



THE VETERANS MEMORIAL CENTER

COUNCIL COURIER

OCTOBER 2022



A Publication of the Brevard Veterans Council & Veterans Memorial Center



WHAT'S INSIDE

On a Mission to Recognize the Forgotten

Ray Norman and his crew believe every veteran should be remembered, no matter how long it takes.

— page 15

New Monument at the VMC Plaza Unveiled

A unique monument in the state of Florida now resides in our plaza, dedicated to allied fighters.

— page 12

A Space Force Primer

Patrick AFB is now Patrick Space Force Base. What does this really mean?

— page 17

9/11

We will always remember.

Every year, the VMC holds a memorial service remembering all that happened, all those who sacrificed and all those left holding the pieces together after the tragic events on 9/11.

Thank you to all who participated and attended this moving service.

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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 Those submissions received after that date will not be published.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 12 Sept 2022:

[List of Board Members 2022-2023](#)

As of 9 August 2022:

[Committee Department Assignment 2022-2023](#)

As of 1 September 2022:

[BVC VMC Org Chart 2022-2023](#)



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.
 400 South Sykes Creek Parkway
 Merritt Island, FL 32952-3547
 Office 321-453-1776
 DAV Service Office 321-452-1774

VMC President's Report

LCDR Dean Schaaf, USN (Ret)



During September, Susan and I took some time to visit family in Indiana and to do some much-needed work on our home in Kokomo. We were able to attend a family reunion, celebrating the 112th anniversary of the Hensler family. I also attended the largest Vietnam Veterans Reunion in the state of Indiana, held annually outside of Kokomo.

I missed a well-attended Patriots Day (9/11) ceremony, the dedication of the Allied Monument and the Academy Appointment and ROTC Scholarship Forum, all covered with articles in the

Courier. Thanks to all who attended.

After returning from Indiana, I attended the Cocoa Beach Chamber of Commerce Military Affairs Council (MAC) held at the Sands Space History Center, Cape Canaveral. The guest speaker was the Brevard County Superintendent, Dr Mullins. At the same time, Donn Weaver represented the VMC Museum at a teacher's forum held at the Brevard County Zoo. Donn covered our Veterans speaking in the schools and our Museum Traveling Trunk program.

The Executive Committee attended Sheriff Ivey's presentation of checks of \$61,000 to the VMC, House of Hope, and Family Promise: the three charities who received funds from the Dancing with the Space Coast event. We have had a banner year in fundraising for the VMC!

Thanks to all volunteers for your dedication and hours served. We could not be the Center we are without you!

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VMC Museum Highlights



Helmets from the 28th Infantry "Keystone" division, which can trace its lineage to Benjamin Franklin's Pennsylvania Associators battalion, and the 77th Infantry "Statue of Liberty" Division are on display with their full history at the museum. The helmets date to the WWI and WWII eras.

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)

As promised last month, your VMC is back to full tilt this fall after a relatively quiet August not just with many events, but also with tremendous donations, increased bookings, lots more activities and pending upgrades because of donations and so much support from others.

On a personal note, I would like to extend very sincere thanks to all the volunteers and staff I have known and worked with during what will be my full ten years associated in elected and appointed major leadership positions for the Council and Center.

Jeanne and I donated for a brick honoring our son in the summer of 2012 and the next year I was appointed as a leader when we moved full time to Cocoa Beach from Virginia. At the September 2022 BVC/VMC combined board meeting, I announced this would be my final year (ending in July 2023) at VMC in any Board or leadership position. It has been an incredible experience with many, many great and dedicated people at VMC and the entire community.

As I suspect you all will understand and have experienced similar crossroads, as a first year baby boomer age is not slowing down, but I am, and there is a bucket list out there which I need to define and use before the No-Go years set in. Evolving leadership makes any organization better as

new ideas and energy make improvements as the years go by.

In the months ahead I look forward to making sure the things I am doing beyond being your chairman are turned over to others, now that we have more volunteers than ever in my 10 years, and know good candidates for the Chairman position will surface for our June 2023 elections.

Very Respectfully,
Donn



Operations Report

CPL Robert W.
Doyle, USMC (Fmr)

Much is going on and now the weather is causing the blues. We are still out of water at the center so if your tenant agency can donate some it would be appreciated. This helps everyone.

Activities will be full swing now to end of year. Most weekends are gone but a few days remain so if you need to plan an event please check with Operations to schedule. After this weather the gates will go back open as mandated by the boards. The bathrooms are shut down for maintenance by the county and should be back on line next week in the park.

Stand down will be the second weekend of October and most staff will be at the Armory if it goes. The center will still be open with DAV services on Friday and scheduled events on Saturday. Everyone be safe.

A graphic advertisement for Vinny's Tech Services Inc. It features a dark blue background with a circuit board pattern. On the left, there is a stylized icon of a computer monitor with a wrench and screwdriver crossed over it. To the right of the icon, the text reads: "Vinny Bonck", "321-536-1752", and "VinnyBonck@gmail.com". Below this, it says "Vinny's Tech Services Inc." and at the bottom, "Computer repair and much more!".



25TH ANNUAL CENTRAL BREVARD

STAND DOWN TO STAND UP

FREE SERVICES TO VETERANS

- ❖ Transportation To and From
- ❖ Medical
- ❖ Dental
- ❖ Legal
- ❖ Hearing and Eye Exams
- ❖ Haircuts
- ❖ Clothing
- ❖ Survival Supplies
- ❖ Employers Hiring
- ❖ VA Benefits Assistance
- ❖ Van Transportation
- ❖ Outdoor Pet Services
- ❖ Women Vets Services
- ❖ Much more...

