

VA Honors Veterans Who Are Artists, Performers ***National Veterans Creative Arts Festival Coming to San Antonio***

WASHINGTON – More than 120 Veterans from across the country who are medal winners in national music, dance, drama, creative writing or visual arts contests are preparing to attend the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival in San Antonio from

Oct. 5 – 11.

“The Creative Arts Festival represents the top achievements of Veterans participating in VA art therapy throughout the nation,” said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki. “Their achievements are a testament to the outstanding care and rehabilitative techniques used to pave the way toward recovery for our nation’s most deserving men and women.”

The National Veterans Creative Arts Festival is presented by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), Help Hospitalized Veterans (HHV) and the American Legion Auxiliary. It is hosted this year by the South Texas Veterans Health Care System in San Antonio.

The festival is the culmination of a year-long fine arts talent competition involving nearly 3,500 participants nationwide. It is open to all Veterans receiving care at VA medical facilities.

“It is truly an honor for the American Legion Auxiliary to support the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival,” said National President Rita Navarreté. “This phenomenal event affords our Veterans a unique outlet for their creative expression and is incredibly inspiring for everyone who is privileged to attend.”

At this year’s event, these talented Veterans will come to San Antonio for a week of rehearsals and workshops, concluding on Sunday, Oct. 11, with a visual art exhibit and gala variety stage show at the San Antonio Municipal Auditorium.

"The Board of Directors of HHV is again thrilled and privileged to co-sponsor the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival with VA and the American Legion Auxiliary," said Mike Lynch, HHV president and CEO. "HHV wishes to congratulate all Veterans who entered into this national competition, for you have shared your fantastic performing and visual arts abilities with America."

The artists will exhibit their work from 12:15 p.m. to 2 p.m. on Sunday, October 11, at the San Antonio Municipal Auditorium. At 2 p.m., performers in music, drama and dance, as well as the creative writing winners, will showcase their talents in an entertaining stage show backed by a professional orchestra.

Heloise, from “Hints from Heloise,” will serve as the festival stage show’s mistress of ceremonies for the first time. Actress Bo Derek, honorary chairperson of VA’s National Rehabilitation Special Events, is expected to attend the event again this year.

For further information about the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival, contact Jeanne Stith at (202) 461-7448, or log on to the festival’s Web site at: www.creativeartsfestival.va.gov.