



CONNECTICUT

Department of Veterans' Affairs E-Newsletter

January 6, 2010

Volume 1, Number 3



Commissioner Schwartz (r) showed Governor Rell through the services and programs for needy veterans at Stand Down 2009 – our biggest ever with over 1200 veterans served!

"Connecticut continued its proud tradition of hosting Stand Down. Since 1992, our state has stepped up to provide one-stop access to a multitude of federal, state and community services to help veterans in need." Commissioner Linda Schwartz



Welcome to our new Electronic Newsletter!

"I am delighted to share this new communication with you! As we work to serve the 277,000 veterans of Connecticut, efficiently and effectively, I hope you will use this opportunity to share your thoughts on how we are doing, and how we can better serve those who have served." - Dr. Linda S. Schwartz, Commissioner

Commissioner's Comments –

The Caring Season

During the long, cold nights of winter, most of the world takes time out to bring light and warmth to all with the celebration of a Holiday Season. Perhaps it is the inspiration of the birth of a child in a manger or the miracle of a small container of oil that burned long enough to purify a temple that had been desecrated by the devastation of war that calls our attention to family and friends and the needs of others. Against the dark of winter the light of a candle plays prominently in the observances of three main holidays which bring families of differing religions and cultures together. The warmth, inspiration and sharing of Christmas, Hanukkah and Kwanzaa remind us that even when the elements are bleak and uninviting, people make the season bright and warm.

The Joy of this Season is made even greater by the sharing and generosity of people helping people. Indeed as I look back over the past year, I see how much we have received from veterans and the friends of veterans. In Ceremonies through out our State at Memorials and Cemeteries the bright green and red of Wreaths Across America peppered the landscape as we paused in the midst of the celebrations to take a moment to remember our honored dead who gave much so that we may live in freedom. The generosity of many members of the veteran community with gifts to our veterans at Rocky Hill send an important message of the special bond veterans share and that they are not forgotten. During this special time and every day we are able to address our mission of "Serving those Who Served" with the compassion, professionalism and dedication that comes with the great honor and responsibility that comes from serving Connecticut's 277,650 veterans.

Best Wishes for the Holiday Season and in the Coming Year.



Connecticut Veterans Hall of Fame Class of 2009

Governor Rell inducted 11 distinguished veterans in the Connecticut Veterans Hall of Fame on November 17, 2009.

[Click here to see the Bios of the Class of 2009](#)

[Click here to see the Bios of All the Inductees in the Connecticut Veterans Hall of Fame](#)

Nominations for the Connecticut Veterans Hall of Fame Class of 2010 MUST be submitted by 4 pm June 30, 2010.

[Click here for the Nomination Packet](#)



Gov Rell and 2009 Inductee Daniel Vece, Jr.

“These individuals not only answered the call of their nation, they have answered the call of their communities. It is what they have done beyond their military service that truly sets them apart as individuals worthy of this special honor. The example they have set, the courage they have shown and the public service they have given is most worthy of the respect and admiration of all Connecticut citizens.”

-- Governor M. Jodi Rell

(Back Row L to R) Gen. Scorzato, CTANG; James Vlasto for Homer Wise (posthumous); Daniel Vece, Jr; Commissioner Linda Schwartz; Alphonse Sabetta; Governor M. Jodi Rell; Theodore Plamondon, Jr.; Gen. Daniel McHale; Rev. William D. McGee (Front Row L to R) Robert King for Brig Gen John King (posthumous); Dr. Harvey Grinsell, Jr; Robert Genovese; John Dougherty; Bertha Belden for Richard Belden (posthumous).

Governor M. Jodi Rell created the Connecticut Veterans Hall of Fame by Executive Order in 2005 to recognize the post-military achievements of outstanding veterans and to spotlight the substantial contributions of veterans to communities across the state. Governor Rell believed this was a critical time in state history to establish this honor and institution as more than 12,000 Connecticut citizens have performed military service in support of the Global War on Terrorism since September 11, 2001.

The Connecticut Veterans Hall of Fame was established to increase the awareness of the lifetime contributions of veterans after completion of honorable military service. The Connecticut Veterans Hall of Fame is not a military hall of fame. Those selected for the honor of induction are veterans who honorably served their country through military service and who continue to serve and inspire their fellow man with their deeds and accomplishments throughout their lifetime.

