



Veterans Council of St. Johns County

Volume 7 Issue 5 May 2018

Bill Dudley, Publisher

Michael Rothfeld, Editor

Bill Dudley, Chairman

Ray Quinn, Vice Chairman

John Mountcastle, Treasurer

Michael Rothfeld, Secretary

Joe McDermott, Board Member

**This is the new look for the Patriot Reader.**

**We became too successful and were limited in the number of newsletters we could send out each day via email.**

You are receiving the newsletter because you were receiving the Patriot Reader.

**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.**

***The Veterans Council will meet at the St. Johns County Health & Human Services Building, 200 San Sebastian View  
Muscovy Room, 1st floor***



### *From the Chairman*

Please join us on May 15th as we honor those who have given so much for our country

I wanted to let you know about an event we will be having on Tuesday May 15th in St Augustine in case you would like to join us.

At 7:30am we will be raising a POW/MIA flag over the County Administration building. This will be followed by a reception at 8:15 am, and then at 9 am the Board of County Commissioners will be issuing a Proclamation naming St

Johns County a Purple Heart County  
and recognizing the Purple Heart  
recipients in the audience.



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 May 14, 2018. The meeting will be at 7:00pm. The meeting will take place at  
Community Hospice, 4266 Sunbeam Rd., Jacksonville, FL 32257 in  
Conference Room A.

Jacksonville National Cemetery Support Committee Meetings for 2018

At Community Hospice of NE FL.

4266 Sunbeam Rd, Jacksonville, FL 32257

Hadlow Bldg – Conference Room A 7:00pm

Monday, May 14th

Thursday, May 24th - placement of Flags for Memorial Day (Details TBA)

Saturday, May 26th - Memorial Day Observance Ceremony (Details TBA)

Monday, Sept 17th

Monday, Oct 15th

Monday, Nov 5th

Monday, Dec 3rd

Saturday, Dec 15th - Wreaths Across America (Details TBA)

All are invited to attend our meetings and become a part of this Committee.

+++++2017/2018 Officers of the SCJNC+++++

Chairman: Steve Spickelmier

Vice Chairman: Bill Dudley, Treasurer: John Mountcastle

Assistant Treasurer: Michael Rothfeld, Secretary: Kathy Church

Chaplain: Michael Halyard, Master-At-Arms: Joe McDermott

Historian: Kathy Cayton



**IN REMEMBRANCE FOR ALL  
OF OUR POW'S & PURPLE HEART  
RECIPIENTS & FAMILIES**

*Fellow Veterans*

The Raising of the POW/MIA Flag Will take place in front of the County  
Administration Building on:  
Tuesday May 15, 2018 at 7:30 A.M.

The St. Johns County Commissioners will issue a  
Proclamation designating the county as a

**PURPLE HEART COUNTY**

A Purple Heart County Designates Our County as one that  
recognizes those in our community who gave their  
lives or were wounded in combat defending  
our American Freedoms

Date & Time: May 15, 2018 at 9:00A.M.

Location: SJC County Commission Meeting at the  
SJC Auditorium, County Administration Building,  
500 San Sebastian View St. Augustine, Florida 32084

We would like to have every veteran who has received a Purple Heart while serving in any military branch of the Armed Forces to join us at the County Commission meeting when the proclamation is presented to the Veterans Council. The County Commissioners and Veterans Council would like to recognize you on that day and thank you for your service to our country.

**Please join us on  
Tuesday May 15 at 7:30  
am for the POW/MIA Flag  
Raising Ceremony at the  
County Municipal  
building, 500 San  
Sebastian View.**



Veterans Council and VVA 1084 “Welcome Home” local Vietnam Veterans Fifty years is a long time to wait, but recognition and acceptance arrived for Vietnam veterans on Thursday March 29th and Friday, March 30th. The First National Vietnam Veterans Day was celebrated in St. Augustine with two very special events.

In recognition of Vietnam Veterans Day, the St. Johns County Veterans Council assisted by County School Board member, Kelly Barrera, asked Laura Wynn, Curriculum Specialist, Secondary Social Studies to meet and speak to the Council about “How the Vietnam War” is taught in St. Johns County Secondary Schools. Laura’s detailed presentation was well received by an overflowing room consisting mostly of Vietnam veterans

from NE Florida. A question and answer session followed and all felt confident that the Vietnam War was being taught fairly and its many complexities, both political and moral were adequately covered.



