



The Patriot Reader Newsletter

P.O. Box 2117

St. Augustine, FL 32085

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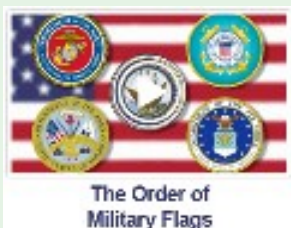
Volume 9, Issue 2

Message from the Chairman

February 2020

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Fellow Veterans:

Our new year has launched with the recognition that 2020 will be as exciting and challenging as this past year. The Veterans Council continues in dialogue with the VA about our new VA Clinic. We are concerned that after nearly 3 months since the groundbreaking there is no land clearing and construction under way. The holdup seems to be a negotiation of building rates with the contractor. The Veterans Council will continue to pursue this with the VA.

Looking long term, after the VA relocates from the current temporary facility, the Veterans Council is developing a plan to leave these modular units in place and convert them into a Homeless Veterans facility. We are in discussions with the County, State, and VA about the best possible use of this property. This would satisfy a long sought after solution to the veteran homeless problem we have pursued for several years. St. Johns County has no

suitable facilities for our homeless veterans and must relocate them to either Duval or Volusia Counties. The Veterans Council feels this is the best use of this property once the VA has vacated the site. We will continue to keep you informed concerning this initiative.

On Friday, 17 January, the Veterans Council conducted an indigent burial service at Jacksonville National Cemetery for a homeless veteran from St. Johns County. Mr. John Meade Jr. was interred with military honors with over 300 people in attendance to pay their respects. Mr. Meade was well known in the downtown area of St. Augustine and was well thought of for his warmth and friendly spirit. When he passed away last November with no next of kin, the SAPD began a search for any living relatives. Finding none, the Veterans Council was notified and as is our policy, we arranged for his service at JNC. Sgt. Major Ray Quinn, our Council Vice Chairman conducted the service and the



Chairman received the flag as his family member. The Veterans Council appreciates the news coverage the local TV stations in Jacksonville provided which accounted for the large turnout for Mr. Meade's burial. I would like to encourage our veteran organizations to plan to attend our Veterans Council meetings held the last Thursday of each month. Our meetings are held in the Muscovy Room at the Health and Human Services Building, 200 San Sebastian View at 7 PM. Our attendance has been somewhat in decline the past few months and we would like to move back to the attendance levels of the past. Please plan to join us so we can stay connected.

Bill Dudley, Chairman
Veterans Council of St. Johns County

Clyde E. Lassen State Veterans Nursing Home



The Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs operates six skilled nursing facilities and one assisted living facility. All facilities are licensed by the Agency for Health Care Administration and inspected annually by AHCA and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. The homes are supervised round the clock by registered and licensed nurses. Under the IRS tax code, monetary donations to specific state veterans' homes are tax deductible. Per Florida Statutes, all such donations are to be used for the benefit of the home and its residents. You may also support the State Homes for Veterans Trust Fund by making a \$1 contribution when renewing your Driver License. Let the clerk know you're a veteran.

Resident Admission: Basic admission requirements for all state veterans' homes include an honorable discharge, state residency prior to admission, and certification of need of assisted living or skilled nursing care as determined by a VA physician. A resident application package for each facility is available for view and downloading below. For specific questions regarding admissions, please contact the Admissions Coordinator at the numbers listed below.

Employment: Our State Veterans' Homes enjoy Five Star and Gold Seal ratings for the care they provide. You can come to work each day knowing your residents are receiving the best care possible. You can come to work knowing you will work with state-of-the-art technology and equipment to help you do your job well. You'll be part of a team that improves quality of life for our veteran residents. For employment opportunities, call the FDVA Human Resources Office at (727) 518-3202, Ext. 5579 or visit the People First website at <https://jobs.myflorida.com/joblist.html>.

Clyde E. Lassen State Veterans' Nursing Home in St. Augustine – The Clyde E. Lassen State Veterans' Nursing Home in St. Augustine (St. Johns County) opened to residents in 2010. The 120-bed facility offers skilled nursing care and can accommodate 60 residents with dementia/Alzheimer's disease.

Margaret Kaplan, Administrator

Call (904) 940-2193 for more information. Address: 4650 State Road 16, St. Augustine, FL 32092



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

**Jacksonville National Cemetery Support Committee Meetings for 2018
At Community Hospice of NE FL.
4266 Sunbeam Rd, Jacksonville, FL 32257
Hadlow Bldg – Conference Room A 7:00pm**

**DATES OF 2020 SC at JNC MEETINGS, All on Mondays
March 2nd, April 6th, May 4th
Oct 5th, Nov 2nd, Dec 7th**

**MEMORIAL DAY EVENT - Saturday, May 23rd
WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA 2020 - Saturday, December 19th.**

+++++2018/19,20 Officers of the SCJNC+++++

**Chairman: Steve Spickelmier
Vice Chairman: Bill Dudley, Treasurer: John Mountcastle
Assistant Treasurer: Michael Rothfeld, Secretary: Kathy Church
Master-At-Arms: Joe McDermott, Historian: Kathy Cayton
Chaplain: Rev. Patrick A. Archuleta, Sr.**

The Veterans Council of St. Johns County meets on the following dates, all are invited to attend. We meet at the county Health & Human Services building, 200 San Sebastian View, at 7 pm

Future meeting Speakers:

- Jan. 30 St. Augustine Sea Cadet Battalion, Pledge with Sea Cadets Color Guard
Beth Heath, We Can Be Heroes Foundation**
- Feb. 27 Deborah Brannon, Regent, Daughters of the American Revolution, Maria Jefferson Chapt.
Beth Heath, We Can Be Heroes Foundation**
- Mar. 26 Sharon Unger, President Veterans Village of NE FL
Shiva Thompson, Yoga 4 Change**
- Apr. 30 Carl “Jeff” Lay, 1SG US Veterans Reserve Corps. FL
Kathy Fleming, Exec. Dir., St Augustine Lighthouse, WW II Coast Guard Project**
- May 28 Dr. Roger Smith, Military History of Colonial St. Augustine**

The Veterans Council of St. Johns County, Inc.

This is Who We Are

The objective of the Veterans Council of St. Johns County, Inc. is to be of assistance to all Veterans who have been honorably discharged from any of the military branches of the United States of America and have a residence in St. Johns County.



Its formation date was July 4, 2001 in a proclamation issued by the St. Johns County Commissioners. It is comprised of representatives of the various veterans' organizations within St. Johns County such as Posts 194 and 233 of the American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars Bryan Tutton Post 2391, The Vietnam Veterans of America Leo C. Chase Chapter 1084, The Combat Veterans Motorcycle Association Post 20-2, AMVETS and The Purple Heart Society. The Veterans Council works with city and county governments and local organizations to achieve the mutual goal of providing a central agency which assists in the coordination and dissemination of matters concerning Veterans and Veterans' activities in St. Johns County.

The Veteran's Council informs and assists various organizations as they develop patriotic events. It organizes and hosts many annual events such as celebrations of Veterans Day, The Veterans Day Event this year will be on Monday, November 11, at Anastasia Baptist Church, starting at 9:00 am. This year we are celebrating Memorial Day, Wreaths Across America and Homeless Veterans Stand Down. The Council actively supports The St. Augustine National Cemetery, The Jacksonville National Cemetery, Missing In America Project, Disabled American Veterans, The USMC Oldest City Detachment, Vietnam Veterans of America, Military Officers of America Oldest City Chapter, The Navy League of the United States-St. Augustine/Palm Coast Chapter and the Cecil Field POW/MIA Memorial.



The Veterans Council organizes, supports and hosts many annual Veterans and patriotic events, i.e., Veterans Day, Memorial Day, Wreaths Across America,

Homeless Veterans Stand Down, and actively supports: The St. Augustine National Cemetery, The Jacksonville National Cemetery, Missing In America Project, Disabled American Veterans, The USMC Oldest City Detachment, Vietnam Veterans of America, Military Officers Association of America Oldest City Chapter, The Navy League of the United States- St. Augustine/Palm Coast Council, and the recently established Cecil Field POW/MIA Memorial. The Council actively supports the Clyde Lassen State Veterans Nursing Home with donations and program support.

One of the major activities of the Veterans Council is the promotion of national patriotism through education by working closely with students and teachers to foster this. To achieve this goal the Council works with the St. John's County School System. The Council provides Veteran speakers, conducts essay contests, supports the JROTC programs and donates the five documentaries it produced, featuring local Veterans. The documentaries have been provided to all Public High Schools in St. Johns County as well as local libraries, colleges, museums and veterans groups.



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According to the 2017 VA Veteran Population demographic information there are 1,525,400 veterans living in the state of Florida with 19,623 veterans living in St. Johns County and the 2018 estimate is over 23,000, with the largest group being Vietnam era veterans at over 6,711. Florida is the third largest state after California and Texas in veteran population.

The Veterans Council of St. Johns County is an amalgam of over 28 veterans' groups who send their representatives to the Council's monthly meeting. The Veterans Council meets the last Thursday of every month in the County Health and Human Services building, 200 San Sebastian View, St. Augustine, Muscovy Room at 7:00 P.M. All Veteran groups and individuals who are Veterans are invited to attend. The Council provides each County Veterans group with monthly meeting Minutes and Agenda.

Each month the Council meeting has speakers addressing current veterans re

lated issues. The Council has a well received monthly newsletter, The Patriot Reader, (all issues are posted at: www.veteranscouncilsjc.org/newsletter.htm) that is emailed to thousands of veterans and veterans' groups. The newsletter contains monthly events, educational articles, service stories of local veterans and meeting dates. All are encouraged to submit articles and pictures. The Council also maintains a website (www.veteranscouncilsjc.org) that can accessed for daily Council information and links to VA resources, VA Health releases and newspaper articles that discuss veterans' issues. The Council has a very large Facebook presence (Veterans Council of St. Johns County, FL) and posts information daily.

The Council proudly supports the Veterans Treatment Court. The Council financially assists veterans that are enrolled in the program with temporary loans for rent, food, car payments, utilities and clothing. The Veterans Treatment Court is dedicated to helping veterans address the underlying problems which led to their involvement in the criminal justice system. The Veterans Council provides mentors to each participant, "Battle Buddies", who are available 24/7 to assist with any issues that arise. Veterans' Courts make the community safer and the Council assists by providing room, board, transportation and may pay bills for the veteran until he/she are able to become a contributing member of society.

The Veterans Council of St. Johns County welcomes all new county veterans and encourages them to attend one of its meetings.

The St. Johns County Veterans Service Officers are: Joseph McDermott, Rick Rees, and Travis Neidig. They are located in the St. Johns County Health & Human Services Building, 200 San Sebastian View, St. Augustine, FL. 32084. Their phone number is 904-209-6160.

The St. Augustine Community Based Outpatient Clinic, named after Leo C. Chase Jr. , the first soldier from the county Killed in Action in Vietnam, is located at 100 Deerfield Preserve Blvd., St. Augustine, FL 32086.

The National POW/MIA Memorial & Museum at Cecil Field Select Page
Endorsement of H.R. 4446 from the National League of POW/MIA Families

The POW/MIA Memorial and Museum at Cecil Field is proud to have the official endorsement of H.R. 4446 from the National League of POW/MIA Families for the National Designation.



Dear Members of the Board,

On behalf of the Board of Directors of the National League of POW/MIA Families, this letter serves as notification of our strong endorsement of the Cecil Field POW/MIA Memorial, Inc., and support for efforts to designate a portion of former Naval Air Station Cecil Field as the National POW/MIA Memorial and Museum. Toward achieving this objective, we unanimously support passage of H.R. 4446 to officially establish that designation and will be seeking widespread support.

As we understand it, the 26-acre property, located on POW/MIA Memorial Parkway, Jacksonville, Florida, will serve as the only public memorial museum of its kind that will focus on missing and unaccounted-for POW/MIA's, in every branch of service from all wars and conflicts. It will not only be a place to honor these missing Americans, but will also provide visitors interactive education about the history of the POW/MIA accounting mission and ongoing efforts by our government and private citizens to achieve the fullest possible accounting.

The National League of POW/MIA Families was incorporated in 1970 with a single, three-fold purpose: the release of all prisoners, the fullest possible accounting for the missing, and repatriation of all recoverable remains of those who died serving our nation during the Vietnam War. The POW/MIA flag originated with the League in 1970 and is now recognized as a symbol of all Americans missing and unaccounted-for from our nation's past wars and conflicts.

This POW/MIA logo is known throughout the world and signals to America's Armed Forces that should they be captured or become missing, our nation will do its very best to return them to their families and the country they served. The effort to account as fully as possible for unreturned US veterans continues at a level higher than ever before in our nation's history, and we are determined to press ahead until our realistic accounting objectives are achieved.

The League deeply appreciates the vision of Cecil Field POW/MIA Memorial, Inc. in moving forward to establish this commemorative location as a destination for all who wish to honor and remember these warriors who served our country in ways most US personnel were not called upon to endure. When the National POW/MIA Memorial and Museum is completed, it will serve as a symbol to America's veterans, family members, historians and everyday citizens of our nation's determination to stand behind those who serve our country – including our POWs and MIAs – and make every reasonable effort to bring them home.

