

HONORING FOREVER

Newsletter

Celebrating Our Veterans & America's 250th Anniversary

Veterans Memorial Board Receives Prestigious Circle of Corydon Awards



State Representative Martin Carbaugh presented the awards to Treasurer Sharon Hudson, Commander Greg Bedford, First Vice Commander Eric Johnson, and Board Member Pat Fraizer.

Members of the Veterans National Memorial Shrine and Museum were presented with Circle of Corydon Awards for their service. State Representative Martin Carbaugh presented the awards to Commander Greg Bedford, First Vice Commander Eric Johnson, Board Member Pat Fraizer and Treasurer Sharon Hudson.

The circle of Corydon is the only state award in Indiana signed by both the governor (executive branch) and members of the General Assembly (legislative branch). The award honors the town of Corydon, which was Indiana's first state capital and the place where the first state constitution was written. Only members of the Indiana General Assembly can nominate people for this award.

Martin Carbaugh, State Representative from the 81st District, nominated all four individuals for this award. He said "all four of these individuals have shown outstanding leadership, dedication and commitment to the veteran community, as well as all of northeast Indiana residents. What a terrific job they have done to put the Veterans Memorial on the map in Fort Wayne".

Speaking on behalf of the group, Commander Bedford said "what we have accomplished over the last several years was through a combined effort of our entire Board of Directors,, volunteers, corporate donors, veteran organizations and veterans themselves. We care about all veterans who have served this great country and continue to serve. We want to ensure no veteran will ever be forgotten."



"Where No Veteran Will Ever Be Forgotten."

2122 O'Day Road • Fort Wayne, IN 46818

260-267-5022

honoringforever.org

From the Commander

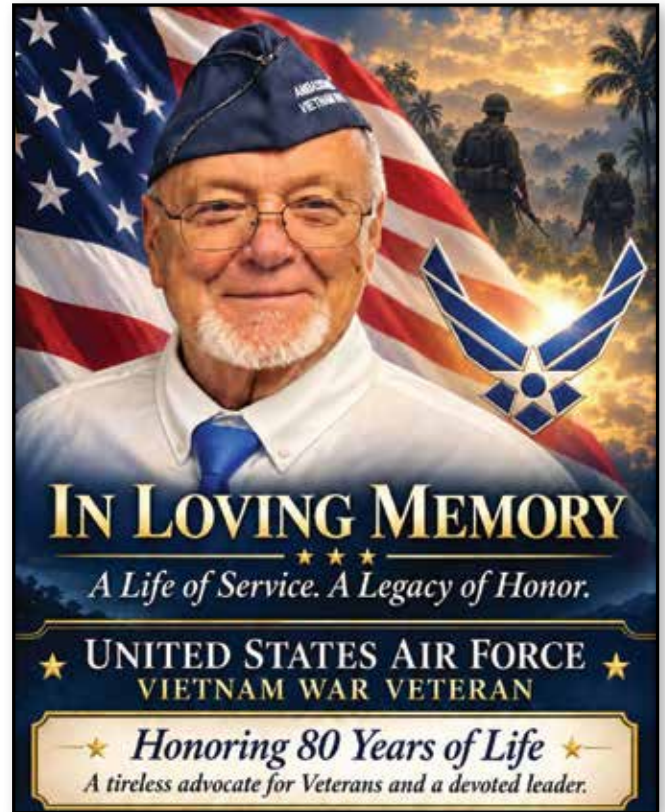


By Greg Bedford, Commander

It is with a heavy heart that I have to tell you that we lost a true patriot, friend and Vietnam Veteran... Patrick Fraizer on October 20th. Pat was very passionate about support for all Veterans and Veteran causes. He was a Board Member for many years and a Chairman of our new Ambassador Board. He was instrumental in our fund raising efforts for our memorials and a friend to all. He will be missed by all that knew and loved him. As one of his last fundraising projects, it was announced at our Board meeting on October 19th that we are close to reaching our goal for funding of the Agent Orange Memorial which will be dedicated in March of 2027. Thank You Pat for your service. Your legacy will live on at the Shrine and all you did for Veterans! God Bless you my brother. Services are pending.

