

Salute to Veterans 2023



Ron Wojtowicz
Photo courtesy of
Prestige Senior Living Five Rivers



Tom Blanchard
Photo courtesy of
Prestige Senior Living Five Rivers



Salute to Veterans

American Legion building membership and offerings

Will Chappell
Headlight Editor

Tillamook American Legion Post 47 returned from dormancy this spring and has already attracted 67 veterans to join with plans to begin offering programs soon.

The post, originally founded in 1919, fell dormant for several decades, but the group leading the revitalization hopes to increase the sense of community for veterans in the county.

"I think what we envision is having more social events with veterans," said Post

Adjutant Larry Emery. "Something that will attract the families and younger veterans."

So far, the post has drawn the majority of its membership from veterans of the Vietnam War, while younger veterans have been under-represented.

Legionnaires worked to increase awareness of the post's return this summer, participating in the Tillamook Rodeo, Tillamook County Fair and Hangar B's 80th anniversary celebration. Brian Werner donated a 1953 Willys Jeep that the group will use to participate in next



year's Dairy Days parade in Tillamook and other summertime events.

The Tillamook post recently voted to begin participation in two legion programs for kids, selecting the Jim Willis Law Enforcement Career Camp and Junior Shooting Sports Pro-

gram for their inaugural offerings.

The law enforcement camp is in Clatsop County and is operated jointly by the Oregon State Police, Oregon State Sheriffs Association and the Oregon Department of the American Legion. Post 47 plans to sponsor the attendance of two high school students each year for an opportunity to learn about opportunities to work in law enforcement.

The shooting sports program will teach youth competitive air rifle marksmanship and firearm safety and

marks the return of the Olympic Sport to Tillamook County after the 4H's program became moribund.

In addition to starting programs, growing their membership and increasing public outreach, the group hopes to celebrate their 105th anniversary next summer with a public, fundraising event.

Emery noted that membership dues are low and to continue to expand offerings for veterans and county youth, the legion will need support from the community.

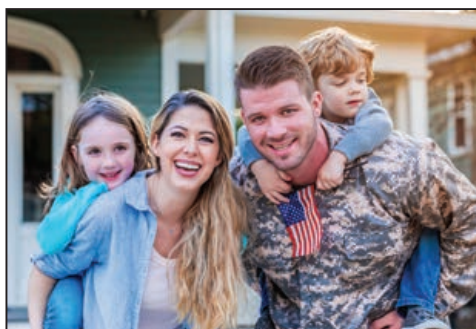
The legion is a con-

sensus driven organization, with all decisions, such as the recent choice to join the Tillamook Area Chamber of Commerce, voted on by the members at the group's monthly meetings.

Membership is open to any veteran who has served since 1921, regardless foreign or combat experience. Meetings take place on the third Wednesday of every month at 1 p.m. at the Tillamook Elks Lodge at 1907 Third Street and more information can be found at tillamookpost47.com.

Thank you, Veterans for your Service, to our Country

The Tillamook Family Counseling Center offers a variety of services including problem gambling prevention services.



Problem gambling can be a high risk activity for some people. If you choose to gamble create responsible guidelines. Examples of guidelines include, set a time limit, set a dollar limit, never gamble to cope with pain, and be aware that using substances while gambling carries additional risk. For more information about responsible guidelines visit www.opgr.org. **Help is Free and Confidential.**



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Salute to Veterans

Five Rivers Salutes Our Veterans

Veterans Day is always a special day here at Prestige Senior Living Five Rivers. We're proud to have residents who have served our country and helped preserve the freedoms we enjoy every day.

In honor of Veterans Day, we're taking this opportunity to spotlight two of our residents who are veterans, Ron Wojtowicz and Tom Blanchard.

Ron Wojtowicz

Originally from Illinois, Ron comes from a military family, as his father served in the U.S. Army in World War II. He followed in his father's footsteps by joining the armed forces, enlisting in the U.S. Navy



Ron Wojtowicz

in the mid-60s.

He served on two ships: the USS Porterfield and USS Hoel. He had a decorated military career, having been awarded a Korean Defense Service Medal,

a badge of honor and an award for conduct.

Ron is proud that his service took him across the Equator. He credits his time in the military for instilling a deep sense of



Tom Blanchard

discipline that has lasted throughout his life since.

