

Freedom Is Never Free



State of West Virginia Department of Veterans Assistance 2010-2011 Annual Report



Keith Gwinn, Cabinet Secretary

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.



Photo credit: SPC Nancy Van Der Weide (Old Guard)

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
Andrew M. Harper	PFC	03/11/11	Maidsville
David Alan Hess	PFC	10/10/10	Mineral Wells
Nicholas H. Hull	CPO	08/06/11	Washington
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
David E. VanCamp	CAPT	06/29/11	Elm Grove
Darren Dale Vankomen	SSG	12/21/04	Beckley
Joshua Shane Wilfong	CPL	04/30/04	Walker



DONEL KINNARD MEMORIAL VETERANS CEMETERY

GROUNDBREAKING CEREMONY

OCTOBER 2011



LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

Dear Governor Tomblin:

In Compliance with the West Virginia Code Section 9A-1-4, which Reads: "...to make annual reports to The Governor respecting the service of The Department...", I have the honor of presenting to Governor Earl Ray Tomblin the Annual Report for the West Virginia Department of Veterans Assistance for fiscal year July 1, 2010 through June 30, 2011.

In preparing this report, we have endeavored to make it informative, as well as, economical. It is believed that our effort to economize has in no way detracted from this report, or from the importance of the information relating to the service provided to our veterans.

The Veterans Council wishes to acknowledge the outstanding work Accomplished by the Cabinet Secretary and his staff in providing service to the Veterans of West Virginia, during this past year.

Respectfully submitted,



Miles S. Epling
Chairman, WV Veterans Council

THE SECRETARY'S FORWARD

The mission of the Department of Veterans Assistance is to aid, assist, counsel, advise and look 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, dependents and orphans, who are or have become citizens and recipients of this state.
(WV Code -Chapter 9A-1-1)

The Department of Veterans Assistance 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 \$161,474,566.; which represents the 7,198 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 but can still care for their selves or veterans who have become homeless.

Following the passage of the West Virginia Veterans Bonus Program by the State Legislature, the Department has established a Veterans Bonus office for the processing of the bonus applications. The application was placed on the Department'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 2011, the bonus office had paid out \$4,856,000.00 in Veterans Bonus.

As in the past, the Department 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 Ex-POW's, Paralyzed Veterans of America, Pearl Harbor Survivors Association, Marine Corps League, Veterans of the Vietnam War and the West Virginia Veterans Coalition.

The Department 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 Department 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 to build a State Veterans Cemetery to be located in Institute, West Virginia. Construction started in October of 2010 with an expected dedication in May of 2012.

The Veterans Outreach Program is in full operation with the hiring of 4 Social Workers to conduct outreach to veterans in the rural areas of our state. They will be working closely with the federal VA Vet Centers and the VA Medical Centers to ensure that these veterans are not forgotten.

The State Veterans Nursing Facility located in Clarksburg received certification for its specialty unit which will be designated as the Alzheimer's wing. With the opening of this unit the facility will soon be at its full capacity of 120 residents.

The Veterans Transportation program received 7 new vans that were delivered to the 4 VA Medical Centers in the state. These vans will assist veterans who are unable to drive or have no transportation to make their appointments for medical treatment.

I look forward to meeting the challenges that face the veterans of our great state and to ensure that they are provided the best possible service available.

Keith Gwinn
Cabinet Secretary



MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the West Virginia Department of Veterans Assistance (DVA) is to obtain for a veteran or their dependents all benefits that they are entitled to and to assist them in obtaining and preparing the evidence that will prove their entitlement. In addition, the DVA encourages communities to develop and enhance local veteran's services. The department has 16 field offices and two claims offices located throughout the state where veterans and their dependents can receive assistance in filing claims, obtaining medical benefits and applying for educational benefits. The DVA also provides representation during the appeals process. These offices are staffed by trained and accredited Veteran Service Officers.

Keith Gwinn
Cabinet Secretary

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 members of the Veterans' Council shall be selected with special reference to their ability and fitness to effectuate the purposes of this article. If an eligible veteran is not available or cannot be selected, a veteran who is a citizen and resident of this state, who served in and was honorably discharged or separated under honorable conditions from the Armed Forces of the United States and who served during any time of war or peace may be selected.

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 Secretary on the general administrative policies of the Department; 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 Department; 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 Department.

