



Newsletter

February 2004 Manny Bacon Post 1758

PROBLEMS AT CASTLE POINT

Moe Baxter submitted a very disturbing report on the treatment of veterans at Castle Point.

Everything from money being stolen from patients to a Partially Paralyzed veteran choking to death on his dinner.

After reading the report I sent an e-mail to our senators and congress woman requesting that there be an investigation. I signed it with my name and title. I then informed the County Commander. He was not happy. I'm just letting you all know now so if you see me wearing a hat just like yours again this summer you all will know why.

As you all know I've been an outspoken veterans advocate and a veteran choking to death in a hospital is a red flag something isn't right. So I made a stand for which I have a feeling I may be paying a price for at election time. In any event I took off from work on the 12th so Moe and I could go to Castle Point together.

The County Commander may be going as well. I will keep you informed on what we find.

Cares Plan Submitted to VA Secretary

No big surprises here .

Acute and Chronic psychiatry relocated to Castle point from Montrose . Nursing home beds relocated from Montrose to Castle Point.

All Spinal cord injuries relocated from castle point to the Bronx.

Legion Vows To Fight Veterans Hospital Closures

WASHINGTON (Feb. 14, 2004) - Removing health care services at veterans hospitals, especially in time of war, makes no sense to the 2.7 million-member American Legion. The nation's largest veterans organization plans to work with the Department of Veterans Affairs, and Congress if necessary, to ensure that the proposed "realignment" of the system's capital assets does not strand veterans seeking health care.

"In this process, the men and women who fight our wars are the most important assets," American Legion National Commander John Brieden said today, after VA's Capital Asset Realignment for Enhanced Service Commission released its analysis of VA's health care realignment plan. "My organization will fight to keep health care services available to veterans and prevent the blanket usage of contracted care by VA. Since the beginning of the CARES process, The American Legion has maintained health care services must not be disrupted by the system's "realignment" for any veteran relying on VA for their health care. Are we surprised by the proposed closures? We're not surprised. We're prepared. Prepared to protect veterans' health care."

The commission does not rubber stamp all the initial recommendations contained in VA's July 2003 CARES Draft National Plan, which included termination of health care services at seven VA hospitals. The commission supports a limited transfer of health care services from Waco, but with the addition of a new outpatient clinic. However, the commission supports VA's proposed transfer of services from Pittsburgh's Highland Drive campus to the University Drive campus, and it agrees with VA that the Brecksville, Ohio, campus should be closed and its services moved to Wade Park. Armed with its own independent analysis, The American Legion will fight the proposed closures in Ohio and Pennsylvania. The American Legion formed a task force to study the health care needs of veterans served by the seven hospitals at which VA proposed terminating health care services.

Members of the Legion panel, which included engineers and

architects, studied the sites: Canandaigua, N.Y.; Pittsburgh; Lexington, Ky.; Brecksville, Ohio; Gulfport, Miss.; Livermore, Calif.; and Waco, Texas.

If the Ohio site were to close, the Legion panel concluded, then the transfer site would not have ample resources to handle the influx. Further, the Pennsylvania hospital handles so many veterans, according to the Legion report, that it would take about \$90 million worth of construction - of a type not on VA's drawing board - to prepare the alternative sites.

Backed by The American Legion, the CARES Commission upheld VA's plan to build a hospital at Orlando; to create blind-rehabilitation centers at Biloxi, Miss., and Long Beach, Calif.; and to develop spinal-cord-injury centers at Denver; Minneapolis; Little Rock, Ark.; and either Syracuse or Albany, N.Y. Although VA envisions a new hospital for Las Vegas, Nev., the commission recommends a continued partnership with Nellis Air Force Base and that a new hospital be built if veterans' needs are unfulfilled.

POT OF GOLD

Name drawn was William Muller. Not present.

The pot is now up to \$185.00.

Half of that could be yours. But you got to be there to win it.

SENATE COMMITTEE TO HOLD FLAG DESECRATION HEARING

Judiciary Panel to Receive Testimony on Senate Joint Resolution 4

After almost a year of inactivity, Congress will once again examine the constitutional amendment to protect the American flag from acts of physical desecration. Senate Joint Resolution 4 - the companion measure to House Joint Resolution 4, which passed the House last June by a 300-125 super-majority - will be the subject of a hearing entitled, "Letting the People Decide." The hearing will be held on March 10 at 10:00 a.m. in Room 106 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building in Washington, DC.

For the past 14 years, the U.S. Senate has been the major stumbling block in allowing this legislation to become part of the Constitution. Members of the American Legion family should e-mail and telephone their senators, urging them to support passage of S.J. Res. 4. Once passed by the Senate, S.J. Res. 4 would go to the states for ratification. For Legion family members attending the Washington Conference, the hearing will be taking place on the last day of the conference activities. Legion family members unable to attend the hearing in person are encouraged to send letters to their senators, asking them to "let the people decide."

Latest on Capt. Speicher

The beam bearing the letters MSS has been turned over to the FBI for testing. There is also talk of removing the million dollar reward that's been offered. I find it interesting that Saddams sons were worth 25 million.

But one missing American Pilot isn't worth 1 million any longer.
Please tell our Reps that we don't want to see that reward removed.

Post sends flowers to 15-year-old girls Hero

When Nikki Mendincino was 10 years old a group of veteran's came to her School and spoke about their experiences. This meeting made such an impression on this little girl she became a veterans advocate, created a web site dedicated to MIA/POW , and started regularly visiting the veterans at the VA hospital. She appeared on talk shows spoke at legion, and VFW meetings, Rolling thunder events and was honored by the state of Pennsylvania. She was at the vigil Amy and I attended at the Capital for Capt. Speicher. Unfortunately the man who got her started down this path and so influents her life passed away without much in the way of family or friends so Nikki sent out an E-mail which the post received asking that flowers be sent to the gentleman's funeral. He was a WW2 DDay Veteran. Well we got quite a thank you via E-mail and she says a formal one will be coming. There is a link to her web site on our post web page.

The Next County Meeting will be held at the Beacon Post Corned Beef and Cabbage will be served at 7:00 meeting starts 8:00 Pm on March 17.
The Beacon post is located at 413 Main St Beacon NY. Parking is in the rear.