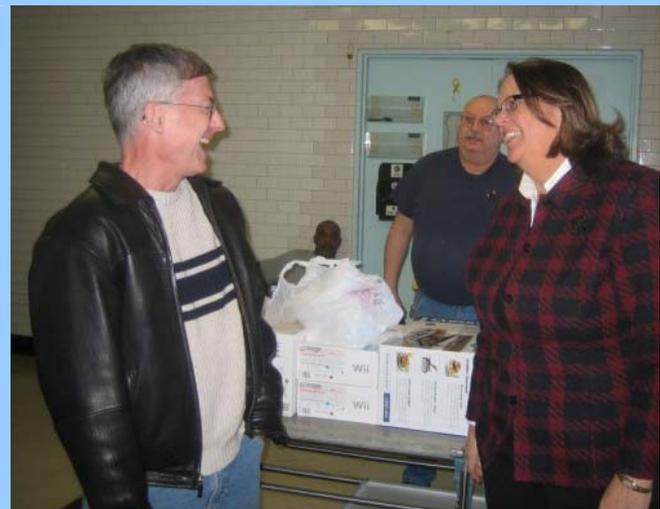
Each year the committee selects at least 10 inductees from applications received from across the state and nation. These veterans have been leaders in a variety of areas, such as arts, education, public service, volunteer activities, and community and business leadership to name a few. Most importantly, they all have made significant impacts on the lives of others and their communities.

To be eligible for the Connecticut Veterans Hall of Fame the nominee must have served their country honorably in a branch of military service and continued to serve their communities, state and nation after discharge. Because so many of America’s veterans continue to give to their communities, state and nation after honorable military service, the Connecticut Veterans Hall of Fame seeks to recognize them for their countless contributions to society.

The Connecticut Veterans Hall of Fame is administered and sponsored by the Connecticut Department of Veterans’ Affairs and the Connecticut Military Department on behalf of the Office of the Governor.

The first class of the Connecticut Veterans Hall of Fame was inducted in November 2005 and includes the 41st President of the United States, George Herbert Walker Bush. To date, fifty-one distinguished veterans of Connecticut are honored in the Connecticut Veterans Hall of Fame.

[Click here to view more Stand Down 2009 photos](#)



Stand Down 2009 – Over 1200 needy veterans served by 64 federal, state and community agencies

We did it again! Since 1992, the Connecticut Department of Veterans' Affairs has been sponsoring an annual program to assist homeless and needy veterans of our state. Each year, the number of veterans who hear about this extraordinary event increases. This year's Stand Down saw attendance soar to a record 1200 veterans in need! Buses and vans from transit authorities throughout the state provided free transportation for veterans to Rocky Hill for the day on Friday September 18th. Over 200 vendors from 64 federal, state and community agencies provided medial, legal, social and other assistance. 150 volunteers offered critical staff support in serving over 2000 meals, parking 1000 cars, acting as guides, and passing out 1000 comfort kits, hats and new clothing items. Over 200 veterans participated in the judicial services, 188 veterans had their eyes tested by Connecticut Lions eye care volunteers, and over 250 veterans received medical and behavioral health services. The citizens of Connecticut offered unprecedented support to Stand Down 2009 through financial and in kind donations of items for the Comfort Kits.

For the first time ever, Governor M. Jodi Rell was able to declare during her tour of Stand Down 09 that, *"This wonderful event was completely supported by private funds. No state dollars were used for Stand Down 2009."* What an extraordinary accomplishment in these difficult economic times. Thank you, Stand Down donors!



NEWS FROM THE VETERANS HOME

**Wii Bowling comes to
Levitow Veterans Health Care Center
Many Groups contribute Wii Games**

Gary Jenkins delivered several Wii gaming consoles and other donations from the Lyme VFW to Cathy Cook, Director of Community Services. Thank You!

THANK YOU Connecticut! Your generosity has made our Secret Santa Program successful for another year with many donations to our Christmas Fund. Thank you to everyone and have a wonderful holiday season!



