



# The Patriot Reader Newsletter

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Bill Dudley, Publisher

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Volume 10, Issue 2

Message from the Chairman

February 2021

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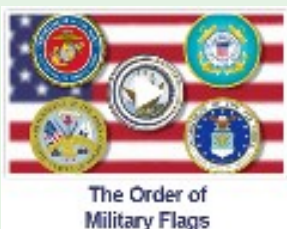
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Fellow Veterans,  
On Saturday, 6 Jan 2021, the Veterans Council was assisted with Boy Scouts from Troop 66 and students from Bartram Trail High School assisting in picking up the wreaths from the St. Augustine National Cemetery placed there by this year's Wreaths Across America program. The Veterans Council appreciates these young people giving up there Saturday morning to come out and help with the cleanup of our National Cemetery.

The VA has begun giving the COVID-19 vaccine at our local Community Base Outpatient Clinic. The Moderna vaccine is being given to local veterans 75 years of age or older and those with medical conditions that make them early candidates for the vaccination. As more vaccine becomes available, the plan is to establish a satellite facility in addition to the CBOC to speed up the

immunization process for our nearly 6000 veterans who receive their health care at our local CBOC. Booster shots will be given 28 days after the initial vaccination. Please do not call the VA clinic for an appointment to receive your shot...they will call you.

Our Veterans Treatment Court has changed their court date from Thursday afternoon to Friday mornings. For the foreseeable future, the VTC will continue to meet via Zoom as live court gatherings are still prohibited.

Our Veterans Council has been quite busy during this past holiday season assisting veterans in need. We assisted financially many of our veterans during the holidays assuring they and their family had the financial means to enjoy the Christmas holidays. The Council provided Publix gift cards for many of our veterans in need as well as RaceTrac gas cards. We assisted several families with locating housing and provid-



ed replacement HVAC systems for two veterans who

were without heat in their homes.

The major focus for 2021 for our Council will be the repurposing of the temporary CBOC to a veterans homeless facility after the VA relocates to the new CBOC in the early summer timeframe. This will be a major undertaking for the Veterans Council. We are partnered with St. Johns County to take on this project and make it a reality after many years of pursuing this elusive goal. We wish all of our veterans the best of 2021 during these very trying times and encourage you to stay safe and virus free.

Bill Dudley  
Chairman  
Veterans Council of St. Johns County

# Clyde E. Lassen State Veterans Nursing Home



The first photo attached is Cassidy and Melanie of Mill Creek Academy here in St. Augustine. They had a “Blanket Drive” at their school and they collected over 250 brand new soft fuzzy blankets for the Veterans!! Thank you Mill Creek!!

The first picture shown here is one of our Veterans getting ready for Christmas Eve Karaoke! The second pic is of Me and my North Pole Mail Cart I made! We received so many cards from the community that I wanted a fun way to get them passed out. The Veterans LOVED it. J



The first pic here is Activity Director Netta and Charlene & James of the Faith Riders motorcycle club with their yearly Generous Donation!! The second pic is Cassidy Sanders and Jill Redick from Mill Creek Academy, their students had a Little Debbie Snack cake drive at the school and also Donated Publix Gift Cards!!

The first pic here is of Mr. & Mrs. Titshaw held a neighborhood Holiday drive and were able to donate 25 gift bags full of goodies!! Thank You from the Veterans and Staff!!

The second is Mr. Carl Ollivier getting ready to sing just ONE more Christmas karaoke song





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



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

Jacksonville National Cemetery Support Committee Meetings for 2018

At Community Hospice of NE FL.

4266 Sunbeam Rd, Jacksonville, FL 32257

Hadlow Bldg – Conference Room A 6:00 pm

DATES OF 2021 SC at JNC MEETINGS

Monday, February 1, 2021

Monday, March 1, 2021

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

Chairman: Steve Spickelmier

Vice Chairman: Bill Dudley, Treasurer: Pat Welch

Secretary: Kathy Church, Judge Advocate: Don Guthrie

Master-At-Arms: Mike Smith, Historian: Win Delpizzo

Chaplain: Pat Archuleta, Public Affairs: Pat Mulvihill

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



***All SJC Health Guidelines will be followed.***

***Please stay safe, Bill Dudley, Chairman, VC of SJC***

### Upcoming Veterans Council Meetings Speakers

January 28, “We Can Be Heroes Foundation”, & Nick Howland, Fire Watch

February 25, Sean Riley, Community Outreach Director, Gratitude America

March 25, Cecil Field POW/MIA Memorial & Museum, (Tentative)

2021 Meeting Dates: January 28, February 25, March 25, April 29, May 27, June 24  
July 29, August 26, September 30, October 28, November 18, December 30

## AROUND ANASTASIA ISLAND: Island resident to be awarded Congressional Gold Medal Bar



*Lorraine Thompson, Correspondent St. Augustine Record*

St. Augustine Beach resident Ed Trester has more than one reason to roll the drums these days. Trester, who heads the swing and jazz band “E.T. Swing the Thing” which through the years has performed at local venues on and off the beach, is also co-founder of the St. Augustine Jazz Society, a local organization that helps high school students receive music scholarships.

He traces his love of music back to the Big Band Era. While in high school in Brooklyn, New York in the 1940’s he began playing the drums, and admits, after more than 8 decades, “the beat goes on!”



Trester recently learned that he will soon be awarded the Gold Medal Bar from the Congress of the United States for his contributions during World War II as a U. S. Merchant Marine.

Now 94 years old, Trester, who has resided in St. Augustine Beach since the early 1980s, recalled his wartime experiences.

“I dropped out of high school in 1943 while World War II was raging,” he explained. My idea was to become a sailor, join the Navy and ‘see the world’, but the Navy wouldn’t have me. They told me I was too young and to go back to school.”

Disappointed, Trester sought another option. He applied, was accepted and soon began training as a Merchant Marine at Sheepshead Bay in Brooklyn, New York. The job of the Merchant Navy was to carry vital troops, food, fuel and equipment to wherever needed in the fight against the Axis alliance of Germany, Italy and Ja

pan.

His work as a deckhand during his 6 years as a Merchant Marine earned him Atlantic, Mediterranean and Pacific War Zone medals. Because the Merchant Marine was not designated as a military branch, its veterans did not receive the G.I. Bill and other benefits given to designated branches of the U.S. military, even though that service recorded one of the highest wartime casualties of other services.



Trester's Merchant Marine memories and those of others in that service are told in the book "Torpedoed for Life" which he co-authored with another Merchant Marine, H. Gerald Starnes, in 2013. Starnes, who resided in Crescent Beach, died in St. Augustine at the age of 88 in 2015.

On March 14, 2020, President Trump signed legislation authorizing the "Congressional Gold Medal for American merchant mariners whose honorable deeds were critical to U.S. and Allied objectives and ultimate success in World War II." The Congressional Gold Medal Bar is one of the highest honors bestowed by the U.S. Congress.

Trester is not sure when he will receive the award. He was notified that it will be presented by Rep. Michel Waltz on a date to be determined. In the meantime, the local musician will continue his "drum rolls" while waiting for COVID-19 restrictions to loosen so he and his band may resume performances.

## MISSING IN AMERICA PROJECT - FLORIDA, UPDATE – December 21, 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 non-profit that relies solely on donations to work our project.

MIAP-FL had CTH #23 scheduled for December 10, 2020 at the South Florida National Cemetery. Due to in climate weather and COVID restrictions, we had to cancel this service. Since the cremains had already been transported to the SFNC, the staff of the cemetery interred the 19 veterans and 7 spouses. MIAP will honor all during our next service.

The unclaimed cremains for this service were from the Van Orsdel Family Funeral Chapels in Miami-Dade County and the Miami-Dade County Medical Examiner Department in Miami.

This MIAP-FL service included 19 veterans, and 7 spouses of veterans, as follows:

US Army – 8 veterans and 4 spouses	US Marine Corps. – 1 veteran and 1 spouse
US Navy – 5 veterans and 2 spouses	US Air Force – 3 veterans
US Coast Guard – 1 veteran	US Merchant Marines – 1 veteran

The veterans served in the US Army, Marine Corps., Navy, Air Force, Coast Guard and Merchant Marines during World Wars I and II, Korea, Vietnam, and other non-war specific periods. The longest that any of those to have been interred has been unclaimed is since 1952.

Our dedicated volunteers continue to work on entering cases into our data base that were located before COVID 19 hit. Once all is back to normal, whatever our new normal will be we will all start reaching out to funeral homes and continue with this project. Florida currently has teams working in the following counties, Brevard, Broward County, Duval, Marion, Miami-Dade and Polk. We will hold another service in February again at the South Florida National Cemetery. We will follow all COVID rules for this service.

Please go to our NEWLY DESIGNED website at [www.miap.us](http://www.miap.us) to read more about our project and find out how you can become involved with MIAP in your area. We need volunteers across the state to join our Team. 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 12/21/2020**

**Total Funeral Homes Visited - 2,460**

**Cremains Found - 23,594**

**Veterans Cremains Identified - 5,178**

**Veterans Interred - 4,718**

**MIAP FLORIDA PROGRESS TO DATE**

**As of 12/21/2020**

**Total Funeral Homes Visited - 189**

**Cremains Found - 2,301**

**Numbers Approved to be Interred - 127**

**Missions Pending - 1**

**Veterans Interred - 363**

**Spouses Interred - 132**

**Dependents Interred - 1**

The **Fire Watch** is Northeast Florida's fight to end veteran suicide. Over 6,000 U.S. military veterans die by suicide each year, including 500 annually here in Florida. But suicide is preventable. And everyone can help. **Join us as a Watch Stander today.** Learn how to identify the risk signs of veterans in crisis and to direct them to the help they need.

3 minutes to enroll. 30 minutes to train. A lifetime of saving lives.

Visit: [www.thefirewatch.org/watch-standers](http://www.thefirewatch.org/watch-standers) to learn more.

Thanks!

Nick Howland

Executive Director, The Fire Watch

[www.thefirewatch.org](http://www.thefirewatch.org)

904.525.1761





## The 1760 British Yawl: Evolution of a Ship's Boat

Pearl Harbor Day's annual remembrance on Dec. 7 generally sends me searching for images from that horrible attack. Visiting the Pearl Harbor Naval Memorial in Hawaii some years ago was one of the most memorable moments of my life, as I gazed down at the hull of the U.S.S. Arizona, trying to imagine what it was like years before. I remember sitting outside by the harbor and listening intently to stories about that day from two Navy veteran survivors of the attack as smoke rose some distance behind them from burning sugarcane fields. Simultaneously, a small plane flew overhead and, added to the stories, which all worked together to take me back in time to have a glimpse into our nation's past.

