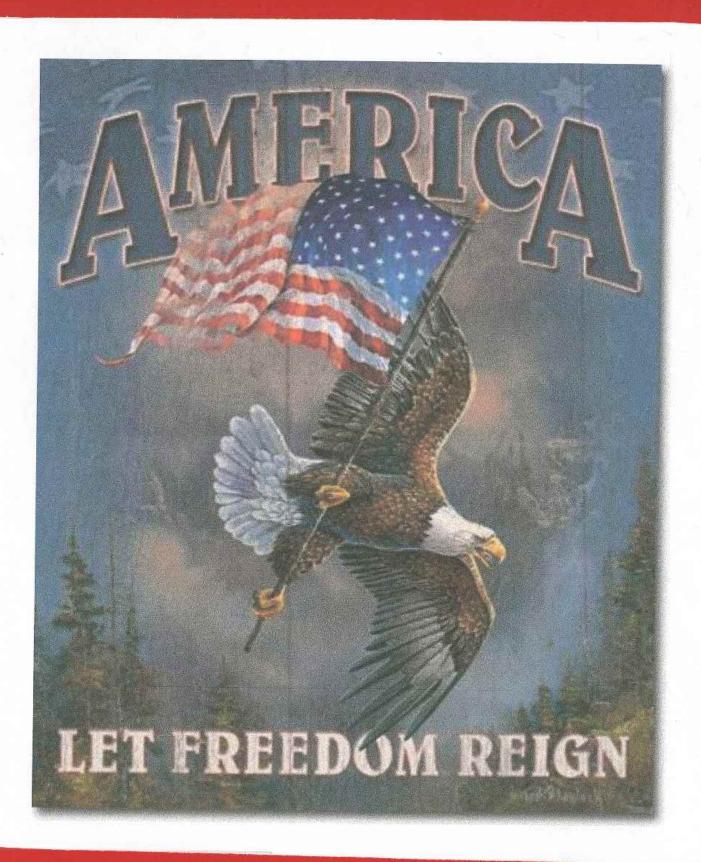
#### Veterans Day Parade Scrapbook 2019 -2022



#### **BRAZORIA COUNTY**

# VETERANS DAY PARADE

2019 -????

JOHN JASSO

-Veteran's Day, November



At the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh

fighting ceased in World War I

T. Central

Let Freedom Ring!



# BRAZORIA

# Veterans Day November 11, 2019







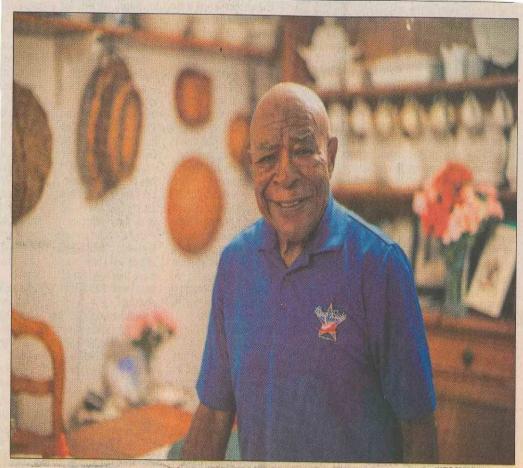
Honoring All Who Served





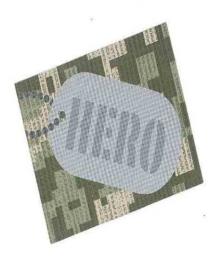
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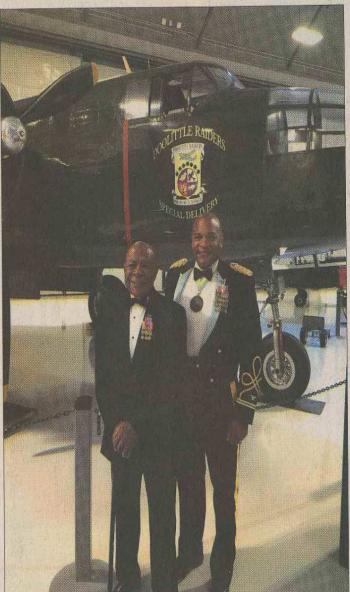
KATIE FREZZA/The Facts

George Ruth Jr.'s accolades include six Coast Guard Good Conduct Medals, the American Campaign Medal, the World War II Victory Medal, the Korean Service Medal and the Vietnam Service Medal.





