



THE VETERANS MEMORIAL CENTER

COUNCIL COURIER

DECEMBER 2023



A Publication of the Brevard Veterans Council & Veterans Memorial Center



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Photo by Roger Scruggs

DECEMBER 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 Those submissions received after that date will not be published.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 27 September 2023:

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

As of 27 September 2023:

[Committee Department Assignment 2023-2024](#)

As of 27 September 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.
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 Merritt Island, FL 32952-3547
 Office 321-453-1776
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VMC President's Report

LCDR Dean Schaaf, USN (Ret)

Susan and I would like to wish all Veterans Memorial Center staff and volunteers a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. This is a busy period, which is good. We are almost completely booked with events in the Gray Hall, Library, Museum and Park. Our General Meeting this month will be our Christmas party on Wednesday, December 13th. Chic-fil-A will be catering the meal. The meeting will be brief so all can enjoy the comradery and fellowship.

Another event we have for the Holidays is the Merritt Island Parade this Saturday sponsored by the Brevard County Sheriff's Organization and the Parks and Recreation Department. We could use volunteers to decorate and participate, Dorothy Walsh is coordinating. I will pull our trailer with the Christmas Eagle in the back and the American Legion Auxiliary riding the float. There is also a parade in Rockledge on December 9th.

You may have noticed that the County is repairing the front of our building. The siding has rotted out since being built in 1989-1990, long overdue. Thankfully, they will not have to tear out all the interior wall, just repair a couple of places. The exterior wall will be stuck because of cost and durability and to better match the rest of the building.

On Saturday, December 9th the Merritt Island Community and VMC Inaugural Illumination Celebration Tree lighting and Gold Star Tree Ceremony will occur in our Veterans Park from 1500-1900. The event will include music, singing, food trucks and community spirit. Also, the Titusville Astronomical Society and the American Space Museum will have some of their telescopes on hand for "Holiday Lights in the Sky". See Saturn and Jupiter and four of its moons and enjoy talks given by Marq Marquette on "Royalty, a Monster and a Hero in the Sky".

Don't forget the upcoming Army/Navy game being played in Boston this year. GO NAVY BEAT ARMY!!

The American Legion Auxiliary is holding its annual children's Christmas party on Saturday, December 16, from 1200-1600 in the Gray Hall,

complete with a visit from Santa Claus.

Wreaths across America at the Cape Canaveral National Ceremony is being held nationally on Saturday, December 16 from 1000-1045. It is also being held at several cemeteries in the area. More information will be found in the Courier, but the coordinators are Dorothy Walsh, 321-426-6736 for the local cemeteries and Donn Weaver 757-871-6576 for the National Cemetery.

The Navy League and Propeller Club held their quarterly BBQ at the Port Ministry in Cape Canaveral on Saturday, 25 November to feed the crews on break from the Cruise Ships and any Merchant Marines that may be in port. There were five cruise ships in port so Paul Julian and me cooked chicken, hotdogs, and hamburgers for 3 hours, feeding 300-400 individuals from all over the world. If you haven't been to the Port Ministry, it is worth the trip to check it out, it is the crew members break area during stops at Cape Canaveral. The Ministry has several buses and vans to take the crew members to several stops around the area.

Thanks to all volunteers for keeping the Center operating and for all your dedication. God bless you and all services.

Dean
GO NAVY BEAT ARMY



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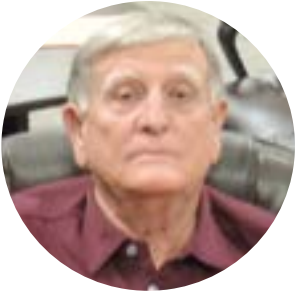
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Library Notes

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

In November, the library discussion group hosted Ben Bydalek's in-depth discussion of the US Congress Tonkin Gulf Resolution passed during the Vietnam War. Ben supported an Artillery Battery near the DMZ during his tour of duty in 1966 with the US Marine Corps. We viewed many artifacts that Ben brought with him to describe what a soldier's life was like during Vietnam.

Veterans Memorial Center celebrated Veterans Day with an outdoor program set up in the parking lot between the Plaza and the VMC facility. Our supported organizations set up table displays and participated in the Pass-in-Review organized by Dorothy Walsh. Thanks to Elanor Fadok, the library's longest serving volunteer, the library remained open as she welcomed newcomers. Librarians Karen Croft and Rita Perini served at the sign-in table that recorded participants. Veterans day opened at 9:00 AM with a 5K Running Event



Pictured: Ben Bydalek presenting at November's library discussion group.

that began and ended in the parking lot before the program started at 11:00 AM. Dean Schaaf opened by welcoming everyone to the program. Keynote speaker was COL. Shannon Da Silvia Deputy Operations Officer at Patrick Space Force Base. She gave a historical overview of the need for the new Space Force of our armed forces that is assuming former Air Force duties in supporting US military spacecraft. Admiral Jim Hart (Ret.) and Ted Suzor, both participated in hosting an Honor Flight to Washington DC recently. Jim Hart spoke during the program about the importance of honoring the Vietnam Veteran. Librarian Joe Davie prepared the photos and Pass-In-Review slide show found at the link below: <https://veteransmemorialcenter.org/featured-past-events/>





A Promise Kept: 12 Veterans and Spouses Finally Laid to Rest

The United States of America pledges to every eligible veteran (whether he or she dies in combat or after a long life) an honorable military funeral service at an appropriate resting place.

Many families decide to inter their veteran and veteran spouse loved ones in family plots at private cemeteries. More and more in East Central Florida decide to take advantage of the service provided at the six-year-old, beautiful VA Cape Canaveral National Cemetery (CCNC) in Scottsboro. It serves five counties and after it was opened in 2016, and no Florida resident is now more than 75 miles away from a National VA Cemetery.



Sadly, some veterans and spouses are not claimed by anyone, and Funeral Homes are required to store those urns unless someone helps to determine they are VA eligible for interment. Most such abandoned urns are not veterans. New rules indicate that such cases will not go beyond one year in the future, but decades have gone by before those changes.

It is estimated around 500 eligible veterans and spouses are in abandoned urns in funeral homes and related facilities in storage in our county. That is why Brevard Veterans undertook a five-month program, working closely with CCNC Director Ed Lyons, to create Brevard No One Veteran Left Behind (BNOVLB) for this county. Other organizations all around the country, including in Florida are devoted to the mission, but clearly the more engaged, the sooner the sad story ends.

