

The Patriot Reader

VETERANS COUNCIL OF ST. JOHNS COUNTY

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Message from the Chairman



Fellow Veterans

I hope everyone participated in the many Memorial Day events that were held in the community. MOAA sponsored a massing of the colors at the St. Augustine National Cemetery and the Jacksonville National Cemetery Support Committee conducted a Memorial Day ceremony with keynote speaker, R/ADM Sinclair Harris. Both were outstanding events and paid the proper respect to all our fallen men and women who have served from all branches of service.

Several local churches conducted Sunday services honoring our fallen heroes but none as impressive as Turning Point at Calvary Church on SR 16. This is the 3rd year I have attended their service and I couldn't have been more impressed. Dr. Mark Conrad and his entire staff and church congregation did an outstanding job of honoring our veterans and military with patriotic music and paying tribute to our fallen heroes as well as those still with us. This is a church that knows how to express their appreciation for our Veterans.

Not to be forgotten is Liberty Pines Academy who again this year did an awesome job of remembering our Veterans with their school program on Friday, 24 May. Their program gets bigger each year and this year was the best yet. Starting with parading the colors each class from kindergarten through K-8 paid tribute to our Veterans through patriotic songs. Principal Judith Thayer and her entire teaching staff are to be commended on this year's Liberty Parade to honor our Veterans.

We have several not to miss events in June. On June 1st, the Navy League is hosting their Battle of Midway Commemorative Dinner at the Renaissance Hotel at World Golf Village. This is their 15th year of hosting this program. Last years attendance was over 850 and this years will equal or exceed last year. This is their signature event of the year and if you have never attended, you owe it to yourself to come out and be in the presence of some of our greatest heroes of WW II along with former POW's, Vietnam Vets, Wounded Warriors and Medal of Honor veterans. There is a featured article covering the Battle of Mid-

way later in this newsletter.

On June 30th, the 450th Military Commemoration Committee will dedicate 3 cannons at Oglethorpe Park in Davis Shores. The program will begin at 10:30 AM that morning. Principal speakers will be RADM. Sinclair Harris, Commander US Navy Southern Region and Fourth Fleet Commander and British RADM Tim Fraser, Royal Navy from CentCom, Tampa. This will be an event worth attending and long remembering.

Our Veterans Council continues to be one of the most active in the State of Florida. I encourage all Veterans to come and be a part of all that we are engaged in as we assert our voice for our Veterans needs.

*Bill Dudley
Chairman
Veterans Council of
St. Johns Co. Inc*



Special Points of Interest

- Celebrating the Army's 238th birthday
- Coquina Crossing Veterans Group
- SGM Ben Meggitt, US Army, ret
- 450 Military Commemorative Committee
- DAV Chapter 6, new Officers
- Military Museum of North Florida
- Tom Crawford, combat Marine
- Flag Day
- Sulzbacher Center
- Korean War Veterans Workshop

Clyde E. Lassen State Veterans Nursing Home

Patriotism is our motto



From the left: *Enjoying the Mother's Day tea hosted by the American Girls Troop; As part of National Nursing Home Week Clyde Lassen SVNH challenged Emory L. Bennett SVNH of Daytona Beach to a volleyball game; Enjoying the carnival, complete with dunking booth, during the courtyard carnival; After the volleyball game, Emory L Bennett SVNH challenged us to bingo and trivia on their turf.*



From the left: *The Navy band and a cook out closed out National Nursing Home Week and celebrated Armed Forces Day; Enjoying the Cook out; Memorial Day-FamilyWorship Center's Intergenerational performing group take a knee during the reading of the veterans who were memorialized during the program*

The Coquina Crossing Veterans Group was presented with a bell to use at our Memorial Day programs and to call our meetings to order every month. The bell was donated by Wendell and Joretta Anderson residents of Coquina Crossing and active in the Veterans group. The bell was purchased from a local antique dealer. Wendell or Andy as he would like to be called made the base for the bell. He commandeered some help to find medallions from all branches of the services to attach to the base. One medallion could not be found locally. Called to action was Wally Gries also a resident of Coquina Crossing and an active member in our group. Wally was a Merchant Marine during WW2. With the help of his spouse Margie and the internet they found one and it soon will be placed with honor on the base. Coquina Crossing has many Veterans from all branches of the service. The group is very active within its gates and outside of its gates. Members belong to many Veterans organizations within St. Johns County as well as National Veterans Organizations. Our group meets the sound Wednesday every month at 1900 hours. All are welcome to attend. We ask that you call ahead (George Milroy 824-9702) so we can get you in the gate.



Andy Anderson & Commander George Milroy



The Jacksonville National Cemetery

Greetings from the Support Committee at the Jacksonville National Cemetery!



Chairman Howard McGillin

Memorial Day at the Jacksonville National Cemetery

The Support Committee at the Jacksonville National Cemetery would like to thank the following members for their outstanding contributions to the Memorial Day Commemoration event - Ray Quinn, Program Coordinator, Joe Covella, Flags In Operation and General Logistical Support, Chaplain Hugus, the Jacksonville Ladies for all they do and as greeters on Memorial Day, Greg Whitney and the wonderful staff at the JNC, Navy Band Southeast, Color Guard and Firing Party coordinated by Dan Blackman, elected leadership, Sen. Nelson, Cong. Crenshaw, State Rep. Jones, City Councilman Redman, RADM Sinclair Harris (Keynote Speaker) and RADM Scorby.

Of course, Memorial Day is meaningless unless we remember the sacrifices of those who have gone before. "...that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion—that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain—that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom—and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth."



Photos by Sharan Bernier

Honoring Their Last Full Measure, by Michael Isam

St. Augustine, Fla, (May 27, 2013) – Prosthetic arms, prosthetic legs, heads in bandages, a face with a look that says “My lights are on, but I have temporarily left the building.” Such was the scene as groups of veterans, families, and others come to honor the lives of veterans who proudly served their country and given their last full measure.

At a time when 1 percent of the population is providing protection for a country of hundreds of millions, the famous words of Sir Winston Churchill, “Never have so many owed so much to so few,” ring crystal clear with truth. These words were repeated many times by guest speaker Brig. Gen. Robert M. Branyon. Branyon is chief of staff and commander of the Florida Air National Guard.

The words from Churchill refer to the time of July to October 1940 when Hitler sent his fighters and bombers to destroy England. “In one day, they sent 400 bombers and 600 fighters,” said Branyon. “Pilots were lucky to grab a few winks under a wing of their aircraft before returning to the skies to face the enemy once again.”

The unsung hero of the day was Jackie Ward, the signer for the hearing impaired. At times her hands were a blur as they moved in cadence with speeches. In the audience many eyes were intently focused on her as they ‘read’ the words. She stood the entire service, along with the color guards of many organizations, as honors and thanks were spoken for those finally safe from all harm.

Then there was the Ancient City Pipes and Drums with that familiar sound going back to the time when the mighty Roman Empire set foot in the Highlands of Scotland. Not quite the same as the naked wode-painted blue bodies running through the fog with bagpipes blaring and watching the one, and supposedly, only time the great Roman army turned tail and ran. But it was close.

This is not to be even remotely mistaken for the angelic voice of Faith Miller who sang the national anthem and lead everyone in “God Bless America” in the closing.

