

NEVADA COUNTY VETERANS SERVICE OFFICE HELPS THOSE WHO SERVED GET THE SUPPORT THEY DESERVE

A Vietnam War veteran who spent years fighting for benefits was living in a tent just last year but now owns a home thanks in part to help from the Nevada County Veterans Service Office.

The office helped him get long-delayed benefits that he was owed for his military service. When he first received the letter approving his benefits, he returned to the office in tears, trying to hug everyone who had helped him, said Stephanie Araiza, a volunteer special project coordinator for the office.



Courtesy photos | David West with Governor Gavin Newsom at the Veterans Hall.

It's the kind of success story that motivates Araiza, a recently retired U.S. Air Force first sergeant who joined the office through SkillBridge, a Department of Defense program that helps transitioning service members gain civilian work experience. After retiring, she chose to continue serving local veterans as a volunteer.

"Our hope is just to get them in the door which is a huge step for someone who is vulnerable and in need," Araiza said. "If we can get them in the door and get them talking, we can try to help them."

As the cost of living continues to rise, more veterans are turning to the office for assistance with everything from food and housing to medical care, transportation and utility bills.

Veterans account for approximately 10% of Nevada County's population of about 100,000, with many more residents connected to military service through family members.

The Veterans Service Office helps veterans access federal benefits, including health care through the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). "It has never been easier for veterans to get their benefits," Nevada County Veterans Service Officer David West said.

With four full-time staff members and an annual budget of approximately $855,000, the Nevada County Veterans Service Office helps Nevada County veterans receive roughly $95 million in federal benefits annually.

The office is next door to the County's Social Services Department so it can coordinate easily to get veterans assistance for food, housing and utility bills if needed.

A group of five active volunteers also provides free rides in a county vehicle to take veterans to medical appointments. In July, and in September, the volunteers logged over 1,000 miles of driving. The office is always looking for additional volunteer drivers, including women. Those interested should call 530-273-3396.

Thanks to a $120,000 two-year CalVet state grant from Proposition 63, the Veterans Service Office has also been able to get veterans free mental health services. Veterans can receive up to 15 free, confidential mental health counseling sessions.

Requests for mental health services are up. During the first quarter of this year, the office made 40 mental health referrals, compared with approximately 25 during a typical quarter in previous years.

In addition, the Veterans Service Office has stepped up efforts to provide housing for veterans experiencing homelessness, helping find housing for 70 veterans since 2022, West said.

The office is committed to serving veterans however they can, and finding a solution for any challenge. For veterans who have hesitated to reach out, or struggled to access their benefits in the past, Araiza encourages them to give it another chance.

"Don't be discouraged by previous experiences," Araiza said.

Now, the Vietnam War veteran (who once came into the office in tears after finally receiving his benefits) stops by the office in Brighton Greens Office Park regularly to encourage others to keep fighting for their benefits too.

The Nevada County Veterans Services Office is at 988 McCourtney Road, Grass Valley. For more information, visit www.NevadaCountyCa.gov/VSO or call 530-273-3396.



Courtesy photos | 2024 Veterans Health and Wellness Fair with County VSO staff, L to R — David West, Jessica Launier, & Tracy Hart

Nevada County Veteran's Service Office
www.mynevadacounty.com/976/Veterans-Service

Nevada County All Veterans Stand Down
www.ncavsd.org

America Legion Auxillary, Frank Gallino Post #130
www.gvlegionpost130.org
(530) 575-7002

Welcome Home Vets
www.welcomehomevets.org

Women Veteran Alliance
www.womenveteransalliance.org
(818) 675-414

Friends of Nevada County Military
www.fncm.org/frame/friends@fncm.org

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Happy Veterans Day!
Freedom Is Not Free
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VETERANS DAY 2026

Submitted by Mike Hauser, Adjutant, American Legion Post 130

Obviously the conflicts, wars and challenges to our existence have occurred over the years since the birth of this Nation 250 years ago. Today we celebrate those who served in every era and got us to this point.

Veterans Day got its start after the last battle of WWI in 1918. It was declared a day dedicated to our troops when the armistice went into effect on the 11th hour, the 11th day of the 11th month. The day was to honor our troops and encourage world peace. If you know Nevada County history, you know it had a large presence in this war. Check out "Nevada County's Veterans Honor Roll" at the VSO's office.

Men and Women who serve our Country have been challenged in every possible way to defend our existence, insure our safety, save the freedoms we United States are built on and to leave service and return home safely. Our active are facing problems and challenges now. We Veterans stand with them.

Veterans Day is a day to say thanks and honor all for their sacrifice and service to these United States and for protecting our freedoms.

We Veterans, we Nevada County citizens, we Americans, are so lucky to exist and live in a community which has, as one of its goals, to see that those who sacrificed are honored.

You no doubt have seen the "Hometown Heros" banners that have been hung on So. Auburn by the City of Grass Valley since early May. Those banners will be brought to the Veterans Day ceremonies and distributed back to family and friends with a big thanks. We want to honor not only the Veteran, but the family that loves and supports them. Grass Valley's Vice Mayor, Haven Caravelli will be present to honor our fellow Americans and encourage more to participate as the program continues on in 2027. This program is underwritten by the Nevada County Consolidated Veterans Council.

