



THE VETERANS MEMORIAL CENTER

COUNCIL COURIER

Space Coast Honors Non-Profit of the Year 2024

FEBRUARY 2025



A Publication of the Brevard Veterans Council & Veterans Memorial Center



R SCRUGGS

WHAT'S INSIDE

Brevard JROTC Air Rifle Teams Excel

At least five Brevard JROTC Air Rifle Teams are expected to qualify for the State championships coming up soon

– page 9

Dean Schaaf Honored at Patriots Awards Dinner

The Liberty Bell Museum has invited the community to join them at the Patriot Awards Dinner at 6 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 27, at The Grand Manor, 1450 Sarno Road.

– page 10

Six Suicide Prevention Resources for Veterans

The VA offers programs and resources to support Veterans in crisis or struggling with mental health challenges—regardless of discharge status, VA benefits enrollment, or service history.

– page 16

“Salute to Service”

A Patriotic Event at Space Coast Stadium Receives Acclaim.

Read more on page 8.

FEBRUARY 2025

COURIER CONTENTS

- President's Report • Page 3
- Council Report • Page 4
- Secretary's Report • Page 5
- Library Report • Page 6
- Book Report • Page 6
- Event Calendar • Page 19
- Boosters • Page 20

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 20 December 2024:
[List of Board 2024-2025](#)

As of 30 October 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)

I am sure everyone is looking forward to warmer weather as we go into February! At least we experienced some "winter" weather. Don't forget Groundhog Day on February 2nd, though those up north are more interested in this day than us Floridians are. Also on the second is our annual Four Chaplains program, please plan on attending. Again, this year the USMC Detachment 513 is presenting the program. A big Bravo Zulu (BZ) goes to the Marines.

There are several JROTC events taking place in our park this month. These events normally bring in around 250 cadets and at least that many parents and observers. Check out Donn Weaver's unofficial VMC veterans' calendar, posted in this edition. Some other events that may be of interest are the annual Pioneer Day Celebration at Sam's house and St Luke's church on north Merritt Island. The VMC museum will have a display at the event. Back Brevard Heroes car show fundraiser on February 22 near Pennys at the Mall. March 15 will be the Last Naval Battle of the Revolutionary War Commemoration. This is always a well-attended and colorful event with the many groups displaying their colors and period costumes.

I attended the American Space Museum sponsored Astronaut Memorial event at Sand Point Park in Titusville on Sunday, January 26. The program was a patriotic and reverent event honoring our fallen astronaut heroes from NASA's three tragic events resulting in the loss of seventeen heroes. These events were the Apollo one crew in a fire on the launch pad, the Space Shuttle Challenger on lift off and the Space Shuttle Columbia on its return to earth. The Keynote speaker was Andy Allen, Astronaut and CEO of Aerodyne Industries. Andy flew three shuttle missions, STS-46, 62, and 75. All seventeen were honored with a picture of the astronaut, reading of a short biography, and a procession that laid a flower on their plaque, located around the flagpole at Sand Point Park. I had the honor of carrying the flower to honor Ellison Onizuka, one of the seven astronauts who perished on the Challenger. I personally knew all of the astronauts that perished on the Columbia. There was an Israeli flag flying paying tribute to Israel's first astronaut, Ilan Ramon who was a member of the Columbia crew. The tribute was very moving and one that I attend every year.

Thanks to Kristi and her crew for their continued hard work in finishing the upgrading of our entryway, complete with new, comfortable, chairs. More to come! God bless our fallen veteran and astronaut heroes, MIAs, and POWs and God bless our armed forces.

Dean
Go Navy beat Army!
Go Kansas City Chiefs in the Super Bowl!



Israeli Astronaut, Ilan Ramon was honored.



American Space Museum sponsored Astronaut Memorial event.

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Council Report

**Don Pearsall,
Chairman
USA (Fmr)**

As the council winds down it's operations, we are in transition of the programs and responsibilities we have worked on for so many years. These will be turned over to the new Brevard Veterans Memorial Center.

I have seen many changes over the years, some good and some not so good. One thing is sure, is that I have made many friends here and met so many heroes. The Center is rich with military history. Not just the library, but the members that make everything work. I have enjoyed being the Chairman of such an amazing organization and will always remember all who made this job easy. There is so much pride and dedication I've witnessed; you would not think we are all volunteers.

As for me, I intend to spend a lot of time traveling. I've seen more foreign countries then I have states. I do plan to occasionally volunteer to help at events, spend time in Massachusetts with my daughter and the UP of Michigan with my youngest son. If global conditions allow, my plan does include a long-time bucket list trip to Israel for the 'Walk where Jesus Walked Tour'.

One last time, GO ARMY BEAT NAVY



The 242nd Commemoration of
**The Last Naval Battle
of the Revolutionary War**

Saturday, March 15, 2025

Veteran's Memorial Center

400 S Sykes Creek PKY, M.I., FL

1000-1100 a.m.

