

A Day for Honoring our Hero Veterans

John Lenotte Commander, American Legion

This year Veterans Day falls on a Saturday. Many people do not work. I hope that all veterans will come out and participate in their local parade. If you can't march I am sure you can get a ride in one of the vehicles. In Haverhill, for example, the American Legion, VFW and AMVETS typically have vehicles in the parade. Bring your own car and join us. And I also hope that the public will turn out to watch the parade. Bring your children. Show them some of what patriotism is about.



Who do they turn to when the roof leaks, the car needs repair? The Legion and other veterans groups have help available but their funds need to be replenished. And what about the children who have lost a parent in this conflict? There is so much need. Let us turn our energy into helping these families who while they are at home, share the burden of the sacrifices of the troops who are away from home.

We do not honor or glorify war. Remember that Veterans Day was originally Armistice Day in celebration of the ending of World War I. That war was thought to be the end of all wars. Unfortunately it was not. Let us remember those who gave the ultimate sacrifice, those who are mentally and physically damaged from the ravages of war. And remember those who still serve and are in harms way. The soldier is not Republican or Democrat. The soldier is a Patriot, obeying orders to preserve our way of life. Let us honor their service.

Whether or not we agree with the politics of the current conflict, we need to support the troops. There are several organizations here in Massachusetts that do so. And they need our help. But let us not forget the families of the troops, whether the soldiers are active duty, Reserve or National Guard.

The military has set up family support networks which are very helpful. Like most Americans these families are proud and may not always ask for the help that is needed. It may be as simple as getting a lawn moved or a driveway plowed for a pregnant wife. It may be some financial assistance. Some of the families are very much in need because the spouse who stays behind now has to be the disciplinarian and the decision maker.

On a larger scale, the federal government talks about how much more money they have put into the VA budget. But they fail to point out that much of it is still discretionary money. That means it can be used elsewhere if the administration deems so. And there are a lot more veterans who are getting older and need help along with a whole new crop of veterans returning from the current conflict. We all need to urge the Congress to make the VA budget one of mandatory funding. And they will only do so at our urging. Let us be vigilant of the needs of those who proudly serve our nation.

Massachusetts veterans and more specifically those in the American Legion have an extra reason to march proud this Veterans Day. The National Commander of The American Legion is Paul Morin from Chicopee, MA. Since the founding of the Legion in 1919, Paul Morin is only the third National Commander from MA.

The others being Daniel Doherty in 1937 (deceased) and John P. "Jake" Comer in 1987. It is an honor to have a native son from Massachusetts occupy the highest office in the American Legion. Let us all be proud as Legionnaires and as veterans.

John Lenotte is the American Legion Commander, District 8/Essex County and Adjutant, Post 4, Haverhill

Home Health VNA Rated top 5% in the Nation

Lawrence, Mass. – Caring for individuals and families for more than a century certainly earns an agency a reputation for longevity – but now Home Health VNA patients can rest assured that the care they receive every day is among the best in the country.

Home Health VNA has been named among the top 5% of the "Home Care Elite" in a listing of the top tier of home health care agencies in the United States.

Outcome Concept Systems (OCS) launched a compilation of the top performing home care agencies nationwide, and Home Health VNA made their top 500 listing. As part of this prestigious group, Home Health VNA ranks in the top 5% of home health agencies throughout the United States.

To score the agencies, the company used publicly available data from the last half of 2005 and the first half of 2006. This determination was based on the agency's quality of care measurements in the Home Health Compare report, quality improvement and financial performance from the CMS Cost Reports.

Each agency's performance in these three areas was compared against the performance of other organizations in their

state and in the country. The three domains were combined into one overall score, using a weighting methodology that gives the greatest importance to quality of care.

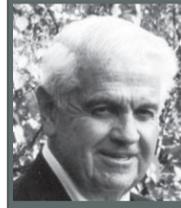
Home Health VNA scored well across all three areas. The top 25% of agencies in each region, both hospital-based and free-standing, were identified and added to the national list. Those in the top 500 like Home Health VNA were identified as highlighted for further recognition.

