



THE VETERANS MEMORIAL CENTER

# COUNCIL COURIER

JUNE 2022



A Publication of the Brevard Veterans Council & Veterans Memorial Center



## WHAT'S INSIDE

## Sea Cadets at VMC Always Serving Others

### Memorial Groundbreaking

The Plaza will soon have a new monument unique in Florida honoring foreign fighters in US missions. – page 13

### Memorial Day at the VMC

Honoring those who sacrificed. – page 10

### Ceremonial Wreath Laying

The moving Vietnam Wall brought many Veterans organizations together to pay respects and remember. – page 16

*The US Naval Sea Cadets are a valuable volunteer run organization, and the VMC is fortunate to host the Courageous Division out of our facility.*

*These fine young people are constantly giving back to the community in many ways and deserve our kudos and admiration. – page 12*

Photo by Robert Scruggs

JUNE 2022

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The Courier is a monthly publication prepared and distributed in both print and electronic forms by the VMC/BVC. 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 third Wednesday of each month. Those submissions received after that date will not be published.

Please send submissions to:  
brevardvmc@gmail.com

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## Our Organization

As of 20 April 2022:

[List of Board Members 2021-2022](#)

As of 20 April 2022:

[Committee Department Assignment 2021-2022](#)

As of 20 April 2022:

[BVC VMC Org Chart 2021-2022](#)



### Mission Statement

**Brevard Veterans Council:** The Brevard Veterans Council (BVC) is a 501(c)19 veterans organization.

BVC's mission 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 Veterans Memorial Center (VMC) is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization. VMC's mission is to maintain and operate a premier facility to educate the public and provide a vibrant memorial to the service and sacrifice of all military veterans and their families through a museum, memorial plaza, library, and veterans park.

**Brevard Veterans Council, Inc. & Veterans Memorial Center, Inc.**  
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 Merritt Island, FL 32952-3547  
 Office 321-453-1776  
 DAV Service Office 321-452-1774

# VMC President's Report

## LCDR Dean Schaaf, USN (Ret)



**M**ay was a busy month at the VMC with many events at the center, rentals picking up, the first 5K in the park, ground-breaking for an Allied Monument, and of course, culminating in a great Memorial Day program.

On a personal note, my new kidney was one year old (in my body) on the 23rd of May and is working well. A major milestone in my health. On a downside, my wife has joined the decade of the geezers. Welcome to the seventies, hon!

June has a couple of BIG events, Dancing with Brevard being the major one! We hope all will support LtCol Tim Thomas as he represents the VMC in the competition. The Veterans Memorial Center is one of four charities that will be the recipient of funds raised by the event.

The election process is complete for officers of the BVC and the VMC and we thank everyone for stepping up to the positions available. We could not run this

great facility without all our volunteers. Never stop serving!

I was honored to be the keynote speaker at the Sea Cadets Courageous Division awards ceremony on May 4th. It was the 60th anniversary of the Naval Sea Cadets as a youth organization. The Courageous Division is supported by the VMC, the Navy League Cape Canaveral Chapter, the Propeller Club Cape Canaveral, and the Military Officers Association of America Cape Canaveral.

Scholarship applications continue to come in. If you know of a senior that is graduating and has been accepted to a college or university, remind them of our Scholarship program. All they need to be eligible is a military connection in their immediate family. Applications are due on July 5, 2022.

Our brick sales continue to increase. The docents in the museum are doing an excellent job in promoting the program. Attendance to the Museum and donations to the Center are also increasing.

Thank you to all who contribute and especially, thanks to all our volunteers. We could not do it without your tireless work.

## VMC/BVC CONTACTS

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[FACEBOOK](#)

[WEBSITE](#)

[YOUTUBE](#)



## Highlights from the VMC Museum

Uniforms from all of our military service branches can be found at the museum. The one to the right is a Seabee uniform from the VMC's own photographer, Roger Scruggs.



## Organizational Meeting Schedule

The VMC is home base for a number of Brevard County Veterans Organizations. These organizations meet at the VMC on a monthly basis; see the [Events & Meetings page online](#) for a full listing of times our hosted organizations meet.



# Council Chairman's Report

by **Donn Weaver**  
 Captain, U.S. Army (Fmr)

## Elections and Plans

Thanks to our great nominating committee--Rich Tomasso (Chair), Paul Julian, Dave Boyd and Ted Schmid--new Board members were located and a full slate of 2022-23 officers were presented in May. Thanks to Dorothy Walsh for by-law review and support to the Nominating Committee as well.

There were no contested positions and no nominations from the floor during our 11 May general membership meeting, which meant no election is needed in June. The June issue of the Courier will include the new Board members.

There is one spot open due to a resignation on the VMC Board, so Dean Schaaf will be looking at options to appoint someone or keep the position open at or after our 13 July General Meeting when the new Board and Officers will be sworn in.

