



Navy Marine Coast Guard Residence Foundation

March 2023 Foundation Update

Never a Dull Moment in March!

In March, the weather always keeps you guessing – running the gamut from frosty mornings and blustery storms to balmy days and spring blossoms. At the Foundation, our month of March has also been full of variety! We celebrated our Four- and Five-Star Members with a special Happy Hour event in Fred Johnson's Bistro. We provided financial support to the Alzheimer's Association, an organization dedicated to finding a cure for this disease that afflicts older adults, and held our own Walk to End Alzheimer's on campus. We installed new bricks that were purchased by our donors for the Foundation's Legacy Walk outside the Vinson Hall entrance. We saluted our friends at the Rotary Club of McLean in thanks for a grant that allowed us to purchase four beautiful new benches for our Sport Park. And we welcomed Debbie Blome, who joined us prior to the holidays and has hit the ground running as our new Communications Specialist! At NMCGRF, there is never a dull moment! Please read more about all of these March highlights in the articles below.

Celebrating Our Four- and Five-Star Donors

Earlier this month, the Navy Marine Coast Guard Residence Foundation celebrated last year's Four- and Five-Star donors by hosting a Happy Hour event in Fred Johnson's Bistro. In 2022, NMCGRF had 18 donors who donated \$2,500 or more to the Foundation, and 15 donors who donated \$5,000



or more. Together, these 33 donors – the largest number of donors we’ve ever had at this level of giving – contributed over \$167,000 to help the Foundation fulfill its mission of supporting the residents and staff of Vinson Hall Retirement Community.



At this year’s event, we were also delighted to be able to include those who have given a planned gift to NMCGRF and to thank them for their commitment to the Foundation. And it was a pleasure to welcome many members of the Board of Trustees, who stopped by to help us celebrate our donors.

They included NMCGRF Board Chair VADM Mark Skinner, Philanthropy & Engagement Committee Chair CAPT Wes Burnett, Treasurer CAPT Scott Slocum, RDML Michael Browne, and CAPT Sushil Jain. With 45 guests in attendance, it was a wonderful evening of great food, fellowship and fun!

Many thanks to all of the Foundation’s donors and supporters! We are happy to speak with you at any time about the Foundation and the various ways to support our work. Please visit our [website](#) or call [Michelle Crone](#), Senior Director of Philanthropy & Engagement, at 703-538-3068.



[Donate Today](#)

**The Foundation and VHRC Work Together
to Support the Alzheimer's Association**

Vinson Hall Retirement Community kicked off its annual fundraising drive to support the Alzheimer's Association with a campus walk this month. About 35 residents and staff walked the eight-tenths of a mile loop, raising more than \$1,000 to support the Alzheimer's Association's effort to find a cure for this disease. The on-campus walk marked the first of VHRC's series of fundraising events over the coming months, which will culminate in the annual Walk to End Alzheimer's in Washington, D.C. on October 14.



NMCGRF supports VHRC's fundraising efforts by contributing \$5,000 as a Courage Sponsor of the Walk to End Alzheimer's. In addition to sponsorship, the Office of Philanthropy & Engagement supports VHRC's fundraising efforts by providing communications and event assistance. In total, last year's campaign at VHRC raised an additional \$4,758.

"It is important for us to support a cause like this because we all may know someone who has been affected," said Fafa Beckley, Assistant Administrator of The Sylvestery, who is organizing the effort for VHRC this year. "If senior living organizations are not at the forefront of supporting Alzheimer's, who will be?" If you are interested in supporting the Alzheimer's Association, we invite you to [join our VHRC/NMCGRF team](#) and donate.



The Annual Gala – We Have a Date!



Mark your calendars for Saturday, **September 23, 2023** – you won't want to miss the annual NMCGRF Gala! By all accounts, last year's sold-out event was a night to remember! With topnotch cuisine, dancing, and the best of company, last year's Gala broke all records, raising \$93,988 to help us support the residents and staff of VHRC. For now, we are keeping our exciting plans for our upcoming Gala under wraps, but we can promise you another magical evening – all in support of a great cause! Watch for more information in the coming months about the event!

Foundation's Legacy Walk Offers Lasting Way to Honor Loved Ones

Have you ever wondered about all the inscribed bricks right out outside the main doors to Vinson Hall? For decades after Vinson Hall opened in 1969, the area in front of the main door was a simple cement-paved entry way. Then in 1997, the Navy Marine Coast Guard Residence Foundation launched a campaign to install a new brick "Legacy Walk." As stated in the campus newsletter that year, the Legacy Walk was envisioned to be "a meaningful tribute and a lasting way to honor a special friend, memorialize a loved one, or recognize an important date." Over the last 25 years, the Legacy Walk, which is still supported by the Foundation, has continued to grow.

