

Brevard Veterans Council/



Veterans Memorial Center

Council Courier

Sept 2021



Vietnam

Nhớ Tết Mậu Thân 1968 (Remember the Tet Offensive of 1968)

WARNING: This feature article may trigger a PTS or C-PTS state of mind.

The Courier is a publication of the
Brevard Veterans Council & Veterans Memorial Center
Merritt Island, FL 32952

Don Pearsall — Editor (321) 313-2444

Best viewed at 100%

In This Issue Sept 2021

The Wonders of Our America
from Sea to Shining Sea



20,000 acres of Everglades, Florida Wetlands crossed by the highway I 75, known as Alligator Alley.

In This Issue

Chairman's Report	Page 3
President's Report	Page 4
Board Membership List	Page 6
Secretary's Report	Page 7
Chaplin's Corner	Page 8
Calendar of Events	Page 9
Plaza Report	Page 11
Special Events	Page 13
Troop Support	Page 15
Park Report	Page 16
Operations	Page 17
Honor Flight	Page 19
Library Report	Page 20
Book Report	Page 21
Sick Call	Page 22
Veteran Support	Page 23
Museum Report	Page 25
Boosters	Page 30
Organization Meeting Dates	Page 31
Advertising Fliers	Page 32

Mission Statements

Brevard Veterans Council: The mission of the Brevard Veterans Council is to work in conjunction with area veterans, local government, and other veterans' organizations to support and promote the interests and welfare of Brevard County veterans and their families.

Veterans Memorial Center: The mission of the Veterans Memorial Center is to maintain and operate a premier facility to support veterans and their families, educate the public, and provide a vibrant memorial to the service and sacrifice of all military veterans through a museum, memorial plaza, library, and park.

The Council Courier

The Courier is a monthly publication prepared and distributed in both print and electronic forms by the Brevard Veterans Council. It reports the ongoing projects by the many committees and departments.

Articles for submission must be sent to the address listed below.

The deadline is the 25th of each month. Those submissions received after that date will not be published.

All Submissions Please Send To:

Don Pearsall at djp32927@gmail.com

Council Chairman's Report



By: Donn Weaver
Former Captain U.S. Army



By now we hope you have made plans to attend our very special 20th Anniversary 9/11 Memorial Tribute at the VMC Central area. Activities include patriotic music, special vendors, veteran organization and VMC supporting organization tables, four food trucks and much more.

Events kick off 1230 - 1900 with the solemn Ceremony set for 16-1700 hours. Check out the flier and the calendar in this Courier edition. Events in Afghanistan right now remind us of the costs that 9/11 and the fights afterward have cost our country so we hope you will schedule some of the time to join us and reflect, remember and honor those who have thus far fallen.

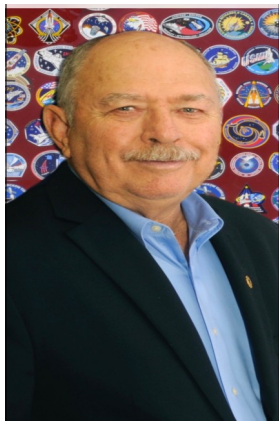
I want to thank our many members and volunteers who have stepped up so far to our 2021-22 Committee/Department Assignments which you can find in this edition of the Courier. If you see a role you would like to explore to further support our great BVC and VMC please seek out the appropriate Chair or any member of the Executive Committee. We would like to "finalize the line up " but will always welcome, as needed, more volunteers who want to engage in our dozens of connected missions through our Departments and Committees.

Stay safe as we hopefully see a downturn of covid soon. We have gotten seven new adult volunteers in August. Some are referred by our members and other volunteers. Please continue to reach out to friends who may want to volunteer in the museum, store, library or other activities. Volunteers do not have to be veterans or members, just people who want to support others and care about veterans and our core missions: Help Veterans, teach Americans about what veterans have done and support and. educate young people.

Military Facts

During the Vietnam Conflict, the US Coast Guard boarded 56 ships, 25,000 junks and sampans to prevent enemy infiltration. A total of 1,900 Sampans were destroyed





VMC Presidents Report

By Former LCDR Dean Schaaf
Veteran United States Navy Aviation



Everyone should pay close attention to the Covid 19 Delta variant and its impact on the community and the Center. Our present requirements for the VMC are "Masks are required for the unvaccinated, recommended for all others". We will be watching the impact closely and adjust accordingly if the CDC and other officials deem it necessary.

The General Meeting, swearing in of people that missed the original ceremony, and the awarding of the scholarship recipients went very well. All the awardees and their parents or JROTC instructors were present. See the picture and write up later in the Courier. Did you know that Brevard County is 6th in the population of veterans in Florida at 73,925? That falls behind Palm Beach county at 126,456 in 1st, followed by Broward County at 124,000, Pinellas County at 112,547, Hillsborough at 100,000 and Orange County at 78,500 In 5th. Source of this information is the

Bivouac paper /magazine which is distributed to the VMC. The Bivouac paper is an excellent source of veteran resources and events scheduled throughout Florida. Because of the statewide exposure, the VMC will run a trial advertisement to hopefully reach out to all of Florida. Check it out if you haven't. Please continue to document your hours with Sandy Ellison. Sandy, thank you for everything you do for the Executive Committee, membership and tracking the volunteer hours.

DID YOU KNOW, The C-Ration, or Field Ration, Type C, was a prepared and canned wet combat ration intended to be issued to U.S. military land forces when fresh food (A-ration) or packaged unprepared food (B-ration) prepared in mess halls or field kitchens was not possible or not available, and when a survival ration (K-ration or D-ration) was insufficient. Development began in 1938 with the first rations being field-tested in 1940 and wide-scale adoption following soon after. Operational conditions often caused the C-ration to be standardized for field issue regardless of environmental suitability or weight limitations. The C-Ration was replaced in 1958 with the Meal Combat Individual (MCI) Although officially a new ration was derived From the original C-Ration, and in fact continued to be called "C-Rations" by American troops through



out its production life as a combat ration (1958–1980). Although the replacement for the MCI, the MRE, was formally adopted as the Department of Defense combat ration in 1975, the first large-scale production test did not occur until in 1978 with the first MRE I rations packed and delivered in 1981. While the MRE officially replaced the MCI in 1981, previously packed rations continued to be issued until depleted.

