



THE VETERANS MEMORIAL CENTER

COUNCIL COURIER

MAY 2023



A Publication of the Brevard Veterans Council & Veterans Memorial Center



WHAT'S INSIDE

Blessing of the Jeeps

One of the many events on the grounds this month! Blessing provided by our own Chaplain Chip Hanson. — page 18

Marine Corps League Officer Installation

New leadership was put into place at this annual event. — page 10

Care Packages for the Troops

OASIS partners with the VMC to send our soldiers reminders of home. — page 12

Our Community Represented

At long last, our entrance sign to the Veterans Memorial Center reflects the large community of non-profit organizations that call the VMC home.

— details page 9

MAY 2023

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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 Those submissions received after that date will not be published.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 1 Feb 2023:

[Committee Department Assignment 2022-2023](#)

As of 1 November 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)

April was another busy month with many events at the VMC, occasionally maxing out our rental spaces, forcing us to use the Museum for meetings. That is good for the organization to be so popular as a destination for events and meetings! It will only get better and busier.

The County has been making progress in the Park with additional improvements. Next to the new playground, contractors have installed an adult exercise area on a concrete slab which will also have a cover to keep out the hot sun. The equipment is by a company called ENERGI, which provides a total body fitness system with different exercise options.

I represented the VMC and other Veterans organizations at many meetings this month. As an Eagle Scout, I felt obligated to attend the annual fundraiser for the Boy Scouts, the Golden Eagle Dinner. Over \$100,000 was raised for the Scouts. I was invited to the Naval Ordnance Test Unit's (NOTU) Submarine Ball. Ed Pingston, our Museum Curator, provided a Klaxon from the museum collection for use during the ball and boy did they use it. The Klaxon is from the diesel submarine USS Hardhead SS-365, commissioned in 1943. The Propeller Club hosted a ShrimpFeast at Terminal 5 at the Port. It was the main fundraiser for the Propeller Club and was entertaining and raised a "boat load" of money for the organization.

We had Boy Scout troops camp out in our Park for two days and they graciously completed a service project of cleaning out one of our areas of weeds

and trees and spruced the area up with mulch. Due to scheduling, the Cocoa Beach Chamber of Commerce Military Affairs Council (MAC) had to hold their monthly meeting in our Museum. It was a successful event and we impressed many in attendance with our displays with promises to return with family and friends.

My wife Susan and I were honored to be featured in Florida Senator Debbie Mayfield's "Mayfield's Minute" information publication as Constituents of the Week.

Stand by for a busy month in May with our Armed Forces Day event in partnership with the Cocoa Beach Regional Chamber of Commerce (more details in the future) and several Memorial Day commemorations.

Thanks for all the volunteers' efforts in making this Veterans Center one of the finest parks in the county. I would especially like to thank the Museum crew and Docents for managing many school tours this last month.

Dean Schaaf

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[FACEBOOK](#)
[WEBSITE](#)
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MIKE ERDMAN

Mike Erdman



MIKE ERDMAN
TOYOTA



**SUPPORTING VETERANS
AND JROTC IN BREVARD COUNTY**



Council Chairman's Report

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

Never Forgotten — VMC and Brevard County Makes Sure

As we approach Memorial Day, we remember at the core of our values as a country is the commitment to never forget the service and sacrifice of our veterans. There will be more ceremonies and opportunities for the public to understand that message in Brevard County this Memorial Day weekend than any in my 10 years living here and working at VMC.

Remembrances may focus on the Combat Fallen — 1.2 Million Americans have died in combat since 1775 — but should also reflect on MIA/POW accounting, non-combat military, military related deaths and the brave men and women who raise their right hand and go wherever the country's elected leadership sends them. Among the latter are those who have been severely wounded and received the Purple Heart; a remembrance ceremony will occur at VMC on 06 August.

Most of you who read this will need no reminding about Memorial Day and its meaning, but, in your divided country reminding others is worth doing. There will be **11 MAJOR Memorial Day events** from 26-29 May all over Brevard County that we know about, and likely even more. Check out the VMC calendar and flyers in this *Courier* issue to get more details on many of them.

We hope to see you at the VMC 0930 29 May Memorial Day Ceremony, or any others. If not, remind yourselves and your family and friends to pause from what will likely be a fun filled day as well and reflect:

Without Veterans and those who sacrificed, there is no America.

And, perhaps remind some people who will say it that "Happy Memorial Day" does not ring true.



MIHS ARMY ROTC NATIONAL SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS
Congratulations to the Merritt Island High School Winners from the VMC!

Save the Date - October 6th

2023 National Veterans Homeless Support 8th Annual Dinner Fundraiser

Hosted by Brevard's Constitutional Officers

Property Appraiser Dana Blickley

Sheriff Wayne Ivey

Clerk of Court Rachel Sadoff

Tax Collector Lisa Cullen

Supervisor of Elections Tim Bobanic

State Attorney Phil Archer

Public Defender Blaise Trettis

Friday, October 6th

Radisson Resort at the Port

8701 Astronaut Blvd. Cape Canaveral

5:30pm Cocktails 6:15pm Dinner

Platinum Sponsorship: \$25,000

Gold Star Sponsorship: \$10,000

Silver Star Sponsorship: \$5,000

Bronze Star Sponsorship: \$1,000

Dinner: \$100 per person or \$1,000 per table of 10

Program ads: Full page - \$250 or Half page - \$150

For advance reservations or to place camera-ready ads in the program, reach out to us:

www.nvhs.org/events

or email events@nvhs.org

or call the NVHS Office at 321-208-7562

ARMED FORCES DAY CELEBRATION

THIS FAMILY-FRIENDLY EVENT HONORS SERVICE
MEMBERS ACROSS THE SIX BRANCHES OF MILITARY.