One of the new "Hometown Heroes" banners going up next year is to honor an amazing individual recently lost. Honors for Colonel Claude Hessel will be part of the program. Claude was career Coast Guard and after leaving service spent his life focused on support of his fellow Veterans and Americans rescuing them as he did others flying his Coast Guard job.

Lastly, we Veterans want to say thanks to the community by adding a fun component to the day's activities. Come share some great music and some food all free. You helped us help our entire community this past year. We just want to say thanks!

We invite you to attend this year's Veterans Day celebration, which begins 10 a.m., Wednesday the 11th, at Grass Valley's Veterans Building.

Nevada County's All Veterans Color Guard will open the ceremonies by presenting the colors.

The program will end at 11:00 with the Color Guard firing three gun volleys followed by "Taps" to honor our passed Veterans.



Submitted Photos

The fun component starts right after with "Diggin' Up Bones" entertaining us and helping us all celebrate 250 years.

Post 130 is in full support of local Scouts and our high schools. One activity the Boy and Girl Scouts have become quite good at with the help of our high schools is the collection and proper retirement of damaged American Flags.

Every year, well over 2,000 flags are collected for proper retirement. Sometime around the 11th, in a private ceremony, local Boy and Girl Scouts troops will properly put those flags to rest. Look for those dramatic images in *The Union* and on the Post 130 web page.

May we express our thanks to the Scouts, NJUHSD's CTE program and the Businesses and Operations, *The Union*, the VSO, GVPD, B&C Hardware, Waste Management, and Hills Flat Lumber for hosting the flag collection boxes.

We thank you for your support. There is no challenge we as a team can't meet: one nation, under God with liberty and justice for all.

Thank you for flying the flag and taking care of her as needed. You got her back, we Veterans have yours.

God Bless America
Mike Hauser
Adjutant
American Legion
Post 130







Soldiers lost or injured in the Iran War

IN HONOR OF THOSE MAKING A SACRIFICE FOR THE WORLD

By Meredith Blake

…I must admit, I feel rather insignificant when I think of all that you are doing to change the world. I'm just a simple writer, a small-town high schooler with very little experience in life and absolutely no experience in combat. You are risking your life to offer children you don't even know the chance for a life which they have only dreamed of, a life which I have taken for granted time and time again.

While I have the freedom to sit here at home complaining about all the things that are wrong with the world, you are doing something about all those things that you believe need to be changed in this world. You are not a superhero with extraordinary powers, but you are a hero in the purest sense of the word. And all this small-town writer can do is offer my deepest, humblest, and greatest thanks to you for all you are doing.

I pray that you quickly find your way home to your families and friends, that you are blessed each day with faith and courage, that you are able to live life to its fullest, knowing that your service will allow others the opportunity to experience freedoms I will no longer take for granted, and that God blesses each of you with an irrepressible spirit that will never be broken. Thank you for your sacrifice…

Meredith Blake is a student at Nevada Union High School. She writes a monthly column.

—Excerpt from The Union archives on April 21, 2003

VETERANS DAY PROGRAM — 10 AM ★★★★★★★★★★★ NOVEMBER 11, 2026

Opening Remarks
Dave Craigen

- Commander, American Legion Frank Gallino Post 130
- Presentation of Colors—Post 130 Color Guard
- Pledge of Allegiance—Boy and Girl Scout troops
- "National Anthem" Donna Mattson
- Invocation—American Legion Auxiliary Unit 130 Chaplain, Pam Blertuempfel
- "Salute to Claude" Babs and Terry
- "God Bless The USA," by Donna Mattson



- Speakers—Lisa Swarthout, County Supervisor—David West, Nevada County VSO—Haven Caravelli, Grass Valley Vice Mayor
- "Where the Stars & Stripes & Eagles Fly" Diggin Up Bones
- Medley of Service Songs," by Donna Mattson (Veterans muster in front of stage when you hear your service song)
- Three Gun Volley—Nevada County All Veterans Honor Guard
- "Taps"
- 11 AM–1 PM
  Entertainment by "Diggin Up Bones"
  Free Treats



THE HISTORY BEHIND VETERANS DAY

Veterans Day is a U.S. legal holiday dedicated to American veterans of all wars. In 1918, on the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month, an armistice, or temporary cessation of hostilities, was declared between the Allied nations and Germany in World War I, then known as "the Great War." Commemorated in many countries as Armistice Day the following year, November 11th became a federal holiday in the United States in 1938. In the aftermath of World War II and the Korean War, Armistice Day became legally known as Veterans Day.

Armistice Day

The Treaty of Versailles was signed on June 28, 1919, marking the official end of World War I. Nonetheless, the armistice date of November 11, 1918, remained in the public imagination as the date that marked the end of the conflict.

One year later, in November 1919, U.S. President Woodrow Wilson proclaimed November 11 as the first commemoration of Armistice Day. The day's observation included parades and public gatherings, as well as a brief pause in business and school activities at 11 a.m.

On November 11, 1921, an unidentified American soldier killed in the war was buried at Arlington National Cemetery near Washington, D.C. On the same day the previous year, unidentified soldiers were laid to rest at Westminster Abbey in London and at the Arc de Triomphe in Paris.

On June 4, 1926, Congress passed a resolution that the "recurring anniversary of [November 11, 1918] should be commemorated with thanksgiving and prayer and exercises designed to perpetuate peace through good will and mutual understanding between nations," and that the president should issue an annual proclamation calling for the observance of Armistice Day.

