



THE VETERANS MEMORIAL CENTER

COUNCIL COURIER

OCTOBER 2024



A Publication of the Brevard Veterans Council & Veterans Memorial Center



WHAT'S INSIDE

Veterans Left Alone at the End, Receive Honorable Service at CCNC

The second Brevard No One Veteran Left Behind (BNOVLB) Service was held at the Cape Canaveral National Cemetery (CCNC) on September 25. Over 140 volunteers and witnesses attended this Service.

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VMC Wins Space Coast “Nonprofit of the Year” in 2024 at Space Coast Honors

VMC wins Space Coast Honors “Nonprofit of the Year” in 2024 on the evening of Friday, September 20 to our surprise and loud applause!

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VMC Adds a New and Special Monument to the Memorial Plaza

Rolling Thunder, FL-1 Chapter raised funds and, with the help of CSpray and other companies, created a new monument at the Veterans Memorial Center (VMC) Plaza.

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9/11 23rd Anniversary Memorial Tribute

The remembrance of the events of September 11, 2001, went on as approximately 250 attendees endured the rain.

Read more on page 10.

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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 and request for advertisement must be sent to the address listed below. The deadline is the 25th of each month.

Please send submissions to:
brevardvmc@gmail.com

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Our Organization

As of 25 September 2024:

[List of Board 2024-2025](#)

As of 25 September 2024:

[BVMC Committee Departments 2024-2025](#)

As of 28 July 2024:

[BVC VMC Org Chart 2024-2025](#)



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)

Last month I mentioned that we were halfway through the season, and I hoped I did not jinx us. Well Tropical Storm Helena is heading NE in the gulf and could impact us. We will see! October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month, and 360,000 people will be diagnosed with breast cancer. Early tests can reduce the survival rate by 99%.

Susan and I made a trip to Norfolk, Virginia to attend the 70th reunion of the Navy's Integrated Undersea Surveillance System (IUSS). The Sound Surveillance System (SOSUS) that I worked in was highly classified during the Cold War and proved to be one of the most effective systems to keep track of the Soviet Submarine fleet. The system was compromised and declassified in the early 1990s. I served at Naval Facility (NAVFAC) Keflavik, Iceland in 1967/68 and then NAVFAC Antigua, West Indies in 1968/69. After being commissioned and Flight School, I flew P-3s as a Naval Flight Officer (NFO) and went back to NAVFAC Keflavik, only this time as the Executive Officer from 1982-84. With the addition of the towed hydrophone system and the SURTAS ships to augment the shore-based hydrophones, the system became integrated and continues to thrive in 2024 and beyond to contain the remaining threat of the Russians and the emerging threat from China.

We have a date for the Amphitheater groundbreaking, which is Saturday, October 29th. Hope to see a great turnout for the turning of the shovels!

The VMC hosted the annual Brevard County 9/11, Patriots Day Ceremony. This is the 23rd anniversary memorial tribute. It is sponsored by Brevard Club 1013, made up of retired NYPD police and fire department officers, many of whom were in NYC on 9/11/2001. Around 200 patriots braved the rain and drizzle to pay tribute to all who sacrificed, both during the tragic events and those who took the fight to the terrorists.

September 20th was POW Day and Rolling Thunder dedicated their new POW monument located on the walkway immediately behind the A-7 Jet. Thanks to all who assisted in getting this monument in place. Congratulations RTF-1! On September 25th I attended the Brevard No One Veteran Left Behind (BNOVLB) service at the Cape Canaveral National Cemetery. It was my honor to carry the ashes of David Bradley Newell, US Army, WW I, January 16, 1894 - February 8, 1958. He was just one of nineteen unclaimed cremains whose service was finally held. See article and pictures later in Courier.

October brings back our JROTC Raider Challenges in the Park. These drill meets usually bring in around 200 cadets and around 300 parents. If you have not attended one of these, I encourage you to try to do so. We are starting planning for our Veterans Day Ceremony, Monday, November 11. Don Pearsall will chair this year's event. Please see Don if you have any ideas or want to assist.

Finally, I want to thank all volunteers for keeping the Center operating and for your dedication. God bless our fallen heroes, MIAs, and POWs and God bless our armed forces.

Dean
GO NAVY - BEAT ARMY
Navy leads 62 - 55 - 7 in the series! USAF leads Navy 32 - 21

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[WEBSITE](#)
[YOUTUBE](#)





Council Report

**Don Pearsall,
Chairman**

Wow, things really are getting busy with all our programs. We have been visiting House of Hope early Monday mornings to give veterans bus passes if needed and assistance with other issues. Many didn't even know the council existed, so I gave them our contact information.