Special thanks to all who answered the call to serve as Board Members: Joe Davie, Mike Schulze (returning from rotation off the Board), Garett McKimmie (returning), Jay Longway (returning), Vic Rogers (returning) and Jalaine Spears. Our very active Chaplain Chip Hanson was reappointed.

Our appreciation to those whose tour ended and who have

done much to support us over the years, including ageless Lou Rossi, Doris Hendricks (who remains active in many key roles), and Alex Terrero, whose work in the museum goes back decades. Thank you all.

After not being selected for the VMC Dancing for the Space Coast position, Rob Medina could have been upset. Instead the Marine in him accepted our invitation to swear in the 2022-23 Board and Officers on 13 July. His position as a member of Rep Bill Posey's staff and Mayor of Palm Bay make him an ideal candidate to do so.

As an aside, we are hosting all candidates for the County Commission Vacant District 2 Seat to tour the VMC and Park and be briefed on our missions, since the winner of that November election covers the Merritt Island area and beyond and is a crucial link for the VMC.

The new slate takes office officially at the July meeting to run the full year until July 2023. Good luck to all and please contact them with your suggestions. We all work for the 500 plus members of BVC/VMC and the 72,000 veterans who live in Brevard.

I am honored to continue as your Chairman and VP of the VMC one more year.



## MOAACC and VMC Accounted For at Vietnam Reunion

In addition to the Wreath Laying Ceremony on 02 May 2022, a number of MOAACC and VMC Members worked side by side from 5-8 May at Wickham Park to support the annual Vietnam Veterans Moving Wall Reunion.

Manning the tables helped spread the word about what each organization does as well as get donations and brick orders for VMC, and one new member for each!!! The growing partnership between MOAACC and VMC is paying off.

The Reunion had plenty of media coverage and there were an estimated 6,000 visitors during the peak day.





## VMC/BVC Secretary's Report

CPT Kristi Blanchard, USA (Fmr)

**Happy Birthday to the US Army - Hooah!** As a bit of fun, you can read about the [origins of Hooah or Hough on Wikipedia](#).

### Retired Flag Box Update

We also celebrate Flag Day on June 14th and thought you'd enjoy knowing that our young people are serving the VMC too. As you might remember, we updated our "retired flag box" about six months ago and continue to try to educate our locals who drop off flags that they can retire their own synthetic flags (we accept 100% cotton for the Boy Scouts to retire in our fire pit).

One of our local teenagers, Lucca Soto, a freshman at Merritt Island High School, has dedicated his service hour time to retiring synthetic flags from our flag box on our behalf. We thank Lucca for promptly and respectfully retiring the flags. Learn more about flag retirement from this blog post: <https://blog.scoutingmagazine.org/2014/09/08/retiring-worn-out-american-flags/>

### Traveling Trunk Program

Our Curator Ed Pingston launched a traveling trunk program several months ago. Each trunk available for checkout focuses on a specific war and contains an assortment of items—original or reproduction—that would have been commonly used by soldiers during that time in our nation's history. You can read more about the traveling trunks on our website. <https://veteransmemorialcenter.org/traveling-trunks/>

Sean Noble, a senior at Edgewood Junior Senior High School, developed the Vietnam era trunk for his Senior Capstone Project. Sean's presentation about Vietnam is available online too at <https://veteransmemorialcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Vietnam-Trunk-Power-Point.pdf>

Schools, civic clubs, and others can check out the trunks and get hands-on clothing, military artifacts, and other era specific objects.



**Pictured:** Lucca Soto served many hours this school year retiring flags for the VMC from our flag box.



**Pictured:** Sean Noble with his Vietnam-era traveling trunk compilation ready to educate the community.





# Island Direct Primary Care

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## Advertise in the Courier

We appreciate having our corporate sponsors and veteran friendly businesses support us and hope they will consider advertising in the 2022 Courier. Please contact Donn Weaver (757.872.6576) if you might be interested or have questions.



### RATES

- Business Card: \$50 per year
- Quarter Page Color: \$150 per year
- Half Page Color: \$250 per year

Our emailed newsletter reaches hundreds, including veteran organizations, government officials, 400 VMC members and more. Ads are in support of the VMC, a 501(c)3 organization, and may be tax deductible. Funds will be used to improve the Courier and expand circulation in 2022 and beyond.



**FRIDAY NIGHT Dances**

PROUDLY PRESENTED BY THE VMC

**JUNE 3 AND 17 2022**

TICKETS \$7.50 PER PERSON. BYOB.

**DOORS OPEN AT 6:30PM**

**DANCES TO BE HELD THE 1ST AND 3RD FRIDAYS OF EVERY MONTH**

The funds collected are donated to the VMC/BVC fund after paying for the cost of set up, take down and clean up. Each year the VMC awards scholarships for college bound or continuing college students from Brevard County who meet the BVC-VMC criteria.



## Operations Report

**CPL Robert W. Doyle, USMC (Fmr)**

Much has happened since last month. We have had one of the busiest months since we locked down for Covid. Security issues

are on the rise in the park as there are some young people strong arming and generally vandalizing the park area.

