



THE VETERANS MEMORIAL CENTER

# COUNCIL COURIER

Space Coast Honors Non-Profit of the Year 2024

JUNE 2025



A Publication of the Brevard Veterans Council & Veterans Memorial Center



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# “2025 Military Enlistment Ceremony of the Space Coast”

*On 15 May hundreds gathered for the First Annual Space Coast Enlistment Ceremony.*

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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 1 June 2025:  
[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)**

May was a busy month on the BVMC calendar and June looks like a much slower month for events. Except, of course for June 10th Special Election day with the BVMC as a precinct, and June 14th which is Flag Day and the U.S. Army's 250th Birthday! We will, however, be gearing up for a busy July, with the BCSO's July 4th Parade on Merritt Island and several other events.



**2nd Annual ZERO K**  
All the FUN without the RUN!  
MAY 26, 2025 - CARIB BREWERY - CAPE CANAVERAL, FLORIDA

The start and finish of our "Zero K" run. Dean is at the far left.

Two exceptional events held in May were the 23rd annual Maritime Day held on May 24th at Rusty's at the Port and our Memorial Day event held at the BVMC. Our event received much praise for the speakers and its content. Thanks to Donn Weaver for organizing the event and to our two speakers from the MOAACC, Col Jeff Rogers and LTC Hans Hunt, both USA ret. Bravo Zulu to everyone involved.

If you have not noticed yet, we have a new Flag Donation Box, built as part of a Trail Life USA project by Elisha Larson as part of his Horizon Trailman, which is a prerequisite for earning the highest award, the Freedom Award. Trail Life USA is a faith based scouting organization, and the Freedom Award is equivalent to the Eagle rank in Scouting America (BSA). His project also includes replacing the stanchions around the Tank and the Truck in the plaza.

The Brevard Public Schools presented awards to the students who completed the "Passport" program of the Museums of Brevard (MOB) during their regular Board meeting. Dean Schaaf, Donn Weaver and Korinn Bradin (Field Manor) attended representing the MOB. Around thirty parents and students attended and received awards.

During an event held by Accelerate Brevard: Chamber of Innovation, I ran my best time in the 2nd Annual Zero K run (all the fun without the run) at the Carib Brewery in Cape Canaveral. A fun time was had by all with limited injuries.

From the 4th to the 7th of June, I plan on attending some of the events of the Navy League National Convention held at NAS Jacksonville.

Thanks to all our volunteers for your support and sacrifices to keep the VMC running smoothly.

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

## VMC/BVC CONTACTS

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## Chaplain's Corner

**Chaplain Chip Hanson**  
USMC (Fmr)

The U.S. Flag Code formalizes and unifies the traditional ways in which we give respect to the flag, and also contains specific instructions on how the flag is not to be used.

The following is a list of do's and don'ts associated with Old Glory, the U.S. Flag.

Display the U.S. flag from sunrise to sunset on buildings and stationary flagstaffs in the open. When a patriotic effect is desired, the flag may be displayed 24 hours a day if properly illuminated during the hours of darkness.

When placed on a single staff or lanyard, place the U.S. flag above all other flags.

When flags are displayed in a row, the U.S. flag goes to the observer's left. Flags of other nations are flown at the same height. State and local flags are traditionally flown lower.

When used during a marching ceremony or parade with other flags, the U.S. flag will be to the observer's left.

On special days, the flag may be flown at half-staff. On Memorial Day it is flown at half-staff until noon and then raised.

When flown at half-staff, it should first be hoisted to the peak for an instant and then lowered to the half-staff position. The flag should be again raised to the peak before it is lowered for the day. By "half-staff" is meant lowering the flag to one-half the distance between the top and bottom of the staff.

When the flag is displayed over the middle of the street, it should be suspended vertically with the union (blue field of stars) to the north in an east and west street or to the east in a north and south street.

When placed on a podium, the flag should be placed on the speaker's right or the staging area. Other flags should be placed to the left.

When displayed either horizontally or vertically against a wall (or other flat surface), the union (blue field of stars) should be uppermost and to the flag's own right, that is, to the observer's left.

When displayed in a window, it should be displayed in the same way -- with the union or blue field to the left of the observer in the street.

When the flag is displayed on a car, the staff shall be fixed firmly to the chassis or clamped to the right fender.

When the flag is used to cover a casket, it should be so placed that the union is at the head and over the left shoulder. The flag should not be lowered into the grave or allowed to touch the ground.

