

Veterans Council of St. Johns County, Inc. Minutes of June 28, 2018

Officers present: Chairman Bill Dudley, Vice Chairman Ray Quinn, Secretary Michael Rothfeld, Treasurer John Mountcastle
Chairman Dudley called the meeting to order at 1902 hours

Chairman Dudley led the Pledge to the Flag
Last month's **Minutes** were approved as read

Vice Chairman Ray Quinn gave the Invocation
The **Treasurer's Report** was approved as amended

Introduction of Guests: Charlie Tramazzo- Jax USO, Michael Anthony – Gratitude America, Carlos Aviles- Fire Chief City of St. Augustine, Christopher Vedvick-MOPH

Speakers: Carlos Aviles, Fire Chief City of St Augustine. Presented Chairman Dudley with T shirts that Fire Dept will wear in November, sell and donate proceeds to a local charity. This project was started by money from the Council.

Charlie Tramazzo, Greater Jax USO. The USO Mission is to serve today's active duty on the home front. USO Jax is an independent non-profit that relies 100% on donations. They distribute 12K care packages, phone cards, over 10K free event tickets and over 1 million \$ in kind services. They have 3 locations, JIA, Mayport & NAS.

Michael Anthony, Gratitude America Military Support Retreats are a No Cost 4 day immersive experience designed to help combat veterans and their supporters make peace with their past so they can begin planning for their new mission at home. This is open to all post 9/11 veterans who served in combat. Retreats provide nature based recreation, kayaking, yoga, & dolphin interactions. Gratitude America is a 501 C3 nonprofit.

Committee Reports:

Mac: Pending House Bill 4556 would provide dental care to all veterans. Also pending Blue Water Navy Bill- has passed House, on the way to the Senate.

Steve: for Kathy, 21 veterans were interred in Cape Canaveral Ntl Cemetery last weekend. It was well attended, over 250+, with volunteers from all branches.

Council of 5 County Presidents- ALL Invited Saturday September 22 as part of National POW/MIA Day, a Ceremony in The Pines.

John L: 26 in total have enrolled in county VTC. Next graduation July 19 all are invited.

VVA State Council last weekend, John McGinty 2nd VP, Bob Dinkins Chaplain

Bill: spoke about the county POW/MIA flag raising, and the county becoming a Purple Heart county. Well attended Memorial Day services at Jax. National Cemetery and St. Augustine National Cemetery

Ray: Army Birthday attended by non Army VC members, Bill, John M., and John L. Hamblen House restaurant open and serving great food indoors and out. The last weekend in July the VC will be at AL 37 with a fund raising table.

Meeting adjourned at 8:25 pm.

The next meeting of the Veterans Council will be on **Thursday, July 26**, 7 pm in the Health & Human Services Building, 200 San Sebastian View.

Future speakers:

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

Scot A. French, Ph.D., Associate Professor of History | Director of Public History, Interim Co-Director, Center for Humanities & Digital Research, University of Central Florida

August 30, Jason Snodgrass, Chief Operating Officer, K9s For Warriors

September 27, Charles Tingley, St. Augustine Historical Society, Senior Reference Librarian, 100 Years Ago: St. Johns County & WW I.

October 25, Dr. Michael Butler, Flagler College, "My trips to Vietnam"

November 29, Andrew Coughlan, Wounded Warrior Project, Resource Development

December 27, Margaret Kaplan, Administrator, Lassen State Veterans Nursing Home