Fall is upon us and it won't be long before the snow flies in northeast Indiana. Our Board of Directors have been working hard preparing the Memorial Park for winter. We have had a lot of volunteer organizations help with maintenance and upkeep of the property. We can't thank all of you enough for your help!

We will also dedicate a tribute bench for Sons and Daughters of Pearl Harbor Survivors commemorating that tragic day on December 7,



1941. The ceremony will take place at the Shrine on November 28th at Noon. You will soon see two more tribute benches to be placed at our Columbarium so that visitors have a place to remember their loved ones and take a break from walking the property.

Best Regards Greg Bedford

Drawing to be held November 14th. Get your tickets now!!



Rudder

Now you could win one of two custom made guitars designed and built by Fred Rudder in North Carolina. Choose from a Korean War design or a Desert Storm guitar. Tickets are just \$20 each with all proceeds going to the Veterans Memorial "Where no veteran will ever be forgotten!" Both guitars are on display in the War History Museum. Get your ticket at the Veterans Museum and be a winner!



Women's Memorial to be Unveiled November 14th



The long waited Women's Memorial will be dedicated on Saturday, November 14th at 2pm at the Veterans National Memorial Shrine and Museum 2122 O'Day Road in Fort Wayne.

A Big Thank You to McMahon Best One Tire

We are proud to announce a generous donation by McMahon's Best One Tire and Auto group. They presented us with a check for \$31,000 raised by their annual golf outing held in Fort Wayne on September 11th.

McMahon and their many vendors raised the largest amount ever presented to the Veterans Memorial over a four year period. Pictured with members of the Veterans Memorial Board are Bubba McMahon, Randy Geiger and Nikki Phillips from the Fort Wayne Headquarters operations. Thank You for helping us grow the Shrine and Museum and donating the proceeds from your annual golf outing!



Calendar of Events

October

Breast Cancer Awareness Month

Oct 4 Chapel Service 10 am
Oct 10 Flag Retirement Day-VFW Post 857
Oct 11 Chapel Service 10 am
Oct 13 Columbus Day U.S. Navy (USN) Birthday
Oct 18 Chapel Service 10 am
Oct 25 Chapel Service 10 am
Oct 26 Dine to Donate Event- Texas Roadhouse 3-10 pm
Oct 27 Navy Day
Oct 31 Halloween

November

National Veterans & Military Family Month

Warrior Care Month

National Family Caregivers Month

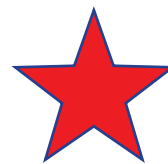
Nov 1 Chapel Service 10 am
Nov 2 Daylight Savings Time Ends
Nov 7 Veterans Day Parade- Parnell Ave to Memorial Coliseum
Nov 8 Chapel Service 10 am
Nov 11 Veterans Day - Armistice Remembrance Day
Nov 14 Dedication of Women's Memorial at the Memorial Park on O'Day Road 2pm
Nov 22 Chapel Service 10 am
Nov 27 Thanksgiving Day
Nov 28 Dedication of the Pearl Harbor Tribute Bench by Sons and Daughters of Pearl Harbor Survivors on O'Day Road 12 noon
Nov 29 Chapel Service 10 am

December

Dec 1 Civil Air Patrol (USAF Auxiliary) Birthday
Dec 2 Giving Tuesday
Dec 6 Chapel Service 10 am
Dec 7 National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day
Dec 13 U.S. National Guard Birthday
Chapel Service 10 am
Dec 19 National Wreaths Across America
Dec 20 Chapel Service 10 am
Dec 25 Christmas Day
Dec 26-Jan 1 Kwanza
Dec 27 Chapel Service 10 am
Dec 31 New Year's Eve

Did You Know...?

- Andrew Jackson's forces defeated the Creek Nation at the battle of Horseshoe Bend in 1814, ending the Creek War. Less known is that this victory secured lands that later became much of Alabama, shaping early U.S. expansion.
- During a famous naval battle with HMS Serapis in 1779, John Paul Jones reportedly declared, "I have not yet begun to fight!" His ship the Bonhomme Richard sank after victory, yet his daring tactics made him a hero of early U.S. naval warfare.
- The United States and Britain formalized their postwar signals-intelligence partnership in the UKUSA Agreement of 1946. The arrangement grew out of wartime cooperation and later expanded to include Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, forming the foundation of the Five Eyes intelligence partnership.
- The NSA's MINARET program monitored selected international communications involving Americans during the Vietnam War era and early 1970s. Its surveillance lists included prominent public figures. The program later became part of a wider national debate about intelligence powers, civil liberties, and government oversight.
- In the final months of World War II, American intelligence officer Allen Dulles participated in secret negotiations in Switzerland with German representatives over the surrender of German forces in northern Italy. Codenamed Operation Sunrise, the negotiations culminated in the surrender on May 2, 1945.