**Presented by the Sons, Daughters, and
Children of the American Revolution**



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





Secretary's Report

Kristi Blanchard
USA (Fmr)

It's been a busy January at the VMC and I'm happy to report all of the progress being made in updating the facility. One of my other specialties is to advise and assist with technology. The old video camera system originated in China and the company had been banned by the US Government two years ago and prevented us from using the mobile app. Alliance Cyber Gives (Cocoa Village) is a non-profit that installed the new US-made camera system.



The BVMC has been working for months to become a Veteran Safe Place. This designation comes after 50 of our 400+ members take the 20-minute online training. If you prefer in-person training, join us at the BVMC for a presentation by Henry Angulo of The Fire Watch. The Fire Watch is a non-profit partner of ours, dedicated to preventing Veteran Suicide. Please join us at our Wednesday, Feb 12 General Membership meeting at 09:30 AM for Henry's presentation. Thanks!

2024 YEAR IN REVIEW

- 153 VETERAN SAFE PLACES** +50 IN 2024
- 8,162 WATCH STANDERS** +2,363 IN 2024
- 9,794 VETERAN REFERRALS** +2,834 IN 2024
- 27% NE FLORIDA VETERAN SUICIDE REDUCTION (2019-2022)**

FW THE FIRE WATCH | STAND AGAINST VETERAN SUICIDE

Veterans Connections

By Don Pearsall

As expected, we had a very busy last quarter of 2024 and so far, this year it looks the same. We budget our funds to allow so much to be spent on each veteran in every category. For example, \$100.00 for Electric, \$65.00 for gasoline and so on. Our major supporters include IRCC Foundation and MOACC and a few smaller private individuals. We work with veterans and their families and help them realign their budget for all their needs.

We will also teach them how to effectively shop for bargains in grocery stores, and on occasion, purchase the family a membership at Costco or Sam's Club where they are able to get more bang for their buck. In every case, we oversee their spending to be sure they are putting the money to good use. Last week during the cold weather, we placed a Navy veteran and his family of four in a motel for two nights when the furnace failed in their mobile home. Another case, we helped an older Vietnam Veteran with housing and food as he just was released from being ill with Pneumonia.

This is what we've done since 2013. In those years, we have helped hundreds of veterans and their families. One of the most complicated was a Brevard veteran and his family who were stranded in Pennsylvania while traveling home. He lost his wallet and had no cash or cards. He showed us his DD214 he had smartly downloaded to his phone, so through our bank we transferred enough money for gas, food, and lodging for them to get back to Cocoa.

As long as there are veterans and their families needing assistance, we will continue and improve the way we operate.

REMEMBERING The Four Immortal Chaplains of World War II

Join Us

Sunday, February 2
2:00 - 3:00 pm
Veterans Memorial Center
Gray Hall
(Behind the Merritt Square Mall)

Contact the VMC or Donn Weaver (757-871-6576) for info



—Presented by the Marine Corps League Detachment 513 of Brevard County

—Includes Reenactment and the Full Story of the Bravery of Four Army Chaplains who gave up everything to save fellow soldiers.

—Special message from the Four Chaplains Memorial Foundation to the VMC in honor of our endorsed Four Immortal Chaplains and All Chaplains Monument





VMC Librarian Report

Hank Rhodes
USN (Fmr)

This month, we honor one of our longest-serving volunteer librarians: Doug Bisset.



A native of Fairfield, Connecticut, Doug graduated from Lafayette College and was commissioned in the U.S. Army. Doug served from 1970 to 1972 in the Transportation Corps.

After a posting at Fort Eustis, Virginia, Doug oversaw port operations at

Inchon, Korea, which is best known as the site of the joint Army-Navy amphibious counterstrike under General MacArthur during the Korean War. Doug notes how the exceptional tidal range of thirty feet complicated the process of loading and unloading cargo, just as it proved to be a challenge to planning and executing MacArthur's operation in 1950.

In Doug's experience, most Koreans appreciate how the United States and allied nations helped them preserve freedom.

Doug's civilian career was in the financial and investment real estate field, based in New York City. His final position before retirement was Director of Asset Management at J.P. Morgan.

A member of the library staff since its inception, Doug also spearheads the Memorial Bench and Memorial Tree programs, and serves on the Board of Directors for the MOAACC Good Deeds Foundation. Additionally, he is active in the Sons of the American Revolution.

As part of the Veterans Back to Class initiative, Doug reenacts as a soldier from the Revolution, in order to provide young people with a more tangible sense of our American heritage. While depicting a soldier from a more recent conflict, one student approached him and asked "Did you know my Dad in World War Two?"

Doug is father to three and grandfather to six, with a seventh on the way.

We at the Brevard VMC are fortunate to have Doug's capabilities committed to so many of our programs.

Book Report: "Proudly We Served: The Men of the USS Mason" by Mary Pat Kelly

Book Report by Hank Rhodes

During World War II, the primary mission of the USS Mason (DE-529) was to escort convoys across the dangerous waters of the Atlantic, thus providing troops and supplies essential to defeating the Nazi threat. After one oceanic transit, during a port stop in Belfast, Northern Ireland, one of the Mason's crew made an intriguing statement:

"Funny how I had to come all the way across the ocean to a foreign country before I got to enjoy the feeling of being an American."