If you use the park to do your walks just please be observant to your surroundings and especially if you see a group of people just hanging around. Also be alert when using the bathrooms as we have people sleeping in the rooms.

The facility at this time appears to be slowing down getting ready for the summer and with school out we may pick up several events. There is still plenty of space open so if you need a location for an event, consider the center and park. Be safe and enjoy the summer.



## Library Notes

**SGT Joe Davie, USAF (Fmr)  
VMC Librarian**



The library has been busy cataloging book donations lately. We have received several new titles for our Black Ops, and War on Terror sections. Black Ops includes books on CIA, Navy Seals, and Army Ranger Special Operations. Our War on Terror section includes books on the Afghanistan and Gulf Wars.

**Here's a look at the new volumes you can find in the VMC library. Stop by and check one out for yourself!**

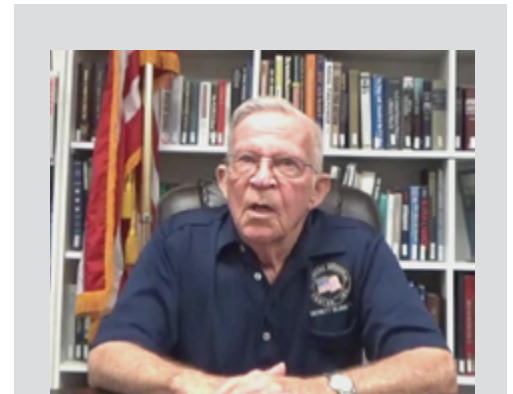
***Of Spies and Lies***, catalog number BlackOps-96, is written by CIA lie detection expert John F. Sullivan. He remembers Vietnam and his lie detection duties during the Vietnam War.

***The Operator***, catalog number BlackOps-96 by Robert O'Neil, tells his story as a Navy Seal Special Operator. "Firing the shots that Killed Osama Bin Laden and my years as a Seal Team Warrior."

***The Warrior Elite***, catalog number BlackOps-127, tells the forging of Seal Class 228. Following the trainees of Class 228 as they undergo Basic Underwater Demolition/Seal Training, we learn who these men are, where they come from and what makes them so special.

***Warrior Soul: The Memoir of a Navy Seal***, catalog number BlackOps-95, by Chuck Pfarrer recounts the author's most dangerous assignments as a Navy Seal.

***Rage Company: A Marine's Baptism by Fire*** can be found in our "War on Terror" section, catalog number WarOnTerror-51. Filled with on-the-ground details and insights on military operations and strategy, Rage Company cements the accurate history of the unlikely alliance that redirected the Iraq War and set the course for operations in the future.



### New Veterans History Project Interview: Ted Schmid

VMC/Veterans Council member and former Treasurer Ted Schmid told his story of service in the US Navy during the Cuban Missile Crisis. Ted served on a destroyer and was on patrol during the Cuban Missile Crisis. He was part of the Navigation crew that chased a Russian submarine and forced it to the surface.

[Click to see the Ted's full Veterans History Project interview.](#)





# Chaplain's Corner

by Chaplain Chip Hanson  
USMC (Fmr)

We in America have been through some very tough times over the last couple of years. Covid-19 that seems to never go away, riots, the economy, the cancel culture, and a country that is so very divided. Finally, the total disrespect by some groups to ruin or change the symbol that defines the United States of America: the American Flag.

## Flag Day and the U.S. Flag Code

On Tuesday, June 14th we will celebrate a day that has been set aside to honor this sacred red, white and blue symbol that has represented freedom for 246 years.

Military.com has written an excellent article that outlines the proper care and respect for our flag. Please read, save and pass along the link: <https://www.military.com/flag-day/flag-etiquette-dos-and-donts.html>

The U.S. Flag Code formalizes and unifies the traditional ways in which we give respect to the flag, and also contains specific instructions on how the flag is not to be used. These standards are for both personal and institutional use of the U.S. Flag, and

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## Read the Do's and Don'ts of flag care at [Military.com](https://www.military.com)

it's a good idea to refamiliarize yourself with the code from time to time.

As Kristi mentioned earlier in the newsletter, the VMC has a box specifically for disposing of old U.S flags made from natural material.