One image that I came across this year was of the U.S. Navy launches tending the U.S. Pacific Fleet's burning wrecks on that day. These humble boats share a long and distinguished history with other workboats back through time. Large vessels have always required smaller boats to transport people and supplies back and forth between vessel and shore. The evolution of these "ship's boats" has been long, and they have earned their place among some of the most significant vessels in our maritime history.



*Photo Above: Dec. 7, 1941, in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. Two U.S. Navy launches work near the capsized hull of the U.S.S. Oklahoma.*

In 1952, four U.S. Coast Guardsmen made history when they performed a daring suicide mission in a 36-foot motor lifeboat facing hurricane-force winds and seventy-foot waves to rescue 36 crewmen from the SS Pendleton, lost off Cape Cod. It was the most incredible motor lifeboat rescue in Coast Guard history and was recently immortalized in the movie "The Finest Hours" released by Disney Pictures in 2016. The film was based on a book of the same name written by Michael J. Tougas and Casey Sherman.



*Photo Above: 36-foot U.S. Coast Guard Motor Lifeboat.*

A century earlier, the U.S. Life Saving Service (U.S.L.S.S.), the U.S. Coast Guard's forerunner, would train surfmen to launch lifeboats from wagons rolled into the surf to rescue individuals trapped on sinking vessels up and down the coast of the United States. One most notable area was the Outer Banks of North Carolina, dubbed "The Graveyard of the Atlantic." The work was so dangerous; their motto was, "You have to go out; you don't have to come back."



*Photo Above: Two 19th Century photos of U.S.L.S.S. crews with their lifeboats.*

These wooden work boat's designs had been honed and improved over time from vessels developed in the old world and made their way to our shores from Europe, particularly Scandinavia and the British Isles.

The Heritage Boat Builders have resurrected one such vessel at the St. Augustine Lighthouse & Maritime Museum. The 1760 era British "Yawl" was the 18th century's workhorse of the British Royal Navy. They were sturdy boats generally between sixteen and eighteen feet in length and, early on, were considered "clinker-built," meaning that the vessel's hull planks overlapped at the edges. Also called lapstrake planking, this technique was developed in Scandinavia, where the Norwegian "Yole" was a small, sturdy fishing vessel sold in kits to the Irish and assembled by the Norwegian boat builders on arrival. The Norwegian design soon popu-

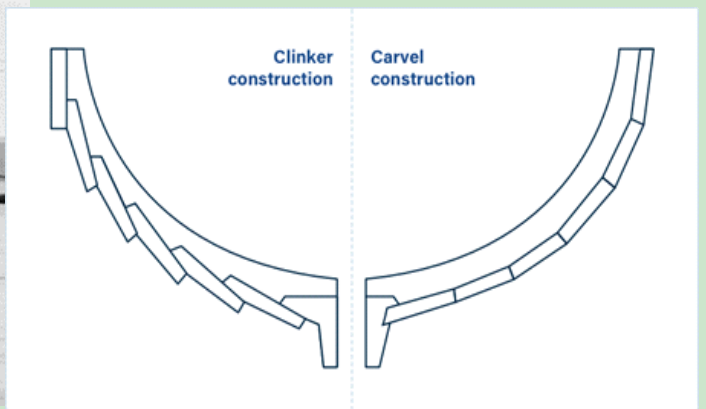


Photo Above Left: 19th Century Norwegian Yoles off the coast of Scotland; and Photo Above Right: Clinker vs. Carvel planking.

The English then took the design and made changes to improve cargo capacity. They replaced the sharp stern with a broader transom and made the bow blunter, increasing the number of rowers and amount of goods that the vessel could transport. The word “Yole” morphed eventually into “Yawl,” and the lap-stake planking was replaced with an in-line method called “carvel planking.” They could be fitted with a mast and sail (as could the Yole), and sailors began to refer to their Yawls as “Jolly Boats” or merely a “Ship’s Boat.”

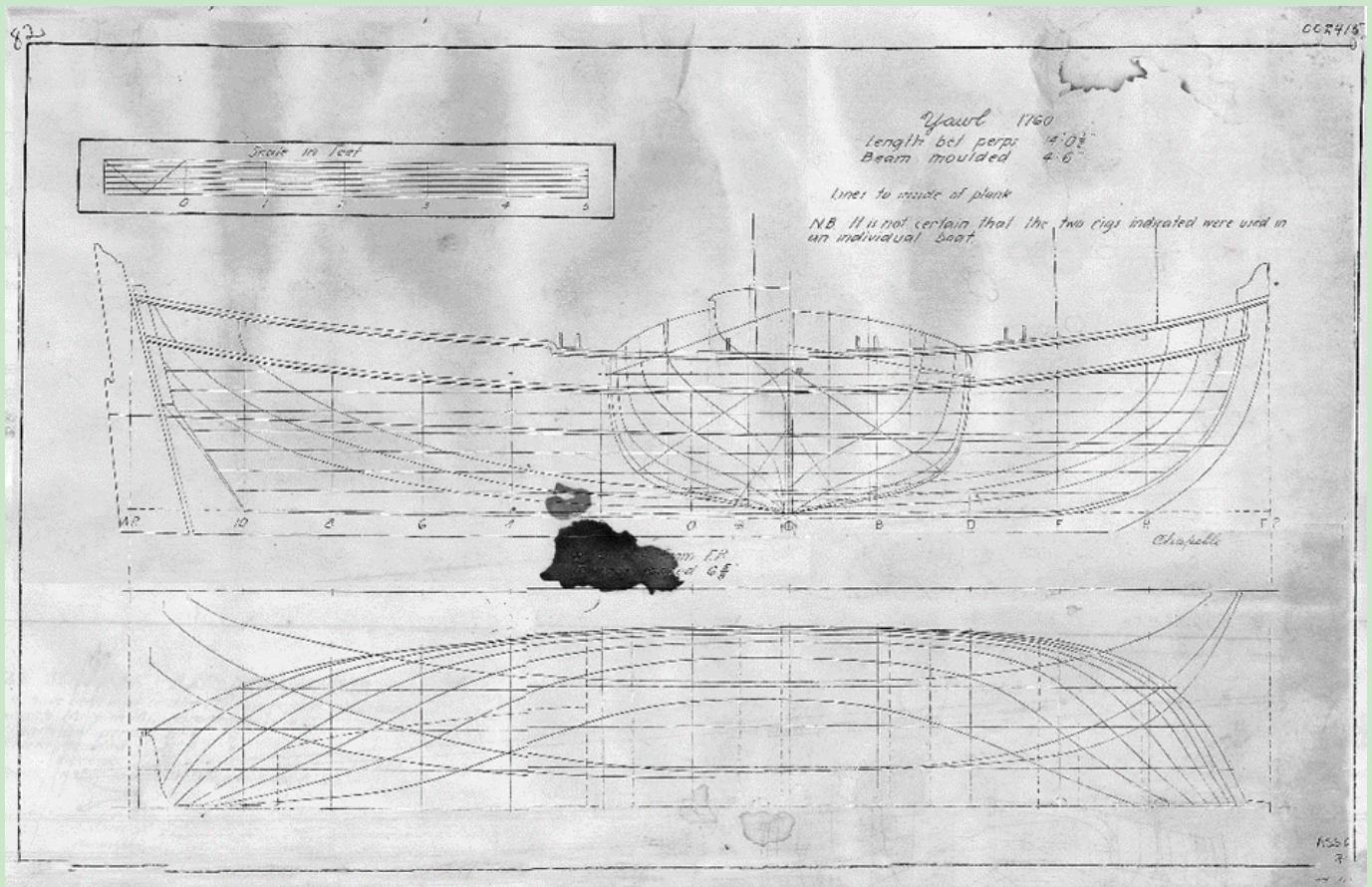


Photo Above: Plans for the 1760 Yawl discovered during research by Museum’s archaeologists.



Photo Above: Ship's Boat (Yawl) of H.M.S. Victory, Lord Nelson's Flagship, Portsmouth, England.

These sturdy boats are built on a frame called a strongback. Forms that determine the hull shape are laid out on the keel after it is set on the strongback, and the boat frames and planking are built around the forms. Planking work may be done upright with forms secured to an overhead beam as pictured below or be done with the vessel inverted (see next page) after framing is complete.



*Photos Above: Heritage Boat Builder Dr. Jim Gaskins lays the keel on the strongback. The Yawl takes shape at the Museum Boat Works. Note the keel that's sitting on the strongback and forms extending down from above. This was the first of two 1760 British Yawl boats built on the Museum grounds.*

The second Yawl was framed in the upright position and then inverted on the strongback for planking. The beautiful lines of the carvel planking are noted, specifically where the hull planks curve back and meet the transom at the vessel's stern. This Yawl will soon be righted to finish its fitting for the sea. The builders of these beautiful wooden vessels are all Museum volunteers who have a deep desire to preserve this dying art and are devoted to their work of retaining our maritime traditions and connection to the sea.



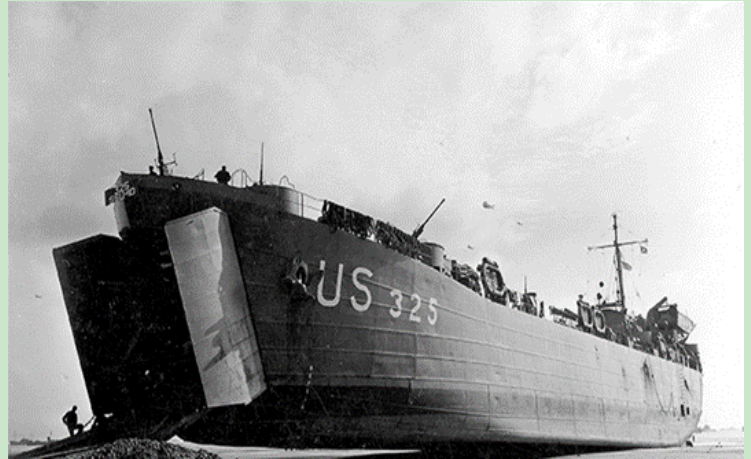
*Photos Above: The Yawl lines at both bow and stern are simplistic beauty and functional for a working boat. The work requires extensive mathematic calculations to achieve the desired results. This was true for 17th and 18th Century shipwrights as well.*

The seams between the planking will be calked with cotton batting using a calking iron and mallet. Historically, the cotton was tarred with a pitch before calking. Pitch was harvested heavily from the pine forests of Florida, Georgia, and the Carolinas in the early history of colonists arriving in North America. Production of these "Ship's Stores" was one of the very first industries in colonial America.



