



THE VETERANS MEMORIAL CENTER

COUNCIL COURIER

SEPTEMBER 2023



A Publication of the Brevard Veterans Council & Veterans Memorial Center



WHAT'S INSIDE

Record Breaking JROTC Support

Through the generosity of local veteran organizations, the local JROTC cadets are well funded this year. — page 4

2023-24 VMC Scholarship Awards

Twelve individuals and \$22,000 in awards made for an exciting ceremony at the VMC. — page 13

Elevation Church and Home Depot Make Our Grounds Beautiful.

We are so thankful for the help we receive from our community! — page 15

Honoring Purple Hearts

The annual ceremony recalled heroic deeds and presented remembrances by the Quilts of Valor. — details page 7

Photo by Roger Scruggs

SEPTEMBER 2023

COURIER CONTENTS

President's Report • Page 3
 Library Report • Page 6
 Chaplain's Report • Page 9
 Operations Report • Page 9
 Park and Plaza Report • Page 11
 Book Report • Page 16
 Museum Store Report • Page 15
 Patriot Report • Page 17
 Event Calendar • Page 20
 Boosters • Page 22

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 Those submissions received after that date will not be published.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

© 2023



Our Organization

As of 31 August 2023:

[List of Board Members 2023-2024](#)

As of 31 August 2023:

[Committee Department Assignment 2023-2024](#)

As of 31 August 2023:

[BVC VMC Org Chart 2023-2024](#)



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)

Dean is out of pocket this month, but sends his regards to the many staff, volunteers and those involved in our VMC community. While we won't hear a direct update from him this month on the VMC, he did share with us a recent moment from while he was away.

Pictured right: "The sun is setting as seen from our property in Indiana as we sell our home and cherish the many memories, we shared with each other and our families." - Dean Schaaf



Strength In Numbers Auto Fundraiser

BLACK OPS TINTING

Food Trucks, Vendors, Raffles, Trophies, and More

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 23RD, 12-4PM
LOCATION: BREVARD VETERANS MEMORIAL CENTER
400 S SYKES CREEK PKWY, MERRITT ISLAND

Vehicle Registration: RSVP: \$15 or \$20 at Gate
Contact us to secure your spot: 321-398-9789
Open to public & Free to Spectators

ALL PROCEEDS WILL BE DONATED TO A BETTER WAY NON-PROFIT & BREVARD MEMORIAL CENTER

VMC/BVC CONTACTS

BVC Chairman
 Ted Suzor
 suzorted9@gmail.com
 321-271-4327

VMC President
 Dean Schaaf
 dschaaf@brevard.net
 321-794-4371

BVC Vice Chairman
 Jim Carleton
 jimcarleton4@gmail.com
 321-543-0646

VMC Vice President
 Paul Julian
 pjulian54@yahoo.com
 321-749-7369

BVC/VMC Secretary
 Kristi Blanchard
 brevardvmc@gmail.com
 321-453-1776 ext. 5

BVC/VMC Treasurer
 Dave Clayton
 bvmctreasurer@gmail.com
 321-453-1776



ERDMAN AUTOMOTIVE



MIKE ERDMAN

Mike Erdman



MIKE ERDMAN
TOYOTA



Record Breaking Support to Brevard JROTC and other Cadet Programs

by **Donn Weaver**

Brevard County likely has one of the largest and most active high school JROTC programs in Florida and beyond. As the 2023-24 school year begins, the 14 programs in Brevard Public Schools expect another active turnout and busy year with each school averaging over 160 cadets.

The county boasts seven US Army, three USAF, and two Navy JROTC units along with one Marine and one Space Force unit. Brevard also has five other "cadet" programs which operate independently of the school system — two Sea Cadet, two Civil Air Patrol and one Sea Scout Ship program support our youth locally.

As JROTC instructors plan their year, costs of many activities are not fully covered by BPS or the military services that sponsor them, so fund raisers like car washes, parent contributions or help from veteran organizations are required each year.

Thanks to record breaking donations in 2023 and their 2022 Golf Tournament Fund Raiser, the Good Deeds Foundation of the Cape Canaveral Chapter of the Military Officers Association of America (MOAACC) was able to provide \$2,200 to every school-based JROTC Unit, \$1,200 to the five independent Cadet Units and \$4000 to set aside for purchasing all trophies and medals for 2023-24 school year competitions in the Raider Challenge, Drill and Air Rifle. The total donation to these programs is \$38,600 this school year!!

Many veteran organizations support the cadets because they all know molding our youth to be good citizens is crucial to the future of our amazing country. They also know how valuable the role of all the JROTC and other Cadet Instructors is with support from the service branches and BPS. With significant funding support, instructors and cadet leaders can focus more on their training and education missions and less on wondering where the needed extra money will come from.

In Brevard, the Veterans Memorial Center Military Museum and Park is another supportive treasure for JROTC units since many major competitions, museum field trips and other programs are held there free of charge.



Pictured: Plenty of smiling faces as \$38,600 divided up. Surrounded by JROTC Instructors are (l) Dean Schaaf, VMC President with Donn Weaver, GDF President and Past VMC Chairman (holding check left) and Wayne Justice.

On 04 August, one week before school began, most of the JROTC instructors came to the VMC to receive their donations, learn about other support programs and plan the year ahead. It was a great way to start the 2023-24 school year!