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

The West Virginia Veterans Council held three meetings during the fiscal year ending June 30, 2010. The meeting normally held in December had to be rescheduled on two separate occasions due to inclement weather and was moved forward to February. The Council normally has four quarterly meetings.

The first quarterly meeting was held on September 17, 2010 at VFW Post 3466

Meeting called to order by Chairman Epling. Ralph Stump led the invocation and Randal Bare led the Pledge of Allegiance. Those members present were Mr. Miles Epling, Mr. Patrick Farrell, Mr. Fleming, Mr. William "Bill" Harris, Mr. Ralph Stump, Ms. Debra Tompkins (on her way), and Mr. Robert Vass. Mr. Randal Bare and Mr. Cedric Greene were absent.

Highlights of this meeting included:

Motion made and passed to accept the minutes for June 25, 2010.

- **Notification has been sent out for van drivers to the hospitals to require a four hour minimum per round trip, effective August 1st, 2010.**
- **Medal of Honor plaques at the Veterans Nursing Facility at Clarksburg:**
The bid is at purchasing to buy these plaques and have them placed.
- **Keith Gwinn, Director, Veterans Affairs informed the Council that Mrs. Walker, Administrative Secretary, is no longer working for Division of Veterans Affairs.**
- **Cemetery groundbreaking is tentatively set for October 14th.**
- **The Governor has approved us to relocate the Veterans' Affairs offices** close to campus at WV State (Rehab Center) on November 1st.
- **We have two Service Officers moving on:** Marty Gilchrist, the Service Officer from Parkersburg has retired. Also the Service Officer from Spencer has moved up to the Parkersburg area. We have temporarily replaced the Spencer position, so right now we have a vacancy in Huntington.
- **We have interviewed the cemetery positions for Administrator of Cemetery.** Stacy Brown has been head of that committee to interview and she will be making an announcement next week.
- Chairman Epling requested Council Members to give a good hand to Marty Gilchrest, upon his retirement, stating "Marty did an outstanding job as Veterans Officer."
- Stacy Brown, Administrator over WV Veteran's Home in Barboursville gave report.
- Dr. Kevin Crickard, Administrator over WV Veteran's Nursing Facility in Clarksburg gave report.

- **State Commander, Dennis Rayburn - Expressed for the interests of the Veterans of the State of WV and especially those who served in Reserve situations- A law was passed by the Legislature of the State of WV – The WV Uniform Code of Military Justice.** This law as it was promulgated in code exceeds what Title 32 of the United States Code recommends for those purposes. Asking Council to advise the Governor to amend that document to make it agree with Title 32 to reduce the penalties to not be as harsh for “active duty service”.
- Mr. Gwinn noted that Senator Wells is aware and working on this, and that he was quite concerned since he is a Reservist. - **Note: Can access Title 32 US Code and WV code by going online to the Cornell law library.
- **Chester Fleming, Council Member, appealed to Veterans Organization with regard to Veterans getting Federal jobs.** Veterans are not currently classified as a Federal Employee and they should be.
- Gratitude expressed to VFW and American Legion for hosting today’s meeting.
- Mr. Vass offered the benediction
- Meeting adjourned

The second meeting was held on February 11, 2011 in the Governor’s Press Conference Room.

Meeting called to order by Chairman Epling, followed immediately by the Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance. Those members present were Mr. Miles Epling, Mr. Patrick Farrell, Mr. Fleming, Mr. William “Bill” Harris, Ms. Debra Tompkins, Mr. Cedric Greene, Mr. Randall Bare, and Mr. Robert Vass. Mr. Ralph Stump was absent.

Highlights Included:

Motion made and passed to accept the minutes for September 17, 2010.

- **Medal of Honor Plaques at the Veterans Nursing Facility at Clarksburg:** Kevin Crickard stated that great progress had been made with the help of Mr. Woody Williams, who showed a great willingness to work with our art.
- **Director Gwinn presented the new Veterans Affairs Informational Benefit Pamphlets with the new Division of Veterans Affairs logo.** Angela Meadows, newly hired Administrative Secretary, worked in conjunction with Director Gwinn and Deputy Director, Mike Lyons to design the pamphlets with more updated information.
- **Division of Veterans Affairs Contact Booklets:** We have recently designed and disbursed informational/contact booklets that we put out to the Regional Offices, other Veterans organizations, VAMCs, Vet Centers, and any other place that requires Veterans Assistance.
- **Clarksburg Field Office:** We now have two Certified Service Officers, one Assistant, and two Social Workers in Clarksburg Field Office, located in Veterans Nursing Facility.

