



WARRIOR VILLAGE PROJECT

The Bugle: Vol 2, Issue 9, September 2020

www.WarriorVillageProject.com

PROGRESS REPORT

The business community continued to step forward to support our students and our veterans:

- [Temecula Roofing Co.](#) donates roofing shingles for BITA II solar curriculum.
- [Cosmic Solar & Roofing](#) donates solar equipment for BITA solar curriculum.
- [Robertson's Ready Mix](#) donates concrete for SM #1 foundation.

On September 18 we visited the Grainger store in San Marcos to present a plaque to Carlos Ramirez in appreciation for Grainger's \$5,000 grant to the Warrior Village Project at SMHS. The Grainger Foundation was our first Sponsor, and we really appreciate the kick start they gave us!



L to R: Carlos Ramirez and Chris Geldert



17 September 2020

[Temecula Roofing Co.](#) donates roofing shingles for BITA solar curriculum

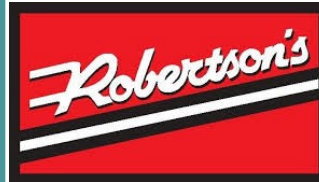
[See more](#)



17 September 2020

[Cosmic Solar & Roofing](#) donates solar equipment for BITA solar curriculum

[See more](#)



17 September 2020

[Robertson's Ready Mix](#) donates concrete.

[See more](#)



17 September 2020

We see light at the end of the tunnel; our plans cleared PDS Plan Check

[See more](#)

IN THIS ISSUE

| | |
|---------------------------|---|
| Progress Report | 1 |
| VIP Profile | 2 |
| School Update | 3 |
| Construction Update | 4 |
| Partners | 5 |
| Sponsors | 6 |
| Donate | 7 |
| Contacts | 7 |
| Subscribe | 7 |

FUTURE EVENTS

Visit our Website:

[WarriorVillageProject.com.](http://WarriorVillageProject.com)

VIP PROFILE: Warrior Foundation Freedom Station Volunteers

This month we salute the volunteers and staff of the [Warrior Foundation Freedom Station](#) (WFFS), a wonderful organization that has been doing a great job for our veterans since 2004. I was drawn to WFFS because of the services they provide veterans transitioning to civilian life, including the operation of two transitional housing communities, [Freedom Station I](#) and [Freedom Station II](#). The two communities are renovated and refurbished 1930s vintage [bungalow courts](#) with small cottages and apartments that can house about 20 veterans (see page 5 for more details). But, I have learned that there is a lot more to WFFS than two beautiful bungalow court communities.

[Sandy Lehmkuhler](#), a 30-year Navy wife and mother, co-founded [Warrior Foundation Freedom Station](#) (WFFS) with [CDR Jim Bedinger](#), U.S. Navy, Ret., in response to the growing number of injured servicemen and women returning from Afghanistan and Iraq. While volunteering at Naval Medical Center San Diego (NMCS) in 2004, Lehmkuhler was distraught to find that the hospital's injured lacked some basic quality-of-life items. In an interview with *Ranch & Coast Magazine*, Lehmkuhler recalled that she met two marines at NMCS, "one who had lost his left arm and one who had lost his right. They were helping each other dress, working together to button shirts and do their belts, but they couldn't shave each other and were getting dinged each morning at inspection. It was Christmas and what they really wanted was a new Norelco razor you could use with one hand in the shower."

Since then, Lehmkuhler and a battalion of volunteers have been dedicated to assisting military men and women who have served our country. These volunteers include [Judy Sexton](#), COO, who has volunteered since the founding of WFFS. While others were easing into their retirement years, Lehmkuhler, Sexton and others worked tirelessly for our veterans for the last 16 years. Last year WFFS hired its first employee, [Col. Greg Martin](#), U.S. Marines, Ret. Col. Martin will oversee strategic direction, operations and programs to ensure that WFFS remains the leading force in assisting, honoring and supporting the men and women who bravely served our country.

Martin grew up in a military family in San Diego and spent 30 years in the Marine Corps. Martin commanded the [Wounded Warrior Battalion - West](#) from 2008 to 2011. He cut the ribbon to open Freedom Station I in 2011. In an interview with the *Village News* on July 15, 2019, Col. Martin explained that, "[For] what senior officers like me have asked these people to do over the years, there is a sense of duty. I feel I owe these guys something. Every American does, but I've had a front row seat to the sacrifices they've made."