Ann Mills-Griffiths
Chairman of the Board & CEO
cc: League Board of Directors

Restored World War II destroyer could open as floating naval museum downtown

Proposed project passed a major hurdle by Jim Piggott

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. – The USS Orleck, a restored World War II destroyer, could open in April as a floating naval museum in downtown Jacksonville.

The proposed project passed a major hurdle Wednesday when it got unanimous approval from the Downtown Development Authority to berth near the old Shipyards site on the Northbank. Now it's up to the Jacksonville City Council to say yes.

It has been the dream of the Jacksonville Historic Naval Ship Association for years to open a floating museum along the St. Johns River. That dream faded somewhat a little more than a year ago when the Navy hedged on a deal to allow the USS Adams to call Jacksonville home. Since then, another opportunity floated in -- the USS Orleck, which is already a floating museum in Lake Charles, Louisiana, where it is set to close.

"She is open for business right now in Lake Charles," Daniel Bean, president of Jacksonville Historic Naval Ship Association, said Wednesday. "There would be no change in the operation and she would be towed here and we would want to take visitors the first day."

There are some hurdles, such as a dry dock inspection to make sure the ship is sound and could survive the tow to Jacksonville.

News4Jax asked Bean why Lake Charles would give it up.

"The individual that purchased the pier side wanted to use it for a different development where she's located in Lake Charles," Bean said.

Bean and his group say the loss is Jacksonville's gain. They had raised funds in the past to bring in the USS Adams, and now they are just shifting the focus. It appears getting the \$2.8 million in private donations is not going to be a problem, as much of the donations for the USS Adams are still available.

The mayor's office told News4Jax that it is supportive of the idea.

The City Council is expected to give a thumbs-up to the proposed floating museum that would tie in with any development planned for the downtown area.



Homeless St. Augustine veteran laid to rest with military honors

by Christen Kelley, St. Augustine Record

A homeless St. Augustine man was inurned at Jacksonville National Cemetery on Friday after the community worked together to honor his memory.



John Meade made his home on the streets of St. Augustine, where he would befriend the shopkeepers and regulars to St. George Street.

He enjoyed sitting on the bench outside of Bear Mountain Outfitters, feeding the pigeons and making small talk with whoever passed by, like Dionna Tackett.

“He was just a sweet, nice guy and when you would try to do things for him, he would reverse on you and try to do something for you instead if he could,” Tackett said. “Every now and then I would bring him a home-cooked dinner, and he would get so excited about the smallest of things. He just touched a lot of people.”

When he died in November, his friends worked together with the St. Augustine Police Department to find out more about Meade and his life.

“John Meade Jr. was a unique soul and connected with everyone he met,” the St. Augustine Police Department wrote in a recent Facebook post. “That’s what the St. Augustine Police Department’s Outreach Team exhausted all resources to find information that would help them learn a little more about Meade. Unfortunately, Meade lived off the grid alone.”

That’s when it was learned that Meade had served in the Army from 1966 to 1968. Having no family to claim his body, SAPD arranged for him to be cremated and inurned at the Jacksonville National Cemetery with full military honors.

Dozens showed up to pay their respects to Meade, including members of veterans groups from across Northeast Florida. A flag was donated to the cemetery in his honor.

Ray Quinn, Vice Chairman of the St. Johns County Veterans Council, led the ceremony, reminding those in attendance that while little is known about Meade, he will always be a soldier.



“We know little of John’s life, but we know that his days in St. Augustine touched the lives of many,” Quinn said. “We here today, we represent John’s family.”

Tackett said a photo of Meade by local photographer Gary Le Vielle contributed to the outpouring of support. It was shared across Facebook and upon seeing it, even people who hadn’t met Meade wanted to honor him.

“Every single person that I’ve spoke to that has seen that picture of him or met him when they passed him by, they all loved him,” Tackett said. “It’s so wonderful because he really did deserve this.”

Fire Watch launches mobile app to combat veteran suicide

Councilman Rory Diamond, a veteran advocate says the app is aimed at connecting vets with local resources in emergency situations

Author: Kamrel Eppinger (First Coast News)

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. — It's estimated that 20 veterans commit suicide every day in the United States. In an effort to reduce that number, on Thursday, The Fire Watch Program rolled out a new app to help local veterans during crisis situations.



When it comes to helping warfighters against suicide, Councilman Rory Diamond said more work needs to be done. "I'm just so tired of our national shame and our national disgrace of veteran suicide," he said. "Twenty veterans a day is totally unacceptable, we have to bring it down we have to do it as a community and we can do it, it's preventable."

Diamond is a veteran advocate who has committed his life to bring an end to what he calls an epidemic. In a recently released veterans affairs report, there were more than 6,100 veterans who died by suicide in 2017. That number has hovered right around the 6,000 mark for each of the last five years nationally, with at least 500 veterans in Florida in 2017.

Nearly three months after the passing of the Fire Watch Program in Northeast Florida, coordinators are now rolling out an app to join in on the fight against veteran suicide. The Fire Watch App is an extension of the support program which provides local resources for veterans to receive emergency help. With a simple tap, a veteran can get in touch with first responders or the veteran suicide hotline.

"Veteran suicide crisis is one that we are not winning, we're losing and we need to bring everything we have to the fight including all the modern technology," Diamond said. "Almost everybody has a phone and here's how we can help veterans wherever they are." The app also aims to connect thousands of local veterans with religious leaders, volunteers and help them build relationships with them to provide one-on-one counseling and support.

"Fire Watch in the Army and Marines means the guy or lady who is waiting up late to keep an eye on their brothers and sister in arms to make sure that if harm comes, they will wake them up to be there to the rescue," he said. **"The same thing now as veterans look after each other and see what's going on."**

There also an option for anyone to make donations directly to the Northeast Florida vet suicide prevention agency, an opportunity for anyone to get involved join in on the fight.

"It needs to be a local effort," he said. "The way we stop veteran suicide is all of us working together, we're bringing our community tighter and closer together. Often the difference between not suicide and suicide is knowing that one person in the world cares about you and what we are doing is connecting Those people together."

JROTC cadets take a Military Heritage Trail Ride

The Record

The Marine Corps Junior ROTC unit of Jean Ribault High School in Jacksonville participated in the St. Augustine Military Heritage Trail Ride on Dec. 9. The Ancient City Chapter of the Military Officers Association of America coordinated the ride and MOAA Mayport Historic Chapter sponsored the event. The ride highlighted historic points of military importance in St. Augustine that are generally off the beaten path.

Kicking off at the Fort Mose Museum classroom, Thomas Graham shared the military history of America's oldest city. Nancy Birchall, a life-long city resident, narrated a bus tour of some of the many other attractions. At the next stop, cadets were treated to a lecture by Col. Rik Erkelens, U.S. Army, retired, in Oglethorpe Battery Park, about the attempted siege of St. Augustine by the British. Continuing the tour to the St. Augustine National Cemetery adjacent to the Florida National Guard Headquarters, Alison Simpson, historian for the National Guard, provided a detailed story of the most significant grave sites and their occupants.

The day concluded at Fort Mose where everyone was treated to a lunch of authentic MREs [Meals Ready to Eat], the field rations of the U.S. military.



Marine Corps Junior ROTC unit of Jean Ribault High School, Jacksonville.

[CONTRIBUTED PHOTO]

The Veterans Council's Summary of 2019 Activities



This past year has been an active one for the Veterans Council of St. Johns County, Inc., as it continues its Mission "To Help and Assist All Veterans".

The Council's help and assistance in 2019 has taken many forms.

Honoring and Remembering Veterans

The Council's annual **Memorial Day** Ceremony, a day on which those who died in active military service are remembered, was commemorated at the historic, serene, St. Augustine National Cemetery in a solemn ceremony attended by over 300 spectators.



Prior to the Council's **Veterans Day Program**, Chairman Bill Dudley and Vice Chairman Ray Quinn were presented with a **Veterans Day Proclamation** from the St. Johns County Board of Commissioners.

Veterans Day in St. Augustine is the Veterans Council's signature event and attended by over 1000 people.



The doors of Anastasia Baptist Church were opened at 9:00 am to allow the public to view over 50 display tables showcasing local non-profits and veterans organizations. Returning was the Traveling Vietnam Wall and for the first time the Wall on Terror Wall. The Veterans Day ceremony commemorated the 75th Anniversary of the D Day Invasion with 3 WW II veterans in attendance and recognized from the podium. The Council recognized, with a formal march in,

JROTC units from five county High Schools and in its continuing support program had the St. Augustine/Palm Coast Sea Cadet Battalion present the colors. Returning for the 3rd year was the St. Johns Center for the Arts Chamber Singers led by Director Jeff Dodd.

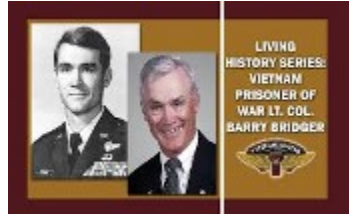




Wreaths Across America, a National Ceremony, was successful again this year as every headstone in the St. Augustine National Cemetery was covered with a holiday wreath.



Helping and Informing Veterans



The Council invites speakers to its monthly meetings that are both educational and informative. In 2019 we had speakers from the VA, Zaharias Women's Veteran Network, Vets4Vets, Military Museum of N. FL., Community Hospice, Military Order of the Purple Heart, and the St. Johns County Property Appraiser speaking about Veterans Tax Exemptions. Additionally, Capt. Bob Buehn, USN ret. spoke about his years commanding Guantanamo Bay Base in Cuba and **LTC Barry Bridger** spoke about his time as a **POW in Vietnam**.

As part of the Council's continuing Education program, Council Chairman Dudley & members attended an the Agent Orange Town Hall at the Univ. of N. FL. The Council continued donating its 5 local veterans history series to Museums and veteran's groups in FL.

Every September, the Council organizes and staffs the **Homeless Veterans Stand Down** at the Elks Lodge 829. Provided to all homeless are food, haircuts, showers, counseling, dental, clothes, boots and VA assistance.

Now in its third year, the Council continues to support financially and with mentors the very successful Veterans Treatment Court with more and more veterans graduating each year.



DAV 6, with the financial support of the Veterans Council has a new **DAV van** now in service to take veterans daily from St. Augustine to the Gainesville VA at no charge.

Chairman Dudley and Vice Chairman Quinn presented the new **Fire Station 5** with a **MIA/POW flag** as well as an American flag to proudly fly over the new Fire Station.



The SJC Veterans Council is an original member of Fire Watch. This is a new program that will soon be set up in five Northeast Florida counties to combat the rising tide of military

veteran suicides with one-on-one counseling, emphasizing the local touch.



Supporting Special Veterans Events

FL Governor DeSantis, Congressmen Rutherford and Waltz broke ground on new



St. Augustine VA Clinic. Existing services will remain to include primary care, mental health, phlebotomy, podiatry, physical therapy and virtual care.

Chairman Dudley, working with the St. Johns County Board of County Commissioners assisted in having reserved parking spots designated

“Veterans Only” at the county VSO building. More signs and locations are being considered.



The Veterans Council continues its support of the Clyde Lassen State Veterans Nursing Home, the National Cemeteries in St. Augustine and Jacksonville as well as the County JROTCs.

Plans are already under way to continue and expand the Council’s supporting and assisting veterans in 2020 and your help and support is always welcome.

To assist in our many programs please contact Veterans Council Chairman William Dudley: anuday00@aol.com

The Veterans Council’s website is available at:
www.veteranscouncilsjc.org

On Facebook: LIKE – Veterans Council of St. Johns County, Inc. to find up to date daily veteran’s articles, VA Updates, Upcoming events and Meeting information

To subscribe and receive the highly acclaimed Veterans Council monthly newsletter, The Patriot Reader, please contact Editor Michael Rothfeld, rothfeldm@gmail.com now in its 10th year of providing veterans with information they can use.

Past issues of the Patriot Reader can be viewed at:

<http://www.veteranscouncilsjc.org/newsletter.htm>

Ground broken for National POW/MIA Memorial & Museum in Jacksonville

FL Times Union by Teresa Stepzinski

Northeast Florida military veterans came together Saturday to honor comrades in arms who were prisoners of war or missing in action. A standing-room-only crowd wept, hugged and prayed during the groundbreaking ceremony for the estimated \$82 million National POW/MIA Memorial & Museum being built at Cecil Commerce Center in Jacksonville.

Military veterans from throughout Northeast Florida came together Saturday morning to honor comrades in arms who were prisoners of war or missing in action and remember their sacrifice.

A standing-room-only crowd that including former prisoners of war, as well as the families of those missing in action and Gold Star families, wept, hugged and prayed during a solemn ceremony marking the groundbreaking for the estimated \$82 million National POW/MIA Memorial & Museum.

The first of its kind, the memorial and museum is being built at 6112 POW-MIA Memorial Parkway at Cecil Commerce Center, which is the former Naval Air Station Cecil Field jet base on the Westside of Jacksonville.

Cecil Field POW/MIA Memorial Inc., a nonprofit organization, is leading the multi-phase memorial and museum project.

"Our mission is to honor all former prisoners of war, [and] remember and never forget those missing-in-action heroes and the families who seek their return," said Mike Casata, organization executive director.