The Inaugural BNOVLB Service was held at CCNC on 14 November in between heavy winds and rain, which likely kept many away. Still, 90 attended, 30 of whom were bearers of the urns, folded flags and flowers or other positions to make sure the Service went well. Nine veterans and three spouses were finally laid to rest that day. One WWI veteran had enjoyed a long life after combat but was abandoned for 47 years. Now he and the others rest in honored peace at CCNC. As one witness noted, saying they were happy they came despite the weather, the service was moving and being there was important to confirm the life, service and sacrifice of each and every eligible veteran and spouse. They now rest in well-kept surroundings with their brothers and sisters forever.

Three to four BNOVLB Services are planned for 2024. The Veterans Memorial Center, the Support Committee of the CCNC, and the Cape Canaveral Chapter of MOAA and its Good Deeds Foundation, came together with Director Lyons to make the new organization happen through a Steering Committee with two members from each organization. Services will be listed in the VMC Monthly Calendar or contact Donn Weaver (757-871-6576) to volunteer or learn more.

In Search of a Few Good People: VMC Call for Color Guard Volunteers

by Don Pearsall

The Veterans Memorial Center is forming a color guard to present the Center's flags at events held at the Memorial Center and on the plaza.

We are fortunate to have tenants that have their own color guards, like the Marine Corp League that carries the American Flag, and the Marine Corps Flag, but they are representing their own organizations.

The same with other tenants, like the American Legion, Sea Cadets and others that represent themselves. There is no official color guard representing our beautiful park, museum, and center. The concept thus far has been well received by the Executive Committee and the membership.

I will train the color guard since a few are not military and have no marching experience. My philosophy is "If you can walk, you can march." Twice, I have started with raw recruits forming brand new color guards. Once with the Fire Department and again with VFW Post 4534 in neighboring Rockledge. Both eventually won prizes for best appearance and best overall marching.

Color Guards and Honor Guards are similar, but different if that makes any sense. A Color Guard carries and handles "the colors" for ceremonies such as conferences, sports events, parades, etc. An Honor Guard carries and handles "the colors for events dedicated to individuals such as promotions, funerals, memorials, Changes of Command, etc. The latter, also includes a Firing Team which conducts the 21-gun salute.

It is a source of pride for the Veterans Memorial Center to have its own Color Guard, especially with the eventual completion of the planned amphitheater.

I wish to thank EXCOM for looking ahead to the future of the Veterans Memorial Center and improving our appearance to our veterans and the residents of Brevard County. Anyone interested, please contact me at (321) 313-2444.



ATLANTIC MUSIC CENTER

www.atlanticmusiccenter.com

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



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)



I hope all had a wonderful Thanksgiving Day. Now we are continuing with our very festive time of year. Coming next at Sundown December 7th begins the seven-day, eight-night celebration of Chanukkah which celebrates two things: a miracle in which one day's worth of oil burned in lamps for eight days and the victory of the Jewish freedom fighters over the Syrian-Greek forces that tried to wipe out Judaism.

In a larger sense, then, Chanukkah celebrates a reaffirmation of freedom and a recommitment to the spiritual quest.

December 25th, Christians celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ. The current celebration as we know it began under the Roman Emperor Constantine. He had accepted the one true God, and Jesus Christ as his Savior. The population of Rome was not converting easily. Constantine met with Christian leaders together they agreed to change the celebration of the winter solstice to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ. Thus began Christmas, as we now know it.

Christmas Memories

I would like to share a personal Christmas memory with all of you from when I was a Marine in Vietnam in 1968. The original unit that I had been assigned to had been almost wiped out, those who were left were assigned to different units in Vietnam.

While I was traveling to my newly assigned unit, I received a ride on a convoy heading in the direction I needed to go.

When the convoy reached its destination, I got a ride from a Marine in a jeep who was headed to the 1st Division headquarters, my destination. When we arrived, I reported in and I handed my orders to a Marine who would give transportation to my unit. He asked me if I was in a hurry to get to my unit. I told him no. He asked me to stow my gear and come with him; I and Several Marines got to go to a U S O show. We went to Danang and joined about a thousand others where we were treated to the Bob Hope Christmas show.

On Christmas Eve 1968, my team was assigned to set up in a large Vietnamese Cemetery. Each grave had a circular mound on top of it. We set up using these mounds as a barrier in case of a fire. At midnight the sky lit up from red and green flares. I spent Christmas 1968 on top of a grave in Vietnam. The next week at the same grave at the same time the sky lit up proclaiming the first day of 1969. This meant I was officially a short timer (less than 90 days in Vietnam.)

Matthew 2:11

After coming into the house, they saw the Child with Mary, His mother, and they fell to the ground and worshiped Him. Then, opening their treasures, they presented to Him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

God Bless and protect Israel.

MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY CHANUKKAH
Chaplain Chip Hanson



ERDMAN AUTOMOTIVE



MIKE ERDMAN

Mike Erdman



MIKE ERDMAN
TOYOTA



Veterans Day 5K at VMC Great Success

by Donn Weaver

For almost a year, St Francis Reflections and Lifestage Care. (SFR), a strong partner of the Veterans Memorial Center, planned and organized sponsors and runners for a 5K race at the VMC and Park. More than 200 runners registered and there were more sponsors than ever, so it was a huge success with proceeds going to programs helping hundreds of veterans SFR supports.

After the run, many stayed for the VMC Veterans Day Ceremony which kicked off at 1111 hours on the 11th month. SFR also held a veteran pinning ceremony recognizing by name and branch over 60 veterans in attendance at the Memorial Plaza.

Sheriff Wayne Ivey and his fearless dog Junny stopped by to officially start the 5K race at 0800. While we know some VMC members were likely in the pack of runners, VMC Vice President Paul Julian was spotted running every foot of the 5K. Well done, Paul. Secretary Kristi Blanchard ran the race virtually from the deck of a cruise ship. So, anyone can join in!



Pictured: Runners at the starting line as seen from behind.



Pictured: Pinning Ceremony with VMC Chaplain doing the honors.

FREE ENTRY
Follow CAME on social media for updates!