By that time, 27 state legislatures had made November 11 a legal holiday. An act approved May 13, 1938, made November 11 a legal Federal holiday, "dedicated to the cause of world peace and to be hereafter celebrated and known as 'Armistice Day.'"



In actuality, there are no U.S. national holidays because the states retain the right to designate their own, and the government can only designate holidays for federal employees and for the District of Columbia. In practice, however, states almost always follow the federal lead.

From Armistice Day to Veterans Day

American effort during World War II saw the greatest mobilization of the U.S. Army, Navy, Marines and Air Force in the nation's history (more than 16 million people); some 5.7 million more served in the Korean War.

In 1954, after lobbying efforts by veterans' service organizations, the 83rd U.S. Congress amended the 1938 act that had made Armistice Day a holiday, striking the word "Armistice" in favor of "Veterans." President Dwight D. Eisenhower signed the legislation on June 1, 1954. From then on, November 11 became a day to honor American veterans of all wars.

The next development in the story of Veterans Day unfolded in 1968, when Congress passed the Uniform Holidays Bill, which sought to ensure threeday weekends for federal employees—and encourage tourism and travel—by celebrating four national holidays (Washington's Birthday, Memorial Day, Veterans Day and Columbus Day) on Mondays.

The observation of Veterans Day was set as the fourth Monday in October. The first Veterans Day under the new law was Monday, October 25, 1971; confusion ensued, as many states disapproved of this change, and continued to observe the holiday on its original date.

In 1975, after it became evident that the actual date of Veterans Day carried historical and patriotic significance to many Americans, President Gerald Ford signed a new law returning the observation of Veterans Day to November 11th beginning in 1978. If November 11 falls on a Saturday or Sunday, the federal government observes the holiday on the previous Friday or following Monday, respectively.

Remembrance Day

Great Britain, France, Australia and Canada also commemorate the veterans of World War I and II on or near November 11th: Canada has Remembrance Day, while Britain has Remembrance Sunday (the second Sunday of November). In Europe, Great Britain and the Commonwealth countries it is common to observe two minutes of silence at 11 a.m. every November 11.

In the United States, an official wreath-laying ceremony is held each Veterans Day at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Arlington National Cemetery, while parades and other celebrations are held in states around the country.

Veterans Day is not to be confused with Memorial Day—a common misunderstanding, according to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. Memorial Day (the fourth Monday in May) honors American servicemembers who died in service to their country or as a result of injuries incurred during battle, while Veterans Day pays tribute to all American veterans—living or dead—but especially gives thanks to living veterans who served.

Our freedom is a gift from our brave servicemen and women.

Thank you!

★ ★ ★

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WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA

Submitted by Sally Knutson & Bonnie Magnetti

On December 19th, at 12:00 p.m., Wreaths Across America will hold the annual ceremony at St. Patrick's Cemetery in Grass Valley. This will be the 11th year that wreaths have been placed on the graves of veterans. Following a short ceremony at St. Patrick's (next to NID) the public is invited to take a wreath, place it on the grave of a veteran, and say their name so they are not forgotten. Wreaths will also be placed at Greenwood Memorial Gardens, next to St. Patrick's, and Sierra Memorial Lawn Cemetery in Nevada City (next to Hooper and Weaver Mortuary). Our goal is to have 2,000 wreaths placed on veteran's graves. Currently, we have approximately 1,200. So, we need many more wreaths. You may sponsor a wreath at $17 each by going to: wreathsacrossamerica.org/CA0231P or by mailing a check to:

Wreaths Across America
P.O. Box 165
Grass Valley, CA 95945-9998

Online orders must be placed by 8:59 p.m. December 1. Checks mailed must be received by November 20.

If you have any questions or wish to volunteer, please contact Bonnie Magnetti, bandbmagnetti@yahoo.com or 530-210-1941.

Bonnie Magnetti
Location Coordinator
Wreaths Across America



Submitted Photos





U.S. AIR FORCE

Off we go, into the wild blue yonder,
climbing high into the sun.
Here they come zooming to meet our thunder.
At 'em boys, give 'em the gun.
Down we dive, spouting our flame from under.
·Off with one hell of a roar!
We live in fame or go down in flame.
Ain't nothing can stop the U.S. Air Force.

U.S. COAST GUARD

We 're always ready for the call.
We place our trust in Thee. Through surf
and storm and howling gale, high shall our
purpose be.
"Semper Paratus" is our guide,
our fame, our glory too.
To fight to save or fight and die,
Aye! Coast Guard, we are for you.

U.S. MERCHANT MARINES

Heave Ho! My Lads, Heave Ho!
It's a long, long way to go.
It's a long, long pull with our hatches full,
Braving the wind, braving the sea, Fighting
the treacherous foe;
Heave Ho' My Lads, Heave Ho!
Let the sea roll high or low,
We can cross any ocean, sail any river.
Give us the goods and we'll deliver,
Damn the submarine!
We're the men of the Merchant Marine!