The speaker was an American of African heritage, and despite all the promises of equal citizenship by the U.S. government, his country severely curtailed his rights and status. He was serving in a Navy that historically restricted people of African ancestry to a small number of shipboard jobs.

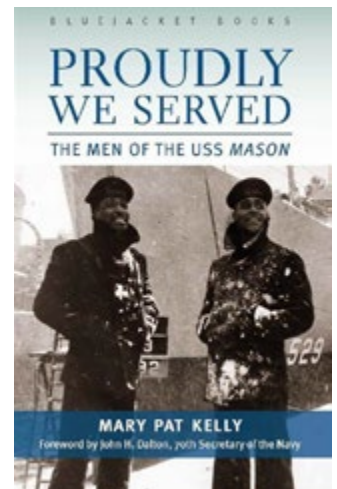
The USS Mason, in fact, represented a departure from past practices. Excepting the officers and senior enlisted personnel, the entire crew were African-American sailors who provided the full range of mariners' skills: navigation, communications, engineering, repair, and combat systems.

The men of the Mason met all challenges and added their names to the long roll of heroes of World War II. In addition to the ever-present threat of U-boat attack, the convoys and their escorts had to brave the powerful storms of mid-ocean.

By their actions, the men of the Mason not only helped assure victory, but they also demolished many toxic prejudices that infected both the Navy and the nation at large. Their legacy of excellence paved the way for the integration of the Navy a few years after World War II. Coming in for particular praise for his leadership is the Mason's first Captain, Lieutenant Commander William Blackford.

Told in the form of personal remembrances and document excerpts with a minimum of narrative intrusion, this book is very engaging and highly recommended. It is a story of courage and inspiration.

Proudly We Served is found in the VMC library as "WWIIEC-16."



Park and Plaza Report

By Donn Weaver

The month of January was a very busy one with 14 new Brick orders in the Memorial Plaza and a new Bench and Tree order for the Park. Our CSpray partners also completed some great upgrades to the Plaza and have turned in a plan for 2025 for ongoing maintenance and improvements including repainting and cleaning all monuments and many bricks and benches. This contract will keep our plaza among the best looking and appropriately honor those thousands of names etched on bricks, benches and stones throughout our Memorial Plaza.

As expected, the biggest news comes from our accelerating construction project led by Ivey's to build in Veterans Memorial Park the new amphitheater. The project also includes another new building for restrooms, concessions, storage and a food dining area with tables along with power, lighting, irrigation, planting and more. The \$8.2 Million project is on schedule despite recent rain delays.

Starting 1 Feb there will still be more than 20 events in the other 70 percent of the Park not under construction which you will see on the VMC Calendar and website. Parking adjustments will be required, but our support to JROTC events and much more will not get off track during the building project. We remain hopeful all might be completed in late 2025 so stay tuned and be patient.

Our VMC leadership team meets weekly in the Ivey's trailer in the Park along with MIRA, Parks and Rec and other officials for updates and ongoing involvement in many phases, This includes helping to choose color schemes, flooring, bathroom fixtures, etc., just like we did with the Museum in 2015-16. MIRA, Space Coast Daily and the VMC have also begun video and photo logs of the progress of construction. Next month we will share website information where you can witness the progress. Below is an initial drone shot of the cleared area with tons of earth brought in to form the base for the amphitheater and concession building, Thanks to Roger Scruggs for that great shot. More to follow in each Courier.

Contact the ExComm with any questions. Exciting times ahead.



American Legion Aux Unit 344 Brings Christmas Sprit to Vet Families in Need

By Donn Weaver

Just before Christmas, the Brevard Veterans Memorial Center based American Legion Aux Unit 344 hosted Santa and provided great food and gifts to more than 35 parents and children of veteran families living on the edge at their annual Christmas Party. This time they moved away from the VMC due to scheduling conflicts. For the fourth year in a row, MOAACC's Good Deeds Foundation (GDF) provided a portion of the funding costs. Taking care of veterans and their children in need is a big part of the BVMC and GDF Missions.

Hopefully this event, and many more around the county, made for better holidays for many facing challenging economic times.



“Salute to Service”: A Patriotic Event at Space Coast Stadium Receives Acclaim

By Donn Weaver

On a clear, warmer day after a week of cold and rain, about 1,500 people gathered from all over Brevard and from many states in the country. The reason was the opening ceremony and first game of the 2025 Challenge Cup slow pitch softball championships. Led by Bob Grey and organized by United States Specialty Sports Association (USSSA), which runs Space Coast Stadium and the complex that once housed The Washington Nationals Spring Training games, the opening ceremony and Huey flyover really resonated with those in attendance.

The tournament pitted 20 teams of first responders and active duty/military veteran teams from as far away as California against each other. The first game played after the opening ceremonies was a contest between Patrick Space Force Base military and Brevard Sheriff, Fire, EMT and police members. Sheriff Ivey managed the First Responder Team and threw out one of the ceremonial first pitches coordinated with Army veteran and Gold Star Father Donn Weaver.

