



The Patriot Reader

VETERANS COUNCIL OF ST. JOHNS COUNTY

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Newsletter Editor Michael Rothfeld

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Fellow Veterans,

I hope everyone enjoyed their Holidays and are now ready to step back in to the business of volunteering to support our Veterans activities.

I would like to begin my comments for this month's PATRIOT READER by giving a big shout out to Diane King and her team at the Clyde E. Lassen Veterans Nursing Home. The Lassen Nursing Home was recently awarded a Five Star Rating from the centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. This is the highest award given to nursing homes. Diane and her Lassen Team just keep racking up the awards and recognition from around the state and in the nursing home community. Locally, we are all aware of what an awesome job they are doing for our Veterans. It's also great to know they are recognized by others, especially the certifying agencies. Diane, you and your team continue to make us proud.

I was recently made aware that the **Veterans Support Organization** is back operating in St. Johns County again. We have had many encounters with this organization in the past. They set up a collection stand at merchants

like Publix, Winn-Dixie, and Wal Mart after convincing the store managers they are a legitimate organization. Usually dressed in camo clothing, they prey on our unsuspecting and patriotic citizens who think they are giving to a legitimate veteran's organization and are helping our deserving veterans. Nothing could be further from the truth. Most of these people have never served a day in any branch of the military but by dressing in camo clothing, they give the impression they are veterans. None of the money that is collected remains in St. Johns County and my research of this organization indicates very little of it goes to Veterans at any location around the state. In looking at the organizations 990 tax filing for last year I noted that the President of VSO had a salary of \$286,711. All of our Veterans Council members are non-compensated volunteers who give freely of their time to support veterans and their needs. It is also important to know that the Florida State Legislature passed HB 1455 two years ago amending Florida statute 496.415 making it a third degree felony to solicit for charitable contributions while

misrepresenting themselves as veterans or for veterans purposes. It also violates Florida statute 817.312 which deals with the same violation.

I would like to appeal to all our Veterans and any others who may encounter these imposters at a local merchant store to challenge them and ask them to leave. If you are uncomfortable with confronting them, go in the store and explain to the store manager that these people are not veterans and request the store manager to ask them to leave. It has been my experience that most store managers will comply with your request since you are a customer who shops there and if they are breaking the law, they do not want to be involved. Please help us keep this fraudulent organization from operating in our county.

Bill Dudley, Chairman
Veterans Council of
St. Johns County

Clyde E. Lassen State Veterans Nursing Home

Patriotism is our motto



Home Administrator Diane King

Congratulations to Home Administrator Diane King and her team at the Clyde E. Lassen State Veterans' Nursing Home in St. Augustine. The 120-bed skilled nursing facility just received a Five-Star Rating from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services – the nation's highest award for nursing homes. The Lassen home, the state's first nursing home to be certified LEED Gold, joins the Douglas T. Jacobson State Veterans' Nursing Home in Port Charlotte, Alexander Nininger State Veterans' Nursing Home in Pembroke Pines and Clifford C. Sims State Veterans' Nursing Home in Panama City with top honors.

Re-Creation is making a return visit!

Re-Creation is a non-profit organization whose main service is to America's Veterans Affairs Medical Centers and State Veterans Homes. For 30 years, Re-Creation has provided the only continuing, live, therapeutic entertainment presence in our nation's VA Medical Centers. They typically go to facilities across the country every other year. However, because we have such phenomenal winter weather, they like to come here EVERY year! They will be returning for their third trip on **Tuesday February 18th at 2:00**. This great group of singers and dancers puts on a great show and you won't want to miss it! Please join us in our courtyard for a wonderful performance.



University of Florida has a program called Florida Alternative Breaks. Students who are in this program volunteer to spend their long holiday week-end (Martin Luther King) doing worthwhile projects at a chosen location. For the past 3 years they have chosen to spend their time here at Clyde E. Lassen. They enjoy doing crafts, playing games and just all around spending time with our residents. The following are all photographs all the week-end project.



Clyde E. Lassen State Veterans Nursing Home

Article by Kathy Shea, Admissions Coordinator

Clyde E Lassen State Veterans' Nursing Home is a 120 bed skilled nursing facility of which 60 beds are dedicated to the care of veterans with memory challenges. Our residents can receive rehabilitation services such as: Physical, Occupational, Speech therapy and Restorative Programs, all under the direct supervision of trained qualified therapists. Hospice Services are also available.

There is a five step applicant qualifying process that is as follows:

Application: All documents required by the home must be completed before the application can be processed. Most of these documents are VA, financial and medical.

Spouses who are not veterans cannot be considered.

Pending Approval: When all documents are complete, the resident is placed on the waiting list. Priority is given to those with service-connected disability.

Assessment: If on our waiting list, an assessment will be scheduled before admission.

Approval: The completed application will be reviewed by our admission team for placement on the waiting list or if there is a vacancy, for admission.

Admission: Whether your application is approved or disapproved for our waiting list or direct admission, you will be notified by the admissions office.

The basic requirements for Admission to the Nursing Home are as follows:

Honorably Discharged Veteran: Veteran as determined under Chapter 1.01 (14), Florida Statutes (Honorably Discharged from Active Duty).

Resident of Florida for one year immediately prior to application.

In need of nursing home care for a medical condition that requires services which fall within the level of care the home has resources and functional ability to provide, and as determined by a Physician.

Submit a completed application for Admission for our facility

Lassen is a **tobacco free** Campus; applicants must be free from tobacco for a period of time.

Tips for applicants:

Best to be proactive, **apply early** when you feel you may need future service. The facility is currently **operating with a wait list.**

Please call ahead when requesting an appointment or a tour. It is our pleasure to serve our veterans and their families.

Contact the admissions coordinator for an appointment to review the requirements and learn of the services available. 904-940-2193 ext. 2205

Please use a Florida ID or voter ID to show the start of the one-year **Florida residency requirement.**

To obtain an application for consideration, please contact the admissions coordinator at Lassen, 904-940-2193 ext. 2205. An appointment can be made to receive and review the application during standard business hours. An application can be sent via the US mail, or E-mailed. An application can also be picked up from the receptionist at the facility front desk.

Applicants needing assistance from the Federal VA obtaining copies of military discharge paperwork or help with Veterans' benefits and assistance are referred to a Veteran Claims Examiner for assistance with obtaining information from the Federal VA.

From the Director of the Jacksonville National Cemetery:
WISHING EVERYONE A VERY HAPPY 2014

A friendly reminder to everyone of procedural changes and the cortege lane assignments:

We will be making a change in the entry procedures and which cortege lane you enter for your service. We will be discontinuing having a staff member in a golf cart at the entrance directing funeral traffic to a particular lane. Starting Monday January 6, 2014 the following schedule will be in place.

- | | |
|------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. 9:00am, lane one | 2. 9:30am, lane two |
| 3. 10:00am, lane three | 4. 10:30am, lane one |
| 5. 11:00am, lane two | 6. 11:30am, lane three |
| 7. 12:30pm, lane one | 8. 1:00pm, lane two |
| 9. 1:30pm, lane three | 10. 2:00pm, lane one |
| 11. 2:30pm, lane two | |

Please make every effort informing your families of this procedural change so they also will know the lane they are to enter for their service.

If individual should arrive not knowing and they enter the administration building, my staff will direct them to the proper lane. With the amount of burials we are now handling we need this person at the gate in the field or in the administration office. Many of our national cemeteries across the nation have implemented the same procedure and it works well. You are part of the "Success Team" at the Jacksonville National Cemetery and I appreciate all you do prior to even arriving. Thank you in advance for your support of the veteran community.

Once we get past this procedural hurdle change for parking line up, I will be announcing the use of a second committal shelter when staffing permits on extremely busy days such as Monday and Friday. Stand-by for that procedural change after we work out all the potential kinks we might encounter.

Also, in March the AMVETs, North Jacksonville Rotary Club and the Support Committee will be planning a dedication ceremony for our new carillon. Stay tuned for that information forthcoming in the near future.

Remember, it is all about the veteran and their families we serve and our stakeholders like you that make us successful.

CLIFF SHIELDS
Director
Jacksonville National Cemetery
4083 Lannie Road
Jacksonville, FL 32218-1247
904-766-5222 Ext. 3006

Saturday 01 March 2014 at 10:00 am

Erection of the Schulmerich Electronic Carillon / Tower & Liberty
Bell System at The Jacksonville National Cemetery

"...As these bells ring ...honored dead rest ...freedom lives..."



Traditions Older Than The Nation's Oldest City

By Michael Isam, St. Augustine, Fla, (January 18, 2014)

There is a truth that traces its roots to the first trained armies.

Veterans do as veterans have learned. Carry out your objective quickly, completely, and with as few casualties as possible.

In this case, the objective was to remove the wreaths decorating the 1218 graves in the St. Augustine National Cemetery. The wreaths were placed in a solemn ceremony on December 14, 2013 as part of the annual 'Wreaths Across America' project.

