

School Programs Honor US Veterans Of War

[By Nancy K. Crevier & Eliza Hallabek](#)

Middle Gate Elementary School

Students gathered in two separate assemblies at Middle Gate Elementary School in the afternoon on Friday.

During the first assembly, fourth grade teacher Linda Baron introduced a student run skit that answered the question, "What is a veteran?"

After the students, Eamon Doherty, Kelsey Pearson, Rebecca Alicea, and Kaitlyn Kantor, in the skit discussed what a veteran is, the actors came to the conclusion that everyone should say thank you to a veteran. The gathered students at the assembly and teachers joined in a loud "thank you" at the end of the skit.



Navy veteran and Bethel resident Skip Clapp spoke to Middle Gate Elementary School students on Friday, November 11, during an assembly for Veterans Day.

Ms Baron also oversaw the Veterans Day effort at the school.

This year, like last year, veterans were asked to attend the event to speak to students. Ms Baron introduced Bethel resident and veteran Skip Clapp to students during the assembly.

Mr Clapp said he was hoping other veterans would visit the school later in the afternoon to also visit with students.

Following the theme of the student performed skit, Mr Clapp said a veteran is many things.

"When we signed up, either when we were listed or we were drafted, it is common knowledge that we sign a blank check up to and including our lives if necessary," said Mr Clapp.

Mr Clapp also said that he learned Friday morning, before visiting Middle Gate, that 2.2 million Americans have died in military service since the Revolutionary War. He added that many more servicemen and women have returned home over the years with visible and invisible wounds.

Veterans organizations, like the American Legion and the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) organization, take on the charge of helping men and women who have returned home.

Mr Clapp served for 10 years, from 1959 to 1969, during the Vietnam War era but not in Vietnam. Post 100 American Legion and VFW 935

After speaking to the students, Mr Clapp invited students to ask him questions. One student wanted to know why he had signed up with the Navy.

Mr Clapp responded that his father was the reason he joined. His father was a career Navy man, he said, and Mr Clapp's first memory of his father was of him walking home in his uniform.

(excerpt from article)