*Photo Above: The launch of the first 1760 British Yawl in Salt Run below the St. Augustine Lighthouse & Maritime Museum.*

From the Navy launches at Pearl Harbor to the Higgins Boats and L.S.T.'s operating with the Allied forces at Normandy during Operation Overlord, the evolution of vessels that move people and goods, soldiers and supplies, as well as the people who build and operate them have all contributed to our nation's maritime traditions. Keeping these traditions alive is a primary mission of the St. Augustine Lighthouse & Maritime Museum. You may visit our Heritage Boat Builders at the Museum, generally on Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday mornings before noon, or you may consider becoming a volunteer yourself.

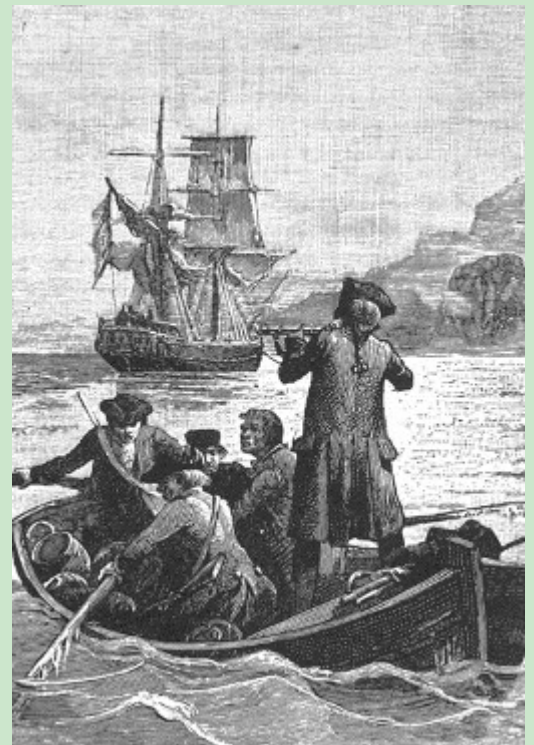
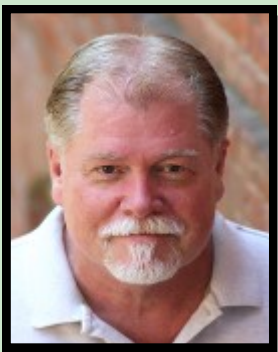


*Photos Above: Higgins Boat landing craft and the larger L.S.T. delivering troops, vehicles, and supplies on D-Day, Jun. 6, 1944.*

No matter how large or small, the ship's boat known as the Yawl is one of a few vessels that started it all. A bit of well-crafted wood, a rigged sail, and a crew to row her is all that is needed to have a look back in time to our humble beginnings of humans working on the water.

#### **About the Author: Rick Cain**

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



## The Story of Notre Dame's Legendary 'Rudy' Ruettiger Began in Vietnam Military.com

*Defensive end Daniel Eugene "Rudy" Ruettiger is carried off the field by his University of Notre Dame teammates after Ruettiger sacked Georgia Tech quarterback Rudy Allen on the final play of the game, Notre Dame, Ind., Nov. 8, 1975. Notre Dame won the game. (Courtesy of Notre Dame)*



Daniel Eugene "**Rudy**" Ruettiger became a famous college football athlete, but he got his big start by joining the Navy in 1968 and serving two years at sea as a yeoman.

Using his GI Bill benefits, he enrolled in Indiana's Holy Cross College in 1972 and then at the University of Notre Dame in 1974, playing in the Orange Bowl in 1975 and the Gator Bowl in 1976 -- the year he graduated.

Former Notre Dame defensive end Daniel Eugene "Rudy" Ruettiger, gives a motivational speech to soldiers at Fort Huachuca, Ariz. (U.S. Army)

Despite being undersized for a football player -- 5 feet, 6 inches tall and 165 pounds -- Ruettiger was accepted as a defensive end on Notre Dame's Fighting Irish football team due to his drive and determination.

His claim to fame was brief, but spectacular. On Nov. 8, 1975, he was put in the game against Georgia Institute of Technology. During the final play of the game, he sacked Georgia Tech quarterback Rudy Allen.

Ruettiger's teammates were ecstatic, and they carried him off the field. At the time, he was the only player ever to receive such an honor.

The story of the undersized young man being allowed to play and sacking the opposition's quarterback led to the 1993 movie "Rudy," based on Ruettiger's short football career. Ruettiger was played by actor Sean Astin.

Ruettiger actually appeared in the movie as a fan in the final scene. Although Hollywood often takes liberties to make events more dramatic when making films based on true stories, Ruettiger said the film was 92% accurate.

These days, Ruettiger likes to visit service members and give motivational speeches.

During one such visit to Fort Huachuca, Arizona, on Oct. 7, 2010, he told the soldiers that "the Navy actually changed my thinking around, my attitude around, and who I was."

Ruettiger said members of the armed forces are great Americans. "This is an honor for me to come here. I'm real humbled and real privileged," he said.

During his motivational speech, he talked about how everyone has the potential to be whatever they want to be.

"It's not your age; it's your attitude," he said, adding that people who work hard deserve a shot.

Ruettiger also told the soldiers that all it takes to succeed is what he called the four Cs: character, courage, commitment and contribution.

"The little things make a big difference," he said.



## Frederick S. Olmsted, Jr - A History

In 1968, my volunteer request for SEA combat duty finally got to somebody's desk, and to my joyous surprise I was given orders to Davis-Monthan AFB to check out in the F-4 Phantom. I entered F-4 CCTS in Mar. 1969 and finished up in Sep. 1969. Within a month, I was heading for combat in SEA. I was privileged to serve in combat in SEA for the next 30 months. My last 20 months (Dec 1970-Jun 1972) were spent in the 13th TFS at Udorn RTAFB, Thailand. We were part of the 432d TRW, the famous "MiG Killer Wing," whose motto was "...and kill MiGs."



While at Udorn, I served as a Laredo Fast FAC, and when the air war heated up once again in early 1972 I was selected as one of the special cadre of MiGCAP flight leaders. Our mission was to dash ahead of the strike fighters that were bombing Hanoi so as to keep the MiGs from engaging our bomb-laden fighter brethren. While I was leading these MiG sweep missions over Hanoi, I shot down two enemy MiG-21s in aerial combat. The first kill took place on Mar. 30, 1972, and the second kill was on Apr. 16, 1972.

It was the second kill that became quite famous after it was featured on the History Channel Dogfights episode entitled "Hell Over Hanoi." I was flying as Basco Flight lead on that particular mission, leading a four ship of Phantoms from Udorn. It is interesting to note that my aircraft that day was the now-iconic "MiG Killer Phantom" that sits in front of Mitchell Hall, tail # OY 463! At the end of this mission, the proud warrior Phantom would have another red star adorning the splitter plate!

Our mission on 16 April was to act as MiGCAP for a major strike against Hanoi that morning. We were in orbit on the western border of NVN when we were alerted that there were four blue bandits closing head-on at 20 miles. I positioned Basco Flight for the imminent dogfight and ordered the flight members to jettison the 3 external fuel tanks we were all carrying. Just then, my backseater (Capt. Stu Maas) picked up two of the bandits on the radar. At twelve miles Stu obtained a full radar lock-on, and informed me that these bogeys were indeed MiG-21s. As we closed head-on and came into firing range, I hesitated to fire my Sparrow missiles fearing that the bogeys might be friendlies drifting into our area. I just didn't trust the new, top-secret electronic gear that was installed in the airplane which allowed us to shoot BVR, or beyond visual range. I disregarded Stu's insistent intercom calls to me to "shoot 'em, Fredo, shoot 'em, they are MiG-21s."



At that time, I saw the two aircraft pass immediately overhead, and they were indeed shiny MiG-21s!! I immediately alerted my #3 (Major [now General] Dan Cherry) of my visual sighting and made a high-g turn up and to the right to engage the MiGs. As we were rolling out behind the lead MiGs, the third MiG entered the fight from behind. Doing his usual superb job as an element leader, Dan Cherry picked this MiG-21 up and engaged him in a high-speed fight that I could hear taking place.



As I pulled OY 463 in behind the two lead MiGs, the MiG leader performed a split-s directly in front of my nose and was gone from the fight, leaving his wingman to fend for himself. I tracked this MiG through a number of high-speed, high-g vertical vector rolls until I got into good Sparrow firing position. I fired a missile at the MiG while we were both in a hard left turn. The missile impacted the aircraft and blew about half of his wing off, but the pilot didn't eject and the aircraft kept on turning hard. So I fired 2 more Sparrows at him, and the second of these two shots scored a direct hit. The missile went through the top of the MiG's canopy, and the shiny enemy fighter exploded into two, huge fireballs.

After the war in SEA had ended, various books and documents were written extolling the tactics that I employed to shoot down my adversary in that dogfight, calling the dogfight "the textbook example as to how a Phantom should fight against a MiG-21." I left the 432nd in Jun. 1972, after flying more than 300 combat missions. I was awarded 2 Silver Stars, the Distinguished Flying Cross, and the Air Medal with 21 Oak Leaf Clusters.

I am proud and humbled to say that I was privileged to fly combat with some of the greatest fighter pilots the AF has ever produced. Our classmate Bob Lodge was a mentor to all of us in our wing, and he was a fearless combat pilot with a brilliant understanding of combat flying. Likewise, our classmate and fighter ace Steve Ritchie was a superb combat leader who flew and fought with extraordinary skill in his three combat tours. I was honored to fly many missions with both of these inspirational members of our illustrious class. To this day, they bring all of us a great deal of pride.

When I returned to the US, I had decided that the peacetime AF didn't particularly suit me. It seems that I had spent too much time "calling all the shots" as a combat

flight lead! Consequently, I resigned from the AF in Dec. 1972.

Just as I was starting w a law firm in Houston, my best buddy Al McArtor called me from his executive office in Memphis where he was Fed Ex's Sr. VP of Flight Operations. Al invited me to Memphis for an interview with FedEx, and I was quick to accept. I happily took FedEx' job offer in 1989, and was back flying the B-727 once again! I spent the next 19 years happily employed by this wonderful company.

In 1998 I left the B-727 captain's seat for the captain's seat of the Airbus A-300. This flying assignment took me to the Philippines for the next 2 years, where I experienced the finest flying and work conditions an airline pilot could ever imagine. When I reached the statutory age of retirement (60 years old) I was summoned back to the US and to FedEx World Headquarters in Memphis. It was at this time that the VP of Flight Operations asked if I would stay on for a few more years as a Special Assistant to him. My tasking by him was to conceptualize and then implement an administrative accident investigation policy for FedEx to use in litigation after a major aircraft accident.

I retired from full-time work for FedEx in 2008 and moved to St Augustine, FL with my life-long love and wife Barbara.