Update on the Agent Orange Memorial coming next Spring

By Eric Johnson 1st Vice Commander



We are pleased to announce that the Agent Orange Memorial funding is almost to our goal. We have ordered the black granite and hope to dedicate the memorial next spring.

"We have had a tremendous response from veterans and their families" said Eric Johnson who heads up the fundraising efforts."

Johnson added "We are selling Agent Orange and Burn Pits Exposure patches for \$10 each and have had a tremendous response from veterans and their families who have seen the suffering from soldiers that have been affected by these terrible toxins used during war." Patches are available in the Gift Shop at the War History Museum on O'Day Road.

You can donate to the memorial by mailing your donation to Veterans Memorial P.O. Box 26 Arcola, IN 46704 or by donating online at our website:

honoringforever.org Donations are always accepted at the Veterans Memorial War History Museum 2122 O'Day Road in Fort Wayne, IN 46818

Garrett Legion Post 178 Check Presentation



Check presentation from 4th district riders on Sunday Oct. 18th at the Garrett Legion Post 178. The \$3,100 check is helping us reach our fundraising goal for the Agent Orange Memorial!



\$10 each

★ Memorials ★

Donations received in memory of:

Charlie Momper
Nick Taylor
Don Shoup Jr.
Russell E. Parker
Gary Boldt
Matthew Tomkiewicz
Steven Modejewski

James Craig
Chuck Manor
David Stevenson
Teresa McCardle
Pat (Hank) Fraizer
Ronald B Bradshaw
Veterans affected by Agent Orange

2122 O'Day Road • Fort Wayne, IN 46818

260-267-5022

honoringforever.org

Veteran Suicide Prevention: Progress, Support, and Healing



By Greg Banicki, MS, LMFT Board Member

When a veteran dies by suicide, the loss reaches far beyond one life. Fellow veterans, spouses, children, and family members are left to navigate grief that can be difficult to bear alone. Recognizing this need, the Veterans National Memorial Shrine and Museum (VNMS&M) in Fort Wayne has introduced a new **Suicide Bereavement Group specifically for veterans and family members grieving the loss of a veteran friend or loved one to suicide.**

NEW: VETERAN SUICIDE BEREAVEMENT GROUP

When: First Thursday of each month, 5–6:30 p.m.

Who: Veterans and family members who have lost a veteran friend or veteran family member to suicide. This group provides an opportunity to connect with others who share the unique grief associated with losing someone who served.

Where: Veterans National Memorial Shrine and Museum, Fort Wayne.



 **VETERANS NATIONAL
MEMORIAL SHRINE
AND MUSEUM**

According to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), 6,488 veterans died by suicide in 2024—an average of 17.7 lives lost each day. Although this is below the historically cited estimate of 22 veteran suicides per day, the continuing loss underscores the need for prevention, treatment, and community support.

Firearms accounted for 74.3% of veteran suicide deaths in 2024, making them the predominant method. Veterans ages 18–34 experienced the highest suicide rates. Homelessness and recent traumatic brain injuries were also significant risk factors. Suicide rates declined 4.8% among veterans enrolled in VA health care but increased 3.7% among those not enrolled.

VNMS&M offers three mental wellness support groups:

- **Veteran Support Group:** Mondays, 5–6:30 p.m.
- **Spouse/Family Support Group:** First Saturday of each month, 11 a.m.–12:30 p.m.
- **Veteran Suicide Bereavement Group:** First Thursday of each month, 5–6:30 p.m.
- Additional Northeast Indiana resources for veteran suicide prevention include FW22 Inc., the Fort Wayne Vet Center, and the Fort Wayne VA Medical Center.

