

Spring 2013

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## JAMESON HOSPITAL OPENS NEW ER AND SURGICAL WING

### Rep. Sainato aids project with \$500,000 state grant

Jameson Hospital opened a new emergency and surgical wing on March 25 that will improve the hospital's quality and level of care, as well as the overall health of our regional economy.

I was pleased to be part of making this project a reality by securing \$500,000 in state grants. This was a true private-public partnership as the state provided Jameson Health System with a total of \$6 million in grants toward the \$16 million project.

"We quantified an absolute need for our community to have this facility," said Jameson Health System President and CEO Doug Danko. "Our legislators listened, concurred and delivered – helping us to hand our dream of a modern healthcare facility over to our community."

Jameson's previous emergency room had capacity for 28,000 patients a year, but was treating over 40,000 patients. It was not uncommon to have nearly 30 patients in need of emergency care with only 19 semiprivate patient-treatment areas available.

The new building includes 30 patient emergency rooms, six operating rooms, two endoscopy suites and a rooftop helipad.



*It was an exciting day when we cut the ribbon for the new emergency and surgical wing at Jameson Hospital.*

In addition to improving the quality and level of care, the new wing will reduce the need for patients to travel to large metropolitan areas for treatment, enhance physician recruitment, and strengthen the local economy by creating jobs and improving the tax base.

The grand opening of the new emergency and surgical wing was held over three days with tours, a ribbon-cutting ceremony, a reception and an open house. More than 5,000 people had the opportunity to explore the new facility and meet with caregivers.

## Sainato reappointed as Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness Committee Chairman

I am pleased to announce that I have been re-appointed by House Democratic Leader Frank Dermody as Democratic Chairman of the House Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness Committee for the 2013-2014 Legislative Session.

Last session, the committee worked in a bipartisan manner to pass important legislation that benefits Pennsylvania's veterans and emergency responders. I am honored to continue to serve as the Democratic Chairman this session.

Several of these proposals went on to be signed into law, including a bill to renew and expand the Fire Company and

Ambulance Service Grant Program, which greatly benefits municipal fire companies across the state, including New Castle.

The committee also advanced legislation that resulted in new laws to improve safety at gas stations, improve veterans' access to medication and ensure veteran preference laws are enforced for civil service jobs.

A great deal was accomplished last session and I look forward to the 2013-2014 session as we continue to advocate for initiatives that are important to our veterans and emergency responders.

# Committee meets with veterans and emergency response stakeholders

The Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness Committee held several informational meetings earlier this year to examine issues that are important to Pennsylvania's veterans and emergency responders. The committee heard from a variety of agencies including:

■ Glenn Cannon, Director of the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA), provided an overview of the agency and laid out PEMA's 2013-14 legislative priorities.

■ State Fire Commissioner Edward Mann thanked the committee for its efforts in reauthorizing and expanding the Fire Company and Ambulance Service Grant Program last year. The program's annual funding was increased from \$25 million to \$30 million, and eligibility was extended to 35 municipal fire departments across the state.

Mann noted that: "This year we awarded 2,114 grants to fire companies and 551 grants to volunteer ambulance services. The average grant to a fire department was \$12,488 and the grants provided to ambulance services averaged \$6,534." He also recommended several legislative changes to the Volunteer Loan Assistance Program (VLAP). Loan amounts have not increased since the law was last amended in 1990.

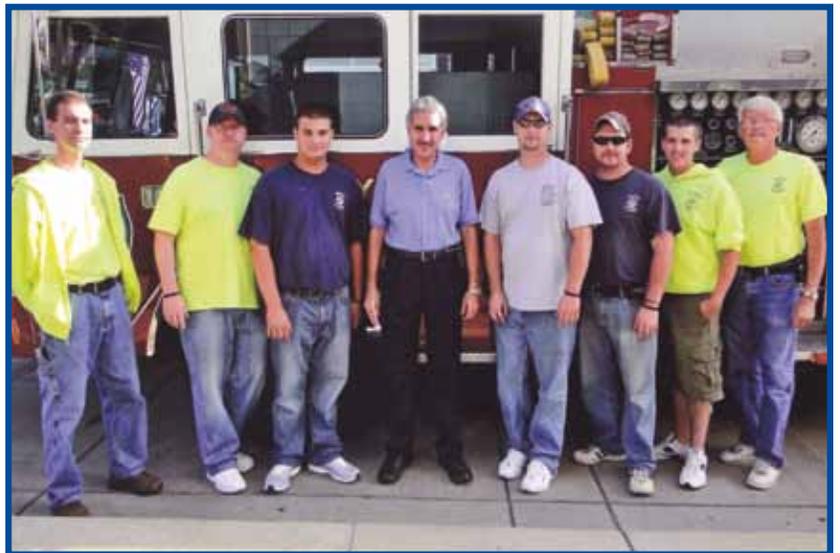
■ Joseph Schmider, Director of the Bureau of Emergency Medical Services for the Department of Health, provided the committee with an overview of emergency medical services in the commonwealth and discussed initiatives.