Mrs. Barbara and I both savor all of the life-changing experiences we were privileged to enjoy during our service with the Air Force and our years spent with the commercial airlines. Most importantly, we have been blessed by having the finest, dearest, truest friends we could ever wish for. I'm proud to say that the friends I am speaking of are my brothers from the USAFA Class of 1964...finer men never served this country!!

Best always, Fred "Fredo" Olmsted

Below is a video of Veterans Council member and co-founder of the Vetwrans Council of St. Johns County Tom's Waskovich's neighbor and friend Fred Olmsted, featured in a documentary on Discovery YouTube, regarding his feat of shooting down 2 Migs in Vietnam. Very impressive. I hope you enjoy.

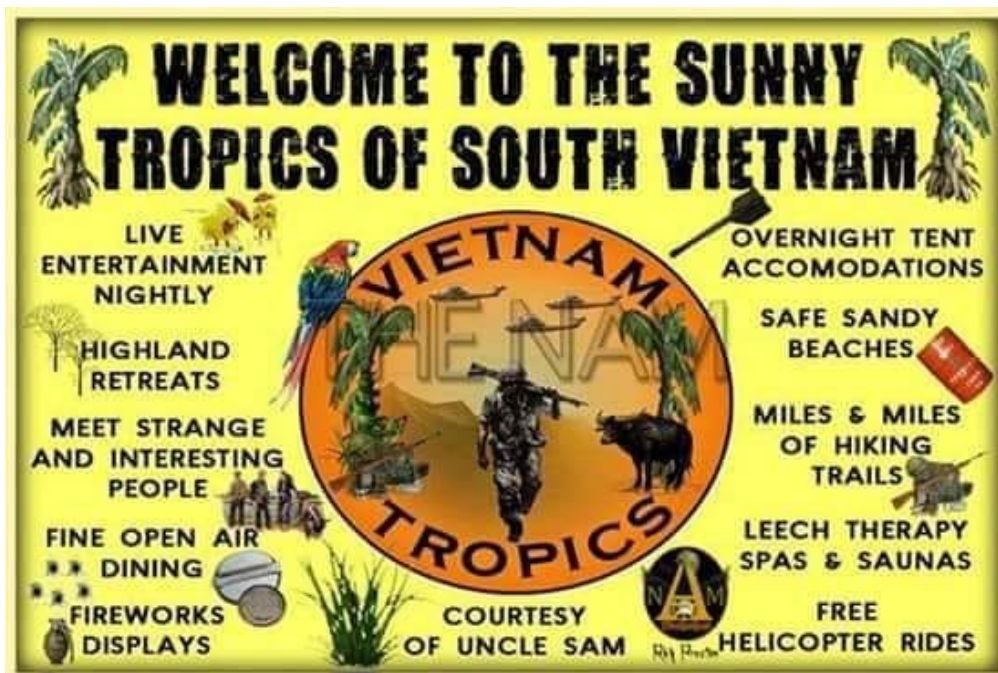
<https://youtu.be/dfrscGQKg2g>

**From Veterans Council Chairman Bill Dudley**

**Subject: VA Transportation Assistance**

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

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



Scout Troop 66 under the leadership of Scout Master Marc Albanese help remove wreaths from the St. Augustine National Cemetery.





# FLORIDA NATIONAL GUARD VACCINATION PROGRAM

## MODERNA COVID-19 VACCINE

### FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

#### HOW WILL OUR GUARDSMEN RECEIVE THE VACCINE?

- The Florida National Guard (FLNG) has been selected to receive 1,100 doses of the MODERNA vaccine to begin inoculating the FLNG COVID 502(f) population.
- The FLNG Medical Detachment will conduct all immunizations.
- If the 502(f) population does not exhaust the 1,100 doses, the FLNG will inoculate the force based on Department of Defense priorities.
- Even those who have been previously diagnosed with COVID should still get the vaccine.
- The Moderna vaccine requires two doses, 28 days apart.

#### IS IT SAFE?

- While the development of the COVID-19 vaccine was accelerated, all steps were followed to ensure the safety and efficacy of the vaccine. This virus is a member of the coronavirus family and research on these viruses was already underway. Operation Warp Speed (OWS), a multi-agency partnership that works with other federal and private-sector organizations, leveraged the full capacity of the United States government to ensure that no technical, logistical or financial hurdles hindered vaccine development or deployment of the vaccines.
- The COVID-19 vaccines **do not use a live virus** that causes COVID-19. Keep in mind that it will take a few weeks for your body to build immunity after vaccination. As a result, it is possible you could become infected with the virus that causes COVID-19 just before or after being vaccinated.
- The vaccine can cause mild side effects such as pain, redness or swelling where the shot was given, fever/chills, fatigue, headache, muscle pain or joint pain. These side effects are associated with the normal immune response and are not an indication that you have COVID-19.
- The process is simple and quick with medical observation during and following the administration of the vaccine.

#### DOES IT WORK?

- The United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has approved Pfizer BioNTech (13 Dec 2020) and Moderna COVID-19 (17 Dec 2020) Vaccinations for Emergency Use Authorization.
- The FDA released a briefing in December confirming Moderna's data on safety and efficacy. The **Moderna vaccine is 94.1% effective** in the prevention of severe COVID-19 with no specific safety concerns identified.

#### IS IT MANDATORY?

- At this time, there is no mandate for personnel to receive the COVID-19 vaccine. Many personnel are at risk for COVID-19 infection and can pass the infection on to others, including fellow service members, friends and family members. For this reason, our guardsmen are encouraged to get vaccinated in order to protect themselves and others.
- Getting the COVID-19 vaccine can help protect you by creating an antibody response in your body without having to become sick.

### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION & RESOURCES

American Hospital Association (2020). FDA verifies safety, efficacy data for Moderna COVID-19 vaccine candidate. <https://www.aha.org/news/headline/2020-12-15-fda-verifies-safety-efficacy-data-moderna-covid-19-vaccine-candidate>

Mayo Clinic (2020). <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/coronavirus/in-depth/coronavirus-vaccine/art-20484859>

Polack, F.P., Thomas, S.J., Kitchin, N.,..... Absalon, J. (2020). Safety and efficacy of BNT162b2 mRNA Covid-19 Vaccine. <https://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMoa2034577>

Slaoui, M. & Hepburn, M. (2020). Developing Safe and Effective Covid Vaccines- Operation Warp Speed Strategy and Approach. <https://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMp2027405>

**VETERANS COUNCIL OF ST. JOHNS COUNTY**

**MINUTES 17 DECEMBER 2020**

**WELCOME: CHAIRMAN DUDLEY**

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: CHAIRMAN DUDLEY**

**PRAYER: VICE CHAIR QUINN**

**WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS: CHAIRMAN DUDLEY**

**APPROVAL OF NOVEMBER MINUTES: ALL**

**FINANCE REPORT: JOHN MOUNTCASTLE**

**A DETAILED REPORT WAS RENDERED BY FINANCE CHAIR MOUNTCASTLE. HE REPORTED THAT THE CURRENT BALANCE IS: \$62,532.31. A COPY OF THE REPORT WAS MADE AVAILABLE TO ALL IN ATTENDANCE.**

**GUEST SPEAKER: CHAIRMAN DUDLEY INTRODUCED TO THE COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP CSM (USA, Ret) JEFF LAY. CSM LAY REPRESENTS THE UNITED STATES VETERAN CORPS. CSM LAY IS A 23 YEAR VETERAN OF THE UNITED STATES ARMY WITH ASSIGNMENTS IN INFANTRY AND ARMOR.**

**CSM LAY PROVIDED A DETAILED OVERVIEW OF THE VETERAN CORPS THAT PROVIDES A MEANINGFUL AND UNIQUE WAY TO CONTINUE SERVICE TO COMMUNITY, STATE AND NATION. MEMBERS ARE FROM ALL BRANCHES AND SPECIALTIES AND ARE ASSIGNED WHERE THEIR SKILL SETS BENEFIT THE MOST. SOME MEMBERS HAVE NO MILITARY TRAINING BUT HAVE SKILLS THAT FIT THE NEEDS. TRAINING IS CURRENTLY CONDUCTED MONTHLY AND AT PRESENT IS CONDUCTED AT LAKE BUTLER. MEMBERS MUST BE CERTIFIED BY FEMA TO INSURE PROFESSIONALISM OF DUTY. MEMBERS WEAR A DISTINCTIVE UNIFORM. THEY CAN BE OF GREAT VALUE WHEN FEMA REQUIRES ASSISTANCE IN COMMUNICATION, SECURITY AND MANY MORE TASKINGS. CSM LAY RECRUITS IN OUR AREA AND WOULD APPRECIATE OUR ASSISTANCE IN SENDING VOLUNTEERS THAT WOULD BE AN ASSET.**

**VETERANS ASSISTANCE: CSM (USA, Ret) JOE MC DERMOTT**

**CSM MC DERMOTT GAVE AN UPDATE ON THE LATEST IN FILING OF CLAIMS. HE ALSO WANTED TO THANK THE COUNCIL FOR ALL THE ASSISTANCE PROVIDED DURING THE PAST YEAR. HE STATED HIS OFFICE TRULY APPRECIATES THE COUNCIL AND ALL THAT THE COUNCIL DOES TO SUPPORT HIS OFFICE.**

**WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA: SGM (USA, Ret) RAY QUINN**

**SGM QUINN REPORTED ON THE CURRENT STATUS OF OUR WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA PROGRAM. WREATHS ARE TO BE DELIVERED TO TWO MEN AND A TRUCK ON THURSDAY 17 DECEMBER 2020 AND DELIVERED TO THE CEMETERY AT 0900 HOURS FRIDAY 18 DECEMBER 2020. HE REITERATED THAT ONLY 50 VOLUNTEERS COULD LAY THE WREATHS AND THAT THE CEREMONY WOULD BE AT 1200 HOURS THE SAME DAY. NO EVENT ON SATURADAY. IT IS HOPED THAT THE PROCEDURES RETURN TO NORMAL NEXT YEAR. HE EXPRESSED THANKS FOR BEING ABLE TO ATTAIN OUR GOAL**



**OF FILLING THE CEMETERY.**

**VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA: JOHN LESLIE**

**JOHN REPORTED THAT THE VVA CHAPTER WOULD BE ASSISTING THE MARINE CORPS LEAGUE WITH THE TOYS FOR TOTS PROGRAM. THEY ARE SCHEDULED TO ASSIST AT THE SAME TIME AS THE WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA EVENT WILL TAKE PLACE. GREAT TO SEE ORGANIZATIONS HELPING EACH OTHER.**

