



Members of the local VFW (Veterans of Foreign Wars) chapter prepare for the ribbon cutting ceremony.

New facility will help vets battle their demons

BY LAYLA FARMER
THE CHRONICLE

Vietnam veteran Peter Moorman spent nearly a decade on the streets.

His experience is not unique. Veterans make up an disproportionate number of America's homeless population.

Moorman, a Virginia native, said his experiences in the service were directly linked to his homelessness. Those who fought in the controversial Vietnam War weren't greeted as heroes when they returned home. There were no welcome home parades and few pats on the back. Moorman said that coldness led him to drug addiction, which in turn rendered him homeless.

"The military experience back in Vietnam (War) was one of the things that hurt me quite a bit," said Moorman, who served just over a year, state-side before being honorably discharged from the Army for medical reasons. "People picked the base because we were working with biological warfare. We couldn't wear our uniforms when we went off base. We had to be undercover soldiers."

In the years since, Moorman, who will celebrate 11 years of sobriety next month, said he has reconciled his past and forged a new trail. Now, the grandfather of two will be helping other veterans to start a new chapter in their lives. He is the program director of Veterans Helping Veterans Heal (VHVH), an innovative new facility that will serve as a halfway point for veterans transitioning from homelessness to permanent housing. Homeless vets with disabilities and/or substance abuse/mental illness issues will be referred to the facility, where they will receive treatment and a number of tools to help them successfully re-enter society.

The 30-unit, dormitory-style facility was made possible by partners like United Way's Ten Year Plan to End Chronic Homelessness, the North Carolina Housing Foundation, Inc. and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. VHVH partners and supporters celebrated the building's completion with a ribbon cutting ceremony last week.

Homeless veterans are a key population being targeted by the Ten Year Plan to End Chronic Homelessness, says the Plan's director, Andrea Kurtz.

"The Ten Year Plan has identified a number of target populations," Kurtz explained. "As we looked at the numbers of people who were homeless ... one of the groups that rose to the top were veterans. For many of them, the transition from Vietnam back to a civilian lifestyle was very difficult and we're still seeing the effects of that today."

Kurtz hopes to begin to address that problem through the VHVH. The Ten Year Plan has already had many success, including helping to affect an eight percent drop in homeless veterans countywide between January 2011 and January 2012.

"Today is a day to rejoice," declared Shelia Womack, a social worker from the Salisbury Veterans Administration Medical Center, one of two VA facilities that will refer veterans to



A view of the renovated facility.



Operations Director Jonathan "JC" Evans (left) with Program Director Peter Moorman.



Willie Craven of American Legion Post #55 plays "Taps."

the program. "Today is a day that we show our gratitude to those who served us so honorably."

The old Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 1134 was rehabbed to create VHVH building.

"When someone came to my office and talked about making this a place for veterans to stay, I did not blink an eye," said Mayor Pro Tempore Vivian Burke, who represents the city's Northeast Ward, where the facility is located. "I thought about my great country and how great we feel because soldiers and veterans allowed us to have the quality of life that we have... This is a great day in the city because history is being seen, history is

being written."

Following an inspection by the VA in the coming weeks, the facility will officially open its doors to 30 veterans referred by the VA. The vets will take part in a comprehensive program that includes job and life skills training and addresses substance abuse and mental illness.

"Today we celebrate the construction, and tomorrow we start the real work, and that is transforming lives back to being productive and hopeful citizens," said Garry Merritt, president of the NC Housing Foundation.

VHVH Operations Director Jonathan "JC" Evans, a former Marine, said he hopes to staff the facility entirely with veterans who can relate to the unique challenges the population they serve faces. People like Moorman will play an important role in the success of the program, he believes.

"Peter's experience with this population is really going to serve the homeless population very well," concluded Evans, who is also a veteran himself. "His remarkable story is really going to change lives."

For more information about Veterans Helping Veterans Heal, visit www.vhv.org.



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CBC chair to speak at NAACP banquet

CHRONICLE STAFF REPORT

U.S. Rep. Emanuel Cleaver II, a Democrat who represents Missouri's Fifth District, will give the keynote address at the Winston-Salem NAACP's Freedom Fund Banquet on April 27.

