



# The Patriot Reader

## VETERANS COUNCIL OF ST. JOHNS COUNTY

**CHAIRMAN BILL DUDLEY**  
**VICE CHAIRMAN RAY QUINN**  
**SECRETARY GEORGE APRIL**  
**TREASURER MICHAEL ROTHFELD**

Newsletter Editor Michael Rothfeld

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Newsletter Date: July, 2014

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### Message from the Chairman



page

Fellow Veterans:

We were also very privileged to have attending from Tampa, Vice Admiral Mark Fox, Deputy Commander, CENTCOM. VADM Fox made a presentation to the essay winners of this year's essay contest and addressed the Battle of Midway Veterans at the Sponsor's Reception before the dinner. Also attending the gala event were Rear Admiral Ricky Williamson, Commander, Navy Region Southeast, NAS Jacksonville and Rear Admiral Charles Richard, Commander, Sub Group 10, Kings Bay, Ga.

Mr. Nick Ross, Asst. Director for Outpatient Clinics, Dept. of Veterans Affairs and Mr. Jerry Cameron, Asst. County Administrator addressed our Council meeting, giving both views on the issue of the relocation of the CBOC. Mr. Ross' remarks and presentation of graphics did little to allay the concerns of our Veterans. In fact, I would have to say that he has heightened the concerns of the Veterans in St. Johns County. The timelines that were given far exceed the time left before all tenants in the current building must vacate the property. Given that the relocation and building of a new CBOC includes other government agencies including the GSA, there is no confidence that our Veterans will not experience an interruption in their health care service.

This has become the Navy Leagues signature annual event and if you have never attended, you should give strong consideration to being a part of these historical dinners before our Midway Veterans pass on to the history books of time. You may never have a better opportunity to be in the presence of so many of our National Treasures in one assemblage.

I would like to thank the huge outpouring of Veterans Thursday evening at our Veterans Council meeting to hear our two invited guest speakers discuss with us the impending relocation of our Community Based Outpatient Clinic

June 7 was a very special day as we once again celebrated the honoring of our Veterans at the Battle of Midway Commemorative Dinner at the Renaissance Resort Hotel, World Golf Village. Over 600 from our community gathered to pay their respects to our Battle of Midway Veterans, as well as our former POW's, WW II, Korean, Vietnam, Gulf War, Wounded Warriors, and other Veterans who were in attendance.

We were very privileged to have as our keynote speaker this year Vice



Admiral Michelle Howard, Deputy CNO for Operations, Plans, and Strategy, ( N3/N5 ). VADM Howard has been selected to receive her 4<sup>th</sup> Star and promotion to Vice Chief of Naval Operations in a ceremony and Change of Command later this month at the Pentagon. We are very fortunate to have an officer of VADM Howard's experience and proven leadership to be moving into the number two position for the Navy and a pioneer as the first female 4 star in the US Navy.



### Special Points of Interest

- 5 Famous War Dogs pg 29
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CBOC dilemma. The County has offered to build within the new building being built at the new San Sebastian Way location a facility that adequately meets the needs of our Veterans for their health care needs. The VA offered many reasons ( read as excuses ) as to why that site would not work. The County Administration met every reason given by the VA with a positive action by complying with their requirements.

The Veterans Council leadership intends to reach out to our Congressional Representative, Mr. Ron DeSantis and our two Florida U.S. Senators, Mr. Bill Nelson and Mr. Marco Rubio and request their involvement in remediating this issue and assuring our Veterans are not negatively impacted by the long delays and indecision of the VA.

We will keep our Veterans posted as we continue to bring continued focus on this critical issue through every means and resource available to us.  
Bill Dudley , Chairman, Veterans Council of St. Johns County

## Clyde E. Lassen State Veterans Nursing Home

*Patriotism is our Motto*



We started a monthly checkers tournament

Mr. White congratulating the winner, Mr. Brady.

My company is hosting a meet and greet event with Congressman Ted Yoho and his Veteran constituents. Congressman Yoho is Florida's 3<sup>rd</sup> District. He'll be speaking for about 10 to 15 minutes and then open the floor for discussion. It's going to be held at the Adamec Harley Davidson in Orange Park on Wells Rd from 9 to 10 am on July 1<sup>st</sup>. If you're interested or know someone that would be interested the flyer is above with the address information. If you have any questions please feel free to contact me. All of my contact information is below. There will be coffee and doughnuts or bagels. Please let all your veteran friends and veterans organization know about this, thank you

**Debra Dow, Community Relations Director**  
**National Association of Senior Veterans - Veteran Support Center**

1300 Cooks Lane NE, Green Cove Springs, FL 32043, Direct: (904) 394-3909

Toll Free: 1 (800) 352-2919, Cell: 1 (210) 306-6315, Fax: (904) 264-1070

[debra@vetmatter.org](mailto:debra@vetmatter.org)

## You Are Invited



### Coffee with your Congressman

**July 1, 2014 from 9 am to 10 am**

**Join us for coffee and conversation with Congressman Ted Yoho.**

**Located at the Adamec Harley Davidson Conference Room Orange Park 1520 & 1522 Wells Rd.**

**Congressman Yoho wants to Hear Your Concerns!**

Brought to you by:



Orange Park, FL



## 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, September 8th** 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.

Come on support  
"Spirit Night" for  
Wreaths Across  
America" at  
Sonny's Bar-B-Que  
on Tuesday, July 8th  
from 5 pm to 8 pm.  
Lots of fun and  
prizes every 15  
minutes!!!



# SPIRIT NIGHT

*Come all, come hungry and  
join us at Sonny's BBQ  
Tuesday July 8<sup>th</sup>  
from 5pm - 8pm*



*Located at  
1720 US1 South in  
St. Augustine*



*Help us reach our  
goal of 1,214 wreaths  
to be placed at the  
St. Augustine  
National Cemetery.*

*Sponsored by the St. Johns County Veterans Council  
Help support*

***WreathsAcrossAmerica.org***

*Contact Ray Quinn @ 904 540-1630 or Judy Davis @ 904 797-2686*



## **Negotiations for VA Outpatient Clinic Stalled. By Michael Isam**

St. Augustine, Fla, (June 18, 2014) – If you are old enough to remember the Paris Peace Accord this could be a Yogi Berra “Déjà Vu all over again” moment.

An article on the History.com website dated December 12, 1968 tells the story. “The Paris Peace talks, which opened on May 10, continue to be plagued by procedural questions that impeded any meaningful progress.” Both the South Vietnamese and North Vietnamese continually refused to move forward until matters ranging from seating arrangements of delegates to the shape and placement of the tables were satisfactorily settled. If not for Averell Harriman the talks may not have begun.

Speaking before a larger than normal gathering of veterans during a meeting of the Disabled American Veterans Chapter 6, Assistant County Administrator Jerry Cameron presented a brief timeline of communications between St. Johns County and the Department of Veterans Affairs.



Jerry Cameron

Formal communications began on October 12, 2011 between Mary Ann Blount, Director of Land Management Systems for St. Johns County, Cameron, and Cynthia Halstead, Administrator of the local Community Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC), and Rachel Griner of the VA Lease Team informing them Lowe’s had presented the county with a Purchase and Sale Agreement to be considered at the November 1, 2011 St. Johns Board of County Commissioner’s meeting and following the closing they would have two years to vacate the premises.