Many sets of eyes, including those of St. Johns County Commissioner Cyndi Stevenson, swept the crowd looking for friends. “I kept looking for Ben Meggitt,” she said. “I did not realize he had passed until I heard his name called during the “Salute to Veterans”. He was such a stalwart of veteran issues and I miss him, especially now.” She was not alone.

Meggitt was one of 127 veterans to pass since Veterans Day 2012. The names were read by Nancy Birchall and Deirdre Mountcastle. With the pronouncement of each name a ship bell was pealed by Cadet Micaela Heinrich of the Nease High School Naval JROTC.

Ray Quinn, Sgt. Major, Army National Guard of the United States (ARNGUS), retired, spoke of the black POW/MIA flag next to the podium. “Thousands of American soldiers, airmen, sailors, Marines and Coast Guardsmen remain missing in action,” said Quinn. “We should turn our thoughts to them, and their families.”

Quinn went on to speak of the memorial to fallen comrades located in front of the speaker podium. “This is a temporary marker,” said Quinn. “It says to all ‘Our comrade is here, Rest, comrade, rest’.” The marker contains a soldier’s tools; their boots, rifle with fixed bayonet, helmet, and “dog” tags to recognize them.

Watching as the last of the color guard units retired, followed by parade marshal George McCrea, CW4, USA, retired, the words of taps suddenly waxed poetic.

“Day is done, gone the sun,

From the hills, from the lake, from the sky.

All is well, safely rest, God is nigh.”



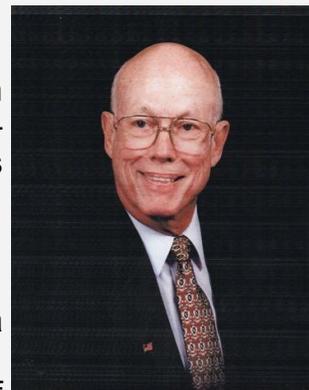
From top left: Guest speaker Brig. Gen. Robert M. Branyon, Chief of Staff and Commander, Florida Air National Guard; Jackie Ward, signer for the hearing impaired; Pealing a ship's bell to mark a veterans Last Full Measure of Devotion; Ancient City Pipes and Drums retiring the colors; George McCrea follows the color guard units - Retiring the Colors

Photos credit Michael Isam



Bill Montgomery, USMC, Jacksonville, FL

It was early 1944. WWII raged on, the end was not in sight. I was almost 18 years old and was anxious to finish high school, join the US Marines and fight the Japs in the Pacific.



So three days after high school graduation, I caught a train bound for Marine Corps Boot Camp in San Diego, California. After Boot Camp and after a couple of months at Marine Scout & Sniper School located in the mountains east of San Diego, I boarded a troop ship for Hawaii where the 5th Marine Division was based on the big island of Hawaii. There I was assigned to the Intelligence Section, 2nd Bn., 26th Marines, 5th Marine Division and joined a three man forward observer unit. Our job was to scout-out intelligence information on the enemy and otherwise serve as infantrymen.

A little more than a month later, the 5th Division boarded ships for a new combat operation-we didn't know where- but after a few days, we were advised we were to take Iwo Jima, a small volcanic island about 700 miles south of Tokyo, Japan.

Our outfit went ashore on Iwo Jima on February 19, 1945 and our few survivors and replacements left the island 37 days later. During these 37 days, 6800 Americans died, 19,000 were wounded. Nearly all of the 22,000 Japanese garrison died.

On February 23rd (D+4), the 26th and 27th Marines were moving north on the left part of the island. Elements of the 3rd Marine Division which had just come ashore, were on our right flank with the 4th Marine Division located on their right all the way to the eastern shore. The 28th Marines of the 5th Division was attacking Mt. Suribachi, the 556 foot high hump on the south end of the island.

Early that morning, we came under one of the most ferocious barrages of mortar and artillery, machine gun and rifle fire of the entire battle. Two of our three forward observer unit men were hit. I was the only survivor.

Around 10:00 that morning, I wondered how the 28th Marines were doing with their push to the top of Mt. Suribachi. I looked back at Suribachi and saw an American flag waving in the breeze on top. What a great sight! Nearby Marines started cheering and offshore ships started blowing their ships' whistles. Little did we know then that this carnage would continue for more than another month !

When things quieted down a bit later that afternoon, I was called back to Bn. Intelligence and assigned to be the Intelligence Scout for E (Easy) Company to replace the original Intelligence Scout who had been killed that day.

During the following month, many more of my buddies were killed or wounded. I went through dozens of near misses myself from rifle and machine gun fire, hand grenade attacks, mortar and artillery fire—yet I was never hit ! But almost worse than being hit yourself was when a close buddy was killed.



Brownie joined our company as a replacement around the second or third week of battle. Brownie was extremely nervous when bullets and shells came close although Brownie was courageous and did the job he was trained to do. The word was out that we would leave the island the next day, March 26th. So we were sent out on a final “clean-up” patrol.

I ran across Brownie and said, “Brownie, we may be leaving this rock tomorrow. It looks like you made it through.” He said, “Yeah, Monty, it looks like I made it.” A little while later, I heard two shots ring out. A Jap sniper! I went over to that area and saw that two men had been hit. Both were dead. I didn’t recognize the first but I did recognize the second. It was Brownie! He didn’t make it after all.

68 years later, I returned to Iwo Jima. I never intended to set foot on that evil island of death again. But I’m glad I did!

I traveled with the Military Historical Tours to Guam and Iwo Jima. This group goes to Guam and Iwo Jima yearly. Access to the island is highly restricted by the Japanese. There are no sleeping or meal facilities on Iwo except those for the Japanese maintenance people for the small airport. Therefore, we stayed eight days on Guam, 700 miles south of Iwo Jima and had one full day of activities on Iwo Jima.

Guam was retaken from Japan by the Marines in 1944 just six months before the Marines landed on Iwo. It is now a beautiful tropical resort island; and our stay and battleground tours on Guam were most enjoyable.

Our one full day on Iwo Jima was somewhat of an emotional tour of much of that ugly island and included ceremonies by Japanese diplomats and, of course, Marines.

My visit to Iwo Jima reminded me and the other 10 Iwo Jima vets on the tour, that our primary reason for visiting Iwo Jima again after all these years, was to honor the memories of the thousands of comrades we left behind.

*Bill Montgomery, Member, Jacksonville Semper Fidelis Society
Thank you to Bob Adelheim, Jacksonville Semper Fidelis Society for providing this article*

Matt Blakely participated in the landings and battles on the Island of Iwo Jima where he was the recipient of the Silver Star. Matt shared his experience with the Jacksonville Semper Fidelis Society and as is the case with many of his generation and those that have stepped up when others wouldn't or couldn't, he was reluctant and didn't think it was a big deal. We thought it was and finally convinced him to give us his story about his participation in the actions that have now become a part of Marine Corps history and legend. We hope you enjoy the article and keep in mind there are a lot of forgotten heroes amongst us who stepped up to made a difference and just simply returned to society with little or no recognition for their sacrifice or contribution. I guess this is our small way of going back and saying not only as Marines, but also as Americans, thank you! So, from all of us...Thanks, Matt and Semper Fi...The Marines and Corpsmen of the Semper Fidelis Society!



