



**Veterans Coalition of North Central Texas**

**“Thanksgiving for Veterans 2011”**

**After Action Report**

**Sunday, November 20, 2011**

**9:00-11:30am**

The Veterans Coalition of North Central Texas (VCNCT) had its first Community Initiative Event of 2011, "Thanksgiving for Veterans ". The event took place at the Dallas VFW Post 6796 at 9179 Garland Rd. The purpose of the event was to provide Thanksgiving dinner for Veteran and their family members, a one year free membership into the VFW, and to educate the Veterans on a list of available resources. Sponsoring organizations provided the following items:

Operation Healthy Reunions:	Overall Event Coordination
VSweeps:	500 12lb-16lb turkeys
Dallas Elks Lodge #71:	Food order and Money Collections
VA of North Texas:	400 2012 VA Benefits Books
Dallas Count Veterans Office:	100 2012 VA Benefits Books
GM Autotransport:	Transportation of completed bags
Texas Land Board:	500 bags
Kroger Grocery:	Food (at a discounted price)
Child & Fam. Assess. Cntr:	In-Kind Food Donations

The coordination and preparation of the event took approximately two months. There were 500 turkeys totaling approximately \$7,500, two orders with approximately 16 different items, totaling over 8000 ordered items for \$7,115, 45 additional in-kind bags donated, three inventory and bagging sessions with 51 volunteers bagging, 32 Coalition volunteers, 2 VFW Post, Garland and Dallas, and 14 volunteer hours. Participating Coalition members included the following organizations:

1. Operation Healthy Reunions
2. Equest Ranch
3. Child and Family Assessment Center
4. VA or North Texas
5. Dallas County Veterans Office
6. Dallas Elks Lodge #71
7. The Center for Brain Health
8. Dallas Habitat for Humanity
9. Texas Veterans Commission
10. Love Your Veterans
11. Volunteers of America
12. 300<sup>th</sup> SBE
13. TX Army National Guard Family Program
14. Doris Webb + five family members

- 15. Dallas VFW Post 6796
- 16. VSweeps
- 17. Dallas County Veterans Court
- 18. Tuskegee Airman
- 19. Ken Watterson

Primary recruitment and registration for participating Veterans took place at the Seagoville Medical Battalion and the Army National Guard Headquarters in Grand Prairie. Additional Veterans were recruited by Dallas County Veterans Services Office, Dallas County Veterans Court, San Antonio Unit 228 CSH, and The VA of North Texas. On the day of the event 178 Veterans were present and of the Veterans present 627 family members were served, an additional 225 were delivered with an unknown amount of family members identified. Of the Veterans present, there was a total of 1734 combined years of military service. The following is a breakdown of served Military Personal:

Army:	100	Family Members:	627
Marine Corps:	14	Combined Years of Service:	1734
Navy:	2	Food Total Cost:	\$14,615
Army National Guard:	60		
Air Force:	2		
Delivered	<u>175</u>		
Total:	353		

There were a total of 98 turkeys remaining after the event; the remaining turkeys were donated to community organizations that service Veterans in the DFW area. The remaining bags were donated to the Bridge of Dallas, that serve veterans on a daily bases, and The Marine Corps of Ft. Worth.

Ken Watterson, a Coalition partner, was able to feed an additional 625 homeless Veterans at the Union Gospel Mission and the Bridge, 65 children, and 38 turkeys and bags were given to Active Duty Servicemen and women.

The event preparation was advertised on Fox 4 News and the event was advertised on Mental Health America of Greater Dallas website and Health of the Nation radio/talk show and website.