More than 30 people, veterans and civilian, took on the task in daunting atypical Florida weather. The wind-chill factor read 31 degrees. Casualty rate: zero.

Broom and rake handles, rope, and a metal pipe or two were the implements of choice. One disabled veteran used his cane. Overall, the most popular was the forearm. In the typical efficient military fashion, the job was done in less than 45 minutes versus the hour-plus to disburse them. The dumpsters on the side street filled in short time and the remaining wreaths were stacked in typical neat-nick military fashion.

Of the 1218 graves in the St. Augustine National Cemetery, one grave stood out. The grave was specially adorned with a Teddy Bear and flower decoration. What made it special among the rest? The person interred was 10 years-old when they passed.

When asked about the future of the Teddy Bear, St. Augustine National Cemetery grounds-keeper, Roy Bartell said, "It will stay there until I remove it." "Every year, around the birthday of the person interred," said Bartell, "a flower arrangement and a toy appear." "I leave it until I feel compelled to remove it," continued Bartell, "someone feels very strongly about people interred here and I do what I can to help keep the memory last."





The Jacksonville National Cemetery Greetings from the Support Committee at the Jacksonville National Cemetery!

The Support Committee invites everyone to attend its next scheduled meeting on **Monday, February 3rd**, at 7:00pm. The meeting will take place at Community Hospice, 4266 Sunbeam Rd., Jacksonville, FL 32257 in Conference Room A



Chairman Howard
McGillin, COL US
Army ret.

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Soldier finally home 63 years later; buried Thursday at Jacksonville National Cemetery

By [Clifford Davis](#) Thu, Jan 9, 2014 @ 6:40 pm | updated Fri, Jan 10, 2014 @ 9:38 am

A Jacksonville soldier finally came home after 63 years Thursday.

Cpl. Joe Howard, a Jacksonville native who perished in a North Korean prison camp, was buried in Jacksonville National Cemetery with full military honors and a tombstone with his name on it.

Under gray skies and misting rain, his remaining family members finally got to welcome their “Uncle Bubba” home.

“All we ever knew was that he was in Washington, D.C., and went off to war and never came home. Uncle Bubba never came home,” Howard’s niece, Beverly Moreland, said. “It gives us a final rest and we’re deeply honored that the military would go to this extent. This is beautiful, that no soldier would be left on foreign soil and we’ve just been honored to witness this today — we’re all in awe.”

To the family, the service, at least in some small measure, gave Howard the funeral he never got.

According to the Army, Cpl. Howard died of malnutrition in Prisoner of War Camp 5 near Pyoktong, North Korea in 1951.

Slideshow: [Cpl. Joe Howard burial at National Cemetery](#)

Related: [Cpl. Joe Howard perished in brutal North Korean prison camp](#)

It was a long road home for Howard. As part of the 503rd Field Artillery Regiment, he was captured by Chinese forces Nov. 30, 1950.

“As a member of the 503rd, Cpl. Howard was probably marched for several weeks across North Korea,” according to Lt. Col. Bill Latham, author of “Cold Days in Hell: American POWs in Korea.”

(continued on next page)



Will Dickey /The Times-Union
Soldiers from the Florida Army National Guard Military Honors program carry the remains of U. S. Army Cpl. Joe Howard, who was listed as missing in action 63 years ago during the Korean War. He was being laid to rest at Jacksonville Na-

After being forced marched to Camp 5 on the banks of the Yalu River, the horrid conditions got no better that winter.

“It was an extremely cold winter for an extremely cold place,” Latham said. “The Yalu Valley is bordered by mountains on both sides which blocks the sunlight and channelized the wind, which makes the wind chill terrible.” Latham estimates there were about 3,000 Americans housed at Camp 5. At least 1,000 of them died before the winter of 1950-51 was over.

Cpl. Howard’s remains were handed over to the United States during a war-dead exchange in 1954, but due to a lack of technology identities couldn’t be confirmed. He was buried anonymously at the National Cemetery of the Pacific in Hawaii.

The only boy in the family, all of his sisters have since passed away, leaving only nieces and nephews behind. But not before the last, his closest sister Ruby, was able to provide DNA to the U.S. Army that proved to be the crucial puzzle piece needed to identify him.

“They had three black males whose dental records were very similar,” Moreland said. “Then my Aunt Ruby submitted DNA and it matched.”

Thursday, Joe Howard got the funeral he deserved. Representatives from the City of Jacksonville, American Legion, Korean War Veterans Association, Missing in America Project and an Army honor guard all came to pay their respects.

From the mountains of North Korea to Hawaii, Cpl. Howard was finally laid to rest at the Jacksonville National Cemetery under the St. Augustine grass he would have recognized.

“This is where all the family is, which is why we chose the National Cemetery here in Jacksonville instead of Arlington National Cemetery,” Moreland said. “He was born here in Jacksonville, so he’s come back home.”



Veteran Organization Shows Appreciation

By Michael Isam

St. Augustine, Fla, (January 26, 2014) – When all is peaceful and war is more a distant memory than an ‘In your face’ reality, veterans are oftentimes pushed to the curb. Such is the case many times throughout history.

Even today, when men and women are dying on foreign soil, there are those who denigrate their service. This is especially true of those who enjoy a luxury of life few can begin to imagine. This is especially true of those who do not have to serve in the military thanks to those who did serve and those serving now.

Luckily there are those who do not share that same sentiment.

On Saturday Bryan Tutton Memorial VFW Post 2391 threw a party. Also known as Veteran's Appreciation Day, more than 150 local veterans came to honor the WWII and Korean veterans who paid a dear price to maintain the freedoms we enjoy today.

It was one large hoe down, throw down, low country boil, music till you drop shindig! There are commercials that show special price dinners at a low cost, but none can compare to the smorgasbord enjoyed by these veterans. One long serving line of domestic roast pig, wild pig, venison stew, slow country boil, calamari, baked beans, coleslaw, salads and other epicurean delights.

Outside at the Tiki Bar, the entourage was treated to music provided by Just Dave who played a great mix of country, bluegrass and other sundry favorites.

“One thing good for sure came out of this event,” said Jim Sisk, “I am watching more and more of the younger vets in close conversation with older vets.” “Finally the ‘My war was different than your war’ veil has begun to show transparency,” continued Sisk “It is about time.”

Sisk and Herb, ‘The Sock Man’, Naumann enjoyed the company of a young Combat Veterans Motorcycle Association member ‘Life-Line’. “I love to hear the stories of the elder veterans,” said Life-Line, “The more I hear, the closer I feel and I don’t feel quite so alone.” ‘The Sock Man’ collects white tube socks from organizations and individuals for distribution to veterans in local nursing homes and for shipment to active duty personnel in harms way. Last year he distributed over 700 pairs of socks.

The event was sponsored by Island Doctor, VFW Post 2391, Old Carriage Realty, Coleman Music & Entertainment, Family Kia of St. Augustine, Jack Wilson Chevrolet, Hyundai of St. Augustine, members of the AmVets and members of the VFW.



Oldest City Det. #383, Marine Corps League
2014 Officers

On Tuesday evening, January 21st, the Oldest City Detachment #383, Marine Corps League, St. Augustine installed its 2014 staff of officers. From L to R: Walter Mosher, Sr. Vice Commandant; Jim Bellamy, Commandant; Bill Nantz, Paymaster; Harry Manford, Judge Advocate; John Roberts, Jr. Vice Commandant; Charlie Myers, Adjutant; Woody Rodgers, Chaplain and John Balanovich, Sgt. at Arms.

The Oldest City Detachment #383 invites all Marine Corps and Navy FMF Corpsman to join its ranks as they continue to carry out their mission of servicing the St. Augustine and St. Johns County community veterans. In addition to Toys for Tots, the Oldest City Detachment #383 supports: scholarship programs, wounded warriors, canes for veterans, young Marines, and Eagle Scout Good Citizenship Awards; just to name a few.

Please join us at the Elks Lodge on A1A, at 7 pm every first Tuesday of the month. For more information about the Oldest City Detachment #383 visit our web site at: <http://www.mclfl383.org>

Semper Fi!

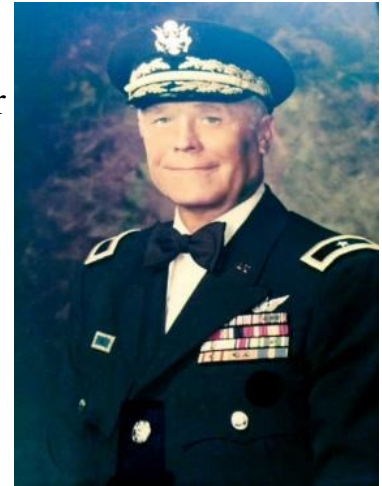


First Fla. National Guard full-time aviator dies

Completed 25 combat missions as P-51 fighter pilot

By [MARCIA LANE](#), marcia.lane@staugustine.com

Ret. Brig. Gen. Charles Willis, the first full-time aviator with the Florida National Guard, died at his home. Friends remember Willis, 90, as a patriot and warrior, someone who was an active supporter of both his community and his country.