8 October 2022
7:30 am – 2 pm

For Homeless or Distressed Veterans
and Families

SPONSORED BY

THE VETERANS MEMORIAL CENTER AND
MANY OTHER VETERAN ORGANIZATIONS

06 SEPTEMBER	VMC LIBRARY 5-6:30 PM
20 SEPTEMBER	VMC GRAY HALL 5-6:30 PM
27 SEPTEMBER	ARMORY 11 AM – 12:30 PM
07 OCTOBER	SET UP ARMORY 12-5 PM
08 OCTOBER	EVENT – ARMORY 7:30 AM – 2PM

LOCATION

Cocoa Armory
308 North Fiske Boulevard, Cocoa
32922

CONTACT US

Non-Monetary Donations
Donna Longway | boosters2002@gmail.com

CONTACT US

Funding / Donations
Donn Weaver | (757) 871-6576 |
donnweaver2020@gmail.com

CONTACT US

To Volunteer
Jill Rippon | jillrvmc@gmail.com

Revised 1 September 2022

2022 Brevard Stand Down to Stand Up: No One Left Behind

After nearly three years of the event on hold due to Covid, the 25th Annual Central Brevard County "Stand Down to Stand Up" will take place at the Cocoa Armory on October 8th. The event is designed to offer a wide range of support and much more to homeless veterans, veterans in distress and their families during these tough economic times.

This year's event organizers project about 100 homeless veterans and 150 or more veterans facing major challenges will attend. Also expected are 200 or more volunteers, including professionals who will offer a wide range of services.

The 2022 program is staged by the Brevard Veterans Memorial Center in partnership with the Florida Army National Guard in Cocoa and many veteran and other organizations. Generous donations from the Good Deeds Foundation of the Cape Canaveral Chapter of the Military Officers Association of America, the IRCC Foundation in Viera and individual donors have come through with funding, while hundreds are donating items like good clothes, toiletries, towels, and food and their

TIME to make it a big success.

Active duty military members always had each other to offer help when needed. After leaving the service, veterans, like all of us, run into rough patches. The Stand Down to Stand Up event is focused on helping them out and especially on connecting them to job opportunities where over 30 vendors are expected. That is the Stand Up focus this year so that no veteran or their family is left behind.

For more information about donating to this unique event, contact the VMC via Donn Weaver, Council Chairman, at 757-871-6576.



Pictured: Traveling trunks on display at the Brevard Zoo's annual Teacher's Resource Conference.

VMC and Vets Back to Class at the Zoo!!

Being involved in the community is a vital part of the VMC mission. Help us spread the word on our programs!

The evening of 21 September was a big community outreach night for the VMC. President Dean Schaaf attended the Monthly CBRCC Mission Partners Meeting at the Space Museum on Cape Canaveral with numerous military units, other museums, and various veteran groups present. He briefed the group on a number of VMC events and programs.

Further south, VMC VP Donn Weaver was at the Brevard Zoo for the annual Teachers Resource Conference. He spoke with more than 60 teachers about the [VMC Museum](#), our Vets Back to Class (VBC) Program and the VMC Museum Traveling trunk program.

Many picked up extra handouts of all three to share with colleagues at their schools. Our WWI Trunk was quite a hit. Spread the word and encourage more requests for VBC, Museum Field Trips and use of our Traveling Trunks full of history.

[Visit Traveling Trunks on the VMC website.](#)



Chaplain's Corner

by Chaplain Chip Hanson
USMC (Fmr)



As we begin the fall season, we welcome cooler weather, our snowbird Veterans are returning. And the beginning of the holiday season comes about, starting with Halloween.

The Origins of Halloween are rooted in a Celtic festival of Samhain (pronounced sow-in). The Celts, who lived 2,000 years ago in the area that is now Ireland, the United Kingdom, and northern France, celebrated their new year on November 1. On Halloween, when it was believed that ghosts came back to the earthly world, people thought that they would encounter ghosts if they left their homes. To avoid being recognized by these ghosts, people would wear masks when they left their homes after dark so that the ghosts would mistake them for fellow spirits.

Halloween, or Hallowe'en (a contraction of All Hallows' Evening), also known as All Halloween, All Hallows' Eve, or All Saints' Eve, is a celebration observed in a number of countries

on 31 October, the eve of the Western Christian feast of All Hallows' Day.

I wish all a spooktacular Halloween

Happy Birthday Navy, 13 October 1775.

"Double, double toil and trouble; Fire burn, and cauldron bubble." William Shakespeare, Macbeth

1 Kgs 9:27

And Hiram sent in the navy his servants, shipmen that had knowledge of the sea, with the servants of Solomon.

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



ATTENTION!

If you have been awarded one of these,
DID YOU KNOW

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at the Veteran Center on Merritt Island?

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



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380 N Courtenay Pkwy, Merritt Island, FL 32953



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



PROUDLY PRESENTED BY THE VMC

FRIDAY NIGHT Dances

OCTOBER 7 AND 14 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.



Library Notes

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

We have seasonal volunteers that return from up north in October to help with staffing the library through the winter. Doug Bisset is a seasonal volunteer that is also a member of the Sons of the American Revolution (SAR.) He has recently been elected as the Historian for the SAR organization and has agreed to evaluate their list of the best 100 Books on the American Revolution. He will give us a recommendation of some selections that we may add to our collection.

SAR has offered funding needed to add more books to our American Revolution collection. We hope to see and hear from Doug as well as Norm and Wayne when they return for the Winter.

