

Veteran Journal

"Serving Those Who Served"

NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY AND VETERANS AFFAIRS
October 2006



Ocean County Donates \$25K To WWII Memorial



Deputy Commissioner Steve Abel (left) accepts a \$25,000 check for the New Jersey World War II Memorial Project from Ocean County Freeholders Gerry P. Little, John C. Bartlett Jr., John P. Kelly, and WWII Commission member E. Larry St. Laurent. Nationally, WWII vets comprise 15 percent of the veteran population, among New Jersey's population of 600,000 veterans, 30 percent are from WWII, a disproportionately high number in comparison to other states. A recent Star Ledger Op-Ed on Memorial Day

stressed that aging World War II veterans are not capable of raising and soliciting enough funds to build the memorial themselves. Also, due to the current New Jersey state budget, public funding is not an option. Therefore, in order to honor those who served, we need the support of New Jersey's corporations and citizens, like the Ocean County Freeholders, to make this memorial a reality. For more information, go to www.nj.gov/military/veterans/wwii_memorial or call (609) 530-7049.

DCVA's Message



Dear Veteran,

I want to thank you all for the hospitality I received at your conventions. It was great to see old friends and meet many of you for the first time. Our Department is truly blessed to have the opportunity to partner with your organizations and to receive your unending support.

Through the FY 2007 funding of the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, Governor Corzine has shown us that veterans are a top priority for his administration. We have been working closely with the Governor's office in order to make his vision for veterans in New Jersey a reality. We understand his goals and have been working hard to execute his plans. Our close collaboration is paramount to the success of our department in providing efficient and ever improving service.

One of Governor Corzine's most important and largest objectives is to help homeless veterans residing in New Jersey. In this regard, Governor Corzine has allocated 2 million dollars for the expansion of our current homeless veterans care program. It is our goal to leverage additional dollars in federal grants from the Veterans Administration. This is just one example of the collaboration between DMAVA and the Governor. For more information on how we care for our homeless veterans, please refer to enclosed articles on our future plans on expansion of our transitional housing program, Veterans Haven.

Veterans Outreach remains the centerpiece of our Department's efforts. We are continuing our mall visitation program and setting up kiosks in order to find those veterans who may need assistance or those who are unaware of the services our state offers. So far our mall visitation program has been a resounding success, and we hope to continue and expand our outreach in other ways as well.

Thanks again for your support and kindness during the convention season. It was my pleasure to work with all of the previous state commanders of your organizations, and I am looking forward to coordinating with new ones.

Best Wishes,



Veteran
Journal

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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.

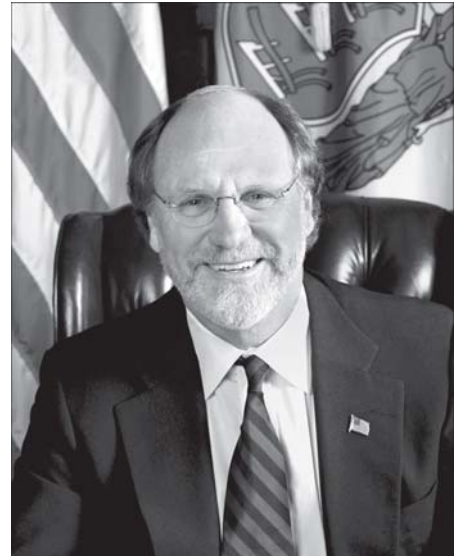
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Message From The Governor

Dear Veteran,

On Memorial and Flag Day we all reflected on the honorable men and women who served our country and state. My administration is working towards further honoring those who served and have committed ourselves to the funding of the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs this year. This means that the department can continue to expand Post Traumatic Stress Disorder Services and the toll free hotline in order to meet demand from returning veterans from the Global War on Terrorism. Full funding also means the department can ensure adequate staffing for the three elderly care memorial homes, as well as increasing upkeep and maintenance of the BG Doyle Veterans Cemetery. Veterans Service Officers will also be funded throughout the state in order to assist in filing claims and answering questions about state and federal benefits.



Other than simply ensuring that current programs remain in top form, we are also dedicated to improving and offering more and better services to our veterans. I would like to outline a few of our major goals and coming improvements in the next few years:

There are approximately 8,000 homeless veterans in New Jersey today. My administration is committed foremost, to seeking out these veterans and ensuring that New Jersey does not leave those who proudly served our country without the proper treatment and care they deserve. Accordingly, we are allocating \$2 million dollars towards expanding current transitional housing programs for homeless veterans, while exploring the possibility of opening another facility in the northern half of the state. We are looking into the opportunities that might exist at Ft. Monmouth for a second home.