COMMITTEE / DEPARTMENT ASSIGNMENTS

18 AUGUST 2021

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (EX COMM)		
Ad Hoc Committees as needed		Donn Weaver, Dean Schaaf, Dave Clayton, Kristi Blanchard
Events		Donn Weaver, Dean Schaaf, Dave Clayton, Kristi Blanchard
Fund Raising		Donn Weaver, Dean Schaaf, Dave Clayton, Kristi Blanchard
Special Projects		Donn Weaver, Dean Schaaf, Dave Clayton, Kristi Blanchard
ORGANIZATIONAL ELEMENT	LEAD	VOLUNTEERS
CENTER DEPARTMENTS		
Library	Joe Davie	Bill Wilkening, Norm Desmarias, Doug Bissett, Eleanor Fadok, Hank Rhodes, Jill Rippon, Vic Rogers, Wayne Rowe
Museum	Ed Pingston	Alex Terrero, Kristi Blanchard, Ted Schmid, Docents
Operations/Security	Bob Doyle/Ted Suzor	MOD, CSW, AARP
Park Planning	Joint	Donn Weaver, Dean Schaaf, MIRA (County Parks&Rec)
Park Events	Donn Weaver	Dean Schaaf, Dave Clayton, Dorothy Walsh, Don Pearsall, Garet McKimmie
Plaza	Donn Weaver (V)	Dean Schaaf, Sandy Eliason, Garet McKimmie
Store	Dave Boyd	Chris Gibson, Bob Estes, Kristi Blanchard, Donna Longway, Ray Norman, Jay Longway, Mike Wrazen, Vic Rogers, Jalaine Spears, Garet McKimmie
JOINT COMMITTEES		
Courier	Don Pearsall	Kristi Blanchard, Sandy Eliason
Finance	Dave Clayton	Jay Longway, Rich Tomasso, Ed Pingston, Kristi Blanchard, Dave Boyd
Governance	Dorothy Walsh	Ernie Hoffman, Ray Norman, Ted Suzor, Chip Hanson, Harry Beaver, EX COMM REP, Ted Schmid
Public Affairs	Harry Beaver	Chip Hanson, Ray Norman, EX COMM REP
Social Media / FB / Web / Mobile	Kristi Blanchard	Joe Davie, Doris Hendricks
COUNCIL ONLY COMMITTEES		
Cemetery Support	Chip Hanson	Dorothy Walsh (Brevard), Donn Weaver (CCNC), Ray Norman (MI)
Membership	Sandy Eliason	Kristi Blanchard, Dave Clayton
Scholarship	Doris Hendricks	Dean Schaaf, Ray Norman, Rich Tomasso, Mary Ann Tucker, Jay Longway
Stand Up	Don Pearsall	Donn Weaver, Dean Schaaf, Dorothy Walsh, Bob Doyle, Ted Suzor
Veterans Support	Don Pearsall	Bob Doyle, Dorothy Walsh, Bryant Faulkenberry
Veterans Treatment Court	Brian Whalen	Skip Taylor, Dorothy Walsh
Women Veterans Outreach	Christine Tate	Tabitha Miller, Dorothy Walsh, Amanda Herrnkind, Adrienne Leonhardt
CENTER ONLY COMMITTEES		
MIAP-FL Brevard	Donn Weaver	Chip Hanson, Doris Hendricks, Rich Tomasso, Paul Julian
Speaker's Bureau	Paul Julian	Norm Desmarias, Donn Weaver, Dean Schaaf
Veterans History Project	Paul Julian	Donn Weaver, Chip Hanson, Julie Adamson, Joe Davie
Vets Back to Class / JFI	Donn Weaver	Dean Schaaf, Chris Gibson, Doug Bissett, Paul Julian, Joe Davie, Norm Desmarias, Hank Rhodes
Youth Activities	Paul Julian	Bob Doyle, Dean Schaaf, Brian Delaney (SCYM)
(V) - Vacancy and looking for a new lead		

2021-2022

BVC/VMC Leadership Team

BVC Chair/VMC Vice Pres	Donn Weaver	757-871-6576	donnweaver2020@gmail.com
VMC President/BVC Vice Chair	Dean Schaaf	794-4371	dschaaf@brevard.net
BVC/VMC Secretary	Kristi Blanchard	449-1226	brevardvmc@gmail.com
BVC/VMC Treasurer	Dave Clayton	401-255-5461	bvmctreasurer@gmail.com

Brevard Veterans Council Board of Directors

3 Year	Ed Pingston	794-9401	ed@pingstonservices.com
3 Year	Ray Norman	452-5376	normanrayl@yahoo.com
3 Year	Ted Schmid	863-3640	tedschmid88@gmail.com
2 Year	Bill Pollock	258-6414	wrp50@yahoo.com
2 Year	Rich Tomasso	613-5417	rich4400@gmail.com
2 Year	Ted Suzor	271-4327	dolfyys21@cfl.rr.com
1 Year	Alex Terrero	759-5543	aja3@bellsouth.net
1 Year	Bryant Faulkenberry	423-6723	law.faulken.19dmil@outlook.com
1 Year	Vic Rogers	603-707-2304	itcret@yahoo.com
BVC Chaplain	Chip Hanson	543-7505	chipvietnam@aol.com
DAV Chapter 123	Rodger Pickett	795-3108	rpickett@davfla.com
Immed. Past BVC Chair	Donn Weaver	757-871-6576	donnweaver2020@gmail.com

Veterans Memorial Center Board of Directors

3 Year	Dave Boyd	266-3825	dboyd52@outlook.com
3 Year	Mary Ann Tucker	986-9494	wellmare@aol.com
3 Year	Paul Julian	749-7369	pjulian54@yahoo.com
2 Year	Dorothy Walsh	426-6736	dwalshusa@gmail.com
2 Year	Harry Beaver	507-4228	sgmbeaver@netzero.net
2 Year	Lou Rossi	394-1669	No email
1 Year	Doris Hendricks	458-1138	dorisroses@yahoo.com
1 Year	Garet McKimmie	571-239-9991	garetmck@yahoo.com
1 Year	Jay Longway	449-9037	jpl3x@yahoo.com
VMC Advisory Chair	Dennis Herring	693-7209	dmherring7602@sbcglobal.net
Immed. Past VMC Pres	Dean Schaaf	794-4371	dschaaf@brevard.net

Veterans Center - Non Voting Support Positions

Asst. Secretary	Julie Adamson	446-4663	Juliecladamson@gmail.com
Asst. Treasurer	Kristi Blanchard	449-1226	bvmctreasurer@gmail.com
Courier	Don Pearsall	313-2444	djp32927@gmail.com
Librarian	Joe Davie	636-8644	jdavie@cfl.rr.com
Membership	Sandy Eliason	750-4724	sandyk.eliason@gmail.com
Museum Curator	Ed Pingston	794-9401	ed@pingstonservices.com
Museum Curator (Assoc.)	Alex Terrero	759-5543	aja3@bellsouth.net
Operations Director	Bob Doyle	276-7814	vmcoperationsmgr@gmail.com
Photographer	Roger Scruggs	795-6545	scruggs@tvphotog.com
Security/Asst, Operations	Ted Suzor	271-4327	dolfyys21@cfl.rr.com
Social Media	Kristi Blanchard	449-1226	brevardvmc@gmail.com



Secretary's Report

By Kristi Blanchard Capt.
U.S. Army — Military Academy, West Point



We're so fortunate to live in Merritt Island and to be able to support our veterans. I had an adventure in early August that gives me hope for the future of our military leadership too.