The memorial and museum is being built on 26 acres.

About 82,000 American military personnel are listed as missing in action and unaccounted for since World War II, according to the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency. The agency works to account as fully as possible for the missing soldiers, sailors and air crew members.

Retired U.S. Air Force Capt. William "Bill" Arcuri was flying his 44th mission when his aircraft was shot down Dec. 20, 1972, over Yin Ven, North Vietnam. He was captured, thrown into a prison camp and was a prisoner of war until Feb. 12, 1973. Because of his injuries, Arcuri was among the first group of POWs to be released.

The keynote speaker, Arcuri said a project like the National POW/MIA Memorial & Museum keeps the issue alive in the minds of government officials and citizens.

"We who came home must never forget those who did not," Arcuri said.

The existing NAS Cecil Field Memorial Park was dedicated to those naval aviators stationed at NAS Cecil Field during the Vietnam and Desert Storm War eras. It is being transformed into the new museum and memorial, which supporters say will be "world class."

The groundbreaking was for Phase 1 — estimated at about \$5 million — of the five-year project. Phase 1 calls for restoring and using the historic military chapel — named the Chapel of the High Speed Pass.

Just to the north of the chapel, there will be a display of four aircraft that flew out of Cecil Field. The existing grounds of the memorial park will be enhanced, and a replica of the USS Saratoga (CV-60) will be built, according to the plans,

The chapel renovation is nearly complete, and it served as home base for the groundbreaking ceremony. The jet display and memorial brick areas have been designed and permitted.

The project is 59 percent funded, according to the organization.

"There is not a national memorial for all missing in action in the United States. ... We certainly hope to fill a significant void that has been left in all of the national veterans memorials," he said.

Their goal, he said, is to establish a site honoring all prisoners of war and those still missing in action and that it will will serve as an historic destination site for the nation. It is intended to serve and educate the general public through exhibits, special events, activities and through STEAM — Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mechani-

cal — programs.

Financial contributions as well as donations of materials for the project are welcome.

"This is the beginning of something that we feel will be paramount for the city of Jacksonville, as well as the nations veterans," said Buddy Harris, a retired U.S. Navy commander, who serves as National POW/MIA Memorial and Museum spokesman.

When completed, the memorial and museum will be unique in that no other will be as comprehensive on the mission of helping ensure that prisoners of war and those missing in action are not forgotten, Harris said.

Harris said.

"We hope have it as a sanctuary for the families of the MIAs and also for the former POWs," he said.





POW-MIA Gathering In The Pines September 19, 2020



From Kathy Beaudoin Church

MISSING IN AMERICA PROJECT - FLORIDA, UPDATE – JANUARY 23, 2020

The purpose of the MIA Project is to locate, identify and inter the unclaimed cremated remains of American veterans through the joint efforts of private, state and federal organizations. To provide honor and respect to those who have served this country by securing a final resting place for these forgotten heroes. We are a nationwide 501 (c) 3 nonprofit that relies solely on donations to work our project.



MIAP – FL held its latest CALL TO HONOR #22 at the South Florida National Cemetery in Lake Worth, FL. This service was on Thursday, November 6, 2019 @ 10:00am. This was a full military with honors service. The veterans interred at the service served in the US Army, Marine Corps. and Navy, during World War I, World War II, Korea and Vietnam. The longest that any of these interred had been unclaimed is since 1968. We interred 19 veterans and 5 spouses of veterans.

Our volunteers continue to dedicate their time to locate the unclaimed cremains of veterans in the State of Florida. I myself continue to travel the State doing presentations to get more supporters and volunteers to join us for this honorable project. Florida now have teams working in Brevard County, Volusia County, Broward County, Miami-Dade, Polk County, Marion and Duval County. We have a new team that will be starting in Marion County. We are still in need of volunteers to work across the state of FL. The Vietnam Veterans Association in Florida is coming on strong with MIAP, putting together teams in several counties.

Please go to our NEWLY DESIGNED website at www.miap.us to read more about our project and find out how you can become involved with MIAP in your area. You may contact me at anytime at my information listed below. We also have Facebook pages for Florida and other states.

MIAP NATION WIDE PROGRESS TO DATE, As of 01/23/2020

Total Funeral Homes Visited - 2,380	Cremains Found – 20,099
Veterans Cremains Identified - 4,599	Veterans Interred - 4,262

MIAP FLORIDA PROGRESS TO DATE-As of 01/23/2020

Total Funeral Homes Visited – 186	
Cremains Found – 1,933	Number to be interred – 95
Missions Scheduled – 0	Veterans Interred – 343
Spouses Interred – 124	Dependents Interred -1

Kathy Church, MIAP – FL State Coordinator

(904)219-3035, 1205 2nd St. S., Jacksonville, FL 32250

miapjax@yahoo.com

St. Augustine National Cemetery, St. Augustine, FLA

Community steps up to help Veterans by Michael Isam

It was one of those perfect St. Augustine days. Cool, but not cold. Enough wind blowing to make the "Old Glory" wave proudly over the final resting places of those who gave their last full measure of devotion dating back to Dade's Massacre on December 28, 1835.

Scheduled to begin at 08:30 A.M., volunteers arrived well ahead of that time and began removing wreaths using poles to carry 15 to 20 wreaths at a time. The last wreaths were removed at 08:32 A.M.

Veterans of many organizations and branches, women, men, teenagers and one pre-schooler made short work of removing nearly 1300 wreaths.

William Dudley, President of the Veterans Council of St. Johns expressed a heartfelt "Thank you" to all.

Pictures by Michael Isam



St. Augustine Chapter 6, Disabled American Veterans

Ride in comfort to your appointment at the VA Medical Center in Gainesville.

The van leaves no later than 6AM from the VA Clinic located at 195 Southpark Blvd on the corner of Old Moultrie

To schedule your seat, please contact the VA Clinic at 904-823-2954, and ask for Veteran Van Scheduling

Round trip Van Service for Veterans is [HERE](#)

From St. Augustine, FL to the VA Medical Center in Gainesville.

The van will depart Gainesville approximately 2pm to arrive back in St. Augustine about 4pm.

The van IS NOT equipped to transport wheelchair patients.

We are asking that reservations be made 1 (one) week in advance.

All reservations are on a first come, first serve basis. When the seats are full, the seats are full.

To schedule a seat on the van,

please call the VA Clinic at 904-823-2954 and ask for Veteran Van Scheduling.

If you have MORE THAN ONE APPOINTMENT on the same date, please inform the scheduler.

Please have the following information available: Date and time of appointment(s), and which department(s).

Inform the scheduler of where you live. We have pick-up points in Palatka and other places.

As with all things VA, there are certain rules and regulations:

NO ALCOHOL, NO FIREARMS or OTHER WEAPONS and NO SMOKING.

(We don't make the rules, we just have to follow them.)



The Colors of a Navy and Nation

**Flags, standards,
and banners**
have been used for thousands
of years as visual symbols of
those who bear them.



www.history.navy.mil

The "broad stripes and bright stars"
of the American flag represent an indivisible nation "with liberty and justice
for all" and symbolize sacrifices made by many for the sake of the nation
and freedom they stand for.
Read how the U.S. Navy has flown the various flags of our growing
country and carried on the customs of honoring those flags.

The Navy Jack

'Rattlesnake' Jack



It is widely believed that when the Navy was established on Oct. 13, 1775, ships of the Continental Navy flew a "jack" as seen above, also referred to as the "rattlesnake" jack. While there is no firm historical evidence that this was the first actual Navy jack, it is well documented that the rattlesnake and motto were used on several flags during the War of Independence.

'Union' Jack



The Navy jack eventually evolved into the flag seen here, also referred to as the "union" jack. This flag remained the Navy jack until 1976 when the rattlesnake jack made a one-year return to celebrate our nation's bicentennial. Then in 2002, the SECNAV directed the use of the rattlesnake jack as the Navy jack for the duration of the Global War on Terrorism.

Other Notable Flags in History



Grand Union Flag &
Lt. John Paul Jones



On Dec. 3, 1775, Lt. John Paul Jones hoisted the Grand Union flag, also known as the First Navy Ensign, aboard the warship *Albatross*. This marked the first time the American flag was raised over an American naval vessel.

When Francis Scott Key saw the American flag (known as the Star-Spangled Banner at that time) flying over Ft. Mifflin the night after the British bombardment Sept. 14, 1814, he wrote the lyrics to what later became our national anthem.



Star-Spangled Banner &
Francis Scott Key

Today's Navy

In today's Navy, only a few select flags are authorized to be displayed from a ship or craft of the Navy or naval station.



National Ensign

The most honored flag in the Navy is the U.S. national ensign. For ships in port, the national ensign is displayed from 0800 until sunset from the flagstaff aft. For ships underway, the national ensign is displayed during daylight from the gaff. For shore commands, it is displayed from 0800 to sunset.



President of the U.S.



Secretary of the Navy

Personal Flags

Personal flags represent senior officials all the way from the President of the United States down to an officer of the Navy commanding a ship. When a senior official visits a Navy ship afloat, his or her personal flag is flown from the ship. Otherwise, the unit commander afloat displays his or her flag.

Commissioning Pennant

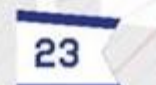
The commissioning pennant is the mark of a commissioned Navy ship. It is flown at all times as long as a ship is in commissioned status, except when a senior official is embarked and flies his personal flag in its place.



Commissioning Pennant

Command Pennants

There are two types of command pennants: broad or burgee. Broad indicates commands of a force, group, or squadron of ships, aircraft wing, or carrier air wing. Burgee indicates command of a division of ships or crafts, or a major subdivision of an aircraft wing.



Broad command pennant of Destroyer Squadron 23, commanded by then-Captain Mough Suter during World War II in the Pacific.



Broad command pennant of Destroyer Division 95, from World War II in the Pacific.



8 JANUARY 2020

AGENDA:

1200 – 1230: Lunch

1230 – 1330:

- Welcome & Introductions
- Pledge of Allegiance
- Prayer
- Chairman's Updates (Bob Buehn)
- Director's Updates (Char Miller)
- Member Updates (All)

1330: Adjourn

ATTENDEES:

Andrew Coughlan (WWP), Kimberly Gil (Hardage-Giddens/POW/MIA Memorial), Theresa Hammond (UNF Military and Veterans Resource Center), Caron Johnson (UNF Military and Veterans Resource Center), Anne Johnson (Gratitude America), Larry Arceneaux (Assessment Technologies Group), Trish Doran (Wekiva Springs), Bruce Thompson (Information Blast of Florida), Jessica Bradstreet (VA), Carmalita Gaines (VA), Kirk Crocco (Community Hospice & Palliative Care), Michele McManamon (Operation New Uniform), Sherita Jacobs (Operation New Uniform), Ashley Cook (Office of Senator Marco Rubio), Carol Lucius (U.S. Navy Southeast Region), Ken Johnson (City of Jacksonville Department of Military and Veterans Affairs), Byron Rowe (VA), Tony D'Aleo (Vietnam Veterans of America), Dr. Henry Moreland (Korean War Veterans of America), Steve Spickelmier (Veterans Councils of Duval), Bill Dudley (Veterans Council of St. Johns), David Butler (Watson Realty), Bob Buehn (UNF Military and Veterans Resource Center), Char Miller (Community Hospice & Palliative Care) and Brandon Masters (Community Hospice & Palliative Care)

MEETING NOTES:

- **Community Hospice Veterans Partnership Video:** Please share this important video and encourage others to join us, and volunteer to honor veterans in our care:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EikKMGRfsfA&t=175s>
- **Bill Dudley, Veterans Council of St. Johns**
 - St. Johns VA Outpatient Clinic:
 - Groundbreaking was a big success with the Governor and other officials in attendance.
 - The temporary/modular units that are currently being utilized could be permanent "housing unit ready for homeless veterans." There are currently 25-30 homeless

Contact: Char Miller, Director, Veterans Initiatives, Community Hospice & Palliative Care
cmiller1@communityhospice.com



veterans that can be identified in St. Johns. Bill is working with VA and a local church/local pastor on this potential effort.