Front, L to R: Greg Martin, President; Sandy Lehmkuhler, Founder & CEO; Mike Seymour, Vice President, and; Judy Sexton, COO with WFFS Board at Freedom Station II during construction.



SCHOOL UPDATE San Marcos High School

San Marcos High School has been operating solely online and remote since Tuesday, August 18.

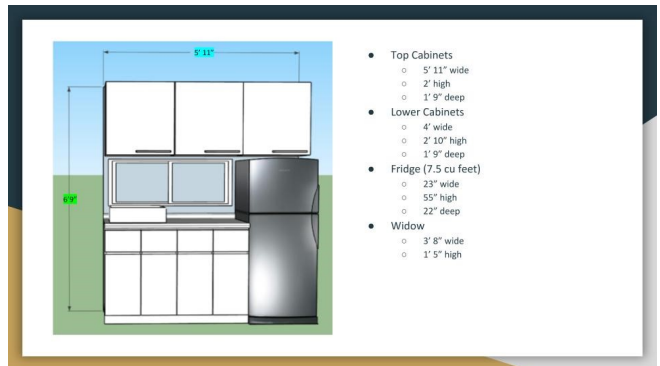
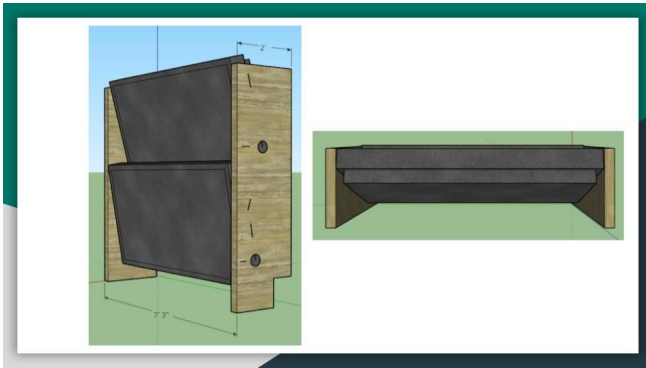


It appears unlikely that our students will return to campus before the Spring Semester. The San Marcos Unified School District has School Reopening Plans to transition to in-person instruction under a [2 Day A/B Hybrid Model](#) of part time, in-person classes, tentatively in January:

2 Day A/B Hybrid Model:

- 2 cohorts split into A & B
- 2 days a week of in-person Instruction
- A cohort in-person on T/Th
- B cohort in-person on W/F

Chris Geldert's BITA II students have been using [SketchUp 3D Modeling Software](#) to design the interior elements of the 22 ft cargo trailer that they will be converting into a Tiny Home. Below are a few examples of their early work: 1) several views of a design for bunk beds that fold up for stowage, or down for a bench seat, and; 2) an elevation view of a design for a compact kitchen.



CONSTRUCTION UPDATE

We are still awaiting approval of our Building Permit from the County so that we can start work on the [Wounded Warrior Homes](#) site in Vista where SM #1 will be installed. Once we receive our permit, we will be able to start construction of the foundation and start trenching for the water supply, sewer and propane lines and the electrical conduit.

San Marcos High School is building a security fence around the construction area behind Chris Geldert's wood shop. Since we are not able to transport SM #1 to Vista until we have a foundation to set it on, we had to relocate SM #1 outside of the fenced area until we are able to transport it off campus. A crew of San Marcos High School 2020 graduates came to the school on 8 September to help re-position the cottage. It was good to get some of the band back together again!



When we started the construction of our cottages, the intent was for our students to complete 95% of the work on campus before they were transported to their installation sites. As a result of COVID-19, our students haven't been able to work on the cottages since March 12. The remaining work on SM #1, including installation of the siding, insulation, drywall, cabinets, finish carpentry, etc. will now be completed on site. We are hoping that a crew of BITA II 2020 graduates will help us finish SM #1 in Vista.