The Opening ceremony set the stage and included:

MOTORCYCLES: 30 bikes from Rolling Thunder FL-1 and Combat Vets 20-1 did a great job and made a huge impact.

GOLOR GUARDS: The theme was Past/Present and Future presented by the Sons of the American Revolution (SAR); Marine Corps League Veterans and the Viera HS Army JROTC. They also had 25 cadets in support. Together, all three color guards brought about a huge cheer.

NATIONAL ANTHEM: Great job by Delinda Griffis. She's in the Lonnie and Delinda Beach Band and is a Brevard Parks and Recreation employee.

CEREMONIAL FIRST PITCH: Kristi Blanchard, Jim Carleton, Dave Clayton, Susie Dabrowski, Ernesto Bottoms and Donn Weaver threw out other ceremonial first pitches to honor the Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force, Space Force and Coast Guard respectively.

VENDORS: More than 15 vendors from veteran organizations and 501(c)3 nonprofits who set up before the game.

Plans have already begun to make this an annual event as the USSSA National Headquarters in Viera seeks to offer a great venue to produce a “Salute to Service” celebrating so many who put military and first responder service before self.



VP Donn Weaver, First Pitch representing the Coast Guard and First Responders



During the amazing Huey Flyover



SAR, Marine Corps League and Viera HS JROTC Color Guards



Sec Kristi Blanchard, The Army First Pitch over the plate!

Brevard JROTC Air Rifle Teams Excel

By Donn Weaver

Each winter most of Brevard's 14 High School JROTC programs compete in Air Rifle Marksmanship Competition among themselves and in some cases far beyond our county. Among the best of the JROTC Rifle Teams has been for many years the Palm Bay Jr/Sr Magnet High School Marine JROTC Cadets. On 10-11 January they hosted the Commanders Cup Championship Meet with Army, Air Force, Space Force and even a couple other county schools attending.

At least five Brevard JROTC Air Rifle Teams are expected to qualify for the State championships coming up soon, but most will be chasing Palm Bay. Led by two teams of four made up of mostly sharpshooting female cadets, Palm Bay has completed state qualifications and will shoot for the Marine JROTC National title in Anniston, AL in mid-February. They are currently ranked 3rd and 11th among the Marine units in the entire nation.

The Palm Bay program received funding in 2023-24 from Brevard Public Schools and other donors to construct a state of the art indoor, electronic target range in a standalone building. The facility is likely among the best such ranges for JROTC in Florida and many other states. Other schools have been working hard to field good rifle teams and improve their own facilities to help them do so. Most have to borrow cafeteria or other space on the weekends to practice, but Rockledge and Heritage JROTC programs also got help recently to refurbish their existing ranges. Rockledge resurfaced the 1961 floor of what was then the old Cocoa High School. Heritage is upgrading their targets and other equipment as well.

Perhaps most surprising is the rapid improvement of the Space Force JROTC Rifle Teams at Space Coast High School. They have upgraded targets and their facility with donations which have helped them excel this year. As a result, SCHS JROTC Rifle Teams have qualified for the State USAF Air Rifle Championship in late January and the National USAF JROTC Championship in mid-February.

JROTC programs raise funds for such teams from many sources including car washes, parent groups, and others. The Good Deeds Foundation of MOAA Cape Canaveral Chapter is among their largest donors with over an average of \$4500 per school in the 2024-25 school year. GDF also supported floor resurfacing at target upgrades at four schools this year.

Continued success to all JROTC Air Rifle teams as the community continues to support one of the best JROTC programs in the State and, perhaps, the country. Thanks to all JROTC Instructors and schools for supporting our youth enrolled in JROTC which now averages close to 150 students in all 14 high schools.



Liberty Bell Museum is hosting Patriots Awards Dinner; Dean Schaaf to Recieve Award

By Jo Solley Hansen, Board Secretary Honor America, Inc.

This year, The Liberty Bell Museum has invited the community to join them at the Patriot Awards Dinner at 6 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 27, at The Grand Manor, 1450 Sarno Road. The event will honor several remarkable individuals who have dedicated their time, talent, and treasure toward improving the community. The dinner's proceeds will support the Liberty Bell Museum, an iconic treasure.

Housed in a historic water tower, the Liberty Bell Museum is more than just a place to view artifacts – it is a place to connect with both national and local history. One of its crown jewels is its full-size replica of the Liberty Bell, cast in 1976 by the same foundry that made the original bell in 1752.

Funded by Brevard County schoolchildren, this bell represents the community's deep commitment to preserving history for future generations. At the Liberty Bell Museum, visitors have the chance to ring the bell themselves with a rubber mallet and join the "Ding Dong Club."

The Liberty Bell Museum also boasts exhibits featuring military uniforms, artifacts from Brevard's frontier days, early technology, American history, and a moving 9/11 display, including an I-beam from the Twin Towers. The Liberty Bell Museum is a place of remembrance, reflection, and connection. Located at 1601 Oak St., the facility is run by volunteers and relies completely on donations to continue its important work.