HELPING VETERANS HEAL THROUGH THE
WAVES OF LIFE

SURF THERAPY FOR VETERANS AND FIRST RESPONDERS

8-12 WEEK SURF CLINICS

LEARN TO SURF, FLOW, CONNECT WITH
FELLOW VETERANS AND DIVE DEEPER
INTO HEALING

COMPLIMENTARY SESSIONS FOR VA VETERANS
FIRST RESPONDERS AND NON VA VETERANS
REQUEST A REFERRAL FROM YOUR HEALTHCARE
PROVIDER FOR EXPERIENTIAL
THERAPEUTIC/OCCUPATIONAL REHABILITATION

www.costasurf.org | info@costasurf.org

BVC Donation Furthers Genealogical Research in Georgia

by Ray Norman

Over the last year, the Brevard Veterans Memorial Center Library found itself running out of room. Generous recent donations taxed our available space, many of which were duplicates of current holdings. Thankfully, we found a perfect recipient that can use our duplicates in Homerville, GA, a small town just over the FL border, in the Huxford-Spear Library. The world class ancestral research facility located there is managed by the Huxford Genealogical Society. Our donation will join Judge Folks Huxford's extensive collection of family histories from the Wiregrass region and the merged collections from the Elmer Spear Genealogy Library from Madison, Florida. Within the library more than 57,000 research books and other materials can be found, including 16,000 family folders and a large collection of microfilm and microfiche.

Shown on the right is a "farewell" to our excess which has kindly been delivered to Huxford by two Huxford Genealogical Society associates. One of the associates, Steve Purkey, has family connections in Homerville and was on the way to visit. He was gracious enough to stop by the BVC to pick up donations and deliver the load to Huxford. The VMC has a prior history with the Huxford Society; Ray Norman previously delivered to them 500 photo albums of Civil War generals (about 1000 lbs worth!).



The Civil War volumes were excess to the Florida Historical Society as they were not specific to Florida. BVC did not have the space for these oversized photo albums but Huxford did.



NVHS

RESCUING VETERANS
LOST IN AMERICA

When
Friday, October 6, 2023 from 5:30 PM to 9:00 PM EDT
[Add to Calendar](#)

Where
Radisson Resort at the Port
8701 Astronaut Blvd
Cape Canaveral, FL 32920



[Get Directions](#)

Contact
Kasey Corson
NVHS
321-268-7162
kcorson@nvhs.org

8th Annual Rescuing Veterans Lost in America Dinner

HOSTED BY BREVARD'S CONSTITUTIONAL OFFICERS

Property Appraiser Dena Blickey
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

[Register Now!](#)





The 2023, Brevard County 9/11 22nd Anniversary
Memorial Tribute will be held at:

The Veteran's Memorial Park

Located at:
**400 South Sykes Creek Pkwy
Merritt Island, FL 32952**

CITIZENS OF BREVARD COUNTY JOIN US
AT 6:00PM ON MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 2023
SUPPORTING AND REMEMBERING THE FIRE, POLICE, EMS,
CIVILIANS, AND MILITARY WHO LOST THEIR LIVES ON 9/11
AND ALL THOSE AFTERWARDS WHO SUFFERED
THE LOSS OF LIFE AND MEDICAL 9/11 CHALLENGES.

UNIFORM CEREMONY BEGINS AT 6PM.



Library Notes

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

August brought a heatwave to remember, but being in our library was a welcome relief from the August temperatures. My swimming pool thermometer at home reached 93 degrees more than a few times. I can remember pool thermometer temps of 90 degrees in the summertime in years past but at 93 degrees - I thought of a Swim Spa when I was in the pool.

Librarians did a review of our collections of Military Services during August. We removed many books catalogued in the past but no longer feel our public has interest in checking out. As a result, we now have more space available for new books in several areas. Among these areas are BlackOps, WarOnTerror, Air Force, Navy, Marines, Army and Biographies. We also now have a new collection called Joint Military Aviation (JMA). Each of our Military Services has a variant of a specific



Pictured: The new Joint Military Aviation (JMA) collection in the Military History Library at the VMC.

aircraft that is built specifically for them; for example, the Black Hawk Helicopter. The Air Force Search and Rescue Squadron stationed at Patrick has the Air Force version, the Navy has its own version, and the Special Forces has their own version. Hank Rhodes brought these volumes together as JMA.



**UNIQUE ART
by
Dan Haddad**

310 Le Jeune Dr
Merritt Island, FL 32953

321-536-5585

rragent@gmail.com

Veteran Advertiser Spotlight

Army Veteran Dan Haddad (Nike Hercules Missiles, 1961-1963) is a metal artist whose name means Blacksmith in English. Dan has been churning out metal furniture, fish, suns, etc. from Massachusetts to California to Florida for decades.

He has just finished creating a 4 Top Coffee Table that opens up like a crossword puzzle ([see it in action in this video](#)) that seats four people for dining. Made out of cast iron and steel, it can be customized to suit your choice of colors. Dan is a new advertiser in the Council Courier and can be reached at 321-536-5585. Please contact him and support local veterans in our community!



VMC LIBRARY DISCUSSION SERIES

THE VIETNAM WAR AN OVERVIEW

Tuesday, September 26, 2023
6:00-7:30 PM

**The Library, Veterans Memorial Center
Merritt Island, FL**

If you have any questions, please contact Paul Julian or Joe Davie at vmclibrary5@gmail.com. Light refreshments will be provided!



Pictured: The beginning of the Purple Heart Ceremony held in Gray Hall at the VMC.