What followed in quasi-discussion via emails, certified delivered documents, and phone conversations seem to make the above mentioned peace talks pale in comparison.

“We have bent over backwards, tap danced, pleaded, extended dates with Lowe’s, and generally extended ourselves to the limit of time allotment,” said Cameron. “We offered to make facilities available to them, built to their specifications in our new facility and have, to date received nothing but a run around.” Cameron continued “There comes a time when one realizes that there is only one side to an apparent two-sided discussion.” Cameron quoted an old adage proclaiming “When a person does not want to do a thing, any excuse, no matter how irrelevant, is offered, and this is where we are now.”

Senior County Veteran Service Officer Joe McDermott commented on one excuse used “the location does not offer enough places to eat” with “I do believe the primary

purpose is to provide for the veteran. Staff considerations are secondary and in some occasions, tertiary in concern.”



Joseph "Mac" McDermott, St. Johns County Veterans Service Officer

Many more “concerns” from Nick Ross, Assistant Director, Veterans Health Systems in Gainesville were received and addressed according to Cameron. “Now it appears the location we are offering is out of the center of population for their relocation... by a few blocks.” McDermott quotes the tracking his office routinely completes noting, “The growing veteran population in the county is in the north with Nocatee and other developments. The south end of the county is not growing and therefore is not viable regarding their center of population.”

“Are we frustrated? Extremely so,” said Cameron. “But with the realization the VA staff will use any excuse, the frustration diminishes to the level of shaking one’s head and walking away.” “Given the timeline of March 31, 2015, there is not enough time to complete the work. Add to that a \$50,000 per month fine imposed for not vacating in the specified time limit.

By a miracle of possible Divine intervention, the announcement of the impending last minute meeting reached the desk of Public Affairs Officer Cindy Snook. In an e-mail she included bullet points regarding the current situation with the St. Augustine CBOC:

- Under no circumstances will VA services be interrupted to Veterans in the St. Augustine area.
- Plans are in place to acquire a replacement clinic
- The plans are presently being overseen by Department of Veterans Affairs Central Office (VACO) Office of Construction and Facilities Management, Real Property Services
- Solicitations for offers has been issued
- Bids will be evaluated next month (July)
- I want to reiterate that we strive to meet the needs of every Veteran we serve and there will be no interruptions of VA Services to Veterans in the St. Augustine area.

Upon receipt by Veterans Council Chairman Bill Dudley, he extended an invitation to Snook to attend the next Veterans Council meeting on Thursday, June 26 at the Elks Lodge on Anastasia Blvd. As of this writing it is not known if she has accepted.

[Disclosure: The author of this story is the current Commander of DAV Chapter 6 who receives his medical treatment from the VA and is assigned to the St. Augustine CBOC.]

## Comrades and Family Remembered In Memorial Day Ceremony By Michael Isam



St. Augustine, Fla, (May 27, 2014) – The 2014 Memorial Day ceremony at the St. Augustine National Cemetery witnessed the largest assembly in recent years. Some estimates put the number at 400 people who gathered on an overcast and sultry day to honor fallen veterans. The ceremony was sponsored by Ancient City Chapter, Military Officers Association of America, the Florida National Guard, and the Veterans Council of St. Johns County.

Before the ceremony began, numerous occasions of handshakes and hugs were exchanged, veteran to veteran. A solemn time marked by gratefulness and much camaraderie. No greater love exists than the love of one veteran to another. They share a bond that others can only witness from afar.

The ceremony included the time honored tradition of reading names of veterans who passed since the previous Veteran's Day. The 117 names were read by Peggy Linardos and Deidre Mountcastle. Cadet Michaela Heinrich, Nease High School NJROTC, served as salute officer peeling a ship's bell for each branch of service.

More than 30 organizational color guards participated under the leadership of Parade Marshall CWO4 George McCrea, USA retired. Marching on to the parade field, the color guards were led by the Florida National Guard Adjutant General's Honor Guard and honored by veteran presenting hand salutes and civilians with hand-over-heart. After the ceremony Former Mayor George Gardner remarked, "Despite the number of times I witness this event, the sight of row upon row of our nation's flag plucks my heartstrings and the pure sound of honor fills my soul." "Magnificent," he said, "Just magnificent."

The highlight of the ceremony was the "Tribute to A Fallen Comrade" written and read by SGM Ray Quinn, USA retired. Quinn penned the piece and registered it with the U.S. Copyright Office on April 11, 2005. Quotes from the piece are used by permission.

The tribute speaks of how a fallen comrade is honored by those still living. "Brother must tend to brother," it reads. The monument is simple, but powerful, showing "honor and respect for the one who has fought the good fight and given their last full measure."

"Marked by the tools of a soldier's trade," read Quinn, "it will never be seen in a church synagogue or chapel, only on the field of battle." The tools are the soldier's boots, rifle with fixed bayonet, helmet, and dog tags.

Even though people knew it was coming, many still flinched and jumped when the rifle salute, performed by the Florida National Guard, sounded. Not all were veterans. The salute was followed by

the solitary bugle of St. Johns County Sheriff's Office Commander John Donlon, retired. "Of all the military bugle calls, none is so easily recognized or more apt to render emotion than the call Taps," wrote bugler historian Jari A. Villanueva in his article 24 Notes That Tap Deep Emotions

After the benediction and retirement of the colors, many of the audience fell in behind the Ancient City Pipes and Drums to proceed north on Charlotte street to the Plaza de la Constitution to participate in the rededication of the Pilot Club of St. Augustine War Monument which was recently moved to a more prominent and accessible location. Thoughtfulness was expressed for those unable to walk the distance, transport to and from the plaza was provided by The Green Trolleys.

"Day is done, gone the sun,  
From the hills, from the lake,  
From the sky.  
All is well, safely rest,  
God is nigh."



SGM Ray Quinn, USA, ret



Tribute to a Fallen Comrade



Veterans Ken Bryan and Tom Crawford greet each other



Michaaela Heinrich



Old Glory Salutes her sons and daughters



## First Militia Chapter of the Association of the U.S. Army

The First Militia Chapter, Association of the United States Army, was established in November 1994 in St. Augustine, Florida – our nation's oldest city. Our chapter represents the northeast Florida area, which includes the counties of Alachua, Baker, Bradford, Clay, Columbia, Dixie, Duval, Flagler, Gilchrist, Hamilton, Lafayette, Levy, Nassau, Putnam, St. Johns, Suwannee, and Union. The Chapter also serves parts of Madison, Marion and Volusia Counties with other Florida AUSA Chapters.

As an AUSA chapter our focus is to support AUSA initiatives, represent our Army service members, retirees, and their families, and to support our communities. Our primary service programs include providing annual scholarships to deserving college students, annually recognizing the Army JROTC programs in our region, and supporting soldiers and their families in our region. To ensure we are able to support our service programs we annually host a chapter golf tournament, which has proven to be a great success. And finally, to ensure involvement and camaraderie within our organization we hold a quarterly dinner and general membership meeting that any and all are welcome to attend.

The Association of the United States Army was established in 1950 as a private non-profit organization that works to support all components of the United States Army, which includes the active, National Guard, and Reserve components. The focus of AUSA is to serve as a voice of the United States Army, to promote public awareness and support the Army's role in our nation's security effort, to provide education and information to promote a better understanding of our Army's issues and activities, and to provide service and support to our soldiers, their families, and our communities.