# STERLING EXAMPLE



Contributed photo

Coast Guard veteran George Ruth Jr. celebrates the 75th anniversary of D-Day at Ellington Air Force Base with his son, Army Col. Stephen Ruth.

World War II vet exemplifies a lifetime given to service

By COURTNEY BLACKANN

coourtney.blackann@thefacts.com

ANGLETON

n a quiet street in Angleton lives a small-statured man in a home that is filled with years of warm memories.

Although George Ruth Jr., 90, now walks with a cane after suffering from three strokes since 2011, his home tells a story of a man who took seriously the duty to serve his country.

With accolades like six Coast Guard Good Conduct Medals, the American Campaign Medal, the World War II Victory Medal, the Korean Service Medal and the Vietnam Service Medal to name a few, Ruth's distinguished service speaks for itself.

But his more than two decades of time in the armed forces doesn't

See VETERAN, Page 2A



# ¥

#### **Veteran**

CONTINUED FROM COVER

describe the tiresome efforts and sometimes tragic path that led Ruth to be the man he is today.

"I always say it's not the size of the man, but the will of the man that matters," Ruth said.

When Pearl Harbor was bombed on Dec. 7, 1941, Ruth was a young boy in Greenwood, Louisiana. He remembers how tragic the event was and how thoroughly it shook the nation.

About the same time the United States officially entered World War II, Ruth's mother died, leaving him and his seven siblings behind.

"I took a Greyhound bus to New Orleans to find some work, since I had an aunt living there at the time," Ruth said.

Finding a job as a dishwasher in the heart of the French Quarter, Ruth diligently worked day in and day out.

His hard work didn't go unnoticed and soon, Ruth would work his way up from washing dishes, onto helping in department stores and then to a paper factory — where a move he would make changed his life forever.

"I was 14 at that time, and the manager saw that I was working hard and offered me another job — but he said I needed to be 18 to do the work." Ruth said.

While Ruth was four years shy of the appropriate age, he had a knack for solving problems and found a way to register himself as Ruth to Australia time, m. Philippi warding way to register himself as he said.

an 18-year-old through a draft agent, in order to work the job the man had offered him.

The only problem was that two weeks later, Ruth received a letter in the mail that told him to report to an industrial house downtown.

"Well, they told me to take my clothes off and get behind a curtain, and I told them I was only 14," Ruth said. "And they just looked at me and said, 'Yeah, OK, get back there with all the other '14- year-olds.'"

Unbeknownst to Ruth, he was being drafted into the Army.

After an exam, Ruth was put on a bus to Little Rock, Arkansas, and sent to basic training for the next three months.

"I was a little underfed around that time, so I didn't mind being there too much. We were fed very well — it was the first time I'd ever seen pancakes," Ruth said.

Shortly after graduating from basic training
— a time Ruth said was mentally and physically challenging — he was sent with the 93rd Infantry overseas to New Guinea.

"Around that time, and I'm not sure how, but I got separated from my platoon and ended up in the Philippines with Australian soldiers," Ruth said. "But I wasn't afraid; that's one thing they took out of you, I wasn't afraid of nothing."

Ruth took up with the Australian soldiers for a time, making allies with Philippine guerrillas and warding off the Japanese, he said.

When he was injured a short time later, medical examiners discovered Ruth's true age and discharged him from the Army on Sept. 12, 1945.

Back in New Orleans, while walking down the street, Ruth saw a bus with a banner that read, "Join the Coast Guard, see the world."

Though he didn't know anything about being a sailor, that sign would launch Ruth's 23 years working in food services on numerous Coast Guard ships and bases across the world.

Laughing as he described how other chefs would get seasick and not be able to cook meals for the men on board, Ruth said when the sea was rough, he came alive.

"I'd make doughnuts and bacon and fresh bread. All sorts of things. No one knew how I was cooking like that with a rough sea," Ruth said.

