



Veterans' Affairs
Committee

The Honorable Mayor Jonathan Rothschild
And Honorable Council Members
City of Tucson
P.O. Box 27210
Tucson, AZ 85726

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Subject: Veterans' Affairs Committee 2011 Annual Report

In 2011, the Veterans' Affairs Committee (VAC) pursued its function to provide a common forum to member organizations for discussion and coordination of activities. Each meeting participating organizations including the American Legion, Association of Vietnam Veterans of America, Disabled American Veterans, Korean War Veterans' Association, the Military Officers Association of America, the Military Order of the Purple Heart, the Tucson Jewish War Veterans, Veterans of Foreign Wars, the Vietnam Veterans of America, the Tucson Airport Authority (Airport Military Lounge), Arizona Department of Veterans Services, the Veterans Administration Hospital, Arizona Department of Economic Security Employment Services, the Tucson Veterans Cemetery Group and the Womens' Army Corps Veterans Association, had a chance to distribute information and report on upcoming events, programs and projects.

The Committee's activities rely on the contributions of its member organizations and the generosity of local businesses and citizens. The VAC sponsored or had members participate in several Tucson 2011 events:

- The Four Chaplains Ceremony held in February honored the four military chaplains of different religious faiths and denominations who gave their lives to save others when the U.S.A.T. Dorchester was torpedoed and sunk during World War II. The VAC commissioned a bronze plaque created to honor the Four Chaplains. Dignity Memorial donated the plaque to the Committee. The plaque was permanently mounted in Veterans' Memorial Park in Tucson on February 3, 2011, the 68th Anniversary of the sinking of the U.S.A.T. Dorchester.
- In April 2011, the Committee voted to send representatives to the United Arizona Veterans (UAV) meetings held in Phoenix. The UAV is an organization whose "purpose is to support and endorse legislative actions at state and federal levels that further the general welfare of all Arizona Veterans and their families. It is dedicated to activities and objectives that stimulate love of state and country." Committee member Norman Ross was inducted into The Arizona Veterans Hall of Fame, which is a major program of the Unified Arizona Veterans.

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- The Veterans Day Parade was held November 11 and sponsored by the American Legion Post 7. The VAC participated in the honoring of all veterans by providing a committee car and inviting Mayor Robert Walkup to ride along in support.
- The Committee voted to participate in the Wreaths Across America event on December 10, 2011, by purchasing wreaths that were placed on local veterans' graves. Wreaths Across America is a non-profit organization with five hundred participating locations nation wide. Their mission is to Remember, Honor, and Teach, in part, by placing wreaths on veterans' graves during the holiday season.
- Operation Exodus sponsored by the VAC, took place December 20th through 22nd, just before the Christmas holiday. It is an annual event designed to make the trip of young soldiers on their way home at Christmastime more comfortable by providing healthy snacks, refreshments, and other essentials to ease their journey. For many of the troops, some expected to have late flights and long layovers, it is their last stateside leave before being sent to Iraq, Afghanistan or other military installations overseas. As an addition to the "goody bags", Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords' Office provided Christmas cards made by local public, private, and charter school students as well as retirement communities, clubs, organizations and individuals. Committee members and volunteers provided conversation and thanks for the soldiers' service.

The Veterans' Affairs Committee appreciates the Mayor, Council and City Clerk's support.

Respectfully submitted,


Vern Pall

Chairman, Tucson Veterans' Affairs Committee

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