Reflection, a Remembrance: Iwo Jima 1945 Matt Blakely, Atlantic Beach, FL

In 1942, I was a civil engineer employed by Boeing Aircraft doing research work. Through an odd circumstance, I enlisted in the Navy and was cleared into the Office of Naval Intelligence. After 14 intense months at the US Navy Oriental Language School in Boulder, Colorado learning the Japanese language and being educated in their culture, I graduated and selected the Marines for intelligence service. After finishing the Basic School, aboard Quantico, I was commissioned a 2nd Lt and was immediately ordered to the FMF, 4th MarDiv on Hawaii.

My assignment to the 4th MarDiv was around the time the division was preparing for its fourth island invasion since being activated at Camp Pendleton only two and a half years earlier. I was assigned to the Division D-2 (later called G-2 in Marine lexicon) between operations. There were approximately 10 officer interpreters and half dozen enlisted linguists that practiced speaking, reading and translating radio broadcasts daily to maintain proficiency in the Japanese language. The enlisted personnel eventually were assigned to the RCT's (Regimental Combat Teams) during operations along with 2 officers. The remaining officers were assigned to the division to translate and interrogate. Those assigned to the RCT's were assigned to the S-2 where they would conduct prisoner snatches and conduct spot interrogations and forward the information up to division for additional analysis. Between operations some of us were ordered TAD on Hawaii for prisoner interrogation work at the POW installation. This duty was considered prized not only for the training experience, but also for the liberty associated with the area.

Operation "Detachment" and the 4th MarDiv involvement was soon underway for the assault on the Island of Iwo Jima by the 5th Amphibious Corps. D-Day came on February 19th, 1945. I hit the beach shortly after 0900 in the first wave with RCT 25. We encountered only sporadic resistance at the beginning; the Japanese were holding back major actions until the entire east landing beach became jammed with troops and equipment.

Shortly after the landing a top secret "red bordered" Japanese document was found by the RCT's S-2 and I was ordered to deliver the document to the division command back aboard ship for D-2 analysis. After commandeering a boat and getting aside the ship, I nearly didn't make it up to the ship's deck from the boat via the rope ladders. Climbing from the bouncing small landing craft with full combat gear and weapons I became exhausted, but was gratefully dragged over the ship's rail by two very helpful and welcomed sailors. I delivered the captured document and prepared to return to the beach. I was probably



the only Marine to make 2 landings on Iwo before noon on D-Day.

The conquest of this sulfur island was made extremely costly for the Marines by the Japanese defenders. The defenders had the advantage in terms of assets, manpower, armored equipment, artillery and supplies. Iwo was an island fortress with a determined enemy and heavy resistance was underway by mid morning. I was with the 4th MarDiv, RCT 25 at Blue Beach 2. The 4th was the northern most unit of the attacking force of the 5th and 4th Divisions with the 3rd in reserve. Blue Beach 2 was directly under enfilade fire from the rock quarry cliff area. The going was rough.

The defenders were determined and had previously dug in and set up in preparation for the coming invasion. They had pre-registered targets and established fields of fire covering every square meter of the island. The Japanese fire was deadly, right on and highly accurate, except for 320MM Spigot Mortars that floated through the air and with a demoralizing affect.

The advancing off the beach to take the high ground was terribly slow, but the 4th Division was able to proceed inland wheeling to the north than to the east through the territory of Japanese 2nd Mixed Brigade. For 25 days until March 16th, officer and enlisted Marine interpreters handled the translator and interrogation duties involving the few captured Japanese, translation of documents and analysis of maps.

Prisoners remained the best source of intel and a Japanese officer was the “cream”, but they were scare. Documents were fairly plentiful, but did not provide the level of intel needed. One day melted into another with varying successes in intelligence gathering that started to provide greater value. Continuous scouting and patrolling for any intel assets was the order of the day. RCT 25 Commanding Officer, Col, Lanigan, was especially intel conscious and encouraged aggressive actions. During these actions, we encountered areas of stubborn defense held by fanatically dedicated Japanese defenders. Some of these actions are now part of Marine Corps History and fill the annals of epic battles – Hill 382, Turkey Knob, The Amphitheater, The Meat Grinder and Charlie Dog Ridge.

We got a prisoner here and a prisoner there and after interrogation would cross checked the information against their comrades. In an atmosphere of deadly combat, we continually tried to affect a live capture. The intelligence we gathered for the infantry units was eventually extended to include the air, artillery and armor assets. Intel demand increased.

We conducted these intelligence operations under the continual and deadly mortar, rocket, artillery, grenade and sniper fire; suicide attempts and booby traps were always present, but the intelligence gathering was vital.

I had civil engineering training in land surveying and map making that became useful in developing the use of enemy maps. The maps the Marines used were developed from aerial recon photos which hardly defined the true topography in any detail. The terrain in the north and parts of the east were made up of a high plateau with a myriad of alley ways or corridors formed by the deep crevices in the rocky heights. Man-made inter-connecting tunnels with cave openings were everywhere and armed with every possible type of weapon. Captured Japanese maps were detailed and up to date; interpreting from these Japanese contour maps eventually allowed our troops to more easily, locate and identify positions and possible enemy defensive locations.

I witnessed exceptional and extraordinary acts of selflessness and courage on the part of Marines and Corpsmen throughout the agonizingly and exhaustingly slow progress of the division. We were able to take ground and proceeded to wheel right to the east coast of the island to defeat Japanese troops who were diabolically concealed and highly effective.

For three days starting on March 13th, the 4th Division was held at a standstill by a final “last ditch” effort of the Japanese. We were unable penetrate and advance. On the 15th, while in enemy territory searching for possible prisoners or material information, I was able to convince 2 Japanese officers to “give up” despite their decision to commit seppuku in the Samurai way. As a result, they eventually supplied the information we needed to finish off the Japanese 2nd Mixed Brigade. Mop-up actions followed to the east coast through the 16th. I was eventually cited for this action.

The 4th MarDiv boarded sea transport back to Hawaii. VJ Day came in August after the Okinawa success and this interpreter headed north to China for duty with 3/7/1.

In retrospect, a remembrance - As Dwight D. Eisenhower so aptly said regarding personal military honors, “Humility must always be a portion of any man who receives acclaim earned in the blood of his followers and the sacrifice of his friends.” It was the Brotherhood of Marines that contributed to our success and continues to contribute to the success of the Marine Corps. There is no room in Marine lexicon for the pronoun “I”; the Marines are and have always been about “WE”...The Team!

CITATION:

“For Conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action against the enemy on Iwo Jima, VOLCANO ISLANDS, on 15 March, 1945. First Lieutenant Blakely was given the task of going ahead of friendly lines and into enemy territory to accomplish a particularly hazardous mission. While under heavy enemy fire from mortars, rockets and grenades, he operated with complete disregard for his own safety. Through his heroic efforts, the further movement of friendly troops in the pockets of resistance was facilitated. His courage and conduct throughout were in keeping with the highest traditions of the untied stated naval service”

H.M. Smith LtGen USMC

Thank you to Bob Adelheim, Jacksonville Semper Fidelis Society for providing this article

Reuben Meggitt, SGM, US Army ret.