Prevention begins with connection, and no veteran or grieving family member should have to face these challenges alone. If you're thinking about suicide, are worried about a friend or loved one, or would like emotional support, the Lifeline network is available 24/7 across the United States. Reach the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline by calling or texting 988 and you'll be connected to trained counselors. Veterans in crisis can call **988** and **press 1** or text **838255** to reach the Veterans Crisis Line, available 24/7.

honoringforever.org
P.O. Box 26 • Arcola, IN 46704

The Warriors of Wake Island



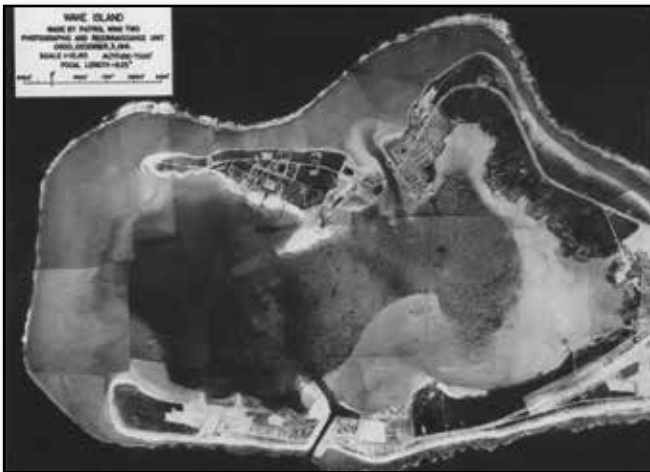
by Bruce Lehman, U.S. Army Veteran

December 7, 1941 is remembered forever around the World. The devastating attack created the Pacific War, adding to the World's chaos as Europe continued to flame thousands of miles away.

The Battle of Wake Island is almost a footnote compared to so many large scale and bloody battles in the Pacific. Even so, it remains a story of heroism, determination, innovation and uncompromising bravery for 16 days.

Two things intrigue me: One because I was there in late July of 1970. The second was years later when I found out that Wake Island was being hit within seven hours of the Pearl Harbor, making it the second target of the Japanese.

The American defense force during the December, 1941 Battle of Wake Island totaled approximately 1,700 to 1,750 personnel, consisting of military service members and civilian construction workers.



Wake Island is three coral atolls with less than three squares of land mass.

There were five Army personnel and Naval Officers and a detachment of approximately 450 Marines from the 1st Marines Defense Battalion. They were buoyed, when shortly before the initial

attack, the Marine Fighting Squadron 211 with 12 Grumman F4F-3 Wildcat fighters arrived.

Even as morale rose with the good news, it wasn't long before the Japanese darken the skies with bombers and naval batteries that threw shell after shell at the 2.5 square mile coral atoll.

The first wave of Japanese arial attacks immediately destroyed two thirds of the 12 aircraft and left destruction everywhere. All on hand rushed to defense positions and returned fire.



Over the next few days the island's defenders prepared for the obvious: the next wave of attacks. On the 11th of December, The Japanese unleashed an attack that featured an attempted troop landing, arial combat and a continuous bombardment by the Japanese navy.

Wake's defenders scored a huge morale victory that day as they repulsed the enemy. Japanese losses included close to 1,000 personnel and heavy damage to several cruisers.

The guardians of Wake used bombardment and arial power to claim two destroyers, the Hayate and the Kisaragi, with the Hayate becoming the first Japanese warship sunk in World War II.

What the heroic defenders didn't know is when the news of their defiance reached the US, it caused an enormous cheer and morale booster, which was of great importance to the nation and the war effort.

Continued on page 8

2026 Allen County Council of Veteran Organizations **Veterans Day Parade**

Saturday, November 7th, 2026 11am



The parade starts at State Boulevard and Parnell Avenue. Parade Route: North on Parnell ending at Allen County Memorial Coliseum

Opening Ceremonies: 10:45am

Remarks: Allen County Council of Veteran Organizations Board Members

Performance: Ms. Wisdom Pearson Concordia High School Senior

Closing Ceremonies: Approx. 12:30pm

Coliseum Veterans Plaza (By Jet)

Guest Speaker: Max Parrott Vietnam US Army Medic
 Performance by Tom Didier

Casing of the Colors Ceremony

September 12th, 2026 the US Army 1st Battalion 330th Regiment, which formed during WWI and was presently based in Fort Wayne, Indiana was officially decommissioned. The Casing of the Colors Ceremony took place at the Veterans National Memorial Shrine and Museum, who hosted the event. The members of the 330th will be reassigned, retire, or choose to return to civilian status.



