



MILITARY HERITAGE MUSEUM

Annual Report 2012

☆Forty-thousand was a significant number for the Military Heritage Museum in 2012. The number of people “clicked in” as they walked through the door: 41,125. The amount of money left in our donation boxes by those visitors: \$41,048. And the first annual earnings distributed by the Charlotte Community Foundation: \$45,564.



Wallie Spatz (1916 - 2011)

Upon her death, Mrs. Spatz left \$1,139,109 in trust to the Museum, held by the Charlotte Community Foundation, to be awarded in annual

payments matching the amount raised by the Museum the previous year, along with the earnings on the account in the previous year. It is the Museum’s intention to use only the earnings, leaving the balance as an endowment fund. Funds to be matched for 2012 are anticipated to be \$100,000, which will be reinvested.

Mrs. Spatz, well-known and loved by many connected to the Museum, is sorely missed, but her legacy is a testament to her belief in our mission: to promote an understanding and respect for the rich military heritage of the United States and the sacrifices made by our country’s veterans, living and dead, emphasizing that *freedom is not free*.

☆Fundraising events held included the annual “Wall of Warriors Honoree Dinner,” this year honoring retired US Air Force Brigadier General Fredric Buckingham; the fourth annual Freedom Isn’t Free Poker Run; the second annual “Party on the Roof” on the top of Punta Gorda’s downtown parking garage on July 4th; and our second annual Celebrity Waiter Luncheon.

☆The Museum continues to hold celebrations and ceremonies for significant days of the year, including Memorial Day (with the Charlotte County Veterans Council), POW/MIA Remembrance Day (with the U.S. Paratroopers Port Charlotte Chapter), Veterans Day (with the Charlotte County Veterans Council), and Pearl Harbor Day (with the Marine Corps League).

☆Receptions held in the Museum included our twice-held “War Tales,” giving visitors a chance to speak with veterans from many wars and conflicts; one for women who served -- both in the military and as “Rosies” on the home front; and one for Congressman Tom Rooney.



WWII Nurses, Grace Chicken, Marie Knasiak and Regina Jones

☆In an effort to continue to spread the word about the Museum, this past year we created a profile with The Giving Partner, a program supported by many of the foundations in southwest Florida (thegivingpartner.guidestar.org). This enables people who may be interested in donating to learn much about the Museum, including our various policies and philosophies.

☆Finally, a note about our leadership. Marilyn Smith-Mooney, the Museum’s president for over five years, turned over the reins to Bill Minerich, the owner of Jack’s on Marion and an Army veteran of the Vietnam conflict. The executive director, the volunteers, and her fellow trustees are extremely grateful for her dedication and tireless efforts in service to the Museum.

Admission is free. The experience is priceless.