U.S. NAVY

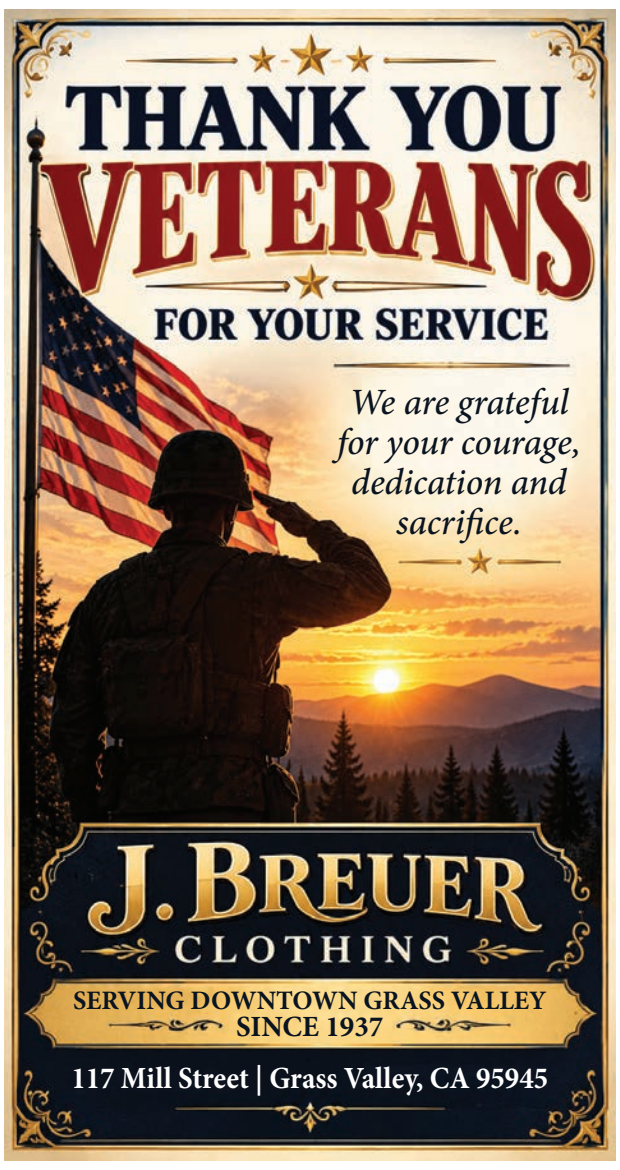
Anchors Aweigh, my boys. Anchors Aweigh!
Farewell to foreign shores,
we sail at break of day-ay-ay-ay.
Through our last night on shore, drink to the foam.
Until we meet once more.
Here's wishing you a happy voyage home!

U.S. MARINES

From the halls of Montezuma,
to the shores of Tripoli,
we fight our country's battles
in the air, on land and sea.
First to fight for right and freedom,
and to keep our honor clean.
We are proud to claim the title of,
United States Marine.

U.S. ARMY

Over hill, over dale
As we hit the dusty trail,
And those caissons go rolling along.
In and out, hear them shout,
Counter
march and right about,
And those caissons go rolling along.
Then it's hi! hi! hee!
In the field arti11ery,
Shout out your numbers loud and strong,
For where e'er you go,
You will always know







THE SPECIAL MISSION OF VIETNAM VETERANS CHAPTER 535

"Never again will one generation of veterans abandon another."

Founded in 1978 as the Council of Vietnam Veterans, the organization transformed into Vietnam Veterans of America in 1979, a veteran service organization composed of and dedicated to Vietnam War veterans. It is the only national Vietnam Veterans organization congressionally chartered and exclusively dedicated to Vietnam-era veterans and their families. VVA is organized as a not-for-profit corporation under the IRS Section 501(c)(19). The organization operates without any funding or contribution from any branch of our federal government. Its headquarters is in Silver Spring, MD. Today, the VVA has a national membership of over 93,000 with more than 630 chapters across the United States, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands and Guam. Some 46 VVA state councils coordinate the activities of local chapters.

The VVA advocates for full access to quality health care for veterans, seeks to identify the full range of disabling injuries and illnesses incurred during military service, works to hold the government agencies accountable for following laws mandating veterans' health care, seeks a full accounting of America's POW/MIAs and supports more recent generations of war veterans.

Our purpose at Chapter 535 is, **"To foster camaraderie among members and assist those with disabling mental and physical injuries, to promote the welfare of our brethren affected by the war, and to engender public understanding of the sacrifice, patriotism, and bravery of those who served, those who gave all, and those left behind."**

VVA Chapter 535 of Nevada County was chartered in 1992, and today, we have more than 85 members in their older years. Our numbers have been decreasing by attrition, but we are still looking for a "few good men and women" to join us. We have members from Nevada and Placer counties and beyond.

The chapter meets the first Thursday of most months at 6:00 p.m. in the Remembrance Room of the Grass Valley Veterans Memorial Building, 255 South Auburn St., Grass Valley, California. Visit www.VVA535.org to learn more.

THREE SPECIAL PROJECT NEEDS

Recently, Vietnam Veterans of America, Chapter 535 in Nevada County, launched a special fundraiser on **GoFundMe.com** and is asking for your help. There are three ongoing programs we are supporting:

1. Many veterans of all ages face unexpected hardships outside the scope of traditional social services and veteran assistance programs, and we are asked periodically to evaluate and decide emergency support for veterans and their families with immediate critical needs. Your donation will help **ensure that those who served our nation are not forgotten or left behind**.

2. The Harold K. Graves, Jr. Memorial **Scholarships** program helps qualified high school students pursue higher education while preparing for dedicated careers in military, law enforcement, firefighting, emergency medical services, or other public safety professions. We ask you to help invest in the next generation of leaders and protectors.