On Friday, March 30th, a solemn ceremony was held at the oldest National Cemetery in the country, St. Augustine National Cemetery. This event was supported by both the St. Johns County Veterans Council and the Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 1084, named after Leo C. Chase, the first St. Johns County serviceman Killed in Action. Council Chairman Bill Dudley and VVA President, John Leslie organized and led the event. BG Richard Capps, a Vietnam veteran was the guest speaker, and Congressman John Rutherford was the Keynote speaker. The most moving moment of the afternoon came when Commander John Leslie, USN (Ret) read aloud the 20 names of Vietnam



era servicemen who were killed in action, several of whom are buried in the St. Augustine National. The afternoon's commemoration ended with Congressman Rutherford presenting Vietnam pins to the veterans in attendance.

The Commemoration and Recognition came 50 years after the end of the Vietnam War, but Vietnam veterans now feel accepted by the American public as they should have been all these intervening years.

WELCOME HOME!



Bank employee leads team of volunteers to spruce up Five Star Veterans Center By Joe Daraskevich, FL Times Union

The grounds at the Five Star Veterans Center look a lot different than they did five years ago when volunteers from Bank of America first started helping out there

Fresh paint, landscaping and chores as simple as picking up trash have gone a long way toward giving the veterans who live there a sanctuary from the stresses of post-military life.

Other organizations provide similar services throughout the year, said Five Star's Administrative Director Suzie Loving, but anything the facility needed was taken care of by bank employees over three days last week.

"We had about 100 people out here this week running around like a colony of ants," she said Wednesday.

The volunteers put up a retention wall in the parking lot and added fresh coats of paint wherever the building needed touch-ups.

Bettiemae Kitchens coordinated all those people as the leader of Bank of America's Military Support & Assistance Group. She said the company encourages volunteer work by paying employees for up to two hours a week when they volunteer in the community.

"The bank is very involved in volunteer activities," said Martha Barrett, the Jacksonville market manager for Bank of America. "They want people to be out in the community, and we just have wonderful volunteers."

She said the volunteer work is up to the individual and can be anything from coaching youth sports to working at homeless shelters. Kitchens said she never has any trouble getting people to sign up for the annual event at Five Star.

“The emails just start coming in one after another,” Kitchens said. “The event fills up in less than a week.”

Kitchens grew up in a patriotic family full of Navy veterans in Pennsylvania and decided to join the Army in 1976. She said her Navy father taught her to respect all veterans, and until she started volunteering at homeless shelters in Jacksonville she had no idea some veterans struggle as much as they do.

“I never knew about the homeless veteran population until I saw the problem for myself,” Kitchens said. “I thought they were all honored and everyone loved them.”

Five Star is a nonprofit on Acme Street near Atlantic Boulevard that offers housing, meals and a program to re-integrate displaced veterans back into society at a price of just over \$600 a month. Many of the veteran residents pitched in this week to help spruce up the facility.

“It’s good for the veterans who live here to know that people care,” said retired Col. Len Loving, the CEO of Five Star. “Many of the people who have been here as volunteers have really never met a veteran before under the circumstances these young men and women are in.”

Len Loving said when the partnership with Bank of America started five years ago the building was white with blue and red trim.

It was very patriotic, he said, but it wasn’t the most aesthetic building to look at.

Volunteers painted the exterior walls light brown in past years, and this year they worked to add a black trim just below the roof.

Len Loving said Bank of America also helps out with funding and provides cleaning supplies for the center to use all year. And of course, Kitchens volunteers whenever she can outside of the service week.

“She’s been a wonderful addition for us,” Suzie Loving said. “If we have a need for something we can call her and she can help us find it or find someone who can find it for us.”

Kitchens volunteers about 300 hours a year to various veteran causes in the area, but she said she’s built a personal bond with the Lovings because of their “loving” personalities.

To show how much she cares about the people she helps at Five Star, Kitchens ends the three days of work by cooking a spaghetti dinner for everyone involved. She spent about three hours Tuesday night making 200 meatballs by hand.

Residents and volunteers sat down together to eat the meal Wednesday as Kitchens walked around to make sure everyone had enough food.