Brevard Veterans Memorial Center and
Community Advocacy for Merritt Island Present

**MERRITT ISLAND'S 1ST ANNUAL
HOLIDAY ILLUMINATION
CELEBRATION**

At the Brevard Veterans Memorial Center,
Saturday, December 9th, 4pm-7pm

FEATURING

A Variety of Merritt Island's Best Community Partners
Community Luminary Walk & Tree Lighting
Local Holiday Entertainment & Caroling
Shopping from Local Vendors
Food Trucks & Holiday Treats
Raffle & Giveaways
Merritt Island Mermaid Photo-op

For more information, scan here:

**WREATHS
ACROSS
AMERICA**
FIND A WAY TO SERVE

**Emory Lawrence Bennett
1929—1951**
*Korean War Congressional Medal
of Honor Recipient*

Please Join Us

**Sunday December 17, 2023
3:00 PM**

Escort from Veterans Memorial Center
400 S Sykes Creek Parkway
Merritt Island, FL 32952
Meet: 1:30 PM
KSU: 2:00 PM

Thank You from Oasis for Making the Season Bright for Soldiers Overseas



A HUGE thanks to everyone who supported our Stockings from Home Event! 500 stockings were sent in 250 packages, all thanks to YOU!! A special thank you to all our supporters and volunteers. The most addresses we have EVER had!

Thank you to Elk's Lodge who came and presented us with a second \$1,000 donation...YOU ROCK! A special thanks to Beef O'Brady's in Merritt Island who always opens their doors to us and to the Courageous Division Sea Cadets for volunteering. Thank you to all who sponsored our event, and donated cards, content for our stockings and to all the people who handmade our stockings! We had so many from our plea last

year, that we had enough for this year too. Please know that we have a pattern to conform to, so please reach out if you would like to help make the beautiful handmade stockings that are filled with love in every stitch. Those we don't use this year will be kept until next year's event.

And I want to thank the board of OASIS...The OASIS Ironmaidens! We are all volunteers that love our military who have full time jobs. This is a labor of love!! We thank you for being patient, kind and supportive, as we continue to strive to grow OASIS and put a smile on our military members faces and hearts.

Together we have made this a success, because of you, and you and YOU!! From the bottom of our hearts, thank you! Have a wonderful and blessed Thanksgiving. We are thankful for each and every one of you, and our troops who sacrificed so much, so we can live in a country of freedom. Thank you for remembering our military this holiday season, and remember, FREEDOM ISN'T FREE!

Tess Brady Heribacka
& the OASIS Team, www.oasisofcfl.org

VMC's Courageous Division Sea Cadets Provide Support to (OASIS)



On Saturday morning, November 18th, 14 Cadets and five Adult Leaders from the VMC's-own Courageous Division Sea Cadets joined the Central Florida chapter of Operation America Standing in Support (OASIS) at Merritt Island's Beef O' Brady's in packing 500 handmade holiday "stockings" for our troops stationed overseas. The stockings were packed with various "goodies"!

The mission of OASIS is to support those military members serving overseas in the GLOBAL WAR ON TERRORISM. In that suicide amongst returning Veterans averages 22 per day, OASIS places emphasis on those experiencing PTSD, depression, and other mental challenges.

OASIS attempts to provide six "care packages" per year to our troops. They also provide "arrival celebrations" and

"recreational activities" to troops returning home on R&R or at the completion of their deployment. This local team of grateful volunteers truly love their Veterans!





Park and Plaza Report

by Shaun McKinney

Bricks, Benches and Trees

Two bricks were ordered in the month of November, with five bricks being from previously open orders. Seven bricks remain in CSPPRAY's work queue.

No new tree orders were submitted in November. All previous tree orders are complete.

There is one open order for the memorial bench. The status: The plate for the bench was delivered in early November and the bench was delivered the week of Thanksgiving. The bench will be assembled, and the plate will be installed no later than the first week of December. The status was provided to the family.

Thank you in advance to the VMC's Maintenance Supervisor, Jerry Johnson.

The Amphitheater

This is the same report as was posted last month. The cost of the project has been received and is over budget. Final negotiations between the Merritt Island Redevelop Agency, the Parks and Recreation Department and the Lead Contractor, Ivey's Construction are in progress. All parties will have a series of meetings through the next month and hopefully have the groundbreaking and the start of construction soon.




Guess Who is Coming to Town

American Legion Auxiliary Unit 344 and the Brevard Veterans Memorial Center Are Hosting Their Annual Children's Christmas Party

400 S. Sykes Creek Pkwy., Merritt Island
Saturday, December 16, 2023 1:00 to 3:00 P.M.

** Pre Registration Strongly Recommended

 Food
 Gifts
 Crafts
 Games

Special Visit from Santa Clause

Child's Name / Age / Gender

List Additional On The Back

Please complete registration and return it to the MOD Office at the Veterans Memorial Center or email to Diane Davidson at diane8276@yahoo.com by December 6th 2023

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 Program at the VMC

On October 24th we had another very successful, well attended woman veteran outreach and support group luncheon. 35 women veterans and 3 volunteers had a wonderful time-sharing ideas and resources. Henry Angulo, South FL Regional Programs Director at The Fire Watch gave a full Fire Watch presentation with an in-depth question and answer period following the presentation. Our female veteran attendees had lots of questions and comments that Henry admitted he learned as much from them as they did from him. We then had a Case Manager from the Orlando VA Healthcare System, Suicide Prevention team to talk about this very tough yet prevalent topic. Again, many questions, comments and concerns were discussed. Lunch was served thanks to the generosity of the MOACC Good Deeds Foundation.



On October 31 (Halloween) we held our first, what will become annual) Trunk or Treat Halloween party for the children of veterans. We had between 90 and 100 children come by to collect their treats, eat their hot dogs, bounce in the bounce house, play games, watch a fun and patriotic puppet show, get their faces painted and receive awards for the awesome variety of costumes. A great day was had by all



Women Veterans Outreach And Support

"Their Voice of Hope" Working in Partnership with The Brevard Veterans Memorial Center, and the Brevard Veterans Council

Holiday Dish to Pass Pot Luck Celebration

Created to address the unique needs of our women veterans

Thursday Dec 14, 2023
6:00 PM. - 9:00 PM.
Veterans Memorial Center
400 S Sykes Creek Pkwy
Merritt Island, FL

This event and the program are for women veterans only

Please RSVP, and what you will bring to Dorothy Walsh at dwalshusa@gmail.com

who attended – as she was leaving one mom looked at me and said, “you’ll never understand what this meant for all of us”. So yes we decided then and there to make it an annual event. Again, thanks to MOACC Good Deeds Foundation for their generous donation and to everyone who answered our shout out for candy and decorations. We have enough left over for the children’s Christmas party. And thank you to all the volunteers from so many different organizations who showed up to help make this event spectacular. It takes a Village!!!! Our next big event will be the Holiday Potluck party on December 14th. Fun, swag bags, gifts and a special treat as Jack Smink will be there to entertain. It’s going to be a great event.

