

# VETERANS COUNCIL OF ST. JOHNS COUNTY

**CHAIRMAN BILL DUDLEY**

**VICE CHAIRMAN RAY QUINN**

**SECRETARY MICHAEL ROTHFELD**

**TREASURER JOHN MOUNTCASTLE**

Newsletter Editor Michael Rothfeld



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Fellow Veterans:

At our March meeting, the Veterans Council was pleased to present this year's Col. Ed Taylor Award to the Marine Corps. League, Oldest City Detachment #383. Vice Chairman Ray Quinn presented the plaque to MCL President Walt Mosher along with other members who were present to receive the award. The Marine Corps League has been very active in our community for many years providing services to the community including the Toys for Tots program each year at Christmas, providing Honor Guard details at many events around the city, participating in our annual Veterans Stand Down, and many other outreach programs around the area. The Veterans Council was very pleased to honor this great organization with this year's prestigious Col. Ed Taylor award. Ooh Rah Marines.

Well done for all who went to the polls to vote in last week's elections. Our voter turnout

in the County was one of the highest in years. Although it's still hard to make sense of this year's election campaign, it is never the less our responsibility as veterans and citizens of this great nation to vote for our elected leaders. Thanks for all who supported the process.

Until further notice, we will continue to meet at the St. Johns County Health and Human Services Building at 200 San Sebastian View.

The Veterans Council working with the local MOAA Chapter is making plans for another Veterans Day parade on Nov. 11. Last year's parade was a huge success and we have been asked by many of our veterans and local citizens to make this an annual event as opposed to the static event at Francis Field held each year on Veterans Day. We are moving forward with the planning and fund raising to make this year's parade as successful as last year's.

I was very honored this month to be selected to receive two of

this area's most prestigious awards, Public Citizen of the Year Award from the National Association of Social Workers, Florida Chapter and the Sheriff's Legacy Award from the St. Johns County Sheriff's Dept. The Public Citizens Award was presented at a breakfast meeting at the Jacksonville Yacht Club in Jacksonville on March 8 and the Sheriff's Legacy Award was presented on March 17 at the 32nd Annual Awards Banquet held at the Renaissance Resort Hotel at World Golf Village. I was very honored and humbled to have received both these recognitions and accepted them on behalf of the Veterans Council and the 23000 veterans who reside in St. Johns County.

Bill Dudley,  
Chairman Veterans Council of  
St. Johns County



# Clyde E. Lassen State Veterans Nursing Home

## Where Patriotism is our Motto



**Congratulations to Kay Maley and her staff at the Clyde E. Lassen State Veterans' Nursing Home in St. Augustine. The 120-bed home has been notified by the American College of Health Care Administrators that it will receive the Eli Pick Facility Leadership Award, recognizing high performing skilled nursing facilities. Fewer than 9% of facilities nationwide qualify.**



Delta Sigma Pi Business Fraternity from UNF are coming three week-ends in a row to engage with the residents



Mr. Remieres had his cat, Baby, brought in for the St. Patrick's Day Pet Parade



Hospice lines their pet volunteers up for the Pet Parade!



Staff member, Chrissy, and Mr. Donnelly toast with their Bailey's "shots" during the St. Patrick's Day "Pub Crawl."



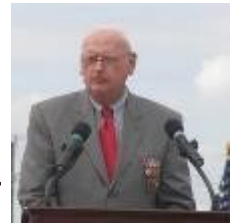
Staff member, Kristine, and Mr. Brewer chat over this pub serving O'Doul's and pretzels



This pub was serving Shamrock Shacks! There were 5 pubs in all..



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



JNC SC Chairman,  
Ray Quinn

The Support Committee invites everyone to attend its **next scheduled meeting, on Monday, April 4, 2016.** 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.**

**+++++2015/2016 Officers of the SCJNC+++++**

- Chairman: Ray Quinn
- Vice Chairman: Bill Dudley
- Treasurer: John Mountcastle
- Assistant Treasurer: Michael Rothfeld
- Secretary: Kathy Church
- Chaplain: Michael Halyard
- Master-At-Arms: Joe McDermott
- JAG Officer: Patrick Bennett
- Historian: Jody Raymond

***VOLUNTEERS are needed!*** <http://jacksonvilleladies.org>

Membership in **The Jacksonville Ladies/Gentlemen** is strictly *voluntary* and is open to all Ladies and Gentlemen who have a sincere desire to pay final tribute to our Veterans. A Volunteer is there to attend every Service, not to "intrude" but to stand as a "silent witness" and give honor to the Veteran and condolences to their families. It is not a "typical" Volunteer position, it must come from the heart. It is an honor to be a part of these ceremonies that pay tribute to the everyday heroes that make up our armed forces. The Volunteers give back a little to those who have given so much for our great country.

**How to Volunteer -** <http://jacksonvilleladies.org>

The Jacksonville Ladies/Gentlemen are a very special group of *Volunteers* dedicated to being the "Silent Witness" for the Service of a Veteran and/or their Spouse. Especially important are those with no family present so they are not laid to rest alone. We also hope to provide some comfort to the family.

The only requirements are compassion, dedication and the sincere desire to honor our Veterans for their service to our country.

If you think you might be interested in becoming a Volunteer please contact Chair Gail Williams at 904-291-0604 or Vice Chair Kathy Cayton at 904-272-9489.

You can also fill out the form in the link below and one of us will get back to you as soon as possible.

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

## Veterans Council Chairman Bill Dudley recognized as Social Worker of the Year



March is recognized as Social Work Month. The theme this year is Forging Solutions out of Challenges, celebrating social workers as they work to improve lives and communities. Today social work is one of the fastest growing professions in the US, with more than 600,000 people employed in the field. Professional social workers tackle some of the toughest challenges facing our society. In every city and every community they develop solutions to make mental health and health care more available, to reduce poverty, to eliminate injustice and discrimination, and to protect vulnerable children and adults from harm.

Social workers contribute at all level of society, working with individuals, families, schools, universities, non-profit agencies, corporations, hospitals and government offices to mediate conflict, foster positive relationships and create hope and opportunity for people in need. On March 8th, 2016 the National Association of So-



cial Work North East Florida Unit held its Social Worker Of the Year annual awards event at the Florida Yacht Club in Jacksonville. Among this years awardees was **St John's County Veteran Council President William "Bill" Dudley**. Bill is a longtime St Johns County resident and a retired Air Force veteran and aviation executive. Bill has been instrumental in his strong support of veterans of all eras that reside in St Augustine, St John's County and the State of Florida. Among Bill's ac-

complishments that include the first St Augustine Veterans Day Parade and his continued efforts in the establishment of a St Johns Veteran Court. As a result of his tireless work and support of the Veteran Community, Bill was recently named the 2016 Public Citizen of the Year by the Northeast Florida NASW Unit.



**Congratulations to Chairmen Judy Davis and Ray Quinn in their achieving their goal of having a wreath placed on every tombstone at St. Augustine National Cemetery.**

## CERTIFICATE OF APPRECIATION

Presented to:

*Saint Johns County Veterans Council*

In recognition of outstanding efforts in helping to further the  
mission: Remember ~ Honor ~ Teach

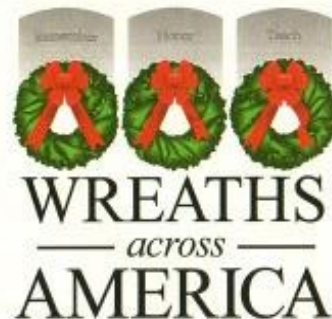
Your hard work and dedication to the program is greatly  
appreciated!

Presented this day

December 18, 2015

*Karen Worcester*

Signed: Karen Worcester, Executive Director



## St. Augustine Jewish Historical Society honors World War I soldier on 70th death anniversary

By EMELIA HITCHNER [emelia.hitchner@staugustine.com](mailto:emelia.hitchner@staugustine.com) Reprinted from the St. Augustine Record with permission of its author and the St. Augustine Record

A gravestone in the St. Augustine National Cemetery attracted the attention of dozens of people Thursday afternoon during a memorial conducted by the St. Augustine Jewish Historical Society.



The commemoration honored Army 1st Lt. George Friedlander — who served with the 306th Field Artillery, 6th Battalion, 17th Regiment during World War I — on the 70th anniversary of his death.

Rabbi Merrill Shapiro, the president of the St. Augustine Historical Society, said Friedlander is one of several Jewish soldiers resting in the cemetery and notable for his tie to the official song of the Army, now titled “The Army Goes Rolling Along.”

“The research is still ongoing and we’re hoping to find connections to his family,” Shapiro said. “When we look at this cemetery, we have to remember that there are people buried here, and these people have a history.”

According to Shapiro, Friedlander attended a luncheon meeting between Secretary of the Navy Josephus Daniels and John Philip Sousa, known as “The March King.” During the meeting, Sousa requested better instruments for his marching band, and Friedlander suggested creating a march from the “Caisson Song.”

The U.S. Army website says that in 1917, Sousa did indeed change the song and titled it “The Field Artillery Song.” In 1952, the Army revised, retitled, and officially adopted the piece.

“So here, in the city of St. Augustine, lies the man who is responsible for that song as we now know it,” Shapiro said.

Among those attending the memorial service was Mayor Nancy Shaver and World War II veteran Hal Baumgarten.

Shapiro believes it’s important for the St. Augustine community to keep the past alive and understand its historic connections.

“We use a phrase: ‘We’re concerned about the future of the past.’ It looked like George Friedlander’s past was passed by, but now we hope that by telling everyone about him, more people will look into this history and remember the men who give their lives for our freedom,” Shapiro said.

Don Heine, 72, is a member of the historical society and said he’s excited to see events like these engage the community about the past.

“It’s an honor to come here and see Friedlander as an inspiration,” Heine said. “I love meeting people and seeing the role these things play in passive recreation.”

Shapiro said the organization plans to research more of the graves at the national cemetery and welcomes anyone wishing to help.

## Jacksonville veteran receives Silver Star

By Jacqueline Matter, WNCT

CAMP LEJEUNE, N.C. (WNCT) – The military awarded Jacksonville resident, Sergeant Matthew Parker the third highest honor given to armed service members.



He received the Silver Star medal for his heroic actions during a firefight on May 21st 2011 in Afghanistan, but credits the tireless efforts of his fellow Marines while in combat.

“I wasn’t the only one that did anything that day, I was humbled by the whole thing,” said Sgt. Parker.

Records show while Parker and his platoon were serving in the Musa Qal’ah district of Afghanistan, enemy fire severely wounded the platoon commander and a squad leader.

The Sergeant boldly assumed control as the ground force commander of numerous squads and later forced the enemy, who injured many of his fellow Marines, to withdraw.

That’s why Marine Corps officials deemed him worthy of one of the highest awards in the service.

“I don’t believe I did anything extraordinary, I think I did what anyone else in my shoes would have done or I hope they would have done,” said Sgt. Parker.

Many of Sergeant Parker’s friends, family and fellow Marines attended the ceremony.

