

2011 Annual Report

**Friends of the Veterans Monument,
Inc.**

Founded 1997

OUR MISSION

To honor those who have served
the Cause of Freedom, to preserve the
legacy of the monument, to educate, and to
foster cooperation among veterans .

Dear Friend:

Picture the El Dorado County Veterans Monument with its row after row of names. Now imagine, in addition to the rows of names, there is a directory with photos and stories of the thousands of men and women who served the cause of freedom. And think how moving it would be to be able to learn more about the lives of those individuals.

In 2006, the Friends of the Veterans Monument, Inc. (Friends) realized their goal of building the El Dorado County Veterans Monument. In 2010 the Friends began looking at all we do with an eye toward telling the stories of the people whose names are engraved on the walkways and walls of the monument grounds. In our annual events at the Veterans Monument Plaza, we recall the people who did not come home or who have since died and how they touched our lives. This is especially poignant on Memorial Day when thousands come to the monument to remember family members.

Since the monument's dedication in 2006, Friends of the Veterans Monument volunteers have helped hundreds of veterans and friends find the names of loved ones at the Monument Plaza. We are amazed at the lengths to which visitors want to honor and remember our local heroes.

Starting in 2012, Friends will install an information tent at our events, staffed with volunteers to help veterans and friends find the names of loved ones and to help the Friends' Education Committee reach into our communities to gather photos and stories of those in the plaza for our future Education Center.

Our mission through our programs is clear: To honor those who have served the cause of freedom, to preserve the legacy of the monument, to educate, and to foster cooperation among veterans.

Each year we remind ourselves that some day, there won't be anyone left who remembers the people who served and died during the last 100



years. To help make sure they are not forgotten to future generations, the Friends of the Veterans Monument, Inc. is dedicated to helping educate our youth about the traditions, the sometimes divisive conflicts of our times and the people who served in them.

Sincerely,

Richard W. Buchanan NC
Friends of the Veterans Monument, Inc.

History: El Dorado County Veterans Monument

In 1998 with the first substantial construction donation in hand from Don and Katy Peek of El Dorado County, the newly formed Friends of the Veterans Monument approached the El Dorado Community Foundation who championed Friends by establishing a non-profit advised fund for the purpose of construction of a Veterans Monument in El Dorado County. The Foundation became the stewards and guardians of the funds donated, allowing the Friends to focus on the critical elements of design, funding, and building of our Veterans Monument.

The promise made in 1968, that the dedication and sacrifices of our men and women of our Armed Forces would not be forgotten, was fulfilled with the dedication of the El Dorado County Veterans Monument on Veterans Day, November 11, 2006.

Little did the Friends know then that our Veterans Monument would be considered nationwide to be a significant contribution to American monuments.

Ceremonies

HISTORY OF THE EL DORADO COUNTY VETERANS MONUMENT

THE EL DORADO COUNTY VETERANS MONUMENT WAS FIRST ENVISIONED BY FORMER UNITED STATES MARINE, RICHARD W. BUCHANAN, DURING THE VIETNAM WAR, WHERE HE WAS AWARDED THE NAVY CROSS FOR UPHOLDING THE HIGHEST TRADITIONS OF THE MARINE CORPS AND THE UNITED STATES NAVAL SERVICES. ON MAY 24, 1968, AS 3RD BATTALION, 27TH MARINES MOVED AGAINST WELL-ENTRENCHED ENEMY FORCES DURING THE BATTLE OF LE BAC (I), BUCHANAN WITNESSED NUMEROUS EXAMPLES OF THE AMERICAN FIGHTING SPIRIT AND SELFLESS DEVOTION TO DUTY BY HIS FELLOW MARINES AND CORPMEN. HE VOWED THAT THEIR DEDICATION, AND THE DEDICATION AND SACRIFICES OF OTHER MEN AND WOMEN OF OUR ARMED FORCES, WOULD NOT BE FORGOTTEN.

