



**PATRIOT  
PARK**

HONORING THOSE WHO FOUGHT  
THE GLOBAL WAR ON TERRORISM

December, 2022

# News

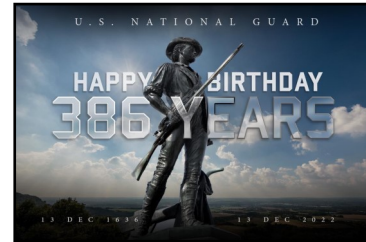
## Patriot Park Receives Grant

On December 7, Patriot Park was one of 40 Somerset County organizations that attended a luncheon at Seven Springs, and subsequently received some excellent news from **Somerset County's Annual Tourism Grant Program**.



As a recipient of a **\$14,647.50** marketing grant, the funds will be used to promote the Park through digital and print advertisements, email marketing, and brochures.

Our sincere thanks to all those involved with the Somerset County Grant Program, and especially to Board Secretary **Cathy Incardona** and President **Randy Musser** for their hard work and assistance in preparing and submitting the grant request.



**386th birthday—US National Guard**  
**December 13, 2022**  
**3rd birthday—US Space Force**  
**December 20, 2022**



## President's Message, December 2022

As the Christmas Holiday season is now upon us, we at **Patriot Park Foundation** wish you and yours a very happy and safe holiday season. But, we also pause at this time to remember and thank the brave men and women of the U.S. Armed Forces who are serving in foreign lands and in harms way. Separation from their families is one of the sacrifices they make on our behalf to keep us safe and secure. Please remember them and their loved ones in your prayers this year.

All is now quiet at the Park. The flags have been removed, the storyboards covered, and the displays cleaned and stored away until next year. However, just because operations are done for the year, don't think the Foundation's Board of Directors is not busy! Plans are well underway for next year, with a **Global War on Terrorism (GWOT) Timeline Trail** the most exciting feature being planned. We hope to have interactive storyboards that will link to a visitor's mobile device. We are also planning to improve our entrance road, give our building a facelift, and generally improve the curb appeal of the Park entrance.

Looking ahead, we are planning to reinstall the **Field of Heroes Flag Display** the first week of May with reopening on **Saturday, May 6**. Arrangements are also underway for a **Memorial Ceremony** on the evening of **Sunday, May 28** featuring patriotic music and a guest speaker. In addition, a summer concert to benefit a GWOT veteran non-profit organization is being planned.

2023 promises to be an exciting year at Patriot Park. Please get involved, as not only is it very rewarding work, it is always fun as well. To sign up as a volunteer, contact me at [patriotparkfoundation@gmail.com](mailto:patriotparkfoundation@gmail.com) or give me a call at 814-233-0351.




## Local Student Council Donates Proceeds of Annual Fundraiser to Patriot Park

In late November, the Foundation received a letter from **Shanksville High School Student Council**. They had organized a volleyball tournament for their annual fundraiser consisting of 66 students and 11 volleyball teams. This had resulted in a total of **\$345** being raised by the students, which they had then elected to donate to Patriot Park.

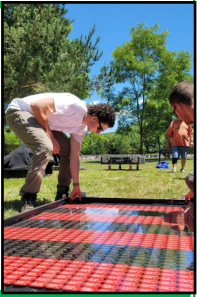
It was about a week later, in early December that president Randy Musser was able to attend the high school to received the check in person from the Student Council. When asked why the Park was chosen to receive the funds, Student Council president **Alec Thiele** responded, "It is a non-profit organization that honors those that made the decision to put their lives on the line so that us Americans can have our freedom."

It is worth noting that some of the Council members helped to install the flags at the Park and have also helped in other volunteer capacities. President Musser stated, "It has been so heartwarming to work with the young men and women at our local schools this year. They are smart, hardworking and we could not have accomplished all we have this year without them! The future looks bright. I want to add a special thank you to those board members who encouraged me to look to this particular group of young people for volunteers, as it has certainly been very rewarding."



### Patriot Park Volunteer Receives West Point Appointment

And speaking of our outstanding high school volunteers ... Congratulations to Patriot Park volunteer and Shanksville Senior, **Ian Fox**, for receiving an appointment to the **United States Military Academy at West Point**! Ian has been a big help at the Park and we are so proud that he will be joining the class of 2027.



## Thank You to Our Volunteers!

Once again our **volunteers** came out in force to help with the removal and proper disposal of the flags in the Field of Honor display. Thank you to everyone who helped, not only on that day, but every day throughout the year whether it was for clean-up, visitor greeting, or any other task required. We value every one of our volunteers, and for anyone who is considering joining us—not only is it a worthy cause, but you get to hang out with a great bunch of people of all ages with the joint interest of honoring those who served on our behalf after 9/11, as well as the families they left behind.



A special "thank you" must go to the **Central City VFW Honor Guard** who helped us close down the Field of Honor and the Park for the season with such honor and dignity (and to the VFW Post for hosting the excellent reception afterwards for our volunteers!)

Of course, our final thanks of the year must go to **Linda and Randy Musser**, without whom **NONE** of this would be possible.







