



PVAHCS VA Veterans Day Parade News Release

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For Immediate Release

Oct. 17, 2008

Annual VA Veterans Day Parade Slated for Tuesday, November 11, 2008

Designated by National Committee as Regional Site for Celebrating Veterans Day

PHOENIX — The national committee that oversees planning and coordination of the observance of Veterans Day has selected the Phoenix VA Health Care System's VA Veterans Day Parade as a Regional Site for celebrating the holiday.

Under Honorary Chairman, Pres. George W. Bush, and Chairman, Hon. James B. Peake, Secretary of Veterans Affairs, the committee recognizes regional events that "serve as model events to honor America's veterans."

The VA Veterans Day Parade will honor all our nation's veterans who have served in war, conflict and peacetime. This year's theme is "Serving with Honor," paying special tribute to those who have served in Operation Enduring Freedom (OIF), in Afghanistan, and Operation Iraqi Freedom (OEF).



Four local OEF-OIF veterans will serve as Grand Marshals of the parade. They include:

- **Tim Hernandez, of Florence**, who served with the U.S. Army
- **Laura Bringas, who resides in the Maryvale area of Phoenix** and served with the U.S. Marine Corps
- **Aya Harrison, of Chandler**, who served with the U.S. Air Force
- **Kevin Ivory, who resides in central Phoenix** and served with the U.S. Navy

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The Carl T. Hayden Veterans Affairs Medical Center, which is part of the Phoenix VA Health Care System, has been serving veterans in Maricopa County since 1951. We are a level one tertiary care facility that offers a variety of services to more than 67,000 veterans. We currently have 130 inpatient beds for medical and surgical patients, 80 beds for nursing home patients and 48 inpatient beds for mental health patients. We are honored to serve our veterans who have paid the price for us to enjoy our freedoms.

VA Veterans Day Parade is Premier Event
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Also serving as Grand Marshals in the 2008 VA Veterans Day Parade will be:

- **Connie Stevens, who will serve as Celebrity Grand Marshal;** Recording artist and star of films, television and stage, she has been involved in many humanitarian projects through the years, including visiting troops from the Vietnam War to the Persian Gulf.
- **Jason LeVecke, Business Community Grand Marshal,** who served with the Marine Corps from 1997 to 2001, and is president of MJKL Enterprises Inc., which owns and operates Carl's Jr. restaurants in Arizona.
- **Lex, a decorated military working dog,** whose handler, Marine Cpl. Dustin Lee, was killed in Iraq in 2007. Lex, a German Shepherd, sustained injuries in the same attack that killed his partner, and was subsequently retired and adopted by Lee's family, who will be here with Lex.

One of the largest such events in the nation, the parade will feature approximately 100 entries, including historic military vehicles; Veterans Service Organizations such as the Disabled American Veterans, American Legion and others; marching units, color guards; canine and equestrian units; floats; giant helium balloons, and bands. US Airways is a presenting sponsor of the event.



This is the 12th year that the Phoenix VA Health Care System has coordinated the VA Veterans Day Parade, which is supported by the City of Phoenix Parks, Recreation and Library Department and the Veterans Medical Leadership Council.

For more information, contact the VA Veterans Day Parade Coordinator and Public Affairs Officer for the Phoenix VA Health Care System, Paula Pedene, APR, at paula.pedene@va.gov.

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