Our awesome group of women have adopted 7 female veterans from the Viera VA to make sure they have a great Christmas by fulfilling their meager requests for items for Christmas. But being the wonderful group, these women are, the gifts being supplied go above and beyond. We will also be working, once again, with BCSO Shop with a Cop program to ensure that 50 children of low-income veterans receive a fabulous Christmas this year. IT TAKES A VILLAGE and Brevard County is an awesome village who helps out our veterans in need.

Wishing you a wonderful, Blessed and happy holiday season.

Crystal Turman, LCSW
Chairman, Women Veteran Outreach & Support Group

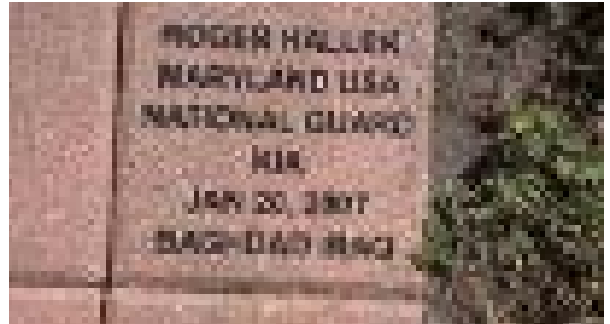
Dorothy Walsh, MS, CPC
VMC Events Chair
President, Their Voice of Hope, Inc.

The Haller Brothers: An Amazing Story

by Donn Weaver

Several weeks ago, VMC was contacted by a veteran living in Maryland who wanted to purchase a brick in our Memorial Plaza to honor his brother. John Haller visited during his vacation in June of this year and loved our museum, plaza, and everything. He filled out then form and mailed in his check so Shaun and Garet could process it, and the Brick was installed by C-Spray in the Iraq Monument pathway.

When we called John and sent him a photo of the brick, he told us an amazing story. For six years he has been working to install some kind of a tribute to his brother in ALL 50 states!!! There are only two remaining to complete his mission. What a great tribute to a Fallen Hero that is. The VMC is the only one in Florida and we are pleased John Haller chose the VMC.



The tributes include memorial bricks, benches, wall engravings, trees and other forms in each state depending on what was available and most appropriate,

Brevard County Adds Another to Florida Veterans Hall of Fame



Pictured: Weaver receives the medal and Certificate.



Pictured: The Florida Veterans HOF wall in the Capitol Building

With more than 180 in attendance, the Florida Department of Veterans Affairs and the Florida Veterans Hall of Fame Society inducted 21 new members in the Florida Veterans Hall of Fame.

The new class included Donn Weaver. Joining him from Brevard to recognize all the honorees and many other HOF members who attended, were Skip Taylor, (HOF 2021), Juan Santiago (HOF 2019), Carmen Santiago, Sen Debbie Mayfield, and Chandler Langevin (Veteran Outreach Officer for St Francis Reflections). Weaver became the fifth veteran from Brevard so honored with MG John Cleland, USA, Ret starting that list in the inaugural HOF class of 2013.

The HOF now has 151 members with over 30 deceased, sadly including two from the 2023 class just recognized. In 2018 the HOF Society was created to support the ceremonies and help others, including a scholarship program for Florida State University veterans who need assistance. Weaver was already assigned to that committee.

Florida Lt Gov Jeanette Nunez was the presiding official since her boss was out of town on other business. FDVA and HOF Society Officials handled the ceremony which can be viewed online on the Florida Channel from 14 Nov.

Earlier in October the County of Brevard Commissioners recognized the five Brevard HOF members with a proclamation. With Brevard being such a great place for veterans to live, it is no coincidence perhaps that Brevard likely has the highest number of HOF members per capita. Congratulations to all of them.



Viera High JROTC Salutes Veterans

by Donn Weaver

On a beautiful fall evening for football, the Viera High School JROTC program invited veterans of all eras and services to come to their annual "Salute to Military Veterans." Over 150 veterans, ranging from one WWII veteran to several who left the military this year, came to the November 3rd event and were honored by over 200 JROTC cadets lined up and saluting as they passed, as well as several thousand fans.



Pictured: Pregame Check Presentation with Donn Weaver, GDF

The evening began with a ceremony before kick-off when the Good Deeds Foundation. (GDF) of the Cape Canaveral Chapter of the Military Officers Association of America (MOAACC), presented a symbolic check for \$38,400. This amount was to support all 14 JROTC and 5 other Cadet programs in the county as well as for purchasing all trophies and awards for JROTC 2023-24 competitions. As all veterans understand, supporting our youth is crucial to the future of America. JROTC cadets are a great investment.



Pictured: Honored Veterans

The Viera JROTC program is the biggest in Brevard and is led by LTC Tim Thomas USA, Ret and SFC Carl Thomas USA, Ret. With invitations extended to the veteran community, this was perhaps the best attended "Salute" in the many years Viera has done the program. A tight football game between Titusville and Viera and VHS Senior Night brought out a great crowd to support the veterans. Brevard County Fire Department helped out with their ladder truck and huge garrison American Flag.



Pictured: The JROTC lines the track in salute.

It was quite an evening which served as the kick off for more than 15 Veterans Week programs throughout Brevard through November 11 — the designated Veterans Day. Every veteran who came that night was smiling and happy to salute the crowd as well as to honor America's Fallen as TAPS concluded the evening.

Veterans Day at the VMC

The variety of events, people and activities made the day at the VMC truly memorable!

Veterans Day started out early at the Brevard Veterans Memorial Center with the annual St. Francis Reflections Dash in Life 5K starting at 7AM. St. Francis had a great turnout with more than 200 runners and walkers – the hit was having Brevard County Sheriff Wayne Ivey, and his dog Junny starting the runners off. The runners finished with a pinning ceremony for veterans and benediction by our own Chaplain Chip Hanson.

The Pass in Review was led by Marine Corps League Detachment 513 Brevard with an additional 18 participating organizations. The Veterans Day ceremony began with a fly-by of America's Pride, Invocation, and a POW/MIA remembrance ceremony.

Our keynote speaker, Colonel S. DaSilva, daughter of our own Garret McKinney, did a fabulous job and truly engaged the crowd. There was a great response to Adm Jim Hart and the information he shared about Space Coast Honor Flight.

In total, there were 31 resource and information areas set up for our attendees as well as 5 food trucks. Our guesstimated number of attendees was 400. So many patriots came together to honor and celebrate our veterans. The musical team did a wonderful job Lonnie and Delinda as always, and we had two newcomers, Sanjanette Scott, USAF veteran National Creative Arts first place winner, performed a beautiful rendition of the Star-Spangled Banner and Jack Smink who ended the ceremony with a wonderful rendition of America the Beautiful.