DEDICATED NOVEMBER 11, 2006

El Dorado County Veterans Monument is intended to honor those who have served the cause of freedom and to provide a place for individuals to engage in quiet contemplation, reflection, meditation, and consideration of the veterans and their service. To preserve this purpose, it is intended that the Monument not be utilized for any organized activities other than the commemorative ceremonies to be held on Memorial Day and Veterans Day.

Memorial Day Summary

An audience of nearly two thousand packed the Veterans Monument Plaza for the 2011 Memorial Day ceremony which was not only a deserved tribute to fallen heroes, it displayed the eternal gratefulness of a nation who still mourns the losses of fellow Americans in the service of freedom.

Monument Sgt-At-Arm Sgt. K.P. Smothers, former United States Marine, once again gave the Call to Order and Present Colors. The color guard was made up of members of the United States Marine Corps.

A flight of four vintage military aircraft made a close-formation pass over the Veterans Monument in honor of those who served, and a second pass in honor of those who lost their lives defending our freedoms.

The invocation and benediction were both given by Lt. Col. Lee Rebman USA (Ret.). Master of Ceremonies was Major Jay A. Lappe, USMC Commanding Officer RS of Sacramento, California. Major Lappe served with the 5th Marine regiment as a Marine Rifle Platoon Commander in both Iraq and Afghanistan.

The 2011 Memorial Day address was delivered by Placerville native Major General Douglas M. Stone, USMC (Ret.).

From 2007 until 2008 MajGen. Stone held the billet of Deputy Commanding General, Multi-National Force – Iraq and Commanding General, Task Forces 134 (Detainee Operations), Baghdad, Iraq. In this capacity he oversaw more than 30,000 interrogations and 40,000 detainees, pioneering the concept of the Battlefield of the mind.



Major General Douglas M. Stone USMC (Ret.)

Memorial Day Proclamations were given Capt. Jack Kirwan, California Dept. of Veterans Affairs, on behalf of Governor Brown and Supervisor John Knight on behalf of El Dorado County. The El Dorado Community Foundation Director Bill Roby addressed the crowd, giving the history of the Veterans Monument Scholarship fund and assisting Mike Tilson in the presentation of the 2011 Veterans Monument Scholarship award. Melinda Buchanan, assisted by Sgt. Whitaker, USMC, followed with the wreath laying. Next there was a 21-gun salute, a benediction, and Taps. The colors were retired, thus ending the 2011 Memorial Day ceremony.

Veterans Day Summary

Attendance at the 2011 Veterans Day was down slightly due to forecasted rain and cool temperatures. Evan Yanagihara, Cadet Squadron 85, acted as the Monument's Sgt. At Arms, and lead the way with the Call to Order, Presentation of Colors, and the Pledge of Allegiance.

United States Army Vietnam veteran Robert A. Laurie emceed the event. Mr. Laurie has lived in El Dorado County for 35 years and is a longstanding member of several veterans organizations.

Guest speaker was Major General Kathy E. Thomas USAF (Ret.). General Thomas was commissioned in 1972 after completing Officer Training School and was one of the last Women Force squadron commanders in Strategic Air Command. While stationed in Thailand, she supported the rescue of the merchant ship SS Mayaguez, and resettlement of evacuees following the evacuation of Phnom Penh, Cambodia, and Saigon.



Air

Major General Kathy E. Thomas USAF (Ret.)

The Foothills Women's Chorus sang the National Anthem and My Country Tis of Thee. The third annual El Dorado County Veterans Monument Veteran of the Year Award was presented to the recipient. Supervisor John Knight presented the Veterans Day Proclamation on behalf of El Dorado County. The wreath laying was done by Glenn and Rose Shuder in honor of their son, L/CPL Brad Shuder USMC KIA, they were assisted by First Sgt. Marty Sanford USAR (Ret.). A 21-gun salute by the Veterans Rifle Team of EDC followed. LCDR Bill Tubbs USCGR (Ret.) played a meaningful rendition of Amazing Grace, followed by Taps. The colors were retired, ending the 2011 Veterans Day ceremony.