If there's one thing serving in the Coast Guard taught Ruth, it was that when someone's in trouble, a rescue attempt is always made.

"We never gave up on rescues. Helping someone is the greatest thing I could have ever done," Ruth said.

After leaving the Coast Guard, Ruth settled in southeast Texas, where he would meet his wife, Lois, and raise his three sons.

He worked as director of food services for the Texas Department of Criminal Justice for 20 years after his military service.

"He always had an industrious spirit," said

Army Col. Stephen Ruth, George Ruth Jr.'s son. "He was always working, always trying to make things better ... Knowing his story at an early age, I've been able to see how he's always trying to improve his life around him."

Having a family with both a mother and father dedicated to a life of service, Stephen Ruth said the example was set early on.

"My mom taught school for 10 years and then did missionary work, and they both did a lot in service, and that was instilled from an early age," Stephen Ruth said. "Throughout my life, it just became a natural extension of that."

Stephen Ruth dedicated his life and career to the Army, following in his father's footsteps after graduating from Texas A&M and serving seven tours overseas. He attributes his success to his family and the life they led in Angleton.

"From serving through Korea and Vietnam, it's just an amazing testimony of that generation of Americans that really makes him quite unique," Stephen Ruth said of his father. "They grew up through the Great Depression and they had developed a sense of hardiness and keep carrying on. It's a different perspective to have, and that's one of the gifts those from the greatest generation attempted to give to us."

Courtney Blackann is a reporter for The Facts, Contact her at 979-237-0152.





#### Brazoria to host county Veterans Day ceremony

By MADDY MCCARTY

madison.mccarty@thefacts.com

BRAZORIA — Mayor Shugart said. Roger Shugart began preparing for the official Brazoria County the Veterans Day parade as soon as he found out his city would host it, he said. He understands the importance of the day, he said.

"It's just recognizing all the active-duty, retired people and all the veterans

of this country who stood on the line and defended this country's freedom,"

To start the day Monday, veterans are welcome to breakfast from 7 to 9 a.m. at the Brazoria Heritage Foundation cafeteria, 202 W. Smith St.

The parade lineup begins immediately after breakfast and will start rolling on

See PARADE, 5A

#### **America** beproud



KATIE FREZZA/The Facts

Kids place their hands over their hearts as the flags are walked by Monday during the Veterans Day Parade in Brazoria.

#### **Parade**

CONTINUED FROM COVER

11 a.m., Shugart said. The parade will move toward Gaines Street, where the American Legion post trumpet, Verbeck said. stands, he said.

Legion Post 561 commander.

The parade will feature floats representing different veterans organization posts, including the Marine Corps League and Veterans of Foreign Wars, Verbeck said. Everyone always enjoys the fire trucks, he said.

But the best part for the veterans riding on the floats is "seeing the reaction from the parade viewers, who are out there to thank the vets," Verbeck said.

about 1 p.m., there is a shuttle that will pick people up and bring them back to the Heritage said. Foundation for the Veterans Day program, Shugart said. Local schoolchildren will perform the Facts. Contact her at 979-237-0151.

program, which will last about an hour, he said.

The whole thing is over when the sheriff's honor guard fires Highway 36 from Linder Lane at their rifles, the Texas Militia fires its cannon, and a high school band student plays taps on a

It's important for residents The grand marshal of the and families to come out to parade is a retired Army general, the celebration, Shugart said. said Vance Verbeck, American Children might be unaware of how important the day is, so they can learn on Monday, he said.

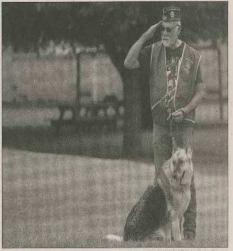
"Freedom is not free," Shugart said. "We have to protect the borders from the evil that wants to come here and destroy it."

Shugart knows this as an Army veteran himself, who defended B-52 bombers as a missile tracking radar specialist, destroying aircraft coming to attack the bombers, he said

"Veterans Day is a day to thank At the end of the parade at all veterans, living and who have passed, for the service they've given to the country," Verbeck

Maddy McCarty is a reporter for The

and Justice for all.



