



THE VETERANS MEMORIAL CENTER

COUNCIL COURIER

Space Coast Honors Non-Profit of the Year 2024

MARCH 2025



A Publication of the Brevard Veterans Council & Veterans Memorial Center



WHAT'S INSIDE

Dedicated to the Vietnam Experience

National Vietnam War Veterans Day is the first of four national holidays that recognize those veterans that are serving and have served and sacrificed for our country.

— page 13

Commemoration of Iwo Jima Flag Raising

On 23 February 2025, members of the Brevard County Detachment of the Marine Corps League on Merritt Island hosted a get together in honor and remembrance of Marines.

— page 15

Great Start to JROTC Drill Meet Season

Nearly 180 JROTC cadets from nine Brevard High Schools participated in their first major JROTC Drill meet of the Spring Season.

— page 17

“Ceremony Honors the Four Immortal Chaplains”

On 2 February about sixty people attended a very special ceremony at the Brevard Veterans Memorial Center.

Read more on page 12

MARCH 2025

COURIER CONTENTS

President's Report • Page 3

Council Report • Page 4

Chaplain's Report • Page 4

Library Report • Page 5

Book Report • Page 5

Museum Report • Page 6

Event Calendar • Page 20

Boosters • Page 21

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 finally took some time off to "chill." Susan and I went on a four day cruise on Celebrity Silhouette out of Port Everglades to Key West and Bimini. I was stationed in Key West in 1967 and then from 1974-1976. It is always interesting to go back to your old haunts, like Sloppy Joe's and Mallory Square. We did tour "The Little White House" where President Harry Truman spent time during his presidency. John F. Kennedy stayed at the facility during the Cuban missile crisis.

We lost a great friend and co-worker on February 24, Ted Schmid, who was our Treasurer before Dave Clayton. Ted was a great guy and did a lot of our repairs and installations around the Center. May he rest in peace.

We are busy with bookings for the facility and the park pavilion. The weather is getting nicer, with many weddings, baby showers, and celebrations of all types being reserved. Get the word out how great our facility is and our price competitiveness with local venues.

The Cocoa Beach Regional Chamber of Commerce has rebranded themselves as Accelerate Brevard: Chamber of Innovation. A Toast to Tourism, A Series of Visit Cocoa Beach - 2025. They have sold their building on Fortenberry and moved to temporary quarters on Courtenay, across from Target. The Brevard Veterans Memorial Center is a member of the Chamber and the Military Affairs Council (MAC). I have represented the BVMC at the Chamber for several years and serve on the MAC Board of Directors as well at another part of the Chamber that works closely with the tourism industry, Visit Cocoa Beach (VCB), where I serve on the VCB Advisory Council. If you have not downloaded the VCB app, you are missing a lot of tourist information. VCB has three kiosks located in the Cocoa Beach area, Fishlips, Beachside Hotel and Homewood Suites by Hilton Cape Canaveral.

The final planning for the March 15th commemoration of the 242nd Last Naval Battle of the Revolutionary War. This is always a well-attended and colorful event with the many groups displaying their colors and period costumes.

We have several events on the calendar for the next few months, so make sure you take a look at Vice President Donn Weavers "Unofficial BVMC Veteran Events Callendar" in this issue.

Our Lobby is looking better although we are only making "baby steps" to complete the project and I take responsibility for that. Thanks to Kristi and her crew for their continued challenging work in finishing the upgrade, complete with new, comfortable chairs, of which DAV 123 contributed 50% of the cost. Thank you, DAV!

Please take a look at the two flyers in the Courier. One on the Propeller Club's 2025 Shrimpeast on April 11 at Cruise Terminal 5 and Visit Cocoa Beach's Spring into Action, saving lives on the shore.

God bless our fallen veteran and astronaut heroes, MIAs, and POWs and God bless our armed forces. Go Navy beat Army!



Dean and Charles Schaaf lead the takedown of our Christmas tree for hopefully final time. Next December our live tree should be in the expanded Park.

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





Council Report

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

The council has been involved with many cases this past month assisting veterans and their families. Networking is an important part of the mission we share with the Brevard Memorial Center. Dean and I attended the last Military Affairs Council (MAC) held at the Cocoa Civic Center. It's surprising how many organizations all work together to assist the military both active and veteran. The MAC part of the area Cocoa Beach Regional Chamber of Commerce now re-named Accelerate Brevard: Chamber of Innovation. The membership is largely made up of businesses from all areas of the county. There is much interest and excitement about major projects within our area, such as the new hospital, the new bridge on Sea Ray Drive and of course the new amphitheater being built on our own turf.

Speaking of which, I have been attending meetings with the county, Ivey Construction and Dean and Donn at their construction trailer out back. It's hard to imagine the size until they start going vertical, and we can get a sense of the size. Concrete footers have been poured for the concession stand and much of the initial grading is completed. The electrical and plumbing is well under way. The back of the amphitheater has a large parking lot for stage equipment trucks and parking area for performers, plus restrooms and dressing rooms.