I recently attended the Chamber of Commerce dinner where the VMC was voted the Non-Profit of the year. I was fortunate enough to meet Scott Billue the Founder and CEO of Mathews Hope. After much discussion, we agreed that we will have a good working relationship with the Brevard Veterans Center because they have many veterans seeking assistance.

We contacted BCSO about their helicopters they are turning back to the Army to see if we could swap parts like the Port side door and possibly the pilot's seat. Greg Hale from the Warbird Museum and I are going to strip off the parts we need to make our helicopter in front of the museum more attractive.

I attended the Artistic endeavors of our women veterans at American Legion Post 332. The event hosted by "Their Voice of Hope" was well attended. The Brevard Women Veterans 'Outreach and Support is a program under the BVC Flag supporting all the woman veterans, regardless of their military status.

The food drive is not going as well as we expected. We think it's because of the ridiculous prices at the supermarkets. People barely have enough for their own families so it's hard for them to help others. We will, however, continue collection. Those who wish to donate non-perishable food, there is a box near the main entrance to the center.

Go Army Beat Navy



Secretary's Report

**Kristi Blanchard
USA (Fmr)**

Hello Membership,

In my other volunteer role as your Online and Social Media lead, I have been working with the ExComm leadership and other volunteers to upgrade our computer and phone system. I'm happy to report that the VMC has moved to Spectrum for internet reliability (the DAV also uses them) and to RingCentral on our automated phone system (note that extensions have changed). Our WiFi extenders are again operational and we continue to have a Guest Network but now it also has a password due to the security requirements of the times we live in. We also have a new advisor partnership with Alliance Cyber. The current changes will save us over \$100 a month on internet and many hundreds of dollars in service costs due to the great rates Alliance Cyber changes nonprofits like ours.

Reminder to take your Firewatch training so that the VMC can become a Veteran Safe Place (VSP). We can do this!

1. Please find more information here: <https://www.thefirewatch.org/watch-standers>
2. Complete the 20-minute training online (as a veteran or civilian)
3. When you complete your account setup, add "Veterans Memorial Center" as your "Organization" (see the screen shot with this article)
4. Email me at brevardvmc@gmail.com after you complete your training

Thank you for all for what you do everyday for veterans and their families!

Become a Watch Stander Today!

FW
THE FIRE WATCH | STAND AGAINST
VETERAN SUICIDE





Chaplain's Corner

Chaplain Chip Hanson
USMC (Fmr)

During a recent conversation with my peers about the upcoming election, I mentioned that over 248 years ago, we began an experiment in democracy. A friend interjected, respectfully pointing out that our nation is actually a republic, not a democracy, and that there is an important distinction between the two.

This piqued my curiosity, so I did some research, consulting Google and several other sources. Here's what I discovered:

The word "republic" comes from the Latin phrase *res publica*, meaning "the people's concern." Early republics, like the Roman Republic and Classical Athens, existed long before Christ. At the time of the American Revolution, it was widely believed that the only legitimate form of government was one where public authority derived entirely from the people and was protected by a constitution.

Democracy, on the other hand, is characterized by transparent and accountable politicians working together in the interests of citizens. Voting in elections and contacting elected officials are two key ways Americans can participate in their democracy.

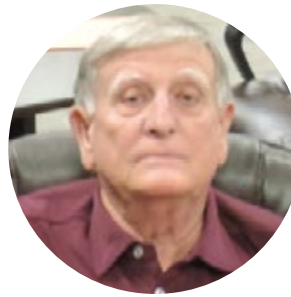
The critical difference between a democracy and a republic lies in the limitations placed on government by the law, which has significant implications for protecting minority rights. Both systems typically use a representational structure — citizens vote to elect representatives who form the government. In a republic, a constitution or charter of rights protects certain inalienable rights that cannot be taken away, even by a majority-elected government. In a "pure democracy," however, the majority is not restrained in this way and can impose its will on the minority.

Most modern nations, including the United States, are democratic republics with constitutions that can be amended by a popularly elected government. (Source: Diffen)

Ultimately, I must concede that my friend is correct: our nation is indeed a republic. However, in my view, without democracy, we wouldn't have achieved the success our nation enjoys today.

