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**2015** Annual Report  
War Memorial Center





**VIP Tour:** WMC Executive Director Dave Drent with retired Admiral Michael Mullen, who served as 17th Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and retired Vice Admiral Dirk Debbink.



**9/11 Standing for the Fallen:** This first time event brought together first responders, members of the military and the community to remember for a 9/11 Tribute. 343 helmets held the names of those firefighters who died that day.



**Granite Bollards:** The new markers installed in front of WMC protect the building against traffic and honor our military history.



**WWII Veteran Lecture:** Author Gene Schulz gives a fascinating presentation about bearing witness to the first concentration camp uncovered during WWII.



**Honor Roll:** For the first time since the Vietnam War, names of Milwaukee County residents killed in action are added. 3,481 names are now listed.



**Korean War Posters:** Korean War veteran Ron Ziolecki checks out the new signage above the poster collection on the 4th floor.



**Gary G. Wetzel Medal of Honor Way:** Medal of Honor recipient & Vietnam veteran Gary Wetzel gathers with his family for the street renaming ceremony held in March.



**Latino Veterans Legacy of Valor Project:** WWII veteran Jesse Haro gets emotional after being named Latino Veteran of the Year at the second annual celebration.



**Veterans Story Project:** WWII nurse Pinky Behlen visits the WMC to be interviewed for the Veterans Story Project.



**9/11 Ceremony:** The Milwaukee Fire Department raises a flag between two ladders in tribute to those who died on 9/11.



**Doors Open MKE:** For the first time, WMC becomes a stop in the Doors Open MKE September event. More than 700 people visit during the weekend open house.



**USS Milwaukee:** WMC is a hub for many of the USS Milwaukee (LCS-5) christening festivities in November.

## Dear War Memorial Center Stakeholder: It's a new day at the War Memorial Center.

We began the year with construction in full swing on Veterans Courtyard thanks to the generous support of so many during phase I of our \$1.5 million Operation Renew campaign. On March 25, which is national Medal of Honor Day, we celebrated the renaming of the street in front of the War Memorial as *Gary G. Wetzel Medal of Honor Way*. The Vietnam veteran and Milwaukee County resident is one of only 79 living Medal of Honor recipients. A new granite marker and street sign will now stand in his honor at the WMC.

On May 29, 2015, a beautifully renovated Veterans Courtyard was rededicated and presented to the Milwaukee community. Citizens and businesses joined together to restore and renovate this iconic building for the community - both citizens and veterans alike. We thank the Bradley Foundation, the Rotary Club of Milwaukee, and Albert O. Nicholas for their significant contributions to make that day possible.

The renovated Veterans Courtyard has several new features: a stunning rebuilt Eternal Flame, granite Ring of Honor, courtyard flagpole and—for the first time since the Vietnam War— names were added to the Honor Roll. There are now 3,481 names of Milwaukee County residents killed in action engraved in granite around the Eternal Flame. A stunning reminder that freedom isn't free; and that we must tell the stories of those no longer able to speak for themselves. We owe them at least that much.

The War Memorial Board of Trustees saw major transition in 2015. In March, we accepted with regret the retirement of our Chairman of the Board, General Michael Berzowski, who carried us through our darkest and most difficult days. We thank him for his tireless service to WMC. In April, a new Executive Committee was sworn in with Peter Pochowski taking the lead as chairman.

Our annual 3rd of July Fireworks Dinner was a huge success with more than 1,500 people enjoying the best seats in the entire city. The expansion to Fitch Plaza allows us to

accommodate even more guests for this beloved event. September was an especially busy month. Our annual *Remember 9/11* schedule included a morning and a new evening ceremony. We also held our first annual War Memorial Golf Outing sponsored by The Stone on KK. For the first time, we participated in Doors Open Milwaukee which attracted more than 700 visitors to our open house over two days.

October brought us our first adult education program event featuring author/WWII veteran Eugene Schulz, a member of Patton's Army. In November, our Veterans Story Project was featured on Channel 10's MPTV. The advance showing of the video was presented at the WMC to many of those vets who were featured in the documentary. We closed the year as we always do with the Pearl Harbor Ceremony on December 7th. For the year we had 902 events and 133,000 visitors.

For 2016, our plans include more major renovation and new memorials dedicated to General Douglas MacArthur and our nation's POW/MIA's. We will also continue to build our educational programming. Our new education coordinator is working to develop and grow programs for students, scouts and adults. We will keep you posted as these exciting initiatives are accomplished (sign up for our e-newsletter!), but please visit us and see for yourself as we continue to grow as Milwaukee County's Cultural Center for Patriotism.

