

Freedom Is Never Free



**State of West Virginia
Division of Veterans Affairs
2009-2010 Annual report
Keith Gwinn, Director**

The sacrifices made by our fellow West Virginians will forever be remembered and honored by those who share the common bond of service under the flag.



IN MEMORIUM
OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM
AFGHANISTAN

Bobby Edward Beasley	SGT	08/07/04	Inwood
Julian L. Berisford	SPC	11/04/09	Benwood
Brent S. Cole	CWO4	05/22/09	Reedsville
David Alan Hess	PFC	10/10/10	Mineral Wells
Garrett T. Lawton	CAPT	08/04/08	Charleston
Charles John McClain	SGT	10/31/06	Colliers
Daniel F. Mehringer	SPC	04/27/07	Morgantown

Jamie S. Nicholas	SFC	09/29/08	Maysel
Anissa Ann Shero	SSG	06/12/02	Grafton
Jeffrey Scott Taylor	PO1	06/28/05	Beckley
Juston Tyler Thacker	LCPL	06/24/04	Bluefield
Gene Arden Vance Jr.	SSG	05/19/02	Morgantown
Robert Frank White	SSG	09/26/05	Cross Lanes

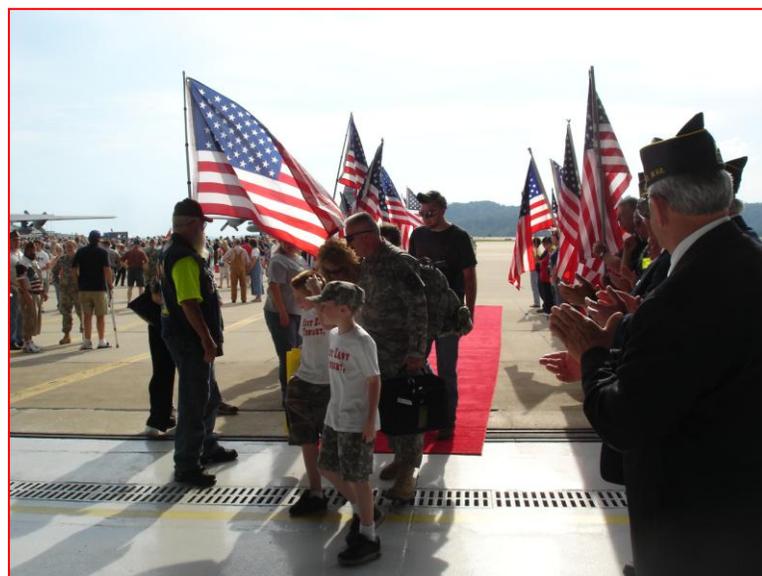
IN MEMORIUM
OPERATION IRAQ FREEDOM

Jesse Adam Ault	SSG	04/09/08	Middlebourne
Jeremy Alexander Brown	SSG	07/03/05	Mabscott
John Thomas Byrd II	LCPL	10/30/04	Fairview
Adam J. Crumpler	LCPL	06/18/05	Charleston
Danny Bruce Daniels II	SPC	07/20/04	Varney
John W. Engeman	CWO4	06/21/06	Princeton
William Bradley Fulks	CPL	06/18/06	Culloden
Richard William Hafer	PFC	11/15/03	Cross Lanes
Matthew David Hunter	SGT	01/23/06	Valley Grove
Romulo Jose Jimenez II	CPL	11/10/04	Belington
Brian Christopher Karim	SGT	12/13/05	Talcott
Otie Joseph McVey	SFC	11/07/04	Oak Hill

Jason Nicholas Marchland	SPC	10/05/07	Greenwood
Bradley Lee Parker	LCPL	11/15/04	Rachel
Stanley Brian Reynolds	SSG	08/14/07	Rock
Bryan James Richardson	CPL	03/25/05	Summersville
Stephen A. Seale	SSG	08/06/06	Grafton
Michael J. Slater	PFC	04/21/07	Scott Depot
Ernest Harold Sutphin	PFC	03/18/04	Parkersburg
Deforest Lee Talbert	SGT	07/27/04	Charleston
Benjamin D. Tiffner	CAPT	11/07/07	Pigeon
Duane A. Thornsby	SFC	09/12/09	Bridgeport
Roger Clinton Turner Jr.	SSG	02/01/04	Parkersburg
Brian Scott Ulbrich	SPC	06/05/05	Chapmanville
Darren Dale Vankomen	SSG	12/21/04	Beckley
Joshua Shane Wilfong	CPL	04/30/04	Walker



WELCOMING OUR TROOPS HOME



THE DIRECTOR'S FORWARD

The mission of this division is aiding, assisting, counseling, advising and looking after the rights and interests of all persons known as veterans, who have served in the armed forces of the United States in the Army, Air Force, Navy, Marine Corps or Coast Guard as defined by the laws of the United States and whose separation there from has been other than dishonorable, and who are citizens and residents of this state, including their widows, dependants and orphans, who are or have become citizens and recipients of this state. (WV Code Chapter 9A-1-1).

The Division of Veterans Affairs through its sixteen field offices and two claims offices assisted veterans and their dependents this year with monetary benefits obtained and retained in the amount of \$142,448,121.; which represents the 7,748 VA claims awarded by the Department of Veterans Affairs to West Virginia veterans.

The West Virginia Veterans Home at Barboursville provides an excellent domiciliary style facility for approximately 150 West Virginia veterans who are disabled physically or mentally to the extent they cannot maintain full time employment.

Following the passage of the West Virginia Veterans Bonus Program by the State Legislature, the Division has established a Veterans Bonus office for the processing of the bonus applications. The application was placed on the Division's website so that it could be down loaded by our citizens who are in the armed services stationed around the world. As of the end of June 2010, the bonus office had paid out \$4,686,400.00 in Veterans Bonus.

As in the past, the division worked in close cooperation with the following veterans organizations in promoting veterans benefits: The American Legion, AMVETS, Disabled American Veterans, The Military Order of the Purple Heart, Non-Commissioned Officers Association, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Vietnam Veterans of America, The American Red Cross, American ExPOW's, Paralyzed Veterans of America, Pearl Harbor Survivors Association, Marine Corps League, Veterans of the Vietnam War and the West Virginia Veterans Coalition.

The Division took an active role in providing information and support to West Virginia troops as they returned home from their deployment. On each occasion, a field officer was dispatched to the various guard armories around the state to inform those members of the West Virginia National Guard as to what benefits they are entitled to and how they are to go about securing their benefits. The Division worked in conjunction with the various state veterans service organizations and the United States Department of Veterans Affairs to provide training and updates to all Service Officers located in our State.

The Department of Veterans Affairs Cemetery Grant Program awarded the West Virginia Division of Veterans Affairs \$14,102,000.00 to build a State Veterans Cemetery to be located in Institute, West Virginia. Construction will start in October of 2010.