**JOHN ALSO GAVE AN OVERVUE OF VETERANS TREATMENT COURT AND THE RECENT SUCCESSES. AT PRESENT THEY HAVE 30 VETS ENROLLED AND ON 17 DECEMBER 2020 TWO OF THE VETS GRADUATED FROM THE TWO YEAR PROGRAM. HE STATED AT PRESENT THEY HAVE THE LARGEST NUMBER ENROLLED EVER.**

**THE PROGRAM HAS BEEN A RESOUNDING SUCCESS WITH 38 GRADUATES AND ONLY 8 FAILURES.**

**FROM THE CHAIRMAN: CHAIR BILL DUDLEY**

**CHAIRMAN DUDLEY REPORTED ON THE COUNCILS PARTICIPATION IN THE FAREWELL FOR OUTGOING SHERIFF DAVID SHOAR. THE COUNCIL PRESENTED A BEAUTIFUL SHADOW BOX CONTAINING A FLAG THAT HAD BEEN FLOWN OVER THE USS ARIZONA IN PEARL HARBOR. In ADDITION THERE WAS A CERTIFICATE OF AUTHENTICITY AND HIS MILITARY RIBBON BAR AS WELL AS MILITARY RANK INSIGNIA.**

**ALSO AMONG THE PRESENTATIONS TO SHERIFF SHOAR WAS THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE CREATION OF A SHERIFF SHOAR SCHOLARSHIP IN THE AMOUNT OF \$500.00 TO BE PRESENTED TO A FIRST RESPONDER STUDENT.**

**SHERIFF SHOAR WAS ALSO OFFERED THE OPPORTUNITY TO JOIN THE COUNCIL BY SERVING ON THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.**

**CHAIRMAN DUDLEY REPORTED A NUMBER OF ANONYMOUS DONATIONS TO THE COUNCIL TO BE PRESENTED TO VETERANS IN NEED DURING THE HOLIDAYS. THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE WILL ASSIST THE CHAIRMAN IN THE PROCESS OF DIVIDING THE FUNDS AND RANKING THE ONE WITH THE MOST NEED.**

**CHAIRMAN DUDLEY ALSO SPOKE OF THE WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA ANNOUNCING HE HAD LOCATED PARKING FOR THE VOLUNTEERS AT O.C. WHITE'S RESTAURANT . HE HAS ARRANGED FOR TROLLEY TRANSPORTATION FROM THE PARKING LOCATION. HE ALSO HAS ARRANGED FOR DRONES TO RECORD THE EVENT.**

**CHAIRMAN DUDLEY ANNOUNCED THAT A SCHEDULE OF OUR MEETINGS IS BEING DEVLOPED AND WE PLAN TO CONTINUE TO USE THE COUNTY AUDITORIUM.**

**RESPECFULLY SUBMITTED:**

**RAY A. QUINN, VICE CHAIR, VETERANS COUNCIL OF ST. JOHNS COUNTY**

## Veterans Art Exhibit

*“THEN & NOW” OVERVIEW Jan 14, 2021*

### THEN & NOW: 50 YEARS OF VETERAN EXPERIENCES

demonstrates the potential healing power of creative expression in a display of artistic endeavors working through the trauma and grief these 8 artists have incurred through their military service. St. Augustine Art Association is proud to provide a voice and stage for the Veterans to share their experiences from subtle murmurs of anguish; to riveting, raw and emotionally-charged cries for support and understanding. The exhibit merges St. Augustine’s rich art and history with today’s global military awareness and experiences, providing both an educational narrative and broad outreach to society.



THEN & NOW is a special “Shout Out” to Army Major (RET) Theodore Gostas, a former POW held in captivity for over five years, 4.5 years of this spent in solitary confinement. A special installation will be constructed depicting his five-by-eight foot solitary confinement cell. It also speaks to a special relation between two “Foxhole Buddies” (Gostas & Domask) healing and helping each other over a half century transiting from THEN to NOW.

The artists represent more than 50 years of military history, from the Cold War to the present Middle East hostilities. They have served around the world; including the U.S., Europe, Vietnam, GTMO (Cuba), Iraq, Japan, Afghanistan, Korea, Persian Gulf for Desert Shield/Storm and Bosnia.

The veterans represent all the Services and are divided equally between female and male. It is one of the first known times a National Veterans Art Exhibit has equal representation among the sexes. It was not planned this way! They earned it! Each artist’s body of work was examined in-depth and selected solely on this criteria - the strength of their work. The female veterans will knock your socks off based upon their military accomplishments, distinguished creative accomplishments in multiple mediums, and their subsequent leadership role in giving back to the mental wellness of their veteran brothers. Another unusual and most rewarding participant is the inclusion of a Navy Chaplain (RET) Ron Moses Camarda. He served in places that could be described as “Heaven and Hell”! He inspires, informs and educates through his religious narrative the life cycle of life and death in a combat zone. He personalizes these observations through his ministry in his words, prayers, observations and visuals.

In summary, THEN & NOW experiences are filled with racing emotions, challenging perspectives and exploring denials in seeking clarity for a path forward with enlightenment and hope. It is our hope that through this exhibit we raise awareness and sensitivity of our veteran’s service and the importance of their mental health, while demonstrating how the power of creativity may be used as a tool for help to heal a broken spirit.

Jerome H. Domask, Vietnam Veteran, Army (RET), Artist, Guest Curator

*NOTE: Four of the veteran artists are from Florida; two from Jacksonville, and one each from Palatka and St. Petersburg.*



December 31, 2020

Dear Veterans Council Members and Benefactors,

Thank you very much for helping our Veterans in their time of need. Your generosity and kindness has made a huge impact in the lives of our Veterans at critical time in their lives.



Many of the Veterans in our Court struggle with life changing issues that often arise from their military service. These issues include PTSD, severe depression, traumatic brain injury, and physical health problems. These challenges frequently result in substance abuse and other disorders, which we address through the Veterans Treatment Court program.

I would like to share with you a few stories of the Veterans you helped through your generous donations:

A father and combat Veteran with sole custody of his young child who recently lost his construction job due a recurring health condition. Your donations gave the child a Christmas; and the father money toward a deposit on a rental home of their own.

A combat Veteran father of a minor child who is struggling to get his life back in order after dealing with drug addiction. Your donations gave this Veteran the money to pay his month's rent; and peace of mind over the holidays.

A hardworking Veteran who has battled mental health and substance abuse issues for decades but has never given up. Your donations paid for her deposit and first month's rent, allowing her to move away from a half-way house which was located in a drug plagued neighborhood.

The combat Veteran single mother of a large family of preteen children, who has continued to work despite debilitating health problems. Your donations gave the family Christmas cheer; and gave the mother ease from financial stress during the holidays.

Perhaps the greatest gift you have given our Veterans is the knowledge that people in the community care about them and believe in them. With his permission, I pass along to you the thank you letter one of our Veterans sent a few days ago:

I wanted to say thank you so much to you, the Veterans Counsel and Veterans Treatment court for the very generous gift I received today.

It came just as my last penny was spent on our Holiday dinner. I also wanted you to know, that it will not be wasted on foolish things.

2020 was my families most difficult of all my years. I am truly grateful to receive such a blessing.

We are looking forward to many more blessings that my sobriety through Veterans Treatment Court has continued to provide. I believe that the years to come will exceed all of my wishes for peace on earth and good will towards men and women.

I participated in all three days of Toys for Tots and I enjoyed it to the fullest. I intend to continue to volunteer in many events that can provide relief for veterans of our community and God willing, I will continue to do so for many years to come.

You have my most sincere hope for a wonderful Holiday Season and a very Happy New Year! Very Respectfully---

Thanks to the tireless, daily work of Mr. Bill Dudley and Veterans Council members, and the generosity of our benefactors, the Veterans Council helps our Veterans every day of the year. Veterans Council pays for many things which our financially challenged Veterans require to take part in the program, including cell phone and phone plans, transportation, groceries and gas, and emergency rent and utility payments. Veterans Council funds also pay for program essentials such as gift card incentives, graduation challenge coins, and the dog tags we use to recognize program promotions.

Your donation directly helps Veterans regain their life and dignity. At his or her graduation, Veterans Treatment Court Judge Howard O. McGillin salutes the Veteran and says Welcome Home. Your generosity is that welcome home that means so much to all Veterans.

I welcome your call or email if you have any questions about Veterans Treatment Court.

Cynthia C. Thompson

Coordinator, St. Johns County Veterans Treatment Court

St. Augustine, Florida

904 827-5626

[ccthompson@circuit7.org](mailto:ccthompson@circuit7.org)

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



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

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

**Date and Time**

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

**Location**

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

**Event Activities**

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

**Uniform of the Day**

Flight Jacket  
Business Casual

**Event Registration**

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





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



### Invitation to Sponsor

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

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

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

**The order of events are as follows:**

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

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

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

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

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

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



## U.S. VRC will offer you:



## United States Veteran Reserve Corps

[US-VRC.ORG](http://US-VRC.ORG)

### Fundamental Skills

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

### Mission Ready Packages

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

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

## *Celeris Paratus*

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



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

Apply Today!  
[US-VRC.ORG](http://US-VRC.ORG)

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## Carrying on a Proud Tradition of Service



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



US VRC, Wreaths for America 2017



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

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**  
Florida



**FEBRUARY 4-7**



**Sarasota**  
Florida



**MARCH 4-7**



**Lake Chatuge**  
Georgia



**APRIL 15-18**

**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](http://GRATITUDEAMERICA.ORG/RETREATS)**



CHRISTOPHER DUKE  
770-298-7654  
[DUKE@GRATITUDEAMERICA.ORG](mailto:DUKE@GRATITUDEAMERICA.ORG)



## Cecil Field POW/MIA Memorial

### CONSTRUCTION DELAYS



As many of you know, COVID-19 has affected all of us in many ways. The Cecil Field POW/MIA Memorial construction was brought to a complete halt earlier this year due to COVID-19 shutdowns which delayed construction, and specifically brick placement. Phase I construction was finally able to restart in November. We have been working and meeting with our new site contractor, Live Oak Contracting, putting together a new, revised schedule for the remaining Phase I construction. Please accept our sincere apologies for the delays in brick placement that may have affected your plans with mini bricks or site visits to see the placed bricks. We are working diligently to get the Phase I construction updated schedule and get the bricks placed.

### BRICK ORDERS

Please also note that the mini bricks are all shipped and packaged with the entire brick order; they are not provided separately to us. Due to delays from COVID circumstances, we have delayed submitting the third brick order. This is good news for some, as there is still time to order a brick

Orders will be accepted until further notice. Once your order is placed, shipment has been received, and inventoried and checked by our volunteers, we will notify you if you would like to pick up your mini brick at the Chapel or would like to have it shipped to you – just as we have done with the prior two orders.

### THANKYOU!

We do want to take this opportunity to thank each and everyone of you who have and continue to support our efforts. We appreciate your patience and support as we restart Phase I construction and move toward the much-anticipated placement of the memorial bricks.