Greeting all who enter Vinson Hall, each of the 569 personalized inscriptions has a story to tell. Some stand in tribute to heroes of the past: "In Honor of our CNO, ADM Arleigh Burke, USNA Class 1961, or "Merrill E. Debolt, Semper Fi Always, From his Proud Son," or "CDR Jo Parks, USN, WW2 Korea Vietnam." Others honor current residents: "RADM Gene Sizemore, USN 1945-1982, Naval Aviator," or "The Man, the Myth, the Legend, Gramps Clair." Some offer concrete words of advice – "Be Useful, Col. Cluff, USMC" – others pique the imagination – "Grateful Memory of Shipmates," or "Queen of Awesome was Here." Still others tug at the heart strings – "My True Love, Ruth Deal LT USNR, Forever Princess," or "In Honor of My Three Great Sons, Rick, Rob and Wayne," or "I Am Waiting Gracie, Robert Aug. '02."

Eight new bricks were recently purchased and installed, one of which was a gift to resident Althea Coetzee by her daughter RADM and NMCGRF Board member Allie Leslie. "When I heard

about the Legacy Walk, I thought, 'What a great way to commemorate my Mom!'" said Allie. "She lives at Vinson Hall, and every time she sees it, she'll think, 'This is my home. I'm a part of this.'" If you're interested in purchasing a personalized brick in the Legacy Walk in support of the Foundation, please contact [Clara Orrell](#) at 703-538-2970. Bricks are available for a donation of \$150 for a standard brick or \$225 for a border brick.

New Benches Provide Sport Park Seating, Courtesy of McLean Rotary Club



Thanks to a generous grant from the Rotary Club of McLean, the Foundation was able to purchase four durable outdoor Trex benches for residents to use at VHRC's Sports Park! The benches are now in place, and each bears a plaque inscribed "A Gift from the Rotary Club of McLean to Vinson Hall

Retirement Community 2022." The \$2,000 grant from the Rotary Club, which we received last year, enabled us to expand our outdoor socialization options for our residents – a process that began during the pandemic.

Over the last three years, VHRC created an outdoor recreation space where residents could gather together more safely than they could indoors. This new Sport Park, with pickle ball court, horseshoe pit and bocce ball court, has become an extremely popular destination for residents – but it lacked adequate seating for those who came to sit, watch and visit while their friends played. Not anymore.



We are so pleased to reinforce our connection with the Rotary Club of McLean, a service organization of local business and community leaders that was founded in town in 1965, four years before Vinson Hall opened its doors. Our two entities share a commitment to patriotism and have



long supported one another. Many thanks to this wonderful community organization for supporting NMCGRF and the residents of VHRC!

Introducing Debbie Blome, Communications Specialist

We are pleased to welcome Debbie Blome to our Foundation team! Debbie's role is to provide communications support, which includes producing the weekly *Beacon* resident newsletter and the quarterly *Campus News & Views* literary magazine, maintaining VHRC's website, producing press releases, and writing Facebook posts. In addition, Debbie designs invitations, flyers and other print material generated by the Foundation, creates video and slide show presentations, and helps other VHRC departments with their design, writing and editing needs.



Debbie joined us prior to the holidays and fits in seamlessly at VHRC, having spent much of the last few decades living throughout the Middle East with her husband, Don, who serves in the U.S. Foreign Service. Their years abroad included tours in Tunisia, Israel, Egypt, Kuwait, Jordan and Saudi Arabia, and Don currently serves as U.S. ambassador to Pakistan. Debbie's extensive career roles include serving as an editor for the American Foreign Service Association's *Foreign Service Journal*, the American University in Cairo Press, the Open Source Center, and the *University of Chicago Magazine*. In addition, she helped overhaul the website of the American Cooperative School of Tunisia and worked in communications and public relations as a volunteer at St. John of Jerusalem Eye Hospital.

Debbie's and Don's three children are now in their 20s and all live in Virginia. While she thoroughly enjoyed her many years of rich international experiences, Debbie is happy to be back home again in

Vienna and is delighted to be a part of the NMCGRF team. We hope you will join us in welcoming Debbie to our NMCGRF/VHRC family!

[Donate Today](#)

Your Planned Gift Today Can Make a Difference Tomorrow

You can leave a legacy that will last for years to come by designating Navy Marine Coast Guard Residence Foundation in your will or by making a planned gift. Some types of planned gifts can support our community and provide you with a charitable income tax deduction, minimize capital gains taxes, reduce estate taxes or provide you or others with an annual income for life. To learn more about these types of gifts, please see our [website](#) or contact Michelle Crone at michellec@vinsonhall.org or 703-538-3068.

[Learn More about Planned Giving](#)

Navy Marine Coast Guard Residence Foundation

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