When saluting the flag DO the following:

All persons present in uniform (military, police, fire, etc.) should render the military salute. Members of the armed forces and veterans who are present but not in uniform may render the military salute.

All other persons present should face the flag and stand at attention with their right hand over the heart, or, if applicable, remove their headdress with their right hand and hold it at the left shoulder, the hand being over the heart.

When stowing or disposing of the flag, DO the following:

Fold in the traditional triangle for stowage, never wadded up.

The flag should be folded in its customary manner.

It is important that the fire be fairly large and of sufficient intensity to ensure complete burning of the flag.

Place the flag on the fire.

The individual(s) can come to attention, salute the flag, recite the Pledge of Allegiance and have a brief period of silent reflection.

After the flag is completely consumed, the fire should then be safely extinguished and the ashes buried.

Please make sure you are conforming to local/state fire codes or ordinances.

### Quick list of Flag Etiquette Don'ts:

- Don't dip the U.S. flag for any person, flag, or vessel.
- Don't let the flag touch the ground.
- Don't fly the flag upside down unless there is an emergency.
- Don't carry the flag flat, or carry things in it.
- Don't use the flag as clothing.
- Don't store the flag where it can get dirty.
- Don't use it as a cover.
- Don't fasten it or tie it back. Always allow it to fall free.
- Don't draw on, or otherwise mark the flag.

"But God will never forget the needy; the hope of the afflicted will never perish." -Psalm 9:18

GOD BLESS AMERICA

Chaplain Chip Hanson



## Council Report

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

Another month is in the books. Snowbird population is dwindling and our official summer season begins. We are assisting veterans as they need it. With grocery prices still rather high, the biggest demand is for food. EXCOMM approved the purchase of dehydrated and freeze-dried meals to be kept here at the center, for storage and distribution.



I made a real good deal from the company 4 Patriots. Meals they couldn't sell because of minor defects such as label printed crooked or the ink was smudged, things like that. It has no effect on the product, so we jumped at the opportunity to enter into an agreement that was set in motion by Veterans' Connections, a veteran's transition service here in Brevard. The big advantage to these meals are many, but the best is that they have a large menu that can't even come close to what MRE's offer. Also, since they are packaged in sealed mylar bags, it is very easy to store. I can fit 20 complete meals in the same space as 1 box of MRE's. The shelf life of freeze-dried meals is about 25 years if stored properly.

In other news the amphitheater project is moving right along, now that it's gone vertical, you can really see how big it really is going to be. That, plus the mall ideas, and the hospital is going to make Merritt Island the place to visit. This will help increase the reason for visits to our center



## BVC Vice Chairman Report

**By Jim Carleton, USMC (Ret)**

Well based on the last few days, summer is here. This month had really screamed by us. There were several Memorial Day events throughout Brevard County this month. I was honored to speak at one in North Brevard. There was a genuinely nice service on the Memorial Brick Plaza at the La Cita Golf and Country Club. This was attended by many of the citizens of Titusville as well as ten or eleven officers from the Titusville Police Department. The speakers were the Mayor of Titusville Andrew Connors, Vice Mayor Col. Herman Cole and me. At the conclusion of the observance there was a golf tournament and a barbecue. American flags were on every hole and on almost every golf cart. A great patriotic time was had by everyone.

Last month I reported that the Governance Committee was very close to finishing the by-laws that they had been working on for the integration of the Brevard Veterans Council and the Veterans Memorial Center into the Brevard Veterans Memorial Center.

Well, this month I am extremely happy to report that we are remarkably close to becoming the BVMC. At the May General Membership meeting the vote was taken to accept the proposed integrated by-laws. The vote was "Unanimous" to accept. This six-month, challenging task was but one of the many steps for us to become one. We have a minor issue with the IRS and a couple other items to work to closure.

I would like to thank all those who supported, helped, or provided comments to make the by-laws and the BVMC a reality.

I will sign off, "Semper Fi".



