-day VA conference developed to assist veterans in their transition from military service to civilian life.

"All Americans can be grateful for the service and sacrifice of the men and women of our armed forces," said Nicholson. "The VA is committed to assisting these young heroes in the transition from military life to the civilian workforce through a wide-ranging array of pro-

grams. It just makes good common sense to hire these highly trained, disciplined young people, who volunteered, served and are now honorably discharged."

The Initiative is a comprehensive intergovernmental and public-private alliance that will assure separating Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom veterans that when they return home from their service in the war on terrorism, they will have employment opportunities.

According to Bureau of Labor Statistics, during the first three-

quarters of 2005, nearly 15 percent of veterans 20-24 years old were unemployed — almost three times the national rate.

"These young men and women who protect our way of life need to know that they will have the opportunity to work and take care of their families once they are discharged from military service," said Nicholson.

VA employs nearly 20,000 disabled veterans in its workforce of 237,000, making it one of the nation's largest employers of disabled veterans.

Veterans Day At The N.J. Vietnam Veterans' Memorial

Story by Sibley Smith, Director of Education, VVM; photo courtesy Vietnam Veterans Memorial Foundation

On the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month, the New Jersey Vietnam Veterans' Memorial Foundation was host to a Veterans Day ceremony at the New Jersey Vietnam Veterans' Memorial in Holmdel.

Approximately 400 people attended the commemorative event, which was held in the Memorial's courtyard, surrounded by the circular, black granite wall bearing the names of 1,557 New Jerseyans whose lives were lost in the Vietnam War.

The Keynote Speaker was retired Maj. Gen. Joseph T. Anderson, Marine Corps, Associate Director of the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum – Steven F. Udvar-Hazy Center. Maj. Gen. Anderson, a 1968 graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy, is a Vietnam veteran fighter pilot, whose last assignment was as Commanding General of the First Marine Aircraft Wing. The Smithsonian's Steven F. Udvar-Hazy Center, located in Chantilly, Va, near Washington Dulles International Airport, displays in open hangar settings, 119 aircraft and 142 large space artifacts, along with more than 1,500 smaller objects, and welcomes more than one million visitors a year.

Two New Jersey Vietnam Veterans – Leo P. Staub (USMC) from Manahawkin, who died July 1, 2003, and Andrew L. Toth (USA) from Edison, who died Dec. 23, 2002 – were inducted into the In Memory Program, which honors those who served in Vietnam and returned home but died later as a result of wounds received in Vietnam. As part of the ceremony, family members spoke about their loved one and lit a candle in their memory. Following the ceremony, attendees enjoyed an Open House in the adjacent Vietnam Era



Veterans and friends attend the Veterans Day ceremony at the New Jersey Vietnam Veterans Memorial Nov. 11.

Educational Center, which includes a museum and research library.

The New Jersey Vietnam Veterans' Memorial and the Vietnam Era Educational Center are located on the grounds of the PNC Bank Arts Center, Holmdel, Monmouth County, (Garden State Parkway exit 116). The Memorial and Educational Center are maintained through a partnership between the New Jersey Vietnam Veterans' Memorial Foundation and the New Jersey Department of Military and Veterans Affairs. The Educational Center is open Tuesday through Saturday, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. Regular admission is free for veterans and active-duty military personnel. Regular adult admission is \$4; student and senior citizen admission is \$2 and children under 10 are admitted free.

OTHER VETERANS DAY HIGHLIGHTS

Vets Awarded Jubilee Of Liberty Medal

Some 45 veterans of the Normandy invasion were awarded the Jubilee Of Liberty Medal Nov. 11 in Paramus.

Created by the French Government in conjunction with the 50th Anniversary of the D-Day Invasion June 6, 1944, the Medal is presented to veterans of the Allied Forces who participated. Congressman Scott Garrett, 5th District, facilitated the award of this medalion to eligible constituents in a ceremony at Bergen County Community College. Assisting with the ceremony was a color guard comprised of soldiers assigned to the Teaneck Armory.

