

HONORING FOREVER

NEWSLETTER

Busy Summer at the Veterans Shrine and Museum

There have been a lot of events, ceremonies and dedications throughout the summer months. The new W. Paul Wolf War History Museum has been open since Memorial Weekend and is getting great reviews. Robert Thomas and his staff have done a wonderful job not only moving the existing artifacts to the new museum but adding new displays and exhibits.



*New weapon displays.
See article on page 10.*



June 9th

Nick Taylor Honored by Berne American Legion Post

We had over 50 members of the American Legion Post 468 from Berne, Indiana stop by and make a donation in the name of Nick Taylor, an Afghan vet who was killed in July of 2012. The group donated \$968 dollars on his behalf and said they will continue to do it every year moving forward with a donation to the Veterans Memorial Shrine and Museum.



Friends, family, and fellow riders enjoyed the ceremony, toured the Vietnam Memorial Wall and got to see the new museum and exhibits. We wish to thank Director of Post 468 Rod Donathan, Joe Stutzman, Donna Butler and Calvin Hofstetter organizing the check presentation.



honoringforever.org

 VETERANS NATIONAL
MEMORIAL SHRINE
AND MUSEUM

"Where No Veteran Will Ever Be Forgotten."

2122 O'Day Road • Fort Wayne, IN 46818
260-267-5022

July 3rd

Service Statues Unveiled at Museum



On Monday July 3rd we received a very special gift from Chris Bickel and her late husband Glen. The local couple donated 6 concrete sculptures of soldiers from each branch of service. These two foot high figures represent all branches of service, and each figure is holding the representative flag from each branch. Max Shelmadine is pictured with Chris Bickel in the photo above. Max did all the intricate painting of the soldiers. It is definitely worth seeing next time you're in the museum.



July 4th

Dove Released at the Wall

Members of the Christian Motorcycle Association stopped by the Shrine and Museum over the 4th of July Holiday. Thomas Wilkinson, head of the group, had several members of the Christian Motorcycle Association with him on their ride to the Vietnam Memorial Wall. At exactly noon that day they released a Dove, and upon release it flew to the top of the Vietnam Wall, as if it knew exactly why we were all there and paying tribute to our fallen heroes whose names are all listed on the wall. Thanks Tom for organizing the release of the Dove! You are always welcome back to the Veterans Memorial Park.



HONORING FOREVER

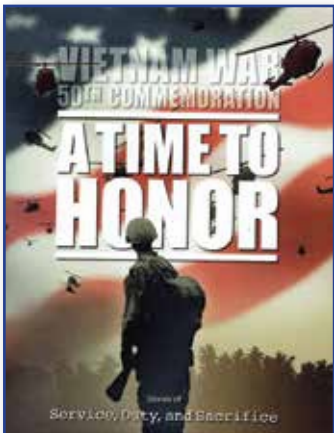
July 12th

Annual Golf Outing

The 5th Annual Veterans Memorial Golf Tournament was held Wednesday, July 12th at beautiful Cobblestone Golf Club in Kendallville Indiana. This year's tournament looked like a rainout at 8 am in the morning, but as luck would have it by 9 am all 132 players were teeing it up and we never saw another drop of rain throughout the tournament. We would like to thank all our sponsors, volunteers, beverage cart ladies, Cobblestone staff, Angie Newkirk who sang the National Anthem, and the Color Guard from Hamilton American Legion Post. And we can't forget Charlie Hanes who does our veterans handshake lineup with non-veterans. Hope to see everyone back next summer for our 6th Annual Memorial Tournament.

July 15th

“A Time to Honor”



Welcome Home Vietnam Era Veterans! On Saturday July 15th the Veterans National Memorial Shrine and Museum hosted a give-away of the book “A Time to Honor”. This full color coffee table book was given out to all Vietnam Era Veterans.

From 11 am to 3 pm we gave away 95 books to local veterans. Each Veteran had proof of service either a DD214 or a membership card from either a local VFW, DAV, or American Legion Post. Each veteran received a snap shot of them pictured with the book. Truly a great keepsake for any veteran who served during



the Vietnam Era. If you couldn't make the book give-away in July we are hosting another event on **Saturday October 14th at the Event Center at the Veterans National Memorial Shrine and Museum.**



HONORING FOREVER

July 27th

Armistice Day Tribute

The Veterans National Memorial Shrine and Museum hosted another Armistice Day tribute to all our local Korean Veterans at the new Event Center at the Shrine. Over 50 people gathered to honor our heroes from “the forgotten war”. W. Paul Wolf, a Korean Veteran himself spoke about the war followed by Antonette Lee who survived the terrible war in Korea and later became an American citizen. Her story is moving and an inspiration to all of us who have ever been in combat. It was also announced that there will be a new Korean monument erected on the Memorial grounds on November 11th, Veterans Day 2023. Reverend Youngsoo An from First Presbyterian gave the opening address and prayers at both the beginning and end of the ceremony. Thomas Schmitt played taps to end the program.