# PATRIOT PARK FOUNDATION

HONORING THOSE WHO FOUGHT THE GLOBAL WAR ON TERRORISM

6150 Lincoln Highway, Stoystown, PA 15563

[patriotparkfoundation@gmail.com](mailto:patriotparkfoundation@gmail.com)

[www.patriotparkmemorial.org](http://www.patriotparkmemorial.org)

Randall Musser P.E., P.L.S.  
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Musser Engineering, Inc. -  
Retired

Robert E. Sembower  
Vice President  
Brigadier General, U.S. Army -  
Retired

Clair Gill  
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Donald Newman  
LT U.S. Navy, veteran

Robert Munhall  
Colonel, U.S. Army - Retired

Travis Pheanis  
SFC U.S. Army - Retired  
Executive Director  
National Ranger Association

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School Superintendent  
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Commissioner - Retired

Kathy Walker  
Gold Star Mother

G. Henry Cook  
Chairman of the Board  
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Michael Knapp  
LT COL, U.S. Army - Retired

William Szych  
LT COL, U.S.A.F. - Retired

December 2022

Dear Supporter of our Armed Forces

Twenty-one years ago our nation was still reeling from the vicious attacks of ruthless terrorists who claimed the lives of nearly 3000 innocent Americans. Those attacks were condemned by the civilized world, and President Bush vowed to bring those responsible to justice. Our country looked to the U.S. Armed Forces to carry out this mission and millions of Americans answered the call to duty.

For twenty-one years the men and women of the U.S. Armed Forces sacrificed enormously to keep us free and safe. This security has been bought with the blood, sweat, and tears of our Armed Forces and their families. Their sacrifice cannot and must not be forgotten. Patriot Park provides the place where we can tell their stories.

Stories such as that of Senior Airman Mark A. Forester from Haleysville, AL. Friends and family described him as a kind and gentle man. He had a degree in finance from the University of Alabama. He served as an Air Force Special Operations Combat Controller. On August 6, 2010, Airman Forester, multiple times, ran through a hail of enemy fire to better position himself to direct air support. His bravery saved his team, who had been ambushed by a much larger number of insurgents. Airman Forester was awarded the Bronze Star for Valor. Unfortunately he did not live to receive his Bronze Star. On September 29, 2010, while trying to rescue injured Special Forces Medic Sergeant First Class Calvin Harrison, Airman Forester was shot and killed by a sniper.

At Patriot Park our nation can come together and express our appreciation for all of our Post 9-11 Global War on Terrorism veterans. The Gold Star families, the Blue Star families, and the veterans who visit the Park very much appreciate Patriot Park and its message of gratitude. A veteran told a volunteer that Patriot Park will save lives as post 9-11 Global War on Terrorism veterans realize they are not forgotten.

Education is another important function at Patriot Park. Millions of Americans were born after 9-11-2001 and have very little knowledge of the Global War on Terrorism mission our Armed Forces were asked to accomplish. They must know what happened and why. 2022 was the first full year of operation at Patriot Park.



Visitors were often overwhelmed by the Field of Heroes Flag Display, the storyboards, and the Names of the Fallen Display. Comments such as “Very impressive and moving”, “Incredible”, and “Excellent” are often expressed by visitors and on social media.

With all this in mind, the Patriot Park Board of Directors is more committed than ever to our mission. Improvements planned for 2023 include a driveway and parking lot resurfacing, a bus parking area, a Global War on Terrorism timeline walking trail with mobile phone first person accounts, updated storyboards, and a Memorial to the members of the PA Army National Guard 55<sup>th</sup> Brigade Combat Team who were killed in action.

To make this and much more happen we will need everyone’s help. The estimated budget for these improvements is approximately \$100,000. Your end of year contribution will help position us to complete these important improvements as soon as possible. For 21 years and continuing today our U.S. Armed Forces and Post 9-11 Global War on Terrorism veterans have missed the holiday season as they are/were deployed overseas. As you consider end of year giving, please consider helping Patriot Park properly honor and remember the sacrifices made by our Post 9-11 Global War on Terrorism Armed Forces, veterans and their families. Your generosity is greatly appreciated.

Thank You

Patriot Park Foundation Board of Directors

## Patriot Park Foundation 2022 Year End Fund Drive

Patriot Park Foundation honors and remembers all veterans who have served America in the Post 9-11 Global War on Terrorism (GWOT).

2022 was an exciting year, as we replanted the Field of Heroes, constructed additional features including more storyboards, and continued to expand operations at the Park. Our plans for 2023 include resurfacing the entrance road and parking areas, adding a GWOT timeline walking trail, a bus parking area and a Memorial to the members of the 55<sup>th</sup> Brigade Combat Team who were killed in action. Help us jump start our funding for 2023 so we can construct these features in time for the reopening in May 2023. With your help, Patriot Park Foundation will continue to honor all Post 9-11 GWOT veterans in 2023.

Please kindly complete the form below and return it to

**Patriot Park Foundation**

**6150 Lincoln Hwy, Stoystown, PA 15563.**

Please make all checks payable to Patriot Park Foundation.

If you wish to make a secure donation online, please go to our website

[www.patriotparkfoundation.org](http://www.patriotparkfoundation.org).

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I am committed to help Patriot Park Foundation fulfill its mission of providing a place for citizens to pay tribute and express gratitude to all veterans of the Global War on Terrorism for their brave and sacrificial service to our country. In that spirit, I offer my gift below:

Gold Star Level:      \$10,000 or more.      Amount \_\_\_\_\_

Silver Star Level:      \$5,000 - \$9,999      Amount: \_\_\_\_\_

Bronze Star Level:      \$2,500 - \$4,999      Amount: \_\_\_\_\_

Benefactor Level:      \$1,000 - \$2,499      Amount: \_\_\_\_\_

Patriot Level:      \$500 - \$999      Amount: \_\_\_\_\_

Supporter Level:      Up to \$499      Amount: \_\_\_\_\_

Please indicate below how we can publicly acknowledged your support and donation.

Donor's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_