

The Veterans Memorial Park of The Villages

DEDICATED ON NOVEMBER 11, 1998 TO ALL
U.S. VETERANS PAST AND PRESENT

History

The Veterans Memorial Park had its beginning when Frank Mezzatesta was raising money at the local grocery store for Ex-POWs. Three young teens stopped to ask him if "POW" stood for "People Out of Work." An Ex-POW himself, Mezzatesta was shocked that the younger generation had no knowledge of the meaning of the term. He felt compelled to find a way to educate today's youth about veterans' contributions to our nation. Thus, the idea of a monument to veterans was born.

A committee of veterans and patriotic organizations was formed to work on the project. The Villages developer, the Schwartz/Morse family, donated the grounds for the park and, using Mezzatesta's original plans, provided the architectural design. The Village Foundation administered the fundraising efforts. As a result of the partnership, the new park was dedicated on Veterans Day, November 11, 1998. Now that the park is complete, the Committee conducts regular services for veterans throughout the year. The public is invited to these services, and local youth groups are also encouraged to participate.

CURRENT MONUMENTS INCLUDE:

Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 1036,
Daughters of the American Revolution,
Korean War Veterans, Wounded Combat Veterans,
and many small plaques throughout the park
recognizing other groups & organizations.

Scheduled Services

March 29, Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans
May 15, Peace Officers Day
Third Saturday in May, Armed Forces Day
Last Monday in May, Memorial Day
June 14, Flag Day
July 4, Independence Day
July 27, Korean War Armistice Day
September 11, Remembrance Day
Third Friday in September, POW/MIA Recognition Day
November 11, Veterans Day
December 7, Pearl Harbor Day

WE FLY THE FLAG AT HALF-STAFF:

Memorial Day, sunup to noon
Peace Officers Day, sunup to sundown
Korean War Armistice Day, sunup to sundown

Sunday services are held at 2PM. All other services are held at 10AM.



The VMP Committee

PRESENT BOARD MEMBERS

Sue Roper, President US Navy
Tom Miller, Vice President/Chaplain US Army
Arlene Pfeuffer, Secretary NSDAR
Michael Summers, Treasurer US Army
Peggy Campbell, Commander Honor Guard US Navy
David Levine, US Army
Marj Fada, Board Member USAF
Terri Friend, Advisor, USN

ORIGINAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Frank Mezzatesta, Ex-POW, Park Founder, USAAF
Harold E. Sievers (Emeritus), USAF
John Brehio, USA (Deceased)
Emory Clippert, Ex-POW, USA
Del Presher, USN (Deceased)
Tom Ritter, USA (Deceased)
Roger Sullivan (Emeritus), USAF
Janet Davie (Emeritus), NSDAR
Christine Heaton (Emeritus), NSDAR

Unit Flags

82nd Airborne, Div. Assoc. of
Paratroopers And Glider Men
American Ex-POWs
American Legion Post #347
Band of Brothers
Dav Chapter #150 Auxiliary
Disabled American Veterans #150
Distinguished Flying Cross Society
Jewish War Veterans
Korean War Veterans, Ch #169
Lake & Sumter Counties Chapter Military
Officers Assoc. of America
Marine Corps League
Col. Philip C. DeLong Detachment #1267
Military Order of Purple Heart, Ch #795
NS, Daughters of The American
Revolution, Puc Puggy Chapter
Sons of The American Revolution
Submarine Sea Dragon Base USSVI
Submarine Veterans of WWII
Tri-County Women Veterans
Vietnam Veterans Of America #1036
Villages Honor Flight
Worldwide Airborne

The VMP welcomes participation of unit flags from all Tri-County veterans and patriotic organizations in its ceremonies.
All veterans who have served our country honorably are welcome.

TheVillagesMemorialPark.org
[The-Veterans-Memorial-Park-of-The-Villages](https://www.facebook.com/The-Veterans-Memorial-Park-of-The-Villages)

Committee Projects

CONDUCT VETERANS SERVICES

at the Veterans Memorial Park.

BRICK SALES to commemorate US veterans past and present. Bricks may be purchased all year. Bricks are dedicated each November 11 during Veterans Day service. For information, call the VCDD office at 352-753-4508.

SUPPORT of VA hospital activities.

AWARD SCHOLARSHIPS to high school graduates.

Adopt-a-Kid, Adopt-a-Vet

This program is a major activity of the VMP Committee and began in the fall of 1999 at The Villages Elementary of Lady Lake. It was created to fill a serious gap in children's education: the absence of meaningful instruction about what a veteran is, or their sacrifices to preserve freedom and democracy; about our nation's heritage, and respect for its flag. The program serves elementary schools—mainly grades 4 and 5—in the tricounty area, though its success has spread across Florida and the nation. The program not only educates students about the significance of veterans to our country, but also affords an exciting and rewarding mission for our veterans to fulfill. The hours required are few but the rewards are many. For information, call 352-751-5136.



The Veterans Memorial Park is located off Lake Miramar at Paige Place, between La Hacienda Regional Recreation Complex and Spanish Springs Town Square. Out of respect for those honored here, the VMP is a pet-free park.