On Friday, May 17th, I went to a funeral service at the Jacksonville National Cemetery. It was for someone I honored and respected a great deal.



Ben Meggitt was all soldier, dedicated to helping all who hon-

orably served this great country. Ben was a former Chairman of the Veterans Council of St. Johns County and in that position he chose me to represent the County Veterans on a committee for a National Cemetery that was being planned in Jacksonville. I was honored that Ben selected and entrusted me to represent the veterans of St. Johns County as I have never served in the military. I strived every day to make Ben proud of his selection and he told me many times that I was doing well. I always thanked him. I will miss Ben as will many others, he was someone to look up to and emulate. Michael





The 450th Military Commemoration Committee* inaugurates its legacy site program:

Dedication of British colonial period cannons in Oglethorpe Park.

Col Rik Erkelens is leading a cannon project for the 450th Military Commemoration Committee. This project, in cooperation with the city of St Augustine, will provide and install replicas of British mid-1700 period cannons in Oglethorpe Park on Davis Shores, Sunday, 30 June at 10:30. The current monument and plaque at the park mark the site of James Oglethorpe's 30-day siege of St Augustine in 1740. Under siege for over a month in 1740,



Current site



the city with its Castillo, garrison and cannon was able to repel a much larger and stronger

force. The installation of these 3 replicas will provide a physical representation of the military protection of the city from the British attacking force in the Oglethorpe Park area, thus supporting the committee's vision: "To establish St Augustine as the premier destination for learning about the vital role of the military, as demonstrated by 450 years of continuous protection of our city, our state and our nation." Although a current monument exists, there is little indication that a major battle was fought in that area for the survival of St Augustine. The cannons in Oglethorpe Park, together with the existing monument and plaques will strengthen the historical importance of the park in the city and support our vision.

Our military committee is preparing this project in coordination with the St Augustine North Davis Shores (SANDS) group, a city recognized neighborhood. Together with SANDS our committee has funded the major costs of acquiring the three cannons. The city will provide concrete bases and simulated concrete mount carriages and install the cannons. The city commission approved the project at its 11 March, 2013 meeting. The approval included the committee's plan to conduct a military signature event on 30 June to dedicate installation of the cannons. This event will observe the British period and also provide an event as part of the 500th anniversary of the state of Florida. Once the project is complete, the committee will turn over the purchased cannons to the city to keep painted over the years.

*About the 450th Military Commemoration Committee

The 450th is a organization of former military and non-military volunteers with the common goal of carrying out our Vision: **"To establish St Augustine as the premier destination for learning about the vital role of the military, as demonstrated by 450 years of continuous protection of our city, our state and our nation"** The dedication of the three British period cannons in St. Augustine's Oglethorpe Park at Davis shores described above is the first of a number of its "legacy" sites and projects which are in planning or underway. We urge and welcome your support of this event, Sunday, 30 June at 10:30.

The committee is in need of volunteers who are able and willing to assist with its general public relations work in a variety of ways. Such as developing a data base mailing list and helping to document and publicize the committee's activities and sponsored events. If you are interested in joining this exciting endeavor, contact Ted Pappas email address papp6047@bellsouth.net, Subject Line 450 Volunteers.



THE BATTLE OF MIDWAY COMMEMORATIVE DINNER



ADM William E. Gortney

Ticket Information

Ticket costs are:

Active Duty E-6 and below, \$25;
E-7 to 03, \$35,
04 to 05, \$45,
06 and above,
civilians, and retirees, \$65.

Tickets available from the following-

NAVY LEAGUE MAYPORT

POC Bob Price
Phone (904)246-9982
E-mail - bpricex4@comcast.net

NAVY LEAGUE ST AUGUSTINE

POC Bill Dudley,
Phone (904)806-4712
E-mail - anuday00@aol.com

Make Checks payable to
NAVY LEAGUE MIDWAY DINNER

P.O. Box 331944
Atlantic Beach, FL 32233-1944

Tickets also available thru our WEB SITE
www.midwaydinner.org

Uniform will be 04 and above -
dinner dress white jacket;
03 and below - dinner dress white/dinner
dress white jacket optional
and civilian is black tie or business attire.

Special Hotel Rates for Battle of Midway

Rooms are available from the hotel -
The Renaissance Resort
at World Golf Village

Special Room Rate - \$79.00
(includes 2 breakfast vouchers)
This special rate good until May 9th only
Suites also available for \$109.00

YOU MUST INCLUDE
"2013 Battle of Midway"
to receive this discounted rate

Hotel reservations must be made
By calling
Phone 1-888-789-3090
Monday thru Friday 8 a.m. to 9 p.m.



Battle of Midway Commemorative Dinner

Keynote Speaker

Admiral William E. Gortney, USN
Commander
U.S. Fleet Forces Command

Event will be held at
The Renaissance Resort at
World Golf Village.
Cocktails begin at 6 PM
Dinner at 7 PM.
Reserved seating.
Hosted by
The Mayport Council
Navy League
of the United States
June 1, 2013

And you are invited!
Tickets are now on sale

A Short History of the Battle of Midway

4-7 June 1942

The Battle of Midway, fought over and near the tiny U.S. mid-Pacific base at Midway atoll, represents the strategic high water mark of Japan's Pacific Ocean war. Prior to this action, Japan possessed general naval superiority over the United States and could usually choose where and when to attack. After Midway, the two opposing fleets were essentially equals, and the United States soon took the offensive.

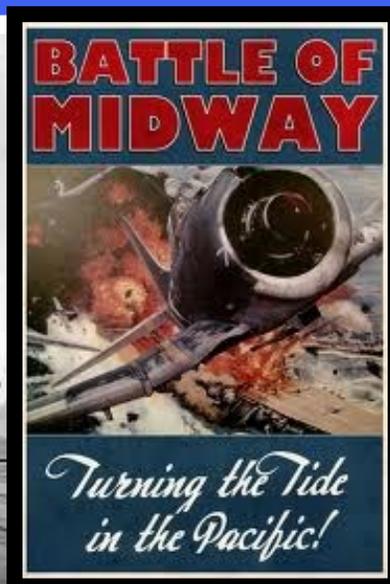
Japanese Combined Fleet commander Admiral Isoroku Yamamoto moved on Midway in an effort to draw out and destroy the U.S. Pacific Fleet's aircraft carrier striking forces, which had embarrassed the Japanese Navy in the mid-April Doolittle Raid on Japan's home islands and at the Battle of Coral Sea in early May. He planned to quickly knock down Midway's defenses, follow up with an invasion of the atoll's two small islands and establish a Japanese air base there. He expected the U.S. carriers to come out and fight, but to arrive too late to save Midway and in insufficient strength to avoid defeat by his own well-tested carrier air power.

Yamamoto's intended surprise was thwarted by superior American communications intelligence, which deduced his scheme well before battle was joined. This allowed Admiral Chester W. Nimitz, the U.S. Pacific Fleet commander, to establish an ambush by having his carriers ready and waiting for the Japanese. On 4 June 1942, in the second of the Pacific War's great carrier battles, the trap was sprung. The perseverance, sacrifice and skill of U.S. Navy aviators, plus a great deal of good luck on the American side, cost Japan four irreplaceable fleet carriers, while only one of the three U.S. carriers present was lost. The base at Midway, though damaged by Japanese air attack, remained operational and later became a vital component in the American trans-Pacific offensive.