3. Our VVA Chapter 535 also provides assistance to **orphanages** located in the Central Highlands among the Montagnard tribespeople of Vietnam. These orphanages house, feed, care for, and educate up to 800 children from toddlers through high school, providing them with safe homes, education, vocational training, and hope for a brighter future. Your gifts will help ensure these children develop skills and have successful lives.

Visit **GoFundMe** at **https://gofund.me/1333865bf** or **www.vva535.org** for more information, including photos. Thank you for your support, and please share these special projects with family and friends. We are registered as an IRS 501(c)(19) non-profit organization.

THE TUXEDO AND THE RIFLE

Submitted by Gregory Ingram

When my brother Chris and I were boys, dinner next door at Angelo and Polly's house in San Mateo was a treat. The homemade southern Italian food was wonderful, but the affection was far greater. They adopted our family, and we loved them right back. When Chris and I were still quite young, Angelo entrusted us with his Bolognese recipe for what we learned to call "gravy." Neither of us has ever shared the recipe secrets. We both still make it regularly, even after all these years every pot brings us back to their kitchen.

Upstairs, in a guest bedroom closet, Angelo kept two things that return to my mind every Veterans Day: a rifle from the Second World War and a tuxedo. We knew the rifle had gone through the war with him. As I remember the story, he came off the ship, skipped the formal mustering out, threw away nearly everything else, and kept that rifle. He was reluctant to show it to us. The tuxedo was another matter. Chris and I decided Angelo must have a secret James Bond life. I even remember a white dinner jacket, although I may have invented that detail.

Angelo had fought in the South Pacific, taking part in several beachhead landings. He was friendly, funny, and sociable, but the war was something he rarely discussed. After I returned from graduate school and began working as a chaplain, he told me a bit about his service. Polly later said I was among the few people he had ever spoken with about the war. Other veterans who served in the Pacific had shared more with me. I never assumed I knew what Angelo experienced.

One thing he did tell me was that after the war, he always needed something to do with his hands. He kept a rosary ring in his pocket and turned it constantly. Perhaps that movement was connected to his wartime experiences; perhaps it was simply comforting. I cannot know. He gave Chris and I rings of our own. Mine is in my safe, among treasures of little monetary value but of incalculable worth.

I sometimes wonder whether Angelo's restless hands were quietly telling a story he rarely spoke aloud. Trauma tends to stay with the body as well as the mind. I welcome advances in trauma treatment, including approaches that help people work through trauma physically as well as emotionally. Good therapy can make a difference. But healing is bigger than any one treatment. I have worked with veterans as a chaplain and, more recently, as a therapist in training. I often wonder, though, whether the most valuable thing any person can bring is simply a willingness to listen with a loving heart.

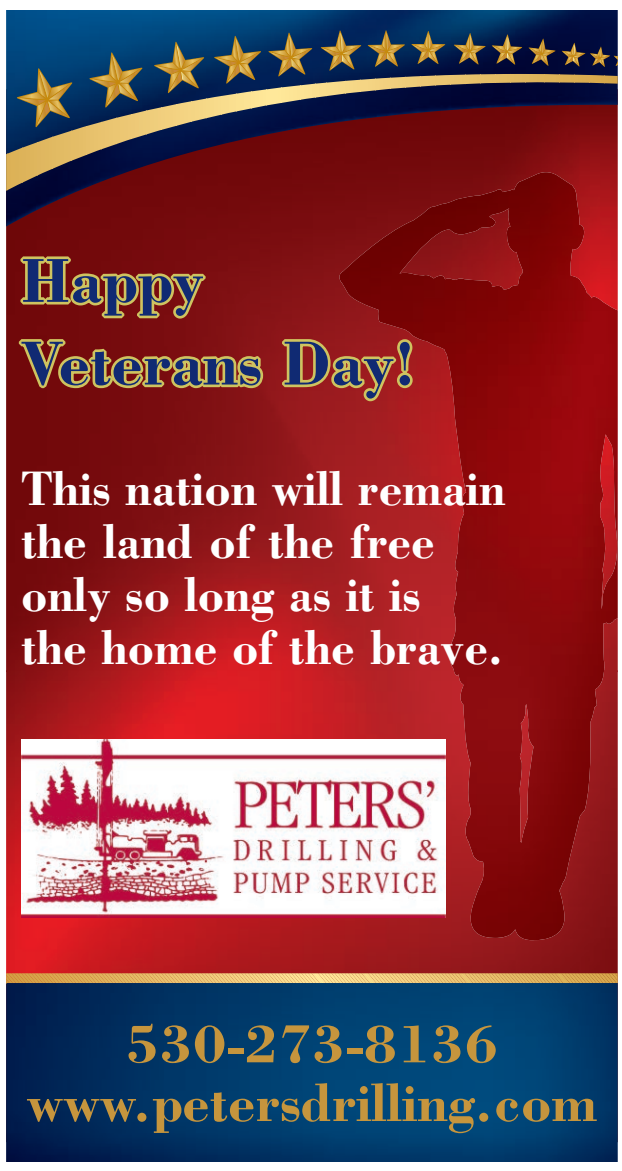
And that brings me back to the tuxedo. Angelo told Chris and I that he bought it because he was tired of renting one for VFW events. He wore it elsewhere too, but those VFW gatherings were special to him. I picture the dances, dinners, laughter, and camaraderie. Veterans could enjoy one another's company, while spouses, families, and friends joined. Here was Angelo, not just a man who had been to war, but a man who found reintegration, belonging, and peace following his war.