MISSION STATEMENT

The State of West Virginia is and has always been foremost in providing its sons and daughters for the defense of the country. The patriotism of West Virginians is a matter of history. By the same token, the State of West Virginia has been foremost in caring for those who have served. The West Virginia Legislature in its wisdom in 1945 created the West Virginia Department of Veterans Affairs (later named West Virginia Division of Veterans Affairs) to provide a service to its honored veterans which cannot be and is not duplicated by any other state group or agency currently in existence.

The United States of America has, on a broad scale, been most generous in providing for the care of its millions of veterans. Its program is of necessity, vast and complicated. The necessity for personal assistance in filing and pursuing claims and in maintaining a continuing information program results from the legal principle that veterans benefits are not awarded automatically, all must be applied for. With the Federal Department of Veterans Affairs having only one office located within our state to process claims it has become necessary that veterans and their dependants are properly counseled and advised as to their rights and benefits. The aim of the State Division of Veterans Affairs is to obtain for a veteran or their dependants all they are entitled to and to help them obtain and prepare the evidence that will prove their entitlement. The Division of Veterans Affairs has 17 Field Offices and 2 Claims Offices located throughout the State to assist veterans and their dependents in filing claims or obtaining medical benefits. We can also assist with representation during the appeals process. These offices are staffed by trained and accredited Veteran Service Officers.

Keith Gwinn
Director

WEST VIRGINIA VETERANS COUNCIL

In accordance with Chapter 9A, Article 1, Section 2, as amended, The West Virginia Code provides that there shall be a Veterans Council consisting of nine members who must be citizens and residents of this state and who have served in and been honorably discharged or separated under honorable conditions from the armed forces of the United States and whose service was within a time of war as defined by the laws of the United States, either Public Law No. 1 – 73rd Congress, or Public Law No. 346 – 78th Congress, and amendments thereto. At least one member of the council must be a Veteran of World War II, at least one member of the council must be a Veteran of the Korean Conflict, at least two members of the council must be Veterans of the Vietnam era, one member must be a Veteran of the first Gulf War and at least one member must be a Veteran of the Afghanistan and Iraq conflicts.

The Governor makes appointments to the Council which is then confirmed by the State Senate. Council members are appointed for a six-year term and may be reappointed. It is the duty and function of the Veterans Council to advise the Director on the general administrative policies of the Division; to select at their first meeting in each fiscal year a Chairman to serve for one year to promulgate such rules and regulations as may be necessary; to examine the efficiency of the Division; to advise the Governor and the Legislature with respect to legislation affecting the interest of Veterans, their widows, dependents and orphans; and to make annual reports to the Governor reflecting the service of the Division.

VETERANS' COUNCIL MEMBERS

Randall Bare – Sandyville – Jackson County - Vietnam

Miles Epling, Chairman – Point Pleasant – Mason County - Vietnam

Patrick Farrell – Bridgeport – Harrison County - Iraq

Chester Fleming – Elkview – Kanawha County - Korean

Cedric Greene – Charleston, Kanawha County - Gulf

Bill Harris – Glen Easton – Marshall County – WW II

Ralph Stump – Mt. Claire – Harrison County – WW II

Debra K. Tompkins – Mt. Nebo – Nicholas County – Desert Storm

Robert Vass, Sr. – Huntington – Cabell County – WW II

This Council of the West Virginia Division of Veterans Affairs, during the fiscal year ending June 30, 2010, held four meetings as noted below:

The first quarterly meeting was held on **September 25, 2009** at the WV Veterans Home.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Epling. Robert Vass led the invocation and Patrick Ferrell led the Pledge of Allegiance. The roll called.

Chairman Epling welcomed the new members Randall Bare and Cedric Greene. Motion made and passed to accept the minutes for June 26, 2009.

Highlights of this meeting included:

- Keith Gwinn, Director Veterans Affairs, introduced the new Administrator for the Veterans Home, Stacy Brown. She will begin the Administrator position October 16, 2009.
- **A place has been selected by the Capital Building Commission for the WV Women's Statue.** The statue will be located between the Veterans Memorial and the DMV Building. The base for the statue is being bid out for contract.
- We should have the deed for the Veterans Cemetery Monday or Tuesday.
- There have been several vacancies in the division. The two vacancies in Beckley and one in Princeton have been filled. The office in Hurricane should be ready to open in two months. We are getting ready to interview for the four Social Worker positions for the VA Medical Centers.
- Delivery of the thirteen new vans should begin next week.
- Chris Cremeans, Acting Director, gave the report for the Veterans Home and recognized a couple of the employees.
- Plan to accept the 60th resident next Tuesday at the Veterans Facility. This makes the facility half way filled.
- Motion made and passed to write a letter to the DMV concerning the handicapped parking and ramp. Cedric Greene informed the Council he would talk with the Commissioner of DMV and see what can be done. He will report back to the Council at the next meeting. Motion made and passed to rescind motion passed to write a letter to DMV.
- Chairman Epling recognized all visitors and thanked the Veterans Home for allowing the meeting at their facility.

- Woody Williams asked about the duties of the Veterans Council.
- Mr. Williams discussed the Rules and Regulations for admission into the Veterans Home.
- Mr. Williams also discussed a resolution to have markers erected on highways and bridges identifying those who gave their lives for our freedom and those who dedicated their lives to public service.

Ralph Stump closed the meeting with the benediction.

No further business the meeting was adjourned.

The second meeting was held on **December 11, 2009** at the Days Inn Conference Center, Flatwoods, WV.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Epling. Robert Vass led the invocation and Larry Linch led the Pledge of Allegiance. The roll called.

Motion made and passed to accept the minutes for September 25, 2009.

Highlights included:

- Cedric Greene read a letter from Mr. Joe Miller, Commissioner, DMV, concerning the limited number of handicap spaces available at the Kanawha City Regional Office of DMV.
- Keith Gwinn, Director Veterans Affairs, addressed the code to State Rules to match the State Code concerning residency requirements. Priority will be established for a Veteran who was a resident of the State of West Virginia one year or more immediately prior to the date of application; or, was a resident of the State of West Virginia at the time of enlistment or induction as documented by Department of Defense on the DD214. Non-residents will be required to establish residency. Keith Gwinn informed the Council that Division will begin to track the resolutions.
- There is currently only one resolution for a bridge to be named after a soldier in Lincoln County who was not a WV resident.
- The Logan Office was damaged by fire and has been moved to Henlawson at the **Veterans' Center.**

- **The Veterans' Cemetery at Institute is at a dead end. The donation agreement was signed by the Realty Board and Dow and sent to the Attorney Generals' Office. They refused to sign the donation agreement because they believe Dow should be responsible for the property. Dow will not make any changes on the agreement and has informed us that until the donation agreement is signed nobody is allowed on the property donated to the State for the cemetery by Dow. There is another meeting between the Governor's office and the Attorney General on Monday.**
- Keith Gwinn, Director, discussed the budget in lengthy detail. Several questions were asked from the visitors.
- The Council made motion and passed to accept the Budget as recommended by Mr. Keith Gwinn.
- Mr. Gwinn informed the Veterans of Foreign Wars that he or Mike would be in Clarksburg at 11:00 on Friday to discuss the rent for the field office.
- Stacy Brown, Administrator, gave the report for the Veterans Home.
- Kevin Crickard, Administrator, gave the report for the Veterans Facility.