The Warriors of Wake Island *Continued from page 7*

The Wake Island defenders would battle for another 12 days but could not sustain the island and the Japanese eventually overran them. On December 23, 1941, U.S. Navy Commander Winfield Scott Cunningham ordered the surrender and the Japanese took hundreds of American prisoners.

The Warriors of Wake that survived were trans-

ported to Shanghai's Woosung POW Camp and other camps in Korea and in Japan, the Zentsuji Prison Camp.

The importance of the Wake Island battle could be considered as a proclamation that the U.S. and her allies were defiant and ready for the ensuing fight.

Concordia Bench Dedication

On August 22nd the Veterans National Memorial Shrine and Museum paid tribute to two local heroes who gave their lives for our country. They were both honored by students from Concordia Lutheran Grade School, High School, Team Pape and JROTC. These groups raised the funds for two beautiful black granite benches which are placed in front of the War on Global Terrorism. Army 1st Lieutenant Neale M. Shank died serving his country during Operation Iraqi Freedom on March 31, 2007. Army Staff Sergeant Kevin Pape died November 16, 2019 in Afghanistan during Operation Enduring Freedom. Thank you both for your service and sacrifice.



War of 1812 Burning of the White House



By Tom Schmitt Board Member

August 24th, 1814 hours after President James Madison had left to meet with his generals and the British advancing, his wife Dolly Madison ordered members of her staff to break the frame and cut out the canvas of the 8 ft portrait of George Washington before the British burned the White House. She instructed them to burn the portrait before letting the British capture it, she then escaped Washington City. The portrait was safely stored in a farm house across the Potomac. This copy of the portrait now hangs in the White House, another hangs in the Smithsonian.

The George Washington portrait was painted by Gilbert Stuart in 1796. Oil on Canvas.



New in the Museum



by Curator Robert Thomas

The War History Museum has added four new displays since last year.

The first was the Weapons Display case which houses all the infantry weapons from the beginning of our country up to today. The case has had a couple of new pistols added recently from donors which are on display next to the glass with their own signage.

The second display is the Naval Ships display of handmade models of five American warships and one Japanese warship. Three of the ships were made by the model maker, Chet Proglar. The largest one of the group is a model of the USS St. Lo, an escort carrier that was the first warship sunk by a kamikaze aircraft in World War II. The detailing of these ships is incredible.



The third is the display of aircraft models from planes to jets to helicopters from several wars. The models are made from plastic kits or hand-made from wood. There is two additional display cases that hold aircraft artifacts such as the Norton Bomb-sight of World War II and Korea.



We also added a new area for our young visitors called the "Kids Zone". This area has a table with activities for kids of various age groups to learn and enjoy. Hands on feature for kids to try on military hats, military jackets from the different branches, and hold common equipment carried by military personnel, and a hop scotch/identification movement fun. U.S. Military facts and jargon are displayed on a board for reading. Coloring pages and trivia questions are available for kids to learn while having fun in the museum.



Several new items have also been added in the exhibit case areas or arrived through donations. New items on display are the Brown Bess Bayonet found on a battlefield from the American Revolution/War of 1812, a photograph of General Ulysses S. Grant's headquarters near Petersburg, Virginia in the Civil War, a Thanksgiving menu in November 1917 before the Sixth Engineers left for France, aircraft camera from World War II, a piece of wire fence from the DMZ in



Continued on page 11

New in the Museum

Continued from page 10

Korea, green flak vest with plates from Vietnam War, and a large model of the A-10 Thunderbolt II nicknamed the "Wart-hog", along with a .30 caliber belt section and one spare barrel for the main gun called the GAU-8 Avenger in the present era.

