Governor Romney to Address VFW National Convention

Jul 12, 2012

The presumptive Republican candidate for this fall's presidential election has accepted an invitation to speak before the 113th National Convention of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S., which begins July 21 at the Reno-Sparks Convention Center in Reno, Nev. The event is closed to the public.

"We are most appreciative to Governor Mitt Romney for again taking time to address America's oldest and largest major combat veterans' organization," said VFW National Commander Richard L. DeNoyer, a retired Marine and Vietnam combat veteran from Middleton, Mass. The governor spoke at the VFW's 112th National Convention in San Antonio last August.

Governor Romney is scheduled to speak on July 24, one day after President Obama, which continues a long standing VFW tradition to provide a platform for those seeking the nation's highest office to address issues of importance directly to veterans, military service members and their families. DeNoyer said this is especially important during a time of war and instability abroad, and economic belt tightening at home.

"We hope to hear how both candidates will take the fight to our enemies and keep America safe through strong national defense and homeland security programs," he said. "We also want to know how they will create, enhance and protect veteran and military healthcare programs and Quality of Life initiatives, to include educational benefits and military retirement programs, as well as how they will improve veterans' job training and employment opportunities, and eliminate veterans' homelessness. We would also greatly appreciate hearing their commitment to returning our fallen from their battlefields."

Up to 12,000 VFW and Ladies Auxiliary delegates are expected to represent the organization's total membership of 2 million at the weeklong convention. Their mission is to approve new national priorities to guide the VFW as it lobbies Congress on issues important to the nation's veterans, service members and their families. Convention delegates will also elect a new VFW national commander and recognize prominent individuals and organizations for their support of veterans, the military and the nation.

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Awards to be presented are:

•VFW Gold Medal of Merit to the Montford Point Marine Association, accepted by Dr. James T. Averhart Jr., national president;
•VFW Aerospace Award to women's aviation and space pioneer Wally Funk;
•VFW Americanism Award to correspondent and author Joe Galloway;
•VFW Armed Services Award to the Army's Landstuhl Regional Medical Center in Germany, accepted by Col. Barbara R. Holcomb, commanding officer;
•VFW Citizenship Award to "Kids Thank a Veteran" director Cherie Reid;
•VFW Dwight D. Eisenhower Award to Army Chief of Staff Gen. Raymond T. Odierno;
•and VFW Teacher of the Year awards to Debra Rose Howell (Monte Cristo Elementary School, Granite Falls, Wash.), and George "Bud" Zorman (Mountain Home High School, Ark.).

Also addressing the delegates will be:

•Deputy Minister Chin, Hsiao-hui, Veterans Affairs Commission, Republic of China on Taiwan;
•Spencer Fleming, 2012 Buddy Poppy Child for the VFW National Home for Children, Eaton Rapids, Mich.;
•Retired Army Maj. Gen. John P. Herrling, executive director, National Museum of the U.S. Army Campaign;
•Retired Army Lt. Gen. Claude M. "Mick" Kicklighter, executive director, 50th Anniversary of the Vietnam War Commemoration;
•Yekaterina Priyezzheva, Russian co-chair of the U.S.-Russia Joint Commission on POW/MIAs;
•Elizabeth Scannell, Goose Creek, S.C., the $30,000 scholarship winner of VFW's annual Voice of Democracy program;
•Secretary Eric K. Shinseki, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs;
•Army Maj. Gen. Stephen D. Tom, commander of the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command;
•and many others.

Although the 113th VFW National Convention is closed to the general public, a video link to the general session will stream live at www.vfw.org beginning at 8 a.m. PDT, July 23-25.

ABOUT THE VFW: The Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S. is a nonprofit veterans' service organization composed of combat veterans and eligible military service members from the active, Guard and Reserve forces. Founded in 1899 and chartered by Congress in 1936, the VFW is the nation's largest organization of war veterans and its oldest major veterans' organization. With more than 2 million members located in more than 7,300 VFW Posts

worldwide, “NO ONE DOES MORE FOR VETERANS.” The VFW and its Auxiliaries are dedicated to veterans’ service, legislative advocacy, and military and community service programs nationwide. For more information or to join, visit our website at www.vfw.org.

MEDIA CREDENTIALING: The VFW National Convention is not open to the public, and only registered and credentialed media from bona fide news organizations will be approved to cover convention activities. A Daybook of speakers, dates and times will be released to interested media next week. To pre-register, contact Randi Law at VFW National Headquarters at rlaw@vfw.org or (816) 968-1104. Onsite registration will begin July 21 in room D10 of the Reno-Sparks Convention Center, phones (775) 236-1207 or 236-1208. Additional contacts are VFW National Headquarters communications director Jerry Newberry at jnewberry@vfw.org or (816) 968-1168, and VFW Washington Office public affairs director Joe Davis at jdavis@vfw.org or (202) 608-8357. In Reno, Newberry and Davis can be reached by e-mail or their cells, which are (816) 835-1851 and (202) 374-9998, respectively.