- **Keith Gwinn, Director, Veterans Affairs addressed issue of Nursing Salaries.** Discussed with Governor earlier, proposal drawn up and Secretary Thornton submitted to DOP Board and we should hear within next few weeks and should be discussing increasing the Nursing starting salaries.
 - **Keith Gwinn introduced Larissa Wines as the new Cemetery Administrator over the Donel Kinnard Memorial State Veterans Cemetery in Institute.**
 - **Cemetery Highway Sign:** Mr. Gwinn passed out information and requested recommendation for passage of sign which will be put on interstate side next to State Police Barracks.
 - **GWOT Memorial: Global War on Terrorism Memorial will be located on the memorial walk.** We will be one of the first cemeteries to have a Memorial Walk installed. This walk will be a concrete walkway going over streams and around by trees and comes to the end at the POW MIA which is being replaced by GWOT Memorial which will also include POW MIA Flags.
 - **Stacy Brown, Administrator over WV Veteran's Home in Barboursville gave report.**
 - **Dr. Kevin Crickard, Administrator over WV Veteran's Nursing Facility in Clarksburg gave report.**
 - **Director Gwinn requests that members of committee review the Congressional notification letter that was handed out.** – This indicates by Secretary of Veterans Affairs for the 14.1 Million Dollar Grant for the Cemetery that construction plan includes 1,674 standard burial plots and 2,000 pre-placed double crypts.
 - **Motion made, seconded, voted on and passed for the additional 400 more crypts at a cost of \$240,000.**
 - **Annual Report for Veterans Affairs** – Copies passed out to Council by Mr. Gwinn. Report indicated that Veterans Affairs filed over 4,000 claims in Fiscal Year 2009-2010. We have brought in over \$141 Million Dollars to the State. We've almost passed that already and are projected to bring in over \$200 Million Dollars into the State in disability claims filed on behalf of Veterans. We are paced to go past 7,500 claims filed on behalf of veterans in the State.
 - **Cost of burial at cemetery is free to Veteran,** \$300 for wife or one dependent per VA regulation, but the allowance which VA will reimburse the State for is \$750.
 - Chairman Epling – Any further business to come before this meeting? If not, we'll entertain a **motion to adjourn- moved, voted on and dismissed.**
-

Third and final quarterly meeting for Fiscal Year 2011 was held on June 24, 2011 at the Flatwoods Conference Center.

Meeting called to order by Chairman Epling, followed immediately by the Invocation, led by Ralph Stump and the Pledge of Allegiance, led by Patrick Farrell.

Roll call by Director Keith Gwinn. All nine Council Members were present:

Mr. Miles Epling, Mr. Patrick Farrell, Mr. Chester Fleming, Mr. William "Bill" Harris, Ms. Debra Tompkins, Mr. Cedric Greene, Mr. Randall Bare, Mr. Ralph Stump, and Mr. Robert Vass.

Since copies of minutes from last meeting were disbursed, the motion was made, seconded, and passed to suspend the reading of the minutes and to accept the minutes as presented in hard copy for February 11, 2011.

Highlights Included:

- **Medal of Honor Plaques at the Veterans Nursing Facility at Clarksburg:**
Dr. Kevin Crickard reported that he has been working with artist on this project for last 9 -12 months.
- **Chairman Epling requested Dr. Kevin Crickard to go ahead and give report for Nursing Facility:**
- **Lottery Ticket Sales:**
Director Gwinn: I passed out a statement about the sales of the lottery tickets and in 2006 we drew in \$876,000, increased in 2007, decreased in 2008, it went back up in 2009 - \$818, 000, and during the recession 2010 it went down to 419,000 – End of May this year or around May 20th , we had \$663,000.00 in sales. The Commissioner of Lottery predicted around \$730,000 for end of year total. – So we're right where we need to be.
- **Director Gwinn: Just submitted change order for Cemetery, we're putting Cemetery signs on highway at main entrance. This has been approved and we can start construction of those.**
- **Director Gwinn: The Governor appointed me as the new Secretary for the new Department of Veterans Assistance effective July 1st.**
- **Clarksburg Interstate signs:** Regarding contacting with Dept. of Highways for increasing the size of the signs. I talked to Dept. of Transportation Secretary and he indicated the 18" x 12" current signs will be replaced and made the standard 5' x 18" signs.
- Veterans Home Administrator, Stacy Brown, is on active duty so Director Gwinn gave report: Stacy is in Texas right now on active duty.
- **110 residents at Veterans Home and everything is running fine.**