He also holds many other personal decorations including the Combat Action Ribbon with one gold star.

## **Attention Veterans:**

Do you have a family law case, housing issue, or other civil matter to discuss with an attorney?

Jacksonville Collaborative Veterans Legal Clinic at JOPC

Unless otherwise posted, the Veterans Legal Clinic will be held at the Jacksonville Outpatient Clinic 1536 N. Jefferson Street in room 2L103 (large conference room on second floor) the below dates.

Services beyond legal consultation are subject to income guidelines.

To ensure everyone has an opportunity to speak with an attorney, please be there by noon to register.

**Spring 2016 dates:**

**April 8 & 22**

**May 13**

For more information, please contact Florida Coastal School of Law at (904)256-1207 or [veteranslaw@fcsl.edu](mailto:veteranslaw@fcsl.edu)

Florida Coastal School of Law, Inc., Jacksonville Area Legal Aid, Three Rivers Legal Services and the Jacksonville Veterans Legal Collaborative are not an agency, contractor, employee or other entity of the US Department of Veteran Affairs (VA). Furthermore, VA assumes no responsibility for the professional integrity of the organizations whose names appear on this list, and the organizations' presence in the Jacksonville Outpatient Clinic does not constitute an endorsement or recommendation by VA.



## 2015 K9s For Warriors Summary



This year was a big year for K9s For Warriors! We moved into our new facility, Camp K9, which meant that we were able to help so many more warriors and rescue dogs! We paired fifty-one warrior-dog teams this year - an accomplishment that is not ours alone. We depend on our supports to help us with their time, talent, and treasure in order to spread the word about our mission and fund our life-saving program.

Our Proud Supporters (that's you!) who spent time this year energizing their friends, families, and communities to get excited about being part of the K9s For Warriors family and assisting us in our mission are a HUGE reason for our success this year.

We'd like to thank each and every one of you for your time and energy in supporting military heroes and rescue dogs. No matter how big or small, your event has helped to make a difference in the life a dog, a warrior, and a warrior's family. Paws up to all! Together you all helped raise nearly \$400,000 in 2015! That's enough to give 20 warriors a new leash on life!

A special thanks thank our Top Dog Proud Supporters of 2015:

**Animal Supply Company Southeast**

**BCF Solutions**

**Doug Brown/Fletcher High School Interact Club**

**Dogzaz**

**Jacksonville Women's Golf Association**

**Kremer Eye Care Moosehaven, Inc.**

**Riding Into History**

**A Toast to Our Heroes**

**Bruce Wilkinson**

**Yappy Hour DFW**

We look forward to a successful 2016! If you have any questions or feedback, please don't hesitate to reach out to the team at [events@k9sforwarriors.org](mailto:events@k9sforwarriors.org).

Sincere regards,  
Shari Duval, President

*K9s For Warriors is a 501(C)3 dedicated to our American Warriors who have sacrificed their tomorrows for our todays.*

114 Camp K9 Road— Ponte Vedra, FL 32081, (904) 686-1956, Fax (904) 686-1957

Email: [info@k9sforwarriors.org](mailto:info@k9sforwarriors.org)

## Why are the younger Veterans avoiding the Veteran Service Organizations? By Les Davis, MA National Recruiter at AMVETS National Headquarters

[https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/why-younger-veterans-avoiding-veteran-service-les-davis-ma?trk=pulse\\_spock-articles](https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/why-younger-veterans-avoiding-veteran-service-les-davis-ma?trk=pulse_spock-articles)



Before I researched why the post-Vietnam generation of Veterans were not joining Veteran Service Organizations (VSO), I asked myself, “Why wouldn’t veterans want to be around other veterans?” Truly, participating in a VSO provides a unique opportunity to serve our community with people from all walks of life, and also offers the opportunity to share the bond and comradery that melds us together as proud United States Veterans.

After months of research, most of which involved visiting many VSOs in several states, the answer became obvious: In all of the VSOs that I had the pleasure of visiting, I found that VSOs are standing by and waiting for this younger generation of veterans to just walk in and join like their fathers and grandfathers before them. And this appeared to be the “marketing strategy” to bolster membership in many, if not all, of the VSOs. Many VSOs rely solely on their names to entice these young veterans to show up and join, and most have a marketing campaign that hasn’t quite made it into the 21st Century. And quite frankly, some of the messaging is a little misleading. For example, I remember getting a package from a VSO that looked like an official government envelope until I opened it and discovered much to my dismay that this official-looking correspondence was in fact a membership package. I thought the **BOLD RED** ink demanding some type of action was a little over the top. When I read “send money along with application and you will receive a multi-tool with your new membership”, I decided to throw the whole envelope away.

The current VSO image and what the younger veteran generation think about local VSOs is real; they see a building with a couple windows, a dimly lit smoke-filled room with a pool table or darts with “Bingo Night” being boldly advertised as the biggest event happening at that particular location. How do we get the younger veterans to be part of that? The answer is we don’t. WE MUST CHANGE. The thought that eventually the younger veterans will join because they are missing the comradery is a false notion. There are too many newer and younger VSOs that have popped-up in the recent years for them to join leaving a vast number of VSOs competing for membership from a much smaller pool of veterans.

The one positive aspect from the VSOs, one that no one can take away, is that they have held firm in the support of the various veteran issues in Washington, D.C. for decades, and have dedicated much of their efforts in resolving very troubling veteran issues involving the Veterans Administration that have surfaced in recent years. The more established veteran service organizations have a voice with the Congress and President regardless of the dominant political party. Senators, Representatives, and Presidents have made speeches at VSO national conventions because politicians know that they need the support of these Veteran Service Organizations. Politicians listen to them because of the membership numbers which unfortunately are

declining.

What positive actions can the VSOs take to build membership? After talking to Desert Storm, OEF and OIF veterans over the past 9 years, I suggest the following 12 common sense steps to appeal to that younger generation of veterans who are the very life-blood of the existing VSOs:

1. Be honest and transparent when sending out material to attract new members. Educate the younger veteran generation by conveying to them what you have accomplished locally and nationally to ensure that veteran issues stay at the forefront of the discussion. Show them that you are making a difference. Let them know about your whole organization, not just a narrow scope of membership and money.
2. Treat all veterans equally. Both men and women have served honorable in the Armed Forces. To assume only men deployed or served is backwards thinking, and has no room in today's VSO.
3. Update posts with free WIFI, offer video gaming like an XBOX or PlayStation 4, and install flat screen TVs, and select programming, such as sports programming, that would appeal to all veterans
4. I know the more seasoned veterans have life experience and perhaps a different frame of reference. But we should never think that the younger generation is any different. As a leader, I've always welcomed new ideas from everyone, and the younger veterans are full of ideas-just as we were at that age. You should embrace their energy and let them share their ideas about improving your post; you will be pleasantly surprised with the innovative ideas that they come up with. Be open to these new ideas.
5. Welcome all veterans into your post. When you see someone new walk in, welcome them with open arms, make them feel like they are part of your post and have found a new family and friends. And don't criticize the ounger generation, especially the millennials like to solve problems by working and teaming with a group. This is a prime opportunity for the VSO leadership to mentor those younger veterans. Be patient. Some of these young veterans suffer from a malady of challenges, such as Traumatic Brain Injury.
6. Turn your post or part of your post into a community type of center. Our younger veterans want a place to network, drop their child off for daycare, or do homework.
7. Turn your post into a place where veterans can network with the community. Invite local business owners, company executives, your local college Veteran's Representatives, or members of the local Chamber of Commerce to speak at your meetings.
8. Don't be afraid to work with other veteran organizations within your community. Build a strong support network for all veterans.
9. If you have a post close to a military base, begin working with the base transition office or AW2/AF2/USMC Wound Warrior Regiment or the Navy's Safe Harbor Program. These once flourishing programs have had their share of budget cuts, but the mission remains the same. This is where VSOs could make a positive impact with the base leadership as well as the surrounding veteran population.
10. Introduce yourself and your post to your local Guard and Reserve centers. Most of the members live, work, and shop in your community.

**Sign up for and attend every veteran event that you can. Make sure the people in your community know that you are the person and post to contact when it comes to supporting veterans. Talk the talk and walk the walk.**

From FRED DUPONT, Meanwhile back in 1967, Delta Company, 9th Engineers was sent to the DMZ to construct a firebase at Ca Lu...

### PETERMAN'S TOES

After we cleared the 225 acres, constructed the fences, and laid the concertina, I was put on the "sighting and recording party" to layout the minefield. The team consisted of Cpl Green, Cpl Hutchins, and me. Our job was to lay out in sectors where the 16,683 antipersonnel mines would be placed utilizing bench marks, a compass, transit, tape measure, and sticks (tongue depressors). The cluster pattern used was like the shape of a hand where by a bounding mine would be in the palm and several quarter pound mines at the finger tips. These clusters were laid in 4 or 5 rows through the depth of the minefield with each pattern rotated in subsequent rows to confuse anyone trying to disarm the mines. We recorded all of this on a map which Green and Hutchins had to sign as to its accuracy, someone had to come back and disarm it one day. They were back in Dong Ha at 11th Engineers, and since I was left behind with the Ca Lu 16, they radioed that one of the sector azimuths was wrong. I took a compass to the offending benchmark and reshot the azimuth for that sector, which corrected the problem.



After the layout was complete for each sector, the mines were placed next to the appropriate stick in their factory boxes. Our team and the armours then buried the mines, leaving the arming pins just above ground level. Then everyone except the armours had to leave the minefield while they pulled the pins to arm the mines. I can remember watching them slide down a muddy hill side on their butts, pulling pins as they went. When you're young, you do stupid shit sometimes. They were Cpl Cummins, Lcpl Morgan, Lcpl Peterman, Lcpl Spencer, PFC Degennaro, and PFC Davis. They all volunteered for that job and I admire them for their courage.

Just after all the mines were armed, a great deal of boxes and trash were left in the last sector of the minefield that was just armed the day before. This is where it gets surreal. Someone in the chain of command could not stand to see the "trash" laying in that sector and ordered them to police up the sector. Peterman was the first to step over the barrier fence and, you guessed it, immediately stepped on a quarter pound "toe popper". I was at the top of the hill when we heard the explosion. When I got to the fence, Spencer and Sgt Johnson were lifting Peterman over the fence. The Corpsman brought a stretcher, hit him with morphine, and bandaged his foot. Peterman always had an 8mm camera with him and as soon as we put him on the stretcher, he started filming a close up of his foot. The toe of his boot was gone and his toes looked like spaghetti going every which way. He passed the camera to Spencer as we carried him up the hill to the Medevac chopper, with Spencer capturing the entire thing on film. Just as the chopper began to lift off, Spencer threw the camera to the door gunner. Peterman is probably the only Marine to ever have a home movie of his own wounds and Medevac.

One more thing about Peterman, he is the only avowed atheist I ever met. We had that discussion one night in a foxhole at Ca Lu while on perimeter duty. So I guess that myth is busted.