United States Navy veteran Louis Ledesma, with his dog Alex salutes as parade participants walk by Monday for a Veterans Day celebration in Brazoria.



















COVID-19



NOVEMBER 11, 2020

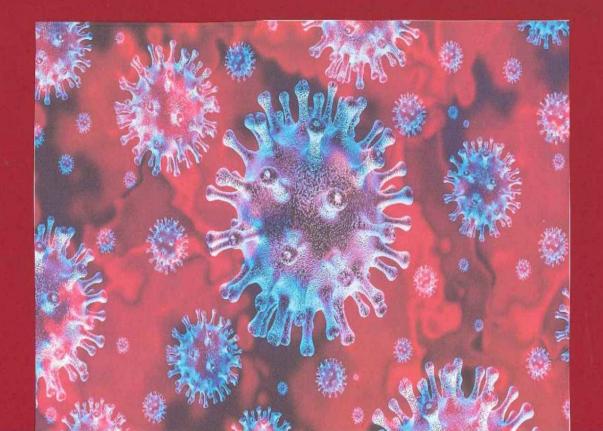
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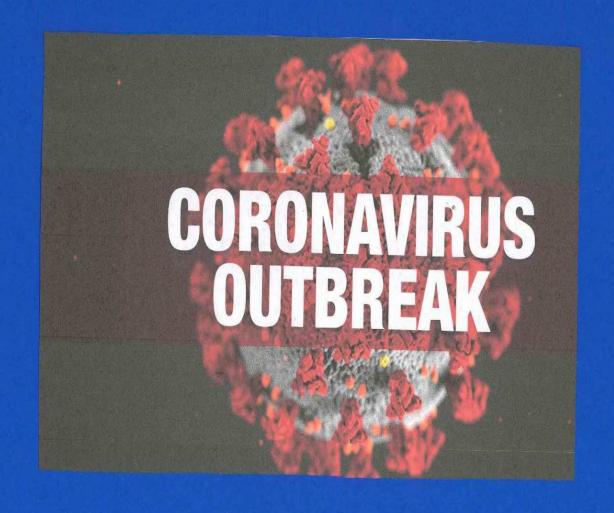
WWW.VA.GOV











# FREEPORT

# VETERANS DAY

November 11, 2021





www.va.gov









In God we trust.













CLUTE FIRE AND RESCU



HONOR





PROUD

Veterans with the Marine Corps League of Brazoria County wave to parade-goers Thursday during the Veterans Day parade in Freeport.



# SALUTES TO VETERANS

Freeport parade, ceremony make veteran 'feel proud'

By RAVEN WUEBKER raven.wuebker@thefacts.com

FREEPORT

lights flashing and crowds cheering demonstrated the thanks Southern Brazoria County has for veterans.

"It makes me feel proud to have served," veteran Jimmy Jackson of Angleton

said. "I've

been to

about all

of them

I've been

here. It

means a

lot to be

with my

buddies

throwing

people

candy."

and I enjoy

since

"It means
a lot to be
with my
buddies
and I enjoy
throwing
people
candy."
— Jimmy

Jackson,

Army veteran

The
22nd annual Brazoria
County Veterans Day
Parade and Ceremony
took place Thursday in
Freeport, at least the third
time it has served as host.

"It's a great day for the city of Freeport to be able to host this Veterans Day event," Mayor Brooks Bass

See PARADE, 6A



DAKOTA PERRY/The Facts

Barrow Elementary School's fifth graders sing "The Heart of America" during their Veterans Day program Thursday at the Brazoria school.



JEREMY HILL/The Facts

Veterans who belong to American Legion Mattson-Ringgold Post 503 wave flags Thursday as they move along the Veterans Day parade route in Freeport.



JEREMY HILL/The Facts

The Air Force Junior ROTC from Brazoswood High School present the colors Thursday during the Veterans Day Parade in Freeport.

Students show appreciation through song

By DAKOTA PERRY

dakota.perry@thefacts.com

Every American parent's wish is that their child never knows war. But Southern Brazoria County children know the importance of those who do.

Schools hosted men and women who have worn the nation's uniform Thursday for Veterans Day programs, some sharing meals, others sharing thoughts and songs.

