



Gold Coast Veterans Foundation
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

WWII Veteran Wins His Last Battle Just Before Passing at Age 97

Navy “Seabee” fought to end veteran homelessness, founded Veterans’ Village

Camarillo, CA January 19, 2021 – The Gold Coast Veterans Foundation sadly announces the passing of a great man, Bill Mors, who died on January the 16th, at the age of 97.

Bill Mors had already built the airfields that helped win World War II, as one of the Navy’s “Fighting Seabees”. He’d built a successful construction business, had a beloved wife and family, and a beautiful home in Ojai. Bill was a man of modest means, was an active member of his church, and had even learned to fly. On December the 11th, 2018 Bill visited the Gold Coast Veterans Foundation, a Camarillo military nonprofit that had just started a program to rescue veterans from homelessness, deal with its root causes, and actually repair broken lives.

“Bill came in and asked what we did for veterans,” says GCVF’s Executive Director Bob Harris, “and after every answer I gave him, he still asked ‘is that as far as you go?... is *that* as far as you go?’ “. Only after Harris described a bold new idea - to combine equal parts of housing, supportive services, and healing the wounds that make so many veterans homeless - was the old Seabee satisfied. At a point where most people would just quietly live out their days, Bill Mors went back into combat, to defeat homelessness and suffering for veterans.

“80 years ago, Bill went into battle with a rifle and a bulldozer.” says Harris; “This time he used a checkbook instead of a rifle, but his mind was that same unstoppable bulldozer; we couldn’t hardly keep up with him. He knew it was his last battle and he knew his time was getting short. He pushed us to move faster, push delays and obstacles aside, and build a place for veterans to live and heal, with no barriers, no requirements, and no BS.” Mors made a \$500,000 commitment in December of 2020 to begin the project, called Veterans’ Village.

Gold Coast Veterans Foundation already had Veterans Connection, a one-stop service center that became the leading regional nonprofit for veterans, helping them navigate complex VA benefits and file disability claims. They soon identified a critical need to help homeless veterans. This grew into the Mobile Veteran Outreach program, rescuing homeless veterans that other social service providers couldn’t engage or help. But finding decent low-income housing for these rescued veterans was next to impossible. Worse yet, “homeless shelters” and “housing projects” did little or nothing to fix the problems leading to homelessness, like PTSD and “moral injury”.

“Veterans’ Village creates the first truly comprehensive model of care for high risk veterans,” says Harris; “by combining housing, healing, veteran-specific services, and community resources - integrated into one model of care – we now have a method to end veteran homelessness. By putting his last year, his money, and his bulldozer personality into making sure it was all set into motion in his lifetime, this model will succeed and it will eventually be replicated across the nation. Bill Mors will be remembered as the man who defeated homelessness for American veterans.”

Harris adds; “They don’t call it the Greatest Generation for nothing. Our Navy Seabee and friend will be deeply missed”.

About Gold Coast Veterans Foundation – The leading non-profit serving veterans in Ventura County, GCVF provides a “one-stop” resource center connecting veterans with benefits and comprehensive care. Nine core in-house programs intervene to disrupt the root causes of suffering, homelessness and poor life outcomes. These include mobile veteran outreach, case management, health care, job training & placement, workforce development, low-income housing assistance, counseling, and wellness. GCVF remains open full-time as an ‘essential service’ to rescue veterans from homelessness during Covid-19. All services free of charge. <http://www.gcvf.org> (805) 482-6550