



*Premiere Issue*

Volume 1, Number 1

May – July, 2010

NEWS

VIEWS

PROGRAMS

UPDATES

LAWS

CONGRESS

THE WAR



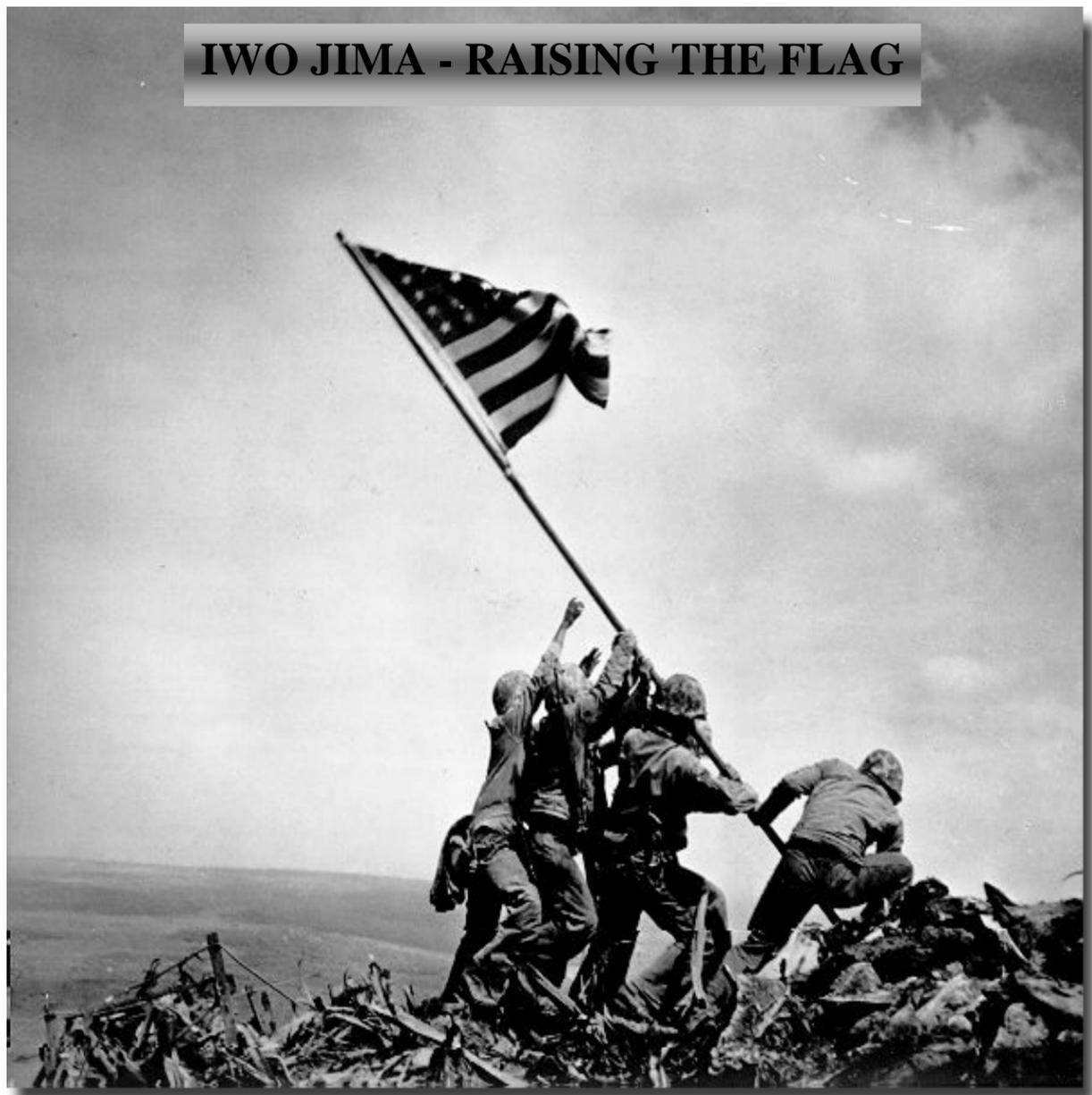
**NATIONAL  
GUARD**



# THE RHODE ISLAND VETERANS'

## SENTINEL

### IWO JIMA - RAISING THE FLAG



There are six Flag Raisers in the photo. Four in the front line and two in back. The front four are (left to right) Ira Hayes, Franklin Sousley, John Bradley and Harlon Block. The back two are Michael Strank (behind Sousley) and Rene Gagnon (behind Bradley). Strank, Block and Sousley would die shortly afterwards. Bradley, Hayes and Gagnon became national heroes within weeks.

#### Iwo Jima Memorial Facts

Each figure is 32 feet high.

The flagpole is 60 feet in length.

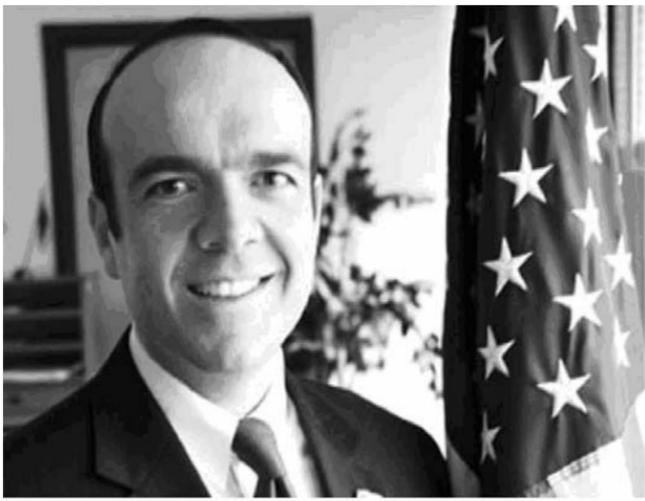
It stands 78 feet high.

It's the world's tallest bronze statue.

A cloth flag flies from the pole.

The cost of the statue was \$850,000 (1954 Dollars.)

No public funds were used.



## WELCOME TO THE SENTINEL

There is, unquestionably, no group within the citizenry of the United States of America that deserves greater praise, thanks and advocacy than the men and women who served this great nation bravely and selflessly. Each successive generation of young Americans must become conscious of the sacrifices made by the predecessors in defense of America and the rights and liberties of the American people. These are not things that are to be taken for granted. Toward this end, and to serve you, the Veterans of our Armed Forces, I offer my thanks and allegiance to this profound reality. The first shot heard at Lexington and Concord in 1776 must continue to ring in the hearts of each and every American Citizen. You, the Veteran, honor us with your witness to this continuing defense of America and the heroic deeds that distinguish us as a great and honorable nation. To you, we dedicate this

new publication "The Veterans' Sentinel". We shall endeavor to communicate news, views, history, commentaries and aspects of issues that affect Veterans everywhere. As the Secretary of Health and Human Services for the State of Rhode Island, I am proud to serve you.

**Gary D. Alexander, Secretary**  
**Executive Office of Health & Human Services**

### SOME RHODE ISLAND VETERANS MEMORIAL CEMETERY PROGRAM MEMORIES



*Secretary Alexander greets members of the Permanent Advisory Council House Veterans' Affairs, John C. Giarrusso, President, Donald M. Brown, Past President and John P. Gallo, Secretary.*

The Rhode Island Veterans Memorial Cemetery is located on a spectacular 350-acre site at 301 South County Trail in Exeter Rhode Island. The cemetery was established in May of 1974 on an original 22 acres of land adjacent to the former Joseph H. Ladd School. Overall supervision of the cemetery is vested in the Executive Office of Health & Human Services, Division of Veterans Affairs.



**The Honorable Donald L. Carcieri, Governor of Rhode Island greeting our Veterans.**



New Administration Building at the Veterans Cemetery in Exeter

Recently the cemetery underwent a 5.7 million dollar improvement and renovation project. The new facilities include a new Administration and Honor Guard building, a public information center and restroom access kiosk, one thousand ninety new cremation niches, and widening of the main entrance road. These additions and improvements are designed to greatly enhance our ability to serve the needs of the relatives and visitors who frequent the cemetery. The project was completed in November, 2008.

### MEMORIAL DAY CEREMONIES

The cemetery is open from dawn until dusk each day and the Administration office is open from 8am till 4pm Monday through Friday. The business office phone number is (401) 268-3088. Please call if you have questions or concerns or if you would like pre-qualification information sent to you.

The 2010 Memorial Day Ceremony will be held under a tent on the grounds of the Veterans Memorial Cemetery in Exeter at 1:00 P.M. on May 31, 2010.

The ceremony is customarily attended by nearly five hundred people including the Governor, federal and state dignitaries, and many veterans groups and organizations. The exercise is hosted by the Executive Office of Health & Human Services, Division of Veterans' Affairs.

The Rhode Island National Guard will provide the Color Guard and the 88<sup>th</sup> Army Grand and the R.I. Air National Guard Chorale will provide the patriotic music.

As is the tradition, a wreath will be laid at the base of the WWII memorial led by Governor Carcieri.

## PETS ‘PERK UP’ VETS

**BRISTOL, RI:** The Rhode Island Division of Veterans' Affairs has implemented a Pet Therapy initiative as the beginning of a host of new programs to enhance the quality of life at the Rhode Island Veterans Home. Secretary Alexander said, "the therapeutic use of pets as companions has gained increasing attention in recent years for a wide variety of patients – the elderly, children, people with AIDS or cancer and the mentally ill. Pets bring out our nurturing instinct and give us love and comfort. They seem to remedy feelings of insecurity and project unconditional love, permitting us to simply be ourselves."

The Executive Office of Health & Human Services is committed to developing comprehensive programs and initiatives for our Veterans that will not only enhance the quality of their lives but also make the Veterans Home genuinely like home. Research has shown that pet therapy can reduce stress, lower blood pressure, boost moods, require less

medical attention and prolong life.

Recently, a nine-pound 17-week-old Javanese named Madison entered into the Rhode Island Veterans' Home Blue Room and lifted spirits immediately. She evoked great happiness from veterans as she rubbed up against them and danced around. Madison has been visiting the veterans at the home for over a month and she is in the middle of her own education at the Community College of Rhode Island's pet therapy certification course that will certify her as a pet assistant therapy dog. Madison is actually owned by Gail Reynolds, a social worker at the Rhode Island Veterans' Home.

For more information about the Rhode Island Veterans Home Pet Therapy Program please contact The Rhode Island Division of Veterans Affairs. Veterans Affairs is a Division of the Rhode Island Department of Human Services.

## PROFILE IN COURAGE JOHN O'HARA, GUN CAPTAIN 2/C USS ALABAMA

By Stephen Jennings

On November 12, 1942, the attack transport Hugh L. Scott was anchored sixteen miles north of Casablanca, Morocco as she unloaded supplies for the North African allied invasion. The previous day, a transport, a tanker and a destroyer had been torpedoed in the same harbor.

About 5:40 pm., as the men were getting ready to go to chow, a torpedo exploded in the compartment directly below the quarters of John O'Hara and his four crewmates instantly killing all but John. As the Scott filled with water, listed and began to sink, and as her lights blinked off, John began a

desperate 90-minute long climb, searching in complete darkness for a way upward through the torn ship. Trying to stay ahead of the rising water and diesel oil - at one point he swam for an hour, in the darkness, in a slowly filling compartment, searching for an escape hole only finding an escape with inches of air left. John still remembers the sound of the cries and prayers of those trapped by flooding in an escape hatch below who didn't make it out alive.

The Navy's custom for survivors of sunken ships was to offer safe duty. Yet John was advised that if he didn't get to open sea soon, he may be afraid of it the rest of his life. So he turned down an offer to ferry newly built landing craft on the Mississippi for the duration of the war in favor of signing on as an anti-aircraft gun captain on the USS Alabama, a modern Dakota class battleship just built and being readied for wartime duty.

The men wore summer Navy white as the ship headed into the Atlantic, east from Newport News.



John O'Hara pictured with Secretary Alexander

Yet, three days out, the uniforms were switched to cold weather woolens.

Hopefully the spies in Virginia would be fooled by the Navy whites into reporting the battlegroup was likely headed south. The Alabama steamed directly to Iceland where it was placed under British command and assigned to shadow supply convoys for St. Petersburg, ferrying support for the Russians to use in their fight against the Nazi invasion. Off the coast of occupied Norway, the ships underwent a thirteen-hour air attack from the best the German air force had to throw at them. The US War Department attempted to keep secret to the end of the war that American ships

were under British command in the North Sea. When the news leaked out, the Alabama was ordered to the South Pacific and subsequently she was in nine major combat engagements with elements of the Japanese fleet in the waters of the Philippines and elsewhere. Her modern radar, at one point, picked up a great Japanese air attack approaching the American fleet thirty minutes out, providing a vital window for American fighters to get airborne and destroy the attack. "Although the movies like to show the crew cheering, the men were usually deadly silent when the ship was under attack," John remembers, "everyone was working as hard as they could, each doing their job as well as they could, for that was our best chance to survive and return to our loved ones." Dale O'Hara, one of John's six sons, has John's 13 combat citation medals and a Purple Heart under glass on his den wall. Now eighty-eight and surviving cancer, John just mailed off a three-ring binder to his Massachusetts great-grandson recounting his extraordinary adventures.