As a chapter of the Association of the United States Army we stand proud and ready to serve our nation, state and community. We welcome all who are interested in becoming a member and getting involved in our organization. To become a member of AUSA, First Militia Chapter simply go to [www.ausa.org](http://www.ausa.org) and click on "Become an AUSA member". For information concerning the First Militia Chapter please click on the "Leadership" tab and either call or email the respective point of contact.

### **Membership: Members of the finest small chapter of AUSA – The First Militia Chapter Individual Membership**

During the last three years, First Militia Chapter has earned a spot in the National Presidents Gold Club and received a cash bonus for exceeding our membership goal of 435. This year AUSA National raised the Chapter's membership goal to 450 members. Your support is important to us by bringing new members to our quarterly Dinner and Meeting, renewing your membership before the expiration date, and referring friends or colleagues to join us. Please contact our membership secretary for further information or assistance at: [rebecca.gibson@us.army.com](mailto:rebecca.gibson@us.army.com) or call 904-823-0646. To apply on line for membership, please use [www.ausa.org](http://www.ausa.org) and go to membership. Our Chapter Number is C3205 or First Militia Chapter.

Corporate Membership: Our Chapter also has a robust list of Corporate Sponsors members ranging from 23 to 30 monthly consisting of mostly small business owners supporting our local chapter and local army families and veterans. Our Corporate Sponsors are a significant factor in helping us support our Soldier, Family, Scholarship and JROTC programs. Their products and services are routinely recognized in our quarterly newsletters and our meetings and dinners. Please contact our VP for Corporate Membership for further information or assistance at [wingardc@comcast.net](mailto:wingardc@comcast.net) or call (904) 315-4620. For on line service, go to [www.ausa.org](http://www.ausa.org) and then membership, Corporate. Our Chapter Number is C3205.





## **Veterans Remembered in Council on Aging Ceremony By Michael Isam**

St. Augustine, Fla, (May 24, 2014) – On Friday the Council on Aging (COA) held their annual Memorial Day Celebration at River House on Marine Street. The event was well attended by a cadre of veterans from several branches.

Martha Skinner, Senior Center Coordinator was Master of Ceremonies. Dr. David Rice, Pastor of Ancient City Baptist Church provided the invocation and asked attendees to observe a moment of silence for those veterans who have given their “last full measure of devotion” to their country.

Color presentation was provided by members of the Nease Naval Junior ROTC under the direction of John A. Duffy, USN (Retired).

SGM Ray Quinn, USA, (Retired) spoke eloquently about St. Augustine’s display of flags beginning with the American Legion post on Anderson Circle, flag displayed by the city of St. Augustine at the west end of the Bridge of Lions and down Avenida Menendez to the parade ground across from the Florida National Guard Headquarters on Marine Street. “The flag on the parade ground did not always fly 24 hours per day. The flag was raised every morning and lowered every evening until 2002,” said Quinn. “When the number of soldiers being deployed by the Florida National Guard,” continued Quinn, “the decision was made to illuminate it and fly it 24 hours per day to let the soldiers know this was their home, their temple and it was going to remain flying because of their sacrifices.” “If you think about it, our city would make a wonderful canvas for a Norman Rockwell painting, said Quinn.”

Quinn made reference to the anti-war demonstrations where protesters carried that same flag. “When I see that,” said Quinn, “I think of my brothers and sisters of the military made it possible for them be there, to carry the signs that I disagreed with, but which they believe in so fervently.”

Quinn went on to say, “Since 2002 the Florida National Guard has deployed more than 14,000 men and women. Multiply that by the 50 states and five territories and you have a relevant force.” “We developed two ceremonies. One was for deployment and the other for their “Welcome Home!”

On deployment, each unit was given a flag and asked to fly it at their field of operation, to bring that flag home and display it in their armory to show their citizens where that flag had been and who it represents.”

Quinn went on to relate of the times that soldiers had come home with “Old Glory” wrapped around them. “I can close my eyes and see the funeral honors detail as they fold the flag with great care, crease it, and held against the chest, present it to a general officer accompanied by a three second salute.” “I remember each time a general officer bent down on one knee to present that flag to the family of the fallen.” “Please accept this flag as a token of our appreciation from a grateful nation.”

After Quinn came the River House Chorus presenting an Armed Forces medley. Piper Jim Sloan concluded the ceremony with “Danny Boy”.

Everyone adjourned to the dining room to enjoy a small repast which was highlighted by a presentation to Mario Patruno of a mess hall tray and fork. From the twinkle in his eyes and the smile on his face, you would believe he received the most treasured gift of his life.



Mess hall tray and fork



Piper Jim Sloan



SGM Ray Quimm, USA ret.



River House Chorus



Members of the audience enjoying the ceremony

Photos by Michael Isam

## Pilot Club War Memorial Rededication By Michael Isam



St. Augustine, Fla, (May 27, 2014) – Hundreds flocked to the Plaza de la Constitution on Memorial Day with many asking “Where is the memorial?”

The 68-year-old memorial was hidden from view; again. Not by the FPL power boxes, but by the sea of humanity come to witness its rededication and pay their respects to veterans of WWII, Korea, and Vietnam who paid the ultimate sacrifice for their country.

The memorial had been decommissioned April 28, 2014 to prepare it for the move approximately 30 feet west from its original location established in 1946.

With the unmistakable sound of pipes, drums, the Ancient City Pipe and Drum Corp made its way across King Street and onto the grounds of the plaza. A cadre of color guards followed closely behind along with many people who walked the distance from the Memorial Day ceremony at the St. Augustine National Cemetery.

Capt. Charles Stratman, USN (retired.) rang 4 bells signaling the commencement of the ceremony followed by a welcoming by Kay Burtin, President of the Pilot Club of St. Augustine. The rich voice of Weyman Hudgins rang out the Star Spangle Banner with the audience singing along. Rene Naughton, past Florida district governor and district chaplain, provided the invocation.

Additional speakers at the event were St. Augustine Mayor Joe Boles, State Rep. Doc Renuart, and Col. Rik Erkelens, USA, retired, President of the Military Officers Association of America, John Valdez, the “anonymous” contractor who stepped forward and offered his services to move the memorial, and St. Augustine native son Bobby Jones credited with setting the move of the monument in motion.

Additional plaques bearing witness to the service and sacrifice of our local men and women who died in Iraq and Afghanistan will be added in the future.

The ceremony was concluded with a solitary ring of the ship bell followed by “Taps” offered by John Donlon, St. Johns County Sheriffs Department, retired.



Ancient City Pipe & Drum Corps



Anne Heymen



FNG AG Honor Guard



Kay Burtin



Rene Naughton



## A TRADITION OF HONOR

*Submitted by: Harvey K. Warnock, Past Commander Greater Beaches VFW Post 3270*

Guardsmen and Reservists are not now and never have attempted to avoid military service. They have elected to be business people, farmers, teachers, homemakers, and professionals first, and then skilled military specialist ready to respond to their country's need. This is in the very finest

American tradition.

Flash back to April 18, 1775, British General Thomas Gage sent 700 soldiers to destroy weapons and ammunition the colonists had stored in the town of Concord and to arrest Samuel Adams and John Hancock. After learning of the British plans, Dr. Joseph Warren alerted Paul Revere who made his famous ride. The battle of Lexington and Concord soon ensued.