Plans are underway for a “Commission of Women’s Veterans,” which would focus on the specific needs of the growing number of women who make up the veteran population.

In order to help returning soldiers find jobs after their service, I have endorsed the “Helmets to Hardhats” program. Also, to honor the deeds of those in WWII, the state of NJ has designated \$2 million for the construction of a WWII monument in Trenton. A commission has been set up in order to raise the additional \$5 million necessary for the project. Funding is to be completed by Memorial Day 2007, with construction of the memorial to be finished by Memorial Day 2008.

Outreach remains a high priority of our administration. We want to ensure that every veteran in NJ knows and understands what their federal and state benefits are, and ensure that every veteran who has a service connected disability is aware of the VA claims procedures. Therefore, we are also looking for the 12,000 NJ veterans with service-connected disabilities who have not yet filed a claim and are receiving no compensation.

Thank you for your service to our country and the state of New Jersey. It is my honor to work with you in improving the care of our veteran population.

VETERANS HAVEN 2: EXPANDING CARE FOR NEW JERSEY'S HOMELESS VETERANS

By Fred Kemper, Special Assistant to Deputy Commissioner



Patterson Army Health Clinic as it appears today. Photo by Kryn Westhoven, NJDMAVA/PA.

The problem of homelessness amongst veterans is prevalent throughout the United States. There are approximately 200,000 homeless veterans nationally, 8,000 of which live in New Jersey.

Many returning from service have difficulty readjusting to civilian life and face problems with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and other ailments. This occasionally leads to veterans living on our streets after their honorable service to our country.

To combat homelessness, Veterans Haven was developed as a transitional housing unit for homeless veterans. In order to break the cycle of addiction many residents face, it is a 100 percent drug and alcohol free facility. Following treatment and screening at a USVA hospital, Veterans Haven residents enter a three-phase program consisting of assessment and treatment, vocational training and education coupled with societal re-integration. Within two to six months of entrance into the home, residents must be employed, and they can remain in the program for up to two years.

With a high success rate of 73 percent, residents often leave the program with stable employment and maintenance of permanent housing. The Department of Community Affairs is providing State Rental Assistance Program (SRAP) vouchers to twelve graduates of Veterans Haven and is offering housing professional guidance and counseling services.

Currently, the State can serve 54 veterans, however the overwhelming number of homeless veterans residing in New Jersey pushes us towards expansion in the program and outreach. As stated in his letter, Governor Corzine has emphasized battling the problem of homelessness amongst the

veteran population as key in his next years in office. The \$2 million dollar appropriation towards expanding the bed capacity and improving the facility is paramount to success in addressing the problem. DMAVA is currently involved in applying for federal money to supplement the appropriation by the state, intending to leverage another \$2.6 million dollars for the project. This expansion however, will only yield an estimated 36 additional rooms, giving the State the ability to serve a total of 90 veterans.

Even with expansion, the sheer amount of homeless veterans calls for the creation of another facility. We are investigating the possibility of opening Veterans Haven 2 at the Patterson Army Health Clinic in Fort Monmouth. Fort Monmouth is set to close in concert with the Department of Defense's "Base Realignment and Closure" act. As part

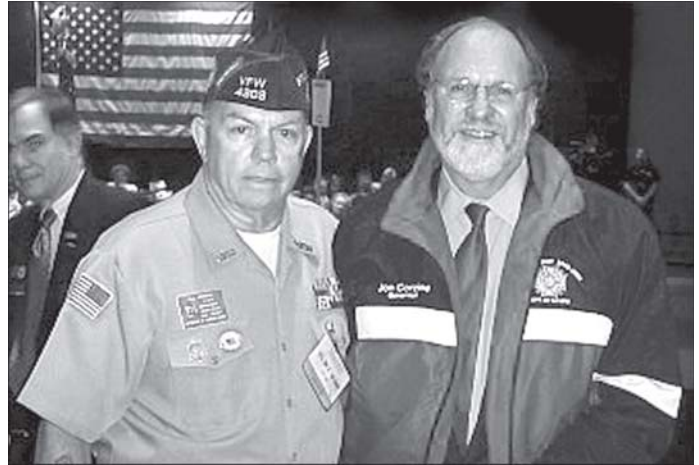
of the realignment procedure, the federal government allocates money towards shifting the operations of the base. A portion of the new operations at the base needs to be dedicated towards dealing with the problem of homelessness. Therefore, DMAVA and Governor Corzine feel that this location would be perfect for the much needed Veterans Haven 2.