“It’s my favorite thing of the year, it really is,” she said



A very important message from Moe Moyer, please read entire message! Please share with all your contacts and veterans' groups.

**National POW/MIA Recognition Day**

## The RIDE HOME 2018

Did you know that there are only two (2) days on our Julian Calendar that we set aside to recognize all Americans, civilian and military, who have been held against their will by enemies of the United States? The first date is 9 April, Former Prisoner of War Recognition Day. Why 9 April you ask, because that is the day the largest number of American Military were taken captive by an enemy during combat operations. Remember the Bataan Death March? After a three-month heroic battle in the Philippines, Major General King, Jr. surrendered all troops under his command to Colonel Mootoo Nakayama of the 14th Imperial Japanese Army. The total number varies by reporting source, but it is safe to say the total exceeded sixty thousand (60,000) combat troops were taken as Prisoners of War. The second date, The Third Friday of September, came about more as a compromise than any historical significance to the date. It was Commander in Chief Jimmy Carter who initially requested a Joint Resolution from Congress annually to which he provided a Presidential Proclamation. The Recognition Day was held in April, to the liking of the American Ex-POW organization, or in July from 1978 through 1985. The debating parties, American Ex-POW and the Vietnam POW/MIA Families reached a compromise and starting in 1986

the day has been the Third Friday of September in which we recognize all former Prisoners of War (POW) as well as those who are still classified as Missing in Action (MIA).

For well over a decade a small group of POW/MIA advocates from across the country have been extending an invitation to Former Prisoners of War, civilian & military, and to the Families of those who are still classified as Missing in Action with the goal of fulfilling the Commander in Chief's proclamation, which notes:

"I call upon the people of the United States to join me in honoring and remembering all former American prisoners of war and those missing in action who valiantly served our great country. I also call upon Federal, State, and local government officials and private organizations to observe this day with appropriate ceremonies and activities."

In their effort to meet the President's request this group, appropriately named "The RIDE HOME" will be working in conjunction with; The National Prisoner of War Museum, located on the grounds of Andersonville Historical Site, Andersonville Georgia; Central Georgia Technical College, Warner Robins Campus; o corporations, private organizations as well as individual patriots from the communities of Warner Robins, Perry, Georgia, and Andersonville Georgia.

The Itinerary for this national event begins on Thursday, 20 September 2018, with honored guest checking in early afternoon followed by a Recognition Day Service, open to the public, commencing at 1500 hrs. at the Larry Walker Arena on the Central Georgia Technical College. Friday morning, 21 September, following a Law Enforcement escorted ride, service at the National Prisoner of War Museum, open to the public. Friday evening the Hero's Banquet will occur on the Central Georgia Technical College campus. (Dinner requires pre-paid reservation for everyone except the Honored guest.) KEEPING the PROMISE and Candlelight Services follow the dinner and are open to the public. Saturday, 22 September, Recognition Service followed by the FLY-BOY – GROUND-POUNDER Lunch, open to the public, followed by open socials at participating hotels/motels in the Warner Robins market.

For all former Prisoners of War, the Next of Kin of our Missing in Action who wish to attend the RIDE HOME 2017, go to our website, <http://www.theridehome.com/home-1.html> and on the home page you will see a link for the invitation letter and registration form. Due to the



fact this is a National event all registration applications will be vetted prior to acceptance. If you mail your application to the RIDE HOME Corporate address, noted at the top of the form, we will start the process and you'll be contacted acknowledging your participation at this year's event. Due to popularity of the event all applications will be addressed on a first come first served basis. If you wish to have some of your family or friends join you at the event the RIDE HOME Team will be happy to help you obtain/arrange room accommodations as well as reservations for the two meals for your guest/friends.

We look forward to saying 'Thank YOU!' face to face, for not just your service to this great Republic, but for the sacrifices you have made and continue to make on our behalf.

If you or your organization would like to Sponsor a Honored Guest, POW or NOK of an MIA, go to our webpage;  
<http://www.theridehome.com/donate-sponsor-1.html> - and click on the Sponsor link.

This is a National Event and all services are open to the Public. Heroes Banquet requires reservation.

Hope to see you in Georgia this September for National POW/MIA Recognition Day 2018.