Antonette Lee



Reverend Youngsoo An



W. Paul Wolf

August 5th

McMahon Tire Makes Major Donation.



McMahon Tire made a major donation to the Veterans National Memorial Shrine and Museum on Friday August 5th. Owners Patrick McMahon III and Randy Geyer along with retail Marketing Director Nikki Phillips presented the Executive Board with a check for \$10,555. The proceeds were raised at their annual vendor golf outing on July 13th at Coyote Creek Golf Club. The Shrine was a co-beneficiary along with the Fort Wayne Trails. We cannot express our gratitude enough to the McMahon Team for all they do for the Veterans Shrine and in the Fort Wayne community. Thanks again Bubba, Kim, Randy and Nikki for your support of our mission!

HONORING FOREVER

August 8th

New Civil War Monument Dedicated

It was a year in the making but it is now in its rightful place at the Veterans National Memorial Shrine and Museum! Chris Bickel and her late husband Glen designed the 6 foot high black granite monument in honor of their relative Francis M. "Nate" Bickel who fought in the Civil War. They thought it was a fitting tribute to all the soldiers who fought back during the Civil War. In keeping with our mission Commander Greg Bedford said "No veteran will ever be forgotten", it was our founder's mission and continues to our mission as we serve all veterans who have served this great country. Eric and Cleo Scott would be so proud today if they saw this Veterans Memorial Park and we're not stopping here...there's more monuments coming!"



Tom Schmitt, Board Member and Chris Bickel

August 19th

4th District Women's Auxiliary Makes Donation to the Shrine

The 4th District Women's Auxiliary has made a donation to the Veterans National Memorial Shrine and Museum in the amount of \$2,763. Nancy Schlatter President of the Auxiliary presented a check to the Executive Board at the Museum on August 19th. A large group of 4th District members joined Nancy at the presentation. The Women's Auxiliary has continually supported the mission of the Shrine and we want to thank all the 4th District members for their generous donation. It helps support our mission that "no veteran will ever be forgotten".



★ The Mission of the Shrine ★

- To provide a forever memorial for all military Veterans of the United States.
- To educate today's youth on the history of war and conflicts that the United States has been involved in defending the freedoms we enjoy every day.
- To preserve artifacts of their service; to give future generations a better understanding and appreciation of the historical past of the United States.

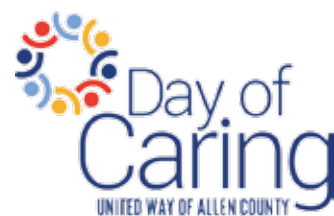
HONORING FOREVER

August 23rd

Star Bank Supports the Veterans Memorial Shrine and Museum on United Way Day of Caring

Brian Buisman from Star Bank recruited 45 volunteers for the United Way Day of Caring. The Star Bank employees really tackled a lot of projects to help make the “Shrine Shine”. From trimming bushes and trees to painting and staining to washing down the Vietnam Memorial Wall. We can’t thank

the Star Bank team enough for their terrific work. Also many thanks go out to Jim Turcovsky for his excellent coordination of all the projects on behalf of the Veterans Memorial Shrine and Museum. Thank you Star...you are all Stars!



2122 O'Day Road • Fort Wayne, IN 46818
honoringforever.org

HONORING FOREVER

Calendar of Events

September

National Suicide Prevention Month

National Service Dog Month

- Sept. 2 VJ Day (Victory Over Japan)
- Sept. 4 Labor Day
- Sept. 11 Patriot Day
- Sept. 15 National POW/MIA Recognition Day
- Sept 16 Trail To Zero by Brave Hearts
in Fort Wayne
- Sept. 18 Air Force Birthday
- Sept. 18 Air National Guard Birthday
- Sept. 22 The Four Freshmen Society
Singing the "Star Spangled Banner"
at the Vietnam Wall
- Sept. 29 VFW Day
- Sept. 30 Gold Star Mother's Day

October

- Oct. 9 Columbus Day
- Oct. 13 U.S. Navy Birthday
- Oct. 14 Welcome Home Vietnam Era
Veterans Book Give-A-Way
11am to 3 pm Event Center at the
Veterans National Memorial Shrine
and Museum
- Oct. 26 Day of Deployed
- Oct. 27 Navy Day