This addition to Merritt Island is being overseen by Merritt Island Redevelopment (MIRA) who are doing a fine job of promoting this project.



Chaplain's Corner

**Chaplain Chip
Hanson
USMC (Fmr)**

The rate of suicide among veterans ticked upwards in recent years despite increased public attention and funding on the problem, according to a new report released by Department of Veterans Affairs officials on Thursday. Veterans' suicides made up about 14 percent of total suicides in America in 2018. VA officials have emphasized in recent years that mental health challenges and suicidal thoughts are not a problem specific to the veteran's community.

"Findings documented in this report highlight the continuing and increasing problem of suicide among U.S. adults and among veterans, and the need for ongoing efforts to improve methods of suicide risk mitigation," the report stated. In a statement, VA Secretary Robert Wilkie said that despite the lack of overall progress in suicide prevention among veterans, the report does show some areas of improvement.

"The data shows the rate of suicide among veterans who recently used VA health services has decreased, an encouraging sign as the department continues its work and shares what we learn with those who care for and about veterans," he said. The rate of suicide among veterans who recently received some type of VA care decreased was down 2.4 percent from 2017 to 2018. For veterans with no connection to VA care, it increased 2.5 percent.

Tucked in the middle of the November/December 2021 issue of DAV Magazine is an article that deserves some extra focus from our members at chapters and departments nationwide. Titled "Anybody can do it," the article highlights how Chapter 30 in Mountain Home, Arkansas used a grant from DAV's Columbia Trust for its suicide prevention program, which contributed to a dramatic decrease in the epidemic in their local county.

The reason for this renewed focus is twofold. First, the article spotlights one of the National Service Foundation's most underutilized programs and the Trust's role as a catalyst in bridging resources from well-populated chapters and departments to others in need. Second, and more importantly, it bestows the recognition that Chapter 30 deserves for tackling and making a notable difference in an issue that plagues the veteran community, one that will remain Wilkie's highest priority as national commander.

GOD BLESS AMERICA

Chaplain Chip Hanson

P.S. Secretary Kristi Blanchard noted that the BVMC is getting closer to achieving The Fire Watch designation as a Veteran Safe Place with its members qualified as Watch Standers against veteran suicide.



VMC Librarian Report

Hank Rhodes
USN (Fmr)

All members of the Library Team are committed to continuous improvement in the services we provide to our customers. In most cases, these improvements should be transparent, in that the customers need not and will not take any notice.

There is, however, one area of improvement we do wish to bring to attention of the community. This is the establishment of a new subsection: "Guidance for Vets & Families." This subsection is found on the west wall (to the right upon entering the library) and are cataloged as "MiscG." We expect this section will grow over time. It is our hope that, in conjunction with all the other initiatives by the BVMC community to help our fellow veterans, the literature on this particular book shelf will be informative and inspiring.

In January 2025 (the most recent month for which data is available), the library hosted 110 visitors and issued 25 items (books or DVDs).

There have been several recent additions to WWII, Vietnam and Joint Military Aviation sections.

Finally, we note the addition of the "Raiding Forces" series, authored by Phil Ward, an Army Ranger with combat experience. This is a series of novels centered on an American Special Operator in WWII.



GUIDANCE FOR VETS & FAMILIES

Book Report: "Nam" written by Mark Baker

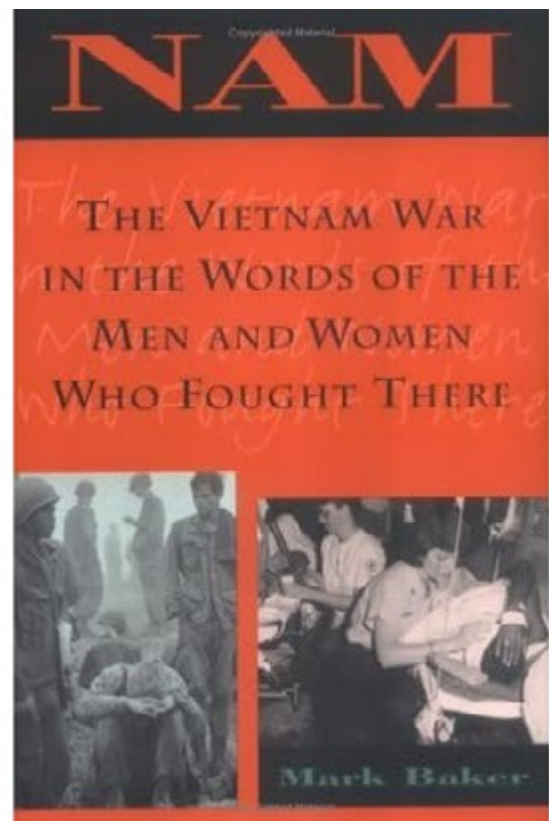
Book Report by Kathy Risi

Nam, written by Mark Baker is a graphic, oral account of experiences throughout the Vietnam War. It is a fresh and insightful perspective of stories the author put together after extensive interviews. The detailed narration in Nam has the reader on edge for the next page. This book is a raw and unfiltered war log of the Vietnam War experience told from the perspective of the various men and women involved.