Brig. Gen. Charles Willis

“We’ve lost a great warrior,” said Ret. Gen. Richard Capps, who was a “brand new second lieutenant” when he met Willis, then in the process of organizing a “brand-new arm of an aviation unit” for the Guard.

“He had enough trust and faith in me to send me to flight school and from there I came back and stayed with the unit,” Capps recalled Thursday. From just a couple of small aircraft, Willis built up the program to several hundred men and multiple aircraft at several facilities.

“It’s been a long journey,” Capps said. “He was an absolute great mentor. I treasure the years we had to serve together. He worked harder for the National Guard than anyone. His intent was always to make it better for tomorrow.”

Born in Canton, N.C., in 1923, Willis graduated from Canton High School in 1940 and became an Army aviator.

During World War II, he flew combat missions over Germany as a bombardier and later as a fighter pilot in P-51 Mustangs. He also flew P-80s and P-84s.

Capps said Willis completed 25 combat missions as a P-51 fighter pilot and at the time he retired had more than 7,500 hours including fighters, helicopters and transport aircraft.

Former St. Augustine Mayor John Bailey Sr. called Willis “a great human being as well as a great member of the armed forces. He fought in World War II in Europe ... and won medals. Yet he never bragged about it. You had to pick at him a little bit to give you information.”

Bailey said he and his wife, Peg, became friends with Charles Willis and his wife, Smitty, and for many years the couples got together weekly.

“He loved the Guard and supported it in every way he could. He also was involved in civic endeavors. The Boy Scouts was one of his favorite organizations; he always participated in their annual fundraising dinners and helped raise money for them among many others.”

After World War II, Willis attended the Nuremberg war crime trials and when he returned to the U.S., he worked as an air traffic controller before joining the Florida National Guard. He rose to deputy commander at the Guard and was promoted to brigadier general, assisting with ensuring the readiness of 10,000 soldiers.

“I met Gen. Willis in 1966 when I joined the Florida Army National Guard. He was in charge of Army Aviation for the state of Florida and he gave me my first check ride in a Guard helicopter,” said Bill Young. “He was an excellent pilot.”

Young said the general flew many types of aircraft, both fixed and rotary wing.

“Gen. Willis was a true professional soldier and I am proud to have been his friend for more than 47 years,” said Young. “He will be missed. He was a real asset to the Guard.”

After Willis’ retirement in 1983 in St. Augustine, he served as an aviation consultant for the Pentagon and the National Guard.

He was elected to the St. Johns County Commission and served on various government boards and committees.

Funeral services were held at 11 a.m. Tuesday January 28th at Craig Funeral Home Chapel.

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By [PETER GUINTA](mailto:peter.guinta@staugustine.com) , peter.guinta@staugustine.com

City to figure out cost of memorial's move

Veterans and others told the St. Augustine City Commission on Monday evening that it's unacceptable that a bank of unsightly Florida Power & Light electrical boxes, pipes and meters are overshadowing the view of a 67-year-old monument honoring the city's war dead.



*PER.WILLOTT@STAUGUSTINE.COM
Utility boxes are close to a war veterans
memorial on the east side of the Plaza de la
Constitución in St. Augustine.*

The commission, however, already knew that.

The issue became public on Thursday, after Robert P. Jones of Tallahassee, a St. Augustine native and former U.S. Marine, noticed the monument's unfortunate placement behind the electrical boxes in the Plaza de la Constitución.

Kay Burtin, president of the Pilot Club of St. Augustine, said she was told that moving the electrical array — the switching mechanisms for the Bridge of Lions signal lights — would cost millions.

"We need some direction so we can move this monument," she said.

The names of 72 local veterans who died in World War II, and the Korean and Vietnam wars are engraved on bronze plaques hanging on three sides of the monument.

"When I look at it, I see the names of boys I went to school with," Burtin said. "After it's moved, I would like to add the names of our residents who were killed in Iraq and Afghanistan."

The stone monument was built by the Pilot Club, a civic organization, in 1946 for about \$4,000. Burtin said the Pilot Club will meet this week to discuss what it might take to move the monument to another spot on the Plaza.

Commissioner Don Crichlow said he'd been approached by veterans wondering if they could contribute monetarily to the move.

Mayor Joe Boles said city staffers would look into the cost of moving the monument to a more respectful place.

"(But) we don't have a number yet," Boles said.

He asked Crichlow to "stay on top" of all financial collection efforts. "A lot more people might want to give," Boles said. "I would tell them, 'Call Don Crichlow.'"

Commissioner Leanna Freeman said the entire commission is looking forward to a resolu-

tion.

“Nobody up here is satisfied with the situation,” Freeman said.

Still, no distinct initiatives were proposed, and the city didn’t commit to any specific course of action. No one mentioned the fact that resident money won’t be enough to dismantle, transport and reassemble the heavy stone monument.

A representative of only one veterans organization showed up to speak to the commission: Retired U.S. Army Col. Rick Erkelens, president-elect of the local Military Officer’s Association of America chapter.

Erkelens said, “There is no greater love a man has for his country than to lay down his life for it. We are judged in the manner in which we honor our heroes.”

He suggested moving, enlarging and updating the monument, and pointed to a spot on the west side of Government House near the fountain that would be a good home for the monument, perhaps “as part of a larger display.”

Monday morning, four members of American Legion Post 37 — David Israel, Fred Rychlock, Aaron Ray and Don Quigley — acted independently and pressure-washed the dingy monument. Weeds had been growing out of its roof stones and the shrubbery around it was growing wild.



Asked why they did that work, Israel said, “It’s disrespectful to our deceased veterans for the monument to be dirty. We said we were going to do it and we did it.”

*PHIL WHITLEY, correspondent Volunteer
American Legion members David Israel and
Freddy Rychlock clean a war memorial on the
Plaza de la Constitucion early on the morning of
Monday, Jan. 13, 2014.*

Robert Jones, back home in Tallahassee, wrote to U.S. Army Lt. Col. Glen Tilley, past commander of Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 2391 on U.S. 1 South, to say, “We can’t let go (of this issue). One of those killed in Vietnam was Steve Shelley, who I drove to grade school with my kids. I have touched his name on The Wall in (Washington) D.C. and wept. We need to learn the stories of all those listed who died for us.”

UPDATE: West Plaza considered for War Memorial

St. Augustine’s war memorial will be moved 35 feet further west on the Plaza de la Constitucion, the City Commission decided on Jan. 27th. The move could cost \$ 10,000 with the City paying half.

Blocking of the memorial by a bank of electric panels in the Charlotte Street/Cathedral Place corner has been criticized by tourists and veterans. Originally installed by the St. Augustine Pilot Club in 1946 to honor World War Two war dead, it now carries names of war dead from subsequent wars.

Nena Vreeland will donate the \$ 5000. needed to relocate the War Memorial in the Plaza.

Missing U.S Soldier Bowe Bergdahl Seen Alive in New Video

The new proof of life video is the first in three years of Bergdahl, who was captured by the Taliban in June 2009

By Nate Rawlings, Time World

For the family of Sgt. Bowe Bergdahl, a U.S. soldier held by the [Taliban](#), it has been 4 years, 7 months and seventeen days since they learned their son went missing from his base in eastern [Afghanistan](#). It has been nearly three years since the last video showing their son alive.



On Wednesday, [CNN reported](#) that the [U.S. military](#) had obtained a new video showing Bergdahl, dated December 14, 2013. The Bergdahl family released a statement Wednesday afternoon confirming the video and asking again for the released of their son. "As we have done so many times over the past 4 and a half years, we request his captors to release him safely so that our only son can be reunited with his mother and father," [the family's statement said](#). "BOWE – If you see this, continue to remain strong through patience. Your endurance will carry you to the finish line. Breathe!"

Bergdahl was serving in Paktika Province in eastern Afghanistan when he went missing from his base on June 30, 2009. The circumstances of his disappearance remain unclear. Bergdahl was captured by Taliban fighters and taken first to the Pakistani border town of Angoor Adda, then to the mountains of North Waziristan's Shawal Valley, where he is believed to be held by the network of Taliban-aligned militant leader Sirajuddin Haqqani.

Soon after Bergdahl was captured, the Taliban [released a video](#) of the American dressed in local garb and with the beginnings of a wispy beard. "I am scared I won't be able to go home," Bergdahl said in the video. "It is very unnerving to be a prisoner." The Bergdahl family initially remained silent in public, working behind the scenes for their son's release. Then two years after Bowe's capture, his father, Bob, [made a Youtube video](#) where he appealed to the Pakistani military to help secure Bowe's safe return.

Most of the world would learn the name Bowe Bergdahl in May 2012, when a local newspaper in the Bergdahl's hometown, Hailey, Idaho, published a story quoting the family saying "everybody is frustrated with how slowly the process has evolved." That week, news broke that Bowe had been the subject of a failed deal to swap Taliban prisoners from Guantanamo for Bowe's release.