As a reminder, there is no National Memorial dedicated to the more than 80,000 still Missing in Action/ Unaccounted For service members going back to World War II. We humbly ask that you consider partnering with us as we move forward to ensuring a National site is established! If you would like to contribute financially or would like to volunteer your time to assist in our efforts to establish a National Memorial, please visit our website at: [powmiamemorial.org](http://powmiamemorial.org)

Sincerely,

Mike Cassata, Executive Director

“The Cecil Field POW/MIA Memorial supports the efforts of our government and foreign governments to achieve the fullest possible accounting for those still Missing in Action and unaccounted for from all wars – past, present and future. See the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) website at [dpaa.mil](http://dpaa.mil) for additional information about those who are still unaccounted for.”

## **Fighter Pilot Gregory “Pappy” Boyington: An Ace, A Medal of Honor Recipient, a POW and One Rowdy Marine**



Those who are my age may remember a TV show back in the 60s called Baa Baa Blacksheep, or Blacksheep Squadron. If you remember, it was a semi-fictional account of the real life exploits of the “Black Sheep Squadron commanded by the raucous, hard drinking, Marine Corps rebel, Maj. Gregory “Pappy” Boyington.

The program dealt with the behavior and actions of the squadron and their unconventional commander, both in the rear and in the skies over the Pacific during WWII. They were a rowdy collection of Marine Corps misfits, and some of the best, most daring fighter pilots the Marine Corps had in the Pacific. Those guys got in as much trouble on and off base in the rear as they caused the Japanese in the skies over the Pacific.

Maj. “Pappy” Boyington was born in Coeur d’Alene, Idaho. He began his flying career with the famed Flying Tigers (First American Volunteer Group) of the Republic of China Air force and saw combat in Burma in late 1941 and 1942 during the Second Sino-Japanese War. In September 1942, Boyington, who had left the Marine Corps to fly with the Flying Tigers was reinstated in the Marine Corps and was deployed to the South Pacific.

He began flying combat missions in the F4U Corsair fighter plane. In September 1943, he was put in command of Marine fighter squadron VMF-214 (the Black Sheep). During this time he shot down 25 Japanese “Zero” fighter planes in aerial dogfights. He not only became an “Ace” several times over, but when he shot down his 25th plane, he was only one shy of the record held by another Ace, Joe Foss, another Marine Corps fighter pilot and Medal of Honor recipient from South Dakota.

Boyington’s tour of duty was coming to a close and he wanted that 26th shoot down badly. In January 1944, Boyington, outnumbered by Japanese Zero fighters, was able to shoot down one of them to get his 26th kill, but was himself shot down. He parachuted out, but was picked up by a Japanese submarine and would spend a little over a year as a POW in a Japanese Prisoner of War camp in the South Pacific.

Boyington was rescued from that camp in 1945. This video will fill in more details and ends with an interview where you will see Boyington and hear his voice detailing what the treatment was like in that POW camp.

Then Maj. Gregory “Pappy” Boyington was awarded the Medal of Honor for his actions during in the Pacific during WWII. He also was awarded a Navy Cross, Purple Heart, Presidential Unit Citation, and the Prisoner of War Medal. He died on January 11, 1988, at age 75 in Fresno, California. He is buried at Arlington National Cemetery in Washington, D.C.

The Veterans Site honors the memory of Lt. Col. Gregory “Pappy” Boyington and that of those other Marine Corps fighter pilots he commanded in the Black Sheep Squadron. OooRah! Semper Fi!



## Disability Compensation

### Disability Compensation - Basic Rate Effective 12/1/2020 (1.3%)

Dep Code	Dep Status	10%	20%	30%	40%	50%	60%	70%	80%	90%	100%
0	Veteran	\$ 144.14	\$284.93	\$ 441.35	\$ 635.77	\$ 905.04	\$ 1,146.39	\$ 1,444.71	\$ 1,679.35	\$ 1,887.18	\$ 3,146.42
10	V-S			\$ 493.35	\$ 705.77	\$ 992.04	\$ 1,251.39	\$ 1,566.71	\$ 1,819.35	\$ 2,044.18	\$ 3,321.85
11	V-S-1C			\$ 532.35	\$ 756.77	\$ 1,056.04	\$ 1,328.39	\$ 1,656.71	\$ 1,922.35	\$ 2,160.18	\$ 3,450.32
12	V-S-2C			\$ 558.35	\$ 790.77	\$ 1,099.04	\$ 1,380.39	\$ 1,717.71	\$ 1,991.35	\$ 2,238.18	\$ 3,537.49
13	V-S-3C			\$ 584.35	\$ 824.77	\$ 1,142.04	\$ 1,432.39	\$ 1,778.71	\$ 2,060.35	\$ 2,316.18	\$ 3,624.66
14	V-S-4C			\$ 610.35	\$ 858.77	\$ 1,185.04	\$ 1,484.39	\$ 1,839.71	\$ 2,129.35	\$ 2,394.18	\$ 3,711.83

Additional Child			\$26.00	\$34.00	\$43.00	\$52.00	\$61.00	\$69.00	\$78.00	\$87.17
Add School Child			\$84.00	\$112.00	\$140.00	\$168.00	\$197.00	\$225.00	\$253.00	\$281.57
Add for A/A spouse			\$48.00	\$64.00	\$81.00	\$96.00	\$113.00	\$129.00	\$145.00	\$160.89

### Disability Compensation - SMC Rates

Effective 12/1/2020

Dep Code	Dep Status	L	LI/2	M	MI/2	N	NI/2	O/P	R.1	R.2	S	T
0	Veteran	3915.15	4117.54	4320.76	4617.63	4915.17	5204.3	5493.95	7850.43	9004.64	3521.85	9004.64
10	V-S	4090.57	4292.97	4496.19	4793.63	5090.6	5379.73	5669.38	8025.86	9180.07	3697.28	9180.07
11	V-S-1C	4177.74	4380.14	4583.36	4651.62	4932.84	5206.11	5479.89	7707.12	8798.03	3784.45	8625.52
12	V-S-2C	4264.91	4467.31	4670.53	4738.79	5020.01	5293.28	5567.06	7794.29	8885.2	3871.62	8706.28
13	V-S-3C	4352.08	4554.48	4757.7	4825.96	5107.18	5380.45	5654.23	7881.46	8972.37	3958.79	8787.04
14	V-S-4C	4439.25	4641.65	4844.87	4913.13	5194.35	5467.62	5741.4	7968.63	9059.54	4045.96	8867.8

Each additional child	87.17	87.17	87.17	87.17	87.17	87.17	87.17	87.17	87.17	87.17	87.17	87.17
Each schoolchild	281.57	281.57	281.57	281.57	281.57	281.57	281.57	281.57	281.57	281.57	281.57	281.57

SMC K **\$ 111.74** SMC Q **\$67.00**

Clothing Allowance **\$ 841.36**

Auto Allowance **##### (one-time)**

Special Adaptive Housing **##### (max)**

Special Home Adaptation **#####**

HISA Grant (service-connected) \$6,800.00. HISA Grant (nonservice-connected) \$2,000.00

Burial (service-connected)\$2,000.00. Burial (nonservice-connected) \$300.00. (\$780.00 if hospitalized by VA).

DIC= \$1,357.56 (8 yrs continued totally disabling to include IU and married to spouse for the same 8 yrs+\$288.27) (Spouse w/ Housebound \$157.55) (Spouse w/A&A+\$336.32)

Maximum Annual Pension Rate (MAPR)

Improved Pension: No Dependents **income < \$13,931.00** **w/ one dependent** **income < \$18,243.00**



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**K9S FOR WARRIORS**

## **HEROES' GALA BANQUET HONORING YOUR**

**UNSUNG  
HEROES**

*From your neighborhood to our frontline, unsung heroes walk among us...  
let's recognize them. Nominate your hero at [WeCanBeHeroesFoundation.org](http://WeCanBeHeroesFoundation.org)*

**SATURDAY, MARCH 6, 2021**

5:15 p.m. VIP WWII Heroes Reception | 6 p.m. Heroes' Gala Banquet

UNF's Adam W. Herbert University Center  
12000 Alumni Dr., Jacksonville, Florida 32224

Tickets Available Soon at [WeCanBeHeroesFoundation.org](http://WeCanBeHeroesFoundation.org)

### Your Hero receives:

- Invitation to the March 6<sup>th</sup> Gala
- Recognition at the Heroes Gala
- "Hero Lives Here" yard sign delivered by the We Can Be Heroes Foundation and K9s for Warriors



### **WHO ARE UNSUNG HEROES?**

From neighbors and volunteers reaching out to care for those at-risk, to the janitors, military, police, firefighters, veterans, grocery clerks, small business owners and many others who deserve our gratitude.

FLORIDA REGISTRATION #CH 48313. A COPY OF THE OFFICIAL REGISTRATION AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE DIVISION OF CONSUMER SERVICES BY CALLING TOLL-FREE (800-435-7352) WITHIN THE STATE. REGISTRATION DOES NOT IMPLY ENDORSEMENT, APPROVAL, OR RECOMMENDATION BY STATE. This event is not sponsored by The University of North Florida.



Villagers for Veterans and Hope4Veterans are collaborating to address the widely overlooked and critical issue of homelessness and Peer2Peer sisterhood (suicide prevention) among the female veteran community. In fact, women veterans are the fastest growing group of homeless veterans, according to the Department of Veterans Affairs.

“Many of our veterans find it extremely difficult to transition from military to civilian life,” said Villagers for Veterans founder Marie Bogdonoff. “They miss the camaraderie and structure of military life and often find themselves facing severe financial hardship and frequent bouts of PTSD -- homelessness is a constant threat.”

On December 26, 2020, Villager for Veterans (V4V) Founder Bogdonoff and Hope4veterans (H4V) Founder Lynn Geiser met in St. Augustine, Florida to produce a video that includes female veterans from every branch of the military who have encountered homelessness after their, often highly decorated, service in the United States military.

The veterans highlighted the unique challenges that women face while transitioning into civilian life through their own experience. Nearly all of the veterans have been affected by some type of trauma, including Military Sexual Trauma (MST), and were offered little to no resources to cope and address what they had endured. They also encountered a lack of a community of female veterans, lack of childcare assistance for single mothers, and financial instability due to a scarcity of information and education. Hope4veterans works with Women Veterans & their families that struggle transitioning and goal is to prevent homelessness and high suicide rates for Women Veterans & their families.

