Staples All Veterans Park NEWSLETTER

Spring 2026 Volume 10 Issue 1

On Memorial Day we will gather to honor those who gave their lives in service to our nation, that we may live in freedom, safety and peace. It is a day of reflection, gratitude and solemn respect. It is incumbent upon us to teach our youth about the cost of liberty.

SMHS girls will lead us in the National Anthem, Pastor Jim Jonson will deliver the invocation. Our Speaker will be Marine Veteran Andrew Schmidt. His talk will be about Memorial Day, the USA and his military service. The Motley American Legion Color Guard will conduct a 21 gun salute, followed by Taps. "The Boogie Woogie Bugle Boys" will be performed by Brynn Bestland, Raina Mikhaeil, and Cicily Moe. The Staples Dairy Queen will provide Dilly Bars. Please bring your lawn chairs. In case of rain, the event will be held at Faith Lutheran Church.

The Invisible Wounds

Post Traumatic Stress Disorder & Traumatic Brain Injury

Please also remember those for whom the trauma of war including physical, mental and spiritual trauma did not end with a tour of duty or the signing of a treaty, but continued to burden them long after the shooting had ceased. They too, have earned our recognition, gratitude and compassion for their sacrifices and hardships.

HOSPITAL CORPSMAN ANDREW SCHMIDT WILL SPEAK ON MEMORIAL DAY

Andy enlisted in the Navy in January 1976. Boot camp was in Orlando, FL followed by Hospital Corps School at San Diego, CA. Then a couple weeks off, a flight home to marry his sweetheart Nancy before heading to Field Service School at Camp Pendleton, CA, and as they say, conversion to "Marine Corps Ways." He spent 1977 in Okinawa, Japan with the 3rd Force Services Support Group while his sweetheart was in Minnesota. But, "not by choice." Then he returned to 1st Marine Division at Camp Pendleton until being discharged in February 1980.

WE HONOR THE FOLLOWING VETERANS WHO PASSED AWAY SINCE LAST MEMORIAL DAY

Richard Allen	US Army PPC	1955-1957
Gary Carpenter	USMC	1964–1968
Charlie Crews	US Navy	1947-1969
Gary DeWald	US Navy	
Steven Dille	US Air Force	1968-1989
Robert Dvorak	US Air Force	1955
Rod Enberg	US Army Airborne	1967-1969
Vic Flansburg	US Coast Guard	
Robert Follis	US Army	20 years
James Holub	US Navy	1988-1992
Earl Mergens	USMC	
Gary Mueller	US Navy	1966-1970
Ron Unger	USMC	1962-1968
Lawrence Weyer	US Navy	1957-1975

"Think about the past and consider the sacrifices that men and women in the military have made for us." - Gary Wetzel

4TH OF JULY CELEBRATION

AMERICA 250 1776-2026

Saturday 11am at the Park

The 4th of July celebration at the Veterans Park will begin at 11am. Veteran Jerry Cleveland will be the guest speaker and talk about how "it is our duty to serve our nation and defend it." Then Tristan Jenkins will talk about America 250 and what it means. Huck Holst will MC, Pastor Barry Klein will deliver the Invocation. Windwood Quintet, "Looney Tunes" made up from the Heartland Symphony will perform the Star Spangled Banner and patriotic medleys. The Motley American Legion Color Guard will conduct a 21 gun Salute and will play taps. 25 granite pavers will be dedicated to honor the veterans listed below. In addition there will be a dedication for the Giza granite bench, Pavilion, POW/MIA and The Purple Heart Memorial. Please bring lawn chairs. There will be a patriotic sing-along at the end. The event will be catered by Bubba's Catering, serving beef brisket, pulled pork, coleslaw, salads and fruit with a free will donations. In case of rain, the event will be held at Faith Lutheran Church.

VETERAN JERRY CLEVELAND WILL SPEAK AT 4TH OF JULY EVENT

Jerry was born in Staples in 1949. Graduated SHS in 1967. Enlisted in Army 1969, four days before Classmate Roger Jensen was KIA in Vietnam. He took Basic Training at Ft Polk, LA, then on to Ft Campbell, KY for Infantry Training where he was assigned to Bravo Co and then deployed to Vietnam. He spent 15 months before returning home. After his discharge he coached wrestling, officiated and spent his career in HS Administration. In 2010 he retired and returned to Staples.