The colonists expecting a fight with the British to be inevitable had organized a group of local farmers and townsmen into a militia called the Minutemen. From their homes and farms they came, greatly outnumbered, and with unorthodox military strategy, but with accurate sharp-shooting resulting in 73 British soldiers killed and 174 wounded before their return to Boston. The patriots had lost 49 killed and 39 wounded. The concept of the citizen soldier was born and successful!

From our American Revolutionary beginnings to the present our citizen soldiers have wanted to pursue their education, jobs, and professions, but have always been quick to respond to the defense of their country on domestic soil and abroad. Today there is a wide variety of National Guard and Reserve Units that make up our modern day citizen soldiers. They serve in the tradition of the Minuteman. These men and women continually train, honing their skills to remain tough enough to get the job accomplished. Don't ever look at a reservist or guardsman as someone avoiding military duty or as a second-class militia. They are among our very finest citizens and trained military troops.

Since WW II our citizen soldiers have answered the call frequently, in Korea, the "Cold War", Vietnam, Desert Storm, Desert Shield, and now Operation Iraqi Freedom and Afghanistan. These are not second-class citizen soldiers; they are modern day Minutemen who now make up almost 40% of the forces defending us in the mid-east. Because you are in the National Guard or any military reserve unit certainly does not mean that you are trying to avoid active duty. Many folks do not realize that most of our military that has served in the past are reservist; they are not in the "Regular" Army, Navy, Marines, or Air Force. They will finish the active duty portion of their service and remain in the reserve for the balance of their obligation. We presently have a small standing military force making the guardsman and reservist more important than ever to our military system. Thank you, to all of the men and women of our regular forces, guard, and reserves for doing your service. Our country needs and respects all of you.

## Busy Meeting for DAV By Michael Isam

St. Augustine, Fla, (June 18, 2014) – The regular DAV meeting agenda went by the way-side in favor of a discussion regarding the future of the St. Augustine Community Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC).

Before advancing to the discussion, two special items required immediate attention.

The first order of business was the awarding of Past Commander pins to Shawn Prentiss, 2007-2008; Judy Davis, 2010-2012; A. J, Sartin, 2012-2014.

The Chapter remained active because of the commitment of these leaders.

Herb “The Sock Man” Naumann has a personal quest to make sure that all veterans in nursing homes in St. Johns County have warm comfortable socks. “I plan to give out 1,000 pairs of socks by December 31, 2014. I am on my way having distributed more than 600 pair so far this year.” Naumann also provides to active duty personnel in Afghanistan. The need is not as great since the draw-down, says Naumann, “but more elder veterans are going to nursing homes, so there is a continual need.” If you want to donate to the cause, contact Herb Naumann at 904-794-5307. Herb has hearing challenges, so speak slow, clear, with volume, but do not shout.

The largest portion of the meeting was dedicated to the history of communications between St. Johns County and primarily Nick Ross, Assistant Director for Outpatient Clinics and others with the VA. The future of the CBOC, run by the Department of Veterans Affairs Health System, is currently in jeopardy as the VA must vacate the current building by March 31, 2015 or face a \$50,000 per month fine. Ross is scheduled to be present at the Veterans Council meeting on June 26 at 7pm. The Council meets at the Elks Lodge on A1A South.

Photos courtesy of DAV Chapter 6: Past Commanders2: in front: Chapter Mascot, Gidget; (l-r) A.J. Sartin, Shawn Prentiss, Judy Davis, current commander Michael Isam



Herb “The Sock Man” Naumann with 230 pair of sox donated by DAV Chapter 6.

## *Spotlight on CSM Gary Lee Wingard, our featured Veteran of the Month*

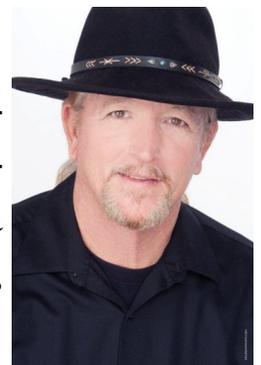


Gary Lee Wingard graduated in June 1970 from Theodore Roosevelt High School in Kent, Ohio and enlisted in the Ohio Army National Guard. Trained as a helicopter mechanic, Gary performed crew chief duties as he attended Kent State University where he was a member of Sigma Tau Gamma. In 1974, Gary moved to Florida and was employed by the Florida Army National Guard in 1975 as an aircraft mechanic. Gary culminated his career in Aviation as the Command Sergeant Major (CSM) until 2000 when he reclassified as an IT Tech and transferred to the Signal Corps

As a traditional National Guardsman, Gary was activated for trucker strikes, riots, fires, floods, hurricanes, and political national conventions, receiving laudatory praise for his duty performance. Gary continued to excel in the National Guard and attained the rank of Sergeant Major (E9) in 1991. In 1995, he was assigned as the CSM of the 1/111th Aviation Attack Battalion in exercise "Bright Star" in northern Egypt, a joint exercise between the USA and UAE. Gary received the Army Aviation Association of American's highest award as the best Aviation Unit in the US Army in 1995. In September 2006, Gary deployed with Operation Iraqi Freedom as the Task Force Kuwait CSM in the 1/111th Aviation General Support Battalion. Gary was in charge of over 600 soldiers and aviation assets in the theater combat zone under the command of LTG Whitcomb, CG, 3<sup>rd</sup> Army. For excellence in the performance of his duties, Gary received the Bronze Star. Following his deployment, Gary retired from the Army National Guard in 2008 with honors, receiving the Legion of Merit.

Gary is a member of the Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States (EANGUS). As the FL association President in 2005, he oversaw the successful operation of the EANGUS National Conference in Orlando Florida with 2,000 attendees.

In 2010, Gary began a solo music career. He completed his first Album "Once There Was A Man", in 2012. Gary has played for thousands at festivals and can be seen regularly at local northeast Florida bistros and upscale restaurants. Gary travels each summer in his RV, sharing his music, and is currently working on his second album.



**Battle of Midway Commemoration pictures by Garry Cohn, member St. Augustine –Palm Coast Navy League Council and used with his permission**



# Navy League Honors Battle of Midway Veterans

By MC1 Michael Wiss

Reprinted from an article in the Mayport Mirror

*Navy Public Affairs Support Element East, Detachment Southeast*

Hundreds of guests honored World War II veterans at the 17th commemoration of the U.S. naval victory at Midway during a memorial dinner held June 7 at the World Golf Village Renaissance Resort in St. Augustine.

The event, sponsored by the U.S. Navy League, paid homage to veterans who fought so valiantly at the Battle of Midway. It is widely regarded as the most important naval battle of the Pacific in World War II.

Approximately one month after the Battle of Coral Sea and six months after the attack on Pearl Harbor, the U.S. Navy decisively defeated the Imperial Japanese Navy and turned the war to America's favor. According to Navy league member Bill Howard, these great veterans are responsible for the freedom we enjoy today.

"We need to recognize that freedom is not free," he said. "It takes a lot of good people, such as the veterans we are honoring tonight, to provide the freedom we enjoy today."

The guest speaker for the annual event was Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Operations, Plans, and Strategy Vice Adm. Michelle Howard. She is the first African-American woman to command a U.S. Navy ship, USS Rushmore (LSD 47). According to Howard, it was a great honor to recognize those who truly represent the Navy core values of honor, courage and commitment.

"We are in the presence of the defenders of American freedom, democracy and the American way of life," she said during her speech.