On September 10, [Weyerhaeuser](#) delivered over 420 pieces of HardiePlank® Fiber Cement Lap Siding and five 150-ft rolls of WeatherSmart House Wrap to San Marcos High School. They gave us enough siding and house wrap for at least three cottages. We are very grateful for the generous support of the good folks at Weyerhaeuser, particular our friends at the Fontana and Santa Clarita Distribution Centers who made the delivery of these donations possible!



PARTNERS

Warrior Foundation Freedom Station

There are over 200 nonprofits in San Diego County supporting our veterans. We recently learned about a very successful one, [Warrior Foundation Freedom Station](#) (WFFS). I reached out to [Judy Sexton](#), COO, and asked if we could meet her and visit WFFS' transitional housing communities. Judy very kindly spent a Saturday morning with Chris Geldert and me explaining WFFS's programs and giving us a tour of their facilities. We left very impressed with the work that WFFS is doing for our veterans.

WFFS was founded in 2004 with a mission to be the leading force in assisting, honoring and supporting the military men and women who have so bravely served and sacrificed for our country. The good people at WWFS are committed to providing our warriors with quality-of-life items, support services and transitional housing designed to assist them and their families during their recovery from injuries.

WFFS provides items that provide comfort to injured service members during recovery and assist with the transition to civilian life, including: ultra light wheelchairs; modified combat boots with built-in zippers to accommodate prosthetic limbs; special hiking boots for warriors with lower leg injuries and IDEO braces; iPads with specialized applications for those with post-traumatic stress (PTS) and traumatic brain injury (TBI); high-quality pillows, pillow cases, blankets and bath towels for the hospital; pallets of bottled water and non-perishable food items; men's and ladies' business suits for transitioning service members to go on job interviews; Christmas gifts provided annually to recovering warriors, including toiletries and personal care supplies, athletic equipment, apparel, military blankets, and more.

Warrior Foundation Freedom Station assists four main groups of warriors:

- The seriously injured returning home from war;
- Those suffering from post-traumatic stress (PTS) and/or traumatic brain injury (TBI);
- Those undergoing physical or occupational therapy;
- Transitioning warriors who have been medically retired and remain in our community

To serve this last group in particular, WFFS pioneered a new approach to address the needs of transitioning warriors. WFFS realized there was a missing link in one crucial place - the transition from military service to civilian life. During this period, warriors are at the highest risk of homelessness, joblessness, and physical and emotional distress. In 2011, WFFS opened [Freedom Station I](#), a unique transitional housing community of 12 fully furnished, move-in ready cottages and apartments. It became a place for healing, personal growth and preparation for the new opportunities that await veterans in civilian life. Freedom Station I was so successful in achieving its mission that WFFS opened a second community of 9 cottages and apartments, [Freedom Station II](#), on May 29, 2020.



Freedom Station I



Freedom Station II

Dozens of injured warriors have lived at Freedom Stations I and II and have validated the concept of a transitional environment for servicemen and women as they return to life outside the military. These "graduates" and success stories have gone on to enroll in college and vocational schools, establish fulfilling new careers, secure long-term independent housing, start families of their own, and manage continuing care for their injuries.

We view Freedom Stations I and II as models for our first Warrior Village Project village. We hope to learn more from the good folks at Warrior Foundation Freedom Station to help us plan for a successful future of helping our veterans while training the next generation of home builders.

SPONSORS

The Warrior Village Project is a community effort. To succeed, we need the community's support. We have been receiving a tremendous response to our pleas for help from individuals and businesses.



You read in our August newsletter that the Building Industry Technology Academy (BITA) curriculum has been updated to include solar system installation. Students will build a mock-up roof to hone their roofing and solar installation skills. We asked Will Picquelle, owner of [Temecula Roofing Co.](#), if he could donate some asphalt shingles for this project. His response: "Thank you for the opportunity to assist you on this project." He even offered to work with our students when they return to school. In addition to running a successful roofing business, Will volunteers countless hours to the community, including with the [Alaska Adventure Project](#) for wounded veterans. Thanks Will. You're our kind of guy!