New Veterans History Project Interview: Mary Beth Pace



Mary Beth Pace shared her Veterans History Project interview with us in September. Before joining the Air force she was born in Melbourne, Florida and raised in this area. She joined the Air Force at the age of 22 and did her

basic Training at Lackland AFB in Texas. Mary was trained and became certified as a Surgical Technologist for the Air Force and was sent to Elmendorf AFB in Alaska for her first assignment. There she worked in operating rooms assisting in medical operations.

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

Seniors Who...

Play

Work

Learn

Travel

Laugh

Savor

Shop

Create

Share

Garden

Cook

Enjoy life...

Also read SENIOR SCENE

Seniors all around town are talking about their FREE magazine that has it all!

We know how to reach them with what they want to read most, in places they frequent most. That's why advertising in Senior Scene works, and why our distribution has rapidly grown to now include the Space Coast!

Also read it at www.seniorscenemag.com

Pick up your FREE copy at the places you visit most!



Remembering 9/11 and Its Ongoing Costs

There were several major events in Brevard County on Sunday, 11 September, 21 years after terrorists attacked our shores. At the Veterans Memorial Center, more than 350 gathered to remember and reflect on those events and ongoing costs. The Remembrance Ceremony was organized by Club 1013, a local organization of retired NYPD and other officers, and the Veterans Memorial Center. It was sponsored by a number of businesses and organizations including the Good Deeds Foundation of the Cape Canaveral Chapter of the Military Officers Association of America.

At the VMC Ceremony, the Fire Bell Tolls for all of them in remembrance as all speakers and supporters vowed to never forget and each year return to honor the fallen and their families who lost so much when America changed that fall day in 2001.



Caption: The VMC based Marine Corps Color Guard led the ceremony.



Caption: RADM Wayne Justice USCG, Ret. speaking about the Pentagon and sacrifice in Iraq after 9/11.



Pictured: Club 1013 Member Al Boettjer as the MC as the bell tolls.

Tragic statistics also became people and their families left behind:

Nearly 3000 died on 9/11/2001 in NYC, Wash DC and Pennsylvania.

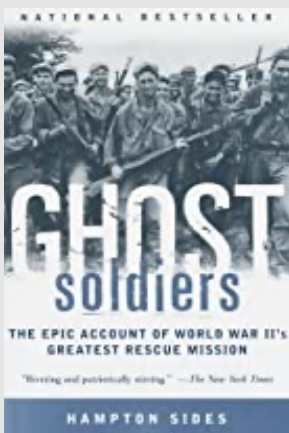
Several thousand died or became seriously ill as a result of toxic exposure in NYC or Iraq and countries when we took the fight to the radical terrorists who attacked America.

A total of 7,061 American service members were killed in combat October 2001 through July 2022 and thousands more grievously injured or died as a result of military service.



Pictured: The Brevard County Police and Fire Pipes and Drum Corps gave a poignant tribute at the 9/11 ceremony at the Veterans Memorial Center.

Book Report: “Ghost Soldiers” by Hampton Sides



Ghost Soldiers is a WWII POW rescue mission behind the Japanese lines in the Philippines. In January 1945, a team of 121 hand selected US troops slipped thru the Japanese line. Major Mucci was the spark plug of the operation and he marched them thirty rough miles in order to rescue 513 POWs being held in a hellish prison camp. Among them was the last survivors of the Bataan Death March.

Ray Norman worked with a Bataan survivor named Jeff Speck who walked with a limp, was a cheerful chap....but he would never talk about

Bataan.... This Ghost story is about a Ranger detachment...US guys who were at their physical peak and needed every ounce of inner courage to accomplish this mission.

The Ghost Soldiers gets its emphasis from a prisoner massacre by Japanese soldiers elsewhere in the Philippines. It made the stakes impossibly high for any success of this operation...there was little time or information to plan the complex operation. Major Mucci had his hands full from beginning to end. Besides the Japanese soldiers at the camp, there were two competing armed local tribes fighting for supremacy. One tribe helped the US side.

The Japanese prison camp guards were brutal and unfeeling.... one incident revealed a male who had been mutilated and left by

the roadside to rot and be eaten by rats and vultures... in another incident a pregnant Philippine female was taken behind a tree and mutilated while she was still alive. The Japanese soldiers were brutal and unfeeling automatons at the disposal of their military superiors.

The author Hampton Sides vividly creates the daring raid offering minute narration that unfolds alongside of intimate portraits of the POW and their lives in camp. The POWs bonded together to survive - and in doing so- defied the Japanese authorities as they endured starvation, tropical diseases and torture and murder. Harrowing and inspiring-Ghost Soldiers are mesmerizing stories of this remarkable mission. In addition to the primary story there are anecdotes of a Manila chanteuse bar owner who was helping. She was almost killed by the “water treatment” (garden hose through the nose-filing the lungs and stomach...not unlike the waterboarding during the Civil War and of recent years of CIA and military operations.) It is a testament to the human spirit, an account of enormous bravery, self-sacrifice, and death among the most trying conditions of heat, deprivation, brutal captivity.

Frankly, this book is hard to read if you have empathy for your fellow man/woman, so do not let it give you nightmares. Catalog # WWIIPH06

--Ray Norman

Special Monument Unveiled at Brevard Veterans Memorial Plaza



For eight years the Orlando based Unforgettable Memories Foundation has been raising funds and searching for a location for a unique monument to honor America's Allies by name.

The dedication of the United States Allied Forces Memorial on Saturday, September 17th was timed to remember POW/MIA day and the Vietnam conflict. More than 300 Republic of Vietnam and their American partners who fell during the Vietnam War have bricks laid in their honor at the site.

As the years go by, names of allies from many other countries will be added on dedicated bricks. Our allies have sacrificed for America and have done so since the French sent ships and advisers during the American Revolution. Already Afghan, Dutch and British (for the Spanish American War) names have been added to the memorial.