Tom Blanchard

A native of Tillamook County, Tom grew up nearby in Beaver, Oregon.

He is a World War II veteran who was drafted to the U.S. Army and was stationed in Pearl Harbor and the Philippines.

After his time in the military, Tom returned

and spent 70 years as a truck driver and is proud of the family he has raised.

Life at Prestige Senior Living Five Rivers

Here at Prestige, we are incredibly grateful for the service of Ron, Tom and all our veterans. In fact, our company's founder, Harold Delamarter, is himself a veteran.

They served our country well, and now it's our turn to serve their needs.

For more about Prestige, visit us online at prestigecare.com/fiverivers or call us at (503) 842-0918.



FREE Resource Site For Caregivers

The holidays can mean added demands on caregivers for older adults, and here at **Prestige Senior Living Five Rivers**, we're here to help with a free resource page on our website at www.prestigecanhelp.com.

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Salute to Veterans



Veterans Day 2023

November 11 @ The Tillamook Air Museum

Breakfast from 8am - 10:30am

Flyover: (estimated time) 10:45am

VFW Ceremony 11am - 12:30pm

Join us on Veterans Day, Saturday, November 11th, as we honor & celebrate the courage and patriotism of the men & women who served, and continue to serve this country! Our local VFW, 2848 will be putting on this ceremony, and a flyover from the Oregon National Guard will also be taking place (weather permitting). For more information on this event, please contact us at 503-842-1130 or email us at Info@Tillamookair.com



SALUTE TO VETERANS

Publication of the
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Salute to Veterans

A guide to local Memorials and Markers

Bay City (2)

- Plaque/Native Boulder with POW/MIA Flag on the flagpole; Dedicated December 16, 2003; Located Marion Barr Library
- Vietnam Memorial; Dedicated July 4, 1992; Located Campsite between Bay City and Tillamook east of Hwy 101

Cloverdale (1)

- Plaque; Located Nestucca Valley Cem-

etry off Highway 101

- Plaque; Located west of bridge off Highway 101 in Cloverdale, directly across from the High School digital sign

Garibaldi (1)

- Coast Guard Boat Memorial; Dedicated - Unknown; Located near the marina off South 7th Street to Coast Guard Way just north of the Coast Guard facility.

Hebo (1)

- Mt. Hebo Memorial Plaque; Dedicated 1987; Former Mt. Hebo Air Force Station

Nehalem (3)

- Nehalem Bay Veterans Memorial; Dedicated May 21, 1989; Located Nehalem Bay Cemetery; http://www.waymarking.com/waymarks/WM13M9_Nehalem_Bay_Veterans_Memorial

- Plaque (All Veterans); Dedicated - 1994; Dennis D. Schnoor Veterans Memorial Park located near the northwest entry to Nehalem Bridge

- Plaque/Flagpole (Veterans of All Wars); Dedicated - Unknown; Located Cemetery between Nehalem and Manzanita, Highway 101

Tillamook (6)

- Plaque (Tillamook County Vet-

erans Korean and Vietnam); Dedicated - Unknown; Located US Post Office, 2200 First Street

- Plaque (All Wars); Dedicated - Unknown; Located Courthouse, 201 Laurel Ave.

- Plaque (Country's Dead); Dedicated - Unknown; Located Odd Fellows Cemetery, across from the County Fairgrounds, 4603 E 3rd Street

- Giant Flag; Dedicated - Unknown;

Located next to Werner's Meats on East 3rd Street across from Goodspeed Park

- The Tillamook Air Museum (Wartime Memorabilia); Dedicated - Unknown; Located Highway 101 just south of Tillamook

- Pioneers Museum Exhibit of Veterans' Memorabilia; Dedicated - Unknown; Located Pioneers Museum, 2106 2nd Street



MORE
THAN THANKS

Thank you to the brave individuals who have served and sacrificed in our armed forces to protect America's freedom. We are proud and honored to provide compassionate care to our local heroes. Happy Veterans Day!

Salute to Veterans

Honoring Vietnam veterans

Medals presented at ceremony in Lincoln City

Steve Card
Country Media, Inc.