Each year, The Liberty Bell Museum celebrates at their annual Patriot Awards Dinner, individuals who have gone "above and beyond." This year's recipients are:

- John Casey – For his dedication to improving Brevard's recreational spaces and spearheading Hurricane efforts multiple times | Brian Jensen – For his leadership in supporting veterans and his active involvement in several charitable organizations in the region.
- Mark Pieloch – For his generous philanthropy and commitment to both people and animals, including his work creating community spaces like the Eau Gallie Pieloch Dog Park.
- Dean Schaaf – For his longstanding dedication as president of the Veterans Memorial Center, growing the facility, establishing the Memorial Park, and most recently, breaking ground on a new amphitheater.
- Rose Yeary – For her tireless support of veterans and military families, always going the extra mile through volunteerism and advocacy And the Young Patriot Award winners are:
- Joel Freeland – For leadership in academics, JROTC and Scouting, in which he created and installed a web-based interactive tour of the Liberty Bell Museum as a part of his Eagle project
- Alex Gregoire – For his exceptional contributions to student government, JROTC and varsity athletics, and for leading by example in the community at large.

LIBERTY BELL MUSEUM
PATRIOT Awards DINNER
FEBRUARY 27
2025
STARTS AT 6:00PM

Honorees
 John Casey
 Brian Jensen
 Mark Pieloch
 Dean Schaaf
 Rose Yeary

Young Patriots
 Joel Freeland
 Alex Gregoire

Table Sponsors
Bronze: \$550
 Color Ad inside page in Program
Silver: \$750
 Color Ad inside program Back Cover
Gold: \$1000
 Color Ad on Program Back Cover

TICKET \$65 /Person

SCAN ME

Make checks payable to:
 Honor America (501 c3 charity)
 mail to: 1601 Oak St., Melbourne, FL 32901
 RSVP: (321) 373-2311
 or honoramericaf@gmail.com

Questions: honoramericaf@gmail.com

Tickets are available by calling (321) 373-2311 or by email at honoramericaf@gmail.com. You can also mail checks to Honor America at 1601 Oak St. Melbourne, Fla., 32901.

About The Liberty Bell Museum: The Liberty Bell Museum, part of Honor America Inc. is a nonprofit organization dedicated to preserving American heritage and fostering patriotism. The organization supports educational programs and events, ensuring that both young and old alike have access to our country's rich history.

Detachment 513 Marine Corps League

By Dennis Herring, Adjutant

WHAT IS A DEVIL DOG?

Have you ever heard Marines refer to each other as “Devil Dogs” and wondered where the term comes from? Is it a compliment, an inside joke, or a mark of distinction?

The term Devil Dog is one of high regard within the United States Marine Corps. To be called a Devil Dog is to be recognized for the tenacity, skill, and aggressive determination required for success—especially in combat.

Origins of the Name

The nickname dates back to World War I—often called the “Great War” or the “War to End All Wars.” As the United States entered the conflict, a small force of Marines was deployed to Europe under Army General “Black Jack” Pershing. The German Army, advancing rapidly toward Paris after the failure of the Maginot Line, was overwhelming French forces, threatening their collapse.

About 40 miles east of Paris, American forces—including U.S. Marines—engaged superior German numbers near the village of Château-Thierry and the surrounding Belleau Wood. An article from Encyclopedia Britannica describes the battle:

As the Germans extended their offensive against the French on the Marne River, they encountered U.S. 2nd and 3rd Divisions at Château-Thierry and Belleau Wood. When nearby French troops began to retreat, they urged the Americans to do the same. This prompted the now-famous response from U.S. Marine Captain Lloyd W. Williams: “Retreat? Hell, we just got here!”

Inspired, some French troops turned back to fight alongside the Marines. The Americans dug in and held their position with expert marksmanship, repelling the German assault on June 4. Despite being outnumbered, they launched an offensive on June 6, suffering heavy losses—the highest in Marine Corps history at the time. The brutal, close-quarters fighting continued for weeks, with Marines making six separate attacks before finally expelling the Germans from Belleau Wood on June 26.

Impressed by the relentless fighting spirit of the Marines, the Germans reportedly referred to them as “Teufel Hunden,” meaning “Devil Dogs.” The nickname became a symbol of Marine Corps pride and tradition, still honored today.

A Legacy of Honor

From the moment a Marine begins training—whether enlisted or officer—the title Devil Dog is instilled as a badge of honor, signifying valor and tradition. This legacy is even commemorated at Belleau Wood, France, where the “Devil Dog Fountain” stands. According to legend, drinking from its waters grants Marines an additional ten years of life.

The Military Order of the Devil Dogs (MODD) Within the Marine Corps League, the title “Devil Dog” has been elevated even further. The Military Order of the Devil Dogs (MODD) is an exclusive honor society within the League, built on both camaraderie and tradition.

Membership is by peer selection, and those chosen must fully embrace the spirit of the order—this includes speaking in “dog talk” (woof-woof), respecting the hierarchy of ranks, and advancing through the stages of Pup, Devil Dog, and Pedigree Devil Dog. Meetings, known as “growls,” are held regularly, and any failure to uphold protocol results in playful “fines” for disobedient dogs.