Director of Veterans Services, Gary Englert, stated that the clinic in Fort Monmouth could possibly provide living space for an additional 200 veterans. Patient rooms and offices in the facility would be converted into residential rooms, utilizing already available infrastructure to make the transition easier. Englert stated that by working with the VA, DMAVA intends to keep the Veterans Outpatient Clinic operational even as the active service care wing would close.

In order to secure the Patterson Army Health Clinic as the site for Veterans Haven 2, it needs to be approved by the "Fort Monmouth Economic Revitalization Planning Authority" (FMERPA). At a July 26 meeting, Deputy Commissioner Steve Abel made a presentation to the authority outlining the current program and future plans, stressing that Veterans Haven is a program that produces results, and most importantly, it serves those have served our state and country. The presentation was received with overwhelming approval and praise, although significant time remains before a final decision is made.

Many veterans attended the event, some voicing their concern over the need for further homeless veterans care and noted that if the outpatient clinic were closed, veterans would have difficulty using other facilities due to greatly increased travel time

DMAVA Visits The Veterans' Conventions



Photos clockwise starting top left: Deputy Commissioner Steve Abel (right) presents a flag flown over Baghdad, Iraq, to State Commander Joseph Harris (left) at the N.J. Disabled American Veterans convention. Governor Jon S. Corzine (right) poses with State Commander Bill Grieman (left) after receiving a Veterans of Foreign Wars membership jacket at the VFW convention. Maj. Gen. Glenn K. Rieth (left) assists

Purple Heart State Commander Dennis Moriarty (second from left) with a presentation to the next of kin of New Jersey troops killed in action. General Rieth (left) and Deputy Commissioner Abel (right) present State Commander Joseph Gugliuzza (center) the New Jersey Distinguished Service Medal at the American Legion convention.

Building Construction Nearing Completion



Deputy Commissioner Abel (center) and Iven Dumas (left) Brigadier General William Doyle Cemetery Superintendent accept a donation from Mary Veres in memory of her hus-

band George for the purchase and installation of a flag pole at the new Administration/Maintenance building. The building is tentatively scheduled to be completed Oct. 17, with a dedication ceremony to be held in the Spring of 2007.



Remembering The Fallen

(pictured right to left) Deputy Commissioner Steve Abel, Assemblyman Jack Connors, Legislative District 7 and Maj. Gen. Glenn K. Rieth render honors to the Gold Star Mothers during the Memorial Day ceremony at the Brigadier General William C. Doyle Veterans Memorial Cemetery. We would like to thank all those who participated and joined us in our day of remembrance. Photo by Tech. Sgt. Mark Olsen, NJDMAVA/PA.

Vets' Hiring Preference Changes For Guard, Reserve

Beginning June 9, National Guard and reserve members released from active duty will get the same veterans' hiring preference for federal jobs as those who are separated or retired from regular active-duty assignments.

The Office of Personnel Management announced the new hiring rules in a notice published the same day in the Federal Register, where new rules and regulations are published. Normally, there is a three or four-month delay in implementing newly announced federal rules. OPM officials, however, said in a statement accompanying the rule that they chose not to wait for the traditional comment period before implementing the new hiring policy so as to "not unwittingly deny veterans' preference based upon regulations that are now obsolete."

"If OPM's regulations were permitted to remain as currently written while OPM solicited comments upon its proposed revisions there is a chance that reservists recently released from active duty in Iraq or Afghanistan, for example, might be denied veterans' preference based upon the language of current regulations," the statement says.

The federal personnel office said factors in the rush to implement the policy were "the sacrifices being made by individuals who do not serve full time in the armed forces but who have been called to active duty for significant service."

Under the new rules, which Congress approved last year as part of the 2006 Defense Authorization Act, the definition of a veteran expands for the purposes of getting extra credit when seeking a federal job. Previously, veterans' preference applied only to people "separated" from active duty under honorable conditions.