As background, each year young people from all fifty states and many countries enter the United States Military Academy as "new cadets" (this year it was 1,225 U.S. citizens and 16 international students). In early August they complete their Camp Frederick boot-camp training just before starting the academic year. The son of my former roommate entered the incoming USMA Class of 2025, and we were invited to march back with his company. We marched 14 miles with the new cadets, and other "old grads" from the Class of 1958 thru the Class of 2021. Despite the precautions taken for COVID-19, they remained upbeat about the rigorous training.

It was an amazing experience to interact with youth who are truly excited about serving our country and becoming the best leaders they can be. Their diversity, camaraderie and team work were on full display – and I for one am happy to report that the development by attrition I experienced as a cadet has been replaced. Their class motto is "Together We Thrive" and it's a great reminder to all of us. I'm glad to serve with all of the volunteers and staff here at the VMC.



Note: Last month the Courier listed our awardees but this article was omitted. See Page 17 for the 2021 Distinguished Service Awardees.

On July 14th, 31 BVC-VMC volunteers with 100 hours or more of service in 2020-2021 received the President's Volunteer Service Award (PVSA) and 18 volunteers with 50-99 hours received a BVC Certificate of Appreciation. All volunteers also received a \$10 Gift Card to the VMC Store. Since 2003, then President George H.W. Bush's President's Council on Service and Civic Participation has recognized the important role of volunteers in America's strength and national identity. The BVC-VMC volunteers with 100+ hours received:

- A personalized certificate recognizing their highest level of achievement (Gold, Silver, or Bronze)
- A letter signed by President Joseph R. Biden;
- A pin (Gold, Silver, or Bronze), which can be worn on their badge while volunteering

Chaplin's Corner



By: Chaplin Chip Hansen
United States
Marine Corps

Breakfast & Lunch Donna & Robert Lahr Owners

Cozy Corner Cafe



(321) 452-0305
2425 N. Courtenay Pkwy, Merritt Island, FL 32953
www.thecozycornercafe.webs.com

**Family-friendly joint
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**Roger Scruggs can
communicate your public
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ther still photos or video.**

Mary Consolato (321) 305-6009 office
Owner (407) 402-3993 cell



mconsolato@bellsouth.net
285 N. Plumosa St., Merritt Island, FL 32953

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210 North Tropical Trail
Merritt Island, FL 32953
www.MIUnity.org



A positive, practical approach
to Christianity based on Jesus's teachings
and the power of prayer.

In Memory of the Fall of Afghanistan



A Salute to the Sacrifices of Gold Star Families

I am an American Soldier.

I am a warrior and a member of a team.

I serve the people of the United States, and live the Army Values.

I will always place the mission first.

I will never accept defeat.

I will never quit.

I will never leave a fallen comrade.

I am disciplined, physically and mentally tough, trained and proficient in my warrior tasks and drills.

I always maintain my arms, my equipment and myself.

I am an expert and I am a professional.

I stand ready to deploy, engage, and destroy, the enemies of the United States of America in close combat.

I am a guardian of freedom and the American way of life.

I am an American Soldier.

**We honor the September Jewish Holidays of
Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur**

UNOFFICIAL BREVARD VMC VETS CALENDAR (MAY AND BEYOND)

Contact VMC for any additions or other information.

11 Sep — Space Coast Honor Flight returns to operations with 2021 Honor Flights. Check their website : SpaceCoastHonorFlight.org for updated information. Luncheons for SCHF have resumed at several county restaurants.

11 Sep — TWENTIETH ANNIVERSARY TRIBUTE TO SACRIFICE: 9/11 and Aftermath. Patriots Day and 9/11 Commemoration at the VMC . Sponsored by Club 1013 Ret NYPD and the VMC. This event marks the 20th anniversary of the attacks on America and almost two decades since America took the fight to enemies in Afghanistan and around the world. It will be a special Patriots Day Remembrance (1100- 1530 — 1730-1900) and Tribute Ceremony (1600-1730) . Food trucks, vendors and special events in Veterans Memorial Park; Ceremony in the Center and Memorial Plaza area.

18 Sep — Space Coast Honor Flight Fund raising event at The American Muscle Car Museum 3500 Sarno Road, Melbourne 1830-2100. Tickets required at \$100 for General Admission and \$200 for VIP entry and private tour. Order online at www.spacecoasthonorflight.org.

23 Sep — Sen. Rubio's representative holds office hours (1400-1600) in the VMC Library to support veterans in need of federal attention or to pass along ideas to the Senator. Contact Maria Montano on 407-254-2573 for more information.

02 Oct — Jack's Back New Show, Songs and Look 1800- 2200 at Space Coast Convention Center in Cocoa (520 and I-95). A Fund Raiser for the Medal of Honor Memorial at the Veterans Memorial Center and Park. Salute to music from the 60's to the 80's and More. Dinner and Show (1900) included for \$48 each. Reservations through Karen at 321-604-1344. A great, one of a kind evening, for a great cause.

15 Oct — Shrimp Feast at the Port sponsored by the Propeller Club of Port Canaveral 1800-2200. Held outdoors at the Exploration Tower. Tickets and sponsorships, baskets available through the website: ShrimpFeast2021.com. This is a fundraiser and wonderful community event with years of history broken by covid in 2020.

16 Oct — NVHS Sponsored 2021 6th Annual Dinner Fundraiser 1730-2100 at the Radisson Resort at Cape Canaveral. The National Veterans Homeless Support non-profit event includes Sheriff Ivey and many Brevard officials who strongly support veterans in need. Table and other level of sponsorships are available. Register on line at Kasey@nvhs.org or call Kasey Corson 321-208-7562 for more info.

TBD Oct — MIAP-FL: Fourth Missing in America Project - FL Call to Honor Ceremony (CTH) in Brevard at CCNC 0900- 1100. In Brevard we continue to research dozens of abandoned veteran cremains in our area. The October MIAP FL Ceremony at the Cape Canaveral National Cemetery will include Brevard County Veterans for the first time. Another MIAP FL CTH at CCNC is planned late 2021.

28 Oct — Sen. Rubio's representative holds office hours (1400-1600) in the VMC Library to support veterans in need of federal attention or to pass along ideas to the Senator. Contact Maria Montano on 407-254-2573 for more information.

11 Nov — VMC Veterans Day Ceremony at VMC (0930-1100) Food and refreshments provided; Special events and displays.

18 Nov — Sen. Rubio's representative holds office hours (1400-1600) in the VMC Library to support veterans in need of federal attention or to pass along ideas to the Senator. Contact Maria Montano on 407-254-2573 for more information.