Twelve Honored at Purple Heart Ceremony at VMC

On August 6, twelve recipients of military Purple Hearts from WWII to Iraq were honored at the Veterans Memorial Center in the seventh annual ceremony of its kind.

Brevard Chapter 453 of the Military Order of the Purple Heart (MOPH) holds their unique ceremony on the Sunday afternoon closest to National Purple Heart Day, August 7th. This year, more than 160 people attended the indoor event as emotional stories of how each veteran received their Purple Hearts (in one case, three) were read by fellow Purple Heart Recipients or MOPH members.

Each person honored saw an engraved brick that will later be placed at the Purple Heart Monument in the VMC Memorial Plaza. After their stories were read, Karmen Sowers and her Quilts of Valor volunteer group presented the veterans with beautiful handmade patriotic themed quilts. Emotions and stories of valor in combat ran high during the ceremony.

Carl Miller, Commander of MOPH 453 was there as Master of Ceremonies introducing the readers and recipients. Family members and friends joined as the stories were read, some

continued on next page



Pictured: The Recipients with Carl Miller seated in USMC Uniform

Purple Heart Quilt Recipients

Sister and Mother of Jeremiah Johnson,
KIA, Army, Niger, West Africa 2017

Ralph Clark: USMC, Vietnam

David Crib: Army, Vietnam

Marc Gray: Army, Iraq

Sonny Hartwell: USMC, Vietnam

Franck Kaiser: Army, Vietnam

Charles Lynchard: Army, Vietnam

Michael Maguire: Army, WWII

Don Pearsall: Army, Vietnam

Bruce Schwanda: USMC, Vietnam

Buddy Story: Army, Vietnam

Douglas Sykes: Army, Vietnam

learning details for the first time. Dean Schaaf, VMC President welcomed all noting the VMC is home to MOPH 453 and 16 other veteran organizations.

Over 1.8 million Americans have received the Purple Heart as a result of combat wounds, many times fatal. Such recognition began when George Washington awarded cloth patches to wounded Revolutionary War soldiers. MOPH 453 is looking for other Purple Heart Recipients who now live in Brevard to join their Chapter of very special veterans. Contact VMC on 321-453-1776 for more information.

EVENTS

As the new Events Coordinator for the BVC/VMC I am going to need a lot of help to get the job done. So far, upcoming events sponsored by the BVC/VMC include Kids Halloween Party, Veterans Day, the Center Christmas Party, and I'm sure other events will come up along the way. Events by outside agencies are their responsibility. I need volunteers to help make these events as spectacular as they have been in the past. But it Takes a Village and I need your help.

Interested? Please send me an email:
dwalshusa@gmail.com

Thank you!
Dorothy Walsh



Pictured: Athena Gray looks up proudly at her father, Marc Gray, an Army veteran who was wounded in Operation Iraqi Freedom. At left is her mom Lyndsay, also a veteran. Marc is currently completing culinary school. The Military Order of the Purple Heart held a National Purple Heart Day celebration Sunday at the Brevard Veterans Memorial Center. Twelve Purple Heart recipients with Space Coast ties were honored for their sacrifices. Each of the honorees was introduced by a fellow Purple Heart recipient and given a quilt by the Space Coast Quilts of Valor.



Pictured: Don Pearsall with wife Dorothy receives his quilt after his story was told as Karmel Sowers and her colleague RI stand by along with Juan Santiago a good friend.

Seniors Who...

Play
Work
Learn
Travel
Laugh
Savor
Shop
Create
Share
Garden
Cook
Enjoy life...

SENIOR SCENE

We Have Arrived!
Senior Scene Lands on the New York Times Best Seller List
On The Space Coast...
Harriet O'Neil

INSIDE:
Linda Watney
Dr. Dool
Norman Winter
Guido Winter
Eleanor
Christopher Proulx
Rex Lee
Health Articles
Hobbies
Events
Dr. Kimmel
Dr. Kimmel
Space Coast History

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.



Chaplain's Corner

by Chaplain
Chip Hanson
USMC (Fmr)

More than 30,000 Americans commit suicide each year; hundreds of thousands more attempt it but fail. As a deliberate act to end one's own life, suicide appears an athema in a society seemingly obsessed with improving health and prolonging life. Yet suicide was the 11th leading cause of death in the United States in 2007. Suicide brings pain to the families of victims and exacts economic costs for the country.

Unfortunately, for more than a decade, the suicide rate has been rising in the general U.S. population, especially among veterans, men, and women who risked their lives for the country. In its 2018–2024 strategic plan, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) identified preventing veteran suicide as its highest clinical priority, and the RAND Epstein Family Veterans Policy Research Institute is committed to helping VA—and the country—achieve this critical goal.

The largest number of veterans who die by suicide are between 55 and 74 years old. The highest suicide rates have historically been among the oldest Americans. Many elderly have undiagnosed or untreated depression, which can be intensified by the trauma of losing a spouse or the stress of living with a chronic illness.

Elderly adults often lack frequent social interactions that can help protect them against the loneliness that can exacerbate depression. Compared with suicide attempts among younger people, suicides among older adults tend to be carefully planned and more likely to be successful.

Many elderlies also have underlying health conditions, which reduces their chances of surviving a suicide attempt compared with younger adults. Suicide rates have actually declined for older adults since 1999, but they remain higher than those in most other age groups.