## SECRETARY OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES GARY D. ALEXANDER'S REMARKS AT THE MEMORIAL DAY COMMEMORATION MAY, 2009



*We live in a time, when many doubts trouble the hearts of Americans everywhere. Our dedication today, to the memory of those who served our country valiantly in past wars, can no longer be considered a simple "commemoration".*

*Our Veterans of the past dedicated and sacrificed their lives for something that they believed to be sacred. It was a time when God did bless America and her sons. It was a time when every American was able to proudly share the sense of patriotism that characterized the American Revolution. There were no doubts. We all became patriots.*

*Today, as we meditate upon those generations of heroes who have gone before us...we must understand the word "patriot-ism" in the fullness of its' spirit. They stand invisibly here before us as witnesses to a time, a determination and a belief in their nation that has been unparalleled in our history. They are the Spirit of Freedom. They are the Spirit of Independence. They are the Spirit of Sacrifice. And...above all they are the glorious, undying and trumpeting spirit of...*

**AMERICA'S VICTORY OVER ADVERSITY.**

**AMERICAN HISTORY - EACH HUNDRED YEARS**

**1710**

- 3,000 German refugees from the Palatinate settle near Livingston Manor on the Hudson River in New York to produce naval stores. When the colony fails, the settlers go first to the Mohawk Valley (in New York) and finally to eastern Pennsylvania.
- Christopher Dock, a Mennonite and one of Pennsylvania's most famous educators, arrives from Germany and later opens a school in Montgomery County, PA. Dock's book, *Schul-Ordnung* (meaning school management), published in 1770, is the first book about teaching printed in colonial America. Typical of those in the middle colonies, schools in Pennsylvania are established not only by the Mennonites, but by the Quakers and other religious groups as well.

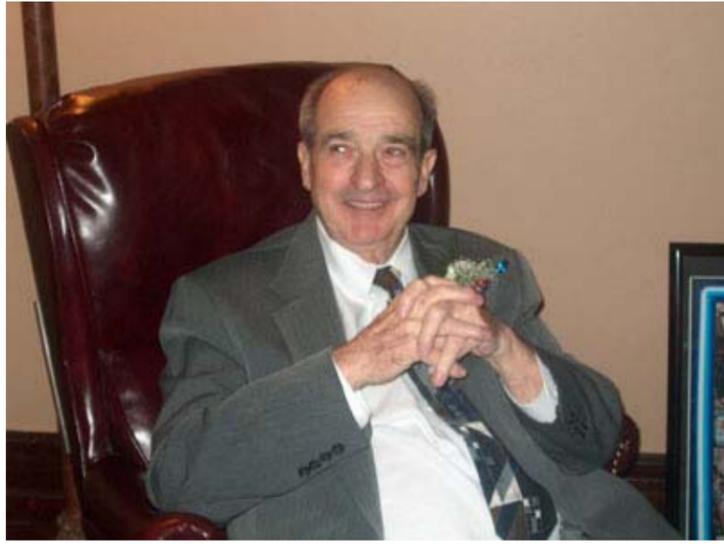
**1810**

- Third national census records 7,239,881 people
- John Jacob Astor founds the Pacific Fur Company. In 1811, this company establishes a trading post at Astoria at the mouth of the Oregon River. Astor loses this post during the War of 1812.

**1910**

- Mann Act adopted by Congress to stop the transportation of women across state lines for "immoral purposes" and to stem the importation of European women to work in American brothels. This law becomes known as the "white slave traffic act," and in the next few years, alarm about the "white slave trade" grows rapidly.
- In Osawatomie, Kansas, Theodore Roosevelt calls for "a square deal" in a speech that will become a rallying cry for the Progressive Movement.
- Mexican revolution against Dictator Porfirio Diaz.

**SOME PHOTOS OF VETERANS AT WORK**



Representative Kenneth Carter, Chairman, Committee on Veterans' Affairs.



Members of the Permanent Advisory Committee on Veterans Affairs from left, U.S. Navy WAVE Ginny Hanson, USMC Sergeant Donald M. Brown, Ernest Pitochelli, USAF Master Sergeant John C. Giarrusso, and USN Sergeant Michael Minutelli.



**NATHANAEL GREENE**

Nathanael Greene was born on July 27, 1742 in Potowomut, Rhode Island.

In April of 1775, the Assembly of Rhode Island met at Providence and established an Army of Observation. Two months later, Greene was given command as a brigadier general of state troops.

It was in Boston that Greene first met George Washington. Even during their initial meeting, Washington was greatly impressed. Within a year, he would consider Greene the best of his generals suited to succeed him in case of his death or capture. After the British evacuated Boston, Greene took command of the city.

Photo from painting by C.W. Peale



Taps being played at the Veterans' Memorial at Smithfield, RI

**Veterans Administration conducts Triennial On-site Review of the RI Veterans Memorial Cemetery**

On January 14 of this year the Veterans Administration conducted a Triennial On-site Review of the Rhode Island Veterans Memorial Cemetery. Mr. Paul McFarland, Director of the Massachusetts National Cemetery in Bourne MA, conducted the review.

This On-site inspection is held to determine how well the state cemetery does in meeting the standards set forth by the Federal VA. All aspects of the cemetery and grounds are reviewed including buildings, roadways, headstone alignment, and general lawn and grounds appearance. The scope and quality of monuments, of engravings, as well as the participation of the cemetery in National and local events are also reviewed.

David Wm. Kirchner, Asst. Administrator at the RI Division of Veterans' Affairs announced that the ensuing review by the VA was highly complimentary of our cemetery. In addition, our cemetery is being mentioned for "National Shrine" Status because of its beauty. The buildings and grounds reflect the dedication of the State of Rhode Island and the staff of the cemetery in honoring our deceased Veterans and their families in a beautiful and dignified setting.



AP photo / Charles Krupa

U.S. Navy Chief Petty Officer Brian Zimmerman, of Rhode Island, looks in at home before throwing out the ceremonial first pitch as service men and women injured in war were honored prior to Red Sox-Angels game from September 2009. Zimmerman, a physician's assistant who was based with troops hit with heavy fire in Fallujah, Iraq, during 2004, suffers from post-traumatic stress.

**EOHHS' Department of Mental Health, Retardation and Hospitals  
Receives Federal Trauma Grant – Priority to Veterans**

Recently, the EOHHS' Department of Mental Health Retardation and Hospitals [MHRH], in collaboration with the Kent Center, received a \$1.2 million federal grant from the Center for Mental Health Services. The project, entitled "Rhode Island's Jail Diversion and Trauma Recovery Program – Priority to Veterans", will address the needs of individuals with mental illness such as Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and trauma related disorders involved in the justice system. In recognition of the dramatically higher prevalence of trauma related disorders among veterans, this program will prioritize eligibility for veterans.

The EOHHS Departments have been searching for opportunities to assist Veterans, especially those with PTSD. EOHHS Secretary Gary D. Alexander commented, "that U.S. combat veterans face enormous challenges in readjusting to civilian life after confronting the gruesome realities of war. It is estimated that between 15-30% of veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan will suffer from significant mental health problems including PTSD.

We must do everything we can to assist all of our Veterans especially those who have been traumatized." RI will be using the Trauma, Addiction, Mental Health, and Recovery (TAMAR) promising practice that is promoted by the National Center on Trauma Informed Care. Services will be centered at the Kent Center in Warwick, RI. Craig Stenning, MHRH Director, stated that the Kent Center has a track record of engaging in trauma-informed training and promoting trauma-informed care internally and within other institutions like RI's women's prison."

Stenning continued, "We are very pleased that the federal government recognized our past work to address the needs of veterans, returning soldiers and their families by selecting RI for this grant. These funds will allow us to expand our efforts to help veterans and others suffering PTSD and other trauma-related disorders.

For more information, please contact the MHRH at 401-462-2339.

**AMERICAN HISTORY**

**BATTLE OF BUNKER HILL**



After the battle of Lexington, an irregular army of New Englanders blockaded the English troops in Boston. A detachment sent to encamp on Bunker Hill threw up breastworks on Breed's Hill instead. Here the British attacked them with nearly double their force, and, though the Americans were farmers who had never fought, and had nothing but fowling -pieces to fight with, they twice repulsed the British regulars with great slaughter, and, when their ammunition was exhausted, fought with the butts and barrels of their guns until compelled to retreat. One third of the British force was killed or wounded, and the result of the battle was to give great confidence to the Americans, who have always regarded the battle of Bunker Hill, as it was called, more as a victory than a defeat.

**CIVIL WAR FIRSTS**

As the breeding ground for modern warfare, the Civil War has long been known for its "firsts." It has been credited with dozens like these:

A workable machine gun  
A steel ship  
A successful submarine  
A "snorkel" breathing device  
A wide-ranging corps of press correspondents in battle areas  
American conscription  
American bread lines  
American President assassinated  
Aerial reconnaissance  
Antiaircraft fire  
Army ambulance corps  
Blackouts and camouflage under aerial observation  
Cigarette tax  
Commissioned American Army chaplains  
Department of justice

Electrically exploded bombs and torpedoes  
Fixed ammunition  
Field trenches on a grand scale  
Flame throwers  
Hospital ships  
Ironclad navies  
Land-mine fields  
Legal voting for servicemen  
Long-range rifles for general use  
Medal of Honor  
Military telegraph  
Military railroads  
Naval torpedoes  
Negro U.S. Army Officer (Major M.R. Delany)  
Organized medical and nursing corps  
Photography of battle

Railroad artillery  
Repeating rifles  
Revolving gun turrets  
The bugle call, "Taps"  
The Income tax  
The wigwag signal code in battle  
The periscope, for trench warfare  
Telescopic sights for rifles  
Tobacco tax  
U.S. Navy Admiral  
U.S. Secret Service  
Withholding tax  
Wire entanglements  
Wide-scale use of anesthetics for wounded

*Source: "The Civil War, Strange and Fascinating Facts" by Burke Davis*

**Names For The Civil War**

The conflict known to most of us as the Civil War has a long and checkered nomenclature. To this day some patriotic Southerners wince at the term, Civil War. These partisans usually favor The War Between the States-and some organizations of descendants of Confederate warriors use this term under their by-laws, and none other. The tide seems to stem from the two-volume work by Alexander Stephens, the Confederate Vice-President, published after the war.

Most of the names listed are of Southern origin, since the defeated and their heirs grasped for some expression of unquenched ardor and defiance which would do justice to the Old South. These names have been seriously, not to say apoplectically, offered to the world.

In a more jocular vein the war has been known as The Late Unpleasantness, The Late Friction, The Late Ruction, The Schism, or The Uncivil War. But in the South in particular it is known simply as The War, as if the planet had not heard a shot fired in anger since '65.

War for Constitutional Liberty  
The War for Southern Independence  
The Second American Revolution  
The War for States' Rights  
Mr. Lincoln's War  
The Southern Rebellion  
The War for Southern Rights  
The War of the Southern Planters  
The War of the Rebellion  
The Second War for Independence  
The War to Suppress Yankee Arrogance  
The Brothers' War  
The War of Secession  
The Great Rebellion  
The War for Nationality

The War for Southern Nationality  
The War Against Slavery  
The Civil War Between the States  
The War of the Sixties  
The War Against Northern Aggression  
The Yankee Invasion  
The War for Separation  
The War for Abolition  
The War for the Union  
The Confederate War  
The War of the Southrons  
The War for Southern Freedom  
The War of the North and South  
The Lost Cause

*Source: "Historical Times Encyclopedia of the Civil War"  
Edited by Patricia L. Faust*

**CELEBRATE AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE**

**JULY 4, 2010**

**E Pluribus Unum – Out of Many, One**

What is Independence?

It is freedom from the influence, control, or determination of another or others. The roots of the American journey for liberty began even before the Declaration of Independence! Over 300 years ago, the House of Burgesses was founded for the colony of Virginia. Over the next few decades the colonies formed their own government and rebelled against the British rule. Thus began the long, hard struggle we call... THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION!

The roots of American Independence started with the early English settlers. The majority came for religious and political freedom and already did not like English laws. The settlers were rebellious in spirit and wanted to start a new life. Over the next few decades the colonies formed their own government.

In 1754, war broke out in Europe between England and France. It was called the French and Indian War by the colonies because the English were fighting the French and their Native American allies, the Huron. The two countries were fighting for control of North America. The French and Indian War was a long, brutal war and when it ended England was in debt. Because the war was fought over control of North America, King George III decided to tax the colonists. The colonies hated this taxation. Taxation was a major cause of the War for Independence in America.

The earliest cause of the War for Independence was the Domination of New England, in which King George tried to control colonial legislatures. King George was afraid that New England was becoming too powerful. Next, the Proclamation of 1763 set all lands west of the Appalachians off limits to colonists. The colonists hated this because they were already farming in the lands west of the Appalachians. In 1764, the Sugar Act taxed all sugar products from Great Britain. The colonists thought this was unfair. Then, in 1765, the Quartering and Stamp Acts were enacted. The Quartering Act forced colonists to house British soldiers. The Stamp Act put a tax on all of the legal documents including newspapers, pamphlets, passports, etc. The Stamp Act Congress was formed by the colonists to remove the Stamp Act. In 1766, the Declaratory Act stated that England could tax the colonies whenever it wanted. In 1767, the Townshend Acts imposed a tax on every day goods imported from Britain. The colonists were so mad they boycotted British goods.

The colonists protested in Boston demanding England repeal the Townshend Acts. Britain stationed soldiers in the colonies. This made the colonists even angrier than ever. Their protests became violent. They hurled rocks and snowballs at the soldiers. They attacked shopkeepers that tried to enforce the taxes and made them quit their jobs.

In March of 1770, the colonists demonstrated in Boston by attacking the

British main guard. British soldiers fired and five men lay dead in the snow. The colonists went wild. They called this the Boston Massacre. Their protests got more violent until finally, England repealed all Townshend Acts. After a while, the confusion and excitement died down.