04 Dec — The 2021 Veterans and Military Support Golf Tournament sponsored by Good Deeds Foundation of the Military Officers Association of America (MOAACC) at the Cocoa Beach Country Club (0800-1400) This tournament funds MOAACC GDF support to all JROTC and related units in the county; active duty military needs not covered by DoD; and support to veterans in urgent need. Sign up for the event and sponsorship levels at moaacc.org.

15 Jan 2022 — The Fourth Annual Key Lime Pie Festival at the Veterans Memorial Park at VMC. Proceeds support the VMC. Major Park improvements should make the event very special.

19 Feb 2022 — The Veteran Stand Up (Formerly known as Stand Down) event was postponed due to COVID 19 in 2020/21. The VMC Boards and EXCOMM decided it was better to postpone the event until Feb 2022 due to uncertain COVID conditions that could impact such a large, indoor gathering. We hope many veterans, organizations and others will find ways in the meantime to help Homeless and at risk Veterans in Brevard County. Planning meetings begin in Early November at the VMC. This event will focus on at risk veterans and matching them with job options on the Space Coast.

TBD Mar 2022 —The Space Coast Food Festival 1600-2000 at the VMC and Veterans Memorial Park. Sponsored by the Cocoa Beach Regional Chamber of Commerce, this popular, community event has been held at the Port and other large venues. Room for organizational tables and canopies as well as good entertainment and great food to sample. POC is Jennifer Sugarman of CBRCC 321-459-2200

Please help us spread the word and advise of any new events.



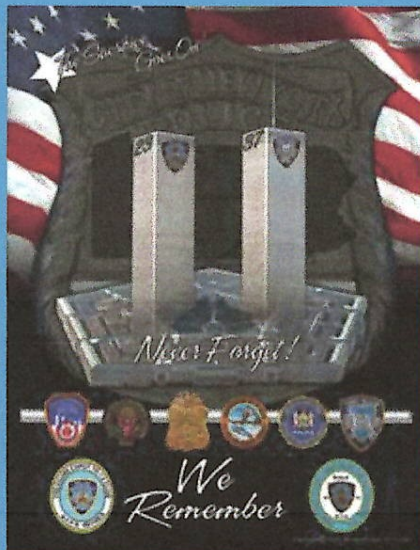


**The 2021, Brevard County 20th Anniversary
Memorial Tribute will be held at:**

The Veteran's Memorial Park

Located at:

**400 South Sykes Creek Pkwy
Merritt Island, FL 32952**



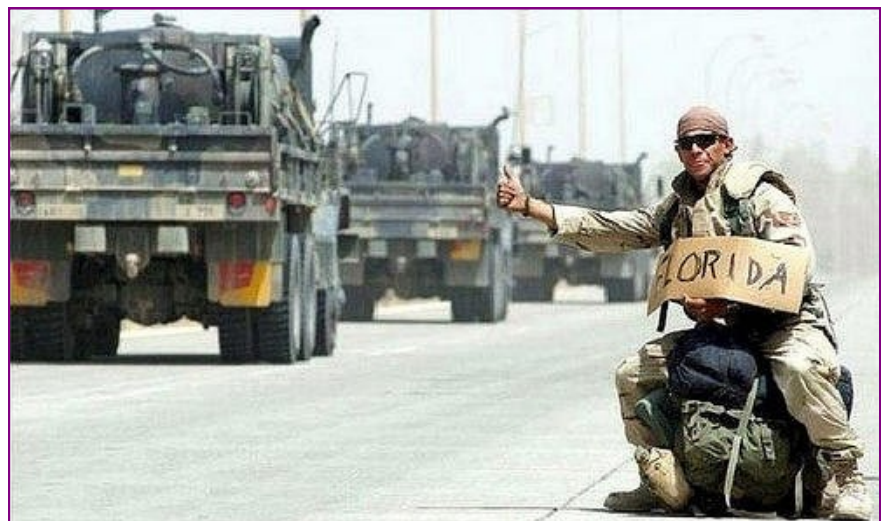
**CITIZENS OF BREVARD COUNTY
JOIN US AT 4:00PM ON SATURDAY
SEPTEMBER 11, 2021
SUPPORTING AND REMEMBERING
THE FIRE, POLICE, EMS, CIVILIANS,
AND MILITARY WHO
LOST THEIR LIVES ON 9/11**



VMC Scholarship Winners –2021

At the VMC General Meeting on 11 August, most of the Center’s winners of college scholarships for 2021 and their families attended and were awarded their checks to lots of applause. The complete list of winners is available in the minutes of that meeting and with the Scholarship Committee Chaired by Doris Hendricks. The committee had a tough job as more applications were received than funds available due to the past COVID year. The winners came from several local high schools with the highest number from Merritt Island HS. The ten winners received a total of \$8000 in funds made possible by the Friday Night Dance group and the VMC bridge players.

Humor in Uniform



Special Events

By Donn Weaver



A Very Special Tribute to 12 Purple Heart Recipients: 08 August Ceremony at the VMC

For the fourth straight year the Space Coast Chapter of the Military Order of the Purple Heart (MOPH) held a ceremony to recognize a record number of PH recipients (12) in front of a record crowd (160). Many of the honorees and readers for the stories were Veterans Memorial Center (VMC) and/or Cape Canaveral Chapter of MOAA members.

The Space Coast MOPH Chapter is commanded by Carl Miller and calls the VMC its home. The program included the colors being presented by the Space Coast Young Marines, also often working out of VMC. Many people assisted Carl Miller in making this a great event with a fantastic printed program, but Brevard Marine Corps League Commandant, Vinnie Howard with his extensive set up work and coordinating the Color Guard with SCYM Commander Brian Delaney, deserve special recognition.



Each honoree story of how they received their Purple Heart(s) was read aloud while the twelve 8x8 in bricks were displayed on a table in the front of Gray Hall at the VMC. The honorees were:



Brian McGinnis (KIA in Iraq 2003); Jonathan Langford ; Thomas Trotter; Joshua Frey; Danny Mc Knight; John Erskine; Ray Lynch; Charles Donovan; Adrian Ayala; Mike Lomax; Juan Santiago and Carl Miller.

Their bricks have been installed in the VMC Memorial Plaza around the Purple Heart Monument in honored recognition of their service and sacrifice for our country.

Local Sports Stadium and Organization Provides Special Support to Veterans

In early May this year, a few veterans approached Bob Grey, Strategic Partner and Manager of the United States Specialty Sports of America (USSSA) at Space Coast Stadium in Viera and his great team with a request.