But of course, none of this would have been possible if it weren't for all the amazing volunteers who came together to support the event. Both in physical labor as well as monetary and in-kind donations. It takes a Village!!!! Special thanks and appreciation to Elevation Church for their very generous donation to the Brevard Veterans Memorial Center.

In case you missed it. Space Coast Daily Coverage before and during the event. Thank you to Steve and Orville. <https://fb.watch/owEEExXazKr/>

Yours in Service,

Dorothy Walsh
Brevard Veterans Memorial Center
Events Coordinator



Caption: Scenes from the Pass in Review at the VMC for Veterans Day 2023.

(continued on next page)

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Thank you!!!

The Veteran's Day event would not have been such a huge success without the help of our dozens of volunteers. But there is a group of volunteers that I want to point out – and they are our future leaders. These amazing young people participated in the Pass in Review (doing as spectacular a job as all the adults) as well as volunteered their time and energy to set up and clean up before during and after the event. For this reason, our Veterans Memorial Center President, Dean Schaaf and our keynote speaker Col. S. DaSilva honored them with a "Future Leaders" trophy.

- Commodore John Barry Children of the American Revolution
- Courageous Sea Cadets
- Viera Antlers Lodge 2817
- The Adventurers, Navigators and Woodlands Trail members of Trail Life Troop 4321 of Merritt Island

There was one volunteer who hid from the camera but worked harder than anyone else there – and I want to give a huge shout out and thank you to our VMC volunteer Thomas Peterson III. Thomas was a tremendous help in making sure everything that needed to be done, was completed and completed perfectly! THANK YOU THOMAS!!!!



Pictured: The Navigators and Woodland Trail members of Trail Life Troop 4321



Pictured: The Courageous Sea Cadets Color Guard



Pictured: Viera Antlers Lodge 2817

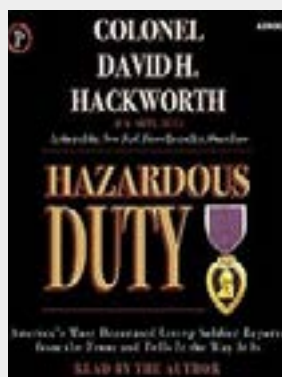


Pictured: Col. DaSilva presents the Children of the American Revolution a "Future Leaders" trophy.

Book Report

Hazardous Duty by Colonel David H. Hackworth

Book Report by Karen Croft, Catalog # WarOnTerror155



Colonel David H. Hackworth (1930–2005) earned over ninety military awards, numerous individual citations for valor as well as unit citations earned by units he served in or commanded. He was proudest of his Combat Infantryman Badge. Other examples: Distinguished Service Cross with Bronze Oak Leaf Cluster, Silver Star Medal (10 Awards) and many, many more including several purple hearts.

His book *Hazardous Duty* is a real-life nonfiction story set in Bosnia, Saudi Arabia (Desert Storm). From underage enlistment in the Merchant Marines to the Army and then completing his life's journey as a war correspondent, *Hazardous Duty* is a book which describes Hackworth's reporting from Desert Storm and later in life. It is an exciting and spellbinding read. 328 pages.

Gary Powers, Jr. to Present at VMC

The VMC is pleased to announce we will host Gary Powers Jr, the son of the famed Cold War U-2 Pilot, for a special lecture presentation on Monday, Jan 29 from 1300-1430 hours in our Gray Hall. Details about signing up follow in early December, but wanted to announce to the public that this excellent opportunity to hear an amazing story will be coming to the VMC. His recent book, *Spy Pilot: Francis Gary Powers, the U-2 Incident, and a Controversial Cold War Legacy*, helps to set the record straight in regard to the fake news that surround the U-2 Incident and tarnished his father's reputation. This and other cold war topic will be covered during the presentation.

Please mark your calendars and help spread the word! We plan a modest admission charge in the \$5 range. Snacks and drinks will be available.



Photo of Gary Powers at the American High Altitude Lockheed U-2 reconnaissance aircraft by Mil.ru, CC BY 4.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=106690314>



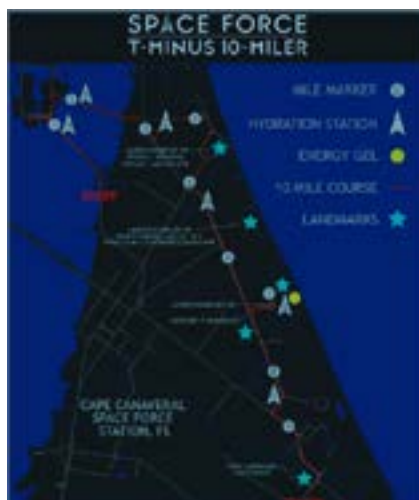
Highlights:

- The Space Force T-10 Miler is a crucial space heritage event
- The inaugural race had approximately 2,500 participants, and we are dedicated to growing the event
- Race registration is open to all, allowing civilians from the local area and around the world to come view our space history
- The 10-mile course weaves it's way through 4 historic launch sites, and finishes at the Cape Canaveral Lighthouse

If you have any questions, wish to volunteer, or provide a sponsorship please contact:

Capt Jonathan Huffman
jonathan.huffman.4@us.af.mil

MSgt Ricardo Porto
ricardo.porto@us.af.mil



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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.**



Free VMC Library Presentation and Discussion Series
The Lost Colony of Roanoke

Topic: Discuss what happened to first British Settlement in America

Where: Veterans Center Library Merritt Island

When: January 30, 2023 at 6:00 PM

Time duration: Approx 1.5 hrs

Type: Power Point Presentation

Discussion Leader: Norm Desmarais

It's July 22, 1587: Between 110 and 150 settlers led by John White (Gov) arrive on Roanoke Island, NC. They originally intended to settle in the Chesapeake Bay area but are forced to land on Roanoke Island in NC because the captain wanted to get back to hunting Spanish merchant ships. Leader of the Colony, John White had to return to England for supplies. Problems occurred and White did not return until August 1590. Colony was gone and researchers to this day are still trying to find out what happened to them.

This presentation and discussion is based on the book named "The Lost Colony of Roanoke". Presentation will focus on what happened to the colony and will include the latest research information. Norm will also share his personal research and opinion on what took place.

Highly recommended for anyone interested in a good mystery and the early settlement of British North America.



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!