Northside Elementary School music teacher Juli Martin put together the program presented by the Angleton campus. She has current and historical ties to military service, she said.

"I have a long line of veterans in my family," Martin said. "My grandfather fought in World War II, my father fought in Vietnam, my boyfriend is in the Marines and my son is new to the U.S. Navy working on submarines."

Each grade level at Northside took turns singing a song for their veterans, culminating with fourth and fifth graders performing the







COURAGE



CONTINUED FROM COVER

important we take time throughout the year to recognize those who have served our country. It's an honor for the city of Freeport to host it this year, and we had a tremendous turnout."

It's a great day anytime the community gets together to celebrate those who served in our community and the nation, he said.

After the parade made its way from Memorial Park in downtown Freeport to Hopper Field, a ceremony followed featuring a 21-gun salute, presentation of colors and guest speakers including retired Marine Gunnery Sgt. Teresa Arroyo, a Brazosport graduate and Freeport resident.

"It was great to be out here with the community with them waving and thanking them for being out here," Arroyo said. "For me and us, as veterans who have been doing our job and duty for the country we love, it's an incredible event to come together for us and with us."

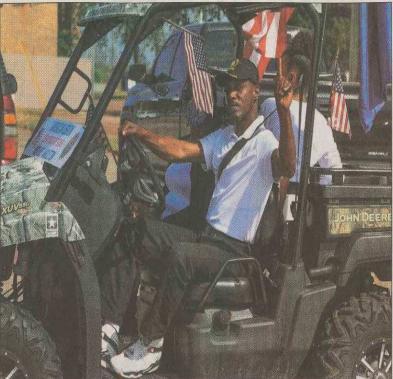
In her speech, Arroyo reminded those in the crowd of the importance of the military bond.

"I am so happy to see that we can continue to receive your love and your prayers," Arroyo said. "To my fellow veterans, my fellow brothers and sisters in arms, I appreciate you being out here. Know that we have each other. You're not alone, hold onto that bond and connection."

Congressman Louie Gohmert, R-Texas, the keynote speak, shared his appreciation for those who served.

"This is what America is all about," Gohmert said. "The people here in Freeport, they understand it takes people willing to fight for what they believe in and then a community that supports them. To be part of such an incredible parade and service to honor veterans is just an honor and I'm touched and it's a wonderful day."

Former Lake Jackson Police



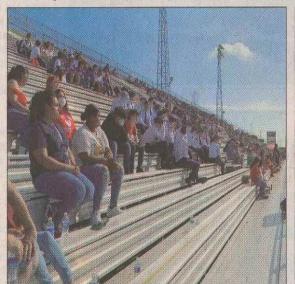
American Legion Post 835 in Angleton is represented Thursday in the Veterans Day parade in Freeport.

JEREMY HILL/The Facts

Freeport Intermediate School students wave

flags as they pass along the parade route Thursday during the Veterans Day celebration in Freeport.

JEREMY HILL/The Facts



JEREMY HILL/The Facts

#### Guests wait for the Veterans Day program to begin Thursday at Hopper Field in Freeport.

Chief P.C. Miller told of his experience in the service.

"My war was Vietnam from '70 to '71," Miller said. "I started when I was 17, got out when I was 20, went back in my late 20s and got out when I was 30-something. I enjoy seeing the ROTC and these young folks walking around with hot dogs and being extra polite; it's impressive. I appreciate the recognition.

The country doesn't owe me anything. I owe them, understanding that it still feels good to say thank-you and have a program like this."

As the parade went on for miles, those from around the area lined the streets to honor those serving, past and present, and their sacrifices.

"I have a lot of family that are veterans and I like to honor them, and I have a brother



JEREMY HILL/The Facts

Members of the VFW Post 8551 and Ladies Auxiliary were out to support fellow veterans Thursday during the Veterans Day parade in Freeport.

who died in the military," said April Cavazoes of Angleton. "I came to do this to honor him. I think it's great the city honors them as well. I think it's great people come out and support veterans. It's what keeps the county what it is."

Toward the end of the parade, the crowd didn't lose their enthusiasm.

