



# The Center's Review

A newsletter for donors and friends of:  
The Philadelphia Veterans Multi-Service & Education Center, Inc.

Volume 1, Issue 3 July 2008

## From the Desk of Edward Lowry : Executive Director

### Executive Director:

Edward J. Lowry

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As The Center approaches it's 28th year of services to our Veteran community, we are happy to announce the success we have had in addressing the critical needs of the homeless, disabled, unemployed and less fortunate Veterans that have benefited from The Center's community support and service.

Without the help and support of our friends, supporters and sponsors, it would be impossible to address the multiple and changing needs of our region's Veterans.

Each era of our Nation's Veterans from World War II through our most recently discharged Veterans that served in Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) and Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) are experiencing problems and needs that are very different and unique.

Our competent staff has been able to make the transition necessary to address the ever changing needs of our region's Veterans and their families.

Thanks to many of our local elected officials, the local members of organized labor, and the contractors associations, John DeBella and the staff of WMGK (102.9 FM), the Delaware River Port Authority, Penn's Landing Association, the City Trust (Girard Estate) and the numerous private citizens and corporations that fund and donate the critically needed finances to "serve those who have served".

## Doo Wop Festival Reminder!

**The 3rd Annual Philadelphia Doo Wop Festival will be held on Saturday, August, 9th, 2008, from 1 PM to 7 PM at Penn's Landings Great Plaza. We hope to see everyone there for a great day of fun and music!**

**Performers:** Headlining Act Jimmy Beaumont and The Skyliners, The Continentals, Billy Carlucci of Billy & The Essentials, Billy Harner (The Human Perkulator), Cornerstone featuring Golden Voice Harry, Reunion, Street Corner Five, Now & Then, The Norristones.

**Special Guests:** King Arthur Dance Party playing his Crown Sounds, Harvey Holiday, Lou Costello, Philly's Own Frank Lafaro, Philadelphia's Favorite Son Timmy Kelly, Ed Marra, and a Tribute to Buddy Holly.

**All Proceeds will benefit The Philadelphia Veterans Multi-Service & Education Center with direct services to Veterans.**

Please visit [www.phillydoo-wopfestival.org](http://www.phillydoo-wopfestival.org) or call 215-923-2600 for more details



A Special thank you to the following Doo Wop Committee Members:

William Diamond, Tom Dooley, Ed Donnelly, Joseph Dougherty, Bonnie Egan, Patrick Eiding, Patrick Gillespie, John Kane, Edward Keenan, Edward Lowry, and Patricia Pomroy.

## Donors Corner

Thank you to John DeBella, the staff at WMGK 102.9 Radio, and all of those who donated on June 20th, 2008 during the 2nd Annual John DeBella's Veterans Radiothon. With your help \$75,000 was raised for homeless and unemployed Veterans!

Michelle and Pat Burrell of the Philadelphia Phillies donated a Phillies Suite to our Women's Homeless Transitional Housing Program (Walker House). The women Veterans will enjoy the Phillies Vs. Milwaukee Brewers on September 13th, 2008. Our women Veterans thank you both for this great day at the ballpark.

Two Guys and a Truck owner David Grogan and his business partner Dale donated one move per month to our homeless veteran clients moving into an apartment.

Jack Enea, singer and songwriter, donated 100 of his Red White Blue Album to our veteran clients. He will perform his song Red White Blue live at the 3rd Annual Philadelphia Doo Wop Festival on August 9th, 2008.



**Pictured Above:** Michelle Burrell, John DeBella, and Pat Burrell of the Philadelphia Phillies at the John DeBella Annual Veterans Radiothon on June 20th, 2008.

## Volunteers Giving Back



On May 21st, 2008, a group of employees from Fannie Mae volunteered their time to paint the exterior of our building located on 4th and Florist Streets in Old City Philadelphia.

Last year a large group of Fannie Mae employees painted our applications classroom and also refurbished our kitchen that helps prepare meals for homeless veterans.

Fannie Mae Volunteers on May 21st, 2008: Dennis Flannery, Beverly Lopez, Michael Tracy, Jeanette Connelly, Trevor Grant, Tanya Stevenson-Thompson, Peter McGonigle, Mark Bickert, Scott Scarcia, Robert Gyory, and John Lee.

Thank you all for your hard work and support!



In April, a group of WWII and Korean War Veterans from the Mt. Airy Center visited the Perimeter, our day service center for homeless Veterans. The gentleman donated knitted hats, gloves and socks for the homeless veterans, spent time talking with their fellow veterans and shared a meal with them.