We can identify with the characters through Baker's clever language and expression. The use of jargon is exquisite. The humor is priceless. For example, when I read "he was the top banana" and that marine "looked like a rock" I couldn't help but giggle a little.

Nam is personal and intimate, from the draft to deployment and the return home, throughout the Vietnam War. Baker does a good job of detailing isolated instances and situations so that the reader feels life and death, and all the horrors of war through the eyes of the narrator. These hardcore accounts collected together are hard to come by and anyone interested in the Vietnam War should not hesitate to pick up a copy of Nam by Mark Baker and start reading.

Nam by Mark Baker is located in the VMC Library at VIET-23.





Museum Updates

Ed Pingston, Curator
US Army (Ret)



"Buffalo Soldier" U.S. Army Cavalrymen 1870's

Buffalo Soldiers originally were members of the 10th Cavalry Regiment of the United States Army, formed on September 21, 1866, at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. This nickname was given to the Colored Cavalry by Native American tribes who fought in the Indian Wars. The term eventually became synonymous with all of the African-American regiments formed after the Civil War in 1866:

9th Cavalry Regiment
10th Cavalry Regiment
24th Infantry Regiment
25th Infantry Regiment
Second 38th Infantry Regiment

During the peacetime formation years (1865-1870), the black infantry and cavalry regiments were composed of black enlisted soldiers commanded by white commissioned officers and black noncommissioned officers. These included the first commander of the 10th Cavalry Benjamin Grierson, the first commander of the 9th Cavalry Edward Hatch, Medal of Honor recipient Louis H. Carpenter, and Nicholas M. Nolan. The first black commissioned officer to lead the Buffalo Soldiers and the first black graduate of West Point, was Henry O. Flipper in 1877.



Indian Wars

From 1867 to the early 1890s, these regiments served at a variety of posts in the Southwestern United States and the Great Plains regions. They participated in most of the Indian Wars campaigns in these areas and earned a distinguished record. Thirteen enlisted men and six officers from these four regiments earned the Medal of Honor during the Indian Wars. Park Rangers

Another little-known contribution of the Buffalo Soldiers involved eight troops of the 9th Cavalry Regiment and one company of the 24th Infantry Regiment who served in California's Sierra Nevada as some of the first national park rangers. In 1899, Buffalo Soldiers from Company H, 24th Infantry Regiment briefly served in Yosemite National Park, Sequoia National Park, and General Grant (Kings Canyon) National Parks.



BVC Chairman Don Pearsall, VMC Vice President Donn Weaver and VMC President Dean Schaaf prepare to visit the amphitheater construction



"They teach us how to fight, but not how to transition back to family life"

Meeting The Challenges of Veterans and their Families

About Us: Veterans' Connections is a Brevard County 501 C (3) that was formed in 2013 by Don Pearsall a US Army veteran, who is still President / CEO of the agency. It was formed with a Board of Directors to control all the day by day resource operations. **The mission was, and is still very clear, to assist Brevard County veterans and families that are struggling in today's economy.** For example, years ago, to help a veteran pay their electric bill was about \$70.00. Now, it's about \$200.00 if not more. Whether we pay full or a partial payment, funds are only through private, public donations, and every cent is spent in Brevard County on emergency assistance for our veterans. We also offer many other select programs to assist our returning veterans.

We are a unique organization. We are the only ones who do not use donations for anything other than veteran support. We have no paid employees, no administration costs, all our in-house expenses, utilities and other programs are paid from the sale of our popular book on PTSD /MST *"Back from the Front"* (Edition 1) By operating this way, we allow greater latitude for spending to help veterans and their loved ones. But, we cant do it alone, help. **Please help your Brevard Veterans**



Tax Deduction Information

Florida Not For Profit Corporation
IRS 501 C (3)

Florida State Tax Certificate
Number: 82-0816082

US / FL Document Number
NP1600088983

Corporation Name:
Connections to a New Life Inc.