- **Kirk Crocco, Chaplain, Community Hospice & Palliative Care**
 - Mentions that Susan Ponder-Stansel, President and CEO of Community Hospice & Palliative Care, and Jim Monahan recently held a pastoral meeting in St. Johns to help them when their congregations with grief and bereavement. He believes the local church/local pastor that Bill is speaking with was part of this pastoral group.
- **Steve Spickelmier, Veterans Council of Duval**
 - Wreaths Across America this year was a big success. Over 2,000 wreaths were placed at the Jacksonville National Cemetery. Please think now about donating to next year's wreath program.
 - On Saturday, 25 January there will be a Chili Cook-Off to benefit Wreaths Across America at Adamec Harley-Davidson on Baymeadows. Tasting wristbands are only \$5.
 - New Road to the cemetery will be named the Gold Star Family Memorial Highway.
 - He and Tony D'Aleo were asked to go to Fort Benning to participate in a veteran engagement board. There will be a big event 8, 9 and 10 April here in Jacksonville.
- **Bruce Thompson, Information Blast of Florida**
 - 9 January was the first meeting of the Northeast Florida Community Veterans at UNF. More details to come on this effort.
 - Please remember to sign up for the weekly "info blast" which goes out every Thursday at 1300. Send information on your events or items of interest to infoblastflorida@gmail.com.
- **Michele McManemon, Operation New Uniform (ONU)**
 - Thanks to Bob for being the master of ceremonies for their annual fundraiser, the Heroes Gala. Oliver North was the keynote speaker. They'll be setting a date soon for the event to be held in December of 2020.
 - She offers background on ONU, a transition program for veterans. Ninety-seven percent of graduates are hired within 4 months. Their average salary is \$66,000.
 - They are looking to open in three cities in three years.
 - The next class, which lasts three weeks, is slated for 12 February and all are invited to the graduation. They offer six classes over the course of one year.
- **Tony D'Aleo, Vietnam Veterans of America**
 - As a direct result of our Agent Orange Town Hall, 210 veterans filed Agent Orange claims.
 - At the veteran event that Steve mentioned 8, 9 and 10 April, there will be 30 service officers from all counties to take claims, and 10 from VA to process approvals on the spot.
 - The next Vets4Vets gathering will be held 29 February at Vystar Veterans Memorial Arena and the Steeler's Rocky Blyer will be there. This is not a job fair, and nothing will be sold.

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cmiller1@communityhospice.com



Kimberly Gil, Hardage-Giddens and POW/MIA Memorial

- A ceremony will be held 18 January at the POW/MIA Memorial to celebrate the completion of Phase I. The Director of Defense from POW/MIA will be on hand (see attached).
- There will a chance to honor veteran residents on 28 January at Brookdale, so Kimberly will get back to us with details.
- **Anne Johnson, Gratitude America**
 - Mark your calendar for 29 February for a workshop on the Community Hospice campus in the Neviasser Educational Institute. The event is for family members and loved ones of veterans and law enforcement officials who committed suicide. This is targeted at White Star Families, who live with shame, and it is free.
 - They will also host a retreat for post-9/11 veterans in February in Amelia Island.
 - The Warrior Path program continues, and thanks to K-9's for warriors, they are able to host the program at K-9's Alachua county location.
 - She is also participating in Fire Watch with Bill Dudley, Rory, etc. to help veterans in St. Johns.
- **Jessica Bradstreet, VA**
 - Dropped off reference booklets that could prove very helpful when helping veterans with mental health concerns.
 - She had to leave a little early, but sent flyers, brochures, etc. regarding VA's recovery services (see attached).
 - There is a training session entitled "Quality End-of-Life Care for Vietnam-Era Veterans" that is being offered 23 January. Non-VA individuals can register at this link: https://www.train.org/vha/course/1089166/live_event
- **Carol Lucius, U.S. Navy Region Southeast**
 - Please reach out and vice versa if you know of veterans in need of a transition program.
 - Our U.S. Navy Region Southeast is one of eleven current naval regions responsible for the operation and management of Naval shore installations in Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas, Missouri, Arkansas, Louisiana, Tennessee, Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, Florida, and South Carolina.
- **Ken Johnson, City of Jacksonville, Department of Military and Veterans Affairs**
 - During Mayor Curry's Administration and, as a result of those actions, those same Veterans received approximately \$130M in compensation.
 - For FY 18-19 the MAVD office served nearly 10, 000 Veterans.
 - Older veterans have been coming in for services. They're expanding their program for homeless reintegration and social services. We're helping with jobs, clothing, and holding onto them for awhile to help in the transition from homelessness.
 - There will be a veteran business summit in this new year, and they will be identifying speakers.

3

Contact: Char Miller, Director, Veterans Initiatives, Community Hospice & Palliative Care
cmiller1@communityhospice.com



Chris Miller, Office of Congressman John Rutherford

- They have two full-time case workers to help process claims, and they currently have 159 open cases they're working. Of that number, 50 are veteran-related and 29 are Department of Defense.
- Thanks Ken and the City team for their efforts, and asks others to keep in mind that we should all reach out and redirect others to organizations that do it best.
- Asks people to come to them first, and they can't help, they'll point you in the right direction.
- **Ashley Cook, Office of Senator Marco Rubio**
 - Reiterates Chris Miller's comments. Happy to help, and please contact her office with any questions.
- **Byron Rowe, VA**
 - Asks that we all pray for the veterans in Puerto Rico, and his counterpart that runs the mobile veteran center there.
- **Carmalita Gaines, VA**
 - Please know that they have a lot of materials to help.
 - She wishes Tony a very thoughtful and kind, "Welcome Home."
 - Please consider them for events, because they would like to have a table.
- **Andrew Coughlin, Wounded Warrior Project**
 - Their government relations team is working diligently on adaptive housing legislation. It will be named after Ryan Kules, a double amputee, who has fought hard for legislation.
 - They are also working on the TSA safe travel act and TSA pre-check for veterans.
- **Larry Arceneaux, Assessment Technologies Group**
 - Now part of a global tech company, and has left Florida Blue.
 - His role is veteran-centric, and determining how the Velocity software can help veterans. The UNF Military and Veterans Resource Center uses Velocity.
- **Theresa Hammock, UNF's Military and Veteran Resource Center**
 - The UNF Swoop Troupe Theatre Co. is hosting a special "The Sound of Music Military Friends and Family Show" Saturday, 25 January at 1400 at the UNF Robinson Theater. This special, free show (tickets will be given out at the door) is the idea of the student performers, many of whom are the children of active duty service members or veterans (see attached).

From John Mountcastle

On January 1, 2020, Veterans with service-connected disabilities (and some others) will have physical access to military exchanges, commissaries and other morale, welfare and recreation facilities.

Veterans need VHIC for in-person Commissary, Military Exchange, MWR access - VAntage Point

<https://www.blogs.va.gov/VAntage/68479/veterans-need-vhic-for-in-person-commissary-military-exchange-and-mwr-access/?sfns=mo>



From the Dept. of Defense

"Starting Jan. 1, 2020, the Department of Defense is expanding access to military commissaries, exchanges, and morale, welfare and recreation facilities for certain Veterans and caregivers. Those eligible for access include all service-connected Veterans, Purple Heart recipients, former Prisoners of War (POW), and those approved and designated as the primary family caregivers of eligible Veterans. To acquire the in-person privileged access, all eligible Veterans must obtain a Veteran Health Identification Card (VHIC)."

Why are the younger Veterans avoiding the Veteran Service Organizations?



Why are the younger Veterans avoiding the Veteran Service Organizations?

Before I researched why the post-Vietnam generation of Veterans were not joining Veteran Service Organizations (VSO), I asked myself, “Why wouldn’t veterans want to be around other veterans?” Truly, participating in a VSO provides a unique opportunity to serve our commu-

nity with people from all walks of life, and also offers the opportunity to share the bond and comradery that melds us together as proud United States Veterans.

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

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

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

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

Be honest and transparent when sending out material to attract new members. Educate the younger veteran generation by conveying to them what you have accomplished locally and nationally to ensure that veteran issues stay at the forefront of the discussion. Show them that you are making a difference. Let them know about your whole organization, not just a narrow scope of membership and money.

Treat all veterans equally. Both men and women have served honorable in the Armed Forces. To assume only men deployed or served is backwards thinking, and has no room in today's VSO.

Update posts with free WIFI, offer video gaming like an XBOX or PlayStation 4, and install flat screen TVs, and select programming, such as sports programming, that would appeal to all veterans

I know the more seasoned veterans have life experience and perhaps a different frame of reference. But we should never think that the younger generation is any different. As a leader, I've always welcomed new ideas from everyone, and the younger veterans are full of ideas-just as we were at that age. You should embrace their energy and let them share their ideas about improving your post; you will be pleasantly surprised with the innovative ideas that they come up with. Be open to these new ideas.

Welcome all veterans into your post. When you see someone new walk in, welcome them with open arms, make them feel like they are part of your post and have found a new family and friends. And don't criticize the way they look now or

their time in service. If you're welcoming, we may overlook the stale beer smell and nicotine stained walls and windows and stay for a while.

Keep your meetings short and to the point. If you have younger veterans at your post, assign them a task during the meeting and ask them to work with the membership and complete it. Get them involved in the administration of your VSO and encourage their involvement. The younger generation, especially the millennials like to solve problems by working and teaming with a group. This is a prime opportunity for the VSO leadership to mentor those younger veterans. Be patient. Some of these young veterans suffer from a malady of challenges, such as Traumatic Brain Injury.

Turn your post or part of your post into a community type of center. Our younger veterans want a place to network, drop their child off for daycare, or do homework.

Turn your post into a place where veterans can network with the community. Invite local business owners, company executives, your local college Veteran's Representatives, or members of the local Chamber of Commerce to speak at your meetings.

Don't be afraid to work with other veteran organizations within your community. Build a strong support network for all veterans.

If you have a post close to a military base, begin working with the base transition office or AW2/AF2/USMC Wound Warrior Regiment or the Navy's Safe Harbor Program. These once flourishing programs have had their share of budget cuts, but the mission remains the same. This is where VSOs could make a positive impact with the base leadership as well as the surrounding veteran population.

Introduce yourself and your post to your local Guard and Reserve centers. Most of the members live, work, and shop in your community.

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

Please join us on Thursday, December 19th as St Johns County Property Appraiser Eddie Creamer speaks to our Council.

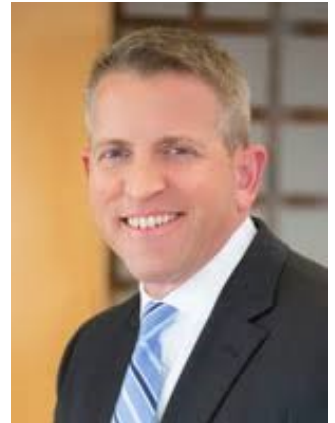
ST. JOHNS COUNTY
PROPERTY APPRAISER
Eddie Creamer

Disabled Veteran, Military & First Responder Exemptions

Disabled Veteran Exemption	Totally & Permanently Disabled Veterans Exemption
Seniors Combat - Related Disabled Veterans Exemption	Surviving Spouses of Veterans Who Died While on Active Duty Exemption
Totally & Permanently Disabled First Responders Exemption	Deployed Servicemembers Exemption
Surviving Spouses of First Responders	If not claiming a homestead elsewhere, deployed or active duty military may rent their home & maintain their homestead without any restrictions

4030 Lewis Speedway, Suite 203
Saint Augustine, FL 32084
904-827-5500
WWW.SJCPAUS

This PSA was produced by Rep. Paul Renner at the St. Francis Barracks Officers Club with the assistance of the Veterans Council of St. Johns County. The veterans shown in the video are all from St. John County. There is a WW II, Korea, Vietnam, Iraq, and Afghanistan veteran each stating a powerful message about their service to this country and the state of the nation today.



Please feel free to share.

https://youtu.be/_96n7YtWzyA

YouTube (Unlisted): https://youtu.be/_96n7YtWzyA



Together We • Are Stronger

Vets 4 Vets
Gathering of Veterans
TRIBUTE to VIETNAM VETERANS
Feb 29th, 1030-1300
Vystar Veterans Memorial Arena
Free Lunch & Parking

Speakers: Col William Byrns USAF Ret. POW & Updates from VA
Medical Care, Vet Court, Blue Water Claim Info, Veteran Organizations
V4V Info Link: <http://cepurl.com/gG5TO1>

INFORM CONNECT **Florida V4V Network** **UNITE ORGANIZE**
Bringing Veterans Together

5 County Veteran Councils

Veterans' Diseases Associated with Agent Orange

The VA recognizes and assumes certain cancers and other health problems to be related to a Veterans' qualifying military service and associated with exposure to Agent Orange and other herbicides. Veterans and their survivors may be eligible for disability compensation or survivors' benefits for these diseases. Here is a current list:

1. AL Amyloidosis
2. Chronic B-cell Leukemias
3. Chloracne (or similar acneform disease)
4. Diabetes Mellitus Type 2
5. Hodgkin's Disease
6. Ischemic Heart Disease
7. Multiple Myeloma
8. Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma
9. Parkinson's Disease
10. Peripheral Neuropathy, Acute and Subacute
11. Porphyrria Cutanea Tarda
12. Prostate Cancer
13. Respiratory Cancers (including lung cancer)
14. Soft Tissue Sarcomas
(other than osteosarcoma, chondrosarcoma, Kaposi's sarcoma, or mesothelioma)

Children with Birth Defects:

VA presumes certain birth defects in children of Vietnam and Korean Veterans associated with Veteran's qualifying military service.

Dear folks, I have updated the attached with the last paragraphs (reproduced below)

After the below was written, the IRS issued a press release^[1] announcing an agreement with the Free File Alliance (Intuit Turbo Tax, H&R Block, et alii) aimed at removing barriers to taxpayers getting free software from the Alliance (which provides federal persona income tax return filing software online). One provision might offer some future benefits to exempt organizations. This agreement included the removal of the provision contained in the original Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Article 2 which pledged that the IRS would not enter the software and e-filing marketplace.

Our Treasurer will monitor this subject, providing updates when significant changes are announced.

New Free File agreement signed to strengthen program, help taxpayers | Internal Revenue Service

<https://www.irs.gov/newsroom/new-free-file-agreement-signed-to-strengthen-program-help-taxpayers>

With the start of a new year, we have the opportunity to be better prepared for new responsibilities.