After a few years of peace, England began taxing again. In 1773, Britain passed the Tea Act, which was a tax on tea. One night a ship full of tea was sitting unguarded in the Boston Harbor. A group of colonists, called The Sons of Liberty, dressed up as Mohawk Indians and dumped all of the tea into the harbor. We know this act of defiance to be The Boston Tea Party.



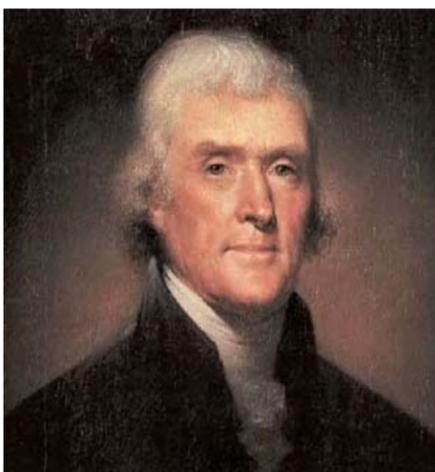
Boston Tea Party

The British were so mad they passed the Coercive Acts, dubbed by the colonists the "Intolerable Acts." England blockaded Boston Harbor and forbid town meetings from all colonies. The Intolerable Acts triggered the First Continental

Congress to ask Britain to repeal the Intolerable Acts but King George remained stubborn.

After the First Continental Congress failed, the Second Congress was formed. They met for a long time. Meanwhile the colonies had been forming an army of over 5,000 men. Some battles had already taken place. A Declaration of Independence was being written by Thomas Jefferson with great encouragement from his good friend, John Adams and was finally signed on July 4, 1776 resulting in the struggle for freedom and Independence.

Story adapted from library.thinkquest



Writer of the Declaration of Independence  
**Thomas Jefferson**



**Committee preparing the Declaration of Independence**

**Declaration of Independence - Chronology of Events – 1776**

Source: Library of Congress

<b>June 7</b>	Congress, meeting in Philadelphia, receives Richard Henry Lee's resolution urging Congress to declare independence
<b>June 11</b>	Thomas Jefferson, John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, Roger Sherman, and Robert R. Livingston appointed to a committee to draft a declaration of independence. American army retreats to Lake Champlain from Canada
<b>June 12-27</b>	Jefferson, at the request of the committee, drafts a declaration, of which only a fragment exists. Jefferson's clean, or "fair" copy, the "original Rough draught," is reviewed by the committee. Both documents are in the manuscript collections of the Library of Congress
<b>June 28</b>	A fair copy of the committee draft of the Declaration of Independence is read in Congress
<b>July 1-4</b>	Congress debates and revises the Declaration of Independence
<b>July 2</b>	Congress declares independence as the British fleet and army arrive at New York
<b>July 4</b>	Congress adopts the Declaration of Independence in the morning of a bright, sunny, but cool Philadelphia day. John Dunlap prints the Declaration of Independence. These prints are now called "Dunlap Broad-sides." Twenty-four copies are known to exist, two of which are in the Library of Congress. One of these was Washington's personal copy
<b>July 5</b>	John Hancock, president of the Continental Congress, dispatches the first of Dunlap's broadsides of the Declaration of Independence to the legislatures of New Jersey and Delaware
<b>July 6</b>	Pennsylvania Evening Post of July 6 prints the first newspaper rendition of the Declaration of Independence
<b>July 8</b>	The first public reading of the Declaration is in Philadelphia
<b>July 9</b>	Washington orders that the Declaration of Independence be read before the American army in New York
<b>July 19</b>	Congress orders the Declaration of Independence engrossed (officially inscribed) and signed by members
<b>August 2</b>	Delegates begin to sign engrossed copy of the Declaration of Independence. A large British reinforcement arrives at New York after being repelled at Charleston, S.C.
<b>January 18, 1777</b>	Congress, now sitting in Baltimore, Maryland, orders that signed copies of the Declaration of Independence printed by Mary Katherine Goddard of Baltimore be sent to the states

**How did we come to choose a Bald Eagle as our National Emblem?**

On July 4, 1776, Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, and John Adams were chosen to pick a national emblem. When Franklin suggested a wild turkey, Jefferson and Adams disagreed [according to legend Jefferson suggested the dove]. 1776 was a busy year for the United States; it declared its independence from Britain, was fighting the American Revolution, and was setting up a new government. Therefore, the job of choosing a national emblem was put off for a while. In 1782, William Barton suggested a bald eagle as a national emblem, and Congress approved it. John Adams was the driving force to have the Bald Eagle approved.

## IN CONGRESS, JULY 4, 1776

### The Unanimous Declaration of the Thirteen United States of America

When in the Course of human events it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. — That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, — That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shewn that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future security. — Such has been the patient sufferance of these Colonies; and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former Systems of Government. The history of the present King of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute Tyranny over these States. To prove this, let Facts be submitted to a candid world.

He has refused his Assent to Laws, the most wholesome and necessary for the public good.

He has forbidden his Governors to pass Laws of immediate and pressing importance, unless suspended in their operation till his Assent should be obtained; and when so suspended, he has utterly neglected to attend to them.

He has refused to pass other Laws for the accommodation of large districts of people, unless those people would relinquish the right of Representation in the Legislature, a right inestimable to them and formidable to tyrants only.

He has called together legislative bodies at places unusual, uncomfortable, and distant from the depository of their Public Records, for the sole purpose of fatiguing them into compliance with his measures.

He has dissolved Representative Houses repeatedly, for opposing with manly firmness his invasions on the rights of the people.

He has refused for a long time, after such dissolutions, to cause others to be elected, whereby the Legislative Powers, incapable of Annihilation, have returned to the People at large for their exercise; the State remaining in the mean time exposed to all the dangers of invasion from without, and convulsions within.

He has endeavored to prevent the population of these States; for that purpose obstructing the Laws for Naturalization of Foreigners; refusing to pass others to encourage their migrations hither, and raising the conditions of new Appropriations of Lands.

He has obstructed the Administration of Justice by refusing his Assent to Laws for establishing Judiciary Powers.

He has made Judges dependent on his Will alone for the tenure of their offices, and the amount and payment of their salaries.

He has erected a multitude of New Offices, and sent hither swarms of Officers to harass our people and eat out their substance.

He has kept among us, in times of peace, Standing Armies without the Consent of our legislatures.

He has affected to render the Military independent of and superior to the Civil Power.

He has combined with others to subject us to a jurisdiction foreign to our constitution, and unacknowledged by our laws; giving his Assent to their Acts of pretended Legislation:

For quartering large bodies of armed troops among us:

For protecting them, by a mock Trial from punishment for any Murders which they should commit on the Inhabitants of these States:

For cutting off our Trade with all parts of the world:

For imposing Taxes on us without our Consent:

For depriving us in many cases, of the benefit of Trial by Jury:

For transporting us beyond Seas to be tried for pretended offences:

For abolishing the free System of English Laws in a neighboring Province, establishing therein an Arbitrary government, and enlarging its Boundaries so as to render it at once an example and fit instrument for introducing the same absolute rule into these Colonies

For taking away our Charters, abolishing our most valuable Laws and altering fundamentally the Forms of our Governments:

For suspending our own Legislatures and declaring themselves invested with power to legislate for us in all cases whatsoever.

He has abdicated Government here, by declaring us out of his Protection and waging War against us.

He has plundered our seas, ravaged our coasts, burnt our towns, and destroyed the lives of our people.

He is at this time transporting large Armies of foreign Mercenaries to compleat the works of death, desolation, and tyranny, already begun with circumstances of Cruelty & Perfidy scarcely paralleled in the most barbarous ages, and totally unworthy the Head of a civilized nation.

He has constrained our fellow Citizens taken Captive on the high Seas to bear Arms against their Country, to become the executioners of their friends and Brethren, or to fall themselves by their Hands.

He has excited domestic insurrections amongst us, and has endeavored to bring on the inhabitants of our frontiers, the merciless Indian Savages whose known rule of warfare is an undistinguished destruction of all ages, sexes and conditions.

In every stage of these Oppressions we have Petitioned for Redress in the most humble terms: Our repeated petitions have been answered only by repeated injury. A Prince, whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a Tyrant, is unfit to be the ruler of a free people.

Nor have We been wanting in attentions to our British brethren. We have warned them from time to time of attempts by their legislature to extend an unwarrantable jurisdiction over us. We have reminded them of the circumstances of our emigration and settlement here. We have appealed to their native justice and magnanimity, and we have conjured them by the ties of our common kindred to disavow these usurpations, which would inevitably interrupt our connections and correspondence. They too have been deaf to the voice of justice and of consanguinity. We must, therefore, acquiesce in the necessity, which denounces our Separation, and hold them, as we hold the rest of mankind, Enemies in War, in Peace Friends.

We, therefore, the Representatives of the United States of America, in General Congress, Assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the Name, and by Authority of the good People of these Colonies, solemnly publish and declare, That these United Colonies are, and of Right ought to be Free and Independent States, that they are Absolved from all Allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain, is and ought to be totally dissolved; and that as Free and Independent States, they have full Power to levy War, conclude Peace, contract Alliances, establish Commerce, and to do all other Acts and Things which Independent States may of right do. — And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes, and our sacred Honor. — John Hancock

## Signers of the Declaration of Independence

New Hampshire:

Josiah Bartlett, William Whipple, Matthew Thornton

Massachusetts:

John Hancock, Samuel Adams, John Adams, Robert Treat Paine, Elbridge Gerry

Rhode Island:

Stephen Hopkins, William Ellery

Connecticut:

Roger Sherman, Samuel Huntington, William Williams, Oliver Wolcott

New York:

William Floyd, Philip Livingston, Francis Lewis, Lewis Morris

New Jersey:

Richard Stockton, John Witherspoon, Francis Hopkinson, John Hart, Abraham Clark

Pennsylvania:

Robert Morris, Benjamin Rush, Benjamin Franklin, John Morton, George Clymer, James Smith, George Taylor, James Wilson, George Ross

Delaware:

Caesar Rodney, George Read, Thomas McKean

Maryland:

Samuel Chase, William Paca, Thomas Stone, Charles Carroll of Carrollton

Virginia:

George Wythe, Richard Henry Lee, Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Harrison, Thomas Nelson, Jr., Francis Lightfoot Lee, Carter Braxton

North Carolina:

William Hooper, Joseph Hewes, John Penn

South Carolina:

Edward Rutledge, Thomas Heyward, Jr., Thomas Lynch, Jr., Arthur Middleton

Georgia:

Button Gwinnett, Lyman Hall, George Walton

## Rhode Island Fourth of July Fireworks, Festivities and Celebrations

Fourth of July Fireworks, Bristol, R.I. - July 4

Bristol Fourth of July Parade, Bristol, R.I. - July 5

Fourth of July Ancient and Horribles Parade, Chepachet, R.I. - July 5th

Arnold Mills Parade, Cumberland, R.I. - July 5th

Pawsox Fireworks - July 1, 2, 3

Fourth of July Celebration, Wakefield, R.I. - July 4th

## DID YOU KNOW?

John Adams is known as "the most captivating founding father". While Benjamin Franklin is described as a charming genius, Thomas Jefferson is known as the writer of the Declaration of Independence, and everyone is familiar with General and then President George Washington, less is known about John Adams - and yet we owe him a great debt for his brilliant defense of the Declaration in 1776 and for our Independence.

Born in Quincy, MA, in 1735, he attended Harvard College but instead of becoming a minister, he became a lawyer. An outstanding orator, Adams nonetheless felt that he never quite had public approval and acknowledgment. He married Abigail Smith of the notable Quincy family in 1764, and their loving partnership for 54 years may be the thing most people know John and Abigail Adams for. They were the parents of 6 children, only 2 of whom outlived their father.

Adams entered politics with his opposition to the Stamp Act of 1765. In 1772 he systematically and vigorously defended Massachusetts against British imperial policy. While representing Massachusetts in the Continental Congress between 1774 and 1778, he nominated George Washington as commander-in-chief of the army and, almost from the beginning, supported permanent separation from Britain.

On 7 June 1776, Richard Henry Lee from Virginia presented a resolution to Congress proposing, complete dissolution of all ties with Britain. John Adams seconded the resolution. While no consensus was reached that day, a five-man committee was established to rewrite a formal Declaration and given less than a month in which to do it. Benjamin Franklin, as the most senior member, had the right to write the document but excused himself because of poor health. Next in line was John Adams who, recognizing the superior writing ability of Thomas Jefferson, somewhat reluctantly handed the task to him. All five members of the committee (the other two were Robert R. Livingston and Roger Sherman) contributed to the wording and ideas based upon Lee's Resolution. When the document was completed and presented to Congress on 2 July 1776, John Adams orally defended the Declaration on the floor of the House and motivated the Congress to push toward independence and freedom. It was passed by Congress on 2 July 1776, with 12 of the 13 colonies formally approving it on the 4th.

John Adams served as the first Vice President (to George Washington) between 1789 and 1797, and as the second President from 1797-1801, with Thomas Jefferson as his Vice President. By this time, relations between Adams and Jefferson had become strained; elections were based at that time on number of votes, not on party affiliation or selection as a "running mate". When Jefferson was inaugurated as the third president, Adams did not attend the celebrations, using the recent death of his son as an excuse to be absent.

Adams and Jefferson did not reconcile until 1812, after being urged to do so by a mutual friend, Benjamin Rush (who also signed the Declaration of Independence). Until their deaths on the same day, 4 July 1826, the two men remained close friends. That day was the 50th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration.