**"Sometimes even to live is an act of courage."
— Seneca**

Isaiah 41:10 "So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand."

GOD BLESS AMERICA
Chaplain Chip Hanson



Operations Report

Robert W. Doyle,
Operations Director

Things have been very busy at the center this month. Major cleanups and restructuring will be going on to meet code standards. Again, we are faced with no bottled water at the

facility. We are again asking our tenement agencies to donate 5 flats of water to get us through the many things occurring in September.

We have a new gas-powered golf cart to keep us up to speed in our daily functions and are repairing the red cart to get it back up to standards. We are in need of Afternoon Managers on Monday and Thursday from 12-4. Anyone interested please contact operations.

Be safe and watch the weather daily.

Coast Guard Birthday Gets Community Support

by Donn Weaver

On 04 August, US Coast Guard Station Port Canaveral hosted over 400 people, including dozens of children for the annual USCG Birthday and Family Day Picnic and Celebration. Many in the community ranging from private businesses to the USO and AVET were there to cheer for the Coast Guard and its great people and families despite scorching mid-day heat.

Prominent among those in support was the Veterans Memorial Center and the MOAACC with its Good Deeds Foundation. The festivities opened with remarks from Station Commander CWO3 Phillip DaWalt, USCG and RADM Wayne Justice, USCG, Ret who is a VMC and MOAACC member.

Highlights of the fun afternoon included:

- The giant water slide with kids racing to cool off by going down in seconds - repeatedly!
- The USCG signed up for a golfing foursome to join the 18 November MOAACC/GDF Military and Veteran IRCC Golf Tournament Fundraiser.
- CWO3 DaWalt cutting the USCG Birthday Cake.
- The USO providing 60 backpacks to USCG kids as they prepare to get back to school (like for many families, costs are a challenge in today's economy).
- Plenty of free sandwiches, pizza, drinks and snacks were provided by several donors.
- and much more!!!



Pictured: CWO3 DaWalt does the cake cutting honors.

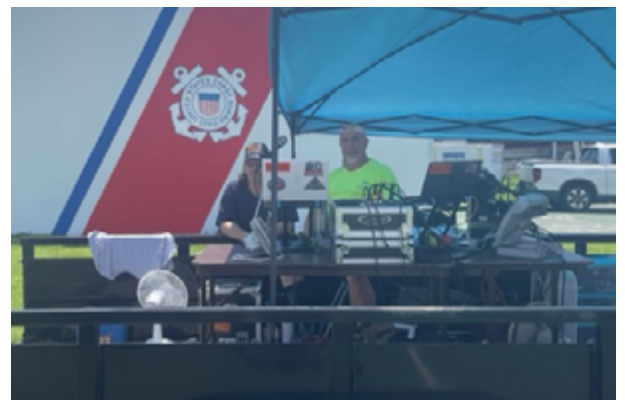
Check out some pictures as we honored the Coast Guard and enjoyed the fun. MOAACC/ GDF provided \$1000 to the USCG Foundation to support this and other events at the Station as well \$3000 to the USO for active-duty events in 2023. Community support makes a difference, including the two plus who turned out to just say thank you and congratulations to the United States Coast Guard.



Pictured: Although hidden by visitors, Dean Schaaf and Harry Beaver man the VMC Table



Pictured: Coast Guard Birthday and Family Event at USCG Station Port Canaveral



Pictured: USCG Day



Park and Plaza Report

by Shaun McKinney

Our Memorial Plaza continues to thrive. The last open order for benches has been delivered and assembled. It is on display the Museum entrance.

VMC Memorial Bricks, Trees and Benches

Mr. Wayne Fried continues to make strides on the tedious work of documenting the location of previous installed memorial bricks. This will culminate in a digital panel where families and friends can more easily find the location of each memorial bricks.

Although no new tree orders have been submitted, three brick orders have been submitted and were being process in August.

Further, a beautiful POW/MIA cement bench commission by Rolling Thunder has been installed.

Lastly, the museum docents are informing their visitors of the VMC Brick, Bench and Tree memorials.

Ampitheater Construction

There was also good news related to Veterans Memorial Park when final changes to the nearly \$5M Amphitheater and other upgrades were approved, bids process completed and a 02 October ground breaking ceremony announced.

After approval of the project in 2019 and obtaining the \$1M additional funds needed from the State due to construction cost increases, we are looking with confidence at the 2024 completion of this amazing series of upgrades.



Become a Certified Watch-Stander

Join us for a Free and meaningful training on Veteran suicide prevention

Light lunch will be served

When: September 23rd, 2023

Time: 12:00pm-1pm

Where: Veterans Memorial Center (Grey Hall)

400 S Sykes Creek
Merritt Island, FL 32952

September is Suicide Prevention Month
Stand watch for the Veterans in our community



STAND AGAINST
VETERAN SUICIDE

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



Women Veteran Outreach & Support Group has Successful Kick Off

On Friday, August 18, 2023, dozens of women veterans came together for the Women Veteran Outreach & Support luncheon sponsored by the Brevard Veterans Council, Veterans Memorial Center, and Their Voice of Hope.

What a success our first meeting was!!! Two hours flew by, and we could have used another two hours. These warriors laughed, cried, and shared resources and frustrations. But most of all they were so appreciative for being recognized as veterans!! One thing that everyone agreed upon was that we need to keep this group going – and I committed to them that I will do my best to do just that. So, our next luncheon is scheduled for October 24, 2023.

