



LGY News & Views



VA Regional Office, St. Petersburg, FL
REGIONAL LOAN CENTER (RLC)

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- ☼ Asst Loan Guaranty Officer-
Kathy Bernheim
- ☼ Valuation Officer-
Michael Andrews
- ☼ Asst Valuation Officers-
Frances Marston (C&V)
Monica Collins (SAH)
- ☼ Loan Production Officer-
Sharon Glanton-Davis
- ☼ Asst Loan Production Officer-
Steve Roberts
- ☼ Loan Administration Officer-
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- ☼ Servicing Officers-
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Gary Marston
- ☼ RLC Newsletter Committee-
Jon Alcott
Vilmaris Ellie
Theresa Hadi
Marisol Labrie
Mary Yale

☼ *St. Petersburg Regional Loan Center* ☼ *Loan Guaranty Division* ☼

St Petersburg RLC Reigns Number One in Quality

by Kathy Bernheim

Fiscal Year 2008 (FY08) was a successful year for the St. Petersburg RLC. RLC employees provided the highest level of service to Veterans purchasing or refinancing a home, obtaining a specially adapted home, or experiencing trouble making mortgage payments. The St. Petersburg RLC is at the top of the charts, ranked #1 among the nation's nine RLCs in quality. The upheaval in the mortgage market caused a tremendous spike in the RLC's workload this year. As conventional lenders raised down payment requirements and tightened credit standards, VA guaranteed loans became even more advantageous for our Veterans.

With the increase in the demand for VA guaranteed loans, outreach to program participants is critical to improve the accuracy of information given to Veterans by program partici-

pants, particularly those who have limited or no experience with VA guaranteed loans. The RLC excelled in this area, conducting 70 outreach visits during the fiscal year, as well as holding a two-day Lender Training Extravaganza at the Bay Pines VA Medical Center Auditorium and publishing a quarterly RLC newsletter.

Other important RLC changes in FY08 included implementation of the VALERI (VA Loan Electronic Record Interface) system in Loan Administration which began in February, 2008 and will be complete by the end of November, 2008. The role of the Loan Administration Section is changing from performing supplemental servicing to monitoring the quality of servicing performed by loan servicers from an oversight perspective.

See **RLC Reigns**, page 2

AFA VA Employee of the Year

by John Acosta

Congratulations to Mary Farquhar in the RLC's Loan Administration Section for being selected the 2008 Air Force Association (AFA) VA Employee of the year. The AFA is the only private



organization to sponsor recognition specifically designed for VA employees. The award recognizes significant contributions to the mission of the VA by an employee. It also focuses public attention on the achievements of VA employees in serving America's Veterans, increases public knowledge and appreciation of the dedication and personal commitment of VA employees to provide competent, courteous and compassionate service to veterans, and encourages VA employees to strive for excellence in their daily work. John Acosta, Loan Administration Officer, accompanied Mary Farquhar to Washington, D. C. for the award presentation on September 15, 2008. ■

Veterans' Benefits Improvement Act

by Vil Ellie

On October 10, 2008, the President signed S. 3023, the Veterans' Benefits Improvement Act of 2008. Following are the three major impacts to the VA Home Loan Guaranty Program:

Authority to guarantee adjustable rate mortgages (ARMs) and hybrid adjustable rate mortgages (HARMs) has been extended through September 30, 2012.

The maximum guaranty for cash-out refinance loans has been made the same as purchase loans - they are no longer limited to \$36,000. In addition, cash-out refinance loans may now be made up to 100% of the appraised value of the home.

The temporary increase to the maximum guaranty has been

See **Veterans' Benefits**, page 2



Visit us on the web..

www.vba.va.gov/ro/south/spete/rlc/index.htm
**St. Petersburg
Regional Loan Center (RLC)**

www.homeloans.va.gov/
**VA Central Office
Loan Guaranty Service**

GOVERNMENT SERVICE AWARDS

- Phillip Bacon - 35 years**
- Tim Meehan - 35 years**
- Dindial Jonnylal - 35 years**
- Maggie Mercado - 30 years**
- Rob Talley - 30 years**
- Gloria Carreno - 20 years**
- Bonnie Fletcher - 20 years**
- Bernadette Fonseca - 20 years**



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

“To care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow and his orphan...” (Abraham Lincoln)

☀ *St. Petersburg Regional Loan Center* ☀ *Loan Guaranty Division* ☀

**Dept of Veterans Affairs
St Petersburg Regional Office
Loan Guaranty Division
9500 Bay Pines Blvd
St Petersburg, FL 33708**

OUR MISSION: The St. Petersburg Regional Loan Center (RLC) assists Veterans in Alabama, Florida, Mississippi, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands with the purchase or refinance of a home using his or her eligibility and provides assistance to Veteran homeowners having difficulty with their VA or conventional mortgage.