Based on my research, our country was founded as a republic that embraced elements of democracy, and the combination of the two has helped form what I believe is the greatest nation in history. Please remember to vote on November 5th, and if you don't vote, don't complain.

Proverbs 11:14 (ESV): "Where there is no guidance, a people falls, but in an abundance of counselors there is safety."



VMC Librarian Report

Joe Davie,
USAF (Fmr)

Joe Davie and Paul Julian will both be stepping down from their volunteer roles in the library on October 3rd of this year. New volunteers will soon be stepping up to take on their responsibilities. Joe has been a dedicated volunteer since 2017, while Paul has served for much longer. Joe has thoroughly enjoyed his time working in the library and will miss everyone involved. However, due to medical issues with his knees and other interests, he needs to step away. Paul, on the other hand, will continue his volunteer work with the BVMC in other capacities.

Library Discussion Series



Hank Rhodes, one of our librarians, will be leading our discussion group on October 29 from 6:00 to 7:30 PM. His presentation is intitled Land of Dis-Enchantment: The Civil War in New Mexico. Everyone is invited.

Presented by
 Their Voice of Hope
 "Where Veterans
 Deserve to Belong"

Thursday
 October 31
 3 to 6 PM

Veterans Memorial Center
 400 Sykes Creek Parkway
 Merritt Island

**SECOND ANNUAL
 SAFE AND FUN
 HALLOWEEN PARTY**
 for military and veteran families
 all ages welcome

Trunk or Treat
 Face Painting
 Costume Contests
 Prizes
 Games
 Free Food
 Fun

For more information
 to participate or donate
 Contact Dorothy Walsh
 dorothy@theirvoiceofhope.com
 call or text 321-426-6736

Book Report: The War Journal of Major Damon "Rocky" Gause

Book Report by Jim Pirrotti Catalog # POW-12

Escape, Evade, Endure, Evolution, Mear Words: The Deeds put those words into action...His Diary...His Words.

Rocky was a Georgia country boy with a lust to fly, sent to the Philippines in November 1941, Manila was an exotic place of peace and beauty, then came December 7, 1941, and the world changed forever.

Escape! There weren't many. Walk in his shoes...walk without shoes. Taste the adventure, feel the pain, suffer the guilt.

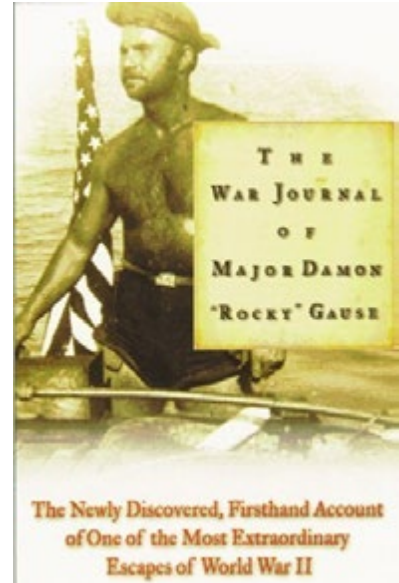
Evade! Months on the run, Japs everywhere. Army troops on the alert, Air Attacks, encounters at sea with the Japanese Navy. They even had a go around with a sub. Couple this with a 3200-mile ocean crossing in a 20 Ft wooden boat from the Philippines to Australia. A sailfish! He circled the stern and approached...He changed his tactics and cleared the stern of the "Ruth-Lee" with surging, twisting mighty lunge of his silver body."

Greeted with a hero's welcome and promotion, he was returned to the States and sent on a war bond tour, but that was not for him. Returning to active duty, his squadron was testing modifications to our plans prior to D-Day. He was killed

testing one of those modifications. Except for an "Un-Official Leave", he never again held his wife or baby son. He rests in peace with the other heroes of his generation in the quiet English countryside.

PS. Page 41 "the Fourth Marines were the best scrappers that ever aimed a gun at anybody."

Semper Fi!



Veterans' Connections

By Don Pearsall

It's either feast or famine. We are a nonprofit organization dedicated to paying for emergency services for veterans and their families, but we can only pay out what we bring in. Today's economy is wreaking havoc on many things. Unlike larger nonprofits, we do not have grants and operate solely on private donations. This is our main problem: a shortage of funds in our coffers. It is emotionally difficult for us to refuse assistance to veterans because we have no money.

Many 501(c)(3) organizations specialize in areas such as housing and transportation, but we are the only organization that helps cover life's necessities, such as car insurance payments, phone bills, electric bills, groceries, school shoes for kids, and more. There are many veteran families in Brevard (approximately 19,500 according to the Brevard Census), and many of them are struggling.