## **The Institute of Medicine released a new report on Agent Orange:**

### **“Significant gaps in our knowledge”**

First, the committee concluded that even after 40 years since the end of the Vietnam War, there’s still not enough Agent Orange research underway, especially related to potential health consequences for the children and grandchildren of vets who were exposed. "Although progress has been made in understanding the health effects of exposure to the chemicals," the committee members wrote in the report, there are still “significant gaps in our knowledge.” We wrote a story about this. Check it out: <http://propub.li/1Mnt5vm>



### **New illnesses associated with Agent Orange**

Second, the report moved three illnesses from “inadequate or insufficient evidence” of Agent Orange association to “limited or suggestive evidence” of Agent Orange association. Those illnesses are:

#### **Cancer of the urinary bladder**

**Parkinson’s-like neurological disorders (only Parkinson’s disease is covered now)**

#### **Hypothyroidism (under-active thyroid)**

The IOM has previously found a similar level of evidence for an association between Agent Orange and hypertension and stroke.

These illnesses are not currently covered by VA and the department will have to decide whether to adopt them. The VA also doesn’t compensate vets with hypertension or who have had a stroke, despite previous IOM reports linking those conditions to Agent Orange. The VA is not bound by the committee’s recommendations. The researchers listed more than 30 past suggestions — including calls for additional government-led studies — that apparently haven’t been pursued by the VA or other agencies.

**ALL VETERANS MUST VOTE, please register if you have not.**



**Who Can Register to Vote?**

**To register to vote in Florida, you must:**

**Be a United States citizen.**

**Be a Florida resident.**

**Be at least 18 years old. (You may pre-register if you are 16 years of age, and you will be able to vote in any election on or after your 18th birthday.)**

**Not currently adjudicated mentally incapacitated, with respect to voting in Florida, or any other state.**

**Not have been convicted of a felony in Florida without your civil rights having been restored.**

**Not claim the right to vote in another state.**

**Voter Registration closes 29 days prior to each election. In order to be eligible to vote in an election, you must be registered prior to the deadline.**

**How to Apply to Register to Vote**

**Online Voter Registration Application**



**You may apply for voter registration by submitting a Florida Voter Registration Application Form to your Supervisor of Elections office. Registration forms are available on our website, at any Elections office, driver's license office, public libraries, public assistance agencies (HRS), armed forces recruitment offices, and government offices including:**

**St. Johns County Tax Collector Offices**

**St. Johns County Public Libraries Branch Locations**

**You may also call our office at (904) 823-2238 for an application to be mailed to you.**

## **Help needed**

**The Veterans Council is looking for a non paid volunteer to either repair or replace our website.**

**The Veterans Council wants to increase its online, social media presence.**

**If interested, contact Michael Rothfeld: [mrothfeld@anyveteran.org](mailto:mrothfeld@anyveteran.org)**

**From Phillip Karp: (husband of Dr. Jane Karp, COL USAF (Ret))**

Here are two photos of my father-in-law **William Tatel**, he was in the 7th Army Division Infantry and served overseas in World War II with General George Patton in North Africa, Sicily, Italy and France as Second Lieutenant promoted to Lieutenant and eventually Captain.

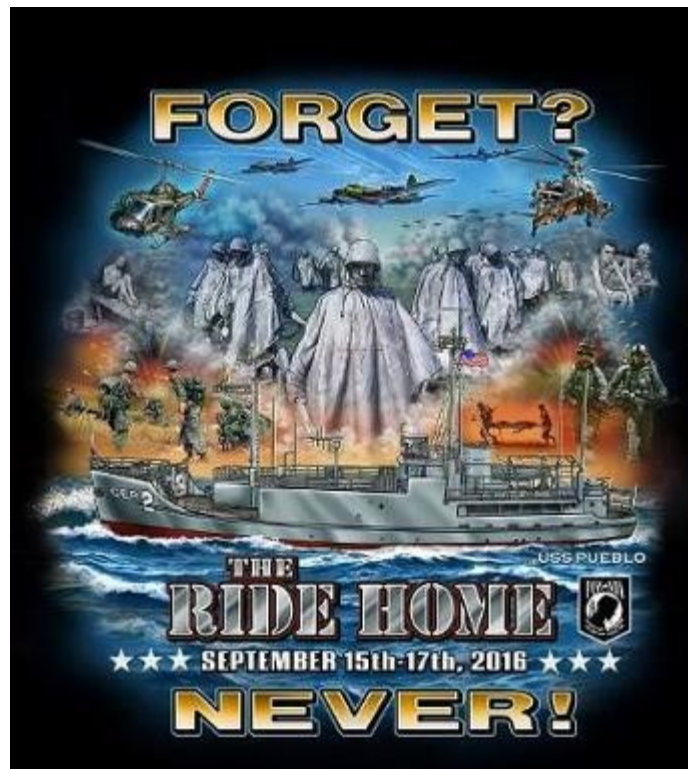
In the first photo, my father-in-law is in Casablanca dated January 1943 and seated in his jeep, which he named after his future wife waiting back home (my mother-in-law) Phyllis. The second photo was taken in Agrigento, Sicily in 1943.

Thank you to my father-in-law, who will be 100 years old in August 2016, and to all the men and women of the Greatest Generation who served with honor and made lasting sacrifices in World War II and then came home to begin building the world we have today... thank you all for your sacrifices made that give us the freedom we have today.



**Support The Ride Home** - it is the largest gathering of former Prisoners Of War and still Missing In Action families tribute event held in the United States. Visit us @ Daytona Speedway Turkey Run March 25-27 and the Vietnam and all Veterans Reunion in Melbourne April 21-24. Go to our website to sponsor a former POW or MIA family member. Corporate sponsorships available.

[www.theridehome.com](http://www.theridehome.com)



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**Big announcement! K9s For Warriors and Bayer** launched "Operation K9 Care" at the Global Pet Expo. Our warriors will now get free pet care and a local retailer will provide \$1,000 worth of dog supplies for each warrior each year! Making service dogs possible for ALL veterans!



Rory Diamond, Executive Director, K9s For Warriors speaks at the Global Pet Expo

2nd Big Announcement from Global Pet Expo! Merrick Pet Care is donating all the proceeds from their "Hero's Banquet" can to K9s For Warriors research efforts to prove the program works and how it works. Step 1 in getting a dog in the hands of every veteran who needs one!





## **Benefits & Services**

At the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs, we advocate for Florida veterans and connect them to earned benefits and services. We're here to honor those who served U.S.

## **Field Services Outreach**

FDVA Claims Examiners regularly attend events throughout the state to help veterans with questions about their earned benefits and assistance.

Find out about the upcoming events that are going on from benefits presentations to town hall meetings across Florida and get your questions answered.

## **Free Benefits Counseling**

The Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs has Claims Examiners co-located with the VA Regional Office in Bay Pines, each VA Medical Center and many VA Outpatient Clinics. Assistance with claims is free and covers all state and federal veterans' programs. FDVA, through its Bureau of State Approving Agency, also evaluates and approves secondary and post-secondary education programs so Floridians can take advantage of federal veterans' educational programs such as the Post-9/11 GI Bill. For more information, call (727) 319-7440.

## **County Veteran Service Offices**

Information on current federal, state and local veterans' programs, entitlements and referral services is also available in Florida through a network of County Veteran Service Offices. The counselors are trained and accredited annually by the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs. All services are provided free of charge.

## **Florida Veterans' Benefits Guide**

The Florida Veterans' Benefits Guide is an annual publication designed to bring you the latest information on federal and state benefits in a concise, easy to read format. The guide, which is a primary tool in our arsenal to advocate for our state's veterans, is produced by the Florida Veterans Foundation. (A hard copy of the Benefits Guide will be added soon.)

**Contact:** Lee Ann Sferrazza-Rios, [sferrazza-riosl@fdva.state.fl.us](mailto:sferrazza-riosl@fdva.state.fl.us)

(727) 518-3202, Ext. 5572 office, (727) 831-1805 cell

## **Nominations Open for 2016 Class of the Florida Veterans' Hall of Fame**

**TALLAHASSEE, Fla.** – The Florida Veterans' Hall of Fame Council is currently accepting nominations for the fourth annual class of inductees into the Florida Veterans' Hall of Fame. The nomination period is open until May 31, 2016. Anyone is permitted to nominate a military veteran.

The Florida Legislature established the Florida Veterans' Hall of Fame to honor and recognize veterans, both living and deceased, for their post-military service to the state.

Those nominating a veteran will need to complete a nomination packet that can be downloaded from [www.FloridaVeteransHallofFame.org](http://www.FloridaVeteransHallofFame.org). Nominations are based on established criteria including recognizing veterans who, through their works and lives during or after military service, have made a significant contribution to the state of Florida through civic, business, public service or other pursuits. It is not a traditional military hall of fame, as it focuses on post-military contributions to the State of Florida.

Up to 20 individuals may be selected for induction into the hall each year.

“We are privileged to be one of only nine other states that can honor its veterans for heeding the call to public service after they leave the military,” said retired Army National Guard Sgt. Maj. Ray A. Quinn, chairman of the Florida Veterans Hall of Fame Council. “As we roll into our fourth class, we are reaching far and wide to get nominations for those who exemplify continued service, sacrifice and commitment to a greater cause throughout their lifetime so that we can honor them by inducting them into the next Florida Veterans' Hall of Fame.”

Names honoring selected inductees are commemorated on a plaque in the Capitol Rotunda in Tallahassee. Since 2013, nineteen Florida veterans have been inducted into the Florida Veterans' Hall of Fame.

“With nearly 1.6 million veterans and a proven track record of service to the country, the Florida Veterans' Hall of Fame is honored to recognize those who have taken the passion of service one step further to make Florida a great state not only for veterans but for each and every Floridian,” said State Rep. Jimmie T. Smith, an Army veteran and vice chairman for the Florida Veterans' Hall of Fame Council.”

The Florida Veterans' Hall of Fame Council, a seven-member advisory panel, is responsible for accepting nominations to be considered for induction into the Florida Veterans' Hall of Fame. In selecting its nominees for submission, the council gives preference to veterans who were either born in Florida or adopted Florida as their home state. Each year, the council transmits its recommended list of nominees to the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs, which submits the nominations to the Governor and Cabinet, who will select the nominees to be inducted.

“Let us never forget our veterans, through whose selfless service and sacrifice we enjoy freedom and liberty,” said Mike Prendergast, executive director of the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs. “Help us recognize the contributions and talents of America's finest.”

For nomination information, visit <http://www.FloridaVeteransHallofFame.org>.



**SGM Ray Quinn, USA ret. presents the COL ED Taylor Award to:  
Oldest City Detachment, Marine Corps League, St. Augustine**

**Signature Programs:  
Toys for Tots**

served 3000 needy, local kids for 2015  
over 24,000 toys distributed  
serves St. Johns and Putnam counties  
donations are from major corporate sponsors  
hundreds of donation boxes spread throughout the county

**Also:**

1987 kids served in 2014  
839 kids served in 2013  
646 kids served in 2012

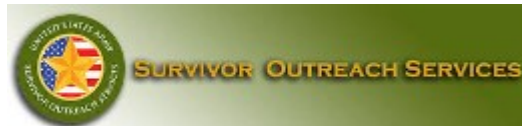
**Program in St. Johns County since 2006**

**We also donate generously to:**

DAV  
Vets 4 Vets  
Homes for Troops  
Canes for Vets  
School Scholarships  
Honor Flight  
and others



Here is a link to those interested in issues involving Military Survivor Families, please enjoy the Survivor Outreach Services Winter 2016 Newsletter for Northeast Florida.



