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Blinded Veterans Association Convention – August 1981

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Blinded Veterans Association

August 12, 1981

To RED/ELIZABETH

EHD EAS
RC lll
DD Diana

OFFICE OF PUBLIC LIAISON

EVENT FOLLOW-UP CHECKLIST

file ↓ *to* →
Event Blinded Veterans Association = White House Tour
Date August 12, 1981 Project Officer Blackwell

1. Thank you letters

-- participants N/A *personal calls made to leadership.*
-- speakers none
-- others Carol MC Cain, Visitors Office
(list)

2. Press releases attached

3. Follow-up (if any)

-- Presidential _____

-- EHD _____

-- Staff _____

Blackwell's office sent additional black and white pictures to the association.

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

August 18, 1981

TO: CAROL MC CAIN

FROM: Morton Blackwell

Thank you so very much for arranging the special White House tour for the Blinded Veterans Association on August 12, 1981.

Everything went well and many favorable comments were made by these veterans and their families.

We certainly appreciate all your help.

THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of Media Liaison

For Immediate Release

August 13, 1981

VETERANS VISIT WHITE HOUSE

For many members of the Blinded Veterans Association, a highlight of their participation in the 36th National Convention of the Association was an informal open house at the White House. On August 12, about 250 veterans and members of their families enjoyed a tour arranged by Carol McCain, Director of the White House Visitors Office.

In proclaiming August 13, 1981, as National Blinded Veterans Recognition Day, President Ronald Reagan gave special recognition to thousands of veterans who have suffered the catastrophic disability of blindness.

"Despite the extreme severity of this disability," the President noted, "these veterans have succeeded in leading useful and productive lives, in part through Federal programs for their readjustment but, more significantly, by drawing upon a special brand of heroism."

Photograph enclosed.





OFFICIAL PHOTOGRAPH
THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

12AG 61 3479-11

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

*file
Blinded
Vets*

July 28, 1981

TO: DODIE LIVINGSTON - PRESIDENTIAL GREETINGS
FROM: Morton Blackwell
RE: BLINDED VETERANS ASSOCIATION Convention August 11 - 13

John Fales of the Blinded Veterans Association has asked us for a Presidential greeting for their annual convention to be held from August 11 - 13. Enclosed are copies of the invitations and a brochure about the organization to give you more information.

He had originally asked for a videotape of the President; however, when he found out how expensive it would be, he changed the request to a Presidential greeting.

The greeting is to be sent to:

Dr. George E. Stocking, National President and Chairman of the Board
Blinded Veterans Association
1735 De Sales Street, N.W.

He suggested that you use the following greeting. Please change it to whatever you feel is best.

Nancy and I are sorry that we are unable to join you and the members of the Blinded Veterans Association at your 36th National Convention.

We are aware of the special significance this week holds for your association and all America's blinded veterans. August 13th has been proclaimed as National Blinded Veterans Recognition Day. The great contributions blinded veterans have made to our country and continue to make serve as an inspiration to all Americans.

I want to take this opportunity to thank you for the plaque which you so kindly presented to me at the White House on July 17, 1981.

Nancy and I wish the very best to your fine organization. WE hope you had a successful convention and that the coming year will be fruitful.



BLINDED VETERANS ASSOCIATION

JOHN FALES, JR.
EMPLOYMENT DIRECTOR

202 347-4010
1735 DESALEE ST. N.W.
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20036

97TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. J. RES. 124

Designating August 13, 1981, as "National Blinded Veterans Recognition Day".

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 22, 1981

Mr. MONTGOMERY introduced the following joint resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Post Office and Civil Service

JOINT RESOLUTION

Designating August 13, 1981, as "National Blinded Veterans Recognition Day".