**“When we honor our flag, we honor what we stand for as a Nation -- freedom, equality, justice, and hope.”**

~Ronald Reagan



*“But God will never forget the needy; the hope of the afflicted will never perish.” -Psalm 9:18*

**GOD BLESS AMERICA**  
Chaplain Chip Hanson



## 247th MARINE CORPS BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION



Saturday 12 November 2022  
6:00-9:00 PM  
Radisson Resort at the Port  
8701 Astronaut Boulevard  
Cape Canaveral, FL 32920

Hosted by:  
Brevard County Detachment 513  
Marine Corps League

\$34.00 Per Person  
(Cash, check or PayPal®)  
For more information contact  
[MCLBrevard513@gmail.com](mailto:MCLBrevard513@gmail.com)



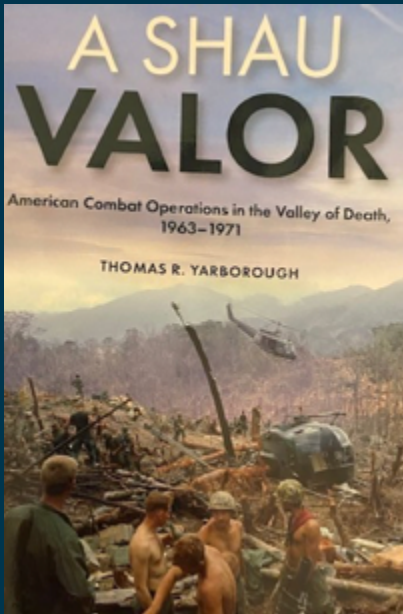
## ATTENTION!

If you have been awarded one of these,  
DID YOU KNOW . . . .  
There is a MOPH Chapter  
at the Veteran Center on Merritt Island?

Call 321-480-3669  
We want to know you!



# Book Report: A SHAU VALOR - American Combat Operations in the Valley of Death 1963- 1971 by Thomas Yarborough



*This is the first book to study the entire nine-year Vietnam campaign, within the context of historical, military, political and cultural events.*

The A Shau Valley was the crucial frontier valley, and the 15-mile radius around it was the deadliest killing ground of the entire Vietnam War. The trained professionals of the North Vietnamese and United States armies repeatedly fought each other head-to-head at this location.

From major operations involving battalions of US Army and Marine units to small Special Forces reconnaissance teams, this book has

it all. It tells primarily about the actions of the recipients of major awards, with discussion of the planning and politics that involved the service members who fought and died in this horrendous environment.

A special credit to my friend John Ciummo, USMC, who, with his trained service dog, was on point patrol several times in the A Shau Valley. He provided me a copy and encouragement on reading this book about events long since forgotten.

**Doug Bisset, VMC Library Staff**

The Space Coast Jazz Society presents:

**Monthly**

**LIVE JAZZ Concerts**

**by a variety of professional bands**

at Veterans Memorial Center, Gray Hall  
400 S. Sykes Creek Pkwy, Merritt Island

**\$5 discount for members of  
the Veterans Memorial Center**

**Open to the Public**

Schedule & details at:  
[SpaceCoastJazzSociety.org](http://SpaceCoastJazzSociety.org)



## One Repaired Trailer: Lots of Hands

**T**eamwork and willingness of others to help veterans sometimes comes together in special ways. Well in time for the Fourth of July Parade is the fully restored SAR/VMC trailer!



# Stories of Sacrifice: Memorial Day at the VMC

The VMC Memorial Day program is one of our most important all year. It tells the story of the ultimate sacrifices of individuals who fell as a result of military service. Over 400 gathered this year to hear speakers tell the legacy of service men and women.

Sheriff Ivey spoke about what those who fell could not do so the rest of us can; Rep Bill Posey presented Merchant Marine WWII CAPT Ed Lanni the 2020 approved Congressional Gold Medal for United States Merchant Marines who served then: twenty Ruck Marchers arrived on time from Cocoa carrying the names of fallen soldiers on a pack laden march; and all reflected on the meaning and need for Memorial Day.

Space Coast Daily filmed it live and it will be on line in their Friday Night Locker Room section and Florida Today and others have reports planned.  
<https://spacecoastdaily.com/2022/05/watch-replay-brevard-veterans-memorial-center-2022-memorial-day-event-featured-very-special-program/>

Thanks to all who set up and attended this ceremony of solemn Remembrance.

**Pictured:** Before the ceremony Donn Weaver talks with the first speaker , Phil Kearns.



**Pictured:** Representative Posey and WWII Vet Cpt Lanni.



**Pictured:** Ruck March in honor of fallen soldiers.



# Marine Corps League awards 50th Anniversary Commemorative Pins

This Memorial Day, the Marine Corps League Detachment 513 was proud to make presentations of the 50th Anniversary Commemorative Vietnam Veteran Pin to two soldiers, Navy Veteran Noel Switzer and a soldier that declines to be named.

Two fundraising efforts were also held at this time, with great success. Thank you to all for their service.

**Pictured:** Commandant Herring "Pins" a Vietnam Veteran with the 50th Anniversary Commorative pin during our Detachment Fundraiser to Navy Veteran Noel Switzer on Sunday 29 May 2022



*"Our flag does not fly because the wind moves it. It flies with the last breath of each soldier who died protecting it."*  
—Unknown

*"Those who have long enjoyed privileges as we enjoy, forget in time that men have died to win them."*  
—Franklin D. Roosevelt

Images used in this bulletin are courtesy of Jeanne Harris Weaver from her series of paintings: Losing Todd: A Mother's Journey

In 24 May an exclusive advance showing of "Top Gun Maverick" was held in Viera. VMC President and retired USN Flight Officer LCDR Dean Schaaf and his wife Susan attended along with 30 other Former Navy Aviators. It was a great night.