Very Respectfully, Keith Ham

Survivor Outreach Services Support Coordinator HRCI Contractor

310 Charlotte St. , St. Augustine, FL 32084 Office: 904-823-0157, Cell: 904-472-7689, keith.e.ham.ctr@mail.mil

<file:///C:/Users/Owner/AppData/Local/Microsoft/Windows/INetCache/Content.Outlook/6XXVSKMT/FL%20Winter%202016.pdf>

**The winter 2016 issue of the Gulf War Newsletter marks the 25th anniversary of the start of Operation Desert Storm. Inside you will find:**

- Personal reflections on the Gulf War from VA employees, many of whom are also Gulf War Veterans
  - Information on VA research related to Gulf War Veterans, including how to participate in upcoming studies
  - Results from a recent survey on the physical and mental health of Gulf War and Gulf War Era Veterans
  - A list of Gulf War illnesses that are presumed by VA to be caused by military service
- Tips on how to get a disability compensation claim decision fast

Start reading today at [www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/publications/gulf-war/gulf-war-](http://www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/publications/gulf-war/gulf-war-)





## Shari Duval: 9s for Warriors founder saves veterans and dogs



In honor of Women's History Month, explore is celebrating those extraordinary individuals devoted to acting selflessly for the sake of others. Today we feature Shari Duval, founder of K9s for Warriors, a hero saving America's military heroes.

Shari started the nonprofit organization K9s For Warriors after her son, Brett, came home from Iraq with PTSD. She was desperate to find a way to get him back.

For Shari, the answer was clear as day: dogs. Because Brett was a police and civilian dog-handler, Shari believed she could bring her beloved son back through starting a charity that trains service dogs for PTSD veterans. Soon thereafter, K9s For Warriors was born. Shari worked diligently to find funding and supporters for the organization. In the beginning, success didn't just fall into Shari's grasp; she fought hard as she chased her dream to help save veteran lives. With just the help of Brett and a few family members, Shari worked long hours to take care of both the program veterans and dogs.

Because of Shari, K9s For Warriors has grown into a thriving national nonprofit. The mission of K9s is to train loving service dogs and pair them with post 9/11 veterans afflicted with PTSD, TBI, or MST. Having a K9s For Warriors' service dog helps these veterans reintegrate back into civilian life. Ninety-five percent of the dogs used in the program are rescued, extending the amount of lives saved beyond that of veterans. To-date, there have been 213 warrior-service dog graduates with a 100% suicide prevention rate.

Under Shari's leadership, the organization has grown from operating out of a small residential home to a 17,000 square foot facility. Many people claim that they look after veterans — Shari really does. She not only advocates for them, but she truly loves them. She is known as “Mom” to every veteran that walks through the doors of the K9s For Warriors program. There are 22 veterans a day that are taking their lives because they have exhausted every avenue trying to recover their minds, bodies, and souls from the grim details of combat. Shari's goal is to put an end to this heart-wrenching statistic and to ensure that our veterans receive dignity, respect, and proper care.

## The Gary Sinise Foundation



The experiences of war leave an indelible impact on our servicemen and women. As they return to civilian life, the physical, emotional and psychological challenges they face are often difficult. As citizens, supporting the heroes of our nation is a responsibility each of us must carry. The Gary Sinise Foundation works to ensure the sacrifices of America's defenders and their families

are never forgotten.

In 2012, the Gary Sinise Foundation began building custom Smart Homes for America's severely wounded veterans through its *Building for America's Bravest* partner program. Each Smart Home features automated amenities to ease the daily challenges these heroes face. In 2013, the Gary Sinise Foundation expanded these efforts by establishing its *R.I.S.E. (Restoring Independence & Supporting Empowerment)* program.

For more than a decade, *Gary Sinise & the Lt. Dan Band* have toured the globe in support of our troops. As a part of the Foundation, the band is raising spirits and awareness for military and first responder causes worldwide.

Through its *Invincible Spirit Festivals*, the Gary Sinise Foundation is boosting the morale at military medical centers across the country. These daylong celebrations provide a respite from the rigors of rehabilitation for the hospital's patients, staff and families. The *Relief & Resiliency Outreach* program is providing complete support to those recovering from trauma, injury and loss during times of urgent need. The Foundation is also providing financial support and training to America's firefighters, police departments and EMTs through its *First Responders Outreach* program.

Additionally, the Gary Sinise Foundation is showing appreciation through *Serving Heroes*, a program providing hearty, classic American meals to our defenders across the country. The *Arts & Entertainment Outreach* program now includes the Steppenwolf Theatre in Chicago and the Geffen Playhouse in Los Angeles. Each theatre provides dinner and a performance to local veterans free of charge.

In 2015, the Gary Sinise Foundation launched *Soaring Valor* with The National WWII Museum. The program provides WWII veterans a chance to visit the museum and documents their first-hand accounts of the war for future generations.



**Veterans 4 Veterans**  
**2nd Quarterly Gathering of 2016**  
**Veterans Memorial Arena**  
**APRIL 2nd, 1130 to 1300**



Parking in lot Z



Gathering of Veterans...We share information of concern to all and provide the opportunity to unite and support one another.

Keynote Speaker:  
**Sheriff Mike Williams**



*Together we can be "ONE POWERFUL VOICE" that can make a difference for all our organizations and Veterans here in NE Florida.*

***Inform, Connect, Grow, Unite***

**PASS THE WORD!**

(Veteran Commanders and leadership share this info with your membership)

**THINK ABOUT IT...**

Over 150,000 Veterans reside in NE Florida, we can be a powerful force if we all got the word.

**Join us!**







**GratitudeAmerica**



# MILITARY SUPPORT RETREAT

*at Amelia Island*

*Fernandina Beach, Florida*

**April 7th at 4:30pm - April 10th at 3pm**

A RETREAT FOR POST 9-11 NORTHEAST FLORIDA AND SOUTHEAST GEORGIA  
MILITARY/VETERANS AND THEIR PRIMARY SUPPORT PERSON

ACTIVE DUTY ★ RETIRED ★ NATIONAL GUARD & RESERVE ★ ALL SERVICE BRANCHES

**★ RESTORATION ★ RECREATION ★ RELAXATION ★**

*Strengthen and restore connections, enjoy the natural beauty of Amelia Island,  
be inspired by fun outdoor activities, learn about available support resources,  
and relax while discovering post-deployment strategies.*

★ Small, friendly group setting ★

★ All accommodations, food, and activities are provided free of charge ★

★ Facilitated by Vets, VA/DoD experts, and Community Nonprofit Support Organizations ★

*Please note: Childcare is not provided*



Sponsored By  **WestRock**

TO LEARN MORE AND TO APPLY VISIT: [GRATITUDEAMERICA.ORG/RETREATS](http://GRATITUDEAMERICA.ORG/RETREATS)

CONTACT INFO: JOHN NOVEMBER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
904-525-3042 OR [JNOVEMBER@GRATITUDEAMERICA.ORG](mailto:JNOVEMBER@GRATITUDEAMERICA.ORG)



**Submitted by Vietnam veteran Jerry Domask**  
**Veterans Art Exhibit at the University of North Florida (UNF)**

**Objectives:**

Provide a venue for veterans and students to express themselves in different media forms by examining their experiences and its impact upon self and society,

To share the sacrifices and hardships endured by individuals serving their Country; and to

Provide a journey of self-expression and enlightenment of the invisible becoming visible in art for any subject matter or period of time.

**Scope of Art Creations:**

Visual (paintings, drawings, sculpture, ceramics, etc.)

Video/film

Multi-media

Photography

Poetry

**Participants:** Active duty, veterans and civilians/students addressing veteran issues and/or topics. Veteran artists are not limited to exhibition subject matter. Student creative works will be limited to military and/or service member genre.

**Tentative Date for Art Exhibit: 2016 or early 2017.** An exhibit date will be announced once facility planning and gallery schedules are finalized.

**Place of Exhibition: University of North Florida (UNF) Art Gallery (TBA).**

**Art Exhibit to be Curated:** Artists will be invited to exhibit by personal invitation. Please express your interest in participation by sending an email to UNF, Military and Veterans Resource Center, at [mvc@unf.edu](mailto:mvc@unf.edu). or Jerry Domask, at [jerrydomask@gmail.com](mailto:jerrydomask@gmail.com)

Jerry Domask 904-386-3622 Website: [JeromeDomaskFineArt.com](http://JeromeDomaskFineArt.com)

NOTE: There is a new “closed group” facebook page for veteran artists called Veterans Artist Program (VAP) : [www.facebook.com/groups/VAP](http://www.facebook.com/groups/VAP) . Sign up if interested. Great group, very talented, many mediums. Currently approximately 400+ members nationally.

## Wounded Warrior Project parts ways with controversial CEO Steven Nardizzi

By DAVID BAUERLEIN, david.bauerlein@jacksonville.com

This article is reprinted in its entirety as it appeared in the FL Times Union

The Jacksonville-based Wounded Warrior Project abruptly parted ways Thursday with CEO Steven Nardizzi, who led the nonprofit to dizzying fundraising growth but got replaced after its board conducted a review prompted by national news reports that criticized how the money is spent.



The Wounded Warrior Project board also announced the departure of Chief Operating Officer Al Giordano, who likewise was a founding member of the nonprofit.

A statement released by the board Thursday night said the organization needed new leadership to strengthen some policies and procedures while also helping to “restore trust in the organization among all constituencies.”

The board created an “Office of the CEO” that will be led by board Chairman Anthony Odierno working with top members of the current executive team.

“It is now time to put the organization’s focus directly back on the men and women who have so bravely fought for our country and who need our support,” Odierno said after the board meeting.

Since relocating its headquarters to Jacksonville in 2006, Wounded Warrior has rolled up huge fundraising numbers and climbed to the No. 38 ranking on Forbes magazine’s list of the nation’s biggest charities. About half of the nonprofit’s roughly 600 employees work in Jacksonville and the rest are spread across 23 other offices nationwide.

The departure of Wounded Warrior’s top executives did not surprise Bonnie Upright, a longtime participant in Jacksonville’s nonprofit sector who has worked in the field of public relations. She said the national media reports put a spotlight on the organization and it needed to assure donors.

“Once that ball starts rolling, it’s difficult to stop,” Upright said. “Clearly, there are some questions, and the board had full authority and should be asking those very difficult questions.”

In late January, CBS News and the New York Times unloaded in-depth reports on the organization that raised questions about whether the organization spends too much on its own staff, such as an annual “all hands” event at the five-star Broadmoor Resort in Colorado. The board announced Feb. 1 it would do an independent investigation.