"Being named on this list is quite an honor," said Joan Stygles Hull, RN, MBA, President / CEO of Home Health VNA. "Our staff is committed to providing the highest quality of care to our patients every day. Being named among this caliber of home care agencies recognizes that commitment."

Home Health VNA is a not-for-profit agency affiliated with HomeCare, Inc. and Merrimack Valley Hospice.

Together, the three agencies serve more than 80 communities throughout Northeastern Massachusetts, the Merrimack Valley and Southern New Hampshire.

For more information, visit their website www.homehealthvna.org



Senior Moments

with Jim Cassidy

New York's Message to the Enemies of Freedom

November reminds us of many happy moments including Halloween and Thanksgiving. But for we veterans it is also a solemn time as we remember Veterans Day, November 11, and what it means to America ... all the sacrifices of thousands of men and women over the years who have protected our freedoms and way of life.

We now know that because of this new type of warfare, terrorists of freedom are everywhere, even among us. So we must remain ever vigilant and alert to anything unusual that is happening around us, even in our own schools, and report it to the authorities.

It is a sad commentary on how the world has evolved since 9/11, which resulted in the terrible slaughter of 3,000 innocents in and around the World Trade Center, and how it has affected New York's citizens.

But a freelance writer living in Atlanta, Rich Daigle, gives us a different perspective on today's New York and tells us of a feeling of hope and how this great city has rebounded from that tragic day.

"New York is a city renowned for 24/7 energy, straightforward sass and a night-life personality that has drawn visitors from around the globe for decades. But after that fateful day in September 2001, the party lights dimmed as smoke rose from the rubble, distressing a multi-billion dollar tourism industry. Five years later, that industry is buzzing like never before.

"We are fortunate that this year New York City is set to welcome a record-breaking 43 million visitors, with 7 million of those coming from foreign countries," said Cristyne L. Nicholas, president and CEO of NYC & Company, the city's marketing and tourism organization. International visitation now exceeds pre-9/11 levels. Foreign visitors make up only 18 percent of New York's tourism traffic, but they represent almost half the spending because they tend to stay longer and spend more.

"A trip to New York offers lifetime memories, especially in the post-9/11 world, where a simple vacation can act as a thumb

of the nose to terrorists who want us to stay home and live in fear. That was my sentiment when I took my teenage daughters to the Big Apple in July. We spent three nights in Times Square, saw two great Broadway plays, viewed the Statue of Liberty from a speedboat, and took a Grayline double-decker bus tour. We walked block after block and never once felt unsafe; crime rates are the lowest in decades. We got lost a few times, but that didn't matter.

"I wanted my girls to see the bright lights of Times Square, the vaunted New York skylines, and the bustling sidewalks around Macy's and other shopping areas. I particularly wanted them to see the naked air in lower Manhattan once occupied by the magnificent twin towers of the World Trade Center. When they are older and 9/11 comes up in conversation, they will be able to say, 'I saw the World Trade Center site in 2006.' The echoes of that terrible day in our nation's history will now be a part of my girls' own personal American history.

"Some say New Yorkers are a kinder, gentler lot since the tragedy. I couldn't really tell one way or another, but I can say the spirit of New York - that endearing, gruff, witty, passionate voice that echoes above the streets and into the air where tragedy struck five years ago - is something to experience today, at a time and in a place where vacation history can still be made."

So - during this busy holiday season, visit the greatest city in the world, that glittering white way, appreciate the festive decorations, the shows on Broadway, and the people's determination and will to survive.

And remember as New Yorker's do ... that freedom and liberty will survive over the evils of injustice.