After twenty-seven years of chaplaincy and now mental health work, I have spent considerable time with veterans navigating the difficult questions that can follow service. How does someone settle into civilian life when so much has changed? What does a new normal look like? There is no single answer. For some, professional care is essential. For others, fellow veterans, family, faith, or a renewed sense of purpose make a difference. Often, it is a combination.

I think Angelo's tuxedo says something wonderfully hopeful about all of this. A person can live with unimaginable memories and physical scars and still build a rich and fulfilling life filled with friendship, laughter, and love. Caring for veterans means caring for the whole person, not just the part touched by war.

As we honor veterans this Veterans Day, I am deeply grateful for Nevada County's veterans' outreach and wellness services, and all of our community members who care for veterans, especially when they are hurting. Veterans Day reminds me of the debt our country owes those who served, and the sacrifices our active-duty service members continue to make. I will be thinking of Angelo this Veterans Day, with gratitude for all who served. And I will remember that every day until next Veterans Day is an opportunity to honor a veteran through respect for their service, extending loving kindness, and, if called upon, simply listening if they have something to share.

I still remember Angelo's rifle in the closet. But increasingly, I remember the tuxedo.




PHIL & MARYALICE: UNITED STATES MILITARY VETERANS & FOOTHILLS COMPASSIONATE CARE VOLUNTEERS

Service doesn't end with a uniform

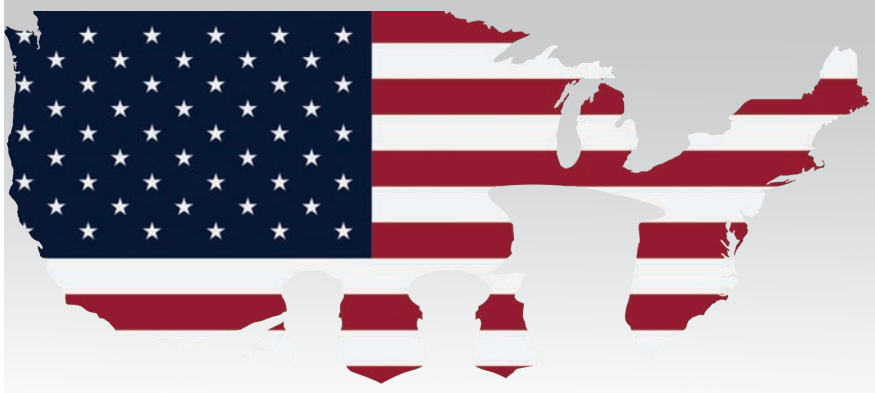
Several of our volunteers first served in the United States Armed Forces. Giving back to their community offers an opportunity to connect with other veterans and continue making a difference in the lives of others.

THIS VETERANS DAY,
WE HONOR THEIR SERVICE IN ALL ITS FORMS.

Foothills Compassionate Care | Hospice of the Foothills | Sierra Community Palliative Care | Foothills Gift & Thrift | Friends of Hospice

foothills-cares.org | 530.272.5739





Nevada County has long been a community that has revered it's active and separated service members. These shared veteran stories have been submitted by the community, so that we can further appreciate and support our veterans and their contributions to our nation.

VOICES OF THE LOCAL VETERANS

ROBERT (BOB) DEMERS

WWII VETERAN



August 15, 1925

I am a WWII Veteran that joined the Navy in October 1943. After basic training & service school (signal-man-quarter master), I was sent to Oceanside CA. for small boat training. (LCl's) & amphibious landing training.

In January 1944, I was assigned to the USS Bladen APA63 which became my home for 2 years. Our job was picking up troops, both Army and Marines, & reposition them in the Pacific. We operated between Noumea, New Caladonia in the south & Wake Island in the north & the Philippines in between.

In February 1945, our task force headed for lwo Jima. I landed with the 4th Marines at lwo Jima on D-day + 4 to set up ship to shore communications. Our team spent 8 days on lwo Jima, where we had severe casualties. Our landing area was close to Mount Suribachi on our left and dead bodies were stacked up like cord wood.

The enemy was living underground and had to be flushed out by flame throwers. In April, 1945, we were part of a task force that arrived in Okinawa & were in the middle of enemy Kamikaze attack that destroyed several ships in our task force. We later learned the importance of lwo Jima and why our B-29's were doing their bombing runs from Eniwetok in the Marshall Islands, they needed lwo Jima for refueling in order to return to Eniwetok.

In August we landed on Wakayama, Japan when the surrender papers were being signed in Tokyo Bay on August 15, 1945. It was my birthday that day, nice present!



CSC MERLE H. RASMUS

US NAVY RETIRED



Aug. 23, 1943-July 9, 1966

I served in all three wars and was on everything from a tug boat to aircraft carriers. I really enjoyed it.

I fought battles of Guam, Iwo Jima, Okinawa and in the Liberation of the Philippines.

I was one of the first participants in the Occupation of Japan.

I served on the hospital ship the USS Haven during the Korean War. It was very interesting.

We took two loads of POWs from Korea back to the US after the Korean War.

In 1954, my ship, the USS Haven, was deployed to Vietnam where we picked up 1,000 French Foreign Legion POWs and returned them to Algiers and the Marseilles in France.

In 1963 & 1966 I served in Saigon, Vietnam.