There was no new business to discuss. The meeting adjourned.

Robert Vass closed the meeting with the benediction.

The third meeting was held on **March 26, 2010** at the American Legion Post 16 Huntington, WV.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Epling. Robert Vass led the invocation and Patrick Farrell led the Pledge of Allegiance. The roll was called and all council members were present. Motion made and passed to accept the minutes for December 11, 2009 meeting.

Highlights included:

- Chester Fleming addressed the problems with ADA at the DMV Building. He will give an update at the next council meeting.
- Keith Gwinn, Director VA, discussed the budget for 2010.
- The rule requiring Veterans to have a year residency for admission into the Veterans' Home has been changed to 30 days. This rule became effective March 26, 2010.
- The Cemetery 75% completion plans have been submitted to Frank Salvas, State Cemetery Administration. They will review and complete the plan to 100% then the plans will go out for bid. We are planning to have the bids out by April 15, 2010.

- There was a problem at the Clarksburg Nursing Facility hiring LPNs for 1st floor. There was a meeting in Governor's office March 15, 2010 to resolve the problem to hire 23 nurses.
- We are updating the website for VA and linking VA Nursing Facility in Clarksburg to the VA site.
- Veterans Visibility Day is scheduled for May 15, 2010 at the Capitol, Charleston, WV.

Motion made and passed to accept Director's report.

- Stacy Brown, Administrator, gave the report for the Veterans Home. There will be a meeting on Tuesday, March 30, 2010 at 2:30 with the Cabell County Health Department to discuss nonsmoking at the Veterans Home.
- Chairman Epling read a letter from Woody Williams and answered the questions listed in the letter.

Chairman Epling recognized all visitors.

There was no new business to discuss. Meeting adjourned

Robert Vass closed the meeting with the benediction.

The fourth and final Veterans Council meeting for Fiscal Year 2010 was held **June 25, 2010** at the American Legion Post 68, Airport Road, Bridgeport, West Virginia.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Epling. Ralph Stump led the invocation and Randall Bare led the Pledge of Allegiance. The roll was called and all but one council member were present. Motion made and passed to accept the minutes for March 26, 2010 meeting.

Highlights included:

Old Business:

- Keith – Personnel requested copies of new admissions rule to VA Home of Barboursville – These have been passed out. Rule has been changed and approved by Secretary of State and is now law. The only change is that priority will be given to any Veterans who have been a WV State resident for one year.

Directors Report:

- Veterans Cemetery- We had a June 22nd pre-bid meeting with approximately 20 contractors showing up as required to submit their bids for building the Cemetery at Institute. Bids required to be submitted by July 13th – After submission, reviewed by State Purchasing Division, and then sent to Federal VA in 3 or 4 days for review. The deadline is July 27th **to have everything approved and that's when they will make the decision on final grants.** Once the contract has been awarded, the bid process gives the contractor 380 days for completion of Cemetery.

- Problems with van drivers per diem program- We have received complaints and have had an increase in people taking advantage of the program by making one quick trip and then requesting \$75 per day per diem pay – Recommendation to the Council to issue a policy that requires that to be eligible for the van drivers per diem pay, it must be a 4 hour round trip or a minimum of 4 hours. In an effort to notify drivers well in advance of this new policy, we will set in policy next week to take affect if August 2010.
- We have replaced the Service Officer in Morgantown. In Clarksburg, we have combined the Nursing Home with VFW downtown. Average of claims from 10 up to 52 last month. Still no need to put a Service Officer in Welch but we would like to have permission to establish a Social Worker in the Welch office.

Veterans Home Update:

- **We currently have 98 residents which is high for the last four years. Since we've had** permission to do emergency rule change, admissions have been increasing.
- We had the first Senior Olympics Veterans Team from Barboursville Veterans Home participating this week in events.
- Smoking Policy – Still working with County Health Dpt. On this and checking into options.

New Business: None

Ralph Stump made introduction & welcome of newest State Commander of Veterans of Foreign Wars, Jim Richison of Clarksburg.

Nursing Facility Update:

- Nursing Home has grown and continues to grow. Currently 11 Veterans on active waiting list for the existing unit and we have 24 Veterans on the waiting list for the **Alzheimer's** Unit once it is open, running and licensed.
- We completed the Federal Survey this week with 5 Inspectors in. Unlike State Surveyors, they were allowed to tell us when we are doing things right. The exit conference conversation was 90% very complimentary. Specifically in our Quality Assurance Process, they were pleased with tracking and trending QUI better than in previous years.
- Regarding the environment, the Inspectors received positive feedback from interviewing Veterans and their family members. We expect one paperwork deficiency related to communications and care planning, but we have developed a process which should correct this deficiency.
- We now have up to 70 Veterans- Includes 8 recent admissions.
- **We have hired on an Alzheimer's Unit Director** and this is the beginning of the process to **get the Alzheimer's Unit filled and licensed.**

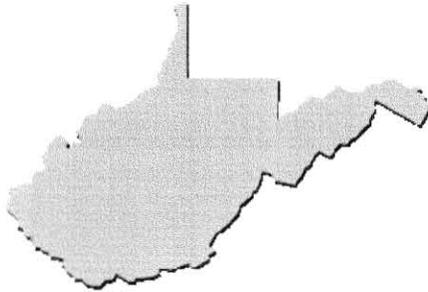
- Concern & discussion regarding admission policy- Request to consider a policy to make exception based on need or urgency.
 - Nursing Home Business Plan for Upcoming Fiscal Year- Each Department has compartmental objectives with specific goals and time frames to accomplish these goals.
 - Overall, since last meeting, we now have 95 employees to 130 flat. Includes 60 RNs and Health Service Workers. Need to hire 12 more Licensed Nurses and 12 more CNAs. Will go up to about 180 positions. Will be hiring recreational assistants, all workers will go **into the Alzheimer's Unit to be there to care for the 20 Veterans in the Unit.**
 - Conversation regarding Division of Veterans Affairs Pamphlet – Keith Gwinn acknowledged that we do have these on hand for mailing out to troops, passing out in meetings and events, etc.
 - **Motion made to name each wing of the VA Nursing Facility in honor of one of the "Medal of Honor" recipients from the area.**
 - Discussion for Council to advise change in policy that Veterans should have same **identical requirements for admission into the Veterans' Nursing Facility as there is for the Veterans' Home.**
 - Discussion for consideration in change of requirements to **sit on WV Veterans' Council—should not be worded as "...service was within a time of war..."request to change to "Veteran, whether peace time or war time"**
 - Proposal to name someone on Council that is the spokesperson who deals with Legislature and Governor. – Take into consideration.
 - Motion to Adjourn
-

DIVISION SERVICES

The following represents a statistical summary of the services performed by the offices of the Division of Veterans Affairs for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2010.