Hope4Veterans 5 programs help provide for Women Veterans are: (1) Hope4sisters Peer2Peer Program (2) Military Mothers with Newborns program (3) Free Laptops for Women Veterans in Need (4) Financial assistances (Grocery/ Gas Gift cards and Utilities) (5) VA Assist Program (advocate for resources for VA claims and VA Medical, sister assist with C&P Appt) For more information for Hope4veterans website: [www.Hope4veterans.org](http://www.Hope4veterans.org). Check out events and our fundraiser (April 3rd & 4th 2021)

Both groups are not only bringing crucial attention to the issue, but they're also showing the need for greater resources for female veterans, including sex-segregated transition centers that are staffed by qualified individuals who have an understanding of the needs of female veteran culture.

“Living in a co-ed transition housing facility promoted by the military is not a safe option,” explained Bogdonoff. “That’s why Villagers for Veterans’ next major objective is to procure and then remodel a Florida property into a transition home – a home that will provide a temporary safe haven for eight deserving women vets.”

Bogdonoff is working on garnering funding and donations to make the transition housing a reality. On April 11, 2021, her organization will be hosting a kick-off gala at the historic Lakeside Inn in Mount Dora. For more information on how to help visit Villagers for Veterans the website: <https://www.villagersforveterans.org>.

Hope4veterans will be having a fundraiser event to raise funds for our Women Veterans on April 3rd & 4th with dj, raffle of 2006 Honda, and many other details following when finalized at 9 ball Heaven grill in Jacksonville.

Prior to the raffle check out our website [www.Hope4veterans.org](http://www.Hope4veterans.org)

And click on rally up for a chance to win 2006 Honda VXT 1300.

Lynn Geiser, President/CEO of HOPE4VETERANS

Website/ Facebook: [www.Hope4veterans.org](http://www.Hope4veterans.org)

Email: [Hope4veteran@gmail.com](mailto:Hope4veteran@gmail.com)

## **Military Insignia: What Are Those Stripes and Bars?**

The stripes and bars on a military uniform signify rank. If you're new to the military, you know enough to understand that rank matters.

While it may take time to figure out what everything means, a working knowledge out of the gate can help you feel more at home in the military.

### **A quick vocabulary lesson**

Here are some terms you'll need to know:

**Rank:** Think of rank as the military's organizational structure. The higher the rank, the more responsibility.

**Insignia:** Insignia on service members' uniforms denote rank and include various emblems including chevrons, bars, oak leaves or stars. These are typically worn on the shoulder or collar of a service member's uniform.

**Pay grade:** These are administrative classifications designed to equalize pay across the military service branches. Each pay grade is represented by a letter and a number. For instance, an officer at the first pay grade level would be referred to as an O-1.

### **Who Wears What and Why**

Here's a breakdown of the insignia:

**Chevrons:** Most enlisted personnel in every military service branch wear chevrons, or v-shaped stripes.

**Bars:** These are worn by officers in the lower pay grades. Officers at the O-1 pay grade wear one gold bar, O-2 wear one silver bar, O-3 wear two silver bars and warrant officers wear striped bars.

**Oak leaves:** Officers at the O-4 pay grade wear a gold oak leaf and officers at the O-5 pay grade wear a silver oak leaf.

**Eagles:** Officers at the O-6 pay grade wear a silver eagle.

**Stars:** Officers at the O-7 through O-10 pay grades wear one, two, three or four stars, respectively.



### **What are the rank categories?**

There are four hierarchical categories:

**Junior enlisted personnel:** This refers to service members at the entry pay-grades. Each service branch has a different name for their junior enlisted personnel. The level at which service members are no longer considered junior enlisted personnel also varies. For instance, an E-1 in the Army and Marine Corps is called a private, in the Air Force an airman basic, and in the Navy an E-1 is called a seaman recruit.

**Non-commissioned officers:** Enlisted service members in pay grades E-5 through E-9, plus E-4 Army and Marine Corps corporals and Navy petty officers, are considered non-commissioned officers.

**Warrant officers:** Service members in pay grades W-1 through W-5 of the Army and Marine Corps are warrant officers. The Navy's warrant officers hold pay grades W-2 through W-4.

**Commissioned officers:** Military commissioned officers hold the highest military ranks in the pay grades of O-1 through O-10.



### **How to greet each rank**

Here's a quick cheat sheet for how to address each rank in person:

**Commissioned officers:** rank (General, Lieutenant, Colonel) + last name

**Warrant officers:** Mr./Ms. + last name

It gets a little trickier with enlisted soldiers and non-commissioned officers:

**Privates (E1 and E2) and privates first class (E3):** Private + last name

**Specialists:** Specialist + last name

**Sergeants, staff sergeants, sergeants first class and master sergeants:** Sergeant + last name

**First sergeants:** First Sergeant + last name

**From Veterans Council Treasurer, John Mountcastle**

**2021 Federal Filing Deadlines for Exempt Organizations**

February 1, provide the recipient payee with Copy B of Form 1099-NEC or 1099-MISC

February 1, provide the IRS with Copy A of Form 1099-NEC

February 1, provide the Social Security Administration with Copy A of Forms W-2 & W-3

February 1, provide employees with **Form W-2 Copy B, C & 2**

Various, provide state reporting agencies with Copy 1 of Form W-2

March 1, provide the IRS with Copy A of Form 1099-MISC

April 30, prepare and file IRS 941 Employer's Quarterly Federal Tax Return (only if an employer)

May 17, prepare and file one of the IRS 990 family of forms (990-N, 990-EZ or 990) with related schedules (for fiscal year filers, due no later than the 15th of the fourth month after the end of the exempt organization's fiscal year)

July 31, prepare and file IRS 941 Employer's Quarterly Federal Tax Return (only if an employer)

October 31, prepare and file IRS 941 Employer's Quarterly Federal Tax Return (only if an employer)

January 31, 2022, prepare and file IRS 941 Employer's Quarterly Federal Tax Return (only if an employer)

**2021 Florida Filing Deadlines for Exempt Organizations**

For employers, file Quarterly Re-Employment forms per the schedule for IRS 941 above

May 1, file Corporate Annual Report with Florida Secretary of State

Various, depending upon original registration, renew charitable organization's registration under the Florida Solicitation of Contributions Act

**New for 2020**

All for-profit and not-for-profit enterprises, including trusts, public charities and veterans' organizations, which made payments (other than by credit or debit card) in the course of a trade or business, in the amounts meeting or exceeding the following thresholds during calendar year 2020, must prepare either the new IRS Form 1099-NEC OR the revised IRS Form 1099-MISC for each person or business receiving such funds:

**Form 1099-MISC**

At least \$10 in royalties (box 2)

At least \$10 in broker payments in lieu of dividends or tax-exempt interest

At least \$600 in:

1. Rents (box 1);
2. Prizes and awards (box 3);
3. Other income payments (box 3);
4. Generally, the cash paid from a notional principal contract to an individual, partnership, or estate (box 3);
5. Any fishing boat proceeds (box 5);
6. Medical and health care payments (box 6);
7. Crop insurance proceeds (box 9);
8. Gross proceeds paid to an attorney (box 10);
9. Section 409A deferrals (box 12); or
10. Nonqualified deferred compensation (box 14).

#### **Form 1099-NEC**

At least \$600 in payments for

1. Services performed by someone who is not your employee (including parts and materials) (box 1); or
2. Payments to an attorney (box 1).

1099-NEC Box 1 essentially replaces the function previously performed by 1099-MISC Box 7 reporting.

DO NOT REPORT PAYMENTS more appropriately described and reported on Form 1099-MISC (no double-reporting), or expense reimbursements paid to volunteers of non-profit organizations.

Report at least \$5,000 of sales of consumer products to a person on buy-sell, deposit-commission or other commission basis. Using either 1099-MISC Box 7 OR 1099-NEC Box 2, but not both forms, check the appropriate box to report these direct sales.

Certain payments made to corporations (not individuals) need not be reported (see 2021 Instructions for 1099-MISC and 1099-NEC) <https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/i1099mec.pdf>

You must also file Form 1099-MISC **OR FORM 1099-NEC** for each person from whom you have withheld any federal income tax (report in box 4 of either form) under the backup withholding rules regardless of the amount of the payment.

For multi-state entities, each IRS form permits (but does not require) the reporting of up to two states' payment information. If applicable, see each appropriate state's instructions to report transactions. Florida has no reporting requirement.

Each reporting form requires the name, address and taxpayer identification number ("TIN") of the payee. Use IRS Form W-9 to request the TIN.

## Vietnam Helicopter Pilots: We Owe Them a Sacred Debt

*From the Veterans Site: by Dan Doyle*



Ever since Vietnam, the distinctive sound of helicopter rotors in the distance causes me and every other Vietnam or War on Terror combat veteran to look up. That sound has an often inexpressible meaning to us.

When we found ourselves in trouble out in the bush and needed support, or a way out of hell, these helicopters, their pilots and crews were our guardian angels, our medivac heroes, our gun support, our observers keeping an eye on the enemy and calling in further support.

That sound and all the memories associated with it never leaves us. It always lifted our hopes and our courage when we were in the middle of all-hell-broke-loose. We knew that we were not alone, that those brave pilots and crews would do anything to protect us, to supply us, or to get us out of the danger zone. We knew that they would not hesitate to come into the kill zone to pick up our wounded, to drop off more ammunition, or to provide aerial weapons support to keep the enemy off of us.

They came in all kinds and sizes. The big, double bladed 46s and 47s would transport us in or take us out of the field. The Hueys and sleek Cobras could offer heavy, aerial, fire support. The Hueys would be especially effective medivac transports. Then there were the small, lightly armed aerial observers that would give us “eyes-in-the-sky” and help call in other support if necessary.

None of those helicopters were armored in any significant way. They were thin skinned, which made them lighter and more maneuverable. Some were armed with rockets and heavy machine guns. Some only had a door-gunner with a 60cal. machine gun, but those pilots and crews did not hesitate to come down into the middle of a fight to get their wounded brothers out of the fight and back to medical help. It was common that they could get the wounded back to more sophisticated medical help within the “golden hour” that made their survival from the more serious wounds more possible. Their bravery saved a greater percentage of the wounded than in any previous wars. And they do so with even more efficiency and skill now in our present war zone situations.



We who benefitted from their courage and dedication to duty really do owe a sacred debt to those brave men. 4,095 pilots and crew members were killed in action in Vietnam. They were always going against the odds of survival when they came to our aid under fire. But they did so unhesitatingly. These were unusually courageous and heroic men. Our sense of brotherhood toward them is imperishable. We will never forget what they did for us.

The Veterans Site adds its thanks and its honor and deep respect to all who served as pilots and crews on helicopters during the Vietnam War. We extend the same to all those who serve and have served in helicopters in our current War on Terror in Iraq and Afghanistan and the other hotspots around the globe today. You are truly our angels in the sky.