## VMC Librarian Report

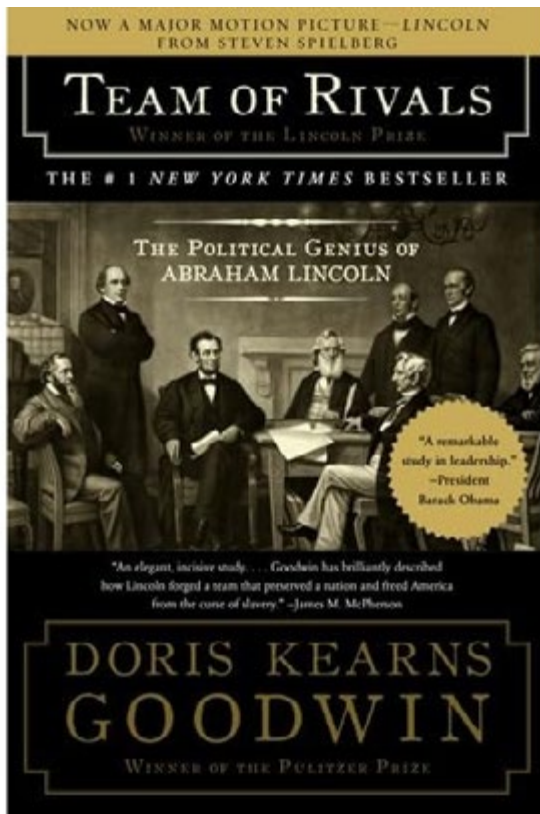
Hank Rhodes  
USN (Fmr)

In April 2025 (the most recent month for which data is available), the library hosted 157 visitors.

Since 2025 marks the 250th anniversary of the United States Army, Navy, and Marine Corps, we plan to conduct discussion groups on each of these observances in coming months.

We are, however, unsure if we will continue the discussion group series in 2026. This depends on the level of interest expressed by the BVMC community and also on public demand.

Our team conducted two Veterans History Project interviews with Navy veterans of the Cuban Missile Crisis and the early Cold War era (Ca. 1950s), respectively. Post-production in progress. We are in touch with several other prospects.



## Book of the Month: “Team of Rivals” by Doris Kearns Goodwin

Reviewed by H.V. Rhodes

This book starts with an amazing story: Three would-be Presidents of the United States contended for their party's nomination. Each of them were well-accomplished and had national standing. Yet, the nomination actually went to a fourth man, an obscure country lawyer who the others lightly regarded.

The year was 1860, and the country lawyer was named Abraham Lincoln. An even more amazing story is how Lincoln, once elected, invited each of these men into his cabinet. Despite their earlier opinion, each of them (William Seward, Salmon Chase, Edward Bates) came to esteem Lincoln. The members of Lincoln's cabinet also had to overcome their dislike and distrust of one another. Most importantly, they rendered valuable service leading their respective departments (State, Treasury, Attorney General's office) through the greatest crisis in the nation's history.

When some members of the cabinet were subject to public condemnation, fairly or unfairly, Lincoln was quick to defend them.

The author raises an important point often overlooked by modern Americans: the clear and present danger that the border states- Maryland, Kentucky, and Missouri- would defect and join the Confederacy. If this occurred, Washington would be isolated and the twin causes of emancipation and preserving the union would most likely be lost.

Also depicted is the role women- wives, daughters, and others- played influencing events, both on stage and behind the scenes

Although focused on the Civil War era, this book is an excellent text on leadership, as demonstrated by Abraham Lincoln. While at 750 pages it requires a commitment of time, the effort will be well-rewarded. Team of Rivals is found in the BVMC Library as Bio-Linc-02.

# Park and Plaza Report

## By Donn Weaver

The month of May brought remarkable progress in the construction of the BVMC Memorial Park Amphitheater, along with other ongoing developments and planning efforts. We also successfully completed the scheduled major events on the west side of the park, which will pause until construction is finished.

The next major park event is scheduled for September 27, when the JROTC Raider Challenge Meets resume. Ivey's Construction has assured full access to the 3.5 km pathway system and sufficient space for other components of the JROTC event, even if final construction and landscaping are not yet completed.

The Plaza also saw continued enhancements, including the installation of 18 new Memorial Bricks, two memorial benches, and one memorial tree. Eight of the new bricks will be engraved in honor of recipients of the Military Order of the Purple Heart 2025 Award Ceremony, taking place in August.

Below are some photos highlighting the ongoing improvements in both the Plaza and the Park.



Power Washing our Jet while Chad Stout of CSpray engraves new bricks.



27 Cement Trucks start pouring at 0200 on 05 May to complete the slab in 10 hours.



The Amphitheater in early May ready to put the cement slab. Not great progress on the concessions building to the West.