The project was presented to the Veterans Memorial Center and Brevard County Parks/County for approval just after Memorial Day 2021. As far as is known, there is no other such monument that includes names in Florida and very few in the country. Perhaps this is the only site intended to honor our allies by name throughout America's history of conflicts.

With the help of dozens of donors, including the VMC, Rolling Thunder FL Chapter 1 and the Good Deeds Foundation of the Cape Canaveral Chapter of the Military Officers Association of America, the eight year effort by Unforgettable Memories achieved a success that was witnessed by more than 250 people on that Saturday morning.

For more information about making tax deductible donations for named bricks to the monument or the story, contact the VMC 321-453-1776, or Donn Weaver, 757-871-6576.



A Special VMC Dutch Connection

With our new Monument to America's Allies in place you will notice a Dutch name among those on the bricks. A Dutch veteran, Richard Schluter, has been in contact with the VMC about our new monument and honoring those fallen soldiers from his country on our grounds.

Schluter is a member of a Rolling Thunder type club in the Netherlands. His group read about the new Monument, and in coordination with RTFL-1 Chapter, plans to participate in the 2023 Memorial Day weekend "Ride for Freedom." The Dutch group will visit our new monument, lay a wreath and donate a brick to honor a Dutch resistance fighter killed in WWII.

To the right is a photo and message from our contact. Other bricks honoring Dutch fighters at our monument include Jeanne Weaver's uncle from the Netherlands killed in WWII. Dean Schaff is working on a brick honoring a Dutch fighter from his family as well.

Making our new Monument to America's Allies personal for VMC members and other Americans who have connections with allied countries was part of the goal of this new project. The Dutch connection is a nice start.



Dean and Donn,

First of all excuses for not sending this email in time. During this rainy weekend, I made a ride of 275 miles with someother Dutch Veterans to Roermond Netherlands, where we laid white flowers at a Memorial Park where we can read the names of Dutch military who died during special missions.

I hope that the opening of this particular Monument was a success. We, the Dutch Stichting Ride for Freedom, wish that you will have lots of visitors to pay their respect to all fallen military. Next year we will visit you to join you during Memorial Weekend and to lay a wreath at this special Monument.

On the enclosed picture you see our chairman, Schipper Henk van Boxtel, with a broken wrist and myself with the orange rain pants.

--Richard



Recognition Times Two

At the VMC General meeting on 14 September, DAV Officer and key leader Rodger Pickett received belatedly the Brevard Veteran Supporter of the Year Award from George Taylor, Jr, President of National Veteran Homeless Support (NVHS) of Cocoa. There were about 50 to witness Taylor's laudatory comments as he passed the beautiful glass trophy.

The month before, over 500 learned that Pickett would receive the coveted award at the NVHS Annual Dinner Fundraiser. Just days before that event Rodger became ill and could not be there with his wife to watch the entire community give a very loud ovation.

Well done, Rodger, as you help hundreds of veterans and spouses every year yourself and lead the day-to-day operations of DAV Chapter 123 with 27 volunteers who help thousands. Thanks to VMC partner George Taylor for twice presenting the award and keeping VMC up to date on homeless and in crisis veterans NVHS assists year long. NVHS will be a major player in our VMC upcoming Stand Down to Stand Up on 07-08 October.

Brevard High School Students Aim High for Military-based College Success

Applying to a position at a military academy or for a ROTC College Scholarship is not a process for the undetermined. Guidance to start on the path for these students who have an eye on a military-based college experience was recently provided by those in the know.

On September 17 at the Veterans Memorial Center on Merritt Island, high school students, parents and siblings gathered to learn from presenters the ways to apply for military academy positions, for ROTC college scholarships and other programs that could help them reach those goals. The Forum was organized by Ken Harris, the recruiters for the ROTC program at Florida Tech and a member of the Cape Canaveral Chapter of the Military Officers Association of America (MOAACC). Dan McIntyre, MOAACC's Student Liaison Officer, and the MOAACC Good Deeds Foundation, which funded the event, assisted.

This program, the first of its kind in Brevard County, was advertised to all high schools through JRTOTC Instructors, Event Coordinators and Guidance Counselors. Hopefully, the event will spark interest throughout the county and lead to follow up questions. Plans are to hold it every year in September mostly targeting juniors in high school since then, or even earlier, is when the student should start engaging the rigorous process.

A Well Represented and Attended Event

Representatives from the Academies (USMA, USNA, USAFA & USCGA) as well as Congressman Posey's nominating committee discussed the processes to gain admission.

Additionally, ROTC representatives covered all the services and various schools & scholarship opportunities. These schools included Florida Tech and Embry Riddle in Florida, Senior Military Colleges (Texas A&M, VMI & the Citadel), the Junior Military Colleges (specifically Marion Military Institute), and of course the excellence of the Leaders within MOAACC! Each of the equities provided a briefing, materials, timelines and contact information.



Pictured: A captivated audience attended the information session.



Pictured: Ken Harris of FIT speaks with a group of students about his program.

A total of 93 students, parents, instructors and MOACC members attended the session. 39 student/cadets signed in with their Academy or college of their interest to receive follow-up from the presenters or ongoing support. The audience included students from 13 schools in Brevard, one from Orange County and a few home schoolers. The top two schools for participation were Rockledge High and Heritage High with nine each.

While a military college program is not for everyone, it offers huge benefits not just in cost savings, but in life time development whether recipients stay in the service for five or thirty-five years after their education. Next year, we aim to have even more students attend the event.





Pictured: The Tuskegee Airmen were the first all-black military pilot group who fought in World War Two. 923 pilots were trained, 355 served in active duty.