We understand the economy is in chaos, and everyone has to tighten their belts. Still, it's heartbreaking to see our brothers and sisters without enough food for their families or enough gas to

make the round trip to work. I'm hopeful things will improve in the future. Many of my regular donors tell me they are holding back until they see the results of the election. All I know is that our veterans don't deserve to be left behind.



Women's Veteran Outreach & Support Updates

By Dorothy Walsh and Linda Hagen, Events Coordinator, Their Voice of Hope, Inc.

Special thanks are due to the MOAACC Good Deeds Foundation for their generous donation to Their Voice of Hope. We are extremely grateful for their support.

In September, our Women Veterans Outreach event, held in the lobby of the Viera VA Clinic, connected with over 20 women veterans. This monthly event is made possible through the cooperation of the Viera VA Clinic and takes place on the second Tuesday of every month. For more information about our programs, please contact Dorothy Walsh at 321-426-6736 or via email at dorothy@theirvoiceofhope.com.

Outreach

We extended a warm welcome to many women veterans in the Greater Orlando area by attending the Veterans 1st Community Partners Coalition in St. Cloud last month. Although our program originated in Brevard County, we are quickly gaining a positive reputation and a strong voice for women veterans throughout Florida. Please refer any women veterans to us so we can reach out and provide support and camaraderie.

Outreach Luncheon

The September Outreach luncheon was generously provided by Elevation Church. Our guest speakers were Elana Pitcher and Army Veteran Diana Dempster, RN, from St. Francis Reflections Lifestage Care, located in Titusville and Melbourne. They work to address the unique needs of veterans and their families, guiding them toward a more peaceful end of life. The next Outreach luncheon will be held at the Brevard Veterans Memorial Center on October 22nd at 11 AM. All women veterans are invited. Please register with Dorothy so we can have an accurate headcount.

Yoga

Free yoga? Yes, please! Relax, stretch, and enjoy a judgment-free session with Dena, a veteran and certified yoga instructor. This event is held on the third Tuesday of each month at the BVMC. Doors open at 10:30 AM, and yoga begins at 11 AM. Chair yoga will be available soon. Please RSVP, and don't forget to bring a mat (if you have one) or a towel and water. This event is open to women veterans, women in the military, female spouses of veterans, and female first responders.

Equine Health and Wellness

This program has been on hold for a few months but will be restarting soon at a new location. Stay tuned to our Facebook page for updates.

Their Voice of Hope

Their Voice of Hope (501c3) has had a successful month. We've

welcomed many new women veterans at our monthly events, focusing on providing support and camaraderie for women veterans of all ranks and branches of service. Please refer any women veterans to our Facebook page (search for Their Voice of Hope). Be sure to LIKE and FOLLOW us on Facebook to stay updated on upcoming events. To sign up for email notifications of events, please contact Dorothy.

Healing Through Art Expression

Move over, Picasso! Nine budding artists attended our first Art Expression session, discovering that art can serve as a nonverbal means of expression, opening new avenues for healing and growth. No experience or talent is required. This monthly event takes place on the first Tuesday of each month at the American Legion at Kars Park. Please sign up with Dorothy.

Spooktacular Halloween Party

Open to all military and veteran families, our second annual Spooktacular Halloween Party is set for Thursday, October 31st, from 3 to 6 PM. The event will feature safe trunk-or-treat, face painting, costume contests, prizes, games, and free food. Candy donations are being accepted at the BVMC front office until October 30th. For more information, contact Dorothy Walsh.

New Activities

Our first Bowling 4 Fun event at Shore Lanes in Merritt Island was a big hit! Several women veterans attended and had a blast throwing strikes, spares, splits, and gutter balls. This will be a monthly event, and it's just for fun (not a league). All women veterans are invited, and even if you don't bowl, you're welcome to join us and cheer on the others. The next Bowling 4 Fun event will be held at Shore Lanes in Merritt Island at 10:30 AM on October 10th. Fees vary depending on the number of games bowled. To sign up, call or text Linda at 321-591-3265.

Additionally, with the help of Keep Brevard Beautiful, we will conduct a Beach Clean-Up on October 21st from 9 AM to 11 AM at Pineda Beach Park, near A1A and Pineda Causeway. All women veterans are welcome to join. For more information, call or text Linda.

