



June 1, 2009

### **VAAC / COMMANDER'S CALL JULY 9**

Mark your calendars for a Governor's Veterans Affairs Advisory Committee / Commander's Call meeting on July 9. The meeting will be held in the Federal Way area at a location to be determined. An invitation will be sent through the WDVA ListServ and posted on the public events page at:

[www.dva.wa.gov](http://www.dva.wa.gov) .

We will be discussing the state's plans to serve the 81<sup>st</sup> Brigade when they return from their deployment in August and how your Veterans Service Organization or community organization can get involved.

### **CEMETERY UPDATE**

Many thanks to everyone who participated in the Groundbreaking Ceremony on Memorial Day! This wonderful occasion would not have been possible without the donations and efforts put forth by dedicated Veterans and the Medical Lake and Spokane communities! I am excited to see the project enter into the next phase and will continue to share updates and pictures on the project throughout the summer months.



Photo courtesy of Jeff T. Green.

Bid documents for the project are due by June 16. For contractors interested in the project, visit the Department of General Administration website at: <https://fortress.wa.gov/ga/apps/BidCal/default.aspx> and click on Project 07-216, Eastern State Veterans Cemetery / Medical Lake.

### **VETERANS CONSERVATION CORPS IN THE HEADLINES!**

Congratulations to Mark Fischer and the Veterans Conservation Corps who recently received notoriety in several local newspapers and nationwide on CNN. Field coordinators and students participating in the VCC Academy have been shadowed by reporters from the Seattle Times and CNN and are scheduled to be featured in another regional paper at the end of June.

The stories tout the program's effectiveness in helping veterans transition from military to civilian roles while furthering the state's conservation efforts by restoring streams and habitats.

You can view the video from both the Seattle Times and CNN at:

[http://www.dva.wa.gov/vet\\_conservation\\_corps.html](http://www.dva.wa.gov/vet_conservation_corps.html)

Veterans interested in the VCC should contact Mark Fischer at: 360-725-2224 or [markf@dva.wa.gov](mailto:markf@dva.wa.gov) for more information.

### **VETERANS LEGISLATIVE COALITION**

The effectiveness of an organization is often tested during tough times. If you read the newspaper over the past few months, you know that the 2009 Legislative Session was considered the toughest session since the Great Depression.

When it came to veterans issues though, someone forgot to tell the VLC that they shouldn't ask for or expect too much! This year, the VLC successfully advocated for 23 pieces of legislation impacting veterans, National Guard Members, military personnel or their families. They were also successful in getting \$500,000 dedicated to the Veterans Innovations Program which serves veterans of OIF/OEF who face hardships following their deployment.

I appreciate the hard work and dedication of VLC Chairman Dennis Primoli and each VLC member, and commend the Veterans Service Organizations for their continued participation on this productive committee.