- **Van Driver's Program:** We had a budget issue about two months, normally we pay out \$50,000 dollars a month – this program pays \$75 per day per diem for driver's to transport veterans. These last three months, it's gone up to \$78,000 that we've paid out. We had to do a change in our budget to transfer money to cover this fund, because it was about a \$120,000 short. We completed this transfer to cover the program and we have enough money to pay for that, the Governor is aware of this and we will be asking for a supplemental to cover that for Fiscal Year 2012.

The reason for the big increase in last three months: More veterans are calling and requesting & requiring transportation, due to price of gasoline going up and the economy. There will be a point when we max out because we only have a certain number of vans and can only have a certain number of drivers and so this should max out at some point.

- **Veterans Inc. Proposal:** Director Gwinn addresses:
This was passed on by the Governor to the Secretary of DMAPs and his recommendation to the Governor was for the Council to review his plan, his plan was a billion dollar plan to create his own Dept. of Veteran's Assistance becoming Ultima Veterans.
Motion made, seconded, voted on and passed that Council rejects the proposal.
- **Chester Fleming: Letter of resignation** was submitted in February, due to failing health issues. Effective with the appointment of my replacement, Letter was read by Mr. Fleming. The name I submit as consideration for my replacement is Mr. James DeCarlo, Korean War Veteran. – Mr. DeCarlo was recognized by Council and attendees.

Chairman Epling: Chester, on behalf of the Council, we want to thank you for your four years of the Veterans Council and I'm sure every member of the Council wish you well in your endeavors and thank you for your service.

Chairman Epling asks if there are any further names to place into nomination to submit to Governor as replacement. No further names were submitted.

Chairman: This name- James DeCarlo, will be submitted to Governor for consideration as replacement.

- **Patrick Farrell introduced Kevin Brady, Executive Director of Greater Huntington Parks & Recreation District, who wants to discuss a proposal about a 9/11 Memorial that will be taking place in Huntington in September.**
- **Meg Cianfrocca from Senator Rockefeller's Office: VA budget is not on the table and is not an issue at the moment.**
- **Michael Dawson asked if there's any progress going on with the Nursing Home in Beckley.** Meg (Rockefeller's Office) responds: Improvement in last year's budget in the Omnibus. When the Omnibus bill was not voted on, anything in that bill dies, and as a result of it not being passed in the Omnibus bill, Senator Rockefeller wrote a letter to Secretary Shinseki and asked that this be included in the budget. We have not got a result back from that. We are still working on it.

- **Dennis Rayburn expresses to the Council and all the individuals present that he believes the bill that passed this past spring by the Legislature creating the Department is one of the best things that has happened to the State of West Virginia**

Woody Williams: Proposal that the Council appoints a representative from the Council as their Legislative Officer, so that if I want to call and discuss something, I can call that person and that person can discuss with the Council.

Suggestion by Council Member: We should take Mr. Williams recommendation and talk about it and at the next Council meeting, we'll come back to him with a response of how we can most effectively hear the Veteran constituents in the State to get the information to the Council and I think it's a good proposal that we need to discuss more of the details of how it would work.

Director Gwinn: This year when the legislation came in session, we tracked all of these bills and emailed these out to the Council Members. We will continue doing this every year. Angela sends out the email to everyone who she can get the email address for.

Randall Bare, Council Member: I want to talk about Veteran's issues in the State. Our job is to recommend to the Governor our thought on legislation. We need to know the impact the legislation will have in the community.

Meg Cianfrocca of Senator Rockefeller's Office: Ordinary claims are taking a backseat to Nehmer claims, so if you have a Veteran in a situation that they are in a financial hardship and they have a claim pending, and if there's ever a situation similar to what's been brought up today, please direct to me or a service officer in the VA.

Chairman Epling: Thanks to everyone for coming and we hope that in some way we helped and did some good for the Veterans in West Virginia, that's our goal and we will continue to do that.

Meeting Adjourned.