Only days earlier a well known former Brevard County ROTC and JROTC Instructor and retired US Army Ranger, MSG Mike Sonnenschien, had been nearly fatally shot while serving on a religious mission to Haiti, a country in major turmoil through this time. Ranger Mike needed financial assistance to help with air evacuation and recovery since he had given up most everything to pursue his mission through a local Viera Church. LTC Tim Thomas, USA Ret and Vice Mayor of Melbourne as well as Viera HS JROTC Army Instructor led the Ranger Mike Fund effort while Brevard Veterans Council Chairman Donn Weaver worked with the Veterans Memorial Center and other groups in support.

Listening carefully, Grey suggested there was a date on May 22 where a fundraiser could be held at Space Coast Stadium. Over the next week he worked with the veterans to add additional fundraising opportunities at the July 2 USSSA Pride Fast Pitch Softball Game Military and Veteran Appreciation Night. Finally he decided that proceeds from a month long on line auction of sports jerseys provided by local sports personalities could also be added to the effort.

Together these event added over 90 per cent of the \$22,000 raised to provide to Ranger Mike and his family. In addition, the July 2 game, attended by nearly 2000, recognized three WWII and Korean War Vets as well as all military and veterans in attendance, which was a great and patriotic way to kick off one of the best Fourth of July weekends in the history of Brevard County.

During the summer the Bob Grey and his team also included at no cost a full page ad in their program for 2021 about the partnership now established with the Veterans Memorial Center (VMC). The Good Deeds Foundation of the Cape Canaveral Chapter of the Military Officers Association of America (MOAACC) worked with USSSA and the VMC to create and advertise the Ranger Mike Fund which enabled all donations to be tax deductible.



The VMC supports many veterans, teaches Americans about what veterans have done for our country and has many other missions together with the county. VMC charges nothing for its museum and other facilities for regular visits.

Success breeds new ideas. The USSSA is now working with the VMC and MOAACC to organize another special night for veterans and active duty military during a late September national softball tournament. Although the date is pending, teams of men's slow pitch softball from active duty military units all over the world will descend on Space Coast Stadium for their annual tournament. Bob Grey and the veterans are back to work seeing what program might work in that environment to help and to bring awareness to the veterans and their missions in Brevard County. From the 72,000 veterans resident in Brevard, thanks to Bob Grey and his team for such special efforts and their demonstration of patriotism as the new partnership begins.



Park Report

By Donn Weaver



Very special, courtesy of the County. Think of all the events that will follow!! Especially with the Amphitheater. A new version of “Build it and they will come”.

The County just did these drone shots which I wanted to share with our new Parks Events Committee and others who use the Park for events. They will be great to help us book events, attract vendors, etc.





VMC Operations

By Bob Doyle
U.S Army
U.S Marine Corps

Your Operations section is involved in many other areas which make up its abilities to do so many things. I am a Director for Florida Veterans Foundation in Tallahassee and a Service Officer in several Military Associations.

Ted Suzor is a Director with Honor Flight and Don Pearsall runs his own Veteran Support agency. We are also members of the Community and State Emergency Response Teams with FEMA and we are tasked with assisting 14 other states build their programs based on the Florida Program Don and I developed.

In the afternoons we go out to several homeless camps each day and deliver food and supplies as needed. Don and I also assist in moving veterans from their location to new housing as it becomes available and pay bills when funds are available. As to our wonderful facility, we strive each day to try to maintain a level of professionalism in what we do so that we are a positive influence to our tenants and guests.



2021 Distinguished Service Awards – Silver Medal

Roger Scruggs
Jay Longway
Donna Longway
Hank Rhodes
Ernie Hoffman
Chip Hansen
Rich Tomasso
Jalaine Spears





Flag Retirement Pit Scout Awarded Eagle Scout Rank

About one year ago, an Eagle Scout Project (one of nine at VMC over the last 6 years) was completed when the American Flag Retirement Burn Pit was inaugurated. The Scout behind that project, Jacob Huff, received his Eagle Scout Award on 21 August, along with two other scouts at his MI Troop 343 Court of Honor. VMC Pres Dean Schaaf, who is an Eagle Scout himself and who read the story of the Eagle Project, and BVC Chairman Donn Weaver attended the Ceremony. American Legion Post 344 was also well represented by Les Beecher, Ken Hill and Richard Panchik. Vinnie Howard also presented recognition from the Marine Corps League. Dean Schaaf did double duty presenting an award from the Fleet Reserve. Pictured below is Jacob after the Ceremony and with his mother and father (center) being recognized as new Eagle Scouts. Congratulations.



Note: Jacob did such a good job raising funds for his Eagle Project that he was able to provide VMC an extra \$700 for maintenance in the general fund, along with the beautiful fire pit.



Honor Flight

By Paula Suzor



Quick N Mobile Industry, a provider of lightweight folding wheelchairs and lift devices, recently made a donation to a local veteran, CJ Davis.

Pictured with CJ are Ted and Paula Suzor, veteran coordinators with Space Coast Honor Flight. CJ also went on a flight to Washington, DC with the local honor flight hub, a national program that honors our nations' veterans.



Library Report

By Joe Davie and Paul Julian



Mask guidelines for library visitors have been revised. Masks are required for the unvaccinated and recommended for all others.

We conducted one VHP interview during the month of September Louis Allen Williams II. Louis and his wife Anita live in Maitland Florida and the interview was conducted in our library. We also accepted a PowerPoint presentation from Anita that detailed her father's service in the Army Air Corps at Guadalcanal during November 1942. Her father Robert Edward Grubbs, who is deceased now, wrote a typewritten account of his service defending Henderson field with artillery batteries from incoming Japanese artillery and ships located offshore. Louis Williams's service was during the Vietnam war in the Air Force in which he served as Ordnance Officer aboard B 52's.

We have added a new display in the library called books for sale in the Museum and Local Authors. Local Authors for sale in our Museum Bookstore include. "Back From the Front" by Don Pearsall, "Streets of Mogadishu" by Danny McKnight, "August 1864 A Civil War Adventure" by Hank Rhodes and "Losing Todd: Finding Peace In My Heart" by Jeanne Weaver.

With the help of our summer interns we have been able to create a Veterans history project spreadsheet that details our collection for the Veterans History Project Interviews. Kristi Blanchard has posted it to our website along with other new links here <https://veteransmemorialcenter.org/veterans-history-project/>

We are having a mold assessment along the library wall adjacent to the Kitchen. We have had leaks coming from the Kitchen under the wall wetting the bookshelves on a recurring basis. Please be careful when filling the Keurig water tank not to let it overflow.

Joe Davie

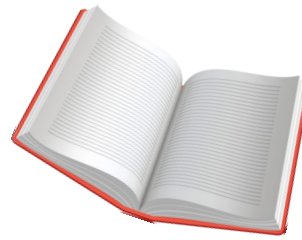
VMC Librarian

"A library outranks any other one thing a community can do to benefit its people. It is a never failing spring in the desert."