The yet-to-be-named development in Merritt Island is expected to be completed by the second quarter of 2027



## “I Was There”

### “Vietnam “Reality Tour”

*-In Country Experience -- Life's Journey-*

**Vietnam War Exhibit & Education Center**

2475 Jen Dr. Melbourne Fl 32940

**Call for Appointment: 321-212-9726**



## An Eagle Scout Upgrade

By Donn Weaver

Working with VMC President Dean Schaaf, himself an Eagle Scout, the latest of so far at least nine Eagle/Freedom Award Projects in the past 14 years gets underway. The plan is to create a major upgrade for our U.S. Flag Retirement Box in the parking lot. The effort began with constructing a cement base on a rare quiet weekend at VMC.

Dean is also working with another Eagle Scout to help fund and complete a new flagpole at the Park Amphitheater. From chimes in the Plaza, to a bench on the boardwalk, to gardens outside Gray Hall, to the Park Flag Retirement fire pit, Eagle Scouts have had a great impact at VMC over the years.



## Memorial Day 2025 Celebration Drew a Crowd of 300

By Donn Weaver



The Brevard Veterans Memorial Day Ceremony drew 300 people and was held under sunny but hot skies on Monday morning, 26 May. Speakers included Vietnam Combat Vet Jeff Rogers, GWOT Combat Vet Hans Hunt, VMC President Dean Schaaf, Chaplain Chip Hanson, and VMC Vice President Donn Weaver as MC.

Delinda Griffis did a great job with the National Anthem and transitional music from different eras, and the BVMC Color Guard, led by Don Pearsall, did a great job presenting the colors, ringing the bell for our fallen, and playing TAPS. Several local officials attended, and 99-year-old WWII veteran George Rosenfield received special recognition.

The entire program can be seen on [Space Coast Daily TV's YouTube channel](#). The event only lasted 45-50 minutes, but many shared with VMC volunteers how special they thought it was.

That day saw many more Memorial Day ceremonies. There were 600 at the Cape Canaveral National Cemetery event, 200 at the Cocoa Riverfront Park ceremony, 70 at the Liberty Bell Museum, 80 at a special musical program on the west side of VMC Park that afternoon, and 200 in Titusville, where Jim Carleton, BVC Vice Chair, spoke.

As we have seen before, Brevard County does better than most in honoring veterans' service and sacrifice.

# Hero Fest 2025 a Big Hit!

While a drizzle may have kept some away, more than 900 people, including many first responder families, attended the 04 May Hero Fest at the Brevard Veterans Memorial Center.

The event has been sponsored annually for the past seven years by Back Back Bread Heroes, led by Sherri Centore and Kimberley Ticker, whose board raises money and provides support all year long.

As always, the VMC hosted the event, and MOAACC Good Deeds Foundation served as a major supporter. From great BBQ to drinks, popcorn, cotton candy, and ice cream cones—everything was served free to the crowd as the community showed its full support for all first responders.

Many veterans attended as well, since approximately 30 percent of law enforcement personnel are also veterans. Both groups truly reflect service before self.

Thank you, BBH, and all First Responders!



# Mission Accomplished at Heritage HS

By Donn Weaver

For three days over a six-week period, five members of the county-wide Vets Back to Class (VBC) program – VMC members too – covered classes in the history of WWI, WWII, and Vietnam War eras. Heritage teacher, Matt Yount, a U.S. Army Veteran who just started in 2024–25 teaching sophomore history, reported he was very grateful for the effort, which included six classes all three days. VMC Museum traveling trunks made the classes even more stimulating. Thanks to Bill Vanasse, Doug Bisset, Jeff Rogers, John Fravel, and Donn Weaver for making it happen.



Pictured: COL Jeff Rogers, USA (Ret), wraps up his three classes on the Vietnam War. Note the military items which abound in Mr. Yount's classroom.

If you are interested in joining the 12 VBC volunteers next school year, please contact VBC Coordinator, Donn Weaver at (757-871-6576).

# VMC Veterans Gift Shop

By Jalaine Spears

Come in and check out the new military shirts for your favorite vet. (See pictures)

School is out and your children will enjoy a tour of the museum with our 5,000 artifacts. We also have many new toys to help entertain them. We have sLubens, which are a form of Legos, and can be put together and represent all uniformed services, including space vehicles. We hope to see you soon!



# A Great Send-Off: The 2025 Military Enlistment Ceremony of the Space Coast

By Donn Weaver



On 15 May, no one played football or soccer at the Viera High School Stadium, but hundreds still gathered for one of the most meaningful community events veterans and attendees had experienced: the First Annual Space Coast Enlistment Ceremony.

