



# Centennial Post 209

Edited version  
March 87

P.O. Box 15461  
Colorado Springs, CO 80935

Legionnaires,

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We can be very proud of our efforts in membership. We reached our membership goal of 100 members in December 1986. At the present time we are at 112% membership and still increasing. If you haven't recruited a new member, who not do it now and help us reach our new goal of 150% by Department Convention in Cortez in June 1987. We can also be very proud of the success of our bingo game. We could sure use some additional help at our weekly bingo game. Why not plan to help out this year and push all of our programs over the top.

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FOR GOD AND COUNTRY  
NEAL L. THOMAS JR. - COMMANDER

## VA Toughens Home Loan Policies

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### Veterans Face Continued Challenges in New Congress

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Today, veterans interests are at a crossroads, aging veterans in need of medical care are growing in numbers. If the VA is to accommodate demand, more must be spent. Not only must medical care be full funded, but construction of replacement facilities to take the place of deteriorating older structures must proceed.

### VA Seeks Veteran Owned Firms to Supply Goods and Services

Vietnam veterans and disabled veterans in business have opportunities to have The Veterans Administration as one of their customers.

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For further information on the VA's procurement process, or to request the necessary SF 129, write to the Deputy Director, Office of Small or Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OOSB), Veterans Administration, 810 Vermont Ave, N.W, Washington, D.C. 20420.

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The 8.5 percent rate means that the monthly payment for principal and interest on the new VA loan of \$70,000 will drop \$125 to \$538.24. As recently as one year ago, the monthly payment on the same loan would have been \$640.32 based on the 10.5 percent rate then in effect. This represents a savings for veterans of \$102.08 per month on the average loan.

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The VPCC, which meets semi-annually, brings the chairmen of the legislative, VA & R, Economic and Public Relations Commissions together with legal and medical consultants, legion leaders, and staff members to consider appropriate responses to challenge to veterans interests. The committee is chaired by National Commander, James P. Dean.

The meeting agenda included issues surrounding the proposed FY 1988 Federal Budget and certain legislative initiatives which are likely to affect veterans in terms of their health, economic and social well being.

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FROM THE LADIES AUXILIARY - JUNE THOMAS, PRESIDENT

Ladies:

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In spite of any stumbling blocks, we are continuing to pursue our goals. We have ordered 500 poppies and will be distributing them in May. I have spoken with Florence Spiwak, who coordinates the cookies to Hospitals and Nursing Homes for this area. If you have any cookies to donate, please have them to me by March 24, 1987.

Our membership is up to 150% now, so we are steadily moving up! We will have Initiation Ceremonies in April as none of us have been initiated into the Auxiliary. I am looking forward to seeing each member present at Post 5 Auxiliary Room. The date will be announced later. Our District 7 President, Betty Andrews will perform the ceremonies.

Anyone interested in holding an office in the Unit, please make your interest known. The nominating committee will be presenting its slate of nominees for the Auxiliary year 1987-1988. We need interested people to continue to carry out the programs for American Legion Auxiliary. Won't you help? Past Department President, Rose Skarin will install new officers on May 8, 1987. We are looking forward to seeing each of you there.

Our next meeting will be March 19th, if I don't see you, please remember our veterans at Ft. Lyons and Florence Nursing Home and get those cookies to me.

I am still encoured and wish to assure you that we are ---  
"A Unit, Under God, Fulfilling a Commitment"

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~~After Expenses Income to Qualify for VA Home Loan~~

~~Dollars per Month:~~

<del>Family Size</del>	<del>Northeast</del>	<del>South</del>	<del>Midwest</del>	<del>West</del>
<del>1</del>	<del>\$ 411</del>	<del>\$ 409</del>	<del>\$ 399</del>	<del>\$ 443</del>
<del>2</del>	<del>646</del>	<del>643</del>	<del>627</del>	<del>697</del>
<del>3</del>	<del>786</del>	<del>781</del>	<del>763</del>	<del>847</del>
<del>4</del>	<del>873</del>	<del>868</del>	<del>848</del>	<del>941</del>
<del>5</del>	<del>951</del>	<del>946</del>	<del>924</del>	<del>1,025</del>

~~VA officials emphasize that the new criteria provides an excellent barometer to use in gauging an individual's ability to meet home mortgage obligations. However, the final determinant is a veteran's financial condition. If in good shape financially, veterans may spend more than 41 percent of their gross income on fixed expenses or have slightly less than the after expenses minimum and still qualify for a loan.~~