An issue that kept coming up is that many of our women veterans do not receive the health care they need because they do not like to go to the doctor's office alone. Whether it's the VA facility or a private doctor. A program that has come out of this need is the Buddy Program.

What is the Buddy Program?

The Buddy Program is a program in development where volunteers will partner with a female veteran to attend doctors' appointments with them. The purpose will be to help the veteran feel comfortable, safe, and supported and to act as a second set of eyes and ears when meeting with the doctor. The relationship will be determined between the veteran and the buddy. The buddy will also be there to advocate for the veteran when necessary. If you're interested in participating either as a Buddy or a Veteran, please reach out to me at dorothy@theirvoiceofhope.com. Training will be provided.

Many other programs are soon to be implemented, and we are all looking forward to them being successful.

As always, it takes a village. One person cannot do it alone – and as I've always said, Brevard County



has the greatest veteran supporters. Thank you to MOAACC Good Deeds Foundation for their generosity as well as Aleta and Brad from Sinclair Law for the great water koozies – they were a big hit!!! Special thanks to our volunteers/helpers from American Legion Auxiliary Unit 344 and VFW Auxiliary 10131.

Please remember that September is suicide awareness month – if you see something say something. Reach out to a veteran who may be struggling to realize that They Matter!!!!

For God and Country,
Dorothy R. Walsh, C.P.C.
Their Voice of Hope, Inc.
President/Veteran Advocate
(321) 426-6736 (cell)



ATLANTIC MUSIC CENTER

atlanticmusiccenter.com

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



2023-24 VMC Scholarship Awards

The VMC hosted a ceremony at the August general meeting to recognize and present a total of \$22,000 in Scholarship Awards to 12 individuals with military family ties. The amount of funding available to award and the number of recipients was the highest since VMC was built in 1990. The generosity of several personal donors and proceeds from the VMC Bridge Club and Friday Night Dance revenues made it all possible.

Jay Longway, a VMC Board Member and Museum volunteer, headed the committee of seven who carefully reviewed all eligible applicants and made the decisions. The ceremony was attended by many of the recipients or by family members for those already involved in college or intern programs outside Brevard.

The 2023 VMC Scholarship winners represented many grade levels of college from Freshman to Grad School and were headed to many academic destinations. Congratulations to all awardees and their families. The VMC Scholarship program opens for applications January- June each year with the awards presented at the August General VMC Meeting. Contact the VMC at 321-453-1776, ext 5 or visit our VMC Scholarships website for more information early next year.

This Year's VMC Scholarship Recipients

Nolan Aycock - University of Central Florida
 Paula Biggs - University of Maryland Global Campus
 Kailyn Chiuchiolo - University of Central Florida
 Sydney Galus - Florida Institute of Technology
 Liam Hunt - Florida Institute of Technology
 Makaila Johnson - Florida Institute of Technology
 Zoie Lindhorst - Flagler College
 Zoe Mueller - Manhattan College
 Samantha Noble - University of Central Florida
 Stephanie Norman - University of Florida
 Rebecca Pantoja - University of Central Florida
 Quentin Picheco - University of North Florida

Prizes  

Games

Costume Contests



Join us for
Safe and fun Halloween
festivities for adults and kids

Tuesday, October 31, 2023
3:00 PM—6:00 PM

Veterans Memorial Center
400 S Sykes Creek Parkway
Merritt Island

For more information
To participate or donate
Contact Dorothy Walsh
dorothy@thevoiceofhope.com
Or call/text 321-426-6736

It's almost that ghostly time of year again so mark your calendars and plan to attend with or without your younger ones – a fun and safe Halloween Party for kids of all ages.

Interested in setting up a cool trunk or treat entry? There will be prizes for that too!! We want to make this extra special for our military and veterans' children – and we need your help to do just that!! Donations are appreciated to help make this spooktacular!!!

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 **USA-JOBS.Gov**.

Women Veteran Outreach & Support



Our Women Veterans Transitional Facility is in need of supplies

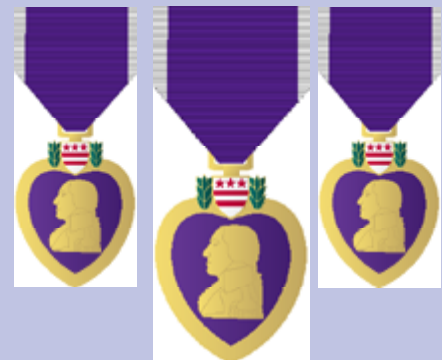
Mesh Clothes Hamper	Shaving cream/gel
Detergent/Fabric Softener	Deodorant
Dryer sheets	Razors
Mesh shower caddy	Hairbrushes/Combs
Toothbrush	Hair ties
Toothpaste	Cotton Swabs
Toilet paper	Bath sponge/loofah
Body wash	Nail Grooming Kits
Dental Floss	Band-Aids
Shampoo/Conditioner	Tissues
Mouthwash	Feminine Hygiene Products
Colored pencils/Crayons	Reusable tumblers
Activity/coloring books	Women's panties (sizes 5-10)
Pens/Pencils	Sports Bras (s-xl)
Journals	Small blankets-pillows

Drop Off Locations:

Veterans Memorial Center	VFW Post 10131	American Legion Post 163
400 S Sykes Creek Pkwy	105 Long Point Rd	1795 N Harbor City Blvd
Merritt Island, FL 32952	Cape Canaveral, FL 32920	Melbourne, FL 32935

Please be sure packages are clearly marked "Women Veteran Donations—Dorothy Walsh"

Thank You!!



