



The Patriot Reader Newsletter

P.O. Box 2117

St. Augustine, FL 32085

Bill Dudley, Publisher

Michael Rothfeld, Editor

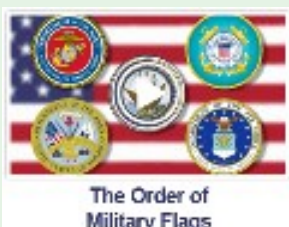
Volume 9, Issue 12

Message from the Chairman

December 2020

Inside this Edition

- Lassen State Veterans Nursing Home
- Jax National Cemetery Support Committee
- SJC Clerk of Courts Local Veterans Exhibit
- Army Veteran, K9s Grad on National TV
- Local Veteran gets New Home
- JNC Headstones Cleaned by Mailman
- New Army Museum Opens
- Wreaths Across America
- Korea: The Forgotten War, Remembered
- VA Transportation Assistance
- Veterans Garden Project
- Veterans Council November Minutes
- Cecil Field Honors Desert Storm/Shield Vets
- US Veterans Reserve Corps
- Patrol Torpedo (PT) Boats
- Free Food Distribution
- MOAA Pig Roast
- First Coast Honor Flight
- Chapel of High Speed Pass Poker Run
- Orange Heart Memorial
- Tarpon Springs WW 2 Woman Veteran "Once A Soldier"
- St Augustine Lighthouse WW2 Exhibit
- Disaster Resources for Veterans
- WW II Resources in NE FL
- Steven A Cohen Military Family Clinic
- Cecil Field POW/MIA Memorial Plans
- AL Post 194 "Buy A Brick"
- St Augustine Lighthouse WW 2 Exhibit
- WW 2 Submarine Veterans Honored in GA
- Veterans Garden Project
- 8 Military Helicopters
- First Coast Honor Flight
- The Fire Watch
- Veterans Ascend



Fellow Veterans:

I hope everyone had a nice Thanksgiving with family and loved ones while managing to stay safe. To say this has been a challenging year would be understating the issues we have been confronted with. However, Americans are resilient and meeting challenges is in our DNA.

The Veterans Council has been conducting live meetings for several months now. We meet in the St. Johns County Auditorium at 500 San Sebastian View. Our attendance has averaged about 20 attendees per meeting. We would like to see the attendance increase to the levels enjoyed pre-Covid 19. We have a large venue with lots of space to socially distance so there is very little risk of exposure during the meeting. Masks are worn when entering and leaving and optional during the meet

ing if proper distance is maintained. Our next meeting will be Dec. 17 at 7 PM. Please plan to join us so as to stay informed about the activities your Veterans Council is involved in.

This past Saturday, Nov 21 State Senator Travis Hutson hosted his annual fundraiser luncheon for the Veterans Council. This year's event was held at the Caddy Shack, World Golf Village. The luncheon was well attended and the buffet food was outstanding. The Veterans Council would like to express its sincere appreciation to Senator Hutson for providing this annual fundraiser and his personal contribution to helping veterans in our community.

We are in the final days of conducting our Wreaths Across America sale of wreaths for this year's ceremony. As I have previously written concerning this year's ceremony, we are limited to 50 volunteers to unload the truck and place



the wreaths on Friday, Dec. 18. A ceremony will be held on Saturday, Dec. 19 to lay the ceremonial wreaths honoring each of the service branches. If you haven't purchased a wreath for this year, there is still time. Wreaths are \$15 each and the purchase of two wreaths will result in three wreaths being provided by the WAA organization. Please purchase a wreath now and be a part of this year's ceremony as we honor those who gave their all for this country.

Bill Dudley
Chairman
Veterans Council of St. Johns County

Clyde E. Lassen State Veterans Nursing Home



St Augustine High School JROTC beginning Flag Ceremony on Veterans Day



St. Augustine DAR members donating puzzle books to Lassen Veterans



St. Johns County Sheriff Kukar and his father Mr. Kukar are in the first pic, the second is our new administrator Steel Dutton talking with the residents.



The first pic is Mr. Ivo Henry getting ready for lunch, the second pic is Joseph Tillman (Tye Dye) Taking a bite of the amazing chicken wings made by one of our kitchen staff.

The first pic here is our old flag being retired by the Cadets, the second is that same flag being presented to Mr. Joseph Tillman. After it was presented to him, later when talking with the cadets he asked that they take it back to school with them and use it for training purposes. He said it would serve a better purpose than being put in. a shadow box





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



The Support Committee invites everyone to attend its **next scheduled meeting**. The meeting will be at **6:00pm**. The meeting will take place at Community Hospice, **4266 Sunbeam Rd., Jacksonville, FL 32257 in Conference Room A.**

Jacksonville National Cemetery Support Committee Meetings for 2018
At Community Hospice of NE FL.
4266 Sunbeam Rd, Jacksonville, FL 32257
Hadlow Bldg – Conference Room A 6:00pm

**DATES OF 2020 SC at JNC MEETINGS, All on Mondays
Dec 7th**

+++++2020 Officers of the SCJNC+++++

Chairman: Steve Spickelmier
Vice Chairman: Bill Dudley, Treasurer: Pat Welch
Secretary: Kathy Church, Judge Advocate: Don Guthrie
Master-At-Arms: Mike Smith, Historian: Win Delpizzo
Chaplain: Pat Archuleta, Public Affairs: Pat Mulvihill

**The Veterans Council of St. Johns County meets
on the last Thursday of the month, all are invited
to attend. We meet at the County Administration
Building, 500 San Sebastian View, at 7 pm**



***All SJC Health Guidelines will be followed.
Please stay safe, Bill Dudley, Chairman, VC of SJC***

Upcoming Veterans Council Meetings Speakers

December 17, Jeff Lay, US Veterans Reserve Corps

January 28, Nick Howland, Fire Watch

February 25, Nila/Bruce Thompson, Info Blast of Florida, Veterans Ascend

Local Veterans Exhibit

The St. Johns County Clerk of the Circuit Court and Comptroller is honoring the men and women who served in the armed forces of the United States with this virtual exhibit of a few of the thousands of discharge certificates recorded at the Clerk's office. In the fall of 1919, one year after the end of World War One, the St. Johns County Clerk of Court began recording discharge certificates.

Veterans brought their discharge certificates to the Courthouse, located in 1919 at the corner of Charlotte and Treasury streets in the colonial part of St. Augustine. The Clerk's staff made photographs and returned the original certificate.

THE 1919 ST. JOHNS COUNTY COURTHOUSE. IMAGE COURTESY OF SAINT AUGUSTINE HISTORICAL SOCIETY, PHOTO MADE CIRCA 1960.



This virtual exhibit offers a sampler of the veterans who served from the time of the Spanish-American War and Philippine-American War (1898) through World War Two (1945). These veterans filled a wide range jobs. The exhibit ends with 1945 as privacy regulations restrict the display of more recent documents.

The information in the discharge certificates changed over time. You can read about where each person served, their health and character, and their occupation before enlisting. You might read about identifying marks and scars or whether the person could ride a horse. There is also information on final pay and transportation home.

The images of the discharge documents in this exhibit were made between 1919 and 1945, using the technology available at that time.

Please view the gallery of images:

<https://stjohnsclerk.com/local-veterans-exhibit-gallery>

Army vet, service dog share their story with national TV audience

Louie Belluomini and Star will be featured on Rachael Ray

By Lissa Guyton

TOLEDO, Ohio (WTVG) - A local Army veteran and his service dog shared their story with a national television audience as the duo appeared on the Rachael Ray Show on Veterans Day.

We first introduced you to Louie Belluomini and Star a few years ago. Star not only lives with Louie and his family, she also goes to work with him. Louie is a full-time paramedic at the Amazon facility in Rossford. He is also a part-time paramedic for Putnam County EMS and Star rides in the ambulance with him. Louie says Star was the first service dog in the United States to work with her handler in an ambulance.

Louie served in the Army for nine years with tours of duty in both Iraq and Afghanistan. Once he got home, he battled PTSD, a hip injury, and a Traumatic Brain Injury. He took medicine and went to therapy, but he says Star changed everything.

"She actually wakes me up from nightmares and sleepwalking," says Louie. "Nights were certainly my hardest time, she's rescued me from all that. She's really been the answer to all my issues. She has been the best medicine, and I want other veterans to know about the powerful work of service dogs and the work of the organization that trained her. She came from an organization called K9s for Warriors. She is a wonderful, smart, kind and funny dog. She's a five-year-old Golden Retriever, and I am so grateful for what she has done for me and my family."

If you'd like to learn more about K9s for Warriors, get connected to www.k9sforwarriors.org/ . You can also learn more about Louie and Star's incredible bond at www.captainlouieandstar.com/ .



Veteran honored with new home in Fernandina Beach

NEWS4JAX.com FERNANDINA BEACH, Fla. —

Sgt. Bradley Thomas of the Marine Corps and his wife, Kori, received a life-changing surprise on Veterans Day: a brand new, mortgage-free home in Fernandina Beach.

It's all thanks to Maxwell House, which worked in partnership with Operation Finally Home.

Thomas, a decorated veteran, has overcome several hardships while transitioning from military to civilian life. He's medically retired from service four years after being injured by a roadside bomb.

Post-traumatic stress lingered and joblessness was a reality, but Thomas persevered.

He's dedicated his life to giving back to his fellow veterans and family. He's even started his own nonprofit with the sole mission of helping veterans through fishing charters and guided hunts.

Thomas is just one of hundreds of thousands of veterans who have struggled to find a home that fits their needs, as well as their family's needs. And homelessness among the nation's veterans is a very real and painful reality.

But now, there's new hope for Thomas and his family members, who plan to be in their new Fernandina Beach home before Christmas.



Mailman Cleans Veteran's Tombstones on His Days Off From Work

By Anastasia Arellano, *The Veterans Site*

Clarence Hollowell lives in Jacksonville, Florida where he works as a U.S. Postal Service mailman. While he works hard at his job, he also happens to work hard at his hobby.

On his Sundays off, Hollowell spends his time at the Old City Cemetery in Springfield, Florida, cleaning the headstones of veterans who have passed away. Hollowell has been doing this for two years.

Hollowell first got involved when he was living in North Carolina, his home state. As he shared with the Florida Times-Union, it's his way of honoring those who served their country. Hollowell, himself, was enlisted in the Army for three years. He's also had other family members serve in the military as well. Therefore, he feels that this was a way for him to give back to his military community.

He stated to the media, "Every town has a story. These guys probably never left their hometowns and, let's face it, had the greatest adventure of their whole lives."



NEW Museum Tells the Story of the U.S. Army

The National Museum of the United States Army officially opened at Fort Belvoir, Virginia. It is the first museum to tell the entire story of the Army, which has existed since June 14, 1775 — even before the existence of the United States itself.

The Army "has been a force for profound good in our world," said Acting Defense Secretary Christopher C. Miller, who spoke at the museum's opening event.

"From the fields of Lexington [and] Concord to the hills of San Juan and from the cliffs of Normandy to the Korangal Valley, more than 30 million brave men and women have donned the Army uniform to fight for freedom at home and abroad," Miller said. "For more than 240 years, they made innumerable contributions to our nation and the world — not just in combat, but also in humanitarian assistance, disaster relief, international cooperation and other vital missions. Their feats are enshrined throughout this museum."

Construction on the 185,000-square-foot museum, which is just a 16-mile drive from the National Mall in Washington, began in 2017. The museum is a joint venture between the Army and the Army Historical Foundation.

The museum includes the "Soldiers' Stories Gallery," which features pictures and biographical information for more than 40 soldiers from all periods in Army history.

Additionally, various galleries cover Army involvement in significant periods of U.S. history. These include the Revolutionary War and the founding of the United States, the period leading up to and including World War I, World War II, the Cold War and the "Changing World Gallery," which chronicles the period from 1990 to today.

Special features of the museum include a theater; a gallery that focuses on the Army's relationship with civilian society; an immersive experience that allows visitors to attempt to experience what trench warfare was like during World War I; and a gallery that documents the experience of World War II's Nisei soldiers, who were born in the U.S. to parents who emigrated from Japan.

In all, there are 11 galleries and nearly 1,390 artifacts available for visitors to see.

"The exhibits shown here promote a deeper understanding and appreciation of the Army's achievements," Miller said. "They illuminate the hard-earned lessons of war and tell us why we must continue to adapt and lead in a world fraught with danger. And the personal narratives

woven throughout these halls will encourage and inspire the next generation of soldiers, who will lead the world's finest fighting force to even greater heights in the future."

Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Army Gen. Mark A. Milley said the museum will finally allow visitors to understand what the Army does to protect American freedom.

"We cannot truly appreciate the sacrifice of our soldiers, from the Continental Army to today, or comprehend what they went through unless we see the weapons they used, feel the uniforms they wore, hear the stories they told, or read the letters they wrote," he said.

