

City of Welch, WV to Hold the 104th Annual Veteran's Day Parade November 11, 2022

For Immediate Release: Welch, WV – The City of Welch will host the 104th Annual Veteran's Day Parade, November 11th, 2022, 10 AM. The Welch Veteran's Day Parade is one of McDowell County's largest events of the year, commemorating a long history of service and sacrifice for our country.

Sponsored by the McDowell County American Legion Post 8 in Welch, the parade is also supported by other community groups and businesses and includes, floats, military vehicles, VFW Honor Guard, and more. Honored veterans featured on the reviewing stand include American Legion Auxiliary Unit 8 President Mary Spence; the WV American Legion Auxiliary District 6 President, Peggy Swartz; Jan Williams, McDowell County Post 8 Commander, as well as, the WV State Department American Legion Commanders Tom Hicks and Jim Dotson, of 40 & 8 Chef De Gare.

Steve Mooney is the Director of Operations for the West Virginia Department of Veterans Assistance and is the featured parade speaker.

Mooney, a retired U.S. Army Warrant Officer, oversees 14 Benefits and Claims offices, and a staff of 34, which include regional supervisors, veterans service officers and assistants. His department leads the state's push to direct U.S. Veterans Affairs benefits and cash to West Virginia veterans. Last year, West Virginia veterans received more than \$2.5 Billion in assistance.

A native of Huntington and Marshall University alumnus, Mooney enlisted in the West Virginia Army National Guard in 1991. During his 23-year military career, Mooney's service included operations in Egypt, Afghanistan, and Iraq. He received numerous awards, including the Combat Action Badge, Senior Parachutist Badge, Meritorious Service Medal, Army Commendation Medal w/ 4 oak leaf clusters, and Afghanistan and Iraq Campaign Medals. His unit awards include the Joint Meritorious and the Meritorious Unit Award. His foreign awards include the Egyptian, British, and United Arab Emirates Parachutist Badges.

Mooney joined the West Virginia Department of Veterans Assistance in 2017 as a Veteran

Service Officer in the Huntington Claims Office. He was promoted in 2019 to Deputy Operation Director and to Operations Director in 2021.

"Despite the many changes Welch and McDowell County has seen in the past 104 years, our commitment in the area to respecting our military service in West Virginia, is a source of pride for me, and I hope it will continue indefinitely. I'm honored to lead the parade in 2022 and I look forward to attending the 105th celebration next year," said the American Legion Post 8 Commander, Jan Williams.

McDowell County has one of the largest numbers of veterans in the state of West Virginia and is proud to claim the longest running Veteran's Day parades in the nation," said Harold McBride, Sr., Mayor. "We are so honored to be able to say that McDowell County, WV has more veterans per capita from our county than any county in the nation. As a community, we want to publicly acknowledge how important our current and former military members are to us and express our gratitude for their unselfish service to our country," he continued.

Welch is a city located in McDowell County, West Virginia at the confluence of the Tug and Elkhorn rivers. Incorporated in 1893, its history showcases the Appalachian perseverance that helped build America. It is the county seat of McDowell County and located in the heart of the mountains of Coal Country, USA. Visit www.cityofwelch.com for more information.

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