Filing Information:
DBA Veterans' Connections

Document Number
N19000011984FEI/
Date Filed 10/03/19

Business started 3/12/2014
Status: Active



(321) 313-2444

Veterans' Connections



DJ PEARSALL
@DJ-PEARSALL-2

Veterans Connections



Veterans Connections
@\$Veteransconnections

"Yea! Daddy's Home"



Because Of You, It Works


4411 Ponds Dr, Cocoa, FL. 32927 (321) 313-2444

VMC Educational Scholarship Program

By Doug Bisset

Applications are open for this year's scholarship program and can be picked up on the VMC website and in the library. Essential criteria, described in the form are:

- Graduation NLT August 1 from high school (JROTC program a plus). Minimum GPA of 2.5 or higher.
- An applicant, or a family member as sponsor, needs to be tied to military service.
- Brevard County Resident (applicant).
- An applicant is enrolled in an institute of higher learning (college or technical school).
- Please execute application and submit with appropriate supporting documents, to the BVMC library NLT June 27th . Please download and submit your application [BVMC 2025 Scholarship Application](#) with supporting documents to the VMC Library before June 27th. Questions can be sent to Doug Bisset docbisset@gmail.com or Dean Schaaf, dschaaf@brevard.net



You're invited to a Life Line Screening event!

Where: Veterans Memorial Center

When: Tuesday April 29, 2025

Life Line Screening is the nation's leader in **Stroke and Cardiovascular Disease Risk Screenings.**

Trusted by over 10 million customers.

Screenings are simple and painless. Get peace of mind or early detection.


Who should attend: Anyone over the age of 40

Special Pricing for \$159

- Carotid Artery Disease Screening
- Peripheral Artery Disease Screening
- Atrial Fibrillation Screening
- Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm Screening
- Plus a FREE Hypertension Screening

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Call 888-814-0466 and use promo code: HSCA001

Visit [LLSA.SOCIAL/HSCA](#)

Text the word "circle" to 216-279-1607

These tests cannot detect all risk factors for all conditions, such as and including the presence of coronary artery disease.

Those with abnormal results should discuss possible next steps with their family healthcare provider and ensure they understand the risk and benefits of any additional testing or procedures.

VMP Amphitheater Photo Update as of 25 Feb 2025

By Donn Weaver

Thanks to our VMC photographer Roger Scruggs, happy to share some shots of the ongoing construction as of this week. Look forward to the MIRA meeting 27 Feb and to arranging tours for MIRA members and others as the project progresses at increasing speed. Thanks to Ivey's for orchestrating so many pieces to keep progress on track despite recent rains.



AUSA Space Coast Chapter Updates



**By Vincent (Kip) Mathias
President, Space Coast
Chapter of AUSA**

Hi Fellow Brevard Veterans and Families

AUSA is accepting applications for scholarships and is open to Premium Members, Association Members, and their dependents (to include children, spouses, and grandchildren) are eligible to apply. Applications are open from February 18, 2025 to May 5, 2025 at 11:59 p.m. (EDT).

Association Members includes many Army-associated organizations like the Army Aviation Association of America, The Army Historical Foundation, The Warrant Officer's Association and the Army Officer Candidate Schools Alumni Association, but also the following organizations of a broader audience:

- National Guard Association of the United States
- Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States
- Space Force Association
- Military Order of the Purple Heart
- Military Order of the World Wars
- Military Cyber Professionals Organization
- Association of U.S. Cyber Forces
- Armed Forces Benefit Association
- American Armed Forces Mutual Aid Association
- Redstone Federal Credit Union
- The Patriot Project

To see all the current Association Members, please see us at:
<https://www.ausa.org/association-partners>.

If you see that you are an Association Member, but you do not know your affiliated AUSA Member Number, please reach out to our Member Support Team at membersupport@ausa.org.

If you have any questions, please contact us at pressc@ausa.org.



Park and Plaza Report

By Donn Weaver

February was a very busy month not only for the huge construction project underway inside Veterans Memorial Park, but also in our beautiful plaza. The following information highlights some changes.

BRICKS: Eleven Bricks were added to the plaza including seven near the Elmore Bech under the Huey Helicopter. More are coming this month in an effort to surpass Dr Richard Elmore, prof emeritus at FIOT with this new bench and section to honor his amazing service as a dust-off helicopter pilot during two tours in Vietnam. This is a fitting time to do so as 29 March marks the 50th Anniversary of our withdrawal from Saigon.

BENCHES: A new tech was received and assembled with a unique theme. A widow donated for the Bench one sign showing her husband in military gear five decades ago, and the other showing a recent photo taken just before he died in 2020. Like, any benches outside the museum this one will be installed in the completed VMP in November (if the project holds to schedule) and be placed near a Memorial Tree.

TREES: Twenty-four trees have been funded as a donation, and we learned this month that the Park plans call for forty-four live oaks to be planted so there will be chances for more purchases in the future. Check the library, museum or foyer for applications for trees, bricks and benches, all donations help us (minus product cost) to continue our operations and maintain the plaza and more.