The event will take place at Carver School Road Church of Christ, 4399 Carver School Road, beginning at 7 p.m.

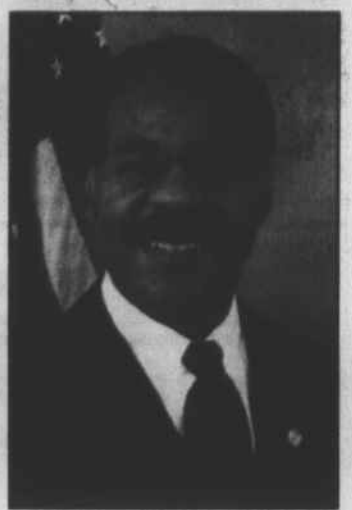
Cleaver was first elected to the U.S. House in 2005. In 2010, his colleagues elected him chair of the Congressional Black

Caucus.

A one-time Methodist minister, Cleaver began his political career in the late 1970s when he was elected to the Kansas City City Council. He became the city's first black mayor in 1991, serving in that position until 1999.

Individual tickets to the banquet, which raises money for scholarships and other NAACP programs, are \$30. Tables of eight are \$210.

Call 336-767-3470 for tickets and/or further information.



U.S. House Photo
U.S. Rep. Emanuel Cleaver II

FOOTBALL CAMP

RAY AGNEW FOOTBALL COMPLEX
Winston-Salem Tiny Indians Field
999 Waterworks Road Winston-Salem NC 27105

Camp Sessions - Saturdays -
April 28, May 5, 12 2012
TIME: 10am - 12pm
COST: \$50 (3sessions)
open to Ages 12-18

The CHAMPION Football Training Camp is a Non-Contact Football Camp designed to help ELITE football players (7th grade-12th grade) with college potential advance their football and training knowledge in order to maximize their ability. Participants are taught position-specific and athletic performance drills designed by some of the top area coaches. The players will have an opportunity to work with some of the Best High School Coaches in the area that have molded stars that are currently playing college football. Current and Former College Players from the area will also be in attendance to volunteer as mentors to the participants.

Participants will receive training in the following areas:

- Speed and Agility Training: Our Coaches work participants through specific drills designed to improve athletic ability, speed and explosiveness. Here, athletes have the opportunity to tap into the secrets of proper workouts that have helped players make it to the next level, including cone and ladder drills. This period educates participants on how to improve football-specific speed, agility and quickness movements.
- POSITION SPECIFIC DRILLS: Participants are separated into position groups (QBs, RBs, WR/TEs, OL, DL, LBs & DBs) to work individually on football skills and techniques with top-notch position coaches.

By the end of the CHAMPION Camp concludes with one-on-one passing and pass rushing, which many say are the highlight of the camp.

- 7 v 7 - participants will be divided into teams and will compete in 7 on 7 sessions
- LEADERSHIP - Community Leaders will address several Life Related issues that will help the participants become more aware of the Responsibility of Being a Student Athlete. **OUR FOCUS IS TO NOT ONLY TEACH PARTICIPANTS TO BE BETTER FOOTBALL PLAYERS BUT ALSO TO TEACH THE PARTICIPANTS TO BECOME LEADERS ON and OFF THE PLAYING FIELD!**

COST/ WHAT TO BRING:

The Camp is \$50 for 3 sessions

Participants are asked to bring football cleats and wear BLACK Shorts or SWEAT PANTS.

We will provide each participant a workout shirt. WE would like to have everyone participating be in uniform by wearing the same color scheme- BLACK Shorts/sweat pants. Each participant must have a physical prior to participation

FOR INFORMATION Contact:
LAMONT SCALES- DIRECTOR
336-817-3950
 Email: starcamp02@yahoo.com
 Website: www.starfootball.org

Registration Deadline:
April 26 2012



Give one.
Get one free.

A hot meal. A warm "Thank you." That's what it's all about for the people who deliver meals to our community's elderly in need.

Right now, our **Meals-on-Wheels** program needs more community volunteers. Please give us a call if you can spare an hour and a half, one day a week or one day a month, to deliver hot meals to local home-bound seniors.

There's someone out there just waiting to give you a hug.



2895 Shorefair Drive, Winston-Salem, NC 27105 | 725-0907 | seniorservicesinc.org