And while visitors of today will never experience what soldiers of the past have gone through fighting America's wars, Milley said, the National Museum of the United States Army will allow them to see all that history in one place for the first time.

"[We] will never fight through the haze and the mustard gas of the Meuse-Argonne. We're not going to hear the whiz and the snap of their ... rounds while assaulting the last 100 yards of Omaha Beach. And, no, we're not going to suffer the blistering cold of the Chosin Reservoir or smell the smoke [of] the Ia Drang Valley," he said. "But we can come here — we can see the relics and hear the stories through the eyes and the voices of the individual soldiers who endured so much for the cause of freedom and their unrelenting devotion to the Constitution of the United States."

Those wishing to tour the museum can do so by first visiting the website at www.thenmusa.org and ordering a free ticket.

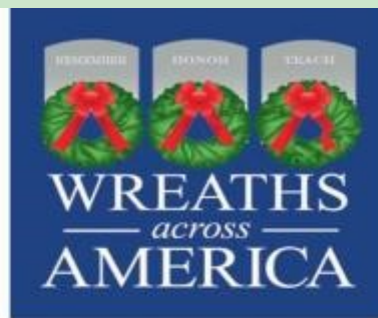


Each year in Dec the Veterans Council sponsors the annual **Wreaths Across America** program at our St. Augustine National Cemetery. This is a public event with our local citizens purchasing wreaths and placing them on a headstone of their choice.

This year, due to the Covid-19 virus, the National Cemetery Administration has restricted the number of people we can have in the cemetery.

In keeping with their current policy, we will have 50 volunteers on Friday, 18 Dec. 2020 to unload the truck and place the wreaths directly onto each gravesite. Then on Sat. 19 Dec, we will have a small ceremony of 10 people to conduct a small ceremony and place the ceremonial wreath representing each branch of service followed by a playing of Taps.

Thanks, Bill Dudley, Chairman, Veterans Council of St. Johns County



DECEMBER 19, 2020

Each December, on National Wreaths Across America Day, our mission to Remember, Honor and Teach is carried out by coordinating wreath-laying ceremonies at Arlington National Cemetery, as well as at more than 2,158 additional locations in all 50 U.S. states, at sea and abroad. In 2019, approximately 2.2 million veteran wreaths were placed on headstones at participating locations around the country, including St. Augustine National Cemetery, in honor of the service and sacrifices made for our freedoms.

The Wreaths Across America Program in St. Augustine will be very limited this year from preceding years. Due to the restrictions placed by NCA policies having to do with the Covid-19 pandemic, we are limited to a non-public ceremony.

A very reduced number of volunteers will place the wreaths on the headstones so as to be sure we are properly maintaining personal spacing in accordance with NCA guidelines. Ceremonial wreaths will be placed by a member from each service branch: USA, USN, USMC, USAF, USCG, USMM and POW/MIA. A Bugler will perform taps.

Wreaths Across America is dedicated to ensuring that headstones in all America's National Cemeteries are adorned with a live holiday wreath at Christmas.

Donation levels for individual wreaths start as low \$15.00 per wreath. If two wreaths are purchased at \$30.00 the council receives a free wreath (3 for cost of 2). Our local businesses are encouraged to participate. With more than 1,200 gravesites the project is truly considerable. Make your checks payable to WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA and send to: Veterans Council of St. Johns County, P. O. Box 2117, St. Augustine, FL 32085-2117. We are a 501(c)(3) for donation purposes.

For additional information, including donation levels, please contact: George Linardos (CPT-USA -Fmr) at 904-495-6111.



WREATHS *across* AMERICA

Wreath Sponsorship Form

*Sponsored wreaths are placed on the grave markers at state, national veterans cemeteries as well as local cemeteries each December. Wreaths may be purchased online at www.WreathsAcrossAmerica.org

If you wish to make your sponsorship with a credit card please visit our website for a secure online transaction.

Name: _____
Address: _____
City: _____
State: _____ Zip: _____
Phone: _____
Email: _____

Please make checks payable to:

Wreaths Across America

PO Box 2117

St. Augustine, Florida 32085-2117

Questions? Please call 904-495-6111

Do we have permission to publicize your name as a sponsor?

Yes or No, I wish to remain Anonymous

Sponsorship	Price	Quantity	Total
Individual = 1 Wreath <i>(Buy 2 we get 1 additional free)</i>	\$15.00		
Mailed "In Honor" card = If you wish to send a mailed honor card telling someone of your sponsorship-see "In Honor" section below. Card will not be mailed if the \$2 fee is not included.	\$2.00		
Family = 6 Wreaths	\$60.00		
Small Business = 15 Wreaths	\$150.00		
Corporate = 150 Wreaths	\$1,500.00		
		Grand Total	

SORRY- WE CAN NOT TAKE GRAVE SPECIFIC REQUESTS

In Honor of:

Please provide email of "In Honor OF" recipient, or mailing address so a card can be sent notifying them of your sponsorship in their honor. (If you have a specific message please write it on the back of this sheet and we will include it.)

Email: _____

Mailing: _____

In Memory of:

This name will be listed on our online memory wall, please provide name, rank, branch of service and state resided

Branch of Service: _____

Rank: _____

State: _____

All sponsorships are sent directly to the location. No wreaths are sent to the individuals purchasing sponsorships.

Location ID: **FLNSA**

Fundraising Group ID: **FL0080**

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY:

Cash \$: _____

Total\$: _____ Date: _____

Total # Checks: _____

Reconciled: _____

MO \$: _____

GEN: _____

Entered: _____

Korea, The Forgotten War: Remembered

On the 70th year Anniversary of the start of the Korean War, the Veterans Council of St. Johns County produced a documentary, "Korea, The Forgotten War: Remembered" to Honor Korean War veterans on this unusual Veterans Day 2020.

The documentary was broadcast on WJCT TV, the PBS affiliate in Jacksonville, FL on November 11th, Veterans Day and then rebroadcast on Sunday November 15th.

The Council thanks Dr. Henry Moreland, President of the Korean War Veterans Association, chapter 200, Jacksonville for his help in this project.

Here are some of the Heroes in the video who remembered their Korean War experiences.



Here is the link to view the entire Korean War documentary

https://youtu.be/TUgNf_ryFPY



St. Johns County Veterans Council December Meeting

- Thursday, December 17 | 7:00 p.m.
- St. Johns County Administration Building | 500 San Sebastian View
- Speaker | Jeff Lay, speaking on U.S. Veterans Reserve Corps

For more information, please call 904.209.6160.

From Veterans Council Chairman Bill Dudley

Subject: VA Transportation Assistance

I received the email below from Dr. McKenzie. If any of our veterans require transportation assistance to any VA medical centers, have them call our CBOC at 904- 829-0814 and ask for the primary social worker for help with transportation.

We recently found that we are able to assist with patients who have significant issues with transportation to VA medical centers. Our primary care social worker can assist with this problem. Patient can call here and ask that she be notified of problem. She will be able to contact them and attempt to provide assistance.

Veteran Garden Project of St. Augustine Fl. is at Veterans Affairs Community Based Clinic.

We are thankful for our Veterans everyday! We had a great morning doing an area beautification at our local VA CBOC.

•Our leadership team was honored to share our gratitude to all our Heros, veterans, VA nurses, doctors, and staff! We hope these new planter gardens bring joy and inspiration to all who visit! •

Much thanks to our @veterangardenproject veteran volunteers and our sponsors at @southernhorticulture for making it happen! •

We planted red fire spike & firecracker, yellow/red Hibiscus, and a few companion plants like sweet alyssum, and butterfly milkweed to add more beauty & invite beneficial pollinators to the space. Thank you to all our veterans and those who take care of our veterans. We appreciate you all everyday! •

[@veterangardenproject](#)

[@southernhorticulture](#)

[#thankfuleveryday](#) [#veteransday](#) [#veteranshelpingveterans](#)

[#staugustineflorida](#) [#stjohnscounty](#) [#veteranadministration](#)

[#supportourveterans](#) [#gardentherapy](#) [#plantsmakepeoplehappy](#)

[#veterannonprofit](#) [#posttraumaticgrowth](#) [#communitylove](#)

[#communitysupport](#) [#veterangardens](#) [#thankaveterantoday](#)



Congratulations to the UNF Military Student of the Year, Tyler Johns!

Tyler Johns is a five-year U.S. Navy veteran. While serving as an Aviation Electronic's Mate, he earned a Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal, Good Conduct Medal, Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Navy Unit Commendation, and Navy Pistol Sharpshooter Ribbon. Tyler is currently pursuing a Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering at UNF and is dedicated to his studies as evidenced by his appearance on the Dean's List and his involvement with the UNF Robotics Club. He is also a Veterans Affairs (VA) work study student in the Military and Veterans Resource Center (MVRC), where he is well known for his willingness to assist students and staff members. In addition to being an exceptional student and VA work study, Tyler is the current president of the UNF Chapter of Student Veterans of America (SVA) club, which demonstrates his deep commitment to helping our community of veterans on campus. As the president, he's had to pivot to conduct meetings and officer business remotely due to COVID-19; under his leadership this club's transition to an online environment was seamless. For these reasons, coupled with his steadfast advocacy in all matters affecting the military-affiliated population at UNF, Tyler is well deserving of the 2020-2021 Military Student of the Year award.



CAPT Bob Buehn, USN (Ret),
UNF Veterans Resource Center to
Director and Tyler Johns

**Veterans Council of St. Johns County, Inc.
Minutes of November 19, 2020**



Officers present: Chairman Bill Dudley, Treasurer John Mountcastle, Advisor Joe McDermott. Not Present, Secretary Michael Rothfeld, Vice Chairman Ray Quinn, Chairman Dudley called the meeting to order at 7:00

PM and led the Pledge of Allegiance. Pastor Don Kabrich gave the Invocation.

Minutes of October's meeting and Treasurer's Report as of 18 November 2020 were approved as presented.

Introduction of Guests: Denise Olsen (Guest Speaker), Ron Howard, Kathy and Andy Fleming, David Mynett, and DeWayne Blackmon.

Speaker: Denise Olsen led a discussion supplemented by a thorough Power-Point presentation on the sources of information for investigating one's search for ancestors, with an emphasis on the discovery of military service references. Her presentation was very thorough and provided numerous sources including Ancestry.com, Family Search (Mormon Church), and Fold3.

Committee Reports:

Mac: VSO Updates - Updated Blue Water Navy claims and noted that ship logs for every ship of that period have been downloaded into the VA database, which should speed up eligibility determination.

Bill: Wreaths Across America Update –The unloading of wreaths will commence at 9:00 AM on Friday 18 December, with a maximum of 50 volunteers present due to COVID-19 protocols. The NG has announced that they will provide Soldiers to supplement our volunteer cadre that day if needed to make 50 total. The formal Ceremony on Saturday, 19 December, is limited to 10 total participants.

Update on new CBOC, Homeless Veterans Initiatives –The construction of the new CBOC is moving along smoothly, still tracking to a mid-summer opening. Bill will soon be conferring with County Commissioner Jeremiah Blocker and staff to discuss and pave a way to converting use of the existing CBOC to housing/shelter for homeless veterans.

John L:Veterans Treatment Court update – 72 Participants entered with 36 graduates so far. Still operating via Zoom sessions. One observation was that for the most recent two to three months the court has experienced a noticeable increase in failed Urine Analyses for drugs or alcohol.

VVA 1084: Not holding a November membership meeting due to holidays.

Toys for Tots:VVA-1084 is hosting the Hastings Distribution location for Toys for Tots on 17 (arrival of toys), 18 (sort gifts by age and sex), and 19 December for the official distribution to registered families.

Meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm, The next meeting of the Veterans Council will be on Thursday, December 17, 2020, 7 pm in the County Administration Building, 500 San Sebastian View.

Future speakers:

Dec. 17 Jeff Lay, 1st SGTs Veterans Reserve Corps

Jan. 28 Nick Howland, Fire Watch

Feb. 25 Nila Thompson, Information Blast of FL, Veterans Ascend

Respectfully submitted,

John Leslie,

VTC Mentor Coordinator

The Cecil Field POW/MIA Memorial
Invites You to an Event
Commemorating the 30th Anniversary
of
Operation Desert Shield and Storm



In August 1990, the United States launched Operation DESERT SHIELD, leading 35 nations to stand against an unprovoked Iraq invasion and occupation of Kuwait. This operation build-up culminated on 17 January 1991, with the unleashing of Operation DESERT STORM, comprising the largest coalition of allied nations as a single combat force since World War II. On 28 February 1991, President George H. W. Bush declared the suspension of offensive actions, signaling the end of hostilities, and the successful liberation of Kuwait. The participation of Jacksonville military community alone included 27 squadrons, 14 Naval and Military Sealift Command ships, and countless staff and medical detachments.