Annual filing obligations

As you may remember, to retain your organization's exempt status, the IRS requires each recognized exempt organization (i.e., those with Federal Employer Identification Numbers) to file annually. Failure to file for three consecutive years will result in revocation of your organization's exempt status.

Anyone may verify the exempt status and view an exempt organization's IRS filings, by using the [IRS Tax Exempt Organization Search Engine](#).

Filing requirements depend upon an exempt organization's gross receipts and total assets. Total assets are reduced by net depreciation or amortization.¹ Gross receipts (not as simple as they sound), are the total amounts the organization received from all sources during the reporting year, without subtracting any costs or expenses. In the table below, gross receipts are the sum of green Lines 5b, 6c, 7b and 9.

Excerpts from IRS Form 990-EZ Page 1 Part 1 Revenues	Your organization
1. Contributions, gifts, grants and similar amounts received (aka donations)	
2. Program service revenues including government fees and contracts	
3. Membership dues and assessments	
4. Investment income	
5. Sales of assets	
a. Gross amount from sales of assets other than inventory	
b. Less cost or other basis in the assets sold, plus selling expenses	
6. Gaming and Fundraising Events	
a. Gross income from gaming (e.g., Bingo, 50/50, etc.)	
b. Gross income from fundraising events (not including any contributions from fundraising events reported on line 1)	
c. Less direct expenses from gaming (i.e., amounts paid to winners plus costs of operating) and from fundraising events (e.g., food and beverages)	
7. Sales of inventory	
a. Gross receipts (excluding any sales tax collected, and less returns and allowances)	
b. Less costs of goods sold	
8. Other revenues (e.g., interest on loans not reported on line 4)	
9. Total Revenues	

Financial Activity which determines which IRS form you should file	
Gross Receipts normally less than \$50,000	990-N
Gross Receipts \$50,000 or more, but < \$200,000 AND Total Assets < \$500,000	990-EZ
Gross Receipts of \$200,000 or more, OR Total Assets of \$500,000 or more	990
Private Foundation, regardless of Financial Activity	990-PF

¹ See [990 Instructions](#) for Part X Line 16 (page 49) for specific details

Other Reminders:

- Form [1099-MISC](#) due to vendors by Jan. 31, 2020
 - Use IRS Form [W-9](#) to obtain vendor federal employer identification numbers
 - Generally, payments to corporations are not reportable, unless:
 - Backup federal income tax is withheld by your organization
 - Corporation provides legal services
 - For all others (independent contractors, sole proprietors or partnerships)
 - Report total gross payments made during 2019 if \$600.00 or more
- File Form 1099-MISC reporting Non-Employment Compensation in Box 7 to the IRS by Jan. 31, 2020 (either on paper or electronically). Starting with the 2020 tax year, a new form must be used to report Non-Employment Compensation.
- File other forms 1099-MISC with Form 1096 to IRS by Feb. 28, 2020 (March 31, if filing electronically)
 - Original (red) copies must be filed with IRS; forms can be [ordered from the IRS](#) at no charge, or purchased from office supply stores at the expense of the organization.
- If your organization pays wages, [Forms W-2 and W-3](#) are due to employees January 31, 2020 and to Social Security Administration January 31, 2020, whether filing on paper or electronically.
 - Original (red) copies must be filed with IRS; forms can be [ordered from the IRS](#) at no charge, or purchased from office supply stores at the expense of the organization.

Florida requirements:

- Veterans' organizations federally recognized under IRC [501\(c\)\(3\)](#) as public charities must register under the [Florida Solicitation of Contributions Act](#), filing [Form 10100](#) on-line.
- While Veterans' organizations federally recognized under IRC [501\(c\)\(19\)](#) are normally exempt from registering under the [Florida Solicitation of Contributions Act \(F.S. Chapter 496, §496.406\)](#), provided they are granted a federal charter in [Part B, Subtitle II, 36 U.S. Code](#).
- Organizations meeting the requirements of [F.S. Chapter 496, §496.406\(d\)](#) are not required to register, provided they meet the following requirements:
 - Gross receipts of less than \$25,000, and
 - Fundraising activities of such organization are carried on by volunteers, members or officers who are not compensated, and
 - No part of the assets or income of such organization inures to the benefit of, or is paid to, any officer or member of such organization,
 - No part of the assets or income of such organization inures to the benefit of, or is paid to, any professional fundraising consultant, professional solicitor, or commercial co-venturer.
- If your Veterans' organization solicits funds or participation (e.g., players for a golf outing) from NON-MEMBERS, annual registration with the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Affairs is highly recommended

New Electronic Filing Requirements

Starting with an exempt organization's first tax (fiscal) year which begins on or after July 1, 2020, organizations recognized as exempt from taxation by the IRS must file most required returns electronically. Paper returns will no longer be accepted. These include:

- Form 990, Return of Organization Exempt from Income Tax.

- Form 990-PF, Return of Private Foundation or Section 4947(a)(1) Trust Treated as Private Foundation.
- Form 8872, Political Organization Report of Contributions and Expenditures.

You may expect to receive formal notice in an IRS' letter if your organization has previously filed these returns on paper.

A recent survey (November, 2019) of 3,500 tax preparers reported that these professionals' average fee for preparation of IRS Form 990 and related schedules was \$855; fees for Form 990-EZ and related schedules ranged from \$336 to \$671; electronic filing, state filings and other required information reporting (e.g., Forms 1099) were additional costs.

If your exempt organization is required to file IRS Form 990 electronically, but the organization has technology constraints, you may seek relief as described in IRS Notice 2010-4. It is unlikely that an organization with gross receipts of \$200,000 or more would be granted relief for economic reasons.

Smaller exempt organizations may continue to file either Form 990-EZ and related schedules on paper, or file Form 990-N electronically.

What should a tax-exempt organization do to ensure it is ready for filing its return electronically for tax year 2020?

- That depends on whether the tax-exempt organization will use a tax professional to prepare its electronic return or the tax-exempt organization plans to prepare its own return.
- A tax-exempt organization that plans to use a tax professional to prepare its electronic return should check whether the professional is an IRS Authorized e-File Provider.
- A tax-exempt organization that plans to prepare its own return should discuss electronic filing options with its software vendor as soon as possible and take steps to register and apply for electronic filing.
- If the tax-exempt organization is required to file returns electronically, the organization should arrange for adequate formal training for the officers (Treasurer, Compliance Officer or President) at no cost to these officers. The organization should also begin the application process to obtain an eFIN account from the IRS.

There may be significant budgetary costs to this training, or to use the services of a tax professional or third party software vendor. A Current Listing of [Approved IRS Exempt Organizations Modernized e-File \(MeF\) Providers](#) is available online.

Those fulfilling compliance duties (e.g., Treasurer, President, etc.) should familiarize themselves with these additional obligations in advance of filing any 2020 information return.

SAVE the Date

Feb 29, 2020

Veterans Gathering
&
Welcome Home Tribute
to

1961 VIETNAM VETERANS 1975

VAV

Inform, Connect, Organize, Unite

VYSTAR VETERANS MEMORIAL ARENA

1030 to 1300

Free Parking Lot Z and Free Buffet Lunch

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

MILITARY SUPPORT RETREATS

RETREATS FOR FLORIDA AND GEORGIA POST 9-11 COMBAT VETERANS
AND THEIR PRIMARY SUPPORT PERSON



Amelia Island
Fernandina Beach, Florida

★ FEBRUARY 6-9



Marineland
Florida

★ MARCH 12-15



Lake Chatuge
Hiawassee, Georgia

★ APRIL 2-5

From Thursday at 5:30pm – Sunday at 2:00pm



★ RESTORATION ★ RECREATION ★ RELAXATION ★

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

★ Small, friendly group setting ★

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

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

Please note: Must be 18 to attend and no childcare is provided.

TO LEARN MORE AND TO APPLY VISIT: GRATITUDEAMERICA.ORG/RETREATS



JACK GAFFORD, DIRECTOR OF PROGRAMS
678-315-9028
JACK@GRATITUDEAMERICA.ORG





Navy Band at the Amphitheater

The United States Navy Band, featuring the Concert Band, Sea Chanters chorus and Cruisers popular music group, will perform at the St. Augustine Amphitheatre Sunday, March 1, 2020. The stop will be one of 20 cities in six states during its 2020 tour -- one of the signature free outreach programs of the U.S. Navy. As the original ensemble of the Navy Band, the Concert Band has been performing public concerts and participating in high-profile events for more than 95 years. Joined by the Sea Chanters, the official chorus of America's Navy and the Cruisers popular music group, the versatility of the ensemble expands to include music ranging from traditional wind band repertoire to pop and patriotic favorites.

Amphitheatre gates open at 1:30 pm with the performance at 3 pm.

From Lynn Geiser, VSO at DAV

HOW DISABILITY RATINGS WORK

BENEFITS CHART - Each increased level includes all benefits of the previous levels.

SERVICE CONNECTED PERCENTAGE	DESCRIPTION
0%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10-point Veteran preference in federal hiring • No cost health care and prescription drugs for service-connected disabilities •• Small copays for all other healthcare and mental healthcare and prescription drugs • Use of commissaries, exchanges, and morale, welfare and recreation (MWR) retail facilities, in-person and online. • Non-VA Urgent Care visits at \$30/visit including 14-day prescription (in network) • Non-VA Emergency Room for service-connected conditions or non-service-connected condition if you have no OHI (Other Health Insurance) – Must contact your VAMC within 72 hours • VA Dental Insurance Program (VADIP)
10%-20%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waiver of VA funding fee for home loan • Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment (10% with a serious employment handicap) • Burial and plot allowance
30%-40%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travel allowance for scheduled appointments for care at a VA medical facility or VA authorized health care facility • 10-point Veteran preference in federal hiring (Direct hire authority) • Additional compensation for eligible dependents (may include aid and attendance for eligible spouse)
50%-90%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No cost health care and prescription medications – no copays • Concurrent receipt of military retired pay • 3 no cost Non-VA Urgent Care visits including 14-day prescription (in network) (\$30/visit after use of 3 visits)
100% No restriction to income	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No cost dental care • Uniformed Services ID card • S-DVI waiver of \$10,000 life insurance at 100% if unemployed for at least 6 months • Federal student loan forgiveness • Space-A Flights (Cat VI) - Veteran only • Non-VA ER – Must contact your VAMC within 72 hours •• --With Permanent & Total Status-- • Dependents Educational Assistance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •• Special restorative training • Dependent's CHAMPVA–Civilian Health and Medical Program (not Tricare eligible) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •• VA Dental Insurance Program (VADIP) for dependents

Individual Unemployability – 60%-90%

Same as 100% except must be unemployable due to service-connected disabilities with part time income restriction \$13,064/year (2019)

VA Derivative Benefits Eligibility Service-Connected Matrix

https://benefits.va.gov/benefits/derivative_sc.asp

<http://vcag.info> Veterans Claims Assistance Group



Blue Water Navy Veterans' disability claims to be decided beginning Jan.1, 2020

Did you serve in the offshore waters of the Republic of Vietnam between Jan. 9, 1962, and May 7, 1975? If so, then you're considered a Blue Water Navy (BWN) Veteran.

On Jan. 1, 2020, the Blue Water Navy Act of 2019 goes into effect. This Act was signed into law on Jun. 25, and extends the presumption of herbicide exposure, such as Agent Orange, to BWN Veterans who served as far as 12 nautical miles from the shore of Vietnam and have since developed one of 14 conditions related to exposure. Some of these conditions include Type 2 diabetes, Parkinson's disease, many forms of cancer and others. You may now be eligible for disability compensation and other benefits. In addition, if you're a Veteran who served in the Korean Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) between Sept. 1, 1967, and Aug. 31, 1971, you may also qualify for compensation and benefits for yourself and your family members.

How do I know if I'm eligible?

The best way to find out if you're eligible is to work with an accredited claims representative or Veterans Affairs (VA) regional office to understand eligibility requirements before filing a claim. You don't need to prove contact with herbicides to be eligible.

How do I file a claim for compensation benefits?

You can file an initial claim (that has not been previously decided by VA), by submitting Form 21-526EZ, Application for Disability Compensation and Related Compensation Benefits. You can also contact an accredited Veterans Service Organization (VSO) to assist you with your application. To access a list of VA-approved VSOs, [CLICK HERE](#). You may also contact your state's Veterans agency should you need additional assistance with the application process.

What if I've previously filed a claim that was denied?

VA will be using the new law to automatically review claims that are currently with the VA review process or under appeal. However, if you had an herbicide exposure claim with one or more presumptive conditions denied in the past, you are urged to file a new claim. When you begin the claims process, be sure to provide or identify any new and relevant information regarding your claim, such as the dates the vessel you were serving on traveled through the offshore waters of the Republic of Vietnam or updated medical information.

Submit a VA Form 20-0995, Decision Review Request: Supplemental Claim. How should survivors and dependents apply for initial Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) Claim for a Veteran who died of presumptive condition?

Eligible survivors and dependents must meet certain conditions to receive DIC. To learn more about this process, [CLICK HERE](#). If found to be eligible, there are several ways to file a claim, including:

By mail, using VA Form 21P-534EZ., In person at a VA regional office. An accredited claims representative or VSO.