Under the new policy, hiring preference would extend to any person discharged or released from active duty if they had more than 180 consecutive days of duty since Sept. 11, 2001, served in a war or in a campaign for which a campaign badge or expeditionary medal was authorized. Also, the person who is discharged or released must have received an honorable or general discharge.

The interim policy is still open to comments, and could be modified. Comments will be accepted through Aug. 8, with revisions possible after a review.

New Housing Search Available Online

New Jersey has introduced a housing search tool available online at, www.njhousing.gov.

This site offers a search engine of affordable housing, as well as housing with special accessibility features. This site also acts as an information source for homebuyers on how to purchase a home, etc.

New Cost Of Living Bill Introduced

HR 5444, the Veteran Disability Compensation Automatic COLA Act has been introduced in the House.

This bill would make an automatic cost of living adjustment for veterans' disability benefits based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI) each year, without an act of Congress. This would create a guarantee of an increase in benefits each year for veterans.

Act Restricts Protests

The 'Respect for America's Fallen Heroes Act' was put into effect on May 29. This prohibits certain demonstrations at cemeteries controlled by the National Cemetery Administration and Arlington National Cemetery.

The bill prohibits protesting within 300 feet of the cemetery entrance, and 150 feet from roads into the cemetery. This restriction holds from an hour before the funeral, to an hour after. This will guarantee that the veterans and their families will have a peaceful ceremony and the respect they deserve during their time of grief.

Healthier US Veterans Initiative

The Director of the VA National Center for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention, Linda Kisinger recently proposed the "Healthier US Veterans" initiative.

Partnering with the Department of Health and Human Services, this initiative will address the problem of diabetes and obesity amongst many veterans by promoting healthy eating and physical activity. National, regional, and local events will be held at VA medical centers that will focus on good nutrition and physical activity. A corps of veteran volunteers called 'Fit For Life' will act also as ambassadors for the program. For more information, go to www.healthierusveterans.va.gov



Citizen Of The Year

New Jersey Jewish War Veterans Department Commander Mike Winnick (left) presents Deputy Commissioner Steve Abel (right) the Citizen of the Year Award during the Commander's Banquet at the N.J. Jewish War Veterans Convention on June 17. Photo courtesy New Jersey Jewish War Veterans Department.



VFW Donates Money For Nurse

The Department for Military and Veterans Affairs partnered with the Veterans of Foreign Wars in order to raise money to rebuild the life of a nurse's aid at the Vineland Memorial Home. Pictured are left to right- VFW District 11 Commander Tom Farrell, Deputy Commissioner for Veterans Affairs Stephen G. Abel, Assemblyman Jack Connors and VFW Post 3020 Ladies Auxillary President Eva Burgess. The nurse's aid has been with DMAVA for the past 16 years and lost her daughter and two grandsons in a tragic fire. The VFW has contributed \$1,500 to the effort, making the total approximately \$2,800. We hope that this small contribution will aid her in this time of need.

Cars For Vets

For a second year in a row, the township of Maple Shade donated a 1996 Ford Crown Victoria car to New Jersey's veteran transitional housing, Veterans Haven.

Other vehicles came from The Burlington County Bridge

Commission who donated a 1997 Ford Explorer, the Dahn Corporation who donated a 16 foot U-Haul Truck and Rocco Castranova who donated a 1990 Nissan Axxess. Bob Sauselein, the superintendent of Veterans Haven, said that residents who have a valid driver's license and are able to afford the insurance would be drawn at random for the use of these vehicles. The transportation provided by the use of the automobiles will allow residents to seek different and better jobs. On behalf of the Department, we would like to extend our thanks to those who donated these vehicles and those who dedicate themselves to improving the lives of Veterans Haven's residents.

State POW/MIA Medal Approved

"On behalf of Maj. Gen. Glenn K. Rieth, The Adjutant General of New Jersey, and the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, it is our pleasure to inform you that Governor Jon S. Corzine has just signed into law, bill A2685/S1613 creating a New Jersey POW-MIA medal.

The New Jersey State POW-MIA Medal has been one of our legislative priorities and is very close to our hearts. Few are as deserving of this high honor than those POW's and MIA's who sacrificed so much in defense of our great nation and state. We all owe a debt of gratitude to these courageous soldiers and their families."

VETERANS NEWS & VIEWS

Admission Application "On-Line"

The Application for Admission to the three N.J. Veterans Memorial Homes (VMHs) is now available on the NJDMAVA website.