"We cannot not be offered a more precious opportunity to express to the Midway veterans what their contributions mean to us."

Other highlights of the event was a special Full Service Color Guard presentation by members of all six services, including the Merchant Marine and a moving six person POW/MIA table by those same service members. According to Howard, this was a night to remember the sacrifices these veterans made for us 72 years ago.

"To be able to honor these battle of Midway veterans is a privilege," she said. "The biggest part of this event is being able to talk to the veterans and say thank you for your service."



Photo by MC2 Salt Cebe  
Vice Adm. Michelle Howard, deputy chief of Naval Operations, Plans and Strategy, speaks with Battle of Midway veteran, Wendell Thrasher during the 17th Battle of Midway commemoration dinner at World Golf Village Renaissance Resort in St. Augustine.

Read more at Jacksonville.com: <http://mayportmirror.jacksonville.com/military/periscope/2014-06-18/story/navy-league-honors-battle-midway-veterans#ixzz35HMKr1oz>

# Volunteers' goal: A flag on every military grave for Memorial Day

By [Sandy Strickland](#) Sat, May 24, 2014 @ 9:12 pm this article is taken from a larger article that appeared in the *Florida Times Union*

## JACKSONVILLE TRADITION

At Jacksonville National Cemetery, flags have always been placed on Memorial Day weekend at the site of veterans' remains. Joe Covella Jr., a 20-year Marine Corps veteran and former drill sergeant, spearheads the operation. He's been doing it since January 2009, when the cemetery was created on Lannie Road near Jacksonville International Airport.

Last year, he expected 60 volunteers. About 250 turned out. It took only 15 minutes to set up the flags. As of March, there were 7,328 veterans and their families interred at Jacksonville National, he said.

As a Marine, national cemeteries hold a special place in Covella's heart; couple that with the fact that his father died in Vietnam and is buried in Arlington National Cemetery.

Covella and other volunteers place the flags every Saturday before Memorial Day. Covella — usually by himself, but sometimes he gets some help — will pick them up on the Tuesday after the holiday.

"It takes me most of the morning, but I don't mind."



JOHN PEMBERTON/The Times-Union  
Joe Covella, a Marine veteran and a volunteer at the Jacksonville National Cemetery, helps place small American flags at hundreds of graves despite heavy rain Saturday. The mood was upbeat and respectful as he and other former Marines spent the day honoring the fallen. "We remember why we're celebrating Memorial Day," Covella



Covella likes to involve children in the flag-placing, saying it's a good way to teach them about Memorial Day, which honors America's war dead.

He starts at 10 a.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance and serves donated hot dogs to the kids afterward.

Covella is assisted by church groups, football leagues, Boy and Girl Scouts, veterans associations, other former Marines, churches such as Chets Creek and Fort Caroline Baptist, the Jacksonville National Cemetery Advisory Committee and Home Depot employees.

The cemetery's advisory committee buys some new flags each year, while some are donated by veterans groups and some are from prior years.

Covella also places 20 flags at the entrance to Evergreen Cemetery, which has memorials to Marines and Navy corpsmen. His grandson, Trey Simons, began helping him 10 years ago when he was 6.

## Tribute to Our National Anthem By Michael Isam



St. Augustine, Fla, (June 15, 2014) – Voices heard around the world!

On Saturday people across the nation gathered to wish “Happy Birthday” to our National Anthem, “The Star-Spangled Banner.”

The brainchild of the Smithsonian’s National Museum of American History, Americans hosted singing parties to celebrate the 200th anniversary and sing the anthem together. The Smithsonian hosted the premier singing party and shared the live broadcast across the nation and around the world.

Locally, nearly 100 people gathered on a hot and muggy afternoon to be part of the event. Event goers were met by a cadre of Maria Jefferson Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) members as they passed out small flags in honor of the auspicious occasion.

“One of the objectives of Daughters of the American Revolution,” said Linda Trevlyn, current Regent, “is Patriotic Endeavor.” “Through our efforts as a chapter,” she continued, “we endeavor to cherish, maintain and extend the institutions of American freedom.” The DAR has long held the effort of “fostering true patriotism and love of country, and to aid in securing for all, the blessings of liberty,” said Trevlyn.

In as far as the flag itself goes, "There was nothing special about it [the flag] at the time," said Scott S. Sheads, historian at Baltimore's Fort McHenry National Monument and Historic Shrine. Sheads was speaking in an article on the Smithsonian website, of a time when our new nation was still struggling for survival.

As is the case during history, the participants of the moment have little knowledge of the far-reaching effects their actions will have on the progeny to follow.

On a blazing July day in 1813, Mary Pickersgill, a hardworking widow known as one of the best flag makers in Baltimore, received a rush order from Maj. George Armistead, the newly installed commander of Fort McHenry. The 33-year-old officer wanted an enormous banner, 30 by 42 feet, to be flown over the federal garrison guarding the entrance to Baltimore's waterfront. Pickersgill, her daughter Caroline, and others, wrestled more than 300 yards of English worsted wool bunting to the floor of Claggett's brewery, the only space in her East Baltimore neighborhood large enough to accommodate the project.

More of the history is available at <http://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/star-spangled-banner-back-on-display-83229098/>.

On a rainy September 13, 1814, Francis Scott Key, a 35-year-old American lawyer, watched as British warships sent a 25 hour downpour of shells and rockets the eight miles onto Fort McHenry in Baltimore Harbor. Key fully expected to see the British Union Jack to be flying over the fort come daybreak. To his astonishment, and delight, the American Flag still flew, signaling the American victory. That sight inspired his words to the "Defence of Fort M'Henry" printed in The Baltimore Patriot and now known as "The Star-Spangled Banner."

More history is available at <http://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/the-story-behind-the-star-spangled-banner-149220970/>

The local event was coordinated by John Reardon. With the help of many local groups, the event was declared a gigantic success. The St. Augustine Community Chorus, joined by the young cast

members of “Oliver!” and directed by Kathleen Vande Berg, led the audience in a stirring rendition of our national anthem, not once, but twice. The first time to help make history; the second “to applaud those who came to pay proper respect to our country and all she stands for,” said Reardon. “What a great day!” he continued.

Among the many organizations present was Judy Burnett Albright a member of the St. Augustine Lighthouse and Museum Board of Trustees. “I am here for a number of reasons,” said Albright, “I am here for my son who served in the Army; I am here for John to support his efforts, and to represent the Lighthouse and Museum.” John Regan, City Manager, represented the City of St. Augustine.

Unplanned participants in the festivities were two wedding parties and a soccer team from Europe. They all graciously took a moment to help celebrate.