BREVARD VETERANS MEMORIAL CENTER
400 S SYKES CREEK PKWY, MERRITT ISLAND

MAY 20, 2023

GATES OPEN 3:00PM
CEREMONY 4:00 PM
MUSIC 5:30 PM

Special activities include:

Static Displays Vendors
Kid's Zone Food Trucks

Live musical performance by Rockie Lynne,
Veteran and Country Music Artist



GENERAL ADMISSION \$5
FREE TO MILITARY COMMUNITY



Operations Report

CPL Robert W. Doyle, USMC (Fmr)

Water Still Needed

We are again in need of water as our stock was used in the last big events. Remember all tenants that you are not charged for your initial meeting as a tenant. So please consider giving back a little to your facility. Please consider donating 4 or 5 flats of water.

Park Improvements

The construction is almost done on the workout area in the park. It is next to the children's playground and should cover most physical needs. Many events are coming up in which volunteers will be needed to drive carts to pick up people around the area. If you have time please let us know you can volunteer to drive during events.

Chip came in on Wednesday for a few hours. He is doing better but still trying to get used to the additional software the Doctor put in. Construction will start on the front of the building soon with the back to follow. This will replace all damaged wood and brackets and strengthen our building to storm standards.



Library Notes

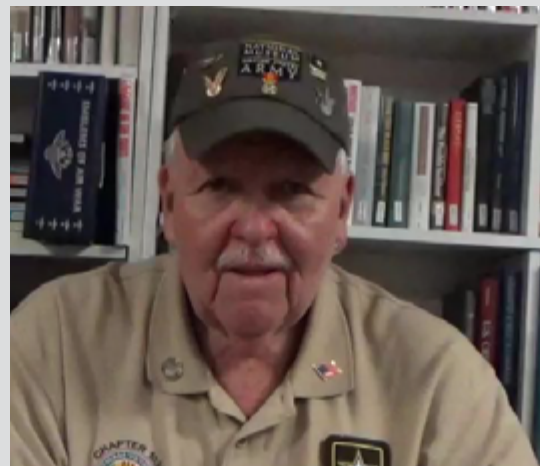
**SGT Joe Davie, USAF (Fmr)
VMC Librarian**

New Military History Program

The library will begin a recurring discussion group series in the library on the last Tuesday of the month from 6:00 till 7:30 PM. Norm Desmaries will present a lecture on the revolutionary war Battle of Saratoga April 25th. Hank Rhodes will follow on Tuesday, May 30th, with the Mexican American War and Wayne Rowe on Tuesday, June 27th with a lecture on Civil War Naval Operations. Included will be power point presentations of the topics discussed. These and future discussions will explore various topics on US military history that are non-political and historical in nature. We hope that these sessions will be of interest to our members.

Library Outreach

Joe Davie will be presenting a PowerPoint overview of the Brevard Veterans Memorial Center Facilities and BVC veterans outreach at the Brevard County Library on Merrit Island. Time and date will be 4:30 PM on May 24 and the library is located across the street from the M.I High School on Courtney Parkway.



New Veterans History Project Interview: *Paul Bartoszewicz*

Paul Bartoszewicz served in the 1st BN 3rd Infantry (The Old Guard) in the US Army in Washington, D.C., where he worked administration and ran sound for the Unit. Notably, he was privileged to serve at the burial of President Lyndon B. Johnson.

Paul's military technology training gave him the foundation to pursue a career in radio broadcasting. As a civilian, Paul had his own radio show which he hosted for many years.

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



MISSION

The Veterans Memorial Center (VMC) offers a special Veterans History Project (VHP) in coordination with the American Red Cross and Library of Congress (LOC) at no charge. The VHP mission is to collect, preserve, and make accessible the personal accounts of American veterans of all services and periods of history. Thus, future generations may hear directly from veterans and better understand the realities of war and other military service. After the recorded interview the veteran and family will receive their own DVD, one will be kept at the VMC library, and electronic copies will be downloaded to the LOC.



TO PARTICIPATE

If you are a veteran, simply contact us and we will arrange a video recorded interview in the VMC library or, in special cases, at your home. The conversation can last thirty minutes or two hours. That is up to you. The story can include your service and how your life was spent after the military. Remember hundreds of veterans have told their stories which are preserved forever on VHP DVD's at the VMC Library and LOC.

CONTACT US

To arrange an appointment please contact either:

Joe Davie	321-626-5462	jdavie@cfl.rr.com
Paul Julian	321-749-7369	pjulian54@yahoo.com

VIDEOGRAPHERS

Joe Davie	321-626-5462	jdavie@cfl.rr.com
Paul Julian	321-749-7369	pjulian54@yahoo.com

VHP SUPPORT

Bill Wilkening	321-428-3422	Hank Rhodes	321-799-1219
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Chaplain's Corner

by Chaplain Chip Hanson
USMC (Fmr)



Memorial Day is a federal holiday in the United States, for remembering 1,498,240 men and women who died and the 85,122 who are still missing in action while serving in our Country's Armed Forces. The holiday, which is currently observed every year on the last Monday of May, this year, will be held on May 29, 2023.