**This is YOUR War Memorial Center. Cherish it. Enjoy it. Support it.**



*Peter P. Pochowski*  
**Peter P. Pochowski**  
WMC Chairman of the Board

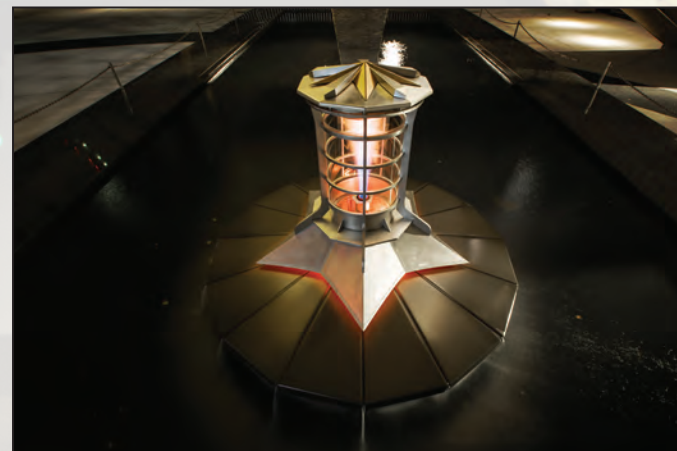


*David J. Drent*  
**David Drent, Executive Director**  
Milwaukee County War Memorial



**On May 29, 2015,** a beautifully renovated Veterans Courtyard was rededicated and presented to the Milwaukee community. Phase 1 of Operation Renew was a \$1.5 million project to restore & renew these sacred grounds.

**New Elements of Veterans Courtyard:**



**Eternal Flame:** The new Eternal Flame and waterfall stands over the most sacred area of the War Memorial. It honors the fallen 24 hours a day, 365 days a year reminding visitors that freedom is not free.



**Ring of Honor:** The new granite ring in Veterans Courtyard highlights all military conflicts where Americans have served. The circle represents our military's never ending commitment to protect our homeland and defend freedom.



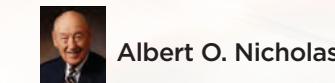
**Honor Roll:** Surrounding the Eternal Flame, etched in granite are the 3,481 names of Milwaukee county residents killed in action since WWII.



**Courtyard Flagpole:** Donated by the Albert O. Nicholas family, the new flagpole will be used for military events and memorial services. Gold Star Mother Janice Dahlke was the first to raise a flag during the rededication ceremony.

WATCH OUR VIDEO OF THE VETERANS COURTYARD REDEDICATION CEREMONY ON OUR YOUTUBE CHANNEL.

We gratefully acknowledge the following generous donors who supported Operation Renew in 2013-2015:



James B. & Lois R. Archer Charitable Foundation  
Baird Foundation  
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*“I am more than a fan.  
The War Memorial is my favorite  
Milwaukee building! Such a potent,  
poignant statement about war.”*

—*Tweet from M.L. Schumacher, Journal Sentinel Architecture Critic*

2015

## Friends of the War Memorial and General Donations

**We are grateful for the support of our programs and operations in 2015 from the following donors:**

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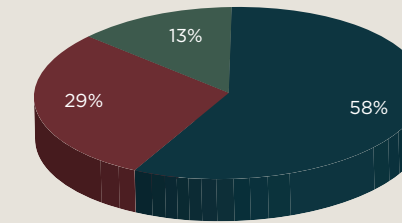
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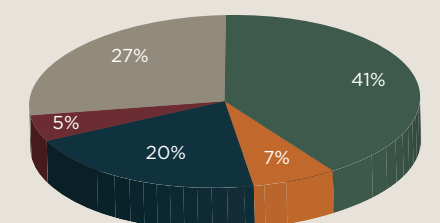
## Financial Statements

Revenue \$1,692,280



■ Earned Revenue, \$984,625  
■ County Support, \$486,000  
■ Grants, Donations, \$221,655

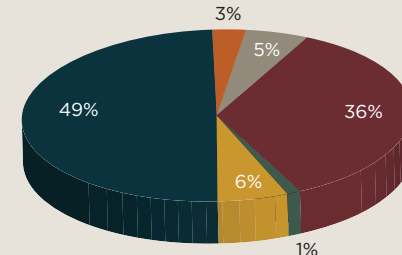
Expenses \$1,604,091



■ Personnel, \$650,887  
■ Professional Fees, \$106,647  
■ Facility, \$329,753  
■ Administrative and Advertising, \$80,684  
■ Programming and Capital Expenses, \$436,120

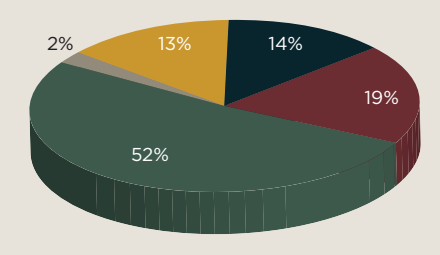
## Statistics

Attendance 132,724



■ War Memorial, 4,203  
■ Veteran, 7,034  
■ NonProfit, Civic, 46,942  
■ Corporate, 973  
■ Private, 8,422  
■ General Public, 65,150

# of Events 902



■ War Memorial, 125  
■ Veteran, 170  
■ NonProfit, Civic, 467  
■ Corporate, 17  
■ Private, 123

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# Vietnam War Commemoration: 50 Years Later

The Soundtrack of the Vietnam War  
Musical Event on Fitch Plaza

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

August 4, 2016

Save the date to meet the authors of  
***We Gotta Get Out of This Place***

Two UW-Madison professors explore how  
and why U.S. troops turned to music as  
a way of connecting to each other  
and the world back home.

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**Bill Christofferson**, *Retired*  
**Matthew J. Flynn**, *Quarles & Brady*  
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