Vietnam veterans, along with their spouses and other family members, gathered in Lincoln City Oct. 19, in a special remembrance of their wartime sacrifice and for the presentation of commemorative medals.

The ceremony, held at the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, was conducted by the Northwest Scots Honor Guard, which has

held a number of such events in both public and private settings. Colonel Daniel Gepford with the Northwest Scots Guard, who also played the bagpipes during the event, spoke to those in attendance about the purpose of the presentation.

“We’re a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization and currently we are working under a commission from the Department of Defense. A commission is technically a legal, binding contract,” Gep-

ford said. And under this contract, they are essentially filling the role of the president of the United States in presenting the Commemorative Bronze Eagle Medal to veterans. In addition, they presented a separate medal to surviving spouses and, in some cases, other family members.

“When we present the medals, that moment is very similar to when you see people on television come out on stage and the president presents

the medal,” Gepford said. “So that moment is a quick reenactment — it’s not possible to fly people back (to Washington, D.C.) for that ceremony.”

Bottled up emotions
Because of the way

they were treated when they returned home after the Vietnam War, many veterans are still carrying around bottled up emotions. One of the main purposes of these presentation ceremonies is to make a connection

the veterans and let them know they are appreciated, because when they returned from the war, the reception they received was anything but appreciative.

■ See **MEDALS**, Page 7



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Steve Card /Country Media, Inc.

Colonel Daniel Gepford, center, of the Northwest Scots Honor Guard, talks with Vietnam veterans during a presentation of the Commemorative Bronze Eagle Medal in Lincoln City.

Salute to Veterans

Medals

Continued from Page 6

“That’s really something, to say that when you’re not able to come home and be proud of the fact that you served your country, because people would spit on you, people would call you names,” Gepford said. “War is monstrous, but the point is, the individuals serving, most were drafted. What were their options?”

“What they experienced over there are things that humans should never have to see or smell or touch. They saw horrors that we can’t imagine. Then they come home and they are considered lower than the lowest of criminals.” As a result, he said, “They just simply built a wall around themselves. They’re still carrying the anger, the hurt, all of those negative things are built around them as a protectionary wall. The medal is simply to deal with the politics of that day.”

And it wasn’t just veterans who were affected by the negative political environment they encountered upon their return. “They came home and there was really no support. The government seriously dropped the ball,” Gepford said. “They also dropped the ball for surviving spouses. When you talk to (the spouses), it is absolutely stunning what they’ve gone through. They’ve

had to be a psychiatrist, they’ve had to be a medical doctor, they’ve had to be a teacher ... patient, kind, loving. These are the surviving spouses that have dealt with the issues that have come back as a result of that war.”

Gepford said when he and other members of the honor guard present medals to the veterans, “I tell all of our individuals, ‘Your job is to tread lightly, carefully and respectfully ... because you’re unearthing a lot of hurt and a lot of pain.’ Some days it’s just like a cork on a champagne bottle, the emotions just pour out. It’s an amazing experience.”

When they present

the medal, “You take that person’s hand, you call them by their name, you look them directly in the eye and try not to let them pull away. Talk to them directly and thank them. It’s hard for people to drop their guard, but when they do, you need to be willing to stand there and support them and stabilize them,” Gepford said.

“It’s a healing process that in my mind is almost miraculous ... to have such a powerful impact on so many people — not all, but so many people.”

Organizing the honor The Oct. 19 ceremony was organized after

■ See **MEDALS**, Page 8



Steve Card /Country Media, Inc.

Members of the Northwest Scots Honor Guard displayed the colors during the ceremony in Lincoln City that honored Vietnam War veterans.



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Salute to Veterans

Medals

Continued from Page 7

Ernie Hanson, former police chief of Lincoln City, learned about the program from Frank Harris, a Marine Corps veteran who served in Vietnam and now owns the Snack City ice cream shop in Lincoln City. Harris had met some members of the Northwest Scots Honor Guard who stopped by his shop for ice cream after a medal presentation at a private ceremony. Harris shared the information he learned with Hanson, who then got it touch with Gepford.

"I called Daniel, and

the ball just kind of got rolling," said Hanson. "We started to compile just as many names as we could compile." And at last week's ceremony, more than 60 medals were presented to the veterans, surviving spouses and/or family members.

