

Brevard Veterans Council/



Veterans Memorial Center

Council Courier

Jan 2022



The Pearl Harbor Remembrance Ceremony was handled with honor and respect by BVC Chairman Donn Weaver (Left) and VMC President Dean Schaaf . See full story on Page 11

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

Mission Statement

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.

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 Those submissions received after that date will not be published.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

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In Honor Of Our Brothers and Sisters



Cape Canaveral National Cemetery



Council Chairman's Report

By: Donn Weaver

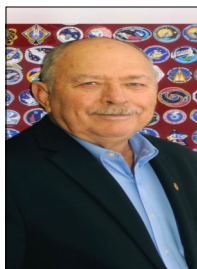
For the past two years the volunteers who support VMC's missions have done remarkable work in the face of Covid 19 and other challenges. No one can predict what 2022 will bring, but let me wish all of you a Very Happy NEW Year as we explore 2022 together.

When we were growing up, resolutions each new year were part of the American culture. This January, whether you sit down and make such a list on New Year's Day or just vow to make improvements in the promise of a new year, we hope you are bolstered by being a member and/or volunteer with the Veterans Memorial Center. It is a remarkable place. Here are just a few things that 2022 should bring to our already busy and productive Center and Park:

- Major Park Upgrades Leading to the Amphitheater (\$4+M) (See Park Report)
- More Events than pre-covid indoors and in the Park (see the VMC Calendar)
- Over 20 new volunteers in the past six months and more expected
- Continued appearance and cleanliness improvements led by Kelly Martin and his team
- DAV 123 great members getting even more active after their early January training
- Increasing donations and visitors with more tourists expected and with more supporting partners
- Starting in February, major events sponsored by us or at VMC/Park every month through Dec.

VMC Presidents Report

By Dean Schaaf



HAPPY NEW YEAR! I hope everyone had a great Christmas holiday and were able to spend time with family and friends. I look forward to another productive year at the Veterans Memorial Center and with the many other veterans' organizations we are all members of.

As our Chairman has posted, we should see a busy year in the Park with many upgrades, eventually leading to the much-anticipated amphitheater in 2023. Merritt Island Redevelopment Agency (MIRA) and the county Parks and Recreation organization are working closely with the VMC to make this happen.

We want to thank all volunteers who participated in the Wreaths Across America annual event on the 17th and 18th of December. A special thank you to Dorothy Walsh for organizing the Brevard County Honors Veterans project which honored 24 cemeteries in the county, Dave Pincheck for coordinating the Wreaths placement on Merritt Island cemeteries and Donn Weaver for his coordination with the Wreaths Across America, Cape Canaveral National Cemetery. We have recently received a very generous donation to our scholarship fund by one of our active members. Thank you Doug Bisset!

And on a closing note, **NAVY 17 – ARMY 13** in the 122nd game of the annual rivalry. All-time series, Navy leads, 62-53-
GO NAVY. Go Purdue Boilermakers in their bowl game against Tennessee in the Music Bowl on December 30.



| | | | |
|------------------------------|------------------|--------------|--------------------------|
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| VMC President/BVC Vice Chair | Dean Schaaf | 794-4371 | dschaaf@brevard.net |
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| 3 Year | Ray Norman | 452-5376 | normanrayl@yahoo.com |
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Veterans Memorial Center Board of Directors

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| 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

| | | | |
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| Museum Curator (Assoc.) | Alex Terrero | 759-5543 | aja3@bellsouth.net |
| Operations Director | Bob Doyle | 276-7814 | vmcoperationsmgr@gmail.com |
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| Social Media | Kristi Blanchard | 449-1226 | brevardvmc@gmail.com |

Chaplin's Corner



By: Chaplin Chip Hansen

Breakfast & Lunch Donna & Robert Lahr Owners

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Owner (407) 402-3993 cell



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

Fifty-four years ago, this very month, I arrived in Viet Nam as a combat Marine. For the next thirteen months, I and a lot of other very young Americans were subjected to things that most folks don't see in a life time. We came home many of us got married and had children. When our children matured, they were sent to the mid-east to be subjected to much of the same horrors that I and my generation were subjected to. Now my Grandson just completed six years in the Marine Corp, he also went overseas and was put in harm's way.