1.	Consultations	57,253
2.	Telephone Calls (Incoming only)	72,431
3.	Correspondence (Outgoing only)	125,435
4.	Applications-Compensation-Pension	4482
5.	Reopened Claims	3266
6.	Veterans Cases Reviewed	11120
7.	Hospital Referrals	10,554
8.	Appearances in Behalf of Veterans	729
9.	Total Awards	8611
10.	Annual income Obtained for Veterans and Dependents from Compensation and Pension Awards	\$ 88,997,218.00
11.	Widows Death Pension, DIC, VR&E, Burial Allowance, EVR's, Confirmed & Continued Awards	\$ 52,744,765.00
12.	Life Insurance Benefits Recovered	\$ 706,138.00
13.	Grand Total of All Monetary Benefits Recovered for Fiscal Year 2010	\$ 142,448,121.00

West Virginia Division of Veterans Affairs



GENERAL REVENUE APPROPRIATIONS



FEDERAL MONETARY RECOVERY

\$ = \$11,067,446.00



= \$142,448,121.00

**FOR EVERY STATE \$1.00 EXPENDED,
THE DIVISION RECOVERED \$12.87 IN FEDERAL FUNDS.**

**WEST VIRGINIA DIVISION OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
FINANCIAL STATEMENT – FISCAL YEAR 2010
PERIOD 7/1/09 THROUGH 6/30/10**

LEGISLATIVE APPROPRIATION FOR 2009-10 FISCAL YEAR - \$ 11,067,446

<u>ACCOUNT</u>	<u>AMOUNT APPROPRIATED</u>	<u>AMOUNT EXPENDED</u>	<u>UNEXPENDED BALANCE</u>	<u>UTILIZATION PERCENTAGE</u>
Personal Services (Benefits)	\$ 1,660,409.00	\$ 1,385,023.00	\$ 275,386.00	83.4%
Unclassified	<u>1,705,122.00</u>	<u>1,559,457.00</u>	<u>145,665.00</u>	<u>91.5%</u>
TOTAL	\$ 3,365,531.00	\$ 2,944,480.00	\$ 421,051.00	87.5%

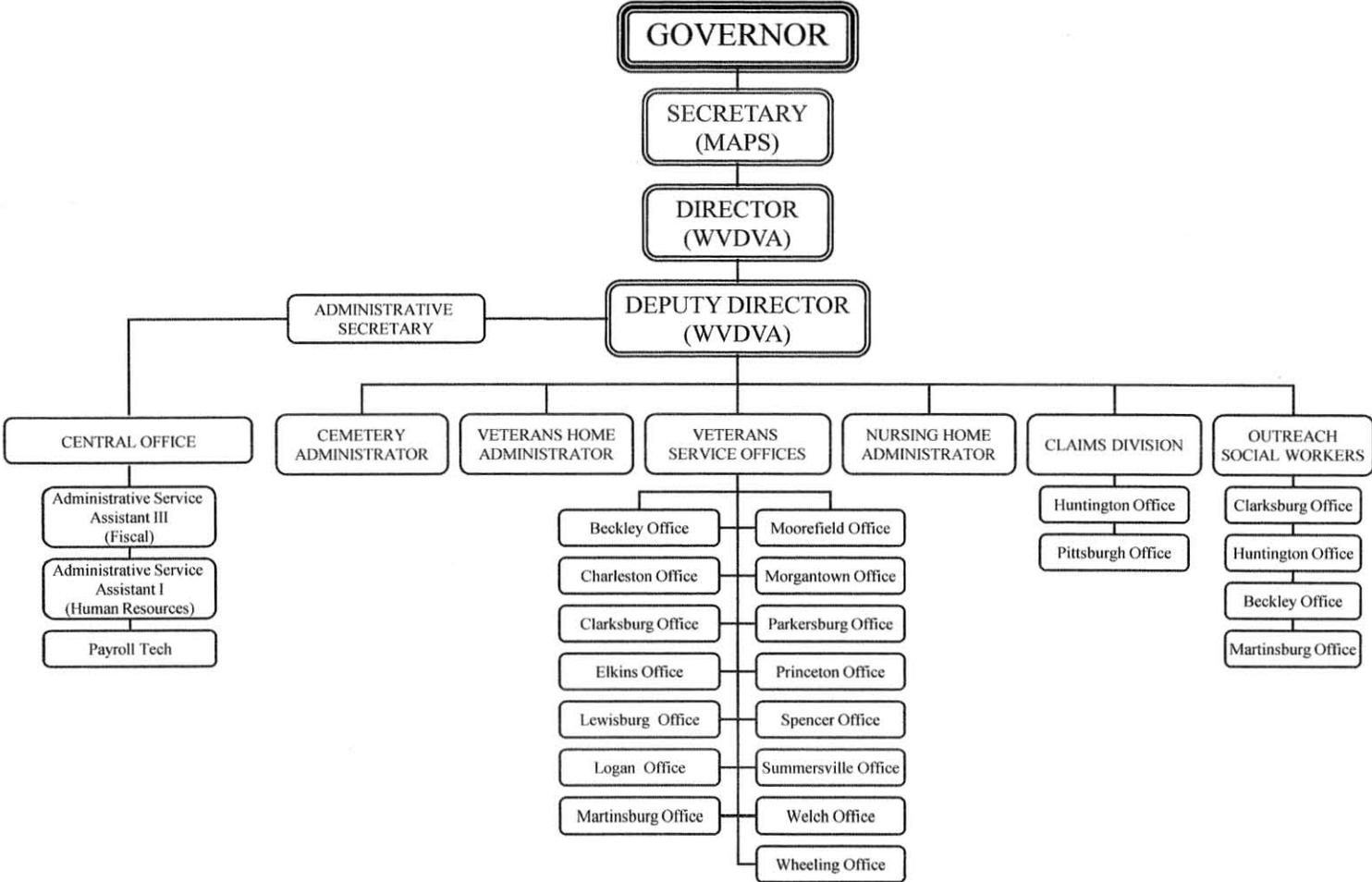
WEST VIRGINIA VETERANS HOME AT BARBOURSVILLE

<u>ACCOUNT</u>	<u>AMOUNT APPROPRIATED</u>	<u>AMOUNT EXPENDED</u>	<u>UNEXPENDED BALANCE</u>	<u>UTILIZATION PERCENTAGE</u>
Personal Services (Benefits)	\$ 1,048,679.00	\$ 1,025,058.00	\$ 23,621.00	97.7%
Unclassified	<u>69,801.00</u>	<u>69,801.00</u>	<u>-0-</u>	<u>100.0%</u>
TOTAL	\$ 1,118,480.00	\$ 1,094,859.00	\$ 23,621.00	97.8%

WEST VIRGINIA VETERANS NURSING FACILITY AT CLARKSBURG

<u>ACCOUNT</u>	<u>AMOUNT APPROPRIATED</u>	<u>AMOUNT EXPENDED</u>	<u>UNEXPENDED BALANCE</u>	<u>UTILIZATION PERCENTAGE</u>
TOTAL	\$ 6,583,435.00	\$ 4,170,381.00	\$ 2,413,054.00	63.4%