"For me, my dad was a vet and it means a lot," Freeport resident Olivia Garcia said.
"This is the first one I've been
to in a long time. I think it's
awesome. It means a lot to me,
and I didn't even know they
had it in different areas. With
everything going on nowadays,
we need to have this type
of positive thing celebrating
veterans."

Raven Wuebker is a reporter for The Facts. Contact her at 979-237-0152.







# The American Spirit lives forever.





Members of American Legion Post 241 and Auxiliary of Angleton participate Thursday in the countywide Veterans Day parade in Freeport.



Veterans from all military branches gathered Thursday at Hopper Field in Freeport for the countywide Veterans Day ceremony. Among them is Jimmy Jackson of Angleton, left, who served in the Army from 1961 to '65.



RAVEN WUEBKER/The Facts

Jesse Montelongo of the Danbury American Legion Post 501 stands at attention during the Veterans Day ceremony Thursday at Hopper Field in Freeport.

#freedom is never it as

ETERANS

HOW BRAZORIA COUNTY CELEBRATED

### SWEENY

HONORING ALL WHO SERVED November 11, 2022 VETERANS DUTY · HONOR · COUNTRY

#### **Parade** veterans

Celebration of service members past and present marches on despite inclement weather

By KENT HOLLE

kent.holle@thefacts.com

**SWEENY** 

ark clouds in the sky threatened for the entirety of the Veterans Day parade, spritzing the crowd with sprinkles on and off for much of the morning, but it never began raining in earnest. Shortly after noon, the cloudy skies parted and the sun shone brightly over the bleachers of Bulldog Stadium as floats emerged at the end of the route, just in time for the ceremony.

It was one of the numerous ways that things went right for the town of Sweeny during their turn hosting the 24th Annual Brazoria County Veterans Day Celebration on Friday. Vets from World War II to Afghanistan served as participants and spectators as the county them for their service and sacrifice.

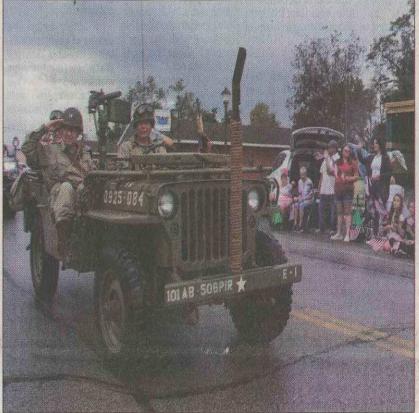
It wasn't just the sky threatening the celebration, but also construction. Fortunately, the situation was worked out. Texas Pride Utilities had already been warned off performing any construction during Sweeny's last council meeting, but it turned out there were plans for work to be done on a railroad intersection on the way into town. Fortunately, Sweeny had its paperwork in place with TXDoT and things

went smoothly.
"I think it was a great team effort to find an amicable solution so that the railroad could do the



JEFFREY GOVIN/ The Facts Friday.

The annual county Veterans Day **Parade** makes its way through downtown Sweeny



JEFFREY GOVIN/The Facts

gathered to humbly thank An Army captain driving an old World War II Jeep salutes o the crowd in main street during the Veterans Day parade in Sweeny on Friday.



JEFFREY GOVIN/ The Facts



JEFFREY GOVIN/ The Facts

A Rosie the Riveter reenactor rode in the pa- A Navy reserve officer training cadet color guard member has a rade in the Gulf Rescue Squad boat in Sweeny drill rifle at right shoulder arms during the Veterans Day Parade in

Pakrio!

MTERRY

#### **Parade**

CONTINUED FROM COVER

work that they needed to do to repair the tracks and we could still have the parade as scheduled," City Manager Lyndsey Koskiniemi said.

Despite the forecast, the crowds were good in Sweeny, stretching out through the downtown area almost a mile and a guarter from the muster station near the park to the school complex. The line up consisted of many veterans and members of the area's American Legion and VFW posts, local political leaders, first responders and vehicles, businesses, school bands and, of course, hard candy for the many children along the route, including Sweeny students who were allowed their own reserved spots.

"The administration allowed kids to come outside and participate and I think that's important to let the kids see such an awesome community event like this,' Koskiniemi said.