By having the application online, applicants and/or their families will have easier access to information. Logon to www.state.nj.us/military, click on "Veterans Affairs" and then go to "Healthcare Services" and pick any of the three VMHs. Print out and complete, either in ink or by typewriter, the Application for Admission. The completed application can be mailed to the VMH of your choice.

The revised Application also contains three Appendixes: Appendix A contains Chapter 5, the law governing admission to the three VMHs; Appendix B discusses HIPAA (patient privacy) information; and Appendix C is "Calculating Financial Costs - An Overview."

The three VMHs are located in Paramus (north), Menlo Park (central), and Vineland (south).

Cell Phones For Soldiers

Cell Phones for Soldiers was started in April 2004 to help soldiers with the cost of calling home. From money collected through direct donations and the recycling of cell phones and ink jet printer cartridges, the organization has bought more than 50,000 prepaid phone cards for soldiers.

If you or anyone you know has any cell phones or printer cartridges they want to donate, please go to www.cellphonesforsoldiers.com.



VA Secretary Tours Paramus

Jim Nicholson (left), Secretary of Veterans Affairs gets a tour of the Paramus Veterans Memorial Home led by New Jersey Deputy Commissioner for Veterans Affairs, Col. (Ret) Stephen Abel on June 1. Congressman Scott Garrett (not pictured) joined Secretary Nicholson in touring and meeting the staff of the home. Following the tour, Nicholson spoke with veterans about the need for further improvement of the care facilities and addressed questions concerning the importance of safeguarding personal data and assured them that the VA is doing everything they can to protect personal information. The Secretary's visit demonstrates our partnership with the federal government in delivering the benefits veterans deserve. Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Robert Stephenson, NJDMAVA/PA.

Veteran Memorial Homes Employee Awards Program



The Division of Veterans Healthcare Services has initiated a Division-wide Employee Awards Program to recognize employees with perfect attendance, as well as Best Employee and Best Team of the quarter from each Veteran Memorial Home. Since Best Employee and Best Team submissions



rely, in part, on letters or notes of appreciation, all residents who have relatives in one of our homes or volunteer in the homes can participate by writing to the Chief Executive Officers when an employee does something especially noteworthy.

Korean Vets Honored

Photos by Tech. Sgt. Mark Olsen, NJDMAVA/PA

The 53rd Anniversary of the Signing of the Korean War Armistice and New Jersey Korean War Commemorative Medal Ceremony was held at the New Jersey Korean War Memorial in Atlantic City on July 27.

Thomas M. McHugh, N.J. State Commander of the 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. William A. Rakestraw, National Executive Committee member for the American Legion spoke of the trials and hardships endured by those who served in the Korean War. As part of the ceremony, Deputy Commissioner Abel presented 15 New Jersey Korean War Service Medals.

Since last year's ceremony, fifty additional New Jersey service members who were killed during the Korean Conflict have been identified. Their names, which have been added to the memorial, were also honored during the ceremony.



Less eager than willing, More dutiful than brave, Brave when required, Democracy's children, they gave their service far from home, and saw they came as victors, not conquerors, in freedom's name. Robert Pinsky

A HAND UP TO HOMELESS VETERANS ACROSS THE STATE



Volunteers and military personnel joined the North Jersey Stand Down Committee, Inc. to help with the annual Stand Down at Essex County Community College on Sept. 9. Sgt. Brian Mills, above left, 250th Signal Battalion, New Jersey Army National Guard hands out plates to homeless vets for a free hot lunch. William Hunter, above right, Veterans of Foreign Wars District 4 Jr. Vice Commander and former commander of Post 9015 hands out comfort items to a homeless vet along the clothing line at North Jersey Stand Down. Photos by Kryn Westhoven, NJDMAVA/PA



The South Jersey Stand Down at the New Jersey Army National Guard armory in Cherry Hill on Sept. 22 received a financial boost prior to the event as Tom Weber, left, President of Stand Down of South Jersey accepts a \$2,000 check from Arthur Seltzer, past Jewish War Veterans, Department of New Jersey commander and past JWV Post 126 commander. Photo by Perry Levine



