An introduction to the Hometown Heroes program

Honoring veterans for their dedication and sacrifice to the community has always been a passion of mine. While I have not served in the military, I have always admired the brave men and women who have dared everything to protect the precious freedom our nation affords to us citizens.

When I went on a trip to my wife’s hometown in Pennsylvania, I saw several pole banners on display throughout the area paying homage to family members who served or are currently serving in the military.

My first thought was that we could pull this off in Downtown DeLand, so make it even better! With the support of City Manager Michael Pleas and the DeLand City Commission, along with the very generous sponsorship by AdventHealth, we are now in our third year of the program. I hope this is just the beginning of the program, as I know there are many deserving heroes who live among us.

Your first thought was that we could pull this off in Downtown DeLand, so make it even better! You may also notice that we switched sponsors to give special recognition to those who have left us with a folded flag.

Finally, I want to give a special thank you to The West Volusia Beacon for adding to our program with a wonderful publication highlighting our heroes.

— Chris Graham, Public Information Officer, City of DeLand

Corporal Gene Apathy

Gene Apathy was in the U.S. Army from 1945 to 1947, and was stationed in cities such as Paris and Berlin. With help from the GI Bill, he went to Indiana University, graduating in 1952. Apathy built his first home in 1954 when he started as a copy writer for Sears at the west-side Chicago headquarters. When the Sears Tower (now the Willis Tower) was built, he transferred there and finished his career as a legal editor for Sears before retiring in 1985. Apathy has covered the country numerous times on his motorcycle and was an integral part of his son, Kirby’s, Nitro Harley race team.

— Chris Graham

Sergeant 1st Class Curtis G. Andrews

Curtis G. Andrews, a native of DeLand, was born the oldest of five to Mrs. Hazel Collier, he attended the local DeLand schools. A 1976 graduate of DeLand High, he played basketball and football during his senior year.

During his tenure in the armed forces, Andrews continued to operate in the field of communications, working for a variety of companies. BellSouth in Atlanta, Georgia; Sprint in Marietta, Georgia; Georgia and United States Logistics Command in Georgia; and finally United States Logistics Command in New Jersey.

Since his retirement from the military, Andrews continued to operate in the field of communicators, working for a variety of companies. BellSouth in Atlanta, Georgia; Sprint in Marietta, Georgia; Georgia and United States Logistics Command in Georgia; and finally United States Logistics Command in New Jersey.

Andrews currently resides in Deland and serves as the vice commander of American Legion Orange Baker Post 187 and a loyal servant to many of the senior citizens in the community. He has two lovely daughters: Cyrelle G. Andrews and Cyntrea G. Andrews.

Be sure to see these banners flying along Woodland Boulevard during July!