Finding History Remembering Veterans

A stroll through the footpaths of any cemetery is a stroll through history. Every marker holds the memory of a person with stories, with family, and with a connection to the community and world.

The march of time is not always so kind to grave markers. With the passage of time, there is often no one connected to these headstones to maintain their care. The markers fall, and the land slowly reclaims them, and the people the markers represent become forgotten.

Veterans in Brevard County will be forgotten no longer. A subcommittee of the BVC/VMC, American Legion 344 and Auxiliary AAL has been working on finding, identifying and honoring veterans who call Brevard County their final resting place. Members of 344 (Hill, Beecher and Schmid) have created a database for two of the larger cemeteries on Merritt Island cataloging all the veterans contained at the sites. Dorothy Walsh has also been instrumental with her work with Wreaths Across America for identifying cemeteries and marked graves.

A Tuskegee Connection

Connections to lost veterans sometimes comes from unexpected places. Several years ago, while at St. Luke's Church Pioneer Day, the American Legion group found a reference to an airman that was buried in the St. Luke's cemetery, located off Tropical Trail in Merritt Island. Both his and his wife's ashes were buried in the Sam's family plot with no marker. After some considerable effort (probing and digging) (continued on next page)



Pictured: Ray Norman and a Field Manor volunteer place a brick marker for Edward Cason Cook.

Mission Recognizing the Forgotten

Our Board Member and three-decade active VMC contributor Ray Norman undertook a very special mission 30 months ago. This is the same Ray Norman who in 2015 learned there may have been a Tuskegee Airman and his wife buried without markers at a Merritt Island Church. With the VMC, the family and community rallying, three years later that veteran and his wife were re-interred at the Cape Canaveral National Cemetery with 400 in attendance and a flyover by today's "Red Tail Squadron".

In 2020, Ray took on a new mission after hearing a WWI veteran named Edward Cason Cook was buried at an unconfirmed location near Field Manor. He researched, coordinated,

paid for a special brick and otherwise led a successful mission ending this September.

In Ray's words, "It has taken two and a half years, a few dollars, one heat issue and three fractured ribs, but we have finally gotten Edward Cason Cook, a WWI veteran to have his resting place recognized above ground. There was a bonus. We think his brother is next to him. Thanks to all who have helped. I could not have done it without you."

Field Manor, Sue Nisbet Lawrence, Dorothy Walsh, and Maggie Funderburk were among those listed by Ray.

Well Done, Ray!!! And for his next mission.....stay tuned.



EDWIN T. COWAN
Flight Officer
Pilot

(continued from previous page)
with GYS the cremains were uncovered. Through the efforts of Ray Norman and others, the Flight Officer Edwin "Eddie" Cowan received the full military honors burial he deserved for his WWII service, relaid to rest in 2019 with his wife at the Cape Canaveral National Cemetery.

More Remembered Veterans

In 2020, a USAF veteran killed in an auto accident was discovered. His grave is in the Indianola cemetery adjacent to the marina at the intersection of SR3 and SR528. This identification of this gravesite was serendipity personified. Through underground detection, the grave was found, and with a lot of determined digging, Sgt. Halverson's Indianola marker is now above ground and available for respectful recognition.

In their Indianola cemetery efforts they came across yet another veteran without recognition, one SGT Earnest Cason Cook. A Veterans Administration headstone was ordered and received for initial burial in 1953, but the original bronze marker is missing. The VMC has ordered a replacement stone that is non-metal, and therefore non-marketable, and it should be arriving this month for placement.

While the plot has been identified for SGT Cook's grave, his exact location within is a mystery to place his new headstone at his actual gravesite. There are options to pursue in the location identification process, but many are useable because of the site's age or cost.

If there are any Brevard Veterans out there who have (or have access to) a metal detector or radar and are willing to spend an hour helping find SGT Ernest Cason Cook, your help would be greatly appreciated. Please contact Raymond Norman if you know of a source at normanrayl@yahoo.com or at the BVC store on Sunday afternoon.

Park and Plaza Report

by Donn Weaver



The weather is cooler. Take a walk around the VMC Memorial Plaza in October. It's worth the time and the scenery is beautiful.

Our Plaza has never looked better. On your stroll, you will see upgraded cement benches, better landscaping, the greatly expanded Purple Heart Monument with 11 new bricks from the 07 August ceremony, another 12 new bricks since August and most of all, the great new USD Allied Forces Memorial with five countries and 300 individuals so far recognized and honored. The full story with photos of the 17 September dedication is elsewhere in this Courier edition. What progress!!

Park Progress

The Park progress is harder to see. A final County survey for the new Amphitheater and other new buildings and facilities was completed and approved by the county and the MIRA Board planned to meet to approve one of two designs for the amphitheater on 28 September with bidding two then go out and ground breaking in mid-2023.

The new and three times bigger playground should be constructed in October and we remain hopeful infrastructure upgrades will also begin next month. October and November will see many more Park Activities including four JROTC events, a 5K Fundraiser by our St Francis Reflections partner and more.

In all, thanks to many for so much support and funding, the Park is on its way to a third and fourth phase of upgrades that may make it unmatched.



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The Patriot Report

**Disabled American Veterans (DAV),
Space Coast Chapter 123, Inc.**

Record Pay Increase Likely Coming for Disabled Veterans and Military Retirees in 2023

Military retirees and veterans that receive disability pay from the Department of Veterans Affairs are likely to receive the benefit of record monthly check increases for the second year running, thanks to the pace of inflation. According to new estimates, the annual military retirement and VA disability pay will receive a cost-of-living pay adjustment (that is typically tied to the Social Security rate change), which will likely be announced in October. An early projection based on national inflation data by The Senior Citizens League (TSCL), a nonpartisan senior advocacy nonprofit, estimates rates will rise by 9.6%. That increase would be the highest veterans and seniors have seen since 1981, when it was increased 11.2% in response to the inflation rate.