To honor the 30th anniversary of Operation DESERT SHIELD and Operation DESERT STORM, and specifically those who served from the Jacksonville area units, the Cecil Field POW/MIA Memorial is hosting a remembrance ceremony commencing at 1030 on Saturday, February 27, 2021. The ceremony will be held at the Chapel of the High-Speed Pass and on the future site of the National POW/MIA Memorial and Museum. This tribute will include the dedication of the new Aircrew Memorial, and a Gold Star Families Memorial. A BBQ Luncheon will be served to attendees.

Date and Time

February 27, 2021
10:30 am until 1:00 pm

Location

Cecil Field POW/MIA Memorial Property
6112 POW-MIA Memorial PKWY
Jacksonville, FL 32221

Event Activities

Commemoration of 30th Anniversary of Desert Shield and Storm
(Inside Chapel)
Dedication of the New Aircrewman Memorial
Dedication of a Gold Star Families Memorial
(Outside)
BBQ Luncheon
(Tent Area)

Uniform of the Day

Flight Jacket
Business Casual

Event Registration

<https://www.powmiamemorial.org/storm30anniversary>





Cecil Field POW/MIA Memorial, Inc.
6112 POW-MIA Memorial Pkwy
Jacksonville, FL 32221
(904) 303-8907



Invitation to Sponsor

The National POW/MIA Memorial and Museum will be hosting an event Commemorating the 30th Anniversary of Desert Storm/Shield In recognition of Desert Storm Veterans Day 2021. Expected attendance is 500 civilian guests, veterans, and dignitaries both military and political.

The event will be held at the POW/MIA property located on the former NAS Cecil Field (1941-1999).

6112 POW-MIA Memorial Parkway, Jacksonville, FL 32221
Saturday, February 27, 2021 at 10:30 AM

The order of events are as follows:

Remembrance Ceremony
Aircrewman Memorial Dedication
Gold Star Families Memorial Dedication
Lunch (Donation)

Sponsorship opportunities are available to support this event at the following levels:

Platinum	\$5,000	Includes: Prominent display of logo on website with link to your website Prominent Logo Display on Event Signage Prominent listing and logo in event printed material Introduction during opening session 20 Food Tickets and Commemorative Coin
Gold	\$2,500	Includes: Display of logo on website Display Logo on Event Signage Listing in event printed material 10 Food Tickets and Commemorative Coin
Silver	\$1,000	Includes: Listing on website Listing on Event Signage Listing in event printed material 5 Food Tickets and Commemorative Coin
Bronze	\$500	Includes: Listing on website Listing in event printed material 5 Commemorative Coin

Please Contact Mike Cassata at (904) 813-8162 or email director@powmiamemorial.org for more information or make a donation.

THE CORPORATION'S FLORIDA CHARITABLE SOLICITATION REGISTRATION NUMBER IS CH51569. A COPY OF THE OFFICIAL STATE REGISTRATION AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE DIVISION OF CONSUMER SERVICES BY CALLING TOLL-FREE (800-435-7352) WITHIN THE STATE. REGISTRATION DOES NOT IMPLY ENDORSEMENT, APPROVAL, OR RECOMMENDATION BY THE STATE. THE CORPORATION DOES NOT HAVE A PROFESSIONAL SOLICITOR.

Cecil Field POW/MIA MEMORIAL, INC. is an IRS 501(c)(3), public charity. ID# 31954. Contributions are deductible.



U.S. VRC will offer you:



United States Veteran Reserve Corps

US-VRC.ORG

Fundamental Skills

Command & Control, Logistics,
Comms, Safety & Security, First Aid

Mission Ready Packages

- Feeding & Sheltering Support
- Planning & Ops Support
- EOC & TOC Support
- Cyber Security
- Search & Rescue
- Pastoral Support
- Administrative Support
- Enhanced CERT Teams
- CERT Training
- Family Reunification Support

- A chance to give back to your community and your country
- A chance for a veteran to get back into his or her boots
- A chance to serve in uniform if you have never done so
- A chance to experience the fellowship and camaraderie that serving in a uniformed organization can provide
- A chance to be a part of something bigger than yourself as a member of a highly diverse group working together for positive change

Celeris Paratus

United States Veteran Reserve Corps — The U.S. VRC was founded to provide civil authorities with disaster preparedness assistance, training and disaster response and support for community events. We are a military structured, uniformed, fraternal and service organization whose membership is comprised of those who have served honorably and steadfastly in, or retired from, the U.S. Armed Forces, State Defense Forces, federal, state, and local governments, as well as civilians with specialized professional skills, all of whom share an earnest desire to serve their communities and country.



The primary mission of the U.S. Veteran Reserve Corps is to deliver effective assistance for disaster preparedness and response. We invest in and value partnerships with FEMA, state and local Emergency Management Agencies and Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOADs). VOAD partners include American Red Cross, The Salvation Army, Team Rubicon, Lutheran Disaster Relief, Catholic Charities, Nechama, Islamic Relief, United Church of Christ Disaster Ministries, and many other secular private and faith-based groups. We provide a source of trained and ready volunteers eager to assist when needed.

Apply Today!
US-VRC.ORG

© U.S. VRC 2020

Carrying on a Proud Tradition of Service



Company A, 10th U.S. Veteran Reserve Corps, Washington, D.C. May 1895. By James Gardner



US VRC, Wreaths for America 2017



Veteran Reserve Corps Soldiers guarding President Lincoln's Funeral Car By Samuel M. Buzzett

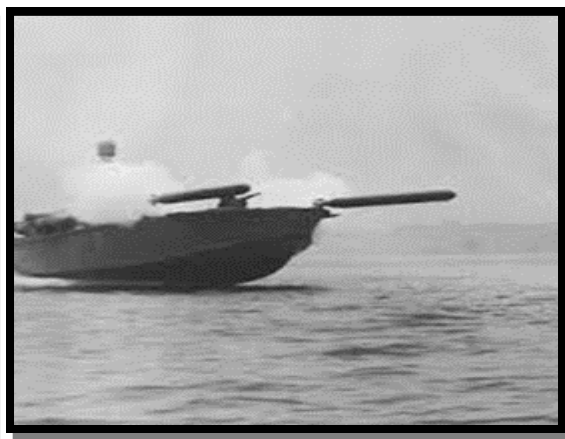
Patrol Torpedo Boats: The Huckins Story

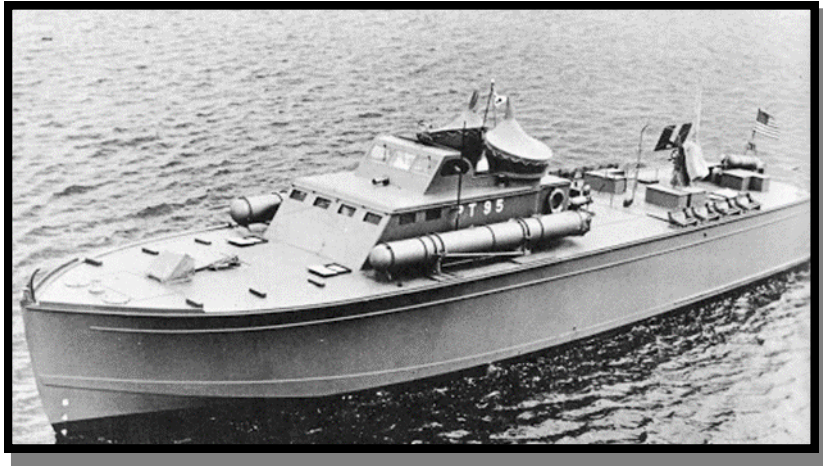
As kids growing up in the 1960s, most of us spent evenings in front of the living room television set. We were the children of World War II veterans. Movies and television shows about the war were a primary part of our media diet. In 1962, we were first introduced to the PT Boat in a TV comedy that aired on the ABC Network. The show, called McHale's Navy, featured the antics the misfit crew of PT-73 stationed somewhere in the South Pacific starring Ernest Borgnine and Tim Conway (pictured below).



The PT boat, or Patrol Torpedo Boat, was a small, light, attack vessel that found its greatest strength in speed rather than armament. It was made of wood and carried three Packard 2500 supercharged V-12 marine engines powered by aircraft fuel. Armed with 2 or 4 Mark 8 torpedoes, two .50 caliber twin anti-aircraft guns, as well as depth charges for anti-submarine warfare, a PT Boat was a formidable sea-going fighting platform. Some of the boats later sported a 20mm cannon and a 37mm anti-tank gun. The torpedoes ran on 180 proof grain alcohol. Sampling the fuel was fairly common. Crews referred to it as “torpedo juice.”

The PT Boats were formed into squadrons with support by tenders for refueling and re-arming at sea during prolonged missions, but they also had PT bases scattered across the South Pacific (the boats saw service in the European Theater as well). Due to their size, the boats worked primarily in shallow sea lanes and near islands to suppress enemy activity where deeper draft vessels could not go. They were nicknamed the “Mosquito Squadron” due to their small size and significant bite. The Japanese simply called them “Devil Boats.”





Pictured Above: Lightly armored Huckins 78-foot PT boat in Jacksonville, Florida in July 1942

The American public became more familiar with the PT Boat when former U.S. Navy Lieutenant John F. Kennedy became President of the United States. President Kennedy was the Skipper (Commanding Officer) of the famous PT-109, an 80-foot Elco boat. At 2 am on August 2, 1943, while on patrol in dense fog in the straits of the Solomon Islands, Lieutenant Kennedy had his boat idling on one engine when the Japanese destroyer, Amagiri, emerged from the fog. Kennedy didn't have time to get his engines up to speed to escape the massive ship, and PT-109 was cut in two. The boat exploded in a fireball of aviation fuel. With the loss of two crew members, Kennedy and the other survivors stayed with the bow section which drifted south until it began to sink. Kennedy then took the most badly injured crew member, MM1 Patrick McMahon, who had burns on seventy percent of his body, and towed him with a life jacket strap in his own mouth as he made a 3.5-mile swim to Plum Pudding Island. The feat took 4 hours of swimming against strong currents.



Pictured Above: Lieutenant John F. Kennedy (far right) with his crew aboard PT-109

Kennedy previously swam on the Harvard University swim team, and he proceeded to perform four more swims over miles of open ocean between islands over the next few days. His actions saved his crew, who endured three days on an island without water or food other than coconuts. The events were immortalized in the 1963 Warner Brothers film PT-109 starring actor Cliff Robertson in the role of Lieutenant Kennedy.



Pictured Above: Cliff Robertson (left) and Ty Hardin (right) in Warner Brothers' PT-109 (1963)

But Kennedy's first command was aboard PT-101, a 78-foot Huckins boat, built in Jacksonville, Florida, by the Huckins Yacht Corporation. The Huckins Corporation made a significant contribution to the boat's design, performance, and ultimately to victory over the Axis powers in World War II.

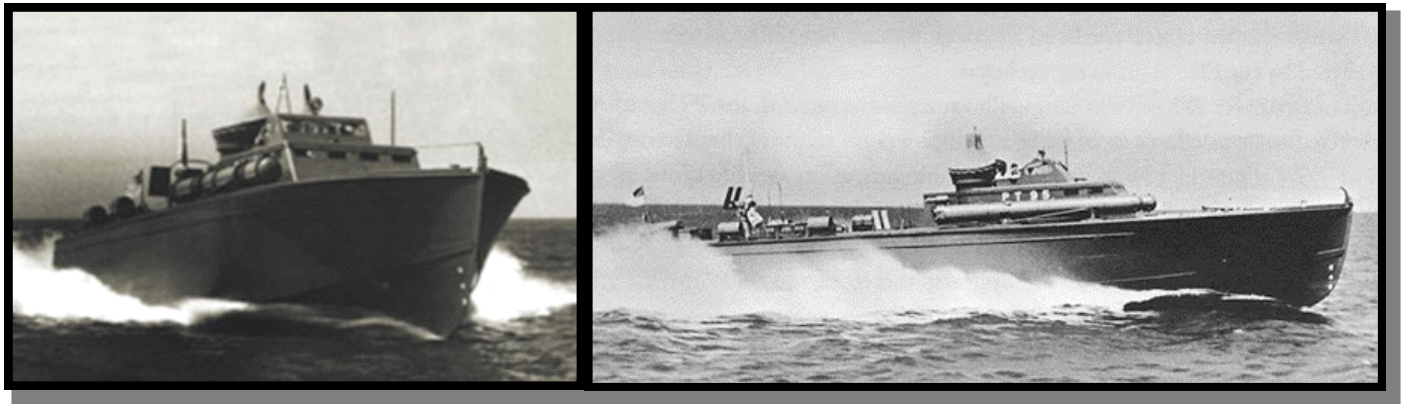
Frank Pembroke Huckins founded the Huckins Yacht Corporation now located on the Ortega River in Jacksonville. It is one of the oldest boat building companies in the United States. Frank Huckins grew up in Boston where his family was in the lumber business. Like most Bostonians, he grew up sailing, but it was his business that gave him ties to the local area.