Whereas there are thousands of Americans in the United States today who, as a result of service in the military forces of their country, incurred perhaps the most severe disability, blindness;

Whereas there is an even larger number of veterans who have been blinded from non-service-connected causes and whose numbers are growing rapidly every year;

Whereas many blinded veterans incurred a number of other disabilities, such as loss of limbs or hearing impairment, when they were blinded;

Whereas most of these veterans have received rehabilitation and have overcome their substantial handicaps through courage

and determination, and have returned to and continue to lead useful and productive lives; and

Whereas the sacrifices that these veterans have made are deserving of national recognition: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives*
2 *of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*
3 That August 13, 1981 is designated as "National Blinded
4 Veterans Recognition Day", and the President is authorized
5 and requested to issue a proclamation calling upon the people
6 of the United States and interested groups and organizations
7 to set aside this day to honor the sacrifices of blinded veter-
8 ans in an appropriate manner.

○

TO CO-SPONSOR, PLEASE CONTACT CELANE McWHORTER OF
REPRESENTATIVE G. V. MONTGOMERY'S OFFICE AT 225-5031.
THANK YOU.

On a national level, a comprehensive and closely monitored legislative program is presented to Congress each year. We also work closely with various government agencies in the development of programs affecting blinded veterans.

We are...

the Blinded Veterans Association (BVA), a nonprofit organization, that was founded in 1945 by a group of veterans blinded in World War II. The BVA was incorporated in 1947, and its national office was established in Washington, D.C., the next year. In 1958, the Association was chartered by an act of Congress to officially represent blinded veterans.

A 10-man Board of Directors governs the Association. They are nationally elected and like the BVA's representatives in the field, are also blinded veterans.

The BVA is unique. It is the only organization of its kind with programs and activities that emphasize seeking out blinded veterans where they live. In addition, the Association's

services are available to all blinded veterans, whether or not they are members.

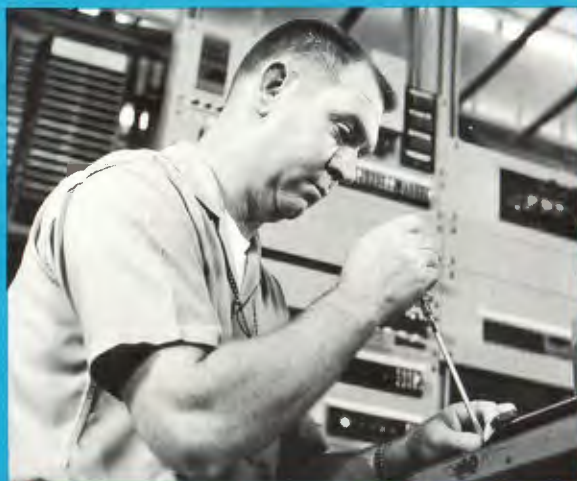
Membership is open to all veterans with service connected blindness. Dues are \$5.00 a year or \$50.00 for a life membership. Veterans with nonservice connected blindness may become Associate members for \$2.50 a year. Dues for a life membership are \$25.00.

The BVA has regional groups across the country that carry out assistance programs at the state and local level. Membership in the national Association also includes membership in the appropriate regional group.

For more information about the Field Service and Outreach Employment Programs, the *BVA Bulletin*, membership, regional groups, or other services and activities, contact:



Blinded Veterans Association
1735 DeSales St., N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036
(202) 347-4010



We are here to help



Blinded Veterans Association

If you are a blinded or visually impaired veteran, if you are a relative or a friend, or if you are just interested in doing something for a blinded veteran. **Then we are here to help.**

We know. . .

- that there are approximately 50,000 veterans who are blind.
- that in addition to the above number, 100s of veterans go blind every year.
- that blindness may not be the veteran's only disability. He may also have additional facial or head injuries, such as a hearing loss, or may have lost the use of an arm or a leg.



We help blinded veterans. . .

- to become reoriented or readjusted and to obtain vocational training;
- by finding them jobs;
- by informing them of available benefits, job opportunities, the accomplishments of other blinded veterans, and the latest technical aids or developments in the field.
- by representing them on the national level.