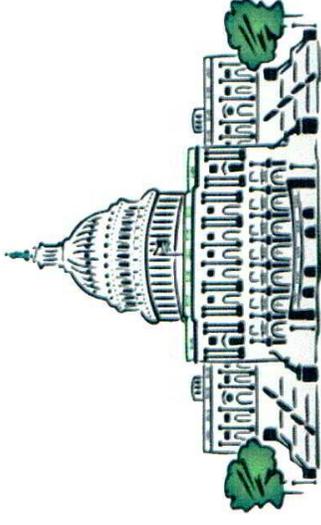
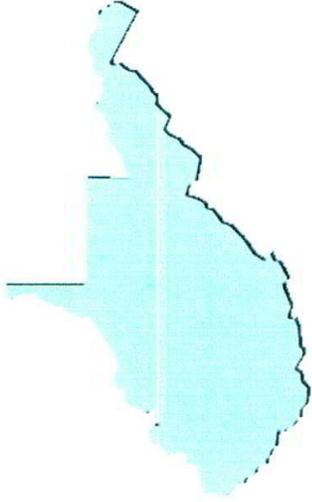
DEPARTMENT SERVICES

The following represents a statistical summary of the services performed by the offices of the Department of Veterans Assistance for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2011.

1.	Consultations	65,860
2.	Telephone Calls (Incoming only)	82,087
3.	Correspondence (Outgoing only)	221,497
4.	Applications-Compensation-Pension	4,695
5.	Reopened Claims	2,503
6.	Veterans Cases Reviewed	10,728
7.	Hospital Referrals	13,745
8.	Appearances in Behalf of Veterans	656
9.	Total Awards	10,730
10.	Annual income Obtained for Veterans and Dependents from Compensation and Pension Awards	\$ 104,763,181.00
11.	Widows Death Pension, DIC, VR&E, Burial Allowance, EVR's, Confirmed & Continued Awards	\$ 57,066,759.00
12.	Life Insurance Benefits Recovered	\$ 499,990.00
13.	Grand Total of All Monetary Benefits Recovered for Fiscal Year 2011	\$ 161,474,566.00



West Virginia Department of Veterans Assistance



GENERAL REVENUE APPROPRIATIONS

\$ = \$11,105,092.00

FEDERAL MONETARY RECOVERY



= \$161,474,566.00

**FOR EVERY STATE \$1.00 EXPENDED,
THE DEPARTMENT RECOVERED \$14.54 IN FEDERAL FUNDS.**

WEST VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS ASSISTANCE
 FINANCIAL STATEMENT – FISCAL YEAR 2011
 PERIOD 7/1/10 THROUGH 6/30/11

LEGISLATIVE APPROPRIATION FOR 2010-11 FISCAL YEAR - \$ 11,105,092.00

<u>ACCOUNT</u>	<u>AMOUNT APPROPRIATED</u>	<u>AMOUNT EXPENDED</u>	<u>UNEXPENDED BALANCE</u>	<u>UTILIZATION PERCENTAGE</u>
Personal Services (Benefits)	\$ 1,534,659.00	\$ 1,518,708.00	\$ 15,952.00	99%
Unclassified	<u>\$ 1,862,245.00</u>	<u>\$ 1,636,149.00</u>	<u>\$ 226,096.00</u>	<u>88%</u>
TOTAL	\$ 3,396,904.00	\$ 3,154,857.00	\$ 242,047.00	93%