Jim is Vice-Commander of American Legion Post #219. He served as a combat infantryman in WWII, fighting in France and Germany with the 70th Infantry Division. Jim Cassidy was awarded the Bronze Star for his service. You can email him with questions or comments at: Cassperry@aol.com



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CITY OF LAWRENCE

PUBLIC NOTICE

Emergency Winter Parking Ban

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If you have any questions please call (978) 794-5754

Frank McCann, Jr.,
 Director of Public Works



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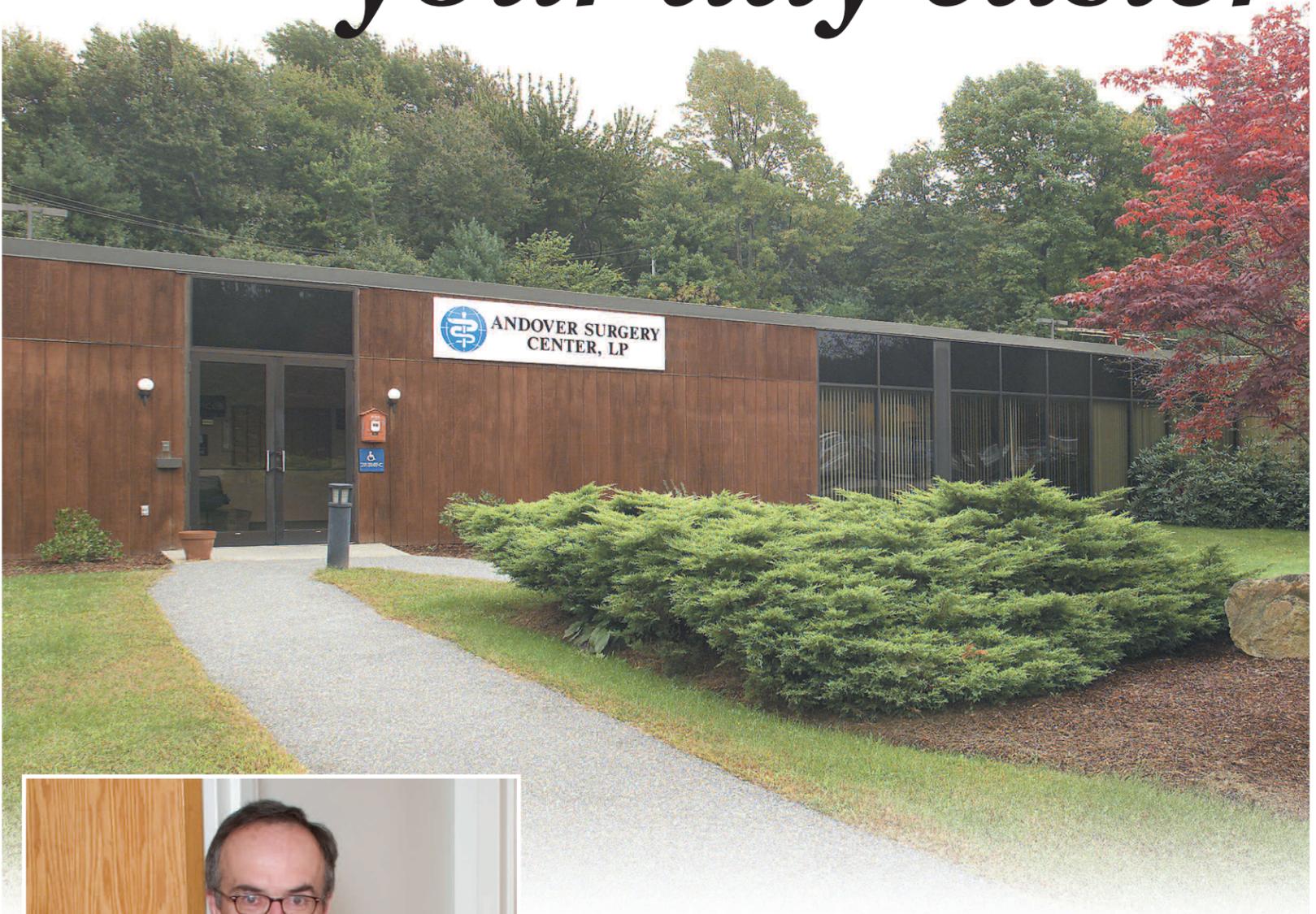
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