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25 PAVERS TO BE DEDICATED ON THE 4TH

PVT
Charles E Asselin
US Army WWI
Company C 88th Infantry
1917 – 1919

E5 Boiler Tech
Wayne Berry
US Navy Vietnam
USS Ticonderoga
Jan 1970 – Sept 1973

SPEC 5
Jon B Blessing
US Army Fort Knox KY
Ireland Army Hospital
Nov 1968 – Sept 1970

SP4
James A Carlson
US Army
1st Armored Division
28 Dec 1965 – 14 Dec 1967

CPL
Paul E Carlson
USMC Desert Storm
24th Marine Expeditionary Unit
1988 – 1992

Surgical Tech Private 1st Class
Vernon H Carlson
US Army WWII
107th General Hospital
Nov 1945 – Nov 1946

SGT
Blair M Fahnlander
USAF
1370 Photo Mapping Wing
Nov 1961 – Oct 1968

S/SGT
Douglas Fahnlander
USAF VFW Vietnam
13 TFS – 388 TRW
Nov 1961 – Nov 1969

Master Sergeant
James L Fahnlander
US Air Force
WA AFROTC Detachment
910 09/1962-1966
09/1971-01/1990

Captain
Jeffrey Fahnlander
USAF Iraq
391st Fighter Squadron
F-15E
May 1989 – Oct 1998

S/SGT
Leo Fahnlander
WWII Army – Air Force
7th Photo
Reconnaissance Group
Apr 1942 – Sept 1945

SP4
Bruce E Hayenga
US Army Germany
Company B 82nd Engineer Battalion
Nov 1960 – Nov 1963

Airman
David M Johnson
US Navy
Cold War VF-213
1982 –1986

Sergeant
Rock Lewandowski
US Army
82nd Airborne
1982 –1986

SP5
Richard J Nichols
US Army Vietnam
Dec 1960 – Dec 1966

MSG
Izaak P Schafer
Army National Guard
Iraq / Afghanistan
34th Infantry Division
Jan 2004 – Jun 2025 B★

Sergeant 1st Class
Benjamin F Schumm
US Army Korea
25th Infantry Division
1952 – 1954

Sergeant
Clifford E Smith
US Army WWII
Supply Clerk
Sept 1941 – Dec 1945

PFC
Craig D Spencer
US Army WWII
Rhineland Campaign
Sept 1944 – Oct 1945
P♥

Petty Officer Third Class
Ronald Spencer Miller
USN Vietnam
USS NEW JERSEY
BB62
Oct 1965 – Sept 1969

PFC
James Henry Richmond
US Army World War II
POW Stalag 11B
Fallingbostel
Sept 1942 – Mar 1944
POW P♥

Tec SGT 4
Bertil P Swenson
12th Armored
134th Ordinance
US Army WWII
July 1942 – Jan 1946

Pharmacy Mate 3rd Class
Edna "Dolly" Swenson
US Navy Waves WWII
Great Lakes Michigan
Dec 1944 – June 1946

Private
Fred N Tracy
US Army
World War I
France
1916 - 1918

QMCS
Lawrence B Weyer
USN Vietnam Conflict
USS HENRY CLAY
NUC SUB
Jan 1957 – June 1975

HONOR YOUR LOVED ONE WITH A COMMEMORATIVE GRANITE PAVER
ONLY $175

4th of July is a great day for our country to salute the people who sacrifices have made this possible.

VISIT OUR NEW WEBSITE : STAPLESMNVETERANSPARK.ORG

VETERANS VIDEOS

We interviewed 25 local veterans. The purpose is to honor those who served and defended our country. You will discover first hand what it was like for them as they tell their stories of wartime military service. These veterans are our local heroes and we can honor them with our respect, appreciation and sincere gratitude for their sacrifice and dedication to the country. To view videos visit newly designed website: www.staplesmnveteranspark.org

CW5 Charles Poulton
US Army Special Forces (Green Berets) Fort Bragg Vietnam & Desert Storm 1968 - 2003

Sgt Marvin Pearson
US Army 17th Hvy Tank 7th Div. Korean War 1950 - 1953

Harry Meyer
US Navy Seabees Naval Operations Pacific WWII 1944 - 1946

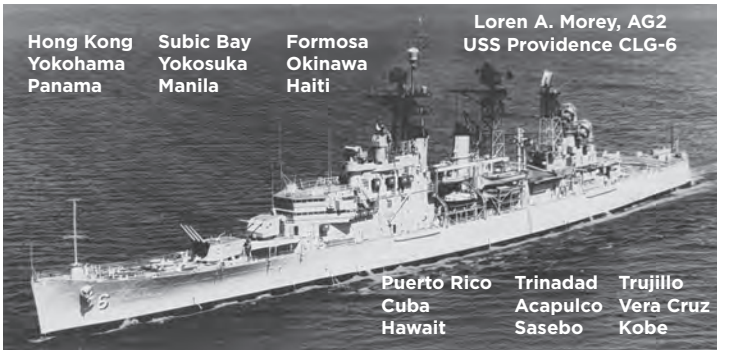
Sgt Ron Starke
US Marines MACG-3 Marine Corps Air Wing Korean War 1953 - 1956

Charles W Crews Jr
Aviation/Storekeeper Chief US Navy Korea Vietnam 1947 - 1969

Our Vets have earned our undying gratitude. May we never forget their sacrifices..