MONUMENT TO ALLIES: Check out the February metal scrubbing and repainting of the Plaza monument closest to the aircraft. The Vietnam Unforgettable Memories Foundation funded the upgrade, and we made plans for biannual polishing given the high toll taken on such metals used near the coast.

PARK: As of the end of February the project moved two weeks ahead of schedule with milestones of pouring cement for the Amphitheater and Concession Building slated for early March. Soon our website will include Timelapse photos of the progress courtesy of Roger Scruggs, our VMC Photographer. Last month we also worked with the county, MIFA and CAMI to choose the Christmas Tree for the Park that will be illuminated starting in early December 2025. It will be a Community Tree but also dedicated as a Gold Star Family Christmas Tree with plans in the works to raise funds for an appropriate sign/marker near the tree.



IVEY's Construction shifting into High Speed in February



Some Fun at the Center

By Donn Weaver

BVC Chairman Don Pearsall (l) and Vice Chairman Jim Carleton (r) don battle helmets during a recent Executive Committee meeting while in the discussion of merging the BVC and VMC into a single non-profit, Brevard Veterans Memorial Center. The helmets are needed for when their positions are dissolved after the Board approves the change later this year and plans are finalized. It is not often leaders work hard to put themselves out of work in months. We know they will not retire fully and take on new positions once the change is made. Thanks guys!!!





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**



Ceremony Honors and Remembers the Four Immortal Chaplains of WWII and All Chaplains

On 02 February about sixty people attended a very special ceremony at the Brevard Veterans Memorial Center (VMC). The solemn program began with the Brevard Marine Corps League Detachment 513 telling the story of four Army Chaplains of different faiths who gave their life jackets and more to save other soldiers. Their troop transport ship was attacked on the night of 03/04 Feb off the coast of Greenland by German U Boats and sunk in less than two hours into the icy North Atlantic.

After the war, the 4 Immortal Chaplains Foundation began at the Chapel of the Philadelphia Naval Shipyard. Its mission has been to remember every year the heroic efforts of these four men who left their churches and a synagogue to join the Army as Chaplains in 1942. After they shared all they had to save others, they linked arms in a unity of different faiths and were swallowed by the sea. Some of the few survivors saw their actions and the four were eventually awarded congressional gold medals.

The Marines read their names and bio while lighting a memory candle and placing a symbolic life vest on three crosses and the Star of David. MCL Commandant Rick Bedford served as MC as the Martens presented colors, carried the life vests and played TAPS.

This year seven Chaplains were also recognized for their service 82 years later and stood behind the photos of the Immortal Four as their bios were read. With over 150 years as chaplains or in other ministry, they too have served and are rarely recognized for their crucial roles, which began when George Washington requested Chaplains be assigned to the Continental Army in 1775.

The Chaplains on 02 Feb: Bill Adams, Tom Unrath, JB Krump, Chip Hanson, Ann Taylor, Bob Doyle and Nelson Riviera.

Donn Weaver, VMC VP read their names and told about some special Chaplain stories, including a report from the current Chief of all 2800 Chaplains in the US Army, MG Bill Green. He noted the Army Chaplains have unity of purpose though they come from, and represent 110 faith groups.

In 2019 the Philadelphia based Four Immortal Chaplains Foundation officially added the monument at the VMC plaza designed by Gold Star Mom Jeanne Weaver into their registry. The monument also recalls the missions of all military chaplains from the Revolution to the War on Terror.

For the VMC the historic connection to this sad by inspiring event in 1943 is more than just a remembrance once a year. Please check out the monument in the VMC Plaza and the Chaplains Display in the second floor of the VMC Military Museum. We

hope next year many more will come to learn about the Four Immortal Chaplains and the very special role in times of fear, danger, stress, family crises and combat/other deaths performed by all Chaplains.



Vietnam War Exhibit & Education Center

"Dedicated to the Vietnam Experience"

By Ben Bydalek, Director VWEEC

National Vietnam War Veterans Day - March 29th

National Vietnam War Veterans Day is the first of four national holidays that recognize those veterans that are serving and have served and sacrificed for our country. They include - Memorial Day- Purple Heart Day and Veterans Day.

President Nixon in 1974 declared March 29th as National Vietnam Veterans Day to coincide with the total withdrawal of US combat forces from Vietnam.

President George W. Bush signed the National Defense Authorization Act of 2008 which included the authorization to recognize the 50th Anniversary of the Vietnam War.

President Barack Obama in 2012 issued a new presidential proclamation to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Vietnam War.

In 2017 the date of the holiday was set as March 29th by President Donald Trump and officially known as National Vietnam War Veterans Day.

March 29th was chosen because this was the day the United States Military Assistance Command I Vietnam MACV was DISESTABLISHED, and the last troops left Vietnam. The last combat soldier to leave Vietnam was Master Sergeant Max Beilke. The last COMBAT UNIT - 3rd Battalion 21st Infantry departed Da Nang RVN on August 11th 1972. This officially ended America's participation in the Vietnam ground war.