Great Week for Veterans Back to Class/ Ceremonies at Brevard Schools

by **Donn Weaver**

Veterans Day events and Vets Back to Class (VBC) Visits began on 03 November and lasted the entire week through 11 Nov. Many Veterans also supported Veterans Day programs at assisted living facilities and other venues, with several doing both.

While the VBC First Semester Report Card will come out in mid-December, the Veteran Day Week events alone bear some highlights and thanks to all who helped. There were several major ceremonies as well where VMC, VBC and MOAACC members participated in major school ceremonies:

- **03 Nov** - Home Schoolers at Calvary Chapel 40 students 3-8th grade.
- **03 Nov** - Viera JROTC Vet Salute Night at Football Game — 150 vets, 3000 fans.
- **09 Nov** - Rockledge JROTC hosts Vets Appreciation Assembly — 600 students from Kennedy Middle School
- **09 Nov** - CBHS JROTC Veterans Day event. — 600 attendees
- **09 Nov** - Ocean Breeze Elementary School Vet Day — 350 K-6 with 86 Sixth Graders getting an extra hour
- **10 Nov** - New Hope Academy K-8 80 students

Classroom visits about the meaning of Veterans included 5 High Schools, One Middle, One Elementary and two private schools for a total of 570 students impacted by 5 VBC members.



Pictured: Kennedy Middle School assembly



Pictured: Ocean Breeze Elementary School ceremony



Pictured: Cocoa Beach Jr/Sr High School Honors RADM Wayne Justice USCG, Ret., as their Veterans Day Keynote Speaker



Pictured: Cocoa Beach Jr/Sr High School JROTC class



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We appreciate having our corporate sponsors and veteran friendly businesses support us and hope they will consider advertising in the 2023 Courier.

Please contact Dave Clayton bvmtreasurer@gmail.com if you might be interested or have questions.



RATES

Business Card: \$50 per year

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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 2023 and beyond.





UNIQUE ART
by
Dan Haddad

310 Le Jeune Dr.
Merritt Island, FL 32953

321-536-5585
rrrgent@gmail.com



Click to see Dan's art in action in this video!



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Dinosaur Store



The Patriot Report

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

DVA May Widen PACT Act Coverage

The Department of Veterans Affairs will be conducting a scientific review to determine whether there is a relationship between three conditions and toxic exposures for servicemembers who deployed to Iraq, Afghanistan, and several other nations.

The three conditions are acute leukemias, chronic leukemias, and multiple myeloma outside of the head and neck. In addition to Iraq and Afghanistan, other nations that would be included would be Somalia, Afghanistan, Djibouti, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, Yemen, Uzbekistan, and the entire Southwest Asia theater of operations.

This review will help VA determine whether these ailments become presumptive conditions for Veterans. When a condition is considered presumptive, eligible Veterans do not need to prove that their service caused their disease to receive benefits for it. Instead, VA automatically assumes service-connection for the disease and provides benefits.

As part of the PACT Act, the Biden administration is aiming to expand benefits and services for toxic-exposed Veterans and their families. These three conditions will go through VA's process for establishing presumptive conditions, which was codified by President Biden's signing of the PACT Act last August.

"We won't rest until we understand whether there's a connection between these deadly conditions and the service of our nation's heroes," VA Secretary Denis McDonough said. "But make no mistake: Veterans shouldn't wait for this review process to conclude to apply for the support they deserve. If you're a Veteran living with acute leukemia, chronic leukemia, or multiple myeloma, don't wait — apply for your VA care and benefits today."

These conditions were chosen for review based on existing scientific data and consultations with Veterans, Veteran Service Organizations, Congress, and other key stakeholders. While these are the first conditions to be announced for scientific review since the PACT Act passed into law, VA will review additional conditions moving forward.

*Contact the DAV for
assistance in filing claims,
reviewing information or
for questions regarding the
PACT Act.*

For-Profit VA Disability Claims Help Available, However, it is Costly.

The firms that "provide assistance" by preparing Veterans' disability paperwork has been an issue in the Veteran community for years. Many question their legality in doing so at all. However, the problems concerning these firms have really become acute with last year's passage of the Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics Act P (commonly known as the PACT Act), which massively expanded eligibility for disability payouts for former military members exposed to burn pit smoke and other toxins during their time in service.

The passing of the PACT Act led to record numbers of claims filed and benefits awarded. More than 2.4 million applications in fiscal year 2023 alone. The Department of Veterans Affairs paid out \$163 billion in benefits, also an all-time high.

With the large amount of money at stake, lawmakers have been wary of outside consultants, better known as Claim Sharks, taking in money meant to compensate Veterans for military injuries.

However, the Claim Shark industry executives have portrayed their work as a necessary option for the increasingly complicated benefits system. The benefit system is one where tens of thousands of Veterans are left waiting for months for needed financial assistance.

(continued on next page)

On Nov. 1, a coalition of the for-profit companies launched a new effort called the National Association for Veterans Rights (NAVR), to promote ethical and transparent business practices among companies engaging with the service-disabled Veteran community."

Their goal is to improve the reputation of the industry and establish best practices for how those companies operate, and to also gain the blessing of federal regulators for their work.

Their critics are working to stamp out the firms completely, and adopting legislation that will all but eliminate their ability to operate. Officials from Disabled American Veterans, the Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors, the VFW, and more are planning a press conference attacking "...claim sharks that offer high-priced assistance and suspect medical advice ... without following the well-established professional and ethical standards of VA accreditation."

The VFW has weighed in heavily on this issue and ramped up their fight against predatory Claim Shark companies, those unaccredited agents who unabashedly target and ILLEGALLY take advantage of Veterans wishing to file VA claims. Make no mistake about it, the proliferation of these illicit organizations is a threat both to Veterans and the entire VA system.

These shady Claim Sharks are not only swindling Veterans out of thousands of dollars in fees, but they are working hard to try to legitimize their operations through the NAVR.

The VFW simply will NOT stand for any of it!!!

Please help put these Claim Sharks out of business! Review, keep handy, and share, our Claim Shark Fact Sheet far and wide to your networks using every tool available to you. Make sure to follow the VFW's social media accounts, amplify our posts, and be on the lookout for Action Alerts and other calls to action to join in the fight. We have one hell of a fight ahead, but together, we can AND WILL put a stop to Veterans falling victim to these bad actors. (Statement from November VFW Member Dispatch)

VA leaders discourage the use of for-profit firms in disability filings but so far have not directly entered the debate. Veterans are left wondering how best to access thousands of dollars in financial aid for successfully navigating VA's disability claims system. It is money that can mean the difference between financial distress and peace of mind, but only if they receive it and not give it up to the sharks.