In the 1940s all of my uncles served in the Army and fought in WWII, my Aunt was A Major stationed North Africa as a combat Nurse. My Father was a civilian who was one of the original team to produce a working atomic bomb. (He died 20 years after the war ended, after a long-term bout with cancer and leukemia)

Every generation since the Revolutionary war, has stood up for what was right for America. Freedom of religion, go to Church without threats, own a gun for recreation and personal protection, and freedom to express an opinion without being shunned or threatened by society. Today there are certain parts of our country where business cannot stay open for fear of been robbed, or killed. In some cities you cannot walk down the street without the threat of robbery, or being harmed. My daughter who lives in a suburb south of Chicago Illinois was in a Walmart parking lot, left her car for just for a few moments and a group of thugs tried breaking into her car. She was lucky they all fled when she returned to her car. In New York City Fox News had a Patriotic Christmas Tree, that was attacked and destroyed by fire.

I wonder what our forefathers would think. George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, John Adams and so many other Americans. In much of our society , if you mention those names, you are now considered un-American.

I remember when we would defend the right of others, to have a difference of opinion. I look forward to when that day returns.

We must work at bringing our society back. Maybe not so much to where we once were, but at least to where we can understand and tolerate one and another.

"A cheerful heart is good medicine, but a crushed spirit dries up the bones."

~ Proverbs 17:22

GOD BLESS AMERICA

CHAPLAIN CHIP HANSON

UNOFFICIAL BREVARD VMC VETS CALENDAR (JAN AND BEYOND)

Contact VMC for any additions or other information.

NOTE: Some events change in between our monthly mailing of the VMC Calendar. Keep up to date with those changes using our web link:

<https://veteransmemorialcenter.org/other-veterans-events/>

13 Jan 2022 — “Civil War Naval Operations” Roundtable discussion led by VMC Library’s own CDR Wayne Rowe, USN. Ret. 1930-2100 at the Cocoa Presbyterian Church, 1404 Dixon Blvd, Cocoa. More research materials have been uncovered about Civil War Naval operations which will be shared in this multi media presentation. Contact Wayne at new-wave99@yahoo.com for more info.

20 Jan — Liberty Bell Museum (a fellow Museums of Brevard - MOB - member) Meet and Greet at VMC 1700-1900 with food and beverages to learn more about the reopened Liberty Bell Museum in Melbourne.

27 Jan 2022 — Office of Sen. Marco Rubio monthly office hours for veterans to report issues and questions to the senator. VMC Library 1400-1600. POC: Tom Self 407-254-2573. Appointments encouraged.

NOTE: JAN-MAR— POSTPONED DUE TO HEALTH ISSUES: Legends of Country Music Concert Honoring Veterans (half price) (Sat 1900 and Sunday 1400) at Various HS Auditorium. Tickets at the door. Call 321-358-6037 for more information. “America’s Favorite Country Tribute Show” Check again in Spring 2022.

NOTE: The Fourth Annual Key Lime Pie Festival at the Veterans Memorial Park at VMC is postponed until VMP upgrades are completed in 2023. Proceeds support the VMC. Major Park improvements should make the event very special as early as possible in 2023..

04 Feb — St Francis Reflections Presents The Beatles Tribute Band from Liverpool in concert as part of their “Honor Veterans Program” at 1900 at Space Coast Stadium in Viera. Buy tickets at text 41444 or RelectionsLSC.org/Beatles.

06 Feb — Ceremony to honor the Immortal Four Chaplains and all Chaplains, at the VMC Plaza and Gray Hall 1400-1500 . Contact Chaplain Chip Hanson for more information as we continue the VMC and American Legion tradition of honoring Four Army Chaplains who went down on their torpedoed troop transport ship in the icy Atlantic Ocean on Feb 3.4, 1943. They gave up everything to save the lives of others that night.

06 Feb — Visit by National Wreaths Across America Mobile Team to Brevard County at VMC, Hours TBA. Learn about the origins and how to support this amazing, nation- wide program.

12 Feb — Brevard County JROTC Sprint Target Relay Air Rifle Competition in the Veterans Memorial Park (0700-1200). Will include numerous JROTC teams from various services in a special competition of skill and endurance. Coordinated by LTC Brian Whalen, USA, Ret Army JROTC Instructor at Rockledge HS.

13 Feb — Forever Remember 9/11: A Salute to First Responders Fund Raiser Dinner 1700 at Space Coast Convention Center /Holiday INN Express Cocoa. Sponsorships available, Seats at \$45 each for individuals. Proceeds to hold the 2022 Remembering 9/11 Ceremony in September at VMC , as well as the American Police Hall of Fame, the VMC and Club 1013 of retired NYPD Officers in Brevard. Contact: artgrenci@yahoo.com or JaneyH@aphof.org for more information

17 Feb — Honor America Patriot Awards Dinner 1800-2100 at The Grand Manor , 1450 Sarno Road in Melbourne. Sponsored by Liberty Bell Museum. Dinner \$50 per person with table sponsorships at \$500 available. Call 321-373-2311 or honoramericafl@gmail.com for reservations and information. Proceeds support the re-opened Liberty Bell Museum.