'In-Country' after March 29th, 1973, were approximately 100 Marines assigned to Embassy duty.

On April 30th 1973... the last Marine, Msg. Juan Jose Valdez, boarded the final chopper and left the roof of the US Embassy 2 hours before Saigon fell.

The American soldiers' objectives in Vietnam were to keep South Vietnam a Free and Democratic Society and from being occupied by Communist North Vietnam.

The Vietnam Veteran participated in 9 years of ground combat and did not lose a major battle. America's objectives were realized while its troops were deployed.

When the United States began to cease ground combat operations in 1972, there were fewer than 70,000 troops stationed "in-country" as compared to 1969 which saw over 540,000 troops deployed. Total Vietnam "In-Country" (boots on

the ground) troops during the Vietnam War were 2,700,000. The last VIETNAM COMBAT VETERAN left country on March 29th, 1973.

American combat forces left Vietnam 25 months before the South Vietnamese Army was overwhelmed by North Vietnam on April 30th 1975, and Saigon fell.

Congress, refusing to honor the Paris Peace Accords, lost "American Objectives" in Vietnam on April 30th, 1975, with the Fall of Saigon. American Objectives that began in the 1950's under President Dwight Eisenhower. A WAR WAS NOT LOST - AMERICAN OBJECTIVES were LOST; the American combat soldier had left Vietnam 25 months before the fall of Saigon. However, coverage of the fall stated that "America had lost the war" and that stigma was unjustly attributed to the Vietnam Veteran.

The American soldier did not lose the fighting war in Vietnam, they had won. This fact has been lost to history.



4TH ANNUAL GOLF TOURNAMENT

HOSTED BY 

TITLE SPONSOR **NORTHROP GRUMMAN** Management Club

APRIL 11, 2025
ROCKLEDGE COUNTRY CLUB

PROCEEDS TO BENEFIT NVHS

EVENT SPONSORSHIPS

PLATINUM \$5000	GOLD \$2500	SILVER \$1000	BRONZE \$500	HOLE \$250
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bronze Plus - Social Media Mentions - Vendor Tent at Event - 2 Complimentary Golf Entries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hole Sponsor Plus - Logo on event banner - Half page program ad 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hole sign - Logo on event page

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**In Commemoration of the
National Vietnam Veteran's Day, March 29, 2025**



search-and-destroy patrol in the Vietnam War, Tuy province, South Vietnam

Join us on March 25th, 6:30 – 7:30 PM

The Speaker will be Ben Bydalek, Vietnam Veteran and founder of the Vietnam War Exhibit & Education Center in Melbourne.

He will talk about the Vietnam War with the video content from a group of Georgia's Vietnam Veterans who were involved in battle for months, and from his own experience and research.

Brevard Veterans Memorial Center Library
400 South Sykes Creek Parkway, Merritt Island

Commemoration of Iwo Jima Flag Raising

By Vinnie Howard

On 23 February 1945, the first flag ever raised on Japanese soil was on Mt Suribachi on the island of Iwo Jima. The flag was only 55.5 inches by 28.5 inches. It was photographed by Marine Sgt. Lou Lowery. It could barely be seen from the ships offshore, so a second flag, 96 inches by 56 was ordered to be brought up. Civilian AP photographer Joe Rosenthal was in the right place at the right time and took the most iconic picture of all time.

On 23 February 2025, members of the Brevard County Detachment of the Marine Corps League on Merritt Island hosted a get together at the Beef O'Brady's of Melbourne in honor and remembrance of those whose shoulders we the Marines of today who stand upon and carry on their legacy.

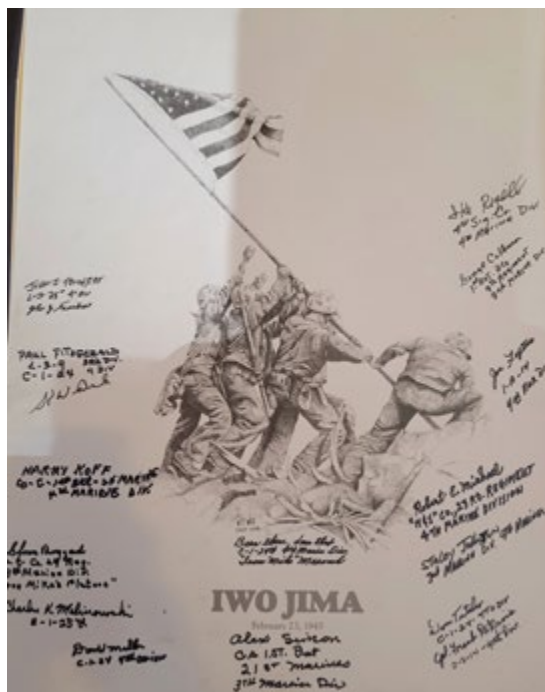
Our Detachment Commandant Marine Rick Bedford (Major, USMC, Retired) cut the cake and in Marine Corps Birthday Ball Tradition, handed the first piece to the daughter of Iwo Jima Survivor John Teuchert to honor him.