Andrew Carnegie

Book Report

By Ray Norman



Ambushed under the Southern Cross: The making of an American Merchant Marine Officer and his Ensuing Saga of Courage and Survival by Capt. George W. Duffy

This book jacket has an interesting title lead...Ambushed gets one's attention. There is a phantom outline of a maritime ship. One would think of swashbucklers, treasure on a Caribbean Island. ...not quite. This saga unfolds with a story about George Duffy and his twenty-five classmates who graduated from the Massachusetts Nautical School (MNS) in 1941. Their class made the summer training cruises under sail and ended an era that began in 1891 with the MNS. These young sailors of 18-20 years old were recruited as deck and engineering officers in the US merchant marine.

Within a year of graduating and ten months into WWII Duffy's good fortune came to an abrupt end when his ship the American Leader was sunk by a German disguised raider. It was a warship with deck cannons, etc. they attacked and sunk the American Leader. Duffy and his 46 shipmates were rescued from the South Atlantic and taken prisoner by the Germans. George had two spartan years in the Nantucket and a rewarding year in the American Leader until she was sunk. After rescue by the German warship, he was sent to southern Pacific and spent four years in ten Japanese prison camps scattered over the southeast Asian island of Java, Singapore, and Sumatra. Picture the movie "Bridge over the River Qui" in all of its brutality, starvation, and death. Perhaps Duffy's experience was the model for the movie.

The antithesis for Duffy is that of a young German naval officer Konrad Hoppe who was an officer on the Hsk Miche. Many years after the war Hoppe and Duffy met and became good friends. Several pages are devoted to the acquaintance of these two mariners after the war. The website <http://www.usmm.org> lists 1554 ships (733 over 1000 gross tons) that were sunk during WWII. Crewman lost was 9521 out of 243000 or about 4% loss. My father told me of many nights of fear of German U-boats in the Caribbean as his ship traversed the Florida straits. In the 60s as a novice scuba diver our club dove on a Russian freighter 12 miles south of Pensacola...mostly flat plates but enough to attract barracudas and a few bottom fish....one of those who did not make it home.—Duffy and his wife Margaret reside in New Hampshire.



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It's Trivia Time

1. The Army Air Forces in WWII flew over the "HUMP" to supply which country with war materials?
2. Name the officer that was the first and only commandant of the Confederate Marine Corps during the Civil War?
3. As prescribed by law, what seat does the senior military officer of the US Armed forces occupy?
4. On 6 April 1909, this distinguished U.S. Naval officer reached the North Pole. What was his name?
5. What does "Swaggering" of military forces mean?

Answers on the next page



Veteran Support



By Don Pearsall Sgt E-5,
1st Cavalry, US Army Aviation

ALL Services are
Free for veterans

August accomplishments by the Independent agency Veterans Connections to a New Life Inc.

The agency assisted a total of 16 veterans, assisted 1 veteran with a electric FPL reconnection payment, Purchased groceries for three families in need, Distributed 8 meal boxes, Distributed 2,225 MRE Meals, Loaned out a generator to veteran who was renovating his home, Distributed 32 blankets to homeless camps in Brevard County,

Veterans Connection to a New Life is a non-affiliated 501 C (3) Non-Profit foundation that oversees many Veterans Assistance programs in the county. They are the only agency in the county that is totally funded exclusively by private donations. Having no administration or employee compensation costs, allows 100% of the donations to go to the benefit of area veterans in need.

- Transitioning from military to civilian life
- Family Acceptance and understanding
- Financial Services Assistance with expenses
- PTSD Counseling
- Substance Abuse Counseling
- Moving from the bush to a home or apartment
- Helping families adjust to the transition
- Substance Abuse Programs
- Legal Services
- Assistance with VA Issues
- Wellness Programs
- Equine Therapy
- Service and Comfort animals
- Career Support Specialties
- Reiki, Holistic and Meditation Therapy
- Peer Support Case Worker.
- New and used furniture free to veterans
- Rides to VA Appointments available
- Bus Passes for public transportation
- Shelter for cold or inclement weather
- Supplies and equipment for homeless veterans

Trivia Answers

- 1 China
- 2 Col Lloyd J Beal West Point Graduate appointed as Commandant in 1861.
- 3 Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff.
- 4 Admiral Robert Peary USN.
- 5 Demonstration of military strength to show US interest in the stability of a region.

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Museum Report

By: Ed Pingston - Museum Curator
Former Captain, U.S. Army
Retired 20 years

*Visit the Museum at
the Veterans Memorial
Center, where history
never gets old.*

Keeping with this months feature of the Vietnam War, the museum has much to offer to make your visit educational .

(Left) a display of the Russian made weapons used by the Viet Cong and the communist North Vietnamese soldiers. The display also includes the uniform often called "pajamas" used by the communist gorilla fight-



(Left) A mannequin is dressed as the US Army soldier during the Vietnam conflict. The dress of the 60's and 70's were called fatigues, which were later replaced by the modern, familiar BDU (Battle Dress Uniform) as seen below.



Vietnam Tet Offensive of 1968

On January 30, 1968, communist-affiliated troops from North Vietnam and the Viet Cong (a distinct political organization) launched what became known as the Tet Offensive against South Vietnam and its American allies. The Tet Offensive was one of the largest military operations of the Vietnam War, and became a key turning point in the conflict.

The Tet Offensive was a surprise series of attacks launched during Tet, the Vietnamese New Year festival. Many South Vietnamese troops were on holiday when the attacks began, and the military was caught off guard. The campaign initially targeted more than 100 cities and towns, including the strategic southern capital of Saigon, now named Ho Chi Minh City.



The Tet Offensive was a catastrophic military failure for the communists. Historians estimate as many as 50,000 communist troops died in the effort to gain control of the southern part of the country. The South Vietnamese and American losses totaled a fraction of that number.

Although a military loss, the Tet Offensive was a stunning propaganda victory for the communists. In fact, it is often credited with turning the war in their favor. The South Vietnamese began to lose influence as Viet Cong guerrillas infiltrated rural areas formerly held by the South Vietnamese government. The offensive frayed the relationship between the South Vietnamese and the United States. The consequences of the Tet Offensive extended to the United States.

Many Americans began to question military and political leaders who assured them the Vietnam War would be won soon. In the wake of the Tet Offensive, popular U.S. journalist Walter Cronkite said, “We are mired in a stalemate [and] the only rational way out, then, will be to negotiate, not as victors, but as an honorable people who lived up to their pledge to defend democracy and did the best they could.”