24 Feb — Office of Sen. Mario Rubio monthly office hours for veterans to report issues and questions to the senator. VMC Library 1400-1600. POC: Tom Self 407-254-2573. Appointments encouraged. 12 Mar — Commemoration of the Last Naval Battle of the American Revolution 1000-1100 Veterans Memorial Center Plaza Outdoors area. Sponsored by the Brevard Sons of the American Revolution Chapter with SAR and DAR Units from all over Florida expected to attend. Food Trucks and other festivities planned. Contact the VMC, Donn Weaver, for more information.

12 Mar — Commemoration of the Last Naval Battle of the American Revolution 1000-1100 Veterans Memorial Center Plaza Outdoors area. Sponsored by the Brevard Sons of the American Revolution Chapter with SAR and DAR Units from all over Florida expected to attend. Food Trucks and other festivities planned. Contact the VMC, Donn Weaver, for more information.

31 Mar — Office of Sen. Mario Rubio monthly office hours for veterans to report issues and questions to the senator. VMC Library 1400-1600. POC: Tom Self 407-254-2573. Appointments encouraged.

28 Apr — Office of Sen. Mario Rubio monthly office hours for veterans to report issues and questions to the senator. VMC Library 1400-1600. POC: Tom Self 407-254-2573. Appointments encouraged.

01 May — Third Annual First Responders Appreciation BBQ at the VMC and Park 12-1500. Free for all First Responders, Active Duty and Veterans including BBQ, drinks, music, special kids events, vendors that support First Responders and veterans. Done in partnership with Back Brevard Heroes and the VMC. Contact backbrevardheroes@gmail.com for more information.

14 May — The Space Coast Food Festival 1400 - 1830 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 CBRCC 321-459-2200.

26 May — Office of Sen. Mario Rubio monthly office hours for veterans to report issues and questions to the senator. VMC Library 1400-1600. POC: Tom Self 407-254-2573. Appointments encouraged.

30 May — Memorial Day Ceremony at the VMC 0930- 1030.

30 Jun — Office of Sen. Mario Rubio monthly office hours for veterans to report issues and questions to the senator. VMC Library 1400-1600. POC: Tom Self 407-254-2573. Appointments encouraged.

04 Jul — Fourth annual VMC/BCSO Merritt Island Independence Day Parade 0900-1100. Location TBD.

31 Jul — Operation Thank You for All You Do BBQ at VMC and Park in honor of Law enforcement, Fire, EMS First Responders in Brevard (1400-1700). Free food and drinks for First Responders, kids games, special activities, music, etc.

07 Aug — Fourth Annual Military Order of Purple Heart Brick Honoring Ceremony (1400-1600) VMC Gray Hall which will recognize and learn the stories of 10 Purple Heart Recipients then inducted into the MOPH VMC Plaza Monument Walkway.

11 Sep — Remembering 9/11, 21 Years Later : The Fallen on that Day and those who fell later as a result of those attacks and who went to the fight for over 20 years thereafter. VMC Center, Outdoor Ceremony 1700-1900.

TBD OCT — The Veteran Stand Down to 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 Oct 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 July 2022 at the VMC. This event will focus on at risk veterans and matching them with job options on the Space Coast.

11 Nov — VMC Veterans Day Ceremony 0930-1100 with lunch and refreshments.

12 Nov — St Francis Reflections Veterans Dash for LIFE 5K (0800-1200) in the Veterans Memorial Park to celebrate Veterans Day week, honor veterans and raise funds for SFR county wide veteran support programs. Contact Gloria Lorey of SFR 321-423-0506 for more information,

Please help us spread the word and advise of any new events. Donn Weaver BVC Chairman 757-871-6576

Special Events

By Donn Weaver

MISSING IN AMERICA PROJECT – FL (MIAP)

YOU ARE NOT FORGOTTEN: Ceremony at Cape Canaveral National Cemetery on Dec 1, Honors 24 Veterans and 2 Spouses cremains that have previously gone unclaimed.

On December 1, 2021, under beautiful fall skies, per current VA protocol, a closed MIAP Call to Honor #28 was held at the Cape Canaveral National Cemetery (CCNC) located in Brevard County, FL. The solemn ceremony honored 24 veterans, and 2 spouses, who were recognized one by one and placed in a niche. The cremated remains of these veterans went unclaimed for an average of more than two decades. One remained in a funeral home storage vault for five decades. Many of the veterans served our country in times of conflict with 18 having served in World War II and two being sent into WWII, Korea, and Vietnam.