November

National Veterans & Family Military Month

Warrior Care Month

National Caregivers Month

- Nov. 1-5 National Veterans Small Business
Week
- Nov. 10 Marine Corp Birthday
- Nov. 11 Veterans Day - Dedication of the new
Korean Monument at the Veterans
National Memorial Shrine and
Museum - 11am at 2122 O'Day Road
Fort Wayne, IN
- Nov. 23 Thanksgiving Day

Captain Matthew Tomkiewicz Bench Dedicated



A beautiful new black granite bench honoring Captain Matthew Tomkiewicz is now located next to the Vietnam monument at the Veterans National Memorial Shrine and Museum. The bench was dedicated by his family this summer. Captain Tomkiewicz was killed when a fixed wing aircraft crashed on a training mission in Norway on March 18, 2022. We would like to thank his family for designing such a fitting tribute to remember Matthew by, and the lasting memories that will always be shared by this wonderful tribute in his honor.



Museum Open
Monday, Thursday,
Saturday and Sunday
11am to 4pm

Memorial Grounds
Open 24/7



Returning to Vietnam 2023

by Greg Banicki, Board Member

Why? Why do you want to go back there?

This is a question I have been asked many times since I decided to return to Vietnam. And one I have asked myself many times, as well.

I finally decided to go back for several reasons. For one thing, I made the decision to take a veteran's tour of Vietnam today before I am too old or ill to be able to make the trek. I will be taking a two-week tour in early September with other vets who served in Vietnam during the years we were involved there. Vietnam Battlefield Tours is operated by Vietnam vets who have been running these tours for well over a decade, and provide an experience geared for veterans and their family members.

My tour with the Army Security Agency in 1972 involved risk and danger, but not like my brothers and sisters who spent their time on firebases or humping the boonies. I saw things I did not want to see, felt fear and anxiety when on supply runs around III Corps, dread during random rocket attacks and when we were told we may be in danger of being overrun during the 1972 Easter Offensive (invasion) of the South.

So it goes, "There but for the grace of God go I". I was trained as an O4B2LVN— a Vietnamese translator/interpreter at the Defense Language Institute in Monterey, CA, in 1970-71. I not only learned the language, I studied the history, culture, and varied geography of the country. Since then, I have always wanted to see and experience Vietnam without war. I have kept in touch with old comrades who have returned to Vietnam many times since it established relations with the U. S. two decades ago and have reported how different Vietnam is today.

The tour I am taking will take us around what was III Corps, II Corps, and IV Corps. I spent my tour around Bien Hoa, Long Binh, and Saigon in III Corps. It will take us to sites of battles and old U. S. military bases, and to visit the cities and towns of



the new Vietnam. The Vietnam we knew and experienced is not the Vietnam of today. Whether you agreed with the war or not or hate the communists in the North, time has marched on.

While it has been a communist country since the demise of South Vietnam in 1975, it has changed drastically. Today, most of the people in the south weren't even alive during the war and have no memory of it. I have been informed that most Vietnamese today (especially in the south) are friendly and welcoming to Americans who visit.

It may be ironic that America is at peace with Vietnam given all the death and destruction and suffering that took place when we served there, but I am hopeful that my visit to the new Vietnam and our tour of the sites where other vets served, will allow me to experience a resurrected country without war and help me come to terms with some old ghosts that continue to haunt me today.

I am anxious.

I am excited.

I am ready.

by Greg Banicki MS, LMFT
Spec. 5, O4B, Vietnam 1972

New Monuments at the Veterans Shrine and Museum

by Tom Schmitt, Board Member

There are three new monuments at the Veterans National Memorial Shrine and Museum.

The Civil War Monument, which displays a large map on black granite showing the states on each side of the conflict and which states were neutral, donated recently by Chris and Glen Bickel. It sits next to the 44th Infantry soldiers headstones from the Civil War who were from northeast Indiana.

The Sultana Monument is a monument to the largest maritime disaster in the history of the United States. Over 1700 veterans traveling home after release from prisoner of war camps were killed in a steam ship explosion.

There is a new black granite bench honoring Captain Matthew Tomkiewicz. He was killed in Osprey crash in Norway in March of 2022. His bench is placed next to the Vietnam monument. His family presented the tribute bench earlier this summer.

Also there are five additional new monuments planned for installation soon at the Memorial Park that are in various stages of development.

The WWII Monument design is being finalized. The foundation is installed, the monument itself needs to be completed and placed on site.

The Gold Star Family Monument by Woody Williams is completely designed and funds are being raised to complete this special tribute monument.