For 2023, that means military retirees would see an average increase of more than \$240 in their monthly retirement checks. Veterans receiving disability compensation from the VA also would see their monthly disability payments increase, with the average monthly amount going up by more than \$150.

According to the VA nearly 5.2 million veterans receive disability compensation, with an annual benefit of \$18,858 as of 2021. According to the Defense Department, there are approximately 1.87 million military retirees, who had an annual average retirement payment of \$30,265 in 2020, the most recent year for which data was readily available.

The annual Social Security COLA increase is based on the Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W), which is measured by the Department of Labor. The department takes a snapshot of the costs of a select group of goods and services and compares those costs to the previous year. If there is an increase, retirees and many others receiving government benefits see a bump in their monthly payments for the upcoming year. If those costs go down, the government payments will remain the same in the upcoming year.

TSCL's estimate is based on the CPI through July. But with several months left to go, the ultimate increase could vary slightly from the projection. For example, if inflation continues to increase, the COLA raise could be as high as 10.01%, they said. If inflation falls below the recent average,

An early projection based on national inflation data by The Senior Citizens League (TSCL), a nonpartisan senior advocacy nonprofit, estimates rates will rise by 9.6%, the highest increase in retiree and veteran pay since 1981.

the increase could dip to 9.3%. The anticipated record increase would be the second year running of such bumps. For 2022, the raise was 5.9%, which followed an average 1.5% increase over the 10 years prior.

The Newest Military Branch, the Space Force

by Rowan Philip

As you may know or not know our beloved Patrick Air Force Base is now Patrick Space Force Base. This is what it's all about.

In January, the newly created U.S. Space Force advertised 35 jobs for its Pentagon offices. It received more than 5,700 applications. On April 18, 86 graduating cadets from the Air Force Academy won prized commissions directly into the new service, while Space Force recruiters are reportedly finding that they can choose among the best applicants across the Defense Department. And America's tiny sixth military branch is also attracting deep interest from female service members and civilians, thanks to an effort to make it the most gender-balanced service.

Energized by a new golden age of space, and the emergence of orbit as a warfighting domain, the Space Force has become a major aspirational target for people with space-related resumes. The sudden excitement is a far cry from the early public mockery of the Space Force name and the widespread confusion about the service's purpose or how it might fight.



Launched last December, the branch's stated mission is to provide space capabilities and to protect U.S. and allied security interests in space. It will also provide tactical support to ground combat units with surveillance, communications, and geopositioning data while seeking to deter adversaries from

acquiring military advantages from orbit. It is growing out of the Air Force, the same way the Air Force grew out of the Army in 1947.

However, there are some lingering perceptions that it might have simply "relabelled" thousands of airmen who, six months after reassignment to the Space Force, are still sitting in their same offices, from Greenland to the Pacific islands, and largely doing the same work.

And there are lingering questions about how it might "fight" in a battlefield where a lot of effective fire automatically turns into friendly fire. That's because anything you blow up in orbit is likely to shed debris that will come around and threaten your own space assets, at 17,500 mph.

In a briefing to the Mitchell Institute for Aerospace Studies, General John "Jay" Raymond, Space Force's chief of space operations, described the excitement surrounding the program. "The numbers of people knocking on our door; begging to be a part of this. On a weekly, if not daily basis, I have people asking me, 'How can I be part of this service?'" Raymond added that universities are seeing an increase in astro-engineering applicants and that Space Force can "do direct hire from industry," something he's also excited about.

Establishing the Space Force

Established by the 2020 National Defense Authorization Act last year, the United States Space Force falls under Secretary of the Air Force Barbara Barrett, and is commanded by Raymond, a four-star general who is now a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. It has an operational command hub at Peterson Air Force Base in Colorado and is supposed to be fully stood up by the summer of 2021. The USSF immediately swallowed up the U.S. Space Command, which was a combatant command within the Air Force with responsibilities for direct military space missions. It will now comb through the other four military branches—and ultimately private industry—for the skills it needs.

Sixteen thousand airmen, largely from U.S. Space Command, were automatically assigned to the Space Force last December. The new service then performed a "scrub" of all Air Force units

with space mission functions and identified 1,840 additional Air Force personnel for transfer from 23 units, ranging from the 18th Intel Squadron at Wright-Patterson AFB Ohio to the AFRL Rocket Propulsion Division at Edwards AFB California. Todd Harrison, director of the Aerospace Security Project at the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), says the Space Force is still widely perceived "as a joke" in the general public, or fundamentally misunderstood.

"We already had space forces, now we have a unified Space Force under one chain of command, instead of a bunch of fractured offices."

"I think a lot of the public perception of the Space Force is embodied in the Netflix series (with Steve Carell), where they think it's a joke, or they think it was Donald Trump's idea, or that it has something to do with NASA and space exploration and going to the moon," he says. "All of that is incorrect."

But Harrison insists that it is, in fact, a necessary and overdue branch with an increasingly important mission, that it has "real teeth" and that it is likely to see plenty of action, whether we know about it or not. He says the Space Force is fundamentally about consolidation: "We already had space forces, now we have a unified Space Force under one chain of command, instead of a bunch of fractured offices."