"We had 30 entry forms, but we had closer to 50 show up," Executive Director for the Sweeny Chamber of Commerce Sarah Pierce said with regards to the parade participants.

It wasn't just Sweeny law enforcement working the security at the parade and making sure that the route was closed off from traffic, but volunteers from 16 different agencies, including the police departments of Manvel, Danbury, Freeport, Lake Jackson, Oyster Creek, Richwood, West Columbia, Brazoria, Pearland, Angleton, Alvin, C-BISD, both Constables precincts and Sweeny Fire and Rescue.

"We were able to reach out and contact local agencies. The Brazoria County community has always been great about



KEN CONKLE/Special to The Facts

The students offered a salute to the veterans as part of the program Friday morning.



JEFFREY GOVIN/The Facts



Brothers Carl Jennings, left, and Willie Jennings of Old Ocean, World War II veterans who served as grand marshals of the Veterans Day Parade, have breakfast Friday morning at the West Brazos VFW Post 8551.

coming out and helping one another, especially for events like this," Sweeny Police Chief Brad Caudle said. "It's been a long time since this parade's been here, so we wanted it to be as successful as possible.

"It's a joint venture between everybody that's involved—the VFW halls, a lot of other organizations that help participate with this, law enforcement agencies and, like I said, it's working together that makes it a success."

Rosa Patino, a long-time Sweeny resident was one of a handful of folks who had camped out a spot early in front of Stewart's

of the route. The reason why was purely logical.

"To get faster access to the high school when the program is done," Patino said. "We just got out of the elementary Veterans Day program and then we came and parked over here."

After the parade, vets leaned against the stadium snack bar, eating hot dogs and resting in the shade while they waited for the ceremony.

A display of patriotic enthusiasm, the celebration brought out veterans of World War II and the Korean War which had served as the grand grocery store, near the end marshals of the parade.

Tom Fordyce, recipient of three Purple Hearts, traveled from Hunstville to be with the students at Friday's program.

They sat front and center around the podium. Some received a hand from younger vets as they proudly stood to salute the flag, including the oldest veteran in attendance, 95 year-old George

Despite it being on the program, the first firing of the Texas Militia's cannon in the ceremony still managed to surprise attendees as its explosive sounds echoed across the field and reenactors delighted many in the crowd.

The keynote speaker was Sweeny VFW member and Korean War veteran Kenneth Lott, A long-time



KEN CONKLE/Special to The Facts

Army and Marine veteran Frank Garcia, Gloria Garcia, Judy Parker and Army veteran Donald Parker visit at a free breakfast for veterans Friday morning at the Columbia Christian Senior Center.



KEN CONKLE/Special to The Facts

Duwayne Dunn, the IT Director at Sweeny Elementary, and Lisa Davis, Sweeny ISD's chief academic officer, both are Army veterans. Their service was recognized Friday during the VeTerans Day program at Sweeny Elementary.

fixture in the Sweeny community who had served in leadership roles such as City Manager and Mayor, he reminded everyone of the highest cost of war.

"All America ought to mourn for we have lost something with each of these soldiers," Lott said. "There are songs that are unsung because those that might have sang them have been laid low. There are symphonies that will never be completed because those who would do so are with us no more. Great scientific truths and medicine and arts that might have been accomplished by those

that are dead and died for our country-someone else must achieve what we have lost."

"We pray that one day war will be just a memory. It'll be a word in a dictionary and the scripture in Micah 6:4-8 would come to pass.," he said, referencing the biblical verse that promises swords will be beaten into plowshares after God judges men and they shall not learn war anymore.

Next year's 25th anniversary parade is set for Angleton in 2023.

Kent Holle is a reporter for The Facts. Contact him at 979-237-0154.

# Sweeny hosting veterans

BY SUSAN AVERA HOLT news@thefacts.com

Editor's note: Facts staff writers Kent Holle and Andrew Tineo contributed to this story.

Flags, streamers, salutes and parades will be the order of the day as Brazoria County celebrates Veterans Day on Friday, Nov. 11.

This year, the 24th annual Veteran's Day parade will be held in Sweeny and is hosted by the West Brazos Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 8551.