ATTENTION!

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

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

Fantastic Veterans Memorial Park Upgrades Courtesy of Volunteers

After their great work on landscaping outside the VMC buildings last year, Elevation Church teamed up again with Home Depot and Behr Paints on a nearly \$7000 grant and worked with over 50 volunteers on 28 July. Not only did they weed and add landscaping rocks to the entire current parking area, but they also replaced all bridge handrails on the 2015 fishing bridge, planning to return in late January to seal all the older bridges.

The grant also included a quality power saw and two drills as well as numerous racks that became the property of VMC after the project was over. The event was coordinated by Erin Kelly, a veteran, with a great assist from the Home Depot. It is clear why Elevation Church and Home Depot deserve their granite plaques along the Memorial Plaza Wall.



Supporting Brevard Students Seeking Military Education and Enlistment Options

by Donn Weaver

On 26 August, 170 Students and Parents attended the two sessions of MOAACC's Second Annual Seminar to learn about Military Paths to Leadership. The event was held at the Veterans Memorial Center.

Almost 40 presenters from all academies and several College ROTC and other programs were there to show the way.

MOAACC, including Good Deeds Foundation, sponsored the event. Thanks to the 12 VMC members and over 20 MOAACC representatives who supported the military leadership paths seminar at the VMC. What a community effort!!

We truly appreciate all those in our community like Dan who consistently give to our center and support our cause!



Museum Store Report

Summer is almost behind us and our children are back in school. Time sure flies when you are having fun. It will soon be time to think about those holiday gifts (I know, don't rush it).

We have lots of kid things, like windup submarines, miniature soldiers, paratroopers, jeeps, toy helmets and stress balls for the parents. We also have some classic retro Army tee shirts and Vietnam veteran tee shirts.

For the ladies, we have some beautiful pink baseball caps with embroidered eagles that are really sharp. Also in pink are some Air Force hats. We have some red VMC polo shirts now for the ladies in addition to the blue ones that are also moisture wicking.

Come in and shop for the family. We appreciate you all.

Jalaine Spears



Advertise in the Courier

We appreciate having our corporate sponsors and veteran friendly businesses support us and hope they will consider advertising in the 2022 Courier.

Please contact Donn Weaver (757.872.6576) if you might be interested or have questions.



RATES

Business Card: \$50 per year

Quarter Page Color: \$150 per year

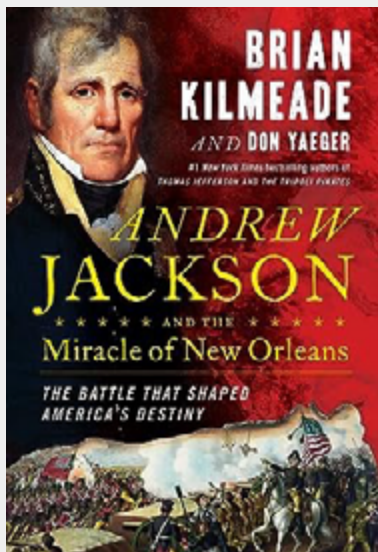
Half Page Color: \$250 per year

Our emailed newsletter reaches hundreds, including vet organizations, government officials, 500 VMC members and more.

Ads are in support of the VMC, a 501(c)3 organization, and may be tax deductible. Funds will be used to improve the Courier and expand circulation in 2022 and beyond.

Book Report

Andrew Jackson and the Miracle of New Orleans by Brian Kilmeade Report by Librarian Joe Davie, Catalog # Bio-Jack-02



The war of 1812 saw America threatened on all sides. The British had encouraged the Indians on the frontier areas to attack settlers. The British also were stopping American ships sailing from our ports and forcing sailors to join and serve in the Royal Navy.

President Madison led congress in declaring War against England, at which point the Royal Navy left England with

a large Expeditionary force of more than 50 Ships. Included were Landing Ships with an experienced Army of 10,000 soldiers that had fought Napoleon, as well as landing barges on board to attack coastal cities. Their plans included sailing to a central location and anchoring off their British Island of Jamaca.

Vice Admiral Alexander Cochrane commanded six large ships of the line of the Royal Navy and General Edward Pakenham commanded the Army. Together, the Army planned to attack Washington, D.C. and Baltimore from Chesapeake Bay and in quick succession to attack New Orleans from the islands off the Gulf Coast in order to permanently occupy the Mississippi River and all lands west of the Mississippi.

Andrew Jackson and his Generals stood in the way of this plan approved by the Crown and members of Parliament in England. The book gives an incredibly detailed account of the strategy and tactics employed by both sides. How Andrew Jackson was able to unify the diverse population of New Orleans and build a fortified line that defeated the army and navy from England for the second time is an extremely exciting read.

Jackson, who grew up as an orphan on the American frontier, rose to a successful two term presidency due to his military accomplishments.



The Patriot Report

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

How the PACT Act Works for Current VA Beneficiaries

What VA officials told Military.com

Military.com | By Amanda Miller
11 Aug 2023

The Department of Veterans Affairs screened more than 4 million U.S. military veterans in the first year of the new PACT Act to find out if they thought they'd been exposed to toxins during their military service. The vast majority of those screened were already enrolled in VA health care.

Of those millions of veterans, 1.7 million had "screened positive" for possible exposure, Steve Miska, the VA's PACT Act transitional executive director, told Military.com.