The board said the review found “some policies, procedures and controls at WWP

have not kept pace with the organization's rapid growth in recent years and are in need of strengthening."

That includes travel policies to "more explicitly limit" domestic air travel to economy class unless there is a health or disability reason for more costly seating. The review found the "vast majority" of air travel was in economy class, but less than 1 percent might have been booked for first-class or business class.

The board announced it also will tighten policies related to other unspecified expenses for employees and board members while stepping up employee training about existing and new policies and procedures.

But the review also concluded that "certain allegations raised in media reports were inaccurate," the board said in its statement.

For instance, the employee conference at the Broadmoor Resort cost about \$970,000, rather than the \$3 million figure reported in media accounts. But the board added it would be scaling back on such events.

The review stood by Wounded Warrior's position that 80.6 percent of spending goes to programs, as opposed to the 54 to 60 percent amount that news reports cited from charity watchdog organizations.

Wounded Warrior's figure includes \$40.9 million in fundraising costs that Wounded Warrior says are appropriately considered spending on programs because the fundraising messages also promote awareness of the programs that veterans can get. If that nearly \$41 million were not counted as an expense for programs, the percentage spent by Wounded Warrior on programs would drop to 67 percent.

The review said Wounded Warrior Project uses an outside organization that works for other nonprofit organizations to determine how to put fundraising expenses into the column for spending on programs, and independent auditors have agreed with the allocation.

The review also said of the \$26 million spent by Wounded Warrior on conferences and events in the 2014 fiscal year, about 94 percent was associated with program services for veterans and their families.

The review disputed a comment that Wounded Warrior's practice in communicating with veterans is "we don't call warriors, warriors call us." The board said from 2013 to 2015, the organization reached out with 150,000 phone calls and 114,000 emails.

The law firm Simpson Thacher and Bartlett and FTI Consulting did the review, which involved examining financial records and conducting interviews with former and current employees throughout the organization, up to senior management and the board of directors.



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Aircraft Fabrication  
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Compressed Natural Gas  
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Dental Assistant  
Diesel Technology  
Digital Design  
Emergency Medical Technician  
Facials Specialty  
Fire Fighting  
HVAC  
Landscape & Turf Management  
Legal Administrative Specialist  
Licensed Practical Nursing  
Massage Therapy  
Medical Administrative Specialist  
Medical Assistant  
Nails Specialty  
Nursery Management  
Nursing Assistant  
Paramedic  
Patient Care Technician  
Pest Control Operations  
Pharmacy Technician  
Welding Technology



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jennifer.wills@fctc.edu • www.fctc.edu

Launched in 2005, [VietnamGear.com](http://VietnamGear.com) is a website dedicated to preserving the history of the Vietnam War. The site contains an extensive selection of photos, numerous articles and more than 600 items of clothing, equipment and weaponry from the conflict. In researching the war we have, wherever possible, used authoritative texts and official documents. These include, but are not limited to, The Pentagon Papers, Foreign Relations of the United States, National Security Action Memorandums, United States Army Material Command reports and Military Specifications.



# 2016 ANNUAL FUNDRAISER

WWW.NABV.ORG

This fundraiser will go to support our efforts to bring a Blind Wounded Warrior from the current wars or a Blind Veteran who has never been to a conference of Blind Veterans and Blind Civilians. This conference can be a life changing experience. We believe that with the proper training and attitude a Blind Warrior or Veteran can accomplish anything he or she sets their minds to do! In our day to day organization activities we strive to make the lives of our fellow Warriors and Veterans the best that it can be. If you would like to support our efforts please go to [WWW.NABV.ORG](http://WWW.NABV.ORG) and click on the navigation bar where the raffles are located. This year is the first time we have had the ability to take credit cards online. We greatly appreciate your generous donation.



**BLIND VETERANS SERVING  
BLIND VETERANS!**

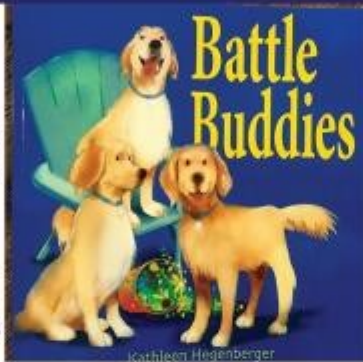


# K9S FOR WARRIORS DOG TALES

K9s' Most Tail-Wagging News Source ● Warrior Update 102 February 2016

## Now on Shelves!

*Battle Buddies* is a charming children's book that tells the true story of three golden retriever puppies, Maverick, Goose, and Iceman, as their journey of growing up and training to become service dogs unfolds. Take a look inside this whimsical narrative to see how these K9s gave a new leash on life to three disabled veterans. The book includes beautiful illustrations and photography of the dogs and their inspiring adventures. Order this great book from our online store. (<http://shop.k9sforwarriors.org/>)



## Canine Calendar

### March

13th: Daylight Savings  
17th: Saint Patrick's Day  
20th: Intl. Day of Happiness  
24th: Graduation  
27th: Easter

### April

7th: World Health Day  
15th: Tax Day  
21st: Graduation  
22nd: Earth Day



### Did You Know?

Our volunteer program now has over 1,000 members!

## Coming Soon: Kennel #2

We are proud to announce that ground-breaking for kennel #2 will soon be getting underway. This expansion will enable us to house 27 additional dogs and serve many more veterans. Stay tuned for more details!

## Top-Dog Tree

K9s' Christmas tree fundraiser was a success. The winner of the tree-decorating contest was Atlantic Coast High School. They used an eclectic theme with handmade ornaments that were created by students of the high school. As their prize, they have received the honor of naming a service dog.



## #213

## puppy PRIDE

To date, K9s For Warriors has graduated a total of 213 warrior-dog teams. We are looking forward to saving many more lives, both canines and veterans, as we continue to grow and prosper as an organization.



**Dozer, Four Months  
Puppy-Raising Program**



**V.F.W. Post 2391**

# **Golf Tournament**

**18th Annual**



**- Modified Scramble, Shotgun Start -**

**Where:** St. Johns County Golf Club

**When:** Saturday April 9, 2016. 7:00 AM Signup, 8:30 AM Start.

**Player Fee:** \$45 Per Player, \$180 Per Team

**Hole Sponsor Fee:** \$50

Coffee & Donuts will be served.

## **Prizes & Gifts**

- Longest & Straightest Drive
- Closest to Pin
- Putting Contest
- Super Prize for Hole-in-One
- Gaudy & Duffer Score
- 1st, 2nd & 3rd place
- Prizes to be raffled off and Lunch held at VFW Post after tourney

For Further Information Contact VFW Post 2391 at 797-5267

**Proceeds to Sponsor Youth Activities & Charities**

## U.S. House approves bill for Wall of Remembrance at Korean War Veterans Memorial

WASHINGTON — Korean War veterans may be getting their own Wall of Remembrance.

The U.S. House of Representatives approved a bipartisan bill that would authorize a Wall of Remembrance at the Korean War Veterans Memorial earlier this week.

It would list the name of each American veteran who was killed in action.

The wall would also have the number of U.S. veterans who were wounded, captured or went missing during the Korean War.

The wall would be built with private contributions.

The bill moves to the U.S. Senate for consideration.



**It's official; DD-214s are NOW Online.** Please pass on to other vets. The National Personnel Records Center (NPRC) has provided the following website for veterans to gain access to their DD-214s online: <http://vetrecs.archives.gov/> or try <http://www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records/>

This may be particularly helpful when a veteran needs a copy of his DD-214 for employment purposes. NPRC is working to make it easier for veterans with computers and Internet access to obtain copies of documents from their military files. Military veterans and the next of kin of deceased former military members may now use a new online military personnel records system to request documents. Other individuals with a need for documents must still complete the Standard Form 180, which can be downloaded from the online web site. Because the requester will be asked to supply all information essential for NPRC to process the request, delays that normally occur when NPRC has to ask veterans for additional information will be minimized. The new web-based application was designed to provide better service on these requests by eliminating the records centers mailroom and processing time. Please pass this information on to former military personnel you may know and their dependents



## Ex POW Bill Ingram Honored

Bob Mitchell and his wife Ann had a great day at the St. Augustine Film Festival as we were honored to be escorts for our friend Ex POW Bill Ingram. Bill was the guest of honor for the showing of the film "Never The Same" The Prisoner of War Experience at the Saint Augustine film festival.

Thank you Director: Jan Thompson and film narrator Loretta Swit for making us feel special. We have never seen Bill so excited. He will be wired for a long time. You made his day and ours. Thanks again for all you both do for our POW's. We will never forget.



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## ***VA Caregiver Support Line Celebrates 5 Years!***

The Caregiver Support Line has been providing support to Caregivers for five years! Over 220,000 callers have reached out to the CSL since it's opening in February 2011.

Staffed by licensed social workers, the Support Line is available to provide supportive counseling, education on topics related to caregiving, and help to connect Caregivers to local supports and services to assist them in their caregiving role, including a referral to a local Caregiver Support Coordinator located at every VA medical center nationwide. To further support Caregivers, the Caregiver Support Line also facilitates telephone education presentations several times each month for Caregivers, with a focus on self-care.

Are you caring for a Veteran loved one? Call us today at [1-855-260-3274](tel:1-855-260-3274) to learn more about ways VA may be able support you in your caregiving journey!

---

## FMC 22nd Annual Golf Tournament



To our Chapter Members, Past Players, and Guests:

The First Militia Chapter, AUSA (Association of the United States Army) will conduct its 22nd Annual Golf Tournament Fundraiser on April 11th at The Golf Club at South Hampton on CR-210, St. Augustine. Same great location as the last few years.

This years Golf Tournament Chairmen will be MAJ Scott Taylor.

He is off to a great start with a great support team.

There will be great prizes, raffle items and as always a delicious lunch. Please plan on participating by playing, sponsoring a hole, or helping us to gain sponsors.

You can now pay your entry fee or sponsorships online at <https://squareup.com/market/first-militia-chapter-ausa>.

*Please remember to still submit your Entry/Sponsor forms to*

*Rebecca Gibson, C/O AUSA Golf Tournament*

*PO Box 3883, St. Augustine, FL 32085-3883*

*or [rebecca.j.gibson.ctr@mail.mil](mailto:rebecca.j.gibson.ctr@mail.mil).*

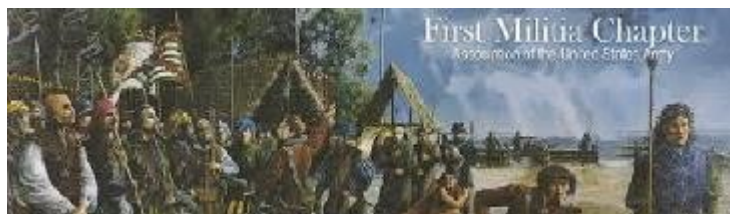
*We are looking forward to another great success and memorable event!*

Respectfully,

Daniel (Matt) Johnson

Colonel, Florida National Guard

President, First Militia Chapter



## VA Memorial Benefits

### How to Apply

Upon the death of the Veteran or his or her spouse or dependent, also called the time of need, family members should locate the Veteran's DD-214 or other discharge papers and click 'get started' to schedule a burial in a VA national cemetery. Then make arrangements with a funeral home, National Cemetery Scheduling Office or directly with a VA national cemetery.