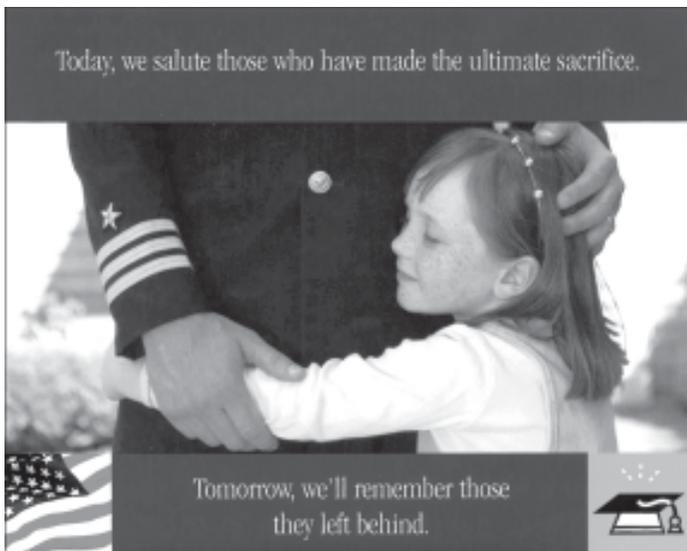
Guard Supports Vets Day Parade

New Jersey Army National Guard members from the West Orange and Teaneck National Guard Armories provided a color guard, marching unit and vehicle convoy as part of a Veterans Day Parade on Nov 13, sponsored by the Joint Veterans Council of Belleville.

The parade culminated at the newly erected Belleville War Memorial, which was dedicated during the parade's conclusion. Gary Englert, the Director of Veterans Services, was the featured speaker.

HIRE A VET!

One Shots: NJ Veterans In The Spotlight



Today, we salute those who have made the ultimate sacrifice.

Tomorrow, we'll remember those they left behind.

We are proud to be among the community banks throughout New Jersey who have joined forces to create the New Jersey Community Bankers Education Foundation, Inc. This is an educational scholarship fund for eligible dependents of U.S. Service members, with a connection to New Jersey, who have given their lives in Afghanistan and Iraq. To us, there is no better way to honor the sacrifice of these brave individuals than to help those they left behind.



For more information visit
www.njleague.com/scholarship.htm

New Jersey League Of Community Bankers Establishes Trust Fund

The New Jersey League Of Community Bankers, Cranford, has established the New Jersey League Of Community Bankers Education Foundation, Inc. for dependents of service members who lost their lives in Afghanistan and Iraq. The 75 members of the League will support the fund. Scholarship funds will be considered for applicants with a high school or equivalency diploma in pursuit of higher education, including technical or vocational training, and who demonstrate a financial need. Either the dependent or the service member must have a geographical connection to New Jersey. The Foundation is currently in the fundraising stage and anticipates applications will be accepted in 2006. The Fund's trustees have made all information available to the New Jersey Department of Military and Veterans Affairs and are working with federal and state officials in implementing this program. Raymond Hallock, Chairman, New Jersey League Of Community Bankers, said, "The Board has been inspired by the significant work and sacrifices of United States military personnel throughout the world, particularly in Afghanistan and Iraq. With this scholarship fund we will be honored to help dependents of service members who gave their lives."



Leaders Meet To Discuss Veterans Issues

Jack Conners (second from right), Chairman of N.J. Veterans Affairs Committee, Steve Abel (right), Deputy Commissioner for Veterans Affairs, and senior leaders from the N.J. Department of the Veterans of Foreign Wars meet with Senator Jon Corzine (center), Governor-elect of New Jersey to discuss key issues for N.J. Veterans. Photo courtesy of the New Jersey Department of Military and Veterans Affairs.



Veterans Receive Orientation Flight

Nearly a dozen veterans learned about the mission of the 108th Air Refueling Wing during an orientation flight on Nov. 17 from McGuire Air Force Base. The veterans ate a box lunch aboard the KC-135-E Stratotanker during the refueling mission. Photo by Krynn P. Westhoven, NJDMAVA/PA.

"SERVING THOSE WHO SERVED"

NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY AND VETERANS AFFAIRS VETERANS SERVICE OFFICES

Atlantic/Cape May

John Valenta, 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.
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Fax: 201-996-8009

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Fax: 856-787-3822

Camden/Gloucester

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William McDonnell, VSO
Diane Rosci, Sec.
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Carolanne Guzzi, Sec.
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Donald McNamara, VSO
Carolyn Brown, Sec.
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732-775-7009/7005
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Fort Monmouth Clinic

8:30 am – 12 noon
(Thursday)
732-532-4465

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

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Ft. Dix/Lawrenceville

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609-530-7005

For information on veterans' entitlements call toll-free 1-888-8NJ-VETS, or go online to:
www.state.nj.us/military/veterans/index.html