For Questions or Concerns feel free to contact; moe – 407 448 1181 or [moehog@verizon.net](mailto:moehog@verizon.net)

Until they all come home.....

**MISSION BACKGROUND**

The Cecil Field POW/MIA Memorial is a 501(c)(3) not-profit organization that has been formed to receive the memorial in Jacksonville and to serve as a vehicle and distribution site for Jacksonville's role in this as a national day of recognition to come.

The memorial site located at the former Naval Air Station Cecil Field was originally dedicated on September 8, 1947, and consisted of markers and associated signs for each of the 48 POW/MIA parks that were known as World War II and Vietnam War POW/MIA parks. It was a major step in the history of the effort to provide the best of all Cecil Field and its legacy. This project was also the first of its kind in Jacksonville when Cecil Field was decommissioned in 1988. No one else has ever memorialized the best of all.

However, the not-profit organization was then is led by the Jacksonville City Council with the hope to allow and grant the right to control, expand and fund the 50-year memorial.

**A FEW QUOTES SUBMITTED BY OUR NATIONAL LEADERS**

**U.S. Congressman**  
John R. Roth

*"I am pleased to see part of the former Naval Air Station Cecil Field for a POW/MIA Memorial is a fitting location to pay tribute to the very special group. I am that they staff the corner of the POW/MIA flag is a very close friend of Jacksonville and that her husband, Lieutenant Commander Richard D. York, is remembered at Cecil Field, there could be a more appropriate site for the POW/MIA Memorial."*

**U.S. Senator**  
Marco Rubio

*"I am pleased to lead the Cecil Field Prosees of War and Missing in Action Memorial in a great opportunity to honor the service members who did not return home from war."*

**U.S. Senator**  
Bill Nelson

*"The Cecil Field POW/MIA Memorial is an important commitment to all those who have seen the colors in the children and families, and their story for their unselfishness and bravery."*

**JOIN THE MISSION TO BRING A NATIONAL POW/MIA MEMORIAL TO JACKSONVILLE**

**MISSION STATEMENT**

REMEMBER ALL FORMER PRISONERS OF WAR, HEROISM AND NEVER FORGET THOSE QUIET MISSING IN ACTION HEROES AND THE FAMILIES THAT WAIT FOR THEIR RETURN.

More than 82,000 are at a Missing in Action and Homecoming for a new MIA

MISSING IN AMERICA PROJECT – FLORIDA, “IT’S THE RIGHT THING TO DO”

The Missing in America Project (MIAP) is a registered 501(c)3 Non-profit Corporation. Our mission is to locate, identify and inter the unclaimed cremains of American veterans. Missing in America Project was launched nationwide in January, 2007. \*\*\*\*\*

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NATIONWIDE PROGRESS AS OF 3/22/2018

Total Funeral Homes Visited - 2,209 Cremains Found - 16,074

Veterans Cremains Identified - 3,717 Veterans Interred - 3,402

FLORIDA’S PROGRESS AS OF 3/20/2018

Total Funeral Homes Visited - 138 Cremains Found – 1,208

Veterans Interred – 167 Spouses Interred – 80

Dependents Interred – 1 Missions Pending - 29

Missions Scheduled - 27 Call to Honors -13

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On Saturday, April 14, 2018, MIAP-FL held its 14th CALL TO HONOR at the South Florida National Cemetery in Lake Worth, FL. On this day we will inter 25 veterans and 2 spouses of veterans which include, 11 Army veterans, 2 spouses, 3 MC veterans, 10 Navy veterans and 1 AF veterans. Included are veterans from WWII, Korea and Vietnam. The longest that anyone has set unclaimed dates back to 1988. MIAP volunteers are continuing to work with Craig Funeral Home in St. Augustine and we hope to have Call to Honor # 15 at the Jacksonville National Cemetery sometime at the beginning of June 2018. We are also working with the Miami-Dade ME’s Office to cremate and return to his family in Texas a Vietnam Veteran that was homeless and was found dead in Miami. His body has been at the morgue for two years now and we hope to have him returned home very soon.

Our volunteer in south Florida has started working with a funeral home in Vero Beach and we hope to have Call to Honor #16 possibly in June at the Cape Canaveral National Cemetery. This will be our first service at this cemetery that opened in 2016.