The newly created Lunch Bunch is designed as a relaxed, social event with no strings attached. This monthly pay-as-you-go lunch will be held at a different restaurant each month. October's lunch will be at Nomads Canteen, 617 W Eau Gallie Blvd, Melbourne, FL 32935, at 12 PM on October 24th. To sign up, call or text Linda at 321-591-3265.

If you are a woman veteran (or know one) interested in learning more about our services and activities, or if you are a civilian or business willing to donate to our organization, please contact Dorothy Walsh at 321-426-6736 or email dorothy@theirvoiceofhope.com.

Color Guard Report

By Don Pearsall



The VMC Color Guard had quite a few appearances over the last month or so. We were asked to the dedication of the new Viera Middle School, the opening of the new Veterans Park in Cape Canaveral, the dedication of Rolling Thunder Chapter one's POW /MIA chair in our plaza, and the presentation of colors at the General VMC Meetings.

We are still recruiting people who wish to serve with this elite team call me if you wish to join us or show up at the center for information (321) 313-2444



Supporting Veteran Families



Dorothy Walsh, Founder and CEO of Their Voice of Hope which supports women veterans and veteran children, receives a grant from MOAACC Good Deeds Foundation to support two family events. Donn Weaver, MOAACC GDF Pres and VMC VP, right, along with MOAACC Board Member and VMC President Dean Schaff present the check. GDF provided \$500 each for the TVOH Veteran families Trunk or Treat Event on Halloween in the VMC Park, and for a family Fun Day at a horse ranch in Titusville in the spring. The VMC serves as the venue for many such events and as the mechanism to bring veteran nonprofit organizations together to help each other.



**Brevard Veterans Memorial Center and the Brevard Veterans Council Presents
Veterans Day 2024**



**Monday November 11 th
9:30 A.M.
400 S. Sykes Creek Parkway,
Merritt Island**

Tribute to Veterans

concert * fundraiser * benefit

TUESDAY
NOVEMBER 12TH, 2024
7 PM TIL 9 PM
DOORS OPEN @ 6 PM



UNITY CHURCH OF
MERRITT ISLAND
210 N. TROPICAL TRAIL
MERRITT ISLAND, FL
32953

COLOR GUARD
PRESENTATION BY THE
VETERAN'S MEMORIAL
CENTER
(LED BY DON PEARSALL)

*suggested
love
offering*
\$10

PRAYER & POEM BY:
REVEREND
DEE DEE WILCHECK

MUSIC BY:
• STEVE KIRSNER
• THE JOY BAND (JAN
SALMON, KIM KOSLOSKY,
& SUZANNE BAKER)
• ART EDWARDS

SPEECH BY:
DON PEARSALL
(BREVARD VETERAN'S
CENTER CHAIRMAN)

ALSO ACCEPTING
DONATIONS OF:
• NON-
PERISHABLE
FOOD ITEMS
• NEW/ GENTLY
USED
CLOTHING
ITEMS
**BOXES WILL BE ON
THE PATIO**

food
Sing-along!
silent auction

ALL proceeds benefit various Veteran organizations below:

for more info: Contact Chris Boyle @ 321-453-4253 or
Ailene Pacheco @ 321-652-0680

"Bowling for Heroes"



a FUN Charity Event benefiting
Heroes United to Heal Foundation

GRAND PRIZE
Offshore Fishing Trip
with Fired Up Fishing Charters
Sponsored by Drop Zone Distilling

Where: **Heroes United to Heal**
Palm Bay
4851 Dairy Road
Melbourne, FL 32904

When: November 17th, 2024
2:00 - 4:00 pm

Tournament Rules

- Team Registration Fee is \$120 due upon registration.
- Grand Prize is NOT based on bowling score but will be awarded to the team that raises the most money and presents the largest donation on the day of the event.
- Team Categories.
 - League Teams (Scratch)
 - Corporate/Private Businesses
 - Hero category