What makes the Space Force Different

The contrast between the Space Force and the other five branches is stark: It is likely to be the oldest service by median age, the most civilian-heavy, the most contractor-dependent, the most collaborative, the least gender-unbalanced, the most rank-unbalanced, and the leanest. Perhaps the most striking contrast is that it doesn't plan to ask for more money from Congress beyond its initial \$15.4 billion budget. Its operational costs could actually reduce, with the cost of satellites and space launches tumbling. It will feature collapsed command layers, while outsourcing most of its medical, legal, and bureaucratic needs to the Air Force.

Another difference is its stated intention to use a "clean sheet" on hiring and workplace policies to benefit women, including flexible career provisions and an emphasis on lateral entry from private industry. At a meeting of the Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services, Maj. Gen. Clinton Crosier, director of planning for the USSF, said that "there are tremendous opportunities for women in the U.S. Space Force."

Rebecca Keiser, chair of Women in Aerospace, an association for the aerospace community, says she is "very encouraged" by signs from both Congress and the USSF that the new service

will actively seek a healthy gender balance. “It’s a very good signal that its first two civilian hires were female professionals.” One of them being Patricia Mulcahy—a retired Army colonel who was hired as deputy chief of space operations for personnel and logistics services.

But there’s controversy in other areas. Harrison says early challenges for the Space Force include resentment from other branches and opposition to its stated intention to declassify some of its capabilities. In the briefing, Raymond admitted that the service’s capabilities were “overly classified” and that it would need to move toward visibility to deter adversaries from threatening U.S. assets in space.

“The Army does not yet trust that the Space Force will provide the space capabilities it needs on the battlefield. I have heard that directly from senior folks in the Army,” says Harrison. “The problem is the intel community. The intel agencies do their own space operations with capabilities that overlap (with the Space Force), and they have no interest in declassifying anything.”

David Burbach, a professor and space specialist at the U.S. Naval War College, spoke in personal capacity on the unique nature of the new battlefield. “You would not have to do much fighting to make space unusable for everyone. If you blow up satellites and create debris fields, it’s game over, or if you set off nuclear weapons in space, the electrons and particles just stay up in the belts over the Earth.”

Raymond also reiterated the risk of space fighting. “We don’t want conflicts that extend into space,” he said. “We want to deter that from happening. But if deterrence were to fail, we’re gonna [going to] have to fight for space superiority in the future.” Advances in technology for both the U.S. and its adversaries, together with reductions in launch costs and satellite sizes, have made dramatic changes to the threats and capabilities in what is now considered a new warfighting domain.

Harrison says space arsenals in countries like Russia and China include missiles, ground-to-space “blinding” lasers, cyber weapons, and yes, even the James Bond-style military spacecraft many might imagine in this domain. And he says weapons like these will likely see plenty of use, because military space incidents are less likely to result in escalating conflict. That’s because there would be no direct human casualties, and few attacks in space would meet the standard of acts of war.

In an interview on April 16, Harrison said: “Today, literally today, Russia tested another anti-satellite weapon. This stuff is happening all the time; there are constantly demonstrations of weapons in space, and weapons that aren’t in space but interfere with space systems. Like GPS jamming and spoofing, high powered lasers from aircraft and ships that can blind their sensors on satellites, microwave weapons that can fry the circuits in orbit, and there are hunter-killer satellites than



Photo by: Senior Airman Zoe Thacker. “Patrick AFB, Cape Canaveral AFS renamed as Space Force installations,” spaceforce.mil.

can chase down other spacecraft and interfere with them or destroy them.”

In February, two Russian co-orbital counterspace assets called “inspector satellites,” came within 100 miles of a U.S. spy satellite and began trailing it. In perhaps the first public action report from the Space Force, Raymond commented that “we view this behavior as unusual and disturbing.”

Additional personnel from the Army, Navy, and Marine Corps are expected to join the Space Force over the next 14 months, but the final number of USSF members is expected to remain below 20,000 and be heavily skewed to former airmen. Raymond said, “We have to be careful that we don’t break the (other branches) in standing up the Space Force.”

For everyday uniforms, Harrison says the USSF will use the same camouflage pattern as the Army and Air Force and will have its own song, but not its own marching band. It will be “lean,” at every level he says.

In March, the 45th Space Wing at Cape Canaveral succeeded with the Space Force’s first launch, a 13,600 pound military communications satellite, aboard a commercial Atlas V rocket emblazoned with a Space Force seal.

While the scope of the Space Force’s acquisition powers are still being finalized in new legislation, the service has already been empowered to make rapid investments. “Space has normally relied on very large, very expensive satellites, especially military space has gone that way,” Burbach says. “Now, the realization is that we can make pretty powerful satellites at low size and cost.”

Harrison is hopeful about the future of the Space Force. “We needed a separate service to start developing a space culture, which just doesn’t exist in the Air Force,” he says. “Operating a satellite is nothing like flying an airplane, and no one in the Space Force will go into space. But it will have a culture of people who understand the physics and the domain.”



Unofficial Brevard VMC Vets Calendar October 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/>

NOTE: Due to Senate Election Year Rules, Sen Rubio's Team must suspend VMC Office Hours until November. Call Mr. Tom Self at 497-254-3753 directly if you have questions during the gap in office hours directly as needed.

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. This event, with a 25-year history, was postponed due to COVID 19 in 2020/21. As many as 200 homeless and at-risk veterans usually attend the event with more than that number of volunteers providing a wide range of services from the private sector, the VA, the Medical Community, charitable organizations, etc. The Veterans Memorial Center (VMC) is the primary organizer of the event, but partners with National Veterans Homeless Support (NVHS) and dozens of others to help the program support many veterans in need. 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.

