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STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA  
DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS



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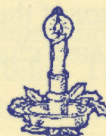
***"FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK"***

As we approach the passing of another year, and as I look back over the year and remember the terrible devastation that Hurricane Hugo dealt our State and the support we have received, I have to thank the volunteers. Perhaps, the first axiom we heard when we joined the military was "never volunteer for anything". I am not sure how many lived by that creed while on active duty, but I do know as veterans many have abandoned it. The largest and most dedicated core of volunteers I know of are our veterans.

The service organizations and their auxiliaries from our great State and across the Nation responded to our veterans and our citizens' needs during Hugo. Their donations which reflected the caring dedication of those groups for veterans remind me of the enormous amount of time, money and equipment freely given to us each year by our many veterans organizations and other civic and community groups. There is not a time when our volunteers are not there.

The veterans fraternity is indeed a special one. Not everyone can belong but once a member, your brother and sister veterans will not forget you.

Thanks to all the veterans groups which have given us so much; to all the individual and civic groups who have not forgotten; and to the children, especially the children, some too young to even understand what a veteran is. *We salute you.*



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**"SEASONS GREETINGS"**

The Director and Staff of the  
South Carolina Department of Veterans Affairs  
wish you and your families a Merry Christmas  
and a healthy, happy and prosperous New Year.

## *SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS NEWS*

At long last the Agency is about to experience what many people find commonplace in today's workplace - AUTOMATION -. As this newsletter goes to print, we are awaiting the final components necessary to implement the initial phase of automation. This occasion marks the culmination of a lot of hard work by the folks of SCDVA in planning, budgeting and all that it takes to bring to fruition a program like this. Learning to use these new tools means more hard work, but the end result will mean better service to our veteran clients and that is what it is all about.

### *USDVA NAMES SPECIAL CONSULTANT*

Admiral Elmo Zumwalt (USN-Ret) has been named as a special consultant to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs. Admiral Zumwalt, who retired as Chief of Naval Operations in 1974 and was famous for his "Z-GRAMS", will counsel Secretary Derwinski on a variety of issues, including Agent Orange. The Admiral's son, who was a river patrol boat captain during the Vietnam War, died of cancer at a very early age. It is the Admiral's conviction that his son's cancer is linked to his exposure to Agent Orange. In view of the fact that there are ongoing studies and debates concerning the final drafts of USDVA regulations concerning Agent Orange, this appointment may be very significant to a lot of Vietnam Veterans.

### *COUNTY VETERANS AFFAIRS NEWS*

On Tuesday, October 11, 1989, the annual meeting of County Veterans Affairs Officers (CVAO) was held at American Legion Post 6 in Columbia. The meeting was well attended, attracting 35 CVAO's and/or staff.

The CVAO's heard from Mr. W. C. "Billy" Plowden, the South Carolina Veterans Employment Representative of the U. S. Department of Labor and Dr. R. E. "Jack" David, Executive Director of the S. C. Employment Security Commission.

Representatives from the VA Medical Centers of Columbia, Charleston and Augusta brought everyone up-to-date on what was going on in their respective hospitals and what the future had in store for their patients.

As always, Mr. R. Stedman Sloan, Director of the VA Regional Office, brought a group of his "experts" who enlightened the group as to the latest changes in Compensation, Pension and Veteran Services.

A special thanks goes to American Legion Post 6 and especially Ms. Joan Wellford, Post 6 Secretary, for all their efforts in setting up the meeting room.

While on the subject of "Kudos", the efforts of many of the fine CVAO's and SCDVA staff members in the aftermath of Hurricane Hugo should not go unrecognized. They gave of their time, energy and in some instances, their own resources to aid the hurricane victims. A special "well done" goes out to each of those who participated in the relief effort.

## **JUDICIAL REVIEW UPDATE**

October 16, 1989, marked the real beginning of a new era for veterans. The Court of Veterans Appeals (CVA) became an operational entity with the confirmation of two Associate Judges. Chief Judge Frank Q. Nebeker has been joined by two Vietnam Veterans. Associate Judge John Farley, 47, is a disabled combat veteran who served for 16 years in the Torts Section of the U. S. Department of Justice. Associate Judge Kenneth Kramer, also 47, is a former Army Judge Advocate who was elected to several terms in the U. S. House of Representatives from Colorado. Since 1988, he has been an Assistant Secretary of the Army.

For the time being, the Court will be located at 1625 K Street NW, Fourth Floor, Washington, D. C. 20006. Telephone (202) 254-6600.

Public Law 101-94 provided some technical amendments to the Veterans Judicial Review Act which provides that the Court will operate under the Federal Rules of Appellate Procedure, as interim rules, and that the Court can modify these rules at a later date.

Because the 120-day appeal period has expired for some veterans before there was an address for the Court, the amendments gave these claimants an additional 30 days from the date the Court publishes a notice of address in the Federal Register within which to file an appeal.

## **RETIREES TO GET 4.7% RAISE**

Nearly 40 million military and federal retirees and Social Security recipients will receive their biggest cost-of-living (COLA) increase since March 1982 next January.

The inflation rate for consumer prices which is used to set the COLA was 4.7 per cent during the year ending October 1, 1989.

The COLA becomes effective December 1, 1989, and is payable after the end of the month. Last year's COLA was 4 per cent.

The same COLA will be applicable to non-service connected pensions paid by the U. S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

At press time, the COLA for VA compensation had not been decided as the House and Senate have used different rates in their respective bills. This will have to be ironed out by a conference committee. In all likelihood, it will approximate the Social Security and federal retirees' cost-of-living adjustments and is also payable on January 1, 1990.

## **CONGRESSIONAL MEDAL OF HONOR SOCIETY**

Mr. J. Elliott Williams has been elected President of the Congressional Medal of Honor Society. Mr. Williams replaces Colonel Charles P. Murray (Ret.). Mr. Williams' address is Route 1, 29 Creekside Drive, Mt. Gilead, South Carolina 29576. Telephone 651-4978.

# DISABLED CHILDREN SKI PROGRAM



Ski Beech, Banner Elk, North Carolina, has been selected as a site for one of eight "Challenges" to be held throughout the Country from December, 1989, through February, 1990. Each Challenge will offer beginning through advanced ski instruction to children of all ages who have a spinal cord injury, amputation, neuromuscular disease, visual impairment or other physical disability. The Ski Beech event will take place February 7-10, 1990.

In announcing the schedule of events, National Handicapped Sports (NHS) Executive Director Kirk Bauer explained that special emphasis will be placed on serving disabled children of Vietnam Veterans.

This program is made possible by a grant to National Handicapped Sports from the Agent Orange Class Assistance Program. The funds are to be used to involve the disabled children of Vietnam Veterans in active sports and recreation.

The Challenges' primary sponsor is Chap Stick Lip Balm Products. Associate sponsors include the Agent Orange Class Assistance Program, United Airlines, Ronald McDonald Children's Charities, Paralyzed Veterans of America, and the Million Dollar Round Table Foundation.

Those interested in participating in the Ski Beech Challenge or other NHS programs should contact Robert Robbins, the NHS Agent Orange Program Coordinator at the NHS National Headquarters, 4405 East-West Highway, Suite 603, Bethesda, Maryland, 20814, (301) 652-7505.

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