Bob Bergdahl [spoke with TIME](#) in Hailey, where he described the family's painful wait for Bowe's return. Bob learned Pashto and [grew a long beard](#) in solidarity with his son. "His faith seems to be intact," Bob said. "In his videos, he's mentioned his faith in God, and that means a lot to us. We think the Taliban and these Pashtun people can identify with that. And I hope they can respect him for that. I hope they continue to treat him humanely."

There are few details of the latest video, and Bergdahl's fate remains in limbo. When Bob spoke with TIME in 2012, he worried that the politics of the presidential election would prevent any prisoner-swap deal that could secure Bowe's release. "This is a war, and war doesn't wait on politics," he said. There was little discussion of the war in Afghanistan during the 2012 campaign, and virtually no mention of the one soldier still being held prisoner by the Taliban. As the U.S. completes its drawdown of nearly all troops by the end of this year, the Bergdahls must hope the U.S. government can cut a deal with the Haqqani Network and the Taliban that will ensure he is not left behind.

WWII B-17 pilot from St. Augustine signs historic wing Thursday

This article is reprinted with the permission of its author, Clifford Davis and the Florida Times-Union

By [Clifford Davis](#) clifford.davis@jacksonville.com

Lt. Walter Harvey walked into a bootmaker's shop to see what kind of a deposit must be made on a new pair.

It was London in 1943 and the bootmaker replied deposits were unacceptable — he must be paid in full — and told a skeptical Harvey to come with him.



Photo by Bruce Lipsky-

BRUCE.LIPSKY@JACKSONVILLE.COM Richard Harvey (L-R) and Keith Ellefson hold the B-17 wing panel for Captain Walter "Big Dog" Harvey to sign on Thursday, December 26, 2013, in St. Augustine, FL. Ellefson drove from Ozark, Alabama with the wing panel as part of the 384th Bomb Group Veterans Signing Project. Walter Harvey was the co-pilot of the B-

“He took me to a back room and pointed to 30 or 40 pairs of boots, and said, ‘I only asked for a deposit on these boots and now they are mine forever,’ ” Harvey said. “Those boys had been shot down and wouldn’t be back to make the final payment.

“After paying him the full amount, I walked out a very sober fellow.”

Harvey went on to fly 24½ missions (more on that later) over Nazi-occupied Europe as a B-17 pilot with the 384th Bomb Group and then he moved to the Jacksonville area after the war.

Thursday he added his signature to a portion of B-17 wing that will be housed at the aerospace museum at Hill Air Force Base, Utah, in honor of the 384th.

The portion of the wing, a fuel tank stress panel, has been taken around the country by the 384th Bomber Group Next Generation Association as they track down the few surviving veterans of the group.

“Most of our members had family members in the 384th,” association member Keith Ellefson said. “We just did this as a way to remember them and pay homage to them.”

The 384th operated out of England from 1943 to 1945 suffering horrific losses, along with most other American bomber units of the Army Air Corps.

“One month from the day our squadron had flown its first mission, there were only three of us left out of the original 93 flying personnel,” Harvey said.

A few days later, an entire 10-man crew returned after having to ditch their B-17 in the Eng-

lish Channel. That made it 13.

As for Harvey, he was made somewhat of an instructor pilot. Since most planes were being lost before their fifth mission, veteran pilots were being placed with inexperienced crews. Twenty-five missions was the magic number it took for crews to make it back to the U.S. ---- about half made it.

On the morning of April 24, 1944, Harvey took off for his 25th mission to bomb an area near Munich, Germany.

Over France, his B-17 became swamped in flack (German anti-aircraft fire). Then the back of the cockpit caught fire.

“We had a bail system that alarmed the whole ship,” Harvey said. “So they knew it was time to get out, but I think they suspected it before that. We were really being hit.”

He landed in a French village called Faux Fesnay where what his mind initially told him were German troops waiting for him turned out to be French school children and their teachers. What followed for him and one of his crew members was four months like something out of a Hemingway novel: Dodging German patrols, quaffing French wine and sampling cheeses and hopping from farm to farm trying to stay one step ahead of the enemy.

Harvey witnessed a suspected German collaborator being executed by the French underground.

Unfortunately some of those who helped him paid with their lives as well.

Harvey still keeps a picture of those victims given to him by neighbors after the war. His caption under the grisly photo reads: “These people were members of the French underground. The Germans found out we had been hiding on their farm — made them dig their own graves and shot them.”

There also was one close call while in the care of the French underground Harvey remembered specifically.

“The Germans found out we were in the woods there and they came in after us one morning early,” he said. “There were four or five Englishmen there too, one of them was killed.” After months on the run, he and his crew member Dick Rader were just outside of Paris force-marching three German soldiers they’d captured nearby when they spotted American tanks. “I yelled to them, ‘I’m Lt. Harvey and this is Lt. Rader. We were shot down. What’s taken you guys so long to get here?’” he said.

Navy's first jet squadron arrived at Cecil Field 65 years ago this week

Both played major role in American air dominance

By [Clifford Davis](#) Thu, Jan 16, 2014 @ 8:44 pm | updated Thu, Jan 16, 2014 @ 9:54 pm

Sixty-five years ago this week, the Navy's first fighter squadron equipped with jet planes, FH-1 Phantoms, touched down at their new home among the pines at a small auxiliary airfield called Cecil Field.

The first of the VF-171 "Screamin' Demons" touched down Jan. 11, 1949, flown by the squadron's commanding officer, Cmdr. Bill Leonard, an ace Hellcat pilot who served in the Pacific in WWII. The rest of the squadron arrived by Jan. 15.

They were perilous times.

The Cold War had set in: Newspaper headlines lamented Mao Zedong's communist forces' inevitable victory in China and instructed readers on how to survive a Soviet nuclear attack.

Jet technology offered an opportunity to separate America and her allies from the communists. In May of 1948, the squadron became the first in history to be carrier-qualified, taking off and landing jets from the USS Saipan off Rhode Island. Though it answered any critics who thought jets weren't feasible for carrier-borne operations, the squadron's leader, Cmdr. Ralph A. Fuoss, was killed on the way back to base when another jet collided with his.

At a time with no major conflict, many of the pilots of the squadron had been on somewhat of a break since then.

"The whole squadron went to Cleveland, Ohio, for the air races — back then it was a show-boat outfit," Jerry Rosen, then a 22-year-old engine mechanic with the squadron, said. "In January of 1949, we got orders to go to Cecil Field.

"It was the only jet squadron on the East Coast."

A FIRST FOR AMERICA

The new jets meant a huge leap forward in military aviation.

"It was like going from driving a Model T to a modern sports car," said Jacksonville Naval Air Station historian Ronald Williamson.

Rosen said it was hard on the maintenance crews as well.

"It was a lot more complicated," he said. "You had those old radial engines for years and here comes these new jet engines. It took some time."

Faster and more agile than their propeller-driven predecessors, the Phantoms were the United States' first attempt at a mass-produced jet fighter.

Though they would soon be replaced by F2H Banshees and other more advanced fighters, it marked the successful beginning of what is now more than 70 years of jet-engine design for the U.S. military.

The jet squadron was only a small part of a larger movement to bring naval aviation units to the Southeast. On Nov. 1, 1949, Fleet Air Jacksonville, comprised of aviation personnel at Jacksonville Naval Air Station and Cecil Field, celebrated its first birthday.

"In one year, the command had grown from a staff of three officers and a total of six squad-

rons to 34 squadrons and a personnel strength of 5,000,” Williamson said.

But Cecil Field was an austere beginning for the cutting-edge aircraft. During World War II, runways were constructed at Cecil to help relieve the congestion the war brought to Jacksonville NAS.

“It was an auxiliary air field,” Rosen said. “It was just a hole in the wall.”

However, the jets of VF-171 would soon pave the way for Cecil Field to become a Master Jet Base in 1951 — the South’s first, where jet fighters attached to aircraft carriers could train while not at sea.

That designation led to the Navy purchasing 2,000 more acres and beginning the multimillion dollar construction of new 8,000-foot runways.

Ironically, local politicians began — just as today — to lobby the government to deepen Mayport’s channel to allow for the planes’ carriers.

It never happened.

Today Cecil Field, like the Phantom, is only a memory for those who served there. Nevertheless, both played a crucial role in America’s dominance of the skies that continues to this day.

Clifford Davis: (904) 359-4103



Provided by Ron Williamson

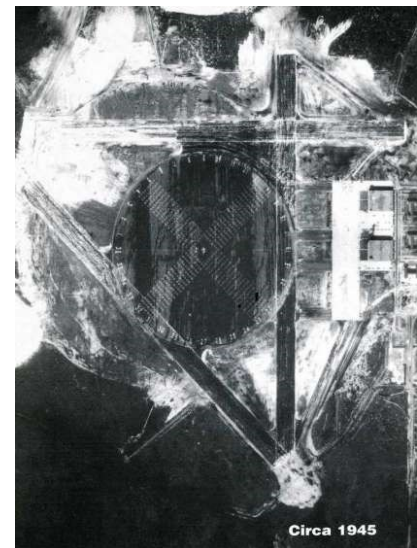
The first Navy jets land at Cecil Field on Jan. 11, 1949. The first of Navy squadron VF-171 to touch down was flown by Cmdr. Bill Leonard, a WWII ace.



