



National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
Centennial Initiative  
News Release

Valley Forge National Historical  
Park

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Release Date: August 23, 2007  
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## **Valley Forge Lands 3 Projects on the Centennial Challenge List!**

**VALLEY FORGE, PA** – Three proposals from Valley Forge National Historical Park were among 201 proposals announced by National Park Service Director Mary Bomar and Secretary of the Interior Dirk Kempthorne at a press conference in Yosemite National Park today to celebrate the 91<sup>st</sup> anniversary of the NPS. “The National Park Service, has, after a rigorous review, certified these proposals as eligible for centennial challenge matching funds,” Bomar said. “And they are ready to go in Fiscal Year 2008 which begins Oct. 1”

Director Bomar said, “The centennial challenge is a critical element in the National Park Centennial Initiative put forward by President Bush and unveiled by Secretary Kempthorne one year ago. The full centennial initiative is a potential \$3 billion investment in our national parks, two-thirds of it a public-private partnership of matching money.”

The President’s fiscal year 2008 budget called for an additional \$100 million a year for 10 years to be dedicated to bolster basic park operations, Bomar said. Congress has included the first \$100 million for operations in the fiscal year 2008 budget that awaits final passage.

“The second part of the initiative is the centennial challenge – a funding mechanism to match up to \$100 million a year over 10 years of public money with \$100 million a year for 10 years in private donations,” Bomar said. “Congress has yet to finish legislation necessary to create the public-private centennial challenge.” Financial commitments to the first round of proposals exceeded the President’s challenge. “We have about \$370 million in proposals with not \$100 million in private commitments but \$216 million committed from park visitors, friends groups and other partners,” Bomar said.

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“I’ve testified before Senate and House subcommittees and judging by the warm reception we received, I believe Congress will include centennial challenge money in our next budget. We look forward to working with members from both sides of the aisle to provide the key to the centennial challenge. When that happens we can make decisions on which of these wonderful proposals to begin in the fall.”

The Valley Forge proposals certified as eligible to receive matching funds include a multimedia show for Washington’s Headquarters, a new connector trail at Washington’s Headquarters, and the expansion of Once Upon a Nation programming at the park. To be certified, proposals had to be imaginative and innovative, addressed critical Service needs, had a philanthropic partner, required little or no additional recurring operating funds to be sustainable, improved the efficiency of park management operations and employees and produce measurable results. “Partnerships are alive and well at Valley Forge” said Superintendent Mike Caldwell. “This is great news and it would not have been possible without the support from our partners in the community who have pledge over \$185,000 in funding to match the potential centennial challenge funds.”

There is a huge wave of excitement among National Park Service professionals and our partners,” Bomar said. “This is a victory for national parks and over 270 million park visitors we see each year.”

The full list of centennial challenge-eligible projects and programs is available on-line at the National Park Service centennial web site [www.nps.gov/2016](http://www.nps.gov/2016)

Valley Forge National Historical Park Proposal Highlights:

**Multimedia Show for Washington’s Headquarters** – This project will develop and produce a multimedia production for the Valley Forge train station located adjacent to Washington’s Headquarters. The train station is currently being rehabilitated into a visitor contact station and is scheduled for completion in late 2008. The production will be a centerpiece of the orientation at this area of the park. This project is being supported by a pledge of \$100,000 from the Friends of Valley Forge Park and the Encampment Store. "Inclusion of this component of the

Washington Headquarters area improvements in the centennial challenge is wonderful. This project will absolutely bring George Washington and his leadership alive for visitors," said Don Naimoli, board member of the Friends of Valley Forge Park. "The Friends have been long time supporters of the preservation of the Headquarters building and it has long been a dream to also provide a great educational experience as part of visitors trip to this area of the park" added Naimoli. "The Encampment Store joins with the Friends of Valley Forge Park in our excitement about hearing the news that the multimedia program for Washington's Headquarters has been certified as eligible for centennial challenge funds" said Daria Fink, Executive Director of the Encampment Store. "As the park's cooperating association, the Encampment Store understands the benefits of collaboration and we are honored to offer our funding commitment make this project a reality".

**Connector Trail at Washington's Headquarters** – This project will create a 900 liner foot trail that links the Washington's Headquarters area with the Valley Creek Trail and the Joseph Plumb Martin trail. This is one of the key improvements identified in Valley Forge's new General Management Plan and will greatly enhance the trail system at the park. "We are delighted that the Washington's Headquarters Connector Trail at Valley Forge has been selected as part of the centennial challenge--the project supports investment in the popular trails network of the park. The trail system provides all visitors, no matter what their interest or activity, with direct links to the natural and historic treasures of the park," said Don Naimoli, board member of the Friends of Valley Forge Park.

**Expansion of Once Upon A Nation Storytelling Programming at Valley Forge** – Guaranteed to educate and entertain, these one-of-a-kind storytelling benches are in three locations around Valley Forge National Historical Park. Storytellers share riveting stories of the encampment and the American Revolution at the signature 13-foot curved Once Upon A Nation benches. "Once Upon A Nation's programming with Valley Forge has been an unqualified success with wonderful visitor feedback. The potential funding from the centennial challenge will enable us to expand and enhance programming for future visitors to this important site", said Amy Needle, President and CEO of Historic Philadelphia, Inc., Once Upon A Nation's parent organization. "Being part of the centennial challenge will allow us to continue to tell compelling stories about our country's founding in entertaining and meaningful ways."

### **About Valley Forge National Historical Park**

Valley Forge National Historical Park educates present and future generations of Americans about one of the most defining events in our nation's history by preserving the natural and cultural resources that commemorate the encampment of the Continental Army at Valley Forge in 1777-78. To learn more visit [www.nps.gov/vafo](http://www.nps.gov/vafo).

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