## HISTORY OF THE RHODE ISLAND VETERANS HOME

### Part One

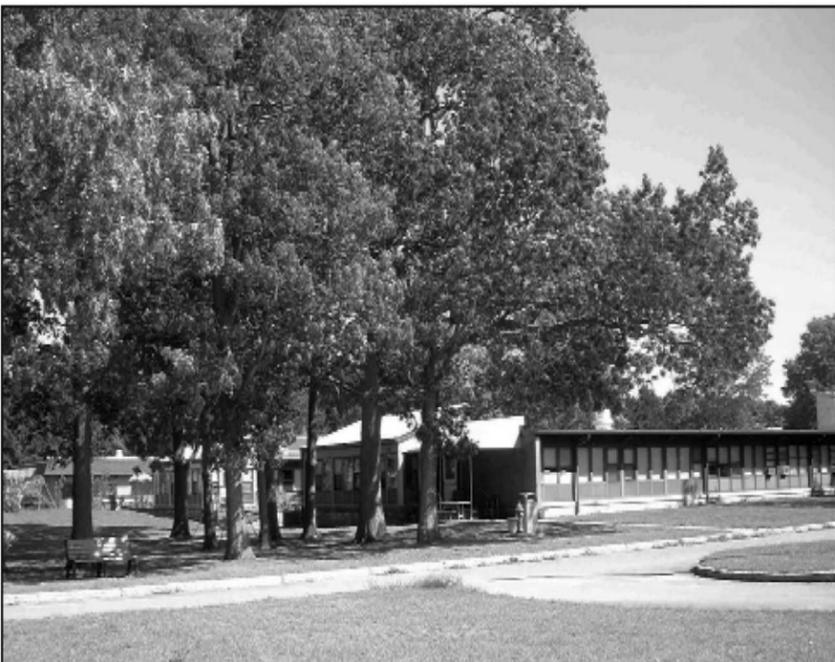
Although the Rhode Island Veterans' Home was born of a necessity arising from the aftermath of the Civil War, its mission has changed substantially during its 100 years' history. The Civil War was conducted with both sides using battlefield tactics established by Napoleon, but with weapons which had rendered those tactics quite obsolete. As General Pierre Bosquat remarked while observing the Charge of the Light Brigade at the Battle of Balaklava on October 25, 1854, "It is magnificent but it is not war." Casualties on both North and South resulting from cavalry and infantry charges were horrendous, with a total of over 98,000 men killed in battle on both sides. The total number dying of disease on both sides was over 184,000, while the combined total of deaths by wounds and disease was 303,000. Chances of survival were improved by the medical attention provided at or near the battle sites, and while conditions and sanitation were somewhat crude, many soldiers who might have succumbed to wounds were saved.

Unfortunately, many men who spent time in military prisons [both North and South] contracted infections and chronic diseases which rendered them incapable of resuming a productive existence upon the return home.

Out of all this came the concept of a "Soldiers Home", a place with a quasi-military atmosphere where veterans could live out their years in peace and tranquility while their basic needs were taken care of by people who cared. With rapid advances in medical science, the mission of the Soldiers' Home changed from a custodial role to one more geared toward rehabilitation. As an example of these rapid changes, one of the first was the enlargement of the hospital at the Home.

From the very beginning, volunteers have played a key role in the operation of the Veterans' Home. Each year, hundreds of volunteers from all over Rhode Island, and especially from Bristol, give thousands of hours in service to our veterans. Our local and state elected officials' has from the very beginning, been very supportive of the Veterans Home, and this support, along with community involvement, has kept the Home a true haven for Rhode Island Veterans of all wars. Veteran's organizations have always made an extremely vital effort in support of the Home, both with services and with financial support in the form of programs and furnishings for the Home.

It is significant that our Centennial Celebrations were being conducted primarily under the auspices of our Veterans' Organizations. Our representatives in Washington [Congress, Senate and House] have also been very supportive over the years, and have always been helpful in solving problems for individual veterans and their families. No commentary on the History of the Veterans' Home would be adequate without special tribute to the Commandants and their dedicated staffs who carried on this unique service since its inception. The dramatic changes and improvements that have taken place both in the physical plan of the Home and in its programs over the years,



all bear the imprints of dedicated men and women in behalf of veterans of all wars. To offset food costs, the Soldiers Home operated a 30-acre vegetable farm on the grounds, along with a prize winning Holstein dairy herd and piggery. In 1929, the Rhode Island Soldiers Home was placed on the National Honor Roll of the National Dairy Association for maintaining a prize-winning dairy herd of seven cows. Over 200 chickens were kept to provide meat and fresh eggs. The farm remained in operation until the 1950s, with some help provided by more active residents of the Home.



#### STATUTORY HISTORY FOR R.I. VETERANS

- Title 30, Chapter 24, Sections 1 and 2 established the Rhode Island Veterans' Home
- Title 30, Chapter 17 created the Veterans Affairs/Assistance Program.
- Title 30, Chapter 25, Section 14 authorized the operation of the Rhode Island Veterans Memorial Cemetery.

With rapid advances in medical technology, the existing hospital became inadequate, and authorizations for a new building were granted. Unfortunately, the amount of money appropriated by the state was insufficient so it was decided to enlarge an existing building by an additional fifty feet, which resulted in a building some 190 feet in length. The building was divided into two separate wards, each consisting of twenty-seven beds.

Thus, the Rhode Island Soldiers Home served its residents quite adequately into the early 1940s. Of course, in the meantime, veterans of World War I were reaching the age at which an increased demand for services would be a reality. With the war clouds gathering, and the subsequent entry into World War II by the United States as a result of attack on Pearl Harbor, the Rhode Island Legislature undertook a study of the Soldiers Home and concluded that the existing buildings had become obsolete as well as posing a dangerous fire hazard. None of the existing residential and medical buildings were in conformance with updated fire and safety codes. As a result, the legislature ordered a demolition of most of the existing facilities and had a new brick and masonry hospital building and dormitory built.

In 1955, the new building designed by Kent, Cruise and Associates was built at a cost of \$1,500,000. By legislative mandate, the Rhode Island Soldiers Home became the Rhode Island Veterans' Home.

The new addition was a modern, single-story hospital facility with quarters for 84 chronically-ill veterans in its two infirmary wings. In the three domiciliary wings, 186 ambulatory patients were cared for. The hospital also included a Physical and Occupational Therapy unit, Dental Offices, X-Ray room, a Pharmacy, Laboratory facilities, a full Dietary Unit and Kitchen, a Chapel/Auditorium and recreational area. In 1969, the Custer Williams Wing housing the new library was built at a cost of \$750,350.00.

In 1976, the V.A. Nursing wing, designed by Robinson, Greene, and Beretta was built at a cost of \$3,909,000, and added 150 new beds to the capacity of the Home. In 1989, the latest addition, the 36 bed domiciliary Wing, was completed at a cost of \$2,677,431.

The Home was first occupied May 14, 1891. The formal dedication included His Excellency, Governor Davis. The Rev. Joseph J. Wooley, said, in his address: "Notwithstanding the fact that nearly a generation has passed since the war ended, the sentiment is growing and obtaining an increasing hold on the minds of the people, that the men of that day met an extraordinary condition of affairs in an extraordinary way - with supreme courage, fidelity and faithfulness - and accomplished a glorious result in the preservation of the union of the States and the establishment of the Government on a stronger and more enduring foundation."

Part 2 in the next issue of the Sentinel



*This photo was copied from www.projo.com*

As friends and family members look on, incoming Commander Col. David Medeiros, above right, receives the flag from outgoing Commander Col. Charles Petrarca Jr., above left, during the 56th Troop Command Change of Command Ceremony from this past November at Camp Fogarty in East Greenwich.



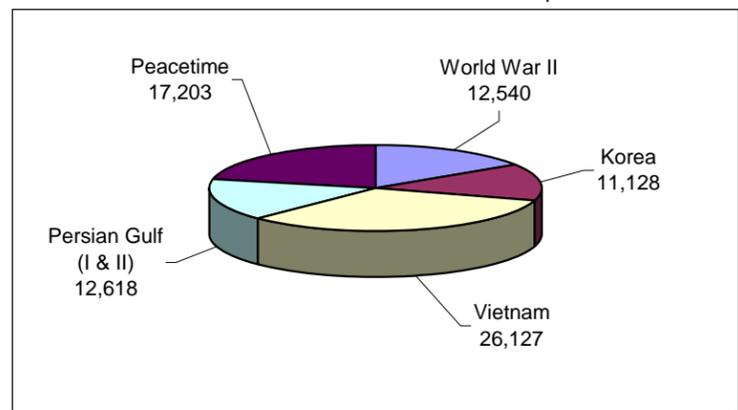
**New Army National Guard Memorial Monument  
At the R.I. Veterans' Cemetery, Exeter, R.I.**

**Overview of Veterans in Rhode Island**

Totalling nearly 80,000, eighty percent of RI veterans have served our country during a wartime period. This qualifies them for a full-range of benefits provided by the RI Division of Veterans Affairs. These benefits include a comprehensive range of social, medical and rehabilitative services, as well as burial services. Some benefits are also available to veterans' spouses and dependents. Benefits are provided through one of the Division's three units: the Veterans Affairs Office, the Rhode Island Veterans Home and the Rhode Island Veterans Memorial Cemetery.

Based on data from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, the largest segment of war service veterans distributed by service period are those who served in Vietnam, followed by the Persian Gulf (I & II combined), World War II, and Korea. While the overall ranking by distribution hasn't changed significantly over the past several years, the number of soldiers serving in the Persian Gulf has, for the first time, surpassed the number of Rhode Island veterans having served in Korea.

**Total War Service Veterans 79,616**



Taken from the Rhode Island Department of Human Services Division of Veterans Affairs Annual Report FY2009

**VETERANS HOME COMPUTER ROOM RENOVATED THROUGH GENEROUS DONATION**

The renovation of the space for the computer room was realized by a donation from the parents of 1LT Gregory F. Zavota, United States Army who died while on active duty. This room is dedicated to his memory. Several organizations donated 8 state of the art computers that have been set up in the cafe. Other organizations contributed the funds for the 52" HDTV that is now located in the room and integrated with the Wii gaming system to allow for state of the art computerized physical games, such as bowling, golf, and baseball. 1LT Zavota was a medivac pilot with the 101st Airborne Division, Ft. Campbell, Kentucky. This space is available to our veterans on a 24/7 basis.



**Pictured Left to Right:**  
Diane Lucier,  
Edwin Antonio,  
Rick Baccus,  
Bill Camara,  
Dr. Frank Amalfitano  
Diane Costa,  
Alexander Simmons

**FEDERAL VETERANS' NEWS  
HIKE DELAYED FOR PRESCRIPTION CO-PAYMENTS FOR VETERANS**

The VA will freeze any increase in prescription co-payments for veterans and out-of-pocket payments for pharmaceuticals until June 30, 2010. This means the department will delay a scheduled \$1 increase, to \$9, in vets' co-payments for each 30-day supply of medicine for the treatment of conditions not related to military service. The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has made certain changes to its benefits structure for 2010 for veterans and other beneficiaries. Also during this period, VA will maintain a \$960 total as the maximum annual, out-of-pocket amount for payments for pharmaceuticals for non-service-related conditions. The \$960 cap will not apply to veterans in priority groups seven and eight. The yearly maximum out-of-pocket payment was scheduled to increase to a cap of \$1,080. There are no co-payments associated with the treatment of conditions related to military service.

As usual, VA will distribute insurance dividends to about 900,000 veterans who are in line to share \$286.4 million in annual insurance dividends during 2010. VA operates one of the nation's largest life-insurance programs, providing more than \$1 trillion in coverage to 7 million service members, veterans and family members. These payments will be made to insurance policyholders on the anniversary date of their policies. They will be sent automatically through different payment plans and the amounts will vary based on the veteran's age, the type of insurance and the length of time the policy has been in place. Consistent with private mutual insurance company practice, VA is returning a portion of premium payments back to policyholders because the agency had strong financial results this past year. Veterans who have questions about their policies may contact VA insurance at their toll-free number at (800) 669-8477 or send an e-mail to VAinsurance@va.gov. or go online to www.insurance.va.gov.

As a result of negative inflation and the consumer price index going down over the past year, the Social Security Administration has announced there will be no cost of living adjustment (COLA) this year for Social Security recipients. Under federal law, VA's COLAs cannot exceed the Social Security COLAs. Therefore, VA is barred from making a COLA increase for recipients of its benefits. VA provides compensation and pension benefits to more than 3.8 million veterans and other beneficiaries. Presently, the basic monthly rate of compensation paid to veterans ranges from \$123 to \$2,673. Annual income limits for a disability pension begin at \$11,830 for a veteran without dependents and increase for those with dependents who are housebound or who need regular aid and attendance. Veterans with questions about their benefits may contact VA's toll-free hotline at (800) 827-1000 or go to www.vba.va.gov/VBA.

**Go online for DD-214s**

In an effort to make it easier for veterans with computers and Internet access to obtain copies of documents from their military files, the National Personnel Records Center has provided a Web site for veterans to gain access to their DD-214s online at vetrecs.archives.gov/.

Military veterans and the next of kin of deceased former military members may now use this new online military personnel records system to request documents. Other individuals with a need for documents must still complete the Standard Form 180, which can be downloaded from the online Web site.