"If we can develop another list of people, we would put another one together," Hanson said. "Personally, I like to see the veterans get recognition. One of the guys who got his medal was a retired colonel from the Air National Guard. In Vietnam he was what I call an airborne ambulance driver — medevac is think is the official title. And we had a hus-

band and wife who were both Navy veterans from that era."

Gepford said the honor guard is already planning to be in Newport for a ceremony in early January 2024. It will be held at the Pacific Maritime Heritage Center on the Bayfront during the culmination of an exhibit featuring veterans quilts created by the Oregon Coastal Quilters Guild.

And Gepford is open to hearing from other people who have an interest in this program. "Any group or organization, small or large, that would like to host one of these events, we would just beg them to get ahold of us so that

we would have the opportunity to come down and be a part of that. We can do it small, and we can do it as large as their creativity allows."

The honor guard can be contacted through its group site on Facebook at Northwest Scots Guard or on the website: NorthwestScotsGuard.com

Daniel Gepford played the bagpipes to open the ceremony honoring Vietnam veterans and their surviving spouses.

Steve Card /
Country Media, Inc.



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Salute to Veterans

Interesting facts about Veterans Day

Each November, millions of people recognize the service and sacrifice of military veterans on Veterans Day. Initially commemorated as Armistice Day but renamed Veterans Day in the United States in 1954, the holiday is a federal holiday throughout the country.

The first Armistice Day was observed in 1919. Despite that lengthy history, the general public may still have questions about Veterans Day.

When is Veterans Day observed?

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs notes that Veterans Day is always ob-

served officially on November 11, regardless of which day of the week that happens to be. In 2023, Veterans Day is Saturday, November 11. Because Veterans Day falls on a Saturday in 2023, the federal observation date is Friday, November 10.

Why is November 11 so significant?

November 11 is a significant day in world history because it marks the signing of the armistice between the Allies of World War I and Germany at 5:45 a.m. on November 11, 1918. Though the formal peace treaty, the Treaty of Versailles, was not signed until 1919 and

hostilities between the sides continued for hours after the armistice was signed, the day is still viewed as the end of World War I.

What distinguishes Veterans Day from Memorial Day?

The VA notes that Veterans Day honors all those individuals who served honorably in the military during both wartime and peacetime. Memorial Day is a day to honor and remember military personnel who died in the service of their country, particularly those who lost their lives in battle or as a result of wounds sustained in battle.

What is the significance of red poppies?

Red poppies are ubiquitous on Memorial Day, but they're also visible on Veterans Day. Though it's not taboo to wear red poppies on Veterans Day, it's a tradition that aligns more with Memorial Day. That's because the poppies are typically worn to honor fallen military personnel. A 1915 poem written by a Canadian Lieutenant Colonel named John McCrae referred to the fields of poppies growing around the graves of World War I soldiers in Flanders.

Do other countries honor their military veterans?

Many countries across the globe honor their military veterans, and many do so on November 11 as well. For example, Canadians and Australians observe Remembrance Day in honor of their nation's respective veterans on November 11. Great Britain observes Remembrance Day on the Sunday nearest to November 11.

Veterans Day is a day to honor and commemorate the brave men and women who have honorably served in the U.S. military during wartime and peacetime.

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Salute to Veterans

The roles of the various branches of the U.S. military

Each November, people across the United States and its territories honor the brave men and women who serve and have served in the various branches of the country's military. Veterans Day is observed annually every November 11 and honors the service of all U.S. military veterans. The day should not be confused with Memorial Day, which is celebrated each year in May and honors all military personnel who have died in service.

Veterans Day is a great time for anyone to learn more about the various branches of the U.S. military.

Army

The U.S. Department of Defense notes that the Army is the largest and oldest service in the country's military. The Army provides the ground forces that protect the United States. Members of the Army are trained to defeat enemy ground forces and to seize and control enemy lands and resources. Army also are trained to control and interact with the general population in countries where members are stationed.

Marine Corps.

It might surprise some to learn that the Marine



Corps. is a component of the Department of the Navy. That's one reason why maintains amphibious and ground units for contingency and combat operations. The Marine Corps is divided into four groups: the operating forces that fight; the headquarters for leadership; the supporting establishment that provides

logistical support; and the Marine Corps. Reserve.

