



Downey & Scott, LLC is thrilled to share recent news sited in publications such as the Washington Post, (WTOP) Washington's Top News, Richmond Times-Dispatch, and Fauquier Now regarding a new state-of-the-art, care facility for our veterans.

Managing Principal, Bill Downey, worked behind the scenes with the Secretary of Veterans Affairs Office, Fauquier County Economic Development Department, Vint Hill Economic Development Authority (Vint Hill EDA), and Vint Hill Village, LLC as Vice Chairman for the Vint Hill EDA when assisting in the preparation of a winning proposal that will bring a 120-bed Veterans Care Center to Vint Hill.

In celebrating this achievement shared by so many, Downey & Scott would like to celebrate and honor our own veterans who have sacrificed so much for our freedom. A special thank you to,

Gary Salpini – U.S. Army Sergeant, Combat Infantry, Americal Division Vietnam

Paul Knight – U.S. Marine Corps Corporal

Tim Harms – U.S. Marine Corps Corporal

See next page for Article:



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June 1, 2016

Gov. announces veterans care center at Vint Hill



With Fauquier representatives (rear) and Sen. Puller, governor signs bill for funding.

By **Lawrence Emerson, Editor**

Virginia will build a 120-bed veterans care center at Vint Hill in eastern Fauquier, Gov. Terry McAuliffe announced Wednesday.

The Virginia Department of Veterans Services chose the 30-acre Fauquier site

over offers from Prince William and Stafford counties, Gov. McAuliffe said during a ceremony at American Legion Post 176 in Springfield.

“The new veterans care center will be a state-of-the-art facility providing skilled nursing care, Alzheimer’s/dementia care and short-term rehabilitative care,” the governor said. “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.”

Expected to cost about \$48 million, the center will employ 150. Construction should start late next year, with the center opening in late 2019. It will stand at Vint Hill Road and Vint Hill Parkway, just north of the Federal Aviation Administration air traffic control center.

“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,” Virginia Secretary of Veterans and Defense Affairs John C. Harvey Jr., a retired four-star admiral, told the audience of about 120 veterans, legislators and county officials.

Vint Hill served as an Army Signal Corps base for eavesdropping on enemy communications in World War II. Until the Army closed Vint Hill in 1997, it served as a center for development of electronic warfare technology.

Next month, the state will announce the site for another veterans care center in



Photos/Lawrence Emerson

Supervisor Holder Trumbo (Scott District), who represents Vint Hill, expresses county’s appreciation for the site selection.

Puller Veteran Care Center

- **Services:** Nursing, dementia and short-term rehabilitative care for military veterans.
- **Where:** 30 acres at Vint Hill Road and Vint Hill Parkway in eastern Fauquier.
- **Operator:** Virginia Department of Veterans Services.
- **Beds:** 120.
- **Cost:** Estimated \$48 million, excluding donated land.
- **Staff:** 150.
- **Opening:** Late 2019, two years after construction starts.
- **Background:** The state operates similar 400-bed and 240-bed centers in Richmond and Roanoke, respectively. Virginia will announce another 120-bed center in Hampton or Virginia Beach next month. The state hopes to earn federal reimbursement for construction of the new centers.

Hampton or Virginia Beach. Virginia operates similar centers in **Richmond** and **Roanoke**. They have 400 and 240 beds, respectively.

“We see this the start of a healthcare cluster” in Fauquier, county Economic Development Direct Miles Friedman said of Vint Hill’s selection. “It will attract private, for-profit businesses and it will create jobs.

“The other thing is, any time you land a project like this, it sends a message,” Mr. Friedman added. “We can’t buy that kind of publicity.”

The Department of Veterans Services asked counties for proposals last June and gave them six weeks to respond.

Mr. Friedman and his staff produced a 32-page offer that detailed the site’s assets and Vint Hill’s history, along with the county’s commitment to veterans.

“Fauquier is a very good location in that it is on the western edge of Northern Virginia,” Virginia Department of Veterans Services Commissioner John L. Newby II said. “So, it can serve veterans from Northern Virginia and from other parts of the state.”

The Puller center will get designed as a cluster of smaller buildings, rather than single, large structure, Mr. Newby explained. To qualify for potential federal reimbursement, it must conform with new U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs guidelines, he said.

For 15 years, Virginia officials had applied for federal funds to build two, 200-bed centers, Gov. McAuliffe said. Each year, VA officials told state representatives that its application ranked near the bottom nationwide. The effort intensified about six years ago but still produced no help from Washington.

The governor and state legislative leaders in 2015 decided to build the two centers without federal funding.

The General Assembly in 2015 approved \$66 million for the centers. The legislature this year added about \$30 million to that.

“Virginia has one of the lowest ratios of veterans to available care centers in the nation,” the governor said Wednesday. “The urgency grows with each and every day.”

The state has “the fastest growing veteran population in the United States,” he added. Approximately 800,000 veterans account for 10 percent of Virginia’s population.

The center at Vint Hill will honor late **Gen. Lewis B. “Chesty” Puller**, one of the most decorated Marines in U.S. history, and his family.

Gen. Puller served in Central America, World War II and the Korean War before retiring in 1955. He retired to Saluda on Virginia’s Middle Peninsula and died in

1971.

His son, **Lt. Lewis B. Puller Jr.** lost his legs, left hand and several fingers on his right hand in 1968 while serving in Vietnam. Lt. Puller graduated from law school and ran for Congress in 1978. He died in Alexandria 16 years later, shortly after winning the Pulitzer Prize for his autobiography, "Fortunate Son."

His widow, **Toddy Puller** won a seat in the Virginia House of Delegates in 1991 and the state senate in 1999. Sen. Puller sponsored the 2015 legislation to fund the two new care centers. She retired last year.

"I am delighted to be here and to take a small role in opening another care center," Sen. Puller said Wednesday. "I grew up in the Vietnam era . . . Our country did not support that war, and I do not want our country to forget about veterans ever again.

"They are the greatest people we have."

Vint Hill Village LLC will donate the site, which it technically does not own.

The development company last year purchased much of the former Army base's land from the Vint Hill Economic Development Authority, which the state established two decades ago for redevelopment of the property.

Vint Hill Village has a contract to buy the rest of the land by October. It continues to work out the details of the donation with the EDA, Vint Hill Village President Ed Moore explained. The developer will get a significant tax benefit from the donation.