Visit our Web Site at <http://www.midwaydinner.org/>
for photos and more information



Photo # 80-G-312018 On board USS Yorktown after she was hit by dive bombers





Bozard Ford Lincoln Salutes our Military!

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*This incentive is in addition to current offers.



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The VA Claims Backlog; Up-close and Personal, By Michael Isam



St. Augustine, Fla. (May 10, 2013) – “The building housing the backlog processing team was closed. There were so many files stored; the floor was buckling under the weight.”

Kris Braddock, speaking to the Veterans Council of St. Johns County, is a Leadership Fellow for the Iraq Afghanistan Veterans of America (IAVA) at the University of North Florida. Braddock, USAF Retired, is one of those caught up in the VA Claims Backlog. What caused him to be caught up in the backlog? “The VA Medical Center (VAMC) in Gainesville, FL lost my medical records; twice,” said Braddock. “Every time I go to the copy center to make a copy, I think their stock rises a couple of points.”

Adding to his lost records dilemma is having to go down the same road with medical personnel as all they can see is a diagnosis of sleep apnea which has been determined to be incorrect. “My files, the ones they lost, show I have narcolepsy,” said Braddock. Narcolepsy, according to the Mayo Clinic and other sources, is ‘a neurological disorder caused by the brain's inability to regulate sleep-wake cycles normally’.

“Traumatic Brain Injury, or TBI, seems to be the root cause of my physical dilemmas. TBI rewires the brain sometimes to the point of not knowing who I am or where I am,” says Braddock.

Braddock was fortunate to participate in the “Storming of Capitol Hill” by the IAVA along with a myriad of other Veteran organizations. “I stayed in Florida providing blogging and assorted internet postings as that is my area of expertise,” said Braddock. “It was an illuminating experience to be able to report on the reactions of senators and representatives, which were favorable and supportive of the issues of veterans, especially on the backlog.”

Braddock is not alone. Anytime a group of veterans get together the conversation eventually comes to the VA and the claims issues. Lost records, inability to make a decision based on the evidence at hand, sometimes having to prove that the veteran was actually at the place where they said they were. The latter is often a matter of finding a person who was at the same place at the same time to obtain corroboration of the evidence. Finding those people is, at times, a massive undertaking. In some cases, the location has been determined only to discover the person died before contact could be made.

In press releases from the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) a point is made to a plan to process the 250,000 claims that are one year or older within the next six months. However, that information was challenged by a Veteran Service Officer who stated that it should read two years, not one. In VBA Letter 20-13-05 obtained online at Scribd, an online digital library, the language changes to be more precise. “The intent of this initiative is to work all claims pending for more than two years within 60 days from the date of this letter, April 19, 2013. This guidance applies to claims received on or before July 1, 2011.”

Included in the letter is the caveat “this does not affect those claims which already require priority processing, (Homeless, Terminally Ill, Medal of Honor Recipients, former POW’s and fully developed claims).”

Now comes another kink in the process, With so much emphasis placed on the backlog in the VA claims processing, it appears his claim, and many thousands of others, may not receive attention for awhile.

Many veterans have mixed emotions about the entire process. While they are glad to see the backlog addressed, this means their claim goes on hold for at least 60 more days which brings to mind the term “Catch-22” coined by Joseph Heller in his novel of the same name.



photo by Michael Isam:
Kris Braddock, IAVA Fellow,
addresses Veterans Council
members regarding Iraq and
Afghanistan Veterans of America
activities.

This internet article is about Korean War veteran and St. Augustine resident John Leahy



BROOKLYN, N.Y. – The year 1953 brought an uneasy truce to the Korean peninsula, leaving North and South Korea divided and wary of each other to this day. More than 50,000 American military personnel died in the three-year war, along with more than 2 million others. Twenty-eight of these American fatalities were Irish nationals.

Sandwiched between World War II and the Vietnam War, less exalted than the former and less controversial than the latter, the so-called Korean Conflict gained a reputation in the West as "The Forgotten War." And those who fought it have had to scrap to gain the recognition that their sacrifices deserved, including American citizenship for the foreign born.

Hundreds of Irish-born immigrants filled the ranks of the 500,000 U.S. military personnel serving in Korea, fighting under the United Nations flag with forces of 16 other nations. Upon their return, just like all other immigrants then, they had to wait a mandated five years before becoming eligible for U.S. citizenship.

1953's Public Law 86, though, cut a break for those immigrants who would serve in the regular U.S. military. Going forward, they wouldn't need to serve in a declared war nor have to wait the statutory five years, only between 90 and 180 days.

However, the new law did not include a grandfather clause, nor include reservists, so the war's Irish GIs had to wait for the old requirements to be met, and the dead had to wait for John Leahy. On Oct. 14, a resplendent and warm day, a monument was unveiled in honor of the 28, and Korean War veteran Leahy had a chance to consider anew his accomplishment and that of his allies, the granting in 2003 of U.S. citizenship to the 28.

Many of those who helped were among the 250 people gathered under a powder blue sky at Green-Wood Cemetery, in New York City's borough of Brooklyn, founded in 1838 and among the most beautiful and historic cemeteries in the world. Leahy, a native of Lixnaw, County Kerry, was one of several speakers at the unveiling of the two-ton, gray granite slab that bears the names of the 28, along with a Celtic cross and epigraph.

Leahy told the throng: "Today is possibly the proudest day of my life. ... These 28, just after crossing home plate, they're now in a beautiful clubhouse and have a monument of their own." He went on to eulogize his fallen comrades, while noting that the memorial is about 60 feet from the final resting place of Matilda Tone, widow of Theobald Wolfe Tone, an enduring symbol of Irish republicanism.



Leahy, a sergeant with the 82nd Anti-Aircraft Artillery Battalion during the war, pushed for 27 years to gain citizenship for his fallen comrades. He had received a citation for capturing a spy in Korea, and chuckled dryly when reflecting on the impact of his immigrant status then: "I got a citation for catching a spy and couldn't get (work in) the Post Office upon coming back!"



DAV Chapter 6 Installs New Officers

By Michael Isam

St. Augustine, Fla, (May 25, 2013) – A new year started for Disabled American Veterans (DAV) Chapter 6 with the installation of officers.

The clubhouse of the St. Augustine South Improvement Association was the setting for the election and installation of officers for 2013-2014.

Running unopposed were A. J. Sartin, Commander; Judy Davis, Sr. Vice Commander; Shawn Prentiss, Jr. Vice Commander and Art DuBois Treasurer/Adjutant. Also installed were William Tatel as Chaplain and Joe McDermott as Officer of the Day.



l-r Shawn Prentiss, A. J. Sartin, Judy Davis, Art DuBois (seated), William Tatel, Joe McDermottt: Photo by Michael Isam

“Our chapter does much behind the scenes,” said Sartin. “Through our ‘Forget-Me-Not’ campaign, we generate monies to help veterans in distress. This can be anything thing from a tank of gas to get to the next destination for work or to help buy food for their family.” “We donate food and clothing, gather stamps to assist in rehab of veterans, dimes for vets, and we donate socks for veterans in nursing homes, as part of care packages for our service members in harms way and for the ‘Homeless Veteran Stand-down’ which will be coming in August at the Elks Lodge on the island.”