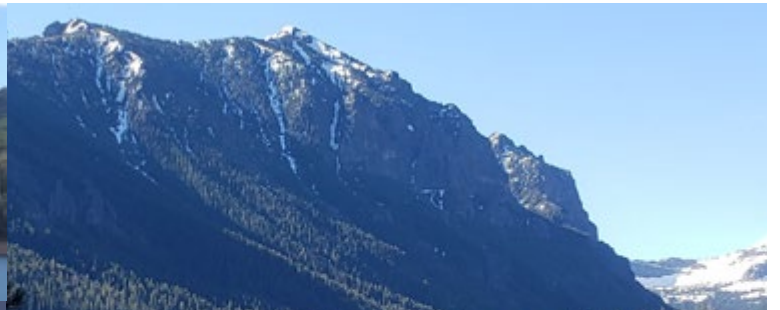
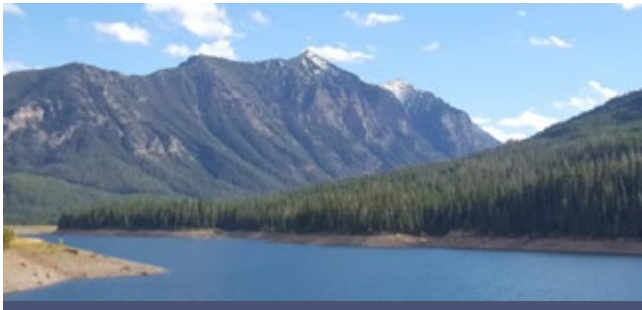
(Heroes are defined as those who've served, past or present, in the military or as a first responder)

REGISTER NOW >



Register by
November 8, 2024
at www.hu2h.org
Contact admin@hu2h.org
with any questions

All proceeds from funds raised will be donated to our mission to
End Veteran and First Responder Suicide.
Heroes United to Heal Foundation is a 501c3 nonprofit organization



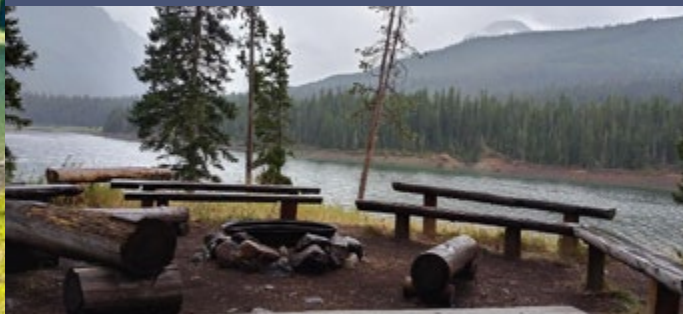
A TIME TO HEAL

Next Chapter: HUZH Big Sky Retreat

A healing journey for Heroes with invisible wounds.

SUMMER 2025
YELLOWSTONE/PARADISE VALLEY
MONTANA

For veterans and first responders, the next chapter following tragedy can be daunting.
This retreat is designed to help heroes find the strength to move forward.



9/11 Remembered at Veterans Memorial Center Despite Rain

The weather was ominous throughout the day, and just moments before the special ceremony at the Veterans Memorial Center (VMC) on Merritt Island, a light rain began to fall. Nonetheless, the remembrance of the events of September 11, 2001, went on, perhaps made even more poignant as approximately 250 attendees endured the rain.

The event was sponsored by Club 1013, a group of retired NYPD officers, and supported by over 70 local fire, police, and other first responders. During the 45-minute ceremony, the 23rd anniversary of the attacks in New York City, the Pentagon, and a field in Pennsylvania was solemnly remembered. Similar events took place in Brevard County, including in Palm Bay and at many local high schools, an important part of ensuring that future generations understand the significance of that day. Many college and high school students today were born after 9/11, and even some parents were too young to fully grasp its immediate impact at the time. As today's headlines remind us, the repercussions of 9/11 are far from over.

Al Boettjer of Club 1013 served as the Master of Ceremonies, recounting the human toll of nearly 3,000 lives lost on that day, along with the thousands more who have since succumbed to related health issues and those who fell in the fight against terrorism worldwide.

Rear Admiral Wayne Justice, USCG (Ret.) and Port Canaveral Commissioner, spoke as a native New Yorker who lost friends in the attack and was near the Pentagon that day. His words framed the personal impact on so many families.

VMC Vice President Donn Weaver, a Gold Star Father whose son was killed in Afghanistan in 2010, recounted the aftermath of 9/11. He shared that 7,049 Americans have died in combat since then, with many thousands more having perished or been injured due to their military service and toxic exposures resulting from 9/11. Keynote speaker Sheriff Wayne Ivey concluded the ceremony with heartfelt thanks to those who attended despite the rain, emphasizing the importance of honoring and remembering first responders and military personnel who went into the fire that day and continue to put service before self.

The Sea Cadets of the Courageous Division, based at the VMC, provided excellent support and were among the 30 young people present for the event. Many volunteers from VMC and Club 1013 helped ensure the event ran smoothly, with support from several sponsors, including the Good Deeds Foundation of the Cape Canaveral Chapter of the Military Officers Association of America.