### VA Memorial Benefits

VA takes special care to pay lasting tribute to the memory of Veterans who served and sacrificed and that of their families. VA meticulously maintains 134 VA national cemeteries in 39 states and is adding new cemeteries to accommodate Veterans and loved ones in their time of need. In a few years, 95 percent of Veterans will have a burial option in an open VA, state or tribal veterans cemetery located within an hour's drive of their home. Some benefits are also available for Veterans who choose burial in a private cemetery.

Veterans with a qualifying discharge are entitled to VA burial benefits. Spouses and dependent children are eligible too, even if they predecease the Veteran.

The following burial benefits may be provided:

Burial in a VA national cemetery

- Opening and closing of the grave or burial of cremated remains or placement in an above-ground vault, also called a columbarium
- A government furnished grave liner
- Perpetual care of the gravesite
- A headstone or marker with an inscription
- A burial flag
- A Presidential Memorial Certificate

Transportation of flower arrangements from the committal service shelter to the gravesite

Burial in a private cemetery

- A government headstone, marker, or medallion

A [burial flag](#)

A [Presidential Memorial Certificate](#).

Some survivors may also be entitled to VA [burial allowances](#) as partial reimbursement for the costs of funerals and burials for eligible Veterans.

Please note that gravesites in a VA National Cemetery cannot be reserved in advance. To prepare for a private cemetery burial, VA suggests families [review these questions and complete required forms](#) in advance.

### VA Requirements

[Discharge papers](#) to establish your [eligibility](#) for burial services

Burials in a national cemetery take place during the week and cannot be conducted on a federal holiday.

**Vietnam and All Veterans of Brevard Presents  
Florida's 29th Annual**

# **VIETNAM & ALL VETERANS REUNION**

**April 21-24, 2016**

**THE NATION'S LARGEST VETERANS REUNION**

Supported by the Vietnam and All Veterans of Florida, Inc. - vvoef.org

Come visit the

**Vietnam Traveling  
Memorial Wall**

**April 17 - 24, 2016**

[www.travelingwall.us](http://www.travelingwall.us)

**Wall Escort**

April 17, 2016, Leave 10AM

Eastern Florida State College

Cocoa Campus on Clearlake Road

**POW MIA  
CEREMONIES**

**FOOD & DRINK**

**LIVE MUSIC**

**MILITARY DISPLAYS**

**MILITARY VENDORS**

**THE LAST PATROL**  
By Seacoast Vietnam Veterans

**THE MOVING TRIBUTE**



Visit the Reunion Web Page at [www.FloridaVeteransReunion.com](http://www.FloridaVeteransReunion.com)  
VVB Web Page [www.VietnamandAllVeteransofBrevard.com](http://www.VietnamandAllVeteransofBrevard.com)

## **Public Invited**

**WICKHAM PARK  
MELBOURNE, FL**

**321-255-4307**

**Take I-95 to Exit 191**  
Off Exit 73

**NO COOLERS, GLASS OR PETS  
ALLOWED IN THE REUNION AREA**

Per Wickham Park: Golf carts  
permitted for handicapped only and  
must abide by Florida highway laws.



**CALL FOR INFO**

**321-652-4185**

[RaRusso1962@gmail.com](mailto:RaRusso1962@gmail.com)

[Candy1540@yahoo.com](mailto:Candy1540@yahoo.com)

**VENDOR INFO**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 9, 2016

## VA Expands Hepatitis C Drug Treatment

*Expanded funding now allows VA to provide increased drug therapy at VA facilities nationwide*

WASHINGTON – The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) today announced that it is now able to fund care for all Veterans with hepatitis C for Fiscal Year 2016 regardless of the stage of the patient’s liver disease. The move follows increased funding from Congress along with reduced drug prices.

“We’re honored to be able to expand treatment for Veterans who are afflicted with hepatitis C,” says VA Under Secretary for Health Dr. David Shulkin. “To manage limited resources previously, we established treatment priority for the sickest patients. Additionally, if Veterans are currently waiting on an appointment for community care through the Choice Program, they can now turn to their local VA facility for this treatment or can elect to continue to receive treatment through the Choice Program.”

VA has long led the country in screening for and treating hepatitis C. VA has treated over 76,000 Veterans infected with hepatitis C and approximately 60,000 have been cured. In addition, since the beginning of 2014, more than 42,000 patients have been treated with the new highly effective antivirals. In fiscal year 2015, VA allocated \$696 million for new hepatitis C drugs (17 percent of the VA’s total pharmacy budget) and in fiscal year 2016, VA anticipates spending approximately \$1 billion on hepatitis C drugs. VA expects that with the expansion, many more Veterans will be started on hepatitis C treatment every week this fiscal year.

In addition to furnishing clinical care to Veterans with hepatitis C, VA Research continues to expand the knowledge base regarding the disease through scientific studies focused on effective care, screening, and healthcare delivery including to female Veterans and Veterans with complicated medical conditions in addition to hepatitis C.

For additional information on Hepatitis C treatments Veterans can log onto <http://www.hepatitis.va.gov/patient/hcv/index.asp>.



## *Maria Eck Bullard to USS Indianapolis CA-35 Second Watch*

Wishing a very happy birthday to USS Indianapolis Survivor Harlan Twible who is 94 years young today! Harlan was an Annapolis trained Ensign on the USS Indianapolis at the time of the sinking. One thing that Harlan said once when talking about the experience is that as difficult as it was, he never let it define his life. He went on to appreciate every day of his life, to be a very successful in his career, a dedicated father to his 3 children and was married to the love of his life for 70 years before she passed away last year. Because of his Naval Academy training, he was responsible for saving many young lives in the water. He continues to be sharp as a tack today and a dear friend. So join me in wishing Harlan a very happy birthday!



## Science News, from research organizations

### Final review of health problems that may be linked to **Agent Orange** exposure during Vietnam War

Date: March 10, 2016

Source: National Academy of Sciences

#### **Summary:**

The latest and final in a series of congressionally mandated biennial reviews of the evidence of health problems that may be linked to exposure to Agent Orange and other herbicides used during the Vietnam War changed the categorization of health outcomes for bladder cancer, hypothyroidism, and spina bifida and clarified the breadth of the previous finding for Parkinson's disease.

The latest and final in a series of congressionally mandated biennial reviews of the evidence of health problems that may be linked to exposure to Agent Orange and other herbicides used during the Vietnam War changed the categorization of health outcomes for bladder cancer, hypothyroidism, and spina bifida and clarified the breadth of the previous finding for Parkinson's disease. The committee that carried out the study and wrote this report, Veterans and Agent Orange: Update 2014, reviewed scientific literature published between Oct. 1, 2012, and Sept. 30, 2014.

Bladder cancer and hypothyroidism were moved to the category of "limited or suggestive" evidence of an association from their previous positions in the default "inadequate or insufficient" category. A finding of limited or suggestive evidence of an association means that the epidemiologic evidence indicates there could be a link between exposure to a chemical and increased risk for a particular health effect. A finding of inadequate or insufficient evidence indicates that the available studies are of insufficient quality, consistency, or statistical power to permit a conclusion regarding the presence or absence of such a link. For both bladder cancer and hypothyroidism, new results from a large study of Korean veterans who served in the Vietnam War were compellingly suggestive of an association. In combination with pre-existing supportive epidemiologic findings and substantial biologic plausibility, the new information provided evidence to merit a change in category of association for these two outcomes.

The committee for the first Veterans and Agent Orange report in 1994 concluded that there was little and inconsistent evidence concerning an association between any birth defects and parental exposure -- either mother or father -- to herbicides. The committee for the next report, Update 1996, placed spina bifida in the "limited or suggestive" category of association based on preliminary findings from the then ongoing Air Force Health Study. However, to date, a complete analysis of the data from the Air Force Health Study for neural tube defects has not been published. No subsequent studies have found increases in spina bifida with exposure to components of the herbicides sprayed in Vietnam. Contrary to expectation, intensive in

Investigation of possible heritable effects in animal models still has not demonstrated that herbicide exposure of adult males can produce birth defects in their offspring. Taking these factors into consideration, the committee for this final report concluded that the evidence did not merit retaining spina bifida in the limited or suggestive category of association and downgraded it to the category of "inadequate or insufficient" evidence. This is only the second time that a Veterans and Agent Orange committee has demoted a health outcome to a weaker category of association. The first instance was the move of porphyria cutanea tarda from the "sufficient" category to the "limited or suggestive" category by the committee for Update 1998.

In addition to reviewing the evidence of health problems that may be linked to exposure to Agent Orange and other herbicides, the committee was asked to address the specific question of whether various conditions with Parkinson's-like symptoms should qualify the assignment of Parkinson's disease to the limited or suggestive category of association with herbicide exposure. The committee noted that Parkinson's disease is a diagnosis of exclusion, and therefore, the diagnostic standards for this condition should not be assumed to have been uniform in the epidemiologic studies that constitute the basis for this association or in the claims submitted by veterans. Consequently, there is no rational basis for exclusion of individuals with Parkinson's-like symptoms from the service-related category denoted as Parkinson's disease. To exclude a claim for a condition with Parkinson's-like symptoms, the onus should be on the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) on a case-by-case basis to definitively establish the role of a recognized factor other than the herbicides sprayed in Vietnam.

Given that this is the final report mandated by the Agent Orange Act, the committee developed recommendations for future actions to advance the well-being of Vietnam veterans, including that the VA should continue epidemiologic studies of the veterans; develop protocols that could investigate paternal transmission of adverse effects to offspring; and design a study to focus on specific manifestations in humans of dioxin exposure and compromised immunity, which have been clearly demonstrated in animal models. The committee also called for a careful review of evidence concerning whether paternal exposure to any toxicant has definitively resulted in abnormalities in the first generation of offspring. In addition, the committee formulated recommendations for improved assembly and evaluation of information necessary for monitoring possible service-related health effects in all military personnel, including creating and maintaining rosters of individuals deployed on every mission and linking U.S. Department of Defense and VA databases to systematically identify, record, and monitor trends in veterans' diseases.

The report can be accessed at: <http://www.nap.edu/catalog/21845/veterans-and-agent-orange-update-2014>

Story Source: The above post is reprinted from materials provided by National Academy of Sciences.  
Note: Materials may be edited for content and length.

## VA News Release

### **VA Announces Community Care Call Center to Help Veterans with Choice Program Billing Issues**

WASHINGTON – Veterans can now work directly with the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to resolve debt collection issues resulting from inappropriate or delayed Choice Program billing. In step with MyVA’s efforts to modernize VA’s customer-focused, Veteran-centered services capabilities, a Community Care Call Center has been set up for Veterans experiencing adverse credit reporting or debt collection resulting from inappropriately billed Choice Program claims. Veterans experiencing these problems can call 1-877-881-7618 for assistance.