There are many ways one can get involved with MIAP. Please go to our website @ [www.miap.us](http://www.miap.us) for more info. You can keep up with our events on our Facebook Page at Missing In America Project – Florida (miap-florida). Many other states also have FB pages. You can also view many videos from other services on You Tube. Please feel free to contact me at my info listed below.

“YOU ARE NOT FORGOTTEN”

Kathy Church -MIAP FL State Coordinator

[miapjax@yahoo.com](mailto:miapjax@yahoo.com)

904-219-3035



From John Mountcastle: Exempt organizations reporting on a calendar year basis (i.e., their tax year ends on Dec. 31) must file some version of form IRS 990 no later than May 15, 2018 for their 2017 filing?

While some may file on a group basis (i.e., their national organization submits the return on their behalf), many opt to file Form 990-N if their gross receipts are less normally less than \$50,000).

Completing the e-Postcard requires the eight items listed below:

1. Employer identification number (EIN), also known as a Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN).
2. Tax year
3. Legal name and mailing address
4. Any other names the organization uses
5. Name and address of a principal officer
6. Web site address if the organization has one
7. Confirmation that the organization's annual gross receipts are \$50,000 or less
8. If applicable, a statement that the organization has terminated or is terminating (going out of business)

Annual Electronic Filing Requirement for Small Exempt Organizations —  
Form 990-N (e-Postcard)

<https://www.irs.gov/charities-non-profits/annual-electronic-filing-requirement-for-small-exempt-organizations-form-990-n-e-postcard>



Event goes back in time to remember fatal U-boat attack off Jacksonville Beach by Joe Dareskevich

The musical performers and fashion on display Tuesday transported everyone in attendance back to the 1940s as organizers honored the 19 men who died in a fiery attack off the coast of Jacksonville Beach during World War II.

People danced to the music and posed for pictures in a military jeep in an effort to recreate what life was like in Northeast Florida during the war.

The occasion at the SeaWalk Pavilion marked the 76th anniversary of the night a German U-boat attacked the oil tanker SS Gulfamerica so close to shore that people stopped what they were doing to watch the flames rise from the ocean.

It was a normal Friday night in the lively beach community where people gathered on the boardwalk to ride a pair of Ferris wheels and a roller coaster. There was also a Firemen's Ball on the pier that night that made for an even more captive audience when a torpedo struck the ship just after 10 p.m.

Local historian Scott A. Grant has been giving a speech about the attack at various venues over the last year to keep alive the memory of the men who died. He guessed he's given the speech about 75 times since the 75th anniversary of the attack.

He said a quick internet search about what happened will bring back plenty of results about the U-123 or its famous skipper, Capt.

Reinhard Hardegen. But there's very little out there about the men who died that night, Grant said.

"Nobody is talking about those 19 guys," he said. "In World War II the only people in the United States that were closer to shore and were killed by a foreign power was at Pearl Harbor. We want them [the 19 on the Gulfamerica] to have a plaque."

Grant threw the 1940s party Tuesday to promote a movement to have a marker placed in memory of those men. There is a historical marker in Jacksonville Beach that commemorates the attack, but it just has a brief mention of the men who died. That will no longer be the case if two local chapters of the National Society of Daughters of the American Revolution can accomplish their latest project.

"I may be optimistic, but I don't see any reason why we shouldn't be able to get this done by next year's anniversary," said Judy Delmar, the regent for the Ponte Vedra Beach chapter of Daughters of the American Revolution.

She said Grant spoke about the sinking of the Gulfamerica at one of the group's recent monthly meetings, and many of the women



were deeply moved after learning about the tragic event. She said they were even more shocked to find out there isn't a commemorative marker near the site that names each of the 19 victims of the attack.

Delmar said the Ponte Vedra chapter is working with the Jean Ribault chapter in Neptune Beach to get approval to put a new monument on public property. She said once they get that approval they will submit their plan to the national Daughters of the American Revolution office, and they should be ready to dedicate their tribute by next year.


"This kind of project is right up our alley," Delmar said.

Grant estimated about 50 or 60 people attended Tuesday's event where participants walked down a runway to model military and civilian clothes from the 1940s. His son Xander dressed as a paperboy and carried a poster of an Associated Press story from April 17, 1942, that described hundreds of stalks of bananas that washed up on Jacksonville Beach after a separate attack on a cargo ship in the area.