**WEST VIRGINIA DIVISION OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
ORGANIZATIONAL CHART**



West Virginia Division of Veterans Affairs Administrative Office

1321 Plaza East – Suite 109
Charleston, West Virginia 25301
Phone: (304) 558-3661
(866) WV4-VETS
Fax: (304) 558-3662
E-mail: wvdva@state.wv.us



Keith Gwinn
Director
Keith.C.Gwinn@wv.gov

Mike Lyons
Deputy Director
Mike.C.Lyons@wv.gov

Amber Heath
Payroll Assistant

Connie Hodapp
Administrative Services
Assistant III

Sandy Duff
Administrative Service
Assistant I

Angela Meadows
Administrative Secretary

HUNTINGTON CLAIMS OFFICE

640 Fourth Avenue
Huntington, West Virginia 25701
Phone: (304) 399-9395
Fax: (304) 528-5738
E-mail: JamesA.Lewis@va.gov



CLAIMS MANAGER
JOSH HIVELY

CLAIMS MANAGER
CHARLES BELLOMY

CLAIMS MANAGER
JIM LEWIS

OFFICE ASSISTANT
LAURA LYNN

OFFICE ASSISTANT
VICKI RICE

BECKLEY

407 Neville Street Suite 113
West Virginia State Building
Beckley, West Virginia 25801
Telephone: (304) 256-6955
Fax: (304) 256-6955
E-mail: James.W.Doran@wv.gov
Cheryl.L.Farrell@wv.gov

OFFICE ASSISTANT
CHERYL FARRELL

VETERANS AFFAIRS OFFICER
JAMES DORAN



CHARLESTON

1321 Plaza East Suite 101
Charleston, West Virginia 25301
Telephone: (304) 558-8164
Fax: (304) 558-8197
E-mail: Sherry.R.Barker-Jackson@wv.gov
Todd.O.Hanson@wv.gov

VETERAN SERVICE OFFICERS
SHERRY BARKER-JACKSON
TODD HANSON

ASST. VETERANS AFFAIR OFFICER
MITZI OCHELTREE

OFFICE ASSISTANT II – GLORIA ANNIE



CLARKSBURG

One Freedoms Way
Clarksburg, West Virginia 26301
Telephone: (304) 626-1603
Fax: (304) 626-1605
E-mail: David.P.Ervin@wv.gov

SOCIAL WORKER-AMBER BRUNETTI

ASST. VETERANS AFFAIRS OFFICER
SUSANNE DORRER

VETERANS AFFAIRS OFFICER
DAVID “PIERCE” ERVIN



ELKINS

Elkins-Randolph County Airport
Route 4, Box 271
Elkins, West Virginia 26241
Telephone: (304) 637-0235
Fax: (304) 637-0299
E-mail: jeffrossiter@suddenlinkmail.com

VETERANS AFFAIRS OFFICER
JEFF ROSSITER

OFFICE ASST II
PAMELA ROSENCRANCE



LEWISBURG

200 North Court Street
Lewisburg, West Virginia 24901
Telephone: (304) 647-7500
Fax: (304) 647-7502
E-mail: Ruth.P.White@wv.gov
Dana.I.Gowings@wv.gov

OFFICE ASSISTANT- DANA GOWINGS

VETERANS AFFAIRS OFFICER
RUTH WHITE

LOGAN

21 Veterans Avenue
P O Box 397
Henlawson, West Virginia 25624
Telephone: (304) 752-2110
E-mail: DVALogan@wvdsi.net

VETERANS AFFAIRS OFFICER
BARRY DINGESS

ASST VETERANS AFFAIRS OFFICER
SHERRY ALLEN



MARTINSBURG

115 Aikens Center, Suite 17
Martinsburg, West Virginia 25401
Telephone: (304) 267-0040
Fax: (304) 267-0095
E-mail: David.L.Robinson@wv.gov
Lisa.M.Smith@wv.gov

VETERANS AFFAIRS OFFICER
DAVID ROBINSON

ASST. VETERANS AFFAIRS OFFICER
LISA SMITH



MOOREFIELD

225 North Main Street
Moorefield, West Virginia 26836
Telephone: (304) 538-2839
Fax: (304) 538-8045
E-mail: Carol.R.Hefner@wv.gov
Michelle.Lo.Cook@wv.gov

OFFICE ASSISTANT
MICHELLE COOK

ASST VETERANS AFFAIRS OFFICER
CAROL HEFNER



MORGANTOWN

1705 Mile Ground Road, Suite 1
Morgantown, West Virginia 26505
Telephone: (304) 285-3480
Fax: (304) 285-3481
E-mail: bsetler@comcast.net

VETERANS AFFAIRS OFFICER
BOB SETLER

OFFICE ASSISTANT II
REBECCA COZORT



PARKERSBURG

Wood County Courthouse
1 Court Square, Room 403
Parkersburg, West Virginia 26101
Telephone: (304) 424-1952
Fax: (304) 424-1782
E-mail: PARKVA@Woodcountywv.com

VETERANS AFFAIRS OFFICER
MARTY GILCHRIST

ASST VETERANS AFFAIRS OFFICER
KAREN McDONALD



PRINCETON

C/O Memorial Building
1500 West Main Street
Princeton, West Virginia 24740
Telephone: (304) 425-5194
Fax: (304) 487-2012
E-mail: Danny.L.Honaker@wv.gov
Lora.J.Viars@wv.gov

OFFICE ASSISTANT
LORA VIARS

VETERANS AFFAIRS OFFICER
DANNY HONAKER



SPENCER

811 Madison Avenue, Suite 29
Spencer, West Virginia 25276
Telephone: (304) 927-0980
Fax: (304) 927-0986
E-mail: thomascoakley vso@yahoo.com
Norma.f@frontier.com

VETERANS AFFAIRS OFFICER
THOMAS COAKLEY

OFFICE ASSISTANT
NORMA FERRELL



SUMMERSVILLE

715 Main Street Suite 102
Summersville, West Virginia 26651
Telephone: (304) 872-0829
Fax: (304) 872-0827
E-mail: wvdvaigo@aol.com
wvdvagail@aol.com

VETERANS AFFAIRS OFFICER
DAREK IGO

ASST. VETERANS AFFAIRS OFFICER
GAIL THOMAS



WELCH

McDowell County Library
90 Howard Street
Welch, West Virginia 24801
Telephone: (304) 436-3804
Fax: (304) 436-3804
E-mail: DVAWELCH@yahoo.com

ASST. VETERANS AFFAIRS OFFICER
KESHA NEALEN



WHEELING/PITTSBURGH

51 11th Street, Room 300
Wheeling, West Virginia 26003
Telephone: (304) 238-1085
Fax: (304) 238-1076
E-mail: VETWHG@comcast.net

CLAIMS MANAGER
MICHAEL CRAIG

ASST. VETERANS AFFAIRS OFFICER
DEBI McGRAW

PITTSBURGH

Federal Bldg, Rm 1615
1000 Liberty Ave.
Pittsburgh, PA 15222
Telephone: (304) 238-1085
E-mail: Linda.Eshenbaugh@va.gov

LINDA ESHENBAUGH
ASST. VETERANS AFFAIRS OFFICER



**WEST VIRGINIA VETERANS NURSING FACILITY
ONE FREEDOM WAY
CLARKSBURG, WV 26301**

The West Virginia Veterans Nursing Facility is located adjacent to the Louis a Johnson VA Hospital in Clarksburg. This 120 bed facility began operation in 2007.