According to Cindy Purcell, his granddaughter, they were harvesting lumber from Jacksonville, Florida, up to the state of Georgia. Frank would travel south to Jacksonville to purchase cypress and yellow pine to supply boat builders back home. He relocated permanently to Jacksonville to join the building boom of 1928. He designed and built his first boat at age sixteen and another at age twenty-one. Staff from the St. Augustine Lighthouse & Maritime Museum had the opportunity to interview Cindy Purcell at the Huckins Factory. She and her husband Buddy are the current owners of Huckins Yachts, and she will confirm that boats and salt water flow in the family's blood. In fact, they make the fastest motor yachts on the water today.



And Frank Huckins was about to solve a big problem. Almost all boats displace water. The design of PT Boats required speed, but at high speeds, the boats the Navy tested tore themselves apart. Enter the brilliance of Frank Huckins and his invention, the Quadroconic Hull. After years of research, he had successfully designed a hull that would naturally plane on top of the water, rather than cut through it. This innovation provided more speed and better handling at high speeds. He also patented a laminated keel that increased the hull strength of his boats.

At the outbreak of the war, the Navy determined that PT boats up to that time were defective and inefficient. They decided to hold sea trials in New London, Connecticut, to determine which manufacturer could design and produce the best boat to save the dying PT boat program. The trials were nicknamed “The Plywood Derby” and brought together the three primary competitors: Elco Motor Yachts, Higgins Industries, and Philadelphia Navy Yard. However, Frank Huckins didn’t receive an invitation, so he took matters into his own hands. He arranged a meeting with Navy Admiral James Irish and convinced him that he could design and build a boat that would do the job, if the Navy would supply the power plant. The first set of motors to arrive were completely worn out and unsuitable. Frank Huckins procured new motors, and proceeded to take his Huckins PT boat to compete in the trials.



Pictured Above: Huckins PT-2 (left) and Huckins PT-95 exhibiting the Quadroconic planing hull

The Huckins boat outperformed the others in both speed and turning radius. Unfortunately, Frank Huckins’ manufacturing facilities did not have the capacity to handle the large contracts that the Navy required. A contract was awarded to Elco for 385 boats, even though the Elco pounded through the water sixty percent harder than the Huckins design. The other two companies also received government contracts. The U.S. Navy simply “shared” Frank Huckins’ Quadroconic Hull and laminated keel designs with the three other companies. Frank Huckins never saw any financial returns for his revolutionary designs, but he was quoted as saying, “if our contributing a form of hull that eliminated destructive pounding and saved the PT Boat from failure or oblivion, has contributed to the war effort and victory, by ever so small an increment, then such was my purpose.”

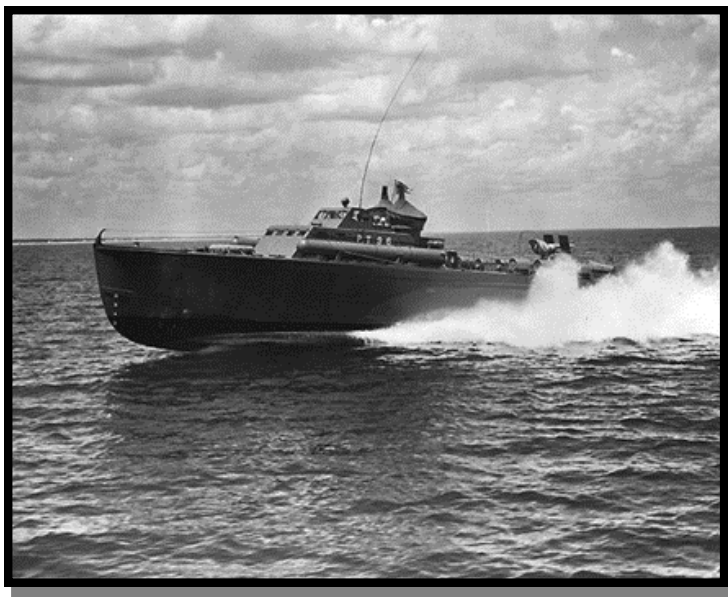
In the end, the Huckins Yacht Corporation produced eighteen 78-foot PT boats (two squadrons) for the United States Navy in 1942. Almost all of them were reserved for training purposes at the Navy’s Motor Torpedo Boats Squadron Training Center in Melville, Rhode Island. Lieutenant Kennedy remained on as an instructor in his Huckins PT-101 before taking it to his first duty station in the Panama Canal. Other Huckins boats went on to serve in Miami and Pearl Harbor. Cindy Purcell says the company still has all of the 89 original design drawings, and her remarkable grandfather, Frank, has written his story down for future generations.

Being a small yacht company has its advantages. After the war, most of the other companies could not downsize fast enough to remain competitive, but Huckins Yachts is still here in Jacksonville. Frank Huckins died in 1952. Since that time, Mrs. Purcell and her husband have shepherded the company through three recessions. “Not an easy time,” she states. “No one has to have a boat, especially in hard times.” A good deal of their work is in boat repair and maintenance of all makes and models. But they still make some of the finest custom yachts in the world, and many names you would recognize own a Huckins: Goodrich, Dupont, and Payne Weber are among them.

Their latest endeavor is a hybrid called the “Sportsman 38” powered by both batteries for silent cruising, and diesel motors when speed is needed. Purcell’s goal is to have a yacht that can reach 30 mph on batteries. No doubt, given time, she will have it for you, just like her ingenious and tenacious grandfather, Frank, would have.

But make no mistake, there’s a PT boat inside the bones of that new Sportsman. The Skippers of Huckins PT boats considered them roomier, and more comfortable than any of the other manufacturer’s boats, and Huckins’ PT boat crews referred to them simply and lovingly as “their yacht.”

One of our Museum Heritage Boat building volunteers has a story about Huckins Yacht. His father-in-law worked at a boat repair shop in New Jersey. He said that they, “all fought over who got to drive, if a Huckins yacht came in for service.” This was because, he said, “they were the fastest yachts on the water,” and they still are today.

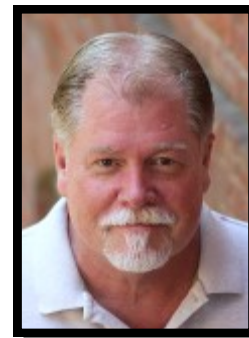


Pictured Above: Huckins PT-96 at a speed of 41.5 knots (47.8 mph)



ST. AUGUSTINE
LIGHTHOUSE
& MARITIME MUSEUM

Rick Cain has worked for the St. Augustine Lighthouse & Maritime Museum for 18 years after a 20-year career as a health care professional. He serves on the Board of Directors of the American Lighthouse Council and is Immediate Past Chair of the Florida Attractions Association. He also works closely with the United States Coast Guard to maintain their historic ties to the Lighthouse.



FREE FOOD DISTRIBUTION DRIVE THRU-RAIN OR SHINE



ST. AUGUSTINE
LIGHTHOUSE
& MARITIME MUSEUM

**FARM SHARE &
ST. AUGUSTINE LIGHTHOUSE
& MARITIME MUSEUM
ARE PROUD TO PARTNER
FOR THIS EVENT**

**GLOVES AND MASKS WILL BE WORN FOR YOUR
PROTECTION**



DATE: December 8, 2020

TIME: 9:00 AM - UNTIL FOOD RUNS OUT

LOCATION: BELK PARKING LOT

PONCE DE LEON MALL: 2121 US - 1

ST. AUGUSTINE, FL 32086

Kid's Holiday Activity Kit to the first 1600 kids.

Enter from US - 1

Food is first come, first served.

Farm Share is an equal opportunity provider.

**SPECIAL THANKS TO THESE LOCAL ST. AUGUSTINE BUSINESSES BELOW
WHOSE GENEROUSITY SUPPORTS THIS EVENT.**





“FREE” ANNUAL RECRUITING PIG ROAST “FREE”
SATURDAY -JANUARY 9, 2021
6:00 PM (1800)

REGISTRATION TO RESERVE ATTENDANCE TO MOAA-ACC PIG ROAST

NAME: _____

SERVICE BRANCH: _____

RANK: _____

PHONE: _____

EMAIL ADDRESS: _____

HOME ADDRESS: _____

PLEASE BRING YOUR SPOUSE, PARTNER AND/OR FAMILY CHILDREN UNDER 12:

- | | |
|----------|----------|
| 1. _____ | 2. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 4. _____ |
| 5. _____ | 6. _____ |
| 7. _____ | 8. _____ |

THE PIG ROAST IS HELD AT **GUY HARVEY RESORT - ST. AUGUSTINE BEACH**, 860 A1A BEACH BLVD, ST AUGUSTINE BEACH, FL 32080. PLEASE ARRIVE BY 6:00 PM (1800 MILITARY).

YOUR **“FREE”** ATTENDANCE TO THE MOAA-ACC PIG ROAST INDICATES YOUR INTEREST IN JOINING MOAA-ACC.

MEMBERSHIP IN MOAA-ACC REQUIRES JOINING MOAA NATIONAL.

FIRST YEAR CHAPTER’S DUES ARE **“FREE”**.

SEE THE MOAA-ACC WEBSITE, MOAA-ACC.ORG, FOR MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION.

PLEASE RETURN YOUR REGISTRATION TO GEORGE LINARDOS, CPT-USA (FMR) AT GL@SNOWDOGS.US OR CALL 904-495-6111.

WANTED



WWII, Korean War & Vietnam War Vets!

**For an all expense paid trip to Washington DC
A day to remember, because we will never forget!**

First Coast Honor Flight

888-400-1185 www.firstcoasthonorflight.org



Sunday December 6, 2020
Poker run to benefit the Chapel of the High-Speed Pass

Service at Chapel 8am
 Registration 8:30-10 behind the chapel
 KSU 10am

\$20 per rider, \$15 for passenger
Additional donations to the Chapel and POW-MIA Memorial encouraged and accepted

Stops:

Timbuktu Lounge & Package
 17420 US-301, Starke

VFW Post 8255
 2296 Aster Ave, Middleburg

Island Girl Cigar Bar
 1560 Business Center Drive, Fleming Island

Boogerville Hideout Bar (final stop destination)
 6043 US-17, Green Cove Springs
Live Music, Food, Prizes, 50/50 drawing

Brought to you by Rolling Thunder Florida Chapter 4



Orange Heart Memorial honoring Vietnam Veterans unveiled, dedicated in Springfield, TN

from the Tennessean

The Orange Heart: an idea whose time has come.

Honoring Vietnam Veterans who have passed as a result of Agent Orange and other just as deadly pesticides.

Is this something we can do in NE FL to show our respect for those who have and still are suffering from this?

Hundreds gathered in Springfield, TN for the official unveiling and dedication of the new Orange Heart Memorial at Springfield Memorial Gardens.

The Memorial will serve as tribute to the more than 2.7 million Vietnam Veterans who served from 1955 – 1975, the men and women who served and later died as a result of their service, the more than 2.6 million who were exposed to herbicidal warfare and the more than 3.4 million who served in Southeast Asia.

The Orange Heart Medal Foundation

<http://orangeheartmedal.org/about/index.html>

The Orange Heart Medal Project was founded in January 2018 as a 501c3 organization whose mission and purpose is to bring recognition for veterans who served in the Vietnam war and who were affected by exposure to Agent Orange, an herbicide and defoliant chemical. It is believed that August 10, 1961 is the first date that Agent Orange was sprayed. Five months later Agent Orange was widely used in Vietnam by the United States military as part of the herbicidal warfare program called “Operation Ranch Hand” from 1961 to 1971. This orange powder was sprayed over the land from helicopters or low flying aircraft. The herbicide quickly destroyed vegetation and crops. The goal was to destroy crops, defoliate rural and forested land and deprive enemy guerrillas of food and cover for their activities. Agent Orange allowed clearing of sensitive areas around military bases. The United States military sprayed nearly 20,000,000 gallons of Agent Orange. In addition to the damaging environmental effects, Agent Orange has also caused major physical injury to the 2.6 million American soldiers who were exposed. Agent Orange is a dioxin. It is a cancer-causing chemical that enters the body through physical contact or ingestion. Dioxin moves into the human cell nucleus where it attacks the genes and causes a number of serious illnesses. For many these effects laid dormant for 40 plus years. Conditions currently attributed to Agent Orange exposure include such illnesses as leukemia, lymphoma, myeloma, Ischemic heart disease, soft tissue sarcoma, amyloidosis, diabetes, and cancers of the throat, prostate, lung, colon, and other life changing conditions. The genetic damage from Agent Orange, in some cases, has affected the second and third generations of veterans



among those who were exposed. Today only approximately 600,000 of these veterans are still living while 390 deaths are occurring every day among soldiers who continue their march to join their fallen comrades.