The Korean War Monument which will feature the faces of local Korean War Veterans is in production and will be completed and ready to dedicate on Veterans Day, November 11th, adjacent to the new W. Paul Wolf War History Museum.

The WWI monument is still in the early planning stages. It will in some way honor Eric Scott, a WWI veteran and the founder of the Veterans National Memorial Shrine and Museum, along with other WWI veterans who served.

Mother George Monument, a monument to honor Eliza George, a Civil War nurse from Fort Wayne is in the planning stages and funds are still being raised to honor her with her own monument next to the Sultana monument.

Donations to any or all of these monuments can be made at the Veterans National Memorial Shrine and Museum or online at honoringforever.org. Just specify to which monument you would like your donation to go to.



New Museum Additions

by Robert Thomas, Curator and Board Member

A new exhibit has been completed at the museum. This exhibit was incomplete when the museum opened on Memorial Day weekend. Three new cases have been added to display the exhibit.

The weapons were displayed in the original museum among the other artifacts of a particular war. The only problem was that many of the weapons were used in different wars and we only had one of each type to display.

This new display is organized by eras starting from the American Revolution until the end of the Cold War. Each set of weapons are displayed as they were introduced and used in warfare. Besides the weapons, there are a collection of shells of various sizes and used in many different wars.

New artifacts that have not been displayed before consist of the French Chauchat machinegun and 4.2 inch Mortar shell. The Chauchat light machinegun was a standard infantry weapon issued to the French Army in World War I. It has a curved magazine that attaches to the gun. It has a unique feature of a cut out in the magazine for the gunner to tell how many rounds are left. This feature would cause many issues of dirt jamming up the magazine. This weapon was issued to the US Army 6th Engineers when they were assigned to train with the French Army in Trench warfare.

The second item is a 4.2 inch Mortar that is used in close support with the infantry. These weapons are assigned to the Infantry Battalion for control. The weapon operates when it is dropped into the angled mortar tube that has a pin to ignite the round when it slides to the bottom. These were created for the Army between the World Wars and it would remain in the service until the end of the 20th Century.

New exhibit items are continually added to the displays to honor the service and memory of our nation's Veterans.



Did You Know...?

The Department of Defense employs about 1.3 million people on active duty.

- The U.S. Army is the largest branch with 464k members.
- The U.S. Navy is the second-largest military branch, with 346k members.
- The U.S. Marines is the third largest branch, with 174k members.
- The U.S. Air Force & Space Force together have 333k members.

The Foo Fighters is a term from World War II. In addition to the popular band, the term Foo Fighters can be traced back to WWII, when American and British aircraft pilots reported bright lights that would change direction and speed away faster than any aircraft possibly could. No one was able to determine who piloted these crafts or what they were, and they were given the nickname “foo fighters.”

The United States has 750 military installations overseas in 80 nations, and Germany has more Army bases than any U. S. state.

Military families relocate 10 times more often than civilian families. On average, military families are sent to new duty stations every 2 or 3 years.

The Coast Guard lives by the motto “Always ready”, so whether that means saving people at sea or doing battle, the Coast Guard is always prepared. One of its primary tasks is maritime law enforcement in both domestic and international waters.



“Quilts of Honor” Now at the New Museum

You may have noticed several quilts hanging in the new museum. They are hand made custom quilts by the ladies of “Quilts of Honor”. Their organization makes quilts, table runners, coffee rugs and other quilted items to remember your veteran with. They are now selling in our Gift Shop inside the museum. They are all very unique and will make a great gift anytime or keepsake for your family. If you see a quilt you like, don’t wait it may be gone before you make it back to the museum! All one of a kind pieces...all quality made!

*Example of
Quilts*



Quilted Pillows

From Our Commander

I want to thank our Board of Directors for their ongoing efforts at the Veterans Memorial Shrine and Museum. The new Event Center is now available for functions, meetings and receptions. We have already had several events in the center and we are getting a lot of positive feedback from individuals who are renting the facility.

We are now working on organizing an extensive collection of materials, photos and books to fill up our new Medal of Honor library, which is in the planning stages right now. It will act as a look into the past and help with further educating the general public, veterans and students on the history of war and military service.

I would also like to thank Lauren Tomkiewicz and the Tomkiewicz family for the wonderful tribute bench that now sits on our memorial grounds. It is a honor to have it be a lasting memory of Captain Matthew Tomkiewicz who was killed in Norway when his fixed wing aircraft crashed in March of 2022. It is another great example of why our mission at the Veterans Memorial remains "Where no veteran will ever be forgotten!"