Provided by Ron Williamson, The squadron patch of the period from VF-171. Nicknamed the Screamin’ Demons, they were the first Navy fighter squadron outfitted with jets.



Provided by Ron Williamson,
An FH-1 Phantom arrives at the Overhaul and Repair Department at Jacksonville Naval Air Station in July 1949



Cecil Field Naval Air Station, seen from above in 1945.

How to thank a veteran

By [CARL W. BURCHFIELD III](#), Elkton

This is from a guest column in the St. Augustine Record

So many times I'm at a gathering, or even just walking down the street, and someone will walk up, shake my hand and say, "Thank you for your service." I like that. It's nice to be appreciated after serving 20 years in the military. I don't ask for thanks, and I don't expect it, either. But do you "really" want to thank a vet? Or are you just going through the motions to feel good about yourself by being perceived as socially correct?

I voluntarily, and of my own choice and free will, made a conscious decision when I was 17 years old and a senior in high school, that I wanted to serve my country. It took me the next four years to figure out why I made that decision, and understand why I re-enlisted and continued to do so for 20 years.

For 20 years, I willingly sacrificed many of my rights, freedoms and civil liberties serving to protect the rights, freedom and liberty of others. It was my choice to do so. Nobody twisted my arm or held a gun to my head. You see that American flag? It makes anyone proud who can say that's "their" flag.

But it's just a piece of colored cloth, a symbol really. I didn't serve for that flag.

One of the things that flag represents is the United States of America, the country, the one I was born in. But America is really nothing more than a piece of land. It's composed of dirt, rocks, trees and flowers. I didn't serve 20 years to protect dirt, rocks, trees and flowers. They survived fairly well on their own, long before I was here.

I didn't serve to protect our republic, the democratic society we live in, our way of life, my family or even you. Many, including you, are perfectly capable of taking care of yourselves in whatever way of life you live. You do so quite well without any help from me, or any other service member for that matter.

I served to protect, preserve and ensure choice: your choice. Yes, you, the one reading these words right now. It's personal to me. I served to protect your right to choose and to defend the choices you make: the choice to have dreams, change those dreams, pursue those dreams and to pursue them by any means you desire, regardless of what others may say, do, or think about the life you live and choices you make.

Just over 10 years ago I had the unfortunate experience of witnessing a flag-burning. They were burning the flag in political protest of administration policies. But I'm not talking about policy or politics here. Another non-participating witness who knew I was retired military asked me why, with what I've sacrificed, I wouldn't take action to stop those protesting from burning the flag. I could have. There were others around that I know would have assisted me in doing exactly that. But that's not why I served.

Yes, the flag-burning upset me deeply, but think about it. It's just a piece of colored cloth. You can burn it all you want. I don't care what you do to that flag, because you will never burn or destroy that which it symbolizes. That's what I served for. In fact, if anyone had tried to stop those protestors from burning that flag, I would have done whatever necessary and executed whatever action required to protect them.

Do you really want to thank a vet? Then pursue your dream. Live the life you choose.

But if you want to show veterans how much you really appreciate what they've sacrificed for you, don't just pursue those dreams. Work all the way to the end of your goals and actually achieve them. Live them. Share them. Celebrate them. That is what I served for, and that is the best way to truly, from the bottom of your heart, thank a veteran.

On behalf of all veterans who served and those who serve you now, from the bottom of our collective hearts, it was a pleasure to serve you. You're welcome.

A Celebration of Service

Please take the time to watch this extraordinary video, from CBS This Morning. It was a POW Re-Union after 40 years. It took place on May 24, 1973 and was hosted by the Richard Nixon Foundation.

http://www.youtube.com/watch_popup?v=LemllfcAY8A&sns=em



The Florida Regional Group will offer two \$1000 scholarships for the 2014-2015 academic year, for use by the spouse or child of a Florida Blinded Veteran. The child may be a minor child or an

adult child while the spouse may also be the widow of a Florida Blinded Veteran.

The purpose of the FRG Scholarship program, which is both need and merit based, is to award scholarship grants for use by the recipient either at college or university, a trade or vocational school for the 2014-2015 academic year, beginning in July 2014 through June 2015. The money is sent directly to the school when the recipient has already been accepted and may be used by the awardees for tuition, books and academic fees.

Applications may be requested by calling Dr George Stocking at (305)446-8008 or email gstocking@bellsouth.net or writing to Blinded Veterans Association, Florida Regional Group, 3801 Coco Grove Ave, Miami FL 33133. The application must be completed in its entirety, including all supplementary data, and postmarked no later than April 15th, 2014. The selection will be made by the FRG Scholarship Committee.

Dr Jane Karp, Col USAF (ret)

Induction Ceremony for Navy League officers



Historic City News was informed by Vice President of Public Affairs for the St. Augustine Council of the Navy League, Kim Kendall, that the civilian organization, whose mission is to support active duty Maritime Military units and local High School JROTC programs, held an induction of officers at Flagler College's stunningly new solarium on Monday evening, January 13th.

The League actively supports 13 Marine, Navy, and Coast Guard Military units with their award presentations, tours of ships and facilities, and other Sea-Services support activities.

"Concerning next year, I am quite excited about the opportunities for the St. Augustine Navy League to continue to honor and support the men and women in the Sea Services," Mike Zollar commented as he commences his third year as President. "We are also getting a great stream of new members who want to be active participants; and, that is very important to providing continuing leadership for the council."

All hands were on deck for Florida Region President Skip Witunski. Witunski presented the Scroll of Honor to Bill Dudley, National Vice President Navy League of the United States. Witunski spotlighted the tremendous work Dudley has been doing at the National level as well as for the local St. Augustine Council.



National Vice President of the Navy League of the U.S. and member of local St. Augustine Council Bill Dudley receives the Scroll of Honor. Also pictured are grandsons Avery and Ethan along with Florida Region President Skip Witunski.

Officers and directors inducted included; President – Mike Zollar, Recording Secretary – Anita Proffitt, Treasurer – Cecil Bateman. Judge Advocate – Dick Roth, Legislative Affairs – Dave Sullivan, Vice President Youth Programs – Bill Hamm, Vice President Finance – Dean Smith, Vice President Communications – Lee Figliuolo, Vice President Public Affairs – Kim Kendall, Board of Directors – Bill Korach and Don Manson.

A first rate presentation was given by Captain Uhls who briefed the league about the USS HUE City's past missions and future vision for deployments. Uhls also highlighted the unique attributes his team provides for local, regional, and global security.

In recognition of Captain Uhls leadership and team, SANL President Mike Zollar presented Captain Uhls with the Navy League Certificate of Appreciation for his outstanding partnership in helping us support the crew of the USS HUE CITY.

For more information on the St. Augustine Council of the Navy League of the United States contact President Mike Zollar by email



SANL Officers and Directors being sworn in

Edwin A. Shuman III, Former Prisoner of War Who Defied Hanoi Hilton Guards, Dies at 82 - The New York Times - By RICHARD GOLDSTEIN - December 24, 2013

As Christmas 1970 approached, 43 American prisoners of war in a large holding cell at the North Vietnamese camp known as the Hanoi Hilton sought to hold a brief church service. Their guards stopped them, and so the seeds of rebellion were planted.

A few days later, Lt. Cmdr. Edwin A. Shuman III, a downed Navy pilot, orchestrated the resistance, knowing he would be the first to face the consequences: a beating in a torture cell.



“Ned stepped forward and said, ‘Are we really committed to having church Sunday? I want to know person by person,’ ” a fellow prisoner, Leo K. Thorsness, recounted in a memoir. “He went around the cell pointing to each of us individually,” Mr. Thorsness continued. “When the 42nd man said yes, it was unanimous. At that instant, Ned knew he would end up in the torture cells.”

The following Sunday, Commander Shuman, who died on Dec. 3 at 82, stepped forward to lead a prayer session and was quickly hustled away by guards. The next four ranking officers did the same, and they, too, were taken away to be beaten. Meanwhile, as Mr. Thorsness told it, “the guards were now hitting P.O.W.s with gun butts and the cell was in chaos.”

And then, he remembered, the sixth-ranking senior officer began, “Gentlemen, the Lord’s Prayer.” “And this time,” he added, “we finished it.” The guards had yielded.

Everett Alvarez Jr., who was the first American pilot captured in the Vietnam War when his Navy plane was shot down in 1964, said in an interview that the defiance Commander Shuman engineered was emulated by senior officers in other large holding cells. The 19th-century Hoa Lo prison was known as the Hanoi Hilton by the Americans confined there.

“It was contagious,” said Mr. Alvarez, who was in another cell during the first prayer service. “By the time it got to the fourth or fifth cell,” he said, the guards “gave up.” He said the prisoners were also singing patriotic songs.