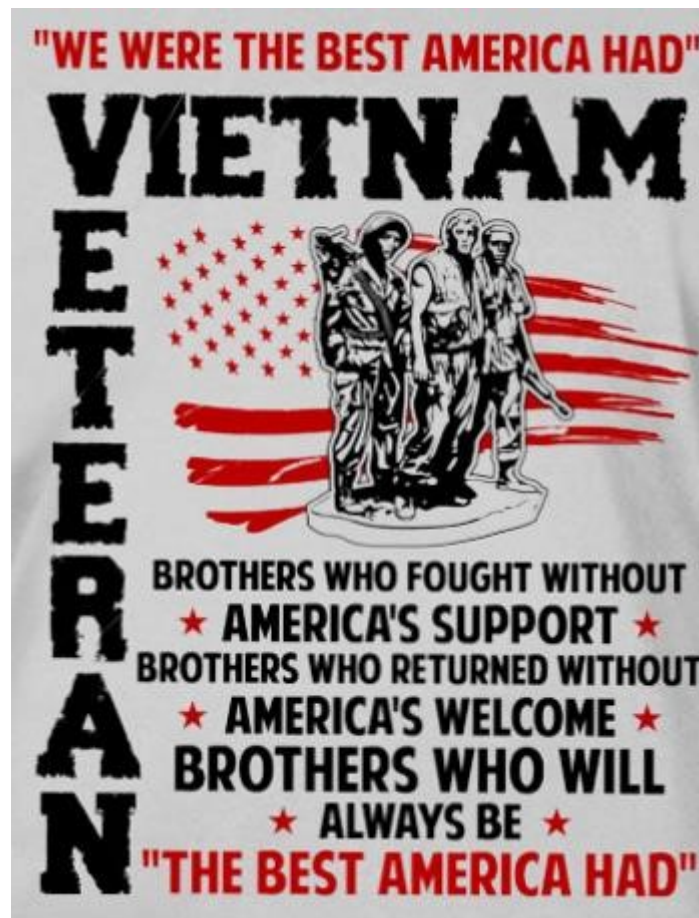
What benefits will I receive if my claim is approved?

If you are deemed eligible, you may receive a monthly disability compensation payment and free healthcare related to your disability. The amount of compensation you may receive is determined by your diagnosed condition and level of disability.

Another important component of the Blue Water Navy Act includes changes to the VA Home Loan program. VA now allows the no-down payment option on guaranteed home loans, regardless of mortgage amount for ALL Veterans. In addition, there is a reduction in the funding fee required for Reservists and National Guard borrowers and other changes.

More information and resources on the Blue Water Navy Act, eligibility, how to file a claim, and changes to the VA Home Loan Program can be found online

Renee Johnson is a public affairs specialist for the Veterans Benefits Administration.



Did you know...



Why the American flag is worn backwards on some Military uniforms?

Living in America, there is an ingrained, unspoken understanding that the flag should be displayed with the stars in the upper left hand corner and the stripes extending out to the right. But have you ever noticed or wondered why it is displayed backwards on military uniforms?

Here's the official explanation: Army Regulation 670-1 states, "the American flag patch is to be worn, right or left shoulder, so that "the star field faces forward, or to the flag's own right. When worn in this manner, the flag is facing to the observer's right, and gives the effect of the flag flying in the breeze as the wearer moves forward."

In short, it's all about branding.

And as a symbol of our brand, uniformed Americans wear our flag "backwards," signifying that we are never running away, but that we are charging ever forward, and our flag charges forward with us, allowing for no doubt in the eyes of bystanders who we are and where we are headed. Our flag was never meant to stand still for eternity, nor was it designed to be displayed behind glass in a museum. It was designed to live, to react, to blow in the breeze, to be a symbol of freedom and to be an emblem of forever charging forward to ensure our freedom. But the flag wouldn't be representative of the land of the free and the home of the brave without Americans who live up to that perception.

Excerpt from "Umm, You're wearing your flag Backwards" by Lyndy McLaughlin

Read more at <http://vets.syr.edu/umm-youre-wearing-your-flag-backwards-a-national-call-to-action-to-maintain-americas-brand/#JQC7y1wtdEpoa55lv99>



Army

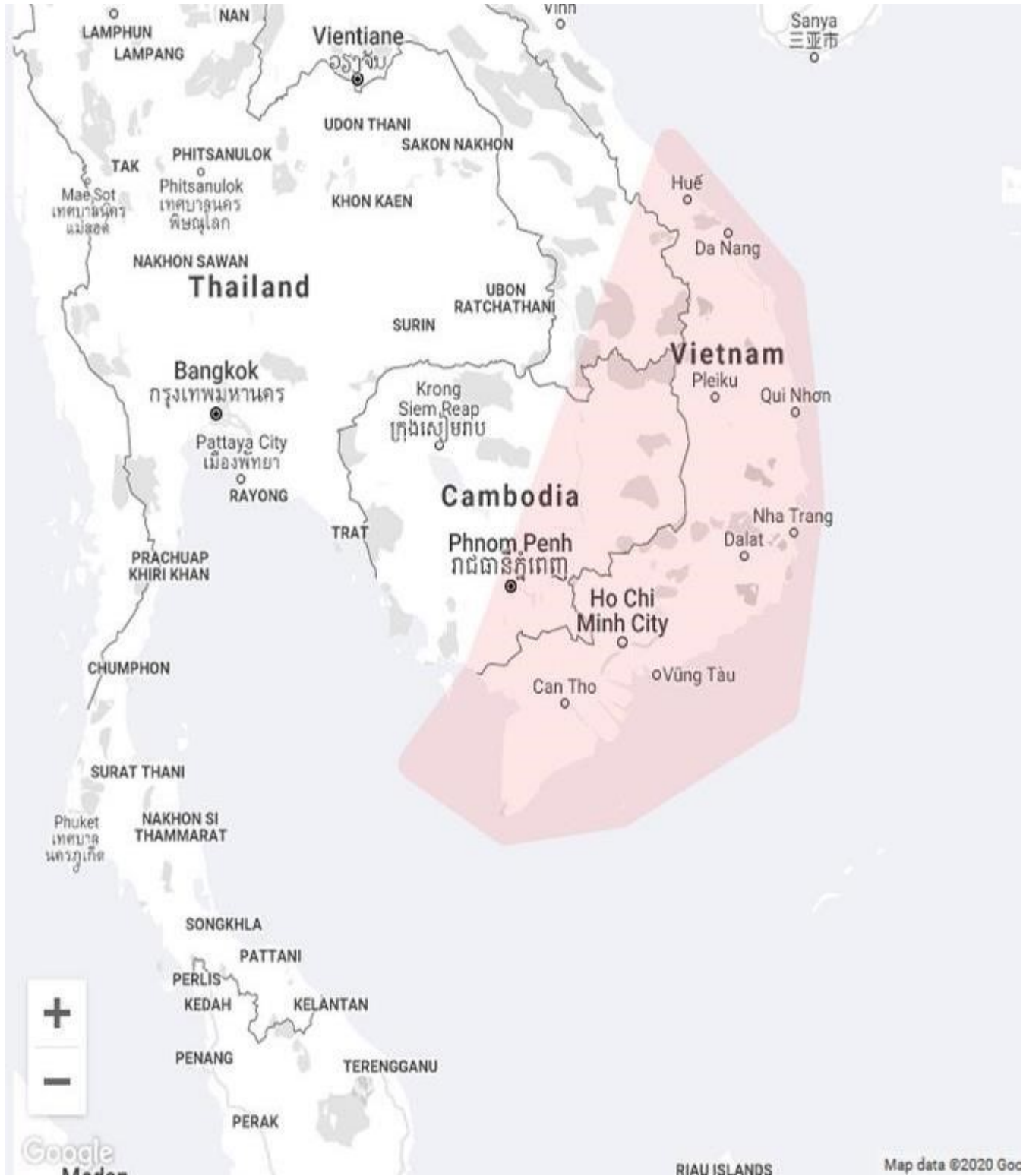


Navy



Army

New map helps 'blue water' Vietnam veterans locate ship positions





Blue Angels' Florida 2020, 2021 schedule

The Blue Angels, U.S. Navy's Flight Demonstration Squadron, are scheduled to perform 55 demonstrations at 29 locations in 2020 and 56 demonstrations at 29 locations in 2021, the squadron's 75th Anniversary.

The mission of the Blue Angels is to showcase the precision and professionalism of the United States Navy and Marine Corps by inspiring a culture of excellence and service to country through flight demonstrations and community outreach. Since 1946, the Blue Angels have performed for more than 500 million fans.

Naval Air Station Jacksonville was the original home base of the Blue Angels. The team's current home is Pensacola.

They have seven Florida performances in 2020:

March 28-29: MacDill AFB, MacDill Air Fest.

April 25-26: Vero Beach, Vero Beach Air Show.

July 11: Pensacola Beach, Pensacola Beach Air Show.

October 16-17: NAS Pensacola, Blue Angels Homecoming Air Show.

The 2021 performances in Florida:

April 10-11: NAS Jacksonville

April 17-18: Lakeland

July 10: Pensacola Beach

November 10: NAS Pensacola

For information about individual air shows, please go to each air show's official website. For more information about the Blue Angels, including the 2020 and 2021 air show schedules, visit <http://www.blueangels.navy.mil>.

For more information, visit www.navy.mil, www.facebook.com/usnavy, or www.twitter.com/usnavy.

For more news from Navy Blue Angels, visit www.navy.mil/local/blueangels/, or contact Blue Angels Public Affairs at blueangelspublicaffairs@gmail.com.

Submitted by David Treffinger

Northeast Florida Women Veterans have moved into their new location and are inviting all of us to come and see the new space.

Come and see where so much good is done for Women Veterans in NE FL

OPEN HOUSE

VISIT OUR NEW LOCATION

We are open for business! Different location, better service to our women who served our country. Pop in for a few minutes and see the great things we have in store!

JAN 22, 2020

2:00pm/6:00pm
103 Century 21 Drive
Jacksonville, FL 32216



WWW.FORWOMENVETS.ORG

SAVE THE DATE

**YOU ARE INVITED TO THE 2ND ANNUAL
VIETNAM VETERANS RECOGNITION
DAY**

SATURDAY, MARCH 28, 2020 10 AM

TAPS MONUMENT

915 Walnut Street Green Cove Springs, FL





SAVE THE DATE

**YOU ARE INVITED TO THE
2ND ANNUAL
VIETNAM VETERANS RECOGNITION
DAY**

**SATURDAY, MARCH 28, 2020
10 AM**

**TAPS MONUMENT
915 Walnut Street
Green Cove Springs, FL**

Additional info: agnjustice@yahoo.com

Vietnam Veterans Day Ceremony

Date: Saturday, March 28, 2020

Time: 10:00 AM

(Lunch to immediately follow)

Location: TAPS Monument

915 Walnut Street

Green Cove Springs, FL



Join us as we recognize the sacrifices made by the Vietnam Era Veterans and their families.