AG 2ND CLASS LOREN MOREY

Loren was born in Brainerd in 1940 and attended Motley HS. He enlisted in the Navy Reserve program prior to graduation. He went on to Hamline College until 1961 at which time he had to complete his 2 year Naval obligation. He desperately wanted to become an Aerographer. He attended "A" school in Lakehurst, NJ to learn that skill. He was assigned to the USS Providence, CLG 6, a guided missile carrier. As an Aerographer he traveled to 17 countries. As the weatherman on the ship he was the meteorological and oceanographic "expert" collecting, analyzing, and forecasting atmospheric and sea conditions to insure that Navy operations can be carried out safely, effectively and on time. Next he was assigned to Guantanamo Bay Naval Base as a Weatherman, just after the Cuban blockade. He was discharged in 1963. That year he married Kathy and they raised two children. He resumed his education at Hamline to earn a degree in Economics and went to work for his father Ed, at the Morey Fish Plant retiring in 2015. During this time he was a Motley Fire Fighter, a Lakewood Health System board member and was very active in the Motley United Methodist Church. Loren Morey deserves our recognition and appreciation. The full version of his story can be viewed on our new website: staplesmnveteranspark.org



Compiled by Navy Veteran Lee Jenkins

PARK APPAREL ON THE 4th

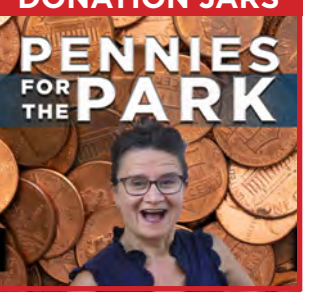
America 250 Cap

WE WANT YOUR CHANGE

Find donations jars at retail locations or drop off your change jars at park events.

Funds will be used for tables & chairs at the pavilion.

DONATION JARS



Park Association Mission Statement

Working together to provide a park to honor and remember those Veterans and individuals who served and defended their nation and community so well. To offer an educational opportunity for all members of the community to learn more about those that have defended and served their country and community.

Thank you Char Daniels for your 12 years of dedicated service to the Veterans park. We are grateful for your commitment to the Park and its mission.

Central Building Supply donates $5,000

Adam Baxter from Central Building Supply presents $5,000 check to Staples Veterans Park President Bob Hamann to be used for the pavilion.

VETERANS PARK STORE

Downtown Longbella store across from Tower Pizza

Open every Thursday 1pm - 4pm

If you wish to donate call Penny @218 820-1919

FLAG REPAIR

In March our 80 ft flag pole sustained major damage to the inside mechanism. Steeplejack Todd Ross was called in to climb the pole and perform necessary repairs. Todd Is a US Navy veteran from Arvada, CO and is the owner of Raising Freedom Corp. that specializes in flag pole repair, maintenance, painting, cleaning and installation. He has completed over 500 climbs.

NEW PARK PAVILION

The new park pavilion is near near completion. Soon, we can rent for Events, Markets, Social gatherings etc. Please call Huck if you are interested at 218-296-2469

JARHEAD TOMMIE Donates $10K to Battlefield Cross Memorial

Grave Flags go out Monday, May 18th
At Evergreen Cemetery
Meet at the Mausoleum on
4th Street NE at 5pm

THANK YOU to MAJOR DONORS for 2025

Most gave from $50 - $400

Those listed gave $500 - $2,000

Tom & Roxanne Berga
Virginia Chenoweth
Dominic Gagnon, DDS
Bob & Joan Hamann
Huck & Marilyn Holst
Ken Holst
Kevin & Sue Jenkins
Cecil Johnson
Ken & Lanie Klose
Gary & Kathleen McGillivary
Erin McGuire
Jeremiah & Sara Miller
Milt & Janice Peterson
Dan & Donna Shaw
Rita Stone

THANK YOU EVENT SPONSORS

Creative Steel Work, Inc
Jeff Kreitz 218-562-5848

First International Bank & Trust
live first Staples, MN

DQ

Lakewood Health System

Staples ACE The helpful place.

Staples Bakery

Trantina Auction Service

Motley Post #124

JDM Machining, Inc.

True Value HUBBARD'S HARDWARE & APPLIANCE

THANK YOU PARK PAVILION SPONSORS

PHB EXCAVATING .com

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DHC OF LAKES AREA GENERAL CONTRACTOR

HOLST ACRES
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Trident SEAFOODS

C & K READY MIX

425 4th Street NE Staples, MN 56479 Call Huck: 218-296-2469

WEBSITE: staplesmnveteranspark.org

Please make checks payable to:

STAPLES ALL VETERANS & Community Park Association