Commander Shuman remained incarcerated at the Hanoi Hilton for more than two more years. But by then the prisoners’ right to collective prayer had been established.

“From that Sunday on until we came home, we held a church service,” Mr. Thorsness, an Air Force pilot and recipient of the Medal of Honor for heroics on a mission in 1967, wrote in his memoir, “Surviving Hell: A POW’s Journey” (2008). “We won. They lost. Forty-two men in prison pajamas followed Ned’s lead. I know I will never see a better example of pure raw leadership or ever pray with a better sense of



the meaning of the words.”

Edwin Arthur Shuman III was born in Boston on Oct. 7, 1931, the son of a marine architect and Navy officer. Growing up in Marblehead, Mass., he began to sail at age 5. He graduated from the United States Naval Academy in 1954 and arrived in Vietnam in September 1967.

On his 18th mission, his A-6 Intruder fighter was shot down just north of Hanoi, the capital, in the early hours of March 17, 1968, during a low-level attack on a railroad yard. He bailed out, together with his bombardier-navigator, and both men were captured. He spent 17 months in solitary confinement. On one occasion, when he violated regulations, he was beaten for hours with a whip.

After United States Special Forces raided a small prison camp at Son Tay on Nov. 20, 1970, only to find no captives there — they had been transferred out months earlier — the North Vietnamese consolidated their prisoners, who had been held at several camps. They were taken to the large Hoa Lo prison, a 19th-century structure that was built by the French in central Hanoi and christened the Hanoi Hilton by American prisoners during the Vietnam War. The North Vietnamese felt the prisoners could be more securely guarded there and grouped them in large cells, which, as it turned out, made mass prayer sessions possible.

Commander Shuman was freed in March 1973 as part of a mass release of remaining P.O.W.s. He retired from the Navy as a captain 11 years later. His commendations included the Silver Star for his resistance to brutal treatment. He returned to North Vietnam in 1991 as part of a three-week humanitarian medical mission, mainly out of curiosity about what had become of it.

“I didn’t view this as a healing process,” he told The Baltimore Sun when he came back. “I never had a nightmare.” He said that he liked the Vietnamese people, whom he found to be hard working. Most of the prison was demolished in the mid-1990s.

Mr. Shuman died in Annapolis, Md. His wife, Donna, said the cause was complications of surgery on a leg he broke on Nov. 22 when he fell in his small boat while preparing to hunt geese. He lived in Annapolis.

In addition to his wife, he is survived by two sons, Edwin IV and J. Brant, and a daughter, Mary Dana Giardina, from his first marriage, which ended in divorce; a stepson, Robert Borte III; nine grandchildren; a great-grandson; three sisters, Mary Russell, Sally Smyth and Ann Mills; and two half brothers, William and John Boeckeler.

After returning from Vietnam, Mr. Shuman was in charge of the Naval Academy’s sailing program. In August 1979, he commanded the Alliance, the program’s aluminum sloop, in the Fastnet race off England and brought his crew back safely amid a storm in the Irish Sea that left 15 other sailors dead.

“You can’t get out so you make the best of it,” he continued. “It’s a character-builder.”



The date and time for our next MIAP - FL service has been approved by Clifford Shields of the JNC. This date was requested by Janis Diamond of Hardage Giddens Funeral Home.

Please mark your calendars for Friday, March 28, 2014 @ 1:30pm. The time of 1:30pm works better for the staff of the JNC. At this time we still can not do our services on Saturdays so Fridays are the best day. I hope that by sending this notice out now it will give everyone enough time to plan. We all know we can never pick a date or time that would be best for all.

I WILL KEEP EVERYONE UPDATED AS THE PLANS COMES TOGETHER AND WILL POST PRE-MEETING DATES AFTER THE FIRST OF THE YEAR. If you were not involved in our first service but wish to join in for this one please contact me at miapjax@yahoo.com. We want as many people from our community to be a part of this as possible.

Be fore warned I will be asking for some items to be donated (chairs, water, etc) for this service.

On behalf of MIAP - FL I would like to wish everyone a VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS and HAPPY HOLIDAYS. PLEASE BE SAFE in all your holiday travels and fun. Remember the REASON for the SEASON.

LOVE & PEACE to all for GOD & COUNTRY,

Kathy Church
101 Bowles Street
Neptune Beach, FL 32266
(904) 219-3035
bartenderpost233@yahoo.com

The Missing in America Project
MIAP - FL State Coordinator
miapjax@yahoo.com
www.miap.us

CFC - Combined Federal Campaign #76243

ALA Unit 233 Membership Chair
ALA 5th District Poppy Chair

American Legion Riders
Chapter 233 - Treasurer
legionriders233@gmail.com

Veterans and Friends of Veterans,

More than 40 years ago, hundreds of thousands of Vietnam Veterans returned home to a country they could no longer recognize. They were the first veterans of the United States of America to come home without a hero's welcome.

Over 58,000 young Americans gave their lives in that war. Many more came home with physical and mental health issues. Many of them continue to suffer as a result of their service.

The Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 1046 wants to honor all veterans of the Vietnam War. We have committed to build a Vietnam Veterans Memorial Monument at Jacksonville National Cemetery.

The cost of erecting the monument will be \$40,000.

I am writing to ask for your assistance. We, the citizens of Northeast Florida, need to make this happen. It is not only a way of saying "thank you" to those who served and sacrificed, but a way to permanently remember all those that served in the Vietnam War with this monument at the Jacksonville National Cemetery.

It is our way of telling the families of those veterans that have passed, that we remember and that "We will never forget."

Please help us remember all Vietnam War Veterans by making a generous donation today to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Monument fund. Please fill out the flap on the attached brochure and enclose it with your donation.

*Mail your checks to: Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 1046,
P.O. Box 331322, Atlantic Beach, FL 32233-1322*

You can also make your donation online by going to our website at www.vva1046.com/monument. All donations are tax deductible. We appreciate support. We would also be grateful you would take the time to forward this to email, with your endorsement and recommendation, to your email list. Thank you for your support, God Bless America.



Semper Fi, Anthony(Tony)D'Aleo

Nicholas J Cutinha Chapter 1046, President

Vietnam Veterans of America

In Service of America

www.VVA1046.com

Monument Design

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial is a sculpture designed by local Vietnam Veteran, artist and sculptor, Jerome Domask. The design is different, as was the war. The monument is a tribute to those who served during the Vietnam War. The overall design is characterized by abrupt changes and unpredictable planes, symbolizing the social and political turmoil of the times. The front of the monument pays tribute and honors all those who served from all branches of the United States Military. The back of the memorial is in recognition of the POW/MIAs, some who never made it home. The side panel is a listing of major battles and operations during the war.

Jacksonville National Cemetery

The Jacksonville National Cemetery was dedicated on September 21, 2008. To date, over 5,000 internments have taken place. Over 1,500 burials are now occurring each year. The majority of these are Vietnam Veterans.



**Be Generous –
Honor Our Vietnam Vets**



P.O. Box 331322
Atlantic Beach, FL 32233-1322

VIETNAM VETERANS MEMORIAL

HONORING ALL WHO SERVED

JOIN US...

In building a permanent testament to the courage and sacrifice of all the men and women who served during the Vietnam War.

"We Will Never Forget"

ARTIST RENDERING

IN MEMORY OF ALL VETERANS THAT SERVED DURING THE VIETNAM WAR 1961 - 1975

Be Generous – Honor Our Vietnam Vets



In erecting a permanent memorial to all the men and women that served their country during the Vietnam War.

The monument will be erected at the Jacksonville National Cemetery. It's unique design will stand as a testament to their memory and to their courage and sacrifice.

The design and specifications for the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Monument has been submitted to the Jacksonville National Cemetery for approval. All specifications are in accordance with the Veterans Administration Cemetery Memorials requirements.

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Monument is being funded entirely by private donations.

The goal is to raise \$36,000 to cover the cost of the monument and related costs.

Funds donated that exceed our goal will be used by VVA 1046 to support our Veterans Outreach Programs

DONATIONS

Donations of any size are gratefully appreciated. Even the smallest amount will help us erect this memorial to our Vietnam Veterans.

DONATE NOW > Memorial Goal is \$36,000

SPONSORS

Sponsors will be featured on our website, in all program brochures and will also receive a commemorative certificate of the monument.

PARTNERS

We are seeking patriotic men and women as well as businesses, community organizations and veterans organizations to come together to help to promote this project. Please feel free to contact us if you have ideas or means to help us with raising the funds for this monument. Car washes, garage sales, booths and tables at retail outlets are just some of the ways you could partner to help reach the goal. Contact Ray Breault, First Vice President, at 1vp@vva1046.com with any ideas or suggestions.