Memorial Day is not to be confused with Veterans Day; Memorial Day is a day of remembering the men and women who died while serving, whereas Veterans Day celebrates the service of all U.S. military veterans Army, Navy, Marines, Coast Guard, Air Force, and now the Space Force. Merchant Marines are not included as part of the US military and why they are not recognized on a Veteran holiday. (ref CITREP, Wikipedia, and several other publications).

Memorial Day was originally held on May 30 from 1868 to 1970 and marks the unofficial start of the summer season.

In 1868, General John A. Logan of the Grand Army of the Republic, an organization of Union veterans founded in Decatur, Illinois, established Decoration Day as a time for the nation to decorate the graves of the Union war dead with flowers. By the 20th century, various Union and Confederate memorial traditions, celebrated on different days, merged, and Memorial Day eventually extended to honor all Americans who died while in military service.

In 1915, following the Second Battle of Ypres, Lieutenant Colonel John McCrae, a physician with the Canadian Expeditionary Force, wrote the poem, "In Flanders Fields." Its opening lines refer to the fields of poppies that grew among the soldiers' graves in Flanders.

In 1918, inspired by the poem, YWCA worker Moina Michael attended a YWCA Overseas War Secretaries' conference wearing a silk poppy pinned to her coat and distributed over two dozen more to others present. In 1920, the National American Legion adopted it as their official symbol of

remembrance.

On May 26, 1966, President Lyndon B. Johnson designated an "official" birthplace of the holiday by signing the presidential proclamation naming Waterloo, New York, as the holder of the title. This action followed House Concurrent Resolution 587, in which the 89th Congress had officially recognized that the patriotic tradition of observing Memorial Day had begun one hundred years prior in Waterloo, New York. The village credits druggist Henry C. Welles and county clerk John B. Murray as the founders of the holiday. Snopes and Live Science discredit the Waterloo account. (REF: Wikipedia)

**"It is foolish and wrong to mourn the men who died. Rather we should thank God that such men lived."
-- George S. Patton**

**Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends.
John 15:13 ESV**

GOD BLESS AMERICA
Chaplain Chip Hanson



ATLANTIC MUSIC CENTER

atlanticmusiccenter.com

Brian Gatchell, Owner
150 East Drive, Ste C | Melbourne, FL 32904
321.725.5690



VMC Sign Improved: Tenants Properly Honored

We have finally installed seventeen unit/agency logos under the Parks and Recreation sign at our main entrance. These signs honor the units that qualify as tenant organizations - those organizations that meet here on a regular basis and call the VMC their home. Thanks to Dennis Herring for getting the organization logos, Lickity Split sign company for producing the logo signs, and to those who spent countless man-hours building, painting, and installing the impressive addition to our Veterans Memorial Center sign.

The tenants represented in the new sign include the Disabled American Veterans Chapter, Navy League, Fleet Reserve Association Branch, America's Boating Club, Good Deeds Foundation Board of the Military Officers Association of America, Marine Corps League Detachment 513, Military Order of the Purple Heart, Sons of the American Revolution, Rolling Thunder FL Chapter 1, Blue Knights Motorcycle Club, Sea Cadets, U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary, American Legion, American Legion Auxiliary, OCS (Army) Space / Treasure Coast Chapter, and the Cape Canaveral Ladies - Cemetary Support Committee.



VMC LIBRARY DISCUSSION SERIES

LAND GRAB OR LIBERATION?

The U.S. – Mexican War
1846-1848

Tuesday May 30, 2023
6:00-7:30 PM

The Library
Veterans Memorial Center
Merritt Island, FL



Birthday Blowout!

Dr. Scott Fairchild, Army Veteran, celebrated his retirement and his birthday with over 150 local veterans and retirees at the VMC on April 23, 2023.

The food and entertainment were excellent – as “Greggie and the Jets” performed an Elton John tribute. Celebrants gave monetary donations to multiple military organizations.

It's great to see the many ways the VMC facilities can be used by the community beyond meetings - we love it when celebrations are held here!



Pictured: Newly appointed officers.

New Officer Installation Detachment 513, Marine Corps League

On 06 April 2023, the leadership of the Marine Corps League Detachment 513 changed hands at the regularly scheduled monthly meeting. Following a nomination and election process in February and March of 2023, a new slate of Elected and Appointed Officers was installed into their prospective positions with ceremonial proceedings and military pageantry. Stepping down from Commandant, Dennis Herring handed the gavel of leadership and passed the Detachment Colors to Richard (Rick) Bedford as he was installed as the new Commandant. Also installed and elected by a Detachment vote was Senior Vice Commandant Carlos Rivera, Junior Vice Commandant Charles (Chuck) Betz, and Judge Advocate Thomas (Tom) Fitzgerald. These elected Officers serve as the Board of Trustees for the Detachment.

Commandant Bedford requested and received affirmation for service from the following Appointed Officers: Junior Past Commandant Vincent Howard, Adjutant Dennis Herring, Paymaster Thomas Fitzgerald, Chaplain Robert Doyle, Sergeant at Arms Gary Corbett, Marine for Life Liaison Dennis Herring, Membership Outreach Chairman, Donna J. Reed and Quartermaster, Kimberly Benton. Selected, but not present for installation, Historian, Normand Desmarais will be installed next month.