The VA leadership frequently reminds Veterans through press conferences and outreach events that they do not need to pay anyone to file a disability claim. Veterans service organizations like the American Legion, the DAV, the VFW, and state and county Veterans Services Offices employ thousands of staffers who provide claims preparation work free and never charge for

any claim assistance!

Peter O'Rourke, head of the newly formed National Association for Veterans Rights (NAVR), said those options, meaning the free Veterans organizations, aren't enough to keep up with the growing demand for claims work. The number of backlogged first-time disability claims (these are cases waiting more than four months for processing) has doubled in the last year, and now sits at more than 300,000. "Yes, there are free services," said O'Rourke, who served as VA chief of staff and acting VA Secretary under former President Donald Trump. "But we are still seeing elevated levels of inventory. So, we need to have other approaches to this problem." "If Veterans are happy with the free services available, that is great for them. But this is a complex process. Veterans should have the opportunity to choose the service that fits best what they want to get accomplished."

By law, companies that are not accredited by the VA cannot file any benefits claim on a Veteran's behalf or charge them for work related to filing such an application. Accredited firms can charge Veterans for assistance in limited situations, and those fees are capped. For-profit claims companies instead charge consulting fees for work related to preparing to file the disability paperwork and leave individual Veterans to submit the final applications on their own.

O'Rourke compared it to a spouse or friend helping a Veteran submit a claim, except in this case they are professional experts at navigating the VA systems.

Except, unlike a family member, the companies charge for those services. For-profit claims companies instead charge consulting fees for work related to preparing to file the disability paperwork and leave individual Veterans to submit the final applications on their own.

O'Rourke compared it to a spouse or friend helping a Veteran submit a claim, except in this case they are professional experts at navigating the VA systems.

Unlike family members, the companies charge for those services. Ryan Gallucci, executive director of the Veterans of Foreign Wars National headquarters, said that's a blatant violation of the law.

Before 2006, federal prosecutors cracked down on the practice heavily, and lawmakers removed penalties for indirectly charging fees from Veterans for VA claims assistance, without legalizing the practice. The result has been two decades of legal limbo, with advocates crying foul and for-profit firms operating at the margins of the claims process without directly engaging in it.

In testimony before the House Veterans' Affairs Committee in

(continued on next page)

April 2022, VA Deputy General Counsel Richard Hipolit said the VA sends out hundreds of letters annually to companies in violation of the rules. "More often than not, we receive no response to our letter or a response indicating that they do not intend to cease their practices, because there are no criminal penalties under federal law," he said.

Bipartisan legislation introduced in Congress earlier this year would change that. The Governing Unaccredited Representatives Defrauding VA Benefits Act (named the GUARD Act) would reinstate criminal penalties for companies that charge fees for unsanctioned claims work. The proposal is backed by VFW, the American Legion, Disabled American Veterans, Paralyzed Veterans of America, and a host of other Veterans groups. The proposal has been stalled in Congress for months.

The VA in September launched a new online page www.va.gov/vsafe, dedicated to warning Veterans about how to

protect themselves from "...claims sharks or unaccredited service representatives...taking thousands of dollars from Veterans for services that should be free or at a much lower costs."

The DAV policy for representation is for the Veteran to sign a VA Form 21-22 appointing the DAV as having Power of Attorney (POA) as the sole representative of the Veteran. If the Veteran then signs on with, or has engaged an attorney prior to seeking DAV assistance, and it becomes known to the DAV that the Veteran has a relationship with an attorney, they will revoke the VA Form 21-22 and provide no assistance to the Veteran.

Stay tuned folks, I am sure much more is coming on this subject! If you have any comments on this issue, I would like to hear from you. My Email address is: georgefuris7@gmail.com.

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

Cybersecurity Tips for the Holiday Season

by Paula Biggs and Michael Pertain from Alliance Cyber



We'd like to thank Alliance Cyber for providing the following information to help our many members, supporters and their families. -Kristi Blanchard, VMC IT Director.

The holidays are a favorite time of year for many people...including cyber criminals. While you are buying that special gift for loved ones or making travel arrangements to visit family and friends, cyber criminals are waiting for their opportunity to take advantage of the unaware. Here are some simple cyber tips from Alliance Cyber to help keep you safe.

Secure Your Devices: Ensure your PCs, laptops, smartphones, and tablets are "patched." Download the most recent updates, software, and internet browsers available. Conduct regular device scans on hardware with anti-malware applications.

Use Only "Secure" Wi-Fi: Free public Wi-Fi is convenient, but potentially dangerous. If you must connect to public Wi-Fi, use a virtual private network (VPN), or use the hotspot function on your smart phone. Disable the auto-connect feature on your devices. If your phone or tablet connects automatically to wireless

networks or Bluetooth devices, disable this feature, and connect manually.

Shop from Secure Retailers: Prior to making online purchases, ensure the website is using SSL protection. Check the address bar and look for "https." Sites without "https" are potentially unsafe and should not be used for purchasing because they don't keep your information secret as it travels across the internet. When making purchases, use debit or credit cards instead of bank accounts and consider payment services, like Google Pay or Apple Pay.

Avoid Shared Computers: If using a public computer at a hotel, avoid making purchases or logging into email or personal accounts. These devices may not be up to date with the latest security software and present the potential to compromise your personal information.

Avoid Unsolicited Charity Donation Requests: Many like to give to charities during the holidays. Be mindful of emails and phone calls asking for donations, especially from organizations you are unfamiliar with. If you plan to donate, visit secure charity websites to donate.

Alliance Cyber is a Minority, Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned company located in Cocoa, Florida.



MCL Detachment 513 Conducts Special Marine Corps Ball

On Saturday night, 11 November after a busy day of Veterans Day Ceremonies all over Brevard and 24 hours after the US Marine Corps 248th Birthday, Marine Corps League Detachment 513 outdid themselves.

With over 80 people as guests the MCL hosted a fabulous dinner and dancing ceremony event at the Cape Canaveral Radisson ballroom. There was a silent auction and raffle that raised perhaps a record in funds for the Detachment and the guests enjoyed a great dinner, but the pageantry is what it is all about. Great job MCL Det 513!!

Of special note was the choice of keynote speaker — Capt Bill Muckler, USMC, former, who joined the Corps in 1958 and who is an established author and veterans advocate now living in Sebring, FL. He remains in contact with the Veterans Memorial Center where he served for years on the Board and as Secretary. Muckler is also the Assistant Secretary of MOAACC attending many meetings and even taking minutes via zoom.

