



DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
Medical Center
Coatesville, PA 19320



Office of Public Affairs

Reply: 542/003
Kathleen Pomorski
610-383-0203
kathleen.pomorski@va.gov

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Coatesville Veterans Affairs Medical Center Hosts Veterans WEEK Celebrations

Coatesville, PA . October 22nd . In recognition of Veterans Day 2008, which takes place on Tuesday, November 11th this year, Coatesville Veterans Affairs Medical Center (CVAMC) will host a week long celebration, paying tribute to veterans. Many events will be open to the community as well.

It has long been our tradition at Coatesville VAMC to honor veterans for an entire week in addition to Veterans Day, said Gary W. Devansky, "This week of celebration is a time dedicated solely to honoring those who selflessly fought to preserve freedom."

The week-long festivities kick off on Wednesday, November 5th in the Great Hall, Building 5, with the Women Veterans Luncheon, where Wilma L. Vaught, retired Brigadier General of the United States Air Force, will speak. Also present will be Michael Moreland, Network Director of VA Healthcare Veterans Integrated Services Network (VISN) 4. The luncheon, featuring delicious dishes prepared by CVAMC's Nutrition & Food Service, is open to all female veterans in the community. The program begins at 10:30am and will run through 1pm. Following the luncheon will be an Interfaith Service at 2pm in the All Faith Chapel, located in Building 72 on the CVAMC Campus.

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All are welcome to attend the Veterans Week Parade on Friday, November 7th, beginning at 9:30am. A Pontiac Firebird, outfitted in red, white and blue stars and stripes, and driven by Teri DiLiberio, will lead the parade. The patriotic convertible will carry the parade Grand Marshall, Fred Mitchell, former Seaman 1st Class of the US Navy, and survivor of the sinking of USS Drexler in May of 1945. The vehicle will also carry his wife of 59 years, Lila Ruth Mitchell, and CVAMC Director, Gary W. Devansky. Many local organizations and groups will participate, including marching bands from Coatesville, Octorara and West Chester East High Schools. Additional marchers include the Atglen Fire Department along with Coatesville High School Cheerleaders. Local and State Veterans Service Organizations will be represented in the parade as well. Many CVAMC services will display creative parade floats that will be judged at the conclusion of the procession and mascots from Philadelphia and Lancaster sports teams are also expected to entertain parade-goers.

A flag ceremony will follow the parade, beginning at 1:30pm. Veterans and other participants will line up and proceed to the American flag flying high at the top of the hill. A ceremony that calls all to reflect on the meaning of the flag will ensue.

On Tuesday, November 11th, Veterans Day at 10:45am, the Coatesville Veterans Council will hold a special salute to veterans at Veterans Plaza on First Avenue and Lincoln Highway in Coatesville. Many veterans receiving care at CVAMC will be present to partake in this solemn tribute. Additionally, CVAMC Director, Gary W. Devansky, along with dignitaries and other community leaders, will provide comments. The observance will conclude with the laying of a wreath at the base of the Coatesville Veterans Council War Memorial.

Any female veteran interested in attending the Women Veterans Luncheon must register ahead of time by calling 610-384-7711 x2701. Any organization wishing to participate in the parade may call 610-384-7711 x5005 to inquire about availability. For directions to the medical center campus as well as a map and updated event information, interested persons can visit www.coatesville.va.gov.

Any media wishing to attend the events may contact Kathleen Pomorski in the public affairs office at 610-383-0203 or kathleen.pomorski@va.gov. A media alert detailing events that are not open to the public will be sent the week prior to the celebration.

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