As Sheriff Ivey and other speakers noted, it is our shared responsibility to use the national Patriot Day holiday and Day of Service to never forget 9/11 and its ongoing impact.



Sheriff Wayne Ivey anchors the Ceremony thanking those who braved the weather and urging all to Never Forget what happened 23 years ago and still impacts so many today



With most trying to stay dry under the museum leaves, the Ceremony begins



BCFD team folds the flag and ring the bell to honor 9/11 fallen.

Veterans Left Alone at the End, Receive Honorable Service at CCNC

By Donn Weaver



The second Brevard No One Veteran Left Behind (BNOVLB) Service was held at the Cape Canaveral National Cemetery (CCNC) on September 25. Over 140 volunteers and witnesses attended this Service, which had two significant parts.

First, the names and some biographical data of six veterans, nineteen family members, and one Ohio Army National Guardsman—well known in Brevard—were read aloud. These veterans and family members had been abandoned when they passed away, and their cremains were left unclaimed in Brevard County funeral homes for many years—in one case, a World

War I veteran’s cremains had remained unclaimed for nearly six decades. These individuals have now been honored by many and are finally at rest where they belong, at a beautiful VA/ NCA cemetery, joining over 10,000 others at their final duty station.

Second, CCNC staff members read the names of another 140 veterans who were laid to rest at CCNC in the past 15 months without family present. It was a moving and memorable service, covered by five media outlets, including Florida Today, which published a feature story on September 24.

CCNC, much like Arlington National Cemetery in Northern Virginia, is unique. More than 20 members of the Cape Canaveral Ladies attended the service, and they have been present at every CCNC burial where no family members were in attendance. Thanks to them, and the Arlington Ladies at ANC, no veteran or eligible family member is ever truly buried alone.

The North Brevard Honor Guard conducted full military honors during the service, fulfilling the promise made to all veterans: that they will never be forgotten and will be remembered by those who also served.

The next BNOVLB Service is tentatively planned for the Spring of 2025. There are an estimated 300-400 veterans and eligible family members whose cremains remain forgotten on funeral home shelves. The BNOVLB mission aims to ensure that their wait will not be much longer.

For more information or to volunteer for the next Service, please contact BNOVLB Coordinator, Donn Weaver.

A Huge Thank You to the IRCC Army Women for Their Support

By Donn Weaver

On September 25, the Army Women of the Indian River Colony Club (IRCC) visited the Veterans Memorial Center (VMC) to present another generous \$2,000 donation. In just over two years, they have contributed more than \$9,000 to the VMC. Pictured here, their president, Bobbie Greenwood (center left), presents the donation to VMC President Dean Schaaf in front of their plaque of honor at the VMC Memorial Plaza. VMC Vice President Donn Weaver (far left) looks on. A heartfelt thank you to the IRCC Army Women and all our special supporters!



VMC wins Space Coast Honors “Nonprofit of the Year” in 2024

Beginning in 1969, the Cocoa Beach Chamber of Commerce began awarding “Business Champion of the Year” to various businesses, business leaders, and nonprofit programs. In the 55 years since then, the Veterans Memorial Center (VMC)—founded in 1991—had never won this prestigious award or been recognized. This program has been re-branded as “Space Coast Honors” and is the biggest opportunity of the year for the Chamber to honor fellow businesses. Space Coast Honors nominated VCM in the Non-Profit category, With eight outstanding organizations competing in the nonprofit category in 2024, we were not expecting to break the drought.

Yet, on the evening of Friday, September 20, to our surprise and to loud applause, the VMC was selected as the top nonprofit for 2024! More than 400 people were in attendance as VMC Vice President Donn Weaver and BVC Chairman Don Pearsall accepted the award with gratitude on behalf of our 75 volunteers, 520 members, and the 74,000 veterans who live in Brevard County. The VMC also received a beautiful plexiglass trophy, which will be proudly displayed in the VMC lobby.

With the ribbon-cutting for the VMC Park Amphitheater and other major \$8.2 million projects launching on October 29, Fall 2024 is off to a fantastic start!



VMC Adds a New and Special Monument to the Memorial Plaza

by Donn Weaver

Rolling Thunder, FL-1 Chapter raised funds and, with the help of CSpray and other companies, created a new monument at the Veterans Memorial Center (VMC) Plaza. This monument is the Missing Man Chair, symbolizing unaccounted-for military service members from all conflicts since World War II. The POW/MIA Missing Man Chair honors the 81,000 service members whose remains have yet to be found. The concept originated in Brevard County in 1979, alongside the creation of the POW/MIA Flag.