“Our main focus locally is to purchase a van to transport our veterans to appointments at the VA Medical Center in Gainesville,” said Sartin. “Without that van, vital appointments would have to be cancelled. MRI’s, Cat-scans, neurology, prosthetics and other vital services would go unused.” “When you consider that the van runs 5 days per week transporting up to 11 veterans per day, the nearly 80 miles one-way trips add up quickly. It does not take long to get to the 200,000 mile mark.”

“A campaign seeking donations will be underway shortly,” said Sartin. “The cost of vans purchased through a special program of the National DAV increases about \$2000.00 per year. Our last one was a little over \$27,000.00.” Sartin added, “An equally equipped van purchased off the show room floor is more than double that price.”

“We want to take this opportunity to thank the St. Augustine South Improvement Association,” said Sartin, “for their generous support over the years in providing us a place to meet.”

To find out more about the chapter and membership, visit their website at:

<http://www.davfl6.org/>.



Liberty Pines Academy Students Honor Veterans

By Michael Isam: St. Augustine, Fla, (May 25, 2013)

All through the presentation battle hardened veterans quietly wiped tears from their eyes and searched pockets frantically for tissues or handkerchiefs.

Many of the vets asked not to be identified. “Since my return from ‘Nam,” said a grizzled veteran, “Nobody got inside my shell, nobody; Until today.” “I withstood many things during and after the war, most unspeakable.” “But when I looked out on that sea of innocence looking directly at me and straight into my heart...” He turned and left without finishing.

Each class from first grade through sixth marched in and sang to the veterans. ‘It’s a Grand Old Flag’, ‘This Land is Made for You and Me’ and more, each with their own choreography. Cell phones, small digital cameras, and cameras bearing large telescope lens popped out from all over as proud moms and dads recorded for posterity their children’s deeds.

As the school band played the theme of each branch of service, members of that branch stood in honor. Each branch received a rousing round of applause. It was clear in many cases this recognition from the children touched the hearts of the veterans as they wiped tears from their eyes.

The finale of the presentation, ‘Proud To Be An American’ by recording artist Lee Greenwood, brought down the house. By the second round of the chorus the audience was singing back to the students and it was not quite clear who was the happiest. Although it was not a contest, the clear winners were the veterans.

After the presentation, the children rushed to veterans to thank them for their service. Lots of handshakes, salutes were exchanged, but there many hugs given and received as well.

Bill Dudley, Chairman of the Veterans Council of St. Johns County, expressed what all were feeling. “This annual event really warms my heart. The outpouring of respect from the children and the teachers is incredible. It is one thing to get recognition from our older generations, the ones people my age look up to, but to receive it from children the age of some veterans great-grand children brings pride in our nation to the forefront.” “I applaud the teachers of these children, of Liberty Pines Academy, for helping keep the dream alive.

A Vietnam veteran summed it all up, “Cecil B. DeMille, eat your heart out. You could learn a lot from these kids.”



ROTC Color Guard



Marine Corps League
Color Guard



Mario Patrino, WWII 101st Airborne “Screaming Eagle” and his lovely bride, Ruth



Questions, handshakes and hugs for an Air Force Sr. Master Sergeant



Grades 1 to 6 of Liberty Pines Academy express their thanks to St. Johns County Veterans



The Last Angel: Mildred Dalton Manning

by Alice A. Booher

Re-printed in its entirety with permission of the author and publisher.
Millie Dalton lived more than 40 years in Jacksonville.

There are angels in nearly every theology, specific versions like Gabriel and generic types like Seraphim. But perhaps the most beloved Angels are those Army and Navy women, captured in the Pacific theater in WWII, named by their fellow prisoners as the “Angels of Bataan and Corregidor”. They started out as nearly 100 strong; as of March 8, 2013, there are none.

Mildred Jeannette (known as Millie) Dalton was the only daughter of Jesse B. Dalton and Flossie Bernice Dooly, born July 11, 1914 on a farm near Winder, Barrow County, GA. She lived with grandparents in Jefferson before graduating in 1932 from The Marin Institute. At age 16, she won an essay contest sponsored by a newspaper columnist; the prize was a trip to the mountains of NC. The columnist loaned her money, which she paid back, to study at Grady Memorial Hospital School of Nursing in Atlanta, GA. She served for 2 years as head surgical nurse and then at Forts McPherson and Benning. Her goal was to see the world, but as Millie told The Courier News of Bridgewater, NJ, “what I saw was a prison camp”.

Joining the Army in September 1939, she arrived in the Philippines weeks before Pearl Harbor. She recalled she was in a store to be measured for riding boots when she heard and by the time she got back to Clark Field, it too was being bombed. Casualties mounted; the nurses were sent to Bataan to set up 4 hospitals (per fellow POW Josie Nesbit’s report, Manning was evacuated from Manila from Sternberg to Ft. Mills Corregidor). A 2nd LT when captured (1st LT when released), she spent May 1942 to February 1945 in Santo Tomas; 5’6" tall, 130 pounds at capture, she lost 15 as a POW. She rarely discussed the horrors of captivity but made exceptions for the Atlanta Journal-Constitution in 2001 and Jacksonville Times Union in 2004, saying that she feared crowds and dark places after the tunnels of Corregidor, and built extra shelves in her home to store staples for fear of running out of food, (hording her son remembered in The Quan in January-February 2002). Millie saved the two vials of morphine given the Angels by the chief nurse to commit suicide if their treatment became unbearable.



Millie returned CONUS suffering the residuals of beriberi, dengue fever and malnutrition, and soon lost all of her teeth. She was delegated to speak at war bond drives, including at a plant in Marietta, GA; Arthur Brewster (Bruce) Manning was the Atlanta Constitution reporter assigned to go with her. They married in December 1945; she became mother to Bruce’s then 3 year old daughter March (Price who married James Huey, of Marietta, GA). Bruce became the women’s editor, managing editor and ombudsman for the Times-Union, moving from Atlanta to Jacksonville in the 1950’s, and living there for 40 years until moving to Trenton. She and

Bruce had two sons, William (Bill) D., a scholar and renowned artist (and his wife Deborah K. Benz of Austell, GA); and James B. (and his wife Sandra K, both attorneys of Trenton, NJ). Bruce died in 1994; Bill died in February 2006.

Millie suffered respiratory problems for decades, unable to join with the other remaining POW women in March 1992 in Washington, D.C. when her COPD flared up, but was always gracious, funny, articulate and caring. In 2004, she was asked about integration of women into the military and said “More power to ‘em”. She had broken a hip and had various ailments, but lived alone and drove short distances in her tomato-red compact car with vanity plate “EX-POW RN”; she admitted she thought hard before buying it, a Japanese Toyota Corolla.

In the Fall of 2012, she was interviewed for the Frank Martin/ Ron Howard PBS production, *Unsung Heroes*, to be shown in November 2013, oxygen cannula in place, wearing a bright red blazer and matching red lipstick.