The purpose of the Orange Heart Medal Project is to bring recognition to veterans who were exposed and subsequently were affected by Agent Orange during their military service in the United States Armed Services. The Orange Heart Medal Project was born in the heart of Ken Gamble, U.S. Navy Veteran, Vietnam as he laid receiving radiation and chemotherapy at the Veterans Administration Hospital for his own prostate cancer. After suffering in silence for many years with his own Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), which is also common in many war veterans, Ken was now suffering the effects of his own Agent Orange herbicidal exposure. We created, and are currently updating our website www.orangeheartmedal.org , where you will find applications for the medal, general information, articles on Vietnam and a blog that shares stories of veterans who have been affected by Agent Orange. This website is a tool to help educate the public on available resources for veterans and their families. Our primary goal has been to provide to each veteran or their surviving spouse the Orange Heart Medal, free of charge because in Ken's words, "the veteran has already paid for it." We believe that the Orange Heart Medal serves as a recognition of the chemical warfare exposure suffered by these soldiers. The medal also allows those memories to be shared as the Orange Heart Medal is passed on to the soldier's generations to come.

The Orange Heart Medal Project's current focus is working to establish a permanent monument to memorialize the veterans that served in Vietnam. The memorial will include the names of Veterans who returned from Vietnam, many who have died or are continuing their battles to join their fallen comrades due to the effects of Agent Orange. If the Veteran has lost their battle with Agent Orange, an orange heart will be placed next to their name.

A long reaching dream for our foundation is to be able to help children and grandchildren of Vietnam Veterans by establishing a scholarship program.

Our unwavering goal and hope is to ensure that all Vietnam Veterans and their families are recognized and that history never forgets the sacrifices these brave men and women made so that we might remain free.

Women in War: Tarpon Springs WWII veteran shares her story

Tampa Bay Times, By Ileana Najarro

Helen Zirpiades served in the Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service division of the Navy — the WAVES.



TARPON SPRINGS — As one of four girls, Helen Zirpiades felt a little guilty that her family wasn't going to be represented in World War II. So she quit her job as a dressmaker to work in a factory making filaments for Navy radios.

But she also saw the ads in the paper about the Navy asking women to join.

"I came from an old-fashioned Greek family," Zirpiades said, "and Greek girls don't join the Navy. They get married, and they make babies, and they make baklava."

Zirpiades said she shocked her parents by serving in the Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service division of the Navy, also known as the WAVES, from 1943 to 1945.

Now 100 and living in Tarpon Springs with her Navy veteran husband, Zirpiades hopes more people recognize the key role women like her played in the global conflict.

"You very seldom hear anything about the WAVES or the Women's Army Corps, and that's really depressing," she said.

On July 30, 1942, President Franklin Roosevelt signed into law the Navy Women's Reserve Act, thus creating the WAVES with the goal of freeing up male personnel for sea duty, according to a Department of Defense report.

In 1945, more than 104,000 women joined the WAVES, and women made up about 18 percent of the total Navy force ashore, according to the Naval History and Heritage Command. They did everything from administrative duties, to working as pharmacists and aircraft mechanics.

Zirpiades trained in Memphis, learning about the parts of an airplane, including the engine. Later stationed in Pensacola, she rose to the rank of aviation machinist's mate petty officer first class, overseeing a crew of 25 women in charge of airplane maintenance.

Aside from being able to serve her country, the WAVES offered Zirpiades unique bonding experiences. One time, she recalls she and her friends having to toss cameras, crackers and salami out the window when the master at arms announced a surprise captain's inspection of their rooms. They later had to draw straws to see who would climb out the window to retrieve the goods.

The Army paved the way for women in service during WWII through the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps,

which later became the Women's Army Corps. The Navy WAVES offered women the unique opportunity to achieve the same rank and pay as men, with some women even outranking men, said Kathleen Ryan, associate professor of journalism at the University of Colorado Boulder.

In 2012, Ryan made a documentary about the WAVES after learning that her mother had served as a pharmacist in the division. Yet Ryan knew little about her mother's service and the military contributions of other women at the time. She now runs a website cataloging oral histories of the Navy WAVES and has interviewed more than 50 such veterans.

Through these interviews, Ryan learned how serving in the WAVES helped women better advocate for themselves and even their daughters. She also hopes more attention can be given to these veterans and their work.

"The military isn't just the frontline soldiers," she said.

Zirpiades now spends her days trading war stories with her husband of 62 years, Charles Zirpiades, 92, who served as a Navy airman first class.

"I always tease him because I outrank him," she said.

The veteran couple continue to serve their community through volunteer work at St. George Greek Orthodox Church in New Port Richey, said George Psetas, founding president of the church.

In 2017, the church asked Congressman Gus Bilirakis to present them an award acknowledging their military service.

"There is no greater example of heroism than those among us, both past and present, who have bravely answered the call to serve our nation," Bilirakis said in an email this week.

In the end, Zirpiades said her father never really approved of her service, but her mother and sisters were very proud.

"I'm extremely proud of what I did," Zirpiades said. "It was the best three years of my single life."



Helen Zirpiades, 100, left, holds her Navy jacket which she says was issued to her while she served as an aviation machinist's mate petty officer first class at Naval Air Station Ellyson Field, a former U.S. Navy training base in Escambia County (FL), between 1943-1945 during WWII. Zirpiades helped maintain aircraft engines and propellers as part of the Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Services (WAVES), which was opened to women during the war. Helen's husband, Charles Zirpiades, 92, right, said he served as a U.S. Navy airman first class with the aircraft maintenance division on the Navy aircraft carrier USS Franklin D. Roosevelt between 1946 and 1948, with deployments to the Mediterranean.

[DOUGLAS R. CLIFFORD | Times]

Local nonprofit dedicated to helping families of veterans who die by suicide

A local organization called Once a Soldier gears itself to support families financially and with counseling after the tragedy of a veteran dying by suicide.

Author: Josslyn Howard

JACKSONVILLE, Fla — A local nonprofit gathered guests Sunday to raise awareness of the “postvention” needed for families of veterans that die by suicide.



According to the organization, called Once a Soldier, 22 veterans die by suicide every day. Once a Soldier gears itself to support those families financially and with counseling after that tragedy.

Sunday’s gathering brought speakers that wanted to battle this from different angles, such as medically and through legislation. To start the night, Kevin Johns told the story of his son Jared Johns, who died by suicide in 2018.

“He got deployed to Afghanistan,” Kevin Johns said. “Said he saw some pretty gruesome things.”

Jared Johns proudly served his country from 2012 to 2015.

After being injured in Afghanistan, Jared Johns returned home.

“When he came back, when he got out of the Army, you can tell her was a different boy,” his father said.

Jared Johns was diagnosed with PTSD

“Soldiers with PTSD, there’s usually some type of a trigger,” Kevin Johns said. “Family got together, went to watch fireworks for the Fourth of July, looking in the sky, everyone is 'ooing' and 'awing,' not him.”

On Sept. 11, 2018, Jared Johns slipped into a deep depression and took his own life.

“All I wanted to do was hold my son,” his father said.

The funeral home would not let him see his son until he paid for a casket. The tragedy left the family in emotional and financial stress.

That’s where Once A Soldier stepped in and helped cover costs and counseling.

Congressman John Rutherford wants to bring this before congress, he said at Sunday’s event.

“We need to address this at a national level,” Rutherford said. “Two-thousand dollars and a 'Thank you for your service' is not enough.”

Rutherford says he plans to work alongside Once A Soldier to make their message heard.

“We need to find a way in congress that we can help once a soldier,” Rutherford said.

To learn more about Once a Soldier, visit its website.

DISCOVER FLORIDA'S FIRST LIGHTHOUSE



And shed some light on WWII history



Much more than a lighthouse!
Exhibits, Archaeology, and History.

World War II Exhibit Now Open!

Discover more:
www.staugustinelighthouse.org

Follow us on:   



ST. AUGUSTINE
LIGHTHOUSE
& MARITIME MUSEUM



ST. JOHNS COUNTY
TOURIST DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL
Culture Around Every Corner | St. Augustine 9 Forts Years



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

Disaster Resources Available to Veterans

“Veterans and their families should be focused on their health and safety during the natural disasters,” said VA Secretary Robert Wilkie. “VA is taking action to give those with pending debts greater flexibility during these challenging times.”

Health Care Assistance

If you have questions such as where to go for care or how to receive prescribed medications, VA has established a toll-free number for assistance in areas that have been impacted by disasters. Veterans or their families can call the VA Veterans Disaster Response line 24 hours, seven days a week at 1-800-507-4571.

Debt Relief

If you are affected by a natural disaster, have a VBA benefit debt and need temporary financial relief, please contact VA's Debt Management Center at 1-800-827-0648 to request assistance.

If you have questions on Compensation or Pension benefits: Call toll-free 1-800-827-1000 Monday - Friday 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. CST.

Other Resources

Find a VA Vet Center near you 877-WAR-VETS (927-8387) or <https://www.va.gov/find-locations>

Mobile Vet Centers and Vet Center teams are actively responding to disaster-affected areas to offer counseling and grief support as well as connection and referral services to other VA and community resources.

Find a VA facility near you <https://www.va.gov/find-locations>

Call the White House VA Hotline 24 hours a day, seven days a week at 1-855-948-2311.

Apply for \$500 grant for your damaged primary residence (on a first come, first serve basis subject to funding) from PenFed Foundation.

National Resource Directory - Search for local resources for Veterans, their families, caregivers, and survivors.

FEMA - FEMA helps with temporary housing, repair or replacement of existing homes.

American Red Cross - The American Red Cross offers emergency financial assistance to the most impacted counties. Please call 1-800-733-2767 to see if you qualify.

Disaster Assistance – An easy way to determine if your zip code has been declared a disaster and eligible for assistance. The website also allows users to complete an online application and the ability to check FEMA application status.

World War II Resources in Northeast Florida

Be sure to visit our digital exhibit
full of WWII artifacts
and information!



<https://wwiinefl.omeka.net/>



Florida veterans and military families have a new resource to receive the care they need thanks to a partnership dedicated to serving this most deserving population.

Centerstone and the Cohen Veterans Network have joined forces to offer compassionate, targeted behavioral health care for Post 9/11 veterans, National Guard, Reservists, their families and active duty family members at the Steven A. Cohen Military Family Clinic at Centerstone, Jacksonville. <https://centerstone.org/cohen-military-family-clinic/jacksonville/>. The clinic’s skilled clinicians and staff have been trained to work specifically with veterans and their families, and some are veterans themselves. Services offered include individual therapy for children, adolescents and adults, couples therapy, family therapy, groups and workshops.

“Military families are some of the most resilient people you will ever encounter, but a life of service often gives way to invisible wounds and unique challenges that are difficult to navigate,” Elizabeth Sherr, clinic director said. “We understand those challenges and stand ready to support our veterans and their loved ones with effective, personalized care right now.”

The clinic’s ability to meet the needs of veterans and their families quickly is vital in today’s mental health environment where gaining access to care can often be daunting - with long wait times and all too common barriers to overcome. The Cohen Clinic at Centerstone is committed to reducing these barriers. Not only are military families currently able to receive same day appointments, the clinic also offers all therapy services via telehealth - breaking down time and distance concerns that can sometimes be problematic.

“We want to make getting help as easy as possible for our veterans and family members,” Brigadier General (ret.) Michael Fleming, the clinic’s outreach director said. “Sometimes just reaching out for help is difficult enough, and we want to ensure we meet this step with compassion and ease.”

For the time being, in an effort to ensure the safety of clients and team members amidst the COVID-19 physical distancing guidelines, that includes conducting all services via CVN Telehealth or telephone. Studies have shown telehealth has the same efficacy as in-person counseling and the clinic’s therapists are well trained in the delivery of this care. Additionally, front desk staff still have complete access to answer the appointment line during business hours, as before, and veterans, military families and outside organizations can continue to call directly for an appointment.

Veterans, National Guard, Reservists, their families and active duty family members may contact the clinic at (904) 431-3500 to schedule appointments. Clinic hours are:

- Monday 8:00am – 5:00pm
- Tuesday 8:00am – 5:00pm
- Wednesday 8:00am – 7:00pm
- Thursday 8:00am – 5:00pm
- Friday 8:00am - 12:00pm

For more information on clinic services log on to <https://centerstone.org/cohen-military-family-clinic/jacksonville/> or call the appointment line at (904) 431-3500.



