

Veterans Council of St. Johns County, Inc. Minutes of December 28, 2017

Officers present: Chairman Bill Dudley, Vice Chairman Ray Quinn, Treasurer John Mountcastle, Secretary Michael Rothfeld
Chairman Dudley called the meeting to order at 1900 hours

Chairman Dudley led the Pledge to the Flag, **Vice Chairman Ray Quinn** gave the Invocation
Last month's **Minutes** were approved as read
The **Treasurer's Report** was approved as read

Introduction of Guests: Lynn Brannon, SSG Ben Watford

Speakers:

Lynn Brannon, Building Healthy Military Communities: Building healthy military communities is a multi year pilot that aims to better understand the unique challenges faced by geographically dispersed Service members and their families that may impact their readiness, resiliency, and well being. The FL State Coordinator is Lynn Brannon. Lynn.b.brannon.ctr@mail.mil

SSG Benjamin Watford, The Warriors Peer Group: This is a Church Ministry led by 2 time Purple Heart recipient and combat veteran Ben Watford. He offers peer counseling to combat veterans and works with them to reintegrate them back into society as productive citizens. He offers counseling for PTSD, substance abuse and mentorship through Christianity leading the veterans back to their loving family. He has a 24 hour Facebook page that is always ready to help veterans.

Facebook.com/Thewarriorspeergroup

Committee Reports:

Mac: Mrs Lambert, wife of veteran Ron Lambert needs help every other week. She needs someone to stay with Ron while she does food shopping. If you know anyone please contact Joe McDermott, 904-209-6160.
2017 was a big year averaging 15 new clients every month.

Ray Quinn: WAA was a great success, largest turnout in years. 1250 wreaths were placed in 10 minutes.
Nominations for the Annual COL Ed Taylor Award are now being accepted, deadline for name submission is Jan. 12, 2018

Steve Spickelmier: *WAA at Jax National Cemetery a huge success*, about 2500 in attendance. 12,000 wreaths were placed and all headstones covered.

MIAP: the next Honor Service is scheduled for Feb. 24, 2018.

Chairman Dudley: 2017 was a very successful, busy year for the Council and we will present a Year End Power Point summary at our February 22nd meeting.

All sites were looked at for the proposed new CBOC and informational meetings are scheduled.

Ron Birchall: January 13th is the Annual Military Ball, at the Mark Lance Armory. This is a formal event. This year honoring SGM Ray Quinn, USA (Ret). All proceeds will go to the Veterans Council to assist WAA, DAV, VTC and V4V.

John Leslie: Mentors are still needed for the Veterans Treatment Court. Jan. 18 the first two VTC veterans graduate.

Meeting adjourned at 8:07 pm.

The next meeting of the Veterans Council will be on **Thursday, January 25**, 7 pm in the Health & Human Services Building, 200 San Sebastian View.

Future speakers:

January 25, 2018- Mike Mitchell, Jacksonville University Veteran Students Coordinator

Alison Simpson, Historian FL National Guard

February 22, Leigh Devane, Traci Mansour, Lassen State Veterans Nursing Home

Chairman Dudley will speak about the Council's 2017 programs, projects, and events.

March 28, Laura Wynn, Curriculum Specialist, Secondary Social Studies, Advanced Academic Programs, SJC School District

April 26, Thomas Richardson, Asst Director, Veterans Employment & Training Service (VETS)