We offer. . .

- a **Field Service Program**. Field representatives encourage blinded veterans to assume an active role in life once again; assist them in obtaining veterans' benefits including disability compensation or pension, rehabilitation training, prosthetic equipment and medical treatment; and help them to take advantage of existing community programs. These field representatives understand the problems in-



volved — they also are blinded veterans.

- an **Outreach Employment Program**. Employment representatives, also blinded veterans, concentrate on finding satisfying *careers*, not just jobs for the visually impaired. This may mean helping the veterans write resumes, preparing and filing job applications, and keeping them informed of potential job opportunities. Most importantly, employment representatives actively seek out, and in some cases create, potential job openings and then match up employers with the best qualified blinded veteran.

- an **Information Program**. The *BVA Bulletin*, which is published six times a year, is the primary means of keeping blinded veterans informed. It is printed in large type and is available on recorded discs or in braille.

A national convention is held each year, and awards are made annually to recognize and focus attention on the achievements of individual blinded veterans. Other information activities, geared to giving the public a better understanding of the blind, include distributing press releases and public service announcements and direct mail campaigns.



6

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

August 6, 1981

The President today signed S.J. Res. 64, which designates August 13, 1981, as "National Blinded Veterans Recognition Day".

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THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

August 6, 1981

NATIONAL BLINDED VETERANS RECOGNITION DAY

- - - - -

BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

A PROCLAMATION

Among those Americans who have answered their country's call to service in defense of its freedoms, there are thousands who, as a result of service in our Nation's military forces, have suffered the catastrophic disability of blindness. Despite the extreme severity of this disability, these veterans have succeeded in leading useful and productive lives, in part through Federal programs for their readjustment but, more significantly, by drawing upon a special brand of heroism.

Our country now enjoys the blessing of peace, and it is appropriate that all Americans recognize the special debt owed to those who have been blinded in the defense of our freedoms during the wars of this century.

We must acknowledge also the example they have provided to those blinded veterans whose equally catastrophic disability occurred after their separations from military service, and to other blinded Americans. Few are more worthy of national recognition than the disabled American veterans who have honored their commitments to their country and serve as a source of pride for us all.

I would also like to single out for praise those employers who have provided blinded veterans with the opportunity to develop rewarding private-sector careers. This promise of a future with challenge and fulfillment is particularly meaningful.

It is fitting that the Congress has, by enactment of Senate Joint Resolution 64, designated August 13, 1981, as "National Blinded Veterans Recognition Day."

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, call upon all Americans to observe Thursday, August 13, 1981, as National Blinded Veterans Recognition Day. I urge my fellow citizens and all interested groups and organizations to set aside this day to honor the sacrifices and service of our Nation's blinded veterans by means of appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this sixth day of August, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty-one, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and sixth.

RONALD REAGAN

#

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

August 12, 1981

TO: Mary Kathryn English - Lou Gerig's office

FROM: Kathy Christiansen - Morton Blackwell's office

RE: Press Release on Blinded Veterans Association

I am enclosing some information about the 36th National Convention of this group that is being held at the Stouffer's Hotel.

Some ideas for the release would be:

President signed a proclamation making August 13th National Blinded Veterans Recognition Day.

The group is being honored by the U.S. Postal Service - with a commemorative stamp envelope with the first ever Braille overprint

Approximately 250 blinded veterans are attending this convention - with spouses and children also.

They are holding a wreath laying ceremony at Arlington cemetery and they are presenting a plaque to honor the war dead - this is the same plaque they gave to the President and the Vice-President at ceremonies in the White House during the past month - the plaque was sculpted by Julie Helms.

And of course, the group had a specially conducted tour of the White House on Wednesday. They were greeted by Elizabeth Dole's staff of the Office of Public Liaison and the Visitor's Office under the direction of Carol McCain conducted the tour - which was enjoyed by all very much.