“As a result of the Veterans Choice Program, community providers have seen thousands of Veterans. We continue to work to make the program more Veteran-friendly,” said Dr. David Shulkin, Under Secretary for Health. “There should be no bureaucratic burden that stands in the way of Veterans getting care.”

The new call center will work to resolve instances of improper Veteran billing and assist community care medical providers with delayed payments. VA staff are also trained and ready to work with the medical providers to expunge adverse credit reporting on Veterans resulting from delayed payments to providers. VA is urging Veterans to continue working with their VA primary care team to obtain necessary health care services regardless of adverse credit reporting or debt collection activity.

VA acknowledges that delayed payments and inappropriately billed claims are unacceptable and have caused stress for Veterans and providers alike. The new call center is the first step in addressing these issues. VA presented The Plan to Consolidate Community Care in October of 2015 that outlines additional solutions to streamline processes and improve timely provider payment.

For more details about the Veterans Choice Program and VA’s progress, visit: [www.va.gov/opa/choiceact](http://www.va.gov/opa/choiceact) . Veterans seeking to use the Veterans Choice Program can call 1-866-606-8198 to find out more about the program, confirm their eligibility and schedule an appointment.







**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**



## Veterans Health Administration by Hans Petersen



Were you exposed to burn pits while deployed? Did you serve in Operation Enduring Freedom/Operation Iraqi Freedom/Operation New Dawn, Djibouti, Africa, Operations Desert Shield or Desert Storm or the Southeast Asia theater of operations after August, 1990? Do you think you may have been exposed to burn pits and other airborne hazards? Some Veterans have reported respiratory symptoms and health conditions that may be related to exposure to burn pits. The long-term health effects of exposure to burn pits and other airborne hazards are not fully understood. In an effort to better understand these health effects, VA has launched the Airborne Hazards and Open Burn Pit Registry for Veterans and Service members. “While nearly 61,000 Veterans and Service members have joined the Burn Pit Registry since its launch nearly two years ago, this is only a small fraction of the estimated 3 million individuals who may be eligible to join this registry,” said Dr. Stephen Hunt, National Director of VA’s Post-Deployment Integrated Care Initiative. “I encourage as many eligible individuals as possible to sign up for the Burn Pit Registry.” - See more at: <http://www.va.gov/HEALTH/NewsFeatures/2016/March/Were-you-exposed-to-burn-pits-while-deployed.asp#sthash.CprxXqDA.dpuf>

Since the early 1980s, Dr. Hunt has conducted registry exams for the Agent Orange, Former POW, Gulf War, Ionizing Radiation, and the Airborne Hazards and the Open Burn Pit Registries. According to Dr. Hunt, the Burn Pit Registry will help Veterans in a number of ways.

The Registry gives participants an opportunity to document any concerns they may have about deployment-related exposures and provides an opportunity to obtain a free health evaluation by a VA or DoD provider. The evaluation can identify and document any problems potentially related to the exposures and ensure ongoing follow up for any existing health conditions or any additional conditions that could emerge down the road.

One challenge when addressing environmental exposures is that we don’t always know what the long-term health effects of those exposures may be or when those health concerns might arise. Some exposures don’t lead to any long-term problems. Others, however, may have long-term or downstream health effects that aren’t identifiable early on. Through the registry, if health conditions related to exposures do

emerge months or years later, we will be able to identify them more quickly and to make sure that Veterans get the health care that they need in a timely manner.

A common misunderstanding about the registry is that participation is required to obtain disability compensation benefits. This is not true. The burn pit registry and all other VA registries are unrelated to the disability compensation rating process. While a Registry note in your medical record summarizing your exposure concerns and related medical treatment may serve as evidence to support a claim, it is not a necessary document or step in the claims process.

The registry is open to anyone who served in:

- Operation Enduring Freedom/Operation Iraqi Freedom/Operation New Dawn
- Djibouti, Africa on or after Sept. 11, 2001
- Operations Desert Shield or Desert Storm
- Southeast Asia theater of operations on or after Aug. 2, 1990

Interested Veterans and Service members can learn more about the registry in this short video, or sign up. “Ultimately, our goal in VA is to have 22 million healthy Veterans using VA services and resources as needed to ensure that they enjoy the most meaningful, satisfying, and productive lives possible,” said Hunt.

“The Burn Pit Registry is a nice way for Veterans to get their foot in the door at the VA and to explore the services, benefits and resources available to them through VA health care.”

The Burn Pit Registry is one more reflection of how far VA has come. It is a measure of how much progress we’ve made in taking care of individuals with deployment-related exposure concerns, and in taking care of Veterans in general.

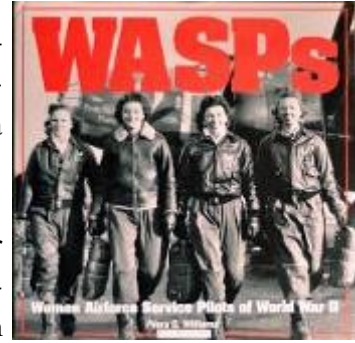
Operation Enduring Freedom/Operation Iraqi Freedom/Operation New Dawn Djibouti, Africa on or after Sept. 11, 2001 Operations Desert Shield or Desert Storm Southeast Asia theater of operations on or after Aug. 2, 1990

- See more at: <http://www.va.gov/HEALTH/NewsFeatures/2016/March/Were-you-exposed-to-burn-pits-while-deployed.asp#sthash.CprxXqDA.dpuf>



## Veterans Fight for Arlington Rights: By [Sarah B. Boxer](#)

They were known as WASPs, Women Airforce Service Pilots. During World War II, between 1942 and 1944, about 1,100 women volunteered to fly military planes here in the United States. Today, a new battle is being waged for these veterans of war.



Despite the important role they played, the women pilots have never been awarded full Army status and therefore cannot be buried at Arlington National Cemetery. They were granted retroactive veteran status in 1977 but never received the full military benefits needed for the right to be interred at Arlington.

A bipartisan group of lawmakers is looking to change that for good. Sen. Joni Ernst, R-Iowa, and Rep. Martha McSally, R-Ariz., are holding a press conference today to draw [attention to legislation](#) that would allow for WASPs to be interred at Arlington. The bill now has the support of almost 40 percent of Congress, with 28 co-sponsors in the Senate and 181 in the House, according to McSally's office. Ernst and McSally will be joined by Sen. Amy Klobuchar, D-Minn., and Rep. Susan Davis, D-Calif., as well as the family of [Elaine Harmon](#), a WASP who died last April.

Harmon told her family that her dying wish was for her ashes to be laid to rest at Arlington.

"Elaine's family has been amazing," McSally tells Yahoo Global News Anchor Katie Couric. "And they are not going to rest until this is changed. The Army has tried to pressure them ... and they have said no, even though Elaine's ashes are sitting on a shelf in their granddaughter's closet, waiting to be given that full military burial at Arlington that she deserved and she asked for."

Arlington, the Army and the Department of Defense all tell Yahoo News that they will comply if Congress passes a law to let WASPs be buried at the cemetery. But Arlington also wrote in a statement that space is limited — [in 20 years, by the mid-2030s](#), Arlington is expected to be at capacity.

Ernst and McSally, both veterans, tell Couric they would gladly give up their own spots at Arlington for the women who came before them.

"There are a number of us that would gladly give up our spaces at Arlington to make sure that we're honoring these women," says Ernst, who served in the National Guard. McSally is a former Air Force pilot.

Turning to the election, Couric asked both women whether they would support Donald Trump if he becomes the GOP nominee for president.

"I will support whoever the nominee is," said Ernst, adding, "I truly hope that whoever our next president is will honor these women as well."



The **Blue Water** Navy Vietnam Veterans Act of 2015 (H.R. 969 and S. 681) was introduced by Representative Christopher Gibson and Senator Kristin Gillibrand, respectively. This legislation would expand presumptions for Vietnam Veterans to be awarded service connection for illnesses and diseases associated with exposure to herbicides containing dioxin, including Agent Orange. This legislation would extend eligibility to Vietnam veterans who served in the vicinity of Vietnam, including the inland waterways, ports, harbors, and waters offshore or territorial seas of Vietnam, as well as in the airspace above, during the period of war.

As of March 15, 2016, H.R. 969 has 305 cosponsors and has been referred to the House Veterans' Affairs Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs. S. 681 has 39 cosponsors and is pending before the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee.

DAV supports these measures, which are in line with DAV Resolution No. 018, passed at our most recent National Convention. Please take a moment to send the prepared e-mail to your legislators to seek their support for this legislation.

Also, the Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Association has [launched a petition](#) drive in support of this bill. We recommend you support this petition as a part of your advocacy to pass this important legislation.

As always, thank you for your support.

Click the link below to log in and send your message:  
[https://www.votervoice.net/BroadcastLinks/H0Q9KKiXBuRO-spXcXPW\\_g](https://www.votervoice.net/BroadcastLinks/H0Q9KKiXBuRO-spXcXPW_g)



**First Coast TV** was delighted and honored to help spread the word on the event "**Honoring Our Veterans**", that took place on Sunday, Nov. 8th at Anastasia Baptist Church. We need to let our community know that that very small percentage of our men and women, who we value because of their service in uniform, must still be valued after they are no longer in uniform. So First Coast.TV was pleased to be asked to help spread the word. We also covered the story of the new and improved VA clinic in St Augustine. For more **news in video format** on our community in St Johns County please go to [www.firstcoast.tv](http://www.firstcoast.tv) to see more stories on what's news at home.



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## U.S. Army Women in Vietnam

The great majority of the military women who served in Vietnam were nurses. All were volunteers, and they ranged from recent college graduates in their early 20s to seasoned career women in their 40s. Members of the Army Nurse Corps arrived in Vietnam as early as 1956, when they were tasked with training the South Vietnamese in nursing skills. As the American military presence in South Vietnam increased beginning in the early 1960s, so did that of the Army Nurse Corps. From March 1962 to March 1973, when the last Army nurses left Vietnam, some 5,000 would serve in the conflict. Five female Army nurses died over the course of the war, including 52-year-old Lieutenant Colonel Annie Ruth Graham, who served as a military nurse in both [World War II](#) and Korea before Vietnam and suffered a stroke in August 1968; and First Lieutenant Sharon Ann Lane, who died from shrapnel wounds suffered in an attack on the hospital where she was working in June 1969. Lane was posthumously awarded the Vietnamese Gallantry Cross with Palm and the Bronze Star for Heroism.

### Did You Know?

In November 1993, the Vietnam Women's Memorial was dedicated at the Vietnam Memorial in Washington, D.C. in front of a crowd of some 25,000 people. The centerpiece of the memorial is a bronze statue by Glenna Goodacre, which depicts three female nurses assisting a wounded soldier.

