



PRESS RELEASE

Governor McAuliffe Announces Fauquier County as Site for New Veterans Care Center

- 120-bed facility to be named in honor of the Puller family -

SPRINGFIELD - Governor Terry McAuliffe today announced that a site in Fauquier County has been selected for a planned 120-bed veterans care center.

“I am pleased to announce the center will be built on land donated by Fauquier County, the Vint Hill Economic Development Authority, and Vint Hill Village at no cost to the state,” **Governor McAuliffe stated**. “The new veterans care center will be a state-of-the-art facility providing skilled nursing care, Alzheimers/dementia care, and short term rehabilitative care. The Northern Virginia region is home to over 200,000 veterans, the second largest concentration in the Commonwealth, and we owe it to them, and their families, to build this new facility.

“I am also very pleased to announce that this care center will be named the Puller Veteran Care Center in honor of the multigenerational commitment by the Puller family to military service and veteran advocacy.”

The new Puller Veterans Care Center will be built on the former Vint Hill Farms Station in Fauquier County, which previously served as a United States Army and National Security Agency facility. The site played a critical role in eavesdropping on enemy communications during World War II, when it intercepted a message that helped lead to the D-Day invasion of Normandy.

“With its selection as the site of the new veterans care center, the former Vint Hill Farms Station is once again poised to serve as home to those that answered the call to duty,” **said John C. Harvey, Jr., Virginia Secretary of Veterans and Defense Affairs**.

The new care center will deliver top-quality care to Virginia veterans in a home-like setting. The 120-bed facility will feature all private rooms that will be organized into households and neighborhoods that surround a central community center.

“This state-of-the-art facility demonstrates Virginia’s continued dedication to providing excellent services to our veterans and their families,” **said Commissioner John L. Newby II of the Virginia Department of Veterans Services**.



Construction of the new veterans care center is planned to start in late 2017 and be completed in late 2019.

“Fauquier County is excited to have been chosen as the site of the new veterans care center,” said **Christopher N. Granger, Chairman of the Fauquier County Board of Supervisors**. “Our veterans are a critical part of this community, and this veterans care center will offer many veterans the care they have earned,” he added.

Planning for the new Northern Virginia Veterans Care Center, and a similar center in the Hampton Roads region, began in earnest during the 2015 General Assembly session with legislation patroned by Delegates Kirk Cox and Rich Anderson and Senators Toddy Puller and Bryce Reeves. Full funding for the two projects, estimated at \$96 million, was provided for in the budget, again patroned by Delegate Kirk Cox and approved unanimously by the 2016 General Assembly.

“As we ramp up our programs and services for younger veterans, especially in the areas of transition, employment, and education, we must not lose sight of the fact that one third of Virginia’s veterans are 65 and older,” said **House Majority Leader Kirk Cox**. “I believe I speak for all of the members of the Virginia General Assembly in affirming our unwavering support for veterans of all ages.”

The Northern Virginia Veterans Care Center will be the Commonwealth’s third veterans care center, joining the Virginia Veterans Care Center in Roanoke, which opened in 1992, and the Sitter & Barfoot Veterans Care Center in Richmond, which opened in 2008. Sites are currently being evaluated for the state’s fourth veterans care center, which will be located in the Hampton Roads region. A site is expected to be announced in July, with construction paralleling the Northern Virginia center.

About the Puller Family Legacy

General Lewis B. “Chesty” Puller was born in West Point, Virginia and served with distinction in Central America, WWII and the Korean War before retiring in 1955. He is one of only two people to receive five Navy Crosses and is one of the most decorated Marines in history. He retired to Saluda, Virginia and passed away in 1971.

Lt. Lewis B. Puller, Jr. served in Vietnam in 1968, where he was wounded when he tripped a booby trapped howitzer round, losing his right leg at the hip, left leg below the knee, left hand and several fingers on his right hand. Because he was out in front of his platoon, he saved most of them by taking the hit. He was awarded a purple heart and several other military honors. He graduated from William & Mary Law School and ran for Congress in 1978. He died in Alexandria, Virginia in 1994, shortly after winning the Pulitzer Prize for his autobiography.

Lt. Puller met his wife, Toddy, while she was a school teacher in Woodbridge, Virginia, after graduating from Mary Washington College. In 1991, she won a seat in the House of Delegates. In 1999, she won a seat in the Senate of Virginia. She carried the legislation to create Virginia Veteran and Family Support, the Virginia Values Veterans (V3) Program, and last year’s legislation to build the two new care centers. There is not a part of the Department of Veterans Services unaffected by her legislative efforts, which were always propelled by the memory of her husband and father-in-law. She lives in Alexandria, Virginia.

- See more at: <https://governor.virginia.gov/newsroom/newsarticle?articleId=15485#sthash.2kMNIRMI.dpuf>

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