Cecil Field POW/MIA MEMORIAL & MUSEUM

Progress Report

By Dave Dollarhide

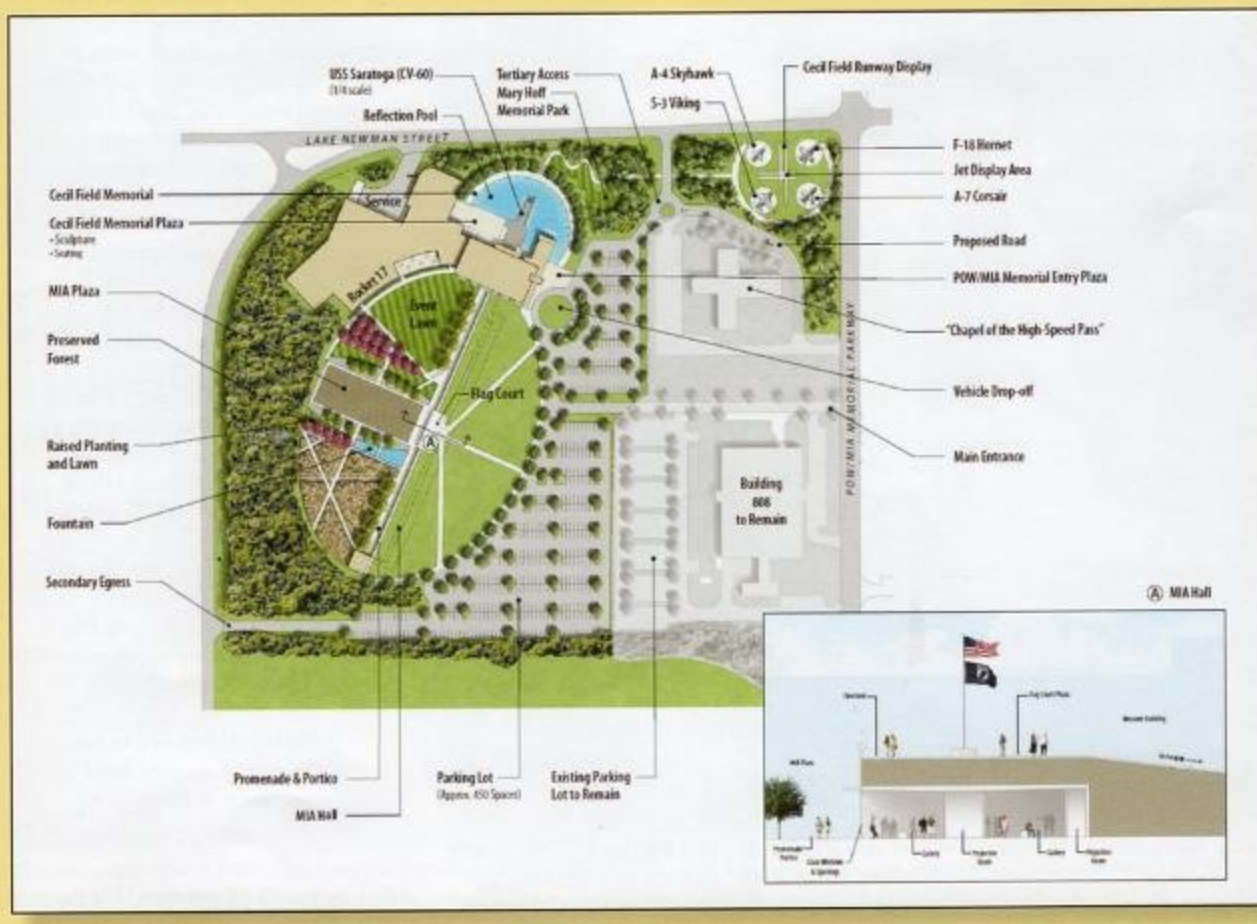
At the former NAS Cecil Field, the up and coming POW/MIA Memorial is making good progress. Acting as the anchor of the planned complex, the former base chapel, now called "The Church of the High Speed Pass," has been completely restored, with the old base theater across the street now being used for meetings and storage.

An A-7A Corsair II has been delivered to Cecil as the first of four display airplanes to sit on concrete pads, now being constructed near the Chapel. An airliner overhaul company at Cecil, *Flight Star*, is donating a new paint job for the A-7. Negotiations with the Airport Director are under way to move an FA-18 from near the airport tower the few blocks to the site and there is a lead on an S-3 Viking. So far, the search for an A-4 Skyhawk has come up short, but there is optimism one will be found.

The overall project has extensive plans for other buildings and surrounding park to pay tribute to POW/MIA's from the US military services, plus a memorial to all lost in the line of duty from NAS Cecil.

There has been great support in Jacksonville and the State of Florida for the cause to date. \$384,546 has been raised towards a goal of \$2,000,000, so there is still a lot to do. The Skyhawk Association has donated \$1,000 and purchased a large brick that will include our logo and a tribute to those lost from Cecil.

The *Memorial Brick Campaign* and challenge coin sales are helping greatly. I just bought a brick displaying the insignia for my reserve squadron, VA-203, and I encourage all to help this worthy cause by going to <https://www.powmiamemorial.org/support-the-memorial/>





ALTON GREEN MEMORIAL POST 194 www.altpost194.com (904) 829-8189 1029 PEARL ST. ST. AUGUSTINE, FL 32084

Only \$100 contact samsanks@yahoo.com

Alton Green Memorial American Legion Post 194

Veterans Centennial Park

BUY A BRICK

Lend a Hand & Leave a Legacy

A promotional graphic for the 'Buy a Brick' campaign. The background is a red brick wall. In the center, there is a map of the park area with several circular callouts showing different sections. A hand in a black suit sleeve is holding a brick with the text 'YOUR NAME HERE' on it. In the bottom right corner, there is a small American Legion logo and a yellow sign that says 'Kids SAFE ZONE'.



ST. AUGUSTINE
LIGHTHOUSE
& MARITIME MUSEUM

Here is a link to a short video from the St. Augustine Lighthouse and Maritime Museum, Introducing: “ Guardians of the First Coast: Building Readiness for World War 2”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xkWuvDBcGns>

The Press Release for this very important interesting event follows on the next few pages.



WWII submarine veterans honored at Kings Bay, GA



By GORDON JACKSON | The Brunswick News |

ST. MARYS, Ga. (Tribune News Service) -- This could have been the year when no World War II submarine veterans would attend the annual ceremony held Friday in their honor at Naval Submarine Base Kings Bay.

But the COVID-19 pandemic didn't stop three WWII submarine veterans and three widows from attending.

Unlike other years when as many as 1,500 submarine veterans from all eras have been present at the event, health and safety was a strong consideration. Masks were required and social distancing limited the audience to 45.

Rear Adm. John Spencer, commander of Submarine Group Ten and keynote speaker, called the ceremony at Kings Bay the nation's best to honor submarine veterans. Spencer said it was his third WWII ceremony at Kings Bay. It took a lot of work and planning so it could be held this year.

"It's important to them we have this ceremony," he said.

Spencer said WWII veterans set the high standards held by today's sailors serving on submarines.

"It's an honor to carry on that legacy and an obligation to carry it on," he said. "Their legacy is legendary."

Before the attack on Pearl Harbor, Spencer said submarines were considered a secondary asset and battleships the most important line of defense on the seas.

"We weren't considered a factor," he said. "The Navy thought battleships would play a major role."

A major mistake during the attack by the Japanese was not attacking the submarine piers at Pearl Harbor. That enabled the Navy to use submarines as a tactical weapon.

"It was the submarine force that went to the fight immediately," he said.

Though the submarine fleet made up less than 2 percent of the Navy, the boats were responsible for sinking more than half of the enemy's fleet during the war. The submarine force also suffered the highest casualty rate of any other military group during the war. "We inherited this legacy from you. We are honored to carry on that tradition," Spencer told the veterans.

Submarines still play a vital role in security across the world because of their stealth. The base is making preparations for the arrival of the first Columbia-class submarines. Spencer said the first four will be ported at Kings Bay.

"We're excited about another class of submarines," he said.

Spencer praised the current generation of sailors serving on submarines for the hard work and creativity needed to ensure they remain healthy during a pandemic. "We had to keep up with submarine deployments in the midst of a pandemic," he said. "We didn't have that option. We had to make it work."

After Spencer's speech, a wreath in memory of the Navy veterans who have lost their lives aboard submarines since 1915 was carried to the front of the stage as the audience stood.

The ceremony continued with the "Tolling of the Boats" ceremony, where the names of every lost Navy submarine was named, along with the number of casualties, and, if known, the cause. In most instances, the only information was all hands were lost with no idea how the boats sunk.

A bell was also tolled for the 83 Royal British Navy submarines, and the 3,142 crew members who died during WWII.

April 10 & 11, 2021



The National POW/MIA Memorial and Museum at Cecil Field

Here is a link to a video about Cecil Field by noted videographer
Jorge Rivera of FirstCoast.TV

[https://www.firstcoast.tv/national-pow-mia-memorial-and-museum-at-
cecile-field/?](https://www.firstcoast.tv/national-pow-mia-memorial-and-museum-at-cecile-field/?)

[utm_campaign=shareaholic&utm_medium=facebook&utm_source=socialnetwork&fbclid=IwAR1QDqbrUnmVbTR9zKzdkalkkpYvQv_bKXc00Vnoh
Mq3g7BU8o5dYDh6Mos](https://www.firstcoast.tv/national-pow-mia-memorial-and-museum-at-cecile-field/?utm_campaign=shareaholic&utm_medium=facebook&utm_source=socialnetwork&fbclid=IwAR1QDqbrUnmVbTR9zKzdkalkkpYvQv_bKXc00VnohMq3g7BU8o5dYDh6Mos)

Pandemic hasn't stopped Veteran Garden Project

Local vet honored by Florida Department of Agriculture

Stuart Korfhage, St. Augustine Record

When Robert Timmons and wife Crystal Timmons started the Veteran Garden Project in St. Augustine about three years ago, it was an effort at both self healing and a way to reach other veterans who struggled to return to civilian life after service.



The nonprofit served its purpose as Timmons enjoyed the benefits of immersing himself in horticulture and introducing it to others as a form of therapy.

But when the COVID-19 pandemic struck, Robert Timmons saw that the importance of the project might increase as veterans and their families dealt with the isolation brought on by the outbreak.

"It's been even harder for myself and for our members and other veterans that I know because they're alone," Timmons said. "It's already hard for them to go out in public and be around people anyway. Now you're pretty much told to (isolate). So the ones who were getting out are now secluding back in their homes."



During WWII, the Coast Guard Beach Patrol covered more than 3,700 mile of coast and employed about 24,000 men. Patrols on horseback worked in pairs, riding about 100 feet apart, usually covering a 2-mile stretch. They were call "Sand Pounders" and were able to cover difficult terrain quickly and efficiently. c 1945

These 8 Military Helicopters Once Ruled The Skies, But They've Been Replaced By More Powerful Aircraft

By The Veterans Site

The military boasts a veritable arsenal of aircraft ranging from troop transport planes and fighter jets to combat helicopters. First coming on the scene in World War II, helicopters have exploded into the world of warfare.

These birds don't need a runway, so can fly into places most planes can't go, and they are remarkably well-fit for specific missions. They range from the most basic of designs to models made specifically as light-duty, heavy-duty, combat, and transport crafts. Here are a handful of amazing military helicopters that once ruled the skies.

8. Boeing AH-64 Apache

This combat helicopter was first designed back in the late 1970s – although it wasn't put into production until the 1980s – for warfare. The helicopter boasts heavy firepower and easy maneuverability to get it into and out of tight situations and defend ground forces. It's been improved through the years with the 2014 AH-64E model as the latest in technology.

7. Boeing CH-47 Chinook

The Boeing CH-47 Chinook was produced a few decades earlier than its AH-64 Apache cousin with an entirely different purpose. Instead of being used as flying firepower, it was designed to transport large numbers of troops – or refugees (in the case of the Vietnam War). Also like the Apache, the Chinook has undergone improvements and is expected to play a role in the military for years to come.

6. Eurocopter UH-72 Lakota

The Eurocopter UH-72 Lakota is a light-duty helicopter primarily used in medical evacuation, although it can also be useful as an aerial scout. First produced in 2006, it's still in use by the military.

5. Bell H-13 Sioux

The U.S. military begin testing the Bell H-13 Sioux shortly after World War II. After evaluation, it saw extensive service in the Korean and Vietnam wars. It was considered a light utility or obser

vation helicopter, and was often used in medical emergencies.

4. MH-6 Little Bird

The MH-6 Little Bird has seen a certain amount of limelight as the preferred vehicle of the 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment, was a vital component of the Battle of Mogadishu, and was featured in the movie Blackhawk Down. This helicopter is indeed a little bird, built to reach even the most inaccessible of locations.

3. Bell UH-1 Iroquois

The Bell UH-1 Iroquois, better known as a Huey, is possible one of the most popular military helicopters and a symbol of the U.S. presence during the Vietnam War. It served the military well, but was eventually retired in 2011.