Honor, Remember, Respect.

Thank You
Greg Bedford

102 year old Veteran enjoys a surprise visit to the museum.



Ken Jones, the oldest living veteran in Whitley County, recently visited the Museum. Jones will turn 103 this November, and served in the Navy during WWII for the Tarawa and Gilbert Island campaigns. Friends and family were on

hand to celebrate as he was presented with a flag, and the Combat Vets Motorcycle Association presented Ken with a commemorative t-shirt.



★ Donations Accepted ★

The Veterans National Memorial Shrine and Museum operates solely on donations from our visitors, private individuals, and patriotic organizations. We welcome in-kind donations of services or materials that enhance our mission. We are a 501(C)(3) not for profit organization as recognized by the IRS regulations. All donations are tax deductible.



[Donate Online](#)

New Gift Shop Items

Some new items have been added to the museum gift shop.

The first new item is a new mug for our veterans to show off their pride in service to our country. It only costs \$10.00 and it can hold 10 oz. of your favorite hot beverage.

The second new item(s) are totes that have a military theme. They sell for \$3.00 and shows support for our military.

The third new item(s) are Garden Stones that sell for \$15.00 and make a nice gift or addition to a garden or walkway.

Pillows are the fourth new item. They show support for the military branches or patriotism for our country. They come in two sizes that are perfect for a comfortable chair or couch. The designs can be found in both sizes. The small pillows cost \$2.00 and the large pillows cost \$4.00.

Our fifth new item is a handmade Teddy Bear. These are in limited quantity and represent a branch of military service. Only two bears are left and one represents the US Air Force and the other represents the POW/MIA. The bears cost \$25.00 and once gone may not be available in the future.

The final new items in the gift shop are Quilts. They are handmade by the Quilts of Honor group which gives quilts to veterans as a thank you for their service. The quilts on sale are to raise money for them to buy material to continue making more for veterans. The quilts come in two sizes: large and small. The large cost \$200.00 and the small cost \$100.00. Every quilt is handmade and no two are alike. If you would like to help make quilts, help donate or learn more about Quilts of Honor, call Deb Richardson at (207) 436-1085.



Purple Heart recipient Corporal Donald Greenwood

by Bruce Lehman

World War II was a struggle unlike any other. It became a cause that American men and women would defiantly stand against the warring countries of German, Japan and Italy.

One such American was Donald Greenwood of Ashley, Indiana. Greenwood, who was born September 21, 1921, entered U.S. Army service in August of 1942 and was Honorably Discharged as a Private First Class on December 11, 1945.

During WW II Medical Detachments were “attached” to each Infantry Regiment. Their mission was to help conserve the strength of the Regiment by taking the necessary preventive and sanitary measures, and provide appropriate medical and dental treatment.

Officers and Enlisted Men were adequately trained in medical and other skills. The men were not only trained for different duties such as: Dental – Medical – Sanitary and Surgical Technicians, but also as Record Clerks, Litter Bearers, Podiatrists, and Light Truck Drivers. Detachments were responsible for first echelon medical service in combat situations, including emergency medical treatment in the field, removal of battle casualties and establishment of Aid Stations for the reception, triage, temporary care, and treatment of casualties.

Greenwood served as a medical aid and truck driver with Medical Detachment 126th Infantry. His Pacific campaigns encompassed the islands of New Guinea, Leyte, Luzon and across the Philippine islands. A member of the 126th Infantry, Greenwood was wounded on both Leyte and Luzon islands. He was awarded multiple Purple Hearts and awarded three Bronze Campaign Stars.

According to notes provided to this reporter, Greenwood was awarded the Combat Medical Badge and also earned a Combat Infantry Badge. In addition, he received the Asiatic - Pacific Campaign



ribbon and other awards and citations, including the Victory Medal.

With records sparse and after many searches, we wish we could tell you more about this hero. Even so, Donald Greenwood represents honor and courage. As such, he is one of the honored veterans that we all must never forget.



HONORING FOREVER

VOLUNTEER TODAY

VETERANS with *Connecting* VETERANS

- ★ Help us connect patients with fellow veterans from the community
- ★ Partnering veterans with veteran patients to provide companionship
- ★ Honoring patients where they live- in your area
- ★ FREE Training provided

For more information Contact Amy at 260-241-7250 or
amy.kleinrichert@promedica.org

 PROMEDICA | Heartland 




WE HONOR VETERANS
Helping Professionals on a Mission to Serve

 **VETERANS NATIONAL
MEMORIAL SHRINE
AND MUSEUM**

2122 O'Day Road • Fort Wayne, IN 46818
260-267-5022