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November 12, 2009

Commissioners, Travis Manion Foundation Host Veterans Day Launch Celebration for Military Community Network of Bucks County

Yesterday, Commissioner Chairman Charles H. Martin joined Janet Manion, executive director of the Travis Manion Foundation, to launch a partnership that creates a comprehensive network connecting current service members, veterans, family members, and survivors with individuals and organizations offering assistance.

The endeavor, known as the *Military Community Network of Bucks County (MCN BC)* was conceived when Janet Manion (whose son, 1st Lt. Travis Manion, USMC, was killed in Iraq) approached the commissioners with a concern about the gap between those needing, and those offering services. Martin told the crowd of about 130, "The commissioners get contacted by many people with concerns – but rarely do they also offer solutions. Janet came to us with a real issue, and an idea to effectively address it." Work began on shaping the plan this summer.

Ryan Manion-Borek, Travis's sister and board member of the Travis Manion Foundation, welcomed the assemblage of veterans, current service members, families, survivors of fallen heroes, and representatives of organizations wishing to offer their help. Borek views this initiative as having the promise to grow exponentially in scale. "This is clearly an effort, born in Bucks County, which has the potential to move to communities across the country."

Following a series of focus-group meetings with Armed Forces officials, service members and families, as well as feedback from a survey, it was determined that a Web site would serve as a useful tool for Bucks County's military community. It also now serves as a resource for those providing help. Matt Fisher, a former Army officer who served in Iraq in the storied 82nd Airborne Division, and current commander of VFW Post 175 in Doylestown, was the event's keynote speaker. Fisher pointed out that his post gets many calls seeking information, and he will now turn to www.militarycommunitynetwork.org to assist his members and anyone else calling for resources.

Whether users are looking for veteran-friendly employers, assistance with resume and interview skills, programs for children affected by deployment, education assistance, financial assistance, or even companies offering military discounts, this will be the place to go in Bucks County.

The event was kicked off with a harmonious rendition of God Bless America, sung by students from the William Tennent High School Madrigal Choir. Soldiers from the PA Army National Guard's A Co., 1-111th Infantry Regiment served as the event's band. At the event's conclusion, Manion recognized Bill DeBergh as the event's keynote speaker. The event was held at the Doylestown Marriott Hotel. <http://www.buckscountypa.gov/newsroom/2009-11-12/veterans-day-launch.aspx>



volunteer time he and his firm provided to the effort. Inverse Paradox's Neil Harner designed the site.

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