Navy

The Navy protects America at sea. Despite its massive land mass, the United States is a maritime nation, which underscores how important a strong Navy is to the safety of the country and its

residents. The Navy works alongside American allies and partners to keep the seas open and free.

Air Force

The Air Force has five core missions: air superiority; global strike; rapid global mobility; intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance; and command and control. The Air Force defends the country and its residents in air, space and cyberspace and is capable of delivering forces anywhere in the world within hours.

Space Force

The existence of the

Space Force may come as a surprise to many Americans. Organized under the Department of the Air Force and established in 2019, this branch of the military organizes, trains and equips space forces in order to protect the interest of America and its allies in space.

Coast Guard

During peacetime, the Coast Guard is part of the Department of Homeland Security. In times of war, it operates under the Navy. The Coast Guard provides law and maritime safety enforcement as well as environmental protection. In addition to promoting national security, border security and economic prosperity in the maritime environment, the Coast Guard saves those in peril on the sea.

National Guard

The National Guard is comprised of the Army National Guard and the Air National Guard. The National Guard has a diverse array of responsibilities that range from supporting combat missions to responding during domestic emergencies to assisting in humanitarian efforts and more.

The U.S. military is made up various branches, each with its own unique missions and responsibilities. Veterans Day marks the perfect occasion to celebrate the many individuals who have served and continue to serve in the U.S. military.

Dr. Tracy Solis, DVM

Dr. Jennifer Witt, DVM

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H22801

Salute to Veterans

Charities whose missions support veterans, active military and their families

The support Americans have for their armed forces is evident in how much they donate each year to charities with military-related missions. According to Charity Navigator, Americans donate more than \$2.5 billion annually to charities with missions dedicated to the military.

Individuals who want to donate to a charitable organization with a military-related mission may not know where to start, and that can be daunting given the number of organiza-

tions that fit that criteria. Charity Navigator indicates there are more than 40,000 American charities with military-related missions, which underscores how diffi-

cult it can be to find one to support. Thankfully, Charity Navigator, which has provided donors with free access to data, tools and resources to guide their philanthrop-

ic decision-making since 2001, has curated a list of highly rated organizations that provide a variety of services to mili-

■ See **CHARITIES**, Page 12



Thank You Veterans!

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- Chas Hinkle – U.S.C.G.

Netarts-Oceanside

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- Rick Miller – U.S. Marine Corps

Tillamook

- Rueben Descloux – U.S. Army
- Kyle Stimpson – Army National Guard

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Salute to Veterans

Charities

Continued from Page 11

tary members and their families. The following is a brief rundown of that list that can serve as a solid foundation for prospective donors. The full list can be found at charitynavigator.org.

Wounded Troops

- Air Warrior Courage Foundation (airwarrior-courage.org)
- DAV (Disabled American Veterans) Charitable Service Trust (cst.dav.org)
- Fisher House Foundation (fisherhouse.org)



- Higher Ground (highergroundusa.org)
- Homes for Our Troops (hfotusa.org)
- K9s for Warriors (k9sforwarriors.org)
- Operation Second Chance (operationsecondchance.org)
- Wounded Warrior Project (wounded-warriorproject.org)
- Yellow Ribbon Fund (yellowribbonfund.org)

Military Social Services

- AMVETS National Service Foundation (amvetsnsf.org)
- Hire Heroes USA (hireheroesusa.org)
- Honor Flight Network (honorflight.org)
- Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America (iava.org)
- Operation Gratitude (operationgratitude.com)
- Operation Healing Forces (operationhealingforces.org)
- Soldiers' Angels (soldiersangels.org)
- The Mission Continues (missioncontinues.org)

Military Family Support

- Army Emergency Relief (armyemergen-cyrelief.org)
- Blue Star Families (bluestarfam.org)
- Children of Fallen Patriots Foundation (fallenpatriots.org)
- Folds of Honor (foldsofhonor.org)
- Operation Homefront (operationhomefront.org)
- Our Military Kids (ourmilitarykids.org)
- Travis Manion Foundation (travismanion.org)
- VFW National Home for Children (vfwnation-alhome.org)

Thank You to all of our Veterans

On Veterans Day we thank our service men and women who are no longer with us, those who have served and those who are still serving — we salute you on Veterans Day!

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