Needless to say, MOAACC and many other VMC partners were well represented any the event and enjoyed it all, including the traditional cake!



Pictured: Guests enjoy the remarks of Bill Muckler.



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.





Unofficial Brevard VMC Vets Calendar December 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/>

DECEMBER

02 Dec – 2023 Holiday Parade - Merritt Island 1000-1130. Sponsored by BCSO. The VMC will have a float. Starts at Merritt Island High School on N. Courtney Blvd and Ends at Edgewood Jr/Sr High School on Merritt. Contact Brevard Parks and Rec for more information.

02 Dec – 2023 Veterans and Military Support MOAACC Good Deeds Foundation Golf Tournament at IRCC 0800-1400. Primary GDF Fundraiser of the year with sponsorships, hole sponsorships, golfing slots and auction/raffle prizes. NOTE: New Date. Postponed from 18 Nov due heavy rains that week.

08 Dec – World Changers Concert to support Veterans at the Saint Augustine Amphitheater 1700-2100. Presented by Danny Garcia, the Walking Marine and featuring The Long Run Rock Band and dinner. Tickets on sale at www.theamp.com

09 Dec – Merritt Island Community and VMC Inaugural Christmas Tree lighting and Gold Star Tree Ceremony in Veterans Memorial Park 1600-1900. Includes music, singing, food trucks and community spirit.

13 Dec – Annual Veterans Memorial Center Christmas Party during our monthly general membership meeting. 0930-1200 Gray Hall at VMC.

14 Dec – Women veteran outreach and support group Holiday potluck. Register at dorothy@theirvoiceofhope.com. I will keep a list of items. Bring a wrapped gift, under \$20.00 value for a gift exchange, if you'd like to participate. Veterans Memorial Center, Gray Hall. 6:00 PM – 9:00 PM.

16 Dec – American Legion Auxiliary Unit 344 annual children's Christmas party, complete with a visit from Santa Claus. 1200 -1600. To participate or donate please contact ALA Unit 344 President, Rose Marie Hill at rmhill@cfl.rr.com.

16 Dec – Wreaths Across America at the VA Cape Canaveral National Cemetery 1000 -1200 in Mims and other veteran

cemeteries in the area. Each year CCNC expands by almost 2200 veterans and spouses. Parking is limited so please carpool and arrive early. Families of those interred at CCNC will have time to place their wreaths first, before section leaders work with their volunteers to make sure as many grave sites as possible are honored with a commemorative wreath, not intended as a Christmas Wreath. Golf carts and drop off available. Pick up wreaths on 06 January 0700-0930. Contact Donn Weaver, 757-871-6576, for more information.

17 Dec – Wreaths Across America Special Ceremony at Pinecrest Cemetery on Clearlake Road in Cocoa. 1500-1630. Honors Brevard Native Korean War Medal of Honor Recipient Emory Bennett and other veterans laid to rest in that cemetery. RTFL:-1 Motorcycle wreath escort from VMC at 1400 . Contact Dorothy Walsh at dorothy@theirvoiceofhope.com.

JANUARY

27 Jan – Historic Preservation and Heritage Tourism Seminar VMC Gray Hall 0800-1600. Sponsored by Museums of Brevard (MOB) Contact Dean Schaaf VMC President and MOB officer on 321-453-1776 ext 5.

27 Jan – JROTC County Wide Run and Shoot Competition in Veterans Memorial Park 0700-1230. Details in December.

29 Jan – Guest Lecture Series at VMC Gray Hall – 1300-1430: Gary Powers Jr, son of the late, famed U-2 Pilot shot down over the Soviet Union at the height of the Cold War. Newly unclassified materials, his new book, and an update of analysis about why and what happened after his father's capture, took his son decades to unravel as the truth.

30 Jan – VMC Library Discussion Series, 1800-1930, presenter Norm Desmarais will discuss what happened to the first British Settlement in America. Highly recommended for anyone interested in a good mystery and the early settlement of British North America. Refreshments provided.

(continued on next page)

FEBRUARY

04 Feb – Hearts to the Troops 5K Fundraiser sponsored by OASIS 0700-1000 at VMC Park. Packing Valentine boxes of goodies for deployed troops afterwards for mailing overseas. Sponsorships and information available at 321-243-7753 or via cofounder@oasisofcfl.org. OASIS supports troops deployed in harm's way all year round with a number of packing events with the goodies and postage purchased through grants and via such Fundraisers.

04 Feb – Anniversary to Remember the Immortal Four Chaplains of WWII 1400-1530 in the VMC Plaza. They went down with their transport ship helping troops in 1943 after a German Torpedo attack in then icy Atlantic. Sponsored by VMC with support from the Marine Corps League of Brevard County.

10 Feb – JROTC Squad Drill Meet 0700-1230 with 10-12 Schools Expected and more than 150 cadets in the Veterans Memorial Park on MI. Supported by MOAA Cape Canaveral Chapter Good Deeds Foundation (all trophies) and the VMC.

17 Feb – Second Annual Back Brevard Heroes Fundraiser Car Show in Veterans Memorial Center Park 1000 - 1500. Registration details in early January. BBH supports First Responders and Veterans.

24 Feb – JROTC Squad and Platoon Drill Meet 0700-1230 with 10-12 Schools Expected and more than 150 cadets in the Veterans Memorial Park on MI. Supported by MOAA Cape Canaveral Chapter Good Deeds Foundation (all trophies) and the VMC.

MARCH

09 Mar– JROTC District Drill Meet with all disciplines 0700-1300 with 10-12 Schools Expected and more than 150 cadets in the Veterans Memorial Park on MI. Supported by MOAA Cape Canaveral Chapter Good Deeds Foundation (all trophies) and the VMC.

16 Mar – Ceremony to Remember the Last Naval Battle of the American Revolutionary War fought off the Coast of Cape Canaveral in 1783. 1000-1200 at the VMC Plaza Area with food and drinks and a parade pf colors and wreaths with many in colonial attire. Put on by the Sons of the American Revolution Brevard Chapter along with the DAR and VMC. Contact Donn Weaver 757-871-6576 for more information.

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



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Bateman, Skip & Ruth July, 2026

Bisset, M Doug Sept, 2025

Carleton, Jim Feb, 2024

Clark, Garrett Sept, 2024

Clayton, David & Anne July, 2024

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

Garcia, Jackie and Danny Dec, 2024

Huffman, Kenneth, USN Nov, 2024

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, 2024

Sherman, Rheta Campbell Oct, 2024

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) _____