Pictured: Sea Cadet Color Guard at the Back Brevard Heros event.



Pictured: Don Weaver presents the Sea Cadets at VMC challenge coins.



# Sea Cadets at VMC: Always Contributing

*For many years, the Courageous Division of the US Naval Sea Cadet Corps has home ported at the Veterans Memorial Center. Next month you will read more about their history, current cadets, programs and plans, but we at VMC wanted to share some highlights over the last couple months.*

At all major events, the USNSCC is there to help us set up, clean up and take down--saving some much more "experienced" people back aches and sore muscles. So, lets all say thank you to "our" Sea Cadets and congratulate them, their parents and leaders on their engagement in a very special youth program.

Stay tuned for more next month.



Pictured: Sea Cadets presenting colors at the Propeller Club Shrimp Feast.

Recently, the Courageous Division completed the repairs, repainting and special design of their storage trailer outside the Museum side door. They also have inside storage with VMC at the UHaul facility.

The Sea Cadet Color Guard has done great work at several VMC based events with more on the horizon. After an especially strong effort at the 01 May Back Brevard Heroes event, BVC Chairman Donn Weaver presented the Color Guard members with VMC Challenge Coins. They are also our Color Guard for the 30 May VMC Memorial Day Ceremony.



Pictured: Quality work by the Sea Cadets on the painting and repair of their storage trailer.

# Steps Closer: New Memorial Ground Breaking

*A long overdue monument to allied foreign fighters in American missions begins construction at the Veterans Memorial Center with support from the Vietnam Unforgettable Memories Foundation.*

About 50 people gathered on a warm afternoon on 30 April to witness history: the groundbreaking ceremony to create a “Monument to America’s Fallen Allies.”

As best the Brevard Veterans Memorial Center can determine, there is no other monument or memorial in Florida like the one being built. The new monument strictly honors the fallen soldiers from foreign, but allied countries who gave their lives for their own nations AND for the mission shared with the United States. Our country has relied on allies who have sacrificed since the French came to our aid during Revolutionary War.

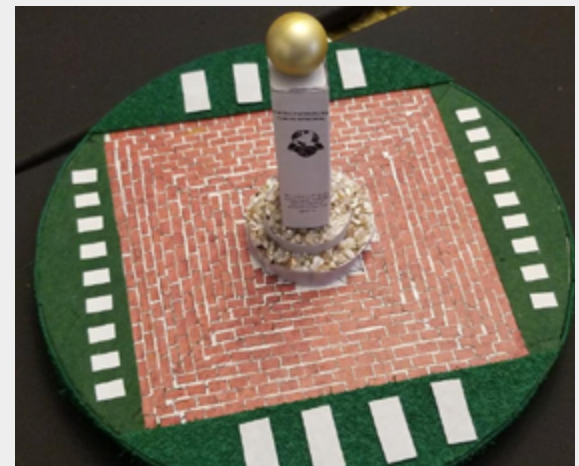
For more than eight years a 501(c)3 organization based in Orlando, the Vietnam Unforgettable Memories Foundation (VUMF) has sought a place in Central Florida to establish such a memorial. In December 2021, the Veterans Memorial Center and Brevard County Officials approved the VMC Memorial Plaza area as the site that would honor Fallen Allies who fought along side American forces throughout history, and would begin with those who fell during the Vietnam War.

Already families from Afghanistan, Canada, and even the Ukraine have expressed interest. These families have relocated to Florida and in many cases have no way to go back to their native countries or no appropriate memorial to visit in their home country.

The ceremony was attended by most of the contractors involved in construction, many members of Rolling Thunder FL Chapter and the VMC and Orlando based supporters of the project. Plans now include starting ground preparation in mid-July and construction by early August.

See the photo on this page is for concept design, which will include over 300 bricks to be engraved honoring those who fell in combat alongside their American brothers and sisters in conflict, no matter when.

The gray granite engraved obelisk with a beautiful metal and protected globe on top will stand over 7 feet high and weigh over 5,000 pounds. The



**Caption:** The first shovel turn in the ground breaking ceremony attended by many of the the monument’s supporters.

**Caption:** The concept design for the new memorial, including 300 engraved bricks memorializing individuals.

target for unveiling is 17 September, a key date in the history of American involvement in Vietnam and appropriate during this time of honoring American Vietnam Veterans.

The new monument will be located next to the Immortal Four and All Chaplains Monument to the north of our tank in the Plaza area.

Please contact VUMF at their [website](#), or through Mr. Hoang Doan (HD) at 407-489-2746 to donate or BVC Chairman Donn Weaver, 757-871-6576, for more information.

