

Clyde E. Lassen State Veterans Nursing Home

The Mission

On June 19, 1968, Lassen, then a 26-year-old [Lieutenant, junior grade](#) flying a [UH-2 Seasprite](#), embarked on a mission to recover two downed naval aviators whose plane had been shot down deep in [North Vietnamese](#) territory. Upon reaching the hilly terrain where the aviators were hiding, Lassen made several attempts to recover the aviators, but dense tree cover, enemy weapons fire and intermittent illumination frustrated his efforts. Lassen turned on the landing lights of the helicopter, despite the danger of revealing his position to the enemy. After the pilots made their

way to the helicopter and with his bullet-riddled helicopter dangerously low on fuel, Lassen evaded further [antiaircraft](#) fire before landing safely at sea on board a [guided missile destroyer](#) with only five minutes of fuel left in the helicopter's fuel lines. The account of the rescue was logged as a successful, routine search and rescue mission.

LT Lassen became the first naval aviator and fifth Navy man to be awarded the Medal of Honor for bravery in Vietnam. He remained in



the Navy for a career and retired in 1982 with the rank of [Commander](#), residing in [Pensacola, Florida](#) until his death in 1994. In 2001, a destroyer was commissioned and named after him: the [USS Lassen](#). An [SH-60 Seahawk](#) was painted to commemorate his actions.



Clyde E. Lassen State Veterans' Nursing held two major events in the month of November. The first was our Third Annual Black & White Ball. This is a more formal event in which many participants dress in black and white. The event is held in the courtyard which is lit by twinkling white lights and all decorations are all black and white. Finger foods were served and the much sought after band "Bread & Butter" from Jacksonville provided the spectacular dance music. Veterans, families and families danced the evening away!





The second big day for Clyde E. Lassen was Veterans' Day. We had many events in the days before and after, but the actual ceremony was held on Veterans' Day. A formal ceremony was held in the courtyard with many residents, staff, families and visitors in attendance. Students from Green Cove Springs Junior High School assisted in the celebration by reading letters written specifically to veterans. The keynote speaker was Brig. Gen. James Eifert Assistant Adjutant General-Air and Deputy Commander, Florida Air National Guard. After lunch of the same day The Elk's Lodge provided a hilariously entertaining USO type show for the residents and their families.



Abate Motorcycle Club Cookout



Creative Photography's 1940's pin up girls visit

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