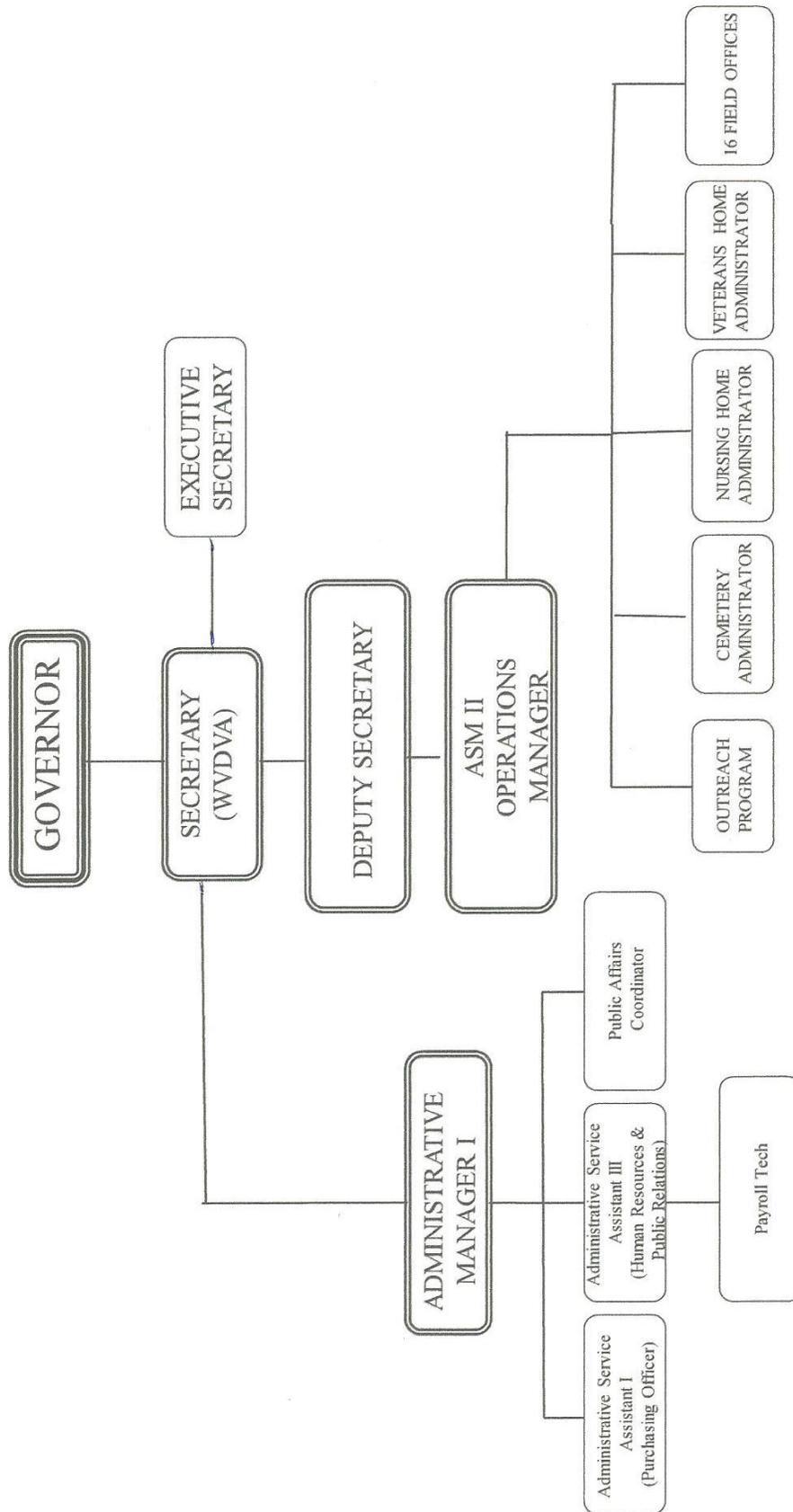
WEST VIRGINIA VETERANS HOME AT BARBOURSVILLE

<u>ACCOUNT</u>	<u>AMOUNT APPROPRIATED</u>	<u>AMOUNT EXPENDED</u>	<u>UNEXPENDED BALANCE</u>	<u>UTILIZATION PERCENTAGE</u>
Personal Services (Benefits)	\$ 969,998.00	\$ 938,758.00	\$ 31,240.00	97%
Unclassified	<u>\$ 135,258.00</u>	<u>\$ 135,258.00</u>	<u>-0-</u>	<u>100%</u>
TOTAL	\$ 1,105,256.00	\$ 1,074,016.00	\$ 31,240.00	97%

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	\$ 6,602,932.00	\$ 6,549,068.00	\$ 53,866.00	99%

WEST VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS ASSISTANCE ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



Division elevated to Department effective July 1, 2011

08/10/11

**West Virginia Department of Veterans Assistance
Office of the Secretary
Administrative Office**

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Cabinet Secretary, Keith Gwinn
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(Back Row-Right)

Operations Manager, Mike Lyons
(Back Row-Left)

Executive Secretary, Angela Meadows
(Front-Left)

Heather Miles, Public Relations Coordinator
(Front-2nd)

Connie Hodapp, Fiscal Officer
(Front-3rd)

Amber Heath, Administrative Assistant I
(Front-4th)

Sandy Duff, Administrative Assistant III
(Front-Right)

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CHARLES BELLOMY

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TODD HANSON (Back-Right)
TOM LYONS (Back-Left)

MITZI OCHELTREE, VSO ASSISTANT (F-R)
JESSICA BROOKS, VSO ASSISTANT (F-L)



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AMBER BRUNETTI, OUTREACH SOCIAL WORKER



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KESHA NEALEN, VSOA (Right)

KASEY VOLOSKI, VETERANS (Left)



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CLAIMS MANAGER
MICHAEL CRAIG, VSO II

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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 now has 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.