Special thanks to CCNC, Director Mr. Kevin Ridgeway, and the great CCNC staff for supporting a beautiful ceremony and making sure each veteran and spouse is now laid to rest with dignity and honor. Active-duty personnel from local units of all branches of service and some veteran organizations supported the ceremony, along with MIAP volunteers led by Kathy Church, Florida State MIAP Coordinator.

Difficult to accept, the reality is that funeral homes, Medical Examiners Offices, hospitals, and other private locations across the country are caretakers of unclaimed cremains. The Missing in America Project is a nationwide, nonprofit, 501c 3 volunteer organization.

The purpose of the MIA Project is to locate, identify and inter the unclaimed cremated remains of American veterans through the joint efforts of private, state, and federal organizations. To provide honor and respect to those who have served this country by securing a final resting place for these forgotten heroes. MIAP was founded in 2006 and operates in many states. For more information about MIAP and to become a supporter or volunteer go to www.miap.us.





VMC Steps Up Again to Support Marine Corps Reserve Program: Toys for Tots through the Marine Corps League and led by Ops Director Bob Doyle, the Veterans Memorial Center was for the 31st straight year a focal point for Toys for Tots 2021 Christmas Drive. For a month hundreds of toys were collected at the VMC and VMC Museum then taken over to Merritt Island Airport on 11 December to be merged with more toys from all over MI. Through 20 Dec toys were collected then taken to the major Toys for Tots warehouse in Titusville to be picked up by young families in need

to make sure hundreds of Brevard children have a great Christmas. Thanks to Bob and the MCL for this special and always successful mission. Before the Toys were sent on, members of the Eau Gallie AF JROTC Color Guard pose for a Christmas photo as they get ready to present colors at our 08 December General Meeting and Christmas Party.

Special Community Award



A Real Surprise: Ray Norman Receives a Special Community Award

At our BVC/VMC December General Meeting and Annual Christmas Party on 08 December, a long time member and leader with VMC received a great surprise before the holiday party began. Ray Norman, Jr worked with us and a business 501c3 called Brevard Random Acts of Kindness (BRAK) for six weeks to plan to recognize his Dad. Ray Norman, Sr. is known for his many years of VMC and other service always with a smile and determination to assist in our missions. He never asked for recognition and was always kind to everyone. When approached by BRAK in October, he was a good choice. Noelle Brown and other BRAK members presented Ray

with a beautiful glass trophy, a great Ray cake we all shared and other goodies and refreshments. Earlier Ray Jr, his wife and Neighbors of Ray waited in the Library until the surprise was announced. It is a challenge to keep Ray speechless but the surprise did it as the 60 people at the Party gave him a standing ovation. Congratulations Ray!! Well earned.



Gold Star Tree Honoring Brevard's Fallen Military decorate at VMC Museum for the Holidays

On 11 December, six Gold Star families came together to decorate the annual Gold Star Tree at the Veterans Memorial Center Museum. The tree includes hand crafted gold stars made of wood with photos of 30 loved ones, with deep Brevard County connections, who were killed in combat or as a result of military service going back to Vietnam. It has been a local project with VMC and MOAACC volunteers going back 8 years, when it was first displayed in the Merritt Square Mall.

Last year it was shifted to the beautiful and appropriate VMC Museum. Less people may see the tree, but most understand the service and ultimate sacrifice each star represents. It will remain up until 15 January and carefully stored until next Christmas. Like the Wreaths Across America does for as many veterans as possible over the holidays, the Gold Star Tree helps remind us of the cost of freedom. For most Gold Star families it also shows their loved ones will not be forgotten. If you are, or know, a Gold Star family in Brevard not yet included with the Tree Project, please contact Donn Weaver, 757-871-6576 for more information.





As the photos show, our 07 December 80th Anniversary Remembrance of the attack on Pearl Harbor was a great success. About 80 attended the event and more than 10 shared their own or family stories about that day or it's impact on them.

The event was filmed live by Space Coast Daily Friday Night Flights and follow up stories appeared in Florida Today and other media. Three WWII veterans told their stories about where they were that day in 1941 and how their lives changed forever because of the Japanese attack. They included 102 year old Bob Clarke, who was already in Army Air Corps pilot training that day; as well as Peter Diaz and George Rosenfield. VMC President Dean Schaaf gave a vivid account of the fleet and aircraft at Pearl and the other ensuing loss of life, ships and aircraft as a beautiful Sunday morning dawned in Hawaii and history changed in hours.





Cape Canaveral National Cemetery

December 18, 2021



Eight wreaths were placed at a wreath ceremony at Cape Canaveral National Cemetery in Mims Friday morning to kick off the 2021 Wreaths Across America. The national event is happening Saturday at cemeteries across the country. On Friday wreaths were placed for the six branches of the service, the Merchant Marines and for the POW/MIA.