Basic admission criteria requirements are: Veterans who have served on active duty or performed active service in a reserve component of the armed forces for a period of at least twelve consecutive month; or have been medically discharged for a service connected injury prior to twelve month service. Veterans whose discharge status from military service is honorable. Veterans who have continuously been a citizen of the state of West Virginia for one year prior to application to the WVVNF, or who was a resident of West Virginia at the time they initially entered active military service. Veterans who are physically unable to maintain themselves in their own home by reason of age, disability or disease and meet the criteria for intermediate or skilled nursing care.

The WVVNF shall not admit any applicant who requires treatment primarily for mental retardation, mental illness, or substance abuse, or who has a documented history of physical violence and/or disciplinary problems, or whose needs cannot be met by the facility. As a matter of clarity, prospective residents with Alzheimer's disease or dementia are eligible for consideration. Spouses of the veterans are eligible to participate.

The facility will have a 20 bed unit for Alzheimer patients.

There shall be no income limitations as an eligible requirement.

We are a smoke-free facility. No veteran is allowed to smoke on facility grounds.

Emphasis is placed on maintaining a warm, attractive and comfortable facility for West Virginia veterans in need of nursing home care. Visitation to the home is encouraged.

We have our own in-house pharmacy and a pharmacist that provides individualized attention to the medication needs of our veterans. We offer remote storage lockers for our veterans to store valuable or extra personal items. Personal laundry is processed in-house, and other linens are cleaned through a state agency that hires personnel with disabilities.

As the newest constructed nursing facility in the state, our fire detection and suppression systems are exceptional. Our rooms have oxygen and suction capability built in, and all of our rooms come with free TV and local phone coverage. We also offer a wireless network for computer web access.

We are a value to the veterans because our maximum room rate is roughly one-third of what it would cost to pay privately in a typical nursing facility. In fact, no veteran will be turned down due to finances.



**Dr. Kevin Crickard
Administrator**



NURSING HOME STAFF



WEST VIRGINIA VETERANS NURSING FACILITY



Therapy Room



Dining Area

WEST VIRGINIA VETERANS HOME

The West Virginia Veterans Home is located in the Village of Barboursville, fifteen miles from downtown Huntington. This home for West Virginia veterans was authorized in 1975 and became a reality in 1981.

Basic eligibility requirements are:

- Veterans must have been discharged from the service with an honorable discharge or with a general discharge under honorable conditions
- Veterans discharged after September 7, 1980 must have served at least 24 consecutive months.
- Although priority will be given to veterans who are residents from the state of West Virginia, the previous one year state residency requirement has been rescinded.
- Due to the health and welfare of residents of the Barboursville Veterans Home, there are certain pre-admission medical tests which must be completed prior to being admitted to the home.
- All qualified veterans must be ambulatory and independent in all activities of daily living. The home is not a treatment facility and cannot accommodate veterans in need of daily care or skilled assistance. The home provides a nursing department and a contact physician. All medical treatment is provided by the VA Medical Center located in Huntington. Transportation is provided to the medical center three times daily.

Rooms available for occupancy accommodate two, three or four persons. Every effort is made to ensure compatibility between occupants. Female veterans are most welcome and special lodging accommodations are provided as they become available.

A person's income is not a factor in gaining admission, although residents are required to contribute one-half of his or her monthly income as their maintenance contribution. The home is very liberal in its rules and regulations. Residents may leave on a pass for up to three days by simply signing a daily log sheet. All residents are authorized up to 30 days of furlough per year. Visitation to the home is encouraged and visitors may enjoy a meal with the residents at a nominal fee.

Emphasis is placed on maintaining a warm, attractive and comfortable "home" for the West Virginia veteran who is in need of a place to live. We, the residents and staff, wish to extend an invitation to each of you to visit our facility. You will be proud, as we are, that such a home exists.

Assistance with applications for residency can be obtained through any of the West Virginia Division of Veterans Affairs Field Offices or you may contact us directly at 304-736-1027.



WEST VIRGINIA VETERANS HOME



**Stacy Brown
Administrator**

**West Virginia Veterans Home
512 Water Street
Barboursville, WV 25504**



VETERANS HOME STAFF

Donel Kinnard Memorial State Veterans Cemetery

The Donel Kinnard Memorial State Veterans Cemetery had its groundbreaking ceremony on October 14, 2010. Within two weeks of that date excavation and construction had commenced. Through its lifetime, the cemetery will be able to inter approximately 60,000 qualified veterans and family members. Burial options include in-ground single sites, in-ground double crypts, in-ground cremated sites and columbarium options for cremated remains. On site are a storage facility, maintenance building, administrative office and information center, interment site and a memorial to the war of terrorism. It has been estimated that the cemetery will inter approximately 600+ veterans and family members per year. The cemetery will be following Federal guidelines and requirements for eligibility.

Eligibility is as follows, but is not limited to:

- Any member of the Armed Forces of the United States who dies on active duty.
- Any veteran who was discharged under conditions other than dishonorable and had a minimum of 24 months of active duty.
- The spouse or surviving spouse of an eligible veteran.
- The minor children of an eligible veteran. For purpose of burial in a national cemetery, a minor child is a child who is unmarried and: Who is under 21 years of age; or, Who is under 23 years of age and pursuing a full-time course of instruction at an approved educational institution.

Any state or federal Veterans Affairs office can assist in determining eligibility for burial in a VA national or state veteran's cemetery.



**Larissa Wines
Administrator
State Veterans Cemetery**



Don Kinnard

VETERANS BENEFITS

The Division of Veterans Affairs of West Virginia shall assist eligible veterans their widows, dependents and orphans in proper preparation and presentation of their claims for the benefits of their right and privileges under federal and state laws enacted for their benefits.

HOMESTEAD EXEMPTION FOR CERTAIN ELIGIBLE VETERANS: Specific information is available through the local County Assessor's Office.

AGENT ORANGE PROGRAM: The program administered by the West Virginia Division of Health expired July 1, 1989. However, assistance is provided to Korean and Vietnam veterans exposed to certain chemicals, defoliants or herbicides or other causation agents, including Agent Orange, from the US Department of Veterans Affairs Medicine and Surgery.

STATE WAR ORPHANS EDUCATION: Provides for a waiver of tuition and registration fees in a state supported college or university for children between the ages of sixteen and twenty-five whose veteran parents served in World War I, World War II, Korean Conflict, Vietnam Era, Kosovo, Afghanistan, Iraq or any time of conflict as declared by Congress. Parent must have died in such wartime period, or, if subsequent to discharge, death must have been the result of disability incurred in such wartime service. Children attending private, out-of-state and state education or training institutions will receive one thousand dollars in any one semester or a total of up to two thousand dollars in any one year.