■ Tracy Wingenroth, Government Affairs Consultant for the Fireman's Association of the State of Pennsylvania (FASP), and Don Konkle, Executive Director of the Pennsylvania Fire and Emergency Services Institute (PFESI), explained their legislative priorities for the 2013-2014 session and shared their hopes of generating consensus on firefighter-related issues.

■ The committee joined the state Senate Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness Committee to hear the Pennsylvania War Veterans' Council discuss its legislative priorities and other issues directly impacting veterans throughout the Commonwealth. During this meeting, we heard testimony from Lawrence County's own Ruth Fairchild, state Commander of Pennsylvania Veterans of Foreign War, who spoke about Act 2, the Small Games of Chance Law in Pennsylvania. Ruth shared several concerns that have been voiced by many veterans' organizations regarding Act 2 and offered several suggestions as to how the General Assembly can make improvements. Several other presenters spoke about funding for Pennsylvania's Veterans' Outreach and asked that we support proposed legislation to create a Veterans' Lottery Game.



*Attending the "Lawrence County Veterans' Stand Down" at Cascade Park in New Castle.*



*Proudly standing with members of the Hickory Township Fire Department.*



*Visiting with the Ladies Auxiliary at the VFW Post 315 picnic.*

# National Guard Day at the Capitol

The House of Representatives designated April 17th as National Guard Day in Pennsylvania. Maj. Gen. Wesley Craig, Adjutant General of the Pennsylvania National Guard, addressed the full House of Representatives and provided an update on Pennsylvania Guard activities.

Throughout the day, various displays highlighting National Guard activities were presented in the Capitol. The day concluded with a commemorative ceremony that included a concert and wreath laying for Medal of Honor recipient and former Gov. John F. Hartranft at his equestrian statue located near the Capitol steps.

We are grateful to each and every guard member and their families for the sacrifices they make to keep us safe. I would like to express my gratitude for the Pennsylvania National Guard and their outstanding service and continued commitment to protecting Pennsylvania, and America, in times of peace and times of war.



*Rep. Steve Barrar, Republican Chairman of the House Veterans Affairs & Emergency Preparedness Committee, and I present a citation to Major Gen. Wesley Craig, recognizing National Guard Day at the Capitol.*

## Into the wild blue yonder: committee gets a look at air refueling

The Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness Committee toured the 171<sup>st</sup> Air Refueling Wing of the Pennsylvania National Guard at the Pittsburgh International Airport. Committee members had the privilege to fly in a KC-135 Stratotanker and take part in an air refueling exercise.

The Stratotanker provides in-flight refueling, which maximizes the reach of the U.S. military.

Here's how it works:

A KC-135 Stratotanker will fly a pre-arranged circling route in the sky. An aircraft approaches a tanker at a scheduled time, the tanker's boom operator threads a fuel line into a waiting aircraft as both the tanker and receiving plane are flying at hundreds of miles per hour.

There is a long tradition in the U.S. Air Force of painting colorful art on the nose of aircraft, as has been done on this KC-135 Stratotanker. Aircraft nose art and naming the aircraft became popular during the grim years of World War II. It helped raise the morale of service members and instilled pride in the work they did to maintain and fly the aircraft. It also helped instill pride in the units in which they served.



*I am joined by committee members and staff in front of the KC-135 Stratotanker after an air refueling exercise.*



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HOUSE VETERANS AFFAIRS AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS COMMITTEE

Rep. Chris

sainato

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## Sainato bill would extend death benefits to Pennsylvania Civil Air Patrol

The House Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness Committee unanimously approved my bill to extend death benefits that are currently available to other emergency responders to members of the Pennsylvania Civil Air Patrol.

The state's Emergency and Law Enforcement Personnel Death Benefits Act provides \$100,000 to families of emergency responders who die while performing their duties. House Bill 500 would amend the act to include the PA Civil Air Patrol.

Members of the Pennsylvania Civil Air Patrol are citizen volunteers who work alongside our state police, fire officials and other emergency service professions – often placing their own lives in danger to help or save the lives

of others. These volunteers knowingly risk their lives to respond to emergency situations and certainly deserve the same line of duty death benefits we currently provide to other emergency responders.

Members of the PA wing aided in Hurricane Katrina relief efforts in Mississippi by going door-to-door to ensure that residents had adequate food, water and medical care. They worked with Civil Air Patrol wings in Maryland, West Virginia, Ohio and Indiana to help those affected by Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee. They also helped communities in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York and Delaware recover from Hurricane Sandy.

My bill is currently awaiting consideration by the full House of Representatives.

### My office can help you with:

- Car registrations, special tags, disability placards, titles and driver's license applications
- Information on financial assistance for higher education
- Assistance in obtaining and completing state forms of all kinds
- Voter registration and absentee ballot applications
- Unemployment compensation, disability and workers' compensation
- Birth and death certificates
- Pennsylvania income tax questions or problems
- Complaints or questions about utilities and the Public Utility Commission
- Renewal of state-issued licenses or certifications
- Property Tax/Rent Rebate problems or questions
- Problems or questions about the state lottery
- PACE cards for senior citizens
- Consumer complaints
- Tours of the state Capitol for individuals or groups

