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**Saluting The Fourth**

Marine Corps treat veterans at nursing home to holiday picnic

*Carie Canterbury  
The Daily Record*

FLORENCE — Hamburgers, hot dogs, watermelon and a warm, sunny day, made for the picture-perfect Fourth of July celebratory picnic at the Bruce McCandless Colorado State Veterans Nursing Home.

Residents were treated to a Fourth of July cookout for the second year in a row by the Royal Gorge Detachment 1318 Marine Corps League.

“These are our heroes,” said Will Perdue. “They need comradery and to know they have not been forgotten. Basically, we have adopted this veterans home, and we just want to help them.”

Several of the residents spent the early afternoon hours Sunday visiting and enjoying the food.

Facility residents Bob Crigger and Don Albrecht are two of the honored heroes who served in the military.

Crigger served in the Navy during the Korean War for four years, and Albrecht served in the Air Force 20 years, during World War II, the Korean War and the Vietnam War.

The men said they attended the picnic because of the beautiful weather and the holiday itself.

“I think it’s really great,” Crigger said about the Marine Corps’ cookout.

“Different members of the attachment come out fairly frequently just to visit the Marines who are here and the other guys who are here,” said adjutant Rona Vaughn. “They bring them magazines and visit, and we come out on the Fourth of the July for the barbecue and on Veteran’s Day to bring them cake from the Marine Corps Ball.”

Perdue said the residents are very appreciative any time they receive visits from those they can talk to that understand what they have been through. While they normally talk about a variety of topics, the common denominator of the visit is the military service, he said.

There are about 70 members and associate members of the detachment, which was chartered in 2008, Ron Bates said. The detachment collects Toys for Tots and also hosts an annual Marine Corps Ball.

Activity Director James Barrows said the facility is blessed with strong community support and appreciates the Marine Corps’ visits.

“I’m so thankful for what our groups do, especially the Marine Corps Leagues,” he said. “(The residents) see us all the time, so when they get other groups in, it is such an added bonus — end especially on the Fourth of July. What better way to spend it than with their fellow veterans. Good people, good food and good conversation; what more do you want.”

For more information on the Marine Corps League, or to view photos from past events, visit [www.royalgorgemcl.com](http://www.royalgorgemcl.com).

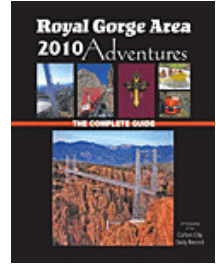
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Marine Corps League member Will Perdue visits with veterans Don Albrecht and Bob Crigger Sunday at the Fourth of July picnic at the Bruce McCandless Colorado State Veterans Nursing Home that was hosted by the MCL.

**Carie Canterbury/Daily Record**





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