2. Bell AH-1 Cobra



The Bell AH-1 Cobra is another attack helicopter, and was considered a critical part of the military. However, with its more impressive firepower, the Apache replaced the Cobra.

1. Sikorsky CH-53 Super Stallion

The Sikorsky is another transport helicopter. Called the Super Jolly Green Giant, this heavy lift aircraft with three engines was used extensively in Vietnam. Although it was retired in the 1980s by the Marines, the Air Force still uses them to an extent.



Since the 1940s, helicopters in their many forms have been a tremendous asset to multiple branches of the U.S. military. They are indispensable for getting into and out of tight places, and their importance in combat, medical aid, and transport is undeniable. What unique development will push these birds even higher, bringing the next generation of innovation to the people who defend our country? Only time will tell. Until then, take a trip to your local air museum to see some of these impressive beauties up close and in person, and imagine what it feels like to take to the skies.



You sacrificed for our country.

**AT SILVER CREEK,
FREEDOM IS YOURS.**

Because of your commitment, you helped us achieve the American Dream. At Silver Creek, we want to return the favor – by providing the freedom, independence and personal attention you deserve. Since 2016, Silver Creek has served the St. Augustine community, offering military retirees and seniors at large a vibrant, community lifestyle complete with everything except the burdens of home maintenance. Impeccably-appointed independent concierge living, assisted living and memory care apartments homes, first-class amenities, holistic wellness programming, gourmet, all-day dining and abounding opportunities for enrichment are just a few of the many options you'll find.

Silver Creek provides residents the perfect balance of elegant, upscale living with the warmth and intimacy of home – inspiring socialization and fellowship within a close-knit community.

Call **800-665-9492** to schedule a tour and learn more.



THE FUTURE OF SENIOR LIVING

165 Silver Lane | St. Augustine, FL 32084 | SilverCreekRetirement.com



**Independent Concierge Living – Assisted Living
Memory Care – Short-Term Stays**

Assisted Living Facility #12928

National Army museum opening on Veterans Day tells the US soldier's story from 1600s to today

By COREY DICKSTEIN | STARS AND STRIPES



FORT BELVOIR, Va. — Seventy lifelike cast figures in uniform and bearing arms portray American soldiers from the Revolutionary War to recent combat in Afghanistan are spread throughout the National Museum of the United States Army, set to open to the public Nov. 11.

The figures form centerpieces for the museum's six main galleries that reflect the Army's history from its militia roots in the early 1600s through its roles in ongoing wars in the Middle East, museum officials said Thursday. The chronologically arranged galleries feature unique artifacts, short vignettes about soldiers' personal experiences at war and interactive displays that explain things like the music soldiers listened to in the era and the food they ate.

Tammy Call, the museum's director, said it was important that visitors experience the chronological history of the Army, to see how the service and warfare has changed over time. But, more than anything else, she said she hoped visitors would find a connection with the unique stories of individual soldiers displayed throughout the museum.

“My greatest desire is that an individual visiting here, that doesn't have a connection with the Army, or that does, that they walk away with knowledge of the American soldier,” Call said. “That they see themselves reflected in our soldiers and that there's that understanding that our American soldiers and members of our Army are American citizens.”

The 185,000-square-foot museum has been a longtime coming. The Army Historical Foundation has worked for more than a decade to build the service's first comprehensive museum. It will open on Veterans Day, in the midst of the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, just more than three years after the Army broke ground.

The pandemic delayed the opening by about five months, Call said. When it opens Nov. 11, visitors must reserve free tickets online at theNMUSA.org and adhere to certain restrictions, like wearing a face-covering and social distancing. The museum is also providing styluses to allow visitors to work the plethora of touchscreens throughout the exhibits.

Officials wanted visitors to experience what soldiering was like for troops on the ground throughout the Army's history. A video inside the museum's Army Theater brings them into the action in Belgium during World War II, in the Ia Drang Valley in Vietnam and the Korengal Valley in Afghanistan, placing them into the heart of the battles with a 300-degree screen. The theater shakes as bomb blasts go off and machine gun fire cuts through the air.

Pylons details information about soldier who fought in Vietnam, inside the Cold War Gallery at the new National Museum of the United States Army at Fort Belvoir, Va.

The exhibits include six dedicated to combat, one that examines the connection between the Army and American society, one that shares the history of the nation's highest military decoration, the Medal of Honor, and a virtual reality gallery where visitors can step into a World War II tank simulator, fly in virtual historic aircraft and even test their marksmanship skills.

Curators said the museum would rotate displays of 1,389 artifacts, most of which the Army has held for years but never before shared with the public. And more items are headed to the museum in the near future, including some from as recent as this year, Call said.

The museum plans to add items from soldiers who were at Iraq's al Asad Air Base during the Jan. 8 ballistic missile attack by Iran in retaliation for the United States' drone strike that killed their top military figure, Maj. Gen. Qassem Soleimani.

Call said she was not certain Thursday what those items would include, but the staff considered the event a critical part of the Army's recent history.

"We felt it was so important, just like all the artifacts in the in the exhibit wing ... to preserve those items, to get them, to take care of them and to be able to have them available."

The museum has left room to expand its galleries to include whatever the future holds for the Army, Call said.

The National Museum of the United States Army includes some 70 cast figures of soldiers in action, including this one of a soldier lowering himself into a Higgins Boat used in the Normandy Beach landings during World War II. The casts were created from scans of current active-duty soldiers.

Paul Morando, who has been the museum's exhibits chief for about three years, said his team worked hard to ensure everyone who visits would learn from their time in the building.

"You don't have to be a soldier to be connected to this museum," he said. "If you never served in the Army, but you can connect to something — a soldier's story here from the same hometown, and look and see what he or she did for our country, then there's a connection there."

The most difficult part, he said, was working within the natural limits in a physical building.

"You can't tell the entire story, of course, of the history of the Army," Morando said. "This museum would be five times the size if we incorporated every soldier's story, every aspect of the Army's history. But if we can just reach those visitors through the galleries, through the exhibits, through the artifacts that we have here, then we've done our job."

dickstein.corey@stripes.com

Army museum at a glance

Location: 1775 Liberty Dr., Fort Belvoir, Va.

Access: The museum is open to the public and is outside Fort Belvoir's security gates.

To visit: Free tickets are available for timed entry to the museum beginning Nov. 11. They can be reserved at theNMUSA.org.

Vietnam Veterans of America

If you are a Vietnam Era Veteran and live in one of these counties, please contact the President for information as to how to join



Chapter/President/email/Location

1046	Tony D'Aleo	adaleo5579@gmail.com; Duval
1048	Rod Phillips	cobra101st@gmail.com; Daytona
1059	David Treffinger	dtreffinger433@msn.com; Clay
1084	John Leslie	john_leslie15@yahoo.com; St. Johns
1088	Roy (Corky) Rudd	corkstopper50@yahoo.com; Nassau
1092	Forest Hope	foresthope@usa.net; Gainesville
1134	Marvin Lagle	mdlagle@gmail.com; Baker



First Coast Honor Flight's (FCHF) mission is to take World War II, Korean War, and Vietnam Veterans to visit their War Memorials in Washington D.C. This is a unique opportunity to show our gratitude to these Heroes who made it possible for us to enjoy the freedoms we have today.

Our trip's priorities are to ensure the safety and dignity of our Veterans! To enhance the experience each Veteran is paired with a Guardian escort and has a wheelchair available. This is a long day and there is a fair amount of walking. In addition, we travel with several staff members to include a medical doctor and videographer.

Applications are available online, for <https://firstcoasthonorflight.org/>
applications
Guardians
Veterans
Volunteers

Selena Hernandez-Haines, President

Toll Free 888-400-1185

Website: www.firstcoasthonorflight.org

email: info@firstcoasthonorflight.org

Mail: First Coast Honor Flight , PO Box 600785

St. Johns, FL 32260

Please support and donate where you can



First Coast Honor Flight Donation

I would like to donate \$ _____ to honor Veterans.

Please make check payable to: First Coast Honor Flight, Inc.

Mail to: First Coast Honor Flight, Inc.
P.O. Box 600785
Saint Johns, FL 32260

To make a donation by credit card please visit our website at:

www.firstcoasthonorflight.org

Click on "Help Our Cause" and then Click on "Donate Now" and submit your donation through PayPal. *Thank you!*

Name of Organization _____

Address _____

Home Phone _____ Cell Phone _____

Email _____ Email _____

This donation is: In Honor of _____ In Memory of _____

Name _____

Address _____

Veteran? Yes _____ No _____ Relationship _____

Branch _____ Dates Served _____

First Coast Honor Flight warrants that the information contained on this form is for internal use only and will not be shared, transmitted, or used for any purposes other than recording and acknowledging the donation. Donations are tax deductible to the extent permitted by law. First Coast Honor Flight is a registered 501(c)3 Not for Profit EIN:84-4667182 For questions please Call: 888-400-1185 or email: info@firstcoasthonorflight.org.



Over 6,000 U.S. veterans take their lives each year with more than 500 of those occurring in Florida. Almost 1 in 4 Northeast Florida citizens have a connection to the military and as a community we felt we must act on behalf of our veterans and their families. The Fire Watch Council (www.thefirewatch.org) was established by the Counties of Baker, Clay, Nassau, St. Johns and City of Jacksonville as a multi-jurisdictional government entity to address veteran suicide prevention in Northeast Florida. Our Resource Guide provides a comprehensive list of resources for the Northeast Florida military community <https://resources.thefirewatch.org/#!/> and you can stand in the gap for veterans by becoming a Fire Watch Watch Stander <https://www.thefirewatch.org/watch-standers>. We are uniting our War Fighters and allies to swiftly activate local assets, stand watch, and build a life-saving network.

Veterans Ascend

Here it is, the **BIG ANNOUNCEMENT** you have all been waiting for!

Our Military Family Service is now up and running!

You can create a FREE profile and be matched to jobs in your area, **NO RESUME REQUIRED!**

#veteransascend #militaryspouse #veterans

LIVE



LIVE

We've Made Some Great Changes!

FEATURING

The Military Family Module

Our skills-matching technology is now available to the Military Family. You have skills and we connect you directly with employers who need those skills

New features for Service Member and Veteran Accounts

You can now add civilian occupations, tax credit eligibility, travel and shifts among a few other enhancements

Create your FREE profile today
www.veteransascend.com

NO RESUME REQUIRED





PROGRAMS DESIGNED TO MEET VETERANS' UNIQUE NEEDS

Advance Care Planning

Community Hospice & Palliative Care offers Honoring Choices® Florida, a program to help you document your health care wishes in advance, so that, in the event you become ill and cannot speak for yourself, your wishes are known and can be followed.

Palliative Care

Our palliative care services can help people with serious illnesses get relief from physical, emotional, and spiritual pain, symptoms, and stress while seeking curative treatment.

Hospice Care

We also provide support during the final phase of advanced illness, with a focus on comfort and quality of life.

- ★ **Team Approach:** Trained clinicians identify and address the psychological, physical, spiritual and emotional needs of veterans and their caregivers.
- ★ **Pinning Ceremony:** We provide a veteran-to-veteran pinning ceremony to honor the service of our nation's bravest.
- ★ **Service Branch Flags:** For veterans who receive care at our inpatient centers, we fly the flag of their service branch outside their room and entrust the flag to the family following death.
- ★ **Veterans History Project:** Members of our Community Hospice Veterans Partnership (CHVP) record veterans' stories and share them online and with the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress.
- ★ **Community Hospice Veterans Partnership:** A select group of veteran leaders serving as brand ambassadors throughout Northeast and North Central Florida bringing awareness to, and providing access for, veterans and their caregivers facing advanced illness and end-of-life care.

Complementary Therapies

In addition to routine home care, respite care, continuous care and inpatient hospice, we also provide the following services to patients and their families:

- ★ **Grief and Loss Support**
- ★ **Certified Music Therapy**
- ★ **Certified Pet Therapy**
- ★ **Pet Promises**

We Need Volunteers

Whether you offer companionship and a listening ear or assist at fundraising events, there's a volunteer role for everyone. Opportunities include pinning ceremonies, Veterans History Project recordings, CHVP membership and other special programs.

WE HONOR VETERANS
Partner

Community Hospice & Palliative Care participates in We Honor Veterans, a Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization program that honors veterans for their service and sacrifices.

For more information or to volunteer, call toll free **866.253.6681** or visit **CommunityHospice.com**.