The event began at 6 PM on a warm but breezy evening, and it quickly became clear it was something special.

There were too many contributors to name individually, but a heartfelt thank you goes out to Brevard Public Schools, Viera High School, all Brevard JROTC units, the event committee, recruiters, commanders, media reps, local public officials, Rolling Thunder and other riders, MOAACC, DAV, and all veteran groups in attendance. Your support meant the world to the enlistees, their families, and the community.

A special highlight was the presence of Brigadier General John Dreska, U.S. Army, who traveled from the Pentagon to deliver the keynote address. He was joined on stage by several elected local officials, all offering congratulations to the enlistees—much like a graduation ceremony that would take place at Viera the following week.

But the true stars of the night were the 152 enlistees who stood proudly before the community. They represented not just themselves, but hundreds of others across Brevard and nearby counties in what is shaping up to be a record-setting recruitment year.

## Observations from the Evening:

One veteran said, “Nothing like this happened to me—and I bet 95% of veterans—when they enlisted. Being honored and launched by the community is huge. High schools usually recognize seniors who enlist, but this event brought it to a whole new level.”

The event committee gave out their first military challenge coins to the enlistees. During the ceremony, it was decided to also honor dignitaries, recruiters, staff, and volunteers with a coin. Seven veteran organizations helped fund the effort. One coin was even

presented to 99-year-old WWII veteran Maj. George Rosenfield, USA, Ret.

From the Constitution Truck at the entrance, to letters from Congress distributed by Keith Van Buren (from Rep. Haridopolos’ office), to the oath of enlistment, the sense of service before self was overwhelming. A perfectly timed BCSO Huey helicopter flyover, following a fantastic rendition of the National Anthem, and concluding fireworks, capped off an evening of powerful patriotism.

The idea for this event originated in late February with SGT Joshua Arocho, an Army recruiter from the Rockledge office and a key member of the event committee. Noticing a surge in enlistment numbers for 2024–25, Arocho asked, “Can we make this happen in time?” The answer was a resounding yes, and plans are already forming for 2026 as many hope to make this an annual tradition.

The event was made possible by a team including BPS School Board Member Matt Susin (who served as MC), BPS Community Relations Officer Yvette Cruz, and members of the Education and Citizenship Armed Forces Coalition of the Space Coast (ECAC)—a group formed two years ago by veterans, active duty members, and BPS staff. WHAT AN EVENING.



Titusville HS NJROTC - Nine enlistees receive quilts from Moonlight Quilters Guild



Astronaut HS AJROTC - Fourteen quilts awarded to enlistees in Armed Forces by Moonlight Quilters Guild

# Veterans Back to Class: Still working in Brevard County After 10 Years (Aug 2025)

By Donn Weaver

MOAACC and the Veterans Memorial Center (VMC) of Brevard County created a special program in 2015. Ten years later, it has proven its value in dozens of schools across the Space Coast, including public, private, and home-school groups. We call it Brevard Veterans Back to Class (VBC). We currently have 13 veteran volunteers serving schools throughout the county.

During the COVID years (2020–21), VBC recorded 18 veterans covering key educational topics for schools. These video resources are available online to all Brevard Public School (BPS) teachers at any time. In 2024, VBC added STEM-related programs, including participation in several BPS Science Fairs to date.

In the 2024–25 school year, twelve VBC volunteers spoke to 4,950 students across 17 schools and programs, sometimes bringing VMC Museum combat-era trunks to enhance their presentations. VBC representatives also spoke at JROTC Military Balls and other community events. Teachers continued to show our 18 educational video units, covering subjects ranging from the Constitution to World War II and the Global War on Terror (GWOT).

VBC helped coordinate 13 school field trips to the VMC Museum and supported four Science Fairs, collectively involving more than 2,000 students.

The Education and Citizenship Armed Forces Coalition of the Space Coast (ECAC), formed in August 2024, completed a website tool focused on military-related education and Museum exploration. ECAC and BPS also hosted a major Military

Enlistment Ceremony in May 2025, attended by 550 students.

Since 2015, VBC volunteers have presented programs to over 31,200 students across all grade levels.

Our best year remains 2016–17, when volunteers visited 19 schools (elementary, middle, and high school) and reached 6,280 students. We hope to break that record in 2025–26, with plans to engage with dozens of BPS social studies teachers and JROTC instructors in early August 2025.