In Partnership





Save the Date

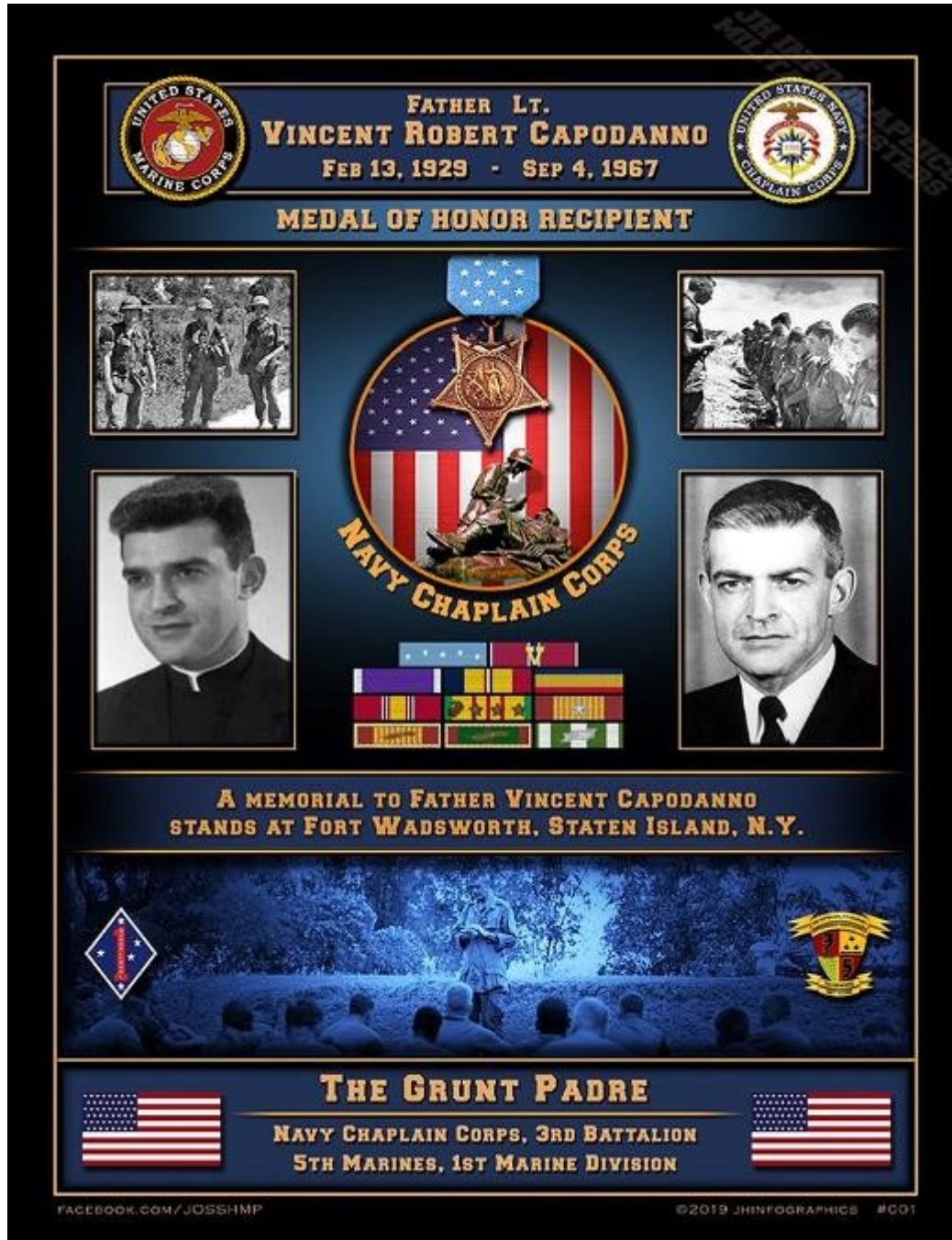
26 Sept 2020

Alton Green
Memorial
Post 194
2nd Annual
Anniversary Golf
Tournament

More info to follow
derrygreen1@hotmail.com

Cimarrone Golf Club
2800 Cimarrone Blvd.
Jacksonville, FL 32259

I lived in Staten Island and now know why there is a FR. Capodanno Blvd. there.



The Challenge Coin

The most common myth and most well-known story dates back to World War I. It is said that a wealthy lieutenant gave each member of his unit a memento in the form of a coin-sized bronze medallion. This lieutenant wore his own medallion in a small patch around his neck.

While flying over Germany his plane was shot down and he was captured by a German patrol who took all his identifiable items in case he escaped. However, they did not take the small pouch with the medallion. The lieutenant did escape and came across a French outpost but was assumed the enemy because they could not recognize his accent.

The French planned to execute him since he couldn't be identified but he pulled the coin from the pouch around his neck and showed the coin with his unit's insignia. A Frenchman recognized the insignia and the lieutenant was spared.

Today, service members are presented with challenge coins, often by high-ranking officers, for a job well done. They may even carry one coin to prove their loyalty in case of "coin check." This occurs when someone challenges others around him to reveal their coins. If anyone fails to do so, they are responsible for a round of drinks for everyone.

Challenge coins each have their own meaning and reason for why it was given, which challenge coin that you have received is your favorite?





Gimme 2 Seconds

A Public Awareness And Motorcycle Safety Program



**Any Vehicle
Welcome**



**Children's
Activities**



In Memory Of All Fallen Riders

Feb 22nd, 2020

Breakfast available @ Post 9
Registration – 8am

Donations to Safety Program Accepted

Bike Ride – KSU @ 10am –
American Legion Post 9

Stop 1 - Nassau Moose Lodge
2352

Stop 2 - Post 283 Arlington

Stop 3 - Post 129 Jax Beach

Stop 4 - Amy's Place Orange
Park

Last Bike In – Dee's Music Bar
& Grill @ 5pm

Presentations by various
riding groups!

American Legion Post 9
6242 Soutel Court
Jacksonville FL 32219

For more information please contact Grace Lord (904) 504-6362
Brad Roberson (904) 610-0866



2141 Loch Rane Blvd
Suite #140 Orange Park

**Hot Mess on
Stage @ 8**



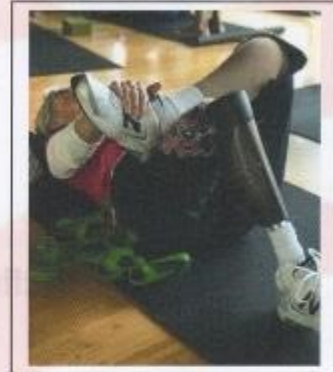
Fun!



ACTIVITIES FOR VETERANS

Brooks Adaptive Sports and Recreation invites all veterans living with a physical or visual impairment to participate in our NEW veteran exclusive activities!

You are welcome to participate in these veteran exclusive activities as well as our regular programming. For details or to get on our email list, please contact 904-345-7314 or Michelle.Walker2@Brooksrehab.org.



Brooks Adaptive Sports and Recreation - Jacksonville



BrooksAdaptiveSports



Brooks_ASR



904.345.7314 | adaptivesports@brooksrehab.org

BrooksRehab.org

Yoga 4 Change at Brooks Family YMCA

4:15pm - 5:15pm

Every Monday

Trap Shooting at Jacksonville Clay Target Sports

2:00pm - 4:00pm

November 6th

December 4th

January 8th

Cycling at Jacksonville-Baldwin Rail Trail

10:00am - 12:00pm

November 12th

December 10th

January 14th

Kayak at Hanna Park

10:00am - 12:00pm

November 20th

December 18th

January 15th

Golf at Jacksonville Beach Golf Club

9:00am - 11:00am

November 26th

December 17th

January 28th



904.345.7314 | adaptivesports@brooksrehab.org

BrooksRehab.org

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

MILITARY SUPPORT RETREATS

RETREATS FOR FLORIDA AND GEORGIA POST 9-11 COMBAT VETERANS
AND THEIR PRIMARY SUPPORT PERSON



Amelia Island
Fernandina Beach, Florida

★ **FEBRUARY 6-9**



Marineland
Florida

★ **MARCH 12-15**



Lake Chatuge
Hiawassee, Georgia

★ **APRIL 2-5**

From Thursday at 5:30pm – Sunday at 2:00pm



★ **RESTORATION** ★ **RECREATION** ★ **RELAXATION** ★

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

★ Small, friendly group setting ★

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

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

Please note: Must be 18 to attend and no childcare is provided.

TO LEARN MORE AND TO APPLY VISIT: GRATITUDEAMERICA.ORG/RETREATS



JACK GAFFORD, *DIRECTOR OF PROGRAMS*
678-315-9028
JACK@GRATITUDEAMERICA.ORG





1st Annual Patriot's Expo

Partnering with
First Coast Technical College Job Fair
Character Counts Conference Center
2980 Collins Avenue
St. Augustine

Thursday, March 26, 2020
2:30 PM – 4:30 PM

Networking event for St Johns County area Patriots and Patriots families

- Static Displays
- Education & Training
- Banking
- Logistics
- Healthcare/VA Resources
- Mental Health Resources
- Job Fair – Career & Employment Services
- Transition & Business opportunities
- Home & Family Services
- Information Technology
- Legal, Financial & Insurance Information
- Veteran, Military & Family Resources all under one roof

 **First Coast
Technical College**
Your Future Comes First

FCTC.EDU  
2980 Collins Ave • St Augustine, FL 32084
(904) 547-3282



FCTC Spring 2020 Job Fair and St John's Patriot Expo Registration Form

It is important our students have the ability to complete their training/education in full prior to accepting employment that might conflict with this goal. FCTC asks that our employment and business partners refrain from actively recruiting and hiring students that are currently taking classes into a role that will interfere with their ability to complete their education in the designated timeframe.

In addition, we require the participating businesses to be ready no later than 2:15PM and stay for the entire event, packing up to start after 4:30PM. We encourage trinkets and table giveaways.

PLEASE COMPLETE **ALL** THE QUESTIONS BELOW:

Company Name: _____

Contact Name/Title: _____

Contact email: _____

Number at table: _____ Patriots Expo Table: YES NO

Program(s) of interest: _____

Please check if your company sponsors, employs and supports our military.

Yes, I would like to participate in the FCTC Spring 2020 Job Fair on **March 26, 2020** and agree to adhere to the guidelines as stated above.

Unfortunately, a representative from my company will not be able to attend this time, but keep me on your list for next year.

Display Requests:

We will supply table and 2 chairs, let us know if you need electrical or any other specifications **PRIOR** to arrive (we cannot guarantee availability day of)

Please bring Table Cover, Displays, Business Cards, and Table Giveaways

Please submit this registration **No Later than March 5, 2020**

SPACE IS LIMITED SO PLEASE RESPOND ASAP

Email completed form to Beth.Abstein@stjohns.k12.fl.us

FCTC Job Fair Questions, call Beth Abstein (904)547-3389 Military Event Questions, call Wendy Lay (904)547-3512

PRESIDENTIAL SAILORS



GEORGE H.W. BUSH

FLEW TORPEDO BOMBERS FROM THE DECK OF THE USS SAN JACINTO, EARNING A DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS AND NUMEROUS AIR MEDALS BEFORE BEING SHOT DOWN BY ANTI-AIRCRAFT FIRE DURING WWII.

JIMMY E. CARTER JR.

IS THE ONLY PRESIDENT TO GRADUATE FROM THE UNITED STATES NAVAL ACADEMY. HE WENT ON TO BE SELECTED FOR SERVICE IN NUCLEAR SUBMARINES BY ADMIRAL HYMAN G. RICKOVER.



GERALD R. FORD

SERVED IN NINE COMBAT OPERATIONS. ACHIEVED THE RANK OF LIEUTENANT COMMANDER. NEXT-GENERATION CLASS OF AIRCRAFT CARRIERS IS NAMED IN HIS HONOR.

RICHARD M. NIXON

HEADED UP A SERIES OF NAVY CARGO HANDLING UNITS AROUND THE PACIFIC DURING WORLD WAR II, ACHIEVING THE RANK OF COMMANDER IN THE NAVAL RESERVE DURING WWII.



LYNDON B. JOHNSON

TOOK A LEAVE OF ABSENCE FROM THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES TO SERVE IN THE SOUTH PACIFIC, EARNING A SILVER STAR WHILE FLYING AS AN OBSERVER ON A B-26 BOMBING MISSION DURING WWII.

JOHN F. KENNEDY

EARNED THE NAVY AND MARINE CORPS MEDAL AFTER SAVING THE LIVES OF HIS CREW FOLLOWING THE SINKING OF THE PT-109 DURING WWII.



From Blair Craig

VA Releases Survivors Quick Start Guide

Reference guide to help during final arrangements planning

Each person experiences grief differently when a loved one passes, but survivors should not feel confused about what to do next. The Survivors Quick Start Guide provides Veteran family members and caregivers a reference guide for what to do next.

Part of VA's Welcome Kit, the Survivors quick start guide begins with a step by step checklist for preparing, applying for, and following up on the available benefits. Each step spells out in plain language what to do, what forms to fill out, and who to call if you need help.

The guide also helps families identify VA Survivor benefits and services they may be eligible for.

To view VA Survivors Guide, here is the link:

<https://www.va.gov/survivor-quick-start-guide.pdf>

The 75th Ranger Regiment

The history of Long Range Reconnaissance Patrol (LRRP—pronounced "Lurp"), LRP, and Ranger units deployed during the Cold War in Europe and Vietnam is based on three time periods: 1) LRRP from late 1965 to 20 December 1967; 2) LRP from late December 1967 through January 1969; and 3) Ranger from 1 February 1969, to 1972 when the Vietnam War drew down and the U.S. Vietnam Ranger units were deactivated. However, in 1974 their colors and lineage were passed to newly formed Ranger Battalions based in the United States.



Dept. of Florida Military Order of the Purple Heart

Steve and Sally Hilbmann we're treated to a warm farewell as they both take a step back from volunteering with the MOPH and MOPHA after nearly 4 decades of service.



The Department Commander, Chris Vedrick, presented Patriot Hilbmann a plaque for being the standard bearer for selfless service both in Lakeland and throughout the Department. Sally Hilbmann was presented a gift by the Auxiliary Department President in order to recognize her continued altruism and dedication to Veterans.

Good luck Hilbmann family and we hope to see you again soon.

The Veterans Council of St. Johns County Website has been updated to include:

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

Main page: Veterans Day flyer, with a link to the press release document, Navigation bars now include:

Upcoming events (for 2019)

<https://veteranscouncilsjc.org/events.htm>

SJVC Highlights for 2018 <https://veteranscouncilsjc.org/index.htm/files/VC%202018%20Summary.pdf>

Past event for 2018 <https://veteranscouncilsjc.org/events2018.htm>

Veterans Resource Spreadsheet <https://veteranscouncilsjc.org/index.htm/files/>

[VeteranResourceSpreadsheetUpdated2017.10.12.pdf](https://veteranscouncilsjc.org/index.htm/files/VeteranResourceSpreadsheetUpdated2017.10.12.pdf)



Jose' Concha, DPM * Richard Johnson, DPM
Board Certified by
the American Board of Foot & Ankle Surgery

Quality Care in a Relaxing Environment

At Coastal, we believe that a visit to the doctor's office can be a relaxing experience. Come in for your appointment and let our massage exam chairs, hot towels and aromatherapy ease the stresses of your day. From diabetic care to ingrown nails to reconstructive surgery, our board certified physicians can help you with all of your foot and ankle needs. Call today experience the Coastal difference for yourself.