VMC Chaplin Chip Hanson (Center) gives solemn thanks for the sacrifice of our fallen heroes while flanked by BVC Chairman Donn Weaver, and Bettie Jo Green the CCNC Location Coordinator





REMEMBER HONOR TEACH
WREATHS
 across
AMERICA
 ★ EVERYONE PLAYS A PART ★
BREVARD HONORS VETERANS

(Above) Lt. COL Tim Thomas US Army Ret. Salutes while the colors are presented and wreaths were placed on veterans graves in Melbourne cemeteries. (Right) Dana Blickley (kneeling) places a Christmas Wreath on the grave of George Taylor Sr while Dorothy Walsh looks on. George Taylor has done more for Veterans in Brevard County than anyone. He passed away in 2020.



(Left) Veterans placed Christmas Wreaths on the graves of deceased veterans at the Brevard Memorial Gardens in Port St John



(Above) Marine Corp League Honor Guard (Below) young people learn about MOH Recipient Emory Bennett and place his and his family's wreaths



Don Pearsall (Left) discusses the wreath escort route with Darrell "Bones" Benton, John Dittmor, and Shawn Oberdorf prior to kickstands up



American Legion Auxiliary Unit 344 Hosts Special Christmas and Holiday Party for Brevard Children



This awesome bunch of ladies from the American Legion Auxiliary out did themselves with kindness and charity at their children's Christmas party held at the VMC. All the kid's favorites, Hot Dogs, Pizza, Fruit, Mac and Cheese and juice and soda were served throughout the day

On Saturday, 18 December, the Veterans Memorial Center was turned into Santa's Workshop, a toy store and holiday food support facility in one. For almost four hours more than 30 veteran families including more than 50 children were given a great party, lots of pizza and other goodies, food to take home for the holidays and big bags of multiple toys for all the kids. It was a great event since these veterans families are facing major economic challenges, with some in transitional housing, and in danger of missing Christmas because rent and utility bills had to be paid.

American Legion AUX Unit 344 and their President Rose Marie Hill to the RESCUE. Working with VMC support, individual and organizational donations, their own unit budget, generous grants from the Brevard Federated Republican Women members, and the Good Deeds Foundation of the Cape Canaveral Chapter of the Military Officers Association of America, a VMC Partner, many Christmases and Holidays this year were saved. Thanks to Santa and so many elves who cared about veterans' families struggling in Brevard.

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FREE SIGN UP!



Free “Meet and Greet” Event

January 20, 2022, 5 to 7 pm

Veterans Memorial Center

400 Sykes Creek Parkway, Merritt Island, FL 32952

“Heavy Hors D’Ouvres,” Soda and Iced Tea

Come and meet members of our newly reconstituted board and learn about new developments and programs at the museum.



Learn about the role our museum plays in the cultural and educational life of Brevard County.

Plaza and Park Report

By: Donn Weaver

December saw 9 bricks installed and a new bench top along with some ongoing enhancements, including plans for a new Monument to Fallen Allies which is awaiting county approval to proceed. It will be located near the Immortal Four and All Chaplains monument and was approved to begin the phased, several year effort on 01 December by the BVC/VMC boards.

There was real progress here when MIRA and the County approved a major design upgrade and prioritized improvements starting early in 2022 into 2023 with the completion of the Amphitheater. In all nearly \$4Million is available and approved for the projects. Here is the report on the Veterans Memorial Park Upgrades approved at the MIRA 09 December meeting:

A. PHASE III Start Date: Given fact the final park design plan was only approved by the County Commissioners in November (See Dec Courier for key agreement reached 30 October), County Facilities, led by Tim Lawry, continues in final design, bidding, contracting stages. Actual work is expected to start by March 2022.

B. NEW OFFICIAL SCHEMATIC DRAWING: Posted in our Office is a blow up of the new, approved design. It adds a lot: A number of new restrooms; graded amphitheater area; Electrical outlets for vendors (which we will confirm with the county by mid January; irrigation; \$180K in more landscaping including Memorial trees; food sales pavilion and security/storage building; camera system; limited lighting; 80 new mostly grass parking spaces; irrigation; 10 Workout Stations along pathway; cover for playground; paved access road for third entrance off Fortenberry (Can be gated when not needed); the new Electronic capable sign Board; and much more.

C. PHASE III Priorities Approved: With the new site plan approved, additional funds for things like the above have been identified to be spaced out over current and next fiscal year. The priorities in sequence were confirmed today and a final list will be available to us in early January.