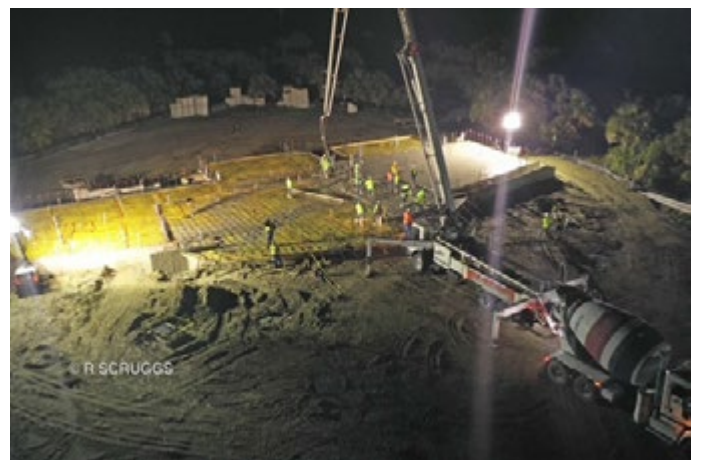
The VBC Program allows teachers to describe their classroom needs and provides veterans with 5–10 minutes each class period to share their personal stories of service and how being a veteran has impacted their lives. Passing on that ethos is crucial.

For more information or to schedule a visit or volunteer, contact:

Donn Weaver (MOAACC and VMC)

☎ 757-871-6576

## Ampitheater Updates



# VMRI Opens with Moving Wreath Laying Ceremony at Wickham Park

The 37th Annual Vietnam and GWOT Walls Opening Ceremony had a slightly different tone on 05 May during the Wreath Laying Ceremony, but it was well-attended and moving as always. For the first time in the event's 37-year history in Brevard, Vietnam-era veterans passed the torch to a new generation—veterans from Desert Storm and beyond—who have formed a new organization to oversee the event: Veteran Reunion Memorial, Inc. (VMRI).

The new leaders organized a strong ceremony that included many traditional elements, though some aspects differed from previous years when the Vietnam and All Veterans of Brevard (VVB) ran the large-scale event, which draws thousands over the course of a full week (04–11 May).

More than 115 veteran and civic organizations paid their respects to the over 58,000 killed in action in Vietnam and the more than 8,000 killed in the fight against terrorism since the attack on the USS Cole.

The evening's events concluded just as rain began to fall around 1930—an appropriate and solemn end to the ceremony.



Preparing for the Ceremony.



Great MOAAC Turnout led by President Steve Cusick (center)



MOAAC Getting ready with many members also supporting other vet organizations Wreath Laying.



Don Pearsall (center) and Donn Weaver pay respects for the BVMC in between MOAAC and Civil War guys.

# Detachment 513 Marine Corps League

By Dennis Herring, Adjutant

## WHEN I WAS IN...THE "OLD" CORPS

Having been out of the Marine Corps now for almost 25 years, I looked forward to a re-union with like-minded Marines who worked in the same military occupational fields (MOS) that I associated with when we were the "cutting edge" in technology and communications. Much of that equipment was nearing its "end of life" cycle from a post-Vietnam to Desert Storm/Shield era legacy when I retired, so I knew little of what to expect. I've always tried to stay abreast of the latest and greatest innovations in our domain by reading publications such as Marine Corps Times, Defense News, and Today's Military, etc., but those journals do not provide the detail associated with actual operation of the equipment nor the organization associated with command and control of combat aircraft in a combat arena. This re-union was of particular importance as we would be provided tours of the latest Marine Corps Air Combat and Control Squadrons. Nothing classified, just the basic view of operational equipment, training, and procedures and the thrill of meeting today's Marines, the young NCO's and Officers responsible for making everything work for the sole purpose of protecting our nation, the same thing we had done in the '60s, '70s, '80s, and '90s.

So, let's look at these old timers who attended this little "get-together" in the middle of the desert. The event was held at Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) Yuma, Arizona in mid-May of this year. MCAS Yuma is not noted as a travel destination for vacationers as it is somewhat remote and off the beaten path. And those +100 degree temperatures are not inviting to most tourists. All that being said, three Marine members of Detachment 513 and a former Commanding Officer from our active duty days embarked on the trek. The oldest Marine, Gary Corbett, served in the Corps between Korea and Vietnam. In fact, Gary was one of the first Marines aboard the Yuma base when it transitioned from an Air Force Station to the Marine Corps in 1960. When he arrived, his first task was to un-crate the electronic assets for the MACS-1 unit which had transferred their flag to MCAS Yuma that year. Gary felt as if he had moved into a palace as the relatively new Air Force barracks were a huge step above the typical Marine Corps living quarters.