Third Annual El Dorado County Veterans Monument Veteran of the Year Award

Beginning November 11, 2009 the Friends of the Veterans Monument, Inc. annually recognizes an El Dorado County veteran on Veterans Day as the El Dorado County Veterans Monument Veteran of the Year.

The award recognizes a veteran who has compiled a record of exemplary service as a military service member, in veterans' issues, and as a citizen of El Dorado County. The award is part of the Friends of the Veterans Monument, Inc.'s ongoing effort and commitment to honor those who have served the cause of freedom.

Friends member Gary Campbell USAF (Ret.) presented the third annual El Dorado County Veterans Monument Veteran of the Year Award to recipient, Lt. Commander Jake "Slim" Parsons, USNR. Mr. Campbell asked Commander Parsons' grandfather, John Pass, who served with General Patton during WW11, to come forward to assist in honoring his grandson. Commander Parsons was assigned to the "Royal Maces,"

Strike Fighter Squadron flying F/A 18E/F who deployed aboard the USS Kitty Hawk and were among the first flight of Strike Fighters over Bagdad, Iraq. He



completed five tours.

Commander Parsons was the first El Dorado High School graduate to attend the United States Naval

Academy, and works as the director of PGR Solutions. He lives in El Dorado County with his wife Glory and their four children. Commander Parson continues to serve as a reserve pilot instructor and is one of the newest members of the Friends of the Veterans Monument Board of Directors.

Education

The Friends of the Veteran Monument, Inc. have become a conduit for speakers for the Joe Foss Institute. The Institute is a leading national organization promoting Patriotism, Integrity, Public Service and an Appreciation of America's Freedom to our nation's youth.

Friends Education Committee continues to develop balanced educational materials, incorporating the lessons of heroism and selflessness to provide students with a greater sense of responsibility, leadership, citizenship and patriotism.

Veterans Monument Scholarship Fund

Once each year the Friends Veterans Monument Scholarship Fund awards scholarships to deserving sons and daughters of veterans of El Dorado County residents for use in their continuing education.

The fund was established by the Friends and is an advised fund managed by the El Dorado Community Foundation with a current balance in excess of \$100,000.00 with available funds of \$12,848.00 for scholarships though 2012.

Monument Preservation

During 2011 Friends supplemented Department of Transportation Buildings and Grounds Division's efforts to maintain the monument grounds to a high standard with donations of plants and ground cover totaling \$1,150.00. In addition, Home Depot of Placerville donated \$650.00 worth of flowering plants for the 2011 Veterans Day ceremony.

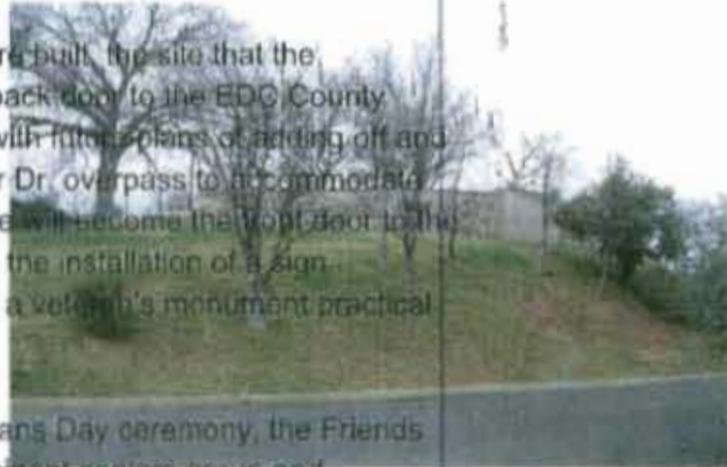


Friend's volunteers power washed the Monument Plaza repeatedly during November and December to rid the monument grounds of bird droppings that stain the granite benches, engraved bricks, and the plaza. The droppings are directly related to the red berries from the Firethorn *Pyracantha* bushes on the west side of the monument around the HVAC enclosures.

The *Pyracantha* bushes are not part of any landscaping plan and with their dense thorny structure and red berries are particularly unsuited for their location and should be removed. Friends have discussed the issue with Buildings and Grounds since 2006, to no avail.