Photo Credits: Michael Isam



St. Augustine Community Chorus  
and the cast of Oliver



St. Augustine Community Chorus  
and the cast of Oliver



European Soccer Players  
help sing



Karen Harvey DAR



Lightner Adorned

## A Public Service Announcement

-

### **Class Action Against USAA Relating To Failure To Pay Sales Tax On Covered Claims**

A class action has been filed against USAA automobile insurance companies alleging that USAA has improperly withheld sales tax from military men and women who have made auto insurance claims for their totaled vehicles. The lawsuit alleges that USAA improperly withheld up to 6% of the insured vehicle cost, which on a \$10,000 vehicle can be as high as \$600 per person. Documents filed with the federal court show that USAA withheld sales tax from as much as 75% of policy holders who made claims for totaled vehicles in a one year period. The same documents show that the withheld sales tax at issue in the lawsuit may total over \$17 million. The lawsuit is in federal court and styled *Chantal Bastian v. United Services Automobile Association, USAA Casualty Insurance Company, Garrison Property and Casualty Insurance Company, and USAA General Indemnity Company*, No. 3:13-cv-01454, Middle District of Florida, Jacksonville Division. The federal court denied without prejudice USAA's motion to dismiss the lawsuit and the lawsuit is proceeding. **For information, you can contact attorney Tracy Markham at 904-794-7005 or [tmarkhamlaw@gmail.com](mailto:tmarkhamlaw@gmail.com).**

The St. Johns County DAV FL Chapter 6 has an Access Ramp available for a Veteran.  
It is an EZ-Access Modular Ramp.

Contact AJ to see if this ramp will be ADA Compliant with your need.

Here is a link to a picture of the Access Ramp:

<http://ezaccess.com/products/products.asp>

To learn more about this ramp, contact A. J. Sartin (904) 669-1946

[A. J. Sartin](#), Commander - VFW

[VilanoBeachVFW@att.net](mailto:VilanoBeachVFW@att.net)



[www.VilanoBeachVFW.org](http://www.VilanoBeachVFW.org)

At Vilano Beach VFW, "We Have Camaraderie and We Serve Our Community"

## 2014 Florida County Veterans Service Officers Association Scholarship Award



**(L to R) SJC VSO Joseph McDermott, Madison Stenzel Graduating Senior Nease High School, Bill Dudley Chairman, Veterans Council of SJC Florida**



**(L to R) SJC VSO Joseph McDermott, Madison Stenzel Graduating Senior Nease High School, Bill Dudley Chairman, Veterans Council of SJC Florida**

On May 27, 2014 an award ceremony was held at the Allen D. Nease High School in St John's County Florida. Approximately 84 scholarships & awards were presented to members of the graduating class. The awards and scholarships reflected a wide assortment of Military, Civic, Character, and Monetary awards which included at least two appointments to the military academies of the U.S. ARMY & U.S. NAVY.

During the ceremony the Florida Association of County Veterans Service Officers presented a \$1500.00 scholarship to graduating Senior Madison Stenzel. The award was presented by Joseph McDermott, St John's County Veterans Service Officer and Bill Dudley, Chairman, Veterans Council of St John's County.

Madison Stenzel was presented with eight other scholarships at the ceremony and will be attending Yale University in New Haven Connecticut in the fall.

*Article and pictures submitted by St. Johns County Assistant Veterans Service Officer Rick Rees*

## Dog's D-Day exploits chronicled in children's book

Seventy years ago, on June 6, 1944, Allied forces executed Operation Overlord, where thousands of troops stormed Normandy Beach in France during World War II. Its success turned the tide of the war in Europe. One of the participants in the invasion was Bing, a two-year-old [Collie-German Shepherd mix](#), who was dropped with the British 6th Airborne Division behind enemy lines. Although the dog had trained for the actual jump, he needed a little “encouragement” from a fellow soldier’s boot to actually leap from the plane.



Bing and his handler, Army sniper Jack Walton, during World War II.

On the ground, Bing provided invaluable assistance to his men. The dog would keep watch while troops were sleeping, and would guide them through occupied territory — if he sensed danger ahead, he would freeze to signal the men. Later, Bing paired with an Army sniper named Jack Walton, and he was part of the crossing of the Rhine.

He was awarded the [PDSA Dickin Medal](#) for bravery in 1947.

After the war, Bing returned to owner in Essex, where he lived until 1955, when he died of natural causes.

Bing’s story is told in a new children’s book, [Amazing Adventures of Bing the Parachuting Dog](#) by Gil Boyd. Those interested in famous war dogs can check DogTime’s piece, "[Five Famous War Dogs](#)."

**The St. Johns County Veterans Council and FVPPI have been working closely for over a year on producing a 28 minute documentary featuring the stories of the wounded warriors, suffering from PTSD, their families and dogs and how all three work together to assist the warrior transition to life back home.**

**The documentary is in post production and will be ready in a few months.**

**We are looking for donations to help us finish this important educational work. Please send your tax deductible contributions to:**

**The Veterans Council of St. Johns County**

**PO Box 2117**

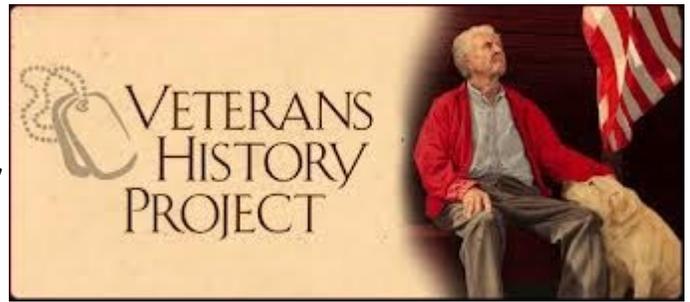
**St. Augustine, FL 32085**

**Please put K9 documentary on the memo line.**

**Here is a link to a short trailer of the documentary:**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tfilo7-AURc&feature=youtu.be>

**The Veterans History Project of the American Folklife Center collects, preserves, and makes accessible the personal accounts of American war veterans so that future generations may hear directly from veterans and better understand the realities of war.**



**The Project collects first-hand accounts of U.S. Veterans from the following wars:**

World War I (1914-1920)

World War II (1939-1946)

Korean War (1950-1955)

Vietnam War (1961-1975)

Persian Gulf War (1990-1995)

Afghanistan and Iraq conflicts (2001-present)

In addition, those U.S. citizen civilians who were actively involved in supporting war efforts (such as war industry workers, USO workers, flight instructors, medical volunteers, etc.) are also invited to share their valuable stories.

## **How to Participate in the Project**

A participant may be a veteran, an interviewer, or person donating a veteran's collection (learn more about what we collect). Students in the 10th grade and above may also participate and there are special resources for educators and students.



**“If you’d like to be added to the waiting list”, please contact: the Veterans History Project, local contact, Amy Ackerman / 827-6940 / [aackerman@sjcfl.us](mailto:aackerman@sjcfl.us), or Mikki Sampo / 209-3730 / [msampo@sjcfl.us](mailto:msampo@sjcfl.us) or Kathy Furney from Haven Hospice, v [jkfurney@havenhospice.org](mailto:jkfurney@havenhospice.org)**

On May 21, 2014, Rep. John Tierney (D-Mass.) introduced H.R. 4741, the Surviving Spouses Benefits Improvement Act. The bill would increase Dependency Indemnity Compensation (DIC) payments a surviving spouse receives from the VA when a service member or veteran dies from a service-connected cause. Under current law, an eligible surviving spouse receives \$1,233 per month in DIC. The amount is based off 43 percent of the basic compensation for a veteran with a 100 percent disability rating. H.R. 4741 increases that percentage to 55 percent, consistent with other federal employee programs. If enacted, the new DIC rate would be \$1,572 per month. The bill would exempt the increase in DIC payments from the unfair offset for survivors eligible to receive both a DoD Survivor's Benefit Plan annuity (SBP) and DIC.