"We just wanted to show what it was like back then," Grant said.

Joe Daraskevich: (904) 359-4308

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*Save the Date*

**V4V**

*Vets 4 Vets*

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**Quarterly Gathering of Veterans  
Saturday June 9<sup>th</sup>, 2018**

**Veterans Memorial Arena  
300 A Phillip Randolph Blvd  
Jacksonville, FL 32202**

**1030 – 1100**

**Networking / Exhibitors Expo**

**1100 – 1230**

**Speakers**

**1230 – 1300**

**Free Lunch**

**Listen, Learn, and Voice Your Opinion**

**TOGETHER WE ARE STRONGER!!**



Jacksonville FL

“Missing Man Chair”

Supports the Remembrance of the Men & Women who Went Off to War and Either Didn't Make It Back Alive, or Were Detained Against Their Will:

The Jacksonville Veterans Memorial Arena has one additional chair which was added this past weekend to honor Former Prisoners of War and those still Missing in Action.

The POW/MIA Chair, known as "One Empty Seat" was dedicated during the first intermission of the Jacksonville Icemen's hockey game this past Friday, April 6.

With over 8,000 fans in attendance to witness the occasion, this Chair of Honor is to show our nation's and Jacksonville's commitment of fully accounting for those still Missing in Action.

This Chair is to remain permanently empty and show there is always a seat for those still missing. The chair and dedication was made possible by SMG, The Icemen, Rotary District 6970 and the Cecil Field POW/MIA Memorial groups.

The ceremony included: Ms. Pam Cain (ribbon cutter), daughter of Col. Oscar Mauterer (still MIA); Mrs. Cynde Covington, Past District Governor of Rotary International District 6970 and daughter of Lt. Cmdr. Fred Wright (accounted for); and, Michael Cassata, Executive Director of the Cecil Field POW/MIA Memorial.





**Forward March Chairman Ron Birchall, COL USA (Ret) with the Forward March Board of Directors presents Veterans Council Chairman Bill Dudley with a check for \$ 35,000.**

### **Veterans Council of St. Johns County, Inc. Minutes of March 29, 2018**

Officers present: Chairman Bill Dudley, Vice Chairman Ray Quinn, Secretary Michael Rothfeld, not present John Mountcastle

Chairman Dudley called the meeting to order at 1903 hours

Chairman Dudley led the Pledge to the Flag, Vice Chairman Ray Quinn gave the Invocation

Last month's Minutes were approved as read

The Treasurer's Report was approved as read

Introduction of Guests: Judge McGillin, St Johns County School Board Members Bill Mignon, Kelly Barrera & Bev Slough. St Johns County Commissioners J Morris, H

Dean, J Smith. Forward March Board of Directors Ron & Nancy Birchall, Bill & Barbara McNees, Dan & Helene Sullivan & Ray Quinn. Dick Williams.

Check presentation: Ron Birchall, Chairman Forward March, presented the Veterans Council with a check for \$ 35,000, which was the profit from the annual Military Ball.

Chairman Dudley then presented checks to St Augustine DAV, Vets4Vets for \$5000, with money to follow for Veterans Treatment Court & Wreaths Across America.

Speaker: Laura Wynn, Secondary Social Studies Curriculum Specialist: Laura gave a very detailed overview of how the Vietnam War is taught in County Secondary Schools, mentioning text books, benchmarks, causes, analysis and consequences. Students are taught to incorporate primary sources and are evaluated with a standardized state assessment. The local chapter of Vietnam Veterans of America as well as the Veterans Council have been working with Laura for several years and many Vietnam War veterans have spoken to students about their experiences. Laura answered questions afterward and we all thought the schools were teaching the Vietnam War correctly. Chairman Dudley then presented Laura with a plaque thanking her for passionate handling and supervision of "How the Vietnam War" is taught to our future patriots.

Additional Comments: Commissioner Jay Morris spoke about his "Bird Dog" experiences in Vietnam and how he was the only pilot to have his plane shot at with an arrow.

Navy Commander, USN (Ret), and VVA 1084 President John Leslie spoke about his flying A7s to escort B52s and flying missions twice a day into Saigon.

