

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Contact: Anne Atkins
(804) 371-0441

Albert G. Horton, Jr. Memorial Veterans Cemetery Wreath Society kicks off campaign to place wreaths on all grave sites

SUFFOLK—At a meeting on September 10, members of the Albert G. Horton, Jr. Memorial Veterans Cemetery Wreath Society went into high gear in their campaign to collect funds to purchase evergreen wreaths for all gravesites in the cemetery. For the past two years, the Wreath Society has collected funds to place fresh wreaths throughout the cemetery.

The Wreath Society has been fundraising and purchasing live wreaths for the past two years. But, each year, their fund raising goal grows higher. In 2008, the Society collected \$8,400 and placed wreaths on 1,400 gravesites. In 2009, they collected \$18,720 for 2,400 wreaths. This year, their target is \$21,840 to fund 2,800 wreaths. The wreaths come from Maine and are purchased at cost from Ray Bennett's Florist in Suffolk.

"I'm sure we have enough people here in the Tidewater area who appreciate what our military community does every day and that we will meet our goal," said Jeanne Banks, Chairwoman of the Wreath Society. She added, "If everyone gave just one dollar, what a wonderful thing that would be."

Members of WAVES National, Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, the Patriot Guard Riders, and active duty military personnel will place the wreaths on Saturday, December 11, beginning at 9:30 a.m. Family members are invited to come early to place a wreath on the graves of their loved ones.

A wreath laying ceremony will follow at 11:30 a.m. at the Committal Shelter. The ceremony will feature speakers, music, and a procession from the Committal Shelter to the last row of graves where active duty members from every service branch will place wreaths on the remaining headstones.

The wreath laying ceremony at the Horton Cemetery incorporates elements of the Wreaths Across America Program which strives to remember, honor, and teach our younger generation about the

service and sacrifices of our nation's veterans. Approximately 350 ceremonies placing wreaths in veterans cemeteries will be held across the nation on December 11.

The tradition of laying wreaths began in 1992 when the Worcester Wreath Company, Worcester, ME, donated wreaths for the headstones of fallen heroes in Arlington National Cemetery. In 2005, they expanded their efforts to include veterans cemeteries around the country and Wreaths Across America was born.

The Albert G. Horton, Jr. Memorial Veterans Cemetery is one of two state-operated veterans cemeteries in Virginia. A similar, yet smaller, ceremony will be held at the Virginia Veterans Cemetery in Amelia.

The Albert G. Horton, Jr. Memorial Veterans Cemetery is located at 5310 Milners Road, Suffolk, VA. The public is encouraged to attend. Contributions can be sent to SunTrust Bank, 123 Main St., Suffolk, VA 23434. Checks can be made out to the Horton Wreath Society.

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