As a result, the VA is reaching back out to those veterans, "encouraging them to file a supplemental claim that could potentially increase benefits, whether on the health-care side or many of the other benefits," Miska said.

The PACT Act linked a variety of medical conditions with toxins common during specific eras or circumstances of military service. Rather than require veterans or their survivors to prove that a toxic exposure caused a given condition, the law assumes that some illnesses are service connected if the person served in a certain place at a certain time. This means that veterans may be eligible for additional VA benefits based on past toxic exposure during their service.

Here's how the PACT Act could affect existing VA beneficiaries:

The Department of Veterans Affairs screened more than 4 million U.S. military veterans in the first year of the new PACT Act to find out if they thought they'd been exposed to toxins during their military service.

The vast majority of those screened were already enrolled in VA health care. Of those millions of veterans, 1.7 million had "screened positive" for

possible exposure, Steve Miska, the VA's PACT Act transitional executive director, told Military.com.

As a result, the VA is reaching back out to those veterans, "encouraging them to file a supplemental claim that could potentially increase benefits, whether on the health-care side or many of the other benefits," Miska said.

The PACT Act linked a variety of medical conditions with toxins common during specific eras or circumstances of military service. Rather than require veterans or their survivors to prove that a toxic exposure caused a given condition, the law assumes that some illnesses are service connected if the person served in a certain place at a certain time. This means that veterans may be eligible for additional VA benefits based on past toxic exposure during their service.

Veterans Who Already Receive Partial Disability Pay

Veterans who already have a partial VA disability rating could have their rating increased now that the VA covers more conditions under the PACT Act, and they don't need to fear that applying could potentially cause their rating to decrease instead, VA officials told Military.com.

That increased rating could add up to a significant difference in monthly compensation, especially for veterans with dependents. For example, a veteran with a spouse and two dependent children under age 18 whose disability rating rises from 10% to 60% could see their pay rise from \$165.92 a month to \$1,588.65 a month in 2023. "And we are not looking back at other service-connected issues trying to decrease those," Kaitlin Richards, assistant director in the VA's Office of Policy and Oversight, told Military.com.

Veterans Who Already Receive 100% Disability Pay

Even those veterans who already receive the maximum monthly disability benefit should file a PACT Act claim if they think they have a condition that's newly covered under the PACT Act, the VA officials told Military.com. Doing so could benefit not only the veterans now but their families later. "What I tell everyone -- because we always get that question -- is, even if you are 100% service-connected already, you should still file for benefits,"

(continued on next page)

Richards said. "Because if you get [declared] service-connected for a disability, and that is ultimately the disability that you pass away from, that -- whatever is listed on your death certificate -- is how your survivor, your spouse, will be able to file for their own benefits."

Meanwhile, veterans themselves may, depending on their condition, qualify for additional benefits if they need, for example, aid and attendance in everyday living or specially adapted housing. This "special monthly compensation ... is paying at an even higher level," Richards said. Establishing a service connection could ultimately help with burial, such as providing an allowance for costs.

Surviving Family Members Who Already Receive DIC

The survivors of deceased veterans who already receive the VA's Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) likely won't benefit from filing a toxic exposure claim now, "unless they have an increase in their disability [rating]," Richards said.

DIC beneficiaries can get an extra \$258 a month if their veteran

was totally disabled with a service-connected disability for eight years leading up to the veteran's death.

Survivors should file a new DIC claim if they think they qualify now, even if the VA denied their claim in the past.

Surviving Family Members Who Already Receive VA Survivors Pension

Current recipients of the VA's income-based Survivors Pension could become eligible for DIC instead if their service member died of a newly presumptive condition. Because the Survivors Pension is meant only to raise their income up to a certain threshold, depending on individual circumstances, the flat-rate DIC could pay more.

Source: Military.Com-- Amanda Miller can be reached at amanda.miller@military.com.

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

VMC and Good Deeds Enhance Support to Sea Cadets

by Donn Weaver

On 24 July the Sea Cadets of Courageous Division, based at the Veterans Memorial Center (VMC) hosted a fundraiser for an upcoming trip at Time Out Plus in Cocoa and got a big surprise.

The Good Deeds Foundation presented the cadets and their leader Heather Owen \$1,200 to cover school year 2023-24 expenses. It was the largest amount GDF has ever been able to provide to such organizations as ENS. Owen noted it will make a big difference to their now 20 Naval Sea Cadet Corps cadets in terms of what they can accomplish in the year ahead. GDF had earlier provided support for the Division to visit Jacksonville NAS and tour two ships to kick off the plans.

In addition to hosting the Courageous Division, the VMC provides free meeting space for their twice monthly Saturday Drills and supports their trailer, which is positioned outside the museum and was recently spruced up.



Pictured: VMC Vice President Paul Julian (center) and members of the Sea Cadets



Pictured: Dean Schaaf (l) VMC President and Donn Weaver (c) GDF President and VMC Board Member present the GDF Grant to Courageous Division Sea Cadets!!!