Their generous assistance enabled us to enhance our programs for homeless veterans and showed them that people really do care about them. We especially liked their flier requesting assistance with the donations, which stated "Protect the Hands that Helped Protect You! Gloves for homeless Vets".

## David Keyser - A Forgotten War Hero



David Keyser from the Frankford neighborhood is one of the many veterans who returned to our City of Brotherly Love to live out the “American Dream.”

During his service in Vietnam he volunteered to serve as a “tunnel rat,” which was classified as “exceptionally hazardous” and was most often a single-person assignment.

The extensive network of underground tunnels he navigated was booby-trapped and well defended, resulting in frequent encounters with the enemy. Although he earned many medals, including the Purple Heart, two Bronze Stars with Valor Device and the Army Commendation Medal with Valor Device, his experience as a “tunnel rat” left a devastating effect

as he was exposed to Agent Orange, a powerful herbicide and defoliant, on a daily basis. As a result, Keyser developed severe medical conditions that caused him excruciating pain and eventually led to a drug dependency one year after returning home.

When he returned home in February 1969, no one cared. Keyser had numerous medical problems as a result of his service to his country. He could not hold a job, and he eventually lost his family. Living with the untreated mental and physical pain, he turned to illegal drugs for self-medication and soon found himself in jail with a five-year sentence that turned into twenty five years, as no one spoke up for him.

In 2007, Keyser decided to seek help from the Philadelphia Veterans Multi-Service & Education Center. At that time David was still in a prison pre-release program and was only

receiving \$108 a month from the Veterans Administration. To make matters worse, he had no family to live with and was trying unsuccessfully to maneuver in a world that had changed greatly since February 1969.

After spending eight months at the Center, life is looking brighter for our forgotten war hero. Keyser is now being treated by the VA Medical Team for his post traumatic stress

disorder and other medical conditions as a result of the Center’s partnership with the Veterans Administration. The Center provided him with transportation to and from the VA so he can get to his appointments. His disability checks have increased as a result of working

with the Center’s Veterans benefits counselor. Additionally, staff was able to find him an apartment and provide his security deposit and first months rent.

David Keyser is finally able to live on his own.

**“When he returned home in 1969, no one cared.”**

## Purple Heart Café Re-Opens (Open Monday through Friday 6:30am to 2:00pm)

Joan Lindsay, former owner of the Cottage Tea Room in Langhorne, PA has recently re-opened The Purple Heart Café to the public.

Located at the corner of 4th and Florist Streets in Old City Philadelphia (Entrance on 4th Street), customers can enjoy breakfast or lunch inside the Café or simply take their meal on the go.

Coming in mid September The Purple Heart Café will open a Tea Room

three days a week, Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday from 11am to 3pm.

We invite you to join us in an old world setting with soft lighting, music, a room for the children to enjoy a tea party and have their favorite drink served in “a teapot”. Whether you want a quick lunch or a leisurely tea, take a breath before rushing off to your busy day. We are excited to have you visit us!

The Veterans who volunteered their

time played a large part in helping to prepare the Café. Joan states “Everyday I open the door to the Café and I am reminded Freedom isn’t Free and I enjoy what I do because of their sacrifices”. Every time you visit the Café or the Tea Room you will be supporting The Philadelphia Veterans Multi-Service & Education Center.

Free Internet Access is also available for those who would like to check their emails or do a little work while enjoying the atmosphere.

## The Philadelphia Veterans Multi Service & Education Center, Inc.



**Serving those who served for over 27 Years**

213-217 N. 4th Street  
Philadelphia PA 19106

**Phone:** 215.923.2600

**Fax:** 215.925.8460

**Web:** [www.philavets.org](http://www.philavets.org)

**Our mission** is to provide employment, training and related educational services to honorable discharged Veterans. Also, to provide social and human services counseling and referrals to our Veteran clients experiencing barriers in finding their way back into the mainstream of society.

We provide a variety of free services to any honorably discharged veteran from any era in the tri-state area.

### Services / Programs

- Employment and Training
- Services to Homeless Veterans
- Transitional / Permanent Housing
- Referral Services



### **The Purple Heart Cafe**

**Open Weekdays 6:30 AM to 2:00 PM - Located at 4th and Florist Streets in Old City Philadelphia**

**There are a number of ways to donate and make an impact on a Veterans life:**

**Web** [www.PhilaVets.org](http://www.PhilaVets.org)

**Call** 1-800-923-VETS

**Mail** in a check payable to PVMSEC at: 213-217 N. 4th Street Philadelphia, PA 19106

**Leave a Lasting Legacy:** Name The Philadelphia Veterans Multi-Service & Education Center, Inc. as a beneficiary in your will

**United Way Donor Choice:** #04308

**Combined Federal Campaign:** #9226