Millie died at Hopewell, NJ of pneumonia on March 8, 2013; she would have been 99 in July. Burial with full honors was on 15 March 2013 at the Washington Crossing Veterans Cemetery in Newtown, PA.

George Elliot wrote “The golden moments in the stream of life rush past us and we see nothing but sand; the angels come to visit and we only know them when they are gone”. These special Angels are now all gone.



The Military Museum of North Florida is a non profit organization dedicated the honoring those men and women that have served their country in the armed forces via artifacts, displays and military memorabilia. Admission is free but donations are welcome.

The museum is located on Rt 16 in Green Cove Springs Fl 1 1/2 miles East of US 17 and 1 1/2 miles West of the Shands Bridge.

The Museums' hours are: 10:00 to 3:00 Thursday through Saturday and 12:00 to 4:00 on Sundays.

Call (904) 584-8719 for more infrmation

Herb Steigelman, Curator

A Poem Worth Reading

submitted by Gail Williams, Chairwoman, Jacksonville
Ladies

He was getting old and paunchy
And his hair was falling fast,
And he sat around the Legion,
Telling stories of the past.

Of a war that he once fought in
And the deeds that he had done,
In his exploits with his buddies;
They were heroes, every one.

And 'tho sometimes to his neighbors
His tales became a joke,
All his buddies listened quietly
For they knew where of he spoke.

But we'll hear his tales no longer,
For ol' Joe has passed away,
And the world's a little poorer
For a Soldier died today.

He won't be mourned by many,
Just his children and his wife.
For he lived an ordinary,
Very quiet sort of life.

He held a job and raised a family,
Going quietly on his way;
And the world won't note his passing,
'Tho a Soldier died today.

When politicians leave this earth,
Their bodies lie in state,
While thousands note their passing,
And proclaim that they were great.

Papers tell of their life stories
From the time that they were young
But the passing of a Soldier
Goes unnoticed, and unsung.

Is the greatest contribution
To the welfare of our land,
Some jerk who breaks his promise
And cons his fellow man?

Or the ordinary fellow
Who in times of war and strife,
Goes off to serve his country
And offers up his life?

The politician's stipend
And the style in which he lives,
Are often disproportionate,
To the service that he gives.

While the ordinary Soldier,
Who offered up his all,
Is paid off with a medal
And perhaps a pension, small.

It is not the politicians
With their compromise and ploys,
Who won for us the freedom
That our country now enjoys.

Should you find yourself in danger,
With your enemies at hand,
Would you really want some cop-out,
With his ever waffling stand?

Or would you want a Soldier
His home, his country, his kin,
Just a common Soldier,
Who would fight until the end.

He was just a common Soldier,
And his ranks are growing thin,
But his presence should remind us
We may need his likes again.

For when countries are in conflict,
We find the Soldier's part
Is to clean up all the troubles
That the politicians start.

If we cannot do him honor
While he's here to hear the praise,
Then at least let's give him homage
At the ending of his days.

Perhaps just a simple headline
In the paper that might say:
"OUR COUNTRY IS IN MOURNING,
A SOLDIER DIED TODAY."

War - 'for the right reasons'



A young Tom Crawford

Former St. Johns Housing Director Tom Crawford is a proud combat Marine veteran - proud of his service, proud of his comrades in arms, proud of the sacrifice of seven of his comrades who fell during action in South Vietnam on January 7th, 1968, and proud of America and defending her - for the right reasons.

"If you want to send our forces, what is your motivation?" he asks in a poignant YouTube message he also sent as a DVD to every senator, congressman and the President, "be careful how you use us, we trust you as a nation."

A poem Tom wrote, "[A Combat Marine's Message](#)," is the feature of the video which notes that his seven fallen comrades' names are on the front of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial brochure handed out by the National Park Service at "The Wall" in Washington DC.



St. Augustine resident, Tom Crawford

Used with permission of the George Gardner, publisher of the *St. Augustine Report*

Hal Kushner, M.D., FACS, (COL, USA (Ret), VNE), is a board certified ophthalmologist, practicing in FL. As a POW, he spent 2 years captivity in Hanoi and 3 ½ years in the jungles of the South Vietnam. He has done surgical missions on every continent and is currently President of the Board of Trustees of the Army Aviation Association Hall of Fame.

Dr. Kushner was recently the keynote speaker at the quarterly meeting of AUSA First Militia Chapter, St. Augustine and has appeared in Prisoners of War: Stolen Freedom, a local documentary produced by Florida Veterans Programs & Projects, Inc.

This information is from the May/June AXPOW Bulletin and used with their permission.



Washington, May 20, 2013

The House of Representatives has passed a bill making it a crime for people to falsely claim they have received a military medal in order to obtain money or government benefits. Under the legislation, which passed overwhelmingly and now goes to the Senate, offenders could face up to a year in jail.

The bill makes it a crime to seek benefits, such as money or a job, by claiming to be a medal recipient.

THE HISTORY OF FLAG DAY, June 14th



The Fourth of July was traditionally celebrated as America's birthday, but the idea of an annual day specifically celebrating the Flag is believed to have first originated in 1885. BJ Cigrand, a schoolteacher, arranged for the pupils in the Fredonia, Wisconsin Public School, District 6, to observe



June 14 (the 108th anniversary of the official adoption of The Stars and Stripes) as 'Flag Birthday'. In numerous magazines and newspaper articles and public addresses over the following years, Cigrand continued to enthusiastically advocate the observance of June 14 as 'Flag Birthday', or 'Flag Day'.

In 1894, the governor of New York directed that on June 14 the Flag be displayed on all public buildings. With BJ Cigrand and Leroy Van Horn as the moving spirits, the Illinois organization, known as the American Flag Day Association, was organized for the purpose of promoting the holding of Flag Day exercises. On June 14th, 1894, under the auspices of this association, the first general public school children's celebration of Flag Day in Chicago was held in Douglas, Garfield, Humboldt, Lincoln, and Washington Parks, with more than 300,000 children participating.

Adults, too, participated in patriotic programs. Franklin K. Lane, Secretary of the Interior, delivered a 1914 Flag Day address in which he repeated words he said the flag had spoken to him that morning: "I am what you make me; nothing more. I swing before your eyes as a bright gleam of color, a symbol of yourself."

Inspired by these three decades of state and local celebrations, Flag Day - the anniversary of the Flag Resolution of 1777 - was officially *established* by the Proclamation of President Woodrow Wilson on May 30th, 1916. While Flag Day was celebrated in various communities for years after Wilson's proclamation, it was not until August 3rd, 1949, that President Truman signed an Act of Congress designating **June 14th** of each year as **National Flag Day**.

Two hundred thirty-eight years ago, our nation's leaders established the Continental Army, beginning a rich heritage of successfully defending this great country and her citizens. Today, we celebrate the continued strength, professionalism and bravery of our ready and resilient Soldiers in the all-volunteer force. Our Soldiers remain Army Strong with a lifelong commitment to our core values and beliefs. Following more than 12 years of war, the Army remains committed to the readiness, training and advancement of the Total Army through the Army initiatives: Ready and Resilient, The Army Profession and Soldier for Life. This 238th birthday commemorates America's Army - Soldiers, families and civilians - who are achieving a level of excellence that is truly Army Strong. We also celebrate our local communities for their steadfast support of our Soldiers and families. We are "America's Army: Service to the Nation, Strength for the Future."