*This article appeared in the Providence Journal on February 1, 2010.*

## VETERANS HOME EMPLOYEES BRING SUPPORT TO HAITIAN EARTHQUAKE VICTIMS

On March 12, 2010, an ambitious group of RI Veterans Home employees made a special trip to Port Au Prince, Haiti, for one week, to deliver comfort and care to the poorest nation in the western hemisphere. The team of professional healthcare workers included a physician, two nurses and several support staff and interpreters. Long-time Senior Administrator, and former Army Nurse Corp Officer, Bill Camara coordinated the effort and prepared the team for the humanitarian mission. The group met regularly for several weeks in order to learn their assignments and to receive security briefs regarding safety, climate, and diseases indigenous to the area. The group called themselves "Team Hope", and joined forces with two other groups while in Haiti. Together, they were able to provide treatment and support to approximately 2,000 individuals on this nine-day mission. According to Team Hope Physician, Paul Agatiello, MD it was estimated that over 10,000 pills were dispensed while treating numerous health conditions such as malaria, cutaneous anthrax, and tropical ulcers.



Transportation was in pickup truck beds

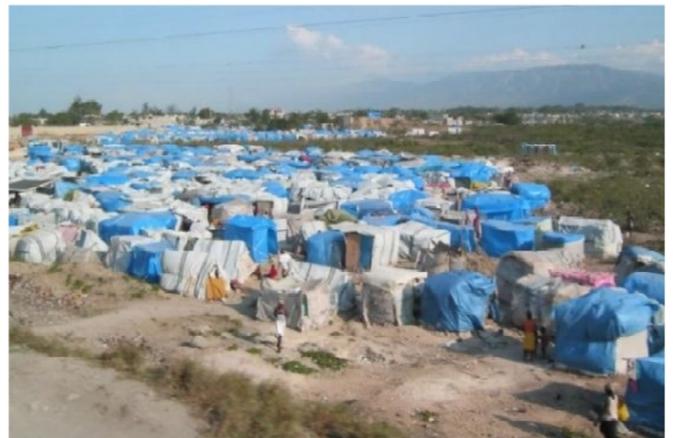


Preparing for a clinic - Steve Heilbron, Bill Camara and Dr Paul Agatiello

The living conditions within the tent cities were also the cause of additional problems. Various infections and gastro-intestinal issues were being caused by unsanitary conditions. The psychological impact from the quake was also very evident, as common symptoms of anxiety and sleep disorders (post-traumatic stress disorder) were seen in adults and children.

To address the issues at hand, the team had many great assets that allowed for their success. Steve Heilborn, a veteran of mission trips to Haiti, was very familiar with the land, culture and language. Edna Jean Louis and Myriel Dorival, both born in Haiti, interpreted for the medical staff. Bill Camara and Margaret Hugo, both registered nurses with over 20 years experience, provided medical treatment in addition to Dr. Paul Agatiello M.D. The group operated out of a small village named Lamothe, in a compound surrounded by a ten-foot wall and concertina wire. They set up tents for sleeping and used a small church for the clinic. With no electricity or safe drinking water, together with 90 degree day time temperatures, followed

by the nighttime rain storms and tarantulas, presented a challenge for the Team. But without hesitation, the Team was ready each morning to begin another round of clinics. Several days the team traveled to outlying villages and communities that had not received any medical support since the quake. The devastation was evident everywhere. Buildings and homes were left in total rubble, some still with victims inside. Survivors were living in shelters made out of bed sheets and tarps.



Tent City

Sleeping in muddy and mosquito-infested conditions, lacking latrines and showers, the people of Haiti continued to remain courageous. They have endured one of the world's largest disasters, their government in disarray, and they have literally the clothes on their backs. Yet, they do not complain. They wanted help and were greatly appreciative for what the Team was able to provide.



Veterans Home Team

As for "Team Hope", the mission is not complete. The Veterans Home group, through correspondence, will continue to support the Haitian people, and their co-workers who have families suffering through this tragedy. It will take many years to rebuild the country and heal the wounds of the people, but with the help

of dedicated individuals from the Veterans Home, the heart of Haiti will see the light at the end of the tunnel. RI Secretary of Health and Human Services commented that, "what makes this mission of mercy so moving for all of us is that this team of seasoned state employees did all of this on their own personal time and they donated and dedicated so much effort to help our Haitian brothers and sisters. This is a great example to all of us."

The Executive Office of Health and Human Services and the Division of Veterans Affairs salutes "Team Hope", for their dedication and service to people in need.

## DIVISION OF VETERANS AFFAIRS OPEN HOUSE

On MARCH 29TH 2010, The R.I. Division of Veterans Affairs held an open house at C.C.R.I Warwick Campus to present a new service booklet for Rhode Island Veterans, their Dependents, and other agency representatives working with Veterans. Over 80 interested parties came by to pick up this new hand book which contains a listing and explanation of all services provided to Rhode Island Veterans and their families.

This booklet can be picked up at the Rhode Island Veterans Home at 480 Metacom Ave, Bristol RI or on our web site at [www.dhs.ri.gov](http://www.dhs.ri.gov).

Pictured: Rick Guerin, Joe Gamacho and Fred Short of Chapter 818, Vietnam Veterans of America





IN MEMORY OF OUR NATION



**George T. Panichas**

PANICHAS, THE HONORABLE GEORGE T., (87), of Lincoln, Rhode Island, an international investment broker who was the first Greek Orthodox-American elected to state office in Rhode Island, died February 25, 2010. He was the husband of Angela (Chiavaras) Panichas for 57 years. A decorated Air Force Veteran of World War II, Mr. Panichas was long devoted to veterans affairs, as well as to his Greek-American heritage. He served as a tail gunner in the U.S. Air Force during World War II, completing 50 missions over enemy occupied Europe. He received the Air Medal with four oak leaf clusters, three battle stars for service in the European Theatre, the Presidential Unit Citation with oak leaf cluster, and a personal citation from the commanding general of the 15th Air Force.

In 1970, Mr. Panichas was elected as a Democrat to the RI House of Representatives (District 78-Pawtucket) where he served for 14 years until his retirement from the legislature in 1984. During his tenure he served on the House committees of Finance, Labor and Health, Education and Welfare in addition to assignments related to veterans. He was a longtime member of the Democratic State Committee and Executive Committee. He attended every Democratic National Convention from 1964-2008.

His election as the first Greek-American to hold state office in Rhode Island symbolized his long devotion to his cultural heritage. Throughout his career, Mr. Panichas was one of a small handful of national leading figures in the Greek lobby significantly influencing causes on behalf of Greece, Cyprus and the Ecumenical Patriarchate. In 1975, he accompanied U.S. Senator Claiborne Pell of RI on a fact-finding mission to Cyprus and thereafter annually attended many White House events and met with members of Congress and Cabinet level officials.

As a real estate and international investment broker, Mr. Panichas represented or consulted with several major Greek companies including Aristotle Onassis Co., Metallurgiki-Halkyps S.A., Greek Power Company, Erogon, Drac Oil Co., Netsos Shipping, and Greek Industrial Development Bank. He was also consultant to major corporations in New York, Paris, London and Mexico including the Loews Corporation, Rollins Corporation, Times Mirror Corporation, Hallmark Cards, Heritage Cable TV, Star Markets, and Providence and Worcester Railroad. He was a developer of homes and shopping centers.

In addition to service in the RI General Assembly, Mr. Panichas' community activities included hosting the Rhode Island Former Legislators Association television program, Treasurer of the RI Cancer Council, member of the 401st Bomb Group Association, 97th Air Force Association, 8th Air Force Association, 15th Air Force Association, the Pawtucket Veteran's Memorial Committee, Chair of the 1973 Pawtucket Heart Fund and, Master Mason - Overseas Lodge and Shriner, Rhode Island, the Alpha Omega, the Order of AHEPA, and the Army Navy Club.

Most recently, Mr. Panichas was a member of the Governor's Advisory Council on Veterans Affairs where he served as Chair of the Veterans Memorial Cemetery subcommittee in Exeter, RI and successfully advocated for significant expansions and improvements.

In 2001, Mr. Panichas received the 'Special Diploma' awarded by the Government of France to soldiers of the allied forces for their contribution in the fight to liberate France in World War II. In October 2008, the State of Rhode Island dedicated the Veterans Memorial Cemetery administration building in honor of Mr. Panichas. In 2009, he was awarded an Honorary Degree, Doctor of Philosophy from the American University of Athens, Greece, where he served on the Board of Directors.

Mr. Panichas was a lifelong member of the Assumption Greek Orthodox Church of Pawtucket, RI where he served as Parish Council President and member of the Board of Trustees.

Born in Pawtucket, he was the son of the late Thomas and Despina (Kanellopoulos) Panichas. He is survived by his sister Tula (Panichas) Kattke and brother Anthony T. Panichas. He was the brother of the late James T. Panichas. He is survived by his two daughters Denise Panichas of Woonsocket; Joan (Panichas) Milas of Lincoln and her husband Mathew and their children Angela and Michael; and his son George T. Panichas, Jr. of Smithfield and his wife Anastasia and their children George III and Melina.

George received an Orthodox Christian Burial on March 2nd at 10:00a.m. at the Assumption Greek Orthodox Church in Pawtucket presided over by Metropolitan Methodius from the New England Diocese. He was eulogized by Metropolitan Methodius, former House Speaker John Harwood and his son, George. His burial, with military honors, followed at Swan Point Cemetery, Providence, RI.

The State of Rhode Island and the Division of Veterans' Affairs are grateful for all that George accomplished for our veterans and especially our cemetery in Exeter. May his memory be eternal.

Donations in lieu of flowers may be made to The Samaritans of RI, P.O. Box 9086, Providence RI 02940; the RI Veterans Home Chaplaincy Fund, 480 Metacom Avenue, Bristol RI 02809 or the Assumption Greek Orthodox Church of Pawtucket Endowment Fund, 97 Walcott Street, Pawtucket, RI 02860.



**Joseph T. Corrente**

Joseph T. Corrente, 85, of Dean Ridge Court, Cranston died on Thursday November 5, 2009 at Miriam, Providence. He was the loving husband of Antonetta (Castaldi) Corrente for 55 years. A patriot of the highest order, Joseph T. Corrente, was a dedicated public servant and engineer, a decorated veteran of World War II and the Korean War and an outstanding community leader.

Born in Providence on November 27, 1923 he was the son of the late Tomasso and Lucrezia (Simeone) Corrente of Providence. He was a lifelong resident of Providence until 1992, when he moved to Cranston. He attended Providence Public Schools, and graduated from Providence Technical Institute with an Associate Degree in Architectural Design and Construction.

He served his country during WWII in the U.S. Army in the European Theater of Operations. In 1950 he was recalled to active military duty in the Korean War serving with 1343rd Engineering Combat Battalion.

In 1954, Joe started his 32 years of distinguished and dedicated public service with the State of Rhode Island. He was the state's bridge resident engineer for the construction of the Providence River Bridge and approach roadway bridges in 1955-1958. For the next 15 years, he was bridge resident in-charge of building some 20 bridges on the interstate routes and state primary highways.

From 1972 until his retirement in 1986 Joe held the position of Chief Bridge Maintenance Engineer, supervising the maintenance and repair of over 650 bridges, including the old Jamestown Bridge. In 1985, he was nominated for one of two annual Robert M. Goodrich Distinguished Public Service Award, which are for exemplary public employees.

Joe also worked for the Providence Public Works Department as a special assistant for maintenance management of bridges and the hurricane barrier in 1987 and 1988. His contributions in bridge construction and maintenance engineering technology brought him a four-year appointment to the examination board for the certification of engineering technicians.

Upon his retirement from State Service, Joe continued his community service activity by accepting four successive 3-year appointments on the Governor's Commission on Disabilities. He also served on the RI Advisory Commission on Aging, RI Forum on Aging, and Speaker of RI Silver Haired Legislature.

In 1988, He organized a successful drive by Veterans in the Performing Arts Community for the restoration of the Veterans Memorial Auditorium in Providence. For his untiring efforts for this project, he was appointed to the Veterans Memorial Auditorium Foundation. He served over 50 years as a member of the Disabled American Veterans, Cranston Chapter # 10 and served as Past State Commander.

In 1994, as Executive Secretary for United Veterans Council of RI, an Advocacy Group of the eight Major State Veterans Organizations, he successfully resolved the debate to relocate the WWI monument to the Jackson-Gardner-Verrazano Park in Providence as part of the Capital Center River Relocation project.

He was the co-chairman of building the Korean War Monument and Memorial Walkway in Providence, and spear-headed and chaired a committee to build the WWII Memorial in Memorial Park, Providence which was dedicated on November 11, 2007.

In 2001, he was presented with the prestigious "Freeman Award" by the Providence Engineering Society for "Outstanding Achievement in Bridge Engineering and Maintenance Through the Application of Creativity and Innovation During a Lifetime of State Service". In February of 2003 he was cited by the Society's "Humanitarian Award", in recognition of faithful and long term community service to various civic, religious and public organizations.

On May 4, 2003 Governor Donald L. Carcieri presented Joe with the coveted 2003 Joseph Vanni Award in recognition of his many years as a leading advocate for people with disabilities, Veterans and senior citizens.

Joe was a caring and dedicated husband, father, grandfather, friend, public servant and advocate for seniors, and veterans. He is loved dearly and will be forever missed.

Besides his wife, he was the beloved father of Glenn J. Corrente and his wife Kimberly of North Providence, and Gail Theriault and husband Steven of Narragansett and the loving grandfather "Joey" to Sophia J. Theriault. He was the brother of the late Thomas Corrente.

The Funeral Mass took place on November 9, 2009 at the Immaculate Conception Church in Cranston followed by the entombment with Military Honors at St. Ann Cemetery Mausoleum, Cranston. In lieu of flowers contributions may be made in his memory to Home and Hospice Care of Rhode Island, 1085 North Main Street, Providence, RI 02904.