~~There is strong opposition in the real estate industry. Real estate brokers charge that lower ranking personnel are being driven out of home ownership, and that VA minimums are unrealistically high for lower-cost cities and rural areas. VA officials counter that their statistics demonstrate that living in a rural area is not necessarily cheaper than in an urban area. What is saved on lower rent tends to be expended on trips to doctors and into town, they assert.~~

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years. That agenda, in it's simplest terms is to protect veterans programs from budgetary damage while ~~simultaneously~~ <sup>budget</sup> assuring sufficient defense funding to protect the nations security.

This year, for the first time since 1981, the Senate is controlled by a democrat party majority. Along with this majority go the chairmanships of virtually all committees and sub-committees and principal control over what legislation will reach the floor for consideration.

To even the most casual observers, the last 6 years have been difficult ones for veterans. The reasons for this difficulty have had less to do with the majority in the Senate then with a bipartisan consensus that the nation must put its fiscal house in order.

The legion has agreed with this consensus, but has encountered an unwillingness to recognize until very recently that the cost of veterans programs and benefits have contributed nothing to persistently high federal deficits. By comparison with other domestic federal programs, VA expenditures have been tightly controlled. This is one reason why the VA Budget has consumed and ever-decreasing share of total federal funds.

For some, the change in party domination of The Senate and the fact that the President now faces a House and Senate controlled by an opposing party may suggest a reversal in the trend to reduce spending on veterans. For others, the election results constitute an undesirable threat to the progress having been made to rebuild the nation's defenses.

The fact of the matter is that the Democratic majority in The Senate is slim enough to counsel caution against either unjustified hopes that the threat to veterans is over or that a bipartisan consensus on deficit reduction has been dissolved.

The challenge to both veterans and defense is guaranteed by the ongoing requirement of the Gramm-Rudman-Hollings deficit reduction law to reduce budgetary "Red Ink" by \$31 Billion each year until the deficit is eradicated in FY 1991. In other words no matter who controls Congress and no matter what The Administration proposes, Budgets will be constrained, deficit-reducing reconciliation legislation will be favorably considered and appropriations to actually pay for federal activities will decline.

The Legion made significant progress last year in convincing Congress that veterans have not caused the deficit for the first time in 6 years, veterans were exempt from reconciliation reductions.



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~~Employment programs for younger veterans must be improved and the VA home loan program must be \*strengthened. For all generations of veterans, particularly service disabled veterans, There must be sufficient VA personnel to process claims in a timely manner. The claims made by Agent Orange in radiation-exposed veterans must be adjudicated in a fair and impartial atmosphere.~~

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The VA adopted the "special consideration" to veterans philosophy of The Small Business Administration (SBA) requirement of PL 93-237. The agency has directed all facilities having procurement requirements for which vietnam veterans and disabled veterans owned small businesses are known sources to take affirmative action to solicit these firms and assist them in participating in the VA procurement process.

~~The VA uses both the competitive, sealed bids and negotiation purchasing methods. Depending on the commodity, cost contracts are definite quantity, fixed price with definite delivery dates or call-type contracts with delivery orders placed as the need arises.~~

~~Each VA purchasing office maintains active bidding lists and commodity index files, indicating the various items offered by prospective bidders.~~

~~Firms interested in being placed on the bidders list are required to submit standard form 129. This form should be completed in full and signed by an officer of the company who is authorized to execute contracts. Catalogs, price lists, and other informational material on the firm's product or service should~~

~~also be submitted, if available.~~

For further information on the VA's procurement process, or to request the necessary SF 129, write to the Deputy Director, Office of Small or Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU), Veterans Administration, 810 Vermont Ave, N.W, Washington, D.C. 20420.

~~While the VA is not authorized to set aside noncompetitive contract awards for veterans owned businesses, it feels that its efforts to actively seek out and assist these firms in competing for VA contracts will have a substantial and positive impact on the success of veteran owned and operated businesses.~~

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In addition, turnage described plans to turn back to the government \$75 million which had ben earmarked for treatment of "Category C" veterans. Those with private health insurance which can be billed by the VA under provisions for third party reimbursement, established during the 99th Congress.

Jonathen Steinberg, chief counsel of The Senate Veterans Affairs Committee, and Mack Fleming, chief counsel of the House Veterans Affairs Committee, discussed the status of a pending veterans legislation.