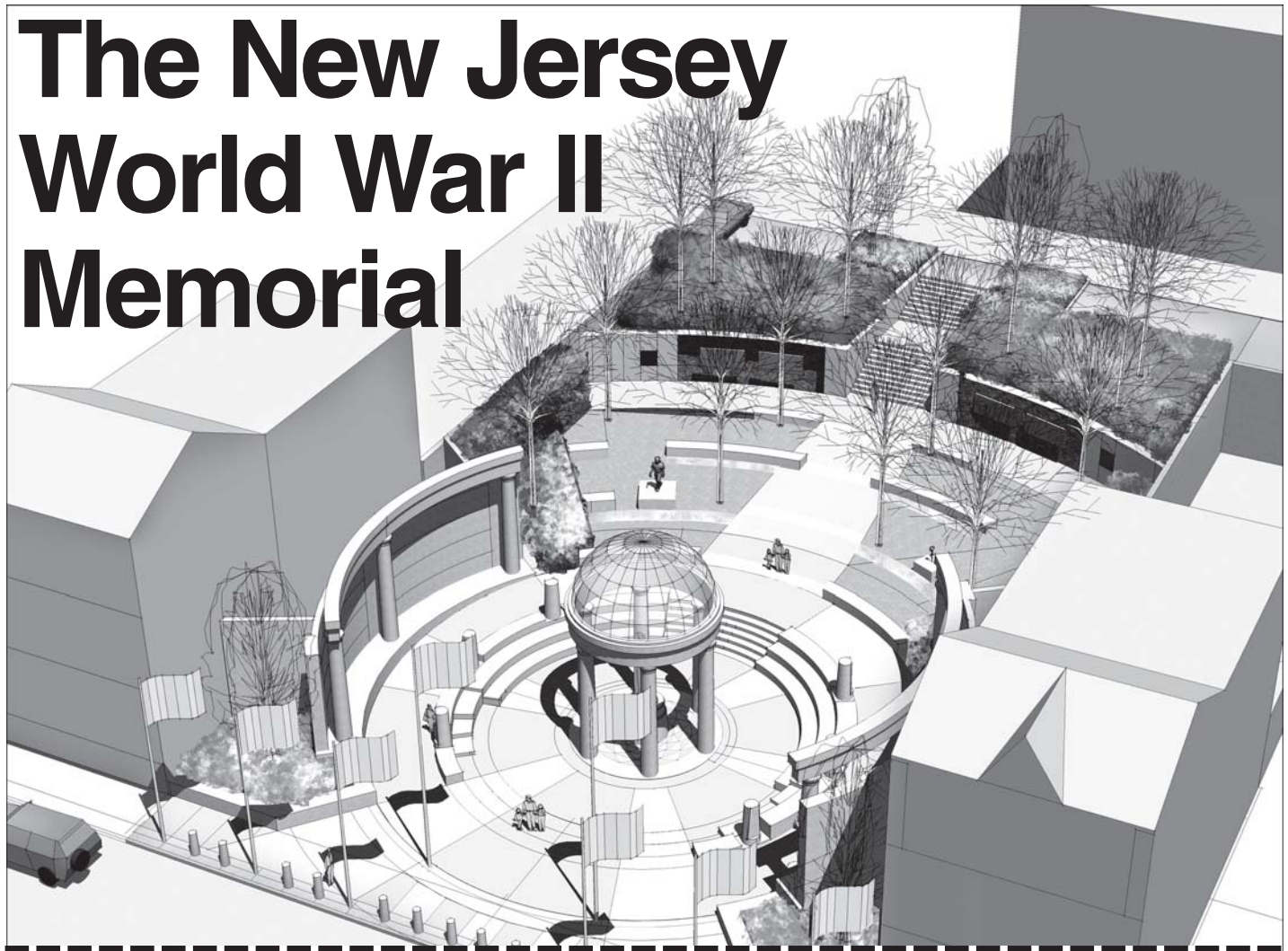
War Dog Memorial Dedication

The United States War Dogs Memorial was dedicated at the New Jersey Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Holmdel June 10. Approximately 500 people attended the event with many attendees bringing their scout and sentry dogs to honor the tens of thousands of K-9s that served in the United States Armed Forces since World War I. The memorial was built through the cooperation of the New Jersey Vietnam Veterans' Memorial Foundation, the U.S. War Dogs



Association and the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs. The New Jersey Vietnam Veterans Memorial is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and the Educational Center is open Tuesday through Saturday 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

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



"SERVING THOSE WHO SERVED"

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

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