**Antonio Ceprano**

CEPRANO, ANTONIO 'TONY', of North Providence, passed away on Tuesday, April 6, 2010 at the Miriam Hospital surrounded by his loving family. Born in Providence, he was the son of the late Salvatore and Cesarina (Silvestri) Ceprano and was a North Providence resident for 57 years. He was the husband of Gloria (DiNucci) for 55 years.

Tony served as a Staff Sergeant in the Army during WWII. His tours included serving in the Pacific Theatre. Upon returning home, he continued to serve his country in the Army Reserve. Tony had a long-lasting commitment to civic service that included serving as a lifelong member of the Geneva Volunteer Fire Company, a communicant of St. Anthony Church and a member of the Holy Name Society. He was a member of the St. Anthony's Knights of Columbus, member of the North Providence Town Committee, North Providence Town Councilman-at-Large, and North Providence Town Budget Committee Member. He served in countless leadership roles that included serving as Past District Governor RI Lions District 42 and the North Providence Lions Club, Past President of the RI State Police FOPA Lodge 25 and North Providence FOPA Lodge 13. Member of VFW, American Legion, Italian American Veterans and served as a Doorkeeper for the RI Senate. For many years, Tony's life was spent as a devoted advocate for Veterans causes. The last ten years, he served as Commander of the Mt. Pleasant Chapter 21 Disabled American Veterans, and served as a member of The State of RI Veteran's Committee.

Besides his wife, he leaves two sons, Anthony S. Ceprano and Emilia Petteruti, and Mark A. and Donna Ceprano; his grandchildren, Andrea L. Ceprano and Christine M. Ceprano; brother of Tina Ceprano and Rose DelMatto, Albert Ceprano and the late Angelo Ceprano, all of North Providence.

Tony's Mass of Christian Burial was held on Saturday April 10, 2010 at St. Anthony Roman Catholic Church, 1413 Mineral Spring Avenue, North Providence. A graveside burial with Military Honors followed at St. Ann Cemetery, Cranston. Donations may be made to RI Veterans Home, Chapel Fund, 480 Metacom Avenue, Bristol, RI 02809 or St. Anthony Kitchen Ministry, 5 Gibbs Street, North Providence, RI 02904.

**Leo Biagioni Jr.**

BIAGIONI, LEO 'UGLY' JR., 79, passed away Monday, March 15, 2010. He was the beloved husband of Bertha M. (Rybak) Biagioni for 56 years. A lifelong resident of Pawtucket, he was the son of the late Leo Biagioni, Sr. and Anna (Simmons) Biagioni. Leo was a Korean War U.S. Air Force veteran. He was a computer programmer for the State of RI for 38 years until retiring in 1992. Leo was a member of the Pawtucket Congregational Church and the Tri-City Lodge of Elks No. 14, HLM with 42 years of service. Besides his wife he leaves a daughter, Doreen L. Martin and her husband Robert of North Kingstown; three sons, John M. Biagioni and his wife Debra, James A. Biagioni and his wife Kathy all of Foster and Steven A. Biagioni and his wife Susan of Cranston; seven grandchildren, Jennifer and Robert Martin, Amy, James, Joshua, Matthew and Nicholas Biagioni and a great-granddaughter, Grace Martin. He was the brother of Anna Ducharme of Pawtucket and the late Phyllis A. Thompson. Services and Interment with Military Honors was at Swan Point Cemetery, Providence. Gifts in his memory to the Rhode Island Veterans Home, 480 Metacom Ave., Ward N3, Bristol, RI 02809 would be appreciated.

**Robert Carrier**

Robert Carrier, 92, passed away on March 4, 2010. He served in the United States Army during World War. He received a purple heart.

**Robert H. Capuano**

Robert H. Capuano, 76, of RI Veterans Home, passed away March 23, 2010. Born in Providence, he was the son of the late Pasco and Gertrude (Knowles) Capuano. Robert had lived in Warwick and Pawtucket for most of his life and was a self-employed electrician. He served with the Army and the Coast Guard in the Korean War. He is survived by a sister, Marie Capuano Hall of North Providence, and two brothers, Donald Capuano of Pawtucket and Pasco Capuano of Georgia. He was the brother of the late Gordon and Melvin Capuano. He was an electrician. Funeral services were held March 29 from George Lima Funeral Home, 367 High St., Bristol, with a Mass of Christian Burial at the RI Veterans Home, Bristol. Burial with military honors followed in Rhode Island Veterans Cemetery, Exeter.

**Dariel Hill**

Dariel Hill, 75, passed away on March 29, 2010. He served in the United States Air Force during World War II.

**Edward Soares**

Edward Soares, 81, passed away March 27, 2010. He served in the United States Army during World War II and the Korean War.



**IN MEMORY OF OUR NATION (Cont.)**



**RAYMOND THOMAS STEVENS, M.D.**

STEVENS, RAYMOND THOMAS, M.D., 94, of East Providence, died April 4, 2010 in the V.A. Medical Center, Providence. He was the widower of the late Regina (Cronin) Stevens and the son of the late Francis and Anna (Uschold) Stevens.

He was born in Middleboro, MA and lived in Wareham, MA, Providence, and East Providence, RI for many years before moving to Bristol. He was a Major in the U.S. Army during WWII.

Dr. Stevens graduated from Central High School and Providence College and Jefferson Medical School. Dr. Stevens was a General Practitioner in East Providence for over 47 years before retiring. He enjoyed golfing and was an avid Boston Red Sox fan. His true passion was practicing medicine.

Survivors include two sons, Michael A. Stevens of Rehoboth and Mark F. Stevens of Mashpee; a daughter, Susan Stevens of NH; 5 grandchildren; 2 great grandchildren.

His funeral was held on Friday, April 9, 2010 from the Chapman, Cole & Gleason Funeral Home, 2599 Cranberry Hwy., Wareham, MA followed by a Mass of Christian Burial at St. Patrick's Church, 82 High St., Wareham, MA. Burial followed at St. Patrick's Cemetery, Wareham, MA.



**Franklin B. Frazier, Sr.**

Franklin B. Frazier, Sr., 89, passed away on Sunday, March 28, 2010 at the Providence Veterans Administration Medical Center, in Providence, RI.

Born in Mount Holly, NJ, Mr. Frazier was the husband of Shirley M. (Sundin) Frazier, and the son of the late Charles and Rosella (Rouse) Frazier. Mr. and Mrs. Frazier were married for 64 years.

Franklin was the former owner of Country Auto Supply of Wakefield, RI for twenty years. He was an Army US Veteran of WWII.

Mr. Frazier was a Life Member of the Verdandi Male Chorus and the Swedish Chorus Singers in Warwick, RI.

He is survived by a son; Franklin B. Frazier, Jr., two daughters; Susan Fadden and Linda Lee Vlashoc and a sister; Lois Miller.

He is also survived by 6 grandchildren and 8 great-grandchildren.

His Funeral Service with Military Honors was held at 11:00 am on Wednesday, March 31, at the RI Veterans Cemetery Chapel in Exeter, RI.

**World War II Veteran Gets Bronze Star 66 years After Service**



SMITHFIELD — Under heavy fire in Germany in 1944, Army Pfc. Pasquale Costellese helped carry two wounded soldiers to safety. Sixty-six years later, during a brief ceremony in the great room at North Bay Manor in Smithfield, Costellese got his thank-you from the U.S. government. "These are not gifts," U.S. Rep. James R. Langevin said during the ceremony Friday. "We're here to present what you earned as a combat veteran of World War II."

Costellese, 84, received the Bronze Star for bravery — along with seven other awards for his wartime service. He was awarded the Good Conduct medal, American Campaign medal, European, Africa and Middle Eastern medal, World War II Victory medal, Combat Infantryman Badge — 1st Award, Sharp Shooter badge and Rifle bar and Honorable Service lapel button. Sitting beside his wife, Clorine, Costellese remained humble about his heroics.

"I just got up and did it," he said. "It was a spur of the moment thing. I just thought of getting this guy out of here and to the aid station."

The sergeant that Costellese helped carry to an aid station in Duren, Germany, was already dead, and the other man died after being taken to safety. Costellese served with the 8th Infantry Division, 2nd Battalion, 28th Regiment and also fought in the Battle of the Bulge, the largest and deadliest battle of the war.

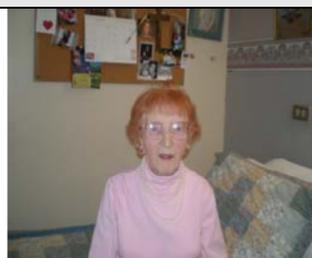
Costellese was honorably discharged in 1945 and returned to his hometown of Johnston. By 1959, he had begun what would become a 27-year career with the Johnston Police Department. He retired in 1984 as a sergeant.

Lawrence and Dennis Costellese said they just learned some of the details of their father's war years, as the process to get his medals began to move along. Like many combat veterans, their father didn't talk frequently about what happened on the battlefield, Dennis said. Medals are not automatically presented to veterans upon discharge, said Kristen Connors, constituent case worker for veterans affairs in Langevin's office. The veteran or next of kin must provide discharge papers and send a formal request to the National Personnel Records Center to receive medals from the Army. Costellese sent in his request and waited years with no response. "This is something I never expected," Costellese said, a gold WWII pin on his lapel. "I figured I'd die before I got something — after 60 years, what would you think?"

His friend Anthony Tudino had experience obtaining earned medals for relatives, so he did some additional research on Costellese's time in the service and passed the information on to Langevin's office, he said. Langevin said that it was an honor to "meet a real hero" like Costellese and the other soldiers of his generation. "They put aside their own goals in other areas, their own dreams and made it their mission and priority to wear that uniform," Langevin said. "Without them, we wouldn't enjoy the freedoms we enjoy and so often take for granted."

Talia Buford Taken from Projo.com May 1, 2010

**MEET VETERANS AT OUT VETERANS' HOME**



Her name is Catherine Stock and she has been in the Rhode Island Veterans Home for 4 ½ years. She served in the 48<sup>th</sup> Evacuation Hospital, which was formed at the Rhode Island Hospital in Providence, Rhode Island. She served from September 1, 1942 to November 18, 1945.

She served in Assard, India caring for the American and Indian people. It was there in 1943 that she met and fell in love with a British Officer. She asked the military for permission to marry and was denied and was transferred to a post with the 181<sup>st</sup> General Hospital in Karach 1,000 miles away. On route to her new assignment, she married her fiancé in Calcutta. For this offense she was court-martialed, fined \$75.00 per month for three months, and confined to the base, also for three months.

In February of 1944, she was ordered to return to the States and Fort Devens, Mass. In the interim she was assigned the care of a mentally ill nurse for several weeks and for six weeks on board a ship. In August of 1944, she was the medical custodian for 275 WAC private enlistees to transfer from Boston, Providence and New Haven by train to Fort Oglethorpe, GA. She was then promoted to 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant.

She left the service with an honorable discharge.

**HOUSING PROJECT ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS**

The Rhode Island Veterans Action Center will take preliminary housing applications for Turning Point, a 14-unit veterans' housing project at 1380 Broad St., Providence.

Twelve single units and two two-bedroom units will be ready for occupancy in September, according to Johanne Washington, RIVAC's executive director, who anticipates having the tenant selection process completed soon. The building is a joint venture of RIVAC and OMNI Development Corp. of Providence, and construction should be completed in late August.

Homeless veterans will be given priority in the application process. Interested honorably discharged veterans should contact Washington at (401) 521-6710 or visit the RIVAC office at 685 Cranston St., Providence, for more information.

**BENEFIT HONORS GUNNERY SERGEANT JOHN DAVID FRY**

**New Scholarship for the Children of Fallen Service Members**

WASHINGTON – The children of military personnel who died in the line of duty since Sept. 11, 2001 can apply for an educational scholarship similar to the new Post-9/11 GI Bill. Benefits are retroactive to Aug. 1, 2009.

The scholarship, which is administered by the Department of Veterans Affairs, are named after Marine Gunnery Sergeant John David Fry, 28, a Texas native who died in Iraq in 2006 while disarming an explosive. He was survived by three young children.

"The Fry scholarship represents this nation's solemn commitment to care for children whose mothers and fathers paid the ultimate price for our country," said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki.

VA begins accepting applications for the Fry scholarship on May 1, 2010. For more information or assistance applying, call toll-free 1-888-GIBILL-1 (1-888-442-4551), or visit the VA GI Bill Website at [www.gibill.va.gov](http://www.gibill.va.gov).

VA estimates nearly 1,500 children will receive benefits under the Fry scholarship program in 2010. Recipients generally have 15 years to use their benefits, beginning on their 18th birthdays.

Eligible children attending institutions of higher learning may receive payments to cover their tuition and fees up to the highest amounts charged to public, in-state students at undergraduate institutions in each state. A monthly housing allowance and stipend for books and supplies are also paid under this program.

VA will begin paying benefits under the Fry scholarships on Aug. 1, 2010. Eligible participants may receive benefits retroactively to August 1, 2009, the same day the Post-9/11 GI Bill took effect.

Eligible children may be married. Recipients are entitled to 36 months of benefits at the 100 percent level.

When dependents also serve in the military, the reserves or are Veterans in their own right, eligible for education benefits under the Montgomery GI Bill for Active Duty, the Montgomery GI Bill for Selected Reserves or the Reserve Educational Assistance Program (REAP), then they would relinquish their eligibility under those programs to receive benefits under a Fry scholarship.

**RED CROSS DONATES RENOVATION OF ROOM AT VETERANS HOME**



The American National Red Cross in Washington, DC received a grant from the Department of Defense to pass on to the local Red Cross Chapters. In order to apply for the grant dollars, the RI Chapter needed to do a survey of the Military Commands (including the Veterans Home & Center) to determine needs. This was done with General Rick Baccus and Pam Dow at The Veteran's Home.