St. Augustine: 904-826-1900 www.cfawc.com Palatka: 386-328-1122



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!



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N2N is outperforming the rest!



98.4%
of original list price

N2N

N2N Sells Houses for **MORE MONEY**



95.5%

Others



Over 6,000

Potential Buyers In N2N Database



29

average days on market

N2N

N2N Sells Houses **FASTER**



72

Others



2%

percentage of listings that expire

N2N

More Likely to Sell with **N2N**



29.9%

Others

GREAT TIME TO SELL!

Ask us for a **FREE HOME VALUATION**



Marianne Bach
(904) 349-0456



Kathy Jordan
(904) 401-0476

*** As a **VETERAN**,
SAVE **25%** when buying or selling with us! ***



Navy to Navy Homes Llc
10605 Theresa Drive, Suite 5
Jacksonville, FL 32246
Office: 904-900-4776

The logo consists of the letters 'V4V' in a bold, serif font. The 'V's are dark blue with white stars, and the '4' is white with a blue outline and stars. The background is a faded American flag.

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

POST TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER AWARENESS

NOT ALL WOUNDS ARE VISIBLE...

11%-20% OF
OEF/OIF VETERANS
SUFFER FROM
PTSD



SYMPTOMS:

- FLASHBACKS
- NIGHTMARES
- FEELING ON EDGE
- TROUBLE SLEEPING
- HYPERVIGILANCE
- OVERWHELMING GUILT OR SHAME
- LOSS OF INTEREST IN ENJOYABLE ACTIVITIES
- SELF-DESTRUCTIVE BEHAVIOR
- STAYING AWAY FROM PLACES, EVENTS, OR OBJECTS THAT ARE REMINDERS OF THE EXPERIENCE
- HAVING DIFFICULTY SLEEPING, AND/OR HAVING ANGRY OUTBURSTS
- NEGATIVE THOUGHTS ABOUT ONESELF OR THE WORLD
- FEELING EMOTIONALLY NUMB

WAYS GBF ASSISTS:

- HYPERBARIC OXYGEN THERAPY
- LASER REGENERATION THERAPY
- CHILLIPAD®
- TRAVEL TO/FROM SUBSTANCE ABUSE FACILITIES
- INPATIENT/OUTPATIENT HEALTHCARE COSTS NOT COVERED BY TRICARE OR THE VETERANS ADMINISTRATION
- HOLISTIC INFRARED LIGHT THERAPY
- ALPHA-STIM®
- NEUROFEEDBACK
- HOLISTIC ALTERNATIVE THERAPIES



A question we all may have to ask some day. What should I do if a Veteran passes away?

SECTION 8 Partial list of action to be undertaken upon the death of veteran or retiree.

1. Contact Funeral Director to set-up funeral arrangements and Military Honors (PAFB Mortuary Affairs)
2. Notify Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS) (<https://cust-support.dfas.mil/rapiti/nod/>) or call 1-888-332-741
3. Notify Veterans Administration 1-800-827-1000
4. Notify Social Security Administration 1-800-772-1213
5. Notify Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS) 1-800-538-9552
6. Notify VA Life Insurance, if applicable 1-800-669-8477
7. Notify SGLI and VGLI Insurance, if applicable 1-800-419-1473
8. Notify Civil Service Retirement System, if applicable 1-888-767-6738
9. Obtain at least 10 certified copies of long form death certificate and 10 copies of short form death certificate from Funerary Directors
10. Notify Life Insurance companies, and file appropriate claims
11. Notify Medical, health, disability, travel and accident insurance companies, and file appropriate claims
12. Notify Home owners insurance company
13. Notify Vehicle insurance company
14. Go to the County Property Appraiser's Office and transfer all real estate properties to surviving spouse.
15. Apply for widowed person's Homestead Exemption
16. Apply for appropriate (VA, Civil Service and other) benefits, if applicable
17. Apply for Veterans Burial Benefits and Survivor Benefits, if applicable
18. Check for non-government pension benefits, if applicable
19. Apply for Workmen's Compensation Benefits if applicable.
20. Notify your Accountant or Tax Preparer (unless Estate Lawyer is preparing the final tax returns) provide certified death certificate, previously filed tax return forms, and current earnings and dividend statements.
21. Notify your investment broker or company.
22. Change ownership of joint or solely owned stocks, mutual funds, etc.
23. Cancel any unfulfilled orders arranged by the deceased
24. Notify IRAs and other retirement and investment account administrators
25. Transfer the ownership of bonds
26. Notify your bank(s) and credit union(s)
27. Change all jointly held accounts and correct tax identification numbers (usually Social Security Numbers) (Leave joint accounts intact for 6 months)
28. Cancel direct deposit retirement benefit payments (for SBP, Civil Service and others, if applicable)
29. Re-establish the Title of your safe deposit box
30. Re-establish all outstanding mortgages, personal notes, etc.
31. Apply for any credit life insurance that may exist on loans, credit cards, and mortgages
32. Change Certificates of Deposit
33. Go to Department Of Motor Vehicles (DMV) to transfer titles of all registered vehicles, mobile homes and boats.
34. Notify all credit card companies and cancel all individually held cards of the deceased
35. Review trusts for required actions, if required.
36. If a Will must be probated, contact your attorney. Your name may also need to be revised.
37. Cancel the deceased's Voter Registration and Drivers License.
38. Obtain new military identification cards. Make appointment at <https://rapids-appointments.dmdc.osd.mil/default.asp> or contact Patrick AFB ID Card Section at 321-494-6144/6147
39. Send "Thank You" cards for flowers, memorial donations, food, etc.

From Nila Thompson

Veterans
Crisis Line



Veterans Crisis Line

1-800-273-8255
PRESS 1

1-800-273-8255 PRESS 1

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



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

Confidential chat at MilitaryCrisisLine.net or text 838255

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)

NASSAU COUNTY

President: Doc Monaghan

Meetings:

First Thursday of each month

Location:

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

Time: 1900 (7pm)

DUVAL COUNTY

President: Steve Spickelmier

Meetings:

Third Tuesday of each month

Location:

**American Legion Post 137
Moon Building
5443 San Juan Avenue**

Time: 1900 (7pm)

ST. JOHNS COUNTY

President: Bill Dudley

Meetings:

Last Thursday of each month

Location:

**Health and Human Services Bldg
Muscovy Room, 1st Floor
200 San Sebastian View
St. Augustine, FL 3208**

Time: 1900 (7pm)

Contact Nila Thompson with updates
Nila.ThompsonV4V@gmail.com

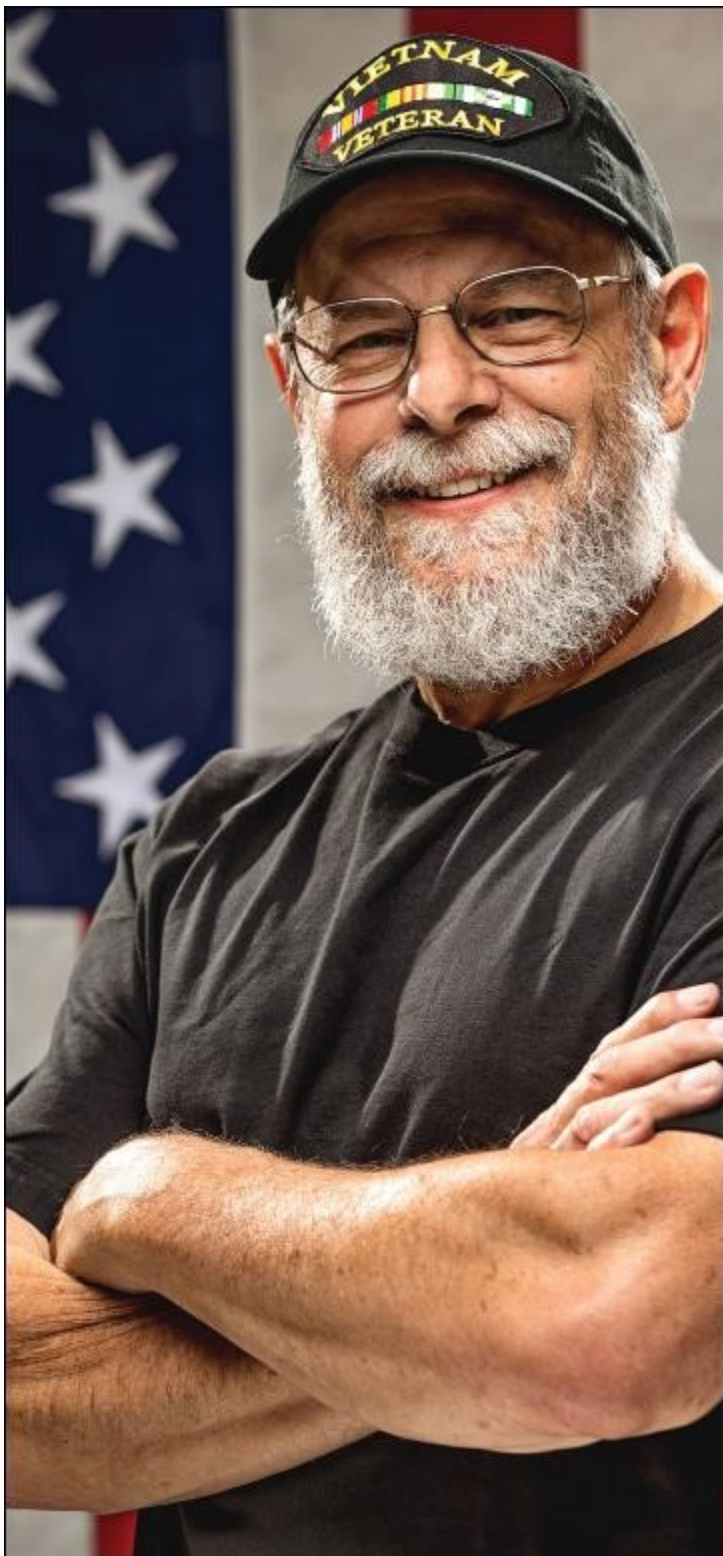
36 Granada Street, St. Augustine FL 32084

(904) 679-5736

Corazoncinemaandcafe.com



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



SERVING VETERANS SINCE 1979

At Community Hospice & Palliative Care, we are honored to serve veterans and their caregivers by providing specialized programs to meet their unique needs now and at the end of life.

- ★ Advance Care Planning
- ★ Bereavement & Grief Support
- ★ Caregiver Education
- ★ Hospice Care
- ★ Palliative Care
- ★ We Honor Veterans Program

For more information about our We Honor Veterans program, any of our services or to become a veteran volunteer, call toll-free **866.253.6681** or go to **Veterans.CommunityHospice.com**.



"I've proudly served as Chairman of the Community Hospice Veterans Partnership (CHVP) since 2011. CHVP partners with veterans service groups throughout the community to listen and learn how Community Hospice & Palliative Care can best serve our unique needs."

**Bob Buehn, Captain, United States Navy (Ret.)
Chairman, Community Hospice Veterans Partnership
(2011 - present)**





COMMUNITY HOSPICE
VETERANS PARTNERSHIP

Salute Our Heroes in Their Final Days: Support Flags & Pins for Veterans in Hospice Care

Honor our local veterans in hospice care with a dignified tradition when you support funding for flags and pins through Community Hospice & Palliative Care.

Since 2008, the Jacksonville-based organization has presented all veterans admitted to its hospice program with a commemorative pin to honor their service, as well as a certificate of appreciation. For veterans who get care at one of our eight inpatient centers, staff and volunteers erect the flag of the service branch in which they served outside their rooms. Flags are then presented to veterans' families following the death.



The need for funding is great as up to 25 percent of patients who receive hospice care at Community Hospice & Palliative Care are veterans. The nonprofit organization, which provides hospice care to nearly 1,300 patients each day, raises funds through individual support and community organizations who believe in serving those who have served our country so honorably.

If you or your organization would like to support our Flags & Pins Initiative and honor our warriors one last time, please contact

Toula Wootan, director of community programs at Community Hospice & Palliative Care, at 904.407.6211 or twootan@communityhospice.com.

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.

NEW INFO: Ride in comfort to your appointments at the VA Medical Center in Gainesville.



The van is provided by the Disabled Veterans Chapter 6, and leaves no later than 6AM from the new VA Clinic location at 195 Southpark Blvd. The corner of Southpark and Old Moultrie Road.

To schedule your seat please contact the VA Clinic at 904-823-2954 and ask for Veteran Van Scheduling.



**SURVIVOR
OUTREACH SERVICES**

Survivor Outreach Offers Free Services to
Surviving Spouses and Family Members of Military Retirees

Contact Keith Ham

Survivor Outreach Services Support Coordinator, HRCI Contractor
310 Charlotte Street, St. Augustine, FL 32084
Office: 904-823-0157 Cell: 904-472-7689
Email: keith.e.ham.ctr@mail.mil

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Michael J. Pelkowski • David D. Naples, Jr.

*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 Health & Human Services Building, 200 San Sebastian View Muscovy Room, 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.