FREE LICENSE – AUTOMOBILE: Provides special vehicle license plates or DV Tags without fee to any veteran in receipt of an auto grant or who is permanently and totally disabled due to service-connected causes, and former POW Tag as certified by the US Department of Veterans Affairs. Also, recent legislation provides for Purple Heart Tags for those wounded in action and Pearl Harbor Survivors Tags for West Virginia veterans who were at Pearl Harbor during the attack on December 7, 1941. Recent legislation provided for special license plates for veterans in receipt of the Congressional Medal of Honor, The Distinguished Service Cross, The Navy Cross, The Air Force Cross, The Silver Star and the Bronze Star. The Department of Motor Vehicles requires a one-time fee of \$10.00 over and above the regular license fee for Honorably Discharged Veteran, Combat Veteran, Marine Corps League, American Legion, Disable American Veteran, National Guard, World War II Veteran, Korean War Veteran, Vietnam War Veteran, Persian Gulf Veteran, Women Veterans, Retired Military Air Force, Retired Military Army, Retired Military Coast Guard, Retired Military Marines, Retired Military Navy, Combat Infantry Badge, and Combat Medic Badge, Afghanistan Campaign and Iraq Campaign plates.

FREE HUNTING AND FISHING PRIVILEGES for 100% service-connected veterans and those veterans in receipt of a VA auto grant.

STATE VETERANS HOME (DOMICILIARY): Domiciliary care in the Veterans Home is for ambulatory veterans who are able to go to the dining room without help; can dress themselves; can make their own beds, and can participate in an assigned therapeutic activity. A veteran may be charged for care if he is able to pay.

VETERANS PREFERENCE: Under the West Virginia Civil Service System, all veterans who have served under honorable conditions in the armed forces of the United States during World War II, Korean Conflicts, and Vietnam Era or during hostile conflict shall have five (5) points added to a final passing score. An additional five (5) points are added to a veteran's score if in receipt of the Purple Heart or has a compensable service-connected disability.

VETERANS BONUS: The West Virginia State Legislature approved four separate bonus programs for payment to veterans of World War I and World War II, Korean Conflict, the Vietnam Era and veterans of conflicts in Lebanon, Panama, Granada and Desert Storm. The deadline for making applications for these bonus programs has expired as indicated: World War I and World War II – December 31, 1955; Korean Conflict – June 30, 1959; Vietnam Era – December 31, 1976; Lebanon, Panama, Granada and Desert Storm – June 30, 1994.

The West Virginia State Legislature approved Veterans Bonus Amendment for payment of bonuses and death benefits to veterans of the conflicts in Kosovo, Afghanistan and Iraq or to their relatives. Kosovo - November 20, 1995 – December 31, 2000; Afghanistan - October 7, 2001 and the date determined by the President or Congress of the United States as the end of the involvement of the United States armed forces in Afghanistan. Iraq March 19, 2003 and the date determined by the President or Congress of the United States as the end of the involvement of the United States armed forces in Iraq.

VETERANS RE-EDUCATION ACT FUND: The West Virginia Legislature provides tuition assistance to those veterans who need a new vocation due to dislocation or unemployment. Veterans must have exhausted the G.I. Bill and be in need of tuition assistance.

SIXTY-THIRD ANNUAL SERVICE OFFICERS TRAINING CONFERENCE

For the 63rd year, the West Virginia Division of Veterans Affairs was privileged to host the annual West Virginia Service Officers Training Conference. The dates of this year's conference were Friday, October 29 through Sunday, October 31, 2009. This annual event is held in coordination with the US Department of Veterans Affairs and all active Veterans organizations in West Virginia.

This year the conference was held at Summersville, West Virginia. Starting next year we will begin a rotation of different locations around the state. This conference is designed to instruct all Veteran organizational officers, especially service officers, regarding their commitment to council and assist veterans and their dependants in obtaining VA benefits. Conference attendees receive intensified classroom instruction from the US Department of Veterans Affairs Regional Office, located in Huntington, West Virginia. Areas of instruction include compensation, pension, appeals, personal hearings, vocational rehabilitation, medical and insurance benefits and details about eligibility at the Veterans Home located in Barboursville, West Virginia.

This year the conference had over 81 attendees representing various organizations such as the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Disabled American Veterans, American Legion, Marine Corp League, Military Order of the Purple Heart, Paralyzed Veterans of America, Vietnam Veterans of America, AMVETS and the Korean War Veterans Association. In attendance also were several Veterans Affairs Officers from the local offices under the jurisdiction of the Division of Veterans Affairs. Representatives from the State Job Services and the VA Vet Centers were also present and conducted training seminars.

Mr. Mike Lyons, Deputy Director of the West Virginia Division of Veterans Affairs, opened the conference on Friday evening and presented an update regarding various programs that affect veterans. An open discussion period was held with representatives from the VA Regional office and the Beckley, Clarksburg, and Huntington VA Medical Centers, along with staff from local VET Centers.

Conference attendees received intensified training concerning changes in law, appeals, changes in health care and eligibility, PTSD and the returning veterans outreach program throughout the day on Saturday.

EDUCATION OF WAR ORPHANS

A total of 8 students received benefits under the Education of War Orphans Program administered by the Division of Veterans Affairs during the fiscal year June 30, 2010.

Known as the "Education of War Orphans Program", this legislation entitles children to educational benefits whenever their veteran parent has died of disability resulting from his service in the armed forces during World War I, World War II, Korean Conflict, Vietnam Era, Kosovo, Afghanistan, and Iraq and other hostile actions as declared by congress.

No funds appropriated from the "Education of War Orphans Program" are used for administrative expenses. Orphan students received payment for matriculation fee, board, room, books, supplies and other necessary living expenses. The law provides for automatic waiver of tuition by state operated schools for students approved under the program.

Of the 8 students enrolled during the past 12-month period, 8 attended institutions at the college level or comparable institution. The law authorizing this benefit specifies that the orphan of West Virginia's war veterans, to be eligible, must be between 16 and 25 years of age; consequently, only students of high school age or higher can qualify.

March 11, 2006 Senate Bill No. 32 was passed by the Legislature which gave all students attending an out-of-state or state education or training institution \$2000.00 per year. Fifteen students were enrolled in the program.

The following represents the disbursements during the fiscal year 2009-2010 from the Education of War Orphans Fund:

8 students	\$15,000
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Eight students attending college under the Federal War Orphans Education Program were approved for waiver of tuition.