SURVIVOR OUTREACH SERVICES

Strength
built on
Sacrifice

Your Florida SOS Team

St. Augustine Area

Keith Ham
Support Coordinator
310 Charlotte Street
St. Augustine, FL 32085
(904) 823-0157 (desk)
(904) 472-7689 (cell)
keith.c.ham.ctr@mail.mil

Tallahassee Area

Matthew Reeves
Support Coordinator
1225 Easterwood Drive
Tallahassee, FL 32311-3599
(850) 617-0192 (desk)
(850) 459-6630 (cell)
matthew.p.reeves.ctr@mail.mil

Orlando Area

Shinekqua Baines
Support Coordinator
9500 Armed Forces Reserve Drive
Orlando, FL 32827
(407) 240-5939 ext. 1743
shinekqua.l.baines.ctr@mail.mil

Tampa Bay Area

LaShawnda S. Strother
Support Coordinator
2801 Grand Avenue
Pinellas Park, FL 33782
(727)-563-3647
lashawnda.s.strother.ctr@mail.mil

Miami Area

Support Coordinator
9301 NW 33rd Street
Doral, FL 33172-1202
(305) 437-2178

Scholarships & Application Deadlines

There are two primary VA Programs offering educational assistance. While federal benefits do not technically have a due date, it is important to apply as early as possible.

The Marine Gunnery Sergeant John David Fry Scholarship (Fry Scholarship) is currently available for children of those who died in the line of duty after September 10, 2001. Beginning January 1, 2015, Fry Scholarship will also be available for surviving spouses of those who died in the line of duty after September 10, 2001.

The Survivors' and Dependents' Educational Assistance (DEA) Program offers education and training opportunities to eligible dependents of Veterans who are permanently and totally disabled due to a service-related condition or of Veterans who died while on active duty or as a result of a service-related condition.

Application Deadlines for surviving children

Children of Fallen Patriots Foundation

No set amount, available for children of those who died in the line of duty or of a service-connected disability. No application due date.

Freedom Alliance

Scholarships of up to \$5,000 for children of those who died in the line of duty. No application due date.

Fisher House Foundation/ Heroes Legacy Scholarship

Amount varies, for children of those who died while on active duty on or after September 11, 2001. Applications available from early December to March 14.

Special Ops Warrior Foundation

Amount varies, for surviving children of Special Operations Service Members who died in the line of duty. Applications due at least sixty days prior to the start of the semester.

Deadline for multiple relationships

Army Emergency Relief Fund

Amount varies, for surviving spouses and children of soldiers who die while on active duty or in retiree status. Applications available from January 2 to May 1, 2015.

Application Deadlines: For surviving spouses

Aspire

\$3,000 scholarships per semester for spouses of those who died on active duty. Applications due by October 31 for spring semester and June 30 for fall semester each year.

National Military Family Association

\$500 to \$2,500 scholarships for surviving spouses of those who died while on active duty on or after September 11, 2001. Applications available from December 1 to January 31.

Pat Tillman Foundation

Amount varies, scholarships for surviving spouses of those who died on active duty, in veteran status, or in retiree status. Applications available from February 1 to March 6.

Application Deadlines: For surviving siblings

Matthew Freeman Project

\$1,000 scholarships for siblings of those who have died in the line of duty. No application due date

Deadline for multiple relationships

Folds of Honor

\$5,000 scholarships for surviving spouses and children of service members who die in the line of duty or from a service-connected disability. Applications available from January 15 to March 15.

Disclaimer: The information presented in this newsletter is for informational awareness only and does not represent endorsement, sponsorship, recommendation, or promotion of any commercial events, commercial names or brands by the editors of this Newsletter, the Department of Defense, US Army, US Navy, US Air Force, US Coast Guard, National Guard, Reserve, or the federal government. Usage of commercial or trademark names is for identification purposes only.

FLORIDA SURVIVOR OUTREACH SERVICES AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY



Survivor Outreach Services provides long-term support and advocacy for families of the fallen. Our support coordinators and financial counselors are dedicated to helping survivors from all eras understand and apply for benefits as well as stay connected to the Army family for as long as they desire.

Although Survivor Outreach Services is the focus of this newsletter, please know that all branches of the Armed Forces are equally committed to taking care of surviving military families. Please contact us, and we will connect you with additional resources that may be available for your branch of service. To find the Survivor Outreach Services location nearest you, check out the map on this page, or visit www.sos.army.mil.



Here is a good resource for vets who may be experiencing Covid 19 or flu like symptoms. The call center can be reached 24/7 and the vet will be able to reach a nurse. Also for Vets who qualify for the Vet Center they also have a 24/7 call center War Vets 877-927-8387. One of the Vet Center staff will be notified by both text and email to contact and follow-up with the veteran.

Ann McCulliss Johnson LCSW, USA COL (ret)
 Clinical Director, 904-864-2885

VA HealthNow^{24/7}
 YOUR CLINICAL CONTACT CENTER
1-877-741-3400

VA HEALTH CARE WHERE AND WHEN YOU NEED IT.

24
Around the Clock Support
 Call us at 1-877-741-3400 to receive immediate clinical and administrative support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

No Co-Pays
 Veterans who are eligible for VA Care are not subject to co-pays when using the Clinical Contact Center.

Nurse Triage
 Connect with a nurse to discuss your health concerns and to determine the best course of action for your care.

Connect with a Provider
 Connect with a doctor or nurse practitioner over the phone or by secure video to discuss your care.

***Pharmacy**
 Pharmacists are available to assist you and your care team to support your path to healing.

VISN 8 Clinical Contact Center

The VISN 8 Clinical Contact Center is a service of the VA Sunshine Healthcare Network (VISN 8) - providing 24/7, virtual urgent care to Veterans enrolled for VA Health Care in Florida, South Georgia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Veterans who receive care in the network can call us around the clock to get their health questions or concerns answered from the comfort and convenience of their home, or wherever they may be.

Services include general administrative support, nurse advice and triage, virtual visits with a doctor or nurse practitioner via telephone or VA Video Connect.

There are no co-payments for using the VISN 8 Clinical Contact Center!

Note: The Clinical Contact Center should not be used for emergency situations. In the event of a life-threatening emergency, please dial 911 or visit your closest emergency room.

**Prescription medications may be subject to co-pays.*

To learn more, visit www.visn8.va.gov/ccc.asp.

VA U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
 Veterans Health Administration
 VA Sunshine Healthcare Network (VISN 8)

Rescheduled!

2nd Annual

Save the Date

Saturday, December 5, 2020

1800 hours: Social Hour
1900 hours: Dinner Dance

Military Ball for All

HONORING FIVE STAR VETERANS CENTER

All previously purchased tickets/sponsorships honored

Omni Hotel
Downtown Jacksonville
\$150 couple, \$80 single
Tables from \$1000

Tax Deductible

Sponsorships Available

*Special Tribute to the American Heroes
of Pearl Harbor - December 7, 1941



Dinner Banquet

Dancing with military
stars & Heroes

Black Tie, Full Dress
Uniform Optional

(904) 723-5950
5starveteranscenter.org

***Reserve Tax Deductible Tickets @ 5starveteranscenter.org**

ALL proceeds benefit recovering, homeless veterans

A hero's home for the holidays!



See Every Word

Your calls captioned. Whenever. Wherever.



Your calls captioned at **NO COST*** to you.

- Fast-dial contacts and favorites
- Adjust font size and color
- Industry leading near real-time captioning
- Answering machine with captioned messages

*No cost to qualified users through a federally-funded program.

FEDERAL LAW PROHIBITS ANYONE BUT REGISTERED USERS WITH HEARING LOSS FROM USING INTERNET PROTOCOL (IP) CAPTIONED TELEPHONES WITH THE CAPTIONS TURNED ON.

IP Captioned Telephone Service may use a live operator. The operator generates captions of what the other party to the call says.

These captions are then sent to your phone. There is a cost for each minute of captions generated, paid from a federally administered fund.

REQUIREMENTS:

- Hearing loss
- Home phone service
- High-speed internet
For home phone
- iPhone® 5s or newer
For mobile app

Contact me today!
Anas Benjelloun
904-568-4562
clearcaptions.com

Available to present to groups!



© 2019 ClearCaptions LLC. All rights reserved. ClearCaptions, the ClearCaptions logo, "the CC phone" icon, "WordsMatter", "Blue" and "Get the whole conversation" are trademarks of ClearCaptions LLC. All other product or service names mentioned herein are the trademarks or registered trademarks of their respective owners. 20258-201907

The logo consists of the letters 'V4V' in a bold, serif font. The 'V's are filled with a pattern of white stars on a dark blue background, while the '4' is a solid dark blue.

Together We are Stronger

**Keeping our Veterans
Informed, Connected, United, and Organized**

V4VFlorida.org

Vets4VetsNJax@gmail.com

Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram: @Vets4VetsNJax

#vets4vetsjax #Jointhevetsmovement #Togetherwearestronger



Mission Statement:

**The Veterans Council of St. Johns County, Inc.
is a 501 C3 Not-For-Profit Florida Corporation.**



The Veterans Council of St. Johns County is comprised of representatives from various veterans' organizations that work with city and county governments and organizations to assist with matters concerning veterans and veterans' activities.

What the Council has done:

- The Veterans Treatment Court
 - Wreaths Across America
 - Homeless Veterans Standdown
 - Veterans Day Parade
 - Vets 4 Vets
- And so much more...

SA-0003147064-01



Veterans Crisis Line
 1-800-273-8255 **PRESS 1**


Veterans Crisis Line
 1-800-273-8255 **PRESS 1**



STAND BY THEM
 Confidential help for Veterans and their families
 ••••• Confidential chat at VeteransCrisisLine.net or text to 838255 •••••

NATIONAL SUICIDE PREVENTION LIFELINE
 1-800-273-TALK (8255)
www.suicideline.org


Military/Veterans Crisis Line
 1-800-273-8255
 Confidential chat at MilitaryCrisisLine.net or text 838255



Veterans Crisis Line
 1-800-273-8255 **PRESS 1**

Veterans Councils of Northeast Florida



BAKER COUNTY

President: Larry Porterfield

Meetings:

Second Thursday of each month

Location:

MacClenny Primitive Baptist Church
Fellowship Hall on North Boulevard

Time : 1800 (6pm)

CLAY COUNTY

President: Harry Silvers

Meetings:

First Wednesday of each month

Location:

American Legion Post 250
3939 County Rd 218
Middleburg, FL 32068

Time: 1400 (2pm)

DUVAL COUNTY

President Steve Spickelmier

Meetings:

Third Tuesday of each month

Location:

American Legion Post 37
Main Building
San Juan Avenue

Time: 1900 (7 pm)

NASSAU COUNTY

President: Mike Doran

Meetings:

First Thursday of each month

Location:

American Legion Post 54
626 South 3rd St
Fernandina Beach fit 32034

Time: 1900 (7pm)

St. Johns County

President: Bill Dudley

Meetings:

Last Thursday of each month

Location:

Health & Human Services building
Muscovy room, 1st floor
200 San Sebastian View, St. Augustine

Time: 1900 (7pm)

The Veterans Council of St. Johns County is proud to announce that it has modernized its website and created a Facebook page.



We are inviting all veterans to visit our website at:

NEW <http://www.veteranscouncilsjc.org>

The Veterans Council will post items of interest to all veterans, post pictures, articles, flyers, events, etc. We will post our meetings dates and keep you informed about events at the Jacksonville and St. Augustine National Cemeteries.

Please join our group on Facebook at:

<http://veteranscouncilsjc.org>

Please select **Join the Group** to become a member

Once you have joined the Veterans Council Facebook group you will be able to post your meetings, pictures, articles, fund raisers, etc. It will be your common site to go to and see what's happening.

The website and Facebook page were updated and created so that there would be a central place to list all veterans activities in NE FL.

You may have noticed the Veterans Council's new logo, it was created by Roy Havekost and his web design company PageAuthors. The VC strongly recommends that you contact Roy, 727-487-6252, if you or your vet group wants to create a website or Facebook page.

*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: rothfeldm@gmail.com



**The Veterans Council of St. Johns County, Inc. is a
Not For Profit Florida Corporation.**

Our formation date was July 4, 2001 in a proclamation issued by the St. Johns County Commissioners. It is composed of representatives of the various veterans' organizations within St. Johns County.

The Veteran's Council will work with city and county governments and other local organizations to achieve the mutual goal to provide a central agency to assist in the coordination and presentation of matters concerning veterans and veterans activities in St. Johns County.

The Veteran's Council will endeavor to precipitate, stimulate and assist various organizations as they perform patriotic events. One of the major purposes is the promotion and education of national patriotic matters.

**The St. Johns County Veterans Council meets the
last Thursday of the month at 7 pm.**

***The Veterans Council will meet at the St.
Johns County Administration Building
500 San Sebastian View
Auditorium, 1st floor***

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

*(physical location)
The VSO Office is located in the 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.*

*Service is by appointment.
Phone: 904-209-6160 Fax: 904-209-6161
Joseph McDermott, SR VSO
Rick Rees, Assistant VSO
Travis Neidig, Assistant VSO*

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.