In 1964, I returned stateside and was assigned to the Destroyer Frank E. Evans (DD754) which was then deployed to the Tonkin Gulf, Vietnam.

I remained with the Frank E. Evans until I was "piped over the side" (a retirement ceremony) in July of 1966.

I was very fortunate that I survived all three wars. Just a few months after I retired off the Frank E. Evans, an Australian aircraft carrier cut it in half. We lost 174 shipmates in just a few moments. The hardest part of the war for me was losing friends.

I am very proud of my 22 year career in the US Navy.

"If you want to know the price of freedom, visit a VA Hospital."

—MERLE





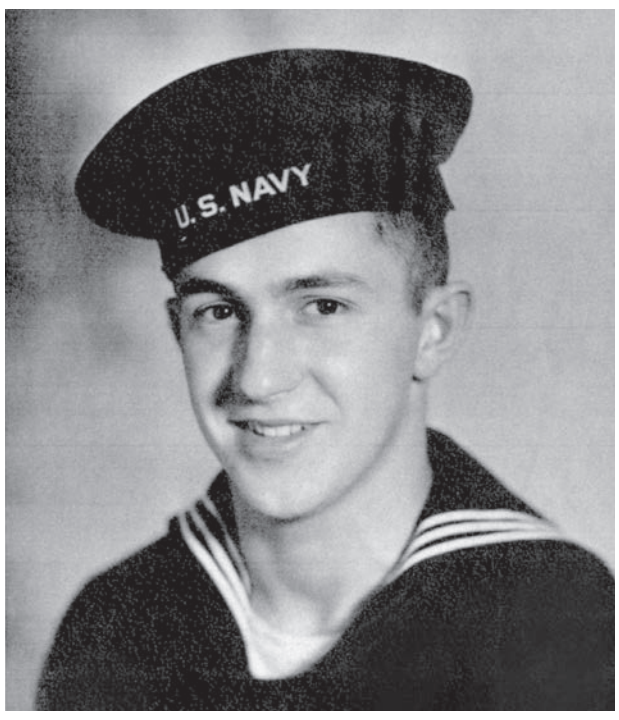


CONTINUED

VOICES OF THE LOCAL VETERANS

MATHIAS HERMAN

US NAVY



Sept 1944–June 1946

I loved the Navy, I was treated well and have no complaints. As a matter of fact, I sometimes wonder why I let myself get discharged. I met my best buddy at boot camp and as luck would have it, we were transferred to the same ship, the hospital ship Tranquility. This was a brand-new ship, and the newspapers on the East Coast were filled with articles about this new wonderful hospital ship.

I worked in the Engine Room, Machinist Mate M/3. I was on the wheel for power, checked pumps, kept things lubed, etc. I really enjoyed my work.

1945 Time Line:
June 27th : We arrived at Pearl Harbor to join the service force, Pacific Fleet.

July 11th: Arrived in Ulithi served as the Base Hospital Ship.

Aug 3rd: Sent to Palaus to take on board the survivors from the cruiser Indianapolis, which was sunk by a Japanese Submarine just days earlier. We headed to Guam where the 166 survivors were disembarked on the 8th.

Aug 11th: Rendezvous with 3rd fleet 350 miles off the coast of Japan, from there we headed for Guam.

Aug 27th: We took on 766 patients at Apra Harbor, they disembarked in San Francisco on Sept. 11th and returned to Pearl Harbor on the 26th. Attached to the Magic Carpet Fleet, returning Armed Forces from overseas bases to the U.S.

Oct 18th: Arrived at Guam and picked up 788 patients, disembarked them in S.F. on Nov. 3rd.

The ship was reclassified, did two more voyages with the Magic Carpet Fleet and returned to S.F. on January 30, 1946.

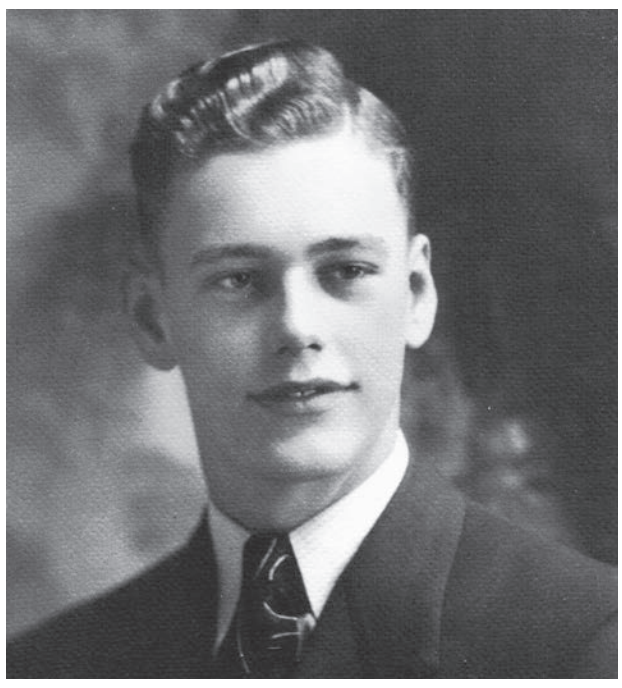
Tranquility received one Battle Star for WWII service.

The ship was scrapped in Philadelphia in July 1974. It was a true honor to serve my country and help the service personnel who fought for our freedoms. I enjoyed my time on the ocean and traveling around the world.