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## In DOD Reversal, agency will analyze remains thought to be WW II's first Medal of Honor Recipient

By WYATT OLSON | STARS AND STRIPES

The Defense Department agreed to analyze remains in a Philippines grave long believed by family members to be those of Alexander “Sandy” Nininger Jr., the first service member awarded the Medal of Honor during World War II.

The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency and its precursors had denied repeated requests by the family to exhume the remains for DNA testing, maintaining that the agency’s documentation could not validate taking that step.

“I have directed DPAA to immediately generate the necessary exception to policy in order to expeditiously execute scientific analysis of the remains to confirm or deny identification,” Anthony Tata, currently performing the duties of undersecretary of defense for policy, said in an email Wednesday sent to Defense Department officials and John Patterson, who is Nininger’s nephew and closest next of kin.

The exception to policy comes a day after Patterson sent a letter to Defense Department officials on behalf of the family requesting that the soldier’s name be removed from all federal installations, plaques and other sites. Patterson expressed frustration over what he described as a “bureaucratic logjam” on his uncle’s case.

“Sandy’s country has failed him and because of that we ask that the U.S. Government promptly begin the process of removing the name of Lt. Alexander R. Nininger Jr from all Federal facilities and cease trading on his good name and reputation,” Patterson concluded in the letter.

Patterson was stunned about the speed of the policy reversal after the release of the letter, he said during an interview with Stars and Stripes on Wednesday from his Rhode Island home.

“This is obviously the furthest we’ve ever gotten,” he said. “The bottom line is, I’m pleased and now I want to wait and see what their action is – and when.”

Tata told Stars and Stripes on Wednesday he had learned of Patterson’s letter in an email he read during a flight back to the United States on Tuesday after a week of official international travel. He reviewed the case Wednesday morning.

“This is the first time I’ve really had an opportunity to review the case,” he said. “If there’s a chance, even if it’s remote, to discover the identity of these remains, then I think that is something we should do.

“I believe we have no more solemn duty than to take care of our fallen and their families.”

Nininger, a 1941 West Point graduate, was serving with the 57th Infantry Regiment, Philippine Scouts, as he defended against the Japanese invasion of the Philippines. He died on Jan. 12, 1942, near Abucay on the Bataan peninsula of Luzon Island and was hastily buried.

He became the first service member to receive the Medal of Honor during World War II. Medals of Honor were subsequently awarded to service members involved in the earlier Japanese surprise attack on Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7, 1941.

“Though exposed to heavy enemy fire, he continued to attack with rifle and hand grenades and succeeded in destroying several enemy groups in foxholes and enemy snipers,” Nininger’s Medal of Honor citation said



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U.S. Department  
of Veterans Affairs

## Disaster Resources Available to Veterans

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

### Health Care Assistance

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

### Debt Relief

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

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

### Other Resources

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

# World War II Resources in Northeast Florida

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



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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



# Cecil Field POW/MIA MEMORIAL & MUSEUM

## Progress Report

By Dave Dollarhide

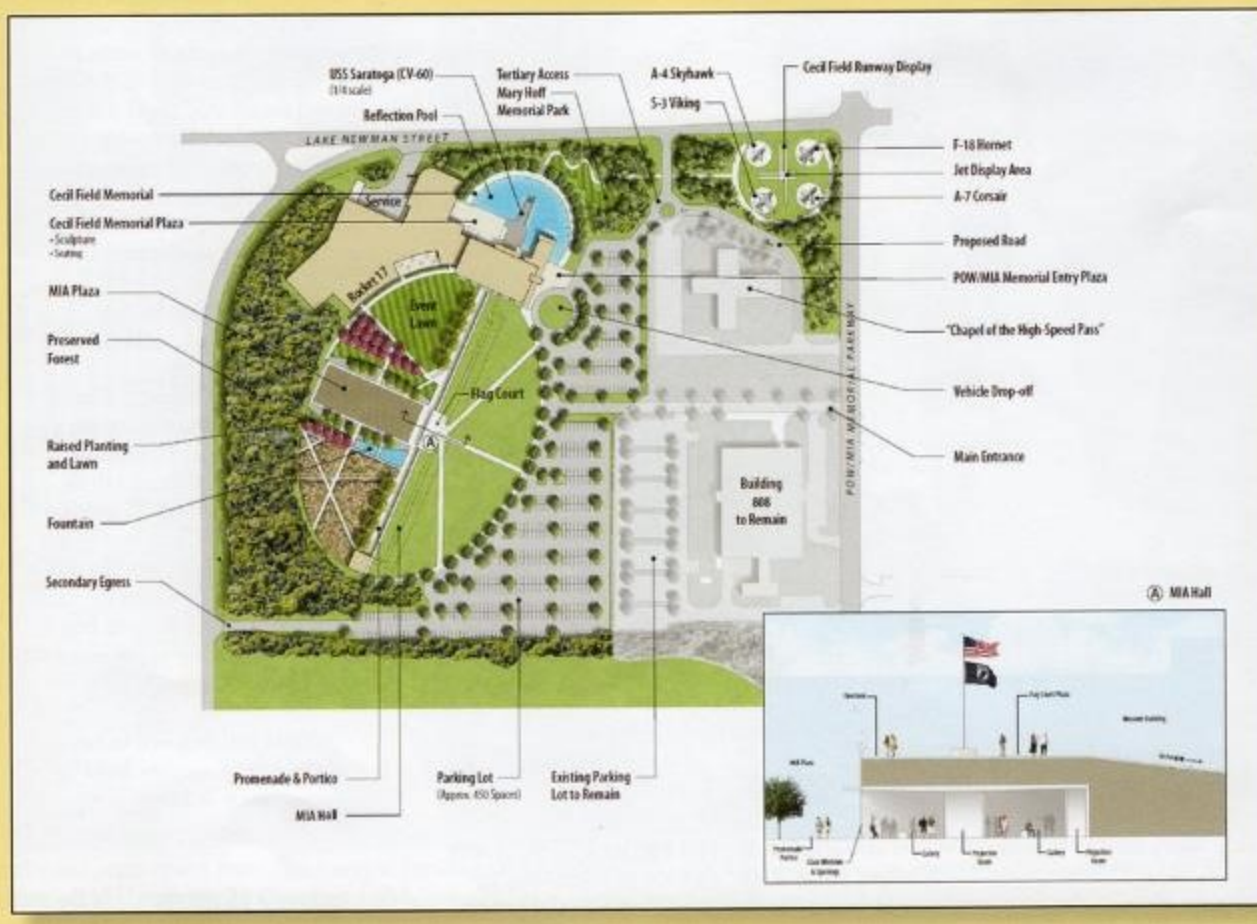
At the former NAS Cecil Field, the up and coming POW/MIA Memorial is making good progress. Acting as the anchor of the planned complex, the former base chapel, now called "The Church of the High Speed Pass," has been completely restored, with the old base theater across the street now being used for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

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

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

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

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





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## Vietnam Veterans of America

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



### Chapter/President/email/Location

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



## First Coast Honor Flight Donation

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

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

[www.firstcoasthonorflight.org](http://www.firstcoasthonorflight.org)

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

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Veteran? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship \_\_\_\_\_

Branch \_\_\_\_\_ Dates Served \_\_\_\_\_

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

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



**LIVE**



**LIVE**

**We've Made Some Great Changes!**

FEATURING

**The Military Family Module**

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

**New features for Service Member and Veteran Accounts**

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

**Create your FREE profile today**  
**[www.veteransascend.com](http://www.veteransascend.com)**

NO RESUME REQUIRED



**PROGRAMS DESIGNED TO MEET VETERANS' UNIQUE NEEDS**

**Advance Care Planning**

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

**Palliative Care**

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

**Hospice Care**

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

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

**Complementary Therapies**

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

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

**We Need Volunteers**

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

**WE HONOR VETERANS**  
*Partner*

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

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

★ Along with traditional reimbursement for hospice services, we offer payment options to veterans with TRICARE. As with all Community Hospice & Palliative Care patients, we provide care and support to all who need it, regardless of their ability to pay. VET 007.5/20



# SURVIVOR OUTREACH SERVICES

Strength  
*built on*  
Sacrifice

## Your Florida SOS Team

### St. Augustine Area

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

### Tallahassee Area

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

### Orlando Area

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

### Tampa Bay Area

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

### Miami Area

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

## Scholarships & Application Deadlines

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

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

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

### Application Deadlines for surviving children

#### Children of Fallen Patriots Foundation

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

#### Freedom Alliance

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

#### Fisher House Foundation/ Heroes Legacy Scholarship

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

#### Special Ops Warrior Foundation

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

### Deadline for multiple relationships

#### Army Emergency Relief Fund

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

### Application Deadlines: For surviving spouses

#### Aspire

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

#### National Military Family Association

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

#### Pat Tillman Foundation

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

### Application Deadlines: For surviving siblings

#### Matthew Freeman Project

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

### Deadline for multiple relationships

#### Folds of Honor

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

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

## FLORIDA SURVIVOR OUTREACH SERVICES AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY



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

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



## Mission Statement:

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



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

## What the Council has done:

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

SA-0003147064-01

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

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

**STAND BY THEM**  
Confidential help for Veterans and their families

**NATIONAL SUICIDE PREVENTION LIFELINE**  
1-800-273-TALK (8256)  
[suicidepreventionlifeline.org](http://suicidepreventionlifeline.org)

..... Confidential chat at [VeteransCrisisLine.net](http://VeteransCrisisLine.net) or text to 838255 .....

**Military/Veterans Crisis Line**  
1-800-273-8255

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

Confidential chat at [MilitaryCrisisLine.net](http://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)

### **DUVAL COUNTY**

President Steve Spickelmier

Meetings:

Third Tuesday of each month

Location:

American Legion Post 37  
Main Building  
San Juan Avenue

Tome: 1900 (7 pm)

### **NASSAU COUNTY**

President: Mike Doran

Meetings:

First Thursday of each month

Location:

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

Time: 1900 (7pm)

### **St. Johns County**

President: Bill Dudley

Meetings:

Last Thursday of each month

Location:

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

Time: 1900 (7pm)



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



We are inviting all veterans to visit our website at:

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

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

Please join our group on Facebook at:

<http://veteranscouncilsjc.org>

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

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

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

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

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

The Veterans Council of St. Johns County welcomes article submissions from all County Veterans & organizations. Articles should be of interest to all and veterans related. Submissions may be edited &/or shortened and used if space permits.

Send to: rothfeldm@gmail.com



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

*(physical location)*

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

*The office is open from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. daily,  
Monday through Friday excluding holidays.*

*Service is by appointment.  
Phone: 904-209-6160 Fax: 904-209-6161  
Joseph McDermott, SR VSO  
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.*