Art Blank, director of re-adjustments counseling service to the VA Department of Medicine and Surgery, discussed the VET Center programs's development and history, and suggested that the time may be near to remove the centers from remote locations and to integrate them, where possible, into existing VA facilities.

The UPCC also heard reports prepared by commission staff members on a variety of issues of concern to The American Legion, including:

- the status of The Beneficiary Travel Allowance.
- the outlook for the FY 1988 Department of Defense Budget.
- National Security implications of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) and its effect on the nations blood donor pool.
- Challenges to Federal Veterans Employment Programs.

The VPCC is not a policy making body of the national organization. Its authority is limited to fact-finding and the formulation of recommendations for consideration by those national commissions in whose area of responsibility the recommendations may fall, and in advising the national executive committee.

Any recommendations of the committee, if accepted, is formally proposed through the legions's resolution process and is acted upon only as a result of national convention or NEC approval.

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110 E. ENTERPRISE / COLORADO SPRINGS, COLORADO 80907  
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# Newsletter

\* For Woody



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Mar 1987

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Dollars per month

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1	\$ 411	\$ 409	\$ 399	\$ 443
2	646	643	627	697
3	786	781	763	847
4	873	868	848	941
5	951	946	924	1,025

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VETERANS FACE CONTINUED CHALLENGES IN NEW CONGRESS:

WITH THE 1986 ELECTIONS NOW A MATTER OF HISTORY, THE 100TH CONGRESS CONVENED ON JAN 6. THERE ARE MANY NEW FACES IN BOTH THE HOUSE AND SENATE, BUT THE AGENDA FOR THE AMERICAN LEGION REMAINS THE SAME AS IT HAS BEEN FOR THE LAST SEVERAL YEARS. THAT AGENDA, IN ITS SIMPLEST TERMS IS TO PROTECT VETERANS PROGRAMS FROM BUDGETARY DAMAGE WHILE SIMULTANEOUSLY ASSURING SUFFICIENT DEFENSE FUNDING TO PROTECT THE NATION'S SECURITY.

THIS YEAR, FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE 1981, THE SENATE IS CONTROLLED BY A DEMOCRAT PARTY MAJORITY. ALONG WITH THIS MAJORITY GO THE CHAIRMANSHIPS OF VIRTUALLY ALL COMMITTEES AND SUBCOMMITTEES AND PRINCIPAL CONTROL OVER WHAT LEGISLATION WILL REACH THE FLOOR FOR CONSIDERATION.

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Vietnam Veterans AND Disabled Veterans in Business

signed by an officer of the company who is authorized to execute contracts. Catalogs, price lists, and other informational material on the firm's product or service should also be submitted, if available.

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The 8.5 percent rate means that the monthly payment for principal and interest on the new VA loan of \$70,000 will drop \$25 to

have opportunities to have the Veterans Administration as one of their customers.

In order to fulfill its mission of service to the millions of men and women who served their country, the VA - the government's third largest agency - must purchase goods and services for the operation of its medical centers, outpatient clinics, nursing homes, domiciliarys, outreach centers, research facilities, and offices.

The VA adopted the "special consideration" to veterans philosophy of the Small Business Administration (SBA) requirement of 91.93-237. The Agency has directed all facilities having procurement requirements for which Vietnam veterans and disabled veteran owned small businesses are known sources to take alternative action to solicit these firms and assist them in participating in the VA procurement process.

The VA uses both the competitive, sealed bids and negotiation purchasing methods. Depending on the commodity, cost contracts are definite quantity, fixed price with definite delivery dates or call-type contracts with delivery orders placed as the need arises.

Each VA purchasing office maintains active bidders list and commodity index files, indicating the various items offered by prospective bidders.

Firms interested in being placed on the bidder's list are required to submit Standard Form 29. This form should be completed in full and



To \$538.24. As recently as one year ago, the monthly payment on the same loan would have been 640.32. Based on the 10.5 percent rate then in effect. This represents a savings for veterans of \$102.08 per month on the average loan.

VET Benefit developments presented to Plan group.

Washington (A&NS) - The American Legion's Veterans Planning and Coordinating Committee has completed two day of discussions and meetings with members of the Reagan Administration, representatives of the House and Senate Veterans Affairs committees, and others concerned with the delivery of Veterans benefits.