PLEASE JOIN US IN CELEBRATING THE ARMY'S 238TH BIRTHDAY

DATE: FRIDAY 14 JUNE 13, 1600 HRS

LOCATION: THE OFFICER'S CLUB OF ST. FRANCIS BARRACKS, 82 MARINE ST., ST. AUGUSTINE 32084

EVENT DETAILS: RECOGNITION OF THE U.S. ARMY'S 238TH BIRTHDAY, COMPLETE WITH CEREMONIAL CUTTING OF THE ARMY'S BIRTHDAY CAKE AND SINGING OF THE ARMY SONG.

POC: LTC ROBERT KEATING (904) 823-0530



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From Bill Gamble, for Memorial Day
"The Path of the Warrior"

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JKqT0-3JV5E&feature=youtube_gdata_player
For those who have fought for it, freedom has a taste the
protected will never know.



Ending homelessness, one person at a time

On October 3, 2013, the **Sulzbacher Center**, Northeast Florida's largest homeless services provider, will salute formerly homeless US Military Veterans, as they share their stories of hope and finding the *way home*.

Join in our 15th annual **Transformations** event, as we celebrate military veterans whose once-broken lives have been transformed by Sulzbacher Center programs and services.



15th Annual Transformations event

Tuesday, October 3, 2013

5:30 PM – 8:00 PM

Hyatt Regency Jacksonville Riverfront

Transformations has long been called the “feel good event” of the season. Substantial participation by supporters and new Sulzbacher Center *friends* will help make this year's event even more successful.

General admission: \$50.00 per person
Sponsorships available, starting at \$500.00

Transformations gifts help the Sulzbacher Center turn the overwhelming uncertainty of homelessness into hope.

How the Sulzbacher Center Helps Homeless Military Veterans

Unique Shelter Area

- Private veteran's-only dormitory
- 9 comfortably appointed, semi-private rooms
- TV and relaxation area
- 14 shower stalls and laundry



Special Case Management

- Designed to address Veterans' unique needs
- Works with the VA to prioritize stable housing

Veteran's Hope TEAM

- Mobile medical street outreach, specifically for homeless veterans living on the street
- Staffed by a physician and case managers with military experience
- Medical and psychiatric support
- Focus on relationship building to encourage vets to come into the Sulzbacher Center

Future Focus

- Create a special dorm and case management for women military veterans
- Developing partnerships for veteran job training and career development opportunities

Transformations Group Sales

Money raised will help initiate a special program at the Sulzbacher Center for homeless women military veterans and job training/placement for veterans over all.

Sales Goal: 600 tickets

Did You Know?

25% of America's chronically homeless are military veterans

400 homeless veterans live in Jacksonville

90% of homeless veterans received an honorable military discharge

It's time to improve the future of our homeless veterans by taking action in the present.

*Veterans Council of St. Johns County,
"Helping All Veterans"*

The Veterans Council of St. Johns County welcomes article submissions from all County Veterans & organizations. Articles should be of interest to all and veterans related. Submissions may be edited &/or shortened and used if space permits.

Send to: mrothfeld@anyveteran.org



Celebrate Flag Day June 14

Important Online Veterans Link:

National Vietnam War Museum

[http://www.nationalvnwarmuseum.org/
about.htm](http://www.nationalvnwarmuseum.org/about.htm)

**The Veterans Council of St. Johns County, Inc. is a
Not For Profit Florida Corporation.**

Our formation date was July 4, 2001 in a proclamation issued by the St. Johns County Commissioners. It is composed of representatives of the various veterans' organizations within St. Johns County.

The Veteran's Council will work with city and county governments and other local organizations to achieve the mutual goal to provide a central agency to assist in the coordination and presentation of matters concerning veterans and veterans activities in St. Johns County.

The Veteran's Council will endeavor to precipitate, stimulate and assist various organizations as they perform patriotic events. One of the major purposes is the promotion and education of national patriotic matters.

**The St. Johns County Veterans Council meets the last
Thursday of the month at 7 pm at the Elks Lodge,
1420 A1A So., St. Augustine.**

Visit our Website: www.veteranscouncilofstjohns.org
(please note the NEW web address)

**Veterans Service Office
1955 US 1 South, Suite 550
St. Augustine, FL 32086**

(physical location)

*The VSO Office is located in the St.
Johns County Health and Human
Services complex, behind the VA Clinic.*

*The office is open from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. daily,
Monday through Friday excluding holidays.*

*Service is by appointment.
Phone: 904-209-6160 Fax: 904-209-6161
Joseph McDermott, CVSO
Rick Rees, Assistant VSO
Heather Andrews, Assistant VSO
Tammy Shirley, Office Specialist*



The locally produced *Vietnam documentary, Service, Sacrifice
and Courage* has received **201,475** views to date on YouTube.

You can view part of it at:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H8Cs6Th7VNc>



Florida Veterans Programs & Projects, Inc. in association with Rolling Thunder Florida are making available free copies of its "Prisoners of War: Stolen Freedom" documentary to all Veterans Groups. Just contact Michael at: 904-829-0381 or mrothfeld@AnyVeteran.org and I will mail them or meet you to give you as many free copies as you need. Our goal is to have as many people see the documentary as possible.

KOREAN WAR VETERANS

DIGITAL MEMORIAL

Looking for Applicants!

KOREAN WAR VETERANS YOUTH LEGACY WORKSHOP

Please share this information with your families and friends!

In honor of the 60th Anniversary of the Armistice and the US-Korea Alliance, the Korean War Veterans Digital Memorial Foundation (<http://www.kwvdm.org/>) will host the first KWV Youth Legacy Project Workshop in Washington, D.C. A select group of high school and college students who are KWVs descendants will be invited to carry on the valuable legacy and lessons of the Korean War, KWVs, and the US-Korea alliance. Expenses up to \$1,000 will be covered by the foundation for transportation, hotel, meals, and program fees.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- ⇒ Attendance at the 60th Armistice event in the KWV Memorial Park
- ⇒ Visits to the Republic of Korea Embassy, Library of Congress, and Memorials
- ⇒ Launching of the National KWV Descendant Organization
- ⇒ \$1,000 Scholarship Award for excellence in participation

APPLICATION CONTACT INFORMATION

Please submit application (form downloads from: <http://bit.ly/16uf4q1>) and questions to:
President Dr. Jongwoo Han at jonghan@syr.edu, (315) 480-9427

Please Apply By: June 20, 2013
(early birds with more benefits)

Application details on the back.





Please don't forget to send your articles or Veteran organization information for the Veterans Council of St. Johns County Newsletter to Editor Michael Rothfeld at: mrothfeld@anyveteran.org

We want to tell everyone about where you served, who you served with, any interesting or exciting battles you were in, etc. We also want to know what you are doing now, what veterans groups you belong to, how to join, when they meet and what they do.

This is your Newsletter, please contribute.

The views expressed in The Patriot Reader Newsletter articles, submissions and spotlights are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views of the Veterans Council of St. Johns County or the editors of The Patriot Reader. It is the purpose of this periodical to share a variety of information that pertain to local veterans and their organizations.