Early on, the U.S. Army resisted sending women other than nurses to Vietnam. The Women's Army Corps (WAC), established during World War II, had a presence in Vietnam beginning in 1964, when General [William Westmoreland](#) asked the [Pentagon](#) to provide a WAC officer and non-commissioned officer to help the South Vietnamese train their own women's army corps. At its peak in 1970, WAC presence in Vietnam numbered some 20 officers and 130 enlisted women. WACs filled noncombat positions in U.S. Army headquarters in Saigon and other bases in South Vietnam; a number received decorations for meritorious service. No WACs died during the conflict.

## Women in the U.S. Navy, Air Force and Marines in Vietnam

Members of the U.S. Navy Nurse Corps also played an important role in the conflict beginning in 1963. Five Navy nurses were awarded the Purple Heart after they were injured in a Viet Cong bombing of an officers' billets in downtown Saigon on [Christmas Eve](#) 1964; they became the first female members of the U.S. Armed Forces to receive that award in the [Vietnam War](#). Apart from nurses, only nine Navy women—all officers—served in Vietnam, including Lieutenant Elizabeth G. Wylie, who worked in the Command Information Center on the staff of the Commander of Naval Forces in Saigon beginning in June 1967; and Commander Elizabeth Barrett, who in November 1972 became the first female naval line officer to hold command in a combat zone.

Women also served as members of the U.S. Air Force Nurse Corps and the Women's

Air Force (WAF) during the Vietnam conflict. Captain Mary Therese Klinker, one of the eight military women killed in Vietnam, was the flight nurse on the U.S. Air Force C-5A Galaxy that crashed April 1975 near Saigon. (The plane had been on a mission for Operation Babylift, which placed Southeast Asian orphans with families in the United States; some 138 people were killed in the crash, including many Vietnamese children and a number of female civilians working for U.S. government agencies.) Klinker was posthumously awarded the Airman's Medal for Heroism and the Meritorious Service Medal. The U.S. Marine Corps had a more limited female presence in Vietnam, as until 1966 only 60 female marines were permitted to serve overseas, with most of those stationed in [Hawaii](#). From 1967 to 1973, a total of 28 enlisted Marine women and eight officers served in Vietnam at various times.

## Civilian Women in Vietnam

In addition to the U.S. military women who served in Vietnam, an unknown number of female civilians willingly gave their services on Vietnamese soil during the conflict. Many of them worked on behalf of the American Red Cross, Army Special Services, United Service Organizations (USO), Peace Corps, and various religious groups such as Catholic Relief Services.

Other American women traveled to Vietnam as foreign correspondents for news organizations, including Georgette "Dickey" Chappelle, a writer for the National Observer who was killed by a mine while on patrol with U.S. Marines outside Chu Lai in November 1965. According to the Vietnam Women's Memorial Foundation, 59 female civilians died during the conflict.







"These American heroes are owed a debt we can never fully repay, but we are passionate about making a significant difference in their lives."

-Lewis Jordan, Founder, & CEO



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## CONTACT US

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Executive Director

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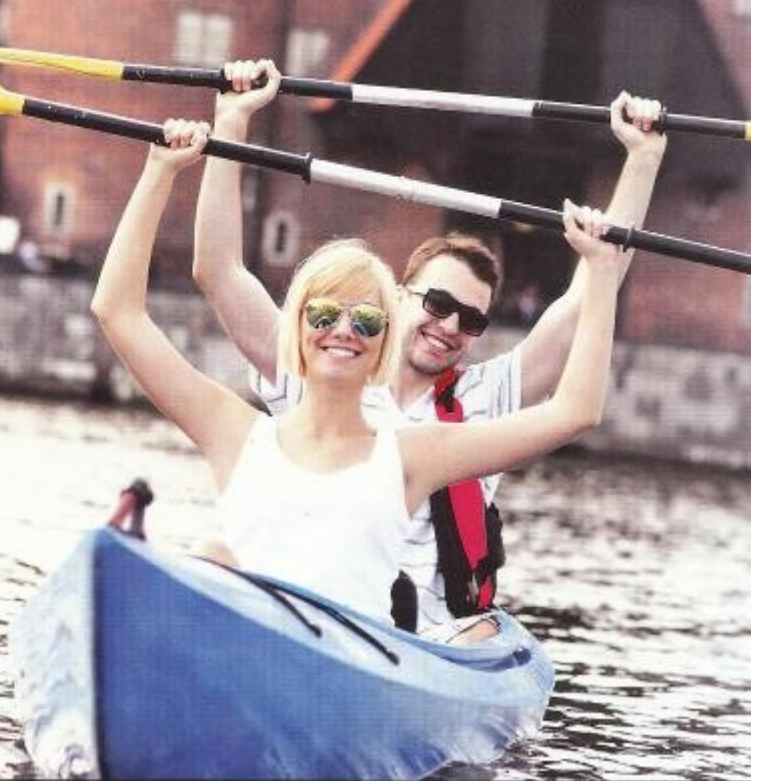
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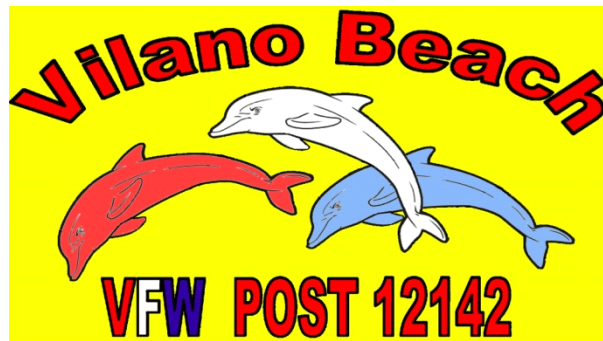
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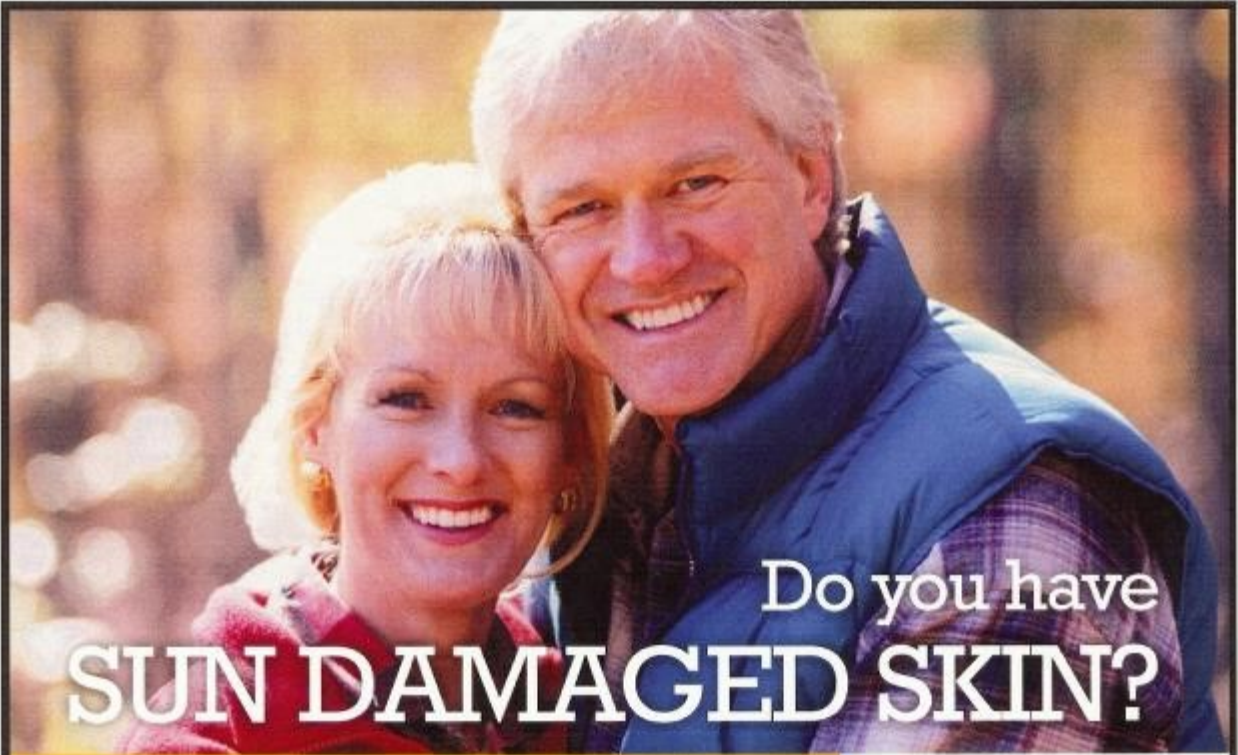
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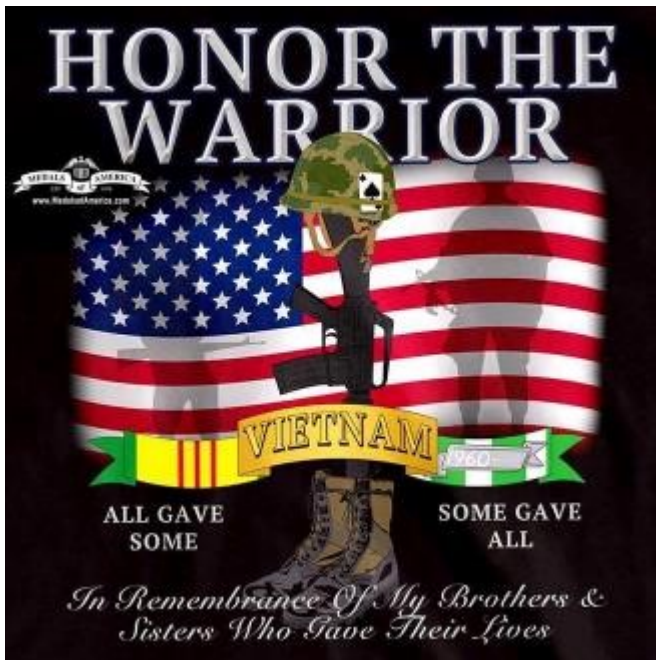


*Veterans Council of St. Johns County,  
"Helping All Veterans"*

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)

Please send to: [mrothfeld@anyveteran.org](mailto:mrothfeld@anyveteran.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.**

***The Veterans Council meetings will now be conducted at the new Health and Human Services Building, 200 San Sebastian View, St. Augustine. The meetings will be held in the Muscovy Room which is directly across from the elevators in the lobby area as you enter the building. This is the building where the Veterans Service Office is located.***

**Veterans Service Office  
200 San Sebastian View, Suite 1400  
St. Augustine, FL 32084**

*(physical location)*

*The VSO Office is located in the new St. Johns County Health and Human Services Building.*

*The office is open from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. daily,  
Monday through Friday excluding holidays.  
Closed for lunch daily from 11:30 am 12:30 pm*

*Service is by appointment.*

*Phone: 904-209-6160 Fax: 904-209-6161*

*Joseph McDermott, CVSO*

*Rick Rees, Assistant VSO*

*Tammy Shirley, Assistant VSO*

*Lashonda Burns, Office Specialist*

*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.*