Beyond tradition, MODD members actively serve their communities. Local Pound 273, for example, has gathered supplies for the Brevard County Sheriff’s Office animal shelter, while funds raised nationally support Children’s Hospitals and Veterans Hospitals.

For more information or to support the local MODD Pound, contact a member of the Marine Corps League, Detachment 513:

Email: detachment513marinecorpsleague@gmail.com

Website: <https://militaryorderofthedevildogs.org/contact-us/>

Or simply ask any Detachment 513 member:

“Are you a member of the MILITARY ORDER OF THE DEVIL DOGS?”



Devil Dog Fountain in BELLEAU WOOD, FR.

4TH ANNUAL GOLF TOURNAMENT

HOSTED BY



TITLE SPONSOR

NORTHROP GRUMMAN
Management Club



PROCEEDS TO
BENEFIT NVHS

APRIL 11, 2025
ROCKLEDGE COUNTRY CLUB

SCRAMBLE START
8:00AM
PER PLAYER
\$100

EVENT SPONSORSHIPS

PLATINUM \$5000

- Gold Plus
- Podium Time to highlight business to attendees
- Own Banner at the Event
- Prominent logo on event banner
- 4 Complimentary Golf Entries (8 Total)
- Choice of front inside or back cover for Ad
- 4 Drink tickets (8 Total)

GOLD \$2500

- Silver Plus
- Event Day Announcer Mentions
- Post event marketing mentions (press release, social, blog)
- 2 Complimentary Golf Entries (4 Total)
- Full page program ad
- 4 drink tickets
- Preferred Seating

SILVER \$1000

- Bronze Plus
- Social Media Mentions
- Vendor Tent at Event
- 2 Complimentary Golf Entries

BRONZE \$500

- Hole Sponsor Plus
- Logo on event banner
- Half page program ad

HOLE \$250

- Hole sign
- Logo on event page

WIN A NEW CAR!



MELBOURNE

HOLE IN ONE!



SIGN UP TODAY
NVHS.ORG/EVENTS

SEND LOGOS TO:
EVENTS@NVHS.ORG

Six Suicide Prevention Resources for Veterans

Suicide is preventable. There is hope. The VA offers programs and resources to support Veterans in crisis or struggling with mental health challenges—regardless of discharge status, VA benefits enrollment, or service history. Here are six key resources every Veteran should know about:

1. Veterans Crisis Line

If you or a Veteran you know is in crisis, help is available 24/7:

Call: Dial 988, then Press 1

Chat Online: VeteransCrisisLine.net/Chat

Text: 838255

This free and confidential service connects Veterans with trained responders who provide immediate support and link them to further resources, including local VA Suicide Prevention Coordinators.

2. Veterans Self-Check Quiz

Sometimes, stress and depression build up before we recognize the warning signs. The Veterans Self-Check Quiz is an anonymous, voluntary, and confidential tool that helps assess your mental well-being. A VA responder will review your answers and offer personalized feedback, including suggestions for follow-up resources if needed.

Take the quiz: VeteransCrisisLine.net

3. Safety Plan App

For those struggling with suicidal thoughts, having a Safety Plan can be life-saving. The VA's Safety Plan App helps Veterans create a personalized plan with coping strategies, support contacts, and reminders of reasons to live. This step-by-step approach provides a structured way to manage crises and stay safe.

Download via the VA website

4. Keep It Secure Program

Reducing access to lethal means—such as firearms, medications, or sharp objects—can be a critical suicide prevention step. The Keep It Secure program educates Veterans on how to safely store these items to create time and space between suicidal thoughts and actions.

Learn more: va.gov

5. Veteran Training Portal

Mental health challenges can impact daily life. The Veteran Training Portal offers self-paced online courses on problem-solving, stress management, anger control, parenting, and relationship-building. These free, evidence-based tools are designed specifically for Veterans and their families.

Visit: veterantraining.va.gov

6. “Don’t Wait. Reach Out.” Program

Whether you’re dealing with career struggles, grief, isolation, a disability, or relationship difficulties, VA has resources to help. The “Don’t Wait. Reach Out.” program connects Veterans with tailored support options.

Explore support options: va.gov/REACH

You Are Not Alone

You do not need to be enrolled in VA health care or benefits to access these lifesaving resources. If you or someone you know is struggling, reach out—help is always available.

For More Information, visit va.gov/orlando-health-care



Valentine's Day Luncheon Cruise

BIG KID ADVENTURE SERIES

951 KIWANIS ISLAND PARK ROAD, MERRITT ISLAND, FL 32952

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2025 | 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM

\$85.00 PER PERSON (FEE INCLUDES FULL MEAL WITH CRUISE)

Spend Valentine's Day aboard the "Barbara Lee" for a 3-hour luncheon cruise on the St. John's River.

Boarding for the Valentine's Day Cruise begins at 10:30a.m. A full meal from appetizer to dessert will be served with seven different entrée selections. A full cash bar will also be available (*not included*). Lunch will be served on the top deck which has stairs to access. We suggest wearing comfortable shoes and a light jacket. Cruise the St. Johns River and enjoy one of Florida's natural treasures.