Glenn E. Minney, Director of Government Relations  
Blinded Veterans Association, National Headquarters  
477 H. Street N.W.  
Washington, DC 20001-2694  
Office: (202)-371-8880 ext. 3305  
Toll Free: 1-800-669-7079



**For several years, D.A.V. FI Chapter 6 has furnished the passenger vans for the delivery of Veterans between the St. Augustine Clinic and the Gainesville, V.A. Hospital, and back, Monday – Friday. The Van departs the Clinic every weekday at 0600. Phone (904) 209-3710 to schedule a ride.**

**Drivers furnished by the COA are:**

**Monday – Lonnie Woodard; Tuesday –  
Jack LaLonde**

**Wednesday – Floyd Bubba; Thursday –  
Bob Garlander**

**Friday – Robert “Butch” Harrison**



## SURVIVOR OUTREACH SERVICES

There is no cause greater than taking care of those who have lost a soldier in service to our nation. Families who have paid the ultimate sacrifice deserve our respect, gratitude and the very best we can provide. The Army made a commitment to families to provide long-term support to survivors of the fallen. The Army-wide program includes the United States Army Reserve and Army National Guard, and provides dedicated and comprehensive support services.

One of the most important aspects of taking care of survivors is ensuring they know that they remain a part of the Army family. They are not simply 'dropped off the rolls' when their soldier dies or is killed. For many survivors, the loss of the military culture coupled with the loss of their loved one can be difficult to bear. Letting them know they are still a part of the Army culture can provide the reassurance and continuity they need while grieving.

Survivors are supported closest to where they reside, regardless of Army component. Support Coordinators and Financial Counselors ensure that survivors are supported whether they live near an installation, or are geographically dispersed. Survivor Outreach Services provides long term family case management and support services and is integral to the Army's casualty notification and support system.

Army Survivor Outreach Services currently provides support to more than 55,790 surviving military family members. The Army's commitment to survivors is reflected in its recognition of long-term support and outreach to survivors of all eras through the Army Survivor Outreach Services program.



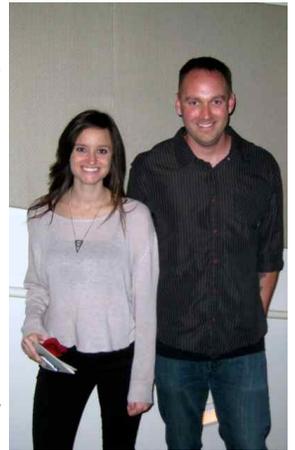
**For more information, please contact: Keith Ham, Survivor  
Outreach Services, Support Coordinator**

**Office (904) 823-0157 Cell (904) 472-7689 Fax (904) 827-8532**

***"In Country" is a short powerful documentary produced by two UNF students for an English class project. Tori Harris and Benjamin Causey filmed last year at the 5 Star Veterans Center in Jacksonville. They decided to produce a story on returning veterans.***

***The video, "In Country", is a very creative artistic endeavor about the life of a few returning veterans from the 5 Star Veterans Center.***

**From Tori Harris:** I have always been interested in psychology, so when I heard that there was a topic up for grabs in our documentary class that had to do with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, I really wanted to be a part of it. I wanted to understand this disorder intimately, not from a distance. Since I did not know many specifics about PTSD before starting this project, I wanted to know how this psychological disorder drove them to homelessness. This documentary was filmed at the Five Star Veteran's Center in Jacksonville, Florida. I learned so much just by being in the atmosphere and talking to the veterans. I spent hours listening to these men's stories, between interviewing, transcribing, and then listening to their stories over and over again in the editing process. This project only lasted a semester long, and even throughout the semester I had my own circumstances to worry about what with work, family, and other classes; but I often found myself thinking about Patrick, Brett, and Robert, replaying their words in my head at random times, and even thinking about their war stories. I still struggle to understand how they are expected to readapt into civilian life after seeing and experiencing the things they describe in this documentary. Listening to these men gave me a perspective about the trivialities of civilian life that made me reexamine my own life.



Tori and Benjamin

Two and half million Americans have served in Iraq and Afghanistan wars. "In Country" is an expression of three of those veterans' experiences. Pat, Brett and Rob have each suffered from homelessness at some point since they returned from war, and we wanted to find out why. Instead, we were struck by how much "combat experience" is a present-tense circumstance for these men, rather than just something that happened to them. The term "in-country" is military slang for being in a conflict area. For our three veterans, and countless others, the conflict clearly reverberates back here, in the United States.

**From Benjamin Causey:** Post-traumatic stress syndrome looms large for all of the veterans featured in the film, but PTSD is still only a part of their post-war lives. Brett suffers from traumatic brain injury and other physical ailments, and Rob tragically lost his daughter in an accident that he believes may not have happened had he not been in the army. This documentary attempts to visually represent the ways in which the aftermath of war applies to each day of a veteran's life, long after that war is over. Assisting in this effort are the paintings of Jerry Domask, who is a Vietnam War veteran himself. The paintings add another element of post-war expression from someone who was involved in the conflict that first brought PTSD into the general American consciousness.

Tori and I hope that viewers of "In Country" can appreciate that our three veterans, along with millions of others, shared a similar experience, but that they live that experience in two and a half million different ways. The consequences of war are often presented in casualty counts and in dollars, but "In Country" presents a different kind of consequence, one that lives and breathes on, regardless of the success or the outcome of battle.

Here is a link to "In Country":

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ePActenmzuI&feature=youtu.be>

Vietnam Veterans of America 1084, St. Augustine Chapter



Election of Officers  
President: Bob Dinkins  
1st Vice President: AJ Sartin  
2nd Vice President: Robert Place  
Secretary: George April  
Treasurer: Walter Mosher  
Member Chairman: John McGinty

VVA 1084 Meets the First Tuesday of the Month at the St. Augustine Elks Lodge 829

Officers and Commanders, **SCAM ALERT**

*There is a phony organization running around the State handing out business cards saying they are collecting money under the name of VFW-VA.*

*The guy's name is Daniel Soat and there are two phone numbers on the card. One in Daytona Beach area [386-872-0407](tel:386-872-0407) and the other number is [202-906-0507](tel:202-906-0507) in Washington DC.*

*Both numbers go to an answering machine and the mailboxes are full. Do yourself a favor and do not entertain any Communications from this scam artist.*

*They have nothing to do with the Veterans of Foreign Wars, this Department or the VA.*

*Please get the word out to your members and your auxiliaries. If anyone donates to this organization your only course of action is to contact the local authorities for justice.*

*Please get the word out ASAP.*

*Thanks, Gene, VFW Post 10476  
**Eugene "Gene" Perrino, Sr.***

**CWO (Ret) U.S. Army, Department Of Florida VFW**

**Assistant State Adjutant, Phone # [352-622-5126](tel:352-622-5126), Fax # [352-622-3869](tel:352-622-3869)**

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## Five Famous War Dogs

On [Memorial Day](#) we remember Americans who have died while serving in the armed forces. March 13, 1942 was the birthday of the U.S. K9 Corps, and here are five dogs who also bravely served their country. Their acts of heroism should not be forgotten

**Chips:** [Chips](#) was a [Collie-German Shepherd-Siberian Husky mix](#) who was the most decorated dog in [World War II](#). The pooch saw action in Germany, France, North Africa, and Sicily. Among the animal's heroic exploits are his assault on an Italian machine-gun nest and helping take 10 enemy Italian soldiers captive. Chips was awarded the [Distinguished Service Cross](#), [Purple Heart](#), and [Silver Star](#) for his actions; unfortunately, the commendations were revoked as military policy at the time didn't allow such recognition for animals. The dog returned to his home in [Pleasantville, NY](#), in 1945.