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

August 12, 1981

TO: BARBARA BOLLER, DEPARTMENT OF STATE
FROM: Morton Blackwell's office, Office of Public Liaison
RE: Blinded Veterans Association Banquet

Thank you so very much for all your help in obtaining a speaker for the Blinded Veterans Association Banquet on Saturday evening, August 15. We certainly appreciate the fact that you were able to get General Vernon Walters to address this group.

I have spoken with John Fales of the Blinded Veterans Association and he is very happy to hear about this speaker. He may be calling you for additional information. Also, if you need to get in touch with him for any reason, he can be reached at the Stouffer's Hotel, Crystal City, 979-6800.

I am enclosing some information about the Blinded Veterans Association; unfortunately we do not have a lot of factual background material, but I know that John Fales could give you anything you need about the group.

If you have any questions, please call - 456-2657.

Thanks again for your help.

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

August 6, 1981

The President today signed S.J. Res. 64, which designates August 13, 1981, as "National Blinded Veterans Recognition Day".

###

yes _____
no X

*President George E. Stocking
and the Board of Directors
cordially invite you to attend the
Awards Banquet
at the Thirty-Sixth National Convention
of the Blinded Veterans Association
Saturday, the fifteenth day of August
nineteen hundred and eighty-one
from eight until eleven o'clock
Stouffer's National Center Hotel
Decatur-Farragut Room
2399 Jefferson Davis Highway
Arlington, Virginia*

*Hosted by the M D C V Regional Group
John Fales, Wilbur Long
and Elsworth Sharpe,
Co-Chairmen*

*H. P. V. P.
347-4010*

*Cocktails
Seven o'clock*

*General
Vernon
Walters
Speaking*

yes ☒
no ☐

President
George E. Stocking
of the
Blinded Veterans Association
cordially invites you to attend
a Cocktail Buffet
in Honor of the Members of the
United States Congress
Thursday, the thirteenth day of August
nineteen hundred and eighty-one
from five-thirty until eight-thirty
The Caucus Room
The Cannon House Office Building
New Jersey and
Independence Avenues, Southeast
Washington, District of Columbia

Hosted by the M D C V Regional Group
John Fales, Wilburn Long
and Ellsworth Sharpe,
Co-Chairmen

R. I. V. P.
367-4010

Informal

7/30

yes ☐
no ☒

President George E. Stocking
and the Board of Directors
cordially invite you to attend the
President's Reception
at the Thirty-Sixth National Convention
of the Blinded Veterans Association
Tuesday, the eleventh day of August
nineteen hundred and eighty-one
from seven until nine o'clock
Stauffer's National Center Hotel
Decatur-Farragut Room
2399 Jefferson Davis Highway
Arlington, Virginia

Hosted by the M D C V Regional Group
John Fales, Wilburn Long
and Ellsworth Sharpe,
Co-Chairmen

R. I. V. P.
367-4010

request
7/30

The Blinded Veterans Association
cordially invites you to attend
the
Laying of the Wreath Ceremony
and
Presentation of the Memorial Plaque
at
The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier
Arlington National Cemetery
Thursday, the thirteenth day of August
nineteen hundred and eighty-one
at three o'clock in the afternoon

Hosted by the M D C V Regional Group
John Fales, Wilburn Long
and Ellsworth Sharpe,
Co-Chairmen

Mathey

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

Has this been done?

DATE: *7/8*

TO: *Morton*
FROM: *Mama*

For your info _____

Per our conversation _____

Other:

*See kid's note re. Thank
you to Carol McCain.
Also to be sure ^{OK}
how Gerig does press.*

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

TO: LOU GERIG

FROM: Kathy Christiansen in
Morton Blackwell's office
x. 2657 Room 191

This White House tour is a
media event that we would like
covered.

Date: August 12, 1981
2:00 PM

Let us know if you need further
information.

Thank you.

