

New magazine honors veterans

MAGAZINE

BY CRAIG YOUNG REPORTER-HERALD STAFF WRITER

Loveland resident Brad Hoopes, who has spent a decade and a half preserving the stories of Northern Colorado veterans on video, has launched a magazine to keep veterans informed and to share some of those stories.

Hoopes published the first issue of Remember and Honor in March, and his June issue is just going to press.

He distributes 2,000 copies of the free 20-page glossy magazine to public locations around Northern Colorado. The magazine also is available for reading online at rememberandhonormagazine.com or through links at facebook.com/RememberandHonor.

The cover of each issue of Remember and Honor bears the tag line: "Mission: To Honor, Entertain & Inform NoCo Veterans."

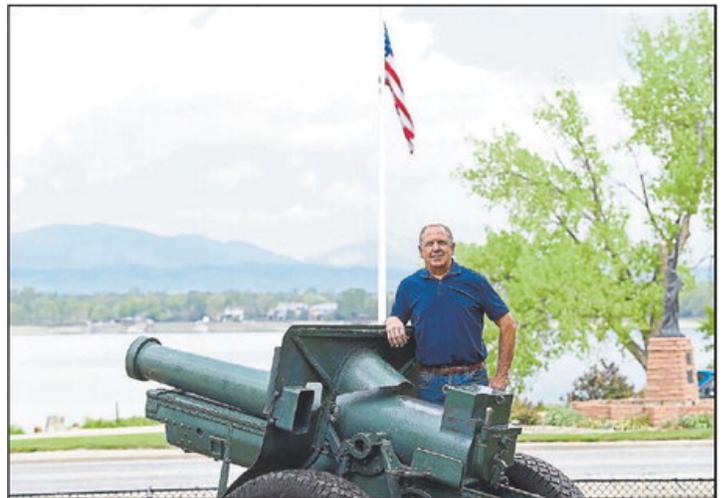
"It's a place for veterans to come and learn what's going on in the veteran community," Hoopes said. "I've been doing the (video) project for 13 years, I've heard hundreds and hundreds of stories, and I've met incredible people ... but there never has been a central location to collect all this information and share it." Each issue has feature stories about veterans Hoopes has interviewed, articles about events and organizations focused on veterans, a list of phone numbers for Veterans Administration clinics and other services, a calendar of upcoming events and a listing of veteran-owned businesses. The magazine carries advertisements from local businesses, and Hoopes said as the publication grows, he hopes it will become a source of income for him. He admitted that all the unpaid time he has poured into the video project has put him in a financial bind. "I'm trying to right my ship," he said.

"Sixteen years ago I read an article about how the Library of Congress was starting to collect stories of veterans. I thought, why not do it locally? I went out and bought a video camera and kind of got consumed by it," he said.

Morgan Library, the National World War II Museum in New Orleans and the Library of Congress.

"It was really a hobby to fulfill an interest in history. Then I got a call from the wife of a World War II veteran. She called me the day after the interview," he recalled. "She said, 'Last night was the first time in 60 years that he slept through the night.' "It hit me like a ton of bricks. We owe these people so much," he said. "I have an awe and respect for veterans."

In a column in the first issue of Remember and Honor, Hoopes told how he visited an Air Force recruiter after college but was told all the officer slots were filled at that time. He never ended up joining the military.



Brad Hoopes, of Loveland, poses Friday near the canon on which he used to play as a child at Dwayne Webster Veterans Park in Loveland. Hoopes has spent almost two decades recording the stories of World War II veterans before they're gone and now he has launched a magazine, Remember and Honor, to publicize news of interest to Northern Colorado veterans and to share those stories.

JENNY SPARKS / Loveland Reporter-Herald

Hoopes gives DVDs of the interviews to the veterans and their family members, many of whom have never heard the stories. And he sends copies to local museums and libraries, Colorado State University's

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"While I try to live life without regrets, never serving has always been a huge regret," he wrote.

Hoopes' father served in the Air Force, and "quite a collection of aunts and uncles and cousins" also are veterans, he said.

So he has taken his respect and appreciation for military veterans and turned it into involvement: He served on the board of the original Honor Flight Northern Colorado and the Veterans Plaza committee, helps with the effort to bring World War II bombers and fighters to Loveland each year, wrote a book, "Reflections of Our Gentle Warriors," does a monthly show on a Greeley radio station, wrote a column for the Reporter-Herald with the stories of World War II veterans and is involved in much more.

Norm Oliphant, a Navy veteran of World War II, had nothing but high praise for Hoopes.

Oliphant, who is almost 95, rediscovered art in his mid-80s and now sells his paintings. He said Hoopes helped arrange an exhibition of his work at desk chair workspace, which continues through the end of May.

"Brad has been magnificent," Oliphant said. "I just can't commend him enough. He's available anytime you want him. When you text him or email him, he gets right back to you. ... He's been a godsend to all of us."

Oliphant said he has been impressed with the new magazine.

"I've read some really good articles. I think it's extremely well done," he said.

Oliphant said Hoopes' help for veterans extends to all eras.

"It's not only the World War II veterans; he's helping all veterans," he said. "He doesn't care where you were or what you did. You were no better and no worse than anyone else if you served."

Hoopes said he feels honored to do what he can.

"You come across these incredible people," he said. "The kindly old gentleman walking down the street — you'd never imagine that he's a hero."

Brad Hoopes shows off some of the issues of a magazine he has launched, Remember and Honor, at Dwayne Webster Veterans Park in Loveland. Hoopes has spent almost two decades recording the stories of World War II veterans before they're gone and now he wants to publicize news of interest to Northern Colorado veterans and to share those stories in the magazine.

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