[Cosmic Solar & Roofing](#) installed a solar system expansion at my house two years ago. I contacted Cosmic because they were highly recommended by neighbors who had solar systems designed and installed by Cosmic. I was very happy with their work and have recommended them to others. Pey Shadzi, Cosmic's Operations Manager, has advised me about solar requirements under our new building codes. They are a great group, so when I asked Bahram Shadzi, Founder and President, to donate 2 solar panels, 2 inverters, some rails, wiring, connectors and hardware for our BITA curriculum, I was pretty confident that Bahram would say yes - and he did. Thank you Cosmic Solar & Roofing.



Concrete, consisting of portland cement, sand, gravel and water, is a critical component of construction projects. Concrete will be poured for the foundations of our cottages. Jon Hill, Instructor in the [AGC Apprenticeship Program](#), asked Dave Weintraub of [Robertson's Ready Mix](#) if Robertson's would donate a load of concrete, 9 cubic yards of 3,000 psi Concrete Pea Gravel Mix, for the foundation of SM #1. This much concrete is expensive. So, we were very grateful when Dave said Yes. Robertson's has facilities throughout southern California, the Bay Area, and southern Nevada. But, the concrete will probably be delivered from their Escondido yard. Thank you Robertson's for your generous donation!

Obtaining a Building Permit is a slow, time-consuming process that can seem like an impenetrable maze of obstacles and hurdles. It involves reviews by numerous discipline experts in many different departments, in several agencies in different jurisdictions, lots of forms and a host of approval stamps. The process has become slower because of the protocols put in place to protect the people involved from COVID-19. But, we have achieved an important milestone: our plans have passed the Plan Check process at San Diego County Planning & Development Services and are now at the City of Vista for the next steps in the process. It will probably take another month to receive our Building Permit so that we can start our site work in Vista.



DONATE TO THE WARRIOR VILLAGE PROJECT

We can provide truly affordable, permanent housing. But, we can't do it for free. To succeed, we need financial support. The materials required to build our cottages cost about \$25,000 per cottage. It will cost about \$10,000 to transport a cottage to its installation site. The cost of installing a cottage as an Accessory Dwelling Unit will depend on the site. But, it should cost about \$30,000 per cottage. Hence, we can provide permanent housing for a veteran for about \$65,000 per unit. This is a bargain compared to the cost of government supported 'affordable' housing projects. According to the [Turner Center for Housing Innovation](#) at UC Berkeley, it cost an average of \$480,000 (\$700/sq ft) to build one unit of affordable housing in California under the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program.

Donors who wish to donate for the construction of our cottages at San Marcos High School can make a contribution through our fiscal sponsor, [The San Marcos Promise](https://thesanmarcospromise.org/donate/#ways-to-donate) (<https://thesanmarcospromise.org/donate/#ways-to-donate>), a 501(c)(3) nonprofit.

- **Online Donations:** When you donate online, please '*Leave A Comment*' indicating that your donation is for the Warrior Village Project.
- **Donations by Check:** Mail your check, made payable to The San Marcos Promise, to:

**The San Marcos Promise
255 Pico Avenue, Suite 103
San Marcos, CA 92069**

Please write on the Check's Memo Line that your donation is for the Warrior Village Project.

If you would like more information on the Warrior Village Project and our Partners, please visit our website, WarriorVillageProject.com, or send an email to Mark.L.Pilcher@gmail.com.

Please help us to provide affordable, permanent housing for homeless veterans while training the next generation of homebuilders.

PROJECT CONTACTS

| | | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------|------------------|--|
| Volunteer..... | Mark L. Pilcher | 760-666-0077 ... | Mark.L.Pilcher@gmail.com |
| BIA San Diego County..... | Mike McSweeney ... | 858-514-7004 ... | MMcSweeney@biasandiego.org |
| BITA Program Director | Jill Herman | 916 412-7118 | JHerman@mychf.org |
| SMHS BITA Instructor | Chris Geldert..... | 760 390 2388 .. | Chris.Geldert@SMUSD.org |
| SMHS Assistant Principal.. | Barry Zeait | 760-290-2204 .. | Barry.Zeait@SMUSD.org |
| The San Marcos Promise .. | Lisa Stout..... | 760-290-2373 .. | Lisa@TheSanMarcosPromise.org |

SUBSCRIBE TO OUR NEWSLETTER

If you would like to receive future editions of our Newsletter via email, please send an email to Mark.L.Pilcher@gmail.com. Thank you for your interest and support.