Honor Our Vietnam Vets



Make a Donation of

[] \$10 [] \$25 [] \$50 [] \$100 [] Other \$ _____

Be a Sponsor

[] \$250 [] \$500 [] \$1000 [] Other \$ _____

Name _____

Company/Organization _____

Mailing Address _____

City, State and Zip _____

Phone # _____

Email _____

Make Checks Payable to:
Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 1046

Please mail completed form and donation to:
**Vietnam Veterans of America
Nicholas J. Cutinha Chapter 1046
Monument Committee
P. O. Box 331322
Atlantic Beach, FL 32233-1322**

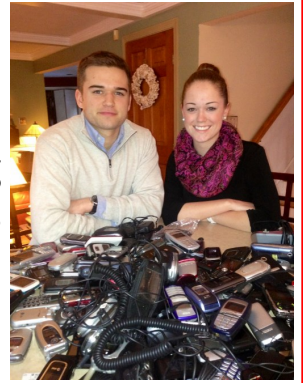
Visit our Website at:
www.vva1046.com/monument for more information and photographs. Donations can also be made using debit or credit cards at the website.

Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 1046 is a 501(c)(19) veterans organization. All donations are tax deductible under IRC 170(c)(3).

"THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE"

CELL PHONES FOR SOLDIERS® ANSWERS THE CALL FOR TROOPS AND VETERANS

In 2004 at the age of 13, Brittany Bergquist and her brother, Robbie saw a story on the morning news of a soldier returning from Iraq with an almost \$8,000 cell phone bill. Their cousin had recently been deployed and the story really hit home for them. How could a man who was serving his country not be able to call his family for free? He was sacrificing so much for all of us. They decided to do something. They cleaned out their piggy banks, gathered lunch money and even held a car wash to help this one man. They decided why stop there and that's when their non-profit Cell Phones for Soldiers was born.



Robbie and Brittany Bergquist with donated cell phones

They collect and recycle used cell phones and use the proceeds to purchase prepaid international calling cards for troops through Cell Phones for Soldiers' program, *Minutes that Matter*.



Robbie donating calling cards to troops at Fort Lewis McChord

Since 2004, they have sent 200 million minutes of talk time overseas and recycled more than 11 million cell phones. Cell Phones for Soldiers receives an average of 8,000 calling card requests each week, and fulfills each and every one of them!

Brittany and Robbie recently expanded their services to assist veterans with their new program, Helping Heroes Home. Helping Heroes Home provides emergency funds for returning veterans to alleviate communication challenges as well as physical, emotional and assimilation hardships.

Each day, requests are submitted to aid veterans as they transition into post-combat life. Helping Heroes Home has provided veterans with mobile phones and service, car repairs, home bill payments such as rent or mortgage, utilities, and more. In a little more than a year, Helping Heroes Home has assisted more than 350 veterans with emergency needs.

Please reference the fact sheet to learn more about Helping Heroes Home and if you or someone you know qualifies for assistance. If you're interested in supporting Cell Phones for Soldiers, online monetary donations and free shipping labels for donated cell phones can be found at www.cellphonesforsoldiers.com.

HELPING HEROES HOME

Helping Heroes Home, an initiative of Cell Phones for Soldiers, provides emergency funds for returning veterans to alleviate communication challenges as well as physical, emotional and assimilation hardships.

Cell Phones for Soldiers founders, Robbie and Brittany Bergquist, introduced this program, in July 2012, to aid veterans returning from recent deployment.

Helping Heroes Home assists with:

- Communication needs:
 - Home phone service
 - Cell phone service
 - Cell phone purchase
 - Internet service
- Prescribed medication
- Vehicle repair
- Home bill payment (water, electricity, rent/mortgage)

Helping Heroes Home serves:

- Veteran who have served in active duty or been honorably discharged since 2001.
- Emergency funding may be granted for one of the following reasons:
 - Family needs due to deployment
 - Military related illness or injury
 - Natural disaster
 - Family emergency affecting the day-to-day livelihood of the veteran

Reaching Veterans:

Helping Heroes Home has partnered with numerous organizations to provide this service to veterans and also assist in identifying those most in need. Partners include:

- Regional Veterans Administrations
- Veterans Hospitals
- Army Wounded Warrior Program (AW2)

Applications also may be submitted online at www.helpingheroeshome.org.

The Need

- Currently in the United States, one in seven homeless persons is a veteran.
- One and a half million veterans are at risk of homelessness due to poverty, lack of support networks, and dismal living conditions in overcrowded or substandard housing.
- Thirty percent of veterans ages 18 to 24 were unemployed according to the unpublished 2011 Bureau of Labor Statistics data.
- More than 968,000 of veterans ages 18 to 64 had been in poverty in the past year.
- More than one million veterans used mental health services in 2010.

(Statistical information provided by the Center for American Progress)

For more information, please visit www.helpingheroeshome.org or www.cellphonesforsoldiers.com or www.facebook.com/JoinCellPhonesforSoldiers. ###

Submitted by George Whitmer

INTERESTING THOUGHTS FROM ONE WHO HAS SERVED



This is an excellent article by General David Petraeus. He captured the essence of vets, their families, and our nation in a very concise and accurate manner. His recent negative experiences on college campuses adds credence to his thoughts.

Gen Petraeus About Our Military Today.....

Thanks to my fellow veterans:

I remember the day I found out I was accepted into West Point. My mom actually showed up in the hallway of my high school and waited for me to get out of class. She was bawling her eyes out and apologizing that she had opened up my admission letter. She wasn't crying because it had been her dream for me to go there. She was crying because she knew how hard I'd worked to get in, how much I wanted to attend, and how much I wanted to be an infantry officer.

I was going to get that opportunity. That same day two of my teachers took me aside and essentially told me the following:

"David, you're a smart guy. You don't have to join the military. You should go to college, instead."

I could easily write a theme defending West Point and the military as I did that day, explaining that USMA is an elite institution, that separate from that it is actually statistically much harder to enlist in the military than it is to get admitted to college, that serving the nation is a challenge that all able-bodied men should at least consider for a host of reasons, but I won't.

What I will say is that when a 16 year-old kid is being told that attending West Point is going to be bad for his future then there is a dangerous disconnect in America, and entirely too many Americans have no idea what kind of burdens our military is bearing.

In World War II, 11.2% of the nation served in four (4) years.

During the Vietnam era, 4.3% served in twelve (12) years.

Since 2001, only 0.45% of our population has served in the Global War on Terror.

These are unbelievable statistics. Over time, fewer and fewer people have shouldered more and more of the burden and it is only getting worse.

Our troops were sent to war in Iraq by a Congress consisting of 10% veterans with only one person having a child in the military. Taxes did not increase to pay for the war. War bonds were not sold. Gas was not regulated. In fact, the average citizen was asked to sacrifice nothing, and has sacrificed nothing unless they have chosen to out of the goodness of their hearts.

The only people who have sacrificed are the veterans and their families. The volunteers. The people who swore an oath to defend this nation. You stand there, deployment after deployment and fight on. You've lost relationships, spent years of your lives in extreme conditions, years apart from kids you'll never get back, and beaten your body in a way that even professional athletes don't understand.

Then you come home to a nation that doesn't understand. They don't understand suffering. They don't understand sacrifice. They don't understand why we fight for them. They don't understand that bad people exist. They look at you like you're a machine - like something is wrong with you. You are the misguided one - not them.

When you get out, you sit in the college classrooms with political science teachers that discount your opinions on Iraq and Afghanistan because YOU WERE THERE and can't understand the macro issues they gathered from books, because of your bias.

You watch TV shows where every vet has PTSD and the violent strain at that. Your Congress is debating your benefits, your retirement, and your pay, while they ask you to do more. But the amazing thing about you is that you all know this. You know your country will never pay back what you've given up. You know that the populace at large will never truly understand or appreciate what you have done for them. Hell, you know that in some circles, you will be thought as less than normal for having worn the uniform. But you do it anyway.

You do what the greatest men and women of this country have done since 1775. YOU SERVED. Just that decision alone makes you part of an elite group.

"Never in the field of human conflict has so much been owed by so many to so few." -Winston Churchill- Thank you to the 11.2% and 4.3% who have served and thanks to the 0.45% who continue to serve our Nation.

General David Petraeus
West Point Class 1974

From Michael Isam: According to the research I have accomplished thus far, the information displayed below does appear to be factual.

If you google the following:

https://www.google.com/search?q=Veterans+Statistics+off+the+Vietnam+Memorial+Wall&og=Veterans+Statistics+off+the+Vietnam+Memorial+Wall&aqs=chrome..69i57j0l3.17490j0j8&sourceid=chrome&espv=210&es_sm=93&ie=UTF-8

an impressive list appears and the same info is on just about every page with a few exceptions.