Detachment 513 of the Department of Florida, Marine Corps League is a Tenant Organization of the Veterans Memorial Council (VMC) at the Brevard Veterans Memorial Center. The Detachment hosts a premier Color and Honor Guard providing flag services and rifle details for ceremonies and funerals, often supporting the Solemn Pride Caisson at CCNC, a Marine Corps Dinner and Ball, fundraising activities for local veterans, and has a large contingency of members belonging to the Military Order of Devil Dogs, Pack 273.

All United States Marines, FMF Corpsman, and Navy Chaplains with honorable service are welcomed and encouraged to join the Detachment. Interested parties may contact us thru email



Pictured: Detachment 513 outgoing Commandant Herring and incoming Commandant Bedford.



Pictured: Elected and appointed officers are sworn into office.



Pictured: Elected officers and Board of Trustees.

at: detachment513marinecorpsleague@gmail.com or USPS at Marine Corps League, Detachment 513, 400 South Sykes Creek Pkwy., Merritt Island, FL 32952.



ROLLING THUNDER®, Inc. RIDE FOR FREEDOM XXXV

MAY 26 - 28, 2023 FLORIDA

VETERANS MEMORIAL CENTER (VMC)

400 Sykes Creek Parkway | Merritt Island, FL 32952

Event details and update information, visit:

www.rollingthunderflorida1.org

FRIDAY, MAY 26

6:30 p.m. - Fishlips Waterfront Restaurant **Blessing of the Bikes**

7 p.m. - **KSU**

VMC - **Gold Star Families Candlelight Vigil. Solemn Walk in front of Traveling Vietnam Wall.** Gold Star families please RSVP to dinner on our website.

SATURDAY, MAY 27

Space Coast Harley Davidson THUNDER ALLEY

Live Entertainment, Vendors and Chapter Booths

\$10 Donation may win this HD Ultra Classic at 7PM!



SUNDAY, MAY 28

FREEDOM RIDE XXXV

8 a.m. - VMC Rally and Speakers

10 a.m. - KSU with B-52H fly-over

Thank You to our patriotic sponsors!

\$20 BIKE REGISTRATION
Ride Registration available at ALL Events



HOSTED IN PARTNERSHIP WITH:



The major function of Rolling Thunder®, Inc. is to publicize the POW-MIA issue: To educate the public that many American Prisoners of War were left behind after all previous wars and to help correct the past and to protect the future Veterans from being left behind should they become Prisoners Of War-Missing In Action. We are committed to helping American Veterans from all wars. Rolling Thunder®, Inc. is a non-profit organization and everyone donates his or her time because they believe in the POW/MIA Issue that we are working on.

Deployed Troop Care Packages en Route Thanks to OASIS

On 01 April more than 30 volunteers gathered at the Veterans Memorial Center's (VMC) Gray Hall to sort and pack up 120 boxes of treats to be sent all over the world to deployed active duty military members. The event was even filmed by Channel 13 News and will appear on TV over the Memorial Day weekend.

Operation of Americans Standing In Support (OASIS) has been operating for many years to make sure those serving our country with roots on the Space Coast know they are appreciated. Most often the care packages sent 4-5 times per year are shared with many other unit members in some very isolated and often dangerous places.

OASIS is led by Tess Brady Heribaka who is the mother of veterans who were deployed during the GWOT and she just keeps going with great group of volunteers and sponsors. Packing mornings are a real sight to behold as the assembly line cranks up.

The VMC supports one or more such events per year; one of the key sponsors is the Good Deeds Foundation of the Cape Canaveral Chapter of MOAA. GDF provided \$1000 to defray mailing costs for the Easter Gift event.



Pictured: Good Deeds Foundation President Donn Weaver presents OASIS Leader Tess Brady Heribaka \$1000 for mailing costs in front of the care boxes ready to ship overseas to deployed troops on 01 April.



An Act of Generosity

Lou Rossi, the most experienced former VMC Board Member, will soon turn 93. Not able to drive any longer, he donated his 2005 minivan to the VMC at our April General Meeting. His thought and dedication Lou has shown for 35 years to the VMC is apparent in his actions. Thank you, Lou!

VA IS HIRING!!!! WITH PREFERENCE TO VETERANS & ELIGIBLE SPOUSES

In support of the Congressionally approved "Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics (PACT) Act" the Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) will soon recruit veterans and qualified military spouses to fill federal civil service jobs ~~ and are seeking qualified candidates possessing the following skill-sets:

- Information Technology Specialists
- Customer Services (Medical Claims Examiners/Representatives)
- Logistics (Supply Chain Management) Specialists
- Acquisition/Inventory Management Specialists
- Management and Program Analysts
- Specialty Medical Staff

****In many instances, employment opportunities will offer remote (virtual) work locations, and you can work from home.**

To expedite the process, you are highly encouraged to create an account and load your resume within **[USAJOBS.Gov.](https://www.usajobs.gov)**



NEVER FORGOTTEN

Our Fallen
&



Batts/Getty

Memorial Day Ceremony

Veterans Memorial Center

Monday, May 29, 2023

0930 - 1030

400 South Sykes Creek Parkway, MI

A Solemn Remembrance of American Sacrifices for our Freedoms:

- Musical Tributes: Lonnie & Delinda Band
- Color Guards from Veteran and Cadet Units
- Special Recognitions
- VMC Welcome - Dean Schaaf
- Fallen First Responders - Sheriff Wayne Ivey
- Ultimate Sacrifice: LTC Tim Thomas, USA, Ret
- Gold Star Families Left Behind: Donn Weaver
- Ruck March from Cocoa in Honor of The Fallen
- Rifle Salute: BCSO Honor Guard, Lt L. Smith
- TAPS from the Tower: Bob Doyle
- Refreshments



Contact VMC for
more information:
321-453-1776

Letters to the Editor



I could not help being inspired by a short article (Pg.6) in the April 2023 MILITARY OFFICERS Magazine and feel it worthy to repeat in the MOAACC and VMC Newsletters:

WORDS THAT UNIFY US

- By Janet Apolonia Flatley

"In the February MILITARY OFFICER, The Member Spotlight is on Lt. Colonel Enoch Woodhouse, a Tuskegee Airman. I was struck by what he was quoted as saying. And while Woodhouse is often asked to share his story for Black History Month, he seeks to desegregate the record books. "It is not black history. It is not white history...It is American History."

"When I became a US citizen at 16, (she writes), I pledged

allegiance to "**one nation indivisible.**" When my late husband served in the Marine Corps, he took an oath to support and defend the **Constitution**. It pains me to see deliberate divisions sowed among Americans. Separating us by categories does very little to unify us."

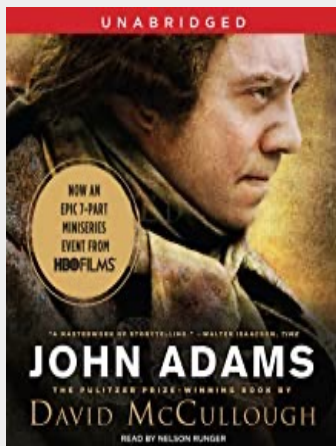
"I thank Lt. Col. Woodhouse; his words deserve to be emblazoned on a billboard and in all our military bases--indeed, all over the nation."

I could not have said it better!

Submitted by Doug Bisset 1LT USA (Former)

Book Report

John Adams by David McCullough, Catalog #Bio-Adam-01 Report by Raymond Norman



Author McCullough "unfolds the adventuresome life journey of John Adams ...the brilliant and fiercely independent man, often irascible, but always honest...a patriot and signer of the Declaration of Independence."

McCullough's book is an interesting compendium of facts and historical narrative of the life of

John Adams, the second president of the United States. Adams made the life he was given count, spending his helping to found our country. We may take for granted our current way of life, but things were pretty tough as the nation developed.

John Adams, born in 1735, married Abigail Smith in 1764; she was mainstay and backstop for their lives. Together, they had children Abigail, John Quincy--the sixth president, Susanna, Charles Adams and Thomas Boylston.

After gaining independence in 1776, the United States went to war with Great Britain (again) in 1812 over freedom of the seas. Either privateers or English war ships would attack American vessels, rob the cargo and "impress" the sailors--basically kidnapping the sailors and make them work on the British ships. The US was in the right. For two years, we held off the British, even though we were still a rather weak country. Great Britain was in a life and death struggle with France led by Napoleon. Just as the United States declared war, Napoleon marched off to invade Russia. If he won, as everyone expected, he would control Europe. That is another story.

McCullough leads us through Adams life in 651 pages, twelve chapters with appendices and maps, plus notes. Much of the writing came from the Adams letters; original letters are in a Boston library. The book was "manufactured" in 1920, but the book is static in regards to history and could be reprinted today as is. This is a wonderful trip down the founding and development of the US. Matching the events to your early history lessons in school will keep you awake if you let it. Reading this book is like eating the proverbial elephant--"one bite at a time." So take your time and enjoy.

Park and Plaza Report by Donn Weaver

Then month of April was busy in our Veterans Memorial Park and Plaza but that busy will not come close to what will happen in May!

THE PARK

Last month we had the American Legion 344 Auxiliary Easter Egg Hunt, Blessings of the Jeeps and a Medal of Honor Tribute fundraiser along with record breaking recreational traffic and playground action. Even more importantly, the county approved the final 50 percent drawings so infrastructure digging for electrical, irrigation pipes and more planting should be able to finally launch in May or June. In April, a new adult exercise area was built near the playground and foreshadows other workout stations that will be constructed along the park pathways. We ordered a Memorial Park bench in memory of JJ Justice, Past President of Rolling Thunder FL-1 and rededicated a bench outside the main door to honor a MIA hero whose remains were finally returned. His family member belongs to RTFL-1. Check it out, it is an amazing story.

May will see **seven huge events** as well as Scout campouts and

more improvements with several volunteer groups promising help. With the Amphitheater coming in 2024, "you ain't seen nothing yet."

THE PLAZA

Over 20 new bricks were positioned, including our very first Space Force Honor brick for Garet McKimmie's daughter who is a Colonel in the US Space Force and will soon arrive at Patrick SFB to take on the Deputy Commander Role!!

Several more benches were upgraded and we continue to plan to install our 16-tenant logos at the entrance and upgrade the roped off equipment around the jets and military vehicles.

Vinny Bonck
321-536-1752
VinnyBonck@gmail.com
Vinny's Tech Services Inc.
Computer repair and much more!