**Kaiser:** [Kaiser](#) was a [German Shepherd](#) who served in [Vietnam](#) under his handler Marine Lance Cpl. Alfredo Salazar. Kaiser and Salazar did more than 30 combat patrols and participated in 12 major operations together. After the pair joined "D" Company for a search-and-destroy mission, they were ambushed by enemy forces while on patrol in 1966. Kaiser was hit in the initial barrage and died while trying to lick Salazar's hand. Kaiser was the first war dog killed in action during the [Vietnam War](#).

**Nemo:** On December 4, 1966, [Nemo](#) and Airman 2nd Class Bob Throneburg were on patrol at a cemetery near the company's airbase in [Vietnam](#). The two came under enemy fire: and the [German Shepherd](#) took a round to his eye, and Throneburg was shot in the shoulder after killing two [Viet Cong](#) guerillas. Undaunted, Nemo still attacked the enemy, which gave Throneburg the precious minutes he needed to call in reinforcements. After Throneburg fell unconscious, Nemo crawled on top of the soldier's body to protect him from harm. The dog didn't let anyone touch his fallen handler; it took a veterinarian to remove Nemo (Nemo and Throneburg later recovered from their wounds). Nemo was later given a permanent retirement kennel; he died when he was 11 years old in December 1972. .



**Smoky:** A [Yorkshire Terrier](#) who saw action in the Pacific during [World War II](#), [Smoky](#) was initially found in February 1944, abandoned in a foxhole in the jungles of [New Guinea](#). The dog was included in a dozen combat missions and survived more than 150 air raids. Like famous [World War I](#) veteran [Stubby](#), Smoky used her sharp sense of hearing to warn of incoming artillery shells. One of Smoky's most famous exploits was at a crucial airstrip in the [Philippine Island](#) of [Luzon](#). The dog pulled a telegraph wire through a narrow 70-foot pipe, saving construction time and keeping workers and engineers safe from enemy fire. When not in harm's way, Smoky entertained troops with a

variety of tricks and self-taught antics. The dog died on February 21, 1957; she was 14 years old. Smoky's exploits are chronicled in detail in the book [Yorkie Doodle Dandy](#), written by her adoptive owner William A. Wynne.

**Stubby:** Probably the most famous war dog, this [American Pit Bull Terrier](#) was the only dog to be given the rank of sergeant. [Stubby](#) was found as a stray on the Yale campus in 1917, and smuggled to France during [World War I](#) by his adoptive owner, Cpl. John Robert Conroy. The dog's heroic acts include participating in 17 battles, four offenses, and improving troop morale. He also used his keen senses to warn his unit of poison-gas attacks, incoming artillery fire, and to locate downed soldiers on the battlefield (they were also put to good use when he sniffed out and apprehended a German spy lurking in the trenches). Stubby is remembered today: the [Pit Bull](#)-centric website, [StubbyDog.org](#), is named after him, as is the [Stubby Award for Canine Heroism](#). Stubby died in his owner's arms in 1926.



*Thanks to Terry Allan for this information*

## **Middle East Conflicts Wall**



On June 19th, 2004 a Granite Memorial Wall was dedicated commemorating the servicemen and women who have lost their lives in worldwide conflicts since 1979. The project was conceived by Jerry Kuczera and Tony Cutrano and built with donated material and labor and is the first of its kind, in the History of the United States, to give honor to our fallen by name while a conflict is ongoing. It took 20 years to Honor our Vietnam Veterans. Almost 60 years to Honor our World War II Veterans. The names on the wall represent our fallen heroes from such diverse locations as Panama, Lebanon, the Balkans, Grenada, Somalia, Haiti, USS Cole, USS Stark, Terrorist attacks in Italy, Greece, Scotland, and the current conflicts in the Middle East.

The Wall is located at 200 Riverfront Drive in Marseilles, Illinois. The Purpose of the Illinois Motorcycle Freedom Run is to show Our Brave Servicemen and Women, and their Families, that we support them, and to Honor Fallen Heroes. The route is lined with Americans waving American Flags and paying tribute. In the past we have had 10's of thousands of participants. The money raised through you generous donations is used to update and maintain the Memorial, and to put this wonderful event together. The first Memorial we erected was in the small town of St Anne Illinois. the hometown of Capt. Ryan A. Beaupre, one of Illinois first casualties in the war against terror. We have donated Memorials to all of the Veteran Homes and Hospitals in The State of Illinois in Honor of all our Veterans , Past and



Present. We Have assisted many of our Fallen Heroes Children, with funds for their education, in hopes that through education, they will learn to diplomatically resolve their problems.



U.S. Department  
of Veterans Affairs

## News Release

Office of Public Affairs  
Media Relations

Washington, DC 20420  
(202) 461-7600  
[www.va.gov](http://www.va.gov)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 18, 2014

# **VA Moves to Secure New Scheduling System**

*VA Holds Medical Appointment Scheduling System Industry Day*

WASHINGTON – Today, the Department of Veteran Affairs (VA) announced it is continuing the process to replace its medical appointment scheduling system through an acquisition process. Today, VA is hosting pre-solicitation “Industry Day” meetings with technology vendors to discuss the Department’s upcoming scheduling system acquisition.

“Our top priority is getting Veterans off waitlists and in to see their doctors,” said Acting Secretary Sloan Gibson. “We’re taking a series of immediate actions to ensure our Veterans receive the timely access to quality health care they have earned and deserve. We need lasting, long-term reforms, including a complete overhaul to replace the outdated technology for our scheduling system. Bringing an innovative scheduling product into our world-class electronic health record system is a crucial part of providing the scheduling staff in our facilities with the tools necessary to succeed. Our Veterans deserve nothing less than our best, and that’s exactly what we intend to give them.”

This Industry Day presents a unique opportunity for VA to communicate directly with potential vendors on all aspects of the upcoming scheduling system acquisition. The Industry Day serves as a face-to-face platform for exchanging information about business needs, industry best practices and challenges specific to VA’s scheduling system.

VA’s scheduling technical requirements are complex and require clear, well-articulated communication to ensure comprehensive understanding by industry and potential vendors. As part of today’s events, VA is conducting a live scheduling system architecture Q&A session to ensure potential solutions seamlessly interface with VA’s VistA electronic health record.

VA uses this type of event to facilitate communication with vendors and reduce the risk of misinterpretation and miscommunication on technical requirements. The information shared during the Industry Day will provide VA with a better understanding of what needs to be included in the upcoming scheduling system solicitation, with the ultimate goals of receiving solid proposals and reducing time to field new technologies.



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 Colonel, US Army (Retired)  
 Attorney and Civil Mediator

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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](mailto:mrothfeld@anyveteran.org)



LTC Greg Moore, USA, ret., Command  
Historian FL National Guard

**FL Dept. of Veterans Affairs**

<http://floridavets.org>

**FL Veterans Foundation**

[www.floridaveteransfoundation.org](http://www.floridaveteransfoundation.org)

**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](http://www.veteranscouncilofstjohns.org)

**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*

The locally produced *Vietnam documentary, Service, Sacrifice and Courage* has received **158,963** views to date on YouTube.

You can view part of it at:

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



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](mailto: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.*