The Battle of Khe Sanh began on January 21, 1968, when forces from the People's Army of North Vietnam (PAVN) carried out a massive artillery bombardment on the U.S. Marine garrison at Khe Sanh, located in South Vietnam near the border with Laos. For the next 77 days, U.S. Marines and their South Vietnamese allies fought off an intense siege of the garrison, one of the longest and bloodiest battles of the Vietnam War.

Defending Khe Sanh

The U.S. military presence at Khe Sanh began in 1962, when Army Special Forces built a small camp near the village, located some 14 miles south of the demilitarized zone (DMZ) between North and South Vietnam and 6 miles from the Laotian border on Route 9, the principal road from South Vietnam into Laos.

U.S. Marines built a garrison adjacent to the Army camp in 1966. In the fall of 1967, the People's Army of North Vietnam (PAVN) began to build up its strength in the region, and U.S. officials began to suspect that Khe Sanh would be the target of an attack. Did you know? The number of Communist forces killed in the Battle of Khe Sanh would reach around 10,000, compared to fewer than 500 U.S. Marines killed in action.

General William Westmoreland, commander of the U.S. Military Assistance Command in Vietnam (MACV), believed that Vietnamese Communist forces had targeted Khe Sanh as part of a general effort to seize South Vietnam's northernmost regions and put themselves in a stronger position prior to any future peace negotiations. They had done this successfully against French colonial troops at the Battle of Dien Bien Phu in 1954, prior to obtaining independence at the Geneva peace conference. As part of a program codenamed Operation Scotland, Westmoreland reinforced the Marine garrison at Khe Sanh—bringing the total number of troops to around 6,000—stockpiled ammunition and refurbished the airstrip at the base, all in preparation for a possible attack.

Battle of Khe Sanh

The attack finally came on January 21, 1968, when PAVN forces began a massive artillery bombardment of Khe Sanh, hitting the base's main store of ammunition and destroying 90 percent of its artillery and mortar rounds.



**Vietnam Tet Offensive of 1968.
Many Died,
Most came back home changed,
and many still go back every night**

President Lyndon B. Johnson agreed with Westmoreland's argument that the base should be held at all costs, and U.S. and South Vietnamese forces launched Operation Niagara, a major artillery bombardment of suspected locations of North Vietnamese artillery in the hills surrounding Khe Sanh. As Johnson, Westmoreland and other officials considered Khe Sanh to be the primary target of the North Vietnamese, they largely ignored signs of a Communist buildup in more urban areas of South Vietnam.

The Tet Offensive

This proved to be a mistake, as on January 31, 1968—a date celebrated as the lunar new year, or Tet—some 70,000 North Vietnamese and Viet Cong forces launched a coordinated series of fierce attacks on more than 100 cities and towns in South Vietnam. Known as the Tet Offensive, this aggressive operation aimed to break Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) forces, inspire rebellion among the South Vietnamese population against the regime in Saigon and drive a wedge between South Vietnam and its powerful ally, the United States. Suddenly, the long and bitter struggle at Khe Sanh began to look like a diversionary tactic meant to tie up U.S. and South Vietnamese resources leading up to the Tet Offensive.

Impact of Khe Sanh

News reports of the Battle of Khe Sanh consistently referred to the struggle as another Dien Bien Phu, but in reality the U.S. and South Vietnamese enjoyed a much stronger position than had the French.

In addition to a fleet of helicopters and cargo planes that could resupply and reinforce the besieged Marines, they could rely on the heavy bombing capacity of the B-52 fighter planes, which dropped close to 100,000 explosives on the hills surrounding Khe Sanh over the course of the battle.

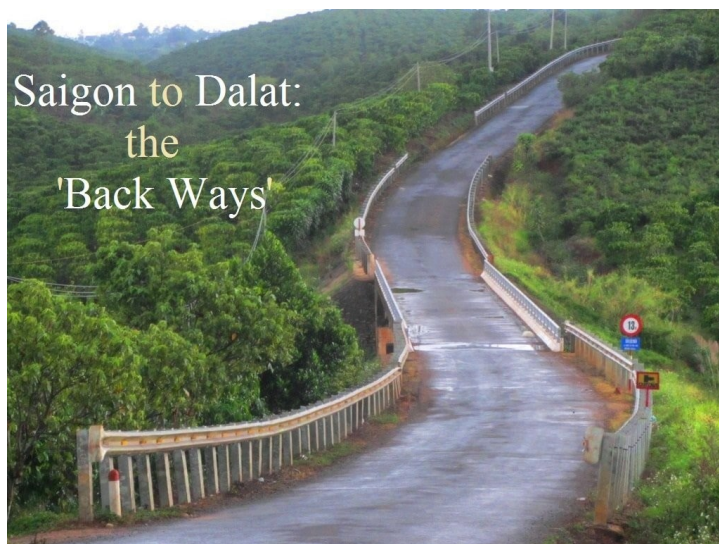
Though U.S. officials expected a full-scale attack by North Vietnamese forces on the base, it never came, and in March Westmoreland ordered Operation Pegasus, a joint Army, Marine and ARVN ground advance that relieved the base and ended the siege by mid-April, after some 77 days.

Critics Attack U.S. War Effort

In the face of criticism that he had fallen victim to the North Vietnamese diversionary tactic, Westmoreland defended his decision to defend Khe Sanh, and claimed the battle as a victory in that it prevented the enemy from gaining control over the northwest corner of South Vietnam and inflicted heavy losses on PAVN forces. As anti-war sentiment mounted on the home front in the wake of the Tet Offensive, the Johnson administration lost confidence in the general's strategy of attrition and his claims of progress in the war effort. On March 31, Johnson announced he was halting most of the bombing attacks in North Vietnam and opening peace negotiations; he also withdrew his candidacy for reelection. General Creighton W. Abrams replaced Westmoreland as MACV head in June 1968, and on July 5 he closed the U.S. Marine base at Khe Sanh.

What the HO CHI MINH TRAIL" looks like today

The Ho Chi Minh Trail was a military supply route running from North Vietnam through Laos and Cambodia to South Vietnam. The route sent weapons, manpower, ammunition and other supplies from communist-led North Vietnam to their supporters in South Vietnam



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The Patriot Report



By: Holly Petrucci
DAV Service Officer



Disabled American Veterans, Space Coast Chapter 123, Inc.
September 2021

VA Burial Benefits / National Cemetery

Questions about the Veterans Affairs Burial Benefit Program for the National Cemetery? VA burial benefits can help service members, Veterans, and their family members plan and pay for a burial or memorial service in a VA national cemetery. Family members can also order memorial items to honor the service of a Veteran. Find out how to apply for the burial benefits you've earned.