Keeping the search and the memories alive is the primary mission of Rolling Thunder. With over 100 members, our VMC-based chapter is among the largest and most active in the state and country. Congratulations and heartfelt thanks to them for adding this meaningful new monument to the Plaza. A special thank you also to the VMC Color Guard for their participation in the dedication ceremony, further contributing to the occasion.

The granite chair, featuring a bronze plate, brick base, and protective cordon, was dedicated on National POW/MIA Recognition Day, September 20. More than 20 people attended the dedication, which was led by Rolling Thunder FL-1 members Chip Hanson, Walt Marshall, Billy Van Dorn, and Donn Weaver. Another brief ceremony is planned for the next Rolling Thunder FL-1 meeting or local event, but it was essential to unveil the monument on this significant day.



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Unofficial Brevard VMC Vets Calendar October 2024 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/>

OCTOBER 2024

11 Oct – Free Eighth Annual Every Day is Veterans

Day Event at Space Coast Center for Collaboration 1100 Rockledge Ave, US Rte 1, Rockledge. Celebrate veterans with food, drinks and many informational booths. Sponsored by One Senior Place. Call 321-251-6771 to register as a vendor or RSVP for attendance.

12 Oct – JROTC Raider Challenge Invitational Competition at the Veterans Memorial Center Park (0630-1300). Support hundreds of JROTC cadets engaging in five grueling events in 10 person male, female and mixed teams.

12 Oct – Space Coast Honor Flight to WashDC for selected veterans to visit their memorials. Guardian volunteers and other supporters welcome for ceremony to launch the flight – 0130 hours at the Senior Center in Wickham Park, Melbourne. Contact SCHF on 321-456-7031 or info@spacecoasthonorflight.org for more information.

29 Oct – VMC Library Discussions Series, The Land of Disenchantment: The Civi War in New Mexico.1800 1930. Presented by Hank Rhodes off the VMC Library Staff. Drinks and Snacks served.

22 Oct – Monthly Women Veterans Luncheon “It Takes a Village:” at Veterans Memorial Center Gray Hall 1130-1330. Special celebration of collaboration of several veteran organizations to support Women Veterans from every Service and every Era. Contact Dorothy Walsh of Their Voice of Hope (sponsors) to RSVP or for questions. dwalshusa@gmail.com

29 Oct – Brevard Parks and Rec arranged Ground Breaking Ceremony at 1000 hours on \$8.2M phase three Veterans Memorial Park Upgrades. Includes Amphitheater and many more improvements such as power, irrigation, lighting, planting, new restrooms and food prep area, parking, new entrance, etc. Open to all to celebrate the capstone of an effort that began when Phase I started in 2016. Thanks so much to County, MIRA, TDC and State funding for this amazing project approved by the County Commissioners

in late August. Contact Parks and Rec or the VMC for more information.

31 Oct – BCSO Shred Event in VMC Park 0900-1030. BCSO conducts monthly shred services at various locations and will release their 2024 schedule in January.

31 Oct – Second Annual Trunk or Treat Halloween Party VMC Park 1500-1800. Sponsored by Their Voice of Hope for children of veterans and their families. Lots of games, food and kids fun. For more information to participate or donate contact dorothy@theirvoiceofhope.com or call 321-426-6736.

NOVEMBER 2024

02 Nov – JROTC Raider Challenge DISTRICT CHAMPIONSHIP Invitational Competition at the Veterans Memorial Center Park (0630-1300). Support hundreds of JROTC cadets engaging in five grueling events in 10 person male, female and mixed teams.

10 Nov – NVHS's Seventh Annual Homestretch 5K for At-Risk and Homeless Vets. For details and to register see Latest Events and Updates on: nvhs.org

09 Nov – St Francis Reflections Lifestage CareVeterans Day 5K at VMC Park. 0800-1030 More details in Oct.

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



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	jdavie976@gmail.com
Paul Julian	321-452-9414	pjulian54@gmail.com

VIDEOGRAPHERS

Joe Davie	321-626-5462	jdavie976@gmail.com
Paul Julian	321-452-9414	pjulian54@gmail.com

VHP SUPPORT

Bill Wilkening	321-428-3422	Hank Rhodes	321-799-1219
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