Patty Rusnock was her dad's caregiver until he passed.

We watched historical footage of the battle, enjoyed the books and pictures displayed and had a great meal!

2025 is going to be a memorable year for Marines past and present. This event precedes the upcoming 250th Birthday of our beloved Marine Corps on 10 November.

Semper Fi Marines!

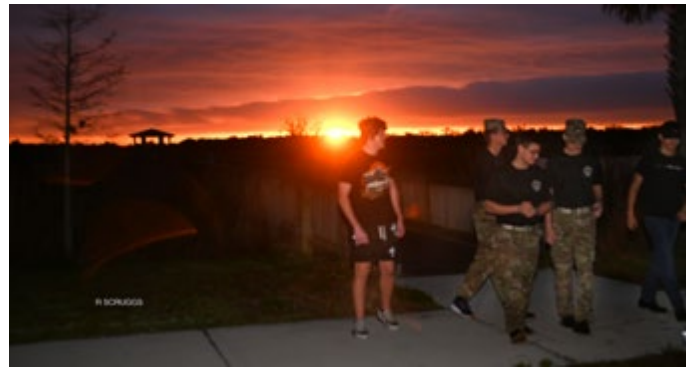


JROTC Cadets Enjoy Unique Run and Shoot Competition at VMC

On a cool day, JROTC cadets from Melbourne, Rockledge, Space Coast and Satellite High Schools came out to have some fun and compete with each other. The event "Run and Shoot" has a 30 year history in Brevard County and is not an event on the State or National JROTC programs like Drill, Air Rifle or Raider Challenge.

This year's event, which includes a half mile run, penalty laps if any of 10 shots are missed and standing air rifle shooting with pellets into paper targets, is timed and scored for accuracy. This year the course had to be modified to accommodate large scale Amphitheater Construction leaving only the small west parking lot and limited vehicle access available at the VMP. There is still more than enough room to do all JROTC events that follow into next Fall until the project is completed. So, it was game on with this event, three drill meets and three Raider Challenge meets between now and November, when the project is expected to be completed.

Each school had two teams of five each with Melbourne HS taking away first place and Satellite and Space Coast splitting other trophies. Rockledge also gave out special medals to its team members. All awards were funded by the MOAACC Good Deeds Foundation, which will cover every trophy and medal for every JROTC event in Brevard this school year with the total likely surpassing \$17 K. MOAACC and VMC members Doug Bisset, Joe Tichich and Donn Weaver supported the event and handed out the awards to some very energized and happy cadets. They seemed to be glad they gave up a Saturday morning of sleeping in.



Brevard Memorial Center Color Guard

by Don Pearsall, Drill Captain

The color guard has been on a short break waiting for warmer days and staying light longer so we can return to a practice schedule. However, we, are ready to present and perform when the need arises. Anyone interested in joining us please call (321) 313-2444



Great Start to JROTC Drill Meet Season

By Donn Weaver

Nearly 180 JROTC cadets from nine Brevard High Schools participated in their first major JROTC Drill meet of the Spring Season. Amphitheater construction required adjustments to the parking and portions of the Veterans Memorial Park being utilized, but all went well, and the cadets showed they had been practicing hard already. Events including Color Guard, Individual rifle skills, Squad armed and unarmed drills with male, female and mixed teams signed up.

The next JROTC Drill meet is scheduled for 8 March with the District Championship with State Qualifiers competing on 29 March. VMC and MOAACC members are encouraged to visit the meets between 0930-1200 hours to see the cadets in action and help us present ribbons and trophies.

MOAACC Good Deeds Foundation, as with all JROTC meets, provided the trophies and ribbons with Donn Weaver, Jay Welch and Mike Broski on Hand to support the event and help hand out awards. The same day, Dan Wilson of MOAACC/SAC led a group supporting the regional USAF/USSF JROTC Drill meet at Melbourne HS. Almost 500 cadets were involved in both events with many rising before 0500 to get there — not a typical teenager's Saturday morning ritual. Look for USAF JROTC photos in the April Edition.



Detachment 513 Marine Corps League

By Dennis Herring, Adjutant

BUSY PEOPLE

Have you ever heard Marines refer to each other as “Devil Dogs”? I know you’ve heard the old adage “if you want something done... find a busy person”. How true. And I am sure it is so in all of the organizations associated with the BVMC. Winston Churchill said it concisely, “never was so much owed by so many to so few”. Within Detachment 513 of the Marine Corps League, we have our energizer bunnies who always seem to be present at events hosted by the detachment or in other organizations in and outside of the BVMC.