For more information or to make reservations, please call Delinda Griffis (321)633-1874.



Brevard County Parks and Recreation
Central Area Operations
840 Forrest Avenue, Cocoa, FL 32922
www.brevardparks.com





YOUNG EAGLES FLIGHT RALLY

Sponsored by EAA Chapter 724, Merritt Island Airport

For Children and Grandchildren (8 Through 17 Years Old) of:

Military:

Law Enforcement & First Responders:

- Gold Star Families
- Critically Wounded Service Personnel
- Those Who Lost Their Battle With Depression

- Killed in the Line of Duty
- Critically Wounded in the Line of Duty
- Those Who Lost Their Battle With Depression

Cost: Free Flight and Aviation Intro
Date: February 15, 2025

FAA Approved Aircraft & Licensed Pilots
Each Seat on Each Aircraft is Insured

Location: Merritt Island Airport
900 Airport Rd.
Merritt Island, FL 32952
“Follow The Signs at the Gate”

Bring your camera!

Parents or Guardians Must Register Online For This Opportunity

<https://youngeaglesday.org/?12312> The Young Eagles Coordinator is: Don White, 321-266-7410

The permission forms must be signed in ink and brought to the event by the parent or legal guardian. Photocopies cannot be accepted. Your Child’s name and flight will be will be entered into <https://www.eaa.org/eaayouth/free-ye-flights/eaayoung-eagles-logbook> so that they may review it for many years.

Background:

Began in 1992, with 2.3 million children flown to date. Originally conceived to introduce 1.0 million children to aviation before the Wright Brothers 100th Anniversary of flight. It has continued on after 31 years. Past Honorary National Chairpersons have been: General Chuck Yeager, Actor and Aviator Harrison Ford, And Captain “Sully” Sullenberger of the “Miracle on the Hudson” fame.

Also: All participating families are formally invited to the Brevard County Military Museum, 400 S. Sykes Creek Parkway, Merritt Island, FL 32952. The Director is Mr. Donn Weaver, 757-871-6576, VP VMC and Gold Star Coordinator.

Support by Association of the United States Army, Space Coast Chapter:
<https://www.ausea.org/chapters/space-coast-chapter>
<https://www.facebook.com/search/top?q=ausea%20space%20coast>



U.S. Space Force
Space Launch Delta 45 Public Affairs Office
1201 Edward H. White II Street, Patrick SFB, FL 32925-3237

Jan. 21, 2025

Public Advisory

Release #01212025-01

Contact: Space Launch Delta 45 Public Affairs Office
Website: www.Patrick.Spaceforce.mil
Email: SLD45.PA.PublicAffairs@Spaceforce.mil
Phone: 321-494-5933

South Gate construction begins at Patrick SFB, Jan. 27, 2025

The Patrick Space Force Base South Gate construction project begins Mon., Jan. 27 and is expected to continue until late spring or early summer of 2026. A full closure on Feb. 2 is scheduled, reopening Feb 3.

Key points during construction:

- **Full closure Feb. 2:** The South Gate will be completely closed on Sunday, Feb. 2, to allow contractors to implement a new traffic pattern. It is expected to reopen the morning of Monday, Feb. 3.
- **Reduced Capacity:** The South Gate will remain open during construction but will run at reduced capacity, with only one inbound and one outbound lane. Occasional full closures will be necessary to adjust the traffic pattern.
- **Patrick SFB East Gate encouraged:** To alleviate congestion and enhance safety, personnel and visitors are encouraged to use the East Gate (off A1A Hwy.) as much as possible, especially to avoid congestion on the Pineda Causeway ramps.
- **Occasional Closures:** There will be occasional closures to accommodate adjustments in traffic patterns as the project progresses.
- **Access to Golf Course, Marina:** The Golf Course and Marina will remain accessible throughout the project.

To read more about the project, follow this link: [Patrick Space Force Base South Gate Construction > Space Launch Delta 45 > Article Display](#)

Advertise in the Courier

RATES

- Business Card: \$50 per year
- Quarter Page Color: \$150 per year
- Half Page Color: \$250 per year

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

Ads are in support of the VMC, a 501(c)3 organization, and may be tax deductible. Funds will be used to improve the Courier and expand circulation in 2023 and beyond.



Old Fish House Restaurant
 249 W Cocoa Beach CSWY
 Cocoa Beach FL 32931
 Call us at (321)-799-9190

OPEN
 Tues.-Thurs. 11:30 am - 9:00 pm
 Fri. & Sat. 11:30 am - 9:30 pm
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 Sunday & Monday

Seniors Who...