Eligibility Requirements

- You paid for a Veteran's burial or funeral, AND
- You have not been reimbursed by another government agency or some other source, such as the deceased Veteran's employer, AND
- The Veteran was discharged under conditions other than dishonorable, AND
- The Veteran died because of a service-related disability, OR
- The Veteran was receiving VA pension or compensation at the time of death, OR
- The Veteran was entitled to receive VA pension or compensation, but decided not to reduce his/her military retirement or disability pay, OR
- The Veteran died while hospitalized by VA, or while receiving care under VA contract at a non-VA facility, OR
- The Veteran died while traveling under proper authorization and at VA expense to or from a specified place for the purpose of examination, treatment, or care, OR
- The Veteran had an original or reopened claim pending at the time of death and has been found entitled to compensation or pension from a date prior to the date of death, OR
- The Veteran died on or after October 9, 1996, while a patient at a VA-approved state nursing home.

NOTE: VA does not pay burial benefits if the deceased:

Died during active military service, OR

Was a member of Congress who died while holding office, OR Was a Federal prisoner

Link for more information: [Eligibility for burial in a VA national cemetery](#)

Burial Benefits

Service-related Death

VA burial benefits include:

A gravesite in any of the [national cemeteries](#) with available space

- Opening and closing of the grave
- A burial liner provided by the government.

A [headstone or marker](#) provided by the government

Perpetual (ongoing) care of the gravesite

At the time of need, the person planning the burial can also request other [VA memorial items](#) as well as [military funeral honors](#) provided by the Department of Defense. These items and honors have other eligibility requirements.

[Download the National Cemetery Administration brochure \(PDF\)](#)

VA will pay up to \$2,000 toward burial expenses for deaths on or after September 11, 2001, or up to \$1,500 for deaths prior to September 11, 2001. If the Veteran is buried in a VA national cemetery, some or all of the cost of transporting the deceased may be reimbursed.

Non-service-related Death

VA will pay up to \$796 toward burial and funeral expenses for deaths on or after October 1, 2019 (if hospitalized by VA at time of death), or \$300 toward burial and funeral expenses (if not hospitalized by VA at time of death), and a \$796 plot-interment allowance (if not buried in a national cemetery). For deaths on or after December 1, 2001, but before October 1, 2011, VA will pay up to \$300 toward burial and funeral expenses and a \$300 plot-interment allowance. For deaths on or after April 1, 1988 but before October 1, 2011, VA will pay \$300 toward burial and funeral expenses (for Veterans hospitalized by VA at the time of death).

An annual increase in burial and plot allowances for deaths occurring after October 1, 2011 began in fiscal year 2013 based on the Consumer Price Index for the preceding 12-month period.

Evidence Requirements

Acceptable proof of death as specified in [38 CFR 3.211](#), AND

- Receipted bills that show that you made payment in whole or part, OR
- A statement of account, preferably on the printed billhead of the funeral director or cemetery owner. The statement of account must show:
 - The name of the deceased Veteran for whom the services and merchandise were furnished, AND
 - The nature and cost of the services and merchandise, AND
 - All credits, AND

The amount of the unpaid balance, if any

What does burial in a VA national cemetery include?

When a Veteran, service member, or family member qualifies for burial in a VA national cemetery, they receive certain burial benefits at no cost to their family.

Find out if you Qualify for a Burial Allowance

Link <https://www.va.gov/burials-memorials/veterans-burial-allowance/>

How to Apply

You can apply [online at Vets.gov](https://www.va.gov/burials-memorials/veterans-burial-allowance/), OR

To submit a paper application, download and complete [VA Form 21P-530, Application for Burial Allowance](#) and mail it to the [Pension Management Center](#) that serves your state, OR

Work with an [accredited representative](#), OR

You may also go to your [local regional benefit office](#) and turn in your application for processing.

Additional Information

Other information regarding VA burial benefits such as flags, headstones and markers is provided by the [National Cemetery Administration](#).

Make an appointment with a Chapter Service Officer to discuss the VA Burial Benefit Program. Call 321-452-1774 for an appointment. DAV Chapter 123 is not open and fully operating as yet. We are open on an appointment basis only! If you aren't sure your condition rates an increase, sometimes it is best not to kick a sleeping dog; it's best to leave it just lie there.



U.S. Army Airborne Jump Towers at Fort Benning
Georgia Three of the 250-foot towers that U.S. Army Airborne School recruits practice from during Tower Week. Jump Week is the culmination of the training, where the students have to complete five jumps from an airplane at 1,250 feet.



U.S. Navy Submarine training escape tower, at Groton CT. From the 1930s through the 1990s they were used for training in buoyant ascent, The decommissioned tower on Ford Island, Hawaii, was built to train United States Navy Pacific Fleet submariners prior to World War II, and was converted for use as an airport control tower. The Submarine Escape Trainer, a 40-foot (12 m) high, 84,000-gallon pool with two escape trunks was constructed at New London in 2007.



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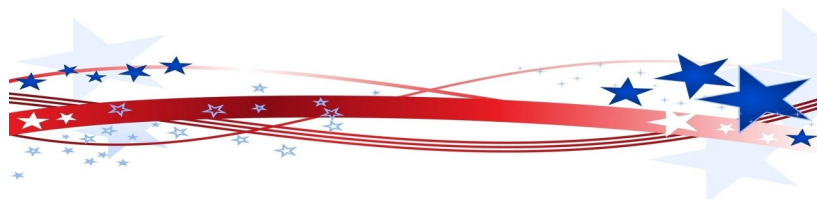
Diane & Adrienne Davison (December 2021)

Maryanne Tucker (March 2022)

If you feel your name is missing and that you paid for Booster sponsorship this year, please contact the Treasurer. Thank you for your forbearance and understanding. Fill in your names and send to the BVC along with your check. Please make your check payable to:

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Name(s) _____



Organizational Meetings Time and Dates

American Legion Post 344 (Last Thursday of Month at 1800 Hours)

American Legion Auxiliary Unit 344 (2nd Thursday of Month at 1730 Hours)

Combat Veterans Motorcycle Club (3rd Saturday at 1100 Hours)

DAV Chapter 123 (2nd Thursday of Month at Noon)

The Fleet Reserve Association Branch 263 (1st Wednesday of Month at 1800 Hours)

Marine Corps League Detachment 513 (1st Thursday of Month at 1800 Hours)

Military Order of the Purple Heart (4th Monday of Month at 1100-1330 Hours)

Navy League (1st Monday of Month at 1800 Hours)

U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary (2nd Tuesday of Month at 1800 Hours)

U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Exec. Meeting (Last Wednesday of Month at 1800 Hours)

Rolling Thunder FL Chapter 1 (Fourth Sunday of Month at 1400 Hours)

Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 12167 (Last Thursday of Month at 1700 Hours)

Non-Veteran Organizations Meeting Times at the VMC Cape Canaveral Ladies

U.S. Power Squadron (1st Tuesday of the month at 1800 Hours)

Sea Cadets (2nd Friday of Month at 1800 Hours)



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