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



**FRIDAY
NIGHT
Dances**

PROUDLY PRESENTED
BY THE VMC

**MAY
7 AND
21
2023**

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.

Viera High School Dental Club Completes a Mission

On April 3, the Viera High School Dental Club provided over 300 gift bags with new dental hygiene supplies to the Veterans Memorial Center for onward distribution. The Club includes 50 members and is led by Neta Elran and Audia Freckleton. Members are interested in exploring possible careers in dental medicine and meet after school for education, networking and community service projects. For this event, the students raised funds to purchase toothpaste, toothbrushes, dental floss and dental picks to fill every bag.

Club members even drew hand painted messages and smiles to the vets and included several kids packages, knowing that today's economy has many veterans and families facing challenging financial times. The fact that high school students raised the money, or obtained the items through donations (the average of \$8-15 worth for each bag) will no doubt bring smiles to many veterans.



The VMC in turn provided donations to National Veteran Homeless Support (NVHS) and Veteran Connections for distribution in the weeks ahead to veterans in real need. Thanks to the Viera Hawks who care!!



Pictured: Pick up at the school

Pictured: Delivery to Kasey Korson at NVHS for onward distribution.

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! You 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!

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.



The Patriot Report

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

The PACT Act

On August 10, 2022, President Biden signed into law the Sergeant First Class (SFC) Heath Robinson Honoring our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics Act of 2022, also known as the PACT Act, into law. This Legislation brought about the following changes:

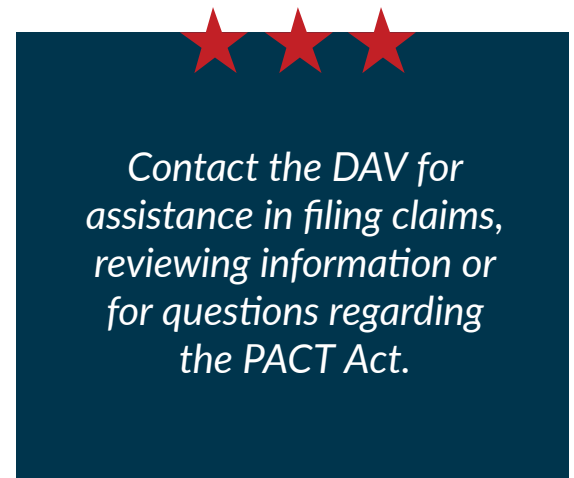
- Expands the lists of the locations, timeframes, and the presumptive conditions related to herbicides exposures.
- Removes the manifestation period and its compensable level requirement for certain disabilities occurring in Persian Gulf War Veterans.
- Expands locations for Persian Gulf War Veterans.
- Expands the list of presumptive conditions and timeframes for certain diseases associated with burn pits and toxic exposures.
- Expands the list of risk activities for radiation exposures.

Now it gets even better by letting you check up on your claim and see its status as it crawls through the VA system.

How Can I Check My PACT Act Claim Status?

Veterans, their families and/or their survivors who have filed claims under the new law that expanded VA health care and benefits for Veterans exposed to burn pits, Agent Orange, radiation and other toxic substances, known as the PACT Act, can now check the status of those claims. The VA is in the middle of an awareness campaign to ensure Veterans, their families, caregivers, or survivors know about the expanded care and benefits for Veterans affected by toxic exposure, and to encourage them to file a claim.

The PACT Act also added more health conditions that the VA now considers presumptive conditions. Which means the conditions were caused by exposure to those toxic substances. For instance, the VA has added two new Agent Orange presumptive conditions, High Blood Pressure, and Monoclonal Gammopathy of undetermined significance (MGUS is a non-cancerous condition where the body makes an abnormal protein, called a paraprotein.) Although MGUS is not a cancer, people



with it have a slightly higher risk of developing: myeloma (a cancer of blood cells called plasma cells) or lymphoma. However, most people with MGUS never develop a related cancer and do not need treatment.

The VA's awareness campaign is making it easier for beneficiaries to access VA benefits and services. Now you can easily check the status of those PACT Act claim once they have been submitted. Here is how:

- Sign into your va.gov account with your existing Login.gov, ID.me, DS Logon or My HealtheVet account. If you don't have any of these accounts, you can create a free Login.gov or ID.me account. Once you are signed into your account, simply follow these three steps to check the status of your PACT Act claim:
- Go to your "My VA" dashboard. You will find the link for this dashboard in the top right corner of the page once you're signed in.
- Scroll down to the "Track Claims" section. There, you'll see a summary of the latest status information for any open claims or appeals you may have.
- Click on the "View Status" button for a specific claim. You will go to a page with more details about that claim's status and supporting evidence. Evidence may include documents like a doctor's report or medical test results. (Claim status tool FAQs can be found here.)

What else can I learn about my PACT Act claim?

After you log in and follow the steps above, you can also find out:

(continued on next page)

- Where your claim, appeal or decision review is in the review process. (Learn what your claim status means here.)
- Which documents and/or forms the VA needs from you.
- Which documents have already been received from health care providers, government agencies and other sources.
- Details like your claim type, the date VA received your claim and the name of your representative.

What should I do if I need help filing a claim or have questions?

The Disabled American Veterans Service Officers are available to assist any Veteran or their survivor(s) in filing claims, reviewing information, or answering questions.