Our thanks go out to sailors from the Sub School in Groton who helped load some of the new furniture donated to the Veterans Home from Navy surplus!

The US Navy gets a great big THANK YOU! from the veterans in the domicile at Rocky Hill. Due to new construction at the Groton Sub Base, the Veterans Home has received hundreds of items of furniture for the veterans bedrooms and day rooms. Almost new oak armoires, beds, desks, dressers, and tables and chairs are making huge improvement in the quality of life for the 370 veterans who live in our residential program. Thank you, US Navy!



QUILTS! QUILTS! QUILTS!



What a wonderful surprise when the “Pieceful Quilters” of Thompson, CT came to call with 48 (!) hand made quilts for the veterans in the Levitow Veterans Health Care Center. They are beautiful and now are well loved by our patients. They said they made them all in a few weeks! Thanks!

ROCKVILLE ELKS DONATE FLAT SCREEN TV



Thank you! to the Exalted Ruler Harry Olsen and Master Sgt Brian Tripp of the Rockville Elks Lodge #1359 who donated a new 32 " flat screen television to replace a burned out TV in our Winner's Circle sports café.

Veterans at Rocky Hill Share the Joy of the Season with Families from Hartford Shelters

Just as these photos show from last year, the veterans and staff of Rocky Hill have shared the joy of the holiday season with others in need. On December 16th, we celebrated the lighting of the trees and shared a holiday dinner and treats with thirty-five children and their mothers from two Hartford area homeless shelters. Staff donated gifts for Santa to distribute, the First Governor's Foot Guard Band played a holiday concert, and Commissioner Schwartz and our chaplains told holiday stories to the children. It was a wonderful time for everyone, and a great opportunity to share the peace and fellowship of the holiday season.

Check out our newly redesigned website!
www.ct.gov/ctva with easier access to
important news and information.

ATTENTION Veterans Organizations:
You are invited to send in your events and news items to be posted
on the website. Send to Catherine.Cook@po.state.ct.us



The screenshot shows the homepage of the Connecticut Department of Veterans Affairs website. It features a search bar at the top right, a navigation menu on the left with links like 'Home', 'About Us', 'Reports & Publications', and 'Contact Us'. The main content area includes a featured article about the State Veterans Home in Rocky Hill, a 'News and Announcements' section with links to federal VA news, state VA news, and various programs, and a 'Frequently Asked Questions' section with links to get copies of DD214s, apply for medals, and more. There are also links for 'CT DVA E-Newsletter' and 'US Dept of Veterans Affairs'.

VETERANS TELEPHONE DIRECTORY

Connecticut Department of Veterans' Affairs 1-800-550-0000
CT Veterans Benefits Information 1-866-928-8387
CT Veterans Cemetery 860-721-5838
Soldiers' Sailors' & Marines Fund (emergency) 860-296-0719
MILITARY SUPPORT PROGRAM (toll free, confidential)
1- 866-251-2913
CT VETS INFOLINE (toll-free) 1-866-9CT-VETS

Web links

CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS:
www.ct.gov/ctva

US Department of Veterans' Affairs: www.va.gov

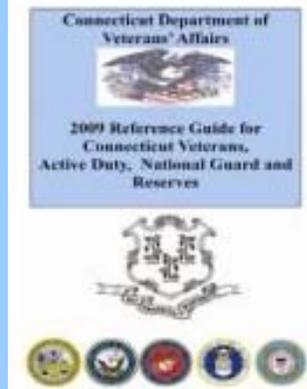
State of Connecticut Official Website: www.ct.gov

**Go to www.ct.gov/ctva for
veterans news and information**

Need assistance or help?

***Veterans Help Line (toll free)
1-866-9CT-VETS***

***Military Support Program
Confidential 1-866-251-2913***



***2009 VETERANS RESOURCE
GUIDE IS NOW AVAILABLE***

***Please click here to connect to
this important guide of federal
and state veterans' information
and programs.***

**CT Department of
Veterans' Affairs and
Veterans Home**

**287 West Street
Rocky Hill, CT 06067**

[Click here for directions](#)

Veterans Help Line

1-866-9CT-VETS

We're on the Web!

<http://www.ct.gov/ctva/>