VETERANS ORGANIZATIONS
2010-2011 ELECTED OFFICERS

Mr. Robert (Greek) Fochalis, Commander
The American Legion
Department of West Virginia
HC 71 Box 44A-1
Augusta, WV 26704
Telephone: (304) 496-8523

Mr. Miles Epling, Adjutant
The American Legion
Department of West Virginia
P O Box 3191
Charleston, WV 25332
Telephone: (304) 343-7591
Fax: (304) 343-7592

Mr. James Richison, Commander
Veterans of Foreign Wars
Department of West Virginia
700 Ohio Ave
Nutter Fort, WV 26301
Telephone: 304-622-7424

Mr. Donald Young, Adjutant
Veterans of Foreign Wars
Department of West Virginia
P O Box 9431
South Charleston, WV 25309
Telephone: (304) 768-7514

Jake Stafford, Adjutant
Disabled American Veterans
Department of West Virginia
P O Box 274
Oceana, WV 24870
Telephone: (304) 682-6592

Mr. Steve Doll, Deputy Adjutant
Disabled American Veterans
Department of West Virginia
320 Webster Avenue
Morgantown, WV 26505

Mr. Charles Baisden, Commander
Military Order of the Purple Heart
Department of West Virginia
360 Harts Creek
Harts, WV 25524
Telephone: (304) 855-2009

Mr. Randy Pleva, President
Paralyzed Veterans of America
336 Campbells Creek Drive
Charleston, WV 25306
Telephone: (304) 925-9352
Email: info@wvpva.org

Mr. Dave Simmons, President
Vietnam Veterans of America
West Virginia State Council
P O Box 49
Nemours, WV 24738
Telephone: (304) 248-7316

Jacob Stafford, State Adjutant
Disabled American Veterans
PO Box 274
Oceana, WV 24870-0274
Telephone: (304) 682-6592
E-Mail: jnstafford@dav.net

VETERANS ORGANIZATIONS
2010-2011 ELECTED OFFICERS

Mr. Wetzel Sanders, Chairman
Pearl Harbor Survivors, Chapter 1
Department of West Virginia
P O Box 32
Midkiff, WV 25540

Mr. Miles Epling, Chairman
West Virginia Veterans Council
RR 1 Box 368
Point Pleasant, WV 25550
Telephone: (304) 675-6577

Mr. Roger Ware, Commandant
Marine Corps League
Department of West Virginia
P O Box 11828
Charleston, WV 25339
Telephone: (304) 636-4365

Mr. Ron W. Wroblewski, President
West Virginia Marine Corps
Coordinating Council
P O Box 734
Ceredo, WV 25507-0734
Telephone: (304) 453-4712
E-mail: SemprFiName@aol.com

Mr. Frank Goff, State President
Korean War Veterans Association
160 Riverview Drive
St. Albans, WV 25177
Telephone: (304) 722-1204

Mr. Keith Gwinn, State Director
West Virginia Division of Veterans Affairs
1321 Plaza East – Suite 109
Charleston, WV 25301-1400
Telephone: (304) 558-3661
Toll Free Within WV: (866) 984-8387
E-mail: Keith.C.Gwinn@wv.gov

Mr. Sherman Shumate, President
The Retired Enlisted Association
121 4th Street
Shady Spring, WV 25918
Telephone: (304) 763-2647

VETERANS ORGANIZATIONS
2010-2011 ELECTED OFFICERS

Mr. Hershel "Woody" Williams
Congressional Medal of Honor Recipient
3450 Wire Branch Road
Ona, WV 25545-9513
Telephone: (304) 743-1026
E-mail: hwoodysemper@frontier.com

Mr. Jack Tincher, Chairman
West Virginia Veterans Coalition
106 McKinley St.
Crab Orchard, WV 25827
Telephone: (304) 575-8579
Email: jacktincher@hotmail.com

Rev. Willie Lewis, State Commander
POW's Office
212 Maplewood Dr.
Fairmont, WV 26554
Telephone: 304-363-5790 (Business)
304-369-3204 (Personal)
Email: Wjopl55@live.com

Fred Haddad
ESGR, Area Chair
948 Ridgemont Rd.
Charleston, WV 25314
Telephone: 304-545-7025 (Cell)
Gms1958@frontier.com

Dennis Rayburn, State Commander
AMVETS of WV
1101 Meadowbrook Drive
Point Pleasant, WV 25550
Telephone: 304-674-3663

Mr. Ira S. Latimer, Jr., President
Air Force Association
Chuck Yeager Chapter
67 Abney Circle
Charleston, WV 25314
Telephone: 343-2650

Rick Given
Marine Corp League
925 Chapps Fork Road
Charleston, WV 25312
Telephone: 304-965-3541
304-807-5534 (Cell)

Mr. Donald L. Jennings, Secretary
West Virginia All-Airborne Chapter
P O Box 252
Durbin, WV 26264-0252
Telephone: (304) 456-4956

Mr. Barry Hogue, Chairman
West Virginia All-Airborne Chapter
1220 Philippi Pike
Clarksburg, WV 26301-3325
Telephone: (304) 624-5363

Marty Gilchrist, Adjutant
AMVETS of WV
24878 West Hornsby Road
Coolville, OH 45723
Telephone: 304-424-1952

THE AMERICAN LEGION DEPARTMENT OF WEST VIRGINIA INC.

P.O. BOX 3191
CHARLESTON, WV 25332

MILES S. EPLING
DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT

PHONE: (304) 343-7591
TOLL FREE: 1-888-534-4667
FAX: (304) 343-7592
EMAIL: wvlegion@suddenlinkmail.com
WEBSITE: www.wvlegion.org

December 21, 2010

Keith Gwinn, Director
WV Division of Veterans Affairs
1321 Plaza East Suite 109
Charleston, WV 25301

Dear Director Gwinn:

On behalf of The American Legion, Department of West Virginia, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to you and your staff for the outstanding service provided to this state's veterans and their families.

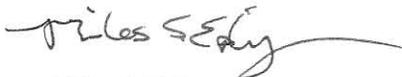
I appreciate our close working relationship, and it gives me great satisfaction to know that we are striving for the same goal – to help each veteran reap the benefits to which he or she is entitled.

The field offices are most helpful in assisting veterans in their own communities. This allows an individual the luxury of getting help without having to travel a long distance to receive it.

I commend you for your hard work and dedication to the veterans of this great state.

If I can ever be of assistance to you, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



Miles S. Epling
Department Adjutant



“For God and Country”

VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS OF THE UNITED STATES

December 21, 2010

Keith Gwinn, Director
West Virginia Division of Veterans Affairs
1321 Plaza East - Suite 101
Charleston, WV 25301-1400

Dear Mr. Gwinn:

As the year comes to a close, I would like to commend the West Virginia Division of Veterans Affairs employees who are helping veterans file claims for compensation, pension, education, and other benefits at the Department of Veterans Affairs. West Virginia's service officers are first-class, well trained, accredited, and certified individuals who ensure that veterans and their families receive all the benefits to which they are entitled.

In these austere economic times, highly trained service officers, such as those in the State of West Virginia, play an ever-increasing part in helping the VFW continue to provide representation. As such, I'd like to take this opportunity to say thank you to you and your staff. We highly value our friendship and association with you and your team of professionals.

I look forward to seeing you and your dedicated service officers at future VFW national training.

Sincerely,



WILLIAM L. BRADSHAW
Director, National Veterans Service