Find other Veteran Service Officers near you at the VA's VSO Webpage. For further help, please call 1-800-827-1000 (TTY: 711) from Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. ET. To learn more about the PACT Act, visit: <https://www.va.gov/pact>.

George Furis

Department of Florida Service Officer (Retired)
USAF SMSgt (Retired)



Airshow View of the Year

The best place to watch the Cocoa Beach Airshow is not on Cocoa Beach! The VMC's wide riverfront view provided a spectacular spot to watch the F-15s, A-10, C-130 and of course, the always fun to see Thunderbirds last month. Best part for these spectators? No traffic, no crowds, no parking problems and lots of cool shade and open blue skies.

The Blessings of the Jeeps at VMC

Our Park is the scene of so much activity every day and especially on the weekends. Some are very unusual. On 15 April the Space Coast Jeep Club held their annual Jeep Blessing with 21 Wrangler Jeeps lined up along the water's edge.

VMC Chaplain Chip Hanson blessed each vehicle in his first official act back after several weeks of medical challenges. Welcome back Chip. Great job.

The event coordinator for the local Jeep Club is Angela Brazau, whom we thank for the pictures. Her group visited the museum after blessing and we are told several donations were made. See the Jeeps next year!!!



Space Coast Jeep Club

If you're looking for some good Jeep company with likeminded Jeep enthusiasts, visit the Space Coast Jeep club online at <http://spacecoastjeepclub.com> or on [Facebook](#).



Pictured: Chaplain Chip Hanson inspects each vehicle before he gives a blessing for safe travels and safe Jeeping.



Unofficial Brevard VMC Vets Calendar May 2023 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/upcoming-veterans-events/>

MAY

01-07 May — Florida's 35th Annual Vietnam and All Veterans Reunion at Wickham Park, Melbourne. Traveling Wall, both, food and drinks, entertainment, displays, and more. Contact VVB Quartermaster Faye Nelson for more information. Schedule, Sunday 01 May — Escort and Assemble Wall; 02 May 1500-1700 Wreath Laying and Ceremony first come first served. Register via email yo_vvbquartermaster@gmail.com. after 11 April; Reunion 04-08 May all day.

07 May — Back Brevard Heroes Festival to honor First Responders and Veterans, VMC Plaza, Gray Hall and Park 0930- 1400.

20 May — Space Coast Military and Family Appreciation Day and BBQ — On Armed Forces Day 2023, From 1500-1900 at the VMC and Park. Featuring CW Award winning singer Rocky Lynne!!!! "Heroes Come from Small Towns" and "Proud to Be a Soldier: Active duty unit displays, music, food, kids games, many special activities to honor our active duty forces and their families who eat free. Co sponsored by CBRCC/ MAC, VMC, MOAACC Good Deeds Foundation and Military Recruiters.

26 May— Day ONE: Ride For Freedom and Flame of Honor Ceremony at VMC Plaza area 1700- 2000. Rolling Thunder FL-1 Sponsor of 3 Day event. First Motorcycle Rally at 1600 at Fishlips at Port Canaveral with travel to VMC. Vietnam and GWOT Moving Walls from Patriot Guard Riders on Display at VMC with Gold Star Family and MIA/POW Remembrance Torch March through the VMC Memorial Plaza.

27 May— Day TWO: Ride for Freedom Rally Space Coast Harley Davidson Ride for Freedom Festival (1000-1600). Includes Food, Drinks, Music, Announcement of Motorcycle Raffle winner and much more. Sponsored by all 7 RTFL Chapters.

27 May— Space Coast Harley Davidson Ride for Freedom Festival (1000-1700). Sponsored by RTFL-1.

28 May — Day THREE: Motorcycle Ride for Freedom Kicks Off in the Merritt Square Mall Parking Lot adjacent to the VMC 1000 with apical events prior and after the Ride for Freedom departs VMC. 0900 -0930 Gray Hall Ceremony. Breakfast snacks and drinks available. Route of travel TBD.

29 May — Memorial Day Remembrance VMC 0930-1030

29 May— Memorial Day Ceremony at the Cape Canaveral National Cemetery in Scottsmoor/Mims 0900-1000

29 May — Memorial Day Ceremony and Display downtown Cocoa Riverfront Park 1600-1800

JUNE

03 Jun — Annual Courageous Division NSCC Sea Cadet Awards Ceremony, VMC Gray Hall and Library 0800-1500

24 Jun — Military Appreciation Night at Space Coast Stadium in Viera during USSSA Pride Professional Women's Fast Pitch Softball Game. Honoring Active Duty and Veterans. Details in early May.