D. AMPHITHEATER : Designs being submitted and will be reviewed/approved hopefully by May 2022; competitive bidding process then launched; ground breaking planned for Fall 2022 if PHASE III on track to support; Funding rules require Amphitheater " must " be completed by Sep 2023 (the Museum had similar rules if you recall). VMC will have input as MIRA Partner on final design approval.

Next month we should be able to share the VMP site map of all the projects once approved by next month, we should be able to share the VMP site map of all the projects once approved by County engineering. Our VMP will be unique in the State and most states when these projects are completed. County engineering. Our VMP will be unique in the State and most states when these projects are completed.



Newest addition to our ponds sighted on 12/18/21 Baby is approximately 24 " Long



Operations Report

By Bob Doyle—Director

This is the month when ALL TENANTS are required to fill out a new schedule meeting contract with all your new points of contacts. Also will list all personnel that are required to have the security codes for building access. All private exercise contracts are required to complete a new contract and provide insurance information for the upcoming year. Fees will be updated by the treasurer if required for facility usage.

A reminder to all tenants that your primary monthly meeting is provided to you at no cost with the understanding that assistance is needed in facility operation with water donations, work as a volunteer in many areas and assisting at the large functions.

Any other use of the facility may incur a payment based on type of meeting or event and area usage if available. This is outside of the original once a month contract.

PLEASE MAKE SURE YOU FILL OUT A NEW CONTRACT SO THAT I DO NOT HAVE TO CHASE YOU DOWN. Many groups have new staff and officers and we need to know current information. If you are a tenant group with access to the storage facility make sure your payments are up to date for its usage. Failure to comply could result in loss of this privilege.

Please ensure that at the completion of your meeting or event that you break down the room and empty the trash. This is a mandatory requirement for your free facility usage otherwise we will hire a clean up person at your expense to follow up after you.

There will soon be a lot of construction happening in the park area as we will be expanding and adding many things to include power, trees and eventually the Amphitheater. This will include additional bathrooms and a security tower in the park. There will be additional parking areas included and lighting throughout the area. So soon we will have a very dynamic facility and park that we can all be proud of.

Have a blessed holiday season and be safe.

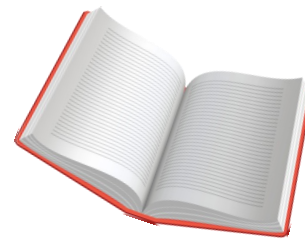
Library Report

By Joe Davie

Doug Bisset and Joe Davie teamed up to interview Danny Garcia for the Veterans History Project in December 2021. Danny is one of our local authors and also participates in our local chapter of the Marine Corps League. Danny is well known in the Marine Corps and has received their support from Bases and US Embassies throughout the world. His outreach to children and world peace has touched many thousands of people for more than a decade. Many dignitaries including our Presidents, the Vatican, City Mayors, numerous US and foreign representatives and Marines from foreign countries have been touched by Danny through his walks for children and world peace. View Danny's interview here and above photo. <https://youtu.be/tiJV0RdVmis> Sgt. Garcia USMC and his wife Lt. Col. Jackie C. Garcia USAF (Ret.) who wrote his book "Marines Don't Cry" have donated a copy of the book and is available in our Bookstore and local Authors section of our library.

Next year the library staff is planning on digitizing cultural and heritage materials that are already a part of our Library collections. We have Books, Magazines Newspapers, Photos, and Documents in storage that we would like to make available to the public through digitizing and viewing on large TV screens and computer monitors. To this end we have upgraded our TV and Computer Systems in order to display these materials. We are in the planning stages of developing a digitized file system that will lend itself to archiving and displaying these collections.

Book Report



By Doug Bisset

Marines Don't Cry- Delivering the Message at All Costs" By Danny Garcia & Jackie C. Garcia

This book is a fast read-225 pages; yet full of inspirational messages. The Veterans Center Museum has copies for sale. A copy for the library was kindly donated and signed by the authors' during the recording of their story for the Veterans History Project on 12/9/21- which will also be in the library for review.

The book is the full story of Danny's life from a difficult childhood in New York's Harlem and conflicting home life; two tours in the Marine Corps to include service during the Cuban Missile Crisis and the Viet Nam War; the destructive return home period after the war (that many of us can relate to); two divorces; death to life experiences; and deep sorrow to joy in finding God and being guided through Him to walk more than 52 million steps on six continents for children of the world and peace. Some of the walks were dangerous, as, for instance, he was briefly taken hostage in Palestine. All were inspirational and all touched many. Sometimes he also saved lives. In addition, he met and communicated with more world leaders than anyone the rest of us will ever know.

One has to be amazed at any individual that can walk 50 miles a day. And he is diabetic and has PTSD!