The following links were provided by **AJ Sartin** and contain many statistics about Vietnam. Please take the time to check them out.

http://www.vietnamwar50th.com/10_new_name_additions_to_vietnam_veterans_memorial/

<http://www.uswings.com/vietnamfacts.asp>

<http://www.vva522.org/page70.html>

<http://www.history.com/news/6-things-you-may-not-know-about-the-vietnam-veterans-memorial>



The Oak Ridge Boys at Arlington National Cemetery



Click here: GI Joe and Lillie

[<http://silverandgoldandthee.net/V/Lil.html>](http://silverandgoldandthee.net/V/Lil.html)



American Legion Post 37, information provided by Adjutant Kevin McKeefery



From left to right: Vice Commander Kevin McKeefery, Commander Richard L. White, WW II nurse, American Legion National Commander Daniel Dilenger, Chaplain Scott Young, WWII nurse, Korean Nurse, Vietnam nurse, Korean nurse

All nurses are from Military Nurses Association. Commanders visit to Florida at Post 316 Mayport.

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CHAPTER 1046
Duval County, FL



WA CHAPTER 1046

INAUGURAL GOLF

TOURNAMENT

Monday, MARCH 31, 2014, 10:00am T-Off - NAS Golf Course

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Jacksonville, FL 32212; (Golf Club House will be on Mustin Road, Bldg #809)**



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8:00am Check-in opens
9:30am All Players checked in
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2:00pm Prizes (Lunch included)



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Golfer #3: _____ **DOB** _____
Golfer #4: _____ **DOB** _____

Send this form to: Gary Krynski, gkrynski@yahoo.com or register online at: www.vva1046.com/Golf

Contact Information: (586)206-1165 Fax: (904)733-5622

Make checks or money orders payable to: Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 1046 (Inaugural Golf Tournament), P.O. Box 331322, Atlantic Beach, FL 32233)



Department of
Veterans Affairs

Office of Public Affairs
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www.va.gov

News Release

The [Orlando VA Medical Center's](#) hospital and outpatient facility opening has again been delayed, Orlando Business Journal has learned. At a press briefing with U.S. Sen. [Bill Nelson](#) Jan. 21, Nelson said the new target date for opening is now December 2014, [not September as was previously reported](#). But, Nelson said, officials are confident that the December date will hold. “The secretary is making a massive push to ensure that it won't go beyond that,” Nelson said, referring to retired U.S. Army Gen. [Eric K. Shinseki](#), the secretary of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

Nelson said that, from the VA's perspective, the contractor is moving too slowly, with only 600 workers on the site. From the contractor's perspective, the VA isn't providing direction and has made too many changes. “So you've got finger pointing going on,” Nelson said. “And the completion date seems to slip each time the director [[Timothy Liezert](#)] is briefed. But the director is now confident that they're sticking to the December date.” [Michael Strickler](#), the public affairs officer for the Orlando VA Medical Center, confirmed that December 2014 is now the working completion date. It's not all bad news for the \$665 million Orlando VA Medical Center project, Nelson said. The Community Living Center, a nursing home primarily for disabled vets, [opened in December in Lake Nona](#).

And the Domiciliary, a residential rehab facility for homeless veterans and veterans with substance abuse or post-traumatic stress disorder, will have patients moved in next month. What's more, the Orlando VA Medical Center is expected to award a contract and [break ground on the \\$20.3 million National Simulation Center in April](#).

From Vietnam War veteran George Whitmer:

Note this is at Atlanta Ga. Airport

**Thank God for the Americans who still stand for
dignified patriotism.**

Delta Airlines

I had no idea Delta does this. God Bless them!

Thank You Delta Airline employees.

http://www.youtube.com/embed/c_VGxfrmDmEo

From Korean War veteran, Jack Wentz:

I just picked up a copy of a book "Korea Reborn". It is published by the Republic of Korea, and is intended as a thank you for all Korean War Veterans . The book is free! If you know a Korean War Vet who would like a copy, they should send an e-mail to Larry Wallace at:

larry.c.wallace.nfg@mail.mil

He will make arrangements to pick up your copy at the barracks on Marine Street



Department of
Veterans Affairs

Office of Public Affairs
Media Relations

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www.va.gov

News Release

VA to Expand Benefits for Traumatic Brain Injury Adds Five Illnesses Related to Service-Connected TBI

WASHINGTON – Some Veterans with traumatic brain injury (TBI) who are diagnosed with any of five other ailments will have an easier path to receive additional disability pay under new regulations developed by the Department of Veterans Affairs.

The new regulation, which **takes effect 16 Jan 2014**, impacts some Veterans living with TBI who also have Parkinson's disease, certain types of dementia, depression, unprovoked seizures or certain diseases of the hypothalamus and pituitary glands.

"We decide Veterans' disability claims based on the best science available," said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki. "As scientific knowledge advances, VA will expand its programs to ensure Veterans receive the care and benefits they've earned and deserve."

This regulation stems from a report of the National Academy of Sciences, Institute of Medicine (IOM) regarding the association between TBI and the five diagnosable illnesses. The IOM report, *Gulf War and Health, Volume 7: Long-Term Consequences of Traumatic Brain Injury*, found "sufficient evidence" to link moderate or severe levels of TBI with the five ailments.

The new regulations, printed in the *Federal Register*, say that if certain Veterans with service-connected TBI also have one of the five illnesses, then the second illness will also be considered as service connected for the calculation of VA disability compensation.

Eligibility for expanded benefits will depend upon the severity of the TBI and the time between the injury causing the TBI and the onset of the second illness. However, Veterans can still file a claim to establish direct service-connection for these ailments even if they do not meet the time and severity standards in the new regulation.

Veterans who have questions or who wish to file new disability claims may use the eBenefits website, available at www.eBenefits.va.gov/ebenefits.

Servicemembers who are within 180 days of discharge may also file a pre-discharge claim for TBI online through the VA-DoD eBenefits portal at www.eBenefits.va.gov/ebenefits.

The published final rule will be available Dec. 17 at <http://www.regulations.gov>.

Information about VA and DoD programs for brain injury and related research is available at www.dvbic.org.

Information about VA's programs for Gulf War Veterans is available at www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/gulfwar/hazardous_exposures.asp.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2013/12/16/us/new-rule-to-make-it-easier-for-veterans-to-get-health-care-for-some-traumatic-injuries.html>

Florida Veterans Programs & Projects, Inc. and the Veterans Council of St. Johns County are working on a new documentary to premiere in November 2014. In order to complete this important documentary about how wounded warriors are able to succeed in today's society with the aid of K9s, we are asking for your help. Please look at the short trailer of what we have done so far and please consider contributing: <http://vimeo.com/71966728>

All contributions are tax deductible. Please make checks out to Florida Veterans Programs & Projects, Inc. and mail to 4905 Los Altos Circle, Elkton, FL 32033. Thank you.



Short Summary

This documentary tells the story of the K9 For Warriors Program which month after month is radically changing the lives of Post-9/11 veterans who are suffering with PTSD and pairing them with rescued dogs trained to be service dogs. Veterans have described the success of the story as "waking up from a nightmare".

- This short documentary is intended to promote the efforts of K9 for Warriors and recruit more donors and veterans**
 - It is important to educate the public about PTSD and how rescued dogs are being used to heal and comfort veterans who thought life for them was over**
- This documentary will allow us to take the inspiring and positive message of K9 for Warriors global letting the world know that healing is not just possible, it's happening.**

We want to share this uplifting and positive message in a sea of bad news and difficulty that will create a greater audience for the program and it's possibilities.

What We Need & What You Get

We need your help. There are production expenses involved in making any film. Please support us to make this film a reality!

- Post 9/11 Veterans are suffering in unacceptably high rates and need relief beyond the medication and services that are being offered to them at no avail**

This project is being sponsored by FVPPI and the Veterans Council of St. Johns County.

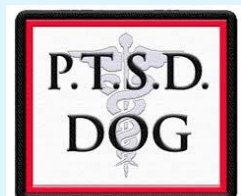
Other Ways You Can Help

- Please help us spread the word about this film and fundraising.**
- Forward the trailer on your social media.**

Email people or even call folks to help us make this happen



THANK YOU for being part of this important film about Veterans, rescued dogs and miraculous healing.



The Veterans Council wants to thank AJ Sartin for being the VC website administrator. John Mountcastle has set-up a guide for all veterans/not for profit groups on what you need to know to stay in compliance with IRS regulations.



The IRS info page has been added to the WebSite under the IRS & Charities button.

**www.VeteransCouncilOfStJohns.org or
www.StJohnsVetsCouncil.org**

If you click on them, the .pdf file opens. If the file does not open you can get Adobe Reader here, just click on <http://get.adobe.com/reader/> and you can download the file.

**If you still cannot open this link contact Michael at:
mrothfeld@anyveteran.org**

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 information Herb Steigelman,
Curator**

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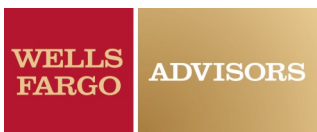
General Public is invited to Community Forum to be held Feb. 16th at 5PM @ UF Whitney Lab Auditorium

Meeting:
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*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

On the Job



**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
Tammy Shirley, Assistant VSO*

**Women's Air Force Service
Pilots of America**
wingsacrossamerica.us/wasps/

WASP Museum
waspmuseum.org/

The locally produced *Vietnam documentary, Service, Sacrifice
and Courage* has received **278,256** 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.



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.