*We
need a
thank you
note to
Carol*

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

*Contact Lou Jerig
on this one.*

Porter
July 7, 1981

*EHD - may want
to drop a special
note to Carol
re her help on
this! /GHD*

TO: PETER MC COY GREG NEWELL
MUFFIE BRANDON REX SCOUTEN
NINA WORMSER SGT. MAYCLIN
✓ ELIZABETH DOLE

FROM: CAROL MC CAIN, DIRECTOR
WHITE HOUSE VISITORS OFFICE

Attached is a copy of the confirmation letter sent to Mr. John Fales, Jr., Employment Director, Blinded Veterans Association, concerning an "Informal Open House" (walk-through) tour of the White House on August 12, 1981 at 2:00 p.m.

*They also will be getting
on U. P. on July 20th at 4PM
to present him the plaque -
John Fales told me that this
was confirmed -
I spoke w/ him on 7/9
to tell him about this
form & he was very happy.*

JUL 06 REC'D

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

July 7, 1981

Mr. John Fales, Jr.
Blinded Veterans Association
1735 DeSales Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036

Dear Mr. Fales:

This letter will confirm that arrangements have been made for 400 people from the Blinded Veterans Association for an "Informal Open House" (walk-through) tour of the White House at 2:00 p.m. on August 12, 1981.

The members of the group should plan their arrival at the East Gate on East Executive Avenue at 1:45 p.m. The Officer on duty will be expecting them.

I hope you will express to your members our best wishes for a most enjoyable visit of the White House.

Sincerely,

Carol McCain
Director
White House Visitors Office

bcc: Peter McCoy
Nina Wormser
Muffie Brandon
Elizabeth Dole

Greg Newell
Sgt. Mayclin
Rex Scouten

June 29, 1981

Mr. John Fales, Jr.
Co-Chairman
Blinded Veterans Association
1735 Desales St., N.W.
Washington, D. C. 20036

Dear John:

The President's scheduling office has informed us that he will be unable to attend your National Convention since he will not be in town during the August 11-15th period of time.

We have urged them to approach you regarding a video taping, and we will soon be in contact regarding parameters, costs and etc. Morton Blackwell will be calling you direct on this matter.

Elizabeth has also urged Carol McCain to offer special consideration for your request of a White House Tour on August 12th.

We appreciate your continuing support of the President's policies and initiatives regarding the economic recovery program and look forward to working with you in the months ahead.

Warmest regards,

Red Cavaney
Deputy Assistant to the President
for Public Liaison

cc: Morton Blackwell

RC:gws

EHD _____
RC _____
DD _____

OFFICE OF PUBLIC LIAISON
EVENT FOLLOW-UP CHECKLIST

Event Blinded Veterans Association = White House Tour
Date August 12, 1981 Project Officer Blackwell

1. Thank you letters

-- participants N/A
-- speakers none
-- others Carol MC Cain, Visitors Office
(list)

2. Press releases attached

3. Follow-up (if any)

-- Presidential _____

-- EHD _____

-- Staff Blackwell's office sent additional black and white pictures to the association.

THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of Media Liaison

For Immediate Release

August 13, 1981

VETERANS VISIT WHITE HOUSE

For many members of the Blinded Veterans Association, a highlight of their participation in the 36th National Convention of the Association was an informal open house at the White House. On August 12, about 250 veterans and members of their families enjoyed a tour arranged by Carol McCain, Director of the White House Visitors Office.

In proclaiming August 13, 1981, as National Blinded Veterans Recognition Day, President Ronald Reagan gave special recognition to thousands of veterans who have suffered the catastrophic disability of blindness.

"Despite the extreme severity of this disability," the President noted, "these veterans have succeeded in leading useful and productive lives, in part through Federal programs for their readjustment but, more significantly, by drawing upon a special brand of heroism."

Photograph enclosed.



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August 18, 1981

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FROM: Morton Blackwell

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