LTC Blair Craig, USA (Ret), thanked Laura for all she does to ensure Vietnam War

history is taught correctly in our schools and asked all of us, "What did we learn from Vietnam" and "How can we avoid the same mistakes".

Committee Reports: None tonight

Chairman Dudley: Invited all to the May 15th POW/MIA flag raising ceremony at the County Administration building and the County Declaring by Proclamation, that St Johns County will be a Purple Heart County and honoring our Purple Heart recipients. More detailed information to follow.

Meeting adjourned at 7:45 pm. The next meeting of the Veterans Council will be on Thursday, April 26th, 7 pm in the Health & Human Services Building, 200 San Sebastian View.

Future speakers:

**April 26, Thomas Richardson**, Asst Director, Veterans Employment & Training Service (VETS) and **Selena A. Hernandez-Haines, M.S.**, Commander, USN (Ret.), Director of Military Recruitment Flagler College

**May 31, Toulia F. Wootan**, Director of Community Programs, Community Hospice and Palliative Care, Caregiver Coalition of Northeast Florida and **Crystal Timmons**, of the Veterans Garden Project.

**June 28, Charlie Tramazzo** of Greater Jacksonville USO and **COL (Ret) Ann Johnson** of Gratitude America

**July 26, Bret Sovine**, Combat Veterans Motorcycle Association 20-2

**August 30, Jason Snodgrass**, Chief Executive Officer, K9s For Warriors



September 27, Charles Tingley, St. Augustine Historical Society, Senior Reference Librarian

**36 Granada Street, St. Augustine**

**FL 32084**

**(904) 679-5736**

**[Corazoncinemaandcafe.com](http://Corazoncinemaandcafe.com)**

Stop by the Corazon Cinema and Café located in the heart of St. Augustine to catch a great film or a bite to eat (free parking). **Tell us you are a veteran and receive 10% off any food or drinks.** Beer and wine available.

## Veteran County Councils of Northeast Florida



### •Baker County

President: Larry Porterfield  
Meetings:  
Second Thursday of each month  
MacClenny Primitive Baptist Church  
Fellowship Hall on North Boulevard  
6pm  
Contact:  
Baker County Veterans Council  
PO Box 1434  
MacClenny, FL 32063

### Clay County

President: Bob Brewster  
Meetings: First Wednesday of  
each month  
Location varies between the  
different Veteran Organizations.  
Time varies

### •Duval County

President: Steve Spickelmier  
Meetings:  
Third Tuesday of each month in the 40/8  
Building  
Located at the American Legion Post 137  
5443 San Juan Avenue  
7pm

### •Nassau County

President: Doc WP Manoghan  
Contact:  
Veterans Council of Nassau County  
17195 Cornerstone Road  
Hilliard, FL 32046-8265

### •St. Johns County

President: Bill Dudley  
Meetings:  
Last Thursday of each month  
Health and Human Services Building  
Muscovy Room, 1st Floor  
200 San Sebastian View  
Muscovy Room 1st Floor  
St. Augustine, FL 32084  
7pm

Contact:  
[info@VeteransCouncilofStJohns.org](mailto:info@VeteransCouncilofStJohns.org)

**Navy to Navy Homes vs Others**  
N2N is outperforming the rest!

<b>98.4%</b> of original list price	<b>N2N</b>	N2N Sells Houses for <b>MORE MONEY</b>
<b>95.5%</b>	Others	

**Over 6,000** Potential Buyers in N2N Database

<b>29</b> average days on market	<b>N2N</b>	N2N Sells Houses <b>FASTER</b>
<b>72</b>	Others	

<b>2%</b> percentage of listings that expire	<b>N2N</b>	More Likely to Sell with N2N
<b>29.9%</b>	Others	

**GREAT TIME TO SELL!**  
Ask us for a **FREE HOME VALUATION**



**Marianne Bach**  
(904) 349-0456



**Kathy Jordan**  
(904) 401-0476

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From the FL Times Union By Joe Daraskevich

The Special Forces Association chapter in Chicago is named for Maj. Gen. Michael Healy, but the Chicago native called Jacksonville home until his death on Saturday. He was 91.

During an Army career that spanned five decades and two wars, “Iron Mike” Healy earned three Distinguished Service Medals, two Silver Stars, the Legion of Merit, Distinguished Flying Cross, seven Bronze Stars with Valor and two Purple Hearts among many other accolades. He was the inspiration for John Wayne’s character in the 1968 film “The Green Berets.”