An upcoming artifact for display will be the famous Japanese Model 89 "Knee" Mortar Shell during World War II. The mortar was a 50mm shell that fired from a tube feed through the muzzle end. It had a rifled barrel that produced a spin that kept the projectile stable in flight. When the mortar was captured by American Marines and Soldiers, it was believed that a small plate at the bottom allowed the Japanese Soldiers to fire it off their knee. This mistaken use would injure personnel trying to use it incorrectly against the Japanese when capture. The plate was to be place on the ground while the soldier was in a kneeling position to hold the tube for firing. This nickname stayed with the tube for the rest of the war by GI's. This shell was created early in the war



and the red color marks it as a High Explosive (HE) round. This artifact will be out on display in the next few months.

Volunteers Always Welcome at the Veterans Memorial

Whether you would like to help with our Memorial grounds or work in the War History Museum, we can always use volunteers. No matter if it's a couple hours a week or a few hours a month, give Bonnie Davis a call. She is our volunteer coordinator and would welcome the opportunity to tell you about our needs. You can reach Bonnie by calling the Shrine office at 260-267-5022.

Thank You!



United Day of Caring
 August 21st
 Purdue Fort Wayne
 UWDC Trusted Solutions

Continued on page 12



Home Schooler Group
August 21st



BAE Work Day
September 19th



American Heritage Girls
October 4th



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

Memorial Grounds
Open 24/7

Continued on page 13

HONORING FOREVER

Newsletter

Celebrating Our Veterans & America's 250th Anniversary

Parkview Healthcare Systems Veterans Group

October 17th





Celebrate America's 250th Birthday with Commemorative Gifts!

"We Stand for Freedom" \$20 ea.
T-Shirts available in Red and Blue

2 XL \$23 ea.



**250th
Anniversary
Collector
Challenge Coin**

\$15 ea.



Saluting All Veterans
Veterans National Memorial Shrine and Museum
WE STAND FOR FREEDOM




All proceeds benefit the War History Museum.

Ceremonial Fire Pit Fundraising Campaign



Home of the Annual "Memorial Watchfire"
for the last 38 years.



7 Grey
Granite Benches



**VETERANS NATIONAL
MEMORIAL SHRINE
AND MUSEUM**

**The National Veterans Shrine and Museum
is embarking on a fund raising campaign
to update the current Ceremonial Fire Pit!**



You can donate to the Ceremonial Fire Pit by mailing
your donation to Veterans Memorial P.O. Box 26 Arcola,
IN 46704 or by donating online at our website:
honoringforever.org

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

Kroger Cares & You Can Too!



Do you want to help the Veterans National Memorial Shrine and Museum without doing anything besides your normal grocery shopping? You are able to do this by using Kroger Community Rewards! It doesn't cost you a thing, and Kroger will donate a percentage from your grocery bill to us.

To Use the Kroger Community Rewards Program: Visit **www.kroger.com**. Once logged into their Kroger account, search for "War Veterans Memorial Shrine of American History Inc" either by name or MK539 and then click Enroll. New users will need to create an account which requires some basic information, a valid email address and a rewards card.

- Customers must have a registered Kroger rewards card account to link to your organization.
- If a member does not yet have a Kroger rewards card, please let them know they are available at the customer service desk at any Kroger. REMEMBER, purchases will not count for your organization until after your participants register their rewards card. Participants must swipe their registered Kroger rewards card or use the phone number that is related to their registered Kroger rewards card when shopping for each purchase to count.

American Legion Post 241 Veterans Breakfast November 11, 2026

Breakfast FREE to all Veterans
7605 Bluffton Road, Fort Wayne
Breakfast is first-come, first-served from
7:30 to 9:00am
Please text or call Dave to RSVP at
260-341-4434



Another way to give to the **Veterans National Memorial Shrine and Memorial** is through the local **Community Foundation of Greater Fort Wayne**.

Challenge Dates: November 1–20, 2026

Match Opportunity: All gifts are eligible to receive a 20% match to our endowment funds at the Community Foundation.

This link takes you to our organization on their website: https://cfgfw.fcsuite.com/erp/donate/create/fund?funit_id=7700

Copy and paste to your browser. Thank You!

thrivent **GIVING TUESDAY** **December 1, 2026**

We are teaming up with Thrivent for Giving Tuesday! Thrivent is committing \$3 million to support organizations like ours. When you donate through Thrivent's giving platform, they'll boost your gift so your generosity goes further.

To donate please go to Thrivent.com and select:
War Veterans Memorial Shrine of American History

honoringforever.org
P.O. Box 26 • Arcola, IN 46704