To contact the RLC- Phone 1-888-611-5916 or email fl/homeloan@va.gov

LOAN GUARANTY OUTREACH PROGRAM

By Marisol Labrie

The St. Petersburg Regional Loan Center had the privilege to perform 70 outreach visits during Fiscal Year 2008. The training was provided in the markets of Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, and Puerto Rico. The outreach mission is to provide quality service and training to all of our Veterans, lenders, realtors and other program participants. The training enables them to access resources and information available to help deliver a fast and efficient experience to our Veterans during the process of their loans. It is our ultimate goal to increase the Veteran's awareness on the benefits and advantages that the VA guaranteed loan offers. We provide Veterans with different alternatives available to protect their homes and investment. We are seeking to increase our local market training. With this in mind we have successfully launched our first Lender Training Extravaganza, among other events in 2008. We are currently working on the development and strategy of our Outreach Training events in 2009. We extend a warm invitation to all our program participants to visit our national website www.homeloans@va.gov as well as the Regional Loan Center's website www.vba.va.gov/ro/south/spete/rlc/ and to learn about our upcoming training events, featuring our...

2nd Annual Lender Training Extravaganza March 9-10, 2009
For further information and reservations, please call us toll-free at 1-888-611-5916 ▪

**2009 Lender Training Extravaganza
Dates Changed to
March 9-10, 2009**

Satellite Broadcast for VA Fee Appraisers

by Kathy Bernheim

A meeting for VA fee panel appraisers will be held on Thursday, November 20, 2008 from Noon until approximately 2:00 PM (Eastern Time). The meeting will be held via satellite broadcast and appraisers should plan to watch the meeting online. The meeting will feature Gerald Kifer, Supervisory Appraiser, VA Central Office, together with Herman Cohen, VA Loan Guaranty's Training Officer, and William "Sandy" Stewart, Valuation Officer from the Roanoke Regional Loan Center. The St. Petersburg Regional Loan Center will be e-mailing more details and a link to watch the broadcast to all fee appraisers on its panel. ▪

RLC Employees Recognized for Dedicated Government Service

By Theresa Hadi

The VA recently awarded eight RLC employees for many years of dedicated government service to this country and our nation's Veterans. In that group, Tim Meehan was awarded a 35 year pin. During his ceremony, in honor of his late mother, he was reissued her 35 year pin. Tim served in the U.S. Army for 14 years, was a police officer for 4 years, came to the VA in 1989 and has been in Loan Administration (LA) since 1990. Robert Talley was awarded his 30 year pin. Rob served 20 years in the U.S. Air Force and has spent the last 10 years in Loan Guaranty (LGY) working in Property Management, Loan Production (LP), Lender Training, and LA. Gloria Carreno celebrated 20 years of service. Gloria worked in Los Angeles LGY for 10 years, then moved to the St. Petersburg office and has been in Loan Administration for the past 10 years. Bernadette Fonseca also received her 20 year pin. Having served 4 years in the U.S. Air Force, she then came to work at the St. Petersburg Regional Office and has served 16 years in a variety of positions, including Automated Services, Administration, Veteran's Benefit Counselor, Veteran's Service Representative, LGY, LP and LA. Bonnie Fletcher has served 20 years in LGY. She spent 17 years in LA, 1 year in ILA and has served in LP for the past 2 years. Dindial Sonnylal recently celebrated 35 years of government service. He spent 2 years in the U.S. Army before joining the VA in the Adjudication department. He then went to LP and finally to LA where he serves today. Phillip Bacon also celebrated 35 years of service. Phillip started out in LP and then became an X-Ray tech at the VA hospital before returning to the VBA's District Council and Admin section. He then returned to his roots in LP. Maggie Mercado has 30 years of VA service. She started in the typing pool, worked in the file room, proceeded to the Finance department and then came to LGY, where she currently serves in Construction and Valuation (C&V). We in Loan Guaranty feel we are very fortunate to have so many dedicated employees who continue to apply their wealth of experience in their daily jobs, as well as pass their knowledge on to the next generation of those also ready, willing and able to serve our nation's Veterans. ▪

RLC Reigns (continued from page 1.)

The Specially Adapted Housing Agents continued to provide world-class service to all of our Veterans including many seriously injured Global War on Terror (GWOT) Veterans hospitalized at the James Haley VA Medical Center in Tampa.

Unquestionably, the RLC employees are the reason the RLC is ranked #1. ▪

Veterans' Benefits (continued from page 1.)

extended through December 31, 2011. When combined with new locality-based Freddie Mac conforming loan limit in January 2009, VA's maximum county "loan limit" will be \$1,094,625 (\$1,641,937.50 in Alaska, Guam, Hawaii, and the Virgin Islands). This results in unique county "loan limits" for VA.

This notice is meant to provide general information regarding the major impacts of the recently passed legislation. For more detailed information and guidance log into our website. (<http://www.homeloans.va.gov/new.htm>) ▪