In a similar situation, the Friends have been assured of the removal of the volunteer plants and trees on the monument's southeast side between the monument and the frontage road by every General Services Director since 2006. Plans to install lighting and a sign on the outboard side of the monument that could be viewed from Ray Lawyer Drive and US Hwy 50 identifying the structure as a veteran's monument have been made.

When buildings A and B were built, the site that the monument sits on was the back door to the EDC County Government Center. Now, with future plans of adding off and on ramps to the Ray Lawyer Dr. overpass to accommodate the new court house, the site will become the front door to the Government Center making the installation of a sign identifying the structure as a veteran's monument practical and useful.



Shortly after the 2009 Veterans Day ceremony, the Friends were approached by a prominent seniors group and individuals from our community about the lack of seating at the Veterans Monument. The monument plaza can only accommodate about 460 chairs, which are transported by the Friends and Buildings and Ground and set up by our local Boy Scouts troops. With attendance reaching two thousand, the remaining attendees are forced to stand in the landscaping, which has resulted in a number of incidences of tripping and falling.

Goals completed in 2011

1. First design completed for additional seating for one thousand.
2. Increased the number of Girl and Boy Scouts in attendance to 150.
3. Installed 37 new engraved bricks, leaving space for 22 additional brick sites. Buildings and Grounds personnel have been informed.

Goals for 2012

1. Complete the monument's landscaping plan that was approved by the Board of Supervisors in 2006.
2. Install street signs in the surrounding community with directions to the monument.
3. Install Veterans Monument signs on US Highway 50 at exits that lead to the monument.
4. Install a sign with accent lighting on the monument's south/east outside tower wall facing Ray Lawyer Drive, identifying the structure as a veteran's monument as follows:

El Dorado County

Veterans Monument

5. Expand the Monument Plaza to accommodate seating.
6. Clear the view shed in front of the monument between Ray Lawyer Drive and the rear government center access road of volunteer shrubs and selected small trees.
7. Continue to develop a Monument directory

**Friends of the Veterans Monument Inc.
2011 Board of Directors/Corporate Council**

Richard W. Buchanan NC
James Denmark USAF
LtCol. Tim Thompson USA Ret.

Ken Schoniger USN
William Cathcart DSC USA Ret.
Lt. Col. Gregory AM Etzel AFC USAF Ret.

Andrew LePeilbet DSC USA
Lt. Commander Jake Parsons USNR
LtCol. Kurt Raffetto USAF

Capt. Norm Mahalich USMC
Gary Campbell USAF Ret.

Committee Members

Lee Rebman - Chaplain
Holly Salvestrin - Chorus
Jim Cahill USA
Glenn Gilbert Esq.
Lt. Andrew LePeilbet DSC USA (Ret)
K.P. Smothers USMC
Gary Hansen USAF - Flags
Jim Booth - Flight Leader
Chuck Wahl - Pilot
Veterans Rifle Team
First Sgt. Marty Sanford USAR (ret)
Aaron Yanagihara - Civil Air Patrol
Adam Stupek USMC
Salvatore Gigante USA
Pat Egan - Boy Scouts
Foothills Women's Chorus

Andrew Woll Esq.
Mike Tilson, USA
Chris Moore USA
Capt. Jack Babbitt USMC (Ret)
General LePeilbet
Gary Cambell USAF
Capt. Norm Mahalich USMC (Ret)
Del Hansen - Monument Piper
Richard Falk - Boy Scouts
Lt. Col. Gregory AM Etzel AFC USAF
Lt. Col. Dusty Deryck USA (Ret)
John Riley USN - Photos
Gary McMillan - Sound System
Clifford Abbott - Bugler
Frank Yost - Sound System
Gold Star Mothers

Financial Information 2011

Friends of the Veterans Monument Inc. takes the stewardship of our community's donation seriously. The programs we fund are designed to help us achieve our mission of preserving the legacy of the El Dorado County Veterans Monument.

2011 starting balance.....	\$1,235.75
Donations.....	\$5,275.00
In kind donations.....	\$650.00
Program expenses.....	\$6,310.73