08 Oct — Raider Challenge JROTC County Meet #1 in Veterans Memorial Park (0700-1230)

15 Oct — Support Committee Cape Canaveral National Cemetery (SC/CCNC) VMC Gray Hall Dinner and Fundraiser - 1600-2000

22 Oct — Raider Challenge JROTC Invitational Meet #2 in Veterans Memorial Park (0700-1230)

27 Oct — BCSO Free Shredder Event at the Veterans Memorial Park 0900 - 1100.

NOVEMBER

05 Nov — Raider Challenge JROTC District Championship Meet #3 in Veterans Memorial Park 0700-1300.

08 Nov — Election Day including at VMC which is a polling station.

11 Nov — VMC Veterans Day Ceremony 0930-1100 with lunch by Chick-fil-a and refreshments, special exhibits, speeches and vendors.

12 Nov — 247th Marine Corps Birthday Celebration 1800-2100 Marine Ball at Radisson Resort Cape Canaveral. Tickets required in advance NLT 01 Nov at \$34.00 perperson. Contact MCLBrevard513@gmail.com for more information and to register.

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.

17 Nov — 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. No office hours at VMC in December.

20 Nov — Meet the MOB: Museums of Brevard (MOB) Exposition with many member museums participating. Warbird Museum, Vietnam Hangar 1300- 1500. Meet with reps from 21 Brevard County Museums and what they offer. Contact Dean Schaaf at VMC for any questions.

17 Nov — 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. No office hours at VMC in December.

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Bayside Navy JROTC Color Guard Standing Tall

At each VMC General Meeting we request a JROTC or other Cadet Organization (Like Sea Cadets) Color Guard to present the colors. We welcome them and provide a \$200 donation to support each program.

For the 2022-23 school year, eight high school JROTC programs signed up to provide this service, and we will request the Sea Cadets of Courageous Division based at VMC (or other such units) to cover the three summer meetings when JROTC units are not in session. All do a great job and their presence at the VMC gives the cadets a chance to see our Center and Museum while supporting we veterans. Thanks to all of them.

On 14 September the Navy JROTC Color Guard came all the way from Bayside High School in Palm Bay and were led by their Senior JROTC Instructor CMDR Paul Fenech, USN, Ret. As he introduced his cadets and their future plans it was clear they are well motivated and will make great citizens. We are blessed in Brevard County to have one of the largest and best JROTC programs in Florida with 15 participating high schools.



(continued from previous page)

DECEMBER

03 Dec — First Annual Veteran Benefit Car and Motorcycle Show by VMC and American Legion Post 344 at VMC Park 10-1600. Up to 100 cars and 100 motorcycles, food, music by Doc Holiday, vendors and much more. Contact Mike Hriciso at 321-350-6163 or mhricis02002@yahoo.com to register and for more information.

10 Dec — MOAACC Good Deeds Foundation Veterans and Military Support Golf Tournament. Cocoa Beach Country Club 0730-1400. Sponsorships and Hole Sponsor signs available. To sponsor or play connect to moaacc.org for Golf Tournament or call Donn Weaver 757-871-6576.

17 Dec — JROTC Sprint Relay in Veterans Memorial Park (0730-1200) with combat pack run followed by air rifle target shooting. American Legion Post 344 to sponsor trophies.

17 Dec — Wreaths Across America Ceremonies and laying out at Cape Canaveral National Cemetery (0800-1100) and many other Brevard areas and cemeteries with WAA Location Coordinators. Contact VMC for more information and was.org to donate a wreath for \$15.

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



Pictured: Sheriff Wayne Ivey, Kristi Blanchard, Dean Schaff, Donn Weaver and Dave Clayton receive the check from the BCSO "Dancing with the Space Coast." The donation is extremely appreciated and will put to good use in our developing projects that help us achieve our ultimate missions.



Dancing with the Space Coast Major Contribution

Over one year ago, the Veterans Memorial Center was chosen as one of three Brevard 501c3 charities to benefit from the 2022 Brevard County Sheriff's Office (BCSO) Charities' "Dancing with the Space Coast". The event was held 04 June and the dance team we sponsored, LTC Tim Thomas, USA Ret Viera HS JROTC Instructor, and his professional partner Heidi Arnold even won the contest!! Thank you again to LTC Thomas for your outstanding participation and representation of the VMC.

On 22 September at the Viera BCSO Precinct, Sheriff Wayne Ivey and BCSO Charities Director Lindsey Deaton presented the VMC and two other charities checks for \$61,206 each! The VMC Executive Committee was there to gratefully accept the grant intended to help us with major projects in the coming months.

We are blessed to live in Brevard County where veterans truly are supported.

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



Boosters

Bateman, Skip & Ruth July, 2026	Schaaf, Dean & Susan July, 2023
Bisset, M Doug Sept, 2023	Schmid, Ted Jan, 2023
Clayton, David & Anne July, 2023	Space Coast Honor Flight May, 2023
Fadok, Eleanor Dec 2022	Weiler, Philip R. Feb, 2023
Fleet Reserve Branch 263 July, 2023	Weaver, Donn & Jeanne Sep, 2023
Fugaro, Joan & Ricardo Nov, 2022	Florida State University College of Social Work April, 2023
Leonhart, Rick Mar, 2023	Norman, Ray April, 2027
Longway, J.P & Donna Dec, 2023	Sherman, John S. (Tank) Oct, 2023
Martin, John & Roberta Nov, 2022	Sherman, Rheta Campbell Oct, 2023
Rapp, Gary (USMC) Aug, 2022	Eliaison, Sandra Oct, 2023
Rathbun, Don & Barbara Dec, 2023	
Roseland, Tom & Patrice Jan, 2023	

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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).

Single Name per year- \$10.00 / Double Names – \$20.00

Name(s) _____