Thus, it is with Chuck and Heather Betz. These two former police officers and League members hold multiple, significant positions in the detachment, play in the Fire & Police Fife and Drum Band, sponsor several events around the community, and Chuck holds down a full time job as head of security at Space Coast Stadium. They recently traveled to Washington, D. C. after being selected to participate in President Trump’s inaugural parade. Soon after returning home, the group performed at the Space Coast Stadium in support of a nationally sponsored Veterans/First Responder’s Softball Tournament.

What effect do these charitable works have to do with other personnel within the construct of their associations. Primarily inspirational, there is also a trickle down aspect which causes other associated members to pick up the ball (so to speak) and join in the much needed volunteer work conducted by Veteran Service Organizations such as the Military Officers Association of Cape Canaveral, Association of the U.S. Army, The Navy League, The Fleet Reserve Association, and The Marine Corps League, to name a few of our BVMC Tenant Organizations.

I am absolutely positive that within all of our tenant memberships here at the BVMC, we have those leaders, those achievers, those individuals who are prominent at the front of the pack. Watch them. Learn from them. Emulate them. Let their work inspire you to “pick up that ball” and do all that you are able to help our community.

Dennis Herring
Adjutant, Det. 513
Marine Corps League &
Tenant Committee Chair
Brevard Veterans Memorial Center



Det. 513 Color Guard presenting the Colors at Space Coast Stadium in Viera, FL

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

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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:

Donn Weaver	757-871-6576	donnweaver2020@gmail.com
Jim Pirotti	732-690-8353	Jim.P-Midstate@hotmail.com

VIDEOGRAPHERS

Paul Julian	321-452-9414	pjulian54@gmail.com
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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/>

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

15 Mar – 242nd Annual Last Naval Battle of the Revolutionary War Celebration/Commemoration at VMC Plaza 1000-1130. Sponsored and staged by the Brevard Sons of the American Revolution with assistance from VMC and MOAACC Good Deeds Foundation. Featuring US Navy support from NOTU at Port Canaveral, Marine Corps League Color Guard, Sea Cadet Color Guard and parade of flags from many SAR, DAR and CAR units from several states. Wreath Laying in memory of the fallen in at 1783 battle off the coast of what is now Cape Canaveral. Contact Donn Weaver, VMC for more info on 757-871-6576.

15 Mar – Annual Commemoration of the WWII Bataan Death March at Space Coast HS 0900-1300. Air Force and Space Force JROTC units only come together for a 13-mile-long ruck March to remember this tragic chapter in American military history and reflect on the sacrifice of our prisoners of war. NOTE: Date and Venue Change made 07 Feb due to military vehicles scheduled to be on display. Previously at VMC Park 15 Feb.

29 March – JROTC District Championship Drill Meet at VMC Park 0700-1300. State Championship Qualifier.

29 Mar – Annual and Final Vietnam Welcome Home Ceremony at the Cape Canaveral National Cemetery 1000-1100 with a program to remember the service and sacrifice of the Vietnam War with the anniversary of the American withdrawal in 1975, fifty years ago.

NOTE: This is also National Vietnam War Remembrance Day with other events planned throughout the county and country. This is the final year of official VA and USG commemoration that began decades after the troops came home to divided America.

APRIL

11 Apr – 4th Annual Golf Tournament Hosted by National Veterans Homeless Support (NVHS) and sponsored by Northrup Grumman Management Club. Rockledge Country Club 0800- 1300 with Scramble Start. Proceeds Support NVHS 2025 Missions. Prizes and sponsorships are available. \$100 per player registration fee. Win a New Car with a Hole in One. Sign up to play or sponsor at: nvhs.org/events

11 Apr – 2025 Shrimp Feast 1800-2200 at Port Canaveral Cruise Terminal 5 (8445 Rowland Dr. Port Canaveral). Cost is \$50 for early birds through 17 March at \$60 afterwards. No tickets at the door. Have fun and support our Propeller Club of Port Canaveral Maritime Education Programs. Cocktails, Shrimp Dinner, Door Prizes, Live. Auction and Dancing. Email propellerclubcanaveral@gmail.com to register and for more information out call 321-698-5269. Also See web site: www.spacecoastshrimpfeast.com

25 Apr – Women Veterans Outreach and Support Committee sponsored luncheon for Women Veterans, 1000-1400 in the BVMC Gray Hall. All are welcome.

29 Apr – Scouting America Central Florida Council Golden Eagle Dinner at Florida Tech Conference Center 150 W. University Blvd Melbourne, 1800-2100. Fundraising Dinner and Auction to support our youth involved in scouting, many of which are also in JROTC or other Cadet Programs. Donate or sign up at www.cflscouting.org event site.

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

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