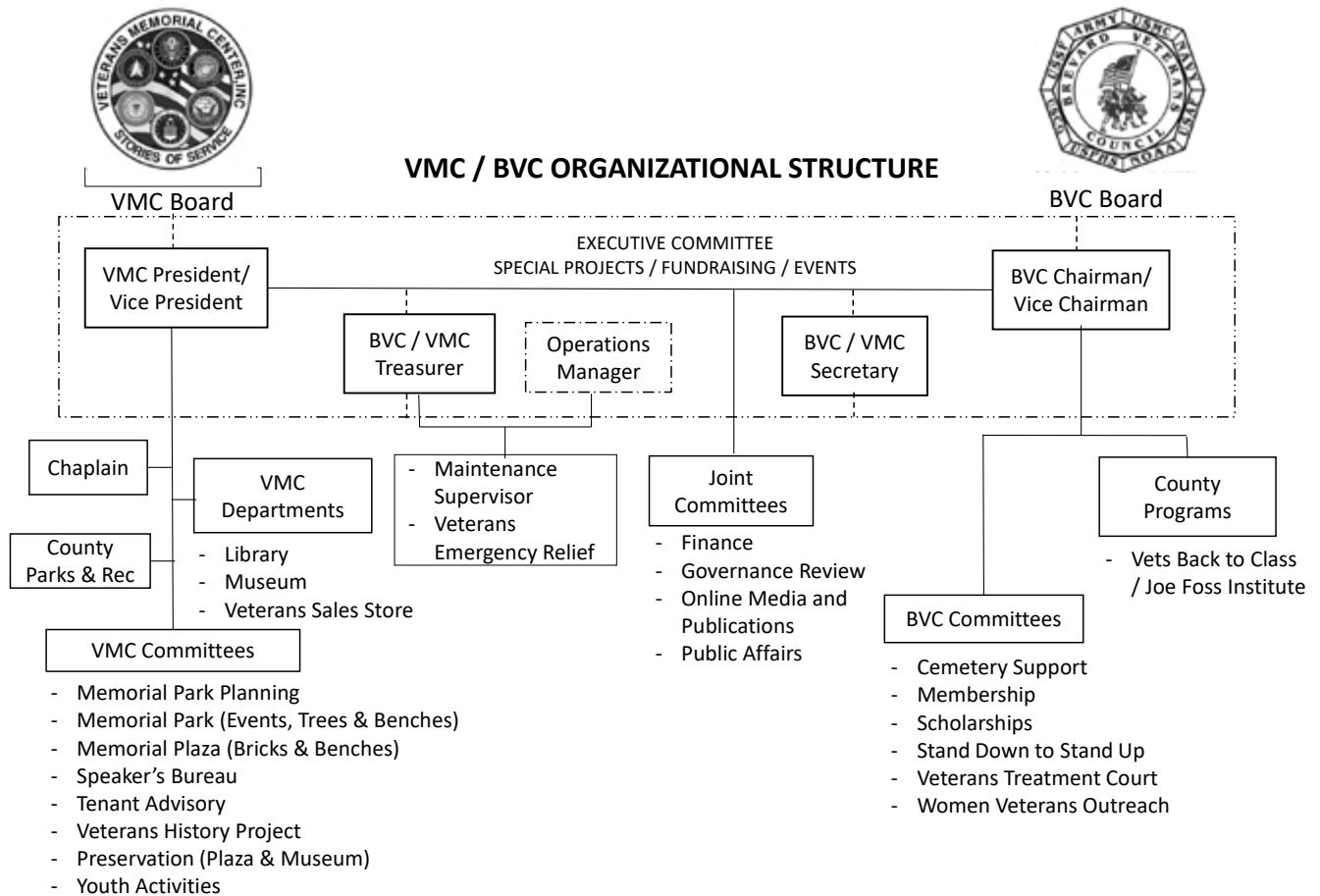
JULY

04 Jul — Annual BCSO/VMC Independence Day Parade — Details in May. AVET BBQ for Vets planned after the Parade at VMC.

AUGUST

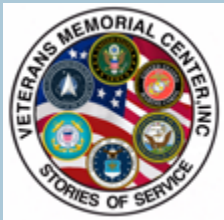
06 Aug — Purple Heart Remembrance Day by MOPH Brevard at the VMC Gray Hall and Plaza 1400-1600. Details in June.

For events beyond June, please visit the [VMC online event calendar](https://veteransmemorialcenter.org/upcoming-veterans-events/).



1-Nov-22

VMC Educational Scholarship Program Applications Open



Every year, the VMC is thrilled to support our local students in achieving higher education goals. Throughout the year many factions of the VMC raise money through events so that we may award six to eight \$1000 scholarships to help defray the

costs of tuition, books or room and board.

To be eligible for a scholarship, you or a member of your immediate family must be or have been an active duty member of the U.S. Armed Forces or Merchant Marines

and will be listed as your sponsor. Additionally, you or your sponsor must be a Brevard County, Florida resident or former resident.

Download your scholarship application on the VMC website: <https://veteransmemorialcenter.org/scholarships/>

Submissions are due no later than 1 o'clock on June 30, 2023.



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



Boosters

Adair, Mark and Karen Croft, IMO
MSGT Edmond Adair, USAF, RET Feb, 2025

Bateman, Skip & Ruth July, 2026

Bisset, M Doug Sept, 2023

Carleton, Jim Feb, 2024

Clayton, David & Anne July, 2023

Eliason, Sandra Oct, 2023

Fadok, Eleanor Dec, 2023

Fleet Reserve Branch 263 July, 2023

Fugaro, Ricardo and Joan April, 2024

Huffman, Kenneth, USN Nov, 2023

Kanis, Jussara and Michael May, 2024

Longway, J.P & Donna Dec, 2023

Muckler, Bill, CAPT. USMC May, 2028

Norman, Ray April, 2027

Rathbun, Don & Barbara Dec, 2023

Schaaf, Dean & Susan July, 2023

Sherman, John S. (Tank) Oct, 2023

Sherman, Rheta Campbell Oct, 2023

Weaver, Donn & Jeanne Sep, 2023

Space Coast Honor Flight May, 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) _____