Read it and be inspired. Doug Bisset Library Staff



Sick Call

Taps

*Thankfully
No Report*



*Thankfully
No Report*



Back in August, Florida Power and Light reached out to VMC leaders and MOAACC members to help select a deserving veteran and his family for a very special series of gifts for Christmas. Plans were kept quiet and shared only with Sarah Frey, wife of Marine Josh Frey and mother of their three young daughters who live in West Melbourne. Josh served in Iraq in 2004 and was severely wounded in 2004 during the Battle of Fallujah. It took several years of surgeries and courage to build his body and spirit back and he still has no use of one arm. Sarah and he kept fighting and today he is always ready to help other veterans. He cannot hang

up any Christmas lights. Enter FPL. While Sarah took Josh and the kids on a pre-planned trip to the zoo on Pearl Harbor Day, 07 December, about 30 FPL volunteers armed with a cherry picker gave their afternoon off to put up thousands of lights and a huge Santa in military uniform. They also brought gifts and signs of honor to pass out when a very surprised Josh and the daughters pulled up near dusk. Florida Today, TV Channel 2 and other media were there and told the story the next day. Dean Schaaf and Donn Weaver represented the VMC and are also MOAACC members. All honored a great veteran for his service and sacrifice for our country while saluting his terrific family who clearly spurred his determination to rise above his injuries. Thanks to FPL — Who will be recognized and surprised next holiday season?





The Patriot Report



The VA has extended the presumptive period to Dec. 31, 2026 for qualifying chronic disabilities rated 10% or more resulting from undiagnosed illnesses in [Persian Gulf War Veterans](#) to ensure benefits established by Congress are fairly administered.

If an extension of the current presumptive period was not implemented, service members whose conditions arise after Dec. 31, 2021 would be substantially disadvantaged compared to service members whose conditions manifested at an earlier date.

Limiting entitlement to benefits due to the expiration of the presumptive period would be premature given that current studies remain inconclusive as to the cause and time of onset of illnesses suffered by Persian Gulf War Veterans.

VA presumes certain medically unexplained illnesses are related to Persian Gulf War service without regard to cause, including, chronic fatigue syndrome, fibromyalgia, functional gastrointestinal disorders. Also included are undiagnosed illnesses with symptoms that may include but are not limited to abnormal weight loss, cardiovascular disease, muscle and joint pain, headache, menstrual disorders, neurological and psychological problems, skin conditions, respiratory disorders and sleep disturbances.

Persian Gulf War Veterans who are experiencing any of the symptoms listed above and other unexplained medical issues are encouraged to [file](#) a compensation claim for them.

Source: VA Benefits Newsletter December 2021

We would like to make sure you are aware of the Department of Veteran Affairs delays in printing and mailing VA notification letters through the Government Publishing Office's vendors.

VA statement on GPO printing and mailing delay

WASHINGTON — Due to supply chain and staffing shortages, the vendor contracted by the Government Publishing Office to provide printing services for the Department of Veterans Affairs is experiencing delays in printing and mailing notification letters to Veterans and claimants. The disruption may impact the ability of some claimants to meet required deadlines via written correspondence with VA.

In response to the mailing delays and to protect the best interest of claimants, the Veterans Benefits Administration is extending their response period by 90-calendar days for claimants with letters dated between July 13, 2021 and Dec. 31, 2021.

If a claimant does not reply to a time-limited notification, such as, making an election of benefits or services, or reporting for a scheduled compensation and pension examination, VBA will not take adverse action to deny, reduce or terminate benefits and services unless:

- 1) The claimant is contacted and there is documentation of their right to respond;
- 2) The requested information has been received; or
- 3) The response period has lapsed.

VA and GPO are proactively working to quickly address the mailing delays. For questions on this matter, Veterans and claimants can contact VA at **800-827-1000**.

Veterans who filed an appeal with the Board of Veterans' Appeals can **check [here](#)** for information specific to Board correspondence, scheduled hearings at the Board and receiving your Board decision.

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Board of Veterans' Appeals Delayed Notification December 2021

Overview: The Board of Veterans' Appeals (Board) is experiencing delays in providing Veterans and their representative's notice of their hearings, decisions, and other mailed correspondence. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Board transitioned from in-house mailing to mailing through the Government Printing Office (GPO). GPO is operating with a significant delay in printing and shipping correspondence due to staffing shortages. This delay has impacted the Board's ability to mail correspondence in a timely manner. The Board is currently working to put processes in place to ensure Veterans and their representatives receive timely correspondence, including notice of decisions and hearings. Additionally, impacted Veterans are invited to request that the Board consider a previous submission that was not addressed or reconsider a determination that a previous submission was untimely. We are closely monitoring the backlog at GPO and will continue putting new and improved processes in place to ensure Veterans are receiving notice of their Board decisions in a timely fashion. **Hearings for Veterans:** The Board is currently working to call, email and send a letter to every Veteran scheduled for a hearing in front of a Veterans Law Judge (VLJ). We are working to provide as much notice as possible, but we expect hearing scheduling notices will continue to be delayed. It is very important that you let us know as quickly as possible if you have good cause to postpone your hearing.