Veteran's Nursing Facility Staff



**Crystal Clark,
Dietary Supervisor**



**Dr. Kevin Crickard,
Administrator**



**Jerry Nelson, Building &
Grounds Manager**



**Jodie Everson,
Activities Supervisor**



**Kathy Hess,
Administrative Service
Manager**



**Mary Jo Arbogast
Alzheimer's Director**



**Pam Hedrick,
Social Services Supervisor**



**Sherri Reed
Business Office Manager**



**Tammy Nutter
Staff Development**



**Teena Freeman,
Medical Records Supervisor**



Amber Rock, Pharmacist



**Tom McVay,
Director of Nursing**



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 Department of Veterans Assistance 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
Veterans Cemetery**



Don Kinnard State

VETERANS BENEFITS

The Department of Veterans Assistance 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-FOURTH ANNUAL SERVICE OFFICERS TRAINING CONFERENCE

For the 64th year, the West Virginia Dept. of Veterans Assistance was privileged to host the annual West Virginia Service Officers Training Conference. This annual event is held in coordination with the US Department of Veterans Affairs and all active Veterans organizations in West Virginia.

Starting this 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.

Attendees at this year's conference represented 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 Dept. of Veterans Assistance. Representatives from the State Job Services and the VA Vet Centers were also present and conducted training seminars.

Mr. Mike Lyons, Operations Manager of the West Virginia Dept. of Veterans Assistance, 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.



West Virginia Department of Veterans Assistance
Keith Gwinn, Cabinet Secretary
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www.veterans.wv.gov

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2011-2012 ELECTED OFFICERS

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West Virginia State Council
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Ms. Mary Byrd
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WV State Chapter 24
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EDUCATION OF WAR ORPHANS

A total of 5 students received benefits under the Education of War Orphans Program administered by the Department of Veteran's Assistance during the Fiscal Year ending June 30, 2011.

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.

During the past 12 month period, all 5 students 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 originally enrolled in the program.

The following represents the disbursements during fiscal year 2010-2011 from the Education of War Orphans Fund:

A total of Five (5) students: Four (4) Renewing and One (1) New Applicant for a total disbursement for FY 2011 in amount of \$11,000

All five (5) students attending college under the *Federal War Orphans Education Program* were approved for waiver of tuition and registration fees.

THE AMERICAN LEGION DEPARTMENT OF WEST VIRGINIA INC.

P.O. BOX 3191
CHARLESTON, WV 25332

MILES S. EPLING
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December 1, 2011

Keith Gwinn, Cabinet Secretary
WV Department of Veterans Assistance
1321 Plaza East Suite 109
Charleston, WV 25301

Dear Cabinet Secretary 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.

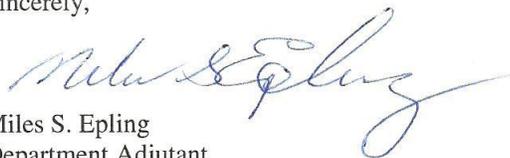
I appreciate our close working relationship, and it gives me great satisfaction to know that we are striving for the same goal – to help each veteran reap the benefits to which he or she is entitled.

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

www.vfw.org | info@vfw.org

January 6, 2012

Keith Gwinn, Secretary
West Virginia Department of Veterans Assistance
1321 Plaza East –Suite 101
Charleston, WV 25301-1400

Dear Secretary Gwinn:

I would like to commend the West Virginia Department of Veterans Assistance employees who are helping veterans file claims for compensation, pension, education, and other benefits at the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Again the percent of veterans being represented by your Department has consistently increased. This confirms your position of being among the best in the country.

As we forecasted in the past, things are getting tougher for those of us representing veterans. The workload continues to increase, the numbers of issues per claim are rising, and the numbers of appeals continue to climb. Through your leadership, your staff has once again doubled their efforts and consistently stays on top of the workload. There is not a better crew in the business than the employees of the West Virginia Department of Veterans Assistance.

Thank you for your dedicated work in representing West Virginia's veterans and I am proud to be associated with your organization.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM L. BRADSHAW
Director, National Veterans Service