Myself and retired Gunnery Sergeant Keith Carrizosa, both members of Detachment 513, have served together off and on throughout our careers. We met after boot camp while attending Basic Electronics School at Marine Corps Base (MCB) 29 Palms, California. We graduated from our terminal class in Aviation Radio Repair and were both stationed at MCAS Cherry

Point, North Carolina. Since our MOS was a very small occupational field, we were destined to meet again later in our careers at Marine Wing Communications Squadron-48 (MWCS-48) at NAS Glenview, Illinois where we again served together. Later, Keith moved to Marine Air Tactical Control Squadron-48 (MATCS-48) and I moved to Marine Air Group-48 (MAG-48) from which we both retired. All toll, Gary, Keith and I served our Marine Corps and our country for over 60 years and here we were over 25 years removed from our retirement dates.



Our fourth and final member of this "band of brothers" was retired Colonel Craig Hullinger. Craig started his career as an enlisted Marine serving in Vietnam as a radio operator. At that time, the Marine Corps was hurting for officers, so Craig took this opportunity to become a Second Lieutenant with his commissioning and returned to Vietnam

as Communication Officer (Comm. O). With a few more promotions under his belt, he was given the Commanding Officers billet of MWCS-48 as my C.O. during Desert Storm/Desert Shield where our paths crossed. The Colonel served in several communications billets after leaving MWCS-48 and ultimately retired with a very prestigious career of 32 years. Add that to our 60+ years of service and you are getting pretty close to a century of Marine Corps history packed between the four of us.

As we converged on MCAS Yuma for the re-union, two of us from Florida and two from Illinois, we did not know what to expect. About 100 attendees were expected, some retired, some not, some junior and senior enlisted, many were officers, but the wide-ranging diversification of ages, ranks, and times served had no common factor...other than Marine Aviation.

The re-union committee came through with an outstanding program considering how active Marine Corps units often keep their mission "in close quarters". The committee set up social events, some athletic games for those with prowess in golf and bowling, an evening dinner aboard the base, and the highlight, two up-close and personal tours aboard the base with active Marine Corps units, one with MACS-1, the air control squadron, and one with MAWTS-1 a Marine Air Wing Training Squadron.

For those unfamiliar with Marine Air, the MACS unit is the

# Detachment 513 Marine Corps League Cont.

By Dennis Herring, Adjutant

pinnacle in aviation combat control and the MAWTS unit is essentially the top school for senior Marine aviation elements. Every aspect of Marine Air/Ground aviation, F-35 B/C, F/A-18 E/F, C-130 and KC-130, AH-1, Ch-53, MV-22, MQ-9 Reaper, plus all the support agencies like radio, radar, Tactical Data Systems, Air Traffic Control, Marine Wing Support units and the myriad of composite squadrons working in unison to fine tune this huge offensive weapons system are attending this school.

Each and every one in attendance, no matter how you fit into the puzzle, no matter what your MOS, no matter when you were "in", all came away with the same conclusion. OUR CORPS IS IN GOOD HANDS. Most impressive of all the facets of the Corps that we encountered, were our young Marines. Several of the presentations were given by Lance Corporal (E3) and Corporal (E4) personnel from various disciplines. In every case, these young Marines portrayed themselves as knowledgeable, mature, respectful, professional personnel, as well as did the senior Staff and Officer who described their peripherals.

Very often, we who have left the service behind, cannot fathom our replacements, these "new guys", as having the same eagerness and dedication to the profession. It is likewise, easy to picture the "new kids in town" as having an easy-going, luxurious time of it. Whether you're a soldier, sailor, airman, guardian, or Marine, you always think it was more difficult, harder, tougher when you were in. From this experience, I would say "not so". Times change, equipment changes, procedures morph into new ways of getting the job done. But the personnel are just as committed, just as staunch, just as loyal and devoted as we were when we raised our right hand to serve this nation. It is also why we join these veteran organizations. To be with those like-minded personnel with whom we served. So... join up, join in. The American Legion, VFW, FRA, and, if you are one of The Few, The Proud, the Marine Corps League are all waiting for your participation.

Join us at one of our meetings on the first Thursday of every month at 18:00 (6 PM) in the Gray Hall of the Brevard Veterans Memorial Center, 400 South Sykes Creek Pkwy, Merritt Island, FL 32952.