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



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Also read it at www.seniorscenemag.com

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



Vietnam War Exhibit & Education Center



Brevard County's

“Newest”

Military Exhibit

DEDICATED TO THE VIETNAM EXPERIENCE



HUNDREDS OF AUTHENTIC ARTIFACTS

-Education – Awareness – Reflection-

Please call for times – 321-212-9726

- Rt 1 & the Pineda Causeway -

“Across from Grills Restaurant”



2475 Jen Drive #5, Melbourne, FL.

vietnamwarexhibit.com – Fb: Vietnam War Exhibit



Unofficial Brevard VMC Vets Calendar February 2025 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/>

FEBRUARY

01-02 Feb – Ground Hog Day Fundraiser for St Francis Reflections Foundation to support Veterans and others at Chez Cani, 6375 N. Wickham Rd, Melbourne 1200-2100. Join the fun for great food, treats and to purchase limited edition pint glasses with a presentation of all sales going to the SFR Foundation. Make a reservation for meals or just stop by. Bring friends and family, In France they also celebrate “La Chandeleur” as the midway point of winter before spring just as we hope the groundhog will forecast a shorter winter. .

01 Feb – County wide JROTC Air Rifle Run and Shoot Competition at VMC Memorial Park. 0700-1200. Hosted by Satellite HS JROTC.

02 Feb – Annual Ceremony to Commemorate the Immortal Four Chaplains of WWII. VMC Plaza 1400-1500. Marine Corps League and VMC are the Sponsors and Presenters.

08 Feb – Annual Pioneer Day Celebration at Sam’s House and St Luke’s Church off North Courtenay on Merritt Island, 1000-1600 hours with vendors, troupes, food, music and more. Looking for vendors. Contact Museums of Brevard Members and Sam’s House for more information. Details later in January.

15 Feb – Annual Commemoration of the WWII Bataan Death March at VMC Park 0700-1100. Air Force and Space Force JROTC units only come together for a long ruck March to remember this tragic chapter in American military history and reflect on the sacrifice of our prisoners of war.

15 Feb – (new date) Young Eagles Flight Rally for kids and grandkids 8-12 from Gold Star, Wounded Veteran and similar First Responder Families 0900-1200. Merritt Island Airport S. Courtney Road entrance with signs to the EAA Hangar. EAA organization and pilots are the Sponsors. Free Flights for the kids selected in FAA approved aircraft. Parents or Guardians must register online starting 08 Feb. Contact Donn Weaver 757-871-6576 for more information. Registration details will be announced in early February.

22 Feb – Back Brevard Heroes Car Show Fundraiser 1000-1500 in the UHaul and Mall Parking Spaces of Merritt Square Mall. More details and registration info in January.

22 Feb – JROTC District Drill Meet at VMC Park 0700-1200. See many teams compete in Color Guard, Squad and Platoon drills.

22 Feb – USAF JROTC Statewide Drill meet for Air/Space Force programs at Melbourne HS 0800-1300.

27 Feb – Honor America Awards Ceremony 1800-2100 at the Grand Manor on Sarno Road in Eau Gallie. Sponsored by the Liberty Bell Museum, this dinner recognizes outstanding volunteers in the community. Dean Schaaf, VMC President is among the Awardees this year. Reserve your dinner and place through libertybellmuseum.org.

28- Feb – Every Day is Veterans Day 1000-1330 at the at the Space Coast Center for Collaboration on Rte 1 in Rockledge. RSVPs will be called after 15 January. Many vendors, veteran info booths, food and drinks and much more to honor and celebrate veterans. Sponsored by One Senior Place. Contact Angie Higgins of One Senior Place at 321- 751-6771 for more info and to RSVP. This event was set for last fall but along came MILTON.

MARCH

08 Mar – JROTC District Drill Meet with hundreds of cadets in competition in five events. VMC Park 0700-1200.

12 Mar – A Tribute to Vietnam Veterans Commemorating National Vietnam Veterans Day, 12 March 17-1900 hrs. Eau Gallie Civic Center 1551 Highland Ave. Sponsored by DAV Chapter 32. Featuring speakers who are all Vietnam Veterans, two former DAV National Commanders and a former POW who spent 6 years in the Hanoi Hilton. RSVP via email to attend: mail@fldav32.org or to sponsor and get more info : commander@fldav32.org

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



Boosters

Adair, Mark and Karen Croft, IMO
MSGT Edmond Adair, USAF, RET Aug, 2027

Bateman, Skip & Ruth July, 2026

Bisset, M Doug Sept, 2025

Carleton, Jim March, 2025

Clayton, David & Anne July, 2026

Ericson, Robert & Robin Mar 2026

Fadok, Eleanor Dec, 2025

Fleet Reserve Branch 263 July, 2026

Florida State University College of Social
Work, August, 2025

Garcia, Jackie & Danny June, 2025

Huffman, Kenneth and Lois Jan, 2026

Kanis, Jussara & Michael Nov, 2027

Kappes, Bea (RIP) & Mickey July, 2025

Longway, J.P & Donna Dec, 2028

McKinney, Shaun & Adora Sept, 2025

Muckler, Bill, CAPT. USMC May, 2028

Norman, Ray April, 2027

Rowe, Wayne June, 2025

Schaaf, Dean & Susan July, 2025

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If you feel your name is missing and that you paid for Booster sponsorship this year, please contact the Treasurer. Thank you for your forbearance and understanding. Fill in your names and send to the BVC along with your check.

Please make your check payable to: Brevard Veterans Council (Boosters).

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

Name(s) _____