# Dancing With Brevard: VMC Chosen for Major BCSO Charitable Event



The VMC has been selected by Sheriff Ivey and the BCSO Foundation Team to be one of four county wide 501(c)3 Non-Profits to benefit from this year's DANCING FOR THE SPACE COAST Gala at Florida Tech, and we need your support!

The VMC needs sponsorship for this incredible event! Whether it be at a high level, a table, or some individual chairs, anything will help us meet our goals.

Your help will enable us to "win" the contest and support major VMC projects and our veterans of Brevard, as well as other charities in the coming year. Last year, groups received over \$50,000 each. The entire community responds to the BCSO Call and there are many benefits to businesses and groups for their participation.

Thank you Tim and partner!!!

Viera HS JROTC Instructor LTC Tim Thomas, USA, Ret. is our dancer. He is teamed with a great professional and already practicing for the big night.

## Dancing With Brevard

Saturday, June 4, 2022  
5:30pm  
Clemente Center  
on the Florida Tech  
Campus

Sponsor Tim and help VMC at [www.dancingforthespacecoast.com](http://www.dancingforthespacecoast.com)

*It's an honor for me to be selected as a Dancer in this year's Dancing with the Space Coast Competition. I served as an Army officer for 23 years, including 2 combat tours, retiring as a Lt. Colonel in 2010. Since my retirement, I have continued serving as an Army JROTC instructor at Viera High School and on the Melbourne City Council...I have always had a servant's heart and am passionate about helping those in need.*

*Winning Dancing with Brevard is based 60% on money raised for the charities, so raising money is most important in this competition...I hope I can count on my friends to benefit those truly in need...with the purchase of a table or a ticket.*

*Thank you so much for your consideration helping support these wonderful charities.*

Very Respectfully,  
LTC (Ret) Tim Thomas





## Lockheed Martin Thank You!

Thanks to a team of over 20 from Lockheed Martin on Friday the 13th of May and Trail Lifers with their leaders and parents the next day, the VMC and Veterans Memorial Park got some great facelifts. Check out the new mulching, improved bridges, painted benches, extensive area clean up, etc, to see their impact. Thanks to Parks and Rec for supplying wood, mulch and trailers for the workdays. Check out these photos of people who came on hot mornings of the weekend to donate their time to the VMC and veterans. We are lucky to continue to have such great support.



## Veterans Sales Store

by Jalaine Spears

Check out our new military logo beach towels, carry-all bags, and sunglasses for your hot, sunny-day needs.

We are now selling jewelry, distressed desk flags, metallic and acrylic garage signs, and many new challenge coins. Also, new for the summer are new patriotic t-shirts and "Remember the Fallen" along with our license plates, decals, and hats.

Don't forget we also have online sales too.

# Ceremonial Wreaths Bring Meaning and Refresh Memories

More than 60 veteran organizations from our area and far beyond participated in the 2022, 01 May Wreath Laying Ceremony at the base of the Moving Vietnam and Global War on Terror Walls at Wickham Park.

This annual reunion opens officially with the wreath ceremony on the Monday after the wall is set up. For more than 25 years, the Vietnam and All Veterans of Brevard (VVB) in Cocoa have organized the event and invited the public to attend.



## Many VMC Organizations Paid Respects

This year saw clear, warm weather for the solemn ceremony and all who participated seemed happy they did so. MOAACC, VMC and the new Space and Treasure Coast Chapter of the Army Officers Candidate Schools Association (STCOCSAA) were among the participants. Look for more coverage of the weeklong event.

Many who lay the wreaths belong to multiple veteran organizations with

some participating in 3-4 wreath units.

Phil Kearns (also MOAACC) and Rob McCall, Commander of STCOCSAA the Space and Treasure Coast Chapter present their inaugural wreath. (left photo above.)

Rolling Thunder FL:-1 Chapter based at VMC had the biggest contingent led by Lance Armstrong, Chapter President. (bottom right photo above.)



Military Officers of America Cape Canaveral Chapter (MOAACC) Members Tim Thomas, 1VP Brian Whalen and Past President Tim Pishdad carry in the MOAACC wreath.

Right behind is MOAACC and VMC member Rob McCall carrying in the Veterans Memorial Center Wreath. Thanks to Rob for jumping in for VMC since other members were not around or too close to carry two wreaths.



# Back Brevard Heros 3rd Annual First Responders Appreciation BBQ

The local community loves its first responders, and showed its support by hosting a BBQ on the VMC grounds with music, food and activities.

Visit the [Back Brevard Heros Facebook page](#) to see a fantastic video of all the highlights of the day, in addition to the few we've included here.



## VMC Reaching Out

The weekend of 20-22 May was very busy at the VMC. Dean Schaaf and Harry Beaver set up the VMC canopy and table for the Space Coast Air Show.

On 21 May we participated in a Parade for a 103 Year Old WWII Veteran and the next day set up a table at the Palm Bay Senior Center focused on a Memorial Day theme. MaryAnn Tucker, one of our museum docents helped BVC Chair Weaver talk with over 100 people who came by the booth and about 30 who took brochures and pledged visits.