You can also drop us an email at [detachment513marine\\_corpsleague@gmail.com](mailto:detachment513marine_corpsleague@gmail.com) or leave a message with our membership representative at 612-670-1772.

**WE ARE HERE.**  
 Dennis Herring  
 Adjutant  
 Detachment 513  
 Marine Corps League



MOB Passport awards presented at the Brevard School Board



New flag box built by Elisha Larson as part of his Trail Life project.



BVMC display at Vietnam Veterans Reunion at Wickham Park.



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# Unofficial Brevard VMC Vets Calendar June 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/>

## JUNE

**05 Jun – OrlandoVA Medical Center 10-Year Anniversary Celebration** 1000-1100. Lake Nona Amphitheater . VA Leadership remarks; historical review; learning about services; Golf Cart shuttle. Space is limited so RSVP via [OrlandoVAMedicalCenter10YearAnniversary](https://www.orlandohealth.com/veterans-affairs) via [VAOrlandoHealthCare/Veterans Affairs](https://www.va.gov).

## JULY

**04 Jul. Annual BCSO Merritt Island Independence Day Parade** 1000 start at Merritt Island HS with finish at Edgewood HS or on to BVMC. Details in early June.

**04 Jul. Symphony Under the Stars at Cocoa Riverfront Park** in Cocoa Village 2000 hours with Fireworks at 2115. Free concert by Brevard Symphony Orchestra along with free VIP BBQ before the event. More info at [brevardsymphony.com/symphonyunderthestars](http://brevardsymphony.com/symphonyunderthestars)

**15 Jul – Cape Canaveral Lighthouse Foundation Third Annual Christmas in July Fundraiser** 1700-1900 at Rising Tide Tap and Table , 523 Glen Cheek Dr Port Canaveral. Event is a raffle drawing party with each ticket at \$100 which admits two people for plenty of food, drinks, live auction . Great raffle prize. Purchase tickets (limited to 250) from CCLF Board Members or [info@CanaveralLight.org](mailto:info@CanaveralLight.org). 321-351-5052.

## AUGUST

**03 Aug - Annual Military Order of Purpose Heart Honor Ceremony** 1400 at VMC Gray Hall. Program details in June. Nine Purple Heart Recipients from Vietnam to Afghanistan will be recognized.

## SEPTEMBER

**11 Sep – 09/11 Remembrance Ceremony BVMC Plaza and Gray Hall** 1630 - 1900. Sponsored by Club 1013, MOAACC GDF and BVMC. Program details in July.

## OCTOBER

**03 Oct - Annual NVHS Dinner and Fundraiser** to support homeless and at risk veterans and their families. Save the Date. The Difference a Decade Has Made. 1700 -2100 at Radisson Resort by the Port. Hosted by Brevard's Constitutional Officers Semi to formal attire. Sign up starting in July.

## NOVEMBER

**08 Nov – Annual St Francis Reflections 5K Fundraiser** at VMC Plaza and Park. 0800 - 1200 Includes veteran recognition and pinning. Details in August.

**08 Nov – Veterans Day Recognition VyStar Dinner** at Holiday Inn Viera Conference Center 1715-2030. Sponsored by MOAA Cape Canaveral Chapter Good Deeds Foundation. To honor and express our and community gratitude to individuals, associations and projects that make a significant impact on military veterans in Brevard County. Sponsors at levels from \$10K, to \$5K to Tables of 10 at \$1250. to become a sponsor out seek more information go to GDFD. ORG or contact event chair Larry Jackson on 321-242-1331 or [larryj59@gmail.com](mailto:larryj59@gmail.com).

**08 Nov – Annual VFW Post 10131 and City of Cape Canaveral Veterans Day Parade** 1000-1130. Details in August. This year VFW Post in Cape Canaveral is hosting and managing the event.

**09 Nov – 8th Annual Homestretch 5K by NVHS for Homeless and at-Risk Veterans.** 0800-11100. Eau Gallie Arts District at the Square Park. Save the date. For moire info and to sign up as a sponsor and/or runner see: [runsignup.com/Homestretch5K](https://runsignup.com/Homestretch5K)

**11 Nov – VMC Veterans Day Ceremony** 0930 - 1030 VMC Plaza/Park. Details in August with possible Parade of Colors that afternoon in the new Amphitheater/Park. May also serve as Ribbon Cutting for the Amphitheater and expanded VM Park.

BECOME A BOOSTER TODAY and help defray the cost of producing our newsletter.  
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