The VPCC, which meets semiannually, brings the chairmen of the Legislative, VA+R, Economic and Public Relations Commissions together with legal and medical consultants, Legion leaders, and staff members to consider appropriate responses to challenges to veterans interests. The committee is chaired by National Commander James P. Dean.

The meeting agenda included issues surrounding the proposed FY 1988 Federal Budget and certain legislative initiatives which are likely to affect veterans in terms of their health, economic and social well being.

Thomas K. Turnage, Administrator of Veterans Affairs,

discussed the effect of a proposed \$550 million increase in the VA Budget. Despite the increase the VA is going forward with plans to cut 2,500 - 3,000 full time equivalent employees from the payroll, in keeping with recent trends toward trimming the workforce.

In addition, Turnage described plans to turn back to the government \$25 million which had been earmarked for treatment of "Category C" veterans - those with private health insurance which can be billed by the VA under provisions for third party reimbursement, established during the 99<sup>th</sup> Congress.

Jonathan Steinberg, chief counsel of the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee, and Mark Fleming, chief counsel of the House Veterans Affairs Committee, discussed the status of pending veterans legislation.

Art Blank, Director of readjustment counseling service in the VA Department of Medicine and Surgery, discussed the Vet Center program's development and history, and suggested that the time may be near to remove the centers from remote locations and to integrate them, where possible, into existing VA facilities.

The UPEC also heard reports prepared by commission staff members on a variety of issues of concern to the American Legion, including - The status of The Beneficiary Travel Allowance:

- The outlook for the FY 1988 Department of Defense Budget;

- National Security implications of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS), and its effect on the nations Blood donor pool; and

- Challenges to Federal veterans employment programs.

The VPCC is not a policymaking body of the National Organization. Its authority is limited to fact-finding and the formulation of recommendations for consideration by those national commissions in whose areas of responsibility the recommendations may fall, and in advising the National Executive Committee.

Any recommendations of the committee, if accepted, is formally proposed through the legion's resolution process and is acted upon only as a result of National Convention or NEC approval.

From The ADJUTANT:

Well MOTHER NATURE HAS forced us to cancel another meeting. Here's a little bit of what is going on with Post 209.

Four-Corner Beauty Parade - 209 has the privilege of hosting the event this year. It will be held 24-26 April at the Clarion Hotel. Plans are to hold a Golf Tournament during this weekend. It will be at Cimarron Hills Golf Course. More details in next

MONTH'S NEWSLETTER:

Post Home: We have been looking into the possibility of either purchasing or leasing a post home. Not all the figures are in yet and as soon as we find out all the options that are available to us we will be passing them on at future post meetings. So plan to attend all future meetings.

Doc Thomas is out of the hospital and doing fine. He should be back on Tuesday night in the near future.

Gym Reese has been admitted to the Air Force Academy hospital. We wish him a speedy recovery.

Of course I'm doing o.k. getting stronger every day and hope to be back on Tuesday night soon.

Our sympathy goes out to John Druce who lost his father last month. John our sorrows are with you.

Our bulk mailing application has been submitted and we should be hearing something soon. This would cut our expenses a great deal. Thanks Bill Hanson for all your help in this area.

We are also in the process of updating our constitution and by-laws. They have been

goals. We have ordered 500 poppies and will be distributing them in May. I have spoken with Florence Spiwak, who coordinates the cookies to Hospitals and Nursing Homes for this area. If you have any cookies to donate, please have them to me by March 24, 1987.

Our membership is up to 150% now, so we are steadily moving up! We will have Initiation Ceremonies in April as none of us have been initiated into the Auxiliary. I am looking forward to seeing each member present at Post 5 Auxiliary Room. The date will be announced later. Our District 7 President, Betty Andrews will perform the ceremonies.

Anyone interested in holding an office in the Unit, please make your interest known. The nominating committee will be presenting its slate of nominees for the Auxiliary year 1987-1988. We need interested people to continue to carry out the programs for American Legion Auxiliary. Won't you help? Past Department President, Rose Skarin will install new officers on May 8, 1987. We are looking forward to seeing each of you there.

Our next meeting will be March 19th, if I don't see you, please remember our veterans at Ft. Lyons and Florence Nursing Home and get those cookies to me.

I am still encoured and wish to assure you that we are ---  
"A Unit, Under God, Fulfilling a Commitment"

June Thomas - President