Brevard County Detachment 513 248th Marine Corps Birthday Ball

Saturday, 11 November 2023, 6:00-10:00 pm
Radisson Conference Center, 8701 Astronaut Blvd, Cape Canaveral FL

Attire: MCL Members-Formal or Casual Uniform / Guests-Business Casual / Active Duty
Personnel-Uniform of the Day

Dinner: Choice of Sliced Top Sirloin or Roasted Chicken Breast, with salad, sides, and beverages.
A cash bar will be available & dancing after the event

Cost: \$40.00 per person

Send in your reservations and payment
by Thursday 2 November 2023
(Advance paid reservations only, no pay-at-the-door allowed)

Names _____ / _____ / _____

Entrée Choice
(Beef or Chicken) _____ / _____ / _____

Email or Mailing Address _____

Phone Number: _____

Please send this form with checks made payable to **Marine Corps League** to:

Tom Fitzgerald/Detachment 513 Paymaster
4542 Whiskey Lane
Mimms, FL 32754



Unofficial Brevard VMC Vets Calendar September 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/>

SEPTEMBER

09 Sep — Space Coast Honor Flight Mission to DC.

Ceremony starts at 0215 AM at the Wickham Park Senior Center in Melbourne. Help support the WWII, Korea, Vietnam and other veterans with health issues be honored and provided a special flight and full day to see all their monuments in Wash DC. Check schf.org for more details.

11 Sep — Patriot Day Brevard County 9/11 22nd Anniversary Remembrance Ceremony

at VMC Plaza area 1800-1930. Sponsored by Club 1013 and the MOAACC Good Deeds Foundation and hosted by VMC. Remembering those lost on 9/11/2001 and all those who fell later as a result of toxic exposure or while taking the fight to the terrorists abroad. See Poster.

11 Sep — AVET sponsored Patriot Day Firearms Friendly Fun Night

at Frogbones Family Shooting Center 1700-2000. Venue is located at 404 South Harbor City Blvd, Melbourne. Evening focused on remembering 9/11 and its impact on so many who went to the fight thereafter, as well as a fun evening to help raise funds for the AVET missions year round.

23 Sep – September is Suicide Prevention Month. Free training on Veteran Suicide Prevention will be in the VMC Gray Hall from 12-1 PM. Light lunch provided. Become a certified Watch Stander.

24 Sep - President Auxiliary Post 10131 Buffet Breakfast honoring Gold star families free of charge from 8am - 11am at the Post. For information, contact Mickie Kellum at 321-536-8528.

23 Sep – Strength in Numbers Auto Fundraiser 12-4 PM in the VMC Park. Free to spectators. Car registration is \$15 or \$20 at the gate. Some proceeds will be donated back to the VMC. Call Joseph at 321-398-9789 to register or for more info.

26 Sep – VMC Library Discussion Series, 1800-1930 on Vietnam and the impact of that war. Paul Julian, VMC VP is the presenter. Refreshments served.

OCTOBER

06 Oct — Eighth Annual NVHS Rescuing Veterans Lost in America Dinner and Fundraiser.

1730-2100 at the Radisson Resort at the Port. 8701 Astronaut Blvd, Cape Canaveral. Sponsorships available. \$100 per plate fundraiser. email event@nvhs.org or Call NVHS 321-208-7562 for more info. [Click here to register.](#)

26 Oct— BCSO Shredder Event – VM PARK – 0900-1030.

31 Oct – VMC Library Discussion Series, 1800-1930. The presenter and topic TBD.

31 Oct – Women Veteran Outreach Trunk or Treat at the VMC, 1500-1800. Held especially for our military and veterans' children, looking for trunk or treat entries as well. For more information or to participate, contact Dorothy Walsh at dorothy@theirvoiceofhope.com.

NOVEMBER

11 Nov – SFR Veterans Day 5K VM PARK and Center – 0600-1000. Merging to:

11 Nov – VMC Veterans Day Ceremony Plaza, Center, Gray Hall with lunch courtesy of Chick Fil a 1000-1200. Poster and Details soon.

11 Nov – First Annual City of Cape Canaveral and VFW Post 10131 Veterans Day Parade and festival afterwards at VFW Post in Cape Canaveral; Details and entry information in September. Free food and drinks; sponsors sought. Contact VFW Post 10131 for more information.

12 Nov – Sixth Annual NVHS Homestretch 5K for Homeless Veterans. 0700-1200 in the Eau Gallie Square. Details in August. Call NVHS 321-208-7562 for more info.

18 Nov – 20-23 Veterans and Military Support MOAACC Good Deeds Foundation Golf Tournament at IRCC 0800-1400.

28 Nov – VMC Library Discussion Series, 1800-1930. The presenter and topic TBD.



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
----------------	--------------	-------------	--------------

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, 2025

Carleton, Jim Feb, 2024

Clark, Garrett Sept, 2024

Clayton, David & Anne July, 2024

Eliason, Sandra Oct, 2023

Fadok, Eleanor Dec, 2023

Fleet Reserve Branch 263 July, 2024

Florida State University College of Social
Work, August, 2024

Fugaro, Ricardo and Joan April, 2024

Huffman, Kenneth, USN Nov, 2023

Kanis, Jussara and Michael May, 2024

Longway, J.P & Donna Dec, 2023

McKinney, Shaun and Adora Sept, 2024

Muckler, Bill, CAPT. USMC May, 2028

Norman, Ray April, 2027

Rathbun, Don & Barbara Dec, 2023

Schaaf, Dean & Susan July, 2024

Sherman, John S. (Tank) Oct, 2023

Sherman, Rheta Campbell Oct, 2023

Taylor, Skip USA (Ret.) June, 2024

Weaver, Donn & Jeanne Sep, 2024

Space Coast Honor Flight May, 2024

.....

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) _____