—MATHIAS

DERALD DONOVAN GOFORTH

US NAVY



Derald Donovan Goforth served in the U.S.Navy on the USS Monaghan during WWII and the USS LST-611 during the Korean War. He worked as a machinist for 32 years at Mare Island Naval Shipyard in Vallejo. He retired to Nevada City in 1985 and was a member of the United Methodist Church of Nevada City, the Elks Lodge of Nevada City and the American Legion.

—SUBMITTED BY BONNIE MAGNETTI

LCDT THOMAS D. ROBINS

US NAVY
1942-1972



I started out peeling potatoes ended up working with nuclear weapons.

I served in Europe in WWII, then in Korea, then Vietnam.

I served on 10 different aircraft carriers and numerous aircraft squadrons.

"I did what I did so that my family and the rest of the country could do what they are doing today."

God Bless America.

—TOM



Sourced from Metro Media

CONTINUED

VOICES OF THE LOCAL VETERANS

MAJOR KYLE W. GREEVER, SR.

US AIR FORCE



Major Kyle W. Greever, Sr. was born on December 28, 1921, in Buffalo, Oklahoma. Upon graduation from Cheyenne High School, he was accepted into the U.S. Air Force Cadet Program and shortly thereafter proceeded to aviation cadet training where he graduated as a pilot and Second Lieutenant.

Subsequently, Mr. Greever was trained for flying P-47 Thunderbolt fighters and became part of the 342nd Fighter Squadron in the S.W. Pacific, passing through countries such as New Guinea and the Philippines, eventually ending up in Ie Shima (now Iejima), a tiny island near Okinawa, Japan.

During his fighter pilot stint during WWII, he completed 139 combat missions flying the P-47 Thunderbolt and P-51 Mustang, providing ground support and attacking Japanese shipping. One of Major Greever's most life threatening episodes during WWII was when he had to ditch his P-47 into the China Sea. Luckily he was near an island and was rescued by locals. He states that most individuals don't survive this situation as there are only seconds to get out of this heavy aircraft.

Toward the end of the war, Mr. Greever was recalled by the Air Force and became a flight instructor in Greenville, Mississippi, as well as an ROTC instructor at Florida State University. His next assignment in the Air Force was as an F-86D fighter pilot for 1.5 years stationed at Naha AFB, Okinawa. Major Greever retired after 20.5 years, finishing his Air Force career as a command pilot in KC-135 tankers.

After retirement from the Air Force, Major Greever worked as a Nevada County Deputy Sheriff for 10 years. He was married to Marion Greever from 1941 until her death in 2015. Major Greever passed on January 10, 2018 at 96 years old.

—SUBMITTED BY FRANCES SHERIDAN



American Legion
American Legion Frank Gallino Post 130: HOME
www.al1130.org

Disabled American Veterans
http://wwwdavcal.org/find-a-chapter.html

Friends of Nevada County Military
https://www.facebook.com/FriendsOfNevadaCountyMilitary/

Marine Corps League
http://www.mcl885.org

Vietnam Veterans of America
http://www.vva535.org/

Veterans of Foreign Wars
http://www.vfw.org

Welcome Home Vets
https://www.welcomehomevets.org

To All Our Veterans

Thank you
for your service, your strength, and the sacrifices you and your families have made.
We are forever grateful for everything you have done to protect the freedoms we enjoy today.

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THANK YOU
for all who have sacrificed for our great freedom!

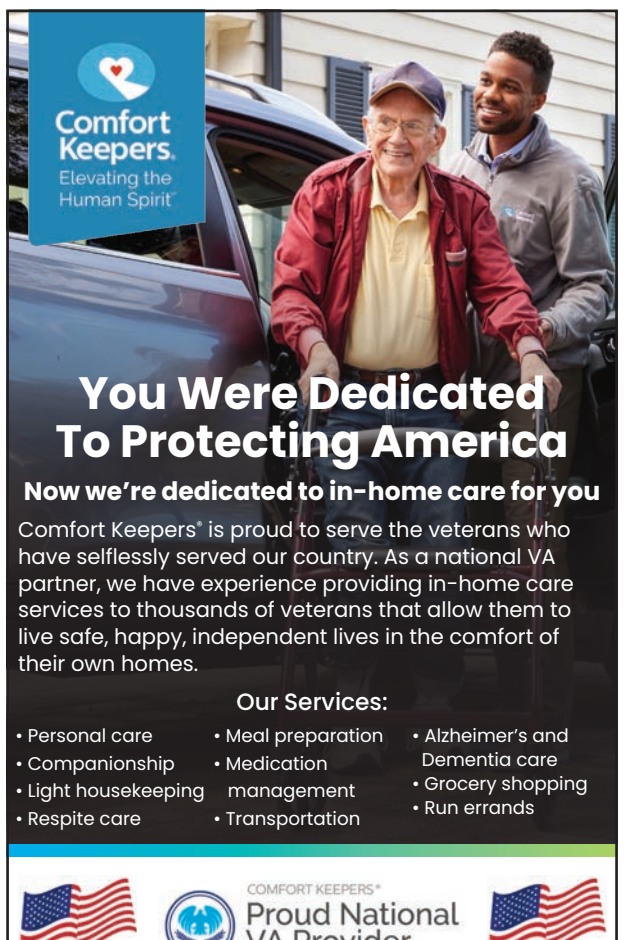
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