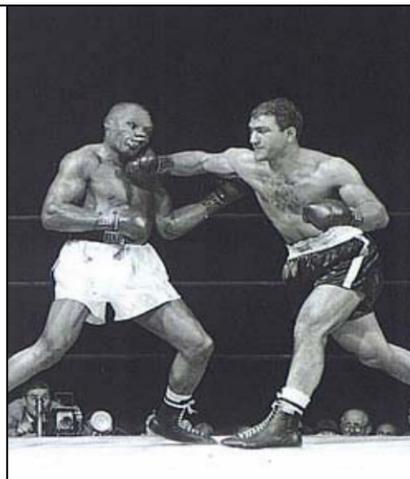
The next step was to write the grant, submit to National Red Cross and wait. We were very successful. Once we had the grant money approved, additional meetings took place with Veteran's Home staff ironing out the details. Time was spent with the residents of the Veteran's home and their input was invaluable. Bids were accepted for the large screen TV, furniture and construction work. The team that evolved from this met again with Pam Dow who then oversaw the project.

Other items the Red Cross was able to help with are: TV wall mounts; Sponsorship of 2 Narragansett Bay boat rides for residents/staff; Sponsorship of Holiday Party 2009; Chair for an individual in need of a recliner; Comfort kits for all residents; Holiday gifts for residents; Veteran's Home Art Classes for residents; and a Beauty day for female residents.

**DID YOU KNOW?**

From its beginnings, Rhode Island has been distinguished by its support for freedom of conscience and action: Clergyman Roger Williams founded the present state capital, Providence, after being exiled by the Massachusetts Bay Colony Puritans in 1636. Williams was followed by other religious exiles who founded Pocasset, now Portsmouth, in 1638 and Newport in 1639.

Rhode Island's rebellious, authority-defying nature was further demonstrated by the burnings of the British revenue cutters Liberty and Gaspee prior to the Revolution; by its early declaration of independence from Great Britain in May 1776; by its refusal to participate actively in the War of 1812; and by Dorr's Rebellion of 1842, which protested property requirements for voting.



**Who Am I?**

Each issue will feature a famous Veteran.

Turn to page 16 for the answer.

**NEW RHODE ISLAND DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS CREATED**

Last fall, Governor Carcieri signed into law legislation calling for the creation of a new Department of Veterans' Affairs, to be in place in state government by July, 2010. The new RI Department of Veterans' Affairs, as outlined in the new law, will be a new full department of state government within the Executive Office of Health and Human Services and will replace the Division of Veterans' Affairs within the Department of Human Services which now handles veterans' matters.

Under the law, all the powers and duties of the existing division of veterans' affairs will be transferred to the new department and its new director, who will be required to be an honorably discharged veteran of the United States armed forces, appointed by the Governor with Senate approval. The legislation abolishes the advisory council of the Rhode Island Veterans' Home in Bristol and replaces it with the advisory council for veterans' affairs.

The House bill was sponsored by Rep. Kenneth Carter bill and co-sponsored by Rep. Al Gemma (D-Dist. 20, Warwick), Rep. Robert B. Jacquard (D-Dist. 17, Cranston), Rep Raymond J. Gallison Jr. (D-Dist. 69, Bristol, Portsmouth) and Rep. Joseph S. Almeida (D-Dist. 12, Providence).

The Senate Bill was sponsored by Senator Walter Felag bill and co-sponsored by Sen. John J. Tassoni Jr. (D-Dist. 22, Smithfield, North Smithfield), Sen. David E. Bates (R-Dist. 32, Barrington, Bristol), Sen. Charles J. Levesque (D-Dist. 11, Portsmouth, Bristol) and Sen. Frank A. Ciccone III (D-Dist. 7, Providence, North Providence).

**RHODE ISLAND VETERANS HOME HOSTS FLOOD VICTIMS**

The Rhode Island Veterans Home recently offered temporary housing for eleven people who were displaced due to the flooding caused by the torrential rain last month. The Home welcomed the clients of the Maher Center's Wood Street Group Home and the Puritan Avenue Group Home and offered them a place of refuge for two nights, until they could return to their own residences. The gentlemen were set up in bunk type beds in a large dormitory and the ladies were given rooms on the nursing units. The entire staff showed great care and concern for the comfort of their guests. In addition, the Rhode Island Veterans Home also assisted several Operation Stand Down residents with a place to stay when their housing was flooded and they could not return home. Those gentlemen have since been accepted into the Veterans Transitional Support Program at the Home and will remain as permanent residents until such time as they can be transitioned to permanent housing once again.

**Memorial Day Events on May 31, 2010**

**Warwick Memorial Day Parade, Warwick**

Begins at 9:15am. From Bishop Hendricken High School, 2615 Warwick Avenue, along West Shore Road, to Warwick Veterans Memorial Park in front of Warwick Vets High School, 2401 West Shore Road. Call (401) 737-1909 or (401) 919-8951 for more information.

**Memorial Day Parade, Wakefield, South Kingstown**

Begins at 10:00am. Parade begins at Holly Street, goes down Main Street, and ends at High Street in Saugatucket Park for ceremony. Call (401) 789-9301, or visit the Town of South Kingstown website for more information.

**Memorial Day Parade, Westerly**

Begins at 9:30am. Downtown Pawcatuck/Westerly. Annual parade and ceremony following at Wilcox park. Free. Call (401) 596-0837 for more information.

**BATTLE OF RHODE ISLAND**

The Battle of Rhode Island, also known as the Battle of Quaker Hill, took place on August 29, 1778 in the town of Portsmouth, on the island of Rhode Island, in the State of Rhode Island.

In the battle, the Continental Army under the command of John Sullivan attempted to recapture the island of Rhode Island (now known as Aquidneck Island to distinguish it from the State of Rhode Island in which it is located), from British forces.

American troops under Sullivan sought to recapture the island of Rhode Island. It was the first joint land and sea operation of American and French forces. And it was the first battle in which a racially segregated unit of black soldiers fought, the 1st Rhode Island Regiment.

The battle ended inconclusively but the Continental Army had to give up its goal of capturing the island and securing Narragansett Bay for American and French ship traffic.

On Right:

Patriot's Park, memorial off RI 114 to Rhode Island militiamen slain in battle.



## FEDERAL VETERANS' NEWS



**Department of  
Veterans Affairs**

**Office of Public Affairs  
Media Relations**

**Washington, DC 20420  
(202) 461-7600  
www.va.gov**

# News Release

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

February 1, 2010

**White House Seeks \$125 Billion for Veterans in 2011  
*Homelessness, Claims Increases and Access - Priorities for VA Budget***

**WASHINGTON** – To expand health care to a record-number of Veterans, reduce the number of homeless Veterans and process a dramatically increased number of new disability compensation claims, the White House has announced a proposed \$125 billion budget next year for the Department of Veterans Affairs.

“Our budget proposal provides the resources necessary to continue our aggressive pursuit of President Obama’s two over-arching goals for Veterans,” said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki. “First, the requested budget will help transform VA into a 21<sup>st</sup> century organization. And second, it will ensure that we approach Veterans’ care as a lifetime initiative, from the day they take their oaths until the day they are laid to rest.”

The \$125 billion budget request, which has to be approved by Congress, includes \$60.3 billion for discretionary spending (mostly health care) and \$64.7 billion in mandatory funding (mostly for disability compensation and pensions).

“VA’s 2011 budget request covers many areas but focuses on three central issues that are of critical importance to our Veterans – easier access to benefits and services, faster disability claims decisions, and ending the downward spiral that results in Veterans’ homelessness,” Shinseki said.

**Reducing Claims Backlog**

The president’s budget proposal includes an increase of \$460 million and more than 4,000 additional claims processors for Veterans benefits. This is a 27 percent funding increase over the 2010 level.

The 1,014,000 claims received in 2009 were a 75 percent increase over the 579,000 received in 2000. Shinseki said the Department expects a 30 percent increase in claims – to 1,319,000 – in 2011 from 2009 levels.

One reason for the increase is VA’s expansion of the number of Agent Orange-related illnesses that automatically qualify for disability benefits. Veterans exposed to the Agent Orange herbicides during the Vietnam War are likely to file additional claims that will have a substantial impact upon the processing system for benefits, the secretary said.

“We project significantly increased claims inventories in the near term while we make fundamental improvements to the way we process disability compensation claims,” Shinseki said.

Long-term reduction of the inventory will come from additional manpower, improved business practices, plus an infusion of \$145 million in the proposed budget for development of a paperless claims processing system, which plays a significant role in the transformation of VA.

**Automating the GI Bill**

The budget proposal includes \$44 million to complete by December 2010 an automated system for processing applications for the new Post-9/11 GI Bill. VA also plans to start development next year of electronic systems to process claims from other VA-administered educational programs.

The Post-9/11 GI Bill authorizes the most extensive educational assistance opportunity since the passage of the original GI Bill in 1944. Over \$1.7 billion in regular Post-9/11 GI Bill benefit payments have been issued since the implementation of the program on Aug. 1, 2009. In 2011, VA expects the number of all education claims to grow by 32 percent over 2009, going from 1.7 million to 2.25 million.

“To meet this increasing workload and process education claims in a timely manner, VA has established a comprehensive strategy to develop industry-standard technologies to modernize the delivery of these important educational benefits,” Shinseki said.

**Eliminating Homelessness**

The budget proposal includes \$4.2 billion in 2011 to reduce and help prevent homelessness among Veterans. That breaks down into \$3.4 billion for core medical services and \$799 million for specific homeless programs and expanded medical care, which includes \$294 million for expanded homeless initiatives. This increased investment for expanded homeless services is consistent with the VA secretary’s established goal of ultimately eliminating homelessness among Veterans.

On a typical night, about 131,000 Veterans are homeless. They represent every war and generation, from the “Greatest Generation” to the latest generation of Veterans who served in Iraq and Afghanistan. To date, VA operates the largest system of homeless treatment and assistance programs in the nation.

**Targeting Mental Health, Preventing Suicides**

“The 2011 budget proposal continues the department’s keen focus on improving the quality, access and value of mental health care provided to Veterans,” Shinseki said.

The spending request seeks \$5.2 billion for mental health, an increase of \$410 million (or 8.5 percent) over current spending, enabling expansion of inpatient, residential and outpatient mental health services, with emphasis on making mental health services part of primary care and specialty care.

The secretary noted that one-fifth of the patients seen last year in VA’s health care facilities had a mental health diagnosis, and that the department has added more than 6,000 new mental health professionals since 2005, bringing to 19,000 the number of employees dedicated to mental health care.

The budget request will enable the department to continue expanding its programs for post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and traumatic brain injury (TBI), along with the diagnosis and treatment of depression, substance abuse and other mental health problems. Shinseki called PTSD treatment “central to VA’s mission.”

The proposed spending will continue VA’s suicide prevention program. Since July 2007, the department’s suicide prevention hotline has received nearly 225,000 calls from Veterans, active-duty personnel and family members. The hotline is credited with saving the lives of nearly 7,000 people.

**Reaching Rural Veterans**

For 2011, VA is seeking \$250 million to strengthen access to health care for 3.2 million Veterans enrolled in VA’s medical system who live in rural areas. Rural outreach includes expanded use of home-based primary care and mental health.

A key portion of rural outreach – which shows promise for use with Veterans across the country – is VA’s innovative “telehealth” program. It links patients and health care providers by telephones and includes telephone-based data transmission, enabling daily monitoring of patients with chronic problems.

The budget provides an increase of \$42 million for VA’s home telehealth program. The effort already cares for 35,000 patients and is the largest program of its kind in the world.

**Serving Women Veterans**

The 2011 budget provides \$217.6 million to meet the gender-specific health care needs of women Veterans, an increase of \$18.6 million (or 9.4 percent) over the 2010 level. Enhanced primary care for women Veterans remains one of the Department’s top priorities. The number of women Veterans is growing rapidly and women are increasingly using VA for their health care.

Shinseki said the expansion of health care programs for women Veterans will lead to higher quality care, increased coordination of care, enhanced privacy and dignity, and a greater sense of security among women patients.

Among the initiatives for women in the 2011 budget proposal are expanded health care services in Vet Centers, increased training for health care providers to advance their knowledge and understanding of women's health issues, and implementing a peer call center and social networking site for women combat Veterans. This call center will be open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

**Delivering World-Class Health Care**

During 2011, VA expects to treat 6.1 million patients, who will account for more than 800,000 hospitalizations and 83 million outpatient visits.

The total includes 439,000 Veterans who served in Iraq and Afghanistan, for whom \$2.6 billion is included in the budget proposal. That's an increase of \$597 million – or 30 percent – from the current budget.

The proposed budget for health care includes:

- \$6.8 billion for long-term care, an increase of \$859 million (or 14 percent) over 2010. This amount includes \$1.5 billion for non-institutional long-term care;
- Expanding access to VA health care system for more than 99,000 Veterans who were previously denied care because of their incomes;
- \$590 million for medical and prosthetic research; and
- Continuing development of a "virtual lifetime electronic record," a digital health record that will accompany Veterans throughout their lives.

VA is requesting \$54.3 billion in advance appropriations for 2012 for health care, an increase of \$2.8 billion over the 2011 enacted amount. Planned initiatives in 2012 include better leveraging acquisitions and contracting, enhancing the use of referral agreements, strengthening VA's relationship with the Defense Department, and expanding the use of medical technology.

