

News Release for Windber Memorial Day Celebration

The borough of Windber and the surrounding communities will celebrate Memorial Day on May 31, 2010 with a parade and the dedication of the Memorial Wall in Windber Veterans Park. The parade will begin at 10:00 AM, and Memorial Day services will follow in Veterans Park.

The Memorial Day celebration is sponsored by the Windber Veterans Association under the leadership of Tom Geiger, and is composed of the American Legion Windber Post No. 137, Windber VFW Post No. 4795, and the World War II 50th Anniversary Commemorative Committee. Mr. Geiger is the former chairman of the Windber World War II Committee which was the guiding force behind the establishment of the Windber Veterans Park. This park was dedicated during Windber's 100th anniversary celebration in July, 1997 in conjunction with the commemoration of the 50th anniversary of America's participation in World War II. The park is a tribute to all service men and women past, present, and future; and demonstrates the community's commitment to honor her sons and daughters who have or will answer the call to defend the land they love and the principles for which it stands.

The dedication and unveiling of the Memorial Wall will honor those Windber area veterans whose service was "above and beyond the call of duty" in defense of our country in time of war. The black granite wall will have the names of those who sacrificed their lives for their country including killed in action, missing in action, and prisoners of war from the Civil War, WWI, WWII, the Korea War, and the Vietnam War. The Windber Veterans Association will continue to accept names for placement on the wall of Windber area veterans that meet eligibility requirements from other conflicts.

The Windber Veterans Association provided the vision and impetus for the Memorial Wall. Their work included gathering financial support from the generous people and businesses of the surrounding communities; gathering information on Windber Area School District veterans who served in America's wars; and providing oversight for a multitude of volunteers to construct the wall, prepare for, and execute the ceremonies to dedicate the wall on Memorial Day 2010. The research conducted for the Memorial Wall, a year-long effort, was done by the volunteer services of Patricia M. Durst Shaffer. Ms Shaffer assembled documented records from the National Archives & Records Administration, War Department files, personnel records, local newspaper articles, Overseas American Cemetery records, and other documents preserved in the Windber Area Museum.

This year's guest speaker is Brigadier General Raymond P. Palumbo. General Palumbo is a graduate of Windber Area High School and the United States Military Academy at West Point. A combat veteran of numerous military campaigns, General Palumbo is currently the deputy commander of the United States Army Special Operations Command at Ft Bragg, NC.

The Windber Veterans Association continues to seek financial support in the form of tax deductible monetary contributions and to solicit volunteers to sustain and maintain the park and the Memorial Wall. Contact Tom Geiger at 814-467-4303 to contribute or volunteer. Contact Patricia M. Shaffer at 814-467-8386 to provide eligibility information on veterans in order to add to the names on the wall. Veterans needing transportation assistance for the Memorial Day celebration can call Koot Karts NLT May 28th at 814-467-9065.