For Representatives: The Board requests that you access your hearing schedule in Case flow. Please reach out to the Veterans on your schedule to ensure the Veteran has been made aware of their scheduled hearing. The Board's hearing team will also be emailing veterans service officers (VSOs) and attorneys with notices of scheduled hearings. **Decisions for Veterans:** We know Veterans are waiting for their decisions and we apologize for the additional delay. If the status of your appeal on VA.gov reflects that the Board has issued a decision but you have not yet received a decision in the mail, please reach out to your representative, if you have one, as they may be able to electronically access your decision for you. If not, we are working as quickly as possible to get the decision mailed to you.

For Representatives: If VA.gov or Case flow indicate that a Board decision has been issued and you have access to the Veterans Benefits Management System (VBMS), please consider obtaining a copy of the decision from VBMS to provide to your client and advise on next steps. **Reconsideration of Previous Submissions:** If you believe that the Board's failure to address a prior submission or determination that a submission was untimely was a result of the delay in the mailing of correspondence or notice to you or your representative, you may ask the Board to reconsider its determination. Please indicate in your correspondence that you are submitting a request for reconsideration/recalculation of a timeliness determination due to the mail delay. You are encouraged to submit any evidence, including a statement, relevant to the mailing date of the Board correspondence or notice at issue. Please note: If you receive Board correspondence requesting a response within a certain amount of time, please provide the requested response, even if the deadline is soon approaching or has recently passed. The Board is taking steps to allow for additional time to receive and address such responses, when permitted under the law. Additionally, in some instances, the Board is permitted to grant a good cause extension to accept certain filings. For additional assistance : VSOs, **(DAV)** Private attorneys, or agent advocates should contact their Information Security Officer or local Change Management Agent to initiate Casflow access through updates to existing Common Security Employee Manager (CSEM) permissions. If additional assistance is required, please reach out to Marty Caraway at martin.caraway@va.gov. If you would like to check the status of your appeal, please visit www.va.gov/claim-or-appeal-status.

For additional questions, please email boardcustomerservice@va.gov

As more information becomes available, updates will be provided. If you have any questions or believe you were impacted by the delays, call 1-800-827-1000, as stated above.

Thomas J. Murphy
Director, Northeast District, Veterans Benefits Administration,
Performing the Delegable Duties of the Under Secretary for Benefits

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)

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)



**We thank Those
Who Tonight, Are Guarding
The Gates Of Freedom**

***BECOME A BOOSTER TODAY and
help defray the cost of printing and
mailing our newsletter. Only \$10.00
per name, per year.***

- Boosters -

| | |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Bateman, Skip & Ruth July, 2026 | Mueller, Mel & Dora Mar, 2022 |
| Bisset, M Doug Sept, 2023 | Neugebauer, Susan Mar, 2022 |
| Clayton, David & Anne July, 2022 | Rapp, Gary (USMC) Aug, 2022 |
| Davison, Dianne & Adrienne Feb, 2022 | Rathbun, Don & Barbara Dec, 2023 |
| Donovan, Charles & Nancy Feb, 2022 | Roseland, Tom & Patrice Jan, 2023 |
| Eliason, Sandra July, 2022 | Schaaf, Dean & Susan July, 2022 |
| Fadok, Eleanor Dec 2022 | Sherman, John S. (Tank) Sept, 2022 |
| Fleet Reserve Branch 263 July, 2023 | Sherman, Rheta Campbell Sept, 2022 |
| Fugaro, Joan & Ricardo Nov, 2022 | Schmid, Ted Jan, 2023 |
| Kaufmann, John & Cindy Mar, 2022 | Space Coast Honor Flight May, 2023 |
| Leonhart, Rick Mar, 2023 | Tootle, Jim & Ann Feb, 2022 |
| Longway, J.P & Donna Dec, 2023 | Tucker, Mary Ann Mar, 2022 |
| Malpass, Dick & Louise May, 2022 | Weiler, Philip R. Feb, 2023 |
| Martin, John & Roberta Nov, 2022 | Weaver, Donn & Jeanne Sep, 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:

Brevard Veterans Council. *Single Name per year- \$10.00 / Double Names – \$20.00*

Name(s) _____



Happy New Year!