**Preserving National Shrines**

"VA remains steadfastly committed to providing access to a dignified and respectful burial for Veterans choosing to be buried in a VA national cemetery," Shinseki said. "This promise requires that we maintain national cemeteries as shrines dedicated to the memory of those who served this nation in uniform."

The requested \$251 million for cemetery operations and maintenance will support more than 114,000 interments in 2011, a 3.8 percent increase over 2010. In 2011, the department will maintain 8,441 acres with 3.1 million gravesites. The budget request includes \$37 million to clean and realign an estimated 668,000 headstones and repair 100,000 sunken graves.

**Building for the Future**

\$1.15 billion requested for major construction for 2011 includes funding for medical facilities in New Orleans; Denver; Palo Alto, Calif.; Alameda, Calif.; and Omaha, Neb. Also budgeted for 2011 are major expansions and improvements to the national cemeteries in Indiantown Gap, Pa.; Los Angeles; and Tahoma, Wash., and new burial access policies that will provide a burial option to an additional 500,000 Veterans and enhance service in urban areas.

A requested budget of \$468 million for minor construction in 2011 would fund a wide variety of improvements at VA facilities.

**DID YOU KNOW?**

From its beginnings, Rhode Island has been distinguished by its support for freedom of conscience and action: Clergyman Roger Williams founded the present state capital, Providence, after being exiled by the Massachusetts Bay Colony Puritans in 1636. Williams was followed by other religious exiles who founded Pocasset, now Portsmouth, in 1638 and Newport in 1639.

Rhode Island's rebellious, authority-defying nature was further demonstrated by the burnings of the British revenue cutters Liberty and Gaspee prior to the Revolution; by its early declaration of independence from Great Britain in May 1776; by its refusal to participate actively in the War of 1812; and by Dorr's Rebellion of 1842, which protested property requirements for voting.

**THE LIBERTY BELL**



The Liberty Bell, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, is one of the most prominent symbols of the American Revolutionary War. It is a familiar symbol of independence within the United States and has been described as an icon of liberty and justice.

On November 1, 1751, a letter was sent to Robert Charles, the Colonial Agent of the Province of Pennsylvania who was working in London. Signed by Isaac Norris, Thomas Leech, and Edward Warner, it represented the desires of the Assembly to purchase a bell for the State House (now Independence Hall) steeple. The bell was ordered from Whitechapel Foundry, with instructions to inscribe on it the passage from Leviticus.

The bell arrived in Philadelphia on September 1, 1752, but was not hung until March 10, 1753, on which day Isaac Norris wrote, "I had the mortification to hear that it was cracked by a stroke of the clapper without any other violence [sic] as it was hung up to try the sound." The cause of the break is thought to have been attributable either to flaws in its casting or, as they thought at the time, to its being too brittle.

Two Philadelphia foundry workers named John Pass and John Stow were given the cracked bell to be melted down and recast. They added an ounce and a half of copper to a pound of the old bell in an attempt to make the new bell less brittle. For their labors they charged slightly over 36 Pounds.

The new bell was raised in the belfry on March 29, 1753. "Upon trial, it seems that they have added too much copper. They were so teased with the witticisms of the town that they will very soon make a second essay," wrote Isaac Norris to London agent Robert Charles. Apparently nobody was now pleased with the tone of the bell.

Pass and Stow indeed tried again. They broke up the bell and recast it. On June 11, 1753, the New York Mercury reported, "Last Week was raised and fixed in the Statehouse Steeple, the new great Bell, cast here by Pass and Stow, weighing 2080 lbs."

In November, Norris wrote to Robert Charles that he was still displeased with the bell and requested that Whitechapel cast a new one. Upon the arrival of the new bell from England, it was agreed that it sounded no better than the Pass and Stow bell. So the "Liberty Bell" remained where it was in the steeple, and the new Whitechapel bell was placed in the cupola on the State House roof and attached to the clock to sound the hours.

The Liberty Bell was rung to call the Assembly together and to summon people together for special announcements and events. The Liberty Bell tolled frequently. Among the more historically important occasions, it tolled when Benjamin Franklin was sent to England to address Colonial grievances, it tolled when King George III ascended to the throne in 1761, and it tolled to call together the people of Philadelphia to discuss the Sugar Act in 1764 and the Stamp Act in 1765.

In 1772 a petition was sent to the Assembly stating that the people in the vicinity of the State House were "incommoded and distressed" by the constant "ringing of the great Bell in the steeple."

But, tradition holds, it continued tolling for the First Continental Congress in 1774, the Battle of Lexington and Concord in 1775 and its most resonant tolling was on July 8, 1776, when it summoned the citizenry for the reading of the Declaration of Independence produced by the Second Continental Congress. However, the steeple was in bad condition and historians today doubt the likelihood of the story.

In October 1777, the British occupied Philadelphia. Weeks earlier all bells, including the Liberty Bell, were removed from the city. It was well understood that, if left, they would likely be melted down and used for cannon. The Liberty Bell was removed from the city and hidden in the floorboards of the Zion Reformed Church in Allentown, Pennsylvania, which you can still visit today.

Throughout the period from 1790 to 1800, when Philadelphia was the nation's capital, uses of the Bell included calling the state legislature into session, summoning voters to hand in their ballots at the State House window, and tolling to commemorate Washington's birthday and celebrate the Fourth of July.

**Liberty Bell Facts**

**Location:** Liberty Bell Center, Market Street & 6th, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

**Bell Originally Cast:** Whitechapel Foundry 1752

**Bell recast:** Pass & Stow Philadelphia 1753 and again later that year

**Bell owned by:** The City of Philadelphia

**Strike note:** E-flat

**Composition:** 70% copper, 25% tin, and small amounts of lead, zinc, arsenic, gold and silver.

**The Crack:** The "crack" is approximately 1/2 inch wide and 24.5 inches long. The Bell actually suffered a series of hairline cracks. The area around the crack was expanded in hopes of extending the useful life of the Bell. In the picture at right, note the hairline crack that finally rendered the bell unusable extending upward.

**Bell Statistics**

- circumference around the lip: 12 ft.
- thickness at lip: 3 in.
- weight (originally): 2080 lbs.
- length of clapper: 3 ft. 2 in.
- weight of clapper: 44-1/2 lbs.
- weight of yoke: 200 lbs.



**VETERANS CONTACTS**

**STATE OF RHODE ISLAND**

DIVISION OF VETERANS AFFAIRS  
 RI VETERANS AFFAIRS DIVISION [401] 253-8000 [ext. 495]  
 Rick Baccus, Acting Administrator  
 RI VETERANS AFFAIRS SOCIAL SERVICES [401] 254-8429  
 RI VETERANS HOME [401] 253-8000  
 RI VETERANS CEMETERY [401] 268-3088

**FEDERAL GOVERNMENT**

RI FEDERAL VETERANS HOSPITAL [VA] [401] 273-7100  
 Toll Free [866] 363-4486

VA Benefits: 1-800-827-1000  
 Burial  
 Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs (CHAMPVA)  
 Death Pension  
 Dependency Indemnity Compensation  
 Direct Deposit  
 Directions to VA Benefits Regional Offices  
 Disability Compensation  
 Disability Pension  
 Education  
 Home Loan Guaranty  
 Life Insurance  
 Medical Care  
 Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment  
 Beneficiaries in receipt of Pension Benefits: 1-877-294-6380  
 Education (GI Bill): 1-888-442-4551  
 Health Care Benefits: 1-877-222-8387  
 Income Verification and Means Testing: 1-800-929-8387  
 Life Insurance: 1-800-669-8477  
 Mammography Helpline: 1-888-492-7844  
 Special Issues - Gulf War/Agent Orange/Project Shad/Mustard Agents and Lewisite/Ionizing Radiation: 1-800-749-8387  
 Status of Headstones and Markers: 1-800-697-6947  
 Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TDD): 1-800-829-4833

**THE VETERANS' SENTINEL WELCOMES YOUR VIEWS  
 COMMENTS, QUESTIONS, AND EXPERIENCES**

We are interested in receiving news about all veterans' events, stories, and photos.  
 Send all information to: [sbuontempo@dhs.ri.gov](mailto:sbuontempo@dhs.ri.gov)  
 Or write to: The Veterans' Sentinel at  
 The Executive Office of Health & Human Services  
 600 New London Avenue Building #57,  
 Cranston, RI 02920.  
 The Sentinel can also be read online at <http://www.dhs.ri.gov/>

***ROCKY MARCIANO* (WHO AM I from page 13)**

Born Rocco Francis Marchegiano in Brockton, Massachusetts, on September 1, 1923, Marciano won the heavyweight championship by defeating Jersey Joe Walcott for the title on September 23, 1952.  
 Drafted into the U.S. Army in 1943, Marciano was assigned to the 150th Combat Engineers. He was stationed in Wales where he was involved in operations on the English Channel. The 150th was awarded service stars for Normandy, North France, Rheinland, Ardennes-Asace and Central Europe.  
 It was in the Army that Marciano first boxed, starting with unofficial bouts, and working up to junior amateur by the time of his discharge in 1947. After failing a tryout for catcher with the Chicago Cubs, baseball team, Marciano returned to boxing. His record was 49 wins, no losses.

**SENTINEL STAFF**

Gary D. Alexander  
 Editor, Layout and Design

Craig Stenning, Contributor	Rick Baccus, Contributor
David Wm. Kirchner, Contributor	George Bowen, Contributor
Diana Beaton, Contributor	Stephanie Okolowicz, Contributor
Nancy Pellegrino, Contributor	Amy Kempe, Contributor
Fred Sneesby, Contributor	Stephen Jennings, Contributor
Kevin Madigan, Contributor	Sondra Spencer, Contributor
Diane Lucier, Contributor	Michael Cronan, Contributor
Deborah Buffi, Contributor	David Foehr, Contributor

**STATE DIVISION OF VETERANS AFFAIRS TO  
 ORGANIZE POW-MIA REMEMBRANCE DAY**

**Cranston, RI.** State Health and Human Services Secretary, Gary D. Alexander recently called upon state Veterans Organizations to organize a state-wide day for POW-MIA [Prisoners of War Missing-in-Action] Commemoration And Remembrance.



POW-MIA Day is recognized each year on the third Friday of September and this year it falls on Friday September 17, 2010. The first planning meeting inviting all veterans' organizations to organize this important event, took place on April 12, 2010 at 11:00 AM at the Executive Office of Health and Human Services in Cranston, RI. In a recent letter to the Chairman of the

State Advisory Council on Veterans Affairs, Raymond Benkowsky, Alexander wrote, "With POW-MIA Recognition Day before us on Friday, September 17, 2010 it is imperative that we give serious consideration to the importance and significance of this day to the very fiber of American citizenship." POW/MIA Recognition Day is a day of remembrance and hope for the speedy and safe return of American Prisoners of War, and those still Missing in Action. It also seeks the return of the remains of fallen soldiers. The first official national commemoration of POW/MIAs was July 18, 1979. It was the result of resolutions passed in Congress. Over the next several years, it was held in varying dates of the year. Finally, in 1986, The National League of Families proposed the third Friday in September as a day to recognize and remember POW/MIAs. This date was selected, as it is not associated with any wars. Each year, the President of the United States issues a proclamation on this day. Alexander went on further to say, "Our POW- MIAs are a unique part of the American tapestry that deserves respect and congratulations for selfless service beyond the call of duty for their country. I consider it an appropriate and long overdue gesture of thanks to honor these American heroes with a state-wide annual POW-MIA Recognition Day." Although various Rhode Island Veteran Organizations may remember the day, there is no state-wide commemoration. At the first planning meeting on April 12, it was decided by the planning committee to hold the commemoration on the actual day, September 17, 2010. The event is being planned to take place at the Rhode Island State House. Anyone interested in being named to the committee and assisting in the planning of the state-wide commemoration should contact Daniel Evangelista at the Rhode Island Division of Veterans Affairs at 401-268-3088. The RI Division of Veterans Affairs is a division of State Government located within the Executive Office of Health and Human Services.

**MARK THE DATE**

"Come Honor our Veterans"

MAY 31, 2010 - 1:00 PM

Memorial Day Exercises and Program  
 Veterans Memorial Cemetery  
 301 South County Trail  
 Exeter, Rhode Island

**Memorial Day Facts**



- General John Alexander Logan (photo on left), national commander of the Grand Army of the Republic, first created the idea of commemorating Memorial Day in 1868. He later ordered the Memorial Day holiday to be observed by decorating the graves of the war dead.  
 - Memorial Day is a day of remembrance of those who have died serving our country.  
 - Memorial Day was originally known as Decoration Day because it was a time set aside to honor the nation's Civil War dead by decorating their graves.

- On Memorial Day, the flag should be at half-staff until noon only, then raised to the top of the staff.
- Red Poppies are recognized as the Memorial Day flower.
- "Taps" is often played at ceremonies on Memorial Day.
- New York was the 1st state to officially recognize Memorial Day.
- Flowers and flags are the two most popular items people use to remember soldiers.
- The south refused to honor the dead on Memorial Day until after World War I when the meaning of Memorial Day changed from honoring civil war dead to honoring Americans who died fighting in any war.
- Memorial Day was declared a federal holiday in 1971.

**Formal Observance of Memorial Day:**

- Wear red poppies on Memorial day to honor those who died serving the United States during war.
- At 3 p.m. local time, Americans should pause for a moment of silence or listen to "Taps".
- Visit cemeteries and place flags or flowers on the graves of veterans.
- Visit a memorial.
- Attend a parade to honor fallen heroes.

*"Your silent tents of green  
 We deck with fragrant flowers;  
 Yours has the suffering been,  
 The memory shall be ours."  
 -Henry Wadsworth Longfellow*