



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Virginia War Memorial Foundation Directors Produce Hand Sanitizer for Veterans Care Center

Recently, the Sitter & Barfoot Veterans Care Center located on Broad Rock Blvd. in Richmond, VA, took delivery of 4 gallons of badly needed hand sanitizer. This particular sanitizer was manufactured and donated by the veteran-owned Vanguard Brewpub and Distillery in Hampton VA, and its delivery was made possible by a few special people and members of the Virginia War Memorial Foundation (VWMF) Board.

In response to Governor Northam's Executive Order 51 regarding COVID-19, Virginia ABC board issued an emergency order, authorizing Virginia distillers to manufacture and distribute alcohol-based sanitizer. The Vanguard Brewpub and Distillery in Hampton jumped at the opportunity and began sourcing ingredients specified by the World Health Organization recipe. After finding reliable supplies of hydrogen peroxide and glycerin, sourcing other materials that could be distilled into purified alcohol became the challenge. That's when VWMF Board member Kathy P. Owens, a partner at The Vanguard, reached out to fellow VWMF Board member Bob Archer, President of Blue Ridge Beverage Co., located in Salem with a request to acquire expired beer in order to distill it into alcohol for the sanitizer. Mr. Archer connected Ms. Owens with Ryland Thomas at Tri-Cities Beverage Co., in Newport News. Mr. Thomas was quick to identify more than 1,000 kegs of expired beer in his warehouse. Former Virginia War Memorial board member and Virginia State Senator Bill DeSteph was instrumental in working with Virginia ABC officials for an accelerated approval of the transfer and, within a week, The Vanguard was converting the expired product into purified alcohol for the sanitizer.

The Vanguard also provides direct-to-consumer sales of sanitizer in an array of various-sized spray bottles. Dollar Tree stores had the best quality and selection of sizes and the Vanguard staff spent weeks visiting local Dollar Trees, depleting their stocks. This somewhat inefficient procurement process resulted in sporadic availability to local consumers, hospitals, health care facilities, and first responders. Ms. Owens then reached out to her friend and U.S. Navy colleague, Bob Gantt, Vice President of Facilities and Special Projects at Dollar Tree. She pleaded Vanguard's case for a bulk purchase of bottles. Mr. Gantt immediately found a solution and was able to coordinate a bulk order with speedy fulfillment. The Vanguard now has a steady supply of spray sanitizer for the community, thanks to their friends at Dollar Tree.

In appreciation for their assistance in making this possible, The Vanguard donated four gallons of sanitizer to the Sitter & Barfoot Veterans Care Center, one each on behalf of Senator Bill DeSteph, Bob Archer, Tri-Cities Beverage Co., and Dollar Tree.

The Virginia War Memorial Foundation is a 501(c)(3) organization that provides private support to the Virginia War Memorial, a state agency established in 1956. This remarkable public/private partnership has provided funds for the documentary films, educational programs, exhibitions, teacher institutes, and veterans outreach which have positioned the Virginia War Memorial to be among the leading state war memorials.

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