

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Wreaths to be laid on all graves at the Albert G. Horton, Jr. Memorial Veterans Cemetery; Ceremony to be held December 13

SUFFOLK— Wreaths honoring Virginia's veterans will be placed on all gravesites in the Albert G. Horton, Jr. Memorial Veterans Cemetery on Saturday, December 13, 2008, as part of the national Wreaths Across America observance. The tradition of laying wreaths began in 1992 when the Worcester Wreath Company donated wreaths for the headstones of fallen heroes in Arlington National Cemetery. In 2006, they expanded their efforts to include veteran cemeteries around the country and Wreaths Across America was born.

The Wreaths Across America ceremony will begin at 11:45 on the 13th with a Navy Color Guard singing of the National Anthem and invocation. At noon, Major Dean Gould, Virginia Civil Air Patrol, will read the Wreaths Across America tribute. The same tribute will be read simultaneously at veterans cemeteries around the U.S., linking participants in honoring the service and sacrifices of the nation's veterans. The ceremony will feature active duty service members from the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, and U.S. Coast Guard escorting veterans in placing a wreath at each of their respective service markers. A Korean War veteran and POW will place the POW/MIA wreath.

Following the laying of service wreaths, the ceremony will continue with a musical performance and a guest speaker from the U.S. Navy. Guests will then be lead by a bagpiper from the cemetery pavilion to the burial plots where active duty volunteers will place the final 25 wreaths. A bugler from the Salvation Army will play TAPS to conclude the ceremony.

Jeanne Banks, along with The Tidewater Tidal WAVES, lead a group of volunteers in raising more than \$8,000 to purchase the 1,700 wreaths needed for each headstone. Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, members of the Patriot Guard Riders, and active duty service members will begin placing wreaths on the headstones at 9 a.m. Saturday morning.

The Civil Air Patrol partners with Wreaths Across America, a nonprofit organization, to remember, honor, and teach about the service and sacrifices of our nation's veterans. This year, approximately 350 similar ceremonies will be held across the nation.

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.

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