The Brazoria County Sheriff's Office honor guard will lead the parade. Jasso himself is a veteran, said John Jasso Sr., founder of the parade, He served in Vietnam from Sept. 1974-1980 in the U.S. Navy.

Jasso said he is amazed at how big the event has become since 1998.

"Each city has hosted the parade multiple times," he said. "I think the Lord is happy with it. Each and every year about this time, I start praying for good weather. We've been very fortunate."

Glenn James is commander of the West Brazos VFW Post 8551. He served in the US Navy in the U.S.S. Providence in Vietnam. James and his wife Donna have been involved with the parade steering committee for about 20 years.

Nearly 120 members of the commander post with Glenn James and roughly 90 percent of the members are made up of Vietnam war veterans.

Donna James said the

#### **Veterans**

CONTINUED FROM COVER

post auxiliary will be up early Friday to cook a come-and-go breakfast for all veterans and activeduty personnel from 7 to 9:30 a.m. at the post, located at the corner of Highway 35 and FM 1459. The Sweeny varsity football team will be serving.

The smell of biscuits, gravy, sausage, scrambled eggs, to go with, coffee, milk and juice will fill the

World War II, but now that whether it's combat or nonthe Korean War veterans are combat veterans." the oldest ones we got and they enjoy talking about other events happening it with each other," Glenn across Brazoria County. lames said.

She will be one of the members of the Auxiliary up bright and early at the West Brazos VFW Post 8851, prepping for breakfast at 5:30 a.m.

"They just get together and they like to socialize with each other. That's the time that they see each other every year and they get to reminisce about things they used to do," Donna James said.

Afterwards, the parade lineup begins at Gazebo Park on FM 524. The parade begins at 11 a.m., goes down Main Street and ends at the Sweeny football stadium. The grand marshal this year will be "something special," said parade volunteer of 24 years, Neal Bess. The parade will have two grand marshals — brothers from Old Ocean, Bill Jennings, 92, and Carl Jennings, 89, will be featured as the area's oldest veterans from World

All county junior ROTC programs and the Brazoria County Cavalry will be participating in the parade also, Jasso said.

The parade will end at Bulldog Stadium, and at 1 p.m. a formal program will begin.

Corp., Sweeny Police Dept., Sweeny Chamber of Commerce, Sweeny Community Hospital, Sweeny ISD and numerous businesses including ConocoPhillips, Chevron Phillips (VETNET), BASF and Dow Chemical.

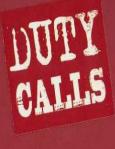
During the program later that night, all of the veterans heading to the football stadium in Sweeny will be given a raffle ticket. There will be a drawing for all five service branches and each branch will have a chance to win a Bowie knife.

'We want to honor all of "We are losing all of our veterans. I don't care

There are also a spate of

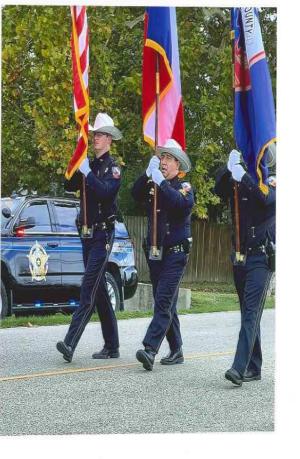
The cavalry invites all veterans to enter its drawing. Tickets will be available at the cavalry table at the entrance to the stadium. The drawing for a prize will be held during the program.

The VFW is pleased that the residents of Sweeny are so involved in the festivities, Donna James said. With one week of planning still to go, that the following organizations all have pledged support: City of Sweeny, Sweeny Economic Development

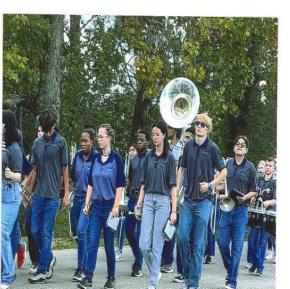
































### HONOR

One Nation,
under God...
with Tiberty
and Justice for all,



#### TO STATE OF THE PARTY OF THE PA











Jand of Liberty



America be proud!



The American Spirit lives forever.







In God we trust.