“Despite everything he accomplished, he remained a humble man,” said Sean Healy, one of his six sons. “We always had to brag on him ourselves.”

Sean Healy said when people mentioned the military he would ask them if they had heard of the John Wayne movie or of Iron Mike.

“If they knew who that was I would let them go on for a while, and then I would say, ‘that’s my dad.’ ”

Sean Healy said his father moved to Jacksonville following his 1981 retirement to be closer to three of his sons — one in Jacksonville, one in Orlando and one in Sarasota.

Dewey Walker, president of Special Forces Association Chapter 88 in Northeast Florida, said the retired general kept such a low profile that he lived in Jacksonville for several years before anyone connected with the organization knew he was here.

“I served under him back in the 1970s,” Walker said. “He was a very shy person.”

The son of a Chicago police chief enlisted in the Army as a private in 1945, two months before the end of World War II.

He served with the 1st Cavalry Division in Japan before taking command of the 4th Airborne Ranger Company as a lieutenant.

The nickname “Iron Mike” came while he was serving as a young officer leading Army Rangers on combat patrols deep behind enemy lines in Korea in the early 1950s.

Maj. Gen. Healy attended several military schools before being recruited to serve as chief of the Special Warfare Operations and Foreign Intelligence Branch for the Office of the Assistant Chief of Staff for Intelligence.

He went to Vietnam in 1963 as a Special Forces colonel and would ultimately serve five tours there over almost eight years.

“He was one of the first Americans to go into Vietnam and one of the last to leave,” said retired Sgt. 1st Class Cliff Newman, executive director of the Special Forces Association. “He was just an icon in Special Forces. Everyone knew who he was; and he was just a presence — you knew you were talking to somebody who was somebody.”

Retired Col. Jack Tobin said he served under Maj. Gen. Healy in 1969 as part of the mobile strike group command. Before he took command, there was talk of disbanding the Special Forces, Tobin said.

When Maj. Gen. Healy first addressed the men, he told them they were back in business, Tobin remembered.

“That man would move heaven and hell to help you,” Tobin said.

He said the general could look into your eyes knowing he was sending you to almost certain death, but he had a way of letting you know you were the most qualified person for the job and he wanted you to come back alive.

Tobin was once in a room with some younger Special Forces veterans who didn't know who Maj. Gen. Healy was when he found out he hadn't received the honor of joining the Distinguished Member of the Special Forces Regiment.

“I told them, ‘The only reason you are sitting here with a green beret on that table is thanks to Iron Mike,’ ” Tobin said Tuesday.

Maj. Gen. Healy was given the Distinguished Member of the Special Forces Regiment award at a ceremony in Jacksonville in 2015.

The U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School at Fort Bragg, N.C., said at the time that “He not only ensured the continued sustainment of Special Forces, Psychological Operations and Civil Affairs,

but also increased its value. Furthermore, he raised morale and competencies of the soldiers, cadre and students.”

“Iron Mike” battled heart problems for many years, his son said, and doctors thought he was going to die several times.

Bruce Pastorini first met the general during one of those hospital stays a few years ago. He said someone from the local Special Forces Association chapter told him Maj. Gen. Healy wasn’t doing so well and encouraged him to pay a visit.

He had no idea such a distinguished member of the Special Forces lived nearby. They eventually built a bond so strong that Pastorini and his wife — also devout Catholics — would bring communion to Maj. Gen. Healy on a regular basis.

They often talked about the general’s hometown of Chicago and his love for that city’s sports teams. He was relieved in 2016 when the Chicago Cubs finally won the World Series, Pastorini said.

“He lived here, but he always loved the city he came from,” Pastorini said.

Maj. Gen. Healy is survived by his wife of 67 years, Jacklyn; sons Michael Jr., Daniel, Timothy, Sean, Kirk and Patrick; 10 grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren.

No services will be held in Jacksonville. Family members are coordinating efforts with the Arlington National Cemetery in Virginia for a burial later this year.

“He wasn’t a big man, but he was a very, very large man,” Tobin said.

“Greatness like that is something that doesn’t come along very often.”

Drew Brooks of the Fayetteville Observer in North Carolina contributed to this report.

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