VMC gets quite a bit of printed media exposure every month, is working to expand our social media and Courier reach, continues to advertise, etc. However, getting out to the community with such a "long" county continues to be important.

**We hope more volunteers will up us do that in major future events around Brevard.**



**Pictured:** Scenes from the Back Brevard Heros event. Many sponsors came together to show support for our local responders.



**Pictured:** Cadets unfurl the MIHS JROTC Banner presented as a gift from the MOAACC Good Deeds Foundation.



# Supporting County HS JROTC Programs

*Local Veterans groups support our country's most valuable resource, its youth, through JROTC programs and end of year award presentations.*

Every year in Brevard, April and May finds the Veterans Memorial Center (VMC), Cape Canaveral Chapter of MOAA and its Good Deeds Foundation and over 20 more veteran organizations honoring JROTC cadets with various medals and awards for the academic year. Some of the veterans volunteer with multiple organizations and can end up giving out more than one award.

Each cadet is selected by the JROTC Instructors based on the criteria for each award. We wanted to share some photos of just one of the ceremonies – the presentations at Merritt Island High School on Friday, 26 April. The cadets led the ceremony under the guidance of LTC Anthony Austin, USA, Ret., a MOAACC member and 1SG Juan Torres, USA Ret. It was held in the MIHS Auditorium with over 300 cadets, family, friends and presenters on deck for the special event.

**Pictured:** Donn Weaver pins the MOPH Award winner.



**Top Right Pictured:** The presenters wait their turn. Among them were former MI JROTC Instructor LTC Scott Waggoner, USA, Ret. Left rear: Ken Hill, Dave Pinchek and Les Beecher of American Legion Post 344 at the VMC (in uniform); the Brevard Marine and Army recruiters; Donn Weaver, who presented the MOAA medal and the Military Order of Purple Heart ribbon and certificate (from left); and Doug Bissett of VMC and MOAACC Good Deeds Foundation who presented the medal from the Sons of the American Revolution.

**Bottom Right Pictured:** The new MI Army JROTC 2022-23 Command Team



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# VMC and Park Hosts Children's Charities 5K

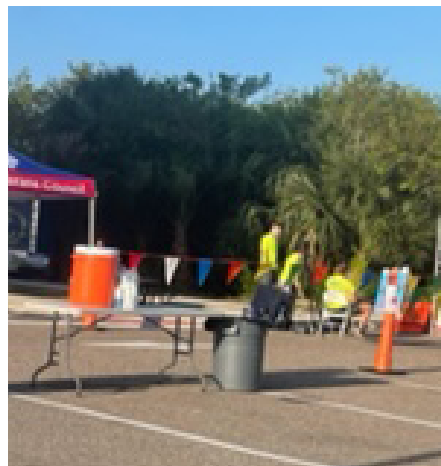
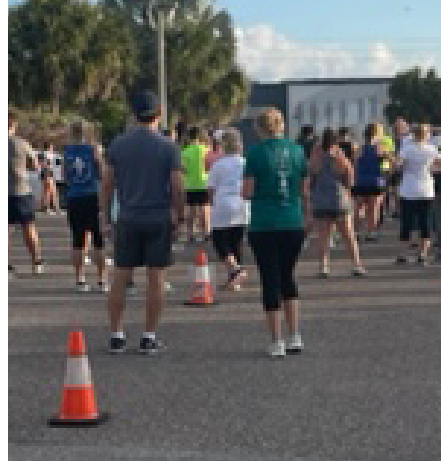
*The VMC shows its location to be ideal for hosting popular 5k races on the Park grounds, adding another safe venue for these type of events in Brevard County.*

As the VMC and our improved Memorial Park become more well known and popular, events from many sources have been requested.

On 14 May we hosted the teamed up Optimist Club of Cocoa Beach and Kiwanis Club of Rockledge/Viera's 5K Race to support Children's Charities in Brevard.

Running Zone began set up at 0530 for the event; they are also on tap to support the 5K on 12 November sponsored by St. Francis Reflections.

In the first year of hosting the event at the VMC, fifty two runners and walkers



signed up. Sponsors came through with generous support, so the two service organizations considered it a big success. They will later be giving VMC a grant to support our efforts for staging the event.

## Lt. Col Mahaffey honored with Innovation Award

Lt. Col. Jason Mahaffey, 932nd Airlift Wing, 73rd Airlift Squadron program manager, was recently recognized as 2020 Innovation Airman of the Year representing Scott Air Force Base by the Leadership Council Southwestern Illinois. Due to COVID-19 pandemic health conditions in 2020, he was not formally awarded until recently.



**Caption:** He is pictured (center) with Lt. Col. Brandon Lorton (left), 73rd AS commander, and Lt. Col. David Santarelli, 932nd Operations Group deputy commander.



## Signs of Growth: New Park Signage at the VMC Main Entrance

Check out the new sign at our main entrance proudly confirming our growth at Veterans Memorial Park. The old wooden sign was totally rotted out, but the insert given last year will go up on Fortenberry near the West access road.

We are now working on a companion sign that will have logos of all the tenant organizations and recurring activities to accompany the new sign. By next year we are set for a new sign on 520 and Sykes Creek that will include an electronic scroll for events.





# Unofficial Brevard VMC Vets Calendar June 2022 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/>

## JUNE

**04 Jun – BCSO Sponsored “Dancing for the Stars”** annual event and fundraiser for selected charitable organizations. 1700-2100 at Clemente Center on the FIT Campus. VMC is one of three 501(c)3 organizations that will benefit from the proceeds of this great fundraiser. Details of the event, tickets, and how to support the VMC sponsored dancers in this issue. Special thanks to Sheriff Ivey and his team for selecting the VMC in 2022!!!! LTC Tim Thomas, USA, Ret is the VMC Dancer so vote and donate for his team.

**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.

## JULY

**04 Jul – Fourth annual VMC/BCSO Merritt Island Independence Day Parade** 0900-1100. Details follow in May.

**28 Jul – 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.

## AUGUST

**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.

**07 Aug – Forever Remember 9/11: A Salute to First Responders FundRaiser Dinner.** 1700 at Space Coast Convention Center /Holiday INN Express Cocoa. Sponsorships available, Seats at \$45 each for individuals.

Proceeds go towards holding the 2022 Remembering 9/11 Ceremony in September at VMC, as well as to support 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

**12 Aug – 2022 National Veterans Homeless Support 7th Annual Dinner Fundraiser** 1730- 2100 RadissonResort at Cape Canaveral. Sponsorships available and tables at \$1000 or seats at \$100. Call 321-208-7562or email events@nvhs.org.

**25 Aug – 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.

## SEPTEMBER

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

**22 Sep – 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.

## OCTOBER

**07-08 Oct – The Central Brevard “Veteran Stand Down to Stand Up”** (Formerly known as Stand Down) event will be held at the Cocoa Armory on 07 October (set up) and 08 October for the actual activity. Planning meetings begin in July 2022 at the VMC. This event will focus on homeless and at risk veterans and their families, while matching the veterans with job options on the Space Coast. Contact BVC Council Chairman Donn Weaver 757-871-6576 for more information.

For events beyond October, please visit the [VMC online event calendar](#).



## Park and Plaza Report

by Donn Weaver

**May was a very busy month for the Memorial Plaza and our Park. Here are just some highlights, many of which you can see written about in this month's newsletter:**

- 20 Lockheed Martin and 25 Trail Life kids and family did two days of great clean up
- Third Annual Back Brevard Heroes Event filled the VMC parking lots on 01 May
- Kiwanis Rockledge/Viera and Optimist Cocoa Beach with VMC held the Children's Charities 5K
- American Legion and Harry Beaver donated for the cement bench tops in the Plaza
- Two more Memorial Park Benches and one Memorial Tree were ordered (Benches due by mid-June)
- Elks fishing with the kids project
- A 10 plus foot gator was spotted in our ponds and had to be removed.
- The new sign for Medal of Honor Tribute was installed in the new site, sadly vandalized and reinstalled with stronger posts, etc.
- 18 more bricks were donated and the refresher project for benches and monuments continued

– Our newly renamed tenant, The American Boat Club organized a Sykes Creek Road and Fortenberry Road Cleanup before Memorial Day.

And much more....

Special thanks to all those who support our Parks and Plaza Committees: The Preservation Group (led by Jay Longway); Garett McKimmie, Ray Norman, Jalaine Spears, Dave Clayton, CSpray of Cocoa – Chad and Kitty Stoudt, Kelly Martin and his maintenance team; and the County Parks and Rec group led by Fed Ameigh and Travis Freeman, and others who help from time to time. Every one of our volunteers is important in accomplishing our mission and we appreciate every one of you.



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- Eliason, Sandra July, 2022
- Fadok, Eleanor Dec 2022
- Fleet Reserve Branch 263 July, 2023
- Fugaro, Joan & Ricardo Nov, 2022
- Leonhart, Rick Mar, 2023
- Longway, J.P & Donna Dec, 2023
- Martin, John & Roberta Nov, 2022
- Rapp, Gary (USMC) Aug, 2022
- Rathbun, Don & Barbara Dec, 2023
- Roseland, Tom & Patrice Jan, 2023
- Schaaf, Dean & Susan July, 2022
- Sherman, John S. (Tank) Sept, 2022
- Sherman, Rheta Campbell Sept, 2022
- Schmid, Ted Jan, 2023
- Space Coast Honor Flight May, 2023
- Weiler, Philip R. Feb, 2023
- Weaver, Donn & Jeanne Sep, 2022
- Florida State University College of Social Work  
April, 2023
- Norman, Ray April, 2027

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 (Boosters).

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